

# INSIDE *Singletree*

DECEMBER 2020

A SOCIAL PUBLICATION FOR THE RESIDENTS OF SINGLETREE



## the KENNEDY FAMILY

Photography by Olga Barron Photography Inc.

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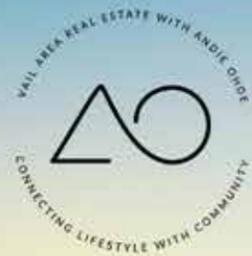
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# Singletree VIDEO SPOTLIGHTS

Don't miss our new videos every month featuring the "Story Behind the Story" of our local businesses and not-for-profit organizations.

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& CONSIGNMENTS

**KACEE PICOT**  
KACEE COSMETOLOGIST  
EST. 1986

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"My dream came to fruition 14 years ago, and now I get to see Nest Furnishings and Consignments grow and mature alongside the valley, hopefully, for many more years to come."

Kacee Picot knows how to make people feel good about the way they look! She has been a licensed Cosmetologist since 1986 and has been rockin' in the Vail Valley for over 25 years.

"With the current boom in local beers and liquors, we figured we better get as many in Riverwalk as we can fit, not just to support local endeavors, but because these are good!"

SOS Outreach programs empower youths to discover their true potential. Due to the tireless efforts of residents like Claus Tjaden and Bill Cotton, the future is indeed a bright one.



**ANDIE OHDE** GRI, CRS, SFR  
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CenturyLink	855-707-4993
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# Neighborhood Sponsor INDEX

This Index has been created to provide an easy reference for you when searching for a trusted neighborhood vendor to use; these local businesses are proud to partner with the community and to make this magazine possible. Take a minute to familiarize yourself with the businesses sponsoring *INSIDE Singletree* and be sure to call on them when you need their products or services. And of course, please remember to thank them for supporting *INSIDE Singletree!*

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**publisher's note**

# HELLO

*Singletree Residents!*

Season's greetings! The holidays are here, and I hope you are able to take a moment to reflect, relax, and enjoy time with family and friends. Despite the overwhelming challenges of the past year, and the uncertainty of the months to come, now is the time to take pause and celebrate all the blessings we are fortunate to experience every day by living in our glorious valley.

In this issue, we share the wide and varied paths that have led our residents to destination Singletree. Meet the Kennedys: Jeff, Meredith, Gracen, Libba Jayne, and the newest addition to the family, Millie B. Hailing originally from Alabama, the Kennedys are thrilled to be living in Singletree and sharing their Southern heritage with the community.

We are happy to meet another "Super Seconds" family in the neighborhood: with roots in Texas, Randy and Denise Ford chose

Singletree as their mountain retreat to spend more time with their active children and grandchildren. And Bob and Judy Holmes share their path from the library stacks at the Denver University Law Library to their ultimate full-time home in the neighborhood.

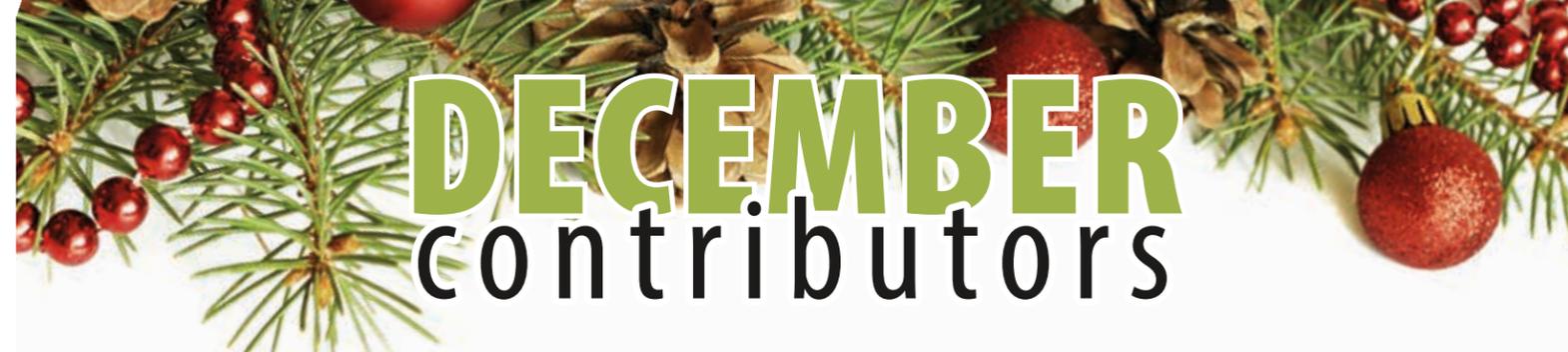
Melissa MacDonald shares her journey through a number of careers which finally lead to her to be able to say today: "I am an artist"! And speaking of journeys, Natalia Kavanaugh leads us on an adventure exploring the puzzles of her native Russia and sharing insights only a local would know.

Linda Hill checks in with the Vail Valley Partnership and enlightens us as to their recently unveiled program, Vail Valley Works, as the premier local source for professional development. And on a lighter note, Sir Beau Sims of Singletree Manor is not so concerned with professional development and just looks forward to his next play date.

All this and more in your December issue of *INSIDE Singletree!* Wishing you and your loved ones peace, love, and joy this holiday season and in the coming New Year!



**Holly Proctor**  
Area Director  
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**CALLING ALL SINGLETREE RESIDENTS!** This is YOUR neighborhood publication, and it is not possible without your active and enthusiastic participation! Please offer an article or nominate a friend or neighbor to be featured in an upcoming issue of the magazine. We are always looking for opportunities to feature your family, kids, pets, athletic endeavors, volunteer activities, travel adventures, or social happenings. Please email [holly.proctor@n2pub.com](mailto:holly.proctor@n2pub.com) to participate in *INSIDE Singletree!* We welcome and appreciate your involvement.

Have you checked out our *INSIDE Singletree* pages on Facebook and Instagram? Be sure to like and follow us on both Facebook and Instagram! And be sure to tag [@insidesingletree](https://www.instagram.com/insidesingletree) to be featured on our page!



**Olga Barron**  
Photographer



**Debbie Robbins**  
Content Advisor



**Dana Walker**  
Social Instigator



**Bobbie Ruh**  
Resident Writer



**Jeff and Meredith Kennedy**  
Meet Your Neighbors



**Melissa MacDonald**  
Celebrating the Arts



**Linda Hill**  
Business Beat



**Denise and Randy Ford**  
Super Seconds



**Bob and Judy Holmes**  
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# Welcome New Sponsors

Please join us in welcoming our newest sponsors to *INSIDE Singletree*! Your neighborhood publication would not be possible without the support of our business partners. Please be sure to call on them when you are in need of their products or services.



## ANDIE OHDE LIV SOTHEBY'S INTERNATIONAL REALTY

Hello, neighbors! I'm thrilled to be back in my favorite neighborhood and even more thrilled to announce a new collaboration with *INSIDE Singletree* magazine as the new video sponsor. In this booming digital age, videos often serve as the pathway to connection between people across



the world. Birthed from my passion to connect the community together and give back in the process, I started using my platform and relationships to showcase the incredible people of the Vail Valley on my social media and YouTube channel. Like a great wine and cheese pairing, this collaboration with *INSIDE Singletree* magazine is the best of both worlds as we will be working together to spotlight our sponsor businesses and nonprofits that bring the Vail Valley to life. I can't wait to work together with you as we connect lifestyle with community!



You can reach Andie at **970-471-5233** or [aohde@livsothebysrealty.com](mailto:aohde@livsothebysrealty.com), or visit her website at [www.VailAreaRealEstate.com](http://www.VailAreaRealEstate.com).



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Owners and Singletree residents Bruce and Susie Delnay purchased Vail Valley Pharmacy in September 2020 and will continue to provide the same level of service you have come to expect from us.

Vail Valley Pharmacy – your one-stop shop for health and wellness – located at **105 Edwards Village Blvd.** Call us today at **970-569-4150**, email [vailvalleypharmacy@gmail.com](mailto:vailvalleypharmacy@gmail.com), or click [vailvalleypharmacy.com](http://vailvalleypharmacy.com).



## BLITZ BOUTIQUE

As the new owner of Blitz Boutique, a longtime local and integral fixture of the boutique for years, Stephanie McCarthy welcomes you to stop by and shop her fabulous selection of women's clothing and accessories, and to celebrate the new chapter of this beloved Vail Village boutique. With a focus on curating unique pieces and delivering an exceptional customer experience, Blitz is truly a one-stop shopping destination in Vail.



From loungewear to formalwear (and everything in between), the store offers something for everyone at attainable prices. Favorite brands you will find include 7 For All Mankind, BB Dakota, DL1961, Dolce Vita Shoes, Evoke Aspen, Joie, Lollia, Palo de Yucca, PJ Salvage, Ted Baker, Vince Camuto, Wolf People Jewelry, and more.

Stephanie looks forward to being a part of the local small-business community in the valley and continuing to serve longstanding loyal clientele while welcoming new customers as well.

Blitz Boutique is open daily at **242 East Meadow Dr.** (by the covered bridge) in Vail Village. You may also visit [blitzvail.com](http://blitzvail.com), or contact Stephanie at **970-476-3999**. And keep in mind, Blitz Boutique is available for Private Shopping; email [stephanie@blitzvail.com](mailto:stephanie@blitzvail.com) for details!



## FARMERS INSURANCE - FROMAN INSURANCE AGENCY

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Debbie Brill established this Farmers Insurance agency in 1992, and I have had the fortunate experience of working for Debbie

since 2006. As of October 1, 2020, I have acquired the Brill Agency, however, Debbie and the long-tenured team continue to work at the Froman Agency. I am extremely honored to represent Farmers Insurance and to be your local Farmers Insurance agent. I look forward to establishing new relationships and am incredibly grateful to represent our current clients.

Although there is a change in your agent, the team and location remain the same. Please call **970-845-8910**, email [lfroman@farmersagent.com](mailto:lfroman@farmersagent.com), or stop by the office at **150 E. Beaver Creek Blvd., #A-203** so that we may review your needs and provide "easy to understand" solutions.

**If you have worked with a professional and reliable business who you would recommend to your Singletree neighbors, please email your referrals to [holly.proctor@n2pub.com](mailto:holly.proctor@n2pub.com). We would love to introduce these quality businesses to other residents in your community!**

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## meet your neighbors

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# Jeff, Meredith, Gracen, Libba Jayne and Millie B

After growing up in neighboring towns in North Alabama, Meredith and I met at a mutual friend's wedding in Vail, CO. We had both attended the University of Alabama and seemed to have a lot in common. We immediately started dating, and proceeded to live the young-and-in-love ski-bum life! We both enjoy a fast-paced life, and that is exactly how we have lived the last 19 years. Skiing, biking, kayaking, hiking, rafting and all the other outdoor adventures of Colorado made us fall in love with the Vail Valley.

During this time, I also fell in love with the hospitality industry. In 2001, along with two friends, one being Meredith's brother, we started Moe's

Original BBQ. We spent the first summer in a roadside trailer on a gravel lot that is now the Edwards Corner. This would prove to be the beginning of a life filled with food, family, friends, and fun! In 2003, Meredith and I married on the beach in Seaside, FL. After a Thursday ceremony, we continued the celebration through the weekend at Jazz Fest in New Orleans with all our friends and family. After a honeymoon in the South Pacific, we hurried back to Colorado, eager to begin our newlywed life in Vail.

Meredith began her 15-year tenure with the Vail Valley Foundation. Her job not only introduced us to many lasting friendships but supported us



as we began to build a barbecue concept. In the years to come, we would welcome two daughters, Gracen and Libba Jayne, into our world. As anyone with children knows, these years are full of joy, chaos, and everything in between! During this time, we would move from Minturn to Edwards to Eagle and back to Edwards.

"Now we are an official family!" Libba Jayne recently announced when we added Millie B, our new Australian Labradoodle puppy, to our family. So, here we are in Singletree – finally complete – and loving it!

Gracen, 13, and Libba Jayne, 9, are in school at Eagle County Charter Academy here in Edwards. Gracen is highly active with Nordic, alpine skiing, soccer, and cross country. Libba Jayne enjoys all the same sports,

as well as having a passion for the arts. Both girls always keep us on the move!

Now a stay-at-home mother, Meredith enjoys volunteering at the girls' school and sitting on the Family Selection Committee for Habitat for Humanity. Most importantly, she keeps our household running smoothly. My career takes me on the road and into the daily operations of the demanding restaurant industry. When not working, I still chase the adventure and adrenaline wherever it takes me. We feel proud to have grown Moe's Original BBQ to 57 restaurants around the country. We hope to continue spreading our Southern heritage around the world. Our restaurants here in the valley have allowed our family to develop a special bond with this community that we love.



We love living on the golf course where we routinely see friends, as well as meet strangers playing through (the yard!). We were especially appreciative of the golf course allowing residents to use the fairways for recreation during the COVID-19 lockdown. A big perk of living in Singletree is the convenience of the Sonnenalp Club. The whole family takes full advantage of the amenities, but my favorite part is the year-round lap pool!

We have been truly fortunate to create a wonderful life here in the Vail Valley and feel especially lucky to have landed in Singletree!



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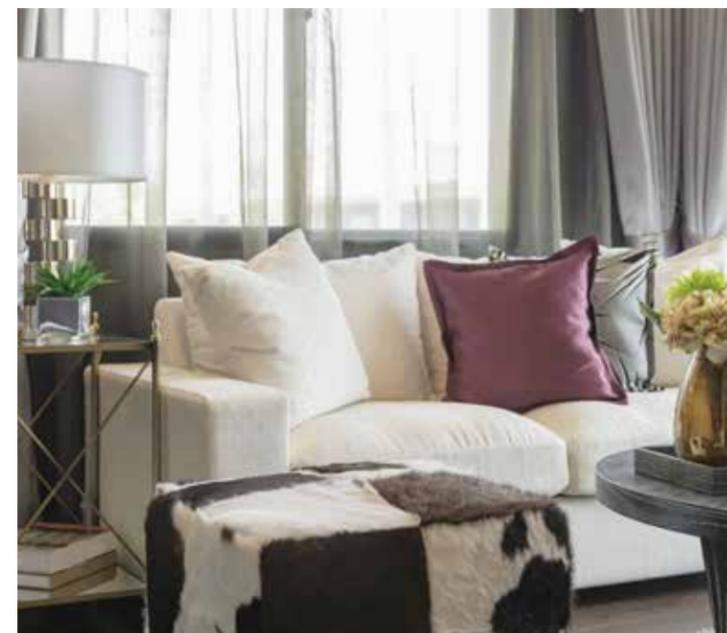
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**sponsor spotlight**



When I moved here from Palm Desert California 25 years ago, I realized two things about the Vail Valley: the summers were much more bearable, and there was not a consignment option for Vail shoppers. Seeing that the valley was a second-home market, I knew it would be the perfect location to open Nest Furnishings and Consignments.

I wanted to open a store where the customer could come in and discover something unexpected or find exactly what they were searching for – a place that offers one-of-a-kind artisan pieces and high-quality furnishings. I wanted a store where you didn't have to wait weeks for an ordered piece to come in.

With my dream mapped out and a space ready for stocking, I opened Nest Furnishings and Consignments located in Avon's Chapel Square. Fourteen years later, we are still at the same location. The store was a hit and did so well that eight years ago, we decided to expand to over 11,000 square feet to fill the demand I was receiving from local Vail Valley residents and visitors alike.

Today, you can come into Nest and find unique furnishing pieces with brands such as Henredon, Ralph Lauren, and Restoration Hardware. You can browse through our collection of designer lamps and chandeliers, one-of-a-kind bronze sculptures and Waterford crystal. We offer a variety of styles – everything from contemporary to mountain rustic-style furniture.

And if for some reason, you can't find what you want today, just come in tomorrow. Our inventory of furnishings, accessories and gifts changes daily, as well as our pricing. All of the pieces are priced well below cost, and our pricing structure allows pieces to reduce over their term at Nest.

As Nest keeps growing, we are still keeping the focus on the locals, offering a wonderful selection of gifts on hand such as jewelry made by local artisans, and Nest Fragrances candles and diffusers.

Nest is ever-changing as we offer free pickup five days a week. We try to be selective in the pieces we accept for consignment because we want to offer our customers the most exclusive and finest shopping experience out there. Over the years we have sold unique pieces such as a 24-foot antique canoe, an antique, life-size cowboy slot machine, as well as, original art from most of the local galleries in the Vail Valley.

My dream came to fruition 14 years ago, and now I get to see Nest Furnishings and Consignments grow and mature alongside the valley, hopefully, for many more years to come.

Please visit Nest Furnishings and Consignments at **222 Chapel Pl.** in Avon or [nestvail.com](http://nestvail.com).

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## celebrating the arts

Contributed by **Melissa MacDonald**, Singletree resident

# art: MY FOURTH CAREER ... OR MAYBE THE FIFTH?

**As a little girl, I was transported to the Cleveland Museum of Art every Saturday for art classes. We would pick up our folding stools, follow a docent to a gallery where we learned about the art in that gallery, then we would attempt to draw what we saw. Offerings ranged from Gainsborough to Persian miniatures to suits of armor. My aunt, a working artist, had graduated from the Cleveland Institute of Art, my mother was an interior "decorator," and it was hoped I might have an art gene. If I did, it was recessive!**

Having graduated from college with an art history minor and English major, one might think I was unemployable. Luckily I was hired to edit a Chicago corporate publication and started graduate school in Journalism with a photography emphasis. Five years later as an associate editor of a Tisch publications magazine, I realized I needed decent income instead of seeing my name in print and logically (!) interviewed to become

a stockbroker. Moving from Merrill Lynch to investment banking through the next 15 years kept me constantly on airplanes, but with enough capital to leave the business and start redoing houses and running nonprofit organizations. After 13 home renovations and Executive Directing several nonprofits, I wound up living in Singletree in 2006 running the Eagle River Watershed Council (ERWC). Of course I was also a "weekend" ski instructor at Beaver Creek. And through all of these evolutions, I had bought and sold art, even traveling to Belgium to buy primarily old Impressionist paintings and amassing a small art collection.

From 2002 to 2005, I had been able to sneak in a few evening art classes at the Denver Art Museum and join a group of painters once a week with a wild Russian instructor. I wouldn't paint again until retiring from ERWC in 2013 and marrying a wonderful guy I had almost married 15 years earlier. A group of gals had just organized the Vail Valley Art Guild, were obtaining a donated gallery space in Avon, and had started painting together. I joined them and have been painting ever since.

Painting for fun and exhibiting in a gallery are two different animals. You have to actually finish your painting, give it a name, learn how to frame it or spend big bucks to have it framed, price it, then bolster enough courage to put it out there for other people to see – or maybe even buy. Then you even have to show up for the opening and own up to having painted "that thing" and having the gall to put a price on it. Now I know why they serve wine at gallery openings.

My first sale was a Montana rooster painting to lady from St. Louis who likely collected rooster paintings. I had been in an Impressionist painting class with a friend in Montana taught by a German who was trained by a famous Russian. We were painting in a barn wearing huge coats surrounded by sheep, chickens and a rooster. Two of the chickens ate part of the still life I was painting when we took a break for lunch and to warm up. I took pictures of them, came back to Colorado, and happily painted them instead of fruit and flowers.



Hen-rietta



Mom Takes Us for a Ride



Zoom Call with Fred

My next sales were impressionistic, slightly abstracted (on purpose!) landscapes, several purchased by friends, or friends of friends, but some by people I did not know which I considered a step up in a fledgling career. Through our Vail Valley Art Guild, my paintings have now been in five galleries from Avon to Minturn to Eagle (since we keep losing our free spaces and relocating), in several of Eagle County's libraries and in our annual shows at Colorado Mountain College where I won one People's Choice award and two Honorable Mentions (second place). The former executive director of the Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art has purchased three of my paintings.



Fred

I enjoy painting somewhat abstracted landscapes and am working to achieve abstracted figures. I seem to alternate into quasi-realistic paintings between painting abstracts because it seems easier to paint what I see instead of what I feel.

But art seems to demand both seeing and feeling – and constantly



Taking in the View

working on putting shapes and colors together while maintaining a whole painting and, in my case, usually reworking what I've just done. Sometimes the "adjustments" improve the painting, and sometimes you just have to give up. But you are always learning from the experience.

So now I am the treasurer of the 180-member Vail Valley Art Guild. Our members are photographers, ceramicists, sculptors, painters in all mediums, muralists and a movie maker. Our galleries are located in Minturn and Eagle, and open for shows on first and second Fridays respectively. We will hang a show at CMC in November. When the libraries re-open their exhibition areas, you will find us in Avon, Eagle, Gypsum and Vail. We hold all levels of now socially distanced, masked workshops from spring to fall to learn new skills, improve old skills and meet new artists. Our monthly member meetings are presently on hold although we have daily communication through our opt-in email lists, as well as a bi-monthly newsletter and an updating website ([www.vailvalleyartguild.org](http://www.vailvalleyartguild.org)). Singletree has several member artists and photographers, and I bet there are more of you out there. Check out our website and join us.

And now, this former writer, editor, investment banker, house remodeler, nonprofit executive director and ski instructor is really an artist!

## business beat

Contributed by Linda Hill,  
Singletree resident



Engaged businesses and professionals participate in CareerWise apprenticeships, Business Insight Series and Vail Valley Works professional development programs – even during COVID in 2020.

# Linda Hill Catches Up with the VAIL VALLEY PARTNERSHIP

There are a few organizations in the valley that help keep businesses informed and supported. One of those is the Vail Valley Partnership (VVP). As a member, I have had the opportunity to value the resources they bring to our Valley. Erik Williams, the VVP's Community Development Director, reminded me of a saying his grandmother used: "You were given **two** ears and **one** mouth – act accordingly." The VVP believes that Grandma was right and that the best way to lead a community is to first listen to the community.

"We make it our first priority, listening to our members and the community," says Anna Robinson, program manager of the VVP. "We go to the source, and it helps shape our programs."

As a business owner and long-time resident (40+ years), I have seen many of the major challenges our community has faced. While many challenges to the community remain the same (housing, cost of living/healthcare/childcare), there are trends that develop cross industry. The Vail Valley Partnership tracks these trends locally through member surveys, in-person interviews, focus sessions and constant member outreach. The information gathered has helped put business support programs in place that my marketing firm and other companies have been able to use to improve our businesses.

I wanted to take a moment and interview the VVP to see what the organization has done during the pandemic. Following are the answers that both Erik Williams (EW), Community Development Director and Anna Robinson (AR), Program Manager were able to provide.

**LH: What are some of the things you have seen as a result of the pandemic?**

**AR:** This year, both before and during the pandemic, the businesses in our valley are asking for more professional development opportunities for their employees. This difficult time for the local business community has reinforced the notion that our workforce is our most important resource. Across industries our employers are looking for ways to better educate, support and grow talented professionals within their businesses.

**EW:** We have made a commitment to strengthening Eagle County's current and future workforce by recently unveiling *Vail Valley Works* as the premier local source for professional development. This professional development programming is designed to establish, train and support a network of local leaders who are ready to take on the challenges of an ever-changing community.

**LH: I'm familiar with the NEXT part of the program as some of my employees have participated. Can you provide a broader overview of Vail Valley Works?**

**EW:** Ah yes, I recall some of your team members participating, and you even had the opportunity to be a speaker if I recall correctly. We have broken Vail Valley Works offerings into three specific categories. The first being Signature Courses, which houses some valley favorites including NEXT Emerging Leaders, the Community Leadership Academy and the popular new Community Issues Bootcamp. The second are the Specialty Courses, and the third are the Affiliate Courses. We also built a resource library to house



Linda Hill with VVP CEO and President Chris Romer



Businesses attend an open lunch session to learn about CareerWise Apprenticeships.



Eddie Campos adds to a discussion during the final session of the Community Leadership Academy, a program of Vail Valley Works.



Anna Robinson checks the live stream feed as VVP hosts Thriving in Chaos, a Business Insight Series online and in person.

many of the ideas, videos, podcasts, white papers and more to keep these resources at the community's fingertips.

**LH: What are some of the specialty courses?**

**AR:** Specialty courses are designed to teach specific skills such as a professional fundraising or project management certification drawing from experts here in our valley. The professional fundraising course culminates in an audit project to earn the certification. The project management course receives a certificate of completion, with the official certification earned after participants sit for the CompTIA Project+ test.

**LH: Interesting. I believe I heard about another program for learning a new skill or topic?**

**EW:** Yes, that would be our Affiliate Courses, which are learning opportunities curated by subject matter experts. Many of these courses are "101-level" learning – perfect for those looking for an introduction to a new skill, industry, or topic

without a big investment. Course offerings include Skills for Supervisors; Diversity, Equity and Inclusion; Intro to HR; and Intro to Digital Marketing.

**AR:** It all goes back to listening. With the variety of options available, we believe there's something here for every business, regardless of size or industry. This platform also gives us the opportunity to be nimble and change the courses to fit the community's needs moving forward.

**LH: We could all use better listening skills. I know housing is always a challenge in our valley and I seem to recall an effort by the VVP to address housing?**

**AR:** Yes, two years ago the community asked for more information on housing. In response, the VVP created the Workforce Housing Coalition, bringing in national speakers, educational events, tours and more to give our community a holistic picture of housing and its challenges.



Anna Robinson, Program Manager



Chris Romer, CEO and President



Erik Williams, Community Development Director

...

**LH: I love the innovation to your programming. Last but not least, I have to ask, how is Chris Romer, CEO and President of the VVP?**

**EW:** He is doing great and applies his leadership skills to the organization on a daily basis. I think Anna would agree, Chris constantly encourages his team to always look for the “WHY” in each situation. “Why should we do this?” is one of his many mantras. He has instilled within the VVP a belief that if a community is seriously interested in creating change and supporting innovation, it will begin with a firm commitment to analyze its challenges, and to identify, educate, train and support a team of public and private sector community leaders to attack those issues. Without that commitment, a community cannot develop the intelligent, creative, and energetic local professional network that is essential for the community to achieve its full potential.

Thank you, Vail Valley Partnership, for taking the time for this interview and for providing such great business support to my company, as well as all the industries and companies in our valley.

I would like to add that in September the Vail Valley Partnership was recognized as the **Chamber of the Year** nationally by the Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives, winning this award for the second time in four years from a group that includes over 4000 chambers nationally.



New participating businesses and apprentices listen as Erik Williams interviews an apprentice and supervisor of Can Do MS at the annual CareerWise Bootcamp.

“It’s an incredible honor, but we really hope it shows our community that we’re constantly working on strategies to help our businesses, nonprofits, schools and community. We’re excited about the future of Vail Valley Works; it has enormous potential, but it needs all of you participating and advising.”

Adds Anna Robinson, “Bottom line ... we’re listening!”

*Linda Hill is a resident of Singletree and owner of Hill Aevium, a full-service marketing and branding company with clients throughout the Rocky Mountain region. And, as you can tell, she has been able to utilize a number of the VVP’s programs and encourages other local business owners to do the same.*

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# randy and denise FORD



Denise and Randy

Randy and I have traveled to the Vail Valley area for 40+ years enjoying skiing, summer vacations, as well as occasional business meetings. So last year, we decided we wanted to spend more time in the mountains, and to offer this as an opportunity to connect with our children and grandchildren. Happy Power came highly recommended to us, and we began a search for the right home and the right neighborhood.

We wanted a home where we felt comfortable and connected. We instantly fell in love with the Singletree community for that very reason! It IS a community. Thanks to the friendliness of the people in Singletree, we felt right at home as we settled into our home on Palomino Road. While we still live full time in Dallas, TX, we have definitely been welcomed into the Singletree neighborhood, and hopefully post COVID will have even more occasions to connect.

Randy has been in the life and annuity brokerage business for his entire career. I have assisted him as comptroller on a part time basis while volunteering at the Dallas Museum of Art giving tours to visitors.

We have two children, Randal and Emily. Emily lives in Tulsa with her husband, Blake, and they love fly fishing in the Vail Valley area. Randal lives in Austin with his wife, Lauren, and their three children, Layla, Ellis, and Everett. They love to ski but are now hooked on summertime in the mountains too. Needless to say, we are an active family.

We have traveled extensively but now are happy to split time between Texas and Colorado! We have a wonderful church community in Dallas that we stay connected with via Zoom while in the mountains. We cycle (me on an ebike!), we hike, we golf (Randy, very well), and we ski (Randy, expert).



Randal and Lauren



The "grands": Layla, Ellis, and Everett



Emily with Dad



Randy and Denise

*Wishing you and your family a  
healthy and happy holiday season!*

*We hope that 2021 brings us all  
a year of peace, prosperity, and health!*

As winter is upon us in Singletree, here is some helpful information to keep you safe and informed this winter –

[www.cotrip.org](http://www.cotrip.org) has current road information for Colorado interstates and highways. Find out the road conditions before you head out.

[www.ecalert.org](http://www.ecalert.org) is where you can sign up to receive Eagle County emergency communications. If you sign up, emergency management agencies and first responders send alerts, notifications, and updates directly to your device based on your location and the alert categories that you have chosen.

[www.snow.com](http://www.snow.com) will give you local ski conditions before you hit the slopes.

[road@eaglecounty.us](mailto:road@eaglecounty.us) is the email address to send complaints, concerns or suggestions directly to Eagle County Road and Bridge Department. They are responsible for maintaining the roads in Singletree.

[www.eaglevalleybh.org](http://www.eaglevalleybh.org) provides information for behavioral health services in the Eagle River Valley.

[www.ecemergency.org](http://www.ecemergency.org) is a project of Eagle County Public Information Officers and provides information and resources on Eagle County emergencies, including fire, health, etc.

[www.flyvail.com](http://www.flyvail.com) provides information for Eagle County Regional Airport.

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## AT “HOLMES” in singletree

Bob and Judy Holmes have been in love with Vail for just about as long as they have been in love with each other. They met over Christmas break in the law library when both were students at the University of Denver School of Law. Judy, a Denver native, was using the break to work on a project and was scurrying back and forth among the stacks in a hurry to finish and get away for the holiday. Bob, meanwhile, had come to the library that fateful day by a more circuitous route. He had studied engineering at the University of Nebraska, graduating in 1970 to work in Florida as a “rocket scientist” for a company competing to develop an engine for the space-shuttle program.



When his company lost the bid, Bob left to travel in Europe during the 1972 Olympics and found a job as a computer programmer that kept him there for almost two years. He returned to the U.S. to earn a master’s degree in engineering from Georgia Tech and then relocated to Los Angeles to take another engineering position. That was where he decided that engineering was no longer for him – it was just *too* boring. He applied to and was accepted at the University of Denver School of Law. He attended law school in the night division so he could work during the day at Martin-Marietta, yet another engineering job.

The scene was set: Judy was dashing around among the bookshelves while Bob was diligently trying to cram as much studying in as he could during his time away from the office. This good-looking girl was definitely distracting him from his studies. Finally, he flagged her down by uttering two incredibly romantic words: “Hey, you!” It was love at first sight. They spent the rest of the afternoon talking, and by sunset they knew they were a couple.

Judy, who had grown up in Denver and graduated from Colorado College with a degree in Psychology, had already accepted a job in a law firm in Alaska. However, after that fateful meeting, not only did she rescind her acceptance, but she found out which classes Bob had signed up for in the coming quarter and enrolled in all of them. He didn’t stand a chance.

From the beginning, their relationship involved trips to Vail for skiing. Judy’s family



had a mountain home in Eagle-Vail, which made getting away for the week-end easy and was a welcome break from the pressures of law school. Judy finished law school in 1979, and she and Bob were married on September 8, 1979,



right after she took the Bar exam. In an act of faith, Bob married her before he knew whether or not she had passed the Bar. Bob’s graduation from law school took place shortly thereafter in 1980.

After graduation, both Bob and Judy immersed themselves in the practice of law but managed to make time for the birth of their two children, Molly in 1982 and Matt in 1987. Bob specialized in commercial real estate law, which he *never* found boring, first with Fairfield and Woods P.C. and later with Holme, Roberts and Owen, LLP (now Brian Cave). Since leaving Brian Cave in 2017, he has opened his own practice, Robert Holmes Law LLC, and specializes in the development, financing, leasing, purchase and sale of commercial real estate, as well as the restructuring and workouts of loans. He is also listed as a “Super Lawyer” and in *Best Lawyers in America*. He has served on the Boards of the Eagle Valley Land Trust and the Vail Symposium. He is especially proud of serving as President of the American College of Mortgage Attorneys.

Judy was honored to practice law with her father for 18 years where she specialized in medical malpractice defense and employment discrimination cases. After her father’s retirement, she became an employment litigator with the firm of Littler



Mendelson, and 17 years ago she opened her own firm. She has lectured and published extensively in the areas of employment and health-care law, and has been an instructor for the National Institute of Trial

Advocacy and Continuing Legal Education in Colorado. She served as Vice President of both the Denver and Colorado Bar Associations and as a Delegate to the Board of Governors of the American Bar Association.

Now that Bob and Judy both have their independent law practices with more control over their schedules, they have made the Vail Valley their primary residence. They had been weekenders in Eagle-Vail for over 35 years, but in 2015 decided to make the move to Singletree and bought a home on Charolais Circle. They focused on the Singletree location because they love the town of Edwards, and “there is always something to do in Singletree.” They enjoy the ease of skiing at Arrowhead and Beaver Creek and appreciate having a beautiful golf course in their neighborhood.



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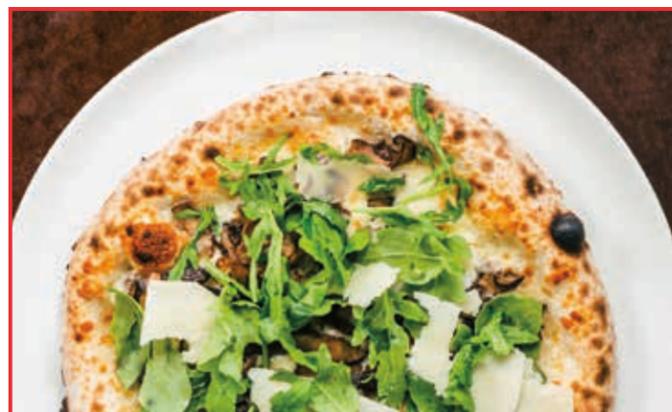


Finally, being in Singletree has made it easier for the Holmeses to pursue their most rewarding volunteer activity: serving on the Board of Directors for the Round-Up River Ranch. The have known Ruth Johnson, President and CEO, since their early days of private practice and are proud to work with her to further the ends of that organization. They are especially pleased that the Ranch was able to continue to enrich the lives of children with serious illnesses and their families by offering free virtual camp programs during this period of COVID that makes in-person camping impossible.

All of these connections, however, haven't kept this energetic couple homebound in Singletree. They recently purchased a vacation home in Tucson, AZ, and are currently working out how to best divide their time between the two locations. It's a good guess that summers will be in Singletree (duh!), and we look forward to seeing them out and about once COVID is over!



Being in Singletree also makes it easy for them to stay in close touch with their children, both of whom have inherited their parents' love of the Colorado outdoors. Matt and his wife, Elise, live in Minturn, and are the force behind Vela Apparel, which they founded in 2016 with the goal of creating comfortable and stylish clothing for people who love travel, the outdoors and art-sanship. Matt is also the CEO of Mtns.Co., the producer of those wonderful ski map jigsaw puzzles and related products that we all love. Their daughter, Molly, also found her calling through her love of the outdoors, and is currently the director of Customer Relationship Management and Marketing (CRM) at Alterra Mountain Company, developer of the IKON pass, and leads their strategic planning for multi-channel CRM initiatives.



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11 Shotgun Circle E	Duplex	3	4	2,105	Partially	\$935,000	\$444	2	--	--	--
31 Shotgun Circle A	Duplex	3	3	2,126	Unfurnished	\$948,000	\$446	101	--	--	--
20 June Creek Road A	Duplex	5	5	2,662	Unfurnished	\$1,050,000	\$394	65	--	--	--
<b>50 Singletree Road</b>	<b>Duplex</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2,267</b>	<b>Partially</b>	<b>\$1,095,000</b>	<b>\$483</b>	<b>0</b>	--	--	--
1671 Winslow Road	Single Family	4	5	3,740	Unfurnished	\$1,100,000	\$294	1114	--	--	--
1581 Winslow Road A	Duplex	4	4	2,544	Unfurnished	\$1,350,000	\$531	4	--	--	--
<b>745 Charolais Circle</b>	<b>Single Family</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3,955</b>	<b>Partially</b>	<b>\$1,475,000</b>	<b>\$373</b>	<b>48</b>	--	--	--
461 Winslow Road	Single Family	4	4	3,133	Unfurnished	\$1,685,000	\$538	6	--	--	--
211 Hackamore Road	Single Family	5	6	4,221	Unfurnished	\$1,695,000	\$402	230	--	--	--
<b>1471 Winslow Road</b>	<b>Single Family</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4,327</b>	<b>Unfurnished</b>	<b>\$1,889,000</b>	<b>\$437</b>	<b>44</b>	--	--	--
31 Longhorn Road	Single Family	6	5	4,208	Partially	\$2,195,000	\$522	19	--	--	--
123 Howard Drive	Single Family	4	5	3,063	Partially	\$2,375,000	\$775	15	--	--	--
<b>11 Buckboard Road</b>	<b>Single Family</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4,069</b>	<b>Unfurnished</b>	<b>\$2,795,000</b>	<b>\$687</b>	<b>621</b>	--	--	--
33 Latigo Circle	Single Family	5	5	6,032	Unfurnished	\$2,875,000	\$477	77	--	--	--
21 Hackamore Road W	Duplex	3	3	2,229	Unfurnished	\$890,000	\$399	1	\$870,000	\$390	9/29/20
<b>117 Charolais Circle</b>	<b>Duplex</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2,498</b>	<b>Furnished</b>	<b>\$915,000</b>	<b>\$366</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>\$880,000</b>	<b>\$352</b>	<b>10/2/20</b>
141 Corral Road East	Duplex	6	6	4,887	Unfurnished	\$975,000	\$200	18	\$925,000	\$189	10/1/20
<b>120 Charolais Circle B</b>	<b>Duplex</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2,865</b>	<b>Unfurnished</b>	<b>\$1,045,000</b>	<b>\$365</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>\$1,045,000</b>	<b>\$365</b>	<b>9/21/20</b>
1071 June Creek Road	Single Family	4	5	3,103	Unfurnished	\$1,200,000	\$387	0	\$1,200,000	\$387	10/5/20
451 Rawhide Road	Single Family	4	4	3,533	Unfurnished	\$1,595,000	\$451	4	\$1,595,000	\$451	9/18/20
351 Longhorn Road	Single Family	3	3	3,898	Unfurnished	\$1,775,000	\$455	9	\$1,599,000	\$410	9/29/20
161 Pinto Drive B	Duplex	5	6	3,569	Unfurnished	\$1,600,000	\$448	4	\$1,600,000	\$448	10/5/20
11 Foal Circle	Single Family	5	6	4,620	Furnished	\$2,245,000	\$486	39	\$2,195,000	\$475	9/10/20
11 Appaloosa Drive	Single Family	4	5	4,353	Unfurnished	\$3,475,000	\$798	195	\$3,375,000	\$775	9/30/20

\*\*8.14.20 - 9.15.20 \*Properties bolded were listed or sold by Happy Power.



Dan and Pam with daughters (L to R) Alden, Crosby, and Nell

# Dan Pennington leads VAIL HEALTH FOUNDATION'S FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN FOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH in the Eagle River Valley

Our growing Singletree community is full of compassionate residents who devote time and energy to making a difference. Dan Pennington, Vail Health Chief of External Affairs and Vail Health Foundation President, is among the many people in our neighborhood dedicated to improving the health and wellness of the community.

After 10 years in Minnesota as Mayo Clinic's assistant chair of development and campaign director for its first-ever comprehensive campaign, Dan moved to Singletree five years ago to take on the role of President of Vail Health Foundation. The year-round sunny skies in Colorado made all the difference for Dan, his wife, Pam, and their three daughters. While Minnesota will always be home, it is hard to beat the Vail Valley and everything it has to offer to residents and visitors.

Dan finds helping benefactors make a match with what they're most passionate about to be the most rewarding part of his job. "There is a certain joy in helping someone find a meaningful way to help someone else," he says. In his role, Dan, along with his

team of professional fundraisers, are spearheading *It Takes A Valley: Transforming Behavioral Health*, in collaboration with Eagle Valley Behavioral Health (EVBH).

Last year, EVBH and the foundation launched a \$100 million fundraising campaign to transform the Eagle River Valley's behavioral health system. The campaign raises funds to support and expand the efforts of dozens of partners, including local nonprofit SpeakUp ReachOut.

SpeakUp ReachOut's mission is to prevent suicide in Eagle County through training, awareness, and hope. They accomplish this by providing services that include prevention/awareness education, community connection events, and suicide loss support. One of their major goals is to train 40,000 people in the Eagle River Valley



SUICIDE WARNING SIGNS		
MOOD	BEHAVIOR	TALK
Depression	Increased use of drugs or alcohol	About being a burden to others
Loss of interest	Withdrawing from activities	About experiencing unbearable pain
Irritability	Isolating from friends and family	About killing themselves
Rage	Sleeping too little or too much	About feeling trapped
Anxiety	Giving away prized possessions	About having no reason to live
Humiliation	Acting recklessly	
	Displaying aggression	
	Visiting or calling people to say goodbye	
	Searching online for materials or means to kill themselves	

SOURCE: American Foundation for Suicide Prevention



SURO provides QPR training for the Vail Valley Salvation Army

(75% of the community) in suicide outreach and prevention. With outreach and prevention being a main focus for the campaign, the partnership between the two organizations was a perfect fit.

Thus far, the support from Vail Health Foundation and EVBH has helped SpeakUp ReachOut reach many other milestones, such as:

- Expanded SpeakUp ReachOut staff to four full-time employees.
- Trained 1,500 students in suicide awareness during the 2019/20 school year.
- Trained 650 adults in outreach training programs and presented awareness talks to an additional 350 (July 2019 - July 2020).
- Launched the COVID Coping Card initiative as a proactive way to support community members who may not seek behavioral health services.
- In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, SpeakUp ReachOut transitioned the Mental Health First Aid, Working Minds, and Question, Persuade, and Refer (QPR) programs from in-person to virtual.

SpeakUp ReachOut offers these programs and trainings free of charge to individuals and organizations throughout the community.

Beyond his leadership role in the *It Takes A Valley* campaign, Dan has also expanded his knowledge in suicide prevention and awareness. Dan, Pam, and their daughter, Alden, now a senior at Battle Mountain High School, have all completed SpeakUp ReachOut's QPR training, which teaches

individuals how to recognize and respond positively to suicide warning signs and behaviors.

"I found SpeakUp ReachOut's QPR training to be very enlightening," says Dan. "Some of the things you think about suicide and depression are NOT true. Instead, there are some really easy and tangible actions each of us can do to help prevent suicide."

Research shows that for every person trained in suicide prevention, six lives are impacted.

### DID YOU KNOW?

- Most people considering suicide communicate their intent sometime during the week preceding their attempt and do not keep their plans a secret.
- Asking someone directly about suicidal intent lowers anxiety, opens up communication, lowers the risk of an impulsive act, and does not plant the idea of suicide in someone's head.
- If people in a crisis get the help that they need, they will probably never experience a suicidal crisis again, which shows that suicide is preventable.
- Suicide prevention is everyone's business and anyone can help prevent the tragedy of suicide, not just the "experts."

"We all have been touched by the behavioral health crisis. I encourage everyone to sign up for SpeakUp ReachOut's suicide awareness training," Dan adds.

The ongoing support from the *It Takes A Valley* campaign will allow the organization to offer more training opportunities, more community events for speakers to share their personal stories, as well as improved and expanded outreach and marketing.

SpeakUp ReachOut is looking forward to achieving even more milestones in the future. "Thanks to our partnership with Vail Health Foundation and EVBH, SpeakUp ReachOut is creating a community of gatekeepers in the Eagle River Valley," says Erin Ivie, Executive Director of SpeakUp ReachOut.

Outside of his role at the foundation, Dan enjoys spending quality time with his family. They like baking—and the reward of eating what they make—hiking, skiing, and playing frisbee with their dog, Juniper (the Griff).

To learn more about Vail Health Foundation's *It Takes A Valley* campaign: visit [ItTakesAValley.org](http://ItTakesAValley.org). To sign up for SpeakUp ReachOut's suicide prevention training: go to [speaku-preachout.org/training-sessions](http://speaku-preachout.org/training-sessions).



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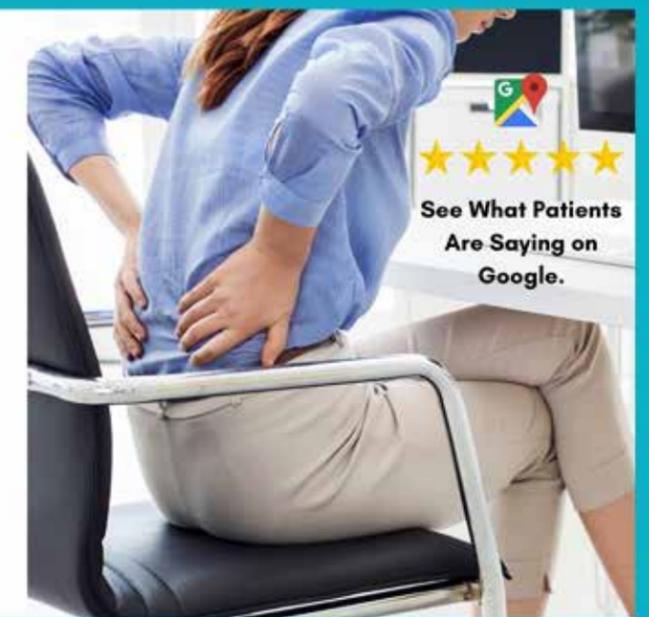


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## precious pets

Contributed by **Beau and Buddy** and **Bonnie Sims**, Singletree pet and residents



# SIR BEAU SIMS OF SINGLETREE MANOR'S Puppy Story

Sir Beau Sims of Singletree Manor was born on July 6, 2020, in Grand Junction, CO, to Ed Knight's family which included his dam, Princess Kona of Palisades, and his sire, Rocky Mountain True Blue, all Golden Retrievers. Beau has a sister, Coco Gotthelf, living in Lake Creek, and two brothers living in Minturn and Beaver Creek. One of Beau's other brothers, Ashley, lives in Phoenix with the Sims' son, James. In Beau's first week, he had

two play dates with his sister, Coco, in Singletree, and Remy Jensen, an English Cream Golden Retriever, in Vail.

At 8 weeks old, Beau moved to Buddy and Bonnie Sims' Singletree home to be pampered by two grandparents who were soon to be trained by Beau. Traveling from a retriever litter of three girls and eight boys, he learned that he was the center



Buddy and Beau with son James and Beau's brother Ashley



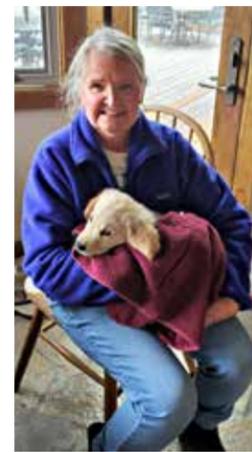
All fun and games for Beau and Dutch



Buddy and Beau with Bonnie and sister Coco



Play date with Remy



Mom's lap is the best place to be.



Beau's first snow



Marshall Gordon and the "cutest puppy" ever



At home with Mom and Dad



All worn out

of attention in the neighborhood and adores Gaia Bosco. He has also attended two deck happy-hour parties and learned to beg snacks with a royal flavor. His neighbor, Milly, a Bernedoodle puppy, visits daily.

His first mini-vacation was to Nova Guides at Camp Hale where he met Dutch and Beth Pittel, both English Cream Golden Retrievers. They were much larger dogs but played hard until they were escorted to a hamburger luncheon.

Beau weighed in at 12 pounds when arriving at the Sims', but Dr. Ron Gruber, his veterinarian, says he is already 22 pounds on his way to a final estimated weight of 70 pounds. Beau has caught on fast, and can climb up and down stairs, walk with the best of them, sleep his days away, and will bark and whine when he is not happy with his parents. Beau enjoys running through the lawn sprinkler and one day, he thought he had discovered an indoor sprinkler when he tried to take a shower with Bonnie.

In the words of Marshall Gordon, Singletree resident, "Beau is the cutest puppy and sure gets to meet new people easily." Beau can't wait until he is grown up so he can make the cover of the Singletree magazine.



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# NATALIA KAVANAUGH EXPLORES THE PUZZLES About the Biggest Country

**My husband (Mike, an American), when he wants to surprise his new acquaintances, often asks them, “Where do you think my wife is from? Hint: Her country is the largest country in the world.” I hope you guessed from where I come? I am from Russia (my country occupies one-eighth of the earth’s land, composing one half of Europe and one third of Asia). I am delighted to share with you what is unusual in my country, why it is interesting for tourists, and what can amaze you in its vastness and complexities of cultures.**

## STEREOTYPES

There are many stereotypes about Russia and a huge number of myths invented over a millennium about a country less accessed by many western societies.

For example, that bears often roam the streets of cities. Believe me, in Russia it is unrealistic to see representatives of wildlife in cities and villages in the European part – maybe in a distant Siberian village, in the taiga or in Kamchatka (this is the Far East). On the contrary, here in Colorado, I came face to face with a bear in my backyard twice this September.

Many Americans sincerely believe that Russia is a bleak, cold country. The length of the Russian Federation from south to north is about 2,450 miles, from west to east over 6,200 miles. Russia has 11 time zones, the most in the world. Therefore, it covers several climatic zones from arctic to subtropical. I lived in the south of Russia, near the Black Sea, where the Winter Olympics in Sochi 2014 took place. A city where palm trees actually grow! This region is warm even in the winter. When the Americans ask me, “Are you from Russia? It’s probably so cold there.” I answer, “Where I lived, snow is very rare in winter. Colorado is much colder!”

Yes, there are many customs and traditions that are different between America and Russia, but you will be pleasantly surprised and amazed if you come to Russia. You should start your acquaintance with this amazing country visiting Moscow and

St. Petersburg. One cultural difference is in that Russians smile less perhaps than Americans with strangers on the street. Their faces seem serious and possibly even unfriendly. If for Americans and Europeans a smile can be both a sign of politeness or sincere affection, then for Russians it is primarily a sign of a positive, sincere attitude towards a person.



In the Russian culture, smiling is to express friendliness to be mostly known people. If you smile at strangers, you may be thought to be either flirting or have a headache. LOL. But in fact, Russians are open, cheerful and friendly; they can joke. It’s just that Russian culture is considered impolite to express emotions in front of strangers, so they smile at those they know and trust, showing by this their sincere affection.

My husband lived in Japan and said their culture is similar to Russia in this aspect about smiling and talking to strangers. My husband is rather open and loves to converse with complete strangers (bless him!). The younger generation in Russia are amused with his smiles and attempts at Russian, albeit broken Russian. However, he gets perplexed looks from the older Russians in particular older ladies on the Metro. Oh boy. I just gently and firmly hold his hand and upper arm.

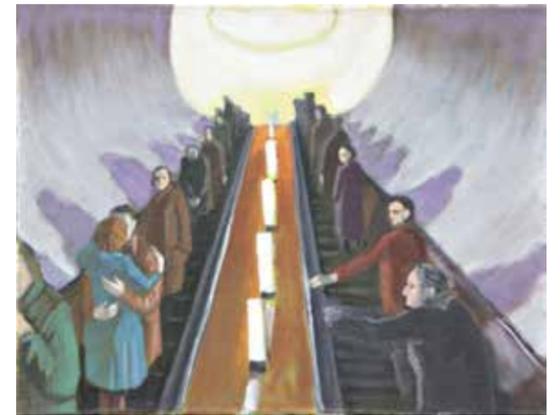
I have been all over western Russia with my American husband, and he says he has always been happy with our travels all over Russia. Many tourists are concerned about safety on Russian streets, perhaps from Hollywood movies about Russians, and then a few terrorist attacks in the subway in early 2000. It is quite important to the Russian government that people, and especially tourists, are and feel safe in the streets and public places, so you will see many police officers and armed patrolmen who are responsible for the safety of citizens. A truly incredible opportunity is to travel Russia by train. It is my husband’s favorite that is travel by rail: trains, trams and subways. He says it’s his wanderlust watching the countryside go by and watching so many different cultures on board. Yes, and he’s always the chitty-chatty one on board.

## MOSCOW

Moscow is the capital of Russia. The first mention of Moscow in ancient chronicles dates back to 1147. Many architectural monuments have been preserved to this day, despite the fact that 80% of the buildings burned down in 1812 during the war with the French emperor Napoleon. In the historical center, architectural monuments coexist with modern skyscrapers, and Soviet-era panel five-story buildings can stand next to the sparkling glass and steel business centers.

The most famous place in Moscow, of course, is Red Square. When my husband first saw this place, he was surprised by the size of the Kremlin and the scale of the square. It is no coincidence that the Kremlin is considered the world’s largest medieval

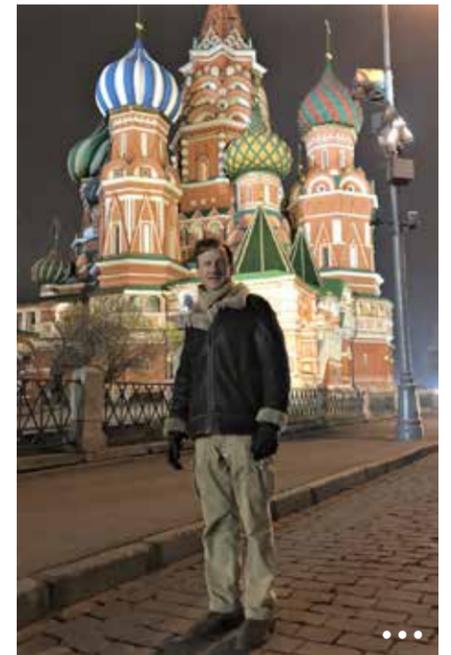
fortress. Spasskaya Tower, the largest tower of the Moscow Kremlin, overlooks Red Square and is visible from all sides. Its height is 71 meters. It was built in 1491. By the way, my husband proposed to me to marry him on Red Square. It was November 7, 2017, in the evening. (Centenary of the October Revolution of 1917.) The large clock on the Spasskaya Tower, called the Chimes, struck six times.



Also on the Square there is St. Basil’s Cathedral. The unusual architecture of this temple is striking in its uniqueness. This is not even one temple, but 11 churches united into a single complex. Legend has it that Ivan the Terrible blinded Postnik Yakovlev (the architect) after the construction of the temple, so that he would never build anything like it.

When my husband came to visit me in Moscow, the first thing I did was take him to the historical places of Moscow, we visited the Moscow Philharmonic, historical museums, the Tretyakovsky Art Gallery. We also walked in the parks of the capital. There are about 300 parks of various formats in Moscow; these are city parks of culture and recreation, large squares, gardens, estates and reserves. In many territories there are ancient architectural ensembles, which have been turned into museum objects. The largest of them: “Tsaritsyno,” “Kuskovo,” “Kolomenskoye.”

In Moscow we moved by Metro. This is a very common form of transport. Each station is unusual in its design. Some stations have preserved the beauty and grandeur of the Soviet era: mosaic paintings on the walls, heavy gilded chandeliers, sculptures and bas-reliefs. The detailed craftsmanship of the communist



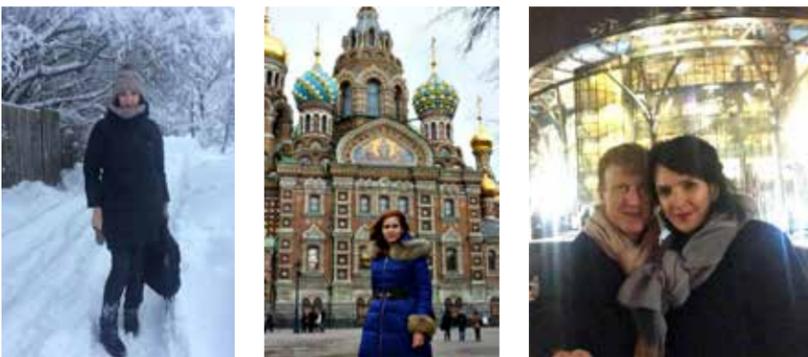
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peasant workers in the 1920, '30s and '40s can still be seen in all its splendor today. Everything is color-coded and marked for direction on the Metro. Once we even got lost in the subway, so my husband, having experience of service in Naval Aviation, found the right path by signs and designations (in English too).

Relatively recently, Moscow has its own "downtown" - by analogy with American and European cities. It is called Moscow City and is an international business center. Modern glass skyscrapers are built using modern technologies. They house business offices and restaurants. Once a friend of mine recommended to us an inexpensive good restaurant on the 58th floor. When my husband and I arrived at the place, I forgot the floor number. At the entrance, the concierge suggested that we need a restaurant on the 64th floor. We took the elevator.

When I got to the right floor, I turned to the administrator to find a reservation in my name. She was very surprised, apologized that my name was not on the list, but kindly offered a table for two with a beautiful view. And then I realized that the floor was not the same. It was a very expensive restaurant. But we have not regretted being there! The view from the window was amazing!

*Natalia continues to share her insights and experiences in Russia with us in the February issue of INSIDE Singletree. We look forward to learning more about this fascinating country. Thank you, Natalia, for sharing your personal perspectives on your native country!*



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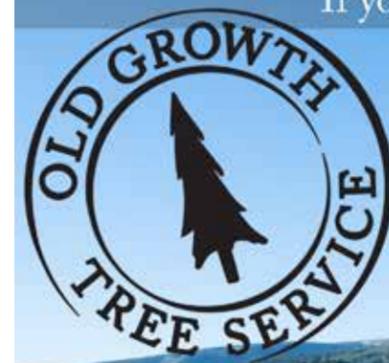
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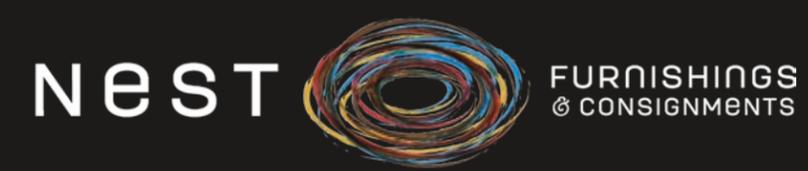
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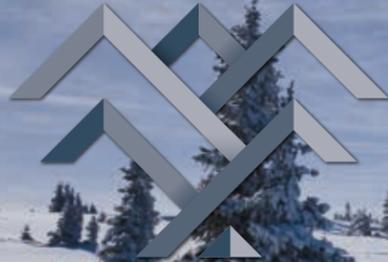


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**Meredith Bizer Offers Insight for Couples**

With the holidays upon us and a heightened awareness of the mental-health challenges that frequently come with the season, not to mention the culmination of the “unique” circumstances experienced in 2020, we asked our *INSIDE Singletree* sponsor, Meredith Bizer, to offer some insight as to the issues couples face on a day-to-day basis, which are often exacerbated during this time of year.

If you are in a long-term committed relationship, then you likely have intimate knowledge of why we say “relationships are hard.” Couples in Eagle County, including Singletree, have shared with me that *communication* is their number-one challenge ... she/he is controlling and demanding; she/he doesn’t listen; we both think we’re right; she/he goes ballistic whenever I make a mistake; when I make a mistake she/he punishes me; she/he shuts down and withdraws. Any of these statements sound familiar in your relationship dynamic? These statements reflect known unhelpful patterns of conflict that I work with couples to identify, address, and revise into helpful ways to approach and discuss points of disagreement and conflict.

Here is a classic example of a long-standing unhelpful pattern of conflict that an anonymous married couple recently shared with me (I’ll call them Jane and John for purposes of this article):

Jane complains that John drives too fast. “John is aggressive, he tailgates, and honks his horn when he thinks someone is

going too slowly. It’s embarrassing, and I do not feel safe riding in the car with him.” I check in with John on Jane’s statement. John says, “We’re from New York. I might drive aggressively, but it’s not dangerous. I know what I’m doing, and I haven’t gotten in any accidents.” The conversation continues. Jane reminds John of his several speeding tickets; John reminds Jane that he has gotten far fewer since he got the new radar detector. This highly educated couple is applying the scientific method to their point of disagreement – they are both laying out their pieces of evidence,

trying to convince the other that they are right. Unfortunately, neither are working toward a solution.

Communication challenges can be long-standing, or they can be new, often surfacing in times of increased stress. Life transitions, be it voluntary, involuntary, reflective of life stages, or artificially imposed, can cause just the right amount of increased stress to wreak havoc on an otherwise easy-going relationship.

One of the most notable trends in our community right now is transition and change. Reflected in real-estate sales alone, people are moving to different parts of the Valley, some are leaving all together, and many are moving in to give mountain living a try. We also see significant change in how we do school, how we work, how we socialize, and we’re now considering changing how we do the holidays this year.

I received permission from my partner to share the following personal example of how increased stress can cause unhelpful approaches to conflict. My partner’s degree of “busyness” increased dramatically when COVID began. He met that busyness with tunnel vision to the point that he was sometimes late or forgetful of our plans. I came across as demanding when I called it to his attention, and he tended to shut down and withdraw in response. Once we identified the pattern, we started working on more helpful strategies ... it’s a work in process. Even for counselors!

If you and your partner are experiencing well-established or new communication challenges, please contact me at **970-306-6507** or [Meredith.bizer@gmail.com](mailto:Meredith.bizer@gmail.com) to gain some essential tools to engage in disagreements for a more productive outcome.



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## An Artful Soiree AT THE RAITMAN ART GALLERIES IN VAIL

A festive evening of art, socializing, light fare and beverages was shared by Singletree residents at the Raitman Art Galleries on a quintessential fall evening in the valley. With the Gallery offering such a wide selection of art to satisfy a range of individual tastes, each resident chose their “favorite” for a photo. Many thanks to Mike, Dena, Ross, Brian and Liz Raitman for their gracious hospitality!

Soiree favorites: Clockwise: (1) The Raitman family “at home” at the Vail Raitman Art Galleries; (2) Ingrid and Craig holding paws with “Doodle in Burgundy VW Red Door” by DD LaRue; (3) Greg and Carolyn with “Guardian’s Promise” by Cynthia Duff; (4) Noemi and Kristof Kosmowski with Kristof’s “Holy Cross Mountain”; (5) Marie and Nicole with “Ascension” by Christopher Owen Nelson; (6) Allie and Greg with Fekadu Mekasha’s “Midnight Rider”; and (7) Jamie and Tom standing by Jared and Nicole Davis’ “Riverway Series – Upper CO River”



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