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**ICE DAM**  
An accumulation of ice that forms on the roof edge during the thawing and re-freezing of snow on the overhang.



**JOINT TENANCY**  
A legal term for when two or more people own equal shares of the same piece of property.



**LISTING PRICE**  
A list price is the price of a home for sale set by the seller and listing agent.



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**NOTE:** When community events take place, photographers may be present to take photos for that event, and they may be used in the publication.

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

# Happy Holidays, Singletree Residents!

As the season to celebrate family draws near, there is no better time to meet a family that represents three generations filled with love in Singletree. The Leach and Shapiro families are a quintessential model for overcoming the curveballs in life; their journey has led Jody and David Leach and LuAnn and Ken Shapiro to truly enjoy a family united with children and grandchildren today.

Fifty years ago, Title IX was signed into law with 37 words that changed everything. Over the course of five decades, women athletes have come to enjoy a level of equality that was unknown prior to the landmark legislation. But it did not change overnight. In a tribute to Title IX, several Singletree residents share with us the impact the momentous law has had on their lives during their academic lives and beyond.

The female athletes of today hardly know of a world without Title IX. They are equally as passionate about their sports as were their predecessors on the field or on the court. In this issue, we get to know this season's Singletree

high school volleyball players who enthusiastically embrace competitiveness and team camaraderie.

We visit the inaugural Children's Business Fair created and hosted in Edwards by Cassie and Zak Boca. Stephanie Merritt Johnson shares the success of B the Difference, a nonprofit foundation she and her sister, Jessica, created to honor the memory of her brother, Brandon, and to raise awareness and funds to support families battling Neurofibromatosis. And we meet Quill, an eager young German Shorthaired Pointer always in pursuit of ducks, birds, voles ... and frisbees!



May your holidays sparkle with joy and laughter!

*Holly Proctor*

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## DECEMBER CONTRIBUTORS

A special "thank you" to the Singletree volleyball players who participated in this issue of *Stroll Singletree!*

Your personal Singletree publication is **BY YOU** and **FOR YOU**. It is not possible without **YOUR** stories and photos! Email [holly.proctor@n2co.com](mailto:holly.proctor@n2co.com) to contribute to your neighborhood magazine.



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Edwards Plaza was established in 1973 by long-time locals Fritz and Cecilia Schmidt, who are still the proud proprietors to this day. Notable not only as Edwards' first commercial plaza but also home to many long-term Vail Valley establishments such as Fiesta's, Marko's Pizza, Alpine Bank, as well as many others! With several additions and

changes to the original structure over the years, Edwards Plaza has been home to many privately owned and successful local businesses and continues to do so. With the addition of another restaurant owned by locals opening in early December, the Schmidt family is excited to be part of the positive and continuing growth of the Edwards and surrounding communities, as they have since the beginning! Swing by 57 Edwards Access Road and find out what's happening at Edwards Plaza!



### GOLDEN TAILS DOG WALKING

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Kathy Perez is the powerhouse behind Golden Tails Dog Walking. She has made it her life's mission to

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For additional information or to contact Kathy, please visit [goldentailsdogwalking.com](http://goldentailsdogwalking.com) or call 786-537-5869

If you have worked with a professional and reliable business that you would recommend to your Singletree neighbors, please email your referrals to [holly.proctor@n2co.com](mailto:holly.proctor@n2co.com). We would love to introduce your favorite businesses to other residents in your community!

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# Love

## MAKES EVERYTHING BETTER

My name is Jody Leach, and I am a retired United Air Lines flight attendant with over 34 years of “flying the friendly skies.” This is the story of how the Leach and Shapiro families united to form one harmonious extended family — overcoming life’s curveballs to join together to raise Jen, Josh, and Jeremy and to welcome our grandchildren into our loving family.

For me, the story starts when UAL furloughed about one-third of its workforce. In 1981, then-President Reagan had fired over 11,000 striking air traffic controllers who ignored his return-to-work order, resulting

in the need for a drastic reduction in commercial flights. Not being one to miss an opportunity to travel and with free time available, I took advantage of my flight benefits. After a trip abroad and a few island stops, I made my first trip to Vail to visit a longtime friend from my home state of Oregon.

“This is truly a fairyland!” I thought as I arrived in December during one of the heaviest snow years recorded; the town was decked out in twinkling lights and mesmerizing. After a magical week with my old friend and making new friendships, I returned home. Upon arriving, I had a phone call asking me to

work for Vail Associates for the winter season, which I promptly did. As fate would have it, I met my future husband six months later, the day before I left for Oregon to work until my furlough ended.

I first met David in June of 1982 when a mutual friend, Cindy Steitz, had me help plant flowers with her at what was once, Crossroads, now Solaris. Our next meeting would come a year later while I was visiting Cindy on my way to Denver, my new base with UAL. After the third meeting in November of 1984, we were together forever. Come October 1985, we were married and honeymooning in Maui. We had a

beautiful home in Vail at the very end of Buffehr Creek Road that overlooked the ski slopes and the Gore Range for 19 years before moving to Singletree. It is hard to believe we have now lived here on Pinto Drive for 17 years and have loved every minute of it.

But let me take a step back and start at the beginning of the story that ultimately led to the happy family union we enjoy today.

David Leach owned and operated Gore Valley Landscaping and Maintenance, Inc. for 30 years. He specialized in the original landscaping of many top resorts, lodges and homes in Vail, Beaver Creek, Eagle, and Edwards, including Singletree. He has always had a passion for racing and exotic cars. After selling his landscaping business, he has



spent the past 25 years as a pro driver/instructor for many domestic and European car manufacturers, including BMW, Audi, Lamborghini, Ferrari, and Aston Martin, and he is currently driving for Porsche.

David married LuAnn Porter in 1977. LuAnn was born in Cherry Creek, CO. David was born and raised in Michigan. Shortly after their marriage,

the adventurous couple moved to Vail. They bought a house then under construction on beautiful Bellyache Ridge. The home and surrounding vistas were breathtaking. However, life was challenging. The location was remote, the road was gravel, and often they had no power, or the water pipes were frozen. While David was landscaping in summer and plowing snow in the winter,



and it served us well during those challenging teenage years! Jen and Josh may not have realized it at the time but having four loving parents looking after their best interest was a Godsend.

As parents themselves now, they do realize that now as they raise their own families. With children in tow, we have shared houseboats on Lake Powell, weeks in Hawaii, and Easter break hockey tournaments, as well as school events, birthdays and graduations. Over the course of time, we, the adults, discovered we actually enjoyed each other's company, joining the same clubs, golfing together and playing cards sans children.

Jennifer, Kyle and Kameron are second and third-generation Singletree residents. Jen graduated with a degree in biology from CU Boulder and pursued marine biology. She first interned at the Waikoloa Hilton in Hawaii, working with dolphins. This led to a position in Antiqua, followed by the Mote Marine Research Lab, working mainly with manatees. After a stint at Six Flags Discovery Kingdom working not only with dolphins but also orcas, known as killer whales, she landed her then-dream job at Sea World San Diego. That is where she met and married Kyle Pletcher, who was at the time a border patrol agent.



LuAnn was an employee of Vail National Bank. In 1980, they brought Jennifer Brooke into the world, and Joshua David followed in 1981.

Ken Shapiro moved to Vail in the summer of 1973. He worked in real estate development in the Vail Valley from 1976-2005. He was responsible for building numerous residential and commercial RE projects in Vail, Avon, Beaver Creek, Edwards, and Eagle. LuAnn and Ken met through close friends in 1981 at Shadows, the disco dance bar of early Vail. They were married in 1983, and their "happily ever after" began. Besides working with her husband as an interior decorator/designer, LuAnn owned H.W. Antiques in Avon, a successful Christian book and antiques store.

Ken and LuAnn were blessed beyond measure, after nearly eight years of marriage, to adopt their precious Jeremy. Friends would often comment on how much Jeremy looked and acted like Ken. Although Jeremy was raised in the Vail Valley, he and his beautiful wife Rachel, along with their lovely 2-½-year-old Tessa, choose to live in San Diego, where the climate is more

temperate. Jeremy works in the health care field, as does Rachel as an RN shift manager at Kaiser Permanente. We are Uncle David and Aunt Jody to them and love that they have always considered us family, as we do them.

The early years of sharing children were spent dividing holidays and weekends. So many families are familiar with this arrangement. Spring, winter, and summer breaks usually brought us all to the Hawaiian Islands. There we would exchange the children to enjoy our individual family time together. When we found ourselves staying at the same resorts, lounging poolside and playing in the surf, our social lives started meshing. Evening meals and afternoon adventures turned into group family events.

As Jen and Josh grew up, there were soccer games, Vail Mountain School functions, and hockey tournaments. Our priority was to create a happy and loving environment for our children, so we attended all these functions amicably. With our similar backgrounds of faith and the ability to compromise, every year strengthened our family commitment. Teamwork was our motto,

After our adorable grandson, Kameron David, was born January 2015, Jen decided that working with killer whales may be a bit too dangerous. She took an alternate career path working with the big cats at San Diego Wildlife Safari Park. Lions, tigers and cheetahs! Oh, my! This brought on another life-changing career move bringing the family home to Singletree. Jen was very active in the International Marine Animal Trainer's Association, IMATA, and held a number of officer positions. Organizing and coordinating annual conferences afforded her the experience that led to her current profession. She is the owner and creative director of Gemini Event Planning, which has been a very successful endeavor for her and is another story in itself.

Kyle has fit wonderfully into the family and has been a grand asset to the valley. He was rapidly hired by the Vail Police Department, graduating top of his class from the Police Academy. Kyle excels in acquiring additional training and qualifications, including being on the SWAT team. Vail Mountain School is happy to have him as their school resource officer, part of the VPD, and he is dearly loved by students and parents alike.

Kameron, now nearly 8 years old, is our little superstar. Grandparents, of course, have bragging rights, and he has four here in Singletree that think he is absolutely amazing. We are

astounded at his energy, compassion and athleticism. He is on a swim team, he surfs, and he snorkels and free dives with sea turtles. He is amazing to watch playing hockey and soccer. Obviously, we are so very proud of him.

Josh's experiences after graduating from DU in Denver with a BS in biology and phycology were equally adventuresome. He continued with a study started at DU dealing with developmental cognitive neuroscience at the rehabilitation center in Children's Hospital Denver. After an unfortunate accident about a year into this position, he had to relinquish that post to focus on his own recovery for a year and a half. His recovery was spent between the Shapiro house on Howard Drive and our home here on Pinto Drive.

Thanks to an amazing series of miracles, including Good Samaritans, the fantastic team of professionals at Steadman Hawkins and the grace of God, Josh recovered well. For someone who had his leg 80% severed at the knee and then reattached, he can still mountain bike, snowboard and run with the best of them. That's not to say he doesn't pay for it later; Aleve and ice are his friends. Pursuing other employment opportunities, Josh made his way to California. He spent a period of time working at Six Flags Discovery Kingdom at the same time as his sister. I recall an absolutely thrilling and terrifying stunt show involving an extremely high dive off the mast of a pirate ship!



He moved on to San Diego, where he worked with a company that did independent contracting for the Naval Marine Mammal Program, training wild dolphins and sea lions. He logged thousands of dives. While living on his boat at the San Diego Marina, he became reacquainted with his future wife, Erin. The pair were both members of IMATA and had met at previous conferences. Following a training position working with various marine mammals, primarily dolphins, Erin spent 15 years in the field, nine of which at the Mirage Dolphin Habitat in Las Vegas, NV, as supervisor of animal training. Their developing relationship and subsequent nuptials brought Josh to Las Vegas.

Josh and his father, David, have a joint attraction to speed in the form of racing cars. The two had previously completed a year of competitive racing and did quite well in the series. In addition to club racing and ice driving, this looked pretty good on a resume, and Josh landed a job as lead race instructor for the country's largest driving school in Las Vegas.

Now that Josh and Erin are settled in and thinking of starting a family of their own, they too decided to come home to the valley to raise their children. They had plenty of encouragement from the rest of us! The couple soon found employment with Vail Resorts and the Four Seasons for Josh and Erin the Westin in sales. Josh now holds a position with Bold Property Management Solutions.

It wasn't long before they welcomed the addition of Jackson David, now 3 ½ years old, our unbelievably sweet and entertaining grandson. He definitely takes after both of his parents in that he

is smart and inquisitive like his mother and has that adventurous attraction to wheels like his father. He knows which keys start every car, could shift gears at two, and some of his first words were,

"Papa's Porsche," "Grandma Jody's Audi," and "Nissan GTR." Jackson's love of wheels extends to mountain bikes as well as his dad loves to take him on terrifying trail rides, with Jackson enthusiastically crying, "AGAIN!"

Just six months ago, we were thrilled with the addition of Baby Q. Quinn Michelle, our beautiful baby granddaughter. We cannot wait to see how this little sprite develops; she is all smiles and giggles right now. Kudos to Erin; she is a super mom, blending her expertise with marine mammals and further studies on little humans, with Josh pitching in to help as well.

We all know life throws us curve balls when least expected. If it were not for these unforeseen events, David and I, nor Ken and LuAnn, would not have the happy unions that we do today. We are one big family unit, and everything goes better with love.

Family Heirloom Photography  
by Lisa Darren Photography Inc.



Happy holidays!

Enjoy the Beauty of the Season



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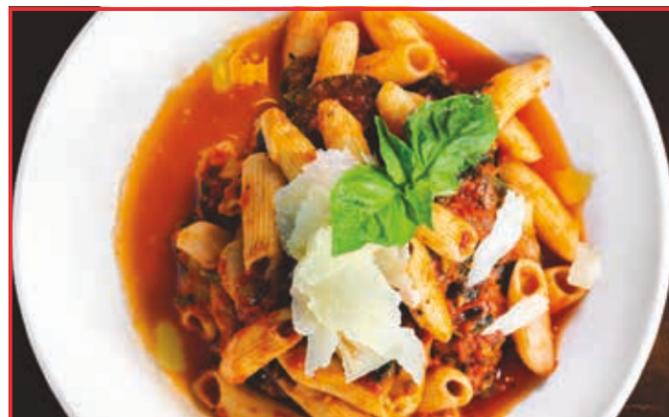
# SINGLETREE WALKS TO END ALZHEIMER'S

This was the fifth year for the Rocky Mountain Walk to End Alzheimer's, our best year ever! It was great to see so many of our Singletree friends this year supporting this important cause. We have raised over \$157,000 so far, and fundraising is open until Dec. 31. We are so fortunate to live in an area where our businesses and community organizations support us in the fight for an end to Alzheimer's and all other dementias.

The participants at the walk were able to visit with many of our sponsors who were exhibiting at the event. We had delicious food from Starbucks Avon, Costco, Ridley's and Fiestas, and sponsor ACE Hardware Gypsum went over and above serving fantastic barbecue. This would not be possible without over 40 wonderful volunteers who make the event what it is. Among our volunteers were students from Eagle Valley High School National Honor Society, who helped us at the registration areas. Additionally, we enjoyed entertainment from Mountain Harmony, Helmet Fricker, Don Watson and the Battle Mountain High School Dance Team.

There is still time! Visit [act.alz.org/rmwalk](http://act.alz.org/rmwalk) to donate.





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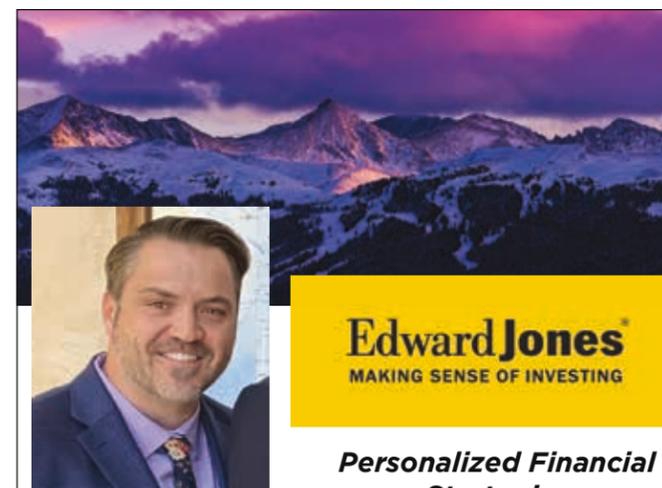


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# SINGLETREE ATHLETES CELEBRATE THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF TITLE IX

The 37 words that changed everything for women's rights

Was there really a time when women and girls didn't play sports? When scholarships and sponsorships were virtually non-existent? When the sports bra hadn't been invented, and LuLuLemon didn't exist?

On June 23, 1972, Title IX, the landmark gender equity law that banned sex discrimination in federally funded education programs, was signed into law and opened Pandora's box that ultimately changed the landscape of athletics in the US. Interestingly enough, Title IX did not include any reference to sports. That gender equality revolution required the dedication and ingenuity of countless women athletes across the country and the decades.

Singletree boasts dozens of these pioneers and trailblazers: those determined girls who kept asking 'why not?' These women were at the forefront of upending cultural attitudes and demanding the funding that separated women

and girls from their brothers in sports. Many attended college in the '60s, '70s and '80s. They've grown into accomplished women opening doors (sometimes unwittingly) for a new generation of female athletes, coaches, Olympians, athletic directors and fierce competitors on thousands of competitive playing fields.

## REMEMBERING THE '60S AND EARLY '70S: THE DAYS BEFORE TITLE IX

**Teri Lebeau** recounts, "I was fortunate to grow up in Buffalo, NY, in the '50s and '60s. Buffalo had a very well-organized sports program for both girls and boys. I participated in swimming and diving for my town, as well as volleyball, basketball and track for my grade school and high school. There were competitive citywide leagues for these sports for women. I never knew that there was a problem with women's participation in sports. I had grown up with it.

CONTRIBUTED BY TERI LEBEAU, SALLY AUSTEN, ANDREA EDDY, ALICE PLAIN, KIMMY SHIKVERG, MOLLY GRIFFIN, AND BRITNEY BROWN BRANSON, SINGLETREE RESIDENTS  
ARTICLE COMPILED BY SALLY AUSTEN



Sally Austen, just as excited about field hockey at Yale University today as she was 50 years ago!

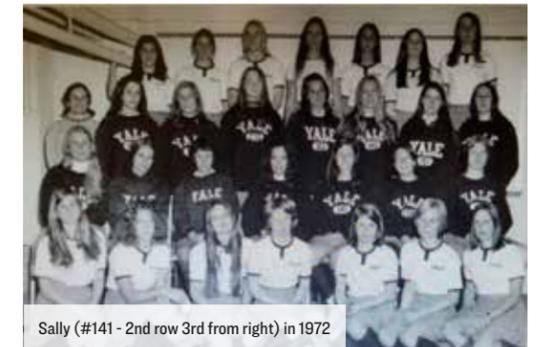
"It was a different story when I got to college. That was in 1967-1971. I went to a small school (less than 3000 students), and the only sport for women was cheerleading. That was just a foreign concept to me — not to have sports available for women. So, of course, I became a cheerleader!"

**Sally Austen** recalls that "sports facilities for women were meager when I arrived at Yale in the fall of 1970. We played field hockey in a parking lot after we removed the debris from Saturday's football game tailgaters. We begged uniforms from high school discards and even players from the opposing team to make up the II we needed for a game. We played in cut-off jeans most of the time. There was no locker room, no coach, and no trainer. We even slept on the floor in our opponents' dorm rooms at away games. Finally, after Title IX was signed into law in 1972, we became the first women's team that Yale elevated to varsity status. They gave us uniforms, a bulky sweater with a big 'Y,' and a coach.

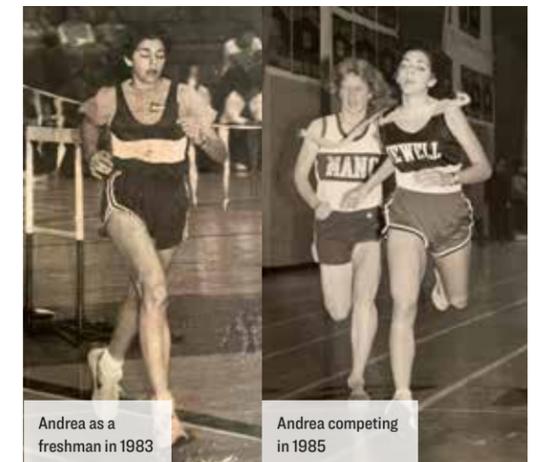
"At the time, we were grateful. How absurd. There was one sport per season — field hockey, squash, and crew: no organized club system, no intramurals. I had attended a girls' school in Columbus, Ohio, requiring us to play a LOT of sports; I competed on a citywide tennis team, showed hunter jumpers, was a lifeguard and taught swimming in the Headstart program. I had always had a coach, equipment and encouragement. I was 18 when I got to Yale and was shocked that suddenly someone thought that there was something women weren't supposed to do."



Teri (back row: 4th from left) in 1966

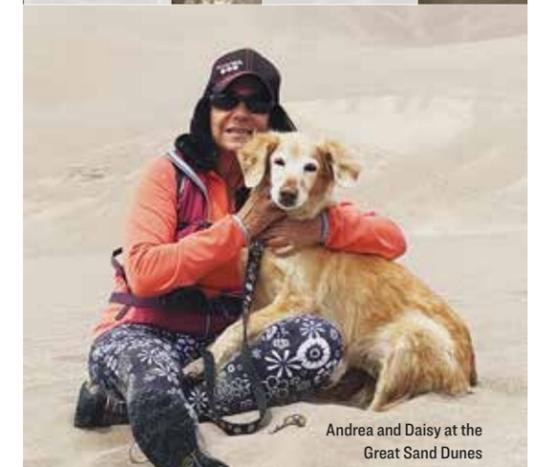


Sally (#141 - 2nd row 3rd from right) in 1972



Andrea as a freshman in 1983

Andrea competing in 1985



Andrea and Daisy at the Great Sand Dunes



Alice Plain with the Hanover College golf team in 1986



Alice (far right) with the golf team at Oklahoma State University

### A WORLD SLOW TO ACCEPT TITLE IX IN THE '80S

**Andrea Eddy** wasn't nearly as placid. Living in Kansas City, MO, she played middle and high school volleyball and track, competed on the state 4 x 400 relay team and was recognized as Athlete of the Year, but not without controversy.

"I went to a Catholic grade school that was part of the Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) in Kansas City, which was very active in sports," Andrea explains. "All sports started in the fifth grade, and boys were provided team uniforms and athletic equipment by the school, and girls had to have their parents pay for everything. After the passage of Title IX, my parents (who had three athletic girls and were never the activist types) put together a group of parents to confront the school board. They said they were going to sue under Title IX if the girls did not get uniforms and equipment as the boys did. And, because only the girls had

to wear school uniforms (and were getting sent home if the skirt was too short or if you had on bobby socks instead of knee highs), they said they would also sue if the boys were not also made to wear school uniforms. Needless to say, they got everything changed at the grade school by threatening to sue under Title IX. But, after that victory, they sent us to an all-girls high school so there we wouldn't have to fight the same battle again."

At William Jewell College in the early '80s, Andrea qualified for nationals in cross country and was the second woman inducted into the Hall of Fame, but things were not much different.

"There was only one training room for athletic injuries, getting taped, whirlpool, massage, etc., which had an all-male staff. It was extremely intimidating for a woman to go in there with football players walking around in jock straps

and men sitting in the whirlpool. We would need to get our legs rubbed out after hard workouts or in between races, yet we never wanted to go in there because the men would make comments, and we didn't want one of the guys doing our bodywork. After enough complaints about needing equal treatment, they finally hired a female trainer, and eventually, there was a separate training room for the women.

"After moving to Colorado, I traded my running shoes for hiking boots and started climbing all the 14'ers in the state and have now summited all of them. I repeat one easy one each year with Daisy; this year, I summited Mt. Elbert, the highest 14'er in Colorado at 14,439 feet."

As schools struggled to implement these new opportunities and protections, there remained major controversies. Does Title IX mean gender parity in dollars spent? Do we reduce men's sports offerings to make way for women? Do we nominate male coaches to direct women athletes? Are they really serious competitors?

Director of Golf at the Vail Golf Club **Alice Plain** was born in 1966. "I was an active young girl and played any sport I had access to. Although Title IX was passed in 1972, the effects had not trickled down to the girls in South Bend, IN, when I was in high school. We had a boys' golf team in high school. I tried out for the team — made it, and then the coach changed the rules for freshmen, so I could not play. I did not play on the team during my four years in high school. During the summer months, I continued to play golf every day with all the local boys. I played in some competitions, but not many.

"Off to College. I stayed in Indiana and went to a small school in the Southern part of the state called Hanover College. They had varsity golf, but only a men's team. Well, I tried out for the team and made it. I was selected third 'man' on the team. Not long after this took place, the coach told me the school did not have the funds to pay for a separate hotel room for me. I offered to pay for myself, and the coach said 'no.' Well, this time around, I took my fight to the president of the school to plead my case. The president of the school granted permission for me to play on the team. I will say, the men on the golf team were supportive of me playing through all of this.

"Fast forward to the summer of 1986, and I played golf with a gal from my hometown who was attending Oklahoma State University and was on the women's golf team. She made the comment that I was a strong enough player to play at an elite college level. I was surprised to hear this as I had only really played with the boys. Later,



Kimmy (lower right) with the first girls' golf team at CU in 1994



Molly at UM

Molly with daughter Evie and friends

I talked to coach Ann Pitts at Oklahoma State, and she offered me a scholarship to play on one of the top women's teams in the country. I could not believe it! So, I transferred and played for three years on the team. This experience changed my life. I played at Hanover College from 1985-1986 and Oklahoma State from 1987-1990."

For more of Alice's story, please visit <https://www.google.com/amp/s/coloradoavidgolfer.com/alice-through-the-looking-glass/amp/>

### WELCOME TO THE '90S: RECRUITING AND SCHOLARSHIPS

**Kimmy Shikverg** shared her experience at the University of Colorado. "I played golf for CU because of Title IX. They eliminated men's baseball and started all these women's sports. CU called me during my freshman year and asked me to join halfway through the year because they were starting a new team. That was in 1994, and I played for several years. I had played at Cherry Creek in high school and was part of the state-champion women's golf team for three years. Two of my high school teammates went on to play golf at the University of Arizona and the University of San Francisco.

"But gotta love Title IX! So many people were so angry they took away baseball because it was a successful sport. CU did support the girls with travel around the United States. Plus, we received some amazing Nike products.

CU professors were not as supportive. I had to get the administration involved a few times because the teachers would not allow me to make up exams when I missed them for golf. I probably heard 1000 times, “We have a women’s golf team — why?”

**Molly Vandebark Griffin** looks back on her college days and recalls, “I attended the University of Michigan from 1993-1997 on a full scholarship to play golf. When my senior high school golf season concluded in the fall, much to my surprise, letters from universities asking me to visit started arriving by mail. I had heard of Title IX but had mostly only heard the biased opinion of how men’s large sports would be negatively impacted; I hadn’t considered how the policy might affect me personally.

“I visited several schools but fell in love with the University of Michigan. I will forever be grateful to have attended such an amazing school and to have experienced it as a student athlete. The chaotic and rigorous responsibilities of a student athlete can be overwhelming but also incredibly rewarding. Those four years solidly prepared me for life and all the curveballs that come with it.

“Golf is an amazing sport of strategy, patience and perseverance. I love how the game has become popular with the younger generations. It’s a great lifelong sport and one for families of all ages to enjoy together. I also appreciate today’s much cuter clothes and the fact that push carts are now cool. See you on the links!”

#### THE LIFE-CHANGING IMPACT OF TITLE IX

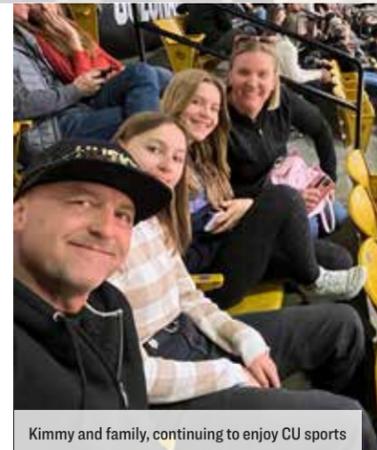
BMHS volleyball star **Britney Brown Branson** earned a full athletic scholarship for volleyball to Northeastern University in Boston, MA, and after graduation, continued her career professionally in Sweden for the 2012-2013 season. Her numerous awards include American Volleyball Coaches Association All-American, 4A high school Player of the Year, Rocky Mountain News First Team All-State, Denver Post First Team All-State, Rocky Mountain News All-Colorado Team, 2006 State Champion, Colorado State Tournament MVP and Academic All-State Honorable Mention.

Britney offers her insight into the life-changing impact afforded by her volleyball career. “Volleyball has provided lessons I can use in life, my business, relationships and raising my children. I started playing volleyball at a young age, and I have been very lucky to have such wonderful experiences at the high school, club, college, and professional levels. It provided me with a great education. Volleyball also provided me with the opportunity to travel all over the country for club and college and eventually all over the world in my professional career.

“I played on a USA Developmental Team for a summer, and we traveled and competed all over China. My professional team in Sweden won the Swedish Cup the year before I arrived, so we qualified to play in the European Cup and got to travel to Belgium. Once I completed my volleyball career, I was able to give back and get into the coaching world. Currently, I volunteer my time and help with the Battle Mountain volleyball team, put on volleyball camps and offer private lessons to athletes in the valley.”



Kimmy celebrates the 25th anniversary of women’s golf at CU



Kimmy and family, continuing to enjoy CU sports



Britney (#5) celebrating a point



Britney at home today with Avery, Olivia and Remy



Teri today with husband Joe



Sally with Olympian Rachel Dawson at the 50th anniversary celebration of Title IX at Yale University

#### WE’VE COME A LONG WAY, BABY!

Teri reflects further on the changes brought on by the landmark legislation. “Since Title IX, my small college now has many sports for women, and they are competing at high levels within their divisions and offering scholarships as well. The sports offered for women are soccer, volleyball, basketball, lacrosse, ice hockey, golf, rowing, swimming, tennis, and track.

“It’s really exciting for me to see women’s sports continuing at high levels and, in some sports, there is good solid fan participation — particularly women’s soccer and women’s basketball as these programs fuel the professional levels. In addition, women’s track, skiing, snowboarding, and ice skating have all developed strong fan support. I am concerned when I hear comments at the college level regarding cutting back on all sports, but particularly when it’s directed at women’s sports. While I recognize that women’s basketball, for example, at the college level does not have the same fan following (or revenue-generating base) as collegiate NCAA men’s basketball or football, it is ever so important to keep these athletic programs going.”

According to Kimmy, the current CU facility for girls’ golf is spectacular! “The girls that followed in my footsteps are incredible at golf. The coach has been the same for most of the team since around 1999. I was jealous and wished I had the coach that is there now. I am very proud to see how the program has grown and to witness how many kids participate in the sport today.”

Sally recounts a similar story after attending the recent 50th Anniversary of her field hockey team. “Thanks to the generosity of one alum, we have a state-of-the-art field house, field and Robotron board. They actually let me play in the alumni game which is on the top of my highlight reel. The sport, the equipment, and the preparation are all so sophisticated now. It remains a community of determination: fierce loyalties, lifelong friendships, a connection to all other athletes.”

#### WHAT DO I TELL MY DAUGHTER?

“PLAY SPORTS,” says Alice emphatically. “Being involved in any individual or team sport gives you the confidence to take on challenges you will face in your life. You will create lifelong friendships and meet amazing people. Sports will give you the confidence in the workplace to rise to the top and compete for the job you want. Being active and playing sports can be something you can do your whole life.”

“I feel sports helped form the successful woman I became — learning teamwork, competition, winning and losing. I retired as the corporate director of investor relations for Dow Chemical Company. When I started at Dow in 1971, I was the first woman in technical sales at Dow and in the entire chemical industry. We’ve come a long way!” exclaims Teri.

“I’ve noticed a heightened situational awareness among women who learned teamwork on the playing field. The ‘me’ became ‘us.’ It’s something my brothers accepted as easily as breathing,” Sally reflects. “I’ve also learned that



Alice today at Vail Golf Club

failure is part of the process. It's the next step that counts or the one after that. In sports, there is a commonality of experience among athletes that transcends a single sport, a single moment in time, even your own team. It creates a community and a lasting bond. It opens doors throughout your life to communicate with strangers who can become friends.

Kimmy's daughter currently has her eyes on playing beach volleyball. Once an emerging sport, beach volleyball has risen to more than 200 colleges and championship levels; a high school qualification in "indoor" volleyball opens the gates for a dual application for scholarships. Its meteoric rise in popularity is expected to continue at varsity, club and recreational levels.

Over 50 years, we have moved from less than 1 in 27 women playing sports to more than 1 in 5. In 1970 it was estimated that fewer than 19,000 women played on college teams, representing barely 2% of athletic budgets. Today in DI colleges, there are 333 women's soccer teams, 320 tennis teams, 312 track and field squads, 65 water polo teams, 87 lacrosse teams, 78 field hockey teams, and 192 swimming teams. Each DI basketball program gets 15 full scholarships. By comparison, only eight women ran in the NY Marathon in 1972. At the Rio Olympics in 2021, 292 U.S. women competed compared to just 90 in 1970.

In closing, Sally encourages us to take a look at ESPN's *Fifty/50* initiative. "Throughout June 2022, they presented a series of stories focused on the intersection of women, sports, culture and the fight for equality to commemorate the passing of this seminal legislation. You can find their 4-part documentary series *37 Words* on ESPN as well. I applaud these brave and outspoken pioneers (a few of whom were my friends and teammates) who didn't realize they were making history; they just wanted to play sports.

"And when you see women on competitive or recreational fields, don't hesitate to walk up and say hello. Can I play too?"



A resident of the neighborhood since 1995, Happy is your "in-house" expert. So if you are considering selling your Singletree home this year and looking to purchase within the neighborhood or anywhere else in the Valley, please call her. She would love to help!

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### Singletree Real Estate Activity

Status as of 10.14.22	Property Address	Property Type	Beds	Baths	Square Feet	Furnished	List Price	List Price/SqFt	Days On Market	Sold Price	Sold Price/SqFt	Date Sold	
Active	50 Hereford Road E	Duplex	3	3	2161	Unfurnished	\$1,450,000.00	\$670.99	30				
	110 Charolais Circle	Duplex	3	3	2120	Unfurnished	\$1,500,000.00	\$707.55	11				
	81 Lariat Road A	Duplex	4	3	2257	Unfurnished	\$1,595,000.00	\$706.69	75				
	30 Buckboard Road	Single Family	5	7	3824	Partially	\$2,325,000.00	\$608.00	142				
	141 Corral Road B	Duplex	5	6	5457	Unfurnished	\$2,875,000.00	\$526.85	250				
	151 Howard Drive	Single Family	4	4	3166	Unfurnished	\$2,995,000.00	\$945.99	54				
	170 Mesquite Drive	Single Family	5	6	5616	Partially	\$3,995,000.00	\$711.36	108				
	451 Singletree Road	Single Family	4	6	4910	Unfurnished	\$4,995,000.00	\$1,017.31	11				
	Closed	1107 June Creek Road	Duplex	4	3	2398	Unfurnished	\$2,295,000.00	\$957.05	7	\$2,295,000.00	\$957.05	10/5/2022
		20 Buckboard Road West	Duplex	3	3	2100	Furnished	\$1,295,000.00	\$616.67	34	\$1,150,000.00	\$547.62	9/30/2022
1520 Singletree Road		Single Family	3	5	3060	Unfurnished	\$1,850,000.00	\$604.58	-23	\$1,650,000.00	\$539.22	9/30/2022	
781 June Creek Road S		Duplex	3	4	2432	Unfurnished	\$1,395,000.00	\$573.60	29	\$1,350,000.00	\$555.10	9/29/2022	
	50 Filly Drive S	Duplex	4	3	2543	Unfurnished	\$1,950,000.00	\$766.81	12	\$2,000,000.00	\$786.47	9/14/2022	

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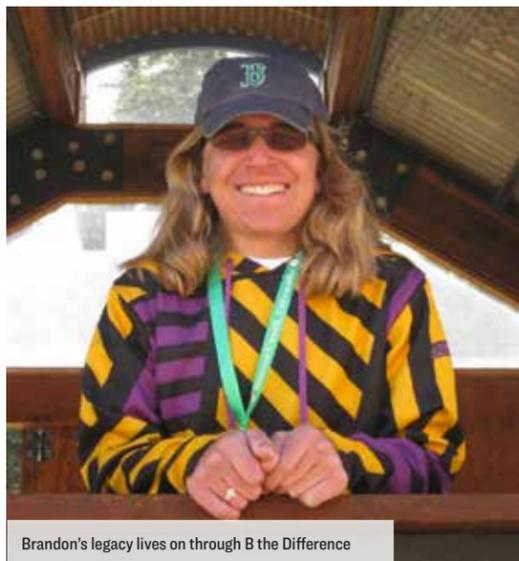


Jessica, Debbie, Ralph, and Stephanie Merritt

# B THE DIFFERENCE: B HAPPY AND B KIND!

Brandon's memory lives on in the legacy created by Stephanie and Jessica Merritt

CONTRIBUTED BY STEPHANIE MERRITT JOHNSON, SINGLETREE RESIDENT



Brandon's legacy lives on through B the Difference

It was February 1, 2011. My sister, brother, future husband, and I were in the kitchen contemplating dinner. It was one of those nights where nothing sounded good, and everything sounded difficult. Breakfast for dinner? Sounded great! Except for Brandon, who thought breakfast for dinner was crazy — so a compromise was reached. He'd make mac and cheese with hot dogs. Everyone was happy with their choices.

The next morning, he was gone.

It wasn't unusual that he'd sleep through his alarm; he was the best sleeper I knew. We frequently would go in and gently wake him for the day. But he wouldn't wake up. The next moments were a blur, which led to an extended blur. How could this happen when we just had an evening full of laughter? Everything was fine, and then it wasn't. Our brother, Brandon, passed away from neurofibromatosis (NF, a genetic disease that causes tumors to grow on nerve endings) on Feb. 2, 2011. He was 22.

Our world was turned upside down overnight. My family and I had no control over our new normal. But we found solace in our memories together. That time we went to Marco Island and collected seashells as kids. That time we made snow angels for the first time at Nana and Papa's condo in Avon. That time Brandon went to Boston and got to meet Big Papi...

Jessica and I had an idea. What if we could provide these wonderful memories to other families who are fighting their battle with NF? We could truly make a difference! Well, Brandon's nickname was "B," so why didn't we become "B the Difference"? With this intention, the support of our mom and dad, and a killer board of directors who helped guide us, our foundation was born. It took a couple of years to get off the ground, but after our first small fundraisers, we were able to launch our "B Happy" program, which provides all-expenses-paid, hosted vacations to young adults with NF and their families. We could bring Brandon's joy to others!

Over the next five years, we provided "B Happy" trips to 50 families! Trips to the beach, trips to the snow, trips to Boston! Fifty other families now had happy memories to reflect on instead of having to think about doctors and MRIs and needles and hospitals all the time! We were geared up to have 2020 be our biggest year yet, and then the whole world shut down.

How can we host trips while the world is shut down? We couldn't risk our high-risk families' health; even road trips wouldn't be safe. We were at a crossroads — do we wait until the world gets better, or can we find another way to help? Our situation was oddly familiar — our whole world was ripped out from under us. However, this time it affected everyone, not just us. And we had the ability to help. We had to take back our narrative and continue helping others. This time, we had the means to do so, and our "B Kind" assistance program was born.

Through "B Kind," we have helped families with NF with schooling, food assistance, and medical assistance. We have helped purchase a service dog, paid for a life-changing surgery, provided the ability for parents to put food on the table, paid for hotels for far-away hospital visits, and more. In just two short years, B Happy has helped over 140 families! And we're not done yet!

Our foundation is funded entirely by donations at this time. Even our amazing Director of Operations, Aisling, has her salary donated by an anonymous donor. We have always had a large event in Florida to help raise funding for our programs, where we are originally from and where many of our Board members live; however it was always our dream to have a Colorado event as well. It makes sense — this is where

Brandon was happiest. This was his community. This is where he thrived and where his friends are.

And finally, in 2022, Bling & Blue Jeans came to fruition. Our inaugural Colorado event had support from the local businesses who donated auction items to us and a phenomenal volunteer team who gave us their time and their talents. But we're still a small charity in the Vail Valley — would we have any interest from attendees? Ticket sales were our biggest stressor; it's hard to compete with such amazing, well-known foundations in our community, and we were afraid we might get lost in the shuffle. But oh, how we were wrong! Our neighbors supported us and our cause and helped us raise over \$200,000 at our very first Bling & Blue Jeans!

It's such an indescribable feeling to have an idea and then have other people, some of whom are perfect strangers, think your idea is worth it. The thing you created to take back the narrative is actually good and worth donating to and supporting. Looking around Donovan Pavilion on Jul. 25, as paddles were being raised and each person in the room was smiling, Jessica and I were completely overwhelmed with gratitude.



Doug Able sharing an evening with friends for a good cause



Girls' night out for Renee Chelm and a friend



Shannon and Jay Kizer cutting a rug to the tunes of Tim and Taylor



Will Theoharides, owner of Avon Frame Shoppe, happy to see an old friend

We've raised a million dollars to date to support our B Happy and B Kind programs, and we're so excited for the future. At the advice of our medical advisors, we have re-launched our B Happy trips! Starting with our families who have been waiting since 2020 for their adventure and new submissions, we're getting trips on the books and have already completed one B Happy trip since the re-launch! We're also about to begin our "B Kind for the Holidays" campaign, where we provide a little extra holiday cheer to one family each day from Thanksgiving to Christmas! And, of course, B Kind has been in full swing since its inception.

If you know a young adult with neurofibromatosis who may be in need of a little happiness, please let us know by nominating them to either B Happy or B Kind on our website: [www.bthedifference.org](http://www.bthedifference.org).

As we approach another February, it is comforting to know Brandon's memory lives on in the legacy Jessica and I created for him and for all the families we've had the opportunity to help in his name. It doesn't help bring our brother back, but it helps. We hope to see you at future Bling & Blue Jeans fundraisers and around our neighborhood. Thank you for all your support so far ... and cheers to 2023! Always remember to B Happy and B Kind.



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# I Am Quill

CONTRIBUTED BY QUILL AND TIMM KLUENDER, SINGLETREE PET AND RESIDENT

I am Quill. I was just a little pup when my owners first picked me up, but I'm all grown up now. I am a German Shorthaired Pointer (GSP) from the Outlander Q Litter, which means my name has to start with a Q. My AKC name is "Outlanders Quintessential," but my owners call me Quill from *Guardians of the Galaxy*, thank goodness.

I like to go hiking with my owners, especially when it's near water, so I can swim around and look for ducks. I'll retrieve just about anything, but my favorite thing to retrieve is the frisbee. I like it best

when my owners throw it on the grass so I can run out and catch it in the air. Sometimes, they'll throw it across the ravine for me. I can't catch it then, but it's fun running up and down the hill.

I love hunting the most. I get really serious about it. The birds smell so good to me, and my tail goes crazy when birds are around. I like to sneak up on them and point them out. I just freeze when I get close and wait for my owner to catch up. Sometimes, the thunderstick goes off, and I chase them down. I can't catch them otherwise.

My other favorite thing is snuggling on the couch with my female owner. She pets me and feeds me and loves me. Sometimes, she lets me in the bed under the covers, but don't tell my male owner because he doesn't like it.

I gotta go now ... There are some voles in the backyard that need my attention.



Quill with the big stick



Quill with a prized grouse



Quill and Sophia on the river



Couch time for Quill



Quill as a puppy settling in at home



Quill's first day

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# The Girls of Singletree Rock the Volleyball Court

CONTRIBUTED BY ALEX DIENST, SADI PETROVSKI, KAMRYN MITCHELL,  
HAILEY GRANT, MOLLY KESSENICH AND LILY SUMAN, SINGLETREE RESIDENTS

As celebrated separately in this publication, 2022 marked the 50th anniversary of Title IX, the landmark gender equity law that banned sex discrimination in federally funded education programs: 37 words that changed everything. Having shared the experiences of a handful of Singletree women whose lives were positively impacted by Title IX, it seems only fitting to recognize today's female athletes in the neighborhood. While they know little of the old days, their passion, competitiveness and fierce commitment to their sport and their team are unparalleled. Here we get to know the 2022 girls' high school volleyball players in Singletree.

## ALEX DIENST

Senior at Battle Mountain High School

### How and when did you start playing volleyball?

I started playing volleyball in sixth grade at ECCA. I was always an athlete, and since that was the main sport the girls in middle school played in the fall, I joined the team and loved it!

### What is the best part of playing volleyball?

The best part of playing volleyball for Battle Mountain High School is being able to spend time with all the amazing girls that are a part of the program.

### What is the best part of your game, and what are you working on improving?

I play outside hitter all the way around, and I think the best part of my game is my defense and that I am quick when reacting to the ball. I am working on improving my transition before hitting the ball and making my arm swing faster.

### What life lessons have you learned?

Volleyball has taught me so many life lessons, such as the importance of grit, reliance, self-discipline, teamwork, and much more.

### What is your favorite memory?

My favorite memory so far of playing volleyball was our first game against Evergreen — we won in five sets, and that game created a lot of hope and built a lot of confidence for our team. It was an amazing way to start our season.

### What has been the highlight of this season?

Although we lost in five sets, I think the highlight of the season so far has been our Eagle Valley game because not only did we play hard and learn a lot, but we also had the biggest student section/amount of outside support that I've ever seen at a Battle Mountain sports game.



### What are you looking forward to for the rest of this season?

I am looking forward to our upcoming home tournament because I enjoy playing back-to-back games and spending time with my teammates. I am also looking forward to our game against Eagle Valley at Eagle Valley because we are ready to redeem ourselves and fight for the win.

### What piece of advice would you offer other high school girls?

The biggest piece of advice I can offer to other high school girls is to learn how to have fun. Learn that mistakes are a large part of the game, and you will never benefit from dwelling on them. It's a fun and highly competitive game. Win or lose, as long as you left it all on the court and enjoyed your time out there, you were successful.



## SADI PETROVSKI

Senior at Battle Mountain High School

### How and when did you start playing volleyball?

I started playing volleyball when I was in sixth grade. I started because I watched my sister play, and she inspired me because I wanted to be like her.

### What is the best part of playing volleyball?

The best part of playing volleyball for Battle Mountain is the environment and how good the coaches are and how supportive they are. I love being on this team.

### What is the strongest part of your game, and what are you working on improving?

The best part of my team is how close we all are. I love being on a team with all my best friends.

### What life lessons have you learned?

I have learned patience and how to work with other people.

### What is your favorite memory?

My favorite memory was playing with varsity my sister's senior year or her senior night and watching them beat out rivals.

### What has been the highlight of this season?

The highlight of this season has been beating Steamboat because we haven't beaten them in nine years.

### What are you looking forward to for the rest of this season being on the team?

I'm looking forward to beating out rivals in their house and continuing to play with such an amazing group of girls.

## KAMRYN MITCHELL

Senior at Vail Christian High School

### How and when did you start playing volleyball?

I started volleyball in fourth grade through Mountain Rec.

### What is the best part of playing volleyball?

The best part of playing with Vail Christian is that we have a very supportive school. The football team comes and cheers us on as well as parents and student support.

### What is the strongest part of your game, and what are you working on improving?

I am working on my communication with my teammates and being able to stay positive. I hope to improve my volleyball serve to get a lot of aces.

### What life lessons have you learned?

I have learned about sportsmanship.

### What is your favorite memory?

One time when I was playing for Vail Volleyball Club during one of our tournaments, I was backing up to pass the ball, and my shoe came off. I had to wait for the point to be over so that I could put my shoe back on.

### What has been the highlight of this season?

The highlight would be the excitement of our senior year and the last year we will be playing for Vail Christian.

### What are you looking forward to for the rest of this season?

I am looking forward to hopefully making our way to the state tournament. We have worked very hard to get to where we are now.





Photo by Rex Keep

**HAILEY GRANT**

Senior at Battle Mountain High School

**How and when did you start playing volleyball?**

I started playing volleyball in seventh grade for Homestake Peak Middle School. I started playing club volleyball for Vail Volleyball Club that same year and was on the U14 Developmental Team. This year will be my sixth year playing for Vail Volleyball Club, and I am on the UI8 team. I am currently on the varsity team at BMHS and have played for Battle Mountain all four years of high school.

**What is the best part of playing volleyball?**

The best part of playing volleyball for Battle Mountain High School is the games when we get to see the results of all our practice and hard work.

**What is the strongest part of your game, and what are you working on improving?**

The best part of my game is my hitting and playing at the net and blocking. I am working on improving my passing game.

**What life lessons have you learned?**

I have learned that when six people work really hard together, we can be better than any of us individually.

**What is your favorite memory?**

My favorite memories of playing volleyball are traveling to tournaments with my club team. We have played in Denver, Atlanta, Salt Lake City, Orlando and Omaha. My favorite has always been the Colorado Crossroads Tournament at the Denver Convention Center. This year we are going to Kansas City and Las Vegas, and I'm really looking forward to my last club season!

**What has been the highlight of this season?**

For me, the highlight of the season so far was beating Steamboat at home. We played really well, and the crowd was cheering, "Sink the Boat!" It was a great night!

**What are you looking forward to for the rest of this season?**

I am looking forward to finishing the season strong and hopefully qualifying for regional playoffs.

**MOLLY KESSENICH**

Junior at Battle Mountain High School

**How and when did you start playing volleyball?**

Fourth grade, WECMRD (Field House), then I played all through middle school and high school seasons, plus I started playing "club" volleyball in the offseason in eighth grade.

**What is the best part of playing volleyball?**

The best part of playing for Battle Mountain High School is the friendships and the competition (and fun crowds at home games).

**What is the strongest part of your game, and what are you working on improving?**

The best part is being able to play many positions, especially libero (defense), but still play all around. I am working on staying consistent and not getting into my head.

**What life lessons have you learned?**

Mental toughness, teamwork, responsibility, perseverance, and resilience.

**What is your favorite memory?**

Team camp and having fun while staying competitive in games.

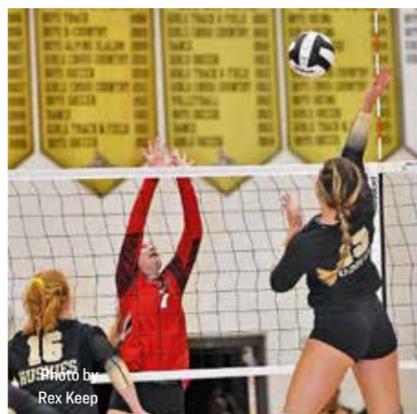


Photo by Rex Keep

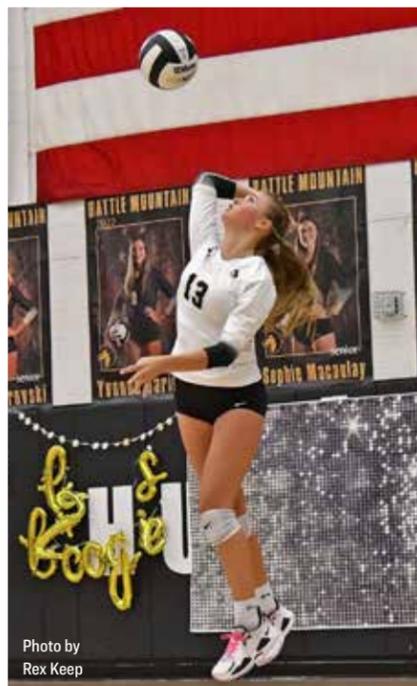


Photo by Rex Keep

**What are you looking forward to for the rest of this season?**

Being around fun players, having a fun senior night at home, and playing with seniors before they graduate.

**What piece of advice would you offer other high school girls considering playing volleyball?**

Stick with it! And have fun playing because it's so much more fun when you can have fun playing the game.

**LILY SUMAN**

Junior at Battle Mountain High School

**How and when did you start playing volleyball?**

I started playing volleyball in sixth grade when I started middle school. I played on the ECCA team rather than Stone Creek, which is where I went to middle school because my school didn't have a team. Through playing for ECCA, I got to meet a lot of new friends that I would continue to play with all throughout middle school and into high school!

**What is the best part of playing volleyball?**

The best part of playing volleyball for Battle Mountain is the awesome team I get to be a part of and how much fun we get to have all together.

**What is the strongest part of your game, and what are you working on improving?**

My position on varsity is setter, and I think that the best part of my game is diversifying the offense and setting up the hitters to put the ball away. Something I'm focusing on working on is reading the blockers and defense on the other side of the court.

**What life lessons have you learned?**

The most important lesson I have learned through volleyball, especially this season, is having the perseverance to push through obstacles that stand in the way of your goals.

**What is your favorite memory?**

My favorite memory so far is going to the overnight varsity team camp at Colorado state university. We learned how to function as a team and have lots of fun on the court which set us up for lots of success during the season.

**What has been the highlight of this season?**

The highlight of the season so far is definitely Battle Mountain's homecoming game against Eagle Valley High School. It was a high-intensity game with lots of fans for both sides and a lot of awesome plays. Even though we lost in five, it was a close game and still one of the best matches we have played this year.

**What are you looking forward to for the rest of this season?**

I'm most excited for our senior night this year because we get to celebrate our seven awesome seniors I'm going to miss very much next year.

**What piece of advice would you offer other high school girls considering playing volleyball?**

The biggest piece of advice I have for girls considering volleyball is to work hard. whether you win or lose, if you try your absolute best, it will be worth it for not only yourself but also your amazing teammates that worked alongside you.



Lily (left) with teammate Sophie



Photo by Rex Keep



# PARTNERING TO PREVENT WILDLAND FIRE

CONTRIBUTED BY MIKE EARL, OWNER OF OLD GROWTH TREE SERVICE



With the prolonged drought that has plagued the West for what is now decades, the threat of wildland fire has become a part of each and every one of our lives here in the Vail Valley. Experts are often quoted as saying that it's not a question of *if* but *when* a fire will be on our doorsteps. And as we saw last April, when the Duck Pond Fire in Gypsum exploded and threatened multiple communities, the need for concern is indeed very real.

Fortunately, many government agencies, often in collaboration with metropolitan districts, HOAs and other private entities, are working proactively to reduce the danger by completing large-scale fire mitigation projects.

Over the past couple of years, Eagle County Wildland has been using sophisticated modeling and simulation software to determine where and how to complete fuel reductions that will give firefighters a tactical advantage in defending our communities. This past October, Eagle County Wildland began fire mitigation work in and around Singletree. The effort, which is a result of a partnership between the Singletree Community, Berry Creek Metro District, Town of Avon, Eagle Valley Land Trust, Eagle River Fire Protection District, and Eagle County, includes fuel reduction and the development of fuel breaks that will help firefighters protect people and property in the event of a fire.

And while this kind of strategic fire mitigation work is critical in preparing for fire, it is only one part of the solution. There are several preventative measures that individual homeowners should take to help mitigate risk on their own property, and that will ultimately contribute to what must be a community effort and partnership.

The first step is to take advantage of Eagle County's REALFire program (<https://realfire.net/realfireapp/ClientApplicationForm.aspx>), which provides free fire mitigation assessments. REALFire experts can help homeowners determine how to strike a balance between creating a defensible space and maintaining the lovely landscaping that is characteristic of our mountain communities. REALFire consultants complete site visits in order to generate a written set of recommendations that homeowners can contract landscaping or tree care companies to complete.

Fire mitigation work often involves removing trees and vegetation, which requires specialized training and equipment; however, there are also simple steps that homeowners can complete themselves. Just a few examples: clean up fallen leaves; keep gutters clean and free of debris; and, perhaps, most important — reduce or eliminate

combustible material within five feet of any buildings. According to information on the National Fire Protection Association's (NFPA) Firewise website, the area within five feet of a structure is critical because it is a primary path for small surface flames and blowing embers to carry fires up to homes. NFPA recommends homeowners consider the following:

- Is there dead vegetation, dried leaves, pine needles, and ground debris near foundations?
- Has hardscaping been used around perimeters to keep them free of litter/debris?
- Are there concrete, stone, or gravel walkways?
- Have wood mulch products been replaced with non-combustible

alternatives, such as crushed stone/gravel options?

- Are there trees/shrubs next to the home?
- Are there branches overhanging the roof or within 10 feet of chimneys?

Preventative measures such as those listed above, coupled with the strategic fuel reduction projects underway in the wildland-urban interfaces, will help to mitigate the risk to people and property in the event of a wildland fire. However, it is critical that all homeowners become "firewise" and take steps to protect their own property, which will also help to protect their neighbors' and, ultimately, the entire community.

To reach Old Growth Tree Service, please call 970-401-0274 or email [info@oldgrowth-tree.com](mailto:info@oldgrowth-tree.com).



This article is contributed by Mike Earl, who is a partner in Old Growth Tree Service. Mike is certified by the National Fire Protection Association to advise homeowners about how to create defensible spaces around buildings and structures. Old Growth Tree Service is the only tree care company in Eagle County that is accredited by the Tree Care Industry Association and has made significant investments in training and equipment specifically designed to complete fire mitigation work safely and efficiently. Their capabilities range from building clearance pruning and tree removal to large-scale fuel reduction projects using industrial-scale masticators. Old Growth offers free arborist consultations in all aspects of tree care, including fire mitigation.



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# INSTILLING AN ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT IN THE YOUTH OF EAGLE VALLEY

Cassie and Zak Boca host the first annual Children’s Business Fair

CONTRIBUTED BY CASSIE BOCA, SINGLETREE RESIDENT

The morning air was buzzing with anticipation on Sept. 10 as nearly 50 young entrepreneurs, ages 3 to 16 years old, lined Edwards Village Boulevard. They hurried around the Edwards Farmers Market, setting up individual booths for their 23 unique businesses. By 9 a.m., they would kick off the first annual Children’s Business Fair.

Each child was there to showcase and operate the business of their dreams — spearheading everything from conceptualization to execution. Parents took the sidelines and were discouraged from helping with any planning, proposal creation, or operations. Every opportunity was taken to encourage the kids to learn and grow from their mistakes.

The Children’s Business Fair was developed by two Eagle Valley residents, Cassie and Zak Boca. As lifelong entrepreneurs raising a 2- and an almost-4-year-old, they felt they could add real value back to this place that they love.

“We want to give not only our kids, but other kids in the community, a chance to be exposed to, participate in, and learn more about running their own business from start to finish,” says Cassie Boca.

Successful entrepreneurs often start their first business as a child. By immersing the children in the business world that Cassie and Zak were so familiar with, they could offer them a point of entry into an entrepreneurial mindset at a young age. This would give them the confidence and experience necessary to be successful, critical thinkers in the future of the workplace.

The Bocas’ plan was straightforward: give kids a chance to develop a business by hosting a business fair just for them. Each business was required to draw up a plan to submit for approval. They would need to outline start-up costs, marketing ideas, and other activities essential to the success of their new business. Once Cassie and Zak reviewed the plans and determined the viability each proposed, they sent out formal invitations to the young participants inviting them to set up shop for a one-day event.

At the Children’s Business Fair, the kids were entirely in charge. Adolescents and teens bounced from booth to booth, referring customers and passing along support as they went. They sold bike repairs, handcrafted coffees and art, Lego figurines, and custom lollipops. At every innovative business booth was a young community member who got there all on their own. Behind the scenes, they were experiencing what it’s like to plan and adapt in real-time, building flexibility, curiosity, and independence as entrepreneurially minded thinkers.

After the fair wrapped up, Cassie went around to every sweaty, beaming kid and asked three questions: Did they have fun? Did they make some money? Would they want to

do it again next year? She was pleased, but not surprised, when the answer was loudly and repeatedly, “Yes!”

The Children’s Business Fair was the first of many events aimed at fulfilling the couple’s promise to instill and encourage the young minds of the valley. In fall 2023, Cassie and Zak will open the doors to Vail Valley Unbound, a K-5 school driven by a purpose to foster learning through community and open discussion. The school will allow them to continue facilitating creativity and guiding young learners toward their calling. The learning design will be guided by student agency, collaboration, gamification, and self-directed learning.

Though the school will have a 60-student limit, Cassie and Zak plan to extend its offerings beyond its walls. They’re designing enriching community programs to foster discussion and inspire learning experiences. In addition to their students, they hope to equip the community with the tools necessary to enable entrepreneurial growth.

Stay tuned for more information on the school’s developments on [VailValleyUnbound.org](http://VailValleyUnbound.org).



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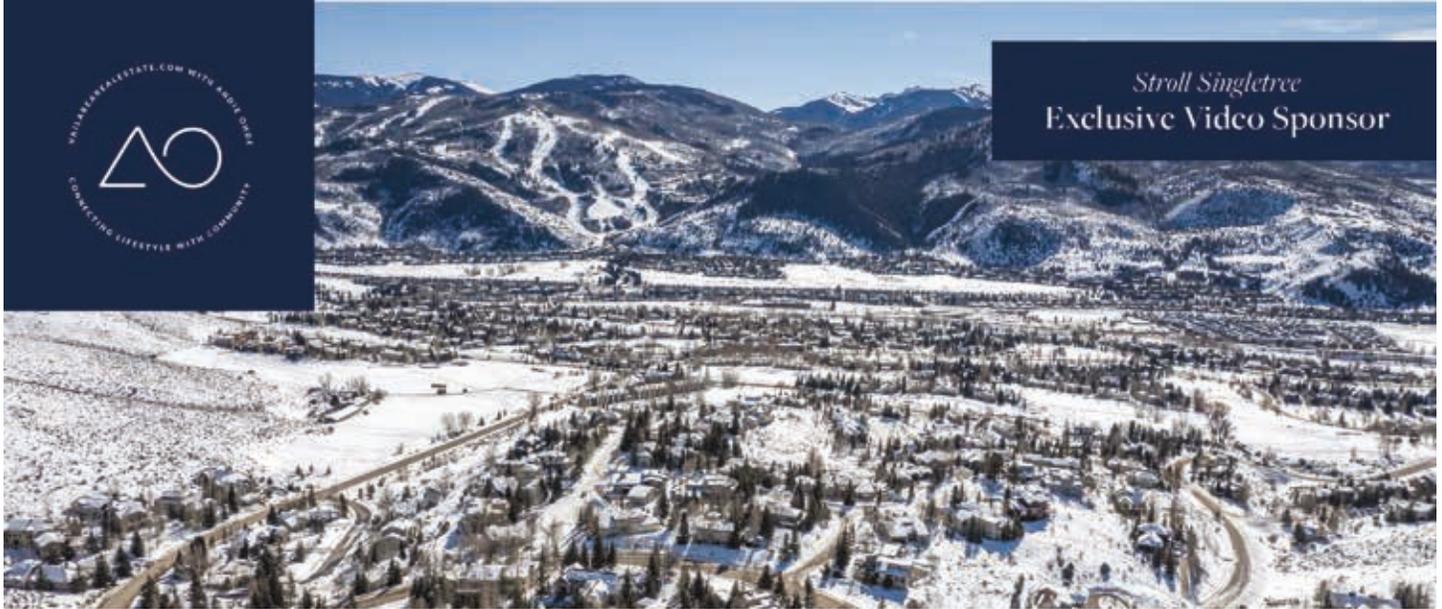
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