

# INSIDE *Singletree*

FEBRUARY 2020

A SOCIAL PUBLICATION FOR THE RESIDENTS OF SINGLETREE

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*Sims*



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**publisher's note**

# HELLO

*Singletree residents!*

Welcome to February! The month we celebrate Groundhog Day, the founding of the Boy Scouts, Valentine's Day, the birthdays of Presidents Washington and Lincoln, National Love Your Pet Day and Leap Year. To name a few. Did you know February 11 is 'Don't Cry Over Spilled Milk Day'?!?

February is the perfect month to get to know Buddy and Bonnie Sims. A Valentine's story of its own, the tale begins while shopping at the military exchange at the Grand Forks Air Force Base, ND. Today, following a highly decorated military career for Buddy and many years of teaching for Bonnie, the couple enjoys world travel, spending time with children and grandchildren, and loving life in Singletree.

February 8 marks the 110th anniversary of the founding of the Boy Scouts of America. Phillip D'Andrea, Stuart Howard, David Ross and Kyle Ross truly embody the spirit of the organization and take to heart the motto, 'Be prepared', on many an adventure.

Auggie is a super cool dude and a celebrity - donning the face of beer cans in Boulder! Rescued from a shelter in New Mexico,

Auggie has certainly won a place in the hearts of the Lathrop family. Rohn Robbins shares his latest adventure which includes... tobogganing in China?! Rohn admits 'this is no beach vacation'. It takes work and grit and stamina to explore this fascinating country.

We are honored that Dave and Debbie Irwin, Mike and Terry Mutter, Mike and Traci Wodlinger and Perry and Molly Churchill let us in on their personal stories of how the sparks first flew and what works to keep them together today. We hope their tales will inspire you to share your love and affection with the special people in your life - on Valentine's Day and beyond.

Wishing you a month of love and celebration!



*Holly Proctor*

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# ANGELS & DEMONS

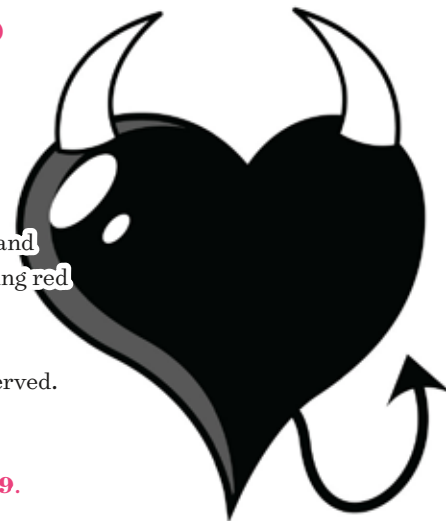
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Don't forget to like and follow both our *INSIDE Singletree* Facebook and Instagram pages! Tag @insidesingletree to be featured on our page!



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Photographer



**Debbie Robbins**  
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## CALLING ALL 2020 *Singletree* Graduates!

Time to celebrate Vail Valley high school graduation! Please help us identify this year's graduates to participate in the May issue of *INSIDE Singletree* featuring the Class of 2020. Please email contact information to [holly.proctor@n2pub.com](mailto:holly.proctor@n2pub.com). We will reach out to each graduate for profiles and photos; contributions are due March 15, 2020. Thank you for joining us in recognizing the 2020 neighborhood graduates!





# 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.



### VAIL VALLEY PET GROOMERS

Est. 2018, Vail Valley Pet Groomers is a dream come true for owner Lisa Potter. Having groomed pets professionally for over 30 years, she has served the four-legged community with love and care in

many grooming shops over the course of her career. Having fallen in love with Colorado, she moved to the Vail Valley to follow her dream, bringing her passion and skills with her.

Lisa emphasizes the importance of establishing relationships with her clients based on mutual respect and communication. With an open mind for new ways to care for her clientele, she understands the importance of learning exactly how pet owners would like their four-legged companions groomed. As the shop in Edwards grows, Lisa looks forward to building a team of like-minded, talented and creative groomers.



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Born and raised in upstate New York, Adir Saati moved to Colorado nearly ten years ago seeking a different way of life. With an innate and incredible passion for people, he knew it was his purpose to help others create a happy, meaningful life for themselves,

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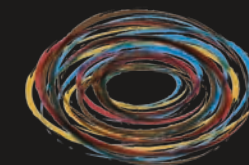
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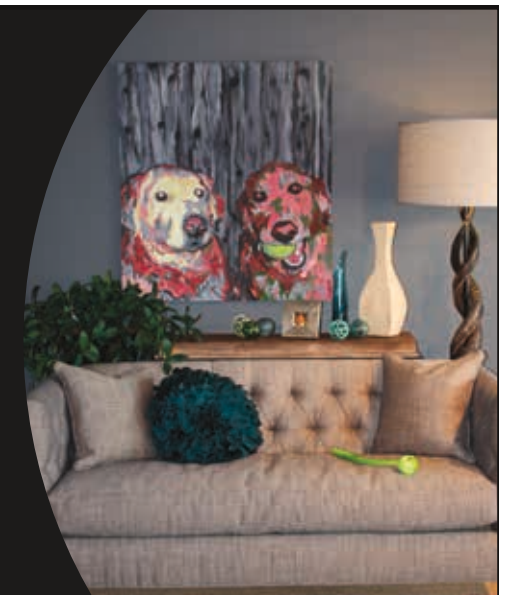
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# Buddy and Bonnie SIMS

Buddy and Bonnie Sims have owned a home in Singletree since 1992 and previously lived at the Lionshead Center condos in Vail since 1974 as “snowbirds”. Before moving to Edwards full time in 1996, they lived in Virginia for 9 years while Bonnie was a Prince William County teacher and Buddy held numerous positions as a Foreign Military Sales Chief in the Pentagon, United Airlines and Pan Am World Airways commercial airline pilot, and as an Acquisition/Logistics Manager employed by

National Technologies Associates, Inc. As a government contractor under the Naval Air Systems Command, I managed the Navy EA-6B Prowler aircraft upgrade of new avionics equipment including a pilot’s flight director system plus supported the Marine MV-22 Osprey aircraft in initial flight testing and redesign. As “snowbirds” from Edwards, we also tried living five years in Georgetown, TX, and seven years in Anthem, AZ, both DelWebb communities.

Working at Grand Forks Air Force Base, ND, while both

were shopping in the military exchange (BX). Bonnie was trying on shoes and Buddy was with his B-52 bomber crew while serving in an Emergency War Order nuclear alert status. Over the years, Bonnie has continued to enjoy shoe shopping and always buys shoes everywhere they travel.

Bonnie had over thirty-three years as an elementary teacher in North Dakota, Minnesota, Oklahoma, Virginia, North Carolina, DoDDS in the Republic of Panama, and Colorado. For the last 10 years she has worked as a retail associate for Vail Boot & Shoe and previously for the Golden Bear, Montage, and Vail Resorts ski school. She also volunteered at the Vail Hospital for many years.



Since 1996, Buddy has worked on several non-profit boards to improve our community – Freedom Park Memorial – EMS, 911, and Veterans to include fundraising and construction. We brought the 600-pound piece of the Pentagon Limestone to the Park in a rental truck from Washington, DC. This fragment was part of the damage and rubble of the 9/11 attack from the American Airlines Flight 77.

As a charter member of the Edwards Rotary Club, and as the current Adjutant and past Quartermaster and Commander of the Minturn Mt Holy Cross VFW Post 10721, I have worked on providing high school college scholarships. 22 years ago, Buddy along with Debbie Robbins, another Singletree resident, started the Veterans Day Awareness school assemblies and in 2019 conducted patriotic assemblies at 22 local K-8 and high schools with over 50 local military veterans participating. Further, as the VFW Scholarship Chairman, he has taken the first VFW \$500 annual scholarship in 1983 at Battle Mountain High School to now \$2,000 annually and \$500 for three years of follow-on college and expanded the VFW scholarship program to five other local high schools. This additional funding was made possible by his Co-Chairmanship with Moses Gonzales on the 9/11 Inaugural “Never Forget” Golf Tournament in 2018 and continues to this day.

My 27-year United States Marine Corps and United States Air Force careers included overseas assignments at Bien Hoa, Vietnam, U-tapao, Thailand, Guam, RAF Bentwaters, UK, Albrook AB, Panama, Osan AFB, Korea, Prince Sultan AB, Saudi Arabia, Al Udeid AB, Qatar, and two tours at the Pentagon, Washington, DC and Barksdale AFB, LA. I flew 350 combat missions as an O-2A Forward Air Controller and B-52D bomber pilot in the Vietnam War from 1968 through 1972. I was recalled to Air Force active duty after 9/11 in 2002. During Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom in 2002 and 2003, as the Chief



of Time Sensitive Targeting, I worked in two Combined Air Operations Centers overseas. During my second tour at the Pentagon in 2004 as General Goldfein’s Executive Officer, under the Operational Capabilities Requirements Directorate, I helped direct seventeen Air Staff Warfighting Divisions.

My military decorations include the Distinguished Flying Cross, fifteen Air Medals, and the Cross of Gallantry for aerial flight during the Vietnam War. I also received my sixteenth Air Medal for a 32-hour B-52H bomber non-stop flight directed by the U.S. President “as a show of force” from North Dakota to Cairo, Egypt and back. My first USAF flight in a B-52H (aircraft 61-017) bomber was in January 1970 and my final bomber flight was in the same aircraft in June 2003.

Buddy and Bonnie have three grown children – Theron, Jr., an attorney, James, a Vice-President in Brinks International, and Amy, a housewife. They all live in Arizona. All three children graduated from Washburn University, Topeka, KS where Dad got his business degree.

The brightly colored wall hangings, the “Molas” depicted in this issue of the Inside Singletree magazine, were made by Cuna women in the San Blas Archipelago (over 360 islands). The word mola (moh-lah) means ‘clothing’ in Cuna dialect and has now come to mean the single panel of a Cuna woman’s appliqued blouse. We saw our first molas 37 years ago at a gift shop while living at the Hilton Hotel in the Republic of Panama and were amazed at the graphic

we saw our first molas 37 years ago at a gift shop while living at the Hilton Hotel in the Republic of Panama and were amazed at the graphic







We have traveled extensively over the last years to Southeast Asia, Singapore, Europe, United Kingdom, Norway, Greece, Croatia, New Zealand, Australia, Cuba, and the Caribbean. We prefer trans-ocean cruises to the shorter ones. January 2020 found us on the Queen Victoria from Southampton, UK to Fort Lauderdale. In February 2020, we are steaming on a Pacific roundtrip from San Francisco to Hawaii. In our semi-retirement years, we enjoy gardening, skiing and traveling to visit our children and grandchildren.

For years, we volunteered at the Minturn Rummage Sale and as Bravo ushers. Buddy was also the General Manager and President of two security alarm companies, both ADT Franchise Dealerships installing security alarms from Vail to Aspen. Currently we serve on the Mt Holy Cross Lutheran Church Council.

We recently attended the Singletree mixer at Maximum Comfort Pool & Spa, sponsored by the Inside Singletree magazine, Holly Proctor, and Sara and Mike Charles, and to our surprise won a butane firepit for our backyard shown in the magazine. Over the many years, living in the Singletree community has been a blessing to us and has made a significant difference in our lives. We consider Singletree the best small-town community in America.



Get to know your neighbors by featuring your family in the next available issue! Email [holly.proctor@n2pub.com](mailto:holly.proctor@n2pub.com) to share your family story with your community.

designs and incredible color combinations. Each mola is hand-sewn and this primitive art form includes both antique (worn) and modern molas. It was only discovered after an exhibit at the Art Gallery of the Center for Inter-American Relations in New York City in 1976 and then forever termed "sculptures in cloth".

While living in Panama, our family enjoyed frequent trips to Brazil, Bolivia, Ecuador, Peru, Uruguay, Costa Rica, Guatemala, and Argentina. Since we flew on embassy flights, we were often surprised by diverted destinations. That was the beginning of our adventurous travel explorations.

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what's happening inside singletree

# SANTA finds out who's NAUGHTY AND NICE!

The air was festive as Singletree rang in the holidays with a celebration including ornament decorating, a seasonal sing-along, and visits with Santa and Ralph, the World's Tallest Elf. Hosted by *INSIDE Singletree* and the Singletree Property Owners' Association, the afternoon brought lots of neighborhood camaraderie and holiday cheer to the community!





# Celebrating Valentine's Day in Singletree!

**Did you know?** Each day of the entire week before Valentine's Day is dedicated to offering a new reason to celebrate love. Starting with Rose Day on the 7th, the week is celebrated with Propose Day, Chocolate Day, Teddy Day, Promise Day, Hug Day, Kiss Day and ultimately culminates on Valentine's Day on the 14<sup>th</sup>!

In honor of Love Week, we are thrilled to have Dave and Debbie Irwin, Mike and Terry Mutter, Perry and Molly Churchill and Mike and Traci Wodlinger share their stories of love, affection and friendship.

## DAVE AND DEBBIE IRWIN

**How did you meet?** I had just finished playing golf. It was the Grand Opening of Ray's Restaurant in Edwards. Debbie was there with girlfriends when she walked past me and I fell in love. I said hello and she said hello back. Yet she continued to the bar. She then saw that I was with someone she knew, so she felt comfortable about coming over to talk with me. We talked a lot yet it was noisy in there. So we went over to the Mustang Grill and sat in a booth next to each other. Talked all night yet when we said good night, she informed me that she just got separated. My heart broke and I told her I would call her in two years. Didn't want to be the first reject in her dating.

**Where are each of you from and how is it your paths crossed?** Debbie is from Chicago, yet at 8, grew up in Aspen and moved to Vail. I was from NY yet at 22, moved to Vail. After our initial meeting, it all happened two weeks later. It was fate that we ran into each other again at a concert at Ford Amphitheater. The first thing she said was, "Why didn't you call me?" I started asking her more questions and we have been together ever since 2004.

**When and where did you get married?** We were married in 2010 at Vista's in Arrowhead. My brother, Mike, married us and we had a fantastic party with our families being there. My friend, Steve Myers, actually played for our wedding which was so much fun.

**Did you honeymoon and where?** We honeymooned in Kona, HI, at the Mauna Kea which was almost as beautiful as Debbie.



## Do you have kids?

Debbie has two wonderful daughters, Brianna, a nurse in Denver, and Michelle, a sport tech in Boulder. Amazing and talented young ladies. We are so fortunate to have them in our lives.

## What are your favorite shared activities?

We ski, golf, tennis and love to travel. Just being with each other!

## What keeps you together or makes it work still today?

I married my best friend and the love of my life. It is always work yet anything worthwhile is. I have always felt that the two best moments of each day is when I

hug and kiss her goodnight and good morning. Plus we never leave each other without a kiss and saying, "I love you". Same thing on the phone saying, "I love you" when we hang up. We have only been apart for a couple of weeks in 15 years and when she is not there the house is empty and lonely. I am only complete with Debbie in my life.

We had a life changing experience this summer being in a motorcycle crash. I almost lost her and now I love her 100 times more.



## MIKE AND TERRY MUTTER

Mike and I met in 6th grade at a square dance. We didn't start going out until senior year in high school. However, it wasn't all smooth sailing. Mike says he played softball and I played the field during our college years. We got married right after graduating from Michigan State University in 1980. No honeymoon for us.

We moved to Boston so Mike could attend grad school at Harvard. We then briefly lived in Chicago, then back to Birmingham, Michigan. During that time, we had two daughters, Lauren and Caitlin. In 1995, the four of us packed up and moved to Edwards, Colorado. We have lived in Singletree ever since. We have enjoyed entertaining, skiing, hiking with our dog Baylor and playing tennis together. Family means everything to us! That's what keeps us together!

## MIKE AND TRACI WODLINGER

**How did you meet?** Our meeting was a *blind date* in February 2003, and we haven't looked back or elsewhere from the moment our eyes met at the airport in Grand Junction!

## How is it your paths crossed?

Mike's brother married Traci's best friend, they moved to Grand Junction from Missouri, and they suggested we meet. Mike was living in Breckenridge, and Traci was living in Missouri. Traci was skeptical and not too interested; Mike was interested and not at all skeptical. After about a month of electronic and telephone dialogue, Traci was convinced enough to give a face-to-face meeting a try. We decided to meet at the home of the people who thought we should meet - Mike's brother and Traci's best friend. We had a long-distance relationship for 15 months (yes, we counted), and the longest we were apart after that blind date was 18 days (yes, we counted).

**When and where did you get married?** Traci moved to the valley in June of 2004, we purchased a home in Singletree, Mike sold his home in Breckenridge, and we married in June of 2005 at St. John the Baptist Episcopal Church in Breckenridge. We had before and after parties with friends and family at the Singletree Community Center, so that venue will always hold a special place in our hearts.



## Did you honeymoon and where?

We honeymooned a year after we were married, in France. Mike is fluent in French, had spent a semester+ there in college, and we plan to recreate our adventures in France within the next year or two.

**Do you have kids?** Mike has two daughters (one in Bozeman and one in Dallas), and Traci has two nephews (both in Missouri; their parents passed when the boys were in high school). We consider the boys our bonus kids! So, even though the four of them are adults (most of the time), they keep us hopping. We have a grandniece who just turned two, and she is simply the best.

## What keeps you together or makes it work still today?

Faith + love + hope + gratitude

We're best friends, and we simply really enjoy each other's company. Through our 17 years, we've had much good fortune matched with perhaps an equal number of life's challenges. We've just ended our first year of retirement, and people ask us how we manage to have hours on end and days on end together. We find it to be amazing to have the gift of time together. Time is what life is made of, as they say.



**PERRY AND MOLLY CHURCHILL**

**How did you meet?**

**Molly:** We met in the Dead Goat Saloon in Salt Lake City. And it was a really fun bar. It wasn't like this sleazy old bar. I had just completed my senior thesis and my friends had taken me out to party and celebrate. And we ended up at the Dead Goat. Then Perry's best friend was there and we were visiting with him. And then, in walks Perry! And he had just gotten back from what, a 12-hour drive?

**Perry:** I just got back from California. I had been driving a long time.

**Molly:** Anyway, we just talked and visited. And then when he called me to go out, I thought, oh, I just met this guy at a bar. Is this okay? But I figured since he was Spence's friend, I thought, OK, I really think this is safe.

**Where are each of you from and how is it your paths crossed?**

**Molly:** I am from Lawton, Oklahoma. We lovingly call it Rotten Lawton, but that's beside the point. I had gone to the University of Utah for the dance department. I was a modern dancer and received my BFA in teaching and choreography and performing. And so the thesis that I had done was a choreography where I wrote the music and I did everything: costumes, lighting, the whole thing. So that was a grand reason to really celebrate.

**Perry:** I'd gone to the University of Utah also and studied business management there. I was from California and went to Utah for the university and for skiing. I was a ski instructor at that time at Snowbird. We lived in Utah for 25 years before coming here.

**When and where did you get married?**

**Molly:** Well, we got married up in the mountains at a church camp. There were no potties except for outhouses, but it was so beautiful.

**Perry:** Camp Tuttle Episcopal Church Camp was the name of the church camp. The ceremony was in the chapel and the reception was there too in the mess hall.

**Molly:** There was this beautiful little chapel up there. Huge tall peaks. It was summer. It was just so beautiful. But my aunts from Memphis, and their husbands too, had flown out for this. I was so worried about them because without, you know, regular potties. But I remember looking out and seeing the outhouses and there's my aunt waiting in line. She was so cute.

**Did you honeymoon and where?**

**Perry:** We went later to Europe for a honeymoon.



**Molly:** We were pretty poor at the beginning. We actually went camping with some friends that we had not seen in a long time. They had come out for our wedding and so we decided to do that first and then we went to Europe. We had to wait until we had a little money.

**Do you have kids and/or pets?**

**Molly:** We have two boys. Mark and Paul. Mark lives in Seattle with his wife, Jen, and grandson, Kylan. My other son is not married and is presently in Australia. He lives in Bozeman, MT. He has a podcast called Recovery Elevator and he has helped more people become sober. It is really amazing. I'm very, very proud of him. And then we have Annie and Izzy. Izzy is a standard poodle and is eight and Annie is a miniature poodle and is 28 weeks old.

**How long have you been married and makes it work still today?**

**Molly:** 44 years. It will be 45 next July!

**Perry:** Well, with two different personalities... What would you call that? Opposites attract. And so you make a lot of compromise. You have a lot of discussions and you make things work.

**Molly:** Perry's mother said this to me one time... and I'm going to try to get it right. She said that you find the things that you LOVE about each other and you try to forget the rest!



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UC	51 Prairie Cir	Duplex	\$820,000	--	\$377	--	3	3 (2 0 1)	2,177	--
UC	240 June Creek Rd #E	Duplex	\$980,000	--	\$436	--	4	5 (4 0 1)	2,250	--
UC	1140 Winslow Rd	Single Family	\$1,295,000	--	\$386	--	5	4 (3 0 1)	3,358	--
Sold	1107 June Creek Rd	Duplex	\$1,350,000	\$1,337,500	\$640	\$634	4	3 (3 0 0)	2,110	11/20/19
Sold	1111 June Creek Rd	Duplex	\$1,350,000	\$1,350,000	\$614	\$614	4	4 (3 1 0)	2,200	12/2/19
UC	141 Corral Rd	Duplex	\$1,795,000	--	\$294	--	6	7 (6 0 1)	6,103	--

**Thinking about selling your home in 2020?**

Get ahead of the curve and call me to discuss the 2019 market and what may be ahead for next year.

\*Data 11.14.19 - 12.16.19

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# let me introduce you to Auggie!

**precious pets**

Contributed by **Auggie, Mark and Sue Lathrop,**  
Singletree Pet and Residents

**Auggie joined our family in May of 2013. He came to us from a shelter in New Mexico. Since then he has changed our lives incredibly and has been an amazing part of our family.**

We found Auggie on a pet adoption website and drove down to New Mexico to meet him. He immediately won us over with his loving nature and goofy personality. By the next week, he was in our home. You never really know what shelter dogs have been through in their lives and what kind of fears and behaviors they are going to bring with them. Auggie came to us with a few unusual tricks and habits but they only endeared him more to our hearts.

One of his most interesting behaviors is to howl whenever the home telephone rings. These days, home telephones don't ring much with the growth of cell phones. But whenever our home phone does ring, Auggie lets loose with a loud howl like a hound dog. It is even more interesting when he trying to eat his dinner or drink water and the phone rings, because he then tries to howl and eat or drink at the same time. Have you ever tried to howl/sing loudly while your mouth is full of food or water? It is not easy! It is so entertaining that we often call our home phone from our cell phones just to hear him sing!

Another one of Auggie's other remarkable behaviors is his love of what we call his "cinnamon roll" bed. We were given a small doggie bed by a neighbor who was moving. The bed was used by their 4.5-pound dog. We were going to take it to the animal shelter for them. But we happened to place it on the floor and Auggie immediately climbed onto it. As best he could. You see, Auggie is about 65 pounds, so a dog bed for a 5 pound dog is a bit small for him. His solution is to roll up into as tight a ball as possible (like a "cinnamon roll") and he loves to sleep in that bed, even though we have two other full-size beds for him. So, the little bed moves around our house numerous times a day so that he can be near us and be in his favorite bed.

Auggie is a famous dog in Boulder with his picture on beer cans! He was a leading contestant in the Boulder Kiwanis' fundraiser for "Coolest Dog" which was sponsored by Upslope Brewery of Boulder. People donated to vote for the coolest dog, with all proceeds going to the Kiwanis Alert Service Dog program, which provides trained alert dogs for children with Type 1 Diabetes. The winning dog had a batch of beer named for him and



that dog got his picture on the front of the can. Auggie did not win the contest but was definitely considered to be a "cool dog" and earned enough votes that his picture is on the back of the can. Doesn't he look cool in his sunglasses?!

Auggie loves to dress in different bandannas all year, based on the time of year. He has different bandannas to celebrate the 4th of July, Christmas, St. Patrick's Day, Easter, harvest, summer, and many more. And of course, he also has his Denver Broncos and Colorado State Rams jerseys and a festive winter jacket to keep his tummy warm and dry for his walks on cold winter days!

Auggie goes to work frequently with his dad, who is a CPA in Edwards. Auggie has the whole office trained to give him regular dog treats and take him for walks. He is great at greeting his dad's clients, but as yet is still not very good on a computer keyboard to help with the work!



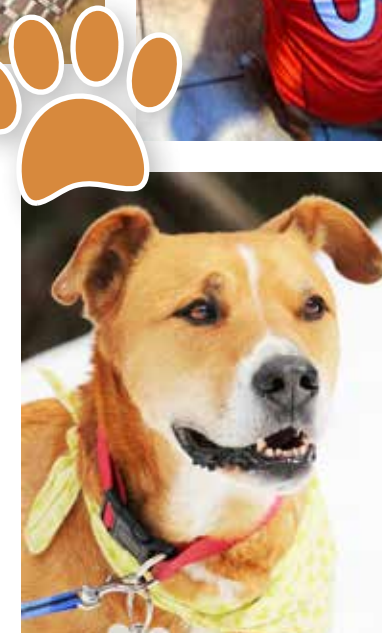
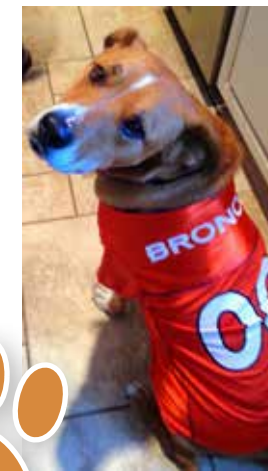
Auggie loves his walks around the neighborhood and greets all the people that stop to meet him. He also likes to take a quick run around the back yard a few times a week, growling as he goes, pretending (we think?) to be chasing away bad guys!

Our previous dog hated to have his picture taken and would run away when we pulled out a camera to take a photo. But Auggie loves to pose in very regal poses and ham it up for the camera. We think he moonlights as a male model.

Auggie has won a place in our hearts and in that of anyone who meets him. Say 'hello' if you see him walking around the neighborhood and he'll gladly greet you with a wag of his tail!



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# ADVENTURE ABOUNDS

SINGLETREE SCOUTS LIVING BY THE MOTTO: **BE PREPARED**



Singletree Boy Scouts (L to R): Kyle Ross, Stuart Howard, David Ross and Phillip D'Andrea

**February 8, 2020, marks the 110th Anniversary of the Boy Scouts of America. Since 1910, the Boy Scouts have been a premier organization for teaching boys to be good men. In addition to camping and outdoors skills, boys are taught leadership, character, citizenship, and service to others. They also have fun while they are doing it!**

**INSIDE Singletree** had the fortunate opportunity to get to know the four young men from the neighborhood who are diligently pursuing their Eagle Scout rank: Phillip D'Andrea, Stuart Howard, David Ross and Kyle Ross. What an impressive, enthusiastic, committed group of

Scouts. Or in the words of the Scout law: a Scout is trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean, and reverent. These young men certainly epitomize that law.

Before hearing about their adventures, first, a word from Nate Free, Troop 231 Scout Master:

Scouting is “alive and well” in the Vail Valley! There are currently two dozen scouts in the “upper Eagle Valley” and slightly less in the Eagle/Gypsum area. Our local Troop meets at the Trinity church rec center on Monday evenings, gathering primarily to either plan future outings or

explore opportunities for personal advancement and leadership.

One of the most unique things about scouting is the level in which the young men develop leadership skills: planning calendars, organizing events, and leading their peers. Of course, there is also the citizenship side of things: placing flags at Veteran gravestones, retiring American flags, performing lots of community service, and of course the “Eagle Project”, where a young man develops, plans, and leads others to benefit the community. This process typically requires approximately 100 hours.

My reason to be engaged in scouting comes from a strong belief in the growth I’ve seen in the young men who pass through our Troop. I’ve seen the meek gain self-confidence and be able to address groups of people; the bossy become servant

leaders and earn the respect of other members. Although I do not have sons of my own, I am hopeful that I am able to positively influence the lives of tomorrow’s leaders. It has been an absolute pleasure being involved with the program and watching the young men grow!

**Please tell me your name, your year in school, your level as a Boy Scout and how you first became involved in Scouts.**

**PD:** I am Phillip D’Andrea and I am a freshman and I am a Life Scout. My dad was just a Cub Scout when he was a kid. He wishes he would have done more with it. So he told me about it and I started doing it in first grade and kept with it.

**SH:** I’m Stuart Howard. I’m a junior and a Life Scout as well. I started out in first grade in Cub Scouts and I’ve been doing it for a decade now. My dad was an Eagle Scout, so he kind of got me into it; and it was pretty fun.

**DR:** I am David Ross. I am a senior, and on paper, I’m an Eagle Scout. I started either in fourth or fifth grade. I was going to a Broncos game with my dad and I saw a billboard of these kids racing cars. It was the Pinewood Derby and I said, Dad I want to do that. He signed me up; I crossed over into Boy Scouts in 2013 and I’ve been with it ever since.

**KR:** I’m Kyle Ross and I’m a freshman and I’m a Life Scout. So I started when my brother started when I was in first grade and after that, I went to Boy Scouts and here I am.

**Who wants to tell me about the rankings within the Boy Scouts?**

**SH:** Life Scout is the last rank before Eagle. There’s Scout, Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class, Star and Life. So there’s six ranks before you get Eagle. For each of the different ranks, you have to do certain requirements. You have to get certain merit badges; you have to follow this list in the book and you have to get signed off by your unit leader, which is the leader of the troop. Life Scout, though, that’s the most important rank because that’s right before Eagle. Once you get Life, it’s great because you’re basically home free. And then you can start working on Eagle.

**Who can tell me about the Pinewood Derby?**

**SH:** Pinewood Derby is an event for Cub Scouts. You get a block of wood and you have to carve your own car. It’s like six inches by four inches. Then you put the axles and on the wheels and then you race them. There’s a big, long metal track in an L and they line them all up and then they all go at the same time.



Kayaking on Emerald Bay



Preparing for a hike on [ ]



David and Kyle snowshoeing on [ ]





...

**What was it about Cub Scouts that you enjoyed and motivated you to continue into Boy Scouts?**

**SH:** I thought the best parts were the outdoor activities; we are in the mountains and we get a lot of outdoor activities here but Boy Scouts was kind of more structured and it was more fun and we had competitions. And the Pinewood Derby is one example of the competitions which really got me into it. That was really fun.

**DR:** I would say... just the different activities outside, camping, and the fellowship. I didn't really get the fellowship as much in Cub Scouts as I did in Boy Scouts, so that's what has kind of kept me going.

**KR:** I would say that some of the camping trips and other backpacking trips you can do are a lot of fun. I think it keeps you going because you can look forward to things.

**PD:** I did Cub Scouts in Summit County and we didn't do that many outdoor activities. We did more indoor learning stuff. One of my favorite times was when we were learning how to use knives, so we carved soap, which was really fun.

**What stands out as one of your favorite things you have done as a Boy Scout?**

**SH:** This past summer, I went to the World Scout Jamboree, which was at the Summit Bechtel Reserve in West Virginia; it was hosted by the US, Canada and Mexico. But many different countries with scouts from all around the world came. There were 45,000 scouts there. Phillip attended as well. It was a 12-day experience. We were all in tents. It was kind of like a refugee camp but way more organized. So there were about 20,000 tents all lined up. It was an interesting experience; but it was really fun. There's so many different activities that you can do there,



Phillip on top of [ ]



David and Kyle snowshoeing on [ ]



Stuart and Phillip goofing off at the World Jamboree

along with all the cultures that were there. That was a very interesting part of the entire trip.

**PD:** It was like crazy just to see everyone. And their scouting organizations because it's different all around the world. And just meeting new people; I talked to this one person from Finland. And you still keep in touch with them.

**DR:** I think my most memorable experience was when I went with a bunch of my friends to Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico. We went on a 12-day backpacking trip. And we did a bunch of different activities; we hiked, we did hatchet throwing, we did some conservation work and we got to shoot black powder rifles, which was really cool.

We also did a hike that was around twelve miles. It was a really hard day. We summited two mountains in the same day. There was no water along the way. We each started out with four Nalgens and by the time we got to camp, we were all empty. It's was like 92 degrees at the hottest. We got into camp at 7:30, so we hiked for like 13 hours. It sounds really miserable. In the moment, it wasn't very fun but looking back, it was super fun.

**KR:** We went to the Northern Tier High Adventure Base this past summer in Canada. We went on a 60-mile canoe trip and we had tons of terrible weather and windy weather and other bad things. But looking back on it, it was really fun. It was like



Phillip and Stuart [ ]

thunder bound, where you can't go on water and windbound. So you have to stand on the shore and just wait for it to pass.

There was one day we went through the swamp and there was what they call moose muck. It's like brown gooey quicksand. I mean, it went up to maybe our waist. We were carrying bags that were like 100 pounds. It was warm and stinky. It's really kind of gross. You can't push a boat through it because it's just mud. It's like thin mud.

**What kind of mindset do you need to get through these adventures?**

**DR:** I think you just think that you've got to get through it to get to camp. The moose muck was in the first mile of the day. And so you just keep going for the next 12 miles. You can't shower. We all have kind of a particular musk. You have a pair of pants that you only wear on the trail and in the water. They just get stinky and dirty.

**What other adventures have you had?**

**SH:** A couple years ago, all of us went to Emerald Bay which is on Catalina Island just outside of LA. We took a ferry there. That was an interesting experience taking the ferry with a lot of throw up. It was really rocky on the waves and everything. But once we got there, we set up camp and we had a whole week there. We did all these different activities, but there was one day that we did a canoe trip around the horn of the island and we ended up on Parson's Landing.

There were only a set amount of canoes. And there were a lot of people this day that were going to this beach. So there were way more people in the canoe than there should have been. There are about four more. And we had these big jugs of water that we were supposed to bring ourselves. So we get into the water and we're



Stuart enjoying snorkel adventures on Parson's Landing



David on Mt. Huron

just more focused on our canoeing more than anything else. So we're getting there, we're getting there. And about a thousand feet down the way, we look at the side of the canoe and there's about an inch of the canoe to the water.

**PD:** We were like eleven people. There were supposed to be eight. Apparently we were too many people for one canoe but not enough for two canoes.

**SH:** We couldn't dock on the beach because there were all these rocks and waves and everything. And if we tried to go up, we would have hit a rock or something or capsized. So we had to get out in about chest deep water to push the canoe in. And there was this guy yelling at everyone. We were trying to figure out what to do. And I like fall out of this thing. We are trying to swim it in but we can't walk it in because we can't even touch the bottom so then we're all up to our necks or chest in water and we don't know how deep it is. And then we're all screaming because the water off the coast is so cold - it's Pacific water!

We got to the beach and then we did these different snorkel outings on the beach. We slept without tents. And we looked at the stars and everything. That day we went snorkeling and it was really cool to see the kelp forests. There were tons of kelp forest in the snorkel area. After that, we hiked to another cove that had lots of rock; that was a mistake to go there because the waves were insane that day. We could get out easily into the water, but when we came back, the waves were just pounding. People were getting battered and blood everywhere.

**PD:** That night, we made a cast iron dinner and dessert. Again, like the canoe, we all had one dutch oven. So the bigger troops, they got multiple dutch ovens. But we only got to cook just one dutch oven so we got really small portions. We got back and ate a lot of oatmeal. Summer camps don't exactly have the best food...

**SH:** But it was really cool to see the ocean and all the jellyfish. We slept on the beach that night and looking at the stars was amazing. I woke up in the morning and there was water about four inches away from my sleeping bag. That was my experience!

**Please join us next month to learn more about the activities and accomplishments of our neighborhood Boy Scouts!**



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# Meet **David Kurt:** Fulfilling Dreams of Homeownership

Like all long-time locals, David Kurt with U.S. Bank Home Mortgage, answered the call from the mountains and moved to the Vail Valley in the early 1990's to ski. In addition to the outdoors, it was the sense of community that really encouraged Dave to put down his roots. "Over the years, I have literally lived in every section of this wonderful valley - from Eagle Vail to Minturn, West Vail to Edwards and now I'm at home with my two daughters, Cassidy (15) and Dakota (12), in Eagle Ranch." Dave has enjoyed all the perks that comes with small town mountain living and moved into the mortgage industry to help other people fulfill their dreams of living in the Vail Valley.

This year, Dave is enjoying his 20th year in the mortgage industry and has been with U.S. Bank Home Mortgage since 2006 when U.S. Bank opened their doors in Avon. Dave still finds his

greatest satisfaction from helping his clients obtain their dream of homeownership. "Whether it's a young couple purchasing their first home to start a family or a second homeowner who has chosen the Vail Valley as their full-time retirement home, the responsibility associated with helping people navigate the biggest purchase of their lives is extremely rewarding."



"I love that I get to help neighbors become homeowners. Our community is close enough that I get to continue a friendship that is established during the mortgage process. I truly love running into past clients at the grocery store, post office, or on the slopes and hearing about the changes they made to their house to turn it into their home."

This philosophy has worked well for Dave as he continues to succeed in the mortgage industry from his office in Avon. Dave is an annual winner of the U.S. Bank Home Mortgage Legends of Possible Award given to the top 20 loan officers in the country and has his eyes set towards the future.

The best part of staying in this industry for so long is the opportunity to continue working with clients in all the phases of their lives. "I recently worked with a client who I originally met in my office when he was 5 years old while helping HIS parents purchase their first home. Not only was it an honor and extremely humbling to receive this referral, but it also made me wonder how in the heck the time has gone by so fast. As they say, "time flies when you are having fun!"

David Kurt is located in the Avon, CO U.S. Bank building. You can contact David via phone at 970-376-3948 or email at [David.Kurt@usbank.com](mailto:David.Kurt@usbank.com).



Dave as the annual emcee for Pink Vail on the Golden Peak stage in 2019

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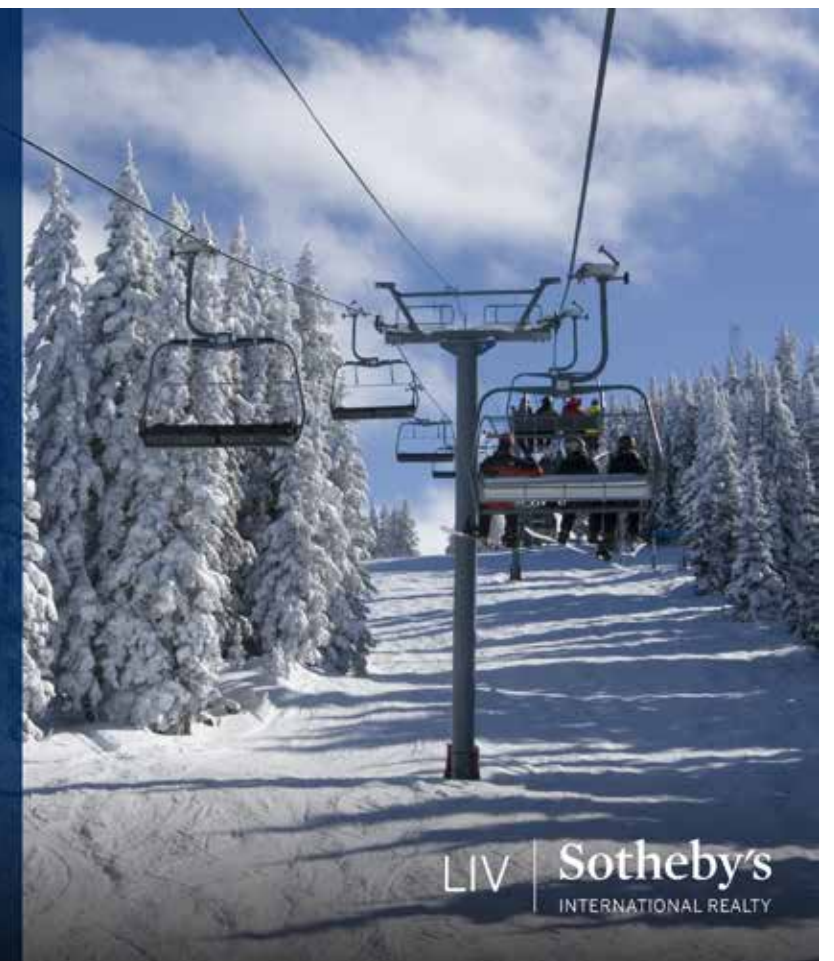
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# Tobogganing The Great Wall of China

China occupies roughly the same landmass as the United States. The 2019 estimated population of the U.S. is 327 million. China's is more than 1.4 billion, more than four times that of the United States. Most Chinese live in the humid south and more than half of them live in cities. New York City—with its 8.5 million population—is a mere piker compared to Beijing with its 19 million. And Beijing is only the second-largest city in China. First is Shanghai with more than 24 million souls. Oh yeah, Shanghai and Beijing are the two largest cities in the world. The Big Apple straggles in at number 28, just ahead of Nanjing... China. Nine of the 30 largest cities in the world are in China, all of them with populations of greater than 8 million. China has 160 cities of over a million people and 53 greater than 2 million. Denver is the 19th largest city in the US with a population of around 732,000.

If you've ever been stuck in LA traffic, you don't know nothin' till you've had the pleasure of rush hour in Shanghai or Beijing. China is big. In places you can cut the air pollution with a cake server. And in China, you are never alone.

Not only are there—literally—more than a billion-and-half Chinese, but Big Brother is definitely watching. In every commercial vehicle, one camera watches the passengers, another keeps an

eye on the driver and a third observes the road. You are warned in Chinese passenger airlines that you are being watched. In one public bathroom we stopped in, there was a sign in both English and Chinese that warned “Vandalism of a public facility is a crime punishable by up to life in prison.” Yikes! Needless to say, we zipped up quickly.

To house the teeming population, the government has been busy. There are—all across the country, from Beijing to Xian to Guilin to Shanghai—what we came to call “mountain ranges” of apartments. They consist of largely uninspired rectangles hurtled skyward in metastatic clusters of 30, 40, 50 or more buildings, each one reaching fifty or so stories and standing shoulder-to-shoulder with the phalanx of its identical clones. Half a mile later is another cluster with slightly different colors and embellishments and half a mile later is another and then another and another. And they ain't nearly done.

Everywhere you look, more and more and then more clusters are being constructed. If Japan is the land of Red Crowned Crane, China is the empire of the construction crane. They are—without exaggeration—everywhere, piercing the gray-green, smog-choked sky, there are scores upon scores of and then more scores of them.

Another thing or two before we get on the road. In June, southern China is like standing on hot coals hot with dank-dish-rag-smothered-over-your-nose-and-mouth humidity. Be prepared to sweat. To quench your thirst, you will have to slake it with tepid water; the Chinese do not like their drinks chilled. Go figure.

Chinese food? Ain't nothing like P.F. Chang. In China, they don't know a Kung from a Pao. Be more prepared for a chicken—bones and all, sliced sagittally with his head, neck and feet delightfully arrayed on your platter. One local told us, “The Chinese eat everything in the air except the airplane, everything in the water except the boat, and everything on the land except the table.” Believe it. In our experience, most food is spicy. With a few exceptions where the food was really good, most was, well... interesting.

One more nasty bit before we shove off from the shore for our adventure: toilets. Except in western hotels, most of are the squat type, even in nice restaurants and—a word to the wise—bring your own TP and soap. Oh yeah, if you want to Google while you are there, download a VPN before you go; without one, you will have trouble accessing the censored sites which, by American standards, is nearly everything.

## BEIJING

Everything is so big, you don't quite know where to focus. My own estimate was that Tiananmen Square (which had just “celebrated” 30 years from the protests—you know, the one with the puny little guy staring down the line of tanks) could probably stand a million people—maybe more. The scale of it is simply mindboggling. I stopped for a quick photo and when I looked up, I could not find any of my people. Had we not been able to text, I'd probably still be there thrashing for a way out.

Tiananmen leads to the ancient Imperial City which, in turn, leads to the Forbidden City which is, well... no longer forbidden. Besides the swarms of people, there are classic Chinese buildings, massive courtyards, streams and gardens that used to serve the emperor, his courtesans and—on pain of death—no one else.

There is so much of so much, it is simply overwhelming; you take in what you can. Once through the Forbidden City, we were spit out its back end, crossed the street, and climbed the stair-cased hill in Jingshan Park which overlooked the Forbidden City in the foreground, the Imperial City at midrange and Tiananmen beyond.

The morrow took us to Mutianyu, a village an hour-and-a-half or so from Beijing and one of the several access points to the Great Wall. The Great Wall spans more than 13,000 miles. Read that again. From LA to New York, then back. And then back once more for good measure. It's... what's the word? ... sorta big?

Incongruously, the way to get from Mutianyu to the Wall is by chairlift, a two-seater of the kind that used to populate Vail Mountain. Up and up you go until, at last, you are deposited at the base of the Great Wall.



The view from Victoria Peak



Bund from the water at night



The Great Wall

Then, you begin to climb. You see, the wall is not flat. Oh my, no; not by a long shot. It climbs up hill and dale, is wide enough for a semi-truck to stretch out its broad elbows, and is oh-my-god tall. How they built it with nothing but ingenuity and muscle simply beggars the imagination. Where it climbs—and there are many, many places where it climbs—there are stairs with four inch risers and then ranks and ranks of others with twenty-inch risers. Especially in the oppressive heat, to make tracks up the wall is a workout. Every two hundred yards or so it's a stone fortress which, in the day, presumably stocked supplies and personnel and provided for extra fortification. I imagine many a hearty invader, after trekking god knows how many miles looked up at the wall and said, “Well WTF?” and then retraced his steps.

A few hours on the Wall and it was time for... yup, a toboggan ride? That is, indeed, how one descends the 2,000 vertical feet or so back to Mutianyu. You hop on a toboggan—pretty much like Vail's Forest Flyer—and like a wailing Banshee, down you go!

## XIAN

A bullet train took us faster than a speeding bullet to Xian, ancient capital of China, home to the emperors of 13 dynasties.

What most people come to Xian for is the Terracotta warriors. But there are some surprises too. The ancient city walls—much in the design of the Great Wall but flat on top and perhaps only 50 or 60 feet tall, encircle the old royal city over a distance of 8 miles. Its cobbled top is wide enough that every September, the City Wall Marathon is run on the walls. There are bike concessions on the wall and you can rent a mountain bike to tool around.







Along the Li River



The Dragon's Backbone

A short distance away, is another surprise. I for one did not expect a huge Middle Eastern souk (marketplace) in the ancient heart of China. Within the Muslim Quarter is the country's largest mosque, a serene respite in this bustling city. After an evening dinner show of dim sum (small steamed dumplings with everything inside except the plane, the boat and the table) and traditional song and dance, we were off early the next day to the impressive Buddhist Temple Complex and then on the see the warriors.

The Terracotta Army is a collection of clay sculptures depicting the armies of Qin Shi Huang, the first Emperor of China. It is a form of funerary art buried with the emperor in 210–209 BCE with the purpose of protecting the emperor in his afterlife. The figures were discovered in 1974 by local farmers in Lintong County, outside Xi'an, Shaanxi, and vary in height according to their roles, with the tallest being the generals.

The figures include warriors, chariots and horses. Estimates are that the three pits containing the Terracotta Army held more than 8,000 soldiers, 130 chariots with 520 horses, and 150 cavalry horses, the majority of which remained buried in the pits near Qin Shi Huang's mausoleum. Other terracotta non-military figures were found in other pits, including officials, acrobats, strongmen and musicians. The largest of the three buildings housing the warriors is perhaps the length and width of 4 football fields. To say it is impressive is to understate it.

This is a good moment to pause. Something that must be said about China is that it is astride both the first world and the third. What China seems to have skipped is what is in the middle. In places, life is extraordinarily primitive and in others, change is happening at warp speed (more on that in Shanghai and Hong Kong). One example we noted was at the Xian Xianyang airport which was slick and clean and modern. There are sleeping pods the size of kiosks you can rent by the hour. To help while away the time, there are karaoke pods that seat four for rent. But perhaps slickest of all, if you stand before the departure/arrival board, the board will do a little facial recognition on you and, because your image has been taken about a zillion times, up pops your image in the upper right hand corner, with your name, flight number, gate and flight status.

## GUILIN

A two-hour flight took us to Guilin, hard against the Li River, and renowned for its "karst" scenery. Karst is a topography formed from the dissolution of soluble rocks such as limestone, dolomite, and gypsum. If you think of the sharp blades that stood up from the backs of dinosaurs and then enlarged them to the height of a thousand feet or more, that gives you an idea. It is as if dinosaurs, or perhaps more aptly dragons, are sleeping—spines up—among the verdant landscape. The karsts are everywhere and a cruise down the Li River to the hot and teeming bustling market town of Yangshou is a must.

The "Dragon's Backbone" consists of terraced rice fields built along the slope winding from the riverside up to the mountain top, (upslope about 2,500 ft). It is a coiling staircase that divides the mountain into layers of water in spring, green rice shoots in summer, rice in fall, and frost in winter. The terraced fields were mostly built about 650 years ago.

Nearly as impressive as the rice fields are the villages hanging by their fingernails and little more than grit to every crook and interstice of the mountain. Bamboo rice is the local dish—rice with every this and that cooked in a bamboo stalk—and for the more adventurous, there is bee wine or snake wine; wine fermented with a stack of bees or coiled snake curled in it.

## SHANGHAI

Shanghai may have been the biggest surprise. From the ancient "water village" of Luzhi (the "Venice of China") to the gleaming downtown waterfront along the Huang-Po, Shanghai is the booming financial center of this vast nation. Many of the tallest buildings in the world line its impressive waterfront including the second tallest in the world, the Shanghai Tower, from whose observatory levels on 118th and 119th floors (no, that is not the top!) the view is stunning. Well below your feet, is the Shanghai World Finance Center (known as the bottle opener), the 12th tallest building in the world.

Shanghai is a city of contrasts. On one bank of the Huang-Po—known as the Bund—are the old, impressive British administrative buildings, museums, and other historic colossuses dating from the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Across the bay, everything is new and tall and glitzy. Along the Bund, a five-times-the-size-of-life statue of Mao looks out on a bit of greenery but is all but lost in the gleam and glam across the bay. A replica of the Wall Street bull is a favorite attraction along the Bund... in communist China circa 2019.

At 7:00 PM, the Bund comes alive. All of the historic buildings are beautifully lit, adopting a largely golden hue, and across the bay, for miles left and right as you walk along the river, the skyscrapers dance with light. Think Las Vegas. Everything is roiling and bubbling, images flash up and down the 100-plus floor skyscrapers. Everything and everywhere is a-pulse and the Bund is thick with gawkers. A boat cruise at night along the Bund was a highlight.

Then in a bow to communist austerity, at 11:00 PM—precisely—all the lights go off. The party's over. Time for all good citizens to go home.

## HONG KONG

Victoria Harbor is a mountain range of high-rises. From one ceaseless end to the other, buildings thrust up like so many spears. The population is 7-and-a-half million and the population density is 17,500 per square mile. By comparison, the population density in Eagle County is 31 per square mile. Yup, Hong Kong is a little thick with people and more vertical than you can imagine; where are you going to house all those hot, humid bodies?

In the evening, we made our way along the Tsim Sha Tsui Promenade which fronts the harbor. At 7:00 each night, there is a musical electric light show with lasers, huge screens, and digital lights that run across the faces of the high-rises while red-sailed junks cruise the waters. With its light boards, lasers and pulsing music, it has the feel of the climactic scene from *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*. It is not to be missed.

China. From its zig-zag bridges to ward off evil spirits (who can, apparently, cross only in a straight line), to its stunning landscapes, to its incessant crush of humanity, to its ancient, gardens, architecture and traditions, to its bacchanal of construction, to its rush join the modern world. In a word, it is fascinating.

China is no beach vacation. It takes work and grit and stamina. But the rewards are many. In a world where China is by sheer muscle on the rise, it is good to see and feel, taste and smell, what gives this vast nation its impatient pulse.



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