

PEAK EXPERIENCE

VOLUME 16, NUMBER 2 • SUMMER 2020



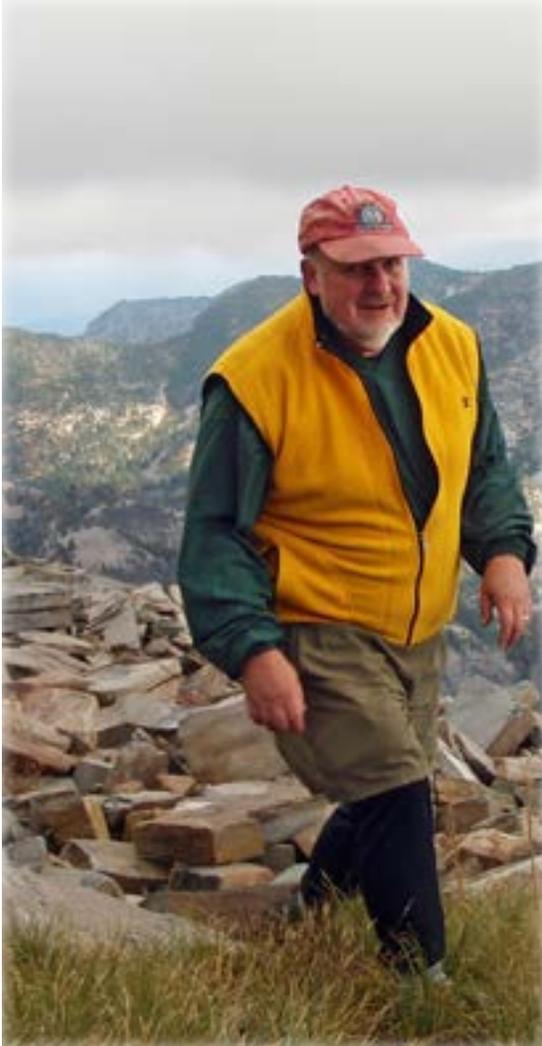
Photo courtesy Vanette Leighty

Page 4 and 5: FSPW podcast brings outdoor voices to life

Making the most of uncertain times

Page 7: Previewing the summer trails season

scotchmanpeaks.org • [#savethewildscotchmans](https://twitter.com/savethewildscotchmans)



From the director: Working in an uncertain time

A lot has changed in the last few months! All of our lives have been impacted by the Corona Virus Pandemic. Cancellations and closures happened fast. Schools and work became at home experiences for some folks. Others ended adrift in an economy that stalled and has only, slowly, restarted. Our relationships shifted to online or double arm length.

No one is used to this new routine. We are all adapting. Public restrictions and response are evolving very fast. We don't know yet what the full impact to our summer will be. Fall and winter are hard to imagine and plan for. This uncertainty creates stress and anxiety. Finding ways to calm ourselves and our community are vital to our collective mental health.

The Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness number-one priority continues to be the health and well-being of our board, staff, volunteers and

community. Our in-person office coverage will be minimal. If you have to come by for something, call first to see if anyone will be there.

We are planning activities like summer hikes and trail projects with appropriate size and safety precautions. Our Trail Ambassadors are gearing up for their weekend outreach. We are hoping to do some fall events, redesigned with social distancing in mind. Sign up for our weekly Insider email to find out more.

A long, or even short, walk in the woods can do everyone a lot of good right now. Unplug from the news and social media for a few hours. Breathe some fresh air, enjoy the scenery. This will lower your stress. Your immune system will thank you. Hike at a safe distance from others. Watch what you touch at the trailhead. Hike locally to limit the exposure and spread travel might create. Be safe.

-Phil Hough

Help the Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness!

Sign up for digital newsletter

Printing and distributing the newsletter is expensive. Save the Friends a stamp and more by signing up for the digital newsletter! You get the same content delivered right to your inbox.

To sign up for the digital newsletter, simply go to www.scotchmanpeaks.org/friends and enter your information.

Make the most of the Cinnabar grant

FSPW wants to thank the Cinnabar Foundation for offering us a challenge grant again this year. And this time it is for \$6,000! We are so excited to show them that you, the Friends of the Scotchman Peaks, are up to the challenge, and so are we! Join in by [donating today](#).

Thank you for all your support!

Supporters of the Friends really came through the last few months. Through Idaho Gives and the FSPW online auction, we raised a total of over \$8,000. That money goes a long way to support the Friends' busy summer season. Keep an eye on www.scotchmanpeaks.org for more ways to help!



Painting outdoors

Some people like to use the French term *Plein-Aire* to describe painting outdoors. As you all know, part of the joy of hiking in the mountains is feeling the cool air on your face, smelling the aromas of plants and animals and touching the rocks and conifer branches. Seeing the light change as the sun moves across the sky, and the grand vistas fading into the very long distance.

These same feelings are what supercharge paintings done outside. So be sure to carry a small box of watercolors and a sketchpad. Just a quick color sketch can amaze you when you look at it later. After all, you are not painting nature – that’s been done. You are painting your own response to nature. Just be sure to keep all senses wide open!

If you want to learn more, check out the website of John Muir Laws on drawing in nature.

-Story and art by Marilyn McIntyre

Autumn Lear joins FSPW as program coordinator

There are some jobs you’ve trained for years to do without knowing it. That’s exactly the case for Autumn Lear, Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness’ new program coordinator.

Already a veteran of wilderness work with experience in both the Sawtooth and Frank Church Wilderness, Autumn’s passion for nature runs deep. Her work experience and degree in ecology and conservation biology, meanwhile, make her a person who understands what stewardship is all about.

“This is something I love, so when I saw this position open up, it seemed like something I’d really enjoy doing,” she said.

Autumn will manage a variety of FSPW programs that underline the importance of our wild backyard. She’ll be overseeing trail stewardship and maintenance, an essential job in keeping

the Scotchmans open and accessible to everyone. Likewise, as head of the Trail Ambassador volunteer program, which keeps the peace between hikers and wildlife, she’ll boost outdoor safety. And with Winter Tracks, which gets regional students outside to learn about nature, she’ll enhance education as well.

“My idea of wilderness is simply being in the wild and allowing nature to take its course — no human involvement,” Autumn said. “It’s really a peaceful feeling for a lot of people, but there are others who don’t necessarily know about it. That’s why it’s important to preserve wilderness, so everyone can discover that wild feeling.”

Autumn has deep roots in the Inland Northwest wilderness. Growing up in North Idaho, Autumn was a frequent visitor forming an attachment to the region early on. It’s a connec-



Autumn Lear

tion that goes back generations, when her great-great-grandfathers worked as local millwrights. In addition, her family is local to Bonner County.



Your Wild Place:

Reaching out over a distance

With the COVID-19 crisis putting a halt to business as usual, the FSPW staff put their heads together on new ways to spread the wilderness word. The result: a brand new podcast.



Sandy Compton

A few months back, our program coordinator Sandy Compton was nearing retirement. I began to think that we needed to audio record some of his classic essays. Sandy is a gifted writer and master storyteller. Listening to Sandy around a campfire is the best way to really appreciate his stories. As we launched our podcast series, "Your Wild Place," Sandy reading his essay "Growing Up Wild" just had to be the first episode! He captures the very sense of this special place. Sandy reflects on what it's like to not only grow up near the Scotchmans. He captures what it's like to grow up WILD, like they are.

-Phil Hough



Jack DeShazer

In episode three of Your Wild Place, Jack DeShazer of Libby, Mont., and Duncan Adams, reporter for the Western News, sit down to discuss Jack's book "The Land Beyond All Roads." Released in December of last year, "The Land Beyond All Roads" is a memoir told through a collection of essays set in the wilds of Montana and Idaho. DeShazer talks about his struggles with dyslexia, his reasons for writing this book and his love for wilderness. The romance of the backcountry runs through each story. He also talks at length about what the Scotchman Peaks country means to him.

-Henry Jorden



Project Ascent students

We talked with Rob Christianson about helping youth as a school counselor in Thompson Falls, Mont., and founder of Project Ascent. His work helped secure 12 climbing walls in Montana schools and evolved after-school programs into the comprehensive outdoor and adventure education program Ascent is today. He is passionate about outdoor recreation, stewardship and experiential and adventure education, and believes wholeheartedly in its benefits for our youth. Project Ascent and the Friends have teamed up during the Bull River Base Camp to educate the campers on wilderness values and stewardship.

-Ray Brown

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Social distancing. Working from home. Teleconferencing. The workstyle may change, but the goal of saving our wild backyard stays the same.

To help flatten the curve while still getting the wilderness word out, Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness has started a podcast. Named “Your Wild Place,” several episodes are available to download or stream right now through the platform of your choice at [www.](http://www.scotchmanpeaks.org/podcast)

[scotchmanpeaks.org/podcast](http://www.scotchmanpeaks.org/podcast).

The podcast is a community effort. It is sponsored by Blue Creek Press, Idaho Conservation League and Montana Wilderness Association. The theme music is written and performed by Ben Olson and Cadie Archer. And regional community members lend their voices and stories that bring wild places to life.

“Your Wild Place” tells personal stories that bring out the humanity in wil-

derness. They explore our relationship to wilderness from many different perspectives. Highlighted here are just a few of the many stories Your Wild Place has captured over the past few months. And many more are on the way.

Follow FSPW on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Soundcloud to catch “Your Wild Place” when new episodes are released. And check out www.scotchmanpeaks.org for news and updates.



Amy Pearson

I was the lucky staff member to sit down (via Zoom) with Amy Pearson. We chatted about her adventures in the Bob Marshall Wilderness that led to her book, “100 Days of Solitude.” I had read her bio and knew a little bit about her, and still was not ready for how awesome this woman of wilderness is. We’ve never actually met. We’ve had a couple video calls is all. And when we’re all allowed to travel again, I want to pack up my little family and go visit her.

Do you have any Amy in your life? We would love to hear from you and them! Especially if you’d like to record it. Shameless plug intended.

-Britta Mireley



Jaspen Kleinsmith

Jeremy Kleinsmith is a father who knows the importance of wild places. His daughter Jaspen and he have been taking their mornings at McArthur Lake Wildlife Management Area. An area that supports over 2,000 ducks (Mallard, Buffleheads, Wigeon and more), waterfowl, geese, marsh birds, shorebirds and is home to bald eagle nesting sites.

In their podcast episode, Jaspen enthusiastically observes many birds with their associated behaviors. Jeremy and his family love to spend time outside appreciating and observing northern Idaho ecosystems. Who knows what other adventures they will find?

-Autumn Lear



Help Your Wild Place reach its peak!

Want to help Your Wild Place thrive? Become a sponsor!

Content sponsors record and submit content that falls under the podcast themes: community, families, storytelling and nature. Financial sponsors can start at a \$50 per episode rate, with multi-episode discounts available. They are entitled to a “sponsor break” in an episode, with a message recorded personally, by FSPW or foregone entirely. They can also choose a content type to sponsor, if they so wish.

You’ll also get a shout out sent out FSPW’s 3,600-plus social media followers. Check out www.scotchmanpeaks.org/podcast/ for more information.

Here's to 10 years

In March, after 10 years on the job, Sandy Compton rode off into the sunset. At least that's what he would have done if he had not taken a "Side Trip from Cowboy." One of his most compelling tales, the story by the same name is a must to understand his world.

Likewise, his story "Growing Up Wild" sums up our connection to the special places in our lives. It's so inspiring, we made it the basis of our first podcast.

Those insights are just one reason why Sandy has been an integral part of the Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness staff. For five years before that, he was a dependable volunteer and our "go-to" graphic design and media contractor, discounting his work at a very good "friends and family" rate. Before that, he spent the previous 50 or so years "Growing up Wild" in the nearby Scotchman Peaks.

No, didn't go in search of those lands that are coronavirus-free. Nor is he practicing the ultimate in social distancing. He retired. A word that he has been reluctant to use. And somewhat rightfully so.

He's not likely to be seen in a rocking chair with a lap blanket. He is more than likely repurposing. Sandy has always led a purposeful life. To the casual observer it may appear that his chief purpose was to ski and drink beer. And not necessarily in that order. Those of us who have had the chance to get to know him better know that Sandy is driven by a purpose to tell stories. His tales help people to connect to the landscape, to connect to each other, to connect to themselves. When you begin to understand Sandy's purpose you will understand

yourself and your community better. And you will come closer to understanding, or at least having empathy for, this crazy, mixed-up world of ours.

So we wish him well and appreciate that his side trip from cowboy and his growing up wild are what brought him into our lives. We are ever grateful he has shared all that with us!

-Phil Hough



Sandy Compton enjoying some of the wilderness that helped define his world.

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Hitting the trails

Summer is the perfect time to lend a hand

Trail season is coming! Please know we care about your safety and appreciate your support, and we anticipate a great trail season to begin in July.

Our summer stewardship program are scheduled and ready for you to sign up! Volunteer and learn about FSPW's

health and safety precautions at scotchmanpeaks.org.

The future of trail work is changing with smaller groups and family-

focused outings. This can be a great way to spend time exploring, picnicking and getting everyone outside with family, all while volunteering and giving back to the community. Learn to use trail tools and be surrounded by the beautiful West Cabinets. Contact Autumn Lear at Autumn@scotchmanpeaks.org to learn more about any of the following work dates and special programs.

Historic Peak Star Trail #999, July 11. Training Day! Learn to build perfect tread, stellar waterbars and become crosscut saw certified. This training encourages good work ethic and motivates trail stewardship!

Goat Mountain Trail, July 17, 22, 26; Aug. 14; Sept. 11. We plan to spend some time on this trail for the coming season with a focus on tread work to maintain a degraded trail. It's a nice hike with exposed uphill climbing.

Star Gulch Trail, July 24, 31; Aug. 6. Trail work to help rehab a burned area from 2015 wildfire.

Ross Creek Trail #142, Aug. 22. We will spend a day building tread to a new creek crossing.

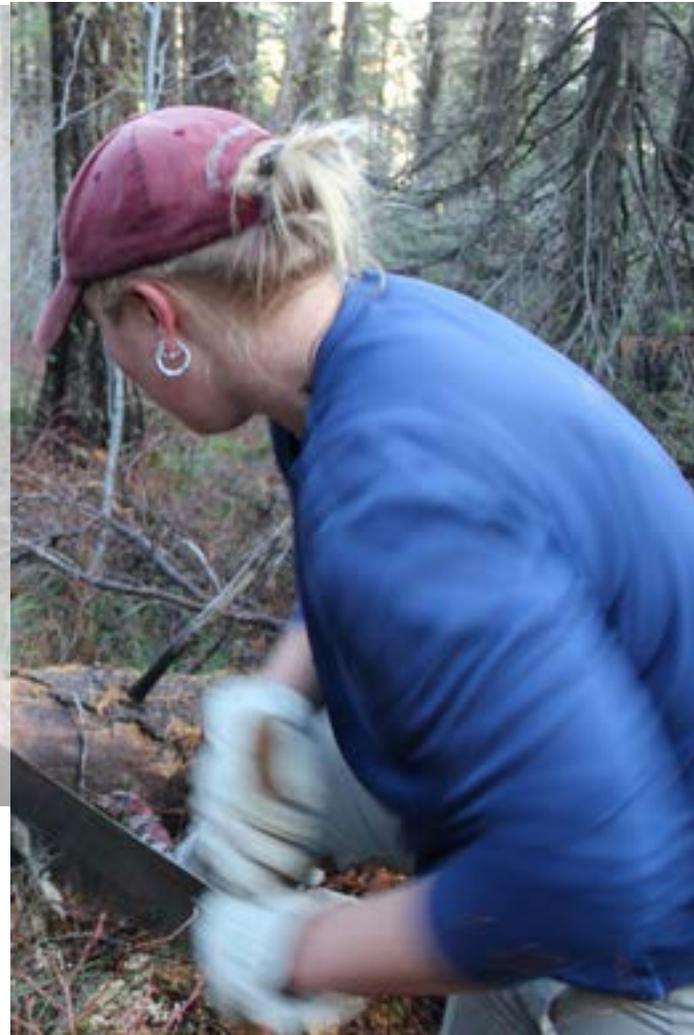
Ross Creek Reroute, Aug. 27-28. We will do trail building, tread digging and some brushing to relocate a trail away from the creek.

Morris Creek, Sept. 26. National Trails Day. We will be focusing on heavy brushing along a creek.

Adopt-A-Trail. Want to work a trail as an individual or family unit? Adopt it! Volunteers will be given light-duty trail tools (loppers, folding saw) to do brushing and other light maintenance within a two-week window or more on their adopted trail. Then report back with conditions and if heavier maintenance is needed. If volunteers really love a trail, they can adopt it for the whole summer and hike it monthly or more. They can hold onto the trail tools for the season.

To adopt your trail, email Autumn.

Trail Monitoring Program. Work with FSPW to establish a trail monitoring tool with integrated map through ArcGIS. We are looking for reports on hiking trails in the Scotchmans. As you're hiking, think about the conditions with a few things in mind: How big were those downed trees? Eight-inch diameter? Twenty-inch diameter? How long was that impassable stretch



Trail volunteers clear brush away during a cleanup day.

of overgrown brush? Including latitude and longitude information is very helpful, along with photos of trail problems. Send us your scenic shots as well!

Goat Ambassadors. Did you know you can volunteer to talk to hikers (at a distance) about the native goats that live in the cabinet mountains? Sometimes, goats get too close, and that's a problem. Do your part to make sure both hikers and wildlife stay safe!

-Autumn Lear

Visit www.scotchmanpeaks.org to sign up for any volunteer opportunity listed here

Congratulations

FSPW scholarship winners share wilderness adventures

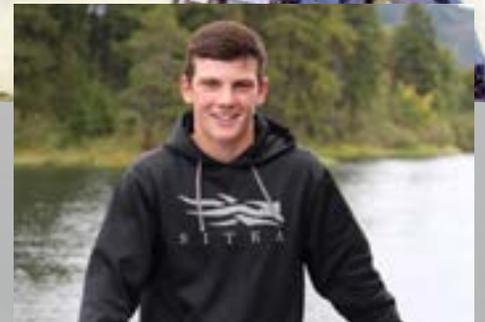
With budding scholars across the country preparing to continue their education, Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness is proud to lend a helping hand with its scholarship program

In Bonner County, Travis Tuttle of Forrest Bird Charter School wrote about his experience climbing Mt. Whitney in California, the tallest mountain in the contiguous United States. Sophie McMahon of Clark Fork High School detailed the lessons and challenges of her backpacking trip in the Patagonia Wilderness. And Bradley O'Brien of Priest River Lamanna High School covered his time spent hunting in wild places.

Ryan Goodman of Libby High School in Lincoln County wrote about a close call he had with a grizzly bear while bow hunting with his family in the Cabinet Mountain Wilderness. Moxley Roesler-Begalke of Troy High School, meanwhile, shared his introduction to Inland Northwest nature after his family moved to Montana.

In Sanders County, Thompson Falls High School student Ethan Brown discussed his time in the Youth Conservation Corps and work on Star Peak Trail. And Reagan Hanks of Thompson Falls High School wrote about the rejuvenation of exercise and camping in nature with family.

Thank you to all students who submitted scholarship essays this year. They're all great examples of why people raise their families in towns with a wild backyard.



FSPW scholarship winners from top to bottom: Sophie McMahon, Ryan Goodman, Travis Tuttle, Moxley Roesler-Begalke, Reagan Hanks, Ethan Brown and Bradley O'Brien.



The Sanchez kids take a hike in their wild backyard. Photo courtesy Rebecca Sanchez

State of the Scotchmans 2020

Want to find out our pick for Old Goat of 2020? Tune in to State of the Scotchmans on July 1 to find out!

We're taking a socially distanced approach to the State of the Scotchmans this year. All you need is an internet connection to join in! It happens

Wednesday, July 1, at 6 p.m. PST and 7 p.m. MST.

The hour-long livestream will include live music from Bob Missed the Bus, an announcement of volunteer awards like the coveted Old Goat of the Year and a drawing for some AMAZING raffle prizes from Six Moon Designs and Syringa Cyclery.

Check out <http://bit.ly/2020StateoftheScotchmans> for information on how to join the live stream.

Join us for Sanders County Picnic!

Come out for some fun with the Friends! You'll get to hear a general update and learn more about the exciting projects we have planned for the summer.

We will meet at the same place, the Bull River Campground Pavilion Saturday, June 27, 3-6 p.m. MST.

Keep in mind we will be practicing social distancing during the event. The picnic tables will be separated and

seating limited at them, so bring a folding chair. We will cook up some burgers and provide beer and all the other beverages. We do ask you bring your own side dishes and

We know that wearing a face mask isn't too practical while eating and drinking, so please keep six feet apart from anyone not indoor family.

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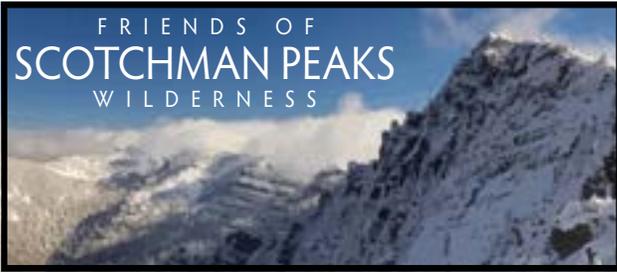
Uniting thousands of Montanans and Idahoans to save the wild Scotchmans for our children and grandchildren.



Thanks to all who joined in the fun!

Save us a stamp!

Sign up to receive Peak Experience by email at scotchmanpeaks.org/friends/



Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness, Inc.
PO Box 2061, Sandpoint, ID 83864

YOU CAN SAVE THE WILD SCOTCHMANS!

- **Donate to FSPW** to save the incredibly wild Scotchman Peaks for our children and grandchildren. **To donate, visit our website or mail in the form below.**
- **Volunteer** your time whether it's breaking a sweat on the trail, talking to folks at an outreach table, or helping with office work.
- **Save us a stamp** and printing costs by receiving Peak Experience by email.

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