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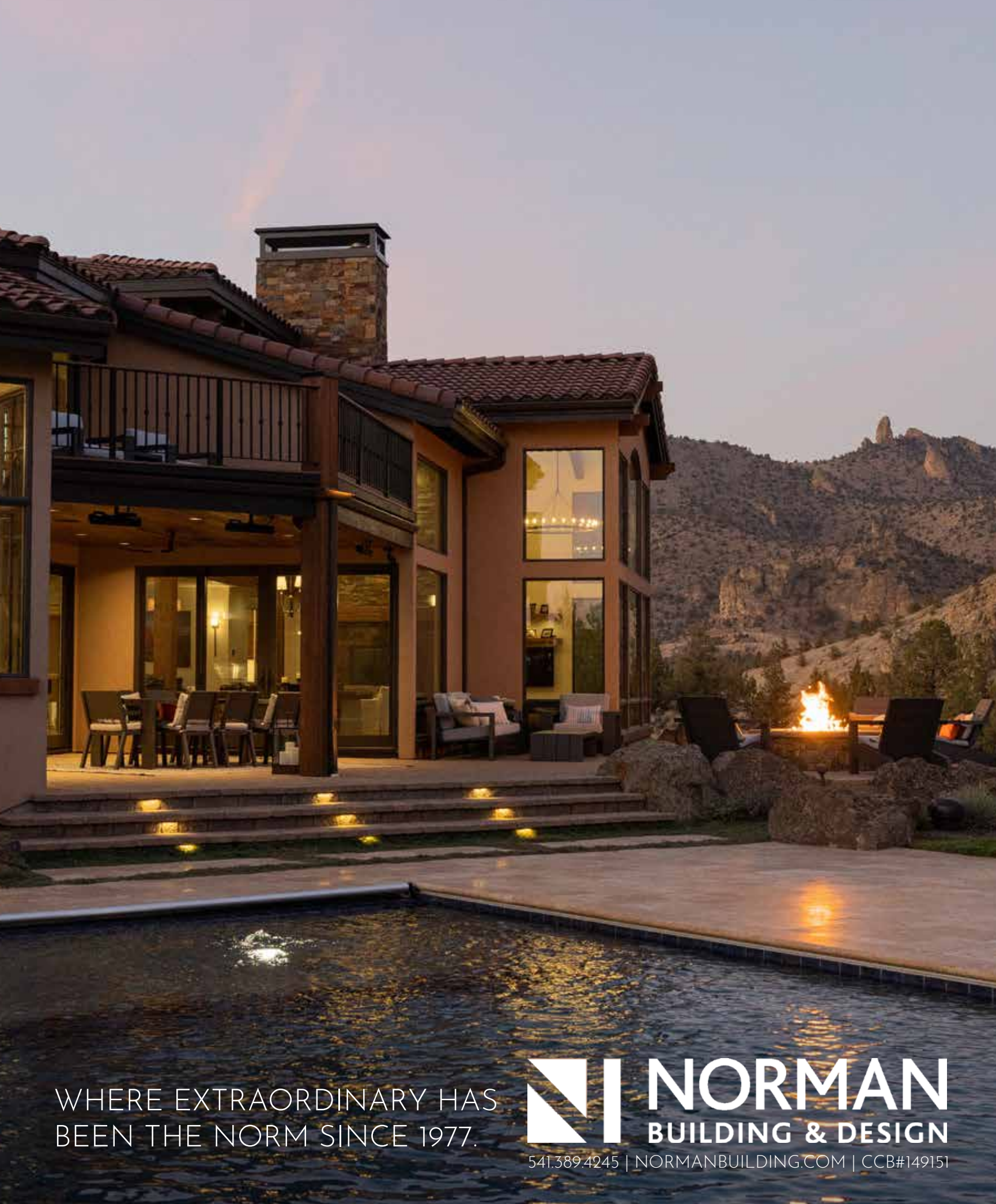
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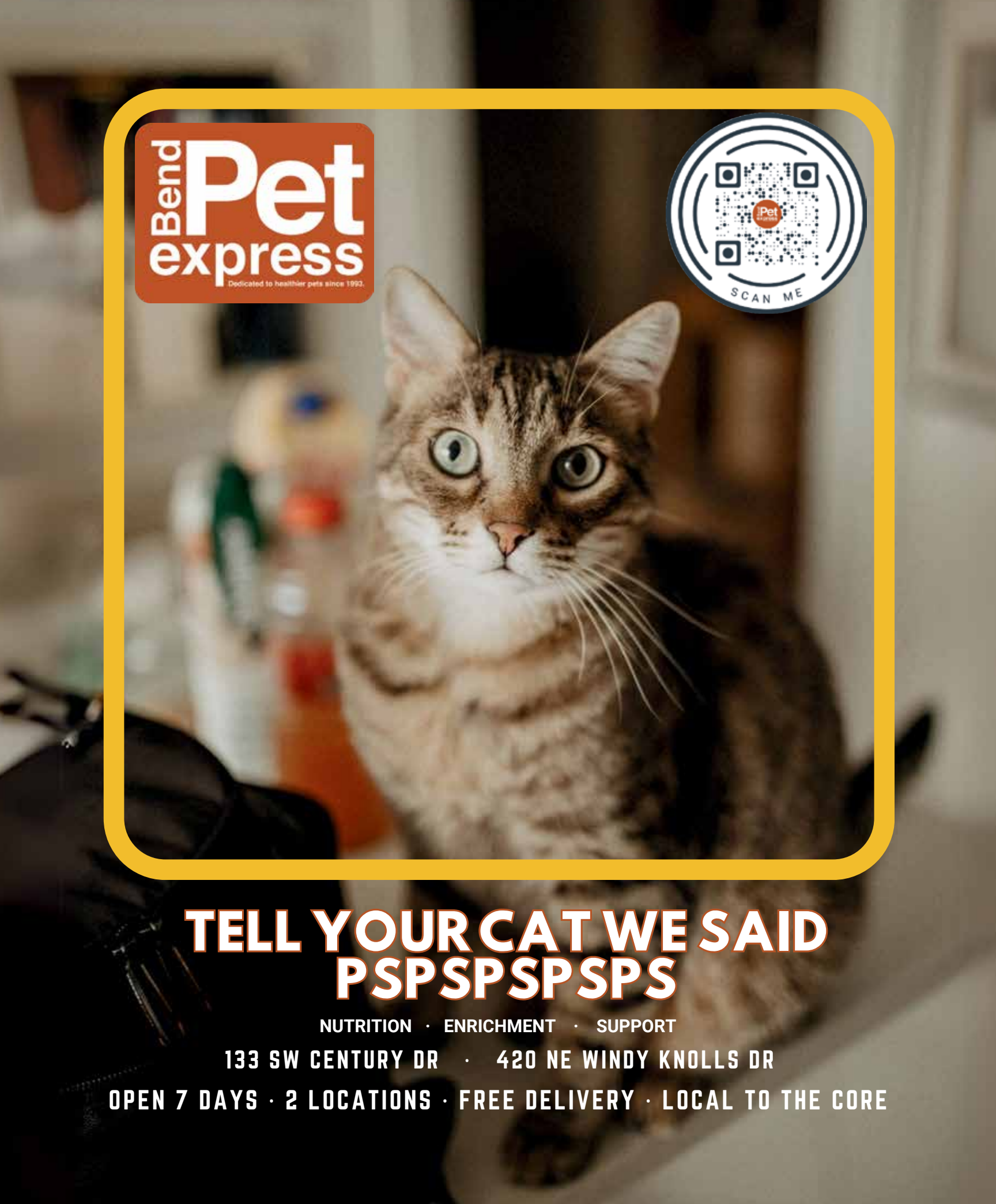

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MAY

05-19 JAMES TAYLOR & HIS ALL-STAR BAND // TINY HABITS
05-25 STING 3.0
05-26 STING 3.0
05-28 KHRUANGBIN // JOHN CARROLL KIRBY
05-29 BRAD PAISLEY // WALKER HAYES, MAE ESTES
05-30 AN EVENING WITH GOOSE
05-31 THE BLACK KEYS // HERMANOS GUTIÉRREZ

JUNE

06-01 LEON BRIDGES // LA LOM
06-05 MUMFORD & SONS // DIVORCE
06-06 MUMFORD & SONS // DIVORCE
06-07 YACHT ROCK REVUE
06-14 STYX & KEVIN CRONIN + DON FELDER: THE BROTHERHOOD OF ROCK TOUR
06-15 PETER FRAMPTON
06-21 JON PARDI // KASSI ASHTON
06-22 EARTH, WIND & FIRE
06-28 BARENAKED LADIES // GUSTER, FASTBALL
06-29 PINK MARTINI WITH CHINA FORBES

JULY

07-02 LAKE STREET DIVE // THE 502s
07-09 COLLECTIVE SOUL AND +LIVE+ // OUR LADY PEACE, GREYLIN JAMES RUE
07-11 BILLY CURRINGTON & KIP MOORE // MARLON FUNAKI
07-12 TREVOR NOAH
07-18 JERRY SEINFELD
07-23 DROPKICK MURPHYS AND BAD RELIGION
07-24 MAOLI
07-26 THE RED CLAY STRAYS
07-30 OLD DOMINION // REDFERRIN
07-31 DISPATCH // JOHN BUTLER W/ BAND, G. LOVE & SPECIAL SAUCE, DONAVON FRANKENREITER

AUGUST

08-02 CAAMP // FUTUREBIRDS
08-03 JOE BONAMASSA
08-05 MY MORNING JACKET // MELT
08-07 WHISKEY MYERS + TEDESCHI TRUCKS BAND
08-08 TEDESCHI TRUCKS BAND + WHISKEY MYERS
08-11 RAINBOW KITTEN SURPRISE // MEDIUM BUILD
08-12 RÜFÜS DU SOL // GLASS BEAMS
08-13 THE LUMINEERS // TOM ODELL
08-14 THE LUMINEERS // TOM ODELL
08-15 TRAMPLED BY TURTLES & SHAKEY GRAVES
08-16 GLASS ANIMALS // ORLA GARTLAND
08-17 ALABAMA SHAKES // SHANNON AND THE CLAMS
08-19 COUNTING CROWS // THE GASLIGHT ANTHEM
08-21 LAINEY WILSON // ERNEST, KAITLIN BUTTS
08-22 MT. JOY
08-23 MATT RIFE // 18+ ONLY SHOW
08-29 GOO GOO DOLLS // DASHBOARD CONFESSIONAL
08-30 JAPANESE BREAKFAST // GINGER ROOT
08-31 AN EVENING WITH CHICAGO

SEPTEMBER

09-10 NEIL YOUNG AND THE CHROME HEARTS
09-12 KIDZ BOP LIVE
09-18 WARREN ZEIDERS // CHAYCE BECKHAM

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DIGITAL EXTRAS

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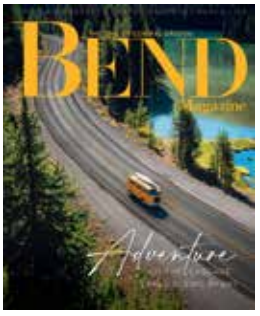

ON THE COVER
Michael McLandress and his dog Skye explore the Cascade Lakes.

PHOTO BY
CODY RHEAULT

PHOTO BY JESSE POLAY

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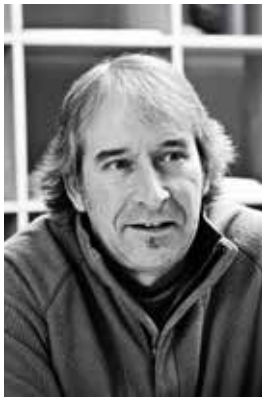

CAM DAVIS
WRITER

A freelance writer with a passion for travel and outdoor adventure, Cam Davis has been exploring the Cascade Lakes Scenic Byway since the days when it was distinctively paved with red volcanic cinders instead of black asphalt. After moving to Bend in 1991, he began collecting a library of books which provided a wealth of knowledge about the area's history, geology, culture and little-known facts that inspired his 10 years of writing travel guides for the Central Oregon Visitor's Association. In the feature "Beyond a Road Well Traveled," Davis explores the hidden stories and natural wonders of the Cascade Lakes Scenic Byway, on page 82.

SIENA DORMAN
WRITER

Born and raised in Oregon, Siena Dorman began writing for her high school newspaper, then continued at the University of Oregon and while interning abroad in London, where she fell in love with sharing people's stories on the page. She's passionate about gastronomy, travel and the people behind creative works. Dorman's work is inspired by the community that makes Central Oregon so special. When she's not writing, you'll find her in the sun, testing new recipes or chasing after her niece and nephews. Join Dorman as she celebrates the heart and mission behind J Bar J Youth Services on page 51.

TINA PAYMASTER
PHOTOGRAPHER

The art of photographing food, beverages, restaurants and products are all in a day's work for Bend-based Tina Paymaster. From spending hours in the dark room in high school to studying photography in college, Paymaster loves how the world can transform into something magical through the lens and editing processes. Her journey has led her to careers in graphic design, health, nutrition coaching and commercial photography. She loves to create imagery that tells a story and leaves the observer hungry for more. Zoom into the artful worlds of sushi and Moroccan cuisine through her images on pages 89 and 97.

CODY RHEAULT
PHOTOGRAPHER

A professional filmmaker, photographer and budding writer, Sisters-based Cody Rheault travels the globe telling stories of people and places with his camera. Using a candid documentary style, Rheault's work is inspired by the outdoors. He's spent much of his career honoring the life of military veterans through short films. When not behind the lens, Rheault enjoys time with his family, hiking local peaks, disc golfing or riding his motorcycle on backroads. For this issue, Rheault captured the ingenuity of a model airplane club and went behind the scenes with high desert ranchers. See pages 45 and 76.

ARIAN STEVENS
PHOTOGRAPHER

Raised in the foothills near Lake Tahoe, Arian Stevens is now based in Bend. He began his photographic journey shooting scenic images of Yosemite National Park using film and a darkroom, and has continued to capture images of the outdoors and the people who roam there ever since. His work has been featured by companies, outfitters, nonprofits and in publications such as *Adventure Journal*, *Field & Stream* and *Sunset*, among others. Here, Stevens immersed himself in Central Oregon's fly-fishing culture to highlight the people, the places and the passion that drives the artistry. See "Flowing Voices" on page 70.

SANDY GRAVES

The series: "In the Seam" consists of three different limited edition sculptures.

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WHILE FAMILIAR ROADS AND RELATIONSHIPS PROVIDE STABILITY, NEW DISCOVERIES AND FRIENDSHIPS COLOR OUR LIVES ALONG THE WAY."

Editor's LETTER

You know it when you feel it: The appreciation of coming around a curve you've navigated hundreds of times before and seeing Mt. Bachelor awash in morning sun, or opening the door after a long day at work to find a familiar smile (or at this time of year, the smell of something pending on the grill). If you know me, you know I'm always game for a road-trip adventure or to try something new, but I also appreciate the path that welcomes me home to Bend.

Apparently, I can be a distracted navigator though. Left to the passenger seat—and to provide color commentary and a playlist—there's no photo opp, coffee shop or "road-we-could-have taken" that doesn't offer potential. It's a wonder we get anywhere. One of my teachers, Keith Carter, for his book *Uncertain to Blue*, followed (and photographed) 200 towns along rural routes in Texas with names that drew him in, like Simplicity, Poetry and Mount Calm. He helped show me how to be curious, and I still love holding a paper map in my hands to see colorful roads fanning out like an array of possibilities.

While there's a certain comfort in well-trodden trails, signature ski runs and finding your way home without a guide, there's also much to be learned while taking an alternative route.

In this issue, we learn about some unlikely instruction that extends beyond a conventional classroom. The Deschutes River provides wisdom about fishing and life as shared in our feature, "In Their Words," through the eyes of flyfishing guides (page 70). Learn about the School of Ranch (page 76), a community hub for people to learn ranching and farming skills once passed on through generations as a testament to the enduring value of practical wisdom.

Artist John Grade found the humble sagebrush as his mystic muse to inspire a sculpture newly installed at the Redmond Public Library. For Ashley Paggi, a 100-day project was a pathway to fine art. Century Drive is a different kind of 100—providing not days, but miles of Central Oregon discovery. Then, Pacific Northwest artist Elizabeth Person handpainted our map of the Cascade Lakes Scenic Byway to illustrate a story by Cam Davis (page 82) that gives reasons to pause and think about what's along this road well traveled.

Bend Magazine is here each issue to consistently give you the best of Central Oregon, but hopefully, we will surprise you a bit, too. While familiar roads and relationships provide stability, new discoveries and friendships color our lives along the way. Shall we explore together? Move over Siri, let's turn up the volume and turn the page.

Cheryl Parton, *Editor in Chief*


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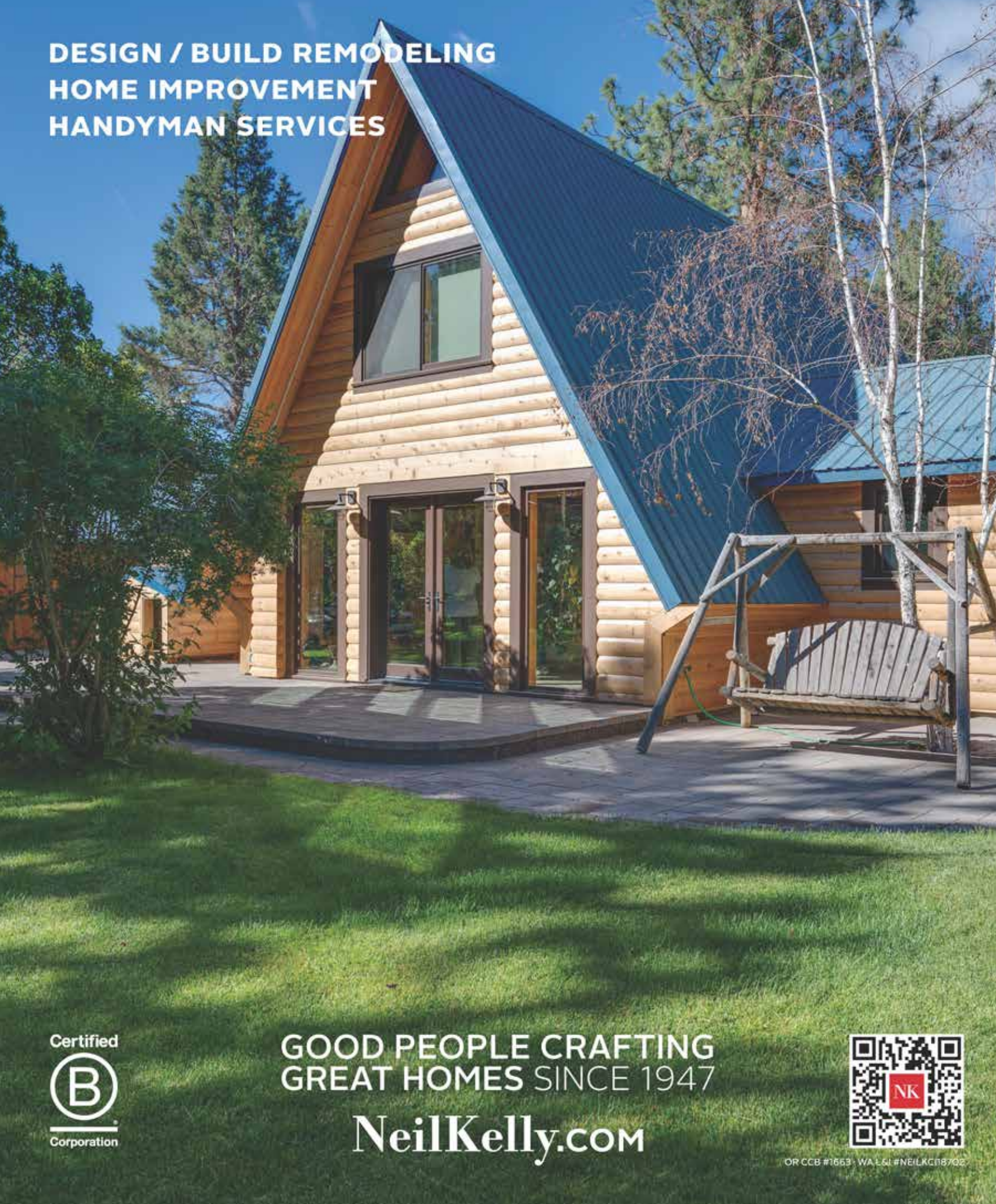
Craving more stories about the community you love? Leap from the printed page to digital content to find inspiration, whether for adventure or amplifying your life, by visiting *bendmagazine.com* and connecting to the events, people and places that define the Bend lifestyle.

PHOTO TOP COURTESY OF BIG PONDEROO BY STARK PHOTOGRAPHY | BOTTOM PHOTOS BY TINA PAYMASTER

1. THINGS TO DO: See what's happening next around Central Oregon, including live music festivals such as Big Ponderoo this June in Sisters at *bendmagazine.com/big-ponderoo-festival*. **2. DINING GUIDE:** Find expanded coverage beyond what you read in the pages of *Bend* and *Savor* magazines, and discover Central Oregon's top dining spots including El Sancho (shown above), at *bendmagazine.com/dining-guide*. **3. YOUR NEXT ADVENTURE STARTS HERE:** Have *Bend Magazine* delivered by mail all year for $5 by using code SPRING4 at *bendmagazine.com/subscribe*.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Growing a Community

75 years of Central Oregon Community College

Beginning in 1949 as night sessions held at Bend High, Central Oregon Community College (COCC) commemorates a milestone this year with its 75th anniversary. During seven-plus decades, the college has become a pillar of the community, offering more than 70 academic programs and a wide array of workshops and events. "Certainly, today's COCC looks incredibly different than we did as a small Bend night school, but our focus on community, on providing affordable, accessible education, and working hand in hand with our regional partners has always been who we are," says Dr. Laurie Chesley, outgoing president of the college. "Our 75th anniversary is undoubtedly a proud moment, but more importantly, it's a celebration of Central Oregon, its people, and what we've accomplished together." To honor the anniversary, COCC is hosting an afternoon of events on May 2, 2025, with speakers, memorabilia, program showcases and of course birthday cake. See *cocc.edu*.

News *Shorts*

HIGH HONORS FOR BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS OF CENTRAL OREGON

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Oregon (BBBSCO) was awarded the 2024 national Platinum Honors, an award that recognizes outstanding team leadership in providing one-on-one youth mentoring. The Central Oregon branch was selected out of 230 Big Brothers Big Sisters agencies across the country for the program's retention and growth. In 2024, BBBSCO served 221 youth, in both the mentor (or "Bigs") and youth ("Littles") categories. In addition, the agency received $10,300 from Lay It Out Events as beneficiaries of Bend WinterFest. See *bbbsco.org*.

NEW REGIONAL PARK PLANNED FOR SOUTHEAST BEND

On 452 acres of former farm and surface-mining land is the planned location of a new recreational space in southeast Bend. In a part of town that is booming with growth, the new park could feature field space, multiple natural areas and concessions. Bend Park and Recreation District is still in the early planning stages of the common grounds, but it is hoping that with community input the new space—second in size to Shevlin Park—will serve the new residents moving into southeast Bend. See *bendparksandrec.org*.

CENTRAL OREGON FUTURE FUND AWARDS GRANTS

Promoting accessible adventure, stewardship and cultural tourism, Central Oregon Visitor Association awarded $280,000 to local projects through its Central Oregon Future Fund. Supporting both visitors and residents, the recipients represent a wide range of projects that protect and enhance the region, its community and the local economy. They include the Antelope Pavilion, a safe and inclusive "stopping place" for travelers to rural areas; the creation of a high desert gravel-cycling guide; and the support of an adaptive golf project in Prineville called Golf "Fore" All. Additional grantees include the Deschutes River Alliance, High Desert Museum, Oregon Adaptive Sports and the Tower Theatre Foundation. See *visitcentraloregon.com*.

COMMUTE OPTIONS CELEBRATES SAFER ROADS

In May, Commute Options hosts community events and activities to support transportation in Central Oregon. From May 6 through 15, the Get There Walk+Roll Challenge encourages the use of anything but a single passenger vehicle to get around town. On May 7, students and their families head to school on foot for Walk to School Day. Year-round, take the free Oregon Friendly Driver course which shows drivers how to safely interact with pedestrians and cyclists while in a vehicle. See *commuteoptions.org*, *oregonfriendlydriver.org*.

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The Soul *of* Central Oregon

ILLUSTRATIONS BY DAVI AUGUSTO

CARSON STORCH

ATHLETE + AMBASSADOR

In recognition of the passion he brings to mountain biking, Bend's Carson Strorch was recognized as co-recipient of a Spirit Award at the Natural Selection Tour event held this winter in New Zealand. Racing against the best mountain bikers in the world, he competed in the freestyle, slopestyle and downhill events. Growing up riding on Central Oregon trails, Storch turned his hobby into a career in 2014. Despite multiple injuries, he has continued to succeed on the global circuit, yet his goals have changed. "I used to be driven by being the best," Storch shared. Now, his focus has evolved to hosting events, filming, building trails and growing the sport. His advice? "To the young riders trying to make it, [while it] sounds cheesy: Just don't give up."

ARIANNA MORRIS

STUDENT + SPOKEN WORD ARTIST

Redmond High School junior Arianna Morris recited her way to the state finals of the Poetry Out Loud competition this spring in Salem, Oregon. One of 11 Oregon students to advance to the championship round, Arianna's poem selections spoke of devotion and the courage to speak one's mind. Inspired by her older sister, Mariah Reynolds, Morris has been competing for three years, bringing a background in theater to her performances. With mentoring from her English teacher Mona Mensing, Morris is charting her own course. While earning a state title is her goal, she said, the doors poetry opens for others is what fuels her passion. "In the part of Central Oregon where I live, it is not very common to be in the arts," she explained. "That challenge has just inspired me to push forward."

MILA SHELEHOFF

COMMUNITY CHAMPION

Founder of nonprofit Art Sprouts, Inc., Mila Shelehoff supports immigrant and refugee families in Central Oregon, nurturing connections and awareness through intercultural storytelling, public art and multicultural events. Born in Kyiv, Ukraine, Shelehoff was influenced by her grandfather—an artist, poet, musician and gardener—who instilled in her the power of storytelling and imagination. A Bendite since 2020, "Mama Mila," as she's known by the community, is a single mother, Nordic ski coach and a compassionate leader. "I hope our work inspires greater empathy, cultural curiosity and a sense of belonging in Central Oregon," she shared. See *artsprouts.org*.

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Rigged and Ready

Overlanding is as much about the journey (and gear) as the destination

WRITTEN BY **ELLEE THALHEIMER**

Look out, Redmond. On June 27, the overlanders are converging. A Toyota Tacoma with 33-inch mud tires and LED lights on a custom bumper might crest the horizon. Behind it might be a Mercedes-Benz Sprinter Van with retractable awnings and skid plates to protect its underbelly. These vehicles are rigged to withstand rough terrain, and there's plenty to explore—the United States has more public land than any other developed country in the world.

PHOTO BY BENJAMIN EDWARDS

Around 17,000 overland enthusiasts and their rigs are expected to descend on the Deschutes County Expo Center for the Overland Expo PNW, a weekend dedicated to off-road adventures. Imagine an off-camber, log-jammed driving course, a backcountry-specific culinary pavilion, more than 300 gear exhibits and demonstrations, educational workshops, and 1,000-plus campers all in one place.

The term "overlanding" originated in Australia, originally referring to moving cattle across long distances. Today, this concept has evolved to mean self-sufficient vehicle travel where the odyssey of traveling is itself the destination. The trend gained momentum in part when Jeep Wrangler fanatics began developing backcountry modifications. Then, during the COVID-19 pandemic, overlanding exploded as people leaned heavily into outdoor recreation and wanted to work remotely—as in faraway forests, canyons or beaches.

"For many people the term overlanding means you have to drive a specific kind of tricked-out rig, but shorter adventures with smaller vehicles can still be overlanding," said David Kerstan, a marketing specialist at Overland Expo. "I like to define overlanding as using a vehicle to get to a place to do a thing—from expeditions in the outback to weekend warriors car camping."

While there is a diversity of approaches to overlanding, a consistent feature is the embrace and utilization of gear and vehicle modifications. Imagine improved suspension, engine snorkels for river crossing, traction boards for tires, intricate mounting systems, hitch-mounted cargo carriers, rooftop solar panels and cell phone boosters for backcountry service.

LOWER LEFT: An EarthCruiser allows access to some of the most remote and beautiful places in the country. RIGHT Put a Cascadia Vehicle Tents (CVT) on a truck to create camp wherever adventure takes you.

PHOTO THIS PAGE BY MADI CARSON | OPPOSITE PAGE TOP BY FLURI ADVENTURES | BOTTOM BY RAY GORDON

FOR MANY PEOPLE THE TERM OVERLANDING MEANS YOU HAVE TO DRIVE A SPECIFIC KIND OF TRICKED-OUT RIG, BUT SHORTER ADVENTURES WITH SMALLER VEHICLES CAN STILL BE OVERLANDING."

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360 Sierra: *A pop-up camper that's towable behind smaller vehicles.* 360sierra.com.

Adventure Truck: *Overland accessory company specializing in locally manufactured racks.* adventuretruck.com.

Cascade Rack: *Vehicle accessories, racks, hitches and installation.* cascaderack.com.

Cascade Van: *Specializing in build outs and custom van conversions.* cascadevan.com.

EarthCruiser Overland Vehicles: *This company makes innovative expedition overland trucks.* earthcruiser.com.

Expion360: *Offering lithium power sources for outdoor pursuits.* expion360.com.

Freespirit Recreation: *Find rooftop and hub tents, as well as awnings, kitchen supplies and lighting systems.* gofsr.com.

Luno: *Vehicle-based camping products, such as mattresses and storage solutions.* lunolife.com.

Oxbow Van Conversions: *Custom van conversions for outdoor adventures.* oxbowvans.com.

Overbuilt Adventure: *Dealer for vehicle-based storage systems, suspensions, bumpers and armors.* overbuiltadventure.com.

PACAYA: *Prepared meal kits for outdoor adventure.* pacaya.camp.

Technique Vehicle Outfitters: *Off-road and expedition-vehicle outfitters and dealer for Overland Explorer Vehicles.* techniquevo.com.

Zamp Solar: *Solar power solutions for vans, overland vehicles and RVs.* zampsolar.com.

Overlanding has recruited a solid following in Central Oregon, where people have an outsized affinity for both getting outside and cutting-edge gear. Naturally, related businesses have popped up in the area and are thriving, from rack specialists to makers of tow-behind tents and backcountry meal kits.

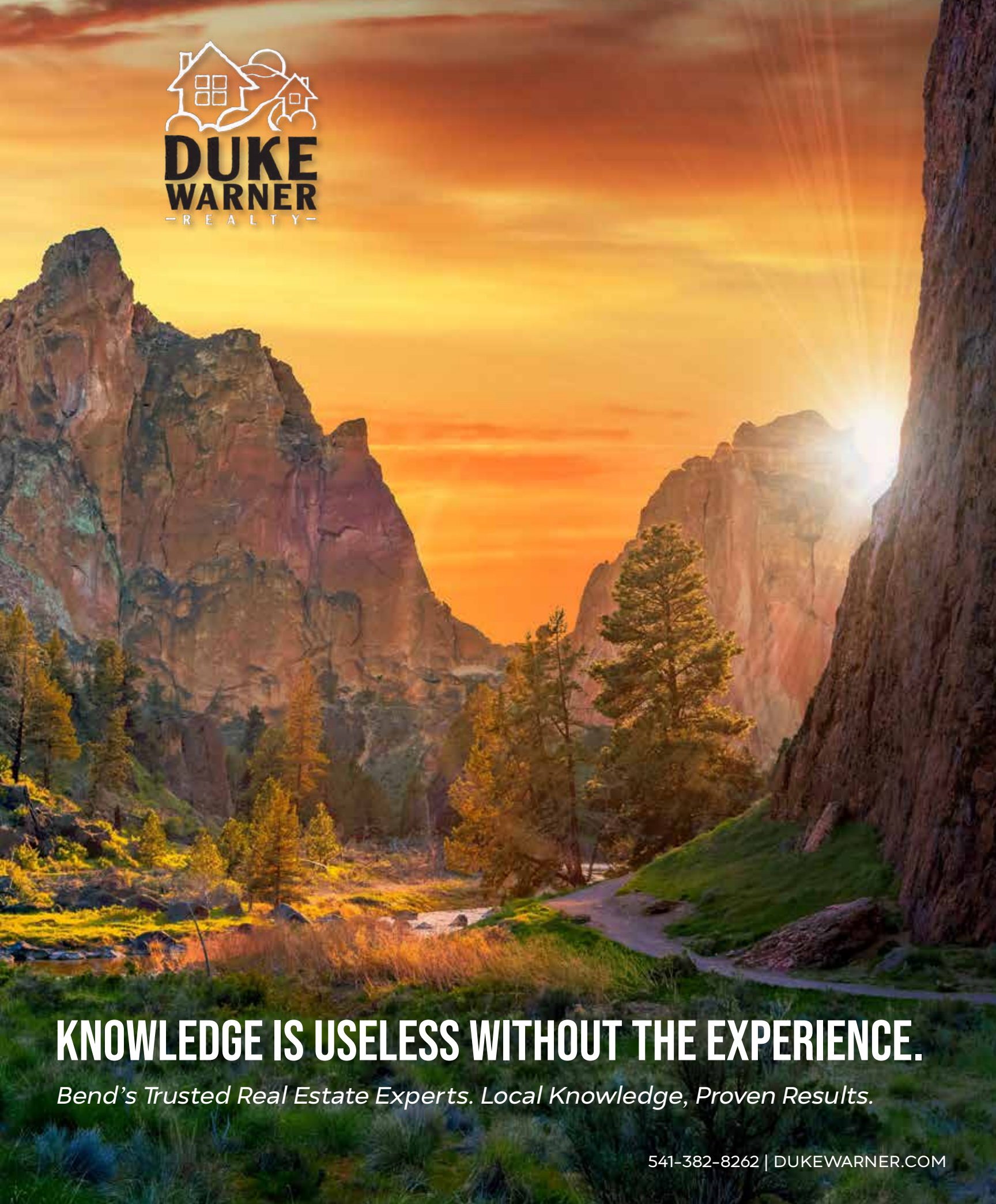
"As an outdoor-centric area, Central Oregon is a hotspot for overlanding," said Kerstan. "Our PNW expo is a place where locals hang out around fires and connect during campground after-parties after expo activities and classes are done."

Many local enthusiasts are a part of the Central Oregon Landcruisers, a collective of people who love to ride their highly equipped vehicles on super rough land and snow. Online, the forum IH8Mud is also a hub for local information. One Oregon group, Team Overland, is a volunteer-run nonprofit based in Southern Oregon which takes veterans on free trips three to four times per year, sometimes exploring Central Oregon. Their trips epitomize the spirit of overlanding and why so many people are drawn to it.

Bobby Raetz, the vice president of Team Overland, describes the magic of retreating deep into the woods: "As we travel away from civilization, we tap back into a mentality of camaraderie and support. We use teamwork to navigate obstacles and set up camp. Then, at the end of the day, we sit around the fire and use that as common ground to communicate."

Overlanding provides the gift of outdoor recreation.

PHOTO BY FLURI ADVENTURES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Strawberry Trails Forever

Wildlife and wildflowers in Eastern Oregon's paradise

WRITTEN BY **ROSEANN DENNERY**

As summer approaches, the wilderness around Bend is brimming with hikers eager to summit buttes and mountain peaks clear of winter snow. But why not take a road trip to explore an equally spectacular landscape with lesser-traversed paths and leave some of the crowds behind? Nestled in the Malheur National Forest of Eastern Oregon is one such place—a glacier-carved valley seeming to rise out of nowhere from the surrounding sage brush hills. This postcard-perfect alpine region is known as the Strawberry Mountain Wilderness, named by homesteader Nathan Willis Fisk—one of Oregon's earliest pioneers—from his simple observation of an abundance of wild strawberries found there."

PHOTO BY GARRETT & NINA, OREGONISFORADVENTURE.COM

Strawberry Lake

To access the Strawberry Mountain Wilderness, hikers starting from Bend drive roughly three-and-a-half hours to the parking area at Strawberry Campground. The sojourner is welcomed with stunning views and more than 100 miles of trails showcasing waterfalls, craggy peaks, spring-fed meadows and seven alpine lakes. The appeal of the Strawberry Mountains is perhaps their ability to simultaneously humble and awe visitors with both a grandeur and quiet nature. The landscape here seems more akin to the Canadian Rockies than the Cascade's high desert peaks—an unexpected delight in what feels like Oregon's forgotten backcountry.

This wilderness is also a haven for wildlife and wildflowers. California bighorn sheep and mountain goats are frequent visitors on the andesite cliff outcroppings. In early summer, the mountain basins bloom with colorful explosions of a variety of wildflower species. Throughout the hillside meadows, paintbrush, lupine and monkeyflower mingle and dance to create a colorful symphony of bright pinks, deep purples and striking yellows.

Fortunately, Fisk's namesake observations still hold true as spring-fed meadows feed the fields and ripe huckleberries and strawberries dot the trails in late summer, offering the hiker plenty of sweet trailside treats. The region is also a backpacker's paradise, offering an ideal setting for a two- or three-day loop to take in one of the few less-touched areas of majestic wilderness east of the Cascade Range.

Here are three hikes that feature some of the most scenic portions of the Strawberry Mountains, all starting from Strawberry Campground. Choose a beginner's loop, or level up to the Summit.

▲ STRAWBERRY LAKE LOOP

If a shorter hike is at the top of the list, the trek around Strawberry Lake provides a perfect introduction to the splendor of the area. The trail picks up at the Strawberry Basin Trailhead in the campground day-use parking lot. It begins with a gradual ascent through a thick fir forest before opening up to a dramatic view of glistening Strawberry Lake. The 4-mile loop follows the shoreline before connecting back to the trailhead and gives ample shaded inlets to take in the valley's breeze, cast your line or enjoy a tranquil picnic lunch. At around the 1.5-mile marker, turn right to take the lesser-traveled path and enjoy the stillness of the lake's western shores on the return.

Distance: 4-mile loop
Difficulty: Easy
Dog and family friendly

STRAWBERRY FALLS AND LITTLE STRAWBERRY LAKE

At the head of Strawberry Lake is a large grassy meadow and a series of bubbling stream crossings. Look for the sign to the falls branching off to the right and begin the climb. In roughly a mile, feel the mist from 60-foot Strawberry Falls—a welcome treat on a hot summer day. Continue on a long switchback toward the footbridge that traverses the top of the falls. The next fork heads uphill toward the Little Strawberry Lake basin. The babbling Strawberry Creek will follow the trail through the next half-mile section of ponderosa pine forest as glistening Little Strawberry Lake comes into view. Keep watch for

PHOTO BY TROY MCMULLIN

mountain goats on the towering cliffs here. There are several secluded sites in which to pitch a tent for overnighting, or head back the same way you came, turning right to explore the other side of the shoreline back toward the falls.

Distance: 6.5 miles out and back
Difficulty: Moderate, but with some challenging sections
Dog and older kid-friendly

▶ STRAWBERRY MOUNTAIN SUMMIT

This trail gains more than 3,000 feet of elevation, so prepare accordingly. At the Strawberry Basin/Little Strawberry Lake Trail Junction is the optional (but recommended) side trip to Little Strawberry Lake, which adds about a mile. From here, the Strawberry Basin trail continues and offers a bird's-eye view of Strawberry Lake as a kaleidoscope of wildflower meadows come to life. Keep an eye out for the remains of an old cabin, and across the valley to the east, catch a glimpse of Rabbit Ears, a rock formation jutting out of the rocks on the ridgeline. The trail eventually opens up to a drier, more rugged and exposed landscape. Keep right and expect some scree field scrambling here, reminiscent of South Sister's summit trail (the "one step forward, two steps back" kind). The last 300 feet of the ascent is a series of switchbacks toward the summit's reward: arguably the best panoramic views of the John Day River valley, the Blue Mountains and the vast Strawberry Mountain Wilderness below. Return the same way for the most scenic descent.

Distance: 13 miles (with optional side trip to Little Strawberry Lake)
Difficulty: Hard
Not recommended for dogs or kids due to narrow trails and drop offs

HELPFUL HIKING TIPS:

There are small, nonreservable campsites—one at the base of the trailhead, another farther down the road at Slide Creek—to overnight and begin at early light.

Pack a fishing pole. The lakes in the area are stocked with brook and rainbow trout.

A Northwest Forest Pass or interagency pass, such as America the Beautiful, is needed to park at any of the trailheads.

Mosquito spray is highly recommended if exploring in the early summer months.

Strawberry Falls

Strawberry Mountain

PHOTOS BY CHRISTIAN MURILLO

Rowing for a Record

Jennifer and Kristen Hofer are the first sisters to row across the mid-Pacific Ocean

WRITTEN BY **ELLEE THALHEIMER**

Last summer, humpback whales spouted and breached around Bend natives Jennifer and Kristen Hofer's 28-foot skiff during the first two days of the World's Toughest Row competition from Monterey Bay, California, to Hanalei Bay, Kaua'i. It wasn't all whales and rainbows though. On the eighth day, a 20-foot wave capsized their boat. Their self-righting vessel flipped back over, with the rowers strapped onto the boat with harnesses. All were safe.

PHOTO COURTESY OF WORLD'S TOUGHEST ROW

It could be assumed that the Hofer sisters had immense experience navigating open ocean. However, they grew up in land-locked Central Oregon, graduated from Bend High School and had no experience in deep ocean waters before the race. Jennifer, 30, was on a rowing team at Pacific University in Forest Grove, Oregon; Kristen, 31, competed in outrigger canoe races when attending University of Hawaii at Hilo, but never away from coastal zones.

Despite growing up far from the ocean, their team, Hericane Rowing, finished the 2,800-mile race on July 19, 2024, in 40 days, 22 hours and 14 minutes, coming in sixth out of eight teams. Jennifer and Kristen became the first sisters to complete a mid-Pacific row together.

THE DREAM BEGINS

Jennifer was the first to get excited about the potential of racing. "In 2022, we watched the Lat 35 team break the women's record crossing the Pacific," said Jennifer, who quit her job as a data analyst in Portland to do the race. But she couldn't do it alone. "I asked Kristen and Sierra Myers, my college rowing teammate, if I was crazy to consider doing this. They were both instantly interested. We connected to our skipper, Kelsey Pfender. through the race organization. She had the most open water experience."

The women trained for two years, not just physically but also for sleep deprivation, stress and pressure. They prepared to row in teams of two—two hours on, two hours off. To go faster, sometimes the women did three-hour day shifts on the oars with 30-minute breaks.

"We averaged four hours of sleep per day across 40 days," said Kristen, who is a rafting guide for Wanderlust Tours in Central Oregon. "We were so exhausted, we worried less about getting to sleep and more about going to sleep with unchewed goldfish in our mouths."

Nighttime rowing was even more challenging. "Talking kept us from falling asleep at the oars, which sometimes happened," said Jennifer. "Focusing on what a rowing partner needed helped distract us from our own struggles."

Kristen added, "Talking at night, we learned everything about each other. Jenn and I really got to know each other as adults."

Their two-hour breaks weren't just for sleeping. They had chores. The women used a solar-powered desalinator for a limited amount of freshwater. Many times laundry meant a bucket of seawater and dish soap. They also concentrated on sunscreening, wound care, baby-wipe showering, teeth brushing, water boiling and, of course, eating.

"We had a bag of food each per day; our job was to eat a whole bag to get the calories we needed," said Kristen, and Jennifer added: "Eating that amount of food was difficult because you had to sacrifice sleep to eat. You had to convince yourself to eat. People brought a surprise snack pack every 500 miles. One time, chocolate pudding changed our entire day."

High points included an unexpected rest day when skipper Pfender was able to use the shape of the boat to sail, going

PHOTOS COURTESY OF WORLD'S TOUGHEST ROW

faster than rowing. They paddled through a night of meteor showers and had a day being followed by a family of whales. They savored wearing shorts on the first sunny day and replaying the MP3 audio files from their family and friends.

CHALLENGES ON OPEN WATER

As for the scariest moment, it wasn't capsizing. It wasn't the shark that lurked under their boat. It wasn't the pitch-black night when they could hear, but not see, humongous swells that had them wondering if these would be the waves that dumped them. It was the night they used a parachute-style anchor when a bad storm was shoving them the wrong way. Their satellite monitor's alarm jolted them awake. They were on a collision course with a cargo ship—vessels that are huge, fast and can suck a boat under.

Their radio communication wasn't answered. They had to act fast, pull anchor and row as if their lives depended on it."In those make or break moments, we learned we could pull through and trust each other," said Jennifer.

Around 4 a.m. on day 40, they neared Kaua'i and their cheering family and friends. "We saw their tiny light in the distance; it seemed to take forever for it to grow closer," said Mary Hofer, the sisters' mother who had her two daughters and a son (deployed in the navy) all on open ocean at the same time during the trip.

CROSSING THE FINISH LINE

"Seeing the finish celebration flares from the pier was a moment I'll never forget," said Mary. "Seeing their faces was the most wonderful feeling in the world. I couldn't wait to get my arms around them. When the four of them walked to shore, holding each other up because they could barely stand, I felt so much pride in this team of amazing young women."

The team drank cold bubbly water to celebrate, except none of them could open a can themselves. Their fingers were seized up. They struggled with a common rowing injury called claw hand that limits the ability to extend fingers, as well as atrophied walking muscles.

They quickly recovered, but were forever changed. "I think about who I was when I started training, then who I was on the starting line and end of the race," said Kristen. "You learn you are stronger than you think you are—physically, emotionally and mentally." Jennifer added, "Gaining confidence, pushing through fear—that translates to everything else in life."

Team Hericane Rowing: left to right: Kelsey Pfender, Jennifer Hofer, Sierra Myers, and Kristen Hofer,

Soaring Clear Skies

Model planes fly high above Central Oregon

WRITTEN BY **DANIEL O'NEIL** | PHOTOS OF CASCADE FLYERS BY **CODY RHEAULT**

From afar, the sky above one of Central Oregon's model plane clubs can resemble a world-class air show. Century-old biplanes, classic military aircraft, Piper Cubs, private jets and gliders can be seen cruising, speeding, performing aerobatics or engaging in faux-combat. But upon closer inspection, the scale models reveal their true size, and the men with radio controllers dwarf the mini tarmac, smiles stretched across their faces as if they were flying in an open cockpit.

Central Oregon is home to some fine flying conditions and locales, hence the four radio controlled (RC) model airplane clubs that operate here. Ever since the 1970s, enthusiasts have built, flown, crashed and rebuilt model planes on this edge of the high desert. Today, most of the RC pilots are men in or near retirement, some with real flying experience, all elevated by a passion for flight and a sense of camaraderie.

"It's a broad-spectrum hobby," said Tom Rainwater, president of the Field of Dreams RC Club in Redmond. "If you're into building models, you can do [just] that. And if you want to put them together really quick and get out there and fly, you can do that, too."

Besides events and rendezvous held at public places such as Haystack Reservoir and Schaub Lake, the RC plane clubs in Bend, La Pine, Redmond and Sisters serve as FAA-approved flight zones where (almost) anything goes, as long as it stays under the mandated 400-foot ceiling in the sky. Propeller planes reach speeds of 40 to 50 miles per hour, while electric, ducted fan-propelled planes can blast beyond 130 miles per hour. Distances are kept well within a half mile from the controller.

> FLYING SOMETHING THAT I BUILT MYSELF—SOMETHING THAT I GOT AS A BOX OF WOOD AND A ROLLED-UP SHEET OF PLANS AND TURNED INTO AN AIRPLANE THAT I COULD FLY AND CONTROL IN THE AIR—THAT'S PRETTY NEAT."

Motivation for flying RC planes is as varied as the models themselves. Friedhelm Baitis, a member of the Bend Aero Modelers club, flew for 20 years in the U.S. Air Force, including two tours in Vietnam, and later as a commercial pilot, but no longer flies real airplanes. He began flying model planes at the age of 14 and admits he's still "attracted to the flying game one way or the other."

Maneuvering a model plane is harder than it looks—one factor that keeps RC pilots alongside the tarmac year after year. Depth perception, quick reflexes, and remembering that right is left

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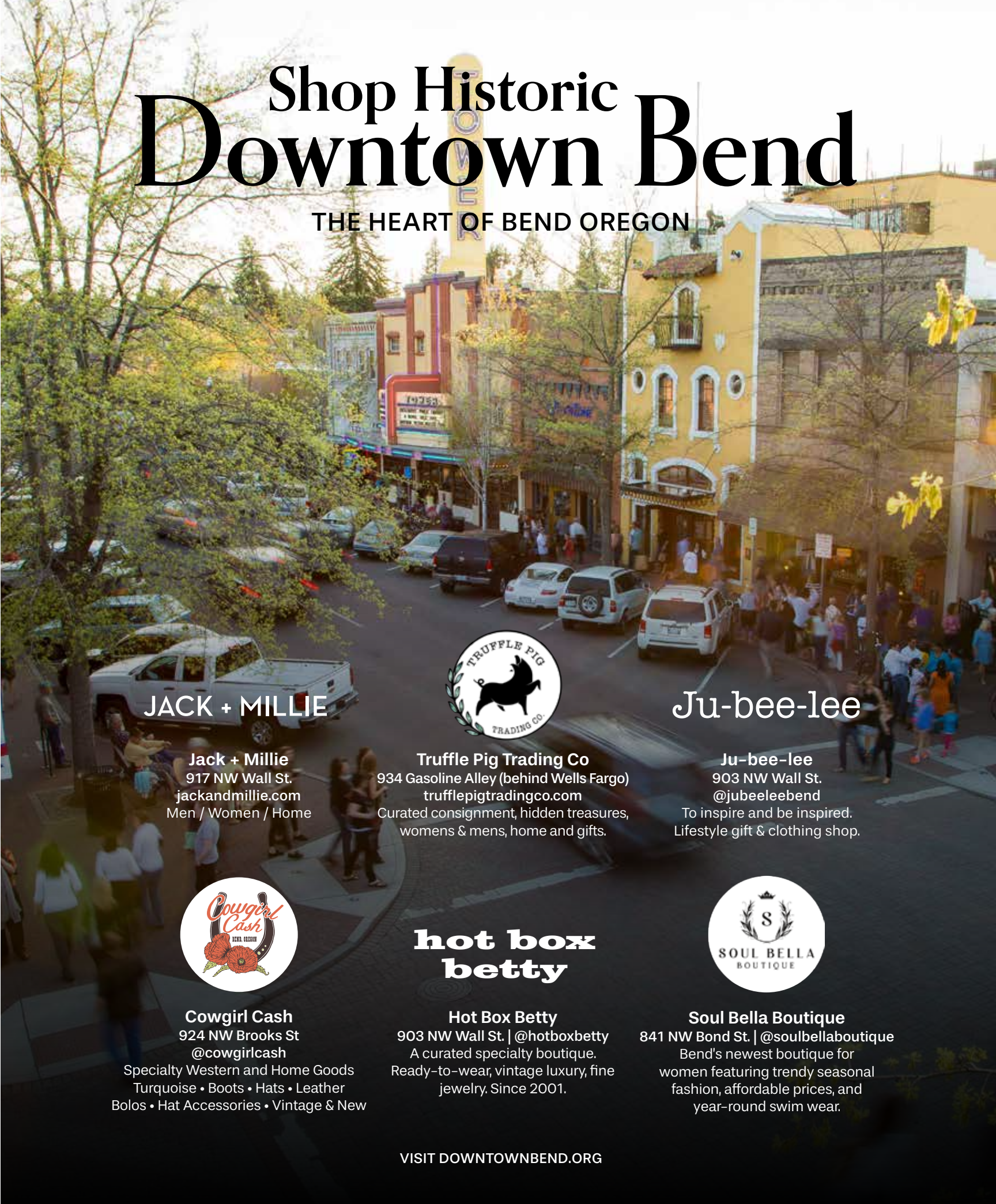
when the plane is flying toward you all equate to a unique set of challenges. "In my opinion, it's harder to fly a model than a real airplane," Baitis said. "I think you really do have to concentrate more for a model."

For Baitis, the endless quest for the perfect landing provides part of the joy of flying models. For Bill Broich, president of the Bend Aero Modelers club, it's the entire process. "Flying something that I built myself—something that I got as a box of wood and a rolled-up sheet of plans and turned into an airplane that I could fly and control in the air—that's pretty neat," he said.

The magic of flight is universal, but model airplanes aren't just about take-offs, tricks and landings. For Broich and the others, it's also about community, which is why visitors are always welcome to watch, try their hand at flying or just hear some good stories. "We joke that we spend maybe 10 percent of our time out on the field flying, and the other 90 percent is sitting around talking with everybody," he said.

"You just go out there and sit in a chair, fly the planes and chat with your buddies," Rainwater said. "That's an average day. But it's a good day."



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Supporting Community

J Bar J Youth Services offers programs for those at risk when they need help the most

WRITTEN BY **SIENA DORMAN**

When Stephanie Alvstad thinks about J Bar J Youth Services, the organization she leads as president and CEO, she sees it through the lens of community connection. "Everything we do comes down to relationships. And when those connections are strong, lives change," said Alvstad. The mission of J Bar J Youth Services is to support young people facing significant challenges. Youth connect with the nonprofit in various ways, including court appointments, referrals from community partners and by seeking help directly through the programs.

J Bar J's network of programs have served Central Oregon's at-risk youth for nearly six decades. Founded in 1968, J Bar J facilitates everything from emergency shelter to equine psychotherapy and helping young people build confidence and self-sufficiency. "We work with youth who have often been through tremendous difficulties," Alvstad said. "Our goal is to provide the stability and support they need to move forward."

Different from traditional services, J Bar J's programs offer specialized support systems. Their residential facilities, such as the J Bar J Boys Ranch and J5, provide rehabilitation for young men facing adversity or those involved in the juvenile justice system.

J Bar J Youth Services includes multiple programs: The Cascade Youth and Family Center delivers emergency shelter and housing solutions for youth experiencing homelessness. J Bar J operates the at:project, providing intervention and assistance for human trafficking victims; and Grandma's House offers shelter for pregnant girls and young mothers.

Mentorship remains central through Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Oregon, which pairs children as young as age 8—known

The Oregon High Desert Classics is the major fundraiser for J Bar J Youth Services.

PHOTO BY JAVI VARELA

as "Littles"—with adult mentors for guidance. These relationships often extend into high school. In 2023, 100% of the program's high school Littles graduated or received their GED. For young women needing intensive intervention, The Academy at Sisters serves as a therapeutic boarding school focusing on healing and growth.

The J Bar J Learning Center offers alternative education for youth who struggle in traditional schools, while Kindred Connections stabilizes home environments by supporting families in crisis.

FUNDING FOR PROGRAMS COMES FROM OREGON HIGH DESERT CLASSICS

To support its wide range of programs, J Bar J hosts the Oregon High Desert Classics at its Boys Ranch every July. The two-week hunter-jumper competition draws thousands of equestrians from across North America to compete for $150,000 in prizes, including the $25,000 Grand Prix. The event is the organization's largest fundraiser and holds the highest AA rating from the U.S. Equestrian Foundation. The competition is on one of the last remaining grass footing rings in the country—a prized surface in the equestrian world that's worth experiencing.

The event is open to the public, with many locals making it an annual tradition. Spectators enjoy watching skilled riders and horses in action plus exploring a variety of vendors offering local food and artisan items.

The Central Oregon community is invited to contribute time and professional expertise to support J Bar J's mission. From bankers teaching accounting skills to chefs hosting cooking classes, community members have numerous opportunities to make an impact on young people's lives. See *jbarj.org*.

Grand Prix Champion 2024

PHOTOS BY JAVI VARELA

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Renovation Education

A historic Tumalo schoolhouse transforms into a family home

WRITTEN BY **CASEY HATFIELD-CHIOTTI** | PHOTOGRAPHY BY **CHRIS MURRAY PRODUCTIONS**

In many ways, interior designer Celeste McGowan and her family's home eschews mainstream home design trends. It's small by today's standards, at 1,300 square feet. The opposite of "open concept," every room is defined and infused with personality.

The living room was once the main school room, and features custom cabinets made by Tim McGowan.

"Spaces with character are what I love to design. When I had the chance to dream up spaces in my own house, I knew that was the direction I wanted to go in," said Celeste, who owns Iron Roots Design along with her husband, Tim. The design-build studio does everything from large home renovations to designing restaurant interiors such as Dear Irene in downtown Bend.

The home already came with a history. Built in 1911, the schoolhouse was moved in the 1970s in Tumalo to its current location, a larger property on Old Bend Redmond Highway. When the McGowans first saw it, the house had blue office carpet and commercial lighting, but the they saw its potential.

ELEMENTS OF HISTORY

While little of the original building was salvaged, the McGowans set about creating spaces that harken back to the building's first iteration, while showcasing their personal style.

They added the decorative black-glazed brick fireplace from California-based Arto Brick in the living room. Celeste found the heavy wooden oversized mirror, a focal point of the room, at a Bend thrift shop. Tim, a multitalented craftsman with a background in custom metal fabrication, made the steel and stained-wood built-in cabinets on the opposite wall, which is both functional and stylish. "In small spaces, playing with scale can be important. I feel like we're doing that with these two opposing elements [of steel and wood]," said Celeste.

History is also important: The living room, which would have been the main school room, is decorated with family photographs and heirlooms, such as a brass oil lamp passed down through Tim's family and a coin purse from Celeste's grandmother. Celeste is a descendant of a famed Oregonian, Captain George Flavel, whose former Queen Anne-style residence is now the Flavel House Museum in Astoria.

One of the living room's most eye-catching features is the dry bar with gold accents and earthy mint green Zelige tile that catches the mid-afternoon light.

The McGowans moved the front door so they could turn an awkward entryway into a second bathroom. This jewel box of a powder room features early 20th-century inspired Art Nouveau wallpaper in a warm cream and black color palette.

"We wanted it to feel special, light and bright," said Celeste.

FAMILY TIES

After living in Sonoma—where Celeste studied interior design and architectural drafting—the McGowan's moved to Tumalo to be closer to family; Celeste's mother and stepfather live down the road. The couple was also searching for a place to start a business and a family. They moved into the home in 2019 and two years later the couple welcomed their son.

Today, 3-year-old Sloane loves playing in the renovated mudroom off the kitchen that is decorated with an array of plants and an Iron Roots Design custom bench. While she put a lot of heart and effort into the home's design, Celeste laughed when she admitted, "There's going to be toy dinosaurs scattered across my living room 95% of the time."

The primary bedroom is the best example of the layered design look. It features the natural, organic and textured elements Celeste loves. Eucalyptus-themed wallpaper by artist Yvonne Hart adds drama. A green Four Hands bench draped in blankets and linens of different colors and textures adds a point of interest at the end of the bed. The wooden side tables built by Tim's late father were important to incorporate into the space—the McGowans also encourage clients to showcase meaningful pieces.

"Family is the main reason we do everything. To have the opportunity to be

Celeste McGowan creates restful spaces accented with heirlooms and photographs.

The 1911 schoolhouse was renovated to serve as the McGowan family home.

a small part of somebody's story or to make their home feel like a safe space is important to me," she said.

As the McGowan's embarked on their home renovation journey, they noticed that more clients also began asking for separation and privacy in their living spaces. While open floor plans have their upsides, they said, they believe there will be a continued movement toward more traditional design in home architecture.

The McGowans also added a deck to the front of the house, but they have more plans for the home, including renovating the bright but dated kitchen and possibly exposing the schoolhouse's original brick chimney stack hidden inside a wall. Every renovation makes the house feel more like a home while staying true to its roots.

"With this project, we didn't want to try to make the house something it isn't. That's how we approach all our work," said Celeste.

Tim & Celeste McGowan

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STAY WARM, STAY OUTSIDE

PHOTO BY MASON OTIS

S'more Business

Summer camps provide tradition, outdoor experiences and economic viability

WRITTEN BY **CATHY CARROLL**

School's almost out, and Central Oregon's summer camps are gearing up for another season of adventure. From rugged backcountry excursions to classic campfire singalongs, these programs don't just create happy campers, they fuel local businesses, support jobs and turn the region's incomparable outdoors into an immersive experience for leadership, resilience and tons of fun.

By drawing on the area's mountains, rivers, forests and deserts, these programs are evolving in new ways to deepen connections to nature and expand access to more campers—an invaluable benefit to families. But as funding sources shift, organizations are adapting with strategic partnerships and diversified revenue streams to stay competitive, and to continue creating lanyards and lifelong memories.

A TRADITION OF OUTDOOR ADVENTURE

Summer camps in Bend have been a tradition dating back to its logging-camp days and today, they need to adapt and evolve to remain vital. Camp Fire Central Oregon, for example, began in 1916 when newcomers flocking to the timber industry wanted their girls to learn outdoors skills for life in their new environs. The camp thrives today, and is open to all. Since 1935, Camp Tamarack taps into the power of the Deschutes National Forest in Sisters to inspire campers and offers counselor-in-training programs that develop leadership. The sight of teepees dotting Shevlin Park signals another year of Cougar Camp. Beginning in the early 1980s, Bend Park and Recreation has offered a classic experience, from the creation of camp names, songs and skits to a family barbecue before kids overnight in the teepees as a Bend rite of passage.

THE PATH TO CAMP OWNERSHIP

Summer camps provide leadership development to counselors, and Chance Caruso's outdoor-education career began while he was a camper at R.A.D. Camps. The camp was founded in 2008, and Caruso took the reins in 2021. He has maintained its focus on true wilderness experiences, offering adventures in more than 50 backcountry locations within a two-hour radius of Bend, from desert to rivers, creeks, mountain lakes and forests.

As a child, the young entrepreneur had unknowingly absorbed business skills by overhearing his mother, a real estate agent, on speaker phone as she sold houses and negotiated deals. "I just slowly took things in over years and years and years, so it's always been natural for me to be able to do that type of thing," he said.

The company has the advantage of possessing rare, highly sought-after special-use permits for the Deschutes and Willamette national forests. Caruso continues the camp's focus on free play, while developing ease in nature, with leave-no-trace practices and no electronics.

R.A.D. Camp has wide appeal, including for families relocating from urban areas that want their children to develop outdoor skills, not unlike Bend's timber industry families a century ago. Clients have expanded from locals to visitors from across the country and some from abroad. Caruso cites the camp's flexible, single-day trips which appeal to vacationing families.

OPPOSITE PAGE AND THIS PAGE TOP: R.A.D. Camps.

BOTTOM: Cougar Camp is often a young camper's first overnight camping experience.

MEETING GROWING DEMAND

As Bend continues to grow, so does the demand for diverse and enriching youth programs. Luckily, new camps are stepping in to meet that need. Cascade Adventure Mountain Programs (C.A.M.P.) Bend is one example, launched last year by Drew Hornbeck who drew on decades of experience in adventure and wilderness therapy to create a summer camp focused on leadership and personal growth through outdoor experiences. The focus also underscores how offering a niche program can be essential for standing out and gaining traction when launching a new business.

"Whether it's paddleboarding, hiking, caving, mountain biking or camping, we're there for a purpose—to create more insight, awareness, resiliency and personal growth within the context of becoming a leader," said Hornbeck. He requires staff to have related degrees or significant outdoor education experience to achieve a high-quality, safe, inclusive environment, emphasizing both physical and emotional well-being. As a result, personnel is the largest business expense. To sustain the camp year-round, he is expanding into after-school and business team-building programs.

Accessibility is key to the financial models for camps such as Camp Fire, C.A.M.P. Bend and R.A.D. Camps, with tuition and business sponsorships generating funds to subsidize enrollment for underserved kids.

CAMPS INNOVATE TO THRIVE

As summer camps face evolving financial pressures, some are seeking commercial partnerships or offering specialized programs to stay viable and fulfill their mission to serve local children and families. Camp Fire Central Oregon, for example, is addressing federal budget cuts by seeking alternative funding sources.

To adapt, Executive Director Kecia Kubota is focusing on diversifying revenue through business sponsorships and individual donations. A recent grant

HAPPY CAMPERS

1861[1]

Year the first official camp is established in the United States: Connecticut's Gunnery Camp.

1987

Year the movie "Dirty Dancing" premiers, set at the fictional Kellerman's Lodge summer camp.

$70 BILLION[2] Contributed to the U.S. economy by youth camps.

26 MILLION[3]

Children and adults participate in summer camp each year, with

986,428[4] people employed by camps in the United States each year.

1.6 MILLION ACRES[5]

Land area in the Deschutes National Forest available for year-around recreation opportunities.

90 MILLION[6]

pounds of marshmallows sold in the United States each year, and

50%[6] of those marshmallows sold are roasted over a campfire.

1, 2, 3. American Camp Association
4. verifiedmarketreseach.com
5. fs.usda.gov/main/deschutes/about-forest
6. National Confectioners Association

C.A.M.P. Bend

enabled the hiring of a marketing and development director to strengthen outreach and secure corporate partnerships, particularly with businesses that depend on and prioritize outdoor spaces. These efforts aim to sustain programming and expand scholarship opportunities for summer campers.

Camp Fire Central Oregon, a local affiliate of the national nonprofit, hosts about 120 summer campers each week at Tumalo Day Camp, a traditional outdoor experience with optional overnight stays for older kids and a nine-week, elementary school-based day camp with themed activities, catering to working families. The emphasis is on fostering stewardship of the natural world and preparing campers for becoming valuable employees and contributing citizens.

Another example of creative funding and marketing partnerships is from C.A.M.P. Bend, which has leaned on strategic partnerships to build momentum. A key collaboration with Bend Park and Recreation District played a pivotal role in boosting enrollment this year, generating 50 signups the first day it was posted, Hornbeck said. He also relies on a mix of digital and grassroots efforts, from boosted social media ads to old-school methods such as posting flyers in local businesses and hosting booths at community events. Hornbeck's personal networks helped with inaugural trips last year—families that knew him through his two teenage daughters trusted his expertise.

The trust and tradition of Central Oregon summer camps offer more than play. With another summer comes a new wave of kids ready to grow under open skies with camps working to create something bigger—for families, the community and the wild places that make it all possible.

Q&A

Recipe for Success

April Lawyer is a professional athlete and founder of Vanilla boutique, celebrating 20 years

Start with an industrious child growing up in the sports-centric culture of Big Bear Lake, California, during the '80s. Fold in raw athletic talent, tenacity and grit. Add hefty doses of style and community support. That only begins to describe April Lawyer: professional athlete—the first woman to compete in both downhill mountain biking and snowboarding in the first X Games of 1997—and founder of the Old Mill District boutique Vanilla, celebrating its 20th anniversary in 2025. Lawyer was one of the first retailers in the Old Mill District when it was a sparkle in Bill Smith's eye. Similarly, Lawyer saw a new niche for her shop with its melding of the snowboard and fashion worlds. She recently talked with Adam Short of *Bend Magazine*'s The Circling Podcast. Read abridged excerpts here, and go to *bendmagazine.com* to listen to the full episode.

A lemonade stand—and bedroom-window candy drive through—were a start for the young entrepreneur:

We lived in an old house and I was on the lower floor, so I had a little pop-out window. I got some milk crates and lined them up so kids could step up to the window. I made a little sign, and I created a little store out of my bedroom window. Kids would knock on the window, I'd slide it open and they would ask, "What do you have today?"

I don't know that my dad completely loved having kids constantly knocking on the windows, but it was really fun, and it created such a great opportunity to understand how to put my profits [from selling candy] into overhead. It was my first introduction into how retail works, but also to customer service and talking to people and just sort of figuring out what people want.

It was an important step to advocate for herself, and being authentic was the best form of marketing:

At one point in time I did bring on a manager [as a professional athlete], but I felt like just being my own authentic self was my best marketing. Having somebody on the outside trying to do that just didn't sit well with me. I really learned a lot about marketing because I negotiated all my own contracts, and I think that to this day it was the best education I could have given myself—to be an advocate for myself.

Vanilla began as the "vanilla shell" of a space and an idea to blend the cultures of a snowboard shop with a boutique:

In 2005, you were either a snowboard shop or you were a boutique; there wasn't any in between. And I thought, why can't we just put the two worlds that I've now been exposed to and really love together? Nowadays there's lots of those, but back then, there really wasn't a whole lot of that. There was one space that was available in a brand new building that hadn't been built out yet. It was what they called a "vanilla shell." It was this huge 2,500-square-foot space, but it was beautiful. I guess I must've been crazy.

Bill Smith believed in her ideas—and the osprey out his window—in the rising Old Mill District of 20 years ago:

I didn't know who Bill Smith was, and I didn't know what I was walking into. Bill was just sitting there in his Old Mill office smiling at me. And I thought, "Okay, I have to make a pitch. This is the real deal." I didn't have a business plan. I just had to pitch [him and his team] on an idea.

Bill looked at me silently, and he had this funny look on his face and I thought, "Oh, this isn't going to go well." He didn't say anything. He just let me keep talking and talking. Then, finally, he looks at his window and he says, "Look out there. Do you like my osprey? Isn't that beautiful?" He was so proud. He looked at me, smiled and said, "I like you, let's do this."

Vanilla was embraced by the community early on and it's an honor to share a vision:

I am so fortunate that the community embraced what we were doing early on, and I think they saw its value. My goal with Vanilla from the beginning was for people to enjoy it because of what we had curated, but also the authenticity of what we were all about. I wanted people to enjoy what I created, and not because it was attached to whatever [sports-related] notoriety I had at that time. But I think to be able to tap into a little bit of who you are is very unique, and I'm very honored to be able to do this.

Learn more about April Lawyer's world of professional athletics and entrepreneurship. Listen to *Bend Magazine*'s The Circling Podcast at *BendMagazine.com*.

Flowing VOICES

DESCHUTES RIVER FISHING GUIDES SHARE THE WISDOM OF THE WATER

WRITTEN BY **MILES NOLTE** | PHOTOGRAPHY BY **ARIAN STEVENS**

As a fly-fishing guide, Matt Mendes pays homage to his cultural heritage and respects the natural resources of the Deschutes River.


"RIVERS ARE OUR LIFE. [THEY'RE] THE LIFEBLOOD OF OREGON RURAL COMMUNITIES AND THIS PLANET."
–MIA SHEPPARD

Apologies to Ted Lasso, but water (not football) is life. It's Earth's secret sauce, the magic elixir of existence. Those who live amid the plateaus and canyons of Central Oregon understand its value. The perpetually thirsty landscape, porous by nature, absorbs nearly all the scant precipitation it receives and redirects that flow underground. Chemistry and gravity carve fissures in volcanic bedrock, fill vast aquifers underneath arid plains and create rivers that sustain every form of life that call this place home.

Few of us, even the most dedicated anglers and paddlers, are as intimately connected to rivers, fisheries and aquatic ecosystems as professional fishing guides. Successful guides don't just show up, put in their hours and go home—they observe and catalog every nuance of these complex systems for their clients' success and safety. Because of that vigilance, they're often the first to notice when a river changes or exhibits signs of distress.

FROM THE MOUTHS OF GUIDES

"Guides witness the river's rhythms every day," said Dylan Stanford, who takes clients out on the Deschutes River as owner of North Fork Outfitters. "That awareness and intimacy is beneficial in assessing the health of the river system over time. We see the subtle shifts in water quality and the impact on the bird, insect and fish populations. It's our home water. We're consistent observers of this place."

Similarly, Mia Sheppard owns and operates Maupin-based Little Creek Outfitters and Juniper River Adventures with her husband, Marty. She's been a professional fishing and river guide since 2003.

"Every day, I wake up and see the Deschutes River," Sheppard explained. "We have raised our daughter on the water. We have hiked almost every canyon and peak in the lower 25 miles. Rivers are our life. [They're] the lifeblood of Oregon rural communities and this planet."

Matt Mendes of Spin the Handle guide service has been guiding on the Warm Springs Reservation since he was 16 years old. He apprenticed under his grandfather, the first Native guide on the Warm Springs section of the Deschutes, and continues to work as a full-time fishing guide.

"The Deschutes River is like family: The water, this river, it means everything to us, [through] several generations. I've grown up on it. My grandpa took me fishing there. My kids now fish it. I've spent countless days and hours with friends on it. It gives us confidence, life, peace, closure and, at moments, even sadness."

PROTECTING RESOURCES

Unlike casual anglers and recreators, guides have multiple incentives to care for the river.

"Guides bear an inherent responsibility to steward the waters they work," said Stanford. "We're obligated to preserve, educate and advocate for these ecosystems. Our livelihoods are tied to the health of the river and fish populations, so it's not only an ethical obligation, but in a guide's best business interest to protect these natural resources."

"Outfitters and guides play significant roles in river conservation," said Sheppard. "We educate people about the river and wildlife, about sustainable practices, such as how to properly handle wild fish; we inspire people to practice Leave No Trace; we pick up trash and poop and pack it out; we break up fire rings and pull noxious weeds. Our business has donated more than $100,000 in trips to conservation organizations over the years."

Mendes holds himself and his business accountable to the river, carrying on his family legacy of stewardship.

FORMING RELATIONSHIPS

Good guides don't just lead to fish, they help people develop relationships with rivers and educate them about wild places. The fish are adrenaline catalysts, searing experiences in the minds of people who would otherwise never have such visceral and personal reasons to care about watershed conservation. Some of the people who hire guides become ardent conservation supporters themselves.

"On the surface, it would seem that a fishing guide is primarily responsible to put their clients on fish," Stanford said. "In my experience, however, the fishing—and especially the catching of the fish—comes second to the overall experience. Bridging the gap between a mysterious wild river and people who want to interact with that place in a positive way is what makes a great guide. I believe people are more likely to protect what they know and understand."

Sheppard believes guides facilitate meaningful interactions that would otherwise never happen. "A lot of people don't have a boat, know how to row safely, or have time to learn a river," she said. "This is why people hire guides. We are all servants to the resources and to our guests. When guests inquire about where to donate money, we offer suggestions on NGOs [nonprofits that address non-governmental or political issues] we trust or suggest giving back to rural communities and programs."

Dylan Stanford

Fishing and river guides don't care for the rivers because they work as guides; they work as guides because they care for the rivers.

Mendes explained, "When I need to get away, I go listen to the sounds of the canyon. The wind, the birds, the pungent aromas of sage and juniper. The sound of the water rushing over the rocks balances out my soul. It's the best medicine around. When I'm in such a sacred and powerful place, all is well again."

LOCAL STORYTELLERS: PREMIERING "THE HARD WAY"

Sisters filmmaker R.A. Beattie and Off the Grid Studios premiered a new film, "The Hard Way," depicting the beauty and challenges of the Deschutes River through the eyes of fly-fishing guide Matt Mendes. An enrolled member of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, Mendes follows in the footsteps of his grandfather who was the first Native American fishing guide on the river. The film portrays four seasons of the Deschutes and how the living ecosystem changes throughout the year. Beattie and his team, including writer Miles Nolte and cinematographer Arian Stevens, took two years to create "The Hard Way" and secured rare permits to film on tribal land. "While it's a fishing film, it's not just about the fish," said Beattie. "It's about effort, place and presence; about showing what it really means to choose the harder path, and why that choice matters. It's the kind of story that reminds us why we started fishing in the first place, and why it's worth pushing through the tough days to get to the good ones."

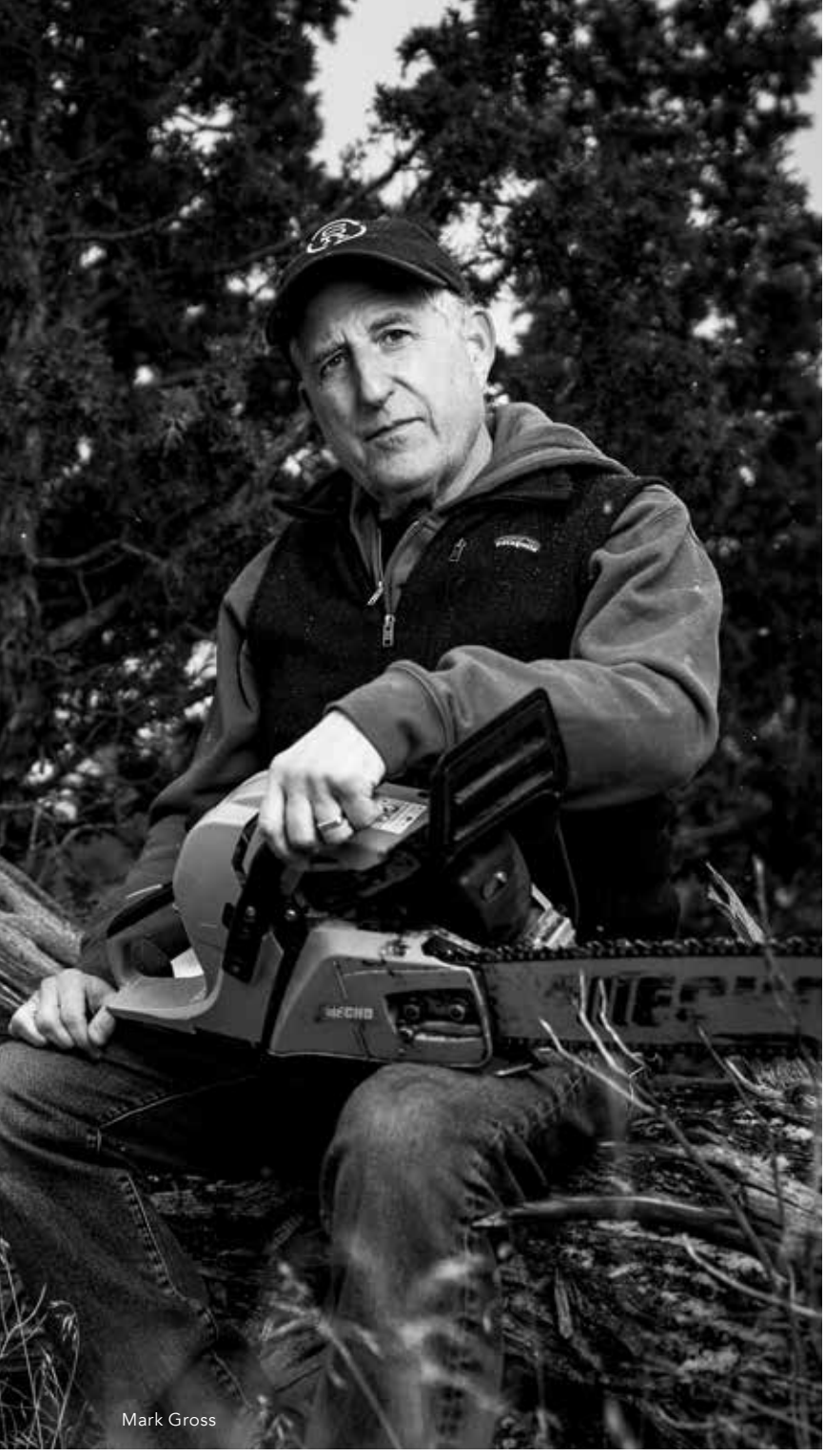
The film premiered as part of the 2025 Fly Fishing Film Tour which spanned more than 14 countries and 300 events, including a sold-out premier in Bend in spring 2025. See *offthegridstudios.com*.

SCHOOLED ON RANCH

EDUCATION OF THE LAND BUILDS SKILLS AND COMMUNITY

WRITTEN BY **SUZANNE JOHNSON** | PHOTOGRAPHY BY **CODY RHEAULT**

Here in Central Oregon, long before it was known for skiing and mountain biking, it was a hub for ranching and farming. Folks grew their own food, fixed their own fences and relied on each other for help when needed. The roots of that culture still thrive here, and growing numbers of people seek out the satisfaction of creating a lifestyle that is grounded, literally, in the land. Traditional knowledge that once passed through generations now can be learned through local organizations such as the School of Ranch. With its blend of high and low technology, the nonprofit connects people who want to learn traditional ranch skills with local mentors and helps build a community of shared values, according to its founder Mark Gross.



Mark Gross

Beth Covert

In 2020 Gross left a high-tech career in California, aiming for a low-tech retirement in rural Central Oregon. Rural life wasn't as simple as it seemed, and he soon realized he needed help learning to use a chainsaw. Ex-Marine Kaleb Watson answered his Craigslist ad. "We were opposites in many ways, but through that project we became friends," said Gross. "I saw how hands-on collaboration builds bridges across differences, while teaching practical skills." This learning experience inspired Gross to establish the school, based in Terrebonne, and cultivate a team of instructors. The organization's website links students to in-person, hands-on workshops held throughout Central Oregon. With a full menu of ranch-relevant topics such as handyman basics, tractor driving, welding, beekeeping, canning and soapmaking, participants and expert mentors work and learn together. Along the way, they find common ground and friendship.

RESILIENT INDIVIDUALS, STRONGER COMMUNITIES

Julia Vasinda and Steve Challis joined the School of Ranch in 2024 after purchasing 80 acres of undeveloped farmland near Sisters. They'd been seeking a more balanced life, one that felt substantial and connected to the land. They had a vision for small-scale farming and the School of Ranch workshops are helping them realize that dream. "The Power Saws for Women

class got me started. Then carpentry, soil management, welding and chicken keeping," said Vasinda. Each class enriches students' ranching know-how and builds upon itself—a student learns how to build a coop before learning how to raise chickens. Of all the workshops, Vasinda and Challis found welding the most challenging and satisfying. "Welding can be intimidating, but by the end I had the basic skills. On our rocky terrain, we're sure to break equipment, and now I know how to fix it," said Challis.

That sense of satisfaction came as no surprise to welding instructor Joe Slattery, who runs the class in his personal workshop. After a career that included fusing NASA space shuttles, he enjoys sharing his wealth of knowledge. "Everyone likes to make stuff, to fix things yourself instead of hiring someone," said Slattery. "Each class has a diverse group, people from all walks of life, but here we share the same goals."

A drive for self-sufficiency shows up in the kitchen, as well, according to Beth Covert, School of Ranch board member and instructor. Covert has seen a fresh desire for a return to traditional ways, especially since the COVID-19 pandemic. In that time of insecurity, people turned to the forgotten arts of cultivating gardens, preserving the bounty and sharing delicious dishes.

For Covert, food is the foundation of a healthy community. She's always cultivated and preserved home-grown food, even as more convenient options filled grocery aisles. Covert's workshops focus on high desert gardening and food preservation, including canning, fermenting and dehydrating. Sharing her knowledge is easy, she explained, because of the structure built into every School of Ranch program.

"I've built hoop beds, propagated low-water plants, mastered my compost system and filled my pantry with dried and canned food, but I've never been a teacher," said Covert. For her classes, Covert schedules time for a potluck to nurture friendships among the participants. While Covert's classes revolve around the garden, instructor Rick Bell helps learners move toward energy independence. After a lengthy military

Joe Slattery

"GETTING YOUR HANDS IN THE SOIL AND RAISING YOUR OWN FOOD IS EMPOWERING, AND WE WANT TO INSPIRE PEOPLE ON THAT PATH."

Shannon Kane

Taylor Kane

career, Bell turned to self sufficiency—living off the energy grid. Through School of Ranch, he teaches others to do the same. His workshops help participants understand wiring and electrical systems, beginning with small projects such as solar batteries and wiring for trailers. Like other instructors, Bell remains available for advice and help as students venture into their own solar and off-grid projects.

"These classes help people take care of both themselves and others, rather than depending on the grid. It makes for a stronger local community, and the local level is where it matters," said Bell.

NURTURING THE RANCH MINDSET

Community engagement has always been part of the mission for Shannon and Taylor Kane of Wild Grown Farm in Redmond. Through School of Ranch, they help people understand the foundations of producing their own food. "As a society, we're increasingly disconnected from where our food comes from," said Taylor "I was raised in a city, so I took the long route to learning these skills. These workshops allow us to bridge the gap for folks like me who weren't raised with this knowledge base."

The Kanes' approach to farming goes beyond traditional agriculture into agroecology and permaculture, with a mindset that keeps them looking to nature as a guide for building regenerative, closed-loop systems on their farm.

"These workshops are a gateway into this lifestyle and philosophy. We hope that folks see the connection between nurturing the earth and nurturing ourselves. Getting your hands in the soil and raising your own food is empowering, and we want to inspire people on that path. The more folks that do that, the better we collectively will be," said Shannon.

For Vasinda and Challis, they're ready to start beekeeping while carefully laying out their farming strategy. They've got a list of workshops yet to join, to grow their community as well as their skills. Eventually, they hope to come full circle and host School of Ranch sessions on their own land.

Gross, in the meantime, has gone from thoughts of retirement to creating a legacy. "School of Ranch will continue to grow because there is so much in the concept of ranching that matters," he said. "Ranch is a metaphor for using your hands, for connecting to land, for community, for sustainability, and even for finding common ground with those who have differing opinions. We all need that now."

See *schoolofranch.org*.

Beyond

A ROAD WELL TRAVELED

TALES FROM A TRIP ALONG THE CASCADE LAKES SCENIC BYWAY

WRITTEN BY CAM DAVIS

MAP ILLUSTRATION BY ELIZABETH PERSON

You've driven past the iconic wooden Cascade Lakes Recreation Area sign on Century Drive dozens of times and might know the mileage posts by heart. But even if it's a road well-traveled, how well do you really know the Cascade Lakes Scenic Byway?

The 66-mile route from Bend to Crescent Lake accesses 14 sparkling lakes and dozens more if you're willing to do some legwork from one of its many trailheads. Yet beyond the countless opportunities for fun along the way, there are scores of hidden gems, subtle secrets and tall tales that are waiting to be uncovered and explored. So grab a Northwest Forest Pass, fasten your seatbelt and come along for a drive that will shed new light on the byway in your backyard.

1 Before the dormant volcano known as Bachelor Butte became the seventh largest ski area in North America, it was also known as Brother Jonathan and Mount Brother. The developers figured that skiing on a butte sounded small time, so they called their resort "Mt. Bachelor." The name stuck but didn't become official until the Oregon Geographic Names Board reluctantly voted to change it in 1983. By whatever name, the volcano last erupted between 8,000 and 10,000 years ago, which means its top layer of ash actually came from the more recent eruption of Mt. Mazama. No wonder its powder is so magical.

2 If you visit Todd Lake or Sparks Meadow and feel a sense of déjà vu, you may have seen one of them before. These two sites are so quintessentially Western that they've set the stage for numerous Hollywood movies including "Rooster Cogburn," starring John Wayne and Katherine Hepburn, "The Way West" with Kirk Douglas, and "Homeward Bound," featuring two adorable dogs and a cat. Haven't seen those classics? They may not be streaming, but you can rent them at the last Blockbuster after you drive back to Bend.

OPPOSITE PAGE TODD LAKE PHOTO BY RICHARD BACON | PHOTO BY CODY RHEAULT

3 On large, flat-sided boulders near Devil's Lake, look for Native pictographs, evidence of the Indigenous people who once lived here. A few of the drawings are said to be thousands of years old.

4 At Devil's Lake, the glacial-fed water is both extra chilly and a clear aquamarine color. Paddling on the shallow, clear blue water gives the sensation of a magic carpet ride.

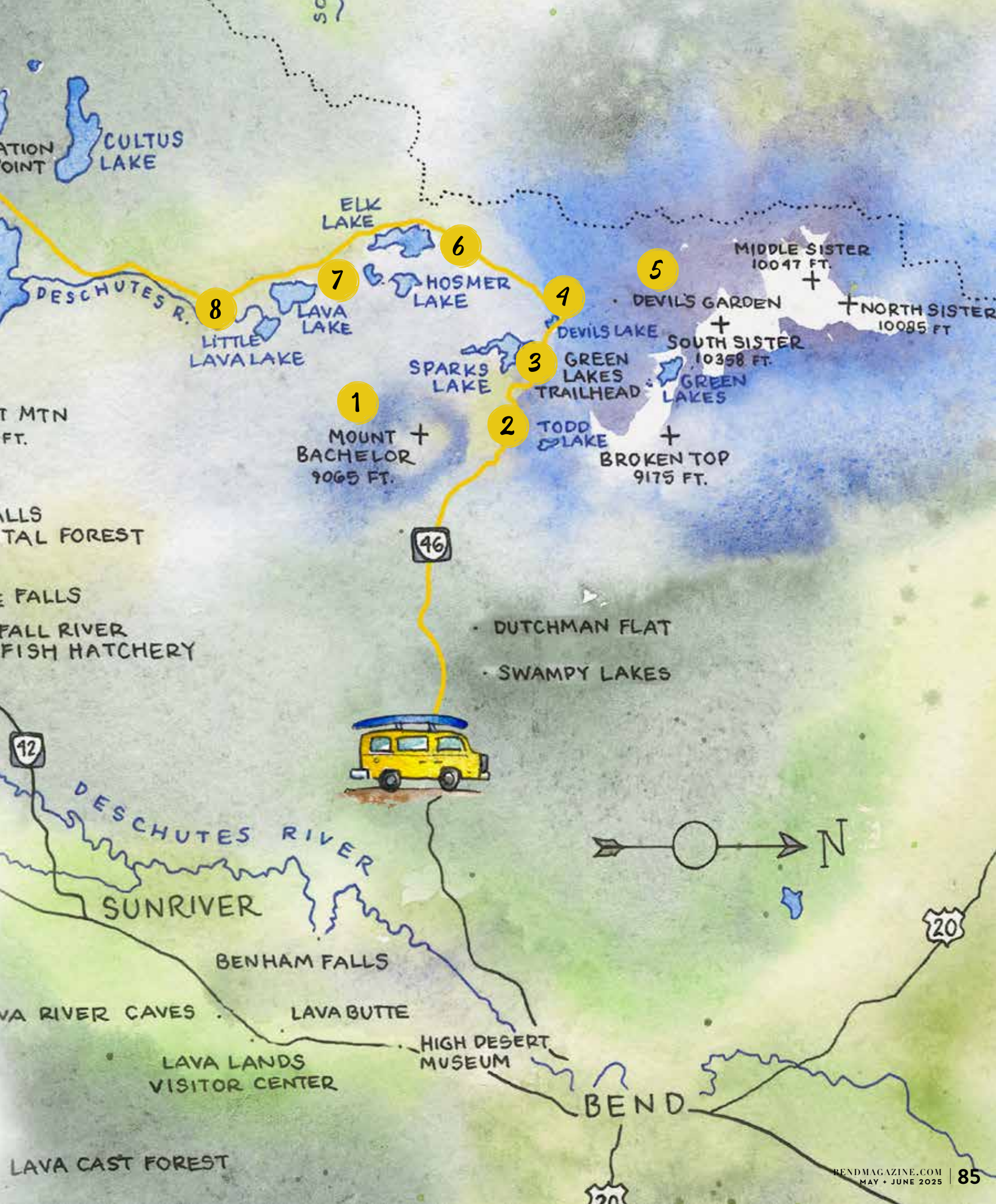
5 In the late 1960s, astronauts in the Apollo space program came to places like the lava flow at Devil's Garden to prepare themselves for walking on the moon. They climbed around similar lava rock at Lava Butte in their space suits. As it turned out, the surface of the moon was much less rugged than Devil's Garden, but the astronauts added to its topography by taking one of our local rocks and placing it on the moon surface in exchange for a lunar rock now on display at the University of Arizona Alfie Norville Gem & Mineral Museum.

6 In the 1950s, little-known Mud Lake was completely overshadowed by its resplendent neighbor Elk Lake. With a murky name and no fish, it had very few visitors. Then, someone had the audacity to stock it with Atlantic salmon for catch and release flytfishing. Paul Hosmer, The Sage of the Sagebrush Country, began singing its praises in the Brooks-Scanlon Pine Echoes newspaper, and they renamed it Hosmer Lake after him in 1962. These days, anglers, paddlers and campers can't stay away. Now that's a lake that cleaned up its act (and the fish evade catching like Nessie avoids being sighted at Loch Ness).

PHOTO OF HOSMER LAKE BY CHRISTIAN MURILLO | LAVA LAKES COURTESY OF DESCHUTES HISTORICAL SOCIETY

7 Peaceful Lava Lake is notorious for one of Central Oregon's greatest unsolved mysteries. In the winter of 1923-24, three burly men settled into a small cabin near the lake for what they thought would be a profitable winter of fur trapping. However, in early spring, the cabin was found abandoned and all three of their bodies were discovered on the surface of the lake when the ice melted, each with evidence of gunshot wounds. While no one was ever charged in the murders, it's safe to say the killer is no longer at large.

8 Nearby, the creek flowing out of Little Lava Lake is the source of the Deschutes River. Its water has been traced all the way back to Mount Bachelor, which absorbs most of its snowmelt like a sponge and sends it downhill to the lake. From here, the Deschutes River continues south to Crane Prairie Reservoir, does a 180 at Wickiup Reservoir and completes its rollicking journey to the Columbia River, 252 miles in all.


CULTUS LAKE
ELK LAKE
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HOSMER LAKE
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MIDDLE SISTER 10047 FT.
DESCHUTES R.
8
LAVA LAKE
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DEVILS GARDEN
NORTH SISTER 10085 FT
LITTLE LAVA LAKE
DEVILS LAKE
SOUTH SISTER 10358 FT.
SPARKS LAKE
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GREEN LAKES TRAILHEAD
GREEN LAKES
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TODD LAKE
MOUNT BACHELOR 9065 FT.
BROKEN TOP 9175 FT.
46
DUTCHMAN FLAT
SWAMPY LAKES
42
DESCHUTES RIVER
N
SUNRIVER
20
BENHAM FALLS
LAVA BUTTE
HIGH DESERT MUSEUM
LAVA LANDS VISITOR CENTER
BEND
LAVA CAST FOREST

9 A short hike to Osprey Point at Crane Prairie Reservoir brings you to a prime spot for wildlife viewing. Once an endangered species, about half of Oregon's osprey population returns to nest and mate here every spring. They share the habitat with eagles, often competing over the same fish in their unique ways. While eagles gracefully soar down and grab a fish near the surface of the water, osprey pause high above the lake, then power dive as much as three feet underwater, which gives osprey their name "fishing hawks."

10 In April of 1940, a team of 600 Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) workers began clearing trees and moving dirt to build Wickiup Reservoir. Creating this source of irrigation water for the Madras area was one of the CCC's biggest undertakings; and yet, as WWII roared in, most of the crew members were called away to serve elsewhere. So who stepped in to finish the job in 1946? A group of Mennonite conscientious objectors.

11 At the end of the byway lies Crescent Lake. Until 1941, ski trains shuttled people there to downhill ski. Soon after, Willamette Pass Ski Area usurped it with easier access and better terrain. Appearing like a throwback to those times is the roadside cabin—Manley's Tavern. The Manley family has been serving up broasted chicken since 1973. If you're lucky, reserve a night at the 1930s Crescent Guard Station to feel the history of the land and the roadway to get there.

PHOTO OF WICKIUP RESERVOIR COURTESY OF DESCHUTES HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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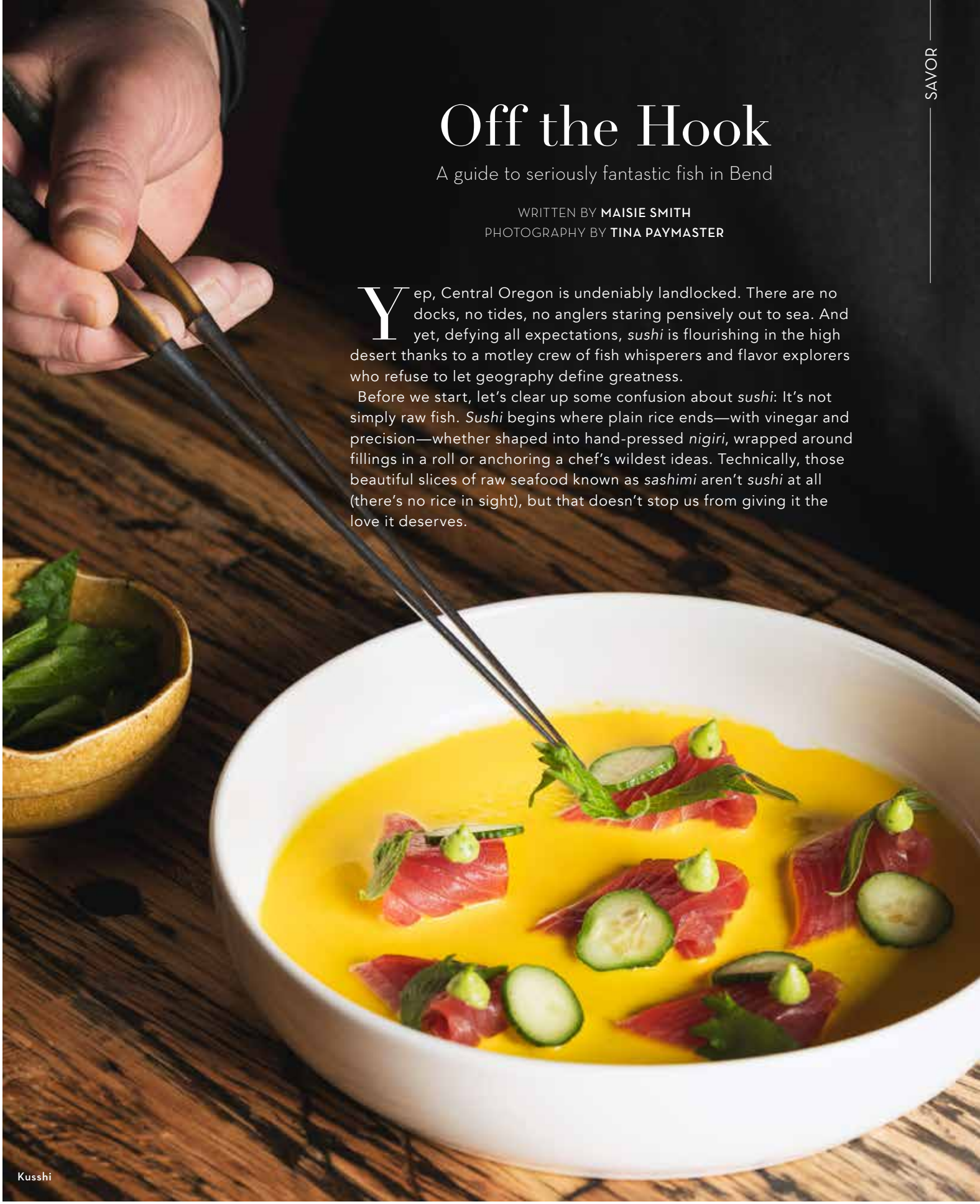
Off the Hook

A guide to seriously fantastic fish in Bend

WRITTEN BY **MAISIE SMITH**
PHOTOGRAPHY BY **TINA PAYMASTER**

Yep, Central Oregon is undeniably landlocked. There are no docks, no tides, no anglers staring pensively out to sea. And yet, defying all expectations, *sushi* is flourishing in the high desert thanks to a motley crew of fish whisperers and flavor explorers who refuse to let geography define greatness.

Before we start, let's clear up some confusion about *sushi*: It's not simply raw fish. *Sushi* begins where plain rice ends—with vinegar and precision—whether shaped into hand-pressed *nigiri*, wrapped around fillings in a roll or anchoring a chef's wildest ideas. Technically, those beautiful slices of raw seafood known as *sashimi* aren't *sushi* at all (there's no rice in sight), but that doesn't stop us from giving it the love it deserves.



Kusshi

Athena and Sebastian Galletti

THE CATCH IS IN AT SEBASTIAN'S

The most crucial ingredient in *sushi* isn't fish—it's trust. You have to know that everything you're eating has been handled with care, precision and zero shortcuts. Founded in 2021 by Sebastian Galletti, Sebastian's Seafood & Specialty Market at The Grove in NorthWest Crossing sources fish directly from his family's seafood distribution business in California, ensuring Central Oregon gets nothing but the best.

The Sebastian's seafood case brims with fresh catches, including buttery salmon and ruby-hued yellowfin plus rotating stars such as Chilean sea bass and Hawaiian bigeye tuna. While availability shifts with the tides, every fish is handpicked by people who take seafood personally. Ambitious home sushi enthusiasts can even snag a perfectly rectangular *saku* block of tuna, ensuring beautifully geometric slices land on the plate. Friendly fishmongers are also happy to answer questions or track down special requests.

While seafood is the showstopper, Sebastian's shelves are packed with must-haves for a proper *sushi* night: *nori* sheets, *sushi* rice, premium soy sauces, *togarashi* spice blends and chili crunch oil for an extra kick. As Galletti joked, "The only thing missing is the rice maker."

Kusshi

RAW TALENT AT KUSSHI & KANPAI

Sashimi may not check the official *sushi* box, but Kusshi is far too busy crafting beautiful plates to argue semantics. In Japanese, the word *kusshi* translates to "precious," a deliberate nod to the deep respect chefs Ian Skomski and Marcus Mitchell have for the ocean's bounty. Their evolving menu at its location tucked off of Century Drive, confidently explores Nikkei cuisine and its inspired union of Japanese precision and punchy Peruvian flavors. "Our dishes feel accessible even if you're new to *sashimi*," Skomski explained. "It's not just a slab of raw fish—we surround it with bright sauces and exciting flavors that didn't exist in Bend until now."

Take the *Tuna Tiradito*, with delicate slices of Hawaiian tuna swimming in a fruity-spicy aji amarillo sauce that practically begs diners to consider drinking directly from the bowl. Or the *Causa Limeña* that reimagines Peru's mashed potato dish as a neatly stacked one-bite wonder topped with tuna, avocado purée and a salty hit of *tobiko* (flying fish roe). Even Hokkaido scallops get special treatment with delightfully acidic *Leche de Tigre* sauce and Peruvian salsa.

Longtime locals know Kanpai as the place that started Bend's love affair with *sushi*. Its standout *nigiri*—hand-pressed mounds of rice topped with a perfect slice of fresh fish—features classics such as *maguro* (bluefin tuna) and *uni* (sea urchin), as well as inventive specialties like Sunrise, featuring tuna crowned with *tobiko* and luxurious quail egg yolk.

RYOSHI SUSHI & IZAKAYA

At Ryoshi Sushi & Izakaya, the *izakaya* part is less about late-night revelry and more about the joyful chaos of passing plates, swapping stories and not caring about who double-dipped. It's the kind of place where local chefs gather after their shifts to sip sake and share fresh-off-the-blade sashimi.

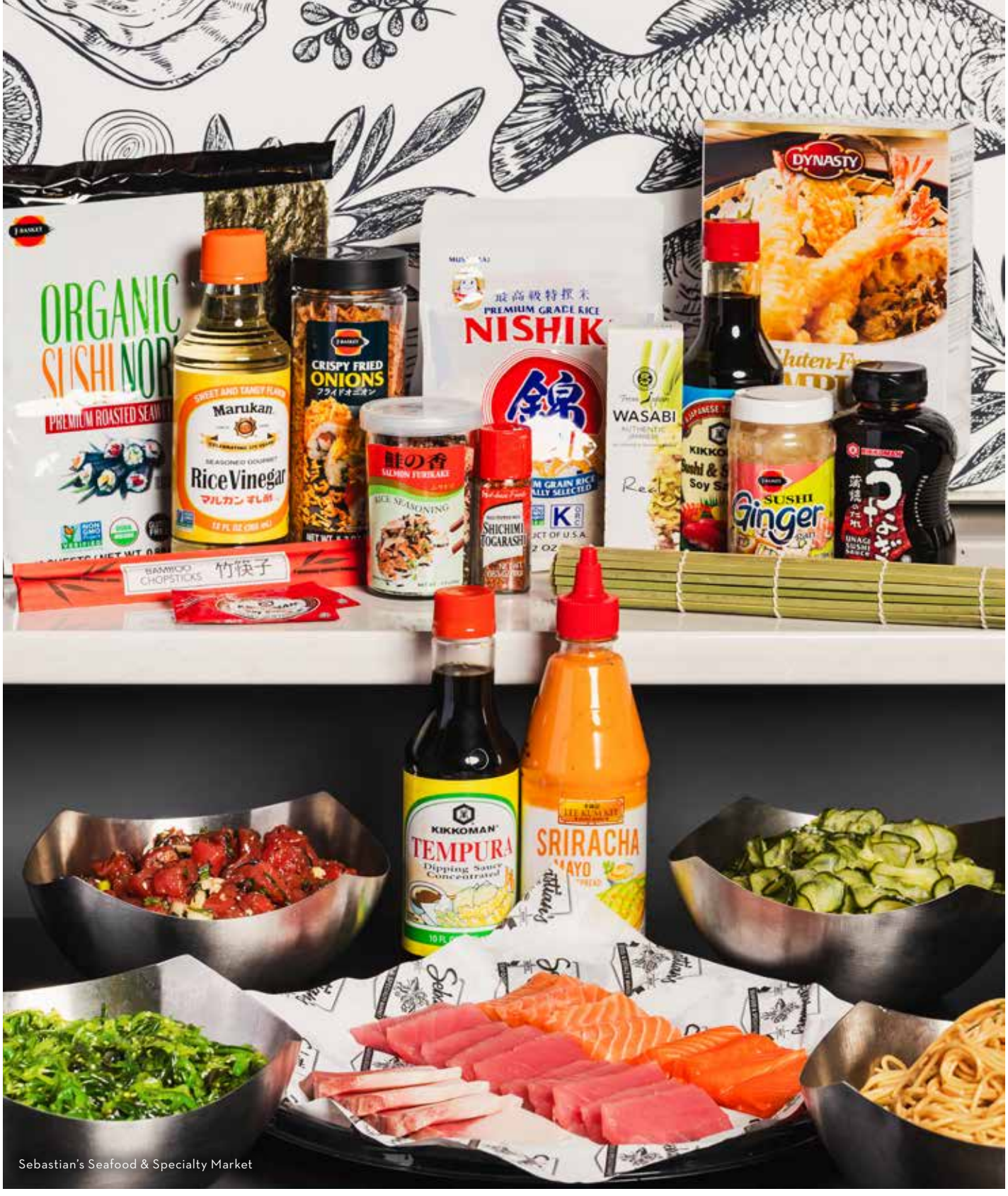
Here, rice is treated with reverence, crafted exclusively by the sushi chef to achieve a perfect texture and balance—subtly vinegared, slightly sweet, structured yet soft enough to hold everything together. Great rice may not win awards, but it's the quiet hero of every great sushi roll.

The daily specials at Ryoshi showcase seasonal fish flown in from Japan. Those seeking adventure can opt for *omakase*—a multicourse meal left entirely to the sushi chef's imagination. There are also dependable sides like garlic edamame, tangy seaweed salad and comforting miso soup to round things out.

But it's the rolls that bring everyone to the table.

Sushi rolls come in two main varieties: *maki* (seaweed wrapped neatly on the outside) and *uramaki* (an inside-out approach that hides the seaweed beneath perfectly sticky rice). Within these humble parameters lies limitless creative potential. Ryoshi's signature roll exemplifies controlled elegance with salmon, avocado, tiny beads of *masago* (capelin fish roe) and rice neatly pressed into a compact and deceptively simple rectangle. A thin slice of torched salmon and a sliver of jalapeño take it from subtle to sublime.

While the Ryoshi Roll plays with form, the Sunset Roll plays with crunch. Sushi rice is fried into crispy, golden slabs and piled high with spicy tuna, creamy avocado, tempura flakes and *masago*. The aptly named Dynamite Roll dares to combine tempura shrimp, smoky grilled eel and…yes… melted cheese. "People see cheese on a sushi roll and hesitate," said manager Yuki Li. "But one bite, and they get it."



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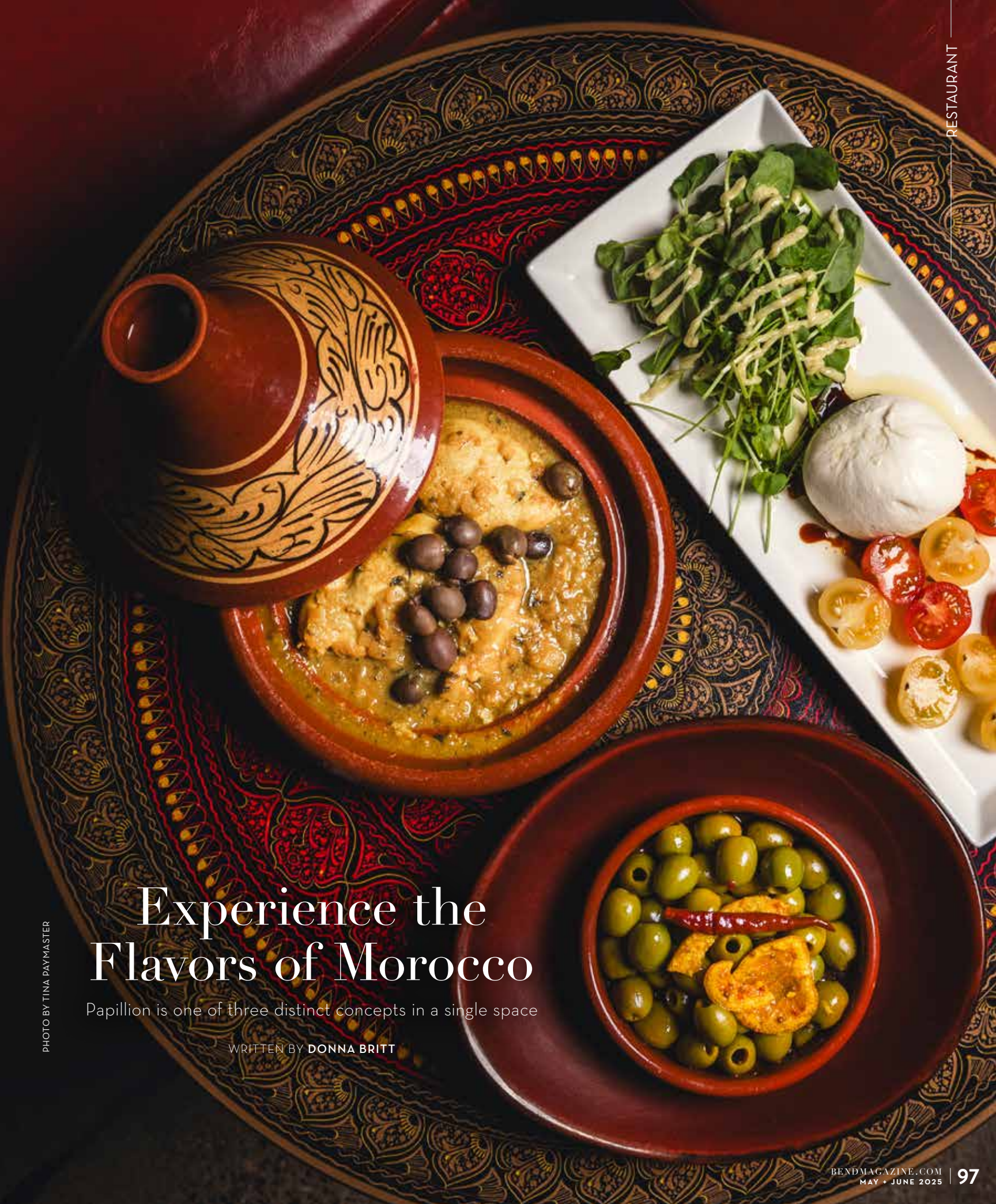


PHOTO BY TINA PAYMASTER

Experience the Flavors of Morocco

Papillion is one of three distinct concepts in a single space

WRITTEN BY **DONNA BRITT**

Papillon, which means butterfly in French, is the apt name of a new evening restaurant concept that emerged in a combination of personal heritage and travels across the world.

Miki Bekkari with her husband and executive chef Kamal, who hails from Morocco, originally envisioned opening a Moroccan restaurant in what ultimately became their Blissful Spoon bakery and brunch spot on Newport Avenue in Bend. In 2023, they added Cellar 65, a speakeasy down a set of stairs that leads below Blissful Spoon, to feature curated craft cocktails and bites. Now, their original idea has emerged, like a butterfly, when the upstairs bakery space transforms into the Moroccan dinner venue, Papillon, each evening.

Miki said she and Kamal are "accidental restaurateurs" who never intended to open a restaurant in the first place. The butterfly is also a fitting metaphor for the Bekkari's culinary evolution from a farmers market stall to a full-fledged trio of taste spaces. Accidental or not, Papillon is a reflection of their journey and a celebration of the culture of Kamal's homeland.

The wall murals inside the restaurant tell the story of Miki and Kamal's travels and experiences, blending elements from their lives across the world. From Kamal's background in Morocco and Miki's childhood in California to a joint stint in Australia, the art reflects a vibrant spirit of the food being served. The restaurant space is like an extension of their home, where they invite you to share in their passion for life and food.

The Papillon menu ranges from sharable bites such as mezze and tapas to traditional, special-occasion *bastilla*—or savory pie—dishes made with fine, multitiered *feuille de brick* pastry dough, as well as *tajines* and *la'acha* (Moroccan family-style) options, all crafted with attention to detail.

The rich and flavorful *zaalouk* dip, featuring smoked eggplant with almond gremolata and warm pita, is a perfect introduction to the bold flavors that define Moroccan cuisine. Moroccan hummus

PHOTO TOP BY TINA PAYMASTER | ALL OTHERS BY TAMBI LANE

CLOCKWISE: A sampling from the menu; Miki Bekkari with her husband and executive chef Kamal; From Cellar 65, braised lamb shank and The Bootlegger cocktail.

is another standout, with its unique combination of pork *nduja*, rose *harissa* and *tahini*, that creating a spicy and utterly addictive dip.

For those looking to share, the *Chlada Khamsa*—or five salads—is a colorful platter that showcases a selection of the restaurant's most popular tapas. This dish includes marinated olives, *zaalouk, hummus, muhammara* and a refreshing tomato and cucumber *fattoush* salad.

Delving deeper into the menu, the heart of Moroccan cooking is represented in its *tajines*—both the conical serving dishes and the slow-cooked meals they contain. The braised lamb shank *tajine* is a must-try, featuring tender lamb infused with Berber spices, along with prunes, brown butter farro, herb salad and almonds. The meat is so tender it falls right off the bone, creating a satisfying and comforting dish that speaks to the essence of Moroccan cuisine.

Another highlight is the rib *tanjia*, showcasing slow-cooked ribs with preserved lemon, *ras al hanout*, Spanish smoked paprika and chickpeas all served on a bed of couscous with seasonal grilled vegetables.

Slow cooked and well spiced, aromatic flavors are the hallmarks of Moroccan food, according to Miki, and the Papillon team is always looking for ways to elevate its dishes to bring out that depth of flavor in each dish. Everything is done in-house, including the desserts.

Sticky date cake, drenched in warm butterscotch and accompanied by *crème fraîche*, is a sublime treat. Or perhaps the Desert Rose raspberry mousse will be the perfect finish to your Papillon experience.

Aiming to create a space where laughter and joy abound, and reminiscent of traditional Moroccan gatherings, the Bekkari's know that food is a common denominator that brings people together. Their newest culinary expression is an invitation to all to experience community while savoring the rich flavors and traditions of Morocco.

Still in its early stages, Papillon is feeling the love. "It's so gratifying to have an idea, to have a passion for something and then have people respond to it," said Miki with a smile. "People come in and say, 'We're so glad you're here.' It means so much to us to get that feedback from the community."

Papillon | Blissful Spoon | Cellar 65
65 NW Newport Ave., Bend
blissfulspoon.com

Sunset in a Glass

Beyond the Vine's high-desert twist on Italy's favorite cocktail

WRITTEN BY **MAISIE SMITH**
PHOTOGRAPHY BY **ALYSON BROWN**

There's something about an Aperol Spritz that suggests a person has absolutely nowhere to be. That they've made peace with the afternoon and ordered another round just to prove it. First poured in Italy in 1919, the cocktail is a low-proof blend of prosecco, soda water and Aperol—a bitter orange aperitivo with a fiercely guarded recipe and a neon-orange hue that glows with main-character energy. It's long been a symbol of the good kind of lazy, a refreshing salute to effortless leisure.

Beyond the Vine in Redmond captures that same unhurried spirit. The wine bar and bottle shop, opened by Lydia DeRoss in November 2023, is more about vibe than vocabulary. With a soft spot for European varietals and a distaste for pretension, DeRoss turned her wine curiosity into a business model. "Redmond was hungry for the things I was excited about," she said. While the wine list runs deep, it's the seasonal spritzes that turn sipping into lingering. Especially one. "The Venetian holds the heartstrings around here," shared DeRoss.

A riff on the Aperol Spritz, the Venetian swaps prosecco for drier Cava, and Aperol for Cappelletti—a wine-based Italian bitter that keeps its sweetness tucked just beneath the surface. Topped with fragrant desert herbs snipped on-site and a lush slice of blood orange, the spritz is the color of a sunset in full sprawl—fiery, layered and electric. DeRoss affectionately dubs it "summer water," although locals are determined to sip the Venetian year-round.

There's no wrong seat at Beyond the Vine, but the patio has its own thing going on—there's sun above, shade where it counts and planters full of things that smell good in the breeze. A dog's asleep under the table. Glasses clink, conversations drift and no one seems to care what time it is. That's kind of the point. See *btvredmond.com*.

Library as Gallery

Artist John Grade creates a world-class sculpture in Redmond

WRITTEN BY **CHERYL PARTON**

PHOTO COURTESY OF DESCHUTES PUBLIC LIBRARY

Entering the Redmond Public Library is an invitation to connect with the community. There, sculptor John Grade found a space for an art installation surrounded by volumes of books. His new work has an organic subject and is at the center of an intellectual landscape to provoke thought and inspire visitors to grow.

Commissioned by the Deschutes Public Library, "SAGE" is a large-scale sculpture suspended from the ceiling of the renovated Redmond branch which reopened in January 2025. Inspired by the structure within a stem of high desert sagebrush, "SAGE" mimics a horizontal cross section of the plant's growth rings and shows the intricate biological geometry that draw water and nutrients from deep within the high desert's soil. Similar to a cell network, each segment of the art piece was created individually. Walking up the staircase in the library space, a visitor is meant to feel part of an interconnected root system. Then, from a walkway above the art, a viewer will see more additional nuances from Grade: an undulating reference to Central Oregon's topography.

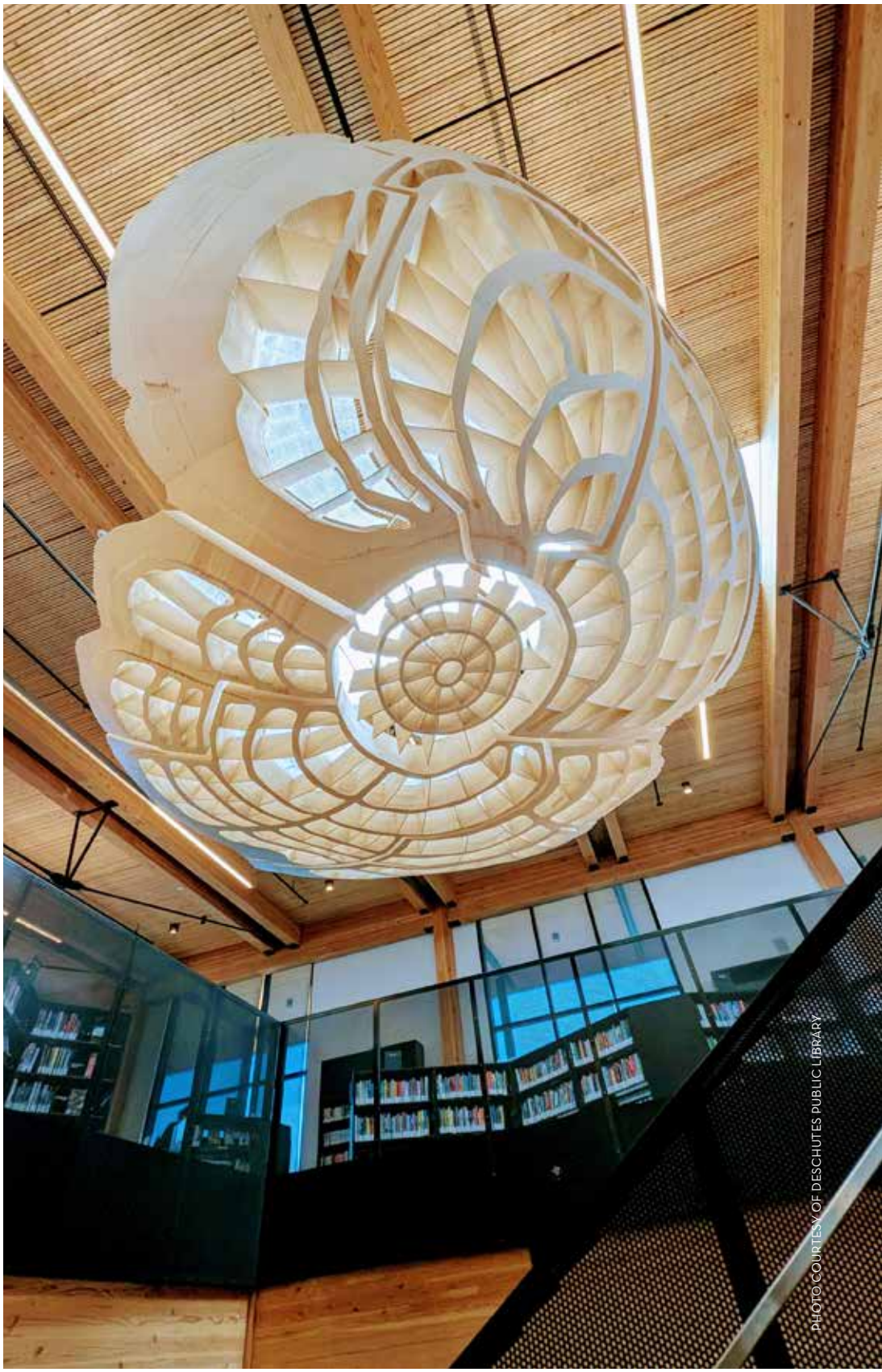
SIMILAR TO A LIBRARY AND HOW IT FUNCTIONS FOR A CROSS SECTION OF PEOPLE, THE SCULPTURE IS A WAY TO INTERACT WITH THE BUILDING."

CONNECTED TO PLACE

While based in Seattle, Grade's work is found both across the country and the world. The award-winning artist has pieces at the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Kew Gardens in London, Arte Sella sculpture garden in Italy, the Seattle Art Museum and Seattle-Tacoma International Airport. Working from his studio with a team of artists, designers and structural engineers, he creates works in collaboration with others, much in the way he approaches the imagining of each piece: in its relationship to the ecosystem. "John's connection to and deep sense of place was critical for us," said Chantal Strobel, a member of the library's art committee and assistant director of Deschutes Public Library. "John's immediate and holistic sense of Central Oregon was exciting to witness. He quickly embraced the polarity of our landscape and set out to discover it."

Grade had previous experience in Central Oregon, having spent 15 years exploring the region. He was drawn to the Badlands in particular and what he referred to as "the humble sagebrush."

"The sculpture started by asking how it participates in the landscape," Grade explained, adding that a journal he read informally called the sagebrush a community builder. "With its deep root system, it takes in more water than it can use itself, and it disperses it to the plants around it and smaller plants that live in its shadow. I thought it was a beautiful metaphor for what a library could be."



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John Grade

CREATION OF A CENTERPIECE

The first step in designing the sculpture was finding a dead sagebrush and cutting a cross section of its stem. "The growth rings are similar to a tree, but much more dynamic," Grade said. The formal qualities of a one-inch cross-section were magnified to almost 30 feet across and used as inspiration. The building of the large-scale work was what Grade calls a "feat of structural engineering." The ceiling wouldn't support a monolithic object and had to follow seismic-safety parameters, so the 1,000-pound work had to be hollow. What appears to be a singular piece is actually a 10-section exoskeleton, with thousands of small holes that Grade said refer to the cell structure of the plant. It was created by his team in Grade's Seattle studio before being installed at the Redmond Public Library. Standing beneath the artwork—positioned under a skylight—gives the viewer a feeling of seeing through a stem. "On multiple visits, you may discover something new," Grade said. "Similar to a library and how it functions for a cross section of people, the sculpture is a way to interact with the building."

MORE ART FOR LIBRARIES

Next, Grade will install the work "JUNIPER" at the Central Library at Stevens Ranch, opening in 2026. This piece was inspired by contrast: the expansion of the high desert's ubiquitous and quick-growing western juniper compared to the contraction of the glacier at South Sister. "I liked the idea of taking two difficult things going on in the landscape, thinking of how we frame them, and bringing them together." Referring to his sculpture as "cultural manifestation," Grade often includes groups of people in the creation of his art and hopes "JUNIPER" will include a hands-on program in conjunction with the library related to its themes. "It will have a long legacy for visitors, not just today but into the future, because that's what the library is trying to do: create community." See *johngrade.com, deschuteslibrary.org.*

PHOTOS COURTESY OF DESCHUTES PUBLIC LIBRARY

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Beauty in the Grit

Artist Ashley Paggi finds inspiration in the rugged landscapes of Central Oregon

WRITTEN BY **KATIE HENRY**

PHOTOGRAPHY BY
MADDIE PHILLIPS PHOTOGRAPHY

It wasn't too long ago that Ashley Paggi of Ash Cascade Designs began to consider herself a fine artist. Even after working as a graphic designer for 15 years, licensing her artwork for companies such as Cotton and Steal Fabrics, and selling her mostly digitally created art prints and products locally at The Workhouse and at nationwide boutiques, Paggi was hesitant to use that word to describe herself.

With a simple daily commitment to work in her sketchbook, she found the conviction to look at her art in a more elevated and tactile way, giving light to a new approach. "I was never a very confident painter. I would always paint in black and then add color and texture on the computer," said Paggi. "But in January [2025], I thought, I'm just going to play. And I started painting quilts in my sketchbook everyday." The experimentation, which turned into the start of a 100-day project, allowed Paggi to test her skills away from the computer, playing with acrylics and watercolors, which gave her enough self-assuredness to move from the comfort of her sketchbook and onto painting quilt patterns on canvas and wood.

Eventually, she found a rhythm to this mode of creation and realized that painting can actually be more forgiving than she had believed. "I'm not creating shapes as much as I'm laying down color. If something isn't right, I can put more color over it," said Paggi. "And I don't want it to be perfect. Something I'm aiming for, and have even with my fabrics, is a sense of grit."

WHAT WOULD LIFE BE LIKE WITHOUT BEAUTIFUL THINGS?”

Paggi's interpretation of grit is seen in the artwork lining the walls of her backyard studio. The quilts that once lived in her sketchbook have come alive, painted on wood panels. On canvases of varying sizes are images of desert flowers, moths and rugged mountainscapes reflecting western Cascade landscapes. "We have flowers [here] that are teeny tiny, because they're living on the side of a mountain, and they have to survive a snowstorm…When I'm painting, I want there to be an element of soul. Yes, it's beautiful, but it's not necessarily fragile."

The vision of these hearty florals and landscapes comes from the experience of simply living in the high desert. "When I'm on a walk, I'm constantly looking at the shape of the plants and flowers," said Paggi. "I'm looking at the color and how it's attached to the ground. I'm looking at how I can interpret this thing that nature made and make it my own."

It's the story within these elements that Paggi is looking to preserve with her art. "When you go to a museum, you're not looking at tax records. You're looking at the art people made, you're reading the passages that people wrote. And those are the things that tell the story of history," Paggi said. Her current art documents what it means to live in Central Oregon and the importance the natural world plays: the subtle green that shows up in sagebrush as spring arrives, the difference between a ponderosa and a juniper, the reprieve that the first cool days of fall bring after a hot and dry summer. "It's common for us to see spiny flowers and more rugged foliage, but it's new to people in other areas," Paggi said.

When Paggi reflects on her art, where she started and where she is now, she feels pride in the transformation of her work. Putting paint to canvas—or wood—has allowed her to explore dynamics within herself that she sees in the natural world: a kind of beauty that is raw, real and sometimes a little messy. With that comes a desire to keep learning, to keep finding new ways to create. "Because what would life be like without beautiful things?" See *ashcascade.com*.

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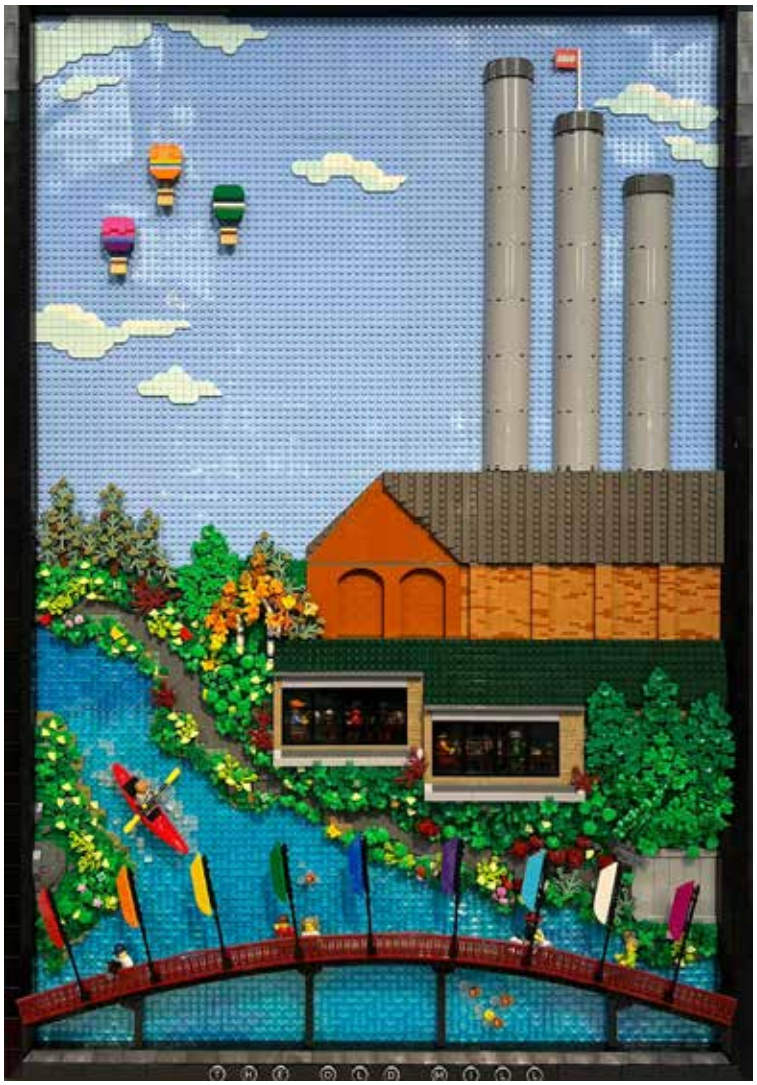

CENTRAL OREGON LEGO ART

Discover colorful depictions of Central Oregon's landscapes, built entirely from LEGOs at Dakota's Brick Shop. The 3-D mosaic art features tens of thousands of LEGO pieces and took roughly 45 days to complete, a collaborative endeavor created by the Dakota's Brick Shop staff. The project highlights the beauty of The Old Mill District, Smith Rock and Mount Bachelor. See *dakotasbrickshop.com*.

The exhibition at the High Desert Museum includes fractivity tables for visitors to create their own fractals.

HIGH DESERT MUSEUM SHOWS FRACTALS AT PLAY

On display through October 5, 2025, the High Desert Museum's newest exhibit, "Patterns at Play: Fractals in Nature,"explores the repeating patterns found in the environment, from trees and snowflakes to galaxies. Visitors can engage in hands-on displays, create fractal patterns and interact with large-scale projections of nature's designs. "Fractals are everywhere in nature," said exhibit curator Hayley Brazier. See *highdesertmuseum.org*.

INAUGURAL BEND BREWS & BEYOND FESTIVAL

A new brew fest comes to Drake Park May 24-25, 2025. Hosted by Grand Craft Bend and Silver Moon Brewing, Bend Brews & Beyond features more than 50 Oregon breweries, cideries and nonalcoholic producers, and offers everything from beer and hop water to kombucha and cold brew. Every local brewer will be represented. See *bendbrewsandbeyond.com*.

PHOTO TOP RIGHT ABBOTT SCHINDLER FOR THE HIGH DESERT MUSEUM

KPOV TURNS 20

KPOV, Bend's independent community radio station, celebrates its 20th anniversary this year. Since 2005, KPOV 88.9 FM has provided news, music and local programming—supported by volunteers, listener contributions and grants. "We remain committed to connecting you, your friends and your family with diverse voices, discovering new music and artists, and reporting well-researched news and information," said Linda Orcelletto, KPOV's executive director. The station features more than 100 volunteer DJs who bring these resources to the community 24 hours a day, every day of the year. See *KPOV.org*.

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