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THE SWEET LIFE

## HONORING OUR PAST

Twenty years ago, when I was a cub reporter at the *Chronicle & Pilot*, I started out by writing feature stories about Crested Butte's old timers. At a summer town reunion, Willard Ruggera told me about playing his sax at some of the biggest dance parties the town had seen. Sitting in his workshop behind his Elk Avenue home, Whitey Sporcich shared tales of long days in the mine. And Betty Spehar reminisced about her childhood, running down the boardwalk with her friends all the way to the Depot to meet the train from Gunnison. The conductor would give them pieces of candy.

From then on, I was hooked on the old time stories of Crested Butte. I'm thrilled to bring some of them to you in this issue of the *Peak*, where we visit some of the town's oldest homes. They've been given new life but still tell stories of the past.

One of them is Betty's family home. When she told me about sprinting across town for a piece of candy we sat in the living room of her home on Sopris Avenue. Her "yellow house on the hill" had been in her family since the early 1900s. A few years after Betty passed away in 2009, her family sold the home and recently, this house underwent a full transformation. The renovation celebrates both the craftsmanship and the history of the home, where builders found capsules of a time past – newspapers from the 1880s in perfect condition underneath the floorboards. A true glimpse into the history of this coal-mining town. Another long-time Crested Butte family, the Kapushions have given new life to their century old home on what was once the edge of town. Sisters Nettie Kapushion and Tina Meredith, along with Tina's daughters, re-imagined their family house, first built in 1890, all the while preserving the sentimental fixtures inside the walls.

This issue of the *Peak* also takes you inside a rebuilt cabin from the 1940s, a modern greenhouse, and the studio of longtime Crested Butte artist Susan Anderton. Her drawings of 1970s Crested Butte capture a time when life was a bit slower here.

We're honored to tell these stories of some of Crested Butte's founding families and their homes. As this town continues to grow and evolve, it's more important than ever to remember our mountain roots. Take some time to look closely at the historic photos on these pages. Although many of the buildings have transformed over time, there's a constant: the mountains surrounding this place we call home. Those of us that are lucky enough to have settled here have all been welcomed by these same views—the immigrant miners in the 1800s to the modern Colorado families of today. Indeed, we live in paradise.

-Melissa Fenlon, publisher

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#### **RENOVATING A HOUSE, HONORING A HOME:**

he nrect 0 **STORY** MARK REAMAN **PHOTOS** JAMES RAY SPAHN 111

This is a story not so much about a house that has been elegantly renovated—it has—but rather a home that has been expanded and modernized, continuing to provide an anchor for a longtime Crested Butte family.

here was a time, before the Crested Butte ski area took off, that the Kapushion house at Fifth and Gothic felt beyond the edge of town. It was known as the last house before the cemetery because there was not another building between it and the final resting place of miners and ranchers of old Crested Butte.

Today, that house feels almost like the middle of town, just a few blocks from the Old Rock Library. It continues to be home for another generation of Kapushions, the third, with another generation likely to take up residence when the time is right. And while the house you see today is very different from the one first built in the 1890s and updated in the 1930s and 1960s, it embodies a warmth of family and tradition that is felt immediately when you walk in the front door.





Sitting at the wooden kitchen table with Tina Meredith and Nettie Kapushion, the oversized window frames Crested Butte mountain like a painting. The sisters are welcoming and vibrant. They laugh and finish each other's sentences as they recall growing up in a very different town and a very different house. Nettie, a former teacher at the Crested Butte Community School, and Tina ate at the table as children. Their mother, Ruth, used the sink that remains in the same spot today to prepare their meals.

While there remain elements of the house Tina and Nettie grew up in, the structure today has been renovated into an expanded home with all the modern conveniences.

The new in-floor heat is warm and the clean lines of the kitchen are comforting. The light fixtures are more modern and fun than you might expect in one of the old-timer dwellings of Crested Butte. The living room centerpiece is a big fireplace, a stone love letter between their parents, Tony and Ruth, who went on Sunday dates to gather the rocks to build it.

"Our hearts are here," said Nettie. "It is a sense of place. It has a sense of family. It would have made us really sad to have to sell it. So Wayne [Tina's husband, Wayne Meredith] knew about Willy and said we had to get Willy Miller. I emailed him and he said he was really busy. I think we waited a whole year while he finished another project—and it was worth it." "We basically built a new house inside an old one," explained Crested Butte builder Willy Miller of Miller Custom Homes. "There were just a few things the family wanted to keep, like the kitchen sink and the fireplace. These types of projects can be challenging but they are really fun."

About that fireplace and the chimney that were built with such love. It's easy to see why they wanted to keep it. "Mom and Dad would go out in their old blue Chevy truck that Dad loved and collect rocks a little at a time," explained Nettie. "So it was a huge project that spanned probably a year in the 1960s. They got the rocks from all over—across

from the ski area, up Ohio Creek. They would bring them home and stockpile them. They were happy to do it because they did it together. They were 20 years apart in age but they were soulmates.

"Then they hired a crew from Montrose for the summer," Nettie continued. "The crew lived in a little trailer by the barn and built the fireplace and chimney. And Mom cooked every single meal for them—with a smile. After it was done, Dad wanted to keep the moss on the rock alive, so for years he'd get out a little sprayer and spray the fireplace."

Tony had roots in the house, which was originally constructed in the 1890s. "Our dad's whole family grew up in the house," said Nettie. "There were seven of them with two little bedrooms and a couple of closets. But that's all they needed since they didn't have many clothes. They had their work clothes and their Sunday suit and that was pretty much it. He was one of the younger boys. The others married and left and he stayed in the house."

"And we were raised here," added Tina. "And my kids were always here as they were growing up. Jodie and Whitney [Meredith] were always in the house with Ruthie. They'd come over from school with their friends. I'd come to pick them up after work and there were always five or six other kids. That was fun."









Willy said that based on newspapers they found in the walls (originally used for insulation), an expansion appeared to have occurred in the 1930s. "We found old *Denver Posts* that referred to Hitler as Chancellor Hitler," Willy said. "The kitchen we are sitting in and probably the second floor of the house were added on in the mid-1930s. Aside from the papers, we didn't find much else. Some old tools. We pulled out some old jeans and burlap sacks probably used to stop cold drafts. There was a letter or two that slipped through the floorboards but no sack of gold coins."

Ruth lived by herself in the home for many years and passed away in 2011. The family began discussions on what to do with the property. Tina said the house was not in good shape. "It was time to make a choice," she said. "We either had to sell it or do something with it."

"The renovation is a happy thing," emphasized Tina. "It took a little over a year and was a joint effort. Jodie, who has a background in architectural design, did all the plans. She really enjoys historic preservation so she took it through BOZAR [the Board of Zoning and Architectural Review].

"Molly Minneman at the town was really helpful in explaining the rules and Jodie really enjoyed doing it. Plus it was a good price," Tina laughs. "My other daughter, Whitney, lives here now and she was responsible for fixtures like the faucets and lighting. It was really important and it all turned out great." Heidi Sherratt of Interior Visions was part of the interior design team.

The family wanted the fireplace and the kitchen sink to stay in the same place. "That's where we always remember Mom working and cooking," said Tina. "So yes, it still brings back warm and good memories."



"It just has a good feeling. Of course Dad would go a little crazy because it's so nice," laughed Nettie. "He would have thought it better to spend the money on something like a tractor to work with. But ultimately everyone in the family agreed to keep the house and renovate it. And hopefully, I can pass it on to my nieces. That's the plan."

Before the latest renovation, the house was about 1,200 square feet. It is now closer to 2,200 with a 600-square-foot garage.

"With projects like these there are a lot of decisions made during the renovation," said Willy. "There is no such thing as a strict plan. It is always shifting and changing on the fly."

Willy cites as an example sitting in the kitchen one day during the renovation work, eating lunch. "I was looking at where the ceiling meets the wall in the kitchen. The rafters were pretty slopey so we wanted to straighten it out. We didn't want to overcorrect and we had to keep it historical, so structurally we did all the things we had to do. What we were left with was a ceiling on the interior above the kitchen cabinets that was really crooked. Nettie and I were talking and I said we couldn't leave the interior looking like that. The exterior was fine and it adds to the funkiness, but interior-wise we were able to fix that and make it look nice. Otherwise it would drive everyone crazy."



"I remember that day and just loved that he could see an issue and fix it on the fly," said Nettie.

Willy and his crew spent a year beefing everything up on the inside. New walls were constructed. Insulation was upgraded. In-floor heat was added. "It was basically building a new house inside an old one," Willy said.

"And it is so much warmer and efficient than the old electric heat, for example," said Tina. "When mom was here and older she really turned up the heat, so the heating bills were \$400 a month sometimes."

"It is a good melding of the old and the new," said Nettie.

"A lot of people were involved to make this happen," Nettie continued. "Willy Miller has just been perfect. He was very flexible and would put a lot of thought into making things special. He might see some of the old original logs and wonder how he could keep them. He would reuse things. We like that."

"Willy was incredible with his detail and creativity," agreed Tina. "It has a great feel now. When we were growing up there was so much stuff in the house. Generations of stuff all over—in the basement and the barn. This is so open and nice."

"It was a joint effort for sure," agreed Willy. "And it came out really nice."

And that is why the newly renovated, much larger, much more open and much warmer house remains rooted in history, a true family home for the current and next generation. The barn, known as the dynamite shack, is still out back. There are still coal remnants in the basement but there are also hip light fixtures throughout the house. The fireplace still tells a love story, and there are other stories that get told over the kitchen table.

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66 IT STILL BRINGS BACK Marm - AND - Good MEMORIES. 22

Stories of how the family owned Tony's Tavern (now the Wooden Nickel) for 17 years. Stories of ranching, of working in the Big Mine and giving horseback tours. Stories of their dad working the old homestead cabin up Washington Gulch and their mom walking lunch up to him because that's what people did back then—everyone worked all the time and they walked everywhere. Stories of townspeople digging up spuds from the family potato patch and letting Tony know at the bar. Stories of people socializing at Tony's Tavern and after drinking a few beers throwing pennies at the back wall for fun, which meant the family had boxes of pennies after the Tavern was sold. Stories of adjusting to the new town when the ski area opened and their dad enjoying the changes and hiring the new hippies to help him hay the family's field.

Nettie and Tina said they too appreciate all the changes that have come to Crested Butte. "It's better than having a mine," said Tina. "It's a much easier life than having a mine and digging coal. It's a fact of life you have to make a living, and tourism is a cleaner, better way."

So while the house has changed—sort of like the town in that it's gotten bigger and nicer and easier to live in—it remains a family home. Four generations have ties there. "This house is sort of like an anchor to the family history," summed up Tina. "I think all of the generations before would be glad that we did it."

"It is wonderful," said Nettie. "Willy Miller made our dream come true." 🛦



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# EVERY PICTURE TELLS A **CRESTED BUTTE** -THROUGH-SUSAN ANDERTON'S DRAWINGS

STORY BY DAWNE BELLOISE | ILLUSTRATIONS BY SUSAN ANDERTON | PHOTO BY LYDIA STERN

ander to

Ust off the south side of Elk Avenue on Third Street, where some of town's art galleries are clustered, Susan Anderton's work graces the walls of her Gallery 3 studio. There are colorful prints from her decades of designing the celebrated Flauschink posters as well as originals of local mountain scenery and wildflowers.

Some of the most intriguing work, especially for Old West architecture and history buffs or the merely curious, are the drawings of Crested Butte's buildings that depict a simpler time back in the early 1970s.

There were then about 300 residents living in town, the streets were dirt and full of potholes, the buildings were dilapidated beyond rustic, and there were almost as many empty lots as there were structures. Every one of these drawings tells a story, as every house and building has its unique personality, captured in that moment and suspended in time.

There's a haunting of time, a history passed into modernity, and it was fortunate for posterity and documentation that Susan captured the ambiance of the old Crested Butte through her drawings, exacting details that convey the real town as it once was 20 years after the Big Mine closed in 1952, well before tourism took the town beyond its original quaintness.

Hailing from Prestwich, England, Susan landed in Crested Butte in 1969 with her former husband, Cordley, an American she met in England and who decided he wanted to live in the mountains. They arrived in December and her first impression of the sleepy town was that she was visiting another world.

"It was hard to get here, but everyone was so friendly and welcoming. It was like going back in history, the old western town, the coal mining history, the families who had stayed when the mine closed, the old timers, some new, younger people of my generation, and a fledgling ski resort," she recalled. Susan had arrived at the Denver airport and drove up at night, so she came into town after dark.

"I woke up the next day to this magnificent snowcovered landscape—it was magical. There were a lot of empty lots all up and down Elk Avenue in those days and very little development east of the Four-way Stop, just the old train depot and one or two houses. There was nothing at all south of Whiterock except the remnants of the coke ovens. Nothing north of Teocalli Avenue. There were no developments around Crested Butte, no Skyland, Riverbend, Riverland, no Crested Butte South, no Trappers Crossing. I thought it was magnificent, the vastness of the landscape and the mountains seemed endless to me."

There was Stefanic's for groceries, gas pumps at Tony's and maybe three or four restaurants when she rolled into town. Susan had planned on being here for only six months but, she laughs, "It didn't work out that way. We started a silk-screen business, Empire Tunnel Graphics, in the Company Store building. It was downstairs Ifor the first year], down a dark passageway, and we had a little room down there. We named it after an old mine."





ALL THE BUILDINGS

HAVE SO MUCH

ONALI

Susan thought the name appropriate with a tunnel for an entryway. She was one of many newcomers, young people, starting ventures in town, as a different demographic slowly began to catch wind of the funky little dusty town and breathe new life into Elk Avenue.

As Susan set up her life in Crested Butte, she was quite impressed with the more public and commercial buildings in town. "The larger buildings really stood out as being major landmarks because there was so little here." She felt as though the buildings were framed by the empty lots around them. "They stood out as histor-

ic landmarks from the mining era. Some of them were dilapidated and run-down. Even without modern building methods, people could construct these large buildings back then and they took so much pride in the appearance of them. All the buildings have so much personality." Susan was fascinated by the history of this town and the story of the old miners.

"The identity of the town was very much the old mining town, the mining and ranching families who had stayed after the Big Mine closed in 1952. It really was a glimpse

into history, quite magical, an era I feel fortunate and privileged to have been here in time to experience. The buildings fascinated me because they were exactly as they had been during the mining days, and I set about drawing and recording them.

"I loved drawing Crested Butte," Susan

continues. "It was authentic, poignant, and heartbreakingly picturesque. Just walking down the alleys and having those glimpses," she notes of the long-gone views, now blocked by newer buildings. "I was trying to get to the truth of what I was seeing here and not to gloss it up." Susan realized that change was inevitable in Crested Butte so she set out to capture its authenticity. She was prolific in her documentation; her drawings reflect the town as it was when she arrived. "Pen and ink seemed an appropriate medium to capture the detail and the texture of the buildings. To me, it's a medium for telling a story because it's illustrative. It seemed like the best way of really capturing the feeling of Crested Butte as it was in those days." She started out with a drawing of Crested Butte Mountain as seen from the town in 1970 and her portfolio grew from there.

A sketch of three buildings on Elk Avenue shows the



Princess Theater, the town's movie theater at the time, now the Princess Wine Bar. With its wooden clapboard, the Alpineer stands within an arm's length next to the Princess, the business having moved from the Company Store building in 1971. That building now houses Mountain Spirits liquor store. Next to the Alpineer in Susan's drawing is Tony's Tavern, now the Wooden Nickel, and she reconstructs the scene, saying, "It was Tony Kapushion's place that was taken over by Don Bachman and was a 3.2 beer place. It had little booths and black and white checkered linoleum tile floor."

Another drawing shows the Kochevar houses, built

by Jacob Kochevar, Jr. and includes what Susan calls the 1913 Atchley House at the southwest end of Elk Avenue, still standing today. Notably, west of the 1913 building, there's a rambling wooden structure with a front façade and a balcony connecting three buildings that was once a boarding house. It sags and stretches all the way back from Elk Avenue to what was known as the mink farm, where during the mining days, minks were raised for the skins.

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"I had heard that the Kochevar houses were going to get torn down. There was a free store in part of it, with a huge pile of old clothing in the middle of the room and you could go in and sort through and take anything you wanted, or you could discard or donate clothing by throwing it on the pile," Susan says of the shop utilized by the "hippie" newcomers. Across the street was a blue house named the Blues Project, owned by the Kahns. Susan drew the Kochevar buildings from the upstairs window of the Blues Project, which later burned down.

"I sat there for two entire afternoons to do the drawing. The Kochevar buildings were probably dangerous and a health hazard in their severe dilapidation, so the town decided they had to go," she said. And a few days after Susan documented the building, it was torn down.

"They bulldozed the entire building, putting all the wood into a large pile, and like adding insult to injury, they had a large bonfire." The 1913 building remains today, the date still easily seen on its rounded façade. Where the Kochevar houses were, another narrow building was erected.

Frank and Gal's was also on Elk Avenue and Susan recalls, "It was a marvelous building with a beautiful bird'seye maple back bar. Frank and Gal Starika had an Italian restaurant and a bar, and Gal was famous for her spaghetti. Upstairs was a large dance hall where the town came to polka." When Frank and Gal retired and sold the place, Susan did a drawing of the building and gave it to them as a gift. On Friday the 13th in December of 1974, the building burned to the ground. A few years later Susan had to redraw Frank and Gal's since she hadn't made copies of the original.

Susan recalls the conglomerate of shacks, buildings, barns, and a smoke house that made up the collective viewscape behind the current post office. She learned that the smoke houses were common for the old timers who would smoke their fish and game for preservation.

Many of those buildings are now gone—some were moved, some were demolished. Jim Barefield's barn on Maroon is still standing, having been repurposed into his real estate office.

A peek through these spaces in 1974 shows there are no trees; in fact, there are very few trees throughout town.

The building that is now Izzy's restaurant used to be on Elk Avenue next to the Grubstake building. It was originally a barber's shop and later, in the 1960s, it was the downtown office for the ski resort real estate sales. In 1969, it transformed once again into a hand-carved sign shop by Barbara Kotz and later still, after an addition, it became the home for the *Crested Butte Pilot*. It was moved north, behind the post office to its current location.

In the alley between Maroon and Gothic and First and Second Streets is a shed, drawn in 1978 detail. Its structure was failing, the wood siding already falling from the frame, the window sashes gone and the metal roof in disarray with lopsided pieces hanging precariously above overgrown weeds. "It's long since been rehabilitated," Susan says, as have most of the back-alley buildings, remodeled and converted into garages, studios and residences.

The Company Store, now home to the Secret Stash, is Mission-Style Revival, with its stucco exterior and rounded front façade. Susan illustrates it in its simplicity. The building once housed and incubated many Crested Butte businesses after its initial function as the Colorado Fuel and Iron (CF&I) main office where the coal miners got paid. There was a large safe, as well as a walk-in freezer to store ice and probably meats. The CF&I also owned the grocery store where within, the miner families would spend their paychecks on food and supplies. There was truth to the song "Sixteen Tons" that Tennessee Ernie Ford made popular early on, that claimed, "I sold my soul to the company store," since families would often owe more for the items they bought than their paychecks would cover.

In addition to Susan's print shop in the Company Store, Crested Butte's only "mall," there was Schmoozie's Health Food; Tincup Tintypes, a Wild West costume photo portrait studio; Rags and Old Iron, a craft shop with pottery, crafts and sewing; Oh Be Joyful Pots to Pants, offering pottery and clothing; Guns and Smokes, a tobacco and ammunition store; The Basket of Light, "where there's a candle for everyone;" Cinnamon Rainbow leather goods; God's Eye Beads; CB Sports, ski equipment and accessories; High Country Sound, featuring records, tapes and stereo equipment; Red Lady's Old Friends, "warm happy things glowing with age;" CB Notions, "gift items and all the things you need but forgot to pack;" Hecho a Mano, handmade Mexican clothing and crafts; Tailings bar and restaurant, and later Jokerville, a bar, restaurant and discotheque with "sandwiches, stew, chili and entertainment nightly;" and of course, The Washhouse, the only self-service laundry at the time where you "can't beat the price."

The arcade boasted "Interesting shopping in a friendly local atmosphere, opened daily from 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m." The entire former mall upstairs is now the Secret Stash Pizzeria and downstairs is the Red Room, a bar at night, shared in the daytime with Karma (also known as the Momo Man), and Chimi's Nepalese food, and Wildflour Sweets baked goods.

On Second Street, the Slogar building, now home to a family-style fried chicken restaurant, was a neglected and empty building during Susan's early days. The front-door glass and most of the windows were smashed and splintered, the siding worn and the foundation had failed. From her drawing, there appears to be a smoke house behind the building, or possibly an outhouse. Even the bushes and trees look downtrodden and unkempt.

The Croatian Hall, once the cultural center and lodge for the Slavic community, including dances, is on the corner and down the street from Slogar's on Second Street. Susan tells that Second was an important street in the mining days with many bars and significant buildings because it was the route the miners took when returning home from a hard day of work in the Big Mine and they stopped into one of the many bars for a beer. The Croatian Hall now is home to Eleven's Scarp Ridge Lodge.

Susan did hundreds of drawings, all capturing the essence of a sleepy town in unsuspected transition. Susan says, "Apart from the uniqueness of the old western town itself, I could not get over the magnificence of the setting, the spectacular panorama, the breath-taking variety of the skyline as one drops over the hill into town. I still can't get over it! It is truly amazing. I have drawn and painted it many times and never feel I can do it justice."





ONE OF CRESTED BUTTE'S FIRST HOTELS GETS AWARD-WINNING RENOVATION

★ HISTORIC PHOTOS PROVIDED BY THE SPEHAR FAMILY



#### **STORY BY** SETH MENSING

t the top of a gentle rise on Sopris Avenue, between Third and Fourth streets, there's a house that for years was known as the Spehar house for the family who owned it for almost 90 years. And on a street lined with low-hung bungalows, their home cut a unique profile.

The surrounding houses are set back behind picket fences with narrow walkways leading to front porches, while the Spehar house hangs over the street like a canyon wall. For its prominence and the yellow steel siding it sported for 40-odd years, the Spehar house was a landmark in Crested Butte.

"People called it the yellow house on the hill," Teri O'Rourke says, scanning old photographs of the house.

O'Rourke, who bought the property to renovate in 2015 with her husband Peter and partners Jeff Hermanson and interior designer Priscila Palhava of Studio West, always knew the siding would have to go. But she had no idea how much history that would uncover. "We didn't even know it was log underneath," she says.

When the O'Rourkes first walked into the property, they were only seeing the final sentences of the home's latest chapter. The history of the house, she discovered, is as old as the town around it. Their opportunity was to preserve that history and bind it with new pages for the next chapter.

In her research, O'Rourke learned that the building was built by Howard F. Smith and William Holt, two of Crested Butte's founding fathers, who opened it as the Pioneer Apartment Hotel in 1881. At the time it was a modest, two-story structure meant to be the more affordable alternative to the Elk Mountain House, which Smith and Holt opened around the corner on Fourth and Elk the same year, she says.

The Pioneer Apartment Hotel operated as one of Crested Butte's first hotels until George and Anna Spehar bought the property sometime before the 1920 census, which lists them as the residents. When George and Anna died, they left the house to their son, George Jr., who in turn left it to his daughter Betty who was born there in 1924.

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1472 Gothic, Rural Crested Butte, 4 Bedrooms, 3 Full Baths, 1 Half Bath, 3,523 Sq. Ft., 7.28 acres, \$3,499,000, Dalynn Trujillo, 970.596.3397

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# bringing dreams home



#### continued from page 25

After going away to college and eventually earning her PhD, Betty moved back to the family home in 1952 to teach English and Literature at Western State. And in the years that followed she became as much a fixture in town as the house she lived in.

When Betty passed away in 2009, she left the house to the next generation of Spehar, who had spread out around the globe. Jim Spehar, who is now around 70 and lives in Grand Junction, started visiting the family home on Sopris when he was still in diapers and remembers it "about three color changes ago," he says. His parents were married in Crested Butte and while his father was a Spehar, his mother's family had been in the valley since the 1880s. So his family's ties to the town and the house were strong.

"[Betty] left the house to me and my five siblings," he says. "We kept it for a few years and were actually about to embark on some improvement projects."

They started to install a stairwell when they got a call from a realtor who had a few interested parties who wanted to look at the house. The timing of the call proved fateful. One of the parties included Teri and Peter O'Rourke, who had 30 years of experience building new and renovating historic buildings in Crested Butte, and they knew they'd found something unique. It was a risk not knowing what was under the yellow steel siding, but the team made an offer anyway.

continued on page 30



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"It was a hard decision to make," Jim Spehar says of the sale. "But we were going to do a fairly modest remodel and nothing to the extent that's been done."

The renovation was a major one, O'Rourke says, and would have been an enormous task for anyone without experience reconstructing a historic building. Even they didn't know quite what they were getting into. When they first saw the house, they noticed the thickness of the walls and guessed they were made of logs. "We thought, 'Oh my God,'" O'Rourke says. "It better be really good log because if it's rotten and awful then what do we do?"

There were two live wires running through insulating plugs on the ceiling, "the old way," Peter O'Rourke says. "And Betty was still using it. It's amazing the place didn't burn down."

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#### continued from page 30

Despite all the code violations, the house didn't burn down and the logs, sheathed in wood and steel siding, didn't rot. In fact, during the renovation Teri O'Rourke says that only one ground-level log needed to be replaced. The others - each hand hewn from local timber - were cleaned and brought back to the outside where they can show the deep cuts of an adz made more than a century ago by the craftsmen constructing one of the town's first hotels.

But before anyone could see those beautifully hand-hewn logs, major work needed to be done, starting with two months of demolition, stripping the structure to its frame and seeing just what they had. "When you do a renovation, especially a historic one, once you've gutted it you kind of need to just sit in there and have a couple of beers and think 'What are you going to do?' O'Rourke says. "And it evolves from there."

Because the building has such a rich history and lies within Crested Butte's National Historic District, everyone knew they would need to take special care to preserve the original look of the building. Palhava,



**BETTY SPEHAR** 

who also has experience serving on Crested Butte's Board of Zoning and Architectural Review, which oversees historic renovations to ensure the history of the place is preserved, said one of the project's major challenges was to rearrange the entire inside of the building and make it work without moving a single window. But she also lives across the street from the house and felt compelled to preserve its history because it was so special to the town.

"I just didn't want that much to change and I do appreciate [the history]," she says. "This was really a dream project. It was Betty Spehar's house and there's so much history."

But for all of its history, the house didn't really have that much space. "When we first got in we didn't know how big the house really was because ... it was really old and the ceilings were really low," Palhava says.

In order to create a stable foundation to work on and create more space for the house, they lifted the entire structure off its dirt footing and made room to excavate and pour a foundation.

From there, the entire building had to be rebuilt. Steel beams were added for structural support, three types of radiant heating systems were connected to a boiler, two bare electrical wires were replaced with modern wiring and the project was underway.

"Inside you would look up and these [beams] are what was holding up the whole bottom floor and also the top," Palhava says. "So Peter repurposed those, we just stacked them in the yard and I put them as I wished on the plans and where they were needed structurally and we just made it happen."

For more than a year they worked to straighten leaning walls and restore pieces of the building's history.

The construction crew had found odd things jammed into gaps in the logs: a dress, old shoes, liquor bottles, containers of a powdery substance they didn't want to learn more about. But along the way, they had learned something of the people who'd come before them and become connected to the history of the place.

Palhava recalls the door in the kitchen floor that led to the tunnel beneath the house where wine barrels and whiskey casks were stored and how it made the homes of early inhabitants seem a little more relatable. "I heard that's where they would get the moonshine and the wine and everything," she says. "It was really cool." The O'Rourkes took members of the Spehar family through the house during various stages of its reconstruction, sharing with them things that were found or getting family artifacts related to the house.





That connection to the past was made even clearer on August 5, 2015, when the carpenters were cleaning the logs on the inside of what is now the master closet. Beneath the wall paper and decades of coal dust was a layer of newspaper pressed against the logs as insulation. When they brushed them off and looked closer, they saw the date of publication: August 5, 1882. Exactly 133 years separated the two craftsmen and not much more.

"It was really a labor of love," O'Rourke says. "It was really important for us to not try to make it too perfect and just honor what was here."

Each of the windows were removed, rebuilt by hand and replaced, protected on the outside by a new storm window. When the old mortar was removed, the pegs used to hold it in place were preserved and replaced, each in its original hole.

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#### continued from page 34

O'Rourke and Palhava say everything that could be reused from the original building, was reused and where new construction was required, it blends in a way that brings the history to the fore. The douglas fir floors still have dried drips of paint on them and scuffs from some long-removed object. And somehow they compliment the glass and marble encased steam shower perfectly. "I didn't want a lot of trim," Palhava says. "I wanted the house to be really mod, as clean as possible in the parts we were adding on. Because the logs were already so rugged."

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continued from page 36

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With all the attention paid to the home's history, it still has any modern amenity one might expect to find in a 3,200 square foot, six bedroom, five-and-a-half bathroom luxury mountain town house, complete with stunning panoramic views. It just has a whole lot more under the surface.

"It's absolutely spectacular. They've done a wonderful job modernizing the house in a way that honors the history of it. The care that Peter took to preserve what was there was amazing," Jim Spehar says of the family's old home. "Each of those logs is individually hand hewn. It would have been a shame to do anything but preserve them. The house got what it needed."









HEATHER T. PETERSON 970-275-5408 heather@bighornrealty.com

# A LOOK BACK

Elk Avenue, Circa 1900, from the Historic Rademan Collection. Courtesy of the Crested Butte Mountain Heritage Museum







rescate



**STORY** BETH BUEHLER **PHOTOS** JAMES RAY SPAHN

#### SLATED FOR DEMOLITION, **THE GANDY CABIN** LIVES ON AS A CHARMING FISHING RETREAT AT **WILDER ON THE TAYLOR**.

rested Butte has excelled in preserving the deep roots of this special valley, including the preservation and restoration of many longtime structures. Sometimes that means finding new uses and locations, as was the case for the Gandy Cabin, built in the 1940s along Crystal Creek between Crested Butte and Almont.

This rich piece of hand-hewn history was constructed by Sherman Cranor for the Gandy family on a big stretch of property that runs from Gandy Gulch to Harmel's Ranch Resort in Taylor Canyon. It was headed straight for demolition in 2009 when Scott Hargrove stepped in.

President of Crested Butte-based Hargrove Construction, Hargrove could see the cabin's potential. The logs were well maintained and the cabin was in good shape when his team carefully dismantled and stored it until the right opportunity came along in the form of Chuck and Holly Schiavo. The couple was in the beginning stages of planning a fishing retreat on a 35-acre lot at Wilder on the Taylor, just down the road from the Gandy Cabin's original location.

"It was such a cool cabin, and I wanted to save it. I thought of putting it up in Tin Cup," says Hargrove, who had already built the Schiavos a building on Elk Avenue and two houses in Crested Butte. "I said, 'I have a cabin...' and they had the confidence and faith to see what might be there, so they had architect Jennifer Hartman incorporate the old cabin in the new."

Chuck was intrigued by the idea of a classic log cabin and liked the "first-class fishing and family atmosphere" at Wilder on the Taylor, a historic working ranch that dates back to an 1898 patent filed for homestead by James E. Stevens.

It was only Holly's second summer of fly fishing but she was hooked. "Chuck and I spent a day with Brandon Snyder of Dragonfly Anglers and Wilder's professional guide, Lu Warner, on the river and hanging around the Founder's Porch. Everything about it fit our ideal of a fishing getaway," Holly says. With full confidence I'd be glad to recommend... the King Systems Team. Tom and Linda Biery - Mt. Crested Butte, CO and Houston, TX

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#### NEXT CHAPTER

When the cabin was disassembled, the logs were tagged, measurements and photos taken, and a skeleton drawing created. As luck would have it, when the logs were loaded and delivered to the new site, Hargove recalls seeing just "a pile of junk with tags that had eroded over time."

Instead of succumbing to the nightmare, Hargrove and his staff built a shed on the Schiavos' lot, organized the logs and relied on old photographs to rebuild the historic cabin on blocks in order to figure out the size of the new foundation. Some mental and physical gymnastics were required to take the cabin apart to dig the new foundation and then put it back together yet again, but fairly mild winters between fall 2014 when construction commenced until completion in April 2016 allowed progress to move ahead at a fairly good clip.

"It definitely was a jigsaw puzzle," Hargove says. "I have been building for 40 years, and it is definitely one of my favorite projects of all time. We have built more than 150 custom homes. We got to do a lot of things in this cabin that I've dreamed about."



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The Schiavos' primary residence is in Edmond, Oklahoma, and they wanted to keep their Wilder retreat rustic and intimate. "We used all of the logs from the original cabin and included lots of windows to enjoy the views of both the river and mountain behind us and the cattle fields in front of the cabin. We also wanted enough beds to host fishing getaways with friends," Holly explains.

Hargrove teamed up with Hartman, principal and co-owner of Sunlit Architecture in Crested Butte and a partner on previous projects, to merge beauty and nostalgia into a one-of-a-kind three-bedroom, two-bathroom log cabin.

"I was the architect on the property where we took down the cabin, so I was well aware of the layout and history of the cabin," Hartman says. "The Schiavos were looking for a small, intimate place for their family to be

66 A PLACE FOR THE FAMILY TO MAKE Unique Menovieg ??

together—to make unique memories. They also wanted to accommodate small groups and have amazing access to the outdoors."

Whenever there is an opportunity to re-use a structure, it makes for a unique and sometimes challenging project. Hartman says, "The fact that it had been taken down only miles from the new location and reconstructed fully is an achievement. Hargrove Construction did an amazing job; Scott sourced so many wonderful reclaimed materials that complemented the log structure and took such great care in the new construction."

#### **STORYBOOK LOOK**

Hartman designed the fishing cabin to have a low profile with a natural color palette and a location at the far end of the lot along the riverbank, close to exist-

> ing cottonwoods, evergreens and aspens. "The cabin is intimate and comfortable. It is unpretentious. The style is a very contextual, simple ranch form that takes advantage of the natural setting with indoor-outdoor living spaces," Hartman says. "It has the feel of being there for a hundred years."







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The bulk of the home is the Gandy Cabin, with an addition placed mostly on the river side, including a master bedroom and bathroom, a guest bedroom and patios. A long rectangular great room featuring living, dining and kitchen spaces greets guests as they walk in and is visually divided by trusses that mimic the original design. The kitchen leads to a large laundry room, bunkroom, guest room and full bath, while an attached covered patio off the living room transitions into a smaller fire pit and "thinking" patios on the short walk down to the Taylor River.

Reclaimed hardwood floors and ceilings were crafted from barn wood purchased at Distinguished Wood Products in Carbondale, and Hargrove found an antique potbelly stove from an old barn in Michigan at A&M Salvage in Gunnison that looks perfectly at home in the Schiavos' living room. Faux antler chandeliers made by Restoration Hardware and a comfy sitting area to play games or read a book make the combination living/dining room a favorite gathering spot.

The adjoining kitchen was designed with an historic appearance, but the Heartland antique replica appliances are state-ofthe art, including a freestanding stove located where a stone fireplace once stood.

Alene Davis, an interior designer based in Tulsa and a Crested Butte homeowner, teamed up with Holly to find much of the decor locally and through wellknown national retailers. Holly's sister, Robi Jones of Tulsa, created much of the painted furniture, and Sarah Anderson, owner of Beauti-Faux Creations in Crested Butte, painted the whimsical red doors with antler door handles, the kitchen island base that is capped with soapstone and various woodwork inside of the home.

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"Holly and Alene Davis did a great job with the interior furnishings, colors and accessories," Hartman notes. "The painted cabinets and doors allow the logs to shine and bring a brightness to the space."

While there are generous pops of color throughout much of the cabin, shades of gray and off-white provide a softer palette in the master bedroom. A generous bank of windows along the back wall and a natural wood floor and ceiling are beautifully accented by a comforter, several pillows, leather headboard and small table, linen chairs handcrafted in Tulsa, and wine-barrel stools made locally. The master bath has a granite-topped double sink situated next to an intricate river-stone wall.

A cheerful and functional bunkroom down the hall sleeps four with sturdy bunk beds built by Hargrove Construction. Nearby, the second bathroom is entered via a large reclaimed wood door that operates on pulleys and has a light fixture that completes the pulley theme.

#### **A HAPPY ENDING**

After writing the next chapter of the Gandy Cabin, both architect and builder are happy with how it reads. "I couldn't be happier with how the cabin turned out the scale, the finishes, the relationship to the river. I wouldn't change a thing!" Hartman reflects.

While Hargrove has built many large homes in the area, sometimes it's the story built into the project that makes it stand out regardless of size. "I can just feel the history here. The logs have patina and warmth and are real," Hargrove says. "Wilder is the perfect place for the Gandy Cabin."







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**B** uild. Sow. Grow's first prototype greenhouse blends in seamlessly in the Crested Butte South neighborhood. Traditional methods and materials infused with modern technology have created "the healthiest and most energy-efficient greenhouse possible for this climate," explains Kara Holzmiller, founding director of Build. Sow. Grow.

It's the first and only of its kind in the Gunnison Valley. "As you walk through the doors you are instantly transformed from winter into a new world. It is everything winter is not. It is warm, humid, inviting and full of life. The plants cascade from the walls onto the floor. New growth is abundant through the entire space," says Holzmiller.

Holzmiller is a young pioneer in the growing sustainability sector in the Western Slope. Her extensive and diverse background includes gathering and integrating wisdom from organic farming in Belize and the West Coast; studying environmental science at the University of Minnesota, permaculture in Colorado, aquaponics in California, and sustainable construction in Canada; and establishing an ecoranch in Arizona.

"I hope my work will inspire others to think of what they can do to lead a less environmentally-impactful life. I want to get people back to the soil, back to the plants," says Holzmiller.

Her two major complementary passions of producing local, nutritious foods and low-impact, efficient living spaces have converged into what she calls "botanical oases"—or passive solar greenhouses. They are ideal not only for growing vegetables, but for a retreat for yoga, office work, recovering from a ski injury, cocktail parties, and connecting with the plant world, Holzmiller notes. Simply, they are a place to feel warmth from the sun's rays in the depth of the winter.





"We recently put a hammock in the greenhouse. On a sunny day, it will reach 100 degrees. But we keep it at 75 or 80 degrees. I was just planting barefoot—it feels as though spring is already here," says Holzmiller in the middle of a frigid February.

Holzmiller originally came to Crested Butte to work with Smithworks Natural Homes, a local custom home building company that pushed her into major design projects and project management. "My background is in environmental science. I did a lot of seasonal fieldwork—but it was always temporary work. Once I got into permaculture, it really led me on the sustainable building path. I realized what a big impact the building sector had on the environment. To make a difference, I believe we need to look at the buildings in which we live." Nearly 50 percent of carbon dioxide emissions in the United States are derived from the building sector, Holzmiller says.

Holzmiller loved the projects she pursued with Smithworks, but confessed the other part of her passion growing—was missing. "The greenhouse just seemed like the perfect marriage," she says.

"We're literally at the end of the road. Once food gets here, it's already half perished," says Holzmiller, explaining the roots of her passion for local foods. With Crested Butte's limited growing season, harsh climate and isolation in the expansive Gunnison National Forest, her quest is no easy task. But she's compelled by the changing climate—and how both trucking food to our isolated town and building enormous structures have contributed to the changing climate.

The goal of Holzmiller's design and build company, Build. Sow. Grow, is to utilize innovative techniques to create highly efficient greenhouses that require no supplemental heating and are built with nontoxic materials. In effect, she is bringing a multitude of new living strategies to our oft-frozen oasis.

Old technologies such as clay building, lime plaster, and passive solar design are utilized alongside a Wi-Fi temperature and humidity monitoring system, a thermostat control on the climate battery, and automatic ventilation. The blending of the tried technologies with modern twists are among Holzmiller's specialties—stretching the relative limitations of Crested Butte's mountain habitat and fostering lifestyles that align more deeply with nature's cycles.

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66



A climate battery is a subterranean heating and cooling system that stores hot, ambient air from the structure generated during the day in the soil to help maintain a stable temperature throughout the night; the method was pioneered by the Rocky Mountain Permaculture Institute in Basalt, Colorado. Passive solar design retains radiation with thermal mass, maximizing solar heat.

**?**?

Holzmiller is working to expand her company into the Roaring Fork Valley and throughout Colorado, as there are only a few other passive solar greenhouse companies in the state. "I'd really love to bring the valleys together with my business and really any mountain town," says Holzmiller, noting that she is navigating the various zoning regulations among the region's towns.

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## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE EMOTIONAL SUPPORT ENRICHMENT

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Visions of a community greenhouse are also on her idea board. The building could not only offer a community garden with all its benefits of shared expertise and social interaction, but also be designed to accomodate workshops—from cooking courses to vermi composting. Holzmiller feels that in a mountainous area that experiences winter much longer than summer, a community greenhouse would certianly be a well-used hub.

Presently, Holzmiller is assessing community demand of her services—marketing to second homeowners, promoting the local foods movement—and ever expanding her technical expertise in greenhouse development. "I'm excited about where this could go," she says.

And the tastiest foods she has so far cultivated in her botanical oasis? "Tomatoes and the dill—the dill just took off like a weed. The parsley is also doing great. This is nitty gritty work—if you're into that, growing your own food is fun."





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#### **STORY** DAWNE BELLOISE **PHOTOS** MELISSA FENLON

rom the time Crested Butte was founded in 1880, the wives and family women of coal miners spent their days solely between the kitchen, household chores, stoking the coal stoves, tending to children and garden, and going to church. The mines pulled up stake and left town in the mid-20th century. Today's Buttian women still tend to practically the same daily chores, while also participating in community events and organizations, and squeezing in an outdoor lifestyle while working at their businesses and jobs.

Although a smaller community during its mining days, Crested Butte was lively and rich with traditions the immigrants who settled the town brought with them from Italy, the Slavic countries, Germany and England. It is just as vibrant today, a community drawing on the diversity of different generations, having merged both historic and new customs.

One thing that seems to have remained a constant in this small town at the end of the road is the love of good food, the homemade stuff of memories and recipes shared by the old-timers of Crested Butte or passed down by grandmothers, as well as modified concoctions created from necessity and from available produce.

Danielle Riesz has been in town only a couple of years but she brings with her an artistry of cakes and pastries, inspired by her heritage from her mother and both of her grandmothers, sweets that would have been familiar to the Italian-Hungarian old timers of Crested Butte—a nostalgic taste of old-world Europe infused with her own flavor and the experience of baking in notable high-end establishments.

Danielle grew up in Lake George, a resort town in upstate New York, where she helped in the family-owned restaurant and motel. She remembers doing everything from washing dishes to busing and serving, from cracking eggs to chopping potatoes and cleaning hotel rooms. As a young girl, even when she had friends spend the night for a sleepover, if one of the staff didn't show up for work, she and all her friends would fill in. Danielle's mother, who is of Italian descent, made all the desserts for their restaurant, and she can still recall the aroma and flavor of her favorites—apple strudel, Death by Chocolate cake and coconut cake. Her mother was taught to make these sweets by the Hungarian couple who sold the restaurant to them, although

Danielle's paternal ancestors also hail from Hungary, so there were traditional family dishes and cakes passed down from generations. Her father was only 10 years old when his family escaped to America dur-

ing the Hungarian revolution in 1956, bringing their cuisine and culinary traditions with them.

"My paternal grandmother was an amazing cook and baker. She showered us with treats like almond crescents and kifli, a rolled pastry like rugelach. My grandmother inspired me with her baking and I was so excited to have it," Danielle said. She always looked forward to visiting her grandmother's house and describes her favorite dessert: "Grandma Ilona's upside-down cake. She'd bake a chocolate cake and a vanilla cake that she'd crumble into a bowl, add-

ing whipped cream, rum-soaked raisins and chocolate sauce. It would sit overnight, then she'd flip it over and drizzle more chocolate sauce and raisins on top."

Her Italian great-grandmother made the most amazing apple pie, Danielle recalls, but sadly, she says, "I was too young and she was too old for me to really remember much about her. I do remember that she was in the kitchen all day cooking. So I was inspired by my family but the thing that actually turned it for me happened in high school."

During a senior year meeting, her guidance counselor suggested that instead of the teaching career Danielle was considering, she'd be far happier as a chef since she loved to bake, and she could make a living doing it. Danielle enrolled at Johnson and Wales University in Rhode Island, receiving an associate's degree in baking and pastry arts in 2001. "I especially liked that I wasn't in academic classes. I don't like to study or take tests and I don't do well sitting. I'm an active person. The classes were all handson. Yes, we had classroom and had to study but it was more about creating and sculpting, so it was fun."

She did her five months of internship in the Netherlands, outside of Maastricht in the countryside, hopping on trains to experience Germany, Belgium, France and Spain. After completing her studies, she landed a position with the prestigious Four Seasons, starting out in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, and then moving to the company's resort in Dallas, Texas.

"They moved me there to learn from their pastry chef with the intention of moving me up the ladder. When they felt I was ready to become a fully fledged pastry chef they sent me to Palo Alto, California, where I was promoted from pastry cook to pastry chef," she

> says of her eight years of onthe-job education. "They were a wonderful company to work for. I grew with them and they taught me management and baking."

> Danielle received a phone call from a former co-worker who offered her a position as a pastry chef at the Little Nell in Aspen. She happily realized that the mountains were calling her and she was compelled to go. "I knew when I left Jackson Hole and went to Dallas, which was entirely a career move, that I wanted to get back to the mountains," she smiles.

Danielle learned to adjust her recipes every time she moved up or down in elevation. Jackson Hole is at 6,200 feet and Aspen is at 8,000 feet, so she readjusted. Now that she's at nearly 9,000 feet in Crested Butte, it's an entirely different game but with each jump in altitude, making her recipes work became easier, although it's still tricky baking at this elevation, she admits. She spent four years in Aspen as executive pastry chef at the Little Nell, heading a team of 10 cooks. "It was good to be in Aspen because I love the mountains, but it was too busy. It was like a city and there was traffic," she says.

In 2013, Danielle had just started dating Crested Butte local Matthew Gutter and after hiking over from Aspen with a bunch of her friends, she knew it was time to put her career moves aside and make a move based on personal preferences and quality of life.

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MY Grandmother INSPIRED ME with her baking ??



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Live Local Programming

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"And I knew I was in love," she smiles. "All the moving around I did was for my career so I felt it was time to settle down," so Danielle began planning. "When I moved to Colorado, I knew it was where I wanted to be. I knew when I met Gutter that he was the one so when he asked me to move here there was no question in my mind. Crested Butte is more like the small town I grew up in."

Five months prior to her move, Danielle explored how she could make a living as a chef in Crested Butte. She began meeting with local wedding planners, Rachael Gardner of Crested Butte Events, and Dana and Stacee from Crested Butte Personal Chefs. Before she had even relocated, Danielle had already booked her first wedding cake, driving it over the very bumpy Kebler Pass road from Aspen.

"It took me three hours just to package the cake for the drive. The cake was a five-tier, intricately designed cake. The top tier was edible, so the bride and groom could cut it at the reception; the rest was Styrofoam that I had decorated in fondant. I made sheet cakes for the wedding guests to eat."

She had brought the cake home, the Styrofoam tiers wrapped in plastic and on the living room table, ready for the journey. "At 1:15 a.m., my dog woke me up making the funniest noises I've ever heard, grunting and growling." Her dog averted what could have been a complete disaster: a bear had smelled the cake and was trying to claw its way into the house. The dog saved the cake and the day.

By autumn of 2014, Danielle was fully

entrenched as a Crested Butte local, cranking up her business, Wildflour Sweets, working out of the rented kitchen space at Elk Avenue Prime during the hours the restaurant was closed in the daytime. She gained recognition throughout the summer at the Crested Butte Farmers Market for her jumbo cookies and individual hand pies, using local fruit from the Western Slope. The jumbo cookie is a five-ounce scrumptious chocolate chunk seasoned with Maldon salt. The other popular jumbo is an oatmeal coconut cranberry. She also makes gluten-free sweets like fudge brownies, lemon bars, and French macaroons. She makes custom specialty cakes as well as cakes for the many destination weddings that take

When space became available in the Red Room, downstairs from the Secret Stash, Danielle decided to try a retail bakery as well, bolstered by the encouragement of Kyleena Falzone, the local businesswoman who owns the building and pizzeria. "Kyleena has been so supportive of my business and in helping me grow it and get the word out. I came to her looking for a kitchen and she was the one to push me to start the retail. The two of us have collaborated on some ideas and her willingness to give her expertise has helped guide me in a business sense. She knows the quirks of doing business in a small resort town."





Danielle's assistant, Dee Gamache, an intern and Culinary Institute of America graduate who worked with Danielle in Aspen, joined her last June, making the move over the mountain to Crested Butte.

Wildflour Sweets uses Mountain Mama flour, a whole-wheat flour for pies and croissants and made in the San Luis Valley. The shop's counter is lined with tiers of delectables, mouthwatering truffles, lemon blueberry squares, creamy icing-topped muffins and cupcakes, croissants both sweet or meaty, and chocolate-filled, frosted and dabbed variations, enough to satisfy the most discriminating chocoholic palate.

"Some of the recipes I've picked up along my journey and then made them my own. I start with a base and adjust it. I've cut back the sugar over the years because I feel pastries can be too sweet. All our creations are hallmark creations. I feel that everything we do is signature. We tweak every recipe to make it our own."

This summer, Danielle will create what will likely be the most important wedding cake of her career—her own. She and Gutter will be married in June in a local ceremony, and as traditional for Crested Buttians, they'll be riding their townie bikes through town after the nuptials. Danielle and her Wildflour Sweets carry on both her family traditions and the tradition of excellent, homemade baking in Crested Butte, and to add to the old adage of how quickly life moves along, it might be said: Life is short. You'll need good pastries.



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ARCHITECTURE, INTERIOR, LIFESTYLE & RESORT PHOTOGRAPHY



When planning a Crested Butte garden, many flower lovers want to recreate what they see in the wilderness – colorful, blooming buds. Longtime local gardener Nel Curtiss, who owns Rocky Mountain Trees and Landscaping with her husband Steve, shares her top five favorite native plants to incorporate into local gardens.

These tried and true native plants are adapted to Crested Butte's high altitude gardening environment, which make them all-stars in landscaping plans. One of the reasons Nel chose these five plants is their hardiness and versatility. They can be grown by scattering seeds at the right time of year, but can also be bought in containers at nurseries.

By planting natives, says Curtiss, it's a nod to what naturally grows here and creates a landscape in your yard that will thrive. "Depending on the environment you've planted them in, for the most part, these require a little less maintenance," explains Curtiss. "None of these are water hogs and some are even drought tolerant."

Her recommendations provide a nice foundation to begin your garden bed.

#### Nel's Top Five Native Plants for Crested Butte Gardens

#### ROCKY MOUNTAIN COLUMBINE

#### Aquilegia coerulea

- filtered shade to shade
- medium water
- 18"-24"
- blue and white flowers
- Colorado State Flower

Good companion plants: False Forget Me Not Bleeding Heart Lady's Mantle

#### SILVERY LUPINE

#### Lupine argentus

- Sun
- low water
- 1-2' tall
- blue/purple flowers

*Good companion plants:* Sunflowers Poppies

## GERANIUM

- sun to filtered shade
- low water
- 1'-2'
- pink/white flowers

Good companion plants: Purple Coneflower Coreopsis Snow in Summer

#### **COMMON HAREBELL**

- Sun to filtered shade
- low water
- blue flowers
- 6"-1'

Good companion plants: Columbine Bleeding Hearts Pansies

#### ROCKY MOUNTAIN PENSTEMON

Penstemon strictus

- sun
  - low water
  - purple/blue flowers,
  - 1'-2'

*Good companion plants:* Bee Balm Blanket flower

Bestlime to seed:

Late fall, right before the snow falls and sticks around. This gives the seeds the chance at getting in a cold dormancy. They will come up in the spring in their natural timeline.



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Living Journeys Community Cancer Support 970.340.2777 www.livingjourneys.org

#### **Twist Nutrition**

Jen Nolan, Holistic Nutrition & Wellness Coach 970.901.8906 jen@twistnutrition.com www.twistnutrition.com

#### WINDOW TREATMENTS

Blind Faith Custom Window Fashions 970.349.2504 515 Riverland Drive, Suite 203, Crested Butte info@blindfaithcb.com www.blindfaithcb.com

# THIS PLACE WE CALL HOME



From left to right: Ruth Ann Keene, Beth Scott, Sarah Keene and Jenny Thomes.

NAME: Sarah Keene

**OCCUPATION:** Advertising Sales

YEARS IN CRESTED BUTTE: Full time 18 years, summers almost every year since I was a child.

#### HOW DID YOU FIND CRESTED BUTTE?

My parents and grandparents started visiting Crested Butte before I was born. They brought me to Crested Butte the first time when I was six months old and every summer after. I found it for myself when I finally moved here full time in 1999, when I realized since all my vacations were to CB I might as well move here.

#### WHEN DID CRESTED BUTTE FIRST FEEL LIKE HOME?

Crested Butte felt like home when I was a kid, it was a perfect town to explore and have freedom. It was small enough that you knew everyone and they knew you. As I grew up and met local kids it became even more so. Now actually living here and building a life here it truly is home.

#### WHY ARE YOU PROUD TO CALL THIS PLACE HOME?

I'm proud to live in this beautiful town that takes care of its own. I've seen it time and time again how CB rallies behind our community members and the organizations. Even though it's not always easy making a living people here make sure to support each other and our vital non profits. And surviving brutally cold winters and crazy snowstorms is something to be proud of, not everyone can do that.

#### WHAT SETS CRESTED BUTTE APART FROM OTHER COMMUNITIES?

Being at the end of the road. The isolation makes Crested Butte different from many other towns. You have to want to come here, you can't just pass through. But once you find it and you come around the corner and see Paradise Divide from Highway 135 you keep coming back. We aren't near the interstate but I think that's one of the best things. Crested Sotheby's Butte INTERNATIONAL REALTY









**193 LARKSPUR LANE | DANNI RANCH** This spectacular Danni Ranch home is a rare combination of riverfront access,

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5 Bed | 5.5 Baths | 6,976 SqFt | 35.24 Acres | 3-Stall Barn Offered for \$4,250,000







**3 LAPIS LANE | MT. CRESTED BUTTE** Majestic and rustic come to mind while one meanders through 3 Lapis Lane, Mt. Crested Butte, Colorado. A short walk to the Gold Link ski lift. **5 Bed L4 Baths L4 104 Soft L0 38 Acres L2 Car Garage** 

5 Bed | 4 Baths | 4,104 SqFt | 0.38 Acres | 2 Car Garage Offered for \$1,625,000



59 CINNAMON MTN RD 4 Bed | 3.5 Baths | 4,822 SqFt | 1.05 Acres Offered for \$1,795,000



18 ASPEN LANE 4 Bed | 4.5 Baths | 4,110 SqFt | 1.02 Acres Offered for \$1,595,000



450 OVERSTEEG GULCH 3 Bed | 2 Baths | 1,497 SqFt | 35.11 Acres Offered for \$1,475,000



**24 APPALOOSA ROAD** 4 Bed | 4.5 Baths | 3,553 SqFt | 0.05 Acres Offered for \$1,100,000



**10 ASPEN LANE** 6 Bed | 5.5 Baths | 5,166 SqFt | 0.40 Acres Offered for \$1,345,000



300 SKYLAND DRIVE 3 Bed | 3.5 Baths | 2,969 SqFt | Unit 2 Offered for \$1,198,000

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