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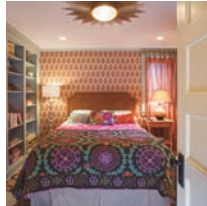
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## EDITOR'S NOTE

I remember as a child walking through historic Boston with my family during a spring break trip. As I looked at the old houses, I started to conjure up stories in my mind of the families who lived in those homes once upon a time.

That type of storytelling became a favorite pastime for me, especially during long road trips across the Midwest. I'd create tales of farmers in quintessential Minnesota farmhouses and Amish children in rural Ohio.

Inside every home is a story to tell. From the people, their hardships, their victories. Laughter around a table, a newborn's first night at home, family holidays, you name it, it happens inside the walls of a home.

These day, one of my favorite things to do on a quiet off-season day, is to walk the alleys in town. Some of the most iconic Crested Butte buildings live on the alleyways. From coal sheds to tiny miner's cabins, these structures most certainly have stories inside their walls.

For this issue of the Peak, I was fortunate to tour a gorgeous remodeled home that's over a century old, with

some amazing sheds along its alley. The homeowners are so proud that they, along with a talented local team, have given new life to a historic house.

Writer Seth Mensing writes about the award-winning renovation of the Public House on Elk Avenue. When you walk into 202 Elk Avenue today, you can easily envision what the space was like 100 years ago.

A tradition that's decades old is being carried on by local writer Cassie Pence, who lives in Wildbird, a pedestrian community off Slate River Road. She and her family go for a meditative walk home each day, and even through crazy weather, it's worth it, reaching their home in the woods.

We hope you enjoy these stories and many others in this issue of the Peak. It's always so fulfilling to share the tales of the people who have built these new homes and the owners who have given new life to part of Crested Butte's history.

—Melissa Fenlon

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## COVER PHOTO.

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*Photographed at 219 Sopris Ave.*

CRESTED BUTTE NEWS, INC.  
PO BOX 369 • CRESTED BUTTE, CO 81224  
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## MINING-ERA VICTORIAN EXUDES

# Bohemian Charm

STORY BETH BUEHLER  
PHOTOS JAMES RAY SPAHN

Crested Butte is a poster child for colorful paint swatches, and the cheerful looking home on the first block of Sopris Avenue is both bold and inviting with peach siding, two shades of blue trim, and a silver corrugated roof. Front and side porches and a large metal peace sign at the main entrance hint that this is a place that has welcomed its fair share of people since 1890.

The gingerbread trim was added in the 1970s to provide extra visual interest to the exterior, and more than four decades later the very plain interior has been transformed in a way that respects the dwelling's mining-era Victorian roots and honors the spirit of current owner Ingrid Gebavi and Crested Butte.

After purchasing the Sopris home from Jane Cofran in 2011, Gebavi spent 2012 through 2014 helping a major renovation unfold. "I was going for a fun, funky Bohemian and eclectic look inside the house that matches the town," she says. "I didn't want a mountain lodge look. I wanted it to be congruent with the home's era."

Gebavi relocated to Crested Butte from her hometown of Chicago in 2009, first living for a month in Kate's Place, a short-term rental next to Union Congregational Church on Maroon Avenue. "I met more people there in a month than in a year living in a downtown Chicago high-rise," she says. Next, it was a 500-square-foot apartment above the garage at Alfred and Nidia Villanueva's home on Butte Avenue.





"The draw is that Crested Butte is a real community. When you walk down the street—especially in the off-season—everyone is smiling. Everyone has to pick up their mail and is generally happy. That's the most special thing about Crested Butte, along with the natural beauty," Gebavi says.

## BUILDING A TEAM & VISION

Having renovated two other homes over the past decade—a historic home in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin that she sold a year ago and her daughter's residence in Los Angeles—Gebavi brought a wealth of ideas and lessons learned to her latest endeavor. To help make her vision a reality, she hired James Nichols of All Mountain Homes in Gunnison as the builder; Carolina Fechino-Alling of Interni Design Studio in Crested Butte, and Andrea Schumacher of Andrea Schumacher Interiors in Denver as the interior designers; and Kevin Van Treek of Van Treek Construction in Gunnison as the artisan for custom millwork.

Cofran had mainly resided on the upper story, Gebavi says, and rented a main-floor bedroom that occupied the current front entrance, which is now a welcoming entry-

way and cheerful office featuring interior transom windows with old-style glass, a built-in desk and a stacked washer and dryer cleverly tucked behind a multicolor macramé curtain.

It's impossible to not fall in love with the nearby powder room with cement tiles featuring two designs in muted shades of blue, yellow and green that were thoughtfully placed to create a distinct overall pattern. A cream-colored grass-cloth occupies the space above the painted bead board and on the ceiling in the bathroom, a look that is continued throughout the first floor.

"The grass-cloth is something I wouldn't have chosen on my own, but it's the reason why I hired designers. They provided ideas that really make a difference," Gebavi says.

Fechino-Alling was instrumental in selecting all the hard surfaces, such as paneling, trim, transom windows, plumbing fixtures, tile, vanities, flooring and built-ins, and designed the kitchen and helped with color coordination. Once Gebavi moved in, Schumacher helped finish the overall look with wall coverings, window treatments, lighting, furnishings and décor.



*The draw is that Crested Butte*  
**IS A REAL COMMUNITY.**



"Ingrid is very hands-on and always fed me with ideas that came together for the best optimal plan; it wasn't just me proposing things," Fechino-Alling notes. "I love input so we end up with a product my client is looking for instead of something generic."

Previous owners also rented what Gebavi described as a "shack with a loft" along the back alley. The shack was recently renovated into a garage and won an honorable mention award from the Board of Zoning and Architectural Review (BOZAR) for the rehabilitation of a historic accessory dwelling. A stone paver patio with a unique circular sauna leads to a short flagstone path that meanders to the garage. Gebavi has heard all sorts of stories about the home from locals, including the fact that Larry Tanning once rented the shack and resided there along with his baby grand piano in the small space.

## RENOVATION HIGHS & LOWS

Work on the home preceded the garage and involved taking the structure down to the studs and installing all new windows and doors. As always, a project of this magnitude comes with some kind of surprise; this time, it was running water underneath the home, discovered when digging a test hole for excavation in April 2012. "It's something you don't know before you buy, so we had to wait to break ground until August and waterproof the foundation," Gebavi says.

The historic residence was raised up to install a new foundation and a lower level that expanded the home's living space to 2,400 square feet. The lower level added two guest rooms (one is currently used for extra storage space), a bathroom and a family room with built-in bar. Painted bead board used throughout the main floor continues downstairs, but instead of being painted the cream color, it's a warm crimson shade in the family room. Generous splashes of color in the guest room are courtesy of paisley wallpaper that was originally intended for the master bedroom, built-ins and trim painted an earthy shade of green, a patterned coverlet, and a sheer window treatment.

Back on the main floor, the connected kitchen, dining and living room have so many interesting details, such as beads dangling from the Roman shades, to capture everything at first glance is impossible; it's just obvious that the look is very much in sync. A bubble chandelier that resembles a satellite dangles over a custom walnut table crafted by Van Treek that is surrounded by chairs and banquette seating.

In the kitchen, much of the cabinetry is painted light turquoise and flows easily with a section of cherry cabinets and the back wall, which is a vignette of shelves stacked with dishes and glassware that frame a deep farm sink with brass fixtures and ivory and black backsplash tile by Pratt & Larson that provides an illusion of old-fashioned wallpaper. A cus-



tom vent made from cherry wood and partially covered in wallpaper was designed by Fechino-Alling and hangs over a gas range that is part of the large island topped with exquisite white marble mined in nearby Marble, Colorado. The same sheet of marble was used for custom vanities in the two upstairs bathrooms.

Figuring out a solution for the vent was a challenge, but often it's the obstacles encountered in renovations that result in better outcomes, Gebavi suggests. "They seem to push everybody to be creative and think of out-of-the-box solutions that bring the greatest amount of character to a project, more than you could have planned for."

Gebavi's guitar and violin stand ready to be played in the living room, and built-in cabinets and bookshelves along one wall neatly contain a flat-screen TV, reading material and all sorts of collected items. A neutral macramé curtain and large tassels that hang down the sides of one large window contribute to the bohemian feel but still allow light to gracefully flow in, while the back window is free of any covering for clear views of the backyard. Swirly-patterned Rookwood Pottery tiles arranged in a unique shape frame one corner and provide an eye-catching backdrop for a black wood stove.

Wood floors throughout the main and upper stories were crafted from heart pine that is 250 to 300 years old and recovered from the Savannah River that flows in Georgia and South Carolina, while porcelain tile runs throughout the lower level.

Another example of a beautiful solution to a renovation challenge is the staircase leading to the upper and lower stories that was designed by Nichols. "The staircase is a masterpiece. We had to fit it in a small space, making it a geometric puzzle that my builder figured out," she says.

## UPSTAIRS SANCTUARY

Nestled between the guest room and master suite at the top of the stairs is a landing area with enough room for a built-in seat. Both rooms have tongue-and-groove cedar ceiling planks and small diamond-shaped windows installed high up on walls facing the landing, adding character and delivering welcome sunlight.

Reaching the master bedroom requires walking through a magnificent bathroom with a glass shower standing like a work of art in the middle, a freestanding Kallista claw-foot tub with light blue on the outside and brass-plated legs, an enclosed toilet, and two marble-topped vanities.

The master bedroom is a quiet sanctuary adorned in cream and gentle pops of crimson, coral and sage from suzani-inspired fabric draped from the ceiling over the bed and used for large pillows and curtains that reveal French doors opening onto the balcony where an atrium installed in the 1970s was removed. An elegant grass-cloth provides a subtle sheen to the walls and ceiling, and a small potbelly stove in an ivory shade seems right at home. Beams that run along the second story ceilings were faux painted by Sarah Hausdoerffer of Crested Butte Faux Finishes to look older and seamless.

The inviting upstairs guest room has the best view in the house and features board and batten paneling, punched tin hanging light fixtures, a patterned curtain that serves as a closet door, and twin beds covered in bold striped duvets. The en suite bathroom is short on space but big on style with a custom washstand vanity, green subway tiles on the walls and a glass shower with a skylight revealing splashes of blue sky and celestial views.



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Fechino-Alling points to the master suite as her favorite space in the house, and she also is partial to the kitchen, dining and living space, main floor powder room and downstairs guest bedroom. "The home has lots of unexpected spaces. Ingrid describes it as Bohemian, but it's very refined," she says. "I love clients who bring me to a different level and make me do different styles, and then I develop something that flows nicely. The end product is esthetically beautiful and cohesive and very particular for Ingrid, and I don't attempt to ever repeat it."

## AN EVOLVING LOOK

Born and raised in Chicago, Gebavi worked as a real estate broker for several years and still maintains her license in Illinois. Currently, she is more focused on being a real estate investor and heads back to the Windy City periodically to see family and stays in her apartment there. Gebavi's daughter and son relish visiting Crested Butte when they can get away from school, with Katie studying for a master's degree at Pacific Oaks in California and John working toward a Ph.D. at Columbia University in New York City.

Gebavi's favorite hobbies include enjoying the outdoor recreation options in the Gunnison-Crested Butte Valley, studying the fiddle, gardening and knitting. She also is looking forward to getting a few more stamps in her passport in 2018 and collecting some final items for her Crested Butte home on multi-week trip to Morocco. "I didn't want the look of an instant home," she says, "so the look is evolving over time." •



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- Roman Kolodziej, Owner, Black Tie Ski Rentals of Crested Butte

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# MING

“That’s the  
old-school  
way”

**STORY BY** SETH MENSING  
**PHOTOS BY** JAMES RAY SPAHN

At its best, a vacation home is place you can go to get away, to forget the world you’ve left behind for a little while, surround yourself with the people you love and indulge in your favorite distractions. It’s your own piece of paradise. To build one takes vision, and a team of talented people, when it might just be easier to buy. But the payoff is a place that suits you and fits like an old pair of wading boots.

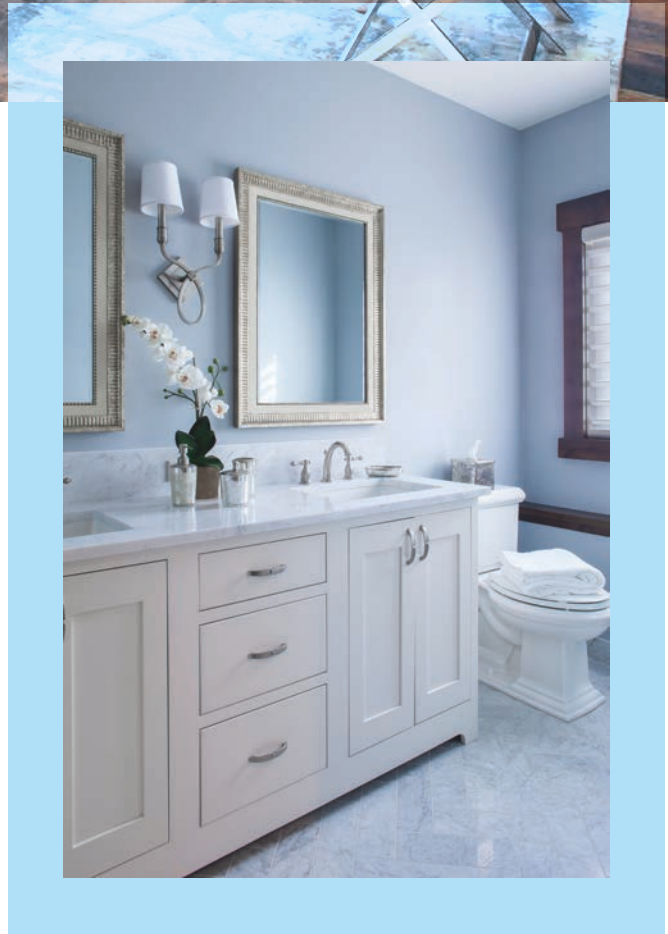




So when architect Andrew Hadley set out to design a vacation home for a Dallas family hoping to have a place in Crested Butte that really fit them, he started with the people and the property they'd chosen to build on. It was set between a world-class golf course and a river pulled right from an angler's dream, with sweeping views of the historic town ranch and Paradise Divide.

"You walk the property and find out what they're excited about," Hadley says. Before anything was built, he sat with the owner and watched the weather roll in and the trout rise, hearing about how the family loves the outdoors and entertaining. "The bend in the river informed me to sort of play with that concept and have a bend in the house," he says. "So it was that bend in the river and the panoramic view up to Paradise Divide that started to inform some of the design decisions."

*continued on page 20*







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Together with Roger Cesario of Copper Creek Homes, they envisioned a great room that flowed in from the front door and out onto the deck, big enough for family and friends, and a wall of windows looking out toward the west. Its four bedrooms and seven bathrooms are tucked away in quiet corners, making the great room and kitchen upstairs and the theater and game room downstairs, focal points in the house.

While the home is open and airy, it is rich with depth and texture. The defining feature of the home's interior is the truss work and timbers where Chris Lenox and his team at Combined Timber Crafts put their skills on display. Fashioned from reclaimed antique heart pine that was salvaged from a grain

elevator outside of St. Louis, the timberwork and joinery are the result of a six-month-long, somewhat proprietary process using tools and techniques that might be forgotten if it weren't for such projects. "A lot of the joinery in there is what you would traditionally see in a hand-hewn timber frame construction," Lenox says. "That's the old-school way."

During the design process, Lenox sat down with Cesario and Hadley, as well as Heidi Sherratt and Kelly Galen from Interior Visions, who handled every detail of the home's interior design, and sketched out ideas of what the otherwise empty vaulted ceilings might become. Ultimately he engineered an elaborate system of box trusses, king posts and struts. There are dovetail joints and scissortail joints

and proprietary joints he designed that you wouldn't see from any other craftsmen. And you'd be forgiven for thinking the scalloped surface of the wood was as old as the timbers themselves. But each one is actually shaped and colored to fit the design in Lenox's shop during construction. "He's a mad scientist," the owner said of Lenox.

The timberwork extends throughout the house and perfectly hides some of the automatic blinds, designed and installed by Blind Faith, as well as a lot of the lighting, which was designed by Eric Naughton of Electrical Logic Lighting Design. Lenox says he and Naughton worked closely to make the vaulted ceilings and truss work glow, drawing the eyes up and bringing out the detail in every grain and tool mark.

*continued on page 22*







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*continued from page 20*

Adding to the texture of the timbers, a moss-rock chimney rises from floor to ceiling, covered in living lichen the owner feeds with an occasional stout beer from a spray bottle. Heidi and Kelly also brought other natural stone such as limestone and marble into the design and paired it with classy, clean lines alongside furniture and fixtures that add a certain sophistication. The art that hangs throughout the house adds even more depth to the interior space, giving it a real rustic elegance. A misty scene looking up the Slate River valley, a commissioned piece showing elk milling around an aspen grove, hangs above the fireplace and more than a dozen other pieces of art from Nick Reiti's collection at Oh Be Joyful Gallery are on display.

At nearly 4,400 square feet, the home hides its mass from the street and stays comfortable as it flows out with the landscape. It invites you in and then begs you to stay and watch the sunset. And still the mastery of it all is revealed in the details, like a place built specially for you. A place to put your fly rod at the end of a long day and leave your old wading boots where they'll be ready for tomorrow. •



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Sunday July 8	BEERoque Chamber Orchestra
Tuesday July 10	Japanese Garden: Outdoor Concert
Wednesday July 11	Crested Butte Opera Studio w/ Orchestra: Bernstein in Song
Thursday July 12	Fluxus Night: Community Performance Art
Friday July 13	Film: The Colorado
Saturday July 14	Symphony with Charles Yang, violin
Sunday July 15	Celebration Gala
Tuesday July 17	Opera: <i>Falstaff</i> Dress Rehearsal
Wednesday July 18	Hike-to Outdoor Concert w/ Alex Komodore and Friends
Thursday July 19	Opera: Verdi's <i>Falstaff</i>
Friday July 20	Opera: Verdi's <i>Falstaff</i>
Friday July 20	After Dark w/ Ron Earl
Saturday July 21	Opera: Verdi's <i>Falstaff</i>
Sunday July 22	The Wild Chamber Music Party
Tuesday July 24	Sound Hearth Home Soirée: Crested Butte Opera Studio
Wednesday July 25	Gypsy Jazz Goes South: Hot Club in Latin and South America
Thursday July 26	Gypsy Jazz: John Jorgenson Quartet
Friday July 27	Altius String Quartet Performs Schubert's "Death and the Maiden"
Sunday July 29	Tribute to Grappelli and Les Paul w/ Nicki Parrot and Jason Anick
Tuesday July 31	Redemption Songs and Sonatas
Thursday August 2	Steve Poltz, Singer-Songwriter
Friday August 3	Spinphony: Female Classical Rock Quartet
Saturday August 4	Don Byron and Aruán Ortiz, Jazz Superstars
Sunday August 5	Messiaen's <i>Quartet for the End of Time</i>
Monday August 6	Sound Hearth Home Soirée: Mozart's Vienna
Tuesday August 7	Aaron Diehl, solo jazz piano
Wednesday August 8	The Good, the Bad, the Devine: Morricone's Spaghetti Western Film Scores
Thursday August 9	Natalia Zukerman in "The Women Who Rode Away: Songs and Portraits"
Friday August 10	In the Family: Eugenia and Arianna Zukerman
Saturday August 11	Mariachi on the Rocks – a Margarita March

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Venue	Time	Price
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Center for the Arts	6:00 PM	\$40
Center for the Arts	8:00 PM	\$25
Center for the Arts	7:30 PM	\$50
TBA for Ticket Holders	2:00 PM	\$40
Center for the Arts	7:30 PM	\$50
Center for the Arts	7:30 PM	FREE
Center for the Arts	7:30 PM	\$5
Center for the Arts	7:30 PM	\$50
Lodge at Mountaineer Square	5:30 PM	\$200
Center for the Arts	11:00 AM	\$10
TBA for Ticket Holders	11:00 AM	\$40
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Center for the Arts	7:30 PM	\$50
Center for the Arts	10:00 PM	\$5
Center for the Arts	7:30 PM	\$50
Center for the Arts	7:30 PM	\$40
Private Residence TBA	6:00 PM	\$160
Center for the Arts	8:00 PM	\$35
Center for the Arts	8:00 PM	\$35
Union Congregational Church	7:30 PM	\$40
Center for the Arts	8:00 PM	\$35
Center for the Arts	9:00 PM	\$25
Center for the Arts	8:00 PM	\$25
Center for the Arts	8:00 PM	\$25
Center for the Arts	8:00 PM	\$40
Center for the Arts	7:30 PM	FREE
Private Residence TBA	6:00 PM	\$110
Center for the Arts	9:00 PM	\$40
Center for the Arts	8:00 PM	\$40
Center for the Arts	8:00 PM	\$40
Center for the Arts	7:30 PM	\$40
Town Parade	4:00 PM	\$20



**FILM: The Colorado**

**Friday, July 13, 2018 7:30 PM**

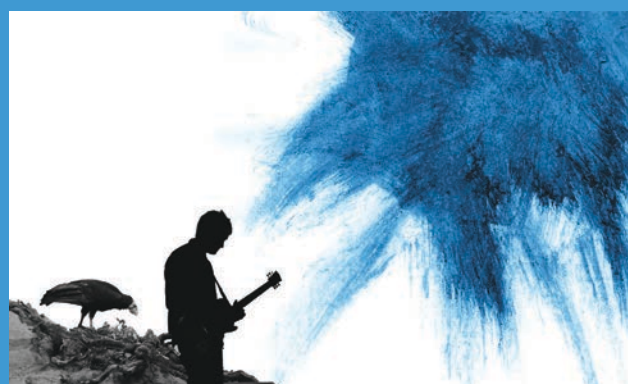
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**A new life for an**

# Old Building

**BOZAR'S 2017 PROJECT OF THE YEAR**

RESURRECTS A FIXTURE OF HISTORIC CRESTED BUTTE



## BY SETH MENSING

Sometimes to appreciate what something is, you first have to appreciate what it was and how it came to be. Looking down Elk Avenue toward Crested Butte Mountain, you see a cozy little Victorian mountain town, with its bright facades and beautiful surroundings. There's a thriving main street lined with entrepreneurs hoping to make a living in an unlikely place. In a way it's a modern iteration of an old story. But when you look a little deeper, you can see an enduring struggle against the elements, an outpost at the edge of civilization in 1880 that would have changed or returned to the earth years ago if not for the people who inhabit it.

When you walk into the barroom at the Public House at 202 Elk Avenue, you can look above the booths opposite the bar and see an old black and white photograph of some of those people standing in the same room as it was a century ago. Derby hats and dingy suit jackets adorn the men and a small child in a long dress sits on the foot-rail, bookended by two spittoons. But when you look a little deeper still, you can see the bar in the photo is remarkably similar to the one the bartender stands behind today.

It's not by accident.



PHOTOS COURTESY ELEVEN EXPERIENCE



When the owner's representative, John Featherman, took on the rehabilitation project that would give new life to a building that had been a fixture in the town's historic district, he knew the outside would have to stay the same, not just similar. He would need to meet all the requirements set by the Board of Zoning and Architectural Review (BOZAR), whose mission is to preserve the town's historic feel.

He also knew the work wouldn't stop there.

The Public House was the vision of Chad and Blake Pike, owners of Crested Butte-based Eleven Experience, which operates Scarp Ridge Lodge and Taylor River Lodge (both in Gunnison County) and has other lodges in Europe and South America. The Pikes wanted to create an intimate high-quality music venue that would bring talented artists to town.

The company's exacting standards meant the Victorian look on the outside of the building would need to be met with the same styles and textures inside. And beneath the ornate wallpaper and mahogany, the building's construction and mechanical systems would be state-of-the-art. Adding to the degree of difficulty, the reconstruction would include the addition of a basement where none existed before and the second floor space would be converted from office space into three well-appointed lofts.

To help turn the owners' vision into construction, Featherman turned first to architect Dan Murphy and engineer Dodson Harper of Crested Butte-based Resource Engineering Group. Then he brought in general contractor Scott Hahn of Cedar Ridge Construction and Hahn's right-hand-man Michael Luna, who together have a half-dozen historic reconstructions under their belts. But the task ahead would still



be a challenge for everyone involved.

The building had been an important part of the business district since the town's earliest days and, according to the historical record, is one of the few buildings unaffected in either of Crested Butte's major fires, in the 1890s. It was originally built in 1882 in the 300 block of Elk Avenue as a boarding house and saloon. A map from 1898 shows the building where it is now, moved there after the building previously on the site burned down five years earlier.

From the late nineteenth century until 1930, John Rozich operated a bar in the building until he passed it down to his stepson, Ed Rozman. Ed ran the establishment, known as the Elk Head Bar, named for the record bull elk mount that hung on the wall, until 1957. After the bar closed, the building remained a residence for the next 30 years until Rozman sold the building and it served as a retail shop.







When the building was bought in 2013, town historic preservation coordinator Molly Minneman says, "The building wasn't feeling very well." It was tilted nine inches from front to back and leaned six inches from right to left. The stacked stone foundation the building sat on was sinking into the ground and the logs the entire structure once rested on had largely rotted away. But it still stood against the elements.

The first order of business was lifting the building so the basement could be excavated and a proper foundation poured. To do that the team would need to square and brace the building and cut holes in its walls big enough to slide long steel beams through. Using their time-tested method for lifting historic buildings, Vogy's House Moving of Montrose lifted the entire structure four feet off the ground to allow the excavation to proceed.

The first step in digging a 14-foot hole just a few yards from Coal Creek

## **We've created a place to be enjoyed by LOCALS & GUESTS for centuries to come.**

was finding ways to reinforce the walls so they wouldn't cave in on workers as they removed tons of dirt and rock. This meant establishing a line of defense with some 225 concrete micro-piles around the building's perimeter. Several additional holes were excavated outside the basement area and pumps installed to remove as much water as possible before it could seep into the work space.

"For six months we had these pumps and hoses pumping the water out of the ground and back into Coal

Creek," Hahn says. "We had pumps down in the hole too, because as we were digging there would be water just running out of the walls."

A concrete slab a foot thick was poured and an elaborate basement wall system was devised to keep the water at bay. "We basically made the hull of a boat in reverse," Hahn says. When they shut off the pumps, the groundwater returned, climbing about eight feet up the foundation wall.

But almost a year to the day after starting the first phase of construction, the walls were holding and the team prepared to set the building back on the ground.

With wall studs that extended the entire height of the building and a base that was rotten throughout, the team set to work cutting the studs, which were 2x4 dimensional lumber instead of the 2x6 lumber that would be standard today, to a uniform length and replacing the sill plate that would sit on the new foundation.





As the building and the foundation came together, the team watched with anticipation. "We listened to the building creak, and when it came down it was still a little wavy, but a lot more straight than it was, which was pretty amazing," Cedar Ridge's Luna says. Today you'd have to look hard to see any wave at all.

At that point the owners had, for the most part, met the town's requirements and could have finished the interior as simply and quickly as possible. The windows had been refurbished and the front stoop, complete with a snowmelt system, was nearly indistinguishable from the original wood. But they were only halfway done. For the next 12 months a team of nearly 40 subcontractors, all experts in their respective fields, worked long days around and over one another to get the job done.

"The overall experience was incredibly rewarding," Featherman says. "Our development team took the time to hone the Pikes' vision, work with the town and engaged a talented team of local craftsman to rehabilitate a piece of Crested Butte's history. We've created a place to be enjoyed by locals and guests for centuries to come, which is something I am very proud of."

*continued on page 32*





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**crested butte**  
RESORT REAL ESTATE





*continued from page 30*

When you walk into the barroom of the Public House today, it's a feast for the eyes, rich with dark mahogany wall panels, sumptuous blue leather upholstery, reclaimed wood floors and custom ironwork from Crested Butte-based Blackstar Ironworks. Immaculate custom trim work, modeled on the original bar, extends from baseboards to crown molding and every detail in between and then continues through the entire building. All together the place feels like it was put in storage a century ago and spruced up just for us to enjoy today.

The refurbished building's original design had a kitchen in the basement, which had been so elaborately engineered and executed that they saw a higher purpose for such a unique space. Eventually they imagined a cutting-edge performance venue, complete with state-of-the-art sound and lighting and a ventilation system that keeps the temperature perfect for 140 dancing fans. In the back patrons are served drinks over the original bar, the same bar featured in the photograph upstairs.

## IT'S A FEAST *for the* EYES





The music venue was inspired by historic New Orleans venues with a tradition of live music such as the Maple Leaf and Tipitina's. "If you haven't seen a show in here yet, you should," Featherman says. "The focus on sound quality and design provides an amazing live musical experience that both fans and musicians appreciate."

Tucked away in the back of the building, an elevator takes guests upstairs to three private lofts, while a stairway gives them private access to Elk Avenue. The rooms are bright, with light pouring in through the big, original double-hung windows. They're plush and comfortable with the texture of reclaimed timber trusses and rich woolen wallpaper.

Featherman says, "What I really loved about this project was that each floor has a unique space with different style and function elements; from a Western saloon, to an urban music venue to a high end lodge and each seamlessly existing under one roof."

When the project was completed and opened for business on July 3, 2017, it was clear that the rehabilitation was a smashing success. BOZAR chose it as Project of the Year for 2017 and the reconstruction added another 150 years of useful life to a



building that was on its last legs.

"They did such a fabulous job," Minneman says of the building's rehabilitation. "Somebody could say, 'Well, it really doesn't look that much different.' And in a way they're right. But that just means they did a really good job." •

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# MODERN + MOUNTAIN

*With a healthy dose  
of rustic*

**STORY BY** MELISSA FENLON

"When we walk through the door, there's a sense of joy. It feels like home." Stephanie Land and her husband, Derek, along with their three children spend as much time as they can in their Crested Butte vacation home, especially during the hot Austin summers. Several weeks in the high country feel just right.

"As soon as we make that turn on to Sopris, we're all so excited," she says. "We're anticipating the really great time we're going to have."

When the Lands bought their fixer-upper in downtown Crested Butte, they were looking for a place to relax and play as a family. What they were drawn to was a two-story home, originally built in the 1880s. It had been remodeled several times, but was in need of a major overhaul to fit the needs of a modern family.

The earliest record of the house at 219 Sopris shows it belonged to a local businessman and saloonkeeper, Mike Fisher. He raised his five sons in the home while running a general store and a beer hall on Elk Avenue. Later, the house was home to Martin "Teen" Tezak, who was born in Floresta around 1910. He grew up in the house, along with his eight siblings. During this time, after the death of Teeny's father, the family took in boarders to make ends meet.







**PHOTOS BY** TRENT BONA





Along the alley behind the house, there still sits a coal shed, along with a miner's cabin, most likely built to house the boarders to whom the Tezaks rented.

"It's so great to think about the classic Crested Butte families who lived in this house," says sixth-generation Crested Butte Ben Somrak.

Somrak, owner of Somrak Concept + Structure, served as the designer and general contractor on the remodel. "We didn't want to change the character of this home," he explains. "We did a lot to stabilize the house, but we kept the character of it, the rustic, homey feel."

When working on a home that is more than 100 years old, there are challenges. One, says Somrak: "You never know what you're getting into."

Case in point: The second story floors. "The floors would just quiver under your boots," he says. To stabilize the second floor, concrete was poured in the crawl space under new posts in the living room. These posts, which join the reclaimed beams on the ceilings throughout the home, were giving the structure not only a gorgeous aesthetic, but new life as well. Additionally, new floor joists were installed to straighten the warping floors.

*continued on page 38*

# MILLER CUSTOM HOMES

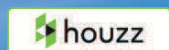


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*continued from page 36*

To keep the historic feel of the house intact, Somrak and the homeowners retained as much as they could. From original bead board to antique back plates on the doors, the renovation feels original.

The remodel was quick, only four months of construction, start to finish. "This type of transformation, especially on a tight schedule, takes a lot of collaboration and teamwork," says Somrak.

In addition to Somrak and his expert team, another invaluable team member was Kim Raines, owner of Mountain Colors in Crested Butte. Land says Raines became her right-hand gal since the homeowner was in Austin during most of the construction. "This is such a unique home," says Raines. "It's got so much character, and that's what Crested Butte is all about."

Raines loves the modern light fixtures she helped source for

the project. "We chose modern shapes, but in a historic finish. It's a nod to history but with a gorgeous, modern touch."

The modern metal light fixtures were installed throughout the house, paired with crisp white walls and trim (Benjamin Moore China White) and dark painted doors (Benjamin Moore Iron Mountain), antique bead board and reclaimed beams—it's a real rustic modern feel.

The Lands envisioned an open feel for the house. The first floor was opened up so you can easily see into the rear of the house, to a sunken living room—a soft, inviting navy blue sectional against re-

claimed wood shiplap, highlighted by decorative buffalo skulls.

The second floor of the house was "funky," with multiple small bedrooms. The Lands were looking for a large master bedroom, along with a bunkroom and guestroom. By opening up some walls and re-envisioning the layout, the upstairs now feels like a brand new home.

*continued on page 41*



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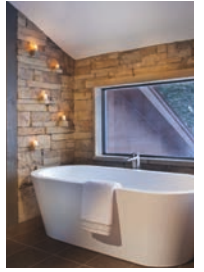
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*continued from page 38*

In the end, it feels bigger than its 2,500 square feet.

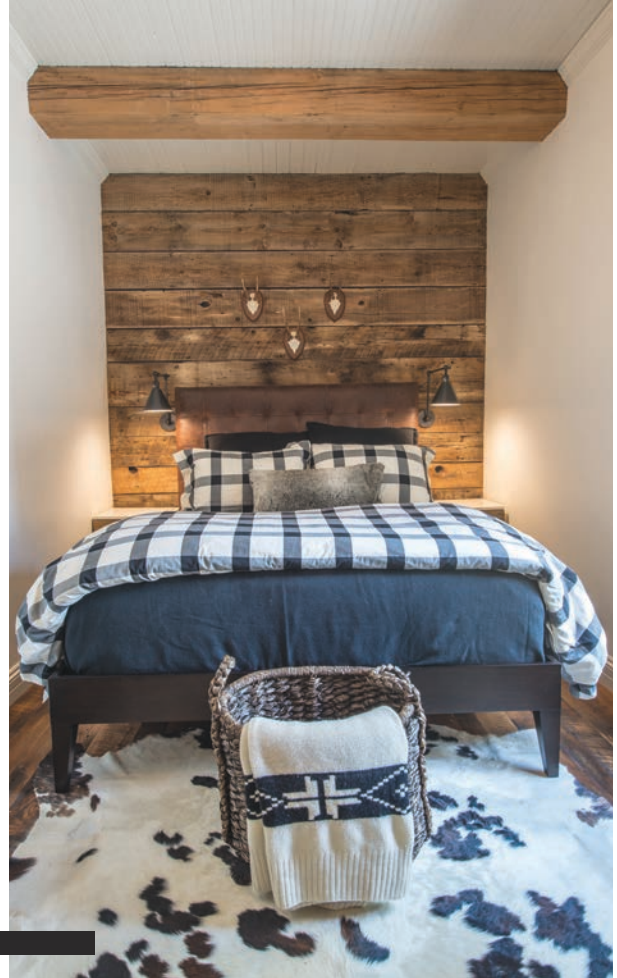
When demolition on the home was under way, the crew unearthed multiple treasures were found. The first was a gorgeous wall of original wood shiplap in the entryway. Another treasure was the women's page of a newspaper from the early 1900s behind a wall. A poster for a Crested Butte Mountain Theatre show in the late 1970s was found under a floor.

"For me, that was a just a reminder of the history. You think about the lives that have lived there, the families that have been raised there. What life, what struggles have occurred inside those walls and how much the town has changed—from the mining town it was to the ski town of today," says Land.

Historic photos of Crested Butte adorn the walls, hanging above modern rustic décor chosen so thoughtfully.

Bringing a new life to the house on Sopris was one of Somrak's favorite jobs so far. "It's rewarding to bring a new life to a historical home, while respecting the history of it at the same time," he says.

The Land family can't wait to spend part of their summer in Crested Butte. "Sometimes you go someplace and at the end of your stay, you feel ready to get back home," Stephanie explains. "But not this place. It holds a special place for us." •



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# Walking HOME

MANIFESTING OUR DREAM *ONE STEP AT A TIME*

**STORY BY** CASSIE PENCE

**PHOTOS BY** LYDIA STERN

L oaded in my Chariot (the cart I tow behind my bicycle) are one toddler, two whole chickens, three canvas bags brimming with vegetables and fruit from the farmers market, a couple dozen eggs and four bottles of wine. I tuck the springy carrot tops back in the bag away from my son's face and snuggle in three loaves of bread on either side him. I'm picking up supplies for a summer party. It's a heavy load, maybe my heaviest, but I'm not worried about the little over a mile I have to bike from town. I'm dreading the single-track trail that leads to my house, and specifically, the short, steep hill I must ascend before reaching my front door.

Slate River Road is a relatively easy commute by bicycle, even with all this weight, and I laugh as my son orders me to ride "faster, momma, faster." I stand up and out of my saddle, pressing all my body weight into the pedals to climb the last rolling hill before I reach the turn off to Wildbird—the pedestrian community where I live. I roll through our parking lot, where my neighbors and I leave our cars, and hit the trail we walk or bike to reach our homes. There are no driveways here. And yes, we live here year-round. There's one vehicular access that we can use only in an emergency or for construction. It's open only in summer, so you pray your water heater doesn't break during winter.

The Slate River winds through the Wildbird property, a total of 40 acres, which is then hugged by conserved open space. I cross a bouncy footbridge to get to the other side of the Slate. I look behind me to ensure the wide wheels of the Chariot are centered and don't fall off the narrow wooden plank. Success!









The trail flattens, tunneled by lush willow bush... but then I hit "The Hill." I gear down all the way and again stand for momentum. I'm cursing myself that I wore flip-flops instead of sneakers and slide off the pedals. I push my bike up the remaining gravel-lined slope, slipping and sweating the entire way. At the top, I hop back on my bike and grind slowly until I reach my front door. I pull Ziggy out and he immediately chases a butterfly in the old stand of lupines that flank our trail. I check the produce—only one smashed tomato. Not bad. I smile. I feel satisfied and think to myself "There's nothing like Wildbird to make you stronger."

It's been nearly six years (and a second child) since we "got into" this pedestrian community, and there's no doubt we are stronger from it. My biceps are bigger and my grip more tenacious. I like to challenge how much I can carry, push in a wheelbarrow or pull in the sled during winter. My neighbors and I joke about the physical demands of living in a pedestrian community, calling it "Wildbird CrossFit." We joke that city slickers would pay good money to haul our groceries or stamp out our trail after a two-foot storm.

Hippies founded Wildbird in 1969. They purchased "The Land," the 40 acres, for \$30,000, a mere \$5,000 each for the six home-sites. Ownership has changed only a handful of times, and when we got here, most of our neighbors had lived here for well over 20 years. And when I say we "got into" Wildbird, that's exactly what I mean. We were accepted as if applying to an elite school. All of the remaining owners interviewed us, talks that sometimes lasted over an hour, to make sure we shared the Wildbird ethos. They wanted to make sure we, too, shared the love of no roads and would never ever change it. They had the right to refuse us, to buy the property themselves first, but thankfully they didn't. We got the green light—it must have been the baby in my belly and the idea of breathing new life into this sacred place.

Wildbird is the dream home. We searched for decades, and it checks off all of our dream home criteria: full sun for large garden and solar panels, river views, well water, and acreage, yet close enough to town that we can bike or ski in. Each Wildbirder has his own septic, well and propane tank, and adding solar makes it quite easy to go off the grid. Shockingly, the octagon-shaped cabin was on the market for nearly four years. No one else could see its true potential, blocked by LSD construction, the six resident pack rats, and ant colonies living in the walls. Or maybe it was just the walk that deterred potential buyers. For us, it was love at first sight.



## Hippies founded **Wildbird** in **1969.**





We've gone through several re-model phases to match our internal vision of dream home. We conserved the octagon, a strong spiritual shape for a home, expanding its five angles into a new great room with vaulted ceilings, American clay plaster walls and huge picture windows framing views of Gothic Mountain, Mt. Crested Butte, Whetstone and the river. The modern kitchen boasts an industrial range, concrete countertops, marble backsplash and open shelving. We reclaimed the locally milled wood that lined every nook and cranny of the old house and used it for cabinets. It's fancy—especially by Wildbird standards.

But at the end of the day, we still have a quarter-mile walk up a trail to reach this luxurious home in the woods. It's the meditative walk that tethers us to Wildbird's hippie roots and strengthens not only our bodies but also, most important, our connec-

tion to the land, to nature and to the seasons.

It's also forced us to consider our sustainability. Carrying out your trash and recycling 280 yards will do that.

In spring, out my kitchen window, I don't see a driveway, I see snow melt to reveal seasonal ponds. These ponds beckon many different types of migratory birds, which is how

Wildbird got its name. When we see the first heron return for the season—those big, blue, prehistoric looking birds with a six-foot wingspan—we run down the trail and cheer. We know spring is coming and we are happy the birds have returned, since their habitat is at risk from the many, many people now using the Slate to stand-up paddleboard.







Spring awakens the chirping wood frogs, too—this tiny miraculous amphibian that can freeze itself and survive in very cold places. Its quacking sound, almost like a duck, fills our spring evenings. The frogs are so small, about the size of a fingernail, we rarely actually see them. However, when you are a small child, it's easy to discover other small creatures, and my son found one on our trail swimming in a puddle that forms when groundwater swells at night. We must have watched those tiny frog legs do the breaststroke for 20 minutes before I pushed my son along

to our destination, now quite late.

The trail—with all of its natural discoveries—is bittersweet. I'm almost always late, whether it's for a meeting, a party or kindergarten. All kids are good dawdlers, but mine are bona fide experts because of the distractions on the trail.

In winter, my daughter, Ruby, likes to follow tracks: big ones that might be moose or elk, to very tiny prints like mice or her favorite, the dynamic snowshoe hare stamp.

In spring, the snow crusts allow us to walk, sled, or snow bike anywhere we

like. No longer are we sinking to our knees or hips, depending on the snow year. This creates an even vaster playground hard to resist despite the school bell ringing.

In summer, I know to allow at least 30 extra minutes for the simple pleasure of skipping rocks on the river. We have to cross the river to get to the other side, to our cars, and the draw of the moving water, whether skipping, wading, or in my daughter's case, skinny-dipping, is truly unavoidable. Even as an adult, I cannot resist the pull, and I'm still trying to beat my 12-skip record.



In fall, it's usually the collection of fallen leaves, or again, the low, finally warmish river that distracts us from the destination at hand. Fall is the best time to take "mud baths" because as the river shrinks, it reveals inviting warm clay. My kids strip naked and roll in it, looking like some kind of aborigine tribal warriors when they are done.

These stories of our natural wonderland are true, but living up a trail in a pedestrian community isn't all mud baths and skinny dips. It has its challenges, too, and there are moments when I curse the trail, curse the load I have to carry, curse my kids for making me late, and I wish for a heated garage to pull into, like most Americans.

I've dumped groceries in a snowstorm and had to dig out each item.

On a particularly icy trail morning, the sled rope slipped through my fingers, and despite my supervoman dive for the sled, my kids went careening down "The Hill," crashing into the willows. Luckily, no one was hurt, just buckets of tears and a purse full of snow.

*continued on page 49*



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*continued from page 47*

There are mornings you wake up and the snow and wind have hidden the trail completely, making you fish for a walkable line.

There was the one time the wood we use to heat our home was delivered after the first big snow dump and we had to hand-sled the entire cord up the trail. There's a learning curve here at Wildbird.

There's the dreaded thaw in spring when the trail rots and each step you post-hole, very dangerous if you are carrying a baby on your back. And, as the thaw continues, our trail becomes an icy, balance beam threatening to twist your ankle or buckle a knee, and then we have to hand-dig the whole thing out.

The aforementioned groundwater that



swells and floods the trail in spring makes it literally impossible not to get wet stinky swamp-foot on your way to yoga class.

Spring also brings the ticks, and checking for the little bloodsuckers after heading down the trail for date night is not the most romantic way to begin dinner—especially if you find one.

If you forget something, like your car keys, you are no longer the usual 10 minutes behind schedule, but 20 minutes late.

Luckily, these scenarios were enough to keep most other mountain folk away from Wildbird, giving us the opportunity to manifest our dream. It takes a special person to live in a pedestrian community. It's a life that's entrenched in nature, and just a little too inconvenient for everyone else. •



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# Living **OFF THE** SUN.

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**STORY BY KRISTY ACUFF**  
**PHOTOS BY LYDIA STERN**

When you walk into Erika Vohman's all-electric "net zero house," the first thing that strikes you is the peace and quiet—no boilers running, no hot air blowing from the furnace. The second thing that strikes you is that it's warm and cozy and full of natural light. And the third thing you think is, "This is a house, but it is also producing its own energy. It is also a mini-utility company."

Net zero means the home's solar panels will, over the course of a year, produce at least as much energy as is consumed by the home's occupants.

"I feel peaceful. It feels really clean, spiritually and philosophically clean," says Vohman.

Her home stands out for what is present but also for what is absent: There's a roof full of solar panels and no natural gas line and boiler.

"I can't even tell you how happy I am not to have a gas line," she says. "It feels independent and liberating and non-toxic."

Dave DiBerardino of Monsoon

Construction built the house with energy efficiency at the forefront of every decision and completed construction in March 2018. The walls and roof are insulated well beyond code requirements and the windows, while abundant, are also above code and many are "fixed," not opening, to prevent heat transfer. That is important in this Riverbend neighborhood just south of Crested Butte where cold winter air collects and lingers.

"In addition to the interior insulation, the entire house is wrapped in a thermal envelope outside the framing and that stops leaks," says DiBerardino. "In a perfect world, everyone could build their homes this way. Think of the energy savings over 100 years for this home."

To capture the full benefit of the solar photovoltaic (PV) panels, there are three electric hot water tanks in the basement that act as batteries to store energy. When the sun is shining, the PV panels heat the water; at night, that water pumps through the floors of the 1,650-square-foot house as a heat source. The PV system is still tied to the electric grid, however, so Vohman could draw on that power if needed.

"At the end of the year, Gunnison

County Electric Association [GCEA] will look at how much power I consumed and how much I produced. That is called 'net-metering,'" says Vohman. "I will either owe money or, more likely, I will get a credit for my production."

The photovoltaic system is a 6.7 kilowatt system installed by local company Nunatak Energy Systems; it should produce nearly 900 kW hours every month. According to GCEA, average customers in the Gunnison County use 750 kW hours each month, so Vohman's system should be more than enough to supply her needs.

"GCEA makes it easy for the average Joan to build a net metering system. In some places around the country, electric companies are trying to shut down net metering, but GCEA has been very supportive. It just cost an extra \$500 for the net meter to be installed and that was it," says DiBerardino.

"I can watch online at SolarEdge and see real-time data for my panels," says Vohman. "It shows me how many kilowatts my panels generate and the CO2 emissions that are saved from that and the equivalent of trees planted as a result."





That carbon emissions reduction was a catalyst for Vohman to build this home and for DiBerardino to build it.

"Living in this house with all the electric power solely from solar cuts my carbon footprint and that feels good," she says.

"You have to believe that clean energy is the future. You've got to look long-term and think of the energy savings over time, over 100 years," says DiBerardino. "The up-front cost is more but she will earn that back over time."

All told, the extra cost for the solar panels, the thicker insulation and the higher-performing windows increased the overall cost of the house by 5 percent or 6 percent or approximately \$30,000, according to DiBerardino. Factor in the fact that Vohman did not pay to install a natural gas line or a boiler and assuming \$2,000 a year in gas and electric utility costs saved, she could re-coup her costs in 15 years. She will also receive a federal rebate for some of the cost of the panels, approximately \$8,000.

Because of the large PV panel array and its kW capacity, Vohman's house will more than likely produce more energy than she consumes this year. If that happens, she plans "to either put in a hot tub or get an electric car."

"In some solar houses, residents have to be careful about the timing of their energy use so they plan their showers and dishwashing during times when their panels are producing," says DiBerardino. "But the design of this house and the solar capacity provide enough of a buffer that she can live 'normally' without having to adjust her habits. She can shower and run the dishwasher at night."

In addition to the hot water tanks, a state-of-the-art Tulikivi wood-burning masonry stove sits front and center in the home's main room. Thousands of pounds

of soapstone envelop the stove and act as a long-lasting furnace, radiating heat long after the fire is extinguished.

"Feel the stones. They are still so warm and I haven't had a fire in it since last night. It is still radiating the next day. This will be my heat source for most of today," Vohman says. "The stove is one of the key elements for this whole system to function."

"I wish that everyone who could afford to build this way would do it," says DiBerardino. "That would go a long way to helping our climate and the future for our kids and the planet."

Thoughtful design features throughout the house center on sustainable, energy efficiency. South-facing fixed windows capture passive solar gain and a minimum number of doors limit air leaks. The kitchen cabinets were all constructed by local valley carpenters; nothing was outsourced. The lighting in the entire house is low-wattage LED, so 6-watt LEDs replace 60-watt halogens. And the house is so tightly constructed

and insulated that it needs a heat recovery ventilator to mechanically bring in fresh air when the windows are closed.

But the house is more than just an energy-efficient mini-utility company; it is an eclectic modern home bathed in warm neutrals with splashes of color throughout. It lives and feels like a clean, modern space with few interior walls and unparalleled views of mountains in every direction.

Unusually, there are two electric breaker boxes—one tied to essential appliances such as the refrigerator and hot water heaters—and the other tied to non-essentials such as lights, computers, coffee machines, etc. When she leaves the house, she turns off the breaker for non-essentials to prevent appliances from drawing

so-called phantom loads of electricity simply by being plugged into the wall socket.

"Phantom loads waste enormous energy and I have a simple solution. Instead of unplugging everything in my house every time I leave, I turn one switch," says Vohman.

"Some people worry that a solar house will be too hot in the summer, but the thermal mass of this house works both ways," says DiBerardino. "In the summer when you wake up and it's 55 degrees, you close the windows to trap that cold nighttime air. The large thermal mass keeps that temperature constant through the day. It won't get too hot, even with all the passive solar gain."

So for those who think a life beyond natural gas is impossible or prohibitively expensive, Vohman's home is proof positive that it can be done. With the right materials and design, even in this cold mountain climate, you can live off the sun, and that feels like a good thing to do. •







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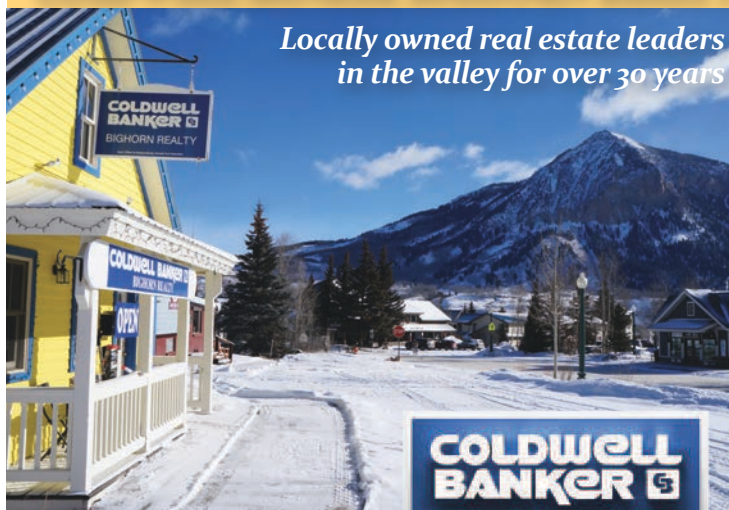


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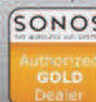


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From  
the  
Ground  
Up:

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## STORY BY DAWNE BELLOISE



alking into Sarah Schmitz' flower shop, From the Ground Up, the richness of deep green, musty earth and life with its pungent kick hits your senses like a walk into the woods on a new spring day. Sarah is sitting at a tall work table drinking a green smoothie from a mason jar, and she seems one with her surroundings, like a tall fern unfurled in a terrarium. A mini botanical garden, the shop is a place you'd want to visit in mid-winter to get your fix of greenery, and in the summer, when brides-to-be are gearing up for their big day, flowers fill every inch of the shop's floor.

Sarah grew up in Denver with a love for plants and a green thumb mom who always had backyard flower gardens whose blooms found their way into colorful arrangements throughout the house. Sarah's known the common names of flowers since her childhood, when her mother would point them out. She attributes her inspiration and love of plants to her mother. Sarah spent much of her childhood outside, digging in the dirt and playing in the sunshine, but she never had an inkling that one day flora would become her career.

She attended Western State College (now Western State Colorado University) in Gunnison, focusing on botany and Rocky Mountain flora. She graduated with a bachelor of science degree in biology, and moved to Crested Butte. After various jobs that had nothing to do with her degree, and inquiries from her parents about what she planned on doing with her life, Sarah returned to Denver in 2013 to attend a five-week flower arranging program at Trim Floral International School, interning at a flower shop and event company there. Eight months later, she came home to Crested Butte, where she still had multiple jobs to keep afloat but started her floral arranging business, From the Ground Up.

Sarah knew she wanted to be in Crested Butte for many reasons, including the natural beauty of the area, but she also noted that there are so many events here and there isn't much in the way of competition in the floral arranging field. She felt it's a small enough town to make it easy to become successful. Sarah knew how fortunate she was to have found a space for her start-up studio, a hunting cabin with electricity out at Nicholson Lake. Working out of this cabin in the woods, Sarah would deliver her creations for weddings and events. Wedding planners started recommending her and through word of mouth, her business took off, keeping Sarah very busy after that very first year.



PHOTO BY LYDIA STERN



Now in her new space at 423 Bel-leview, Unit 2, clients can walk in for consultation, orders, or just to take in the aroma of the living green of every sort of foliage, from succulents, hanging ferns, and carnivorous pitcher plants, to a wide variety of both flowering and exotic houseplants. Her positive attitude toward life in general suffuses her work environment, adding to that happy work space.

Sarah points out there are various plants that can contribute to a healthy living environment and help with oxygen level since plants breathe in CO<sub>2</sub> and emit oxygen. There are certain plants for your bedroom that can help you sleep better at night and other plants that can contribute to your wellbeing, such as spider plants, which are good for detoxifying the air. Sarah goes to Denver once a month to stock up on plants, and she also takes special orders from clients.

Sarah feels that she learns more every day about plants and arrangements, through the multitude of workshops and seminars available to florists. Every year the trends in

flower arrangements change; for example, Sarah says the current trend is gold and copper containers with neutral colors in flowers—blushes, pale

peaches, earth tones of sandy, nude, taupe brown and champagne, more of an antique, Victorian look.

Sarah likes to use lots of texture in her arrangements so she'll add elements like of sprigs of blackberries and figs to lend interest to the scene. Her intention is to make sure there's a more compelling composition.

The table arrangements these days are very much eclectic, not consistent as they have been in the past, and can vary from table to table in a single event or wedding. Sarah will incorporate several different types and often shops for attention-getting vintage vessels, dishes, bowls and vases for her arrangements.

Traditions aren't followed as closely anymore; for instance, mothers of the brides don't have to wear flowers, brides don't carry specific types or shapes of bouquets, and flowers don't have to be on every table. People now utilize candles and gems scattered over the tabletops. There are more do-it-yourself weddings these days, so they're far more eclectic, according to Sarah.

*continued on page 60*

## *Sprigs of blackberries & figs*

*LEND INTEREST  
TO THE SCENE*



PHOTO BY MELISSA FENLON



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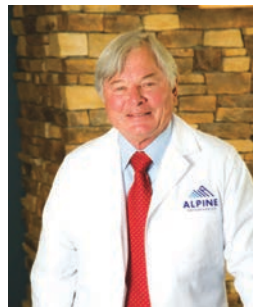


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*continued from page 58*

Sarah loves that flowers come in so many shapes, colors and sizes, and new species are being discovered every day. Her flowers will usually come from South America, mostly in the winter, and they last for weeks. In the summertime she gets many of her flowers locally from area growers. She is endlessly inspired by the Crested Butte landscape, hiking and biking, exploring what wildflowers are in bloom. Although she gets many requests from brides-to-be about cutting the local wildflowers to use in arrangements, she emphatically informs them that it's not only illegal, it's unethical and bad for the reproductive cycles and survival of our wildflowers. Additionally, wildflowers aren't good as cut flowers because they wilt and shrivel and will not last for even hours.

*continued on page 63*



PHOTOS BY MELISSA FENLON





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**RESERVE on the EAST RIVER**





PHOTOS BY LYDIA STERN, SARAH SCHMITZ

*continued from page 60*

Brides often ask what will be blooming here at the time of their weddings so they can coordinate their colors to the natural surroundings. However, Sarah says it's impossible to determine since the blooms depend on weather and moisture, last year's snowfall and the temperature.

Summertime is Sarah's favorite season, but it's also the time she works the most. She does more than 50 weddings and 70 events that include rehearsal dinners and other events. The craziness starts in June and lasts through October, with June and July being her busiest months. Last summer she had two designers and a local high school student working for her, helping with deliveries and big events. She also provides weekly flower arrangements to various local businesses, from lodging and hotels to real estate offices and restaurants. Independently, clients will also call for special delivery flowers for birthdays and other celebrations.

Since May 1, 2017, Sarah has had her retail shop in town, which she says she loves because it enables her to be more available to the community. It's mostly locals who visit the space because most tourists and out-of-town customers don't know she's back there behind Soma.

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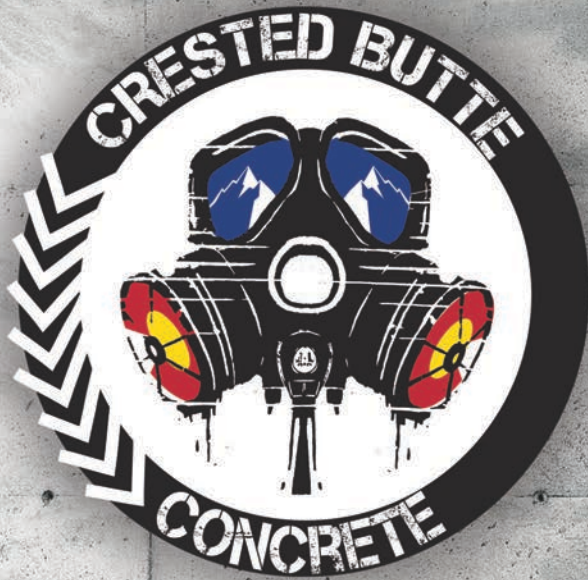
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# GROWING *Community*

It is a Tuesday at Tassinong Farms Food and Wine in Crested Butte South, and the people coming and going are as diverse as the space itself. Two young farmers emerge through the back door; they've been hired to help grow the greens and vegetables that make up Tassinong's menu and want to talk over plans.

Over tea and coffee, two men discuss the art collection that adorns the walls—one man owns an art gallery in Crested Butte and wants to know more about the featured artists. Two people come in to buy greens. A couple of women arrive for an early lunch and a glass of wine from the Italian state-of-the-art wine dispenser along the back wall. Yet another woman enters with her laptop; it's time for a working lunch.

At the center of it all is Kate Haverkamp, who owns Tassinong Farms Food and Wine with her husband. She reviews the farming plan with her employees (more carrots get added to the line-up), thanks the art aficionados for coming down to the "south side," and greets her lunchtime diners—who order without looking at the menu—by name.

*continued on page 69*





**STORY BY** ALISSA JOHNSON  
**PHOTOS BY** LYDIA STERN



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*Kate isn't  
concerned with how  
people define it.*



*continued from page 66*

The surprise, perhaps, is the location. This isn't downtown Crested Butte, but Crested Butte South, seven miles south of town. And the scene feels like two ideas in one: the welcoming, personalized atmosphere small-town Colorado is known for and a taste of something more urbane in the sleekness of the wine machine and the modern art on the walls.

The combination keeps people coming back, whether they're buying local greens or indulging in a charcuterie board and a glass of wine. For some, Tassinong is the local farm. For others, it's a wine bar, a spot for mid-morning cup of Joe, or a lunch spot that doesn't require driving to town. Kate isn't concerned with how people define it—whatever they call it, she prefers to focus on what it provides for the community.

"I wanted a place for people to come and talk to each other, outside of their phones and outside of their computers. That's the way this place was designed—with those thoughts in mind. I was trying to make it more of a community place and a relaxing place. You can come by yourself or you can come with a friend or you can come with six people," Kate says.

The storefront opened in December last year, but Tassinong started as a farm, named for a family farm in Indiana and now retro-fitted with shipping containers behind the main building that house hydroponic farms. In them, Kate and her staff grow greens such as lettuce, kale, and chard, and even carrots and radishes year-round. Kate sold those greens to local residents and restaurants while she figured out

what the storefront would be.

She knew that any commercial space had to feature the farm's produce, but she wanted to offer the community more than a farm stand. She saw a need in Crested Butte South for a place where people could spend time with each other, whether they arrived together or met there. She ended up designing four in one—farm stand, coffee shop, wine bar and restaurant—and carefully considered each feature to facilitate a community feel.

The greens available for purchase are kept in the kitchen to keep the front free of clutter. There are a handful of tables and a few cozy armchairs, and at times, people share their space with newcomers. The walls, free of display cases, are filled with art from the Haverkampfs' personal collection.



One piece in particular has become something of a conversation starter: an oil on canvas by Daryl Trivieri called "On Groundhog Day There Was a Magic Egg Hunt." It looks part painting and part photograph, like it just might have hidden images throughout. It gets people talking, whether or not they consider themselves art aficionados. And that interaction is exactly what Kate wanted to see.

"You might meet somebody you don't know. You might talk to someone you never had a chance to speak to before. It's small and intimate, nothing that feels cavernous when you walk in. I'd rather it feel full and cozy than big and empty," she says.

Even the stainless steel and glass wine dispenser creates a buzz. Wine drinkers don't have to wait for a waiter to refill their glasses. They can peruse the options and select a taste, a half-pour or a full glass. Kate and her husband saw similar machines during some

of their travels, and they loved the way the dispenser lets people try new wines without committing to a whole glass.

"I didn't want it to be a place where you were stuck with a glass of wine you didn't like," Kate says, noting that it also lets people branch out. "If you don't like wine this is a good way for people to get to know it. If you do like wine it's a good way for people to branch out. And if you really love wine then you'll appreciate the technology behind it."

The same philosophy guides the menu, which changes seasonally and features fresh gourmet salads (using Tassinong greens, of course), build-your-own charcuterie boards and a sampling of small plates. Last winter, options like the Moroccan meatball, green mozzarella mini-sandwich and white bean cumin dip made it possible to sample a variety of foods without eating too much or committing to one thing.

*continued on page 73*



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continued from page 70

Kate felt strongly that if she was going to serve food, it had to be healthy, it had to be homemade, and it had to offer reasonable portions. She never wanted people to leave feeling ill because they'd eaten too much. She hired chef Callie Koch, who owned Ingrained Bakery in Fort Collins, to help her do that. Her baking skills are evident in a selection of baked treats, and locals are fast finding sweet and savory favorites on the menu.

Tassinong Farms Food and Wine has been such a hit that Kate has had to stop selling greens to other restaurants in order to serve her customers first. And many people are asking her to open locations in Crested Butte or Gunnison.

The Haverkampfs, however, are committed to Crested Butte South. It's where they live, it's where they work, and Tassinong is filling a niche—whether that's as the local farm, the local wine bar or something else.

"It is so many things," Kate says. "That's why I want people to discover it and figure out what it is to them."

At the time of publication, Tassinong Farms Food and Wine was open from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Check the website, [www.tassinongfarms.com](http://www.tassinongfarms.com), for current hours. •



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info@blindfaithcb.com  
www.blindfaithcb.com



# This place we call **HOME.**

**NAMES:** Bev & Joe Fitzpatrick

**OCCUPATIONS:**

Joe: Town Manager of Mt. Crested Butte

Bev: Cashier, Mountain Earth Grocery

**YEARS IN MT. CRESTED BUTTE:** 40



**HOW DID YOU FIND CRESTED BUTTE?**

After taking several ski trips "out west" (we are from Minnesota), we decided to try finding employment in a resort in Colorado, before "settling down." A tenant in the apartment building we managed suggested we should check out Crested Butte, so we did and the rest is history.

**WHEN DID MT. CRESTED BUTTE FIRST FEEL LIKE HOME?**

Immediately. We grew close to our coworkers, the homeowners of the condominiums we managed, and the business people in the resort and in town that first winter and that circle of friends continued to grow each year.

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

We'd have to say the natural beauty coupled with the caliber of people we have met. We are view junkies and we never tire of gazing at the incredible vistas in and around Crested Butte. To live here takes hard work, innovation and collaboration. We're proud to be a part of a community where everyone is connected and pulls together to help one another, to celebrate with one another and passionately work to solve the challenges of life. It also gives us great joy to watch visitors arrive, all keyed up and see them unwind, relax and leave refreshed.

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

The Crested Butte area is unique in that it is both a resort and a community. This combination produces a vibrant, stimulating environment in the midst of spectacular natural beauty.





bringing dreams home

**Corey Dwan**

970.596.3219

coreydwan@crestedbuttecollection.com

crestedbuttecollection.com



193 Larkspur Lane, Crested Butte, 5 BR, 5.5 Bth, 6,976 SF, 5 Car Gar, 35.24 Acres, 800 feet of East River frontage, Call for Pricing



6475 County Road 740, Crested Butte, 5 BR, 2.5 Bth, 4,323 SF, 35.90 Acres, Over 700 feet of Cement Creek frontage  
Offered for \$1,995,000

59 Cinnamon Mountain Road, Mt. Crested Butte  
4 BR, 3.5 Bth, 4,822 SF  
Offered for \$1,795,000



10 Aspen Lane, Mt. Crested Butte  
6 BR, 5.5 Bth, 5,166 SF, 2 Car Gar  
Offered for \$1,295,000



72 Hunter Hill Road, Unit I304, Mt. Crested Butte  
4 BR, 3 Bth, 1,833 SF, Ski In/Ski Out  
Offered for \$630,000



72 Hunter Hill Road, Unit I204, Mt. Crested Butte  
3 BR, 2 Bth, 1,330 SF, Ski In/Ski Out  
Offered for \$525,000



21 Castle Road, Unit 3, Mt. Crested Butte  
2 BR, 3.5 Bth, 1,100 SF, 1 Car Gar  
Offered for \$475,000



70 Hunter Hill Road, Unit P104, Mt. Crested Butte  
2 BR, 2 Bth, 1001 SF, Ski In/Ski Out  
Offered for \$360,000



6 Emmons Road, Unit 424, Mt. Crested Butte  
1 BR, 2 Bth, 740 SF, Indoor/Outdoor Pool  
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