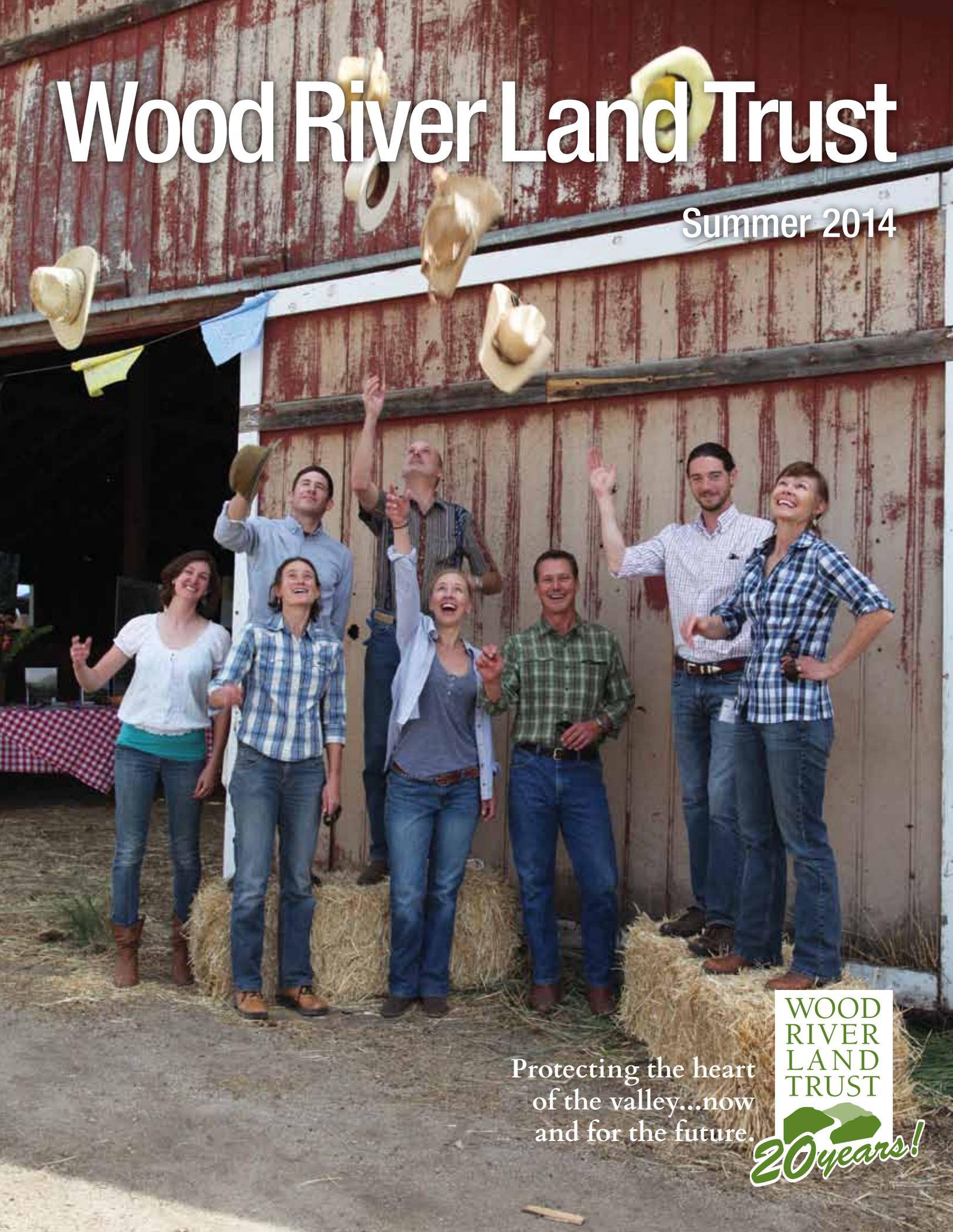


Wood River Land Trust

Summer 2014



Protecting the heart
of the valley...now
and for the future.

WOOD
RIVER
LAND
TRUST


20 years!



David Anderson

Cover:
WRLT staff at Rock Creek
Ranch Hoedown
© Daphne Muehle

No Better Time than the Present— Celebrating Our 20th Anniversary!

A Message from David Anderson, President

On behalf of the organization, I'd like to publicly thank Trent Jones for his dedication and service as President of Wood River Land Trust for the past two years. It will be a great challenge to fill his shoes, but I look forward to the opportunities over the next two years. With the Land Trust's very active Board of Directors, I believe we will continue to make great strides working together with our partners and the community.

Our second decade is starting off with a bang. Together, with our partners The Nature Conservancy and Natural Resources Conservation Service, we acquired and protected our largest property to date, the 10,400-acre Rock Creek Ranch. This success was made possible because of the generosity of the landowners, the Rinker Family and your continued support.

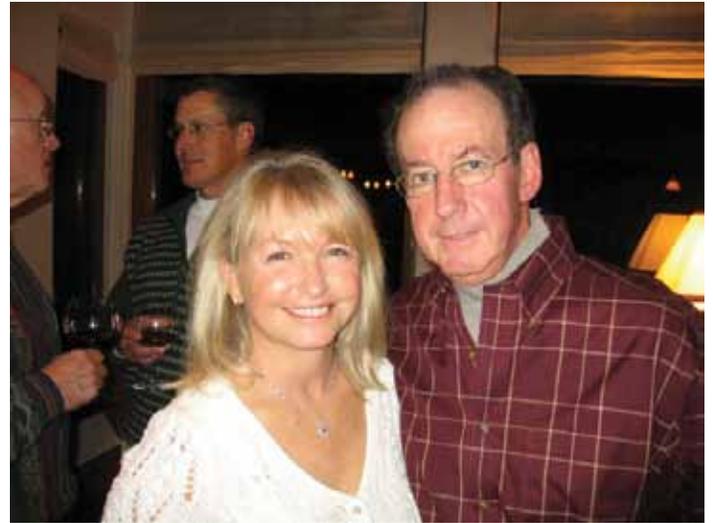
The Land Trust and The Nature Conservancy hosted a hoedown in June at Rock Creek Ranch's red barn. The attendance at the event was unexpected, and a testament to us and our partners how much the community supports and appreciates this land-saving effort. You can read about the history of the land, an overview of the deal and our community celebration in the following pages.

One thing is for certain—partnerships and collaborations are important in achieving our conservation goals. This includes our partnership with you. You are an important component of our ability to save the places that matter; the places that provide clean air and water, public recreation, wildlife habitat and scenic views. I hope you are proud of your contribution to our organization and I look forward to celebrating our success with you as I take the helm as President.

Because this is our 20th anniversary of saving land, water and wildlife habitat in the Wood River Valley (and beyond), we have dedicated each newsletter this year to a time period: past, present and future. In our previous edition we focused on the past. In this issue, we write about the present, and in our final issue of the year, we'll look to the future.

Here's to celebrating the next 20 years with you,

Founders' Award Recipients



WOOD RIVER LAND TRUST Board of Directors honored two of its outstanding former members, John Flattery and Barbara Thrasher, with its Founders' Award. Both Flattery and Thrasher retired from the Board in July 2014 after each serving 12 years.

The award is earned by people who have advanced WRLT's mission and demonstrated a long-term commitment to preserving and protecting open space. Flattery started serving on WRLT's Board in spring of 2003. Over the years, he served on the Finance and Governance committees and became an integral part of land-saving decisions, lending his expertise in land management. He brought a high level of professionalism and dedicated hundreds of hours to the organization.

Thrasher began her service in spring of 2003 as

well. She has been a leader on the Development and Outreach committee, guiding the organization from her experience as a co-founder of the Wood River Women's Charitable Foundation and a long-time philanthropist.

"Barbara's and John's dedication to land, water and wildlife habitat protection is unequalled," said Scott Boettger, Executive Director. "They both brought professionalism, expertise, passion, humor and dedication to their volunteer service. On behalf of the staff and their fellow Board members we are pleased to recognize them with the Founders' Award. Their selflessness has made a positive impact in the Wood River Valley and surrounding areas as we protected 16,553 acres and completed numerous restoration protection projects under their leadership. "

Left to right: Barbara Thrasher, Founders' Award Recipient;
John Flattery, Founders' Award Recipient, with fellow former
Board member, Doris Tunney.



A Momentous Occasion —10,400 Acres Protected at Rock Creek Ranch

Our future is created by what we do today, not tomorrow.

IMAGINE LIVING HERE in the early 1900's before there were cars, electricity, running water or any of the other modern conveniences we take for granted today. In the winter of 1923, the Schmidt family homesteaders (of what is now known as Rock Creek Ranch) had all the hardships of a rural, farming life. When it was time to deliver their son, George Schmidt took his wife, Kay, by sleigh from Poverty Flats to Hailey. They had two teams of horses that alternated breaking trails through the deep snow. For comfort, they placed hot rocks in the sleigh to keep their feet warm for the 20-mile trip.

Today, the red barn which they built on Rock

Creek Ranch is a 20-minute drive from Hailey, and if it's cold, you can turn on your car heater. Although some things change, we are pleased to announce that the landscape will be protected in its natural beauty.

Together with our partners, the Rinker family, The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), we protected the 10,400-acre Ranch for future generations to enjoy as we do today.

The landowners—the Rinker Family—are the cornerstone of this story of protection. They met with WRLT in 2013 to express their interest in protecting the Ranch in perpetuity to honor the

Earlier Homesteaders Recount Life Out Rock Creek

WE WERE EXTREMELY FORTUNATE to have a few Rock Creek Ranch homesteaders and their families join us at the Hoedown on June 26. Sarah Ella Andregg (Stewart Homestead), shown above/below flanked by her two brothers Robert and Jim Stewart, was raised on upper Rock Creek during the 1920's and 1930's with her seven siblings. Her father was a miner and her mother raised sheep and farmed.

Sarah, a vivid storyteller, spoke of her Rock Creek memories at the hoedown about riding her horse as a young girl over Willow Creek to reach Fairfield to visit her grandparents. With a sparkle in her eye, she recounted riding past the Shoshone and Bannock Indians who were encamped there for months gathering and drying camas bulbs for adding starch to their fall and winter diet. Ella recalled seeing beautiful beaded moc-casins, gloves and handwork that the Native Americans would sell to the local farmers and ranchers. The Native American women would stick their tiny babies on cradle boards into the sage brush while gathering bulbs – “with not a peep heard.”

patriarch of their family, Harry Rinker, a prominent community member in the Wood River Valley. After negotiations, they sold the Ranch to WRLT and TNC at a significant bargain sale. The preservation of this spectacular property would not have been possible if not for the Rinkers' generosity.

In order to protect the precious natural resources found on the property, the deal included entering into a land-preservation agreement with NRCS by selling a conservation easement to the agency. The money from the sale lowered the purchase price of the land. The preservation agreement restricts development and provides grazing guidelines in order to conserve Rock Creek's water sources and wildlife habitat.

There is more to this story than the conservation of natural resources. By saving Rock Creek Ranch, we defend the benefits you and others derive from the land—for our health and enjoyment. Recreational trails, working lands that provide food, intact scenic views and clean, fresh water are just a few reasons that compelled us to safeguard the Ranch.

Now we look to our partner agency, Idaho Fish and Game (IDFG), as the future owner and manager of the land. In order to do this we need the assistance of Blaine County's Land, Water and Wildlife program to provide the additional funding. The money we receive from the sale of Rock Creek Ranch to IDFG will repay TNC for their loan to purchase the land. Leveraging your gifts with public funds on multiple projects is what we do best. WRLT and TNC will continue to work with these agencies to bring permanent protection and appropriate management to the land and will keep you informed of our progress.

The first stage of saving Rock Creek Ranch is complete, and it happened at just the right time—to help us celebrate our 20th anniversary. What better way to recognize our history than to show our success.

We've come a long way since 1994—and with you as a partner we can accomplish much more. In fact, we're doing more than heating rocks. In the next 20 years we will be turning up the heat on open-space conservation in the Valley.



Left: Rock Creek Ranch © John Finnell

Right: Photo © Daphne Muehle



Animals of Rock Creek Ranch

CRITICAL SAGE GROUSE HABITAT Protected in Perpetuity: The protection of Rock Creek Ranch aligns with state and federal efforts to conserve Greater sage-grouse habitat. The project expands the bird's protected habitat in south-central Idaho to more than 80,000 acres.

Rock Creek Ranch provides important habitat for Greater sage-grouse, specifically nesting, brood-rearing and summer habitat, as well as several lek locations (breeding areas). Long valued for its benefits to people and nature, Rock Creek Ranch will continue to be conserved and managed for wildlife habitat and public use.



Clockwise from top:
Pronghorn © John Finnell;
Sage Grouse © Bob Griffith;
Barn Swallow, Twin Moose, &
Pronghorn © John Finnell



A Community Celebration at Rock Creek Ranch



1



2



3



4



5

1–3: More than 250 donors, partners and community supporters joined us at the red barn on Rock Creek Ranch for a hoedown on June 24. Great music by the Kim Stocking Band, tomahawk throwing, scrumptious barbecue and a beautiful setting was enjoyed by all. We are grateful to our hoedown sponsors, which included Atkinson’s Market, CK’s Real Food, Idaho Lumber and Tara Bella Flowers. Photos © Daphne Muehle

4: From left, Clark Gerhardt, Former WRLT Board President; Tom Bentley, Former WRLT Board Member; Scott Boettger, WRLT Executive Director, and Toni Hardesty, TNC Idaho State Director. Photo © Daphne Muehle

5: From left, Patsy Nickum, WRLT Croesus Creek Easement donor; Megan Nickum-Stevenson, WRLT Board Member and Megan’s twins Briggs and Lucy enjoying the festive mood at the hoedown.

In the 1980-1990's, R was purchased for de In 2013, the Rinker fa their conservation vis this land for future ge

2014

On May 12, 2014, Wo (WRLT) and The Natu purchased 10,400-ac permanent protection property include tran Idaho Fish and Game management, ensuring for people to enjoy and thrive. WRLT and TNC to the Blaine County program for funding t the property.



Photos: Dev Khalsa

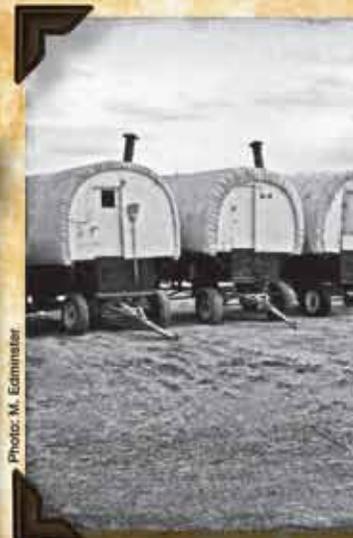
1900s



George and Ella Mae (Severe) Stewart with Ruth Severe in background. Gold fever brought George Stewart, a miner and Ella Mae, a farmer, to homestead in the upper Rock Creek Drainage with their eight children. (1922)



Agatha Diebenau Schmidt feeding one of the calves on Rock Creek. George and Agatha Schmidt were cattle and sheep ranchers and early homesteaders along with George's brother (Bill) and two sisters (Dora Wilks and Annie Dutson). Bill Schmidt was killed in the infamous North Star Mine Disaster when 15 miners were killed in an avalanche ranking as second-worst mining disaster in Idaho history. (Note barn in background is still standing today)



Photos: M. Edminster

After the collapse of gold p and cattle were part of th families that lived out Rock Depression. Union Pacific amount of sheep in the worl industry collapse

Rock Creek
development.
family initiated
decision to preserve
generations.

Rock Creek Ranch

Wood River Land Trust
Conservancy (TNC)
Rock Creek Ranch for
Future plans for the
transferring the land to
(IDFG) for long-term
our vision of a place
and wildlife and habitat to
C submitted a proposal
Land, Water and Wildlife
to help IDFG purchase

1960s

1930s



prices in the 1890's, sheep
the livelihood of the nine
Rock Creek up until the Great
removed the second largest
and out of Ketchum until that
and in the 1930's.



Skiing out Rock Creek circa 1930 was just as popular as skiing in Sun Valley!



Tews Brothers – William, Jim, Clarence and Larry Tews. William, Clarence and Jim grazed cattle and sheep from 1943 to 1960's on lower Rock Creek. They moved 500 - 600 head of cattle between Black Butte Ranch, Shoshone and Rock Creek for over 20 years.

TOP LEFT IMAGE—2014:

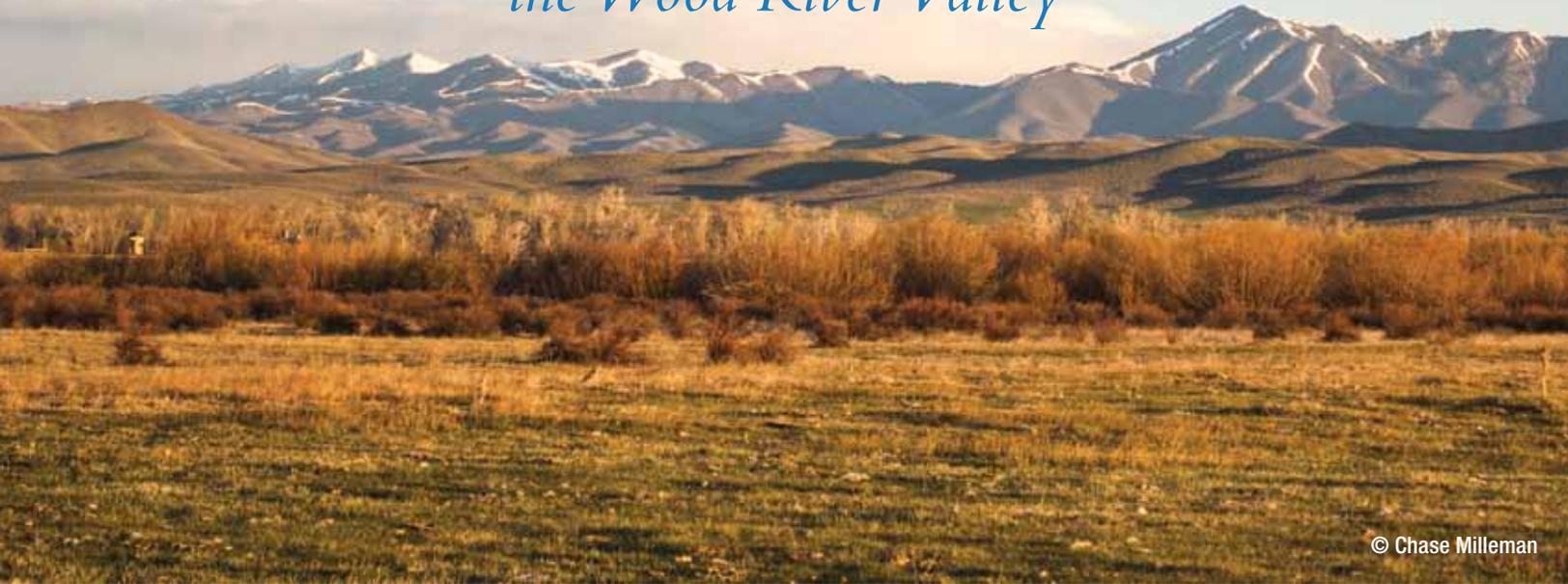
STANDING LEFT TO RIGHT:

Doug Barnum, Ed Cutter, Keri York, Vance Hanawalt, Lou Lunte, Rick Davis, Wade Brown, Trent Jones, Stoney Burke, Dan Smith, Scott Boettger, Gary McStay, Mari McStay, Nick Purdy, Jerome Hansen, Donna Pence, Mark Doerr, Steve Elam, Jack Kueneman

FRONT ROW, SEATED LEFT TO RIGHT:

Bart Rinker, Harry Rinker, Diane Rinker, Rod Rinker.

Rural Qualities Preserved at Gateway to the Wood River Valley



© Chase Milleman

A GENEROUS DONATION of a conservation easement to Wood River Land Trust was made by an anonymous donor in November 2013. The preservation agreement protects the 85-acre Gateway Ranch near the intersection of Highway 75 and Highway 20. Bordered by other privately protected land, Gateway Ranch sits to the northwest of the intersection.

“For many years, my husband and I drove with our sons from southern California to the Valley. I did the long shift, driving all night while they all slept in the back of the van. Coming over Timmerman Hill at 7 or 8 o’clock in the morning after a 16-hour drive, my breath was always taken away as we came down that hill, seeing the wide-open expanse. I knew at that moment we were “home,” a special place of wildlife and scenic beauty,” said the landowner and donor of the easement. “I want others who come here to experience that same feeling—that connection with nature—that I did. Protecting this land with Wood River Land Trust is my way of ensuring this gift for future generations.”

The conservation of Gateway Ranch furthers the Land Trust’s efforts to safeguard the scenic and agricultural character of the southern gateway to the Wood River Valley by protecting an important portion of the most iconic agricultural landscapes along the Sawtooth Scenic Byway and prohibiting any development. Conservation grazing practices will

continue on the property. This gift ensures that the rural and open-space feel that people experience as they enter the valley will not be diminished.

“This property is one of the most prominent in the area and helps define the open and welcome ‘Gateway to the Sawtooth’ that we all call Timmerman Junction. When I moved here 17 years ago there was a sign on this property announcing it as a future commercial site. Now with the generosity of this landowner, this land will forever remain open,” said Scott Boettger, Executive Director for Wood River Land Trust. “The protection of scenic working lands, like Gateway Ranch, is a priority for the Land Trust. We strive to conserve those places that make this Valley special as it continues to grow.”

[A Swainson's Hawk, that migrated from Argentina, surveys the area for prey at Gateway Ranch south of Bellevue, Idaho.](#) © Chase Milleman



Valley Scenic Byway Protected

CONSERVATION USUALLY TAKES TIME

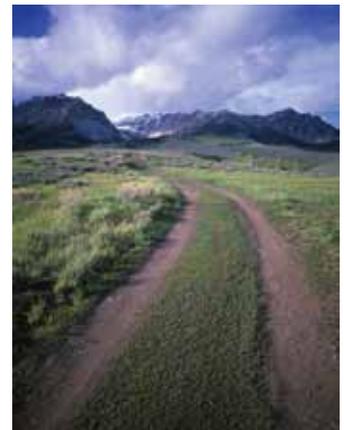
and the story behind the protection of East Fork Preserve took 12 years, beginning in 2002 with an Idaho Transportation Department scenic easement, until the ending was written in 2013. Last December, the Land Trust accepted a donation from the East Fork Homeowners Association of the 7.5-acre East Fork property, located at the southeast corner of the intersection of Highway 75 and East Fork Road. Characterized by sagebrush, grasses and scattered trees, the property may be small, but it is of scenic importance to all of us who drive along Highway 75 and this stretch of the Scenic Byway.

Prior to conservation, the property was explored for development, which if it had occurred would have permanently impacted the stunning views of the Pioneer Mountains to the east. The land also abuts roughly a quarter mile of the Blaine County Recreation District's bicycle path. But because of the generosity and vision of the Homeowners Association, this open space will remain for the benefit of all of us here now and future generations. "Open space and natural scenery are just a few reasons that people enjoy living and visiting the Wood River Valley," said WRLT Executive Director Scott Boettger. "We are pleased to add to our list of conservation successes by preserving this land at East Fork. It was a great way to end 2013 and begin 2014."



Heart of the Valley Contest

*Celebrating 10 Years of
Awe-Inspiring Photography and Prose*

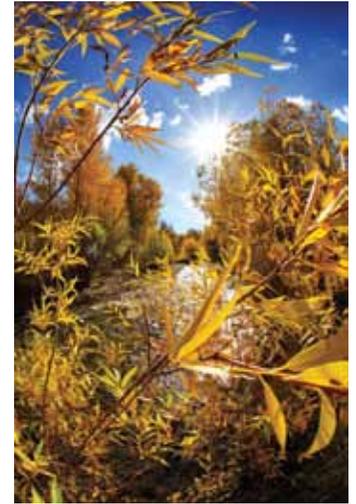


WOOD RIVER VALLEY'S CITIZENS and visitors share a common bond—their love of this unique and inspiring place. We look forward every year to seeing how the community defines what makes this area so special. Now in its 10th year, the Heart of the Valley contest is still going strong, with individuals still enthusiastic to showcase their artistic photos and stimulating prose.

With nearly 50 participants and more than 80 entries, this year marks a record year—what a way to celebrate this milestone anniversary! We

are especially fortunate to be able to use such captivating photos in future publications and outreach materials.

A big thank you to this year's sponsors: CK's Real Food, Despo's Mexican Restaurant, Lost River Outfitters, Mahoney's Bar & Grill, Mule Shoe Tavern, Perry's, Surefoot, Wildflower and the Coffee Grinder. VELOCIO graciously hosted the reception, which included more than 70 guests perusing gallery-like photo displays, while mingling with family and friends.



FIRST PLACE, NON-PROFESSIONAL PROSE

NATURE, TRUE NATURE

By Todd Kaplan

Nature, true nature, wild and unfiltered beckons
the adventurous to test its pure waters,

uninhibited by man's industrialist influences,
unimpeded by government and the poorly governed.

As adventure becomes increasingly wild,
a man's true spirit emerges from a tangled web of existence.

Existence in its purest form becomes attainable,
but only to those whose spirit is free enough to let it
be touched and enlightened by raw nature.

The beauty in ourselves and in the world around us is evident, but
only for a brief moment and then is silenced again.

Silenced by the uncertainty in the modernized world around us;
silenced by ourselves in an attempt to gain truth in the world
within us.

We emerge on the dawn of a new day enlightened by the intrinsic
beauty around us, profoundly awakened by nature's gifts.

The unfiltered world sings in harmony to our souls;
the wind whispers its soothing tune and we rejoice.

FIRST PLACE, STUDENT PROSE

REFLECT AND PROTECT

—*Plastic Bag Poem*

By Ashley Carnduff

As the issue of the plastic bag continues to be disputed
Our dilemma quickly becomes more convoluted, while the world
itself grows polluted

Our evolving planet once filled with green will become mere history
Why humans are against protecting their own home, will forever be
a mystery

This world is an incredible phenomenon

Why are we allowed to stand by as the broken down chemicals
spread and march on

Scarcity of fresh water is already a concern, yet we stand by and
watch humanity's future crash and burn

Abusing each other is a shameful sin, and the guilty are punished for
subverting the law

Yet, people bruise and beat the planet as spectators watch in awe
Our children will amble through fields of plastic bags

Our children will never taste the sweet nectar of fresh and pure water
Our children will know not of the clarity of a blue sky on a summer
afternoon

We are too worried about the wrong kind of green

The kind that causes hate, war and evil brutality

In order to survive, the human race needs to quickly change their
blind mentality

This sticky mess has a simple solution to correct our misstep in
healthy evolution

Humans need to join together to spark a paper revolution

PHOTOS: Facing page, from top left: PROFESSIONAL Honorable Mention
"Painterly Rise" by Nick Price; First Place "Silver Creek" by Todd Kaplan;
Staff Favorite "Road to Nowhere" by Todd Kaplan.



Above from left: NON-PROFESSIONAL First
Place "Eye of the Rainbow" by Chad Chorney;
Honorable Mention "Leaf in Ice" by Steve
Deffe; Staff Favorite "Goldilocks"
by Cody Haskell.

Bottom from left: STUDENT First Place "Spring
Sky" by Emily Boettger; Honorable Mention
"Trees on Rock" by Joyce Chan; Staff Favorite
"Leaves and the River" by Joyce Chan.



Land Trust Welcomes Summer Stewardship Interns

Once again, we were fortunate to have two ambitious interns join us for the summer, helping steward our protected properties and providing general office support. Kay Anagnostou, from Florida, and Rob Roy McGregor, from Washington, took a few minutes from exploring the high and dry sagebrush sea of Idaho to answer some questions.

ROB ROY MCGREGOR

When were your eyes opened to the fragility of our surroundings and the necessity to protect them?

On multiple occasions, I would go to one of my favorite places in the forest and it would be gone, completely clear-cut in preparation for a subdivision. As a kid I played a lot on private land, and didn't really understand why somebody would rather have a cul-de-sac than a forest, but I did understand the finality of that change once the houses were built.

What do you have a knack for?

Well, I like to think that I'm pretty good at teaching people about science and nature by breaking down complex ideas into more simple ones using metaphors. However, I've never been on the receiving end of one my lectures.

Where can we find you on a typical weekend afternoon?

I've been learning how to fly fish so you might find me on some river, totally perplexed.

What have you enjoyed most about working for the WRLT?

My favorite part of this internship has been all of the beautiful places where I've gotten to work. Whether I was monitoring or removing weeds, I would stop and look around and be blown away by how amazing and unique each property was. This is an incredible place, and being able to work outdoors has been a treat.

KAY ANAGNOSTOU

What event or person connected you to the great outdoors?

As a freshman in college, I had my first backpacking and camping experiences in North Carolina and fell in love! I learned about leave-no-trace principles and enjoying the outdoors responsibly.

When were your eyes opened to the fragility of our surroundings and the necessity to protect them?

In Florida, the spring-fed rivers that I used to float down during summer vacations are diminishing. Seeing something you love disappear is heartbreaking and frightening. It's too easy to take things for granted.

What is something that most people may not know about you?

I am a published poet.

What have you enjoyed most about working for the Land Trust?

Monitoring easements and preserves. WRLT lands are spectacularly beautiful, each in their own way. Meeting passionate and caring landowners has been a great joy, too.

After your internship, where are you planning to move and work?

I will serve Skagit Land Trust in Mt. Vernon, Washington as an AmeriCorps volunteer and community outreach member.



Group Introduces Knapweed at Sawtooth Recreation Area

Insectary to Combat Invasive Weed

NOXIOUS WEED CONTROL is an important part of land stewardship, and each year WRLT-staff, interns and volunteers spend many hours working to control weeds on our preserves. This May, WRLT invested in a new approach to combat knapweed. The idea was to create a garden of spotted knapweed at the SNRA headquarters, north of Ketchum, Idaho.

Deliberately allowing noxious weeds to proliferate is unexpected to those who understand their harm, but in this case not without purpose. WRLT, along with Blaine County, Pesticide Action Network, Environmental Resource Center, U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management, created an insectary, a place in which insects are reared, studied and harvested for dispersal as a bio-control method for noxious-weed management. We chose weevils (*cyphocleonus achates*) for this insectary as they feed exclusively on spotted knapweed. The Land Trust has utilized bio-control methods on several of our preserves for many years, but this opportunity will create a supply of insects that are acclimated to our high-desert climate and will be available at no cost.

Once the project partners selected a suitable, insectary location at the SNRA headquarters, the first step was to clear the area of sagebrush and other vegetation. Next, a perimeter for the enclosure was created using stakes and curved metal flashing so that the weevils would not be able to climb over. The final step, before releasing the weevils into the

insectary, was to transplant approximately 400, spotted-knapweed plants into the enclosure, creating the perfect habitat for the weevils to flourish.

The goal of the insectary is to establish a population of spotted knapweed weevils and to offer them to individuals and organizations, free of charge, for use as a bio-control method for noxious weed management. “The Land Trust has been actively looking for innovative methods to manage weeds on our preserves, so we are excited to utilize this insectary as a way to expand our use of bio-control methods,” said Chad Stoesz, WRLT’s Stewardship Coordinator.

The weevils could potentially be ready for harvest by July 2015. Anyone interested should contact Wood River Land Trust for more information.

Top left: Hadley Debree with ERC and Kathryn Goldman formerly with Pesticide Action Network, install flashing on the insectary perimeter:

© Chad Stoesz. Below: Insectary Partners



Wood River Land Trust protects and restores land, water, and wildlife habitat in the Wood River Valley and its surrounding areas.

We work cooperatively with private landowners and local communities to ensure these areas are protected now and for future generations.



WOOD RIVER LAND TRUST

20 years!

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A Ruddy Copper Butterfly, extracts nectar from a wildflower at Rock Creek Ranch. © John Finnell