pointswest

SPRING 2020

casts *of* character

THE TIMELESS
ART OF BRONZE

bison homecoming | lunar eclipse | outdoor volunteers

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

PETER SEIBERT
Executive Director and CEO

Thank you all for your kind and supportive e-mails, texts, and messages regarding the new direction for *Points West*. I hope that you continue to enjoy this publication as we connect people to the stories of the American West.

This past summer, our family discovered an incredible high-mountain, alpine meadow located just outside of Cody, Wyoming. My aging Trailblazer worked hard to get us to the top of several steep climbs to reach the field.

When we finally got there, we could see what appeared to be more than a mile of purple lupines in full bloom. To say that it was spectacular is truly an understatement, as the field was so filled with flowers we could barely walk without stepping on them. It was a place to lie on your back, stare at the clouds, and experience everything that a Rocky Mountain summer day has to offer.

With that in mind, as winter winds down and spring approaches, I hope you will dream of your own summer meadow high in the Rockies. A place you suspect no one has visited since Buffalo Bill. As you hold that in your mind, start making plans to come back to Cody. Spend some time here this summer. View our exhibits, take a class, enjoy a special tour.

Then drive out into the national forest and find that very special place of your own.

pointswest

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Points West is dedicated to connecting people to the stories of the American West.

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Lynn Richardson helps clean Peter Fillerup's statute *Bill Cody — Hard and Fast All the Way* during its 2010 installation at the Buffalo Bill Center of the West.

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ABOUT THE COVER | Bob Gaton, general manager at Caleco Foundry in Cody, Wyoming, works on refinishing a sculpture by local artist Vic Payne, called *Brave Heart*. The piece will receive a new patina and required dozens of individual castings and assembly to create in bronze.

VISIT US ONLINE | Stay in touch with all that's happening at the Buffalo Bill Center of the West; visit *centerofthewest.org*.

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pointswest is the quarterly membership magazine of the private, nonprofit Buffalo Bill Center of the West, Cody, Wyoming.

BUFFALO BILL CENTER OF THE WEST

Smithsonian Affiliate

HOW NOT TO SPOOK A HORSE

BY JIM DAVIS

One of the small miracles of human history was the realization that we could work with horses. If you've never been around a horse, it's important to know how not to spook the animal. A scared horse can be unpredictable and even dangerous. But if you're calm around them, they'll be calm around you.

By chance, horses have the perfect level of intelligence—any smarter and we couldn't handle them, at least humanely. Any less intelligent and they would be close to useless. That said, on any given day, a horse's thoughts may migrate toward either end of the useable spectrum.

Combine that with their self-preservation instinct as a prey animal, and you see why you must be careful approaching a horse. Even a gentle one.

Make sure the horse knows you're coming, so you don't surprise it. Speak to the horse and make eye contact. Approach the horse's shoulder, deliberately but not quickly. Touch them easily in the area of the neck and shoulder. I do this with the back of my hand. Don't be afraid. Once you're accepted, you can do whatever it is you need to: brush, saddle, bridle, whatever.

Make sure you check out the hitching rail the horse is tied to. Some horses have a habit of pulling back against the rail when they're tied up. (Unless you're familiar with a specific horse, you wouldn't know that.)

Today, many people have replaced the old wooden posts and rails you see in the movies with metal posts and rails welded together. If a rail like that is set solidly in the ground, you can be relatively sure it won't fall apart.

In the movies, you see the actors toss their reins around the old wooden posts, instructed by the horse wranglers not to tie the horse. After the camera follows the actor out of the scene, the wrangler steps in to clean up the mess. Movies overlook the details.

Just once, instead of leaving a horse tied to a tree all night, it would be nice to see the actor lead his horse to open grass and picket him on a thirty-foot rope.

But that's a different topic.

Jim Davis is a Cody writer who has worked as a law clerk, deputy prosecutor, newspaper reporter, and backcountry guide. He prefers most horses to some people.

Golden Eagle RESEARCH

A golden eagle's band — a "marker" issued by the U.S. Geological Survey Bird Banding Laboratory — tells the story of its life. As researchers across the country monitor birds, they gain valuable information about trends relating to movement, populations, and conservation status.

Here are the tools of the trade for golden eagle researchers: bands to mark birds; tools of measurement; and of course, worksheets to collect data. It is all neatly packed into a box that's ready for the field.

ALUMINUM BANDS
ISSUED BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY BIRD BANDING LABORATORY. EACH BAND HAS A UNIQUE NUMBER.

METRIC CALIPERS
TO DETERMINE TALON LENGTH, BEAK LENGTH AND WIDTH, AND OTHER MEASUREMENTS.

METRIC SPRING SCALE
TO WEIGH BIRD.

POP RIVETS
IN TWO SIZES TO ATTACH BANDS AROUND LEG. THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF BANDS REQUIRE DIFFERENT RIVET SIZES.

RIVET TOOL
TO FASTEN THE RIVETS TO CLOSE EACH BAND AROUND A LEG.

FALCONRY HOOD
TYPICALLY MADE OF LEATHER OR CLOTH, HOODS INCREASE SAFETY TO BOTH RESEARCHERS AND RAPTORS BY BLOCKING OUT LIGHT AND REDUCING VISUALLY INDUCED STRESS.

WHAT WOULD BUFFALO BILL DO?

Dear Buffalo Bill,

I know I have to save for retirement, but I have no idea how. You made many investments through the years, and I would appreciate any advice on how I should invest.

— Financially Befuddled in Kentucky

What Would Buffalo Bill Do is a quarterly advice column written by Col. William F. Cody with assistance from Jeremy Johnston, Historian at the Center of the West. Send your questions to buffalobilladvice@centerofthewest.org.

Lithograph, 1913-1915, US Lithograph Co., Russell-Morgan Print. 1.69.362

Dear Befuddled,

I certainly experienced my ups and downs financially, so I'm not sure I'm the best person to give investment advice. But I'll do my best to steer you straight.

The best investment advice I know comes from my contemporary, Mark Twain, who said: "The secret of getting ahead is getting started." The sooner you start saving and investing, the better off you'll be. Here are some other ideas to consider:

INVEST IN YOURSELF

Know what you're good at and work to develop income from areas where you excel. My partners and I sank a lot into Buffalo Bill's Wild West, but we made it back in spades. Our profits for 1893, while performing in Chicago, were close to $1 million. That would be nearly $29 million today. My traveling show was by far my greatest source of income, because I invested in myself.

BE GENEROUS, BUT BE WARY OF FRIENDS AND FAMILY

In 1906, I gave $5,000 to help after the Mount Vesuvius eruption, and $1,000 to aid victims of the San Francisco earthquake and fire. They tell me that's the equivalent of nearly $172,000 in today's dollars. I even bought uniforms for the Cody Cowboy Band in 1901. Help friends, family, and deserving strangers. But be careful. I lost a bundle, for instance, on a dubious patent medicine. It was called White Beaver's Cough Cream: The Great Lung Healer, cooked up by my frontier buddy, Frank Powell.

DON'T INVEST WHAT YOU CAN'T AFFORD TO LOSE

Popular accounts of my late-stage financial difficulties were greatly exaggerated. But I did make some poor investment decisions chasing unrealistic returns, including a series of worthless mines in Arizona. Those bad bets required me to return to the road and work as a showman until my final days, especially to support family members and maintain the "Buffalo Bill lifestyle." Be financially conservative as you get older, so you can enjoy retirement.

SOME INVESTMENTS ONLY PAY OFF LONG AFTER YOU'RE GONE

Many people thought the idea of a tourist town like Cody, Wyoming, in the arid, remote Bighorn Basin was foolish. But my friends and I had a grand dream and we bet big on it. Turns out, 100 years later, we were right. We often sit in the shade of trees planted by our predecessors. I'm proud to leave such a legacy in the town that bears my name.

RECIPE by Center of the West Executive Chef Kyle Kleist
ARTICLE AND PHOTO by Tera Gigot @rootsnradishes

GOOD ENOUGH TO EAT

snap pea + radish salad

with feta + lemon vinaigrette

PREP	ASSEMBLY	READY
5 min	10 min	15 min

This salad embodies that light, airy, and fresh feeling of spring with its zesty, zippy lemon vinaigrette and the crunch of fresh radishes and snap peas. It's combined with tender mixed greens and just enough salty feta to make your tastebuds wake up along with those spring buds on the trees.

INGREDIENTS

For the Salad:

- 5-6 cups greens: spinach, arugula, and rainbow chard
- 1 1/2 cups radishes, cut into half-moons or matchsticks
- 1 1/2 cups snap peas, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 3/4 cup feta

For the Lemon Vinaigrette:

- 3/4 cup fresh lemon juice
- 1/4 cup apple cider vinegar
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 3 tbsp sugar
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp white pepper

INSTRUCTIONS:

Make the Dressing: Place all ingredients in a Mason jar and shake vigorously until combined, or whisk ingredients together in a bowl. Vinaigrette will separate, but just shake or whisk again immediately before dressing the salad.

Make the Salad: Cut rainbow chard into 1-inch strips (or use baby chard, as pictured here) and combine with arugula and spinach, using desired amount of each. Toss greens with 1 cup radishes, 1 cup snap peas, and 1/2 cup feta, reserving the remaining ingredients to top salad.

Assemble: Lightly dress tossed salad with the vinaigrette immediately before serving, using just enough to coat the greens (save the rest for another use). Top salad with reserved radishes, snap peas, and feta. Garnish with a twisted lemon wheel, or thinly sliced lemons.

MY FAVORITE THINGS

Bill Weiss is a retired consumer products entrepreneur living in Jackson, Wyoming, with his wife, Robin. He is a longtime member of the Center's Board of Trustees who enjoys fishing and golfing.

Bill Weiss

FREDERIC REMINGTON STUDIO

My wife helped put this together many years ago and I enjoy all the little knick-knacks. Remington surrounded himself with the objects he painted—animals and artifacts—and the studio recreation conveys what it was like to work in his space. I like to see the sketches and see how, near the end of his life, his work became much looser and more impressionistic.

GHOST DANCE SHIRT

There are several Ghost Dance shirts in the collection, but the one I have always particularly liked is this blue one. This shirt has been in the collection for a long time, and it is particularly beautiful because not that many like it have survived. It has a strong design made with all-natural dyes, and then there are white images of birds—it's quite pretty.

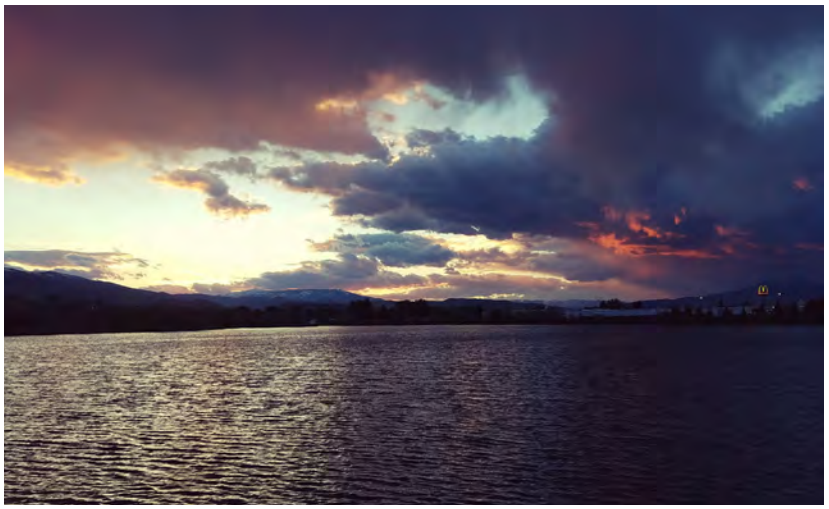
YELLOWSTONE STAGECOACH

I was always taken with the Yellowstone stagecoach from the Buffalo Bill collection. It makes you think about how that's the way people traveled for so many years, and you had to have stamina to do that. The whole stagecoach story of the West is fascinating, changing horses every so many miles, dealing with robbers or the weather—I find it a fascinating way to travel.

PATRONS BALL

My wife and a long line of incredible volunteers helped start the Patrons Ball more than 40 years ago. We had been in New York City at the American Museum of Natural History and they did a members' party for about 5,000 people with four or five bands. It was incredible, and we wanted to do that here. It's probably my favorite event at the museum, because I get to see so many people and catch up with them each year.

TOP: Frederic Remington Studio exhibition, Whitney Western Art Museum. | MIDDLE LEFT: Ghost Dance shirt, Southern Arapaho (Hinono'ei), ca. 1890. Tanned elkhide, pigment, feathers. Chandler-Pohrt Collection, Gift of The Searle Family Trust and The Paul Stock Foundation. NA.204.5 | MIDDLE RIGHT: Yellowstone National Park coach, ca. 1890. Abbot-Downing Co., Concord, NH. 1.69.391 | BOTTOM: From left, Alex Nelson, Scott Kath, Fiona Gallagher and Vickery Fales Hall. Attendees dance at the 2019 Patrons Ball. *Points West* photo/Ken Blackbird.



Fishing, biking, books, and live music

BY KALYN BEASLEY

THE BETA My perfect day in Cody, Wyoming is an adventure that starts with breakfast and coffee at one of the many great local coffee shops. Try The Beta Coffeehouse for fresh-baked muffins and scones. Then it's off to the North Fork of the Shoshone River to put some flies on the water. The **FISHING** is usually best early in the morning. So before it gets too hot, I'll head back to town for mountain biking at **BECK LAKE PARK.**

For lunch, **THE STATION** has terrific sandwiches, crepes, locally roasted coffee, smoothies, and a large, shaded patio. Try the Turkeygurkin or the Grape Salad. From there, it's just a short walk to go see what new and exciting outdoor gear they have at **SUNLIGHT SPORTS**. It's a great spot to swap stories with the staff and get the scoop on outdoor fun in the area.

LEGENDS While downtown, I usually swing by Legends Bookstore for something to read on my next adventure, and to help out—it's my mom's store. Speaking of local gems, a visit to the **WHITNEY WESTERN ART MUSEUM** is a terrific way to escape the early afternoon heat. I always enjoy admiring the works of my favorite artists, like Charlie Russell, Harry Jackson, and N.C. Wyeth.

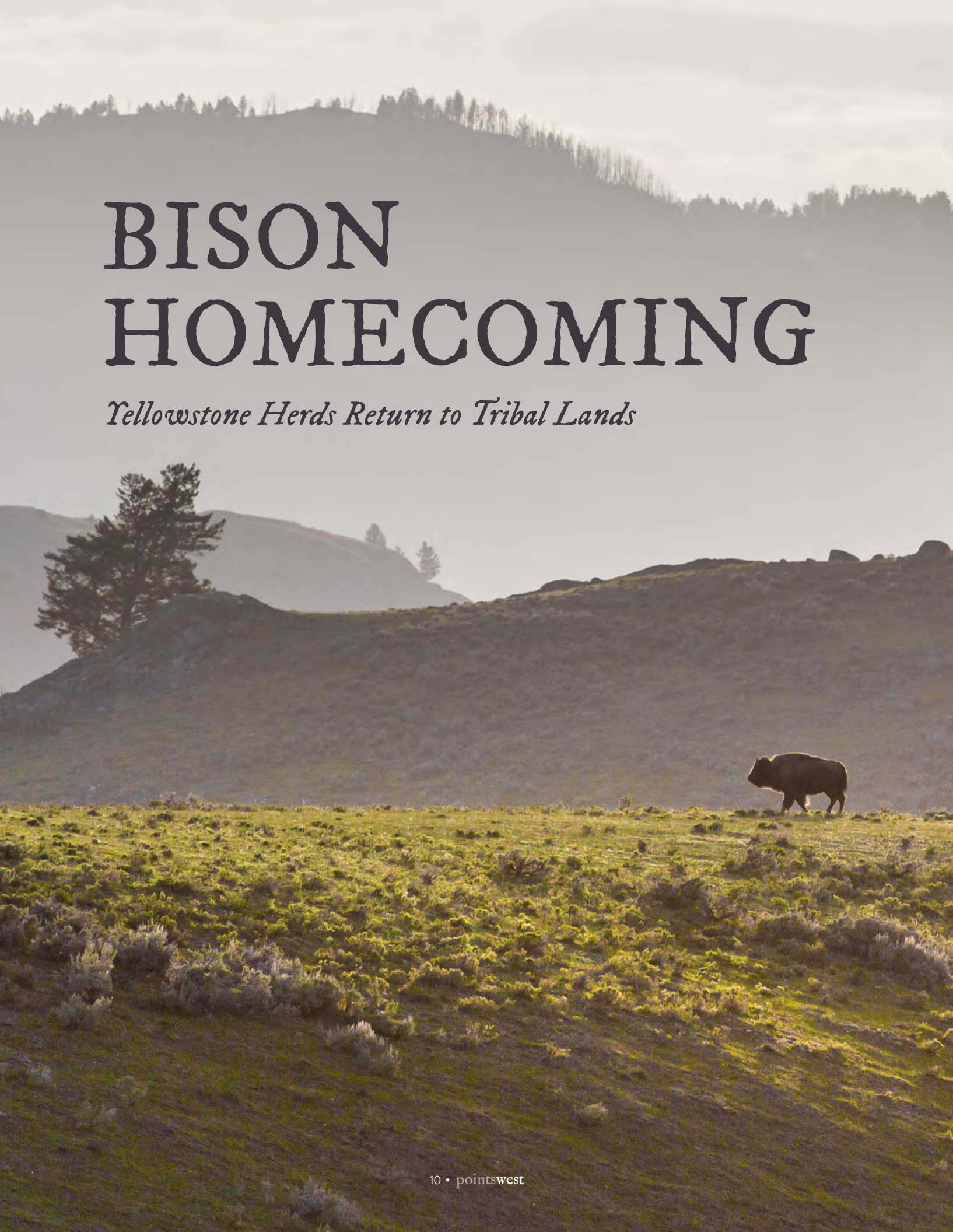
SILVER DOLLAR Summer nights in Cody can't be beat, and one of my favorite spots to wind down after a long, busy day is on the patio of the Silver Dollar Bar. With live music every night, a wide beer selection, and the best burgers in town, the Dollar is a local favorite for good reason.

Maybe you think you couldn't possibly fit all this into one day in one place, but this is how we live in Cody country. The warm-weather season is short, so you make the most of it. Get outside and try it for yourself!

Kalyn Beasley is an outdoors enthusiast and singer/songwriter who performs regularly around Cody and throughout the Intermountain West.

BISON HOMECOMING

Yellowstone Herds Return to Tribal Lands



BY ED KEMMICK

Modern-day visitors to Yellowstone National Park can hardly help being impressed by the thousands of bison roaming the landscape. The buffalo, as it is commonly known, is the largest land animal native to North America, with males growing to more than six feet tall and weighing upwards of 2,000 pounds. The majestic animal is as much a symbol of the United States as the bald eagle.

But their majesty was no defense against merciless slaughter. Once present in numbers unimaginably vast—estimates generally range from 30 million to 60 million—they had been reduced by the late 1800s to a few hundred. Then, from the brink of extinction, bison were gradually restored, resulting in a population today of about half a million, most of them in private, commercial herds.

Among the survivors of the near extinction were about two dozen bison in Yellowstone National Park's remote Pelican Valley, genetically pure descendants of the original continental population, a handful of bison that never interbred with domestic cattle.

Restoration of that population, too, was successful, so much so that by the mid-1970s, as their numbers swelled into the thousands, more and more bison began leaving Yellowstone Park to the north and west, trying to expand their winter range. But this was no longer the land their ancestors knew. Now there were houses, fenced pastures, farmland, and highways, which led to inevitable conflicts. To complicate matters, some Yellowstone bison can carry brucellosis, a bacterial infection that can be transmitted to livestock, inducing abortions and stillbirth in infected animals.

Hazing the huge animals back into the park was ineffective, so their numbers were reduced by culling. Between 1985 and 2000, according to the National Park Service, some 3,100 bison were killed while trying to leave the park. Some were captured and sent off for slaughter, while others were killed by state game agents or by hunters.

Now, under a program years in the making, Yellowstone National Park has begun relocating genetically pure bison to the Assiniboine and Sioux nations on the Fort Peck Indian Reservation in northeastern Montana. That effort, in turn, is part of a larger goal of establishing numerous "conservation herds," as opposed to commercial herds, in the United States and Canada, on tribal and nontribal lands.

"All those satellite herds across the plains would contribute to a meta-population of wild bison, effectively restoring the species to the plains," said Chamois Andersen, senior representative of the Rockies and Plains Program for the Defenders of Wildlife, a conservation organization actively involved in the project.

The conservation herds would be managed specifically as wildlife, Andersen said, with connective landscapes and seasonal habitats, living on their own without any significant human interference. They would do what bison used to do for the plains—spread seeds, create miniature wetlands with their wallowing, encourage the growth of prairie dog populations, and by extension, a rebound of black-footed ferrets.

"The bison is a major large mammal that factors into larger conservation goals of our plains environment, which is one of the most threatened habitats in the world," Andersen said.

The relocation to Fort Peck, said Hunter C. Old Elk, curatorial assistant of the Plains Indian Museum at the Buffalo Bill Center of the West, has the potential to restore the buffalo to its historical position at the center of the material and spiritual culture of Plains Indians.

Having bison back on tribal lands will also help give Indigenous People "economic control over food sovereignty," Old Elk said. "And that's practical because sovereignty is at the base of all of this. If tribes control their own herds, then they have economic control over resources. That promotes growth and health."

The relocation process resulted from decades of negotiations, studies, and agreements among a tangle of state and federal agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and tribal nations. The linchpin has always been brucellosis. Some Yellowstone area elk continue to be a source of potential brucellosis among cattle. And though there are no documented cases of brucellosis transmission from bison to cattle, it remains a theoretical possibility, one that could have devastating effects on the agricultural industry in states surrounding the park.

The possibility of quarantining bison long enough to ensure they are brucellosis-free was

> “In the grand scheme of things, we’d like it to be a lot bigger.”
>
> — SHANA DRIMAL

Jola LeBeau, left, of the Eastern Shoshone Tribe, and her friend watch as 10 genetically pure bison are released onto tribal land. Alexis Bonogofsky photo.

first suggested in the Interagency Bison Management Plan, signed by the Interior and Agriculture secretaries and the Montana governor in 2001. An operational quarantine program was officially approved in 2018.

Years earlier, as part of an experimental program involving quarantining bison on property owned by media mogul-turned-bison-rancher Ted Turner, bull bison were sent to the Fort Peck Reservation, which has certified holding facilities where bison can be held for additional “assurance testing.”

Since then, bison have been quarantined at Stephens Creek, inside Yellowstone, and at nearby Corwin Springs, Montana, under the direction of the federal Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

Another 55 bulls were trucked from Yellowstone to Fort Peck last August. Then, just before Christmas, there was a much more significant transfer, when 33 Yellowstone bison, including 14 females with calves, were shipped from Corwin Springs to Fort Peck. That was important because females are more likely than males to transmit disease, and that Christmas shipment marked the first time female bison were relocated under the new quarantine program.

A fourth-grader from Fort Washakie Elementary School shows a bison she painted when bison from the National Bison Range in Montana were released on the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming in October 2017. Alexis Bonogofsky photo.

The park remains under pressure to do something about its bison herds, which are larger than agreed-upon management plan totals. Tribes have for years assisted in Yellowstone bison management, most recently hunting Yellowstone bison with park approval, using treaty rights that precede Wyoming, Idaho, and Montana statehood.

In the winter of 2018–19, managers culled or harvested 460 bison, according to park spokesperson Morgan Warthin. The winter before that, 1,171 bison were removed from the population. This winter, the population is estimated at 4,900, and members of the bison management plan have agreed to reduce the herd by 600–900 animals.

Warthin said Yellowstone has three main goals: to maintain “a viable, wild, migratory population”; to send park bison to other conservation areas to reduce the number shipped to slaughter; and to develop a new bison management plan.

Shana Drimal, wildlife program associate for the Greater Yellowstone Coalition, another conservation group, said the coalition has been working with tribal nations to pass proactive laws in the Montana Legislature, and to stop legislation that would hamstring relocation efforts. The coalition has also been working with involved parties to expand quarantine facilities inside and outside park boundaries. The total acreage now available for quarantining is quite small, Drimal said.

“In the grand scheme of things, we’d like it to be a lot bigger.” And since it takes years for bison to move through the quarantine process, while the Yellowstone herd keeps growing, Drimal said, “that adds up really quickly. You’d need massive amounts of land, and resources, too.”

The Fort Peck Sioux and Assiniboine tribes look forward to playing a larger role in establishing “cultural herds” of Yellowstone bison on their own reservation and on other tribal lands. Robert Magnan, director of fish

and wildlife and the buffalo program for the Fort Peck tribes, said their commercial bison herd, which is made up of buffalo interbed with cattle, numbered about 260 in early January. The cultural herd numbered about 370 on 17,000 acres.

"It keeps growing every time I turn around," Magnan said. The tribes' long-term goal is to have a cultural herd of 1,500 bison on 100,000 acres, which he said could take another 15 to 20 years. And because Fort Peck has the only certified pens where bison can be held for supplemental brucellosis testing, it will be the conduit for moving Yellowstone buffalo to other tribal lands.

The tribes at Fort Peck are among 69 tribes in 19 states that make up the InterTribal Buffalo Council, which collectively manages about 20,000 buffalo on approximately 1 million acres of land. As on the Fort Peck Reservation, those tribal nations would continue to run commercial herds of buffalo while developing cultural herds as well.

Magnan said the Fort Peck commercial herd makes money for the tribes through live sales and hunting opportunities on the reservation. The cultural herd, though, is used only for conservation and cultural purposes. It is culled to provide meat, for example, to tribal members with diabetes, and for programs that serve children and the elderly.

Other buffalo might be donated for feasts during powwows, to schools for educational purposes, and for cultural events like sun dances, where the meat nourishes participants and the hearts and hides are used in various ceremonies.

Magnan has also watched as the Yellowstone herd—he uses that term interchangeably with "cultural herd"—has begun rejuvenating the prairie land on the reservation. Even more revelatory has been learning firsthand how closely the lives of his ancestors were intertwined with the lives of buffalo. The commercial herd, he said, operates much like cattle, moving en masse, while the Yellowstone herd separates more into family-like units. Smaller groups centered around a matriarch, a dominant female, will go off on their own in the spring, with the whole herd coming together again in the winter, just as Indian tribes used to do.

Hearing stories from elders about the ways of the buffalo is one thing, Magnan said. It is quite another to see, day after day, the living meaning of those stories. "Through the years of watching these buffaloes, I've learned why my ancestors were claiming to be part of the buffalo society," he said. "Because they follow the same society that the buffalo run in."

"The females," he continued, "they raise the herd from the beginning of life until a certain age, and basically the matriarch will kick out 2- or 3-year-old bulls, and they go live with older bulls. If you look at Native American society, it was the same way. The women took care of the kids to a certain age, then the men took them and taught them how to be warriors."

Ed Kemmick is a longtime Montana journalist and founder of Last Best News, *a digital newspaper published in Billings from 2014 to 2018. He recently published* Montana: Lay of the Land—The Best of Last Best News.

A moccasin decorated by a Nez Perce artist shows an abstract bison image made using glass beads and sinew on tanned hide. Moccasins, Nez Perce, Plateau, ca. 1890 Adolf Spohr Collection, Gift of Larry Sheerin NA.202.109

Where did all the buffalo go?

BY ED KEMMICK

How were the immense herds of millions of bison in North America driven almost to extinction by the end of the nineteenth century? And what role did William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody play in that process?

Jeremy Johnston, historian at the Buffalo Bill Center of the West, offered his thoughts on both questions.

Most of the blame has typically fallen on the U.S. Army, which was said to have actively engaged in slaughtering bison or encouraging their slaughter by others as a way of "pacifying" Plains Indians, to whom, in the words of the historian Walter Prescott Webb, the bison was "life, food, raiment, and shelter."

The Army was certainly complicit to some extent, Johnston said, "but that has been really overplayed," and recent scholarship is producing a fuller explanation. Other factors now seen as important include the introduction of cattle—leading to disease transmission and competition for grazing—as well as a large increase in the number of horses on the western plains. Johnston said white settlers cutting down streamside cottonwoods also deprived bison of winter shelter, and then there were all the bison killed for meat and sport.

Above all, Johnston said, "Clearly, the hide hunters caused the greatest decline of bison on the plains. It comes down to basic supply and demand." The demand came from rapid industrialization and the need for leather belts to drive machinery. "These hide hunters made a lot of money going out west and slaughtering the bison for their hides, meeting the demand for hides from the eastern cities," he said.

As for the role of Buffalo Bill, Johnston said, there is a common misperception.

"One of the greatest challenges we face at the Buffalo Bill Center of the West is a lot of people will show up and they assume that Buffalo Bill killed every buffalo that roamed on the Great Plains," Johnston said. "And that's not the case."

Buffalo Bill acquired his nickname for shooting what he himself claimed was approximately 4,280 bison, Johnston said, but most of those were killed to feed the construction crews of the Kansas-Pacific Railroad.

Later in life, Buffalo Bill formed an association in Cody to promote wildlife conservation, and as the proprietor of Buffalo Bill's Wild West, "he introduced the bison to more people in the United States and Europe than any other individual or institution," Johnston said. "For many people, that was really their only chance to see those animals close up and appreciate them."

GIVING BACK TO THE LAND

A volunteer with the Youth Conservation Corps makes parking barriers at the Boiling River in Yellowstone National Park. NPS photo/Jacob W. Frank

VOLUNTEERING FOR PUBLIC LANDS HEALS THE SPIRIT AND THE LANDSCAPE

BY COREY ANCO

What comes to mind when you think about a fond memory of spending time in nature? Fishing with a grandparent? Filling your first tag? Maybe it's a particular hike with friends or family. Whatever the memory, there exists a fundamental need in us all to connect with nature and each other.

Numerous studies demonstrate that we need nature. Spending time outdoors reduces stress and anxiety, increases cognitive functions, reduces fatigue, increases productivity and even shortens recovery time from injuries or illness. But as much as we need nature, it's also true that nature needs us.

Federal public land management agencies nationwide rely on volunteers to help address a $19.4 billion deferred maintenance backlog. In 2019, approximately 156,000 volunteers contributed more than 620,000 hours of labor on National Public Lands Day, amounting to a collective contribution worth an estimated $16 million. Volunteers removed trash, improved trails, stabilized streams, increased fence permeability for wildlife, and performed dozens of other services to improve habitats for wildlife and for our enjoyment.

I live by this adage: if you cultivate an appreciation for nature at an early age, you will gain a lifetime of adventure and curiosity. Growing up just outside of Chicago, I was fortunate to have an undeveloped forest plot as my backyard. The crisp air filled my lungs as I crawled up and down ravines. Oak, maple, and ash leaves painted woodlands a sea of orange, crimson, and marigold each autumn—a picture burned into my memory as early as I can remember.

It wasn't until my adulthood that I learned the forest of my youth was private property. Unbeknown to me, I was trespassing.

Recognizing how critical nature was to my upbringing, I built a career around it. I have moved around frequently over the past 10 years (12 cities, 5 states, 2 countries) pursuing professional and educational opportunities. Among them all was a common thread physically positioning me in nature or professionally tethering me to the outdoors. In 2017, I relocated to Wyoming and began a career with the Draper Natural History Museum. I was drawn to Wyoming's wide-open spaces, wildlife, unrivaled vistas, quality of life, and unparalleled access to nature.

The region around Cody, Wyoming, is home to some of the most iconic landscapes in the world, offering recreational opportunities meeting nearly every outdoor enthusiast's needs. But the number of public land users far exceeds those whose job it is to offset our impacts to these sites.

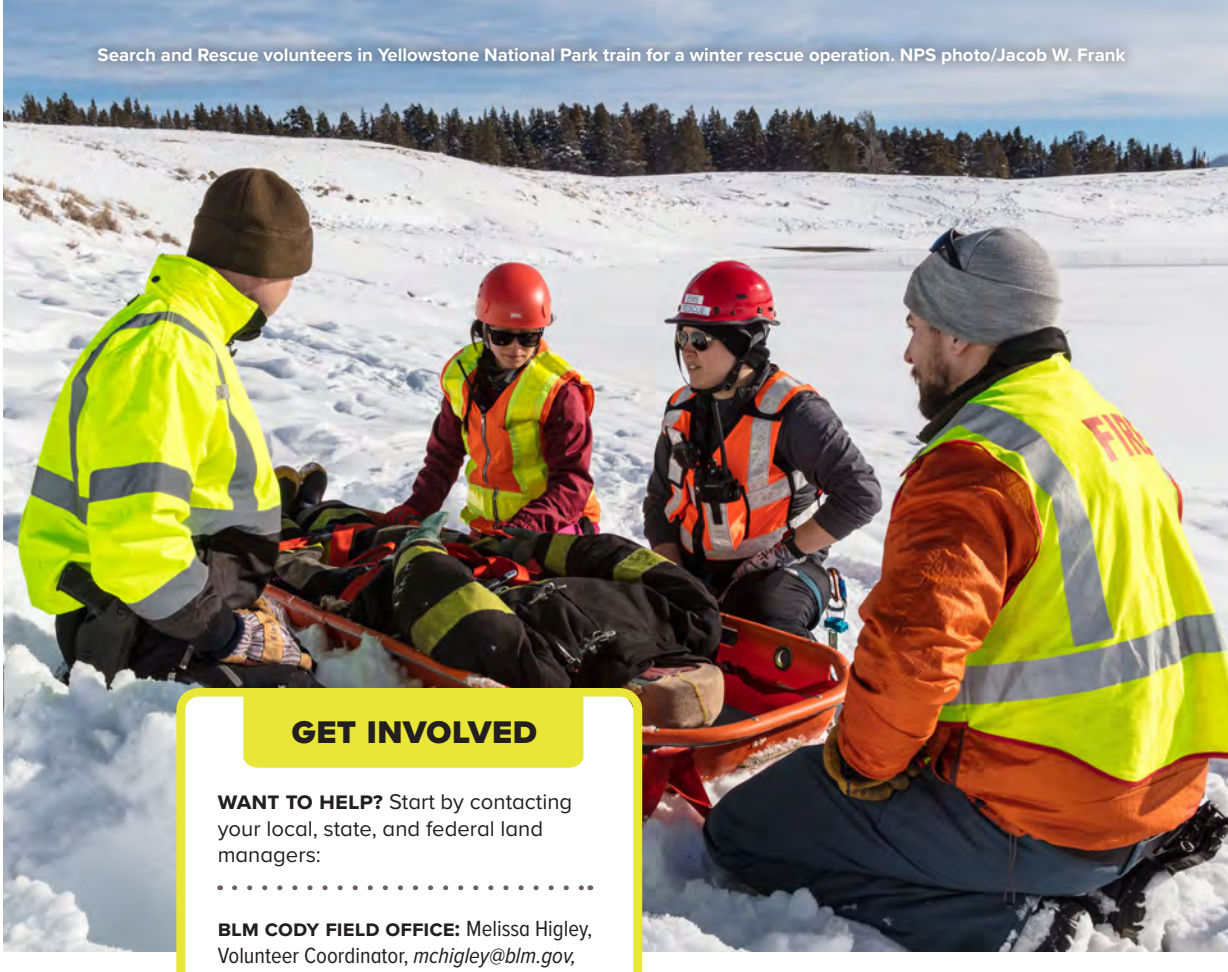
As public land users, we're ethically responsible for taking care of these special places. When was the last time you had an opportunity to volunteer outdoors, but didn't? Was there too little notice? Poor timing or an inconvenient location? Did you not want to go alone? Whatever your reasons, both the local outdoor volunteer base, as well as event organizers and leaders, are aging. And the largest user base of youth and young adult recreationists aren't volunteering in significant numbers.

Much of the volunteer work on public lands is done through nonprofit groups and other organizations, said Cade Powell, Cody Field Manager for the Bureau of Land Management.

That work could range from Boy Scouts working on trail repairs to wildlife advocacy groups making fences easier for animals to navigate, he said.

"Volunteers enhance our programs and projects and many of the opportunities we have to

Dave Sweet, second from right, and other volunteers with Trout Unlimited use an electric stun wand and nets to rescue trout trapped in irrigation ditches near Cody, Wyoming. *PointsWest* photo/Ruffin Prevost



Search and Rescue volunteers in Yellowstone National Park train for a winter rescue operation. NPS photo/Jacob W. Frank

improve our public lands, and they're a great asset because they're passionate about what they're working on," Powell said.

Agencies like the BLM and the U.S. Forest Service work to recruit volunteers throughout the year, but especially on days like National Public Lands Day in September and National Trails Day each June.

Volunteers often become involved more deeply with public lands and are generally more likely to show up for public meetings for land use planning, and to participate in other aspects of planning processes, Powell said.

"Individuals and groups also have a vast social media presence beyond what we can do, so it helps get the word out about whatever is going on and it's a great way to make sure everyone's voice is heard," he said.

For Cody angler Dave Sweet, volunteering has been a long-term way to give back to the resource he has enjoyed for decades.

Sweet has worked for the past 15 years as part of the local Trout Unlimited chapter to rescue fish caught in irrigation canals and ditches in the fall and return them to larger reservoirs before those waters dry up or freeze over.

Sweet said he got involved at the urging of other Trout Unlimited members, including some who had been rescuing the stranded fish for decades.

"It just seemed like there was a need, because we were losing tens of thousands of trout to those irrigation ditches every year," said Sweet, who also has worked to restore native Yellowstone cutthroat trout to backcountry streams in the remote Thorofare region near Cody and Yellowstone National Park.

Sweet and other volunteers work with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department to capture fish stranded in irrigation ditches, transferring them to trucks and releasing them in their streams and rivers of origin. He also helps install screens to make sure trout don't get diverted into canals in the first place. The work can be difficult and time-consuming, but Sweet said he finds it rewarding.

"Fishing has given me so much enjoyment over the years that I feel the need to give back to that resource, and this is clearly a good way to do that," he said.

Like most volunteers I have encountered, Sweet is retired. When asked why they volunteer, many people cite strong childhood memories: recollections of fishing with grandparents, camping with family, putting food on the table, waking to an alpine sunrise. The common denominator reflects a positive relationship connecting us with nature and each other.

Researchers have found that the top reason people donate time is to "help the environment." Critically, this benefit is mutual. Volunteering fulfills the desire to make a positive, tangible impact upon the environment, while being outdoors gets us away from screens and buildings, and into nature, where we receive numerous health benefits. When it comes to using time wisely, volunteering might be one of the best things we can do for ourselves and the environment.

Technology may link the world digitally, but we're losing connections with our surroundings and each other. Socializing, while immersed in nature, nurtures the human experience. Giving back to the lands that provide us with so much helps connect us with something greater.

The time to start is now.

Corey Anco is assistant curator of the Draper Natural History Museum. He enjoys cooking, splitting wood, and hiking throughout the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. PointsWest *editor Ruffin Prevost contributed material for this article.*

GET INVOLVED

WANT TO HELP? Start by contacting your local, state, and federal land managers:

BLM CODY FIELD OFFICE: Melissa Higley, Volunteer Coordinator, *mchigley@blm.gov,* 307-578-5900

SHOSHONE NATIONAL FOREST: Kristie Salzmann, Public Affairs Officer, *kristie.l.salzmann@usda.gov,* 307-578-5190

WYOMING GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT: Tara Hodges, Information and Education Specialist, *tara.hodges@wyo.gov,* 307-527-7125

NATIONAL TRAILS DAY: June 6 (June 13 for Cody BLM)

NATIONAL PUBLIC LANDS DAY: September 26

Trisha Hennings of Caleco Foundry adds a patina to a sculpture. A range of chemicals and techniques can be used to produce a variety of patinas.

casts *of* character

THE TIMELESS ART OF BRONZE

> “Having a foundry in our community is a unique asset and is especially beneficial to local and regional artists.”
>
> — KAREN McWHORTER

STORY AND PHOTOS BY MARK DAVIS

At the southern edge of Cody, Wyoming, a gravel road passes through several rocky, industrial lots covered in machinery, recyclables, or junk—depending on how you see things. Near the end of the road, there’s a white, steel-paneled building that might catch your eye.

At the right time of day, when the east side of the building is in the shade, you might ease off the gas for a second glance at a gentleman in a well-worn hoodie, poking his head out a ground-floor window. He’s leaning out to feed strawberries to golden-laced Wyandottes, red rocks, and calico princess chickens. Surrounded by auto garages, scrap yards, and machine shops, the chickens declare: “This place is different.”

“They’ll eat anything you give them,” the man with happy eyes and a scruffy face will tell you.

Around back, a soot-covered kiln churns black smoke on days when Caleco Foundry is pouring bronzes outside. The smell of melting wax fills the air, as craftsmen in silver thermal radiation suits maneuver a pot of glowing-gold metal so hot they don’t dare try the task in the middle of a hot summer day.

Once they have finished scooping off the impurities, workers carefully pour small amounts of liquid bronze into hot molds, fresh from the furnace. It has an amazing color, literally glowing with a mix of pearl and gold.

Essentially the same for the past 5,000 years, the “lost wax” process of casting bronze statuary uses an alloy of copper mixed with much smaller amounts of tin, aluminum, manganese, and nickel or zinc.

A clay (or sometimes wood or stone) original piece is created by an artist. Foundry workers create a wax duplicate using a mold, and the wax is melted and removed before molten bronze is poured into the mold, allowing a single piece or multiple duplicates to be cast in bronze. Larger pieces are welded together, sometimes requiring dozens of welds, and each joint is reworked to match the texture of the original piece, making the sculpture look like it was poured as a single unit. The piece is sandblasted before a patina is applied, followed by a clear finish.

The director of this industrial dance at Caleco is Bucky Hall,

Bucky Hall, owner of Caleco Foundry, feeds strawberries to chickens that make their home outside his office window at the company. Employees all share in the eggs produced by the chickens.

Bucky Hall, owner of Caleco Foundry, dips wax molds into slurry before applying the first of many coats of silica, which creates a ceramic mold for bronze sculpture.

who joined his father-in-law, Gene Calhoun, in Cody decades ago. At the time, the company made special lights for clients in the oil fields of Wyoming. But the business struggled when oil prices plummeted in the 1980s. Calhoun, an artisan, converted the manufacturing plant into a foundry to make sculptures. Calhoun even dabbled in creating his own sculptures. Hall did not.

Hall has either been employed by or operated the Caleco Foundry—making molds, pouring bronze, and applying patinas—for more than four decades. He works with artists all the time, bringing their visions to life. But he doesn't claim to be an artist, and one of his favorite sculptures is universally hated by his family.

"I've got one that's three toucans—you know the birds—and they're there on a little twig. I think it's the coolest piece in the world. Nobody else I know likes it," he said. "Nobody at my house, nobody in my family. My boys were involved in the business here. My wife was an artist. Gene was an artist. Nobody likes it."

Hall's wife, Donni, is a painter, and has also worked as a sculptor. The business lesson Hall learned from the artists in his family was to surround himself with artists. That may be part of the foundry's longevity. The casting process takes an artist to please the artists employing the company.

From making the molds, to welding, and through the process of applying a patina, it all takes the eye, touch, and patience of an artist.

Bob Gaton, Caleco's general manager, is a sculptor and potter. He'd like to devote more time to his personal artwork, but paying customers keep him busy at the foundry. It's not a bad problem to have in the fickle business of art.

And it's great having a reliable foundry in the neighborhood, said Karen B. McWhorter, Scarlett Curator of Western American Art for the Whitney Western Art Museum at the Buffalo Bill Center of the West.

"Having a foundry in our community is a unique asset and is especially beneficial to local and regional artists," McWhorter said. "With a local foundry, artists can more easily collaborate in the process of casting their sculptures, assuring that their vision is seen through to fruition. Casting bronze sculptures customarily involves many hands and a diverse set of talents; having the artist personally oversee the casting stage of the process is ideal."

There's something else in front of the foundry that might also catch your eye, besides the handsome chickens, whose eggs are shared equally by all the employees. A sign out front is offering the building for sale. At 68, Hall is looking toward retirement. But then again, "Who knows? I could be here for another eight years," he said.

Many artists, both near and far, use Caleco to cast their final artwork in metal. And the Whitney museum has displayed pieces made locally, like Jeff Rudolph's sculpture, *Spirit of Cody*.

Caleco Foundry employees Diana Pond and Bob Gaton discuss wax molds, which will eventually be used to create bronze sculptures. Several employees are artists and can perform multiple tasks at Caleco.

Foundry workers use a variety of tools to help create, assemble and finish bronze sculptures.

Tanner Bischoff pours liquid bronze into molds for a sculpture.

> "I need to do quality control every step of the way."
>
> — LINDA RAYNOLDS

Though Hall admits the foundry business is slim in the margins, the work continues. Cody artist Linda Raynolds has worked with Caleco for years and appreciates their ability to work with artists from several genres.

"We've been working a long time together. They're familiar with my work," Raynolds said. "Every artist's work is different from the standpoint of the artwork, but every artist's work is also really different from the standpoint of what they're going to need the foundry to do—the technical stuff. From the mold making to finishing the bronze piece itself, it's going to be different."

Raynolds also questions whether she would continue working in bronze if Cody didn't have a local foundry.

"I'm not as young as I used to be. If Caleco shut down, would I continue doing bronze sculpture? Where would I go? How many hours would I be willing to drive? I need to do quality control every step of the way," she said.

Raynolds said she would probably "figure something else out" if Caleco wasn't just around the corner.

At some point, Hall will retire, and he hopes the business will continue as it has for decades, with longtime employees working to cast great sculptures for local and regional artists.

Regardless of what happens at Caleco, the millennia-old process of casting bronzes is likely to continue long into the future. McWhorter doesn't see bronze becoming a medium of the past.

"Sculptors today are engaging an ever-expanding diversity of techniques, styles, and subjects. And, concurrently, the definition of 'sculpture' is changing. That said, many sculptors who might define themselves as 'Western American artists' maintain an admirable commitment to traditional techniques and subjects," she said.

"At Western American art museums and in galleries and auction houses selling such work, you'll likely still find that the majority of sculptures are cast bronze with classic colored patinas or in polychrome. I am enthused by artists who, regardless of their technique (traditional or avant-garde), grapple with new subjects in their work—subjects that make us think differently about things."

Mark Davis is the outdoors reporter for the Powell Tribune. *He has worked previously as a reporter and photojournalist in Chicago and Omaha and enjoys hunting, fishing, birdwatching, and all outdoor sports.*

NEW CENTURY CAMPAIGN

December 31 marked the end of the Center's four-year New Century Campaign. With an overall goal of $50 million in three broad categories, the Center has received gifts and pledge commitments totaling $60,325,034.

Gifts and pledges for capital projects, including the Cody Firearms Museum renovation, total more than $17.3 million. Donors gave $15.3 million to the endowment, and $23.7 million to general operations.

All gifts made to the Buffalo Bill Center of the West from 2016-2019, no matter how large or small, counted toward the campaign. Gifts in response to our mailed appeals, even donations in the boxes at the Center in support of the raptor program and "round ups" on purchases in the gift shop are included.

"I am so impressed and grateful for the thousands of people who love and support the Center of the West," CEO and Executive Director Peter Seibert said. "Not only do we have very generous volunteer leadership in our trustees and advisors, donors from all over the United States and a few foreign countries stepped up to support what many of them have told us they consider a cultural treasure."

One of the many benefits of the campaign was the opportunity to directly reach out to supporters who were members, responded to annual appeals, or perhaps only knew us through Patrons Ball. The many projects outlined in the campaign allowed them to give to what mattered to them the most, or, in many cases, show their commitment to the entire institution by making a significant unrestricted gift.

The project list funded by the campaign was determined several years ago, well before fundraising began. Since then, a major facilities infrastructure assessment has identified additional capital needs, and new initiatives have been launched in our efforts to keep the Center fresh and relevant. Many prospective donors we talked with are interested in making a major commitment, but weren't ready to do so by the end of 2019. There are many more we were unable to connect with. So, we are confident that we will be able to find the funds we need to keep moving the Center forward.

"We want to express our sincere gratitude to all of you who helped us exceed our goal for the campaign," said William N. Shiebler, Chair of the Board of Trustees. "We all share a love of the American West, and a true commitment to this great institution. Thank you!"

THE CENTER IS A PRIVATE NON-PROFIT — NOT A PUBLICLY FUNDED INSTITUTION. IT TAKES THE HELP OF PEOPLE LIKE YOU TO FUND OUTREACH PROGRAMS, DAILY OPERATIONS, AND THE PRESERVATION OF OUR COLLECTIONS. WE APPRECIATE YOUR SUPPORT!

WHAT DO DONATIONS MEAN TO THE CENTER?

Whether it's through the New Century Campaign, private donors, or individual contributions, donations are essential to preserving the West for future generations. What do those donations go to, exactly? **Here are just a few things donations fund during any calendar year.**

- **600** STUDENT FIELD TRIPS
- **3700** MICE (TO FEED THE RAPTORS)
- **2** SPECIALIST CONSERVATORS TO PRESERVE OUTDOOR SCULPTURES
- **3700** SKYPE IN THE CLASSROOM LESSONS (IN 46 DIFFERENT COUNTRIES)
- **25+** EXPERT PRESENTERS

NEW
MAJOR GIFT
DONORS

MATTHEW + LESLIE M.

Matthew doesn't remember his first visit to the Buffalo Bill Museum, as it was known then – he was just seven years old. His New Jersey family vacationed at a dude ranch every summer, and the West was an integral part of his life.

In 1985, he brought his new wife, Leslie, who loved the museum – but the dude ranch vacation took some getting used to. Vacations in the '90s and early 2000s found them at dude ranches too far from Cody for a day trip, but they maintained their membership here, because "we wanted to contribute." The Center's Centennial in 2017 provided the impetus to return, and they came to the Patrons Ball that year. They were "thunderstruck" by the changes. "We'd lived in New York, and I've been to museums all over the world," Leslie said. "The Center of the West is one of my top three favorite museums. It's extraordinary."

With all the time they've spent in the West, Matthew says they've never found anything like the Center of the West anywhere else. "We were early and avid fans of the [Center], and it's been fascinating to watch it grow."

Why did they choose to make a major gift to the New Century Campaign? "The Buffalo Bill Center of the West is really something that speaks to us both," Matthew said. "For me, it has a lot of familial and emotional ties going back over half a century. It's part of the fabric of our western experiences. We wanted to show our appreciation."

Matthew and Leslie add that the Center gift shop has always been a favorite. Ruth, the gift shop manager back in the '80s, remembered Matthew from year to year, and helped him select great gifts for Leslie – like a beautiful squash blossom necklace that she still treasures.

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- The Irma
- Sunrise Motor Inn
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CALENDAR

major events

JUNE

20 21 **39th Annual Plains Indian Powwow**
12 pm – 9 pm, 12 pm – 6 pm
Adults: $10 | Youth: 7-17: $5
Under 6: Free

SEPT

19 **44th Annual Patrons Ball**
6 pm

member events

APRIL

9 **Cody Culture Club**
5:30 – 7:30 pm
Buffalo BIll Center of the West
Who's On First?: 150 years of Wyoming Women in the Equality State

MAY

2 **Coffee & Curators**
10:00 – 11:30 pm
Cody Firearms Museum

2+3 **Double Discount Shopping Days**

JUNE

6 **Business Friend Days**

Coffee & Curators
10:00 – 11:30 pm
Draper Natural History Museum

For more information on events at the Center, visit *centerofthewest.org/calendar.*

IN THE NEWS

Arrow Maker. **Ink and pencil on antique paper, 8.5 x 5 inches. (detail)**

Finance Committee Advisor Dick Scarlett, right, chats with Wyoming rancher Stan Flitner.

Artist uses work for healing, learning

Though John Isaiah Pepion comes from a family of artists, it wasn't until a car accident left him with a long road to physical recovery that he got serious about creating his own artwork.

"Drawing became therapy and a way to heal myself," said Pepion, who was part of last summer's artist-in-residence program at the Plains Indian Museum.

Pepion hails from the Blackfeet Nation in northern Montana. He described his development as an artist as a ceremonial process that helped his understanding of his past, family, and culture grow with his work. He incorporates traditional design elements into colorful contemporary illustrations resulting in a highly recognizable style.

Much of Pepion's work deals with Native identity, and he embraces the conversations that come from his creations.

"Some Native artists don't even deal with identity," he said. "But there's this continuous argument about what's traditional and what's contemporary with Native art."

Pepion noted that the U.S. Interior Department regulates the sale of Native artwork under the Indian Arts and Crafts Act of 1990, designed to protect artists against the sale of inauthentic works. But that means Native artists must prove their identities as part of the law.

"We're the only race that has to prove who we are, our pedigree, our bloodline," he said. "There are some weird rules and regulations around Native, indigenous artists that I don't necessarily agree with. What happens when an artist can't prove their Indian blood? There are some tough subject matters, but for me, it's all about growth and learning."

Board adopts themes at winter meeting

Can common themes that span countless artifacts, five museums, and future exhibitions at the Buffalo Bill Center of the West help visitors understand the American West? That's what Board of Trustee members discussed in Jackson, Wyoming, in January during their winter meeting.

As part of its strategic plan, the Center has developed and will begin using four themes to share information and tell stories with greater continuity and deeper context. These themes will also inform and guide future programs, exhibitions, and activities at the Center.

"These themes are not a box we're trying to put everything in. They're a framework, or even a beautiful web that helps us present and explore ideas, and tell stories with greater connection and deeper understanding," said Rebecca West, Director of Curatorial, Education, and Museum Services.

THE FOUR THEMES ARE:

- **Sense of Place, Time, and Continuity:** The American West evolves as a place and an idea.
- **Identities, Cultures, and Diversity:** Dynamic cultures, environments, and events shape identity in the American West.
- **Conflict, Resolution, and Resilience:** Interactions among peoples, resources, and nature drive conflict, resolution, loss, and resilience in the American West.
- **Myths and Realities:** The interplay between myth and reality continually redefine stories of the American West.

Visitors can expect to see these themes appear in museum displays, publications, and elsewhere in the months ahead, West said.

HORSE'S HEAD LUNAR ECLIPSE

BY MACK FROST

As a photographer, I have always been fascinated with landscape and scenic photography. I'll take the occasional wildlife photo when they happen along in front of my lens, but I'm always looking for the scenery first.

I always check to see what kind of eclipses are going to occur during the year, and on June 4, 2012, just before sunrise, a partially eclipsed full moon would be setting in the southwest.

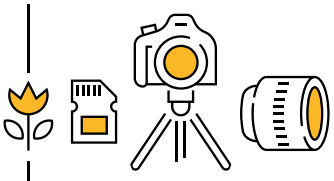
Using an online program, I was able to plot the time, locations, and sightlines of the setting moon around Cody, Wyoming. I picked a spot that lined up the Horse's Head snowfield on the upper South Fork of the Shoshone River with the volcanic pinnacle of Castle Rock, several miles downstream. Old-timers have long said that when the reins on the Horse's Head snowfield are broken, rivers and streams are low enough to reach the backcountry.

I picked a shooting location near the top of a hill along the South Fork Road. The moon would be lined up perfectly around 5:26 a.m., with about a 10-minute window to get the shot.

I arrived with plenty of time to set up, but a band of clouds was partially obscuring the moon. I could only hope that as the moon drifted nearer the horizon, the clouds would clear. Using a tripod, I took a few test shots to determine the best exposure, and at 5:24 started taking photos, 72 of them over the next five minutes before the eclipsed portion of the moon slid beneath the horizon. I set the camera shutter to a 2-second delay to avoid camera shake, and took a photo about every three seconds.

Just in time, the clouds cleared and I nailed it. The best shot was taken at 5:26:34. Back home, images safely downloaded onto my computer, I performed some post-processing and came up with this image, one of my most popular photos.

Mack Frost is a lifelong Cody, Wyoming, resident who works as a digital technician in the McCracken Research Library at the Buffalo Bill Center of the West. He displays his photography at Open Range Images in downtown Cody.



details

SHOT WITH
CANON EOS REBEL T2I

- **EF 70–200mm**
- **f/4L USM @ 200mm**
- **1/10 second @ f/8.0**
- **ISO 100**

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