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WELCOME TO THE 2019 BEST OF SUMMIT COUNTY!

In this year's Best of Summit, readers voted on everything from their favorite cocktails to the most popular ski area and the top teachers to the best veterinarians for our furry friends.

Take a look at Best of Summit 2019 by the numbers:

- 15,364 people cast a total of 85,869 votes across 121 questions.
- Sauce on the Blue saw the most top-three placings at nine, with four of those being first-place awards.
- The top vote getters were Summit Mountain Rentals for Best Property Management/Rental Company and High Country Healing for Best Marijuana Dispensary & Accessories, with each collecting more than 600 votes.
- The most popular questions were Best Indoor Activities and Best Property Management/Rental Company, which each garnered more than 2,000 votes.
- There were three ties this year, with Arapahoe Basin Ski Area and Breckenridge Grand Vacations tying for third Best Place to Work with more than 20 employees, Buffalo Mountain Animal Hospital and Farmers Korner Veterinary Hospital tying for first Best Veterinarian, and Precision Ski & Golf and Pup's Glide Shop tying for third Best Ski/Snowboard Shop.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

BEST PLACE TO IMPRESS OUT-OF-TOWNERS:

SAPPHIRE POINT OVERLOOK

2ND: Dillon Amphitheater | 3RD: Loveland Pass

BEST PLACE TO DANCE:

DILLON AMPHITHEATER

2ND: 10 Mile Music Hall | 3RD: Gold Pan Saloon

BEST PLACE FOR A ROMANTIC DATE:

SKI TIP LODGE

2ND: Vinny's Restaurant | 3RD: Hearthstone

BEST PERFORMING ARTS GROUP:

LAKE DILLON THEATRE COMPANY

2ND: Breckenridge Backstage Theatre | 3RD: National Repertory Orchestra

BEST MUSEUM:

FRISCO HISTORIC PARK & MUSEUM

2ND: Summit County Library - South Branch | 3RD: Dillon Schoolhouse Museum

In 1879, Colorado chartered the town of Frisco. A little more than a hundred years later, the Frisco Historic Park & Museum opened in 1983. The original schoolhouse serves as the main hub, with photos, artifacts and exhibits detailing everything from the area's early settlement to modern skiing.

However, the schoolhouse is only part of the museum. There are 13 other restored, historic structures that include a log chapel, a jail, mining cabins and ranch homes. A self-guided walking tour throughout the campus will give guests the chance to travel back through time as they listen to audiotapes or read the accompanying text.

"Children in particular love the Frisco train diorama, the Frank and Annie Ruth House dress up station and the interactive animal fur display in the Trapper's Cabin," museum manager Rose Gorrell said.

If that isn't enough, the museum hosts various activities throughout the year that take place on and off the grounds. Visitors and locals can tour the Bill's Ranch neighborhood, attend a lunchtime lecture on wildlife or spend the night at the museum listening to live music and enjoying light refreshments.

During Founder's Day, the site becomes the place to celebrate Frisco's heritage. Each year, there will frequently be burro rides, gold panning, costumed reenactments, lawn games, face painting, crafts

and other entertainment like cowboy poetry or a puppet show. During the park's 35th anniversary in 2018, there was a Ute Indian tipi dedication and a traditional performance by members of the tribe at the gazebo.

The gazebo is also the home for other community events such as the Frisco Christmas tree lighting,

an art show and more. In the summer, there are free concerts held each Thursday, with proceeds from alcohol sales going to a different local nonprofit every week.

The free Frisco Historic Park & Museum is open year-round at **120 Main St. in Frisco.**

BY JEFFERSON GEIGER

Photo by Liz Copan



BEST LOCAL BAND/MUSICIAN:

FRISCO FUNK COLLECTIVE

2ND: Beau Thomas | 3RD: El Paso Lasso

For the second year in a row Frisco Funk Collective has the honor of being named the best band in Summit County. Formed in 2015, the group consistently performs high-energy concerts filled with funky grooves.

Though Brooke Harthan moved away and is no longer the lead singer, the band is still going strong. The current lineup includes bassist and founder Tyler Easton, renowned Venezuelan drummer Leo Lopez, guitarist Eric James, tenor saxophonist Jon Neiman and multi-instrumentalist Adam Weidner. Easton has taken over the lead vocal duties, but other members occasionally will hop on the mic, too.

"What I love about funk music is its ability to reach people of all musical tastes and backgrounds and get them dancing," said Easton, who also performs in the band Satellite13 with Lopez and frequent Frisco Funk Collective

collaborator John Truscelli. "When you hear that heavy hit on the one, you can't help but move. It also gives us the platform to really explore the improvisational side of the tunes, which is what Frisco Funk is all about."

That improvisation from soloists — following the lead of their main influences such as Herbie Hancock, The Meters, Sly and the Family Stone and others — means no two Frisco Funk Collective shows are the same. It also helps to have a repertoire of more than 100 songs to fill out a set list each show. They can accommodate if the gig requires a mellower, jazz-like vibe or bring down the house at a festival for throngs of partygoers.

"Part of the beauty of the collective and why I love

Courtesy Frisco Funk



playing these gigs is we have that ability to tailor build a show to the crowd that we have in front of us," Easton said.

Visit friscofunk.com for tour dates.

BY JEFFERSON GEIGER

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

BEST LATE NIGHT SCENE:

SNAKE RIVER SALOON AND STEAKHOUSE

2ND: Rocky Mountain Underground | 3RD: The Gold Pan Saloon

BEST INDOOR ACTIVITIES:

ESCAPE ROOM BRECKENRIDGE

2ND: Silverthorne Recreation Center | 3RD: Ready Paint Fire!

BEST GUIDED HISTORIC TOUR:

COUNTRY BOY MINE

2ND: Ghost Tour, Breckenridge Tours | 3RD: Guided Boat Tour, town of Dillon and Summit Historical Society

BEST ENTERTAINMENT VENUE:

DILLON AMPHITHEATER

2ND: Lake Dillon Theatre Company | 3RD: 10 Mile Music Hall

BEST DAY TRIP FROM SUMMIT COUNTY:

RED ROCKS PARK AND AMPHITHEATRE

2ND: Leadville | 3RD: Mount Princeton Hot Springs Resort

BEST CONCERT SERIES:

DILLON AMPHITHEATER

2ND: National Repertory Orchestra | 3RD: Concert in the Park, Frisco

BEST COMMUNITY EVENT:

COLORADO BBQ CHALLENGE

2ND: Silverthorne First Fridays | 3RD: Dillon Farmers Market

BEST ART GALLERY:

LAKE DILLON THEATRE COMPANY

2ND: Breckenridge Gallery | 3RD: High Country Artisans

BEST APRES SKI:

CONTINENTAL DIVIDE WINERY

2ND: Sauce on the Blue | 3RD: Angry James Brewing Company

A great way to cap off the evening, whether after a day of shopping or skiing, is with a refreshing wine in hand. Thankfully the world's highest-elevation winery, Continental Divide Winery, has a location off Main Street in Breckenridge.

"Our tasting room is located just a one-minute walk from the base of the QuickSilver SuperChair, making Continental Divide's tasting room a great spot to relax and unwind with a glass of wine after a hard day on the slopes," Continental Divide Winery co-founder Jeffrey Maltzman said.

Part-time Breckenridge residents and California vintners Jeffrey and Ana Maltzman founded the winery in 2016 with Alma residents Kent Hutchison and Angela Bryan. The winery features the harvest from the Maltzman's California vineyards as well as local Colorado grapes.

Along with sampling wine, the tasting room offers a

unique blending experience. Participants taste four red wine varietals, craft a custom blend from them, and then bottle, cork and label the souvenir.

Those who wish to take home more than that single bottle should sign up for the winery's wine club. The club has no annual membership fee, and it's offered at different tiers that allow customization in shipment size.

The club is a good way to stay on top of new releases, like last year's limited edition Double Eclipse wine. The blend of six wines was made during the 2017 total solar eclipse and then released during the total lunar eclipse the following year.

More recently, the winery swept the Sunset Magazine International Wine Competition. It won two of the only three gold medals awarded to Colorado wineries in the 2019 contest out of 2,700 entries.

The winning wines included the artist series Napa

Courtesy Continental Divide Winery



Valley cabernet sauvignon and the artist series Reflection, a Bordeaux-style Red Blend crafted from Merlot, Malbec, Cabernet Sauvignon and Petit Verdot. Continental Divide Winery is at **505 S. Main St., Unit A-4 in Breckenridge.**

BY JEFFERSON GEIGER

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BEST TEACHER, GRADES K TO 8:

CORINA KASKEY, SILVERTHORNE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

2ND: Ashley Smith, Summit Middle School | **3RD:** Tracy Arnold, Summit Cove Elementary

Corina Kaskey is a first-grade reading recovery and literacy teacher at Silverthorne Elementary School. Kaskey's role as an educator in literacy is a critical one, as reading proficiency is considered one of the key measures on which future academic success relies. With her first-graders, Kaskey puts students on a path toward brighter futures. She is also trained to observe students for reading difficulties and help them overcome them.

Kaskey said the relationships she builds with students, parents and her fellow teachers are a priority for her, with positive engagement a key tool she uses to be a great educator.

"I try to make learning fun, keep students engaged

and deliver high-quality literacy instruction daily," Kaskey said. "I want my students to love reading. I work tirelessly to find just the right book to get all students engaged in reading. I love buying books for students (and teachers)."

As far as why she decided to do one of the hardest and most important jobs in a community, educating the next generation, it's all about the impact she sees she has in their lives.

"I absolutely love teaching, it's my passion. I love watching my students learn and grow and discover new things. My students, past and present, mean the world to me."

BY DEEPAN DUTTA



Photo by Liz Copan

BEST TEACHER, GRADES 9 TO 12:

LIZ WADDICK, SUMMIT HIGH SCHOOL

2ND: Oakley Van Oss, Summit High School | **3RD:** Jamie Lambrecht, Summit High School



Photo by Liz Copan

Liz Waddick, a Spanish teacher at Summit High School, sees her job as more than teaching Spanish to Summit High juniors to help them get a job — she sees it as a responsibility to help them become global citizens.

"I argue that, sure, learning a language might help get a job or get into college," Waddick said. "But more than that, it improves your quality of life and opens up entire new experiences and ways of thinking."

Waddick's approach to teaching Spanish is based in the idea that knowing another language improves people's lives.

"I approach teaching with the concept of developing caring learners with empathy," Waddick said.

"Language is such a big part of that. It helps build

community, where people can learn from each other."

Waddick said her teaching style involves immersing students into the language through "movement," including acting scenes out, interviewing each other in Spanish and asking each other interesting questions in the language, such as what hopes and dreams they have.

As far as why she's a teacher, Waddick said it's all about helping her students become better people.

"I think it's a noble profession, and I'm proud to be a teacher," Waddick said. "I'm proud to get into the classroom every day to help give these kids a life that is of value."

BY DEEPAN DUTTA

BEST PLACE TO WORK, MORE THAN 20 EMPLOYEES:

HIGH COUNTRY HEALING

2ND: Keystone Science School | 3RD (tie): Arapahoe Basin Ski Area | Breckenridge Grand Vacations

BEST PLACE TO WORK, LESS THAN 20 EMPLOYEES:

ANGRY JAMES BREWING COMPANY

2ND: Broken Compass Brewing | 3RD: Cool River Coffee House

BEST NONPROFIT:

KEYSTONE SCIENCE SCHOOL

2ND: Family & Intercultural Resource Center | 3RD: Breckenridge Outdoor Education Center

BEST NEW BUSINESS, OPENED IN 2018:

HIGHSIDE BREWING

2ND: Pure Kitchen | 3RD: The Argentos Empanadas & More





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MS. SUMMIT COUNTY:

JESSIE UNRUH-BROSSMAN

2ND: Lindsey Davis | **3RD:** Abbey Austin

For Jessie Unruh-Brossman, life in Summit County is about connecting.

The 2019 Ms. Summit County grew up in Wichita, Kansas, but said she has a rich family history in the area. Unruh-Brossman said her parents were farmers in Kansas who'd bring old barn wood up for projects in Breckenridge, an easy excuse for one or two family vacations every year to ski or hike.

She graduated from Kansas State University with a degree in television broadcasting and immediately decided to move to Summit County. "I came to be a snowboard bum, and I excelled," she joked.

Unruh-Brossman moved to Keystone to ski but quickly chose to begin her marketing career in Summit County. She started a job at the Breckenridge Tourism Office, where she served as a content marketing manager for about four years before moving on to work with Rocky Mountain Underground and eventually Breckenridge Distillery, where she serves

as the distillery's marketing manager.

"I think what I've really focused on in my career is supporting the community in terms of small businesses," she said. "I've always been really passionate about telling the stories of small businesses and trying to grow this community. ... I've chosen jobs and opportunities that allow me to do that and to really connect to my town."

Unruh-Brossman's work doesn't stop at the distillery. She said she also sits on the Community Affairs and Services Committee with the Breckenridge Tourism Office and is a frequent content contributor for the Colorado Tourism Office. Additionally, she takes on freelance work for live television in the action sports world — traveling around the world to Amsterdam, Manchester and Berlin to produce webcasts and live shows for events like Dew Tour and the X-Games.

Unruh-Brossman lives in Frisco with her husband, John, along with their two dogs — a pit bull named

Roxy and a border collie named Marley. In her free time, she said she's constantly trying to get the most out of Summit County's recreational opportunities — taking hikes with her husband and dogs, skiing, paddle boarding and taking in the views.

She said she also enjoys winding down with a cold beer or cocktail on the patio at the end of the day, though she's had to put a stop to the ceremony as she and her husband are expecting a baby girl this winter — due on Christmas Eve, just before Unruh-Brossman and John's birthdays on Christmas and New Year's.

"There's a lot of places people can live that are beautiful and amazing," she said. "But I hope to raise a family in this community and to live here and continue to support everything Summit has to offer. ... I've lived in every town in Summit at some point in my life, and I've gotten to work with great companies. I've gotten to connect with people throughout the county. I think to be nominated for this speaks to a person's character

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and their ability to connect to people and adapt to all kinds of situations and places. I think that's something I embrace as a person. I've really grown up in Summit, and it's all because of the community."

BY SAWYER D'ARGONNE

Courtesy Jessie Unruh-Brossman





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MR. SUMMIT COUNTY:

JASON FORD

2ND: Ian Geise | 3RD: Anthony Pestello

Courtesy Jason Ford

Community members will recognize Jason Ford as the proprietor of Broken Compass Brewing, a fixture in Breckenridge since the brewery opened its doors in summer 2013.

But there's a lot more to Ford than just beer, and what he enjoys more than anything is getting to bring people together.

"It completely surprised me," Ford said about his nomination for Mr. Summit County. "But I think it has to be about the community we've created. I'm just a regular guy out here trying to create a great place with a great product. If you can find something like this that brings people together, they pay attention. The beer helps too; it's the face of the brewery. But I really do think it comes from the love people have for this place — a great place for everyone to gather, hang out and see your friends."

Ford was born and raised in Wyoming before moving to Bozeman, Montana, where he earned a degree in chemical engineering at Montana State University. Following graduation, Ford made his first move to Colorado, where he said a Breckenridge Brewery stout at Coors Field first awakened his love for beer.

Shortly after, Ford moved to Portland, Oregon, where he put his degree to work serving as a chemist in an environmental laboratory, and in research and development in the fields of battery technology and aerospace defense. He returned to Denver a decade later to take on another research and development position but soon set his sights on something more ambitious.

"I took on a management position, and not being in the lab anymore and not being able to build anymore just wasn't my bag," Ford said. "I got bored. I wasn't creating anymore. I knew I had to do something different. I had a couple buddies working at breweries or starting breweries, and I thought that looked like a great job."

Ford opened the first iteration of Broken Compass Brewing in Denver in 2008 and moved the business to Breckenridge in 2013.



"I'm just a mountain guy at heart," Ford said. "To be able to have a mountain town brewery is a pie in the sky. It's been a dream of mine since I was a kid, so to make it happen is a blessing."

Ford lives with his wife, Jo, who he lauded for allowing him to chase his dreams. Ford said Jo is also a beer enthusiast and has helped develop some of the flavors Broken Compass patrons might be familiar with — calling the brewery's coconut porter "her baby."

While not working, Ford said he enjoys spending time outdoors biking and skiing as well as taking

advantage of Summit County's slow seasons to travel with his wife. Ford said he also takes an annual trek out west to Nevada's Black Rock Desert, where he spends four weeks on a crew building the man for the Burning Man festival.

"It's been so fun watching the community that we've been able to build here," Ford said. "The support we've seen from the community has been outstanding. And it's been really awesome to see that community develop and keep getting stronger every year."

BY SAWYER D'ARGONNE

BEST WINE LIST:

CONTINENTAL DIVIDE WINERY

2ND: Sauce on the Blue | 3RD: Ski Tip Lodge

BEST SUSHI:

KEMOSABE SUSHI & SAKE

2ND: Nozawa Sushi & Hibachi | 3RD: Mountain Flying Fish

BEST STEAK:

BRIAR ROSE CHOPHOUSE & SALOON

2ND: Legends Steaks and Italian Restaurant | 3RD: The Mint

Courtesy Briar Rose Chophouse & Saloon

The name Briar Rose has deep roots in Breckenridge. Back in the town's early days, the Briar Rose Mine produced silver, gold and other ores close to the top of Peak 10. The miners who worked there had a boarding house on Lincoln Avenue that they knew they could rely on for a warm bed, a good meal and a drink after a hard day's work.

Eventually, the Briar Rose boarding house became better known for its food and drinks than its bedrooms, and from these roots the Briar Rose Chophouse & Saloon was born. In its current location since 1960, the Briar Rose is still well-known as a destination to find a good meal and drink.

This year, voters have picked the restaurant as the Best Steak in Summit County. It's a title that General Manager David Lipka takes a great deal of pride in as well as the restaurant's ability "to mix our Old West heritage with modern day appetites."

The 28-day aged Black Angus steaks come from the Harris Ranch Beef Co., and the restaurant serves a variety of game meats. One of Lipka's personal recommendations is a dry-aged cowboy



buffalo rib-eye steak, which isn't on the main menu but can often be found as a special.

"Between the buffalo and the dry aging, it's not for everyone," Lipka said. "But it's life changing."

The Briar Rose Chophouse & Saloon is at **109 Lincoln Ave. in Breckenridge.**

BY STEVEN JOSEPHSON



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FOOD & DRINK

BEST SPORTS BAR:

OLLIE'S PUB & GRUB

2ND: Downstairs At Eric's | 3RD: Dillon Dam Brewery

BEST RESTAURANT - SUMMIT COUNTY:

SAUCE ON THE BLUE

2ND: Ski Tip Lodge | 3RD: Breckenridge Distillery

BEST RESTAURANT - SILVERTHORNE:

SAUCE ON THE BLUE

2ND: Sunshine Cafe | 3RD: Mountain Lyon Cafe

BEST RESTAURANT - KEYSTONE:

SKI TIP LODGE

2ND: Snake River Saloon and Steakhouse | 3RD: Inxpot

BEST RESTAURANT - FRISCO:

VINNY'S RESTAURANT

2ND: Tavern West | 3RD: Pure Kitchen

BEST RESTAURANT - DILLON:

ARAPAHOE CAFE & PUB

2ND: Dillon Dam Brewery | 3RD: Red Mountain Grill

BEST RESTAURANT - COPPER MOUNTAIN:

INCLINE BAR & GRILL

2ND: JJ's Rocky Mountain Tavern | 3RD: C.B. Grille



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BEST RESTAURANT - BRECKENRIDGE:

AURUM BRECKENRIDGE

2ND: Hearthstone | 3RD: Breckenridge Distillery

BEST RESTAURANT SERVICE:

SUNSHINE CAFE

2ND: Sauce on the Blue | 3RD: Vinny's Restaurant

BEST PIZZA:

GIAMPIETRO PASTA & PIZZERIA

2ND: Luigi's Sports Bar & Pizzeria | 3RD: Peppino's Pizza & Subs

BEST MARGARITAS:

HACIENDA REAL

2ND: Angel's Hollow | 3RD: Rita's Specialty Margs and Taco Bar

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FOOD & DRINK

BEST FIREPLACE:

SKI TIP LODGE

2ND: Angry James Brewing Company | 3RD: Keystone Ranch

BEST LUNCH:

SUNSHINE CAFE

2ND: Duggan's Deli | 3RD: Pure Kitchen

BEST MEXICAN RESTAURANT:

HACIENDA REAL

2ND: Mi Casa Mexican Restaurant and Cantina | 3RD: Sancho Tacos

For nearly two decades Hacienda Real has been providing Summit diners authentic Mexican fare, a wide assortment of margaritas and speedy service. It's yet again taking home the first place prize for Best Mexican Restaurant in Summit County, a feat they said they've managed for the past 13 years.

When asked about their staying power, manager Luis Flores is quick to point out four things: service, food, customer service and consistency. They've managed to keep the same chef since they opened,

and Flores is a well-known figure in the dining area, where he's quick to check in with customers to make sure they are fully satisfied.

Flores' favorite dish at the restaurant is the carne asada: a skirt steak filet that the restaurant serves with guacamole, salsa Mexicana and fried hot peppers. He notes that it is one of Hacienda Real's most popular dishes in addition to the chile rellenos and seafood, particularly the siete mares: a seafood broth that the menu notes has been "long touted as a hangover cure."

The food can be paired with an ample selection from the restaurant's bar, which features a wide assortment of flavored margaritas, including the margarita originale, made with fresh lime juice, sour and Cointreau.

The restaurant expanded its seating area in 2012, and Flores added that it is well suited for bigger groups and parties. Hacienda Real is at **842 N. Summit Blvd. in Frisco.**

BY STEVEN JOSEPHSON



Photo by Liz Copan

Thank you, Summit County, for voting us Best of Summit in 2017, 2018 and 2019.



Finishing our 5th year as part of the Summit County Community, we again are reminded of how privileged we are to call this place home and how fortunate we are to have the support you have given us.



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In December 2014, Basecamp opened its doors to the residents and visitors of Summit County. Since then, the team at Basecamp has spent



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Basecamp considers the Summit County community the heartbeat of their business and their dedication to the community is far reaching. In four years, Basecamp has been able to assist the Girl Scouts, the Peak School, The Education Foundation for the Summit, the National Repertory Orchestra, Flight for Life, F.I.R.C., and many other charitable organizations and causes through donations, collections and events. Basecamp is also proud of its sponsorship and partic-



ipation in festivals such as Breckenridge Food and Wine, HogFest, Strings Ciders and Sours and the Wine Classic. The Frisco-based liquor store has been humbled by being named the first-place winner of best liquor

store for two years in a row in the Best of Summit contest.

The guests that shop at Basecamp have helped shape the store into what it is today. Without customers' input, Basecamp would not have the selection and variety it offers today, boasting Summit County's largest beer, wine and spirits selection with a focus on craft beer, bourbon, and Colorado-based products. Basecamp wants to thank their customers for their continued support and patronage.

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FOOD & DRINK

BEST ITALIAN RESTAURANT:

SAUCE ON THE BLUE

2ND: Vinny's Restaurant | **3RD:** Giampietro Pasta & Pizzeria

Photo by Heather Jarvis

Since opening in 2016, Sauce on the Blue in Silverthorne quickly has become a favorite for locals and visitors.

After being voted the Best Summit County Restaurant in 2018 and taking an additional eight first place awards, Sauce on the Blue is once again earning the accolades. It won Best Summit County Restaurant, Best Italian Restaurant, Best Deck/Patio and Best Silverthorne Restaurant in addition to placing in the top three in apres ski, cocktail, family restaurant, service and wine list.

"The community's really embraced us, and that's something we're really excited about and don't take for granted," general manager Tim Applegate said.

When asked about Sauce on the Blue's popularity, Applegate cited the restaurant's appeal to families and individuals, its location overlooking the Blue River, and the variety of food and drinks offered on the menu.

He said its most popular item is the crispy Brussels sprouts appetizer. The sprouts are tossed in lemon and a balsamic reduction and topped with shaved Parmesan cheese. It's an item that might surprise some who are less inclined to eat their vegetables.

Aside from the restaurant's pizza and signature Italian dishes, Sauce on the Blue has an extensive selection of alcoholic drinks to choose from. There are more than 150 whiskeys available at the bar (including a specially-crafted Woodford barrel-aged bourbon) and a selection of more than 100 wines.

"We've become a family-friendly place that people gravitate toward," Applegate said.

Sauce on the Blue is at **358 Blue River Parkway No. H in Silverthorne.**

BY STEVEN JOSEPHSON



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2ND: Sauce on the Blue | 3RD: Sunshine Cafe

BEST DESSERT:

BLUE MOON BAKERY

2ND: Higgles Ice Cream | 3RD: Stir-Pan Creamery

BEST DECK/PATIO:

SAUCE ON THE BLUE

2ND: Pug Ryan's Tiki Bar | 3RD: The Lodge at Breckenridge

BEST CATERER:

FOOD HEDZ CATERING

2ND: Mountain Lyon Cafe | 3RD: Gilchrist Catering

BEST BURGER:

EMPIRE BURGER

2ND: Arapahoe Cafe & Pub | 3RD: Flip Side Breckenridge



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SUMMIT COUNTY *Community News*



S M A L L P L A Y H O U S E S

Offer Big Support for Charities!

This summer the carpenters came out to build five playhouses in the name of charity in Summit County. Summit Association of REALTORS®, along with the Summit Daily News, helped coordinate “The Playhouse Project”, which was hosted by the Town of Dillon. These little playhouses were sponsored by businesses, and each had a designated charity that benefited. Alpine Bank was honored to commission a playhouse for Habitat for Humanity. This unique event placed the houses at Marina

Park in Dillon and Dillon’s Farmers Market from June 28 thru August 9.

Kids got to play in the houses, and at the end they were all auctioned off, with the proceeds donated to the Family and Intercultural Resource Center.

This was such a success that plans for the second annual Playhouse Project are already in the works.

Learn more by visiting their website at playhouseprojects.org

FOOD & DRINK

BEST COCKTAIL:

BRECKENRIDGE DISTILLERY

2ND: Blue River Bistro | 3RD: Sauce on the Blue



Photo by Liz Copan

While Breckenridge Distillery makes award-winning whiskey, gin, rum and vodka, drinking the aged beverages neat isn't the only option when patronizing the distillery's restaurant. To complement chef David Burke's food menu is an equally diverse

and head bartender Liz Cleary, Keithley balances the menu with spins on classics and new craft creations. A few of these drinks reference one of Keithley's favorite media franchises: "Star Wars."

Guests can usually find the Obi-Wan Old Fashioned

cocktail menu crafted by liquid chef Billie Keithley.

Keithley has been with the distillery for 10 of its 11 years, absorbing knowledge and honing her passion. "If it's edible, I can make a cocktail out of it," Keithley said. "Cocktail creativity is my passion in life and so is putting smiles on guests faces."

Working alongside bar manager Connor Bovich

made with Breckenridge Port Cask Whiskey, raw simple syrup, barrel-aged whiskey bitters and a brandied cherry; or the Yoda's Elixir, the PX Sherry Finish Whiskey combined with seasonal flavors like pomegranate, cranberry and cinnamon. Because the distillery cannot purchase outside liqueurs, anything alcoholic in the cocktail beyond the base spirit is made in-house.

She tries to focus on fresh ingredients from farmers markets and frequently implements honey in some fashion, but the ideas for cocktails can come from anywhere.

"I can be looking at a tree, snowflake, talking to a chef, trying to fall asleep, but wheels are turning," Keithley said. To relax her mind, she plays the classic Atari video game "Centipede."

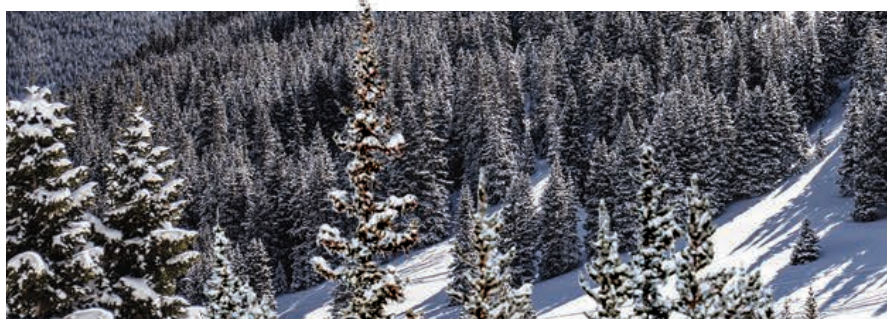
The Breckenridge Distillery restaurant is at **1925 Airport Road in Breckenridge**. Their tasting room is at **137 S. Main St. in Breckenridge**.

BY JEFFERSON GEIGER

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FOOD & DRINK

BEST BREWPUB/BREWERY:

BROKEN COMPASS BREWING

2ND: Angry James Brewing Company | 3RD: HighSide Brewing

BEST BREAKFAST:

SUNSHINE CAFE

2ND: Mountain Lyon Cafe | 3RD: Butterhorn Bakery

BEST BLOODY MARY:

6TH ALLEY BAR & GRILL

2ND: Arapahoe Cafe & Pub | 3RD: Angel's Hollow

BEST BEERS ON TAP:

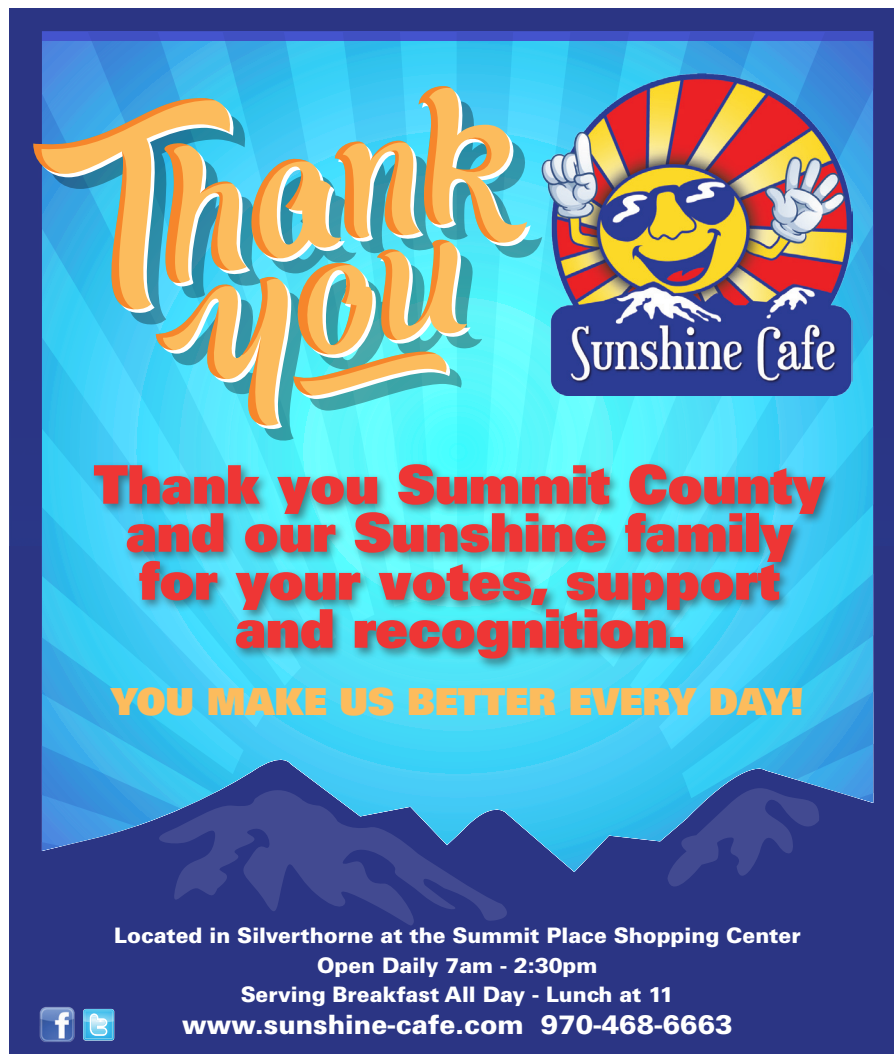
KENOSHA STEAKHOUSE

2ND: Apres Handcrafted Libations | 3RD: Downstairs at Eric's


BEST BARTENDER:

JULIE MORRIS, SNAKE RIVER SALOON & STEAK HOUSE

2ND: Cody Perkins, The Crown | 3RD: Benjie West, Broken Compass Brewing





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2ND: Moe's Rooftop Bar B Que

3RD: Mountain Lyon Cafe

BEST BAR:

BROKEN COMPASS BREWING

2ND: HighSide Brewing

3RD: Angry James Brewing Company

BEST BAKED GOODS/BAKERY:

BLUE MOON BAKERY

2ND: Butterhorn Bakery

3RD: Cool River Coffee House

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FOOD & DRINK

BEST ASIAN RESTAURANT:

KEMOSABE SUSHI & SAKE

2ND: Pho Bay II | 3RD: Nozawa Sushi & Hibachi



Photo by Liz Copan

Names like Hot Hippie, Lone Ranger, Mr. Roboto and Mrs. Perfect might not readily bring sushi rolls to mind for some, but loyal patrons at Kemosabe Sushi & Sake would be quick to recognize them as a sampling of some of the restaurant's sushi rolls.

If the unique names didn't give it away, some of the

ingredients found in them might help a diner understand what the restaurant's website describes as "specialty rolls featuring modern flavor profiles."

"We'll throw steak on our sushi," said sushi chef Matthew Merrill, referring to the restaurant's All American roll, which is filled with red crab, tempura asparagus and avocado and topped with seared beef tenderloin, sweet soy and green onion oil.

While the rolls might come across as inauthentic, Kemosabe's 2019 title as Best Asian Restaurant is just another bit of evidence that Assistant General Manager Roy Beinfest believes shows that Kemosabe is legit.

The restaurant actually started as a once-a-week specialty at Silverheels Bar & Grill but became popular enough that it was spun out into its own location next door. The restaurant has been in its own spot for 10 years.

One dish that shows the restaurant's ability to balance traditional flavors with innovative thinking is the hamachi collar, a regular item on the specials menu.

The item started with a problem: good yellowtail meat that was hard to put into a sushi dish because of the location of bones within the flesh.

"What are we going to do with this?" Beinfest said as he talked about the process of creating the dish.

The answer turned out to be making a variation of a more traditional Japanese dish: hamachi kama. The meat is cooked — bones and all — and served covered in a combination of the restaurant's signature sauces. It has become popular enough that it's being considered as a potential addition to the regular menu.

Besides the distinct riffs on classic Japanese dishes, Merrill and Beinfest agree on three ingredients that keep Kemosabe as a regular in Best of Summit: fresh fish, consistent product and local appeal.

Kemosabe Sushi is at **605 Main St. in Frisco.**

BY STEVEN JOSEPHSON



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BEST COFFEEHOUSE: COOL RIVER COFFEE HOUSE

2ND: Red Buffalo Coffee & Tea | 3RD: Inxpot

Photo by Antonio Olivero

Opening and operating the Cool River Coffee House in Breckenridge has been the dream come true longtime Summit County local Diane Burris hoped it would be. She purchased Cool River from its previous owners three years ago in November. In the time since, the former manager of the Inxpot coffee shop in Keystone has made the place her own. The visual touchups have been minor — some new painting and lighting, taking out a drop ceiling and a change to the logo and signage. It's Cool River's menu that has seen more change.

Inheriting a shop with a collection of local regulars, a shop known for its quality baked goods, Burris started out by bringing on small batch local roasters, such as the shop's main roaster, Huck-leberry Roasters of Denver. Cool River also has a rotating tap that features a different roaster every few weeks.

"That's been my focus," Burris said. "Really, really good coffee."

On the food side, Burris put out a new menu earlier this summer after months of preparation. Featuring homemade dishes made from scratch by Burris and the Cool River cooks, Burris said she thinks their homemade pork green chili is the best around. Between 7 a.m. and 3 p.m. daily, early or late risers can eat breakfast or lunch at any time. The options range widely and cater to various dietary preferences, from homemade chili, to sweet potato bacon breakfast tacos to quinoa porridge.

"There's a lot of coffee shops, a lot of restaurants in Breckenridge, so I wanted to find a niche," Burris said "What is somebody else not doing?" Here, there's something for everyone, from the vegan to someone looking for comfort food to the meat eater."

Since launching the new menu, Burris said lunch has taken off at Cool River. If you happen to stop by, Burris said she's confident you'll find a coffee house experience that feels like home, with friendly service in prompt fashion.



"Every place I've ever been, I want it to feel like home," Burris said. "I want you to be able to come in by yourself and sit at the bar and feel comfortable. I want it to feel like community."

Cool River Coffee House is at **325 S. Main St. in Breckenridge.**

BY ANTONIO OLIVERO

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BEST SALON SERVICES:

MELANIE ASH INTEGRATIVE BEAUTY

2ND: Southern Exposure Salon | **3RD:** Bella Pella Salon Bar

Melanie Ash Integrative Beauty is a specialty hair and wellness salon in Frisco. While the owner, Melanie Ash, has an extensive background in hairdressing, she began coupling her skills with internal work for clients when she opened her Frisco salon in 2012 to create an integrative beauty salon.

Ash said she has been in the beauty industry for almost 34 years and was previously working as the creative head of education for more than 2,000 salons. She retired eight years ago in order to open her Frisco salon. Ash completed reiki and evidence-based energy medicine training, and she found that she wanted to help people undergo transformation from the inside out. She also provides coaching, goal setting and neuro-linguistic programming services.

"I support people with personal development, coaching, healing energy and hair," Ash said.

Ash works with clients one on one and said she has a strong local clientele as well as clients that travel from Denver, Eagle, Vail and out of state. To keep up

with her clients, Ash hired a new stylist this year.

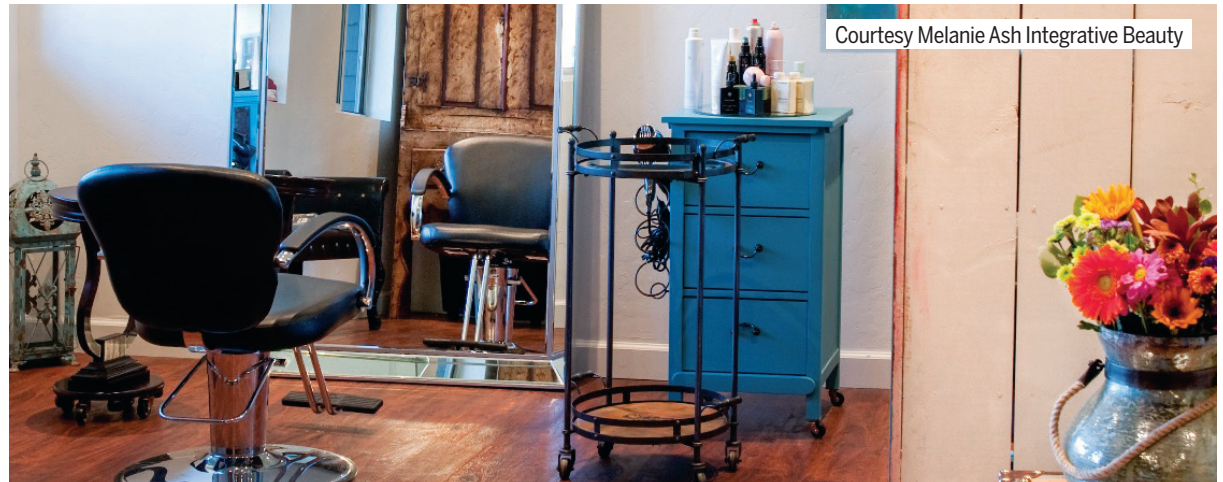
While Ash loves the outdoor-centered community in Summit County, she said her salon gives people the space to do something for themselves in a quiet, low-key environment.

"I love the people that I get to work with and what I

get to do and just being able to support people really feeling good on the inside so that people can radiate their authentic beauty on the outside," Ash said.

Melanie Ash Integrative Beauty is at **619 Main St. in Frisco**

BY TAYLOR SIENKIEWICZ



Courtesy Melanie Ash Integrative Beauty



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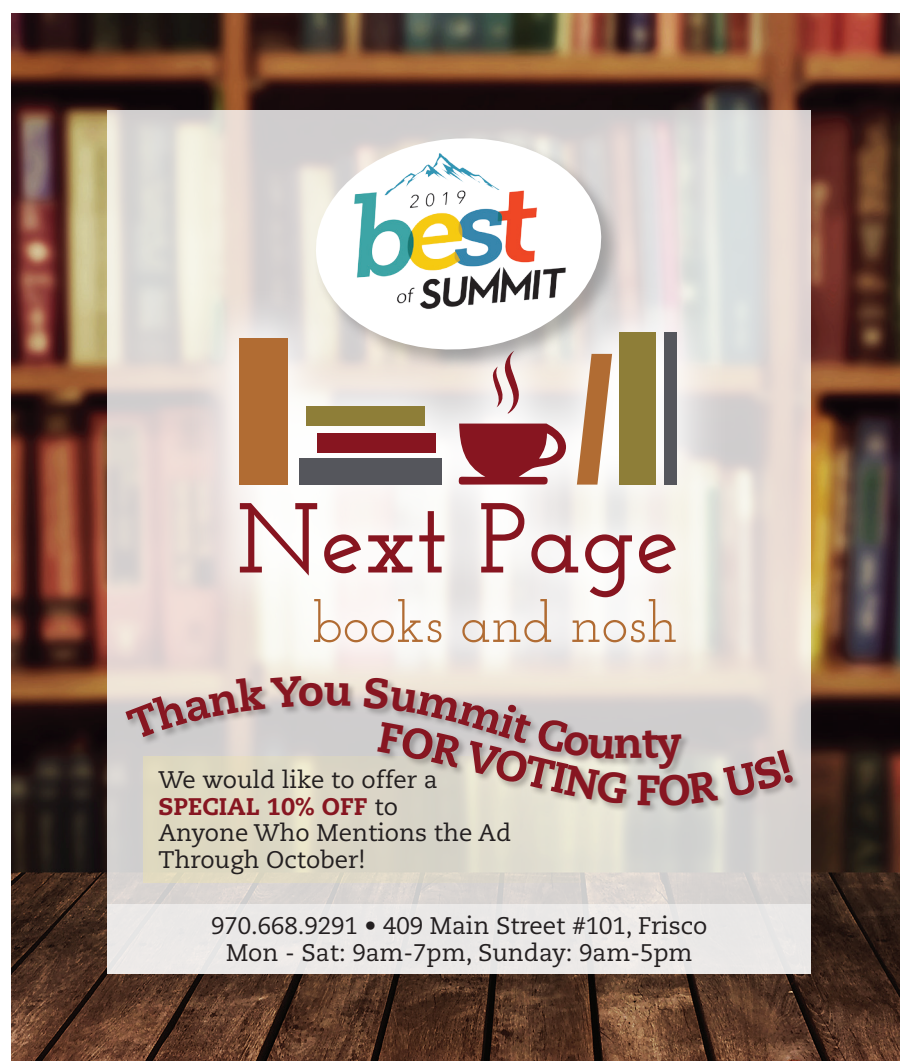
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2019 best of SUMMIT

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BEST PHYSICAL THERAPY OFFICE:

AXIS SPORTS MEDICINE

2ND: Avalanche Physical Therapy | **3RD:** Howard Head Sports Medicine

Photo by Sawyer D'Argonne



Since opening seven years ago, Axis Sports Medicine has rapidly emerged as one of the gold standards for physical therapy services in Summit County.

The company — which is owned by a group of 12 of its own therapists — first opened its doors in 2012 and operates at six locations around the Western Slope, including offices in Frisco, Silverthorne and Breckenridge. And while not a long-standing business, therapists at Axis have undoubtedly made their mark on the community, taking home their fourth consecutive Best of Summit title.

“I would like to think that people respect the work that we do and the bonds that we have in the community along with just a great culture,” said Kristin Schwarck, an owner and therapist that operates out

of the group’s Breckenridge office. “We’re just happy to work with a great community, and we appreciate their support.”

Boasting one of the state’s best physical therapy teams — Schwarck said more than 90% of Axis’ therapists sport additional certifications — Axis offers a number of rehabilitative and sports medicine services, including everything from total joint and vestibular therapy to concussion management, neurological rehabilitation and functional movement screens.

Axis Sports Medicine also has made a name for itself with outstanding customer care. Once a year, the company hosts a patient appreciation day, putting their own work to the test and joining current and former patients on a hike up to the Black Mountain

Lodge at Arapahoe Basin Ski Area, with some going the distance to summit the North Pole at more than 12,600 feet.

“They’re all clients that have had physical therapy,” said Terri Stashick, an owner-therapist out of the Silverthorne office. “I think we live in this environment where we get to share in their passion. Just being able to get people back to doing the things they love and being able to share that with them is special. We definitely go the extra mile to appreciate our customers not just as a patients, but as a people.” Axis Sports Medicine is at **710 N. Summit Blvd. No. 103 in Frisco, 122 S. Main St. Unit D in Breckenridge and 1281 Blue River Parkway Unit A in Silverthorne.**

BY SAWYER D'ARGONNE

SAUCE

ON THE BLUE

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- ✓ Restaurant - Silverthorne (1st Place)
- ✓ Wine list
- ✓ Cocktail
- ✓ Bar
- ✓ Italian restaurant (1st Place)
- ✓ Deck/patio (1st Place)
- ✓ Service
- ✓ Apres Ski

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SERVICES

BEST DOCTOR:

DR. SHELBY OSBORNE, SWAN MOUNTAIN WOMEN'S CENTER

2ND: Dr. Elizabeth Winfield, High Country Healthcare

3RD: Dr. Adele Morano, High Country Healthcare

Dr. Shelby Osborne is an obstetrician gynecologist and co-owner of the Swan Mountain Women's Center, at Farmers Korner in Breckenridge. The Swan Mountain Women's Center is a combined OB-GYN and family medicine practice providing primary care services for Summit County and surrounding communities. The center provides low- and high-risk obstetric care, infertility services, gynecological services, menopause management and all primary care services.

Osborne said that, considering 83% of women use their gynecologist as their primary physician, having a local and accessible OB-GYN and dedicated women's health practice is critical for Summit County residents.

"A low-risk pregnant woman, on average, sees her

physician 16 times during pregnancy," Osborne said. "At a minimum, a woman should have a yearly exam, but many patients are seen more frequently for infertility, hormones, birth control and acute care visits. When a patient needs to be seen, driving to Denver turns a 30-minute appointment into more than a three-hour commitment."

When asked why she thinks her patients nominated her as a Best of Summit doctor, she said she believes it's the personal and direct approach she takes to practicing medicine that her patients appreciate.

"I am very candid with patients," Osborne said. "I try to be approachable so that patients are inclined to trust me and be honest with me. I always try to explain things so that the patient understands

clearly and could turn around and repeat it back to me. I always personally call all of my patients with abnormal results so that I can answer any questions the patient has about the issue at hand."

At the women's center, Osborne works with Dr. Andrew Catron, a founding partner, and Dr. Holly Hickman, a new addition to the center. Dr. Kathleen Cowie, who is also chief medical officer of the Summit Community Care Clinic, works once a week in the family practice, while Laura Amedro and Molly Lee serve as nurse practitioners twice a week.

Swan Mountain Women's Center is at **16172 Colorado Highway 9 in Breckenridge.**

BY DEEPAN DUTTA

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SERVICES

BEST DENTIST:

DR. BRYAN HILTON AND DR. CORRY MARCINCIN, SUMMIT DENTAL GROUP

2ND: Dr. Erin Sain, Backcountry Dental | **3RD:** Dr. Brett Amedro, Ten Mile Dental



since the '60s," Hilton said. "We have generations of families who have stuck with our practice, coming with their kids and grandkids."

Hilton and Marcincin are a married dentist team, having come up from Denver nearly seven years ago after both attending Temple University for their dental training.

Summit Dental Group's staff also features five hygienists along with dental assistants. Hilton said one of the biggest challenges in sustaining a successful dental practice in Summit is retaining their skilled staff, which they do by working hard but also maintaining a fun atmosphere at the office.

Hilton said Summit Dental Group is investing in new technology and expanding its services, including the ability to create digital dental impressions at the office, doing implants and a lot more cosmetic work.

Summit Dental Group also has introduced an insurance alternative for patients, a membership club that covers cleanings, X-rays and emergency visits. Hilton said it is very popular with current patients and saves them money.

Summit Dental Group is at **119 Main St. in Dillon.**

BY DEEPAN DUTTA

Dr. Bryan Hilton and Dr. Corry Marcincin have been voted Best of Summit dentists with their practice, Summit Dental Group in Dillon. Summit Dental Group is the oldest dental practice in Summit County, having been established in 1963. "We have a lot of patients who have been with us

BEST CHIROPRACTOR:

DR. JEFF AUTH, AUTH CHIROPRACTIC & VITALITY CENTER

2ND: Dr. John L. Graham, Chiropractic Health and Acupuncture

3RD: Dr. Ivo Waerlop, Summit Chiropractic & Rehabilitation

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SERVICES

BEST BARBER SHOP:

THE GENTLEMEN'S BARBERSHOP

2ND: Frisco Cuts | **3RD:** Kut & Klip Barber & Beauty



Photo by Sawyer D'Argonne

At The Gentleman's Barbershop, the community is king.

The Frisco establishment, just off Main Street, is no newcomer to the Best of Summit competition, having earned the title of the county's best barbershop for the past several years. Owner Scott Lemme said the shop's success is due to a constant desire to improve, a passion for the craft and strong

found something that most people never find in their lifetime for employment."

The Gentleman's Barbershop first opened its doors as a small, two-chair operation in Dillon almost 13 years ago. Though as demand began to grow, the shop was moved to Frisco, where it now boasts six chairs and five dedicated barbers. Inside, the shop sports an old-school-cool aesthetic, with records

relationships with community members.

"We love the craft of barbering," said Lemme, who took over ownership of the shop about 6 1/2 years ago. "It's important to us that we're constantly learning and growing. But something that's equally important is our clientele. If we didn't have them, we'd be nothing anyway. So we owe everything we have to our clients and the craft. And we love our jobs. We feel like we've

hanging from the walls and decadent leather chairs — "the type of place grandpa may have told you about."

"It's a throwback to a classic time and era," Lemme said. "It's a compliment to what used to be, and to the old ways. But with our hair cutting, we're in the modern age of barbering. So we're trying to combine the classic with modern."

But aesthetics only go so far. The barbers at The Gentleman's Barbershop are always trying to enhance their craft, challenging each other to improve and seek out new techniques.

"We didn't just learn how to cut hair at barber school and stick with it," said Steve Martin, a barber at the shop. "We do continuing education. We travel to different countries to learn different styles and techniques. We put a lot of care into it, and not just as individuals, because we're teaching each other all the time. We haven't become complacent, sticking with skills we learned years ago. We're constantly evolving."

And while visitors are sure to leave happy with their new style, a haircut is just part of what The Gentleman's Barbershop has to offer.

"It's not just coming in, getting a haircut and leaving," Martin said. "It's hearing the music, seeing the things on the wall and getting the full experience, and feeling better and wanting to share that experience with your friends once you leave."

BY SAWYER D'ARGONNE

BEST AUTO MAINTENANCE/REPAIR SHOP:

HIGH COUNTRY AUTO REPAIR

2ND: Summit Automotive Group | **3RD:** Goodway Auto Repair

BEST ARCHITECT:

ALLEN-GUERRA ARCHITECTURE

2ND: TC3 Architect | **3RD:** BHH Partners

BEST ACCOUNTING FIRM:

SWIFT, SNOW & ASSOCIATES

2ND: Stuhr & Associates | **3RD:** Austill's Assets

BEST TOY STORE:

PEAK-A-BOO TOYS

2ND: Stork & Bear Co | 3RD: Joy of Sox

Peak-A-Boo Toys is a long-standing toy store on Breckenridge's Main Street that features an impressive collection of toys. In fact, co-owner Josh Boyd said the large selection and sheer volume of toys is what makes the store unique. "It's just a fun place to come in and look around," Boyd said.

Peak-a-Boo Toys has an indoor kids' play area where children can interact and have fun. And there is a candy counter that carries a large selection of bulk candies — both new and nostalgic.

Boyd said whether you have kids or not, the store has plenty of fun gadgets and gag gifts for adults, as well.

The Boyds decided to open the store 17 years ago because there wasn't a toy store in Breckenridge. The former coffee shop owners decided they wanted to get back into retail. They have been living in the county for 30 years and running local businesses for 27.

"As Breckenridge has grown, the last 15 years has been just crazy around here, and we've grown with Breckenridge," Boyd said. "I'd say we're one of the busiest stores on Main Street. We've fully enjoyed our 30 years up here."

Peak-A-Boo Toys is at **117 S. Main St. in Breckenridge.**

BY TAYLOR SIENKIEWICZ

Courtesy Peak-A-Boo Toys



BEST SECONDHAND STORE:

SUMMIT THRIFT & TREASURE

2ND: Funky Trunk Boutique

3RD: Summit Habitat for Humanity Restore

BEST PLACE TO BUY A VEHICLE:

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2ND: Summit Ford

3RD: Red Mountain Autos

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2ND: Petco | 3RD: Animal Lover's Pet Supply

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SHOPPING

BEST MARIJUANA DISPENSARY & ACCESSORIES:

HIGH COUNTRY HEALING

2ND: Altitude Organic Cannabis | 3RD: Native Roots Dispensary Frisco

BEST LODGING/HOTEL:

FRISCO LODGE

2ND: Beaver Run Resort & Conference Center | 3RD: The Lodge at Breckenridge

BEST LIQUOR STORE:

BASECAMP WINE & SPIRITS

2ND: Dillon Ridge Liquors | 3RD: Antlers Liquor & Wine Cellar

BEST JEWELRY STORE:

SUMMIT GOLD

2ND: DonLo Mercantile | 3RD: Matheu's Fine Watches & Jewelry

BEST HARDWARE/BUILDING SUPPLY:

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SHOPPING

BEST INTERIOR DESIGN COMPANY:

MOUNTAIN COMFORT FURNISHINGS & DESIGN

2ND: ifurnish | 3RD: Collective Design + Furnishings

BEST GYM/FITNESS CENTER/HEALTH CLUB:

SILVERTHORNE RECREATION CENTER

2ND: Breckenridge Recreation Center | 3RD: CrossFit Breckenridge

BEST GROCERY STORE:

CITY MARKET

2ND: Whole Foods Market | 3RD: Natural Grocers

BEST GARDEN SUPPLY STORE/NURSERY:

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2ND: Alpine Gardens | 3RD: The Hydro Shack



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PETAL AND BEAN

2ND: City Market | 3RD: Little Flower Shop

BEST FLOORING COMPANY:

THE FRISCO FLOORING COMPANY

2ND: All Flooring Design | 3RD: Ten Mile Hardwoods

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2ND: Basecamp Wine & Spirits | 3RD: Next Page Books and Nosh



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SHOPPING

BEST FURNITURE STORE:

MOUNTAIN COMFORT FURNISHINGS & DESIGN

2ND: ifurnish | 3RD: Collective Design + Furnishings

Courtesy Mountain Comfort Furnishing & Design



Mountain Comfort Furnishings & Design has been in Frisco for two generations, as current owners Heidi and Andy Jarski bought the store from Andy's parents in 2014. Before buying the Frisco store, the couple had their own Mountain Comfort store in Idaho and still remain the owners of the store in Lake Tahoe.

The two decided to buy the Frisco store when they realized they were coming up to Summit County every weekend recreationally after a week of working in the science field. The Jarskis decided to switch careers and buy the store.

"We had a big passion and fire to make it successful, and we thought our scientific background would help," Heidi said.

The Jarskis keep the store up to date by staying current

on the latest technology and trends. Heidi mentioned that she and her husband are always going to trade shows and events.

"We've always wanted to provide the best quality for the best value," Heidi said. "We actually test the products ourselves."

Heidi said that since they know the Summit County environment well and have been thorough in finding out what works in the dry climate and what doesn't, they are able to vet furniture at trade shows that they think will likely crack or split in the mountain environment.

The Frisco location caters to ski condos, vacation homes and new local residences with wood furnishings and rustic designs. The store also has a focus on

flexible sleeping options — common needs in the High Country — like bunk beds, trundle beds and sleeper sofas.

As Andy grew up in Frisco, the Jarskis remain in tune with the community and community needs. Andy is a member of the Rotary Club of Summit County, and Heidi is on the board of Breckenridge Music. The two also volunteer as children's sport coaches and in the classroom. Heidi said they try to remain very involved with education.

Mountain Comfort Furnishings & Design is at **507 Summit Blvd. in Frisco.**

BY TAYLOR SIENKIEWICZ

BEST CLOTHING STORE:

COLISCO WEARABLES

2ND: The Flying Crane | **3RD:** Rivers Clothing Company

Colisco Wearables, a high-end clothing store on Main Street in Frisco, sells men and women's fashion and specializes in outdoor, yoga and other active-style clothing. The store also carries several handmade Colorado items.

Owner Lisa Ton opened Colisco Wearables in Frisco three years ago after several years of success with her first store, The Flying Crane. Ton said she was confident another clothing business would do well in Frisco, especially one that combines fashion trends with outdoor clothing trends.

"Our store is unique because we provide comfort fashion," Ton said. "With the clothes that we offer, we are able to provide personal, limited items that aren't at a lot of places."

Another aspect of the store that makes it unique is that Colisco Wearables is inside a historic World War II airplane hangar. The building has been restored to preserve

historic elements and function as a retail store.

"When we took over with the store, the building was just so old," Ton said. "When we remodeled it, we just restored (the hangar), and now it's beautiful, and it's a highlight of the store. It just makes the store so unique and different."

While Ton has been working with High Country fashion for several years now, she said it is still a challenge to keep up.

"Every day, with the market being new and fashion, you have to reinvent yourself. So it's a lot of work, but it's a lot of fun at the same time," Ton said.

Ton prides herself on the fact that customers see new inventory every time they come into the store because she brings in new inventory each week. She said locals frequent the store because they know the items have



Courtesy Colisco Wearables

limited availability.

"I'm very grateful for the opportunities in town, and I'm very grateful for the local people that give this store support over the years," Ton said.

Colisco Wearables is at **416 E. Main St. in Frisco.**

BY TAYLOR SIENKIEWICZ



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SPORTS & RECREATION

BEST SKI/SNOWBOARD SHOP:

PIONEER SPORTS

2ND: Wilderness Sports | **3RD (tie):** Precision Ski & Golf | Pup's Glide Shop

When Brett Ford joined the Pioneer Sports staff as general manager three years ago, the industry veteran was looking for a rewarding independent ski and board shop experience. He found that at Pioneer, where he feels the shop has a solid leg up not only on its corporate competition, but other independent shops, in terms of customer service and value at a price.

Yes, Pioneer has some of the cheapest ski and board rental prices in the county, but Ford said the shop prides itself on providing top-notch gear at those reasonable prices. While the shop doesn't cycle in a new fleet of 100 rentals every year, Pioneer does recycle out its old gear regularly. For example,

this winter, no ski or snowboard in the store will have been used longer than one season.

Ford said he's confident in saying no one else in the county services its equipment as well as Pioneer does. With a couple of tune guys in Dylan Garner and Jason Matalavage, who've been around for years, Pioneer tunes each of its rentals after every use by a customer.

"Experience speaks for itself," Ford said. "I went to school for stuff in this industry, and they are still able to show me stuff."

Throughout the shop, Ford said Pioneer brings a genuine approach to interacting with guests led by store manager Jeff Crandall. Though the shop

doesn't sell any hard goods, Pioneer also prides itself on its end-of-season sale of its demo equipment, shuffling out the past season's fleet at discounted prices. The shop also sheds winter a bit earlier than other stores. As soon the calendar hits April, Pioneer throws all of its winter stuff under a tent out front marked down to a 40% discount, "which is almost more highly desired from the local than maybe the brand new equipment," Ford said.

Pioneer Sports has locations at **842 N. Summit Blvd. in Frisco** and **191 Blue River Parkway in Silverthorne**.

BY ANTONIO OLIVERO



Photo by Antonio Olivero

BEST SKI AND SNOWBOARD MOUNTAIN:

COPPER MOUNTAIN RESORT

2ND: Arapahoe Basin Ski Area

3RD: Breckenridge Ski Resort



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SPORTS & RECREATION

BEST RAFTING COMPANY:

PERFORMANCE TOURS RAFTING

2ND: KODI Rafting | **3RD:** AVA Rafting & Zipline

Performance Tours has been a staple not only of Summit County but all of Colorado's High Country for more than three decades. Started in 1986 by Kevin and MaryJo Foley, Performance Tours operates rafting trips out of its Frisco and Breckenridge outposts down to Buena Vista, one of the country's most popular rafting areas. Whether rafting The Numbers, Brown's Canyon or another waterway down south, families and groups have their choice of Buena Vista rafting adventures out of Performance Tours' Frisco outpost. But if you're looking to stick within Summit County, Performance Tours also offers shorter day trips down a several mile stretch of the Blue River north of Silverthorne. This summer was an especially fun season for rafting on the Blue, as all of last winter and spring's snowmelt combined with colder-than-usual temperatures and copious rainfall to peak water

flows on the Blue higher than they'd been in years.

Through all of those years — from down years like 2018 to this summer's thrilling, raging conditions — Performance Tours has been the rafting constant in Summit County. Despite more than a quarter century of experience and success, Kevin and MaryJo bring a down-to-earth, homey feel to Performance Tours, as they still run the day-to-day operations along with their daughter, Kathryn, who works in the office and son, Dan, who guides trips.

The Foleys' backstory is true Summit County. Kevin and MaryJo met at Breckenridge Ski Resort in the '80s, when Kevin was a ski instructor and MJ worked ski patrol. Since then, the Foley family has always lived in Breckenridge and remained active in the community. With family life based here, the Foleys operate four Performance Tours offices, with Buena Vista and Cañon City hubs along with their

Breckenridge and Frisco outposts. Wherever you're rafting with Performance Tours, you'll be guided by a yearly Best of Summit award winner with the most experienced guides on the river, with many senior guides and staff members having been with the company since the beginning.

"We are grateful to live in a wonderful community that supports local businesses and recognizes high-quality customer service," Kevin Foley said. "Thank you to everyone who voted for Performance Tours. It's been a pleasure to paddle with you for the last 33 years."

Performance tours has Summit County locations at **107 Ski Hill Road in Breckenridge** and **842 N. Summit Blvd. in Frisco**.

BY ANTONIO OLIVERO



Courtesy Performance Tours Rafting

SPORTS & RECREATION

BEST PLAYGROUND:

RAINBOW PARK

2ND: Dillon Marina Park | 3RD: High Line Railroad Park

BEST PLACE TO FISH:

UPPER COLORADO RIVER

2ND: Dillon Reservoir | 3RD: Snake River



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SPORTS & RECREATION

BEST PLACE TO CAMP:

BOREAS PASS

2ND: Peak One Campground | 3RD: Twin Lakes

BEST PARK:

RAINBOW PARK

2ND: Frisco Bay Marina | 3RD: Dillon Marina Park

BEST MOUNTAIN/OUTDOOR GEAR:

WILDERNESS SPORTS

2ND: REI | 3RD: Mountain Outfitters

BEST MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAIL:

PEAKS TRAIL

2ND: Colorado Trail | 3RD: Aspen Alley

BEST HIKING TRAIL:

LILY PAD LAKE TRAIL

2ND: Mohawk Lakes Trail | 3RD: Rainbow Lake Trail

BEST GOLF COURSE:

BRECKENRIDGE GOLF CLUB

2ND: Keystone Ranch Golf Course | 3RD: Raven Golf Club At Three Peaks

BEST FLY-FISHING OUTFITTER:

CUTTHROAT ANGLERS

2ND: Mountain Angler | 3RD: The Colorado Angler

BEST BIKE SHOP/RENTAL:

WILDERNESS SPORTS

2ND: Rebel Sports | 3RD: Carvers Ski & Bike Rentals

BEST FISHING GUIDE :

JOHN SPRIGGS, CUTTHROAT ANGLERS

2ND: Trent Jones, Cutthroat Anglers | **3RD:** Drue Eymann, Mountain Anglers

Growing up in Littleton and attending school in the Vail Valley, John Spriggs has known about the area's fly-fishing waters for a long time. After learning how to fly-fish in Vail at age 10, Spriggs spent time out on the Eagle and Colorado Rivers and Gore Creek.

When a love for skiing brought Spriggs at the age of 22 up to Montana to pursue that wintertime passion, his love for fly-fishing grew.

"It fit my life really well," Spriggs said. "Just living the lifestyle: skiing in the winter, fly-fishing in the summer."

Following his ski passion, Spriggs lived out of his truck for three years, spending time pursuing those passions in British Columbia, Alaska and Oregon. Spriggs returned to Colorado and began guiding for Cutthroat Anglers in Silverthorne in May. Since then, Spriggs has learned from

Cutthroat guiding veterans like Summit County local Trent Jones, who has experience ski coaching and fly-fish guiding.

Spriggs said he was hesitant for years to fly-fish guide because he didn't want the work element of the job to soil his love for the sport. But after a summer out on the water with Cutthroat, Spriggs said that hasn't been the case at all, as last winter's huge snow season has made the fishing good all summer.

"It's great to take people out who show interest in the sport and want to have this be a hobby, something they really get into," Spriggs said. "When you're teaching people and you know they are going to go on and fish for the rest of their life, it's just cool to see them at their beginnings getting into it."

What has Spriggs learned it takes to make for a good

fly-fishing guide here in Summit County?

"Every client is different," Spriggs said. "Every client has a different expectation. And not putting so much pressure on catching fish. It's about showing clients and people who come out here that fly-fishing is more about having a good time and going out to cool destinations. It's about getting outside, being in the moment — the now, a mindful state. The fish are just a plus, not putting too much pressure on that. Making sure clients are having fun and just enjoying being out somewhere a lot of people don't get to be: on the river."

Cutthroat Anglers is at **400 Blue River Parkway in Silverthorne.**

BY ANTONIO OLIVERO

Courtesy Performance Tours Rafting



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