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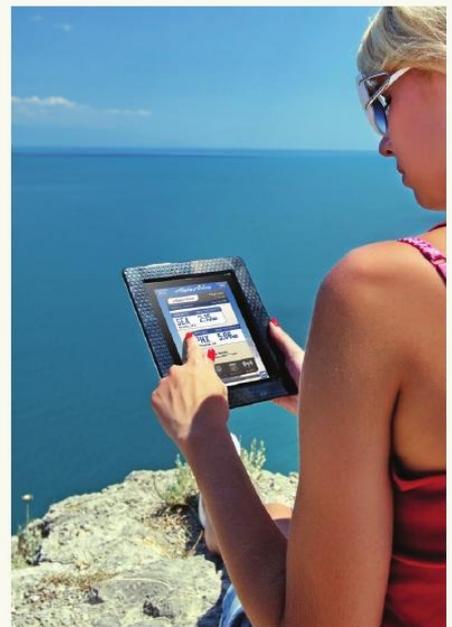


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A life of adventure.

Cover: Sun Valley offers many kilometers of groomed Nordic trails. Photo by Kevin Syms.

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Brad Tilden
Chief Executive Officer

Why Are We Still Here?

This month, CEO Brad Tilden explains how Alaska Air Group has survived and thrived within the tumultuous airline industry. It's a fascinating story. As he makes clear, we wouldn't be where we are today if it weren't for our employees' commitment to creating an enjoyable experience for our customers and building a great business. We prize your loyalty, and through our actions, we aim to express our gratitude with every flight.

—Glenn Johnson, Horizon Air President and Alaska Air Group EVP

This is the time of New Year's resolutions, and it's appropriate for us to think about ours here at Alaska Air Group. Our industry is changing rapidly with multiple airline combinations. As I think about our resolutions for 2014, one question I'm asking myself is this: Why, after all of the turmoil in the industry and all of the airline consolidation, is Alaska still here?

It's an interesting question. In 1978, the airline industry was deregulated. With that act of Congress, we moved from an environment in which the Civil Aeronautics Board allocated routes and regulated fares to the system we have today, in which we largely fly wherever we like and compete—sometimes intensely—for every single passenger.

So what did Alaska Airlines look like back in 1978? We had 11 airplanes and fewer than 1,200 employees, and we were the 24th-largest airline in the United States. We were considered scrappy at best, but even then we had a secret sauce—an incredibly dedicated group of employees who were committed to our survival.

Today we have 183 airplanes and 13,000 employees, and after American and US Airways completely merge, we'll move up to the sixth-largest airline in the country (though still much smaller than the largest carriers). You may be surprised to hear that in our journey from No. 24 to No. 6, *Alaska did not surpass a single other airline in size!* That's right: All of the other airlines merged, were acquired or liquidated. That says more about the last 35 years in our industry than anything else I can think of.

Which brings us back to the question: Why are we still here? The only answer we've been able to come up with, and this is something many of you tell us regularly, is that we're still here because of our people and, in particular, because of the friendly and personal service they provide to you, our customers.

One thing that struck me when I came to Alaska Airlines nearly 23 years ago was our customer-centric culture. Those of us in leadership positions at Alaska are honored to work with the best employees in the business—people who are talented and dedicated, and who enjoy working together to help Alaska compete and win. Their caring and dedication comes from their fundamental values of integrity and doing the right thing—qualities we call Alaska Spirit and Horizon Heart. As I've watched the company over the last several years, I've seen that these exceptional frontline folks are led by equally talented individuals who have made our airlines reliable and on time, simplified our fares, improved our Mileage Plan, built our customer-facing technology, increased our presence in our communities, and lowered our costs so that we can lower our fares.

So, that is my answer to the question of why we're still here. We're still here because of our people.

It's been a phenomenal journey from No. 24 to No. 6, and yet it's humbling to recognize that we still have a market share that is just 3.5 percent of the U.S. total. We want to keep growing this share, and we also want to thrive and prosper as an independent airline. We're proud of the role we play in the economies where we operate. In Washington state alone, we're responsible for nearly 22,000 jobs (directly and indirectly) and \$5.5 billion in economic activity. For us to prosper as an independent company, though, we must continue to perform strongly for all of our constituents.

In this time of New Year's resolutions, here are ours: We are going to double down on our commitment to doing everything we can to keep Alaska both a great airline and a great business. We're going to ensure that we not only operate safely and on time, but that we also continue to offer award-winning service, low fares and a hassle-free customer experience. We're going to keep making Alaska a great place to work and a good place to invest. Those are our commitments to you, whether you're a customer, an employee, a community leader or an investor, and I'm hoping you'll help hold us to them.

Happy New Year to you and yours, and thank you for flying with us today.

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RENO-TAHOE

Nordic trails

Journey across breathtaking snowscapes while cross-country skiing in the Reno-Tahoe area this winter. Many of the region's resorts offer scenic trails, with terrain ranging from beginner to advanced. Many also offer lessons and rentals. Below are some of the options:



The Resort at Squaw Creek boasts more than 18 kilometers in its well-groomed Nordic system, which winds through a meadow and then into rolling hills (squawcreek.com).

Ed Z'berg Sugar Pine Point State Park maintains a nearly 18 km trail system close to Lake Tahoe. Several trails have beautiful views of the lake. The state park was the site of the cross-country and biathlon events at the 1960 Olympics (parks.ca.gov).

Northstar California Resort has 35-plus km of groomed trails, including some with wilderness warming huts (northstarcalifornia.com).

Other areas with Nordic trails include Hope Valley Outdoors, 40 km (hopevalleyoutdoors.com); Kirkwood Mountain Resort, 80 km (kirkwood.com); Royal Gorge, 200 km (royalgorge.com); Tahoe Cross Country Ski Area, 65 km (tahoexc.org); and Tahoe Donner, 100 km (tahoedonner.com).

—Eric Freedman

PUGET SOUND AREA, WA

Creatures featured

Family-friendly animal-themed events

Lots of people talk to animals, but not very many listen, as author Benjamin Hoff has famously written. One of the most celebrated exceptions is Doctor Dolittle, a beloved fictional character whose story is presented in the 1928 German animated film *Doctor Dolittle* being shown at the **Children's Film Festival Seattle**, which runs Jan. 23–Feb. 2. The film, featuring hand-cut illustrations such as the one at right, will be accompanied by the world premiere of a musical score by composing duo Miles & Karina. The festival's 120-plus movies will also include films about horses (childrensfilmfestivalseattle.org).

The film festival is one of the many fun, family-friendly, animal-related events taking place in the Puget Sound area this winter and spring.

On Feb. 8, you can talk and listen to animals during **Woodland Park Zoo's Valentine's Celebration**, when animals will receive

treats such as heart-shaped fruit ice pops. The zoo will have Easter treats for the animals on April 19, and on May 1, the zoo will welcome two adult cheetahs as part of a Species Survival Plan coordinated among accredited zoos (zoo.org).

On Feb. 14 and 15, children up to age 4 can enjoy **Seattle Symphony's Safari Valentine** interactive Tiny Tots class, with songs and stories featuring African animals. The symphony also has a new Family Connections program, with free Masterworks or Seattle Pops concert tickets for children ages 8–18 with the purchase of adult tickets; as a set number of free youth tickets is available for each concert (seattlesymphony.org).

Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium's Ocean Commotion Celebration will take place Feb. 15–17,



spotlighting ocean conservation, and sea creatures big and small. Visitors will be able to touch stingrays in the new Stingray Cove exhibit, build a mini-reef and participate in many other activities. The zoo is located in Tacoma, south of Seattle (pdza.org).

"**Cavalía Odysseo**," a spectacular new show that features 63 horses, 47 equestrian artists and high-tech theatrical effects, will thrill adults and

kids alike. This stunning ode to horse and human will run Feb. 26–March 9 under a big top at Marymoor Park in Redmond, east of Seattle (cavalia.net).

Stuart Little, the story of an endearing mouse, will be on stage March 2 at the **Everett Civic Auditorium**, north of Seattle. *Splat the Cat*, the rambunctious tale of a feline's first day of school, will be performed May 4 at the auditorium (villagepiedpiper.org).

Plot, music, costumes and puppetry have helped to make **Disney's The Lion King** one of the most phenomenal Broadway musicals of all time, and the show will be on stage at Seattle's historic **Paramount Theatre** March 12–April 6. *Disney's The Lion King* is coming to The Paramount as part of the Broadway at The Paramount Series, which is sponsored in part by Alaska Airlines (stgpresents.org).

From April 10–May 18, **Art Dog**—the lively story of a canine artist/superhero, based on the book by Thacher Hurd—will be performed at **Seattle Children's Theatre** at Seattle Center (sct.org).

—Michele Andrus Dill



I THOUGHT I WAS ON TOP OF THE WORLD

By Pat O'Day

My career had been spent in radio and rock and roll. I ran the No. 1 radio station in Seattle and on the air when I also started the world's largest rock-and-roll concert company. On this day I was broadcasting my show from the top of Seattle's new skyscraper, the Columbia Tower. I mean, what could be wrong? Well, several things.

I'd been drinking to excess for years. Being on the road with our rock acts, from Hendrix to Zeppelin, The Beach Boys to Bad Company, cocaine and other things also entered the picture. Oh sure, I thought I was just fine, but several acquaintances saw it differently. There was an unwelcome intervention where a little group of friends cornered me and demanded that I get treatment. "Are you kidding?" I thought. I'm no weak, simpering alcoholic or addict. I just like to drink.

The group demanded I go to Schick Shadel Hospital in Seattle, which has a unique ten-day medical treatment that halts addictions. "OK, fine." I said, "Ten days, these guys will get off my back and I can drink again, socially of course."

Ten days later I walked out of Schick Shadel Hospital to never, ever, have another drink or any bad substance. My habit, the urges, the desire and the mixed-up rationale had simply gone, vanished; I was sober, happy and healed. **So, may I tell you the rest of the story?**

Mr. Charles Shadel of Seattle once said, "Something just isn't right. People are addicted to alcohol. It's wrecking lives. They know they should quit, and they want to, but they can't. Churches, rehab centers, counselors all try to help, but the craving seems impossible to extinguish. Soon, they're right back into drinking or the drugs. Shadel said, "We must be doing something wrong!"



Photo of Pat O'Day, Seattle radio personality, celebrating the completion of Seattle's Columbia Tower with a broadcast in 1984. (Photo courtesy of Dennis Law)

He joined with Doctors Lemere and Voeghtlin in search of a solution. It was clear from their studies that the conscious portion of the brain, the portion you're using as you read this, once addicted, lacks the power to erase overpowering urges of dependency. Those latent cravings simply become overwhelming. So they concluded, "To truly halt the habit, we must employ a more powerful portion of the brain, the subconscious." **And they did!** Their stunning achievement created a medical treatment that is proven to be very successful. **Logically, you're asking, "What is it they do?"** The answer is two powerful but painless medical innovations were combined to erase patients' habits.

First, they developed a powerful "Counter Conditioning" method that brings the patient to hate the sight, smell, taste and thoughts of using the addictive substance, be it alcohol or drugs. Further medication isn't required to maintain this protective shield.

Second, the doctors introduced medically administered deep sleep therapy. The cleansing of the patient's low self-esteem, guilt, regrets and other emotional burdens are critical to long-term mental health.

Understand that Schick Shadel's approach contends these habits are not the fault of the patient. We live in a world of intoxicants and many people are genetically unprotected from their addictive impact. Such vulnerability is passed from parents to kids, generation to generation.

Following these two treatments, patients can leave the hospital after just 10 days, free from cravings, guilt and destructive habits. The original wonderful individual returns. This success is enjoyed by many thousands of former patients including myself. It's now been 27 sober, happy, healthy years for me. It took no willpower; they simply erased my addictions.

So may I say to you, "Your life on this earth is so very short. You needn't let intoxicants control or wreck it, when eliminating the problem is so quick and easy at world-famous Schick Shadel Hospital."

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EUREKA, MT

Eco-friendly instruments

When Ray Jacobs was a fourth-grade teacher giving after-school guitar lessons to students, he realized that some of the instruments were too big for the children. He decided to build a kid-size three-stringed dulcimer that students could easily learn to play.

When Jacobs retired in 1991 after more than 20 years of teaching in Eureka, Montana, about 65 miles north of Kalispell, he began dedicating his time to making inexpensive instruments for children and adults from eco-friendly products and “found objects” such as scrap wood and cardboard. To date, he’s made more than 1,000 instruments, including fiddles, banjos and round-bodied guitars, many of them for members of the Eureka Folk Music Society, which he and his wife, Shirley (whom he met at the 1990 Montana State Fiddle Contest), founded in 1991.

Jacobs, who lives in a log house powered by generators and solar panels, says his goal



The Eureka Folk Music Society typically meets the first and third Monday of each month. Anyone is welcome to join the group to play or listen. For more information: mtsunburst@yahoo.com; 406-297-0197.

is to be respectful of nature in crafting his instruments while allowing more people to make music. “The fact that I can make a simple instrument that is easy to play makes it fun for me and fun for other people,” he says. In January 2013, Oregon-based Hand Print Press published

an instructional book based on Jacobs’ instrument crafting, titled *Make a Ray Jacobs Rocky Mountain Dulcimer*. Jacobs also sells CDs of his and Shirley’s music, and instructional dulcimer-playing videos. Contact: P.O. Box 794, Eureka, MT 59917. —Heidi Dong

PORTLAND, OR

Fertile Ground festival

Seven short musicals, all performed—with dancing—on a 4-foot-by-4-foot stage by 4x4=Musicals, will be among the creative pieces presented during Fertile Ground—A City-Wide Festival of New Works, January 23–February 2 at various Portland venues. The festival, celebrating its fifth anniversary, will also feature full-length plays, script readings, acrobatics, dance and comedy.

Fertile Ground was launched by the Portland Area Theatre Alliance to showcase a variety of performing arts, says Festival Director Nicole Lane.

The works represent all stages of the creative process, from early drafts of

scripts to improv-incorporating productions such as Hand2Mouth Theatre’s *Pep Talk* (shown below), to the world premiere of *Groovin’ Greenhouse*, a collaborative dance production that showcases groups such as Polaris Dance Theatre, Automal dance group and the PDX Dance Collective.

The two main criteria artists must meet to participate are that their work must be new, and

it must be Portland-generated. This year’s festival will feature 77 projects. Attendees can pay for each event à la carte, either online or at the door, or purchase an all-access Festival Pass for \$50 (available online only). Contact: fertilegroundpdx.org.

—Melissa Croce



AROUND THE ROUTE SYSTEM

news¬es

■ The Walla Walla (WA) Chamber Music Festival, featuring chamber music, fine wines and a free concert for kids, takes place Jan. 16-19 (wwcmf.org).

■ Dozens of model railways will be on display during the 40th Annual Model Railroad Show at Seattle’s Pacific Science Center, Jan. 18-20. Visitors can also enjoy hands-on activities and crafts, and take a ride on the Iron Horse Railway child-size train (pacificsciencecenter.org).



■ Savor chocolate from the Northwest and beyond during Chocolate Fest, Jan. 24-26, at the Oregon Convention Center in Portland (chocolatefest.org).

■ The June Lake Winter Festival and Triple Threat Winter Triathlon takes place Jan. 24 and 25 in the Mammoth Lakes, CA, area (visitjune.com).

■ Teams of ice artists from around the world will display their creations during the Ice on Whyte Ice Carving Festival, Jan. 24-Feb. 2 in Edmonton, AB (iceonwhyte.ca).

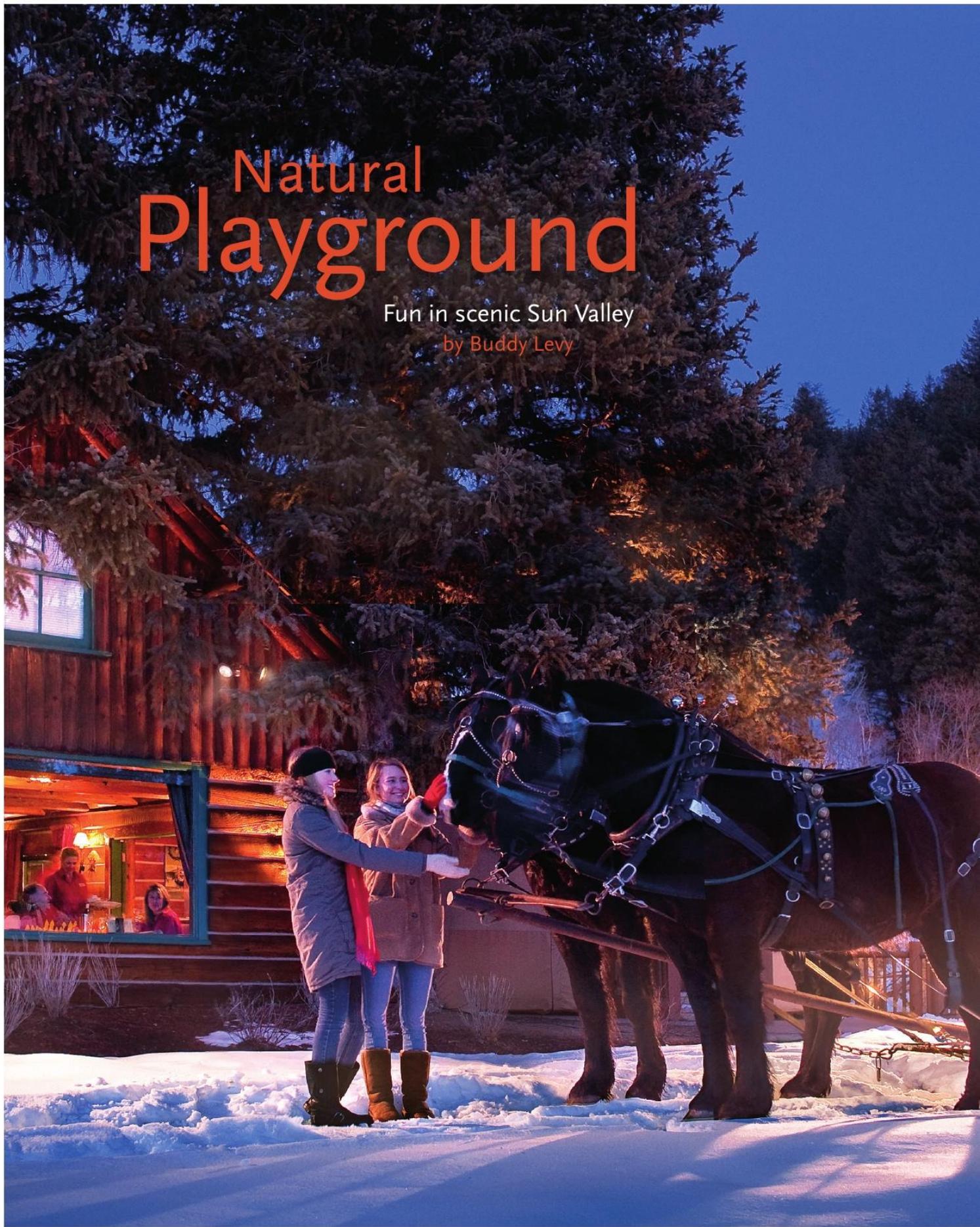
■ The world premiere of the poignant comedy *Warren (or) Those People*, by award-winning playwright Brian Quirk, will be staged by Boise Contemporary Theater, Jan. 29-Feb. 22 (bctheater.org).

BOTTOM: ANNA M. CAMPBELL; TOP: RAY JACOBS AND AN INSTRUMENT HE CRAFTED. PHOTO BY JON GRANDELL; FAR RIGHT: MODEL TRAIN, JANE ESTES

Natural Playground

Fun in scenic Sun Valley

by Buddy Levy





I am gliding over firm snow with a smooth and rhythmic cadence: kick, glide, kick, glide. Wind tightens my cheeks as I zoom “classic style” along one of the manicured trails maintained by the Sun Valley Nordic & Snowshoe Center.

It feels good to propel myself forward near the bank of Trail Creek on a nearly 10-kilometer route that links Boundary Loop and Proctor Loop. Blood pumps through my limbs with each stride. My lungs fill with cold afternoon mountain air. My pulse rises with the first hill. I try to draw on everything my father taught me when I was a kid as I “herringbone” up the hill, using the inside edges of the skis to bite in and allow me to climb in what amounts to a reverse snowplow.

My dad, Dr. Lynn “Buck” Levy, competed for the United States in Nordic skiing at the 1956 Olympics in Cortina d’Ampezzo, Italy, and he taught me how to cross-country ski when I was 6 years old. Over the years I became proficient, not great, while growing up in Sun Valley, but I came to love the vigorous physicality of Nordic skiing—the whole-body workout—and the beauty of Sun Valley’s 40-plus kilometers of groomed trails, which course over hills and through trees, and are part of the extensive 200-kilometer network in Blaine County.

LEFT: Visitors can take a festive sleigh ride to dinner at historic Trail Creek Cabin, a favorite of author Ernest Hemingway’s. **ABOVE:** Sun Valley offers snowshoeing opportunities ranging from easy to challenging, with equipment rentals available for children and adults.



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At the top of the hill, I stop to drink some water—and to drink in the spectacular panorama: To the southwest, Bald Mountain—Sun Valley Resort’s signature ski hill, at 9,150 feet—stands sentinel over the Wood River Valley, while southeast of where I stand, Proctor and Ruud mountains gleam in the sunset.

People come to Sun Valley, Idaho—America’s original year-round destination resort—because it’s one of the most magnificent natural playgrounds on the planet. Winter means activities such as skiing (alpine and Nordic), snowboarding, sleigh rides and snowshoeing. Summer means activities such as golfing, fishing and watching the renowned Sun Valley On Ice show. And no matter when you come, you can relax at the resort’s spa or heated outdoor pools, ice skate on one of the country’s few year-round outdoor rinks, soak up the warming solar rays (there’s a reason it’s called Sun Valley) and enjoy the spectacular views. Although I now live in northern Idaho because of a job opportunity, and I travel to destinations across the globe, I still strive to visit the Sun Valley area every winter and summer, taking advantage of the extraordinary recreation in this scenic part of the Gem State.

Sleigh Rides

The view from a sleigh in winter is unique and memorable. You can see the horses’ heads bobbing along, the snow-frosted evergreens, the shadowy mountains at sunset. A dinner sleigh ride to Trail Creek Cabin is a family tradition. After finishing my cross-country ski, I meet my wife, Camie, and our teenagers, Logan and Hunter, at the Sun Valley Inn, where we climb aboard a green-trimmed red sleigh for a brisk evening adventure.

Each sleigh can hold 20 people; families bundle together under blankets against the cold. The kids love the two bay-colored draft horses that pull our sleigh, their harnesses jingling through the quiet twilight.

It’s a fun half-hour ride back in time to the 1937 cabin, with the horses huffing big plumes of steam into the air and snorting as we sip hot chocolate from thermoses we’ve brought along. (You can also buy hot chocolate at the Euro-style Konditorei in Sun Valley Village, just a short walk from the inn.) A real Idaho cowboy named Harold, wearing chaps and a weathered broad-brim hat, drives our sleigh. He tells a lifetime of Idaho ranching and horse stories as the sleigh whisks down the track.



Did you know?
The name “Sun Valley” was thought up by a New York PR agent, Steve Hannigan, who deemed the name appropriate for a place that receives 250 days of sunshine a year.



At Trail Creek Cabin—once an evening hangout for Ernest Hemingway and his friends—we enter a rustic, fire-warmed dining room for a family-style dinner of delicious grilled Idaho steelhead trout and Cornish game hens. After a dessert of all-natural cinnamon ice cream from Toni’s Sun Valley Ice Cream Co., we buy some hot toddies and hot chocolate for the starlit ride back to the inn. The lights of the snowcats grooming Bald Mountain and the resort’s beginner and terrain-park hill, Dollar Mountain, flicker in the distance, beckoning us to come skiing tomorrow.

ABOVE: Après-ski options include socializing around the firepit at River Run Lodge. LEFT: Sun Valley is also kid-friendly, with a SnowSports School for youngsters of all skill levels.

Downhill Skiing and Snowboarding

Sun Valley and skiing have been synonymous since the resort opened in 1936, complete with the world’s first chairlift. The vista from the top of Baldy (as the locals call Bald Mountain) near Lookout Restaurant ranks among those I prize most in the world.

Perched above the historic former mining town of Ketchum, I can see the brawny 11,000-foot peaks of the Boulder Mountains and other peaks in the Sawtooth National Forest to the north, while east across the valley jut the even higher Pioneers, with Hyndman Peak towering above 12,000 feet.

From Baldy’s summit I can also see paragliders in the cerulean skies. (Paragliders soar on the wind here both winter and summer; during ski season they use a one-way gondola ticket to get to a launch

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Morningstar Large Cap Value Ranking (based on total returns)

November 30, 2013	1 Year	5 Year	10 Year
BVEFX Percentile Ranking %	9th	26th	8th
Number of Funds in Peer Group	1,209	940	610

Annualized Performance

November 30, 2013	10 Years
BVEFX	9.10%
Russell 1000 Value	7.96%
S&P 500	7.69%

September 30, 2013	1 Year	5 Years	Since Inception 11/03/03
BVEFX	26.97%	9.54%	8.50%
Russell 1000 Value	22.30%	8.86%	7.33%
S&P 500	19.34%	10.02%	6.96%

Performance figures shown are past performance and are not a guarantee of future results. The investment return and principal value of an investment will fluctuate so that an investor's shares, when redeemed, may be worth more or less than their original cost. Current performance of the fund may be lower or higher than the performance quoted. Performance data current to the most recent month end may be obtained by calling 800-551-3998. The fund imposes a 1% redemption fee on shares redeemed within 30 days of purchase. Performance data does not reflect the redemption fee. If it had, returns would be lower. Periods over one year are annualized. The total gross expense ratio of the Fund as disclosed in the most recent prospectus is 1.10% and the net expense ratio after contractual fee waivers is 0.94% for BVEFX. The Advisor has contractually agreed to waive fees through February 28, 2014. Information provided with respect to the Fund's Expense Ratio are subject to change at any time.

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point.) And under my feet is some of the finest skiing and riding anywhere.

Baldy's 12 lifts, many of them high-speed, access 66 runs and 2,054 acres of prime and varied terrain. The mountain has a number of unique "sides" or areas, offering trails for all abilities. I like to follow the sun, skiing The Bowls and Seattle Ridge in the morning, including the challenging black-diamond moguls of Mayday Bowl, then taking it easy on less strenuous Seattle Ridge runs such as Christin's Silver and Byron's Park. I always smile with pride while cruising down Christin's Silver, since it's named after a friend and former Sun Valley Ski Team teammate, Christin Cooper, who won the silver medal in the giant slalom at the 1984 Sarajevo Winter Olympics.

I spend afternoons on the Warm Springs side, named for the natural mineral springs at the base. These slopes are bathed in sunlight then, and I like to attempt long, thigh-burning nonstops, combining Warm Springs Face, Mid Warm Springs and Lower Warm Springs.

Treeless Dollar Mountain, about two miles from Baldy, is the best place for beginners and children to boost their comfort level on the slopes, and Dollar also boasts a world-class terrain park. Teens and young-of-heart-and-joints adults rip the 22-foot walls (Olympic size) of the 620-foot-long super-pipe, and do spins and tricks on Dollar's 76 rails.

Snowshoeing

Snowshoeing recalls the earliest origins of manned travel over snow, and is a great way to get the family out together. My wife and kids accompany me on a morning tromp out to the Hemingway Memorial, a pleasant two-mile roundtrip jaunt to a granite monument on

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: Sun Valley is known for excellent cycling trails and also hosts the Ride Sun Valley Mountain Bike Festival, June 19–22 this year. Summer concerts are performed at the Sun Valley Pavilion. The White Clouds Course—one of Sun Valley Resort's three courses—is nicknamed 'Cloud Nine.'



COURTESY: SUN VALLEY RESORT (3)

Free Concerts

Ketchum–Sun Valley also has many cultural offerings, including art exhibits, galleries, museums, theatrical performances and one of my top summertime activities: free-admission concerts at



the Sun Valley Pavilion. Since it opened in summer 2008, the open-air pavilion, whose 3,000-square-foot stage is protected by a curved, copper-shingled roof, has hosted annual Sun Valley Summer Symphony events. A high-strength white fabric stretches across more than 1,500 padded seats, while another 4,000 concertgoers can listen from the undulating lawn—a natural amphitheater that comes with a mountain view as you kick back and enjoy music ranging from classical to pops.

With more than 100 musicians coming together from distinguished orchestras across the country, such as the New York Philharmonic and the San Francisco Symphony, the Sun Valley Summer Symphony bills itself as the largest privately funded free-admission orchestra in the country. Guest performers scheduled for this season, July 26–August 19, include Joshua Bell, who has been called the greatest American violinist active today, and the Grammy-nominated Cuban stylings of Tiempo Libre, who will perform with acclaimed Cuban pianist and composer Alfredo Rodriguez. The symphony also will present a concert featuring the music of animated films such as *Toy Story*, *The Incredibles* and *Cars*. A separate, also free, In Focus Series offers 90-minute concerts that include discussions about each piece on the program.

In addition, the free-admission Kids' Music Tent entertains up to 30 children ages 4 to 10 with hands-on music-related projects while their parents attend a concert (reservations are accepted for the first 10 children; an additional 20 concert-night drop-ins are accepted); svsummersymphony.org. —B.L.



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the bank of Trail Creek. It's fun talking about Hemingway's writing as our snowshoes squeak over the creamy, freshly manicured corduroy.

Accessible from the Sun Valley Club, which has rental equipment for kids and adults, Sun Valley Resort's 10 miles of designated snowshoe trails range from flat and easy, such as Glenn's Loop, just one mile long, to the more hilly and challenging 4.5-mile White Clouds Loop. The White Clouds Loop circumnavigates Sun Valley Resort's newest golf nine and provides sweeping views of the valley and Sun Valley Village below.

The Trail Creek Course, Sun Valley's original 18-hole layout, is referred to as "the Christmas Tree Farm" for the hundreds of perfectly symmetrical spruce and pine trees that line the fairways of this gorgeous 6,968-yard layout.

Golfing

When the snows melt and winter cedes to summer, golf is a key draw of Sun Valley because of the variety: three distinct courses (Trail Creek, Elkhorn, White Clouds) comprising 45 holes. I learned to golf on the Trail Creek Course, Sun Valley's original 18-hole layout, which is referred to as "the Christmas Tree Farm" for the hundreds of perfectly symmetrical spruce and pine trees that line the fairways of this gorgeous 6,968-yard layout.

The White Clouds Course, nicknamed "Cloud Nine," opened in 2008. It's a 3,605-yard, nine-hole layout that challenges players with severe elevation changes and side-hill lies. Hole 7 affords the highest tee shot in the valley and a stunning 360-degree panorama from which I can see the one-time home of Ernest Hemingway, as well as Angel's Perch peak and the pyramidal Devil's Bedstead mountain.

I love the contrast of White Clouds' straw-colored native grasses and silvery sagebrush against the deep-green fairways. My golf score doesn't love the blind tee shots, the cavernous ravines, the sand traps

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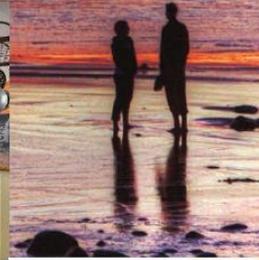
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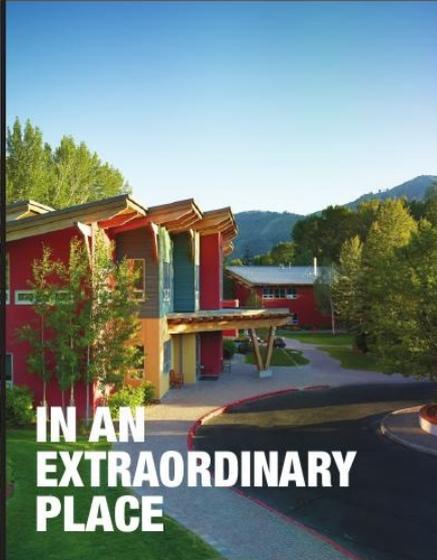


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SUN VALLEY, IDAHO

Additional Activities

Tubing: New family-friendly hill at Dollar Mountain.

Heli-Skiing: Small-group skiing in the powder of area mountain ranges.

Snowmobiling: Approximately 200 miles of groomed trails between Sun Valley and the Stanley Basin.

Horseback Riding: Numerous area stables, providing opportunities for everything from an hour-long ride to an overnight pack trip; from a riding lesson to a dinner ride.

Watersports: More than 10 local outfitters offer single or multiday whitewater river trips, while three alpine lakes within about an hour of Sun Valley attract canoers, windsurfers and waterskiers.

Hiking and Biking: Hundreds of miles of scenic hiking and biking trails, including paved trails, and lift-served and single-track mountain-biking trails; rentals and guided rides available.

Rock Climbing/Mountaineering: Technical and pure rock climbs in the stunning Sawtooth National Recreation Area. Guided adventures available, including introductory rock climbing and custom family adventures.

Sawtooth Botanical Garden: High-altitude plants, with wildflower walks on select days, Memorial Day through the first week in August; the garden is open year-round.

Easley Hot Springs/Cathedral Pines: Family-friendly complex open in summer, with a full-size, chlorine-free, hot springs-fed pool providing a view of Boulder Mountain.

Wood River Farmers Markets: Local produce, herbs, eggs, beef, lamb and chicken, along with prepared foods such as jams and pies, plus arts and crafts, mid-June to mid-October.

See sunvalley.com, visitsunvalley.com and bcrd.org for more information about these and other activities.



STEVE BLY / IDAHO STOCK IMAGES

and the wind-blown ridges, but the sensational test of alpine-style links golf is worth it.

Fishing

Some of my favorite views around Sun Valley are at the stream level. Many of my finest childhood summer memories involve sneaking up to the edge of Silver Creek with my father to watch the slow-moving stream for rising rainbow and brown trout. Located about 30 miles south of Ketchum—Sun Valley, Silver Creek looks like a different world: The dry, bare, high-desert hills and alfalfa ranchlands down here seem like images from old Western movies.

The challenging Silver Creek is a stream for experts, but you can gain the necessary know-how by fishing some of the area's more forgiving waters. The Big Wood River is the natural place to start. The river's headwaters are near Galena Summit, about 20 miles north of Ketchum, and the river

flows south for many miles, with numerous access points in the Wood River Valley.

The meandering, cottonwood-lined Big Wood holds healthy populations of rainbow trout that rise to large dry flies. The 25-mile stretch from the Sawtooth National Recreation Area Visitor Center, north of Ketchum, to the town of Bellevue, to the south, is varied, with deep, dark, slow-moving pools giving way to faster riffles.

The river is glorious, with smooth-stoned sandbars bordered by giant cottonwoods, and is highly fishable for all levels of angler. Because "The Wood" is the most accessible river, I like to fish it every year, especially in the late fall. Last autumn I caught a hard-fighting 15-inch rainbow on a dry fly just a mile or so below the Sawtooth Recreation Area Visitor Center. The trout broke the steel-colored surface of the water to leap against a breathtaking backdrop of magenta-and-gold fall foliage.

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Erik, age 47



Photos: Gerald Pope

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Although I was proactive about fitness with regular weight lifting, cardio, and hiking, I felt that I'd hit a wall. As I began to research how I could manage aging, I began exploring who might be considered an expert in longevity. Having already had great experiences at PRO Sports Club, I was surprised to discover they also had an Anti-Aging Center.

My meetings with Anti-Aging Specialist, Dr. Joe Upton, were very frank and enlightening. Rather than the typical impersonal doctor-patient dialogue, I found his attitude to be warm and caring. The lab work and physical testing were more thorough than anything I've experienced. They have an entire group of people who support this effort – from registered dietitians to Pilates instructors and more. In my second meeting with Dr. Upton, I was handed a book about the state of my health – and I do mean a book! He took the time to go through all the tests performed and explained specifically how I could make a difference in my longevity.

I'm only six months into the program and enjoy seeing progress every week. I was stagnant before, and now I'm not. I see the difference in the mirror and feel the difference in my energy.

For the first time, I've noticed that my abdominal muscles are becoming defined, which is thrilling because I haven't seen them for 10 years. People comment that I look younger and that I look good (and they don't even know that I'm on this program). I've also noticed that I have more energy on hikes and, in general, I perform better. However, I'm most happy that I feel an increased sense of balance in my life.

Everything matters – the food, the vitamins, the hormones, and the avoidance of unhealthy substances. It's all about consistency and perseverance. And once you start seeing results, you'll want more of them. By being extremely intentional about how you drive your own health, you can hit goals that you never even dreamed of achieving.

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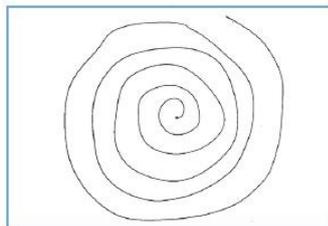
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If you have time, day trips over Trail Creek Summit to the Copper Basin and the Lost River are rewarding journeys, as is an excursion about an hour north of Ketchum to fish the Salmon River as it ambles through the Stanley Basin. The Salmon River has one of the longest steelhead runs in North America (possession regulations vary by season). Standing in the stream near Stanley, I've seen antelope and deer grazing, and admired the jagged, snowcapped Sawtooth Mountains soaring in the distance.

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After a day of fishing or golfing in the Ketchum–Sun Valley area, there's no better culmination than the Sun Valley On Ice show, which usually debuts around July 4 each summer and runs through Labor Day. Dating back many decades, the ice show is an extravaganza that features Olympic medalists, and other world-class figure skaters and ice dancers who thrill audiences with jumps, spins, flips and dazzling performances under glittering lights. Through the years, featured skaters have included Olympic medalists Peggy Fleming, Katarina Witt, Sasha Cohen, Scott Hamilton, Brian Boitano, Nancy Kerrigan and Viktor Petrenko.

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From sheer alpine ridges to languid, tree-lined streams, the Sun Valley region provides a vacation with a view that calls me and other visitors back, year after year. ■

Buddy Levy is a book author, journalist and college professor at Washington State University. His next book, Geronimo: Leadership Strategies of an American Warrior (co-authored with WSU football head coach Mike Leach), is scheduled to be published in May.

Alaska Airlines (800-ALASKAAIR, alaskaair.com) flies nonstop to Sun Valley from mid-December into spring, as well as in summer and fall, from Los Angeles and Seattle. Service continues through April 6 for this year's ski season, with Los Angeles and Seattle summer service June 13–August 31. Fall service is provided September 1–21 from Los Angeles and September 1–October 19 from Seattle. For information on special ski deals, go to alaskaair.com/ski. For more information on recreation in the Ketchum–Sun Valley and Blaine County area—including events—go to sunvalley.com, visitsunvalley.com and bcrd.org.

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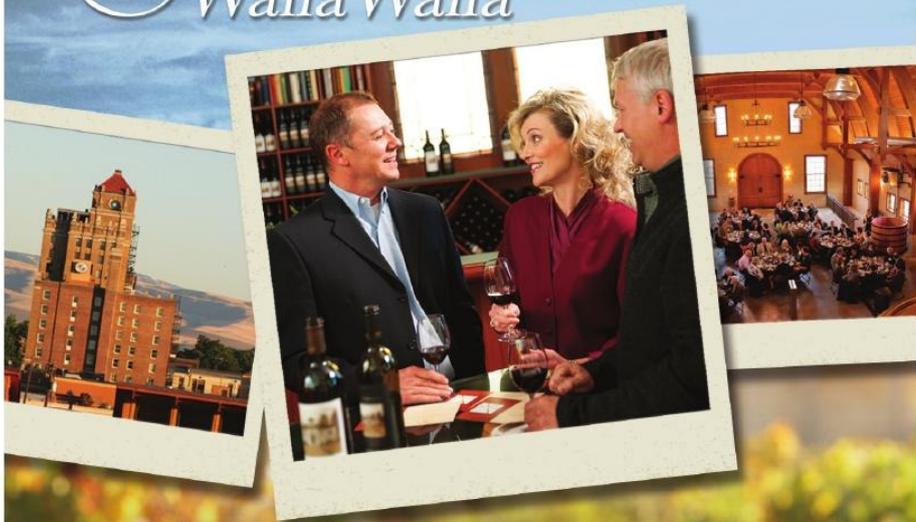
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By holding online rounds of competition before its 2013 Customer Conference, Tableau Software built excitement for a final event held at the conference itself. The culminating "Iron Viz" showdown featured finalists (right) competing live to create the best visuals (above), using the company's data-visualization software.



COURTESY: TABLEAU SOFTWARE (2)

Meetings: Before, During and After

Extending the impact of a conference outside the event dates | By Eric Gold

AT TABLEAU SOFTWARE'S 2013 CUSTOMER CONFERENCE in Washington, D.C., three users of the company's data-visualization platform faced off in a competition dubbed "Iron Viz." The participants, who had received a data set of movie ratings a few days before the event, engaged in a live throw-down to see who could create the most compelling graph, chart or other "viz" with the numbers, dragging elements into a graphical interface with the software. The D.C. face-off (inspired by the TV cooking battle *Iron Chef*) featured no celebrities or handpicked experts. Instead, it was the finale of a competition with previous rounds held online among about 100 ordinary users of Tableau's product. The Iron Viz champion, Ryan Sleeper, won \$2,000 and—at least in the words of Tableau's blog—"eternal glory."

Tableau's pre-event priming for its conference, via the Internet, was an example of a broader practice of expanding the life of a meeting, if not infinitely, at least far beyond the hours of the main event itself. Good meeting planners know how to do this by preparing people and front-loading an experience as well as extending the follow-up afterward. They expand preshow and postshow relationships and often use new technologies to facilitate the process. "You have to be more holistic, thinking of your event as not just a one-time experience," says Jeff Hurt, the Dallas-based executive vice president for education and engagement at Velvet Chainsaw Consulting, which helps organizations improve their annual meetings and conferences.

By having lead-up rounds instead of just one celebrity panel, Tableau made its users, the conference attendees, into active participants and built excitement for the final showdown. Other meetings feature special attention to preshow networking or education. Still others use sophisticated technology to connect with participants in smart ways before and after they travel to a meeting site. Planners handle traditional event logistics while also creating a unique, memorably energized experience from the first contact. After a meeting ends, there are more opportunities to continue the conversation. "The conference doesn't stay behind the four walls of a venue," Hurt says.

This stretching of a meeting's impact adds value for organizer, exhibitor and attendee alike. "People are making a financial and time investment away from

their families," says Janeé Pelletier, vice president of Conference & Logistics Consultants Inc., a Maryland-based conference-management firm. "They have to know they're going to get the most out of it."

Perhaps the simplest thing a meeting host or planner can do before and after a meeting is to listen. "Instead of top-down, it's becoming bottom-up," says Corbin Ball, a Seattle-area consultant and speaker who closely watches the meetings industry, and especially its technological evolution. "*Participants* is a better word than *attendees*. People are increasingly expecting more interactivity, expecting to be engaged and demanding a greater say."

Shawna Suckow, founder of the Senior Planners Industry Network, a group for meeting planners with 10 or more years of experience, recalls planning a consumer show for men. On behalf of her client, she asked the show's social media followers their favorite beers, saying the top 10 brews from the conversation would be at the show that year. "People started dialoguing back and forth, and not just with us, which is beautiful," Suckow says. The show made an extra offer to its Facebook fans: a code word they could mention when buying a ticket that would get them a free beer at the event.

Organizations need a good Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system to track what they're hearing from their audience, says Brian Strickland, director of strategic accounts for Experient, a global meetings and events provider. "Are you surveying, finding out places they might want to go? Do these coincide with hotbeds of your industry? Or do you always go to the same old, same old?" Strickland asks. Making good use of the data isn't easy,

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Strickland says, “but membership maintenance shouldn’t necessarily be easy. You should always be interested in what your members want to tell you.”

What people are saying may not all be positive. Amy Barone of Tableau Software says that, at the company’s 2012 meeting in San Diego, attendees complained on Twitter about the lack of bacon in the conference’s food offerings. In response, Barone says, “we started a rumor about having bacon at our conference in D.C. this year.” She made sure that the meeting had bacon available for every single meal. “We were able to solve a thing that was a little bit of a gripe.”

For Barone, this ability to hear from her event’s attendees and respond—before, during or after the meeting—is a boon. “If people have a complaint, they will tweet about it,” she says. “And we can fix it.”

For many meetings, the opportunity to network is a big part of the draw. “If you boil meetings down to their most essential element, they’re about bringing people together. I firmly believe in the power of face-to-face meetings,” says Ball. “One good contact at an event can pay for the entire trip.”

While that face time may remain paramount for many relationships, laying the groundwork before a meeting, and following up afterward, can increase the chance to make a great connection and maximize its value.

Pelletier says that in the last three years or so, she’s seen more appointment-setting before events even open their doors. Matches between event participants are usually made through online profiles that participants are given to complete. The profiles may be part of a proprietary app or customizable software platform. Some meetings, says Pelletier, have moved to focus even more on networking, substituting a table and a list of prearranged appointments for the traditional trade-show booth.

Organizers can help relationships forged at an event live beyond its closing bell, too. At a health care industry conference in Minnesota, Suckow led a diverse group from all over the state through several networking exercises. In one, she asked each participant to meet someone of a different generation, share with them their biggest challenge, exchange cards and follow up with each other in 30 days. The goal, Suckow says, was that “the community of participants will be a lot stronger for all these



connections after the conference because of what we did during the conference.”

In a trade-show context, Strickland points to a convention industry study suggesting that exhibitors fail to follow up on as many as 60 percent of the leads they gather. “How does that leave the attendee feeling?” Strickland says. “Maybe that there’s not a whole lot of value.”

Organizers can step in by tracking which booths an attendee visits, or allowing attendees to record visits on an app, and then sending the exhibitors’ contact info to the attendees later. That way, the participant exploring the showroom floor can contact a company himself or herself.

A planner’s interventions, Strickland says, should boost rather than replace real personal contact. “Why do people come to meetings? They like interacting with other people. Don’t strip that away,” he says. “That’s the most powerful thing you have.”

Besides networking, education is a driving force behind many meetings. In some cases, attendees may be required to earn credits for licensure in their profession. At other meetings, the content may be about a brand or other topic. Education at meetings, though, is changing with the times, just as it is in schools. “People no longer have to come to the conference to get the education,” says Pelletier. In the age of YouTube and online university classes, she says, “education is available everywhere.”

Hurt sees a “flipped classroom” model, where the informational content is posted online well ahead of the event. The conference itself, Hurt says, is then devoted to real engagement with the speaker and other attendees. People can discuss their challenges with the material as well as what worked and what didn’t in the presentation. That conversation can continue online afterward.

Suckow agrees that more meetings are moving away from a lecture format. “It just bores the pants off people,” she says. Instead, “participants are co-creating their own experience at the conference, their own learner outcomes.”

By moving at least some of the information transfer to a pre-meeting website, planners are letting attendees take full advantage of their face time with the experts and each other. The meeting becomes a time to dig deeper.

After the meeting, Pelletier says, organizers can send attendees digitally cap-

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tured sessions. "We know there were 18 things happening at once," she tells them. "You went to one. Check out 17 more." Such content might be offered at no cost, as part of the registration. To reach out to even more people who may not have made it to the event, meeting content might also be available online for a fee.

From the first preliminary marketing messages to the last follow-ups, technology helps with an event's operation and attendee engagement. Technologies make it easier and cheaper than ever before to capture video, audio and slides of an event and distribute them afterward, Ball says. In some sectors, he says, "If you don't have an app for your event, people ask, 'Why are you behind the times?'" Mobile applications offer exhibit listings, networking, appointment setting, literature pickup and more, he says.

For the last two years, Pelletier's firm has offered meetsmart mobile, a mobile platform for association clients who may not have the considerable budget for a proprietary custom app. "It's sort of like having the conference program on your phone," she says. "When they show up at the meeting, they already know what's going on. They know they won't miss something important."

One client of Pelletier's is a Washington, D.C., association of nonphysician medical professionals. The association had never used a conference app before and was unsure of the technological aptitude of its membership. The app this group used allowed the association to send personalized content to participants after the event. As it turned out, users were very comfortable with the app and liked using it. In all, it was live for 60 days before the event and for another year afterward.

It's not all about apps. Hurt says, "Savvy organizations have a conference blog that starts six months out," posting a few times a week with content from the conference for marketing purposes, and staying up for months after the conference. In this way, technology can make an isolated annual meeting into an all-year affair with a big centerpiece.



Reggio Hearn, director of registration for Ellen Michaels Presents Inc., a meeting-planning firm in the San Francisco Bay area, notes that it's important for event websites to be functional and aesthetically pleasing whether visited on a 30-inch monitor, laptop, tablet, handheld device, or Web-enabled television. Online event communities allow networking to start early, while sponsor and exhibitor advertising is targeted based on each individual attendee's responses to questions on the event registration form. Of course, using technology takes tact. "Our clients are very cognizant of opt-in and opt-out lists. It's done in a responsible manner," Hearn says.

Having the right technology for a meeting is just one of the logistical fundamentals that planners must address to create a successful event. For Strickland, three critical touchpoints happen immediately

before a meeting: the traveler's experience at the airport, the cab ride to the venue and check-in at the hotel. "If those three don't go well, your person already has a negative experience before they even set foot at your event," he says.

So how do planners prevent this? By choosing a city with a well-run airport that moves luggage efficiently, with regulated taxis for safety and reliability, and with a hotel community and visitors bureau that "are all on board with understanding the hot points of your attendees. What they like, what they don't like. If you have that, you're off on the right foot," Strickland says.

He also recommends that planners make conference registration and hotel reservations for the following year's meeting available at the current year's event. "There's no better time to get someone excited about next year's event. Even if all the educational pieces aren't ready, allow them to register. They can sign up for sessions later," he says.

Because many meetings feature professional speakers, Hurt advises asking for supplemental content: a magazine or newsletter article, a blog post, a video, or a post-conference webinar. That type of content from the expert or keynote speaker helps organizers engage their audiences before and after the meeting. "It should be in the contract," Hurt says, adding that it's not hard to get extra content if it's in the contract up front. "Most professional speakers have quite a bit of content readily available that they can tweak and customize."

Strickland places importance on another fundamental practice: maintaining a good database of attendees. "I see a lot of clients operate with a subpar database, and then they wonder why they don't get good results out of it," he says. "If they have the wrong contact info, it makes me feel like I'm not very important to them."

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All the strategies planners and participants use to extend the life of an event contribute to one overarching goal: making the meeting a true experience, rather than just another formulaic gathering. "Look at the entire conference as an experience through the attendee's lens," says Hurt. "It should be an emotional journey from the first marketing experience. That's where the brain gets excited and remembers things."

At the CoreNet Global Summit held in Las Vegas in 2013, this association for corporate real estate (CRE) and workplace professionals, which is a Velvet Chainsaw client, had poet and storyteller David Bowden as the opening and closing speaker. Bowden, whose video-recorded remarks are still posted on the association's website, spoke in flowing, rhythmic verses about the distinction between what a thing costs and its true value. The message, says CoreNet Global CEO Angela Cain, resonated with an audience well acquainted with cost-cutting efforts. Afterward, Jeff Hurt led discussions about the issues faced by the membership. Even after 90 minutes, he says, "people didn't leave the room. They wanted to continue the conversations. We had to turn the lights off to get them to go to the next session."

The memorable experience of an unorthodox speaker has continued after the meeting, as hundreds of attendees have repurposed Bowden's recorded performance in presentations at their own offices, sparking new conversations. "Attendees who couldn't make this event we just held are watching that and getting ideas for the next summit," Cain says. "We've never had anything before where people were calling us, afterwards, asking, can they get it, can they share it?"

A location can also contribute to the creation of an experience that lives on beyond the meeting. Toni Walker, president of Logistics LLC in Anchorage, is very familiar with the broad appeal of her home state. "It's on many people's bucket list," she says. "They come for business, but they also want to enjoy that mystique of Alaska that people are very interested in." Chartered helicopter trips to a glacier for dog-



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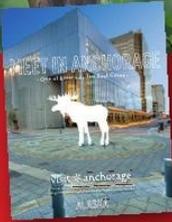


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sledding or excursions for encountering wildlife such as moose, humpback whales and eagles make Alaska a compelling destination for meeting attendees and their companions alike, Walker says. Providing information in advance about unique opportunities in the meeting city and surroundings helps build excitement.

Introducing the unexpected into the meeting plan, whether it's seeing a moose near Anchorage or listening to a rapping presenter in Las Vegas, signals to people that the meeting content merits attention.

A touch of unpredictability helps to make a meeting feel fresh, says Hurt. "You want a little bit of discomfort—not knowing what's going to happen. It puts the brain on high engagement. You can start planning those things ahead of time."

Creating an emotional experience that extends the life of a meeting doesn't have to be complicated, and it doesn't have to be high-tech. For the 2013 SPINCon, the annual conference of her organization, SPIN, Suckow asked each participant to write a letter to himself or herself during the meeting detailing what they hoped to have accomplished 30 days after the conference. The letters were to include what steps the writer would take if the goals were not achieved by that time. Suckow collected the letters and posted them back to the participants after the month had passed.

For the cost of some stamps, this simple exercise put SPINCon's participants in the mindset to carry the conference experience with them as they returned to their regular work routines. In case they forgot their resolutions in the hustle of everyday life, the letter would remind them.

Importantly, the activity wasn't about event organizers handing out assignments for follow-up. The simple letter-writing exercise ensured that participants took ownership of the experience early and followed through later. It was a concrete way to introduce accountability for getting the most out of the meeting and extending the meeting's effect, but it wasn't prescriptive.

"We didn't tell them what to do," Suckow says. "They set their own goals." **m**

Eric Gold is a Portland-based freelance writer.



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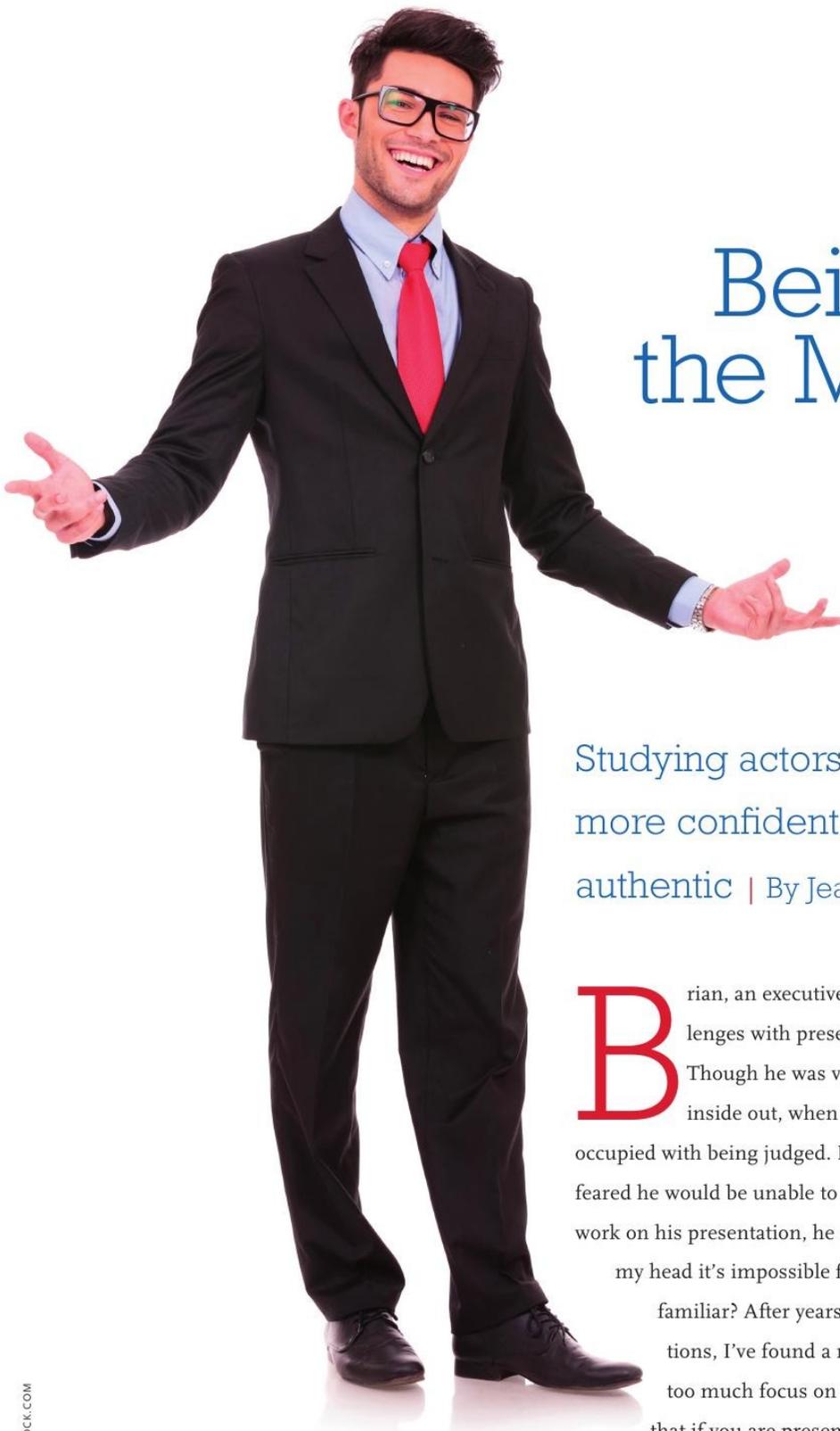


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Being in the Moment

Studying actors can make presenters more confident, expressive and authentic | By Jean Hamilton

Brian, an executive at an IT firm, had been experiencing challenges with presentations for most of his professional career. Though he was very good at his job and knew his material inside out, when he was giving a presentation, he became preoccupied with being judged. He worried he would make a mistake. He feared he would be unable to answer questions. When I met with him to work on his presentation, he said, “There’s so much noise going on inside my head it’s impossible for me to focus on my presentation.” ■ Sound familiar? After years of working with executives on their presentations, I’ve found a major cause of public speaking difficulty is too much focus on internal thoughts. However, I’ve also found that if you are present with your audience and you are focused on your material, fear takes a backseat. ■ So how do you become present? How do you learn to cut the internal chatter?

One way is to study actors. Many people think of acting as big, inauthentic behavior. But that's describing bad acting. The best actors seek truthful expression. Great actors get inside our hearts and minds. We feel their fear, their sadness, their joy. Meryl Streep just has to turn her head and take a slight breath, and she communicates volumes. As soon as Daniel Day-Lewis enters a room, we are intrigued. Why is this? What are the qualities that the best actors bring to a performance, and how can insights into those characteristics help us as speakers?

Focus on what's important

Actors learn to have complete focus on each moment. They are 100 percent present. As acting coach Stella Adler says, "It's not the lines, it's the life." Actors immerse themselves in their characters, scene partners and environments. Their eyes, mouths, voices, breaths and postures are all part of their communication.

Think of times in your life when you have been fully present. Perhaps it was when you were mesmerized by a newborn, or soaking in the beauty of nature or enjoying a captivating conversation. Those moments were powerful because you were completely absorbed in the moment. Bringing that same crystal-clear focus to your presentations can take them to a new level.

When you are present you establish a real connection with your listeners. Your body feels at ease. You breathe naturally. It allows for reflection, curiosity and play. When speakers talk about being "in the zone," they are present.

When I worked with Brian, the IT executive mentioned earlier, my goal was to help him to let his guard down, to move out of his fear of being judged by focusing instead on what was going on in the room. He had a big fear of "not knowing the answer" during Q & A. He saw the audience as potential attackers—picking away at his credibility.

When Brian reframed the situation and saw that questions meant the audience was engaged with his talk and wanted to know more, he became energized and involved in the moment. At the end of our work, he said, "I now see every presentation as a great opportunity. If I don't know the answer to a question, it gives me the chance to follow up with them afterwards. No matter what happens, I'll be fine."

Sometimes getting beyond feelings of anxiety is as simple as deciding to change your focus. After all, if you are not the person in charge of your thoughts, who is? Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "Nothing can bring you peace but yourself."

Play with the moment

Being present also allows you to be spontaneous. When you quiet your internal critic, you are able to truly see your audience and respond to them. Your presentation becomes an event you are sharing. Your presentation creates a rhythm

between the audience and speaker that establishes connection. Maya Angelou says, "I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel." Being present and responsive will not only feel good to you, it will feel good to your audience.

Awareness of the rhythm in a presentation also means relishing stillness. When you are comfortable with silence, you become more available to your audience. If you blast through your presentation, a true connection never happens. I took a course in acting in Spain last summer, and one of the teachers, Simon Edwards, said, "The great actor is one who chooses what not to do." I believe the same is true of great speakers. Too often speakers say too much. Edit out extraneous words. Find clarity so that your message has impact. Be bold. Be clear. Be done.

Move beyond doubt and take action

Living in the present can solve many of life's challenges. Years ago I was a professional modern dancer plagued by insecurities. I never thought I was good enough. After a particularly humiliating ballet class, I went to a studio to dance on my own. I'd always had trouble doing pirouettes. I'd hold my breath and turn awkwardly. But in the studio, with no one watching, I did a pirouette. For the first time in my life, I did a quadruple pirouette with ease, clarity and precision. I thought, "That's what it's supposed to feel like!"

That pirouette was more than 25 years ago, and I remember it like it was yesterday. In that moment I was able to let go of unnecessary tension, and I danced to my full ability. I was present. Rather than thinking about my limitations, I took action. I let loose and I danced. That's the key to being present. Move beyond your doubt and take action. You may surprise yourself. Whether it be dancing, speaking, parenting or just about anything in life, being present enables you to reach your full potential.



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Step outside of your comfort zone

Another quality to learn from actors is freedom of expression.

It's important for business professionals to be credible. As a result, they often fear that if they are too expressive, they will not be taken seriously. In the guise of being professional, they speak without dynamics and fail to engage their audience. Recently I worked with David, an insurance company CFO who had a monotone delivery. I taped him doing a presentation, and he agreed it was much too flat. "If I were in the audience," he said, "I'd have a hard time listening to that guy." He realized that if people aren't listening, he won't have much impact.

I worked with him on presenting the statistics in more human terms. Dan and Chip Heath, authors of *Made to Stick*, write, "Statistics are rarely meaningful in and of themselves. Statistics will, and should, almost always be used to illustrate a relationship."

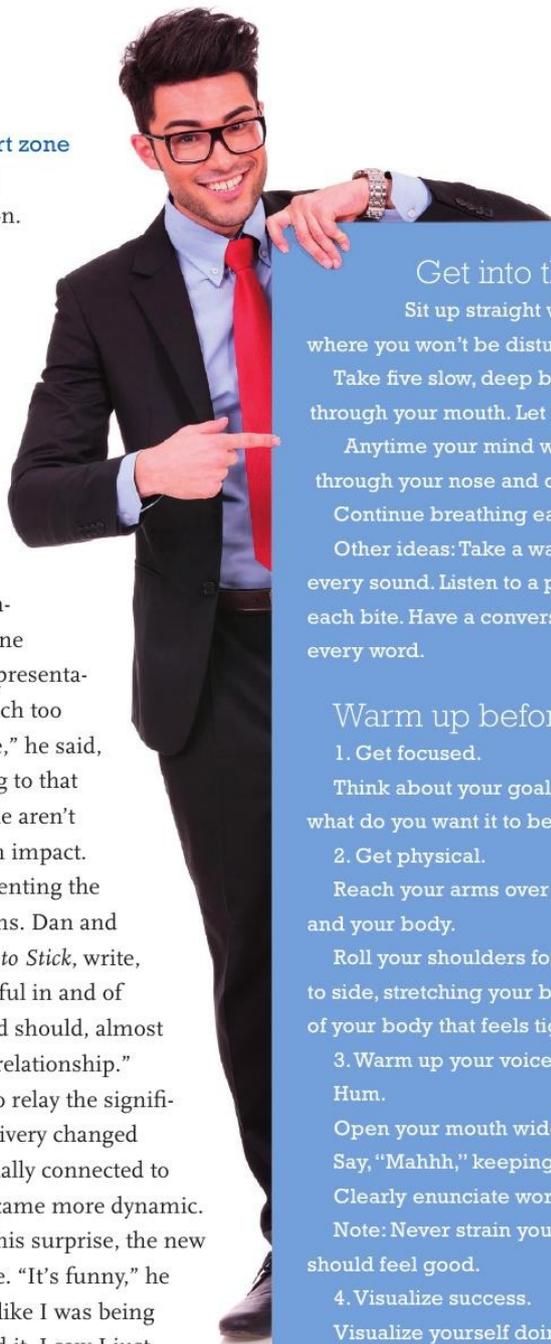
When David used a story to relay the significance of the numbers, his delivery changed dramatically. He was emotionally connected to his message and his voice became more dynamic. I recorded him again, and to his surprise, the new style was much more effective. "It's funny," he said. "As I was doing it, I felt like I was being WAY too big. When I watched it, I saw I just moved my eyebrows up. It wasn't too big; it looked completely natural. I looked like a person interested in their subject."

Even if something does not feel natural, that doesn't mean you shouldn't do it. It means you should stretch your comfort zone to find a new, more expressive "normal." It's been said that life begins at the edge of your comfort zone. If you are always comfortable, it means you are not growing. To step outside of your comfort zone, explore new ways of presenting. To gauge your effectiveness, tape yourself and watch it. Even better, work with a coach to inspire you to take your skills to the next level.

To become emotionally present, let your body talk

Speaking is not just an intellectual activity. Emotions and body language bring a talk to life. Actors are keenly aware of the power of nonverbal communication.

One day while participating in an acting class, I was given a boring, meaningless



Get into the present

Sit up straight with your feet on the floor in a comfortable place where you won't be disturbed.

Take five slow, deep breaths, inhaling through your nose, exhaling through your mouth. Let your belly expand as you breathe in.

Anytime your mind wanders, focus on the feeling of the air coming in through your nose and out your mouth.

Continue breathing easily, focusing on your breath.

Other ideas: Take a walk in nature, focusing on each step. Listen to every sound. Listen to a piece of music that you love. Eat slowly, savoring each bite. Have a conversation with a loved one, listening attentively to every word.

Warm up before a presentation

1. Get focused.

Think about your goals for your presentation. If they remember one thing, what do you want it to be?

2. Get physical.

Reach your arms over your head, take a big yawn and stretch your face and your body.

Roll your shoulders forward and backward 10 times each way. Reach side to side, stretching your back. Stretch your legs in a lunge. Shake out any part of your body that feels tight.

3. Warm up your voice.

Hum.

Open your mouth wide and say, "Ah."

Say, "Mahhh," keeping your throat relaxed, filling the room with sound.

Clearly enunciate words: cat, sat, mat, right, kite, flight, etc.

Note: Never strain your voice. The key to voice exercises is that they should feel good.

4. Visualize success.

Visualize yourself doing a great presentation. Everything starts with the imagination. Use your imagination to set yourself up for success.

script and asked to perform a scene from that script as if I had brain cancer, with three months to live. My scene partner played my brother, who was visiting me for the first time since I got sick. I thought the scene would be a disaster. I would never say those mundane words in such an emotionally charged situation. But the scene was powerful. By the end, I was crying real tears. The words we said had no significance. All of the communication happened in how we said the words, our eye contact, our pauses, our breathing.

Nonverbal communication gives much greater depth to your presentations. Think of communicating

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SHARE A PHOTO of something, big or small, that you discovered while exploring an Alaska Airlines destination. Whether you are an amateur or professional photographer, you may submit up to three images to *Alaska Airlines Magazine* and *Horizon Edition Magazine* for our 2014 Photo Contest. Entries may include natural scenics, urban landscapes, wildlife shots or human-interest photos. In addition to awarding prizes for the top three photographs, the magazines will publish the top 10 photos in our May 2014 issues.

Entries must be postmarked by February 15, 2014.

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By signing this entry I agree to the rules of the contest.

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with your whole body. The next time you present, take note of your breath, your posture and your eye contact. When your body is engaged and congruent with your communication, you have far more power.

Connect your subject matter to your life

Complete commitment to each moment is at the forefront of every actor's craft. I worked with acting coach Benson Simmonds to help me prepare for an audition. The first time I read the script, it felt phony. As we worked, we went over each line to discover how I could emotionally connect with every word. I allowed memories of past experiences to color my reading of the script. After one hour of coaching, the monologue was very different. I was connected emotionally, and I spoke from a place of truth.

The same lesson can be applied to speeches. Don't be afraid to commit. Find your "fire in the belly." Tap into your emotions. If you don't care, your audience won't either. Go deeper. Think about experiences in your life when you had something at stake. Think about when you had an objective that you would go after at all costs. It could be keeping your child safe, successfully completing a race or landing a big client. That's the passion that will bring fuel to your presentations.

When you find a deeper level of connection to yourself and your experiences, it will translate into a deeper connection with your audience. If you are not sure how to do this, an acting class or a coach will help you discover the way.

Communication is at the core of life's experiences. When you are able to quiet your inner critic and focus on the present, you can enjoy your audience and relish the experience. You tap into the magic of presentations. You communicate your ideas, your passion and your feelings about why your material is significant. You are exactly where you are supposed to be. Life fills your presentation. That's when you have true impact. **m**

Jean Hamilton, founder and principal of Speaking Results, helps executives develop their presentation, communication and leadership skills.

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Fairbanks Convention & Visitors Bureau
907-456-5774; www.explorefairbanks.com.

Juneau

Juneau Convention & Visitors Bureau
888-581-2201 or 907-586-2201;
www.traveljuneau.com.

Ketchikan

Ketchikan Visitors Bureau
800-770-3300; www.visit-ketchikan.com.

Kodiak

Discover Kodiak
800-789-4782 or 907-486-4782;
www.kodiak.org.

Nome

Nome Convention & Visitors Bureau
907-443-6555; www.visitnomealaska.com.

Sitka

Sitka Convention & Visitors Bureau
800-557-4852 or 907-747-5940;
www.sitka.org.

Valdez

Valdez Convention & Visitors Bureau
907-835-2984; www.valdezalaska.org.

Arizona

Phoenix

Visit Phoenix
602-254-6500; www.visitphoenix.com.

Scottsdale

Scottsdale Convention & Visitors Bureau
800-782-1117 or 480-421-1004;
www.experiencescottsdale.com.

Tucson

Visit Tucson
888-2-TUCSON or 520-624-1817;
www.visittucson.org.

California (Northern)

Fresno

Fresno/Clovis Convention & Visitors Bureau
800-788-0836; www.playfresno.org.

Mammoth Lakes

Mammoth Lakes Tourism
888-466-2666 or 760-934-2712;
www.visitmammoth.com.

Monterey

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877-666-8373; www.seemonterey.com.

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San Francisco Travel Association
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San Jose

Team San Jose
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www.sanjose.org.

Santa Rosa

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www.visitlongbeach.com.

Los Angeles

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www.discoverlosangeles.com.

Newport Beach

Visit Newport Beach
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Visitors Bureau
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www.discoverontariocalifornia.org.

Rancho Mirage

Greater Palm Springs Convention &
Visitors Bureau
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www.visitgreaterpalmsprings.com.

San Diego

San Diego Tourism Authority
619-236-1212; www.sandiego.org.

Santa Barbara

Visit Santa Barbara
800-676-1266 or 805-966-9222;
www.santabarbaraca.com.

Colorado

Colorado Springs

Colorado Springs Visitor Information Center
800-888-4748; www.visitcos.com.

Denver

Visit Denver, The Convention & Visitors Bureau
800-233-6837 or 303-892-1505;
www.visitdenver.com.

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Hells Canyon Visitors Bureau
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Minneapolis

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888-676-MPLS or 612-767-8000;
www.minneapolis.org.

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www.visitsaintpaul.com.

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800-767-7700; www.visitkc.com.

St. Louis

St. Louis Convention & Visitor Commission
800-325-7962; www.explorestlouis.com.

Montana

Big Sky

Big Sky Chamber of Commerce &
Visitor Information Center
800-943-4111 or 406-995-3000;
www.visitbigskymt.com.

Bigfork

Flathead Convention & Visitor Bureau
800-543-3105 or 406-756-9091;
www.fcvb.org.

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	Fairbanks Convention & Visitors Bureau 101 Dunkel Street, Suite 101, Fairbanks, AK 99701	3,500	\$50-275	50	907-457-3282/Helen Renfrew www.explorefairbanks.com
California	Red Lion Hotel Woodlake Conference Center Sacramento* 500 Leisure Lane, Sacramento, CA 95815	306	\$79-169	24	916-922-2020/Jane Miller www.woodlakesacramento.redlion.com
Colorado	Red Lion Denver Southeast* 3200 Parker Road, Aurora, CO 80014	478	\$79-169	13	303-695-1700/Wendy Peterson www.denverseredlion.com
Idaho	Boise Centre 850 West Front Street, Boise, ID 83702			20	208-336-8900/Sales Manager www.boisecentre.com
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	Red Lion Hotel at the Park* 303 West North River Drive, Spokane, WA 99201	400	\$89-269	17	509-326-8000/Ruth Fitzgerald www.spokaneatthepark.redlion.com
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Medford

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San Antonio Convention & Visitors Bureau
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425-450-3777; www.visitbellevuewashington.com.

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Bellingham Whatcom County Tourism
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www.bellingham.org.

Pullman

Pullman Chamber of Commerce
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www.traveltacoma.com.

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www.visitvancouverusa.com.

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Tourism Walla Walla
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www.wallawalla.org.

Wenatchee

Wenatchee Valley Chamber of Commerce
509-662-2116; www.wenatcheevalley.org.

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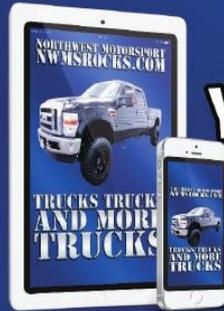
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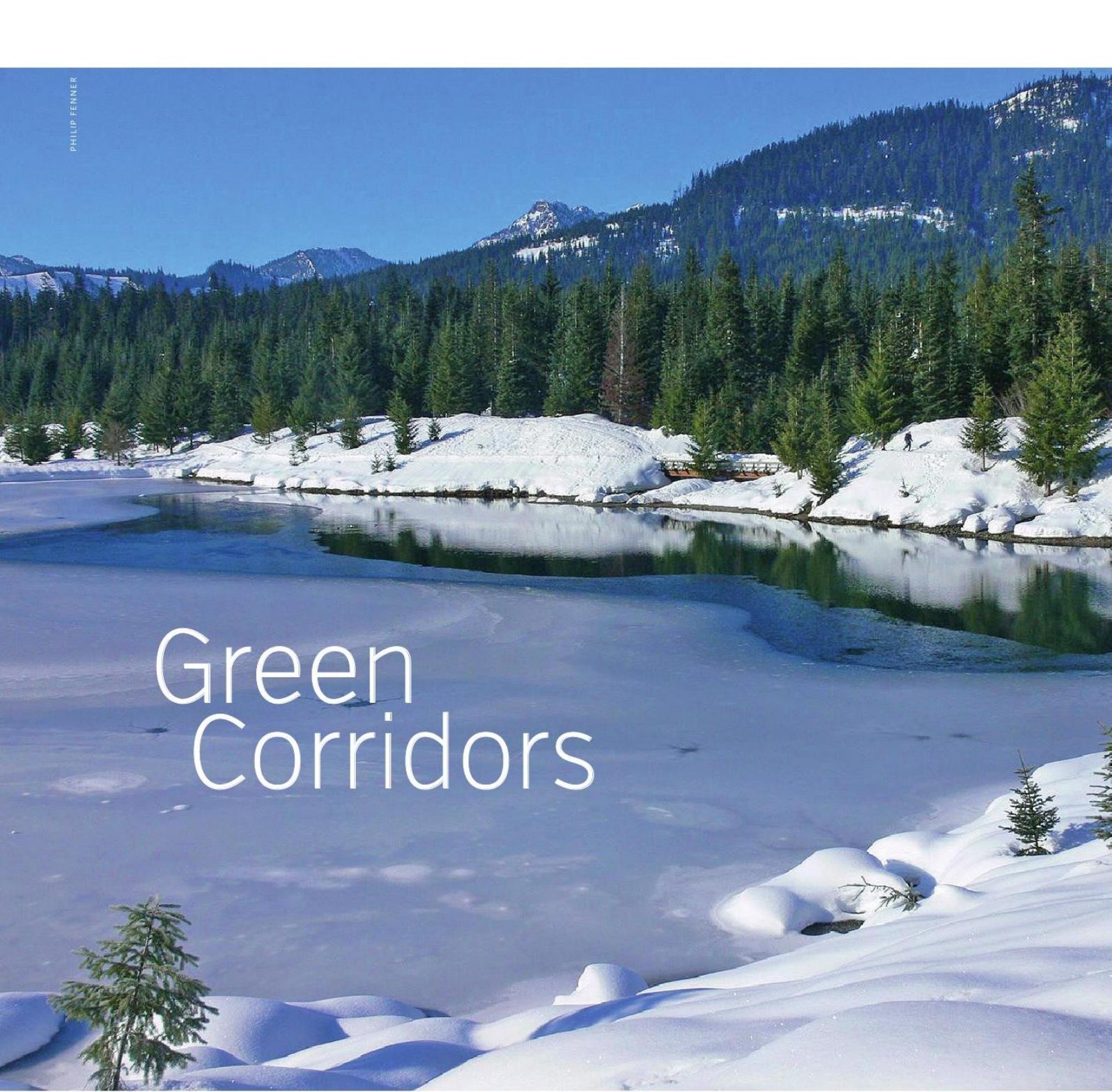
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Green Corridors

Communities Value Greenways for Recreation and Conservation

by Scott Driscoll

VINE MAPLES AND ALDERS DROP RED, GOLD AND GREEN LEAVES at my feet as I stroll the one-mile paved path encircling crystal-clear Gold Creek Pond, about 55 miles southeast of Seattle. The pond is in a region that was mined in the late 1800s. Today, this area is known for its recreational treasures, explains my guide, Margaret Ullman-Hess, communications and development manager for the Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust.



Gold Creek Pond is located in the Mountains to Sound Greenway, which includes three Western Washington watersheds: Upper Yakima, Snoqualmie and Cedar River–Lake Washington. Looking up through the alders, which are whispering in the faint breeze, Ullman-Hess points out Alaska Mountain in the notch of the valley, then Kendall Peak to the north, one of Kendall’s offshoot ridges to the west, and Rampart Ridge to the east.

Continuing along the path, we walk past native underbrush of willow shrubs and elderberry, and pass under a thin canopy of native alder, cottonwood and dogwood trees at the west end of the pond. Ullman-Hess tells me a beaver lodge is often tucked out of view in this area, behind shrubs not far from where Gold Creek enters the pond. Farther on, we use a boardwalk to cross a marshy area, and see the start of the connecting seven-mile Gold Creek Trail, which cuts through a forest of hemlocks and Douglas firs to the base of Alaska Mountain.

In the 1970s, the pond was created after gravel from the site was scooped up for road construction, but the site was reclaimed by conservation efforts in the early 1990s.

In the winter, Gold Creek Pond freezes, and the basin is usually blanketed with 6 to 7 feet of snowpack, making the land around the pond a magical place for a family-friendly snowshoe outing, Ullman-Hess says.

“This is gorgeous, exciting terrain for kids. It’s flat around the pond, and the upslope is gentle. And because the snowpack boosts you 6 feet or so above the actual ground, there is more open space between trees, and you can easily make your own trails with clear views up the valley or back down to the pond.” (Snowshoe rentals are available at The Summit at Snoqualmie Nordic Center, a few miles west of the pond. The Summit at Snoqualmie, located at Snoqualmie Pass, also offers downhill skiing and tubing.) Guided six-mile snowshoe treks, with snowshoes provided, of the scenic Commonwealth Basin, about two miles west of the pond, are available from rangers with the Mt. Baker–Snoqualmie National Forest and Okanogan–Wenatchee National Forest.

The Mountains to Sound Greenway has many sites easily accessible from major roadways, notes Bill Chapman, president of the Greenway Trust



PAUL GORDON / ALAMY



COURTESY: THPRD

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Gold Creek Pond, in the Mountains to Sound Greenway, is a winter wonderland. Bicyclists ride the Burke-Gilman Trail in the Seattle area. The Fanno Creek Greenway Trail in the Portland area is an appealing place to walk for fun and fitness.

(mtsgreenway.org). “For instance, at Gold Creek Pond—literally just five minutes off Interstate 90—you are in one of the most beautiful spots of wilderness Washington has to offer.”

Formed in 1991, the Greenway Trust works to protect a 1.5 million-acre greenway corridor between the central Washington town of Ellensburg and the shores of Puget Sound in Seattle. Over the past 20 years, the trust’s civic, business and community partners have obtained numerous easements and also invested approximately \$390 million in 160 separate transactions to conserve land for public access, recreation, wildlife habitat, working farms and forests,

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adding to the already publicly owned land in the greenway. In addition, volunteers working for trust programs have removed 40 miles of unused logging roads and planted 785,000 native trees and shrubs.

"In 1990, the state of Washington Growth Management Act was passed to help keep towns in towns and forests in forests," says Cynthia Welti, executive director of the trust. The year the act passed, members of the Issaquah Alps Trails Club, based in a community east of Seattle, staged a march that began at Snoqualmie Pass and ended in West Seattle, she says. Their goal was to draw attention to their concern that development due to rapid population growth was threatening the vitality of the natural greenway surrounding the I-90 route east out of Seattle and over the Cascade Range.

In 1991, Jim Ellis, a Seattle lawyer and environmental activist, organized a 60-member coalition of business leaders, government-agency representatives, and members of recreation and conservation groups that became the governing board for the Greenway Trust. Ellis served as the trust's president for the first decade, followed from 2001 to 2004 by Sally Jewell—now the U.S. Secretary of the Interior—before Chapman took the Greenway reins.

"People like living here—the Puget Sound area and central Washington have more vitality as a workplace because of the greenway, which goes through or past 28 cities and towns—and we are also preserving important natural resources," says Welti. "The

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The North Idaho Centennial Trail winds along the north shore of Lake Coeur d'Alene.

Greenway Trust brings different stakeholders together to work for the common good in identifying and protecting important green spaces.”

Greenways are often vital to sustainable communities, says Richard Dolesh, vice president for conservation with the nonprofit National Recreation and

Park Association. Greenway corridors protect indigenous plants and riparian areas, he says. They give wildlife room to roam and often benefit the recovery of species that have lost habitat. They preserve green spaces and rural areas. They open and preserve trails for bicycle and recreational commuting, walking and running. Greenways offer the kind of breathing room that makes an area an attractive and healthy place to live, work and recreate.

And the sustainable preservation of nature is just one benefit, Dolesh says. Another benefit is that public spaces foster economic vitality by attracting new businesses and mobile, affluent 30-somethings who can choose to live where they want.

Greenways also improve the local property-tax base because of the “proximate principle,” he says. The term “proximate principle” was

coined by John Crompton, distinguished professor of the Department of Recreation, Park and Tourism Sciences at Texas A&M University, who determined that private property gains value in direct proportion to its proximity to protected public lands, Dolesh says.

Many abandoned railway lines have been revital-

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ized to create greenways that enhance quality of life and property values, notes Barry Bergman, western trail development manager for the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (railstotrails.org), a nonprofit group that provides technical assistance to groups or agencies that want to develop trails. “Rail, mining and lumber corridors fall into disuse, and the danger is that once those easements are lost to private landowners, they can never be used again by the public,” he says.

In Alaska, Washington, Oregon, California, Idaho and Montana alone, 247 total trails have been created from abandoned

rail lines covering a total of more than 2,600 miles, Bergman says, and approximately 100 rail-trail routes, totaling more than 1,500 miles, are in development in these states.

Over the past several decades, members of the public, and public entities, have “increasingly recognized the value of creating greenways to ensure land conservation, wildlife habitat, preservation of historic sites, eco-friendly transportation and quality recreation in both urban and rural areas,” he says. Revitalizing public spaces around community needs, often referred to as placemaking, allows local communities

to put their stamp on an area, he adds, facilitating the creation of everything from wildlife habitat to public art, to “pop-up” businesses that cater to trail users. “Communities that engage in placemaking tend to thrive,” he says.

A few examples of the many greenways that contribute to sustainable communities and enhanced quality of life in the western United States include the following: the Burke-Gilman Trail in the Seattle area; the North Idaho Centennial Trail in the Coeur d’Alene, Idaho, area; the Fanno Creek Greenway Trail in the Portland, Oregon, area; the Great Northern Historical Trail in the Kalispell, Montana, area; and the American River Parkway in the Sacramento, California, area.

Burke-Gilman Trail

One of the most popular trails in the Mountains to Sound Greenway is the Seattle area’s Burke-Gilman Trail, a nearly 20-mile multiuse, all-season paved path that stretches from the beach at Golden Gardens Park on Puget Sound to Blyth Park in Bothell toward the north end of Lake Washington, where the Burke-Gilman Trail connects to the Sammamish River Trail.

The Burke-Gilman Trail follows a Burlington Northern line that the railroad company abandoned in 1971. The first 12.1-mile stretch of trail officially opened in 1978. In 2008, the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy named Burke-Gilman a Hall-of-Fame trail, citing factors such as the trail’s scenery, use rates (millions of people each year), variety of amenities and historical significance.

According to the Seattle Department of Transportation, in 1885 local judge Thomas Burke and various other investors, including Daniel Gilman, set out to establish a railroad to ensure that the young city, founded in 1851, became a major transportation and trade center. They called their railroad the Seattle, Lake Shore and Eastern Railroad, which through a series of acquisitions and mergers over the years eventually became part of Burlington Northern.

The trail provides access to numerous parks, and also to sights such as the Fremont Troll, under the Aurora Bridge, just a couple of blocks from the trail. The troll is an 18-foot-tall sculpture whose left hand is wrapped around a real Volkswagen Beetle.

For more information: seattle.gov/parks/burkegilman/bgtrail.htm.

North Idaho Centennial Trail

The 24-mile North Idaho Centennial Trail, so named because the first five miles opened in 1990, the year of the state’s centennial



N.C. Wyeth (1882–1945), *Hudson Bay Trading Company*, c. 1895, oil on canvas, estimate \$500,000–700,000



Charles M. Russell (1864–1926), *Indians Hunting*, 1890, oil on canvas, estimate \$350,000–450,000



Charles M. Russell (1864–1926), *Trail of the Iron Horse*, c. 1924, watercolor on paper, estimate \$175,000–225,000

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celebration, follows the scenic north shore of Lake Coeur d'Alene before connecting to the Spokane River Centennial Trail (the state of Washington's centennial was 1989) at the Idaho-Washington border. Together, the two trails total more than 60 miles.

The paved trail's easternmost end is a prime spot for eagle watching in fall and winter, says Charlie Miller, executive director of the North Idaho Centennial Trail Foundation. "Eagles winter over and eat kokanee salmon at spawning grounds by Higgins Point."

In 1999, the trail was designated a "Millennium Legacy Trail" by the U.S. Department of Transportation, the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy and other organizations. The 50-plus trails chosen for the millennium-legacy honor, as the turn of the century drew near, were selected based on exemplifying the theme "Honor the past—Imagine the future" by providing connections between the physical trails, history and culture, according to the U.S. Department of Transportation.

North Idaho Centennial Trail recreationists enjoy lake, river, park and forest vistas. The trail also offers safe, eco-friendly transportation for commuters between Spokane, Post Falls and Coeur d'Alene.

For more information: northidahocentennialtrail.org.

Fanno Creek Greenway Trail

Walking along a stretch of the Fanno Creek Greenway Trail that crosses through the Portland suburb of Beaverton, retired engineer Tom Hjort, a member of the Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation District trails-advisory committee, recently watched two merganser drakes paddle upstream. "They were going against good flow," he says. "The creek was running fast. The drakes were struggling but making headway."

That incident was a good indication of how the greenway brings touches of wilderness into urban areas, he says, and is symbolic of the headway conservationists are making in establishing green corridors. About 10 miles, in various sections, of the envisioned 15 miles for the Fanno Creek Trail have been completed, says Bruce Barbarasch, superintendent of natural resources and trails management for the Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation District, which oversees a four-mile stretch. When all 15 miles are completed, the paved trail will be mostly connected as it passes through two counties and five cities, from Tualatin to Durham to Tigard to Beaverton, with the endpoint in southwest Portland. Local citizens and groups are working with government agencies to spur along the pro-

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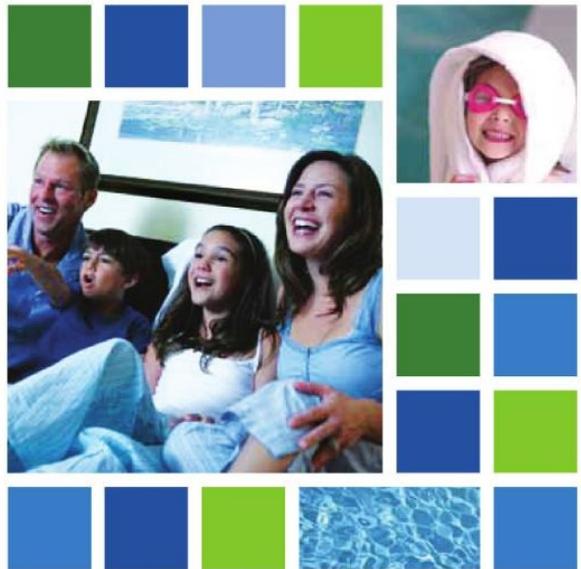
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cess of obtaining the land and easements necessary to complete the route.

The trail, part of which follows a section of an abandoned early 20th century electric-railway system, starts in the city of Tualatin near the mouth of Fanno Creek, and goes north and east toward the Willamette River. Sites along the completed sections of the trail include Greenway Park, with attractions such as the farmhouse of homesteader Augustus Fanno, for whom the creek is named. Fanno was an onion farmer in the mid-1800s, and onions believed to be descendants of those he planted still grow near the farmhouse. The trail also winds through woods and pockets of wetlands, as well as providing access to restaurants and small retail businesses.

The Fanno Creek greenway corridor promotes sustainable transportation between neighboring cities, says Barbarasch. "It's a positive way to be outdoors, out of the car—a place to walk the dog, or run and get a workout."

For more information: thprd.org/pdfs/document46.pdf and theintertwine.org.

Great Northern Historical Trail

Montana's Great Northern Historical Trail runs 22 miles from the town of Somers, at the northern end of Flathead Lake, to the city of Kalispell, and then west through a mountain valley into Kila, ending at Smith Lake.

"The trail has beautiful views of Glacier National Park off to the east and north," says Richard Siderius, president of Rails to Trails of Northwest Montana. "It's very pretty." The route passes three schools that use it for track training and gym classes, he says, and it's also used by "women with baby strollers, walkers, bicyclists, horseback riders and, in the winter, cross-country skiers."

At nearly 200 square miles, Flathead Lake, where the trail begins, is the United States' largest natural freshwater lake west of the Mississippi, according to the Flathead Convention & Visitor Bureau. Cafes near the lake help fuel recreationists for their ride to the Smith Lake Waterfowl Production Area, which is overseen by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's Northwest Montana Wetland Management District. The southern end of Smith Lake is a spring nesting ground for migratory waterfowl such as mallards, northern pintails and American widgeons. The area is also a favorite overwintering spot for rough-legged hawks, red-tailed hawks and northern goshawks.

The Great Northern Railway established the rail line in 1893, and Burlington North-

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Graduate Programs

Learning About Options

By Greg Scheiderer

Rachel Azaroff made some big changes in her life last year. She left a good job as a consultant at a global management consulting firm in Washington, D.C., moved across the country, and entered the Full-time Master of Business Administration program at the University of Washington's Foster School of Business in Seattle.

"I was interested in rounding out my quantitative and business skills to be able to advance in my career," says Azaroff, who began the MBA program last fall. "Moving to a new city, having a new learning experience and meeting new people seemed like a logical way to expand my horizons."

She also liked the average student age of 29 and the average work experience of six years, that typically more than a third of the students are women and about 40 percent of the students have international citizenship, and that the program has one of the country's highest job-placement rates.

Deciding to get a graduate degree and then determining which program is right for you can be exciting but challenging. Because graduate programs represent a significant investment of time, energy and money, it's important to take advantage of opportunities to research the options and find the best fit. Graduate schools also recognize the importance of fit—they want to enroll students who will be successful and happy—so graduate programs put a lot of effort into helping prospective students make a decision. Below are some recommendations from graduate programs, and from current students and alumni, for deciding which program is right for you.

Determine Your Goals

One of the most vital first steps in researching graduate programs is to be clear about your goals. "The more people have thought about themselves and done a little research with respect to what they might want to do and where they might want to go, the easier it is to begin an evaluation process with respect to programs," says JoAnne Starr, assistant dean for MBA programs at the Rady School of Management at the University of California, San Diego. "Self-reflection is a beautiful thing."

Sara Richardson enrolled in the Rady School right after finishing her undergraduate degree in engi-

neering because she saw an MBA as the way to meet her career goals. "Everyone I met who had a job that I thought was interesting had an MBA," she says. "You get immediate respect for being an engineer, and then you get street cred, the vocabulary, the skill set and the connections that go along with having an MBA. The combination of the two degrees is really useful."

Many Rady School students are interested in science and technology, she adds, making collaboration on student projects particularly appealing and beneficial.

After receiving her MBA in 2012, Richardson was chosen as a business analyst in an 18-month business-leadership-development program at a San Diego semiconductor company.

Joseph Pugh, the in-house legal counsel for a semiconductor company in Hillsboro, Oregon, already had degrees in electrical engineering and law when he enrolled in the University of Oregon's Executive MBA program at the Lundquist College of Business in Portland. "I had the technical background and the legal background, but I felt like I was missing the understanding of business," he says. "I didn't feel like I understood the finance, the strategy, the accounting. I wanted

Executive MBA Survey Results

The following statistics were included in a November 2013 press release from the Orange, California-based Executive MBA Council that summarized survey results from 314 member EMBA programs around the world:

Average class size: 43.

Average program length: 20 months.

Average years of management experience students have: 8.5 years.

Average years of work experience students have: 13.7 years.

Percent of programs that require a global trip: Nearly 66%.

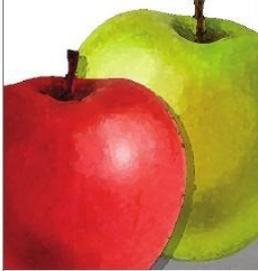
Average program cost: \$73,401.

Percent of programs that offer scholarships and fellowships: 53%.

Number of programs that offer career services (alumni networking is the most common and fastest-growing service): Nearly two-thirds.



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to get my MBA to fill in that gap.”

Matt Davis, a senior market-research manager at a large Puget Sound-area software company, just completed his first term of the Foster School's Evening MBA program. He agrees that knowing what you want is vital to picking the right program, because even within the same school, graduate programs can be quite different.

He says he has long-term career goals that were supported by the wide range of elective classes in the Foster MBA program, which would prepare him for various paths he might want to pursue.

“It's really good to have a sense of why you want to do it,” he says. “Adequate time to reflect is important, and it will also play a critical role in how you evaluate whether a program is the right fit for you or not.”

The importance of fit cannot be over-emphasized, says Dan Poston, assistant dean for MBA programs at the Foster School. “You are going to an experience that you're going to be immersed in, deeply, for two or more years, so you'd better like it there. You'd better like being with those people, and you'd better like that kind of environment.”

Make Connections

One of the ways to learn more about graduate programs is via the web. Starr, from the Rady School, says that tools such as Skype, email, webinars, videos and social media help staff, faculty and student ambassadors reach people anywhere.

“Things that enable us to have individual and personal interactions with prospective students who are at a distance are an enormous help,” Starr says.

Washington State University offers regular informational webinars for options such as the university's acclaimed online MBA program, with students receiving real-time on-screen answers to questions they submit digitally. And in December, the university offered a special webinar to introduce prospective students to the new online Master's in Strategic Communication for working professionals and recent bachelor's degree graduates or others interested in changing careers to strategic communication. The university expects to offer the webinar before every term.

The website for Boise State University's Executive MBA program includes electronic brochures and videos, such as a video called *Experience EMBA in 4 Minutes*. “The prospective student, before they even take the step of coming over to talk to somebody, can get a feel for what it's like,” notes Kirk Smith, associate dean for graduate

Puzzle on page 64.



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‘The more we can give prospective students insight into what it would be like to be a student, the easier it is for them to make good decisions.’

studies in the College of Business and Economics at the university. “It’s a low-risk way for someone to poke around and see what the program looks like.”

Most business schools see their websites as just the beginning of a much longer and more intense dialog. They strive to introduce prospective students, sometimes virtually but often in person, to administrators, faculty, students and alumni for conversations so that the prospective students can learn more about the academics, the culture and the impact of the programs.

“Part of it is just responding to an audience that wants to really understand the experience before they get into something,” says Dan Poston from the University of Washington. “Between social media and the desire for engagement, we see a lot more interest in personal outreach.”

For example, he says, prospective Foster School MBA students can chat over coffee or online with an MBA student ambassador; attend information sessions on campus or at off-campus recruiting events

in cities such as Boston, New York, Los Angeles and San Francisco; and participate in a preview weekend.

The weekend typically features an overview presentation of the different MBA options; a mock class session taught by a faculty member; a business school building tour; an MBA career-path discussion; and opportunities to talk with current students, alumni and staff, includ-

ing having lunch with students and staff. “You have students there who are so enthused about the experience that they enjoy sharing it,” Poston says.

While Rachel Azaroff was still on the East Coast, the school helped her connect by email and phone with a Foster MBA student from Virginia. Azaroff also contacted a former colleague who’d worked at the global management consulting firm before enrolling in the Foster School program.

“Being able to chat with those two people—hear about their experiences, ask them questions, really get a sense of them and the way they speak about the program—was really helpful,” Azaroff says.

Smith, the associate dean at Boise State, says the university’s MBA and EMBA programs host frequent open houses. “We always have lots of current students and alums there to talk informally with people one-on-one with no representative of the university around,” Smith says.

Things to Consider

Here are just a few examples of information you may want to seek out—from websites, and from social-media and in-person connections with staff, faculty and students—to help you decide which program to attend:

- Aspects of the program that are a particularly good fit with your interests (e.g., if you’re interested in being a global leader or entrepreneur, what does the program offer along those lines; if you’re interested in research, what are those opportunities?).
- The culture of the program, including how students interact and how students/faculty interact.
- What kinds of personal and professional attributes the program’s most successful students have.
- Experiential-learning opportunities, including internships and study abroad.
- Faculty members’ involvement and connections in the professional world.
- Percentage of students entering the program right after receiving a bachelor’s degree and percentage who are working professionals.



- Career, gender and cultural diversity of the students.
- Major recent successes of the program, and challenges and issues facing the program.
- Typical time investment required for a student to excel in the program.
- How students are balancing demands of work, family and school.
- What current students have discovered that they wish they’d known when they first applied to or started the program.
- Financial aid available and how to enhance your chances of obtaining aid.
- Kinds of job-placement services the program offers.
- Percentage of graduates who receive job offers in their desired field upon graduation.
- Extent of alumni involvement with the program.
- Whether the program does a regular student-satisfaction survey and what the most recent results were.
- Culture and economy of the larger community where the program is located.

“The idea is, they can get the real scoop.”

Professor Jeff Bailey, academic director of the EMBA program for the University of Idaho’s College of Business and Economics in Moscow, Idaho, says that because the program accepts a small cohort [group] of new students each year, it is manageable for staff members to reach out to anyone who expresses interest and seems qualified for the program.

“The nice thing about having a small cohort is that we can help every single potential applicant think about where they

are with their company or business and how they might take that to the next level,” Bailey says. “We usually go and talk with them in person, have coffee or something, to find out more about their situation.”

Outreach often takes Murray MacTavish, director of the MBA program at Trinity Western University, halfway around the globe. The program has students in China as well as on its Langley, British Columbia, campus, about 25 miles east of Vancouver, BC. MacTavish recently met with a couple of prospective students in Shanghai.

“If you contact us, I’ll do my best to meet with you personally,” says MacTavish.

Julianna Sowash, director of admissions for the University of Oregon’s EMBA program—which has information sessions where prospective students, and their spouses and guests, can talk with staff and alumni—says the program prides itself on providing personalized information.

“We let people see that we are high-touch and high-service from the very first interaction they have with the program,” she says. “It involves working closely with the prospective student and understanding what their goals are, what they’re looking for and what their priorities are.”

Starr, the assistant dean for MBA programs at UC San Diego’s Rady School, says quality outreach is important for the school and the student. “No school wants to have students who arrive with goals and expectations that cannot be met by the program,” she says.

‘On a Shadow Day, you ... spend the whole day with one of the students and go to the things that they go to.’

“This is a shared goal of helping people get to the right kind of program in the right school in the right geographic environment in the right business community so they can achieve their goals. The more we can give prospective students insight into what it would be like to be a student, the easier it is for them to make good decisions.”

Attend a Class

Many programs will make arrangements for students to visit an actual class, giving them an excellent opportunity to observe the culture, pace, interactions and types of students.

“The most valuable thing that you can do when applying to a program is to go to an event or sit in on a class,” says Richardson, the Rady School alum. When you’re in the class environment, you can imagine yourself there as you pursue your degree, and determine if you can see yourself in the program, she says.

Davis, the senior market-research man-



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ager at a Seattle-area software company, met a current Foster School Evening MBA student at a gym where both work out. This acquaintance invited Davis to attend a class session. Davis went, and it paid immediate dividends, he says. "I was excited after just sitting in on a class to talk with people at my company about what I'd heard."

In addition to class visits, the Foster School offers Shadow Days. "On a Shadow Day, you come down and you spend the whole day with one of the students and go to the things that they go to," Poston explains. "You go to class with them; you go to club meetings. If they have a career-services appointment, you go to that. You see how it plays out for somebody on a day-to-day basis."

Research Nonmatriculated-Student Opportunities

Some graduate programs allow students to take entire courses without matriculating, and perhaps apply those credits to their degree if they're later accepted. For instance, Trinity Western University may allow a student to take up to three MBA courses, for nine credits, without being fully admitted to the MBA program, and may allow those credits to go toward the MBA if the student is subsequently accepted into the program.

The Milgard School of Business at the University of Washington Tacoma, south of Seattle, allows graduate nonmatriculated students to take up to 12 credit hours and possibly apply the credits to the MBA program if later admitted.

Universities have varying requirements for nonmatriculated students, and attending as a nonmatriculated student is typically not a guarantee you'll be accepted into a program later, so it's important to get all the applicable information in advance.

Also be aware that a program may not allow nonmatriculated students because the program is cohort based—with the same group of students learning and progressing from course to course together—and structured so that one course builds on the next.

Ponder the Relationship

Davis likens the process of getting to know different graduate programs to a courtship.

"You want to have a good sense of whom you're getting into that relationship with," he says. He learned a little more

from each person he talked with about the Foster School's Evening MBA. "By the end, I had a really clear picture, and at that point it was an easy decision."

Azaroff, the student who moved to Seattle from Washington, D.C., to attend Foster's Full-time MBA program, says her cross-country move has worked out well, except for one tiny bit of information she somehow didn't get from all of her research and networking.

"My corporate, D.C., conservative wardrobe is out of place here!" she says with a laugh. But she's enjoying the culture of the

West Coast and of the graduate school, and she appreciated the opportunities she had to get acquainted with both before jumping in.

"Once you start meeting some of the people, seeing the way they carry themselves, the way they interact with each other, you start being able to hone in on the culture and get a sense of the environment and if it's a good fit for you," she says. ■

Writer Greg Scheiderer lives in the Seattle area.

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BRITSPEAK

ACROSS

- 1 Blacksmiths do it
- 5 Thrash
- 9 Bjorn Borg, e.g.
- 14 Start court proceedings?
- 19 Sledder's delight
- 20 Poi party
- 21 Steamship
- 22 Kilt fabric
- 23 Department of the Navy
- 25 Subway
- 27 GPA spoiler
- 28 Spindle
- 29 Fall drink
- 30 "The Talented Mr. ____"
- 31 Give the slip
- 33 Spread out
- 35 Bowling area
- 36 Supreme Court count
- 38 Page for viewpoints
- 39 Fine spray
- 40 Trendy
- 43 Haddock
- 46 San Antonio athlete
- 48 "Ryan's Hope," e.g.
- 49 Knight's challenge
- 50 Cattle movers
- 51 Attorney
- 54 Bolivian capital
- 55 Reprobate
- 56 Biting
- 57 Mortgage, e.g.
- 58 Gave the punch punch
- 59 Chunk of eternity
- 60 "Navy Blues" actress
- 61 Hoods
- 62 Italian actress Virna ____
- 63 Makes beloved
- 65 Certain passage
- 66 Inventors' rights
- 69 Ardent
- 70 Compare
- 71 Croupier's tool
- 72 Babe
- 73 Incorporate
- 75 Bruce and Demi, e.g.
- 76 Aperture
- 77 Vatican official
- 78 Castles, in chess
- 79 Vest
- 81 No longer au courant
- 82 Fixative
- 83 Come up
- 84 Vulgar
- 85 Gasoline additive
- 86 Master Melvin
- 87 Change for a nickel
- 88 Moody
- 90 Out of the ordinary
- 92 Actor Kaplan
- 93 Most indignant
- 95 Blows apart
- 99 "A Man Called ____"
- 102 Needle
- 103 Word of woe
- 105 Singer Zadora
- 106 Bar

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- 108 Government
- 110 Mongolian, e.g.
- 111 Web-footed mammal
- 112 Apple variety
- 113 Bad time for Caesar
- 114 This and this
- 115 Verse
- 116 Yes votes
- 117 Southwestern sight

DOWN

- 1 Minute variation
- 2 Takes cover
- 3 Ancient Mexican
- 4 Hebrew priest
- 5 Blond
- 6 Put to sleep
- 7 "Them" writer
- 8 ____ Fawkes Day
- 9 Artificial waterway
- 10 Gasping for breath
- 11 All over
- 12 Forest creature
- 13 Get it wrong
- 14 Race

- 15 Skip the wedding march
- 16 Julia of films
- 17 Tarzan's transport
- 18 Swirl
- 24 Rafter's thrill
- 26 See
- 29 Blue Grotto isle
- 32 Pole
- 34 Young turkey
- 35 Teller of tales
- 37 Themes
- 39 Sentimentalizes
- 40 Raincoat
- 41 Shrek, e.g.
- 42 Property title
- 43 Fling
- 44 Warble
- 45 Traffic circle
- 47 Leaf opening
- 48 Conk out
- 49 Pretense
- 52 Nearest
- 53 Hawkeye
- 54 Ill will

- 56 Delayed
- 58 Quench
- 60 Surprise attacks
- 61 Bake sale items
- 64 Draw forth
- 65 Undeliverable letter
- 66 Equivocate
- 67 ____-turvy
- 68 Pittsburgh product
- 70 Minimum
- 71 Main drag
- 73 Therefore
- 74 Shed
- 76 "The ____" (Streep film)
- 77 Ovid's father
- 79 Sherry, e.g.
- 80 Vinegar dispenser
- 81 Study
- 83 Old fiddle
- 87 Pointy tooth
- 88 Drenches
- 89 Crotchety
- 91 Subsidies
- 92 Fetes
- 93 Stir-fry

- 94 Resort lake
- 96 Black suit
- 97 Floor pieces
- 98 Hot sauce
- 99 Row
- 100 Luxurious
- 101 Off-Broadway award
- 102 Oz visitor
- 104 Succotash ingredient
- 107 Leap
- 108 Cynical
- 109 That dude

Solution on page 60.

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- Diet Coke
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- Sprite Zero
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- › Wireless mouse/keyboard
- › e-readers
- › Media/CD/DVD player
- › Noise-cancelling headphones
- › Cell phones (prior to door closure only)

Not Allowed During Flight



- › Voice calls of any kind, including VoIP
- › Devices with cell service enabled
- › AM/FM radios or TVs
- › Personal air purifiers
- › Remote-control toys
- › Electronic cigarettes

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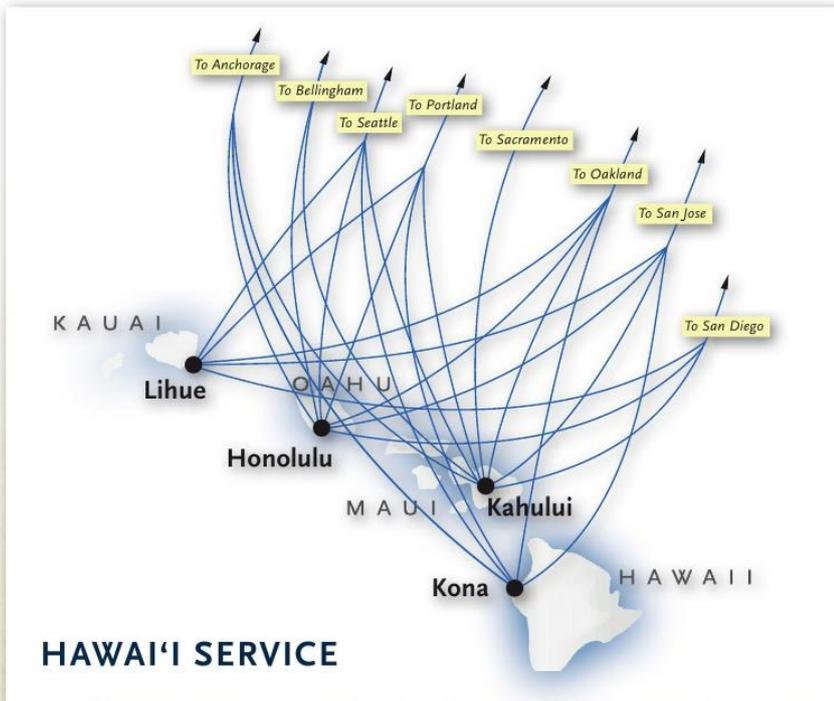
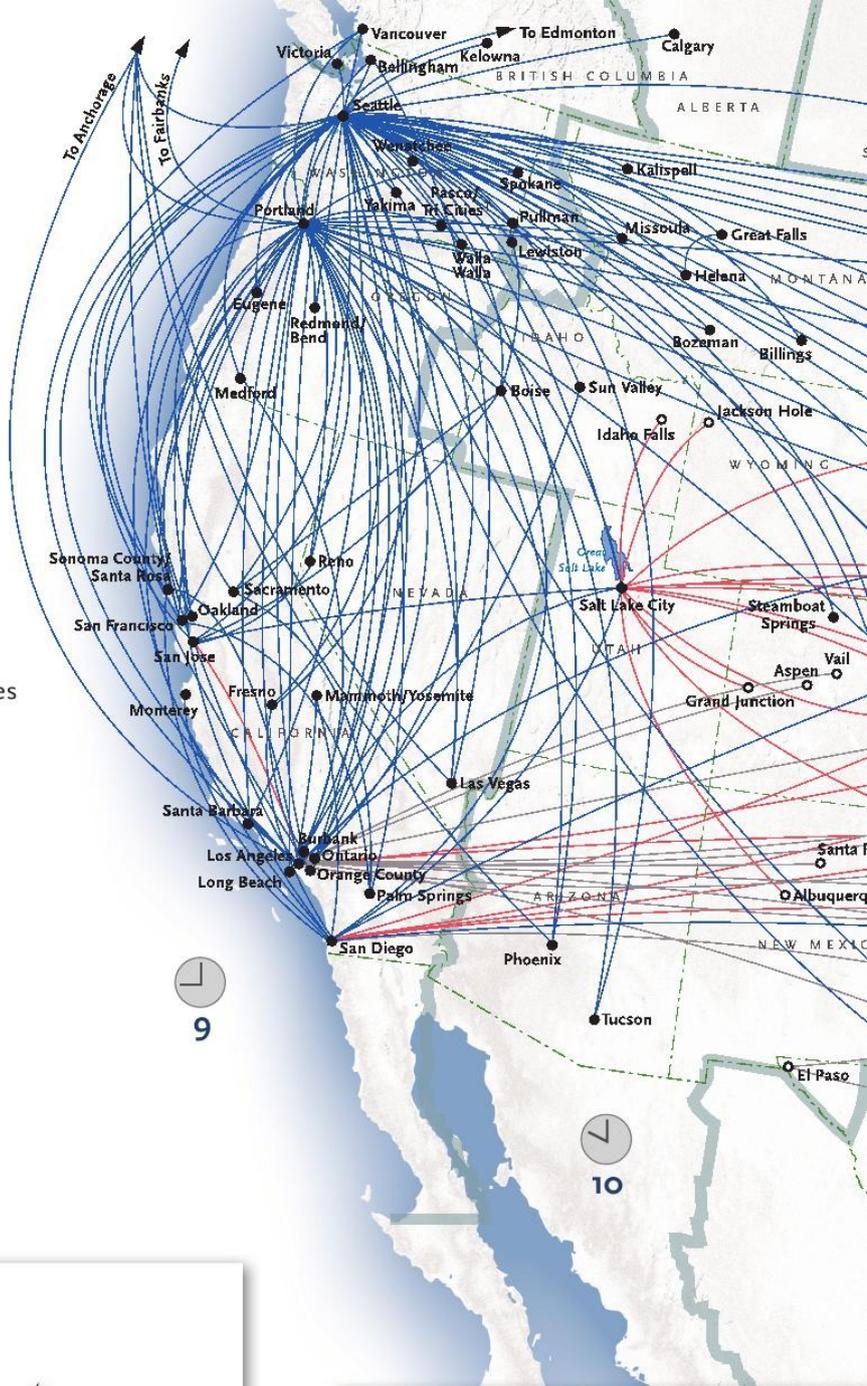
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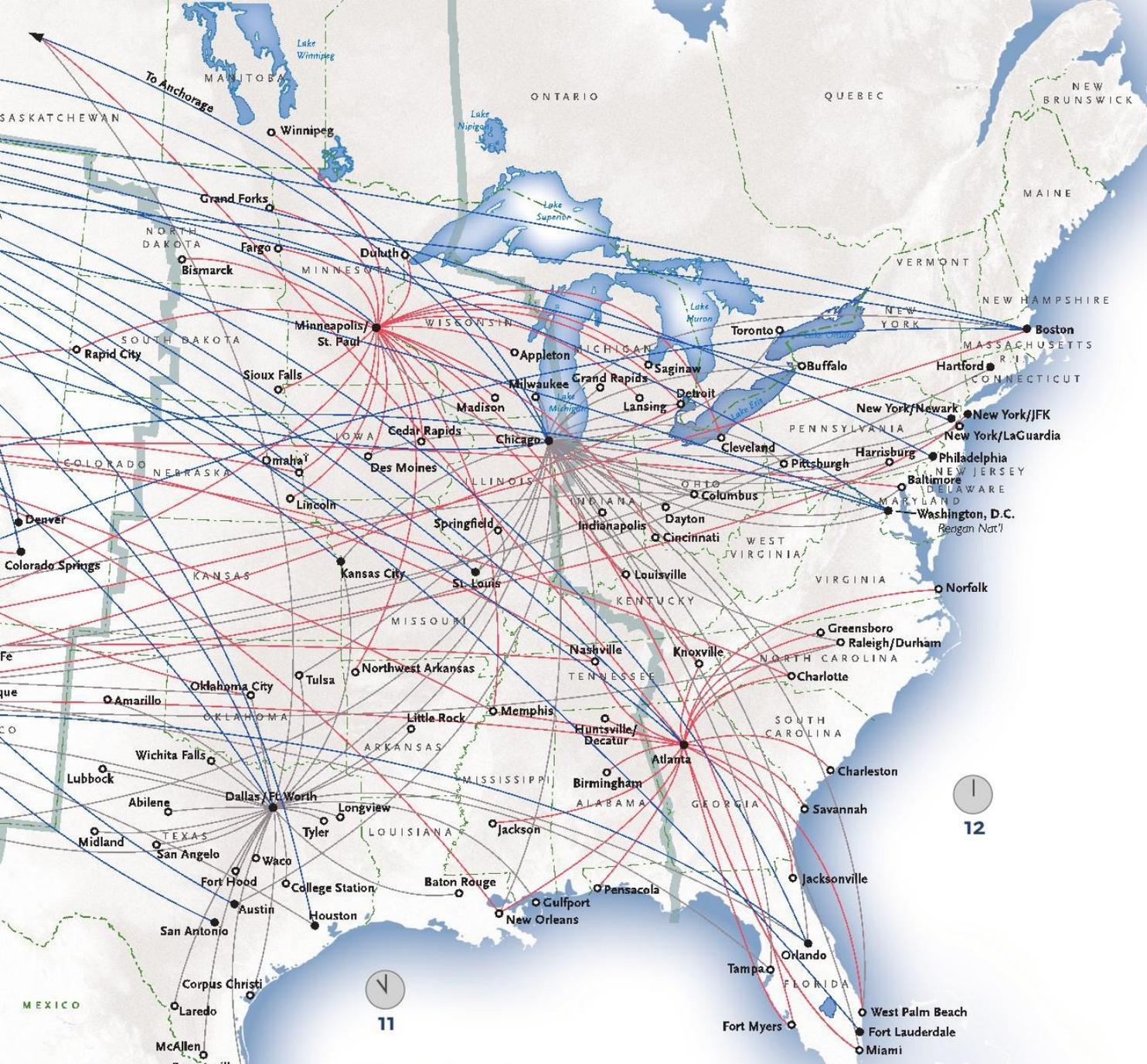
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-  Alaska Airlines
-  American Airlines
-  DELTA

Some Alaska Airlines service operated by Horizon Air or SkyWest Airlines.
Some routes shown operate seasonally.





12

11

U.S. MILEAGE

Between	Mileage
Seattle &	
Boston	2496
Denver	1024
Honolulu	2677
Los Angeles (LAX)	954
Fort Lauderdale	2697
New York City/Newark	2401
Phoenix	1106
San Diego	1050
San Francisco	678
Washington, D.C.	2306
Portland &	
Los Angeles (LAX)	834
Phoenix	1009
San Diego	933
San Francisco	550

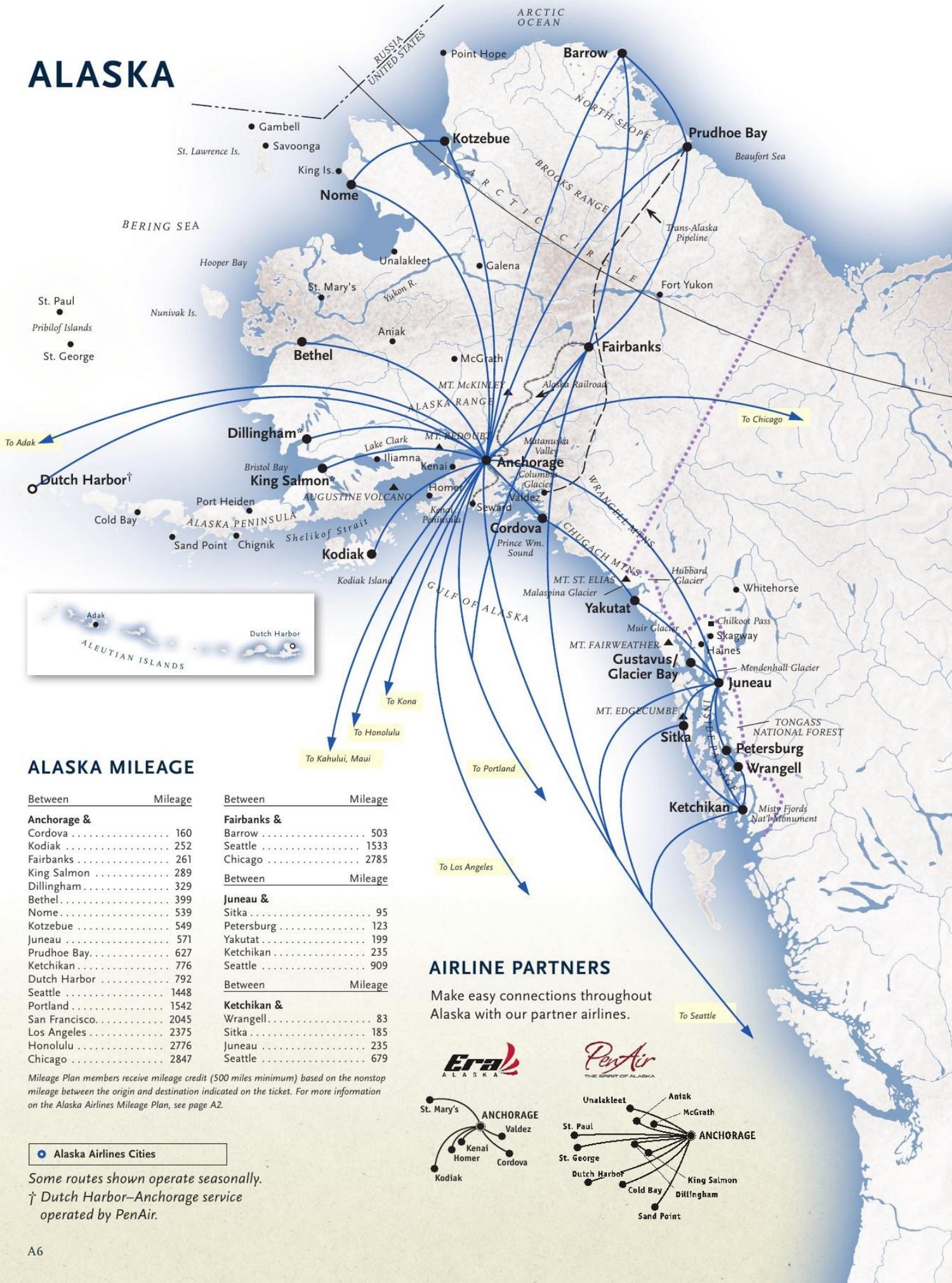
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Salt Lake City–San Diego	June 10, 2014
Salt Lake City–Los Angeles	June 11, 2014
Salt Lake City–San Jose	June 12, 2014



ALASKA



ALASKA MILEAGE

Between	Mileage
Anchorage &	
Cordova	160
Kodiak	252
Fairbanks	261
King Salmon	289
Dillingham	329
Bethel	399
Nome	539
Kotzebue	549
Juneau	571
Prudhoe Bay	627
Ketchikan	776
Dutch Harbor	792
Seattle	1448
Portland	1542
San Francisco	2045
Los Angeles	2375
Honolulu	2776
Chicago	2847

Between	Mileage
Fairbanks &	
Barrow	503
Seattle	1533
Chicago	2785
Juneau &	
Sitka	95
Petersburg	123
Yakutat	199
Ketchikan	235
Seattle	909
Ketchikan &	
Wrangell	83
Sitka	185
Juneau	235
Seattle	679

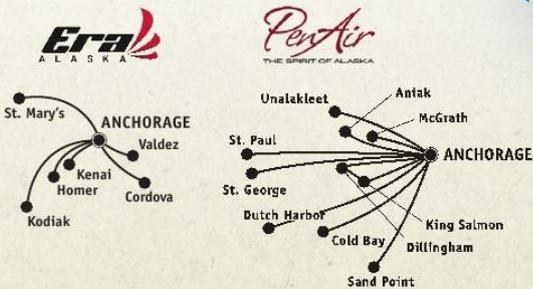
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● Alaska Airlines Cities

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 † Dutch Harbor–Anchorage service operated by PenAir.

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TO THE UNITED STATES

U.S. CUSTOMS DECLARATION

Who must complete this form?

All travelers

Helpful tips

- One form per person or one per family with same address
- Lines 5, 6 — If not using a passport, leave these lines blank
- Line 9 — Enter "AS" for Alaska Airlines
- Sign at the "X"



DECLARACION DE ADUANA

¿Quién debe completar esta forma?

Todos los pasajeros

Datos de ayuda

- Una forma por persona o por familia con la misma dirección
- Línea 5, 6 — Si no tiene pasaporte, deje esta sección en blanco
- Línea 9 — Use "AS" para Alaska Airlines
- Firme en la "X"

DECLARACION DE ADUANA

¿Quién debe completar esta forma?

Todos los pasajeros

Datos de ayuda

- Una forma por persona o por familia con la misma dirección
- Sección 6 — No es necesario declarar sus medicamentos de uso personal

FMM

Who must complete this form?

All travelers except citizens of Mexico

¿Quién debe completar esta forma?

Todos los viajeros, excepto los ciudadanos de México



TO MEXICO

MEXICO CUSTOMS DECLARATION

Who must complete this form?

All travelers

Helpful tips

- One form per person or one per family with same address
- Section 6 — It is not necessary to declare medicine for your personal use



FEM FOR MEXICAN NATIONALS

Who must complete this form?

Citizens of Mexico

FEM PARA MEXICANOS

¿Quién debe completar esta forma?

Ciudadanos de México (Aun siendo residentes permanentes de EE.UU.)

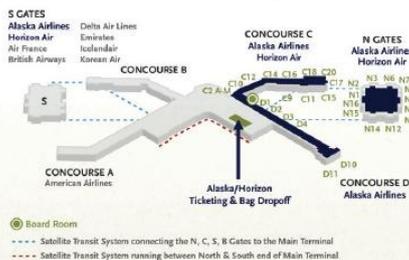
Datos de ayuda

- Complete una forma por persona. No olvide firmarla.
- Seleccione la opción "Entrada a México".
- En la línea 5 escriba el tipo y número del documento que usara como identificación.



AIRPORT GATE LOCATION MAPS

Seattle/Tacoma International Airport (SEA)



Portland International Airport (PDX)



Los Angeles International Airport (LAX)



San Francisco International Airport (SFO)



A Life of Adventure

Dogsledding brings insight to outdoor enthusiast | BY MELISSA HART

LAST SUMMER, after I sandboarded down Oregon's coastal dunes with some college students, my shoulders ached from inadvertent somersaults and backflips on the slick sand. Theirs did not. ■ "How old are you, Melissa?" ■ The oldest of the 20-somethings cocked his head with an air of journalistic inquiry. ■ I ignored the question.

Recently turning 40 hadn't thrilled me. I'd spent decades in pursuit of adrenaline—an endeavor that now required ibuprofen. Half-marathons left me hunched and stork-walking the next day. On backpacking trips, I squinted at topographic maps, surrendering at last to reading glasses. Where once I'd scampered across the top of playground monkey bars, I'd recently pinched a nerve in my back after swinging from them with my young daughter.

Flat on my back on the living-room couch after the monkey bars incident, I grimaced at my husband. "Am I washed up?"

He shrugged. "I'm older than you, and I bike to work every day."

I remained unconvinced about my recreational prospects. Some of our friends, once athletes, had conceded to armchairs and televised sports. The thought frightened me. Adventure had defined my life—what if age robbed me of the ability to run and hike, paddle and pedal?

Then a friend invited me to experience dogsledding. "I know how much you've always wanted to go," she said over coffee at a local cafe.

Dogsledding. Jack London had piqued my interest in *The Call of the Wild*, and when I was in high school, my English teacher had posted London's credo on our classroom wall: "I would rather be a superb meteor, every atom of me in magnificent glow, than a sleepy and permanent planet."

I grinned at my friend. "Sign me up."

She explained that the city of Eugene, Oregon, where I live, has a Recreation Services Division whose excursions include adventures for older adults. She works for the city and said it was OK for nonretirees to participate, too. Earlier in the year, a group had been hot-air ballooning over Oregon's wine country. Now dogsledding participants gathered on a cold winter morning, comparing weather reports for Central Oregon's Mount Bachelor ski resort, where we would meet the dogs and their mushers.

I boarded a van with 10 mostly white-haired passengers. The driver stowed walkers, canes and a wheelchair in the back. A

woman sat in front of me, elegant in a faux fur coat and cap. "Fern," her attendant called her.

"She's the oldest person here." A man I recognized from past running events sat down beside me.

"How old is she?" I whispered. "Mid-90s," he revealed.

Fern didn't look washed up. She sat poised and eager, pointing out the window at icy Clear Lake, at snow-dusted lava fields, at Douglas fir landscapes.

She brought to mind my grandfather, Dale, who drove his

Miata and tap-danced in musical-theater productions until he turned 92. Then I remembered that a septuagenarian friend had just finished climbing one of our state's highest peaks. And the man sitting beside me, old enough to be my father, regularly sped by me on the track during his workouts.

My perception of age began to shift.

At Mount Bachelor, its slopes cross-hatched by the trails of skiers, we pulled on gloves and hats against the 25-degree temperature and walked toward lines of barking dogs. Half a dozen red sleds stood ready, each big enough for two passengers and a musher, who would stand on the back.

As one of the mushers checked his dogs, Fern's attendant helped her into the sled. The two women settled back under a blanket.

Around me, other passengers, wearing big

smiles, also climbed into their sleds. I watched as they slid down a hill and disappeared into the trees.

It was my turn. The musher gave her signal, and her dogs began to lope through the snow. Chill air whipped my cheeks. Pines flashed by. Dogsledding didn't provide the same adrenaline rush as tobogganing, but it was beautiful and serene. All I had to do was relax and enjoy the ride.

After sledding, everyone rejoined at a lodge for hot chocolate. My fellow participants chattered about the canines, the mushers, the Iditarod. I sidled up to Fern. "So what did you think of dogsledding?"

"There's a word for it." She looked into her mug, thinking. "That word is ... sublime." Every atom of her glowed magnificently.

On the van ride back to Eugene, I listened to exuberant discussions and felt a sudden sense of optimism about being in my 40s, 50s, 60s and beyond. The types of excursions might need to change as I aged, but if I retained the sense of wonder so evident on the faces around me, every adventure could prove gratifying.

Melissa Hart is also the author of the memoir Wildness Within: A Romance, an Adoption, and a Baby Barred Owl (Lyons Press, fall 2014).



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