

SPRING 2011

Signature **MONTANA**

RECREATION ■ LIFESTYLE ■ ART ■ BUSINESS ■ HISTORY

LASSOING A LOOK

Cowboy style

PUTTING THE BLING IN SPRING FASHION

Anything goes

FOLLOWING THE BEAT OF A DIFFERENT DRUM

Overcoming a stereotype



MAIN STREET, AUGUSTA, MONTANA

▼ Latigo & Lace, 124 Main St.

Latigo & Lace, a “cultural oasis”

25 years ago, Sara Walsh gave up life as an attorney in Washington, D. C. and landed in Augusta. In 1992, an old grocery store and meat locker on Main Street took on a new and vibrant life as Latigo & Lace. It's been described as a “cultural oasis”, but Augusta culture includes everything from local used cowboy hats and boots to fine art by nation-

ally recognized artists, great books, unique Montana made gifts, jewelry, furs and the stories to go with them often told while bellied up to the only cappuccino bar within 25 miles. No trip to Augusta is complete without checking this place out. *AM*



▲ Buckhorn Bar, 120 Main St.

Good grub, drinks, tales and history

Tami and Frank Dellwo are still serving up big juicy burgers and their famous crispy broasted chicken as well as your favorite beverage. And if you like your grub seasoned with some history and tales (but you won't be able to tell the difference) there is always an old-timer with a cowboy hat that will “educate” you if you are so inclined. Reminiscent of a hunting lodge, the interior walls of this log structure are covered with elk and deer antlers and head mounts, many in the trophy class. One of the famous annual events is the Super Bowl Sunday rocky mountain oyster feed. Be sure not to miss it, you'll have a ball. As a major part of the community fabric, it is also well known by those that have wandered our way or passed through in the last 52 years. *AM*

▼ Bunkhouse Inn, 122 Main St.

At the town Inn the lantern is always on



Originally built in 1912 at Gilman, a mile and-a-half east of Augusta, the Bunkhouse Inn was moved to its present location on Main Street Augusta in the early 1920's. If the décor and the hospitality don't make you dream about cattle drives and cowboys or cowgirls as you sleep in a comfy bed in one of their 10 upstairs rooms, then you ain't alive. Current proprietors, Jordan and Terry have gone all out to make your stay a memorable western experience. And if you are just passing through and not staying the night, well, the coffee pot is always on and there's plenty of local history hanging on the walls in the lobby to browse. The welcome lantern is always on at this place. *AM*

URBAN AFFAIRS — *U Got Style*

• Photography by Phil Procopio

**HAT, ASCOT, SHIRT,
JEANS & BOOTS:**

Big R Store

BELT & BUCKLE:

Hoglund's

Mike Croston, Cowboy/Musician

His LOOK

You won't catch Mike Croston at a big city clothier getting measured for fancy duds. Instead, look for him lugging a couple of brass irrigation heads, a bag of chicken feed, some bailing twine...and a pair of new Wranglers, all bought from his one-stop-for-everything-shop, Big R in Great Falls.

Whether he's singing or dressing, Mike Croston's style is Country, and he wears it well. A self taught songwriter and occasional Nashville performer, it takes Mike about the same time to get dressed as it does to write a good song: five minutes.

Mike's newest CD, recorded at Boone Productions in Belt, Montana is titled "Just Right". And from the looks of this handsome cowboy, you bet it is.

His CD is available online, at Hastings, and at Hoglund's. **AM**

GOLDSMITH

Crafting new life into old jewels

To Rich Davidsen, jewelry isn't just an ornament. It's a piece of somebody's story, or of somebody's heart.

As a descendant of other goldsmiths and jewelers, Davidsen, 45, knew from childhood he would embark on the profession himself. He has been working as a professional goldsmith for 27 years now, but never gets tired of hearing the stories behind his clients' jewelry.

"The people are so cool in Montana," Davidsen said. "They'll tell you their stories. The hunters talk about the hunt, and the ladies will tell you where they come from."

"I love hearing their stories - and I love to tell mine, too," he said.

Davidsen gets plenty of opportunities to do both. As the in-house goldsmith for Jensen Jewelers in Great Falls, he works at a bench in full view of customers. He fashions elk ivories into commemorative jewelry, repairs old rings and creates custom pieces to order.

Hunters will bring an ivory - an elk tooth - into the store, and Davidsen turns it into something they can wear. He cleans and shapes the ivory, although it doesn't usually require much polishing. "The ivories are already basically polished by the animal itself," he said.

Usually, the ivory comes from the hunter's first elk kill, something that signifies a great deal of pride. Or sometimes hunters will bring in a cache of ivories and Davidsen will help them pick out the best one.

Using the "lost wax" method of casting, which involves making a mold and melting out wax to be replaced by molten gold, Davidsen makes a ring to showcase the ivory.

Repair jobs can be just as rewarding. Most of Davidsen's business at Jensen is actually jewelry repair, but his service goes far beyond a basic polish.



If someone brings in a worn-out ring, for example, "I go over it from top to bottom and file out a lot of the scratches and buff it up on a machine," he said. "I clean it, do rhodium plating, and when the customer gets it back it's like a brand-new ring."

But a few jobs stand out as the most meaningful. One woman brought in pieces of jewelry that belonged to her daughter, who died in a car accident. She asked Davidsen to take something from each item - about five necklaces and rings - and make one piece that she could wear.

"I made kind of a pendant, something she'll treasure forever," Davidsen said. "That's kind of the best part of the job."

Davidsen did the same thing for his wife, when their own son died in a car accident three years ago.

"She never takes it off," he said.

Family ties are central to Davidsen's work, from the sentimental connections symbolized by a ring to the history of his endeavors. He learned the trade not at school but from a young age, sitting near his father at the bench where he worked. Even now, people will come into the store and recall Davidsen's great-uncle Pete or his parents in the 1950s, who all worked as jewelry makers at one time in Great Falls.

"I love it," Davidsen said. "It makes me real proud of carrying it on." **AM**

— *Melanie White*



URBAN AFFAIRS — *Introducing*

• Text and Photography by Suzanne Waring

Drs. Pike's and Bonfilio's patients and nursing staff are complimentary of the standards set for joint replacement by the two surgeons:

• "Dr. Bonfilio has replaced both of my hips and knees. I am not using any type of aid to support my walking. It has been years since I was pain free, and I am now able to go up and down stairs normally, not favoring one knee a step at a time as I used to do."

— *Annette Anderson who has had three of the four surgeries in the last nine months*

• "I think the pre-surgery sessions are very important. We make certain that patients have all of the information they need, and we let them know that they can call us anytime they have questions."

— *Amy Wisherd, nursing assistant to Dr. Bonfilio*

• "The less invasive surgical procedures have been a great success. With such a small incision, the patients recover quickly."

— *Melissa Kingsland, nursing assistant to Dr. Pike*



Bill Sybrant

again. The doctor told me that I should enjoy my new knee for years to come."

— *Bill Sybrant, who had total knee surgery in December 2010*

• "I was ambulatory within six hours of surgery. I could tell right away that the knee joint was more stable than it had been since high school. Now with physical therapy, I am learning to retrain muscles that hadn't been used for a long time," *said Sybrant.*

• "As a pharmacist, I was on my feet all day long for over 30 years. The effect of this constant wear, as well as a high school sport injury, was limiting my life. I couldn't shoot hoops with my kids anymore, and I subconsciously favored my knee even on carpet and uneven grass. Now I am looking forward to riding my bicycle

Great Falls Clinic Medical Center Receives High Ranking for Joint Replacement Care

The staff at the Great Falls Clinic Medical Center, located at 1411 Ninth Street South, was notified recently by HealthGrades that the center was being recognized for ranking in the highest 10 percent nationwide and as number one in the state for hip, knee, and joint replacement care. It is the only hospital in Montana to receive the outstanding five-star award for 2011.

HealthGrades is the nation's leading independent evaluator of approximately 5,000 hospitals throughout the country. It rates hospitals on data submitted to the federal government.

"We were unaware that we were being evaluated by Healthgrades. This was a very nice response to the efforts we make on behalf of patients," said Dr. Nick Bonfilio.

Although the doctors at the center also do shoulder replacements, the evaluation was based on mortality and complication rates of patients who had received total knee and hip replacements. To earn this rating, a hospital must have significantly better outcomes than the norm. A HealthGrades study has found that patients of five-star hospitals are 80 percent less likely to experience one or more major complications compared to one-star hospitals.

Starting the joint replacement care program in 2007, Orthopedic Surgeons Nick Bonfilio and Gregg Pike, who perform several hundred replacement surgeries annually, are actively involved in advancing the joint replacement program. They have been highly successful because they have developed protocols, or standards, that provide quality care.

For example, once it has been determined that the person needs joint replacement surgery, each patient meets with the surgeons and staff. "One purpose for the session is to create a mindset with patients that they are not ill but instead that joint replacement surgery will enable them to move forward with their lives," said Bonfilio.

During the sessions, the staff also determines whether patients are in good health before surgery by checking if their dental

work is up to date, whether diabetes is under control, if they have heart or breathing issues, or whether any other issues might need treatment prior to surgery to ensure optimal results and prevent complications.

"We encourage people to take control of their wellbeing because we have found that they heal faster when they do," said Bonfilio.

Patient health, quality care, and advanced procedures are complementary to the success of joint replacement surgery. "I was surprised to learn at a recent conference that only 7 to 8 percent of the knee replacement surgeries performed nationwide are minimally invasive procedures. Instead of cutting knee muscles and tendons, we simply move them aside. Although this is more difficult to perform, these procedures are better for patients," said Bonfilio. "Patients are up walking with physical therapy the same day as surgery; pain-medication needs diminish; and hospital stays become shorter."

To create a care plan for each person, Bonfilio and Pike collaborate with outpatient departments, such as pharmacy staff, physical and occupational therapy, ancillary departments, and others to make this experience the easiest and most pleasant possible. This, they have found, is the cornerstone for providing exceptional care.

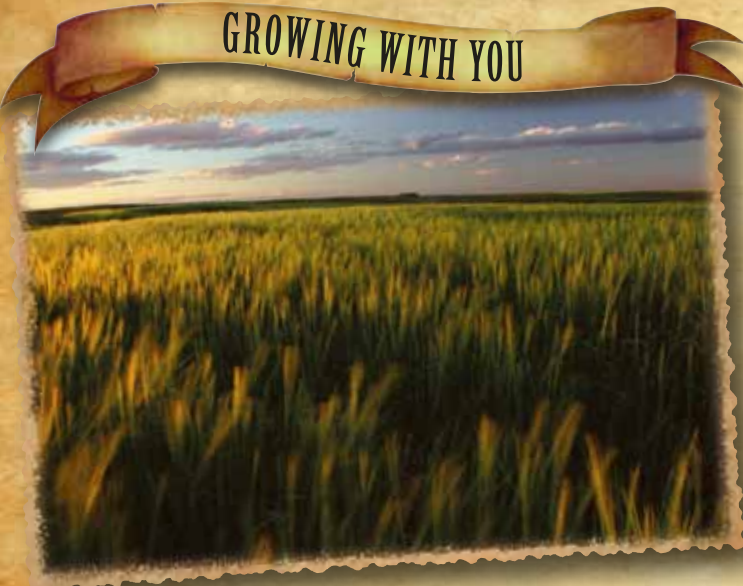
"It is so much fun to get to know the patients and to be directly



Dr. Nick Bonfilio, left, and Dr. Gregg Pike hold the trophy awarded to Great Falls Clinic Medical Center for being #1 in Montana for joint replacement care.

involved in their care. It makes our work a rewarding experience," said Bonfilio. **M**

The outcomes of the joint replacement care study done by HealthGrades can be accessed at www.healthgrades.com. Call 406-771-3173 for an appointment with either Dr. Bonfilio or Dr. Pike.



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