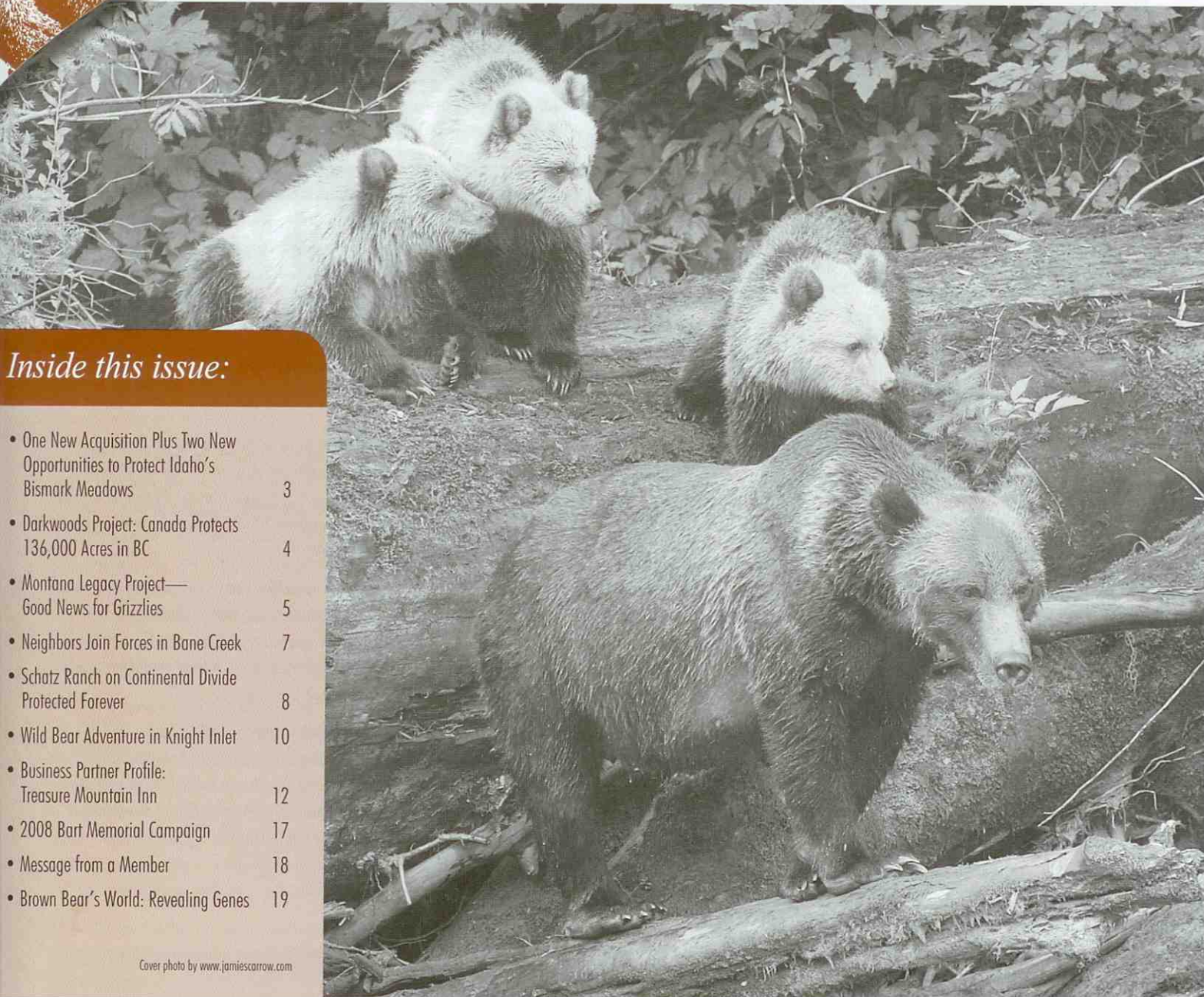




VITAL NEWS



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Cover photo by www.jamiescarrow.com



WHERE THE GRIZZLY CAN WALK, THE EARTH IS HEALTHY AND WHOLE.



Photo by Andy Beerman

Thea Leonard and Andy Beerman put their love of the planet at the center of their lives and their business. Husband and wife owners of Park City, Utah's Treasure Mountain Inn, Thea and Andy are not only passionate about the outdoors, they have transformed their condominium hotel into an earth-friendly haven.

Park City, once a silver mining town that nearly faded into the sagebrush, is now a bustling destination ski area and one of Utah's premier outdoor recreation playgrounds. For those coming to schuss the slopes, hike aspen-clad mountainsides, or explore the town's shops, galleries and restaurants, Treasure Mountain Inn offers 4-diamond rooms and gourmet catering with a live-lightly-on-the-planet twist.

Visitors will find earth-friendly amenities in the rooms and organic foods on the menu. But Thea and Andy also gently urge their guests to think a little differently about their visit to this mountain village. The Inn's location in the heart of downtown means just about everything is within walking distance or a short ride on public transportation, so they encourage guests to leave the car behind and instead use their

leg power, breathe hard and fill lungs with clean pine-scented air.

Yet most of the Inn's sustainable practices are not in plain sight. "Recycling was our gateway into green efforts," says Andy, "and we became the first hotel in town to do business recycling." They then made a switch to electronic and web-based reservations, receipts and advertising, saving reams of paper. While updating the 1960s-era building, they upgraded the Inn's appliances and its heating and cooling systems to energy- and water-efficient equipment, replaced the swimming pool with a salinity-based spa, and switched to fluorescent and compact fluorescent lights throughout the building. They also transformed the Inn's landscaping to native, water-wise plants.

With these changes, they were able to reduce their energy use by 12.5%—despite a 30% increase in business last year. They now purchase 35% of the hotel's power as wind energy through the local utility, and offset the remainder through carbon offset donations, becoming one of the first hotels to be 100% carbon neutral in energy use.

"We try to look at all our business decisions in terms of their impact to the planet, our staff and community," says Thea, "And because Park City is our product—clean air, trees and fresh snow—it makes business sense to preserve the area around us."

They also pay the earth first. Treasure Mountain Inn gives at least 1% and often more off the top of their gross sales to a few selected environmental groups, including Vital Ground, and their contributions are certified through 1% for the Planet.

"We focus on fewer groups for more impact," explains Andy. "We concentrate our dollars with those groups who are working their butts off to actually protect land. Vital Ground was a no-brainer to support." In addition to dollar donations, Treasure Mountain Inn has generously hosted Vital Ground board and strategic planning meetings—donating rooms and

Thea's exquisite catering, and giving us a home away from home.

"We want to do things in an ethical and green way and run a successful business," says Thea. "We had a powerful urge that wasn't going to go away." As they've become successful integrating green habits into the hotel business, they've started getting curious inquiries from other businesses. "Now Park City calls us the 'eco-chic boutique' hotel!"

Yet their commitment runs to the core. "We would be doing this anyway, even if under the radar," says Thea. That dedication is summed up in a Kenyan proverb on the Treasure Mountain Inn website:

Treat the Earth well. It was not given to you by your parents. It was loaned to you by your children. 🌱



TREASURE MOUNTAIN INN

If you have a chance to visit Park City, consider a stay with our friends at Treasure Mountain Inn. You can make reservations at www.treasuremountaininn.com or 1-800-344-2460. And say hello from Bart!

