



# **4th Annual State of the Valley Community Forum 2023**

February 28, 2023  
Community Library in Ketchum



**Welcome to the**  
**State of the Valley Community Forum**  
**presented by the**  
**Wood River Women's Foundation**

Once again, we are honored to host our moderator and panelists who represent several sectors in the agencies and organizations in Blaine County and play important roles in our daily lives. In our fourth Forum, we are presenting to our community representatives of our county government and a few of the providers of our physical and social infrastructure.

They will describe the services their agencies provide, the challenges they face and opportunities that are available to better serve our population—especially taking into account the unusual increase in that population over the last few years.

In this Forum, we will learn more about how decisions are made concerning roads, waste management, water supply, public safety and emergency services.

This program is our first to focus entirely on public facilities and infrastructure. We are grateful to the speakers for sharing their expertise and planning to increase our awareness of the challenges we all face in the community.

We encourage you to ask questions to enliven the discussion and deepen the conversation in this Forum. Thank you for joining us.

## Meet the Moderator



### **Mike McKenna**

#### Valley Chamber of Commerce

Executive Director

Originally from New England, Mike McKenna is an award-winning journalist and author, and has served as the Executive Director of The Chamber since 2019.

Mike first moved to the Wood River Valley in 1996, where he met an eventually married Brooke Pace McKenna, who is the Co-Executive Director of The Hunger Coalition. The couple followed Mike's writing career from New Hampshire to California and eventually back to Idaho in 2010. They are raising two boys in Hailey and the family is very active in the hockey community.

Mike has served on numerous nonprofit boards over the last 15+ years, including spending several on The Chamber of Hailey and the Wood River Valley before being recruited to become the Executive Director. In addition to helping its 400 members, The Chamber is also the "events clearing house" for Blaine County, assisting or managing over 40 each year. The Chamber also serves as a Direct Marketing Organization under the "Discover Wood River Valley" brand.

## Meet the Panelists



### **Ron Bateman**

Wood River Fire and  
Rescue

Chief

Now in his 25th year in fire service, Wood River Fire & Rescue Chief Ron Bateman hails from a 10-year position as the fire chief of the Milliken Fire Protection District, the Johnstown Fire Protection District and the Colorado Front Range Fire Rescue.

In the fall of 2019, Ron took on the position of WRFR's Interim chief, stepping in after the retirement of longtime Chief Bart Lassman.

Ron possesses a wealth of experience in fire department consolidation, a subject that has been on the table in the Wood River Valley intermittently for decades. He also helped found the Wood River Peer Support Initiative, a support team for first responders, run by first responders, designed to reduce stigma and allow fire and EMS professionals to connect through similar lived experiences.

Ron holds a bachelor's degree from Indiana University in English and Economics and a master's degree from Gonzaga University in Organizational Leadership. He started his career in Bloomington, Ind., in 1998.



[wrfr.com](http://wrfr.com)

# Meet the Panelists

## Muffy Davis

### Blaine County Board of Commissioners

Chair



Muffy Davis currently serves as Chair of the Blaine County Board of Commissioners. Previously she was a State Representative for District 26 in the Idaho State Legislature, elected for two terms. Muffy is also an elected member of the International Paralympic Committee's Governing Board and serves as a board member of the US Olympic and Paralympic Committee, the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Executive Committee, and the Idaho Women's Athletic Foundation.

Muffy grew up in the Wood River Valley and was an active member of the Sun Valley Ski Team until she sustained a spinal cord injury during a training run on Bald Mountain. Not one to let her disability slow her down, Muffy re-learned to ski on adaptive equipment called a mono-ski and eventually was named to the US Disabled Ski Team. Muffy represented the USA in the Winter Paralympic Games in 1998 and 2002, winning 4 medals, a bronze, and 3 silvers.

Later she transitioned her competitive energy from the mountain to the road and took up adaptive handcycling. In 2012 Muffy won 3 gold medals at the London Paralympic Games, garnering her a Guinness World record for the most gold medals won in road cycling at a Paralympic Games. In 2022 Muffy was inducted into the US Olympic and Paralympic Hall of Fame, with Olympic and Sun Valley legends Dick Fosbury (a fellow Blaine County Commissioner), Gretchen Fraser, and Picabo Street.

Muffy lives in Hailey with her husband, Jeff Burley, who works for Higher Ground USA, and their 14-year-old daughter, Elle, who attends Wood River Middle School.



[co.blaine.id.us/352/County-Commissioners](https://co.blaine.id.us/352/County-Commissioners)

# Meet the Panelists

## Brian Yeager

City of Hailey

Public Works Director



Brian Yeager is a professional engineer and professional land surveyor who has been the City of Hailey Public Works Director since 2018. Prior to his employment with the City, he was a consulting engineer at Galena Engineering for 23 years specializing in private development and municipal projects.

As the City of Hailey Public Works Director Brian oversees the Capital Improvement Plans, Building Facilities, and Water, Wastewater, Streets, and Parks Divisions,. Brian is knowledgeable about infrastructure design, operations, staffing, budgeting, and planning.



[haileycityhall.org/public-works](http://haileycityhall.org/public-works)

# About WRWF

## + The Education Committee

Women's Foundation Mission Statement: ***WRWF inspires and educates women to become leaders in philanthropy. We encourage and create significant positive change in our community through pooled grant-making.***

WRWF is a collective of women who pool their contributions in order to achieve greater community impact while advancing their philanthropic skills. All women are welcome to join and participate in advancing the Foundation's mission through its' committees including Grants, Membership, Education, Communications, Finance, and Governance.

Since launching in 2005, the WRWF has grown to more than 300 members and is now one of the largest collective giving circles in the country. Wood River Women's Foundation has:

- ◆ Awarded over \$3 million dollars through 193 grants to nonprofit organizations across our community in an array of areas including Arts, Education, Environment, Health & Recreation and Social Services.
- ◆ Launched an Endowment Fund in 2017 to ensure sustainability well into the future.
- ◆ Emphasized and offered philanthropic education to help members become more effective donors.
- ◆ Brought together hundreds of women to share their priority of giving back to the community.

### EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The purpose of the Education Committee is to present educational opportunities to our members that support the mission of Wood River Women's Foundation. Our focus is to increase philanthropy by women and provide information that will lead to wiser, more effective giving. Our primary educational event is the Winter Forum, usually in February, with smaller, more focused events throughout the year as opportunities arise.

*Thanks to our Education Committee: Jenni Riley, Susan Passovoy, Renee Spooner, Lilian Wu, Jeanne Cassell, and Ellen Fastow.*

Wood River Women's Foundation is a certified 501(c)3 organization and an affiliate member of Philanos, a network accelerating philanthropy through women's collective giving.

---

## Thank you to our Event Underwriters!

### Gold Level



LeeAnne  
Linderman

### Silver Level



SUMMER BALDWIN  
summersunvalley.com

Sun Valley | Sotheby's  
INTERNATIONAL REALTY

### Bronze Level



## Thank you to Our Community Partners:



---

Wood River Women's Foundation  
P.O. Box 3686  
Ketchum, ID 83340  
208.309.2530 | [wrwcf1@gmail.com](mailto:wrwcf1@gmail.com)  
[woodriverwomensfoundation.org](http://woodriverwomensfoundation.org)  
Tax-Exempt 501(c)(3) Federal Tax ID #81-4000190

