



Off the couch and into the New Year

By WILLY ZIMMER

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Wyoming's great outdoors is filled with opportunities for new and exciting adventures. Recognizing that, the Casper Star-Tribune looked ahead to the New Year by asking several outdoorsmen and outdoorswomen what they resolve to do outdoors in 2007.

For some, a new year promises new beginnings. For others, it brings hope for a return to old ways.

Hopefully, the new year brings outdoor adventures for all our readers.

Live with intention

Ellen Bechtel, Lander

Bechtel is an ardent participant in the Wyoming climbing community and an organizer of the annual International Climbers Festival in Lander.

As it is with most who pursue adventure sports, Bechtel resolves to master herself rather than a specific rock.

"I will continue toward my current short- and long-term fitness goals. I will make these goals a priority in my life," she said. "I will climb at least two times a week. I will climb with friends and family as much as possible. I will enjoy being in the outdoors doing what

I love. I will push myself towards climbing at and above my limit. I will teach climbing technique and safety in the Lander community.

"I will climb in the Wind River Mountains with my husband. I will live with intention."

Getting serious about getting in shape

Jeff Currier, Jackson



Currier, who is the only American to medal at the World Fly-Fishing Championships, manages the fishing shop at Jack Dennis Sports in Jackson. That is, when he's not fishing.

A trip to Oregon this year, however, opened Currier's eyes to what Father Time can do if you're not diligent about taking care of yourself.

"Last month, for the first time in my life, I was the guy falling behind on a long hike on a fishing trip," he said. "I was being treated to a prime steelhead location in Oregon with two friends. We had to hike about 3 miles. ... I was hot in minutes and slow as a carp milling in the weeds. Worst of all, it definitely cost me time on the water and being the first through some of the best runs. Runs that produced some very nice fish! I began working out the day I got home and plan to carry it deep into the new year."

Currier added he plans on taking his wife, Granny, fishing more, and to fly fish more lakes. He's eyeing Keyhole Reservoir in Crook County as one of the destinations.

"I've been planning to go toss some massive pike flies over there for years," he said.

Get a bigger elk

Earl Collier, Sundance

Collier, 18, is a senior at Sundance High School and plans to attend college in 2007 to major in computer assisted drawing (auto-cad).

He also plans on getting better at hunting. Collier bagged his first elk with a rifle in 2005, and scored in 2006 with a bow -- with a big assist from Greg Johnson of Saratoga.

"I'd like to get another elk with my bow and shoot a nice buck with my bow, too," he said.

Another resolution is to improve on the "rag-horn three-point" bull he arrowed in the Sierra Madres.

Catch the Boysen Trifecta

Don Brewer, Lander

Brewer is a former Louisiana police officer who retired to Fremont County, partly for the company, but mostly for the hunting and fishing.

He once favored the "Sublette County fishing style," fishing glacial lakes for monster lake trout.

One of his favorite fishing holes now, however, is Boysen Reservoir. In its depths feed his 2007 resolutions.

"My ice-fishing ambition is to land the trifecta -- a 13-pound channel catfish by night, an 8-pound or better walleye at sunset and a 20-pound burbot, anytime, anywhere. My wife has a killer ling recipe!" he said.

Cat ski fever

Mandy Hood, Grand Targhee Resort

Like many avid skiers and snowboarders, Hood works at Grand Targhee Resort for the chance to ski, and ski, and ski some more.

One of her favorite experiences is "cat skiing" -- riding a Snow Cat to the top, skiing through untracked powder, then riding back to the top and doing it again.

"There is nothing like skiing fresh tracks all day and having a Cat to take you back to the top," Hood said.

Her resolution for 2007: "This year I hope to improve not only my form and become a better skier, but hope to conquer the many expert runs on Peaked Mountain, ranging from Das Boat (easier) to Pink Slip (extreme)."

Faster, stronger

Adrian Whitmore, Sundance

Whitmore is one of the leaders of the Sundance Chain Gang Mountain Biking Association. His goals are simple -- get in shape and help grow his favorite pastime.

Whitmore will need to get in shape to meet his goal of completing the 111-kilometer Laramie Enduro.

"(I resolve) to lose an additional 25 pounds, and finish the Laramie Enduro in my fourth attempt and to beat my best time in the Dakota 50 this upcoming year. Get more people involved in mountain biking and trail maintenance and mapping."

Quit being a wimp

Bruce Parker, Casper

Parker is a Range Management Specialist with the Bureau of Land Management's Casper office. And he's a zealous fisherman when he's not on the range.

Parker is deeply involved in North Platte Walleyes Unlimited, which confirms walleye are his favorite. He doesn't resolve to catch bigger fish, however, just to be a little tougher when he goes about it.

"I used to not think twice about spending two days and a night ice fishing," Parker said. "Frankly, I remember times when the night fishing was actually better than fishing in the daylight. In recent years, I have become wimpy and fish strictly during the daylight hours. My resolution is to 'quit being a wimp.'

"My wife calls it insanity, but if you really think about it, what better way to bring in the New Year than by spending a moonlit night out on the ice!"

Go with the flow

Nadia White, Casper (sometimes)

White is a former Star-Tribune state editor who now teaches journalism in Montana. She was long a runner's runner in the Wyoming distance scene and could be found most mornings putting in kilometers on Casper Mountain.

White's 2007 resolutions, however, involve using the physical world as an ally.

"I've backed off the endurance stuff to try to learn to coexist with the forces of nature that have long mystified me: gravity, current, wind," she said. "To that end, I started 2006 sailing to Baja, Calif., and am ending it by recommitting to telemark skiing. ... I'm also working hard at going with the flow on the river in my kayak. So, my goals for 2007 are to relax and be one with the wind, the water and gravity, to embrace the flow and use the natural energies of the earth to access new places and new states of mind."