

## Bozeman's Backyard -Names in the Madison, Gallatin and Bridger Ranges

by Dr. Jeff Strickler – Published by the Gallatin History Museum & Press

In order to tell a compelling story, geography and history (time and space) should never be divorced. In this fun, fast read, and fascinating look at the land and its formations that cradle the town of Bozeman, Strickler has put this rule to work. He writes, "we tend to look at the names on our maps as reference tags that just tell you where you are, and identify which mountain, lake or stream that you are on. But the names on this land also tell stories. They tell of the history, ecology and the hopes and dreams of the people who came before us. There are whispers of the past and a reflection of the nature that we find in the forests of our own backyard." The result is a colorful treasure of facts that enlightens your mind, gives answers to questions, and it won't lull you to sleep.

People, places, waterways, landmarks, and summits... some well heard of and many unknown to most of us, give personality, texture, and definition to a diverse and exciting landscape.

Did you know, that near the top of Ramshorn Peak in the Gallatin Range stands a vertical, petrified redwood over 12 feet in diameter called the "King of Ramshorn?"

Koch Peak... Is it pronounced Cook? Coke? (both German), or, Danish as in the climbers' rhyme "the notch in the Koch?" The answer is on page 114.

Descriptive titles like Hardscrabble Peak, Maid of the Mist Mountain, Bacon Rind, Rat Lake, Cowboys Heaven, Bad Luck Creek, and Turkey Pen Peak hint to their origins and pique one's imagination, but also issue an invitation to learn the rest of the story.

Warning... the book may lead you on new adventures as you may want to assemble a bucket list from the numerous sites, and, with this new found knowledge, make plans to search them out.

Strickler's books have all revolved around area monikers and their history. His first title chronicled the origin of names of the town of Big Sky's roads. It was followed by *A Skiers Guide to the Biggest Skiing in America* that discusses the names of ski runs at the Big Sky resort. Then came a book of historical images of Big Sky, co-authored with Anne Mistretta. Now he is expanding his reach with a soon to be released title on Billings, Montana's backyard that focuses on the Crazy Mountains and the Beartooth Range. In person

Jeff Strickler did far more than just put words on paper to publish a book; he put his heart and humor into the writing and research. Time and space... well done. All of the proceeds go to support the Gallatin History Museum in Bozeman. In fact, visit them in person or at [www.gallatinhistorymuseum.org](http://www.gallatinhistorymuseum.org) and buy the book, you won't be disappointed.

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