

# The people behind The Nugget... *Erin Bordonaro*

Erin Bordonaro wasn't looking to get into the newspaper business when she answered an ad looking for a bookkeeper at *The Nugget Newspaper*. She was just looking for a job.

"A job opened up in my field and I was hired the next day," she recalled. "I lucked out, because it's a great place

is working with the people she's been in the trenches with for over a decade — and some new faces, too.

"That's the most fun — working with my co-workers," she said. "And seeing the new and different product come out every week. I like opening the paper every week — and seeing the public open the paper every week. I enjoy being part of that."

The feeling is mutual among her co-workers.

"Erin is such a trouper," said Editor in Chief Jim Cornelius. "She's got a work ethic like nobody I've ever known and a tremendous amount of integrity. She is also utterly unafraid to call BS when she sees it, which is wonderful and refreshing. And she's got a great sense of humor, which is an absolute requirement for somebody who has to share an office with me."

Like many folks in Sisters, Bordonaro is a California refugee. While she works hard, she is committed to a slower pace of life.

"I came from California, and was living such a fast-paced life," she recalled.

"Transitioning to this small community was so surprising to me — in a good way. It forced me to pick up that (slower) pace."

When she's not crunching the numbers for *The Nugget*, she's likely to be out in the woods.

**“ She is also utterly unafraid to call BS when she sees it, which is wonderful and refreshing. — Jim Cornelius**

"I love to be out in the woods," she said. "I love to cross-country ski, hike — enjoying this beautiful place we live in."

Her son Spencer is 17 and working at Sisters Meat and Smokehouse, and most of her family lives in close proximity in Crossroads, which is important to her. And her *Nugget* family is important to her, too, and the paper's role in the community.

"We really care," she said. "Not only about the



Erin Bordonaro has been with The Nugget for 13 years. PHOTO BY SPENCER BORDONARO

community, but about the individuals, and we care about this product. We're not after the dollars, we're after the quality of the product. It's a business, but we care about the quality and the product and the community."

## A life on the peaks

By Eileen M. Chambers  
Correspondent

*Editor's note: This is the first of a three-part, behind-the-scenes series about mountaineer Warren Thompson, Sisters resident who has gone on two expeditions to Everest, one to Denali and many more to world-class mountains.*

"George Mallory was a British climber who in 1922 and 1924 tried to be the first human to climb Everest," Warren Thompson said.

Thompson, a Sisters resident who has made two expeditions to Everest, another to Denali and many more to other world-class mountains, revealed what it is like to climb — and, perhaps more deeply, the "why."

"Mallory was asked, 'Why Everest?' His answer, now famous, was 'Because it's there.' For years, people have tried to understand what Mallory meant," Thompson said. "Mountaineering is inherently dangerous. Lack of oxygen. Hypothermia. Threat of avalanche. Ice crevasses. Still, there are those of us, like Mallory, who accept extreme danger without being deterred by it."

Warren grew up hiking the

Northwest outside Seattle.

"I had no desire to climb mountains until a friend talked me into climbing Mount Eleanor. After your usual teenage craziness getting there, after three hours of climbing, I pestered my friend, 'Where the hell are we?'"

"'We're getting there,' he answered. I wasn't so sure. At 2 p.m. and in avalanche territory, I had enough. Then Bruce said, 'It's another 30 feet.' Convinced he was wrong, I nevertheless kept climbing. Suddenly, the clouds evaporated revealing a beautiful cobalt blue sky. Ice crystals floated around us like diamonds. Olympic Range. Puget Sound. Seattle's skyscrapers. It was the most breathtaking thing I had ever seen."

Warren was hooked.

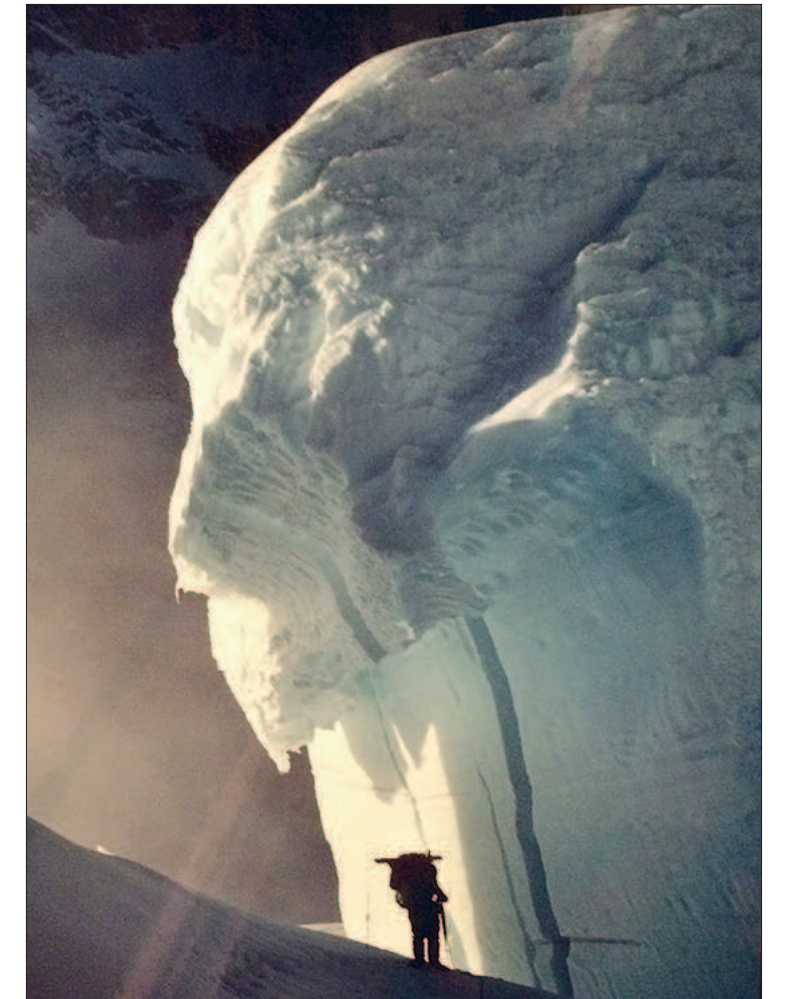
"In mountain climbing, you have your adrenaline junkies. The bigger the thrill, the better. Then there are climbers like me who get spiritual refreshment from places that are nothing short of paradise."

Amid marriage, working at Boeing, earning his MBA and law degrees, Warren became active in Seattle's

Mountaineers Club and Seattle Mountain Rescue, becoming an instructor in climbing, mountain first aid and mountain rescue. After becoming an EMT, he went on "a bunch of wild rescues."

In 1976, as part of America's bicentennial celebration, Warren and his friends climbed Denali, North America's highest peak, taking a route that had not been attempted before.

"What most people don't know about climbing is the work you do before putting one foot on a mountain," Thompson said. "Besides being physically strong, you have to learn the mountain ahead of time. Routes. Weather. Supplies. Where others failed or died trying. Everything. So, before the expedition, I studied Denali intensively. At the time, the success rate for reaching the summit was 25 percent. Although Denali is not the most difficult technically, as Brad Washburn, a climbing legend, has said, 'If the mountain wants to throw the book at you, it can.' You can't afford to make mistakes on mountains like this. Lives and gear are at stake. And, back in 1976, I associated good



Denali, 1976. PHOTO BY WARREN THOMPSON

leadership with having that kind of expert knowledge."

After a month of climbing, Warren's team neared Denali's summit.

"We started at 10 p.m. and after eleven hours of climbing, we reached Carter's Horn. What we didn't realize, coming up from below, was

that Carter's Horn was three peaks, not one. Finally, after ascending all three peaks, I saw the summit and hollered down to the guys, 'I see it.'"

"'How far away is it,' they shouted back."

"'I think 45 minutes.' I

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