



## **Winners Announced in Sun Valley Resort's Inaugural Community Gingerbread House Contest**

*Winning gingerbread artists awarded donations from Sun Valley Company to support local nonprofits including Unega Mountain Dog Rescue, Friends of Hailey Public Library, and Mountain Humane*

**Sun Valley, ID (January 3, 2023)** - Sun Valley Resort's inaugural Community Gingerbread House Contest concluded yesterday as the three week public voting period came to an end. With only a week to prepare, sixteen different individuals and teams from the community entered a masterpiece on behalf of fourteen local nonprofits. Close to 1300 people cast votes over the course of the holiday season while countless others viewed the creations on display in the Boiler Room at the Sun Valley Village.

The winning design, "I'll Just Wing It" was created by Michelle Willows from Five Star Kitchen and Bath took home first prize and a \$3,000 donation from Sun Valley Company to support [Unega Mountain Dog Rescue](#) (UMDR). UMDR is a local organization dedicated to the protection and rescue of Great Pyrenees and Akbash dogs in Idaho and surrounding areas. This year, UMDR will be hosting their first annual running race fundraiser on Saturday, May 6, 2023 in Rinker Rock Creek Ranch which will include a marathon, half marathon, 10k and 5k distances.

"Ra-Pretzel's Tower" created by thirteen-year-old Brooke Vagias earned second place and \$2,000 to benefit [the Friends of Hailey Public Library](#). This nonprofit group raises funds to enhance the library and advocate for literacy awareness and appreciation of library services. As a prolific reader, Miss Vagias hopes "the money can support the children's library and hopefully a Free Little Lending Library" in her neighborhood.

"A Dog Gone Good Day!" entered by the staff of [Mountain Humane](#) (MH) secured third place and \$1,000 donation to support their organization. A team of passionate staff from MH came together to create a tasty replica of their headquarters in Hailey. MH reunites pets with their owners, offers a safe haven for lost or homeless animals, and offers low-cost veterinary

services, behavioral training, and assistance to keep families and pets together whenever possible.

It was such a tight race for third and fourth places that Honorable Mention was added to the awards. Former Dreamer Scholar Eduardo Escalera and [I Have a Dream Foundation](#) Program Director, Pamela Donoso's "Schools In Winter Wonderland" entry earned a \$500 donation for the Foundation. I Have a Dream Foundation – Idaho provides individualized, academic support, social-emotional learning and enrichment programming to under-resourced youth from early elementary school through high-school and post-secondary education with guaranteed tuition support. "We had 60 students from our program participate in the creation of our gingerbread house! Many, many hours of hard-work went into this, but we enjoyed having everyone from the program involved in its creation," said Donoso.

Other nonprofits that were represented in the contest included the Advocates, Wood River Land Trust, NAMI-WRV, Higher Ground, Blaine County Housing Authority, Boulder Mountain Clay Works, SVSEF, Environmental Resource Center, Flourish Foundation, and the Senior Connection.

"We all know this community is filled with incredible talent and passion, but the time, care and artistry put into these gingerbread houses was truly incredible," stated Bridget Higgins, Director of Marketing and Public Relations for the Resort. Higgins continued "We are excited about the community's participation this year, am thrilled we are able to award the prize money to these deserving nonprofits, and can't wait to see what everyone comes up with next year!"

[GINGERBREAD HOUSE WINNING ENTRIES](#) | Sun Valley Resort

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**Media Contacts:**

Local/Regional: Jenna Vagias | [jvagias@sunvalley.com](mailto:jvagias@sunvalley.com) | 406.224.7312

National: Jess Fiaschetti | [Jess@OutsidePR.com](mailto:Jess@OutsidePR.com) | 415.565.9530

**About Sun Valley Resort**

Sun Valley Resort was founded in 1936 as America's first destination ski resort. Located in the Idaho mountains, it is truly a four-season resort with a wide array of activities. With more than 3,400 vertical feet and over 2,300 acres of skiable terrain, Sun Valley offers skiers and boarders an exceptional and varied experience. Bald Mountain has 12 chairlifts, 100 runs, and family and beginner-friendly Dollar Mountain offers two high-speed quads, a terrain park- and the Silver Dollar Carpet for ease of access and learning appeal. Sun Valley is a member of The

Grand America Hotels and Resorts family. Sister properties include Snowbasin Ski Resort, The Grand America Hotel, Little America Hotel (all Salt Lake City, Utah); The Westgate Hotel, San Diego, Calif.; Little America Flagstaff, Ariz.; Little America, Wyo., and Little America, Cheyenne, Wyo.

Sun Valley is served by Hailey's Friedman Memorial Airport (SUN). The airport is located 14 miles from the resort and is easily accessed from six major cities: San Francisco (SFO), Seattle (SEA), Los Angeles (LAX), Salt Lake City (SLC), Denver (DEN), and Chicago (ORD). All Sun Valley Resort guests receive complimentary roundtrip airport transportation.

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