

**Backbone** *Continued from page 3.*  
 “respecting the process. The end result is due to the detail.”

The pair laughed about some of their early media successes, like burying a writer in the snows of Mount Hood, Oregon for the first Avalung demonstration, which was picked up by Dateline Television. Or partnering with Polygamy Porter beer and poking fun at Utah by creating the tagline, “bring some home for the wives,” which was picked up by The Economist.

The “furor that it created was so fun for us,” said Simmons. It helped them realize that “with a great product, you can make this happen.”

In the formative years, Backbone strove to simply outperform the competition.

“We were always gonna be the agency that showed up,” said Simmons. “We really wanted to hustle.”

As their client base expanded, they diversified the types of brands they work with. Now, it’s all about inclusion.

“We were skiers and climbers and hikers. Now a lot of our business is in hunting, angling, travel and tourism, and libations. Our purview is anyone who likes to go outside, do some outdoor activity, and maybe have a cocktail at the end of the day,” said Newhart.

They enjoyed some notable



A big part of Backbone Media’s 60 or so employees were hanging out at another millennial-style business in Carbondale, the Monkey House on Highway 133, putting themselves through the kinds of paces they might encounter out in the wilds.

milestones in their timeline that helped broaden the business.

Greg Williams came on board and advocated to take on media planning and buying, helping brands determine a target audience, when and how to reach it, how much to spend, and then make the buys.

This year, Backbone expects to purchase approximately \$45 million worth of advertising.

“That’s a significant spend just for

the active lifestyle consumer,” said Simmons.

Soon after Williams’ advent, Ian Anderson joined the team. He was working at the Vail Chamber and established a relationship. He wanted to move to Carbondale, and was offered a job overseeing the Public Relations side of the business, where he quickly was “instrumental to leading by example.”

Finally, in 2016 Backbone hired Charlie Losener, who brought an

impressive skill set behind direct digital and email marketing that is credited with transforming the business.

Both Penn and Nate continue to foster a strong appetite for their favorite outdoor sports, as do their employees. It’s hard to tell the difference between work and play, profession and passion.

“There’s a blurred line that’s a beautiful thing,” said Simmons.

### At home in Carbondale

Backbone has more than sixty employees, some of whom work from a Denver office. But the core of the operation remains in Carbondale, and they hope to keep it that way.

Though they acknowledge the difficulties with affordable housing for their employees, they believe that “Carbondale has a great feeling.” Its close proximity to Red Hill, Spring Gulch, and Prince Creek make it ideally suited for the business.

“We’re a compelling story to the town,” said Simmons. “We’re bringing young, talented, bright community members.”

Newhart agreed, and pointed towards the ancillary economic benefits the growing, if still small business has brought to the community: “It’s a big jigsaw puzzle, and it’s fun being a couple pieces.”

## Parting Shots



At Bike Week’s closing event, Cyndy Miller and Mary Lewis of Team Rainbow Bike take best costume and fastest time at a bike scavenger hunt. Photo by Laurel Smith.



Marsha Tadus (pictured) celebrated her 27-year career at Crystal River Elementary at the Roaring Fork Schools retirement party at the Homestead Bar & Grill. Carbondale Middle School’s Kenny Teitler received recognition, for his 26 years of teaching. Francie Jacober, of Carbondale Community School, also is retiring, after 20 years on the job. Photo by Megan Tackett

## Service Directory


**TRINITY**  
**METAL RECYCLING**  
 “don’t trash it – cash it”  
**We pay CASH for METALS!**  
 ALUMINUM CANS • COPPER • BRASS • LEAD • STEEL • CARS/TRUCKS  
 APPLIANCES • EXTENSION CORDS • BATTERIES • RADIATORS  
 STAINLESS STEEL \*ANYTHING METAL\*  
 New Location Glenwood! (2 miles south of Walmart, next to Airgas)  
**3710 Hwy 82 Glenwood Springs, CO 970-948-0333**  
 Open - Tue-Fri 9-4 • Sat 9-1 • Closed Sun/Mon  
 Gypsum location accepts large steel quantities please see our Gypsum location by Costco  
 Guaranteed best prices in the mountains! [Trinityrecycle.com](http://Trinityrecycle.com)

**Bee seen in The Sun**  
 We print scuttlebutt, obituaries, & letters to the editor at no charge!  
[news@soprissun.com](mailto:news@soprissun.com)  
 Want more creative control?  
 Display ads starting at \$45.  
[adsales@soprissun.com](mailto:adsales@soprissun.com)

**ACHES, PAIN, STIFFNESS, MOBILITY ISSUE?**  
 Massage therapy can help  
  
**Carbondale Acupuncture Center**  
 54 Weant Blvd.  
 Carbondale, CO 81623  
 970-379-0575 or  
[jackerman.lmt@gmail.com](mailto:jackerman.lmt@gmail.com)  
**John Ackerman, LMT**  
 Massage Therapist  
[www.carbondalemassage.com](http://www.carbondalemassage.com)  
 EVENING APPOINTMENTS AVAILABLE

See Thundercat at  
**CARBONDALE ANIMAL HOSPITAL**  
  
**New location!**  
 289 Main Street, Carbondale  
 on the corner of Third and Main Street  
 (970) 963-2826  
 Find us on Facebook  
**Dr. Benjamin Mackin**  
 Monday-Friday 8 a.m.-5:30 p.m.

**We Sell Tires!**  
 Come to Sunburst for your winter tire change-over!  
  
**970-963-8800**  
 745 Buggy Circle in Carbondale  
[www.sunburstcarcare.com](http://www.sunburstcarcare.com)  
 Open Mon. - Sat. 8am - 5pm & Sun. 9am - 4pm washes only

**Browning Electric Inc.**  
 Servicing all your electrical needs since 1988  
  
 new construction  
 remodels  
 lighting  
 service & repairs  
**970-948-7850 | D.BROWNING07@COMCAST.NET**