For as long as I can remember, full moons have been a source of magic and wonder. As a child, peering out my window at night, they commanded my attention and captured my imagination. Even now as an adult, full moons continue to pull me into moments of reflection and mental renewal, signifying a time of clarity, celebration, and a time of transition. So perhaps it is timely that as we say good-bye to the full Worm Moon of March and embrace the Pink Moon of April, I welcome you to join me as I lean into this time of reflection, renewal, and transition here locally at SVS, and on a global scale as well.

Our organization is at an exciting and pivotal moment, where change is inevitable and yet so transformative. To start, we are launching our new SVS newsletter, Common Ground. We are saying farewell to incredible staff member, Mindy Crowell as she transitions to her new role with the National Forest Foundation. We are also saying hello to Jessica McAleese, our new Outdoor Education and Communications coordinator. We are leaning into an exciting future of programming filled with pollinators, community storytelling, and a regional network of trails, community partnerships, natural resource celebration and so much more. We can’t wait to share these projects with you and celebrate YOUR stories as well, supporting each other, right here in Common Ground.

--Toni Ruth
“Just don’t come out here!!” My husband shouted into our rental house, snow billowing in through the doorway. It was January, we had just moved to Salmon and I was feeling a little unprepared. My introduction to Salmon had been covered in ice, snow and wood chips. I didn’t have boots with tread! I didn’t know how to start a fire! To this day, moving to Salmon in the middle of January isn’t exactly something I would recommend. And yet, like it always does, spring eventually came. As the ice melted, things seemed to be looking up. Daniel had found his niche in his new job at the Salmon Airbase and during a walk downtown, I had found a small community organization called Salmon Valley Stewardship. That day I went home and told Daniel, “I’m going to work there.”

Little did I know that I was getting myself into more than just a day job. I was getting the chance to discover this community (and how I would fit in) through a means of participation and community creativity. This little non-profit in this incredible rural town gave me the opportunity to build meaningful and lasting relationships, the chance to jump right in and explore the rich history of this region and apply my passion for its exciting future. I started as an Americorps Vista that first year, diving head first into the Salmon Valley Local Foods scene. The synergy from the team at SVS enabled me to be creative, resilient and gave me the support I needed to be an effective project coordinator. In 2016, I became a full time employee, shifting gears into the world of public lands management, collaboration, and community engagement. The team at SVS empowered me to learn more and grow faster than I thought possible! I could not have gained the skills and knowledge that I now have if it wasn’t for our Executive Director, Toni Ruth, Director of Strategic Development & Operations, Rachel Layman, Natural Resources Program Manager, Jenny Gonyer, current and past Board members, past SVS director, Gina Knudson, and so many others.

Fast forward almost 5 years, where Daniel and I are now on our way towards a brand new adventure, far outside the Lemhi County line. And yet, my heart is filled with pride, love and joy for the community we are leaving behind.

But maybe I’m not really leaving SVS... because it is an organization I will continue to support and believe in long after my last day in the office. Perhaps it is because I finally learned how to build a fire, how to lace up my sturdy winter boots, how to float the river right through town on a hot summer day, and how to gather, create and collaborate with my neighbors. I won’t say goodbye because somewhere along the line, SVS became my family, my community and my passion. Saying goodbye doesn’t feel like the right sentiment because YOU will be with us wherever we go.

With love,

Mindy
It’s almost that time of year again, when soon the flowers of Disco Hill will wow us with their beauty and remind us of the intrepid enthusiasm, mischief and passion for this community held by our dear friend and former SVS board member, Tiffanie McAllister. Tiffanie passed away in 2018 but her legacy lives on through the Tiffanie McAllister “Be a Better You” Award. This $500 award is intended to help offset educational expenses or to help fund a “life adventure” for any Salmon High School senior or graduate, ages 18-23. In 2019, first time recipient, Brooke Painter received the award to support her life-changing adventure to Europe!

Applications have been accepted through March 15, 2020 and will be announced in April. To learn more about this opportunity and for details on how to apply in the future, please email Ella Deutchman at elladeutchman000@gmail.com.

Meanwhile, be sure to grab your favorite costume and sign up to for the annual 6 Hours of Spring Flowers bike ride and costume contest on April 18th. All proceeds raised go to the Tiffanie McAllister scholarship! Don’t feel like riding...donations are always accepted.

Community-driven stories hold power – to reveal hidden truths, activate public discourse, and create positive social change. They help us understand, and at times even celebrate, differences. Now more than ever, we need stories that give us a window into people and cultures that are different from our own so that we can better understand and appreciate the rich tapestry of America.

-- Mallary Tenmore, American Press Institute

Empower Our Youth!

Continuing the Legacy of Tiffanie McAllister

In 2016, we moved from Anchorage, AK to Idaho, as my husband accepted a position as a family physician here in Salmon. We were smitten by the proximity of amazing rivers, access to wilderness, the excitement of rural medicine and a small, friendly community that felt like a good place to raise some free-range kids. Salmon also reminded me a lot of the small ranching and mining community I grew up in in Colorado and it felt like coming home. Since then, I’ve settled into raising our two young boys while working part time as a nurse in the ER. The promotion of local food, collaboration and education about public lands, and general dedication to Salmon as a healthy, self-sustaining community were just some of the things that drew me to serving as a board member for SVS.

As we continue to raise our kids, build community relationships and share in each other’s stories, I feel so lucky to live here. It also makes my heart swell to think that perhaps my family is also contributing to the overall story of Salmon…..one adventure, one project and one step at a time.
**Opportunity during this uncertainty:**
As an organization, we are responding to the complex and changing nature of the COVID-19 virus on several fronts. The health and safety of our staff, members, family and community are our number one priority. In response to the worldwide outbreak and the concern it poses to everyone's health and well-being, our entire staff is implementing best practices from the CDC, the World Health Organization and our local Health Department which will still allow us to do our jobs safely and help keep our community safe. Between 3/18 and 4/3, the SVS office will be closed to the public. However, our staff will continue to work remotely and can communicate via phone, virtual meetings, and email. So, please feel free to get in touch if you have questions or concerns. We will need you, our members and supporters, to help us and each other make sound and informed decisions. If we all do our part, we will make a difference.