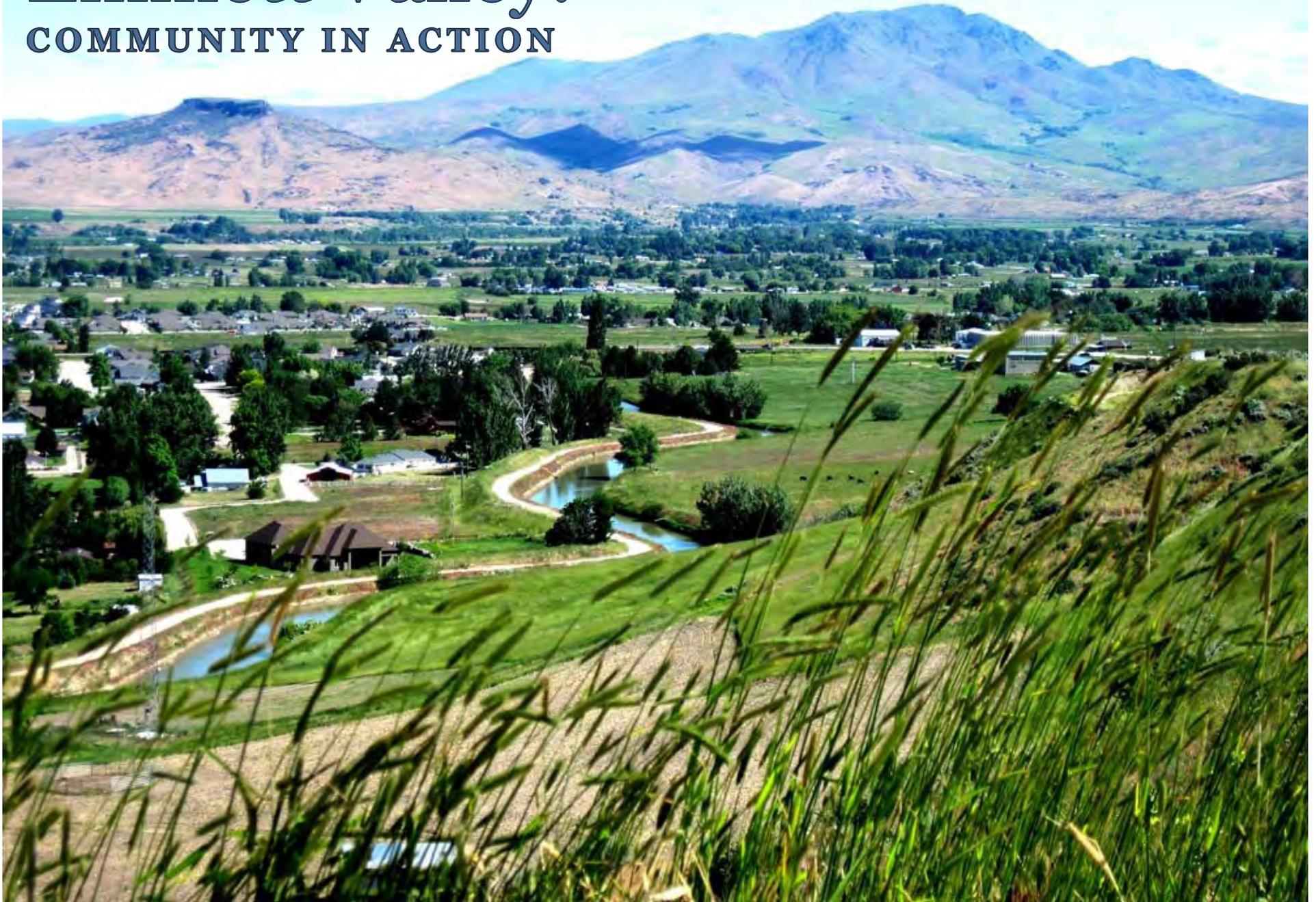


Emmett Valley: COMMUNITY IN ACTION





- Population: 16,719
- Households: 7,100
- Median age: 42.9
- Median household income: \$44,442
- 16.5% live below poverty level

Information from U.S. Census 2010

Gem County





City of Emmett

Emmett is the county seat and only incorporated city in Gem County.

- Population: 6,500
- Features: Three city parks, regulation-size softball field, RV park, walking trails and greenbelt access
- Home to Emmett's Most Excellent Triathlon and the Emmett Cherry Festival.



Top 100 small cities ranks Emmett No. 29

By DIANA BAIRD

newsroom@messenger-index.com

Many people who live in Emmett say they love the view of the valley from Freezeout Hill and state that this is a great place to live. A nationally recognized author agrees with them and ranked Emmett as one of the top small cities in America. Charles Anderson of Winter Haven, Fla., compiled his top 100 list entitled "In Search of Eden: America's Best Small Cities." He traveled across the country and spent 50 years of his life researching small cities in the nation.

Anderson said Emmett is rated No. 29 on his top 100 list and the city is also the "Best Small City in Idaho." He said Emmett is an outstanding small city that is both close to Boise, yet affordable. "Most small cities in the greater Boise area are too expensive or have no real self identity," he said. "Although my study involves smaller cities, my favorite large mid-major city is Boise."

The criteria for the top 100 small cities are based on: an attractive and thriving downtown area; easy access to outdoor recreation areas; a pleasant 12 month climate; self identity; closely linked with big city jobs and entertainment; an adequately equipped and staffed hospital; good primary and secondary schools; cost of living especially housing; cultural events or activities; and a low crime rate.

Mayor Bill Buttici says that he is pleased Anderson committed his life to researching the quality of cities and has

"The compassion and hospitality of our residents is truly the key factor in this ranking. The dedication of our community volunteers, service organizations and elected officials working together make for an enhanced quality of living."

BILL BUTTICCI

Emmett mayor

traveled to feel the heartbeat of those communities. "Not being biased, I know Emmett to be the number one city to live and raise a family," Buttici said.

"As a citizen of Emmett and also the mayor, I am proud of this number 29 ranking. The compassion and hospitality of our residents is truly the key factor in this ranking. The dedication of our community volunteers, service organizations and elected officials working together make for an enhanced quality of living," he said.

Moscow was the only other Idaho small city on the list, coming in at No. 52.





Emmett named best in state



Emmett is 'Best Small City in Idaho'

And No. 29 Top 30 small towns/cities

1. Close to Boise
2. Affordable to live, raise a family
3. Centerpiece of the valley
4. Attractive street scape
5. Well kept store fronts
6. Handsome downtown
7. Equipped and staffed hospital
8. Outdoor recreation within reach
9. Pleasant 12 month climate
10. A very special place to live

— CHARLES N. ANDERSON



Food bank closure spotlights need



In January 2008, the Emmett food bank closed its doors, prompting a local volunteer effort to feed the people who relied on it.

Within weeks, the pantry was re-opened and operating under the newly formed Emmett Valley Friendship Coalition, a group who had members actively involved in the state's hunger relief taskforce.

The formation of this group paved the way for communitywide collaboration.



Hunger-Free initiative brings community together

Joining the national network was the community's first step in breaking down silos and bringing the individual groups together to focus on health. Gem County is currently the only community in the Hunger Free Communities Network in Idaho.

The core team includes representation from:

- City of Emmett
- Gem County
- Emmett School District
- Gem County Chamber of Commerce
- Emmett Valley Friendship Coalition
- Gem County Senior Center
- Emmett Ministerial Association and churches
- Local agriculture
- Latino community
- Scouts
- Community action partnership
- Local media



Messenger Index



'Annual checkup' reveals health issues

Idaho's County Health Rankings 2010

1. Latah
2. Madison
3. Blaine
4. Franklin
5. Ada
6. Jefferson
7. Idaho
8. Power
9. Kootenai
10. Valley
11. Lemhi
12. Custer
13. Caribou
14. Teton
15. Oneida
16. Bonner
17. Cassia
18. Bonneville
19. Fremont
20. Adams
21. Twin Falls
22. Canyon
23. Benewah
24. Elmore
25. Bannock
26. Bingham
27. Owyhee
28. Payette
29. Washington
- 30. Gem**
31. Nez Perce
32. Minidoka
33. Boise
34. Boundary
35. Jerome
36. Gooding
37. Clearwater
38. Butte
39. Bear Lake
40. Shoshone
41. Lewis
42. Lincoln



Clark and Camas counties not reported

Opportunity for improvement



In 2010,
Gem County
came in
last place
for healthy
behaviors

(42 of 44 Idaho counties
were ranked that year)





Gem County Community Health Connection

Spearheaded by Walter Knox Memorial Hospital, the Gem County Community Health Connection was established, representing many facets of the community.

The primary goal of its members was to address the immediate concerns generated by the county health rankings. Three years later, and with overall improvement in the county's health, the group has been able to establish long-term goals for lasting, positive change.





Building a path to continued success



Messenger Index

Community goals

- Educate the public on tobacco use and cessation help
- Establish trails and pathways
- Promote alternative forms of transportation
- Provide opportunities for physical fitness activities for all residents
- Help people establish and maintain healthy eating habits
- Enhance community outreach efforts



City bans smoking from parks and public buildings



In 2010, the City of Emmett was the first city in the Treasure Valley to impose restrictions on smoking in designated areas.

Smoking is banned within 25 feet of all city buildings and in certain areas of the city's parks, including playgrounds, tennis courts and ball fields.

Violation of the ordinance is punishable by a fine of up to \$100.00.



Teaming up with Activate Treasure Valley

The City of Emmett has teamed up with the Activate Treasure Valley program to encourage its employees to adopt healthier lifestyles.

From healthier eating habits to increased physical activity, employee health is improving and the numbers reflect that. Lower health insurance claims in 2012 resulted in a cost savings to the city of \$10,197.89. The city paid it forward, giving \$237.00 to its eligible employees this year. It was our way of saying "Thanks, and keep up the good work."

The city is also seeing reduced health insurance rates. In 2012, there was no increase in the amount the city paid to insure employees. This year, the increase was only 3%. That's compared to rates ranging from 5 to 25% nationally. We're proud of the efforts being made by our employees and we plan to continue to offer incentives wherever we can.





Community joins national Let's Move! campaign



The Gem County Recreation District and the Emmett School District are working together to promote First Lady Michelle Obama's nationwide effort to combat childhood obesity.

From community "fun runs" to after-school program activities, the Recreation District is taking advantage of the various opportunities to promote physical activity to Gem County children and their families.



The path to physical fitness

Gem County has over 6 miles of walking paths and trails for public use.



The City of Emmett has adopted a pathway plan that will enhance the public's access to walking, riding and biking routes throughout the community.

The plan involves the use of salvaged bridges along the paths, offering enjoyment of historic preservation in a natural setting. Efforts are also being made to open a walking path next to an assisted living facility, offering outdoor recreation for the residents.



Mayor's challenge inspires personal bests



Let's walk EMMETT
100 mile Walk in the Park
One step at a time

On day 23 of the mayor's 100-mile walk challenge, one Emmett resident reached the goal and two others were within a few miles of it.

Let's Walk Emmett is a community activity that combines fun and fitness for people of all ages.



Gem County Rec District, a community partner



SPORTS

Soccer
Basketball
Volleyball
Tee ball
Coach pitch

CLASSES

Swimming
Karate
Dance
Tumbling

EVENTS

Triathlon
Overnight parties
Harvest Fest activities
Magic on Main Street
Movie days
New Year's Eve party
Parents' Night Out
Fun runs





Emmett's Most Excellent Triathlon



The Gem County Recreation District hosted the 12th Annual Emmett's Most Excellent Triathlon on Aug. 10, 2013, with triathletes from nine states.

There were more than 500 competitors ranging in age from 13 to 80. Triathletes traveled to the Emmett Valley to swim, bike and run in 90-degree weather.

Each year on the eve of the triathlon, children take to the city's streets and pool to compete in the Kids Splash & Dash triathlon event.





Relay for Life paints the town purple

The Annual Relay for Life event in Gem County raises tens of thousands of dollars for cancer research each year. Teams form early for the summertime event that lasts all night and attracts hundreds of celebrants. This year's event was the sixth consecutive in Gem County.

One of the team fundraisers was a twilight "glow run" that featured 1-mile and 5k events. Participants wore glow sticks and illuminated the night.





Cherry Festival Fun Run: A family affair

The Gem County Recreation District teams up each year with the Kiwanis Club of Emmett to host the Cherry Festival Fun Run. The event offers runners and walkers of all abilities an opportunity to participate. There's a 10k run and a 2-mile walk or run. The event draws 150 to 200 participants each year, many of them families.





High Five membership open doors



As a member of the High Five Children's Health Collaborative, the Emmett community is eligible to receive help to:

- Improve access to healthy and affordable foods
- Increase physical activity opportunities
- Help parents make healthy family choices
- Create healthy schools and child care facilities
- Promote public policy that increases access to healthy foods and opportunities for physical activity

River rafting to golf; it's all here



18 holes at the Emmett Golf Course

Little Gem Cycle Park dirt bike race course

Emmett foothills for hiking, horseback riding and sledding

Payette River for swimming, fishing and floating





Farm-to-table movement gains momentum

The demand for fresh, local produce has prompted the formation of a volunteer group to studying the feasibility of a local food hub.

A food hub – or co-op – in Gem County would encourage healthy eating habits by providing better access to fresh produce. Growers would have a local marketplace and distribution center that could provide to local schools, hospitals, care centers, residential facilities, restaurants and the general public.





Everyone is welcome at the community garden



The bounty from the Gem County community garden is available to all, and everyone is invited to volunteer to weed and harvest.

The 2-acre garden provides fresh produce for a weekly food pantry and dinner. More than 80 people helped tend the garden last year.



Emmett Farmers Market in the Valley of Plenty

The Emmett Farmers Market offers access to local and organic produce and gives growers another option for distribution.

The Market is open every Wednesday and Saturday from May to October. It is centrally located for easy pedestrian access.





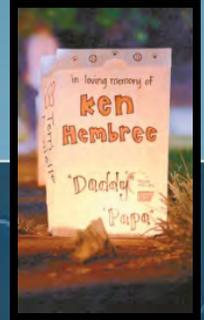
Healthy food & fitness 🍎 in local schools

The Emmett School District is a partner in the Gem County Community Health Connection.

Each school within the district has food and fitness programs that are geared toward helping students establish and maintain healthy habits. Staff are often encouraged to participate in these programs as well.

Grants have helped schools offer fresh fruits and vegetables to students during breaks and at lunch.





Coming together

A small community with limited resources is able to overcome obstacles by working together. The keys to success are communication, commitment and being able to break down the silos that often keep people apart.



In Gem County, we're happy to share what we've learned!

