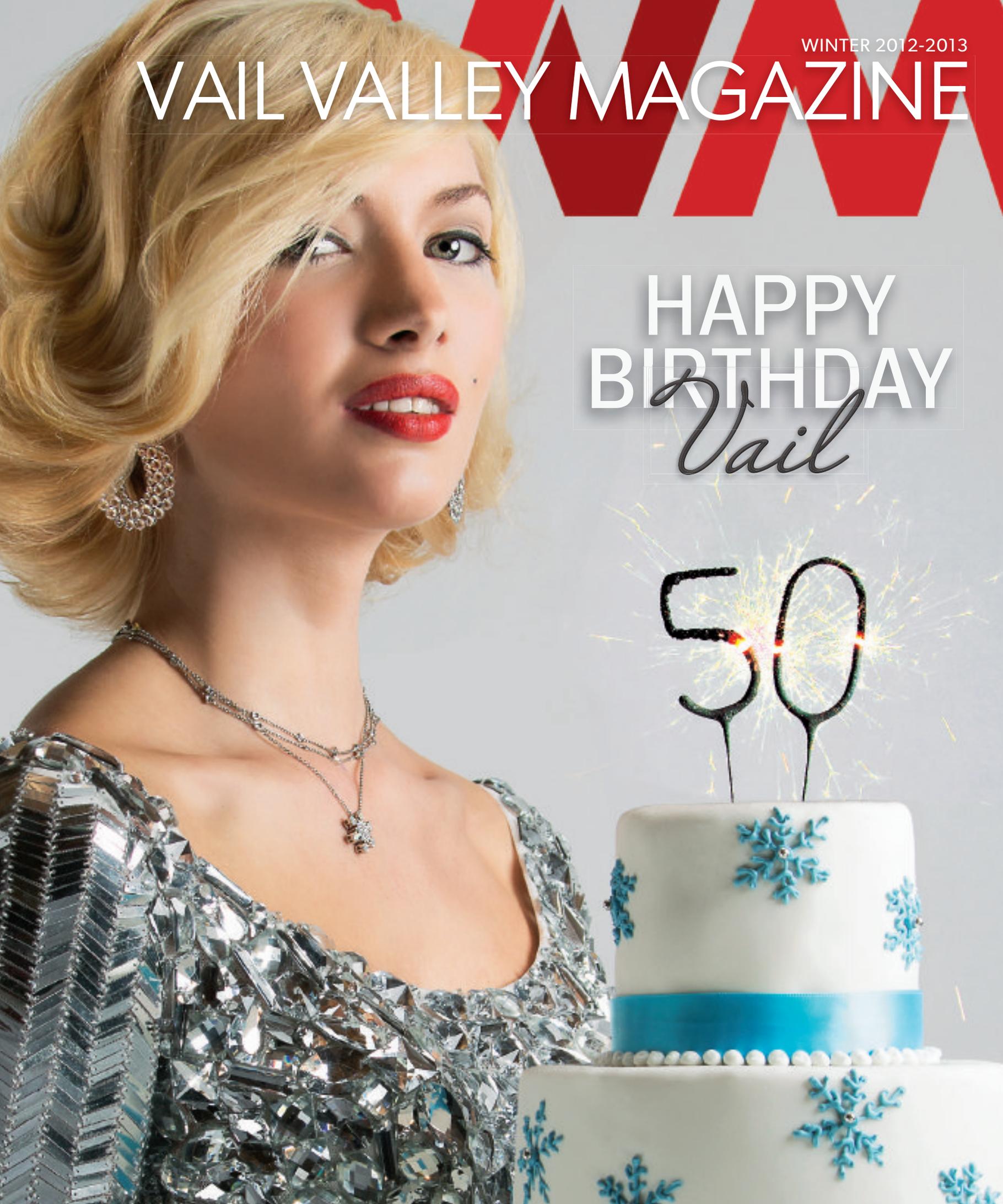


WINTER 2012-2013

VAIL VALLEY MAGAZINE

HAPPY
BIRTHDAY
Vail



In the world today, the more knowledge that we have, the more we can participate in our own well being.

We must stay informed regarding the choices we make about all aspects of our health – be it prevention or how we are being treated.

Those of us who live in this valley are very passionate about health. We have an incredible energy and spirit in this community, a “can-do” attitude about all that we do – whether it is work or play. Perhaps it’s the gift of nature and its beauty that surrounds us. It’s as though by just being in these truly breathtaking surroundings, we are energized and are able to reflect on life and this beauty on a daily basis.

We are fortunate to have a medical community that caters to and understands that passion. And our doctors understand that most of us are unafraid to be our own advocates when it comes to our health. Yet, it’s important to “hear” the recommendations of our physicians.

This spirit and energy about our health is a reflection of the human spirit giving those who experience it a willingness to strive far beyond the ordinary. An example of this spirit is Lance Armstrong who, although hit with recent controversy, did “strive beyond the ordinary,” when it came to his cancer diagnosis.

In 1996, at age 25, Armstrong was diagnosed with Stage III testicular cancer. There was significant metastasis to the lungs, brain and abdomen. Following an orchiectomy (the removal of a testicle) Armstrong was treated with medications that would not cause any damage to his lungs – so as not to interfere with his cycling. He also had surgery to remove two brain metastases. No radiation was given so that his balance and coordination were not compromised.

By 1998, Armstrong was competing again and in 1999, won the Tour de France, which some consider to be the most grueling athletic event in the world. He went on to win this event a record

seven consecutive times between 1999 and 2005.

Armstrong’s passion and will not to give up, as well as his establishing The Lance Armstrong Foundation, provide a story of hope and survival for all cancer victims. Over the years his foundation has become one of the top ten groups funding cancer research in the U.S., so far raising more than \$325 million..

As it happens, Armstrong chose traditional medicine. Fortunately, he conducted research and, from the beginning, was able to be treated by traditional physicians who were experts in their field. That’s not to say that he did not supplement his treatment with alternative remedies. Steve Jobs, too, was his own advocate. However, Jobs, co-founder, chairman and CEO of Apple, who was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in 2003, at first chose alternative rather than conventional medical intervention, which included a vegan diet, acupuncture, herbal remedies, bowel cleansing, juice fast and even a psychic.

Unfortunately, the overall prognosis for pancreatic cancer is very poor. We often do not have choice about how we should approach a medical situation. One’s perspective changes when we are either looking up from the stretcher – or, as a healthcare provider, gazing down at a patient. And, although alternative approaches in specific medical situations and diseases do complement traditional medicine in some cases, the holistic pathways that many seek when diagnosed with cancer are yet unproven.

Jobs passed away on October 5, 2011, having left the world an immeasurably better place with countless innovations and by improving all of our lives.

According to the writings of Charles Spurgeon, a 19th century British preacher, when we are healthy it is easy for us all to build our self-esteem. Without troubles and tribulations it is easy for us to be at peace.

“In our experiences of weakness, we realize that the peace we experience

standing up on the balconies looking down on the streets is much different than being on the pathway than the helplessness occurs when we are experiencing pain and illness,” wrote Spurgeon. He calls this the concept of “chipped, but not broken,” and suggested that we not focus on the extraneous things in life, but to strive to see the big picture.

As the late author Stephen Covey wrote in *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, “Do not spend your whole life climbing the ladder of success and then find out that it has been leaning up against the wrong building.”

Everyone is competing everyday – whether at work or with only ourselves. And winning these ‘competitions’ only can be accomplished if you are strong and physically fit. But, it’s important to nourish your mind and spirit, as well, with tai chi or meditation so you can “be quiet.” It is no different than eating the proper nutritional diet on a regular basis.

Stay active. Push yourself to overachieve – in every way. Listen to your body. Only then can you experience a full life.

We physicians empower you to take responsibility for all that you may do to help you participate in your medical care. **WM**



a passion for **HEALTH**