



*The Brown Family, circa 1970*



# VAIL TRAILBLAZER AWARD

2017 RECIPIENTS

*Vi & Byron Brown*

The Vail Trailblazer Award recognizes individuals that exemplify the spirit and fortitude in making Vail a great community. Recipients are recognized for their pioneering contributions and strong values that help define the town we love.

[vailgov.com/trailblazeraward](http://vailgov.com/trailblazeraward)



**TOWN OF VAIL**  
**PROCLAMATION NO. 1, SERIES OF 2017**  
**IN RECOGNITION OF VAIL'S TRAILBLAZER AWARD RECIPIENTS**  
**VI AND BYRON BROWN**

**WHEREAS**, the Town of Vail celebrated its 50th birthday of incorporation as a municipality on August 23, 2016 with numerous festivities taking place, including the debut of the Vail Trailblazer Award Program, a civic recognition whereby the Vail Town Council acknowledges an individual/s that exemplifies the spirit and fortitude in making Vail a great community through selfless contributions of time and talent which have made a lasting impact; and;

**WHEREAS**, the Browns' legacy in Vail began with their arrival in 1964 after Byron convinced Vi to relocate from their home in Denver. The family included young sons Mike and Todd, while daughter Cindy was born a short time later in their new hometown. At the time, Vail had a population of just over 100 residents with everyone pulling together to help Pete Seibert and the other founders build a ski resort and a new community, and;

**WHEREAS**, the Browns immediately became engulfed in their new life and over the next fifty years began to help build the foundation of Vail! Byron formed a real estate development company and built the first house in West Vail which became the family home. Byron was also instrumental in expanding utilities and other infrastructure that made it possible to develop neighborhoods in West Vail and East Vail. He served more than 30 years on the boards of the local water and sanitation districts and also doubled as a ski patroller. At the same time, Vi spent much of her time introducing the children to skiing and other wonders of the great outdoors while also working as a small business owner and in various retail shops. In addition, she became a familiar fixture at the Vail Information Booth, where she befriended many newcomers and life-long guests. Vi also taught Sunday School at the Vail Chapel, served on the Eagle County School Board and has had a familiar presence at Town Hall while serving as an election judge during decades of municipal elections, and;

**WHEREAS**, the Browns were early and active supporters of Ski Club Vail, the local club developing the next generations of ski competitors. The Browns organized fundraisers for the club, served on the club's board of directors, provided technical support in organizing sanctioned ski races and led a capital campaign to build the current Vail Ski & Snowboard Club headquarters at Golden Peak. Vi and Byron's involvement helped shape the

ski club as first rate and which became the epicenter for so many of Vail's early families as well as for many families of today. They were also instrumental in helping to bring the first World Cup ski races to Vail and the 1989 Alpine World Ski Championships. In addition, Byron helped form the local Buddy Werner Ski League, an organization that transitioned many children to become ski racers at Ski Club Vail. Their son Mike excelled at the sport, becoming the first Vail athlete to join the U.S. Ski Team in 1981, a particularly proud moment for Vi and Byron and the rest of the community, and;

**WHEREAS**, the Browns are also remembered for their decades-long role in organizing and supporting the Eagle Valley Community Fund, in which millions of dollars have been returned to local non-profits from the annual rummage sale event, one of their proudest accomplishments. Today, Vi and Byron's presence can be found at numerous community events, including the ribbon cutting for the recent Vail Golf & Nordic Center Clubhouse, Vail's 50th birthday celebration, the town's annual Community Meetings and more. Married for 55 years, they served as the grand marshals for the Vail America Days Parade in 2016 and are previous recipients of the Hornblower Award presented by the Vail Valley Foundation as well as various Rotary Club awards. They are considered as "family" by many community members who have known them over the last five decades, and;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, be it proclaimed to the community by the Vail Town Council, the second recipients of the Vail Trailblazer Award are Vi and Byron Brown, two pioneers of early Vail who have demonstrated over the past 50 years their courage, leadership, vision and commitment to enhance Vail's social, recreational, cultural, educational and environmental values that define this community, this is our tribute to both of you as we extend our sincere appreciation for your passion and contributions to the betterment of the Town of Vail and broader community.

**Dated this 7th day of March 2017.**

Vail Town Council

David Chapin, Town of Vail Mayor



Attest:

Patty McKenny, Town Clerk



*Vi and Byron Brown  
2016*

Photo by Preston Utley,  
courtesy of  
Vail Valley Medical Center



PHOTO BY TOWNSEND BESSERT

*Vi and Byron Brown as  
grand marshals for the  
2016 Vail America Days  
Parade™ with son Mike and  
granddaughter Madeleine*



PHOTO BY JACK AFFLECK

