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Celebrate 30 Years of Community Gathering

Riverwalk 30 Anniversary Carnival

ft. Asleep at the Wheel

Friday, July 28th • \$50 GA / \$250 VIP

On sale now at breckcreate.org

Breckenridge, CO - For the past three decades, the iconic Riverwalk Center has drawn extraordinary talent and the community to the center of Breckenridge from Summit County and beyond. On Friday, July 28th, Breck Create celebrates the building's establishment with a community gathering like no other.

"The Riverwalk 30 Anniversary Carnival captures everything wonderful about the Riverwalk Center: world-class talent from every corner of the globe has graced its stage, and it serves as a true pillar of our community," says Tamara Nuzzaci Park, president and CEO of Breck Create. "So much fun has been had here, and it's a giant point of pride for our organization to manage it for the Town of Breckenridge."

Nuzzaci Park encourages the entire community to grab their boots and get down to American roots with the iconic Western swing band, Asleep at the Wheel, for the celebration on Friday, July 28th. Guests who upgrade to a VIP ticket will enjoy an old-fashioned county fair on the Riverwalk Center Lawn. This event serves as Breck Create's signature annual fundraising event, which means guests can expect art, wonder and joy as well. Town of Breckenridge Mayor Eric Mamula personally will be helping to fundraise by sitting in the dunk tank. It will be a night of music, dancing and community accompanied by tasty fair food. Tickets are on sale now at breckcreate.org. Tickets to the VIP Anniversary Carnival with reserved seating for Asleep at the Wheel are \$250. General admission tickets to the concert with dancing-room only are \$50.

The Riverwalk Center hosts and appeals to all, from resident weddings to visitors enjoying live music and the full community for July 4th celebrations as well as nonprofits using the space for annual fundraisers. The building can be used for many different events because of its flexible design—movable chairs, park-like grounds and tiered seating. Over the years, it has featured music, film, theater, family and children's entertainment, professional and community dance and comedy events. It serves as the site for the Snow Sculpture festival, the Snow Lounge, car and bike events, ski swaps and more.

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Approximately 50 years ago, the Town of Breckenridge launched an aggressive capital improvement plan to stimulate year-round growth. In 1992, the idea for the Riverwalk Center was born out of the Blue River restoration project, which was a massive undertaking to beautify the waterway running through the middle of town. This planned walkway needed an anchor.

At the time, Breckenridge had a promising, volunteer-driven arts scene. This dedicated group of arts enthusiasts maintained a temporary event space where the Riverwalk Center now stands. This tent—with its lack of protection from inclement weather, substandard acoustics and limited space—was the home of the summer chamber music festival of the Breckenridge Music Institute (BMI). Town leaders saw potential in the space and began noticing other mountain towns capitalizing on the arts to enhance their year-round communities.

At the same time, the National Repertory Orchestra (NRO), located in Keystone, needed a new home. The Town, along with the BMI, seized the opportunity to build a performance space that would benefit from a special type of alchemy: the beauty of music powerfully combined with the serenity of the mountains. With the NRO on board, the performance space would have a full summer calendar. All signs pointed to yes, and the Town made the leap to complete the venue in less than a year.

The unique design—a tent-roofed seasonal amphitheater—satisfied the timeline, the budget and the creative vision. The innovative tent was provided by the same manufacturer that constructed the roof of Denver International Airport: Bird-Air of Amherst, New York. Architect Anderson Mason Dale and local contractor Ken Colvin of Colvin Construction Company managed the project. Locally, the venue became affectionately known as “the Madonna Dome” in a nod to Madonna’s iconic Jean Paul Gaultier cone bra that became a ubiquitous symbol of her *Blond Ambition* tour in 1990.

The roof would be erected each spring and taken down each fall. The venue provided tiered, movable seating for 750 patrons and included an outdoor terrace. A 9500-square-foot permanent support building housed offices, a ticket booth, music recording space, a music library, dressing rooms, rehearsal areas and restrooms.

The design evoked historic mining and railroad motifs that were integral to the founding of Breckenridge. The new facility received a design award from the American Institute of Architects, Colorado, in 1993 and won *Snow Country Magazine’s* Ski Area Design Award for Community Planning in 1996.

The Riverwalk Center proved an immediate success. In 1993 as planned, the venue became the home of the BMI along with its resident summer chamber orchestra and the NRO. The organizations collaborated on a summer concert series called the

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National Festival of Music, later known as the Breckenridge Festival of Music. The festival's first season drew more than 15,000 concertgoers.

The Riverwalk Center hosted thousands of concerts and events in its first 15 years. In addition to the two orchestras, the Breckenridge Festival of Film, now known as Breck Film, tapped the venue to showcase its annual film festival. The Breckenridge Backstage Theatre produced Labor Day performances there. The Town organized popular music concerts and the Town Party. Additional community organizations followed suit with their own events. A particularly noteworthy honor, the Western Governors Association Annual Meeting convened at the Riverwalk Center in 2005, chaired by Colorado Governor Bill Owens, to discuss "Western Leadership in the Global Economy."

While a vast improvement over the temporary event tent, the new tented amphitheater had its limitations. The open-air amphitheater lacked walls, and therefore the sound would spill out into the community. According to local lore, a lively rock band would cause car alarms to go off nearby. The lack of walls also meant a lack of heat, limiting the venue's use to summer months. The set-up and tear-down of the roof was demanding, and as the roof aged, leaks sprung, dousing the bass section of the orchestra during performances.

In 2006, it became a necessity to replace the roof, and this ignited interest in the creation of a permanent structure. Under former mayor John Warner, an unprecedented public/private partnership resulted in the Riverwalk Center as we know it today: a permanent structure with improved acoustics and enhanced audience and performer experiences. Private donors, recognizing the value of the Riverwalk Center as a community asset for arts and events, raised more than \$1 million. The Town funded the remaining \$3 million.

Most recently, the Town invested in improvements based on a 2012 study that have made the Riverwalk Center a state-of-the-art concert venue and enhanced both the diversity of uses and the audience experience. In 2014, Breck Create was founded to manage the Riverwalk Center and the Town's arts assets while also implementing town-funded improvements and expanding usage. Breck Create's programming features a diverse range of ticketed live events including concerts, lectures and performances showcasing local, national and international talent. Breck Create's seasonal lineups regularly include music, theater, dance and spoken word. The venue is also home to a number of [resident companies](#) and hosts a variety of non-profit partner events.

In 2017, Breckenridge was designated a Certified Colorado Creative District. Thanks to the Town's vision and investment, Breckenridge has become a creative hub anchored by the Riverwalk Center. The Arts District now extends through the heart of town, including a campus of renovated historic structures that serve as studio spaces for art classes and workshops as

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well as the Breckenridge Theater, Eclipse Theatre, Breckenridge Grand Vacations Community Center and South Branch Library.

Riverwalk 30 Anniversary Carnival Schedule

6:00 p.m. – VIP Carnival on the Riverwalk Center lawn with open bar (Breckenridge Brewery beers + wine, Breckenridge Distillery tasting), fair games, delicious food by Black Diamond Gourmet, live music

7:30 p.m. – Doors open for general admission

8:00 p.m. – Opening remarks followed by Asleep at the Wheel

Riverwalk 30 Anniversary Throwback Photo Contest

Share your photo memories at the Riverwalk Center on social media with the hashtag #Riverwalk30 now through July 25 for your chance to:

- Be included in the Riverwalk 30 Photo Retrospective on display at the Riverwalk Center
- Win a pair of tickets to the Riverwalk 30 Anniversary Carnival ft. Asleep at the Wheel on Friday, July 28

To view the terms and conditions, visit the [Photo Contest page](#).

Sponsored by: [Hearthstone Restaurant](#)

About Asleep at the Wheel

Founded in 1970, Asleep at the Wheel has been part of the American roots music landscape for more than 50 years.

Although the band got its start on a farm in Paw Paw, West Virginia, Asleep at the Wheel became a cornerstone of the Austin, Texas, scene upon its arrival in 1973. Inspired by Western swing and honky-tonk country, the band has accrued 10 Grammy Awards. In the fall, a career retrospective recorded with the current lineup — and a few special guests — will carry the band back onto the road, where they've remained a staple for five decades. [Read more](#).

ABOUT BRECK CREATE: Breck Create aims to build a dynamic, year-round creative community in Breckenridge. The organization's mission is to deliver inspiring creative experiences that enrich the quality of life for all residents and quality of place for visitors. Breck Create supports and serves artists, creatives, cultural enthusiasts, visitors and the community at large by providing a year-round schedule of performances, exhibitions, screenings, art classes and workshops as well as other engagement opportunities.

The organization maintains, manages and operates the Town of Breckenridge's exceptional cultural facilities and also hosts arts-based events in public gathering spaces throughout Breckenridge. Breck Create's core attractions are the Riverwalk Center—a 750-seat, heated, indoor performance venue—and a lively Arts District campus of renovated historic structures

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that now function as studio spaces for art classes and workshops. These structures also include affordable rentals for local artists and visiting artist-in-residence participants. The Breckenridge Arts District is a certified district within the [Colorado Creative Industries](#) Creative Districts program.

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