

CROSSING DIVIDES:

A Couple's Story of Cancer, Hope, and Hiking Montana's Continental Divide

by Scott Bischke

PRE-PRESS REVIEWS

“Every life has its mountains to climb. Read on and find the inspiration to reach your summit.”

Bernie Siegel
author of Love, Medicine, & Miracles

“Crossing Divides is a story of determination and love. Take a trip along the Continental Divide and at the same time through the wilderness of cancer treatment. It's the tale of a spirited woman struck down with a life-threatening disease, and her sure-footed climb back to good health. The human spirit rides again!

“This book proves that focusing on each day, and just putting one foot in front of the other, CAN get you to your goal. It's a ray of sunshine and a boost of hope for us all.”

Walkin' Jim Stoltz,
Nationally renowned folk singer and long-distance hiker

“Scott Bischke has given us a celebration of wild places where the strenuous effort of the long-distance hiker is rewarded with peace and beauty. In the same package, he reminds us that the condition of human life can be precarious. His description of Montana's Continental Divide wilderness is graceful. His account of helping his partner Kate Gibson fight cancer is terrifying. Crossing Divides is about the challenges we choose and those forced upon us. Read it for a reminder that our health, like our wild lands, is fragile and endangered, and that we keep both only with determination. If you have known anyone who has fought for survival against strong odds, you will appreciate this guide for patients and their friends. If you hope for a walk in the wilderness anywhere, walk first with Scott and Kate to learn about endurance.”

Ross Rodgers
President, Montana Wilderness Association

“Thank you so much for giving me with the opportunity to read a pre-press copy of your fine book, Crossing Divides. It truly was a gift.

“[I read] it without pause. I couldn't help it; it drew me in and held me. I cried, I laughed, and I delighted in travelling known and unknown trails with [Scott] and Kate through our beloved Montana. But [the] maps, observations and adventures paint the glorious and complex panorama of Montana's high country whether or not the landscapes are familiar.

“The metaphor of the divide: fear, confusion and pain juxtaposed to beauty, hope and the power of the human spirit is startlingly familiar in our collective lives. But the knife-edge sharpness of [Scott] and Kate’s confrontation with cancer brings the metaphor into hard reality. [Scott has] conveyed the harsh, gut-wrenching battle with cancer without being maudlin. With Kate’s indomitable spirit and [Scott’s] steadfast support, there was always a ray of hope for besting the odds. Likewise, on the trail, wet, cold or blistered, the possibility of encountering a golden sunset or a lush campsite held promise of reward for [their] efforts.

“Crossing Divides is a must-read for anyone facing a critical physical or emotional challenge, especially cancer. Even sitting here presently healthy and happy, [the] story has better prepared me to face even devastating future challenges. Your and Kate’s generous sharing of your peaks and valleys—as extreme as they were—gives us all cause to celebrate the power of love and desire.

“I thank [Scott and] Kate for reminding us to be more thankful for each breath, each smile and each mile we travel in life.”

Gloria Flora
Former Supervisor of the Lewis and Clark
and Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forests

“The challenges of confronting the dangers and frustrations of the wilderness become a metaphor in this fascinating book for facing the challenges of a cancer illness.

“As Scott and Katie...simultaneously face the existential issues of cancer and endeavor to deal with the hazards of walking the Trail, the reader is helped to find his or her own path, and importantly, to draw hope and strength to not be afraid.

“Love of life and love of nature are fused into a remarkable human experience that ensures the reader will find new meaning in juxtaposition with illness.”

Jimmie C. Holland, MD
Chair, Department of Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences
Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center:

“Scott Bischke is a gifted author who inspires us with a heart-rending story of courage, hope and a determination to live with a capital L. By overcoming the daunting challenges of life-threatening cancer Kate and Scott prepared themselves well for the formidable challenge of hiking more than 800 miles along Montana’s rugged share of the Continental Divide. Underlying it all is the power of their unconditional love for each other, and of their deep love for wilderness, as exemplified by the Great Divide. With the aid of Scott’s precise, beautifully descriptive prose you’ll walk with them along the serpentine Divide, watching for grizzlies, elusive trails, firey sunsets and flat tentsites. Their journeys, through cancer and beyond, and on foot from Canada to Yellowstone, are artfully woven together in a series of compelling analogies. Defeating cancer may well derive from the power of the human spirit in concert with the restorative health of Wild Country. Indeed, their intimacy with wild nature was one of Kate’s most powerful therapies in her unrelenting battle against cancer. With emotions laid bare, Crossing Divides is a grand celebration of life in its fullest expression.”

Bill Cunningham
Author of Wild Montana and Montana’s Continental Divide