



United States Senate
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

RECOGNIZING: THE SANDPIPER IN POCATELLO

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic have not been easy for small business owners and their employees to overcome. Throughout the pandemic, many were forced to temporarily close their doors. Those that reopened had to innovate their business models to comply with local guidelines and public health mandates. As we turn the corner on the COVID-19 pandemic, I am proud to relaunch Support Local Gems, a statewide initiative, on May 21st to encourage Idahoans to support local small businesses in their communities. This month, as a senior member and former chairman of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, I will honor six small businesses located throughout the State of Idaho. I am pleased to honor the Sandpiper in Pocatello as one of the Idaho Small Businesses of the Month for May 2021.

The Pocatello Sandpiper was founded by Bob Angell in 1975 and is currently owned by Rod Russell. With two locations in Eastern Idaho, the restaurant is known for its cozy atmosphere and steak and seafood offerings. It has become a staple of the local community, garnering awards for Best Restaurant, Best Steak and Seafood, Best Fine Dining, and Best Place To Take A Date awards in the Idaho State Journal's Readers' Choice Awards.

Rod and his wife, Kathleen, have served as leaders in the local community during the pandemic. The restaurant avoided layoffs, raised wages, and provided special meals to employees and their families even though they operated at a loss. In addition to the measures taken by the restaurant, upon receiving their \$1200 stimulus check, the Russells began thinking of ways to give back to their community. As the brother of a truck driver, Rod heard firsthand some of the challenges facing truckers amid supply chain shortages. To show thanks to an underappreciated group of essential workers, the Pocatello Sandpiper partnered with Idaho State Police and other small businesses to provide more than 600 free meals to truck drivers in acknowledgment of their critical work. Rod's commitment to service allowed this small business to prioritize the needs of both its employees and the community.

Congratulations to the Sandpiper in Pocatello on being selected as an Idaho Gem for the month of May. You serve as an example in your community and are an outstanding example of what it means to be one of Idaho's Local Gems.