



days at
Dunrovin

April 2019



**Ranch
Talk**



Skydivers Millie and Ramona



**Millie
Stauss**



**Ramona
Kuburich**

Who would have guessed that a visit to the Brookdale Missoula Valley Senior Community would turn up not one, but two intrepid women who defied their age to go skydiving? I personally have no trouble admitting that I lack the nerve to jump out of a perfectly safe airplane to freefall until my parachute opens, billows, and gently guides me back to earth. Nope, skydiving is not in my realm of possibilities, and I am simply in awe of these two women.

Luckily Millie Status with her daughter Lynne Stauss and Ramona Kuburich with her daughter Kim Mace Will sit down with me, Dunnrovin Ranch owner, SuzAnne Miller on April 9th at 2PM for a live web camera broadcast to share their stories about their skydiving experiences.

Ramona Kuburich is a third generation Montanan born in Miles City to parents who were homesteaders and ranchers. Steeped in Montana's cowboy culture, Ramona has many fond memories of the wild west and close-knit ranching communities: driving for miles to enjoy a night of kicking up heels at a county gathering, hiding in the barn to watch fist fights, boot leggings, old-fashioned barn dances and western swings.

During the Great Depression, Ramona's father was forced to hit the road to find employment to make ends meet. He worked as a large-equipment operator, constructing roads and airport runways for the war effort. At war's end the family returned to their beloved Montana, where Ramona attended high school in Miles City, college in Billings, and grad school in Broadus..

Ramona's work life started early. At age 14 she sold popcorn at the local theater. She taught kindergarten, worked at an oil refinery, and sold cars, clothing, advertising, and furniture. She found her passion as a dietician. After employment with health spas, she developed her own company, called RK Slim and Trim, that she operated for 25 years until her retirement at age 84.

The mother of five, Ramona now has eight grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. Family has always been her focus. She greatly misses her husband, the love of her life, who died a year and a half ago.

In possession of an adventurous soul and a willingness to try just about anything, Ramona went skydiving for her 75th birthday. Clearly she loved it, as she is contemplating doing it again on her 90th birthday.

Join us for Ramona's and Millis's Stories



Millie Stauss was born on December 12, 1922, in northwest Pennsylvania.

Her father's penchant for a do-it-yourself way of life taught her to look to herself to get what she wanted. This has held her in very good stead throughout her long life and has sent her traveling across the United States in search of

Outliving three spouses, Millie had four children by her second husband. She and Lysle raised their children in Pennsylvania. During the final 25 years of her working career, she served as a secretary for Edinboro State College. While she greatly enjoyed her duties at the college, she had itchy feet to see the world, so retired promptly at age 60 to fulfill her lifelong dream of traveling in a motorhome. Undaunted, she drove the big rig for three years, while her husband, Lysle, drove their smaller car behind her. When he died in 1986, she strapped the urn holding his ashes to the front seat of her RV and proudly proclaimed, with a smirk on her face and a glint in her eye, "By God, I finally figured out how to get you into the front seat of this damn motorhome! Now sit there and be quiet!" She buried Lysle in Nebraska and continued her journeys.

Along the way, Millie met her third husband, Dub, who shared the road with Millie for nearly 13 years until he died in Texas. Alone again at age 82, Millie's daughter, Lynne, stepped in to ensure that her adventuring spirit was fulfilled by organizing annual excursions that pushed her boundaries. Their first joint venture was—you guessed it—skydiving in Indiana. Lynne barely got the skydiving idea out of her head and into her voice box before Millie was signing up.

Wearing her "Millie the Sloth" T-shirt she purchased in Costa Rica—where she saw real sloths from her canoe floating down the jungle rivers—Millie and Lynne chalked up one exciting excursion after another. During their trip to the Panama Canal, they flew to a secluded island in the Caribbean. There they met a local in the thatched-hut reception area, who took them sightseeing in his dugout canoe, which required constant bailing to stay afloat.

Southern California beckoned them with endless exciting possibilities. Millie flew the coast of Oceanside in an open-pit biplane. She slid around the corners of a racetrack going over 100 miles per hour with a professional racecar driver. Lynne accompanied her mother parasailing in Newport, ziplining in Corona, and glider riding somewhere in Southern California. In Montana, they enjoyed dog sledding through winter's cold.

Clearly harboring a great sense of humor and strong determination, Millie continues to be an inspiration to her children, now all in their 60s and 70s. All of them cherish the many gifts she has given through her positive attitude in the face of struggles and her ability to always find the bright and exciting sides of life.

Broadcast: Date: _____ **Time:** _____

Location: _____