

# Snowmass Sun

Nobody Covers Snowmass Like The Sun

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FREE

## CRUSH it

CrossFit competition debuts in Snowmass

Erica Robbie  
The Aspen Times

When Pat Burke left the Marine Corps at age 23, the former combat veteran said trying to reintegrate with society was like “an outsider trying to come back in.”

“It was surreal,” he said. “I had nobody to relate with.”

In the few years following his military career, Burke moved five times and went through five different jobs, got divorced and lost his home in a housing crash.

What Burke swears “saved” him is the fitness regimen known as CrossFit.



COURTESY PHOTOS

Pat Burke competes at the 2014 Southwest Regional in Salt Lake City.



During the weekend before Thanksgiving each year, Mind, Body, Spirit CrossFit hosts its annual Turkey Challenge, in which 400 athletes compete from across the state and regionally.

Burke discovered CrossFit after injuring his back in the Marines in 2005, but he left the Marines one year later.

With little sense of purpose, direction or connection with what he once considered “normal life,” Burke said the only thing he had going for him then was his love of the CrossFit program.

In 2008, Burke and his wife, Janelle, opened a CrossFit gym in Broomfield called Mind, Body, Spirit CrossFit.

Burke said he had no expectations or hope that the gym would survive and that he thought it would close every month.

But the growth and success of Mind, Body, Spirit CrossFit proved to be just the opposite.

Since 2008, Burke and Janelle have expanded the Broomfield gym from 800 to 14,000 square feet.

Last year, the two opened their second Mind, Body, Spirit CrossFit location in Arvada.

On July 9, in Snowmass, Mind, Body, Spirit CrossFit will host its first-ever Summer Crush event, where teams of four (two men and two women) will compete in four

### MIND, BODY, SPIRIT CROSSFIT SUMMER CRUSH

**What:** CrossFit competition

**When:** 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. July 9

**Where:** Snowmass Base Village and Fanny Hill

**Cost:** Free to spectate; \$300 to register and compete

CrossFit-style workouts.

According to Burke, CrossFit combines weight training, gymnastics and cardio exercises to create a comprehensive work-out that not only delivers effective results but also prepares people “for anything in the real world.”

“The cool thing about the CrossFit program is that it combines all those elements, which are all things seen in everyday life,” he said.

As an example, Burke drew a parallel between weight training in the gym and “real world” scenarios such as helping a friend move furniture or lifting a heavy bag of soil while gardening.

CROSSFIT, 6

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COURTESY PHOTO

Mind, Body, Spirit CrossFit members work out at a park on Memorial Day in memory of those who served.

**CROSSFIT**

From page 1

“Anything that can happen in the real world, we’re replicating in the gym,” Burke said.

The CrossFit program also avoids the use of machines, he said, and focuses instead on peoples’ movement.

“We teach movement — run, jump, push, pull, squat, life,” he said. “It’s in our DNA to do these movements.”

The duration of most CrossFit workouts also varies, Burke said, again as a means of imitating the unexpected and unknown elements of the real world.

For the most part, CrossFit workouts can last anywhere from 5 to 45 minutes, with most lasting around 20 minutes, he said.

In an effort to assist veterans and their families transition to healthy lives after deployment, Burke is donating 100 percent of the event proceeds to Project Sanctuary, a nonprofit organization that helps veterans and their families heal.

Aspen CrossFit owner Erik Larson, who said the gym plans to enter one or two teams in the competition, commended Burke for raising money and awareness to help support veterans and their families.

Larson said he is excited to see a CrossFit competition in the valley as well as the attention that it will draw to the sport locally.

“Anytime we get the opportunity to expose our sport, it’s always a good thing,” he said.

Larson, who had worked as a certified public accountant for more than 20 years, opened Aspen Crossfit in the Aspen Business Center just more than six years ago. After struggling through a Navy SEAL fitness program and feeling uncertain if he was capable of completing it, Larson said he scratched his head and wondered if he’d ever been physically fit in his whole life.

Although it was challenging, Larson first learned about CrossFit through the SEAL fitness program.

“It’s short, it’s sweet, and the results are extraordinary,” he said.

When Larson co-founded Aspen CrossFit in May 2010, he said it was about the 1,500th CrossFit gym to exist internationally.

Today, there are roughly 14,000 CrossFit gyms across the globe, he said.

“It’s been a really fun experience,” Larson said, referring to the past six years he’s spent building the Aspen CrossFit program.

“This genre has been growing rapidly,” Snowmass Tourism groups and events manager Dave Elkan said, adding that he envisions the Summer Crush to grow in years to come.

At this summer’s first-ever Mind, Body, Spirit CrossFit Crush, the plaza area of Base Village will offer competition seating, vendors, food options and a “kid zone” with children-friendly activities.

For more informations, visit [www.mbssummercrush.com](http://www.mbssummercrush.com).

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12:00pm Gates open in Base Village  
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1:00pm Kids Activities Begin  
2:00pm Silent Auction Opens

4:00pm **MUSIC: Jes Grew**  
6:30pm Special Performance by Deaf\* campers of Aspen Camp  
7:00pm **MUSIC: Pimps of Joytime**

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