

GUIDE

BULLETIN



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PARENTING AND
GUIDING: CRUX
MANAGEMENT

WISDOM FROM 13
AMGA LEGENDS

TIPS TO DELIGHT
YOUR CLIENTS

MAJKA BURHARDT:
THE GUIDING LIFE



RIDE

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GUIDE

BULLETIN



U.S. Member of IFMGA



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On the cover: Erica Engle (left) and Erin Smart (right), both American Mountain Guides/IFMGA Guides, get in a morning lap on the East Ridge of Forbidden Peak, North Cascades National Park, Washington. PHOTO BY DAVID MOSKOWITZ

This page: American Mountain Guide/IFMGA Guide Chris Marshall atop the south summit of Bugaboo Spire in British Columbia, Canada. PHOTO BY TED TEEGARDEN

GUIDE

BULLETIN

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IN APRIL THE AMGA BOARD OF DIRECTORS, WITH UNANIMOUS SUPPORT, passed the Scope of Practice (SOP). It took over five years to create this professional standard for American guiding and instruction. We worked on 63 drafts over 18 months, during which time more than 300 members provided input.

The SOP defines the work that AMGA members are prepared for at various levels of training and certification. Built on the twin pillars of international climbing standards—IFMGA for the mountain guide program and UIAA for the single pitch and climbing wall instructor programs—the SOP is the first standard for practitioners of these activities in the U.S. (learn more on page 12). For now, the document serves as an educational resource; in 2022 compliance for AMGA members becomes mandatory.

Nobody within AMGA, from newly minted apprentice guides to industry veterans and business owners, seems fully satisfied with the SOP. There are enough opinions, generally contradictory and often forcefully held, to fill several issues of the *GUIDE Bulletin*. This isn't a bad thing. The way I see it, this is how organizational politics can and should work. Everyone has compromised on something to find common ground and build a stronger, more unified profession.

I'm proud that the AMGA has pitched a big and inclusive tent that respects the many voices and traditions in American guiding and instructing. Together, united under the SOP, we can build the demand for quality guiding and instructing, increase the value the AMGA brings to our members, cultivate more sustainable careers, continue to refine the educational process, and improve access to public lands.

Our momentum continues to build. We just reached a record high of 4,000 memberships, and 15 businesses are up for new or renewed accreditation this year—double our previous record. I want to thank all of you who support the AMGA and especially those who contributed to developing the SOP. I'm excited to continue our work together with this monumental step to guide us.

Onward,

Alex Kosseff, AMGA Executive Director
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AMGA SKI GUIDE SHELDON KERR LEADS THE WAY WITH ERIN SMART (AMERICAN MOUNTAIN GUIDE/IFMGA GUIDE) AND LINDSEY MANN (APPRENTICE SKI GUIDE) ON THE BARNARD GLACIER IN ALASKA'S SAINT ELIAS MOUNTAINS.

PHOTO BY KRYSTLE WRIGHT

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Jessica Baker — **FINDING BALANCE** — Jackson, Wyoming

Professional skier, guide, and mother, Jessica grew up on a farm in the Selkirk Mountains of Northern Idaho and has been guiding since 2004. She currently lives with her husband and two daughters in Jackson, Wyoming. Jessica is an AMGA Assistant Ski Guide and AMGA Apprentice Rock and Alpine Guide.



Majka Burhardt — **THE GUIDING LIFE** — Jackson, New Hampshire

Majka is an AMGA Rock Guide and former two-term member of the AMGA Board. She is a full-time climber, part-time guide, and the founder of Legado, where she works to protect the world's most threatened mountain ecosystems and empower the people who call them home. She lives with her husband and their 10-month-old twins.



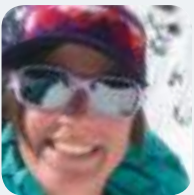
Jaime Musnicki — **WHY EVOLVE AVALANCHE EDUCATION?** — Victor, Idaho

Jaime has been executive director for the American Avalanche Association since September 2013. She lives and works in Idaho with her faithful office assistant, Telly the dog. Even though her work is more office based these days, her heart resides in the mountains and with the individuals with whom she has shared mountainous adventures.



Todd Passey — **FINDING BALANCE** — Cottonwood Heights, Utah

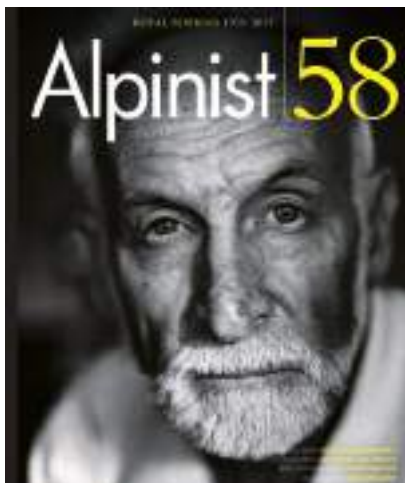
Todd is an American Mountain Guide/IFMGA Guide living in Utah with his wife, Winslow (AMGA Ski Guide), and son, Bodhi. Todd has guided on all seven continents and is owner of and guide for In the Company of Guides. Bodhi has the youngest ascent of Mt. Vinson in Antarctica, as he was conceived on the mountain.



Margaret Wheeler — **FINDING BALANCE** — Ketchum, Idaho & Chamonix, France

In 2006 Margaret became the second woman in the United States to earn her American Mountain Guide/IFMGA Guide certification. In addition to guiding in the ski, alpine, and rock disciplines, she is an AMGA instructor/examiner, served five years as AMGA president, and continues to serve on its Board of Directors and Technical Committee.

PHOTOS BY: [TOP TO BOTTOM] DAVID STUBBS, HOLLY WILMETH, LARA AGNEW PHOTOGRAPHY, TODD PASSEY, AMY MARTIN



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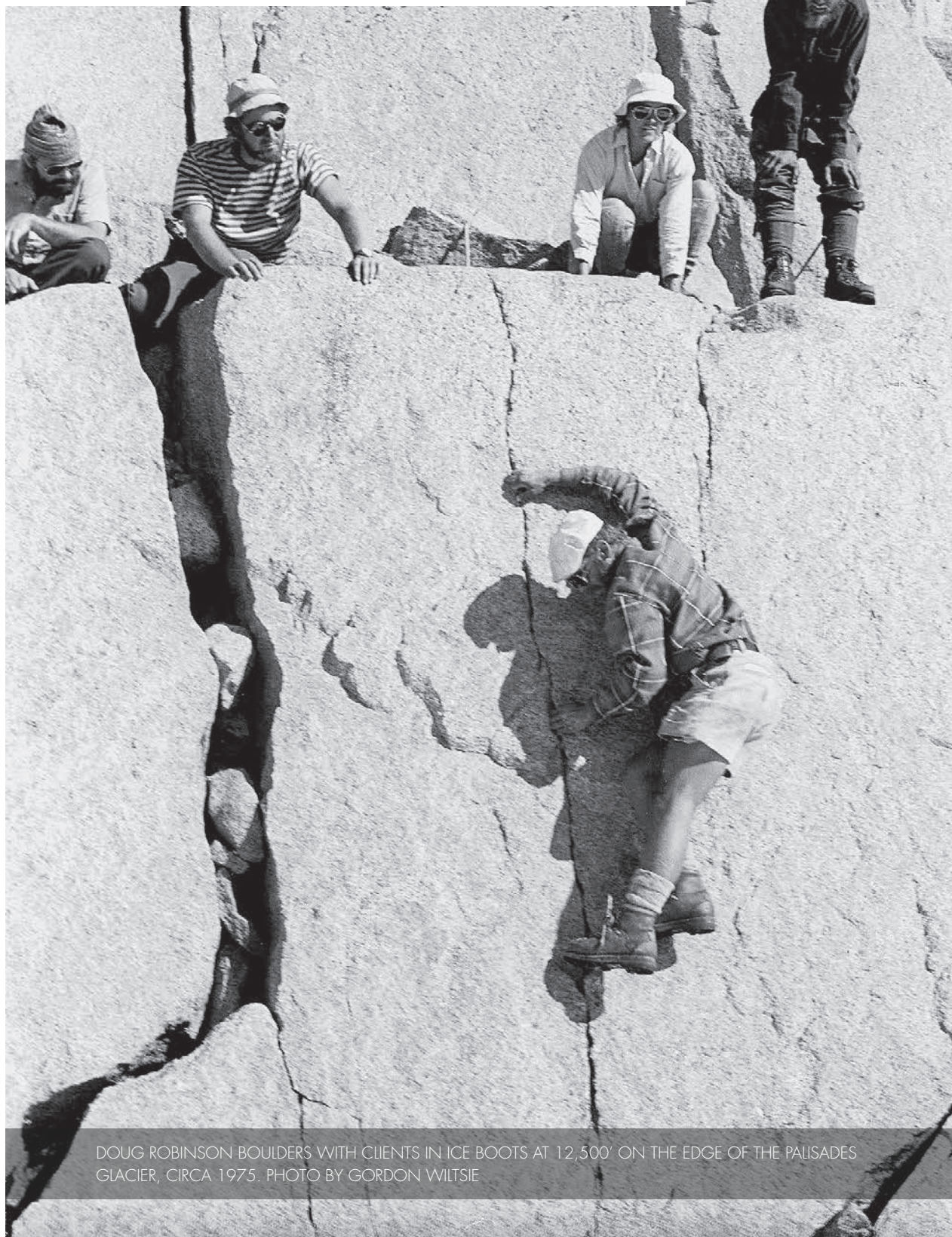
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LEGENDARY WISDOM

With more than 300 years combined guiding experience, 13 AMGA luminaries offer their best advice to the next generation of American guides.



DOUG ROBINSON BOULDERS WITH CLIENTS IN ICE BOOTS AT 12,500' ON THE EDGE OF THE PAUSADES GLACIER, CIRCA 1975. PHOTO BY GORDON WILTSIE



The deepest art of guiding is your human skills. Your don't-call-'em-soft skills. Once you've mastered rope tricks, when you're competent at first aid and skilled in avalanche avoidance, then you're ready to start becoming a guide, by working with the complex human being that is your client. They are smart, interesting, accomplished—they come to you out of a big life. And they bring their fears, tears, their blindness to you, all hidden. That's the person you're ultimately working with. When they break down on a ledge, overcome by exposure, when you reach deep and begin, "I'm not a therapist, but..." then you're becoming a guide.

—Doug Robinson, *AMGA Rock and Alpine Guide, First President of the AMGA*

Attending the AMGA national meeting for the first time changed my whole perspective. Connecting with guides from other parts of the country reinforced what I was doing well and gave me the skills I needed to improve, and I walked away with new friends. It also underscored that we are a community of guides who want to help each other push our country's standards forward. Warren Buffett once gave great advice to those entering the workforce: "Find a job you would do if you didn't need the money." For me, after 41 years as a guide and loving every minute of it, I could give no better advice.

—Joe Lentini, *AMGA Rock Guide*

My favorite bit of advice is from Rudi Kranabitter, a Canadian guide course examiner. One of his candidates was struggling with a decision: stick with his conservative Plan A route or consider a shortcut that introduced a considerable level of uncertainty. The examiner said words to the effect that: "This job is hard enough without adding more uncertainty. Keep the number of your unknowns small." Avoid taking on unnecessary risks by avoiding making more difficult judgements than you must.

—Mark Houston, *American Mountain Guide / IFMGA Guide*

I appreciate when fellow guides and clients ask questions, because it challenges me to articulate what I'm thinking. There's an old guides' adage: "Have a reason for what you do." To our aspiring guides I say: "If you can make your case well, I will support you even if I may not agree."

—Eric Simonson, *AMGA Rock and Ski Guide*

Thinking back, the most meaningful guidance given to me as a young guide came from a single comment: "Everyone has a right to be who they are." Never judge anyone—you never know the impact your day with someone can have. Soon after this comment, I took out a couple for their first time and was thinking to myself that they were so out of shape and way out of their element. A few years later I ran into them in the Alps and hardly recognized them. They told me that first climbing lesson inspired them to pursue a dream of alpine climbing. They trained hard, got in shape, and said climbing had changed their lives. I soon realized that the joys of guiding bring many layers of rewards, all rooted in sharing a passion for the mountains with others.

—Alain Comeau, *AMGA Rock and Alpine Guide*

When I started guiding for the American Alpine Institute in the early 1990s, Kathy Cosley pulled me aside and said, "Angela, you cannot guide some terrain like these guys do. You have to provide yourself with a higher level of security since you're small. Where they can short-rope, you may need to short-pitch. Err on the side of being conservative. It may take you a little longer, but you'll make up for it in other ways." I am certain this advice has saved my life more than once. Size matters and isn't a handicap. Thank you, Kathy!

—Angela Hawse, *American Mountain Guide / IFMGA Guide*



ERIC SIMONSON



ALAIN COMEAU



ANGELA HAWSE



In my first course, Alain Comeau talked about the fundamental difference between recreational climbing and guiding. As guides, we are in service. For me this is at the heart of doing the job properly; it is the fundamental pillar on which knowledge and skill are built. I read once where a guru told a wealthy man that if he wanted to find enlightenment, he needed to really care for someone—he needed to feed, protect, and clean up after another human being. The best guiding happens when we put our own desires and egos aside and fully engage with the needs of our guests.

—Joe Vitti, *AMGA Rock Guide*

One of the best ways to improve as an instructor/educator/guide is to receive and incorporate feedback from those who are able to observe your skills and interactions. Due to the nature of our craft, there is rarely a mentor or fellow guide available to provide this valuable service. My advice is to give your clients the opportunity to provide you with feedback. It may sound scary, but the benefits outweigh the risk. At the end of the day, ask the group or the individual what went well, and what you could do differently to improve the experience. Be attentive, and listen. Sometimes what you thought was a mistake may have been your client's favorite part of the day. Whether we have been guiding for 30 days or 30 years, we can always improve.

—Sue Kligerman, *AMGA Rock Instructor*

SUE KLIGERMAN

Revere your clients. I long viewed my clients as “them” and, in general, assumed they had a low level of skill. After all, it was I who could go from *piolet manche* to *pied troisième* without skipping a beat, yet my clients would have to stop, think, transition... But one day it dawned on me: My clients are interesting, successful people who have simply chosen a different path. Like me, they appreciate an adventure and love to explore this wonderful outdoor world that we have. They have the smarts to learn from a professional—and the funds to pay for it. When I realized this, suddenly my ability to tie a kiwi coil in seven seconds began to seem kind of minor.

—Mike Powers, *American Mountain Guide / IFMGA Guide*

In the 1990s I worked on a bunch of film shoots with my old pal Kevin Donald, who used to run International Alpine Skills in Eldorado Canyon. We worked as mountain safety officers with Hollywood film crews. Kevin had a great slogan on his business card that he passed out to the producers: “Gravity Never Sleeps.” I always taught crew members who weren’t tied in to never turn their back to the edge. I taught myself to be vigilant always—not to look for what looks correct, but to look constantly for what looks wrong.

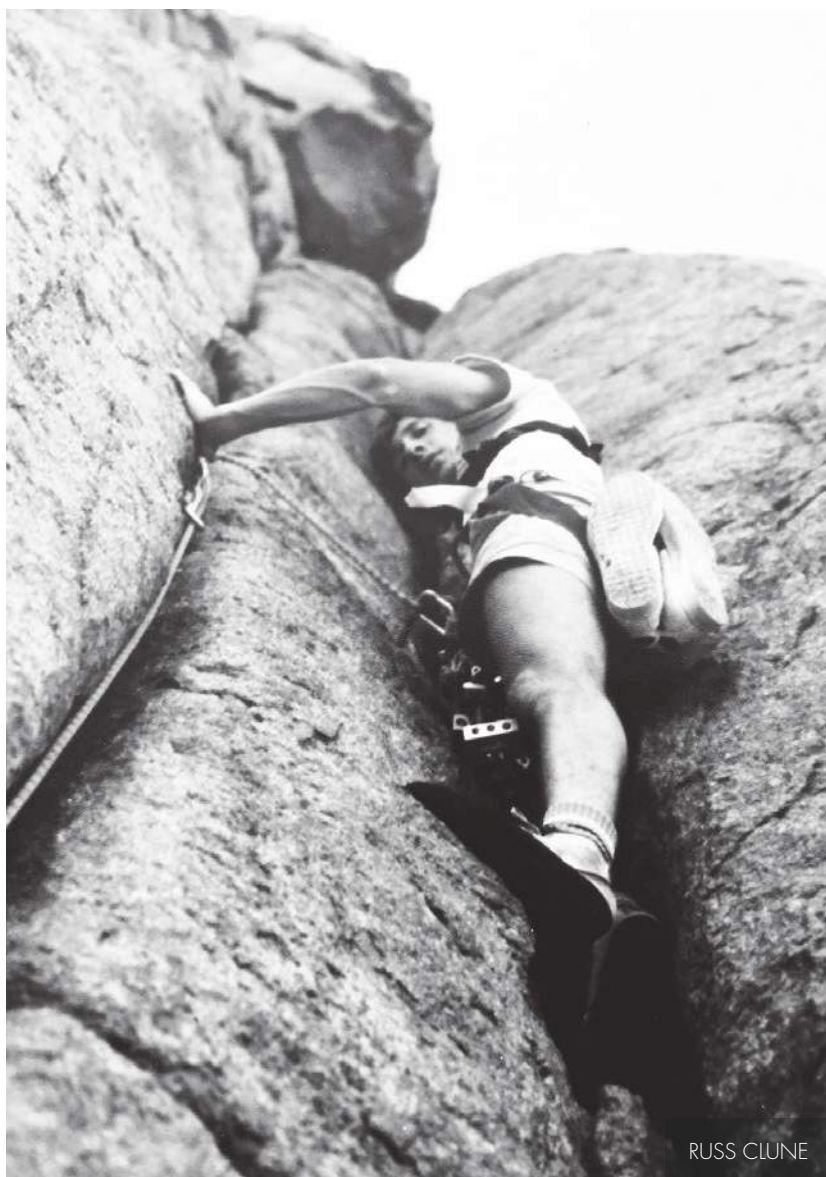
—Bob Gaines, *AMGA Rock Instructor*

When guiding, do everything you can to make it fun for yourself. If you’re having fun, odds are your client is as well. If the guiding day is going sideways and starts to suck, remember: it could be worse. You could’ve become a lawyer.

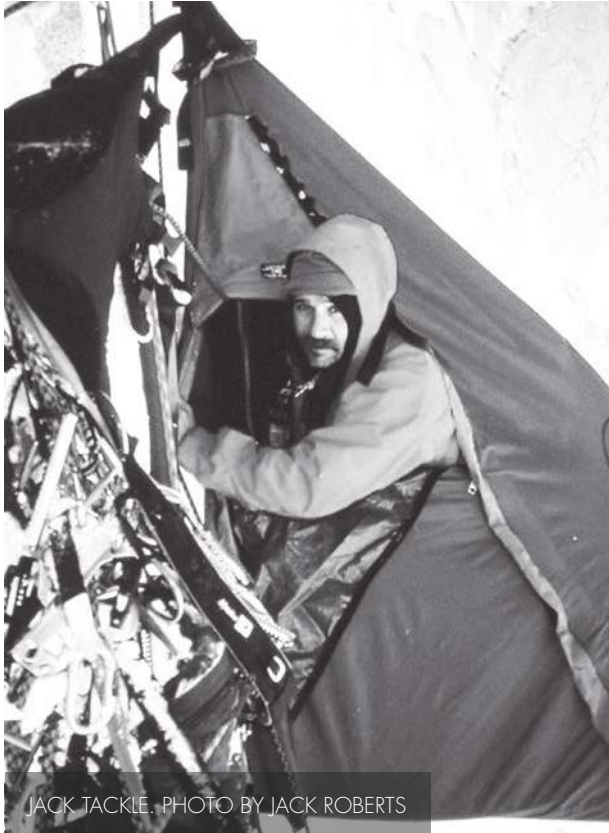
—Russ Clune, *AMGA SPI*



MIKE POWERS



RUSS CLUNE



JACK TACKLE. PHOTO BY JACK ROBERTS

The best advice, and the hardest for me to follow, has been to resist allowing my decisions to be influenced by peer pressure, whether from clients and their expectations or from other guides. Just because another guide decides to do something doesn't mean you should do it too, and just because they turn back doesn't mean you should do that either.

—Kathy Cosley, *American Mountain Guide / IFMGA Guide*

Listening skills and observation skills while assessing clients are largely undervalued. I can tell how a client will do on the Grand Teton, for example, simply by how they walk up the trail from the Jenny Lake boat dock and boulder for a few minutes. Technical climbing skills are necessary for a client to be able to climb, of course, but their level of conditioning and their mental attitude are much more telling when it comes to how they'll do on a big objective.

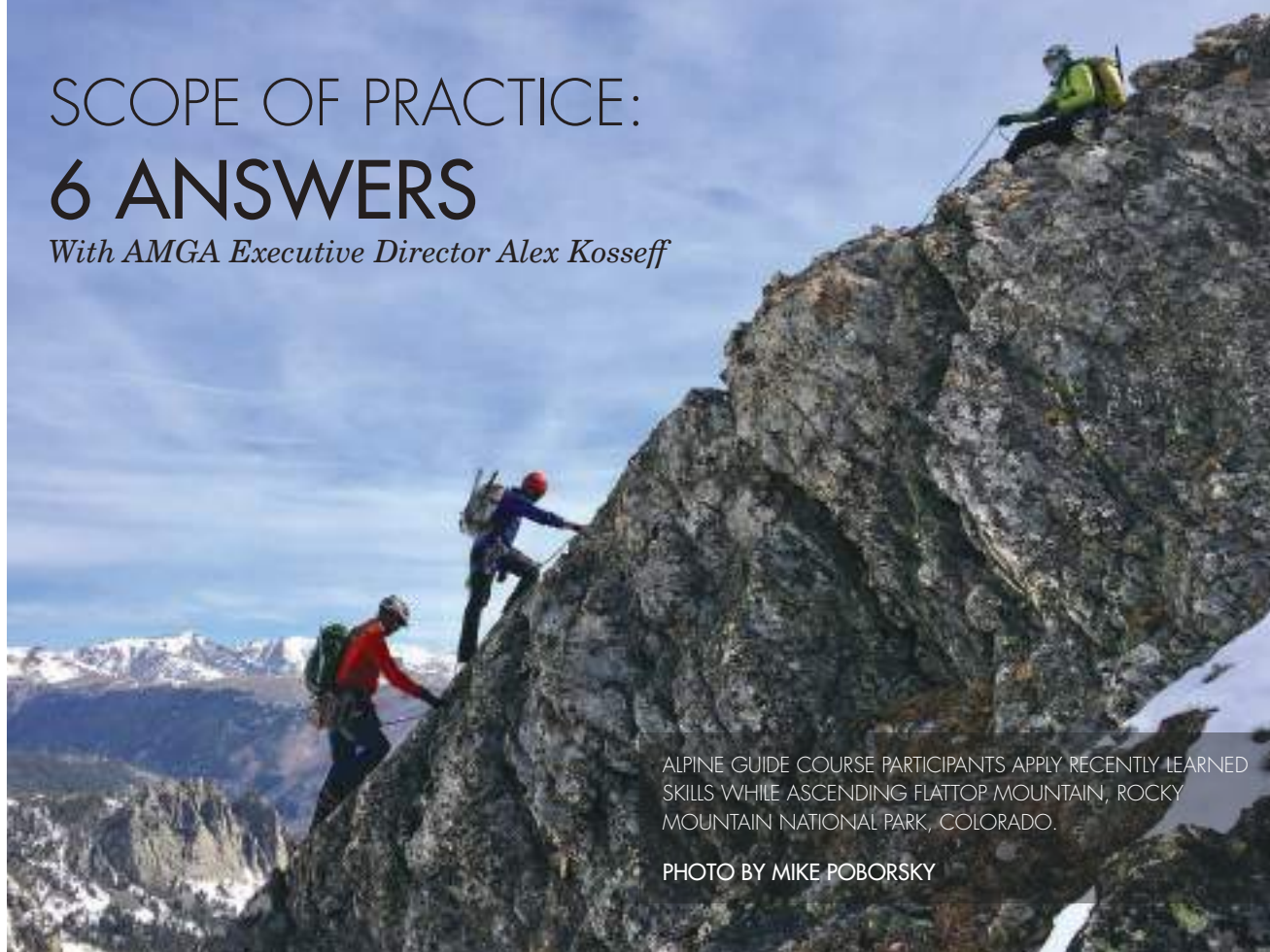
—Jack Tackle, *AMGA Alpine Guide*



BOB GAINES

SCOPE OF PRACTICE: 6 ANSWERS

With AMGA Executive Director Alex Kosseff



ALPINE GUIDE COURSE PARTICIPANTS APPLY RECENTLY LEARNED SKILLS WHILE ASCENDING FLATTOP MOUNTAIN, ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK, COLORADO.

PHOTO BY MIKE POBORSKY

ON APRIL 7, THE AMGA BOARD OF DIRECTORS formally approved and adopted a new Scope of Practice (SOP) framework after years of discussion with AMGA members, accredited businesses, and other organizations in the industry. Designed to clearly delineate the terrain on which AMGA guides and instructors are trained and certified to work, the document represents a milestone in the ongoing effort to create consistent standards across the industry.

As mentioned in this issue's "Director's Corner" (see page 3), there is a collective power in the many voices and opinions that contributed to the SOP. Now that the SOP has been approved and will be put into place, those many voices have many questions. Within, AMGA Executive Director Alex Kosseff answers some of the most frequently asked questions surrounding the SOP in hopes of clarifying the AMGA's position as well as explaining some of the more complex details.

WHY SOP? WHY NOW?

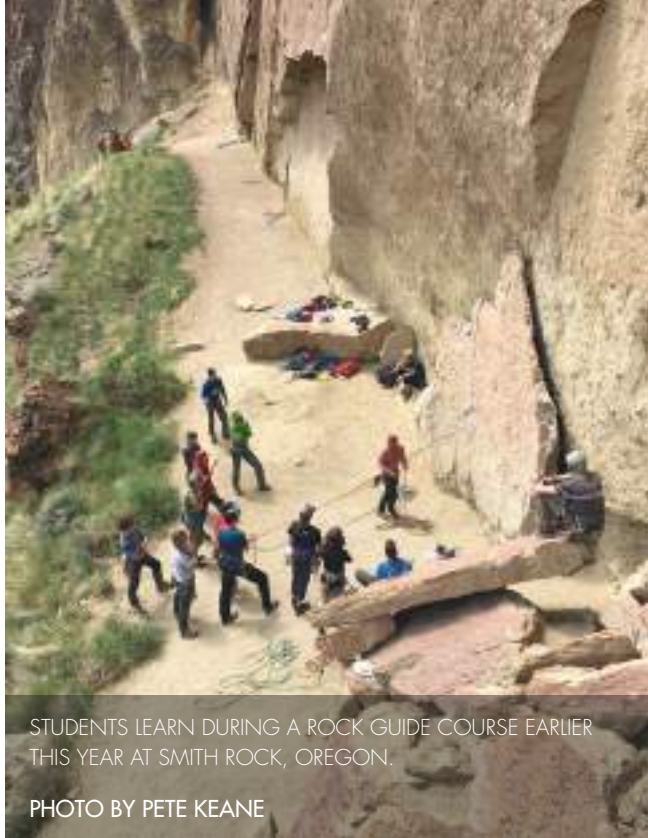
For years there's been broad agreement among AMGA members that the guiding industry, like most established professions in America, needed some kind of professional standard. We put in many months of work over five years to make sure we built consensus among members and accredited businesses and got the legal advice necessary to craft a standard that would serve us all in the long-

term. The SOP represents the culmination of those years of discussion.

Thanks to the SOP, the public can know that any guide or instructor associated with the AMGA has been appropriately trained or certified for the work they're doing. This will help us build even greater public trust in the AMGA brand, and clearer safety guidelines should indirectly boost business: Qualified guides and good risk-management practices mean more exceptional client experiences. The SOP also will help ensure that guides and instructors are prepared to handle themselves in the hazardous environments they work in.

I'M AN SPI WORKING FOR OUTWARD BOUND, NOLS, OR A COLLEGE OUTDOOR PROGRAM. AT TIMES MY WORK ASSIGNMENTS ARE FOR TERRAIN OUTSIDE THE SOP FOR SINGLE PITCH TERRAIN. HOW DOES THE SOP AFFECT MY ABILITY TO WORK IN THAT TERRAIN?

In short: not at all. The updated SOP framework provides a simple process for granting variances, primarily for outdoor education organizations. Variances are available to individual applicants and to any outdoor education organization that trains people for the work they're doing and has a risk-management plan. The hope is that individuals working in these fields will go on to pursue further training, and the SOP is set up in a way to permit this.



STUDENTS LEARN DURING A ROCK GUIDE COURSE EARLIER THIS YEAR AT SMITH ROCK, OREGON.

PHOTO BY PETE KEANE

IS THE LONG-TERM INTENT OF THE SOP TO LIMIT GUIDING OR INSTRUCTION ONLY TO CERTIFIED INDIVIDUALS?

There are a lot of factors beyond certification that go into making a great guide. The AMGA is committed to an educational structure built around the idea that course work alone isn't enough. Hands-on experience, supervision, and mentorship are all essential to rounding out a guide's education, and AMGA curriculum complements that. Though it's hard to predict what the industry will look like 25 years from now, we don't have any expectations that AMGA certification will replace the existing apprenticeship and mentorship traditions.

WHAT IS THE SOP TIMELINE? WHEN WILL THE NEW STANDARDS GO INTO EFFECT?

Right now, the SOP is an educational resource. We're teaching people about the SOP in their courses and helping them understand what they're qualified to do when they complete a course or exam. For most folks, it's not until January 2022 that it will become mandatory. At that time, AMGA members will only be able to work within the SOP described by their training or certification.

For some representatives of the AMGA, the SOP will go into effect on an accelerated timeframe. It already applies to AMGA full-time staff, and the Board has approved a plan to hold SPI providers to the SOP starting in 2018.

HOW WILL THE AMGA ENFORCE IT?

We're hoping for an egalitarian approach in which the community that was so involved in developing the SOP also

commits to abiding by the SOP. If that doesn't work, there will be a formal process through the AMGA's professional compliance committee for reviewing violations and potentially handing down penalties, which could range from a cautionary letter to suspension of membership to withdrawal of membership in extreme cases. When members notice problems, we hope they will feel empowered to talk to their peers and work as a community to uphold the SOP framework.

HOW WILL THE SOP CHANGE GUIDING AND INSTRUCTING IN AMERICA?

It's our hope that as the standards unify us and strengthen the AMGA's reputation, more and more clients will seek out AMGA guides, instructors, and accredited businesses to pursue their climbing and skiing dreams. With increased demand comes the opportunity to increase fees and therefore raise guides' incomes.

AMGA has drawn a lot from the guiding traditions of Europe, where guiding is a licensed professional occupation in most areas. It's unlikely that guiding in America will ever look just like it does in the Alps, but we can learn a lot from the European model. The SOP is a step toward building a stronger American tradition in which good climbing and skiing guides can enjoy a solid middle-class career. «

The Scope of Practice document can be accessed via the membership documents page on amga.com (<https://amga.com/member-documents/>); you'll need to be logged in to view it. Still have questions? Email us at info@amga.com.

ASCENDING TONE'S TEMPLE IN THE CHUGACH RANGE DURING THE 2017 ADVANCED SKI GUIDE COURSE IN VALDEZ, ALASKA.

PHOTO BY MIKE POBORSKY





FINDING **BALANCE**

PARENTING AND GUIDING

Yes, you can have both a guiding career and a family. It will demand your logistical A-game, but hey—that's what guides do best. Jessica Baker, Todd Passey, and Margaret Wheeler (each half of a two-guide household) relay the challenges and joys of family life.

WHAT'S THE MOST CRUCIAL ADVICE YOU'D GIVE TO OTHER GUIDES CONSIDERING STARTING A FAMILY?

JESSICA BAKER — JACKSON, WYOMING: Starting a family is always daunting, but when your life revolves around alpine starts, varied work schedules, frequent travel, and high-risk work environs, it's all the more so. From what I've seen, most guide couples decide not to have children. But for those who are willing to take the plunge? My best advice is to be flexible, be ready to improvise often, and make sure you have a willing partner.

Another bit of advice: Explore all your childcare options and, if possible, secure childcare well before the baby comes along. Communicate with your partner about your respective schedules and goals as guides for the coming

year to determine what amount of work is reasonable and what's no longer realistic once the baby arrives. These conversations can be difficult, but they are critical to your success as a family and as professional guides. After the baby is born, plan to take the first eight to 12 weeks off. Minimum. Both mom and dad will need the time to bond with the baby, heal, and process the life change. Finally, be ready to work 24/7. Once the work day ends, the work of raising a family begins. Make sure to build in designated days off to rest and catch up with your family.

MARGARET WHEELER — KETCHUM, IDAHO & CHAMONIX, FRANCE: Guiding has the blessing and the curse of a flexible schedule. The blessing: you can be with your little ones more than you would with a nine-to-five job. As a two-guide family, we stagger our schedules and have



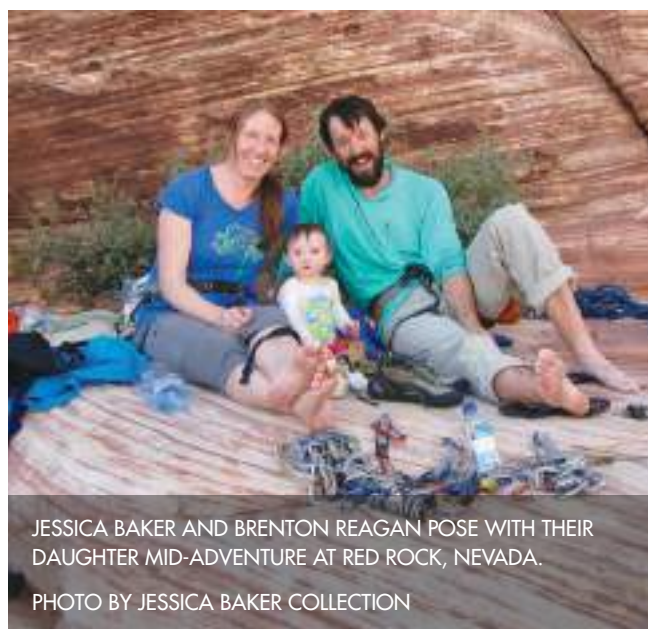
MATT FARMER, WHEELER'S HUSBAND, PULLS A KIDDO-LADEN CHARIOT TO GALENA SUMMIT NEAR THEIR HOME IN IDAHO.

PHOTO BY MARGARET WHEELER

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found that everyone benefits. We both get solo time with the girls (hard but awesome), and we both get to do the job we love (also hard but awesome).

The curse? Flexibility is more complicated than a set schedule. It's exhausting. We spend an enormous amount of energy coordinating all the variables of work, play, childcare, travel, and family time. Some days I feel like it would be so much easier if everyone got up and did the same thing every day, but in the end I wouldn't trade our setup for anything.



JESSICA BAKER AND BRENTON REAGAN POSE WITH THEIR DAUGHTER MID-ADVENTURE AT RED ROCK, NEVADA.

PHOTO BY JESSICA BAKER COLLECTION

WHAT'S YOUR GREATEST CHALLENGE AS BOTH A PARENT AND A GUIDE? HOW DO YOU MEET THIS CHALLENGE?

JB: Work schedules and childcare are both tough. My husband, Brenton, and I have to carefully coordinate our guiding days to ensure we make daycare pickup and drop-off. If I'm heading into the Wrangell St. Elias Range for 10 plus days, Brenton will choose day work that allows him time to make dinner and get the kids to bed. If Brenton is taking clients on the Grand Traverse, I have to pick work with shorter hours so I'm available to drive our children to and from preschool and daycare while he's gone.

I also make sure I choose work with less objective hazard when he's away. It would be naïve of my husband and I to assume that we are somehow immune to these realities. We need to make sure that if for some reason one of us or our clients was injured or—worst-case scenario—died while we were guiding, there would be a remaining parent at minimum to take care of things at home. Believe me, this topic has nearly brought me to tears, but as a parent and guide, it is the only responsible way to consider things.

Childcare comes with definite time constraints. For the first 10 months of our first child's life, we hired a nanny until our daughter was old enough for daycare. We saved money, but we were limited to an 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. childcare schedule. We are now facing the choice once again: Do we put our newest baby into daycare or try to find a nanny who won't break the bank (nearly impossible)? There is such a thing as a nanny share, a setup involving several families that hire a nanny together and split the cost for three to four children. That's an option we're considering.

TODD PASSEY — COTTONWOOD HEIGHTS, UTAH:

Time management has been my greatest challenge. I've never been one for schedules, but as a parent, juggling

”

Having a routine has added a bit of continuity to my life, which has been important to my personal sanity. I'm less stressed about work and more present at home with my family because I'm not constantly worrying when I'm going to get everything done.

—Todd Passey

turned two, I brought my family along to Chamonix. It's not the cheapest option, but the boost to the family psych was definitely worth the financial cost. Winslow and Bodhi have also been able to come with me and a very close friend and client to the Khumbu.

I have always focused on relationships in my guiding, which has enabled me to build an active core group of clients. These clients are friends, so it's not such a big leap when I ask to bring Winslow and Bodhi along. I definitely wouldn't impose this on just any customer, but when it works out, it makes for some unforgettable trips.

JB: There's no doubt about it: Parenting will cut into your personal time, and the biggest loss I felt after starting a family was my free time to train, climb, and ski for myself and with my husband. You don't have to throw out your personal adventures, but you may have to tag-team with your partner and plan well in advance to pull them off. My husband is one of my favorite people to be with in the mountains, but we have to cut our adventure time together to prioritize parenting and guiding. We do go on family adventures, but at a different pace and scale (read: no multi-pitch climbing, steep ski slopes, etc.).



WHEELER'S DAUGHTER TAGS ALONG ON A GUIDED TRIP IN ITALY'S DOLOMITES.

PHOTO BY MARGARET WHEELER



BODHI ACCOMPANIES HIS DAD ON A GUIDED TRIP IN NEPAL.

PHOTO BY WINSLOW PASSEY

various responsibilities without a routine became too chaotic. I didn't have enough personal time or trip prep time. I do mostly private custom trips, which can take a fair bit of planning, and I was always showing up a bit more scattered and stressed than usual.

I decided I needed to change something. My wife, Winslow, got me doing a morning routine of meditation, stretching, and core exercises, followed by a solid hour of office time. The whole thing is about 90 minutes—easy to incorporate into every morning, whether I'm on the road, guiding from home, or taking a day off. Having a routine has added a bit of continuity to my life, which has been important for my personal sanity. I'm less stressed about work and more present at home with my family because I'm not constantly wondering when I'm going to get everything done.

PARENTING CAN BE A FULL-TIME GIG. WHAT HAVE YOU CUT BACK ON TO PRIORITIZE BEING A PARENT AND A GUIDE?

TP: Before becoming a dad, I almost never turned down work. In the years before Bodhi was born, I was often on the road a good eight months of the year, not including the month or two I spent on personal climbing and skiing trips with Winslow. With that schedule, something had to give, and I knew it wasn't going to be family time—I wanted to be there for my kids. So I went from working close to 250 days in 2013 to around 150 this year. I am more selective about the jobs I take, and I'm more conscious of my daily pay rate.

When I'm gone on a longer stint, like the summer Bodhi

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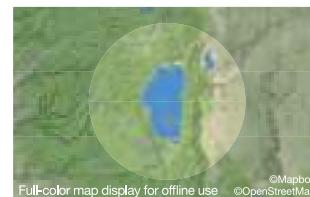


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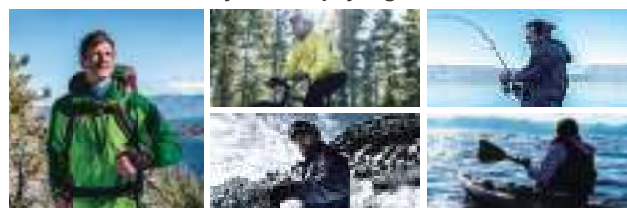


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Full-color map display for offline use ©Mapbox ©OpenStreetMap

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”

Be ready to be a little less selfish and a lot more selfless when you start a family. Sound awful? It's actually a wonderful part of parenting, and I believe it improves your patience and outlook as a guide.

—Jessica Baker

At some point our children will grow up enough to start out-skiing and out-climbing us. Then we will have two little rope guns and rippers that we'll have to try to keep up with. Be ready to be a little less selfish and a lot more selfless when you start a family. Sound awful? It's actually a wonderful part of parenting, and I believe it improves your patience and outlook as a guide.

MW: The bottom line: There is less time for us to take care of ourselves because childcare can be expensive, and logistics can be overwhelming. People keep telling me, “It's going to get easier.” But from here, in the thick of it, it can be hard to believe.

And yet, as I write this, I'm just beginning to see glimpses of “easier.” My second daughter is now six months; her big sister is two-and-a-half. The unrelenting nursing schedule is starting to ease. The older one is now big enough to happily entertain herself when the younger one needs care. The older one loves making faces at her sister until she giggles. They both get more capable at doing things, and we get more capable with the juggling act. And we can't wait to see them together, as sisters. The fun-o-meter just keeps going up.

HOW HAS BEING A GUIDE MADE YOU A BETTER PARENT?

TP: Being a guide makes me happy and grateful, and joy will make you better at anything you do. Guiding is something I am proud of, and it's taught me so much I want to pass on to my son. He doesn't necessarily have to be a guide—I just want him to have opportunities to travel, play in the mountains, and meet amazing people like I do. It's really an amazing way to live. I have true friends across the globe, and I get to live and work in stunning environments. Guiding has taught me what it is to live fully, raising the standard I want to pass on to my son. I want him to live just as well, regardless of his profession. I have a lot in life, but my experiences hold the most importance for me. I hope they do for Bodhi as well.



BAKER'S HUSBAND, BRENTON REAGAN, AND THEIR DAUGHTER, KAIA, CLIMB IN CITY OF ROCKS, IDAHO.

PHOTO BY JESSICA BAKER

HOW HAS BEING A PARENT MADE YOU A BETTER GUIDE?

TP: I really appreciate how much more I laugh nowadays. Bodhi says and does the funniest things. We'll be jumping on the trampoline or running down a trail, playing some game, and Bodhi is always laughing. It's contagious.

I think laughter is great in many ways, but this playfulness has given me a new appreciation for not taking myself or anybody else too seriously. This whole climbing and skiing thing comes with risk, of course, but at the end of the day we're doing it for fun. It's nice to keep that in perspective. There are many components to a good guide, but having fun has to be near the top. In the past, I've been more caught up in image and trying to act how I felt a “serious guide” should act. Now I've relaxed quite a bit in this area. For me, that means my focus is on leading adventures where people leave with smiles on their faces because they just did something cool and inspiring. Being able to get in some good laughs along the way certainly helps.

HELP YOUR FELLOW GUIDES UNDERSTAND THE LOGISTICS. HOW LONG AFTER BIRTH DID YOU GO BACK TO WORK? WHEN DID BALANCING WORK AND FAMILY FEEL MANAGEABLE? WHAT'S POSSIBLE WHEN?

JB: Everyone is different, every pregnancy is different, and every baby is different. With my first baby, Kaia, I took a full eight weeks off before I started back into any kind of training or hard physical activity other than hiking or yoga.

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”

Getting out is worth it even when it isn't worth it... Moments spent in the mountains return you to perspective and balance.

—Margaret Wheeler

It was about 12 weeks before I started to feel like my normal athletic self, and then I started back into my normal physical routine and eased back into guiding.

With the first baby, we were not getting as much sleep as we wanted, and it was unrealistic to return to big alpine days for the first eight months of Kaia's life. Most of my guiding work maxed out at 11-hour days. My husband returned to overnights and multi-day trips a few months after Kaia's birth, but I waited until she was a year old.

As a mother, I chose to breastfeed my baby, and as you might imagine, that can be a logistical nightmare for a guide. For me, the nutritional benefits made it a no-brainer, and I was going to feed my baby my milk no matter what it took. I'm fairly certain that I am the first guide to pump milk in the field next to a helicopter, deep in Alaska's Chugach, as I planned our next remote ski descent. My clients understood completely, and I was able to take advantage of transitions, lunch breaks, and other spare moments to make it happen. On average I would pump three times in a day of guiding, then go home and nurse my baby. It took an immense amount of time and energy, but my baby was healthy, and that made me happy.

Balancing guiding work and family is hard, but it is possible, and there is joy that comes from having a family that I cannot express through words.

MW: For our first child, I was back working in the mountains after eight weeks, about four weeks before our daughter was sleeping through the night. I was sleep-deprived most of the time, but getting back out in the mountains was motivating and inspiring; it helped me to feel connected to my life and my identity (both of which can get blurry in the newborn pain cave). However, I was working for just a few days at a time, and then it would take me a week or more to recover. I was psyched, but exhausted.

I would offer one piece of advice, couched in avalanche-nerd terminology: when forecasting outcomes for yourself and a new baby/family, your uncertainty levels are high. So give yourself margins.

With our second daughter, I underestimated how much of my mental/emotional bandwidth would be already used up with our first, who was an active, loud, strong, fun two-year-old girl. We are in month five of my second daughter's life, and yet I am just now reaching a mental state where I

BODHI DOES HIS BEST TO COIL ROPE IN THE KHUMBU REGION OF NEPAL.

PHOTO BY WINSLOW PASSEY



feel ready to go back to work. I'm working a little now, but I am ramping up more slowly than I had planned.

WHAT ARE YOUR BEST "INSIDER TIPS" ON MAINTAINING A POSITIVE ATTITUDE AT HOME AND AT WORK?

MW: Getting out is worth it even when it isn't worth it. If you don't dash away, get outside, and get into the mountains, then you find yourself sliding from a headspace of "I don't do much for myself right now" into "I don't do anything anymore." These may sound similar, but they are not. One acknowledges that this, too, will evolve. The other admits defeat. Having children creates so much love and is so all-consuming you can lose yourself as weeks stretch to months and years. Moments spent in the mountains return you to perspective and balance. And when those moments are scarce, you absorb and appreciate them more than ever.

AS A PARENT AND GUIDE, WHAT DO YOU LOOK FORWARD TO THE MOST?

JB: I love my job, and I love my children. I look forward to the alpenglow on the horizon as I start into the third pitch of the Grand Teton. I look forward to the fresh air and invigorating physical demand of my guiding work. I look forward to the expressions and emotions that my clients exude upon standing on a big alpine summit for the first time. I look forward to the professional development that comes with working with my fellow mountain professionals



MATT FARMER SHOWS HIS DAUGHTER THE ROPES IN CITY OF ROCKS, IDAHO.

PHOTO BY MARGARET WHEELER



JESSICA SPENDS QUALITY TIME WITH HER DAUGHTER, KAIA, AT THE CLIMBING GYM.

PHOTO BY JESSICA BAKER

on a daily basis.


And at the end of the day or the end of a trip, I look forward to returning to my little ones at home. I look forward to hugging my babies and smelling the sweet smell that only babies have. I look forward to snuggling with my family in bed as we read books together. I look forward to

the future with my children as I envision them growing into bright young adults further evolved than myself. I look forward to every day I get to share with my family in the great outdoors. I look forward to sharing my love for the mountains and nature with my children so that they, too, can share it with the next generation to come. «

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JOHNNY BRESSETTE, AVALANCHE TECH FOR ALASKA ELECTRIC LIGHT & POWER IN JUNEAU, CHECKS OUT THE FILLED-IN CROWN FROM A SIZE 3.5 AVALANCHE THAT STRUCK THE SNETTISHAM TRANSMISSION LINE.

PHOTO BY MIKE JANES

WHY EVOLVE AVALANCHE EDUCATION?



This past year, the American Avalanche Association (AAA) adopted an updated program for avalanche education in the United States. AAA Executive Director Jaime Musnicki explains the motivation behind the paradigm shift.

By Jaime Musnicki

IN SKIMMING THE AMERICAN AVALANCHE Association's (AAA) website, you could easily miss the AAA Memorial List. It's a few clicks deep, at the bottom of another page—buried much like our morbid thoughts might be on a sunny day in the winter backcountry. Whether we think about it or not, the decade-old list now includes 66 names, 11 of whom are guides.

As backcountry skiing and the ski guiding industries continue to expand, the list of fatalities doesn't have to. To that end, beginning in the 2017/18 winter season, avalanche courses will start to look a little different. After the Level 1 course, recreationists and avalanche professionals—including ski patrollers, avalanche forecasters, rescue personnel, snow science researchers, and, yes, guides—will part ways and embark on separate tracks more specifically designed to meet either their professional or recreational needs.

For the past several decades, avalanche education has been highly regionalized. Such a structure promotes creativity, innovation, and independence, but it also means limited consistency and accountability in avalanche training.

To address these drawbacks in light of a growing snow sports industry, AAA hosted an informal avalanche education summit in Alta, Utah, in 2013. Avalanche professionals from across the industry came together

to discuss the state of avalanche education for both professionals and recreationists.

Ben Pritchett, former program director of the American Institute for Avalanche Research and Education (AIARE), and Don Sharaf, co-owner of and instructor for the American Avalanche Institute (AAI), presented two different visions that evening for what a revised system of avalanche education in the United States could look like. Both involved separating the professional and recreational tracks, but neither answered all of our questions: Where should the split between professionals and recreationists occur? Do different types of avalanche professionals need different courses or progressions? What's most important for professionals to learn in a formal course setting versus in the field or through mentorship? How would current programs fit into a revised framework?

The AAA put together a working group of prominent avalanche educators to tackle those questions and draft an initial proposal to be considered by the larger avalanche community. Through a collaborative process, engaging professionals from across the industry and around the country, this proposal evolved into the revised framework that debuts next season.

As an organization focused on avalanche professionals



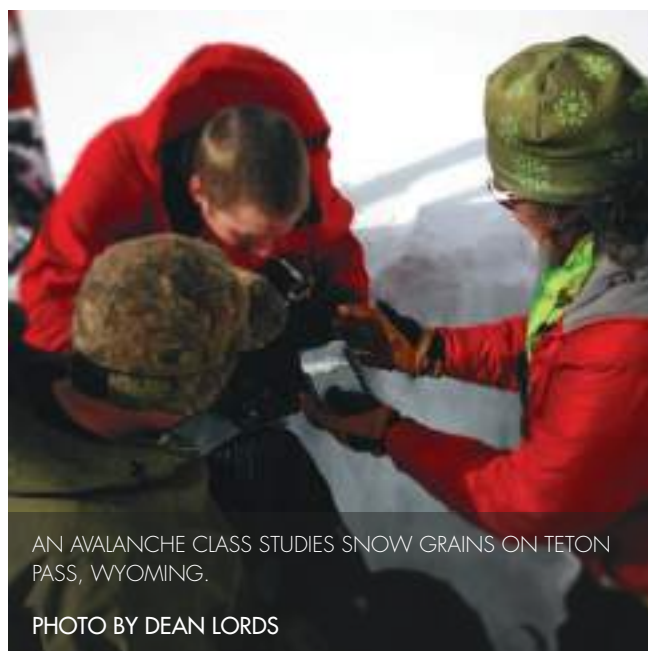
THIS BOWL ON MUSHROOM RIDGE IN THE BOULDER MOUNTAINS OF IDAHO WAS TRIGGERED REMOTELY FROM A QUARTER MILE AWAY.

PHOTO BY CHRIS MARSHALL

in the United States, the AAA believes that more consistent professional avalanche training opportunities will benefit not only avalanche workers but the entire avalanche industry. Everyone benefits when an avalanche worker's skills are consistent and up-to-date, whether they're entering a job, transitioning to a new employer, or moving into a leadership role within their operation. When professionals operate using common language and practices, they can communicate about the environment and decision-making process more effectively, maximizing efficiency in the field.

The revised system also benefits recreationists. Now after a Level 1 course, when burgeoning professionals are directed into profession-specific courses, advancing recreationists can continue their learning with a Level 2 course designed specifically for them. The revamped Level 2 is streamlined to include 24 hours of instruction (approximately three days instead of four), making the course more accessible to someone with a traditional work week. The new Level 2 course focuses on avalanche hazard assessment and decision-making skills in challenging and complex terrain and in areas where a regular public avalanche forecast may not be available. Some of the more profession-focused topics, such as SWAG observation and documentation standards, have been removed from the recommended curriculum.

Many advanced winter backcountry recreationists inevitably find themselves in the role of "de facto leader" in a group of less-skilled friends or backcountry partners who look to them when making decisions in avalanche terrain. The new Level 2 course is designed for these people. It's an opportunity to deepen students' understanding of the snow science behind avalanches, refine their techniques for assessing hazard, and practice decision-making and group management under the watchful eyes of experienced instructors. The more targeted focus of the new Level



AN AVALANCHE CLASS STUDIES SNOW GRAINS ON TETON PASS, WYOMING.

PHOTO BY DEAN LORDS

2 encourages continuing avalanche education at the recreational level to create better backcountry partners—a good thing for independent recreationists and guides alike.

Improved training for recreationists means guides are sharing terrain with better-educated peers and guiding better-educated guests. As for direct benefits, the change provides guides with an earlier entry to a profession-specific avalanche training progression, broader reciprocity between course providers and employers, and improved opportunity to cross-pollinate ideas and practices with other types of avalanche professionals sharing the same courses.

Regardless of occupation or education track, students should emerge better educated than ever before, and that's one big step toward our goal: more magnificent days in the mountains and fewer names memorialized. «

LITTLE EXTRAS: TREASURES TO DELIGHT YOUR CLIENTS

By Corey Buhay

Illustrations by Amelia Altavena

PROVIDING A MEMORABLE CLIENT EXPERIENCE INVOLVES more than just taking them to the top. While technical prowess and mountain know-how will get you through the door, it's the softer skills that will earn you long-term relationships and repeat clients. These relationships are built on trust and shared experiences over time—and it's never too early to dream up something remarkable that your client will remember you by.

"I tend to check in with my guest pre-trip to find out a bit about them, do my research, and personalize each adventure," says American Mountain Guide/IFMGA Guide Joey Thompson of Colorado Mountain School. One of the easiest ways to personalize an adventure, show your guests they come first, and make their day is to get creative with your packing list. From Wet Ones to watermelons and everything in between, here are nine ways to go the extra mile, leave your clients over the moon, and keep them coming back.

CELEBRATE A BIRTHDAY

Matt Wade, AMGA Rock and Alpine Guide, and founder of Peak Mountain Guides, makes a point to know if any clients' birthdays fall on or near the trip date. "A cupcake with a candle can be a fun way to celebrate," he says.



ADD SOME COLOR

Why not make every summit feel like the top of Everest? Besides, it's hard for a client not to look photogenic with a string of colorful prayer flags, an Angela Hawse specialty. The American Mountain Guide/IFMGA Guide typically gauges a client's personality before whipping out the sillier stuff, but sparkly pinwheels make another great photo prop for lighter-hearted guests.



ZINC YOUR SNIFFER

Jason Antin, AMGA SPI and director of partnerships at Gociety, brings out sunblock to coat sensitive noses—and to decorate the faces of goofy kids, who love the war-paint or lifeguard look.



WIPE IT UP

Smell good, feel good; feel good, climb good. Marc Piché, IFMGA Guide and technical director for the Association of Canadian Mountain Guides, hands out a few Wet Ones to remove accumulated grit and sunscreen after long days on the Wapta Icefields. "It's a small gesture with huge gains," he says.





TAME THE SWEET TOOTH

A handful of chocolate-covered espresso beans will boost both spirits and energy levels at haltime breaks or just before the final push. Got a little more time? Nothing says gourmet like a pot of fondue (cheese or chocolate will do) on extended winter trips. Want to go healthier (and heavier)? Legend has it, Gary Falk once lugged a watermelon to the top of the Grand Teton to celebrate the summit after a single-day push. Talk about a surprise.



STAY SHARP

Keep the cutting edge of tools and crampons sharp by carrying a small file in your kit. For ski trips, bring wax. “If clients’ skins or bases are sticky, they’ll love you for this,” says Wade.



BREAK THE ICE

In cold conditions, a thermos of cocoa or chamomile tea can make the difference between type II and type I fun. And midday coffee works for summits as well as saddles. Peak Mountain Guide Zach Lovell once brewed a cup atop Forbidden Peak on his AMGA Alpine Aspirant Exam: “My examiner was psyched.”



SNAP SOME MEMORIES

“Providing clients with photos of them getting rad is always a day-maker,” says Exum Guide Ben Hoiness, adding that it’s part of getting invested in a client’s life, being a good friend, and sharing in their experience.



CRACK A COLD ONE

A happy guest goes to sleep feeling warm and fuzzy every night. Most of that should come from a solid outing, but whiskey will fill in any gaps. AMGA Rock Guide and Instructor Ron Funderburke often totes a flask on overnights to pass around at the end of the day. No surprise—beer’s also a universal crowd-pleaser. At the end of a trip, cracking open a cold sixer will make sure everyone heads home on a high note. Bonus points for stashing the beer in a cold creek near the finish. “The bottom line is that your clients want the same treatment that you would give your best partners in the mountains,” says American Mountain Guide/IFMGA Guide John Race, owner of Northwest Mountain School. “Perhaps minus the snark reserved for friends.” «



ROBBINS (LEFT) AND TOM FROST BIVOUACKING ON THE NORTH AMERICA WALL. 1964 RECON.

PHOTO BY GLEN DENNY

ROYAL **ROBBINS**

INTELLIGENCE & INTEGRITY

By Doug Robinson

ON MARCH 14, 2017, WITH THE PASSING OF Royal Robbins, our community lost one of the earliest supporters and members of what was known as the American Professional Mountain Guides Association, the precursor of the AMGA. As a guide, Royal was known for his passion as an educator who sought to instill confidence and competence in his clients. He was also known for his client-centric approach to guiding; a style that would help define American guiding as we know it today. While Royal had moved away from guiding prior to the drafting of the Moose Bar Charter, his contributions and accomplishments led to him being one of 15 guides named as Charter Full Mountain Guides. In the words of Doug Robinson at the time, these “fifteen guides... qualifications’ were...beyond reproach.” As the saying goes, “We see farther when we stand on the shoulders of giants.” Royal was one of the giants. Heartfelt condolences go out to his family, friends and the thousands of people inspired by a true climbing legend. —Ed Crothers, AMGA Climbing Instructor Program Director & Accreditation Director

In the early '60s in Camp 4, I can't say that I “met” Royal exactly. It was more like I came under his influence, though by then the same was true of every climber in Yosemite. His example championed an adventurous style of climbing—without inventing it, Royal had sure carried it forward—so thoroughly that it gelled into our unconscious context. I was still a teenager, quivering on modest leads and overdriving pitons to protect myself. It was through a piece of Royal's writing that he began, indirectly, to mentor me. In 1966,

during a visit to England, Royal had admired the way that British climbers pioneered crack climbs that looked a whole lot like ours in Yosemite, only on small gritstone outcrops. He enjoyed their routes, but what really surprised him was the form of protection: no pitons, ever. (The Brits considered them unsporting.) Instead, they slotted nuts by hand into fissures in the rock. When he came home, Royal imported the style, and he brought along a few of the rudimentary nuts, too.

The first nuts-only climb Royal did in Yosemite, Chockstone Gorge, may forever languish in obscurity. His second one, Nutcracker, was destined to become Yosemite's most popular route. The climbing reminds me of one of Royal's lyrical passages: “We will take that pleasure cruise, just the two of us, moving lightly over the rock, just for the fun of it. It's the other side of climbing... For now, I am content. I'm in balance.”

Royal died on March 14, after a long illness. In the weeks that followed, his old climbing partner Yvon Chouinard wrote on Patagonia's blog, “Everyone who knew him will recall his stubborn, lifelong integrity.... But his greatest achievement was his creative intelligence.” Chouinard went on to elucidate how that intelligence led to Royal's leadership, to his ability to envision, inspire, and organize his friends onto those wall climbs, back when there was little chance of retreat, and none of rescue. «

Thank you to Alpinist and Doug Robinson for allowing us to excerpt this tribute. Read it in full, alongside other recollections of Royal Robbins, in issue 58 of Alpinist.



PHOTO BY JANELLE SMILEY

MORGAN **MILLER**

ADVENTURER & PHILOSOPHER

By Matt Schonwald

MORGAN CAME TO ME MORE THAN 10 YEARS AGO, EAGER TO take his first avalanche course and embark on the backcountry journey that would become his livelihood. From beginning to end, he traveled the woods and alpine like a beat poet with AMGA training, the mystic and professional in lockstep. Morgan David Miller may have been born 36 years ago, but his spirit came from a very different time.

Guiding served as an avenue to express and share his passion with others, but to so many of us he was much more than an intelligent colleague and friend. Morgan was simultaneously student and teacher, adventurer and philosopher, mystic and alpinist. Conversations with him occurred at a staccato rhythm, like pages from a Kerouac novel, driven by a passion both to learn and to become one with his surroundings.

Morgan taught so many people how to open their hearts and minds to fully experience nature through all mediums, from the rock gym to the Nordic trails of Hyak. Watching Morgan teach, it was clear why so many were inspired to find their adventure with him. He had an uncanny ability to connect to people in an instant—a type of connection typically found between friends who have known each other for a long time. He used this ability to reach scared, anxious, or timid climbers on a calming level quite quickly, and to find ways to deliver not only effective instruction but also deeper life lessons. Each student received his full attention, Morgan's feedback bursting with tips intended to push them toward their goals. Yet he held a safe space for their fears to drop away so they could try out new skills without consequences. He made skiers feel like heroes on their first ski tour.

Without fail he would make every turn a chance to find his nirvana. His partner, Brigit Anderson, said that "his goal was to find the smoothest line possible and telemark ski like Jerry Garcia plays a guitar—just floating down the slope." She rightly called telemarking his "pure joy." Together they toured well beyond the confines of Alpentel Valley, exploring each peak and alcove, long and short excursions before or after work and on days off.

To me, Morgan embodied the reason I love giving back to worthy, generous, and capable people by providing them opportunity and mentorship—and then seeing them run with it all. «

To donate to the Fallen Guides Memorial Fund in Morgan's name: amga.com/memorial-funds



P. Ken Etzel

Alex Megos



TENAYA

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SALE OF ASPEN EXPEDITIONS

Dick Jackson, past AMGA president and founder of iconic guide service Aspen Expeditions Worldwide (AEW) has passed the ownership of his business to longtime AEW guides Amos Whiting and Britt Ruegger. Jackson purchased the business, one of the first guiding outfits in the United States, for less than \$200 in 1977. "There wasn't much to buy back then," Jackson said. He's since turned the one-man operation into a robust guide service and retail shop employing more than a dozen guides. Though he's planning to step away from the minutiae of running the business, Jackson said he expects to see it continue to grow under the new ownership. "The future of the business is ultra bright," Jackson said. "It's never done better, and both Amos and Britt have a lot of experience working for the business." Whiting has worked for AEW since 2002 and Rueger since 2009. Jackson, now 66, emphasizes that he's in no way retiring—he plans to continue working as a mountain guide, renew his focus on philanthropic endeavors, and spend more time with his family.



NEW OWNERS AMOS WHITING AND BRITT RUEGGER STAND IN FRONT OF THE ASPEN EXPEDITIONS SHOP IN MARCH 2017.

PHOTO COURTESY OF ASPEN EXPEDITIONS

CONGRATULATIONS NEW IFMGA GUIDES!

The following guides earned American Mountain Guide/IFMGA Guide Certification between January 1 and June 30, 2017.

- Dan Corn (121)
- Andreas Polloczek (122)
- Kurt Hicks (123)
- Austin Shannon (124)
- Paul Koubek (125)
- Mike Lewis (126)

LUEBBEN EDUCATION FUND

In honor of Craig Luebben, Sterling Ropes and the AMGA partnered to create the Craig Luebben Education Fund, a scholarship available to prospective guides pursuing AMGA guiding certifications. AMGA and Sterling are currently seeking donations to build up the fund, with the goal of reaching \$50,000 by 2019. Sterling will match the first \$2,000 contributed.

Luebben was a guide, author, first ascensionist, inventor, father, mentor, and friend. He died in 2009.

Go to amga.com/donate-now/craig-luebben-fund for more information.

COURSE UPDATES

SKI GUIDE COURSE

In 2018 the Ski Guide Course will be reduced from 12 to 10 days with a 4:1 student-to-instructor ratio, down from a 5:1 ratio.

ALPINE SKILLS COURSE

Beginning in 2018, Alpine Skills Courses will have a discipline-specific focus. The ASC still serves as a

prerequisite for the SGC and the AGC, and the curriculum remains the same, but students interested in entering the ski discipline will be with skiers/riders, and students interested in entering the alpine discipline will be with climbers. Participants taking a ski-focused ASC need to be competent traveling on skis or a splitboard.

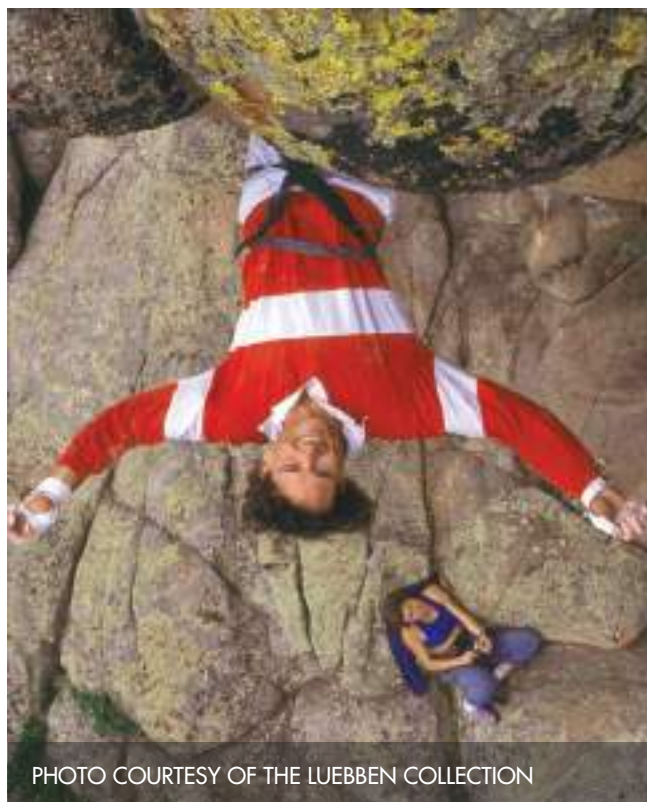


PHOTO COURTESY OF THE LUEBBEN COLLECTION



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| HRF3 | | 603100 | 3160 | | | | | |
| HRF4 | Base NE Ridge Point M. Gila | 602590 | 3120 | | | | | |
| HRF5 | | 602610 | 3120 | | | | | |
| HRF6 | | 602670 | 3120 | | | | | |
| HRF7 | | 603790 | 3270 | | | | | |
| HRF8 | Col d l'Eveque | 603030 | 3270 | | | | | |
| HRF9 | | 604410 | 3380 | | | | | |
| HRF10 | Top brackish | 603700 | 3200 | | | | | |
| HRF11 | | 603000 | 3200 | | | | | |
| HRF12 | Base NE Ridge La Viange | 603380 | 2920 | | | | | |
| HRF13 | | 606300 | 3120 | | | | | |
| HRF14 | Col du M Brulé | 600410 | 3230 | | | | | |
| HRF15 | | 609130 | 3130 | | | | | |
| HRF16 | Base E. Ridge Point de la G. de l'Alpe | 609340 | 3230 | | | | | |
| HRF17 | | 608700 | 3160 | | | | | |
| HRF18 | | 608200 | 3555 | | | | | |
| HRF19 | Col de Valpelline | 602720 | 3200 | | | | | |
| HRF20 | Tran R across Stocky | 612150 | 3000 | | | | | |
| HRF21 | | 603800 | 2840 | | | | | |
| HRF22 | | 612370 | 2640 | | | | | |
| HRF23 | | 602870 | 2200 | | | | | |
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| HRF99 | | 602870 | 2200 | | | | | |
| HRF100 | | 602870 | 2200 | | | | | |

BROOKS-RANGE MOUNTAINEERING Go-To Gear:

SLEEPING SYSTEMS-MAP TOOLS-RESCUE SLEDS
SHELTERS-CLOTHING-SHOVELS-SNOW SCIENCE



INSTRUCTOR TEAM MEMBER ANDREW COUNCELL TEACHING A GROUP OF STUDENTS ON AN ALPINE SKILLS COURSE IN 2016, ESTES PARK, COLORADO.

PHOTO BY THOMAS WHITE

TUITION INCREASES

In an effort to ensure that AMGA Mountain Guide courses operate on a break-even basis, 2018 tuition will increase by an average of 4.5% from the previous year. Increased tuition dollars help cover basic program expenses and provide funds for necessary line items like manual and curriculum updates, and improved Instructor Team training.

While costs are projected to grow, we are striving to cushion future tuition increases by being diligent in containing costs and continuing to look for additional sources of funding, especially for scholarships. We hope to avoid increases of this magnitude in the future.

Feel free to reach out to the AMGA with any comments on courses, exams, or tuition decisions.

CODE OF ETHICS AND CONDUCT UPDATED

On April 24, 2017, the AMGA Board of Directors unanimously voted to update the AMGA Code of Ethics and Conduct to make guidelines clearer, more realistic, and more in line with the AMGA's new Scope of Practice document. You can find the updated Code under "Member Documents" in your myAMGA account. «

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MOUNTAIN CONDITIONS REPORT

**Real time backcountry information
powered by certified mountain professionals**

More posts means more information. By adding your reports you promote safety and establish the guiding community as a resource for everyone using the backcountry. Share your knowledge, connect with other guides, and enhance your professional profile.

In partnership with:



NEW PROGRAM MANUALS

The AMGA is updating the Alpine Guide Course, Rock Guide Course, and Ski Guide Course manuals. The AGC manual has been completed, the RGC manual is in process, and work on the SGC manual will begin in September.

Upon completion of each manual, students enrolled in these programs will receive a hardcopy of the manual at the start of their course. If you have taken one of these courses in the past, please email the AMGA office, and we will send you an updated PDF version (at this time only the updated AGC manual is available). Hardcopies of the new AGC Manual are available for members to purchase on our website. —*Jane Soucy, Operations Director*



2017 MENTORSHIP CAMPS

In the fall of 2016, the AMGA ran our first pilot Mentorship Camp in Boulder, Colorado. It was a two-day rock discipline camp instructed by AMGA Technical Director Dale Remsberg and sponsored by Arc'teryx.

Building off the success of this first program, the AMGA is pleased to announce that we will be running two Mentorship Camps in 2017: one alpine and one rock camp. The Alpine Discipline Mentorship Camp will run from August 23–24 at Washington Pass and serves two apprentice alpine guides. This program is possible thanks to the continued support of Arc'teryx and will be instructed by IFMGA/American Mountain Guide and IT member Jeff Ward.

The Rock Discipline Mentorship Camp will run from September 6–7 in Boulder and serves two Assistant Rock Guides. This program is made possible by the generous support of Eddie Bauer and will be instructed by Dale Remsberg (American Mountain Guide/IFMGA Guide, IT member). —*Jane Soucy, Operations Director*

MENTORSHIP FACEBOOK GROUP

If you are taking AMGA programs and searching for a mentor or if you would like to serve as a mentor, be sure to join the AMGA Mentoring Unofficial Facebook group. This is a great resource to connect with fellow members. AMGA guides Derek DeBruin, Geoff Unger, and Erica Engle designed the group as a member-to-member platform for AMGA guides and instructors seeking mentoring, career advice, or answers related to technical skills, soft skills, risk management, and more. Join this group to stay connected and aware of local meet-ups and mentoring opportunities. facebook.com/groups/AMGAMentoringUnofficial/

—*Jane Soucy, Operations Director*

2017 AMGA ANNUAL MEETING

Our 2017 AMGA Annual Meeting will be heading back to the Petzl Technical Institute from October 26–28, 2017. This year promises even more technical clinics (with outdoor options!), more advanced classroom sessions, and

a wild party. The AMGA Board of Directors Meeting will follow on Sunday, October 29. Check amga.com and your member emails for updates. —*Dana Ladzinski, Strategic Partnerships Director*

ICE INSTRUCTOR EXAM

In 2016, the AMGA Board of Directors decided to move forward with adding a certification for ice guides. While conducting round-table meetings over the last several years, we've heard the membership repeatedly voice interest and concern about the lack of an AMGA ice exam. There are many individuals who guide less complex rock and ice routes part-time or even full-time but remain geographically stationary. While it wouldn't always make sense for these guides to become full Alpine Guides, the Ice Instructor certification will offer an alternative as Scope of Practice comes online in 2022.



GUIDES WILL NOW BE ABLE TO BECOME CERTIFIED ICE INSTRUCTORS WITH A COURSE FORMAT SIMILAR TO THE ROCK INSTRUCTOR EXAM.

PHOTO BY DALE REMSBERG

The certification will be similar to that awarded to a certified Rock Instructor within the rock discipline, and the exam will closely model the Rock Instructor Exam format. There will be an ice-specific rescue component, and the standard for movement will be WI4+. The scope of practice for those who choose this exam is being carefully considered. Routes within the SOP will fall in the one-to-three pitch range with short approaches, minimal complexity, and minimal avalanche exposure (unless the certified ice instructor possesses higher-level avalanche training). The first Ice Instructor Exam will run in North Conway, New Hampshire from February 5–10, 2018. —*Dale Remsberg, Technical Director*

REGIONAL EVENT — NORTHEAST

This year we are proud to kick off our first-ever Regional Event in North Conway, New Hampshire, on Thursday, September 21 with the support of Arc'teryx. This one-day event will feature a variety of clinics taught by some of our top instructors. Topics will include Specifics of the Ice Exam, Exploring the New AMGA Rock Rescue Drill, Maximizing Transitions Up and Down, and Solving Common Problems Encountered in the Single Pitch Realm.

This will be the only event this year of this size, and we look forward to exploring more terrain in 2018. For more information, check out: amga.com/regional-event-north-conway-2017

AMGA'S #TECHTUESDAY SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN

Building on the success of our tech video series, we're introducing a new social media campaign to further engage the broader public, expand brand recognition, and solidify the AMGA's reputation of expertise among our non-guide members by providing quick-hit technical tips that are easy to digest at a glance. This photo campaign will include both basic tech tips and guide-specific tips to help members and the public improve their risk management and efficiency in the field.



FEATURED #AMGATECHTUESDAY TIP: "TRIPLE CARABINER ANCHOR"

Follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter for weekly #amgatechtuesday Tech Tips.

ADDING A SHORTER NONLOCKING CARABINER IN BETWEEN TOP ROPE LOCKERS IS A GREAT WAY TO REDUCE WEAR ON THE ROPE AND YOUR MORE EXPENSIVE LOCKING CARABINERS.

PHOTO BY KAREN HILTON



2017 MARKS THE AMGA'S FIRST ANNUAL REGIONAL EVENT, TO BE HELD IN NORTH CONWAY, NEW HAMPSHIRE.

PHOTO BY JOHN LEMNOTIS

THE AMGA ANNOUNCES 2017 BRAND AMBASSADORS

The AMGA is excited to announce the recent creation of our Brand Ambassador Team. The goals of the Ambassador Team are to highlight underrepresented parts of our membership, to capture what it means to be a guide or instructor in the United States, and to increase brand identity among the climbing and skiing public.

Get to know our 12 new ambassadors for the coming year. Here's one little-known fact about each:

Kerr Adams – Apprentice Rock Guide | Albuquerque, NM
"I love musicals."

Albert Alvarez – Single Pitch Instructor, CWI Provider, and Apprentice Rock Guide | El Paso, TX
"I fell 120 feet off a mountain once, and I think it was the worst and best thing to ever happen to me."

Dan Corn – IFMGA/American Mountain Guide | Kelly, WY
"I'm the first IFMGA National Park Ranger."

Alyssa Countway – Single Pitch Instructor | Boulder, CO
"I have a toe thumb."

Alejandra Garces Pozo – Single Pitch Instructor | Denver, CO
"I'm always craving ice cream."

Paul Koubek – IFMGA/American Mountain Guide | Yosemite, CA
"I'm a former Fulbright Scholar."

Shane Robinson – Certified Ski Guide | Seattle, WA
"My hometown is home of the world's first rodeo."

Donny Roth – Certified Ski Guide | Gunnison, CO
"I can cook."

Abby Rowe – Single Pitch Instructor | Hamilton, NY
"I'm a twin!"

Al Smith III – Single Pitch Instructor, Climbing Wall Instructor | Cullowhee, NC
"I'm an AT thru hiker (SOBO class of 2012)."

Ted Teegarden – Rock Instructor, Apprentice Alpine Guide, SPI Provider | Bethlehem, NH

“I have sick roller-skating skills.”

Joe Vitti – Rock Guide, SPI Provider | High Falls, NY

“I spent about 10 years working for a business turnaround firm in Boulder, CO. I could see Longs Peak, the Indian Peaks, and Pike’s Peak from my window—so close yet so far away!”

To learn more about our 2017 ambassadors, please visit our Ambassador Page at amga.com/amga-ambassadors.

PRO DEALS

The AMGA was created by guides for guides. We are dedicated to serving and supporting the American mountain guiding and climbing community through a number of resources and services made possible by our partners, who help provide scholarships, fund our Mountain Guide Programs, and support many other AMGA initiatives. As an AMGA member, you have access to a variety of pro deals from our corporate partners.*

Stay up to date on deals by logging into your myAMGA account and clicking Pro Purchase Program in the main dashboard. Contact Membership and Social Media Coordinator Steph Marvez with questions at steph@amga.com.

NEW PARTNERS AND PRO DEALS:

We are excited and honored to welcome three new partners to the AMGA family: Icebreaker, Zeal Optics, and TrainingBeta.

Icebreaker:

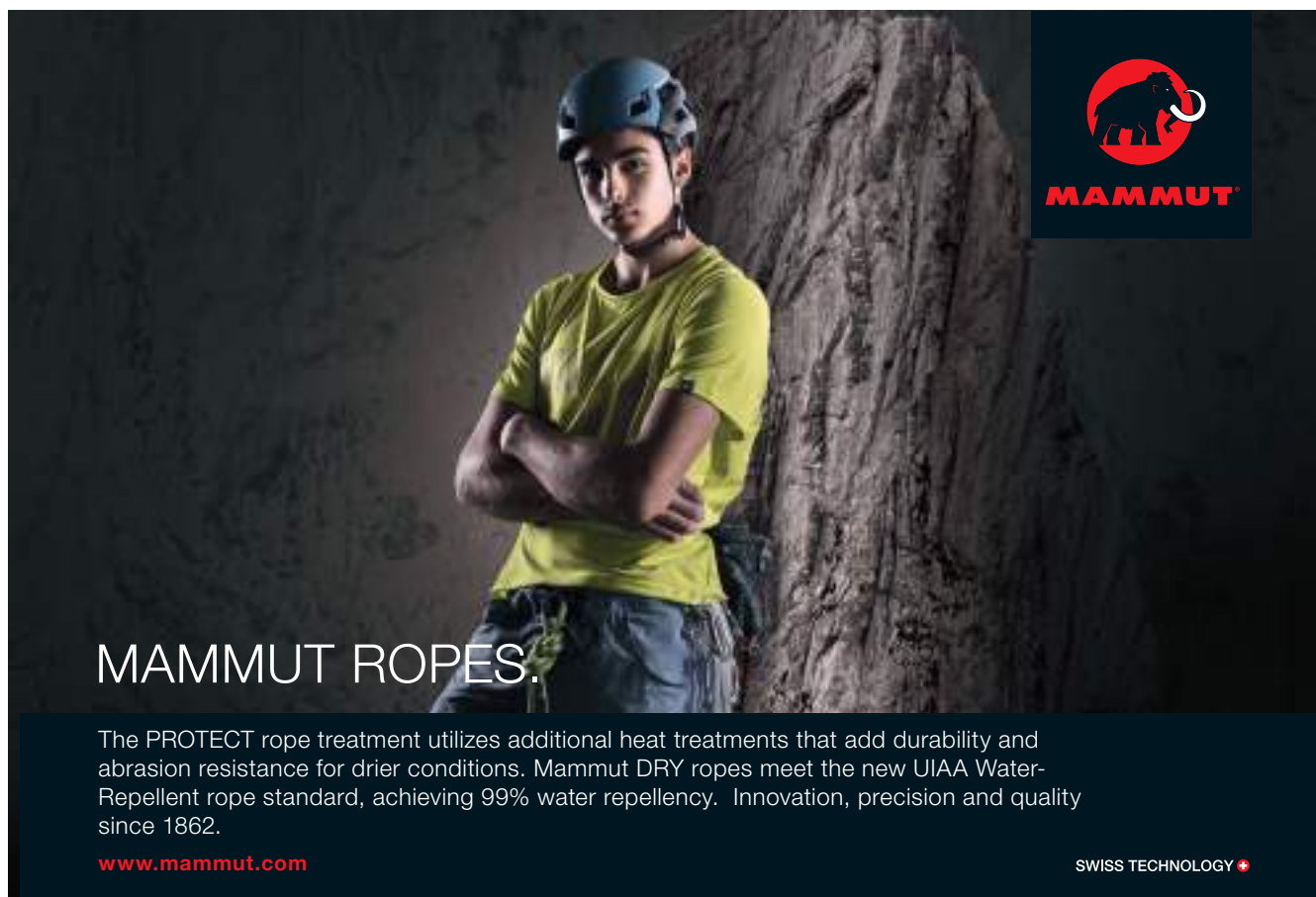
Founded in 1994, Icebreaker is the global leader in premium, sustainable Merino apparel. Since then, Icebreaker has been crafting this versatile fabric into hard-working technical apparel that keeps you warm in the cold, and cool in the heat. AMGA members receive an exclusive 50% off retail pro deal.

Zeal Optics:

Zeal Optics builds the highest quality eyewear for people who live for outdoor adventure. The folks at Zeal live by three rules: Use less, give back, and explore more, and they produce the gear to practice what they preach. Enjoy 50% off all Zeal sunnies and goggles.

TrainingBeta:

TrainingBeta is a site dedicated to training for climbing. Built to include all the best training resources in one place, TrainingBeta offers a daily blog and weekly podcast in addition to easy-to-follow climbing training programs. AMGA members receive 25% off any product on TrainingBeta, including membership.



The advertisement features a climber in a yellow shirt and blue helmet standing against a rock face. The Mammut logo, a red elephant silhouette with a white tusk, is in the top right corner. The text 'MAMMUT ROPES.' is prominently displayed in the lower left. Below it, a paragraph describes the PROTECT rope treatment and the DRY ropes' water-repellent properties. The website www.mammut.com is listed at the bottom left, and 'SWISS TECHNOLOGY' with a red cross icon is at the bottom right.

MAMMUT ROPES.

The PROTECT rope treatment utilizes additional heat treatments that add durability and abrasion resistance for drier conditions. Mammut DRY ropes meet the new UIAA Water-Repellent rope standard, achieving 99% water repellency. Innovation, precision and quality since 1862.

www.mammut.com

SWISS TECHNOLOGY



FOR THE JOURNEY AHEAD

Outdoor Research is committed to improving the journey with exceptional product and inspiration, especially for our guiding community. Certified AMGA guides receive the best discounts on our entire line of award-winning gear.

Join the Outdoor Research Pro Purchase Program at vip.outdoorresearch.com

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**Pro deal information is subject to change as we continually add brands. Access to pro deals varies by AMGA certification level and membership type.*

ACCESS UPDATES

Thanks to the remarkable support of The North Face and your membership dollars, the AMGA has redoubled its national advocacy work to secure the access our industry depends on.

We have retained Jason Keith to help guide these efforts. He will serve on a part-time basis as AMGA's Senior Policy Advisor—a role he also serves at the Access Fund. Keith is an ex-guide and America's most experienced climbing-access advocate. His input will shape a professional approach to advocacy at the AMGA, and he is currently assisting in the hiring process for AMGA's full-time Advocacy Director. In the coming weeks we will make an announcement about who the hiring committee has selected from an amazing pool of candidates to fill this new role.

In May, I went to D.C. as part of the Climb the Hill event organized by the Access Fund and American Alpine Club. I met with Montana Senator Jon Tester, staff for members of the Utah congressional delegation, and officials in the U.S. Forest Service and Department of Interior. These officials now have a better understanding of the AMGA and our members' access needs. In unity with our partner

organizations, we also encouraged elected officials we met to support Senator Ron Wyden's Recreation Not Red-Tape Act.

The change in presidential administrations has slowed down national efforts to increase guided access. The limited number of confirmed appointments in the Department of Interior and Department of Agriculture means that there are few officials to work with on the subject. As more officials are appointed and confirmed, AMGA will be educating those officials about our access needs.

In the meantime, the AMGA will continue to expand our presence in Washington. We plan to take on a more prominent role in the 2018 Climb the Hill event and will have more details to share on that partnership with the American Alpine Club and the Access Fund in the coming months.

We also are continuing to work with the Coalition for Outdoor Access, formerly the Outdoor Access Working Group, which has been holding sessions around the country with the U.S. Forest Service about their new permit process. Many AMGA members have attended these sessions, and we've seen expanded access to permits, especially in the Northwest and Rocky Mountain regions.

I look forward to continuing the conversation around access at our Annual Meeting, October 26–28, when we will be introducing members to our new Advocacy Director. See you in Salt Lake City! —Alex Kosseff, Executive Director <



100% Hardware

Only tools rigorously field tested can truly become essential equipment.

Steep Skier and Mountain Guide, Vivian Bruchez product testing on the Alguille d'Entrèves route up Mont Blanc outside of Chamonix, France.

MOUNTAIN HARDWEAR

Photo: Alex Buisson

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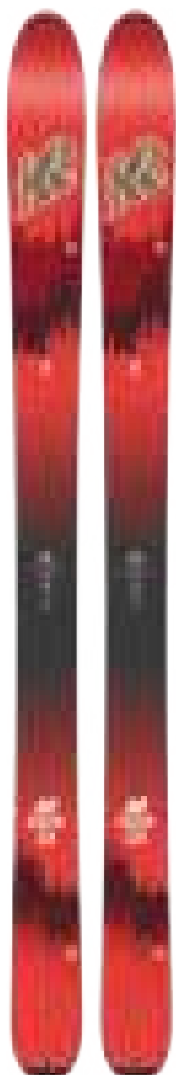
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PHOTO Franz Walter

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The instinct to run, leap,
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icebreaker

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Photo: Louder than 11

Marmot was founded on the
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*by Angela Hawse, Sterling Team
Athlete, Co-owner of Chicks
Climbing and IFMGA/AMGA Guide*

Sterling has come up with a truly
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**To read the full article and check out the
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Kyle O'Neill
Scott Soden
Dirk and Nancy Tyler

PATAGONIA

Patagonia's been backing AMGA scholarships, educational programs, and other initiatives since 1990, but the relationship goes back even further—in 1979, Patagonia founder Yvon Chouinard helped pen the Moose Bar Charter, the first conceptual basis for the AMGA, on a napkin from a barstool in Jackson, Wyoming. Since then, Patagonia has become an iconic international brand known for getting behind good ideas and making them happen, and the company has stood behind the AMGA with that same spirit every step of the way. Now, more than ever, we want to demonstrate our appreciation for Patagonia's rock-solid commitment to protecting wild places and supporting the AMGA through donations, staff time, and sound advice. Both the AMGA and Patagonia have come a long way since that dimly lit evening in the Moose Bar, but together we've grown, and we will continue to work together to promote American mountain craft and get more people outside.

Patagonia's brand mission and product design philosophy have been shaped by the demands and rewards of big walls and high mountains. We believe in the transformational nature of these places and the importance of protecting them. Patagonia holds the AMGA as a key partner in bringing the American mountain community together, improving safety standards, and instilling respect for the places that make us,



VINCE ANDERSON AND STEVE HOUSE, 300 METERS SHY OF THE 7,100-METER SUMMIT OF KUNYANG CHHISH EAST, IN 2006. AS BOTH AMERICAN MOUNTAIN GUIDES/IFMGA GUIDES AND PATAGONIA-SPONSORED CLIMBERS, ANDERSON AND HOUSE REPRESENT WHAT'S POSSIBLE WHEN STRONG PARTNERSHIPS THRIVE.

PHOTO COURTESY OF VINCE ANDERSON COLLECTION

as a company and as climbers, who we are. —Jenna Johnson, Patagonia, Senior Director, Technical Outdoor

Forty-five years in the making

INTRODUCING

The Patagonia Sleeping Bag

Camp in the portaledge, sleep in your car or couch surf: Our new 19-degree 850 Down Sleeping Bag does it all. Inspired by the bag Yvon Chouinard built for himself 45 years ago, today's version is an elegant real-world design that's exceptionally warm, ultracompressible and holds up to season after season of use. Also available in 30-degree and Hybrid options. patagonia.com/sleepingbags

This sleeping bag contains only Traceable Down, traced from farm to factory to help ensure the birds that supply it are not force-fed or live-plucked.

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DEAR KAZ AND IRENNNA

By Majka Burhardt

DEAR KAZ AND IRENNNA,

Today you are 10 months old. This week, the last of winter's snow left our garden, and the final crocus patch bloomed and closed just in time to escape your attempts to eat its purple petals.

I spent our first winter together pulling you behind me in a tandem sled that gave me independence while keeping me tethered. The woods outside our front door were the winning hat trick: my exercise, your naps, and our collective sanity all in one. Together—always together—the three of us did a five-month in-depth study of our backyard ski trail snowpack. We broke trail in two feet of powder, snowplowed rain-soaked crust, and swooshed perfect tracks through ankle-deep corn all in equal measure. And, when things got desperate, we snowshoed.

Your father and I have a combined 50 years in pursuit of the vertical. So when, childless, I envisioned parenthood, it looked light and fast with lean, efficient systems enabling endless adventure. Snowshoes—and the gaiters and postholing that accompanied 50 percent of my “ski” outings with you two—were never part of my picture.

Then again, having two of you was never part of my picture.

Back when you both lived inside my growing belly, I fielded questions about my future climbing plans with noncommittal shrugs. I didn't want to over- or under-commit myself. Then it was suddenly January, you were six months old, and I was shifting my weight back and forth on stemmed-out monopoints and wondering if I should place another ice screw. Now is a good time to tell you: your mom's always liked gear... and 10 months into your presence in the world, I seem to like it even more. All winter, as you learned to crawl, I climbed higher and further with two new rules: I'd place one screw for just before the moment that mattered and one screw for after. *Twins*, I would tell my partners, my clients, myself. *I am the mother of twins*.

I don't think and talk about you all the time when I'm climbing. That's good for all of us. We all need time apart, just not too much. This winter I felt utterly myself when climbing, and while with you. It wasn't hard to know this meant I was supposed to be doing both. What was hard, however—and might always be—was the knowledge that I needed to do both well.

Sometimes I wish I could make it easier on all of us and want less. I wish I could take climbing and the elation and lust and risk that accompany it out of our family picture. In our newfound time we could make kale cupcakes, hand-sew your clothing, and maybe even remember to brush your baby teeth. But instead we are learning how to manage vertical passion as a family.

Will we all go climbing together? Will we tie in on glaciers,



MAJKA BURHARDT, HER HUSBAND (PETER DOUCETTE, AMERICAN MOUNTAIN GUIDE/IFMGA GUIDE), AND THEIR TWINS, KAZ AND IRENNNA, CELEBRATE A LATE-SPRING SNOWFALL.

PHOTO BY PETER DOUCETTE

up aiguilles, and through icy notches? I think we have to wait and see what you want. And what your dad and I can stomach as you become the extension of ourselves we cannot control.

For now, and for a little longer, I can pluck you away from danger and into my arms. I can go climb at 8 a.m. and come home at 4 p.m. and be devoured by double kisses and four sticky hands.

Not everyone will think that I'm making the right choices. This March, I taught a 30-year-old man named Yun how to ice climb over the span of four days. On our first day he learned I was your mother and he asked me what I was doing guiding him if I had you at home. On our second day he told me, as if commiserating, that he understood that I could guide near home, but could never take a climbing trip. On the third day he announced that perhaps I could take a climbing trip, but never one with your dad. And on the fourth day, as I pumped milk from my body sitting two feet from him on a sunny belay ledge 400 feet up our route, he asked me where Peter and I were planning our next expedition.

Today, 10 months into knowing you two, I can say with certainty that our life together is like those four days with Yun, but spread out and compressed in an endless and beautiful loop. There will be limits I don't want; understanding I don't expect. There will be climbing. There will be plans that change for the better and for the worse. And, if I have my way, the four of us will always be both tethered and independent. «



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