

THE

# Leader

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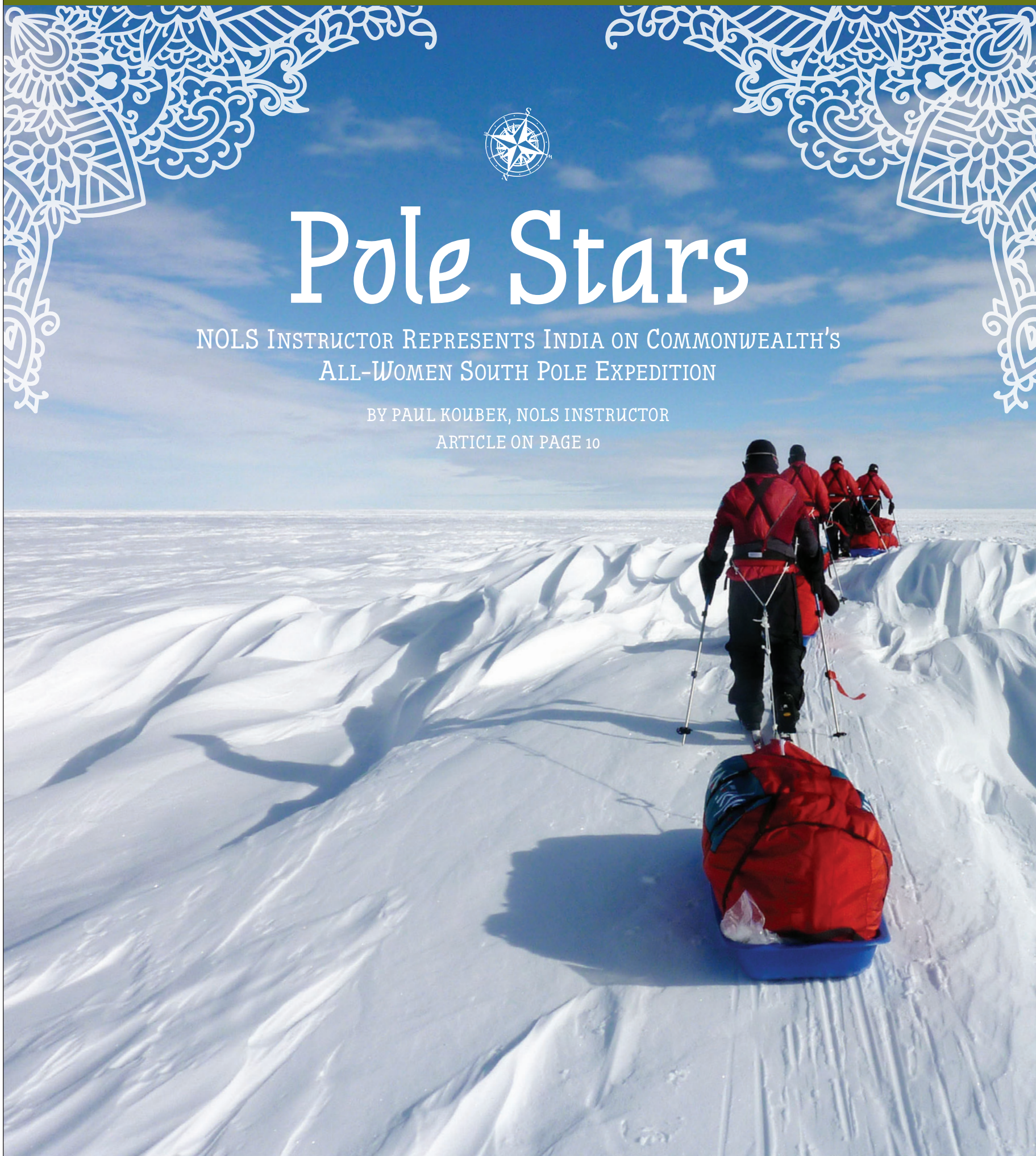
For Alumni of the National Outdoor Leadership School



## Pole Stars

NOLS INSTRUCTOR REPRESENTS INDIA ON COMMONWEALTH'S  
ALL-WOMEN SOUTH POLE EXPEDITION

BY PAUL KOUBEK, NOLS INSTRUCTOR  
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284 Lincoln Street  
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THE LEADER IN WILDERNESS EDUCATION







## THE Leader

Joanne Haines  
Publications Manager

Allison Jackson  
Graphic Designer

David Ketai  
Publications Intern

Rich Brame  
Alumni Relations Manager

John Gans  
NOLS Executive Director

*The Leader* is a newsletter for alumni of the National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS), a nonprofit school focusing on wilderness skills, leadership, and environmental ethics. Published three times a year, *The Leader* is mailed to approximately 50,000 NOLS alumni and an additional 10,000 prospective students. NOLS graduates living in the U.S. receive a free subscription to *The Leader* for life.

*The Leader* accepts paid advertising and welcomes article submissions and comments. Please address all correspondence to [theleader@nols.edu](mailto:theleader@nols.edu) or call (307) 332-8800. Direct address changes to the NOLS Alumni office at [alumni@nols.edu](mailto:alumni@nols.edu) or (800) 332-4280. For the most up-to-date information on NOLS, visit [www.nols.edu](http://www.nols.edu) or e-mail [admissions@nols.edu](mailto:admissions@nols.edu).

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### MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

March 2010 marks the 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary of wilderness and leadership education at NOLS. While our first course did not head into the Wind River Range until the summer of '65, Paul Petzoldt penned the application to establish NOLS on March 23, 1965. Paul founded the school with an expansive vision but a very pragmatic start out of Sinks Canyon State Park near Lander, Wyoming. A lot has changed in the intervening 45 years, but our values and mission remain anchored to our roots. We remain strongly committed to wilderness, education, leadership, safety, community, and excellence.

From a humble start in a small western town, NOLS has dramatically expanded its reach. The extent of that reach is most easily seen through a lens of geography. In this issue of *The Leader* you will read articles that illustrate the impact of a NOLS education in Antarctica near the South Pole and also in Afghanistan. NOLS has offered programs on all the continents and our graduates have used their leadership skills around the world and in outer space.

While the geographic reach of NOLS has become significant, the key to expanding the reach of the NOLS mission has been the ongoing work of our 170,000 graduates. Our graduates are leaders in their communities, on their campuses, and in their workplaces. They spread the lessons of our curriculum with their expedition behavior and leadership skills, all of which are grounded with a wilderness ethic. Speaking of leadership curriculum, this *Leader* features a Q&A with John Kanengieter, our Director for Leadership. John evaluates the leadership outcomes from courses and continues to work with our faculty to ensure quality. I trust you will enjoy what he has to say about learning leadership with NOLS.

As we celebrate our anniversary, I also reflect back 30 years to when I arrived at the Noble Hotel in Lander to start my Instructor Course. After driving from Minnesota across the sagebrush flats of eastern and central Wyoming, I was curious if the mountains were ever going to come into view. The Wind River Range then appeared like a dream on the horizon, but soon transformed into a bold ex-



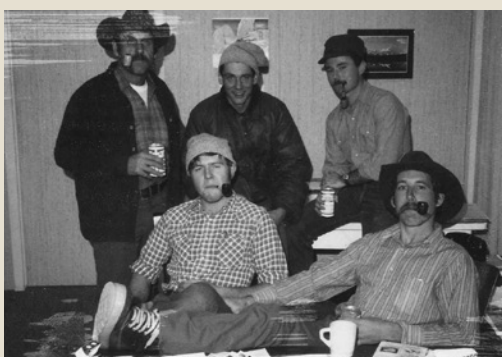
The first NOLS courses back in 1965 (above) celebrated the same wilderness education and leadership successes as our students still do today.

clamation point. My Instructor Course was my first expedition in the Winds, and I was in awe at the beauty of the range and amazed at what a great classroom it was for wilderness education. I didn't want to leave at the end of that course and I guess, in so many ways, I still haven't left our home range. Paul Petzoldt clearly made a wise choice when he chose this place as the home base for NOLS.

It is a joy to look back at our rich history, retell the stories, remember close friends, and relive the powerful experiences of the wilderness. Yet, I find even greater joy in watching our new students arrive at NOLS locations around the globe filled with apprehension and anticipation of their time ahead in the wilderness. As they embark, these students are on their way to becoming our future leaders and our future wilderness advocates. I can only imagine where they will end up and what their gifts to our world will be. It gives me confidence to know they will help define our future and the future of wild lands.

John Gans, NOLS Executive Director

### WHO'S THIS?



Name all 5 individuals in this photo and what role they played at NOLS. The first 10 people to figure it out will receive a free NOLS t-shirt. Call the Alumni office at (800) 332-4280.

The answer to last issue's "Who's This?" is Ken Clanton. A former instructor, Ken started with the school in 1965 and worked for NOLS for almost 20 years. The number of correct callers on this photo exceeded the number for any other photo in *The Leader* for the past 10 years. Thanks to all who called in and correctly identified Ken.

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# Morehead-Cain and NOLS: CELEBRATING 35 YEARS EDUCATING TOMORROW'S LEADERS

BY DAVID KETAI

In 1945, chemist and philanthropist John Motley Morehead III created a foundation in his name to give back to his alma mater, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. In addition to a new planetarium and a bell tower, the greatest gift from the Morehead Foundation was to establish the Morehead Award, a merit-based scholarship to students attending UNC-Chapel Hill. The Morehead Foundation has awarded more than 2,300 Morehead Awards in the last 50 years. In 2007, the Morehead Foundation became the Morehead-Cain Foundation following a \$100 million gift from the Gordon and Mary Cain Foundation. This year marks the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of NOLS' partnership with the Morehead-Cain Scholars Program.

From their inception, both NOLS and the Morehead-Cain Scholars Program have celebrated the same goal of creating leaders through experiential education. Chuck Lovelace, executive director of the Morehead-Cain Foundation since 1987, has seen the partnership mature.

"We choose students for their leadership potential, so the relationship with NOLS was originally established to reinforce this shared core value in our scholarship recipients," he says. "The NOLS philosophy and curriculum made them a natural partner for our program."

The Morehead-Cain Scholars Program awards a four-year scholarship to exemplary students who embody "moral force of character, scholarship, physical vigor, and leadership." Four years of academics and a corresponding Summer Enrichment Program, the Morehead-Cain Scholars Program promotes "a lifelong challenge to make a difference in the world by growing and developing as a leader. This challenge empowers each Morehead-Cain Scholar to fully explore his or her talents and aspirations." The Summer Enrichment Program, specifically, provides hands-on experience in outdoor leadership, public service, international research, and private enterprise over the course of four summers. NOLS courses are

one of the options offered for the outdoor leadership experience the summer before a Morehead-Cain scholar's freshman year.

"We learned that a summer NOLS course between high school and college provides an excellent environment to begin an important transition, to reflect on where one has been and contemplate where one is headed," says Lovelace. "Besides, being challenged in the wilderness for four weeks puts sharing a small dorm room in proper perspective. In subsequent summers we send our students all over

***"The Morehead-Cain partnership is a natural one. NOLS is honored to have the opportunity to share our unique brand of practical leadership with these accomplished students."***

the world, often to challenging environments in developing countries. The fact they have the NOLS experience under their belt gives both them and us a baseline of confidence. NOLS teaches them to be adaptable, self-sufficient, and, most importantly, safety aware."

Sarah Shapiro, a NOLS Alaska Sea Kayaking grad and Morehead-Cain scholar in her junior year agrees. "My NOLS experience helped teach me valuable teamwork and survival skills while enhancing my confidence and my appreciation for the luxuries and comforts I often take for granted," she says.

Generations of Morehead-Cain scholars have transferred their NOLS experience to leadership roles in academia, other summer opportunities through the program, and post-college careers. NOLS is one of the first steps in their extraordinary education and the catalyst in establishing their leadership roles within the global community: After a NOLS Wind River Wilderness course in 2004 and graduating from

UNC-Chapel Hill in 2008, scholar Alana Wilson traveled to Tanzania, Africa, to work on a Students for Students International (S4Si) secondary-school scholarship program for underserved girls in Zanzibar. Kit Leckerling, a 1999 NOLS North Cascades Mountaineering grad and former Morehead-Cain scholar, is now an instructor of history at the Mountain School of Milton Academy, an independent semester program that gives high school juniors the opportunity to live and work on an organic farm in rural Vermont. Stamp Walden, a scholar in his

junior year, describes his 2008 NOLS Alaska Sea Kayaking course as an initiation to a lifelong commitment to leadership: "NOLS, first off, lets students know that this four-year adventure is going to be exactly that, an adventure aimed at pushing us to our limits."

Stamp lost his left leg below his knee in a boating accident the summer before his senior year in high school. This life-changing event did not stop him from completing a NOLS sea kayaking course, living an active lifestyle, and impacting his community in positive ways.

For 35 years NOLS has provided Morehead-Cain scholars with the opportunity to learn leadership in immediate surroundings and, moreover, has given young leaders the opportunity to explore some of the world's most remote wilderness.

"The Morehead-Cain/NOLS partnership is a natural one," says NOLS executive director John Gans. "The Morehead-Cain staff do an exemplary job of identifying young people who will truly make a mark on the world. NOLS is honored to have the opportunity to share our unique brand of practical leadership with these accomplished students as they prepare for a lifetime of trailblazing."

Morehead-Cain scholar Eliza Kern talks about her NOLS experience on video. Find her on [www.nols.tv](http://www.nols.tv)



NOLS Archives

## NOLS is 45!

***Join us in Lander on October 8–9, 2010 to celebrate NOLS' 45th anniversary.***

We're teeing up a fun run, BBQ, golf tournament, fly fishing, a bike race, awards, parties, silent auction, dinner, and dancing. Visit [www.nols.edu/alumni](http://www.nols.edu/alumni) for information and to RSVP.

***See you in Lander in October!***

*P.S. If you've got an interesting item or service for our fund-raising silent auction, call (800) 332-4280.*



## WILD SIDE OF MEDICINE

# Anti-venom For Poisonous Myths

## The Truth About Snakebite Care

BY TOD SCHMELPFENIG, WMI CURRICULUM DIRECTOR

Wilderness medicine has some enduring myths that just won't die. Snakes, and snakebites in particular, seem to generate particularly wild myths: snakes roll themselves into a hoop to chase down their victims, suck milk from a cow, or swallow their young to protect them from predators. One of the enduring rattlesnake myths is that younger snakes either carry more potent venom or, lacking self-control, deliver more volume of venom than those snakes long in the fang.

The snake biologists I've talked with laugh at the notion of snake maturity being linked to envenomation. It seems they entertain it as frequently as a wilderness medicine instructor does and they have a similar answer: we don't know. The eminent snakebite expert Findley Russell M.D., Ph.D, notes that "it has long been known that the venom of any one species of snake may vary with the time of year, age and size, area of capture, health, and length of hibernation; it may even vary within individuals of the

same subspecies, in which all the above factors appear to be the same." With all the variables involved in a snakebite, sorting out the old and wise snakes from the young and impetuous is very difficult.

This is interesting, but irrelevant to field practice. If I'm treating a snakebite victim I'm not interested in capturing the snake to determine its age; I'm interested in whether the patient was envenomated. I perform a careful assessment, looking for signs and symptoms of envenomation: swelling, pain, bruising, blister formation, weakness, sweating and chills, nausea and, perhaps, vomiting, numbness, tingling around the mouth, and swollen lymph nodes.

The treatment for snake envenomation is anti-venom. I certainly don't want to perform any unproven or discredited treatments that may do harm to the patient. I don't want to sequester the venom in the extremity with a tourniquet or ice; try to deactivate it with electricity, ice, or meat tenderizer; or remove



Beautiful but possibly deadly. Be snake aware in the wild.

it with incision and suction, or just plain suction; and I certainly don't want to become a second victim in a needless attempt to identify or age the snake.

My best goals and treatment include keeping myself and the patient calm, immobilizing the limb, getting the patient to a physician, and resisting my well-intentioned urge to do something to fight the venom. It's not dramatic medicine, but it's good medicine and a simple plan of action for snakebites.

For more action on debunking snakebite myths, watch our video NOLS MythCrushers: North American Snakebites at [www.nols.tv](http://www.nols.tv).

### WILDERNESS MEDICINE INSTITUTE OF NOLS



### OFTEN IMITATED, NEVER DUPLICATED



If you spend any time in remote locations, you need wilderness medicine training. For 18 years, the Wilderness Medicine Institute of NOLS (WMI) has defined the standards in wilderness medicine training. With a wide range of course and certification opportunities, our graduates travel into the backcountry prepared to act with confidence, make complex decisions, and manage emergencies.

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### MEDICINE QUIZ

Which of the following is not a cause of snakebites in North America?

- A. The snake aggressively attacks its human prey.
- B. The victim tries to pick up the snake.
- C. The victim inadvertently reaches into a snake's hiding place.
- D. The snake strikes defensively when provoked by the victim.

(Answer on page 9)

#### FEATURED COURSE

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Our Wilderness Medicine Expeditions offer an ideal opportunity for physicians, nurses, and EMTs who want to experience the realities of practical, hands-on wilderness medicine and decision-making right alongside the joys and challenges of backcountry travel and living.

Each expedition includes WMI's signature Wilderness Medicine for the Professional Practitioner course with daily scenarios that will challenge you to apply your medical skills and to effectively manage a team. The NOLS communication and leadership curriculum will serve as the basis for evening discussions and transference of skills.

Our Wilderness Medicine Expeditions are truly unique and showcase the best of what NOLS has to offer.

Visit [www.nols.edu/wildmedexpeditions](http://www.nols.edu/wildmedexpeditions) for full details on this rafting expedition as well as other upcoming locations and activities.



ISSUE ROOM

# Hart of Beringia

## Fighting for the Yukon’s Peel Watershed

BY AARON BANNON, NOLS WILDERNESS ADVOCACY COORDINATOR

As the drone of the floatplane faded in the distance, NOLS Yukon students and instructors portaged their canoes and gear from the lake that was their drop-off point to the put-in near the headwaters of the Hart River. Deep in the wilderness, the group pushed out into the current of the unknown, beginning a 20-day float through one of the most remote ecosystems in North America. The members of this NOLS scouting expedition were exploring a land lost in time.

Beringia is the name given to the region in northern Alaska and Canada that remained unglaciated during the last ice age 20,000 years ago. This created an isolated ecosystem, which preserved many endemic plant and animal species. Exploring Beringia on the Hart River by canoe is just one of many experiences available to river rats bound for the Yukon to experience the world-renowned Peel Watershed and to run its five tributaries: the Blackstone, the Hart, the Wind, the Snake, and the Bonnet Plume. Each river offers a unique perspective on the vast wilderness of the Northern Yukon.

Larger than Vermont, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts combined, the Peel Watershed is a treasure. According to the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society Yukon Chapter (CPAWS), “Free roaming species like woodland and barren ground caribou, grizzly bears, wolverine, and thousands upon thousands of migratory waterfowl and songbirds flourish in these unspoiled waterways and colorful mountain ranges.”

When these lands became the focus of a major planning effort in 2004, local voices coordinated their efforts to provide a strong voice for protection. As the planning process began, the Peel Watershed Planning Commission, formed through an agreement between the territorial government and First Nations communities, was tasked with creating a management plan to guide preservation and development across the entire 30,000 square miles of the watershed.

As opportunities to comment on the draft plan



NOLS’ classroom on the Hart River is part of the Yukon’s Peel Watershed that is currently under land use planning.

arose, 75 percent of the population stated a strong preference for preservation of the remote wilderness. Most Yukoners, including the Na-cho Nyak Dun and Tetl’it Gwich’in First Nations, wanted to keep intrusive development out of the Peel Watershed. On the other side of the scale was the territory’s mining industry, which held numerous claims in the watershed and had discovered quartz. The Yukon government stayed above the fray, for the most part, though it leaned toward expanding the limited economy of the region through the development of its natural resources.

NOLS Yukon submitted its own comments to the planning commission. Those comments stated in part that “the Peel Watershed has long held appeal for diverse visitors to the region. Although not every tourist visits the Peel Watershed, its [natural] state is the tourism symbol that attracts visitors to the Yukon. NOLS chooses to operate in the Yukon, in large part, due to places like the Peel.”

When the final version of the Recommended Land Use Plan was released in December 2009, it was clear that the Commission had given the greatest deference to rank-and-file Yukoners and opted to minimize development. CPAWS elaborated: “The Recommended Plan calls for protection of 80.6 percent of the Peel Watershed.” Conservation organizations and wilderness operators were elated at the news.

“Volume outpaced volume,” says NOLS Yukon Director Jaret Slipp, referring to the sheer number of comments outweighing the protests of the mineral extraction industry. “This is a perfect example of the opinions of people adding up to something significant.” The Recommended Plan is now in the hands of the Yukon government to pass as-is, modify prior to passage, or send back to the commission for further revision.

SUSTAINABILITY UPDATE

# Driving Down Transportation Emissions

BY KARLY COPELAND, NOLS SUSTAINABILITY COORDINATOR

Transportation is a huge piece of running wilderness courses. At NOLS, travel is responsible for 40 percent of our carbon emissions, and that’s *before* you count instructor and student travel to NOLS locations. Students and instructors must travel to often far-flung locations just to begin their adventures. A lot of that travel is air travel, which is responsible for particularly potent carbon emissions. So how does NOLS go about reducing something that is so integral to its operations?

The transportation that is currently included in NOLS’ footprint is staff travel and student travel once they arrive at a NOLS location. Several bases have already taken steps to mitigate the carbon emissions from this transportation. Some have purchased larger buses so they can transport more than one course per trip to the mountains. Others have examined their course schedules to combine one course’s drop-off with another course’s pick-up. Still others have purchased hybrid vehicles for running course errands in town. These are all big changes that are taking us in the right direction, but will they be enough to meet our reduction goal of 30 percent below 2006 carbon levels by 2020? We’re not sure. We’ll continue to measure and mitigate and look for new technologies and fuels that will allow us to run courses with less impact.

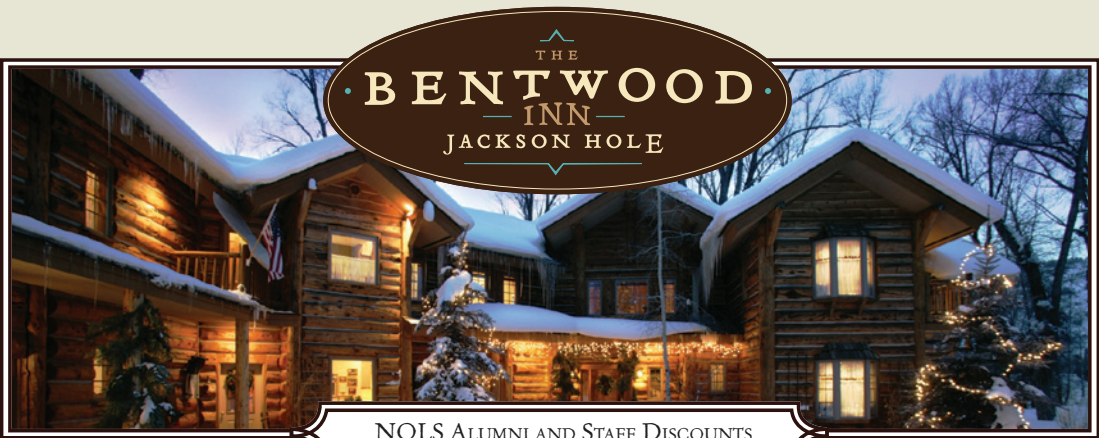
And what about all those students traveling to get to NOLS locations in the first place? Bicycling from New York to Patagonia isn’t going to work! While NOLS, in keeping with international standards, does not include this travel in its carbon footprint, we do feel a keen sense of responsibility in being the impetus behind it and continue to encourage our students to travel as efficiently as possible. We also encourage students to purchase carbon offsets to help mitigate the environmental impact of their travel.

Efficiency is the watchword for our current transportation carbon management plan, but it won’t get us to our ultimate carbon reduction goal of 80 percent by 2050. We continue to watch for new technologies and fuels, and we budget for more efficient vehicles. In the meantime, we’re always looking for new solutions. How do you mitigate your transportation emissions?

WILDERNESS QUIZ

What North American country recently created a huge, yet to be named, park? (Answer on page 7)

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# TAKING THE LEED IN SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTION

## GRADS WEIGH IN ON WHAT IT MEANS TO BUILD GREEN

BY RACHEL HARRIS, FORMER NOLS PUBLICATIONS INTERN

**A**s alarm over the climate change intensifies worldwide, many people have pointed fingers at transportation methods and energy consumption habits as the main culprits behind the issues. But what about the resources the world uses to build our homes and our communities? The built environment we live in has a massive environmental footprint.

Data from the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) shows that buildings account for 72 percent of electricity consumption, 39 percent of carbon dioxide emissions, and 40 percent of primary energy use in the U.S. annually, which does not sit well with countless NOLS alumni in the construction and building industry who have been pushing the green building movement forward for years.

“Green buildings transform the conventional building standard by reducing energy use by as much as 50 percent, carbon dioxide emissions as much as 39 percent, water use by 40 percent, and solid waste by 70 percent,” said Jennifer Easton, a U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) representative. “If we can create sustainable structures to live and work in, we will divert enormous amounts of waste, conserve valuable natural resources, and begin impacting the environment in a positive way. In a time when society faces serious environmental challenges, such as natural resource depletion and climate change, it is more important than ever to green the built environment.”

When an average American spends 90 percent of their time indoors, buildings have a significant impact on health and well-being. So how can we simultaneously maintain our lifestyle and build consciously?

LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) was in the right place at the right time to answer that question. An internationally recognized green building certification system, LEED provides verification that a building or community was designed and constructed using strategies aimed at improving performance in areas that matter most: energy savings, water efficiency, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions reduction, improved indoor environmental quality, and stewardship of resources and sensitivity to their impacts. Already, two federal agencies, 22 states, and 75 localities from Seattle to Boston have instituted policies to require or encourage LEED certification.

LEED points are awarded on a 100-point scale, and credits are weighted to reflect their potential environmental impacts, according to Easton. Additionally, ten bonus credits are available, four of which address regionally specific environmental issues. For example, water conservation is a much more important issue in the Southwest than in the Pacific Northwest. A project must satisfy all prerequisites and earn

a minimum number of points to be certified.

The more points a project achieves the higher the certification level, Easton said. LEED Certified falls into the range of 40–49 points, LEED Silver is 50–59 points, LEED Gold is 60–79 points, and finally, LEED Platinum is awarded for projects receiving 80 points or more. LEED Platinum is considered a lofty goal, but one that is becoming increasingly common and achievable.

Easton urges those not familiar with the certification process to think of it like a food nutrition label: LEED provides the same kind of important details about the green aspects of a building that, taken together, deliver higher performance.

This higher performance is exactly what prompted Chris Killian, a NOLS alum and architect in Seattle, Washington, to get into green building. “My undergraduate degree is Environmental Science, coupled with my NOLS experience, created a natural fit for becoming knowledgeable in green building techniques and implementing them on construction projects I manage,” says the 1994 Fall Semester in the Rockies grad. “Being involved with sustainability in construction allows me to stay connected to what is fundamentally important to me—protection of our natural resources.”

Killian equates LEED certification with lower operating costs, less energy consumption, increased tenant demand, positive marketing for owners, a better work and living environment for tenants, and an overall healthier building. He does admit that LEED

projects require an increased amount of teamwork and communication between architects and designers, builders, and project ownership teams.

“There is an increased sense of pride when a project is awarded LEED certification at its completion,” Killian said. “The feeling is very similar to completion of a small group expedition at the end of a NOLS course.”

LEED is applied to the whole building process from start to finish. Even years after initial construction, the USGBC revisits every certified building to make sure it continues to meet its LEED specifications. And LEED does not only certify commercial projects, but private homes as well. LEED for Homes is a rating system that promotes the design and construction of high-performance green homes that use less energy, water, and natural resources, create less waste, and are more durable and comfortable for occupants. With nearly 20,000 member organizations that include corporations, government agencies, and nonprofits, USGBC’s membership has more than quadrupled since 2000.

Penny McBride, a LEED for Homes rater, verifies that the work done on private homes comply with the LEED for Homes guidelines that have been outlined by the USGBC. “I have a Masters in Environment and Community so I have always had an interest in promoting programs that strengthen the integrity of what is being developed to promote strong community systems, whether that is in increasing efficiencies to heightening awareness,” says the 2002 WMI grad.

McBride firmly believes that the LEED certification system has a lot to offer because it is an honest verification process that is not based on gimmicks. However, not everyone in the industry shares the same whole-hearted enthusiasm about the program.

“[LEED is] a very good system that has taken a lot of the mumbo-jumbo out of what it means to be ‘green’” said Richard Fernau, NOLS grad, NOLS

**“Until local building codes catch up to the LEED standards, recognition for making the extra effort to do the right thing with regards to sustainability is important.”**



Although not LEED certified, NOLS International Headquarters boasts many green design and construction features.



parent, and architect at University of California-Berkley. “Still, it doesn’t address subjective design values such as how a building inhabits its site, expresses the values of sustainability, or creates a livable environment. The certification is good if you just want to follow a checklist, but from an innovative designer’s point of view, it can be a real irritant unless it is understood as simply a point of departure. Architecture begins where LEED leaves off.”

Also on the downside is that buildings cost more to both design and construct when seeking LEED certification, up to 10 percent of the whole project cost in Seattle, for example. Fernau believes that LEED certification is a good way to educate people

**“If we can create sustainable structures to live and work in, we will divert enormous amounts of waste, conserve valuable natural resources, and begin impacting the environment in a positive way.”**

and to make them more aware of the standards of green building, but in the next ten years he believes the certification itself will be passé.

“Will LEED be the gold standard in 15 to 20 years?” asks John Carney, an architect in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, and a 2008 NOLS Hiking in the Dolomites alumni trip participant. “I don’t know. But I am sure it will evolve. The whole level of understanding about building sustainably is much higher than it was ten years ago. The climate out there and the public’s response to environmental issues are changing so you don’t have to twist a client’s arm to build properly anymore.”

Killian adds, “The process of getting a project certified is a lot of work and requires time, but I do believe the gain of the accomplishment is worth the effort. Until local building codes catch up to the LEED standards, recognition for making the extra effort to do the right thing with regards to sustainability is important. I think that it is trendy because most people are aware of climate change and the devastating impacts it will have on our world if we don’t get a handle on it. Because of the massive impacts buildings have on the environment, people who live and work in buildings want to believe they are making a difference.”

And using LEED standards as a framework for evaluation of building decisions does not need to require seeking LEED certification.

“If someone came to me and wanted to do a certain project, I would be more interested in making it sustainable than necessarily getting it LEED certified,” Carney said.

Receiving the LEED stamp of approval is not the be-all and end-all for green building. The NOLS headquarters building in Lander, built in 2000, does not have a LEED certification, but even without it, we can boast about the several green building awards it has received thanks to a range of sustainable design features, including natural light in over 95 percent of staff workspace, passive solar gain, extensive use of recycled and recyclable materials, and an exterior designed to be durable over a very long period of

time and to blend in with the surrounding area.

According to NOLS Finance Director Jeff Buchanan, LEED certification was not a popular thing at the time the headquarters building was being constructed.

“When it became more popular,” he says, “we looked into going back and getting it LEED certified, but the ballpark figure we came up with for all the testing, construction, etc. was around a quarter of a million dollars. We never got an exact number because we decided it was a just a title that wouldn’t change the building anyway.”

As part of ongoing renovations and new construction projects, NOLS utilizes renewable energy technology, including photovoltaic, geothermal, and wind with the support of external grants. To NOLS, building is first and foremost about minimizing the long-term impact the structure has on the environment as well as the surrounding community. In the greater building industry, this thinking is currently wrapped up in a specialty certification like LEED, but our hope is that it will be the standard in years to come.

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From *LEED Rating Systems* at the U.S. Green Building Council’s website: [www.usgbc.org](http://www.usgbc.org).

## BOOK REVIEW



## Sustainable Facilities: Green Design, Construction, and Operations

By Keith Moskow  
©2008 McGraw-Hill Professional, ISBN 978-0071494748, \$69.95, HB, 208pp

REVIEW BY LIBBY GADBOIS, NOLS ALUMNI INTERN

*Sustainable Facilities*, written by decorated architect Keith Moskow, shows the evolution of a new kind of structure that is built with a deeper consideration of the environment in which it stands, the materials that form its walls, and the people who work and live within it.

This book gives a detailed overview of twenty structures in the United States that epitomize green construction, touching on the design, materials, and structural and mechanical systems that help each building to exist in a sustainable fashion. It serves as an organized and thoughtful approach to green living and the accompanying photography makes it a beautiful coffee table piece.

One of the featured buildings in *Sustainable Facilities* is our very own NOLS Headquarters in Lander. Numerous factors were taken into consideration during construction of our international headquarters, from its location in town to the type of paint used on the walls.

*Sustainable Facilities* is a tribute to the creativity and resourcefulness of a new wave of architects as well as the commitment that so many people and professionals have made toward a more sustainable lifestyle.

## WILDERNESS QUIZ

**Answer: Canada** (Question on page 5)

The Canadian federal government is creating a sprawling national park in an area of Newfoundland and Labrador that is home to threatened species of caribou, birds, and other wildlife. The park will be roughly 11,000 square kilometres in the Mealy Mountains area, making it the largest national park in Atlantic Canada, Quebec, and Ontario. The site features summits that reach 1,000 metres, salmon rivers, and beaches described in Viking sagas chronicling explorations along the Atlantic coast.



## Q &amp; A



## Come to NOLS to Lead

*Q&A with NOLS Director for Leadership John Kanengieter*

BY DAVID KETAI

### What brought you to NOLS and how long have you been with the school?

I started my career as a climbing guide at Eastern Mountain Sports, but I always knew that I wanted to come to NOLS because of the school's focus on education, not just guiding. I took my Instructor Course in 1985 and before becoming the Director for Leadership, I spent time as registrar, assistant director and program director at NOLS Rocky Mountain, and director of NOLS Professional Training.

### What do you do in your current role?

As Director for Leadership, I work on developing leadership curriculum throughout various parts of the school. I work with NOLS Professional Training (NOLS Pro) in various capacities, either instructing on a custom course or designing curriculum for a specific client, and I also develop and carry out leadership training for school employees.

### What differentiates NOLS' leadership education from other programs?

There's a reason I've been at NOLS for 25 years. I really believe in our staff—they are some of the highest quality wilderness educators and technicians in the world—and we operate in the remote backcountry. Another reason we are at the forefront of leadership training is that we focus a part of the curriculum on what it means to be a good follower. Followership is leadership. It may be semantics on some level, but taking the initiative to support the designated leader takes a piece of leadership in yourself on some level. I attribute some of our success to that distinction.

### What is the most rewarding aspect of your job?

The most rewarding aspect is watching someone have an "aha moment." That's when you can see a person thinking, "This has really just captured me." At that moment I know they are learning something, which is always fun. The other cool part is that our core leadership curriculum is the same, whether we're teaching on a Wind River Wilderness course or a NASA Leadership Expedition for astronauts.

### What is the most challenging facet of the leadership curriculum to teach as an instructor?

Teaching the NOLS leadership curriculum requires an instructor to be diligent in watching the dynamics of a course, and then recognizing when a leadership moment is happening, capturing it, applying it to our leadership framework, and then transferring that to the student. And that is when we see that "aha moment."

NOLS instructors are adept at teaching leadership because they have an intrinsic understanding of what they're teaching. They know what it feels like to be making some of the decisions that we're asking students to make and they know how that is connected to leadership. They've gone through this stage of growth we're trying to teach so, really, they're mentors.

### What makes the wilderness such an appropriate setting for learning leadership skills?

Teaching leadership in the wilderness is very impactful because it grabs all the senses and has real outcomes. Everything in the backcountry is immediate and has consequence, whether its leaving


your boots outside at night and they get snowed on or working through a decision-making process with a group of your expedition mates.

### How do leadership skills taught in the NOLS curriculum transfer to everyday personal and work life (not just for astronauts but for the average Joe)?

When you go out into the wilderness for the length of time we typically do, there is life-changing thinking that happens. When you're thinking and experiencing at that level, it taps into the deeper levels of learning. No matter who you are, whether you're the average Joe or an astronaut, you have a catalyst for deep change, so the transference process is very much the same. I get correspondence from people who had such a profound and positive experience that they want to send their kids on a NOLS course to have that opportunity, too. That's transference; that's someone seeing that this has changed their life and they want to pass that on.

### What does it mean to be a leader?

If I had to give an elevator speech on what it means to be a leader, I would say it means assessing what my role is in any group and using my influence and skills to help move the group toward its goal. Whether I'm the designated leader or I'm the follower, that same purpose applies.

 *Hear John talk more in-depth about NOLS leadership skills in the podcast An Overview of the NOLS Leadership Curriculum on [www.nols.tv](http://www.nols.tv).*

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In addition to NOLS' regular course offerings, the school also provides custom courses and consulting services through NOLS Professional Training. Every client we work with is different, so every program we offer is different. What you can count on is that we will enhance your ability to lead, manage, work together and teach by employing proven techniques pioneered by NOLS.



**The NOLS Annual Fund provides vital funding for scholarships, sustainability, and curriculum development.**

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## ALUMNI IN ACTION



**Left:** Grad Pat Gleason in standard issue for a private security contractor in a war zone. **Above:** In addition to the medical care and security he provides for his clients, Pat administers care to local villagers that ranges from foot care to pediatrics.

# Finding Humanity Amidst Chaos

## Working as a Medic in Afghanistan

BY DAVID KETAI

Pat Gleason is on contract. He spends his day moving his clients through the desert, safely and efficiently. It is hot down low and cold up high; the rugged landscape is much like the Southwestern United States: Utah, New Mexico, and Colorado. It would almost be a nice place to visit, if the winding dirt roads weren't pocked with improvised explosive devices.

Pat Gleason is not a NOLS instructor, his clients are diplomats and engineers, and he is most certainly not "on course." Pat is stationed in Kabul, working for a private security contractor (PSC) in the wilderness of Afghanistan. He has taken two Wilderness Medicine Institute of NOLS (WMI) certificates with him—Wilderness First Responder (WFR) and Wilderness Emergency Medical Technician (WEMT)—on one of the most dangerous expeditions the world has to offer.

Pat has spent six years in remote Afghan provinces, far removed from U.S. military bases. "The amount of training and risks that PSCs take to protect their clients is so far above and beyond what people realize that it is hard to put into words," he says. "Imagine three armored vehicles with clients and a small security team literally in the middle of nowhere, Taliban country, and the only thing they have to rely on is themselves and their training. There is no formal communication system with the U.S. military, and there is no one coming to help in the event of a major issue."

It is on these contracts that Pat's WMI training comes into effect. Step one: "Is the scene safe?" The answer is emphatically "no." When a client or team member is wounded, the priority is returning fire and securing the area. The initial assessment and a thorough head-to-toe have to wait until the patient can be transported to the relative safety of an extraction vehicle.

In addition to providing care for clients and team members on the battlefield, Pat also spends much of his time as a primary health care provider for Afghan elderly and children as there are few doctors in Afghanistan. "A 'doctor' in many areas is someone who has worked in a pharmacy or has had some training from a relative in the care of animals," Pat notes. "The larger hospitals, like the one in Kandahar, are completely overwhelmed—one hospital for 1.6 million people. There are more and more 'clinics' with varying degrees of education. I'd say 75 percent of the population does not have access to any kind of health care."

Pat's WMI training has a place here and popular conceptions of PSCs go out the window. "Mercenaries are not in the industry; they are long gone," he says. "You would be surprised at the level of professionalism, training, and hard work that PSCs perform. Most PSCs work for embassies, aid agencies, non-governmental organizations, and projects directed toward the reconstruction of Afghanistan."

Pat is simultaneously idealistic and pragmatic, a 23-year veteran of the U.S. military who is taking action to make one of the most corrupt and dangerous places in the world a better place. He lives every day mortally aware that some in the very populace he is helping could well be trying to kill him. There is a thin line between villager and Talib, but that line does not prevent Gleason from doing his job,

which is providing healthcare to those who seek it.

"Taliban are not as cohesive of a force as people think they are; a villager may one day be paid by the Talibs, then return to working his field the next day," Pat says. "Most do not have a real tie to being a Talib; it's just a job to feed the family. True believers are easy to spot and wouldn't accept care anyway. I don't feel conflicted because I know that every time I help someone, they feel an obligation to leave us alone or to warn us ahead of time. It really does work."

Finding the humanity in such chaos requires an effective framework, an ability to treat each individual objectively. Pat's WMI training provides such a framework. He came to WMI in 2007 at the behest of a fellow PSC team member who had taken a WFR course in Australia and served as an Australian military patrol medic for 15 years. Pat first earned his WFR certification in Oregon, and then came to Lander, Wyoming, the following week for his WEMT. "It's a lot to learn in 30 days, but what a WEMT course has to offer, compared to other curriculums, is very unique," says Pat. "I have had several people comment on how surprised they are about the knowledge base the students have walked away with. I was and still am so impressed with the NOLS attitude."

In addition to providing patient care while on contract, Pat also trains his clients to use the U.S. Combat Lifesaver and WFR models. He does his best to pass on a basic understanding of care to provide himself with extra hands in the event his team members or clients become casualties—the added capabilities of these newly trained providers means it's easier to navigate the chaos.

"One of my clients dealt with a traumatic double amputation, and two other seriously wounded with missing limbs," says Pat, painting a common portrait of the depravity rendered by increasingly powerful roadside bombs. "He performed better than anyone I have ever seen, and that was just from the training he received from us."

These days, when Pat does get some time off between contracts and a chance to leave Afghanistan, he rarely has time to get back to the United States and instead lives in Kathmandu, Nepal with his wife. Back in the States, Pat has a home in New Mexico nestled in the Sandia mountains among its crags of granite and limestone and its ponderosa pines. The landscape surrounding his home could easily be mistaken for one of Afghanistan's mountainous provinces. Even the stars might look similar, if it weren't for the green glow provided by the night vision goggles Pat often wears.

Not much is left in Afghanistan these days in terms of hope for peace in the immediate future. What is left are people trying to stabilize and rebuild a broken country, people like Pat Gleason who have left prejudice behind and perform their duties with humanity.

## MEDICINE QUIZ

**Answer: A** (Question on page 4)

**North American snakes don't make a diet on human prey. When they bite us it's usually because we provoked them, tried to pick them up, or had an accidental encounter stepping on or near a snake or reaching into snake habitat.**





# Pole Stars

## NOLS INSTRUCTOR REPRESENTS INDIA ON COMMONWEALTH'S ALL-WOMEN SOUTH POLE EXPEDITION

BY PAUL KOUBEK, NOLS INSTRUCTOR



The big flat white. This is how those of us who have been there describe the Antarctic plateau. There is no way to more accurately describe this expanse of wind-blown snow stretching as far as the eye can see in every direction. Yes, there are mountain ranges in Antarctica—the Transantarctics, the Shackleton Range, and the Ohio Range, to name a few—but what strikes the modern-day explorer is how much of Antarctica is big, flat, and white. Crossing the big flat white, with its crevassed terrain, powerful windstorms, and subzero temperatures, is an intimidating proposition, not only for the objective hazards of the undertaking, but also because of the intimidating barrenness of the place, the lack of scenery in every direction.

The Antarctic plateau has been described as “the last place on earth.” Norwegian Roald Amudson and his expedition teammates Olav Bjaaland, Helmer Hanssen, Sverre Hassel, and Oscar Wisting were the first people on this planet to cross the plateau and stand at the geographic South Pole, in December 1911—beating the iconic British hero Robert F. Scott by the narrow margin of three weeks in a closely contested race. Nearly one century later, times have changed, and now at the geographical pole there is a field research station with over 200 residents operated by the U.S. Antarctic Program that receives semi-regular supply flights by LC-130 from McMurdo Station on the Ross Sea. However, between the coast of the continent and the pole, with the exception of a light scattering of small field camps, there is still largely nothing but the aforementioned intimidating big flat white in every direction.

At 11:00 p.m. on December 30, 2009, Reena Kaushal Dharmshaktu, a mountaineer and NOLS instructor from New Delhi, India, arrived at the South Pole under her own power and peered into the mirrored ball that marks the geographic south. Reena and her teammates on the Kaspersky Commonwealth Antarctic Expedition were

*At 11:00 p.m. on December 30, 2009, Reena Kaushal Dharmshaktu, a mountaineer and NOLS instructor from New Delhi, India, arrived at the South Pole under her own power and peered into the mirrored ball that marks the geographic south.*

underway for 38 days and skied over 900 kilometers, crossing ice and sastrugi (long, wavelike ridges of hard snow), braving winds of up to 100 kph, and living in tight quarters—the type of conditions her work with NOLS on Garwhal Mountaineering and Himalayan Backpacking courses has prepared her for quite well. Her team—comprised of women from the Commonwealth countries of Cyprus, Ghana, India, Singapore, Brunei, New Zealand, Jamaica, and the United Kingdom—braved blizzards, crevasses, and temperatures below  $-22^{\circ}\text{F}/-30^{\circ}\text{C}$  as they skied across Antarctica to the geographic South Pole—and one day ahead of schedule to boot.

“Yes, it was a hardship,” says Reena, now back home in India. “Every day you see the same thing. In spite of that, I loved the scenery. Many of the girls carried MP3 players, in order to escape. For me, I didn’t carry a music device. I live inside of my head very easily and I found the scenery to actually be full of life—the wind, the sun, the whole place was full of energy.”

Marking the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Commonwealth and sponsored by a computer security company, the Kaspersky Commonwealth Antarctic Expedition aimed to demonstrate the potential of greater intercultural understanding and exchange, while at the same time highlighting the achievements of women across the world.

Coincidentally, November 2009 also marked the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first time a woman set foot on the Antarctic continent. Indeed, times have changed. Forty years after this historic moment, women play many roles on this southernmost continent, not only skiing to the

Pole, but also flying aircraft, operating heavy equipment, supervising search and rescue teams, and performing scientific research. Reena’s accomplishment adds to the list of firsts: she is the first Indian woman to have skied the full 900+ km from the edge of the continent to the South Pole (one other Indian woman has skied the final degree of latitude to the pole).

“I didn’t expect the South Pole to have so many buildings,” Reena laughs. “When we arrived, the Americans all lined up to greet us, and cheered, and we felt like stars. There was a handmade banner created by [fellow NOLS instructor] Kate Koons and signed by the NOLS people who have been working at the South Pole this year, as well as all the women working at the South Pole. We were so excited that no one could speak. It was also a big relief—the expedition was over and done. We had arrived in good health and in good spirits, and felt very happy, with a ‘We’ve done it’ feeling.”

Selection for the Kaspersky Expedition was rigorous.





Photos courtesy of the Kaspersky Commonwealth Antarctic Expedition.

**Left:** NOLS instructor Reena Kaushal Dharmshaktu enjoying all the elements Antarctica has to throw at her. **Right:** The Kaspersky Commonwealth Antarctic Expedition team celebrating its success and the achievements of women across the globe. **Above and Cover:** The women moving overland with skis and sleds, heading for the South Pole.

Reena was one of over 800 online applicants, and one of close to 130 Indian women to apply for a slot on the expedition. Ten Indian women were interviewed, and two were selected to attend a final selection conducted in Norway. In Norway, the applicants were exposed to snow and blizzard conditions and tested for their ability to maintain a positive attitude while in extremely cold conditions. At the end of the selection process, Reena was one of the women selected to join the expedition and, in fact, ended up being one of the more experienced members of the expedition.

“Some of the women in the group were quite experienced,” she says, “but others had never camped before. The pace was quite grueling; we would ski for an hour and a half, and then take a seven-minute break. We couldn’t stop longer because of the cold. We skied for eight to ten hours every day and had no rest days other than one resupply. There was lots of food—chocolates, sesame snacks, popcorns, dehydrated food, oatmeal, and protein drinks. We had to consume 4,000–5,000 calories every day in order to stay warm and energized.”

The expedition had its share of adventures other than just skiing a long distance as well. While staging for the expedition during the second night after their arrival in the notoriously windy Patriot Hills base camp, the women experienced a windstorm that destroyed two of their tents, including one that Reena was sleeping in.

“We were out in the cold, one woman holding down each corner of the tent while we struggled to take it down. At 2:00 a.m. our tent poles broke, despite the huge wind walls around us.” One member of their team, a woman from Jamaica, succumbed to frostbite and was forced to leave the expedition. With that storm as a taste of what they faced, the group continued on to its Ronne Ice Shelf start (“The Messner Start”) by Twin Otter airplane and

successfully completed their route.

Reena is a star. She was born into a Hindu family from Punjab. Her father was a Punjabi while her mother was from Uttar Pradesh. She grew up in Darjeeling, within view of the Himalayas. She attended mountaineering courses at the Himalayan Mountaineering Institute in Darjeeling. She has taken part in and led several expeditions in the Himalayas, both with NOLS and other organizations. Her two-time Everest summiteer husband, Love Raj, was born in the Milam Valley.

Meeting Reena, one is struck by a quick and genuine smile, and a warm, unflappable personality. Without in any way being overbearing, she is clearly a person who would not back down from a challenge quickly. When she and I worked together for NOLS India in September and October of 2008, she seemed to be known in every roadhouse and Indo-Tibetan border police checkpoint. Though a familiar face, it was also clear that the residents of the valley found Reena to be quite remarkable and perhaps a little out of their context. Regularly she was asked how many children she had, a question to which she would laugh and say “panch,” Hindi for “five.” She confided in me that this answer was easier than explaining to the men of this valley that she is not a mother.

Even in spite of the clear attention she receives at home—an Indian woman carrying a large backpack is quite cutting edge—Reena was surprised by the amount of media coverage that she encountered upon her return from the South Pole, as well as the crowded reception at the New Delhi airport, organized by her husband Love

Raj. She notes that organizing the reception was Love Raj’s way of communicating to her how proud of her he is.

Not one to rest upon her laurels, Reena is already dreaming of future adventures, this time of the North Pole. On a planet that scientists agree is heating up, the poles are, in fact, a hot topic (pun intended). Environmental stewardship in modern-day emerging economic powerhouse India is also a very relevant topic, and one on the forefront of Reena’s mind. Working in Milam Valley for NOLS, Reena often talks about the imminent threat to this headwater drainage of the Ganges River and points out bore test sites for two planned dams. It will take leaders like Reena to help India chart a course through its own unknown future, and her Antarctic experience makes her all the better prepared.

In many ways, the core learning of the expedition for Reena is similar to the learning that happens on any NOLS course: “If you ever have any doubts about yourself,” she says, “you know that you will be able to think of this moment and you will know that anything is possible.”

📺 *Reena is a fantastic example of a strong wilderness leader. Hear from more NOLS women on [www.nols.tv](http://www.nols.tv) in our video NOLS Leaders: Women & Leadership, including the first woman to ski to the South Pole, Tori McClure.*

*“I didn’t expect the South Pole to have so many buildings,” Reena laughs.*



**FIELD NOTES**

## “Were You Cold?” Applying NOLS Lessons to Antarctica

BY ED FORGOTSON, WIND RIVER MOUNTAINEERING 1988

To my surprise, and even chagrin, the first question people always ask about my recent trip to Antarctica is: “Were you cold?” No, I was actually too hot most of the time. Fact is, minus-40 degree temperatures are downright comfy when you’re wearing ten pounds of down parka over three layers of fleece and hauling around a portable video studio on your back.

I’d just had a life-changing experience, spending a week in January filming stories on the U.S. Antarctic Program for CBS News *Sunday Morning*, and yet most people just want to know about the nuts and bolts. It’s a feeling I’m sure most NOLS grads will recognize, that sense of returning to the real world—still reeling from sensory and emotional overload—and realizing that while everyone means well, they just don’t get it!

Indeed, I was constantly reminded of my NOLS experience 22 years ago during my trip to the ice. For starters, day one was devoted to “Happy Camper” school—basic snow camping skills. Our group of seven journalists were a little slow to get into the spirit of things. Every one of us was so busy snapping photos and shooting video that nobody seemed to hear a single thing coming out of our instructor’s mouth. Although he tolerated our shutterbuggery, he was also quite serious about the task at hand, and I noticed he was taking mental notes on our individual progress.

Later, as we embarked on an unscheduled excursion to shoot the amazing vistas from a spot called A Room With a View, bouncing our way there in the cabin of our snow-tracked Haaglund vehicle, I looked at the others in my group and pondered how each of us was starting to show progress in our expedition behavior. Yes, less than a day in Antarctica and the old NOLS mentality was back.

In addition to expedition behavior, there were even shades of Leave No Trace being practiced down South. Take McMurdo Station, the hub of all U.S. activity in Antarctica since the 1950s. Home to a summer staff of about 1,100, it’s less-than-affectionately known as McMudhole—and in typical Cold War fashion, the U.S. has inflicted countless indignities on the place, from a malfunctioning nuclear reactor (long gone) to decades of dumping raw sewage into the once-pristine sea (now there’s a state-of-the-art waste treatment plant and human excrement is actually shipped back to the U.S. in cargo containers). But McMurdo Station remains prime real-estate: it’s one of the few ice-free patches of dry land in the region, sheltered from the wind, and only a short chopper flight from some of the most spectacular landscapes on Earth.

McMurdo admirably serves the purpose of keeping its hive of human activity concentrated in one spot. Walk a half-mile out to Hut Point—a high spit of land where Robert Falcon Scott’s 1902 Discovery hut still stands, preserved by the cold, dry climate—and the vista is an unbroken line of ice, sky, and mountains. We received yet another briefing before venturing out into that landscape with a thoroughness that would warm the heart of most NOLSies. We were taught to pack-out our pee in specially labeled Nalgene bottles, to walk only on well-trod paths, and to keep track of stray bits of food and gear.

The high point of our trip was a visit to the South Pole. Honestly, I can’t imagine a better example of human adaptability than the fact that about 250 people call this place home. It’s cold (a balmy -14°F/-25°C when we arrived, dipping to -40°F/-40°C during an afternoon storm), dry (practically zero annual precipitation), high (roughly 10,000 feet in elevation), remote (850 air miles from McMurdo Station), and desolate (I can’t even imagine the terror of getting lost in this featureless landscape).

Yet, as much as I was struck by the power of the place, I was truly moved by my time with the people who chose to live and work at the Pole. As much as we joked around and took the requisite snapshots of



NOLS grad Ed Forgotson staying warm on assignment with CBS News on the big flat white.

ourselves at the Pole marker, they kept careful tabs on our condition, and I drew more warmth from that than the chemical heater packets I had taped to the inside of my oversized gauntlet mittens.

At one point, I remarked that I was impressed with the professionalism of everyone at the Pole; my sense was that people took pride in and thrived on the rigors of the place. I experienced a sudden urge to unleash a barrage of NOLS jargon, musings on how expedition behavior develops best in smaller groups, etc. Instead, I simply agreed that in a place like this, people really are all you’ve got to count on.

While I worked my tail off during my week on the ice, I know it was nothing compared to the hard labor so many people put in to keep the program going each season—to say nothing of those who brave the long, dark winters. I’m incredibly grateful to have had the chance to see Antarctica for myself. Considering that I personally had little knowledge of or even interest in the place before I was asked to take on the assignment, I feel like it’s a place more NOLS grads should consider—whether for basic seasonal work or as a venue for academic research. It’s a place to draw deeply from your NOLS experience and, as for me, come away profoundly moved by both the people and the place.

*For the full account of Ed’s trip, a slide show, and updates on CBS News air dates, visit <http://lforgotson.blogspot.com>. More about the U.S. Antarctic Program is at [www.usap.gov](http://www.usap.gov).*



### Filming at the End of the World

Advice on extreme cold weather videography is surprisingly difficult to come by. Here are a few lessons I learned:

**1) KEEP WARM: BOTH YOU AND YOUR GEAR.** To keep my fingers both warm and dexterous in conditions around freezing, I used fingerless fleece gloves with a flip-up mitten top (in which I would sometimes tape hand-warmer packs). In sub-zero weather at the Pole, I wore fingerless merino gloves in combination

with government-issue gauntlet mittens, also with hand warmer packs inside. For my camera, I bought a custom-fitted PortaBrace Polar Mitten (\$300), which is an insulated jacket that accommodates hand-warmer packets in strategic positions next to the battery, tape compartment, and hand-grip. I experienced zero problems with the camera, but the fluid head of my tripod did freeze-up a few times, so I’d consider some type of insulation/warmer for it as well.

**2) BRING LOTS OF BATTERIES.** This is key in cold weather. When the battery in your camera starts to die, swap it out and place it inside your jacket, next to your body (where you should store all of your spare batteries). Once it’s warmed up, it’ll provide a little more operating time. Number or label your batteries so you can keep track of which ones are dead and which have juice. Also, the new lithium AAs, which are very expensive, really outlasted standard alkaline batteries.

**3) MANAGE THE LIGHT.** Blue skies and direct sun reflecting off snow or ice can easily yield an overexposed picture. Make sure to use a neutral density filter, either built-in to many video cameras or added to the camera lens. A circular

polarizing lens is essential in these conditions, both for reducing the overall light level and for dialing out haze in the sky. On days when the sky is overcast, the auto-exposure function will typically underexpose the image, so be prepared to compensate manually. Photographing faces against bright snow or skies is another common problem that calls for manual adjustment as well as using camera lights and a flash. Better yet, a reflector can provide just the right amount of boost.

**4) LISTEN TO THE WIND.** Whether you’re doing interviews or recording 4,000 penguins carrying on a conversation, getting audio is just as important as getting good pictures. Use the landscape or your body as a wind-block to protect the microphone. For cameras with external mics, invest in a windscreen ([www.rycote.com](http://www.rycote.com)).

*My basic lightweight equipment package included a Sony Z5U HDV high-definition camera, Bogen/Manfrotto 503 tripod kit, Vari-Zoom shoulder brace, and two Sennheiser 100ewENG wireless microphone kits. A few camera-mounted LED lights, Lowell studio lights, Flexfill reflectors, and a Nikon D5000 still camera.*



# Five on Ice

## A Big Year for NOLS at the South Pole

BY PAUL KOUBEK, NOLS INSTRUCTOR

Reena Kaushal Dharmshaktu (*Pole Stars*, page 10) and Ed Forgotson (*“Were You Cold?”*, page 12) were not the only NOLSies to set foot at the South Pole this year—in fact they were two of six. The others—Galen Dossin, Kate Koons, Kevin Emery, and me, Paul Koubek—are all senior NOLS instructors who worked in the austral summer of 2009–2010 as employees of the U.S. Antarctic Program (USAP) in various contexts. Unlike Reena, the rest of us arrived by motorized transport, either by air in a LC-130 or, in Galen’s case, overland as copilot in a Pisten Bulley.

Kate and Kevin spent November and December 2009 managing ACK Camp, the acclimatization camp at South Pole Station (9,300 feet). ACK Camp is a haven and resting point where employees of the USAP pause before heading to AGAP, a high camp (12,000 feet) on the East Antarctic Ice Sheet that is a base for scientists involved in the mapping of a newly discovered sub-glacial mountain range. Kate and Kevin’s responsibilities included monitoring camp residents’ blood oxygenization levels, cooking and caring for camp residents, and acting as the communications team. From past years, you might recognize Kevin as one of McMurdo’s main faces in Werner Herzog’s 2007 documentary *Encounters at the End of the World*, where he was filmed supervising the USAP’s Field Safety Training Department. Kate in prior years has applied her NOLS equipment management skills working in McMurdo’s Berg Field Center (the “REI to Antarctica”).

Galen traveled to the South Pole via Pisten Bulley (a German machine commonly used for grooming ski areas) as a member of the 2009 USAP South Pole Traverse. The South Pole Traverse is a team of 10 people and 9 tractors that pull 95,000 gallons of

JP-8 fuel 1,600-plus kilometers overland from McMurdo Station on Ross Island to the South Pole. The traverse is an annual event with an estimated savings to the USAP of 27 LC-130 flights a year (much of the fuel that is the lifeblood of South Pole station was all flown there by LC-130.)

I worked at South Pole station for two weeks in November and December as a standing search and rescue team member and field instructor, teaching Snowcraft I, an outdoor survival skill class given to USAP employees whose work may take them outside immediate South Pole Station environs. This was a short deployment away from my full-season work based primarily at McMurdo Station, which has approximately 1,150 residents and is considered the big city of the Antarctic continent. I must thank Kate and Kevin, too, for their help while I was at the South Pole with station familiarization, setup for my classes, and transportation of my students. Great teamwork!

As might be anticipated given our skill set, NOLS instructors and support staff have, over the years, been regular fixtures within the USAP. Others in the past include NOLS Rocky Mountain’s Chris Wiznewski; former assistant director of NOLS Teton Valley and current program director at NOLS New Zealand, Allen O’Bannon; and Jackson Hole Mountain Guide and NOLS instructor Trevor Deighton, to name a few. The technical skills, expedition behavior and communication skills taught and practiced by NOLS employees prepare them well for working and expeditioning on that harsh continent. Perhaps one day NOLS will make an already proposed next step and use the Antarctic continent as its next wilderness classroom.



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Photos clockwise from top left: NOLS instructors Kevin Emery and Kate Koons snapping the quintessential South Pole keepsake. Paul fresh from a ride in a Haaglund, everyday transportation on Antarctica. South Pole Station at 9,300 feet.



RECIPE BOX

# A Breakfast of Champions And We’re Not Talking Wheaties

BY JACOB SLOSBERG, SEMESTER IN PATAGONIA 2009

I invented this recipe on my spring Semester in Patagonia. It was day three on the glacier, raining/snowing with extremely limited visibility, which meant a long day in the tent. My tent group spent the whole day sleeping and reading, like you would on a day like that. It was my turn to cook and I knew I wanted something hearty and delicious. But I also wanted something with good texture. I find that what I miss most about food when cooking in the backcountry is interesting texture, something that you can chew. Then it hit me, and I popped up in my sleeping bag and announced I was going to make hearty down-home biscuits and gravy!

This is a great hearty meal that can be used for breakfast or dinner. I have since made them in a couple of variations and it continues to be a hit and win me new friends in the backcountry. You will need both a pot and a frybake.

Partial credit must go to John Rader, my partner in preparing and consuming the first batch.

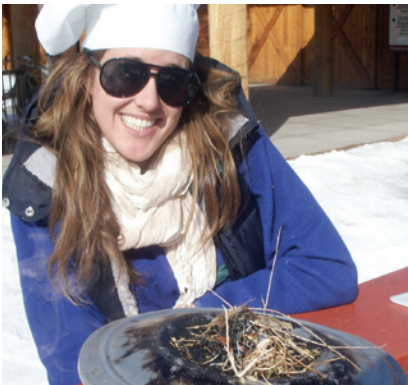
*Field tested by Angela Frinfrock, David Ketai, and Annie Kiser, NOLS Interns and Test Cooks*

This version of biscuits and gravy was fantastic—the recipe was easy to follow, used common ingredients, and was fun to make. It is a very straightforward recipe for even a beginner backcountry cook.

We omitted some of the optional ingredients due to dietary needs and lack of availability. Specifically, we did not add the textured vegetable protein (TVP) or the salami; however, both would add protein if included. This recipe cooks up to be a tasty meal and supplies the energy for a long day on the trail.

Variations and Helpful Hints

- In areas where dry twigs are not readily available, consider flipping biscuits instead of building a twiggy fire. This yields a denser biscuit, but we found them to be quite good.
- Add dried or fresh vegetables to gravy for a fuller flavor.
- Try to eat the gravy when warm; it congeals as it cools.



Who could resist hearty biscuits and gravy in the backcountry? The test cooks all agree this should be a staple field recipe.

PATAGONIA BACKCOUNTRY BISCUITS AND GRAVY

Measurements are approximate; use your judgment.

Biscuit Ingredients

- |                     |                                  |
|---------------------|----------------------------------|
| 2 cups flour        | 6 Tbs butter or margarine        |
| Salt and pepper     | ½ cup shredded cheese (optional) |
| 1 Tsp baking powder | ½ cup-ish cold water             |
| Oregano (optional)  |                                  |

Biscuit Directions

- 1) Mix flour with salt, pepper, baking powder, and oregano.
- 2) Cut the butter into small pieces and add to the flour mix using your hands, pinching the butter into smaller pieces while getting it coated flour. The key is to leave lots of tiny butter pieces covered in flour, rather than completely incorporating the butter into the flour; this will keep the biscuits light and flakey rather than dense.
- 3) Mix in shredded or cubed cheese if desired. (Why would it not be?)
- 4) Mix in cold water to create the dough. The dough should be extremely wet and sticky but should not be wet enough to pour.
- 5) Fill a lightly greased Fry-bake with handful-sized dough balls from the outside edge towards the center so that the biscuits are almost touching. As the biscuits rise they will expand together and vertically, but when it is finished baking they will pull apart nicely.
- 6) Bake until golden brown on a camp stove; incorporate a twiggy fire or flip the covered Fry-bake with the lid down in order to cook biscuits from the top and bottom.
- 7) Remove from Fry-bake and set aside to let cool.

Gravy Ingredients

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| Salami (optional)                                | 5 Tbs or more powdered milk                                     |
| Rehydrated Textured Vegetable Protein (optional) | 1+ cup water  |
| ¼ onion, chopped                                 | Spices like oregano, cayenne pepper, or chili powder (to taste) |
| Dried mushrooms                                  | Salt and pepper (to taste)                                      |
| 2 Tbs butter                                     | Hot sauce (optional)  |
| 2 Tbs flour                                      |   |

Gravy Directions

The key to this is the creaminess of a basic gravy, but the added bonus of whatever protein/meat substitute you have is the kicker. Gravy is basically butter (or other fat) with a small amount of flour plus powdered milk and water, cooked until creamy. The is more like a traditional country gravy and is cooked as follows:

- 1) Start by sauteing diced salami. Once the salami has released some of its fat, add the rehydrated TVP, diced onion, and rehydrated mushrooms. Save the TVP and mushroom water to add later. The TVP will soak up the delicious salami flavors and add to the bulk and protein to the dish.
- 2) As the salami and TVP start to get a little crunchy, add the butter and flour. Continue to saute until the flour looks a little toasted.
- 3) Now add the powdered milk and the leftover TVP/mushroom water plus a little more. It should now look like a watery cream sauce.
- 4) Season to taste but don’t over salt because the sauce will reduce. Reduce the sauce by simmering until the gravy becomes thick and delicious.
- 5) Break open the biscuits in your bowl and smother with thick and meaty gravy. Some pepper and hot sauce on top really finishes it off.

Thanks to NOLS Patagonia grad Jacob Slosberg for sending us this fantastic recipe during our recipe callout via Facebook!

Do you have a great backcountry recipe? Send it to [theleader@nols.edu](mailto:theleader@nols.edu) along with your name, NOLS course, and how the recipe was created. Feel free to post it to our Facebook page as well! Become a fan at [www.facebook.com/nolspage](http://www.facebook.com/nolspage).

If your recipe is printed, you’ll get a free copy of the NOLS Cookery!



GEAR ROOM

# Gear That's Tougher Than You

## *The Sultan of Packs and a Watch with Beauty and Function*

BY NOLS INSTRUCTORS KARY SOMMERS AND RICH BRAME

### KARY'S CHROME SULTAN ROLLTOP PACK

This roll-top, waterproof backpack by Chrome is built in the U.S. with the most rugged assembly of materials and hardware I've ever seen. The outer pack is constructed with weatherproof 1,000-denier Cordura, while the main inner chamber is fully lined with waterproof urethane. The large pack's 4,000-cubic-inch size (21" x 27" x 7") and completely sealed seams make it suitable for day hiking, a scamper to the crags, or even rugged Wyoming hunting days.

I used the Sultan on a late October hunt and found its spacious main compartment to be extremely useful. I not only packed in all my essentials, I also packed out the hindquarters of a mule deer. The pack's impervious rubber coating kept my binoculars, maps, and food well situated, and away from the fresh meat, in the two external pockets. With the additional weight, I fully adjusted the arm, waist, and sternum straps to accommodate it, though a smaller pack would have better fit my five-foot frame.

Bottom line? This pack is tougher than most people. It holds as much as anyone would want to carry, is fully adjustable, has a stylish look, and, in a pinch, even doubles as a beer cooler (according to



Kary sportin' the Chrome Sultan daypack on a recent hunting trip in Wyoming.

Chrome's website, of course). Of all the daypacks I've used, this Chrome bag is indeed "the Sultan of packs."

### RICH'S SUUNTO ELEMENTUM TERRA WATCH

Suunto, of Finland, created their Elementum line of high-end watches with outdoor adventurers in mind. Through a series of NOLS alumni connections, I had the chance to test the Elementum Terra altimeter/barometer/compass wristwatch.

The Terra is a stunning watch. Its water-resistant, stainless steel body is topped with scratch-resistant, anti-glare sapphire crystal. The model tested included a rugged black rubber band and an easy-to-read positive image (light numbers on a dark background) LCD display. The finish, materials, and craftsmanship stand out—this watch is probably tougher than you.

The Terra provides some key outdoor functions: barometer (measured in millibars and inches of mercury with trend indicators), altimeter (with gain/loss recording functions), a digital compass, stopwatch, alarm, and backlight. Unlike many sports watches, the Terra is amazingly simple to use—three knobs control its intuitive functions.

NOLS adventurers who are looking for a substantial, good-looking watch to help monitor your location, the weather, or even elevation changes on hiking or ski days (e.g., 46,670 feet descended on a recent Jackson Hole telemark weekend!), will find Suunto's Terra a satisfying option.

#### Pros

- Beautiful: Looks great indoors and out
- Rugged: Steel construction, sapphire face, waterproof
- Functional: Compass, altimeter, barometer, stopwatch
- Surprisingly easy to use: Limited buttons make sense

#### Cons

- Included manual was lacking: I had to download the full instructions.
- Heavy: The housing is 1¾-inch across and the entire watch weighs 3.2 oz.
- Amazingly quiet alarm: You'll only hear it if you're paying attention.



Rich is a big fan of the multifunctional Suunto Elementum Terra watch.

*The Sultan Rolltop Pack comes in small (\$180), medium (\$200), and large (\$220) and is available online at [www.chromebagsstore.com](http://www.chromebagsstore.com). MSRP for the Sunnto Elementum Terra watch is \$899. For more details and a list of authorized Elementum dealers, visit [www.suunto.com/elementum](http://www.suunto.com/elementum).*

*Write to [theleader@nols.edu](mailto:theleader@nols.edu) and share your gear thoughts, questions, and opinions. If it ends up in print, we'll hook you up with a NOLS t-shirt or hat.*

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**GRADS FROM THE '70S**

**Gregory Zeigler, WRW 06/04/74 & SIC 06/03/75**

Gregory recently retraced John Steinbeck's route from the novel *Travels With Charley*. Driving through 35 states and over 15,000 miles, Gregory rediscovered this "monster land" and saw "what Americans are like today." He is working on a book, film, and teacher's guide about the trip—check it out at <http://travelswithsteinbeck.wordpress.com>.

**Vance Deniston, ABW 07/10/74**

After Vance's course in 1974, he moved west to New Mexico from Tennessee and joined local search and rescue groups around Santa Fe. Moving to Maryland in the '80s, he has been a landscape project manager on several national monuments including the Jefferson Memorial, Tidal Basin, the Lincoln Memorial, and President's Park.

**Jim Pioch, WRS 02/08/78 & YPE 02/14/79**

Though Jim has been retired for 15 years, he still enjoys winter camping. His latest adventure was dog sledding in the Northwest Territories near the Arctic Circle. Jim would love to hear from former classmates: Paul Malloy, Jan Skadberg, Karen, Alice, Bad Boy...anybody! Jim said fellow trekker Sven Flodstrom is still active and says "hi." Reach Jim at [onthegopiochs@hotmail.com](mailto:onthegopiochs@hotmail.com)

**GRADS FROM THE '80S**

**Karen Goodspeed Hertlein, FSR-2 09/04/84**

Karen and her husband, James, completed the Appalachian Trail in 2006. The thru-hike was inspired by her NOLS semester. In 2008 they hiked the 2,600 mile Pacific Crest Trail. In 2009, they rode their tandem bike 3,500 miles from Seattle to Boston. Karen thanks NOLS for her great foundation in the outdoors.

**GRADS FROM THE '90S**

**Brice Particelli, SSP-1 09/27/94**

Brice is a freelance writer and teacher and is working toward a PhD at Columbia, but he is always out looking for the next great adventure—rock climbing in the Gunks, skiing in Austria (or Vermont, more often), and writing about it all. His most recent travel article, a non-fishing fishing story, is a feature in the February/March issue of *Gray's Sporting Journal*. Who says you can't love the outdoors and live in Manhattan?

**Katherine (Katie) Thomas, SSR-2 02/15/99**

Katie will graduate from Colorado State University with a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine in May 2010.

**Jeffrey Donenfeld, AKW 06/11/99**

Jeff is working at the interactive ad agency Morpheus Media. He just returned from a great trip to Belize where he spent nine days sailing and scuba diving. In February, he and his brother **Jason Donenfeld**

(**AKW 07/10/05**) did an ascent of Mt. Washington. This summer, he is hoping to get a trip together to Nicaragua and maybe other parts of Central America. He is also about to apply for a job with the U.S. Antarctic Program. View photos and videos from his recent Belize trip at [www.jeffzilla.com/2010/01/sailing-and-scuba-diving-in-belize](http://www.jeffzilla.com/2010/01/sailing-and-scuba-diving-in-belize).

**GRADS FROM THE '00S**

**Michelle Duda, PWS 06/07/02**

Michelle is an assistant attorney general for the Commonwealth of Virginia handling cases for the state's child support enforcement office. Since completing her NOLS course, she has traveled to Alaska, the British Isles, and Asia, climbing Japan's Mt. Fuji and hitting some sights in China, including "climbing" the Great Wall. This summer she hopes to do another NOLS course or an alumni trip.

**Chelsea Eakin, NCW 06/30/04 & former NOLS Alumni intern**

After graduating from Colby College in May 2009, Chelsea directed the canoe/kayak program at Camp Treetops in Lake Placid, New York. She is now interning with a public television station in NYC, but hopes to do more outdoor adventuring soon.

**Paul Hassell, AKM 05/20/06**

Successful photographer Paul Hassell was one of seven abolitionist-climbers from the "Climb for Captives" team to successfully summit Mt. Rainier (14,410'). Their successful fund-raising goal of \$40K will help rescue 18 children from slavery in Mumbai.

**Ryan Hannan, WRW-1 06/22/06**

On Ryan's NOLS expedition it became clear to him that wildlands—either wilderness or a local park—should be available for future generations to enjoy. Ryan sought an education that would further his knowledge of nature and its resources. This May he will graduate with a degree in Recreation and Park Management from Southern Illinois University. Ryan says he owes his current path to NOLS.

**Rachel Whitten, NZSF 10/05/06**

Rachel recently accepted a position with A Christian Ministry in the National Parks (ACMNP) based in

Denver, Colorado. Each summer, ACMNP places college, graduate, and seminary students in national parks across America to pursue work, wilderness, and ecumenical worship in our country's most beautiful places. As ACMNP's recruiting coordinator, Rachel continues to feed her adventurous spirit by overseeing recruiting efforts and maintaining year-round contact with over 100 colleges and universities across the country.

**Andy Tennant, PY-2 10/15/06**

After some time in Hawaii, Andy joined the U.S. Army in 2007. Six months after that he married a wonderful woman named Holly. Their daughter, Gabriella Jolee, was born nine months later. They are expecting their second child in March. After a stint in Iraq, Andy is still jumping out of planes for a living and loving it.

**Pat "Gabriel" Gleason, WFR 12/10/07 & WEMT 12/31/07**

Pat is in Kabul, Afghanistan, as a PSD Team Leader/Medic. He just clocked over 5½ years over there. Pat was married in Nepal and spends most of his vacation time in Kathmandu. Feel free to drop him a line at [patrickrgleason@gmail.com](mailto:patrickrgleason@gmail.com), and see his full story on page 9 of this issue.

**Jeffrey Dicker, LFB-1 07/20/08**

Jeff lives on Long Island in New York. He has been rehabbing from back surgery and a separated shoulder over the past year. Besides hitting the slopes this winter and the bike trails in the spring, he is planning to do a day hike across Long Island on the Greenbelt Trail starting on the North Shore in Cold Spring Harbor in late March or early April. Jeff invites folks to join in. His email is [mracs67@yahoo.com](mailto:mracs67@yahoo.com).

**Shannon Mullen, AOE 06/09/09**

Shannon moved from Ottawa, Canada, to London, UK, to work as a high school physical education teacher. It has been a great experience for her so far and she is learning a lot from a new education system, a new city, and a new culture. She is spending her salary exploring Europe and going on big adventures.

**Mike Pierre, LNT-WY 06/15/09**

Mike and his partner have opened a hiking/guiding service called Southwest Montana Peak Experiences

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in Bozeman. Before that, Mike was a middle school teacher where he led groups of seventh graders to Yellowstone National Park.

### MARRIAGES AND ENGAGEMENTS

**William Dudley Bass (WMT 06/23/86) and Kristina Katayama**  
William married his long-time partner, Kristina, in Seattle on July 11, 2009. They still spend a lot of time outdoors with the family.

**Lynn Zwaagstra (HOS 08/4/88, WMT 07/15/91, RIC 04/28/99) and Vincent Keene**  
Lynn and Vincent were married in a small family gathering at Ambergris Caye, Belize, in October 2009. The ceremony was held on the beach and reception on the pool deck.

**Nathan Denn (YOSU 07/23/01) and Siew Foong (Mary) Low of Malaysia**  
Nathan and Mary were married on October 10, 2009, in Ohio. Both are working and living at YMCA Storer Camps in Jackson, Michigan.

**Amber Busby (OESF-1 09/12/07) and Kenny Luettger (OESF-1 09/12/2007)**  
College students from Oregon and New York, Amber and Kenny met while attending a NOLS semester in Wyoming. On Friday, October 2, 2009, they were married at Gilbert Lake State Park in Laurens, New York, surrounded by family and eight of their NOLS classmates (see photo below).



### NEW ADDITIONS

**Brooke Berens (SSR-8 03/08/99) and Gailyn Taylor**  
Zander Tuck Berens Taylor was born on May 5, 2009, in Anchorage, Alaska.

**Lauren Reich (ABW 07/17/97, SIC 05/2/02) and Charley Graham (FSR 09/13/99, ICS 04/09/08)**  
Lauren and Charley welcomed baby boy Ezra Rowan Graham into the world on November 11, 2009. The happy family resides in Hardwick, Vermont.

**Will Shoutis (ADV 07/14/88) and Levia (Jones) Shoutis (WFR 03/07/03)**  
Will and Levia are the proud parents of Lucas Alexander Shoutis. Luke was born December 31, 2009. Luke and his parents reside in Livingston, Montana. The infant is the grandson of NOLS grads and former instructors **Skip Shoutis (WRW 06/09/67) and Diane (Newbury) Shoutis (WEC 07/12/68).**

**Jessie (Cunningham) Glodt (IDV 06/19/96) and Greg Glodt**  
Jessie and Greg welcomed their third child into the family on January 6, 2010. Lily Claire Glodt was born in Rapid City, South Dakota. The infant is the granddaughter of NOLS grads and former instructors **Willy Cunningham (SIC 05/26/71) and Tina Cunningham (MSC 04/11/74).**

**Mark Jordan (WAD 07/08/92, SIC 05/17/93) and Laura (Abbott) Jordan (PWS 06/10/97)**  
Mark and Laura met while working at NOLS Alaska and are currently living in Palmer. They became the parents of a baby girl, Audrey Anne, on January 14, 2010. Audrey weighed 8 lbs 5 oz.

**Emily Shoutis-Frank (WMT 06/20/96, SIC 05/06/02) and Latane Frank (SIC 07/29/99)**  
Current NOLS employees, Emily and Latane had Oliver Kenneth Frank on February 20, 2010. Oliver weighed 7 lbs 3.5 oz. at birth and is the grandson of **Skip Shoutis (WRW 06/09/67) and Diane (Newbury) Shoutis (WEC 07/12/68).**

### IN REMEMBRANCE

**Harry Davis, WEC 08/11/68**  
Award-winning photojournalist and founder of the Broadcast Factory, Harry died on January 21, 2010. The Broadcast Factory program brought high school aged kids into real-world sports broadcasting. In addition to traveling the world with a camera, Harry also established Marc Davis Motorsports, a mentoring group for young, diverse NASCAR drivers.

**Ashby C. Hart, FSR 09/10/98**  
Semester grad Ashby Hart died on September 9, 2009, in a motor vehicle accident along the Nevada-California border. Ashby was originally from South Africa and was residing in the U.S.

**Wilson Kyle Ritchey, SAF-1 09/06/02**  
Kyle died in Bozeman on February 3, 2010. In 2002 Kyle did his NOLS course, traveling to Africa where he and his classmates climbed Mt. Kenya. He became fascinated with the Masai culture, made many Masai friends, and particularly loved Masai art. Kyle loved anything to do with being outside. Everyone he touched will miss his kind and enormous heart.

**Kenneth (Ken) Sloan, MG 06/16/72**  
Ken passed away on February 5, 2010. Ken's NOLS course and experiences meant a great deal to him. He asked that his ashes be spread on a high mountain pass in Colorado, as he loved the mountains and wilderness. He always credited his NOLS courses for helping to shape his values later in life and reset his moral compass. Ken is survived by wife Karen, two daughters, Rebecca and Abigail, son Jacob, and brother Howard, also a NOLS grad.



Developed by NOLS, the LNT Master Educator course is the highest level of Leave No Trace training available. As a graduate of the course, you will be qualified to offer and teach two-day LNT Trainer courses.


## TAKE YOUR LNT TRAINING TO THE NEXT LEVEL

ENROLL IN A LEAVE NO TRACE MASTER EDUCATOR COURSE TODAY!

Upcoming 2010 Courses		
April 18-22	Shenandoah National Park, Virginia	Backpacking
May 10-14	Grand Staircase-Escalante, Utah	Backpacking
May 24-28	Whitehorse, Yukon Territory, Canada	Canoeing
June 14-18	Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming	Backpacking
August 23-27	Flat Tops Wilderness, Colorado	Backpacking
Sept 13-17	San Juan Islands, Washington	Sea Kayaking
October 4-8	Ouachita National Forest, Arkansas	Backpacking
November 5-9	Grand Canyon, Arizona	Backpacking

For more information on courses and available scholarships visit [www.nols.edu/lnt](http://www.nols.edu/lnt) or call (800) 710-6657 x3





## Bike across America this summer!

Bike-America.org is a grassroots organization whose mission is to investigate and share stories about our country's modern struggles toward sustainability. The vehicle (pun intended) for our mission is a cross-country bicycle tour that seeks to empower riders and showcase the bicycle as a viable, low-carbon, healthy, and fun method of transportation. The ride will consist of several groups of riders of various ages leaving their homes all over America to converge in Washington, DC in late July. Along the way we will interact with people in their communities, share their stories, gain media attention for their causes, and lobby Congress on behalf of the issues we learn about.

There are currently three routes planned to DC—via San Francisco, Seattle, and Boston—all of which pass through many more major and minor U.S. cities. We are seeking riders but also participants who can act in a supporting role, such as offering a yard for riders to camp in along the way.

See our country and engage people on issues that matter while on the bicycle adventure of your life! For more information, visit [Bike-America.org](http://Bike-America.org).

Hope to see you join us!  
—Kyle Duba, WSC 02/08/09  
Bike-America.org Organizer, NOLS Video Producer



**ALUMNI HAPPENINGS**

# Alumni Trips

If a month is too much to ask from the boss, the NOLS Alumni office offers shorter backcountry trips specifically designed for our working grads. We encourage you to bring family and friends along on these weeklong expeditions to reconnect with the school and introduce others to the NOLS experience. These trips have the same top-quality instructors, and though they aren't guided trips, we do cater a bit more to the desires and maturity levels of our participants. Customized trips are also available. Call us to design your dream adventure.

## Women's Denali Mountaineering

June 17–July 10, 2010 • \$5,900

The highest peak in North America, known as Denali or "Great One" by Alaska Natives, is the lofty goal of this all-women's alumni expedition. Because Denali offers extremely challenging glacier travel and some of the most difficult weather in the world, each person on the expedition must be a NOLS graduate and must submit a separate climbing resume in order to be accepted. This major undertaking requires the strongest of foundations in expedition behavior, leadership, judgment, camping skills, and endurance.

## Salmon River Family Rafting

June 25–29, 2010 • \$1,030

Get away for a great outdoor family vacation. Invite your parents, bring the kids, and enjoy some quality time on one of Idaho's most beautiful wilderness rivers. Enjoy camping on sandy beaches, feeling the rush of whitewater during the day, and relaxing with the comfort of s'mores at night.

## Family Camping in the Wind Rivers

July 19–24, 2010 • \$1,275

Relive your fondest memories of the Wind River Mountains with your family. This trip will travel into the Winds using llamas to transport the majority of your gear as you shoulder a light daypack of necessities. We'll spend time covering basic wilderness skills including navigation, cooking, and Leave No Trace techniques. There will also be time for practicing your photography, fly-fishing crystal clear waters, and exploring the beautiful surroundings of these rugged and majestic mountains. This is a great way to introduce your kids, parents, and friends to the essence of a true NOLS course. Kids aged 10 and up are welcome.

## Gannett Peak Mountaineering

July 26–August 5, 2010 • \$2,285

(Alumni only) Hidden deep in the Wind River Range, above jumbled moraine and glacial ice, Gannett Peak is Wyoming's highest mountain. Reaching this remote 13,804-foot summit requires an approach of several days, followed by the climb itself. You'll travel on snow and ice, cross Dinwoody Glacier, and work up the rock to the summit. This expedition is a perfect opportunity to put your NOLS camping and travel skills back to work and it's a great chance to polish your mountaineering techniques. Horses will pack in the climbing gear and much of your food.

## Alumni Service Trip

August 15–21, 2010 • \$500

(cost is subsidized by NOLS!)

This trip takes NOLS grads, friends, and families into Wyoming's Wind River Mountains for a week of camping, connection, camaraderie, and service. We'll team with the U.S. Forest Service and Student Conservation Association to conduct meaningful and challenging service projects that protect public lands and enhance visitor safety and enjoyment in the backcountry.

## Alumni Horsepacking

August 16–25, 2010 • \$1,535

This adventure starts at NOLS' Three Peaks Ranch where the school's horse courses and re-ration logistics are based. After an introduction to ranch life and horse handling, you'll ride into the mountains with a train of pack animals for a few days of camping, fishing, and riding. You'll focus on the art of Leave No Trace camping with the horses and pack stock.



# Upcoming Reunions

Reunions are a great way to reconnect with NOLS and network with alumni in your area. Check out a great presentation, enjoy some refreshments, and maybe even score sweet gear in our raffle.

### April 10, 2010 • 6:00–8:30 p.m. • Portland, Oregon

REI, 1405 NW Johnson St.

See images from adventurer Rob Walker's 1,850-mile kayak traverse of Chilean Patagonia. Then, join us for discounted climbing at the Multnomah Athletic Club on April 11.

### April 29, 2010 • 7:00–9:30 p.m. • Boston, MA

Fenway Park, 72 Brookline Ave

Join us for a fun reunion and presentation by NOLS instructor Dave Anderson about his mountaineering first ascent in Argentina's stunning Piratas Valley.

### May 1, 2010 • Time TBD • Seattle area

NOLS Pacific Northwest, 20950 Bulson Rd., Conway, WA

Join us for a day of volunteer projects, wall climbing, mini-seminars, snacks, camaraderie, and a stunning slide show. Spend the day or stop by for a few minutes of fun.

### May 15, 2010 • 7:00–9:30 p.m. • Denver, CO

Patagonia Store, 1431 15th St

Join us for a show on Ethiopia's scenic beauty, climbs, culture, and challenges by climber, adventurer, writer, and NOLS grad Majka Burhardt.



## BRANCH NOTES

### NOLS YUKON



- Be the first to identify the person and/or location of the above photo and win a NOLS Yukon water bottle! Contact alumni@nols.edu.
- We're busily working with numerous wilderness advocates to urge the Yukon government to accept 80 percent protection of the Peel Watershed, of one of the world's largest intact watersheds and NOLS classroom. See Aaron Bannon's article on page 5 of this issue.
- In partnership with Yukon College, we've expanded our local educator courses to include Japan's Waseda and Meiji universities. Additionally, we hope to teach leadership through backpacking and whitewater canoeing for the Duke of Edinburgh program in Saskatchewan, Alberta, Northwest Territories, Nunavut, and British Columbia.
- Throughout the spring, we're visiting Canadian schools, universities, and outdoor adventure shows in Toronto, Vancouver, and Calgary. If you are around, please join us or invite us to your school!
- Join us on Facebook! Friend "NOLS Alumni-Canada." Students and grads of any course on Canadian soil and Canadian citizens are urged to network here!

### NOLS ALASKA

- The NOLS Alaska winter staff partook in NOLS Leadership Week. In reflecting on how we can make a difference through our volunteer work, we came up with a few examples of how our staff and former staff living in Alaska serve our community:

**Alex Papasavas**, NOLS alumnus, past kitchen manager, and owner of a wonderful restaurant in Palmer, hosted a dinner and fundraiser for the relief efforts in Haiti.

**Mimi Peabody**, past instructor and in-town staff member, has been active in our local land use advocacy organization, Friends of Mat-Su (Matanuska-Susitna Borough).

**Lisa Jaeger**, current instructor, and **Terry Boyle**, current in-town staff member, oversee a checkpoint along the 1,040-mile Iditarod Sled Dog Race trail for a week or more. **Jack Niggenmyer**, past instructor and former Iditarod race manager, is sweeping the race by snow machine.

**Donna Ford**, current in-town staff member, has been teaching skate and classic skiing to beginning skiers in the Mat-Su Nordic Ski Club.

### NOLS TETON VALLEY

- We're happy to celebrate our tenth year of operating out of this facility!
- We made enough money with our local sweets sales to plan and purchase raspberry canes to add to our sustainable gardens. (And we learned that Russia produces in the neighborhood of 95,000 tons of raspberries, or 26 percent of the market.)
- We enjoyed our 4-H pig throughout the winter so much that we will send Dan Verbeten to next summer's livestock auction for another one.

### NOLS SOUTHWEST

- Using a small pump and hoses, we've developed a system to use grey water to wash vehicles when they return from the field.
- As part of February's NOLS Leadership Week, we hosted an open house for local grads, prospective students, and other NOLS friends. If you missed the event and are local to or visiting Tucson, we'd still love for you to stop by and meet us! Shoot us an email at nols\_southwest@community.nols.edu to set up a visit.

### NOLS PACIFIC NORTHWEST

- Planning a personal trip in the Pacific Northwest this summer? We are always happy to help grads outfit their trip with gear and rations at discounted prices! Please contact us (360) 445-6657 or nols\_pacificnw@community.nols.edu.
- We are hosting a number of WFR and WFR recerts this year, as well as expeditions for medical professionals. Check out [www.nols.edu/wmi](http://www.nols.edu/wmi).
- Join us May 1, 2010 for a fun-filled alumni event. Get a chance to set a new route on our branch climbing wall, reinforce your backcountry pizza baking skills, or enjoy a nature walk through our old growth forest on branch property.

### NOLS ROCKY MOUNTAIN



- At NOLS Three Peaks Ranch, our summer staff includes nine returning packer/instructors and three new mustangs: Shasta, Squirt, and Leo.
- At our Vernal, Utah, base we have a chicken coop that will supplement field rations and in-town food with fresh eggs.
- We've acquired a new permit and Forest Service lease on Burnt Lake in the western Wind River Mountains that will allow additional opportunities for our courses.



NOLSies show off their skills with backcountry cooking and animal calls during Leadership Olympics in Lander.

## Celebrating in NOLS Fashion Leadership Week Recap

BY DAVID KETAI

Back in February, we commenced NOLS Leadership Week, an invitation to the entire NOLS community (graduates and employees alike) to take some time to revisit their leadership skills and reconnect with the school. NOLSies across the country organized events that ranged from kite boarding on White Bear Lake in Minnesota, paddling and cleaning up the Upper Wind River in Washington, and climbing with Benchmark Outfitters and Cincinnati Climbers Anonymous in Ohio. Benchmark Outfitters even offered a gear discount for NOLS graduates all week.

In addition to outdoor activities, NOLS staff and graduates also held information sessions at universities and local schools from coast to coast to share their NOLS experiences. Our website and Facebook page were inundated with responses from NOLS enthusiasts, new leadership videos from our video production team, and blog updates that maintained the momentum. NOLS Word of Mouth Coordinator and event organizer Kary Sommers offers her thanks to all who participated: "We were all energized by the overwhelming response to Leadership Week, and it's proof that NOLS grads near and far are still excited about staying connected."

At NOLS headquarters in Lander, Wyoming, staff celebrated the weeklong leadership holiday in true NOLS fashion. Besides getting outside to Nordic ski at the Lander Golf Course and climb in Sinks Canyon, employees also attended interactive leadership seminars and diversity and inclusion training. The festivities were capped off with the inaugural Leadership Olympics, which included events such as the the NOLS Knowledge Bowl, the Camp Skills Decathlon, and the Communication Obstacle Course.

Judging by the spirited participation that swept through the community during this year's Leadership Week, it is on track to becoming an annual tradition.

*You can find more NOLS Leadership Week 2010 recap at [www.nols.edu/leadershipweek](http://www.nols.edu/leadershipweek)—and check back soon for next year's dates!*



**BELAY OFF**

# Why NOLS: Remembering a Semester in Patagonia

BY DAVID KETAI

How often does a NOLS grad revisit their experience and ask themselves, why NOLS? Looking back at my Patagonia journal, I can relive those months of halcyon days and starry nights through the immediacy of words that came naturally to me at the time:

*"Beauty. I have hot Nalgene's drying my socks and warming my sleeping bag. I've got food and maté [a South American tea] in my stomach. Dry(ish) clothes. And I'm in one of the world's final frontiers. Hope tomorrow brings more adventure..." (10/1/08)*

That was the start to our semester's kyaking section. Then the sky cracked open and the winds whipped the tips of waves into sprays of whitecaps, leaving us no choice but to camp on the side of a muddy, densely vegetated hill:

*"Okay. Scratch that last entry about wanting 'more adventure.' The weather was god awful today... Hope tomorrow is easier." (10/2/08)*

And so it went for the next few days. Eventually the ebbs and flows became less pronounced as we settled into the easy rhythm of life on the water. Simple routines became a part of us as we paddled on. Soon enough, Charles and I were leaders of the day:

*"Overall today was the epitome of a NOLS day. We did something that could have been complicated—crossing Canal Baker—but it turned out fine; while something relatively simple—settling on a campsite—took 3 hours...Turns out these expeditions are about the small things and the group more than an idyllic brochure picture." (10/16/08)*

A week later our kayaking section came to a climactic end, bringing with it more lessons on expedition behavior:

*"Today was the perfect day to end our paddling section. The icebergs, growlers, and brash had moved away from the glacier and into the bay, which at first prevented us from leaving. We decided to use the plastic singles as icebreakers to break through the blockade..."*

Once the adrenaline wore off, my back started to hurt on the rough paddle to camp. I remember telling Sasha to paddle harder, which really upset her.

*Jerk move. I know she was working hard. Sometimes I forget how being in pain or having a bad day narrows your focus to, well, yourself. Apologize tomorrow once we reach Tortel?" (10/23/08)*

A couple of days later we traded our paddles and boat bags for plastic Scarpa mountaineering boots and giant green Deuter packs. I got into the habit of including an epigraph, quotes of the day, at the beginning of each entry. We spent the first week with Joel and Bernardo, two Chileans we simply called "The Brothers," who helped us shuttle food and gear to one of our first camps:

*"No importa." —Joel to Bernardo, moments after we scared ten of their horses across Rio Solo and out of sight.*

*Just stood outside around one of Ollie's fires waiting for water to boil the past half hour. A few feet away, in the woods, Bernardo and Joel are dry and sipping maté beneath their lean-to of freshly cut saplings next to their raging bonfire. I don't think they know how to complain. It was funny watching the brothers saw a trail for their horses through the forest with their chainsaw, 'reeeee reeeee reeeeeee!' They must think we gringos are insane—LNT, carrying everything on our backs, tackling the brush head-on when we could take a motor boat or horses..." (10/31/08).*

When a member of my small hiking group hurt herself one day, I felt bad for myself at first, knowing I might not be able to use the ropes and crampons we'd carried on our backs for weeks and might instead spend my time and energy getting her out of there. But I soon realized that embracing the group mentality provided more purpose than self-pity:

*"If we die today, at least we know the country's in good hands" — Andy.*

Ginger might have hurt her knee, so the runner team (Andy, Tyler and I) left this morning. We blazed a trail so we could find our way back to Zoe and Ginger's tent hidden somewhere in a jungle ravine beneath a fresh dump of snow... When we made it to the lake we rested in a tent, eating macaroni the rest of the group made for us, and waited. We heard Jake call the evac, giving NOLS HQ the 'lat/long' and requesting a 'heli evac.' After the formalities he said, 'If you don't mind

me asking, who's the president?' K.G. and the rest of the expedition began cheering. Obama-mama! For Tyler, Andy, and I the celebration was short-lived; we turned around knowing we had to repeat the six miserable hours we'd just endured, hence Andy's whimsical quote." (11/8/08)

After Ginger was lifted out of the field in a yellow helicopter we were able to achieve our goal of a peak ascent:

*"Boy Howdy Folks!" — Jake  
"25...15...5...Zero...Clear!" — Last person on the rope team calling out the distance from the snow protection.*

*Today was the raddest day, probably the pinnacle of this trip. We 'ascended' a peak today. Actually we were a kilometer or so from the top of peak 2006, but still...The ascent began slowly. We learned how to move cohesively, keeping the right amount of slack in the rope so it wouldn't slack load, etc. It felt like we were walking on the moon..." (11/14/08)*

Before we knew it, we said goodbye to our instructors, Andy, K.G., Jake, Jaime, Ben, Jen, and Gene, and were off on our independent student group expeditions, the last part of our great Patagonia adventure. The morning of our pick-up, I woke up in a grassy field to the clanking of cowbells and a cacophony of mooing; a field full of cows marked the end of our semester:

*"I guess this is my last official entry—we're heading to the campo and an asado [a traditional Chilean barbeque where sheep raised on the farm are roasted on bamboo skewers over open flame] and after that we are free in Coyhaique, which will be weird. This was the experience of a lifetime, and I'm thankful for every minute of it. I'll never forget that." (12/1/08)*

So why NOLS? At times we were cold and uncomfortable, and at times the wilderness kept us from achieving our goals. But instead of falling apart, we learned how to laugh and empathize with one another, we learned how to become friends and expedition mates. I trust every last member of SSPM-2: Ginger, Tyler, Charles, Jordan, Zoe, B-rad, Scotty-Do, Scotty-Don't, Kyle, Oli, Calie, Lars, Elle, Pelayo, Brett and Sasha Bear. Moreover, I trust myself. Would we do it all again? To return to those halcyon days and starry nights, we would do anything.

