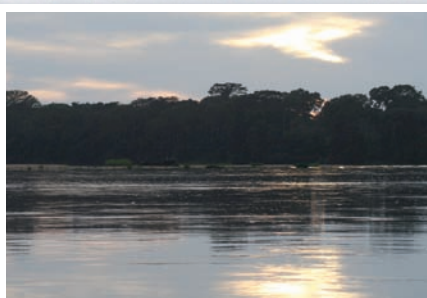
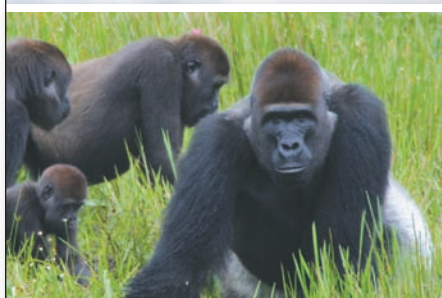
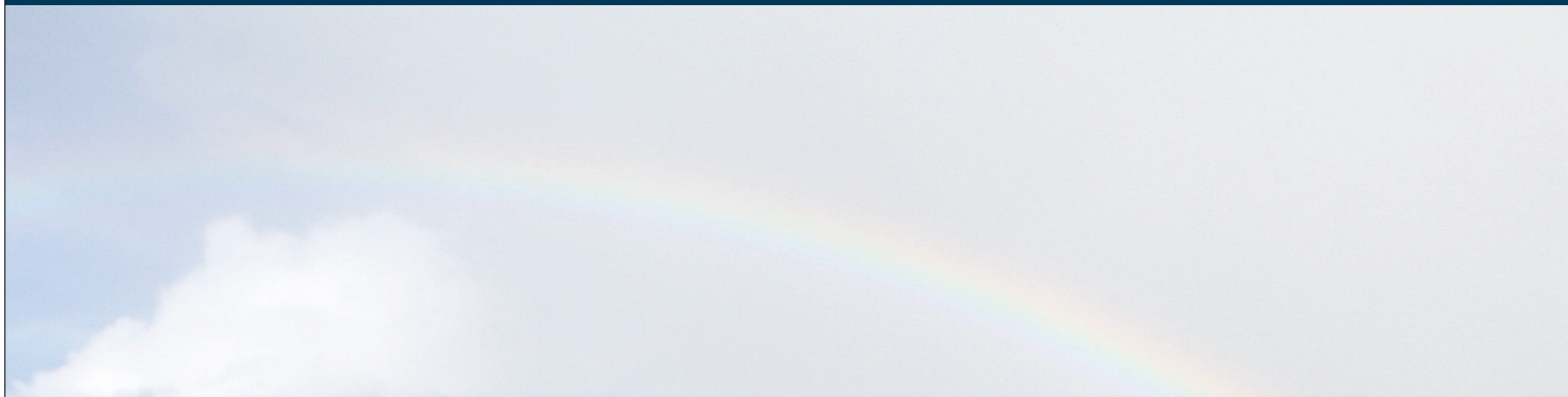




Leader

Fall 2008 • Vol. 24 • No.1

For Alumni of the National Outdoor Leadership School



GORILLA PASSAGE

ON THE TRAIL IN THE REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO AND CAMEROON

BY KELLY MATHESON, NOLS GRAD
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THE LEADER IN WILDERNESS EDUCATION

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MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR



New course offerings in 2008 included Sea Kayaking in Scandinavia.

Fall in the Rockies brings golden aspens, skis out of storage, and an opportunity to look back at the completion of our fiscal year. At NOLS, our fiscal year ends on August 31, at the end of the busy summer season, and I'm pleased to report that 2008 was a very successful year for NOLS. We educated over 13,500 students, selling out many popular courses. We awarded a record amount in scholarship support and our Annual Fund reached a new high, providing for that scholarship support.

Among the highlights of the year were the successful additions of several new course offerings. While the Wilderness Medicine Institute (WMI) has offered courses in Europe, this summer's NOLS Scandinavia Sea Kayaking and Backpacking course was our first European catalog course. Our new Year in the Sonoran, consisting of a semester in the Southwestern U.S. followed by a semester south of the border in Baja, Mexico, has doubled our academic year-long offerings. We also offered our first Instructor Course in New Zealand, which added significantly to our New Zealand and Australia staff.

Of the factors that allow us to deliver quality educational experiences, none is more important than our instructors. While our senior staff, the most experienced group NOLS has ever seen, anchored courses, we also added many new faculty members, a group that brought great energy to their courses.

This fall has brought an escalation of concerns about our national and international economy and the impact on NOLS. The economic situation is sure to have an effect on our coming year and we are evaluating how to best mitigate the negative impacts that could occur. Past downturns have, in retrospect, always reinforced the importance of focusing on our core, while following a clearly chosen path. Our new strategic plan, Expedition 2013, lays out a great path for the coming years that will maintain this focus and still allow us to grow as an organization.

In August I had an opportunity to get into the Wind Rivers for nine days with my wife and three children (ages 14, 11, and 8). We traversed the range from east to west, while catching fish, learning to map read, climbing Wind River Peak, and spending quality time together as a family. The trip was a vivid reminder of the many impacts of a NOLS education. I was able to experience the power, beauty, and awe-inspiring qualities of our wilderness classrooms through the eyes of my children, and to experience the many opportunities for skill development provided through these unique classroom situations.

As I consider the challenges our country is facing, I know there are NOLS grads out there applying their leadership lessons to the challenges at hand, tolerating some adversity, and using judgment and decision-making skills that were honed in the wilderness. These skills will aid our graduates in their work and in their communities, and I believe that the same lessons from the wilderness will guide NOLS in the coming year.

Our alumni are essential to our ability to achieve our mission and I want to thank all of you for contributing to the success of NOLS in the past year. Without our active alumni group, NOLS would not be the same organization. Thank You!


John Gans, NOLS Executive Director

WHO'S THIS?



Recognize this person? The first 10 people to figure it out will receive a free NOLS t-shirt. Call the Alumni office at (800) 332-4280.

Last issue's answer to "Who's This?" is Emily Shoutis-Frank and Louisa Hunker. NOLSies by birth, they are both NOLS instructors and the children of NOLS instructor couples.

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EXPEDITION 2013

NOLS Plans Ahead for the Next Five Years

BY ELISA HITT

Expedition planning is one of NOLS' greatest strengths. We execute it on the branch level, sending students on courses from Patagonia in the far south to Scandinavia in the far north. We teach it on a student level, with many courses concluding with a student group expedition that allows students direct practice in planning their own routes. On an organizational level, it is manifested in the form of Expedition 2013, the NOLS Strategic Plan, a detailed, goal-oriented plan to help guide the school in the coming years.

It's possible to go on a hike without doing any planning, but, in all likelihood, you won't get as far as you might have, and you run a substantially higher risk of getting lost. The same reasons apply to why NOLS needs a strategic plan—we would probably survive without one, but would run the risk of losing our way.

The first question that you should ask yourself in the early parts of the vision stage of expedition planning (well before you arrive at any action) is this: "Why am I going on this expedition? What is my mission?" For NOLS, finding the answer to this question involved the Board of Trustees re-assessing our mission statement, making sure that it was still relevant and viable.

They determined conclusively that it was both of these things, so the goal of the Strategic Plan should be to further the mission, not redesign it. As the first page of the Strategic Plan states, "the predominant story is that we will remain committed to the school's mission and core values, which underwent no changes in this planning process."

The next step in expedition planning involves choosing your objective. On a NOLS course, this might mean selecting a peak to attempt, a rapid to run, or a fresh field of powder to ski. For the Strategic Plan, NOLS spent almost a year seeking and obtaining organization-wide input in developing objectives.

The person in charge of spearheading the solicitation and compilation of this input was John Kanengieter, NOLS director for leadership. In addition to running a staff survey with 347 participants and collecting individual feedback, he also ran a two-day "collective work day" with a representative sample of 30 people involved with NOLS in differ-

ent capacities. When asked about the sessions, he said, "They were fun and productive. It was interesting to see the process evolve. On day one, we came up with largely introspective goals. When we came back on day two, we realized, 'That's not consistent with our mission!' and developed a more balanced approach." He also commented that the group ended up with more goals than they had anticipated, but were unable to cut any of them as they felt they were all vital.

At this point, the planning group was ready to put their ideas in writing, to commit to chosen mountains to climb over the course of the next five

The Strategic Plan is a living document. There are concrete benchmarks... and contingencies for unforeseen obstacles.

years. The five identified "goals of strategic significance," the plan's primary focus areas, are staff excellence, diversity, evidence-based curriculum development, environmental stewardship, and philanthropic support. The foundational areas that support these goals are students, risk management, access to wilderness classrooms, technology, expanding brand awareness, and financial equilibrium and strength. Chairman of the Board Michael Schmertzler points to the strength of the plan as an integrated vision, dependent upon integrated execution, vehemently declining to single out an area when asked if there was any one part of the plan in particular that could single-handedly determine its success or failure.

Another of its strengths is that the Strategic Plan is a living document. For each focus and foundational area there are concrete benchmarks, places at which we can measure how far we've come and re-evaluate how we will get to the next benchmark. And, as any good plan contains contingencies for unforeseen obstacles and inclement weather, so does Expedition 2013. The flexibility inherent in the plan allows us to adapt in order to reach our goals.

Okay, you know why you're going, you've chosen your destination, made a plan... what's left? Start hiking! NOLS is already hard at work on reaching its stated goals, even though the Strategic Plan is

still hot off of the press. John Gookin, NOLS curriculum manager, is working with the University of Utah to analyze a study of leadership development on semester-long courses, so that we can take a good thing and make it better. The environmental sustainability initiative launched last year has ongoing implications that fall into the environmental goals of the Strategic Plan. Every branch of the school has a part to play, and folks are excited and hard at work.

Bruce Palmer, NOLS admission and marketing director, says, "NOLS already is the industry leader in areas like the student experience and risk management. What this plan does is propel NOLS to the

cutting edge in every category." And as Executive Director John Gans says, "The Strategic Plan takes a fabulous mission and extends it further. How can you not be excited about that?"

To read the Strategic Plan in its entirety, go to www.nols.edu/strategic_plan

THE MISSION OF THE NATIONAL OUTDOOR LEADERSHIP SCHOOL IS TO BE THE LEADING SOURCE AND TEACHER OF WILDERNESS SKILLS AND LEADERSHIP THAT SERVE PEOPLE AND THE ENVIRONMENT.

Expedition 2013 Primary Focus Areas:

- Staff Excellence
- Diversity
- Evidence-based Curriculum Development
- Environmental Stewardship
- Philanthropic Support

Foundational Areas of Support:

- Students
- Risk Management
- Access to Wilderness Classrooms
- Technology
- Expanding Brand Awareness
- Financial Equilibrium and Strength

Louis Sass

WILD SIDE OF MEDICINE



Snow Blindness and Sunburn Two Overlooked Winter Injuries

BY TOD SCHIMELPFENIG, WMI CURRICULUM DIRECTOR

When you think of winter-specific injuries, hypothermia and frostbite immediately come to mind, but they are not the only issues of which winter adventurers should be aware.

Snow Blindness

Snow blindness is one of many medical problems with subtle, or no, warning signs. Expose your eyes to too much ultraviolet radiation and 6–10 hours later you may feel the pain, the sand in the eyes sensation, blurred vision, and light sensitivity that accompany this burn of the conjunctiva, the covering of the eye.

Sunshine reflecting off light granite, desert sand, or the water is hard on the eyes, but the real culprit is snow. Fresh snow and bluebird skies can increase the light exposure 10 times beyond what is safe. In conditions of intense reflection, snow blindness can happen in as little as 20 minutes.

There is little to be done for this injury, which usually resolves in 24–48 hours. What you can do is apply patience, along with cool water flushes of the eye, and cool compresses. Rest and avoiding more sun exposure will help, as will pain medications. The lore of wilderness medicine speaks of applying tea bags to the eyes, supposedly for the therapeutic value of tannic acid in the tea. I have not seen science telling me the tannic acid works, but I know several people who speak to the soothing comfort of a moist tea bag.

Protection is found in sunglasses rated for 100 percent UV protection and designed to reduce light leaking in from the sides. If you lose your sunglasses, improvise a pair with anything that will block light (duct tape, cardboard, dark plastic). A thin horizontal slit or pinhole will allow you to see while reducing the light reaching your eyes.

Sunburn in the Winter?

While you may associate sunburns with sunny summer days, don't forget about the possibility of sunburns in the winter. There may be fewer hours of sunlight, but it's still enough to harm your skin. The risk of sunburn under clouds is another subtlety, because clouds do attenuate ultraviolet radiation exposure. Absorption of ultraviolet radiation by clouds varies widely (10–80 percent) depending on cloud type, water vapor, atmospheric particles, elevation, latitude, and other factors, but rarely is it more than 40 percent. UVA, which is responsible for photoaging and reactions such as sun bumps, penetrates clouds better than UVB.

You are more at risk under thin clouds (less protection), at midday (direct sun), at altitude (less atmosphere), and in the tropics (direct sun). At altitude the risk is significant. For people with more susceptible skin the risk is greater everywhere. The skin damage from sunlight is well documented and habits of protection by either clothing or chemical barriers are important.

MEDICINE QUIZ

What are the common early signs and symptoms of a non-freezing cold injury? (Answer on page 13)

- A. Blisters
- B. Cold, hard tissue
- C. Numbness, itching, or pain

Real Life Drama WMI Instructor in the San Juan Mountains

The Wilderness Medicine Institute (WMI) teaches medicine for times when there are few resources, limited assistance is available, and challenging decisions in remote environments are required. Here is a story from WMI instructor Tim Thomas, who put his training into action while in the San Juan Mountains last spring.

"With a hefty snowpack this winter in the San Juan Mountains of Colorado, it was time for a spring ski traverse of the Continental Divide Trail—Wolf Creek Pass to Silverton. The distance is 100 miles. Dustin and I thought we could whip it out in four 25-mile days. The end of day one found us at only 12 miles. Route finding was difficult, and the snow we encountered was everything from boilerplate to powder to sun cups to sastrugi. On day two we fared no better. Then that night, camped at 11,500 feet, I was woken by Dustin saying, 'Tim, wake up man, I've got fluid in my lungs, we have to go down now.' Dustin had HAPE (high altitude pulmonary edema). Even though this didn't develop like textbook HAPE, I trusted his self diagnosis as he had had HAPE before at over 9,000 feet. He never exhibited a dry cough but within three hours had developed a productive cough with wet lung sounds. He became fatigued, despite his excellent fitness, and his heart rate and respirations were elevated, with exhaling seeming more difficult than inhaling.

Dustin thought he could still travel and we knew descent was the best treatment. Descending the fastest route we could via the East Fork of the Piedra River, by 3:00 a.m. we made it down to around 10,400 feet. Dustin had been skiing unassisted but he now had a productive cough and was spitting up a yellowish fluid. He had low energy and an urgency that comes from experience.

By 10:30 a.m. we had only descended another 400 feet and were facing yet another terrain trap. Dustin was not up to negotiating this one and we decided I should go for help. I made it out that night and found a phone to call search and rescue.

The paramedics arrived by helicopter in the morning and noted Dustin's reduced core temperature, dehydration, and low blood oxygen saturation (high 70 percents). Dustin was barely able to stand. At the hospital, examination confirmed his diagnosis of HAPE. He was released the following evening when the liquid in his lungs had been reabsorbed and his blood oxygen saturation was above 92 percent."

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.

To find a course near you, contact us at: www.nols.edu/wmi or (866) 831-9001.



FEATURED COURSE

WILDERNESS FIRST AID (WFA)

This two- or three-day scenario-based course covers a wide range of wilderness medicine topics:

- patient assessment
- wound management
- fractures and dislocations

For a WFA course schedule and additional WMI course descriptions, visit: www.nols.edu/wmi/courses/wildfirstaid.shtml

ISSUE ROOM

Thinking Clearly About Climate Change Policy

BY PETE GEDDES, NOLS GRAD AND FORMER INSTRUCTOR

During my decade as a NOLS instructor, I heard stories of courses that shot wildlife, climbed over piton-scarred rock, and saw vegetation damaged by long ago fires. Over time sensitivities change. Clean protection replaced pitons, and stoves, cook fires. Social values, like ecosystems, evolve.

We see this in the way we think about the environment. For example, in the 1960s the U.S. Navy occasionally used whales for target practice. A quarter century later, the Navy spent over \$1 million to help rescue a single whale trapped under polar ice. “Swamps” have become “valuable wetlands,” and creatures once considered vicious predators, such as wolves, now adorn our nature books and calendars.

It’s no surprise that NOLS has made efforts to reduce its carbon footprint. This reflects a long emphasis on personal responsibility and leading by example. How might we apply this evolutionary perspective to helping students understand an issue as scientifically complex and highly emotional as climate change?

For over a decade, I’ve explored the environmental and policy implications of climate change with some of the world’s foremost physical and social scientists, including several Nobel Prize winners. Climate change is especially vexing for the following reasons:

The atmosphere is a commons with unrestricted access. The benefits of burning fossil fuels accrue to individuals and the costs are borne by all. A key challenge is to design institutions that will effectively “enclose” the commons.

Carbon dioxide is a persistent atmospheric resident. If overnight we eliminated every source of manmade CO₂, the atmosphere would continue warming for 100 years or more. This is primarily due to the thermodynamics of the oceans.

Billions of the earth’s poorest are just climbing out of desperate poverty. Affordable, reliable electricity is essential to their successful escape—and they know it. Electricity removes drudgery, builds

and lights schools, provides clean water, and powers machinery. Increasing energy consumption in the developing world is a prerequisite for both economic and environmental well-being. “If people don’t have electricity,” says Gordon Mwesigye, a senior official in Uganda, “they will cut down trees, and Africa will lose its wildlife habitats.” He understands that poverty is the worst polluter.

Countries at low latitudes that depend on agriculture are most vulnerable to a warming climate. Reducing global carbon emissions will not fix poor

Addressing climate change requires international cooperation for a simple reason: it is a global problem.

land-use practices, encourage civil society, restore degraded local environments, improve emergency preparedness, or eliminate floods, droughts, or disease outbreaks. They need to be more resilient to climate change today.

The huge investments in energy infrastructure being made by China and India today have a lifetime of 50 years or more. Their fuel of choice is coal. Substantial research and development investments are required to develop the technology necessary to capture and safely store emissions from coal-fired power plants. Without this technology, we will not achieve meaningful carbon reductions.

Wind and solar are growing energy sources, but their usefulness will be limited to a niche role unless economical, large-scale storage can be developed. This is a basic science and engineering question that has proven difficult to crack.

Addressing climate change requires international cooperation for a simple reason: it is a global problem. No nation is going to implement an agreement whose costs greatly outweigh its benefits. Permanent solutions require the discovery and adoption of new technologies. The next U.S. president should make this explicit. Constructive proposals will include transferring efficient energy technologies to developing countries.

We’re entering the early stages of a transition from fossil fuels that will likely continue through this century. Vaclav Smil of the University of Manitoba

describes the significance: “We are now at a point in time comparable to 1850, which marked the outset of the last great energy transition. Then, about 85 percent of the world’s total primary energy supply came from biomass fuels. In 2005 about 85 percent of the total supply originated from fossil fuels.... A non-fossil [fuel] world may be highly desirable, but getting there will demand great determination, cost and patience.”

Patrick Clark, a fellow NOLS instructor and great friend, used to remind students as they checked their systems before rappelling, “Remember, gravity always works.” And the economist Thomas Sowell often remarks, “Reality is not optional.” Nowhere is his observation more germane than climate change policy.

Pete Geddes is Executive Vice President of the Foundation for Research on Economics & the Environment (FREE). Pete is a graduate of North Cascades Mountaineering 07/11/83 and Mountain Instructor Course 07/25/84. Contact him at pgeddes@free-eco.org.

SUSTAINABILITY UPDATE

BY JEN LAMB, NOLS PUBLIC POLICY DIRECTOR



In September we welcomed Karly Copeland (left) to the newly created, half-time position of sustainability coordinator! It’s an exciting time for NOLS as we commit space in our budget

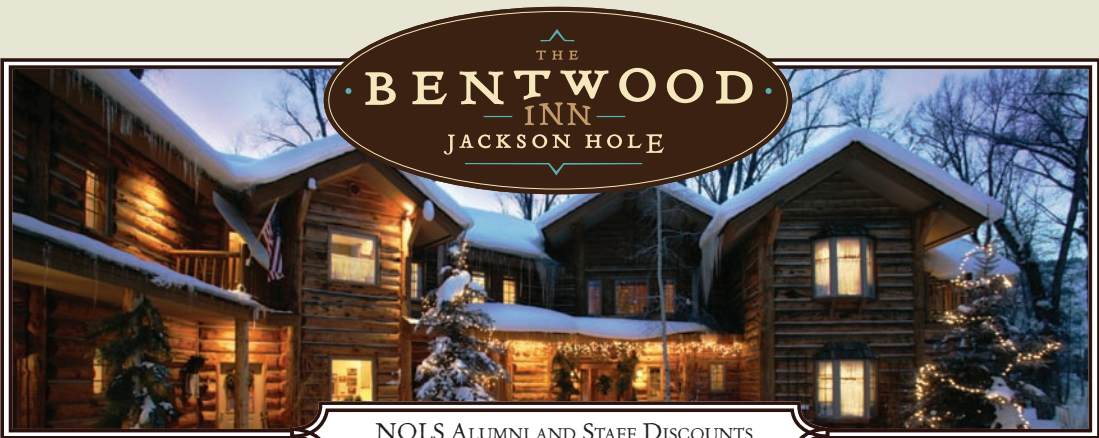
to making measurable strides to become a more environmentally sustainable organization. We are excited to have Karly join us: she brings strong systems experience to the position, having spent the past three years designing and managing systems for NOLS Professional Training. This will be critical to our success as we dissect (and potentially modify) the systems that will enable us to measure our footprint on a regular basis. A new NOLS field instructor, she also brings a passion for translating what we learn on our sustainability path (or off-trail expedition, as the case may be) into educational opportunities for staff and students. Karly is diving head first into the details of establishing NOLS’ carbon footprint boundary and crafting a long-term plan for the school’s sustainability initiative.

In the curriculum realm, we have formed an exciting new partnership with the National Wildlife Federation (NWF). The national nonprofit organization has offered to use their science-based resources to develop regionally specific training for NOLS field instructors on the impacts of global climate change. This will enhance the body of existing materials created by our curriculum department and field instructors.

WILDERNESS QUIZ

Name the only sub-Antarctic islands with intact ecosystems. (Answer on page 13)

LUXURY RIGHT IN THE HEART OF THE TETONS



NOLS ALUMNI AND STAFF DISCOUNTS

Hey NOLS alumni and staff! Stay with us in one of our deluxe rooms with jetted tub, personal fireplace and our “hearty and sumptuous” breakfast with a wine and cheese reception nightly. Mention you’re a NOLS grad or staffer when you book and receive a 15% discount (some restrictions apply). Details online: WWW.BENTWOODINN.COM or (307) 739-1411

SURVIVING THE STORM

FILMMAKER CAPTURES A FRESH PERSPECTIVE ON THE 1996 EVEREST TRAGEDY

BY JOANNE KUNTZ

“For the first time in 27 years of filming on Everest’s often wind-battered slopes, I could turn to [my co-producer] and shout, ‘Turn off the wind!’” That’s NOLS grad and filmmaker David Breashears in an interview with PBS’ *Frontline* describing the recreation of storm scenes for his latest documentary, *Storm Over Everest*. The infamous 1996 storm on Mount Everest claimed the lives of eight climbers in one fateful night, and ten years later, after the event became one of the most notorious in Himalayan mountaineering history, David began to envision telling the story from the perspective of the survivors.

“I was called to go off to Everest in 2004 for development work and initial cinematography for a Universal Pictures feature film about the 1996 tragedy,” said David. “Over the course of the next two years the film never got a green light, but going back had caused me to re-imagine what had happened in 1996. We had all this new footage from the mountain, including some fierce and prolonged windstorms that were reminiscent of what we saw in 1996. All that was missing, which was a lot, was to interview all the survivors and recreate the night scenes of the storm.”

With permission from Universal Pictures to use the 2004 footage for a documentary, David embarked on gathering personal interviews from survivors. In an interview with Denver’s *Rocky Mountain News* he comments, “I had to gain their trust. There had been a lot written about what they had done, and some of them were really bruised and hurt by that. In gaining their trust, I had a couple of things on my side. One, that I was a mountaineer who was going to talk to other climbers, and not just some filmmaker who couldn’t understand their experience... Then I explained to them what kind of film I was going to make... It was going to be a film about why they were there. ‘We’re going to lead people up the mountain, as you describe it, then down the mountain and into the storm, as you describe it.’”

Although David was on the mountain in May 1996 during the days of the legendary storm, he admits that through interviewing the survivors for his documentary, he learned how little he really knew about the actual events that took place with the climbers, even after all the stories that had been published and the one film that had been made: “I learned what a complicated mix this all is and that these events can be—[with] memory, and the ‘fog of war,’ the sleep-deprivation, the hypoxia, the lack of food and water, the driving force of 80 mph wind blowing snow, and the darkness. There’s many, many versions of what happened those few days, and out of those versions comes sort of a collective truth.”

What is that collective truth? David says, “I have watched mountaineering evolve quite a bit. It’s gone from the idea of climbing Everest, period, to the soloing of Everest to not using supplemental oxygen to climbing Everest becoming a season. In 2007, 500 people climbed the mountain. I’ve seen the sport become more accessible to people who I’d never thought would be compelled to want to do it... but the mountaineers of the last 10 years have not invented the human spirit.”

And that’s what the survivors talk about in *Storm Over Everest*. They talk about that human spirit: why they were there climbing, why they made the decisions they did on the fateful days of the storm, and how they have come to



David Breashears

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terms with the deaths of friends and fellow climbers and their own survival. As David says at the end of the documentary, “For as long as people are drawn to Everest, this line of memorials will continue to grow. The mountain doesn’t care whether we’re here or not. It doesn’t compete with us. It isn’t burdened by our

hopes and dreams. Everything it means to us is only what we bring to it. It’s what the mountain reveals about us that has any lasting value.”

Lessons that David explores in his documentary are those he’s carried with him since he was a teenager traveling with NOLS through the mountains of Wyoming. “What I learned at 15 years old in Lander and in the mountains of the Wind River Range is that, under stress, you get insights into your own behavior of how you’re going to react.” He recounts stories of being 16 and 17 and purposefully putting himself into challenging situations when he could still manage the risk: “We’d go out after a fresh snowfall and do modest rock climbs, 5.4–5.5, and take off our mittens because we knew someday we’d be on a climb, far from anywhere, and if it snows how do we manage our gear? How do we set anchors? We went ice climbing in the dark with headlamps, because our feeling was that the first time I have to descend a rock wall or an icefall at night in a snowstorm shouldn’t be high on a big mountain. So much of success in mountaineering (and by that I mean staying safe and living a long life) is just fundamentals.”

Whether we learn this lesson through remembering the struggle of climbers at high-altitude on one

of the most sought-after peaks in the world or simply challenging ourselves on personal trips in the backcountry, it’s important to remember that many of us have the same motivation, that same human spirit of pushing ourselves physically and mentally toward a goal. We are not the first, and we won’t be the last.

Watch excerpts of Storm Over Everest, read the Frontline interview with producer and director David Breashears, purchase the DVD, or download the transcript at www.pbs.org/frontline/everest, and feel for yourself the human spirit it takes to endure Mt. Everest. David is a graduate of Adventure Course 07/15/71.



Courtesy of David Breashears

NOLS Grad David Breashears filming on Mt. Everest.

FILM REVIEW



Storm Over Everest
Produced and directed by David Breashears

REVIEW BY CASEY KANODE, NOLS VIDEO PRODUCTION INTERN

The story of the 1996 climbing season on Mount Everest is familiar to any outdoor enthusiast. That year, 15 people perished in the shadow of Everest while attempting to summit. NOLS grad and filmmaker David Breashears’ new film *Storm Over Everest* explores the events that occurred on May 11, 1996, when eight of those fifteen people died during a horrendous storm that blanketed the mountain.

Many stories have been told about that day on Everest, stories that often carry a weight of blame or accusation to them. In *Storm Over Everest*, Breashears, who was on the mountain that day with an IMAX crew, avoids finger pointing and biased storytelling. Interviews with many of those involved, including sherpas who have never spoken on camera before, are paired with dramatic re-enactments and Breashears’ still photography to help paint a detailed portrait of what unfolded. The finished product is a film that not only conveys the horror that the climbers experienced physically, but also provides insight into the personal convictions of those who were forced to rely on each other for survival.

Rather than promoting his opinion, Breashears lets those directly involved tell the story, and the result is the most honest account of the accident ever told. His firsthand knowledge of the incident and his respect towards those involved is apparent. *Storm Over Everest* is a documentary that avoids the temptation to sensationalize a story that needs no extra drama. It is not only the latest attempt at re-telling the story of those fateful days on Everest, but it is quite possibly the most genuine attempt yet.

Q & A



NOLS Patagonia Director Judd Rogers with his wife, Carolina, and son, Sammy.

A Cultural Experience

Q&A with Judd Rogers, NOLS Patagonia Director

BY LAUREN WETHERBEE

Q How long have you been the branch director for NOLS Patagonia and how did you end up in that position?

A Just over five years now. My path to this job really took me through a lot of different facets of NOLS. I graduated from Lander Valley High in 1989 and got a scholarship to take a Wind River Mountaineering course in June—that course was my first introduction to NOLS. I had great instructors and I came off going, “Wow, I kind of like this.” I got a job in the issue room at NOLS Rocky Mountain and it opened up a whole new world to me.

People at NOLS watch out for your career path and put opportunities in front of you and I just kept jumping on opportunities. In 1992 I took my Instructor Course and did a bunch of field work for NOLS, bumping back and forth between Wyoming, Alaska, and Patagonia. Eventually, my knees got tired and I met a gal in Chile; we got married, and now I’m a desk jockey.

Q Before becoming the director, you instructed NOLS Patagonia courses off and on for 10 years—what is it about Chile that makes exploring there so unique?

A The sheer beauty of the place. It’s a very dramatic landscape—fifty miles to the west are the fjords of the Pacific Ocean and the Chonos Island Archipelago, these glacially carved land masses that are caked with unbelievably dense vegetation. Fifty miles the other direction is the Argentine Patagonian *pompa*, similar to the plains in Wyoming. In between, where we live, are foothills of the mountains and more alpine. The biological diversity is incredible. Culturally, Chile is a bit of an island. It’s attached to the continent but it’s got the Andes ripping down the border. The people are pretty united from north to south but are also incredibly welcoming to outsiders.

Q The Year in Patagonia includes the longest cultural section on a NOLS course—between ten days and two weeks spent living and working with *poblador* families. What was the push behind including such a significant cultural section?

A A highlight of our mountain travel and sea kayaking sections is stumbling upon families that are living in what anywhere else in the world would be designated wilderness. As we developed friendships over time, it seemed like the perfect fit to have our students spend more one on one time with these families. We wanted people to be challenged with their language, open up to the cultural world, and be in a position where they have to be a kid again and learn how things work. Mostly what they’re doing is eating meat or drinking *mate*, and going out and doing chores, working on a farm at the same time that they’re learning how to cope with another culture and speak another language.

Q Are students required to have some Spanish knowledge before enrolling on a Year in Patagonia?

A It is not a prerequisite, though it is highly recommended, ultimately for their own benefit. We don’t have a formal Spanish curriculum that we try to teach through the course, however, we staff our courses with a combination of Spanish speaking and English speaking instructors. The more Spanish students have, the more they’re going to be able to enjoy this experience, but ultimately, there’s always a way to communicate. When our students leave the Patagonia year, those that have a Spanish background leave much stronger, and those that don’t have a Spanish background leave ready to go get more.

Q What kind of presence does NOLS have in the local community of Coyhaique or the larger community of Chile?

A We started with a small office in downtown Coyhaique, right in the heart of it, where we were for eighteen years. We recently moved our offices into my old house on the NOLS *campo*. We’ve developed a local educator program that had 100 graduates last year, which is a third of our total students. The Chilean educator course, Chilean mountaineering course, and LNT Masters courses (*No Deje Rastro* in Spanish) are offered exclusively in Spanish, and we work with WMI to run Wilderness First Aids with CPR and Wilderness First Responders in Spanish. We have translated most of our materials into Spanish, and have a little *tríptico*, a brochure, *¿Quiénes Somos y Que Hacemos?* (Who Are We and What Do We Do?). We have a scholarship program that gives away over \$100,000 a year

in scholarships for Chileans to take catalog courses in Chile, in addition to the subsidized Spanish program courses.

Over the past 18 years, the sons and daughters of community leaders have taken courses and now they are becoming community leaders, so it’s a very successful way to integrate ourselves. We would love to be a Chilean entity and organization and we do that through who we hire—of our 24 intown staff, 19 are Chilean. We’ve run courses from north to south, from Arica to Magallanes to Tierra del Fuego, and we also provide training for the park rangers, for CONAF, and do contract courses for other outfits that either want to bolster their tourism or learn about LNT. We’re all over the place and NOLS has a really good reputation in Chile for providing excellent outdoor education.

Q You and your wife, Carolina, have two children. What’s it like raising your family there?

A My boy, Samuel, was born in Coyhaique and is four and a half now, and Sophia Leonor was born in August. It’s an amazing place to raise kids. Carolina’s family settled Patagonia so there are several generations of her family here and we have a big network of friends and family. We’ve been down here for long enough that other NOLS staff and faculty have married Chileans and they have their kids. It’s becoming this cool merger of two cultures and the NOLS compound, or farm—*campo*, we call it—is a pretty crazy, international destination because we have all these folks coming from all over the world. Sammy and Sophia are growing up completely connected with the natural world around them. I’m really excited about that.

Q The season in Patagonia runs from September to April. What do you do in the off-season (May to August)?

A I usually take a month, grab the family, and we just go somewhere. Anywhere but Coyhaique in the middle of winter. Then July I’ll usually spend in Lander, building a plan for the coming season and spending time with different departments at HQ, getting reacquainted with where the school’s going.

Judd recently won an intown staff award for 2008 for his aptitude and passion in leading NOLS Patagonia. Congratulations, Judd!

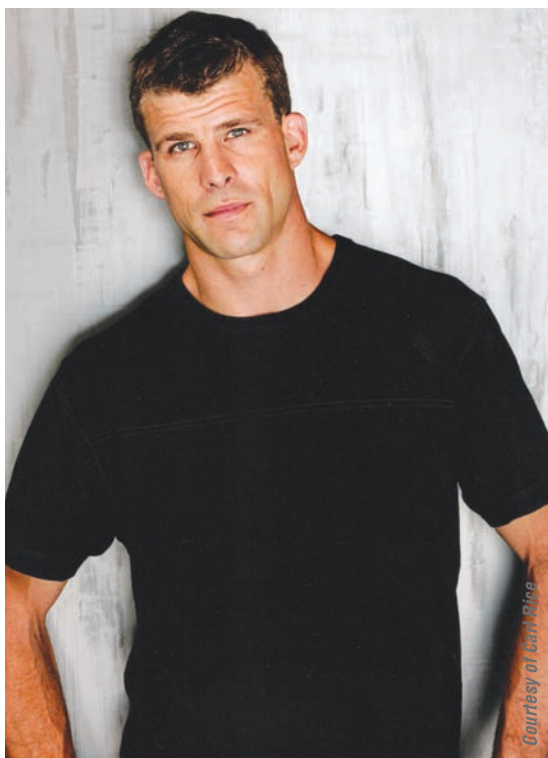
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ALUMNI PROFILE



Falling Without a Rope

Grad Carl Rice Uses His NOLS Training in an Untraditional Way

BY LISA HUENEKE, WMI CREATIVE DESIGNER

The phone rings. The voice on the other end says they need you first thing in the morning. They want you to be set on fire, fall from a tall building, then crash a motorcycle. It might sound crazy to you, but for Carl Rice, professional Hollywood stuntman and NOLS grad, it's all in a day's work.

Carl grew up in New Hampshire, camping, hiking, sailing, and canoeing a long way from the bright lights of Hollywood. After graduating high school, he took a NOLS Semester in the Pacific Northwest. "It was life changing," he says. "When I came home my dad said I looked 10 feet taller."

He returned from the course confident in his abilities and seeking his next adventure, which he found in the form of a 30-foot cutter rig sailboat. Ac-

companied by two friends, Carl sailed from Maine to Scotland in 28 days during which they endured a 16-day storm. "It was as if you tipped your office on its side, shook it for a while, and had water constantly flooding in on you," he remembers.

That experience, however, did not sway him from the water and upon returning to the States, Carl became a rafting and river guide out of California, then spent a year in Africa guiding on the Zambezi River in Zimbabwe. Expedition behavior he learned on his NOLS course, Carl says, helped him the most in his guiding jobs, enabling him to successfully work with all sorts of other guides and clients.

After a few years, though, he was burnt out on guiding and went looking for a new kind of challenge. His sister suggested he look into stunt school, so he enrolled in a six-week course in Florida. After completing his training he found himself taking his first professional 30-foot fall at a LIVE concert and has been working as a stuntman ever since. A highlight of his career was stepping in for Harrison Ford's injured stunt double on the set of the new Indiana Jones film, *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull*. Hired to do stunts for the film, he was not expecting to be sporting the famous hat and whip, but one morning, "they lined us up and said 'Carl get dressed,'" he recalls. It is Carl, not Harrison Ford, who is effortlessly running across warehouse rafters in the beginning of the film.

How does he psych himself up to jump from rafter to rafter or take a huge fall? Experience, Carl explains, is how he overcomes the fear of doing a dangerous stunt. He says the hardest stunts for him are memorizing the moves and maneuvers required to pull off complex car chases. Not content to just perform the stunts, he also knows the rigging ins and outs it takes to create them. He prefers to work on movie sets, but admits that one of his favorite jobs was building car stunts for the reality show *Fear Factor*. In the stunt world, many of the days are long and can be physically and mentally challenging, but other days are spent mostly waiting around. This is when Carl has found his travel and outdoor experience beneficial, filling the

time by sharing his adventure stories with others.

So what does this stuntman do when he is not jumping from windows, being set on fire, or out-driving villains from behind the wheel of a high-powered sports car? He teaches car stunts at a stunt school and is always planning his next outdoor adventure. "That

is one of the nice things about my job," he says, "I am still able to do a lot of personal trips." To deal with the fast pace and avoid feeling claustrophobic in L.A., Carl kite surfs, kayaks, and hikes in areas outside of

the city. In November, he will escape on a 25-day trip into the Grand Canyon.

Carl notes that he is not alone in the stunt world with his outdoor background. In fact, he says it is common for stuntpeople to have rock climbing experience and to stay in shape not only through sports like karate and gymnastics, but also through climbing and other outdoor activities. And while he enjoys the diversity that being in a city and his line of work bring, eventually he may phase out of the stunt industry in order to live closer to the wilderness.

Carl Rice certainly has made his own path in life and credits his experience at NOLS with giving him a solid foundation and enough confidence to go out and do it. So the next time your favorite celebrity actor is hanging from a ledge, it just may be a fellow NOLS grad, but don't worry, he knows how to take a fall and make it look good.

Carl is a graduate of Semester in the Pacific Northwest 09/16/91.

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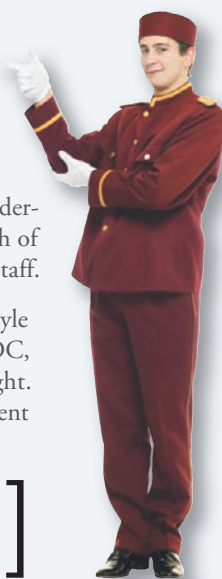
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GORILLA PASS

ON THE TRAIL IN THE REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Kelly Matheson

I was lost in thought, kneeling above a silverback gorilla nest and wondering about my place in this world, when an unmistakable sound stilled our team. Reverberating through the Central African cloud forest came the thundering chest beats of a 375-pound gorilla. The strength of the sound meant a group of gorillas rested just 300 yards from where we worked collecting data.

I landed in the Republic of the Congo, also called Congo-Brazzaville or Congo-B, to work with villagers, wildlife specialists, and the gorillas of Central Africa to learn about the relationship between our health and the health of a revered species with whom we share 95 percent of our DNA. I came hoping to make a small contribution to global health and conservation efforts by creating and showing films on the connections between our health and the health of these magnificent animals. The stories that drew me here were tales of deadly diseases with unfamiliar names that make it sound as if they only strike strangers in faraway lands. But deadly diseases are not as far away as we think. As pointed out by writer David Quammen, “Infectious disease is all around us. [It] is a kind of natural mortar binding . . . one species to another, within the elaborate edifices we call ecosystems.”

With the support of Fulbright’s Africa Regional Research Program, the Central African Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE), and CARPE’s collaborators, I filmed along the trail of the lethal Ebola virus. Ebola’s storyline commonly goes like this: The disease breaks out in great apes—gorillas or chimpanzees. Village hunters find an ape’s carcass in the forest and, believing this “free meat” is a gift from the spirits, carry it back to the village. There, they either sell it in the lucrative bushmeat trade or prepare it to eat. Anyone who comes into contact with an infected carcass can acquire the disease. There is no cure and no vaccine yet available and up to 80 percent of humans and great apes infected will die.

The story gets little play in the international press as Ebola has yet to cause mass deaths in human populations and those who do die from Ebola typically are the forgotten inhabitants of remote African villages. But despite the low death toll, public health experts across the globe are paying attention. They pay heed because the possibility of a pandemic that races through humans and wildlife engenders catastrophic health, ethical, social, environmental, and economic concerns.

I traveled by rusted trucks, bikes without brakes, planes, boats, buses, motorcycles, and on foot on the remote paths of northern Congo to meet villagers at risk of Ebola exposure and those who dedicate their lives to protecting our world’s health. The stories are many. Here are two.

THE BEST TWO DAYS IT TOOK EIGHT DAYS TO HAVE

The Republic of the Congo is sub-Saharan Africa’s fifth-largest oil producer. Ranked 38th in the world, Congo-B produces over 260,000 barrels a day, pumping over 97 percent of its daily yield directly into world markets.

Every five years, the state-owned refinery performs routine maintenance that temporarily stops the massive production and supply cycle. Before beginning the work, officials determine how much petrol the country needs during the shutdown and sets those reserves aside. But things don’t always go as planned. Anywhere. But especially in Congo. On May 9 Congo-B ran out of gas.

May 9 happened to be the day I planned to fly to Nouabalé-Ndoki National Park to see the landscapes and wildlife I was in Congo working to protect, and to at last experience exactly what it feels like to see a gorilla face-to-face. I felt this would help me understand why sharing this world with gorillas is an honor worth protecting. Six days after our scheduled departure, the long-awaited fuel arrived, bringing an end to our involuntary idle.

We landed in the red dirt town of Ouessou and took a *pirogue* (dugout canoe) up the Sangha River to reach the base camp of Nouabalé-Ndoki. I watched the sun set over the forest canopy on the Sangha, a wide, dark river that joins the Congo River three days’ travel downstream. After a warm beer on the border of Congo and Cameroon, we jumped into a Land Cruiser and drove through the dark forest to our bungalow near Bomassa village.

First light and hot coffee brought a relaxed beginning to an unforgettable day. Fishermen were landing in their pirogues with the morning’s catch while monkeys enjoyed fruits in their treetop perches. I piled into the back of a pickup and rode through the forest, feeling the first cool breeze in months hit my face as we drove along a narrow road cut deep into the Congo Basin.

Our drive ended at a river put in. Pirogue guides paddled from a standing position, constantly shifting our direction in the dance that took our petite boat through the narrow geography of the Mbeli River. At any point, I could reach out and touch the forest. Shafts of light shined through the canopy and the sounds changed around every bend. A boardwalk appeared and a short hike landed us at the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) research station for Mbeli Bai. From the station, we hiked another 40 minutes to a place where the forest opened up, giving us a window into the gorilla’s world.

Mbeli Bai is a 13-hectare clearing in the middle of tropical forest. It is also one of a few places in the world where a person can spend the day, 25 feet up on a stilted wooden structure, watching gorillas. As we reached the top of the wooden staircase, our tracker pointed toward a group of eight gorillas lounging in the swampy mat of green, casually pulling up wetlands plants, stripping away all the undesirable bits, enjoying only the finest botanicals.

Dedicated researchers with WCS watch over the Bai every day, recording the daily happenings and telling visitors the stories of the gorillas, elephants, and sitatungas who live there. Our volunteer researcher, Julia, shared

I traveled by rusted trucks, bikes without brakes, planes, boats, buses, motorcycles, and on foot on the remote paths of northern Congo to meet villagers at risk of Ebola exposure and those who dedicate their lives to protecting our world’s health.

SAGE

NGO AND CAMEROON

BY KELLY MATHESON, NOLS GRAD

The view from the research station on Mt. Kagwene in the newly created Kagwene Gorilla Sanctuary.

that we were watching a silverback (the lead gorilla) named Dwayne and his group. Dwayne is a male worthy of admiration. He first introduced himself to researchers in 1995 when he showed up at Mbeli as a solitary bachelor. He left in '96, returning 18 months later with a harem of nine and four of his own young. Under the category of "Life History Milestones" in his biography it reads, "Too many kids sired to mention them all."

Just to the east of Dwayne's group sat six infrequent visitors to the Bai—a silverback named Sangha and the rest of his troop. We sat, quietly peering back and forth between the two groups, spending the day in the company of gorillas.

During our second day at the Bai, we were introduced to a group led by a silverback named Zulu and crossed paths with a troop of chimpanzees and a forest elephant. One of my traveling companions summed it up best, concluding that our time at Mbeli was "the best two days it took eight days to have."

GORILLA PASSAGE

I peered out the window of the lone international departure gate at Brazzaville's dilapidated Maya Maya airport, waiting for my Cameroon flight with Dr. Ken Cameron, a field veterinarian with WCS's Global Health Programs. In Cameroon, Ken would work with WCS's Cross River Gorilla Project to develop a health program protecting villagers and gorillas alike. I went to see how this was done. The usual obstacles stood in our way—delayed flights, international formalities, crawling traffic jams—but lows are always followed by highs.

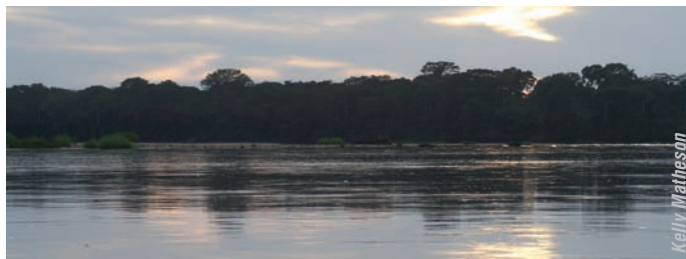
Our work began at Kagwene Research Station, in western Cameroon not far from the Nigerian border. The station sits atop a high point on a grassy slope on the edge of the cloud forest. Mt. Kagwene, with its steep slopes, is one of only 11 enclaves in a fragmented landscape where the Cross River gorilla is known to live. At last count researchers estimated there to be fewer than 300 of these gorillas left in the wild. Less than 15 Westerners have ever seen this ape, and photos of this forest-dweller in the wild are even scarcer—four in total. Their rarity means that the Cross River gorilla could disappear from the planet if agriculture, logging, hunting, or one sudden swipe of a lethal disease pushes them too far. But there is reason for hope. WCS is leading an effort to protect the places these gorillas call home. Their most recent success was the signing of a formal decree creating the Kagwene Gorilla Sanctuary, providing protections for the gorillas who live there.



Kelly Matheson



Kelly Matheson



Kelly Matheson



© Thomas Breuer, Principal Investigator, Mbeli Bai

Clockwise from top left: Early morning outside Kagwene Gorilla Sanctuary; Field assistants examine a silverback nest; Sunset over the Sangha River, northern Congo; Sangha, a silverback, and his troop; Crossing the Sangha in a pirogue.

I arrived with a team of specialists to learn how best to protect gorillas from zoonosis—a word Quammen describes with ease. "When a pathogen leaps from some nonhuman animals into a person and succeeds there in making trouble, the result is what's known as a zoonosis. It's a word of the future, destined for heavy use in the 21st century."

From the research station, we headed out on a routine survey to observe the field assistants and improve already solid health precautions. The surveys begin by going to the gorilla's last known location and then following what's called the "gorilla passage" to the nest where the gorillas slept just hours before. The field assistants, who double as expert trackers, do this by following signs—tracks, branches stripped bare, bent twigs, and dung. Since contact with gorillas is purposely avoided, researchers learn about them by counting their nests and examining their dung. And while face-to-face encounters with the gorillas are extremely rare, gorillas can be exposed to disease left at their nest or along their passage via microbes on boots, on human hands, or in a sneeze. Precautions are mandatory for those who travel in a gorilla's domain.

We arrived at the nest site after two hours and went straight to where the silverback slept. This forest giant always sleeps on the ground, off to the side, so he can keep a watchful eye over his troop who may sleep as high as 75 feet up in the canopy. At each nest site, the field assistants collect the GIS position, document the construction materials used, record the number and diameter of nests and dung, the position of the dung in relation to the nest, and the content of the dung so they know exactly what the gorillas are eating. As a friend and fellow researcher

once observed, "Gorilla research, it turns out, is actually really about dung. So much for the romance."

My job that day was not to learn the intricacies of research techniques, however. I was there to learn why it is vital to protect human and wildlife populations from all varieties of zoonotic disease and how I, as an attorney and filmmaker, could possibly make a small difference. But as we worked over the nest, I wasn't initially thinking about my future contribution. I was thinking about the moment. About how seeing a gorilla is really seeing ourselves. About

"Gorilla research, it turns out, is actually really about dung. So much for the romance."

the important ecological role they play. About how fortunate I was to share three days with these inspiring creatures, first at Mbeli Bai and now in their forest home. About my good fortune to share this world with them.

As my mind focused on the question of what it means to share the planet with gorillas and help them survive, I remembered advice shared by a friend. He taught me that small efforts really do make a difference; even when we believe our contribution couldn't truly matter, it does. Just then, the thundering chest beats of a 375-pound silverback stopped my thoughts. I sat in silence, listening, appreciating, and understanding why I hope our world will always have gorillas.

Kelly is a graduate of Mountain Instructors Course 07/29/99.

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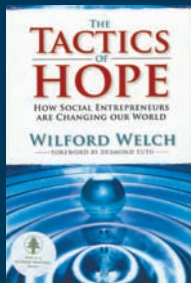
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BOOK REVIEW

The Tactics of Hope

How Social Entrepreneurs Are Changing Our World

By Wilford Welch, foreword by Desmond Tutu
© Earth Aware Editions, ISBN 978-1601090140,
\$24.95

REVIEW BY ELISA HITT

Typical books about people doing good and changing the world are inspiring, but not particularly motivating. *The Tactics of Hope*, written by Wilford Welch, former chairman of the NOLS Board, current NOLS advisory council member, and NOLS grad, isn't that kind of book. Instead of inspiring awe and guilt, it inspires action.

Welch makes the case that it is possible and necessary for individuals to make a substantial difference in addressing longstanding global problems. He believes that we have reached a "tipping point where in the next ten years we'll either start doing the right things to avoid catastrophe or we won't." *The Tactics of Hope*, to this end, includes step-by-step instructions on how to become a "social entrepreneur": be clear on what you're passionate about, determine both your skills and an appropriate degree of involvement, then take your first step.

As motivation, there follow 27 case studies, divided among the categories of Health, Education, Microcredit, Fair Trade, Human Rights and Social Justice, Disaster Relief and Rehabilitation, and The Environment and the Restoration of a Sustainable Planet. While it's possible and enjoyable to read *The Tactics of Hope* from cover to cover, these case study sections also serve well as a reference text. If, for example, as a NOLS grad you're passionate about the environment, there are four detailed profiles to serve as models for action, and another fourteen organizations listed as additional resources.

NOLS is mentioned in *The Tactics of Hope* as an organization that is "energetically and creatively addressing age-old challenges in ways that bring about systematic solutions," demonstrating "the rising power and effectiveness of youth around the world." Welch credits NOLS with giving him the grounding in the outdoor world that inspired him to social activism: "NOLS has been one of the most important organizations in my life, and always will be," he said in a recent interview. "NOLS has given me an opportunity to spend a lot of time in wilderness, and developed my deep appreciation of the natural world."

The Tactics of Hope can be found at your local bookseller or www.Amazon.com. Wilford Welch is a graduate of Thirty Niners 08/11/77 and 25 And Over Alaska Sea Kayaking 07/06/86.

ALUMNI PROFILE

NOLS Grad Taylor Cote in "Hell Hole" on the Ocoee River, Tenn.

Down Rivers, Up Mountains, and Into Orbit

NOLS Grad Taylor Cote Is Up for the Challenge

BY LAUREN WETHERBEE

She's climbed Mt. Rainier, Mt. St. Helens, and Mt. Katahdin, and has her sights on scaling Mt. Everest in a few years. She's a nationally-sponsored whitewater kayaker who has paddled some very impressive rapids. She recently rode in two fundraising bike rides that were over 100 miles each. And now, having completed her first NOLS course this past summer, she's setting out on her newest challenge: high school.

Taylor Cote may look her age and even sound her age at times, but her extracurricular activities are far from average for a 14-year-old. Even though she's only been kayaking for four years, she's built up a resume of rivers that's impressive for any professional whitewater kayaker.

She has always been an active kid and when she saw a flyer in the summer of 2004 for a beginning kayaking seminar, she signed herself and her dad, Ken, up. At the seminar, Taylor's talent and enthusiasm were recognized and an instructor suggested that she attend a beginner's kayaking camp later that summer. After that, she was hooked. "Have you ever had the urge to suddenly have a certain type of food, maybe? Well, that's how paddling is for me," Taylor says. "I have cravings for it when I'm not out there on the water."

In 2007 she attended Gauley Fest, the world's largest river festival, where kayakers and sponsors come together from all over to run seminars, network, and raise money for American Whitewater

conservation projects. Anna Levesque, a renowned whitewater kayaker, spotted Taylor at a clinic and (in Taylor's words), "found the Wave Sport people [who make my boat] and was like, oh you have to get that kid!" Sponsorship offers from Werner Paddles and Kokatat Watersport Wear soon followed.

So how did she come to NOLS? Why, through NASA, of course. From a young age, Taylor's been interested in becoming a mission specialist for NASA, attending space camp each summer in Alabama for the past five years. Two years ago, at age 12, she learned about the courses that NOLS Professional Training runs with NASA astronauts and knew that she had to do a course, too. Unfortunately

So how did she come to NOLS? Why, through NASA, of course.

for her, you have to be at least 14 to do NOLS, so her course was two years in the making. The wait was definitely worth it.

On the course, she was chosen as a leader for one of the two student expedition groups. Even though she knew her instructors were near enough to help if necessary ("they ghosted us for a little while," she notes), it was eye-opening to be out in the wilderness without an adult for the first time. "[One day] we got to camp and we heard a noise that was so



At age 13, Taylor was one of the youngest people ever to summit Mt. Rainier.

weird and we finally realized that no one was going to help us,” she remembers. But knowing that she had to rely on herself and her coursemates “gave me

“Have you ever had the urge to suddenly have a certain type of food, maybe? Well, that’s how paddling is for me. I have cravings for it when I’m not out there on the water.”

more confidence. For NOLS courses you just have to be willing to accept whatever comes at you. I feel awesome and I know I can do a whole lot of stuff,” she says. Her dad concurs: “That kid came back on top of the world.”

She’s currently a freshman at Pinecrest Christian Academy in Georgia, but her dream is to attend a kayaking high school, New River Academy. “I would love to go there,” she says, explaining that students travel the world, attending classes in the

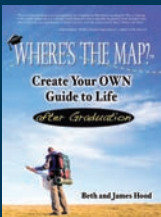
mornings and paddling in the afternoons. “It would make my paddling that much better.” For the moment, though, she’s enjoying being able to paddle every weekend. “Where we live, you can drive up to Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Alabama, so we’re kind of in a good spot.”

It’s a spot that allows her frequent visits to her favorite river, the Gauley, which she loves “because it’s so big and everything’s huge and all around you. It’s so cool,” she says. She’s run both the upper and the lower sections of the river, conquering Class IV and V rapids, and impressing professional kayakers more than twice her age. The weekend after we spoke, she and her dad were headed up to Summerville, West Virginia to participate in Gauley Fest again this year.

When asked about future goals (besides, you know, climbing Everest and going to space), she talked about running the Futaleufú River in the Andes, whose rapids draw paddlers from all over the world, and potentially doing another NOLS course. Whatever she chooses to do, one thing’s for sure: it’s going to be impressive.

Taylor is a graduate of Wyoming Adventure Backpacking 06/30/08.

BOOK REVIEW



Where’s the Map?
Create Your OWN Guide to Life after Graduation

Written by Beth and Jim Hood, © Inspiration Publications, ISBN 978-0979926204, \$19.95

REVIEW BY LAUREN WETHERBEE

Ask any NOLS grad how they would plan for an expedition into the wilderness and you’re sure to get a very thorough answer. Ask some of them how they might plan out their life after high school or college graduation, however, and there is sometimes a blank stare. That’s where *Where’s the Map?* comes in handy. While the book’s focus is primarily on recent high school graduates, sections of the book are applicable for all “What am I doing next?” people, regardless of age. Think of it as a guide to expedition planning for your life.

From the title to the last page, *Where’s the Map?* sticks to its theme of life being a journey necessitating thoughtful planning. In addition to exercises that encourage readers to list goals, create vision statements, and plan a course for their future, there are sidenotes that give insight into how others have maneuvered their way through the life-planning process. Authors Jim and Beth Hood have both written short narratives about important decisions they’ve made in their lives, allowing you to see the concepts in the book in action, in a real life.

Of particular interest to prospective NOLSies is chapter three, which focuses on gap years, and mentions NOLS as a great possibility for time off from school or work. Even for those of us who’ve completed a course, graduated college, or are out in the working world, this book offers a chance to actually sit down and write out what we’re passionate about, what’s important to us, and how we can spend our lives living our vision.

Check out the book’s website, www.wheresthemap.com, for more great advice or to get your own copy.

MEDICINE QUIZ

Answer: C (*Question on page 4*)
Don’t tolerate numbness, itching, or pain in your fingers or toes. These can be the early and subtle symptoms of a non-freezing cold injury, such as immersion foot. Nerves are sensitive to cold and these messages are telling us something is wrong. Blisters tend to form later in both frostbite and non-freezing cold injuries, and cold hard tissue suggests frostbite, the actual freezing of tissue.

WILDERNESS QUIZ

Answer: The Australian Territory of Heard Island and McDonald Island (HIMI). (*Question on page 5*)
HIMI is the only sub-Antarctic island group that has an intact ecosystem, to which no known species has been introduced directly by humans, and where the ongoing evolution of plants and animals occurs in a natural state. The vast numbers of penguins and seals that occupy the beaches are considered one of the great wildlife sights of the world.
Heard and McDonald islands are territories of Australia, both have Wilderness Reserve status as well as being listed as World Heritage Sites.
How wild are they? McDonald Island has been landed on only twice in recorded history—now that’s wild.

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RECIPE BOX



How Hot is Hot?

Testing Backcountry Cooking Temperatures

BY ELISA HITT

A typical frontcountry baking recipe starts with: “Preheat oven to 375 degrees.” When you’re sitting in camp at the end of the day, though, lighting your stove and digging out your fry-bake, that’s not very helpful. Just what is the translation between oven temps and stove temps? How big of a difference does that twiggy fire make? Does stovetop baking sterilize your pizza?

In our never-ending quest for knowledge and backcountry cooking excellence, we rustled up a pyrometer—a handheld, digital device that measures temperatures remotely—to put some field pizza recipes to the test. And while our methods are fairly unscientific, we still got some good answers.

We test-drove two pizza cooking variations—one using the flip fry method (toast the dough on one side, flip brown side up, add toppings and toast again until toppings bubble), and the other using a stove on the bottom and the iconic NOLS twiggy fire on top. We measured all the temps we could think of along the way to answer our nagging question: How hot is hot?

Here’s what our nifty pyrometer had to say:

- 1) Our dough started out at a balmy 60° while our Whisperlite roared to over 800°.
- 2) In our flip fry test, the dough’s toasted side reached 250° after about five minutes of rotated frying.

- 3) We added toppings to the browned side and commenced more rotating frying to finish the pizza. After another five minutes or so the bubbling toppings were at 150° and it was time to eat.
- 4) The alternative twiggy fire method provided plenty of quick heat, too. A 900+° fire atop our pan lid rapidly brought the dough and beautifully gooey toppings to 170°.

Our experiments indicate that both dough and toppings spend five minutes or more between 150–250°. According to Paul Auerbach’s definitive reference, *Wilderness Medicine*, those times and temperatures sterilize most pathogens commonly found in North American backcountry water. That means that both flip frying and twiggy fire baking not only make tasty pizza, they make pizza that is safe to eat. Adapting frontcountry recipes to the backcountry will always be an adventure, but at least now we know how to start: “Preheat stove to 800 degrees.”

We used a Raytek MT6 MiniTemp Infrared Thermometer to obtain temperature ratings, which is priced at around \$60 and is available from www.Amazon.com and other retailers. Our stove was an MSR Whisperlite Internationale, the same sort issued on NOLS courses, available at www.msrgear.com for \$79.95, and our pan was a Banks Expedition Model FryBake, available from the NOLS store (www.nols.edu/store) for \$68.

Got a great backcountry recipe? Send it to leader@nols.edu along with your name, NOLS course, and where the recipe was created. If your recipe is chosen, you’ll get a copy of the *NOLS Cookery*!

GEAR ROOM

Bombproof

The Das is Here to Stay

BY LAUREN WETHERBEE

Over at NOLS Teton Valley, home of the majority of our winter courses, everybody’s revved up about the Patagonia Das Parka. Why? In the words of Phil Hoffman, TVB equipment guru, it’s “a synthetic parka that behaves like a down parka. Oh, behave!” With its water-resistant, windproof shell; helmet-compatible hood; reinforced shoulders, elbows, and hips; and two-way zipper, it’s getting “rave reviews from students and staff alike,” according to Abby Warner, NOLS Teton Valley director.

As exciting as it is for those of you who backcountry tele, ice climb, and belay at temperatures below zero, what does all this mean for folks who just want to stay warm shoveling their driveway, braving the cold between apartment and subway, or snowboarding a few runs on a beautiful winter day? Even though you may not need quite as intense a parka, the same principles come into play.

Keys to a great winter parka are wind resistance, strong shell fabric and zipper, and a fill that’s warm enough for your outdoor activities. If you’re going to be out in the snow, a coat that keeps you warm even when wet is super important.

The Patagonia Das Parka is available online in both adult (\$275) and kid (\$165) sizes at www.Patagonia.com.



FIELD NOTES



NOLS grads Kevin Mahoney and Ben Gilmore proposed a direct route on the North Face of Kangtega.

Climbing With Honors

NOLS Grads Win the Prestigious Mugs Stump Award

BY ELISA HITT

What's it like to win one of the most prestigious awards in modern alpine climbing? Just ask NOLS grads and former instructors Ben Gilmore and Kevin Mahoney—they've won together, twice! "It's a great grant program," said Kevin. "I definitely feel honored."

The Mugs Stump Award, named after the prolific and visionary climber Terrence "Mugs" Stump, was instituted after his death in a crevasse fall in Alaska in 1992. Michael Kennedy, one of the award's founders, relates that it "started as a back-of-the-envelope affair, and remains so today." The award description reflects the founders' desire to keep Mugs Stump's memory alive: "Climbs proposed should present an outstanding challenge, either a first ascent, significant repeat, or first alpine-style ascent; awards will be made to climbing teams whose plans best exemplify the philosophy of 'fast, light, and clean,' with special emphasis placed on climbers leaving no trace of their passage."

"Mugs Stump Award grants are based on merit (the beauty and difficulty of the route, and the ability of the team to achieve it), the application is simple, and there are no strings attached."

Kristo Torgersen, a member of the awards committee, writes that they "receive dozens of applications each year. The degree to which each expedition is funded considers the total budget of the trip, which is largely influenced by where the objective is located, elevation of the peak (peak fees, etc.), and the number of team members. We also must consider what our budget resources are, how many trips we desire to support, and ensure the distribution of funds is fair and balanced." In 2008, they awarded grants to seven expeditions, giving away \$30,000 in total.

Kennedy believes that the Mugs Stump Award is the best grant program of its type in the world because "grants are based on merit (the beauty and difficulty of the route, and the ability of the team to achieve it), the application is simple (2 pages), and there are no strings attached." Additionally, committee members volunteer their time, so all of the money from sponsors goes directly to the grants.

Kevin and Ben taught at NOLS for a decade apiece and have been climbing partners almost as long. They first met in 1994 while working in the field for NOLS, on different courses that crossed at a pass in the Wind River Mountains. They reconnected while instructing in the Pacific Northwest, went on a personal expedition together in the Waddington Range, and have been climbing together ever since.

They won their first Mugs Stump Award in 2004, for an expedition up the East Face of the Moose's Tooth in Alaska. Their objective was to establish "the first all free new line" up this peak, a goal that they are almost positive that they accomplished, although it was a little hard to tell given the conditions in which they were climbing. Accord-

ing to the description of their expedition, two days of climbing included a mixed section of "hanging, dry tooling, aiding—just plain getting up," a "60-meter pitch of the most spectacular

climbing [they] had done in the mountains," and breaking through a summit ridge cornice. "Finally, standing on what appeared to be the summit, we braced against the 40–60 mph winds and started down."

They enjoyed this opportunity to, in their words, "struggle, freeze, hunker and climb" enough that Ben returned to a Mugs Stump expedition in 2007 with another climbing group. This year, they've been funded to make an ascent on Kangtega, a 6,799-meter peak in the Khumbu Valley in Nepal, a region best known for being en route to Everest base camp. They will be joined by fellow mountaineer Freddie Wilkinson.

Asked why they chose this peak, Kevin replies, "because of the mountain's reputation and history as a classic north face alpine route in the

Himalayas that's below 7,000 meters and highly technical." He continues, "It suits our style of climbing—mixed alpine, not extreme altitude."

Their intended climb is a direct route on the North Face. The expedition took place in October just before this issue went to press. Stay tuned to the Mugs Stump Award website for their expedition report.

When Kevin and Ben are not traveling the world in search of visionary alpine climbs, they both spend summers in the Tetons and winters climbing ice and granite in New Hampshire.

For more information on the Mugs Stump Award, including details on how to apply, visit www.mugsstumpaward.com. Ben is a graduate of Wind River Mountaineering 08/03/92 and Mountain Instructors Course 07/15/93. Kevin is a graduate of Fall Semester in the Rockies 09/13/90 and Southwest Mountain Instructor Course 04/25/94.



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www.nols.edu/alumni/employment



Ben and Kevin are psyched to "struggle, freeze, hunker and climb" together again.

JABBERWOCKY

Contact the alumni office via telephone (800-332-4280) or email (alumni@nols.edu) to find contact information for any of your coursemates or to submit your information for the next issue of *The Leader*.

GRADS FROM THE '70s**Cheryl Hirsch-Ginsberg, ADV 06/14/71**

Cheryl has finally made it to Professor at MD Anderson Cancer Center and got her 1st-degree Black Belt in Kuk Sul Wan in the fall of 2007. She hopes NOLS will offer another Kosher Adventure expedition in Wyoming or Alaska so that she can send her 13-year-old son.

GRADS FROM THE '90s**David Erickson, SAF-1 06/06/91**

David has just moved to Budapest after living in Tanzania for the last 7 years. He is the programs officer for an international NGO that has its headquarters in Budapest and works on sustainable use and wildlife conservation. You can find him on facebook. "Micky—come over for a chapatti!!"

Katherine Winder, AKW 06/20/93, WSB-1 04/06/03

Katherine flies helicopter tours in San Francisco, Calif.

Jason Cornwell, WRW-B 06/20/94

Jason is still a camping and hiking maniac who travels yearly to the northern panhandle of Idaho to hike and camp with his family for weeks on end. He owns www.CornwellCasting.com.

Kerstan Lincoln Ruffer, FSR-2 09/07/95

Kerstan and husband Guy had a baby boy, Gabriel Joseph Ruffer, on August 15, 2008, who joins his very excited older sisters Gail (age 4½) and Abby (age 3). The family lives in Lake Oswego, Oregon (outside of Portland). Kerstan wants everyone to remember what Kevin said on their NOLS course: Grab life by the malt balls!

MAKING A DIFFERENCE**Including NOLS in Your Estate**

Did you know that there are many ways other than giving to the NOLS Annual Fund to donate to the school, ways that can often bring membership-society benefits and a variety of tax-savings to you?

One great way is by naming NOLS as a beneficiary in your will. By giving in this way, you are at once declaring your support for unique wilderness education, as well as saving your estate some very significant taxes. All of the assets of which you make NOLS a beneficiary are 100 percent estate-tax deductible. This will allow your loved ones to receive more of what you desire to leave them. Additionally, upon letting NOLS know of its inclusion in your estate, you will become a member of the Summit Team, a recognition society for donors who care enough to help plan a sound financial future for NOLS and for wilderness education.

To learn about more about including NOLS in your will and other ways of giving to the school, please visit our website, www.nols.edu/giving. You might be surprised by the diversity of ways in which you can support NOLS and the variety of rewards that you can receive when you declare your support for wilderness education.

Todd Paden, SSR-2 02/03/97

After his course, Todd lived in Park City, Utah, until moving back home to Memphis, Tenn. in 2004. He and his wife, Chappell, were married 02/02/02 and have one daughter, Elizabeth Spencer Paden, born April 16, 2008. He is employed by Signature Breads Inc., covering the entire southeastern U.S. and would love to hear from others out there.

Deborah Gifford Vannoy, NWS 09/01/99

Debby is living in Georgia, coaching cross-country at a small college—which keeps her outside a lot! She and her husband, Jon, have a 2-year-old and baby #2 is due in April 2009. Their main adventure of late was in March, when they packed up baby and all and led a ski trip to St. Anton, Austria.

GRADS FROM THE '00s**Wilson Greenlaw, JSPA-1 01/30/00**

Wilson and his lovely wife embarked on a weeklong, 177-mile boat trip in May. They left Fredericksburg, Virginia on the Rappahannock River, traveled to Chesapeake Bay, made two left turns, and returned to Stafford, Virginia's Aquia Creek via the Potomac River. They faced navigational challenges, 20 mph consistent winds, 3- to 4- foot waves in the bay, and loved every minute of it.

Jeffrey Rauenhorst, WMT 07/06/00, DEN 06/01/06

Jeff recently finished his MBA at the Haas School of Business, UC Berkeley, focusing on social and

environmental entrepreneurship. He joined Feder-spiel Controls, a startup that cuts heating and cooling energy costs by 20 to 40 percent in data centers and buildings, as VP of business development. His daughter Sophia is now 20 months and already rock climbing... at the playground!

Brandon Mitchell, CWY 07/24/02

Brandon is the director of the 4-H Camp Whitewood, which serves nine counties in northeast Ohio. He is interested in starting new programs at the camp, including "edible schoolyards," to teach children about agriculture, food sources, and growing food.

Josh Helms, FSR-1 08/22/02

Josh is working for Camp Merrie Woode in Sapphire, North Carolina, and is engaged to Merrie Woode head counselor Betsy Reese.

Paul Thomson, SAKR 06/07/03

Paul is working in community-based wildlife conservation with the African Wildlife Foundation. He recently relocated to Kenya, embarking on a new communications initiative to report directly from projects in the field through multimedia. See www.awf.org/blog.

Spencer Case, GAR 09/03/03, DEN 06/01/05

Spencer is looking for volunteers to help start a non-profit. POLAR Recycling Inc. will collect and recycle garbage dumped into the waters surrounding the Earth's polar regions. You can contact Spencer at polarinc@gmail.com.

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- > **Denver, CO** | May 2009
- > **Southeast U.S.** | Fall 2009
- > **Minneapolis, MN** | Fall 2009
- > **San Francisco, CA** | Fall 2009

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Max Young, ABW 07/14/05

Max's recent adventures involve ridding herself of her car, biking around 30 miles per day, doing laundry in her sink and letting it air dry, taking late night bike rides, climbing trees, working at a farmers market, eating locally grown foods, and drinking really good coffee.

Jennifer Wilson, OEC 06/07/07

Jennifer is the coordinator for an experiential education program serving high school students in seven Milwaukee public schools. The students are part of a grant aimed at returning formerly incarcerated, expelled, or truant youth to school and providing employment and extensive support services. She leads trips to the Sylvania Wilderness; the Chequamegon National Forest; and urban rivers, parkways, and Lake Michigan frontage. "Thanks, NOLS, for the skilz and a special shout out to Zandy, Andy, and MJ and my OEC teamies!"

IN REMEMBRANCE**Marcus Hunt, BAJ 01/05/90, BAJ 03/28/90, NCM 07/18/90**

Marcus, 36, passed away on June 24 in La Jolla, Calif. An avid outdoorsman, he had a passion for skiing and loved to kayak, hike, and travel. Music was also a large part of his life, but his ultimate joy was spending time with his wife, Stacey Spoleta Hunt, and two daughters, Hayden and Gracyn. Marcus was eagerly anticipating the birth of his son in August. A memorial service was held on June 30. Memorial contributions can be made to Texas Tech School of Medicine's Department for Mental Health Research or The Nature Conservancy of New Mexico.

Scott Leister, OEM 05/21/08, WEMT 07/14/08

Scott, 21, was killed in a car accident on the Bay Bridge on August 17. Scott had an amazing passion for travel, community service, and the great outdoors. He was the president of University of Rochester's Outdoor Club. To pursue his dreams of travel, wilderness survival, and humanitarian aid,

Scott took a year off college and enrolled in multiple courses with NOLS. He recently completed both an OEM and a WEMT with WMI and was enrolled on a fall semester in the Himalayas. Services were held on August 23 in California. Memorial contributions may be made to the Pillar I Endowment Fund, which supports student participation in international community service projects.

Carolyn Randall, WFR 12/14/03, WEMT 10/15/07

Carolyn died on August 7, her 57th birthday, in a fall shortly after summiting the Matterhorn in Switzerland. Although she didn't begin climbing until age 51, Carolyn had already summited 120 of the 125 tallest peaks in Rocky Mountain National Park, with plans to climb the remaining five this fall. She was passionate about becoming a WMI instructor and had applied for the WMI instructor course this year. A service was held September 6 near Fort Collins, Colo.

Sara Shields, AKW-2 07/07/08

Sara, 17, passed away on October 4 in Boise, Idaho. She was a senior at Timberline High School. An exceptional athlete, student, artist, and outdoors-woman, she held seven letters for athletic excellence in cross-country and track and field and was recently selected again as the Timberline "Alpha Wolf" for being the top student at her high school. Sara had a passion for outdoor activities and enjoyed many trips and adventures with her family. She particularly enjoyed backpacking, mountain biking, off-road motorcycling, archery, and rock climbing, and competed in local and state mountain bike racing with her father. Services were held October 10 in Boise. Memorial contributions can be made to Timberline High School Athletics Department, Boise, Idaho.

Willie Williams, SIC 07/26/83, Senior Instructor for NOLS 1984-2004

Willie, 51, passed away on July 22. An instructor for 20 years, Willie led NOLS sea kayaking, backpacking, climbing, sailing, and mountaineering courses out of the Alaska, Pacific Northwest, Mexico, Aus-

tralia, Rocky Mountain, and Southwest branches as well as program supervising in Mexico, the Southwest, and Alaska. Most recently his greatest passions were sea kayaking, photography, music, natural history, the night sky/stars, hiking, paddling, biking, yoga, and meditation. The values of NOLS were hugely important to him and he lived his life simply, with great love for his family, friends, students, and all of nature. He attended the University of California, Santa Cruz and received a master's degree in environmental education at Humboldt State University. His home base was in the Marin Headlands with his wife, Marisa Nordstrom. Students and friends can share memories by emailing marisanordstrom@yahoo.com or cgillease@comcast.net.

Peter Kallgren, Long-Time NOLS Employee

Peter, 53, died on October 15. His NOLS career began in Mexico, continued as a driver for NOLS Rocky Mountain, and culminated in the position of NOLS purchasing manager. Peter was a master of logistics who knew the answer to any question and, always cheerfully but quietly, did many things to make headquarters and the entire NOLS community a better place. He was a loyal friend and confidant to many, with a big heart, much patient advice, and a great sense of humor. We have all been enriched by knowing Peter and now feel the loss of a colleague and friend. A website for stories and photos is being set up, contact rachladasky@aol.com for details. A celebration of Peter's life was held in Lander on November 16. Memorial donations can be made to the NOLS Annual Fund.

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Other featured presenters include Lonnie Dupre, John Huston & Tyler Fish, Rod and Sharon Johnson, Dan Mazur, Claire Porter, Stephen Regenold, and Dave Watson.

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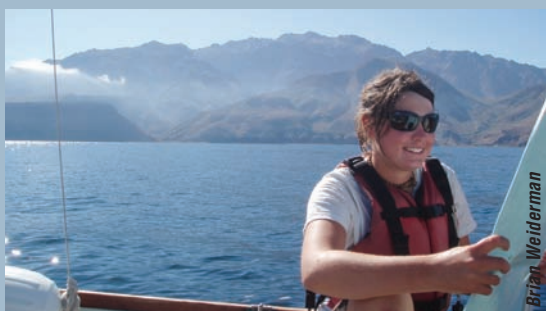
A month may be too much to ask from the boss, so the NOLS Alumni office offers shorter, usually weeklong, backcountry trips that are specifically designed for our alumni. They're a great opportunity to reconnect with the school and we encourage our grads to bring family and friends along to introduce others to the NOLS experience. These trips have the same top-quality instructors, but the atmosphere is a little more relaxed. And while these 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 at (800) 332-4280 to design your dream adventure.



Frédrik Worsell



David Anderson



Brian Weideman



Brad Christensen



Brad Christensen

TETON TELEMAR, SNOWBOARD, & AVALANCHE TRAINING | February 22–27, 2009 | Cost: \$1,175

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ROCK CLIMBING AT COCHISE STRONGHOLD | February 28–March 6, 2009 | Cost: \$1,395

Spend some time at Cochise Stronghold in southeast Arizona learning and improving your climbing skills. It's also a great way to introduce friends or family to the sport of climbing with NOLS doing the teaching. This trip accommodates all levels of climbing ability with a flexible curriculum to match the group's needs. Individuals will work with instructors in small groups of similar abilities to maximize climbing time. You'll learn about anchors, movement on the rock, multi-pitch climbing, and rescue scenarios. Our base camp at Cochise Stronghold is a perfect place to learn or improve your skills while escaping to the sunny Southwest.

SAILING IN BAJA, MEXICO | February 28–March 7, 2009 | Cost: \$1,600

Always a favorite, so sign up soon! This year's Baja sailing trip will be exploring a route in the islands outside of Ensenada Blanco near Loreto. You will travel amongst several islands in the fascinating Sea of Cortez amidst abundant marine life and beautiful green waters. Travel will be in 22-foot yawl-rigged Drascombe Longboats that can accommodate 4-5 people and all their gear. Each night will be spent camping on desert beaches with days spent improving sail skills and afternoons filled with relaxing, visiting, exploring, photography, and snorkeling.

SAILING IN THE BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS | Two sections: May 17–24, May 26–June 2, 2009 | Cost: \$1,875

The waters of the British Virgin Islands will be home for seven days of learning the art of keelboat sailing. The curriculum is the same as a NOLS semester sailing section and will focus extensively on sailing and living aboard a mid-sized (50-foot) cruiser. You'll learn charts, navigation, and seamanship while helping to cook meals and rotating through the various crew positions. You'll enjoy the striking scenery of the British Virgin Islands while sharing quarters with a few other participants and NOLS instructors. After this trip, you should feel confident in your ability to sail with an experienced crew.

FAMILY RAFTING ON IDAHO'S SALMON RIVER | June 19–23, 2009 | Cost: TBA | Age 8 and Up

Get away for a great outdoor family vacation. Invite your parents, bring the kids, and enjoy some quality time on one of the West's most beautiful rivers. Enjoy camping on sandy beaches, having fun, feeling the rush of whitewater, and the calm of s'mores around the campfire. The Salmon River bisects the largest wilderness area in the lower 48, the Frank Church Wilderness. Travel will be by paddle raft and oar rig on this 86 mile stretch of river. Take this chance to create some family memories that will last for years to come.

PLANNING FURTHER AHEAD? NEXT SUMMER WE'LL BE OFFERING:

FAMILY CAMPING IN WYOMING'S WIND RIVER MOUNTAINS

CANOEING ON THE YUKON RIVER

ROCK CLIMBING AT SQUAMISH ROCKS (new course!)

GANNETT PEAK CLIMB

SEA KAYAKING IN ALASKA'S PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND

HORSEPACKING IN WYOMING'S WIND RIVER RANGE

For more information, check out our website, www.nols.edu/alumni/trips, or the 2009 Alumni Offerings brochure—coming to mailboxes in mid-December.

UPCOMING REUNIONS

Reunions are a great way to reconnect with NOLS and network with alumni in your area. Want to find a climbing or paddling partner? This is the place to do it. Join us, check out a great presentation, enjoy some refreshments, and maybe even win some sweet gear in our raffle. NOLS and WMI grads, friends, family, and anyone interested in the school are welcome.

NOVEMBER 22, MINNEAPOLIS, MN

Champps, 100 6th Street

Join us for a slide show highlighting a recent hiking trek through northern Italy's stunning and rugged Dolomite region by long-time NOLS instructor Rich Brame.

NOVEMBER 29, JACKSON, WY

Jackson St. Gallery, 130 South Jackson Street

NOLS grad and renowned adventurer Kit DeLauriers will share images and thoughts from her exploits as the first woman to ski the Seven Summits.

SEE WWW.NOLS.EDU/ALUMNI/REUNIONS FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO RSVP.



Rich Brame

Hiking in Italy's stunning and rugged Dolomite region.

BRANCH NOTES

NOLS SOUTHWEST



- We’ve built three new 16-foot yurts from Pacific Yurts for intown staff housing. Staff erected the new yurts in record time. Special thanks to Dr. Jake Freed for coming down to help us out.
- Our new-in-the-last-year boathouse received electrical power, allowing us to use this space to issue base camps and river courses more efficiently.
- Continuing our push for lighter pack weights, our target on fall sections is 40 pounds, with a hope of seeing 25- to 30-pound packs on Independent Small Group Expeditions using light-weight equipment and techniques.
- We have ordered a Ford Escape Hybrid to be an intown and evacuation pick up vehicle.

NOLS TETON VALLEY

- We’ve begun designing our new outdoor classroom/dining/commons space and are interviewing a local company that focuses on low-impact, environmentally sensitive solutions.
- We purchased a new industrial cook stove, grid-dle, and oven that will be ready to fire up tasty victuals for our skiers and riders in December.

NOLS YUKON

- We’ve had a record number of locals and Canadians on courses and, thanks to the Donner Canadian Foundation and NOLS Alumni, we provided scholarships to 15 locals and Canadians.
- Our first all-Japanese leadership course with Waseda University was a hit!
- In 2009 we’ll be offering a new 23-and-over Backpacking course on Baffin Island.

NOLS PATAGONIA

- We recently moved our offices from downtown Coyhaique into the director’s former house.

NOLS ROCKY MOUNTAIN



- We installed a composter behind the Noble Hotel. Food scraps from courses and the Noble will create compost for the grounds at the RM and HQ.
- We’ve also installed thermally efficient windows in the Noble Hotel to keep rooms cooler in summer and warmer in winter.

NOLS ALASKA

- In July, NOLS grads on our annual alumni Denali Mountaineering course reached the top of the highest mountain in North America.
- We were excited to be able to have lots of home-grown organic vegetables at our branch location in Palmer this season.



NOLS on NPR
“Learning to Lead from
the Seat of a Kayak”

BY JAMIE HOLLOWAY, NOLS PUBLIC RELATIONS INTERN

“Why would a 20-something give up iPods, alcohol, a soft bed—all the things that young people hold dear—and sleep on the ground for 2½ months?”

This is the question NPR reporter Larry Abramson was attempting to answer when he connected with part of a NOLS Summer Semester in the Rockies. The resulting story, “Learning to Lead from the Seat of a Kayak,” aired on NPR’s *Weekend Edition*, Saturday, August 30.

Abramson joined 11 students and 5 instructors during the river section of their course in the Lodore Canyon on the Green River. During his stay with them, he spent his time interviewing students and staff, reviewing the NOLS leadership curriculum, and learning to whitewater raft himself. As with all

NOLS courses, he witnessed the highs and lows of the learning process and watched instructors turn obstacles and observations into lessons.

According to instructor Amy Christenson, Abramson was a welcome addition to the group, taking on the role of easy-going student. The one difference was the tape recorder he kept on at all times, prompting a series of “can Larry hear us?” jokes from students. While his presence didn’t change the tone of the course much, when the tape was rolling, students were on their best behavior, making sure to represent the school well.

After hearing the segment, instructors felt Abramson did just that. “By choosing NOLS, he really proves that we are a leader in outdoor education, and his piece was realistic, not a showpiece for the press,” Amy said. Max Stevens, another instructor on the course, added that, given the length of the piece, Larry displayed what NOLS does very well.

Whether or not your course included a river section, the sounds of camp life on a NOLS course are sure to bring back memories.

To hear the story yourself, search “NOLS” on www.npr.org.



The 2009 NOLS Annual Fund
Calendar is coming soon!

The NOLS Annual Fund Calendar is mailed out each November to many of our recent course graduates and ALL of our generous Annual Fund donors. In the summer, a call for photos goes out to our grads via email and sixteen stunning pictures are chosen from the submissions (the lucky photographers also receive great gear prizes for being selected). The result of the contest is a beautiful calendar, featuring many iconic NOLS vistas and activities that we hope remind folks of their course 365 days a year. Hopefully, the calendar also reminds donors of the power of their gift and reminds all others that receive it just what a gift to NOLS can do to help others experience the wilderness.

Donations to the NOLS Annual Fund are the main source of scholarship funds at the school; with the support of generous donors, we were able to give away more than 375 scholarships last year. In addition, donations to the Annual Fund help NOLS protect the land that serves as our classrooms, ensuring that we all will have access to the world’s most fascinating and beautiful places for generations to come.

The more Annual Fund calendars we are able to send, the happier we are. So check your mailbox next week and if you didn’t get one this year, get online and make a donation at www.nols.edu/eDonate and you will be sure to get this special calendar in 2010.

BELAY OFF

ENDLESS WINTER

November 17, 2007: My sons Jacob, 6, and Elan, 8, are in the second row of the minivan and we're an hour from home in Minneapolis, heading out for a day of early-season skiing at a little area in western Wisconsin called Trollhaugen. When I was a kid, I skied there with my dad. The vertical drop is only 260 feet. Just two runs are open this soon for skiing. And we'll be skiing man-made snow. But, as suburbs give way to bare, brown farm fields, my excitement grows. Today I will complete a goal to telemark ski 12 months in a row!

Almost seven years earlier, in February 2001, I completed NOLS' 12-day backcountry telemark skiing course in the Tetons. Near the trip's end, we spent a day free-skiing on slopes near our quinzhees at Tin Cup Creek. Everyone except instructors Deb Payne and Tony Jewell and I had returned to camp. The three of us kept skiing lap after lap, climbing uphill with climbing skins on our skis, then stripping off the skins and making powder turns on the way down. Finally, Deb asked, "Steve, just how many more runs do you want to do?"

A few more, I explained. I disclosed some news: my wife Ronna was pregnant with our second child and, I added, I didn't know when I would get to do anything like this again.

Indeed, with a busy career and still-young children, getting away for anything like my NOLS ski trip just hasn't been possible. But as my 50th birthday approached, I set a special goal: to ski 12 months in a row.

I turned 50 on November 5, 2006 and skied December through April in Minnesota. Coordinating work, family schedules, and the seasons, I planned to ski through the summer while taking only four out-of-state trips and missing only nine days of work.

May 30, 2007, I took an early morning flight to Denver and arrived at Arapahoe Basin's ticket window just in time for the half-day pass. I skied there May 31, too, then drove to Aspen for two days of backcountry skiing at Independence Pass. The road over Indy Pass (elevation 12,095 feet) gets plowed open by Memorial Day weekend, providing easy access to lots of ski terrain. June 1, I logged six laps climbing up and skiing down what I later learned was called Heart Attack Hill. June 2, I joined a rendezvous of telemark skiers planned through www.telemarktips.com. We hiked twice from the top of the pass to ski down the Fourth of July bowl.

Mid-July, I flew to Portland for Wy'East Nordic's 24th annual summer telemark ski camp at Mt. Hood. The first day, a dozen of us climbed and skied the Snow Dome, a face on Mt. Hood's north side that holds abundant snow through the summer. Traversing the Elliot Glacier at nearly 10,000 feet, we saw swarms of migrating butterflies. That day I learned summer skiing often involves five or six hours of hiking and climbing, followed by one or two ski runs, then two hours hiking back to your car. Two days of telemark clinics at Mt. Hood's Timberline ski area followed.

At tele camp I made connections for my next trip. The first weekend of August I flew to Seattle early Friday evening and two tele camp friends picked me up at the airport. We drove to Mt. Baker, arriving late at the Seattle Mountaineers' dorm-style Mt. Baker Lodge. We hiked and skied for two days on Ptarmigan Ridge. At a lunch stop high on a saddle, Mt. Shuksan rose on one side, Mt. Baker on the other. The view was stunning. Skiing the sun-cupped snow was a challenge. A red-eye flight from Seattle Sunday night brought me home in time for work Monday morning.

I always knew my last planned trip—for September and October—would be the hardest. I flew into Seattle on Friday evening September 28—not knowing exactly where I would be going or if I would get to ski. Quick research, good instincts, and luck prevailed. September 29 and 30 at Mt. Rainier, I hiked and climbed from the Paradise Visitor Center in limited visibility to about 8,000 feet and, with other skiers I met, skied six inches of new powder snow both days. October 1 at Mt. Hood, the Timberline ski area was closed. In blowing snow, I climbed an hour above Timberline Lodge, following nearly invisible towers of the Magic Mile lift. Finding a snowcat track threading through the rocks, I skied down.

The realization that I accomplished my goal to ski 12 months in a row didn't really hit me until that November 17 drive to Wisconsin to ski with my sons. Like my decision years earlier to enroll in NOLS, *committing to the goal was the key*. I extended my streak to 20 months in a row, ending July 1, 2008 skiing Mt. Hood's Zig Zag Glacier. Not bad for a 51-year-old guy from Minneapolis.

Steve is a graduate of 25 and Over Winter Ski Course 02/12/01.

My Quest to Ski 12 Months a Year

BY STEVE SHARE, NOLS GRAD



Courtesy of Steve Share