

# Leader

For Alumni of the National Outdoor Leadership School



## Purpose (Not Panic)

### NOLS MAINTAINS RELEVANCE IN THE FACE OF ECONOMIC RECESSION

BY JOHN GANS, NOLS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
ARTICLE ON PAGE 10

May 17-23, 2009

					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

## NOLS Leadership Week

Promote NOLS, Support The Mission

DETAILS ON PAGE 11

**6** Wyoming Range  
Legacy Act Passes!

**7** NOLS Grad Takes Cars  
Off The Road With Zipcar

**19** Choosing a Camera  
That's Fit for the Field



**THE Leader**

Joanne Kuntz  
Publications Manager

Meredith Haas  
Editor

Allison Jackson  
Graphic Designer

Rich Brame  
Alumni Relations Manager

John Gans  
NOLS Executive Director

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

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

*The Leader* is printed locally on newsprint with a minimum 40% post-consumer-waste recycled content. A paperless version is also available online at www.nols.edu/alumni/leader. We are committed to continually exploring environmentally-friendly production methods.

**MESSAGE FROM THE EDITORS**



Hello, fellow alums! In light of current economic trends, we've switched things up a bit this issue to address more deliberately the challenges we are all facing. Instead of our executive director, John Gans, writing this introductory message, he took the lead for this issue's cover article to more fully consider the economy and how it affects NOLS. In support of this theme, we also asked NOLS Board of Trustees Chairman Michael Schmeztler to follow up in our Q&A column.

The purpose of this edition of *The Leader* is to acknowledge the economic situation around the globe and in the United States and to consider what this recession really means for NOLS. We also provide ideas and invite conversation about how you, as alumni, can help support our mission of being the leading source and teacher of wilderness skills and leadership that serve people and the environment. Mark your calendars for NOLS Leadership Week in May! See page 11 for the overview of events and visit www.nols.edu/leadershipweek for in-depth details on how to get involved.

Although we've diverted from our standard expedition cover article, this current economic recession is no less of an expedition as we continue to

set goals, plan, and work efficiently together so that we can continue to offer life-changing wilderness and leadership experiences. We teach our students expedition leadership, which means timely, appropriate actions that guide and support the group to set and achieve realistic goals. These lessons apply directly to how NOLS has operated in the past and present, and how we will continue to operate in the future, because such lessons are tried and true—that is why they're the core of every NOLS course. And while we hope to answer any of your questions and offer some ideas about how you can help, we haven't forgotten that amidst this turmoil, NOLS grads are doing extraordinary things across the world!

Read about incredible work grads are doing for devastated regions around the globe in our Doctors Without Borders piece, and join in our excitement as we celebrate the passing of the Wyoming Range Legacy Act. We've also dug up a story about how one couple was brought together on their NOLS course! As always, we've chosen to highlight alumni who have contributed to NOLS long after their course by continuing to live our values in the work and play that they pursue.

Our ultimate goal with *The Leader* is to keep you connected with the school and inspired by other NOLS and WMI alumni. It's always great to know what you're doing and what NOLS has meant to you. So please keep us updated. Send us your recipes, stories, gear ideas, books, or just plain old comments about what you like and what you'd like to see more of. You can contact us at leader@nols.edu to share your thoughts and ideas.

Even in these tough economic times, this publication is for you because it's about you. So keep in touch and happy reading!

Cheers,  
*Your Friendly NOLS Alumni and NOLS Publications Team (clockwise from top), Rich Brame, Meredith Haas, Joanne Kuntz, and Allison Jackson.*

**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 Mary Jo Newbury, former NOLS Pacific Northwest operations and general manager.

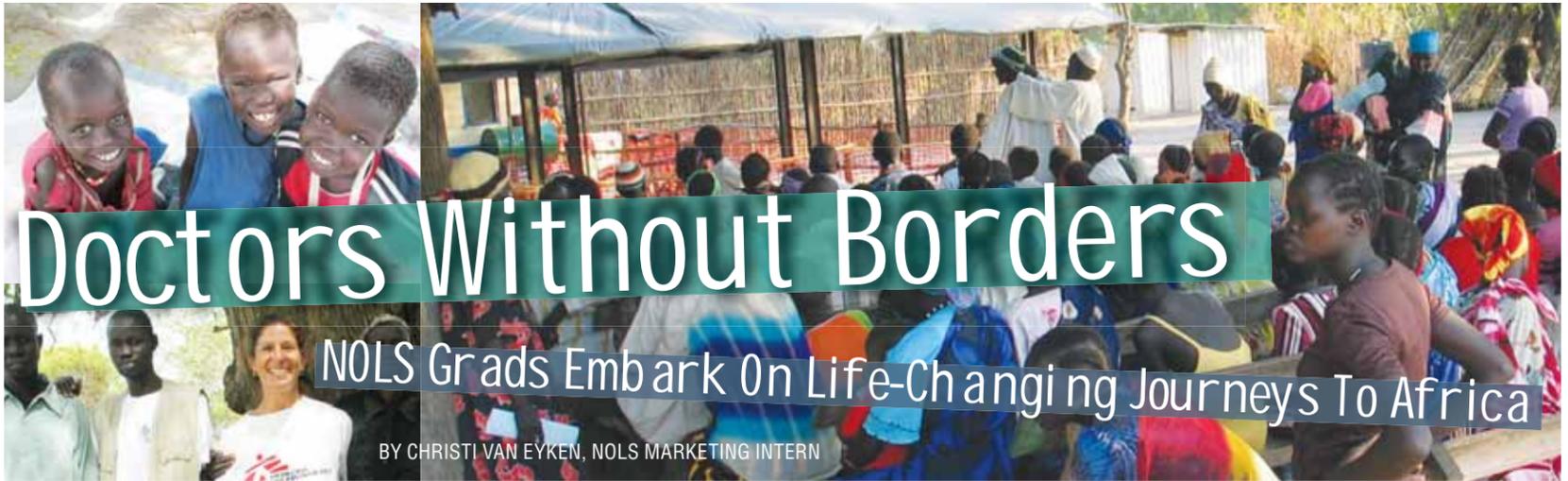
**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**FEATURES**

Doctors Without Borders: *NOLS Grads Embark On Life-Changing Journeys To Africa* ..... 3  
 Wyoming Range Legacy Act: *Protecting NOLS' Classrooms* ..... 6  
 NOLS Is In the Air. Or is that Love? *Coursemates Hear Wedding Bells* ..... 8  
 Purpose Not Panic: *NOLS Remains Relevant in the Face of Economic Recession* ..... 10  
 NOLS Leadership Week: *Promote NOLS, Support the Mission* ..... 11

**DEPARTMENTS**

**WILD SIDE OF MEDICINE:** If We Only Knew Then What We Know Now ..... 4  
**ISSUE ROOM:** Accurately Measuring Our Environmental Footprint. .... 5  
**ALUMNI PROFILE:** Lesley Mottla Helps Take Cars Off the Road with Zipcar ..... 7  
**ALUMNI PROFILE:** Walter Cumming Finds Artistic Inspiration in the Wilderness. .... 9  
**Q&A:** Michael Schmeztler, NOLS Board of Trustees Chairman ..... 12  
**BOOK REVIEW:** *NOLS Wilderness Mountaineering* ..... 12  
**BOOK REVIEW:** *NOLS Backcountry Nutrition*. .... 13  
**BOOK REVIEW:** *A Pearl in the Storm: How I Found My Heart in the Middle of the Ocean* ..... 13  
**RECIPE BOX:** Gado-Gado Wins Favorite Backcountry Recipe ..... 14  
**GEAR ROOM:** Choosing a Camera That's Fit for the Field ..... 14  
**FIELD NOTES:** The Land of the Rising Sun Meets the Land of the Midnight Sun. .... 15  
**JABBERWOCKY.** ..... 16  
**ALUMNI HAPPENINGS** ..... 18  
**BRANCH NOTES** ..... 19  
**BELAY OFF:** Comparing Notes: Mom and Son Weigh in on Different NOLS Experiences ..... 20



**D**octors Without Borders (or *Médicins Sans Frontières*) is an international humanitarian organization that provides life-saving medical care to more than 60 countries. Founded by a group of doctors and journalists in France in 1971, Doctors Without Borders aids areas devastated by war, epidemics, malnutrition, inadequate health care, or natural disasters. Every year around 3,000 employees are in the field fighting epidemics, conducting vaccination campaigns, rehabilitating hospitals and clinics, feeding malnourished children, and improving sanitation. Meet three NOLS grads are on the front lines.

#### Giving Back and Seeking Challenge

NOLS Kenya grad and specialist surgeon Dr. Sharon Stein remembers her hospital's effort to combat *Schistosomiasis* as one of the greatest accomplishments of her time in Sudan with Doctors Without Borders. During her three-month assignment in 2007 with the aid organization, she performed over 400 surgeries in an isolated rural hospital. With the help of over 50 volunteers from the hospital, Sharon and her team were able to treat over 800 children preemptively for *Schistosomiasis*—a parasitic disease also known as bilharzia, bilharziosis, or snail fever—which can damage internal organs and, in children, impair growth and cognitive development.

"I always wanted to work for [Doctors Without Borders]," she said, explaining that after finishing medical school and her residency she felt like she "had a unique opportunity to give something back to the community...any community."

Likewise, Jeff Allen, a WMI of NOLS Wilderness First Responder (WFR) grad, decided a few years ago that it was time to leave his career in computer science and change the direction of his life toward something more meaningful. "Working in the information technology industry is like riding a merry-go-round," he said. "You are constantly rein-

venting things and creating the same stuff over and over again." In 2005 he made the decision to apply for work as a logistician with Doctors Without Borders and embarked on his first assignment in Liberia one year later.

Logisticians are part of a group of non-medical professionals, including water and sanitation engineers and administrators, who support medical personnel. They arrange food, travel, and lodging; bookkeep; ensure compliance with local labor regulations; and bring local medical facilities up to international standards. As a logistician, Jeff arranged travel and housing for his entire team and coordinated the arrival of food and medical supplies.

Jesse Karp, a NOLS Whitewater River grad from 1997 with a degree in civil engineering, also felt the need to involve himself in something new and challenging. "I wanted to work abroad in a social context," he said. The decision to apply as an engineer to Doctors Without Borders was easy. He likes the way the organization combines quality professional aid with "a real volunteer mentality," and his mother is a nurse and long-time contributor to the organization. On his first mission in Sudan, Jesse worked to rehabilitate a local hospital and construct latrines, and he is currently designing an isolation ward for patients with drug-resistant tuberculosis in Swaziland.

#### NOLS Transference

Sharon, Jeff, and Jesse all agree that their NOLS and WMI experiences play a valuable role in their work for Doctors Without Borders. Sharon notes that the cultural interactions with the native Maasai during her NOLS Semester in Kenya in 1990 were part of her motivation to return and do what she could for African communities. The decision to acquire a WFR certification was directly related to Jeff's decision to apply. He felt a WFR would showcase his resolve and dedication, and he wanted to acquire the necessary knowledge to take care of himself and his

colleagues in remote areas. He said he learned how to understand the needs and point of view of the medical people around him and also gained "a better understanding of how it feels to be a patient."

Completing his NOLS course when he was 16, Jesse had more than 10 years before his first assignment with Doctors Without Borders to South Sudan. He recalls challenges from his NOLS course that parallel some of the universal challenges that working in the medical field abroad you're bound to face, such as building positive team dynamics and learning how to live in close quarters. Doctors Without Borders workers come from diverse backgrounds and some people struggle with strange new living conditions and the need to share resources. "You have to learn to understand where people are coming from and to respect their different situations," Jesse said.

***"It's definitely not a one-person operation, and that's one of those NOLS lessons that you can bring to it."***

Circumstances abroad often forced these grads to adapt quickly. The majority of Jesse's training came on the job, learning as he went how to dig wells and latrines and to construct clinics that fit the needs of the community. On Jeff's second assignment in Chad the entire crew was evacuated after two weeks when the surrounding conflict proved too dangerous, but he returned to the field immediately to respond to a meningitis outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Sharon believes that her NOLS course was a great advantage during her months in Sudan. "When you learn to live out of your backpack and make do...it gives you the flexibility you need," she said. "The conditions, honestly, after leading backpacking courses, were kind of peachy." During her time there, she was a "jack-of-all-trades," performing surgeries, working in orthopedics, delivering babies, and treating malaria and liver failure.

"You have to make sure that your feet are dry, that you change your boots at the end of the day, and that you're eating well, because if you don't take care of yourself then the expedition can't go on," Sharon said. "The same is true over there [with Doctors Without Borders]. It's definitely not a one-person operation, and that's one of those NOLS lessons that you can bring to it."

*To find out more about Doctors Without Borders (Médicins Sans Frontières) please visit their link at [www.doctorswithoutborders.org](http://www.doctorswithoutborders.org).*



## WILD SIDE OF MEDICINE



Brad Christensen

## Perfecting Medicine

### *If We Only Knew Then What We Know Now*

BY TOD SCHIMELPFENIG, WMI CURRICULUM DIRECTOR

If you use Maurice Herzog's classic 1950s account of the first ascent of Annapurna as your source for frostbite treatment, you'll find yourself flogging the patient's frozen toes with your rope. If you were constipated on the Lewis and Clark expedition, Rush's Bilious pills, cream of tartar, magnesia, and other unappetizing medicines would have been at your disposal. Viewed through the lens of modern medical practice, these treatments seem outlandish, but let's be cautious before judging. During my years at NOLS we've taught a few silly things ourselves.

We used to advise leaving wounds uncovered. The pure mountain air promoted healing, or so we thought. We now know this is nonsense. The alpine atmosphere may be clear and bright, but there are still plenty of microbes waiting on the ground, our clothing, and our skin to colonize our wounds. The cells on wound edges proliferate and knit a wound, and they do this faster in a clean moist environment. Now we teach to clean and dress wounds, and our wound infection rate is dramatically lower.

We also used to solemnly dole out a few chunks of rock salt, the crystals spread on sidewalks to dissolve ice, as a cure for all that ails you. The salt, and a recommendation to drink lots of water, was to keep our electrolytes balanced. I shudder when I remember drinking water and eating rock salt, and nothing

else, during a multi-day fasting "survival" expedition. I might have been better off with Rush's Bilious pills. Now we know that we already have ample salt in our field diet. Salt supplements are only suggested when working hard and long in hot weather.

We used to tell students it was fine to drink alpine water. It's clarity and fresh taste was testament to its purity, despite the fact that diarrhea is a common complaint on wilderness expeditions and microbes are impossible to see with the naked eye.

We're a long way from flogging frostbite, but we're not immune to passing along hearsay as fact. As WMI's curriculum director, I play the role of the skeptic, ask a lot of questions, listen to experts, and read their research papers. I'm perceptive to ques-

***I listen to perceptive questions from student and staff and keep peeling the onion, asking where we got this piece of information. Does this technique work? Are we teaching it effectively?***

tions from student and staff and keep peeling the onion, asking where we got this piece of information? Does this technique work? Are we teaching it effectively? Lurking in today's curriculum is something we'll look back on and wonder how we ever thought that was the case. Diligence, analysis, and coherent curriculum evolution are the strengths that define NOLS' leadership in wilderness medicine curriculum. We're always on the lookout for the Bilious pills of today.

## Real Life Drama

### *WMI Training Not Just For the Backcountry*

The Wilderness Medicine Institute (WMI) teaches medicine for times when there are few resources, limited assistance, and challenging decisions to be made in remote environments. However, these skills also have application in the urban setting. Here is a story from WMI Wilderness First Responder alum Aaron Mendelovitz putting that training into action.

*"Last night I was in my first jujutsu class and after 15 minutes one of the other students, a 19-year-old kid, slowly began to lose consciousness. At first he said he was okay but then he started to curl up into a ball. I got him on his back to check his airway and found nothing in his mouth. I then checked his breathing and he took a partial breath. I checked his circulation and found he had no pulse. Earlier that morning, I was at an elementary school checking children's pulses, which I found easily in three to five seconds, but other than that this was my first time checking anyone's pulse since my WMI training. I instantly went into autopilot and began doing CPR.*

*I tilted his head back and began rescue breathing and giving external chest compressions. During CPR his forehead started to turn purple and I became concerned about brain function. I continued CPR, 30 compressions to 2 rescue breaths, to the tune of "The Wheels on the Bus Go Round and Round" like we practiced in class. His skin color moved closer to a normal color. In about six minutes the ambulance arrived with an AED (Automated External Defibrillator) and attached it to his chest. They shocked him three times and re-established his heart rhythm. They then took him on a backboard to the hospital. Later the ambulance crew told me I saved his life! Apparently, this kid had a cardiomyopathy [an underlying heart muscle disease].*

*I was clear-minded during the event and just went through the training principles. The martial arts teacher, a person that is normally clear-minded, was freaked out and could not think during the event. All the doctors said the CPR was excellent; he had no broken ribs, though one was sore. Thank you to my WMI instructors Nate and Marjorie. Because of your teaching we saved this young man's life!"*



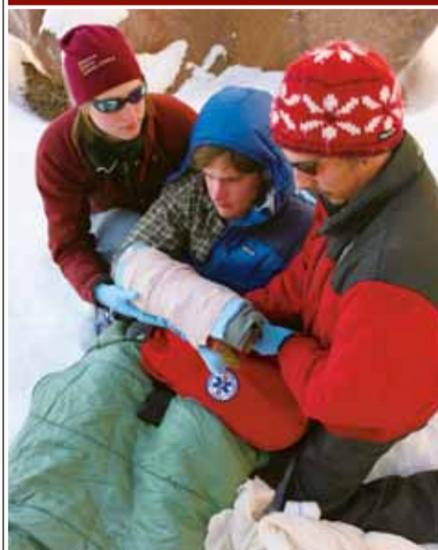
#### FEATURED COURSE

### 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](http://www.nols.edu/wmi/courses/wildfirstaid.shtml)



#### 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](http://www.nols.edu/wmi) or (866) 831-9001.

ISSUE ROOM

# The Scope of the Problem

## Accurately Measuring Our Environmental Footprint

BY KARLY COPELAND, NOLS SUSTAINABILITY COORDINATOR

As NOLS travels farther down the road of sustainability one of the more obvious tasks set in front of us is the measurement of our environmental impact that will set and then quantify the progress of reduction goals. What should be included in our environmental footprint? Fuel combustion, driving our students to roadheads, and burning white gas in the field, for example, seem pretty straightforward to identify and quantify. But what about things like the gasoline used to transport our gear from the manufacturer to the warehouse to our issue rooms? The pesticides and fertilizers used to grow some of our food for rations? The impact of producing the paper used in our enrollment packets? What about the fuel used to get our students to a NOLS location before their course even begins? Which of these environmental impacts belongs to NOLS?

This conundrum stretches far beyond NOLS. Companies, corporations, and even countries are grappling with the decision of where their environmental responsibility begins and ends. In response

*Companies, corporations, and even countries are grappling with the decision of where their environmental responsibility begins and ends.*

to this problem, and the need for this decision to be comparable from entity to entity, the World Resources Institute and the World Business Council for Sustainable Development created a framework known as the *Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Protocol Corporate Accounting and Reporting Standard*. The GHG Protocol calls on organizations to define organiza-

tional and operational boundaries. This applies to the inclusion of partnerships and franchises, as well as categorizing an organization's emissions-causing activities in order to determine what should be included in a GHG inventory.

First, emissions are broken down into "direct" and "indirect." Direct emissions are from sources that an organization owns or controls. In NOLS' case this is where white gas would fall, as well as transporting students to roadheads in NOLS-owned vehicles. On the other hand, indirect emissions result from an organization's activities, but the source is owned or controlled by a separate entity. The most obvious indirect emission for NOLS is electricity use.

The GHG Protocol also categorizes emissions by scope. There are three scopes. Scope 1 encompasses all direct emissions and Scope 2 covers emissions from electricity use. Scope 3 refers to "all other indirect emissions"—in NOLS' case, student, instructor, and staff travel, as well as any "upstream" emissions caused by rented classroom facilities (buildings not owned by NOLS) or by the production and shipment of any purchased products.

The Kyoto Protocol calls on organizations to report only Scope 1 and 2 emissions. This solves the problem of counting emissions twice when it comes to regulation—one company's Scope 1 emissions may be another company's Scope 2, but within a single Scope (1 or 2) there is no double counting.

Many organizations go beyond the standard of reporting and also report Scope 3 emissions. This can be tricky because the organization itself makes the final decision as to the extent of the measurement.

NOLS has defined its Scope 3 emissions based on three factors: relevance, significance, and the opportunity the school has to reduce the emissions. Additionally, we also balanced the need to paint a comprehensive picture of the school's environmental impact while keeping the task focused on what we can control and what is manageable with the school's existing resources. Based on those factors, NOLS decided to include four pieces in our Scope 3 measurement: student travel during NOLS courses, reimbursed intown staff travel, reimbursed instructor travel, and any outsourced re-rations.

Some pieces of our footprint we are not currently measuring but aim to in the future. Student travel to a NOLS course, for example, is not currently a feasible measurement for the school, but is likely the largest part of our Scope 3 emissions. We are plan-

ning ahead to make this measurement in the future and in the meantime will educate our students on low-impact travel to our operating locations. Other pieces, such as upstream emissions, we have decided to revisit at a later date—we do not want to exclude any opportunity for emission reductions but need to keep our project magnitude manageable.

Once we have our footprint measurement formalized and underway for our 2009 fiscal year, we will move forward in finalizing our comprehensive sustainability plan for the school. This plan will include energy reduction goals as well as projects that will reduce the environmental impact of our school.

For more information on the GHG Protocol visit [www.ghgprotocol.org](http://www.ghgprotocol.org), the World Resources Institute at [www.wri.org](http://www.wri.org), and the World Business Council for Sustainable Development at [www.wbcsd.org](http://www.wbcsd.org).

### SUSTAINABILITY UPDATE

BY PAIGE HEALY, NOLS PUBLIC POLICY INTERN

The atmosphere around NOLS is full of eco-friendly energy, and we are working on harnessing that energy at NOLS Headquarters. Reuse, reduce, and recycle projects, big and small, are sprouting up throughout the school.



**REUSE:** We have kept our staff parties fun and sustainable by switching to all reusable silverware, plates, and cups and purchasing napkins that are made with 100% post consumer recycled material.



**REDUCE:** By further harnessing the power of the Internet through electronic contracts and emails, WMI estimates that it will save over 1,700 pieces of paper every year! And NOLS Professional Training created an electronic invite program that promotes their events, which gets rid of the need for 10,000 paper mailers this year. We also moved our data center services from Denver to a wind-powered facility in Cheyenne.



**RECYCLE:** By printing the 2009 NOLS course catalog on FSC-certified paper that is 80% recycled/60% post consumer waste and an application insert on 100% post-consumer waste recycled paper, NOLS saved 695 trees, 419,625 gallons of water, 506 million Btus of energy, 34,319 pounds of solid waste, and 87,859 pounds of green house gases. In addition, we practice responsible electronic disposal at NOLS Headquarters by selling or donating old computers to new users or disposing of computers that can't be returned to working order in an electronics recycling facility near Lander, Wyoming.

These are just a few of the many projects that NOLS continues to implement schoolwide. Our staff are the school's greatest resource, and their continued enthusiasm and dedication to a more sustainable operation make the difference. For more information on NOLS sustainability projects, please visit our sustainability website: [www.nols.edu/creating\\_a\\_climate\\_for\\_change](http://www.nols.edu/creating_a_climate_for_change).

### Determining Our Environmental Footprint: Categorizing Emissions

**Scope 1:** Primary emission measurement from sources NOLS owns or controls

**BUILDING ENERGY**  
(propane, electricity, oil, natural gas)

**VEHICLES**  
(leased and owned)

**WHITE GAS FUEL USE**

**REFRIGERANTS**

**Scope 2:** Primary emission measurement from electricity

**ELECTRICITY**

**Scope 3:** This is not required by the Kyoto Protocol, but is an important emission measurement focused on sources not owned or controlled by NOLS.

**STUDENT TRAVEL DURING NOLS COURSES**

**REIMBURSED INTOWN STAFF TRAVEL**

**OUTSOURCED RERATIONS**

**REIMBURSED INSTRUCTOR TRAVEL**

Scope 3 For Future Measurement: Non-reimbursed Intown Staff Travel, Non-reimbursed Instructor Travel, Student Travel to NOLS Courses, Emissions from Purchased Materials, Offsite Facility Emissions (WMI/NOLS Pro)

### WILDERNESS QUIZ

What entertainment giant has a wilderness area named for it? (Answer on page 19)

# Wyoming Range Legacy Act

## protecting Our Classrooms

BY AARON BANNON, NOLS WILDERNESS ADVOCACY COORDINATOR  
AND PAIGE HEALY, NOLS PUBLIC POLICY INTERN

Most road trippers destined for Yellowstone National Park only notice the Wyoming Range as a long mountain chain, a vision that is soon dominated by the jagged peaks of the area's more famous mountain ranges, the Wind Rivers and the Tetons. The lack of attention suits local folks who consider the range to be their backyard and weekend getaway. As Gary Amerine, owner of Grey's River Trophies, an outfitter in the range, likes to say, "The beauty of the Wyoming Range is that you pretty much have it to yourself."

Such qualities have also made the range an attractive destination for NOLS courses. Jamie O'Donnell, a NOLS instructor familiar with the area, considers the Wyoming Range to be an ideal winter classroom for his students. "The range has good options for the beginner skier, and they're accessible—that's a unique combination," he said, noting the relative quiet the mountains offer. "They have a high-quality wilderness feel."

The "wilderness feel" is critical to how NOLS courses operate, and as the southern anchor to the Greater Yellowstone ecosystem, the Wyoming Range stretches along the western border of the state for 150 miles, with pristine, granite peaks reaching over 11,000 feet. The range provides critical habitat for big game, native trout, threatened species such as peregrine falcons and lynx, and is beginning to support wolves and grizzly bears. There are ample opportunities for hiking, backpacking, mountain biking, horseback riding, hunting, fishing, and skiing, all featuring the mountain's promised solitude and serenity.

In 2005, the solitude of the Wyoming Range was threatened when Wyoming's energy industry expressed renewed interest in potential oil and gas reserves buried beneath it. Initially, the Bridger-Teton National Forest began to auction off lease parcels in the area for oil and gas development. Two years later, pressure increased when Stanley Energy Company submitted a proposal that outlined a full-field development plan for 200 natural gas wells, drilled on eight separate 50-acre pads, each the size of almost

40 football fields. The proposed wells would be located alarmingly close to NOLS backpacking and winter camping course routes, and would also affect many outfitters like Gary.

"What's at risk for NOLS is the wilderness experience that we offer our students," says Jen Lamb, NOLS public policy director. "If you're going to plunk down 200 wells, you can no longer offer the wilderness experience our students expect. Students don't need to travel to Wyoming to see industrial development. That's not the ex-

*"The Wyoming Range represents the heart and soul of our state— independent, still wild, rugged, and a wonder for those that come from all over to experience it."*

perience they expect to have when they come to NOLS. They don't want to look at oil pads from a rocky outcropping on a summer course."

So NOLS' public policy department joined a collection of local nonprofit groups, citizens, and outfitters to form a grassroots coalition called Citizens Protecting The Wyoming Range. Hunting and fishing organizations followed suit, creating Sportsmen For The Wyoming Range, with a similar goal in mind. Both coalitions support responsible and appropriate energy development and recognize the important role it plays in the state's economy but consider the Wyoming Range important to preserve.

These coalitions set about a grassroots campaign to build broader support, through state-wide public meetings and letter writing campaigns to local politicians, for legislation that would remove the entire Wyoming Range from oil and gas leasing considerations forever. In 2007, Wyoming's U.S. Senator John Barrasso introduced the Wyoming Range Legacy Act of

2007. "The Wyoming Range represents the heart and soul of our state—independent, still wild, rugged, and a wonder for those that come from all over to experience it," he said.

Honoring the legacy of late Senator Craig Thomas, the legislation was crafted to find balance between multiple uses on the National Forest. The act withdraws all 1.2 million acres of the Wyoming Range from additional oil and gas development, while protecting the rights of companies, or "would-be" developers, who have existing leases within the withdrawal area. It also opens the door for private funds to purchase the existing leases and then retire them permanently.

As a key stakeholder, Gary actively lobbied for the bill's support and testified before the U.S. Senate Committee. The Wyoming Range has provided his outfitting operation with reliable trophies, returning clients, and a rewarding way of life for 25 years. "Last year, I got on an airplane for the first time in about 20 years to come and talk about the Wyoming Range," Gary said as he began his testimony in February 2008. "I don't like flying, but I'll tell you, this is important."

Today, the passion and commitment of Gary and the many other volunteers and professionals is beginning to pay off. In early 2008, the Wyoming Range Legacy Act successfully passed out of committee and was packaged with 160 other public lands bills and was reintroduced in 2009 as the Omnibus Public Land Management Act. It passed the U.S. Senate last January and the U.S. House of Representatives shortly thereafter. It was signed by President Obama on March 30.

We are optimistic here at NOLS that the bill will preserve not only Wyoming's natural history, but a critical piece of wilderness that is essential to the learning experiences of our students, as well as to the experiences of outdoor recreators.

Read the full Omnibus Public Land Act at <http://tinyurl.com/legacyact>. To learn about the history of the Wyoming Range grassroots campaign, visit [www.wyomingrangesportsmen.org](http://www.wyomingrangesportsmen.org) or [www.wyomingrange.org](http://www.wyomingrange.org).

ALUMNI PROFILE



NOLS grad Lesley Mottla helps NOLS alumni lead more sustainable lives through car-sharing.

## If You Can't Beat 'Em, Join 'Em Taking Cars Off the Road One Zipcar at a Time

BY CHRISTI VAN EYKEN, NOLS MARKETING INTERN

In 2006 the U.S. Bureau of Transit Statistics reported 250,851,833 registered passenger vehicles in the United States. Consequently, transportation is by far the largest source of air pollution in this country, the effects of which include acid rain, global warming, depletion of the ozone layer, and significant human health risks. So when Zipcar, a car-sharing company founded in 1999, informs us that every one of its co-share vehicles takes 15 to 20 personal vehicles off the road, it might be time to pay attention.

Lesley Mottla, a 1999 Kenya Wilderness graduate, has been the vice president of product management and experience for Zipcar since 2007. She says the mission of Zipcar is “to enable simple and responsible urban living.” The company provides self-service vehicle access to residents of major cities, where congestion, pollution, and the cost of parking make individual vehicle ownership impractical and even harmful. “The population of cities is growing, more people have been using cars, and it’s damaging to the environment,” said Lesley. And while walking, biking, or public transit are the best options, a car is occasionally a necessary evil, whether it’s for a weekend trip to the beach or the new sofa that is never going to fit inside your bike basket. That’s where

car-sharing services like Zipcar come in, providing urbanites, businesses, and students with easy access to vehicles when they need them.

Lesley found her way to Zipcar after years of working for software start-up companies in the Boston area. When Microsoft acquired one of the start-ups, she worked for the industry giant as a senior product manager before deciding that she wanted to return to a company that was doing interesting and important work. She loves that Zipcar employs passionate people who are “trying to take cars off the road and trying to get people to do things differently.” She sees parallels between the people who use and run Zipcar and the typical NOLS grad (if there is such a thing!). “They are smart, driven, interested in leadership, and interested in finding solutions to environmental problems,” she said.

Lesley’s ties with NOLS are three-fold and growing. Not only is she a NOLS alum, but she is also a NOLS spouse and a NOLS parent. Not bad for someone who grew up in a family that rarely

*“Zipcar is good for the individual in that it’s saving you money, but it’s also good for the city because it is taking cars off the road.”*

visited the great outdoors. Her husband completed a 25-and-over Whitewater River Expedition on the Green River in 1992, and after hearing his description of the NOLS experience she decided it was something she would enjoy. She had always loved traveling alone, and realized that this might be her last opportunity to have a great solo adventure. “I was getting married soon and I knew that marriage—and future kids—were going to change things,” she said.

She calls her Kenya course “fabulous,” with stunning scenery and fascinating interactions with the local Maasai people. “I hate to say it, because everyone says that NOLS was life-changing, but it really was,” she said. Her step-daughter has since completed an Alaska Prince William Sound Sea Kayaking course and she hopes that her son Rafer, 7, will take a course when he is old enough. She loves that her current work with Zipcar complements her

love of the outdoors and feels that NOLS and Zipcar both recognize “a given need to address environmental issues.” For backcountry-loving NOLS grads, car sharing is definitely one way to take positive action to shelter the environment.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates the annual cost of car ownership at over \$7,000. Car-sharing with Zipcar, which operates on a pay-as-you-go system for occasional drivers or a monthly membership for frequent drivers, can save you more than \$500 a year. Furthermore, with the occasional driving plan, you have a built-in financial incentive to drive only when you absolutely need to. Nearly 90 percent of Zipcar members drive 5,500 miles less per year after joining.

“Zipcar is good for the individual in that it’s saving you money, but it’s also good for the city because it is taking cars off the road,” said Lesley. Zipcar is available in over 50 cities in North America and the UK and on over 100 college campuses. And thanks to Lesley, NOLS alumni can now waive the membership application fee and get a 50 percent discount on the annual fee.

Lesley is grateful that her NOLS course and career have encouraged her to raise her two step-daughters and her son in a family that appreciates the outdoors. “I always feel very happy when I’m out in the wilderness or in a foreign country; it’s very mind-clearing,” she said.

**NEED WHEELS?  
WANT TO SAVE SOME DOUGH?  
OF COURSE YOU DO!**

**CHECK OUT THE NOLS ALUMNI  
BENEFITS FROM ZIPCAR!**

- Waive the membership application fee
- Save 50% off the annual membership fee

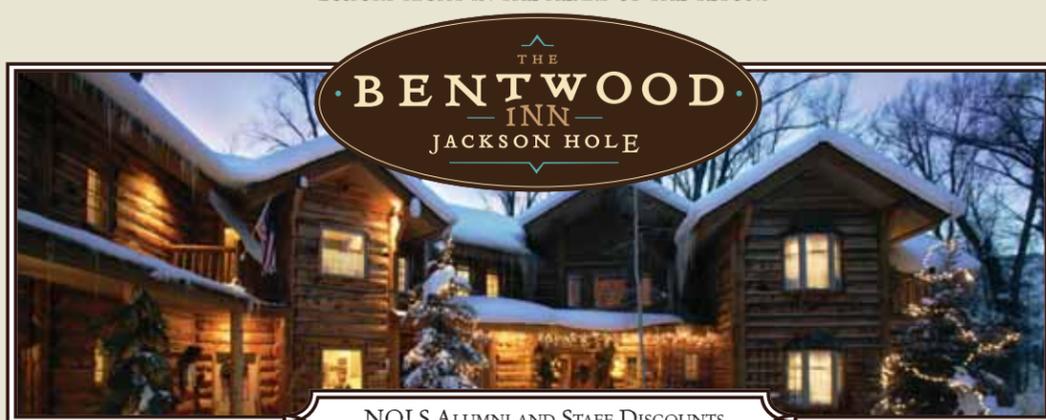


Courtesy of Zipcar

NOLS is thrilled to partner with Zipcar to offer alumni special discounts on car-sharing options in over a dozen cities and at over 100 college and university campuses across North America.

Contact NOLS Alumni at (800) 332-4280 or alumni@nols.edu with questions, or check out [www.zipcar.com/nols-alumni](http://www.zipcar.com/nols-alumni) to see if car sharing is right for you.

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](http://WWW.BENTWOODINN.COM) or (307) 739-1411

NOLS is in the Air .

*Or is that Love?*

Coursemates Hear Wedding Bells

BY CHRISTI VAN EYKEN, NOLS MARKETING INTERN, AND MEREDITH HAAS



Photos courtesy of Jay Parker

Meeting challenges, learning new skills, and working together in a group culminated in the exchange of vows for coursemates Jay and Carolyn Parker five years after their NOLS course.

A NOLS course might not be where you or I would choose to encounter the love of our life. You haven't showered in weeks, deodorant is an abandoned luxury, your hair resembles a Halloween wig and your clothing is dank, sweat-stained, and ripe with trip funk. But for Jay and Carolyn Parker, two happy graduates of a NOLS Semester in Alaska, love truly conquered all.

Carolyn was a junior at Tulane University and Jay was in Texas attending Trinity University when they met on their NOLS course in 2003. Thereafter, their relationship survived two years long-distance, and culminated in their wedding five years to the day since the start of their NOLS course. The officiant at their wedding ceremony even used their favorite quote from NOLS founder Paul Petzoldt: "If you think you are doing too much you are probably just doing enough," which Carolyn feels perfectly describes the work it takes to make a relationship thrive.

Both Carolyn and Jay agree that their time with NOLS taught them things about each other that it might otherwise have taken years to learn. "I would definitely not have known how good a writer Jay is if

***Funky hair, a lack of showers or deodorant, and grubby clothing aside, there is something about a shared love of NOLS and the outdoors that seems to draw people together.***

we had just gone on casual dates," Carolyn said, recalling Jay's entries in their group's daily trip journal.

Jay fell for Carolyn on day one and describes being wary she would never consider him in a different light if they became good friends. So he barely spoke to her during the first month of the course. "It was the silent but deadly technique," he confides.

The mysterious technique must have had some

effect. "Jay didn't talk to me much the first month of the trip," Carolyn said, though goes on to explain his early attempts to make her laugh. "He told me he practiced kayaking at home in his living room with his mom throwing water in his face. I definitely thought he was funny and cute!"

Despite their interest in each other, both were determined to make the most of their course. "I recognized that my NOLS experience was about growing as a person," Jay said. "I really wanted to embrace leadership."

As their relationship developed, they were careful to spend time apart. "We made a point of giving each other distance so that we could both get as much out of our NOLS experience as possible," Carolyn said. She recalls struggling during their mountaineering section and being forced out of her comfort zone. "It taught me that it would always be important to go out and do things on my own, and to continue to challenge myself," she said.

Erica Lorenzen, NOLS instructor and the group's course leader for the mountaineering section, said that it was a great expedition with a great team. "I remember it being one of the best mountaineering sections I have ever worked. We had a strong and capable team," she said. "I remember that all of the students worked remarkably well together and whatever sparks of romance were between Jay and Carolyn did not negatively affect the larger expedition team."

Both Carolyn and Jay agree that the wilderness is important in their lives and each would have had a great experience on course even if they had never met. Needless to say they are happy they did.

"I remember Jay telling me that they were an item between our backpacking and mountaineering sections," said Nick Monserud, Jay and Carolyn's coursemate. "I was definitely happy for them. I didn't really know that they were an item or were even considering it until Jay told me between sections. We were a tight knit bunch and always looked out for each other. They were always very respectful of the

group and I believe that they always put the group before their relationship. I couldn't be happier for both of them and wish them a lifetime of happiness."

Jay admits that meeting Carolyn on a NOLS semester brought its share of obstacles. "It is one thing to be a NOLS couple on a trip in some crazy

***"We made a point of giving each other distance so that we could both get as much out of our NOLS experience as possible."***

location, but to transfer that to reality is much different," he says. After living in a close-knit group for three months it was challenging to maintain the relationship when they returned to school in different states. "We almost didn't make it and our relationship had to be built all over again," said Jay. One of the best things about marrying his coursemate, though, is having someone to talk to about his NOLS experience. "The fact that we knew so much about each other from our shared NOLS experience helped," he said. Carolyn agrees, and adds that the skills involved in developing solid group dynamics on a course have helped them be successful. "Communication is so important in all relationships, but especially important in marriage," she said.

Funky hair, a lack of showers or deodorant, and grubby clothing aside, there is something about a shared love of NOLS and the outdoors that seems to draw people together. And for Jay and Carolyn it was about being in the wilderness and finding a person to share it with.

*If you and your spouse are NOLS grads who are married or your significant other shares the trait of being NOLSie, give us the scoop! Email alumni@nols.edu.*

## ALUMNI PROFILE



Award-winning artist and NOLS grad, Walter Cumming, showcases his passion for the wilderness through his art.



## An Artist's Call of the Wild

### Finding Inspiration In The Wilderness

BY ELISA HITT, FORMER NOLS PUBLICATIONS INTERN

At first glance, Walter Cumming's biography reads like an exemplary but not unusual list of achievements, garnered over the course of a twenty-plus year career as a professional illustrator. With a talent for various mediums, such as watercolor and pencil, Walter has won numerous awards, including the 2008 Best of Cox in Illustration for his work with the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* in Georgia. His biography goes on to list more awards and achievements, but when you find the phrase "after a year of hitchhiking and climbing the mountains of the West..." you begin to think that this story might not be so straightforward.

The phrase "experiential education" hadn't been coined yet in 1974, but Walter, then a student at the Rhode Island School of Design, knew he needed to get out of his books and find some adventure. After hearing about NOLS on an Outward Bound trip, he signed up for a spring Semester in the Rockies and headed west the following year to answer his own personal "call of the wild."

Almost three decades later, Walter vividly describes being woken up by the sound of rattlesnakes on the prairie, enjoying Easter eggs after four days of paddling into icy headwinds for 50 miles with no

food, and experiencing his first smells of desert juniper, pinion pine, and sage brush on the course's first night in the Canyonlands. According to Walter, the skills learned in remote locations with NOLS have served him well ever since. "The fundamental Petzoldt/NOLS philosophy and principles of moderation, caution, and careful judgment on expeditions were applied to many of my travel, creative, and athletic goals," he said.

Walter's connection to NOLS didn't end with his semester. His appetite whetted to spend more time out west, Walter freelanced as an artist based out of the Noble Hotel in Lander. An article from the June 1975 *Wyoming State Journal* stated, "He'll

***His official bio describes him as having a "Thoreau-like" lifestyle, grounding him in a wilderness setting, which he augments with regular personal expeditions.***

do a sketch or caricature of you for \$5, and they're pretty good." During this time Walter met Paul Petzoldt while he was jogging near Grand Targhee. Leaning out of his car window, Paul bellowed, "Hey! You need a place to stay?"

Walter and Paul climbed the Grand Teton together on the NOLS 1975 New Year's Eve Climb. In classic Petzoldt fashion, Paul had agreed to accept a mural Walter was working on as payment for the course in lieu of tuition. That mural, a caricature of the first NOLS semester course, currently resides

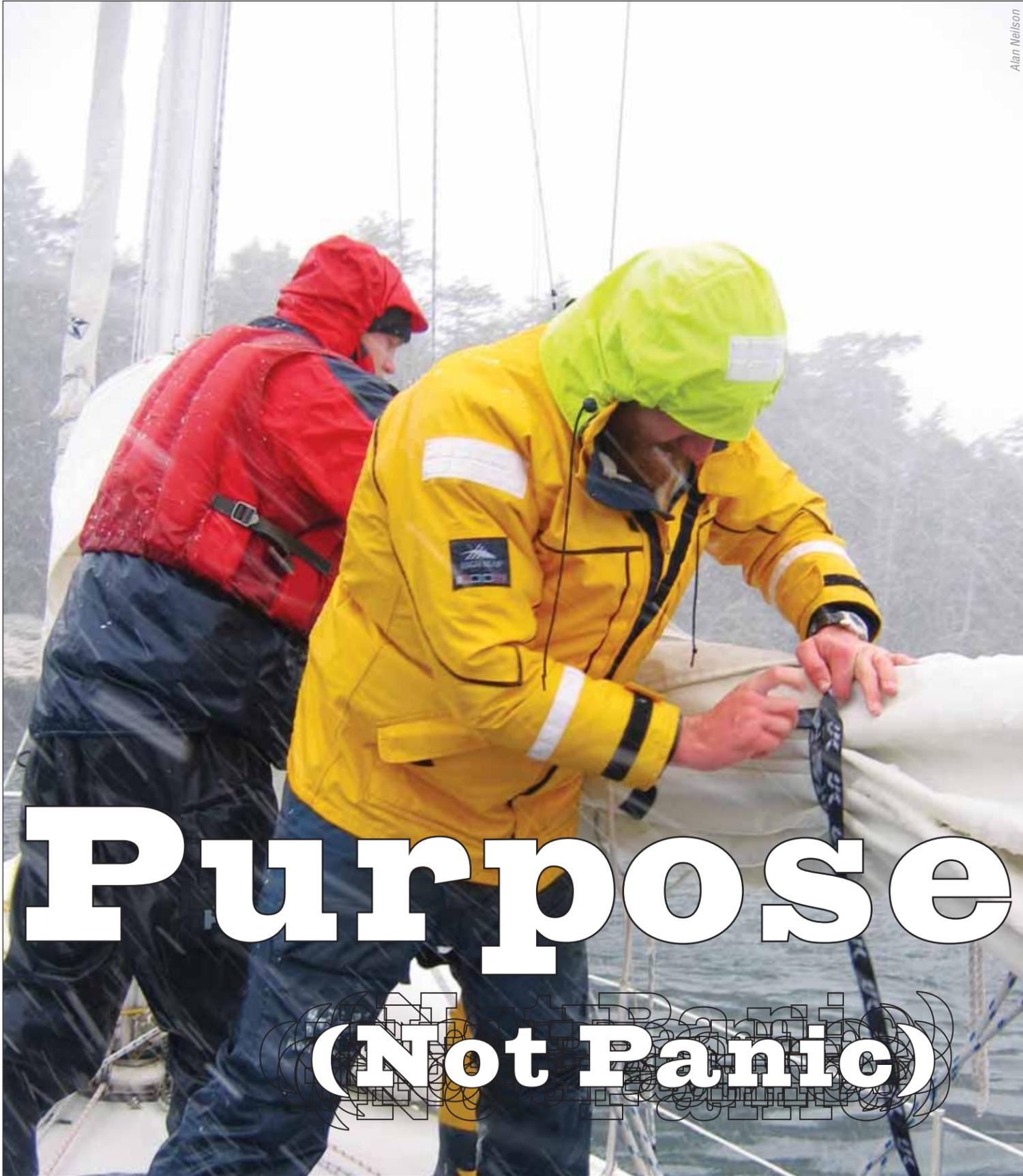
in the Noble here in Lander. He also contributed illustrations for the 1983 edition of *The National Outdoor Leadership School's Wilderness Guide*, as well as the 1976 edition of Petzoldt's *Teton Trails*.

After exhausting his freelancing resources in Lander, and newly married, Walter returned to Atlanta and was hired a few years later by the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, where he has worked for the last 28 years. But the desire to be in the wilderness has remained—manifesting itself as a successful summit of the Junfrau in Switzerland with his son, a solo bike ride across France, and hundreds of miles of wilderness canoeing.

Walter believes that his passion for wilderness and his work as an artist inform each other. His official bio describes him as having a "Thoreau-like" lifestyle, grounding him in a wilderness setting, which he augments with regular personal expeditions. Recently, he embarked upon a bike trip around Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, stopping to set up art shows along the way, and many of his paintings are inspired by his wilderness journeys. Walter attributes his expedition-planning skills to NOLS, a lasting benefit of his course, he said. "There is a time to be bold, both in a painting and on a river or a mountain, but as Paul always repeated 'There are no old, bold mountaineers,'" he said laughing. "If Picasso, Goya, or Michaelangelo had been climbers, they wouldn't have lived long."



To learn more about Walter and to view his work, visit <http://web.mac.com/waltercumming>.



Alan Neilson

# Purpose

## (Not Panic)

### NOLS MAINTAINS RELEVANCE IN THE FACE OF ECONOMIC RECESSION

BY JOHN GANS, NOLS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**T**he economic crisis is a very real situation that affects us all across the country and the globe. The associated challenges are dominating headlines, raising concerns for our students, their families, our alumni, and our employees. While news of unemployment and home foreclosures may seem far away or irrelevant in the middle of the Wind River Range, they provide a somber welcome when our staff and students return from the wilderness to areas more drastically affected. With millions facing job loss, fewer employment opportunities, a volatile stock market, tighter education loans, and home foreclosures it is hard not to find yourself discouraged or even a little panicked. But what this shows us is how connected we

all are and how important it is for us to make purposeful decisions and persevere together in hard times. Any time of adversity is a time of opportunity to grow.

#### WHAT DOES THIS RECESSION MEAN FOR NOLS?

Anyone who spends time on a school or college campus knows that traditional education is being greatly impacted by this recession with enrollment concerns, lay-offs, budget cuts, and endowment losses. Similarly, wilderness education is not immune from the impacts of our slowing economy and NOLS is feeling the stress and strain in a number of ways.

While our enrollment of students enrolling closer to actual enrollment for this fall is strong. Our fall semester enrollment and our spring semester enrollment are both at record levels. Looking forward, however, additional NOLS field courses are being canceled. We are projecting an enrollment decline for both the summer and next fall.

"We have been pro-active in response to the economic downturn," says Bruce Coe, NOLS executive and marketing director. "We are working hard to try to get a handle on the situation. We have decreased capacity to reflect the current situation, summer and upcoming fall courses. We are working to contain expenses. At the same time, we are in a very aggressive posture in the marketplace through events, positioning ourselves for the future. We are in for some tough times, but we will emerge from this downturn. Count on it."

Enrollment at the NOLS Wind River Institute (WMI) has been strong. WMI's fall and summer enrollment is projected to be higher than last year, a record.

"WMI is working to diversify our revenue," says WMI director Melissa Coe. "We are looking to include increasing our presence in the marketplace, developing wilderness courses, and increasing the number of contractual agencies."

What we are finding is that the demand for NOLS and WMI courses remains strong. Tuition and aid have escalated and combined with NOLS courses, such as wilderness medicine, has greatly increased. The importance of the transferability of credits have increased as students try to be as efficient as possible with their educational resources.

The additional request for funding is a unique challenge this year. The endowment provides critical scholarship support in the face of a significant decline. While the endowment is the norm these days, we are working in response to this endowment challenge by suspending any spending from the endowment that we maintain the principal of the endowment.

"Our Annual Fund provides critical support for NOLS. We are focused on how to use the proceeds to mitigate the impact of support that normally comes from the endowment. Coe, NOLS director of alumni relations, thanks all who have so generously supported the Fund, staff and alumni alike.

A key pillar of the leadership is the tolerance for adversity. Certain challenges of adversity these days, but more importantly, to these challenges are our leadership and action coupled with judgment.

We do not anticipate that the recession will last, but rather that our whole landscape will change in the next few years. In summary, we are looking at projections, developed scenarios, and with that, patience so we can optimize our resources.

Our current challenges are a result of strong growth and achievement.

patterns have shifted, with course start dates, our ac- winter, and spring has been enrollment was a record high enrollment is the third best on wever, our enrollment on tra- is looking very weak and we decrease of 15 to 25 percent t fall's semesters.

ve in our response to the eco- ce Palmer, NOLS admission have done scenario-planning e impacts to our enrollment, t our best-thinking for the , and temporarily shuttered er Australia operations as we the same time we have taken the promotion of the school and activating our alumni. imes, but NOLS is resilient. ownturn stronger than ever.

S Wilderness Medicine Insti- g all year. As we look ahead, projected to be comparable to

iversify its student audience," Gray. "Current focus areas in- e in the medical professional ss medicine expeditions, and courses we offer for governmen-

that while interest in NOLS strong, requests for financial cerns about costs associated s travel and gear costs, have rtance of college credit and e also greatly increased as stu- p possible in the allocation of

s for financial aid pose a Our endowment, which pro- port, has gone through a sig- decline of about 25 percent have chosen a conservative t drop. For this year, we are m our endowment to insure ap investment, or *corpus* of

vides significant scholarship ocusing on this fund in order te the loss of scholarship sup- m our endowment," said Pip mni and development. "We ously supported the Annual ."

ship curriculum at NOLS is nly we are all tolerating a bit ore important in our approach eadership principles of vision ment and decision-making.

at this is a short-term storm, ndscape may be changed for ary, we have put forth new rior plans on each side of the are maintaining reasonable potential late enrollment.

are in marked contrast to the ent of our past five years. But

as on a NOLS course, we know that we often learn more on the difficult and stormy days than we do on the sunny and pleasant days. We are committed to furthering our mission during these times. We also remain committed to our strategic plan. Our time frames may change, but the work and mission of NOLS and the NOLS community is more important than ever before.

Consistent with our commitment to our strategic plan, we still plan to see a rise in student and staff diversity by fully funding our \$1.2 million scholarship line this year. This commitment holds even if our revenues drop. We also remain very committed to our environmental stewardship and recognize that our efforts here will deliver long-term financial savings for NOLS and long-term savings for our planet.

"Our internal sustainability initiative is building strength and momentum," says Jen Lamb, NOLS public policy director. "We look forward to seeing the positive impact on both our energy expense lines and our environmental curriculum as we share what we learn with our students. A silver lining to the bleak news is that the new administration's economic stimulus programs promise to improve the health of many public lands, providing benefit to our all-important classrooms."

Though we currently don't have all the answers for *how* we will deliver on these commitments, I know we *will* deliver on them. As with a NOLS course in the wilderness, it will take the leadership, effort, and hard work of all of us. Students often say that they were able to achieve and learn more than they ever imagined. Similarly, NOLS also is capable of achieving more than appears immediately obvious.

As individuals and as a society we need to live within

***Though we currently don't have all the answers for how we will deliver on these commitments, I know we will deliver on them. As with a NOLS course in the wilderness, it will take the leadership, effort, and hard work of all of us.***

our means and in a fashion connected to our environment, both of which are well understood by every NOLS graduate. In this time of financial uncertainty, NOLS recognizes the hardships that individuals and organizations face. We also recognize that there are other global challenges that need to be addressed such as climate change, poverty and access to health care. Through life-changing educational experiences, NOLS is helping to develop the positive, ethical leaders of tomorrow that can lead us through challenging times with perseverance, tolerance, humility, and a respect for our environment and its resources.

We thank every individual who has helped us to visualize, organize, promote, and sustain this organization that is founded with the shared values of leadership and wilderness education. The support from every student, donor, volunteer, alumni, and staff member has made it possible for us to provide profound experiences and opportunities for future generations. I have no words to express my deep sense of gratitude to all of you as we continue to work together to support the NOLS mission. These times of great challenge will also be our time of great relevance.

**SAVE THE DATE!**

**NOLS Leadership Week**  
**Promote NOLS, Support The Mission**

May 17-23, 2009

				1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31	

Every day is a NOLS leadership day, so why the special occasion? We're calling on you and fellow grads worldwide to participate in a weeklong promotional event to collectively celebrate the seven NOLS leadership skills, to inspire life-changing experiences through wilderness expeditions, and to promote the NOLS mission of wilderness education. In today's unprecedentedly challenging economic environment, we're asking you and all alumni to be our active advocates.

*Each day of NOLS Leadership Week highlights ways you can support NOLS by utilizing a specific leadership skill and connecting with family and friends. Check out the day-by-day events below and then visit [www.nols.edu/leadershipweek](http://www.nols.edu/leadershipweek) for a full explanation and details.*

**SUNDAY, MAY 17: Expedition Behavior**

- Share your NOLS story with friends and family, and us!
- Place the NOLS logo as your Facebook profile picture.

**MONDAY, MAY 18: Competence**

- Hand out 5 NOLS catalogs.
- Become an Alumni or Parent Representative.

**TUESDAY, MAY 19: Communication**

- Review a NOLS book on Amazon.
- Join a NOLS group on Facebook.

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 20: Judgment & Decision-making**

- Give a NOLS presentation or set up an information table at your school.
- Eat, drink, and dress NOLSie!

**THURSDAY, MAY 21: Tolerance for Adversity and Uncertainty**

- Sign up for another course to upgrade your skills, or make a donation to the NOLS Annual Fund so that someone else can.
- Volunteer for a local service project in your area.

**FRIDAY, MAY 22: Self-Awareness**

- Host a reunion or participate at a NOLS event in your area.
- Join your local NOLS or WMI email list serve.

**SATURDAY, MAY 23: Vision & Action**

- Email your course description to 5 friends and tell them why you chose NOLS.
- Display a NOLS poster, tear card, or sticker.



Sarah Manwaring-Jones

**Don't Stop Now!** As a nonprofit, we've been successful because of the skills, talent, and commitment of our students, staff, and supporters. Please take a look and take action. NOLS needs you!

**Q & A**

## Weathering the Economic Storm

### Q&A with Michael Schmertzler, NOLS Board of Trustees Chairman

BY MEREDITH HAAS

With over 30 years of experience in the financial sector—investing, building, and financing an array of companies—Michael Schmertzler, a graduate of three NOLS courses and several WMI courses, as well as a NOLS parent, has been on the NOLS Board of Trustees since 2001 and has led the group as chairman since 2007. We’ve asked him to weigh in on the global economic forecast and how he thinks NOLS can weather the storm.

#### **Given your long history with the school, what about NOLS attracted you first and what has made you stay involved?**

My involvement with NOLS began with a 25-and-older river course in Alaska in the early 1990s. I enrolled in the course because I wanted to have an extended wilderness experience and to learn environmentally sound wilderness skills. The mission, values,

excellence, and conviction of NOLS impressed me and, together with the people of NOLS, have made me delighted to remain involved.

#### **What have been your greatest challenges in the current economic climate as a private investor?**

We are all dealing with a very difficult economic environment. Responsibly capitalized businesses have lost access to capital, often placing their shareholders, employees, and customers at risk. Stalwart, prudent investors have lost enormous sums and the ability to support worthwhile companies. The private companies with which I am currently involved are generally early stage, high technology companies, mostly in the life sciences. They have had to find new sources of capital, rapidly reevaluate their plans, and in some case, unfortunately, undergo significant downsizing to allow them to focus their finite resources on narrow paths to cash flow self-sufficiency.

#### **And what do you find to be some of the biggest challenges that lie ahead for NOLS?**

The biggest challenges today are uncertainty, declining enrollment for reasons beyond the control of NOLS, endowment losses, and the threat posed by the economy to the NOLS Annual Fund.

#### **What are some recommendations the Board of Trustees has given to NOLS that will help us face those challenges?**

The Board is very satisfied with the decisions and direction being taken by the NOLS Executive Director Team (EDT). The Board and staff have just completed a discussion of the various economic environments in which NOLS may find itself to be operating and corresponding budget assumptions for the next 18 months. This is a collaborative process between staff and the Board. No recommendations were made that are inconsistent with those of the executive director and EDT.

#### **What do you think NOLS does best for our students, alumni, and the outdoor industry as a nonprofit school focused on wilderness expeditions and leadership education?**

In short, I think NOLS is fulfilling its mission exceptionally well. We serve each of these constituencies differently but from the same core. And implicit in the strategic plan are opportunities for us to do even more.

#### **In relation to the NOLS mantra of “tolerance for adversity,” what are some ways we can continue to persevere and what can alumni do to help support our mission?**

Work together. We all need to understand the constraints under which we are operating and the threats we are facing. Continued focus on risk management, student outcomes, and efficiency from the faculty and staff are essential. Ongoing Annual Fund, word-of-mouth recruiting and, in time, endowment support from the alumni are also important.

#### **Is NOLS relevant in today’s volatile economic climate?**

Yes. I think the importance of leadership, in all its parts, and respect for the environment, resource stewardship (financial as well as material) and the groups in which we live are stunningly relevant—these are all core to NOLS.

#### **What would you say to a prospective student about the NOLS experience?**

Talk to any NOLS graduate.

#### **As a NOLS parent, what do you say to prospective student parents?**

Talk to any parent of a NOLS graduate. The wilderness skills NOLS teaches are outstanding and the environments in which NOLS operates are stunning and essential to our humanity, but the impact on the values, effectiveness, and self-awareness of our students is especially enduring.

#### **Given the world today, what do you look for in skills and experience needed for future Trustees?**

Providing guidance and oversight for NOLS requires a collective Trustee effort combining a very broad range of abilities and experience. No one Trustee can embody them all. Each NOLS Trustee is selected to bring a unique set of strengths to the Board. They are all expected to share a commitment to the NOLS mission and enthusiasm for the school, unqualified integrity, experience in the governance of a non-profit institution, and the leadership skills NOLS teaches.

*For the most up-to-date information on NOLS operations and course offerings please call 1-800-710-NOLS or visit our website [www.nols.edu](http://www.nols.edu).*

**BOOK REVIEW**

### **NOLS Wilderness Mountaineering**

#### **3rd edition**

Written by Phil Powers

© 2009 by NOLS, published

by Stackpole Books

ISBN: 978-0-8117-3521-6, 254

pp, \$16.95

REVIEW BY PAIGE HEALY, NOLS PUBLIC POLICY INTERN

Most people consider an ice axe to be a mountaineer’s best friend; however, the updated edition of *NOLS Wilderness Mountaineering* might give that tool a run

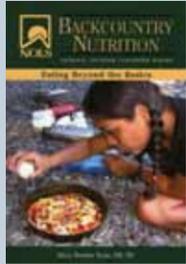
for its money. Author Phil Powers started as a NOLS instructor in 1981, moved on to serve as the school’s chief mountaineering instructor, and is now the executive director of the American Alpine Club and the co-owner of Jackson Hole Mountain Guides. The life of this veteran mountaineer includes the first ascent of the Washburn Face of Mount McKinley, the first winter traverse of the Cathedral Group in the Grand Tetons, and Lukpilla Brakk’s Western Edge, with a couple of 8,000 meter peaks thrown into the mix.

Updates throughout this third edition of this classic NOLS textbook include updated industry standards and NOLS protocols, 20 new illustrations including crevasse rescue scenarios and belay escapes, and essays from senior NOLS staff covering specialized topics such as river

crossings, snowpack assessment, climbing ratings, and transitioning from the climbing gym to the backcountry. Keeping your library updated with this book could mean the difference between summiting or getting caught in a storm; deciding to use a picket or a flute; using a leash for your ice axe or leaving that webbing at home.

“NOLS founder Paul Petzoldt used the term ‘must know’ to describe any information or knowledge fundamental to an activity,” Phil writes in his introduction. “This book is a collection of must knows for wilderness mountaineering.” Whether you are a novice who is just trying to prime your mountaineering skills or an expert looking for a way to keep up with changing industry standards and teaching techniques, remember NOLS will keep you up to date.

## BOOK REVIEW



### NOLS Backcountry Nutrition: Eating Beyond the Basics

Written by Mary Howley Ryan, MS, RD

© 2008 by NOLS, published by Stackpole Books

ISBN: 978-0-8117-3505-6, 274 pp, \$16.95

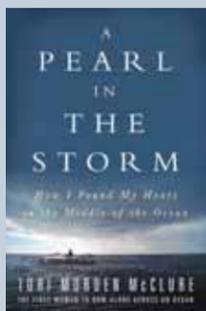
REVIEW BY PAIGE HEALY, NOLS PUBLIC POLICY INTERN

Pull out the food bag, put away the energy bars, and hit the bulk section of your local grocery store. NOLS has published the authoritative manual on backcountry nutrition by Mary Howley Ryan, MS, RD. Mary first connected with NOLS during her graduate training in the field of backcountry nutrition. That summer she packed up her pickup truck with a laptop and a really long extension cord and camped out in the backyard of NOLS Rocky Mountain's rations manager, Claudia Pearson. Together they analyzed the NOLS menu and realized the need for a concise nutrition field manual to supplement instructors' cooking curriculum. As a result, Mary produced the *2002 NOLS Nutritional Field Guide*. This guide was great for training NOLS instructors, but it left a gap in our students' library. NOLS still needed a comprehensive backcountry nutrition book that could educate our students in an easy-to-read and eye-opening format.

The new *NOLS Backcountry Nutrition: Eating Beyond the Basics* is a comprehensive, step-by-step progression through the how and why of backcountry fuel for your body. Expanding upon the normal "how to stay alive" nutritional content, Mary creates a "how to stay alive and enjoy yourself at the same time" message. This book is "designed in a simple and straightforward way to present practical, science-based nutrition information in order to prepare you for your backcountry experience," writes Mary in the beginning of the first chapter. "It helps explain what will give you energy and minimize cranky moments (at least the ones that are nutrition related)."

Mary's nutritional guidelines will allow you to play longer and give you more energy to set up camp at the end of a long day. This book is a great addition to any outdoor enthusiast's library and can make the difference between a mediocre trip and a trip that refuels your soul.

## BOOK REVIEW



### A Pearl in the Storm:

#### How I Found My Heart in the Middle of the Ocean

By Tori Murden McClure, NOLS Board member, Semester in Alaska and Semester in Kenya grad. © 2009 by Tori Murden McClure, published by HarperCollins

ISBN: 978-0-06-171886-1, 292 pp, \$24.95

REVIEWED BY MEREDITH HAAS

As one of the first women to ski over land nearly 750 miles to the South Pole, Tori Murden McClure was no stranger to painstaking expeditions when she took a 23-foot plywood boat, with no motor or sail, and became the first woman, and the first American, to row solo across the Atlantic in 1999. This story about failure, recovery, and personal healing takes on a unique perspective, a woman's perspective, a perspective that probes the recesses of the mind when isolated and confined from any outside communication.

An overwhelming sense of "helplessness" from trying to protect her developmentally handicapped brother in childhood carries over into Tori's adulthood and becomes a focal point when she sets off from the coast of North Carolina in 1998 with the intention of rowing 3,600 miles to France. Out at sea for 91 days, during the worst recorded hurricane season in the North Atlantic, Tori pushes her body, mind, and boat to the brink, forcing her to call for help. Struggling with feeling like a failure at the first attempt, Tori is faced with yet another tormenting hurricane on her second voyage to conquer the sea and herself. There she finds peace in her helplessness

and humanity, and she discovers her heart.

The narrative structure showcases Tori's relation to life through historical and philosophical interpretation in her search for what it means to live a just and meaningful life. Highly idealistic, Tori hides her loneliness and pain in intellectual thought, helping us to understand her motives behind this solo adventure.

It's not about the physical propensity that draws you in, but the intensity of a personal search to find peace and forgiveness within yourself. In a world that's governed by certain ideals of what's normal, this book inspires the search for your own path, which at times left Tori asking, "Why am I here?"

As Bill Murdock, also a NOLS Board of Trustees member and grad, puts it, "One never knows how well or interesting adventure travel books will be. This one, in my opinion, is a grand slam hit. At once it is heroic, candid, funny, philosophical, sad, triumphant, and very, very well-written."

*A highly recommended read, A Pearl in the Storm is available for order at Amazon.com and most local bookstores, and is available on shelves April 7, 2009.*

## 2008 NOLS AWARDS

NOLS held its annual State of the School meeting and awards ceremony last October to reflect on our successes and challenges of the past year, plan for the future, and to recognize folks whose contribution has strengthened the school.

## Alumni Awards

## Alumni Service Award

As the chief stalwart and rabble-rouser for our NYC alumni group, organizing record-setting reunions in 2006 and 2007, we award **SARAH EUSTIS** with this year's Alumni Service Award. Sarah, a 2003 NOLS Alaska grad, is a teacher and exemplifies leadership by organizing adventure trips for her students in New York City.

## Alumni Achievement Award

**DARYL MILLER**, three-time NOLS grad and former instructor, is this year's recipient of NOLS' Alumni Achievement Award for his accomplishments as a mountaineer and climber as well as his services as Denali National Park's South District Ranger. Daryl is well known for incorporating education and a strong emphasis on conservation into his management strategy—two elements that are key to success and undeniably key to NOLS.

## Stewardship Award

The NOLS Stewardship Award honors land managers who have demonstrated exceptional stewardship of wild lands entrusted in their care. This year's recipient was **RENNY JACKSON**, the Jenny Lake Subdistrict Ranger and manager of the Jenny Lake Climbing Rangers in Grand Teton National Park, for his competence and commitment to risk management and education. Renny directly affects many in the NOLS community, including instructors teaching in Grand Teton National Park who express confidence knowing that he manages all search and rescue activity.

## Employee Awards

## Instructor Award

Honored for his in-depth knowledge and engaging techniques, and for her skill on the water, both **MATT BURKE** and **REBECCA RAYNOR** are recognized for their exemplary work as NOLS field instructors.

## Intown Staff Award

**DREW LEEMON**, NOLS risk management director, was recognized for his contributions to the school as an expert on risk management, noted author on the subject, and leader in the industry. **JUDD ROGERS**, NOLS Patagonia director, was honored as an exceptional leader in branch operations. **JOE AUSTIN** was honored for his service to NOLS, our students, and the community in his roles as associate director of admissions.

## Combo Award

Consistently noted as an excellent teacher and mentor for students, **BECCA PARKINSON**, field instructor and NOLS Teton Valley program supervisor, was recognized for her stellar work both in the field and in operations.

## RECIPE BOX

## THE VOTES ARE IN! NOLS Grads Declare Their Favorite Backcountry Recipe

BY RICH BRAME

In sync with the November U.S. Presidential election, we asked 4,000 NARVAN\* subscribers to “vote” for their favorite NOLS field recipe. It was a hotly contested race with a surprising amount of partisanship, name-calling, and SNL-esque satire.

The pundits hemmed and hawed, but ultimately voters made their personal choice: Gado-Gado Spaghetti won in a thunderous landslide as democracy peacefully prevailed. Its spicy peanut butter sauce makes it a treat either hot or cold.

\*NARVAN is the NOLS Alumni Rep Vision and Action Newsletter, an electronic connection to our Alumni Representatives. Wanna join? Email [wom@nols.edu](mailto:wom@nols.edu).

Got a great backcountry recipe? Send it to [leader@nols.edu](mailto: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!



NARVAN mavens, Sarah Lancaster and Kary Sommers (far left), recently test-drove the winning Indonesian-themed recipe originally created by early NOLS Cookery co-author and all around good egg, Donna Orr.

### DONNA ORR'S GADO-GADO SPAGHETTI (serves 2 to 3)

#### Ingredients:

½ lb. (2 cups) spaghetti  
or 2 packages ramen noodles  
4 cups water  
3 Tbs. + 1 tsp. oil  
2 Tbs. sunflower seeds  
1 Tbs. dried onion, rehydrated  
½ Tbs. or one packet broth  
3 Tbs. brown sugar  
1 tsp. garlic  
½ tsp. black pepper (optional)  
½ tsp. hot sauce (optional)  
½ tsp. spike (optional)  
¾ cup water, or more as needed  
3 Tbs. vinegar  
3 Tbs. soy sauce  
3 Tbs. peanut butter  
sliced green or wild onions,  
(if available)

**Directions:** Break pasta in half and put into boiling unsalted water to which 1 tsp. of oil has been added. Cook until done; drain immediately. In a fry pan, heat 3 Tbs. oil and add the sunflower seeds and rehydrated onions. Cook and stir over medium heat for 2 minutes. Add the broth, brown sugar, garlic, other spices if desired, and ¾ cup water. Add the vinegar and soy sauce. Add peanut butter and stir. Don't let it burn! To eat this hot, heat the sauce thoroughly and pour over hot spaghetti.

**Notes:** This dish can have a fairly salty taste. Cut back or eliminate the broth if you are concerned about saltiness. The recipe is best cold, and it loses some of its saltiness as it sits. Mix sauce and spaghetti, cool quickly, and serve chilled. If available, sliced green or wild onions as a garnish add to the flavor.

**Variation:** Fresh vegetables like broccoli, onions, and cabbage, chopped and sautéed lightly and mixed into the sauce, make tasty additions.

## GEAR ROOM

## Choosing a Camera That's Fit for the Field

BY RICH BRAME

I had a chance to visit with NOLS Alaska grad Anthony Stevens at the DD Camera Corral in Jackson, Wyoming, about broad concepts for selecting a good camera for outdoor adventure. As an outdoor guy and long-time camera shop denizen, Anthony brings a great perspective to selecting digital cameras for NOLS expeditions. I was lucky to access Anthony's hands-on camera shop and get the chance to experiment with different cameras and accessories with enthusiastic, experienced staff.

Not surprisingly, the big threats to any backcountry camera are shock, dust, and moisture. Fortunately, there are easy ways to protect your photo gear and today's cameras are often constructed to resist abuse. The Pentax W, Olympus Style, and Canon G lines all offer excellent features and some level of waterproofness in a small, easy-to-carry camera. These cameras' gaskets protect their delicate interiors from dust and allow you to take photos under water—a handy option when reeling in that large trout or loading a NOLS kayak.

Once you've selected the brand, size, and model that you like, there are three main elements to con-

sider when using a camera in the bush—batteries, media/chip storage, and a protective case.

While backcountry solar technology is advancing quickly, it's often easiest and lightest to just carry an extra charged battery or two. Most of the smallest cameras use proprietary batteries, so you can't just pick up any old truckstop Duracell. With judicious use of the camera's LCD screen, many photographers have found that a single battery lasts a week or more, depending on your camera, shooting habits, and the environment.

**There are three main elements to consider when using a camera in the bush—batteries, media/chip storage, and a protective case.**

Most camera memory chips are either Compact Flash (CF), or Secure Digital (SD) format. These chips come in ever-cheaper capacities—4, 8, and 16 GB are good sizes for the field that will hold hundreds of high-resolution shots. Carry a few chips (maybe more, depending on how often you can download) and keep them dry.

Lastly, consider some sort of case for your field camera. If you're heading out on a water adventure, waterproof boxes are a great option—they'll keep dust and water out of your machine, but it probably makes access a bit cumbersome. If you're backpacking or climbing, some sort of padded, water-resistant

case can help protect your camera and keep it handy. Many soft cases can be attached right to your pack straps or clipped to a harness. A camera buried away in your pack is one that probably won't get those interesting shots on the trail.

Thanks to Anthony Stevens and the good folks at Jackson's DD Camera Corral, all these decisions boil down to a few main nuggets of advice: pick a camera that's light and easy to use; keep dust, dings, and moisture to a minimum; carry plenty of battery power and chip capacity; use a case that protects your investment while keeping your camera handy.

#### Anthony's Tips:

- Keep your batteries warm by storing them in your inside jacket pockets in cold environments.
- Shoot on the highest possible resolution—memory cards are a bargain and a NOLS course is often a once-in-a-lifetime experience. Don't scrimp on the images.
- If your camera's insides get wet, completely dry it in the sun—open doors and access points, remove battery, and dry, dry, dry BEFORE turning the camera on.
- Keep your lens and LCD screen clean with a lint-free microfiber cloth.

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

FIELD NOTES

# 荒野に

## Into the Wilderness

### Land of the Rising Sun Meets Land of the Midnight Sun

BY RICH BRAME

In August 2008, 13 dedicated, barely-English-speaking Japanese students from Waseda University, one of 100 universities in Tokyo city, headed into Canada's Yukon wilderness with NOLS. Japanese students in general are uncommon at NOLS, and an entire course of folks from the island nation is almost unheard of. What connected this group with NOLS in the north?

In the summer of 2006, Yukon College's International Education Coordinator, Yoshie Kumagae, participated on a 30-day NOLS Yukon Whitewater Canoeing course that paddled the Bonnet Plume River in remote northern Yukon. Yukon College is the territory's only post-secondary school and is a tremendous educational resource for the capital of Whitehorse, and Yoshie had been trying to design Yukon College programs that connected education and wilderness values with language study and practice. After her successful NOLS course, she recognized the potential to link wilderness, Yukon College, and NOLS with universities in Japan. The outcome was a seven-day backpacking expedition focusing on leadership, communications, the environment, and English as a second language.

"Though we had two fluent English/Japanese leaders with us on the course, we wanted to help the



NOLS Yukon and Yukon College host a bilingual wilderness course for students from Tokyo, Japan.

students improve their English language skills," said Christina (Chris) Hatton, NOLS instructor and course leader. "Translation was used sparingly, yet appropriately, and the students practiced often. All three of us instructors had to significantly alter our teaching styles and lessons to ensure that we were being understood. They quickly learned and effectively shared in English what wilderness meant to them, how difficult it is to find such space in their home country, and how wild the Yukon was to them."

Though their time in the bush was relatively brief, Chris found the expedition to be remarkably full of learning, leadership effort, wilderness connection, and laughter—lots of good-natured laughter in the inevitable cross-cultural and mispronounced mix-ups. "One of the students stated that he had

*Yoshie [Kumagae] had been trying to design Yukon College programs that connected education and wilderness values with language study and practice. After her successful NOLS course, she recognized the potential to link wilderness, Yukon College, and NOLS with universities in Japan.*



never laughed so much in his life and he learned the power of laughter on the course," said Yoshie.

From all perspectives, the expedition was a huge success. "In Yukon, there was no artificial object, but great wilderness was there. I could get inspiration from it," said Nobutoshi Araya, a participating student. "I learned that nature was the greatest teacher."

Efforts are under way to create similar partnership expeditions in the north and with Yukon College. The Waseda University expedition is just one particularly powerful way Yukon staff help make NOLS a resource in the community.

"Waseda University is returning this summer and we will have another Japanese university group to take a NOLS/Yukon College program this year," said Yoshie. "I am very excited to be a part of spreading NOLS spirits in the world as a NOLS grad!" And, as one of the Waseda University administrators said when he first heard about this collaboration in the wilderness, "This is exactly what young Japanese students need!"

Custom Courses • Leadership Training • Skills Seminars • Risk Management



Professional Training

NOLS Professional Training • [www.nols.edu/nolspro](http://www.nols.edu/nolspro)  
(307) 332-8100 • [nolspro@nols.edu](mailto:nolspro@nols.edu)

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

Midwest Mountaineering Presents  
the 48th Bi-Annual

# OUTDOOR ADVENTURE EXPO

April 24-26, 2009  
100 Presentations  
70 Exhibitors

at Midwest Mountaineering, U of M Campus and Big-Top Tents  
Fri. 4-9, Sat. 9-6, Sun. 11-5

Featuring:  
Radical Reels Film Festival World Tour

Details : [www.outdooradventureexpo.com](http://www.outdooradventureexpo.com)

---

MIDWEST MOUNTAINEERING

309 Cedar Ave. So. Minneapolis, MN 55454  
U of M West Bank 612.339.3433 1.888.999.1077

[www.outdooradventureexpo.com](http://www.outdooradventureexpo.com)  
[askus@midwestmtn.com](mailto:askus@midwestmtn.com)

Locally owned and operated since 1970.  
"Ask Us, We've Been There"

Authorized NOLS clothing and gear retailer!

**JABBERWOCKY**

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

**GRADS FROM THE '70S****David Nyquist, WRW 06/22/70**

David is teaching chemistry at the University of North Florida, and he will never forget spending Fourth of July on the Continental Divide with NOLS on his WRW.

**GRADS FROM THE '80S****Wallace Souther, WMT 07/16/84 & ROC 07/18/85**

After NOLS, Wallace finished high school and worked in California as a raft guide and safety kayaker for six years. Many of his winters were spent in Costa Rica, Chile, Zimbabwe, Nepal, and Taiwan teaching English and kayaking. Wallace married in 1999 and lived in Germany from 2000 to 2008. He now works for NCSU's Mountain Horticultural Research Station and lives in North Carolina with his wife and daughter.

**GRADS FROM THE '90S****Jordan Summers, OEC 08/06/90**

Jordan has two new guidebooks being published this spring: *Five Star Trails Around Lake Tahoe* releases in April and *Easy Hikes Close to Home: Sacramento* will be released exclusively to Borders in June. On April 5, Jordan is embarking from the Mexico-California border on a five-month thru-hike to Canada on the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail. In conjunction with the hike, he is raising donations for RP Fighting Blindness, which underwrites genetic research for a cure for the disease *retinitis pigmentosa*. Find him at [www.summers-trails.com](http://www.summers-trails.com).

**Bill Sanford, ABW 07/08/91**

Bill has accepted a position as a leadership coach and trainer at Bell Leadership Institute in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. He is married, has three sons, and is pleased to report that his boys got camping gear for Christmas! Also, he recently heard from one classmate and would love to hear from others.

**Amy Roberts, WSS 06/06/93**

Amy Roberts lives in Santa Fe, New Mexico and works as an environmental educator with Audubon New Mexico. She is also pursuing her MA at Prescott College in environmental education. Despite a long and circuitous route through various occupations, Amy has returned to the field she loves and was first inspired by through NOLS 16 years ago. She welcomes any communication from the wonderful individuals on her NOLS semester via email at [alroberts17@yahoo.com](mailto:alroberts17@yahoo.com).

**Ben Gilmore, WMT 08/03/92 & SIC 07/15/93, and Kevin Mahoney, FSR-4 09/13/90 & ICS 04/24/94**

We featured Ben and Kevin in the fall 2008 issue of *The Leader* after they won the Mugs Stump Award

for the 6,799-meter ascent of Kangtega in Khumbu Valley, Nepal—a region best known for being en route to Everest's base camp. This prestigious award is given each year to an alpine climbing team that demonstrates merit and ability. We're happy to report that Kevin and Ben were successful, and the rest of their expedition story can be found online at <http://newhampshireiceclimbing.com/blog/?p=85>. Congratulations for this amazing feat!

**Charlie Wittmack, SAF-1 01/14/95**

Charlie attempted to become the first American to complete what adventurers refer to as "The Peak and Pond"—climbing Everest and swimming the English Channel. He climbed Everest in 2003 and made it 15 miles across the 21-mile channel last August.

**GRADS FROM THE '00S****Jessica Humpal-Miller, RICU 04/26/00**

Jess and her husband, Tim, are living in Durango, Colorado. They are celebrating the birth of a baby boy named Hatch Edward who is lovingly tortured by his big sister, Nellie June. Besides being a mama, Jess is a part-time ski patroller and on the board of Animas River Keepers, looking to keep the Animas wild. "Well, as wild as the Animas can be anyways," she says. Still boating and wants to do a flat-water trip with the kiddos. Any takers? [jess\\_miller@mac.com](mailto:jess_miller@mac.com).

**Scott Nichols, FSS 09/05/00**

After working for some progressive causes and politicians, Scott decided to get into fundraising for nonprofits. Still based in New Hampshire, he thinks about his course almost every day and hopes everyone is well. Scott is the director of special events for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation.

**Benjamin Tupper, CWY 06/22/01**

Ben just finished his first guiding job with the Alaska Center for the Environment. He has now moved to Georgia to work as an environmental educator at a camp on a barrier island. Quite a change from the snow-peaked mountains of Anchorage!

**Katelyn Krumperman, ABW 05/26/03**

Katelyn recently moved back to the East Coast after living in Telluride, Colorado, for the past three years where she was writing for the local newspaper, working for the local TV station as the Web editor, and working many other ski bum-style jobs. She landed a job at Waterville Valley Ski Academy working part-time as a teacher. She loves being back in the mountains (which she says NOLS taught her to appreciate everyday) surrounded by what she loves to do—hike, ski, rock climb, etc. "I have found my own Telluride in the East," she says.

**Philip Magistro, JSPA-2 01/30/04**

Phil and his wife, Apryle Craig, are embarking on

**PREPARE YOUR RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN****BE READY FOR ROUGH WATERS**

Every program must invest in their crisis planning, staff preparedness, and legal protocols. All too often, though, these steps are overlooked or incomplete.

If you run trips in the outdoors, this training will improve your organization's risk management plan. NOLS has over 40 years of risk management experience that can help you plan and prepare for the inherent hazards of taking people into wild places. After training with us, you'll walk away with the skills and knowledge to apply our strategies to your own program. Register now—you'll be glad you did.

**NOLS RISK MANAGEMENT TRAININGS:** *Hands-on sessions aimed at building or improving your organization's risk management plan*

Upcoming trainings (see our website for complete up-to-date information):

- > April 14-15 | Manchester, NH
- > November 3-4 | Minneapolis, MN
- > May 12-13 | Denver, CO
- > September 23-24 | San Francisco, CA

Register now: [www.nols.edu/nolspro](http://www.nols.edu/nolspro) • (800) 710-6657 ext. 3

*We're Flexing Our Muscle to Get You Great*

**HOTEL DEALS**

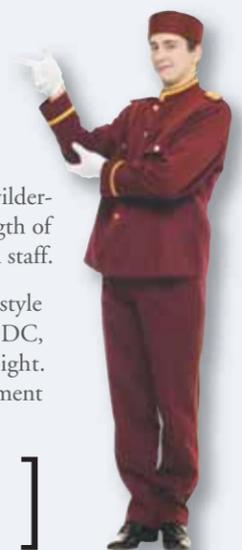
RATES FROM  
**\$56**

The benefits of a NOLS education are many—skills, experience, wilderness, leadership—and now there's more. We're leveraging the strength of our over 100,000 grads to gain valuable benefits for our alumni and staff.

We've arranged for NOLS staff and grads to receive discounted, business-style lodging at Club Quarters properties in New York, Boston, Chicago, Washington DC, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Houston, and London. Rates start as low as \$56/night. Some restrictions apply and availability varies. Contact the NOLS Alumni department at (800) 332-4280 or [alumni@nols.edu](mailto:alumni@nols.edu) for details.



**BECAUSE EVEN HONED WILDERNESS TRAVELERS  
DESERVE A NICE HOTEL ROOM NOW AND THEN.**



a 1,200-mile paddling expedition up Canada and Alaska's Inside Passage in May 2009 to raise awareness for the preservation of wild Pacific salmon. See [www.elevatedattitude.com](http://www.elevatedattitude.com) for more details.

**Adam Delp, JSPM-2 01/25/05**

"Not a day goes by that I don't think about my semester in Patagonia with NOLS." Now a humanitarian organization executive spending 50 hours a week in an office, Adam longs for the fjords, rivers, peaks, and calafate berries of the Aysen Region and, of course, he misses his instructors and classmates. The organization that he works for, The 1010 Project ([www.the1010project.org](http://www.the1010project.org)), is based in Denver. He finds himself injecting the philosophies of Expedition Behavior (EB) and "bombproof" into each and every aspect The 1010 Project, whether its taking a service learning team to Kenya, providing a grant to a grassroots organization, or keeping the office streamlined and organized. "NOLS left an indelible impact on my life and my leadership style, and I am forever grateful. I love driving around Denver seeing NOLS stickers on coffee mugs, Nalgene's, or on the back of vehicles. I continue to run into NOLS grads at non-profit conferences and on dusty roads in Kenya. The subculture that is NOLS is a beautiful place."

**Jack Kuber, WW 06/18/07**

Jack, who lives in the Burlington, Vermont area, is a graduate of Champlain College. He is a graphic

designer at Deerfield Designs/Green Revolution Now T-Shirt, Vermont's oldest screen-print and embroidery shop. Their screen printing process reduces waste, removes toxic chemicals from the printing process, and offers organic fibers in alternative and highly recommended fabrics. Jack's enjoyment is the great outdoors, from soup to nuts. But his passion is riding fresh snow.

**Timothy Rodriguez, SSI 03/26/08**

Tim of Cortland, New York, has been named Main Street community outreach coordinator and will assist town-grown partnerships based at Main Street SUNY Cortland at 9 Main St. Tim's responsibilities include developing, coordinating, and implementing a number of the programs for the SUNY Cortland Institute for civic engagement and the Cortland downtown partnership.

**NEW ADDITIONS**

**Matt Deines, ICS 04/13/99, and Jami Deines, AKIC 05/14/01**

NOLS instructors Matt and Jami would like to announce the arrival of their twin daughters Bailey Christine and Emerson Rivers on 09/12/08.

**Eric Concannon, OEM 08/01/01, and Kristen Brown, NOLS Employee**

NOLS employees Eric and Kristen are the proud

parents of Rowan Sinclair Concannon. Rowan was born on 10/07/08 at 3:25 a.m. He weighed 7 lbs 9.5 oz and 21 inches long.

**Wally Long, SAF-1 01/14/88**

Wally, former NOLS instructor, and Valerie Long are the proud parents of a baby girl. Gwyneth Crandell Long was born 12/02/08 at 10:17 a.m. She was 9 lbs 3 oz and 20.5 inches long. Val is doing well and her sisters, Katherine and Charlotte, are really excited about having another sister!

**Steven Brutger, JSPM 01/25/01, and Sarah Annarella, FSW 09/25/90**

NOLS instructors Steven and Sarah are the proud parents of Ayden Grace Brutger. Ayden was born 12/25/08, Christmas Day! She weighed 7 lbs 4 oz at birth.

**Tony Jewell, NCM 07/15/80, and Deb Payne, PWS 07/27/85**

NOLS instructors Tony and Deb are the proud parents of a second son, Aiden Sanders Jewell. Weighing in at 7 lbs 7 oz, Aiden was born on 01/29/09 in Jackson, Wyoming, and is keeping Mom and Dad and brother Logan (4½ years old) very busy!

**IN REMEMBRANCE**

**Kathryn Miller, WRW 7/26/90, EMT 4/8/91, SIC 8/29/91**

Jackson Hole ski patroller, alpinist, guide, and former NOLS instructor Kathryn Miller passed away on March 17, 2009 after a ski accident in Spacewalk Couloir. Tributes to Kathryn's extraordinary life can be viewed at [www.caringbridge.org/visit/kathrynmiller](http://www.caringbridge.org/visit/kathrynmiller).

In addition to spending over 110 weeks teaching in the field with NOLS, Kathryn broke mountaineering boundaries in 1999 as part of an American, all women team that climbed the sixth highest mountain in the world, 26,906-foot Cho Oyu, on the border of Nepal and Chinese Tibet. Friends, family, and colleagues are saddened, but they are also thankful for Kathryn's tremendous and infectious zest for life.

• **EXPEDITION MODEL:** 10.5" diameter x 2" deep - \$73.00  
 • **ALPINE MODEL:** 8" diameter x 1.5" deep - \$61.00  
 • **HOT EXPEDALP PKG.:** One of each above - \$124.00

**Banks Fry-Bake Company**  
 P.O. Box 183 • Claverack, New York 12513  
 (518) 851-5207 • Toll Free: (888) FRY-BAKE (379-2253)  
 E-mail: [info@frybake.com](mailto:info@frybake.com) • Web: [www.frybake.com](http://www.frybake.com)

**Used by NOLS alumni around the world since 1979**

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

**TAKE YOUR LNT TRAINING TO THE NEXT LEVEL**  
*Enroll in a Leave No Trace Master Educator Course Today!*

**Upcoming courses:**  
 Grand Staircase-Escalante, UT | June 1-5, 2009 | Backpacking  
 Yellowstone National Park, WY | June 15-19, 2009 | Backpacking  
 San Juan Islands, WA | September 14-18, 2009 | Sea Kayaking  
 Grand Canyon, AZ | November 6-10, 2009 | Backpacking  
 Ouachita National Forest, AR | October 4, 2010 | Backpacking

**New Front Country LNT Master Educator:**  
 Mille Lacs Kathio State Park, MN | July 10-13, 2009 | Day Hiking

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

Please Support  
**CLIMB AGAINST THE ODDS**  
**MT. SHASTA**  
**JUNE 21-27, 2009**

Climb Against the Odds 2009 marks the Breast Cancer Fund's 10th major mountaineering expedition to help eliminate the environmental and preventable causes of the disease.

Support Amy McAbee's climb:  
 1-866-760-TBCF x30  
[www.breastcancerfund.org/climb09](http://www.breastcancerfund.org/climb09)

**Amy McAbee**  
 NOLS alum and breast cancer survivor

**BREAST CANCER FUND**  
 PREVENTION STARTS HERE

**ALUMNI HAPPENINGS****Alumni Trips**

A month may be too much to ask from the boss, so the NOLS Alumni office offers shorter backcountry trips that are specifically designed for our alumni. We encourage our grads to bring family and friends along on these weeklong expeditions to reconnect with the school and introduce others to their NOLS experience. These trips have the same top-quality instructors but the atmosphere is a little more relaxed. Customized trips are also available. Call us to design your dream adventure.

**BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS SAILING**

May 26–June 2, 2009 | Cost: \$1,900

Head to the British Virgin Islands to learn the art of keelboat sailing on this seven-day alumni trip. The curriculum focuses on sailing and living aboard a 50-foot cruiser. You'll learn charts, navigation, and seamanship while cooking meals and rotating through crew positions. "Competent Crew" certification is available.

**FAMILY RAFTING ON IDAHO'S SALMON RIVER**

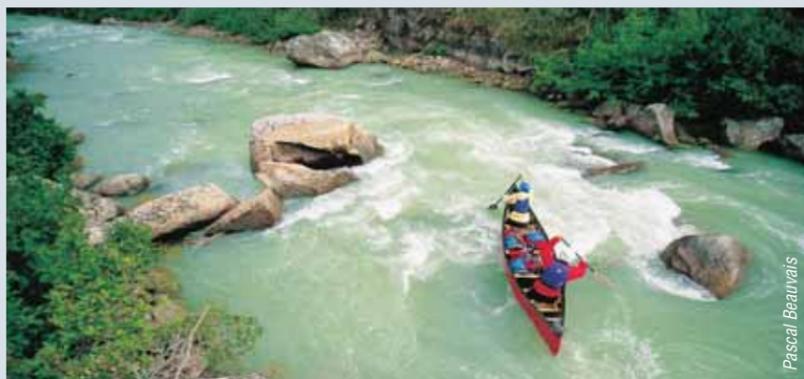
June 25–29, 2009 | Cost: \$1,020

Get away for a great outdoor family vacation. Invite your parents, bring the kids, and enjoy some quality time on an 86-mile stretch of one of the West's most beautiful rivers. Enjoy camping on sandy beaches, feeling the rush of whitewater, and partaking in the calm of s'mores around the campfire. Take this chance to create some family memories that will last for years to come.

**FAMILY CAMPING IN THE WIND RIVER MOUNTAINS**

July 6–11, 2009 | Cost: \$1,275 | Age 10 and up

Relive your fondest memories of Wyoming's Wind River Mountains with your family. This trip uses llamas to transport the majority of our gear as you shoulder a daypack of necessities. We'll cover basic wilderness skills including cooking and LNT techniques. There will be time for fly-fishing, photography, hiking, and enjoying these majestic mountains. Ages 10 and up are welcome.

**YUKON RIVER CANOEING**

July 11–22, 2009 | Cost: \$2,025

Take full advantage of the Yukon Territory on this 12-day expedition that follows the historic Gold Rush path from Whitehorse to Dawson. This trip is perfect for individuals and families wanting to develop wilderness canoeing skills.

**SQUAMISH ROCK CLIMBING**

July 19–25, 2009 | Cost: \$1,395

Visit Squamish, British Columbia, to improve your climbing skills this summer. This trip is a great way to introduce friends or family to the sport of climbing. We'll accommodate 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.

**GANNETT PEAK CLIMB (ALUMNI ONLY)**

July 25–August 4, 2009 | Cost: \$2,275

Hidden deep in the Wind River Range above jumbled moraine and glacial ice, Gannett Peak is Wyoming's highest mountain. Reaching this remote 13,804-foot summit requires an approach of several days followed by the climb itself. You'll travel on snow and ice, cross Dinwoody Glacier, and climb rock to the summit. Horses will pack in the climbing gear and much of your food.

**SEA KAYAKING IN ALASKA'S PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND**

August 16–22, 2009 | Cost: \$1,375

Prince William Sound offers spectacular views of booming tidewater glaciers and abundant wildlife. This seven-day trip focuses on basic sea kayaking and coastal camping skills.

**ALUMNI SERVICE TRIP IN WYOMING'S WIND RIVER MOUNTAINS**

August 16–22, 2009 | Cost: \$500 – subsidized by NOLS!

It's a unique time in the country and we've teed up a unique trip to match. This alumni trip focuses on service—building and repairing trails, campsites, and other backcountry infrastructure. This trip isn't all work though. We'll make time for fly-fishing and perhaps even a walk-up peak ascent.

**HORSEPACKING IN WYOMING'S WIND RIVER RANGE**

August 17–26, 2009 | Cost: \$1,525

Time for a little taste of the Old West! After a few days at NOLS' Three Peaks Ranch, you'll head into the mountains with a string of pack horses to ride, fish, learn, and camp. Grab your hats and boots and live the life of a cowboy...or cowgirl!

**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 score some sweet gear in our raffle. NOLS and WMI grads, friends, family, and everyone interested in the school are welcome.

**MAY 9, DENVER, CO | PATAGONIA STORE**

See images from instructor Rob Walker's six-month, 1,850-mile kayak traverse of Chilean Patagonia.

**MAY 14, BOSTON, MA | FENWAY PARK**

Learn about the Epicocity Project—a two-month expedition through Papua New Guinea's rivers, caves, and rainforests—from NOLS grad and adventurer Brian Eustis.

**Watch for events in the fall including Minneapolis, Chicago, NYC, Austin and more...**

**BRANCH NOTES**

**NOLS PATAGONIA**



- We recently completed our first climbing camp in Chile with the Patagonia Year students. On the scenic shores of Lago General Carrera (see photo), the 18-day camp put up and named numerous new climbing routes.
- We recently purchased a 29-passenger bus for course transport. It is not as romantic as the ox cart, but certainly makes the long drives on dirt roads a bit more enjoyable.
- Our vegetable gardens and greenhouses have doubled in number this year. The veggies go straight to the kitchen to feed students that stay at the campo during expedition preparation and wilderness medicine training.

**NOLS SOUTHWEST**

- We added a hybrid vehicle to our fleet as we continue to reduce carbon emissions by minimizing use of vehicles on the road. We're now leaving our bus close to our canoe program area on the Rio Grande and have our transportation manager shuttled back and forth via Amtrak.

**NOLS ROCKY MOUNTAIN**

- Our solar array celebrated its one-year birthday. Data shows the sun has cut our purchased electricity use by almost 40 percent.
- A new composting system was adopted this fall at the RM, NOLS Headquarters, and the Noble Hotel. Now students, faculty, and staff can conveniently compost their organic waste instead of letting it flow into a landfill. The system came into place after an industrial composter was installed this past August, and it has been in full swing since early November.

- Our growing Scandinavia program will run two sea kayaking/hiking courses this summer. The hiking section emphasizes lightweight backpacking, and the sea kayak sections will go out with complete rations allowing for more exploration on the water and on the beach.

**NOLS MEXICO**

- We're having an exciting change in leadership in May. I am pleased to announce that Carolina Gonzalez Cortes, current NOLS Mexico assistant director, has accepted the position of NOLS Mexico director. Carolina, with a background in computer engineering, started her career with NOLS as an intern in Baja. She's worked as a hiking and kayaking instructor in Baja and Alaska.
- Our Spanish-language programs are an active growing part of NOLS Mexico—with two recent courses for educators from all over Mexico and even Honduras! We're also sponsoring clean-up efforts in Sierra la Laguna together with CONANP (National Commission for Natural Protected Areas) and clean-ups on neighboring beaches near the branch.
- NOLS Mexico recently participated in a beautiful ceremony to celebrate the life of long-time NOLS instructor Willie Williams, who lost his battle last summer with synovial sarcoma. Willie's spouse, Marisa, and other friends from the Marin Headlands Institute traveled to Baja to initiate the celebration with friends here in Coyote Bay.

**NOLS TETON VALLEY**

- We've reconfigured summer logistics to diminish the use of our Salmon, Idaho, river base. We're still running plenty of Salmon courses, but most river students will now complete their course preparation at our Driggs facility.
- Through the creativity and initiative of instructor AJ Linnell, we've developed a new, varied 14-day Teton Range snowboard route that essentially hits the slopes right from the branch. Easy transpo and great powdery slopes—it doesn't get much better than that!

**NOLS ALASKA**



- Join us in celebrating the increasing daylight. If you look closely at our picture above, you'll see us busily planning and preparing for a summer of NOLS expeditions.



*This could be your job.*

If you love the outdoors and have great communication skills, instructing for NOLS may be your opportunity of a lifetime. Launch your NOLS instructor career with:

- **NOLS Instructor Course (IC)**, a month long course for aspiring NOLS instructors. You'll get the tools to teach the next generation of NOLS students—in-depth instruction on teaching the NOLS curriculum and training about NOLS protocols.
- **Professional Instructor Course (PIC)**, a 16-day course for very experienced practicing outdoor educators. We'll recognize your accomplishments and put you on the fast-track to working for NOLS.

Year-round work, instructor seminars to continue your growth, and NOLS support for personal expeditions are all part of the package. Work and travel the world with NOLS!

**For more information, check out:**  
[www.nols.edu/alumni/employment](http://www.nols.edu/alumni/employment)

**WILDERNESS QUIZ**

**Answer:** In April 1993, The Walt Disney Company entered into a partnership with the Nature Conservancy and five other agencies to establish the Disney Wilderness Preserve on 8,500 acres of newly acquired land south of Walt Disney World.

<http://disney.go.com/disneyhand/environmentality/environment/preserve.html>



**Conservation Begins Here.**

SCA, America's #1 conservation service organization, seeks qualified individuals to lead new field projects just approved by Departments of Interior and Agriculture. As a field leader, you could lead high school volunteers in trail building and habitat restoration projects in any one of 100 national parks, forests, refuges, or cities across the U.S., or lead teams of college students in native plant restoration and environmental education.

*Please visit [www.thesca.org](http://www.thesca.org) for specific positions, submit your resume to [fieldleaders@thesca.org](mailto:fieldleaders@thesca.org) or mail to SCA Field Leaders, PO Box 550, Charlestown, NH 03603.*

*SCA is an Equal Opportunity Employer dedicated to workforce diversity.*

**BELAY OFF**

# Comparing Notes

## Mom and Son Weigh In On Different NOLS Experiences

BY LISA PALMER, NOLS GRAD



What's the difference between a 14-pound pack and a 50-pound pack? Lisa Palmer (above, left) and her son Frederic (below, right) swap stories about NOLS.

We had different reasons for enrolling in NOLS for the first time last summer. Frederic, my wiry 17-year-old son, chose a course in the Alaskan wilderness for its promise of rugged adventure. At 42, I went to Wyoming's Wind River Wilderness seeking new outdoor skills and a physical challenge. We both found contentment.

While kayaking in Eastern Penobscot Bay, Maine, we first began comparing notes of our re-

***I was writing a check for Frederic's tuition in the 30-day NOLS Alaska Backpacking and Sea Kayaking course when I blurted, "I want to do this!"***

spective adventures. Frederic had just returned from four weeks in Alaska, and I was about to depart on my trip to the Rocky Mountains the next morning. As we watched two dozen seals vie for position on a tiny island, Frederic told me story after story of his NOLS experiences. He described heart-thumping encounters with grizzlies and other wildlife, recounted exhausting backcountry hikes and mosquito swarms, explained mastering a "C to C" roll in his kayak in frigid water, and told of simple pleasures such as skipping stones along the shore at midnight under a still-sunlit sky. Then, he delivered a whopper: "You're either going to love it or hate it, Mom." He paused, and finally said, "But I predict you're going to love it."

I remembered those words on day 11 of my 14-day Light & Fast Backpacking course. Since sunrise, our group had been on the move. We climbed to the Continental Divide, kick-stepped across glaciers, and then marched up to the 13,350-foot peak of Downs Mountain. Now we were descending steep terrain on boulders the size of a Prius. Overhead, gray clouds consumed the azure sky, gathering slowly and appearing as though they'd rupture from their weighty load. Now, after nine hours of hiking, my legs also felt ready to burst from the day's robust effort. But Frederic's prediction was accurate. I loved the course.

The path leading me to that high alpine Shangri-La began innocently enough at my dining room table last spring. I was writing a check for Frederic's tuition in the 30-day NOLS Alaska Backpacking and Sea Kayaking course when I blurted, "I want to

do this!" As soon as I said it, I recoiled at the image of heaving a fifty-pound backpack and walking in slow, plodding steps uphill.

My son pushed the NOLS catalog in front of me, fingering a description for a Light & Fast Backpacking course. Packs would weigh less than 25 pounds, he read. I'd average 10 to 14 miles of travel each day in mountainous terrain ranging in elevation from 10,000 to 13,000 feet. I was immediately sold.

A lightweight backpacker's life is nothing if not Spartan. In an effort to lighten my load, I trimmed ounces where I could. My clothing, gear, and shoes were all ultra-lightweight models. I sawed off the handle of my toothbrush and traded my cute wool hat (a hefty 14 ounces) for a fleece one (tipping the scale at 3 ounces). My personal gear for two weeks totaled less than 14 pounds, including my backpack. Food and group gear brought the pack to 25 pounds. There were no extras, but the light load would mean a gazelle's pace and a happy back.

My instructor, Mike Clelland, one of the pioneers of lightweight backpacking at NOLS, piped in with an immediate "Right on!" when he inspected my equipment. On the day I had left Maine, Frederic noted the size of my GoLite Jam II Pack and said, "No way. Sick!" It wasn't much bigger than the book bag he carried to school each day. Frederic's pack in Alaska weighed in at more than 50 pounds and was double the dimensions.

Upon my return home, Frederic and I immediately shared a bond as NOLS alumni. Rocks or snowballs? He cooked Gado-Gado spaghetti for dinner. We relied on familiar phrases around the

***Upon my return home, Frederic and I immediately shared a bond as NOLS alumni.***

house, such as "plan ahead and prepare" or "vision and action, baby." At home, Frederic did his share and stayed organized—a tenet of NOLS.

As we recounted our backcountry experiences, we determined that our gear was most noticeably different. Mine was minimal but entirely adequate for two weeks in the Rocky Mountains in August. Frederic carried items for a much longer duration and harsher conditions, including days of rain in a cold climate. His large pack wasn't a burden, he said. He loves gear, the more the better. For him, carrying



a standard NOLS pack was both an act of bravado as well as a display of preparedness, he said.

I embraced the extremely lightweight equipment. As a long distance runner for the past 25 years, my knees couldn't support a standard NOLS pack. And, after watching me pack my bag for various backpacking trips since NOLS, Frederic admitted that he now sees the appeal of light and fast, as much for the ease of organization—there are fewer items to keep track of and pack up in the morning—as for the versatility in hiking in steep terrain.

Most of all, the similarities of our leadership experiences cemented our unique bond: valuing an active lifestyle. Since NOLS, I've organized several backpacking trips in New Hampshire and in Virginia, while Frederic launched a local chapter of a national outing club. He also hatched a plan to mountain bike this summer along the Great Divide trail, from Montana to New Mexico. We have realized that our lives are measured by what we are actually doing and who we really are, both of which are always clearer in the backcountry.

The most unexpected impact of NOLS was how it has transformed our careers. Frederic's experiences influenced him to enroll in the environmental studies program at the University of Colorado-Boulder this fall. And I have devoted my writing career to environmental topics, primarily on the subject of climate change.

What made our NOLS experiences so enlightening was that despite its unflashy pretense, it was enormous fun. We had planned a hiking trip together soon after my return. But school, work, and a seemingly endless string of tropical storms thwarted our efforts. Rain or shine, we've made a pact that we'll go backpacking on Mother's Day weekend. Only one question remains: Will it be light and fast? I think so. We've decided not to bring a tent.

*Lisa Palmer is a freelance writer and regular contributor to The Yale Forum for Climate Change & the Media, directed by the Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies. Email her at [lisa@yaleclimatemediaforum.org](mailto:lisa@yaleclimatemediaforum.org).*