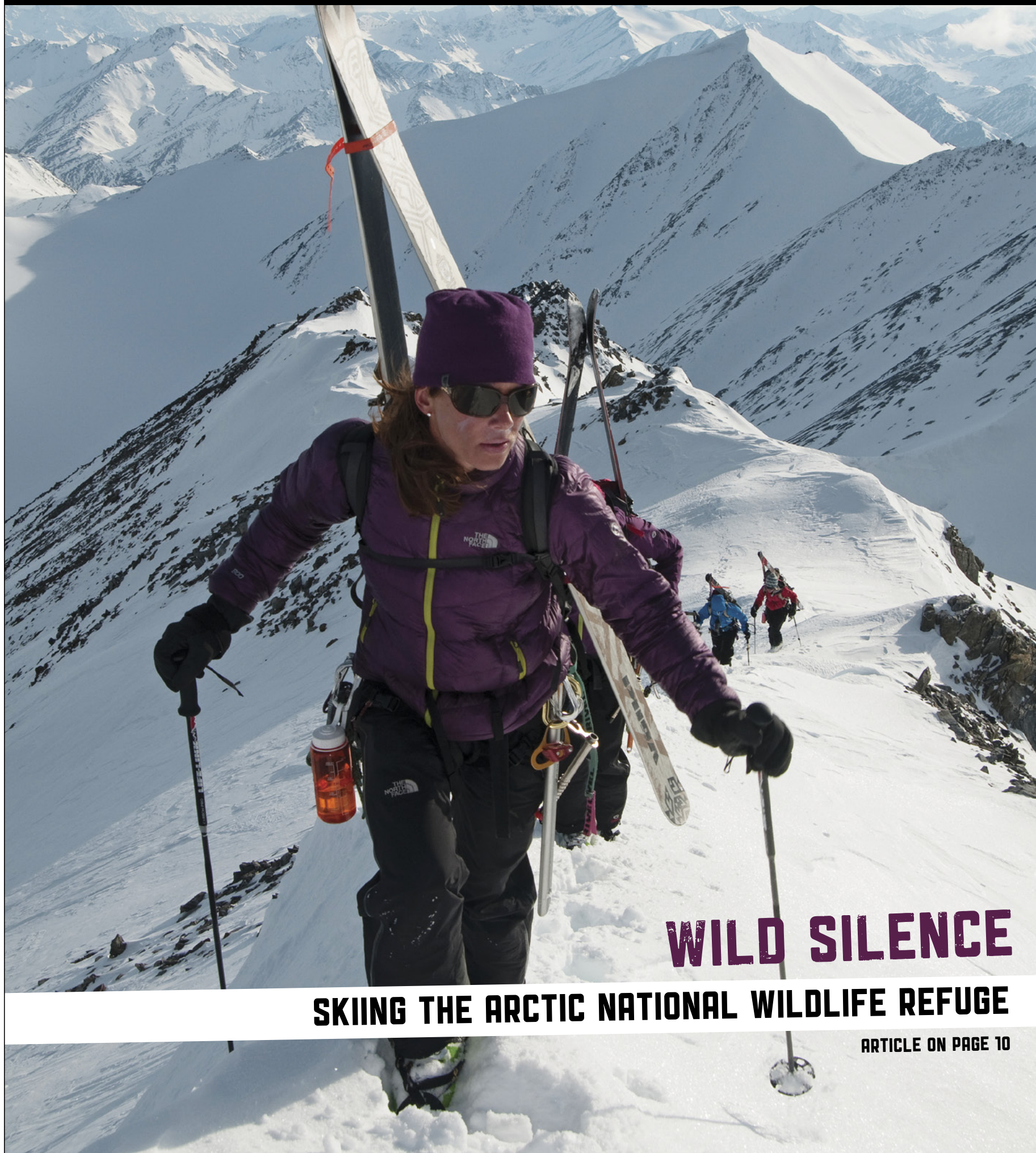


EEH

Fall 2010 • Vol. 26 • No.1

# Leader

For Alumni of the National Outdoor Leadership School



## WILD SILENCE

### SKIING THE ARCTIC NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

ARTICLE ON PAGE 10

**3** Skiing Icebergs

**12** The Finer Points of Expedition Behavior

**20** Grad Saves Dad's Life

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THE LEADER IN WILDERNESS EDUCATION





## MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

As the calendar recently turned to September, NOLS completed its 2010 fiscal year and its 45th year of wilderness education. The year was a wonderful one and, by most measures, the most successful year in the history of the school. We educated a record number of students, adding over 15,000 students to our alumni base. We raised record philanthropic support for the NOLS Annual Fund, which helped us award record scholarship funds this year. For the third year in a row, NOLS was named one of the best places to work in the country by *Outside* magazine. We significantly expanded our student base through our Gateway Partners, who have helped young people of high potential and little opportunity, often from more diverse backgrounds, get into the backcountry with NOLS. Most importantly, our student feedback from the year shows very successful course outcomes and high student satisfaction.

After 45 years, many organizations get complacent. But in our 45th year, NOLS has been actively looking toward and planning for our future. Last fall, we acquired the second largest land use permit in Wyoming, providing further access to our classroom in the Wind River Range. We took steps to scout and develop new course opportunities to roll out in the coming year, including an Adirondack Backpacking Adventure Course for 14- and 15-year-old students (see page 13 for more), as well as a new course for this age group in the Pacific Northwest. We are also adding a sea kayaking course in Scandinavia and a 30-day backpacking course in New Zealand. Also targeted for the fall of 2011 is a return to Africa, with a Semester in Tanzania. Not only are we expanding geographically, but we have also added a new skill set—packrafting—which will be offered with a backpacking course in Alaska.

Aside from planning new courses, we also took many other steps toward our future. Our Wilderness Medicine Institute (WMI) forged an alliance with Recreational Equipment, Incorporated (REI), through which WMI courses will be offered at REI's retail stores, making our wilderness medicine cur-

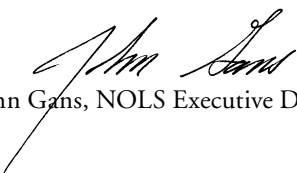


Thanks to everyone who joined us in Lander last month to celebrate our 45th anniversary! The recap can be found on page 19.

riculum more accessible to more people. The school also became a recognized provider/contractor by the Government Services Administration (GSA), which should provide further opportunities for government contracts. Finally, we increased the size of the NOLS library with the release of *NOLS River Rescue* and a new spiral bound waterproof version of *NOLS Cookery*.

Key to our success in the past year was following the road map of our strategic plan. The year 2009 was in many ways a survival year and required considerable focus on the day-to-day aspects of NOLS. The economy and any number of other factors demanded constant change, adjustments, and creative solutions. But in 2010, we launched out of that “present-time” mentality, and our focus turned once again to long-term strategic plan goals.

To celebrate our many successes and gear up for the challenges ahead, this October we held a 45th Anniversary celebration in Lander, which was well-attended by graduates, faculty, staff, and friends of the school (see page 19 for more). My thanks to all of you for the work, ideas, support, and leadership you provided to ensure the quality course outcomes for our 15,014 students in 2010.

  
John Gans, NOLS Executive Director

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## THE Leader

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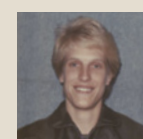
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## WHO'S THIS?



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



The answer to last issue's "Who's This?" is Terri Watson, a field instructor since 1990 and a WMI instructor since 1999. Terri currently lives in California.



## ALUMNI PROFILE



**Left:** Chris Davenport sporting a toothy grin on his trudge up an iceberg. **Top Right:** Taking a breather before descending a remote peak. **Bottom Right:** How does he get down from that massive ice shelf?

## I'll Take a Davenport on Ice . . . *Grad Skis Antarctic Icebergs*

BY KATE BARRETT, NOLS ROCKY MOUNTAIN INTERN

Chris Davenport is a man on the move, literally. He moves really fast, downhill, at high angles, on skis. We profiled Chris in the fall 2007 issue of *The Leader*, but three years later, Chris is still up to his same shenanigans. You know, bagging Fourteeners left and right, introducing remote Antarctic peaks to skis, and skiing down icebergs. Yes, that's right, icebergs. And I mean iceberg in every sense of the word—a massive chunk of ice suspended in the frosty cold ocean surrounding the Antarctic Peninsula. No big deal, right? Right.

To understand what motivated Chris to tackle skiing an iceberg, we've got to rewind back to the 1980s (think "Ice Ice Baby . . ."). A lifetime of remarkable outdoor feats began for Chris in his native New Hampshire, and crystallized when he took his first NOLS course, Wilderness Mountaineering, in 1987. The course culminated in a four-day independent student expedition during which Chris' group chose to fast. They hiked 30 miles, drinking only water and eating nothing. "I'm still proud of having done that. I wouldn't be able to do it today, or at least I wouldn't want to," he joked. "We all had hard times but we suffered together and pushed through."

This undertaking gave Chris a taste of what the human body and mind could endure and encouraged

him to continue looking for challenges. In 1988, he took a NOLS Rock Climbing course. And the rest, as they say, is history. Chris won the 1996 World Extreme Skiing Championships and was the first to ski all 54 of Colorado's 14,000-foot peaks (the aforementioned "Fourteeners") in a single season.

Given his attraction to extreme pursuits, it's no wonder Chris found himself in Antarctica in late 2009, where he, along with skiers Andrea Binning and Stian Hagen, spent the majority of the trip skiing the mountain ranges on the Antarctic Peninsula and surrounding islands, what Chris has dubbed "the last great ski location on earth."

And this, of course, brings us back to the iceberg. November 2009 found Chris hacking his way up an iceberg in Waddington Bay, Antarctica, outfitted with ice axes and ski boots, simply to descend the floating mass on skis. Why this particular iceberg? Chris' crew had spent days scouting for a suitable berg on which Chris could safely land using a small inflatable Zodiac boat, climb, and then ski down. During the search, Chris watched as a few of the floating mounds either flipped over or simply imploded and sunk beneath the surface. Luckily, this berg didn't do either. "Climbing up it was a sensation I can't describe," he said. "The thing isn't stationary so the ground moves beneath

you. It was enough that my brain was like, 'What is going on?' It was a little nerve-racking," he added with a laugh. Needless to say, the outcome was good: Titanic-0, Chris Davenport-1.

Given Chris' track record, there's no doubt he will keep living the life he found so appealing at NOLS. "Both courses were huge moments in my life," he said. "I was completely taken by the experience. It really cemented the fact that the mountains were my home."

Chris' adventures continue to move him from place to place. After running a ski camp in Portillo,

***Chris watched as a few of the floating mounds either flipped over or simply imploded and sunk beneath the surface. Luckily, this berg didn't do either.***

Argentina, this past summer (winter in the Southern Hemisphere), he is now home in Colorado promoting his new book, *50 Classic Ski Descents of North America*, available through [www.wolverinepublishing.com](http://www.wolverinepublishing.com).

For more information about Chris' iceberg ski expedition, visit [www.antarcticseaodyssey.com](http://www.antarcticseaodyssey.com), or read Outside magazine's in-depth article at <http://outsideonline.com/outside/destinations/201004/skiing-antarctica-1.html>.



## WILD SIDE OF MEDICINE

## Real Life Drama

### *A Series of Unfortunate Events on the Inca Trail*

BY APARNA RAJAGOPAL-DURBIN

You've heard about the ancient ruins, stunning mountain scenery, lush cloud forests, and dramatic landscapes of the Inca Trail in Peru, but have you heard about everything that can go wrong? Well, 2008 WEMT grad Brian Kwan experienced firsthand the mishaps and misadventures of travelers to Machu Picchu when he and two teachers took their students on a 10-day school trip to hike the Inca Trail.

Things started going wrong from the get-go, when one of his students suddenly started coughing violently, and then vomiting. Bystanders—who were paranoid about the swine flu outbreak in Peru—were anxious, but Brian's WEMT training immediately kicked in. "I got him sitting down and went through the full patient assessment," Brian recalled. "Apparently this kid had severe bronchitis. He had been prescribed meds but was not taking them." Brian thoroughly documented the student's condition in a SOAP note\* and, because the trail would be strenuous, decided this student could not continue on the trip and evacuated him under the supervision of a fellow teacher.

But that wasn't the end of the story. On day two of the hike, another teacher reported feeling lethargic and said his heart was racing even when he was resting. Brian went into action again and conducted yet another patient assessment, leading to his discov-

\* "SOAP" is an acronym for "Subjective, Objective, Assessment, Plan." A SOAP note is a commonly accepted method for documenting a patient's status.

ery that the teacher had also been suffering from diarrhea. "I remembered learning about taking orthostatic vitals and went ahead and took them, and sure enough, after lying down, then standing, waiting a minute, and then taking vitals again, I found his pulse went up by 25 beats per minute and his systolic blood pressure dropped by 15 millimeters of mercury." Brian suspected shock and dehydration. After rest and hydration, the teacher's condition still did not improve, and he was then sent back into town.

*[And another one bites the dust . . .]*

At this point, Brian was the only teacher left on the expedition. But that didn't stop him from forging ahead. "My WMI training really helped me feel a lot more confident that I could handle any situation that would come up, and I think this helped put everyone else at ease as well," Brian later wrote to his instructor. And sure enough, the "series of unfortunate events" continued unabated, and Brian handled each of them, one by one. This was the final tally: fifteen headaches; five instances of nausea and vomiting; six people with diarrhea; three with ataxia; more hotspots, blisters, abrasions and lacerations than Brian could count; and one foreign substance in the eye. The eye "was taken care of with some sterile saline and my handy-dandy irrigation syringe that I bought from the WMI store," Brian said.

For the record, Brian doesn't believe this qualifies as drama. "It's not like I was helping an acute myocardial infarction [heart attack] patient on an airplane, but it felt really rewarding to know what to do," he said. "I got a great deal of satisfaction from seeing the relief on the kids' faces when they knew that they were being taken care of, even if it was something simple like taking vitals and a history."

Brian's story is a perfect example of how WMI training can kick in with even minor medical emergencies in remote settings. At the end of the day, everyone on Brian's trip returned home in one piece, thanks to his WEMT training. And today, empow-



WEMT grad Brian Kwan taking a student's vital signs on the Inca Trail.

ered by his training and inspired by his experiences in Peru, Brian runs 911 calls as a volunteer EMT with the Pasadena Fire Department in California.

*A little rusty on the Patient Assessment System? Sign up today for a WFA or another WMI course at [www.nols.edu/wmi](http://www.nols.edu/wmi) and be prepared for your next expedition.*



#### 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.

### MEDICINE QUIZ

Q

Which of the following is a treatment principle for frostbite?

- a) Slow warming at room temperature
- b) Rapid warming in warm water (99–102°F; 37–39°C)
- c) Rapid warming near an open flame or a heater
- d) Massaging frozen tissue

(Answer on page 8)

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#### July 9–16, 2011

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ISSUE ROOM

# Glaciers in Retreat

## The Wind River Range Over 45 Years

BY AARON BANNON, NOLS ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP COORDINATOR

Using wooden-handled ice axes to chip steps into the glacial ice, Skip Shoutis and his fellow NOLS students followed instructor Andy Carson along a north ridge above 13,000 feet on their way to summiting Gannett Peak, the highest point in Wyoming. It was 1967, two years after the founding of the school. They had been camping on snow from day one, and it was the peak of summer.

Since that early trip with NOLS, Skip has built his life’s work around the Wind River Range, first with NOLS, and eventually with the Shoshone National Forest. During this period, Skip has seen dramatic shifts in the size and depth of the Wind River glaciers.

“When we were on that course with Paul Petzoldt and Andy Carson in 1967, Gannett Peak was basically a walk-up,” recalls Skip. “We roped up to cross the bergschrund [the crevasse at the top of a glacier] and for some steep stretches, but we didn’t even need to wear crampons [because there was so much snow].”

Today, summiting Gannett Peak is a much more technical undertaking. NOLS instructor Liz Rogers negotiated several challenges during the 2010 NOLS Gannett Peak Mountaineering alumni trip.

“There was plenty of exposed glacier ice and several crevasses,” Liz noted. “The snow bridge over the bergschrund was pretty small.” Crevasses once buried under feet of snow and ice are now exposed, creating hazards and demanding a more technical level of expertise.

Glacial retreat has also affected established trails that were once perennially snow-covered. A common route across the Knife Point Glacier and over Bear’s Ears Pass has deteriorated, exposing fields of talus and boulders, and forcing the Forest Service to reconstruct a trail over bare rock. At the pass itself, the transition from snow to rock has become so treacherous that pack mules can hardly make the trip.

The significance of the Wind River glaciers to backcountry travel is second only in their significance to scientific community. The range is home to 63 glaciers covering 17 square miles, including 7 of the 10 largest glaciers in the American Rocky Mountains. As one of the most southerly examples of widespread and concentrated glaciation in North America, Wind River glaciation has been extensively studied for decades.

Dr. Richard Marston, an associate professor



Repeat photography of Dinwoody Glacier under Gannett Peak in the Wind River Range, capturing glacier melt from 1935 to 2006.

with the University of Wyoming in the late 1990s, compared historic photos and glacial depths with his own contemporary data in one of the earliest studies of glacial recession in the Winds in 1988. Marston found that over a 25-year period ending in 1983, the Dinwoody Glacier lost a whopping 77 feet in thickness, and the Gannett Glacier showed a depth reduction of 61 feet.

In the two decades following Dr. Marston’s study, the glaciers also began shrinking in surface area due to rapid increases in temperatures at high elevations. Between 1950 and 1999, Gannett Glacier shrunk from 1,137 acres to only 897 acres, and Dinwoody Glacier shrunk by 36 percent, with most of the loss occurring in the 1990s.

Skip noticed similar trends. “I would see bowls full of exposed rock, and they looked somehow different,” he said. “I finally realized that they had no lichen on them at all.”

Skip was observing rock that had been trapped under glacial ice for millennia, only recently exposed by rapidly warming temperatures and below-average snowpack.

Dr. Charlie Love, professor of geology and anthropology at Western Wyoming Community College, reports that Wind River glaciers are losing two meters of thickness per year. Air temperatures are continuing to accelerate. A 2002 study by the U.S.

Geological Survey, as reported by the *Sublette Examiner*, found that average air temperatures in high elevations likely increased by more than six degrees over the previous five-year period. In the years to come, Love notes, glacial retreat is also poised to accelerate, since glaciers melt faster as they get smaller.

**“They are going extinct before our very eyes.”**

According to Love, “They are going extinct before our very eyes.”

While the Winds will always be stunning, the dramatic changes in the range over the 45 years of NOLS’ existence is evident. Certainly for Skip, who now ranches outside of Lander, the urgency of addressing climate change is apparent. As more NOLS students experience firsthand the effects a carbon-consuming lifestyle are having on the Winds, we can only hope that they and the tens of thousands of NOLS alumni across the globe will make more sustainable lifestyle choices and convince their friends and families to do the same. Perhaps, if they do, the Wind River glaciers will listen.

For more information on glacier retreat around the globe, visit <http://glacierchange.wordpress.com>.

### SUSTAINABILITY UPDATE

#### Sustainability Successes of 2010

This was an exciting year for sustainability at NOLS. From generous grants to achievements in efficiency, we’re making strides towards becoming a more sustainable school. Here is a snapshot of our achievements in the past twelve months:

- NOLS Teton Valley received \$18,151 in grants from the Bonneville Environmental Foundation and Protect Our Winters to install a solar array that is projected to generate up to 30 percent of the location’s energy needs.
- To celebrate Earth Day, NOLS Rocky Mountain and NOLS Environmental Stewardship and Sustainability coordinated a successful community clean-up of the local Popo Agie River.

- NOLS Patagonia is projecting a 22 percent reduction in their gasoline and diesel use, primarily due to centralizing and streamlining vehicle use.
- NOLS Yukon upped its purchase of organic foods to 35 percent of total poundage and stayed budget neutral.
- NOLS received over \$373,000 in grants from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act for facility energy efficiency retrofits, which we will be completed next year, resulting in a projected 36 percent reduction in energy use schoolwide.
- NOLS Environmental Stewardship and Sustainability completed two curriculum posters, effective illustrations that tell the story of how energy is used by NOLS students in the frontcountry versus backcountry and highlighting NOLS’ worldwide sustainability projects.

### WILDERNESS QUIZ

**Q** The El Yunque National Forest and its El Toro Wilderness Area are the only tropical rain-forest preserves in the U.S. National Forest Service system. **Where are they?** (Answer on page 19)





# When Crisis Strikes, NOLS is There

## GRADS LEND A HUMANITARIAN HAND

BY APARNA RAJAGOPAL-DURBIN

A magnitude 7.5 earthquake in China. A genocide in Sudan. A coup in Nepal. A tsunami in Indonesia. Another earthquake, 7.0 on the Richter scale, in Haiti. Another earthquake, 8.8, off the coast of Chile. And yet another, magnitude 7.2, in Baja.

When crisis strikes, most of us listen to the reports, shake our heads, and cluck to ourselves sympathetically with perhaps the tiniest hint of a tear in our eyes. Maybe, just maybe, if we are feeling particularly charitable that day, we will call the toll-free donation number. Then, our good deed done, we will go off on our merry ways.

But then, there are the others: “humanitarians,” “altruists,” “do-gooders” or “Good Samaritans.” Some of these terms are used as pejoratives, but only by those of us who want to feel better about ourselves for never having lifted a finger. These are folks who can’t help but drop everything—the safety of their armchairs and the security of their paychecks—and make a beeline for ground zero, wherever that might be: Banda Aceh, Port Au Prince, Concepcion. We’re proud to say, a lot of these folks are NOLS grads.

Shane Young, a 2009 WEMT grad, went alone to Haiti, just a few weeks after his course, so that he could use his newfound medical skills to help earthquake victims. Dave Edson, a 2008 Semester in Patagonia grad, literally took planes, buses, trucks, and cars to make his way to Concepcion, Chile, to use his NOLS rations skills to distribute a week’s worth of food to earthquake victims. Tom Turley, a 1999 Semester in the Rockies grad, whose life is devoted to working with AmeriCares, made Haiti his next stop. And Michelle Murphy, a WEMT grad and volunteer

medic, decided to go to Ghana, where there is a continuing poverty crisis, to help at a rural hospital.

So, why do they do it? Is it just because they are Good Samaritans? Or, is there more?

To Shane, it was not a matter of choice; it was fate. “The Haitian earthquake struck only a couple of weeks after I finished my WEMT. I took it as a sign and felt compelled to go and be useful,” he said.

**“JUST BECAUSE WE CAN DO SOMETHING, DOES IT ALWAYS MEAN WE SHOULD?”** This was the question posed by Laura “Glad” McGladrey, WMI instructor and nurse practitioner, to a group of seasoned WMI instructors at a conference this fall in Lander, Wyoming. The answer? Not necessarily.

Recently back from a year of relief work in southern Sudan, Glad has taught for WMI for 11 years and worked for NOLS for 9 of those. She began her career in international humanitarian work by teaching in Latin America and later moved on to work in Africa and in clinics worldwide.

If humanitarian work is in your future, here are some valuable tips from Glad:

- Don’t try to save the world. Glad says, “It took a hard blow to realize that I was never going to save the world, and that I’d be most valuable when I stopped trying to.”
- Don’t be overambitious. Ask yourself: What can I do today?
- Find out what your goals are, examine whether you are really there for the right reasons, and be honest

Tom thinks about it a little differently. “This is a job I like to do, just like someone who likes to be a lawyer or actor or doctor or carpenter,” he said. “It is a two-way street in which hopefully everybody ‘wins.’ I am trying to contribute and help, to give back a bit, but at the same time I am also ‘receiving’ from all those people. I get to travel to far away places, meet the local people, and see a glimpse of their real lives. And it also provides perspective on life and the world.”

For Dave, it was all about knowing that he could make a difference in the aftermath of the Chilean earthquake. “One of the churches was housing 40 displaced people in the small sanctuary,” he said. “Surrounding homes were completely destroyed. The people had built a makeshift oven out of some debris to cook what little food they had. When we arrived with food and water it was moving to see the looks of frustration and desperation transform into smiles of relief.”

Michelle feels the same way: “The smiles you receive, the occasional thank you, the hug, or the tears, makes helping people in need worth every moment.”

So, at the end of the day, each of these NOLS grads was inspired by something different. But what

about how you can truly be capable of helping.

- Focus on what you’re good at. Being an expert in your field is an enormous advantage because working in resource-poor environments requires more ingenuity, not less. Ask yourself: Is my skill set really what is needed in this situation?
- It’s a humbling thing, but stop and ask yourself whether your “solution” is necessarily better than a local solution.
- Tolerance for adversity and uncertainty is key; that is, being able to be flexible and work outside your own box.
- Debrief when you come home, just like on a NOLS course. Processing is crucial.
- Be self-aware. Be honest with what is motivating you to help, and seek proper training.
- Prepare to be challenged, as on any NOLS expedition, by the technical skills, but more so, by the test of character, leadership, and expedition behavior that flow from challenging experiences, wherever you find them.

*Glad’s tips were compiled by Rachel Harris, NOLS Development Intern.*





Working as a medical volunteer requires tolerance for uncertainty. **Above:** WEMT Shane Young had to set up a makeshift triage facility in a parking lot in Haiti. **Far Left/Left Top:** Volunteers, including WMI instructor Michelle Murphy, had to be resourceful in a rural hospital in Ghana. **Left Bottom:** What was once a road in Haiti.

connected them? All of them—Shane, Tom, Dave, Michelle—don't deny that the common denominator is NOLS.

For Tom, NOLS and his work with AmeriCares share elements of “adventure, exploration, new experiences, working with people, and adrenalin.” David said he would never have gone straight into the “thick of it” in Chile had he not been empowered by his NOLS leadership lessons. Michelle also credits NOLS for her work in Ghana.

“We used so many of our NOLS WMI skills,” Michelle said. “With lack of supplies, no recorded patient history, and language barriers, you begin to make do with your limited resources. My WMI training and teaching made me more resourceful.”

Shane, likewise, used all of his WEMT skills, which were fresh in his mind, to tend to the in-

**WHATEVER YOU ARE DOING RIGHT NOW, BE IT ON WALL STREET OR ON A WILD AND SCENIC RIVER, IN THE BACKCOUNTRY OR IN THE FRONTCOUNTRY, IN THE GEAR ROOM OR THE BOARDROOM, YOU CARRY YOUR NOLS TRAINING WITH YOU.**

juries of Haitian earthquake victims. “I took the lead in establishing a safe and clean location outside the damaged hospital building where we could treat patients; set up all the supplies and equipment such as medications, bandages and gloves; triaged patients as they arrived on site; instructed them on keeping hydrated in the hot environment; dealt with major wound care; and had considerable leeway to diagnose and treat, all due to my WEMT skills.”

So, if you have made it this far, dear reader, you are either bursting with pride that your fellow NOLS alums have done great things, or, like me, you are feeling unworthy of being counted in their ranks. But regardless, this is what you should leave with: Whatever you are doing right now, be it on Wall Street or on a wild and scenic river, in the backcountry or in the frontcountry, in the gear room or the boardroom, you carry your NOLS training with you. This means you can make a difference when crisis strikes. And we hope many of you will be on the front lines using that training to make a difference.

*If you or a NOLSie you know is involved in humanitarian efforts, let us know. E-mail [theleader@nols.edu](mailto:theleader@nols.edu).*

## BUILDING COMMUNITY, BUILDING LEADERS

### Building Goodness and NOLS

BY KATE BARRETT, NOLS ROCKY MOUNTAIN INTERN

“Ten years ago I began looking at the big life questions. I had been building for twenty years and was asking myself, is this all there is? I needed to reignite the passion around my work.”

These thoughts, an impromptu trip to Haiti, and a few missing roofs led Jack Stoner to lay the groundwork for the Building Goodness Foundation, which today builds clinics, schools, community centers, and housing for those in need with help from local communities and volunteers from every part of the construction industry.

In 1997, Jack accepted an invitation to join his friend Lawson Drinkard, a 2001 NOLS Baja Sea Kayaking grad, to assist with the construction of a community center in Haiti. On that trip, Jack noticed three buildings in need of roofing. “The materials were there, but no one had the knowledge or expertise to do anything,” Jack recalled. “There were so many jobs to do and no one around to do them.” So Jack decided to bring in workers from his own company to finish the job for free. And these roofs became Jack's ticket to rediscovering that passion he was trying so desperately to find.

Jack then continued to frequent Haiti with other groups of volunteers who had construction expertise. “All the volunteers had such a powerful response,” he said in his light Southern drawl. “We began to get calls from other people who wanted us to design and build structures in other places. Things really grew organically.”

As word spread about the builder from Charlottesville doing third-world volunteer work, Jack took on more and more projects. He and his volunteers built a medical clinic in Haiti, a school in Guatemala, and began work on structures in and around Charlottesville. By 1999, Jack's operation officially became the Building Goodness Foundation, and today he operates across the globe.

From the beginning, a thread of NOLS ran through the organization. Lawson, now Jack's business partner, remained involved with NOLS as an active alumnus. As Building Goodness grew quickly, it soon became clear the building crews, though well-versed in construction skills, were in dire need of training in

risk management and leadership. Lawson suggested NOLS, and soon thereafter, Jack began working with NOLS Professional Training to create a custom course.

What truly cemented Building Goodness' relationship with NOLS, however, was the passion Jack immediately recognized in the school. “From the people working in the kitchen to the people we worked with in NOLS Pro, they all had the same resonating passion,” Jack recalled of his first visit to Lander. “I was really impressed with the degree of consistency in the culture.”

NOLS' Building Goodness Trip Leader Training course, now in its third year, involves classroom sessions, a GPS-based leadership navigation challenge, emergency medical scenarios, and various case studies. All trip leaders are required to go through the training before taking charge of any project. By setting a standard of leadership and teaching volunteers how to be an effective part of a team, NOLS has helped Building Goodness spread a coherent sense of purpose throughout the organization.

It's easy to tell that Jack believes in the mission he aims to cultivate. “Buildings are key foundational structures that allow community to thrive,” he said. “People meet there. Communities gather and they grow stronger.” In that sense, Building Goodness and NOLS aren't so different. While Building Goodness lays foundations of bricks and mortar, NOLS lays the foundation for passionate leaders who can step up as Jack did. Both organizations rely on people with a sense of purpose who care about the well-being of the environment and community surrounding them.

Jack continues to make big plans for Building Goodness. In addition to gearing up for their third NOLS course, the organization plans to build two schools, two churches, one thousand modular houses, and a trade school where more Haitians will be trained in sound construction techniques.

*Learn more about Building Goodness by visiting [www.buildinggoodness.com](http://www.buildinggoodness.com).*



Building Goodness, one of NOLS Professional Training's regular clients, got its start with a few missing roofs.



## Q &amp; A



## Pip Coe

### On Fundraising and Friendraising at NOLS

BY LIBBY GADBOIS, NOLS MARKETING INTERN

**What is your history with NOLS?** I took NOLS' first Professional Instructors Course in '91, though I had been working in the outdoor industry since '79. I became a field instructor, then co-managed our river base in Vernal, Utah, then became NOLS East Africa's Operations Manager, and then worked my way back here, first as Alumni Relations Manager, and then as Alumni and Development Director.

**What helped prepare you to become one of the main decision-makers at NOLS?** Well, I had no life plan. I'm more of an opportunist. I graduated from high school and went to college because that's what I thought you were supposed to do. When I was in college I decided I was going to take a summer off to work as a river guide. I had always known about NOLS, but at the time it had a limited river program, and I had grown up on rivers (I even made my own fiberglass kayak when I was younger). That summer off in college turned into ten years as a river guide. As the NOLS river program took root, I found my skill set was a good match.

**What do you do on a day-to-day basis?** Lots of different things depending on the day of the week and the time of the year. Overall I'm responsible for ensuring philanthropic dollars continue to be brought in to NOLS to help further our mission, and that our alumni stay connected with us and feel they are a part of the school long after their course has ended.

Another big part of my job is to be part of the Executive Director Team. We do budgets and strategies, and since I still get into the field some, I get to see how they are working out.

**Why is fundraising so important for NOLS and its students?** When NOLS started back in 1965, we were a transactional school. People paid us to go on courses, and we took them into the field. Over

time, we have become a relationship-based institution. People support NOLS because they had a great experience and they want other students to be able to have that, too. And that support helps the school give opportunities for students to have this experience, and further our mission.

**How does NOLS typically fundraise?** We raise philanthropic support by connecting with alumni. We raise money each year for our Annual Fund, which supports scholarships, curriculum costs, staff excellence, training and diversity inclusion initiatives, among other things. We also mount capital campaigns for major school priorities that we are unable to cover with our standard revenue stream. In the past, we've had capital campaigns to fund our endowment and help fund bricks and mortar projects (like NOLS' headquarters building).

**Tell us about NOLS' current campaign.** *Campaign NOLS: Endowing Our Core Values* is a comprehensive campaign made up of our endowment and our Annual Fund, and it aims to keep NOLS running for a long time to come.

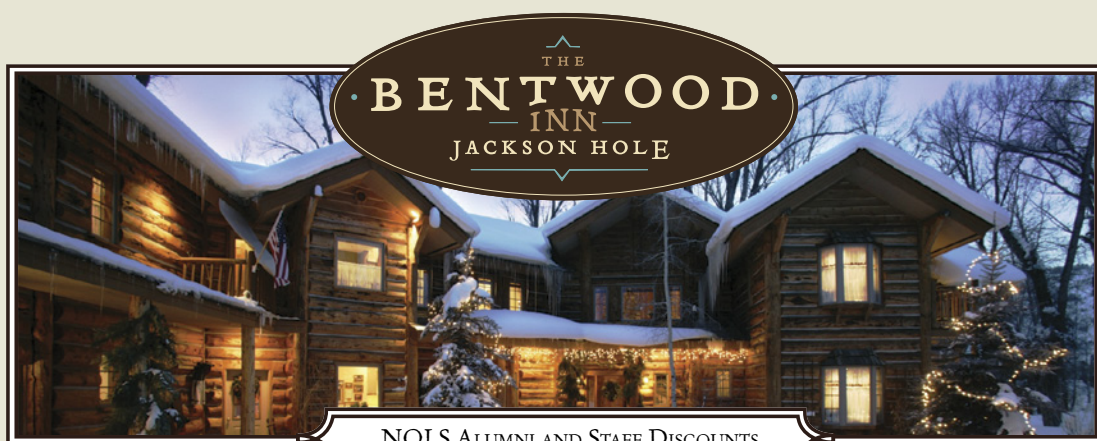
**How do you get people to keep giving money to NOLS?** The majority of our support comes from people who have a relationship with the school, so asking them for support comes pretty naturally. A lot of times, when I'm on the phone with a long-time donor, we don't even talk about money. I get to interact with awesome people every day who talk about their course like it happened yesterday.

**How do you reconcile grabbing cappuccinos in Manhattan with an alum juxtaposed against leading students toting heavy packs through a downpour?** It's just a different environment. I'm still navigating and negotiating, but my transportation and goals are different. I may be in Lander one day wearing a jean jacket and flip flops, and then New York City the next day wearing a black suit and navigating the subway system, and then in the field three days after that wearing a splash jacket and paddling down a river. All of my varied experiences work together in an effort to employ NOLS' ultimate mission.

**How often do you instruct per year and what are your favorite skills to teach?** I try to get into the field at least a couple of times each year. I usually work shorter courses or trips, like the staff training trip (which is great because I get to meet field staff I typically don't meet in my position). Most courses I teach are river-based instead of terrestrial.

**Since you spend a lot of time on rivers for NOLS, we have to ask—have you ever flipped an oar rig?** There are those who have and those who will. I'm one of those who will. So next time you are on the river with me, who knows what will happen?

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### MEDICINE QUIZ

**A** The answer is B, rapid warming in warm water. (Question on page 4)

Slow warming, use of open flames, a heater, or massage are associated with greater tissue damage.



## ALUMNI PROFILE

# Living in the Moment

## Kate Milliken Makes the Best of a Life-Changing Diagnosis

BY RACHEL HARRIS, NOLS DEVELOPMENT INTERN

NOLS grad and videographer Kate Milliken led a *Sex in the City*-esque life. She lived smack in the middle of Manhattan, flirted with her doorman, glided down city sidewalks in her Manolo Blahniks, and did Pilates. She was social, single, and living it up, until December 2006, when life threw her a gigantic curve ball.

"I woke up one Friday really tired," Kate said. "I felt like I had never even gone to sleep. My hands were tingling, and I kept telling myself, 'I'm fine, I'm fine.' But when I tried to put one foot in front of the other, I was losing my balance, and that's when I thought, 'Oh my God, I'm not fine.' Within five days, I was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis (MS)."

MS can cause loss of sensitivity, tingling, and prickling; weakness; spasms; difficulty in moving, coordination, and balance; problems with speech or swallowing; visual impairment; fatigue; acute or chronic pain; bladder and bowel difficulties; and ultimately, paralysis. For young Kate—an athlete, photographer, and mandolin player who never took herself too seriously—life was over.

"It was so hard for me to imagine being paralyzed in a slow, progressive way, to deal with the day-to-day frustration of knowing that your body is declining, moment by moment," Kate said. "You always want to think that you can fight this, that you can make this better, but at some point, it may not get better." But Kate never reached that point, repeating the mantra "Reverse It" to herself everyday.

"Kate had always been a vibrant, athletic, and fit person, and my reaction was, how could this happen to her?" said Christopher Milliken, Kate's father. "But I knew that she was and always would be a fighter."

In fact, Kate had fought societal norms since she was young. Her quirkiness and determination to do something interesting with her life led her to take the classic NOLS Wind River Wilderness course when she was 17 years old. Kate's favorite part of the course was learning to appreciate time in nature. She never thought she would have the ability or energy to walk for six hours straight. "I thought it would be boring, but I feel like I gained the ability to be in the moment."

Having learned on her NOLS course to live in the moment, Kate approached her MS diagnosis with the same Zen mind-set. "Staying calm and living in the moment helped me more than any other attitude," she said. "The people that get in trouble in the wilderness are the people that freak out, right? So, after the diagnosis, I had a short moment of 'holy s\*\*t,' but then was like, okay, who are the survivors? They're the people that don't let the big picture overwhelm them. You can't get to the top of the mountain if you think about how much longer you have."

And Kate is the ultimate example of a survi-



**Above:** NOLS grad Kate Milliken, pictured here in front of her Manhattan film studio, turned to her camera to document her life once she was diagnosed with MS. **Below:** The equally stylish Kate on her NOLS Wind River Wilderness course in 1989.

vor. After a year of experimenting with various and sundry methods of treatment, a 2007 MRI revealed Kate was not only recovering from MS, but was lesion-free. And since then, Kate's world has just been getting better. In 2009, she met and married her husband, Tyler Vaughey. Kate had once upon a time been hesitant to reveal her condition to her partners, but Tyler was different. "She told me on our third date," Tyler recalls, "and by that time I already knew I was going down the rabbit hole with her. I told her that it didn't sway me, that it didn't scare me. She asked me if I was sure, and I put my hand out to show her it wasn't shaking." And Tyler's hands were just as steady on their wedding day when he vowed to stick with her no matter what.

Kate Milliken is an active member of the MS Society and continues to raise money to help fund research through Team Pacific Crest. For more information, visit <http://katescounterpane.com/cp.html>.



Photos courtesy of Kate Milliken



# WILD SILENCE

## SKIING THE ARCTIC NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

BY KIT DESLAURIERS, SAK 06/13/91



**W**ould you walk on top of a wolf's track or next to it if you were skiing uphill on thin snowpack over a frozen river sandwiched by quickly narrowing canyon walls and hauling your gear behind you on a large plastic sled?

Every one of us on our team of six who skied through the highest mountains of the Brooks Range in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge of Alaska faced that choice. Steeped in silence while kicking and gliding along the frozen Okpilak River, we found ourselves contemplating this dilemma. Sometimes the wolf's tracks forced ours to overlap, as it was the path of least resistance and minimized our energy expenditure, which was important given we were hundreds of miles from civilization with ambitious ski objectives ahead of us. Most of the time, though, we chose to ski alongside it so that so we could marvel at the wilderness that we were clearly a part of.

A rare and completely intact ecosystem in the far northeastern part of Alaska, and largely untouched by man, the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is 19.6 million acres and home to a wilderness area nearly the size of Maine. This spring seemed the perfect time for a ski traverse, as the Refuge is celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary on December 6, 2010.

### A REFUGE IS BORN

The Refuge's story starts nearly three decades before it was established, in 1929, when the famous conservationist Bob Marshall spent several summers in the central Brooks Range. Fueled by a desire to protect wild places,

Marshall returned to the Lower 48 to assemble a group of similar-minded conservationists, who went on to form the Wilderness Society. During these years of letter writing campaigns and pleas on the steps of Congress, Marshall met Olaus and Mardy Murie, wildlife biologists from Moose, Wyoming. These soft-spoken yet articulate wilderness advocates pushed for the protection of vast reaches of the Brooks Range, including its eastern portion. They saw success with the establishment of the Arctic National Wildlife Range in 1960, but an even greater success came in 1980, which unfortunately neither Olaus nor Marshall lived to see, when President Jimmy Carter signed the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA), almost doubling the size of the Range and renaming it the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

While ANILCA bestowed wilderness status on 8 million of the 19.6-million acre Refuge, it also was a classic example of trying to balance environmental versus commercial interests. The Act contained a provision known as Section 1002 that gives Congress the authority to allow a 1.5 million-acre segment of the Refuge to be open to oil and gas development. For the optimists among us, it is important to note that Congress also holds the power to disallow any development or even recommend a greater level of protection for the Refuge, such as a national monument or park. Few

places left in the world are home to such prolific wildlife and opportunity for adventure and silence.

### SPRING IN THE BROOKS RANGE

Stretching west to east across Alaska above the Arctic Circle, the Brooks Range is the northernmost major mountain range in the world and its eastern flanks spill into the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. As a kid on a NOLS semester in the southcentral Alaska Range 20 years ago, I had heard of both the Brooks and the Refuge. The allure of someplace that is possibly more remote than any other in Alaska held great appeal. Even skiing all seven of the highest peaks in the world—including Everest—didn't shake the pull of these remote mountains. With support from The North Face and the Alaska Wilderness League, I was fortunate enough to join a team of skiers who traveled to the Brooks Range in the Refuge this spring to experience them firsthand—on skis of course.

Skiing helped us to avoid two things about Alaska that I had become intimate with on my NOLS course: the prolific mosquitoes that peaked in the summer and the boggy tussocks on the coastal plain to the north of the big peaks. On the other hand, skiing usually means

winter camping, including melting enough snow for water every day and enduring extremely cold temperatures. Choosing the exact three-week window for our journey was further compounded by trying to figure out when there

**AS THE PLANE PULLED AWAY, THE SILENCE SUNK IN AND GREW IN ITS INTENSITY. REMOTE. VAST. WILDERNESS. NO TREES, NO RUNNING WATER. NO SOUNDS AT ALL. A WILD, WARM, COMFORTING, ENVELOPING SILENCE.**





Cover photo by Chris Figenstau, all others courtesy Kit DesLauriers



**Far Left:** Expedition mate Hilaree O'Neill carving a retreat down Mt. Isto. **Left:** Posing with my expedition teammates (from left to right) Hilaree O'Neill, Guilia Monego, and Kasha Rigby, all members of The North Face athlete team. **Cover:** What goes up, must come down. Climbing and skiing the high peaks of the Refuge gave us some perspective on this wide open and wild place.

valley this time of year, and there would likely be no snow for travel. We double-checked his prediction on our flight in, and as it was indeed a blow-out season, we changed our starting point to the Okpilak River instead, with our sights set on Mt. Michelson followed by Mt. Isto, the highest in the Brooks Range and plenty glaciated for good skiing.

## SILENCE IS GOLDEN

From Fairbanks we flew to Coldfoot, a stop on the Dalton Highway to Prudhoe Bay. In Coldfoot we met our pilot, Dirk, from Coyote Air who flies a 1960 Beaver DeHavilland single engine plane with skis. He lent us his shotgun as a back-up for any bear encounters that we might have, although he also gave us an air horn that would be our first choice of deterrent.

Sure enough, as we circled into our landing area near frozen Okpilak Lake, we saw enormous polar bear tracks crisscrossing the valley. The Refuge is home to at least 40 denning female polar bears, which is the largest concentration in the world outside of Manitoba, Canada. The close proximity of the Refuge's mountains to the ocean, about 50 miles, is a major attraction for these bears, as the remainder of the Alaskan coastline lies 100 miles or more from the mountains—too far for a polar bear to walk with her newborn cubs after spending up to four months hibernating. The polar bears leave their dens sometime between the middle of March and the middle of April. The grizzly bears start coming out of their dens about the first week of May. Our three-week window coincided with their grand exit from their dens. My stomach dropped as I realized how

**SKIING HELPED US TO AVOID TWO THINGS ABOUT ALASKA THAT I HAD BECOME INTIMATE WITH ON MY NOLS COURSE: THE PROLIFIC MOSQUITOES THAT PEAKED IN THE SUMMER AND THE BOGGY TUSsocks ON THE COASTAL PLAIN TO THE NORTH OF THE BIG PEAKS.**

remote we were about to be once the plane dropped us off.

As the plane pulled away, the silence sunk in and grew in its intensity. Remote. Vast. Wilderness. No trees. No running water. No sounds at all. A wild, warm, comforting, enveloping silence. It wasn't just the two of us who were mothers who were mesmerized by the utter stillness. Where had any of us ever heard this before?

## SKIING IN ARCTIC SCALE

The first morning, after watching a wolverine run along the riverbank across from our camp, we set out for Mt. Michelson, 8,855 feet. With the valley floor at 2,000 feet above sea level, the vertical relief was dramatic. We climbed for six hours and weren't even close to the summit. With such exaggerated horizontal and vertical distances, our team of Himalayan veterans began to refer to the geography in "Arctic Scale," which is about the same

as "Himalayan Scale" minus the grand elevation.

On the second morning, after watching a wolf run across the same riverbank as the wolverine had the day before, we made a second attempt at Michelson. After an enormous amount of dedication that included nine hours of nearly nonstop climbing, some sections of steep north ridge front-pointing in blue ice, and ultra cold temps, we stood on top at 7:00 p.m. We took in the views across the coastal plain to the Beaufort Sea to the north and deeper into the glaciated mountains to the east, west, and south before looking down at our descent. It is unlikely that anyone has ever skied the route we took down the east face of Mt. Michelson. Let's just say that skiing into the shadow of the evening on a shaded mountain face with difficult depth perception taught us to stick to the westerly aspects for the rest of our trip.

## OPEN TO THE LESSONS OF OUR JOURNEY

Hauling everything behind us on sleds and in our packs, we skied another 14 miles south, along the wolf's tracks, up the ever-narrowing Okpilak Valley to our next camp. The following day, we trailed that wolf right up onto the glacier below Mt. Isto at about 8,000 feet, and then its tracks disappeared over a pass to the Jago River Valley. We continued up to the magnificent 9,080-foot summit of Mt. Isto. Skiing down this time was a rare couple of hours found in every ski mountaineer's dream with near perfect snow and nearly endless sun. Almost every trick in the book came into play as we exited the steep west face onto the easy-going glacier and finally picked our way down the alternately rocky and icy riverbeds that had melted during the heat of the day.

During the five days it then took us to ski 60 miles due north out along the Okpilak to Kaktovik, after summing and skiing one more almost 9,000-foot peak, we crossed endless bear tracks, saw flocks of ptarmigans, and spotted a great gray owl and an arctic fox—all living in wild silence. At some unmarked place, as nothing is marked in this wilderness void of roads and trails, we crossed into the area covered by Section 1002 in the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act. Since development has not yet been permitted in this area, it was just as wild and silent as the rest of the Refuge. And just as untouched. So far.

When fighting for these lands back in the day, Mardy Murie wrote, "Will our society be wise enough to keep some of 'The Great Country' empty of technology and full of life?" The American people who need to protect the wild silence of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, including the Section 1002 area, will likely never set foot upon it, as it is difficult to reach and inhospitable to many. But maybe it's enough to just know that places like this exist. Perhaps the value of wilderness untouched by man where wildlife thrives is the value we should defend. I know I feel that the silence alone is worth protecting.

*Interested in helping to protect the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge? Visit Kit's trip sponsor, the Alaska Wilderness League, at [www.alaskawild.org](http://www.alaskawild.org).*

would still be enough snow to support our skis but have temperatures that weren't too frigid.

Some due diligence is important before an expedition into a fairly unknown place and climate so we spoke with a few Alaska 'locals' when searching for beta that would help us make the best plan. Reid Bahnson, a snow scientist for the Alaska Department of Transportation informed us that the spring snow in the Refuge would probably be one to two meters deep at best, with some aspects scoured clean from the high winds. What snow there was likely would be depth hoar with breakable crust on top. Always up for a second opinion, I contacted Robert Thompson who lives in the tiny Inupiat Eskimo village of Kaktovik on Barter Island at the northern tip of the Refuge. Robert gave us the key information that melt-out happens from the mountains to the ocean up there because the cold air coming off the pack ice keeps the coastal plain frozen longer. We decided that April 20 to May 10 was our chance to start in the mountains and follow the melt-out out.

Once in Fairbanks we met up with a retired senior wildlife biologist for the Arctic Refuge, Fran Mauer. Fran described further for us how this area is so unique. Beyond the 120,000-plus head of Porcupine caribou that arrive on the coastal plain of the Refuge in late May to give birth as they have for nearly two million years, Fran says this is likely the only place in the world that Dall sheep may watch polar bears emerge from their dens below the rocky hillsides. He also told us about the "blow out" that happens in the Hula Hula Valley near Mt. Chamberlin, which had been our first objective. Warm winds howl through the



**FIELD NOTES**

# Expedition Behavior: The finer Points

BY HOWARD TOMB, WRW 06/24/76, ROC 06/15/77

A good expedition team is like a powerful, well-oiled, finely tuned marriage. Members cook meals together, carry burdens together, face challenges together and, finally, go to bed together.

A bad expedition, on the other hand, is an awkward, ugly, embarrassing thing characterized by bickering, filth, frustration, and crispy macaroni.

Nearly all bad expeditions have one thing in common: poor expedition behavior (EB). This is true even if team members follow the stated rules, such as Don't Step on the Rope, Kerosene and Food, No Soap in the River, No Raccoons in the Tent, Keep Your Ice Axe Out of My Eye, etc.

Unfortunately, too many rules of expedition behavior remain unspoken. Some leaders seem to assume that their team members already have strong and generous characters like their own. But judging from a few of the campers we've encountered, more rules ought to be spelled out. Here are ten of them.

**Rule #1 Get the hell out of bed.**

Suppose your tentmates get up early to fetch water and fire up the stove while you lie comatose in your sleeping bag. As they run an extensive equipment check, coil ropes, and fix your breakfast, they hear you start to snore. Last night you were their buddy; now they're drawing up a list of things about you that make them want to spit. They will devise cruel punishments for you. You have earned them. The team concept is now defunct. Had you gotten out of bed, nobody would have had to suffer.

**Rule #2 Do not be cheerful before breakfast.**

Some people wake up perky and happy as fluffy bunny rabbits. They put stress on those who wake up mean as rabid wolverines. Exhortations such as "Rise and shine, sugar!" and "Greet the dawn, pumkin!" have been known to provoke pungent expletives from rabid wolverine types. These curses, in turn, may offend fluffy bunny types. Indeed, they are issued with the sincere intent to offend. Thus, the day begins with flying fur and hurt feelings. The best early morning behavior is simple: Be quiet.

**Rule #3 Do not complain.**

About anything. Ever. It's ten below zero, visibility is four inches, and wind-driven hailstones are embedding themselves in your face like shotgun pellets. Must you mention it? Do you think your friends haven't noticed the weather? Make a suggestion. Tell a joke. Lead a prayer. Do NOT lodge a complaint! Your pack weighs 87 pounds and your cheap backpack straps are—surprise! surprise!—cutting into your flesh. Were you promised a personal sherpa? Did somebody cheat you out of a mule team? If you can't carry your weight, get a motorhome.

**Rule #4 Learn to cook at least one thing right.**

One expedition trick is so old that it is no longer amusing: on the first cooking assignment, the clever cook prepares a dish that resembles, say, Burnt Socks in Toxic Waste Sauce. The cook hopes to be relieved permanently from cooking duties. This is the childish approach to a problem that's been with us since people first started throwing dead lizards on the fire. Tricks are not a part of a team spirit. If you don't like to cook, say so. Offer to wash dishes and prepare the one thing you do know how to cook. Even if it's only tea. Remember that talented camp cooks sometimes get invited to join major expeditions in Nepal, all expenses paid.

**Rule #5 Either A) Shampoo, or B) Do not remove your hat for any reason.**

After a week or so on the trail, without shampooing, hair forms angry little clumps and wads. These leave the person beneath looking like an escapee from a mental ward. Such an appearance could shake a team's confidence in your judgment. If you can't shampoo, pull a wool hat down over your ears and leave it there, night and day, for the entire expedition.

**Rule #6 Do not ask if anybody's seen your stuff.**

Experienced adventurers have systems for organizing their gear. They very rarely leave it strewn around camp or lying back on the trail. One of the most damning things you can do is ask your teammate if they've seen the tent poles you thought you packed 20 miles ago. Even in the unlikely event you get home alive, you will not be invited on the next trip. Should you ever leave the tent poles 20 miles away, do not ask if anybody's seen them. Simply announce, with a good-natured chuckle, that you are about to set off in the dark on a 40-mile hike to retrieve them, and that you are sorry. It's unprofessional to lose your spoon or your toothbrush. If something like that happens, don't mention it to anyone.

**Rule #7 Never ask where you are.**

If you want to know where you are, look at the map. Try to figure it out yourself. If you're still confused, feel free to discuss the identity of landmarks around you and how they correspond to the cartography. If you A) suspect that a mistake has been made, and B) have experience in interpreting topographical maps, and C) are certain that your group leader is a novice or on drugs, speak up. Otherwise, follow the group like a sheep.

**Rule #8 Always carry more than your fair share.**

When the trip is over, would you rather be remembered as a rock or a sissy? Keep in mind that a pound or two of extra weight in your pack won't make your back hurt any more than it already does. In any given group of flatlanders, somebody is bound to bicker about your weight. When an argument begins, take the extra weight yourself. Then shake your head and gaze with pity upon the slothful one. This is the mature response to childish behavior. On the trail that day, during a break, load the tenderfoot's pack with 20 pounds of gravel.

**Rule #9 Do not get sunburned.**

Sunburn is not only painful and unattractive, it's also an obvious sign of inexperience. Most green horns wait too long before applying sunscreen. Once you've burned on an expedition, you may not have a chance to get out of the sun. Then the burn gets burned, skin peels away, blisters sprout on the already swollen lips. Anyway, you get the idea. Wear zinc oxide. You can see exactly where and how thickly it's applied and it gives you just about 100% protection. It does get on your sunglasses, all over your clothes and in your mouth. But that's OK. Unlike sunshine, zinc oxide is non-toxic.

**Rule #10 Do not get killed.**

Suppose you make the summit of K2 solo, chain-smoking Gitanes and carrying the complete works of Hemingway in hardcover. Pretty macho, huh? Suppose now that you take a vertical detour down a crevasse and never make it back to camp. Would you still qualify as a hero? And would it matter? Nobody's going to run any fingers through your new chest hair. The worst thing to have on your outdoor resume is the list of the possible locations of your body.

All expedition behavior really flows from this one principle: Think of your team, the beautiful machine, first. You are merely a cog in that machine. If you have something to prove, forget about joining an expedition. Your team will never have more than one member.

*Howard Tomb is author of several "how-to" books with a whimsical twist, including The Cool of the Wild: An Extremist's Guide to Adventure Sports. Howard lives in New Jersey, where he is drumming up yet another way to make NOLS alums laugh out loud as they read The Leader.*



FILM REVIEW



**Arctic Cliffhangers**  
© 2009, Meltwater Media  
Produced and Co-Directed by  
Julia Szucs, NOLS Instructor

REVIEWED BY LIBBY GADBOIS,  
NOLS MARKETING INTERN

Co-directed by NOLS grad and sea kayaking instructor Julia Szucs, this film, screened at this year’s Banff Mountain Film Festival, tells the story of the many ways in which Arctic seabirds are providing humans with vital information about the way climate change is affecting marine ecosystems.

To make the film, Szucs and co-director Steve Smith explored the eastern Canadian Arctic, including Prince Leopold, Akpait, and Lvujuvik islands. Along the way, they journeyed with Newfoundland subsistence hunters, hung suspended from cliffs teeming with sea birds while interviewing biologists, and traveled by boat with Inuits to learn how the health of the local sea

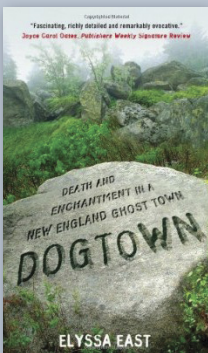
birds is directly affecting the diet and culture of the peoples of the Arctic region.

The takeaway message is that climate change and the resulting reduction in sea ice is drastically affecting the health of local marine life, which in turn is affecting the health and migration patterns of local sea birds and the livelihood of the people who depend on fishing and hunting these species.

Reeling with beautiful scenery and an unexpectedly colorful Arctic landscape, this film shows the importance of seabirds as both a bioindicator, as well as a food source, for many living in the northern reaches of our planet. Tastefully narrated and stunningly shot, *Arctic Cliffhangers* is a must-see for those interested in the health of our ocean worlds and determined to preserve them.

For more information, visit [www.meltwatermedia.ca/site/Arctic-Cliffhangers-movie.html](http://www.meltwatermedia.ca/site/Arctic-Cliffhangers-movie.html).

BOOK REVIEW



**Dogtown: Death and Enchantment in a New England Ghost Town**

© 2009, Simon & Schuster  
Written by Elyssa East,  
FSR-6 09/09/96

REVIEWED BY DIANE  
SHOUTIS, NOLS ALUMNI  
RELATIONS COORDINATOR

Free Press recently launched 1996 Fall Semester in the Rockies grad Elyssa East’s new novel: *Dogtown: Death and Enchantment in a New England Ghost Town*.

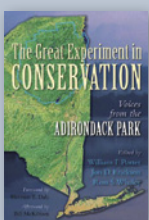
What starts as an attempt to study modern artist Marsen Hartley becomes an in-depth study of an area known as Dogtown—a 3,000-acre abandoned woodland near Gloucester, Massachusetts. Through a succession of interviews, the novel successfully takes the reader through the history of Dogtown, including tales of witches, supernatural sightings, and haunted sites.

Interwoven is the tale of a young woman, Anne Natti, who was mysteriously murdered while crossing the area on the way to a friend’s house in 1984. The compelling story of Natti’s death and the investigation of a local resident as the murderer, successfully tie this book together.

*Dogtown* is not a frothy beach read, but would be a great book for a club, and it would also be of special interest to those living in the Gloucester area. The author performed an incredible amount of research on this remote area, and the book clearly benefits from her efforts. This reviewer eagerly looks forward to Elyssa East’s future novels.

For more information about Dogtown, please visit [dogtownthebook.com](http://dogtownthebook.com).

BOOK REVIEW



**The Great Experiment in Conservation: Voices From the Adirondack Park**

© 2009, Syracuse University Press  
Edited in part by William F. Porter,  
BIO 06/11/71

REVIEWED BY DAVID KETAI,  
SEK 07/17/07, SSPM-2 09/15/08, SIC-2 05/06/10

In this collection of essays about NOLS’ newest classroom, the Adirondack Park, editor and 1971 Wind River Biology graduate William F. Porter covers everything from the park’s ecosystem, to its cultural history, to the institutional mechanisms and political economy that have made the park what it is today, and finally, to the park’s constant balancing act between development and conservation. These essays, written by scholars, practitioners, and environmental activists, are presented in a fashion that is accessible to both well-versed veterans of environmental public policy and novices interested in an introduction to the pressing issue of conserving the wilderness we cherish. From both perspectives, it is clear that this osten-

sible case study holds lessons valuable for posterity.

The essays paint a compelling portrait of Adirondack Park as the epitome of the American conservation ethic at the turn of the twentieth century. This portrait beckons our generation to ask why the Adirondack experiment still persists, a question that brings the reader from New York to NOLS classrooms across the globe. As the editors note: “On the horizon may be new societal choices, as indicated by observations that young people have less affinity for nature than previous generations. In question is a fundamental issue: is wilderness an important asset to the human condition, and therefore is conservation of the resources of a region a reasonable goal?” I speak for NOLS graduates worldwide when I respond, emphatically, yes. Conservation is not only a reasonable goal, but also necessary to preserve the pristine classrooms in which we have learned for decades. And *The Great Experiment in Conservation* will help our generation understand the challenges we will face in our struggle to continue walking the tightrope between development and conservation in our valued wildlands.

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October 3–7	Ouachita National Forest, Arkansas	Backpacking
November 4–8	Grand Canyon, Arizona	Backpacking



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The Adirondack Park is NOLS’ newest wilderness classroom and the ideal Northeast venue for young teens to explore on the NOLS Adirondack Backpacking Adventure for 14- and 15-Year-Olds, premiering in the summer of 2011. With 6.1 million acres of mountain summits, conifer and hardwood forests, wetlands, lakes, ponds, and rivers, Adirondack Park remains the largest park in the contiguous United States. What makes the park even more unique is its successful inclusion of human communities. As NOLS grad and editor of *The Great Experiment in Conservation: Voices From the Adirondack Park*, William F. Porter, notes: “The public and private lands within the park are managed under some of the most stringent environmental regulations ever imposed on any region...The biological integrity of the wilderness is largely intact despite existing within a day’s drive of 94 million people.”

In their two-week NOLS backpacking adventure, teens can experience the landscape that provided shelter and sustenance to the Algonquian and Mohawk Indians, and travel through the boreal forests that are home to beaver, deer, moose, fisher, pine marten, osprey, lynx, and over 250 species of birds. In short, the same remote NOLS experience with the time-tested NOLS curriculum, all within hours of major population centers of the Northeast. For more details or to request a 2011 NOLS Course Catalog, call or visit us online: (800) 710-NOLS (6657), [www.nols.edu](http://www.nols.edu).



RECIPE BOX

# Alexander's Beanoa Quinoa Burgers

## Packing a Protein Punch

SUBMITTED BY ALEXANDER WATERS,  
WRW-1 06/26/08, AKW-1 06/07/10

These instantly famous burgers were originally a creative way to use up all the excess quinoa that loaded down our packs. Let's just say that, after this recipe, quinoa experienced a meteoric rise in popularity within our cook group, which graduated the seeds from hanging out with the bulgur, lentils, and grape nuts until the end of the ration period to hobnobbing with the flour, pasta, and cheese at the top of the menu. These backcountry burgers are a delicacy carnivores and vegetarians alike can savor.



### Ingredients (4 burgers):

3 cups quinoa	4 Tbs. soy sauce	1 tsp. salt
3 cups dehydrated black beans	2 Tbs. hot sauce	1 tsp. pepper
1½ cups cornmeal or polenta	1 Tbs. brown sugar (optional)	1 tsp. Italian seasoning or allspice
1½ cups flour	1 tsp. garlic salt	2 Tbs. oil or butter

### Directions:

- 1) Boil quinoa 15–20 minutes or until most seeds sprout a white tail. Strain. (*Tip:* Pre-soak to cut down cooking time.)
- 2) Combine dry black beans, cornmeal, flour, garlic salt, salt, pepper, Italian seasoning, and brown sugar. (*Tip:* Set aside ½ to 1 cup of flour and add later to obtain desired consistency.)
- 3) Add quinoa, soy sauce, and hot sauce to black bean mixture. While stirring, add water and/or flour until mixture is at the consistency of ground beef (thicker than pancake batter).
- 4) Pan fry ¼ of the mixture for each patty on your Fry-bake directly over the stove (no “Tower of Power” is necessary).
- 5) Try serving each patty between two slices of Willy Oppenheim’s “Everyman’s Bread” recipe from the Summer 2010 issue of *The Leader*.

*Optional:* Make homemade ketchup with tomato base, brown sugar, and spices to add a little zing to the already delectable burgers.

**Do you have a great backcountry recipe?**  
Send it to [theleader@nols.edu](mailto:theleader@nols.edu). If your recipe is printed, you'll get a free copy of the *NOLS Cookery*!

GEAR ROOM

# Be More Avy Savvy

## Buy the Right Beacon for the Job, and Practice!

BY JAIME MUSNICKI, NOLS INSTRUCTOR

As we find ourselves sliding towards another winter in the northern hemisphere, avalanche safety is sure to be on the minds of backcountry skiers and riders. One of the numerous important pieces of avalanche safety gear is an avalanche transceiver, also known as a beacon. Whether you are a seasoned backcountry skier who is looking to replace an older model or a new devotee of the magical powder experience, read on to learn about some of the latest beacons on the market.



**TRACKER DTS**  
BY BACKCOUNTRY ACCESS  
The beacon of choice for NOLS’ winter backcountry skiing and snowboarding programs for the past two decades,

this two-antennae digital beacon is intuitive, easy to use for single-burial searches, and is great for novices (like NOLS students). Having also used this beacon to practice and teach multiple burial techniques, I can attest to it being a great tool in these scenarios as well. Priced at around \$290, it is the most affordable beacon in this review.



**TRACKER 2**  
BY BACKCOUNTRY ACCESS  
Released in the U.S. last season, this much-anticipated three-antennae beacon is even more intuitive than the original Tracker and

has one of the fastest microprocessors on the market today (important for processing the signals received by the three antennae and turning them into distance and direction readings). Improvements over the Tracker DTS include a more accurate distance reading that is closer to actual meters, a comfortable harness system, and the third antenna that helps cut out the “blanks” during the fine search, thereby increasing potential search efficiency. Priced at around \$335, it is also one of the most affordable three-antennae beacons out there.



**BARRYVOX PULSE**  
BY MAMMUT  
The well-reputed Pulse differentiates itself from the Tracker 2 in the realm of multiple burials, as it has

a special “marking” function that helps the searcher locate and differentiate between signals from multiple buried avalanche victims, and an arrow that points you in the correct direction when searching. On the down side, the Pulse has a slower processor than the Tracker 2, which can be frustrating and confusing if you want to move faster than the processing capabilities of the beacon. Additional “pros” for the Pulse include its ability to switch into analog mode for searchers who are practiced with analog transceivers and regular software updates from Mammut retailers. The Pulse retails for around \$450, making it noticeably more expensive than its Tracker 2 peer.



**DSP SMART TRANSMITTER**  
BY PIEPS  
Like the Pulse, this three-antennae beacon also has a “marking” function that facilitates multiple burial searches.

You may find the “bells and whistles”—a thermometer, compass and altimeter—either convenient or unnecessary and distracting. The buttons are also not very user-friendly for bulky-gloved fingers. On the plus side, the DSP has an impressive range while searching, noticeably better than either the Tracker or the Pulse. Retailing for \$450, the DSP is also on the more expensive end.

As a long-time NOLS winter instructor, I would be remiss not to warn you that *any* beacon is only helpful if you’re also carrying a shovel and probe, have proper avalanche training, have diligently practiced searching, are traveling with competent partners, and have read and are following the manufacturer’s guidelines (especially the guidelines for maintaining battery power, which can make all the difference). A common misconception is that advanced beacon technology means less hands-on training. In reality, you should be practicing more with the newer technology in order to work out the quirks that inevitably come with the more complicated equipment.

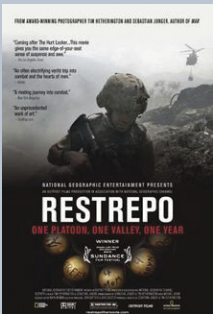
Now grab your transceiver and get practicing. Winter is upon us!

*This review was completed with the assistance of former NOLS instructor Sarah Carpenter, co-owner of the American Avalanche Institute.*

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



FILM REVIEW



**Restrepo**  
© 2010, Outpost Films/National Geographic Entertainment  
Co-Directed by Sebastian Junger, ADV 06/22/76

REVIEWED BY PAUL RONTTO, NOLS PUBLICATIONS INTERN

Lauded writer, filmmaker, and 1976 NOLS Adventure Course grad Sebastian Junger teamed up with cinematographer Tim Hetherington to shoot and direct this gritty, visceral film on the U.S.'s involvement in Afghanistan. The film is titled after Juan Restrepo, a 20-year-old soldier killed in the deployment.

To make the film, Junger and Hetherington spent 14 months dug in with the 2nd Platoon of Battle Company, part of the 173rd Airborne Brigade, in Afghanistan's Korangal Valley, considered by many to be the most deadly place on earth. The powerful visuals are juxtaposed with moving narratives that portray war as it's seen through the soldiers' eyes. Junger and Hetherington did a fantastic job exploring the camaraderie of daily life in the hot zone, bouts of deadly firefights, reflection on those lost, and the backbreaking service our armed forces have undertaken for our country.

This winner of the 2010 Sundance Film Festival's Grand Jury Prize for U.S. Documentary is a must see for those who want a true glimpse of what war means in the 21st century, including how it is fought, the emotions that our soldiers are forced to deal with, and the reality of death in battle. Definitely not for the faint of heart nor for those in the mood for an action-adventure, *Restrepo* should be added to your queue when you're ready to do some serious thinking about the realities of war.

*Sebastian Junger is most famous for his book (made into a blockbuster film) The Perfect Storm: A True Story of Men Against the Sea, © 1997, Harpertorch.*

BOOK REVIEW



**War**  
© 2010, Twelve  
Written by Sebastian Junger, ADV 06/22/76

REVIEWED BY BRUCE PALMER, NOLS ADMISSION AND MARKETING DIRECTOR

*War* is a byproduct of *Restrepo*. Ironically, after five years of occupying the Korangal Valley, U.S. forces abandoned it to the Taliban in April, just as Junger's book was hitting the shelves.

In *War*, Junger paints a picture of war as it really is: profound boredom and hardship interspersed with terrifying action. He captures the young soldiers' contradictions as they both abhor combat, yet desire it as a way to pass the time. Using psychology and history, he plumbs the inner workings of these young men, who at times seem callous and cruel, but then turn around and adopt a puppy.

In the book's most poignant example of these inconsistencies, the men watch as a wounded Taliban fighter crawls across a far ridge, neither attempting to help him nor trying to kill him. When at last he stops moving, dead, a cheer goes up from the men, much to Junger's confusion. The men's response to Junger's questions? "He could have killed us." It was less about killing than preventing any member of the team from getting killed.

Junger has touted the film as being apolitical, and it is, almost to a fault. There are a number of sequences where I felt I was left hanging, as if an elephant was in the room. The young men of the 2nd Platoon have been shaped by U.S. strategy and policies. They are carrying out "our" desires and their lives will never be the same, but Junger tiptoes to the edge and then backs off, never actually going "there."

In spite of what I perceive as a shortcoming, I heartily recommend this book to anyone who wants to better understand what war looks like on the ground and how those experiences impact those most intimately involved.

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— Augie C. Bering V,  
Executive Vice President  
Bering's Retail Store



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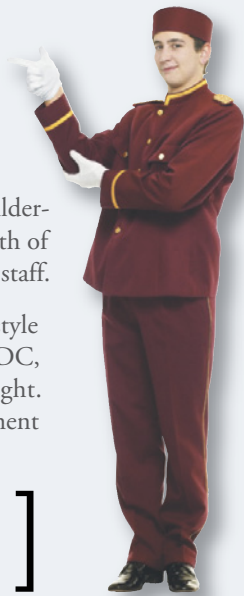
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**JABBERWOCKY**

Contact NOLS Alumni via telephone at (800) 332-4280 or email (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 '80s****Cliff Sharples, FSR 09/07/82**

Cliff is starting a new online gardening resource called DigtheDirt.com, which offers a social network for people around the world who want to live green, grow a garden, and be more sustainable. With the adoption of twin boys from Vietnam last year, his family of five kids and wife, Lisa, are making a renewed effort to "leave no trace" as they garden, hike, and explore the Pacific Northwest from their home on Mercer Island, Washington. His oldest (12) is an avid backpacker and can't wait to attend his first official NOLS course.

**Grads from the '90s****Geraldine Carter, AAU 04/10/96**

After her NOLS course, Geraldine Carter didn't stop exploring. For eight years, she traveled to all the continents, leading hiking trips and bicycle tours. Summoning the leadership skills she honed in Australia, she has combined her passion and concern for the environment with her intuitive understanding of logistics and trip planning to co-create Climate Ride. Climate Ride is a national fundraising bicycle event that raises awareness of climate change and the need for renewable energy legislation. Geraldine lives and plays in Missoula, Montana.

**Stephen E. Hendricks, LNT-GA 04/19/99**

This native of Asheville, North Carolina, and recent retiree of the U.S. Forest Service, has been awarded the 2010 Aldo Leopold Stewardship Award, named after the 1920s USFS employee, renowned conservationist, and author of *A Sand County Almanac*.

**Grads from the '00s****Casey Kanode, IDAS 06/22/02**

Casey did a NOLS Video Production Internship in 2008. After his internship in Lander he enrolled in Montana State University in Bozeman. He is working on his MFA in Science and Natural History Film-making. He is currently in his second year of studies.

**Nick Monserud, SAKM-2 06/04/03**

Since graduating from Iowa State University in 2005, Nick has been called back each summer to lead a sea kayaking trip in Prince William Sound, Alaska, for the university's outdoor education program. The backcountry always seems to knock on Nick's door no matter where his career path takes him (right now he is a civil engineer in the Twin Cities) and he finds that he cannot refuse the call. Nick plans to go back to Alaska to lead trips for as long as he can.

**Timothy Hall, OEC 06/09/03**

Timothy is the new director of the outdoor education program at the Rumson Country Day School, a pre-K to 8 school in Rumson, New Jersey, where he also teaches English and math. Timothy runs trips for the fifth through eighth grades, drawing on his rock-solid NOLS foundation when taking the eighth-graders on four-day trips in the Adirondacks, hiking in the High Peaks, and whitewater rafting.

**Scott Schneider, NCM 06/22/05**

After receiving his master's in recreation management from University of Wisconsin, La Crosse, Scott worked as a coordinator for North Carolina State's Outdoor Adventure Program, where he has recently been promoted to director of the entire program. Scott says NOLS gave him the skills necessary to launch his career as an outdoor educator. Scott plans to take a NOLS Outdoor Educator course to further refine his skills.

**Scott Thalacker, WAD 06/14/06**

Scott recently became a pastor at Our Saviour's Lutheran Church in Whitehall, Wisconsin. While this is very far from the Waddington Range, much of what Scott learned on his course carries him through his work and life. Of particular value to Scott is knowing firsthand how he responds to adversity. The leadership experience and wisdom that he gleaned from his course has deeply impacted how he leads his congregation.

**Karolis Karalevicius, SEK 07/17/07**

With his NOLS experience in his back pocket, Karolis organized a kayaking trip around Washington Island to Rock Island in the Chicago area with a group of friends. The only person with previous kayaking experience, Karolis was able to safely manage the group while still having a ton of fun.

**Alexander Bailey Martin, RICY 06/02/08**

This NOLS river instructor made all the headlines in September after paddling 4,300 miles cross-country from Portland, Oregon, to Portland, Maine. Stay tuned for more on Zand in a future issue of *The Leader*.

**Jonas Cole, NZSF 10/02/08**

This summer Jonas completed a 21-day solo hike of the Long Trail in his home state of Vermont. On the trip he used the knowledge gained on his NOLS semester, including LNT principles and safe backcountry travel. Along the way, Jonas had time for reflection, which allowed him to recall highlights of his NOLS experience and deepened his appreciation for how simple life can be when one lives out of a backpack. He hopes to do a similar trip in the near future, out of Tacoma, Washington, where he is currently a sophomore at the University of Puget Sound.

**Sarah Jacobs, SSR-5 03/04/09**

After Sarah graduated from her NOLS course, she became a guide for GW TRAILS, George Washington University's outdoors organization. This experience allowed Sarah to continue to develop her leadership skills and, thanks to her NOLS course, competently deal with some hairy situations in the backcountry. This past summer, Sarah returned to her roots to staff the trip that first piqued her interest in being in the outdoors and outdoor education: Worthington Field Studies, Inc.

**Evan Nielsen, AMT-1 01/07/10**

This 2003 graduate of Notre Dame (BA, Political Science), captain of the Norte Dame hockey team, and former professional hockey player, is joining the faculty of the Berkshire School in Massachusetts as hisitory teacher and football, hockey, and lacrosse coach.

**Marriages and Engagements****Marianne Dawson, RICU 04/27/04, and Steven Alexander, RICU 04/27/04**

Marianne and Steve were married on August 28 in Saranac Lake, New York.

**Heather Scureman, FSR 09/04/97, and Chris Wisniewski, SSR 02/03/97**

Chris and Heather were married on September 4 just outside of Lander, Wyoming, at Sinks Canyon Center. The wedding was a wonderful celebration, bringing together their family, the NOLS community, and their Northland College friends.

**New Additions****Lara McCluskey, SIC 06/14/04, and Chris Agnew, SAF 01/17/98**

Lara and Chris became the proud parents of baby boy Blue Deveney Agnew on August 15, 2010. Blue weighed 8 lbs 15 oz at birth.

**NOLS Baby Boom**

Six NOLS alumni babies within the last year in Lander: (from left to right) Emily Shoutis-Frank and Oliver (9 mo.), Latane Frank, Aimee Collins Kemp, John Kemp and Eden (1 yr.), Karly Copeland and Everett (6 mo.), Matt Copeland, Anne Clausen Scott, Jared Scott and Eliza (1 yr.), Lara McCluskey and Blue (3 mo.), (Chris Agnew not pictured), Aaron Bannon and Sebastian (9 mo.), and Joy Bannon.

**In Remembrance****Jenna Gruben, ABW 05/29/00**

Jenna died in February 2010 while returning from a trail run in Moab, Utah, to her home in Steamboat Springs, Colorado. Jenna was married in August 2009 to her long-time companion, Matt Morrill. Their honeymoon was highlighted by three months trekking in Nepal. Before their marriage, Jenna and Matt had enjoyed several trips to South America, where they toured Peru, Argentina, and Chile. Jenna excelled at trail running; she set a course record in the Bighorn 50 km and twice won the Run Rabbit Run 50-miler in Steamboat Springs. In Steamboat, she was a leader in the trail running community, founding a club that now boasts 150 members. Jenna held a prominent position in the community, providing learning experiences for special needs children, especially those afflicted with autism, traveling with teams conducting autism screenings, and providing extended therapy in camp settings.

**Robert Charles Davis, OEC 06/05/96**

Robert died September 12, 2010, in a canoeing accident in Washington State. He moved from North



Carolina to Washington in 1995 for the outdoor opportunities. He was a bike messenger in Seattle and a snowboard instructor at the Snoqualmie Pass ski area before working for about 10 years in communications for the ski area. He loved being in the beautiful Northwest wilderness and was an enthusiastic outdoorsman.

**Rick Fine, WRW 06/05/74**

Rick died peacefully with grace and dignity on September 4, 2010. He was truly loved and respected. A master craftsman and a captivating storyteller, a learned man of history, art, and nature, and a kind and patient man with a ready wit and a gentle manner, Rick touched many lives. Nowhere was Rick more at home than in the wilderness. He often spoke of his NOLS experience in Wyoming—coming face-to-face with physical and mental challenges and dangers—all of which suited his methodical and creative approach, his trusting and confident sensibility, and his deep respect for the laws of nature. In the years that followed, Rick spent time in the high desert of California and lakes and woods of the Adirondacks. His supplies were minimal, his tools efficient, his mind at peace. A selection of Rick’s stories, poems, and plays can be found at [www.RickFine.com](http://www.RickFine.com). Memorial gifts can be made in Rick’s name to NOLS ([www.nols.edu](http://www.nols.edu)), Friends of the Wissahickon ([www.fow.org](http://www.fow.org)), and Friends Select School ([www.friends-select.org](http://www.friends-select.org)).

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**Inspired Nomad**

Spencer Martel, AKX-1 06/25/2009

*I'm holding fast to an awkward misplaced feeling,  
squirming against a funny itch I can't possibly reach  
here*

*This love repudiates whatever materialistic fantasies I  
have ever entertained  
and questions my prior loyalties  
here*

*It's not that I don't unreservedly appreciate what wildness  
I encounter  
here*

*But there*

*Out there my mind will forever amble,  
traipsing with caribou across brilliant tundra,  
prowling among devil's thorn in the lush rain forest,  
scrambling up mountains alongside shaggy goats,  
conquering sinister peaks, spiring out of the clouds,  
scaling ridgelines littered with chasms.*

*And it's beautiful.  
These regal summits, saddles mirroring the spines of  
emaciated cats.  
And it's slick with black lichen.  
Stay on the black lichen, these rocks don't move.  
And it's a terrifying sound.  
The ominous movement of rock you painfully try to  
balance on,  
grating, angrily biting the neighboring rock just below it.  
And I'm convinced mountains are merely molehills,*

*atop which perfectly positioned and barely grown  
together boulders  
obdurate in their will to follow gravity.  
Down.  
And I wish to climb higher.*

*And the movement goes on.  
Flowing down lush mountains in the pristine waterfalls  
of melting glacier ice.  
And they are leaving, calving, receding.  
Cracking and submerging and surging onto the black  
gravel beaches.  
I celebrate you in the prime of your life, when you are  
barely hanging on,  
at your bowled and aretted deathbed.*

*The frozen throbbing swathed in saturated gloves  
and the stinging sensation in my right knee  
are easily forgotten in this panoramic moment of  
clothes-lining mountains salted with the last pinch of snow.*

*Out there my mind will eternally tread in the currents,  
being swept to and from rock beaches by the daily tides.  
I want to be at the bottom of the fathomless depths  
where the wildest of things are.*

*I have found my comfort in the uncomfortable.  
I am here.  
My mind is there. As is my heart.*

*And there is no place like home.*

Spencer Virginia Martel is currently a senior at the College of Charleston, South Carolina. AKX-1 was just the spark of an adventure she strives every day to keep alive and hopefully ignite in others. Have poetry, prose, verse, or art inspired by your NOLS experience? E-mail [theleader@nols.edu](mailto:theleader@nols.edu) to get it published in Traverses.


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**ALUMNI HAPPENINGS**

## Alumni Trips

If a month is too much to ask from the boss, the NOLS Alumni office offers shorter backcountry trips specifically designed for our working grads. We encourage you to bring family and friends along on these weeklong expeditions to reconnect with the school and introduce others to the NOLS experience. These trips have the same top-quality instructors, and though they aren't guided trips, we do cater a bit more to the desires and maturity levels of our participants. Customized trips are also available. Call NOLS Alumni at (800) 332-4280 or e-mail us at [alumni@nols.edu](mailto:alumni@nols.edu) to design your dream adventure.

### Rock Climbing at Arizona's Cochise Stronghold

FEBRUARY 26–MARCH 4, 2011

\$1,495

Cochise Stronghold is a granite climbing playground south of Tucson. To maximize climbing time, this trip is based in a rustic campground. Tailored for climbers of all experience levels, this seven-day camp focuses on skills—climbing techniques, knots, rope handling, belaying, anchors, protection placement, traditional and sport climbing systems, rappelling, and lead climbing theory. You'll also develop face and crack climbing skills and gain experience with multi-pitch climbing. Bring your camera to record your mad climbing skills, as well as the desert's unique sun-drenched beauty.

### Telemarking, Snowboarding & Avalanche Training in the Tetons

MARCH 6–11, 2011

\$1,295

Do you want to learn to telemark, improve your turns, ramp up your snowboard skills, or gain avalanche awareness? Well, here's your chance to enjoy a mix of lift-assisted skiing and some of the best winter backcountry terrain in the country! The Tetons in winter are home to the finest powder and most gorgeous mountain scenery that exists. Over the first four days, you'll be introduced to winter travel techniques and avalanche preparedness skills, and practice your turns at Grand Targhee Resort. Then, you'll spend two days in the backcountry staying for two nights in a yurt. It's the perfect combination of education and recreation!

### Horsepacking in Patagonia

MARCH 14–24, 2011

\$2,500

Patagonia has a vibrant horsepacking culture; it is a common form of transportation for many residents of the region. This trip will allow you to experience the Patagonian countryside by horse and interact with local *pobledores* (rural subsistence farmers), while practicing basic horsepacking skills. The scenic route travels along South America's second largest lake, Lago General Carrera. You will marvel at Patagonia's scenic beauty and enjoy rich cultural interactions on this unique trip.

### Keelboat Sailing in Tahiti

MARCH 19–26, 2011

\$2,175

The Islands of Tahiti are renowned as a stunning sailing Mecca with a warm and friendly culture. Tahiti's predictable winds will allow you to polish and improve your keelboat techniques over coral reefs. You will have a chance to explore secluded islands in this snorkeling paradise. Participants receive International Sail and Power Academy (ISPA) training and possibly Competent Crew or Day Skipper certification. This trip starts and ends on the Island of Raiatea.



Travis Christensen



Stephen Bringer

### Canyon Hiking in Utah

MARCH 28–APRIL 2, 2011

\$995

Southern Utah's Colorado Plateau is known for its rugged terrain and delicate beauty, with red and buff sandstone and green junipers adding color to the arid landscape. This trip traverses mesa tops with spectacular views in all directions, as well as labyrinthine canyons of deeply incised waterways. The trip reviews desert living and travel skills and the area's natural history and geology. There may be opportunities to view cultural artifacts tucked away in alcoves by the area's prehistoric Indian inhabitants.

### Keelboat Sailing & Captain Certification in the British Virgin Islands

MAY 22–29, 2011

\$1,975

Join alums and instructors on a weeklong sailing trip in the breathtaking British Virgin Islands aboard a three-cabin, 50-foot keelboat, where you will explore many cays and isles of the colorful Caribbean archipelago. Interested students can even shoot for ISPA's captain certification, a gateway to sailing privileges in more challenging and varying conditions. The English-speaking and UK-governed British Virgin Islands provide an unsurpassed sailing classroom with sheltered bays, scenic islands, and student-friendly winds. The trip begins and ends in Tortola.



Rich Brana

## NOLS is coming to your community!

That's right, we're organizing a series of NOLS alumni reunions for the spring of 2011. Reunions are a great way to connect with like-minded outdoor folks in your area, network with a great group of people, and reconnect with the school. Reunions feature slideshows, snacks, a raffle and NOLS-flavored camaraderie.

Spring reunions are being planned in **San Francisco, Boston, Denver, Bozeman, Seattle, Chicago, and Jackson, Wyoming.** Check [www.nols.edu/alumni](http://www.nols.edu/alumni) for updates or e-mail [alumni@nols.edu](mailto:alumni@nols.edu) to ask for details.



BRANCH NOTES

NOLS TETON VALLEY

- Funding from the Bonneville Environmental Foundation and Protect Our Winters will support solar power that will offset 30–35 percent of the power used by the base. Thirty-three panels are already in!
- Other improvements we’ve undertaken are insulating our attic and cellar spaces, retrofitting lights and fixtures throughout the building using rebates from local utilities that will offset costs, and commencing construction on a shade pavilion that will be a staging area during busy summer months.
- Our first-ever all girls two-week Adventure Course in the Lemhis was a huge success, providing the nine 14- to 15-year-olds with a unique social environment and great outcomes.
- The Operation Purple raft expedition for children of military family members stationed overseas had a blast floating the remote wilderness stretch of the Main Salmon for six days.
- In 2010, students and intown staff completed over 500 hours of local service projects, from trail work to volunteering for local nonprofits.

NOLS YUKON

- For the third year in a row, NOLS Yukon worked with Yukon College to provide leadership training to Japan’s Waseda University.
- Our sixth year of support from the Donner Canadian Foundation saw five Yukon locals and one

University of Northern British Columbia student receive scholarships to take NOLS Yukon courses.

- The Duke of Edinburgh program in Alberta sent six participants to NOLS Yukon to fulfill the Adventurous Journey section of their award, which they did on a new route through Tatshenshini/Alsek Park.
- We are proud to present Wooly Mammoth! Our new NOLSified school bus has single-handedly reduced our carbon footprint by a great deal by using more efficient diesel fuel and replacing the need for multiple vehicles to transport groups to the field.

NOLS ALASKA

- We are excited to be following the NOLS 45th anniversary celebration with one of our own as NOLS Alaska turns 40 in 2011. The NOLS Board of Trustees will hold their June meeting in Alaska as part of our summer-long celebration. If you have never visited the wilderness of Alaska, we invite you to come North and help us celebrate 40 years of NOLS courses in the Land of the Midnight Sun!
- We’re thrilled to be offering our alumni Denali Mountaineering course in June of 2011. We didn’t offer the climb in 2010, but still reached the summit with six climbers from the Indian Air Force, who have now reached six of the seven highest points in the world, with the last one to come later this year. Climbing Denali has been an important part of what we do each summer. NOLS is the longest serving mountaineering concessionaire on De-

nali, offering our first climb in the first year of our existence in 1971.

- We are offering a new Backpacking and Packrafting course in 2011 that we invite you to check out in the NOLS catalog or on the website. This course will be a fun and challenging way to expedition through mountains and on rivers in Alaska.



Happy 45th Anniversary, NOLS!

Alumni, Board and Advisory Council members, branch directors, friends, and current and former staff flocked to Lander for NOLS’ 45th anniversary. The festivities kicked off on Friday, October 8, with an informative State of the School address. The day continued in true NOLS fashion with a barbecue and live music by an alumni band, followed by a rousing golf tournament and the dedication of a new display at NOLS headquarters featuring a pair of NOLS wind pants that NASA astronaut and NOLS grad John Grunsfeld took into space! The merriment continued on Friday night with awards, dinner, and an inspiring and nostalgic keynote speech by Grunsfeld. On Saturday, October 9, early risers participated in a 5K fun run hosted by WMI (and won by a three-year-old!) followed by a Leadership Navigation Challenge hosted by NOLS Pro and a 13-mile bike ride. The weekend culminated in a tailgate party, dinner, the debut of the NOLS 45th Anniversary movie, more awards, a silent auction, and a night of dancing. Thank you to everyone who organized and attended this fabulous event, and we hope to see you soon—the 50th is right around the corner!

*If you would like merchandise featuring NOLS’ 45th Anniversary graphic, contact alumni@nols.edu.*

PHILANTHROPIC TIDBIT



Making a Difference

As the dust settles from our busy summer season, we are taking stock of the school’s successes and challenges and making plans for the future. Likewise, the year’s end is a time when many of you will reflect, plan, and assess your financial priorities—an excellent time to determine if NOLS will fit into your philanthropic goals this year, whether it is through annual or planned giving.

Participate in the NOLS Annual Fund

Donations to the NOLS Annual Fund help support scholarships, ensuring that deserving students are able to attend a course even if they can’t afford it on their own. The Annual Fund also supports curriculum development and research, as well as efforts to preserve our wilderness classrooms, all of which allow us to remain the leader in wilderness education. Make a secure online donation today at [www.nols.edu/eDonate](http://www.nols.edu/eDonate).

Join the NOLS Summit Team

The Summit Team is our recognition society for donors who include NOLS in their will or other long-term giving plans. Through their generous commitment of

current and future support, Summit Team members are creating a legacy that honors the wilderness experience. We would welcome the opportunity to speak with you and your advisors about this and other tax-smart ways to achieve your goals.

This 45th anniversary year is an important milestone at NOLS. By making a gift to NOLS today, you can celebrate our birthday and demonstrate your confidence in the school’s future.

Here’s to the next 45 years of the world’s best wilderness and leadership education! Visit [www.nols.edu/giving](http://www.nols.edu/giving) or e-mail us at [development@nols.edu](mailto:development@nols.edu) to learn more about your giving options.

Take a NOLS Semester Course!

A semester or year with NOLS: What better way to really immerse yourself in the wilderness, learn a variety of backcountry skills, become a steward of the wild places you love, grow as a leader, plus get college credit for it all? If you are a high school student thinking of taking a gap year, a college student taking a hiatus from life at your college campus, or an adult who simply wants a time-out between careers, the NOLS semester or year courses are for you.

A semester or academic year in the wilderness is uniquely NOLS. Spend several months—rather than just days or weeks—as part of an expedition. The result is that you experience being both a leader and an active follower, communication and conflict resolution become old hat, and you grow to be truly proficient in a variety of outdoor skills. You will return home changed. Semester courses are offered not only in several locations in the United States, but in spectacular destinations abroad as well, including the Yukon, Patagonia, India, Australia, and New Zealand. Or explore for a year in Patagonia or the Sonoran Desert of America’s Southwest and Mexico. Request a 2011 NOLS Course Catalog or visit us online for more details: [www.nols.edu](http://www.nols.edu) or (800) 710-NOLS (6657).

WILDERNESS QUIZ



Puerto Rico. (Question on page 5)

In December 2005, President Bush signed legislation designating 10,000 acres of Puerto Rico’s Caribbean National Forest (now El Yunque) as a unit of the National Wilderness Preservation System. Approximately 10,000 acres of the El Yunque National Forest have been designated as the El Toro Wilderness Area. El Toro is the only tropical wilderness area in the U.S. National Forest Service system. Located on the western side of the Luquillo Mountain Range, the area is the most accessible tropical wilderness in the world. The forest features the largest number of species of native trees (240) in the U.S. National Forest System and contains 50 varieties of orchids and more than 150 species of ferns.



**BELAY OFF**

# My Son Was A Hero That Day

## A Life-Saving Belay on the Bastille

BY MIKE OLDHAM, NOLS PARENT

**D**o you ever wonder how many of the skills taught on a NOLS course get put into practical use? Well, in our case, the “payback” was quick.

We encouraged our son Nick to attend a NOLS Rock Climbing course in 2008 for several reasons. We had always heard good feedback about NOLS and the positive impact a NOLS course can have on a young person’s life. We were most interested in Nick maturing and expanding his teamwork and leadership ability. But I was also interested in Nick developing safe climbing skills. I am 53 and have been a recreational climber for over 25 years, and in the last few years have found true joy in being able to go out and climb with my son. It was clear to me that Nick would soon be a much stronger and more aggressive climber than me, and that he needed good instruction in order to remain a safe climber.

What I didn’t anticipate was that the skills he learned on his NOLS Rock Climbing course would save my life less than two weeks after his return from Lander.

On a Sunday morning we planned an outing to El Dorado Canyon. We arrived early to get ahead of the weekend crowds and the threatening weather. Our goal was to climb an old favorite, the Bastille Crack, then bag another classic if the weather held. Because we were early, we had the crack to ourselves.

Nick took the first lead, stopping at the second belay station, where there is a good ledge to stand on and an old but solid fixed protection location to belay from. Nick was climbing better than I had ever seen. But as always, I had “butterflies” in my stomach watching him lead (there has always been an internal debate for me about teaching my son to climb—do the many positive aspects of climbing outweigh the risks?) Despite the slight reservation, I loved seeing him gracefully move up the steep classic crack. He looked down a couple of times with that big climber grin we get when every move is clicking and we feel invincible—“Yeah, I own this pitch.”

As I followed Nick’s lead, I was pleased that his protection was well-placed and had all stayed where he positioned it. I could tell the NOLS training had improved his protection placement skills. When I got to the belay point I was also satisfied to find Nick had not only clipped into the fixed protection, but had also backed up the piton with a solid nut on one side, a solid cam on the other side, and equal-

ized all three with a cordellete. Overall, the belay anchor looked good and I complimented Nick on a job well done. He looked relaxed and confident.

We discussed whether I would lead the next pitch or let Nick continue to lead. I remember feeling tired and thinking maybe I should just let Nick carry on leading. But in the back of my mind, I didn’t want my 16-year-old son to think his old man was losing his “mojo.” Anyway, after a little good-natured father-son banter, he passed me the rack and put me on belay.

I started up the next pitch and placed a good piece of protection about six or eight feet above Nick. Then I moved up the vertical crack another six or eight feet and placed a small tri-cam in a horizontal crack. I didn’t like the way the piece looked, but I already had my eye on another better placement another few feet up, so I didn’t take the time to readjust, replace, or back up the piece. I climbed another short section of the crack, struggling a little, but still focused on getting a good piece in, as I was now 15 to 20 feet above Nick. As I was trying to place the new piece, I was struggling to keep my left foot sticking on a good-sized but down-sloping ledge. “You can’t fall,” I told myself. “That last piece did not look very good.”

The last thing I remember before falling was yelling down to Nick, “Watch me!” He responded, “Don’t worry, I’ve got you, Dad.”

On Nick’s NOLS course, his instructors told him to “fall like a cat” when taking a lead fall. Well, apparently, I didn’t fall like a cat. I must have come off the rock very awkwardly because the next thing I remember is regaining consciousness while lying upside down on the slab ten feet below the belay ledge. I was facing straight down, so the ground 160 feet below looked a long way down. I thought, “So this is what it is like to take a long lead fall.” What happened was that the top piece—the last one that didn’t look good—did not hold, but the first piece held. The result was that I fell past Nick, who was standing on the belay ledge, and hit the deck after a 25- to 30-foot drop. Nick told me that he had yanked in a handful of rope as I popped off and braced himself, according to his NOLS instruction. Fortunately, we had appropriate safety gear and were both wearing helmets. In fact, during the fall my helmet took a hard impact that certainly would have been devastating to me had I not been wearing it.

Despite being yanked while catching my fall, and nervous at seeing me hanging upside down, unconscious and bleeding from head and arm wounds, Nick didn’t panic. He kept himself safe, and then he helped me get upright and safely back to the belay ledge where he tied me in securely.

Step one was complete, but we were still a long way from the ground and I was obviously injured. Nick administered some basic first aid. We knew

**To say I am proud of Nick would be an understatement. His calmness, training, and determination saved the day (and our lives).**

that my arm was broken and I had been unconscious, but we felt I was lucid enough to rappel down using another climber’s rope with a back-up belay on our rope. I put a good effort into the rappel using my uninjured right hand, but effectively, Nick lowered me 165 feet to the waiting ambulance.

To say I am proud of Nick would be an understatement. His calmness, training, and determination saved the day (and our lives). The outcome would have been much worse if Nick had not remembered his NOLS training, set up his belay properly, or braced himself for the impact. Without Nick, it would have been a fatal accident.

Nick was a hero that day, but credit also goes to Boulder climbing guide Jack Roberts, who had helped train Nick, Nick’s NOLS instructors, and other climbers who have taught us safety skills.

Over the next week, I underwent four surgeries (which is a new record for me), but I expect a full recovery from all injuries and will be skiing this winter and doing some easy climbing next summer.

I hope this story is encouraging to the organizational leadership and course leaders of NOLS. Nick’s NOLS training made a big difference on that day and will serve Nick well in the future.

**Above:** Mike (left) and Nick (right) Oldham, tired but happy after completing a route. **Background:** A climber on the first pitch of a climb on the iconic Bastille Tower, in Colorado’s El Dorado Canyon.