

# The Arête

Volume 41, Summer 2014

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Clear blue skies, white granite and ridge traverses; it must be Summer in the High Sierra. Cheyne Lempe gets it done on the Matthes Crest Traverse, Tuolumne Meadows, CA. IMAGES JERMAH WATT



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## The Arête

*"The big question is whether you are going to be able to say a hearty yes to your adventure"*

—Joseph Campbell

**Editor-in-Chief:** Shaun King

**Managing Editor:** Kyle Martin Jones

**Editorial Consultants:** Mary Clayton, Peter Tucker, Marc Piché

## Editorial Policy

The Arête attempts to print every submission that is believed to be of interest to the ACMG membership. This includes items that challenge the Association to examine its actions or direction. Articles that contain insulting or defamatory sections will be edited to remove those sections or not published at all. Technical articles are subject to review by the Technical Committee.

## Article submissions and advertising information

Submission guidelines outlined on the ACMG members website.  
Submit articles and ads to [news@acmg.ca](mailto:news@acmg.ca)

Cover photo: Kris Irwin on the first ascent of Powered by Beans.  
Photo: Darren Vonk

# President's Perspective

By Marc Ledwidge



Every year, the arrival of ACMG membership invoices makes me reflect on the benefits of membership. I expect most of you consider this as well. Given the strength of our membership, I can only assume that being part of the association that represents our profession and its various disciplines is important to each and every one of us. For those who are certified and have chosen not to join the ACMG, or for those who have decided to drop their membership, I trust it was a carefully considered decision not just based on saving a few dollars. When you operate professionally, there is a great deal of benefit to having an organization such as the ACMG standing up for you in so many ways. I am well aware though that the total cost of permits, insurance etc. is significant. Given this, why would I go out on a limb and suggest that ACMG members may want to consider more dues? I am referring to membership in the Canadian Avalanche Association (CAA).

I just received my "Past Due" invoice for my CAA Professional Membership. I have to admit that I procrastinated, but in the end, I realized that if I am to work professionally in the avalanche patch, I had better walk the talk. I need, and want, to be a member of the Association that is recognized as representing professional avalanche work in Canada. One of the key benefits of CAA membership for me is being able to network with other avalanche professionals. Those contacts and the resources that our sister organization provides are an important part of my personal continuing professional development. A good example is the excellent informative report that Troy Leahy provided this winter on their incident with explosives at Revelstoke Mountain Resort.

If you have read this far, you know where I am headed. I would encourage all ACMG members who work in the avalanche industry, and who are not currently members of the CAA, to apply for membership. To quote Phil Hein about 20 years ago, "What is it with guides, most of them show up for the ACMG meetings but hardly any of them show up for the CAA meetings! I mean it's not like they don't deal with avalanches..." Many ACMG members do deal with avalanche issues, on a daily basis, and not just in the winter. If you're one of them, give some strong consideration to joining, or rejoining, the CAA. It's worth it.

Have a great summer!

*Marc Ledwidge is the ACMG President from Banff, AB.*

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# Tucker Talk

By Peter Tucker



This past winter, the high snowfall and bizarre melt-freeze cycles caused significant ice damming on the north-facing portion of our roof. It lay 10-20 cm thick in places and was causing some water leakage into the house. With little hesitation, I knew I had the tool for the job. Down to the basement I went to dust off none other than the best dinner-plating, poor placement ice axe ever built - the Terrordactyl. Within minutes, the ice was flying in huge chips and massive chunks to the point where my wife Debbie couldn't even stand below to hold the ladder for fear of concussion. During the two hour whacking frenzy, however, aside from clearing kilograms of ice, I also managed to put a few holes in the eavestrough. Nothing like fixing one problem only to create another. So, after the snow melted, I contacted a gutter company to come and replace the mangled portions of my roofline aqueduct. So how does this relate to the price of chalk in Sweden? Bear with me.

My initial contact with the tradesperson was civil enough. Would he come and give me a quote? Certainly!

"When do you think you can come out?"

"Oh, I have another job in Bragg Creek, so I'll be there next week."

"Can you be a bit more specific so I know when to be home?"

"I'll call you before I come out."

My second contact was a little less warm. "I'm just following up to see whether you still plan to come out to give me a quote."

"Yes, I'll be there next week."

"That's what you said last week."

"Look it's my busy season, so I'll get out there as soon as I can."

"Don't bother, I'll find someone else who wants the work."

"OK, I'll be there tomorrow."

"What time?"

"I'll call you..."

During my tenure as Executive Director, I've been party to a number of discussions that have raised the question, "Are mountain guiding and climbing instruction trades or professions?" This most recently arose again during the Informalex discussion around the Mt Norquay variance. Trades have unions and associations that strictly represent the interests of their members. They get involved in wage talks and battle hard for individual rights and benefits. Professions have associations that represent the industry as a whole to the broader world. By demonstrating that their members hold the interest of the public foremost, they encourage that public to seek out the services of those holding the required qualifications. While the definitions of a trade and a profession overlap, there is a clear distinction. Professions often arise from trades as they develop formalized qualifications, education, apprenticeship and the ability to discipline practitioners. Professions are characterized by having such things as a professional association, a cognitive base, institutionalized training, licensing, work autonomy, colleague control, a code of conduct etc.

Perhaps the activities of the ACMG and its members used to be closer to those of a trade, but not any longer. Everything about how we operate now defines us as a profession. Picture the scenario where your relationship with a client followed a similar pattern to the one I had with the gutter guy. Client calls guide on his mobile: "Hi, it's 4 AM and I'm here at the Columbia Icefields Centre with my gear as you told me. Skyladder looks in great shape. Where are you?"

Guide: "Oh, I'm on my way to Robson to guide the Emperor Face. Couldn't pass up the chance."

Client: "\*#&\$@\*^!!"

Now, I know that many of you also do work in a trade as carpenters, cabinet makers or other such vocations and I don't mean to imply that all tradespeople act in this way, as many are meticulous in their customer service. Both they and professionals have the opportunity to act "professionally" or not. But for the latter group, at least there is a body that is able to hold the professional accountable for his/her actions and behaviour. For the former, your best option is to try someone else. Anyone know a good eavestrough company?

Have a great summer!

*Peter Tucker is the ACMG Executive Director from Bragg Creek, AB.*

# Canadian Mountain and Ski Guide Program Update

By Dwayne Congdon

## Thanks

The CMSG Program thanks the following individuals and organizations for their operational support over the past winter season.

### Ski Guide Certificate

Charlie Lock

Lake Louise Ski Resort

Mustang Powder Lodge

Whistler Heli-Skiing

Whistler Blackcomb Ski Resort

Selkirk Tangiers Heli-Skiing

Great Canadian Heli-Skiing

### Climbing Instructor Program

The Rock Oasis (Toronto, ON)

Boulderz Climbing Centre (Toronto, ON)

Mount Royal University Climbing Centre (Calgary, AB)

Elevation Place (Canmore, AB)

University of Alberta Climbing Wall (Edmonton, AB)

Boulders Climbing Gym (Saanich, BC)

Kenn Borek Centre Climbing Wall (Dawson Creek, BC)

OVERhang Climbing Gym (Prince George, BC)

## Exam Pass Rates

Pass rates are posted here to allow ACMG members to monitor how effectively the CMSG program is preparing candidates to meet ACMG standards.

Apprentice Ski Guide	23 of 27 passed	85%
Ski Guide	25 of 37 passed	66%
Top Rope Climbing Instructor	16 of 16 passed	100%
Climbing Gym Instructor 1	48 of 55 passed	87%
Climbing Gym Instructor 2	11 of 11 passed	100%

## Appeals

Brad Cooke appealed his 2013 Rock Guide exam evaluation. The appeal committee decision is to have Brad redo two of his exam assignments; marks from these two assignments will determine his final exam result.

## Claire Dixon & Cornelius Brenninkmeyer Award

Friends and family of Claire Dixon and Cornelius Brenninkmeyer created an endowment in memory of Claire and Cornelius who died in a snow caving accident in January, 2007. Cornelius was a student in the Ski Guide Certificate.

The endowment is administered by Thompson Rivers University and income from the endowment is awarded to a student who has completed the training component of the Ski Guide Certificate. The award criteria are:

1. Leadership and people skills - chosen student will have phenomenal people skills and the ability to lead and inspire others.
2. Level of skill - student has demonstrated excellent skills and preparation throughout their ski guide training.
3. Safety skills - student has demonstrated excellent attention to safety during their ski guide training.

The 2014 recipient of this award is Jesse Milner. Congratulations Jesse!

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## New CMSG Instructors

Recent additions to the CMSG instructor pool include:

Dan Madell (Ski Guide): As of 2014 instructing in the Ski Guide certificate.

Mike Stuart (Mountain Guide): As of 2014 instructing in the Rock and Alpine Guide certificates.

Jeff Relph (Mountain Guide): As of 2013 instructing in the Ski Guide certificate.

Sarah Hueniken (Alpine Guide): As of 2013 instructing in the Rock Guide and Top Rope Climbing Instructor certificates.

Jasmin Caton (Rock Guide and Ski Guide): As of 2013 in the Rock Guide and Top Rope Climbing Instructor certificates.

Felix Camire (Hiking Guide and Ski Guide): As of 2013 in the Hiking Guide certificate.

Matt Reynolds (Mountain Guide): As of 2013 in the Hiking Guide certificate.

Mark Bender (Ski Guide): As of 2012 in the Ski Guide certificate.

Scott McKay (CGI 3): As of 2012 in the Climbing Gym Instructor Program.

Lloyd King (CGI 3): As of 2012 in the Climbing Gym Instructor Program.

Prior to instructing on a CMSG course potential instructors submit a professional resume; are interviewed by a selection panel and observe at least one course. New instructors must also demonstrate currency with guide applications and movement standards and attend a "Giving Effective Feedback" workshop.

## CMSG Instructor Positions

ACMG members interested in becoming CMSG instructors are welcome to submit resumes at any time. Note that we are actively seeking instructors for the following programs and regions:

Hiking Guide Certificate (Whistler region, Golden, Quebec)

Climbing Gym Instructor (Toronto and Vancouver region)

Ski Guide Certificate (Whistler region)

For more information contact [dcongdon@tru.ca](mailto:dcongdon@tru.ca)

## Québec Hiking Guide Course

Thanks to financial support provided by the ACMG a hiking guide course will be conducted in the Chic Choc Mountains of Québec from June 21-29. The nine day course will conclude with a 4 day exam conducted at the Hiking Guide standard. This format is offered on a limited bases to applicants with significant guiding experience.

If there proves to be sufficient Eastern interest the Assistant Hiking Guide course and Hiking Guide exam will be regularly offered at appropriate Eastern venues. Eventually a team of Québec based instructors will be developed to reduce travel costs.

## CMSG Program Review

As reported in the last issue of the ACMG News (Winter 2014) the CMSG and ACMG are jointly conducting an audit of each guiding certificate.

The goal of the audit is to ensure that each certificate:

- Is consistent with the ACMG Scope of Practice
- Meets industry needs
- Is up to date with current guiding practice and technical standards
- Is delivered in a manner that is as efficient and cost effective as possible

The Rock and Alpine certificates were reviewed in September 2013 and recommendations were published in the last issue of the ACMG News.

An audit of the Ski Guide certificate is scheduled for September 2014 and recommendations will be published in the Winter 2015 issue of *The Arête*.

*Dwayne Congdon is a Mountain Guide and coordinator of the CMSG Program at Thompson Rivers University in Kamloops, BC.*

# Technical Director's Report

By Marc Piché

The technical committee continues to work on numerous ongoing projects as well as a few new ones. The majority of the committee's time over the winter was spent processing some challenging applications for membership reinstatement and a couple of variance requests.

## TechFiles

Chris Miller and I have put some time into the TechFiles project over the winter. A few video sessions were done and a few documents and videos are nearly ready for review. I am working on developing an effective process to get the documents reviewed without creating too much workload for those involved. The focus has been directed towards materials necessary for teaching some of the more introductory courses including Guide Training Rock and some courses in the Climbing Instructor Program. We would like to thank Scott McKay and Elevation Place climbing gym for their support in providing us with a venue for filming.

## Winter Travel Accreditation

Since we were not able to get an accreditation course organized for last fall through the Canadian Mountain & Ski Guide Program, we extended the timeline for members in the hiking guide stream to apply using the existing requirements. Quite a number of members took advantage of this window and applied for accreditation this winter. I will work with Dwayne Congdon, the technical committee and instructors from the hiking program in order to create a course before next fall.

## Variances

Although the ACMG has been granting variances for quite some time, the process was not formalized until the creation of the most recent Scope of Practice. As was made evident by the discussions on the Informalex this spring there are some aspects that require work and clarification. The ACMG has made significant progress in terms of self-regulating governance in recent years and along with these gains comes a backlog of administrative details that often do not come to light until the system is being tested. After some long and productive discussions at the spring BOD meeting, a more clear way forward has been determined for this process. We will communicate these changes to the membership once they have been formalized.

## Apprentice Guide Timelines

I have worked with the admin team on a system for tracking timelines for apprentice guides. The system is in place now and is being used by Linda Heywood and Peter Tucker to ensure that we know when people need to challenge their next exams. The goal will be to send out automatic emails to Apprentice Guides one year prior to their "due date" as a reminder to keep them on track. There was an influx of applicants to the ski guide program this year in anticipation of the first official due date in 2015.

\*\*\*Reminder - If you have taken an apprentice exam since January 1st 2012 and have not yet challenged the certificate (full) exam in that stream, you are required to do so within three years of the date of your Apprentice exam. For example- if you completed the Apprentice Ski Guide exam in the spring of 2012, you must have challenged the Ski Guide exam by the spring of 2015. Please contact the ACMG with any questions or concerns.

## Canadian Avalanche Association

The ACMG has fielded numerous complaints about ACMG members working outside of their Scope of Practice while working as instructors on the CAA Industry Training Program. This has resulted in a long discussion between the two organizations and some progress towards solutions has been made. The CAA has taken this and the issues raised around the delivery of AST 2 programs very seriously and is working hard at finding some resolution. A significant step towards finding a solution has been made in the striking of a committee that will work on determining terrain competencies of CAA professional members. Myself and some other ACMG members are on this committee and the findings will likely also have an effect on the ITP training program and the CAA Scope of Practice as it evolves.

## Continuing Professional Development

Alison Dakin is working hard at achieving our new CPD goals and has planned a great event for June 24 & 25 in Golden. The membership CPD survey has given us plenty to work with in the next few years and I think we should be able to sustain some momentum.

## Russian Mountain Guides Association

This project is ongoing and will be for a few years yet. Keith Reid and Mark Klassen were scheduled to put on a ski mountaineering course and apprentice exam this spring however the exam portion was cancelled ahead of time due to reports of low snowpack in the area. Alternative locations were discussed but were logistically too hard to achieve. At this point due to funding issues there will be no further courses until 2015.

---

## **IFMGA Risk Management Committee**

As the chair of this committee I have been working with Arc'teryx to create a modern international version of the Mountain Conditions Report and Informalex that would be web and app based. We will be discussing the possibility of switching the ACMG system to this platform in early June. The committee is also working on an initiative to encourage guides to communicate more readily and slightly more formally while working in European huts.

## **International Federation of Mountain Guides Association**

With help from Jorg Wilz and the Swiss Mountain Guides Association we clarified and sent out two messages to ACMG members about a change in guiding regulations in Switzerland.

There is an initiative within the IFMGA to encourage more instructor exchanges in an effort to spread ideas and best practices. The ACMG and American Mountain Guides Association have committed to having at least one exchange in each 'direction' in the next year. I have also been invited to observe on a French course prior to the IFMGA meeting next spring. This initiative is timely considering the CMSG program review project is ongoing and there is potential for positive influence from other countries. Please see the "IFMGA Meetings Report" elsewhere in this edition for an update on the 2014 IFMGA Meetings that Marc Ledwidge and I attended in Obergurgl, Austria this spring.

## **International Snow Science Workshop 2014**

The ACMG has been actively involved in the planning of several 'Practitioner Panel' discussions for the 2014 ISSW in Banff. The goal is to raise the relevance of the ISSW for practitioners and I think this will be a significant step in the right direction. Have a look at this link for details - ISSW Practitioner Workshops

## **Membership Reinstatements**

The trend of membership reinstatements for people who have been non-members for a number of years continues. It seems that most of these people have been active in the industry and now their employers are requiring them to be members. This is a positive trend for our association and its respective industries.

## **Scope of Practice Infractions**

Peter Tucker and I continue to proactively deal with all known SoP infractions. Most are minor and require only an email or a phone call to clarify.

Here are examples of some issues we have worked on recently:

The ACMG had received numerous informal complaints regarding a long time Apprentice Ski Guide who was running his own company with insufficient supervision. These complaints also included issues relating to summer work outside of the person's scope of practice. When contacted, the member was not able to provide documentation of proper supervision and the named supervising guide refused to engage in the discussion. After lengthy discussion, the member was given the options of: A) Upgrading their certification B) Acquiring adequate, documented supervision and only working within their SoP or C) Resigning from the ACMG. The member chose to resign from the ACMG.

The ACMG has fielded numerous complaints about Apprentice Ski Guides working with remote supervision while guiding the classic Wapta traverse in winter. In all cases, both the supervising guide and apprentice guide were contacted and asked to present their case for determining the appropriateness of this decision. They have also been directed to the supervision document of the scope of practice where there is some clarification around the limitations of the scope of practice for apprentice guides working in committing situations for prolonged periods of time where there is potential for complex decision making in avalanche terrain and avalanche conditions. It is widely regarded that guiding this traverse, and particularly the section between the Balfour and Scott Duncan huts should not be guided by apprentice guides in remote supervision situations.

## **Work Safe British Columbia – Part 34, Rope Access**

We have continued to work with WSBC to further refine this draft regulation. In the last few months they introduced a significant change to include ACMG "certification" as a requirement rather than ACMG training or equivalent for all guiding and instructional activities that fall under part 34. This is a very serious and legal endorsement by WSBC. The public hearing for this draft regulation will be held early this summer.

## **Canadian Mountain & Ski Guide Program Audit**

This project is ongoing with a review of the Ski Guide Program scheduled over two days in early September.

*Marc Piché, a Mountain Guide and the ACMG Technical Director lives in Canmore, AB.*



# IFMGA Meetings Report – Obergurgl, Austria

By Marc Ledwidge

The 2014 IFMGA Meetings were attended by ACMG President Marc Ledwidge and Technical Director Marc Piché.

## IFMGA Board of Directors

The board structure is changing in order to allow two members from outside of the five founding nations.

## Technical Commission

Marc Piché updated the group on the risk management initiative of the Technical Commission. This includes introducing the concept of informal evening guides meetings in the huts of the Alps. This would include a discussion on current conditions and/or unusual events. Arc'teryx and the ACMG are jointly working on a new APP that will be a modern version of an information exchange for guides, as well as a conditions report for the public. It is still under development but the launch is hoped for this fall. Initially, it will only be Canada and the USA but hopefully this will evolve to include other IFMGA countries. Arc'teryx is a partner of the ACMG as well as the IFMGA.

## Instructor / Examiner Exchange Program

Discussions have begun over an exchange program in which course instructor / examiners would attend the instructor training and candidate training courses of other IFMGA countries. Concerns focussed on consistency in training standards, travel costs, and language issues. Nonetheless, attempts will be made to make this happen and the ACMG should support this.

## Status of New Applicant Countries

Kirgizstan: After attendance by Hans Bergmann and Kurt Walde on initial courses, it was determined that candidates currently do not meet ski or climbing standards in order to be considered by the IFMGA

Romania: They have indicated that they are interested in joining the IFMGA.

Georgia: They are working with a German/Georgian IFMGA guide to gain admission into the IFMGA. It is expected it will be many years before they are ready to submit an application.

Russia: The Russian Mountain Guides Association (RMGA) working with the ACMG is in its third year of training. It is hoped that within four to five years, the RMGA, could successfully submit an application for admission into the IFMGA.

## Continuing Professional Development

A day long CPD on guiding for high altitude expeditions and trekking was coordinated and presented by Walter Zörer of Austria. The board has committed to continuing with future CPDs. Participation is available to any IFMGA guides. Normally, the IFMGA does not provide CPDs but they are working to change this.

## European Identity Card

Peter Cliff of the British Mountain Guides Association has been working with the European Union (EU) on the issuance of a European Identity Card for Mountain Guides. This card would facilitate movement across the EU for specified professions. The criteria for acceptance are:

1. There is significant mobility within the profession
2. There is a clear interest in the profession
3. The profession is regulated in a significant number of Member States.

Initially, the professions that will be considered are doctors, nurses, engineers and mountain guides.

It is unclear whether multinationals residing outside the EU would be eligible such as ACMG members with both Canadian and EU nationality. However, the country of residency would likely need to be an EU country.

*Marc Ledwidge is the ACMG President from Banff, AB.*

# Awards and Scholarships Reminder

Your awards committee would like to remind you that the nomination and application deadlines for several awards and scholarships are rapidly approaching.

Applications for course subsidies of up to \$1500 through the D'Arcy McRae and Arc'teryx scholarships are due by August 1, full application details can be found on the members site under the 'Our Members' tab. These awards are often under applied for - so get your applications in if you've got training or exam courses coming up!

Nomination forms for both the Honorary Member and Distinguished Service awards are also located under the 'Our Members' tab on the website and have deadlines of July 31 and August 30 respectively. If you know an outstanding member that you feel is deserving of special recognition please take the time to nominate them for one of these awards.

Have a great summer,  
Your awards committee  
awards\_comm@acmg.ca

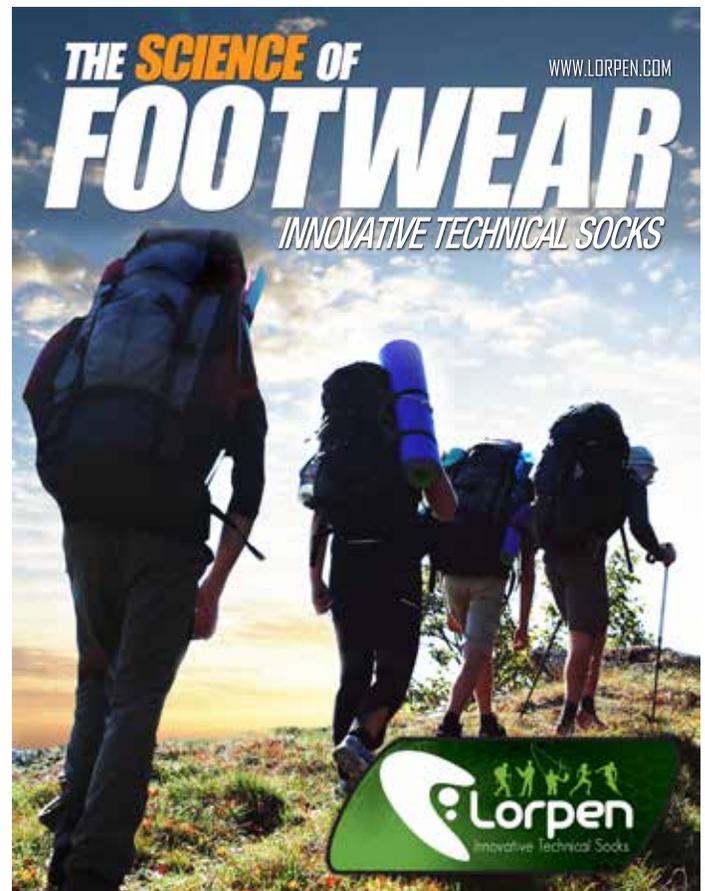


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# International Snow Science Workshop

By Mary Clayton

The International Snow Science Workshop is the premiere gathering of avalanche safety and research professionals from around the world, and an excellent opportunity for ACMG guides to expand their networks and gain valuable professional development. From September 28 through October 3, 2014, 1000 delegates will gather at the Banff Centre for what promises to be the biggest and best ISSW yet.

The ISSW was born in Banff in 1976 when, for the first time, 120 delegates came together to network and share knowledge on snow science and practical avalanche forecasting. The biennial conference returned to Banff again in 1996, when 478 delegates gathered for the 10th ISSW. Since then, attendance at the conference has grown steadily and we expect close to 1000 delegate to converge in Banff for the 21st ISSW.

The ISSW is a unique opportunity to connect with hundreds of your peers and colleagues, many of them from other countries. The long-standing theme of the conference is 'A Merging of Theory and Practice' and this year's conference will have a renewed focus on practitioners. Presentations from researchers and scientists are required to include a slide on the practical application of their work, while practitioners are encouraged to discuss how research could contribute to the management of their topic. These requirements are aimed to make the pure-science presentations more accessible and facilitate a better exchange between scientists and practitioners.

A new concept this year is Practitioner Workshops, where a panel of experts will engage with the audience in a moderated discussion on topics affecting their workplace. Organized by the ACMG, the topic of each workshop promises to yield a stimulating and thought-provoking exchange of ideas:

- Avalanche Safety Equipment for Ice and Alpine Climbing—Not if but how?
- Training, Certification, Qualification and Scope of Practice—Who is qualified to do what?
- Does Compaction Work? —How, when, why and why not?
- Avalanche Research—What has science done for us?

The workshops will be held from 10:15—11:45 on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. For more information, check out [issw2014.com/workshops](http://issw2014.com/workshops).

There's plenty of fun planned too. There's a 'Welcome to Canada' party on Sunday night, sponsored by the Canadian Avalanche Association, at the Banff Ave Brewing Company. On Monday night, TAS is sponsoring a movie night at Wild Bill's, with highlights from the Banff Mountain Film Fest. Diva Night is Tuesday at the Aurora—the premiere event for women in the avalanche patch. Men are welcome after 9:00 for an evening of dancing. On Wednesday, there's Whiskey and Words at the Whyte featuring Chic Scott and Brad White, which promises to be an evening to remember. The conference banquet will be Thursday evening, with Chris Stethem as the keynote speaker. And Friday is when all the volunteers get to put their feet up and raise a glass (or two) at the Volunteer Appreciation party at the Bear Street tavern.

After the daily presentations there will be a great opportunity to connect over drinks at the Snowpack Summary socials. Wednesdays have traditionally been dedicated to field trips and the organizers have gone all out in arranging some great activities for the delegates. There will be tours of the avalanche programs at Parks Canada, Lake Louise, Sunshine and Norquay (which will also include a tour of their new via ferrata). There's horseback tours, mountain biking and golf—a perfect round-up of quintessential Bow Valley fun.

ISSW is for you. Don't miss this opportunity to further your knowledge and deepen your engagement with the wider community of avalanche professionals. Registration is open now and there are some great deals on accommodation. The best one is on-site at the Banff Centre, where a double room can be booked for \$62.50 CAD each, based on double accommodation—but don't wait as this block of rooms will sell out early.

ISSW sponsors play an important role in the success of the conference and this year's Title Sponsors are TAS and Arc'teryx. In addition, the following companies have already signed on with greatly appreciated support:

Wyssen Avalanche Control

Black Diamond/Pieps

CIL/Orion

TECTERRA

Osprey

Mammut

Backcountry Access

There's still room for more sponsors. If you're interested, email [sponsorship@issw2014.com](mailto:sponsorship@issw2014.com). There will also be a trade show and anyone wanting a booth should check the website at [issw2014.com](http://issw2014.com). And be sure to check out our Facebook page (International Snow Science Workshop 2014) as it's growing every day. See you in Banff in September!

*Mary Clayton is the Communications Director for the Canadian Avalanche Centre from Revelstoke, BC.*

# Divas Night at ISSW

By Anna Brown

If you are attending the ISSW this fall the evening session with the Avalanche Divas may be of interest to you. All are welcome even if you are unable to attend the full workshop.

A gathering of female snow and avalanche professionals from around the world, come honour and celebrate with the ISSW Avalanche Divas!

Come to the Aurora Bar in downtown Banff on Tuesday night to meet other women in the avalanche industry and help us celebrate colleagues who have made significant contributions to the community. A night of tapas, wine, dancing, great stories and SWAG. The fun starts at 7 pm and once the dancing begins, we'll let the guys join in!

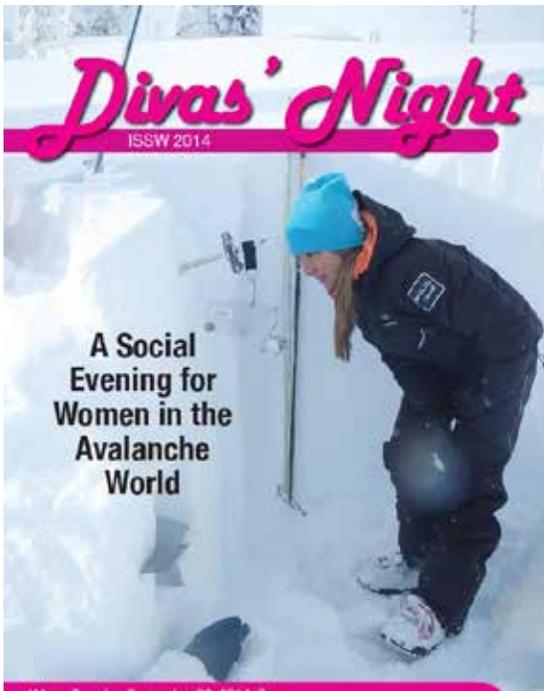
Notable women in snow science will be honoured at the event and nominations may be sent to Emily Grady: [egrady@avalanche.ca](mailto:egrady@avalanche.ca)

There is also a travel grant available through the Divas for women presenting at the ISSW. Follow the link on this page to apply: <http://issw2014.com/diva-night/>

Cora Shea Fund Memorial Fund

The Cora Shea Memorial Fund has been established to provide modest financial assistance to women seeking to do avalanche research and/or study towards advanced avalanche practice. We have missed this year's May 31st deadline for applications, but perhaps you are cooking up a good project for the future-see this link for more info: <http://www.avalanche.ca/caf/programs/cora-shea-memorial-fund>

*Anna Brown is a Ski Guide from Canmore, AB.*



**Divas' Night**  
ISSW 2014

**A Social Evening for Women in the Avalanche World**

When: Tuesday, September 30, 2014, 7pm  
Where: Aurora Nightclub, 110 Banff Ave., Banff  
Tickets: \$15.75 gets you tapas, drinks, music, great stories and swag!  
Tickets may be purchased using the ISSW registration process or the phone, or call banks to order tickets 2014@gmail.com

Come meet other women in the avalanche industry and celebrate colleagues who have made significant contributions to our community.

For more information:  
[issw2014.com/diva-night](http://issw2014.com/diva-night)  
[avalanchedivas.blogspot.ca](http://avalanchedivas.blogspot.ca)  
AvalancheDivas

## Seriously?

Nico Favresse eyeballs another on-coming wave of foul weather while Sean Villanueva lashes himself to the rigging during the first ascent of the South Pillar of Kyzyl Asker. The team spent 15 days on the wall navigating heavy storms, -15°C temps, and "a whole bunch of fantastic rock."

See the video, hear the babble, watch the send. [patagonia.com/chinajam](http://patagonia.com/chinajam)

PHOTO: EVRARD WENDENBAUM

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patagonia

# ACMG and Sea to Sky Gondola Access Policy

By Jayson Faulkner

Association of Canadian Mountain Guides/Sea to Sky Gondola Program - We are pleased to announce our new policy to provide free access to our gondola service to ACMG member guides. We want to support and promote guiding for our guests and for the outdoor community in the Sea to Sky corridor as well as providing a service to promote outdoor activities. Given the very high standards of the ACMG and our wish to encourage responsible backcountry use, we would like to extend the following program for ACMG Member guides.

We offer gondola privileges ONLY to guides that are members in good and current standing with the ACMG. They must be able to produce their current/valid membership card. All guides who wish to access this program must submit a letter/email to [jaysonfaulkner@seatoskygondola.com](mailto:jaysonfaulkner@seatoskygondola.com) with a copy of their current/valid ACMG membership.

Each Guide must sign in at Guest Services for each visit. They must register in advance in order to be part of this program. DO NOT wait until your first visit and expect to get lift privileges, as you will be denied access unless you are registered and approved. The information required at sign in is as follows- Date, name of guide, destination, type of activity, number of clients.

No other discounts for the guides or their guests apply unless noted in their file. Clients will pay full ticket window rate or they can purchase tickets in advance online to receive a discount – go to <https://onlinesales.seatoskygondola.com/DAYTICKETS/tabid/56/Default.aspx>. If a guide is expecting to bring larger groups to the gondola, they may qualify for group discount rates for their clients.

Approved guides may use the lift privileges for “non-working” visits as well, but still must sign in each time unless we have made prior approved arrangements.

NOTE: We reserve the right to revoke privileges at any time.

Hours of operation – 09:00 – 17:00 daily

Sunset Hours – 09:00 – 21:00 FRI, SAT and SUN (hours may change depending upon seasonality)

Last download – 1 hour after LAST upload time (eg. 18:00 daily)

\*Special arrangements may be made for earlier access to gondola eg. 08:00 upload. Contact for more information.

-Jayson Faulkner, Sea to Sky Gondola Corporation

## ACMG News Gets New Name

Thank you to all those who sent in recommendations for a new name for our association’s newsletter! We were looking for something that would be short and catchy and cross all certification streams. Ideally even bilingual. In our new name contest we offered free entry into one series of CPD sessions and some free schwag procured by our Partnership Coordinator, Ken Bélanger. Here is just a sample of some of the great recommendations:

*The Sharp End - a publication of the ACMG* by Ian Tomm

*The Focal Point* by Murray Toft

*The Approach* by Jeff Macpherson

*The Guiding Light* by John Gow

And the winner is... The Arête.

This recommendation actually came from our Executive Director Peter Tucker. I know what you’re thinking, but hey it was really the only name that met all our criteria and Peter has agreed to forego the prizes just to show you that his only interests are in what’s best for the association! I think you’ll find that it is a great name that will grow on you, if it hasn’t already.

You will also notice that The Arête is now printed on 100% recycled paper and has a colour cover! These changes are to increase our image of professionalism, which reflects all the recent motions of the association and is well received by our partners and advertisers. We have also added bio photos for regular contributors so you can easily recognize the folks that work hard behind the scene to keep the association on track.

The Board of Directors has also made a commitment to open the distribution of this publication to the public via the website and other avenues. This is another movement towards professionalism and transparency that will increase our profile and help better establish guiding and instruction among the greater population. If you have any stories, trip reports, gear reviews, member profiles or anything that you feel would be of benefit to other members and / or the greater public, please send in your submissions to [news@acmg.ca](mailto:news@acmg.ca) by Nov. 1 for the winter edition.



*Shaun King, a Mountain Guide and The Arête Editor, is from Canmore, AB.*

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# ACMG Permit News

By Janet Miller

Why has it taken so long to receive the 2014-2015 permit labels this year? Did the permit confirmation emails get sent yet? What is happening with your permit order?

First of all, let me reassure everyone that the ACMG permit program is healthy. Judging by the steadily increasing member participation in the program it is very healthy, although the volume of work at permit renewal time is increasing along with it. But this is achieving a goal, if it means that members are guiding independently on these permits, running their small businesses and successfully working in western Canada as guides.

The biggest challenge of the permit year is the March-April time period, when one permit year ends and a new permit year begins. The slate is literally wiped clean and filled in again, creating a tsunami-like workload. Our liability insurance also renews at this time, which is of critical importance to the permit program since all the permits require it.

While the March-April period is the most intense time, the work on both insurance and permit renewals begins far in advance. This year, I tried a new system to deal with the volume of permit orders and started using it in January with the help of colleagues Linda Heywood and Elaine Powers. Unanticipated problems arose however and by March, Peter Tucker joined the data entry team to help out. In addition to the renewal tasks, other day-to-day permit work still had to get done. And I had vacation time with my husband, which didn't help the situation but was necessary for us.

Bit by bit, the renewal work got done with land managers; the labels continue to be sent out now to members and the confirmation emails will follow shortly. If members have placed permit orders and haven't heard anything back, they will be receiving an email notifying them of their waitlist status soon.

It is now early June and this isn't the "best practices" model for permit renewals. I will be working with ACMG colleagues to see where we can improve our delivery of this crucial service to members. This late delivery is unacceptable.

Thank you to members who contacted me or Peter about pending work dates since April 1. We were able to provide a letter for them to carry while guiding in lieu of permit labels. I hope that provided everyone with what they needed for work and prevented members from working without documentation, or turning down work.

I offer my sincere apologies to members who have been inconvenienced by the delay in their permit renewal this year.



*Janet Miller is the ACMG Permit Manager from Canmore, AB.*

## Spotlight on ACMG Members

With the hundreds of members we have in our association it is no surprise that some of them are doing some pretty incredible things. "Spotlight on ACMG Members" is a new, recurring section in *The Arête* designed specifically to showcase our members and the interesting things they are doing.

If you have a story to share about a fellow member or members that we should be proud of, please contact the Editor-in-Chief of *The Arête*, Shaun King at [news@acmg.ca](mailto:news@acmg.ca) by November 1, 2014 for the winter edition of *The Arête*.

### Ice Climbing at the Olympics

By Jen Olson

*In the Winter 2014 ACMG Newsletter we showcased Mountain Guide Jen Olson who was going to Sochi to represent Canada in Ice Climbing as a Cultural Event. She was able to fundraise \$20,000 to help pay for her travel in an extensive series of World Cup competitions along with the Olympic Games. Here is her first hand account.*

I was in Sochi, Russia at the Winter Olympics from Feb. 14 - 24, 2014 with Canadians Gordon MacArthur and Nathan Kutcher and several other athletes from all over the world. The countries that were represented by ice climbing athletes were: Russia, Canada, USA, Japan, Ukraine, Switzerland, Germany, France, UK, and Iran. The Venue in the Olympic Park, Coastal Cluster was sponsored by a major Russian Bank called Sberbank. There were three interactive stations/exhibits:

1. A place for learning knots, signing your name in a guest registry and taking your photo in front of rugged mountains using ski or snowboard props.
2. A 60ft high tower with refrigeration and frozen ice on 3 of the 4 sides. These panels were insulated with a foam curtain if the sun was directly on the panel. Amazingly, despite +20 to 30°C temperatures, the ice wall was open almost every day for the public to try ice climbing. Hundreds of people each day, lined up to give it a swing.

3. A demonstration by the athletes of their physical prowess climbing overhanging wood panels onto dangling "ice cubes".

Everyday we would meet with the public and talk about our sport of ice climbing, belay at the ice wall and take a lap or two on the ice cubes.



Jen rolls "snake eyes" at Sochi. Photo Nathan Kutcher



Jen shows her Olympic spirit. Photo Alexey Dengin

Spectators were really excited by seeing and experiencing ice climbing.

A big highlight of attending the Olympics was connecting with the other athletes. The Russians were open and friendly; we spent more time getting to know each other than we do at the World Cups where the stress and intensity of the competition prevails. I was especially inspired by Zohre and Masoud from Iran. They have improved so much despite coming from a country with not much ice.

We were filmed by CBC and CTV, as well as NBC and many other countries' networks.

I then flew to Ufa, Russia for my final World Cup competition. I came 12th in the competition and 11th in the overall World Cup rankings. My high ranking was due to my ability to compete in 5/6 of the competitions which was made possible by the generous donations I received during my fundraising campaign. I am grateful to have been able to pursue this passion over the past six months (training, fundraising and competing). I am also especially grateful to have promoted the sport of ice climbing.

During my time in Sochi, I came to my own realization about what the Olympics mean. The Olympics in the media appear only to exist for economic reasons. In my opinion, the most valuable (and rarely discussed) benefit of the Olympics, not unlike religion, is to inspire, create and guide people's lives. These sports give individuals and their families and friends purpose and meaning to their lives. Olympic sports create not only excellence in humans in the physical realm, but in a spiritual and social way of life, as well. They provide a structure by which many of these families can contribute to society and connect.

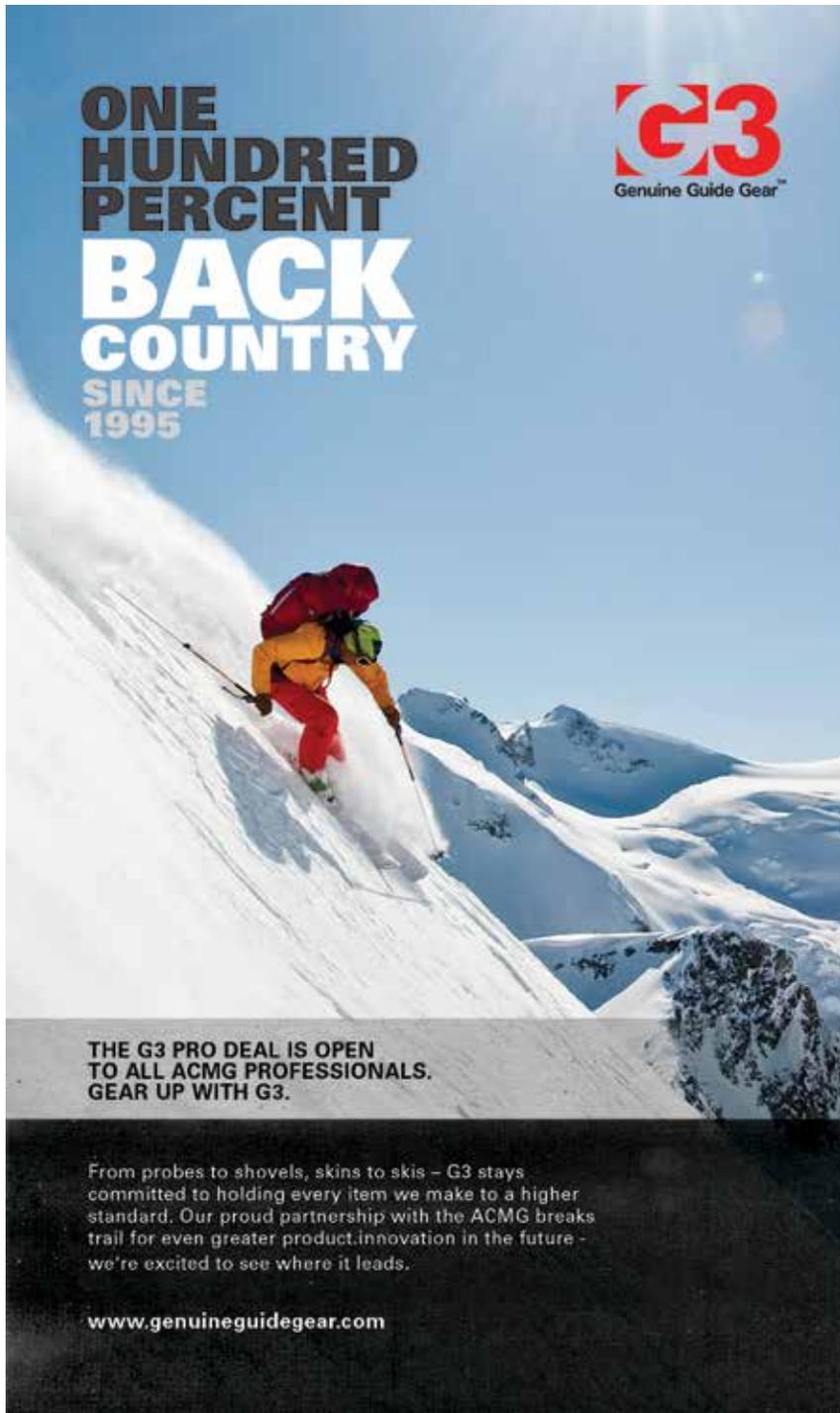
It's unfortunate that we measure the value of the Olympics only by dollar figures instead of individual and community well being. There was a lot of support at these Olympics for "X-Games" type sports like slopestyle and snowboarding so it doesn't seem so far fetched that ice climbing could be the next addition.

The cool thing about competition ice climbing is that we can create the structures in the middle of big cities like Manhattan or Toronto. The spectators love watching the excitement.

The process for adding a new sport to the Olympics is really unclear. There are no longer demonstration sports that may ultimately become Olympic events, only cultural events like this one. In competition ice climbing, both Russia and Korea are big supporters of the sport.

The next winter Olympics, 2018 will be in PyeongChang Korea.

*Jen Olson is a Mountain Guide from Canmore, AB.*



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## ACMG Members Win Silver in Québec Tourism Grand Prix

Attitude Montagne is a Québec based outdoor climbing centre located in the Laurentian Mountains less than an hour away from Montreal. Among their staff include President and Founder Dominic Asselin (ACMG Rock Guide) and Operations Assistants Bjarne Baek (TRCI, CGII and AHG) and Ghislain Allard (ARG).

On May 13 Attitude Montagne was honoured to receive the Silver Laureate in the “Grand Prix du Tourisme Québécois 2014”. The Grand Prix is an annual competition hosted by Tourisme Québec in which excellence through innovation within the industry is rewarded. Eighteen categories are recognized. Attitude Montagne was awarded Silver in the “Eco Tourism and Adventure Tourism” category.

Attitude Montagne is proud to offer guiding experiences at the quality standards of the ACMG and feels that this new recognition gives them the push needed to persevere in raising awareness of our association in Québec.

We applaud their efforts and congratulate our members out east for this award and for representing our association with pride!



From left to right: Bjarne Baek, Dominic Asselin, and Ghislain Allard. Photo Attitude Montagne

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# Inspiring News from the Stewart-Pattersons

Robert Stewart-Patterson (Climbing Gym Instructor 1) placed 22nd in speed climbing at the Kia World Extreme Games in Shanghai, China. He also competed in a Speed Climbing World Cup in Chongqing China. He placed 18th and has a current World Cup ranking of 22nd.



Robert Stewart-Patterson in Chongqing China

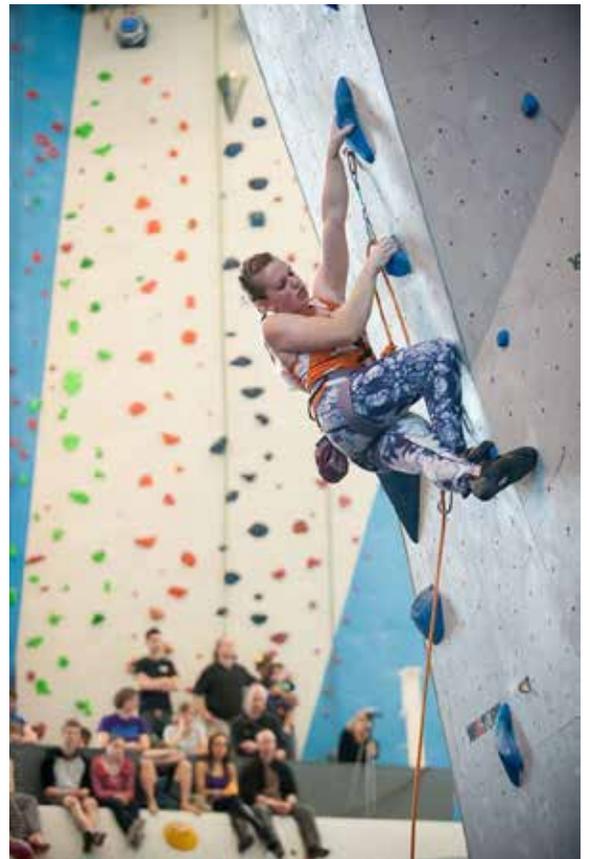
Alison Stewart-Patterson (Climbing Gym Instructor 2) competed at the Canadian National Climbing Championship in Montreal. She won a Gold medal in Women's Open Speed Climbing and a Bronze medal in Women's Open Difficulty Climbing.

Iain Stewart-Patterson (Mountain Guide) completed his PhD through the University of Edinburgh. His dissertation topic was "The role of intuition in the decision process of expert ski guides". Tremendous thanks go out to the 25 ACMG members and 10 CSGA members that participated in the research.

Iain joins a small and prestigious group of IFMGA mountains guides that have also earned doctorates including: Werner Munter SUI, Dave Hopkins GBR, Andy Cave GBR, Rusty Baillie GBR/USA, Thomas Exner GER, Peter Schatzl AUT, Leif Magnussen NOR, Alain Duclos FRA, and Carl Lundberg SWE.

Iain will return to Edinburgh for his graduation ceremony on July 4.

Congratulation to the entire Stewart-Patterson family for some impressive results!



Alison Stewart-Patterson at Nationals in Montreal

## Spotlight on ACMG members

In an effort to introduce our exceptional members to the readership, we have started a new segment in which we will profile a different ACMG member in each newsletter. If you would like to recommend an ACMG member to profile in the next newsletter please contact us at [news@acmg.ca](mailto:news@acmg.ca) - Ed

# ACMG Member Profile – Jordy Shepherd

For those of you who don't know him (or know only one of his guises), Jordy Shepherd is a man of many hats. Most of us have our hands full just getting our ticket and putting it to use. This 42 year old Mountain Guide / Board Member / Realtor / Firefighter / Consultant / Father has already packed two lifetimes worth of experience into his few years and seems to pull off juggling a dizzying workload without dropping the balls. We interviewed him to find out how he does it.



*What was the inspiration that drove you to become a guide?*

My grandfather was a National Park Warden, from the 1950's through to 1978. He retired as the Chief Park Warden of Yoho National Park. He worked with Walter Perren, the first mountain guide that Parks Canada hired to train Park Wardens in mountain rescue, and his stories always fascinated me. My grandfather, Hal Shepherd, told me that the mandate of the Warden Service was to "Protect the parks from the people, and the people from the parks". My father was a member of the Canadian Alpine Ski Team, and helped me develop an appreciation for the outdoors and being in the alpine. I grew up doing family backcountry trips into the national parks. I completed a B.Sc. in Natural Resource Management to allow me to apply for a position with the National Park Warden Service. Shortly after starting with Parks Canada I decided to enter the CMSG program for both personal and professional development, with a goal of becoming a public safety specialist.

*When did you finish your last exam and how would you describe your experience going through the exam process?*

My final exam was the full alpine program, in summer 2005, starting in the Rockies and finishing in heavy snow in the Bugaboos. I really enjoyed the exam process (or maybe I mostly enjoy being done the exam process). Either way, I think that there are few training programs in the world that demand so much mental, physical and emotional commitment. One of my brothers finished a M.Sc. at about the same time

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Photo // Forest Woodward  
ACMG Member Sarah Hueniken

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that I completed the CMSG program. He told me enthusiastically that he had finished his science masters and I had finished my mountain masters. I simply replied back, "It's a Mountain Ph.D., bro."

I was fortunate to have Rudi Kranabitter as an examiner on most of my courses. He is an inspiration, and a great person, mentor and mountain guide, with an awesome sense of humour. On a ski exam in the Monashees I recall leading a couple of other candidates and Rudi across a very narrow fin of ice and snow that bridged a serac field. In the whiteness of the storm it seemed to be the only way through. Rudi stopped in the middle of the narrow bridge, looked down both sides, took a picture, smiled, and said "Pretty scary, huh?" I was sure I had failed. Fortunately, the next day another exam group chose to cross the same bridge, in perfectly clear conditions, as it was truly the only way through the jumbled seracs.

On an apprentice alpine training week, after climbing Mount Ishbel in Banff Park with Rudi, we were debriefing back at the truck after a long, hot day of short-roping across a narrow ridge of loose dinner plates stacked on edge. One of the candidates had a new pair of high end mountaineering boots that had given him very large, oozing blisters. Rudi simply said "I had a pair of boots that gave me blisters. I threw them away."

I really appreciate being mentored by a number of other guides, and many non-guides, some of whom worked for Parks Canada and some who didn't. Several years after finishing the courses I worked as an instructor/examiner on an apprentice ski exam, and really enjoyed it. I hope to do more of that work in the future. It is amazing being part of an association with such rich history, with the ACMG being highly respected by other guide associations around the world.

*What jobs / roles / positions have you had over the years since joining the ACMG?*

I have worked as a national Park Warden in Kootenay, Banff, Yoho, Jasper, Revelstoke and Glacier National Parks, which involved being a generalist, with specialties in mountain training and rescue, wildlife/human conflict management, wildfire management, law enforcement, backcountry patrolling, and resource management. I have also managed operations for a helicopter skiing company near Revelstoke, worked as a guide for several other helicopter skiing companies, instructed for the TRU Adventure Studies program, and have shovelled a lot of snow. I also worked for a large safety and rescue company as an instructor and trainer, and as a regional manager in Alberta and Saskatchewan. We conducted Occupational Health & Safety training in both mountain and industrial environments - rope access, SAR training, fall protection training, confined space rescue, Incident Command training, high angle rescue, training structural firefighters, developing OH&S plans for companies...

*Can you detail the various jobs / positions that you currently hold and how much time you spend on each (per week or month) ?*

I am currently an independent mountain guide and consultant, based in Canmore. I am also a licensed Realtor, and a mountain and industrial rescue specialist/consultant. In addition I serve as an on-call firefighter with Canmore Fire-Rescue. I volunteer with that Town of Canmore Heliport Monitoring Committee and as the Rockies Director on the ACMG Board of Directors. Most recently I have branched out into wildfire consulting, utilizing my 20 years of experience in wildfire management (rappel, hover-exit, parachuting-smoke jumping, and working on fire command teams in a variety of positions). I would say that I divide my time pretty equally between the various types of work, which keeps it diverse and interesting. For example, I spent six weeks in Hokkaido, Japan last winter, consulting and lead guiding for a new helicopter skiing company. The people, culture, food, snow and terrain were incredible. Go there. My real estate business is booming in Canmore, and I have a variety of consulting and guiding jobs lined up over the next several months.

*What is your secret to success for doing as much as you do and doing it all so well?*

I consider myself to be a jack of all trades, master of none. I enjoy the challenges of developing and maintaining a diverse set of skills. Much of the work I do has similar requirements: working with people, keeping people safe (physically or financially), solving problems, and facilitating amazing experiences for my clients. Guiding, real estate, instructing, and government employment are all service industries. When I am guiding I consider myself to be an Alpine Waiter: the product is important, but it is the service that keeps them coming back. I find that listening to what people want, being organized, utilizing administrative and operational systems, putting safety first and client experience a close second, following developed protocols, and embracing the use of databases are critical components to being successful in business and in today's fast paced culture. And of course I couldn't do all of this without the support of my amazing family. Stephen Leacock, a Canadian humourist said "I am a great believer in luck, and I find the harder I work, the more I have of it."

*What does your future hold in store?*

I don't know, and that's the exciting thing about life. I have been rifle hunting for several years, and recently purchased a compound bow, so I plan to spend quite a bit of time looking for large meaty things in the forest this fall. I find that hunting tests all of my backcountry skill set and knowledge, with the reward of providing food for my family. In the words of John Wayne: "Tomorrow is the most important thing in life. Comes into us at midnight very clean. It's perfect when it arrives and puts itself in our hands. It hopes we've learned something from yesterday."

Thanks for the chance to spew, and I look forward to reading about all of the other members of this fine association. Looking forward to seeing you all at the AGM in October, if not sooner!

*Jordy Shepherd is a Mountain Guide (among other things) from Canmore, AB*

# El Potrero Chico

Story and Photos by Shaun King



The limestone goodness of El Toro accounts for about half the climbing at El Potrero Chico

I believe it was the 1991 Masters of Stone video with American climbing ace Kurt Smith where I first learned of El Potrero Chico. It sounded like an incredible place with monster long sport routes on perfectly featured limestone in an idyllic setting that the masses had yet to discover. Smith was spending all his time down there in a chill Mexican casita while putting up hoards of classic new lines. The place had been on my bucket list ever since but it was only just last fall that I got the opportunity to check it out first hand. With a lifetime worth of easy access sport routes from 5.7 – 5.14 and multipitch lines up to 23 pitches, the “Little Coral” (English translation) did not disappoint.

## How to Get There

Flights to Monterrey, Mexico were reasonable and I liked the fact that I didn’t need to spend two days in transit each way and suffer jet lag crossing multiple time zones as I had done on previous trips to Thailand (as sweet as it is there). A morning flight out of Calgary followed by a 45 min. cab ride got us to the neighbouring town of Hidalgo in time for dinner. I booked the first night’s accommodation at La Posada and they provided a driver to pick us up from the airport for about \$50 US. La Posada is a little removed from the grocery store though so if I did it again I would ask the driver to stop for groceries on the way.

## Where to Stay

There are a number of options for accommodation at La Posada from camping to rooms to casitas and it seems to be the most popular venue among the climbers boasting a communal kitchen, internet and short walk to the climbing. There is a nice pool there too although in November the massive mountain of El Toro casts a shadow over Posada by about 3pm so it feels a little chilly after climbing.

The only gear store around is also at La Posada but expect to pay a premium. I forgot my headlamp for the evening walks into town and paid top dollar for the ancient relic they had in the store. Nice T-shirts there though.

Several other nearby accommodations like Homero’s, La Pagoda and others are also worth checking out at [www.potrerochico.org](http://www.potrerochico.org). We opted for a small but self contained casita at an excellent price (I believe we paid ~\$25/night for 2 weeks) at a place called El Chalet. They have 2 small casitas as well as a larger beautiful unit for a group of 4 or more. This is the only



El Chalet as seen from the Mota Wall

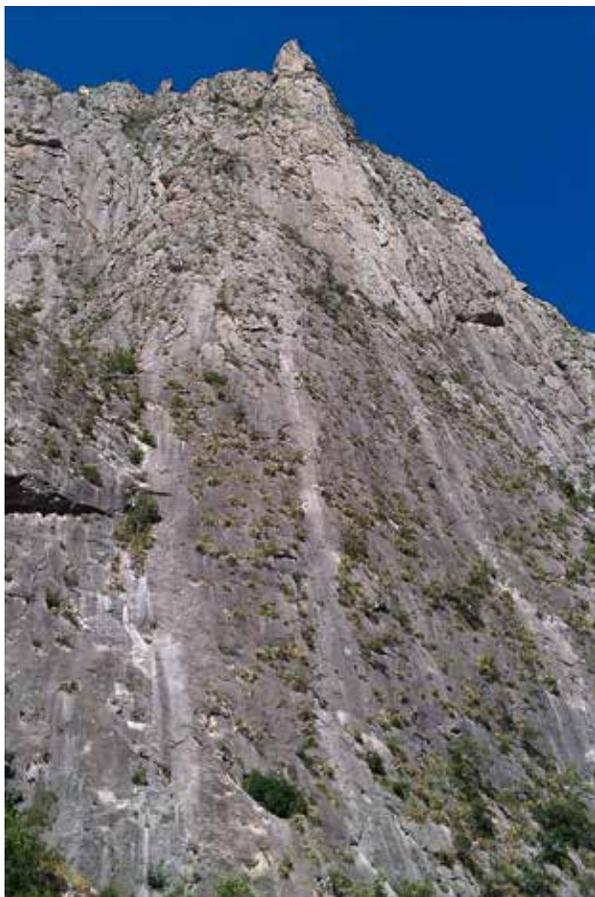
accommodation actually located in the park, on the north side of the range so it got sun later in the afternoon (they have a pool there too but it needed cleaning). This was a prime location for the climbing as everything was just minutes away. The owners Ariel & Celly (pronounced Chelly) were super nice and accommodating (they even had us to their house in Hidalgo for home made tortillas) but we had to speak a lot of Spanish. El Chalet is a half hour walk from town but there were bikes we could borrow.

## The Climbing

The high concentration of climbs in such a short distance here is staggering. The main highway which splits the Sierra San Miguel East and West has climbs on either side along with several canyons that host numerous others. Probably 90% of the climbs can be reached within a 15 min. walk from the road. The limestone is quite solid by Rockies standards and the pockets are fun, although the cactuses and other prickly plant life growing out of the porous rock threaten to scratch your bare legs and snag your rope which takes some getting used to.

The popular Mota Wall gets afternoon sun and has both single pitch climbs and a number of classic multipitch lines like Snot Girlz (7p, 10d), and Poncho Villa Rides Again (5p, 10c). The long impressive lines of Space Boyz (11p, 10d) and Yankee Clipper (15p, 12a) rise straight up from the west side of the main road and are deservedly popular.

For some outrageous climbing on steep tufas, pockets and cracks in the 5.11 – 5.13 range try the orange Outrage Wall about a 15min walk from the road. Lots of easier climbing in the 5.8-9 range can be found at the Mini Super Wall and up the Virgin Canyon. Loads of moderate crags abound as well with routes in the 1- 5 pitch range.



The classic lines of Yankee Clipper and Space Boyz



The author on the super fun "Snot Girlz"

One of the routes on my bucket list (that will have to wait until the next trip) is the 23 pitch "Time Wave Zero". The description reads "This is the one! 20+ pitches of moderate climbing with only 2 pitches of 5.11 and one pitch of 5.12 that is bolted close so you can French free this pitch and continue your summit push."

There are some real adventure climbs too if you want to bring a trad rack and tackle one of the ridges like Monster Truck (50p, 5.9X) however ~22 quickdraws and a 70m rope will get you through most of the routes here. The guide book is called "The Whole Enchilada" by Dane Bass and is packed full of great info on Mexico, Hidalgo and El Potrero.

## The Après Climbing

The town of Hidalgo is where the action happens here. It is about a 20 min. walk from most of the climbing accommodations but it is easy to hitch hike. The Mexicans are quite friendly but they roll a little different in this third world country. Expect drunk drivers, seatbeltless kids and 7 people in a 4 seater.

El Buho is an internet coffee shop and a great hang for climbers. Run by a super nice American couple (Kenny and Kelly Carpenter), this is a wonderful place to get quality java, check your email, play guitar and meet other climbers. Check out [facebook.com/elbuho](https://www.facebook.com/elbuho).

Milton Pena is a very personable local you should meet. On one cold rainy day he took us on a tour of town, the museum in Minas, a goat farm (which was cooler than it sounds) and then had us over for dinner. He only charged \$10/hr on the tour which was very reasonable for his wealth of local knowledge and excellent English. He also offers Spanish lessons and an airport pickup service which would be a great introduction to the area. Contact him at [milmiles22@hotmail.com](mailto:milmiles22@hotmail.com) or by phone 811-375-0831.

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Sarah Hart  
MEC Climbing Envoy

Andrew Querner, Squamish, BC



It wasn't all shirtless climbing in November – the author on "Dope Ninja"



The Bone Yard at the Goat Farm

There are lots of great eats around from street venders with authentic local foods. There is a flea market twice a week and a Tecate beer stand on literally every corner. Milton said the Mexicans like to drink (which they do), but I later heard the plethora of corner stores housing only a beer cooler and a rack of chip bags was for money laundering by the drug cartels. We were none the wiser. My favourite beverage stand was run by a friendly local named Yahir (Ya-here). For 50 pesos he would sell you a 1L bebidas made from premium fruit juices that hid the alcohol so well that you forgot about the weight of the groceries on your back during the stumble back to camp.



Yahir's drink list

*Shaun King, a Mountain Guide and The Arête Editor, is from Canmore, AB.*

# Abbot Pass Hut History

By Peter Fuhrmann



The Abbot Pass Hut. Photo Shaun King

The Abbot Pass Hut was originally built in 1922 by guides working for the Canadian Pacific Railway. In the late 1950's, the CPR phased out the guiding program and a number of building leases were returned to Parks Canada. Private enterprise picked up the Lake Agnes and Plain of Six Glaciers tea houses, but the Abbot Pass Hut was offered to the Alpine Club of Canada. At the time however, the ACC was unable to manage and maintain the hut.

By 1969 the hut had deteriorated to the point where the Superintendent of Banff National Park (upon the advice of his staff) decided to burn down the hut. The roof was leaking, water was running down the inside walls, and there was a large hole in the floor by the door. Floor boards and an interior door had been used as firewood!

When I asked how the demolition would be done, I was told that once the wooden structure had burned, the remaining stone walls would be sledge hammered. All that would remain at Abbot Pass would be a pile of rocks!

The cost of the demolition was to be \$6000 plus a reasonable amount for helicopter support. I asked the Supt.

if he would consider renovating the hut for the same cost.

He said that if renovations could be carried out within the \$6000 budget he would agree to it. Talking to Henning Sorenson, the Parks carpenter shop chief, he thought it would be a reasonable project. Materials were purchased, a crew selected and up we went.

To walk from the heli pad to the hut is just a few steps, but for the crew used to the valley bottom elevations of Banff, being dropped at nearly 10,000 feet with heavy loads on their backs turned out to be a problem.

Once all the materials were at the hut, construction started. One crew rebuilt the floor with fir flooring, while another re-shingled the roof. The Lake Oesa side of the hut was not a problem, but the Lake Louise side, which dropped off toward the glacier was a challenge. Henning (sitting in a Helicopter rescue seat) had to be belayed from the opposite side of the building in order to re-shingle that entire side.

The upper part was insulated and sheeted, the hut was cleaned and the crew returned to Banff.

Since then various volunteer groups have continued improvements at the hut. At the last meeting, presided over by the outgoing ACC president Ted Whalley, the Supt. of Banff Park, Jim Vollmershausen, had been invited. Jim recommended that the ACC take over Abbot Pass and all the Wapta Icefield huts. This was rejected by Ted on the grounds that the ACC was a mountaineering organization and not involved in the accommodation business.

When I later talked to Jim, his strategy was to let all the huts deteriorate to a point where they were unsafe and then have them removed. He had a National Park to run and could not afford to spend money on some mountain huts. He felt huts in alpine terrain were the responsibility of the ACC. Jim's decision was final.

In 1984 the ACC decided to run an experiment. They would take on the high use Abbot Pass Hut, and the low use Castle Mt. Hut and see what the results would be. ACC maintenance crews and volunteers joined forces as further improvements were made with positive results. When I discussed alpine huts with the German, Austrian and Italian Club managements their opinion was that an alpine nation must maintain hut systems for safety and educational reasons, even if it is no doubt a complex matter.

Now the Alpine Club manages a system of 25 alpine huts and is in the process to build the Des Poilus Hut, which will provide the missing link between the Bow and Stanley Mitchell Huts, thus completing the Bow-Yoho Traverse for winter ski touring.

Some time ago I attended a celebration at the Chateau Lake Louise, where the Abbot Pass Hut was declared a National Historic Site. Well it is nice to know that not only does the hut still stand, but it is used and appreciated by many. In fact the 2013 visitation number was 1060.

*Peter Fuhrmann is a Mountain Guide and Honorary ACMG Member from Canmore, AB.*

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# The Tale of the Trek

## How octogenarians Martin and Esther Kafer climbed Kilimanjaro, set a world record and found both hope and despair

Story and Photos by Susan Oakey-Baker



When I interviewed local mountaineers Martin and Esther Kafer for the 2012 annual fundraising hike up Mount Kilimanjaro for the Alzheimer Society of B.C., I did not question their years of experience in the mountains. For their engagement, they gifted each other a climbing rope. On their honeymoon in the Swiss Alps, Esther used the rope to save Martin's life when he lost his footing and fell over a ledge. Together, they've climbed and travelled all over the world. Sixty years later, they are still climbing together and have made over 70 first ascents of the British Columbia mountains.

However, I did question the risk of having Martin and Esther on the team. After all, Martin is 85 years old and Esther is 84. Although Kilimanjaro is a non-technical hike that is accessible to many people of varying age and ability, at 5,895 metres, the summit is considered extreme altitude.

Esther, standing at no more than five feet tall, with hands on her hips, confides in her strong Swiss accent (even after living in Canada for 58 years), "people are always asking us how old we are and saying how inspirational we are. We're used to it. But you know, we're just hiking and we've been hiking all of our lives. It's no big deal! And I am so lucky that I have never had a serious illness."

Martin adds, raising his bushy white eyebrows: "We're just two old fools trying to be young." Martin has two prosthetic hips.

After a team photo, a trip to the outhouse and lathering on sunscreen, I lead the team up the dusty trail of the Rongai route and look over my shoulder frequently as they take their first steps on Kilimanjaro. Pole, Pole. Slowly, slowly. I can feel the energy of the person behind me, almost stepping on my heels, willing me to go faster. Martin grins, "You know if Esther and I were hiking on our own, we would be going much faster." They must get used to this pace or they will be more susceptible to altitude sickness higher up.

That night, in the dining tent, while feasting on chicken, a heap of roast potatoes and other carbs that are good for acclimatization, I coach the team about how to stay warm at night. Esther and Martin negotiate the tent guy lines in the dark to get to the outhouse. Most chores take longer for them to do.

The next morning we see the summit cone of Kilimanjaro in all its splendor. We hike for almost ten hours to an elevation that is much higher than Mount Baker. Esther and Martin walk together, help each other to get snacks and water at rest stops and keenly tell stories of their

# Features

past adventures to their teammates. It is 7 p.m. and dark when we reach our second camp, Kikelewa Cave, at 3,675 metres. At dinner, several people eat much smaller portions, a sign of the altitude sickness. Esther says, "There's too much food. I don't eat this much. I don't want to get fat." Before they head to their tents, I warn them about periodic breathing. When asleep at altitude, a person can have very irregular breathing and then actually stop breathing for several seconds. This is not abnormal above 3,000 metres.

After our second night on the mountain, Esther and Martin stand dutifully in front of the video camera. "My name is Esther Kafer and I feel great. The porters are very helpful and call me Bibi because that means Grandma and they call Martin Babu because that means Grandpa."

"My name is Martin Kafer and I had a lousy sleep but I'm going on anyway." The team has agreed to video and photograph Esther and Martin at each camp and to document the trip in a specific logbook because Esther and Martin have applied to the Guinness Book Of World Records to be the oldest man and woman to summit Mount Kilimanjaro.

In five hours, we gain a ridge and descend slightly to Mawenzi Tarn at 4,302 metres, the only "lake" on the mountain. Mount Mawenzi towers above at 5,200 metres and fingers the sky with its jagged black rock. Martin falls back and steadies his digital SLR camera with his long,

bony fingers to take several shots. His breath comes in short puffs from the exertion of taking photos. "Beautiful," he says.

During the acclimatization day, we luxuriate in not having to pack up, have tea in bed, as usual, and hike pole pole up the North Corrie to a ridge of lava extending thousands of metres to the plains of Kenya. We are higher than Mount Rainier.

That afternoon, the team does a summit dress rehearsal. Burdened by layers of synthetic clothing, down and Gore-tex, they sweat in the sun and amble around the dusty basin like sumo wrestlers. On their chests, underneath several layers, bulge camelbacks of water rigged to stay in place so they won't freeze on the cold and dark summit night. I adjust some systems. Esther is dubious about the camelback.

"I don't drink very much. When we first began climbing in Switzerland, we weren't allowed to drink until we got to the top, so my body got used to it. And I prefer to drink from a water bottle." She makes a face at the camelback. I tell her that everyone I've taken to the summit has not had the energy to take out a water bottle and drink from it. The water must be easy to access and insulated so it doesn't freeze.

Martin appears in puffy down. He has had frostbite on his hands and feet before so I am careful to check his gear for the third time. I comment on their long down jackets with ample hoods made of a telltale rust-coloured nylon used in outdoor gear in the '60s.

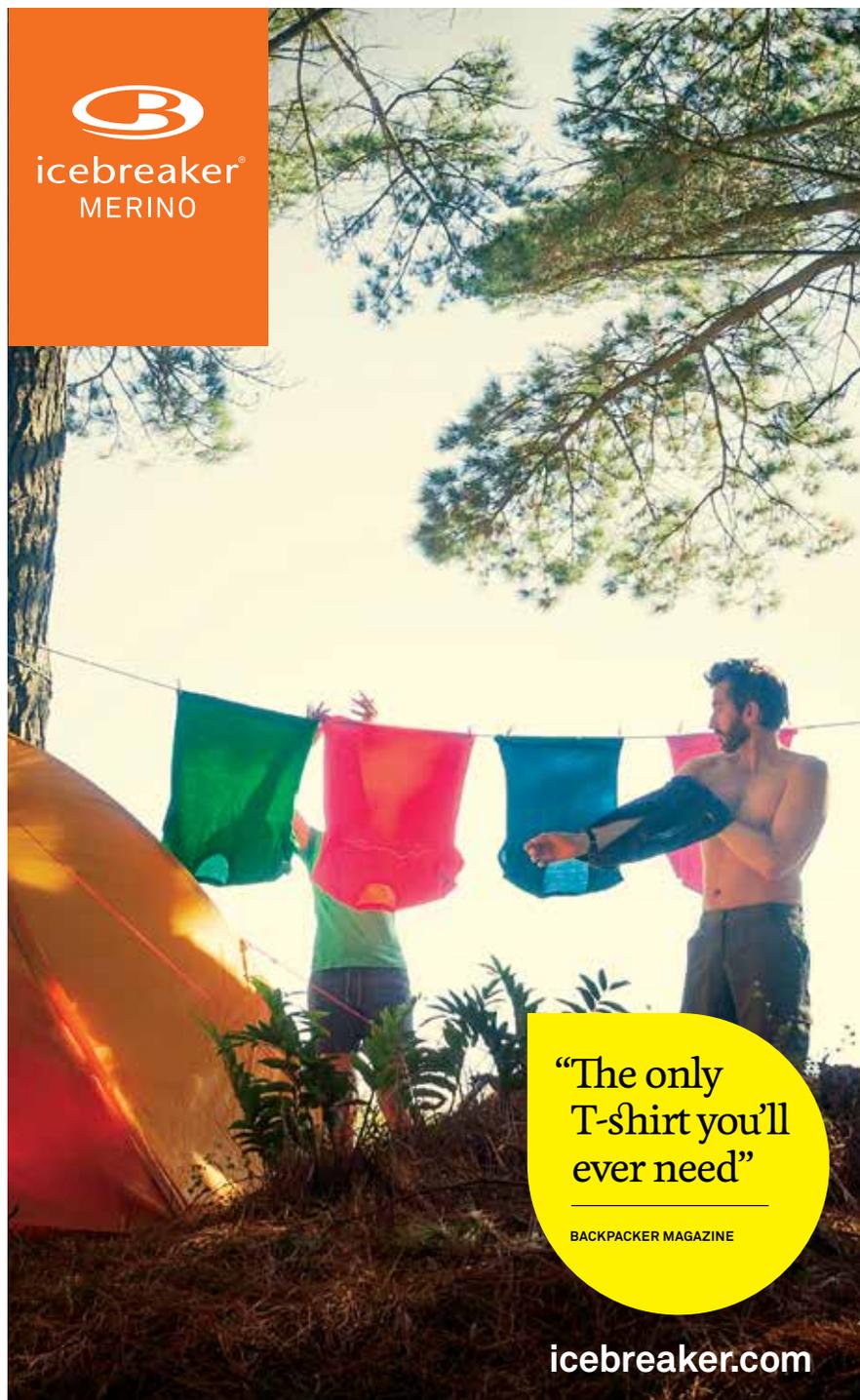
"Esther made these," says Martin. "We got very cold once, on an expedition. We had to bivvy. When we got home, she made these down jackets and our sleeping bags." He smiles at his wife.

"How long ago was that?" I sense the answer.

"1965." Martin's memory kicks in immediately.

"No way! They're older than me!" We all have a chuckle at their 47-year-old gear, but it seems in good shape apart from a few patches.

The group wants to know what summit night will be like. It will take 13 hours to go to the summit and back to high camp. We begin to hike at night so that we will be on the summit close to sunrise. How hard will it be? I don't know. It varies from person to person.



  
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**Martin and Esther Kafer leave camp for the summit.**

The next day we cross the barren saddle in six and a half hours and arrive at our high camp, Kibo Hut, at 4,714 metres, nestled at the base of the grey volcanic cone, which is Kibo. I point out the scree path that zigzags its way up the side of the mountain, getting steeper as it gets higher, until it reaches the crater rim. At 11 p.m. we will begin our push to the summit.

We spend the late afternoon packing daypacks for the summit. I circulate to answer questions. “Don’t forget your sunglasses and sunscreen. They’ll be the last thing on your mind at 11 tonight.”

At 10 p.m., my alarm rings. The team is due in the dining tent at 10:30 p.m. for tea. There are the usual delays. “I can’t find my gloves.” “My zipper is stuck.” “I need to go to the bathroom.” I find Esther and Martin in their tent trying to get on all of their layers. “It takes so long and we don’t want to keep people waiting,” Martin worries. Esther helps him to put his gloves on and I put on their water systems and zip up their jackets. Finally, standing bunched together in the tent like overstuffed Michelin men, pregnant with camelbacks, wrapped up in down, fleece and Gore-tex, I give my parting words.

“You have all done well preparing for tonight. But remember that altitude sickness plays no favourites. Try to take each step as it comes. Your job tonight is to ask for help when you need it. Offer help when you can. And try your best. I will look out for you, as will the boys. And finally, a wise mountaineer once said, ‘the summit is optional, descent is not.’ Let’s have a great hike.”

It is 11:30 p.m. when we trudge single file out of the rocky camp, headlights bobbing. The African crew spreads out along the line and chatters in Swahili to each other but our team is quiet. People concentrate on the pair of boots in front of them.

The night becomes a blur, the air gets colder and thinner. I watch the team to see who sways when we stop to rest. Martin has not slept well for several nights. After three and a half hours of plodding, we huddle in Hans Meyer Cave at 5,259 metres, half way to the crater rim. I make the rounds, shining my lamp indirectly at each person to see if their eyes are clear and focused on me. I ask them questions to hear how they articulate. I make sure their breathing recovers within a few minutes of stopping. I offer them water, hard candies and dried ginger. Some take Ibuprofen or Tylenol for a headache. Others take Graval or ginger for nausea. Some slump against each other on the frozen rocky ground like exhausted rag dolls. Some wear an expression of despair and helplessness. We continue. The trail gets steeper.

Martin lags and sits down to rest, head hung low and cheeks sunken. “I am so tired.” The boys begin to chant in deep melodic voices, “Babu, Babu, Babu.” We help him to his feet and he continues. A bit further on Esther stops. I crunch over close to her and ask how she is doing.

“Not very well,” she says. “I’m losing my balance.”

“Are you dizzy?” I ask

“Yes, a bit.”

Dizziness can be a symptom of acute mountain sickness. Esther is coherent and still walking steadily. She takes 125 mg of Diamox.

“Let’s reassess in 20 minutes.” I tell her and continue at a slower pace, although it hardly seems possible. She does not falter again.

Our line labours on connected by an invisible cord. The energy is heavy like a chain gang.

“The sun will be up soon, we can do it.” I call into the night. This is when I feel teary. I look at these people, hunched over, plodding,



**2012 Ascent For Alzheimer Team on the highest point in Africa. Uhuru Peak, Mount Kilimanjaro**

suffering for a common good. And then it happens. A yellowy glow rises behind us slowly lighting up the entire horizon. “Look guys, the sun is coming. Feel its energy. Draw it inside of you. We can do this.” Joseph gives us the gift of his tenor voice and sings the Tanzanian version of “Hallelujah.” We are so high that we can see the curvature of the Earth. People do not pick up the pace, but they do raise their heads. The snow crystals on the rocks shine. At 6:45 a.m., after more than seven hours of hiking, we top out onto the crater rim, Gillman’s Point, a rocky ledge that holds a dozen people and drops off a hundred feet to the inside of the crater which is 2.5 kilometres wide, with ice 40-metres thick in places.

I hug everyone and say, “Congratulations.”

When I get to Esther, she says, “I didn’t do very well.”

“What do you mean?”

“I was so slow.”

All I can do is laugh. “OK everyone, remember this is not the top. We’ll have a quick drink, put on sunglasses and sunscreen and then keep going to the top.” We are at 5,719 metres and I point around the crater rim to antlike objects, people at Uhuru Peak, the summit. It is only 176 metres higher and a few kilometres but will take us over two hours. We are at extreme altitude.

The views of Mawenzi, the four jumbled glaciers of the crater, the sun illuminating a blanket of cloud below us are spiritual. We are in the heavens.

“I don’t think I can take another step. I have to rest.” Martin is exhausted from the walking, the lack of sleep and the altitude. But he keeps going. Later, I ask Martin and Esther how they kept going.

“You always get to a point in the mountains when you are tired and don’t think you can go on, but from experience you know your body can do it.”

At 9:30 a.m., the whole 2012 Ascent team stands together in front of the green sign that says, “Congratulations! You are now at Uhuru Peak.” There are hugs and tears. Our moment of triumph.

Esther and Martin sit side by side in front of the sign and perform their most important monologue in front of the video camera.

“My name is Esther Kafer and I am so happy that I made it to the top of Africa.”

“My name is Martin Kafer and I am happy to have done the same as my dear wife, to whom I have been married for 59-and-a-half years and this is one of our peak experiences together.” He smiles and then I help him up.

We descend and, incredibly, after 12 hours of hiking at altitude, Martin and Esther run down the scree. Martin doesn’t think it is so surprising. “Our bodies, having done thousands of steps in the mountains, remember how to do it.”

For the next two days, we descend on the most popular Marangu route, a well-worn road surrounded by lush palm tree-like groundsel, giant lobelia, golden grasses and heather trees. Groups pass by us going the other way, on their way up the mountain. When they ask Esther and Martin if they made it to the summit, Esther says proudly with a smile, “Yes, I did and I’m 84.”

“And I did too and I am 85,” beams Martin.

“Are you happy you did it?” I ask.

“Oh yes. It had a very special purpose and we met so many great people.” Esther smiles.

“Yes, and engaging in a cause gives you that extra bit of satisfaction that makes it more than just climbing another mountain.” Martin’s blue eyes shine.

“Would you do it again?”

“No!” they say in unison.

“Esther wants to go rafting in the Northwest Territories or Alaska. So that will be our next adventure,” says Martin.

*Susan Oakey-Baker (SusanOakeyBaker.com) is an ACMG hiking guide, teacher, painter and writer and lives with her husband, Joe, and their son Sam in Whistler. Her first book “Finding Jim” was published in September 2013 by Rocky Mountain Books. She is currently working on a novel about Kilimanjaro.*

# Pterygium Eye Surgery

Story and photos by Sarah Heuniken



Weary guiding eyes after another -30C day

I noticed Fred had a lot of cousins in the eyes of many of my guide friends. Most of us walk around with blood shot eyes from dealing with the elements all day, and as the whites in our eyes (sclera) continually get hammered, they eventually build up extra tissue called pinguecula. It's only when this build up of tissue starts to invade the cornea, that you have invited Fred in for good. Once Fred is there, he won't leave. No matter what woo woo foods you eat, or spirits you pray to.

Here is a little guide to my experience with Pterygium surgery, and the outcome. I would have liked to have known some of this when making my decision to receive treatment so I write it in hopes that it helps some of you out there, or at the least, reinforces putting sunglasses on your kids and yourselves!

I visited a bunch of Optometrists. At first they all said it is normal, and would be cosmetic to remove. This would mean that health care wouldn't cover it and it would cost me \$5,000! I was given steroid prescription drops. They helped, but in the long run are not good for your eye to use too often. I was also told that surgery wasn't recommended as Fred could come back, and with me being a guide in the elements all the time, the chance of reoccurrence was great.

Finally, it was bugging me too much. I asked my family doctor to advise me to an eye specialist for another opinion. Eventually I saw him, and he agreed that the size and height of Fred was enough to see another specialist. I then saw a surgeon in Calgary. After a 2 hour wait in what

Life is full of bumps in the road. Mine, recently came in the form of a bump in my eye. What started as the irritating feeling of a speck of dust, soon became the constant annoyance of what felt like a blackfly stuck in my eye. I noticed it years ago and watched as it continued to dine on the sunshine and wind that us guides tend to find ourselves immersed in daily. I affectionately started to call it Fred.

In the beginning, Fred came and went without much consistency. One day red and irritated, giving me the "rough night before" sort of look, and the next day unnoticeable. As time went on though, Fred started to grow and become highly irritable. He required more attention. Daily doses of eye drops and eventually not just any eye drops but only the one shot, sterile, non preservative, expensive kind. He hated driving in the dark or long drives, computer time, getting up early and staying awake for long periods of time. Sometimes the only way to quiet him down was just to keep my eye shut, which was less than convenient most of the time!

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# Features

felt like a Stevie Wonder convention in a city in India, I had some tests done and was deemed a suitable candidate for surgery. Woohoo! I scheduled it for early spring when work would be over and I would have time to feel sorry for myself.

Lesson 1: DO NOT google Pterygium eye surgery. You tube is an evil place to learn about this and most people only write about their bad experiences! It almost had me bailing minutes before the surgery

Lesson 2: Expect to be the youngest in the surgery room. Cataract surgery is like getting your toenails clipped these days and that is the majority of the patients.

Lesson 3: You will be awake for the surgery with only anesthetic for the eyeball. I accepted the Atavan with reaching hands as I was terrified I would have a seizure when I saw the scalpel enter my eye. This proved useful, as you DO see the tools coming towards your eye, feel them slightly and smell the burning.



Before surgery



After surgery

Surgery only takes about 15 minutes. They cut out Fred, and then cut out a similar sized graft from the back of your eye that is normally covered by your eyelid. This graft then gets glued to the area that Fred existed in.

I was fortunate and didn't feel much pain afterward and slept like a baby until the next day when the patch was removed and my eye could be exposed again.

The eye went through a few stages of recovery. Obviously red and nasty looking, which increased in its red and nastiness for about two weeks before it started to look better. Vision in that eye was still blurry after 2 weeks, and gave me a bit of a vertigo feeling.

At one point I was worried that the graft had moved towards my inner eye, but the surgeon reassured me that it was only the overlap of where the graft gets "tucked in" to the existing eye skin.

I also notice my eyelid was quite swollen and was told that the prescription drops to prevent infection can give you a "droopy" eye. All good things to know as I inspected and analyzed my decision daily!



About a week and a half after surgery



A healthier eyeball

Today it has been 5 weeks since the surgery, and my eye is looking much much better. It still has a bump where the graft was tucked in, and there is still some redness but overall, it is feeling leaps and bounds better than it was.

So for those of you that spend a great deal of time outside exposed to the elements of the wind and sun... I strongly encourage you to wear sunglasses all the time. Make sure they are good ones, and with lots of coverage. I am very pleased so far with the outcome of my surgery. My eye is so much less irritated then it was with the Pterygium. It wasn't a fun process but personally I feel I made the right choice. One blinks a lot in a day, and everytime I do, I'm reminded that the blackfly feeling is gone. Thanks to Dr Bhamra in Calgary for his professional work!

*Sarah Hueniken is an Alpine Guide from Canmore, AB*

# Skiing in Iceland

Story and Photos by Larry Stanier

To paraphrase the “Shit Guides say” video - “Best trip ever!”

I was very lucky with the Icelandic weather this spring, but the terrain, the food, the ocean, the geothermal, the snowpack, the people, etc., etc. were all pretty damn spectacular.

Many of you probably know Iceland’s first (and only) Mountain Guide Jökull Bergmann. His name literally means “Glacier Mountain-Man” in Icelandic - the dude never had a chance in hell of being an accountant. I skied for a day with his operation, Arctic Heliskiing, which he runs at his family farm about 45 minutes from Akureyri (short flight from Reykjavik). He has great terrain and a nice setup if you ever want to send people heliskiing in the spring. I would love to heliski there in June someday!

I met my guests back in Akureyri. Nice town and we had a great little lift serviced lap there the first day. Cheap one ride lift, 1 hour walk to a nice summit and then a few hundred m’s of steepish skiing to a long cruiser almost to town.

Then we went on to explore the Troll peninsula for 6 days. Through Jökull, I had booked a place called “Brimnes” in Olafsfjordur. Nice cabins for 4-6 people, hot tubs and good food served in the hotel. Also, great road access in 3 directions to some fantastic ski terrain. You do need a vehicle here and that is expensive (especially when you are a group of 14).

The tunnels connecting the various towns and fjords were all built to mitigate the wild avalanche hazard to the roads (more on that later). For the ski tourer, the tunnels mean relatively short drives between venues and some mentally engaging driving in the one lane tunnels!

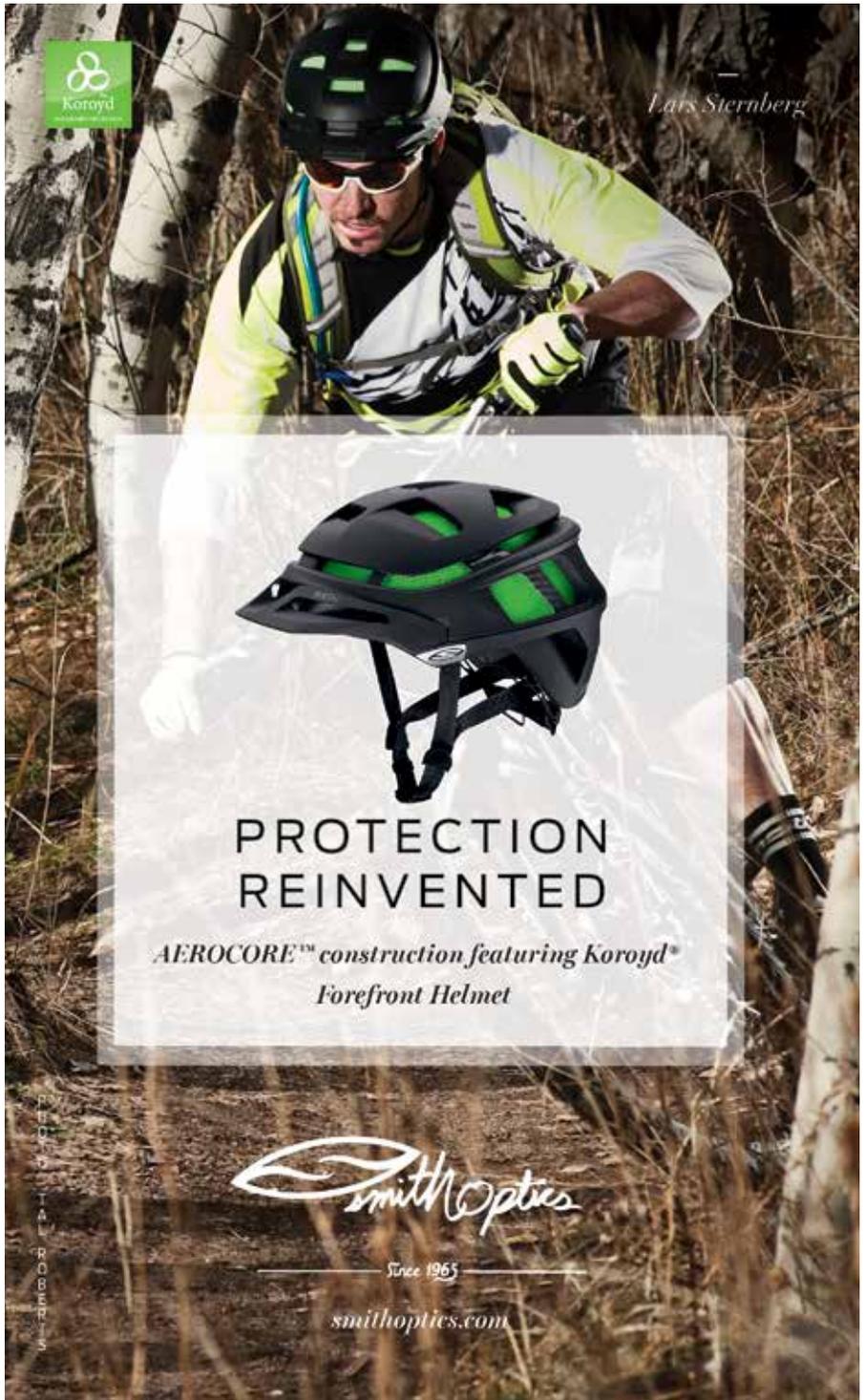
All the terrain in the photo can be accessed from roads out of town and the Siglufjordur ski area has great access to all sorts of cool terrain.

So, the Troll was fantastic - we saw one other party of 2 Euros and one local guy out for a ski after work above Siglufjordur. It will get busy there someday soon but not yet!

Then it was on to the Westfjords. I had booked the Aurora [www.boreadventures.com](http://www.boreadventures.com) for a ski week off their 65ft sailboat and it was spectacularly good. Again, great terrain, food, people and accommodation. I could go on about the boat and Soggi the captain but just go to

Vimeo, “Iceland - A Skiers Journey” by Jordan Manley. Well worth the watch.

We skied for one day on a little mountain SE of Flateyri and then got on the boat for a 5 night / six day ski tour out of Isafjordur. From there we motored NNE to the Hornstrandir nature reserve. The idea was to ski from fjord to fjord with the boat as the moving camp and it was a great idea. Lots of great ski terrain for short missions and the





Karlsafjall - a 988m beauty above Dalvik



Yirarfjall - 800m of steep south aspects viewed from our Brimnes cabins in Olafsfjordur



Corn porn on the Hyanneyrar-hyrna above the village of Siglufjordur.

The institute continues to watch over avalanche danger and additionally was given the responsibility of ordering evacuations in case of avalanche danger. It also is responsible for making hazard maps and guides in the design of avalanche protection measures. There is now extensive earth works protecting these and other villages and the tunnels to remove the worst sections of highways from the road system. They are just recently starting to write public avalanche bulletins.

They are doing a fine job and it was interesting to be working with the IMO staff, some ski area staff and some Mountain Guides on this course. In some ways it is similar to Canada in the 70's in that all the parties involved in avalanche risk management were trying to work together (think Chris Stethem, Hans Gmoser, Willi Pfisterer, Peter Schearer etc.) to communicate and manage risk better.

So, go ski touring in Iceland. It won't be quiet forever but

tours between fjords are 4-6 hr journeys in good conditions. Lots of bird life, seals and arctic foxes. We ate mussels for a pre ski tour snack but there was not much fish in the fjords.

The 65 ft. Aurora was surprisingly comfortable, warm and dry below decks and there was "enough" room for our group of 12 people including myself, Siggí and his son Haukar who helped with the ski guiding. Siggí is a damn good boat chef and all the meals were a treat. I could never get tired of smoked salmon and caviar for breakfast!

Finally Colin Zacharias and I taught a CAA Level 2 module 1 in Isafjordur. The CAA has run a few courses there now in conjunction with the Iceland Meteorological Office. Here is a very brief history of the IMO and avalanches.

In April 1994 an avalanche took out the ski area in Isafjordur and luckily killed only one person. It was a Monday night. In January 1995 14 people were killed in the village of Sudavik and in October 1995, 20 people were killed in the village of Flateyri. All these avalanches ran to sea level. As a result of a new law passed in parliament, the role of the Icelandic Meteorological Office, changed in December 1995.



On a summit between fjords



The Aurora in the Westfjords.

could easily absorb some crowds. I was told by the Icelandic consulate in Ottawa that it was legal for me to work there as long as I was being paid in Canada.

It would be a tough place to ski guide in bad weather and high avalanche hazard as there are basically no trees and lots of the valleys are steep and narrow. So, you go eat fish and find the best hot springs - not so bad. And not much chance of altitude sickness when you are sleeping at 1 - 5m above sea level!

Skól,  
Larry Stanier

*Larry Stanier is a Mountain Guide from Canmore, AB.*



Fresh raw mussels before putting on the skins



The approach vehicle



Topstary view of the Aurora and its standup paddleboards

# Upper Extremity Climbing Injuries - Part 2

By Barb Clemes

*Editor's Note – In the last edition of the ACMG News (Winter 2014) Physical Therapist and former competitive climber Barb Clemes discussed neck, shoulder and elbow injuries. Here in part 2 she covers the most important connection to the rock – the fingers.*

Climbing is rather unique in sport, with the number of finger injuries that can occur. Tearing of tendons, tendon pulleys, and ligaments can happen traumatically. Repeated microtrauma can lead to nodules and osteoarthritis.

## Fingers

### Pulley System Anatomy

Metacarpal – hand bone – one for each digit totaling five in the hand

Phalanx – a small finger bone – there are three in each finger (Proximal, Middle, Distal) and two in the thumb

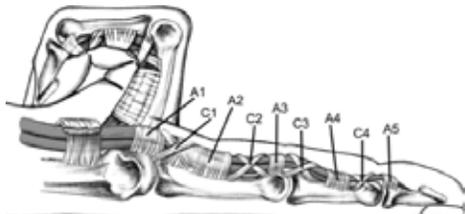
MCP – Metacarpophalangeal Joint – where hand and finger bones meet

FDP -Flexor Digitorum Profundus - the tendon that bends the last phalanx (tip of the finger)

FDS -Flexor Digitorum Superficialis - bends the middle phalanx

IP - Interphalangeal Joint - is the joint between the finger bones, PIP (Proximal IP Joint) DIP (Distal IP Joint)

Annular ligaments or pulleys help create a sheath that the flexor tendons (which bend your fingers) run through.



Metacarpal MCP Proximal PIP Middle DIP Distal Phalanx

A Diagram of the Finger - UKC Articles, Mar 2014 ©  
Lippincott, Williams & Wilkins

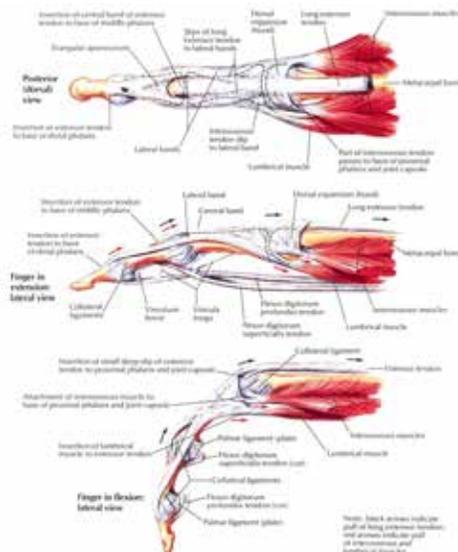
Two of the Annular ligaments (A2 and A4 in the diagram above) are critical to prevent “bowstringing” (picture a bow) and are the most important biomechanically. Complete ruptures could result in permanent loss of power.

A1, A3, and A5 (also called volar plates) overlie the MCP, PIP and DIP joints respectively

Volar Plate - a specialized ligament on the palm side of the fingers preventing hyper-extension- could be torn from hyperextending the joint as the climber tries to push off and make it even straighter or from the crimp grip. In the DIP it would be a hyperextension stretch, and in the PIP it could be due to the pull from the flexor tendon pulley which attaches to the plate.

Cruciate pulleys - function to prevent sheath collapse and expansion during digital motion. There are three at the level of the joints (C2 - C4 in the diagram).

## A. Injuries from Trauma



Tendon and collateral ligament anatomy.  
<http://bedahunmuh.Files.Wordpress.com/2010/05/flexor-and-extensor-tendons-in-fingers.jpg>

1. Pulleys of Flexor Sheaths - you would likely have heard a pop and felt sudden pain while pulling on a hold. This occurs frequently with crimping due to the high, passive uncontrolled forces on the last joint of the finger. Crimping, finger pockets, heavy body mass, sudden loading due to feet slipping, or poor body tension and control could lead to pulley failure. This would cause pain and swelling over the base of the finger for the A2 pulley or farther down the finger for others. There will be pain on movement and touch and the inflammation may cause “crepitus” – a creaky noise. Surgical intervention is controversial and taping the base of the finger for A2 partial tears may allow early return to climbing. This will depend on the severity (grade) of tear.

2. Fracture of Growth Plate

What appears to be an A2 or A4 pulley rupture in a junior climber could actually be an avulsion fracture or growth plate fracture. The growth plates are generally not fully developed and hardened until ages 15-17 in women and 17-20 in males. This is an unusual injury and it is important for coaches and parents to be aware of this possibility as medical personnel may not. Rest, modified activity, gradual return to sport and time are important in the healing.

3. Tendon Nodules - These may appear following acute injury and microtrauma. The swollen tendons from the partial tears rub on the tendon pulleys and create nodules (hard, small bumps in the palm). They may be involved with the A1 pulley and trigger fingers. Cortisone may help, and may correct a trigger finger (otherwise surgery does).

4. Ruptures of Finger Tendons - These do not occur frequently.

You would likely have heard a pop, had sudden pain and be unable to move your last or middle finger joint, under your own muscle power. Inability to move the last joint is a surgical emergency while the middle joint is rarely operated on. You should go to the emergency ward at the hospital though.

# Features

5. Collateral Ligaments of PIP (close finger joint) - These could be torn as climbers move dynamically off of 1 or 2 fingers in a pocket, probably extending the finger with a twisting and transverse pressure.

## B. Injuries from Repetitive Use

These could be sustained from overtraining (climbing walls) or working the same sequence of moves on one climb repeatedly.

1. Finger Flexors (FDS or FDP) tendonitis/tendonosis (“itis” means inflammation, “osis” is a degenerative process) - Due to repeated microtrauma involving minor tears or mechanical crushing and causing localized swelling, tenderness and chronic problems with proliferation of thickened scar tissue. Problems are generally in the small tendons at the proximal end of the elbow (AKA Golfer’s Elbow) but it could occur in the hand. Golfer’s Elbow involves the flexor muscles whereas Tennis Elbow involves the extensor muscles.

2. Arthritis - This could cause painful stiff inflamed joints which could result from cartilage destruction from repeated mechanical overloading. The capsule lined with synovium (smooth joint lining), and the bone are reacting to the frequent loading and irritation by thickening. This makes the joints stiffer, harder to move, and achy especially with no use, or excessive use. Lack of range also means the outside parts of the joints aren’t bathed in the nutritious synovial fluid, which lubricates the joints.

Quick test - if your fingers are stiff in the morning for more than ½ hr or feel like fat sausages you’re into that arthritic cycle.

3. Muscle Belly - Pain half way up the forearm could come from pulling hard on a single finger and causing a shearing force in the belly. The muscle bellies controlling the fingers are not completely separate, and differences in muscle belly separation may account for some people having more problems with this than others.

4. Flexion Contracture of the PIP (closest finger joint unable to straighten) - A permanently maintained angle of 10 to 15 degrees at the PIP joint was seen in 24% of the climbers at Leeds World Cup in a study done as early as the mid 90’s. This was probably due to connective tissue shortening as an inflamed joint was left to heal in a position of rest.

Treatment may involve anti-inflammatories, heat, ice, education, taping, modified rest (decrease difficulty of climbs, or increase number of rest days), complete rest, stretching, and transverse friction massage. Ice if hot and swollen, heat if stiff and tight. Your body will tell you what feels right.



Three Finger positions. Photos Joe Buszowski

Crimp left, open right



Barb Clemes on Success Pool. Photo Brian Bailey

Strengthening: return to low stress, high repetition strengthening and then high stress (weight) low repetition strengthening. Strengthening usually goes from isometric (resistance with no joint movement), to concentric (shortening of the muscle) to eccentric (lengthening of the muscle, which creates the most force and builds up tensile strength in the tendons, as in down climbing).

Specific strengthening: grip with specific devices or different sized balls, close to body and arm stretched overhead, work finger flexion strength with a cord and a small weight, curling individual fingers up (isometric to concentric to eccentric), progressing to a finger board and working your way up to climbing your grade.

Injury prevention involves massage, stretching, warming up well – do 100 finger

movements, making and relaxing a grip or easy movement on big holds before climbing, training the weaker muscle groups (antagonists), using an open hand grip whenever possible, warming up well and paying attention to vague aches and fatigue.

H Taping - the cross bar is in the middle phalanx, and the arms of the H wrap around the closest and the farthest phalanges. An extra wrap has been put on the nearest and farthest phalanges. The blue tape is Kinesio Tape that although stretchy gives good support in this situation.



Taped fingers. Photo Barb Clemes

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Barbara Clemes, B.Sc.(PT) and former ACMG member, was a member of the first National Sport Climbing team from 1990-1992. She is currently a physical therapist for Rocky Mountain Rehab and Sports Medicine Clinic in Canmore, AB.

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# A Unique Revelation

By Kris Irwin

After winning the John Lauchlan award, ACMG members Kris Irwin (Alpine Guide) and Darren Vonk (Apprentice Rock Guide) along with Ian Welsted spent 24 days this past April climbing new routes in the Revelations – a remote range in the SW corner of Alaska. This is Kris Irwin's account of the trip.

“Double check that your seatbelts are on”, our pilot Paul Roderick says moments before “dropping in” to The Revelations of Alaska. A massive valley opens up below us and we are all impressed by what we see. 3,000 – 5,000 ft. granite walls, tumbling icefalls, hanging glaciers, long, steep snow couloirs, and hundreds of large nunataks dotting the glacier below. Paul makes three turns in his Otter to lose elevation and scopes out a landing on the upper glacier. There is a French team of four climbers that are not expecting us, who run out from behind one of the large nunataks in time to see us land next to their camp. This will be our home for the next three weeks.

The Revelations are remote and seldom visited. As the crow flies, this area lays 225 kilometres southwest of Talkeetna, 70 kilometres southwest of the Kichatnas, and a long way from Denali National Park. Talkeetna Air Taxis' motto is “Hike for a week, or fly for an hour”, but this trip on foot would likely take three times that and you would need to cross some serious mountainous terrain to get there. The highest peak in the range is Mt. Hesperus at just less than 10,000 ft. Most peaks lie between 7,000 - 10,000 ft. Although not very high, the vertical relief between valley bottom and these summits can be up to 5000 ft., offering numerous long snow, ice, and mixed lines.



Drop off point on the Revelation Glacier. Photo Kris Irwin

Dave Roberts and fellow Harvard Mountaineering Club members George and Rick Millikan, Matt Hale, and Ned Fletcher first explored this area on a 52-day expedition in 1967. Roberts and Co. achieved nine first ascents and named the range and many of its notable peaks. They endured atrocious weather throughout their visit and were turned back on several outings from bouts of wind and freezing rain. Since that first recorded visit, the range has seen very few visitors, and there were only half a dozen other parties who made the long journey until 2008. Between 2008 and 2013, Anchorage mountain man Clint Helander and various partners made annual trips to the

range and racked up numerous first ascents. His article in the 2013 American Alpine Journal unselfishly highlighted many of the unclimbed peaks and unclimbed mixed routes on their weaknesses.

Ian Welsted, Darren Vonk, Mark Taylor, and I were recipients of The John Lauchlan Memorial Award in 2014. After reading Clint's article, we were intrigued by The Revelations, its solitude, and its unclimbed gems. Unfortunately Mark suffered a back injury while ice climbing in the Ghost Wilderness Area, and was forced to bow out from the trip one week before our departure. Preparations were in place so Ian, Darren, and I decided to go as a team of three.

John Lauchlan was a talented and prolific ice and mixed climber in the Canadian Rockies and abroad during the late 70s and early 80s. John made many notable ascents and pioneered new routes nationally and internationally. An endowment fund was set up by The Alpine Club of Canada in his honour after an unfortunate climbing accident took his life in 1982. I never met John (I was 3yrs old when he passed away) but I learned that he inspired those around him and gave every climber a fearless example of what they can become. We were honoured and privileged to be in The Revelations, representing Canadian alpinism and the spirit of John.



Head of the Revelation Glacier. Photo Kris Irwin



Group shot at the Calgary airport. Photo Ellen Irwin

Our home for the next 23 days was set up at the head of The Revelation glacier at approx. 5000 feet. Camp consisted of two 4 season tents within fortified snow walls, and an impressive 2 room igloo that was built by the French team. We renovated the igloo to include cooking platforms for our camp stoves, shelves, seating for 3, a spice rack, food storage space, and a liquor cabinet. Nearly every food item (except for the bourbon) froze within the first week as temperatures plummeted to -25c for a few days. It's a good thing we brought lots of stove gas as food needed to be boil-thawed before cooking.

On our second day in the range we geared up for a cragging day on what I thought was a low elevation mountain called Hydra Peak. Two discontinuous parallel mixed lines had formed on the east face, and we went for the more appealing right hand line. After climbing 12 pitches or so of new mixed terrain and post holing for a couple hundred meters, we arrived at the top of the massive 600m buttress, to where we could now see a ridge before us that led to a much loftier peak. After a couple hours of ridge walking and an icy traverse around a large gendarme, we finally reached the

glaciated summit plateau. Not wanting to retrace our route, we decided on the most direct line down the north east ice fall. 13 long rappels off glacial ice, one large bergschrund crossing, and some night time navigating brought us back to our camp 17.5 hours after we left - the longest cragging day I've had! We unknowingly climbed Angel Peak, by a new route we called 'The John Lauchlan Memorial Award Route', 1200m AI4+ M5, April 3rd 2014 - Irwin/Welsted/Vonk. The ridge to the summit had been climbed before, so 600m of this route was new terrain.

Over the next week we attempted and retreated off of two mixed lines on the neighbouring Four Horsemen and Cherub Peak. Both lines were of high quality but spindrift avalanches and snow filled chimneys turned us around.

On our flight in we spotted a snaking thin ice line on the unclimbed Dyke Peak. We caught another glimpse of the line after a ski recon in deteriorating conditions and the bottom half of the line looked so good we had to try it. The route did not disappoint, and we found pitch after pitch of amazing thin ice and single swing steep neve. Two thin pitches of WI5 ice opened up passage to the moderate upper mountain. We traversed right and entered the dyke feature after which the mountain is named. We climbed the dyke past an impressive chalkstone and onto the summit for our second new route and the first ascent of the mountain via 'Powered by Beans', 1000m AI5 M5, April 11 2014 - Welsted-Irwin-Vonk. 17hrs camp to camp.

With two routes down and the team warmed up to climbing in the Revelations, we were ready for our main objective, the unclimbed central gully on Pyramid Peak. This line was pitched in our John Lauchlan Award application as something we wanted to try. The Peak had remained unclimbed until the French team established a new route up the right hand flank of the west face called the 'Odyssey' (1100m, 6b AI M7), just days before our arrival. On our first attempt we climbed 10 pitches, with vertical sections of high quality mixed climbing and some not-so-high-quality snow climbing. Ian made a good point that "if you dig far enough down through the snow, you will eventually find cracks". He was right, but the time and effort to find these cracks was eating up the day, and we had not yet reached a small slope we had planned on digging into for the night. On top of this it starting snowing, ever so slightly, but spindrift avalanches starting running down over us with alarming size and frequency. We bailed and agreed to return when we had a solid weather forecast.

After a day of rest from our foray on Pyramid and a good weather forecast ahead of us, we looked for something close to camp. Darren had spotted a shorter looking line on the east face of Hydra Peak. With a long snow gully approach, 5-6 pitches of technical mixed climbing, and a beauty ridge climb to the summit, this turned out to be an excellent outing after our disappointing retreat from Pyramid. After a fun 10 hour day we decided to call this the 'Casual Route', 600m AI4 M6, April 17th 2014, Vonk/Welsted/Irwin.



Ian Welsted and Darren Vonk enjoying the comforts of the igloo. Photo Kris Irwin

After 3 new routes completed we channelled our remaining energy for another attempt at Pyramid Peak. Our trusty weather man and my good friend Rob Smith sent us a weather forecast via sat phone, "high pressure next few days, time to go big!" We packed light and planned for a bivy at the mid-way snow ledge. On day one we reached our high point fairly quickly, utilizing the rappel anchors we left the week before. New pitches of increasingly steep snow mushrooms and blank granite slowed us down but we reached the snow ledge by 6pm. We fixed the next pitch, and spent an hour digging out a suitable platform for our small tent. Darren and Ian shared the tent while I chose to spend the night in belay pants curled up on my empty backpack. At dawn we started to pack up and continued climbing for 2 long and tedious pitches. More overhanging snow and increasingly unprotectable climbing was futile. After closer inspection, the pitches ahead were very steep and wide cracks were plugged with snow. We were hoping to find a long WI6 pillar that Clint had photographed the year before, but it had not formed. We wanted to continue, but the decision to descend was unanimous... and a smart one. One half hour after skiing away from the base of the route, a large chunk of cornice collapsed from the summit ridge and debris charged down entire length of the route. I stood there gasping, knowing that if we had still been up there we would have been swept off the mountain.



Ian Welsted and Darren Vonk at base camp. Photo Kris Irwin

This beautiful and remote valley is worth the visit. Solitude and true adventure is almost guaranteed. There are more possibilities for moderate and cutting-edge climbs, lengthy ridge traverses, enchainments, and steep couloir skiing. The Revelations are the last of a largely unexplored region of Alaska, and one of the few true wilderness areas of North America. I was lucky enough to have such a remote experience, and my journey there will never be forgotten.

#### THANKS

This trip would not have been possible without the financial support of the John Lauchlan award funds.

A big THANK YOU goes to the awards committee, the sponsors (MEC, Arc'teryx, Yamnuska, Calgary Foundation, Lake O'Hara Lodge, Explore Magazine, Rab, Integral Designs, Tony and Gillean Daffern, Don Milliken, Bill Hanlon), my partners, Ian and Darren for their energy and enthusiasm, Mark Taylor for helping with the planning, my wife Ellen for her love and support, my trainer Greg Silva for the lungs and the legs, Onward Up (Petzl, Patagonia), and Rob Smith for the weather updates.

*Kris Irwin is an Alpine Guide from Banff, AB*



Darren Vonk on the ridge traverse to the summit of Angel Peak.  
Photo Kris Irwin



West face of Pyramid Peak showing the French ascent in red and our attempt in yellow. Photo Ian Welsted



Darren Vonk climbing steep ice on the first ascent of 'The John Lauchlan Memorial Award Route'.  
Photo Kris Irwin

# Helmet Use Decision Making for Ski Guiding

By Mark Klassen

In the summer of 2013 WorkSafe BC (WSBC – British Columbia’s WCB regulator) added a guideline to its helmet regulation that specifically identified skiing as an activity where a worker should use a helmet for safety. Although this guideline was apparently instituted with ski area workers in mind, it has repercussions within the ski guiding industry as well.

Many of us have concerns about the standardized use of helmets in all ski guiding situations, but an argument against their use is hard to express. On the face of it this makes sense: why not add another layer of safety to a hazardous activity? However, on closer examination, adhering to the WSBC guideline creates a tangled web that I am not sure guides and the ACMG want to get caught in.

First I would like to make clear that I am not against using helmets while skiing. After instructing on Ski Guide exams in 2012 and 2013, and before this guideline came into effect, I recommended to the Thompson Rivers University (TRU) Guide Training Program that helmets should be put on the gear list for the students. I felt they would be a good idea for certain situations, terrain, and snow conditions.

What I and many other experienced guides do not like is making the use of ski helmets a rule-based decision making process that is guiding standard, and this is what the WSBC guideline is leading to. For example, the directive from the TRU Guide Training Program for the 2014 season was that instructors and students were to use helmets when there was a “risk of significant head injury”, which was defined to me as “skiing downhill”<sup>1</sup> – no matter what the terrain or snow condition. Some guiding companies are conforming to this same rule-based system even if they are not required to by WSBC (e.g. Alberta based companies).

I can see why TRU implemented this policy – it would be strange for the guide examiner to don a helmet at the top of a run (as an employee she is regulated by WSBC to do so), while the candidate has to make a decision for himself and the other candidates on whether it is guide standard to do so in that particular situation (because he is not regulated by WSBC). But the TRU policy, and the ACMG’s acceptance of it, indicates the use of helmets while skiing downhill is a new industry and ACMG standard, which many of us find alarming.

Self-employed guides without WSBC coverage (many of us) would not need to use helmets in such a rule-based fashion, unless it is ACMG standard to do so. So the WSBC regulation is cascading down to those of us not even specifically subject to it.

Guides and the Guide Training Program have traditionally used reason-based decision-making using a rational risk assessment, and this has been a

Decision Model	No Helmet? ← → Helmet?		
Avalanche Risk (not Danger Rating)	Low	Moderate	High
Aggressiveness	<1 fall per week	1 fall per week	>1 fall per week
Speed	<25 kph	25-35 kph	>35 kph
Snow Conditions	Easy (powder)	Moderate (upside down)	Difficult (breakable crust)
Terrain Type	Open	Mixed	Obstacles/Overhead Hazard
Terrain Difficulty	Easy (Blue run)	Moderate (Black run)	Difficult (Double Black)
Vulnerability (last hit to head)	>10 Years	5-10 Years	<5 Years
Vulnerability to human factors	Experienced Guide - Familiar Situation	Experienced - New / Inexperienced - Familiar	Inexperienced Guide - New Situation
Additional weight causing chronic injury (30 year career)	Helmet on downhill, carried uphill, all day (ski-touring)	Helmet on all day (heli-skiing)	Helmet on part of day (cat-skiing)
Exposure Time (to skiing downhill or other hazards)	~10 min/day (ski touring 1500 m)	~20 min/day (cat-skiing 5000 m)	~100 min/day (heli-skiing 7000 m, 11 flights)

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V 1.1

FIGURE 1: Proposed reason-based decision making model for helmet use. To be used as a guide only. All categories should be considered as a whole rather than any single box or column being used to determine helmet use or not.

specifically stated objective of the technical committee and the training program in recent years. A risk-based examination of the issue, using a process typical to guiding, makes me feel that helmet use for ski guiding has limited application (Figure 1). This is based on my experience of 30 years in the industry working at ski areas, guiding heli-skiing and ski touring, and teaching advanced risk management theory and techniques on professional-level avalanche and guide courses. I am not alone in this opinion; many other guides have expressed similar thoughts even if they have not been able to express them in a standardized language of risk.

The following is a brief overview of the process I went through when considering this issue. It is based in part on ISO 31000:2009 (ISO), which is a globally accepted standard for creating a risk management framework<sup>2</sup>.

In the past WSBC (and WCB Alberta) have accepted ACMG guides as trained risk management decision makers in other aspects of their regulations and as a result have adjusted their expectations of how we are required to operate. Examples of this include rope access regulations in both provinces and Avalanche Safety Plan requirements in BC. I encourage the ACMG board and technical committee to engage with

them on this issue to see if we can come up with a compromise solution to helmet use and other safety equipment. This could be based upon ISO and a rational risk assessment such as that outlined below.

## Context

I am probably most qualified to speak to the use of helmets while ski touring guiding as that is the aspect of the industry I have been practicing most recently, and that is where most of my concern lies. This reasoning may also be applicable to other types of ski guiding but I will let someone else make that argument.

Ski touring comes in a variety of forms, from slack-country tours adjacent to ski areas, to multi-day ski traverses with heavy packs. Terrain and snow conditions vary as well, as does the situation guides find themselves in – from guiding a rabid group of powder hounds down an open alpine bowl to going for a stroll through the forest with a senior citizen. The actual risk of head injury incurred by a ski touring guide varies a great deal, but a commonality to most touring activities is a less hurried pace than in other aspects of the industry. The lack of nearby emergency backup, tired legs from the ascent, and a clientele often more interested in a relaxed mountain experience all contribute to guides often skiing slower and more conservatively than they do during many other skiing activities. This lowers the probability of a head injury.

## Strength and Weight of the Evidence

Strength of evidence in a risk assessment scenario means data that makes us sit up and say “wow”. I know of one Canadian ski touring guide who struck his head, resulting in a serious injury that took months to resolve. This is strong evidence that serious head injuries can occur while guiding ski touring.

But that strength of evidence needs to be backed up with weight of evidence – weight meaning the amount of quality data available. More data equals more weight. We have had many ski guides working for many years, both in Canada and around the world. The weight of evidence here does not back up the strength of the evidence: the injury outlined above is the only significant head injury occurring in Canadian ski touring guiding that I know of. Although there may have been other accidents I am not aware of, serious head injuries are extremely rare in this aspect of our industry.

The weight of the evidence also points towards helmets not being particularly effective at reducing some types of head injuries – especially concussions. Studies have shown that head injuries in skiing have increased at the same rate or faster than the sport has, even with the increased use of helmets over the past 15 years<sup>3</sup>. Helmets do however decrease the chances of lacerations and skull fractures.

Good decisions require both strong and weighty evidence. The evidence I have seen points to ski helmets having limited effectiveness for reducing the already extremely low rate of head injuries sustained while guiding ski touring.

## Exposure to the Risk

Some simple arithmetic (or a stop watch) will show that the downhill skiing portion of a typical 1500 m ski touring day lasts about 10 minutes. The run takes longer than that, but most of the time is spent stopped at regroup. While heli-skiing a guide is exposed to the hazards of the helicopter and skiing downhill perhaps ten times that amount – 100 minutes (note that the regulation does not specifically require guides to use a helmet in a helicopter, and many take it off for the lift). Of course not every minute spent skiing downhill is exposed to head injury – for a good portion of our careers we ski on open slopes in deep soft powder where there is little to strike our heads on.

Both of these times clock in far less than the exposure to head injury experienced by a typical rock climbing or mountaineering guiding day. Decision-making training to avoid situations that increase likelihood (e.g. high speed skiing through a rocky area) will reduce exposure.

## Vulnerability

Our human skull is vulnerable to head injury; there is no getting around it. And the more concussions sustained the more vulnerable one is. But we have already seen that helmets are not great at preventing concussions in a high-speed crash. In addition, consideration must be given to the fact that not every hit to the head results in serious injury.

Using a helmet will reduce vulnerability but so will several other techniques we can use as guides. Hazard assessment training, informed decision-making and strong skiing skills reducing the likelihood of a fall will all reduce our vulnerability to head injury.

## Uncertainty and Confidence

ISO defines risk as the “effect of uncertainty on objectives”<sup>2</sup>.

Knowing the strength and weight of the evidence and assessing our exposure and vulnerability lessens the uncertainty of what the risk is. This increases our confidence that we are able to make an informed decision. In this case we should have high confidence that only a portion of blows to the head result in serious head injury and the probability of a knock to the head while ski touring guiding is low, but if a hard blow to the head does occur it has the potential to have bad consequences.

## Probability and Consequence

The data indicates that probability of a head injury while ski touring is very low (one known accident in 30 years), but the consequence of a fall may be high (a guide has sustained a serious head injury). This is a typical low probability-high consequence scenario where many find decision-making to be difficult. I feel WSBC is not properly considering the probability of an event happening in a ski touring guiding scenario and I would encourage them to actually assess the number of claims made by ski touring guides for this type of injury.

When put in to the context of other things we do as guides it may not be that hard a decision. I liken it to skiing when the Danger Rating is Low, but triggering an avalanche could result in a size 2 (possibility of injury or death). It is quite unlikely we will trigger an avalanche at Low, especially if we have professional level decision-making training. Even if we do trigger a size 2, in many instances the outcome will not be disastrous. I know many guides who have been caught in size 2 avalanches (me being one of them) and most of us have skied away from the experience without serious injury. But I also know of a couple guides who have been killed in size 2s.

To better understand whether a ski helmet is a reasonable response to this dilemma we need to weigh the costs and benefits of using one.

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## Cost/Benefit

Being required to use a ski helmet whenever skiing downhill is rule-based thinking. Although there are some things we almost invariably do – such as the “rule” of using avalanche transceivers while skiing in avalanche terrain – this is because the cost/benefit ratio is advantageous for us. But even avalanche transceivers are not used universally: there are a lot of guided climbing activities in avalanche terrain where transceivers are not utilized. Although we are using avalanche gear more while climbing now than in the past, there will continue to be situations where guides do not use it, even if we are in avalanche terrain - e.g. Mt. Victoria South Ridge ascent with Huber Glacier descent. One of the reasons for this is comparing cost to benefit. With the Mt Victoria example a 2-day mountaineering trip where only about half an hour is spent in avalanche terrain does not warrant the use of avalanche gear – other techniques to mitigate risk, such as avoidance or terrain choice, are used instead. The cost (weight, expense and training time required to use avalanche gear) outweighs the benefit (lowering the consequences of a burial in a low probability situation where other methods are available to extricate a person).

In most skiing circumstances the benefits of using a transceiver outweigh the cost. The probability of getting buried is reasonably high (happens in Canadian ski guiding regularly), and the consequences are also high (a burial without transceiver results in near certain death within minutes). The benefit of a transceiver is that it is extremely effective at locating someone, while the costs are weight of the equipment and the expense of purchasing the unit. It's a pretty easy decision: the benefits are high and the costs are relatively low.

The benefit of wearing a ski helmet is that it reduces the low probability of a head injury even further (except perhaps for concussions). The costs however are multiple. Here are a few I can think of:

- The guide's load is heavier

A quick perusal of helmets on the MEC website showed an average weight of 450 g. To get an idea of whether a bit of additional weight makes that much of a difference, I experimented with ski weights last season. I used a different ski on each foot for one day at the end of a big week of ski touring. The skis and skins were nearly identical except one was 250 g heavier than the other. At first I didn't notice a difference, but at about the 1350 m elevation gain mark I began to feel the heavier ski on the uptrack, so much so that I switched feet for the final ascent of the day.

Over a thirty-year ski touring career the costs of wear and tear to the body cannot be discounted – my regular presence in the offices of various health care practitioners is testament to that. Every year I spend thousands of dollars and hundreds of hours keeping my body working. Although hard to quantify, additional impairment will undoubtedly occur due to added weight. This is especially a concern if additional safety rules are imposed on us, requiring even more gear to be carried every day (e.g. avalanche airbags).

- Transitions at the top and bottom of runs are slower

Experienced guides know that efficiency counts towards safety, and every minute counts. Putting helmets on and taking them off, especially by clients, adds time to the day.

- There are more distractions due to weather

Helmets often do not protect from the wind and snow very well because thinner toques frequently need to be used underneath them and hoods do not seal well around them. Temperature regulation is more difficult and protective eyewear may fog easier. This can affect situational awareness, a key factor in risk-management decision-making.

- There is an added layer of equipment and technology between the guide and the environment

Any added piece of safety equipment alters our decision-making and makes us consider taking greater risks. If you don't believe me then go ski touring without a transceiver next winter.

Experienced guides may say that wearing a helmet will not change the way they personally act in the hills. They are probably correct as their engrams<sup>4</sup> are already in place. But I believe that over time attitudes over the entire industry will change if we start standardizing more safety equipment. Again, the analogy of avalanche transceivers comes to mind. Compare the terrain and conditions we ski now with what the norm was before they came into use. As an industry we subject ourselves to far more hazardous terrain and situations now and part of the reason for that is the additional safety equipment we use. The gear allows us to get away with increasing risk.

Adding risk is not necessarily a bad thing – ISO states that increased risk is acceptable if there is an increased benefit. But safety equipment needs to be effective to increase safety and helmets do not seem to work as well as we may think<sup>3</sup>. Ineffective safety equipment actually has the potential to increase risk because it gives us a false sense of security. So in this case we may be increasing our risk more than we increase our benefit because, as outlined here, helmets have costs associated with them without the benefits we may think they have.

- Other guide certifications will need to consider helmets

Both climbing gym instructors (fall potential) and hiking guides (overhead hazards at places like Lake O'Hara, fall potential on many trails) will need to re-assess their need for head protection.

- Clients will be required to use helmets

If it is guide standard it should be client standard – I cannot think of any standard safety equipment that a guide uses that we do not expect clients to use as well. This creates a greater expense for either the client or the guide, depending on who is expected to provide the helmet. There will also be pushback from many clients who do not feel the need to wear one. Only about 10% of my clients bring helmets now, and some stop using them part way through the trip. We do require clients to use many forms of safety equipment, even if they sometimes do not like it. However, with other equipment we are able to give a rational argument for its use. With ski helmets I have not been able to do so.

- It interferes with the sense of freedom and enjoyment we feel

Another hard to quantify issue, but I feel it needs to be considered. A freedom from encumbrances is a big reason that many of us have chosen this profession, and why many of our clients come ski with us. It would be a shame giving part of that up for reasons that are unproven. In places that have bike helmet laws it has been shown to decrease participation in biking<sup>3</sup>. I could see some of my experienced ski touring clients deciding to pass on a guided trip

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if we start asking for too much out of them – helmets may not be the final straw but airbags could well be. By acquiescing to the WSBC helmet regulation we will be hard pressed to say no if airbags are imposed on us.

## Bias

As with any risk assessment we need to carefully assess our biases<sup>5</sup>. There are plenty that apply to both sides of this argument, but I want to point out a few that we often are subject to in our industry.

Availability bias means we remember vivid situations the best and often make decisions based on those memories. A vivid event such as a serious accident will often lead to a shift towards more safety regulation, even though this one accident does not change the overall probability of skiing head injuries. We need to zoom out and look at the big picture to see what the real risk is.

Confirmation bias means that we tend to see and hear what we want to see and hear, and disregard evidence that is at odds with predetermined views. Any risk management decision needs to carefully assess all the available information in an open manner.

Representative bias occurs when resemblances to our references are believed to be the only signs of the probability of an event occurring, without considering other applicable information. To make a good decision we need to cast a wide net to gather all pertinent information.

I feel that those who promote rule-based ski helmet use fall into these traps. This is affecting their risk perception and bumps it beyond their risk tolerance level.

## Risk Perception & Tolerance

One of the main issues we have with this situation is a difference in the perception of the risk. A careful review of statistics needs to be made to truly understand the likelihood of head injuries while guiding ski touring, but my anecdotal evidence suggests that the likelihood is very low.

Then why did WSBC impose this regulation? Their review of injury claims made in the ski industry showed that enough head injuries were occurring to make a skiing-specific guideline necessary. However, the context they were working within was that of a ski area. Hard snow conditions, high speeds, man-made hazards, and numerous other skiers all make this environment a very different one than the ski touring environment I work in.

The present WSBC perspective creates a perception that is not applicable to what many of us do, but it should not be insurmountable to open a discussion with them to see if we can clarify what the context actually is, and how that changes the risk assessment.

If we are able to change the perception then it has to be determined if the new context is within WSBC's risk tolerance. WSBC is obviously accepting of a certain amount of the inherent risk that exists in any workplace. There already is precedent for them to accept the idea of different risk tolerances for the ACMG compared to other industries, an example being our discussions with them regarding rope access regulations.

## The Future

Many active guides are concerned with the ramifications of this law regarding other safety equipment. There is little doubt that regulated use of avalanche airbags will be considered in the near future. This line of thought could be taken further, for example non-DIN tech type bindings (e.g. Dynafits) could be disallowed (non-DIN bindings may create a greater chance of knee injury – a far more common injury in ski guiding than head injuries). Any one of these changes may only create a small change in guiding as we know it but incrementally it will affect a guide's long- and short-term performance, influence safety in an unforeseen way, and significantly alter the mountain experience for the guest.

Over my thirty-year career I have seen many safety innovations introduced in our industry, from the creation of the Infoex, (Information Exchange) to having clients belay me directly off the anchor to the idea that human factors are one of the greatest hazards we face in the mountains. I have accepted and incorporated them into my daily guiding routine. However, I apply them using Hans Gmoser's method: using the right technique in the right place at the right time. There is little to no room for rule-based decision making in our world.

I have no doubt that at some point in the future a ski touring guide who is not wearing a helmet will sustain a serious head injury. This does not mean going without a helmet was a bad decision. We have to accept risk, and I submit that the risk incurred by not wearing a helmet ski touring is within the tolerance of our association, WSBC, and society as a whole. At the same time, I am open to individual guides deciding to wear a helmet more often than may be standard in the industry. There is room here for personal choice and guiding style.

Good decisions are based on an informed analysis of the facts and are consistent with past good decisions. As an organization we have made a lot of good decisions over the years and our safety record proves this. I fear that the decision to uncritically accept the WSBC regulation will lead to more problems than it will solve, and is not consistent with our good decisions of the past. I appeal to the ACMG board and technical committee to reconsider their stance on this issue. I encourage other members who agree with me to communicate their thoughts to the ACMG as well.

<sup>1</sup>Dwayne Congdon, personal communication, winter 2014

<sup>2</sup>Purdy Grant, 2010. ISO 31000:2009 - Setting a New Standard for Risk Management. Risk Analysis, Vol. 30, No. 6, 2010.

<sup>3</sup>[http://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/01/sports/on-slopes-rise-in-helmet-use-but-no-decline-in-brain-injuries.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/01/sports/on-slopes-rise-in-helmet-use-but-no-decline-in-brain-injuries.html?_r=0)

<sup>4</sup>[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Engram\\_\(neuropsychology\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Engram_(neuropsychology))

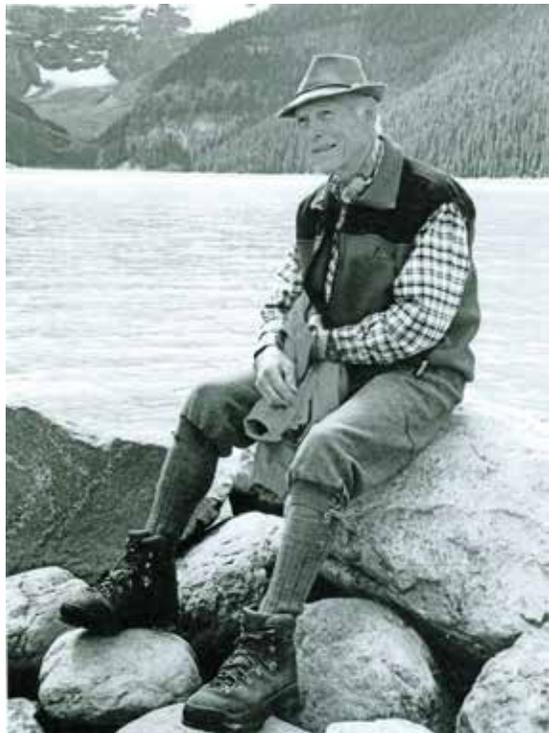
<sup>5</sup>Vick S.G., 2002. Degrees of Belief – Subjective Probability and Engineering Judgment. ASCE Press, Reston, VI, 455.

*Mark Klassen is a Mountain Guide who lives in Banff. He has actively contributed to the ACMG for many years as editor of the ACMG News, working on the guide training program, and by participating on several committees. He has the ACMG logo tattooed on his ass, and he encourages readers assume a positive intent regarding his comments here.*

# Sydney Walter Feuz

Feb. 4, 1922 – March 21, 2014

by Rudi Gertsch



Sydney Feuz at Lake Louise. Photo from "A Golden Mountain Tale: The Lucky Life of Syd Feuz"

I first met Syd in 1966. It was my third week in Canada. I had started guiding for Hans Gmoser in the Bugaboos, and had to stop in Golden to pick up white gas at the Texaco Bulk Plant for the Boulder Camp stove. A guy came out and said, "You're working for CMH." He could tell right away I was Swiss. We introduced ourselves and I found out he was one of the Feuzs. He said he wished he could help me carry the drum up to the camp just for an excuse to go for a hike. It's funny now to look back and see such an insignificant errand as the beginning of an extraordinary friendship.

Syd was born in Golden, BC, the first son and third child of Walter and Johanna Feuz's eight children. Syd's grandfather, Edouard Feuz Sr. was the first of two Swiss guides – the other being Christian Hasler Sr. - hired by the Canadian Pacific Railway to work from its hotels in the Canadian Rockies. In 1912 Walter immigrated to Golden with his brothers Edward and Ernest and their wives. Syd grew up in one of the six houses at Edelweiss Swiss Village that the CPR built for the guides and their families.

Growing up in Golden meant there was no end of outdoor opportunities, and Syd was out skiing and climbing every chance he got. By the time he was 16 he was guiding skiers from Temple Lodge between Lake Louise and Skoki. When the Second World War came he served his country for three years in the navy. But after the war there was no guiding work, so he drove truck, ran the Fridhem Hotel in Golden with his wife, Baeda, and delivered bulk fuel for Texaco up and down the back roads of the Columbia Valley. No matter what Syd was doing, his kindness and reliability made an impression on everyone.

After that first meeting, in the fall I stopped in at the house in Golden and met Syd's dad, Walter and Walter's brother Edouard. It became an annual trip every fall to report to the guides what I did over the summer. I always felt welcome; they were such down-to-earth people.

When I decided to leave CMH and start my own company, Purcell Heli-Skiing (in 1974), I was hoping I'd be able to get Syd to come guide for me for 10 years. I figured

that would be best case scenario. Syd passed his assistant ski guide's exam with the Association of Canadian Mountain Guides at the age of 51. He guided for me for the next 28 years.

Over those years, I worked very closely with Syd. He was tirelessly devoted to so many things, but I was lucky that I got to spend my time with Syd in the mountains, where he felt so at home. The most important lesson I learned from him was to be patient, not just in climbing but hunting too.

Syd was passionate about guiding and he cared deeply about every single guest that got into the helicopter with us. He didn't just go through the motions of being a guide – he always went over and above in getting everyone down safely with a smile on their face.

That's the way Syd was. He treated everyone with respect and seemed to have an endless supply of encouraging words and enthusiasm, so we could all share in the joy he got from being in the mountains. He was not only a mentor and a role model for his guests, but an important mentor for me as well.

One day we left early to go elk hunting. We walked all day and didn't find what we were looking for. I was just pulling into his driveway to end our day, and standing right there was this big elk. And Syd said, "Good thing he wasn't here this morning, we wouldn't have had such a nice day."

With Syd, hunting wasn't about killing something. It was just a good excuse to be out hiking and climbing, enjoying the outdoors to the fullest.

Whether we were skiing, climbing, hunting, hiking or boogie boarding in Hawaii, Syd's love for life and adventure made everything we shared memorable.

Guiding in the mountains was his life, and I'm grateful to have been a witness to it. He will be missed, but Syd and his legacy will never be forgotten. I'll remember Syd as a great man and a true friend.

*Rudi Gertsch is a Hiking and Mountain Guide from Golden, BC.*

## Diapers and Vows

By Lilla Molnar

ACMG members have been busy in the diapers and vows department since the last newsletter, probably the most submissions yet... Congratulations to everyone!

Missed in the last edition of D&V - Kris and Ellen Irwin were married at Peyto Lake on September 26, 2013

Scott and Violet Thumlert had a baby boy named Mateo on March 21. 7lbs and rockin' it!

Christine and Jesse de Montigny had a baby boy name Quinn Ryan on Jan 4th. He was 6lbs, 10oz. That is 3 for the de Montignys, a full basketball team!

16 days overdue + 18 hours of attempted home birth + 1 hair raising car ride down the Sea to Sky highway at 12am + 18 more hours of hospital labour and some minor complications = two psyched new parents (James and Jill Marie Bronson) and one healthy and happy baby girl! Lily Bronson was born on March 6th weighing in at 8.2 lbs

Colin Hoglund married his wife Jackie on April 5 in downtown Canmore.

Dani Loenstein is a very lucky boy to be marrying a Ms. Kristen Page on August 2nd.

Tim Mang and Meaghan Mang are happy to announce the birth of Benjamin Mang. At 10 weeks he has already been sending in Skaha! Born Feb. 3rd.

Todd and Kristin Anthony-Malone had another baby girl named Kinley June. She was born in Revelstoke on April 11.

One of the ACMG's newest members - Andrew Councill, is excited to share that he will be getting married this October to Caroline Hope McNally Leah and Neil Warren welcomed Nora Victoria Warren into the world on March 24th. She's doing very well and they could not be happier.

Jeff and Heather MacPherson had baby boy #2 on March 8 - Logan Douglas MacPherson was born weighing 7.4 pounds. Papa welcomed Logan to the world still dressed in guiding gear including Gore-tex pants.

Proud parents Dave and Fumi welcome Kai Koshiba-Honeyman born Feb 6, 2014 at 7:21am at the Canmore General. A 9lb bouncing baby boy! Everybody is doing well.

Not so new news but Felix Camire is the proud Papa of twins! Lianne and Émilie were born on Jan. 18.

Rob and Marion Owens and proud big brother Finlay welcome Keenan Jonas Owens, born Dec 17.

Joe Pavelich and his wife Lisa had their first child on Nov 7, 2013. He's an awesome little boy and a great teacher. His name is Braden Joseph Pavelich.



*Diapers and Vows is a regular column brought to you by Canmore, AB Mountain Guide Lilla Molnar.*

## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

### Heli Ski Guides Wanted for 2014-2015

Selkirk Tangiers Heli Skiing LLP has openings for full time and part time ACMG or IFMGA certified Mountain Guides and Ski Guides for the 2014-2015 winter season.

Wage: Starting @ \$300 for fully certified Guides

Location: Revelstoke, BC

Job Description: Certified and experienced Mountain or Ski Guides needed for the winter season. Guides are responsible to provide a fun and efficient Heli Ski product in a wilderness environment. This role will focus on the highest degree of safety and professionalism.

Experience: At least three years of experience as a lead Ski Guide.

Skills /Abilities: Superior guiding skills, strong personal ski ability and be physically fit. Fluency in German is required for certain positions.

Certifications/Qualifications: ACMG or IFMGA certificate. CAA Level 2 for Ski operations. Advanced First Aid (minimum 80 hours) with AED and CPR certificates. Valid Class 4 driver's license.

To apply, please send your resume to;

Colette Poirier -Human Resources

Selkirk Tangiers Heli Skiing

PO Box 130

Revelstoke BC V0E 2S0

Email: cpoirier@selkirk-tangiers.com

### Heli Ski Guide

Canadian Mountain Holidays is currently accepting applications for the position of Heli-Ski Guide for the 2014/2015 season.

Job Description: To guide guests in the high mountain winter environment, while providing the most enjoyable skiing experience possible, with the highest degree of professionalism and safety. The work environment is remote, outdoor, mountain terrain. This is a seasonal, full-time position in the Revelstoke, BC area.

Certification Requirements:

- Minimum ACMG Apprentice Ski Guide (Association of Canadian Mountain Guides) or IFMGA (International Federation of Mountain Guides Associations) Definite Assets:

- Previous mechanized Ski Guiding experience
- Ski Instructor Certification and experience (CSIA or equivalent)
- Multi-lingual
- WCB Avalanche Control Blaster's Certification
- CAA Level 2
- Excellent communication and decision making skills

Wages: Starting at \$190/250/280 per day based on certifications and skill set, plus benefits plan.

Apply in writing by August 31st, 2014 to:

Manager of Guiding Operations: Erich Unterberger

Box 1660, Banff, AB T1L 1J6

Email: info@cmhinc.com

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# Changes in ACMG Membership

1 November 2013 to 31 May 2014

Compiled by Linda Heywood

NOTE: The following is a list of changes in the membership of the ACMG. It indicates new members and their certification level as well as qualifications achieved by ACMG members during this specific time period. Due to Thompson Rivers University privacy concerns it is not a list of all candidates who have been successful on TRU guide training programmes, nor is it necessarily a complete list of ACMG member qualifications, the current status for which should always be checked on [www.acmg.ca](http://www.acmg.ca). Although we strive for accuracy at all times, errors and omissions do happen – please get in touch if you have queries that are not resolved by checking the website, or you feel you have been missed from this list [acmg@acmg.ca](mailto:acmg@acmg.ca)

*Italicized names indicate new ACMG members.*

## Mountain Guide

Darrah, Max  
Firth, Ben  
Mortenson, Cecelia  
Treharne, Mike

## Climbing Gym Instructor 1

*Beland, Dan*  
*Butler, Paul*  
*Ferri, Rebecca*  
*Fritz, Julie-Anne*  
*Garraway, Jeff*  
*Gosselin, Ron*  
*Grier, Willow*  
*Irwin, Skye*  
*Jones, J Rhys*  
Ker, Nicole  
*le Roux, Christoff*  
*Leung, Sammy*  
*Lindoff, Jordon*  
*Mahabeer, Ayla*  
*Matheson, Sarah*  
*McKay, Daniel*  
*McMahon, Dana*  
*McVey, Andrew*  
*Moore, Sasha*  
*Morgan, Phillip*  
*Oldenburger, Jonathan*  
*Patola, Coral*  
Peel, Raz  
*Poon, Hannah*  
*Schaflein, Kevin*  
*Smythe, Andrew*  
*Spears, Frank*  
*Sterling, Clayton*  
*Tong, Anne*

## Climbing Gym Instructor 2

*Abe, Neil*  
*Criddle, Mark*  
Kelly, Sandra  
McBurney, Andrew

*McDougall, Jeremy*  
*Naruta, Yumiko*  
Relkoff, David

## Top Rope Climbing Instructor

*Curtis, Adam CGI 1*  
Erickson, David  
Ryan, Teri

## Apprentice Ski Guide

*Bernas, Igor*  
Caswell, Michael  
*Charest, Mathieu*  
Curran, Ian  
Funston, Morgen  
*Jungen, Florian*  
*Kamink, Isaac*  
*Leahy, Troy*  
*McClain, Scott*  
*Mignault-Dionne, Louis-Charles*

*Milner, Jesse*  
*Rasmussen, Tristen*  
Sharp, Barb  
*Sharp, Eirik*  
St Julian, Brodie  
*Wainwright, Peter*

## Ski Guide

Bélanger, Ken  
Darrah, Max  
Devine, Kate  
Edwards, Matt  
Enns, Gavin  
Firth, Ben  
Goto, Katsuhiko  
Holtzman, Lucas  
Johns, Ben  
Lohmann, Corin  
Magnan, Danyelle  
Mariash, Mike  
Mills, Tyler  
Mortenson, Cecelia  
Morton, Daniel

Murray, Tyler  
Smith, Joshua S  
Treharne, Mike  
Van Driel, Jeff

## Joined ACMG for the first time

(not through course during above period)  
Allard, Ghislain ARG  
Bashaw, Wade SG  
Councell, Andrew MG  
Ewing, Sam ASG  
Gagné, Arnaud TRCI, AHG, DHG  
Gagne Simard, Marianne CGI 1  
Grieco, Joel CGI 1  
Hooge, Bonnie AHG  
Lalonde, David CGI 1  
Prest, Trevor CGI 1, TRCI  
Scharlock, Florian ASG  
Seguin, Jesse SG  
Teoh, Zenn ARG  
van Haeren, Maarten TRCI  
Whitney, Mark CGI 1, TRCI  
Wodak, Sabina ASG

## Reinstated to the ACMG

Andrews, Lars MG  
Boyle, Ryan ASG  
Caldwell, Neil ARG, ASG  
Israelson, Gerald MG  
MacDonald, Nathan ARG, TRCI  
Mang, Timothy CGI 2, TRCI, AHG, DHG  
Orr, Lila SG  
Pullan, Brandon ARG  
Shinozaki, Hiroaki AHG, DHG  
van Ulden, Leo CGI 2, TRCI  
Young, Daniel CGI 2

## Resigned from the ACMG

Dansereau, Paul CGI 1  
Jansma, Leo SG  
Kindrat, Brian CGI 1  
Larson, Chris CGI 1  
Robins, Simon AG, ASG  
Stirling, Jephson CGI 1

## Officers of the Board

<b>President</b> Marc Ledwidge Banff, AB pres@acmg.ca	<b>Vice-President</b> Matthew Peter Canmore, AB vp@acmg.ca	<b>Secretary-Treasurer</b> Jörg Wilz Canmore, AB st@acmg.ca
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## Elected Directors

<b>Director, apprentice guides</b> Kate Devine Revelstoke, BC kd.selkirk@gmail.com	<b>Director, Hiking Guides</b> Nathan Dahl Calgary, AB ndahl@ualberta.ca	<b>Director, Rockies</b> Jordy Shepherd Canmore, AB jordy@peakalpine.com	<b>Director, West Coast</b> Ross Berg Squamish, BC berg.ross@yahoo.com	<b>Past President</b> Keith Reid Whistler BC pastpres@acmg.ca
<b>Director, Climbing Instructors</b> Scott McKay Calgary, AB scott.mckay@shaw.ca	<b>Director, Interior</b> Sylvia Forest Golden, BC forestaube@gmail.com	<b>Director, Specialty Guides</b> Derek Wilding Calgary, AB dwilding@mtroyal.ca	<b>Director-at-large, non-member</b> Rick Cowburn Calgary, AB rcowburn@vidya.ca	<b>Director-at-large, non-member</b> Kevin Dumba Calgary, AB kevindumba@gmail.com

## Board Advisors

<b>Communications</b> Kimanda Jarzebiak Ascent Public Affairs Victoria, BC	<b>Finance</b> John Gillett Devonian Properties Canmore, AB
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<b>Legal</b> G W Kent Scarborough Scarborough Herman Bluekens New Westminster, BC
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## Newsletter

*The Arête is a semi-annual publication focusing on the relevant technical and political issues for the professions of mountain guiding, hiking guiding, and climbing instruction.*

<b>Managing Editor</b> Kyle Martin Jones Quebec, QC news@acmg.ca	<b>Editor-in-Chief</b> Shaun King Canmore, AB news@acmg.ca
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## Organizational Contractors

**Technical Director**  
The Technical Director chairs the Technical Committee and oversees all matters relating to technical standards. The TD reports to the President.

**Continuing Professional Development**  
CPD Coordinator  
Alison Dakin  
Golden, BC  
cpd@acmg.ca

**Technical Director**  
Marc Piché  
Canmore, AB  
td@acmg.ca

## ACMG Administrative Support

*The Administrative Support Group is led by the Executive Director and is responsible for matters relating to membership, member services, accounting, IT, sponsorship and promotions. The ED reports to the President.*

<b>Executive Director</b> Peter Tucker Bragg Creek, AB ed@acmg.ca	<b>Permit Manager,</b> Assistant to ED Janet Miller Canmore, AB permits@acmg.ca	<b>Web, Graphics and IT Coordinator</b> Chris Miller Canmore, AB webmaster@acmg.ca	<b>Administration</b> Linda Heywood Canmore, AB acmg@acmg.ca	<b>Partnership Coordinator</b> Ken Bélanger Canmore, AB partnership@acmg.ca	<b>Administrative Assistant</b> Elaine Powers Rossland, BC elaine@acmg.ca
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## ACMG Committees

Committees are groups of volunteer individuals who assist the Board of Directors and the Executive Director in doing some of the operational work and making some of the directional decisions for the Association. As a member-driven organization with limited resources, the Association relies on its committees as sources of insight and energy. A member of the board typically, but not necessarily, chairs each committee and the President and Executive Director are ex officio members of all committees. If you are interested in becoming involved with one of the committees, please contact the President pres@acmg.ca.

<b>Awards and Celebration Committee</b> <i>Chair: Chris Miller</i> Jason Billing Scott Davis Jordy Shepherd Brad White Derek Wilding Sharon Wood	<b>Communications</b> <i>Chair: Lisa Porter</i> Ian Tomm Emily Grady Paddy Jerome Jeremy Mackenzie Olivia Sofer	Jeremy Mackenzie Dave Stark Larry Stanier Leslie Taylor (public) Marni Virtue (public) Rupert Wedgwood Sharon Wood	<b>Governance</b> <i>Chair: Rick Cowburn</i> Steve Blagbrough Pierre Hungr Kent Scarborough – legal advisor Paul Vidalin	Conrad Janzen Marc Ledwidge Grant Statham Tom Wolfe	Matt Peter Veronika Vackova
<b>Climbing Instructor</b> <i>Chair: Scott McKay</i> Chris Adshade Justin Dwyer Kimanda Jarzebiak Lloyd King Sebastian Powell Derek Wilding	<b>Conduct Review</b> <i>Chair: Rod Gibbons</i> <b>Committee members added as necessary. Pool includes:</b> Nick Atkinson (public) Paul Berntsen Barry Blanchard Gillian Calder (public) Nathan Dahl George Field Neil Haggard (public)	<b>MCR/Informalex</b> <i>Chair: Larry Stanier</i> Steve Holeczi Sarah Hueniken	<b>Membership Services</b> <i>Chair: Jörg Wilz</i> Christoph Dietzfelbinger Ben Firth Derek Holtved Janet Miller Mike Welch	<b>Technical</b> <i>Technical Director: Marc Piché</i> James Blench Dwayne Congdon Todd Guyn Kirk Mauthner Craig McGee Helen Sovdat	
			<b>Professional Practices</b> <i>Chair: Nathan Dahl</i> James Blench Alison Cardinal Brent Goodman Steve Holeczi		

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AUGUST 13, 2013

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The following companies contribute financial support to the ACMG and its membership at the highest level. We would like to thank these outstanding companies for their excellent support, and their commitment to professional guiding in Canada.

## Logan

minimum \$10 000 annual contribution



## Waddington

minimum \$7500 annual contribution



## Robson

minimum \$5000 annual contribution



## Columbia

minimum \$2000 annual contribution



## Assiniboine

minimum \$1000 annual contribution

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