



MOUNTAIN BULLETIN



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

by Margaret Wheeler

Hi Everyone,

For this post-Meetingpalooza Mountain Bulletin, I want to write about two subjects: first, what I learned from the IFMGA meetings. And second, what I learned from the Access meetings. The issue of the Bulletin is chock full of details about the meetings in every aspect, and my goal in this article is to look at some of the big-picture perspectives. I hope that writing this will be a useful contribution towards conveying some of the spirit and the value of the Fall Meeting!

IFMGA Meeting

In looking back over the events of the meeting, I feel that there is no way I can fit it all into mere text. How do you capture and convey the coming-together that was truly amazing, and much deeper than we even thought it might be, so much so that it caught us all a bit by surprise? The pages of this Bulletin will express all different aspects of this, and I so for my part I would like to offer the story of one particular moment.

THE PARADE

The moment came sneaking up on me. Of course I knew we planned to have a parade, and that we would all have our uniforms, and there would be flags, and the Mayor of Boulder would be there too, and that it would be very cool and fun. But still I didn't see it coming. Late Sunday afternoon, right on time and according to Kyle's well-laid plans, we all began to gather in front of the courthouse on Pearl Street. There was some initial heckling by a few homeless guys, but then our numbers began to swell and the flags were unrolled and we starting lining up. It began to look like Something Was Happening.

And Happen it did. Standing there, surrounded by our guides – wearing uniforms and ear-to-ear grins, lined up behind the flags and outfits from around the world, I felt a shift, a movement, of perception.

At the parade, gathered together with our community from the US and abroad, in the public view, we suddenly saw ourselves through outside eyes; and in doing we saw ourselves in a new way. We saw ourselves for what we truly are: a young organization coming of age. In joining together, we have a strength that perhaps we did not realize before. We have a potential that we are just beginning to realize.

We have enormous skill and talent in our ranks – as guides, as professionals, and as members of the greater communities in which we live and work. We have warmth and openness, and a deep commitment to personal and professional growth. We have energy and motivation. We have so much!!!

The realists among you might be quick to point out that it is a good thing we have all this, because as an organization we have taken on some big, difficult tasks. We have so much before us, and as the glow of the November meetings fades, we stand here looking at all the work to be done, all the directions to pursue, all the stumbling blocks we see. For everyone – the office, the board, our membership, and our greater community – as we survey the landscape ahead, I hope you will all keep this thought at the front of your mind: Now, more than ever, it is time to work together.

Access Meetings

In my November 4th email to the membership, I wrote:

"In the big picture we are a small organization, and our membership has small numbers when compared to other entities utilizing public lands. But I see that our core values as mountain guides – connectors to the wilderness, magnifiers of our clients' experience, stewards of the land – have something very valuable to offer to the public and to land managers alike."

What is that value? After our week of meetings with NPS and USFS folks, a vision of what we have to offer is emerging. I hope you will consider it, and tell me what you think. It goes something like this:

THE PRESENT SITUATION: WHAT ARE WE NOW?

1. NPS and land managers in general (as well as the public) see guides and guide services strictly as 'people making money off public lands'. In fact, as guides trying to make a living, I think we also see ourselves this way.
2. This perception is at the core of all policy towards commercial entities operating on

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NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

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AN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIR

by Betsy Novak

There were many exciting things that happened in 2010 for the AMGA but I must say the *highlight of the year was the IFMGA/AMGA Meeting held in Boulder, Colorado, November 12- 19.* It was November 2008 when we first learned that the AMGA would be hosting the international community and not too long after that the planning process began. Two years and a few grey hairs later, 60 delegates representing 17 countries descended on Boulder to take part in what will go down in history as one of the greatest IFMGA and AMGA meetings to date.

The week started off with twenty plus foreign guides piling into two, fifteen-passenger vans and one Sprinter van to head to Moab, Utah where they would climb splitter cracks under a deep blue sky and hang with the “local” AMGA crew and climbing trip sponsors, Black Diamond and Patagonia. Geoff Unger, AMGA/IFMGA Mountain Guide, worked the trip for Jackson Hole Mountain Guides and here is what he had to say about the week. *“One memory that I will never forget from the Moab Rock Trip was working with some of the Südtirol guides. The desert is a harsh environment and no exception was made for the IFMGA delegates. They found the splitter cracks of Indian creek to be quite severe indeed. Some of the Südtirol guides had long careers as guides in their home terrain and had moved on to do more trekking and hunting work. In some cases, these guys had not put on a rope in over 20 years. We were able to take them out to Wallstreet for the second day of climbing to introduce them to more moderate sandstone routes. You should have seen the faces of some of the guides who had been guiding for 40 to 50 years as they scaled the Navajo cliffs. They had never climbed any rock like it before.”*

The following days leading up to the Opening Night were filled with important meetings, informing dialogues and lot’s of fine wine and good food. While the Italians, French, Germans, Norwegians and Slovenians enjoyed the desert southwest, IFMGA President and Vice President Hermann Biner and Manfred Lorenz and IFMGA Technical Commission President and Vice President, Peter Kimmig and Hans Bergmann met with me, Margaret Wheeler, Scott Schell and Leigh Goldberg to discuss the current state of guiding in the United States, debrief the Yosemite meeting with Superintendent Neubacher and prepare for the approaching meetings with Denali National Park, Rainier National Park and USFS Region 2 and 6. The goal of these meetings was to create a forum for all to sit together and exchange information and discuss issues pertaining to AMGA and IFMGA credentialed guides and access on NPS and USFS lands.’

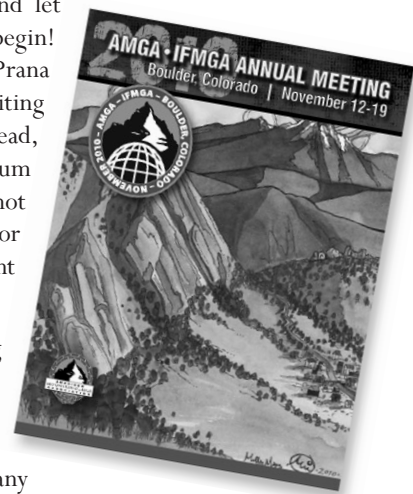
After our final meeting, Bruno Pellicier, former President of the IFMGA, looked me in the eye and said in his French accent, “You certainly have your work cut out for you.” Which was then followed by another memorable comment

made by Katrin Devouassoux, our translator, “This is too confusing for me (referring to the permit system in the US). I do not envy you for the work you must do.” After such comments were made it was evident that the IFMGA had a strong sense of the challenges the AMGA faces when dealing with access for our American guides as well as foreign IFMGA guides. Past president Dick Jackson and Margaret Wheeler have reported to the membership about this “understanding” by the IFMGA before, but I have to admit it wasn’t until I experienced for myself the constructive and meaningful dialogue between both organizations that I felt it to be true.

Another pre-meeting event was the Technical Director Skills Seminar. Technical Directors from across the globe gathered together in Eldorado Canyon State Park to discuss traditional climbing and improvised rescue techniques. Beaver Theodosakis, founder of Prana, along with Kyle Lefkoff , AMGA Board Member, hung with the guides in the park and had this to say about his day, *“It was an honor to hang out with the guides in Eldorado Canyon. My fellow Access Fund board member, Kyle and I served them lunch in the sun at the base of Calypso in the middle of their day of technical training and discussions. These guys are the real deal- you can actually see the depth of their experience in their faces – nice people too!”*

With the rest of the IFMGA Delegates and scores of American guides landed and unloaded in the town of Boulder it was time to start the party and let the international affair begin! Opening Night at the Prana store proved to be an exciting event. With over 200 head, free beer from New Belgium and a DJ to boot, it was not hard for Petzl and Outdoor Research to ensure the night was a success.

Next up was the meeting of the IFMGA Technical Commission at the Rembrandt Yard. It was encouraging to see so many American guides observe this meeting. Topics discussed were: new and developing education programs of member countries, status of applicant countries and specialized training programs for canyoneering and high-altitude expedition climbing. John Leonard, South District Ranger of Denali National Park gave a presentation on the mountaineering program and current commercial use plan



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Hermann Biner's report that was given to the IFMGA General Assembly that shows the position of the IFMGA on the matter:

The IFMGA is not the representative of the Europeans in America, but it is the federation of all mountain guides in the world. It is not the task of the IFMGA to restrict the market-access to a country, but it's the task of every single country. The IFMGA can only promote the dialogue between the countries and encourage them to adopt the so-called reciprocal right in a symmetric way. The reciprocal right is not fixed in the by-laws. Therefore the best way to come to a symmetric reciprocal right is to find a regulation directly between the countries or the continents. Like this it is maybe possible to create the necessary pressure on a country, which is not cooperative enough in this issue. It is however important that the dialogue keeps on going. Expulsion of a country from the IFMGA because of missing reciprocal right, such as it is sometimes asked by single mountain guides, would make a dialogue impossible for years and give a bad spirit.

On the occasion of the GM in Boulder our American colleagues have made a big effort to start the dialogue with the national parks. For the first time the IFMGA directly meets different national parks (Yosemite, Denali, Mt. Rainier) and the National Forest Service together with the AMGA. Although we cannot expect that all our wishes will be accepted after one meeting – the interests differ too much and the parks are not depending on the IFMGA – it is still a beginning of a dialogue, which can hopefully continue over the years.

Immediately following the meeting everyone gathered at the Southern Sun Pub & Brewery for burgers and brew. After bellies were satiated and thirsts quenched the group headed over to Neptune Mountaineering to watch a special screening of the movie documentary "A Life Ascending", which chronicles the life of acclaimed ski mountaineer and mountain guide, Ruedi Beglinger. Director/Producer Stephen Grynberg flew out from L.A. to introduce the film and join us in a post movie discussion and commentary.

The next morning Delegates and a fair amount of American guides gathered at the Rembrandt Yard for the second and final

of Denali. And during the afternoon workshop, conducted by IFMGA President Hermann Biner, the topic of reciprocity was brought to the forefront. It is clear that the IFMGA Executive Committee and respective delegates are aware that each member country has its own struggles and are not in support of expelling countries simply because their current system does not match the EU. Here is a excerpt taken directly from

meeting of the week, the General Assembly of the IFMGA. Minutes were reviewed, financials were approved and Delegates were brought up to speed on matters discussed during the Technical Commission. Once the GA adjourned many IFMGA guides hit the town to partake in the free beer being offered by participating bars before meeting for the Guides Parade.

With people's senses well lubricated, delegates, American guides and spectators gathered together in front of the Boulder County courthouse to be a part of the first ever US Mountain Guide Parade. The parade route covered three blocks of the walking Pearl Street Mall. There was an acoustic bluegrass ensemble livening the scene, a group of local kiddos bearing the flags of each country and a guest appearance by the Mayor of Boulder, Susan Osborne. Over 150 marched. The Swiss and Italians were clad in their respective countries' traditional guide uniforms while others donned the commemorative AMGA/IFMGA meeting jacket. The American IFMGA Guides sported a wool Mammot Tundra jacket, Five-Ten Half Dome jeans and a customized AMGA belt buckle, while AMGA Certified Guides and Climbing Instructors wore logo emblazoned Marmot DriClimes. It was an incredible experience for all. There were lots of smiles and an air of pride permeated the streets. At the end of the parade everyone reconvened on the courthouse lawn where the Mayor personally welcomed the international delegates and gave a proclamation, officially declaring November 12-19 International Mountain Guide week in Boulder, Colorado.

Post parade buzz the delegates made their way to Q's Restaurant in downtown Boulder for a special dinner. Event sponsors, industry affiliates and key dignitaries of the AMGA joined the delegates for a delicious three-course meal that was coupled with fine wines brought straight from the cellar. Toasts were made and conversations were energized as glasses were refilled and friendships fortified.

The following morning The North Face store welcomed the AMGA and IFMGA by hosting a breakfast and slideshow presentation by local climbers and North Face Athletes Matt Segal and Cedar Wright.

Later that evening the Main Event started off with the silent auction and social hour. Representatives from Black Diamond, Bradley Alpinist, Brooks Range, First Ascent, Five Ten, Osprey, Petzl and The North Face displayed product and mingled with the guests. There were over 300 hundred in attendance including special guests, to be mentioned later, who traveled from afar for this very special reunion. The silent auction raised over \$5,000 for the AMGA and folks walked away with quality product from our sponsors at outstanding prices. Once everyone was seated the evening presentation began. This once in a lifetime meeting and hosting of the IFMGA provided itself to be the perfect venue and time for the AMGA to recognize all those past leaders who tirelessly

worked to help the AMGA get to where it is today. Every past president (excluding Matt Culberson and Ramsay Thomas) made the journey to Boulder to reconnect with the old guard and be recognized for his contribution to the AMGA. Some of these guys had not seen each other in over 15 years and it was the first time they all were in one room together. During the awards ceremony Doug Robinson, Ian Wade and Dunham Gooding touched on the history of the organization making the evening entertaining while also educational. To honor these men the AMGA awarded each a President's Council Gold Medal and plaque, which is the highest honor to receive within the organization. To learn more about the past presidents of the AMGA read my article "Honoring the Past".

During the Awards Ceremony we remembered the lives of two very important and cherished individuals, John Fischer and Heidi Kloos. Family members from both families joined the AMGA in honoring their loved ones. It was very meaningful to look out into the crowd and see the faces of Heidi and John's family and friends who came from all over to be part of the memorial. I want to extend a huge thank to Andy and Irene Kloos, Heidi's brother and mother, and Zane Fischer, John's son, for being a part of this very special and emotional ceremony. John and Heidi will be dearly missed but their memory will live on forever within the AMGA.

Each year, at the Main Event, the AMGA recognizes all newly certified guides and climbing instructors for that year. This year the pinning of the guides ceremony was extra meaningful because 2010 IFMGA/AMGA graduates had the honor of being pinned by Hermann Biner, President of the IFMGA. This quote by Angela Hawse, AMGA Instructor Pool member, Technical Committee member and the 6th woman to gain IFMGA/AMGA certification, best describes the experience *"Getting pinned by IFMGA President Hermann Biner with his warm smile and hearty handshake was not only a huge honor, but an experience that honestly made me feel like I had become part of something bigger than I'd ever imagined."*

The Guide of the Year Award was presented to Willie Benegas for his outstanding achievements as a professional guide and for his contributions made to the guiding community. To learn more about the exploits of Willie check out the article about the Guide of the Year Award in the Mountain Bulletin. And last but not least Vince Anderson wrapped up the night with a slideshow and movie presentation titled "Wang Dang Sweet Kunyang".

One would think it would be time to call it quits after powering through 6-days of informative meetings, lavish dinners and triumphant parties, but oh-no the AMGA crew was on fire with four more days to go! Next order of business was the AMGA Board of Directors Meeting in Golden, Colorado. About 40 AMGA members attended the meeting in addition to the noteworthy presence of the Executive Committee of

the IFMGA including Hermann Biner, Peter Kimmig, Armin Oehrli and Manfred Lorenz. Minutes were approved, budgets passed and a new mission and vision statement were adopted. Stay tuned for more to come on the new mission and vision statement. All in all it was a very productive board meeting and it was an honor to have the IFMGA sit on the sidelines and learn about the structure of our organization.

With three days left and counting we all met back up at the American Mountaineering Center for the AMGA Technical Committee Meeting. There were not as many AMGA members present but Peter Kimmig, President of the IFMGA Technical Commission joined us for the morning session. Major items discussed were: Continuing Professional Development (CPD) program and requirements, ski standard, open application process and standardized training for the AMGA Instructor Pool, mentoring program, AMGA's position on snowboards and the ski mountaineering program and scoring on programs. Heli-Ski US gave a presentation on the current state of Heli Operational Standards in the US and the need to create a nationally recognized mechanized ski guide course and certification. The AMGA understands the need for such a program, the critical question to ask ourselves is what are the needs of our members and the guiding profession and how can the AMGA best meet those needs in the future. The conversation that followed the presentation is just one of many to come as we figure out the role the AMGA should be playing in the mechanized ski industry.

The last two days of the week were spent with the AMGA Instructor Pool in Eldorado Canyon State Park for their annual training. The majority of the time was spent on reviewing and revising the standardized training outline and writing lesson plans for each guide track program and for the first time, thanks to Henry Beyer, the AMGA held an awards ceremony for its Instructor Pool. During the awards ceremony Henry recognized Tom Hargis for working the most days (80 in 2010) out of all the instructors, Rob Hess for enduring the worst weather of the season on multiple programs and Keith Garvey for receiving the best overall student evaluations. Congratulations to Tom, Rob and Keith for their awards and a huge thank you to all of our Instructors for their hard work!

Accolades also need to be given to the entire AMGA office staff for all of their extreme hard work throughout the year. One staff member in particular needs to be recognized for his efforts in helping organize and



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*Assuming you don't have a Y chromosome





[R E M E M B E R I N G] HEIDI KLOOS

The AMGA and the guiding community as a whole were devastated when an avalanche took the life of Heidi Kloos this past March. For those who spend their lives in the mountains, conceptually accepting such risks is much easier than receiving the call that a friend has been lost.

One of only a handful of female Alpine Guides certified by the American Mountain Guides Association, Heidi had guided extensively around the world, working for guide services such as Mountain Trip, Southwest Adventure Guides, Aspen Expeditions, and others.

Heidi was one of the strongest, most consistently positive people I have ever met. In 2007, I had the opportunity to guide Denali parallel with Heidi and her level of client care completely blew me away. Heidi made my job easy, as anytime we had a trip that required someone who could get the job done, yet still take really great care of people on a very personal level, moment to moment, she was at the top of our list. She was our go-to guide for expeditions anywhere in the world, guiding climbs in Alaska, Antarctica and Argentina, and was scheduled to leave for Nepal the week after her untimely accident.

When I got the call from a friend that she was overdue, it didn't seem too far-fetched that she would come walking back to the trailhead with a good story to share. Even now, we in her extended family are all still trying to accept that she's not going to give us a call to meet at the crag or head out for a ski tour together. Heidi was a very special friend, co-worker and person. She had the rare ability to be consistently professional, yet also allow herself to be accessible on a personal level.

Heidi discovered climbing while in the Air Force as a member of their search and recovery team. Later, while at the University of Idaho, she began working at the school's indoor

climbing wall, and by the time she graduated she was working as a professional climbing guide, mostly with other students.

After college, she returned to her native Colorado and began working with kids at an indoor climbing wall in Grand Junction. She soon moved to Aspen, where she worked as a ski instructor, landscaper, painter, ski patroller and eventually, as a full-time mountain guide. She also worked as an instructor with the Aspen Youth Experience, a nonprofit program that brings inner-city youth to Marble, CO, to participate in trips involving a ropes course, as well as climbing and rappelling. Heidi managed the annual event, coordinating up to 40 volunteers every July.

I extend my deepest condolences to her mother, Irene Kloos, her brother Andy, his wife, their two children, and a huge cadre of friends, climbing partners, clients, and pets.

A memorial fund in Heidi's name has been set up by the Telluride Adaptive Sports Program to help fund a program for disabled athletes she helped Mountain Trip organize in Alaska. The program brings participants to Denali National Park to camp, ski and climb amongst the glaciated peaks of the Alaska Range. Donations can be made to: Telluride Adaptive Sports Program for The Heidi Kloos Memorial Fund, P.O. Box 2254, Telluride, CO, 81435 or online at tellurideadaptiveports.org. — *Todd Rutledge*



PROGRAM DIRECTOR CORNER – HENRY BEYER

this was a busy year

After an Annual Meeting it is always challenging to decide what to write about for the Fall Issue of the Mountain Bulletin, and this year is no exception. Many great discussions and exchanges happened during the joint IFMGA / AMGA Annual Meeting, so there is even more to report this year than usual.

In the end, I thought it best to briefly describe what I have been working on in 2010. Besides my daily responsibilities of managing the AMGA's guide program, I spent much of this year working on projects that will hopefully improve the quality of our programs and hence the quality of our certifications in the near future.

Along with the Technical Director, Discipline Coordinators, and members of the Technical Committee, I have been updating the Appeals Process, Continuing Professional Development (CPD), and Instructor Pool (IP) hiring procedures and policies. Furthermore, we've been developing a curriculum for a Standardized Instructor Pool training.

Each of these projects was presented to the Technical Committee (TC) and/or the IP for review and was discussed during this year's TC Meeting and/or IP training. Although there are some details to still work out, what follows is a brief account of each project:

Whatever it is write it down, make a phone call, but get the ball rolling. You must commit to it and schedule it or you will lose the opportunity of this moment. *Do it now! Exceed the Challenge!*

■ Starting January 1, 2012 CPD will be a requirement for all voting members of the AMGA – at the moment it is an expectation of all certified guides. The following membership levels are considered voting members: Certified Single Pitch Instructor; Individual Member; and Certified Guide. Certified Single Pitch Instructors already have CPD requirements in place so this change from expectation to requirement is primarily for Individual and Certified Guide Members. The updated CPD requirements will be available to the membership shortly after the start of the new year. The current CPD expectations may be found here on the AMGA's website: http://amga.com/programs/guide_continuing_ed.php.

■ Although a student appealing the Final Mark of an exam is not a common occurrence, it does happen. Consequently, we felt the need to improve and expand on the current appeals process and create a document that can inform and direct both students and staff on

how the process should progress and what to expect. Of primary concern are the length of the appeals process and the composition of the Appeals Committee – both of which are being finalized. Once these two key points have been decided upon, the Appeals Process document will be available to the entire membership. This is expected to happen sometime in the next couple of months.

■ Our IP is where the rubber meets the road for the AMGA. We understand that high quality instructors are fundamental to our success as an organization. In order to ensure we continue to improve, not just maintain, the quality of our programs, the AMGA will begin providing standardized training for all new and current employees as of 2011. The standardized training will be a requirement for all instructors, new and current, working programs in the future. Furthermore we are refining our hiring requirements with the aim of bringing into our IP individuals who are both outstanding guides and educators.

Many of you, and by you I mean members and students, only see the outward workings of the AMGA. You see it in the database and website, through the application process and your interactions with the staff, and so on and so forth. There is, as you probably know, a lot that goes on “behind the scenes” that culminates in a CWI or SPI course, in a rock or ice course, or in an alpine or ski exam.

I heard once that for every combat grunt in the Marines there are ten Marines in supporting roles being sure that grunt has what he needs to do his job. I am not sure if that is true or not, but my point is that projects like those above support the AMGA in its mission to provide the highest quality educational programs, credentials and services to its members and the guiding community.

In closing I'd like to thank and recognize all of the individuals – IP members, TC members, board members, corporate partners, AMGA staff, the list could go on – who, voluntarily and for pay, give of their time, energy, and resources in order to make the AMGA an outstanding organization. But most of all I'd like to thank all our members and students for participating in our education and certification programs. Without you the AMGA wouldn't be where it is today!

Sincerely,
Henry Beyer – Program Director

Each year, the AMGA selects a member for The Outstanding Guide Award. The award is presented to a guide who has made an outstanding contribution or achievement of significant value to the mountain guiding profession in the past year. The recipient must exhibit qualities of loyalty, integrity and moral courage worthy of emulation and be known as a person of ability and character.

For 2010, Willie Benegas has been selected as the award recipient.

Willie Benegas was born and raised in Argentina where he and his twin brother learned to climb with their dad. He returns to Argentina each year to guide trips on Aconcagua, a mountain he has climbed over 50 times.

He has been guiding for over 22 years across the globe and is among the elite of world-class mountain guides.

Willie has led more than 20 expeditions to the Himalayas including Cho Oyu, Ama Dablam, an attempt on the North Face of Jannu, and a new route on Nuptse Face called The Crystal Snake that climbed with his twin brother Damian in 2003. The brothers received the prestigious Golden Piton award for this climb.

Since 1999 he has been guiding clients on Mt. Everest for Mountain Madness and this year he summited Everest for the tenth time with clients.

Willie has set speed records on Mt. Kilimanjaro, Mt. Kenya, Aconcagua, Rainier, and he climbed 22 peaks of the Cordillera Real in 21 days.

He has been a member of The North Face

Athlete Team since 1999.

He is an AMGA Certified Rock and Alpine Guide and is pursuing AMGA Ski Mountaineering certification.

Willie has done a number of expeditions to raise money for charity. His latest cause is the Ideas-Action.org (Ideas for Development and Eco Action Support) and the Eco Everest Cleanup Initiative. This project began in 2008 with the first Eco Everest Expedition. The goal of the expedition is to clean up trash, create awareness among the local people and the climbers to help keep Mt. Everest and the Khumbu clean, and to talk about climate change impacts on the Himalayas.

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AMGA RECOGNIZES WILLIE BENEGAS AS 2010 OUTSTANDING GUIDE

Honoring our Past

by Betsy Novak

At this year's Annual Meeting the AMGA honored and acknowledged a group of individuals who have made an especially meritorious contribution to the mission and interests of the mountain guiding profession and the AMGA by bestowing the AMGA Presidential Gold Medal during the awards ceremony. These past presidents, whose shoulders the organization's current leadership stands upon, are responsible for helping guide the organization to where it is today.

Doug Robinson (1979-1985) was a man of many firsts. He was one of the founding members of the American Professional Guides Association (APMGA) with other notable individuals such as Yvon Chouinard, George Hurley, John Fischer, Jim Donini, Bob Culp, Ian Wade, Peter Lev, Jeff Lowe, Mike Covington, Harry Frishman, Kim Schmitz and Paul Ross. Doug worked tirelessly to establish a legitimate non-profit organization that would be recognized by the State of California. He developed the first written standards for guides while building the membership requirements for the APMGA. Doug established the grandfathering program to help grow the organization and fought long and hard in defense of certification.

Alan Pietrasanta (1986) chaired the formative meeting at the Climber's Ranch in the Tetons. He stated that American guiding is in a fragile situation encouraging guides to organize better to face all challenges within the profession. Allan supported high standards, standards of care, responsibility to government and the public. He developed a regional outreach program within the APMGA and worked on gaining support of the American Alpine Club.

Ian Wade (1986-1990) In the midst of Ian's leadership there was a major insurance crisis plaguing the industry. With the help of John Fischer and others serious steps were

taken to find a master liability insurance policy specifically designed to meet the unique needs of the profession. During Ian's tenure the AMGA realized the importance of shifting from an exclusive club to an association. He was responsible for developing the AMGA Accreditation Program and authoring the first AMGA accreditation guideline manual.

Dunham Gooding (1990-1994) guided the AMGA through a period of great growth. During Dunham's tenure the AMGA witnessed a remarkable growth in membership, the implementation of a full schedule of courses and most significantly a flourishing relationship with the UIAGM. Dunham helped carry the Accreditation Program to the next level and helped direct the development of AMGA certification programs. During Dunham's tenure the Senior Guides Certification Program was adopted with the goal of building a group of reliable and highly experienced guides that could contribute to the development and enhancement of AMGA programs. In 1992 Dunham attended the UIAGM meeting in Vent, Austria as a representative for the AMGA. During this meeting one of the first verbal and written exchanges between both organizations' occurred and shortly thereafter the AMGA submitted its formal letter of application for UIAGM membership.

Matt Culberson (1994-1995) stated "Our collective responsibility is to fairly and equally represent the needs of both independent guides and guides who work for large services and concessionaires." For the first time the access issue is brought to the forefront of the AMGA collective mind and Matt was in support of best methods to keep public lands open to commercial recreational use. Matt definitely set the right tone for his successor when he declared that the only way the AMGA would resolve its current issues is to keep in mind the interests of all active guides. Matt broke new ground by working with Land Managers on the development of climbing management plans establishing credential-based access in Joshua Tree National Park for obtaining commercial use permits.

John Cleary (1995-1997) continued to deal with the long-standing issue of the deep-division within the guiding community over certification. Thanks to advice from the then President of the UIAGM, Leo Blattler, John worked to unify the guiding community by encouraging all seasoned guides to join the AMGA as a Senior Certified Guide. He outwardly supported independent guides working with guide services and all guides adhering to the standards established by Land



Managers. John continued to carry the torch for UIAGM membership and on November 22, 1997 the AMGA was finally admitted into the UIAGM/IFMGA in Salzburg, Austria. John Cleary with 9 other representatives from the AMGA (Matt Brooks, Randal Grandstaff, Bela Vadasz, Jean Pavillard, Ramsay Thomas, Kathy Cosley and Mark Houston) witnessed the unanimous vote by the delegates of the IFMGA. AMGA Guide certification programs are finally recognized as meeting the international standard.

Mark Houston (1997-1999) first worked for the AMGA as the chair of the Technical Commission committee for many years helping the AMGA develop and establish internationally recognized rock and alpine programs. Mark also worked to pilot the Top Rope Site Manager Program (TRSM) in 1998. Mark believed in the development of a strong profession rooted in trust and open communication amongst the guiding community as a whole. In addition, Mark believed that in order to help build professional opportunities for guides we needed to raise the professional status of American Guides in our own eyes and the eyes of the public and our clients. Mark oversaw the continued success and growth of the newly developed Ski Mountaineering Program. Mark supported a guide cooperative idea modeled after European system and advocated for individual guides operating as independent business entities. Mark was a visionary, encouraging AMGA membership to keep sights on the long-term goals so as not to get bogged down by short-term goals driven by personal interests. Mark strived to unify the guiding community by keeping his range of vision on what would better the profession as a whole and what would help all future generation of guides to follow.

Ramsay Thomas (1999-2000) During Ramsay's time as President the AMGA office expanded, courses ran at capacity, a joint ACMG and AMGA Technical Handbook was published and printed, privatized programs were considered, the Senior Guide Program was terminated and the visiting guide program was tested. Ramsay helped research visa options for foreign guides in an attempt to improve the reciprocity situation.

Phil Powers (2000-2001) worked toward strengthening the Accreditation Program by tying it to certification over time. Phil is responsible for beginning conversations with Denali National Park around credential-based access. He supported the work of developing a privatized Rock Instructor program with the main goal of quality programming. Phil believed the AMGA must maintain its' objectivity and play a neutral role when dealing with regional issues and conflicts that face guides and must clearly represent guides as a unified group. He understood the importance of unification in receiving insurance benefits, group health policies, employee networks and improved access stating "Better for the guide, better for the client and better for the environment." Phil encouraged the AMGA to play an increasing role in federal and other land-use policy especially the Fixed Anchors in Wilderness regulations and

helped launch a new communications plan with the aim of more visibility of AMGA's Brand Identity.

Dick Jackson (2001-2006) had a very open mind about the AMGA membership. After years of establishing AMGA programs the organization begins to conceptually tackle the access issue with Dick Jackson at the helm. Dick urges the AMGA Board of Directors to research and ultimately formulate a plan for access that meets the following criteria: it respects current permit holders, supports and acknowledges both accreditation and certification as the national standard, increases available user days and arranges for affordable liability insurance for its' members. Dick was instrumental in the development and implementation of the Certified Guides Federation and worked with the Public Policy Committee efforts to push forward approval of CUA's on US National Park and other public lands.

John Bicknell (2006-2008) revised the TRSM program with the goal of making it more accessible while maintaining program quality and developed and approved a Strategic Plan to help better direct the organization. John was instrumental in advocating for the continued development of the climbing instructor program realizing that the AMGA needed to provide programming and services that meet the needs of the entire industry. John helped the AMGA achieve UIAA recognition for its' Single Pitch Instructor Program and was integral to the successful establishment of the Climbing Wall Instructor Program. John believed in the importance of open dialogue between the AMGA and its' members. He traveled extensively throughout the US and abroad to ensure the voices of our members and partners were being heard. John offered focused leadership as he would always bring the current work of the AMGA back to the long-range plan to make sure the organization was always on track.

Matt Brooks was given honorary mention during the awards ceremony, recognizing his lifetime of service to the AMGA. Matt has been involved with the AMGA for over two decades contributing everything from computers to rescue sleds to funding. He served two terms on the AMGA Board of Directors as Treasurer and currently serves as the AMGA historian who is responsible for collecting and recording historical documents of the association.

The AMGA attributes a great deal of its success to the dedication, hard work, passion, and determination of a community of volunteers, led by a president who also volunteers his or her time as a leader. Drawn from the mountain guiding community, our past presidents, along with hundreds of past board and executive board members, have contributed skills, leadership, countless hours, and even monetary support to ensure that AMGA operates and meets its goal of being the premier source for training, credentials and services for professional mountain guides and climbing instructors in the United States. We are grateful to all of our Past Presidents and the board members who served throughout our history. *Thank you.*

Honoring our Past



ED'S WORLD

A SUMMARY OF 2010

by Ed Crothers, Accreditation & Climbing Instructor Program Director

CLIMBING INSTRUCTOR PROGRAM

It has been a busy year in the CIP. In my opinion, the biggest news in this program is that the UIAA has endorsed the AMGA CWI curriculum as meeting their training standards. What makes this significant is that, at this point, all programs offered by the AMGA have been reviewed and approved by standard setting, international associations. In the case of the Guide Program, the IFMGA and the UIAA in the case of Climbing Instructor Program. While negotiations continue with the UIAA for rights to use the UIAA logo to promote the Climbing Instructor Program, this achievement is a testament to the high standards set by the AMGA and to the hard work and vision of many people over the course of the history of this organization.

Climbing Wall Instructor Program: Big strides have been made in the Climbing Wall Instructor Program. Prior to 2010 there were only two people qualified to train potential new CWI Providers. Considering the number of climbing facilities across the country and the growth potential of this program, it became obvious change was needed. To address that need, trainings were held in May and November of this year to develop new CWI Trainers. Both trainings went very well and the number of trainers increased to nine. The long-term goal is to have at least one CWI Trainer in all 50 States within 10 years.

Another significant change intended to stimulate growth in the CWI Program is that in 2011 people who successfully complete the CWI Certification Course will receive a 3-year membership to the AMGA. This is equal to the length of their CWI certification. This applies to members only certified at the CWI level, not to members certified at other

levels. Associate, Individual, Certified and SPI memberships remain good for one year.

Single Pitch Instructor Program: This program continues to generate strong numbers and be the fastest growing program in the AMGA. In 2007, some felt that the SPI Program, with the lead climbing component, was too specialized and would not generate the number of participants that the Top Rope Site Manager Program had. This has not proven to be the case. At its' peak in 2007, the TRSM had 413 participants in the course/assessment over the course of the year. In 2008 the number of SPI participants was 595, in 2009 – 647 and in 2010, 680 participants in either a course or assessment. Clearly, the AMGA SPI Program has proven it fills a niche in the climbing instructor world. With 51 Assistant Providers or Providers in Training and 46 Providers from all regions of the country, this program truly represents a national standard.

ACCREDITATION PROGRAM

The Accreditation Program continues to grow and evolve. Currently, there are 31 AMGA Accredited Programs. In 2010 two new programs joined the ranks: Southwest Adventure Guides, located in Durango, Colorado and The Rock Club, located in the New York metro area. Irwin Backcountry Guides, a mechanized ski operation based in Crested Butte, Colorado is another new program that applied for accreditation in 2010 and is in the process of being reviewed. Re-accreditations reviews were completed for Exum Mountain Guides, Eastern Mountain Sports and Uprising Adventures. Colorado Mountain School and Alpine Ascents International are partway through the re-accreditation review process.

As the push to tie guide certification closer to accreditation continues, it is worth noting that both EMS and Uprising Adventures require all their field staff to hold AMGA certification. Exum has seven IFMGA on staff and an additional 18 staff members that are Alpine or Rock Certified or both. At Southwest Adventure Guides everyone on staff has taken one or more AMGA courses. There are one IFMGA Certified, 4 Certified Alpine or Rock Guides or both, and 1 Ski Mountaineering Guide on staff. Looking at the bigger picture, these numbers represent a growing trend among AMGA Accredited Programs. As certification moves toward becoming an industry standard, forward thinking guides are participating in AMGA courses and exams. Forward thinking business owners are increasing the number of AMGA trained and certified guides on staff. It is a win-win situation that speaks to the strength and evolution of the AMGA as a whole.

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This past year I represented the AMGA at the Climbing Wall Association Annual Conference, the Exit Strategies meeting, the Wilderness Risk Managers Conference (WRMC,) and the Association of Outdoor Recreation and Education Conference (AORE.) I conducted a workshop at WRMC and provided a presentation at the AORE conference. At both these conferences I was invited to take part in roundtable discussions that addressed, among other things, certification, accreditation and how these credentials fit in to the future of the outdoor industry.

That's it for 2010. Looking forward to the challenges and opportunities to come in 2011. Cheers!!

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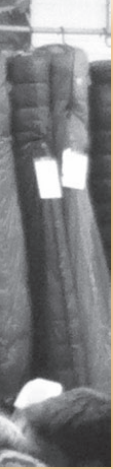
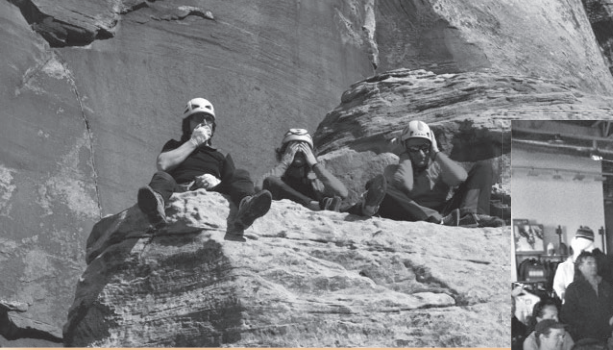
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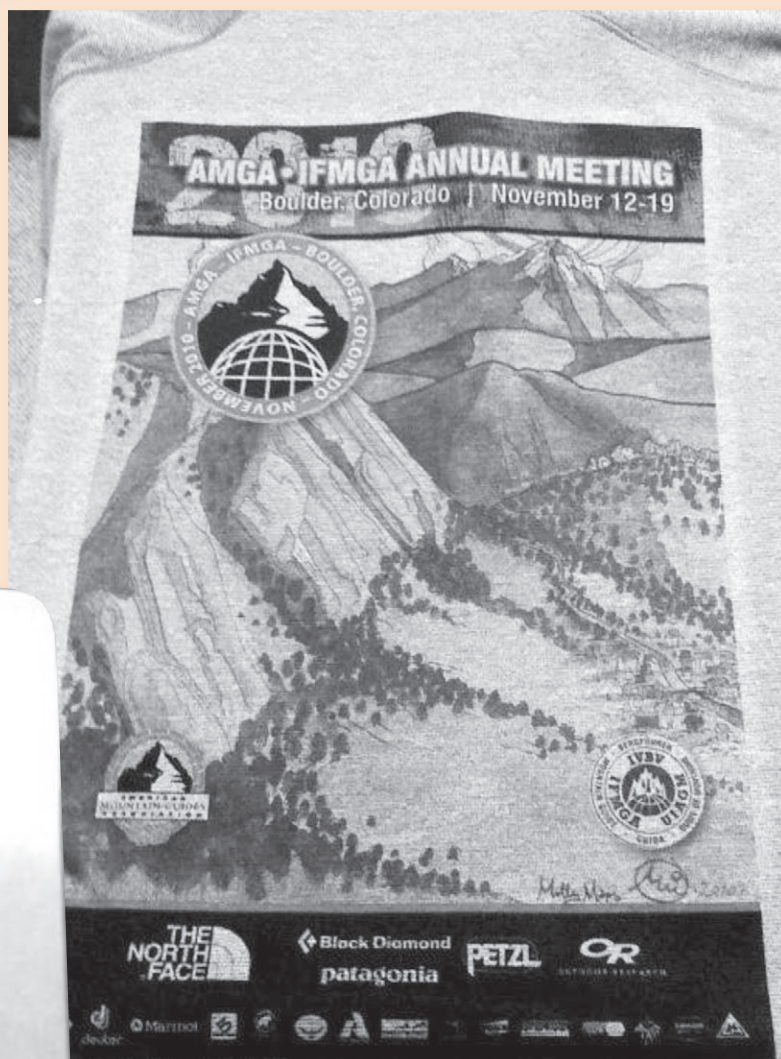


2010 AMGA • IFMGA ANNUAL MEETING

Boulder, Colorado | November 12-19

2010 AMGA/IFMGA ANNUAL MEETING PRODUCT SALE

If you were unable to make your way to Boulder for the AMGA/IFMGA Annual Meeting or if you were in Boulder but never got around to purchasing some of the items we were selling, you're in luck. We have limited quantities so orders will be filled on a first come first served basis. Please call the office if you're interested in ordering.



The Capilene's are \$30 and come in Gray (men's) and Blue (women's).

The Bottle Opener's are \$3.00 and are made of metal and roughly the size of a credit card.

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TD Corner by Rob Hess

Hi all. Here I sit resting from lots of skiing as we have had an amazing start to our ski season here in Jackson. I can only hope you all are experiencing the same thing and that this snowy weather keeps up!

The dust has finally settled from this fall and it is time to get down to business. Many things occurred around the annual meeting and IFMGA gathering this fall. Before I get into some specifics, I think it is important to reflect on what a great job the AMGA office and all the friends involved did in orchestrating a great IFMGA / AMGA event. The delegates from the various countries were very impressed with the atmosphere and organization of the event. I believe this was a huge step in cementing the kind of respect the AMGA needs and deserves in the international community.

For those of us who have gone through courses and exams, putting extensive time and effort into our guiding careers, we can't help but ask ourselves where our training and certification programs lie in comparison to the international community. Though the IFMGA / UIAGM has particular standards a country must meet before being allowed in to the organization, these standards are largely a function of total days of training and certification (80 or so). The scope of the training and certification is largely up to each country based on the demands of the country, though some base line guiding skills in Rock, Alpine and Ski Mountaineering are mandatory. As we know, a fully certified guide should be able to adapt, work and guide around the world. Invariably, we see countries find their strengths based on the type of terrain and style of guiding they tend to utilize most.

Through my travels guiding I have often compared our programs to other countries programs. I have asked myself what defines us as American guides, where do our strengths lie? I think we all know that a certain level of wilderness based activity or activities that are more committing are what we often deal with as Americans. Access to an infrastructure of easy rescue tends to be less available and in some cases non-existent. Avalanche reports are things we look at as guidelines, there is great variability in our terrain, we must be prepared to make our own decisions and be excellent with the skills that help us support our decisions... "snow science". In general, I would say that due to the fact that our terrain is so spread out and that the styles and or type of terrain we use is so variable,

we must be and are great generalists, or in other words, I think we are diverse.

I think we all know that traditional climbing skills are core elements of the American guiding tradition. We often guide rock and alpine climbs with out the use of fixed protection or anchors. A big part of this past IFMGA meeting was a climbing excursion to Indian Creek with IFMGA delegates and friends as well as a meeting of the Technical Directors of the delegate countries. As we hosted the folks on the splitters and as Dale Remsberg and I went through a day with the TD's of each country, it became very clear that one of our strengths as a country is traditional climbing. We may not require that candidates climb at a 5.11 or greater sport climbing grade but we as guides must climb well at 5.10+ on a wide variety of rock and styles of climbing, this includes crack climbing, while we place protection. Delegates were impressed with our desert crack climbing capabilities as a country.

The meeting of the Technical Directors in Eldorado Canyon was quite interesting. Dale Remsberg accompanied me on this outing as the Alpine Discipline Coordinator. The discussion

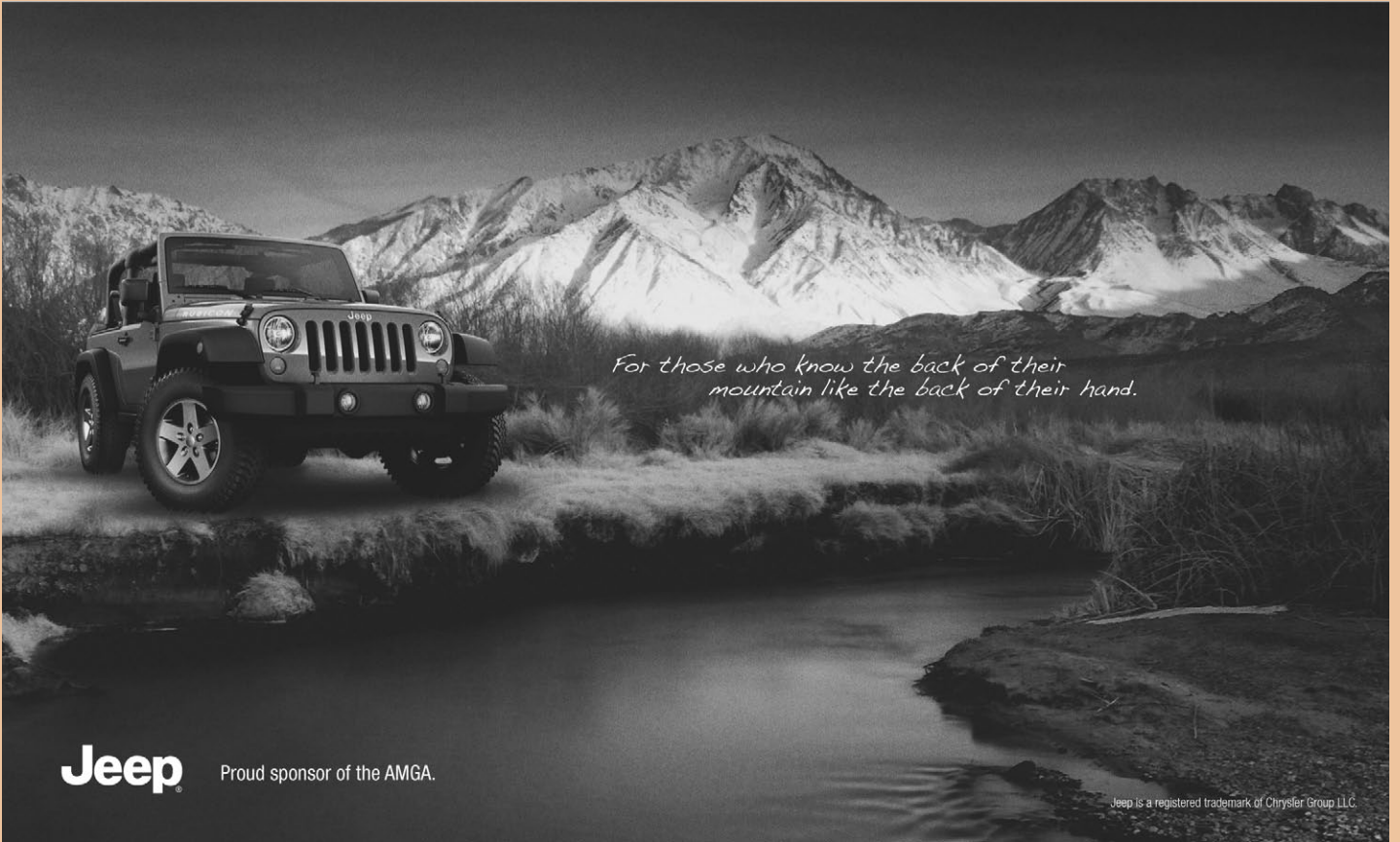
was led by the TD of the UK Terry Ralphs and was focused largely on the rock discipline. The discussions led us in many directions and as a country with a traditional climbing emphasis, we were often at the forefront of the discussions. It became very clear that due to our diverse nature, traditional climbing guiding skills and the overall nature of our rock training and certification program, we are leaders in the rock discipline in the IFMGA. It is worth noting that we shared many of the same beliefs and techniques as much of the countries represented. I had numerous conversations with other TD's of some of the smaller countries represented, as they were interested in utilizing some of the AMGA course material and curriculum. I must say that this was a boost of confidence for myself and the AMGA.

This view I had during the meeting can only be looked at as a thin cross section of what is being done and by whom. I am happy to say that although we can and will continue to improve as an organization, our training and certification programs are something we can and should be proud of here at the AMGA.

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ACCESS DIRECTOR UPDATE

by Leigh Goldberg

It was a huge honor getting to meet so many of you in Boulder during the IFMGA Conference, AMGA Annual Meeting and Board of Directors Meeting last month. During the Board Meeting on November 16 and the Certified Guides Co-op (CGC) Informational Meeting on November 15, I addressed some of the misperceptions of my role as Access Director. Since I am essentially here to serve you, AMGA membership, it's important to me that you understand my day-to-day mission. I would like to recap my mission here for those of you who were unable to join us in Boulder.

My job can be best described as part Marketing, part Public Relations and part Public Policy. One of my top priority audiences are land managers of both public and private lands. Since coming on board in May, I have learned that there are some deeply rooted perceptions of professional guides amongst land managers: namely that guides are ravaging the wilderness for financial profit. This perception continues to shape the quality and quantity of commercial access in our country. One of my objectives is to help shift land manager perceptions so that they see guides as an underutilized resource and part of the solution, as opposed to part of the problem. Consistent and persistent messaging must accurately describe guides as stewards and ambassadors who are in essence connectors to the natural world, and protectors of both the resource and the public. My job is to help tell this story effectively to land managers. Your job is to help tell this story to land managers but more importantly to continue to demonstrate this reality every day in the field.

One of my goals is the ongoing balance between proactive and reactive duties. Examples of proactive duties include strategic planning and membership and land manager outreach. Examples of reactive duties include drafting time sensitive scoping

comments for park Management Plans and participating in public comment periods regarding national and state park policy proposals. The recent meetings we organized with Yosemite National Park, Denali National Park and Preserve, Mount Rainier National Park and the US Forest Service are examples of proactive duties. Our policy efforts to accommodate increased demand for guided climbing on Denali and address the proposed mountaineering fee increases for Denali and Rainier are examples of reactive duties. As Access Director, I will do my best to continue to balance both while keeping an eye on short-term and longer-term objectives.

Another important item I would like to clarify is that the AMGA is a non-profit educational organization. As such, we are not in a position to pursue permits for our members to guide. We will however work to ease moratoriums on permits and expand the opportunity for more permits to be available to our members through programs such as Commercial Use Authorizations (CUAs). The CGC, however, is focused on pursuing permits for its ownership base. If you missed the CGC Informational Meeting in Boulder, (there were over 60 people in attendance), please contact me for a copy of their presentation.

LOOKING BACK...

The fourth quarter marked some important access-related milestones for the AMGA. Here are some of the highlights:

Mount Rainier Single Trip CUA Program

The AMGA promoted the Mount Rainier National Park Single Trip CUA Program for 2011 to AMGA membership. Since it's launch four years ago, this is the first year the program filled to capacity adding 15 guided trips beyond what the three concessioners are authorized to offer. The maximum group size was also increased from five to six, which increases the safety and profitability of each trip. Mount Rainier's CUA Program is a success

story we would like to see repeated in other National Parks. Rainier has been successful in 1) attracting some of the highest quality guides in the country without impacting current concessioners or the resource, 2) creating a mechanism to help decrease illegal guiding which has taxed park resources and compromised public safety, and 3) helping to keep guides employed year-round.

National Climbing Management Summit

Along with Betsy Novak, Executive Director, I represented the AMGA at the National Climbing Management Summit in Las Vegas, NV October 22nd – 24th. The summit, which occurs every two to three years, was co-facilitated by the three federal agencies -- the Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service and US Forest Service – and the Access Fund. This was an extremely valuable opportunity for the AMGA to network with land managers from the most significant climbing venues across the country and gain a greater understanding of land management policies and approaches.

Land Manager Meetings during IFMGA Conference

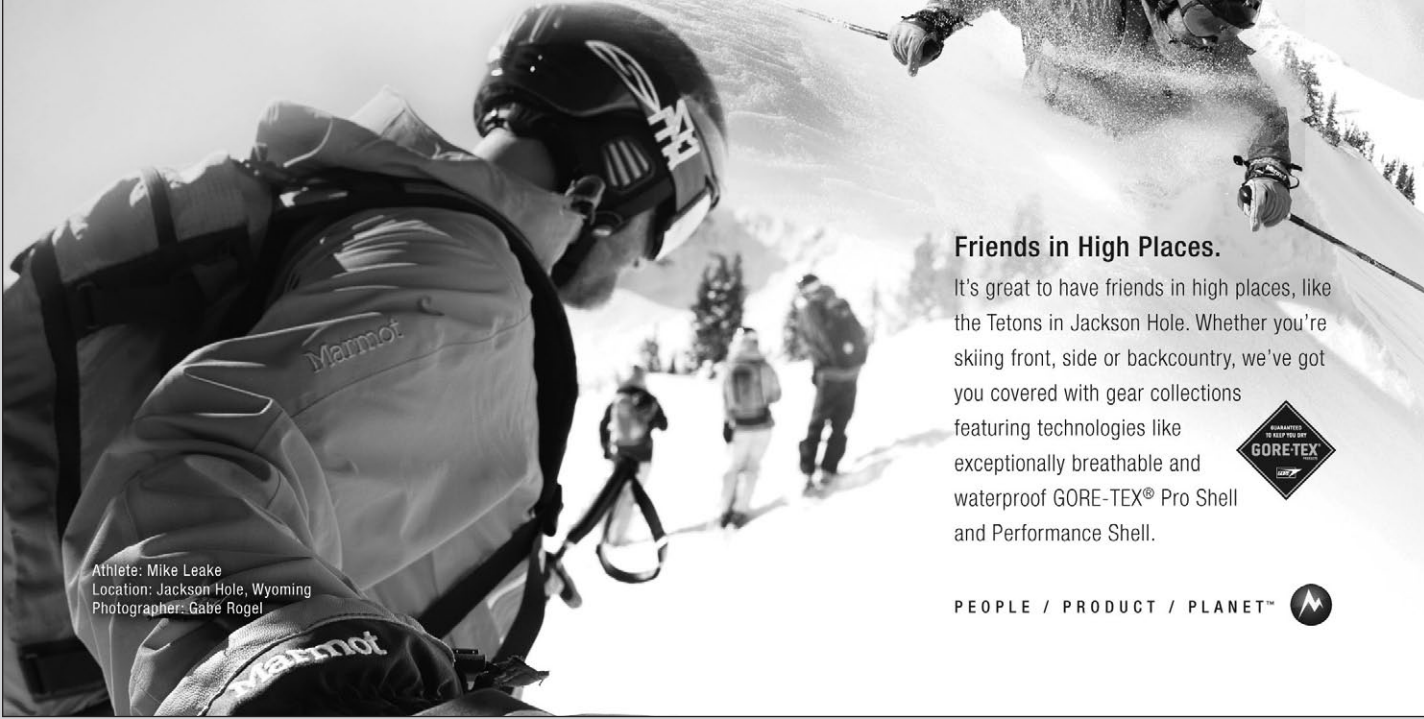
As noted above, the AMGA held meetings with key land managers during the IFMGA Conference. The intention of these meetings was to kick-start dialogue regarding commercial access for American and foreign guides, to educate land managers about the IFMGA and AMGA, and discuss opportunities to work together towards common goals pertaining to guiding on public lands. I will be busy following up with Denali, Yosemite, Rainier and the US Forest Service regional contacts in the months ahead continuing the dialogue we started in November.

LOOKING AHEAD...

Here are some of my key access initiatives for 2011:

continued on page 4

Marmot FOR LIFE



Athlete: Mike Leake
Location: Jackson Hole, Wyoming
Photographer: Gabé Rogel

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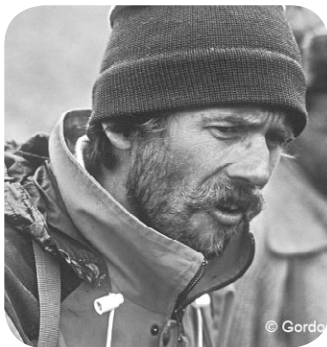


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[R E M E M B E R I N G] JOHN FISCHER



One of the perils of being part of the mountaineering or similar communities are all-too-common surprise phone calls with a stricken voice on the other end saying, “I’ve got some bad news...” I’ve heard those exact words way too many times. It is part of the price of living on the edge.

Allan Pietrasanta’s call to me about John was an especially difficult blow, however. John was one of my most significant mentors and oldest friends. He was also such a rigorously safe mountaineer that I could scarcely imagine him falling off a mountain. It is especially tragic he was killed by a deer, which are so much a part of the mountains and forests he loved.

I first met John and Doug Robinson in 1969, when I was a high school senior in Bishop. They were the first hippies I had ever met and my subsequent visits to their cabin in Cardinal Village scared my parents half to death. If only they had known the whole story!

When I was 17 - fresh out of high school - I was dispatched to Palisade School of Mountaineering by my grandmother (over my parents’ protestations.) She told me that she knew that I was going to climb no matter what she or my parents thought about it, and as long as that was the case, I had better learn to do it right.

John was not my actual guide, but his group and my own made the long hike up from base camp to the glacier high camp together. No sooner did we throw down our packs, however, than John started swearing. He’d forgotten his cigarettes! I was so beat that I could barely stand up, but within minutes John was glissading the couple thousand vertical feet back to base camp. When he finally showed back up a couple of hours later - looking no worse for the wear - I dared to laugh that he had definitely walked his mile for a camel! (the company’s advertising slogan at the time.) In a broader sense, though he always walked that mile (or even many more) for whatever mission he ever needed or wanted to accomplish. One of those was helping to found the AMGA.

Just as John’s friend Doug Robinson mentored my early writing and photography, John taught me the mountain skills and rigorous attention to safety that enabled me later to travel the world as a National Geographic expedition photographer. Although I could scarcely match the technical skills of my later subjects such as Alex Lowe, Will Steger or Conrad Anker, at least those people didn’t have to worry about me getting myself into personal peril while I was doing my job (rock fall and acts of God notwithstanding!)

I have so many stories of our climbs and adventures together that it is impossible to describe in this space. A couple of special ones come to mind, though. I will always remember the longest night of my life, shivering together with John through an unexpected bivouac just below the summit of Clyde Minaret on his birthday in September (some party!). The worst part was when he ran out of cigarettes. Or, the scream he shrieked while jumaring in the dark at 20,000,’ when a piton I had placed popped out and he pendulumed into space over a 3000-foot ice wall on Mount Baruntse, near Everest.

John was instrumental in bringing to life a nascent organization of guides called the American Mountain Guides Association. Although PSOM, itself, passed into history for a variety of reasons, his legacy was bringing an often-competitive group of independent souls together into a powerful group that spent years on an accreditation program that has finally earned international respect and recognition that enables American guides to work anywhere in the world. Just a decade or so ago, that was virtually illegal throughout much of Europe and Canada!

As did many people, John and I did sometimes have our differences, but we always overcame them. I was especially proud of him when he stopped ingesting so many things that were killing him, became more spiritual and entered a whole new phase of his life helping people in other ways beyond mountaineering (but while still remaining just as deft on his crampons.) One of my biggest disappointments in moving to Montana 18 years ago is that I seldom saw John afterwards. He kept promising to ride up on his beloved motorcycle, but then came along the deer.

I extend my deepest condolences to Mike, Kate, Zane and Joy, along with his other friends. May he find peace and wonder in that unknown future that lies ahead of all of us.

Thank you, John, for all you did for me and so many others. You will be sorely missed. – Gordon Wiltse

GEAR review

Garmont Helix

by Amos Whiting

I had the opportunity to test out the new Garmont Helix boots this winter/ spring, while teaching a 12-day AMGA Ski guide course in the Wasatch and Uinta mountains of Utah. I used them in most types of terrain: open bowls, glades, tight east coast-like trees, 50 degree narrow couloirs and even some in bounds moguls. Due to the transitional nature of the snow pack in late March, I got to ski them in nearly every type of snow as well such as corn, dust on crust, dust on coral reef, breakable crust, isothermic potatoes, heavy powder, and even a bit of 4% blower.

The Helix (previously the Helium) is Garmont's lightest overlap cuff boot at (3.46lbs). It has three buckles, is Dynafit compatible, medium high cuff and an external locking lever for walk /ski mode. I have been skiing Garmont boots for many years and have always enjoyed the fit, and weight vs. performance value of the boots. Having skied the Radium for the past two seasons, I already appreciate the overlap cuff design, which gives the boots a more alpine boot feel as far as the flex and down hill performance. This is key with the Helix, which is a very light and fairly low cut boot.

My first impressions when I put them on was "wow these are super light, I could go dancing in these" It had been a couple of years since I had used a three buckle boot and the weight difference on bigger up hill days is dramatic. The walking mode has a huge range of motion, allowing one to have a longer stride while skinning. They came with a plastic toggle (like a zipper toggle) to engage or disengage the walking mode. I broke this toggle the first time I put them on; I am not sure it is necessary, as I did not use the other toggle for the rest of my time using the boots. The weight combined with the low profile nature of the boot



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make them good for scrambling, climbing easy ice or mixed terrain. At the end of my first up hill (around 4200 ft) it was time to lock them down and see how they ski. Having learned to ski on leather tele-boots I am no stranger to softer lower boots, but I will say that I have enjoyed the power and ease of the new beefy AT boots. The snow on the first ski was variable with some wind slab up high, some boot top pow and a fair amount of zipper crust. The Helix skied all of it well, as long as I stayed over the boots. These are not cheater boots, one can not rely on a high cuff and big forward tilt to get you through the crud if you get in the back seat. Once while skiing some light new snow over old tracks I hit a rut and a frozen cookie and felt like I totally folded the boot over. While in steep jump turn or pedal hop type of terrain they were great due to the lightweight nature, very easy to hop around.

My over all impression of the Helix is it is an excellent mid lightweight ski touring/ mountaineering boot with good ski performance. It skis better than a super lightweight boot, and skins better than the bigger AT boots more commonly used these days. I would not recommend it for a skier who struggles with staying out of the back seat, as it won't be very forgiving. It is also not the choice if one is doing more on/ off-piste skiing, as it does not have the beefy support in firmer variable conditions. It is a great quiver boot for an advanced skier/ guide doing a bunch of up hill, or long traverses.

Black Diamond Quadrant

by Donny Roth

For 2010 / 2011 Black Diamond throws its hat into the extremely competitive ring of touring-freeride boots. In usual Black Diamond fashion, they come in with a bold new line led by the Quadrant free-touring boot. This type of boot represents a bit of a holy grail for boot designers, as it's a tough leap from jack-of-all-trades to tool of the true renaissance skier. The skier that still thrives on a high-performance descent, yet earns every foot of vertical to get the goods can be a tough customer to please.

I brought the Quadrant with me for the "summer" season in Chile and Argentina. I skied several peaks and a couple multi-day tours with the boots. The terrain and conditions brought everything from horrible wind-effected cauliflower to blower powder, and from easy ski touring to steep cramponing and rocky ridge ascents.

The fit is a bit short in length. If you are generally between sizes, take a little extra time sizing the boot. It seems to be a fairly average, or medium volume boot. The boot is noticeably precise. Even small movements of the foot translated to action at the ski. This was true even while skinning, which is really incredible. On icy traverses, it was great to have the control.

The Quadrant comes with a Black Diamond designed liner with a proprietary closure system. The liner appears to be extremely durable. It has a tough feel to it – no wimpy fabrics. Once the liner is cooked, and fit properly, it is an extremely comfortable fit. But, if the boot has a weakness, it's the liner. The Boa closure system is fast and easy to operate, but it does not allow for much adjustment. It wants to close more tightly at the top than lower at the ankle. It also does not allow one to pull the tongue out to promote airflow during drying. Is this a non-issue or absolutely critical? Only the user can know.

The Quadrant is a four-buckle overlap design. The buckles are mostly metal – where they need to be. The plastic gives the levers a softer feel, but aren't critical to the integrity of the structure. They are easy to manipulate, even with gloved hands, and don't clog excessively. They would be tough to repair or replace in the field. But, they appear bomber, so that is probably of little concern.

The hook-and-loop straps on the top a touch on the skinny side; it lacks the ability to really add power to the system. It is lightweight, and for those that plan on earning every foot, this is plenty. For those set on ripping descents, an aftermarket strap may be a good choice.

Black Diamond is claiming an unmatched range of motion. It's pretty cool actually. When the boot is in walk mode the cuff seems to disappear. The foot stays seated in the footbed and is not forced to slide forward with each step. It tours well! The huge of range of motion is also helpful in that the boot has a bit of a flatter sole. This is great for down hill performance, but can be a detriment while walking. The Quadrant overcomes this gracefully.

So, great, let's cut to the chase – how's it go down!? Hmm, how to write this for a well-mannered audience? How 'bout "holy-crap-wind-crust-has-never-been-so-easy-I've-never-skied-so-fast-steeps-become-flat-my-pack-isn't-trying-to-fly-over-my-head" awesome. Something like that. I will admit that I was suspicious at the Fisher-Price aesthetics. When staring down a steep, no-fall face you want Ferraris, not Legos. But don't be fooled, these boots will bring it. Black Diamond has used all of their research in multi-density molding to create an asymmetrical design that combines lightweight and power. It is stiff on the inside (medial), and sensitive on the outside (lateral). I admit that I got to the bottom of most descents exclaiming something like, "Really? How's that possible?" The flex is progressive and predictable. It is not an alpine race boot, but it doesn't let you down either.

The Black Diamond Quadrant will be a big-time player in a heavy hitting category. The skiers that use these types of boots are typically strong, athletic skiers, and BD has built a boot for them.





MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR – JOSH HARROD

membership update

First off, I would like to thank everyone that was able to attend the AMGA/IFMGA Annual Meeting last month. The event was a huge success, and member participation played a very important role in this. For those of you not in attendance, you can read all about what you missed, throughout this *Mountain Bulletin*.

As 2010 draws to a close, there are a few important items I'm certain you should be aware of.

Membership

The first is, membership dues will be increasing for 2011. This will be the first increase in member dues in 10 years. In that time, the AMGA has experienced tremendous growth. The increase will allow us to continue to grow while still offering a quality product.

Beginning January 1, 2011, the new member dues will be:

IFMGA Guide	\$200
Certified Guide	\$125
Individual Member	\$110
Certified SPI	\$75
Associate Member	\$65
Student Associate Member	\$45

You may have noticed that the Certified CWI membership was not listed above. The reason being is we will be revamping the CWI membership program. After January 1, 2011 anyone who successfully completes the CWI certification course will receive a 3-year membership to the AMGA. Essentially, your membership will be good for as long as your certification - 3 years. This will be the only AMGA program that provides a 3-year certification/membership and only applies to CWI members. If you are CWI Certified, but holds other AMGA certifications or are at a higher membership level, this change does not affect your membership – it remains a 1-year membership. It is important to remember that if your AMGA membership has expired, any AMGA certifications you hold are not valid until your membership has been renewed.

If you are currently an AMGA Certified CWI, your membership will be extended to 3 years from the last day of your course. For example, if you became certified June 1 of 2009, your AMGA membership and CWI certification will be valid until June 1, 2012. It is important to note that your CWI Membership must be current to be eligible for this extension. If you were that same person who became CWI certified on June 1, 2009 but failed to renew your membership in 2010, you do not qualify for this extension. For those CWI members who have allowed their AMGA membership to expire, you can take advantage of this opportunity by renewing their membership before February 1, 2011.

AMGA Scholarships

Scholarship season is in full swing. If you plan on taking any "guide track" course or exam in 2011, I urge you to look into the scholarship opportunities the AMGA has to offer.

The following Corporate Partners, Private Donors and Members are offering scholarships' in 2011:

- Arcteryx Scholarship
- Backcountry Access Scholarship
- Black Diamond Scholarship
- Niice Fund – Chad VanderHam Memorial Scholarship
- First Ascent Scholarship
- GORE-TEX® Scholarship
- Jim Ratz Memorial Scholarship
- Julie Cheney Culberson Educational Fund
- Mammut Scholarship
- Marmot Scholarship
- Mike Hatstrup Scholarship



Mountain Hardwear Scholarship
 Osprey Scholarship
 Patagonia Scholarship
 Doug Parker & Roger Baxter Jones Memorial Scholarship
 Petzl Scholarship
 The North Face Scholarship
 The Walker Family Foundation

Criteria for application

The purpose of a scholarship is to provide funding for the continuing education of a qualified professional guide. The successful applicant is a guide and:

- **Must** be a current member of the AMGA
- **Must** be currently enrolled in the Course/Exam to which the scholarship will be applied
- Is pursuing guiding as a profession
- Is seeking to better his/her guiding skills through educational courses and/or exams
- Agree to provide 250-word (*minimum*) testimonial describing your program experience and how the scholarship/scholarship sponsor contributed to the experience, 5 Photos (*minimum*) shot during the Program and 1 video (*minimum*) shot during the Program.
- Depending on the scholarship, may be asked to participate in three mutually agreed upon events during the period of 04/1/11–12/31/11. *An event is considered a minimum four-hour time commitment. Events include, but are not limited to: climbing demonstrations, clinics, time spent at trade shows discussing products, and store visits.*

Scholarships Application Process

Please visit the link below to begin the application process. <http://survey.constantcontact.com/survey/a07e30z0oo2ge2zzgcr/start>

Only after we receive the following items will your application be considered for review:

- Completed General Application Survey
- Completed Questionnaire
- Guiding Resume
- Personal Climbing/Skiing Resume

You may submit Scholarship Applications starting October 1, 2010. Any applications received prior to October 1, 2010 will not

be considered for review.

All scholarship applications are due January 31, 2011. Any applications received after 11:59pm (MST) on January 31, 2010 will not be considered for review.

The exception to the above process and deadline is the **Chad VanderHam Memorial Fund Scholarship**. Applicants **MUST** submit a short video (no longer than 5 minutes) describing who you are and why you love skiing. Applicants do not need to answer the six questions on the application form.

The Deadline for this scholarship is **11:59pm (MST) on January 1st, 2011..**

For more information on each scholarship, please visit <http://amga.com/programs/scholarships.php>.

Chrysler/Jeep Deals for Members & Their Clients

As a Diamond Partner of the American Mountain Guides Association, Jeep (a division of Chrysler Group LLC) would like to extend a great offer to our members as well as well as their clients. If you are in the market for a new SUV, Car or Truck, you should definitely consider this deal.

Thru the AMGA, you are eligible for the Affiliate Rewards preferred price. This exclusive purchase program allows you to purchase or lease a new Jeep, Chrysler, Dodge or Ram Truck at 1% under factory invoice, plus consumer incentives.

Here's how you can take advantage of this great offer:

- 1.) It begins with a click to the Chrysler Affiliate Rewards Program <https://www.chrysleraffiliates.com/login.do>
- 2.) To obtain a control number, call or email Josh at the AMGA (303.271.0984 – josh@amga.com)
- 4.) Take your control number, a copy of this information, to any U.S. Jeep, Chrysler, Dodge or Ram Truck dealership.
- 5.) DRIVE AWAY IN YOUR NEW VEHICLE

I think that's all for now. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me. In the meantime, get out there and slide on some snow!

Access Director Update cont'd from page 15

- 1) Develop a Strategic Plan for Access for the next five years. I intend to continue reaching out to AMGA members in order to collect feedback and ideas. If you are interested in shaping the Strategic Plan for Access, please contact me. I look forward to scheduling a time to connect in person or over the phone.
- 2) Shift land manager perceptions so that they see guides as an underutilized resource and part of the solution, as opposed to part of the problem. I intend to achieve this through consistent and persistent outreach and education.
- 3) Identify and pursue National Parks which are optimal for piloting a CUA Program. Denali National Park and Preserve and Yosemite National Park are current considerations.
- 4) Improve the quality and quantity of commercial access by influencing public and private land management policies.
- 5) Become a clearinghouse for employment and guest guiding opportunities for AMGA members and professionals of all levels. I intend to proactively reach out to guide service owners and concessioners in order to collect access opportunities for professionals of all levels. My goal is to become an "access matchmaker" where members contact me for guiding and apprentice opportunities with existing permit holders.

I'll close with an important call to action from all members. I encourage all guides and climbing instructors – as leaders in the climbing, mountaineering and skiing communities – to get involved in shaping the future direction of the profession. Attend public meetings, write letters and let your voice be heard by contacting parks directly and contacting me in the AMGA Office. I am only one person and can work much more effectively on your behalf if you take the step to get involved. I look forward to working together in 2011!

public lands. And since our system requires that you have a permit – and therefore a business license – in most lands where we work, this perception puts us in a very specific position with regards to land management. We are seen commercial entities first, and everything else we have to offer – a resource to the public, connectors and magnifiers of our clients' experiences in wild places, stewards of the land, rescue and communication support – all of these follow after. And so guides and guide services are managed the same as any other business operating in a National Park.

- Have you ever read the Wilderness Act of 1964? Check it out: <http://www.wilderness.net/index.cfm?fuse=NWPS&sec=legisAct>. And now consider for a moment the 'wilderness debate' that circles this piece of legislature. This debate focuses on the often-conflicting desires of the NPS system with regards to our valuable and fragile resources: how can the American public understand and protect their own wild lands if they do not understand their value? In order to truly understand their value, the public must be able to interact and engage an experience in the wilderness, and with this comes impact on fragile resources. Therein lies the conflict: how to connect the public with the resource, yet at the same time protect and preserve it?
- After meeting with NPS folks in DC in September, I began to see that guides are an unrealized possibility in this debate. But after the week of meetings with NPS folks in November, I see that guides are not merely underutilized; we often find ourselves on the wrong side of the wilderness debate. As commercial operators we are seen as part

of the problem, part of the demand, part of the pressure on wild places. And as a result we are regulated as such: limited in access, placed in competition with the unguided public for limited resources, seen as people seeking to profit from public lands.

AVISION: WHAT DO WE HAVE TO OFFER?
What if it were otherwise? What if we were seen as part of the solution? What if guiding entered the debate as a way to ease the strain on wilderness while still connecting Americans with their public lands? This is the vision: across the country, guides are seen first as a resource, and as a commercial entity second. And from this flows change: guiding effects an increase in American's potential to connect with their valuable wild resources without an increase in impact. The demand on resources is not expanded, it is improved; the result is lower impact on the resource and higher levels of the public's experience, connection, and understanding of wild places.

We have an opportunity before us: to work on every level to change the current perception, and to change the policies that result from it; to evolve guides and guiding into an asset that supports our natural resources and becomes a greater asset to the public. In doing so, we have the possibility to effect change in our own lives and our ability to practice our profession. But we also have a possibility to connect with and support the national structure that surrounds our wilderness areas, to join the dialog on a national level, and to expand and deepen the value of our profession. If we do so, we take a step down the path to make a huge move outside ourselves, to move from 'making MY world a better place' to making OUR world a better place'.

Be safe out there, Margaret

implement the IFMGA/AMGA Meeting and that person is Josh Harrod. A huge "job well done" to Josh for playing an instrumental role in coordinating the meeting. Of course we could not have put on the event without the support of our meeting sponsors. Major thanks go out to: The North Face, Black Diamond, Patagonia, Outdoor Research, Petzl, Bradley Alpinist, Deuter, First Ascent, Five Ten, GORE, Marmot, Osprey, Boulder Ventures, Arceryx, Brooks Range, Mountain Hardwear, Mammut, Prana and Canadian Mountain Holidays. Needless to say the IFMGA/AMGA Meeting was a huge success and I think this email sent to me by Armin Oehrli, Secretary General of the IFMGA is a great note to end on because it speaks volumes to the hard work and effort that went into making the meeting happen. "Since 15 years I am visiting the IFMGA meetings, first as president of the Swiss mountain guide association, then as IFMGA secretary. The Boulder meeting was absolutely the best: Open, friendly and very very generous. This is your work, you did really a good job, Thank you and all them who supported you in this, very, very much."

Thanks to all of you who attended the meeting. I hope to see many of you at next years Annual Meeting in the Gunks! Wishing you all a wonderful holiday and a Happy New Year. I look forward to working with you in 2011.



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