

Mountain Bulletin

A Publication of the American Mountain Guides Association

Vol. XVIII † No. 2 † Spring 2004

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Board of Directors, Staff,	2
Newsletter Contributors	2
Executive Director Corner	3
President Corner	3
Land Use Article continued	4
Technical Director Update	5
Guides Gear	6
Scholarship Programs	7
Membership Corner	8
Membership Form	9
Merchandise Form	9
Program Update	10
Program Schedule	10
Contributors & Corporate Partners	11

ANNUAL MEETING and 25th Anniversary

The dates are set for the 2004 AMGA Annual Meeting and 25th Anniversary Celebration. Please join us this October in Moab, UT for this important event.

2004 BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTIONS

Nominations will be held for the upcoming 2004 Board of Directors Election. Five positions will open on the Board of Directors in 2004.

"THE LIFE OF A MOUNTAIN GUIDE"

Achieving the equivalence of a PHD in all aspects of technical mountaineering on rock, ice, snow and skis, the young guide is trained and certified for his/her lifelong vocation in the mountains.

AMGA HOSTS FIRST ANNUAL LAND MANAGERS CONFERENCE

Boulder, CO - The AMGA hosted a Land Managers Conference on April 17th and 18th. In attendance were representatives from the National Forest Service, National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, Eldorado Canyon State Park, Jefferson County, National Outdoor Leadership School, Jackson Hole Mountain Guides, the Access Fund, and the American Mountain Guides Association (for a complete list of attendees please contact mike@amga.com).

Conference attendees gathered from across the country to participate in this first annual event. On Saturday, guest speakers included Maura Longden from the National Park Service and Steve Muehlhauser from Eldorado Canyon State Park. Discussions were held in a round table format that encouraged open communication between all conference attendees. Topics included the use of fixed hardware policies on public lands, and how to create a climbing management plan, and using the AMGA as a resource to facilitate discussion between land management agencies and guides. On Saturday, Steve Muehlhauser led attendees on a tour of Eldorado Canyon State Park to wrap up a productive and enjoyable day.

Sunday's guest speakers included Shawn Tierney from the Access Fund and AMGA Board of Directors member Boots Ferguson from Holland & Hart Law Offices. Shawn Tierney gave a presentation on how land managers can work with the climbing community to address concerns from both parties. Shawn focused on the boulders around Bishop, CA as an example of creating successful policies that worked for everyone. Boots Ferguson, the AMGA chair of the Public Policy Committee, spoke on the new NPS Commercial Use Regulations, New Access Models, and Working Through the Access Maze.

Conference attendees were pleased with the format of the conference and expressed the desire to attend meetings in the future. The dates for next year's conference will be announced in early January of 2005. 🏔️

PROMOTING LAND USE ISSUES AND PERMITTING PROCEDURES

By Jim Ratz

While attending the AMGA Land Manager Conference in Boulder last April, I was reminded of how much we could and should do as an organization to promote and understand land use issues and permitting procedures with our membership.

While I don't know the figures, I would be willing to bet that a large percentage of our membership guides on federally managed lands. In fact, I wouldn't be surprised to hear the majority of guiding by AMGA members, employees of accredited guide services and certified guides is done on federal lands. With apologies to those who guide exclusively on other lands and outside the US, I want to explore a few ideas as they relate to our relationship with the federal government.

It sounds corny but I think it is important to remind ourselves that the "shop" where we practice our craft is owned by the American people and we "rent" space by way of permits and concession contracts. Almost every land manager I've ever met feels very strongly about their heritage of stewardship. How we are perceived by the folks who manage the land, and most importantly, by the "owners", aka the public at large, is crucial to our professional future.

(continued page 4)



AMGA BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2004

Executive Committee:

Dick Jackson, President
Basalt CO
970-925-7625
dickjackson@aspensexpeditions.com

Jim Ratz, Vice President
Lander WY
307 733-4979
jim@JHMG.com

Matt Brooks, Treasurer
San Francisco CA
rewmb@aol.com

Todd Vogel, Secretary
Bishop CA
(760) 873-8526
toddv@sierramountaincenter.com

Peter Absolon
Lander WY
307-332-1417
peter_absolon@nols.edu

David Bengston
Yosemite Valley CA
209-372-8344
dbengsto@dncinc.com

John Bicknell
Estes Park CO
970-586-5758
bicknell@indra.com

Boots Ferguson, Legal Counsel
Aspen CO
970-925-3476
aferguson@hollandhart.com

Angela Hawse
Ridgway CO
206-949-4030
anghawse@ascentdesigns.com

Rob Hess
Jackson WY
(307) 733-4979
Rob@jhm.com

Pete Keane
Bend OR
541-312-9242
bostromkeane@yahoo.com

Kyle Lefkoff
Boulder CO
303-444-6950
kyle@boulderventures.com

Craig Luebben
Golden CO
303-277-9678
CLuebben@aol.com

Maury McKinney
N. Conway NH
603-356-7064
guides@ime-usa.com

Charlie Townsend
Tamworth NH
603-356-5433
ctownsend@ems.com

Jim Williams
Jackson WY
307-733-8812
pmg@atrav.com

Read this Disclaimer!

The AMGA, its officers and employees, authors, editors, artists and volunteers assume no responsibility or liability for accuracy, effectiveness, or safety of any technique or advice described in this publication.

It is the responsibility of the individual climber or guide to investigate technical techniques and evaluate them for safety and applicability.

The **Mountain Bulletin** is published in May, August, November and February.

Newsletter Deadline

The next issue of the **Mountain Bulletin** will be published August 6, 2004.

Deadline for all submissions, including advertising is July 16, 2004.

Deadlines for 2004 issue are as follows:

January 31 (Winter Issue)
April 30 (Spring Issue)
July 16 (Summer Issue)
October 29 (Fall Issue)

Newsletter Contributors:

Mike Alkaitis is Executive Director of the AMGA and a certified Rock Guide.

Simon Fryer is the Program Director for the AMGA. He has worked for the Colorado Mountain School as Office Manager, Expedition Coordinator, and Guide.

Rob Hess serves as the Technical Director of the AMGA. He is IFMGA certified and is the senior guide/owner of Jackson Hole Mountain Guides.

Dick Jackson is a UIAGM/IFMGA guide and current president of the AMGA.

Nancy Lea is the Membership Services Manager of the AMGA. Prior to working with the AMGA Nancy served as Program Director for City Cliffs, a non-profit organization dedicated to working with under privileged youth.

Jim Ratz is the Vice President of the AMGA and is an owner of Jackson Hole Mountain Guides.

National Office Staff

Executive Director: **Mike Alkaitis**

Program Director: **Simon Fryer**

Membership Services Manager:
Nancy Lea

Technical Director: **Rob Hess**

American Mountain Guides Association
P.O. Box 1739
Boulder CO 80306

Tel: 303.271.0984
Fax: 303.271.1377

email: news@amga.com
website: www.amga.com



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR CORNER

by Michael Alkaitis, Executive Director

I attended a party for a friend of mine who just passed the Ski Mountaineering exam recently. The celebration was a grand affair where the joy of seeing a friend complete his quest to become a fully certified IFMGA guide brought warmth to the entire gathering. The sense of community celebrating the achievement made me think of how lucky I am to be part of the guiding community.

The guiding community is worldwide and shares the same values and love of the mountains. It is great to be part of this larger community as it reminds me every day of how wonderful our jobs as mountain guides truly is. We are able to share our special and unique activities with people who may not otherwise ever experience these sights, sensations, heights, and friends.

I look forward to a day in the U.S. where all guides are certified and can share the special feeling of achievement and joy I witnessed the other night. The sense of professionalism and pride in mountain guiding is growing every day in the U.S. and will continue with the help of our members.

The AMGA will continue to advocate for resource based access on our public lands and to educate land managers on why AMGA training and certification are the preferred standard. The AMGA hosted the first annual land managers conference (see update in this issue) while continuing our goal of making the AMGA a national resource for land managers.

With the summer season fast approaching I encourage you to participate in AMGA training, certification, and to conclude some of your professional goals. Contact your local land manager and ask how you can be of assistance, as well as Leave No Trace (www.lnt.org) to see how you can partner with them and your land manager. Be safe in the mountains and I look forward to seeing all of you at this year's annual meeting in Moab, UT. 🏔️



PRESIDENT CORNER

by Dick Jackson, AMGA President

"THE LIFE OF A MOUNTAIN GUIDE"

As the spring days extend longer, I often spend a month or so in the European Alps, especially in Chamonix as a home base for skiing, climbing and paragliding. Chamonix is the worldwide center for Alpinism, and the tradition of mountain guiding is deeply engrained in the local culture, economy and social structure. During the formative days of our profession, guides were initially chosen both by family name and as the local legend suggests: should a child "stick" to a rock wall once thrown against it.... Voila, a Mountain Guide! Achieving the equivalence of a PHD in all aspects of technical mountaineering on rock, ice, snow and skis, the young guide is trained and certified for his/her lifelong vocation in the mountains. In a town like Chamonix, the "guide" represents the Heart and Soul and Passion that date back over two centuries.

Here in the States the profession of mountain guiding is gradually gaining recognition commensurate with the talent and commitment required to become an AMGA certified guide. The AMGA is equally committed to maximize the benefits for the certified guide, including the availability of health, life and liability insurance, marketing the credential, and offering increased and reciprocal access to our public lands.

While in Chamonix I was once again reminded of the risks and harsh reality of our chosen profession. Twice in one week, Chamonix lost a young mountain guide, one in an avalanche on Mt Blanc and one in a fall while skiing the Cosmique Couloir off the Aiguille du Midi. The entire mountain community gathered at the Maison des Montagnes for the funeral service. The community's sense of loss was a sad realization and response in a communal mantra acknowledging the objective hazards and un-forgiveness of the high mountains. "C'est les Montagnes!"It's the Mountains! With a firm handshake, direct eye contact and a deep breath, mountain guides everywhere display a camaraderie and maturity that truly makes me feel proud to be one of them!

Recently the AMGA and our friends/families had a very close call with Ramsay Thomas' accident while ski guiding in Chamonix. I'd like to take this opportunity to extend my hand to all of you as AMGA members to both wish for Ramsay's full recovery and to pursue the highest level of camaraderie with our local, regional, national and global guide's community.

I wish all of you a safe, healthy and enjoyable summer season in the mountains. From time to time...look up, breath deep, reflect on the past, and take care! 🏔️

All the Best,
Dick Jackson



(Promoting Land Use Issues and Permitting Procedures continued)

To get a good objective viewpoint of the relationship between permit holder, management and the public, I suggest a look at other members of the multiple use "family" - function and dysfunctional. Check out a rancher on western lands and you'll learn a lot about what is working and not working in the realm of commercial use of public lands. There is hardly any permit more contentious than a livestock grazing permit.

At least around Lander the more thoughtful ranchers have rejected the classic belligerent attitude and employ three strategies: they research and use the latest conservation techniques, they maintain a healthy relationship with the federal agencies and they understand politics.

To a lesser extent a similar controversy surrounds horsepackers and hunting outfitters in states like Wyoming. Regulations surrounding endangered species, trophy game, environmental assessments, insurance requirements and so forth conspire to make running that type of small business harder every year. A good friend of mine operates a horsepacking and hunting guide operation in the Wind Rivers. His wife doesn't like him talking about permitting issues with me because his blood pressure gets too high. Nonetheless, he likes to talk and I learn a

lot about how he runs a very successful outfit on public lands. Despite the frustrations of bureaucracy he has managed to expand the scope of his permit. He does a superb job and maintains excellent relations with the land managers, his neighbors and the public. He and his family also manage to make a good living at it, which I know would be of interest to at least a few guides.



For some guides obtaining their Incidental Business Permit on a National Monument is no big deal. For many others, obtaining a permit is a monumental chore or simply impossible. The process of obtaining permits differs by land management agency and roadblocks that may impede the applicant range from lack of agency funding to negative prejudices regarding the safety or behavior of climbing and climbers.

If what we want is to make access more available nationwide, then we as members of a national organization need to model a behavior and ethic that land managers can trust and rely upon. We also need to better understand how the permitting maze works and how to work within the system.

My hope is the AMGA will eventually serve as a clearing house of data on permits and permitting procedures for the benefit of our membership. The Access Fund produces a fine publication

entitled "Climbing Management: A Guide to Climbing Issues and the Production of a Climbing Management Plan". It is designed to help facilitate

the interaction of Access Fund members and land managers faced with climbing related issues. Unfortunately, it doesn't mention commercial use in the form of guiding, concessions, commercial use authorizations or other types of permits. This seems to me to be a place where the AMGA could provide some valuable assistance to the membership and the land manager.

We as an organization need to continue elevating our exposure to the public. Dave Holland, Chief of Wilderness, Recreation and Cultural Resources, told Mike Alkaitis that the AMGA has put mountain guiding on the map in the United States. Like a milepost on a marathon, that comment tells me we are heading in the right direction and we are being noticed by the right people. ▲

4

Q. What do these three guide services have in common?

- International Mountain Guides
- Jackson Hole Mountain Guides
- Alaska Mountaineering School

A. They all use Lowe Alpine packs.

The Mountain Attack 50 (and others) are available to all AMGA members at www.prodeal.lowealpine.com Prodeals Online



TECHNICAL DIRECTOR UPDATE

By Rob Hess

As you may all remember from the last newsletter, Mike Powers mentioned that after filling the role as Technical Director for the past three years he was finding it time to move on to other things in the guiding world and thus stepping down from the TD position. After a series of interviews from Mike, The Executive Director (Mike Alkaitis) and the President of the board (Dick Jackson) I was offered the position of Technical Director and accepted.

I have a huge job ahead as I am filling the shoes of Mike Powers who has had a great impact on the AMGA. Mike has increased the standards of the AMGA and has been instrumental in maintaining the IFMGA / UIAGM status we maintain. Though Mike has moved on from this position he will remain an integral part of the technical committee and be someone I will look to for input often.

I would like to introduce myself and share some thoughts with the AMGA community regarding some goals, thoughts and impressions of what I would like to accomplish as Technical Director : I am 43 and have been guiding in ski, rock and alpine for 24 years. I began instructing and guiding for NOLS in 1980 focusing on rock camps, winter ski trips and mountaineering trips ranging from the Wind Rivers, to the Blackhills to the Tetons to the Cascades to the Alaska range to South America and so on. I began guiding for Jackson Hole Mountain Guides in 1986. Not long after, I began guiding occasional trips for my friend and mentor Scott Fisher and his company Mountain Madness. After a few unsuccessful forays to the Himalayas including K2, I finally found some success in becoming the 3rd American to summit Mt. Everest without O2 in 1994 and successfully guided three clients to the summit of Broad peak in 1995. In 1998 I became owner of Jackson Hole Mountain Guides with my wife Kathryn, Jim Ratz and Phil Powers. I have guided for other well known entities such as Alaska Mountaineering School and Valdez Heli Ski Guides. I became a professional member of the AMGA some time in the 90's (can't remember when). I passed a rock guides exam in 2000, gained ski mountaineering certification status through the senior guide program and

passed the alpine guides exam in the Fall of 2002 thus gaining my IFMGA / UIAGM status thereafter.

Certification as the standard for all guides continues to be the goal of the AMGA. We have a long way to go before this standard is one all guides in the U.S. accept. Nonetheless the AMGA is experiencing healthy growth on courses and exams indicating that people are looking to the AMGA to gain the credentials that show that they have achieved the highest standard in guiding. With significant growth there can be problems. If an organization is allowed to grow unchecked the quality and service surrounding the product goes down. An occurrence such as this at the AMGA would be completely unacceptable. We are looking at ways to increase the instructor pool to meet this demand but not at the expense of a high standard.

The ski and alpine disciplines are areas that have presented the greatest difficulties. We have a highly skilled instructor pool that work in these disciplines but the numbers who are available are few. The exam standard for these disciplines continues to be high but a problem that seems to exist is how the candidates feel when they come to a particular exam. Too often we hear that the exam was harder than expected and contained components people had not seen before. To some extent this may be due to people challenging exams therefore not being familiar with the curriculum, which as of 2005 will no longer be an issue. Our goal is to have people come to the exams feeling as though they are well prepared and other than exam stress, in general found the exam to be straight forward. This will not be done by making the exams easier but by looking at our training and tweaking our programs to push the standard further up and developing a clearer curriculum standard. We have incredible talent in our instructor pool but as we all know, they often teach and or emphasize different things. The development of the "Common Elements Course" in the future will help us greatly as this will assure that participants come to the various courses with a strong and consistent technical base. This will allow instructors to dive into the meat of the course instead of treading water so as to bring all participants to a common standard.

In bringing new staff in to the pool and maintaining current staff we must become more aware of our strengths and weaknesses. Being open to feedback is an important part of growing as a professional. Instructor of instructor and instructor of observer (potential instructor) evaluations seem necessary to help manage the quality of a growing instructor pool population. With this growth a commitment to instructor training in addition to the traditional path of course observation are necessary to further ensure consistency on our courses and exams.



We must decide whether our programs fully meet the needs of the American guide. Many operators comment that to meet accreditation standards their guides must gain credentials that do not necessarily coincide with the guiding they perform. I have heard guides comment that the curriculum on courses and exams does not represent American guiding. My comment is usually that we are not merely training and testing for the American guides but for an international standard. Perhaps it makes sense to develop programs or what may be referred to as endorsements to give certain American guides credentials favorable to employers but not at a particular international standard.

Finally, access needs to be at the forefront of all of our thoughts. I strongly believe that the Independent and or foreign guide can and should coexist with the permit or concession holding operator. Though this is not in particular one of my duties I believe it is the responsibility of all guides to think out of the "box" to create a system whereby all guides living in the U.S. can make a viable living on their home grounds.

Thanks for your time, here is to another safe and productive climbing season! ▲

Don't Suck Ice

Stash
ALP40™

Hot and bite valve are neatly stashed inside a super-insulated shoulder strap, where they're kept warm by body heat and protected from the elements.

Stash Alp40™
2850 cu in/40 liters
100 oz/3-liter reservoir
Four season alpinism

bca

Pro pricing available to AMGA guides.
Backcountry Access, Inc. • Boulder, CO USA
www.bcaccess.com • 800-670-8735



GUIDES GEAR

AMGA 2004 Rock and Approach Shoe Review

Approach Shoes:

Garmont Sticky Spin - The sticky spin from Garmont returns to the approach shoe designed for short approaches and climbing performance. The thin midsole allows the shoe to edge well, but hinders the long distance comfort. The Sticky Spin fits well for a medium foot and there was not a lot of play inside the shoe when the laces were snug. The lacing system down to the toes is great for climbing performance.



Retail Price: \$100

Rubber: Vibram Crossover

Pro Purchase contact:

Gary Richter 802-658-8426 ext 231

www.garmontusa.com

Nike ACG Air Cinder Cone - The Nike ACG Air Cinder Cone has not changed from last year and is still a favorite. The Vibram sole climbs well on 5th class terrain and the Air Sole provides comfort during long days. The lacing system down to the toes works well when you ask the shoe to climb a bit harder. Overall this is a fantastic approach shoe that goes anywhere in comfort. (Reviewer's Choice)



Retail Price: \$109

Rubber: Vibram

Pro Purchase contact:

please see website www.acgpropurchase.com

www.nikeacg.com

Rock Shoes:

Five Ten Southwest - The Southwest is a unique design that enables the shoe to excel at both edging and smearing. The midsole in the forefoot goes directly to the edge so you can stand on the smallest of edges. The shoe is surprisingly comfortable for traditional climbing and did well in everything. The shoe fits a smaller volume foot and definitely becomes more comfortable over time.



Retail Price: \$139

Rubber: Stealth C4

Pro Purchase contact:

Steve Guttman 909-798-5272 ext 20

www.fiveten.com

La Sportiva Tora - The Tora is one of three new price point shoes from La Sportiva. This Velcro closing shoe is for the beginner to intermediate climber or a guide who is looking for a comfy all day shoe. The FriXion Green rubber stands up to wear and tear well. The shoe fits a large volume foot.



Retail Price: \$90

Rubber: FriXion Green

Pro Purchase contact:

Rose Everest 303-443-8710 ext 16

www.sportiva.com

La Sportiva Women's Mythos - This classic, versatile climbing shoe keeps its great overall performance and improves upon comfort and durability. It performs like the classic mythos and is a wonderful overall shoe for various types of climbing. This shoe is specifically designed on a women's last. The lacing system and the stiffness of the midsole offer both sensitivity and friction for an enhanced performance. The Mythos is not lined, however the soft upper suede leather and extra padding on the tongue make this shoe perfect for extended wear, something every guide can appreciate! Fit: medium/large volume foot. (Nancy's favorite)



Retail Price: \$120.00

Rubber: Vibram formula XSV 4 mm

Pro Purchase contact:

Rose Everest 303-443-8710 ext 16

www.sportiva.com

Scarpa Vision - The Vision from Scarpa is a new shoe designed for edging and all around climbing. The shoe excelled at all types of climbing from bouldering and overhanging sport climbs to traditional hand cracks. The shoe is soft with feeling, yet still edges well. The unique lacing system with the tongue sewn on one side works well and is comfortable. The Vision offers a slipper feel in a lace up shoe. The shoe fits a medium volume foot. (Mike and Simon's Choice)



Retail Price: \$139

Rubber: Megabyte

Pro Purchase contact: TJ Kolanko 801-278-5552

www.balckdiamondequipment.com

Mammut Blaze Pro - The Blaze Pro from Mammut is a great all around shoe for those looking for a comfortable performance shoe. The shoe is moderately stiff for edging and smears well on slabs. The shoe excelled on long routes and was a nice addition to the Mammut line. The shoe fits a medium to wide volume foot. The synthetic leather is comfortable and stood the test of time well.



Retail Price: \$125

Rubber: Vibram XSV

Pro Purchase contact:

Jeff Cunningham 802-985-5056

www.climbhigh.com

Nike Oregon Series Alti-Compass:

By Keith Garvey and Simon Fryer



After branching into the climbing industry a few years ago, Nike Oregon series has developed a top-notch altimeter watch that rivals their best competitors.

Upon first glance the watch looks well built, and stylish with its silver metal body. Right away Nike made figuring out this wrist computer easy (under fifteen minutes). No more lengthy textbook instruction manuals. Nike's provides an easy to follow fold out instructional sheet along with a well formatted mini DVD.

As with most altimeters this watch is stocked with the basic time, compass, altimeter, barometer, chronograph, and timer. Where Nike has excelled is having, two time zones, accurate 12 hour altimeter and barometer graphs, seven alarms (four for time, two for altitude, and one for hydration), a well designed interval timer, the most accurate compass, and a storage area for data. Don't be fooled, some of these features may seem like over kill or unnecessary as Nike also had tri-athletes in mind. Once you see how easy all these feature are to use the possibilities with this watch are endless.

The only drawbacks were an oversized wristband and buckle system coupled with a weight probably twice that of the popular competitors. However, besides these two gripes, this watch out features others on the market.

If you're in the market the Alti-Compass is highly recommended!

Retail Price: \$199

please see website www.acgpropurchase.com

www.nikeacg.com

AMGA 2004 SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

We recently wrapped up the AMGA Scholarship Program for 2004. For the second year in a row, the AMGA increased the number of full tuition scholarships for AMGA guides wishing to further their guiding education through courses and exams. We believe this increase in full tuition scholarships is a testament to how much effort is being made on the part of the AMGA and our corporate sponsors to increase education opportunities for guides.

Congratulations to all of our 2004 Scholarship Recipients:

Arc'teryx
Full tuition scholarship for Ski program awarded to Jeff Ward

The North Face
Full tuition scholarship for Alpine program awarded to Mark Hammond

NIKE ACG
Full tuition scholarship for Rock program awarded to Ben Marshall

Patagonia Women's Scholarship
Full tuition scholarship awarded to Angela Hawse

Malden Mills

Full tuition scholarship awarded to Anne Keller

Black Diamond

Full tuition scholarship awarded to Eli Helmuth

PETZL

Full tuition scholarship awarded to Larry Goldie

Mammut

Full tuition scholarship awarded to Neil Satterfield

Marmot

Full tuition scholarship awarded to Mark Newcomb

Julie Cheney Culbertson Education Fund

\$250.00 scholarship awarded to

Julia Niles and Amy Bullard

Mike Hattrup Scholarship

\$500.00 scholarship awarded to

Amos Whiting



Lighten up.
We did.



JUNE VOLUNTARY CLIMBING CLOSURE IN EFFECT FOR DEVILS TOWER

The 1995 Devils Tower National Monument Climbing Management Plan established a June voluntary closure for all climbing routes on the Tower. The National Park Service (NPS) advocates this voluntary closure in order to promote understanding and encourage respect for the culture of over 20 affiliated American Indian tribes that consider the Tower a Sacred Site. The voluntary closure occurs during June because this month is a culturally significant time when many ceremonies traditionally take place. Observation of the voluntary closure by climbers has decreased since its start in 1996 from 85% to currently a 75% reduction of climber numbers in 2003 when compared to June 1995. Through the AMGA and other venues, the NPS is making an effort to increase climber awareness about this issue with the goals of increasing climber observation of the voluntary closure and promoting stewardship of this important resource.

Devils Tower boasts a rich and colorful climbing history that dates back to the late 1800s when it was first climbed by two local ranchers using a wooden ladder. Climbers from all over the world consider Devils Tower to be a unique and premier climbing area. Currently, about 5000 visiting climbers come to Devils Tower each year. For these reasons, the National Park Service considers rock climb-

ing to be a legitimate recreational and historical activity at Devils Tower.

American Indians have regarded the Tower as a Sacred Site long before the site became popular with climbers. American Indians have expressed concern over climbing at Devils Tower. They perceive climbing on the Tower as desecration to their sacred site. It appears to many American Indians that climbers and hikers do not respect their traditional culture by the very act of climbing on or near the Tower. Through the June voluntary closure, a choice from "the heart" as a tribal elder describes, people can learn about and seek to understand other cultures.

The 1995 Devils Tower National Monument Climbing Management Plan provides direction for managing climbing activity at the Tower in order to protect the natural and cultural resources. The plan, in its entirety, can be viewed on the Internet at: www.nps.gov/deto/deto_climbing/detosumm.html This plan is currently being revised.

Rangers at the Monument can provide information on the voluntary closure and on alternative rock climbing areas in the local vicinity.

For further information please contact Devils Tower National Monument at 307-467-5283 ext 21. ▲



MEMBERSHIP CORNER

by Nancy M. Lea, Membership Services Manager



Greetings AMGA members! Spring is finally upon us and we are starting to gear up for the 2004 Annual Meeting and 25th Anniversary Celebration. For more detailed information please take a look at the Annual Meeting announcement in this newsletter. It is safe to say that the AMGA has come a very long way in the past 25 years! Since joining the IFMGA in 1997, we have made leaps and bounds in terms of creating a recognized trade organization dedicated to the training and education of mountain guides. As we continue to move forward, it is our sincere hope that you will take a more active role in helping this organization grow and prosper. If you currently work with other guides in the field who have never joined the AMGA take a moment and direct them to our website or encourage them to call the office. We are always here to help with membership questions. If you have ideas, comments, or suggestions please pass them along. We are here to listen and if we can not help you in the office, we will direct your questions to the policy and decision makers within the AMGA.

News Items:

*2004 Board of Directors Nominations are now being accepted. Please take a moment to look at the criteria listed in this newsletter and start thinking about running for the board or nominating a fellow guide that you believe will make a good addition of the board.

*Back orders on merchandise have gone out. If you ordered a T-shirt or sweatshirt last month and we were out of your size or color preference you will be receiving your merchandise shortly.

*There is a new T-shirt design that we are currently working on. Many folks have requested a new look as an alternative for the AMGA Logo T-shirt. The standard logo T-shirt will still be available. The new T-shirt design will be available early this summer, more details to come.

I hope that you have a very safe and happy spring. Stay tuned for more information regarding the upcoming 25th Anniversary Celebration and the Annual Meeting in October! ▲

Best Wishes, Nancy Lea

2004 BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTIONS

Nominations will be held for the upcoming 2004 Board of Directors Election. Five positions will open on the Board of Directors in 2004. If you are interested in running we encourage you to begin working on soliciting nominations and on your position statements. If you would like to nominate someone to run, please submit your nominations to AMGA Secretary Todd Vogel at toddv@sierramountaincenter.com. Below please find the criteria for nominations.

Nomination Qualifications:

To be successfully nominated, a candidate must receive the written or electronic endorsement of six other Individual or Certified Individual Members. Nominated individuals will be eligible to run for two consecutive three-year terms on the AMGA Board of Directors.

For more information, please contact the AMGA office at 303-271-0984.

2004 AMERICAN MOUNTAIN GUIDES ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING and 25th Anniversary

The dates for the 2004 Annual Meeting are as follows:

Thursday Oct. 21st - TC meeting
Friday Oct 22nd - BOD meeting
Saturday & Sunday Oct 23-24th
Annual Meeting and
25th Anniversary Celebration

More details to come!

The dates are set for the 2004 AMGA Annual Meeting and 25th Anniversary Celebration. Please join us this October in Moab, UT for this important event. Meet your fellow AMGA guides and participate in training and continuing education seminars. Members are encouraged to observe the Technical Committee and Board of Directors Meetings, enjoy BBQs, the Guide's Olympics, climbing competitions and more!! Special training opportunities such as WFR recertification and Leave No Trace seminars will also be offered.

Don't miss it! Make your plans now to attend! If you would like to get involved with any of the planning and social events please volunteer with the AMGA office. Give us a call at 303-271-0984 or e-mail nancy@amga.com.

See you in Moab!



AMGA MEMBERSHIP FORM

**Individual, Associate and Student Associate Membership Application*

Name _____ Date of birth _____ Gender _____
 Guide service I work for _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Work phone _____ Home phone _____ Fax _____
 Email _____

I began guiding professionally in the year _____
 I guide professionally about _____ days per year

Check the type of membership you are applying for.: Individual____ Associate____ Student Associate____

Check that you have enclosed ALL listed items in appropriate column in same envelope to AMGA Membership, P.O. Box 1739, Boulder, CO 80306.

*Individual Member	Associate Member	Student Associate Member
\$115 check or money order	\$60 check or money order	\$40 check or money order

*Include resumes and reference letters only with applications for Individual Membership
 *Please include proof of enrollment with applications for Student Associate Membership

Resume of guided climbs Minimum 40 paid days in the last two years
 Resume of personal climbs Minimum 20 climbs
 at least two letters of reference (from an employer, fellow guide or client)

Yes, I'd like to make an additional, tax-deductible contribution to further support the AMGA.
 I have enclosed \$ _____

I agree to support high standards of safety and professionalism in mountain guiding and instruction. I understand that the AMGA does not condone guiding without appropriate authorization and that the AMGA does not endorse any illegal guiding, whether in the US. or another country. I also understand that I, or any AMGA member may be subject to the loss of membership, accreditation or certification if such practices occur.

Signature _____ Date _____

AMGA MERCHANDISE FORM

Item	Price	Shipping	1st Color	2nd Color	Size	Quantity	TOTAL
AMGA Technical Handbook	\$25 (for members)	\$7.50	NA	NA	NA		
AMGA T-shirt (Grey, Light Blue, Pacific Blue, Natural, Forest Green)	\$18 (2/\$34)	\$2.00					
AMGA Women's T-shirt (New Grass, Smokey Violet, Periwinkle)	\$12 (2/\$20)	\$2.00					
AMGA Embroidered Sweatshirt (Navy/Cypress)	\$25	\$5.00					
AMGA Sticker/Decal	\$1.50	NA	NA	NA	NA		
AMGA Course Catalog	\$5	NA	NA	NA	NA		
Brooks Range Mountaineering Equipment Rescue Sled	\$200	\$7.00	NA	NA	NA		
Brooks Range Mountaineering Equipment Shovel	\$29.00	\$7.00	NA	NA	NA		
Brooks Range Mountaineering Equipment Snow Card Set	\$18.00	\$5.00	NA	NA	NA		

Please send all merchandise orders with check or Money Order to: AMGA Merchandise
 PO Box 1739
 Boulder, CO 80306

OR call in orders with a credit card (303) 271-0984

*International Shipping and Handling \$15 minimum **Colorado residents add 2.9% Sales Tax (.029) Total Enclosed: \$ _____



PROGRAM UPDATE

By Simon Fryer



This spring the programs have been full. In fact at times they have maxed out our limits for course size. The instructor and examiner pool have done an amazing job dealing with the numbers while maintain the quality and standard. This is due to the overwhelming response from guides looking to take courses and exams in 2004. For all of those guides who weren't able to take the program I hope you will not be discouraged and apply for a fall program or look towards 2005.

I hope to have the 2005 program schedule posted and available by July. So please check out the website or contact me at the AMGA office. Congratulations to the newly certified guides and thank you to all the examiners who have made this opportunity possible. So far this year we have five newly certified guides who also have achieved their IFMGA certification (please see below). This has increased the number of IFMGA guides certified through the AMGA by 25%.

The AMGA is constantly trying to improve the process. The feedback I have received has set a challenge for the coming year. I hope to continue to work with Rob Hess, Technical Director and the instructor pool to improve the programs and meet the growing need for AMGA training and certification. Please take a few minutes and check out the 2004 course schedule found in this newsletter and on the AMGA website (www.amga.com). Course and exam enrollment is on a first come first serve bases. If you have any application questions please email me at: simon@amga.com or call 303-271-0984 ↗

PLEASE TAKE NOTE: 2004 is the end to all exam challenges

Congratulations to the newly Certified IFMGA Guides:

Eli Helmuth John Kear Miles Smart Jeff Ward Amos Whiting

AMGA 2004 PROGRAM SCHEDULE

NEW AMGA T-SHIRTS coming this summer!

10

Ski Discipline:

S7 Ski Guide Course
Jackson, WY. Dec. 12-19, 2004

Rock Discipline:

R7 Rock Instructor Course
Boulder, CO May 24-June 2

R8 Advanced Rock Guides Course
Black Canyon, CO Sept. 17-26

R9 Rock Instructor Course
Shawangunks, NY May 24-June CANCELLED

R10 Rock Instructor Course
N Conway, NH Aug 30-Sept 8

R11 Rock Instructor Exam
N Conway, NH Sept 6-11

R12 Rock Guide Exam
Red Rocks, NV Sept 20-25 (FULL)

R13 Advanced Rock Guides Course
Red Rocks, NV Sept 27-Oct 6 (FULL)

R14 Rock Instructor Exam
Boulder, CO Sept 27-Oct 2

Alpine Discipline:

A3 Alpine Guides Course
Jackson, WY May 30-June 8 (FULL)

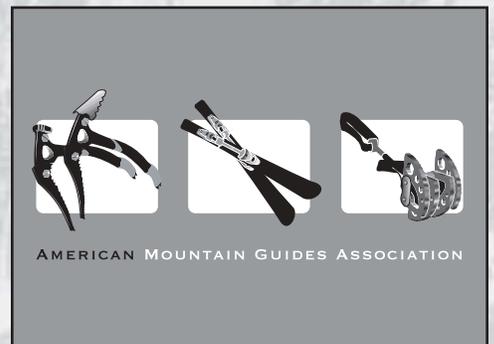
A4 Advanced Alpine Guides Course
N Cascades Aug 30-Sept 8

A5 The North Face Alpine Exam
N Cascades, WA Aug 30-Sept 8 (FULL)

A6 Alpine Guides Course
Sierra, CA Sept 10-19

A7 The North Face Alpine Exam
N Cascades, WA Sept 25 - Oct 4 (FULL)

A8 Advanced Alpine Guides Course
N Cascades, WA Sept 25 - Oct 4 (FULL)





THANKS TO OUR TOP CONTRIBUTORS!

Diamond Sponsors give over \$10,000.
Benefactors give between \$2500 and \$9999.
Patrons give between \$1500 and \$2499.
Supporting Sponsors give between \$500 and \$1499
Contact the AMGA office to learn how you can become a Contributor.

Diamond:

John & Patty Bicknell

Brook's - Mathews Foundation

The North Face

Benefactors:

Arc'teryx

Black Diamond Equipment

Kyle and Cindy Lefkoff

Malden Mills/Polartec

Mammut

Marmot

Nike ACG

Patagonia

Petzl

Rock and Ice Magazine

RINA Accountancy Corporation

Jon & Bridget Winsor

Wells Fargo

Patrons:

Alpinist Magazine

Backcountry Access, Inc.

Backcountry Magazine

Boulder Rock Club

La Sportiva

Lowe Alpine Systems

Supporting:

Arborwear

Big Agnes

BlueWater

Brooks Range Mountaineering

Cascade Designs

Camp USA

Clif Bar

Deuter

Five Ten

Forty Below

Gregory Mountain Products

Jansport

Julbo

Koflach/Atomic

LEKI USA, Inc

Metolius Climbing

Mont Bell

Misty Mountain Threadworks

Mountain Tools

National Geographic Maps

Omega Pacific

Ortovox USA

Oxford Foundation

Princeton Tec Lights

Red Ledge

Sterling Rope Company

Eric Simonson

Tecnica

Trango

Vasque Footwear

Yates Gear, Inc.



Please contact Mike Alkaitis if you would like to contribute to the AMGA at mike@amga.com or 303.271.0984



mammut 24\"/>
dynamo sling
17g

lighten
up.



mammut standard
wiregate biner
36g

mammut revelation rope 9.2mm
55g/per meter



MAMMUT
www.mammut.com

Every ounce counts.

AMGA Pro Forms available: 800-451-5127 • info@climbhigh.com

"The AMGA is YOUR Guide Association"



American Mountain Guides Association
PO Box 1739
Boulder, Colorado 80306 USA