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President's Corner

...this is the busiest season for AMGA training courses—ski courses in AK, rock courses all over, the first alpine course begins in a few days in CO.

Technical Director Report

I have finally been able to take a few moments to think back on the AMGA ski program and where we have come and where we are going.

The Use of Natural Ranges for Mountain Navigation

Sometimes when navigating in the mountains (or anywhere), it is not necessary to know exactly where you are, but it is sufficient to know where you are relative to some point or object.

Pack it out

As responsible members of the mountaineering community, The AMGA tries to promote good ethics and stewardship. An awareness of the impact we each have on the environment is a key component of these practices.

Vol. XXIV No. 14 Spring 2008

Sell Yourself or Free the Nose?

By Betsy Novak



So far this year I have managed to attend a number of events where AMGA Certified Guides, Climbing Instructors and guides in training dominated the masses such as the Ouray Ice Festival and Red Rock Rendezvous to name a few. This was my first year attending both and I have to admit a sense of pride overwhelmed me as I observed the number of AMGA affiliates that are integral to the success of these events.

Each time a competitor, event host or clinic provider passed by wearing the AMGA logo or IFMGA pin I couldn't help but notice and think about the time, energy and money each person had to dedicate in order to achieve that honorable milestone. Now that might seem obvious considering my intimate relationship with and institutional knowledge of the AMGA, but while walking the crowds I realized that I was not the only one paying attention to the insignias worn by AMGA or IFMGA Guides. I quickly became aware that the novice ice and rock climbers and general festival attendees noticed as well.

It seems to me that in order to get ahead in life we need to get noticed and one way to get the attention we are seeking is by promoting ourselves to others. This task of selling ourselves is not an easy one, and most of us would rather free The Nose than try to pitch why we are number one. The reality is that as professionals in a highly competitive and reactive industry it is critical that we convince our potential clients that we are the best person for the job. Our ability to show our qualities, as highly skilled and credible leaders, accomplished skiers and/or climbers, inspiring teachers, and team players can be a crucial factor in sealing the deal.

As individuals who either hold current certification or are on the road to certification, and as programs that are accredited, we have a strong advantage over others because we have a logo and an association behind us that has a history and a reputation that people can relate to. The logo alone can be a helpful tool in conveying a compelling message about what we do, why we do it, and the value our services provides to others.

By amply representing ourselves as an IFMGA Guide, AMGA Certified Rock, Ski, Ski Mountaineering, or Alpine Guide, AMGA Certified Rock Instructor, Top Rope Site Manager, or Single Pitch Instructor or AMGA Accredited Program we add tremendous worth to the education and training we have pursued, the credentials we hold, and the association that supports us. By mentioning our accomplishments and credentials and appropriately using the AMGA/IFMGA logos in our bios, on our websites, business cards and brochures we expose more people to what it means to be AMGA or IFMGA Certified or AMGA Accredited.

When it comes down to it, what I am trying to say is that the more we promote ourselves the more we will get noticed; noticed by prospective clients, land managers, insurance brokers, and the general public which in the end will benefit each and everyone of us and the livelihood we seek.

The AMGA exists to support and promote our members so please feel free to inquire about the many ways we can help you "sell yourself" as the talented and highly skilled professionals that you are.

As always, member comments are welcomed! Thanks for your time and I hope your spring season is off to a prolific start.

All my best,

Betsy Novak
AMGA Executive Director



AMGA BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2007-2008

Executive Committee:

John Bicknell President
Niwot, CO
970-586-5758
bicknell@indra.com

Angela Hawse Vice President
Ridgway, CO
970-626-5770
anghawse@ascentdesigns.com

John Race Secretary
Leavenworth, WA
509-548-5823
jr@mountainschool.com

Margaret Wheeler Treasurer
North Bend, WA
206-818-7947
marg@proguiding.com

Jim Pearson Legal Counsel
Denver, CO
303-478-1115
jpearson@ph-law.com

Peter Gould Legal Counsel
Denver, CO
303-894-6176
PGould@Patton Boggs.com

Matt Brooks Historian
Fremont, CA
rewmb@aol.com

Adam Fox
Hendersonvill, NC
888-284-8433
adam@foxmountainguides.com

Keith Garvey
Boulder, CO
720-221-8302
Keith_Garvey@hotmail.com

Rob Hess Technical Director
Jackson, WY
307-733-4979
Rob@jhmg.com

Phil Powers
Denver, CO
303-905-6330
ppowers@americanalpineclub.org

Dale Remsberg
Louisville, CO
303-818-8009
daleremsberg@mac.com

Scott Soden
Denver, CO
303.242.5758
scottsoden@alpinacapital.com

Evan Stevens
Salt Lake City, UT
801-712-3438
evan_stevens@hotmail.com

Pete Takeda
Boulder, CO
720-273-7663
petetakeda@comcast.net

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

John Winsor
Boulder, CO
303-579-9227
jwinsor@radarcom.com

Read this Disclaimer!

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Newsletter Deadline

The Mountain Bulletin is Published in February, May, August, November. The next issue of the Mountain Bulletin will be published May 16th, 2008.

Deadlines for all submissions, including advertising are: January 11th (winter issue) April 11th (spring issue) July 11th (summer issue) October 10th (fall issue)

Newsletter Contributors:

Katie Kelly is the AMGA Membership Director.

Betsy Novak is the AMGA Executive Director.

Henry Beyer is the AMGA Program Director.

Ed Crothers is the AMGA Accreditation Director.

Justin Yates is the AMGA Program Assistant.

Don Langlois is a current ACMG Hiking Guide.

Lara Usinowicz works for Restop, personal portable sanitation systems.

Don Pacher is the President of Pachner & Associates, LLC.

Angela Hawse is current AMGA Vice President and a Certified Rock Guide.

John Bicknell is a Certified Rock and Alpine Guide, is current President of the AMGA, and is a Diamond Partner of the organization.

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.

Pete Takeda is a current AMGA Board member.

Gear Reviewers – Betsy Novak, Henry Beyer, Ed Crothers, & Justin Yates

National Office Staff

Executive Director: Betsy Novak

Program Director: Henry Beyer

Membership Director: Katie Kelly

Accreditation Director : Ed Crothers

Program Assistant: Justin Yates

American Mountain Guides Association

P.O. Box 1739

Boulder CO 80306

Tel: 303.271.0984

Fax: 303.271.1377

email: info@amga.com

website: www.amga.com



President's Corner

by John Bicknell



It's spring in Colorado, a time I love because you can do it all. Last week, I skied 20" of new snow with an old client on Thursday and worked a Single Pitch course in Boulder over the weekend with temperatures in the seventies. For much the same reason, this is the busiest season for AMGA training courses—ski courses in AK, rock courses all over, the first alpine course begins in a few days in CO. Demand for all these courses seems

strong; enrollments are high.

In particular, public demand for the revised Single Pitch course (old TRSM) and the still-pilot Climbing Wall Instructors course in collaboration with the Climbing Wall Association is encouraging. A second section had to be scheduled to accommodate the demand for the CWI course at the upcoming Climbing Wall symposium; the first-ever Provider's Training Course at the end of the symposium is at capacity. As most mountain guides already have, climbing instructors are seeing the need for outside training and certification and recognizing the AMGA's role in providing that training.

In March, I took the Ski Guides course in the Cascades with Margaret Wheeler and Peter Leh. Over twelve days, it felt like a marathon, as the emphasis and strength of the course was definitely on the touring, receiving immediate feedback and suggestions as one guided guides in complex and beautiful ski terrain. Taking the course certainly helped me to understand the change in course length from eight to twelve days last year—it's just a lot to cover, particularly when the student pool always ranges from

those who climb more than ski to those who ski more than climb. I took the course for the same reasons you do—I thought it would improve my ability serve my clients in the ski and avalanche courses I work. I believe it did. I am also curious (still am) as to the feasibility of continuing on to full certification. I like the fact that I'm still taking AMGA courses, as are many AMGA Board Members—the trainings and exams are the heart of the AMGA and I'm happy not to be removed from that. It means I can better appreciate both the benefits of AMGA courses and at times understand also your frustrations on those courses.

It was great meeting other AMGA members and listening to their ideas and concerns. A common theme was that the AMGA should be linked to a university program. They saw the benefits in the greater availability of loans, scholarships and array of courses that help round out a guide's skills (teaching, marketing, business, ect.). The template is there for this; the ACMG linked to Canadian universities a generation ago. I'll put it out to you here—I would appreciate hearing from you on this topic. Who is in favor of the AMGA looking to link with a college program? Why? Who is against this? Why?

My term as President ends this October. An AMGA/University partnership certainly will not happen this year. But if there was a groundswell of support for this idea from AMGA members, it is a viable goal in the three to five year range. I'll get back to you in a later article on what your comments have been.

I think I'll keep this article short—too much climbing and skiing available this month. We should all be doing some.

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Photo: Tonya Roth - Beth Hadden and Stevie Caldwell in the Grand Canyon

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Clarify Contractual Liability Issues When Applying for or Renewing Insurance

By Don Pachner

Like climbing equipment, insurance coverage is only as strong as the weakest link. Carefully read insurance proposals or insurance policies sent to you by your insurance agent or broker and ask questions. You are paying the insurance premium not only to meet permit requirements, but also for the rare time that you have an unexpected claim. When a claim hits, the track record and experience of an insurance company in dealing with mountaineering claims can be crucial to handling and defense of a claim in court. If you can ask good questions before you experience a claim, your insurance will provide an effective defense and pay any settlement or judgment rendered by the courts.

Contractual liability coverage is one of the least-understood and most complex insurance coverage questions you must consider. By entering into a contract, you may be assuming legal liability for the actions of your sub-contractors through an indemnification or other clause in the contract. Oral and written contracts each have differing coverage/implications under an insurance policy.

Almost all guides are familiar with situations that involve use of sub-contractors. Most often, contractual liability arises out of the use of another guide service to guide clients that you do not have time to take out into the field. For a larger guide service, this may mean contracting out operations to another guide service, where permits are difficult to obtain or human resources are thin. Concession agreements are another source of contractual liability issues.

The IRS or State definition of sub-contractor can differ significantly with the insurance company's definition. Many sub-contractors working on an IRS 1099 reporting basis are actually considered employees by the insurance company, even though they are considered an independent contractor by the federal or state government for tax purposes.

If in doubt, you should ask your insurance agent or broker how the insurance company defines "employee." Always establish this when you apply for insurance. Most insurers of rock climbing and/or mountaineering guides and guide services define an employee as a person under your direction and control and using your equipment. Cases where they use their own equipment can constitute a gray area.

To be insured as an employee, a guide paid on an IRS 1099 basis must adhere to your guide service's safety and operations procedures to be considered "under your direction and control" and insured on your policy. If the guide working for you is AMGA certified or if the guide service is AMGA accredited, they likely have adopted and understand the AMGA professional safety and operations guidelines that you use in your own everyday operations, a giant step towards covering them as employees.

Contractual relationships are often not clear cut, and coverage can vary according to individual policy terms, conditions and exclusion, so you should inform your agent or broker of your contractual relationships when you submit an application for insurance or when a new situation arises during the course of the season. He will be equipped to analyze your needs and work with insurance underwriters to close any gaps in coverage.

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The Use of Natural Ranges for Mountain Navigation

by Don Langlois, ACMG Hiking Guide

Maps and navigating have fascinated me since childhood. My father was a naval officer and the captain of a submarine so he had nautical charts and books at home. I used to read his navigation texts when I hardly knew what I was reading and my favorite was Bowditch: American Practical Navigator, as thick as my arm and considered the navigator's "Bible." From an early age I studied land and marine navigation and the study and the practice of marine navigation in my "alternate career" as a professional mariner has helped be a better navigator in all environments.

Sometimes when navigating in the mountains (or anywhere), it is not necessary to know exactly where you are, but it is sufficient to know where you are relative to some point or object. A range can be just the thing for a quick answer to this dilemma. A range is the alignment of two objects in view separated by some distance. The alignment determines a line. When the navigator sees the two objects in alignment, he is said to be on the range and the line is said to be a line of position (LOP) for the navigator at the moment of alignment. With two simultaneous LOP's, the navigator has a "fix," or known position. Ranges are well known in nautical navigation. Many harbors have artificial ranges constructed with markers and lights, which can be used day or night to keep a vessel lined up in a channel. Natural ranges exist wherever a navigator can find two conveniently located objects, which line up. This gives a very accurate LOP provided the objects are precisely recognized on the chart and in real view. Natural ranges can also be very useful to a land navigator such as a river runner, lake canoeist or mountain guide.

Here is an example of how a natural range can be used to help the mountain navigator who is unsure of his position. The navigator is traveling in a valley surrounded by peaks and is in a thick forest so he has a very limited view of things in the valley bottom. He has a rough idea of his location from dead reckoning (i.e. how long traveled, at what speed and direction), but he is not sure if he has traveled up the valley beyond a certain small lake he sees on the map. In this case, he merely needs to know if he is up valley or down valley of the lake.

He chooses two identifiable points, one on each side of the valley, which determine a line. He does this by pointing at both points with both hands simultaneously. If when he points, he has his arms in a straight line, then he is on the range. Very convenient. If his arms are not in a straight line, that gives him information as well. Now he lays a straightedge on the map, through the two points. He can now easily see which side of the range the lake is on. He can also tell from the angle of his arms which side of the range he is on. Of course if he is lucky enough to be on the range and can pick out two other objects for a second natural range, then he has two LOP's and potentially a very good fix if those LOP's intersect at a favorable angle (close to 90 degrees is best).

This is just one way a natural range can quickly help answer a navigational question. No compass is needed; just a map, a straightedge and map reading skills.



Technical Director Update

by Rob Hess, Technical Director



“A winter to remember” we will be saying. It seems as though most areas in the west had a great winter. Here in Jackson, with over 600 inches of snow fall, the valley is still blanketed with snow--a rarity for this time of year in recent history. By the time this article appears in the newsletter, most of us will be well into our spring seasons. For many this means warm rock in the desert southwest somewhere, for others it will mean an opportunity to ski many descents that have not

been in shape or rarely allow for ski descents except in exceptional years. If you are like me, it will be a combination of both.

Since my return from Chamonix 2 days ago, I have finally been able to take a few moments to think back on the AMGA ski program and where we have come and where we are going. Yes, we still have two programs to run in Valdez, but by the time this comes out, Valdez will be in the record books. There have been some issues that have come to the table regarding entrance into the ski program via the ski guide's course and the method by which participants are evaluated. Individuals wanting entrance into the program do not need to have guiding experience but must be at a very high level of recreational skill. We have defined what this means in our course catalogue and are currently further defining what the expected ski standard needs to be. Many participants have not realized how seriously we take these prerequisites and have enrolled before they were at our standard of skiing. Individuals are evaluated on their skiing skills on the first day of the ski guide's course. It is important to realize that if one comes to the course with skills below the standard, they will receive an “incomplete” for their final evaluation. In some cases if individuals are far below the standard, they may not be allowed to continue the course. There are other prerequisite skills in addition to skiing standards, so please pay close attention to these when considering enrollment onto the course. It is probably important to mention that although I speak with regards to the ski, this is the case with all three discipline, Rock, Alpine and Ski. Final course evaluation and the “complete” or “incomplete” is contingent upon all prerequisite skills, not just the skiing (movement) standard.

There has been some issue with the “complete” or “incomplete” grading system for the final evaluation in the ski guide's course and other disciplines first level courses. Some would argue that they did everything needed to complete the course so why the incomplete? This comes down to semantics. Regardless of what the final designation or grade is, if there are things that must be accomplished before moving to the next level of course, that is the important point. We feel it is very important to have a system that clearly designates where and when someone is ready to move

to the next level. Not having this would be a disservice to program participants and just bad education. We first used “pass” or “fail”, but this was a demoralizing approach and did not foster an environment of learning. We then used “successful” or “unsuccessful”. but this also has a negative connotation and did not really state what was intended. We now use the “complete” or “incomplete”. If one looks at the definition of “complete” in the dictionary, it is defined as “having all the necessary or appropriate parts”. If one does not have the prerequisite skills then they do not have the necessary or appropriate parts and therefore are considered as “incomplete”. They can however gain the necessary skill and successfully “complete” the course (not such a closed door).

Finally, I want to discuss the ski program and the challenges the individual seeking certification is up against. Unlike the rock and alpine where there are ample opportunities to work in the U.S. with experienced guides in an environment that meets the international standard, the ski is much more difficult. There are numerous ski guiding venues in the states, but they tend to be very specialized and tend to not prepare one for the international standard. The art of ski guiding and its relatively vague nature mean that the best and most complete education is done with a healthy dose of shadow and or mentor guiding. The individuals that I have observed that have shown the strongest skills in the certification process, are those that have sought out a varied set of venues, not readily available in the states. For this reason I can't emphasize enough the need for folks to broaden out and spend some quality time in Canada and the Alps, seeking out personal experience and time spent with certified guides. Most American guides are very open to having tail guides, shadow guides or observers. Many Canadians and or associated guides are very open to shadow guides on their various tours through huts and lodges. We have been running some of our training and certification programs in the Alps, and as I said, I just returned from Chamonix from working some AMGA ski programs. The programs we have done in France and Switzerland have seen few numbers, partially due to the Euro/Dollar exchange, but perhaps people are intimidated. I can not speak highly enough of the experience one can and will gain from time spent in the Alps. This is where ski mountaineering was invented (alpine climbing too), and to spend time there is to know precisely why. It is inspiring to see such a vigorous guiding scene in all aspects of the discipline from off piste to steep descents to haute mountain tours. We will continue to run programs in the Alps, so next time you are getting ready to sign up for a course, consider the Alps as part of your education.

Any way, I hope this helps people better understand the reasons for some of the things that are done at the AMGA. Certainly if you have any questions feel free to e-mail me or give me a call, though I can be hard to get this time of year.



Program Director Update

by Henry Beyer



I've now been in the role of Program Director(PD) for about eight months, and it seems I am just finally getting my sea legs. There have been some bumps along the way as I have transitioned from Membership Director to Program Director. Pre-course material not being mailed out in a timely fashion, post-course paperwork suffering the same fate, and me feeling like I am paddling up stream without a paddle in a leaky boat at times all contributed to a somewhat choppy winter. But as we side step our way into spring here in Boulder and as I near completing a full year cycle of managing AMGA programs, I can't help but feel that the waters ahead will begin to calm.

To facilitate that calming affect and in an effort to serve you, our membership, as best we can, I would like to enlist your help. Later this spring I will be emailing the entire membership a survey that pertains specifically to AMGA Programs. What I would like from you is two things: first, if you have any suggestions on content for the survey (i.e., questions to asks, topics to cover, etc.) please contact me by June 6th with your ideas and I will do my best to incorporate them into the survey; and second, I ask that you honestly respond to the survey and let us know what you

think about AMGA Programs and how to improve them. And by us I mean the Board of Directors, the Executive Director, Technical Director, Discipline Coordinators, Instructor Pool, and myself the Program Director. (The survey may be answered anonymously). Once we sift through all the responses and distill the essential elements and key points, the AMGA Office will publish the results. And of course after that we will begin to address those key points in both the short term and long term. As always please feel free to contact me with your comments, suggestions, and concerns. If I had an office, I could say, "My door is always open!"

One final note, I would like to personally congratulate Adrian Ballinger and Mark Puleio on earning IFMGA Certification with their successful completion of the recent Ski Mountaineering Exam in Argentierre, France.

All good things,

Henry Beyer
Program Director

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Gear Review

Five Ten Piton



The Five.Ten Piton is a crack-climbing machine. It is a low cut, slip lasted shoe. With the rand extending well above the toes, feet can be shoved into cracks with confidence. The large toebox is less than ideal for thin cracks, but is superb in cracks from small hands to off-widths. Sized for a flat foot

and with a slightly padded heel, this is a great work shoe providing for all day comfort on the longest routes. Fits medium to large, high volume feet, not recommended for people with narrow, low volume feet. Well made, well designed; definitely worth checking out.

FiveTen V-Mile



The FiveTen V-Mile has quickly become my top pick rock shoe for long moderate routes. It is stiff enough for wide cracks and micro-edging while at the same time providing loads of comfort and support for the long haul. It is amazing that a shoe so comfortable can perform so well especially

when precision is essential. Let us not forget the EVA foam in the heels that make walk-offs almost as enjoyable as when wearing your approach shoe. Many folks recommend sizing it up a little for comfort's sake on longer routes. I would not want this shoe to fit as tight as my Anasazis, but amazingly the size difference doesn't compromise performance.

La Sportiva Lynx Men's Trail Running Shoe



Last year I reviewed the La Sportiva Fireblade and found it to be one of the best trail running shoes I've owned. It had a good combination of cushion and weight for trail runs up to about an hour and a half on trails that are not too rocky. This year I am running on the La Sportiva Lynx. The Lynx is a

stable, neutral, well-cushioned trail runner for every type of trail running. Salient features include: Impact Brake System X-Axis outsole for superior traction and cushioning, dynamic external scree gaiter to keep out trail debris, and the Transkinetic Heel Stabilizer provides stability on uneven, off camber terrain. I have found this shoe to live up to what I have come to expect from La Sportiva—a well built shoe that exceeds expectations in a variety of conditions and terrain. I have been using the shoe on longer runs, so far up to three hours, and have found it to provide more protection and cushion than the Fireblade. Though slightly heavier at 14 oz/397 gm (Fireblade is 11.89 oz.), the Lynx seems to be a better long distance running shoe, providing just a bit more room and comfort. As with the Fireblade I will recommend this shoe to anyone who asks.

The Lynx Women's Trail Running Shoe

Can you say me.....ow! These sexy streamlined shoes are sure to make you feel like a stealthy feline when pouncing on the mountain trails. Lightweight, well cushioned, flexible and grippy, the Lynx by La Sportiva is a

stable trail running shoe you can depend on in variable conditions. Like the paws of our feline friend my feet rejoice in the feeling of rock, roots and grit beneath. The Lynx provide the right amount of armor to keep the debris out, but enough suppleness to allow my feet to respond the ever-changing terrain of the Boulder Front Range.

Five Ten Insight



The Five Ten Men's Insight is the first pair of approach shoes I've owned made by Five Ten. They are versatile, comfortable, cool looking and built tough to handle dirt, mud, scree, talus, and steep rock. I particularly like the low cut ankle, which gives the Insight a more trail running shoe look and

feel. They fit nicely between the Camp Four and Guide Tennie, and that is how I would use them—for moderate approaches to shorter cliffs, where carrying the shoes is unlikely. Plus they look good, so they easily convert to a rest day shoe, ideal for chic coffee joints and the Pearl Street Mall. One side note is that these shoes seemed designed for a medium to wider foot, so if you have narrow feet, I'd stick with the Guide Tennie or your favorite trail running shoe.

Five Ten Savant



The Five Ten Savant is a cross between trail running shoe and approach shoe. Termed "multi-sport" by Five Ten, the shoe does well in a variety of uses. It performed well on short runs with the mesh uppers providing plenty of ventilation for hot feet. The Savant is also well suited for the approach

to your local climbs. With its combination of a supportive mid-sole and Stealth rubber sole these kicks will not only get you to the base of climbs in comfort, they'll also allow you to scramble smoothly on moderately technical terrain. The Five Ten Savant truly is capable across many different activities

Arcteryx S240 Harness



The first thing I want to say about the Warp Strength Technology harnesses from Arc'teryx is that I like them. I just finished a midday training jaunt to the Boulder Rock Club, and once again was nicely cradled in the S240 Sport Climbing Harness on every fall, and today there seemed to be a lot of them. The biggest

thing I've noticed, or more correctly not noticed, about the S240 is that you hardly feel or notice it while climbing or being caught after a fall for that matter. At 240 grams the S240 (I get it!!) weighs 4 grams more than a cup of water...WOW that's light!! There's not much more that needs to be said. The S240 does not sacrifice comfort despite how light it is, and will certainly not get in the way of you sending your latest project at your

favorite sport climbing crag. And be sure, this is a sport climbing harness. Call me old fashioned, but I was more than a little disappointed when I discovered it did not have a haul loop. Oh, well I'll get over it (as I dream about my next big whipper at the gym)!

Arcteryx R280 Women's Climbing Harness



When I stepped into the itty bitsy teeny weenie fuchsia colored R280 I questioned to myself "Can a women's specific climbing harness, that compacts down to the size of a wadded pair of socks and weighs less than a tall latte, still provide lasting comfort and multi-purpose functionality?" Quickly my doubt converted into wonder as I racked up, ascended the face and hung out in my paper-thin waist and leg loops while belaying up the 2nd in complete comfort. There is something to say about how this Warp Strength Technology, which uses a specially woven fabric to uniformly spread the load across the entire harness, can make one feel like they are climbing in their skivvies. The R280 is a worthy harness for all styles of climbing. It is designed to meet the needs of the multi-talented rock goddess who sends cracks, crimpers, offwidths and more, but if a day of sport climbing is your cup of tea I recommend checking out the S240 for an even lighter alternative.



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AMGA Board of Directors Upcoming Elections

by Angela Hawse

AMGA Vice President

As you are enjoying spring and getting ready for your summer guiding season, put some thought into AMGA nominations for the Board of Directors this year. Nominations are due, to Katie Kelly katie@amga.com, by Wednesday, May 28th. Nominees need 6 nominations to make the ballot. This can come from other AMGA members or the BOD. This year we have 5 seats on the ballot. Two current BOD members are eligible to run for a second term.

Each Director of the Board brings unique perspectives, expertise and skills to help the AMGA chart it's course and represent you as a profes-

sional guide. Perhaps you, or someone you know would be interested in serving on the BOD? Participate in your professional organization by running, nominating someone, or making the effort to read each candidates position statement and voting this year.

If you have any questions about the BOD, contact me at anghawse@ascentdesigns.com or katie@amga.com.

The 2008 Annual AMGA Snow Cat Powder Day

by Pete Takeda

2007/2008 was an unbelievable ski year in the Colorado Rockies. Snowfall hit record levels and even the most jaded slope-style cogniscenti confirmed this year as one of the best in decades.

February 7, 2008, the date of the Annual AMGA Snow Cat Powder Day, lay smack dab in the midst of this stellar season. A succession of mega storms blanketed the Continental Divide with waist deep trackless powder. And thanks to donors Kyle and Cindy Lefkoff - and the peerless crew at Vail Powder Guides (www.vailsnowcat.com) - twelve lucky AMGA skiers transcended the usual dreary fare of I-70 lift lines, maddening resort hordes and tedious beat-out crud to float more than 12,000 feet of pure blower bliss.

I'm no expert, but as one of those lucky twelve, I knew a good thing when I felt it. That amazing day, all under the watchful supervision of the Vail Powder Guides easily ranks as the best skiing of my life. Exquisite, effortless gliding through trillions of mirco-crystals - the sweetest runs in all my experience, launching from the very crest of the continent, down blanketed rollers of depthless fluff, arcing through open pine glades.

Months later I still feel like one of the luckiest skiers in Colorado. And if I'm really lucky, maybe I'll have a similar experience sometime in the next 20 years. All I know is after that unforgettable day of February 7 I couldn't be bothered to dust off my skis for the rest of the season. Don't miss it next year. One day was worth an entire season...

But wait - there's more. The Annual 2008 Snow Cat Powder Day raised over \$2,500 for the AMGA. Says Executive Director Betsy Novak (herself a gushing Powder Day enthusiast), "We owe the success of this year's event to all the generous contributions - especially to Kyle, Cindy and the awesome Vail Powder Guides." She adds, "As a non profit organization, the AMGA relies largely on the generous support of its contributing members and corporate sponsors. We hope to go bigger next year - especially if Mother Nature provides!"

Ski Fundraising Event Attendees:

1. Kyle Lefkoff
2. Cindy Lefkoff
3. John Winsor
4. John Bicknell
5. Scott Soden
6. Dick Jackson
7. Betsy Novak
8. Mike Alkaitis
9. Peter Gould
10. Russ Novak
11. Pete Takeda
12. Colby Coombs





Petzl ~ Official Headlamp Sponsor of the AMGA

Boulder, CO- Petzl America becomes the Official Headlamp Sponsor of the AMGA.

The American Mountain Guides Association (AMGA) is pleased to announce that Petzl America has joined the AMGA as its newest Diamond Level Partner.

As the Official Headlamp Sponsor of the AMGA, Petzl America will help keep dark nights in the mountain alight by providing headlamps to core members of the AMGA Instructor Team and to select Certified Guides. In addition to the headlamp provisions, Petzl will offer a one full-tuition scholarship to an AMGA member per year.

“As a Diamond Partner, we will actively participate in promoting the highest standards of professional guiding through education and certification,” says Mark Givens, Sports Division Manager for Petzl America.

Petzl’s core values of safety, education, and innovation are consistent with the AMGA mission and the fact that Petzl has been supporting the AMGA since 1990 shows their level of commitment to the guiding profession in the United States. “We are very excited to name Petzl the Official Headlamp Sponsor of the AMGA. We hope that other companies will see Petzl’s proactive approach as an opportunity to support working guides and instructors,” says Betsy Novak, Executive Director of the AMGA.

Petzl has joined the AMGA as one of eight Diamond level Partners.. A large percentage of the Diamond level partnership funds go directly to AMGA members in the form of subsidized exams and full tuition scholarships.

2008 AMGA Scholarship Recipients

Please congratulate all AMGA 2008 Scholarship Recipients

Arc'teryx - Neil Satterfield

Backcountry Access - Mark Hammond

Black Diamond - Erik Leidecker

Chad VanderHam - Adrian Ballinger

Jim Ratz - Steve Banks

Julie Cheney Culberson - Erica Engle

Mammut - Adam George

Marmot- Steve Banks

Mike Hatstrup - Nat Partidge

Mountain Hardwear - Joe Anderson

Patagonia - Zoe Hart

Petzl - Silas Rossi

The North Face - Tim Brown

Walker Family Foundation - Liz Oakes

W.L. Gore - Jonathan Spitzer

Also, we want to thank all applicants for your time, hard work, and dedication to the AMGA and guiding community. The pool of applicants was quite competitive this year and we are unable to fund all the worthwhile applications we receive. We encourage you to apply for the many other scholarship we have available in 2009.

The AMGA wishes you the best with your training and certification plans, future applications and all your endeavors.

Pack it out

by Lara Usinowicz

As responsible members of the mountaineering community, the AMGA tries to promote good ethics and stewardship. An awareness of the impact we each have on the environment is a key component of these practices.

An issue at the forefront of National Park Rangers and BLM Managers but not necessarily the easiest subject to broach is human waste. The issues of human waste in the wilderness are two-fold—human health problems as a consequence of either direct contact or contamination of drinking water and aesthetic concerns of visitors who find improperly buried waste. There is nothing worse than arriving at a pristine camping site in the wilderness only to find piles of human waste and toilet paper littering the landscape.

There are areas where you can bury your waste. The proper method is to dig a cathole 6 to 8 inches deep at least 200 feet from water, camp, and trails. After use, one should cover and disguise the cathole and pack out all toilet paper and hygiene products.

However, there are many climbing and mountaineering areas where burying waste is not an option either due to soil type or heavy use. A few areas that are requiring or strongly suggesting “packing it out” are:

Grand Teton National Park—The Lower Saddle (waste bags provided with permits)
Indian Creek (waste bag kiosks at trailheads)
Zion National Park
Hawaii Volcanoes National Park
Rocky Mountain National Park (new voluntary pack-out program for the backcountry)
Hueco Tanks State Park
Mt. Whitney (recent removal of high alpine toilet)

There are many other areas that desperately need to address a human waste solution due to heavy impact (Colorado’s 14ers, Aconcagua, Red Rock Canyon) but, until something is suggested, it is the responsibility of each and every member of The AMGA to be responsible for him or herself and for educating clients about proper outdoor ethics.

If one must pack it out, Restop (www.whennaturecalls) makes a bag system to safely transport solid human waste from sensitive wilderness areas. The bags contain the odor as well as the waste, are approved for disposal in any trash receptacle after use, and are offered at a discount on the AMGA website to members.

So, do your part to keep climbing and mountaineering areas from going to shit...





AMGA Membership Form

New Member | Renewing Member

Personal Contact Information:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Home/Cell Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

Fax: _____ Email (required): _____

Date of Birth: _____ Gender: _____

I began guiding professionally the year ____ (not required for student and associate members)

I guide professionally about ____ days per year (not required for student and associate members)

Check the type of the membership you are applying for

- Associate Member (\$60)
 - Student Associate Member (\$40) (Include proof of enrollment with Student Associate Membership.)
- Individual Member (\$115) (For individual memberships you must include with application: resumé of guided climbs, minimum 40 paid days in the last two years; resumé of personal climbs, minimum 20 climbs; at least two letters of reference (from an employer, fellow guide, or client).
- IFMGA (\$125)
- Certified Guide (\$100)
- Certified SPI (\$60)
- Certified TRSM (\$60)
- Lifetime Membership (\$2500)
- Emeritus Membership (\$100)
- Yes, I'd like to make an additional, tax-deductible contribution to further support the AMGA. \$ _____

Please mail membership application, payment, and resúmes (if applicable) to: Membership, PO Box 1739, Boulder, CO 80306.

Payment

Name on MC/VISA Card: _____

Credit Card Number: _____ Exp. Date: _____

Membership Disclaimer

- I agree to support the 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 and 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 of Applicant: _____ Date: _____

- Check this box if you would prefer the AMGA not share this information with AMGA Corporate Partners.



THANKS TO OUR TOP CONTRIBUTORS!

Diamond Sponsors give over \$10,000.

Benefactors give between \$2500 and \$9999.

Patrons give between \$1500 and \$2499.

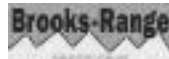
Supporting Sponsors give between \$500 and \$1499

Contact the AMGA office to learn how you can become a Contributor.

Diamond:



NEVER STOP EXPLORING



John and Patty Bicknell

Kyle and Cindy Lefkoff

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Please contact Betsy Novak if you would like to contribute to the AMGA at betsy@amga.com or 303.271.0984





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