



MOUNTAIN BULLETIN



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

by Margaret Wheeler

As I write this we are all in the heart of our busy guiding season, so as the summer draws to a close I hope you'll take some time to read through this Mountain Bulletin. There is so much happening at the AMGA, and the board and the office have been working hard on some complex and exciting subjects.

But before I dive in to my update, a word on this fall: As Josh describes in his article, we will be hosting the IFMGA meeting in Boulder in November. **I urge you—come and be present for our fall meeting!** If you have never been to an annual meeting, make this the one you attend. And if you have been to an AMGA meeting before...this one will be taking it to a new level. Seriously. It WILL go to eleven. There is so much going on, so many great events and great people involved. It is a rare and special honor for us to be hosting the IFMGA meeting. It will be an excellent opportunity to connect with the AMGA, with the IFMGA, and to be a part of your organization.

What work is happening with AMGA Board of Directors?

Our June meeting took a new form this year: as a board we participated in a Strategic Planning Retreat, organized by Betsy and facilitated by two outside consultants. The impetus for this process was our desire, as a board and as an organization, to be directive and proactive in how we grow and evolve in the coming years. We spent two intense days working together to dive into the business of creating a roadmap to guide the AMGA in the next 5 to 10 years. Our goal with this session was to make a significant start in creating specifics so that we can build a new Strategic Plan.

For this article, I'd like to give you all both a window inside the process and an update about where we are headed in building our strategic plan. It is hard to compress the work of two solid days into a few pages. But here is my best shot—please be in touch if you are interested in learning more!

How does an organization develop a Strategic Plan?

It's an intense process, and we devoted two full days to beginning it. After outlining the general goals of a strategic plan, the consultants took us through a SWOT analysis (Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats). SWOT analyses are a frequently used planning tool for boards and organizations, and going through a SWOT analysis as a group is a powerful way to get everything out on the table.

As a board and with input from Betsy, Josh, Henry, Ed and Leigh, we worked together to brainstorm Strengths and Weaknesses of the organization, and then list Opportunities and Threats. S and W refer to internal aspects of the organization, O and T are external.

Our session yielded 8–10 topics in each category. Here are some examples:

One of the **Strengths** we listed is the commitment, dedication, and productivity of our office staff. One of the **Weaknesses** we identified is that AMGA programs do not yet meet the needs of all working guides in the US. An example of an **Opportunity** that we listed is the potential for the AMGA Access director to improve and evolve the access paradigm by devoting resources to lobbying on a state and federal level, and conducting outreach and education with land managers. One of the **Threats** that we identified is any blurring or fracturing of the AMGA certification brand, either via competing organizations or through negative perceptions of the AMGA.

These four are just a few examples of the results of our analysis—the complete brainstorm filled up 6–7 large poster size post-it notes!

In order for our SWOT brainstorm to guide our strategic planning process, the consultants helped take the result of our SWOT analysis to create categories where the organization can use its strengths, improve its weaknesses, take advantage of opportunities, and anticipate/deal with its threats. Within these categories, we worked together to build goals for the next 5 years. Once we had this all listed out, we chose the top three areas to work on as a board for our strategic plan. This process helped us to prioritize the list of issues and goals that we had all worked together to create, and to put them into a form and a scope that we can tackle.

We then created working groups for each category (made up of board members with office staff mixed in amongst the three groups), and began work in those groups to build specific goals, objectives, timelines, and assignments. The work done on this day will set us up as a

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AMGA Board of Directors

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Margaret Wheeler | President
North Bend, WA
206.818.7947
mag@proguiding.com

Majka Burhardt
Boulder, CO
970.290.7822
mb@majkaburhardt.com

Martin Volken | Vice President
North Bend, WA
206-525-4425
martinvolken@proguiding.com

Clint Cook
Ouray, CO
970.290.7822
info@ourayclimbing.com

Evan Stevens | Secretary
Garibaldi Highlands, BC Canada
801.212.3438
evan_stevens@hotmail.com

Adam Fox
Hendersonville, NC
888.284.8433
adam@foxmountainguides.com

Scott Soden | Treasurer
Denver, CO
303.242.5758
scottsoden@alpinacapital.com

Keith Garvey
Boulder, CO
720.221.8302
keith_garvey@hotmail.com

Rob Hess | Technical Director
Jackson, WY
307.733.4979
rob@jhmg.com

Dick Jackson
Aspen, CO
877.790.2777
dickjackson@aspensexpeditions.com

Peter Gould | Legal Counsel
Denver, CO
303.894.6176
pgould@pattonboggs.com

Kyle Lefkoff
Boulder, CO
303.444.6950
kyle@boulderventures.com

Jim Pearson | Legal Counsel
Denver, CO
303.478.1115
jpearson@ph-law.com

Marty Molitoris
Rosendale, NY
845-658-3094
marty@alpineendeavors.com

Matt Brooks | Historian
San Francisco, CA
510.797.7980
rewmb@aol.com

John Race
Leavenworth, WA
509.548.5823
jr@mountainschool.com

Dale Remsberg
Louisville, CO
303.818.8009
daleremsberg@mac.com

John Winsor
Boulder, CO
303.579.9227
jtwinsor@gmail.com

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AMGA Mountain Guides Association
PO Box 1739 | Boulder, CO 80306 | 303.271.1277 fax

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

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NATIONAL OFFICE STAFF

Executive Director | **Betsy Novak**
Program Director | **Henry Beyer**
Membership Director | **Josh Harrod**
Accreditation Director | **Ed Crothers**
Access Director | **Leigh Goldberg**
Climbing Instructor Program Director | **Ed Crothers**
Accountant | **Asha Nagda**

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.

NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTORS

Betsy Novak is the AMGA Executive Director
Henry Beyer is the AMGA Program Director and a Certified Single Pitch Instructor
Josh Harrod is the AMGA Membership Director
Ed Crothers is the AMGA Accreditation Director & Climbing Instructor Program Director as well as a Certified Rock Instructor and SPI Provider
Margaret Wheeler is President of the AMGA, an IFMGA Guide and an instructor for the AMGA
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
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THE AMGA CARES...

by Betsy Novak

1 The AMGA cares about developing a program that contributes to the life-long learning process of professional guides and climbing instructors. We are currently working on building a continuing education and mentorship program that will contribute to the professional development of our members at any point in their guiding careers.

2 The AMGA cares about the experiences our members have while taking our programs. We are currently working on developing curriculum, manuals, supporting materials and a trained staff that represents the gold standard with regards to guide and climbing instructor training, education and assessment. Our goal is to ensure AMGA delivers to each and every student, on each and every program an outstanding, meaningful educational experience that is focused on a consistent core curriculum and clearly defined objectives and outcomes designed to meet different learning styles.

3 The AMGA cares about setting a positive example of best business practices for professional guides. We are refining the administrative side of program operations to ensure our instructors are sufficiently and consistently trained, supported and compensated for the work they do, opportunities for advancement exist, and that a structure is in place to make certain our staffing needs are easily met for years to come.

4 The AMGA cares that our members and instructors are treated fairly, consistently and with respect during AMGA programs and wants to make

certain that there is a trusted mechanism in place for dissenting opinions to be heard. We are evaluating and redrafting our appeals process so that the guidelines for how decisions are made are formalized, consistent, organizationally backed and clearly communicated to members and instructor pool members.

5 The AMGA cares about how land managers perceive the AMGA and the mountain guiding profession. Our goal is to be the leading authority on issues related to credential based access, commercial use authorizations, and the permitting process as they pertain to professional mountain guides and climbing instructors.

With the recent hire of the Access Director we are actively pursuing and lobbying for strategies that streamline the permitting process for professional mountain guides and climbing instructors on public lands, for the specific goal of having a virtual rubber stamp approval system for all AMGA certified guides and accredited organizations.

What do you care about? How can the AMGA help? What can we do for you to ensure your educational, technical, professional and emotional needs are being met? Let us know what you think.



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AMGA Board of Directors 2010 Position

J.T. KALNAY

Cleveland, Ohio

jtk@kkpatent.com

Joined AMGA: 2008

AMGA Certification(s): Certified Single Pitch Instructor

Education: B.A., Math & English, 1983, University of Ottawa

M.S., Computer Science, 1985, University of Dayton

J.D., 1998, Case Western Reserve University

Occupation: Patent Attorney, Business Owner, Kraguljac & Kalnay, LLC

There are 5.14 climbers and there are 5.14 guides. I am neither, but am an experienced businessman and lawyer who loves to climb. Climbing and guiding friends suggested that AMGA Board membership was an appropriate use of my dispute resolution, legal, consensus building, and business skills. I became an AMGA SPI to learn safety skills rather than to guide. AMGA instructors taught me to be safer, to be more respectful of the crags, and to experience the spiritual rewards of guiding. Therefore, to give back, I now volunteer at our local crag guiding and instructing children. Serving on the Board provides another opportunity to give back by sharing my life, legal, and business experience with guides who are out there on the rock doing it every day, guiding me and others in so many ways other than just up a route.

PETE KEANE

Bend, Oregon

pete@timberlinemtguides.com

Joined AMGA: Mid-90's

AMGA Certification(s): AMGA Certified Rock and Alpine Guide

Education: B.S., Geology, 1986, University of New Hampshire

Occupation: Co-owner & Guide, Timberline Mountain Guides, Inc.

Thank you for the opportunity to be considered for the AMGA Board of Directors.

I have been guiding since 1989, and feel very fortunate to be in the position that I am in. Being a guide and a business owner has allowed me to view our profession as a whole from a few different angles.

I've previously served one, three-year term on the AMGA Board (2005-2008). One of my achievements was the implementation of a Life and Disability Policy for AMGA members.

I'm most interested in working on the Public Policy Committee, and any other access issues facing guides. Even though I am a business owner and permit holder, I'm in favor of more open access for certified guides and accredited guide services.

It is ultimately up to us as an organization to educate and push our Land Managers for recognition of our programs and credentials. This is the only way that a more open system of access can be brought about. In the long run, open access is a realistic goal, but it will require a major expenditure of effort in order to achieve. I feel I can dedicate the necessary time and energy to help accomplish this goal of the AMGA.

DALE REMSBERG

Boulder, Colorado

daleremsberg@mac.com

AMGA Certification(s): IFMGA

Occupation: Guide, Colorado Mountain School

AMGA Alpine Discipline Coordinator

Hello AMGA Members. It is that time again when new and hopefully returning Board members for the AMGA have been nominated. Fortunately many believe that my returning to the AMGA board of directors will help steer the AMGA in the correct path. One of the interesting things about

AMGA Board of Directors Official Ballot

Please take a moment to vote for three individuals to be seated on the AMGA Board of Directors in November. Only current Certified Guides, Individual Members, Certified SPI and Certified TRSM's of the AMGA are eligible to vote in the Board of Directors election, as part of their membership benefits. You can view the position statements in the summer Mt. Bulletin or online at www.amga.com. Submit your ballot via mail to PO Box 1739, Boulder, CO 80306, by fax to 303.271.1377 or email your votes to betsy@amga.com. **Ballots will be accepted until Friday, October 22, 2010.** Election results will be posted on the AMGA website and announced by November 1, 2010. New AMGA Board members will be seated at the Annual Meeting.

Select the three (3) candidates you feel are best qualified to serve on the AMGA Board of Directors:

- J.T. Kalnay
- Pete Keane
- Dale Remsberg
- Evan Stevens

Please print your name

Please sign your name

Note that your name is required. This is a ballot control measure. Your vote will be held in strict confidence.

becoming a board member is learning how to be effective and contribute in a constructive and positive manner. I feel that after my first term I'm just reaching my stride in regards to this and another term will allow me to see some of my goals and visions through with the AMGA. As you all know there are many hurdles the AMGA faces but as before one of my main focuses is on our programs. Programs are what define the AMGA and continuing to strengthen and find ways to improve our courses and exams is one of my main goals. With another term I will work hard to strengthen the AMGA on many fronts and promise to engage the organization and its membership.

Sincerely,
Dale Remsberg

EVAN STEVENS

Garibaldi Highlands,
British Columbia
evanstevens@gmail.com
Joined AMGA: 2004
AMGA Certification(s):
IFMGA

Education: B.A., Middlebury College

Occupation: Owner & Guide, Valhalla Mountain Touring

After serving the last 3 years on the BOD, I am hoping to continue to serve the AMGA for another 3 years. Why? Because things are exciting right now and I want to continue to work on these issues, like the new Access Director position, the continuing evolution of the CGF/CGC and the growth of the training programs.

Over the last three years I have grown and changed my self as well, becoming a member of the IP, taking over ownership of a guiding business and increasing my presence and working relationships in Canada. I feel as though all of this experience just adds to me being able to serve the AMGA even better in the years to come with great insight into what the members of the AMGA need, and how things may be going better or worse just north of the border.

Feel free to contact me with any questions or comments!



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PROGRAM DIRECTOR CORNER – HENRY BEYER

maximizing client rewards

What is the result of all the work we do at the AMGA? What is the final outcome that you, as a professional mountain guide, hope to achieve by committing so much time, money, and effort into becoming a certified guide? I would like to think that it is first and foremost to become the best guide you can possibly be. And through becoming that guide you are better able to maximize your client's rewards. Why is maximizing client rewards so important? If clients have a good experience with you, then they are likely to become loyal, returning customers, and, if you are outstanding, raving fans to boot. If you don't maximize client rewards, then you will be stuck with revolving door clients, struggling to make ends meet.

So what the heck is "Maximizing Client Rewards" anyway? Maximizing client rewards is providing an experience that exceeds your clients expectations, whether or not they even get out on a climb or make some turns. It is providing an outstanding experience from the moment a client calls your office or walks into your shop for the first time looking for a guided experience. Maximizing client rewards is ensuring that every step in the process, from your first contact with the client, through the actual guided activity, and finally to the follow-up in the days and weeks and months after their trip, is designed to give the client the best experience possible regardless of them hiring you for a half-day or for 14 day expedition.

How do you ensure that the service you provide does just that? You must commit to improving yourself as a guide each and every day. You must commit to not only improving your technical guiding skills, but to improving your soft, interpersonal skills as well. Becoming an AMGA or IFMGA certified guide is only the first step in the process for a career that could last up to thirty years or more. Continuing to improve yourself both personally and professionally is a life long journey.

Both in the long term and the short term, the AMGA is committed to helping you become the best possible guide

you can be. In the long term we are working to improve our programs so that every student, on each and every AMGA program has an outstanding educational experience that is focused on a consistent core curriculum and clearly defined objectives and outcomes designed to meet the different individual learning styles.

In the short term, my top priorities for the next 18 months are: first, create a standardized training program that all AMGA Instructors must go through before working an AMGA program; second, develop an open application process for certified guides interested in joining the AMGA Instructor Pool; and third, implement a required Continuing Professional Development (CPD) program for all certified guides. Focusing in these key areas will not only improve the education that is delivered on every AMGA program, but will also give you the opportunity after earning your certification(s) to learn new skills as well as update and hone the skills you already do have through the CPD program.

So what is the next step in your journey? Is it taking another AMGA program on your way to becoming an AMGA or IFMGA certified guide? Or is it taking a course or seminar to improve your communication, teaching, or small business skills? Maybe it is taking a workshop on the natural history of your local guiding area or on how to be a better photographer.

What ever 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!

Good Luck, Henry Beyer

maximizing client rewards

ICE

INSTRUCTOR COURSE & ITS IMPLEMENTATION

A Letter from Dale Remsberg

Its mid July and ice climbing is probably not on all of your minds. I have had a couple wicked hot days guiding in Boulder and as I think about it ice doesn't sound all that bad.

We have decided on how to integrate the Ice Instructor Course(IIC)into our alpine program and with this letter I'll summarize when students currently in our alpine program and those that are starting it soon need to take the IIC. With all the considerations below keep in mind that all students will need to have completed the IIC before taking an Alpine Guide Exam in 2014.

I will start with the students who have taken an AAGC course in 2009 or earlier. Those students do not need to complete the IIC as long as they complete their AGE by 2013. Starting in 2014 even these students (if they have not taken their AGE) will need to complete the IIC but will be allowed to due so before or after passing their AGE.

Second are the students who will be taking their AAGC in 2010. These students will be allowed to take the IIC before or after their AGE. It is highly recommend that these people take their IIC prior to their AGE as it will better prepare them for the exam. One other option for these 2010 AAGC graduates is to test out of the IIC course by taking a two-day ice assessment.

Third are the students who are taking the AAGC in 2011 and 2012. These Students will need to take the IIC but are allowed to take it before or after the AAGC but before the AGE.

In 2013 Students will have to have completed the IIC prior to taking the AAGC.

The goal is that starting in 2013 three days total will be eliminated from the AGC and the AAGC. This is combined so don't read this as a total of 6.

At the moment three venues will be used for the IIC. The NE area based out of North Conway, Ouray and Canmore, Alberta. Please check the 2011 schedule when it comes out and find a date that works for you. In the future we will try and add some other venues like Lilloett, British Columbia and possibly the Sierra and Cody Wyoming. Permits are often the road block to new areas and we are always trying to seek out new ones.

There will be three scheduled Ice Instructor Courses this winter so start thinking about sharpening your tools and filling those thermoses.

Cheers, Dale Remsberg

IFMGA/AMGA Mountain guide and alpine discipline coordinator

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by Ed Crothers,
Accreditation and Climbing Instructor Program Director

Where The Hell Am I??

Something a bit different for me in this edition of the Mountain Bulletin below is an article related to backcountry navigation. It deals with things to be aware of when using a GPS with a map. Even if you feel you have a good understanding of the GPS, you may find an interesting fact or two to share with clients or students.

I often tell students on backcountry navigation courses that if I were going to be dropped off in the middle of the wilderness and allowed to choose only one navigational tool, that tool would be a good topographic map of the area; they are amazing tools. Combine the use of a topographical map with a GPS and you suddenly have an incredibly powerful navigation system. The one catch is that the GPS must be “programmed” to match the data on the map. The two most important things that must be programmed are coordinate grid system and datum. Fail to do this and you are likely to find yourself “geographically challenged.” This article deals with datums. In a future article I will provide information about coordinate grid systems.

SO, WHAT IS A DATUM? The most basic definition of a geodetic datum is a point on the Earth’s surface from which measurements, both vertical and horizontal, are measured. This point has a very accurate fixed latitude/longitude and elevation from which all other measurements are made. In North America, the datum that fits this definition is the North American Datum of 1927 (NAD 27.) Modern satellite survey techniques have allowed for more accurate models of the earth. Two examples of this are the North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83) and the World Geodetic Survey of 1984 (WGS 84.) These models are referred to as “Earth-centric” and do not rely on a single reference point on the ground. If you have scrolled through the datums in your GPS, you will have noticed that there are many datums in use around the world. A logical question is why? There are a couple of reasons.

For centuries mathematicians, astronomers, and cartographers understood that the Earth is not a sphere, it is an ellipsoid, and not a perfect one at that. Because of the curvature of the Earth and topographic features that

vary from region to region, one land based reference point on the planet would not provide the accuracy needed for detailed mapping and calculations. A mathematical model of the earth that worked in Britain, a small, relatively flat portion of the planet, would not work in a country like India that goes from sea level to the Himalaya. As a result, different mathematical models and reference points were established that worked for the geographic characteristics of a given region. All these reference points were established manually from information provided by large-scale land surveys. If you have an interest in understanding what this process involved and the enormity of such a project, take a look at John Keay’s “The Great Arc.” This is the story of George Everest’s Great Survey of India; very readable and an amazing piece of history.

An example of a regional datum that preceded modern mapping techniques is the North American Datum of 1927 (NAD 27.) On the list of datums in a GPS this is often designated as CONUS 27. This datum is based off a point that is located on a ranch in Kansas at a point within 40 miles of what is considered the geographic center of the lower 48. It incorporates a mathematical model of the earth’s surface that was developed in 1866 and information gathered by the manual surveying of the entire North American continent.

With the advent of satellite surveying techniques and high-speed computers, mathematicians and cartographers have come up with an extremely accurate model of the Earth. The datum that has been established using these techniques is the World Geodetic Survey of 1984 (WGS 84.) This datum was the result of a project funded by the U.S. Department of Defense to assist in military mapping and navigation, including controlling the orbit and broadcasting of the satellites used in the Global Positioning System (GPS.) It was the first datum developed exclusively using satel-

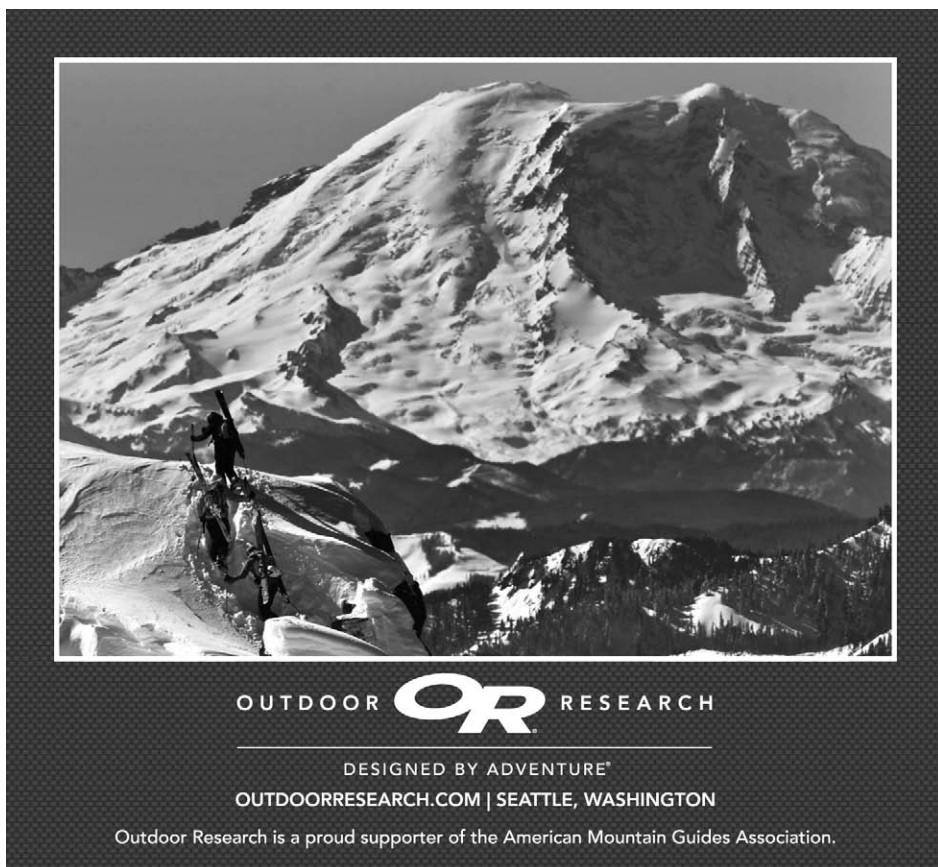
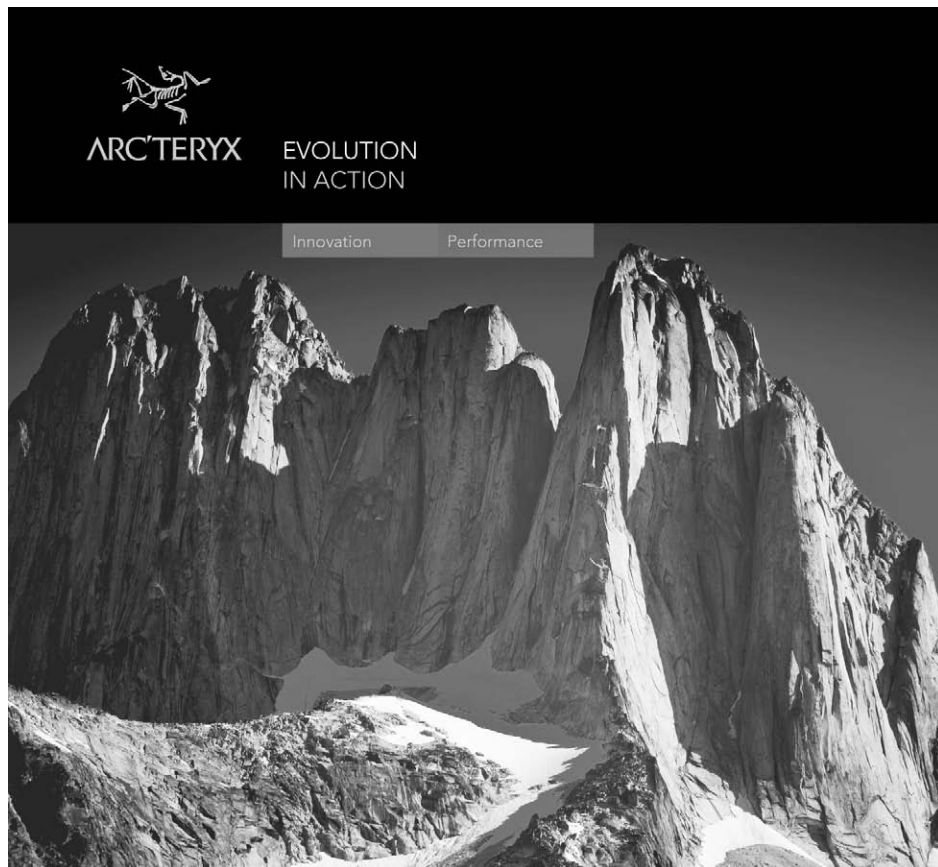


lite surveying techniques and the first and only datum to provide reference points for the entire planet. This is the default datum that is programmed into civilian GPS receivers sold in the US.

The next question is, if WGS 84 is so accurate and will work anywhere on the planet, why is it not the datum used on all maps? It simply is not practical or realistic for a country to update and reprint maps every time a new model of the planet is developed. A good example of the scale of such a project is topographic maps produced by the US Geological Survey that all use NAD 27. This mapping project has been going on since the 1870's when John Wesley Powell (of Colorado River fame,) as US Surveyor General, convinced Congress that topographic mapping of the United States was a worthy project. He provided Congress a reasonable cost estimate and said the project would be completed in less than 10 years. One hundred and forty years later and many millions of dollars over budget, the mapping program continues to this day. Imagine the USGS having to update every topographic map in the country to the WGS 84 datum; not a pretty picture. If your preference is to use WGS 84 in this country, you are in luck. The Delorme and National Geographic's mapping software let you set whatever datum you would like use.

Typically, any good map in the world will have datum information presented on it, but that is not always the case. While traveling in Nepal I was using maps of the Kumbu that had been prepared by the Finnish Geographic Society. No datum was provided. I scrolled through the list of datums in my GPS and could not find one for Nepal. When I tried using WGS 84, it was obvious that was not the correct datum. One more scroll through and I saw that there was an India datum and gave that a try. Oddly enough, the coordinates were accurate east and west, but off exactly 1 kilometer north and south. Once I figured that out, I was good to go.

The bottom line is that if using a map and GPS for backcountry navigation, especially if you have traveled to an exotic location, be certain to use the correct datum or you may be asking the question posed at the beginning of this article.



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The Minimum Standard

by Rob Hess

When I first considered joining the AMGA I was 35 and had been working as a professional mountain guide for almost 15 years. I had an extensive and varied personal and professional resume and considered myself a top-level guide. When I took my first certification exam I was 39 years old. For financial and, perhaps ego related reasons, and partially because it was offered, I chose to challenge my exams. Somehow I managed to pass my various exams in pursuit of IFMGA certification though the process was extremely stressful and definitely not much fun.

After my experience I lacked confidence in the education model and discouraged others from taking the same path I had--challenging into exams. The education model has since changed, but I am sure the feeling I had when I first achieved IFMGA status- the feeling of great accomplishment- has not. When I completed my full-certification I felt as if I had completed my PhD in mountain guiding.

When it comes to AMGA certification we often use the term "minimum standard", but do we truly understand the weight of such a comment? Guide culture and mentality is shifting, and I believe we must continue to work on making AMGA training the standard for all who aspire to be professional guides. This process starts with the AMGA Instructor Pool and ultimately ends with our clients.

I believe that the sense of entitlement and expectation upon completion of certification, whether discipline specific or IFMGA, must be changed. The AMGA process of education and assessment is not meant to take the place of real-time experience. Guiding as an employee should not be viewed as a step back. In fact, I think it is preferable that, once an aspirant or certified guide, people seek employment from other entities to gain necessary and diverse guide experience before operating as an independent guide.

A perfect example is the Denali guide. There is a lot of knowledge and experience to be gained before one is truly a great guide/lead guide in that environment. But if you take two like minded individuals with similar experience and background, one an AMGA Certified Alpine or

IFMGA guide and one not, who will be more valuable? In my mind there's no question that the AMGA Certified Guide will be superior and will progress to lead guide status far quicker.

Quite simply, I feel we need to change our thinking so that, first and foremost, the benefit of certification is that it is the prerequisite for being hired as a guide. Going out on one's own as an independent guide should be something one does after gaining considerable experience working for someone else as a certified guide. Please do not misunderstand me, I am not saying we should eliminate the work of the CGF or the public policy officer at the AMGA and forget about access as a benefit to certification. But if we truly want credential-based access, attitudes on what certification is and means must emanate through all elements of the industry, from operators to land managers to insurance agents to Instructors to prospective participants to clients.

So the minimum standard... Hmm, P.H.D. or B.S.? If we want the "minimum standard" as the base line we must push the evolution of thought. I just read an article about an IFMGA guide; the author mentioned that the guide had received the equivalent of his "PHD in guiding by becoming an IFMGA guide". Perhaps the "highest level of certification available to mountain guides" would be better verbiage. If we are to evolve to the true state of "the minimum standard" we must change our approach on all levels... the AMGA office, the Board of Directors... the instructor pool, the students, we must all consider the minimum standard as the central point of reference. Will we evolve to the point that all guides are trained by the AMGA before becoming mountain guides? I think so. When? This depends on us, the AMGA community.

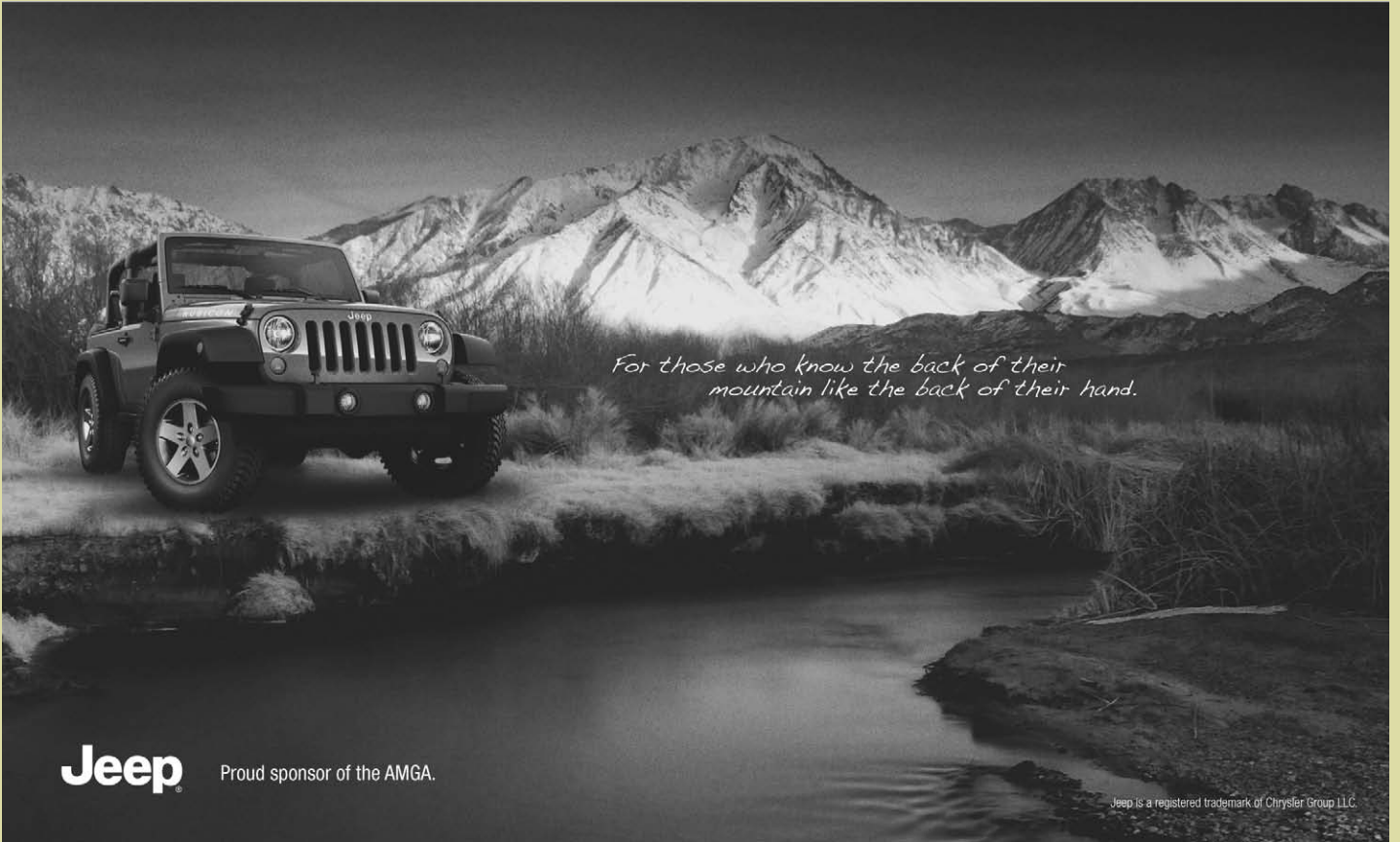


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ACCESS DIRECTOR UPDATE

by Leigh Goldberg

IN the last issue of the Mountain Bulletin, President Margaret Wheeler highlighted the significance of empathy in our community's evolution. Since coming on board as the new Access Director, I see my capacity for empathy as a critical success factor in helping the AMGA work towards a vision for commercial access. During my first few months, I have devoted much of my time into putting myself in another's shoes and seeing the world through his or her eyes.

How do independent guides and climbing instructors see access issues impacting their profession? How do guide service owners work with land managers in their regions? What does our Program Director here in the Boulder office face in scheduling AMGA courses across the country? How do various members of land management perceive commercial access to federal and state lands? How is the public—our members' clientele—impacted by our myriad permitting systems and management policies? How does land management impact how our courses are taught in the field? What is the common ground in how other non-profit and for-profit organizations experience access to public lands, and where can we align ourselves? It is no doubt a complicated web.

I see it as my job to 1) try to understand—as efficiently and effectively as possible—the commercial access landscape from multiple perspectives, 2) identify the key issues affecting our members, and 3) work strategically towards programs which will result in improvements for as many of our members as possible. Recognizing that it will be important to work WITH the current systems in place rather than trying to abruptly overturn them, I see much need for increased communication

and outreach with our membership, local and federal land managers, other commercial non-profit organizations and the public. Ultimately, my goal is for members to see the AMGA as the primary resource for smoothly navigating federal and state managed lands.

Over the next two quarters, I will continue devoting time and energy into conducting interviews and researching the numerous land management policies currently in place. My intention is to generate a White Paper outlining the state of guiding in the U.S. today. Once this foundational report is created, we can start defining the components of our Strategic Plan. I am targeting the June 2011 Board Meeting for presenting a first draft of the AMGA's Strategic Plan on Commercial Access.

If you are interested in scheduling an interview with me to discuss access issues in your region, please email me at access.director@amga.com or call the AMGA office. I am anxious to learn about success stories as well as specific challenges you face in the field. You are also invited to request the initial Policy Summary Report, which I presented to the Board in June.

It is an honor to be stepping into the role of Access Director. I appreciate your support, sharing and patience as we move forward together in planning for the future growth of guiding in the U.S.

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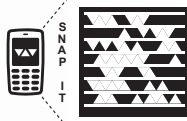
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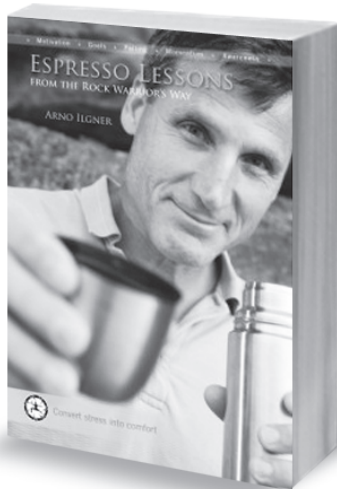
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“Efficient climbing movement, essentially, is... moving in a balanced way through change.”



I have not read *The Rock Warrior's Way* by Arno Ilgner, but I am compelled to after reading *Espresso Lessons*—Arno Ilgner's “how to” companion to *The Rock Warrior's Way*. Knowing a little bit about psychology and personal development, *Espresso Lessons* resonated with me in how it addresses the mind's natural tendency to seek comfort by avoiding stress in light of a desire to climb, which consequently increases stress. In clear and simple language, Arno covers motivation, goal setting, falling, momentum and awareness.

What I found most interesting is the need to separate what Arno calls “thinking skills” from “doing skills”. This idea is fundamental to progressing as a climber whether you are a beginner or an expert, whether you are interested in increasing your performance or just a recreational climber. Understanding this distinction is important because it will help you red point your next project or do that next moderate rock route while reducing your fear and chance of injury. If you don't learn to separate thinking from doing then you will struggle to break into the next grade, perform at your best, or reduce your fear no matter what your motivation for climbing is.

Arno suggests that, “we each have a specific tendency toward being intuitive or analytical in our climbing.”p.16 This tendency leads us to either over think and under do or under think and over do. Both of which keep us from climbing at our best. My tendency is towards being intuitive when climbing.

While on-sighting the crux pitch of the Rostrum, I had successfully climbed through the crux but then found myself trying to move through, what I felt to be at the time, two to three insecure lie back moves in order to reach an intermediate anchor. My vision was

narrowing, my breath was shallow, and my arms were pumped. Although I had a great piece just below me all I could think about was falling, how pumped my arms were, and where the *&(^ am I going to put my feet. Needless to say I lost composure and came off, blowing what would have been my hardest on-sight to date.

In hindsight, using what I have learned from *Espresso Lessons*, spending more time on the belay ledge below the crux developing a better game plan would have perhaps prevented me from falling. Moreover if I had taken a moment at my last piece, what Arno calls a “mini stance” and evaluated the fall hazard and the climbing ahead I too would have been better prepared to meet the challenges in the last section of climbing.

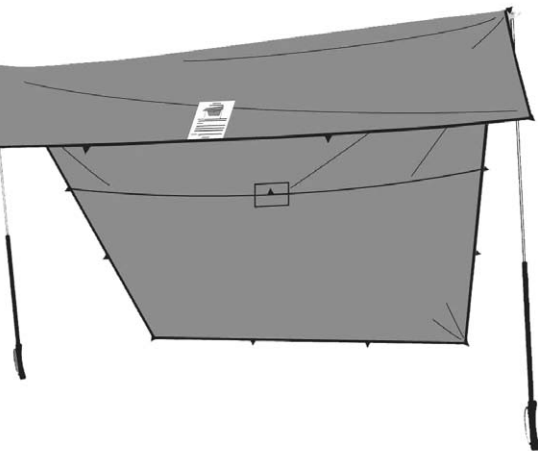
This is what Arno is referring to when he says, “there is a time for stopping and a time for moving”p.23 when climbing. In order to climb efficiently and effectively *Espresso Lessons* says to use your “thinking skills” when stopped to assess the situation and determine the next best course of action. Once moving rely on your intuitive “doing skills” until you get to the next bolt, piece of gear, or rest, then repeat. I relied too heavily on my “doing skills” on a day I was climbing well and missed an opportunity to on-sight the crux pitch of the Rostrum.

Espresso Lessons by Arno Ilgner is full of valuable information and insights. To learn more and to take your climbing to the next level I highly recommend you pick up a copy. The book also includes an appendix with detailed exercises for practicing and integrating the covered skills into your climbing. You may purchase the book for \$19.95 at <http://warriorway.com/espresso-lessons/>.

GEAR review

Brooks-Range Mountaineering Ultralite Solo Tarp

by Ed Crothers



"A tarp is a tarp, right?" Wrong. The Ultralite Solo Tarp from Brooks-Range Mountaineering puts "old school" nylon tarps to shame. Having used coated nylon tarps extensively in the past, it was readily apparent to me the huge advantages the Ultralite Solo Tarp has over its' predecessors.

At the top of the list is weight. With four guy lines and stuff sac, the Ultralite Solo Tarp I tested weighed in at 7.2 ozs. A comparable coated nylon tarp weighs 16+ ozs.

The fabric is state of the art in lightweight materials. It is highly hydrophobic. After heavy rain, I only had to give the tarp a few quick shakes to get nearly all the water (and weight) off. It also dries remarkably quickly in the sun. As a result, it is less likely to develop mildew when compared to coated nylon. Because of the way the individual fibers are coated, this fabric is highly tear resistant; typically twice the strength of coated rip stop nylon. Additionally, this material will not delaminate, a common problem with coated nylon.

When packed, it is about half the size of a 1-liter water bottle. Laying flat it measures 5 feet by 8 feet. Pitched in the classic A-Frame configuration, it provided just enough coverage to keep two mid-sized adults lying down out of the elements. With two larger people, someone is going to get wet. But hey, it is a solo tarp after all.

Versatility is another major selling point. With 16 tie down loops, the ways the tarp can be configured is only limited by your imagination. These attachment points make using the tarp as a tent awning or increasing the size of a vestibule a breeze. Also, there is Velcro on all four sides that make converting the tarp into a one-person bivy sac simple and fast.



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I own 6 or 7 pieces of Brooks-Range Mountaineering gear and have been impressed by the quality of the materials, bombproof construction, and innovative features. The Ultralite Solo Tarp does not disappoint. At \$75 retail, it is cheap insurance against surprise storms or unanticipated emergencies.

Salewa Firetail GTX

Due to a shattered heel 22 years ago, I am very particular when it comes to footwear. If the fit isn't close to perfect, the pain can be unbearable. So, I am always a bit nervous when it comes to testing footwear. When Salewa, one of the most recent AMGA Corporate Sponsors, provided a pair of Firetails for testing and I was the only one in the office they fit, I was apprehensive. After 5 months of use in a variety of conditions, I can report that these hybrid approach shoes have pleasantly surprised me.

Initially, the fit was not quite right. This shoe seems designed for the average "American" foot; I have narrow, low volume feet. After playing around with different insoles, I managed to get a secure, performance fit. To date, I have yet to get a single hot spot, let alone a blister. The Firetails have been remarkably comfortable and performed equally well on big approaches, long 4th class ridge traverses, and easy 5th class terrain. The GORE-TEX® lining has kept my feet dry in some pretty sloppy conditions.

The real test came at the crags and in the mountains. I'm a skeptic when it comes to "sticky rubber" on approach shoes. My experience has been that truly sticky rubber on approach shoes wears out pretty quickly and marginally sticky rubber does not grip well and can be hazardously slick on wet terrain. The folks at Salewa got it right. The best way I can describe this Vibram sole is "waffle stomper" meets dot rubber. There is harder rubber on the high wear areas and a modified dot rubber where needed for secure footing on rocky terrain. After 20+ days of use, the sole shows little wear.

This is a true alpine approach shoe: comfortable, durable, superior performance. Retail price is \$139; a bit high, but you get what you pay for. It is a great choice for work and play in places like the Sierras, Tetons, and the Rockies. *Definitely work checking out.*

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board for our work of the next year in building our new strategic plan.

The three categories are summarized as follows:

Governance Working Group

GOAL: Conduct a review of the governance of the AMGA and provide recommendations for improvement or changes to the governance of the AMGA.

The governance working group will be looking at ways to help us function better as a board as our organization continues to grow. This will include making changes to how we run board meetings and how our executive committee is structured. The group will work to clarify board roles and build a board member orientation to help new board members get up to speed and be able to contribute to the organization. The group will also focus on a review of the interplay between the technical and administrative aspects of our organization, and will create policy for review of our current bylaws and our committee structure.

Mission/Vision/Brand Working Group

GOAL: Revise the current Mission Statement, create a long lasting Vision Statement and crystallize the AMGA brand.

The Mission/Vision/Brand Working Group will review/revise the current Mission Statement and work on defining both short and long-term Vision Statements for the organization. A Mission Statement expresses the stated purpose of an organization's existence; the group will review and revise our existing Mission and present changes to the board at the fall meeting. A Vision Statement expresses what an organization aspires to be. Vision grows out of the mission and paints a picture of a better place; the Vision expresses the desired future. The working group will create a Vision Statement for the AMGA and present it to the board in the coming months.

Following the revision and development of the Mission and the Vision Statements, the group will do a detailed audit of the AMGA brand. The group will then strategize on how to best represent the AMGA brand to our members, the recreating public, non-certified guides, the international guiding community, governmental organizations and land managers.

Access Working Group

GOAL: Create a Strategic Plan for Access; provide support for new Access Director.

The Access Working Group will serve as a resource for the new Access Director (AD) in her work to create a strategic plan for access. This process will take place in several stages; the AD will create a white paper on access in the US, a baseline document summarizing the 'state of the state'. From this, the AD will work together with the ED and the Board to create a long-term strategic plan for access. This process will include connecting with land managers, guides, and guide services; it will also mean working with AMGA resources and in cooperation with the CGF/CGC to build connections with land managers around the country. In addition to the work with the AD, the Access Working Group will be involved in several other projects. The group will create a formal definition of credential-based access to present to the Board as part of the strategic plan. It will generate recommendations for our Executive Director (ED), Technical Director (TD), and the Board with regards to how AMGA Certified Guides and Accredited Programs can become a resource to land managers. The Access Working Group will work to set up meetings between NPS and NFS representatives and the IFMGA President when the IFMGA delegates are in the US for the November meeting.

What about the technical side?

As you read through this, perhaps you are wondering about AMGA programs and the technical side of our organization. Where do they fit in during the planning process? Governance, Mission/Vision/Brand and Access are the three categories we selected to work on as a board. Yet even as we focus on these at the board level, strategic planning for our programs for our technical developments is also very much part of the process. This work—creating a long term plan for our programs and the technical aspects of the AMGA—is being done by our Technical Director, our Executive Director, and our Program Director, and will be incorporated into the larger board planning process.

What is the future of the planning process?

Since the June meeting, each group has been working on these objectives. We're discovering the magnitude of some of the tasks we have set for ourselves, and we are doing some hard work and digging further into some complex issues. As a board, we will continue this process in the coming months, with the goal of having a draft Strategic Plan for our June 2011 meeting. As we go through this process, I hope that we will continue to hear from you all. Come to AMGA board meetings, read the updates sent out by the office and in the bulletins. I hope you will all take some time to stay in touch: write or call—send us your thoughts, your questions, and your concerns.

Be safe out there, Margaret



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