

cover photo: Dick Jackson

Mountain Bulletin

A Publication of the American Mountain Guides Association

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Vol. XXIV No. 5 Winter 2006

Making a Positive Contribution

By Pete Takeda



The AMGA kicked off 2006 with an annual Board of Directors meeting in Vail, Colorado. The meeting, held on January 5th, followed a couple days of skiing which, though I could not attend, was apparently great!

If you weren't aware, I've sat on the AMGA Board of Directors for nearly two years now. I was introduced to the organization by my friend Mike Alkiatis, who recognized that my skill set might be handy with the ongoing expansion and growth of the AMGA. Time has flown by and it's been almost two years since my first meeting,

but, even in that short period of time, I've been impressed by the level of professionalism, passion, and vision of the organization.

Having been absent from the fall meeting, I was pretty psyched to see all the now-familiar faces, and get introduced to all the new one's. Some new folks on the board I've known previously include: newly elected President John Bicknell – I climb at his renowned Boulder Rock Club; and new board member John Winsor -- I've worked for his company, Radar Communications, an amazing research firm with powerhouse corporate clients.

(continued on page 7)

PRESIDENT CORNER

"In my mind, there can be no unification of the U.S. guiding community without outreach and dialogue. I am trying to encourage that both in these articles and in my actions."

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR CORNER

"As many of you prepare for spring AMGA programs, I want to be sure you are up to speed on some course offerings and as promised, detail the upcoming AMGA re-structure that is set to begin in 2007."

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR CORNER

"One of my main objectives when I became Executive Director of the American Mountain Guides Association was to add benefits for becoming a Certified member...and I am proud to announce that we have a new medical sponsor."

It's not too late! To be a guide, that is.

By: Mike Powers, IFMGA guide

I hear those sentiments frequently, and with good reason. "I'm already 32." "Next year I'll be 42." "I won't finish my exams until I'm nearly 46." "I have a family now." "Can I work full time and not travel 9 months a year?" And, when considering IFMGA certification, I hear even more remarks about the physical stress and toll of the courses and exams. Candidates wonder if they will be able to withstand the physical challenges, the heavy packs, the long descents.

I'll admit they are all realistic and justifiable concerns. New guides, aspirant guides and even many senior guides often talk about themselves being too old to pursue full IFMGA certification. In some instances, I'll admit, it may not make much financial sense to pursue full IFMGA certification with limited guiding opportunities. However, I'd like to mention what worked for me, and what may work for many of you too.

Do it. Take that exam. Apply yourself. Determine some of your long term guiding goals and take small, but active steps to achieve them. I did not start guiding until I was 32. Although it took eight years to become fully certified, I continued to guide and work my way systematically through the certification process. Early in my guiding career, I took both an alpine and a ski course and passed the alpine exam during my sixth year of guiding. Pacing myself both physically and financially, I continued to take courses and exams, culminating in my IFMGA status by age 39. During the process, I remained fully employed as a guide, gaining experience, which served me well. It was long, expensive and stressful. But I made it, earned my pin and I'm glad I did.

(continued on page 6)



AMGA BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2005-2006

Executive Committee:

John Bicknell	President	Alan Jolley Nederland, CO 541-312-9242 alanj@nednet.net	
Jim Williams	Vice President	Pete Keane Bend, OR 541-312-9242 bostromkeane@yahoo.com	
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Clint Cook		John Winsor Boulder, CO 303-579-9227 jwinsor@radarcom.com	
Angela Hawse		Kyle Lefkoff	Acting Treasurer
Rob Hess			

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 Deadline

The **Mountain Bulletin** is published in May, August, November and February. The next issue of the Mountain Bulletin will be published February 15th, 2006.

Deadline for all submissions, including advertising is January 21 (winter issue) April 2 (Spring Issue) June 30 (Summer Issue) October 31 (Fall Issue)

Newsletter Contributors:

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

Simon Fryer is the Program Director for the AMGA.

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.

John Bicknell is a Certified Rock Guide and current president of the AMGA

Nancy Lea is the AMGA Membership Director. Prior to working with the AMGA Nancy served as Program Director for City Cliffs.

Dick Jackson is a fully certified IFMGA guide and former President of the AMGA.

Mike Powers is a fully certified IFMGA guide and former Technical Director of the AMGA.

Pete Takeda serves as a current board member of the AMGA. He is the author of the upcoming "An Eye at the Top of The World: Tracing the Steps of the Cold War's Most Daring Covert CIA Operation."

National Office Staff

Executive Director: Mike Alkaitis
Program Director: Simon Fryer
Membership Director: Nancy Lea
Technical Director: Rob Hess

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Executive Director Corner

by Michael Alkaitis, AMGA Executive Director

One of my main objectives when I became Executive Director of the American Mountain Guides Association was to add benefits for becoming a Certified member. With the help of the Board of Directors, I have tried to obtain liability insurance, health insurance, disability and life insurance, access, and a medical sponsor. I will continue to work on all of these objectives for AMGA members and I am proud to announce that we have a new medical sponsor.

Dr. Tom Hackett (from Steadman Hawkins Orthopedic clinic in Vail, Colorado) has agreed to help write the AMGA medical protocols. In addition, he has agreed to be the AMGA program medical advisor in case of an emergency on a program as well as the medical advisor for all AMGA Certified members, and to have all Certified members put on the priority list at Steadman Hawkins. (For a bio of Dr. Hackett please go to www.steadmanhawkins.com)

What does this mean for AMGA Certified members? In short, Dr. Hackett agrees to consult with any AMGA Certified Member regarding medical emergencies. The AMGA office can provide you with his contact information and you are entitled to call him when you are presented with a medical emergency anywhere in the world, not just on AMGA programs. He is also willing to consult with you on possible arthroscopic surgeries and suggest a surgeon in your area who is able to perform the required work if you are unable to make it to Vail for a consultation and surgery.

Dr Hackett's expertise is tremendously helpful to us as guides. He is a doctor who specializes in working with professional athletes. As Certified members, we now have access to the best possible professional help.

I would like to thank Dr Hackett for agreeing to be the AMGA medical advisor and Certified member sponsor.

If you have any questions regarding this program please contact me at 303-271-0984 or mike@amga.com. Thank you for your support of the AMGA and I look forward to obtaining more benefits for you in the future.



President Corner

by John Bicknell

In my last article, I posed a choice to AMGA members: The AMGA can be a small organization devoted solely to IFMGA certification or a much larger organization reaching out to all climbing instructors in the U.S. I've received a number of thoughtful responses to the article, and the overwhelming number of responses has been in favor of the larger AMGA. To summarize, the general feeling has been that to focus too exclusively is to marginalize ourselves (not good if we want more voice and more access). Responses also included that talk is cheap and the AMGA often talks about being open and inclusive, but its actions tend to go the other way. People wish to see the AMGA walk its talk.

To look at these and other questions, the AMGA formed a Long Range Planning Committee which met for the first time in early January. The Long Range Plan on the AMGA website was last updated in 2004, but the last in-depth Board review of the Long Range Plan occurred in 1999-2000. To date, the Planning Committee has identified five primary goals.

- 1) Unify the guiding community within the AMGA
- 2) Promote certification and Accreditation
- 3) Improve guiding as a livelihood for aspiring and certified guides
- 4) Increase access options for individual US guides and international IFMGA guides in keeping with the Jan 99 resolution of working within the present permit model.
- 5) Strengthen the Association

To achieve each goal a number of strategies and tactics have been identified. I'm not listing those here as committee work is continuing and consensus has not been reached. We hope to have a completed plan ready for Board approval in June and it will be in the June newsletter. Any input is appreciated. What is most important to you? Where would you like to see the AMGA focus its energies? Please send an e-mail to bicknell@indra.com and I will be sure to forward the information along to the committee.

In my mind, there can be no unification of the U.S. guiding community without outreach and dialogue. I am trying to encourage that both in these articles and in my actions. This week, for instance, AMGA ED Mike Alkaitis and I are in North Conway. In part, we are here in association with the Ice Festival, but largely we are here simply to meet and talk with guides, and to find out what actions they would like to see the AMGA take.

I plan to visit Alaska, the Northwest, and the Tetons in 2006. Combined with the upcoming Annual Meeting in the Eastern Sierra and the last two in Utah and the Southeast, I am trying to meet guides in all regions of the country and listen to their needs. Certainly my travels are not solely on AMGA business but also for my own climbing and guiding. Still, these trips provide opportunities for the kinds of dialogue the AMGA needs if we are to become an organization responsive to our members.

I hope to get a chance to meet with you.

Yours, John Bicknell



The AMGA Continues To Take Fundraising To A New Level

By: Dick Jackson, IFMGA Guide

Picture this: the perfect bluebird day with 40 cm new powder, no wind, a snow cat reserved for five mountain guides and their clients, gourmet dining, all capped off with a write off/contribution to the mutual benefit of all AMGA member guides.

Thanks to the initiative from Meister Bergfuhrer Kyle Lefkoff, an innovative fund-raising event was destined for incredible success both in terms of pure enjoyment and the money contributed to the AMGA. It is a hard order to beat the professionalism displayed by Steamboat Powder Cats and the certified AMGA/IFMGA guides who graciously volunteered their time to engage in the difficult task of skiing perfect powder with new friends and fellow guides.

So now a new precedent has been set and the ante is up for future events to match the standard that Kyle has put in motion. In addition to the equally enjoyable Board (certainly not “bored”) Ski Day in Vail, Colorado, just prior to the meeting on January 6th, Kyle

displayed the quintessential talent and unmatched challenge to guide seventeen ‘clients’ off-piste, once again “dans la neige parfait!”

I’ll take this opportunity as your most recent past president to congratulate this record ratio in American ski guiding, especially awarded to this honorary/advisory past-member of the AMGA Board of Directors. So on a more serious note, I would sincerely like to acknowledge and thank the following participants and guides who made this event a fantastic way to begin 2006. My thanks goes out to: Kyle Lefkoff, Mike Alkaitis, Keith Garvey, Steve House, and Steamboat Powder Cat guides.

Best Regards,
Dick Jackson



Board Member John Winsor and IFMGA guide Steve House take a ride in the snow cat.



Putting the “fun” in fundraising at the AMGA Steamboat fundraising event.

Guide's Gear



New Patagonia R-2 Jacket:

The new Patagonia R-2 jacket arrived at the AMGA office with the promise from Polartec that this jacket would change my view of fleece. The new material is designed to mimic animal fur with certain fibers being thicker and others smaller to allow for more air to be trapped at a lighter weight. Much to my delight, I discovered that the people at Polartec and Patagonia were telling the truth on the first ski tour that I took the jacket on. The jacket was lighter, compressed to a much smaller size, and was warmer than it's predecessor.

I have now worn the jacket ice climbing, ski touring, rock climbing, and around town. It is still a fleece jacket and will not keep the wind out or repel water, but it is a light, ultra breathable jacket that fits comfortably under a shell or over long underwear. On a calm day in the mountains, I am comfortable wearing this jacket over lightweight Capaline® while moving in 20 degree weather. If you are looking for a breathable, versatile jacket for the mountains you should contact Patagonia to get an R-2. For complete jacket details please visit the Patagonia website at <http://www.patagonia.com>. Retail price \$150.00.

If you are a Certified Individual Member and would like to sign up for Patagonia pro-deal please use the online program enrollment form at www.patagoniapro.com



Silvretta Pure Freeride AT binding:

For 2006 Silvretta has stepped up the Pure binding and created a great lightweight option for your burly AT set up. The Pure Freeride offers a 4-12 DIN, solid carbon fiber rails, and a leg friendly weight of just under 2lbs per binding. At first, I wondered how these would feel on hard

pack at high speed. I was quickly surprised and very impressed with the response and solid feel. I soon forgot that I was on a lightweight AT set up and my attention turned to more important things like skiing and smiling.

While touring the pivot point felt natural and easy. It was great not to feel the tip toe stride of other binding. Silvretta has placed the touring pivot 30mm behind the toe and seems to have found a sweet spot. In addition, the heel release/lock down and climbing riser is about as easy as it gets. It's by far the most effortless set up I've used.

So if your looking for a lightweight AT binding that will accommodate you slaying the downhill in all conditions, I would check out the Silvretta Pure Freeride.

Retail price: \$419.95
www.garmontusa.com



Garmont Silvretta Telemark Adapter:

Have you ever been touring on Telemark gear, and jealous of the ease with which your buddy on AT gear is handling the skinning? Your cable bindings are trying to bring your heel back to earth instead of allowing for free unrestricted movement. There is a new solution.

The Silvretta Tele Binding Adapter (distributed by Garmont) or "Swing Set" as I will call it, is new to the US market this year. The idea is to mount a tele binding atop the Swing Set (which is an AT base), which allows the ease of AT touring with the pleasure of the telemark turn. The Swing Set adds about 400 grams to a pair of skis, but easily overcomes this with the non-restrictive touring.

The back of the Swing Set releases, has heel lifters, and locks down on the classic Silvretta design. I toured on the binding and quickly wondered why this incredible design had not come out sooner. I may have never returned to AT if this

binding had been released sooner. The Swing Set is not compatible to all tele bindings, so please contact Garmont USA at www.garmontusa.com to see if your binding is compatible and for prices and availability.

Mammut ropes up with the AMGA

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(continued from page 1)
- It's not too late!

Completion of my international certification opened a number of unexpected doors for me. Individual discipline certification allowed me to become active in the instructor pool. Once committed to full certification, I was also able to contribute to the AMGA technical committee and to represent American guides internationally at the IFMGA Technical Committee meetings. Full certification has also allowed me to contribute to the curriculum and standards of guide education.

New challenges will always exist. Increasing my skills by participating in the Canadian Avalanche courses or developing a Guides Guidebook for alpine routes allows me to progress in my career while using the techniques I learned through my AMGA certification. Although full certification may be time consuming, consider it the beginning of a life-long process of learning and creating meaningful goals. Guiding is about managing risk; choosing to become a guide is a risk I feel well worth taking and one that has given me a successful and enjoyable career. When I started guiding in 1991, I thought I was too old, and would only be able to guide for a few years. Now, sixteen years later, I'm barely halfway through my guiding career. Turns out I wasn't too old but I was almost too afraid.



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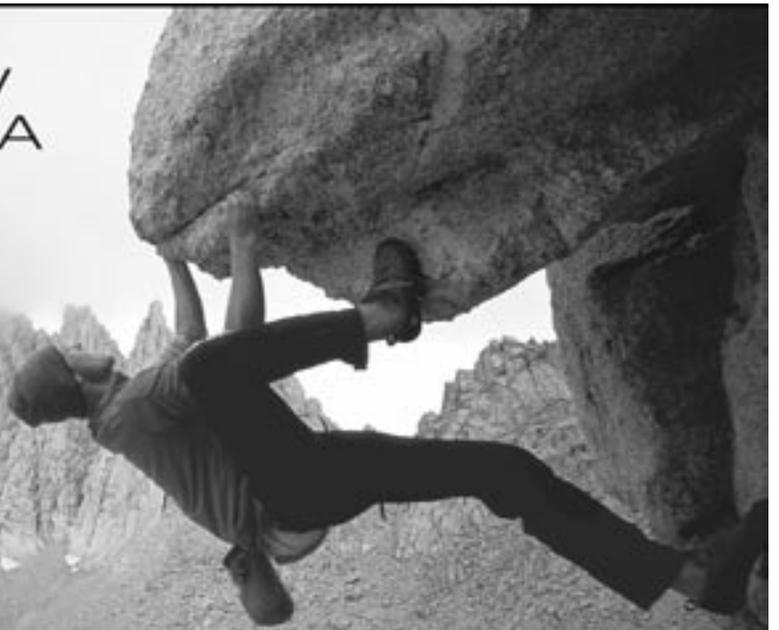
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Todd Smith makes the most of a rest day after being rained off the Keeler Needle in the Sierra Nevada, CA. Photo: Greg Epperson



Patagonia pledges at least 1% of sales, \$20 million in grants and in-kind donations to date, to the preservation and restoration of the natural environment.

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patagonia

committed to the core

(continued from page 1) - Pete Takeda

I was thrilled to meet new Legal Counsel Jim Pearson and new board members Margaret Wheeler and John Race. Their enthusiasm, expertise and unique perspectives came through clearly at the meeting. Their participation is proof of the AMGA's continual quest to grow and support the needs of American mountain guides.

As I mentioned, I missed the fall meeting, something I felt rather guilty about. However, I have a good excuse and, what I was doing during my absence should provide a unique means of raising funds and brand awareness for the AMGA.

In August, 2005, I left the US for a Himalayan climbing expedition. The goal for my three companions and myself was to retrace the steps of a series of CIA sponsored espionage expeditions to the Kumaon Himalayas. In the 1960's, the CIA and the Indian Government attempted to deploy a plutonium-powered spy device on Nanda Devi and Nanda Kot. While Nanda Kot's device was successfully deployed, Nanda Devi rejected all attempts -- the plutonium was lost and never recovered. Together with Jonny Copp, Chuck Bird, and Sarah Thompson, I retraced the spy route on Nanda Kot (22,510 feet) and in the process nearly perished in a massive avalanche. Later Jonny and I attempted an alpine style ascent of Nanda Devi East (24,389 feet).

This adventure, to be published in book form in October, 2006 presents a unique fundraising opportunity for the AMGA. Working with Mike Alkiatis and Nancy Lea in the Boulder office, AMGA diamond partner, Marmot Mountain Ltd., and with publisher, Thunder's Mouth Press, we hope to conduct a coast-to-coast booksigning/slideshow tour. The book, "AN EYE AT THE TOP OF THE WORLD: Tracing the Steps of the Cold War's Most Daring Covert CIA Operation" and amazing images from Jonny Copp, will provide a great focal point for an exclusive per/plate dinner with slideshow/video and signed book for a select audience in key locations. Already, board members like Angela Hawse and Margaret Wheeler have put the feelers out for venues and possible participants.

Like the rest of you, I have limited time and resources to devote to organizations like the AMGA. However, as a believer in their mission, I feel that with a little creativity we can all contribute something positive and worthwhile. As John Bicknell stated in the last newsletter we are, "at a time of growth, opportunity, and challenge." With that in mind, I encourage all of you in 2006, whether you are a guide, client, or other concerned party to take a minute and contribute your bit.

Photo: Pete Takeda

Nanda Devi & Nanda Devi East Kumaon Himalayas





Technical Director Update

by Rob Hess, Technical Director



Hi everyone. Well I don't know about you, but my burning of skis as sacrifice to Uhler has paid off big. We have had some outstanding skiing here in Jackson. As many of you prepare for spring AMGA

programs, I want to be sure you are up to speed on some course offerings and as promised, detail the upcoming AMGA restructure that is set to begin in 2007.

CURRENT PROGRAMS

I am readying myself for a ski mountaineering course in La Grave. This is a new location based on reconnaissance last winter, and should be awesome. I hope you all will consider such programs in the future as there are great resources for ski mountaineering in this area. We will work off the lifts at La Meije and utilize the winter rooms in a variety of huts.

We are offering an additional ski mountaineering course and exam in the Pantheon Range this May. This area is in B.C. Canada and located near the Waddington area. There is still room, so if you are interested, please contact the AMGA office.

This fall in addition to our normal offerings, we will offer an advanced alpine course in the Alps.

2007 PROGRAM RESTRUCTURE

The Technical Committee met this past November for what may be a landmark occasion. Twelve out of fifteen members were present for a 3 day "summit" in Las Vegas. Though it was a long session, we came away unified in where and how the AMGA training and certification program needs to go.

This change will hopefully address a number of issues, some of which are: the need for a base level guiding skills course, the aspirant program, redundancy in our courses and exams, stress and performance. I have included the new flow chart (pg. 9), but the restructure will work as follows:

1. The Rock Instructor course will be expanded to include base guiding skills pertinent to both the rock and alpine. The course will be 11 days in length and will be the first course requirement

for both the rock and or the alpine.

2. We will move towards eliminating "guiding" requirements in the course prerequisite until after the aspirant exams. We will however increase the personal requirements.
3. The advanced courses in the rock, alpine and ski disciplines will include a 3- day aspirant exam.
4. As of 2008, the aspirant exams will include the objective skills tests normally done on the final exams: (Rock and ice movement, rock rescue, knot pass, crevasse rescue, sled lower and beacon search).
5. We are considering requiring all of the rock courses in addition to the alpine courses before gaining alpine certification. This is not set in stone and will be studied carefully as we progress into the 2008 season.
6. The ski guides course will be expanded to 12 days and include base level guiding skills pertinent to the ski. It will be structured this way to allow discipline specific opportunities for the ski.
7. Aspirant cards will be issued upon completion of all aspirant exams.

It is important to note that the ability to skip the first level courses has been set for phase out as of December 31st, 2006 for two years. One may apply for and skip the first level course for up to 2 years ahead of the phase out date, but application must be received on or before December 31st, 2006.

To address the needs of the American guide, we will be customizing the first level courses in all disciplines. This means that any guide service or independent guide may host a course provided they go through legal access channels. This program will be scheduled outside of the normal AMGA course offerings and be put on by private entities at whatever cost desired, provided that the rules of customization are followed. These rules will not be negotiable and are as follows:

1. Course length and curriculum will need to be strictly followed.
2. Only AMGA approved venues allowed.
3. Only current AMGA approved, instructor pool members can teach the courses.
4. There will be a licensing fee.
5. All paperwork and evaluations will be submitted in a timely fashion.
6. All participants must be AMGA members.



The Skylight Jacket by Marmot. Part of the Miles Smart Signature Series of gear inspired, designed and tested by Miles, an Alaskan mountain guide and the recipient of the 2004 American Mountain Guide Association's Guide of the Year award. Miles is a minimalist, focusing on fast, light and nimble gear with an emphasis on simplicity and performance. Engineered with waterproof and highly breathable GORE-TEX® K2 fabric and featuring stretch anatomic articulation, the Skylight Jacket is designed to meet the demands of professionals who work outdoors for a living. It's all part of the deal when you're a Marmot for Life.

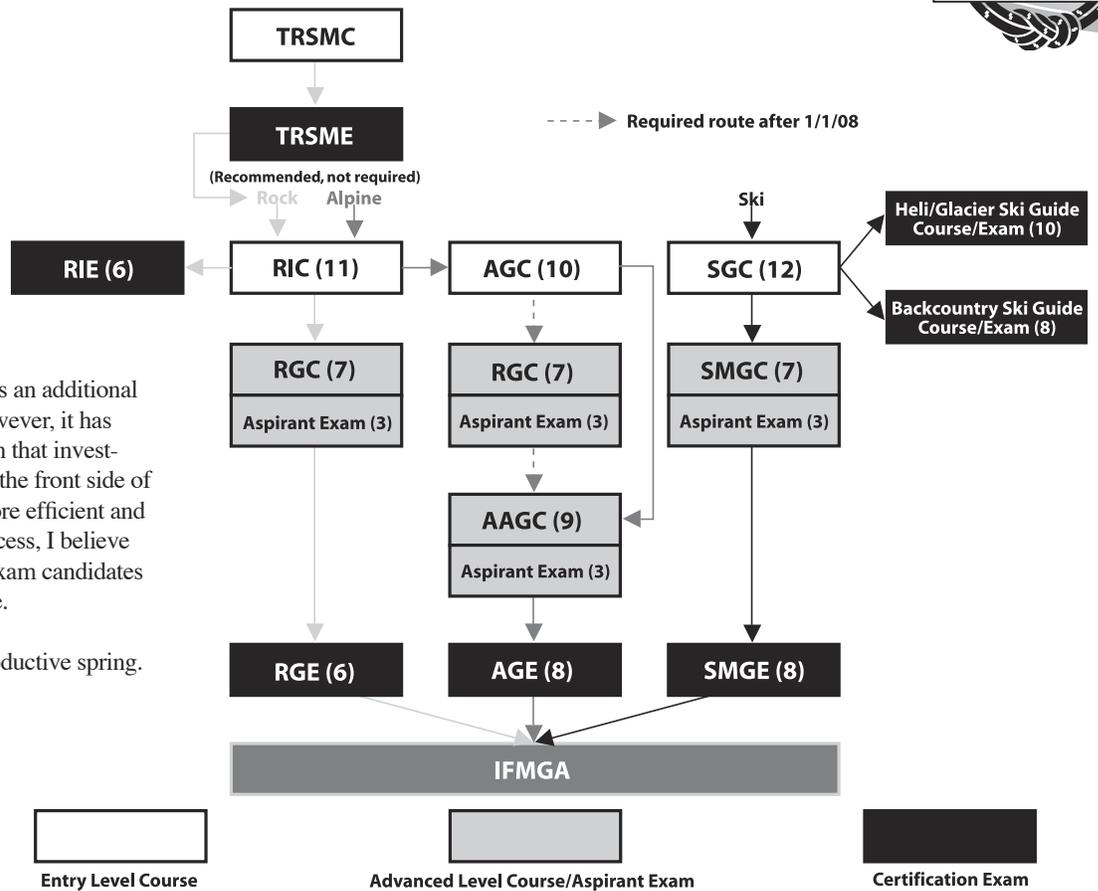


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AMGA Flow Chart



Some may view this restructure as an additional burden on the average guide. However, it has been demonstrated time and again that investment in the form of education on the front side of the certification process, is far more efficient and much less stressful. With this process, I believe we will see the preparedness of exam candidates increase and exam stress decrease.

I hope you all have a safe and productive spring. Thanks for your time! Rob





Membership Corner

by Nancy Lea, AMGA Membership Director



Dear AMGA Member,

Though this is technically the winter edition of the Mt. Bulletin, I already have spring on my mind. I look forward to the warmer temps that make it possible for a wimp like me to stay out and ski all day, without having to go inside to warm up my fingers and toes. For me, nothing beats spring skiing. However, I cannot complain about the wonderful powder that has blessed the Colorado Rockies this winter.

This year, like many others at the AMGA, has gotten off to an incredibly speedy start. It seemed that we had no sooner returned from our holiday break than we were out again for the BOD meeting in Vail, and then out yet again for the OR show in Salt Lake. In the midst of it all a few things have come across my radar screen and I do want to

keep you informed on what is happening:

*The Mammut Jacket special was a smashing success. We quickly sold out of all sizes of the Mammut Jackets and we do hope to do another special in the late spring/early summer.

*Technical Manuals are currently in production. I apologize to all of you who are waiting on manuals. We have a new printer and the production is taking longer than I would like. However, they will be out to you as soon as possible.

*Patagonia is changing their pro-purchase eligibility to exclusively Certified Individual Members. I have included an announcement by TJ at Patagonia to inform you about this change:

“Patagonia recognizes the time and energy it takes to become a certified AMGA guide. In support of the AMGA we wish to welcome all certified guides to become a member of the best pro program in the world. If you hold an AMGA rock, alpine or ski certification we extend an invitation to you to join the program, please visit www.patagoniapro.com to sign up. As AMGA certified guides are setting the standard in guiding, we have set the standard for pro programs and wish to support certified guides across the U.S.”

Many of you know TJ from his previous position at Black Diamond. He is now working hard at his new position with Patagonia and is available to assist you if you have any questions, comments or concerns about the new Patagonia Pro-purchase program.

Recently at the OR show, I had an opportunity to meet with Benefactor Partners, such as Patagonia as well as all five Diamond Partners. I have to say that it is a pleasure to work with the fine individuals at these companies and even more importantly, it is impressive how much they genuinely want to help AMGA guides.

Please take a look in the back of the Mountain Bulletin to see an updated list of our corporate sponsors. If you have any questions regarding how to contact these companies please drop me a line at nancy@amga.com

Thank you and more news to come this spring!

Best Wishes,
Nancy Lea

Join Us for the 2006 AMGA Annual Meeting!

The dates have been set for the 2006 AMGA Annual Meeting! Mark your calendars for the weekend of October 21st – 22nd. This year the event will be held in the Eastern Sierra in and around Bishop, CA. As you know, Bishop offers classic, world-renowned climbing opportunities.

Our slideshow presenter will be Vince Anderson, recent winner (along with Steve House) of the Prix de Public and the Piolet d’Or at the ‘06 ceremony. He will present a slideshow on the night of October 21st. There will also be a silent auction, free food and beverages and a weekend filled with professional development clinics.

The official title sponsor of the event is Patagonia. Stay tuned for more event details in upcoming editions of the Mountain Bulletin.



2006 AMGA SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

We are proud to announce the recipients for round-one scholarships. The following individuals have received scholarships for 2006 programs. The remaining scholarships will be rewarded shortly and recipients will be announced in the spring Mountain Bulletin. If you have any questions or comments regarding scholarships please contact the AMGA office and we will put you in touch with the chair of the scholarship committee.

FULL TUITION SCHOLARSHIPS:

Black Diamond Scholarship - Awarded to Kevin Mahoney

Patagonia Woman's Scholarship - Awarded to Majka Burhardt

The North Face Alpine Scholarship - Awarded to Joey Thompson

Marmot Scholarship - Awarded to Matt Wade

AMGA Jim Ratz Memorial Fund Scholarship - Awarded to Jon Tierney

SCHOLARSHIPS CURRENTLY BEING REVIEWED

The Arc'teryx Scholarship - Deadline January 23, 2006. This scholarship is for all AMGA ski courses and exam

W.L. Gore Scholarship – Deadline January 23, 2006, This scholarship is for all AMGA courses and exams

Mammut Scholarship - Deadline January 23, 2006. This scholarship is for all AMGA courses and exams

PETZL Scholarship - Deadline February 13, 2006. This scholarship is for all AMGA courses and exams

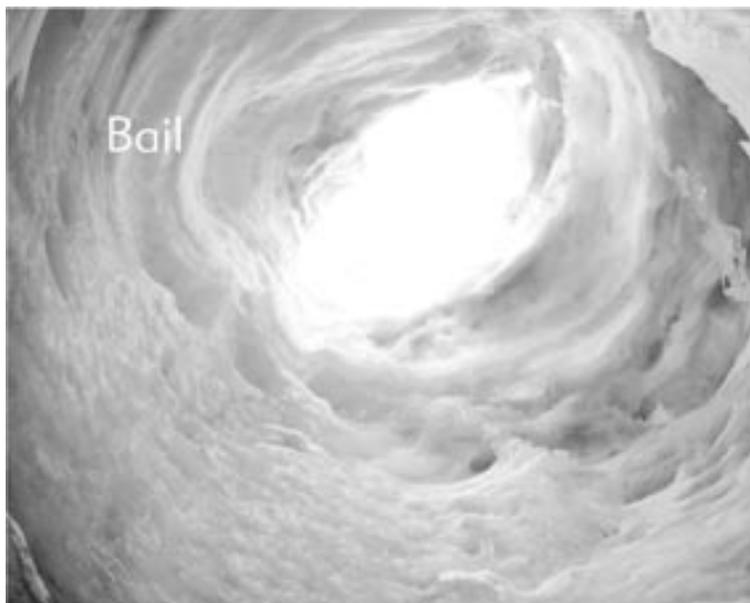
Malden Mills Scholarship Deadline February 13, 2006. This scholarship is for all courses and exams

Mountain Hardwear Scholarship Deadline February 13, 2006. This scholarship is for all courses and exams

AMGA Mike Hattrup/XO Net Ski Mountaineering Exam Scholarship – Deadline February 13, 2006. This scholarship is only for the AMGA Ski Mountaineering Guides Exam. You must have taken the Ski Mountaineering Guides Course to receive this scholarship

AMGA JCC Fund for women. Deadline January 23, 2006. This scholarship is for all courses and exams for \$250.00

AMGA Scott Fisher Alpine Scholarship- Deadline February 13, 2006 This scholarship is only for the AMGA Alpine courses and exam



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Mount Rainer National Park's Prospectus for Guided Mountaineering Released

Superintendent Dave Uberuaga announced today that the prospectus for guided mountaineering at Mount Rainer National Park has been released. Superintendent Uberuaga stated that, "We are looking forward to reviewing proposals from a number of outstanding guide services. The interest in guiding climbs at Mount Rainier National Park is high."

The prospectus implements a major component of the park's 2005 Commercial Services Plan. The Commercial Services Plan outlined the future for guided activities at the park. One of the components of the plan allows three companies to provide guided mountaineering services at the park. Traditionally, one concessionaire has guided the majority of summit attempts. Copies of the prospectus are available electronically at www.concessions.nps.gov/news.cfm or by contacting:

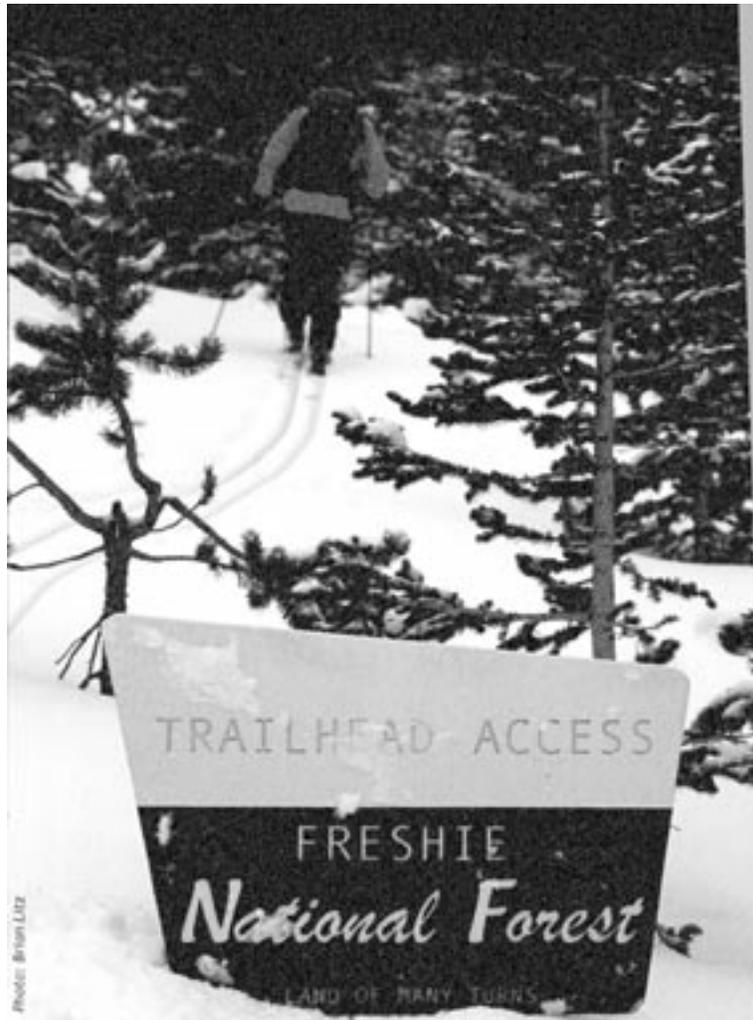
Ms. Kim Gagliolo, Concessions Management
National Park Service
Pacific West Regional Office
1111 Jackson Street, Suite 700
Oakland, California 94607
510-817-1368

Prospectuses are used by the National Park Service to evaluate the qualifications of businesses seeking concession contracts within parks. The Mount Rainier prospectus is being issued to attract the widest possible interested parties of the requirements and conditions under which the operations may be conducted. Interested parties are encouraged to independently visit the park to become familiar with the physical and operational conditions and limitations under which climbs may be guided at Mount Rainier.

Two Prospectuses are being issued simultaneously for the guided mountaineering opportunity. The contract to be issued under Prospectus "A" will be

primarily based out of Camp Muir while the two contracts to be issued under Prospectus "B" will rotate campsites along the Muir corridor. All three contracts will allow for equal levels of service on the other climbing routes.

Responses to the prospectuses are due 90 days from today (May 4, 2006). A meeting will be scheduled within the next two months to answer questions from interested parties about the prospectuses.



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Program Update

by Simon Fryer, AMGA Program Director



This winter season in Colorado had been making up for any of the past years we've been dry and without a decent snow pack. I feel lucky to work with a motivated group that isn't shy about getting out for some laps when time allows. So far this season I don't think we've been disappointed once in the mountains. That's when you know life is good.

Both of our Ski Guide Courses so far this year, one in Jackson and the other in Aspen, have had ideal conditions and strong groups. I want to thank both Jackson Hole Mountain Resort and Aspen Expeditions for hosting the programs once again. Without their support these courses wouldn't be possible. Also big thanks to the staff, Rob Hess, Peter Leh, Dick Jackson, and Art Mooney, who put in countless hours for these trainings.

From where I sit, it's hard to think about the rock season that is come up quickly but with full programs in J-Tree and Red Rocks it's time. There are a number of program with opening, so if you're interested please check the schedule below and feel free to give the office a call. We're setting up for a great year of programs throughout the country. I hope you have the opportunity to join us.

The next Application Review Date is May 1st. This will be for all programs September-December, 2006. In order to enroll you in a program I will need the following:

- 1) Signed course or exam application form
 - 2) Signed liability waiver
 - 3) Emailed resume showing you meet the program prerequisites
 - 4) A copy of your medical training and/or avalanche training (if required)
- *please no faxed copies of these forms

Enjoy the rest of your winter season. Safe travels across the country, around the world, and in the mountains.

Current Program Availability:

Ski Discipline

S4-06: Ski Mountaineering Guide Exam
La Grave, FRANCE, 3/4-11/06

S11-06: Ski Mountaineering Guide
Course
Pantheon Range, BC CANADA, 5/22-
29/2006

S12-06: Ski Mountaineering Guide
Exam
Pantheon Range, BC CANADA, 5/22-
29/2006

Rock Discipline

R4.5-06: Rock Instructor Exam
North Carolina, 4/24-29/06

R5-06: Advanced Rock Guide Course
Black Canyon, CO, 5/3-13/06

R6-06: Rock Instructor Course
North Carolina, 5/1-10/06

R7-06: Rock Instructor Exam
Boulder, CO, 5/1-6/06

R8-06 Rock Instructor Course
Boulder, CO, 5/15-24/06

R9-06: Rock Instructor Course
Shawangunks, NY, 5/15-24/06

R10-06: Rock Guide Exam
Yosemite, CA, 6/5-10/06

R11-06: Rock Instructor Course
North Conway, NH, 8/28/06-9/6/06

Alpine Programs

A3-06: Advanced Alpine Guide Course
Cascades, WA, 7/10-20/06

Contact Simon Fryer, AMGA Program
Director, for program questions and
enrollment.

Please see the AMGA website for the
entire 2006 program schedule at:

<http://www.amga.com/courses/schedule.html>



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



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