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THE AMERICAN ALPINE CLUB ANNOUNCES ITS ANNUAL CLIMBING AWARDS

Climbing greats and champions of conservation will be honored at the AAC's Annual Awards and Benefit Dinner February 23, 2008 at the American Mountaineering Center

Golden, Colorado – Every year, the American Alpine Club honors those who have advanced climbing's frontier and made significant strides in protecting the planet's most iconic and threatened mountain environments. On Saturday, February 23rd at the American Mountaineering Center, the American Alpine Club will host its Annual Awards and Benefit Dinner to pay homage to these individuals. Breaking with tradition, the AAC has decided to announce, in advance, the recipients of the David R. Brower Award, Angelo Heilprin Citation, and Literary Award.

The David R. Brower Award, created in 1991, recognizes leadership and commitment to preserving mountain regions worldwide. Brower, a pioneer in the environmental movement and an active alpinist, was a lifetime member of the AAC and served as the organization's Vice President from 1956-58. In recognition of thirty years of bold conservation efforts in Patagonia, Doug Tompkins is the recipient of this year's David R. Brower Award. Founder of The North Face, Esprit, Foundation for Deep Ecology, The Conservation Land Trust, and Fundación Pumalin, Tompkins shares Brower's love of climbing and passion for conservation. He is responsible for the largest private conservation project in the world, Pumalin Park, which is a shining example of how environmental protection and economic production can go hand-in-hand. He and his wife, Kris, are now focusing their energies on the creation and development of the future Patagonia National Park.

The Angelo Heilprin Citation, established in 1976, is awarded annually to an individual who has shown exemplary service to the club. It was through the dedicated efforts of Angelo Heilprin, the organization's first Vice President, that the American Alpine Club was founded in 1902. The recipient of this year's award is Jim Henriot. Henriot spent his life as an avid climber and served as the Club's president from 1977 to 1979. He was the seventh American to climb Mt. Aconcagua (22,834') in Argentina, and led the first American post-war expedition to Mt. Elbrus in Russia.

The Literary Award recognizes excellence in alpine literature by American writers. This year, the award goes to John Harlin III, an active climber, skier, and writer. Harlin's body of literary work includes a number of guidebooks, tours of duty editing both *Backpacker* and *Summit* magazines and his current role as editor of the prestigious *American Alpine Journal*, the world's journal of record for mountaineering achievement. His most recent book is *Eiger Obsession: Facing the Mountain that Killed My Father*. The story is also told in a newly released IMAX film: *The Alps*.

Tickets to the AAC's Annual Awards and Benefit Dinner can be purchased at www.AmericanAlpineClub.org. The dinner follows two days of special AAC events at the American Mountaineering Center. The evening of Friday, February 22nd features Climatology – a series of presentations by climbers who will reveal new information about how climate change is affecting the world's great mountains. Saturday's events will include the club's annual membership meeting, a screening of Mountainfilm, and the presentation of the Schoening Ice Axe – one of mountaineering's most revered relics – as part of the grand opening of the Bradford Washburn American Mountaineering Museum.

The Club's Underhill Award for climbing achievement, Bates Award for youth, and Sowles Award for heroism will be given at the AAC's new annual celebration of climbing: The Craggin' Classic, October 10-12, 2008.

About the American Alpine Club: The AAC unites climbers to advance the climbing way of life, with a focus on knowledge, conservation, advocacy and logistical support. The AAC publishes the definitive annual record of the world's most significant climbs, the American Alpine Journal, and operates the Western Hemisphere's largest mountaineering library and museum. The Alpine Conservation Partnership builds on a long line of landmark conservation and advocacy efforts. The AAC runs the Grand Teton Climbers' Ranch, provides global rescue services, stages events, and offers more grants to fund climbing expeditions than any other U.S. organization. The AAC's ongoing commitment to inspiring and supporting the climbing community dates back to 1902. Learn more and become a member at www.AmericanAlpineClub.org.