

With each print edition of *Alpinist*, we aim to create a work of art, paying attention to every detail—from our extended photo captions to our carefully selected images and well-crafted stories. Inside our pages, we strive to offer our readers an experience like that of exploratory climbing, a realm of words and images where they can wander, discover surprising new viewpoints, and encounter moments of excitement, humor, awe and beauty.

By publishing the work of climbers from a wide range of ages, technical abilities, nations and cultures—united by their passion for adventure and wild places—we hope to reflect and enhance the sense of community within the climbing life. Over time, back issues have become collectors' items, serving as historical references and ongoing inspirations.

Like our readers, we believe that great writing and art about climbing demand the same boldness, commitment and vision as the pursuit itself. JOIN US.



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 Greg Kerzhner climbing *Mr. Yuk* (5.14a) at Smith Rock, OR. (Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, Tenino lands) AAC member Tara Kerzhner  @tarakerzhner

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# WELCOME, ALL

You belong here.

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This year, with the help of over a dozen supporting organizations, we created the inaugural State of Climbing Report.\* We wanted to share what this sport is, and what it is becoming—and in the process, we found that we could quantify many aspects of our pursuit:

4.4% of all Americans ages 18–24 climbed indoors in 2018. Climbers contributed roughly \$12,450,000 to the economy in 2017. 57% of climbing areas are located on federally managed public lands. The stats go on, and they show that our community is growing.

Then, though, there are aspects of this lifestyle we call climbing that we can't quantify.

We feel a certain way—maybe awestruck, maybe focused, maybe just better than we would otherwise—when we climb. We're a community, and just taking part in this pursuit side-by-side is deeply significant to many of us. We have differences in our approaches, our values, and our experiences, but we extend our care for one another beyond the length of the rope. We unite for change, and for those around us. We're writing the story of our sport in unison.

In this *Guidebook*, you'll find stories of different folks coming together: paraplegic climbers sharing a summit, researchers contributing knowledge of diverse ecosystems to the fight against climate change, and professional climbers mentoring inner-city kids, or getting creative to provide resources to fellow community members who are grieving.

We hope as you read, you'll feel motivated by what the authors offer. Growth of our sport can feel discouraging, but with growth comes strength. We hope you love this community enough to want to share it, because we sure do.



 Holly Hansen climbing *Macedonia* (5.13a) in Oliana, Spain. AAC member Tara Kerzhner  @tarakerzhner

\*You can download the State of Climbing Report at [americanalpineclub.org/state-of-climbing-report](http://americanalpineclub.org/state-of-climbing-report).

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## OUR MISSION

To share and support our passion for climbing and respect for the places we climb.

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## IN ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The AAC has included indigenous land acknowledgments in *Guidebook* photo captions. Territory acknowledgment is a way to insert an awareness of indigenous presence and land rights surrounding the places we climb. These acknowledgments are not a perfect resource.

## ON THE COVER



📷 Jude and Pearl Johnson lay in El Cap meadow, daydreaming future first ascents on the big stone, Yosemite National Park, CA. (Central Sierra Miwok lands) AAC member Drew Smith 📷 @drew\_smith\_

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📷 [This Page] Mikhail Martin looking for friction on *Leary Bard Arete, Left (V5)* in the Buttermilks of Bishop, CA. (Northern Paiute, Eastern Mono/Monache, Newe lands) AAC member Ken Etzel 📷 @ken\_etzel





# BROOKLYN BELL

## Art for the In-betweens

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INTERVIEWED BY JEFF DEIKIS, ARTWORK BY BROOKLYN BELL [IG @BADGAL\\_BROOKY](#)

**I** grew up in Seattle. When I was little, my parents owned a hot-dog stand. They were really successful at it, too. It was incredible to see my parents work so hard, using their creativity, and—most importantly—succeeding on their own terms. That had a huge effect on me. Knowing they had been entrepreneurs and had pulled it off made it easier for me to say, “I am going to be an artist.”

When my parents divorced, I moved to Bellingham with my mom. I’d always wanted to live there; it was a dream come true. Having access to fresh food and trails out the back door changed my life.

In high school, I started to formulate this idea of who I wanted to be. Then it all just happened at once. I got into climbing after a boy dumped

me. I was having a sad day and a friend told me to meet her at the climbing gym to talk, but we just ended up climbing instead and not talking about boys at all. Climbing was really tough, but I loved it. It was an entirely new kind of body vocabulary.

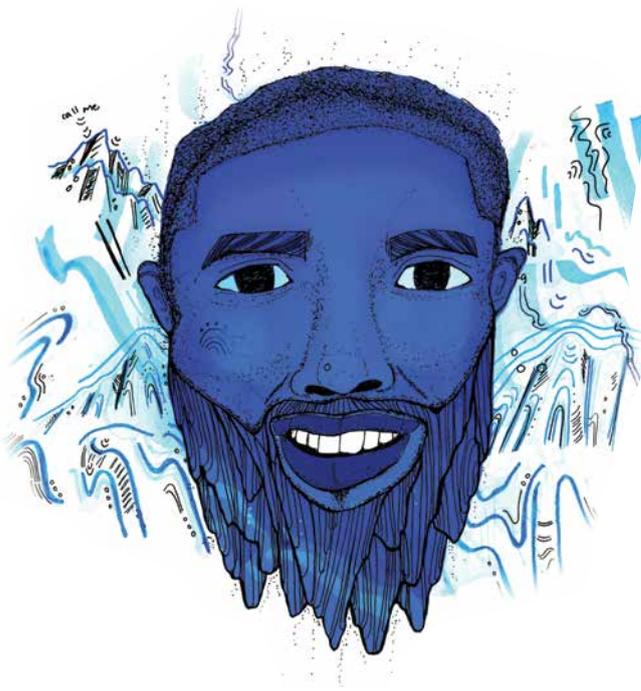
Climbing then became this gateway for me. It helped me bump into the people I needed to bump into. I met people who could help me along the way, answer my questions, get me started. Friends would want to go mountain biking after climbing in the gym, or they’d want to go skiing, or whatever. Everything just wove into itself. I started climbing, skiing, and mountain biking at the same time.

The climbing community has been invaluable to me. It’s opened up this whole other world. I

can get beta just as easily from a 10-year-old as from someone much older than I am. I love that dynamic. Spending time climbing keeps a good group of diverse people in my life—everybody helps each other regardless of status or age.

When I was young I knew I wanted to create art. I wanted to have my own products, do my own thing. I’ve been doing graphic design since I was 13. I would make my own t-shirts and my own prints. When I graduated high school, I shifted from design into fine art. I just started creating.

Art and the mountains just flow. I can be out mountain biking and see a beautiful sunset or can be skiing with a friend who makes some ridiculous joke and I find myself wondering, “how could I illustrate this?” I see the world in convexes and concaves—a world wrapped



## THESE CHARACTERS HELP ME FIND A WAY TO EXPRESS AND CELEBRATE MY OWN BLACKNESS IN THE OUTDOORS.

around hills and valleys. When I'm out in nature, my mind just wants to be creative; it wants to abstract what it is that I'm seeing.

Pen and paper is important. My most valuable tool is writing—just writing things out. A lot of times I find that what I'm writing has a deeper meaning and a deeper message. It's important to be able to flow between the thoughts, fears, anxieties and what it is that you are *actually* experiencing: to have the ability to check in with yourself. Then to let it go. Write it down. Doodle it. A lot of times the writing becomes the art.

A big influence on me was this desire to create the person I wanted to be. I jumped into all these sports not quite feeling like I fit in or that I was strong enough or athletic enough. I didn't even really see much of myself in the outdoors. But creating art was a way for me to

channel who I knew I wanted to be before I knew how to get there.

Lately I've been building this character series. Lots of the characters are combinations of people I know: there's a hint of my young grandfather in one, a little bit of my sister in another, or a little bit of this girl I used to work with at the bagel shop who I always thought was a badass, or maybe this one has just a little bit of Lauren Hill coming through. These characters help me find a way to express and celebrate my own blackness in the outdoors. I created a character for Brown Girls Climb. I continue to create characters to represent beautiful black-and-brown joy within the outdoors.

I have a character for myself, too. Her name is Ruby J. She's the O.G. character. Ruby is the visual manifestation of that person I was formulating back in high school—the

engage on my own terms—to create a visual to-do list that would allow me to

representation of the person I never got to see in the outdoors—and I've been working my butt off to try to become her. A lot of times she throws me for a loop with the challenges she has me tackle. But it's great. I'm here for it.

I want to be a mountain biker, a skier, a climber—and to pursue those things vigorously—but at the same time celebrate this part of me that is undeniably me. I feel really fortunate that I have Ruby J. She helps me strive to become the artist and athlete I am today. I want to create those inspirations for other people. I want to create characters that can help others feel represented, that can act as platforms for others to build their own stories. My art has a purpose to serve the in-betweens—those people who aren't quite this, or quite that, but a little bit of everything.

.....  
Brooklyn Bell is an artist, skier, climber, and mountain-bike racer. She lives in Bellingham, WA. See more of her artwork, or get in touch, at [brooklynbelldesign.com](http://brooklynbelldesign.com).



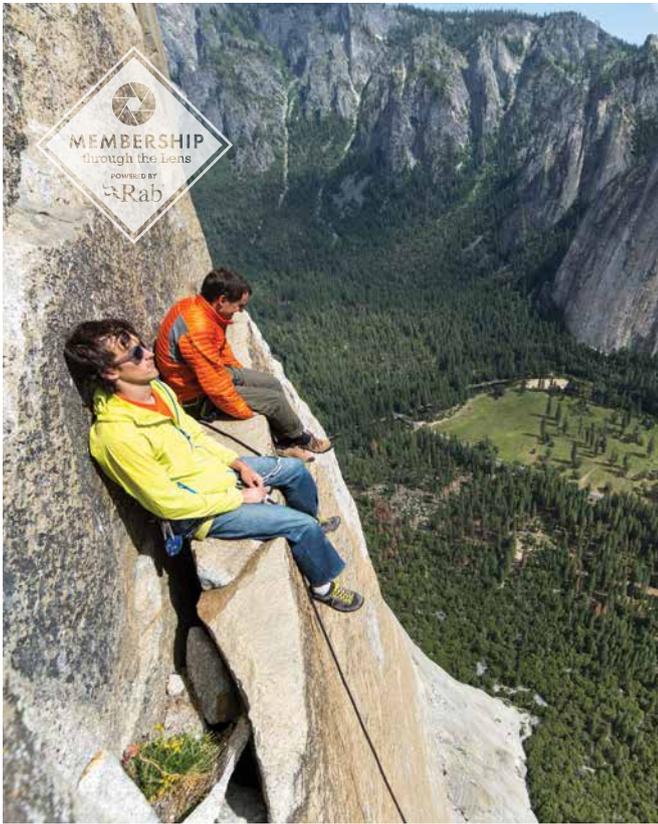


📷 Steve House and Vince Anderson in the Purcell Wilderness Conservancy, British Columbia, Canada. (Wet'suw't'en lands) AAC member Christian Pondella 📷 @christianpondella

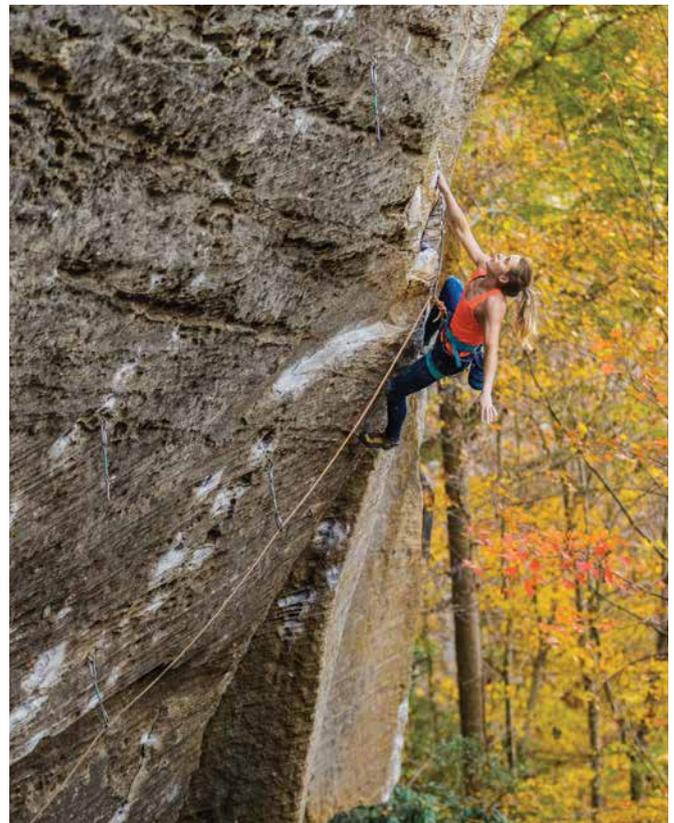
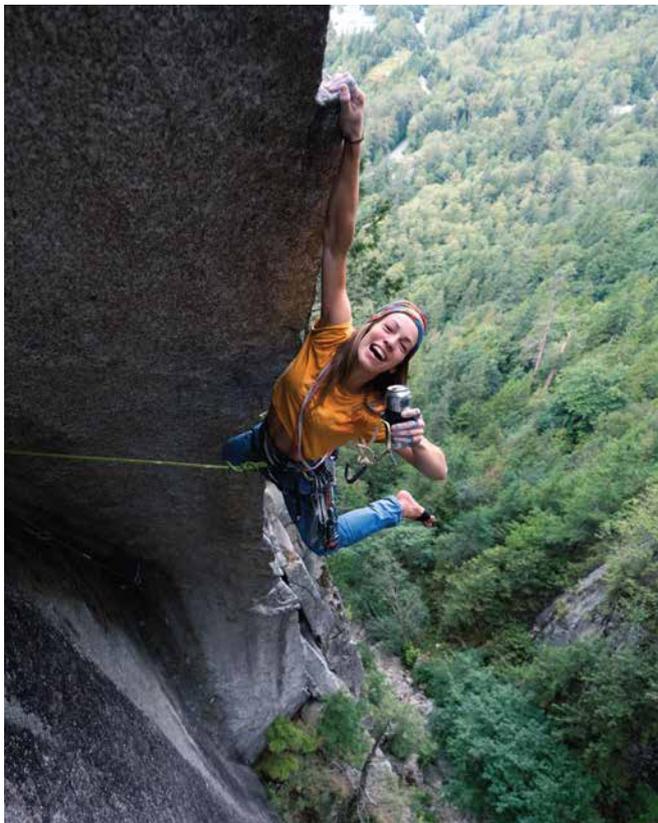
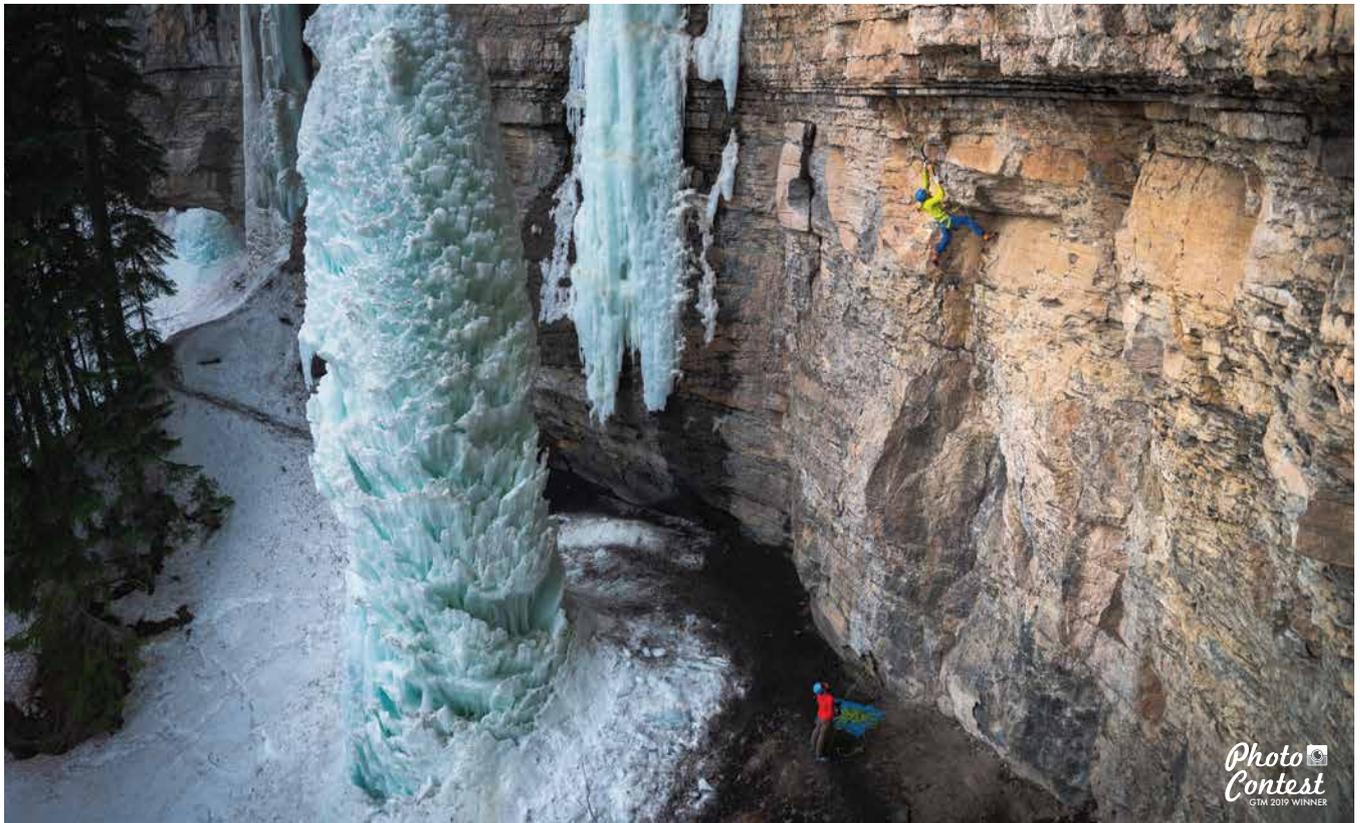




[Opposite] Lanisha Blount climbs *Split Decision* (V1+) at Big Bend, near Moab, UT. (Ute, Diné, Ancestral Puebloan lands) AAC member [Julian Kenchenten](#) @juliankenchenten; [Top] Hayden Jamieson and Heather Weidner moments before taking a very wrong turn on an epic descent of *Wisdom Pilar* (5.10), Wadi Rum, Jordan. AAC member [Jeremiah Watt](#) @miahwatt; [Bottom] Arno Ilgner on *Dinkus Dog* (5.10-) at Looking Glass Rock, NC. (Cherokee lands) AAC member [Bryan Miller](#) @fixedlinemedia



[Top Left] Mason Earle and Brad Gobright relax on a free ascent of the *Heart Route* (5.13b) Yosemite National Park, CA. (Central Sierra Miwok lands) AAC member *Ben Ditto* @benjaminbditto; [Top Right] Tonde San on his project, *Amandla* (5.13d) at the Lower Town Wall, Index, WA. (Snohomish, Tulaip, Puget Sound Salish lands) AAC member *Andy Wickstrom* @andywickstrom; [Bottom] Josh Huckaby pulls some training laps at the White Mountain Research Station, outside of Bishop, CA. (Northern Paiute, Eastern Mono/Monache, Newe lands) AAC member *Ken Etzel* @ken\_etzel



[Top] Lindsay Hastings climbs *Hooded Cobra* (M8-) in the Rigid Designator Amphitheater near Vail, CO (Ute lands) AAC member Adam Pawlikiewicz @adamonthego;  
 [Bottom Left] Emilie Pellerin shows proper style on *The Great Arch* (5.12+) in Squamish, British Columbia, Canada (Squamish lands). AAC member Peter Hoang @pete.hoang;  
 [Bottom Right] Lauren Callaway climbs the ultra-classic, *Jesus Wept* (5.12d) at the Red River Gorge, KY. (Osage, Cherokee, Shawnee lands) AAC member Nathan Welton @nathanwelton



📷 Brittany Griffith climbs *Sicilian Crack* (5.11) at Indian Creek, UT. (Ute, Diné, Ancestral Puebloan lands) AAC member Chris Noble 📷 @noblefoto





📹 [Top] Sam Dospooy climbs *Boardwalk* (5.8) at Ship Rock, NC. (Cherokee, Moneton lands) AAC member Bryan Miller @ [@fixedlinemedia](#); [Bottom] Merryn Venugopal works up the overhanging crack system on *Looney Binge* (5.12c) at Owens River Gorge, Bishop, CA. (Northern Paiute, Eastern Mono/Monache, Newe lands) AAC member William Woodward @ [@wheretowillie](#)



[Top] Anyone want to play cards? Aurel Baker drops and Amanda Fenn kills some time, Fairy Meadows, British Columbia, Canada. (Wet'suwet'en lands) AAC member Ken Etzel @ken\_etzel; [Bottom, Clockwise from Above Left] AAC member Jeremiah Watt @miahwat; AAC member Krystle Wright @krystlejwright; AAC member Forest Woodward @forestwoodward; AAC member Drew Smith @drew\_smith





📷 [Opposite] Hannah Lily Hall navigates tufas on *Celestial Omnibus* (5.12a), Bronco Bowl, El Potrero Chico, Mexico. (Nahuatl, Mexihcah, Hñähñu lands) AAC member Savannah Cummins @sav.cummins; [Top] Alex Megos demonstrates proper technique for the dirtbag shower on the road to the Blue Mountains, Black Heath, Australia. (Dharug lands) AAC member Ken Etzel @ken\_etzel; [Bottom] Jenny Abegg, eyes on the prize, climbing *Beware of Nesting Egos* (5.11b), City of Rocks, ID. (Shoshone-Bannock, Eastern Shoshone lands) AAC member Jeremiah Watt @miahwatt





# NAVAJO RISING

## An Indigenous Emergence Story

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BY AARON MIKE

**A**cknowledging the roots and conceptualizations of the outdoor activities that we so passionately pursue enriches our participation and ties us to the land, as well as to one another. When we view our industry through an historical lens, we inevitably hear about John Muir, Sir Edmund Hillary, Royal Robbins, and other giants of outdoor recreation. We revere them based on their successes and physical accomplishments. There is one similarity between them that is rarely mentioned: the entirety of their recreational pursuits took place on ancestral

homelands of indigenous peoples. The Miwok and Piute resided amongst the majestic granite walls of what is now Yosemite National Park. The Havasupai and Hualapai cultivated the areas of the Grand Canyon. The Shoshone, Bannock, Blackfoot, Crow, Flathead, Gros Ventre, and the Nez Perce tribes inhabited what is now Grand Teton National Park. The history and heritage of indigenous peoples as inherent parts of the lands on which we recreate must be part of the conversation if we are to achieve a responsible, sustainable, and inclusive industry. Especially today, this topic is paramount not only because

it enhances the care and stewardship of the lands we all love, but also because it is a statement against the systematic dehumanization of a people.

Diné Bahane', the Navajo creation story, tells of the journey through three worlds to the fourth world, where the Navajo people now reside. The story details chaos and drama as the Diné, or "Holy people," moved through Black World, which contained no light; Blue World, which contained light; and Yellow World, which contained great rivers. Eventually, in the 4th

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**📍** Shiprock (Tsé Bit a í, "winged rock") rises over 1,500 feet above the desert floor of the Navajo Nation in San Juan County, New Mexico. (Diné, Pueblos, Ute lands) Shiprock was a sought-after summit during the late 1930s, until the first ascent was achieved in 1939 by Dave Brower and a Sierra Club team. It marks one of the first times bolts were placed for protection in the history of North American climbing and earned a listing in Steve Roper and Allan Steck's seminal *50 Classic Climbs of North America*. However, the rock formation is highly sacred to the Navajo people, having historical and religious significance. In 1966, the Navajo Nation banned all climbing on their lands, including Shiprock.



📷 The author, Aaron Mike, bouldering in Northern Arizona. (Hopi, Yavapai, Western Apache, Ancestral Puebloans lands)  
AAC member James Q Martin 📷 @jamesqmartin

## INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE NOT EXTINCT.

world, White World, the Diné would assume human form after gaining greater intelligence and awareness. Through these worlds deities, vegetation, and animals accompanied the Diné, as well as our four sacred mountains: Sis Naajini (Blanca Peak), Tsoodzil (Mount Taylor), Dook'oooslid (the San Francisco Peaks), and Dibé Nitsaa (Mount Hesperus).

Like the story of my people, my tribe, I have gone through many different worlds to walk the path that I am on today. My first world, Ni'hodilhiil, consisted of a surreal state of constantly spending time in the outdoors on the Navajo Nation from Sanders, AZ to Monument Valley, AZ, as well as my hometown of Gallup, NM. Weekends and summers were spent playing with my cousins through the tranquility provided, or turbulence imposed, by our Mother Nature. My grandparents taught me about sheep herding with blue heelers, building hogáns, and butchering sheep. I learned how to take care of horses and cattle, and how to live off of the land. During the spring and summer I spent nights sleeping under the stars and a Pendleton blanket in the back of my grandfather's early 1990's Ford F-150. During the fall and winter, I woke up sweating under a sheep woolskin blanket next to a wood-burning stove that my grandfather had installed.

I blinked my eyes and I was in the second world of my journey, Ni'hodoot'izh, far from the Navajo Nation in the Northwest, transported to an environment where all of those activities that had made me feel so real were not customary or necessary, and were even frowned upon. Due to my Diné heritage and my personality, being in the outdoors is a necessity. It is hardwired into my entire being. In this second world, the connection to the land that I had experienced and loved was diverted and diminished. I began to feel disconnected from my Diné roots and felt a growing spiritual void.

I awoke for my first day in a new desert environment and into my third world, Ni'haltsoh. By this time, high school, my identity was in constant flux. I struggled to find my place and individual path in a sea of foreign values and ambitions. I blew through various sports, political ideas, social scenes, and academic areas of study. Amidst the chaos of these years, I found a vehicle that would take me into my fourth world, rock climbing. Being on the walls and boulders in Yosemite National Park, Rocky Mountain National Park, the eastern Sierra Nevada, Cochise Stronghold, Hueco Tanks State Park, and Mount Lemmon with people who shared similar values brought me back to a feeling of connection. Rock climbing became my missing identity puzzle piece, a reincarnation of my first world.

Ni'halgai, the fourth world of my journey: I am Tábaahá, the Edgewater clan, born for T'ógí, the Zia clan. My maternal grandfather is Táchii'nii and paternal grandfather is Tódich'ii'nii. After 16 years of redpoints, boulders, summits, alpine ascents, and first ascents, I am an indigenous rock climbing guide, guide-company owner, professional rock-climbing athlete, and advocate for the protection of sacred land resources. My fourth world came about after I resolved that I am committed to the path I am on and that I do not want my story to be unique. It is my goal to provide the same access that was gifted to me to indigenous youth as a means of connection to their land and to their heritage.

Simply acknowledging indigenous heritage and history as a part of the land is not the only answer. It is a step in our First World, eventually leading to our Fourth World of evolution. Accountability is not only assumed with the people and organizations in the industry that are trying to make a sustainable difference, but also should be carried out through the actions of each and every climber. Throughout the decades and in my personal experience, there has been a culture in climbing that tries to nullify existing law on sacred lands, specifically on the Navajo Nation. Climbers drill fresh bolts and pay to poach sacred formations behind excuses like "good intentions" or "having a Native friend." These illegal actions are a modern day conquer-and-destroy mentality that fails to respect Indigenous sovereignty and deteriorates the credibility of potential sustainable rock-climbing efforts.

Indigenous peoples are not extinct. Not everything needs to be climbed. Recreation must take a back seat to respecting indigenous practices that have existed for millennia. Media channels promote first ascents, first free ascents, first descents, and sending of beautiful lines in remote places on rock, snow, or water, which can overlook indigenous values. The actions that we take must respect indigenous culture, and it is up to us as the greater climbing community to decide the direction that we wish to pursue. Like climbers' push for Leave No Trace implementation and education, it is up to all of us to push our local climbing organizations to provide information on how to recreate with respect on or near sacred lands and to develop relationships with local tribes. We must shift the ethos from a Western "take" culture in order to not only respect the original stewards of the land, but also to ensure that Nahasdzáán, the Earth, will be healthy for our future generations.

.....  
Aaron Mike is a Navajo rock-climbing guide, a NativesOutdoors ([natives-outdoors.com](http://natives-outdoors.com)) athlete, and a Native Lands Regional Coordinator for the Access Fund. He currently lives in Flagstaff, Arizona.



# WHEN WOMEN LEAD

## Single Pitch Instructors for the 21st Century

BY EMMA LONGCOPE, PHOTOGRAPHY BY IRENE YEE @LADYLOCKOFF

According to the American Mountain Guides Association (AMGA)—the only internationally recognized certifying body for professional climbing guides in the U.S.—only 11% of their members are women. Yet, women made up more than 40% of America's 9.7 million climbing participants in 2017. In response, climbing organizations are partnering for change.

**I**n 2018, the American Alpine Club partnered with the AMGA, FlashFoxy, and Brown Girls Climb to host the first-ever Single Pitch Instructor (SPI) course just for women. We've now replicated the successful program in continued collaboration with these organizations, taking steps together towards evening out the industry's gender disparity.

The three-day course offers competent women the chance to excel in a supportive environment. All-women courses are rooted in the reality that women face different barriers to entry and different challenges than men do in the outdoor community. Women taking these new courses report feeling less pressure, more freedom to learn in a style that suits them, and increased ease of connecting with fellow participants.

"We all come from different walks of life, with varying levels of expertise in the outdoors," explains Sasha McGhee, a participant at the first all-women SPI course. "I learned so much because I felt comfortable both being vulnerable and sharing information and skills because I was surrounded by women who were comfortable doing the same."

Many of these women are following through—25% of the participants from the inaugural course recently completed their SPI assessment and became AMGA-certified Single Pitch Instructors. Their SPI certification does more than validate the work these women do when they instruct climbers; it paves the way for their students and other women to see themselves as professional climbing instructors and guides. In the case of these particular women, they are also showing other black, indigenous,

and people of color interested in becoming professional guides and instructors that they can do it and they do belong. It shows: 10 out of 12 participants in the November 2018 course identified as women of color.

To build on this momentum, the partner organizations recently duplicated the program with an August all-women SPI course, and have a November iteration on the calendar. These courses highlight the values of community collaboration, diverse perspectives, and proactive inclusion that are hallmarks of the AAC's education efforts.

Additionally, the AAC has been hard at work providing all climbers in the U.S. with access to climbing education at a local level, training our volunteer instructors to be more culturally inquisitive and inclusive, diversifying the images of climbers in educational materials, and acknowledging and fostering the role that all climbers play within the climbing community.

Like our partner organizations the AMGA, FlashFoxy, and Brown Girls Climb, we are working to better acknowledge and help remove the barriers that exclude people from the climbing community and climber education. The all-women SPI course is just a first step—all across the climbing industry, groups and individuals are uniting to create stronger, more welcoming programs and opportunities. We're here for this.

.....  
Learn more about the Women's SPI courses, including prerequisites and future course dates, at [amga.com/womens-single-pitch-instructor-courses](https://amga.com/womens-single-pitch-instructor-courses). You can learn more about the AAC's education initiatives on page 63.







# GLACIAL VIEWS

## A Climate Scientist Reflects & Other Stories from Club Researchers

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BY SETH CAMPBELL

**N**early a decade of experience and over 40 expeditions after my first visit, the evening view from Middle Peak of Mount Hunter still inspires me. From that small snowy vantage point, we could see the classic West Face of Mount Waddington to the east, the South Faces of Denali and Mount Hunter to the north, and the South Face of Foraker to the northwest. The longest glacier in the Alaska Range, the Kahiltna, stretched out below us for 30 miles. The silhouettes of Moose's Tooth and Mount Russell were clear in the distance.

We pointed out the many classic climbs visible from our perch, and beyond the glaciers we gazed at low hills, dense spruce forests, braided glacial rivers, meadows, and endless scrub tundra. Despite sweat from the ski chilling my body, and my beard acquiring a thick rime coating

of icicles, I stood in silence for over an hour, contemplating my position on a perfectly calm evening. This view only required a one-kilometer skin from our ice core drill site, 200 meters of elevation gain, and 100 meters of kicking steps into the hardpack snow. Many climbing and science legends have called these mountains home at some point, including Bradford Washburn, Barbara Washburn, and Fred Beckey. Some of my own mentors cut their teeth alpine climbing in these rugged peaks. I recall being encouraged by an expedition sticker a long-time friend and climbing mentor had left behind on the dining-room wall of the famous Talkeetna Roadhouse during my first trip to the area.

Now, I was the one taking in the view, not just as a climber, but as a climber turned glaciologist and climate scientist.

I first visited Denali National Park for research in 2008, and returned each year until 2015. In 2011, the American Alpine Club funded two research grants for my work there. Much of my graduate research was unfunded, so I can honestly say that this support made the difference between completing and not completing a graduate degree.

In the end, the AAC funding went much further. The research our team completed during our early years in Denali led to a National Science Foundation (NSF) grant worth close to one million dollars that was used to extract two surface-to-bedrock ice cores from the saddle between the Main and Middle Peaks of Mount Hunter in 2013. Results from that ice core show significant climate warming, higher rates of melt during the summer, and higher winter snow

accumulation rates. Unfortunately, the winter snow accumulation is far less than the increase in summer melt, which does not bode well for the future of Alaskan glaciers.

This NSF grant also funded several other undergraduate and graduate students and scientists from three institutions. The unique ice core records have been coupled with other data to study climate variability and have allowed us to put recent rapid changes in the Polar North into a longer-term context. From a climbing perspective, the recent warming clearly captured within these ice core records is cause for ice routes melting out sooner in the spring, late season glacier travel becoming more dangerous, and climbing routes generally becoming unstable or impassable—not to mention the many other societal concerns we face due to a rapidly warming Arctic.

I've returned nine times since my first trip to Denali National Park. On those trips, I've been fortunate to complete research on the flanks of Denali, Mt. Hunter, and Mt. Russell and summit Denali, Hunter, and satellite peaks Mount Capps and Kahiltna Dome. I've ski-traversed large parts of surrounding glaciers and even climbed into a beautiful valley of rock spires known as Little Switzerland—all for science. My science career is still just getting started, but it has expanded since these earlier expeditions and now includes close to a dozen trips to Antarctica and several others to Greenland, Canada, and Patagonia. I now work as an Assistant Professor at the Climate Change Institute and School of Earth and Climate Sciences for the University of Maine and as the Director of Research & Academics for the Juneau Icefield Research Program (JIRP).

Both of these roles focus on research and education, and I am grateful for the opportunities to inspire the next generation of Polar explorers, scientists, and environmental advocates. I'm fortunate to work with talented and engaged students from around the globe. Most of them study how glaciers are changing, and they have access to more cutting-edge tools

and methods than I did when I first started, such as drones and advanced numerical modeling techniques. Their skill continues to push me forward, and our relationship often could be characterized as a team as opposed to a student and mentor. We're also expanding the conversation to include sustainability initiatives—the time has passed when we could rely solely on research and education. Real-world solutions are the wave of the future, and we as scientists, students, and environmental advocates need to continue this discussion as we move forward. Looking back, I realize seed research grants such as those offered by the AAC can be career-starting, result in cutting-edge research, and provide much-needed inspiration to protect our many cherished mountain resources.



▶ The author conducting research on Denali. (Koyukon, Dena'ina lands)

**Read on!** The following stories come directly from other Club-funded researchers. Their projects span from Antarctica to Colorado to Central Asia. ➔



### TETONIC UPLIFT ON FAULTS IN THE TIEN SHAN RANGE OF KYRGYZSTAN

WIN McLAUGHLIN

#### What were some challenges and highlights of doing research in the mountains?

Most of my field sites in Kyrgyzstan were between 8,000 and 11,000 feet in elevation. There is a narrow window of the year when

conditions permit work, and even then, weather can shift fast. I got snowed on, which makes finding fossils a bit harder. A highlight was finding the complete jaw of a 5-million-year-old, grizzly-bear-sized hyena!

#### What did you learn about your impact—or the impact of the climbing community—on the environment you studied?

There's certainly a delicate balance. Kyrgyzstan is increasingly opening up as a climbing destination. On one hand this is great for the community and the local economies, but on the other hand it can put delicate alpine ecosystems at risk. I think as more spaces open up to climbing, the international climbing community needs to be more aware of their role in conservation. For example, visitors commonly feed the native ibex at one of the climbing huts where I camped, which is super problematic when hunting season picks up right after rock-climbing season ends. I think much of the climbing community is receptive to learning about conservation—which is all the more reason outdoor education and outreach really matters!

#### What do you think is the biggest challenge facing our mountain/crag ecosystems today?

Climate change. Most ecosystems in Kyrgyzstan, as well as the human population there, depend on glacial melt for year-round water. 20-30% of small "perched" glaciers have melted completely in the last 30 years, and many larger valley glaciers have retreated. These direct changes to the climate already are having dire impacts on the local ecosystems and people. My research looks at the evolution of these alpine ecosystems over millions of years, but now, we're facing change at such an accelerated pace that the ability of systems to evolve is limited.

### ARCTIC CLIMATE: HISTORIES FROM A SHALLOW ICE CORE

ALISON CRISCITIELLO

#### What were some challenges and highlights of doing research on the glacier?

Simply getting to the ice core site was a feat of logistics and good weather! A twin otter aircraft packed with myself, my ice core drill,



equipment and my field assistants headed north to Ellesmere Island, touching down once for refueling in order to make it to the study site. We got lucky with a gorgeous weather window, set up a minimalist camp on the ice cap, and drilled like mad-people under the -30-degree-Celsius midnight sun.

**How did the community affect your research?**

I can only do the remote polar ice coring that I do because I am also a mountaineer and climber. This kind of work is deeply rewarding and utilizes all of my skill-sets to work and live in the most inhospitable places on the planet. For this particular field season, our team of three had to be versatile, with deep and broad experience. Even more important are the relationships with the local communities who grant us permission to do research on their land. We work with the local people of Resolute and Grise Fiord to ensure the highest standards of Leave No Trace and environmental stewardship while on the land and ice. Following the field season, we visited the Resolute School and had the opportunity to talk with grade schoolers about our research.

**What do you think is the biggest challenge facing our mountain ecosystems today?**

The biggest challenge facing those adventuring in places like Ellesmere Island is the changing climate, which causes subsequent changes in sea ice variability and a shifting environmental landscape. For example, the standard route on Mt. Logan 10 years ago will not be the same as the standard route 10 years from now (additionally, the optimal timing to climb has shifted due to regional warming). It has become more and more difficult in many regions, especially in the Canadian high Arctic, to predict

safe travel routes. It will become increasingly important for climbers and scientists to work together and utilize one another's expertise.

**THE EFFECT OF CLIMBING ON CLIFFSIDE ECOSYSTEMS**

MARTÍ MARCH SALAS

**Describe your research goals and findings.**

As rock climbing has grown in popularity, we have seen increased impact on the organisms that inhabit our crags. Hoping to prevent the loss of biodiversity and to implement adequate management and conservation measures, we focused our work on increasing our knowledge of the current and potential impact of climbing on cliffside ecosystems. Our preliminary results show a significant decrease in plant cover and species abundance and richness, plus a shift in the community composition in climbed transects compared to unclimbed transects. This study underscores the need to increase climbers' awareness that their conduct can endanger the organisms that inhabit the cliffs.

**How did the community affect your research?**

More than 20 researchers from more than six countries have collaborated in this study. Most of the scientists and collaborators involved in the field samplings were climbers.



**What did you learn about the impact of the climbing community on the environment?**

The study shows an increasing impact of climbing on the species that inhabit cliffs. We've met with park managers and other climbers, discussing controversy between climbers' goals and managers' wishes for species conservation. Our interactions with managers, climbers, and

other researchers has helped us to understand each group's needs and provide each group with useful tools for understanding and managing cliffside habitats.



**DISTURBANCE ON ALPINE FLORA OF COLORADO'S 14'ERS**

NATHALIE CHARDON

**What do you think is the biggest challenge facing our mountain/crag ecosystems today?**

One of the biggest direct threats is habitat degradation by human disturbance, either in the form of direct trampling or warming temperatures. The result of such habitat degradation will certainly decrease the survival of native species, while increasing the chance that invasive species will take over. Just as importantly, not enough funding is allocated to environmental research, and there is a lack of public knowledge on what processes are currently occurring in nature.

**How can climbers be part of the solution?**

Individual actions are incredibly powerful in conserving mountain and crag ecosystems! If every climber, hiker, and mountaineer took simple actions, such as staying on the trail, respecting wildlife closures, and scrubbing hiking shoes to avoid invasive species' seed transport, our mountain and crag ecosystems would stay in good shape.

..... AAC Research Grants support scientific endeavors in mountains and crags around the world that contribute vital knowledge of our climbing environment, enrich our understanding of global climber impacts, and support and improve the health and sustainability of mountain habitats. Learn more about AAC Research Grants on Page 64.

# CLIMBERS FOR CLIMATE

## Taking a Stand on Climate Change, Together

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**I**t's a privilege to see high peaks at sunrise, glaciers shimmering in the moonlight, and the beauty of all that is wild. With these cherished experiences I have also witnessed dramatic shifts in these pristine landscapes over the years. Wild places are in peril due to a number of threats including extraction, development, and overuse. Climate change is adding fuel to the fire.

Imagine life without our favorite ice climbs and with snow fields unfit for snow travel, ski areas with closed gates too early in the season, and crags too hot for climbing. All of these things are happening in various places at an alarming rate, and we need to act quickly to stop the degradation of our planet.

It's a shame that climate change is so controversial in Washington D.C. and in the media. The climbing community is unique in that it represents many political ideologies. But ultimately, as explorers and lovers of wild places, we have to acknowledge the overwhelming scientific consensus about climate change. We confront the reality of it every time we go into the mountains. By telling our stories, talking about the issues, voting, and communicating with our lawmakers and representatives, we can help shift the national rhetoric.

We find endless joy in the mountains. They provide us with inspiration, challenge us to be our best selves, and give us a perspective that cannot be found outside of these wild places. We owe it not only to these landscapes, but more importantly to the next generation of climbers to put in our best effort to reduce our impact as a community and to advocate for action on climate change.

Conrad Anker  
Legendary Climber and Community Leader

### THE CLUB'S OFFICIAL STANCE ON CLIMATE CHANGE:

The AAC endorses the overwhelming scientific consensus on climate change—the world is warming and carbon emissions, sourced from the burning of fossil fuels and deforestation, is largely the driver. These changes are global, blind to state or national boundaries, and impact everyone regardless of their political affiliation. For the climbing community, economic growth and environmental conservation are mutually reinforcing goals. The AAC does not view this as a political issue, but as a moral issue facing all of our members, and all of humanity.

While the AAC is concerned about the impact that a changing climate will have on our shared

climbing environment, we are equally concerned about all of the adverse impacts of climate change, especially those affecting front line, subsistence mountain communities worldwide. We acknowledge that climate change disproportionately impacts poor and marginalized communities lacking the resources to adapt, especially those in rural mountain communities internationally. As climbers, mountain towns and villages are the basecamps for our expeditions and the people who reside there are our friends, guides, and in some circumstances, our rescuers. The AAC cares deeply about these communities and thus we will advocate for climate justice initiatives by working to protect marginalized mountain communities.

*Take your own stand!*  
↓

### HOW YOU CAN HELP

These postcards, featuring pieces by artist and scientist Jill Pelto, are designed to help you make a difference.

#### Postcard One

This one is to send to your lawmakers. (Easily look up your policy-makers' addresses at [americanalpineclub.org/climate](http://americanalpineclub.org/climate).) Ask them to advocate for climate-forward policies, and tell them why, as a climber, this matters to you. When you send this postcard, snap a photo, and use [#aacgram](https://twitter.com/aacgram) and [#climbersforclimate](https://twitter.com/climbersforclimate) so we can track our impact!

#### Postcard Two

Mountain regions are warming at roughly twice the pace of the global average and AAC members are bearing witness to these changes directly. How have you seen the places you recreate change as a result of a changing climate? Take this postcard and send it back to the AAC with a story of changes due to climate that you have experienced firsthand.

#### About the Artist

Jill Pelto has conducted research on the glaciers of the Pacific Northwest, in the valleys and mountains of Antarctica, in the cirques of the Falkland Islands, and around the lakes and mountains of New Zealand. Her work seeks creatively to communicate information about environmental issues with a broad audience. You can see more of Jill's artwork and learn about her research at [jillpelto.com](http://jillpelto.com).



📹 The late, great Kyle Dempster takes on climate change with the *Great White Waterfall* (WW5+R), Little Cottonwood Canyon, UT. (Eastern Shoshone, Ute, Goshute lands) AAC member Andrew Burr 📷 @andrew\_burr



# 1 CLIMB, INFINITE POTENTIAL

Kevin Jorgeson Breaks Down Walls by Building Them

BY EMMA LONGCOPE, PHOTOGRAPHY BY RYAN WHITE

**I**t's an audacious objective, with no clear path for how to get it done," Kevin Jorgeson muses. "It's inspiring enough for me to want to work on it every day. I'll probably be working on this for several decades, and I'm totally cool with that."

Jorgeson, who made history by partnering with Tommy Caldwell for the first ascent of El Capitan's Dawn Wall in 2015, could be discussing a new 5.14+, or a highball boulder problem, but he's talking about an objective that may be even bigger: 1Climb, an initiative that aims to introduce one million kids in America's cities to the sport of climbing.

The premise is straightforward: the 1Climb team puts up a climbing wall in a Boys and Girls Club, fewer than five miles from an already-established climbing gym. There's a grand opening.

"The kids strap on climbing shoes for the first time, or maybe they stay in their sneakers, and a lot of them know exactly what to do," Jorgeson says.

"Some don't, and their friends encourage them to try it... and encourage them to try it again when they don't get to the top."

The kids uplift each other. The team of local mentors, who have come over from the climbing gym down the road, uplift the kids, too. The Boys and Girls Club and the gym work together to come up with a sustainable schedule of teaching, route-setting, and facilitating—and, thus, kids who may have never seen a mountain become climbers. Climbing becomes the backdrop for their struggles and successes.

"Climbing can bring so many different things to a kid," Jorgeson says. "You don't know what they're bringing to the wall—what their history in sports is, what their home life is like, what their confidence level is, any of that—but climbing teaches so much. Simply providing access, and the opportunity for the climbing wall to be the canvas for how they work through these things—whether that's being intimidated, or being shy, or learning how to problem solve, or focus—[the wall becomes] a



📷 A 1Climb wall-unveiling event at the Variety L.A. Boys and Girls Club in Los Angeles, CA.

## INCLUSION AND IMPACT ARE PROBABLY THE TWO MOST RELEVANT CHALLENGES WORTH FOCUSING ON RIGHT NOW.

non-academic way for them to work through relevant life lessons. It's so instant: if you don't do it right, you fall. You get up, and try again. I love that about climbing: it's just so stupid simple."

For Jorgeson, who started climbing indoors in Santa Rosa, California at age 11 and credits the gym community for shaping his values through adolescence, 1Climb is a labor of love. Running the initiative involves navigating funding challenges, permitting, and ever-changing variables in logistics and partnerships.

"It's just like being uncomfortable when you're climbing," he says of these obstacles. "The harder it gets, [the more you] have to embrace the fact that it's not going to plan or it's not easy. If you can expect that, and kind of enjoy the really hard parts... you feel like you can stick with it."

Jorgeson credits the all-star team behind 1Climb for the non-profit's success thus far. In 2010, the initiative was just a "hairball question": "the Boys and Girls Clubs have a network serving 4.5 million kids per year. They have 4,000 clubs across the country. What better infrastructure for making the sport more inclusive?"

1Climb built walls in Boys and Girls Clubs in Sonoma, California and Saint Louis, Missouri in 2016 and in Los Angeles in 2018. Adidas has signed on as a major project sponsor, donating funding for full-time 1Climb staff and walls in New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago. So iLL—the brand spearheaded by 1Climb co-founder Dan Chancellor—also

donates shoes, plus holds, and the Boys and Girls Clubs and gyms take things from there.

The momentum and collaboration behind the project are impressive, but perhaps not surprising, given the current energy and conversations in the climbing community about the sport's accessibility. It's as if there's been a whole network of individuals eager to help, waiting on the sidelines, and 1Climb has connected the dots and provided a concrete platform for budding change.

"I think there's an old-school way of thinking about [climbing]: it's not mainstream, it's a little bit niche, a little bit exclusive... but I don't think you have to be a preservationist about it," Jorgeson says, "I think inclusion and impact are probably the two most relevant challenges worth focusing on right now. I'm proud of the efforts being made; I'm proud of the climbing community and how it's coming together to tackle these challenges."

Jorgeson tells me a goal of 1Climb—aside from reaching the golden number of one-million kids—is to put a wall in every Boys and Girls Club within five miles of a climbing gym. "Is that feasible?" I ask.

"What I think is feasible is often irrelevant," he says, chuckling. Spoken like a climber who freed the Dawn Wall.

Want to get involved? Contact 1Climb to learn more about their mission and the different ways that you can get involved. Whether you are interested in donating, volunteer work, or having a wall built at your local Boys and Girls Club, there are several ways to get plugged in. Email 1Climb at [wecare@1climb.org](mailto:wecare@1climb.org) or visit them online at [1climb.org](http://1climb.org).



It's possible I am pushing through solid rock  
in flintlike layers, as the ore lies, alone;  
I am such a long way in I see no way through,  
and no space: everything is close to my face,  
and everything close to my face is stone.  
I don't have much knowledge yet in grief  
so this massive darkness makes me small.  
You be the master: make yourself fierce, break in:  
then your great transforming will happen to me,  
and my great grief cry will happen to you.

**Pushing Through**  
by Rainer Maria Rilke

# ON PUSHING

## 24 Hours Into the Black, the AAC Grief Fund

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BY MADALEINE SORKIN, PHOTOGRAPHY BY HENNA TAYLOR [@HENNATAYLORFILMS](#)

**I**f, as poet Rilke describes, grief is like pushing through stone, then there is no escape from the pain. Instead we look for what will help us endure the massive descending darkness. Like climbing in the mountains, feeling our smallness and yielding to what is greater than us alone can bring relief, even transformation.

What if the mountains are listening? What if they are changed by the particular shape, sound, and color of your cry? What if you are transformed by sharing it?

What does my grief cry sound like? How about yours?

I've often wondered where the eldership and wisdom in my community lives to support us in dark times. In the climbing community, a collective grief bares its teeth around death, trauma, and even unwanted change such as aging and loss of identity.

In 2017, Hayden Kennedy took his life after Inge Perkins died beside him in an avalanche, and Quinn Brett's climbing fall on El Capitan

left her paralyzed below her waist. There was no tidy package for me to put my grief into. The dark walls moved in close.

At Hayden's memorial, I learned from his parents, Julie and Michael Kennedy, who showed up as they were, deep in their loss. Julie articulated such strength as she publicly let her community know that she would be leaning on us, that she needed us now. She didn't know how she would get through this pain and she committed to doing so.



I wondered how Julie's friends would show up for her pain. I wondered how Michael and Julie would navigate their partnership with a shared loss, their particular grief cries and their individual paths.

We leaned into the reality of Hayden's passing together, touching our pain and witnessing one another's. After the memorial, many seemed lost in how to keep company with their own pain, let alone another's pain. We were feeling our helplessness and dragging the weight of accumulated loss in our community. Out of their personal loss, Julie and Michael Kennedy began the Hayden Fund to protect public lands. Creative acts such as this can be healing, life-giving sources of connection that honor a person's spirit.

I longed to see support for friends suffering terrible losses and for my community to fully engage with its collective grief. What might it look like to anchor these particular grief cries into a collective narrative that makes space for death, our pain, and offers resources to return to the vitality of ourselves? I wished for what author and educator Parker Palmer spoke to: a community that is neither invasive of the mystery nor evasive of the suffering. Ultimately, these longings moved me to start building the Climbing Grief Fund (CGF) at the American Alpine Club in 2018.

In building awareness for CGF, the idea came to do a personal climb. The climb would become a personal invitation to my grief cry. I wanted to choose an exhausting physical challenge that would soften my body and mind and create the opening for my heart to express any joy and gratitude and sorrow that emerged. I wanted to continue my conversation with pushing in respectful relationship with myself and to use climbing as a tool for renewal and vitality.

I reached out to Mary Harlan, as I thought the vision might resonate with her. Mary said yes to this journey and her heart-forward enthusiasm to explore the intention of this climb grounded my own process. She dedicated herself immediately to the goal, training and exploring her relationship with grief. We spoke about the Black Canyon wilderness and considered the significance the place holds for each of us. Both Mary and I have been drawn to climbing in the Black for many years and have had formative experiences there. As the Black Canyon does for many compelled to descend into its 2,000' chasm, it whispers into our seeking ears an ancient conversation between complex dark- and light-streaked walls and full gushing river, and often a gentle wind, intense heat or cold, pricker bushes, and poison ivy. Here would be ample space for a movement with grief and anything else that came forth.

The original vision of our climb was to complete a 24-hour, back-to-back link-up of three climbs, which several strong parties have done. In May, a day before our link-up was scheduled, the entire South Chasm View Wall closed for an indeterminate period due to a loose rock. We postponed and waited until Fall, and then late Fall. The wall was still closed, and as the days shortened and cooled we adapted our grief climb idea.

In late October, the day before the climb, I spoke with my friend Chip Chace on the phone. He was terminally ill and would die a week later, only two months from his diagnosis with pancreatic cancer. At 61, Chip was a well-known acupuncturist and longtime climber from Boulder, Colorado. Just that Spring, he and I had climbed a challenging route on the Hooker Buttress of the Black. As is common with long routes, the day involved both expected challenges, such as route finding, and unexpected snafus, such as needing to cut our rope down to 70 feet long in order to complete the climb. We returned to camp later than we had hoped. A master of the push, Chip had planned to drive us back to Boulder through much of the evening to see patients the following morning. However, tired from unexpected snafus on the climb, we slept at the campground and Chip rescheduled a couple morning appointments. Apparently, this was the first time he'd done so in 30 years of practice. I wasn't sure what to think about being complicit in this reshuffle of plans for the day. However, I felt grateful to be in the company of someone else who, while bent toward pushing, also responded to what was really occurring.

On the phone that October morning, I told Chip about the new plan for the grief climb. In preparation, Mary and I had descended the canyon and built a ceremonial circle on the shores of the Gunnison. Instead of climbing through the cold night, we planned to pause down here with a few friends and hold council with our grief. In the early morning, we would then climb out of the canyon via the Southern Arête of the Painted Wall.

Chip shared the Chinese term *ganying*, a concept of correlative or cosmic resonance. We discussed the term lightly and discussed being in relationship with the resonance; sensing what is there and adapting.

The next morning before dawn I carried my drum quietly out to the canyon rim. I drummed to layers of stone that I stood upon, space around me, ribboned, folding walls, a constant rush of the water below, and behind the sleeping people at camp. I drummed for the day to come into being, for our joys and sorrows to come forth, to my young warrior, wise elders and limping selves to protect me.

Mary and I descended with headlamps to the base of Scenic Cruise. We set specific intentions before the climb, namely to stay close to our whole

experience with a welcoming attitude. I led and we simul-climbed the majority of the route. That morning the movement felt fluid, playful, my mind yielding to a quiet focus. We topped out on the rim in little over three hours. Friends greeted us at the rim's edge with ethereal guitar notes and burning sage at the top. They fed us lunch and we descended into the canyon again for the Russian Arête. We climbed the thuggy route quickly. I felt "the Wu-Tang climber" Hayden Kennedy's spirit as I charged upwards, strong and confident. We began calling out the names of people we'd lost.

We topped out in the late afternoon to a howling wind. When Mary arrived, gratitude overpowered me, and I thanked her for her dedication to our different kind of goal.

Friends welcomed us back at camp and laid out a feast. A cold wet front was supposedly moving in, and we spoke with a climbing ranger, checked the weather again, and deliberated. It seemed

likely that if we tried to climb the Southern Arête we would do so in a snowstorm. A long, committing route, the Southern Arête would be a challenging place to retreat from. Sifting through our hopes and disappointment, and bringing ourselves back to the intention for the climb, we decided to adapt. Again.

We held a fire council at the rim campground with the friends present, prompted to share from our hearts. We spoke unscripted about grief. I read poetry. Some shared stories of feeling helpless in supporting friends who were currently suffering. We discussed ways to support these friends and the importance of trying even if uncertain about our impact. We closed our ceremony there, thanking one another for showing up for this experiment and our shared desire for a community strong enough to include our pain.

May we let our collective grief cries out, and may they transform the mountains.

..... AAC's Grief Fund is continuing work toward offering individual counseling, mentorship programs, and mental health, trauma, and loss support, including:

- » building a nationwide network of mental-health providers available to work with climbers experiencing trauma or loss
- » starting a peer-to-peer mentorship program
- » compiling a nationwide database of resources related to trauma and loss from counselors to support groups to events in each state
- » implementing these programs within our annual Craggin' Classic series

The fund could use your donations—one-time and ongoing. You can donate directly to the Fund at [amerianalpineclub.org/donate](http://amerianalpineclub.org/donate).

**I WISHED FOR  
WHAT AUTHOR AND  
EDUCATOR PARKER  
PALMER SPOKE TO: A  
COMMUNITY THAT  
IS NEITHER INVASIVE  
OF THE MYSTERY  
NOR EVASIVE OF THE  
SUFFERING.**



# AN ODE TO MOBILITY

## The Range of Motion Project Tackles Cotopaxi

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BY LAUREN PANASEWICZ

1. 2. 3. 4. Breathe. 7. 8. 9. Breathe. Breathe. I need a break.

“I need a break.”

**I** use what feels like all the energy I have to say this out loud. I match my left foot with my right and lean over my ice axe, taking five full, slow breaths. I glance upwards to the horizon. I can't see the top of the mountain. The sun is rising. I see the orange glow from the east; the temperature has already increased a few degrees. I suddenly feel rushed. I move.

22. 23. 24. We left the refuge over six hours ago, but I completely lost my sense of time. I felt like I was moving in slow motion. There were hours when I struggled to stay warm, trying to sip hot tea from my teammate Mark's Klean Kanteen whenever we stopped; the clear night air cut me to the core.

36. 37. 38. This environment isn't new. Mountains have always felt like home. I grew up in them and have sought them out my entire life. This struggle isn't new either. I look up at my guide Kristian and down at Mark. “Almost there,” Kristian says. “How do you feel?”

“Fine.”  
Fucking tired.

I remember Dan and Steve passing me before we even reached the glacier. They are both above-the-knee amputees and proven to be two of the strongest athletes on the team.



📷 [Above Left] ROMP team en route to the glacier on Cotopaxi during acclimatization. Silverline Films; [Above Right] Greg Krupa, Karl Egloff (lead guide of Cumbre Tours), Lauren Panasewicz, and Dave Krupa (ROMP's founder) at the summit on Cotopaxi. Silverline Films

I think about ROMP's Ecuadorian patients on the team: Holgar, Wladimir, Pablo, and Kathy, and how they are part of the <5% of amputees in the developing world who have access to prosthetic care. These statistics stick with me; my everyday life at the office revolves around changing these dismal numbers. ROMP exists to help amputees get the technology they need to reach their own summits. Then I think about all amputees around the world who will never get that chance and I want to fight for them all. This summit is for them. I will keep fighting. ROMP will keep fighting.

54. 55. 56. I stop again. Almost every five steps, I have to stop to catch my breath. I feel the rope tug uphill as Kristian tries to continue. I throw off his balance just by standing still. He takes a step back and waits for me to make the first move. Breathe. Breathe. "Sorry."

79. 80. 81. I squint up, towards the sun. I breathe out, and move my foot uphill. 89. 90. 91. The struggle reminds me how powerful and resilient our bodies truly are. It is in these moments that I am so grateful for my own mobility. I truly believe it is something we all take for granted every day.

139. 140. 141. I can feel the energy from the summit. I can smell the sulphur from the volcano. I stop again. Breathe. I know half my team is above me and half is still on their way up. I'm right on time.

The lights from Quito are still bright, twinkling in the distance to my left. People are starting their days in the city. I couldn't feel any further away from them.

I wonder where Dave is? Did Chad make it? Where's Holger? Kathy? I hope everyone is okay. My team is 22 individuals, including 14 amputees. With our guides, we are 34 total. I feel so close to all of them as we pushed through our physical and mental limits together. What I love most about my job at ROMP is that I get to give that gift of mobility back to people who have lost it.

I look up to see two other rope teams in front of me cresting the horizon. We can do it. Si, se puede. This summit had been four years in the making; we had been turned back year after year due to weather and volcanic activity.

201. 202. 203. I had only started counting my steps when I felt like I couldn't focus anymore and needed any distraction to move my legs. Mark and I started walking from the refuge at 11 p.m. and chatted for hours on the way up, laughing and singing. At some point we both stopped. It was too hard.

211. 212. 213. Holy shit. There it is. I see the end of the rope teams. I see the crater. We crest the last few vertical feet and the most glorious sunrise greets us directly ahead. I am here. Estoy aqui.

Our teammates are there too; they form a tunnel for us. I move the fastest I've moved all night. They are cheering and touching our arms and helmets and I feel their energy run through me. I let out a sigh of relief and the happy tears start to fall.

I struggle to unclip from the rope. Kristian sees. He helps. I don't need this lifeline anymore. I want to be free to soak in the first few moments of this beautiful day. I feel a deep sense of pride. I had no concept of how emotional this moment would be—you can't plan for that. I see Dave. He embraces me and we cry together. We make our rounds, hugging everyone on the team, and the tears are contagious.

I revel in the adrenaline and endorphins. The moment is surreal. The hours of struggle, the months of training and planning, the years of waiting; it all melts away as the sun hits my face. We are here. Estamos aqui. The summit. La cumbre.

At sunrise on September 28, 2018 the ROMP Elite Team, including 11 amputees, reached the summit of Cotopaxi together at 19,347'.

.....  
The author is the Director of Development at the Range of Motion Project (ROMP) and has organized a team of amputees up Ecuador's highest peaks as part of a global mobility event called Climbing for ROMP to raise money for ROMP patients to acquire new prosthetic devices, enabling them to conquer their own mountains. In 2018, Climbing for ROMP raised over \$100,000 to help 100 amputees get prosthetic care. Learn more at [rompglobal.org](http://rompglobal.org).



📷 In 1970, in an effort to combat a dirtbag infestation, the National Park Service did away with the throw-your-tent-anywhere-and-stay-for-free camping style of Camp 4 and created numbered, partitioned campsites with a \$3 fee. Today, lines to get into the historic climber campsite are common and akin to scoring coveted tickets to a rock concert. (Central Sierra Miwok lands) AAC member Drew Smith @drew\_smith

## AHWANEE [YOSEMITE] TIMELINE (4,000 YEARS AGO–PRESENT)

- 1850 | 1860 | 1870 | 1880 | 1890 | 1900 | 1910 | 1920
- ① **4,000 YEARS AGO**  
Archaeological evidence points to the first human inhabitants of Yosemite.
  - ② **1219**  
Ahwahnechee people perform controlled burns in the Valley promoting the growth of oak trees, which provide acorns, a staple to the Ahwahnechee's diet.
  - ③ **1851**  
U.S. Army Major Jim Savage leads the Mariposa Battalion into the west end of Yosemite Valley with the intent of suppressing the native population. Chief Tenaya and his Ahwahnechee are eventually captured and their village burned; they are removed to a reservation near Fresno, California.
  - ④ **1864**  
President Abraham Lincoln signs a bill granting Yosemite Valley and the Mariposa Grove, "for public use, resort and recreation," noting that the two tracts, "shall be inalienable for all time." This was the first time in history that a federal government had set aside scenic lands simply to protect them and to allow for their enjoyment by all people.
  - ⑤ **1890**  
An Act of Congress establishes Yosemite National Park, although Yosemite Valley and the Mariposa Grove remain under state protections. (Later incorporated into federal lands in 1903.)
  - ⑥ **1920**  
Yosemite National Park includes Indian removal in their development plan.
  - ⑦ **1947**  
Climbers Royal Robbins, Warren Harding, Yvon Chouinard, and other "Golden Eras" begin to flock to Yosemite Valley, ticking off first ascents and crashing at the Camp 4 site.
  - ⑧ **1957**  
Royal Robbins, Mike Sherrick, and Jerry Galwas bag the first ascent of the *Northwest Face of Half Dome*, the first grade VI climb in the U.S.
  - ⑨ **1958**  
Warren Harding, Wayne Merry, and George Whitmore make the first ascent of *The Nose*, climbing for 47 days.
  - ⑩ **1969**  
The Indian Village near Camp 4 is burned to the ground in a practice firefighting drill. This was the last native community in Yosemite Valley.
  - ⑪ **1970**  
In an effort to attract non-climber guests, Camp 4 is renamed Sunnyside Walk-In Campground and a fee of \$3 is levied.
  - ⑫ **1975**  
Billy Westbay, Jim Bridwell, and John Long complete the first one-day ascent of El Capitan's *The Nose* in 1975.

# YOSEMITE'S CAMP 4

## The Center of the Climbing Universe

BY CHRIS VAN LEUVEN

For decades, Camp 4 has been the cultural and historical center of American rock climbing. Here's why.

**T**he name Camp 4 is ubiquitous in climbing culture. It's mentioned in books, films, brand names, and businesses. We're inspired by the culture and lifestyle rooted in this historic campground in the center of Yosemite Valley. Since the 1940s, this dusty, often-crowded campground has been more than a place to re-rack between pitches or catch a few Zs. It's where grand plans were (and are) made, new gear inventions tinkered with, and standards pushed on the nearby boulders, crags, and big walls.

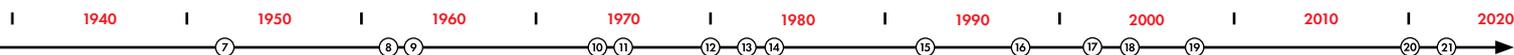
Camp 4 is where America's top climbers have base-camped for decades. It's where Warren Harding stayed in 1958 when he worked on El Cap's first route, *The Nose*, during the Golden Age of American rock climbing. A shot of him in Dean Fidelman's book *Yosemite in the Fifties: The Iron Age* says it all—tin cup in hand and a hemp rope around his waist, smiling and laughing next to his team, Mark Powell and Bill "Dolt" Feuerer, in the parking lot around a stove and a jug of wine.

Powell's pushed Harding past the famous Stovelegs cracks during the first ascent of *The Nose*. In the 1950s, he became the first climber to take up residence at Camp 4. He climbed every day for months and became one of the best free climbers of the era.

Just imagine, in the early '60s, Royal Robbins and Joe Fitch bolting out of Camp 4 at 5 a.m. to climb the North Face of Middle Cathedral Rock.

In the 1970s, climbers started residing in Camp 4 for six months (sometimes more) at a time.

It's hard to keep track of the many books that have come out of Yosemite, specifically Camp 4, with titles including Glen Denny's *Yosemite in the Sixties*, and *Valley Walls: A Memoir of Climbing and Living in Yosemite*, and Dean Fidelman's *The Stone Masters: California Rock Climbers in the Seventies*. A must read in American climbing literature is Steve Roper's



**13 1977**

Descendants from the Southern Sierra Miwok organize and advocate for their community—long displaced from the Yosemite region—to be included in the park's new master plan, including a cultural center and ability to engage in cultural practices. Three years later they succeed.

**14 1978**

Ron Kauk completes the first ascent of *Midnight Lightning* (V8) in Camp 4, still considered the most famous boulder problem in the world.

**15 1987**

The National Park Service produces its first Native American Relationships Management Policy, committing to actively promote tribal cultures as an important component of the parks.

**16 1993**

The first free ascent of *The Nose* is completed by Lynn Hill, who one year later completes the first free ascent in under 24 hours.

**17 1997**

Flooding in Yosemite Valley destroys employee housing units prompting the Park Service to rebuild at Camp 4, effectively eliminating the campground. Tom Frost, Richard Duane, and the American Alpine Club lead the fight to save Camp 4; the effort is successful.

**18 1999**

Sunnyside Walk-In Campground is officially renamed Camp 4 (again).

**19 2003**

Camp 4 is listed on the National Register of Historic Places for "its significant association with the growth and development of rock climbing in the Yosemite Valley during the 'golden years' of pioneer mountaineering."

**20 2015**

Tommy Caldwell and Kevin Jorgeson complete the first free climb of the *Dawn Wall* after 19 days, one of the hardest climbs in the world.

**21 2017**

Alex Honnold completes the first free solo of El Capitan via *Freerider* in 3 hours and 56 minutes.

*Camp 4: Recollections of a Yosemite Rock Climber*, containing stories and photos of the cutting-edge climbers, Royal Robbins, Tom Frost, Jim Bridwell.

Camp 4 is in film too, with movies that date back to the '70s, such as *Free Climb: The Northwest Face of Half Dome*, narrated by Robert Redford. In recent years the documentary *Valley Uprising* (2014) brought the story of Camp 4 and its characters to the mainstream.

And it's where fashion trends started, as seen in GQ's "Meet the California Crew That Brought Sex, Drugs, and Free Jazz to Rock Climbing—and Made it the Most Stylish Sport of the 1970s." It's also been a place of lawlessness, as seen in *Valley Uprising*.

### CAMP 4 THREATENED

On January 2, 1997, warm, heavy winter rains caused the Merced River to swell, eventually reaching flows of more than 10,000 cubic feet per second. The result was catastrophic: the largest flood in Yosemite's recorded history destroyed trails, roads, bridges, sewers, historic structures, campgrounds, and employee housing, eventually closing the park for two and a half months. In response to the destroyed employee housing, the park concessionaire drafted a plan to uproot Camp 4 in order to install a new, three-story employee dormitory at the site.

Upon learning of the Park's intent to bulldoze the evolutionary center of rock climbing, Tom Frost—a Golden Era climber who, more than 30 years earlier, made first ascents of both the Salathé Wall and North America Wall on El Cap—took up the fight. Frost discovered that the Camp 4 demolition and dormitory plans had neglected crucial environmental reviews—in addition to threatening a living symbol of American climbing.

Joined by 1980s Yosemite climber John Middendorf, Frost started rabbleroxing. They wrote impassioned letters to the Park and encouraged climbers and alpine clubs around the world to do the same. The letters poured in. Climbers everywhere argued that Camp 4 was one of the most iconic basecamps on earth, its legacy akin to that of Everest's Base Camp or the historic climbers' camps of Chamonix. Camp 4 could not be destroyed, and climbers everywhere would make their voices heard.

With the American Alpine Club's support, Frost and his motley crew hired lawyer Dick Duane and started a coup. Together, and representing climbers worldwide, they filed a lawsuit against the National Park Service to stop the construction from moving forward and to save Camp 4. Frost personally financed the entire endeavor.

When I asked him about the significance of the suit, Duane told me, "When you're in Camp 4, you feel you are inside the spirit of something you cherish; you can't define it until you get there and it requires a certain amount of leeway and understanding. It has to be kept alive by people that are on the edge."

By 1999, Camp 4 was safe from encroaching dormitories. In the litigious years after the flood, climbers developed a new understanding with the National Park Service, with whom they'd historically clashed. After the

lawsuit, climbers and the park service met at the West Auditorium. There, climbers like Royal Robbins and Hans Florine shared what Camp 4, the "Center of the Universe" and the edge of American climbing culture, meant to them.

In 2003, with support from the AAC, the U.S. Department of the Interior placed a plaque in the center of Camp 4 declaring its inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places "because of its nationally significant role in the development of rock climbing as a sport."

### CAMP 4 TODAY

While the spirit of the place remains the same, Camp 4 is also growing and changing. Its parking lot has doubled in size, new campsites are being built, and a shower house (a first for the area) is being constructed on the east side, over by Swan Slab. In a nod to the Valley's original inhabitants, there are also plans for a spiritual roundhouse on the west side of the camp.

While construction zones go up, one thing that remains is a small collection of tent cabins in the back of Camp 4 belonging to Yosemite's Search and Rescue (YOSAR) team. Wayne Merry, who completed *The Nose* with Harding, started YOSAR as a solution for the Park Service, which was encountering an ever-greater number of high-angle rescues. Soon, the technically masterful, hard-living Jim "The Bird" Bridwell joined; he was the bridge between the Golden Age and the Stone Masters age. Today, YOSAR housing serves as a way for Yosemite's most committed climbers to live in Camp 4 season after season—so long as they are on call to help in emergencies.

Today's Camp 4 isn't the lawless place it once was. Climbing has changed, and thus climbers aren't on the fringe, as they once were. "It's a lot tamer than days of old," says climbing historian and longtime local Ken Yager. Yager is the founder of the yearly volunteer cleanup effort called Yosemite Facelift. His work has contributed to the removal of one million pounds of trash from Yosemite. The Facelift continues to improve the relationship between the climbing community and park service.

Additionally, during peak season, climbing rangers meet with climbers once a week in the center of Camp 4 for a program dubbed Climber Coffee. The meet-up is for discussing current events in the park, stewardship opportunities, and Q&A. The American Alpine Club and Hood River Roasters sponsor the event.

A walk-through of Camp 4 today feels, in many ways, like it has for decades. Incense cedars hang over giant boulders, the rock dotted with climbing chalk. There's still a ragtag of tents scattered about. And people still show up in droves to experience the beauty and magic of the area.

Camp 4 remains. It's weathered the storms. And its spirit lives on.

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Chris Van Leuven is a climber, writer, and guidebook author from Marin, California. In 2016, his work was selected for "Best American Sports Writing." You can get in touch with Chris and read more of his articles at [facebook.com/writerchrisvanleuven](https://facebook.com/writerchrisvanleuven)

# ALL ELSE FADES

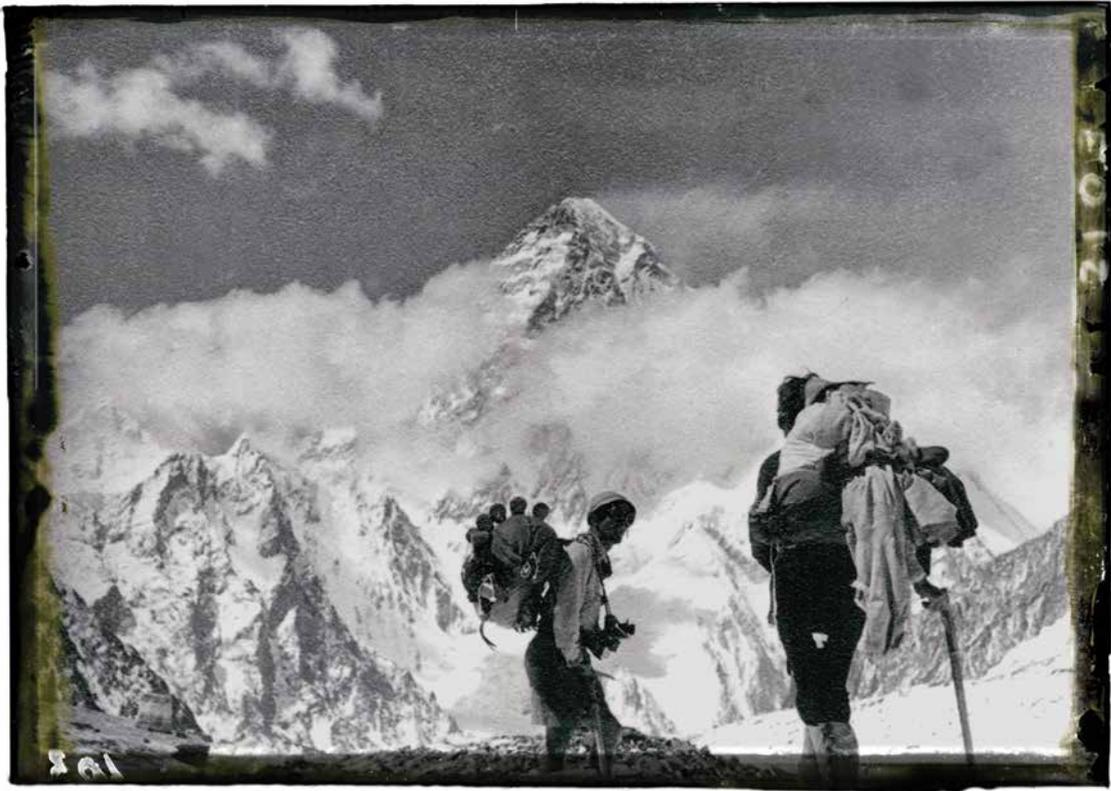
## SUUNTO 5

One step, one stroke, one revolution, repeat. The world around you disappears. Suunto 5 is built for these moments. It is engineered to perform with you for as long as you need it to. A compact GPS sports watch with great battery life.

[suunto.com](http://suunto.com)



  
**SUUNTO**



# REWIND THE CLIMB

## The Tragedy of the 1939 American K2 Expedition

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BY JEFF DEIKIS, PHOTOGRAPHY FROM THE JACK DURRANCE COLLECTION

The American Alpine Club has long held the responsibility of preserving America's climbing history. The *American Alpine Journal*, published since 1929, remains the world's most comprehensive source of information on major new climbs, while the Club's Library & Museum house the world's finest collection of mountain-related artifacts, archives, rare books, maps, and media. It is only through the support of the climbing community that our stories, legacies, and lessons remain. **United We Climb.**

**I**n 1937, the world's 8,000m peaks remained unclimbed. At the American Alpine Club meeting in New York City that year, members Charlie Houston and Fritz Wiessner—preeminent climbers at the time—pitched the idea for an American attempt of the world's second highest summit, K2, located in Pakistan's Karakoram.

With the AAC's support, Houston led a successful reconnaissance expedition of the peak in 1938, exploring the route up the Abruzzi Ridge, locating sites for a high camp, and identifying the crux of the climb—*House's Chimney*, a 100-foot-tall crack in a rock wall hanging at 21,500 feet. A clear route to the summit unlocked, he left the first ascent for Wiessner to tag the following year.

However, in the fall of 1938, the United States was in a crippling economic recession, and the prospects of obtaining funding for a mountaineering expedition were grim. Wiessner was forced to choose a team of individuals who could afford to pay their own expenses, rather than those who held the necessary skills and experience. Tony Cromwell, a fair-weather climber with no leadership experience, was appointed Deputy. Undeterred, in 1939, Wiessner returned to the Karakoram with a team of six Americans and nine Sherpas, intent on reaching the summit of what would later be known as the world's deadliest peak.

Despite high-altitude storms, hurricane-force winds, and sub-arctic temperatures, Wiessner and Sherpa Pasang Dawa Lama managed to reach 27,450 feet with only an 800-foot snow crossing barring them from the summit. Unfortunately, they had run out of daylight. While Wiessner wished to continue through the night, Pasang Lama refused, and they agreed to turn back.

Unbeknown to the summit team, a number of miscommunications had crippled the supply chain beneath them—food and fuel had not been ushered up the mountain according to plan, and the high camps had been evacuated. An exhausted Wiessner and Pasang Lama returned to Camp VIII to find it barren, save for frostbitten team member Dudley Wolfe, who—horrifically—had been abandoned when his companions decided to descend without him. Wolfe had been left alone with no food, no fuel, and no drinking water.

In bad shape, and with no food or sleeping bags of their own (they had lost them during the summit push), Wiessner and Pasang Lama promised Wolfe they would return and continued down the mountain, delirious. On July 24, they stumbled into Camp II, hardly able to walk, to find the rest of the team, along with hired Sherpas, lounging at lower altitude. Drama ensued. Wiessner, furious, accused Deputy Team Leader Cromwell—who had ordered the high camps cleared of supplies—of attempted murder. Wolfe, meanwhile, remained on the mountain, huddled alone at 24,000 feet with no food or water. Nine days passed.

On the second of three rescue attempts, three Sherpas managed to reach Wolfe, but he was (likely) out of his mind and refused to descend. Two days later, the Sherpa rescue team again attempted to retrieve Wolfe but were never seen or heard from again. A fourth and final rescue effort was abandoned, and the four missing climbers were left for dead.

Following the return to America—and for the next 50 years—there was considerable resentment among the surviving team members. Blame for the disaster was directed and redirected several times before finally coming to rest in 1989 when Jack Durrance, a member of the ill-fated expedition, made his diary public. Durrance's account attributed the failings to both Cromwell's lack of experience and Wiessner's poor planning.

While the incident has been described as one of the worst climbing tragedies in the Himalaya, it was very nearly a success. It has been noted by author Jim Curran in *K2: Triumph and Tragedy* that had Wiessner chosen an easier route, such as the *Bottleneck Couloir*, they likely would have summited and returned to camp with Sherpas and equipment still waiting for them. In this scenario, Wiessner and Pasang Lama would have become the first people in history to climb an 8,000m peak—and they would have done so without supplemental oxygen.

.....  
An Italian team led by Ardito Desio finally bagged the first ascent of K2 15 years later. In 1958, Americans made their 8,000m mark with the summit of Gasherbrum I (Hidden Peak)—led by AAC Past President Nick Clinch—(see photos from this expedition on page 61). You can read Fritz Wiessner's 1940 *American Alpine Journal* article on K2 at [publications.americanalpineclub.org](https://publications.americanalpineclub.org) and discover curated historical exhibits at [americanalpineclub.org/explore](https://americanalpineclub.org/explore).



# BETA

Membership has its benefits. From discounts on major outdoor gear brands to international rescue benefits, from the *American Alpine Journal* to the Live Your Dream grant, here at the AAC we look out for each other. Read on to discover how to utilize your membership benefits, connect with your local community and volunteer efforts, and learn more about the dedicated work the Club does around the country for the good of all climbers. **United We Climb.**

📍 Lonnie Kauk seeks solitude in Tuolumne Meadows, Yosemite National Park, CA. (Western Mono/Monache, Central Sierra Miwok lands) AAC member Christian Pondella 📷 @christianpondella





Tom Coney on the Taschhorn - Dom traverse, Switzerland. AAC member Ben Tibbets [@bentibbetsphotography](#)

# ANNUAL REPORT

**When I started climbing**, our craft was relatively obscure. While guidebooks existed and many great lines had been climbed, every outing felt like an adventure and most routes felt like new ones. More importantly, climbing wasn't a part of the American psyche. Climbing today is not the counterculture activity it was. That's a change I'm grateful for.

In the last few decades—especially in the past year—we've seen a major shift. Now, climbing is the subject of popular documentary films. There's a gym in most cities, and millions of Americans have experienced what it's like to tie in or make moves over a bouldering pad. This year, not only has the American Alpine Club grown significantly, but we've also seen growth in most forms of climbing. I am struck most by the quality of that growth. We're working hard to build a Club that reflects the climbing community.

There are now 75 AAC chapters, each doing work that matters locally, across the United States. As a result, our network shares the climbing craft and lifestyle with others—and, in turn, ensures that local climbing environments are cared for. Our membership, too, continues to evolve. For years now, we've seen more women join the AAC than men. We've still got a long way to go toward equity, but we're working to grow our diverse membership.

As our network of volunteers and members grow, the AAC's education team is hard at work supporting your goals with increased infrastructure and high-quality programming. We have also made significant headway in our national

policy efforts. We're particularly proud of two of our policy and advocacy efforts, Climb the Hill, and its in-the-field counterpart, Hill to Crag. Our next challenge will be to fund growth in our policy department so we can better support the obstacles climbers face at the state and local levels.

It is crucial that we align our work with the climbing community's needs and its changing character. Our values continue to guide us while we evolve. These days, we're continuing some of our traditional efforts while also changing with the times. The American Alpine Journal is better than ever, and our stories reaching a larger audience (over 425,000) via podcasts. Our iconic Annual Benefit Dinner continues to be a beloved event, and the Craggin' Classic series reaches 3,600 climbers across the country. We can't wait to see how those programs continue to evolve this year and beyond.

The AAC continues to deliver valuable information, advocate for climbers' interests, and promote competency at every level. Now and in the future, you can also count on the AAC to deliver on these values with the innovation necessary to match our changing world.

Sincerely,



Phil Powers  
CEO

**60 x 60**  
United 60 climbers with 60 legislators in Washington D.C.

**\$26,468**  
Dollars awarded in conservation and scientific research grants

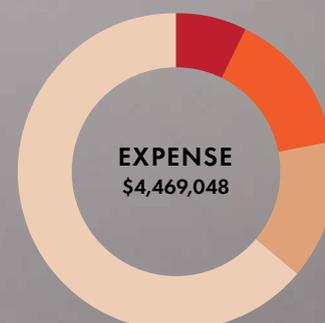
**3,516**  
Climbers gathered across the country at our Craggin' Classics

**\$134,050**  
Dollars awarded in climbing grants for trips and expeditions

**23,418**  
Nights spent under the stars at one of the AAC's 6 campgrounds



- Contributions & Grants
- Membership Dues
- Programs & Events
- Other



- General & Admin
- Fundraising
- Membership Services
- Programs

## MEMBERSHIP

Together, we share a passion for climbing. When you join the AAC, you're part of a community that's making a big difference. We support each other with rescue coverage, publications, discounts, critical lodging facilities, conservation projects, advocacy, education, grants, and more. Join the community today through the AAC's tiered membership options:

### Regular: \$85/year

Our most popular plan.

### Student: \$50/year

Must be currently enrolled at an accredited institution.

### Military: \$50/year

Must be either active duty, veteran, reservist, or military retiree.

### Family: \$85 for first adult, \$65 for second; \$30 for each child

All members receive full benefits, but we send only one set of publications.

### Introductory: \$45/six months

First-time members only. Plan automatically renews at \$85/year upon expiration.

📍 To learn more and to join the Club, visit [membership.americanalpineclub.org/join](https://membership.americanalpineclub.org/join) or call (303) 384-0110 and press 0.

## CONNECT

### Member Profile

By visiting your online profile at [profile.americanalpineclub.org](https://profile.americanalpineclub.org), you can:

- ✓ access your exclusive discounts and benefits
- ✓ access your digital membership card and proof of membership
- ✓ donate to the Club
- ✓ update your account settings

### Social Media

- 📘 [facebook.com/americanalpineclub](https://facebook.com/americanalpineclub)
- 📷 [instagram.com/americanalpine](https://instagram.com/americanalpine)
- 🐦 [twitter.com/americanalpine](https://twitter.com/americanalpine)
- 📺 [youtube.com/AmericanAlpineClub](https://youtube.com/AmericanAlpineClub)

## GET INVOLVED

Volunteers are the backbone and lifeblood of the American Alpine Club. Since the Club's founding, volunteerism has guided every major idea, decision, effort, and achievement. We are an organization founded, influenced, and supported by dedicated and competent volunteer leaders.

AAC volunteers help to carry the fire, working on a grassroots level in climbing communities around the country connecting members through events, film showings, crag stewardship, and education initiatives. AAC volunteers preside over the Board of Directors, organize crag stewardship projects, host community gatherings, sit on grant selection committees, contribute to the *AAJ* and *ANAC*, pour beers at events, and more!

To learn more about Club volunteer opportunities, visit [americanalpineclub.org/volunteer](https://americanalpineclub.org/volunteer) and get connected!



### Club Sections & Chapters

Sections are geographical areas—states or groups of states—that organize members based on regional location. Chapters are smaller, more localized organizations within the American Alpine Club, and operate at a truly grassroots level in communities nationwide. Sections and Chapters work separately and collectively to connect climbers through social functions, climbing outings, film showings, educational events, and more.

If you'd like to learn more about AAC Section and Chapter activities in your area, including local events and volunteer opportunities, locate your Section/Chapter page through [americanalpineclub.org/regions](https://americanalpineclub.org/regions) and contact your local Section/Chapter Chair.

### 2019 Club Section Listing:

Alaska	New England
S. Appalachian	New Mexico
Arizona	New York
Cascade	North Central
Deep South	Oregon
Front Range	Sierra Nevada
Great Lakes	Southwest
Hawaii	Texas
Heartland	Utah
Idaho	Washington D.C.
Mid-Atlantic	Western Slope
Midwest	Wyoming
Montana	

### 2019 Club Chapter Listing:

Arkansas, AR	Sandhills, NC
Asheville, NC	New Hampshire
Atlanta, GA	New York City, NY
Austin, TX	N. New Jersey
Baltimore, MD	Northern VA
Bend, OR	Northern Texas
Boone, NC	Oklahoma City, OK
Boston, MA	Philadelphia, PA
Boulder, CO	Phoenix, AZ
Bozeman, MT	Pittsburgh, PA
Brooklyn, NY	Richmond, VA
Central PA	Sacramento, CA
Charleston, SC	San Diego, CA
Charlotte, NC	San Francisco, CA
Chattanooga, TN	Sawtooth, ID
Chicago, IL	SE Michigan
Colo. Springs, CO	Seneca Rocks, WV
Columbia, SC	Salt Lake, UT
Delaware Chapter	San Jose, CA
D.C. University	Seattle, WA
Denver, CO	SC Highlands
Durango, CO	Tahoe, CA
Flagstaff, AZ	Triad, NC
Gunks, NY	Triangle, NC
Los Angeles, CA	Tucson, AZ
Los Padres, CA	Tulsa, OK
Miami, FL	Twin Cities, MN
North Texas	West Michigan

### Don't have a Chapter in your area?

Would you like to start one? To learn more and to get involved, email Volunteer Program Manager Eddie Espinosa at [eespinosa@americanalpineclub.org](mailto:eespinosa@americanalpineclub.org).



Andrew Burr @andrew\_burr



Forest Woodward @forestwoodward



Jeremiah Watt @miahwatt



Forest Woodward @forestwoodward

## SUPPORT THE CLUB

Your tax-deductible gift to the American Alpine Club helps members and volunteers pursue the mission and core programs of the Club. From conservation to competency, your donation will work to protect the climbing experience for years to come. Options for giving include a one-time gift, monthly giving, matched gift, stock donation, planned gifts, or a Great Ranges Fellowship contribution.

Visit [americanalpineclub.org/ways-to-give](https://americanalpineclub.org/ways-to-give) or email us at [give@americanalpineclub.org](mailto:give@americanalpineclub.org) to donate or learn more about your preferred method of support.

### Piolet Society

The Piolet Society honors the extraordinary donors whose estate-giving solidifies their commitment to the climbing community, our wild places, and the sustainability of the American Alpine Club. Most estate gifts come as a bequest through a will or living trust, or as a beneficiary designation of an IRA or life insurance policy. Each of these options allows you to retain full control of your assets during life. Through the Piolet Society, you can leave a legacy as timeless as the mountains themselves.

For more information about charitable estate planning, or to join the Piolet Society, please contact us at (303) 384-0110 or [give@americanalpineclub.org](mailto:give@americanalpineclub.org).

### Great Ranges Fellowship

The Great Ranges Fellowship (GRF) brings together our donor-members with exclusive events and trips, “insider” communications, improved benefits, and special access to the AAC team. At the AAC, we value every gift—no matter its size. In recognition of our most generous donors, we’ve created this program.

The GRF provides consistent benefits, recognition, and communication to donors at various levels. Most gifts qualify toward annual membership in the GRF including those directed toward key operating programs such as the *American Alpine Journal*, *Accidents in North American Climbing*, the American Alpine Club Library, the Grand Teton Climbers’ Ranch, and grant programs.

The GRF program does not include Corporate Partners, Media Partners, or fiduciary programs such as expedition support.

① Learn more at [americanalpineclub.org/great-ranges-fellowship](https://americanalpineclub.org/great-ranges-fellowship).

#### GRF membership levels include:

##### Teewinot Fellow: \$1,000

- ✓ One-year AAC Membership (beginning at your current expiration date)
- ✓ Exclusive Great Ranges Fellowship gear
- ✓ VIP invitations to a variety of events and climbing trips in your area and around the nation
- ✓ Recognition in the *Guidebook to Membership*
- ✓ One-year subscription to *Alpinist* magazine
- ✓ Insider communication regarding key Club issues

##### Robson Fellow: \$2,500

- ✓ All the benefits of a Teewinot Fellow, plus:
- ✓ A special hardcover edition of the *American Alpine Journal*
- ✓ A one-week stay for two people at an AAC campground

##### Alpamayo Fellow: \$5,000

- ✓ All the benefits of a Robson Fellow, plus:
- ✓ Two one-year AAC gift memberships to share with your friends and family
- ✓ Two weekend passes & clinic registrations for a Craggin’ Classic of your choice

##### Eiger Fellow: \$10,000

- ✓ All the benefits of a Alpamayo Fellow, plus:
- ✓ Two additional (four total) one-year AAC gift memberships to share with your friends and family
- ✓ One-year Global Rescue International Travel Membership trip voucher (restrictions apply)
- ✓ VIP table for six at the Annual Benefit Dinner



📷 Zac Robinson styles up *North Six Shooter* in Indian Creek, UT. (Ute, Diné, Ancestral Puebloan lands) AAC member Andrew Burr 📷 @andrew\_burr

## EVENTS

The AAC brings our community together at hundreds of events throughout the year, from the Annual Benefit Dinner Weekend, which attracts members from across the country, to locally organized section dinners and more. AAC members enjoy discounted access to most events.



© Bryan Miller @fixedlinemedia



© Kevin Umball

### Craggin' Classic Series

POWERED BY: **CAMP**

The Craggin' Classic series unites climbers around the campfire at world-class climbing destinations nationwide. Each fall, these festivals combine clinics to promote competency with stewardship projects to keep our climbing areas healthy. But most of all, they are an opportunity to hang out and climb with your local community.

#### 2019 Series Lineup:

- Smith Rock, OR.....Sept. 13-15
- New River Gorge, WV.....Sept. 20-22
- Rumney, NH.....Sept. 27-29
- Devil's Lake, WI ..... Oct. 11-13
- Shelf Road, CO..... Oct. 18-20
- Moab, UT..... Oct. 25-27
- Bishop, CA.....Nov. 1-3

### Climb the Hill

The American Alpine Club and Access Fund are teaming up again to represent climbers in Washington D.C. for our annual Climb the Hill event. This September, we will meet with members of Congress and agency officials to advocate for the protection of public lands, to support outdoor recreation, and to improve climbing management policies.

➤ Washington, D.C. .... TBD 2020

### Excellence in Climbing Celebration

A community gathering in the home of the American Alpine Club complete with carnival games, tours of the American Mountaineering Museum, an Open Air Vendor Village, food trucks and local beverages — the Excellence in Climbing Celebration has something for everyone! The highlight is inducting inspirational climbing heroes into the Hall of Mountaineering Excellence (H.o.M.E.). The 2019 honorees are Ken Yager for his conservation work in Yosemite and Laura Waterman for her writing and conservation work.

➤ Golden, CO ..... TBD 2020

### International Climbers' Meet

Spend a week climbing and dining in the country's most iconic climbing destination, Yosemite Valley, with climbers from every corner of the globe. ICM participants have the opportunity to participate in clinics and conservation projects, all while sharing a rope with partners from around the world. For information on how to apply, visit [americanalpineclub.org/international-climbers-meet](http://americanalpineclub.org/international-climbers-meet).

➤ Yosemite NP, CA ..... Oct. 13-19, 2019



### Hueco Rock Rodeo

Test out your skills against fellow boulderers in the country's premier bouldering comp. The fun doesn't stop there! The weekend is jam-packed with clinics taught by professional athletes, stewardship projects,

dance parties, karaoke, dyno comp, gear demos, food, films, music, bonfires, raffles, and good times with great people! To round out the weekend, we will be hosting a fireside chat about engagement in climbing, an artists' market, interactive art projects, and a silent auction full of great deals!

Rodeo staff work closely with Hueco Tanks State Park and Historic Site and Climbers of Hueco Tanks Coalition to ensure respect to this historic and delicate desert area.

➤ El Paso, TX ..... February 14-16, 2020



© Jim Aikman @jimaiman

### Annual Benefit Dinner

Each year, AAC members, athletes, and industry leaders gather to raise a glass in celebration of the AAC community and help to raise funds to support AAC programs, conservation, and climber education. The 2020 Annual Benefit Weekend features keynote speaker Kris Tompkins and is packed with a pre-party at the local gym, presentations from the stars of climbing, cocktail reception, gala, an auction packed full of great deals, and more.

➤ Denver, CO ..... March 14, 2020

### Section Dinners, Chapter Gatherings, & More

Each year, the AAC and Club Volunteers host hundreds of events all around the country. Stay up to date on other local happenings—including section dinners, presentations, movie nights, and more—by keeping an eye on your section emails and the AAC events calendar at [americanalpineclub.org/aac-events](http://americanalpineclub.org/aac-events).

## DISCOUNTS

AAC members enjoy discounts on gear, lodging, gym memberships, guide services, and more.\* For the most up-to-date list of discounts, as well as information on how to redeem your discount, log in to your profile at [profile.americanalpineclub.org](http://profile.americanalpineclub.org) and visit the members-only discount section.

### Featured Discounts\*

 <b>FIVE TEN</b> .....	40% off
 <b>the AMERICAN ALPINE club</b> .....	20% off, AAC Store
 <b>TERREX</b> .....	40% off
 <b>backcountry.com</b> .....	15% off, w/ restrictions
 .....	40% off
 .....	20% off
 <b>Black Diamond</b> .....	20% off
 <b>CAMP</b> .....	25% off, Camp Outlet
 <b>cotopaxi</b> .....	25% off
 <b>FRICTIONLABS</b> .....	48% off
 <b>FJALL RAVEN</b> .....	20% off
 <b>KAYU</b> .....	50% off
 <b>MOUNTAIN HARD WEAR</b> .....	20% off
 <b>OR OUTDOOR RESEARCH</b> .....	40% off
 <b>patagonia</b> .....	20% off
 <b>prAna</b> .....	15% off
 <b>PRO BAR</b> .....	40% off
 <b>Rab</b> .....	20% off
 <b>SIERRA DESIGNS</b> .....	40% off
 <b>SUUNTO</b> .....	30% off
 <b>STERLING</b> .....	15% off

### In-store Discounts\*

In-store discounts are limited to certain locations. For detailed information, visit the Discounts page of your online profile at [profile.americanalpineclub.org](http://profile.americanalpineclub.org).

- Feathered Friends
- Ibex
- Second Ascent
- The Mountain Shop
- Down Wind Sports
- Rockwerx
- Rock and Snow
- GreenLife Adventure Sports
- Anvil Crash Pad Rentals

## ExpertVoice

AAC members also have access to discounts on over 300 more brands through [expertvoice.com](http://expertvoice.com). To join the AAC's ExpertVoice team, follow the instructions detailed on the Gear Discounts page of your online profile at [profile.americanalpineclub.org](http://profile.americanalpineclub.org). Discounts include:

Backcountry Access .....	30% off	Mammut .....	40% off
Beal Ropes .....	35% off	Merrell .....	40% off
Deuter .....	45% off	Native Eyewear.....	40% off
Diamondback Bicycles..	30% off	Nemo Equipment.....	40% off
Edelweiss Ropes.....	35% off	Nuun.....	40% off
Faction Skis .....	40% off	Power Bar .....	40% off
Goal Zero .....	40% off	Raleigh Bikes.....	45% off
Gregory .....	40% off	Reef.....	50% off
Grivel .....	35% off	Salewa .....	45% off
Hestra .....	40% off	SmartWool.....	30% off
Hydro Flask .....	30% off	Suncloud Optics .....	50% off
Icelandic Skis .....	30% off	Trango .....	40% off
Jaybird .....	35% off	Yakima.....	40% off
La Sportiva .....	40% off	Zeal .....	40% off

### Magazine Discounts\*

<b>Alpinist</b> .....	1 yr (4 issues): \$29.95; 2 yrs (8 issues): \$54.95
<b>ROCK</b> .....	1 yr (8 issues): \$19.99
<b>Climbing</b> .....	1 yr (10 issues): \$12.95
 <b>CLIMBING ZINE</b> .....	1 yr (2 issues): \$13.98
<b>BACKPACKER</b> .....	1 yr (9 issues): \$9.99
<b>Backcountry</b> .....	1yr (6 issues): \$29.95

\*Discounts are subject to change and restrictions may apply. Though we try to provide you with accurate information, we cannot guarantee you will receive the discount rates listed here or on our website.



📷 AAC member Drew Smith @\_drew\_smith\_

**Gym Discounts \***

10% – 15% off membership

**Boulder Rock Club**

*Boulder, CO*

- ① \$64/month on ARB; \$710/year
- ① Members save up to \$160/year

**Climb Nashville**

*Nashville, TN*

- ① 10% off monthly membership
- ① Members save up to \$90/year

**Edgeworks Climbing**

*Tacoma, WA*

- ① 50% off initiation fee, 10% off individual monthly rate
- ① Members save up to \$52/year

**Granite Arch**

*Rancho Cordova, CA*

- ① \$45 monthly pass
- ① Members save up to \$108/year

**Green Mountain Rock Climbing Center**

*Rutland, VT; Hartland, VT*

- ① 10% off annual pass; 10% off monthly pass; 10% off day pass; 10% off guided trips
- ① Members save up to \$54/year

**Phoenix Rock Gym**

*Tempe, AZ*

- ① 10% off two-week pass; 10% off monthly pass; 10% off semi-annual pass; 10% off annual pass
- ① Members save up to \$45/year

**Rock'n & Jam'n**

*Thornton, CO; Centennial, CO*

- ① 10% off day pass; 10% off monthly pass; 10% off paid-in-full memberships
- ① Members save up to \$70/year

**RocVentures Indoor Climbing Area**

*Rochester, NY*

- ① \$13 day pass; \$45 monthly membership
- ① Members save up to \$60/year

**Salt Pump Climbing Company**

*Scarborough, ME*

- ① 10% off day pass; 10% off punch cards; 10% off membership
- ① Members save up to \$82/year

**Seattle Bouldering Project**

*Seattle, WA*

- ① 10% off monthly membership; \$10 day pass during Send and Social events
- ① Members save up to \$90/year

**Stone Summit**

*Atlanta, GA; Kennesaw, GA*

- ① 10% off all options
- ① Members save up to \$66/year

**Vertical Hold**

*San Diego, CA*

- ① 10% off day use, memberships, and services
- ① Members save up to \$70/year

15% – 20% off membership

**Brooklyn Boulders**

*Brooklyn, NY; Long Island City, NY; Chicago, IL; Somerville, MA*

- ① Initiation fee waived; 15% off membership, \$25 day pass with gear
- ① Members save up to \$270/year

**Petra Cliffs**

*Burlington, VT*

- ① Initiation fee waived; 20% off monthly pass; 20% off day pass; first visit free
- ① Members save up to \$192/year

**Rock Fitness Gym**

*Wildomar, CA*

- ① Initiation fee waived; 20% off monthly membership, 20% off day pass
- ① Members save \$132/year

**Rock Spot Climbing**

*Lincoln, RI; South Kingston, RI; Boston, MA*

- ① Waived activation fee and student price on monthly memberships
- ① Members save \$120/year

Over 20% off membership

**Hangar 18**

*Hawthorne, CA; Riverside, CA; Upland, CA*

- ① \$10 day & \$33 monthly pass
- ① Members save up to \$156/year

**Rocknasium**

*Davis, CA*

- ① \$13 day pass; \$45 monthly pass; \$495 annual pass
- ① Members save up to \$110/year

Don't see your local gym listed?

\*Gym Discounts are subject to change. We do our best to provide you with the most up-to-date discounts, but contact your specific facility for the most recent information.

Recommend a partnership with the American Alpine Club to your gym next time you visit!

### Guide Services Discounts\*

Traveling and need a partner with all the beta? The AAC partners with the following guide services to offer discounts on instruction and guided trips both in the U.S. and abroad:

- ➔ Alaska Mountain Guides and Climbing School
- ➔ Alaska Mountaineering School
- ➔ Alpine Ascents International
- ➔ Alpine Skills International
- ➔ Alpine World Ascents
- ➔ American Alpine Institute
- ➔ Chicks with Picks
- ➔ The Climbing Life Guides
- ➔ Colorado Mountain School
- ➔ Denver Mountain Guiding
- ➔ Devil's Lake Climbing Guides
- ➔ Erratic Rock
- ➔ Exum Mountain Guides
- ➔ Fox Mountain Guides
- ➔ High Peaks Mountain Guides
- ➔ International Mountain Guides
- ➔ Jackson Hole Mountain Guides
- ➔ Kingdom Adventures Mountain Guides
- ➔ Longleaf Wilderness Medicine
- ➔ Mountain Gurus
- ➔ Mountain Madness
- ➔ New River Mountain Guides
- ➔ Northeast Mountaineering
- ➔ Northwest Alpine Guides
- ➔ Northwest Mountain School
- ➔ San Juan Mountain Guides
- ➔ Southwest Adventure Guides
- ➔ Thomson Kilimanjaro Treks & Wildlife Safaris
- ➔ Vertical Medicine Resources

For specifics on discounts offered and more information on the guide services that support us, visit [americanalpineclub.org/guides](http://americanalpineclub.org/guides).

### Hut Discounts\*

AAC members enjoy discounted access at huts owned and operated by alpine clubs around the globe, including the UIAA huts in Europe, the New Zealand Alpine Club's huts, and the Alpine Club of Canada's huts.

AAC members are automatically eligible for the same rate as New Zealand Alpine Club and Alpine Club of Canada members

at most huts in New Zealand and Canada. AAC members may choose to purchase a hut stamp for UIAA huts in Europe, where rates vary by country. To learn how to purchase hut upgrades, visit [americanalpineclub.org/aac-lodging-network#huts](http://americanalpineclub.org/aac-lodging-network#huts).

### Domestic Lodging Discounts\*

AAC members enjoy discounted rates at several lodging establishments throughout the U.S. including:

<b>Hans's Basecamp</b> <i>Yosemite Nat'l Park, CA</i>	<b>Wexler Hut</b> <i>Seneca Rocks, WV</i>
<b>Appalachian Mountain Club Huts and Lodges</b> <i>Various: NH, ME, NJ</i>	<b>Bentwood Inn</b> <i>Wilson, WY</i>
<b>The Notch Hostel</b> <i>N. Woodstock, NH</i>	<b>The Alpine House</b> <i>Jackson, WY</i>
<b>High Peaks Mountain Guides, Guide House</b> <i>Lake Placid, NY</i>	<b>Devils Tower Lodge</b> <i>Devils Tower, WY</i>
<b>The Keene Farm</b> <i>Adirondack Forest Reserve; Keene, NY</i>	<b>Double Diamond X Ranch</b> <i>Cody, WY</i>
<b>Mazama Lodge</b> <i>Mt. Hood, OR</i>	<b>Turpin Meadow Ranch</b> <i>Moran, WY</i>
<b>The Crash Pad</b> <i>Chattanooga, TN</i>	<b>Hotel Engine</b> <i>Up to 60% off accommodations nationwide using <a href="http://hotelengine.com">hotelengine.com</a></i>

### International Lodging Discounts\*

Beyond our borders, Club members have additional options, including:

<b>Sorcerer Lodge</b> <i>Golden, BC, Canada</i>	<b>Refugio Cochamo</b> <i>Cochamo, Chile</i>
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① For more information on specific lodging discounts, visit [americanalpineclub.org/aac-lodging-network](http://americanalpineclub.org/aac-lodging-network).

\*Guide, Lodging, and Hut Discounts are all subject to change. We do our best to provide updated information, but please check with specific organizations to verify all rates.

📷 Bronson Hovnanian taking in the view at Sous Le Toit, Pitch 22 of *Freerider* (5.12d), during an attempt to free climb El Capitan, Yosemite National Park, CA. (Central Sierra Miwok land) AAC member Drew Smith @ [@drew\\_smith](https://twitter.com/drew_smith)

## AAC LODGING

The AAC is committed to building and maintaining facilities for climbers in popular climbing destinations across the country. Members enjoy reduced rates at these facilities. For information on additional lodging options, visit [americanalpineclub.org/aac-lodging-network](http://americanalpineclub.org/aac-lodging-network).



### 1 GRAND TETON CLIMBERS' RANCH

*Moose, WY*

Located just south of Jenny Lake and four miles north of Park Headquarters, the GTCR offers the most affordable and accessible lodging for climbers visiting Grand Teton National Park. Book your stay at [americanalpineclub.org/grand-teton-climbers-ranch](http://americanalpineclub.org/grand-teton-climbers-ranch).

### 2. GUNKS CAMPGROUND

*Gardiner, NY*

Located a short walk from the Trapps and Near Trapps. Includes 50 drive-in and walk-in campsites for visiting climbers. Book your stay at [americanalpineclub.org/gunks-campground](http://americanalpineclub.org/gunks-campground).

### 3. HUECO ROCK RANCH

*El Paso, TX*

Located just three miles from Hueco Tanks, the Ranch offers climbers both bunk-style accommodations and tent sites nearby some of the best bouldering on the planet. Book your stay at [americanalpineclub.org/hueco-rock-ranch](http://americanalpineclub.org/hueco-rock-ranch).

### 4. NEW RIVER GORGE CAMPGROUND

*Fayetteville, WV*

The AAC campground at the New River Gorge resides on a 40-acre parcel adjacent to National Park land and within walking distance of popular crags. Book your stay at [americanalpineclub.org/new-river-gorge-campground](http://americanalpineclub.org/new-river-gorge-campground).

### 5. RUMNEY RATTLESNAKE CAMPGROUND

*Rumney, NH*

The AAC's newest campground is located across the street from the main parking lot for Rumney Rocks, the best sport climbing in the Northeast. Tent sites and bunk-style accommodations are available. For more information, visit [americanalpineclub.org/rumney-rattlesnake-campground](http://americanalpineclub.org/rumney-rattlesnake-campground).

### 6. SNOWBIRD HUT

*Talkeetna Range, AK*

The Alaska Section's Snowbird Hut is beautifully situated in the Talkeetna Mountains on the northern edge of the Snowbird Glacier. The hut is open to the public at no cost. For more information, visit [americanalpineclub.org/snowbird-hut](http://americanalpineclub.org/snowbird-hut).



## RESCUE

AAC membership qualifies you for rescue benefits in case things go wrong during any human-powered, land-based activity beyond the trailhead. With up to \$12,500 available, we've got you covered.

In 2018, 37 members were rescued or received assistance thanks to the Trailhead Rescue Benefit. Learn more about your benefits below.

### Trailhead Rescue

- ✓ \$7,500 in global coverage, including the U.S.
- ✓ No elevation restriction

① To use the Trailhead Rescue Benefit, members must call **Global Rescue at (617) 459-4200** as soon as possible during an emergency.

### Domestic Rescue Benefit

- ✓ Up to 5,000 in reimbursement for out-of-pocket rescue expenses within the U.S. only—Canada and Mexico excluded
- ✓ Medical and ambulance expenses do not qualify
- ✓ Reimbursement subject to verification and approval

① File a claim within 60 days of rescue by emailing [claims@americanalpineclub.org](mailto:claims@americanalpineclub.org) or calling (303) 384-0110.

### Upgrade

AAC members may upgrade to a full Global Rescue membership at a 5% discount. Learn more at [americanalpineclub.org/rescue](http://americanalpineclub.org/rescue) or call 1-800-381-9571.

## PUBLICATIONS & PODCASTS

Print editions of the *American Alpine Journal* and *Accidents in North American Climbing* are delivered each summer as part of your membership. Digital copies are available anytime through your online profile.

Interested in researching the history of a route or expedition area? Have a story to

share? Want to catch up on past articles? To search any article ever published in the *AAJ* or *Accidents*, or to share your own story, visit [publications.americanalpineclub.org](http://publications.americanalpineclub.org).

① If you'd like to help the AAC save resources, you can opt out of receiving print copies by visiting your account settings at [profile.americanalpineclub.org](http://profile.americanalpineclub.org).



### American Alpine Journal

Published annually since 1929, the 368-page *American Alpine Journal* documents mountain exploration and the world's most significant

first ascents. With hundreds of first-person reports and photos, the *AAJ* provides an essential historical record and a feast of inspiration.



### Accidents in North American Climbing

*Accidents in North American Climbing* is a 128-page book that documents notable climbing and ski mountaineering accidents each year. In this keystone

of the Club's educational mission, climbers, rangers, rescue professionals, and editors analyze what went wrong so you can learn from others' mistakes.

### The Sharp End Podcast

POWERED BY:  MAMMUT

In 2016, *Accidents* launched the Sharp End podcast, hosted by Ashley Saupe and presented by Mammut. Each month, Ashley interviews a climber, ranger, or rescuer for stories about serious climbing and skiing accidents. Join the 40,000 people who listen to the Sharp End each month—find it wherever you listen to podcasts.

### The Cutting Edge Podcast

POWERED BY:  HILLEBERG  
THE TENTMAKER

The Cutting Edge podcast brings *AAJ* reports to life, featuring in-depth interviews with the world's greatest climbers. Each month an *AAJ* editor debriefs a climber just home from a cutting-edge expedition, highlighting the tactics, techniques, and epic moments of great new climbs. Hosted by *AAJ* editor in

chief Dougald MacDonald and presented by Hilleberg the Tentmaker.

## RESOURCES

### Library

The Henry S. Hall Jr. American Alpine Club Library provides you with all the information you could ever want on mountain culture, history, and climbing routes. Our staff and volunteers are happy to assist with research and trip planning in person or electronically. Our home base in Golden, CO, houses more than 50,000 books, maps and films, plus countless archives and is one of the world's finest mountain collections. Contact [library@americanalpineclub.org](mailto:library@americanalpineclub.org) for information.

### Bookmail

AAC members can borrow up to 10 items (5 max audiovisual items) at a time for 35 days. Books may be checked out online and sent anywhere in the U.S. You pay only for return shipping. Use our online Guidebook Finder map to check out the guidebook you need for your next trip at [americanalpineclub.org/guidebooks](http://americanalpineclub.org/guidebooks) or search the full catalog at [booksearch.americanalpineclub.org](http://booksearch.americanalpineclub.org).

### Explore

Explore is a community resource that shares the AAC's special and digital collections online and organizes them into exhibits, from the history of the Yeti to stories of desert climbing pioneers. Check out our digital collections and exhibits at [americanalpineclub.org/explore](http://americanalpineclub.org/explore).

### Museum

A joint venture of the American Alpine Club and Colorado Mountain Club, the Bradford Washburn American Mountaineering Museum in Golden, CO, is the only museum in the U.S. dedicated exclusively to mountaineering and rock climbing. The museum hosts rotating exhibits and showcases a scale model of Mt. Everest, the ice axe Pete Schoening used to save five falling climbers on K2 in 1953, and equipment from the first American ascent of Mt. Everest. Stop by to browse at your leisure, or join us for one of our many events. For information, visit [mountaineeringmuseum.org](http://mountaineeringmuseum.org).



## LEAVE A LEGACY

### Support Your American Alpine Club

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The American Alpine Club has united and supported climbers since 1902. By making a gift, you enable the Club to continue gathering our community for greater good, advocating for policies that benefit climbers and our vertical landscapes, and creating a better future for us and for the places we love.

For more information on how to support your Club, see page 45  
or visit [americanalpineclub.org/ways-to-give](https://americanalpineclub.org/ways-to-give).

📹 On July 5, 1958, AAC Past President Nick Clinch led an expedition up Gasherbaun I (Hidden Peak) in northeast Pakistan, helping Andrew Kauffman and Pete Schoening to the summit of the eleventh-tallest mountain in the world—the only 8,000-meter peak to see an American first ascent. A member of the AAC's Piolet Society, Clinch was also a legendary donor, and his gifts throughout the years have been crucial to the Club's success. *AAC member Nick Clinch*



**Jennifer Fischer**, of Boulder, CO, was awarded a \$1,000 Live Your Dream Grant to travel to Li Ming, China to establish first ascents with partner and mentor Kat Whipple. Sharing a love for offwidths, they chose to tackle a strikingly steep and varied wide crack line, not realizing the route would consume all of their time and energy for the remainder of the trip. After 10 days of effort, the cruxes unlocked, they were poised to send when severe flooding in the Sichuan province demanded an immediate evacuation. They left empty-handed but not discouraged.

"What this trip has shown me," Jennifer recalled, "is that I'm not just capable of first ascents, I'm ready for it and there's a legitimacy in my pursuits that I didn't realize I had before. I'm already planning China 2.0."

Check out a film covering Jennifer and Kat's trip to Li Ming China at [bit.ly/LYDfaraway](http://bit.ly/LYDfaraway).

📷 AAC member William Woodward @ @wheretowillie

## POLICY & ADVOCACY

The AAC was founded, and still exists, because the mountains hold great power. Climbers know that standing on a pristine summit and looking out across the vast unknown is a magical and life-changing experience. From Yosemite's sterling granite walls to the committing ocean cliffs of Acadia National Park, protected public lands are vitally important to our craft.

As a community, we have a responsibility to safeguard our fragile mountain and climbing environments and to protect access to them. Your policy team is working with partners, lawmakers, and agency leaders to address issues facing climbers and outdoor recreation—specifically keeping public lands public, adequately resourced, and open to human-powered recreation. Learn more about the AAC's public works at [americanalpineclub.org/conservation](http://americanalpineclub.org/conservation).

## EDUCATION

The AAC has been at the leading edge of climbing education since we began publishing *Accidents in North American Climbing* in 1948. Today our education team is focused on these objectives:

① **Train great instructors.** We're collaborating with regional clubs and volunteer climbing instructors to standardize our systems. As the member federation of the UIAA, the AAC is leading a coalition of volunteer climbing instructors to meet international training standards. Our goal is simple: if you teach climbing on a volunteer basis, we want to validate your hard work and provide resources so that the content you provide to the next generation of climbers is authentic, modern, and accurate.

② **Educate through media.** Our videos, online articles, and print articles tackle some of the most contagious misunderstandings in American climbing. We also promote ground-breaking research and researchers, help chapters create and refine educational resources and curricula, and are available to answer questions from any member about the lingering mysteries of best practice,

historic practice, and the wide variety and variation in between. If you've got a climbing question, we are here to help.

③ **Teach locally.** AAC's Education team is training your local chapters and equipping them with educators, innovators, and mentors. We want every AAC Chapter to instigate learning and inspire curiosity through localized and volunteer-based education. If you are a qualified climbing educator or think you could be a great educator with a little more training, AAC Education wants to recruit your help today.



 AAC member Jon Glassberg  @jonglassberg

### Universal Belay Program

The AAC's Universal Belay Program is designed to ensure you get a safe catch. The Universal Belay Certificate is currently available to anyone who verifies their belay skills to a licensed provider. After you have demonstrated your skills and competency, your Universal Belay card will arrive in the mail. For more information about our belay card, visit: [americanalpineclub.org/universal-belay-program](http://americanalpineclub.org/universal-belay-program). If you'd like to become a licensed provider, email AAC Education Director Ron Funderburke: [rfunderburke@americanalpineclub.org](mailto:rfunderburke@americanalpineclub.org).

## GRANTS

Each year, the AAC awards up to \$150,000 toward climbing, conservation, and research grants to help you realize your climbing dreams and to protect the places we play. Learn more about Club grant offerings at [americanalpineclub.org/grants](http://americanalpineclub.org/grants).

### CLIMBING & ADVENTURE GRANTS

From funding the first ascent of Mt. Logan in 1925 and the exploration of the Karakoram in 1938, to the 2006 first ascent of Nanga Parbat's Rupal Face, and countless expeditions and trips in between, we support climbers looking to push their limits.

#### Live Your Dream Grant

POWERED BY: 

The Live Your Dream grant is designed to help the everyday adventurer take their abilities to the next level. It is about personal progression and supporting one another. The purpose of this grant is to support unforgettable experiences—from bouldering to big walls, alpinism to ski mountaineering, peak bagging to bolt clipping and everything in between. Receive \$200–\$1,000 to jumpstart your next excursion. For more information, visit [americanalpineclub.org/live-your-dream-grant](http://americanalpineclub.org/live-your-dream-grant).

① Application period: Feb. 1–April 1

#### Cutting Edge Grant

Supports advanced, seasoned climbers undertaking high-level climbing and mountaineering objectives in remote areas, including unclimbed peaks, difficult new routes, first free ascents, or similar pursuits. Awards typically fall in the \$5,000 to \$15,000 range. Award amounts vary based on project. For more information, visit [americanalpineclub.org/cutting-edge-grant](http://americanalpineclub.org/cutting-edge-grant).

① Application period: Oct. 1–Nov. 30

#### Mountaineering Fellowship Grant

Started in 1966, Mountaineering Fellowship Grants have long encouraged American climbers age 25 years and younger to go into remote areas and seek out climbs more difficult than they might ordinarily be able to do. Unexplored mountain ranges, unclimbed peaks, and difficult new routes are looked

## CLIMBING GRANTS (CON'T)

upon with favor. Grants vary by project but typically range between \$300 and \$800 and help to cover travel, gear, or other expenses that you need to achieve your objective. For more information, visit [americanalpineclub.org/mffgrant](http://americanalpineclub.org/mffgrant).

⌚ Application period: Oct. 1–Nov. 30, 2019

### Jones Backcountry Adventure Grants

The Jones Backcountry Adventure Grant & Live Like Liz Award support multi-day splitboarding expeditions with exploratory and adventure components. The 2019 Jones Backcountry Adventure Grant offers \$1,500 plus a Jones splitboard, skins, and backpack; the Live Like Liz Award offers the same but is limited to women only. For more information, visit [americanalpineclub.org/jones-splitboarding-grants](http://americanalpineclub.org/jones-splitboarding-grants).

⌚ Application period: Oct. 1–Nov. 30, 2019

### Zack Martin Breaking Barriers Grant

The ZMBB grant is dual-purpose: it funds projects with a humanitarian primary objective as well as a secondary objective involving climbing. Humanitarian efforts should be sustainable and continue to provide benefits to local people after initial implementation. For more information, visit [americanalpineclub.org/zmbb](http://americanalpineclub.org/zmbb).

⌚ Application period: Spring 2020

### McNeill-Nott Award

POWERED BY:  MOUNTAIN HARD WEAR

The McNeill-Nott Award funds amateurs exploring new routes or unclimbed peaks in small, lightweight teams. The Award focuses on projects that have strong exploratory and adventuresome mountaineering objectives. Two or three grants totaling \$5,000 will be awarded annually. For more information, visit [americanalpineclub.org/mcneillnott](http://americanalpineclub.org/mcneillnott).

⌚ Application period: Oct. 1–Nov. 30, 2019

## CONSERVATION GRANTS

Conservation Grants help to ensure healthy climbing landscapes across the nation.

### Cornerstone Conservation Grant

POWERED BY:  REI

The Cornerstone Conservation Grant funds infrastructure projects spearheaded by local climbing organizations that protect and conserve climbing areas in the United States. Grants range from \$1,000 to \$8,000, depending on the size and scope of project. For more information, visit [americanalpineclub.org/cornerstone-conservation-grant](http://americanalpineclub.org/cornerstone-conservation-grant).

⌚ Application period: Spring 2020

### Anchor Replacement Fund

Launched in 2015, in partnership with the Access Fund, the Anchor Replacement Fund addresses the growing concerns of anchor failure and the access issues that could result from these incidents. Awarded to local climbing organizations and rebolting groups to keep our crags safe. For more information, visit [americanalpineclub.org/anchor-replacement-fund](http://americanalpineclub.org/anchor-replacement-fund).

⌚ Application period: Due Sept. 15

## RESEARCH GRANTS

Research Grants support scientific endeavors on mountains and crags around the world. This work contributes vital knowledge of our climbing environments, enriches our understanding of global climber impacts, and supports and improves the health and sustainability of mountain environments and habitats. AAC Research Grants are powered by the National Renewable Energy Lab and supported by Icebreaker and Kavu. For more information, visit [americanalpineclub.org/research-grants](http://americanalpineclub.org/research-grants).

⌚ Application period: Winter 2020



📹 Jon Morgan and Paul Conforth on the Kuffner Arete of Mont Maudit in the French/Italian Alps.  
AAC member Ben Tibbetts 📷 @bentibbettsphotography

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A leadership-giving membership for donors wishing to support American Alpine Club programs with \$1,000 or more annually, GRF members receive numerous insider perks. To learn more see page 45 or visit [americanalpineclub.org/great-ranges-fellowship](http://americanalpineclub.org/great-ranges-fellowship).

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📍 Auzie Gwinn sends *Ecstasy* (5.13a) in Pine Creek Canyon, Bishop, CA. (Northern Paiute, Eastern Mono/Monache, Newe lands) AAC member Ken Etzel @ken\_etzel

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The American Alpine Club is committed to supporting and inspiring everyone who loves climbing. The work we do has the endorsement, in the form of financial and in-kind support from a multitude of industry leaders. The money we raise each year from our Corporate Partners is essential to the core operations of the AAC: national and international advocacy and conservation work, publications like the *American Alpine Journal*, and events like the International Climbers' Meet, all of which keep the spirit of climbing thriving. Our Media Partners—magazines, websites, photographers, artists—provide essential in-kind support to improve and spread the AAC's message. **Thank you for supporting those who support us.**

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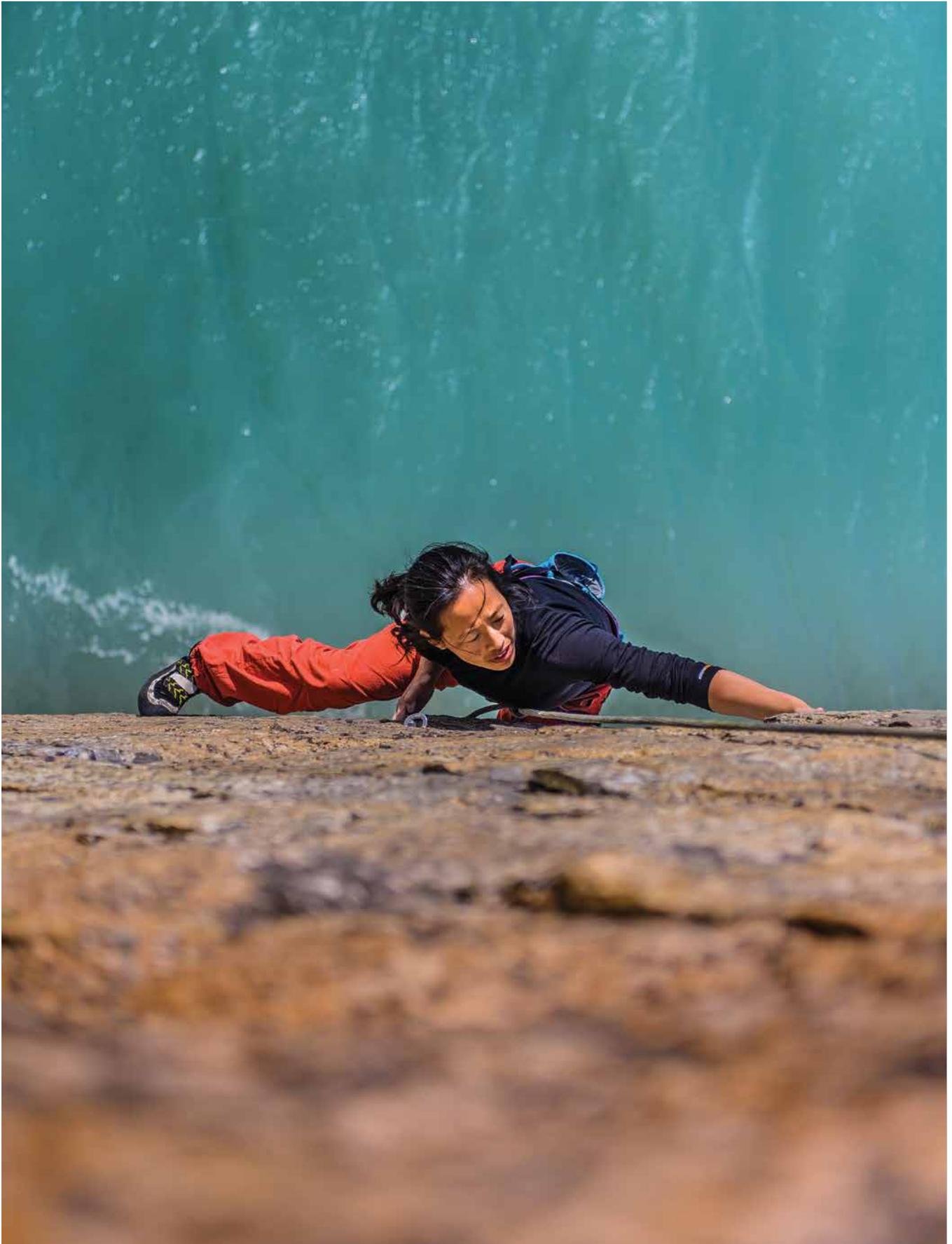
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📍 Cynthia Chow on *Willy's Yacht* (5.11b), on the Sea Cliffs of Squamish. (Squamish lands) AAC member Alex Eggermont 📷 @a.eggermont

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📷 Last light in the Needles, CA. (Mojave, Southern Paiute, Chemehuevi lands) AAC member Austin Siadak @austin\_siadak



📷 Jake Norton gets cleaned up in the village of Syafru Beshi, Nepal. AAC member Jeremiah Watt 📷 @miahwatt

# PARTING SHOT

## Jeremiah Watt on Travel & Life

---

INTERVIEWED BY JEFF DEIKIS

**I**n 2018 I was on assignment following big-mountain guide Jake Norton up the Langtang Valley to the base of Langtang Ri (7,205m) in the Nepalese Himalaya. It's a stunning area, located within the Langtang National Park, on the boarder of Nepal and Tibet. I was there to shoot photos of Jake and his family trekking up the valley, but what took my attention was the aftermath of the Gorkha earthquake, which killed around 9,000 people in 2015. It was devastating.

While the earthquake affected all of Nepal, it hit the Langtang Valley especially hard. The earthquake triggered an avalanche there two or three kilometers wide and filled the valley with talus and debris. The village of Langtang was buried. Everyone there died, submerged in the rubble. The avalanche was so swift and the destruction so complete that a visitor to the Langtang alley today would see no indication of human presence. The once-thriving village has been replaced with an endless field of broken rocks, a graveyard buried underneath. We had to trek over the top of it. It was deeply upsetting, haunting.

The Nepalese are starting to bounce back. They don't really have a choice. People are just trying to survive. There are few support services to help them out. If you want to help Nepal, the best thing you can do is to travel to Nepal, meet the people, and support the local economy.

Traveling to climb is great, but if it were only about the climbing you could just go to the climbing gym. Traveling is about cultural exchange. It's about the people and about learning from other cultures. You can't replicate that. The actual climbing is just the icing on the cake.

It's through traveling—through meeting different people, sharing meals, swapping stories, or even just getting a local shave—that you come to realize that we all share so many things. At the end of the day, we're all just human. That's an excellent lesson to bring home. We don't need much more than each other to be pretty psyched on life.

.....  
 Jeremiah Watt is an AAC member and professional photographer living in Salt Lake City, UT. See more of Jeremiah's work at [jeremiahwattphotography.com](http://jeremiahwattphotography.com).

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No. 10

# Done in an R1®

## "Done in an R1" (A Song)

Stuck on a wall in the middle of a storm  
Finally it's time to jam and make some popcorn  
I really can't remember when I last took a wash  
But with this ninja hoody and chest zipper I feel so posh  
It's my armor, it's my outfit, my pajamas, my tuxedo  
It's my girlfriend, my dish towel and it helps my libido.



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