

EXPEDITION NEWS



August 2009 - Volume Sixteen, Number Eight

EXPEDITION NEWS, now in its 15th year, is the monthly review of significant expeditions, research projects and newsworthy adventures. It is distributed online and to media representatives, corporate sponsors, educators, research librarians, explorers, environmentalists, and outdoor enthusiasts. This forum on exploration covers projects that stimulate, motivate and educate.

BANCROFT ARNESEN TRAVEL IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF AMUNDSEN

Liv Arnesen and Ann Bancroft will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the first man to reach the South Pole with an international expedition of women. Both will return to Antarctica in 2011, compelled by global challenges and the access they have to millions of school-children around the world thanks to past expeditions. Commemorating Roald Amundsen's discovery of the South Pole, and again utilizing an expedition to gain world attention, Bancroft Arnesen Explore will host an international team of women to the South Pole, one from each continent. They believe Antarctica, a continent of peace, cooperation and science – owned by no one government – is the perfect place to stage an expedition focused on making the world a better place through collaboration and peaceful cooperation.

An international team of six women will embark on a 870-mi./1400 km expedition from the Bay of Whales in the Ross Sea to the Geographic South Pole beginning October 2011. The collaboration between the explorers and their native countries will provide a platform for millions of children around the globe to follow the 100-day expedition and learn that they have a voice in their community and in the world to create positive change. The team will depart from Christchurch, New Zealand in October, reach the South Pole by January 2012 and be flown to the coast. They will then travel back to New Zealand by air.

One woman from each continent will participate on the ski expedition while one other woman from each continent will be a back up and part of the team in her native country and the public relations spokesperson there. (For more information: Liv Arnesen: +47 901 37 030, liv@livarnesen.com, Ann Bancroft, 612 618 5533, ann@yourexpediton.com) ▲

RIVERS OF ICE TEAM TO CROSS SOUTHERN PATAGONIA ICE CAP

This month, ultra endurance athletes Tarka L'Herpiniere and Katie-Jane Cooper will embark for Chile to attempt to traverse the complete length of the Southern Patagonian Ice Cap without the aid of sail kites or pre-placed food caches.

They will kayak/packraft from their start point at Caleta Tortel, to the base of the Jorge Montt Glacier, which marks the most northerly point of the Southern Patagonian Ice Cap. From here they will traverse the length of the ice cap, through a combination of skiing, walking and mountaineering to its most southerly point, the Balmaceda Glacier. Taking to their packraft once again they will complete the journey by paddling their way to Puerto Natalas, a total of 344-mi./554 km. The Rivers of Ice team intends to become the fastest team of all full-length crossings, faster than even supported and kite sail expeditions, hoping to complete the journey in as little as 37 days.

Traditionally, expeditions across the ice cap have been undertaken with the aid of pulks ensuring sufficient supplies for long crossings. However, having to shuttle loads across the heavily crevassed sections makes for an arduous and laborious task. In contrast the Rivers of Ice team will undergo an ultra-light and fast approach, undertaking the journey with backpacks and 2.2 lbs. micro sleds that attach to the packs. Having reduced the equipment from over 265 lbs. (traditional amount taken on previous attempts of this journey) to 88 lbs. each, they are mobile enough to move fast over the difficult terrain. However, with only 37 days of food rations, the team cannot afford any mistakes or delays.

continued on page 2

Once the expedition gets underway daily updates will be sent back to the team's Web site as podcasts. In addition the team will be capturing the expedition on film for a documentary on their return. (For more information: www.rivers-of-ice.com) ▲

SKELETON COAST EXPEDITION PLANS LONGEST TREK WITHOUT FRESH WATER

The coastline of Namibia is one of the most inhospitable, unexplored, and yet beautiful places on earth. After many years of working in the country, Briton Jason De Carteret, 43, from Guernsey, is now planning to guide a small group of 14 clients across a 300-mile stretch of the remote coastline in October, taking an estimated 19 days walking approximately eight hours a day. Reportedly, no human has ever completed this journey on foot totally unsupported.

Each person, aged 25 to 59 – eight men and six women – and paying \$10,000 each, will be required to carry their own supplies for the entire duration, up to 85 pounds per person.

Quote of the Month

“Reflecting back on the flight it really was the bridge between two eras of aviation. It was the end of an era of stick and rudder pilots handing it off to the jetliners and satellite navigation and just ten years later we would be walking on the moon.”

- Richard Wiese, 79, of Head of the Harbor, N.Y., who entered the record books 50 years ago this month when he became the first pilot to solo an airplane across the Pacific Ocean. The route was from San Francisco to Brisbane, Australia. *The New York Times* (January 30, 1983) referred to him as the “Lone Eagle of the Pacific.” The flight time for the 7,730-mile journey was 42- 1/2 hours over six days. Wiese was a pilot for Pan American Airlines at the time and used an alias during his flight to avoid drawing attention to his feat.

De Carteret believes they will be setting a world record for “the longest trek without fresh water,” in some of the highest temperatures on the planet.

De Carteret's first desert crossing was in 1989 across the Sahara from North to South, taking 20 days leading an 8-person team. In 1991 he walked across the Kalahari Desert with a team of 14 people of all ages. (For more information: jason@voyageconcepts.co.uk, www.skeleton-coastexpedition.com). ▲

RARE PORPOISE IS SUBJECT OF VIDEO DOCUMENTARY

Christopher Gervais, 38, a member of The Explorers Club from southeastern Pennsylvania and New York, N.Y., is seeking expedition members to participate in a video documentary of one of the world's most endangered marine mammals, the vaquita (*Phocoena sinus*), a rare species of porpoise, in the northern Gulf of California. Less than 150 individuals remain of this critically endangered species. Scientists expect the population to be extinct within 5 to 10 years as an average 30 animals die each year trapped by fisherman's net.

There are very few records of the vaquita (Spanish for *little cow*) in the wild. It appears to swim and feed in a leisurely manner, but is elusive and will avoid boats of any kind. It rises to breathe with a slow, forward-rolling movement that barely disturbs the surface of the water, and then disappears quickly, often for a long time.

The 2010 expedition will attempt to coordinate with local agencies, groups and scientists to produce a video documentary of this species in its natural habitat, work with local fisherman, and develop a partnership to protect the species.

Gervais, a self-made entrepreneur who is the editor and publisher of *Western and Wildlife Art Magazine*, and owner of several other companies, seeks a cetacean biologist, underwater video cinematographer, dive master, scuba equipment specialist, field medic, and other participants with relevant experience. Team members need to be licensed scuba divers from NAUI, PADI or other accredited professional scuba agency. Expedition members must be in good health, and have a valid passport. Fluency in Spanish is helpful but not mandatory.

Participants will be responsible for transportation, hotel accommodations, meals, snorkeling or scuba gear and will be asked to share in the rental cost of local guides and boats. (For more information: Christopher J. Gervais, 610 896 4776, cjgervais@aol.com). ▲

 **MEDIA MATTERS**

Doggie Bags Climbing Wall – On the first day of the Outdoor Retailer 2009 Summer Market, the huge outdoor trade show in Salt Lake last month, the climbing wall went to the dogs when Ruff Wear unveiled its new DoubleBack Harness for man’s-best-friend. One might be confused as to why a dog would even need a climbing harness since they are physically unable to go up cliffs, so Ruff Wear got an adorable dog into the harness to demonstrate it, according to the *Outdoor Retailer Show Daily*.

Turns out that there are many ways a dog-specific climbing harness can be used, including climbing, mountaineering, canyoneering, and helping dogs up and down steep and exposed terrain in the high country. It’s a good bet that most outdoor enthusiasts are also dog lovers, and would always prefer to have their best friends along for every hike and climb. Now they can, even in the most harsh areas, as a dog can easily be lifted and lowered with the Ruff Wear DoubleBack Harness.

The harness was conceived in 2002 and finally is ready to go to market. Features include strength ratings to 2,000 lbf, anodized aluminum buckles, adjustable Martingale collar (the kind that restrains without choking), a rope tie-in point, padded belly support and adjustable frame and leg loops.

Ruff Wear drew a large crowd to the climbing wall inside the Salt Palace Convention Center as they lifted a dog up into the air and let it hang out. It seemed to be very comfortable and relaxed inside its harness as it looked around at everyone taking pictures. The demonstration made it clear that as long as a dog owner builds good anchors, he can safely raise or lower his pet over just about anything. (To see an image of the dog in the air, see www.expeditionnews.blogspot.com).

Thin Slice of History – As part of its coverage of the 40th anniversary of the first moon landing, Cynthia Crossen, writing for the *Wall Street Journal* (July 18-19), recalled what Neil Armstrong said in 2001 when he counted himself among the luckiest men on Earth. Armstrong commented, “Looking back, we were really very privileged to live in that thin slice of history where we changed how man looks at himself, and what he might become and where he might go.” Armstrong doesn’t think the space program is dead. “We don’t have the option any longer to say yes or no to it. We only have the option to say when.”

Amateur to NASA: “I Told You So” – In a related story, Westport, Conn., resident Michael A. Gilbertie thinks NASA literally blew it when the LEM (Lunar Excursion Module) lifted off and most assuredly wiped out any trace of Neil Armstrong’s first footprint on the moon. Writing in the *Stamford (Conn.) Advocate* (Aug. 2), he said he debated

whether to contact the space agency in 1969 to urge them to place the instrument package more than 30 feet from the LEM. “My thinking was that when they took off, the rocket blast would also damage the scientific instruments left behind.” He was right. The flag was knocked down, the laser reflector was covered with dust and rendered useless, and the solar particle collector – a shade-like device – toppled over. While he never contacted NASA, he feels vindicated that by the time Apollo 12 rolled around, the instrument package was set a quarter mile away.

Wildlife Need the “Freedom to Roam” – Rick Ridgeway could have been content being a pioneering climber, adventurer and photographer. Ridgeway, Patagonia’s vice president of environmental initiatives, was a member of the first American team to summit K2 and expanded the boundaries of climbing across the globe.

But he has become more than an adventurer, transitioning into becoming an advocate for the planet. His books, *The Shadow of Kilimanjaro* and *Big Open: On Foot Across Tibet’s Chang Tang*, describe deeply moving treks through East Africa and Tibet.

Ridgeway’s new project, Freedom to Roam (www.freedom-toroam.org), brings together a coalition of corporations, government agencies, and conservation, environmental and recreation organizations that are committed to finding solutions to the threats that human encroachment and global warming present to America’s wildlife, according to a story by Doug Schnitzspahn in the *Outdoor Retailer Show Daily* (July 21).

“We decided that as an adaptive response to global warming, wild corridors are the best strategy,” says Ridgeway. “We kicked around different options and settled on ‘Freedom to Roam.’ We created the brand for wildlife but also for people who are willing to recreate and go about their business in animals’ habitat in ways that are consistent with the needs of wildlife — and it’s not just outdoor recreation but also people like ranchers who want to ranch in ways consistent with wildlife, or companies that want to go about in ways consistent with wildlife.

“... I think this is a new model for conservation for a new century. It’s different for two big reasons: one, it brings together a broad array that we not sitting together at the table before. Two, it’s built around marketing and storytelling.”

Ridgeway continues, “When you have spent your entire adult life visiting wild places, you see visibly the degradation of some of those places. You feel like you want to do what you can to do something about it. Consequently I think we are all obligated to do our very best to mitigate the impact of this inevitable warming on wildlife. The best way to do that is to protect habitat.”

continued on page 4

We'll Drink to That – Former climber Greg Mortenson, whose best-selling *Three Cups of Tea* is still attracting readers after 129 weeks on the *New York Times Paperback Best Sellers List*, continues to make a difference. Writes op-ed columnist Thomas L. Friedman in the July 18 *New York Times*, “I confess, I find it hard to come to Afghanistan and not ask: ‘Why are we here? Who cares about the Taliban? Al Qaeda is gone. And if its leaders come back, well, that’s why God created cruise missiles.’”

“But every time I start writing that column, something stills my hand. This week it was something very powerful. I watched Greg Mortenson, the famed author of *Three Cups of Tea*, open one of his schools for girls in this remote Afghan village in the Hindu Kush mountains. I must say, after witnessing the delight in the faces of those little Afghan girls crowded three to a desk waiting to learn, I found it very hard to write, ‘Let’s just get out of here,’” Friedman reports from Pushghar, Afghanistan.

“Indeed, Mortenson’s efforts remind us what the essence of the ‘war on terrorism’ is about. It’s about the war of ideas within Islam — a war between religious zealots who glorify martyrdom and want to keep Islam untouched by modernity and isolated from other faiths, with its women disempowered, and those who want to embrace modernity, open Islam to new ideas and empower Muslim women as much as men.

“... Mortenson told me why he has devoted his life to building 131 secular schools for girls in Pakistan and another 48 in Afghanistan: ‘The money is money well spent. These are secular schools that will bring a new generation of kids that will have a broader view of the world. We focus on areas where there is no education. Religious extremism flourishes in areas of isolation and conflict.’”

Mortenson said he was originally critical of the U.S. military in Iraq and Afghanistan, but he’s changed his views: “The U.S. military has gone through a huge learning curve. They really get it. It’s all about building relationships from the ground up, listening more and serving the people of Afghanistan.”

Adventures in Wonderland – Anne Doubilet, lifelong diver, underwater photographer, and conservationist, receives the full Annie Leibovitz treatment in the August “Age” issue of *Vogue*. Eve MacSweeney writes that Doubilet, a New Yorker, describes the aquatic world with an animation that is not entirely typical of a 61-year-old discussing a long-held career. “Even now, I get so excited to go underwater,” she says. “I never lose my sense of wonder and curiosity.”

MacSweeney continues, “Sad to say, however, the marine world is not all sweetness and light, a state of affairs that exercises the optimistic Doubilet, who recently chaired a forum at The Explorers Club in New York to bring experts

together to discuss the crisis in the oceans: the world’s coral reefs in major decline; the seas overfished; global warming affecting the food chain; a gyre of plastic garbage twice the size of Texas swirling in the Pacific; seals and whales getting cancers caused by toxic chemicals, and these same chemicals showing up in the breast milk of Inuit women in the Arctic.”

Doubilet, who spends her time traveling, lecturing, and organizing activities as a board member of The Explorers Club and Wings WorldQuest (a nonprofit supporting female explorers and scientists), believes things are not entirely hopeless. With the newfound public awareness of environmental issues, together with a willingness to probe the problem beyond such simple measures as recycling plastics, now may be the time. “I can’t find it in my heart to say it is too late,” Doubilet says.

Also mentioned in the story is Alfred McLaren, an Arctic adventurer and Cold War submarine pilot who is one of a group of entrepreneurs developing a prototype “performance submersible.” The two-man Super Aviator, with its articulated “wings” and bubble hatches, looks like a race car and acts like one, too, MacSweeney writes. “We are clearly in the presence of the ultimate boy toy.” ▲

EN MARKETING

Knife is a Sharp Endorsement

South African explorer Mike Horn of the Pangaea Expedition now has a knife named after him. Wenger, maker of the Genuine Swiss Army Knife, designed a knife that features two one-handed opening blades – a locking emergency blade with serrated edge and a standard edge – as well as needle-nose pliers, metal saw and file, can opener and a newly-developed reamer which enables Horn to punch holes through wood and other dense materials. Made with a sharp vertical edge, it can also be used as a scraper to remove ice and other material from his equipment.

The Pangaea Expedition is a four-year journey that began in May 2008 which will take Horn through some the most challenging and fragile locations in the world and will help to raise awareness of the critical issues facing the environment. The Expedition will shed light on critical issues facing the environment and, more importantly, study action that can help reverse the adverse affects of man.

To help accomplish the goal of the Pangaea Expedition, Horn created the “Young Explorer Program.” Groups of up to 12 young people carefully chosen from around the globe accompany him on parts of his expedition, and before leaving, they attend a training camp in Switzerland and go on to play an active role in selected environmental protection projects throughout their journey.

The first group got to know the beauties of the Antarctic; a second group of nine young people spent 2-1/2 weeks discovering and experiencing the breathtaking landscape of the fjords in the south of New Zealand. Here they learned to use methods to measure the salt content and quality of the water and once again played an active part on projects involving flora and fauna. Other groups of young people are scheduled to accompany Horn to the Solomon Islands, the Great Barrier Reef and Indonesia. The suggested retail price for the Mike Horn Knife is \$135. (For more information: www.wengerna.com, www.mikehorn.com). ▲▲

WEB WATCH

You Are There – WeChooseTheMoon.org is an interactive experience recreating the historic Apollo 11 mission to the Moon in real time. Once where only three men made the trip, now millions can. It was created by the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library & Museum. ▲▲

EXPEDITION INK

The Deep: Voyages to Titanic and Beyond
By Anatoly M. Sagalevich with Paul T. Isley III.
Foreword by James Cameron. Redondo Beach
California: Botanical Press, 2009.

Reviewed by Captain Don Walsh USN (ret), Ph. D.,
Dora, Ore.

From the Cold War to the present, Russian scientists and engineers undertook many unusual undersea operations using manned submersibles. However, the story of this work has rarely appeared in Western publications. With publication of this book in English, the situation has changed.

Dr. Anatoly Sagalevich was a participant and leader of many of these expeditions. For nearly four decades he has piloted research submersibles into the far depths of the world's oceans. His explorations ranged from scientific research in support of the Soviet Navy to helping make the blockbuster movie *Titanic* with James Cameron. In addition, he piloted the Russian Mir submersibles to depths as great as 20,000 feet, made the first dive at the Geographic North Pole and successfully completed a very complex remediation operation at the site of the lost nuclear submarine *Komsomolets*.

Tolya Sagalevich is arguably the most experienced manned submersible pilot in the world and this book is his personal story. (For more information go to: www.botanical-press.com)

Die Trying – One Man's Quest to Conquer the Seven Summits
by Bo Parfet (with Richard Buskin) – Amacom Books 2009

Reviewed by Robert F. Wells, Darien, Conn.

To climb. I suppose you could say the concept implies an ascent. As kids, bars on cribs were made to climb. When older, climbing involved a variety of things – often the least of which included a physical incline. And here's the rub. The author of this book might not readily admit it, but his extraordinary feat of climbing the highest mountains on each of the earth's continents was more about climbing challenges of the mind, rather than strapping on crampons and slogging through oxygen-deprived heights, conquering fear.

Bo Parfet was a dyslexic kid. A speech impediment separated him from others – even teachers told him he would never graduate from high school. His parents divorced. Mountains became ways to cheat defeat ... to escape ... and ultimately, to build proof points for life. There's something different about people who seek extreme adventure, who join expeditions, who relish the isolation of being "out there."

I suspect the young author didn't truly understand what he was getting into when he landed in Tanzania to climb Kilimanjaro. He was a chunky investment banker spending hours staring at computer screens – yet he was someone who had an itch, but didn't know where to scratch. In Africa, he was ill-prepared, but somehow found a way to climb. Then stories of Sir Edmund Hillary and Everest festered. And in no time, a hook was securely imbedded in his relatively young cheek. There were mountains to conquer.

Some years ago, Dick Bass, Frank Wells and Rick Ridgeway penned a book, *Seven Summits*. One of the problems with this book is – after read – it acts as a canker sore afflicting anyone with an adventurous bent. And as a canker, it did gnaw. The author figured out ways to juggle jobs, graduate school and finances (needs of which are considerable here). He learned how to prepare. How to collect collaborations needed to be with the right people at the right times. How to face adversity. How to find a way to "find purpose."

In a sense, *Die Trying* is a fine piece of literary candy. It runs easy – like an icy stream glancing off rocks in a deep canyon. Even if you are not a "technical climber," you feel like you're welcome to tag along. The book chronicles a boy morphing to manhood. You gain a toe-hold in Benjamin Franklin's adage: "By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail." You find out how to stomach fried rat – or for variation, fried bat. You slip into bottomless crevasses ... traverse perilous icefalls ... vicariously freeze your butt off ... meet cannibalistic folks ... and basically feel thankful for comfortable chairs to relax and read. But watch out, if you have someone in your family who is coursing out of college questioning life, this book might point them straight up. Could be dangerous. ▲▲

IN PASSING

The Climbing World Loses an Icon – John Bachar, considered by many to be the greatest rock climber of his generation – and perhaps the top climbing soloist in history – died in a solo-climbing accident near his home in Mammoth Lakes, Calif., on July 5 at the age of 52.

“We all know people who die climbing, and as we get older people start dying of all sorts of things, but every now and then someone’s death really hits you,” said Michael Kennedy, editor of *Alpinist* magazine. “You have this illusion of control – that with enough experience and judgment you’ll be OK, but the reality is that it doesn’t matter how good you are, or how careful you are. Every time you get out there, you put yourself at risk,” he tells the *Outdoor Retailer Show Daily* (July 21).

Bachar, a partner in Acopa International, a climbing shoe maker, was the very image of American rock climbing throughout the late 1970s and ‘80s, appearing countless times in magazine and advertising photos. His free solos (unroped free climbs) of routes like New Dimensions (5.11a), the Nabisco Wall (5.11c), and The Gift (5.12c) astounded fellow climbers, as did roped climbs such as the first free ascent of D-1 on Colorado’s Diamond wall and the first one-day link-up of El Capitan and Half Dome in Yosemite Valley, with Peter Croft. 

EXPEDITION CLASSIFIEDS

Compression Socks Give Your Feet a Boost – Competitors from runners to triathletes to skiers are increasingly turning to compression socks for an edge that helps them recover faster in the process. CW-X Compression Support Socks, from Wacoal Sports Science Corporation, makers of CW-X® Conditioning Wear, use seamless, variable compression Torex four-way stretch fabric to provide targeted support to increase circulation in the feet and lower legs. A built-in Support Web™ supports the calf muscles and arch of the foot, and stabilizes the ankle joint. This results in reduced fatigue and quicker recovery from strenuous athletic activity. (www.cw-x.com)

You Want to Go Where? – Stories and anecdotes ripped from the pages of *Expedition News* are retold in this new book from Skyhorse Publishing. Written by Jeff Blumenfeld, editor and publisher of *EN*, the book provides advice on how individuals can fund and arrange their own trips. It celebrates the feats of explorers familiar to *EN* readers, including Anker, Schurke, Shackleton, Steger, Vaughan, and many others. Included are tips on communications technology, photography, writing contracts, and developing a proposal that will impress potential sponsors. Available now through Amazon.com, BarnesandNoble.com and Borders.com. 