

EXPEDITION NEWS

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August 2010 – Volume Seventeen, Number Eight

EXPEDITION NEWS, now in its 16th year, is the monthly review of significant expeditions, research projects and newsworthy adventures. It is distributed online to media representatives, corporate sponsors, educators, research librarians, explorers, environmentalists, and outdoor enthusiasts. This forum on exploration covers projects that stimulate, motivate and educate.

PROTECTING RUSSIA'S WILD SALMON

This summer, Outdoor Research, the outdoor gear company, will help a team of whitewater kayakers explore the Kamchatka Peninsula in Russia's Far East and draw international attention to this threatened area and its wild salmon.

Partnering with scientists, conservation NGO's and funded by a grant from National Geographic Society's Expedition Council, the Kamchatka Project aims to collect valuable scientific data for researchers and bring much needed attention to protect Kamchatka's river drainages and the salmon that depend on them. Kayaks will allow the least intrusive, most intimate and only way to explore many sections of these wild rivers.

The 600-mile long Kamchatka Peninsula is the spawning ground of roughly one fourth of all Pacific salmon, a species that plays an integral role in the livelihood of communities around the world. Yet this environmentally rich and pristine wilderness is severely threatened by a changing landscape, including an increase in poaching for caviar and industrial land use designations, putting this iconic species at risk.

The Kamchatka Project team is comprised of six skilled whitewater kayakers with diverse backgrounds in science, education, video, and web production, allowing them to tackle the issues that face Kamchatka with an educated and informative perspective.

Throughout the summer, the expedition will be documented in real-time through photos and interviews on VertiCulture, an outdoor adventure website. Once the expedition ends this month, the Kamchatka Project team will generate an online educational platform, edit an adventure documentary, create educational materials, and organize a speaking tour.

“Exploratory kayaking provides a compelling platform to raise awareness for a more important cause,” said Kamchatka Project expedition leader Bryan Smith. “Kamchatka’s salmon-based ecosystems are unparalleled by anything on the planet, and we hope our efforts will help inspire the international community to make sure this abundant source of natural capital is not destroyed.” (For more information: www.outdoorresearchverticalculture.com).

EXPEDITION UPDATE

Ericsson Dies on K2

Swedish mountaineer and professional skier Fredrik Ericsson died Aug. 6 while trying to summit K2 in Pakistan (see *EN*, June 2010). The incident occurred between 7 a.m. and 8 a.m. as Ericsson was attempting to become the first man to ski from the summit to base camp. Ericsson, in his mid-30s, was at the bottleneck, at an altitude of around 8300 meters (27,231 feet), between Camp 4 (8000 meters) and the summit (8611 meters). According to published reports, as Ericsson was attempting to fix ropes to the snow and ice along the route he lost his purchase and was unable to arrest his fall.

Ericsson's body, resting at about 7000 meters, will remain where it fell, according to his website. His parents have requested it remain in the mountains he loved. (For more information: www.fredrikericsson.com).

New Highpoint Record Set

On July 16 at 1:55 p.m. Hawaiian time, Mountain Hardwear Youth Athlete Matt Moniz, 12, and his father Mike ran to the top of Hawaii’s Mauna Kai (13,796-ft.), setting a new speed record for summiting the 50 highest points in all 50 U.S. states. The new 50-50 record set by the Moniz duo is 43 days, 3 hours, 51 minutes and 9 seconds, beating the previous record notched by Denver schoolteacher Mike Haugen and mountain guide Casey Grom by two days 16 hours (see *EN*, July 2010).

The elder Moniz reflected upon the past weeks, “From Florida to Alaska and Katahdin to Mauna Kea, Matt and I marveled firsthand at both the cultural and geographic diversity of our great nation. It seemed daily we were confronted with complexities ranging from high winds and snow to mosquitoes and bears; challenges that served to strengthen our resolve and our already close father-son bond. The expedition was an adventure of a lifetime and will most certainly provide a lifetime of memories.”

The project was dedicated to raising awareness about pulmonary arterial hypertension (PAH). (For more information: www.climb7.com).

Northern Lights Expeditions Shines on Children of Arctic and U.K.

Kokatat, the watersports apparel and accessories company, continues to sponsor Northern Lights Expeditions, a project seeking to establish links between children of isolated

indigenous communities of the Arctic and children of the U.K., as they are preparing for phase two of its three-part service project.

Northern Lights explorers Richard Smith and Craig Mathieson founded the project to help develop the children's confidence and self-reliance through what Smith and Mathieson have coined “inspiration of exploration.” The participating schools are developing online projects covering global warming, song, dance, and social cultural comparisons.

During July and August 2009, Smith and Mathieson kayaked between remote Inuit settlements of Eastern Greenland forging links with Scottish schools and delivering donated laptops to assist with connecting children from different cultures.

This month, the team will travel back to Greenland with teachers to make introductions to the Greenlandic schools and to ensure that all required health and safety assessments are in place prior to the exchange visit of the pupils. During the winter, pupils from schools in Scotland and the French Alps will participate in a mini-expedition by dog sled across the sea ice of the South Eastern coast of Greenland.

In the future, Northern Lights will expand the program to involve other indigenous communities from Arctic countries, making first contact again by kayak. A BBC Radio 4 documentary about Northern Lights is currently in production and set to broadcast in the coming year. (For more information: <http://northernlights-expeditions.org/>).

Scotch on the Rocks

A crate of Scotch whisky that has been frozen in Antarctic ice for more than a century is being slowly thawed by New Zealand museum officials – for analysis, not to be tasted.

The crate of whisky was recovered earlier this year – along with four other crates containing whisky and brandy – beneath the floor of a hut built by British explorer Sir Ernest Shackleton during his 1908 Antarctic expedition (see *EN*, December 2009).

Four of the crates were left in the ice, but one labeled Mackinlay's whisky was brought to the Canterbury Museum in Christchurch, New Zealand, where officials said last month it was being thawed in a controlled environment.

An Antarctic Heritage Trust team that was restoring the explorer's hut found the crates in 2006 but couldn't immediately dislodge them because they were too deeply embedded in the ice.

Drinks group Whyte & Mackay, the Scottish distillery that now owns the Mackinlay's brand, launched the bid to recover the whisky for samples to test and potentially use to relaunch the defunct Scotch. The whisky may still be drinkable but would probably not be tasted.

What's Your Dream Expedition?

What is your dream expedition? Is it rock climbing on seven continents in seven months? Is it bicycling across Europe? This year, NOLS is partnering with Patagonia for the Dream Expedition Contest. The contest is open to people 13 or older. Grand prize is a spot on the classic NOLS Wind River Wilderness course next summer – 30 days exploring the rugged peaks and pristine lakes of Wyoming's Wind River Mountains. Plus all the gear you need for that course. Plus domestic travel to and from Wyoming. Entries must be in the form of a video. Contest deadline is Oct. 31, 2010. (For more information: <http://www.nols.edu/contest/>).

The North Face and Gore-Tex Launch Speaker Series

TNF's "Never Stop Exploring" Speakers Series, presented by Gore-Tex Products, kicks off this fall with a nationwide tour featuring climbers, athletes, and skiers Conrad Anker, Jimmy Chin, Kit Deslauriers, Karina Hollekim, Dean Karnazes, Mark Synnott, and Diane Van Deren. For a complete schedule and tickets for the Sept. 28 to Dec. 3 tour, log onto: www.thenorthface.com/speakersseries.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"Look, and you will find it – what is unsought will go undetected." – Sophocles

MEDIA MATTERS

We are heartened to discover a wealth of recent stories in the media about explorers and their expeditions. When the mainstream media, especially the *Wall Street Journal*, shows an interest, it bodes well for explorers and adventurers seeking sponsorship from publicity-hungry corporations. Here are some of the notable mentions we've found since our last issue:

The Fur Flies

Norwegian Roald Amundsen and Royal Navy Capt. Robert F. Scott were both seasoned explorers in 1910, but they approached their South Pole expeditions quite differently, according to the New York American Museum of Natural History exhibit, "Race to the End of the Earth," which chronicles the 100-year-old race to the South Pole. Mark Yost explains in the *Wall Street Journal* (July 28), that it captivated the world because, as an introductory film explains, Antarctica was the "last great geographical prize on Earth."

Yost reports the Norwegians chose to wear mostly fur clothing; the Brits opted for wool. Amundsen's team fared much better with the fur outfits because their natural animal skins provided better insulation against the sub-zero temperatures. The Norwegian had learned from the Inuit how to dress properly for the conditions. The display includes Amundsen's 12-gauge shotgun, his skis and a Norwegian sled. Yost reports that from the

Shackleton's expedition ran short of supplies on its long ski trek to the South Pole from the northern Antarctic coast in 1907-1909 and turned back about 100 miles (160 km) short of its goal. The expedition sailed away in 1909 as winter ice formed, leaving behind supplies – including the whisky and brandy.

EXPEDITION NOTES

Check the Attic

The late Peter Allen was right when he sang, “Everything Old is New Again.” Time to check the attic: climbers are using hula hoops to stay in shape. According to Betty “Hoops” Shurin, owner of Betty Hoops Dance Therapy (www.bettyhoops.com), hula hoops are “...portable, fun fitness. I know people that summit mountains with their hoops. Climbers use it on their rest days.” Shurin, an extreme sports enthusiast and yoga instructor, first found the hoop at a music festival, and immediately recognized its cross-training benefits – hip-opening, core strengthening and flexibility – yet fell in love with the youthful and playful feelings. In 2003, she created a collapsible hula hoop which is adjustable to two sizes, for 80-pound youth up to 240-pound adults.

Time to Rearrange the Deck Chairs

The 100th anniversary of the tragic sinking of the Belfast-built *Titanic* will be marked by a cruise retracing the ship's final journey. Although the ship will not leave Southampton until April 8, 2012, the cruise company has already sold over 80 percent of their tickets from passengers representing 22 countries. (Why are we not surprised?)

The cruise will depart from Southampton on the *MS Balmoral* and follow the *Titanic*'s itinerary. The ship will travel across the Atlantic, arriving at the point of the *Titanic*'s fateful collision with the iceberg on April 14-15. A memorial service will take place to pay tribute to the passengers and crew who perished 100 years ago. From there the cruise will travel to Halifax, Nova Scotia and on to New York.

Reportedly, many passengers are descendants of those who died on *Titanic* or who were involved with the ship in one way or another.

The *Titanic* was the largest passenger steamship ever built when it set off on April 10, 1912. Four days later it struck an iceberg and sank. One of the deadliest peacetime maritime disasters, the tragedy claimed 1,517 lives. According to the traveling show, *Titanic: The Artifact Exhibition*, the ship is slowly being consumed by iron-eating microbes. Scientists estimate that this process will cause the ship to implode and collapse on itself in approximately 90 years. The exhibition's gift shop, which *EN* visited in a Connecticut Indian casino of all places, sells a raisin-sized piece of coal for \$19.99, recovered from the liner's debris field. A sucker for these kinds of mementoes, it was hard to pass up, but we grit our teeth and moved onto the slots instead. (For more information: <http://www.titanicmemorialcruise.co.uk/itinerary.php>)

British, there's a pair of heavy steel-spiked overboots – an early precursor to crampons – that didn't work well at all. "A metaphor, sad to say, for the entire (British) expedition."

Lindbergh: "How Do You Do It?"

Thomas Kessner's book *The Flight of the Century* (Oxford, 2010) provides insight into the enigmatic Charles Lindbergh. According to a review in the *Wall Street Journal* (July 24-25) by Daniel Ford, when Lindbergh was received by King George V in London barely a week after the landing in Paris, the British monarch asked a question about the epic flight that was on everyone's mind: "There is one thing I long to know. How did you pee?"

It was a question which, Lindbergh said later, "sort of put me at my ease."

"Well, you see, sir," he said, "I had a sort of aluminum container. I dropped the thing when I was over France. I was not going to be caught with the thing on me at Le Bourget."

The bulk of the book concerns the effect of Lindbergh's achievement on the U.S. and its relations with the rest of the world. It shares the little-known fact that when the *Spirit of St. Louis* landed at Le Bourget field near Paris on the night of May 21, 1927, after 33 hours, 30 minutes, 29.8 seconds in the air, the sleepless Lindbergh was worried that the French might not let him stay overnight since he had no visa. He also had no change of clothes, no toothbrush and only 27 cents of ready money.

New Life for an Old Plane

The venerable Twin Otter turboprop plane, a symbol of Canada's aerospace prowess and workhorse of the polar regions, seemed destined to fly into history when production ceased in 1988. But according to the *Wall Street Journal* (July 8), a production facility has sprouted in Calgary where Viking Air is assembling a dozen planes, with orders for a total of 50, mostly from diehard operators of the nearly 600 Twin Otters still flying. Said one Viking mechanic, "I've been working on Twin Otters for 22 years. You can do things with this airplane that people can only imagine."

Selling for about \$4.5 million each, the utilitarian Twin needs only 1,200 feet of runway and can take off and land on water, snow, grass or gravel, depending on whether it's outfitted with amphibious floats, skis or special tires. It can also operate in frigid climes and searing heat, which is why it's often used to ferry National Science Foundation researchers in Antarctica.

Family Burdens

The coming premiere of the film *The Wildest Dream*, the new documentary about British climber George Mallory, prompted author Graham Bowley to examine climbing's impact on the family. "... the costs of climbing and exploration were borne not just by the

mountaineers who perished but also by the families they left behind,” Bowley writes in the *New York Times* (July 25).

Bowley reports that this year more than 513 climbers have summited Everest, but that the mountain claimed four lives. He continues, “It’s a very different age of mountaineering. With the crowds and commercialization, the mountains these days may seem stripped of their mystique, majesty and romance. Without the broader importance of men and women extending the boundaries for all mankind, the climbers of today – some brilliant, others pushed and pampered by paid Sherpas and guides in regions they have no business being – seem to be performing a more selfish, or at least more personal act. “Yet the families carry a burden just the same.”

Dissing Everest

In his review of Graham Bowley’s new book about K2, *No Way Down* (Harper, 2010), Michael J. Ybarra piles it on the much maligned Mount Everest. “Almost any idiot, willing to spend enough money, can climb Everest. The mountain is high but not technically difficult. The Everest basecamp is a well-appointed village that has become a tourist destination itself. Professional guides eliminate most of what has traditionally been the essence of mountaineering: uncertainty. ... Climbers, if the term can still be used, need only show up, wait in relative comfort and, when the weather is good, attach their harness to a fixed line and put one foot in front of the other.” Ouch.

Gobi Reading List

Going on a Gobi desert fossil hunt? What books would you bring? For advice, Ralph Gardner, Jr. of the *Wall Street Journal* (July 16) turned to Michael Novacek, an eminent paleontologist and provost of the American Museum of Natural History. Before he left for his annual month-long dinosaur and ancient-mammal hunt in the Gobi Desert, among the books Novacek packed was *The Oblivion Seekers* by Isabelle Eberhardt, a Swiss-Algerian explorer who died in a flash flood in Algeria in 1904 at the age of 27. Novacek is also bringing *War and Peace*. “It’s time to read it again,” he said. Also packed: a ratty good-luck cap with the likeness of a space alien and the word, “Roswell.”

127 Hours

At the Outdoor Retailer trade show in Salt Lake this month, Fox Searchlight Pictures hosted an exclusive first look at the new dramatization of climber Aron Ralston’s 2003 ordeal in an isolated canyon in Utah. *127 Hours* is the true story of Ralston’s (played by actor James Franco) remarkable adventure to save himself after a fallen boulder crashes on his arm and traps him miles from help. Over the next five days Ralston examines his life and survives the elements to finally discover he has the courage and the wherewithal to extricate himself by any means necessary, scale a 65-foot wall and hike over eight miles before he is finally rescued. Throughout his journey, Ralston recalls friends, lovers (Clémence Poésy), family, and the two hikers (Amber Tamblyn and Kate Mara) he met before his accident.

The film, from Danny Boyle, the Academy Award winning director of last year's Best Picture, *Slumdog Millionaire*, premieres Nov. 5, and is based on Ralston's book, *Between a Rock and a Hard Place* (Atria Books, 2004). Fox hopes to inspire people to share their own life-changing or death-defying experiences through a "social media event" at www.127definingmoments.com.

EXPEDITION MARKETING

Time for Church

In its current issue, *Urban Climber Magazine* and Scarpa named boulderer Jill Church, 30, of Flagstaff, the recipient of the magazine's 2010 Unearthed Climber of the Year Award.

Urban Climber's feature 'Unearthed' is a peer-nominated format that puts the spotlight on North America's most talented but little-known boulderers and climbers.

Urban Climber Editor Andrew Tower said Church, who has now earned a spot as an athlete on Team Scarpa, can send hard problems, "but she's also got a great attitude and is a great ambassador for the sport – a criteria that's just as important for the award as how hard a nominee climbs.

"Aside from her numerous climbing accomplishments, first female ascents, and plenty of hard sends, Church is the kind of climber any company would be proud to have on their team," Tower said. (For more information about Scarpa, visit www.scarpa.com. For more information about *Urban Climber*, visit www.urbanclimbermag.com).

Gramicci Sponsors Climbing Film

Gramicci, the outdoor clothing manufacturer, is sponsoring the feature length documentary film, *The Last Wild Mountain: Portrait of the American Climber*.

Gramicci will donate signature organic hemp "Camu Tees" to support the production, promotion and distribution of the film. The t-shirts will showcase custom art by the producers and artists working on the film and be sold at film locations and online. All proceeds will directly benefit the film's non-profit production company.

The Last Wild Mountain follows the parallel stories of the first two generations of rock climbers in America, ranging from the Vulgarians to the Stonemasters and everyone in between. Interviews, photographs, writings, and archival footage are woven together into a compelling documentary. The filmmakers explore both the past and the future of climbing—the wild experiences, the offbeat antics, and the environmental aspects on which the future of climbing depends. (For more information: www.lastwildmountain.com)

National Outdoor Leadership School Extends Partnership with Deuter USA

The National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS) and Deuter USA have expanded their long-term partnership into NOLS' rock climbing program. Deuter has been the exclusive provider of packs for NOLS' outfitting department for over five years. Each year, hundreds of NOLS students and instructors head into the backcountry equipped with Deuter's multi-use backpacks to learn and teach wilderness skills, leadership, and outdoor ethics. NOLS will outfit students and instructors on its rock climbing courses with Deuter's Spectro AC 38. (For more information: www.deuterusa.com, www.nols.edu).

W.L. Gore & Associates Honored by AMGA

W.L. Gore & Associates, maker of Gore-Tex fabric, is the 2010 recipient of the American Mountain Guides Association (AMGA) Industry Award.

The Industry Award is presented annually to an outdoor company that has shown outstanding support through scholarships, products, and sponsorships of professional mountain guides. An AMGA Partner for the past 17 years and a Diamond Partner since 2005, Gore is the official sponsor of the AMGA Instructor Pool. Additionally, Gore provides one full-tuition scholarship each year for an AMGA course or exam. The scholarship provides financial support for mountain guides seeking training and certification in the U.S.

IN PASSING

Star Man

Caroline Islands native Mau Piailug, who passed away last month at the age of 78, was a master navigator, one of the last experts in the ancient art of Pacific Ocean wayfaring. "Crossing an open ocean without instruments in knife-edged canoes," writes the *Wall Street Journal* (July 18), "as the Polynesians did a thousand years before (Capt. James) Cook, is one of the great achievements in human exploration. ... the palu's skill is an achievement of reason, memory and calculation." He earned wide renown in 1976, when he led a daring 6,000-mile voyage from Hawaii to Tahiti and back in a doubled-hulled canoe. "In Hawaii, until Mau Piailug shared his knowledge, the palu's art had been lost for a millennium," writes the *Journal's* Lawrence Downes.

EXPEDITION CLASSIFIEDS

You Want to Go Where?

Expedition News' editor and publisher Jeff Blumenfeld's book provides an inside look at expedition sponsorship, including how to develop a newsworthy project, identify likely corporate sponsors, and use the latest technology that allows instant communications with sponsors, media, family, and friends no matter where you are on earth. It also takes a

sobering look at what happens when the project doesn't go exactly as planned. *You Want to Go Where?* is available on Amazon for about \$18 (<http://www.amazon.com/You-Want-Go-Where-Someone/dp/1602396477>)

EXPEDITION NEWS is published by Blumenfeld and Associates, Inc., 28 Center Street, Darien, CT 06820 USA. Tel. 203 655 1600, fax 203 655 1622, editor@expeditionnews.com. Editor/publisher: Jeff Blumenfeld. Assistant editor: Jamie Gribbon. ©2010 Blumenfeld and Associates, Inc. All rights reserved. ISSN: 1526-8977. Subscriptions: US\$36/yr. available by e-mail only. Credit card payments accepted through www.paypal.com. Read EXPEDITION NEWS at www.expeditionnews.com. Enjoy the *EN* blog at www.expeditionnews.blogspot.com.