

EXPEDITION NEWS

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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.

MOUNTAIN HARDWEAR CLIMBERS HEAD INTO THE FIELD

Word from Mountain Hardwear comes with news of a number of projects planned by the company's sponsored athletes this fall:

- **Soldiers to the Summit in Nepal, Erik Weihenmayer, through Oct. 30**

Weihenmayer and nine other Everest climbers will be guiding a group of Wounded Warriors (Iraq and Afghanistan veterans) up two peaks: Lobuche (20,075-ft.) and Kala Patar (18,222-ft.). A documentary film will be produced by Michael Brown and Serac Adventure Films. (For more information:

<http://soldierstothetsummit.org/2010/kathmandu-our-heros-journey-begins/>)

- **New Route on Nupste, Nepal, Freddie Wilkinson and Kevin Mahoney, through Nov. 30**

Wilkinson, Mahoney and Ben Gilmore received an AAC Copp-Dash Inspire Award grant for their goal of an alpine-style ascent on Nupste (25,591-ft./7800 m) via a new route on the perimeter of the Cobweb Wall. (For information about the award grant:

<http://www.americanalpineclub.org/grant/coppdashinspireaward>)

- **Climbing in Montenegro, Dawn Glanc, through Nov. 1**

Glanc will travel to Montenegro to climb in new areas and on undeveloped walls in less-frequented Montenegro. (Learn more about Dawn here: www.dawnglanc.com).

- **Mustang, Nepal, Ben Clark, through Nov. 15**

Clark will film for *Ski the Himalayas* while exploring terrain in the Mustang district that has never been skied before. (For more information: <http://www.skithehimalayas.com>)

EXPEDITION UPDATE

Skurka completes 4,700-mile Alaska-Yukon Expedition

In early September, Andrew Skurka completed his most recent long distance project, a solo 4,700-mile loop around Alaska and the Yukon. Highlights of his six-month journey included a 600-mile ski traverse of the Alaska Range (home of Mt. McKinley), a 500-mile backpacking and packrafting leg along the wild Gulf of Alaska coast, and a 1,200-mile walk across the Yukon Arctic and the Brooks Range during which he crossed just one road and once went 3-1/2 weeks without seeing another person. Skurka also floated some of North America's wildest rivers – including the Copper, Yukon, Peel, Noatak, and Kobuk – and followed two historic routes, the Iditarod Trail and Chilkoot Trail.

The 29-year-old Skurka, from Boulder, Colo., and Seekonk, Mass., has completed other long-distance backpacking trips – notably the 7,778-mile Sea-to-Sea Route (see *EN*, August 2005) and the 6,875-mile Great Western Loop (see *EN*, December 2007).

The Alaska-Yukon Expedition was a particularly grueling trip, Skurka reports. "I often felt that I was just another animal in the wilderness because I was experiencing Nature on very similar terms: like the caribou and the bears, I was following game trails, fording big rivers, coping with hellacious mosquitoes, stumbling across tussocks, and always looking over my shoulder with the hope of making it to tomorrow."

What's next for the peripatetic traveler? "I'm going to try to enjoy a life of relative mediocrity for at least a little while. If I can find the determination to sit down long enough, I'd like to write a book this winter. I expect my speaking and guiding schedule to be pretty busy next year too. No concrete plans for another big trip – it usually takes me a year or two after a huge trip to find something else worthy of all the time and resources."

His top sponsors were: National Geographic Expeditions Council, GoLite, La Sportiva, and Mountain Laurel Designs. (For information: www.andrewskurka.com/AK10).

Just One Word: "Plastics"

It's been a few months since David de Rothschild completed his 8,300 nautical mile, 129-day expedition from San Francisco to Sydney on a boat made out of plastic bottles, but he said he's still getting used to being back on dry land. (See *EN*, April 2009).

"Even though the salt's washed off my body and my legs are back to normal and my brain is settling, it still hasn't fully sunken in that, it's over," said de Rothschild.

The four-month long journey (www.theplastiki.com) was challenging, according to NetGreenNews.com. De Rothschild said he and his crew battled seasickness, cabin fever, and a boat that was difficult to navigate at times. Still, he said, it was a magical experience, one that he hopes will continue to inspire change.

The boat is made of 12,500 reclaimed plastic bottles and a new material called Seretex, a self re-enforcing PET.

“It was a totally new material in a totally new environment and in an environment that is outside of your control,” said de Rothschild.

The boat often moved side to side like a little crab. Because it had no engine, it had to be towed in to all its ports. Still de Rothschild said the boat made the journey largely on its own steam and it served its purpose, which was to raise awareness about the problem of plastic waste in the oceans. (See his interview on NetGreen News here: <http://netgreennews.com/the-plastiki-adventure-part-1/>)

Everest: A Climb for Peace Finally Airs on National TV

Starting in this month, *Everest: A Climb for Peace* will be pre-released on the WORLD Channel, which airs on 120 Public TV stations nationwide including the following top ten markets: New York, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Dallas, Boston, and Atlanta. The full release of *Everest: A Climb for Peace* is scheduled to start in November (See *EN*, March 2007).

Narrated by Orlando Bloom and hailed as a "tremendous achievement" by the Dalai Lama, the film is a socially relevant documentary about peace, war, and the human spirit – an inspirational film, which also includes a dramatic rescue from near the summit of Everest. It details a successful summit on May 18, 2006, when Israeli Dudu Yifrah unfolded a sewn-together Israeli/Palestinian flag on the summit. It was produced and directed by Lance Trumbull. (For more information: www.everestpeaceproject.org; see the trailer at <http://www.lancetrumbull.com/screening.php>)

EXPEDITION NOTES

Nunavut Discovery is as Exciting as Al Capone's Vault

A wooden box thought to hold records from either Sir John Franklin's ill-fated 1845 journey to locate the Northwest Passage or Roald Amundsen's 1905 expedition was found to contain little more than newspaper scraps.

The box – recovered in September from beneath a cairn near the Nunavut hamlet of Gjoa Haven – was opened in late September in Ottawa by the Canadian Conservation Institute and representatives of the Nunavut government.

"The remains of a cardboard box lined the bottom and sides of the interior of the wood box. Pieces of newspaper and what appeared to be tallow were discovered beneath the sand and rocks that filled the box," a statement read. "No items related to either Amundsen or to Franklin were found."

What Hath God Wrought?

All these new gadgets on the trail are starting to get us fuhklemt (Google it). Now DeLorme and SPOT are crowing about emerging technology that provides the ability to post to Facebook from anywhere in the world, far from the nearest cell tower. In fact, the two companies are sharing a 2010 *Popular Mechanics* Breakthrough Award next month for the first handheld GPS navigation system that can post to the social network and send text messages via satellite.

The new DeLorme Earthmate PN-60w with SPOT Satellite Communicator was described by *Popular Mechanics* editors as "a valuable tool on any trip that extends well outside of cell phone range. It not only provides detailed topographical maps and GPS guidance in the backcountry, it also lets explorers send SOS messages with embedded coordinates via satellite if they're in trouble – or Facebook updates if they're not." In addition, family and friends can track the user's progress via Google online maps.

The award winners will be highlighted in the November issue of *Popular Mechanics*, on newsstands Oct. 12, with winner profiles currently online at www.popularmechanics.com/breakthrough10.

The Earthmate PN-60w with SPOT Satellite Communicator is now widely available for purchase at retail stores and online, from major sporting goods and electronics resellers. SPOT communication and tracking services are activated via low-cost subscriptions. (For additional information: www.findmeSPOT.com, www.delorme.com).

Pedal and Paddle Across the U.S.

A man who launched a cross-country canoe trip from Portland, Ore., completed his 4,300-mile journey in Portland, Maine. The America's Rivers Expedition (ARE) traced a never attempted inland water route across the U.S. at its widest point.

Late last month, Alexander Martin, 24, of Kensington, Conn., ended his grueling trip that began in April 2009 and included 800 miles of portage. His final lap: down the Presumpscot River to Portland's East End Beach where family waited. Martin says his entire solo trip was human powered, either by paddle or pedal. He had a portable bike that he used to pull his canoe over land on longer portages. Chris Stec, of the American Canoe Association, says it's an epic journey that, while not a confirmed record, has helped raise awareness for America's water resources. Martin is thinking about his next waterborne adventure, possibly Siberia's Lena River. He says the 2,800-mile Lena is one of the longest rivers in the world not obstructed by dams. (For more information: www.americasriversexpedition.com).

World's First Shark Sanctuary

On Sept. 25, Johnson Toribiong, President of the Republic of Palau, was presented with the prestigious Ocean Heritage Award by the Shark Research Institute for creating the entire EEZ (Exclusive Economic Zone) of Palau – 237,000 square miles of the Pacific Ocean – as the world's first shark sanctuary.

Shark populations around the world are crashing; some species such as scalloped hammerhead sharks have declined up to 98% according to fisheries surveys. Approximately 73 million sharks are slaughtered each year for the shark fin trade, primarily as an ingredient in shark fin soup.

Sharks as top predators in the sea are critical to maintaining the health of the ocean ecosystem – the life support system of our planet. “If we take away the top of the ocean food chain – the sharks – the whole system will break down,” said Dr. Sylvia Earle, Honorary President of the Shark Research Institute. (For more information: www.sharks.org).

Paddled the Rio Platano? Please Check In

Explorers Club member Robert Hyman is looking for anyone who has achieved the complete rafting descent of the Rio Platano through the UNESCO World Heritage Site Biosphere Reserve in Honduras. This supposedly protected reserve is under immense pressure from illegal activities such as logging, slash and burn for grazing, fishing poaching and hunting. Very few people have ever done this epic 12-day adventure. If you are one of them please contact Robert Hyman at robertehyman@gmail.com.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“Mistakes are the portals of discovery.” – James Joyce, Irish author (1882-1941).

MEDIA MATTERS

It's the Real Thing

Nigel Cabourn, the British outerwear guru whose archive of 4,000 pieces encompasses everything from early R.A.F. uniforms to expedition gear worn on Sir Edmund Hillary's ascent of Mount Everest, was interviewed for the *New York Times Style Magazine* (Fall 2010). In a story that explains how the Lindbergh look is flying again, Cabourn says, “With aviation, it's a whole new look, with hats, gloves, fat belts. And everything was pure – pure wool, pure cotton, pure silk. That's what they were wearing on those aeroplanes. Nothing synthetic.” The interviewer, writer Mark Rozzo, interprets vintage aviation-inspired apparel, “The message is clear: I am down-to-earth, practical and capable of feats that will boggle your imagination.”

Better Stock Up on Tang

“Commercialized space travel will see a lot of innovation,” Jeffrey Baumgartner, founder of the JPB innovation consultancy tells Chris Gay of the *Wall Street Journal* (Sept. 27). “Much of it will be incremental in nature, but the result – low cost, easy travel to space and potential bases on the moon and, in the longer term, Mars – will involve substantial innovation.

“The key here,” says Baumgartner, “is that aeronautics is leaving government control and being taken over by industry, where cost-cutting and profitability, rather than contractors milking the state for as much as they can get, will lead to a lot of innovation, affordability and efficiency.”

HuffPost Travel Seeks Bloggers

HuffPost Travel, part of The Huffington Post (www.huffingtonpost.com), is looking for adventure bloggers – people who take risks and interesting and challenging trips around the world. The blogs are generally between 300 and 800 words and there is no pay, only exposure for your project. The Huffington Post is an Internet newspaper, full of news, blogs and opinion with roughly 45 million unique hits a month. If you have a trip planned that you'd like to blog about, email Kate Auletta at kate@huffingtonpost.com.

Sierra Magazine is Tops Among Influentials

Sierra magazine is ranked number one out of 213 magazines that reach “influentials,” according to Mediamark Research, Inc.’s 2010 Spring syndicated study. Influentials are Americans who are politically and socially active, well-informed and trusted for their opinion on a variety of products and services. Representing only one in ten consumers—approximately 21 million Americans—influentials are said to turn to magazines for the information they need to make their own personal buying decisions and to make recommendations. In large numbers, they turn to *SIERRA*, reaching more than 1.1 million readers worldwide. In number two position was *Barron’s*.

“We’re always proud to be in the company of such great magazines, but even more proud of our readers, who are never shy about wielding influence in defense of the mountains, deserts, lakes, rivers and planet they love,” declares Editor-in-Chief Bob Sipchen.

SIERRA magazine is the publication of the Sierra Club and fosters relationships between its readers, the outdoors and the outdoor companies that can help them to “Explore, Enjoy and Protect the Planet.” (For more information: www.sierraclub.org/sierra).

EXPEDITION MARKETING

Keen on Winning a Trip to Boulder?

We never win anything. No wait. Correct that. We once won an awful Sarah Coventry pendant after posing as an imposter on the vintage TV game show *To Tell the Truth*. But

a new video contest sponsored by Keen ups the prize ante substantially. Photos and video entries are being sought that show “how you are playing outside, caring for the world and creating new possibilities.” Top prize is a VIP package for two to the 2011 Boulder International Film Festival, including three nights hotel and roundtrip airfare to Denver. Deadline is Nov. 30, 2010. (For more information and tips on taking better photos and video: www.hybridlifechallenge.com).

84-Year Old Everest Trekker Pitches Socks

With the boom in reality television, seems almost anyone can be a celebrity these days, even an elderly Everest trekker. Sock manufacturer Point6 is crowing about the use of their socks by a group of trekkers including 84-year old Edna Northrup.

Outfitted in Point6 hiking and trekking socks, Northrup’s group spent 11 days completing the 100-mile trek from Lukla, Nepal to South Base Camp on Mount Everest reaching an altitude of approximately 17,590 feet. A self-proclaimed adventure seeker, Northrup is believed to be the eldest Western woman to have completed the Everest base camp trek. Northrup has also hiked the Appalachian Trail from Maine to Georgia covering over 2,000 miles in addition to countless other adventures in her time.

The company expects her valuable feedback and experience as a product tester will be an asset to the Point6 product team. (Read about her trek in the local Ellicottville [N.Y.] News: <http://www.ellicottvillenews.com/index.php/2010/05/edna-northrup-triumphs-over-mount-everest/>).

EXPEDITION INK

The Hard Way Around

By Geoffrey Wolff,

(Knopf, October 2010)

Reviewed by Robert F. Wells

For more than a century, *Sailing Alone Around the World*, by Joshua Slocum has been required reading for anyone who dreams of exploring the unknown. Slocum stuck a finger in the eye of convention to sail solo around the world in a small boat that looked like a mutant bathtub. By being the first to attempt this feat, Slocum easily plopped himself into the same league as Magellan, Columbus and Cook.

But who was this fellow? Where and when did his itch begin to twitch? And why? I'm not sure whether you should read Slocum's spellbinding narrative first. But you should definitely read Geoffrey Wolff's *The Hard Way Around* for dessert.

Slocum? He's one odd duck. Coming from rocky soil in Nova Scotia – browbeat by a tyrannical father – it's easy to see why "escaping into solitude" made sense. As a child, nothing he did was right... and so off he went, crawling through a hawses hole onto a nearby merchant ship. He was a fast study and before long, ships were his and oceans were sliced open by their bows. Sydney brought him a kindred wife and companion.

Kids followed – all with instant sea legs and salt water behind the ears. As a captain, Joshua didn't suffer slovenly seamen – and often forced them to taste his hair trigger temper. There were mutinies. Exotic diseases. Deaths. Ship wrecks. And economic ruin. All of these conditions crashed upon the shores of his mind – giving birth to his attempt to accomplish what no other man has done... to sail around the world alone.

Geoffrey Wolff does his level best to unravel the enigma that is Joshua Slocum – a complicated task. If alive today, Slocum would fascinate any red-blooded psychologist. George Plimpton once cited Slocum as one person he would have loved to invite over for dinner. For Slocum, anything was possible – if you rolled up your sleeves and dug your fingers into it. What others thought had no bearing.

Loneliness collapsed by making inanimate objects live, while days slipped into months without human contact. After three years at sea, his little ship landed in ritzy Newport, R.I. to jeering "gold coast" disbelievers who thought he was no more than an unkempt quack. Laughing at him, they sent him out to sea again as a nautical nut case. (I guess if you live in mansions with dozens of dotting servants, exploration is a foreign language).

You do not need a spanking breeze with a bone in your teeth to enjoy this fine little book. After turning a few early pages, you will be easily caught up by an adventurous spirit that will sail you to places you've never been. But please, put your slicker on.

Robert Wells, a member of The Explorers Club since 1991, is a resident of Darien, Conn., and a retired executive of the Young & Rubicam ad agency. Wells is the director of a steel band (see www.blueflamessteelband.com) and in 1989, at the age of 45, traveled south by road bike from Canada to Long Island Sound in a single 19-hr., 28-min. push.

CLIMBING FOR DOLLARS

Deadline Approaches for Polartec Challenge Grants

For almost twenty years, the International Polartec Challenge Grant has supported expeditions and adventures to every corner of the Earth. Applications for the \$10,000 grant are now available for 2011 expeditions.

The Polartec Challenge Grant seeks to assist frugal, low impact teams who respect the local culture and environment and serve as role models to outdoor enthusiasts worldwide. Applications are evaluated on the basis of vision, commitment, educational and cultural value. Polartec Challenge Grants have supported winners as they kayaked the waters of Antarctica, skied across Siberia, trekked across deserts and forged first ascents on the world's most difficult peaks.

Past recipients of the Polartec Challenge Grant include outdoor pioneers and adventurers such as Conrad Anker, Jimmy Chin, Steve House, Marko Prezelj, Andrew McLean and

John Shipton. In addition to grant money, winners are fully outfitted with Polartec garments to keep expedition members warm, dry and comfortable.

The Polartec Challenge is not the appropriate venue for projects that involve competition or fund raising. To apply for the 2011 International Polartec Challenge Grant, visit Polartec.com. The deadline for submissions is November 1, 2010.

66° North Expedition Grant

Every year, the 66° North Icelandic apparel company allocates two expedition grants of ISK 500,000 each (approx. \$4,360) to individuals or groups. The grants include both clothing for the expedition and a cash sum of up to ISK 200,000 (\$1,745).

The application deadline is October 10; winners will be announced Nov. 1, 2010. To apply: <http://www.66north.com/us/about-us/news-&-events/nr/580/> (For more information: Helga Viðarsdóttir, marketing manager, helga@66north.is, +354 535-6600).

WEB WATCH

Google Street View Expands to Antarctica

It seems now nowhere is safe from Google's prying eyes. Brian McClendon, vice president of engineering, Google Earth and Maps, announced late last month that Street View now includes Antarctica, specifically a panoramic section of Half Moon Island in the South Shetlands.

Street View was introduced in May 2007, enabling people to explore street-level imagery in five U.S. cities. Since then, the free service has expanded its 360-degree panoramic views to all seven continents.

McClendon took the Street View images, really just vacation photos, while traveling to Antarctica with his wife on Swan Hellenic cruise line's *Minerva* last January. "We enjoyed stunning vistas, and I found that any minute not spent on deck was a spectacular view missed," he blogged on Sept. 30 on the Official Google Blog:

<http://googleblog.blogspot.com/2010/09/explore-world-with-street-view-now-on.html>

See Street View Antarctica at:

http://maps.google.com/intl/en_us/help/maps/streetview/gallery/#seven-continents-of-street-view&half-moon-island-antarctica

We have our friends at The Adventure Blog (<http://theadventureblog.blogspot.com/>) to thank for this tip.

ON THE HORIZON

**AAC New York Section Celebrates Seven Summits 25th Anniversary –
Union Club, New York City, Nov. 13, 2010**

Twenty-five years ago last April, Dick Bass, partnered with David Breashears, summited Mt. Everest, thus concluding a three-year quest to climb the highest point on all Seven Continents, a feat which had not been accomplished before. Since then, more than 275 climbers have followed in Bass's footsteps and completed the odyssey with many more on their way. It has been a boon to the guiding industry and has spawned numerous books and films.

The event, also featuring climbers Phil Ershler and "Bo" Parfet, will benefit the American Alpine Club Library. Tickets are available by advance subscription only through Section Chair Phil Erard, philiperard@nysalpineclub.org, 212 763 0379.

EXPEDITION MAILBAG

Keep the Mallory Mystery Alive

"I appreciate the length that folks are going to in order to solve the Mallory mystery once and for all (*EN*, September 2010), but I for one hope that the mystery is never solved: we all need a bit of mystery in our lives and I'd rather be left with the thought that they might – just might – have reached the top rather than the factual evidence that they did not."

– Paul Deegan, Equipment Editor, *Geographical* - the magazine of the Royal Geographical Society. www.geographical.co.uk

EXPEDITION CLASSIFIEDS

Adventurous But Dysfunctional? – Dysfunctional families wanted for global adventure reality series. Is your wife too busy? Is your daughter not talking to you? Has Dear Old Dad lost his way after getting laid off from work? Is your son more interested in his iPod than in being your son? Share your story with us. Please e-mail us a couple of paragraphs that talks about your individual personalities and why the family is dysfunctional at production@creativecvg.com. Also, please include a jpeg of your family.

Explorers Club Seeks Executive Director – The New York-based Explorers Club is seeking applicants for the position of Executive Director to be responsible for the day-to-day management of the organization. Founded in 1906, the Explorers Club has 3,100 members in 19 domestic and 9 overseas chapters. An e-mail copy of the position description and application form can be obtained from Matt Williams, Operations Director, at mwilliams@explorers.org. Experience in management of non-profit organizations is highly desired. Application deadline is November 15, 2010.

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