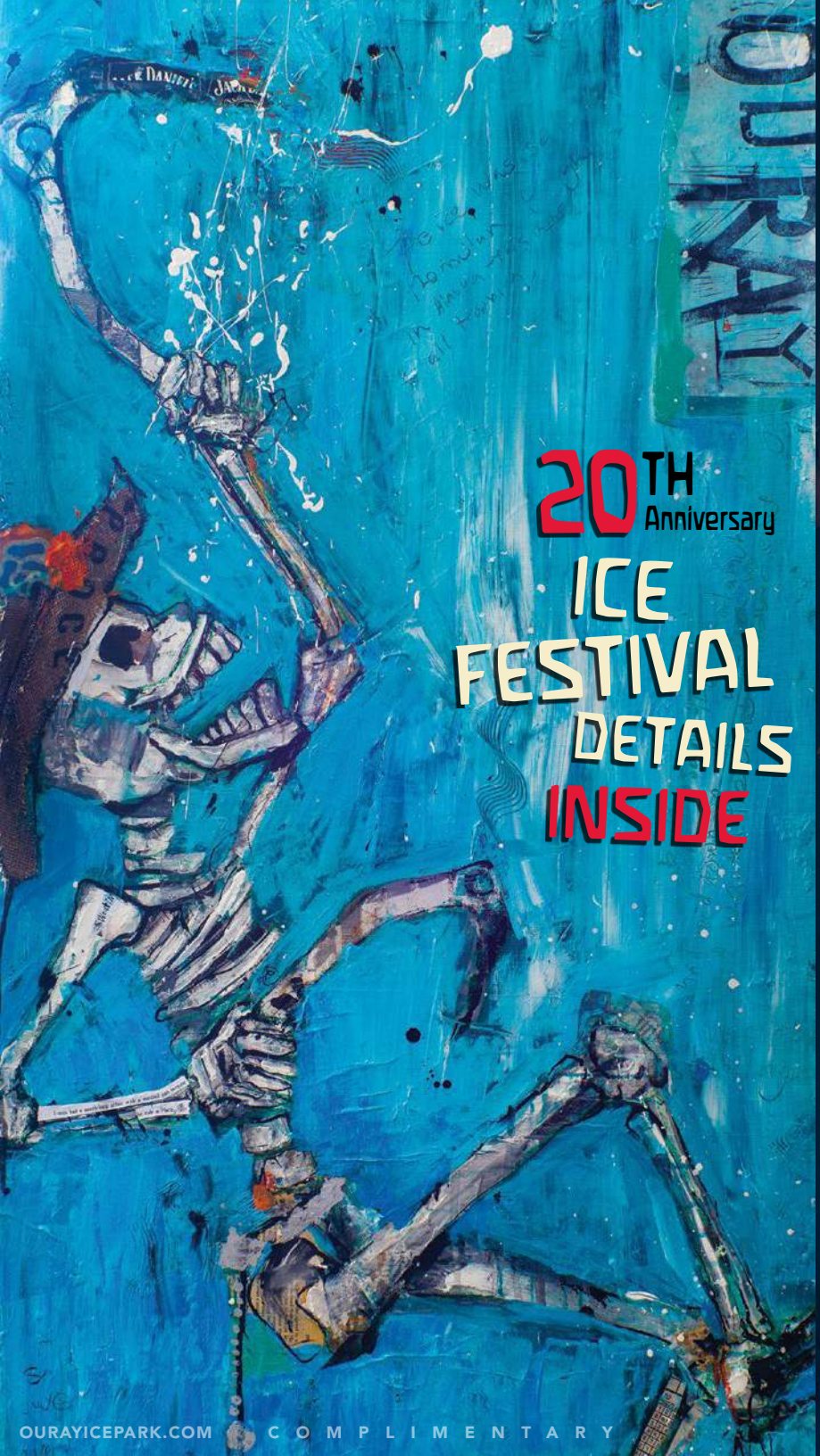


20TH Anniversary ICE FESTIVAL DETAILS INSIDE

THE OFFICIAL OURAY ICE PARK GUIDE 2014-15

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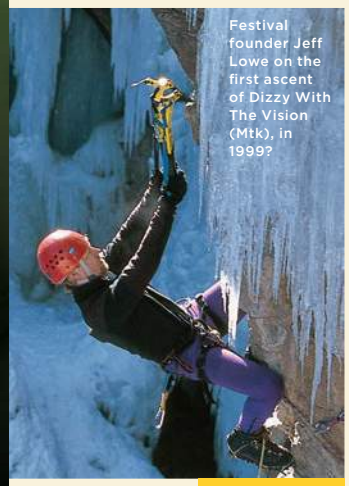
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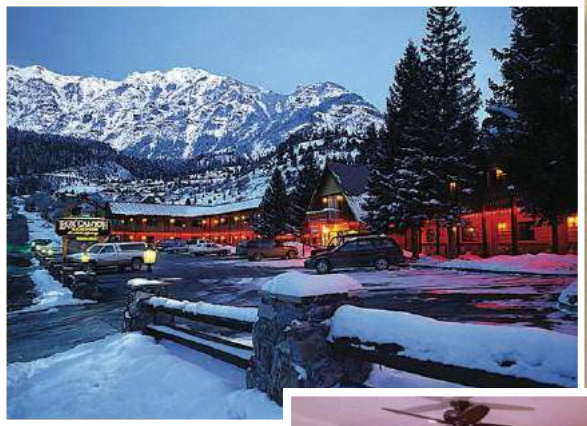
Andreas Marin at the 2012 mixed competition. PHOTO: Seth Anderson



Festival founder Jeff Lowe on the first ascent of Dizzy With The Vision (Mtk), in 1999?

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KELLIE DAY: COVER ARTIST

My artistic medium is mixed media on canvas. I like the way words mix with images, and often add poems, chocolate wrappers and torn pages of books to my paintings that can be serendipitous to the viewer. If you look closely, youíll find all kinds of surprises. My work is whimsical, bold, bright, happy and sometimes a little edgy. It's my goal to spread beauty in the world.

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FSC







FORMER ALPINIST MAGAZINE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF MICHAEL KENNEDY (AT RIGHT) AND HIS SON HAYDEN FREQUENTLY PARTAKE IN THE ANNUAL "GATHERING OF THE TRIBE" AT THE OURAY ICE FESTIVAL.

Welcome to the OURAY ICE PARK

I first visited Ouray in February 1977. Jeff Lowe, one of the founders of the Ouray Ice Festival, had asked me to help him teach an ice-climbing course. The town was virtually shut down in winter then and Jeff had convinced a motel owner to reopen part of his property to our motley crew. The Silver Nugget was the only restaurant open but we were typically cheap climbers and mostly cooked for ourselves. Conveniently, both Duckett's Market and Apteka Liquors were in operation, so we had all the bases covered.

We were the only climbers around and headed out each day into a magical world of exploration, repeating routes that had often only been done once or twice and finding unclimbed waterfalls around every corner. Little did we know that this sleepy, out-of-the-way mining town would eventually become a bustling mini-metropolis with "ice climbers welcome" signs in every shop and restaurant window.

Nearly four decades after my first visit, Ouray in winter is packed, busy in the best sort of way, a place for climbers from all over the world to congregate. The Ouray Ice Park is a world-renowned destination, offering dozens of routes for all tastes, and the surrounding valleys contain some of the world's best – and hardest – ice and mixed climbs. It's truly a paradise for beginner and aficionado alike.

For 20 years, the Ouray Ice Festival has been an integral part of the town's emergence as the epicenter of ice and mixed climbing in the U.S. and indeed the world. As a gathering of the tribe, the Ice Fest fosters broad communication and understanding of the latest routes, techniques and attitudes. The competition is less about winning than showcasing the exceptional skill of the athletes and the passion they share with all climbers. The Ouray Ice Festival is a celebration of the beauty and challenge of the winter dance, and an inspiration to get out on your own cold, crystalline adventure.

– Michael Kennedy



PHOTO BY DANCHEHAYL

THE OURAY ICE PARK
Tiny Town, World Class Climbing Venue

BY PETER SHELTON, MARTINIQUE DAVIS AND SAMANTHA WRIGHT

Every winter, from mid-December to late March, shaded 70-to-100 foot cliff faces, a plentiful municipal water supply, sub-zero overnight temperatures and an intrepid gang of "ice farmers" conspire to create exquisite frothy ribbons of steep blue ice that spill down into the Uncompahgre Gorge, drawing ice climbers and spectators from around the globe.

This is the Ouray Ice Park, providing a mind-boggling variety of accessible, open and free ice climbing terrain, all just a few minutes' walk from downtown Ouray, Colorado.

The glacial curtains of the Uncompahgre Gorge have served for decades as a playground for ice climbers, starting in the 1970s when the sport first emerged in earnest on mountain athletes' radar in the western United States. They climbed ice wherever they could find it – including the dark slit of the Uncompahgre Gorge near Ouray, upstream of the Camp Bird Road bridge, where an 80-foot icicle dripped down the cliff below the old city reservoir.

Old-school ice climbers of the day couldn't resist rappelling down the cliff and spidering back up the undulating ice.

Back in those days, Ouray in winter was essentially Rip Van Winkle-ville. Some mornings, there wasn't a single car on Main Street, and no human form stirring in the frosty air.

Anecdotally, the hardest thing to find in Ouray in the winter back then was a hotel that was open. "You would go into the Portal" – Ouray's bar of the day –"and somebody would know somebody who would open up a room for the night," recalled longtime local ice climber and world-class mountaineer Vince Anderson.

The area didn't see an influx of new visitors, or much interest, until 1994, when local ice enthusiasts Bill Whitt and Gary Wild came up with a kooky but brilliant idea. They strung PVC pipe and a sundry assortment of garden hose and sprinkler heads along the lip of the gorge, and thus got into the business of "ice farming."

The results surprised even the pundits: long steep flows of crystal blue ice on previously blank rock. Word spread quickly that winter, with the newly formed area seeing a big increase in visiting ice climbers.

With a world-class venue to promote, the Ouray Ice Festival soon was born. The first-ever event was held in January 1996, nurtured under the guidance of ice-climbing pioneer Jeff Lowe. The formation of Ouray Ice Park Inc. (OIPI) followed closely on the heels of the inaugural Ice Festival, with the formal organization coming into being in January 1997.

In 2001, Lowe sold the Ouray Ice Festival to OIPI. The festival's shift to local ownership in 2001

>>>

ICE AGE
An Insider's Story of the Ouray Ice Park

BY SAMANTHA WRIGHT

There are plenty of apocryphal tales out there about the birth of the Ouray Ice Park, but Bill Whitt knows all the dirty details of how it really happened.

Back in 1991, Whitt, a California windsurfing bum turned ice climber, and local trial attorney turned real estate developer Gary Wild bought a hotel together in Ouray called the Victorian Inn.

They dreamed up the Ouray Ice Park as a way to drum up winter business. But before they could start farming ice, they had to get the blessing of Eric Jacobson, the owner of the Ouray Hydroelectric Plant, who owned an easement right through the Uncompahgre Gorge.

As Whitt tells the story, Jacobson and Wild were not crazy about each other. But then one day, "Gary walked over to the hydro plant with a six-pack, sat down with Eric, they started drinking beers, and it was like, 'I love you, man,' and boom, it was solved. They worked it out. Without that, there would never be an Ice Park."

In the early days of ice farming in the Uncompahgre Gorge, "there was a lot of trial and error," Whitt said. "Nobody had done anything like this before. It was a grassroots effort personified."

It was also a pain in the ass.

"We'd run hoses and stuff, and that worked great for half a night, then they'd be frozen solid. So we'd



BILL WHITT

strip the hoses, take them down to the Victorian Inn, put 'em in the hot tub, defrost them, then take them back up and hook them up again."

Miraculously, it worked. The ice started growing. Ice climbers flocked to Ouray from around the world. Et voila, the Ouray Ice Park was born.

"Everyone thought we were mental," Whitt said. "They said it would never make any money and it was the stupidest thing ever. There are still locals that wish we never started it."

But most folks today agree that the Ice Park has changed Ouray, and the sport of ice climbing, for the better.

These days there are plenty of people who'd like to take some credit for what Whitt and Wild started. "I wish I had a buck for everybody I ran into who said they started the Ice Park," Whitt said.

"I just laugh, and say, 'That was a good idea, man. I'm glad you did.'" ●



PHOTO BY STORMY PYEATTE

>>>

represented a vital first step in its evolution into the internationally recognized event it is known as today.

A festival that once was visited by a handful of American ice climbers (and a dozen or less sponsors) now boasts an internationally touted competitive field, upwards of 40 sponsors, and many opportunities for non-competitive climbers of all ages and skill levels to be involved in the festivities, through its adult and children's climbing clinics.

Today, thanks to their symbiotic relationship, both the Ouray Ice Park and the Ouray Ice Festival continue to thrive, while upholding the maverick, grassroots spirit of their founders. The park provides a picture-perfect venue for some of the finest ice climbing on the planet, while the festival serves as the Park's primary revenue source (accounting for over 70 percent of the Park's annual budget).

Despite the high cost of its maintenance, the Park remains free and open for public use. San Juan Mountain Guides, a local outfitting company, holds the guiding concession in the Ouray Ice Park and allocates climbing days to other guides.

Jointly owned and managed by the City of Ouray, OIPI and a mix of other private and public landowners, the park has grown to span more than one mile of the Uncompahgre Gorge, and offers more than three vertical miles of ice and mixed terrain in about 200 identified routes equipped with dozens of fixed anchors and access points.

The Ice Park's innovative gravity-fed plumbing system has improved considerably from the days of cobbled-together garden hoses and whatnot. Today, using more than 7,500 feet of pipe and 235 spray nozzles, over 270,000 gallons of highly pressurized spring water are sprayed on the canyon walls on a typical winter's night, and the Ouray Ice Park has become one of the world's premier ice-climbing venues.

For three-and-a-half magical months each winter, the billowing blue beauty of the place, with its crystalline draperies and drippy frozen chandeliers, echoes with the sound of myriad languages and accents, and countless picks swinging into ice.

And thanks to the Ouray Ice Park, its sleepy neighboring community has been transformed. Most hotels in Ouray now stay open year-round. Shops and restaurants have followed suit, staying open to serve the ice-climbing crowd through the winter months. Business owners attest that ice climbers continue to flock to the area with full wallets, big appetites and high spirits.

Deep within its depths, you would never guess that a highway snakes past, just over the lip of the canyon, and that a busy little town is just a few minutes' walk away.

There's no other place like this in the world. So take a moment to chillax. Shake out your arms. Enjoy the view. Breathe. Then belly up to a slick wall of ice and climb.

BEHIND THE ICE: About OIPI

Ouray Ice Park, Inc. is a non-profit corporation formed in 1997 to provide formal organization to what previously had been a loose grassroots effort to maintain and promote the Ouray Ice Park. The organization consists of a hard-working volunteer Board of Directors and five awesome employees.

Administrative Director Stephanie Griebe is a new addition to the Ouray Ice Park this year. She started working for OIPI in July 2014 and hasn't had a moment to think about anything aside from ice and Ice Festing ever since! As a Colorado native, Stephanie grew up enjoying what she considers the finer side of life; camping, fishing, hiking and biking. She feels fortunate to now call the San Juan Mountains home, and embraces the opportunity to work for the Ouray Ice Park – an amazing organization that provides incredible outdoor recreation for the novice, the pro and everyone in between.

Administrative Assistant Nicole Lovesky has worked as the Administrative Assistant at the Ouray Ice Park for the past two years. She graduated from the University of Vermont with a degree in Environmental Studies with a concentration in Sustainable Business. Lovesky splits her time between Colorado and northern Vermont, where she spends her summers working for the Craftsbury Outdoor Center. Nicole has enjoyed working with the small but committed staff and board at the Ouray Ice Park. She loves watching the organization continue to grow and the impact it has on individuals, Ouray, and the greater climbing community.

Ice Park Manager Dan Chehayl is no stranger to the Ouray Ice Park. This is his fourth season working here; last year he was the Chief Ice Farmer; this year he's been promoted to the Park Manager. Chehayl (who is married to Nicole Lovesky) first came to Ouray as a college sophomore with a group of friends from Sterling College in Vermont. He came back as often as he could over the next couple of years and eventually moved to Ouray in 2007. That first winter, he worked at Mouse's Chocolates and ice climbed obsessively. Then, after a year in Telluride and a brief stint back east, he came back to Ouray for good, landing work as an ice farmer under former Park Manager Kevin Koprek. He enjoys the best of both worlds – doing work he loves, and then climbing in the icy badlands that he and his crew create.

This is **Chief Ice Farmer Steven Van Sickle**'s second year farming ice in the Ouray Ice Park. He has lived in Ouray year round for five years now and can't get enough of the climbing on the Western Slope. "To me, the changing nature of ice is one of the most interesting things about winter climbing," he said.Winter is certainly his favorite time, but when there isn't anything frozen in the area he likes to head to the Black Canyon, Indian Creek, or Chamonix!

Ice Farmer Scott Vanderplaats is new to the Ice Park this year. He grew up in Colorado Springs and started climbing ice in Rocky Mountain National Park while attending CSU. Outdoor recreation has always been a passion for Vanderplaats, and forced the move to the Western Slope five years ago. You can find him skiing and climbing ice when it's cold, biking and climbing splitters when it's not. He's out there somewhere…

FUNDING STRUCTURE

OIPI relies solely on memberships, sponsorships, and donations to operate one of the premier ice climbing venues in the world. Approximately 70 percent of the funds needed to maintain the Ouray Ice Park are raised through the annual Ouray Ice Festival. The remaining operating budget comes from individual memberships and local business sponsorships.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP

Please consider becoming a member to help us maintain and operate the Ouray Ice Park and to help keep it free. For more information about the benefits of becoming a Ouray Ice Park member, visit ourayicepark.com/about/membership/.

PRESERVING ACCESS

Every great climbing venue probably has a fascinating access story behind it. The Ouray Ice Park is no different. Unbeknownst to many climbers, a Federal Energy Regulatory Commission-regulated hydroelectric facility runs right through the middle of it.

The facility belongs to Eric Jacobson, owner and operator of the Ouray Hydroelectric Plant. The plant itself is located in downtown Ouray, but its infrastructure includes a dam at the south end of the Ouray Ice Park and a 6,130-foot-long pressure pipeline, or penstock, with an accompanying easement that stretches right through the core of the Ice Park.

Jacobson is among the rare breed of benevolent private property owners sympathetic to climbers and their desire to climb on his property. He leases the use of his land in the Ouray Ice Park to the City of Ouray for recreational purposes for $1.00 a year. In return, the City provides Jacobson with liability protection.

This protection is strengthened through the Colorado Recreational Use Statute which provides that if an owner of land allows members of the general public to use the land for recreational purposes without charge, the owner is not liable for injury suffered by a recreational user.

This ongoing arrangement with Jacobson has been a critical ingredient for laying the foundation of the Ouray Ice Park.

"The truth is that without Eric's early willingness to grant access, and his continued willingness to sign a lease with the City of Ouray, the Ouray Ice Park wouldn't be what it is today," said OIPI Board President Mike MacLeod.

Thanks, Eric!


PHOTO BY SAMANTHA WRIGHT

Insider's Tour of the Ouray Ice Park

BY SAMANTHA WRIGHT

The Ouray Ice Park is basically divvied up into the **South End** and the **North End** – a nod to the plumbing system that keeps the water flowing and the ice growing inside the Park.

A six-inch stainless steel line delivers water downhill from the City of Ouray's water storage tank to a vault in the central portion of the Ice Park, where the line splits into a "T" to form north end and south end systems.

All climbs in the Ice Park downstream from the Trestle and Mixed Alcove climbing areas are part of the North End system. Everything else is in the South End.

With Ice Park Manager DanChehayl as our guide, let's start our insider's tour at the **Mixed Alcove**, which has got some steep climbs and a couple of really neat mixed routes like Jesus Built My Finger Crack.

Just downstream is Pick o' the Vic (a long sheer climb just to the south of the Upper Bridge) and the **Lead-Only Area** (meaning that you can't set up a top-rope belay, and have to rap in to begin your route). Mostly located beneath the Upper Bridge, this area boasts long, sheer 130-foot climbs that are very steep and challenging.

If you're not up for climbing this stuff yourself, it's still a great place to go watch really good climbers do their thing.

The **Lower Bridge** area has it all. Moderate to desperate ice, and a selection of easily accessed classic mixed routes. This is the heart of the Ice Park, where the annual Ouray Ice Festival is centered, with familiar landmark features including the Powder House, observation decks overlooking the gorge, and the comp tower where the best ice climbers in the world compete during the Ouray Ice Festival.

The nearby **Scottish Gullies** area features a good mix of moderate to more difficult climbs and is also easily accessed via a short approach from the road. The area gets more sun than most other parts of the Ice Park. "It makes the ice a bit stickier – what we call hero ice – and easier to climb," Chehayl said.

From there, if you continue heading down the canyon towards town, on the right you'll find the only area in the whole ice park that offers climbing on the west side of the canyon. It's called the **Stump Wall**, in honor of the famous Got Stump t-shirt auction that raised funds to develop the area. Chehayl describes the Stump Wall as "another little pot of gold."

It's not climbed a lot, maybe because not that many people know about it. "It offers some steeper routes – nothing moderate or easy – so it's a good place to challenge yourself," Chehayl said. "It's open for top-roping as well and there is a neat mixed-climbing bolted route there that comes out of a cave. It's one of my favorites to climb."

After the Stump Wall, you get into the **Five Fingers** area, named for five iconic free-hanging pillars that do not touch the rock behind them. The area offers some "really quality climbing," Chehayl said, including an enormous pillar called **La Ventana**, which is "one of the neatest features we have in the park."

Go around the corner, where the canyon doglegs, and you have the poetically named **Shithouse Wall**, serving up nice long challenging pillars of vertical ice, situated below an outhouse on the canyon's rim. The area gets lot of sun, "so it's probably got our stickiest ice," Chehayl added.

THE SOUTH END of the Ouray Ice Park winds its way up into the Uncompahgre Gorge from the Pick o' the Vic area near the Upper Bridge. Most of it can't be seen from the highway.

The most popular area, by far, is the **School Room**, a giant slab of ice that stretches for close to a quarter mile up the canyon.

"It's a good place to learn, with anchors right next to each other, and a good standing area at the bottom," Chehayl said. "You can walk around from one end to the other and talk to other climbers. There is a lot of space for groups to hang out and do instruction, and a fair amount of sun during the morning and early afternoon."

Beyond the School Room is **Grad School**, which is by contrast, "the quietest area in the park," Chehayl said. "It's a good place to be on your own, challenge yourself on vertical stuff."

After that comes **New Funtier,** a narrow gullied area with walk-in access where the canyon is not so deep, offering shorter pillared climbs.

Almost all the way up the canyon, you get to **South Park** – "a really cool spot with a lot of ice and a whole lot of climbs," Chehayl said. "On weekends, people frequently make the trek to South Park, and it gets pretty crowded. It's a big social scene."

At the end of the Park comes the **Deep South**, serving up the last 10 climbs in the Ice Park. "It's usually pretty quiet out there," Chehayl said. "The climbs are shorter. It's a nice, peaceful place to go climb. You feel like you are in the backcountry when you are out in the Deep South."

And indeed, you almost are. For beyond the Ice Park, the San Juan Mountains beckon, with some of the wildest ice you could ever hope to climb.

Ice Park Landmarks

Uncompahgre River – The yellowish-brownish water of the Uncompahgre River trickles through the guts of the Ouray Ice Park throughout the winter. Although it freezes over in spots, plenty of ice tools have been lost to "the drink" over the years. In parts of the Uncompahgre Gorge where the river does not freeze, Dan Chehayl and his crew set up ladders and boards to offer safe access to the bottoms of the climbs.

Upper Bridge and Lower Bridge – Two bridges spanning the Uncompahgre Gorge that provide key access and convenient viewing platforms for the central part of the Ouray Ice Park.

Hydro Dam, Penstock & Trestle – Infrastructure associated with the century-old Federal Energy Regulatory Commission-regulated hydroelectric facility that runs right through the middle of the Ouray Ice Park.

Kids Wall – The Kids Wall, located near the Upper Bridge alongside the Camp Bird Road, features a dozen beginner-friendly climbs on a modest slope above the Uncompahgre Gorge. A number of picnic tables are set up in the area, providing a popular spot for climbers to hang out, get their crampons on, and watch the action on the Kids Wall and big climbs in the gorge nearby.

Memorial Kiosk – Also near the Upper Bridge, on the very brink of the Uncompahgre Gorge, is the Memorial Kiosk, created by Ouray metalsmith Jeff Skoloda. It features lattice work designed to look like rope tangled around the structure, blowing in the wind. Two granite benches inside the kiosk overlook the Kids' Wall, and a compass rose embedded in the floor displays mile markers for favorite climbing mountains around the world. Both the kiosk and Kids Wall are dedicated to all the fallen friends of the Ouray Ice Park.

Dick's Chalet – Named for a longtime friend of the Ouray Ice Park, Dick Fowler, who passed away in 2009, Dick's Chalet is a simple hut-like structure tucked into the woods overlooking the Uncompahgre Gorge, just uphill from the Upper Bridge. Come in on weekends to buy Ice Park memberships and merchandise like hoodies and tees. "Mr. Dick" was an iconic Ouray character, spanning the old and the new as effortlessly as he spun tales from his stool of honor at the Buen Tiempo restaurant. Formerly the operator of Ouray's historic hydro plant, Fowler also helped build the very first catwalk at the Ice Park in the early 1990s.

Powder House – A quonset-hut-shaped rock masonry structure near the Lower Bridge that once served as an explosives magazine and is now Ice Farmer headquarters.

Port-a-potties – If you have to go, look for port-a-potties at the Powder House and by the Kids Wall/ Upper Bridge area. Last year, with help from the Access Fund and American Alpine Club, OIPI also built two new outhouses at the south end of the Park; one in the Grad School area, and another at the far end of South Park.



ABOUT OURAY

PHOTO BY DAWN GLANC

BY SAMANTHA WRIGHT

Ouray, the "Switzerland of America," nestles like a little jewel in the heart of the San Juan Mountains, with world-class outdoor recreation opportunities beckoning in all directions. From ice climbing to backcountry skiing and ski mountaineering, the Ouray area has you covered for any winter outdoor adventure. And the best part is, you get to soak in our local hot springs when you are done.

Ouray is also a place of living history – settled by miners in the 1870s and named for the Ute leader Chief Ouray who once lived near here, and whose people frequented the area's "sacred healing waters." The town has a preponderance of lovely old historic buildings – the entire town is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

WHERE TO SOAK

Ouray Hot Springs Pool – On a chilly winter's night, there's no place like the Ouray Hot Springs Pool and Fitness Center to soak away the thrills and spills of the day. The huge municipal outdoor pool is divided into areas with different temperatures for different activities and comfort levels, including a hot-soak section with water temperatures ranging from 104 to106 degrees – very popular with the ice-climbing crowd after a big day in the Park! Winter hours are noon - 9 p.m. Monday to Friday, and 11 a.m.-9 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. Ouray Ice Park members enjoy a 20 percent discounted admission. Present your membership card at the door. *(1230 Main St., Ouray; 970/325-7073; on Facebook)*

Orvis Hot Springs – This small, clothing-optional facility just south of Ridgway offers private hot-tubs and a natural outdoor hot springs pool where geothermal spring water bubbles up out of a meadow under the shadow of 14,150 ft. Mt. Sneffels. Overnight guests have 24-hour access to the pools. Everyone else has to leave at 10 p.m. *(1585 County Road 3, Ridgway; 970/626-5324; orvishotsprings.com)*

Wiesbaden Hot Springs Spa – The Historic Wiesbaden Hot Springs Spa, in the heart of Ouray, sits directly over the emanation points of several natural hot springs ranging in temperatures from 78-128 degrees. Enter the spa's vapor cave and soaking pool for a strange, dark, steamy underworld soaking experience. Outside, enjoy the small hot springs swimming pool with untreated water so pure you could drink it, and the "Lorelei," a secluded outdoor spa with its own tranquil soaking pool. Overnight lodging and a full range of spa treatments are offered. *(625 5th St, Ouray; 970/325-4347; wiesbadenhotsprings.com)*

WHERE TO PLAY

Backcountry Ice Climbing – There's much, much more to ice climbing in Ouray than the Ouray Ice Park. The surrounding San Juan mountain range is home to one of the greatest concentrations of water ice climbs in North America. The range's steep relief and deep gorges provide a superb venue for backcountry ice climbing. Roads carved into the sides of mountains – a legacy of Ouray's rich mining history – provide stunning access to that terrain today. Ouray's backcountry climbing scene begins at the Skylight area near the Camp Bird Mine up County Road 361. Quite a few other classics are within walking distance of town, or a short drive up the road – try the Dexter Slab, Bear Creek Falls, Horsetail Falls, Skyrocket and Cascade Falls. Ice farmed in the shadows of the Uncompahgre Gorge within the Ouray Ice Park tends to stay consistently good, but that's not always the case with climbs out in the wilds, where conditions change from year to year, and sometimes day to day.

Backcountry Skiing – Stoked to thrash some pow in the backcountry? The most accessible stuff in Ouray County is found at the top of Red Mountain Pass. For a lift-served taste of extreme backcountry bliss, head on over the pass to Silverton Mountain.

Nordic Skiing – Try Ironton Park on Red Mountain Pass, maintained by the Ouray County Nordic Council, and Top of the Pines, near Ridgway, with spectacular vistas of the Sneffels Range and eight kilometers of winter trails groomed for nordic skating and classic flat-track skiing. Closer to town, the Ouray River Trail system is often groomed for Nordic skiers. *topofthepines.org, ouraytrails.org*

Winter Hiking – The Ouray Perimeter Trail creates a loop around Ouray, taking in beloved attractions like Cascade Falls, the Ouray Ice Park and Box Canyon Falls Park, while providing beautiful views of the town and surrounding peaks. Much of the trail remains boot-packed throughout the snowy winter season. There are several places along the trail where one can leave or access it, so the entire five miles does not have to be hiked to return to town. The scenic Ouray Ice Park trail, accessed from the Camp Bird Road (County Road 361) just up the hill from the upper bridge across the Uncompahgre Gorge, offers an insider's glimpse of the Ice Park with no crampons required. *ouraytrails.org*

San Juan Hut System – Five backcountry huts dot the northern flanks of the visually stunning 14,000 ft. Sneffels range from Ouray to Ridgway to Telluride, offering access to a network of over 60 miles of backcountry and Nordic trails. Hit one hut at a time, or bop from one to the next in a tour that can cover between four and 11 miles per day. *sanjuanhuts.com*

Alpine & Heli Skiing – About an hour's drive from Ouray, Telluride Ski Resort offers mountains of fun for skiers, snowboarders and backcountry enthusiasts, with over 2,000 acres of beginner, intermediate and advanced skiing terrain with a vertical drop of 4,000 feet. Revelation Bowl offers lift-served backcountry skiing, while the Surge Air Garden is a snowboarder's playground of berms, banks, tabletops, pyramids, and a competition-sized halfpipe. Telluride Helitrax provides Heli Skiing and Heli Boarding adventures.

HOW TO ICE FEST

WELCOME TO THE OURAY ICE FESTIVAL – an annual gathering of the tribe that has become the premier event of its kind for people who love the sport of ice climbing, or want to learn more about it. We are super-stoked to be celebrating our 20th anniversary this year, from Jan. 8-11!

The Fest can be roughly divided into two categories. By day, the action happens at the Ouray Ice Park, and includes exciting climbing competitions, an Outdoor Gear Expo, Kids Climbing College and adult walk-up climbing, Interactive Climbing Clinics, and more.

In the evening, the action shifts to town. There's lots going on – slideshows and multimedia presentations with big-name climbers, late night parties, a fundraising dinner, and silent and live auctions.

NEW THIS YEAR

In honor of our 20th anniversary, we've scaled down the number of evening presentations, and stepped up the opportunities to party! We also swapped out our traditional indoor gear expo for a lively fashion show with "celebrity models." Check it out on Friday night at the Ouray Community Center.

PARKING

The parking lot across Highway 550 from the Ouray Ice Park entrance is open to the public but fills up early during Ice Fest weekend. There is no parking permitted along U.S. Highway 550. So unless you are getting dropped off, it's best to leave your car in town and walk, or take the shuttle, up to the Ice Park.

Please note that overnight parking is prohibited on Main Street in Ouray throughout the winter, to facilitate snow removal. Vehicles left there overnight will receive a citation, and may even be towed, which would really suck, so please don't do it!

GETTING THERE

On Foot: Starting at the southern terminus of Main Street, you can simply walk up U.S. Highway 550 for about one-fourth mile until you get to the Ice Park entrance, just around the corner from the first switch-back. This short walk will get you there but is not the preferred route.

Alternatively, again starting at the southern terminus of Main Street, turn right (west) on Third Avenue, and walk down the road toward the Box Canyon Lodge and Victorian Inn. When you get to the bottom of the hill, veer left at the Box Canyon Falls exit, and follow the road up the hill. After a brief hike, you'll emerge on a path on the west side of the Uncompahgre Gorge that leads straight to the heart of the Ouray Ice Park and Festival Headquarters.

By Shuttle: You can catch a ride up to the Ice Park on one of the free shuttles that will be running continuously along Main Street from 8 a.m.-4 p.m., Friday through Sunday. The shuttle route starts at the Ouray Visitors Center near the Hot Springs Pool, and ends at the Ice Park entrance, and includes a Third Avenue spur. Shuttles are marked with magnetic Ouray Ice Park logos. Designated pickup spots include Citizens State Bank at the corner of Sixth Avenue and Main Street, and the bottom of Third Avenue (near the Victorian Inn and Box Canyon Lodge). Or, you can just flag the shuttle down as you see it coming, and it will stop for you.

INFO BOOTH

Got questions? An info booth in the Outdoor Gear Expo area will be staffed with friendly and helpful volunteers throughout Ice Fest weekend. Here, you can pick up your gear card, maps, programs, schedules, and competition order, buy Ouray Ice Festival memorabilia, and check out the custom-made trophies that will be awarded to comp winners at the Asolo Award Ceremony on Sunday.

GEAR CARDS

Want to demo the newest, greatest ice climbing gear, or even a new down puffy? Pick up your gear card at the Thursday night Kickoff Party or Info Booth (or order it online from our website ahead of time), and use it to demo the gear that Ice Fest sponsors have brought to the Outdoor Gear Expo. The gear card works like a library card; provide your credit card number as collateral, then check out gear for free and return it at the end of the day.

FINAL BETA

Check the white-board at the Outdoor Gear Expo, or the San Juan Mountain Guides tent, for up-to-the-minute information about which clinics still have openings (or visit mtnguide.net). Clinics cost $59 - $159 with some full-day backcountry options available. The Info Booth has extra lists of the final comp order for the Elite Mixed Climbing Comp and Hari Berger Speed Comp, as well as up-to-date information about who's winning. We'll be live-tweeting and posting updates on Facebook throughout the weekend

SPECTATING AND PHOTOGRAPHY

Two bridges (known simply as the Upper Bridge and the Lower Bridge) span the Uncompahgre Gorge in the central part of the Ouray Ice Park. Both bridges offer spectacular viewing and photography opportunities of the climbing action in the icy depths of the gorge. There are also several strategically placed spectator stands along the rim of the gorge. Direct sunlight into the gorge is limited to midday. If you are not equipped with proper climbing equipment, please stick to the roads, bridges, and viewing stands, as outcroppings over the gorge are slippery and perilous.

RECYCLING

Again for the 2015 Ouray Ice Festival, we plan to greatly reduce our eco-footprint through recycling and other forms of waste reduction. We hope that all festival participants will join in our mission to responsibly recreate. Look for Recycling Stations located at the Ice Park and the Ouray Community Center. While at the Festival, please sort your waste stream and get it into the right container, and bring your own water bottle.

FOOD & DRINK

Food and drinks (both hot and cold) are available for purchase at vendor booths near the Ice Park entrance, featuring a nice mix of fare from local restaurants and nonprofits. The food vendor area is a great place to take a break from all the action, sit down for a spell at a picnic table, or warm your hands over a fire ring. Camp Chef is back by popular demand this year with donated grills and outdoor ovens, stepping up the quality of concessions that can be offered. Artisan pizza, anyone?

WIFI, CELL PHONE RECEPTION

Cell phone reception is available for major cell phone carriers in Ouray and throughout most of the Ice Park. In town, free WiFi can be found at the Ouray Community Center, Ouray Public Library, and other select locations including Mouse's Chocolates and the Backstreet Bistro. Insider's tip: keep your cell phone in an inner pocket; it might not work if it gets too cold!

COMMEMORATIVE PINT GLASSES

Like to drink beer? This year you can swill it from our 20th anniversary commemorative pint glass, included with the price of admission at our Friday and Saturday night events. Beer has been donated by participating members of the Uncompahgre Brewer's Association, including Ouray Brewery, Colorado Boy and 2 Rascals Brewing.

ALL ACCESS PASS PROGRAM

Keep it simple and purchase a 20th Anniversary ALL ACCESS Ouray Ice Festival Pass. New this year, the $75 pass gets you into all of the Ouray Ice Festival evening events, including the Thursday Night Kick-Off Party at the Wright Opera House; the Friday Night Dinner & Fashion Show followed by a presentation by Kelly Cordes at the Ouray Community Center; Saturday night's Live Auction and Keynote Presentation by Will Gadd at the Wright Opera House; and the Saturday Night Petzl Party at the Ouray Community Center. Purchasing the pass automatically pre-registers you for a gear card to be used throughout the fest! Purchase your All Access Pass at ourayicepark.com/ice-festival.

Festival participants will still be able to purchase tickets at the door for each event (cash only). Door admission prices are: Thursday Night- $15; Friday Night- $35; Saturday Night Presentations- $20; Saturday Night Petzl Party- $15.



PARK RULES

Crampons and a helmet are required for all persons in "Climber Only" areas.

1. You must clearly occupy a top anchor prior to climbing any route in the Ouray Ice Park.
2. No rope and/or anchor shall remain established for more than 3 hours.
3. Do not anchor to any man made structure without a clearly labeled anchor tag or yellow wand.
4. Dogs must be leashed at all times and not left unattended.
5. Absolutely no dogs allowed below the top of the gorge.
6. Please read all "Area Specific Rules" prior to entering a given area.
7. Be courteous and respect your fellow climbers.

20TH ANNIVERSARY SCHEDULE 2015 OURAY ICE FESTIVAL

ASOLO ROCK·ICE

THURSDAY, JANUARY 8

7:00pm-10:00pm | All Access Pass or $15 at door
OURAY ICE FESTIVAL KICK-OFF PARTY
Wright Opera House (472 Main Street)
sponsored by the American Alpine Club and Rab, beer from Upslope Brewing Company, food, and prizes. Music by One Roof Blues

FRIDAY, JANUARY 9

AT THE ICE PARK

8:00am-3:00pm | **OUTDOOR GEAR EXPO**
Free gear demos!

9:00am & 12:30pm | **INTERACTIVE CLINICS**
Sign up online.

10:00am-3:00pm | Ages 18+ FREE
WALK-UP CLIMBING AT THE LA SPORTIVA ZONE
It's your turn to climb!

5:00pm-9:30pm | All Access Pass or $35 at door
Ouray Community Center (340 6th Ave)

DINNER AND BEER Free commemorative pint glass!

OURAY ICE FESTIVAL 20TH ANNIVERSARY FASHION SHOW
Check out the latest gear and fashions on "celebrity" models. A rocking/raucous affair, no doubt!

SILENT AUCTION Come bid on great gear!

PRESENTATION BY KELLY CORDES

SATURDAY, JANUARY 10

AT THE ICE PARK

8:00am-3:00pm | **OUTDOOR GEAR EXPO**
Newest gear! Ask info booth about gear card!

9:00am & 12:30pm | **INTERACTIVE CLINICS**
Sign up online.

9:00am-3:00pm
ELITE MIXED ICE CLIMBING COMPETITION

10:00am-3:00pm | Ages 8-17 FREE
KID'S CLIMBING COLLEGE

10:00am-3:00pm | Ages 18+ FREE
WALK-UP CLIMBING AT THE LA SPORTIVA ZONE
It's your turn to climb!

8:00pm-10:00pm | All Access Pass or $20 at door (Doors open at 7:00pm)
Wright Opera House (472 Main Street)

PRESENTATIONS BY BLACK DIAMOND CEO PETER METCALF AND ATHLETE WILL GADD
Beer provided along with a commemorative pint glass!

LIVE AUCTION
Exciting climbing gear, artwork, and collectibles!

PRESENTATION OF THE JEFF LOWE AWARD

10:00pm-1:30am | All Access Pass or $15 at door
Ouray Community Center (340 6th Ave)

PETZL PARTY: PROM NIGHT
Beer provided.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 11

AT THE ICE PARK

9:00am.
OURAY ICE FESTIVAL HARI BERGER SPEED COMP
Sponsored by Lowa

9:00am | **INTERACTIVE CLINICS**
Sign up online.

8:00am-2:00pm | **OUTDOOR GEAR EXPO**
Newest gear! Ask info booth about gear card!

10:00am-2:00pm | Ages 8-17 FREE
KID'S CLIMBING COLLEGE

10:00am-2:00pm | Ages 18+ FREE
WALK-UP CLIMBING AT THE LA SPORTIVA ZONE
It's your turn to climb!

1:00pm | **ASOLO AWARDS CEREMONY**
At the Outdoor Gear Expo.

TIME	SPONSOR	ATHLETE	THEME
SEMINARS THURSDAY, JANUARY 8			
0800-1500	SJ MTN GUIDES	GARY FALK	GUIDED ASCENT: WHOREHOUSE ICE HOSE
0800-1500	SJ MTN GUIDES	LINDSAY FIXMER	GUIDED ASCENT: SKYLIGHT AREA
0800-1500	SJ MTN GUIDES	MARK MILLER	PERFECTING ICE MOVEMENT SKILLS
0800-1500	SJ MTN GUIDES	BUSTER JESIK	INTRODUCTION TO ICE CLIMBING
0800-1500	SJ MTN GUIDES	PAT ORMOND	ADVANCED MULTI-PITCH ICE CLIMBING
0800-1500	SJ MTN GUIDES	DAVE AHRENS	LEARN TO LEAD ICE
0800-1500	SJ MTN GUIDES	DAN ZOKAITES	GUIDED ASCENT: STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN
CLINICS FRIDAY, JANUARY 9			
0900-1130	ARCTERYX	PAUL MCSORLEY	INTERMEDIATE ICE
0900-1130	GRIVEL MONT BLANC	SCOTT ADAMSON	STEEP ICE
0900-1130	OUTDOOR RESEARCH	MARK ALLEN	INTERMEDIATE ICE
0900-1130	MARMOT	MATT WADE	NOVICE ICE
0900-1130	BLACK DIAMOND	CHRIS THOMAS	INTRO TO ICE
0900-1130	THE NORTH FACE	SAM ELIAS	INTERMEDIATE ICE
0900-1130	LOWA	INES PAPERT	STEEP ICE TECHNIQUES
0900-1130	OUTDOOR RESEARCH	KYLE DEMPSTER	MODERATE MIXED
0900-1130	GORE-TEX	DALE REMSBERG	INTRO TO ICE LEADING
0900-1130	PETZL	ANDRES MARIN	INTRO TO ICE
0900-1130	GRIVEL MONT BLANC	AARON MULKEY	INTRO TO ICE
0900-1130	MAXIM	ANNA PFAFF	INTRO TO ICE FOR WOMEN
0900-1130	THE NORTH FACE	CONRAD ANKER	ADVANCED ICE
0900-1130	OSPREY	BEN CLARK	INTRO TO ICE
0900-1130	ASOLO	MARK MILLER	RESCUE CLINIC: BELAY ESCAPES
0900-1130	PETZL	WILL MAYO	INTERMEDIATE ICE FOOTWORK FUNDAMENTALS
0900-1130	BLUEWATER.ROPES	DAWN GLANC	INTRO TO MIXED CLIMBING
0900-1130	ZEAL.OPTICS	STEVE HOUSE	CLIMBING FAST: SPEED & EFFICIENCY ON ICE
0900-1130	BERGHAUS	ANGELIKA RAINER	INTERMEDIATE ICE
0900-1130	HYPERLITE MTN GEAR	BUD MARTIN	NOVICE ICE
1230-1500	ASOLO	MARK MILLER	INTERMEDIATE ICE FOCUS ON YOUR FOOTWORK
1230-1500	GRIVEL MONT BLANC	ANGELIKA RAINER	INTERMEDIATE ICE WOMEN'S SPECIFIC
1230-1500	GORE-TEX	DALE REMSBERG	STEEP ICE TECHNIQUES
1230-1500	LA SPORTIVA	KARSTEN DELAP	NOVICE ICE FOCUS ON YOUR FOOTWORK
1230-1500	RAB	AARON MULKEY	SKILLS FOR THE ICE LEADER
1230-1500	THE NORTH FACE	HEIDI WIRTZ	INTERMEDIATE ICE
1230-1500	LA SPORTIVA	WILL MAYO	HARD ICE
1230-1500	BLACK DIAMOND	SAM ELIAS	MODERATE MIXED
1230-1500	SCARPA	JESSE HUEY	NOVICE ICE
1230-1500	OUTDOOR RESEARCH	MARGO TALBOT	INTRO TO ICE FOR WOMEN
1230-1500	HYPERLITE MTN GEAR	ANGELA VANWIERMEERSCH	INTRO TO ICE
1230-1500	STERLING ROPE	MARK WILFORD	NOVICE ICE
1230-1500	MILLET	ANDRES MARIN	ADVANCED ICE
1230-1500	PATAGONIA	VINCE ANDERSON	BELAYS & TRANSITIONS FOR MULTI-PITCH ICE
1230-1500	BLACK DIAMOND	DAWN GLANC	ANCHORS
1230-1500	PATAGONIA	STEVE HOUSE	TRAINING FOR THE NEW ALPINISM
1230-1500	ARCTERYX	INES PAPERT	INTRO TO MIXED CLIMBING
1230-1500	ROCK & ICE	DOUG ROBINSON	OLD SCHOOL ICE: CLIMB LIKE A HARDMAN (OR WOMAN)

SEMINARS FRIDAY, JANUARY 9

TIME	SPONSOR	ATHLETE	THEME
0930-1500	RAB	ELI HELMUTH	INTERMEDIATE ICE
0930-1500	MAMMUT	ANDREA CHAREST	NOVICE ICE
0930-1500	OUTDOOR RESEARCH	JEWELL LUND	INTERMEDIATE ICE
0930-1500	LA SPORTIVA	JIM SHIMBERG	LEARN TO LEAD ICE
0800-1500	GORE-TEX	ANGELA HAWSE	BACKCOUNTRY ICE CLIMBING – SKYLIGHT AREA
0800-1500	LOWA	CARLOS BUHLER	BACKCOUNTRY ICE CLIMBING – SILVERTON'S EUREKA CANYON
0930-1500	BLACK DIAMOND	PATRICK ORMOND	SELF-RESCUE SKILLS CLINIC
0930-1500	TRANGO ICE FEST	MARCUS GARCIA	INTRO TO ICE CLIMBING

CLINICS SATURDAY, JANUARY 10

0900-1130	ARCTERYX	ROGER STRONG	INTERMEDIATE ICE
0900-1130	THE NORTH FACE	HEIDI WIRTZ	USING YOUR HIPS FOR MAX BALANCE AND SECURITY ON ICE
0900-1130	MAMMUT	ANDREA CHAREST	WOMEN'S SPECIFIC FOCUS ON YOUR FOOTWORK
0900-1130	BLACK DIAMOND	CHRIS THOMAS	NOVICE ICE
0900-1130	BLACK DIAMOND	JEAN-PIERRE OUELLET	ADVANCED ICE
0900-1130	LOWA	CARLOS BUHLER	INTERMEDIATE ICE
0900-1130	GRIVEL MONT BLANC	AARON MULKEY	STEEP ICE TECHNIQUES
0900-1130	RAB	ELI HELMUTH	INTRO TO ICE LEADING
0900-1130	STERLING ROPE	JIM SHIMBERG	NOVICE ICE
0900-1130	MAMMUT	DOUG SHEPHERD	MODERATE MIXED
0900-1130	OUTDOOR RESEARCH	MARGO TALBOT	WOMEN'S SPECIFIC INTRO TO ICE LEADING
0900-1130	MARMOT	PETE TAKEDA	SKILLS FOR THE ICE LEADER
0900-1130	MAXIM	ANNA PFAFF	NOVICE ICE
0900-1030	OIP	OLIVIA HSU	YOGA FOR CLIMBERS
0900-1130	GORE-TEX	ANGELA HAWSE	BELAYS & TRANSITIONS FOR MULTI-PITCH ICE
0900-1130	OIP	KENDRA STRITCH	CLIMBING FAST SPEED & EFFICIENCY ON ICE
0900-1130	ASOLO	KAREN BOCKEL	NOVICE ICE WOMEN'S SPECIFIC FOOTWORK FOUNDATIONS
1230-1500	ARCTERYX	ROGER STRONG	ICE SCREW PLACEMENTS & ANCHORS
1230-1500	LA SPORTIVA	JIM SHIMBERG	INTERMEDIATE ICE
1230-1500	MARMOT	ANGELA HAWSE	WOMEN'S MOVEMENT SKILLS BALANCE & EFFICIENCY
1230-1500	PATAGONIA	KITTY CALHOUN	LEASHLESS CLIMBING FOR THE CHICKENHEARTED
1230-1500	OUTDOOR RESEARCH	KYLE DEMPSTER	INTERMEDIATE ICE
1230-1500	LOWA	CARLOS BUHLER	ADVANCED ICE
1230-1500	GRIVEL MONT BLANC	AARON MULKEY	LEADING STEEP ICE
1230-1500	OUTDOOR RESEARCH	SARAH HUENIKEN	MODERATE MIXED FOR WOMEN
1230-1500	THE NORTH FACE	HEIDI WIRTZ	INTRO TO ICE LEADING
1230-1500	PATAGONIA	STEVE HOUSE	ADVANCED ICE
1230-1400	OSPREY	BEN CLARK	NOVICE ICE
1230-1500	RAB	ELI HELMUTH	V-THREADS, ICE SCREW ANCHORS, AND BELAY/RAPPEL SYSTEMS
0900-1130	ASOLO	KAREN BOCKEL	INTERMEDIATE ICE: BODY MOVEMENT FOR EFFICIENT ICE CLIMBING
0900-1130	HYPERLITE MTN GEAR	BUD MARTIN	INTERMEDIATE ICE: TRIANGLE TECHNIQUE

SEMINARS SATURDAY, JANUARY 10

TIME	SPONSOR	ATHLETE	THEME
0930-1500	PETZL	MATT WADE	INTRO TO ICE CLIMBING
0930-1500	GRIVEL MONT BLANC	SHINGO OHKAWA	NOVICE ICE
0930-1500	SCARPA	JESSE HUEY	INTERMEDIATE ICE
0930-1500	OUTDOOR RESEARCH	MARK ALLEN	LEARN TO LEAD ICE
0800-1500	BLUEWATER ROPES	KARSTEN DELAP	BACKCOUNTRY ICE CLIMBING – SKYLIGHT AREA
0800-1500	GORE-TEX	DALE REMSBERG	BACKCOUNTRY ICE CLIMBING – OURAY AREA
0930-1500	SCARPA	MARKUS BECK	SELF-RESCUE SKILLS CLINIC
0800-1500	OUTDOOR RESEARCH	SHELDON KERR	INTRO TO BC SKIING – RED MOUNTAIN PASS

CLINICS SUNDAY, JANUARY 11

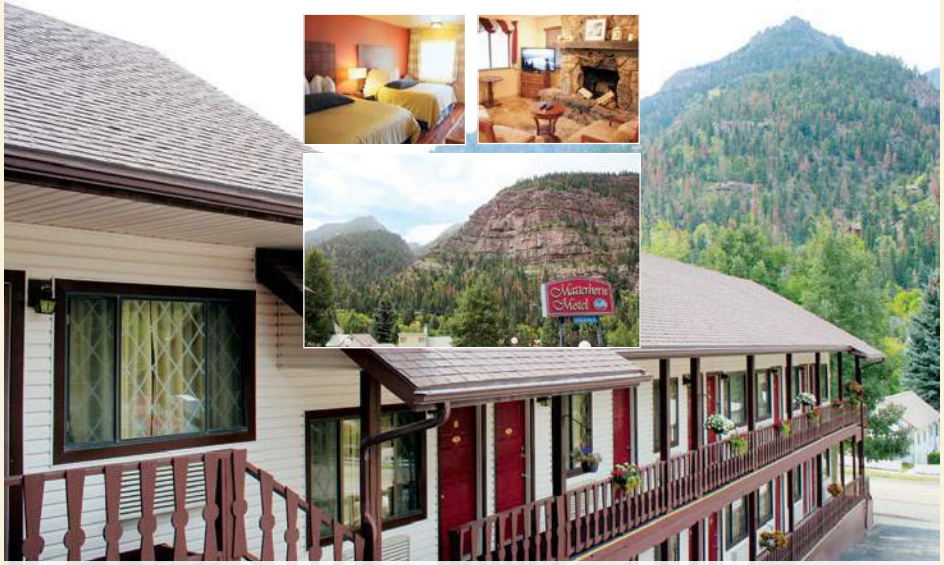
0900-1130	MAMMUT	DOUG SHEPHERD	INTERMEDIATE ICE
0900-1130	SCARPA	ANGELA HAWSE	INTERMEDIATE ICE – MOVING WITH EFFICIENCY
0900-1130	LA SPORTIVA	WILL MAYO	INTERMEDIATE ICE – FOOTWORK FUNDAMENTALS
0900-1130	BLACK DIAMOND	JEAN-PIERRE OUELLET	NOVICE ICE
0900-1130	GRIVEL MONT BLANC	SHINGO OHKAWA	INTRO TO ICE CLIMBING
0900-1130	LA SPORTIVA	DAWN GLANC	INTERMEDIATE ICE
0900-1130	SCARPA	KITTY CALHOUN	STEEP ICE TECHNIQUES
0900-1130	OUTDOOR RESEARCH	SARAH HUENIKEN	LEASHLESS CLIMBING FOR THE CHICKENHEARTED
0900-1130	ASOLO	MARK MILLER	RESCUE CLINIC: THE SECOND
0900-1130	EDELWEISS	KYLE DEMPSTER	INTERMEDIATE MIXED CLIMBING
0900-1130	GRIVEL MONT BLANC	SCOTT ADAMSON	INTRO TO MIXED CLIMBING
0900-1130	ARCTERYX	PAUL MCSORLEY	INTRO TO ICE CLIMBING
0900-1130	OSPREY	MARCUS GARCIA	STEEP ICE TECHNIQUES
0900-1130	MILLET	ANDRES MARIN	INTRO TO MIXED CLIMBING
0900-1130	BLUEWATER.ROPES	KARSTEN DELAP	NTERMEDIATE ICE
0900-1130	GRIVEL MONT BLANC	STEVE HOUSE	TRAINING FOR THE NEW ALPINISM
0900-1130	LA SPORTIVA	DALE REMSBERG	SKILLS FOR THE ICE LEADER



PHOTO BY STORMY PYEATTE

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MAP BY TOR ANDERSON
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ONGOING OUTDOOR ICE FEST ACTIVITIES

OUTDOOR GEAR EXPO

Friday, Jan. 9, 8 a.m.-3 p.m.
Saturday, Jan. 10, 8 a.m.-3 p.m.
Sunday, Jan. 11, 8 a.m.-2 p.m.
Near the Lower Bridge at the Ouray Ice Park

Every year, the outdoor gear manufacturers that sponsor the Ouray Ice Festival travel to the Fest to let participants demo their latest and greatest products. Used to be, it was just boots, tools and crampons. But now, you can pretty much demo anything but base layers. So if you're in the market for a new puffy belay jacket, for example, a handful of sponsors have a fleet of them for you to demo.

The Outdoor Gear Expo is a hive of activity during Ice Festival weekend – a colorful tent village perched alongside the rim of the Uncompahgre Gorge, with hundreds of ice climbers and onlookers strolling around, trying on gear and just hangin' out. The Gore-Tex tent provides couches, heaters and a live video feed of action down in the gorge during the competitions. It's a great place to warm up and get out of the weather.

The Outdoor Gear Expo is not a gear swap; you will find little for sale, but there's plenty of swag. So go ahead, feel the sponsors' love.


PHOTO BY STORMY PYEATT

KIDS CLIMBING COLLEGE

Saturday, Jan. 10, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.
Sunday, Jan. 11, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.
At the Kid's Wall near the Upper Bridge

Sponsored by San Juan Mountain Guides and the Woman's Club of Ouray County, the popular Kid's Climbing College offers free ice climbing instruction to kids ages 8-17. The KCC is staged at the Kid's Wall – a beginners climbing area located near the Upper Bridge and Memorial Kiosk, right off of County Road 361 (Camp Bird Road).

Four to five ropes will be going full-time both days. Participants receive 15 minutes of instruction each, with a professional guide, on a first-come, first-served basis.

It's easy to sign up your kids, and San Juan Mountain Guides provides all the technical gear they'll need.

FREE ADULT WALK-UP CLIMBING AT THE LA SPORTIVA ZONE

Friday, Jan. 9, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.
Saturday, Jan. 10, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.
Sunday, Jan. 11, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Want to try ice climbing without going through the hassle of registering for an expensive class? La Sportiva's free adult walk-up clinics are taught by high-level athletes, no registration required. All technical gear is provided. They will be set up next door to the Kids Climbing College at the Kids Wall, near the Upper Bridge and County Road 361.There's never been a better time to grab some tools and give ice climbing a try!

INTERACTIVE CLINICS

Friday, Jan. 9, 9 a.m. & 12:30 p.m.
Saturday, Jan. 10, 9 a.m. & 12:30 p.m.
Sunday, Jan. 11, 9 a.m.
Sign up online at mtnguide.net/ouray-ice-climbing/ouray-ice-festival-clinics/

Clinics are the heart and soul of the Ouray Ice Festival; few climbing events and festivals offer attendees so many opportunities to learn from the pros about how to improve technique in a convivial, supportive atmosphere.

The Ouray Ice Park is pleased again to partner with San Juan Mountain Guides to provide interactive climbing clinics and seminars for the 2015 Ouray Ice Festival.

Throughout the weekend, almost 100 unique, informative, cutting-edge ice and mixed climbing clinics and seminars will be offered.

Most clinics take place inside the Ice Park. A great lineup of all-day backcountry skiing and ice climbing seminars are also available this year.

Want to learn how to backcountry ski on Red Mountain Pass or climb the Whorehouse Hose? Here's your chance!

Clinics and seminars are taught by professional athletes and guides with the most knowledge and the best instructional techniques in their fields, with sponsors including Black Diamond, Outdoor Research, La Sportiva, The North Face, Patagonia, Mammut, Scarpa, Gore-Tex, and many more. Each clinic offers a unique opportunity to pair vendors and their sponsored athletes with a passionate audience of amateur climbers.

Clinics are offered twice a day on Friday and Saturday as well as on Sunday morning, with


PHOTO BY MIKE MACLEOD

offerings for beginner, intermediate and advanced ice climbers. All-day seminars are offered on Friday and Saturday.

Clinics and seminars fill up fast – typically, a couple of months before the Ice Fest even gets underway – but some slots always open up at the last minute, due to cancellations. Check the white board near the San Juan Mountain Guides booth at the Outdoor Gear Expo for last-minute openings, or visit mtnguide.net/ouray-ice-climbing/ouray-ice-festival-clinics/.

The clinics and seminars are a screaming deal. Half-day clinics cost $59 per person, full-day seminars $109 per person and backcountry ice/ski seminars $159 per person. Ice Park members enjoy modest discounts when they register.

SPECIAL EVENTS

KICK-OFF PARTY

Thursday, Jan. 8, 7-10 p.m.
Wright Opera House (472 Main Street)

Join us at the Wright Opera House for the Ouray Ice Festival Kick-off Party sponsored by the American Alpine Club (AAC) and Rab. There will be music by One Room Blues, beer from Upslope Brewing Company, music, food and prizes, and opportunities to hang with local and visiting climbing royalty. Plus, Conrad Anker will be a special guest at a showing of the North Face film Always Above Us. The party brings in a "Who's Who" from the climbing world, highlighting the Ouray Ice Park's unique partnership with the AAC. This is a great, grassroots gathering in a beautiful historic venue that tends to attract a huge turnout. Your Ouray Ice Festival All Access Pass or $15 gets you in the door. Let's kick this party off right! Plus, beat the rush and pick up your gear card.

LASAGNA DINNER + FASHION SHOW + SILENT AUCTION + KELLY CORDES

Friday, Jan. 9, 5-9:30 p.m.
Ouray Community Center (340 6th Ave.)

The annual Friday Night Dinner, served up by the Ouray Volunteer Fire Department, is a Ouray Ice Festival tradition that attracts a boisterous crowd hungry for plates of pasta and opportunities to mingle with the sponsored athletes.

Your Ouray Ice Festival All Access Pass gets you in the door for the entire evening or it's $35 at the door. Admission includes dinner, silent auction, both shows and beer provided by the Uncompahgre Brewers Association, served in a commemorative pint glass. A portion of the cover charge goes to support the OVFD, which has provided critical volunteer support to the Ice Fest over the years. After dinner, check out the latest gear and fashions on "celebrity" models at the Ouray Ice Festival 20th Anniversary Fashion Show – a rocking/raucous affair, no doubt! And don't forget to bid on silent auction items donated by the Ice Fest's corporate sponsors. All auction proceeds go directly to support the Ouray Ice Park, keeping it free and open for all of our



PHOTO BY SAMANTHA WRIGHT

enjoyment, so bid high, folks! The evening wraps up with a presentation by Kelly Cordes, sharing tales from his forthcoming book, The Tower: A Chronicle of Climbing and Controversy on Cerro Torre *(see page 39 for more info)*.

LIVE AUCTION + PETER METCALF + WILL GADD + JEFF LOWE AWARD

Saturday, Jan. 10, 8-10 p.m.
(Doors open at 7 p.m.)
Wright Opera House (472 Main Street)

On Saturday night, dinner is on the town. Ouray's restaurants are ready to feed the masses and turn over tables quickly, so you can hustle back to the Wright Opera House for a presentation by Black Diamond CEO Peter Metcalf and our keynote presentation by "Captain Adventure" himself *(aka Will Gadd; see pages 40 and 41 for more info)* plus the presentation of the third annual Jeff Lowe Award. Your Ouray Ice Festival All Access Pass or $20 gets you in the door and includes beer from the Uncompahgre Brewers Association, served in a commemorative pint glass. The evening also includes a fantastic live auction, with goods ranging from the latest climbing gear to signed photographs and ice axes once wielded by climbing greats.

PETZL PARTY: 'PROM NIGHT'

Saturday, Jan. 10, 10 p.m.-1:30 a.m.
Ouray Community Center, 340 6th Ave.

The annual late-night Petzl party is a raucous affair, and definitely one of most heavily attended events of the whole Ouray Ice Festival weekend. Part rave, part costume party, it's a racy evening that pulls in Ice Fest regulars and "Petzl party groupies" from throughout the region. This year you will be able to capture some of those more special moments with a visit to the Petzl Party photo booth. The theme for this year's party is "Prom Night" so break out those tiaras and powder-blue tuxes! Your Ouray Ice Festival All Access Pass or $15 gets you in the door and includes beer.

ASOLO AWARDS CEREMONY

Sunday, Jan. 11, 1 p.m.
Outdoor Gear Expo area at the Ice Park

The Asolo Awards Ceremony is like something right out of the Olympics as the winning athletes from the Elite Mixed Climbing Comp and Hari Berger Speed Comp take their places on a podium carved from ice to receive gorgeous custom trophies made by Ouray glass and metal artists Sam Rushing and Jeff Skoloda. Before you point your camera toward the podium, take a look around you – there's likely to be a "Who's Who" of the climbing elite in the crowd.



PHOTO BY SAMANTHA WRIGHT

THE COMPETITIONS

ELITE MIXED CLIMBING COMP

Saturday, Jan. 10, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
Ouray Ice Park, Lower Bridge/ Outdoor Gear Expo area

For many fans, the Elite Mixed Climbing Competition is the highlight of the whole Ice Fest weekend.

The competition showcases 25 of the finest alpinists and sport climbers in the world exhibiting jaw-dropping, head-scratching feats of strength and flexibility as they pit themselves against a uniquely challenging route in the Ouray Ice Park.

Last year's Elite Mixed Climbing Comp saw seasoned French alpinists Jeff Mercier and Stéphanie Maureau topping the podium in a contest that required equal parts playfulness and acrobatic prowess.

This year, competitors will be tackling another devious route from route-setter Vince Anderson that blends natural and artificial features including vertical rock and ice inside the Uncompahgre Gorge, and a 25-ft. steel climbing tower overhanging the gorge. The tower made its debut in 2013, with the aim of spicing up the competition and making it more spectator friendly.

Competitors have a set amount of time to complete their climb. Place is determined based upon the highest controlled point reached. If more than one climber makes the full pull, the one with the fastest time wins.

Applications for the Elite Mixed Climbing Competition are due Dec. 15, and competitors are notified by Dec. 25 whether they got in. The names of competitors are made available to the public in early January, shortly before the Ice Fest gets underway. Check our website and social media at that time to get an up-to-date list of who's climbing.

Well-known climbers Ines Papert and Angelika Rainer have both confirmed that they will climb this year in the women's contest, along with local favorite Dawn Glanc.

In the men's contest, 2013 and 2014 champions Simon Duverney and Jeff Mercier are among the top contenders. They'll be facing off against the likes of Will Mayo and Will Gadd, both former ice fest champions.

As they ascend the cold, hard ice, climbers will be competing for cold, hard cash; $9,000 will be divvied among the top three male and female competitors in the Elite Mixed Climbing Competition this year.

HARI BERGER SPEED COMP SPONSORED BY LOWA

Sunday, Jan. 11, starting at 9 a.m.
Ouray Ice Park, Lower Bridge/ Outdoor Gear Expo area

Speed climbing is hugely popular on the World Cup scene in Europe. Judging from its reception at the Ouray Ice Fest over the past couple of years, it's a hit here, too!

The Hari Berger Speed Competition sponsored by Lowa is back again by popular demand! The concept is simple. Competitors race against the clock on adjacent columns of ice, with $5,500 in prize money up for grabs. Competition will be fast and furious at our most spectator friendly venue ever.

Last year, local hero Andres Marin came in 1st place – by a hair – in the Men's Division, with a time of 1:23.4. Italian Mauro Dorigatti was a mere tenth of a second behind, and Jeff Mercier of France came in 3rd place, a second later. But the day belonged to Kendra Stritch, a speed climber from Minnesota and a regular on the Ice Climbing World Cup circuit, who crushed the competition – guys and gals alike – to come in 1st place overall with a time of 1:18.3.

Unlike the Elite Mixed Climbing Competition, this is an open comp; anyone can sign up to compete. It should attract a nice mix of big names and local heroes – who may even be pitted against each other. The action takes place in the same vicinity as the Elite Mixed Climbing Competition, but the route will consist solely of ice.

The Hari Berger Speed Comp memorializes fallen Austrian climber Hari Berger, who died in 2006 at age 34 near his home town of Salzburg when an ice pillar he was climbing collapsed, crushing him. The three-time ice climbing world champion left behind his pregnant girlfriend Kristen Buchman, who gave birth to a daughter, Zoe, the day after he died.

Berger was a regular at the Ouray Ice Festival, known for his expansive smile and virtually effortless ascents of difficult comp routes.

"The wheel of living and dying turns with such savage cruelty sometimes," wrote climber Will Gadd of Berger's tragic death. "Hari was a good man – a good climber, a moral human and, as he often demonstrated while staying at our house, a good cook. I'm sure he would have been a fantastic father to his new daughter."

LOOKING BACK: 20 Years of Climbing Competitions at the Ouray Ice Festival

BY SAMANTHA WRIGHT

Ever since ice climbing pioneer Jeff Lowe organized the Arctic Wolf Ouray Ice Festival on Martin Luther King weekend in 1996 in appreciation for the expanding wealth of accessible terrain in the nascent Ouray Ice Park, the Fest has remained committed to showcasing the technique and artistry of the world's best ice climbers. Here's a chronicle of highlights from 20 years' worth of climbing exhibitions and competitions in Ouray.

1996 Nearly 400 ice climbers from around the globe attended the first Arctic Wolf Ouray Ice Festival, which featured climbing demos by Jeff Lowe and others, but no competitions.

1998 At the 3rd Annual Arctic Wolf Ouray Ice Festival, the traditional climbing demos evolved into the more formal, scored "Ouray Ice Craft Invitational Exhibition" where climbers from around the world showcased their talent and earned points in Pure Waterfall Ice and Sport Mixed Climbing. Bruno Sourzac and Jen Stewart won top honors.

2001 Ouray Ice Park, Inc. took over the Ouray Ice Festival from Jeff Lowe, and it became OIPI's main fundraising event to pay for the ongoing maintenance and development of the Park.

2004 Swiss climber Simon Anthamatten won the men's comp on "a wild-looking mixed route with big blobs of ice pasted to an overhanging wall.," recounted climbing.com. German Ines Papert, climbing the same route, was the top female competitor and "nearly stole the entire show."

2005 Ines Papert made history as the overall winner in the difficulty competition at the 2005 Ouray Ice Festival – the first time a woman took the Ouray crown. She finished the long mixed route near the Upper Bridge about three minutes faster than Canadian Will Gadd and Austrian Harry Berger, who finished second and third, respectively.



PHOTO BY MIKE MACLEOD

2007 In his first-ever Ouray Ice Festival appearance, 37-year-old Ukraine native Evgeny Kryvosheytsev celebrated his win with a bat-hang from his tools, dangling upside down, 120 feet above the bottom of the gorge.

2011 In an unprecedented "three-peat," Josh Wharton came back from a broken back and two broken arms – the result of a climbing accident he suffered the previous summer –to once again claim overall victory at the sixteenth annual Ouray Ice Festival competition. Local girl Dawn Glanc claimed first place among women competitors for the second time in three years, garnering the loudest, most enthusiastic cheering squad of the event.

2012 Nate Kutcher, a Minnesota native who makes his home in Ontario, Canada, seemingly came out of nowhere to take the men's title on a course whose crux was a tricky loaf-shaped horizontal feature referred to by its makers as as Povitica (after the Slovenian sweet bread), which climbers had to carefully pick their way across, while dangling upside down, in order to traverse from one side of the Uncompahgre Gorge to the other.

2013 The comp tower – a 3.5 ton, 25-foot-tall steel climbing wall overhanging the Uncompahgre Gorge in the heart of the Ouray Ice Park – made its debut.

2014 "French mixed-climbing guru Jeff Mercier spun through figure-fours, twisted into figure-nines and powered to the top of the finals route just 16 seconds faster than Italian Mauro Dorigatti and American Will Mayo to win the 19th annual Ouray Ice Festival mixed-climbing comp," recounted Rock and Ice. The route, dubbed Gold Digger (a tip of the hat to Ouray's mining heritage) featured an overhanging traverse linking three gold-painted wooden "nuggets" and required those few climbers who made the full pull to finish off with a "whipper" – a flying leap – to tag a donkey-shaped cheeseball-stuffed piñata that dangled teasingly from a pole at the top of the tower.

ANGELIKA RAINER

Dancing with the Dragon

BY ERIC MING & SAMANTHA WRIGHT

The Helmcken Falls "Spray Cave" is like no other ice climbing site on the planet. Located in Wells Gray Provincial Park, British Columbia, it is a raging, 500-foot waterfall that sprays the backside of an enormous cave with mist. The torrent of drops freeze into gargantuan stalactites which hang like scimitars, ready to chop the life out of anyone who strays beneath them.

The place was discovered by the ever-innovative and daring ice-climber Will Gadd (catch his presentation during the Ouray Ice Festival on Saturday evening at 8 p.m. at the Wright Opera House). At the falls are chunks of ice the size of buses dangling by what appear to be a thread. "If they fall on you, you're going to die," Gadd's climbing partner, Tim Emmett, has observed (perhaps unnecessarily). Emmett has compared the roar of the water to "a dragon that breathes."

Recent three-time Ice Climbing World Champion Angelika Rainer of Italy, whose "official" accomplishments last year include taking 1st place at the Ice Climbing World Cup in Sass Fee, Switzerland, 1st place at the Bozeman Ice Festival and 2nd in the Ice Climbing World Cup overall (she took first place in 2012), climbed Clash of the Titans, a route at the Falls, in early 2014.

Her movements were not the stodgy, peck-peck-peck you might expect in this most dangerous, intimidating of places. Instead, they were dance-like, nimble and airy – as close to artistry as you'll see in the sport of ice climbing.

(Rainer's gentle style even extends to her chronicle of the climb. Gadd has called the place where the falls disappear into the ground "the cauldron of death." Yet Rainer described Helmcken Falls as "situated in a beautiful valley with forests and meadows" whose spray "creates fascinating structures and big icicles.")

"I think it's really an incredible place," she said.



"If you see only pictures, you can't imagine how huge this place is. We were very lucky to have the possibility to climb there."

Rainer, 28, gave up a chance to compete at a World Cup contest in South Korea to come to the Ouray Ice Festival this year. She grew up in northern Italy, close to the Dolomites, and spent much of her childhood out in the mountains with her mom.

But it wasn't until a climbing gym opened up in her town that she discovered her affinity for climbing. "It was the perfect sport for me," she said. "I really love being out in the mountains and nature."

She started sport-climbing at age 12. Lynn Hill, the first person to free climb The Nose route on El Capitan in a day, and author of *Climbing Free: My Life in the Vertical World*, became her idol.

Today, Rainer herself is an idol to a new generation of climbers – arguably the best female competitive ice climber in the world with three World Champion titles to her name.

"I meet young girls that say, 'We would like to be so strong like you,' and it makes me really happy," she said.

Rainer is psyched to take on the unique blend of natural and artificial elements that comprise the comp route in Ouray – with a nod to her sport-climbing roots and her more recent evolution as a climber of wild rock and ice in places like Helmcken Falls. "I have heard that Ouray has a really nice audience," she added. "And I'm really curious to see the Ouray Ice Park. It sounds like it's really full of possibilities to climb."

Check out the video of Rainer's Helmcken ascent at PlanetMountain.com – all you need to know about this supremely talented competitor. Then catch her on Saturday, Jan. 10 at the Ouray Ice Park in the Elite Mixed Climbing Competition.

INES PAPERT

Ice Climber-Alpinist Does It All

BY ERIC MING

Climbing sensation Ines Papert has been accused by her mother of being a "lazy child" when it came to sports: when it started snowing, she was the first to run back to the hut. Today, Papert is not only a mother herself, but *Alpinist* magazine has called her "one of the world's most accomplished climbers." Nor is she known primarily for being an accomplished *female* climber. As Will Gadd has observed, Papert "is now climbing harder than most women, and most men too."

She is a three-time World Cup winner on ice and has won numerous times in Ouray. Most notably, she was the overall winner in the difficulty competition in 2005, the first and only time a woman has taken the top prize at the event. Papert was one of three climbers that year to finish the long mixed route near the Upper Bridge at the Ouray Ice Park, finishing three minutes faster than Gadd and Austrian Hari Berger, who finished second and third, respectively.

This year, we'll get to watch Papert do her thing again at the Elite Mixed Climbing Competition and Hari Berger Speed Comp.

Beyond the box canyon, Papert has a global climbing resume, having summited in (among other places) India, Baffin Island, Norway, China, and Kyrgyzstan – where she says she withstood the hardest night of her life at an altitude of 6,000 meters. On her website, you can see great footage of Papert's alpine rock abilities on the Cima Grande in the Dolomites, as well as hard Scottish winter mixed climbing where ethics dictate no bolts are allowed – just use your own gear. She's also written a book about her adventures: *Vertical Life on the Steepest Faces.*

Papert, who grew up in Germany, began sport climbing around the same time she started ice climbing. In effect, she layered her training,

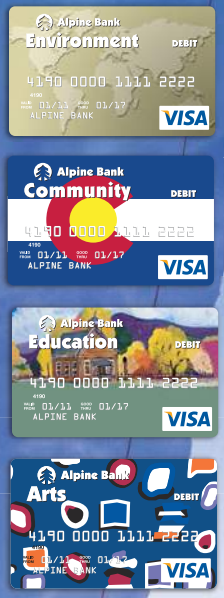

PHOTO BY SAMANTHA WRIGHT

one pursuit on top of the other. The gymnastics of movement required in sport climbing have given her a range and depth-of-ability on ice, and also helped make her a first-class alpinist. Her most recent accomplishment in the alpine world was huge: this year, she stood on an unclimbed Nepalese summit – Likhu Chuli 1 (22,043 ft.). She stacked all her skills and completed the climb solo, after her partner's feet became frostbitten.

Papert's accomplishments seem all the more impressive when you consider that this hard working alpinist really works double-duty: she's not only at the top of her game orchestrating climbing expeditions to the remote places of the world, but she's also a devoted and successful mom. She began balancing climbing along with raising her son at the age of 26, making decisions she says she might have handled a little differently if she had been a little older, and not in the throes of a burgeoning climbing career. Although she chooses her routes carefully, "There is some risk, of course. But I think the risk of staying home and getting into a boring life, becoming a boring mom, a depressive person, is much higher than in the climbing that I want to do."

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PHOTO BY STORMY PYEATTE

PRESENTATIONS

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Conrad Anker

PHOTO BY J. JASON THOMPSON

FILM PRESENTATION: *ALWAYS ABOVE US*

sponsored by THE NORTH FACE

Thursday, Jan. 8, 7-9 p.m.
Wright Opera House

BY SAMANTHA WRIGHT & ALLISON PERRY

In spite of the people he's lost, Conrad Anker can't imagine a life without climbing.

"It's what I do," he said.

And it's what he does in The North Face film *Always Above Us,* which will show as part of the Ouray Ice Festival kick-off party at the Wright Opera House on Thursday night.

The short film features Anker and fellow North Face Athletes team member Kris Erickson on their first ascent of Nutcracker, a variation to the iconic icefall Winter Dance in Hyalite Canyon, Montana.

"The film tells the evolution of ice to mixed to dry tool climbing," Anker said.

But more than anything, it uses spectacular, dizzying film footage of Anker climbing as a backdrop for exploring the death of his best friend Alex Lowe, who claimed the first ascent of Winter Dance in 1998, and died a year later along with filmmaker David Bridges in an avalanche on Shishapangma in the Tibetan Himalaya in 1999.

Both Anker and Erickson were part of that expedition. Anker barely escaped the avalanche alive, and was overcome with survivor's guilt.

In the months following the tragedy, he worked to comfort Lowe's widow Jennifer, and eventually they found unexpected love. Today they are married and live in Montana, where Anker is helping to raise Jennifer and Alex's three sons.

When Anker and Erickson revisited Alex Lowe's sparkling Winter Dance route last year, rather than simply retracing Lowe's steps, they took a slightly different approach, preserving the honor and integrity of the man who had done the first ascent.

The climb, and the film that documents it, serve as a poignant symbol for how Anker has picked up the pieces that Lowe left behind, and braided them into his own life's path.

"Winter Dance is the most difficult, the biggest, the most imposing climb there is in Hyalite Canyon," Erickson reflected in the film. "No matter where you are, whether you are at the base of other climbs or out in the valley, it's always above you."

Anker's journey into the realm of climbing began when he was growing up in California, where he gained a love and respect for the outdoors at a young age.

One of the world's elite climbers, he has given decades of his life to the mountains, and is credited with a long list of first-time ascents in such places as Antarctica, the Himalaya, Alaska, Baffin Island and Patagonia.

In 1999 he found George Mallory's body on Everest as a member of a search team looking for the remains of the legendary British climber.

His book, *Lost Explorer: Finding Mallory on Mt. Everest* (Simon & Schuster, 1999, co-written with David Roberts) and the 2010 IMAX film *The Wildest Dream* recount the experience.

Anker is no stranger to Ouray's annual homage to all things ice. He loves how the Ouray Ice Festival has become an annual "gathering of the tribe" of alpinists and ice climbers.

In addition to presenting his new film project at this year's festival, he'll also be announcing the Elite Mixed Climbing Competition – again! – and teaching a clinic or two.

"And I'll take my bath cure at the Wiesbaden," he said. "I'm taking the waters in an old school way."



Kelly Cordes

A REPORT FROM THE FRONT LINES OF THE CERRO TORRE CONTROVERSY

sponsored by patagonia

Friday, Jan. 9, approx. 7 p.m.
Ouray Community Center, 340 6th Ave.

At the southern tip of Argentina, set between Patagonia's windswept pampas and the Pacific Ocean, rises an otherworldly spire named Cerro Torre. Its vertical walls, capped by mushrooms of overhanging rime ice, attract the finest and most devoted alpinists in the world.

As well as some of the most obsessed.

Ever since the fatal, futuristic – and highly dubious – first ascent claim by Italian climber Cesare Maestri in 1959, controversy has swirled around the mountain. The myth of '59 unfolded in ways that neither Maestri nor anyone else could have imagined, from his vengeful return in 1970 with a gasoline-powered air compressor to jackhammer-in some 400 unnecessary bolts, to how his contentious line became the most popular route on the mountain, to how the removal of his bolts by two young, idealistic climbers in 2012 triggered a global climbing controversy. The story of Cerro Torre is a wild and unlikely chronicle of hubris, heroism, and epic journeys, all played out on what many climbers consider to be the most beautiful mountain in the world.

Ouray Ice Festival presenter Kelly Cordes tells this tale in his newly released book *The Tower: A Chronicle of Climbing and Controversy on Cerro Torre,* (Patagonia Books, 2014) focusing on the 40-year controversy surrounding Maestri's so-called Compressor Route.

Writing *The Tower* was a labor of love for Cordes, who traveled to seven different countries while compiling his research on the characters who inhabit its pages.

"It's painstakingly hard to put together such a complicated, layered story," he admitted. "It nearly drove me over the edge; it was way more than I bargained for."

More than anything, he came out of the experience with a deep sense of the tragic dimensions of his story's central character Maestri. "He is old and bitter and sad and angry – a Shakespearean character shaped by his own hubris," Cordes reflected. "He has alienated the climbing world. Everyone knows his first ascent claim in 59 was a lie, but a lot of people still protect him like an old grandfather."

Cordes will deliver an entertaining show about the wild story of Cerro Torre, complete with a slew of images from the 1950s to 2012 – perhaps even including those from his own ascent of the iconic peak in 2007. Although he promises that his presentation "is decidedly not a pitch for the book," he will be happy to sign your copy!

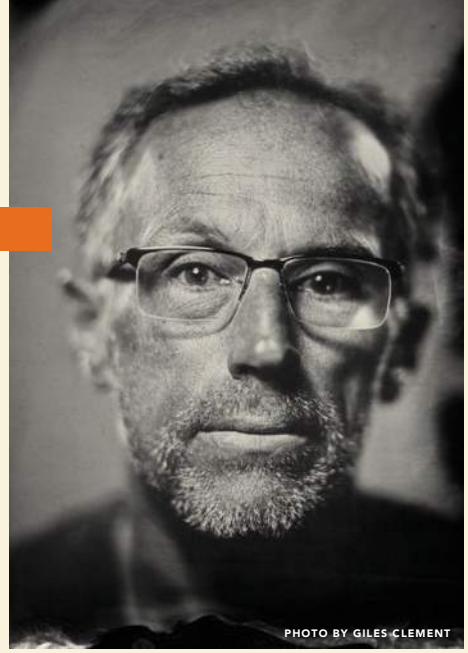
"Cordes is one of the best presenters you will ever see, with a quick sense of humor, and a really great writer," said Ouray Ice Park Inc. board president Mike MacLeod. "His talk will be super-relevant."

Cordes lives and climbs in Estes Park, Colorado, though his love of the mountains has taken him on alpine adventures around the world. He was formerly the senior editor for the *American Alpine Journal.*

Peter Metcalf

MULTIMEDIA PRESENTATION

Saturday, Jan. 10, 8-10 p.m.
(Doors open at 7 p.m.)
Wright Opera House


PHOTO BY GILES CLEMENT

BY SAMANTHA WRIGHT

Black Diamond CEO Peter Metcalf has never been to the Ouray Ice Festival or the Ouray Ice Park before, but he is plenty familiar with the San Juan Mountains.

Back in the '70s, he worked out of Silverton for Outward Bound, staying at the old Eureka Boarding House with fellow old-school Outward Bound instructors that have gone on to make names for themselves – like Mike Friedman (who helped found Telluride Helitrax) and Paul Parker (the Breckenridge-based master of free-heel skiing).

Metcalf fell effortlessly into the climbing lifestyle – working six months of the year for Outward Bound and as a roughneck with an oil drilling rig in Wyoming, and climbing obsessively the rest of the time.

Within a few years he was recognized as a pioneer alpinist both in Colorado (where he poached the first one-day ascent of Bridal Veil Falls with Glenn Randall and visiting British climber Andy Parkin) and in Alaska, with noted ascents on Fairweather, Foraker, Denali and most notoriously, Mount Hunter in Alaska.

"It was a time in life where the bohemian existence is better than at other times – it's easier to do that earlier in your life than the other way around," Metcalf said. "It was easier to find the holy grail, the balance, that is often spoken about but rarely achieved later in life."

As CEO of the $205-million-a-year outdoor-gear and apparel making conglomerate that rose out of the ashes of Patagonia founder Yvon Chouinard's struggling climbing equipment company in 1989, balance continues to be Metcalf's holy grail. "I'm like Don Quixote, searching for it, but right now I don't have balance," he admitted.

Recently, he's set into motion some changes that may put him back on the path toward the holy grail – hiring a new CEO who will take the reins at Black Diamond next June – so he can step back from day-to-day operations and move into "just a full-time job" as Vice President of Public Policy, Advocacy and Activism.

"Our style of doing business – the style in which we accomplish our goals – is as important as accomplishing our goals; which is really a mantra of climbing," he said.

Metcalf is excited to be a presenter at this year's Ouray Ice Festival. His company has always been a major sponsor of the annual Fest. Now, he'll get to share his thoughts about the role Ouray has played in the evolution of ice climbing (and his company) over the past two decades.

"I'll also be talking about how climbing has changed in America – especially from when I started, when it was this very bohemian, iconoclastic, stealthy, under-the-radar-screen activity, to become much more mainstream – and what that has meant to the sport," he said.

"It's incumbent upon climbers to think about the role we must play to ensure our privilege versus right to rock climb and ice climb continues, now that our numbers are large, and the sport is mainstream and anything but iconoclastic." ●


PHOTO BY CHRISTIAN PONDELLA/
RED BULL CONTENT POOL

Will Gadd

KEYNOTE PRESENTATION

Saturday, Jan. 10, 8-10 p.m. (Doors open at 7 p.m.)
Wright Opera House

BY SAMANTHA WRIGHT & ALLISON PERRY

World-renowned multi-sport mountain athlete and notorious freak of nature Will Gadd (aka "Captain Adventure") is always looking for ways to create a challenge for himself and push the limits.

Take, for example, his recent trip to Africa, where he climbed the last ice on Mt. Kilimanjaro.

"I heard the ice was disappearing (not due to warmth but to other reasons), and I had to go climb it," the Canadian adventurer said. "I got there and discovered it's shrinking so fast, it's really stunning. There is just amazing climbing there – the best and wildest climbing in my life. All that's left is slivers, like icebergs in a desert. It's a stunning environment."

This is just one of the great stories Gadd will share during his keynote presentation at the Wright Opera House on Saturday night, Jan. 10.

Gadd's also got some amazing Cineplex footage from his ascent of "the best, hardest, most fun, most full-on all-around get stoked rad multi-pitch mixed route in the world" – Helmcken Falls in British Columbia – where he broke his finger and nearly died in February 2014.

Ice is not Gadd's only medium; he has also received global acclaim for his paragliding adventures, and is a candidate for *National Geographic's* 2015 People's Choice Adventurer of the Year for paragliding (with Idaho's Gavin McClurg) 400 miles over the Canadian Rockies last summer to complete the longest-known journey via air by a paraglider.

"It's been a pretty good year," Gadd, 47, acknowledged. "Those are three of the better things that happened."

If there's time left over at his presentation, he may even throw in some footage of a rock climbing expedition on the Newfoundland coast last year.

"I think people will be entertained," he said. "My shows are more about the stories and places and ups and downs of it all than the actual climbing. It's a good general audience show."

People are still talking about the last time Gadd came to the Ouray Ice Festival in 2010, when he completed the Endless Ascent – climbing for 24 straight hours in the Ouray Ice Park in support of the dZi Foundation's "Revitalize a Village" program in eastern Nepal. His goal was to climb a paltry 11,429 feet of ice – the equivalent of base camp to the summit of Mt. Everest, by running laps on Pick o' the Vic, one of the ice park's longest and most vertical climbs.

When all was said and done, he had climbed an astounding 194 laps—a minimum total of 25,414'—all in a single day.

"I will show a video from that, too," he promised.

Oh yeah, and you may even get to see Gadd climb at this year's Ouray Ice Festival; he will likely be competing in the Elite Mixed Climbing Competition and Hari Berger Speed Climbing Comp. According to Ouray Ice Park, Inc. Board President Mike MacLeod, Gadd is "still killin' it out there," competing at a really high level. He took 1st at the Bozeman Ice Fest two years ago, and 2nd last year. (He has also won in Ouray several times.)

All in all, Gadd has been coming to Ouray for going on 20 years – since the very early days of the Ice Fest. "I'm looking forward to coming back and sharing my experiences one more time," he said. "It's always one of the highlights of my travel year." ●

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PHOTO BY STORMY PYEATTE

BEYOND THE ICE FEST

DEMO DAYS

Ice Fest weekend is awesome, but why let the fun stop there? If you've caught the ice climbing bug, check out our Demo Days throughout the ice climbing season!

Interested in ice climbing? Interested in checking out the latest in ice climbing gear? Either way, the Ouray Ice Park is the place to be this season.

Ouray Ice Park Demo Days feature top brands in the outdoor industry, offering participants the not-to-be-missed opportunity to test-drive great gear.

Asolo Boots hosts a Demo Days event at the Ouray Ice Park on Saturday, Jan. 31 and Sunday, Feb. 1, 2015. Look for Asolo near the Kids Wall (with ice climbing boots available for tryouts in the Park).

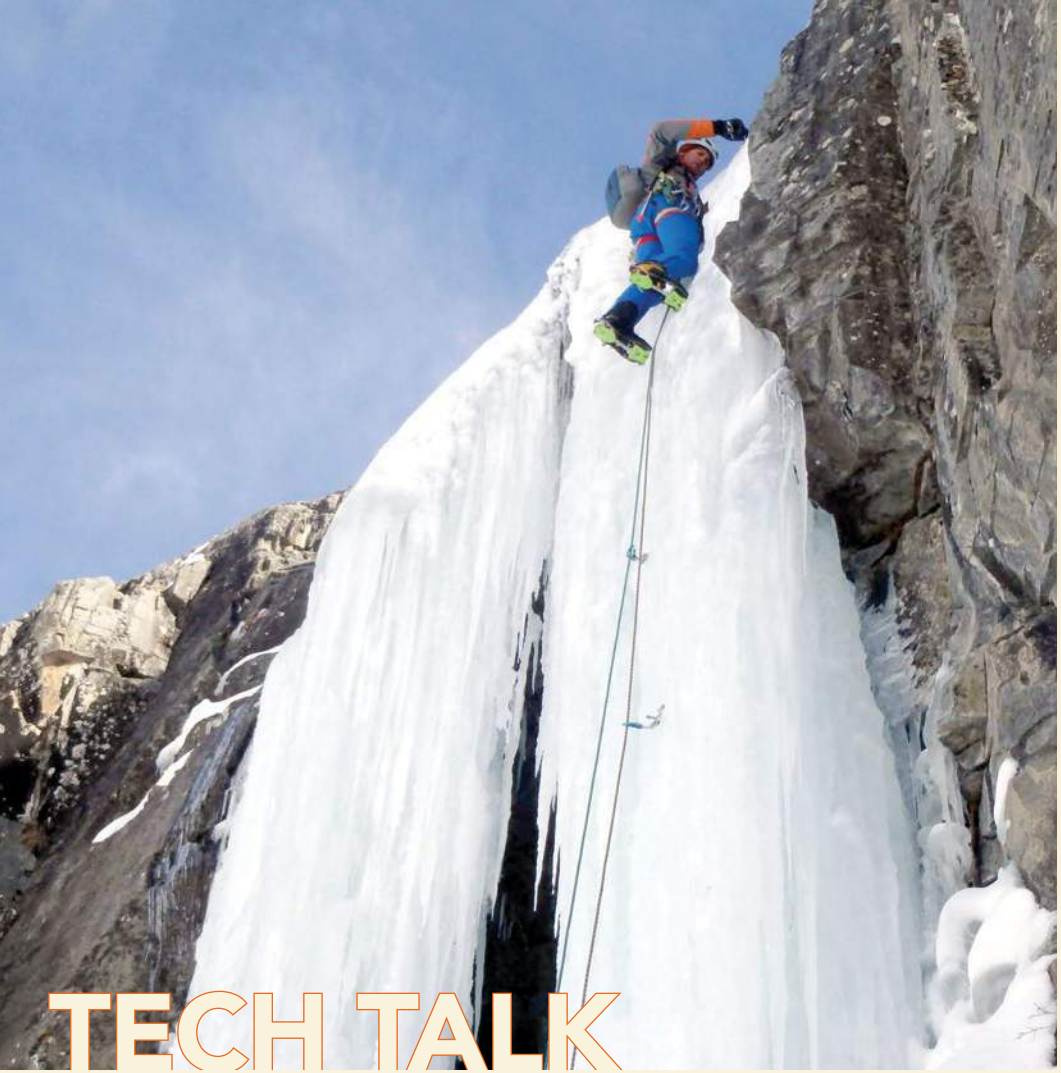
For more Demo Days, including **Black Diamond and Patagonia,** visit www.ourayicepark.com and the Ouray Ice Park Facebook page for updated information throughout the season.

FEM FEST

Fems who love Ice Fest are invited back to the Ouray Ice Park Feb. 6-8 for Fem Fest, a women's ice climbing festival presented by the Ouray Ice Park and hosted by Dawn Glanc.

At **Fem Fest,** women ice climbers of all ages and abilities come together to share the ice and mentor one another. There are no organized clinics or competitions. There are no signups. Bring a friend, or come alone. Either way, come and climb with us during the second weekend of February. Fems use social media to organize climbing partners, carpools and room sharing (there are plenty of places to stay). Town is only one square mile, so everything is close to the Ice Park. 30

The schedule of events includes an evening slideshow presentation by Angela Hawse at the Ouray Community Center on Friday, Feb. 6, and the famous Fem Fest Fashion Show and Makeover on Saturday night, Feb. 7. Go to Ourayfemfest.com or visit Facebook.com/womensicefest for more details and for Fem Fest makeover application information.



TECH TALK

Placing an Ice Screw on Lead

BY NATE DISSER

Quite possibly the most important aspect of leading ice is the art of placing an ice screw. It doesn't matter how hard you can climb – eventually if you don't learn to master the intricacies of a quality ice screw placement it's going to catch up to you one way or another. I consider leading ice more serious and potentially dangerous than leading rock climbs. Higher stakes mean more attention is necessary on the quality of your placements when considering the overall context of the terrain and your chosen route.

While the tips in this article are by no means an exhaustive list of all the skills you will need to competently lead ice climbs, it is intended get you thinking about a few of the techniques that may make the difference as you progress onto steeper and more difficult terrain. First and foremost, the three main rules of ice leading (per SJMG Senior Guide Andres Marin) are: "1. Don't fall; 2. Don't fall; 3. Don't hit the ground." Use that teaching as your modus operandi when embarking on all your ice climbing adventures.

1. PLAN BEFORE YOU GO

Before you start your lead, it is always a good idea to survey the route and look for natural places for you to protect the climb. In the process, you should advise yourself of rests, steep sections, or other formations which could prove challenging or hard to protect (bulges, mushrooms, etc.). This will have the added benefit of mentally preparing you for the pitch, creating a focused and attentive frame of mind – which lends to the ability to relax when the going gets tough.

2. RACK EFFICIENTLY ON YOUR HARNESS

It is very helpful to be organized on your harness so that you have access to your screws when you need them. Ice clippers (plastic carabiners with spine fixed to harness) are an absolute must, and aid in quick removal of your screws from your harness. How you accomplish your own sense of organization is specific to you, but the basic rule here is, don't be fumbling trying to get a screw when you need one.

3. ORIENT YOUR BODY PROPERLY

How you position yourself on the ice while placing a screw might make a huge difference – especially as you venture onto steeper terrain. Nothing will pump you out quicker than trying to place a screw while you have bad footing, or doing so from a lock off. Set one of your tools high as the apex of your position with a straight arm and set your feet such that maximum balance is achieved. This will help to create a good view of the ice around you and maintain excellent leverage during placement.

4. LOOK FOR CONCAVE PLACEMENTS

When you establish yourself for a placement, look around to find the best ice for your screw. Most often this will be in a concave section of ice where the support of the ice around the screw is much better than that found on convex areas.

5. MAINTAIN PRESSURE

I've seen a lot of new leaders drop ice screws. Typically the primary reason for this is that they are not maintaining the proper amount of pressure through the first few turns into the ice. The express knob on the screw should not be used until you are certain that the screw is firmly placed and can hold itself up. Make sure to keep your hand under the ice screw with each turn transition while you accomplish this goal. That way you'll be able to handle the screw (i.e. you are less likely to drop it) if it is being pesky and not setting on the first few rotations.

6. LEVERAGE AND ANGLE ARE IMPORTANT

Try to maintain a good L-shaped position while placing your screw. That is, place the screw at about waist height to achieve good pressure while starting your ice screw in the ice. This will increase your chances of setting the screw on the first try, which in turn will support the speed and energy efficiency of it all. Place the screw at a zero-to-five-degree downward angle to maximize the holding power of the ice screw threads.

7. EXPRESS SCREWS ARE MANDATORY

Ice screws with an integrated crank or "express knob" are an absolute must for your rack. Once the screw is firmly in the ice, engage the crank and insert the screw as fast as you can. Speed counts.

8. DON'T OVERTIGHTEN THE SCREW!

Once in a while I'll see someone using the hammer of their axe to drive home the last few bits of rotation that they can out of the screw. Don't do this! The threads of the screw are what give it the holding power it needs. Over-tightening can cause the threads to work less effectively than they are designed.

9. CLIP & GO

Once the screw is placed and the hanger is in the right position, grab your draw and clip your rope. If you've been securing your placement on steep ice then you will likely need to relax your grip on your high tool to release some of that glorious and unmistakable forearm pump. Then get back to the upward movement! Your partner is waiting for you to finish the pitch, the day is growing shorter, and Ouray's Hot Springs are calling….

10. EXTRA CREDIT

For extra credit, be able to place ice screws equally well with your left and right hand.

Enjoy!

Nate Disser, an AMGA Certified Rock & Alpine Guide, is the co-owner of San Juan Mountain Guides.

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IN MEMORIAM

Eitan Green

BY SAMANTHA WRIGHT



EITAN GREEN ON DENALI IN 2011. PHOTO BY ERIC MURPHY

Eitan Green, a part-time Ouray resident and well-loved guide, died May 31, 2014 on Mt. Rainier.

All six in the party, including Green, another guide and four clients, perished in a 3,300-ft. fall along the precipitous, avalanche-prone north slope of Mount Rainier known as Liberty Ridge.

Green had lived in Ouray and worked for San Juan Mountain Guides through the high winter season for the past five years, typically from December through April.

"Quite simply, Eitan was one of the most well-respected, well-liked guides in this community," San Juan Mountain Guides owner Nate Disser said. "He always had a smile on his face. He had encyclopedic knowledge of local ice climbing routes, and he was a very accomplished climber."

His passing "is a huge loss for all of us in this guiding community and for San Juan Mountain Guides," Disser said, "not to mention his family and their loss. We are grief stricken and devastated by the whole incident and are trying to deal with it as best we can."

Although Green was only 28 when he died, Disser recalls that he "really committed himself to climbing and guiding, more so than other people. He was a very intelligent person, able to grasp the more complex elements of how to be a quality guide very quickly."

Green was also a great athlete, climbing in Patagonia, Canada, Alaska and extensively throughout the continental U.S., where he had made 40-plus summits of Mt. Rainier by six different routes.

His favorite place to ice climb in Ouray was Bird Brain Boulevard, near the Camp Bird Mine; that, followed by a soak in the hot springs, amounted to his idea of the perfect day.

Raised in the Boston area, Green "mastered karate as a child, spoke four languages, rocked the drums and was a star anthropology student [at Colby College in Maine] who completed original research and wrote a thesis on global climbing communities," wrote Patrick Bagley in a memorial article that appeared in rockandice.com.

During his college years, Green spent a formative semester in the Indian Himalaya, where he became fluent in Nepali.

He was "quick with a smile and exuberant, and had that infectious nature of guides who love their work and time in the mountains," according to Alpine Ascents, the guiding company where Green was working when he died. "His talent as a strong leader and critical thinker in the wilderness was unsurpassed."

At the time of his death, Green was working towards becoming a certified guide through the American Mountain Guides Association. "I live, work, and play in the mountains," he wrote in a statement on his website. "I consider it a privilege to facilitate mountain adventures."

Allez, allez, Eitan!



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