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mountain life

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58



43



80



84

FEATURES

- 50 FLYIN' HIGH AGAIN**
*Peru's Semana del Andinismo takes off.
 Roasted Guinea Pig Anyone?*
- 58 FREE FALLIN'**
*Waterfalls of the Sea to Sky.
 Get Ready to Get Wet.*
- 70 THE AIR UP THERE**
*Filming for National Geographic Channel's
 The Man Who Can Fly takes a crew of Squamish
 locals to Mount Bute and beyond.*

UPFRONT

- 20** Hot Summer Fun
- 24** Freediving
- 27** 29'ers
- 28** Trailblazer

DEPARTMENTS

- 14** Editor's Message *Bending the Laws*
- 23** Comin' Up *Jackson Goldstone*
- 30** Backyard *Saddle Up in Callaghan Country*
- 34** Mini Adventure *Echo Lake*
- 39** Character *People of the Arbutus*
- 43** Environment *Stand Up for Great Bear*
- 66** Mountain Home *The House That Bob Built*
- 76** Gallery *Summer Stunners*
- 80** Local Artist *Rory Bushfield*
- 84** Food *SPIN Farming*
- 88** Wellness *Shouldering the Load*
- 90** Gear *Wet and Dry*
- 98** Back Page *DIY Airtime*

On the cover: Dean Potter tests the limits of human flight, and his custom wingsuit. Mount Bute, BC. MIKEY SCHAEFER PHOTO.
 Upper left: Tom Emmerson, Callaghan Creek. STEVE ROGERS PHOTO.

Upper right: Great Bear Rainforest. IAN McALLISTER PHOTO.
 Middle: Rory Bushfield. FLIP McCRIRICK PHOTO.
 Bottom: Backyard agriculture. MARK GRIBBON PHOTO.



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Things to do today #1: Walk a highline over Shannon Falls. #2: Patch hole in pants. REUBEN KRABBE PHOTO.

THE AIRTIME ISSUE

Being in the air, especially that tiny point of weightlessness at the pinnacle of a jump, is the closest most of us will ever come to breaking the laws of gravity.

Almost as soon as we can walk, we start to jump off stuff – the curb, the bottom step, the end of an old mossy log. There's just something about catching air...

For one, airtime is intrinsically punk rock because it bends the rules a bit. Every other second of our lives we are bound by gravity, pulled to the point of touching whatever happens to be between us and the earth. The floor, the concrete, the path, the bed – we're always on something solid, firm and noticeable.

Except when we're in the air. In the air, suddenly we're free, unencumbered and floating through space. Being underwater pushes the laws of gravity but being in the air, especially that tiny point of weightlessness at the pinnacle of a jump, is the closest most of us will ever come to breaking them. Airtime is rebellious.

Airtime is also more than just jumping. Climbers on a big wall, clinging to near-nothingness, alone but for raw nerve, a rope, and a few hundred metres of empty space – that counts too. As does walking the highline, dancing across a piece of webbing with the wind in your toes. Airtime brings perspective and insight in a way no foot-to-ground hike ever can.

Airtime need not be ultra-extreme, however. A two-minute wingsuit flight or paddling over the

lip of a 40-foot waterfall is incredibly awesome but so is bunny-hopping a BMX in your driveway or cannonballing into a lake. Airtime is relative to your comfort zone and making the decision to fly is just as important as the flight itself.

Of course, airtime can also be about the distribution of knowledge and what kinds of information we get, or what is kept from us. These days there are plenty of issues that don't get enough airtime in the mainstream media. Quality airtime is so valuable some would try to buy it all up, to push their own agendas. Airtime needs balance.

We live in an ever-controlled society, with more rules and social expectations heaped on us with every passing year. Our time-saving devices seem to be doing just the opposite and, in most places on the planet, routine is winning over adventure.

Thankfully, here in the Coast Mountains we have it better than most. Our air is clean and easily accessible. We have a lot of good stuff to jump off.

Gravity always wins, it's a bit of a bully that way, but why not fight back a little this summer? Airtime is freedom. Go get some. [m](#)

– Feet Banks



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Mamquam River, Squamish, BC. Todd Lawson photo.

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C O A S T M O U N T A I N S

PUBLISHERS

JON BURAK jon@mountainlifemag.ca
TODD LAWSON todd@mountainlifemag.ca
GLEN HARRIS glen@mountainlifemag.ca

EDITOR

FEET BANKS feet@mountainlifemag.ca

CREATIVE & PRODUCTION DIRECTOR

AMÉLIE LÉGARE amelie@mountainlifemag.ca

MANAGING EDITOR

NED MORGAN ned@mountainlifemag.ca

WEBMASTER

JOHN MAGILL john@mountainlifemag.ca

FINANCIAL CONTROLLER

DIANE DECOOK diane@mountainlifemag.ca

CONTRIBUTORS

Flip McCrick, Seb Kemp, Mikey Schaefer, Jeff Slack, Derek Dix, Jess Robertson, Alain Denis, Ashley Barker, Blake Jorgenson, Nicole Trigg, Dawn Green, Nicolas Teichrob, Jason Smith, Lisa Richardson, Bryson Robertson, Dr. Carla Cupido, Andrew Campbell, Hans Christian Gulsvik, Russell Dalby, Alex Gabriel, Mason Mashon, Drew Glaser, Jordan Manley, Jess Smith, Paddy Kaye, Will Edmundson, Jim Martinello, Matt Domanski, Chris Winter, Justa Jeskova, Dagan Beach, Steve Fisher, Jussi Grznar, Dave Barnes, Andrew Bradley, Chris Ankeny, Dan Carr, Dave Steers, Matt Mallory, Chris Christie, Damian Cromwell, Colin Field, Cooper Saver, Les Anthony, Brian Finestone, Rich Glass, Mark Gribbon, Sterling Lorence, Ace Mackay-Smith, G.D. Maxwell, Bryn Hughes, Paul Morrison, Bruce Rowles, Matt Domanski, Lorne Warburton.

SALES & MARKETING

JON BURAK jon@mountainlifemag.ca 604 815 1900
TODD LAWSON todd@mountainlifemag.ca 604 932 1974
BRANDI HITCHON brandi@mountainlifemag.ca 604 902 3290

PUBLISHED BY MOUNTAIN LIFE MEDIA INC.

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Mountain Life Coast Mountains is published every February, June and November by Mountain Life Media Inc. and circulated throughout Whistler and the Sea to Sky corridor from Pemberton to Vancouver. Reproduction in whole or in part is strictly prohibited. Views expressed herein are those of the author exclusively. To learn more about Mountain Life, visit Mountainlifemag.ca. To distribute Mountain Life in your store please call 604 815 1900.

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ABOVE & BELOW: DAGAN BEACH PHOTOS.

...PARTIES

LIVE AT SQUAMISH

LIVE at Squamish returns August 24-26 and headliners include the Tragically Hip and Chromeo. This year the fest features "Glamping," on-site camping with access to showers. liveatsquamish.com

BASS COAST

Bass Coast goes down August 3-6 just north of Squamish and features top-notch electronic acts like Fort Knox Five, Smalltown DJs, Vinyl Ritchie and more. There is no glamping but always lots of glamour. basscoast.ca

TWO ACRE SHAKER

Pemberton's hottest hoedown, "The Shaker" is the kind of intimate, grassroots festival that perfect summers are made of. Not too rave-y, not too redneck the Two-Acre Shaker is much more than just a clever rhyming couplet. It's the party of the summer. Keep checking the website for location, date and line-up details. Giv'r. twoacreshaker.com



MATT DOMANSKI PHOTO.

...TRAIL: FULL NELSON

Half Nelson, Squamish's most publicized, all-inclusive, all-weather, government-funded trail has been branched out and extended another kilometre and become Full Nelson.

"It's amazing what can be accomplished when all trail users cooperate and find tolerance for each other," says Dream Wizards Events founder Ted Tempany, who flagged the trail over ten years ago and spent the past six months building the extension with the support of the Anthill crew and Red Bull. Full Nelson is built to last, with lots of drainage, and is named after local trail advocate Mike Nelson, a key player in securing permits and keeping Squamish's trails on the level.

– Matt Domanski



...WTF!?: MOUNTAIN UNICYCLING

Kris Holm is out to prove there's more to unicycling than circus clowns and Russian bears. Over the past eight years he's been working on a book to showcase all aspects of "mountain unicycling."

"Imagine if your sole understanding of skiing came from big mountain ski movies," Kris says. "Or your only context for biking was bike videos... a pretty warped picture." Kris's book, *The Essential Guide to Mountain and Trails Unicycling*, is the first instructional tome for the sport. Tips, stories and 250 photos showcase the accessibility of a true fringe sport. Ride on. gradientpress.com



RICH WHEATER PHOTO.

...CAUSE: BAND TOGETHER BC

This summer Whistler local Kim Slater plans to run along the proposed 1170-kilometre Northern Pipeline route to open dialogue and raise awareness about issues related to the Alberta tar sands and alternative energy.

"I don't want to protest or fight anything," Kim says. "I just want to foster dialogue towards the creation of a national energy strategy for Canada, and a clean energy future."

The Northern Pipeline is a classic case of the "Economy vs. Environment" argument. While oil exports will undoubtedly bring a lot of money into Canada (and Alberta), many BC residents consider the potential damage of oil spills in the Great Bear Rainforest and the destruction of Native culture along the coast too great a risk to take. The Great Bear is the largest coastal rainforest left on the planet.

"My friend Matt Hill said that running is the simplest way forward," Kim says.

"So run I shall."

Follow Kim (and donate) at bandtogetherbc.com



... BEERS

Any time is good for beer but most will agree that summer is the best time. Here are three hot new flavours to tickle your fancy and quench your thirst.

LIGHTHOUSE BREWING COMPANY

Switchback IPA

First of all it's 6.5 percent alcohol so that is key. Then the combo of bitter hops, citrus and tropical fruits and fresh medium-bodied malts dishes up a lighter, more summery IPA. Available in six-pack bottles, 19L kegs and a beauty 50L keg.

HOWE SOUND BREWING COMPANY

4Way Fruit Ale

There's a lot of leeway in a three-way so this 4Way must be phenomenal. Keeping with the fruit theme the brewers at Howe Sound have combined mango, pomegranate, passion fruit and raspberry into a mild, subtle, lightly sweet ale that's about as summery as they come. It's 4.4 percent alcohol and pomegranate has antioxidants so... healthy beer!

WHISTLER BREWING COMPANY

Pineapple Express Wheat Ale

With just a hint of wheat and plenty of pineapple to keep things tropical, the Pineapple Express is a perfect patio sessioning beverage. While some lucky local establishments will have it on tap, the easiest way to hitch a ride on this Express is to pick up a couple of the 650-ml bottles and let the good times roll.

– Feet Banks



TODD LAWSON PHOTO.

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PHOTO: TIM KEMPLE



ACTION JACKSON

Photos & Text by Jim Martinello

Like most eight-year-old kids, Jackson Goldstone truly loves to ride his bike – anytime and anywhere. Unlike most kids his age, however, Jackson started landing his first backflips a few months ago.

"I was doing 180's when I was four years old on my push bike," the Squamish local says. "Backflips, I was practicing last year in the foam pit and stuck my first one a couple months ago at Woodward West camp in California."

He comes by the talents honestly; parents Ron and Miriam are also avid bikers. Ron says, "He's happy any chance he gets to get out on his bike and it shows."

From the mountain bike trails and the dirt jumps to soaring through the air at the bike park or dropping into the big bowl at the skate park, Jackson can cruise through it all – smooth and easy, smiles the whole way.

I was able to spend a little time with Jackson and his family over the last few weeks and witnessing the support, connection and passion for life they all share was inspirational. Underneath all the videos and tricks and excitement, Jackson just really loves to ride.

Mountain Life – How do you like the riding in Squamish?

Jackson Goldstone – The riding is awesome here. And the scenery rocks, lots of variety.

ML – Where is your favourite place to ride? And your favourite trail?

JG – Whistler Bike is my favourite place to ride, so much fun. Favourite trail is Half Nelson in Squamish.

ML – When did you start riding?

JG – As a two-year-old on my Norco push bike. I also had a rear suspension Kokum, sweet ride.

ML – Do you have a mentor? What inspired you to get so involved in riding?

JG – Danny MacAskill. He's a pro rider. I started seeing videos of him when I was two.

ML – Inspiration for the future?

JG – To become a pro rider. Also pull a cash roll on my bike, that's a 180-back, flip-180.

ML – Who do you like to ride with?

JG – Finn Finestone – [we're] brothers from different mothers.

ML – How often do you ride a week?

JG – Every day I can. 

Hit up cm.mountainlifemag.ca and click "In this Issue" for a video of Jackson ripping at Woodward West Camp and landing his first backflip.





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THE FINAL BREATH

*A Different Perspective on airtime
from world record freediver
Mandy Rae Cruickshank*

I take my final breath and then pack extra air into my stretching lungs. I need to get in as much as possible because my lungs will soon be compressed down to one-ninth the size they are here at the surface. This final breath can also cause problems if done improperly – I don't want too much of a good thing, even if that good thing is air...

What is freediving? It's essentially deep snorkeling: swimming underwater on a single breath of air. Most of the world's freedivers do it recreationally, to take pictures or get their dinner. I was drawn to it for the challenge and competitive thrill.


When I enter the water to start prepping for a world record dive it is all about the breath. Slow breaths not only help relax and focus but they are done in a manner that helps induce bradycardia, a slowing of the heart rate. This is big, as a fast heartbeat means I will use too

much oxygen and that could ruin the dive and cause a blackout instead of a world record. I lie on my back and breathe slowly with long exhalations. Then with one minute remaining I breathe slightly faster to help get rid of excess CO₂ while still oxygenating. Even these breaths can cause problems, though — do too many or breathe too deeply or quickly and it could also cause me to black out.

On the actual dive I am fully focused on the technique that will get me from the surface to 88 metres and back again. Nothing else is allowed in my mind. I do allow a brief moment of joy after I grab the tag at world record depth. "Yes! I am deeper than anyone else has ever gone!" Then it's back to technique, as I am only halfway there.

Upon returning to the surface I don't feel starved for air. In fact, after just six breaths I am able to remove my goggles and nose clip, give a

sign with my fingers to signal to the judges that I am OK. No panting, no gasping for air.

Even at 88 metres below the surface, deeper than anyone has ever been on a single breath, never have I ever felt like the lack of breathing was scary or limiting. The cessation of breathing is voluntary and welcomed, a challenge that I accept. It allows me to become more like a dolphin or a whale, to explore the underwater world in a way very few people ever will. For a freediver, the lack of air means freedom. 

Mandy Rae Cruickshank holds twelve national and seven world records and currently lives in Vancouver with her husband. She offers freediving instruction to anyone interested in building up a one-breath relationship with the big blue. performancefreediving.com

Mandy reaches for the world record at 88m below the surface.
COURTNEY PLATT PHOTO.



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"I'm able to attack steeps without worrying about endo-ing as much. An aggressive rider charging into a rough, flat trail can, without argument, carry momentum better." – Wade Simmons



NOTHIN' FINER THAN A 29'ER

By Paddy Kaye

Bigger is better when it comes to motorhomes, chocolate Easter bunnies, the transatlantic economic union, and flat-screen TVs – this is fact. But not everyone knows bigger is also better when it comes to the mountain bike wheel. Welcome to the latest trend in our beloved sport – the 29'er.

Okay, maybe not really the latest trend, since 29-inch wheels have been around since bikes became mountain bikes (Geoff Apps' company offered a 29'er in their 1981 catalogue) but recently this simple mod has tipped into a revolution.

"29'ers are the reverse camber of the biking world," says Whistler rider Matt Ryan. "They make trail riding easier for the general public and for those who have a quiver, the 29'er is

another tool in the shed. Bigger wheels give you more balance because of the geometry."

Gary Fisher was the first major manufacturer to offer a line of 29" bikes but they didn't sell well until 2004 with the Rig, a single-speed 29'er. Today most brands offer at least one 29" bike or frame and companies that openly dismissed them as a passing trend are now bringing 29" wheels to market.

Among riders, the debate rages on. Those who believe the 29'er to be inferior often mention added weight, perceived sluggishness in handling and problems with fit. Enthusiasts respond with comments about reduced rolling resistance, perceived increased stability and enhanced ability to roll over obstacles.

Freeride pioneer Wade Simmons says that the true benefits of a 29'er are the ability to smooth out a rough trail and "endo" prevention – they help keep you from going over the handlebars.


"I'm able to attack steeps without worrying about endo-ing as much," he says. "And an aggressive rider charging into a rough, flat trail can, without argument, carry momentum better."

As far as the complaint about maneuverability in tight corners Simmons adds: "This is true, but if a rider possesses the skills to endo the rear wheel around, it's easy to overcome. I enjoy riding a 29 for the challenges it presents differently than a 26."

Big wheels aren't necessarily just for big riders. Willow Rockwell is a top American cross-country competitor; she is also 5-foot-2. "The 29'er works for me," she says. "I feel confident and supported, like I am in my own cocoon. The key is to get a bike with a good fit."

So is a 29'er a good fit for you? The only

way to know is to sell your soul at the cross-roads and use the money to buy a new bike. Whistler-based Chromag is making a hardtail 29'er called the Surface. Inaugural production run is 40 frames, and 52 are already presold. "Bigger wheels hang up less, carry momentum and close up holes in the trail," says Chromag owner Ian Ritz. "It's similar to adding suspension."

If you like to pedal, maybe it's time you hopped on a 29'er – or get really tech and go "96'er/69'er", a combo of a 29" wheel up front and a 26" at the back (or vice-versa). But that's a whole 'nother discussion. Ride on! 

SPLIT THE DIFFERENCE? THE 650B

Guess what? There's yet another player on the field – the 650B wheel – that actually comes in around the 27" mark. The MTB industry is embracing this new size too, so now we have three tire sizes. Why? Some think it's a money grab but I suspect it's all about finding the ultimate equipment for the best riding experience.

"The 29'er suits the hardtail no question," says Jonny Inglis from his porch at The Pemberton Bike Co. "Short-travel bikes 4 to 6 inch will sport 650B, and the long travel downhill bikes will continue with the 26."

What's best? Time will tell as there are actually ten standardized rim sizes in between 26" and 29". Can't wait to build up my 700C'er/650D'er in 2022.



ABOVE: PADDY KAYE PHOTO.

TOP: Jason Porter isn't worried about this 29'er endo. BLAKE JORGENSEN PHOTO.



DAVE BARNES ILLUSTRATION.

STANLEY SMITH

A Forgotten Explorer

By Jeff Slack

For every visionary mountaineer and frozen-bearded explorer whose exploits are immortalized, there have been dozens of equally remarkable backwoods hardmen stalking the wilderness in search of wealth, adventure, or even solitude, but not fame. Fair or not, history is not their friend.

Take the enigmatic Stanley Smith, whose coastal adventures would now be completely forgotten if it weren't for a handful of old newspaper articles.

In July 1893, accompanied by a "Mr. Doolittle" and two anonymous Squamish guides, Smith set off up the Squamish Valley in search of two surveyors who had disappeared the previous summer. All they found was a grey tweed cap and a burnt-out campsite near the head of the Elaho River. Undeterred, and with little more than a shotgun to ward off starvation, Smith and Doolittle continued northwards.

According to Smith's police report – the only surviving firsthand account – from here they ascended massive icefalls unroped, crimping along narrow rock ledges above heavy exposure, crossed box canyons on suspended logs hundreds of feet above boiling rapids, and at one point spent six days immobilized on a glacier waiting out a severe case of snow-blindness. As most of the terrain they crossed was unmapped and unnamed, their exact route is unclear. Almost certainly, they traversed much of the Lillooet Icefield before finally descending from the ice one last time to find "rock formations and plant growth that showed we were on

the eastern slope" of the Coast Range, a few miles from Chilko Lake.

Surviving on half rations from an earlier goat kill, from here they took three days to carve out a canoe and cross the freshwater fjord, purchased fresh provisions and clothing from a group of Chilcotin men, felled and carved out a second canoe, and descended the treacherous Klinaklini River to Knight Inlet. Finally back on the coast, they hitched a ride on a passing steamer back to a hero's welcome at Vancouver, arriving on October 26th more than three months after setting out.

Victoria newspapers described Smith as a "well-known British Columbia explorer" who "had a great deal of experience in the unexplored parts of the province," but sparse details remain of his other journeys. His career came to an abrupt halt when a Homalco chief found Smith's corpse stuck in a log jam on the lower Homathko River in November 1895. Reports stated that a partially legible diary was found in Smith's pocket recording some of his mineral finds and travel routes, but this little black book of Coast Range secrets is long gone.

Smith's obituary portrays a unique, even eccentric character. "A college-bred man, possessed of considerable means [with] rich parents living in the East," Smith rejected his privilege and chose instead to live alone in a humble cabin on the outskirts of Vancouver. When not wandering the coastal wilderness, Smith put his education to use by providing pro bono legal services for those of lesser means, turning his cabin into a "tramp's court," like a nineteenth-century Judge Judy.

The article concludes: "All who knew Stanley Smith here revered, respected and admired him as a man, while in his public character as an explorer, the province loses the valued assistance of one whom it will be almost impossible to replace." For whatever reason, however, his memory quickly faded. A half-century later, mountaineering legend Don Munday was astounded to learn how "mountaineering circles in British Columbia [had lost] even word-of-mouth knowledge of [these] great glaciers discovered in 1893." Today the only monument to these epic adventures is the Stanley Smith Glacier near the remote heart of the Lillooet Icefield. ■

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SADDLE UP TO SLOW DOWN

A horseback tour in the Callaghan Valley dishes up all the peace and serenity but without the campfire beans



By Feet Banks
Photography by Todd Lawson

Ever been kicked by a horse? I have. It sucks. Ever been bucked off? I have, as a small child, and for the past 25 years I've remained convinced that horses are giant savage beasts, hundreds of pounds of gnashing teeth and malicious unpredictability that can smell fear and are just waiting for another shot at me. Horses are scary.

Cowboys, on the other hand, are the coolest. They're easy going and minimalist – if it doesn't fit in a saddlebag they probably don't have much use for it. And I've come to realize much of the cool, calm cowboy demeanor is because of the horse, or rather the act of riding one. So last September I nipped up and saddled up and hopped on a horse named Happy for a mellow adventure up into the Callaghan Valley. (And to trick the horse into thinking I knew what I was doing, I dressed in my cowboy finest – it totally worked.)

"The Pemberton Trail was an old horse trail completed in 1877," says Brad Sills, owner of Callaghan Country Wilderness Adventures and

Lodge. "That was the only link from Pemberton to Squamish before the railway pushed through in 1914. There probably wasn't much horse activity in the Callaghan back then but they played an integral role in the development of the entire Sea to Sky."

Just sitting on a horse, after categorically avoiding them most of my life, felt like a triumph. To actually ride one, a thousand pounds of living beast controlled by simple tugs and prods, is way more fun than I'd expected.

"Horses are incredibly smart," says Copper Cayuse Outfitters co-owner Don Coggins as we clip-clop through the forest. "You take them over a trail once and they'll remember it."

Happy, Scrambler, Smokey, Nipper, Rusty and Max were all once reservation horses from Mount Currie, essentially wild. "We get male horses and have all female trainers," Don explains. "It works well."

It certainly seems to: the horses behave and my fears quickly fade. Experiencing the Coast Mountains on horseback is a slow and meandering adventure unlike any other method
continued on pg 32...



PHOTO COURTESY OF CALLAGHAN COUNTRY.



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of transportation. Forget the speedy, split-second adrenaline of mountain biking or the plodding, repetitive foot placements of hiking. The horse does the work, allowing one to pass through the world at a speed that truly lets us take in the beauty of our surroundings and the subtle details of nature (accentuated with nips from the requisite flask of whiskey).

Horseback riding is relaxing but also dynamic. I'm quickly drawn into the rhythmic, up-down gait of traveling atop a living beast. The horse knows where to go yet the rider can still control it. Speed, direction, stop, go – it's about developing a feel for the horse, a bond. I don't quite feel in charge, but Happy and I seem to have agreed to coexist in harmony as we push through the forest and into the sub-alpine meadows.

Perfectly placed on the edge of an alpine meadow, Callaghan Country Lodge is an eight-bedroom haven of rustic relaxation and fine dining complete with a wood-fired sauna set beside a chilling alpine creek.

The Lodge electricity shuts off each night but hosts Evan Boland and Kirsti Leppanen are always on hand to ensure we are warm, happy, and at peace. The four-course dinner is the furthest thing from campfire beans.

Later the mist rolls in – a chilly, grey

atmosphere that shrouds the peaks and creeps into the forest as if searching for shelter from itself. For the first time all day the horses get skittish, their ears perked up, scanning the night. It's ideal ghost story weather. Don lights the campfire.

Poking at coals the way people have since the beginning of time, we listen to Brad's tales of a T-33 fighter jet that crashed in the area in 1956, the two pilots never found, and of the Puyup, a tribe of the Squamish Nation who used to hunt goat here and collect obsidian for weapons and trade. Evan talks about encounters with wildlife, "grizzlies more than anything, but also the odd wolverine. You really feel like you're part of the forest after a few days up here alone."

Tomorrow perhaps we'll hike up to Ring Lake for more views, or take the horses for a mosey around the forest. No definitive plans are made because we are alone in the wilderness and can just take things as they come, cowboy style. Eventually the last embers burn low, the flask of whiskey long dry, and we're left with just the dark silence of nighttime in the alpine punctuated by the occasional snort of a horse.

Staying at Callaghan Lodge is like taking a step into history and the horse is the best time travel machine going. Brad Sills has been

running the Lodge for 32 years and he never tires of the spot.

"Every day is like the first time," he says. "It's always different up here. It's about a reconnection to the natural world and the spirit of the quest."

Regardless of what you come looking for, Callaghan Country will give you what you need. I beat my fear of horses and discovered a new way to travel and connect with the land. Evan and Kirsti found a place to work and play and meet people, every day an adventure. Brad, also head of Whistler Search & Rescue, still hasn't found the bodies of those long-lost pilots but he's in no rush. Some quests take a lifetime.

As we shuffle into the Lodge to clean sheets and soft beds, Don Coggins lays a sleeping bag out on the deck. For him, this is just another night out under the stars – no tent, no bug netting. Just the gun, the dog, the horses – and the peaceful sleep that comes to a man set in his rightful path.

Cowboys are just so damn cool. ■

Callaghan Country Wilderness Adventures offers three-day horse tours that include accommodation and meals in the Lodge. They also have the world's most amazing Huckleberry Festival every September. callaghancountry.com

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ECHO LAKE

Stepping off the beaten path yields big rewards (and hornets)

By Feet Banks
Photography by Chris Christie

“Never Stop Exploring.”

Some would say it's a cop-out to build an adventure story around the tagline for a giant outdoor clothing company but the truth is those three words also offer up some damn fine advice, whatever brand your jacket is.

Exploring is the heart of adventure and heading out into the unknown will bring more satisfaction than playing it safe and sticking with the routine – nine times out of ten anyhow, but there's always a chance you'll get burned.

Or chewed on by an animal. Or you might have to cut your own arm off with a pocket knife. And if you happen to head up towards Echo Lake in the mountains west of Squamish, there's a good chance you'll get savagely attacked by ferocious hornets every few hundred metres. Of course, the most valuable lessons of exploration are often learned the hard way.

LESSON #1

Small groups are best for this hike. Otherwise when the leaders stir up another nest of stump- or ground-dwelling hornets, the six people behind walk into an angry swarm. Also, wear long pants.

Echo Lake is one of those so-close-but-so-far spots. The cascading waters of Monmouth Creek are easily visible from downtown Squamish, but few people ever bother going over to check them out, or the incredible alpine lake that feeds them.

“When I was building my store I'd take breaks and sit outside with my paperwork,” says Murray Sovereign, owner of Valhalla Pure Squamish. “And I'd stare up at that waterfall and wish I was over there, away from the dust and chaos.”

Since then Murray has been “over there” probably a hundred times. He even established a new trail on the upper section that more closely follows the creek straight up to the lake, a clear, sparkling gem that sits 950 metres (3000 feet) above the Squamish River. That river is Echo Lake's

first line of defense, and not to be taken lightly.

LESSON #2

Crossing a large, tidal river in an inflatable raft from Canadian Tire is totally not recommended (but it's definitely an adventure.)

Charter a boat or use canoes or kayaks instead. Also, the river is tidal so tie your boat to something sturdy.

Once back on dry land, the hike up Monmouth Creek is pure sweat equity. The trail quickly rises straight up and within ten minutes arrives at Monmouth's lowest waterfall – a multi-stager of around 80 feet. The mist-glistened logs, calm spray pools and thunderous refrain of the falls raises spirits and provides inspiration to soldier onwards and upwards through some never-been-logged coastal rainforest, steep scrambles, almost constant waterfalls, canyons and over-pool bouldering problems, a couple of no-fall zones, and way too many ground-nesting hornets.

continued on pg 32...



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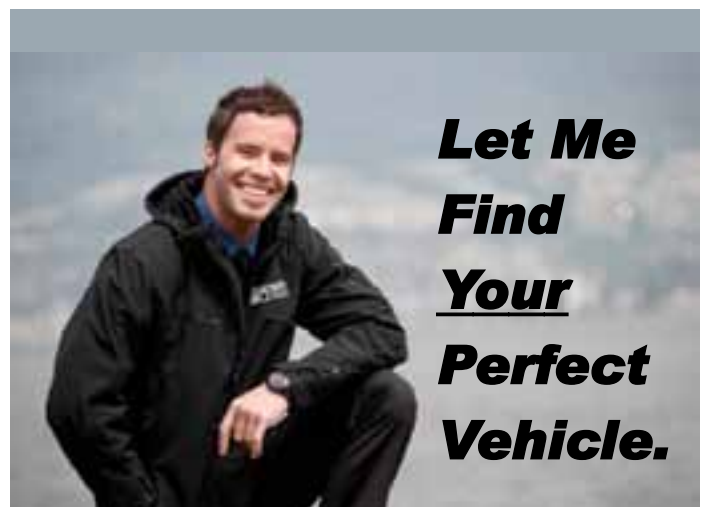


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As humans we explore, not only to see new sights but also to gain new perspective on familiar ones. The views of the Squamish Chief, Howe Sound and the local mountains to be had while sitting on a rocky ridgeline beside a creek that's shooting straight into empty space is something that even hornets can't ruin. It's a fresh look at some of the beauty we see every day (and perhaps take a bit for granted).

Just metres from the edge, the clear,



cool waters of Echo Lake soothe a lot more than hornet stings. The place is a literal amphitheatre of awesomeness with steep forested shorelines leading to rocky peaks and patchy snowfields. Another waterfall feeds into the lake on the northern shore, a promise of more adventure (and another lake) just over the next ridge.

Eventually Murray and his crew from Valhalla hope to continue the trail up and around Echo Lake but for now, it's pure, old-fashioned bushwhacking up there.

"There's lots of slash alder and devils club," Murray says. "Not to mention the hornets. Those seem to be the worst during long dry spells."

Ah, the hornets – those savage bloodthirsty beasts that turned our mellow morning into a swollen, itchy epic. Thankfully only one of our eight-person team was allergic, and then only mildly so (tracheotomies in the backcountry are painfully messy) but by the time we made it back to the river we had collectively suffered 23 stings.

But we made it. That's the thing about exploring: the more it sucks, the better you feel when you finally limp back to civilization, proud to have ducked the rope of your everyday routine and experienced something different, and better, than those 200-plus people who stair-mastered up the Chief again.

LESSON #3

Dogs not only scare off bears and cougars, they also have an instinct for remembering where the hornets nests are located on the way back down. Of course, while you're detouring one nest there's a good chance you'll hit another... Never stop exploring. [m](#)

GETTING THERE

Go talk to Murray and the staff at Valhalla Pure Squamish (604.892.9092) for for a printed description of the route, which can be tricky to find and stay on at times.

Find/borrow/beg for a boat or some other water transport device.

The trailhead is right beside some old pilings on the west side of the river (which is always changing but try the second right coming from the Spit.)

The hiking is steep and challenging with some rope-assisted sections. Experienced hikers with no pack should give themselves three hours to reach the lake and about 90 minutes to get back down. (Long, thick pants and sleeves might help with the hornets.)

Mapsheet 92G/11 covers the area. Contact Valhalla Pure at squamish@vpo.ca

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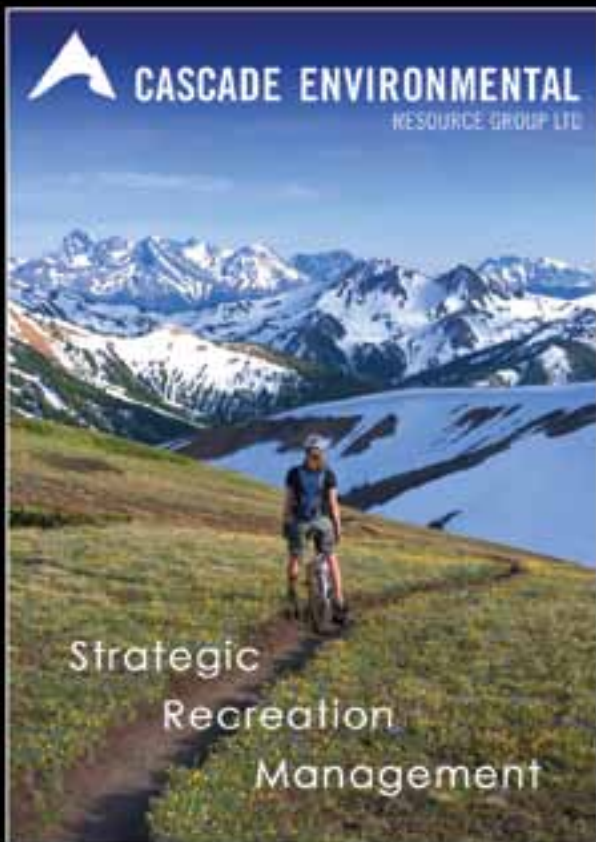


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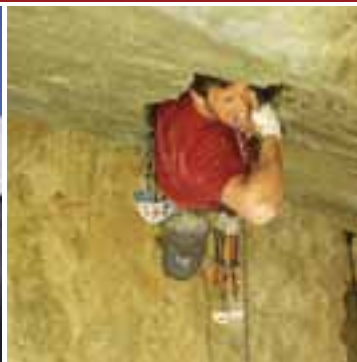
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PEOPLE OF THE ARBUTUS

Colour and gnarl flavour the rides amongst some of Vancouver Island's coolest trees, and people



By Seb Kemp
Photography by Nicolas Teichrob

I'm hunkered in the shade of an arbutus tree desperately trying to hide my eyes from a bag-of-hammers hangover that threatens to sink me. This tree is my refuge, an anchor to my sanity.

The trunk and branches are crooked and contorted, twisting and turning while shedding dry, papery bark as if planed by an absent-minded woodworker. The tree also resembles the knotted train of thoughts swirling around my disheveled mind. Memories and reflections, like a montage on fast-forward, flicker between painful thumps of last night's excess and the joys of riding over the past week on the inaugural BC Bike Ride, the easier-going little sister to

the epic, week-long BC Bike Race. Hosted by the organizers of this world-renowned single-track competition – Dean Payne, Tom Skinner, Andreas Hestler – and accompanied by longtime BC riders like Dave Norona and Mitch Forbes, as well as some wide-eyed BC virgins from Utah, the week was a celebration of serpentine trails, mid-summer delights, and the natural beauty that is on our doorstep but hidden from view.

Still reeling, I silence my pounding mind long enough to consider the arbutus above me, one of many such colourful and gnarled trees which shaded or corralled me on each ride (or post-ride beer) over the past week.

Arbutus trees only grow near the ocean and are often found clinging to rock cliffs, stretching themselves out over the Pacific.

The only broadleaf evergreen in Canada, arbutus shed leaves throughout the year and are never without foliage. They require little nourishment and can store water in their burls. In times of drought, arbutus can draw on these reserves or even shed branches to save the whole tree.

The arbutus is similar to many of the people we met on Vancouver Island over the past week while we discovered the cache of amazing singletrack just a short ferry ride away from the famous lines of Vancouver's North Shore. The Island, the largest on North America's west coast, is home to a breed of tough people with charm and colour. Cyclists who prefer a life of simple nourishments will flourish on the trails near the coastline, where rock shakes off dirt and roots cling to impossible shapes.





In Duncan we met up with Robin Dutton, the proprietor of Cowichan Cycles and a thigh-ripping hooligan in his own right. Robin took us on an evening ride up Mount Tzouhalem, the local area. Tzouhalem is a community-managed forest containing a rat's nest of trails and offers short, fast descents that sucker-punch riders with quick, sharp climbs that have you dropping gears with thumbs full of crunch. Robin led us on a ride we later dubbed the "The Descent of One Thousand Climbs."

He rallied us down superb singletrack that ducked, dove and weaved through beautifully lush British Columbian rainforest – green moss, orange stumps, red arbutus, thigh-bone roots, hard-packed dirt and plenty of knuckle-like rocks.

On nearly slick tires he thrashed down the trails and flashed up climbs as if the earth would tilt horizontal just for him. Like local heroes the world over, he rides his trails with the comfort and poise of someone who has adjusted his life in order to ride whenever he wants.

"I had my own bike shop before but I sold it to work as a sales rep," Robin said.

"I made good money as a rep but I was never home. I gave up that job and started my new shop so I can always be here. I love it here." Like the arbutus, Robin found it difficult to flourish when away from the coastline.

At the city of Victoria's "Dump" region – named for the refuse site it borders, not the quality of its trails – hometown ripper Seamus McGrath joined us. Born and raised on Vancouver Island, Seamus raced professionally for 15 years on the world circuit and competed in two Olympics but now has settled back into full-time Island living.

He rallied us down superb singletrack that ducked, dove and weaved through beautifully lush British Columbian rainforest – green moss, orange stumps, red arbutus, thigh-bone roots, hard-packed dirt and plenty of knuckle-like rocks. Keeping up with Seamus was a task – he doesn't shave his legs anymore but he could have torn ours off if he wanted to.


In the end he took it easy on us (and shared his beer). Seamus seemed genuinely happy to have left the world of travel schedules and high-performance racing behind, instead looking forward to running training camps and raising his first child. Like the arbutus, his outward appearance may change but underneath is the same solid core.

In Cumberland we met Martin Ready of Island Mountain Guides on the sidewalk outside of The Riding Fool Hostel. Looking at Martin – a racing snake of muscle and sinew – we could tell we were in for a lot of singletrack smiles. He told us, utterly straight-faced, that the ride ahead would be a joyless death march and that we should just keep our mouths shut and try to keep up. The group's high-spirited exuberance was replaced by nervous silence. We could almost feel the fun times being run out of town by the Sheriff of Misery. Everyone stared at their toes. Then a lone guffaw sounded out. "Not really, you are in paradise now." He smiled slyly. "The only torture will be leaving this place."

The next day Martin led us to Hornby Island where we climbed Mount Geoffrey along precarious cliff edges and descended "Four Dead Aliens" onto an island road populated with bikini-clad cyclists that led us to the wide, white sand beach of Tribune Bay. Luxuriating in the warm water amongst the sand dollars made us feel like pauper princes and fueled our urge for a bacchanalia to mark the end of the journey.

Martin's dry sense of humor caught me off guard. He set up one-liners with such a dour expression that when the punch line was delivered I struggled to figure out whether he was challenging me to laugh. However, after a short while I saw clearly the glints of humour flashing between the cracks in his hard-faced exterior. Arbutus branches, like Martin's humour, are gnarled and twisted, but colourful all the same.

The festivities on the beaches of Tribune Bay, which rival the Caribbean in beauty, began quickly but didn't end quite soon enough. Which is how I came to find myself laid out under the sanctuary of an arbutus tree, my body a wretched mess, my brain feeling vice-tight and my stomach rolling like a failed test-tube experiment. Saturated by alcohol and drained of energy, somehow I still smile and reflect on a week charged with vitality and zeal.

There were many more people and many more trails we rode over those seven days. The coastal homeland of the arbutus tree offers some of southwestern BC's best singletrack – some of it gnarled, some of it smooth, all of it colourful and wild. Just like the arbutus tree. 



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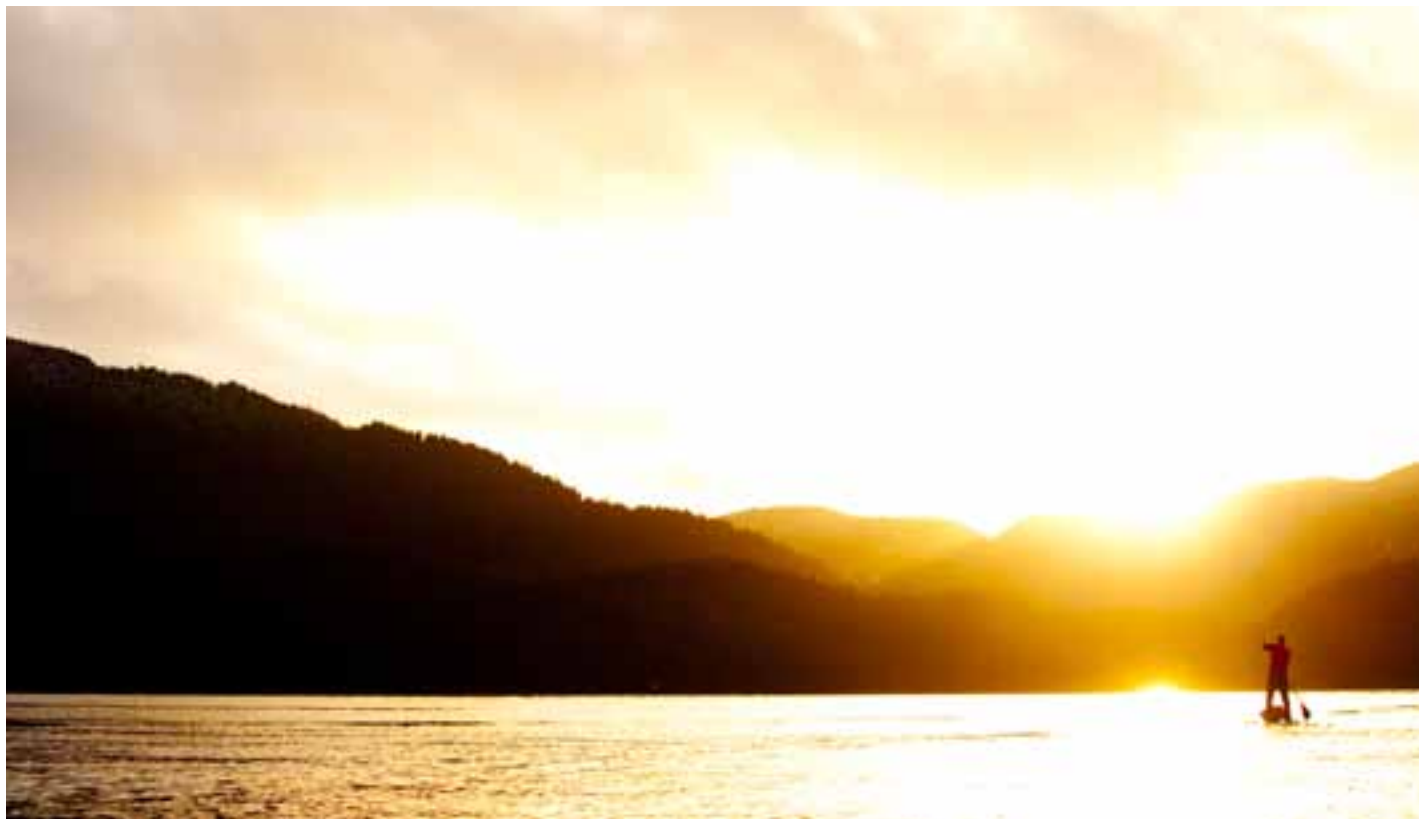
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Standing Up for the Great Bear Rainforest

Working on the film STAND, Nicolas Teichrob delves into the wonders and culture of BC's North Coast



Norm Hann, standing up for nature. NICOLAS TEICHROB PHOTO.

By Nicolas Teichrob

Prior to arriving in Hartley Bay, I didn't really know what to expect.

The research scientist in me knew that the Great Bear Rainforest of the north and central coast of British Columbia is the last remaining intact temperate rainforest on the planet. I'd read about a wilderness filled with towering trees, about black bears with a recessive gene causing one in ten to have white fur, about moss dripping from every rock and tree, and about an underwater environment teeming with cetaceans and countless species of invertebrates.

I'd also heard firsthand that the more than 17-million-acre area, and all the rich and diverse life it contains, is currently under threat. The proposed Northern Gateway project seeks to bring unrefined bitumen via an 1170-kilometre pipeline from the tar sands of Alberta to the coast of BC, and then run supertankers full of crude oil through some of the most unpredictable waters in the world.

I had all this information, but there's no substitute for real-life experience and walking down the boardwalk away from the floatplane I quickly realized our arrival at Hartley could not have been timed better. It was the lowest tide of the year, which meant the local Gitga'at nation members were about to head out into the night to harvest cockles (a type of bivalve/clam) and my companion Norm Hann and I would be joining them.

Norm and I were in the tiny, boat-and-air-access-only community of Hartley Bay to work on *STAND*, a film that would see Norm lead a stand-up paddleboard expedition through the coastal regions at risk from the Northern Gateway pipeline and tanker route. The goal of our trip was to witness and showcase the natural beauty and rich culture of the region, to listen and learn and to raise awareness, and to show what exactly is at risk. But first we had to go dig up some cockles.

Hartley Bay residents can only harvest cockles once a year, on the lowest tide, so Norm and I suited up for warmth and headed out into the darkness with some of his Gitga'at

relatives (Norm was adopted by the nation in 2006 because of his volunteer work with the Hartley Bay youth.) After a 25-minute boat trip we arrived at a sandy bay and were shown how to rake the ground for cockles.

A few hours later, as the rapidly rising tide threatened to swamp our gumboots, I watched the ocean and sky shift from clear and glassy to thick and stormy, my first sign of the incredibly dynamic weather on the waters of the coast. Boating home in stormy seas, I reflected on the privilege of joining in on a traditional food-harvesting site used by the First Nations for centuries.

"To me, tankers going by is like committing suicide," says Hartley Bay resident and elder Helen Clifton on the subject of the Northern Gateway project. "Not only for us as there will be no room for our fishing gear, but there will be no room for the spirit bears to roam the beaches, no room for salmon in the rivers, no room for the whales. It will affect this whole seascape, which then affects the land."

continued on pg 45...

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ABOVE: The pristine Great Bear Rainforest.
 BELOW: Ecosystems like this would be devastated by an oil spill.
 IAN McALLISTER PHOTOS.
 BOTTOM: GitGa'at Totem. NICOLAS TEICHROB PHOTO.

The proposed supertankers carry ten times the amount of oil as the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill and their route would require the massive ships to maintain 12-19 knots through treacherous waters in order to make turns greater than 90 degrees.

These are fears shared by many. The proposed supertankers carry ten times the amount of oil as the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill and their route would require the massive ships to maintain 12-19 knots through treacherous waters in order to make turns greater than 90 degrees. Ten-metre swell is not uncommon along the north coast and fog and storms can make navigation a nightmare. The port where the pipeline would end is over 100 nautical miles from the open ocean and reached through narrow and difficult-to-navigate channels. It is in these same waters, in March of 2006, that the BC Ferries ship *Queen of the North* hit ground and sank in the night. It was the residents of Hartley Bay that came to the rescue of the stranded passengers.

Damages from an oil spill on the north coast could potentially reach as far south as Washington State but for the people of Hartley Bay and other coastal communities it would mean the end of their ecosystems and way of life. Ocean life would cease to exist, cetaceans would die off, salmon would not return, and commercial fisheries, the lifeblood of the West Coast, would fade into an oily oblivion. With 220

supertankers proposed to navigate the stormy, narrow passages of the coast every year – and expansion plans for up to 340 – many Canadians feel the risks are too high, that a disaster waiting to happen is also one easily avoided.

The degree to which the Gitga'at and other North Coast peoples make use of the ocean and land (and the animals inhabiting them) is much greater than I had ever imagined. During my time there every meal we ate included food harvested from the ocean and shoreline – cockles, salmon, black cod, octopus, seaweed, and countless berries.

Throughout my five days in Hartley Bay one point of consistency was the friendly nature of the Gitga'at people. Everyone greeted me, the stranger in their town, with a smile and a "hello." One particular afternoon, while filming some paddling out on the water, a boat of locals pulled over to show us a freshly killed moose they'd procured after an hour of hunting up the inlet. It was at that moment that I fully realized to what extent the Gitga'at appreciate every land and sea creature in these regions, and how all of it is under threat of permanent loss.

continued on pg 47...



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I am a geoscientist. I know our best resources are those all around us: clean air, clean water, fresh food, wild animals, and grand forests. There is no reason why a short-term non-renewable resource project should jeopardize all of this. However, it is not the scientist in me that works on this film, *STAND*, it is the human being in me – the person whom the Gitga'at welcomed into their homes and shared their culture with. The person who ate beside them, every meal provided by the ocean.

The people of the north and central coast have united and will battle the Northern Gateway project to the very end. Nobody is going to back down. I know; I've met them. And I'm willing to stand with them.

Get more info on the film at Standfilm.com and to read a critique of the proposed tanker plans from Captian Mal Walsh, a BC Master Mariner with over 40 years experience in the international oil exploration and shipping industry, go to "In this Issue" at cm.mountainlifemag.ca

Hit the ocean right here in the Sea to Sky with Norm Hann's Standup4Coffee adventures from Squamish to Britannia Beach. Check out mountainsurfadventures.com for more info. 

STAND



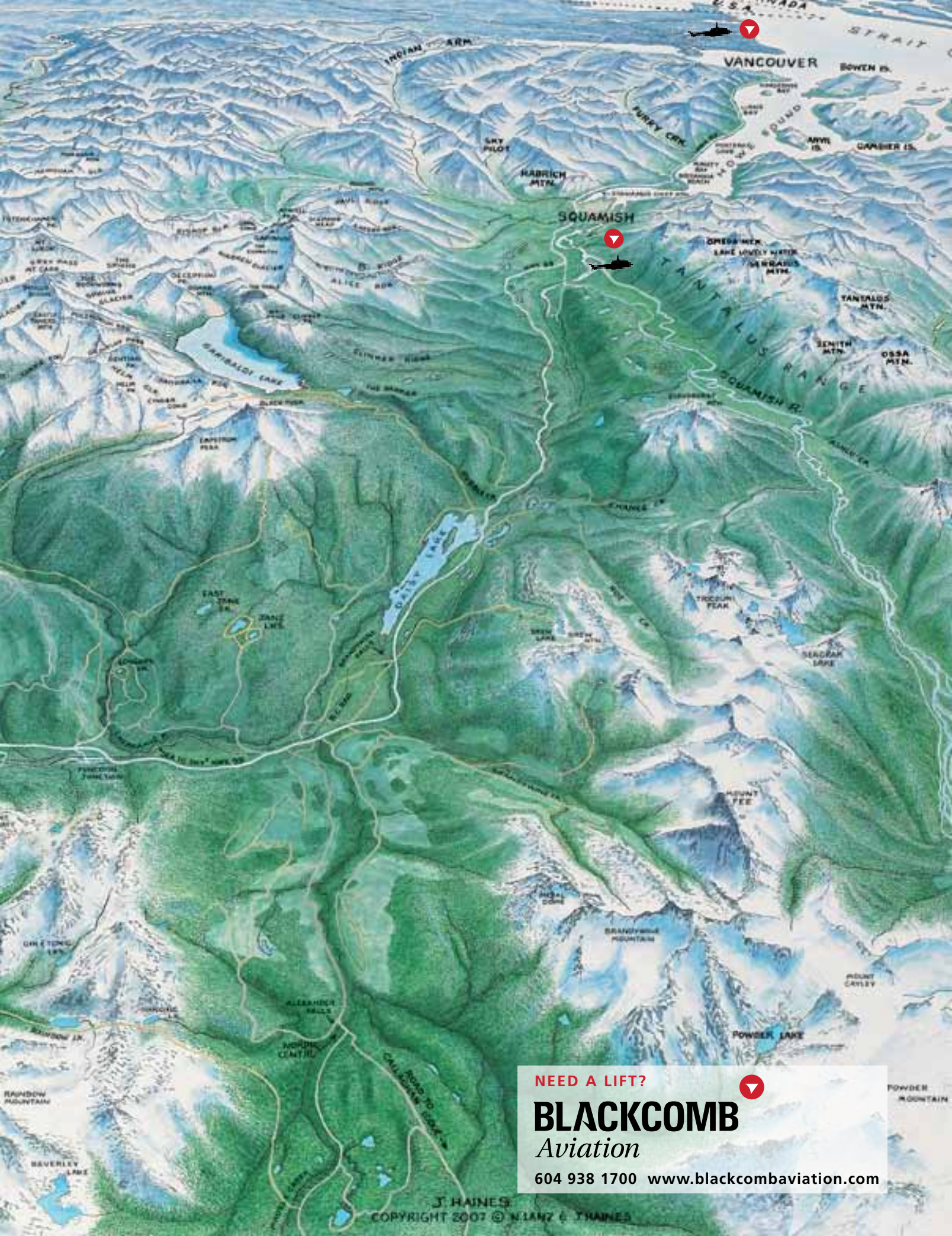
BELOW: Wildlife of the Great Bear Rainforest. IAN McALLISTER PHOTOS.

BOTTOM MIDDLE: Cockle clams harvested by the Gitga'at peoples. NICOLAS TEICHROB PHOTO. ILLUSTRATION BY DAVE BARNES.



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FLYIN' HIGH AGAIN

**AFTER A SPORADIC 30-YEAR EXISTENCE,
THE RESURGENCE OF THE DYNAMIC SEMANA
DEL ANDINISMO BRINGS MOUNTAIN SPORTS
TO PERU'S MAIN STAGE ONCE AGAIN**

STORY & PHOTOGRAPHY BY TODD LAWSON



July 19, 1979 – Shortly after cresting the 6162-metre summit of Mount Ranrapalca, Peter Chrzanowski clicked into his skis and steadied himself for a sketchy, icy first descent. After linking three clean jump-turns he caught an edge and began cartwheeling down one of the most stunning mountains in Peru's Cordillera Blanca. After ragdolling for 900 metres, losing his boots and socks in the process, Peter finally came to rest on a ledge inside a crevasse. In a cruel twist of fate, Chrzanowski had landed not far from base camp...but a world away from survival.

"All I remember is losing an edge on that icy face," says Chrzanowski, a Pemberton-based filmmaker and adventurer with one of the most controversial reputations in Coast Mountain lore – to some he's a careless livewire, to others an ambitious mountain man with an envious list of accomplishments under his belt. Regardless, he's been adventuring in mountains all over the world for more than 35 years, and that scary day has remained at the forefront of his mind.

"When I lost the turn I thought for sure I was going to die. I blacked out in the fall and figured I was already gone into another void."

And he may well have been except Peter wasn't alone. His climbing partner, a brave 19-year-old Peruvian guide named Américo Tordoya, rappelled 17 pitches down to give Chrzanowski some water, then ran for 18 hours to Huaraz, the nearest town, where he attempted to organize a local rescue party – no easy feat in 1979, long before the words "search and rescue" had reached remote mountain towns in South America.

"I waited for three days," Peter recalls. "Sleeping and passing out on sleeping pills. That saved my life as my metabolism lowered and relaxed."

Chrzanowski lived to tell the tale and in June of 2011, returned to Huaraz with another ambitious plan (one with hopefully a better outcome). This time he had no intention of climbing mountains, rather he came to fly amongst them and organize a world-class paragliding event called X-Andes. He planned to piggyback it onto a surging multi-sport mountain festival known as Semana del Andinismo.

Started in 1983 by a ragtag bunch of South American mountaineers wanting to party, Semana del Andinismo had the ultimate venue for success. With at least 269 lakes, 663 glaciers, 41 rivers and 33 summits rising over 5500 metres, the 180-kilometre Cordillera Blanca is arguably the world's most magnificent mountain range. Organizers invited a few friends, added more outdoor sports and let chaos and culture light the rest of the fire.

After helping to bring mountain sports into the South American spotlight, the mountaineering festival peaked in the early nineties but then began to die a slow death as local government intervened and eventually pulled funding until the event folded altogether in 1997. In 2004, however, a young Huaraz entrepreneur named Benquelo Morales re-ignited the spark by organizing a massive one-day bash featuring mountain biking, skiing, snowboarding and rafting.

"It was successful and started to gather some steam," says Morales, "so last year we put all our eggs in one basket and brought back Semana del Andinismo. We added even more sports, invited all of the athletes and the media and showed them that we have a lot to offer."

Today, the festival is a powerhouse of Peruvian adventure sports, with climbing, trekking, mountaineering, rafting, paragliding, kayaking, skiing, snowboarding, BMX and mountain biking all taking the stage during the five-day fiesta. Also incorporated into the line-up are environmental awareness initiatives, film, arts, music, food, drink and plenty of colourful Peruvian character. The vibe is similar to popular Whistler festivals like WSSF or Crankworx except the drinks are stronger, the dancing lasts longer and instead of pizza, the post-party snacks are barbecued guinea pig or chicken feet.

Hubert Salas catches a thermal during an X-Andes recon flight as Nevado Huascarán (Peru's highest mountain at 6768 m) watches over.





Spectators eat snow as they climb up the Pastoruri Glacier en route to witness the ski and snowboard exhibition.



No shortage of colour, character and culture in Huaraz.

“The response has been incredible,” says Morales. “The athletes love it...seeing and competing in front of all these people in these magical mountains. And Peruvian people who have never seen these sports in real life are completely blown away. Everybody wins. For us it’s worth all of the effort.”

With five days of multi-sport action, an impressive collection of international paragliding athletes, and financial support from the mayor of Huaraz and from private enterprise, Morales is ready to let the games begin, again.

CIDDY-UP ON THE GLACIER SKI RACING AND SNOWCONES

The muddy parking lot just west of the Pastoruri Glacier is filling up with busloads of tourists and members of Peru’s national media, all here for the Semana’s ski and snowboard exhibition. Thanks to hearty local vendors who set up shop at 5,200 metres above sea level, the spectators fuel up with instant coffee and homemade chicken noodle soup before embarking on the hour-long hike to the glacier. When they

Curious campesinos (Peruvian peasants) watch Chrzanowski take off from their front yard.



finally arrive, the magnificence is overwhelming – some of these people have never seen or touched snow in their lives.

“I could not believe a place like this exists,” says 60-year-old Ignacio Perez, a Lima resident who grew up in the Amazonian city of Iquitos. “But now I see it with my own eyes, and I love my country even more.” Perez came for one reason only: he wanted to eat snow scooped up with his own bare hands, something he once saw on TV years ago. “To see this ski show is a bonus,” he says, laughing.

Meanwhile a dozen of Peru’s keenest young skiers and riders arrive on horseback to take on a gated dual-salom course down 100 metres of vertical. Strangely they’re all from Lima, the coastal capital of Peru where snowflakes never fall. The racecourse looks oddly out of place on the giant tongue of ice that slithers between the mountains, but it’s all they’ve got and they take nothing for granted. One by one they duel it out, hike back up and repeat, constantly smiling like it’s the biggest powder day in the history of the world.

The media are also happy. They’ve found pure gold – an impressive backdrop in which to capture one of the biggest niche events in their country. So far, so good for Benquelo Morales and his latest incarnation of the Semana.

ON A WING AND A PRAYER X-ANDES

High above the town of Caraz, campesinos emerge from rustic earthen homes to watch gringos huck themselves off a hillside and take to the skies. Dressed in pure llama wool the peasants mingle with world-class pilots and their ultralight, ripstop-nylon wings. Kids scream and giggle and women swap their bowler hats with baseball caps for a laugh. But it’s not all fun and games – take-offs are crucial in this sport. There will be time for pisco sours at the bottom.

“These are really big mountains, and it’s amazing to fly here, but we have to be careful,” says 49-year-old Frenchman Xavier Murillo, a veteran pilot and International Paragliding World Cup *jefe* who’s flying in Peru for the first time. If anyone, Murillo will be able to determine whether or not X-Andes is a go. In the paragliding world nobody has more experience, and respect, when it comes to staging competitions.

“As long as the conditions are right I think we can have many good flights here. I have been flying in many countries in the world, but wow, look around here, this is something special.”

The wow-factor is what Chrzanowski was banking on when he dreamed up X-Andes and invited some of the world’s best mountain pilots to compete in a long-distance navigational race in one of the most spectacular mountain ranges anywhere.

continued on pg 54...



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X-Andes is based upon Europe's popular Red Bull X-Alps, a gruelling 800-km journey from Austria to Monaco, where winning pilots fly and hike for 12 non-stop days.

"We're going to turn this place into a destination for paraholics," Chrzanowski hopes. "People have flown here and there before, but not this many pilots all at the same time. I hope this will change everything."

Still, there are skeptics. Flying in the "Blanca" can be dazzling but very dangerous – fierce winds and unpredictable alpine air can quickly become a paraglider's worst nightmare. Coupled with the lack of a crucial emergency response system in place, X-Andes has a few people wondering if a big cross-country paraglide race should ever occur here.

"You need balls for that adventure. Big ones," says Lima-based pilot Hubert Salas. "I am used to flying here on the coast, but in the mountains it is a completely different story. I just pray for good conditions."

Today, those prayers are answered. Warm air sweeps up the hillsides producing the all-important thermals the paragliders hope to catch for lift – the higher in the sky, the longer and further the flight. It's not uncommon for paragliders in the Andes to reach heights of over 18,000 feet. With today's focus on distance, that's what they'll be gunning for.

"When you climb high, you're almost at the same level as these bright white summits," says Murillo. "It's incredible, you feel in awe... but it's the people I love. Launching from 5,000 metres surrounded by a smiling crowd. We can share this with them and I hope they know we also take much from these moments."

Tragically, it would be Murillo's last such moment. An hour later he launched himself into what would be considered good cross-country

conditions by "virtually any mountain-pilot in the world," according to James Oroc, a Kiwi pilot and photographer and the last man to see Xavier alive. "He caught a decent thermal and I saw him way above me. I thought, 'Yeah man, go for it.' Conditions were perfect, why not?"

Nobody knows what happened after that. Xavier Murillo literally disappeared into thin air. After a seven-day search his body was recovered from high on the flanks of 6,768-metre Huascarán Sur, Peru's highest mountain. Reports suggest that the "most likely" scenario is that Xavier was taking photographs when he lost control of his glider and crashed. He had tried to deploy his reserve chute but "died quickly from his injuries."

News of the accident spread like wildfire throughout the tight-knit paraglide community. Most pilots sadly agreed that nobody was to blame. The mountains had claimed the life of a legend.

AN ORDER OF GUINEA PIG, PLEASE: THE CAMPESINOS MEET THE FREERIDERS

Amongst the throng of bikes and bodies crowded around the finish line of the Semana's wildly popular downhill mountain bike race, an 80-year-old woman in traditional Peruvian attire cooks fried guinea pig for a modern, armour-clad freerider. Were it not for the Peruvian delicacy, their worlds would likely never collide. But such is the case in Huaraz, where contrast and culture (no matter how different) go hand-in-hand. *continued on pg 56...*

"You can keep your helmet kid, I'm happy with my bowler hat."



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About an hour previous I'd noticed the same woman pausing at the in-ramp of the BMX freestyle event, the first of three bike disciplines on the final day. As she gazed with curiosity at the young men and their little bikes, I asked her if she had seen anything like this before in her life.

"No, this is my first time. But why do they jump so high?" she said, squinting into the sun. "Is it not painful? I am afraid of this."

She watched for a few minutes while her grandson gathered firewood, then returned to her makeshift food stall to feed the growing hoard of villagers and tourists out to watch the mountain bike extravaganza unfolding in front of her bewildered eyes.

After the BMXers – who please the crowd with a few spectacular crashes – the cross-country enduro-freaks come blazing down the track in a steady stream of sweaty, grimacing faces and pumped legs. Clearly the crowd is into it, carrying the riders to the finish line with old-fashioned, bring-the-house-down applause. Finally the downhillers are announced and the audience swells at the base of a big wooden booter, everyone cheering and watching their very own Peruvian daredevils catch some air.

"When I decided to do this seven years ago [people] thought I was crazy, that nobody would ride and take these jumps," says Julio Olaza, director of Mountain Bike Adventures in Huaraz and the competition trail builder. "There were only about eight riders that had the cojones to do it. Now we've got about 50 Peruvian downhill riders. Before we had 75 cross-country riders, now we have 28. It's all about the downhill now for these kids – but that's good."

Through his vision and belief in his sport, Olaza has become a beneficiary of the classic "build-it-and-they-will-come" scenario. "We do descents from 4200 metres that people don't really experience in North America or Europe. Foreigners tell me they love it here, riding with these massive peaks in the background, meeting the peasants high up on the trail. It's true adventure riding and they really enjoy it."

Benquelo Morales is nearby, megaphone in hand, checking out the action and the crowd enjoying it. All three bike events have gone smoothly, much like the rest of the festival's diverse itinerary.

"This is cool," he says. "I am really happy with the turnout. It's nice to see people here that know nothing about this sport...you can really *feel* the excitement here. Next year we hope they all come back."

Chrzanowski will indeed be one of them. He plans to return this year to show his support to Benquelo and the people of Huaraz, with whom he has formed a close personal bond over the past 30-plus years. "I owe a lot to Américo and the people that saved my life," he says, "This is a very special place and festivals like this give people a chance to come together and celebrate mountain sports. It truly deserves a lot of respect."

The games may be over but Morales isn't finished. To cap off a week of blood, sweat and tears that come with staging a wildly diverse event such as this, he and his team have one final trick to throw, one last surprise to end his baby with a bang.

As the last rays of summer sun fall behind the Andes, Turmanyne, a famous Peruvian band, takes to the giant outdoor stage. Everyone is there – Chrzanowski and the paragliders, the mountain bikers and the mountaineers, the climbers and the campesinos. Many sports, many cultures, but everyone celebrating the same thing – the incredible flavour of life, with adventure as perhaps the strongest spice. And there is no better way to taste it than at a big party under a starry South American night. ■

semanadelandinismo.com



Peter Chrzanowski catching some Pemberton airtime.

PEMBY SKIES ARE SMILIN'

The Canadian Paragliding Nationals are coming to Pemberton from August 5 to 12 and with an expected field of more than 125 registered pilots from more than 15 countries, it will be the largest paraglide competition ever held in Canada.

"The climate, the terrain, the consistent flying that time of year – aside from that, it's spectacular as hell," says Jim Orava, Pemby-based former Canadian paragliding champion. "The mixture of glaciers, mountain peaks and 'west coast jungle' is pretty mind-blowing, especially for flatlanders or people coming from the tropics. The only other place that really compares is the Alps."

Although the Nationals is one step below the world-class level, Orava, also Race Director of the event, says that pilots will be competing in Pemberton to get in form for the Paragliding World Cup in Sun Valley, Idaho the following week.

Pilots will fly high over the Pemberton valley, competing in classic speed-over-distance 'tasks,' flying over a virtual GPS route to cover the most ground in the fastest time. It's a big cross-country course and flying times range from two to six hours in the air, covering from 55 to "well over 100" kilometres of airspace.

For Orava, the 2009 champion and a member of Canada's 2010 World Cup team, the chance to compete in home skies is tantalizing. The title of Race Director comes with big responsibility, but with a solid crew of fellow organizers in his stable he's keen to get some airtime of his own.

"I'm stoked to compete, yes, but after 25 years of flying here I'm most excited about being able to share this place with everyone."

paraglidenationals.com



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FREE FALLIN'

Photographer & paddler **Steve Rogers** on the exhilaration of getting airborne in Coast Mountain waterfalls

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Isaac Levinson, Mamquam Falls, 69 ft.

The snowy peaks and vast icecaps of the Coast Mountains are home to an abundance of waterfalls and cascades. Great swaths of bedrock produce perfect funnels and spouts to channel water back into the Pacific. This is one of the world's wildest whitewater paddling destinations, a liquid playground.



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TOP: Sam Ricketts, Balls to the Wall Falls, Cheakamus River.
ABOVE: Sam Ricketts, Nymph Pool, Tatlow Creek, Ashlu Drainage.

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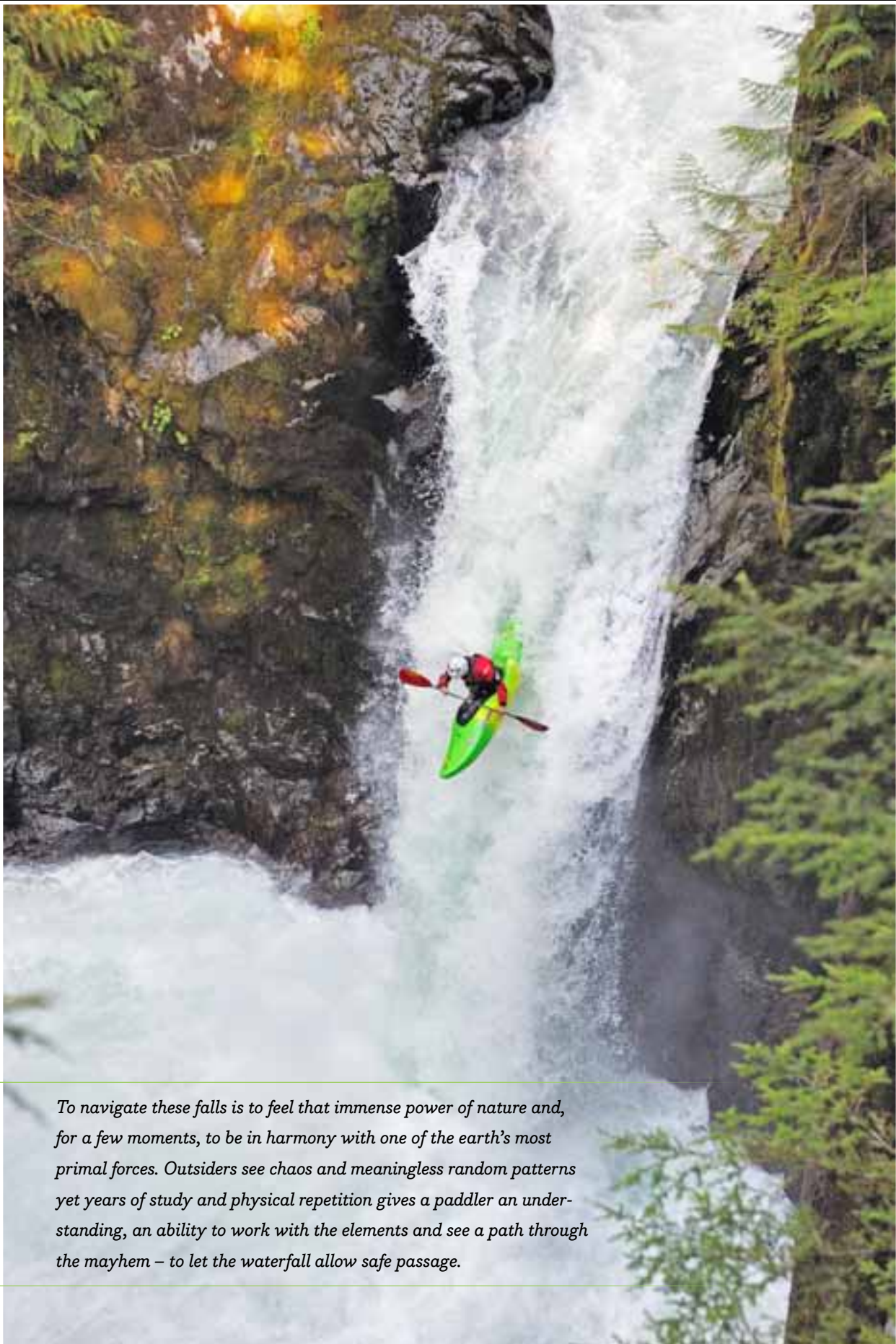
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To navigate these falls is to feel that immense power of nature and, for a few moments, to be in harmony with one of the earth's most primal forces. Outsiders see chaos and meaningless random patterns yet years of study and physical repetition gives a paddler an understanding, an ability to work with the elements and see a path through the mayhem – to let the waterfall allow safe passage.

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A photograph of a skateboarder, Mathew 'Grizz' Kroetsch, performing a trick on a paved path. He is wearing a red and white plaid shirt, grey pants, and a helmet. His arms are outstretched, and he is leaning back. The path is surrounded by trees and foliage.

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MATHEW 'GRIZZ' KROETSCH



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photo: Greg Nicholls



To a kayaker, waterfalls represent commitment. First you will scout and study the waterfall, looking for a possible line through. When you make a decision to attempt the waterfall, it requires a commitment to what you believe will happen and also to what you need to make happen. Once in the flow, there is no rope to catch you and no stopping – only the logical end to what you have commenced upon, for better or for worse.

What comes next is the gateway into what whitewater philosopher Jim Snyder describes as the third dimension – a 360-degree sensation – not quite floating, not quite falling. Just finding the point where water meets air, a quiet moment amid chaos.

It is that single moment, the ability to be part of that explosion of energy if only for a second, that is freedom. ■

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THE HOUSE THAT BOB BUILT



Photos Courtesy RDC

By Ace Mackay-Smith

I have a dream, or rather a dream house. I would love a place that's not too big, but has lots of usable space. A place where the inside smells as fresh as the air outside, and I would never need to dust. I dream of a warm, cozy place in the winter that gets lots of sun in the summer (but not too much heat). I would also love a place that looks stylish and modern but didn't send too much construction waste to the landfill. And I would love it to be on the Whistler Housing Authority listings so I can possibly afford it. Pipe dreams, right?

I guess it all depends on what pipe you're smoking. RDC Fine Homes built a place in Whistler's new Rainbow subdivision that is making my dreams come true, and more.

"We're relearning lessons society learned a long time ago, building smaller, more efficient houses," says RDC founder and 24-year Whistler local Bob Deeks. Bob is former president of both the local and provincial Home Builders Association and he has been in the sustainable-home game since 1999, when he and his team at RDC started aggressively experimenting with

building envelopes, assembly style, air-tightness, and thermal imaging.

"We've been able to steadily improve the performance," Bob says, "and the last house we just completed is the best one yet."

The foundation on that last house, the dreamy one, is built with insulated concrete forms (ICF). Conventional framing – filling plywood forms with concrete – leaves you with bare concrete walls and a lot of wasted plywood. The ICF forms (which are quicker and easier to work with) provide insulated concrete walls with no waste. Bob also used structurally insulated pre-built (SIP) panels on the interior walls rather than traditional 2x6 framing. This all translates into a quieter, better-insulated home with less dust and drafts – essentially airtight.

"With airtight buildings," Bob explains, "you have to have really good mechanical ventilation to manage humidity levels and the indoor air pollutants created from everyday living."

Good ventilation translates to a more comfortable home with better air quality. The odour of that garlic-fried fish dinner is much more quickly evacuated and heat distribution

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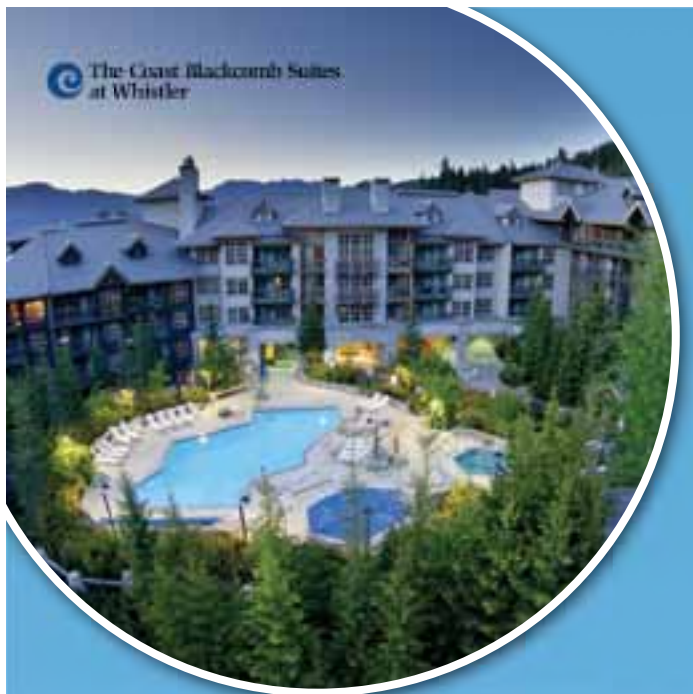
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TOP: TODD LAWSON PHOTO.

is much more even. For even better air quality RDC also uses zero-VOC paints, natural finishes, and avoids carpet.

South-facing exposure helps maximize solar heat from the lower-traversing winter sun while a large roof overhang shades the home during the warmer months when the sun is high. This translates to big savings on energy bills.

"I don't think I could afford to move back to a regular house," says Alex Tavuchis, a resident of one of the three new RDC homes in Rainbow. "We didn't turn the heat on all winter, just used the fireplace and the heated floors in the bathrooms. Our biggest bill last winter was \$150." Neighbours with similar-sized non-RDC homes in the area reported paying up to three times that.

The EnerGuide Rating System is a national standard for measuring a home's efficiency. An average Whistler home built to recent codes would register between 72-77. An old A-frame cabin would likely be in the low 50s or 40s. The latest RDC home registers an 81. It also received a Built-Green Gold rating.

Apart from the recognition and awards, Bob Deeks is proud of these latest homes for more practical reasons. "They're a very simple design, very efficient to build," he says. "Occupant experience has exceeded our expectations and we've had lots of compliments on how they look. These concepts of design and building are something I would always aspire to. Simpler is better." ■

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THE AIR UP HERE

Squamish crew accompanies Dean Potter to the top of Mount Bute and beyond while filming *The Man Who Can Fly*

Story and Photos by Jim Martinello

Dreams and thoughts slowly transform into reality with each ripple of the sail as we venture into the remote and beautiful waterways of Bute Inlet. Mountain peaks power up from the ocean floor, their flanks covered in the green abundance of rainforest life. Two years ago I stood atop Mount Bute and gazed at this wondrous inlet, celebrating one of the best climbs (and times) of my life. Now I'm back, with new ambitions and a great crew to help create a film about Dean Potter – the man who can fly.

A climber, a slack-liner, and the world record holder for the longest human flight in a wingsuit, Dean Potter is a man of unreal talents. *The Man Who Can Fly* is a National Geographic Channel documentary that follows Dean all over North America as he pursues his quest to further what is possible with human flight. From new wingsuit designs and studying birds in a wind tunnel, to free-soloing the north wall of El Capitan in Yosemite, to wild high-line walks and wingsuit flights off the Squamish Chief with my good buddy Wayne Krill, the film is already unbelievable.

Our goal on this adventure is to help Dean and Wayne fly off Mount Bute, a granite monolith rising over 9,200 feet from the sea... but first we have to climb it.

The morning light awakens as the sun rises over spectacular views. Groggy from not enough sleep and too much excitement, we rise at 5 am to prepare for the climb ahead. Our ascent crew consists of Dean, my awesome, longtime friend and Squamish local Damien Kelly, Wayne Krill, aka Dr. Thrill – another wicked spirit – and myself. The ropes are laid out and I clip the last piece of gear to my harness. The first few leads are mine and a vertical world of adventure awaits as I start up the rock to find a way through and progress up the wild and steep west face of Mount Bute... vertical world, here we come.





I'm lay-backing thin cracks, finding my groove with still-tense fingers. A few hundred feet up things start to get real exciting. The cracks end and my last piece of protection is 40 feet below me – this is where I am supposed to be clear-minded, make every point connect, but my spirit is still a bit shaky. I push down on my toes, willing them to stick as my fingers bear down on the little granite crystals, slowly traversing a smooth wall, another crack just a few moves away.

Adrenaline firing, I finally reach and jam a fist into a beautiful solid hand crack. The crew below yells with excitement and spirits rise as we break through the first crux of the day. The quality of climbing is unbelievable – every pitch is good and challenging. Dean takes over the next few leads, scaling up the smooth solid features of white and grey, a massive expanse of granite. The walls above stretch to the sky and the peaks, glaciers and forest valleys give off energy and sounds that keep us all in tune with the magical seclusion of the moment. Our crew, so truly stoked on where we are, climb on. Dean leads up his pitches smoothly and gets us through the hardest crux of the route.

It's after dark when we reach the summit. The day held many challenges but Dean, Wayne and Damien climbed through it all with great leads and awesome support. In the end it's all smiles at the adventure we're on and the realization of a dream coming true. We had climbed a new route up the western flank of the mountain.

After connecting up top with the very talented rigging and filming crew (see sidebar) we prepare for the final stage of the adventure – it's time for Dean and Wayne to take flight in their wingsuits from the peak of Bute to sea level, if possible.

We were all so lucky to experience this incredible mission and I thank everyone involved who helped to pull it off. Our team rallied together and overcame considerable odds to make a successful film and the adventure of a lifetime. We were all flying high on this trip. 🏔️



PAGE 70-71: Dean Potter walks onto the "Flight Deck" swallowed by a sea of Coast Mountains.

FAR LEFT: Wayne Krill slips his fingers into yet another clean crack on the first ascent of a route the crew would later name "The Flight Deck."

LEFT: Sailing up Bute Inlet.

THIS PAGE - TOP: Dean, looking like he enjoys the air up there.

UPPER RIGHT: Christian Begin in his office.

RIGHT: Dean Potter (left) coaches Wayne Krill on wingsuit nuances just before they leap off the Squamish Chief.

LOWER RIGHT: Chuck (far back) is so solid he doesn't need a last name. The Crew shuttles up the Homathko River on a day off.

LOWER LEFT: Dean Potter, untethered between the second and third peaks of the Chief.

BELOW: Mt Bute, BC.





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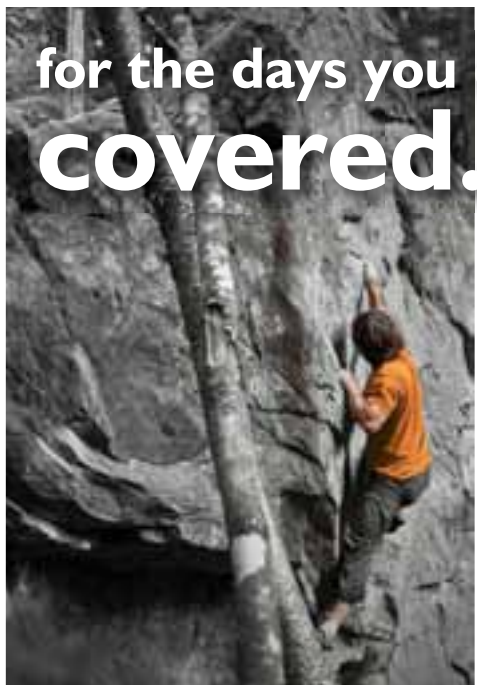
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ICAMERACTION

Squamish filmmakers step up to the challenge of shooting *The Man Who Can Fly*



TOP: Dean prepares to take to the air.

ABOVE: The Homathko River, seen in the top of this frame, lies almost 8000 feet below Matt "the Wizard" Maddaloni as he tests The Flight Deck.

"If you watch the movie, there are no cuts on the final flight. One shot. I didn't want any GoPro on that," says Christian Begin, co-director of National Geographic Channel's *The Man Who Can Fly*. "That is what we wanted, what Dean wanted – authentic."

From his seminal ski film *Locomotion* to the genre-defining *Kranked* bike series, Begin has been in the "extreme" movie business for over 20 years and understands what it takes to get the perfect shot under pressure.

But filming Dean Potter free-solo climbing El Capitan in Yosemite, or walking a high-line over the Squamish Chief, or climbing and wingsuit-flying off Mount Bute – these were moments of intensity Begin had never felt before.

"I don't think I have ever been so focused," the longtime Whistler/Squamish local says.

"There is not another chance, no tomorrow. It was pure focus and you can't miss the shot."

"Ultimately that is why we got the job," says Bryan Smith, another Squamish filmmaker who co-directed with Begin. "We have a good track record of being able to pull off stuff in really hard locations."

The remote, imposing walls of Mount Bute became the hardest location of all. "It was kind of an interesting modern-day expedition," Smith says. "When you're showing up in the middle of nowhere with a 40-foot ramp... some people would say that's forcing it, but that was our solution to do what Dean wanted to do and everyone worked together to get it done."

"The Ramp" was a 40-foot launch deck designed to hang off the summit of Bute to give Dean enough distance away from the sloping slab of the mountain. Matt Maddaloni, Squamish climber/rigger/self-taught engineer, designed the ramp and assembled it on the wall, one of the most impressive rigging displays anyone involved had ever seen.

"I designed it to be like a drawbridge," Maddaloni explains. "Bring it up in pieces, assemble, and drawbridge it out. It weighed 450 pounds and the physical crux was pushing it up to a vertical position off the slab. That was terrifying; after that we just lowered it down."

Over a year later Begin still gets excited about the ramp. "The boys, Jimmy, Damien, Dean and Wayne – with Matt directing, they set up that ramp in a day. You had to be a good climber, good with rope, good communication, everything. We are talking about the lives of people and everyone on the team is equally important and everyone is there for the same goal. It's about finding a solution. Adventure film is live and true, not fake. It is happening right there – he walks the ramp and it's done."

Check out christianbegin.com and reelwater-productions.com and seatoskycam.com to see more from these kick-ass local filmmakers.

– Feet Banks



Lorraine Blancher, Whistler, BC. MASON MASHON PHOTO.





Brandon Semenuk, Squamish, BC. STERLING LORENCE PHOTO.



Stu Smith, Shannon Falls. Squamish, BC. RUEBEN KRABBE PHOTO.



Shannon Falls, Squamish, BC. LORNE WARBURTON PHOTO.

RORY BUSHFIELD

Sparks & Sawdust

By Feet Banks

Rory Bushfield is a man of action – a balls-out pro skier, an avid surfer and a hard-charging mountain biker. In his downtime he flies a single-engine aircraft and jumps off cliffs into lakes. “Bushy” (to his friends) is a real dude’s dude – a guy who pisses pure adrenaline and spends more time in the air over a single weekend than most of us do in a year. It’s only fitting then, that when Rory Bushfield decides to get artistic he does so with a chainsaw.

“That’s my art philosophy actually,” the 28-year-old Squamish local says. “You gotta use a chainsaw.” Rory’s handcrafted tables combine salvaged coastal rainforest timber with welded metal stands and/or glass.

“It’s pretty raw and organic,” says Harvey Lim, owner of Whistler’s Art Junction Gallery. Over the past year or so Lim has sold a half-dozen of Rory’s creations from his gallery. “The large pieces of wood and the industrial bases make a nice mix. It works.”

Raised as a mogul skier in western Alberta, Rory moved to BC in 2003 and got into wood sculpture almost immediately. “Coming from Alberta, our biggest trees are like six inches wide,” he says. “So I got out here and saw all the crazy stumps and pieces of wood and right away got my saw and started cutting my own boards and stuff. My girl is always buying new furniture and I wanted to cut down on the costs so I made her a dining room table.”

continued on pg 82...

Rory at work in Bralorne. MARK GRIBBON PHOTO.



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"You're not gonna get any waves standing on the beach." – Rory Bushfield

That table led to another and, when a skiing injury sidelined him for an extended stint, Rory kicked things into high gear. "I get so bored when I am hurt so it's nice to make things. I inherited a welder from my grandfather," he says. "It's an old thing from the sixties but I like it because it's quick and solid and you can snap things together."

Known for ripping burly and inventive lines on the ski hill, Rory admits that his creativity crosses over. "For sure," he says. "Sometimes I look at a piece of wood and see a table right away. Other times it will sit for a long time. I'm always keeping scrap pieces because I like them so much. I'm a bit of a hoarder."

And he has the garage to prove it. Crammed in amongst his work-in-progress tables, worn tools, crates of snowmobile parts and multiple skis and surfboards Rory has recently set up a fiberglass station and is pumping out surfboard fins. "Why buy 'em when you can make 'em?" he asks.

Art was not a lifelong passion for Rory. "I quit 'real' school in grade 8 to ski and don't remember being too artistic before that," he says. "I remember I made a mousetrap car and won the race or something.... That is about the only thing I remember from school."

Rory's work is for sale at Art Junction in Whistler (artjunction.ca) and One Earth Collection (oneearthcollection.com) in Pemberton. Also check out Rorybushfield.com to see what else Rory is up to. 



TOP: Rory was unable to sell any tables to the owners of this European castle but this airtime is a work of art in its own right. FLIP MCCRIK PHOTO.

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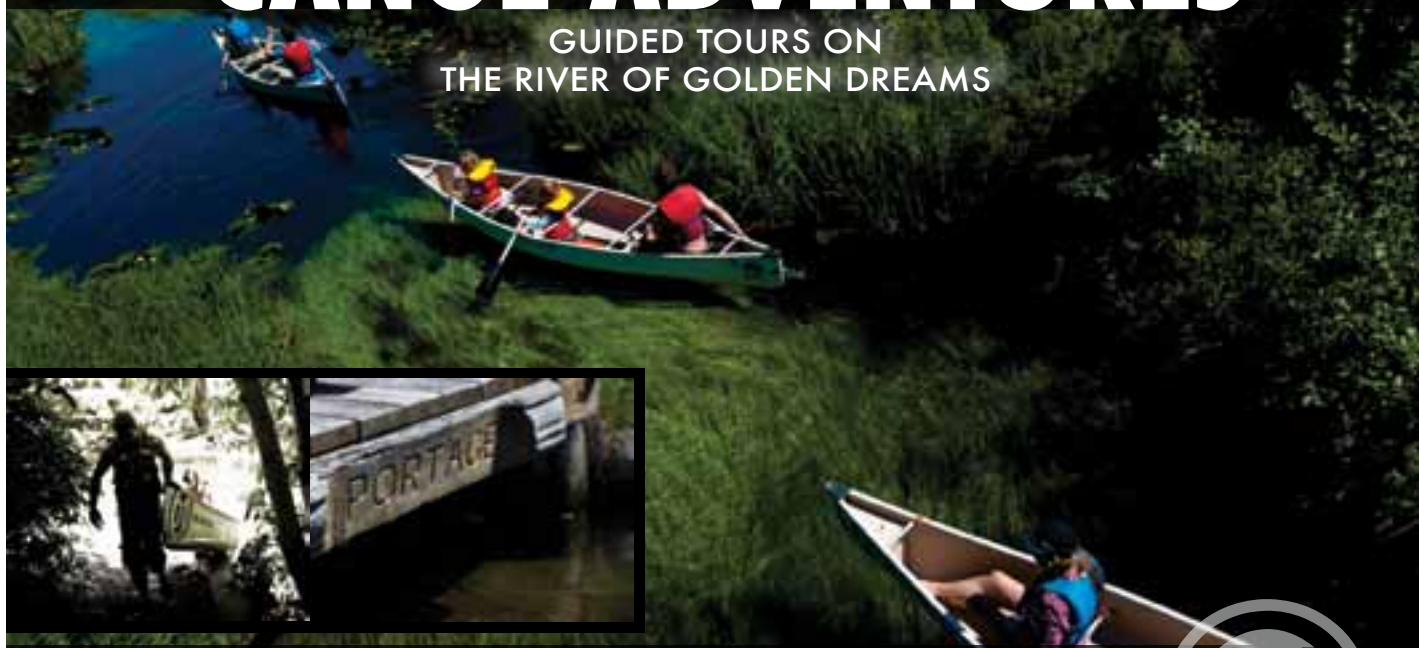
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SMALL PLOTS INTENSIVE

Squamish-based Good Time Farming brings food production inside city limits



Stefan, Jess and Nic Butler. MARK GRIBBON PHOTOS.

By Kristen Dillon

Your lawn is doing a grave disservice to the entire population of the earth. Underneath that bocce pitch, or over by that fence where it's a pain in the ass to mow, lies an untapped soil cache waiting to be properly harvested.

"We've created this misconception that farming belongs in a rural environment," says Stefan Butler of Good Time Farming, "but it doesn't have to be. We already have enough good, cleared land to produce the food we need."

And it's right under our noses.

SPIN-farming (the acronym means **S**mall **P**lots **I**ntensive) is an expanding movement to revitalize borrowed urban land areas and create high-yielding vegetable crops – turning backyard badminton courts and sun-tanning spots into nutrient-rich, densely packed gardens capable of regularly supplying fresh food to the farmer, landowner, and often the rest of the community.

Good Time, a sibling coalition of Stefan,

Nic and Jessica Butler, are currently in their third season of SPIN-farming, working five modestly sized properties. "The total amount of land we farm is under two acres," Stefan says. "And with that we can produce enough food to feed 30 families, attend four farmer's markets and supply a handful of local restaurants."

Equipped with only a small bio-diesel truck, a walk-behind tiller, some bicycles and the manpower of three siblings Good Time Farming continues to grow and succeed using eco-friendly practices. Stefan explains that as they build their soil and refine their crop rotation, the current garden space will produce even more efficiently.

"Cucumbers are a good summer crop because they grow vertically," Stefan says. "So we're able to grow something else, such as greens, below them. Growing root crops intensively allows us to use the various stages of the crops' thinnings as additional product, as well as the mature crop."

continued on pg 84...

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ERIC BERGER PHOTO.

As locally produced food becomes more popular, SPIN-farming is an attractive option for aspiring modern-day growers because it eliminates two of traditional farming's major obstacles – access to large amounts of land and the financial cost associated with running it.


The need for large equipment is also eradicated because almost everything can be done manually (which also means the price of the produce is not affected by rising fuel costs). As well, working numerous small plots generally means fewer pest and wind problems and fewer massive crop failures, while the concrete and buildings of our urban fabric actually trap heat and make for a longer growing season.

"Probably a big reason people are so disconnected from their food is because agriculture is in the periphery," Stefan says. "It's been pushed outside the city limits but when you start farming right in town it becomes more accessible. People see it."

Of course, the flaw in the SPIN concept is land security. The Butlers farm private land and provide their landowners with weekly produce. "At the end of the day," Stefan adds, "if the owner sells or wants to pull the plug, that lost garden space is huge income lost because production is so intensive."

In other cities the SPIN concept includes farming boulevards and other urban lands. Seattle recently announced the creation of an "edible forest" of fruit, berry and nut trees free for anyone to enjoy. Squamish, Stefan says, is not even close to Seattle yet as far as policy or awareness but SPIN-farming is definitely a step in the right direction.

"Incorporating intensive vegetable plots into our urban fabric is one way to preserve our surrounding hinterlands and reduce stress on the transportation system," Stefan says. "Much of our farmland has been replaced with the mass production of suburbia, but within this suburban template there is an abundance of lawns – land that has essentially been cover-cropped with grass as the community developed. The undisturbed soil underneath those lawns is probably in better shape than a lot of the farmland currently under production."

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TODD LAWSON PHOTO.

SHOULDERS THAT SEND

By Dr. Carla Cupido Hon.B.Kin.,D.C.

Catapulting up rock faces, juggling up severely overhanging cliffs and traversing thin, precarious ledges... sounds like acts that require the super powers of Spiderman, yet mere humans routinely crank off these moves.

Many rock climbers, however, routinely put forth tremendous feats of power, endurance and mental tenacity only to be regularly denied their projects. Why? It has nothing to do with being bitten by a radioactive spider; more likely it's because they've neglected their shoulders. Read on, wall-scalers, and maximize your human sending powers.

There are four main components to strong, healthy, crux-destroying shoulders:

1. THE SCAPULA (A.K.A., SHOULDER BLADE)

The scapula connects your arm to your body and functions similarly to a door hinge. If the hinge is firmly attached to the wall, the door can open and close perfectly. If the hinge becomes loose, the door gets floppy and unstable, just as your shoulder does when your scapulae aren't fixed firmly to your body.

The scapular stabilizers are the primary reasons your hinges remain secure. These include the middle and lower trapezius, rhomboids and serratus anterior muscles. Without these muscles, we are left with one very small joint holding the scapula in place, which means these muscles need to be strong *and* know when to engage or contract at the correct time. Unfortunately, they are commonly neglected in training or are trained with incorrect contraction patterns.

2. ROTATOR CUFF MUSCLES (SUPRASPINATUS, INFRASPINATUS, TERES MINOR, SUBSCAPULARIS)

The rotator cuff muscles are also important.

The rotator cuff is made of four muscles which function together to secure the head of the arm bone (ball) in the socket (which happens to be part of the shoulder blade). Weak rotator cuff muscles will make for a sloppy ball-in-socket, decreasing power and increasing injury risk.

3. MOVEMENT PATTERNS

The key is to first beef up those scapular stabilizers and then fire up your rotator cuff, as this completes the circuit between your torso and your arm. If the SS muscles are weak or not engaging optimally, your rotator cuff muscles don't have a hope of protecting the shoulder joint through any overhead movements – especially fast and/or powerful ones. If you want to stick like the spider, young grasshopper, you must therefore master the shoulder pack.

Shoulder packing – engaging the scapular stabilizers to position your arm bone firmly in the socket – is attained by drawing your shoulder blades away from your ears and pulling them towards each other on your back.

This pattern disables the wrong muscles from overworking, helping to stabilizing the shoulder complex. Shoulder packing can be very challenging for people to stabilize and it often takes considerable cuing from a health professional, but it will change your climbing forever when you nail it, and it will help minimize neck, shoulder, and chest tightness. Shoulder packing is an exercise as much as it is a technique you must master. (Note that not all climbing moves allow for a packed shoulder due to body and rock positioning; this means overall strength and conditioning are that much more important for these moves, especially if they are dynamic or power moves.)

4. MID-BACK MOBILITY

If mid-back mobility is lost it throws your shoulder complex completely off. Be sure to work on

maintaining freedom of movement through your back with chest opening exercises (of which there are many, so check in with a health professional equipped with this knowledge). An open chest and good mid-back mobility might be the difference to sending the next grade this season. Otherwise your best bet is to climb to the highest peak you can, and hope a radioactive spider sails in on the trade winds from Japan. 🕸

EXERCISE

Scapular Stabilization with Trunk Rotation

LEVEL 1

Lie on your back. Bend your knees and keep feet flat on the floor. Engage your core, pack your shoulders and slowly rotate your knees to one side while keeping both shoulders pressed firmly into the floor: now return to centre and repeat on the opposite side. Do NOT let your shoulders come off the ground – the point is to remain engaged through the core and scapular stabilizers throughout this rotation. Get those shoulders away from your ears.

You may progress to Level 2 and 3 when Level 1 can be performed perfectly with ease. Reps and sets are determined by ability, so build up as you get stronger.

LEVEL 2

Position your hips and knees at 90 degrees.

LEVEL 3

Position your hips at 90 degrees and straighten your knees.

SAFETY TIP:

Maintain a neutral lumbar spine (don't push lower back into ground or arch up).

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Summer adventure starts with what's inside your duffel bag. Good for travel, good for keeping things organized, this shipping-container-inspired duffel protects your gear from rain and rough handling. Padded shoulder straps are a nice touch for approaches to the crag or bushwhacking to the riverside put-in.

patagonia.com

2 PELICAN 1500 CASE (\$145)

Pelican is the standard for waterproof cases and this badboy is perfect for big camera set-ups (or three dozen eggs). The pick-and-pluck foam inserts allow total customization and if you save the pieces you cut out, you can always put them back and redesign your layout. Dropped out of an airplane or chucked off a waterfall, the Pelican case keeps your stuff safe and dry.

pelican.com/cases

3 C4 WATERMAN 10' RAPID RIDER ISUP (\$1,150)

Let's talk about versatility. We've carried this rigid inflatable board through mossy forests and over rocky riverbanks then inflated it (in about seven minutes) and hit the river to run rapids and wave trains. Built from military-grade PVC and light enough to crank fast, 180-degree turns with a single paddle stroke, the Rapid Rider can be bounced off rocks, dragged onto the beach, thrown off the roof rack, and you'll never have to repair a ding. Added bonus is no more \$200 board-handling fee at the airport – just roll it up, put it in the bag and inflate it when you get there.

c4waterman.com

4 HYDROFLASK WATERBOTTLE (\$27.99)

We already live in the space age but the double vacuum sealed walls elevate this water bottle into the next frontier. It keeps cold stuff cold and warm stuff warm – for about 12 hours! After a few dunks in a glacier-fed river, that still-piping Baileys and coffee is gonna be worth it. Welcome to the future, drink up.

hydroflask.com

5 C4 WATERMAN DYNEL TUFF-TIP PADDLE (\$330)

Strength and speed are essential when paddling through whitewater and this good-looking stick provides both. The Tuff Tip is a fast-cadence, wave-surfing, river-running stand-up paddler's dream. In addition to low weight and stiffness, the added Dynel wrap on the reinforced blade helps protect the lightweight carbon – perfect for rivers and rocky shores.

c4waterman.com



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1 GEIGERRIG RIG 500 BALLISTIC (\$115)

The days of sharing saliva from your friend's who-knows-where-it's-been mouthpiece are history. A little grenade-looking handpump allows you to pressurize this bladder while you ride, which means no more sucking on the hose. The added bonus is the ability to spray your buddy in the face, wash the blood off your shins, or host a quick wet t-shirt contest. Aside from that (and the bomber ballistic nylon) the best feature has to be the inline water filter that removes nasty bacteria from any backcountry stream. geigerrig.com

2 SANDBOX LEGEND HELMET (\$99.95)

Sandbox is a local company usually associated with snowboarding but these Legend helmets are also certified for bike and skateboarding. The fit is totally adjustable, with removable inserts, earflaps and goggle straps and there is no denying these helmets have 60 times the street cred of a regular bike helmet. Basically this is a helmet for all the male bikers out there who don't shave their legs. Looks hot on the ladies, too (whether they shave their legs or not). sandboxland.com

3 BIG AGNES DREAM ISLAND SLEEPING BAG AND HINMAN 50" PAD (\$219.95 & \$200)

Does your spouse insist on camping with a down duvet? Mine did, until we tried this doublewide sleeping set up. Spacious, rated to -10 Celsius, with two pillow sacks and a zipper on each side, the Dream Island does sleep like a couples' dream – perfect for festivaling, car camping and short hikes. However, at 20 lbs combined, this set-up isn't ideal for multi-day expeditions (although if the other person carries the tent, food, stove, pots and liquor, then it totally is). bigagnes.com

4 GHOST AMR LECTOR EBS BICYCLE UNISEX (\$2500)

What do BMW and Porsche have in common with mountain biking? German engineering, that's what. At first glance this all-mountain Euro-design looks like a heavyweight, but a quick tap on the carbon frame tells a different story. The frame's light weight helps ease the pain on uphill but it's strong enough to handle just about anything from cross-country epics to the nastiest North Shore singletrack. Welcome to the bike game MEC. So far, so good. mec.ca



TODD LAWSON PHOTO.



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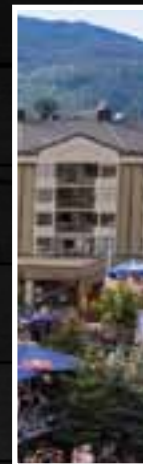


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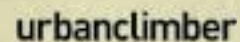
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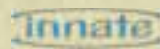
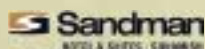
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Website inspireearthspa.com
Phone Number 604 967 6186 ext.1
Location Box 726, Whistler, BC, V0N1B6



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