



Beyond Basecamp

The Newsletter of Montana Yellowstone Expeditions



Happy New Year! It is hard to believe we are already half-way through the first month of 2008. January has been a busy month for us here at MYE and a time of change and development.

We would like to say goodbye to Lauran who is leaving the MYE team. We are sad to see her go - she has worked tirelessly for all of us, and we will miss her energy and enthusiasm. Of course we wish her luck in her future endeavors and intend to keep in close touch with her.

We would like to welcome Laurel Anderson, who is now our liaison person at OFF and of course Jerry Lawrie who features later in the newsletter.

We have also moved into an office in Bozeman, so that is now the base for MYE World HQ. We have another recent addition to our team - Sommer Roefaro, who is in our Bozeman office, helping us all keep on top of MYE business. She may answer the phone if you ring MYE, so if you call and she answers - say hi and welcome her to the family.

From Basecamp

Although basecamp and the MYE summer program are always on our radar, we are now turning our sights firmly towards the upcoming 2008 summer and are well into recruiting for our 25 day Montana Wilderness Challenge Courses. In this newsletter we are kicking off the recruitment drive for the MYE 2008 Leadership Lab and Intern Program. So if you have been waiting for news and information about these programs - read on. You can download the application forms for both from our website now.

If you have completed a 25 day program in Montana, are highly motivated, want to learn more about yourself and how to work effectively with others; love the outdoors and want to get more of it; if you are ready for the next step - we would like to hear from you. Make MYE part of your 2008 - you will get out of it, what you put in. Alex and Ryan our 2007 interns have plenty more to say about this on page 4.....

Better go, we just saw a wolf trotting across our front lawn, and our trusty watch-dog Stella is asleep on the bed, so I am off to check it out. Wish me luck.....

*Ellen Sagmyr
MYE Program Director*

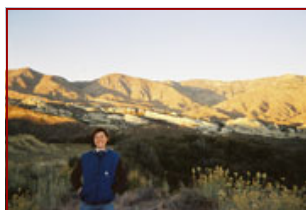
Happy reading and stay in touch.....

Food 4 Thought from Jerry Lawrie

In order to move around the landscape safely and with confidence you need to know the hazards of the bioregion in which you live or are visiting. (A hazard is defined as a source of danger).

Can you name 3 poisonous plants found in the area where you live? And yes.....there are poisonous plants that grow within a cities limit.

Hope To Stay In Touch - From Lauran Eastman



Over the past eighteen months, I have been honored to serve as the Montana Yellowstone Expedition's California Coordinator, but the time has come for me to pass the baton to former MYE instructor Jerry Lawrie.

In February I will be moving to the San Francisco Bay Area to experience the city lifestyle. I am pursuing jobs in the non-profit sector and hope to find another organization that is as exciting as MYE!

I have greatly enjoyed my experiences with MYE particularly presenting at schools, coordinating the MYE DVD, back packing in Montana, kayaking at Santa Cruz Island with the MYE alumni and so much more!!!

I hope to stay in touch with everyone and please don't hesitate to contact me if you are in San Francisco at lauran.eastman@gmail.com.

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▶ Next Steps - Leadership Lab

▶ **The Leadership Lab is MYE 2 and takes exceptional MYE alumnus to the next level.**

The aim of this program is to help students further develop a sense of who they are, what they value and how they can use their strengths and skills to have a positive impact in their world and reach their goals.

This course is offered once per summer in Montana and successful applicants will have demonstrated an ongoing commitment to their own learning and development, regular attendance and contributions to MYE Life Skills events; and be involved in community service projects.



▶ **The Leadership Lab has two phases** – one is a 23 day course based at Grizzly Creek Ranch in Tom Miner Basin. Participants can expect to explore leadership, communication, team building and sustainability concepts and applications; climb mountains; descend rivers; participate in low ropes course activities; and plan and run their own expedition.

▶ **The second phase** kicks off after students arrive home from Montana – when the group will continue to function as a cohesive unit. This phase will involve ongoing individual and group tasks, projects and/or goals developed during the Montana phase by group members and MYE staff. An online or telephone group will be coordinated by a MYE staff member to facilitate this process.

Participating in a Leadership Lab will also require you to become an MYE Ambassador. If you're up for this new challenge, here's how to apply:

▶▶ **Program Dates**

The 2008 Leadership Lab starts with a 23 day program based at Grizzly Creek Ranch, Montana, from 22nd July – 13th August 2008. Phase Two of the program will commence in your home town after the school term has started.

▶▶ **To Apply**

Download an LL Application from www.myeconnect.org or request one from: basecamp@myeconnect.org
The application form has more details and you can follow the directions on the form to apply. For help email as above and we will answer any of your questions.

To apply for the Leadership Lab you must:

- Have attended and completed a 25 day MYE Wilderness Challenge program.
- Be attaining passing grades at school.
- Have no active judicial or criminal record.
- Complete an MYE Leadership Lab Application, including all supporting material, and return it to MYE by the due date.
- Have kept in touch with MYE after your Montana program (this could be through the Life Skills program, newsletter contributions, MYEarth contact, contacting us to tell us what you are up to in terms of leadership/community service etc).
- Have high energy, a positive attitude, the ability and willingness to work long hours and multiple days in a row.
- Be physically fit and active.
- Be able to be in Montana for the dates of the program and be committed to being an active participant during the subsequent school year.
- Have written permission from your legal guardian to attend the course.
- Provide a letter of recommendation from someone who is not a relative.

It would benefit your application if you:

- Were 16 years of age.
- Could show demonstrated leadership abilities, community service involvement and/or participation in outdoor activities since your MYE Wilderness Challenge program.
- Are a junior in High School.



► Next Steps - Intern Program



The aim of this program is for participants to develop a strong foundation in a range of leadership skills, sustainability ethics and technical pursuits, with additional focus on professional issues and sound professional practice in the outdoors. Interns are expected to become a productive member of the MYE basecamp summer work team.

The MYE intern program is a 10 month commitment initially at MYE basecamp and then in the interns home town. The time in basecamp will provide interns with the opportunity to gain hands on experience in an outdoor wilderness program and interact with other people who are keen to extend their outdoor pursuit skills, leadership experiences and inter-personal skills.

The program in Montana will comprise of field time, leadership opportunities, service projects and learning workshops. The intern group will often operate as a discrete unit, spending a significant amount of time working together to develop technical, inter-personal and self-leadership skills.

The intern group will also be an integral part of MYE basecamp operations and as paid MYE employees are expected to maintain the same professional standards as any other MYE team member. Each intern will receive training in logistics, field and support work; and take leadership roles in the kitchen, logistics shed and with groups in the field. They have the important job of providing positive role modeling to MYE program participants, as well as being an essential support to field and office staff. And, on top of all that, they will be actively involved in the MYEarth sustainability program.

The home component aims and objectives, and how these are practically applied post summer, will be individually designed for each intern based on their skills and interests, and the needs to the MYE Life Skills program in their area. The planning for this will start during the Montana phase of the internship and be an ongoing and dynamic process for the remainder of their internship.

►► Program Dates

The MYE intern program is a 10 month commitment, divided into two components as follows:

Summer June 17 – August 19;
6 days per week on a flexible schedule
MYE Basecamp, Tom Miner Basin, Montana

School Year September 1 – May 1
From home or school, with access to MYE and OFF of-fices and staff

►► To Apply

Download an Intern Program Application from www.myeconnect.org or request one from: basecamp@myeconnect.org

The application form has more details and you can follow the directions on the form to apply. For help email as above and we will answer any of your questions.

To apply for the Intern Program you must:

- Have attended and completed a 25 day MYE Wilderness Challenge program.
- Be at least a junior in high school.
- Be attaining passing grades at school.
- Have no active judicial or criminal record.
- Complete an MYE Internship Application, including all supporting materials, and return it to MYE by the due date.
- Provide two letters of recommendation.
- Have kept in touch with MYE after your Montana program (this could be through the Life Skills program, newsletter contributions, MYEarth contact, contacting us to tell us what you are up to in terms of leadership/community service etc).
- Have high energy, a positive attitude, the ability and willingness to work long hours and multiple days in a row.
- Be physically fit and healthy.
- Be able to be in Montana for the dates of the program and be prepared to commit 10 hours a month to MYE for the school year following this.

It would benefit your application if you:

- Were 17 years of age.
- Could show demonstrated leadership abilities, community service involvement and/or participation in outdoor activities since your MYE outdoor challenge program.
- Were a senior in High School.
- Had attended an MYE Leadership Lab.
- Have had a paid job and can provide a reference from your employer.



The Inside Word



In 2007 Alex Cuevas, Mike Vizcaino and Ryan Marquez (pictured left) were the first MYE alumni to experience our 'new look' intern program. They were up for the challenge and added plenty of value, both professionally and personally, to the MYE summer team.

Ryan and Alex have written a few words about their experience to share with MYE alumni considering applying for the MYE Intern Program.

▶ **My MYE experience has changed my life.** As a participant on the MYE course I had done amazing things and met amazing people. After that I stuck with MYE - going to every retreat I could. Then I started wondering if there was a chance to go back to basecamp. I remembered the interns from when I was there, and that made me think: why can't I do that too? And as it turns out, I think it was one of the best decisions I have made in my life.



I tell people what I did over the summer and they have a hard time believing me.

My experience as an intern has given me some skills people would probably pay for. Whether its backpacking, white water rafting or leadership skills, I have them all now, and I try to use them when, and where ever, I can. I would highly recommend the intern position to anybody who wants to build on their past experiences. I had to pass up sports and summer school to do it, and I don't regret it at all. Its not everyday you are offered an experience like this. - **Ryan Marquez MYE 6/Intern'07**



▶ **My name is Alex Cuevas and MYE has played an active role in building me into the person I am today.**

I am proud to say that I have been to Montana for three summers and the most recent trip must have been one of the greatest. What I did (on the intern program) tops off anything else I've done in my life as far as adventure and exploring goes. The activities planned for us were great and the people we got to work with were even better.

As far as activities went the list goes on. I could talk about this all day - rock climbing, kayaking, canoeing, backpacking, wilderness first aid training, and much more other fun stuff.



I enjoyed taking photos of nature. Some of my best shots were not of people but of what Montana has to offer, and that's beautiful flowers and really nice clouds.

Another one of my favorite things to do was to go for runs. For me it was the perfect training ground, and some of my most exciting moments occurred while I was running. For example - once I ran into a bear. I don't want to scare anybody off because I'm the one who scared the bear away - he was just so impressed at how I was running.

For those who remember the drive up to Grizzly Creek Ranch from basecamp - you know how long it can take. Well I'm proud to say I ran all the way to the top and it was a feeling I haven't had since. Overall whether it was the sense of adventure you get out of being an intern, or what you make of it yourself, there's no doubt that you will have fun.

Something I would like to mention is that no amount of money can ever pay for the experience one has as an intern. I constantly got asked how much money I made and I simply said I'm not here for the money because the opportunity itself is provided and what else could I ask for. So remember don't be greedy and if you're picked to be an intern don't forget to appreciate the amazing opportunity being given to you. - **Alex Cuevas MYE 3/LL'06/Intern'07**



We are very excited to welcome Jerry Lawrie onto the MYE team as CA Life Skills Program Coordinator. Jerry has been working with MYE since 2005 - for two seasons as an instructor in our Montana summer program, and more recently in the CA Life Skills program in a voluntary and paid capacity. His passion for the outdoors, education and youth development are well known to all who have worked with him. Now all of us at MYE will gain the full benefit of his enthusiasm and commitment - Welcome on board Jerry!

► Jerry Lawrie MYE
CA Life Skills Coordinator

Climbing In December - California Life Skills Program Report

► **Climbing in December, isn't that a great concept?** December is a month where people across the country are forced to stay inside because of snow, ice, rain, and bitter cold. However, here in Santa Barbara the mild weather allows us to be outside - and go rock climbing.

Five MYE Alumni and one Wilderness Youth Project (WYP) participant accompanied the WYP staff and I for a day of climbing at Gibraltar Rock, a crag located in the front country of Santa Barbara. The five alumni were Ryan Marquez, Pedro Valdovinos, Alex Vasquez Cruz, Bailee Moraco, and Rebecca Lynch.



We met at 8:45 am at the Santa Barbara Mission Rose Garden and opened with a WYP circle of thanksgiving and a discussion about the day's logistics. The group then jumped into the WYP van and headed up Gibraltar Rd, straight to Gibraltar Rock. The road is long, narrow and has lots of turns and thankfully nobody got car sick on the way up or on the return journey.

When we arrived at the rock WYP staff ran a safety talk while another of their instructors (Charlie Coupal) and I set up the climbs. We set up three routes - one route with a bottom belay, another with a top belay, and the third as an assisted rappel.

The climbing at Gibraltar Rock is single pitch and the routes offer a range of difficulty. The views are remarkable from the top - you can see all the way from Point Conception down to Point Magu (NW and SE if you are standing on the rock and looking toward the Channel Islands). The Channel Islands take up most of the horizon and the day we were there you could see Anacapa, Santa Cruz, San Miguel, and little Santa Rosa.

During the safety talk, the students set goals for the day's climbing and during the session all reached their objectives. Ryan and Pedro were the first to climb, and Alex, Rebecca and Bailee followed. Each did a remarkable job and scaled the wall like they were Spiderman and Spiderwoman. Everyone got to climb at least twice, with some climbing 3 or 4 times. Half the team tried the rappelling, with Bailee going first and setting the standard.

As we waited our turn to climb we shared stories, told jokes and supported those who were climbing. We laughed a lot and had time to enjoy our surroundings - plenty of time was spent gazing into the afore-mentioned horizon. All in all, it was an amazing day. We left the rock at about 3:15pm and arrived back at the park at 4:00pm.

For those who came, thank you for coming and participating. It was a great day in my book!

Definition of Belay: a rope management technique used to ensure that a fall taken by a climber can be quickly arrested; belay techniques are also used for additional safety/control in rappelling, raising and lowering systems, and for mountain stream crossings (Google definition).

Definition of Rappel: Any of various methods of descending a rope using controlled friction (Google definition).

If you are interested in participating in days like these, please check your email, newsletter and the website regularly. This is where we advertise our Life Skills activities.



Staff - Where Are They Now?



Back in Australia in December

► Reflections On the Ozbus Experience *by Janelle Conner*

We have been following Janelle's ground-breaking adventure on Ozbus - the 82 day cross-country journey from London to Sydney - since she left London in late September '07 until she finished in Australia in December . This is the last installment - and we are giving Janelle the final word.....her reflections on a life-changing experience.....

So as time passes the experiences that I had on Ozbus seem better and better. Everything is different in hindsight. The memories blur and you tend to forget about how hot, sweaty, gross or disgusting some things were and remember how much you laughed about it afterwards and how your new friends helped you out, working together to take care of problems.

One thing I thought I knew, that I re-learnt on a daily basis is - attitude IS everything. One person's heaven is another person's hell.

In Indonesia we hiked through jungle and had trees whacking our legs. It was so muddy and slippery that people slid and fell every few minutes. We ended up at a freshwater lake that very few foreigners have ever seen. Another day we hiked across an open basin in the pounding sun and climbed an active volcano that was spewing ash. Everything was dry and dusty.

These two days were some people's favorite days of the trip. Others hated the idea so much they elected not to participate. They didn't realize how much fun we had slipping around in the mud and painting our faces with it, or how exciting it was balancing on the edge of a volcano looking into it's crater, with the ground crumbling underneath our feet! **Or maybe that just doesn't sound like fun to some people.**



Pakistan - Central Asia

Military Checkpoint

Calcutta - India

Uluru (Ayers Rock) Australia

Really appreciating the local people, their culture and their daily life is important. In many places in the world people don't have hot running water and they wash with a bucket bath and cold water. We didn't mind this - the weather was so hot we hated the idea of hot water! But for us this was a novelty, for them it is how they live the whole time, and they don't have a choice.

The entire experience was incredible although there were some stressful moments and days.

In Turkey we went to a waterfall and some of our team jumped up and down on a walking bridge over the river. They angered a woman who reported our bus to the authorities. Because she didn't want to tell them she had been scared by the jumping she lied and said we were in the country illegally. This meant our group had a several hour delay at a military checkpoint - trying to convince the authorities we were legitimate - before we were allowed to pass!

This entire journey is a once in a lifetime experience for most people and it's amazing to think I have the opportunity to do it again. I will get to lead other people on this life changing experience and every time will be different and have its own challenges.



Photo from Ozbus - www.oz-bus.com



MYEarth - China: The New Environmental Leaders



Cari has worked with MYE in various capacities since 2005. She spent some time in 2006 working to 'green' MYE operations and in early 2007 stepped into the seasonal Sustainability Coordinator's role. She continued her sustainability work with MYE operations and expanded it into the educational program. The role became full time in January 2008 and MYE now has the benefit of Cari's passion and dedication to 'green' issues - for the long term. The creation of this position reflects the MYE commitment to sustainability issues and having Cari - who has had an active role in making MYE what it is today - at the MYEarth helm, is an added bonus. [Watch this space for MYEarth news and inspiration.](#)

► *Cari Hanson MYE Sustainability Coordinator*

2008 is already an exciting time for MYE. We are recruiting for the next round of students -hoping to see some of you return - and I'm re-working the MYEarth sustainability curriculum.

In the news and online, many articles, reports, and bloggers are starting to hint 2008 may be the Year of Sustainability or The Green Year. Sustainability is on the minds of individuals, companies and governments.



For example, recently the Chinese government announced that by June 1 2008, "under new government rules, the production of ultra-thin bags will be banned and their use in supermarkets forbidden. Shops can still use more durable plastic bags, but will be required to charge shoppers for them" (*Voice of America*, www.voanews.com). On their website they are calling for Chinese shoppers to return to the old ways - using string bags for shopping. This is significant because **China uses 3 billion plastic bags a day!** (*January 13, 2008, National Public Radio News*).

Some may say this move is a drop in the bucket considering the changes required to address the environmental problems China faces. I think every step nations or individuals take to be more in balance with world is the way to go.

I bring this to your attention, not to get into a debate about whether China's efforts are enough, but to highlight, praise, and use it as an example for us all. Just think how much cleaner China will be without 3 billion plastic bags being used daily - it's almost too hard to imagine. But what I can imagine is all of us doing the same thing; it is an easy way to reduce our footprint on the Earth. More importantly it can be the first step in a series of steps that lead to a drastically smaller footprint. That, I think, is the best reason to highlight China's new policy.

We all need to start somewhere to create change in our environment, in our homes, in our families, and in our bodies. What if everyone picked something that was "do-able" even if it seemed like not that big of a deal compared to the whole picture? Focusing on **a single tree** in the proverbial woods of sustainability, may help us feel less overwhelmed.

Using a cloth or string bag to shop, seems simple but is something we CAN do to get our feet moving toward a smaller footprint. Once we get in the habit of doing the small things we can move on to the "larger" stuff.

Starting soon the MYEarth section of the newsletter will be more interactive. Come up with the simple thing you can do and start doing it, I'll ask you about your progress soon.

Attention MYE alumni, staff and friends.....

We would like to announce the naming of our 25 day Montana wilderness course. With all the other MYE programs now in existence we needed a name to differentiate our foundation course from everything else happening in Montana. So from now on we will be referring to it as the

Wilderness Challenge Course (WC)

We are currently recruiting for the WC course, so if you know anyone who would benefit from this experience, is highly motivated and fits our selection criteria, encourage them to check it out. **Closing dates: 1/26/08 (CA) 2/28/08 (MT/NY/FL)**



ADVENTURE RISK CHALLENGE
ARC
2008

UCSB Adventure, Risk & Challenge Program

Are you looking for another adventure in your life? If you are an English Language Learner or you speak another language at home, this is an exciting opportunity for you.

The ARC program is looking for highly-motivated English Language Learner high school students to participate in our 6-week summer program.





Spend your summer backpacking, kayaking, surfing, and improving your English skills.

Applications available by calling 530.416.5682 or e-mailing jennifergurecki@hotmail.com

Visit <http://sagehen.ucnrs.org/arc/index.htm> for more information.



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