



## Welcome to Leader Lines

Leader Lines is a monthly eNewsletter written especially for Mountaineers volunteer leaders. This month we can look at the State of the Volunteers, see the results of last month's leadership scenario survey, and issue the final call for the 2nd-annual Mountaineers Leadership Conference. We've also included useful information to hopefully make your volunteer life easier to enjoy.

As always, I welcome your suggestions for future story ideas and THANK YOU for all your work this year! We're close to accomplishing a huge benchmark this year (read more below) because of your leadership!

--Chris Williams,  
*Leadership Development Manager*

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## Fall 2015 Volunteer Survey Results

This fall, we asked what you thought about your volunteer experience - and you told us! We received hundreds of responses to our volunteer survey and gathered really valuable insights and opinions to help you modify and refine your own programs!

I've [written a blog highlighting some key results](#), or you can dive right into the data to look for insights more specific to the issues you're facing by [accessing the report directly](#).



We saw a lot of positive indicators towards a healthy volunteer culture here. Since we are volunteer-led, here are some trends you can be proud of:

- We saw a **9% increase** over the last survey in the number of people who felt their opinions were valued.
- We achieved a **significant drop** in the number of people who reported a **decrease in their satisfaction** level over the past year (down from 14% to 10%).

- Volunteers reported a **6% improvement** in having the tools and information needed to perform volunteer jobs.

Each branch and committee is its own unique enterprise under The Mountaineers umbrella, and so it's critical we evaluate the "State of the Volunteers" with respect to our unique micro-cultures within the greater organization. **We hope you can take some time to look at the results to identify 2-3 things you can do to make the volunteer experience with our organization even better for people next year!** Thank all so much for your insights, feedback, efforts, and contributions.

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### Leadership Scenario Survey Results

Last month we asked you to weigh in on a **leadership scenario** commonly faced in The Mountaineers. We heard some great suggestions for how to deal with someone who struggles in the field. [Read all about the results and analysis here.](#)

If you haven't taken the survey yet, you still can. It's live and the results automatically update daily, allowing you to see how your voice affects the overall opinion of those who also responded. Asking difficult questions where answers are ambiguous helps build our reputation for being the experts in outdoor leadership. Remember, any leader or community can use this fancy survey functionality through [our SurveyGizmo account](#) . Surveys can also be used as e-learning tools to supplement the skills you build - in and out of the classroom.

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### Last Chance to Register: Mountaineers Leadership Conference

We've finalized the schedule for [The Mountaineers Leadership Conference](#) on December 5th and registration is nearly at capacity. In case you missed it, we've got:

- **"Outdoor Leadership" author** John Graham
- **North Cascades Institute** Founder Saul Weisberg
- **Northwest Avalanche Center's** Program Director Scott Schell, and ...representatives from the **WTA, NOLS, Outward Bound, and many other**



**professional institutions** offering insights to help you (1) expand leadership skills, (2) learn teaching skills, and (3) manage group dynamics in a more productive way (the three top issues you said were important before we approached speakers).

Just like last year, the registration fee does not cover the value of the conference or the gifts you'll receive as an attendee. It's one way we invest in your development as an outdoor expert as a Mountaineers volunteer. Make sure your leaders (and aspiring leaders) know that registration will max out at 300 people - and we're almost there!

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### Quick Hits

- **Website Workshop for Activity and Course Leaders** : We know the administrative side of volunteering is the least attractive aspect of working with The Mountaineers. We want it to be as easy as possible so you can connect people with our activities and courses. This free evening workshop offers individualized hands-on learning about our unique website functions. [Register now](#). Thank you Cheryl Talbert and the Foothills Branch for offering this!
- **Updating your carpool preferences:** Leaders please take *the lead* and make sure your carpool statuses are up to date on your trips. **This month we added two more statuses that can be added when modifying your carpool status specifically for an activity. They are "Drive-Have space" and "Drive - Full Car."** This can reduce the number of email inquiries people receive *after* they've successfully arranged a carpool. Remember: a generic status for your default lives in your profile, but you can always modify it for a specific outing. [Learn more](#).
- **Mt. Rainier National Park Stewardship Planning:** Want a shuttle system or improved campsites at Mount Rainier? Mount Rainier National Park is updating their Wilderness Stewardship Plan, which means you should voice your opinion about project prioritization in the park. [Check out our blog](#) for more information and to comment on this important land management process.
- **Website Updates:** As usual, many tweaks and changes to Mountaineers.org were made based on your feedback and suggestions. [Check them out here](#). And don't forget, [the "feedback" system](#) is always available to vote for functionality, suggest new changes, or respond to dialogue about a proposal with other members.
- **Looking for Additional Hike Leaders** : If you would like to contribute to a free program of seminars and "teaching hikes" for beginner hikers and those who are new to the PNW, email Cheryl Talbert at [cascadehiker@earthlink.net](mailto:cascadehiker@earthlink.net). She is coordinating involvement of people like you into programs that promote safety, trail courtesy, leave-no-trace practices, and The Mountaineers! [Here is one example](#) of the program being developed.
- **Winter Trails Day** in the Methow Valley is coming up January 9-10. We need Snowshoe and Cross Country Ski leaders to lead trips on either Saturday or Sunday. Please contact [Chris Ensor](#) if you are able to lead a trip for this family-friendly event. It's also an excellent opportunity for leaders to hang out in a social setting to exchange

stories and fun ideas for future wintery adventures. Plus Mountaineers are getting great deals on rentals and accommodations in the Methow!

- **Successful Avalanche Summit:** A shout-out to 26 avalanche instructors and Mountaineers members who got together in November to discuss avalanche curriculum and how to maintain appropriate standards for our organization. Many "thanks" to all, especially to Tab Wilkins for facilitating a large group with many strong opinions. It was also great to see additional Mountaineers leaders and members at the [Northwest Snow and Avalanche Workshop \(NSAW\)](#) the next day to continue those discussions with other snow professionals.
- **Winter Book Sale:** From Nov 30 - Dec 23, the [bookstore in the Seattle Program Center will have extended hours and additional discounts for members](#). Books and maps make great gifts for your family, friends, and yourself! And if you want to give the gift that keeps on giving, consider buying a [gift membership at 25% off](#).

**SOOOOOO CLOSE!!! This year, The Mountaineers has traveled 97,210 miles (as of Nov 23)! We've nearly reached 100,000 human-powered miles! This is just ONE measure of our combined interactions with the outdoors. Everyone who explores outside with us contributes to this metric!**

**Hope you're having a great holiday weekend. Let it snow!!!**