



Welcome to Leader Lines

In this edition of LeaderLines, a monthly eNewsletter written especially for Mountaineers volunteer leaders, we re-cap a great night in Seattle, analyze some numbers, announce our new CEO, and remind you of the large recall that affects so many of our members. There are also a number of useful announcements below in the "quick hits" section, with a *few things people should be excited about hidden in there just for fun.*

As always, [I welcome your suggestions for future story ideas](#) and thank you for all the ways you support our mission.

--Chris Williams,
Leadership Development Manager

Thank you! Volunteer Awards and Appreciation Dinner

Last month's Volunteer Appreciation Dinner, sponsored and hosted by the Seattle Branch, was a fun and inspiring event where 200 of our best and brightest gathered to honor our Branch and Organization-wide Service Award recipients. All seven of the **Branch Service Awards** were re-presented and the Board-selected **Volunteer of the Year** and **Mountaineers Service Award** winners were announced.



Everyone also got to hear James Edward Mills (see picture), the author of our book [The Adventure Gap](#), describe how the outdoor community can value and encourage its members to reach out to diverse communities. Seeing so many people who value our collective efforts come together to learn and give thanks was another example of how impressive each of our volunteers is. [Read all about it and see who was honored here.](#)

All Mountaineers Trips



Trends in Trips & Leadership to Inform Strategy

I've been **analyzing data recently** and started by looking at trip offerings, something a number of you have asked about (note: this isn't about "field trips" tied to courses - just standalone trips).

Here's the takeaway: the modest decline in *trips* is

a re-allocation of effort into *courses*, not a decline in volunteer efforts, the number of leaders posting trips dipped a bit in 2014 (when the website launched) but is growing again. It is clear that the reduction in trips is directly correlated with a conversion of many hiking trips to the Conditioning Hiking Series, which is now a "course."

When I dove down into specific activities, climbing, scrambling, and sea kayaking have each increased the number of trips offered in the last 2 years. Snowshoeing saw a reduction in trips, but that's clearly related to the minimal snowpack last year. Hiking and backpacking saw a reduction of 233 trips from 2013-2014, but that directly correlates with the increase in popularity of the Conditioning Hiking Series. There was a smaller reduction in all Mountaineers trips over that same period. If you look at the hiking and backpacking *course* registrations, you see a large spike from 2013 (under 400) to 2015 (721) - further showing how the reduction in trips was more of a re-direction of efforts into those courses. I have yet to dive into other course data, but this was interesting and I wanted to share it with you as Leaders of the organization.

What does this all mean? Nothing really. **As long as our volunteers enjoy what they do, then we are happy and confident the rest will sort itself out** (with our ongoing efforts). But it does show that our programs are growing (when Mother Nature allows them to) and that, culturally, some of our efforts are being directed into courses rather than trips.

Keep in mind that our overall membership continues to rise (we recently broke the 11,000 mark), and we know that it takes a few years to go from "member" to "leader." I believe that **keeping members engaged with us through events, seminars, and skills clinics, while also showing them the path to leadership, will be important to retention as we work on increasing our leader base.**

Tess tells me that each of the gear grabs in Everett, Olympia, Seattle, and Tacoma were huge successes and created healthy "buzz" about being a Mountaineer. In addition, here are some

excellent sessions on the website which help clarify the path to leadership that can serve as good models to promote your programs:

- [Olympia New Hike Leader Training](#)
- [Seattle Snowshoe New Trip Leader Seminar](#)
- [Everett Scramble Trip Leader Orientation](#)

Thank you for your efforts - a growing membership validates how important and appealing your work is to the new community members joining The Mountaineers. We remain healthy and active as an organization.

New Leadership! Meet Mountaineers CEO Tom Vogl

The helm of The Mountaineers is now under the steady hand of Tom Vogl. In addition to being a graduate of Harvard Business School (small east coast liberal arts college I think), Tom brings extensive experience in the outdoor industry with him. He was the Senior Vice President of Marketing at REI for 6 years and has served on the board of directors at the National Parks Advisory Board, the REI foundation, and Chief Seattle Council of the Boy Scouts of America.



Tom is a passionate climber and outdoor adventurer. Outgoing **President Dan Lauren** , who chaired the search committee, said "we are confident that Tom's leadership skills, his experience with both the business and the recreation communities, and his personal commitment to conservation and outdoor education make him ideally suited to lead The Mountaineers. **His values and personal style fit in well with our organizational mission to transform lives and conserve our area's wild places.**"

"I'm grateful for the opportunity to lead an organization with such a rich history and strong mission," said Tom . "In regions such as the Pacific Northwest where wilderness is abundant, people connect with the outdoors in ways that are truly transformative. I look forward to serving the members of The Mountaineers and supporting our talented and committed staff and volunteers." [Learn more about Tom.](#)

Recall Reminder

Most people have heard **Black Diamond** recently issued a large voluntary recall of a number of carabiners, quickdraws, and runners. We want to make sure we inform our students and members, especially those that may be new to climbing.

All climbing and scrambling committee chairs, secretaries, and course leads (as indicated by their "position" on committee rosters - keep those up to date!) were

asked to spread the news. Many instructors have made announcements. [A blog](#) was created that went up on the home page, and there were a number of announcements in different social media feeds.

We all know communication across this vast organization can be difficult, so please help us distribute this messaging. SPECIAL THANKS to Craig S. who I know spent TWO HOURS checking all the biners that Seattle Scramble students receive with the course. Thanks to everyone else doing the same.

- [Information on the Black Diamond recall](#)
- [Information on other outdoor equipment recalls](#)

RECALL FOR INSPECTION
CARABINERS/QUICKDRAWS & NYLON RUNNERS

Black Diamond is issuing a voluntary recall, subject to user inspection, of Carabiners/Quickdraws and Nylon Runners. To find out if your equipment falls within the scope of the recall, visit our website. Please share the word.

WIREGATE CARABINERS SOLID GATE CARABINERS SCREWGATE LOCKING CARABINERS

16MM NYLON RUNNERS: 60CM & 120CM

CARABINER INFO
RUNNER INFO

Quick Hits

- **Revised "[Leader Resources](#)" Page:** I looked at the use rates on the Leader Resources page and revised how it was organized to match the frequency with which people were accessing information. If you have ideas on what else may be useful, [my "door" is always open](#).
- **What does the "typical" American volunteer look like and do?:** [This info-graphic shows recent nationwide data of volunteerism](#). It puts a "face" to volunteers, showing who they are and what they do. Where do you fit in? Does this help you tailor your programs so they appeal to the entire pool of people willing to volunteer? In your recruiting, can you make accommodations to attract the larger number of people who are married or have children to volunteer? [Remember, youth can more easily participate in our courses and programs now](#). That may open the door to more volunteerism by their parents!
- **Online Basic First Aid Refresher:** [This free and easy online First Aid refresher from the Red Cross](#) isn't as complete as any WFA or MOFA course, but it's a useful reminder of common ailments and first aid responses. Revive the knowledge you picked up when you took those courses. Try it out - everyone needs a refresher now and then! And

while we're on the topic...

- **Wilderness First Responder and WFR Re-Certification Courses:** With tremendous support from Super Volunteer Mary Panza, [we have partnered with RMI to offer WFR and WFR re-cert courses](#) in May and December 2016. If you are interested, start planning for this 10-day course now. Registration is already open.
- **Quest!** I've got a jacket from Outdoor Research for anyone who can get Rue Mapp to speak at The Mountaineers! Does anyone know her? [She's inspiring and leading an important set of changes in the outdoor industry](#) (read more here) and many of our members would love to meet her. [Get in touch with me](#) if you think you have an "in" and could ask her to visit us here in the PNW!
- **Booty!** [Mountain Hardwear](#) is going to be doing SURPRISE sponsorship of 2 of our activities in March. If you have an activity listed, you have the chance to win prizes for you and your participants. Each volunteer leader will receive a Scrambler OutDry 30L Backpack, and all of the participants will receive a gift as well, along with special discounts to the Seattle Mountain Hardwear Store. [List your activity now](#) for a chance to win!
- **Accepting Youth in Your Courses?** If you have plans to open up your courses or offer new ones specifically targeting families, [please let us know!](#) We can facilitate any [necessary background checks under our Qualified Youth Leader](#) program and promote them to families looking to get outside.

Stay safe out there. This year, we have assigned leader badges to 66 different people! Our membership has also already traveled 13,400 miles over 2.8 million feet of elevation (of which the Kayakers and Sailors have added nothing!)