



10TH MOUNTAIN DIVISION
HUT SYSTEM NEWSLETTER
SUMMER HUT SEASON
2017

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Base of Operations in Leadville



I'M DELIGHTED TO REPORT that the process to construct 10th Mountain's Base of Operations is proceeding well and we expect to substantially complete construction sometime in late October. Thanks to many generous donors, 10th Mountain completed its capital campaign in early May and all funds to construct the facility are in hand. We are, quite simply, amazed and grateful for everyone's speedy and big-hearted response.

The process to gather approvals for this facility has required a lot of interaction with Lake County including its Planning Commission, Board of County Commissioners, Building & Land Use, Public Health, Public Works & Maintenance, and Leadville/Lake County Fire-Rescue Departments. In every instance—without exception!—Lake County has demonstrated professionalism, expertise, and a firm commitment to getting the job done correctly and to high standards. This process has reaffirmed my belief in the value of a government agency comprised of good people making wise and thoughtful decisions.

This facility is already making a difference in how we take care of the huts: two large logging trucks have already delivered logs to the firewood processing area and in short order were cut, split, and delivered to the huts. This sort of scale and capability is precisely the reason to develop this facility and we look forward to using the entire facility with its work areas, office, storage, and housing so that we can better accomplish our goals and further 10th Mountain's mission.

10th Mountain has managed to do a number of things right over the years through a combination of vision, influence, wise governance, gracious and generous donors, and a good measure of luck. Some of these most fundamental points are offered below, and are highlighted because the Base of Operations will provide the means to continue doing them more effectively far into the future.

- **CONSTRUCT A SYSTEM** of well-built huts in remote locations and maintain them to high standards.
- **HIRE, RETAIN, AND MOTIVATE** highly skilled and qualified people.
- **DEVELOP A BUSINESS PLAN** that provides long term economic sustainability, keeps the rates affordable, and ensures that huts remain culturally relevant and valuable to people.
- **ENGAGE AND PARTICIPATE IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES** including schools, civic groups, and other non-profits.
- **PROVIDE THE OPPORTUNITY** for people to connect with their friends and/or family, and the outdoors, in unique and sometimes challenging environments.

We understand that the natural and business environments will continue to evolve, and people's expectations will likewise continue to develop. Given this new facility, I am confident that 10th Mountain will be better equipped to manage for change, and build on its success. 🏠

—Ben Dodge | Executive Director
10TH MOUNTAIN DIVISION HUT ASSOCIATION

10th Mountain Medical Course

WHETHER YOU'RE A VETERAN of backcountry adventure or a first timer, preparation is the key to a successful hut trip. As a service to our members and guests, the 10th Mountain Division Hut Association has partnered with the University of Colorado School of Medicine's Wilderness & Environmental Medicine program to offer a tailor-made course in backcountry first aid, specific to the high altitude winter environment of Colorado.

Earn a Wilderness First Aid (WFA) Certificate! Courses will take place over two 8-hour days in the following locations:

Breckenridge | October 14-15
Denver | November 4-5
CU Anschutz Medical Campus
Sangree's Hut | December 1-3

The course is equivalent to a Wilderness First Aid Course, but is contextualized for 10th Mountain Hut travel and extreme winter adventure, including topics of avalanche safety, high altitude, hypothermia, frostbite, immersion, snow travel, trauma, musculoskeletal soft tissue issues, dislocations/fractures, navigation, and lost persons.

Expert faculty from the CU School of Medicine will teach through a combination of lectures and hands-on practical skills, and participants will receive a certificate from the School of Medicine attesting to a WFA in the 10th Mountain Medicine Course. Cost: \$345

Sign up | www.huts.org

Backcountry Snowsports Initiative

THE DEBATE OVER PUBLIC LANDS is heating up this summer and the Backcountry Snowsports Initiative is actively working to ensure protection for the backcountry landscapes where you ski, snowshoe, hike, paddle and ride.

Although Colorado's National Monuments aren't always the snowiest, BSI has been working to defend these iconic designations across the nation and protect our bedrock conservation laws like the Antiquities Act. Currently, the Department of the Interior is reviewing 27 Monuments across the country to consider shrinking or redesignating places like Canyons of the Ancients, Bears Ears and Giant Sequoia, the latter of which is known for epic backcountry ski lines. BSI work closely with Outdoor Alliance to generate hundreds of comments in support of the monuments and we hope Interior Secretary Zinke will recognize the important recreation opportunities these areas provide.

A little closer to home, BSI is gearing up for two big forest planning efforts in Southwest Colorado and will need you to help speak up at public meetings and through written comments to protect your favorite backcountry areas. The Grand Mesa/Uncompahgre/Gunnison National Forest is revising their Forest Plan to guide management of all resources and uses, including both summer and winter recreation, in areas like Crested Butte, Ouray and Grand Junction. Public meetings will take place this summer and fall, followed by a public comment period during the scoping phase. Additionally, the San Juan National Forest is expected to start Winter Travel Management Planning to determine where snowmobile can and cannot travel in areas around Pagosa Springs, Durango and Silverton. It is essential for skiers, snowshoers and winter mountaineers speak up early and often to ensure access is protected on your favorite winter trails and landscapes.

Visit www.cmc.org/conservation for more info on these projects and to get involved! Also, be sure to save the date for the 2017 Backcountry Bash: October 21 in Denver. 🌲



ALFRED A. BRAUN HUT SYSTEM

What Were the First Hut Trips to Braun Huts Like?

THE CASTLE CREEK VALLEY holds a unique place in the birth of American skiing and hut-to-hut touring. Skiing in the Castle Creek valley is a serious endeavor even for the most competent modern ski mountaineer. Hut trips today are often full of the latest lightweight gear, gadgets, and GoreTex. It can make you wonder: What were the very first hut trips like in the 1930s? This was the era of wool, leather "boots," and sealskin skins. The 215 cm hickory skis that they used had wood edges and that could only be coaxed into a turn with an artful stem-christi.

Searching for these answers I found a dusty copy of the 1939 book *American Skiing*. Written by the German emerge and ski instructor Otto Schniebs. This Talmud of touring is an instructional book mostly devoted to ski technique, however, the first chapter "Adventures on Skis in the Colorado Rockies" is a brilliant trip report of an expedition to an old mining cabin at the base of Castle Peak where the present Tagert Hut stands. Andre Roch, Billy Fiske, Ted Ryan, and Billy Tagert amongst others were key to pioneering skiing in this area and they are the ones who introduced Schniebs to this area and inspired his well documented trip.

On April 7th, 1937 Otto and two companions set off to the Highland Lodge at the confluence of Castle and Conundrum creek. This was a much longer approach than the current Ashcroft trailhead! As they shuttled loads Ashcroft was their first camp and Otto took a moment to ponder the busy mining history of the ghost town concluding that "...today, Ashcroft means to me peace, quietness and recreation." They were equipped with 1,600 pounds of gear for their six-week expedition into the heart of the Elk Mountains. Otto noted that: "Our food supply was plentiful and included many delicacies, in addition to some wine, rum and beer, which were to be used only as a stimulant or in emergency cases. At least, that was what we had planned..." They also hired John Stubagger, a 71-year-old one-eyed miner known as "the iron man of Montezuma" as their local guide, who later became one of the main consumers of the "emergency supplies" on the trip.

It took them a little over a week to schlep their loads via Ashcroft to their "Montezuma camp" at 11,200 feet. This was a cabin used by Billy Tagert and it is the site of the current Tagert Hut. For the first part of their trip they enjoyed skiing on Castle Peak (14,278') mostly in Montezuma basin. They also explored behind the hut in an area they dubbed the "backyard slope" a name that we still use! Here they found perfect fresh snow that skied like "velvet on top of the hard base."



The main goal of their trip was to summit the foreboding and remote Star Peak (13,521') from Tagert, this is an ambitious goal even today. Otto and his companions possessed an impressive knowledge of mountain craft and snow sense for their era. After a reconnaissance tour they decided on a 1:30 am departure for their first attempt at Star on April 28th. They crossed Pearl Pass and skied towards the Star Basin (above where the Friends Hut is now) at 10:30 am they reached a bowl 1,500' below the summit and began the technical portion for their ascent. However, after some climbing Otto writes, "I decided to call it a day. The making of pictures and movies had taken too much of our time, and a crossing of that avalanche slope at that late an hour would probably have spelled disaster." After their responsible retreat they returned on April 30th equipped with a better understanding of the terrain and conditions and made a successful trip up the loose rocky ridge of Star that put them on the summit at 9:45 AM.

When the group finally returned from their six-week expedition the valley below the leaves had burst into a vibrant spring. Reading about this trip today it is striking at how in many ways the basics of the hut trip have changed little in almost 80 years. Otto wisely reflected that: "Whatever degree of skill a skier may possess, they should never forget that their skis are after all only an instrument, a means through which they can enjoy the winter in all it's glory and ruggedness, can breath clean fresh air, can meet human beings in their true character, and can forget all the petty troubles which beset our so-called civilization. These are a few of the reasons why skiing is not merely a sport it is a way of life"

We hope that you have an opportunity to escape our "so-called civilization" and visit the huts this winter! 🌲

—Morgan Boyles | ALFRED A. BRAUN HUT MANAGER

10TH MOUNTAIN DIVISION HUT ASSOCIATION | AUGUST 2017

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The 10th Mountain Division Hut Association is a privately funded not-for-profit organization located in Aspen, Colorado. The purpose of 10th Mountain is to plan, finance, build and manage, for public use, a mountain hut system that promotes understanding and appreciation of the natural mountain environment while developing individual self reliance. We welcome any comments or suggestions you may have.

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Wilderness, Huts and Equine Therapy

ADRIAN, A COMBAT VETERAN of Iraq, fell asleep on her horse. She wasn't actively riding it at the time. In fact, she was sitting on it backwards, comfortably reclined on the horse's ample rump in the dappled shade of a cottonwood.

"It's like a soft, warm couch," explained Sheryl Barto of Smiling Goat Ranch, near Carbondale, "and it's very relaxing."

Adrian, a Huts For Vets participant in our July 2017 women veterans program, was among the inaugural group of women combat veterans to experience equine therapy as an addition to our regular four-day program.

This is year five for Huts For Vets, which provides healing opportunities for veterans who have experienced trauma as a result of their service. HFV pays all expenses, including travel, because we feel that veterans have already paid a supreme price through the often intense rigors of their military service.

Adding an optional layover day following our hut trips this summer, HFV plans to invite all of the 50 veterans we serve to equine therapy at Smiling Goat Ranch. Our veterans have the opportunity to pet dogs, stroke miniature ponies, ride horses and even paint their horses with warrior symbols of their own choosing.

Equine therapy is a fast-growing therapeutic technique that has proved its value among autistic children as demonstrated by the well documented Horse Boy project. This breakthrough program, launched by Rupert Isaacson, a human rights activist and journalist, reveals the deep



healing power of animals, and especially horses.

Sheryl Barto of Smiling Goat Ranch and her team of dedicated and caring volunteers, creates a healing ritual that can deliver great benefits to

trauma-stricken veterans. Huts For Vets participants segue from the wilderness to equine therapy, meeting trained facilitators and the horses that are assigned to them. Success is determined by the relationships that form between these veterans and their mounts.

Our first program for summer 2017, in early July, introduced half a dozen women veterans, first to wilderness, nature and philosophy at Margy's Hut, then to horses at Smiling Goat Ranch. The ranch day entailed five hours of teaching, meditation, contact with the horses, and finally, a trail ride to a ridge with a grand vista of Mt. Sopris.

For our veteran women, the experience culminated with ear-to-ear grins, showing that equine therapy is a natural follow-up to wilderness immersion. The two programs taken together touch the whole person – body, mind and spirit. And that's just what Huts For Vets and Smiling Goat Ranch aspire to do.

For more information on Hut For Vets, please visit our website, which describes our unique healing opportunities in the wilderness at the 10th Mountain Huts – www.hutsforvets.org.

—Paul Andersen | Executive Director
HUTS FOR VETS

VAIL VALLEY FOUNDATION

YouthPower365

Girl PowHER is a middle school and high school girls' empowerment program serving over 200 young women yearly in Eagle County. The comprehensive program seeks to strengthen participants by providing physical activity opportunities, and supporting them emotionally and academically with the end goal of students being career and/or college ready.

Girl PowHER Adventure Camp is everyone's favorite time of the year. This free camp takes advantage of so many fun activities our valley has to offer, paddle boarding, horseback riding, high ropes courses and more. The camp builds in leadership, teambuilding and awareness activities for girls to understand roles and responsibilities in a group setting, all while pushing themselves out of their comfort zone. Each year, an overnight camping trip on the last day is the highlight of the trip.



Girl PowHER traveled to Eisemann Hut above Vail for an overnight that none of us will forget. Almost all of the 12 girls had never been camping before despite growing up in the Vail Valley and just driving up to the hut was

an amazing adventure! The hut was a perfect retreat for the group who had just been through five days of activities that pushed some of them to their physical and emotional limits. We celebrated accomplishments, created goals for the upcoming year, did tons of art projects, hiked and enjoyed life. The hut provided us with everything we needed and seeing the girls connect to nature, perhaps for the first time, was priceless. Thank you to the 10th Mountain Division Hut Association for the opportunity and taking such immaculate care of the hut to provide a safe space at 11,000 feet!" ▲

Forty-five Miles and 14,000 Vertical Feet

IN 2012, my best friend, life companion, fellow adventurer, and wife joined me on a 900+ mile, seven week, fully contained bike ride through France, Switzerland, and Germany for our twenty-fifth anniversary. In 2017 we planned to spend several weeks in France trekking from town to town and hut to hut, so in August 2016 we made a trial run here in Colorado trekking to four of the 10th Mountain Huts.

This was to be a five-day, four night, hut-to-hut trip utilizing three 10th Mountain Division huts and one Summit Huts organization cabin. We will be hiking 4-7 miles per day. Staying in the huts means we will be able to leave the heavy tent, bulky pads, and most of our cook gear at home. This should lighten our packs somewhat. We still have to carry all our food, clothing, sleeping bags, and emergency gear in our packs. In several cases we will have to carry water from the streams we cross in the valleys up to the huts as they are built on ridge lines and don't have water sources near by.

DAY 1 | COPPER MOUNTAIN TO JANET'S CABIN

WE GOT STARTED at 11 am, a bit later than expected. The packs were heavy—mine was about 45 lbs. and Christie's was about 37 lbs. We walked to the base of the ski area and the American Eagle lift was running so we bought two single ride tickets and rode the lift up...

thinking it would reduce the vertical and might reduce distance.

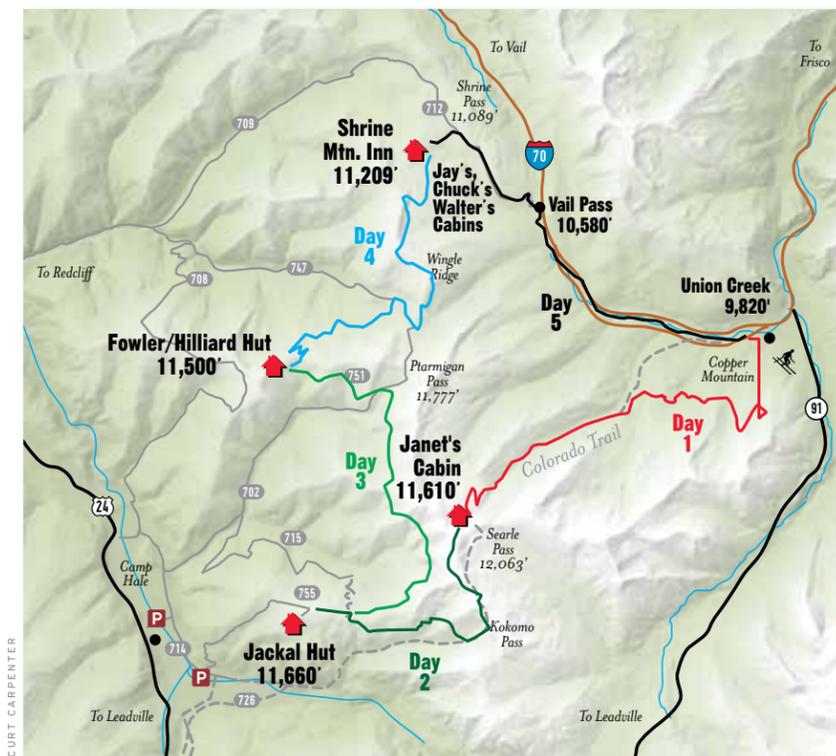
At the top of the American Eagle Lift we took a service road across and down the hill a bit to the base of the Timberline Lift. We continued following an old service road across and up the mountain to the top of the Lumberjack Lift. Here is where we left the ski area and started hiking with the intent of intercepting the Colorado Trail near where it crosses Guller Creek. Other than an occasional game trail there is no path through the woods and I was relying on my GPS to make the trail intercept. We ended up staying too high and the hillside got steep as we neared Jacque Creek. Rather than crossing one creek at a trail ford we ended up crossing one creek in a deep draw, climbing out of the draw, descending into another draw, crossing a second creek then climbing up through a large boulder field to gain the actual trail. Not recommended!

Six and a half hours later we arrived at Janet's Cabin, exhausted. We were the last of the guests for the night to arrive. Along with us there were four 60+ year-old women who were hiking the Colorado trail from Breckenridge to Camp Hale in three days, and a Russian immigrant family of three who had hiked into the hut for a night.

DAY 2 | JANET'S CABIN TO JACKAL HUT

WE SLEPT WELL and after a good breakfast and filling up the water bottles we started the day heading up the trail from Janet's cabin to the first of two passes for the day, Searle Pass. This is a beautiful hike. Most of it is above timberline through a high valley. It's only after you cross Kokomo Pass and drop down to Cataract Creek do you get back into the trees. The day was clear, sunny, and warm with light wind. The high alpine flowers were just glorious. The summer rain kept everything fresh and alive. Many people were hiking this stretch of trail including a couple riding their horses from Denver to Durango. We got to Kokomo Pass at 1:00. Sat down for a well deserved lunch.

We arrived at Jackal Hut at 5:00, eight hours after we left Janet's Cabin. That was a long day. I got blisters climbing up the ridge from the valley below. Probably aggravated by





The trail to Janet's Cabin from Copper Mountain



Indian Paintbrush



Christie looking across the saddle between Pearl Peak and Elk Ridge.



Christie and Tom departing Fowler/Hilliard Hut

the fact that I filled and carried a 3 liter dromedary bag from the valley floor because we didn't know if the hut cistern would have water. It did, plus the previous guests had left another five gallons of potable water. At least we didn't go thirsty.

DAY 3 | JACKAL HUT TO FOWLER/HILLIARD HUT

WE HAD A BIG DAY ahead. Two choices, we could head down to the county road, along the road for a bit, then up a steep valley to the next ridge, basically following the winter ski route between the cabins. Or we could blaze our own trail along a 12,000 foot ridge. The day was overcast but it looked like the weather would hold.

We started by retracing the last part of our previous day. We walked from the hut down to the saddle then started up the ridge line following an old jeep trail. The going got quite steep.

We traversed back and fourth until we could walk around the north side of Pearl Peak.

The weather was worsening and we didn't like the idea of having to climb another 400-500 vertical feet to gain the ridge. After some discussion we decided to cross the saddle then head across the slope below the ridge. From this point forward we basically high lined the slope at 12,000 feet.

Eventually we got back to the county road which we walked the final two miles to the hut. Shortly after gaining the road the mist turned to rain and it rained heavily.

We were so glad to get to the hut.

When we arrived there was a large group and they still had lots of food and asked us to join them, a generous offer we gladly accepted.



Jackal Hut

DAY 4 | FOWLER/HILLIARD HUT TO SHRINE MOUNTAIN INN

THE DAY STARTED OFF with hiking along a Forest Service road. This is the winter ski route for people traveling between Shrine Mountain Inn and Fowler/Hilliard Hut. Eventually we came to a meadowed valley below Ptarmigan Hill to the south and the ridge off Shrine Mountain to the north.

We followed a cobbly road up to the divide between

Wearyman Creek and Wilder Gulch where we had lunch. While eating lunch we heard a group of runners chatting and laughing as they came down the trail from Ptarmigan Pass then continued on down Wilder Gulch.

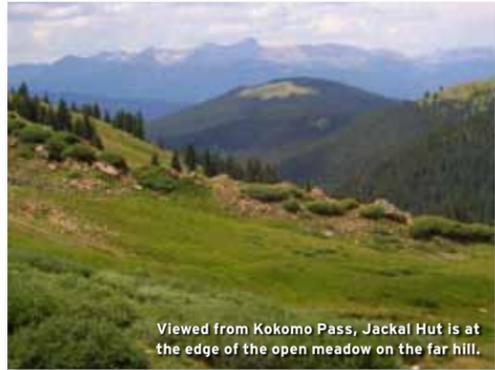
Leaving the trail, we chose to head almost due south to climb the ridge.

I DO NOT RECOMMEND FOLLOWING THIS ROUTE. We had to climb a very steep hillside. A slip or fall would have been very dangerous. I recommend taking the trail down Wilder Gulch then following the road back to Shrine Mountain Inn.

When we arrived at Shrine Mountain Inn we found out who the runners were. They were members of the Aspen Cross Country team and they were running hut-to-hut from Aspen to Vail. They had run from Jackal Hut to Shrine Mountain Inn in one day! They also said that there's a trail from the saddle directly to Shrine Mountain Inn.

DAY 5 | SHRINE MOUNTAIN INN TO COPPER MOUNTAIN

TODAY IS THE FINAL DAY. We will be walking dirt roads and the paved bike path from the Vail Pass rest stop down to Copper Mountain. The bike path runs between the east and west bound lanes of I-70. Not the most serene environment after four days in the back country but it closed the loop. It's not really all that bad. The design engineers



Viewed from Kokomo Pass, Jackal Hut is at the edge of the open meadow on the far hill.

put the east bound lanes on the south side of the valley up on the hillside a bit and the west bound lanes up on the north hillside of the valley leaving a good half mile of valley floor between. The bike path follows the creek as it tumbles down the mountain. You do hear road noise but it's not like you are walking on the shoulder of the road.

We happened to be walking down the path the day of the 2016 Copper Triangle bike ride. Cyclists start at Copper Mountain, ride over Fremont Pass to Leadville, then over Tennessee Pass to Vail, then over Vail Pass back to Copper Mountain. It's a 78-mile loop that takes 4-8 hours depending on your conditioning. Many riders start at 5 a.m. so we were in the thick of it as we got near Copper Mountain. We had to keep a constant eye up the trail to make sure we could step off the path and out of the way of the speeding cyclists.

SUMMARY | LESSONS LEARNED

YOUR BODY NEEDS TO ADAPT to long duration exercise and recovery. Even though your body is burning 3000+ calories/day your digestive system isn't accustomed to more than 2000 calories/day. We had close to 16 pounds of food left in our packs when we got back home. I was too conservative with my meal planning then we didn't eat as much as I thought we would and finally, our hut mates at Fowler/Hilliard Hut fed us dinner and breakfast so we ended up carrying that food all the way around the loop.

Hiking five days in a row was brutal but space was limited in the huts and when I made our reservations I didn't really have a good idea of what we were getting ourselves into. If I were to do this route again I would book an extra night at each of the huts and spend the layover day hiking/exploring/lounging around the hut. That would have increased our trip from five days to nine days which, for those of us lucky ones that live in Colorado, means you could do this trip during a one-week vacation. 🚶

— Tom Moritz
US BUREAU OF RECLAMATION

Can We Not Bring Up Forest Gump?



Rickey Gates

10th Mountain's past summer intern Rickey Gates is getting closer to his personal journey of running from South Carolina to San Francisco, March-August, 2017.

Rickey is the creator of **Hut Run Hut**, a six-day, one-hundred-mile, Aspen-to-Vail mountain running adventure with a priority of fun over fast.

Running ten to twenty-five miles per day along the iconic and breath-taking Continental Divide, participants will traverse a portion of the Rockies while resting at the secluded 10th Mountain Division Huts along the way.

Rickey says, "As a former hut-keeper and trail-worker with the 10th Mountain Division Hut Association I am eager to share the experience of running remotely through the mountains that have long been my backyard."

Join **Hut Run Hut** for two trips this fall.

- September 4-9 with Jenn Shelton
 - September 18-23 with Rickey Gates
- www.hutrunhut.com | www.huts.org

BOB PARKER

Honorary 10th Mountain board member Bob Parker passed away on June 24, 2017 in Grand Junction. Bob was 94.

As a founding Board member and 10th Mountain Division Vet, Bob was instrumental in fulfilling Fritz Benedict's vision of connecting Aspen and Vail with huts. With Rob Burnett (10th Mountain's first Director), Fritz, and Bob often hit the trail together looking for hut sites and routes in the early 1980s.



RUDY STANOVICH

Goodbye and our sincere thanks to Rudy Stanovich (1950 - 2017) for giving us his time and hard work—and supplying all of us with a really good time—at the 10th Mountain Hut Volunteer Work Sessions for the past 24 years.





Tenth Mountain Division Hut Association
1280 Ute Avenue | Suite 21
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Welcome to our Summer Crew

MEGAN BALLARD | I was born and raised in Boulder, Colorado. I was fortunate enough to be brought up in a hiking, biking, skiing family, who enjoyed trekking to the 10th Mountain Division Huts. My parents passion for the outdoors has shaped my lifestyle to include; raft guiding, ski instructing, rangering, mountain biking, and backcountry trail crews. I also love surfing, stand up paddling, and yoga. I feel very lucky to spend my summer working, learning, and helping to maintain the 10th Mountain Division Huts! Hope to see you on the trail!



RYAN BING | I am from Charleston, South Carolina and just finished an Environmental Science and Physics undergraduate degree at Colorado College. I grew up fishing and surfing, and have recently gotten into moun-



tain biking. I'm hoping to pursue architecture in the future, however, am looking forward to first taking some time to work, be in the mountains, and travel. After working with the 10th Mountain Division this summer, I plan to spend a few months living out of a van that I recently converted into a camper.

KATIE KETCHUM | I am originally from northern Idaho and just completed my third year at the University of Denver where I am double majoring in Geography and International Studies. I hope to pursue a career dedicated to increasing food security in the United States through sustainable agriculture. In my free time, I love to ski, hike, and garden. A fun fact about me is that I am fluent in Turkish! 🇹🇷

