

STEVEN DONALD FREDERICK UNTCH
1956-1994

My friend Steve Untch was a big man with a big smile and a big heart. He cut a wide path wherever he went, infecting all whom he touched with his positive outlook on life. This unassuming man had the ability to reach out with his impish grin, pick you up and make you appreciate the moment.

On a climb many years ago on Tahquitz Rock, Steve was a way out and I was looking at the rubber soles of those big feet scrambling for purchase above me when suddenly he was off. I closed my eyes and locked off the rope. All at once, I was wrapped in a bear hug. Steve had landed right in my lap. "Open your eyes, dude. We're alive," he yelled. Then laughing uproariously, he was up and past the section that had given him trouble and in what seemed moments was at the belay, still chuckling.

My memories of Steve are filled with moments like this as are, I'm sure, those of others who knew him. He was more than a climber. He was a consummate adventurer. Had he been born in another time, he would have been on the deck of a ship, discovering new lands, on a camel with Lawrence in the desert, or in a canoe in the unexplored Northwest with Lewis and Clark. In his short life in our time, Steve explored the crags and big walls of the Southwest, climbed peaks in Peru, Ecuador and the Himalaya and kayaked on the Sea of Cortez. He canoed and explored on foot the jungles and rivers of the Amazon Basin. He investigated a dozen caves, doing scientific research in the beautiful Lechuguilla Cave system in New Mexico. And he delivered groceries on cross-country skis to his snowed-in neighbors. Through all this, he would share his adventures with others in slide shows and articles in newspapers and magazines. Steve's sharing like this inspired so many others to go out and have an adventure on their own who otherwise would have dreamed but never dared to experience their dreams.

Steve's death on K2, while tragic, was characteristic. He had rushed up to assist Australian Michael Groom off the mountain. While helping his injured friend, a fixed rope broke and he plunged to his fate. In doing this all for another, it was the culmination of a short but well-lived life, pursuing audacious dreams. None of us could wish for more.

MICHAEL RIGNEY

JULIE CHENEY CULBERSON
1957-1993

One of America's most loved and respected alpinists, teachers and guides was lost on August 9, 1993 when Julie Culberson was killed in a climbing accident in the Canadian Rockies. The loss to her husband Matt and to Julie's family is the greatest of all but it is a tribute to her that many others have had such a hard time adjusting to her absence. Death is always hard to accept, but