

# ACCIDENTS IN NORTH AMERICAN MOUNTAINEERING

Sixty-fourth Annual Report of The American Alpine Club

This is the sixty-fourth issue of Accidents in North American Mountaineering.

**Canada:** Data and narratives not available from 2010. Visit [alpineclubof-canada.ca/services/safety/index.html](http://alpineclubof-canada.ca/services/safety/index.html) for information on the Alpine Club of Canada's safety program.

**United States:** Aside from once again seeing too many belay and rappel errors, it was a year with some major events. Among them: Another runaway sled incident on the Kahiltna Glacier—resulting in a fatality; an avalanche in the Ruth Gorge that resulted in the death of two experienced climbers; a HACE fatality on Mount Shasta; a rappel rigging error by an experienced climber on Serenity Crack in Yosemite (see illustration with this narrative); the aggressive and tenacious French climber on the Salathé Wall of El Capitan who did not give up on his grievously injured partner; the lead climber in American Fork Canyon, UT, who was pulled off by his belayer due to, among other matters, mis-communication; the eleven climbers who ignored the avalanche conditions on the Ingraham Direct, Mount Rainier, and were partly buried as a result; and the 17 climbers struck by lightning on the Grand Teton in August.

As mentioned in previous issues and throughout this report, there are some Web-based resources that often provide good information and accident stories. Here is a short-list of some of those sites:

[home.nps.gov/applications/morningreport](http://home.nps.gov/applications/morningreport)  
[supertopo.com](http://supertopo.com)  
[mountainproject.com](http://mountainproject.com)  
[tuckerman.org](http://tuckerman.org)  
[mountrainierclimbing.blogspot.com](http://mountrainierclimbing.blogspot.com)  
[friendsofyosar.org](http://friendsofyosar.org)

A few words about three individuals who are helping with important aspects of ANAM.

Molly Allen has been responsible for the layout of this publication for over fifteen years now. Though she is not responsible for mechanical errors or typos, she has a keen eye for these matters and often saves us a lot of time by making corrections as she goes.

Aram Attarian has taken on gathering reports from Colorado and the entire Southeast. He has been working in the adventure industry for over 30 years. He is currently an Associate Professor at North Carolina State University, specializing in adventure recreation, outdoor leadership, and park and protected area management. He has over 20 seasons as a Course Director and Instructor at the North Carolina Outward Bound School. He is a member of the NCOBS Board, where he chairs the safety committee, and participates in safety and program reviews for various organizations and the Association for Experiential Education.

Joe Forrester sent an e-mail this year asking if he could be of help in producing the publication. Given his background, he was put into service as a copy editor, which has been a great addition to the team. He has been a member of the American Alpine Club since 2004 and has climbed in many locales both domestically and abroad. He is the Senior Editor for the *Colorado College Alpine Journal* and has several peer-reviewed publications related to injury in the wilderness. He is currently a fourth-year medical student at the University of Virginia, and will be starting residency in general surgery at Stanford next year. Ultimately he plans to specialize in Trauma and Critical Care.

In addition to the dedicated individuals on the Safety Advisory Council, we are grateful to the following—with apologies for any omissions—for collecting data and for helping with the report: Hank Alacandri, Erik Hansen, Janet Miller, Leo Paik, Justin Preisendorfer, all individuals who sent in personal stories, and, of course, George Sainsbury.

John E. (Jed) Williamson  
Managing Editor  
7 River Ridge Road  
Hanover, NH 03755  
jedwmsn@mac.com