

# The Arizona Mountaineer



The Arizona Mountaineering Club

Summer 2018

## Our Quarterly Newsletter

Hello fellow Climbers!

I trust that you all have found a way to stay cool , while also getting some climbs in. I know that I have, unfortunately , taken most of my climbing indoors. I hope that you enjoy this edition of the Arizona Mountaineer! In this edition there are two pieces regarding out of the country hiking and climbing trips, as well as, articles regarding stewardship. As always, please feel free to submit any articles for publication to: **newsletter@arizonamountaineeringclub.net** .



Anna Dircks, Newsletter Editor

*“Our **Mission** is to provide educational opportunities, climbing experiences, advocacy to protect our climbing resources, and stewardship of the Arizona Outdoors by promoting volunteerism and community engagement.”*

## In This Issue:

- ♦ Ecuador Climbing
- ♦ Grand Canyon Cleanup
- ♦ Stewardship in the Valley
- ♦ Hiking in Baja

# Mountains of Ecuador Recap

By Margaret Kincaid

**Context of my trip:** I spent four weeks in Riobamba, Ecuador completing the Cachamsi medical Spanish program and volunteering in a local hospital. The particular housing location I chose was nearly 11,000ft elevation and less than a one hour drive to the entrance of Chimborazo National Park. I had all weekends free and climbed a different volcano every weekend.

**Climbing season and time of my trip:** Ecuador has two climbing seasons, during our Summer and Winter. November through February is generally accepted as the best period for climbing. Unique microclimate allows certain mountains to be climbed year round. I climbed primarily during the month of November, but made a quick five-day return trip in January to climb with a friend.

**Travel logistics:** Many major US airlines fly to Quito. My Delta flight was 4 hours and 45 minutes from Atlanta to Quito, only slightly longer than my flight from Phoenix to Atlanta! The time zone in Ecuador is the same as US Eastern time. Currency is the US dollar and electrical outlets are identical to the US. Pretty freaking easy as far as international travel goes! I rented a car for the month, which worked very well for me, but there are some oddities about the system. Feel free to reach out if you have questions about this.



**Guiding regulations in Ecuador:** In Ecuador it is mandatory to climb with an approved guide for any glaciated peak higher than 5,000 meters. My understanding is that this law was enacted in 2012, after an unusually large number of climbing deaths in 2011. The mandatory guiding rule makes this destination less appealing to some people, but I would encourage you to still go for it if the location is otherwise attractive. I will mention three friends: one who has climbed Everest and Cho Oyu, one who has done an unguided attempt on Pumori and another who has done first ascents in Antarctica. These guys all climbed in Ecuador within the last two years (using a guide service as mandated) and every single one had an amazing time. So, I would encourage you to remain open to the idea, even if you are an experienced climber who would typically go without a guide in the US.

**Mountain huts:** Many of the mountains have base camp huts, which make the logistics of climbing significantly easier. Chimborazo, Cotopaxi, Cayambe,

the Ilinizas and Tungurahua all have huts that you may sleep in before the summit attempt. A regular passenger car can be driven to the Chimborazo refuge (I drove 1L 62.3 hp Chevy spark up there!), but other huts like Cayambe have notoriously bad access roads only suitable for high clearance 4WD vehicles. Others still require a hike of 45 minutes to three hours from the parking area (Cotopaxi, Ilinizas and Tungurahua) to reach the hut.

**Popular acclimatization hikes:** (can be done independently, no guide required)

Rucu Pichincha (15,407 ft) located on the West side of Quito. A Teleferique can take you up to 13,451 ft, three hour one way hike to the summit from there.

Corazon (15,718 ft) located on the South of Quito, three to four hours one way to the summit

Ruminahui (15,492 ft) located within Cotopaxi national park. The central

summit is the typical objective, which usually takes four to five hours one way.

**Rockstar guide service I used:** I did all of my climbs with a guide service based out of Banos called **Andean Summit Adventure**. I compiled a short list of guide services based on excellent Trip Advisor reviews and reached out to a handful of companies. Elisabeth, the business manager of Andean Summit Adventure was extremely helpful, thoughtful and very quick to respond to a LARGE number of questions from me. I did six summits with them, and a close friend of mine has since done a 21 day climbing itinerary with this company. So, based on our collective experience, I definitely feel justified in giving them my highest recommendation. The owner and

head guide, Jaime Vargas, has UIAGM international guiding certification, as well as Ecuadorian mountain guide certification. When it was clear that I had a little experience, Jaime was very eager to take me on several interesting



and challenging alternate routes, which made for unforgettable experiences that I likely would not have gotten with other guides. Jaime also clearly cares about giving his clients the best possible days in the mountains. A friend and I planned to climb Antisana with Jaime, but there was a period of unusually heavy snow in this region. In talking to guide friends at the Antisana camp the day before, it was very clear to Jaime that this objective was not possible at the given time (parties were reportedly walking only 60 meters on to the glacier before turning around, as the snow was more than waist deep). While many guides would just say, “too bad, the trip is cancelled due to conditions” Jaime immediately sprung into action to design an alternate adventure. Within an hour he had arranged for us to do a “double- pack” of Iliniza Sur and Iliniza Norte. We were still able to get up in the mountains and enjoy fabulous climbing, including an interesting, technical alternate route on Iliniza Sur. I would recommend Jaime, Elisabeth and their company without hesitation to anyone climbing in Ecuador. <http://www.andeansummitadventure.com>

### **Mountains I climbed:**

Cotopaxi (19,347 ft) Drive to parking area at 15,092 ft and hike 50 minutes to the mountain refuge at 15,748ft. Rest several hours before a midnight departure. Six to seven hours average to reach to the summit. We took a fun, alternate route called

the Arista. (pictured right)



Chimborazo (20,549 ft) Drive to the Carrel refuge at 15,780ft and rest before an 11pm or midnight start. Average ascent time to the Whymper (highest) summit is eight to nine hours, with descent taking another three to four hours. (pictured left)



Tungurahua (16,840 ft)

can be done in one or two days. We did this as a one day (non technical) climb with 8,000 ft of elevation gain! This is accessed from the town of Banos, and can be a great objective on it's own or acclimatization training for higher peaks. (pictured above)

Iliniza Sur (17,211 ft)/ Iliniza Norte (16,818 ft) double pack.

We hiked to the Ilinizas refuge (~2hrs), and rested for a few hours after dinner. We first ascended the more technical and glaciated Iliniza Sur. After returning to the hut for a short rest, we set out for Iliniza Norte. No glacier travel is involved in this climb, but a large amount of snow made for an interesting scramble to the summit and descent.

Both mountains, as viewed from the access road, which passes through lovely farms. Sur on the left, Norte on the right.



## Upcoming Event: 2018 Grand Canyon Cleanup Stewardship in Action By John Furniss

The AMC Mission statement appears often on the cover of the newsletter and states our purpose of providing “educational opportunities, climbing experiences, advocacy to protect our climbing resources, and **stewardship of the Arizona Outdoors by promoting volunteerism and community engagement.**” Over the weekend of September 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>, members of the AMC will journey to the Grand Canyon National Park to carry out the Annual Over the Rim Cleanup, our longest running stewardship event.

### 2017 In Review

For our 2017 Grand Canyon Cleanup, the AMC was asked to capture and report several metrics seen as indicative of the effort. The number of participants each day, the hours of the event and the participant-hours applied are presented in the table below.

An additional estimated 140 hours of planning and skills review were invested on the part of AMC members in advance of the weekend’s event.



	Saturday 16 September	Sunday 17 September	Relevant Totals
Participants	36	10	
Event Hours	9.5 Hrs (0730 – 1700)	4 Hrs (0730- 1130)	13 Hours
Participant Hours	342	40	382 Hours

The trash collected along the Rim was bagged and transferred to a dedicated dumpster in the parking lot adjacent to the Emergency Services building. The weight and volume of the trash collected are presented in the table below.

Weight of Trash Collected	Volume of Trash Collected
340 lbs	4 cubic yards

The weight and volume reported above includes a steel and wood park bench retrieved from about 100-plus feet down a slope beyond the rim wall opposite the northwest corner of the Hopi House. The photos below were taken during the recovery effort. The bench weighed 120 pounds and was one of two found at this location.



The AMC has made it a point each year to collect coins as part of the Cleanup and keep them separate from other trash and other materials recovered. The 2017 collection included five paper currency notes; four from the US and one from Japan, and these were set aside once recorded. The coins were sorted by country of origin and face value. The weight and US Dollar values are presented in the table below.

Weight of Coins Collected	US Dollar Value of Coins Collected	US Dollar Value of Paper Cur- rency Collected	Total US Dollar Value of Coin and Paper Currency Collected
5 lbs 15 oz	\$38.41	\$16.95	\$55.36

A total of 872 coins were collected representing seven different countries and the European Union. A total of 857 or 98% of the coins are from the United States.

### 2018 In Anticipation

This will be the 26<sup>th</sup> year the AMC has performed this valuable service where members have the opportunity to rappel off the South Rim and collect trash that has accumulated since our last event. The National Park Services (NPS) at the Canyon sponsors our work each year and is grateful for the work we do and the way we go about it. Each year, our performance determines if we earn the privilege to come back another year and they are looking forward to our return this year.

There are opportunities for members of all skill levels to participate, either as a member of a rappel team or a member of the support team helping move equipment along the Rim and working with the park visitors from around the world who stop, watch and ask questions about what we are doing.

The event is posted on Meetup as well as two skill review sessions to be held on August 25<sup>th</sup> and September 8<sup>th</sup> for those who did not participate last year. Sign up on Meetup or contact John Furniss via email at [john.v.furniss@gmail.com](mailto:john.v.furniss@gmail.com) with questions.

I encourage you to read the Andrea Galyean's article in this edition, AMC Stewardship, that describes the AMC plans to build on our stewardship work at the Grand Canyon, our biannual Queen Creek Cleanup, and climber access routes.

## **AMC Stewardship: The Nitty Gritty on the Clean-up Committee**

**By Andrea Galyean  
AMC Stewardship Chair**

Since the AMC's founding in 1964, stewardship has been a core part of the club's mission. From trail maintenance in the McDowells, to picking up trash along our adopted section of U.S. 60 near Queen Creek, to that epic Over-the-Rim Clean-up at the Grand Canyon, the AMC is committed to taking care of the places we use.

And, based on the enthusiasm generated at our June 25 member meeting, a lot of you want to do even more of it. That evening, we had an inspiring guest speaker in Eric Sophiea, executive director of the Tucson-based Climbing Association of Southern Arizona (CASA). As part of a discussion about CASA's stewardship programs, Eric prompted each of us to ask ourselves: "What problem would I like to see solved?"

Although the question was left wide open, the vast majority of the answers were the same: We want to clean up the messes.

Because some of our favorite outdoor areas are, frankly, getting messed up.

There's trash, of course: plastic bottles, broken glass, orange peels, and (shudder) T.P. tails. There's straight-up vandalism, from graffiti tags to tree carvings. But there's also the "loved-to-death" kind of mess: eroded trails, over-crowded parking areas, and trampled plants.

This is not unique to Arizona. If anything, our local climbing areas are in better shape than many. A recent article in the Access Fund's Vertical Times newsletter describes the damage to *"America's Deteriorating Climbing Areas"* (read the full story at <https://www.accessfund.org/open-gate-blog/americas-deteriorating-climbing-areas>) and efforts to restore the most heavily impacted crags while preventing similar problems at newly-developed areas.

Not surprisingly, we ended that June meeting with a long list of ideas and a pretty clear mandate to keep building on our history of stewardship.

And so, in August, the AMC board unanimously agreed to establish a new Stewardship Committee. This committee will add to the accomplishments of our long-standing Advocacy Committee, which has historically also managed stewardship, as well as our annual and biannual clean-ups by organizing even more such events at local climbing and recreation areas, seeking new opportunities for trail maintenance and other work, and by helping the AMC incorporate "Leave No Trace" principles into every outing we sponsor.

Of course, the upcoming Grand Canyon Clean-Up — now in its 26th year! — is the cornerstone of our care-taking efforts, and we're excited to follow it with new opportunities inspired by member suggestions, so watch for the announcements as we get those events underway. We'll also be adding some new resources to the AMC website, including calendar listings for outdoor clean-ups sponsored by other organizations around Arizona. If you have ideas



about things you'd like to see us tackle — or if you want to get involved— contact me directly at [andreagalyean@gmail.com](mailto:andreagalyean@gmail.com) or drop a comment on the AMC website.

And whenever you go out, remember to stash a bag in your pack, so you can leave every approach, climb, and trail a little cleaner than you found it. After all, you don't need a committee to be a good steward.

### **Elections Chair Announcement:**

Hi Everyone!

Lisa Ruggiero here. I'm new as the Elections Chair and first want to say that it's my privilege to serve in this capacity. Secondly, I'm taking this opportunity to let everyone know that there will be officer and board positions up for the taking in 2019!

There are four officer positions, which are one-year terms, and they are as follows: President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Additionally, there are (4) Director positions open. Two of those positions are for two-year terms and the other two are one-year terms. The conditions to run for any position are: 1) Be 18 years or older and 2) Be an AMC member for at least 12 months. Elections occur at the January membership meeting.

Holding a position is a great way to serve AMC and the greater rock climbing community at large... not to mention you get an important line on your resume which is pretty cool! Please consider running for a position and don't hesitate to ask any board member past or present if you have questions about any of the positions.

I'll see ya on the ballot!

## “Dirtbag Crew”

What started as a relatively innocent comment on a Facebook page between two strangers, Margaret Kincaid and Ann Revill, turned very quickly into quite an adventure. Realizing pretty rapidly just what putting on a movie screening entailed, we enlisted the help of both the American Alpine Club Central Arizona Chapter and the Arizona Mountaineering Club to help us coordinate a showing of *Dirtbag* at Pollack Theatre on May 31. *Dirtbag* is the story of Fred Beckey, who spent his life climbing throughout North America and elsewhere in the world. His single-minded focus and meticulous attention to detail facilitated numerous successful first ascents, and produced several guidebooks. If you didn't make the screening, this film comes highly recommended by climbers and non-climbers alike!

Without the support of Eli and Ben of the ACC, the AMC, and everyone who was part of the “Dirtbag Crew”, this event wouldn't have happened. Furthermore, we were particularly impressed with the willingness of members of both clubs to volunteer their time for the event helping to MC, to sell raffle tickets, to manage the door prizes, etc. It is thanks to those volunteers and their hard work that the night ran so smoothly. We also have to give a huge thank you to all of the organizations that donated door prizes: Arizona Hiking Shack, AZ on the Rocks, Five Ten, Focus Climbing Center, Ape Index Rock Climbing Gym, Boulders on Broadway, Phoenix Rock Gym, Petzl, Metolius Climbing, the American Alpine Club, the Arizona Mountaineering Club, and the Access Fund. We were quite blown away by the generosity of these organizations. And of course, thank you to everyone who came out to the event to make it a huge success. All in all, we sold almost 240 tickets for the showing, and a huge number of door prize tickets. This means that we raised nearly \$2600 for the Save the Homestead Campaign through the Access Fund – a rather resoundingly successful event that started from a pretty nutty idea.

Ann Revill and Margaret Kincaid on behalf of the entire Dirtbag Crew



## Out and About Photos of our Members



Photo Credit: Aaron Vix

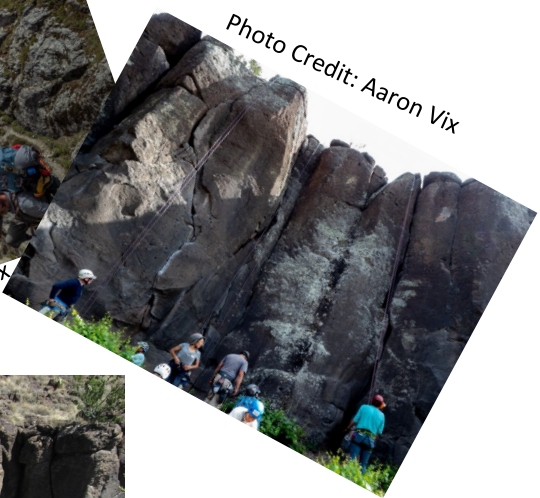


Photo Credit: Aaron Vix



Photo Credit: Art Tucker



Photo Credit: Chris Adam



Photo Credit: Tom Sealey



Photo Credit: David Anderson

## Hiking in Baja

By Oscar and Barbra

We were drawn to Baja, Mexico by the thoughts of warm sand, clear ocean, and cold margaritas. What we found there was even better! The Baja Peninsula has a range of mountains that runs all the way down its length. They are part of the coastal ranges that run all the way from Alaska down to the tip of the Peninsula. The Sonoran desert also extends into Baja. The shoreline, mountains, and desert combined offer so many diverse opportunities for hiking and exploring. We only scratched the surface of this pristine, wild land. What we discovered has us longing for more time to explore this beautiful area.

Most of the hiking we did this year was near the tiny town of Loreto. Loreto is on the Gulf of California side about 400 miles north of Cabo San Lucas. Many visitors to Baja discount Loreto because the waters are not as warm as they are further south, and the town is much quieter than the typical tourist destinations. However, Loreto was one of our favorite places.

The hiking near Loreto was especially attractive to us because it was mostly canyon hiking. There are technical canyoneering opportunities, but we stuck to non-technical exploration, and still enjoyed some of the most beautiful canyons we have seen. These canyons were amazing oases of crystal clear water falls and pools, greenery and palm trees. We felt like true explorers as we scrambled, swam, climbed, and hiked up the canyons as far as we could each day. Each corner we would turn, we would plan to turn back, but the beauty kept urging us forward. We really hope to do some multi-day trips up the canyons to see how far we can go. Our three favorite hikes were:

**Tabor/Steinbeck's Canyon** - one of the most known hikes, named for John Steinbeck.



**Mesquite Canyon** - lots of refreshing swimming in crystal clear pools!



**El Río del Pez** - lots of scrambling and the owner of the land (and grand son of the original settlers who built the historic ranch) joined us on horseback for much of the hike and shared his passion for his land with us.



While most information about hiking in Baja is gathered by talking to the locals and long-time visitors there, one couple wrote a book giving basic directions to some of the hikes in Loreto. It is worth checking out since it is pretty challenging to locate some of these places. There are no markers or signs, and lots of river beds and off-road trails to get lost on. DeeDee and Dave Kelly's book "Hiking Loreto" is a great resource, and can be ordered on-line.

This year we plan to explore higher up in the mountains, hiking in the area near La Paz. Picacho de la Sierra and other treks are beckoning us. Many of the mountain hikes we want to explore are multi-day trips, so we will be looking for someone to stay in our RV and dog sit for a few days!



## The Arizona Mountaineering Club

**Schools:** The AMC conducts several rock climbing, mountaineering and other outdoor skills schools each year. Browse the AMC website and meet up calendar for information on schedules and classes.

**For More Information:** Website: <http://arizonamountaineeringclub.net/>  
Mail: Arizona Mountaineering Club, 4340 E. Indian School Rd., Ste 21-164, Phoenix, AZ 85018.

**AMC Land Advocacy Committee:** The Committee works to maintain public access to climbing areas. If you know of areas that are threatened with closures or climbing restrictions, please notify the Land Advocacy representative Erik Filsinger at [smorefil@aol.com](mailto:smorefil@aol.com).

**Newsletter:** The Arizona Mountaineer is published quarterly by the AMC. The newsletter depends on contributions from its members so PLEASE send us your articles, gear reviews and/or photos. Submit to [newsletter@arizonamountaineeringclub.net](mailto:newsletter@arizonamountaineeringclub.net).

**AMC Rental Equipment:** rentals available for the following items: MSR alpine snowshoes, ice crampons, ice axes (70 and 90cms), snow shovel, avalanche kit (probe and shovel), curved ice tool (pair). For now, please contact Erik Filsinger at [smorefil@aol.com](mailto:smorefil@aol.com).

### President's Corner: AMC Contributors Exposed!

By John Furniss

I used this opportunity in the Spring Newsletter to summarize the AMC's governance structure, the officers and directors serving the club this year, and to highlight the contributions of several individuals in critical supporting roles. The AMC schools, programs, outings, governance and other activities are made possible by a large body of AMC members who volunteer their time and talents. Our challenge as a Board is to find ways to communicate and recognize those who make things happen. We've elected to use the new and evolving AMC website as a vehicle to let members and non-members alike know who's doing what in support of you, our members.

During the week of August 20<sup>th</sup>, 2018 we launched a new set of pages on our website that provides the names and faces of those members serving in one or more of the key roles in the club. We also included a page listing members who have volunteered to support one or more of the AMC's many activities. The page is aptly named "Contributors". You can access the new pages using

the new button, “AMC Organization” on the top bar of the website Home Page at [www.arizonamountaineeringclub.net](http://www.arizonamountaineeringclub.net).

If you or someone you know should be included, please let us know via email at [contact@arizonamountaineeringclub.net](mailto:contact@arizonamountaineeringclub.net). We don't want to leave anyone out! Likewise, there are plenty of opportunities to support the club, both short-term and long-term. Please contact us at the email address above to discuss how best to get involved. There's a place on one or more of these pages for you!

Warm Regards,

Furniss

## AMC Upcoming Events

By Deborah Roether

**AMC PROGRAM CALENDAR**– Member meetings are the fourth Monday, 7 -9 p.m. of every month. **Please look for date exceptions listed in the details of the event on Meetup.** Check out the AMC website or the AMC Meetup calendar for details.

- **June**- Eric Sophia, current President of Climbing Association of Southern Arizona (C.A.S.A.) presented on their Stewardship Program and led an exercise that applied the CASA approach to identification; resource assessment; and administration and management. First and second versions of Stories From the Drylands: A Southern Arizona Climbing Anthology were available for sale. Program was very well received.
- **July**- No Programs.
- **August**– Beer, Beta and Boasts at Boulders on Broadway
- **September**- George Krall- Climbing Mt. Denali, Alaska
- **October**- Marty Karabin
- **November**- Dawn Glanc- Ice Climbing
- **December** – Holiday Party

**AMC Club Members – Please feel free to suggest potential member meeting topics and presenters to Deborah Roether, Program Chair. She can be contacted at [deborahleother@gmail.com](mailto:deborahleother@gmail.com)**



## Practice Tip: Create a Meaningful Experience from Arno Ilgner

Submitted by Deborah Roether

You create a meaningful climbing experience by serving something larger than yourself. This can be done by serving the rock climb you're on. Transcend your ego by applying the four pillars for creating a meaningful experience:

1. **Belonging:** You belong to something larger. Integrate with it by blending with the rock climb rather than fighting it. Do this by slowing down, being attentive, and being kind to the climb. Grab the holds with intentional care, not violent aggression.
2. **Purpose:** Your purpose isn't to conquer the climb; it's to give your best effort. Use your unique strengths and talents to create a worthwhile effort.
3. **Transcendence:** Transcend your ego by focusing on the quality of your effort rather than your desire to achieve the goal.
4. **Story telling:** You're not having a good climbing experience because you're progressing and achieving your goal. Dig deeper into your story by being interested in why you're struggling. What is the climb asking of you? How is this struggle complementing your story of a good climbing experience?

## Highlighted Scheduled Events

*Outings listed in this section are not AMC sanctioned outings. Any AMC member can list an event he or she is planning and which is open to other AMC members. The member does not have to be an approved AMC Outing Leader.*

Tuesdays North Mountain hikes after work - Rogil Schroeter  
(623) 512-8465

Wednesdays Ape Index Gym Climbing - Rogil Schroeter (623)  
512-8465

**Want to get outdoors?**

**Go to the AMC Meetup for a complete list of outings and activities.**

**Up-to-date information and registration will be available.**

**<http://www.meetup.com/Arizona-Mountaineering-Club/>**