



10TH MOUNTAIN DIVISION
HUT SYSTEM NEWSLETTER
SUMMER HUT SEASON
2020

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

The Huts are Open!

WE ARE DELIGHTED to report that the huts are open and available for you to enjoy this summer. As you might expect, we have made some changes to bring more comfort, confidence and certainty to your hut experience.



Public health officials also advise that having multiple parties at the huts this summer is a bad idea. Given these compelling reasons, we converted all summer reservations to single party only.

SINGLE PARTY RESERVATIONS

We understand that hut visitors—many of whom are just emerging from various lockdown modes—now prefer to share the hut only with family and friends. Public health officials also advise that having multiple parties at the huts this summer is a bad idea. Given these compelling reasons, we converted all summer reservations to single party only. Existing whole-hut, single-party, reservations didn't require any changes but every multi-party reservation was personally contacted and changed. 10th Mountain applied "first in time, first in right" criteria whereby the first reservation had "first dibs" on the whole hut. As you might expect, this was a popular decision for those first-in-time folks and not so popular for those later-in-time folks who had to re-book at another hut/date or receive hut credit. Thankfully, the response from almost everyone was overwhelmingly positive and supportive.

SMALLER PARTY SIZE AT AFFORDABLE PRICES

New summer bookings must reserve a minimum number of spaces to get the whole hut. The minimum at larger huts was set less than the maximum capacity (e.g., 12-person minimum at a 16-person maximum capacity hut) in order to make the experience more affordable and incentivize having fewer people at the hut. The person who makes the single-party reservation can book additional spots as preferred up to the maximum capacity of the hut by calling 10th Mountain. Existing whole-hut reservations have the option to reduce their number to 12 and receive credit for the difference.

OTHER CHANGES AT THE HUTS: (see www.huts.org for more details)

1 | Check-in time is 2 PM and check-out time is 11 AM. This helps ensure that parties don't overlap at the hut.

2 | No pillows are provided at the huts. We suggest you bring your own. This is intended to provide a more predictable and comfortable experience which visitors and staff will appreciate.

3 | No flannel sheets on mattresses. Instead, special fitted sheets sewn by a skilled Leadville seamstress have been installed on mattresses at most huts. These consist of a polyurethane/polyester laminate (no PVC) and are easily cleaned and disinfected in place using a spray bottle with EPA-approved disinfecting product and cloth rag. As with pillows, this is intended to provide a more predictable and comfortable experience. The new sheets are quite comfortable (not like your grandmother's plastic couch cover...) but you can bring your own sheet if you prefer.

4 | Copious quantities of soap, hand sanitizer, cleaner, disinfectant, single-use gloves, and paper towels/rags are provided for your use.

5 | More signage: we're typically reluctant to place more signage at the huts but it seems warranted in this case to help ensure that hut visitors follow expected protocols and practices.

6 | More expectations: 10th Mountain is relying on all visitors to enjoy the huts responsibly and adhere to expectations regarding social distancing, use of face masks, sleeping arrangements, and cleaning/disinfecting the hut. This is critically important and will help allow more huts to open later this summer and this winter.

WINTER RESERVATIONS

10th Mountain may make changes to winter reservations but will wait to make those decisions until more information is available. We want to make sure we get it right, and this means learning more about the virus, our communities' abilities to handle infection, and hut visitors' expectations and preferences.

SUSTAINABILITY

The impact of COVID-19 to 10th Mountain is significant. Financially, we issued a massive amount of credit (and refunds for special circumstances, including financial need and out-of-state travel) for trips cancelled which will be a liability on the books for a couple of years. Culturally, social norms and governmental regulations are changing how people use the huts, and we are having to adapt. Thankfully, 10th Mountain entered the COVID-19 situation with experienced, capable staff and governance; strong operating cash reserves; good working relationships with regulatory agencies; and most important, many dedicated hut visitors who value the hut experience. With these factors in our favor, I am confident that 10th Mountain will continue to do what it has done since inception: namely, provide first-rate opportunities for people to connect with friends and family in Colorado's remote and beautiful backcountry.

ETIQUETTE, STEWARDSHIP AND ETHICS

The huts are open this summer only because the public health boards, county commissioners, and other decision-makers understand the backcountry hut experience and understand that hut visitors adhere to a credo of stewardship, etiquette and ethics that includes leaving the hut in excellent condition for the next group. We are grateful for their faith (which is both notable and warranted) and grateful for all that you and other hut visitors have done and will do to further this credo. ✨

— BEN DODGE | Executive Director
10th Mountain Division Hut Association

10TH MOUNTAIN DIVISION HUT ASSOCIATION | JULY 2020

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Hugh Evans, Beth Fergus, Fred Fisher

10TH MOUNTAIN DIVISION HUT ASSOCIATION © 2020

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR | Ben Dodge

STAFF | Jenifer Blomquist, Mikey Bridge, Cindy Carpenter, Patrick Essig, Dave Lee, Scott Messina, Conor O'Rourke

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. 10th Mountain Division Hut System Newsletter (Vol. XXXVII, No. 1) is published twice/year (February and July) by the 10th Mountain Division Hut Association, a 501(c)(3) organization, 1280 Ute Avenue • Suite 21 • Aspen, Colorado 81611.



IN MEMORIUM

Greg Borst

10TH MOUNTAIN HUTS lost one its longtime supporters and volunteers when **Greg Borst** (1954–2020) passed away in April following a long illness. Those who knew Greg will always remember his good humor and generosity, not to mention his fussiness



and inability to be outworked at any task, be it painting, cleaning, stacking wood or...skiing. The hut system was a big part of Greg's life, both in winter and summer, and it

provided a perfect outlet for his considerable energy and talents. Those of us who knew him will miss him, and are better people for having known him. Rest in peace, dear friend. *

IN MEMORIUM

Lorraine Higbie

LORRAINE HIGBIE (1931–2020) was a founding member of the 10th Mountain Division Hut Association. Lorraine spearheaded the building



of **Fowler-Hilliard Hut**, dedicated to the memory of two dear climbing friends, Ann Fowler and Ed Hilliard.

Lorraine met her beloved husband Harley Higbie while skiing in Europe. The

couple became passionately involved in creating the ski area and town of Vail where Lorraine opened the town's first ski shop. Lorraine's legacy will live on through her family and the **Fowler/Hilliard Hut**. *

CLIMATE ACTION COMMITTEE

Our Commitment to Address Climate Change

LAST YEAR, in recognition of the increasingly important role that the outdoor community plays in prioritizing and addressing climate change, the board of directors came together to create a new **Climate Action Committee**.



TED MAHON

This committee's goal is to make the 10th Mountain Division Hut System's operations as sustainable as possible, while educating our users on how they can also reduce their environmental impact.

The committee's first step was to understand the measures that the hut association has already committed to in an effort to reduce its carbon footprint. Many examples of sustainability have been in place for years. 10th Mountain uses 100% wind and solar energy offsets for its Leadville Base of Operations and Aspen employee housing buildings. 10th Mountain's Endowment Fund is fully divested of any fossil fuel investments. Other measures taken by 10th Mountain to reduce greenhouse gases include solar-powered LED lighting in all huts, minimization of vehicle and fuel use, and utilization of the latest in green building design and materials.

Through ongoing research efforts, 10th Mountain seeks ways to further reduce the footprint of our operations through the use of innovative, environmentally-friendly technologies such as electric snowmobiles, environmentally-responsible energy and waste management systems, and a future carbon audit to determine further emission reduction strategies.

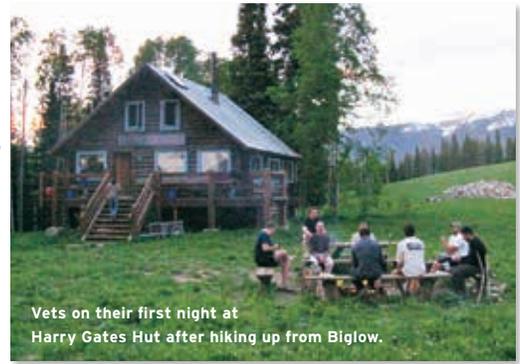
The huts provide environmentally responsible access for a growing number of people who want to experience the majesty of Colorado's mountain backcountry. The committee recognizes our responsibility to educate our users by encouraging sustainable behavior and practices like carpooling, human-powered travel from trailheads, recycling and composting, and conservation of wood, energy, and consumption. The committee is also committed to ongoing climate education at board retreats and future board meetings so we can serve as a model for sustainable operations and environmental stewardship.

Through these actions, we hope to significantly improve the sustainability and resilience of our hut association, and do our part to contribute to healthy communities, climate change mitigation, and nature conservation. *

— CHRISTY MAHON

Huts for Vets Marches On

HUTS FOR VETS received word from 10th Mountain director Ben Dodge in early June: **Gates Hut** will be open for summer 2020, thanks to approvals from Eagle County. With our first two trips of the year scheduled at Gates, this was great news for **Huts For Vets**.



Considering that the current suicide rate among US veterans is 20 to 22 per day, and with the added stressors caused by the pandemic, we at **Huts For Vets** consider ours an “essential service.” So many veterans can benefit from hut trips that we feel it is our duty to push beyond the virus and bring these deserving men and women into the mountains for healing opportunities.

This summer, **HFV** plans to bring in only those veterans who can drive, which means cultivating local and regional participation. This has been a goal of ours since we offered our first trip eight years ago and knowing of large veteran populations along the Front Range that we hope to serve. A blast on social media after Ben’s announcement soon had applications flowing in, and our trips began to fill.

Things will be different this summer because of disinfecting the huts—before and after each trip—and with social distancing in sleeping quarters. Our **HFV** team will be virus-tested before each trip, and participants will be asked to be tested before they arrive, if possible.

The huts lend themselves to the required protocols, and with forethought, preparation and smaller group size, our programs should run as successfully as in past years. Our **HFV** team will be facing greater potential exposure, but our commitment to prudently serving the psycho-emotional health of veterans gives us confidence that we’ll get through the season just fine.

As always, **Huts For Vets** is grateful to 10th Mountain for taking the measures it has in ensuring safe hut operations and catering to our veteran groups. There exists for us a sense of urgency given the tens of thousands of veterans still to serve, so we take it one step at a time by improving one life at a time in the beauty of the mountains and experiencing the homey, welcoming atmosphere of the 10th Mountain huts. ✨

— PAUL ANDERSEN | Executive Director of **Huts For Vets**

For more information on Hut For Vets, please visit our website, which describes our unique healing opportunities—www.hutsforvets.org.

IN MEMORIUM

John L. (Tim) Tyler

TIM TYLER (1923–2020), longtime 10th Mountain Division Hut Association board member, died February 1 in Denver.

Tim’s father, Reverend Tyler, was a missionary to the Arapahoe Indians in Ethete, Wyoming. Tim became an honorary member of the Arapahoe Tribe and was named “Blue Eagle.”

Despite being trained as a pilot, Tim was selected for the 10th Mountain Division at Camp Hale.

He became part of the WWII occupation forces in Japan.

Tim’s career in real estate included 20 years as Vice President of the First National Bank of Denver, retiring in 1979.

An early investor in Vail, Tim skied 30-60 times a year well into his 92nd year. We are grateful for Tim’s many years of dedicated service to the 10th Mountain Division Hut Association. ✨



The Benedict 100

OUR SHUTTLE VAN STOPPED at a turnoff among the multi-million dollar mansions in a neighborhood above Aspen. The driver wasn't willing to go any further. Our ski tour from Aspen to Vail, known as the **Benedict 100**, would begin here, and the twelve passengers collectively laughed. We were set to ski 100 or so miles over the next six days, under our own power. What was another one or two miles to the trailhead?

There, on the side of the road in this iconic Colorado town, the journey to Vail began. The group was made up of a dozen well-accomplished mountain athletes, including a ski guide, numerous 100-mile ultra-runners, pro-level cyclists and of course, elite-level skiers. Up to this point we'd shared hundreds of emails, texts, trip reports and training hours in preparation for the trip, but many had never met in person.

Day 1 | We lucked out with weather for the entire trip, and the bluebird sky was welcome as we made our way the 13.5 miles from Hunter Creek trailhead up 4,500 feet of climbing out to **Margy's Hut**. Some route-finding and fresh snow made for a longer day than anticipated. Pesto pasta was on the menu, and the unfinished box of wine was a testament to the group's collective energy levels.

Day 2 | We were out early, and the first half of the day was spent picking our way down the valley. We were soon making our way up the steep final climb to **Betty Bear Hut**. The 17.5-mile day was worth the reward with incredible views along the back of Sawatch Range. Yoga, stretching and whiskey accompanied dinner for the night.

Day 3 | We skied up and over Hagerman Pass, which was windy after a calm serene early morning in the clouds below the ridge. The skiing below the pass was incredibly good, and we were soon up on the next ridge at **Uncle Bud's Hut**. The 'shorter' day meant for some 'extra credit' skiing in the afternoon for some of the group.

Day 4 | We were out of Bud's in the dark the next morning and were lucky to see the sun rise over Mt.



LEFT TO RIGHT: Austin Stephens, Jerry Oliver, Ryan Van Horn (back), Ian London, Taylor Ross (back), Alex Pond, Daniel Macarthur, Charlie Macarthur, Luke Ortner, Matt Eberly (kneeling)

Massive. We knew Day 4 would be our longest as far as mileage. A few hours later we had hit the halfway point at Ski Cooper. Some soup and sandwiches for lunch at the **Tennessee Pass Nordic Center** hit the spot. Two of the twelve dropped out of the trip here, so the group was down to ten. After a long day, the sunset and tacos at **Jackal Hut** were much needed after 20+ miles.

Day 5 | The group took the ridgeline over and down to **Shrine Mountain Inn** with a few lunch laps on the way. Family and friends were waiting at Shrine with Thai food and plenty of celebrating.

Day 6 | We parted ways with two members of the group who skied the few short miles back to their parked cars on Vail Pass, and the rest of the group skinned up the ridge and linked in to the infamous Commando Run on Vail resort. It was as rewarding as ever to cruise into the town of Vail and enjoy a proper celebration in town. In total, eight made the 'full' **Benedict 100** trip all the way from Aspen.

A special thanks to everyone at 10th Mountain Division, especially Dave Lee, Ben Dodge and Jenifer Blomquist. The level of communication and assistance with the food caches were an incredible lift, and this trip would have been a much different experience if we didn't have your help. ❄️

— ALEX MCGEORGE

Hut Run Hut

"CHRIS KELEHER AND I cut this log with a two-person cross-cut saw in the summer of 1998," as I point to a log, nearly 30 inches in diameter, laying on either side of the trail. My audience of one is a middle aged runner from Georgia, gasping for air, much more concerned with how much further we have to go until we are sitting on the porch at the **Margy's Hut** with his new friends, shoes off and a cold beer in hand.

The nostalgia is mine, but the current experience is theirs.

Even as a teenager working a summer intern job, I knew then that I wanted the 10th Mountain Huts to continue to be a part of my life. I also I knew that I wanted to help make them a part of other people's lives. Amidst a career that I had carved out for myself in running trails and mountains around the world,

fifteen years after cutting logs and splitting wood, I made that dream a reality as a bold group



of twelve runners from around the States and beyond set off from downtown Aspen on the first of many **Hut Run Huts**. Over the next six days, we covered 100 miles, climbed over 20,000 feet, and rested in five different huts before arriving in downtown Vail.

Now entering its seventh consecutive year (and 15th and 16th trips), **Hut Run Hut** continues to bring in runners of all ages and abilities from every corner of the globe to experience the magic and beauty of the Colorado Rockies through the unique lens of the 10th Mountain Huts. I still point out the log that I sawed through to my fellow runners with varying levels of interest. ✨

—RICKY GATES

HIGH-ALTITUDE TRAINING WITH THE

Lake County H.S. Cross Country Team

IN PREPARATION for the 2019 cross-country season, I wanted to take my athletes on a team bonding trip. Although I had considered this idea in previous years, the logistics overwhelmed me, and nothing had ever materialized. Then my husband suggested using one of the 10th Mountain huts. We have used the huts for various activities during our 18 years of living in Lake County, but for some reason, I had never thought of them for this purpose.

The reservation process turned out to be smooth and easy. We were able to book all of **Skinner Hut** for our group of nine, which allowed us to spread out and keep a relaxed schedule. The hut was wonderful, the rooms were comfortable, the kitchen had everything we needed, and the setting was beautiful.

We started our adventure by running up Hagerman Pass Road from Windsor Lake Trailhead to **Skinner Hut**. Then we spent the afternoon playing games like Capture the Flag outside. After dinner, we bonded over Apples to Apples and team goal-setting.

The next morning, we ran up Hagerman Pass Road to the Continental Divide and did some speed work at the top. Then we hiked up to a nearby high point and got a spectacular view of the surrounding area. On our way down, we had fun sliding down snow fields. We

returned to the hut for lunch and clean up and then ran down the road to meet our ride.



The trip was very positive for our team; it helped solidify relationships among the runners and build excitement for the season. The season turned out to be our best in many years: our boys team finished 5th at State, and our top girl took 8th at the State Meet.

Thank you for providing us with an excellent location to get our season off on the right foot! ✨

—AMY PETERS

Lake County High School Cross Country Coach

10th Mountain's Backcountry Exploration Program encourages the use of the huts by non-profit educational groups, offering up to a 50% discount on whole hut rentals Monday-Thursday nights. Please visit www.huts.

BSI News

NEW SNOW RANGER PROGRAM MANAGING WINTER RECREATION IN THE SAN JUANS

This winter, the **Colorado Mountain Club** partnered with the Ouray Ranger District to host two **Snow Ranger** positions to help educate users and patrol backcountry recreation areas including Red Mountain Pass, the Cimarron Mountains, Mt. Sneffels area, and the southern portion of the Uncompahgre Plateau.

As winter user groups have an increasing presence in Southwest Colorado, a primary goal of this inaugural season was to document and monitor user groups and where they were recreating.



This included tracking public contacts, visual encounters, types of use and parking patterns and issues. The **Snow Rangers** also patrolled wilderness boundaries, installed signage and

talked with users about winter travel regulations.

The program was supported by the US Forest Service, Colorado Mountain Club and a generous donation from Weston Backcountry to equip the **Snow Rangers** with split-board touring equipment.

FOREST PLANNING UPDATES

The **Backcountry Snowsports Initiative (BSI)** continues to advocate for human powered winter recreation on the Rio Grande National Forest and Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre & Gunnison (GMUG) National Forests as they move through their Forest Planning processes. These high-level plans will inform recreation decisions for the next 20-30 years, so it's important to be sure pristine backcountry landscapes remain intact. These forests include incredible skiing opportunities in the San Juan Mountains, Wolf Creek Pass, the Crested Butte Area and more. **BSI** is working closely with Outdoor Alliance on a recreation vision for the GMUG which prioritizes protection for some of the most iconic backcountry skiing areas in the state. A public comment opportunity is expected this fall. Sign up for updates from **BSI** on these and other campaigns at: www.cmc.org/BSI ✨

—JULIE MACH

Aspen Alpine Guides

ASPEN ALPINE GUIDES has happily restarted our guide operations for the upcoming season. We are under some new guidelines particular to managing safety for our guests and guides while in the COVID-19 era. Those mostly impact how we manage transportation and overnight accommodations, but we also have systems in place to assure that gear and equipment that is used regularly in the field has a rest period in addition to being sanitized before returning to field use.

Outdoor recreation has been a great outlet for most of us in the valley as we manage new and unknown work and family considerations. Exercise in itself is a great outlet, and that, coupled with some time in backcountry and wilderness environments, can help to provide balance in our lives and in our relationships.

To further the positive and beneficial gains found in physical and outdoor activity, we welcome the opportunity to return to guiding our guests in a safe and relaxing backcountry experience in these upcoming seasons. Family units can unplug from the digital world to boost their mental and physical

health, while being assured that the guides and their safety is our first

priority. We have all worked diligently to draft our operating plans along with the Forest Service and Pitkin County in order to provide the best possible guided experience.

Moreover, the 10th Mountain Hut System, with whom we work with on our backcountry hut trips, has employed measures to make sure the huts are easier to sanitize for our overnight hut-based trips.

Please visit AspenAlpine.com to schedule your overnight hiking, biking, snowshoeing or skiing hut trip with **AAG**, and also please reach out with any questions that you may have that concern how we are approaching the guided experience and to gain further insights into our new guidelines.

We look forward to working with you. ✨

—STEPHEN SZORADI





Tenth Mountain Division Hut Association
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by mail. Thanks

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10th Mountain's 2020 Awesome **Summer Interns**

WALT JONES is from Littleton, Colorado and is currently on a gap year before attending Colorado College as a Boettcher Scholar. He loves running, biking, hiking, skiing, and, before working for 10th, had travelled to ten of the huts in the system. He is grateful for the opportunity to give back to the huts in Colorado that have played such a significant role in his childhood. After working for 10th, Walt plans to get his WEMT through a semester-long NOLS trip, as well as travel to New Zealand.



COOPER REES was born and raised in Leadville and will be a junior at Buena Vista High School this fall. He has previously worked at Sugarloafin' Campground digging out fire

pits, clearing trash, and doing repairs. Cooper has always been an outdoorsy guy, and in his free time he likes to ski, fish, camp, bike, and hang out with his friends. Prior to the internship, Cooper had volunteered at four 10th Mountain huts, and he looks forward to visiting more of them. He is very excited for the opportunity to work with 10th Mountain this summer.

BAILEY WALKER is from Denver, Colorado. He was an intern with the Hut System last summer and had an amazing time. He is an avid outdoorsman and is passionate about recreating in and protecting our public lands for all to use. Next February he will be a freshman at Middlebury College, where he plans to study Environmental Science after traveling this fall. ✨

