



Bardini

# The Backside of Beyond

The Bardini Foundation Newsletter

Summer 2005 Issue

## Bardini Survives—But Not Without Help And Not Without More Help!

The cost of liability insurance almost put the **Bardini Foundation out of existence** last month. The liability insurance "thing" has become a major problem for us—much more of a problem than originally anticipated. It is a **major expense** that we did not foresee and it could force us out of the guiding operation—the number one item in our statement of purpose.

As explained in our newsletters, we have been involved for the past seven years in seeking a special use commercial permit for guiding in the Inyo National Forest. After two appeals to **Forest Service (FS)** decisions, we have finally been granted a one-year permit with some assurance that we will eventually obtain a regular 5-year permit.

In anticipation of a permit for the 2004 season, we obtained liability insurance coverage at a premium of \$2500. This policy expired in October of 2004. The FS failed to issue the anticipated new permits for the 2004 season and we did not need the coverage we had paid for.

After we won our second appeal and obtained a permit for the 2005 season, our previous insurance provider notified us that they could no longer provide liability insurance for guiding. After months seeking a new insurance company, we realized how few companies in the U.S. provide this type of coverage and that only one was willing to cover a guide service with no prior history.

We obtained coverage from this one company effective March 28, 2005. The premium amounted to \$7400. After putting \$3100 down and financing the balance

over three months, we sent the FS our coverage confirmation only to be notified that the level of coverage was below FS requirements.

Being pressed by the FS, we applied for additional coverage to meet the requirements. The additional coverage premium was \$8900. The final insurance bill for this year amounted to \$16,300. The FS permit fee, and finance charges added another \$670 to bring the total operational outlay to about \$16,970

The **Dale and Edna Walsh (DEW) Foundation** had already donated \$5000 in a grant last January, but being in a real bind, we asked for more funding and the DEW Foundation came through again with an additional \$5000 grant.

We were still \$6970 short of the required funds when Gary Bard informed me that **Barbara Schantin** was getting married in mid-May and she and her husband-to-be, **Jerry Oliver**, had asked that all wedding gifts be sent as cash donations to the Bardini Foundation (**see the story on Page-2**). These gifts amounted to \$1455, leaving us **\$5500 short**.

Left with no alternative, we borrowed the \$5500 and if we can pay it back by November 2005, it will only have cost us \$65 in finance charges.

Without the **DEW** grant money and Barbara and Jerry's thoughtfulness we would not have been able to continue our guide services—our basic reason for existence.

**Now we need your help. We need to raise \$5500 before November! Help!**

## Allan Bard Receives Dagfinn Ragg Award

The **Dagfinn Ragg Award** is the the nordic world's equivalent of the **Oscar**. According to award founder Bob Woodward, the award is presented "to that person whose past and continuing contributions have had a positive effect on nordic ski sports and on cross country skiers." Dagfinn Ragg was the international sales manager for Rottefella and his passion for all forms of nordic skiing was legendary.

The award was presented posthumously to **Allan Bard** in a ceremony last January at the Outdoor Retailer Trade Show in Salt Lake City, and was accepted by Allan's brothers—Gary, who works for Ortovox, and Dale, of climbing gear maker Petzl.

Known for his many exploits, including laying out and skiing the first Sierra Red Line Traverse, the "Great Bardini" is now on the short list of a handful of telemark pioneers to which the development of modern tele skiing owes so much.

The presentation to **Bard was the tenth** annual award that has been bestowed upon an industry figure. Past award winners have included Paul Parker, Clair Yost, Steve Barnett, Dickie Hall, Chip Chase, Steve Hardesty and John Schweitzer. ♦

**This issue of Backside of Beyond was sponsored anonymously in memory of  
Bob Kamps  
&  
Ken McNutt**

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## 2005 Contributions

The Bardini Foundation is not a club and thus does not require dues, however, an annual subscription to the newsletter at \$5.00 a year could be thought of as dues or as membership in a commendable cause.

Any donation over \$5 will, of course, include "membership" and if \$25 or more will earn special mention.

### INDIVIDUALS

**Patron \$200+**

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Glenn Hirayawa  
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**Sustainer \$25+**

Patrice & Gregory Bava  
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Bob Kamps  
Thomas Rossi  
Nancy Tuitama  
Diane Verna

**Member \$5+**

Jerry Tinling

### ORGANIZATIONS

**Patron \$5000+**

The DEW Foundation  
*The Dale & Edna Walsh Foundation*

The DEW Foundation deserves special recognition. It has contributed \$10,000 in 2005. Thank you, Shai Edberg!

**Partner \$1000+**

**Contributor \$500+**

## Thank You Jerry & Barbara Oliver

You may remember Barbara Schantin from our newsletter back in Spring 2000 issue. She was one of the bakers at the annual Bake Sale. We received the following letter and photo from her and her husband, dated May 31, 2005:

Hi [Bardini Foundation],

It is with great pleasure that we send you the enclosed "gifts" for the Bardini Foundation, Inc. in honor of our wedding celebrated this past May 14, 2005 in the



amount of \$1455.

We have enclosed a list of the donors and would appreciate a letter to each donor specifying the tax donation made to the Bardini Foundation. It would also be great if you could place each donor on your mailing list so they can receive the "Backside of Beyond". Thank you again.

Keeping the spirit of Allan alive is a focus I truly love! Jerry is and has been an avid backpacker and a lover of the wilderness, so we each send our very best to you, the other Directors and the Advisory Board for the effort in forwarding the message of the outdoors!

With kind regard,

William Gerald Oliver  
Barbara June Oliver  
formerly Barbara Schantin

## Letters to the Editor

To:

The Great Bardini Foundation. Keep up the good work! God bless, say hello to my old buddy, Tim Villanueva.

**Bill Donohue  
Wilton, CT**

Good luck for the coming year! I'll be in Bishop in early August—maybe I can stop by and say "hi".

**Brian Parks  
Madison, WI**

I was researching Cathedral Peak in [Secor's guide] and he listed your [Shooting Star Guides]\* as a good reference. Then—off to Internet to [buy a guide]—[I found an ad] in one of your old newsletters ... you should get off your rump and set up an online store, that way even when potential customers are searching for guides, they can find your website ...

**Omar Abukurah  
Culver City, CA**

\*Shooting Star Guides are a unique set of five climbing guidebooks ... perhaps better described as route cards... printed on waterproof, tear-resistant ASCOT paper. Allan wrote these guides in 1991 and because of his intimate knowledge of the area, these guides give you the inside scoop on all the information needed to approach, scale, and descend these fine peaks:

Mt. Whitney, East Face  
Mt. Whitney, East Buttress  
Mt. Sill, The Swiss Arete  
Cathedral Peak, SE Buttress  
Matterhorn Peak, North Buttress

The ASCOT paper is bombproof allowing you to fold and stuff the guides into your pocket making them accessible while climbing. Each route card contains quality photos of the peak, clearly mapping the climbing route and descent. In addition, each guide contains a brief history of the area and a sketch of a Sierra wildflower.

The Bardini Foundation continues to distribute these on a wholesale basis to climbing shops and book stores throughout the western states and offers them to the public directly by mail.

## Breathing Lessons

by Don Lauria

The sound is familiar and startling like a diving swallow, but louder, maybe a falling rock. I have heard the sound many times, the sound of the diving swallow, the violet-green swallow, those that nest on El Cap. They spend their lives diving, making that sound, the whirring that their stubby wings make as they careen around invisible sky corners in pursuit of prey. But the sound of a falling rock is more ominous and a frightening sound. My first impulse is to duck, arms over the head, then inevitably to look up—nothing—then straight out from our perch on El Cap Tower, 1500 vertical feet above El Capitan's base, I see them—two human bodies plummeting toward the valley floor. My breathing stopped.

Moments earlier on this cool evening in the spring of 1993, Allan and I had comfortably bivouacked half way up El Cap's southwest buttress in Yosemite Valley. Why were we here? That thought had begun to dominate the somnolent reverie brought on by the extreme heat of this very long day and the inert boredom of belaying.

To the casual observer, El Cap Tower is barely visible on the face of El Capitan—the awesome granite presence that greets visitors to California's most famous national park. El Cap Tower is merely a ledge named by the first climbers to reach it back in the fifties. To Allan and me, the Tower is commodious. Ledges of this size are rare on this three-thousand foot high, one-mile long cliff. To the unaccustomed, however, just its location might add one more insanity to the idea of being here. Why were we here?

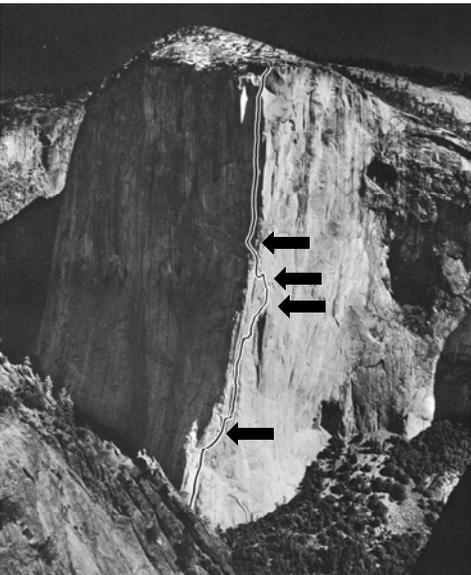
Six months ago Allan insisted that we do a Yosemite route together and the Nose of El Capitan was decided upon. We both had experience on El Cap, but not as a team. We had both been high in the granite niches of the Captain's walls many times in the past, but in those days the reasons for being there were never in question—why are we here now?

Back in the sixties and seventies when climbing many of the Valley's classic routes, I trained incessantly and obsessively for these "walls". I spent months working my way up lesser climbing routes getting ready for the "big" ones. Allan, as a Tuolumne climbing guide in the seventies, had always been ready for his walls. Being "ready" meant spending hours, sometimes days, hundreds of feet off the ground, enduring the hot sun and unrelenting thirst, suspended in nylon slings, pounding pitons into cracks in vertical granite, often sitting all night in home-made three-step climbing slings on an ankle hooked under one's butt, or sleeping in a delicate nylon hammock strung between over-driven pitons.

We were ready then—not so, now. We are literally off-the-couch and twenty years older. We've been joking about our combined age being over one-hundred, and how if we suc-

ceed and can forget the difficulties, we might come back in a few years and break some kind of record for geriatric wall climbing. This day has been an eye-opening, memory-jogging, revelation. Wall climbing was hard back then and it's even harder now. I am sixty years old. Allan is forty. I haven't been on El Cap since Royal R. and I gave Warren H. more to talk about back in 1971. Why am I here now?

Bill F., the Dolt, had begun to ask that same question during his many trips up and down the fixed ropes that he, Warren H., and Mark P. had strung to this most commodious of Nose ledges during the first ascent siege. He thought someone was trying to tell him something. Why was he there? On one of his numerous rappels, Bill forgetfully slid down into a knot and was uncomfortably detained many feet above the ground until he extricated himself. Later, according to Warren, "he began muttering ominous biblical quotations and eventually ended his wall climbing activities—for good." He had figured out why he shouldn't be there.



**The Nose Route on El Capitan**

Arrows point (from bottom to top) to: Sickle Ledge, El Cap Tower, Boot Flake, and the Great Roof

We began the climb yesterday struggling up the first four pitches to Sickle Ledge. Two younger climbers, climbing free, passed us on the third pitch. We rappelled back to the ground and spent last night in Camp-4 with lots of time to reflect on our climbing efficiency—we are very slow. We haven't dared to step out of our aid loops except to rappel. Our wall climbing equipment is outmoded and our technique is need of resuscitation. The two young climbers were two pitches ahead of us when we rappelled.

This morning we returned to our high point on Sickle Ledge and continued the climb up the Stove Legs, past Dolt Tower, and just beyond El Cap Tower. My thoughts beyond that point ran like this:

On the ground I was scared. Up here the fear is gone. The environment is familiar, friendly. I am

in my element now. The immensity of the rock and the chore of climbing it should no longer be overwhelming. But something makes me ask, why am I here? The something is the exhaustion.

This is exhausting. I am exhausted. Back in the sixties this was easy. The chimney behind Texas Flake was incredibly easy then. I wiggled up it in just minutes, completely within my aerobic capabilities. This is the nineties and I can't even get over the initial move into the chimney. I struggle over it somehow and begin the ascent. Within seconds I am gasping, gulping down air in insufficient quantities. A quarter of the way up I have to rest, but how does one rest when it's taking everything I have to remain stemmed between two vertical, slippery walls? Stopping to "rest" does nothing but increase my agony. I struggle upward toward Allan perched above me, clipped into a bolt, his legs astride the thin summit of the flake.

When I finally arrive, totally exhausted, completely out of breath, I cannot speak, I need more air than I can possibly inhale. It takes forever for my pulse to approach normal. Unable to talk, I'm thinking, God, I hope Allan realizes that I cannot lead the next pitch—the bolt trail out to Boot Flake and the scary crack up its right side. Avoiding eye contact, Allan calmly hands me the hardware rack, "Go for it, Don."

I'm thinking, shit, is he blind? I'm dying here! Resigned to my fate, I step out and begin clipping the bolts. My pulse has returned to a more comfortable level and my mouth is regaining some moisture. As my body shifts into cruise control, my mind's eye flashes on Dolt's photo of Mark on this lead during the first ascent. I just want to finish this pitch so I can rest.

It's late afternoon when Allan follows my lead to the Boot top and we decide to rappel back to El Cap Tower for a comfortable bivouac. We are tired, but the ledge, El Cap Tower, is comfortable and we are already beginning to forget what it took to get here. We discuss Boot Flake and the King Swing—determined to go on tomorrow. After our meal, with the sun gone, we quaff a couple of master cylinders—over-sized cans of malt liquor—and settle back to enjoy two of Allan's little plastic tipped cigars. Bivouacs were always the high points of my sixties ascents and this was a nineties classic. In the back of my mind though, Why are we here?

This brings us back to the sound of something falling—back to the horror of the plummeting bodies and the instant my breathing stopped.

Before my heart can regain its rhythm, another sound. Pow! Pow! Like two shotgun bursts. Pow! Pow! The two plummeting bodies abruptly snap to a slow gliding descent below bright nylon canopies. They are now ecstatically exchanging joyous screams as they swoop to a clearing on the valley floor and their accomplices gather them and their gear into a waiting van. In a matter of seconds they are gone.

Continued on Page-4 ➔

## Breathing Lessons

Continued from Page-3

Neither one of us has said a word. I am still trying to breathe. Allan finally gasps, "Jesus, that scared the holy crap out of me!" The impending tragedy has become nothing more than two BASE jumpers doing their thing, but the horror in our initial impression is not so easily dismissed. I am still trembling. Allan continues mumbling, his head metronoming, "That had to be the scariest damn thing I've ever experienced." Well, not quite—read on.

The next morning we awake to a dark cloudy sky. Now what? I have never retreated from an El Cap route in my life and always believed it easier to continue than to retreat. Allan used the escape bolt-route once in the distant past and was not anxious to use it again, but after considering our options, we decide to pack up, climb the fixed ropes to the top of Boot Flake, and wait to see how the weather develops. If there is no improvement by ten o'clock, we bail.

At ten o'clock, the wind has picked up, and the skies are still cloudy. We can see the two young climbers that passed us the first day. They are just over the Great Roof and moving into the lowering clouds. As the wind continues to build, we bail.

Allan knows the many rappels on the escape route, maybe 16—most from antiquated quarter-inch Rawls placed back in the late sixties by Tom R., the Mad Bolter. We begin our retreat. The wind is blowing from the west so intensely that it's impossible to stay on course and difficult to find the anchors—even harder to fight our way west to reach them. Sixteen times I find myself next to Allan, our total weight suspended in nylon slings from two smarmy, almost thirty-year-old bolts on a blank vertical wall of granite, hundreds of feet above the valley floor. Each time we pull down the rappel line from the two anchors above we reduce our security by half and raise our anxieties proportionately. I'm still wondering, Why are we here?

Many hours later, having added sixteen stressful chapters to this epic of misguided adventure, we are finally on the ground and met by friends. They have been watching our daily progress and have brought us each a beer. We kneel to kiss the ground, thanking God first, for the ground, our friends second, for the beer.

After a brief respite in Camp-4, we head for Degnan's and sit out front watching the weather grow worse and drinking more beer. Billy R. shows up, goes in and buys us another six-pack. Tim M. happens by later and offers to purchase another "box of Rocks". By late afternoon and yet another box, the weather has deteriorated in sync with our sobriety. It's begun snowing up higher. We think about the two young guys up on El Cap—bad news. We lean back and open another bottle. Now we know why we're **here —down here.** ♦

## Remembering Bob Kamps

Bob's idea of hell was not being able to climb and not being able to work. His last day was just as he would have wanted it to be. He worked at home all day, accomplishing, as usual, a multitude of different tasks. In the evening he went to Boulderdash [a climbing gym] with Jim Wilson. He had a massive heart attack while making a move and was gone by the time Jim had lowered him. He died with his climbing shoes on. Everyone who knew him derives comfort from knowing it was the way he wanted it to be. But for those he left behind it was far too soon. Bob and I made jokes about our marriage on the rocks. I was the ultimate Kamps follower and his biggest fan. I know how blessed I was to share 46 years with a very special man.

Bonnie Kamps

I was at the Stoney Point memorial gathering on March 10th and was nudged by TM into saying a few words about Bob Kamps. I mentioned that I had met him when I began climbing in 1961. He was pointed out to me by the three high school seniors that had become my climbing buddies (Dennis Hennek, Ken Boche, and Russ McLean). They referred to him as "that old guy". I also referred to him that way until, years later, he mentioned his age to me and I found that he was only one year my senior.

I bouldered with Bob throughout the 60s and early 70s at Stoney and spent one summer in the Needles of South Dakota with him, Bonnie, Mark & Beverly Powell, and Dave Rearick. Bob, Mark, Dave, and I did a first ascent of the Phal-lus, where I – being the least experienced - was the last man up and – being the least experienced - was chosen to be the backup to a questionable rappel bolt ... and thus – being the least experienced – was the last man down sans backup (the old "if it holds the three of us, it'll hold you" story).

More memorable that summer of '65 in the Needles was Bob's excitement about our "five pinnacle day". The weather had been intermittently wet and Bob had problems getting anyone to spend long days out on the rocks. Late one day in August we scurried back to camp with Bob waving and exclaiming to Bonnie, "We did five pinnacles today ... five pinnacles. Do you believe it? A five pinnacle day!" Only later that evening around the campfire with friends and a few bottles of wine did the excitement wane.

The only other time I experienced a really excited Bob Kamps was in 1966 when we did the 6th ascent of the South Face of the Column in Yosemite. We were attempting the 5th and first "clean" ascent unaware that we had been preceded a few days prior. I was belaying Bob across a short aid traverse when he noticed that I had momentarily removed my brake hand from

the rope. These were the days of body belays - before belaying devices. Excitedly and with obvious anger he berated me for my negligence. The excitement subsided, but the anger lingered as I endured a six-pitch lecture on the seriousness of my transgression.

Upon reaching the summit, Bob immediately began collecting wood for a fire. "Hey, Bob, I can get down this thing in my sleep – let's go." "No way! We're bivouacking" was his very adamant reply. I learned two lessons in safe climbing that day .... Rob Knobs you will be missed.

Don Lauria

## Support Foundation Efforts

*Bardini*



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### Statement of Purpose

The Bardini Foundation is a group of friends and relatives who wish to honor and commemorate their friend and brother, the late Allan Bard, fondly known as "The Great Bardini". The Foundation was formed to continue Allan's work and carry out his plans and dreams of exposing people to the total mountain experience. In Allan's memory, the Foundation will strive to provide the common man with Muir's inspiration to "Climb the mountains and get their good tidings".

The Bardini Foundation is providing:

1. Year-round backcountry guide services
2. Sponsorship of courses in avalanche safety, mountain emergency medical practices, mountaineering skills, and wilderness appreciation
3. Continued publication and distribution of Allan's Shooting Star Guides
4. A newsletter to promote mountain ethics, protocol, and safety
5. Publication of Allan's writings and photographs
6. Funds for search and rescue groups, for training and equipment
7. Slide shows and seminars on mountain sports, safety, and photography
8. Funds to train and accredit, in cooperation with the American Mountain Guides Association, mountain guides of Allan's quality
9. Support for environmental and cultural projects of community interest in Bishop, California

### Bardini Ski Season Activities

Throughout the past fall, winter, and spring ski season, the Bardini Foundation has continued to serve the local community and the general public on a **volunteer basis**. Tim Villanueva, our chief guide and avalanche expert, continued to provide the **Eastern Sierra's only avalanche forecast**. He wrote a weekly avalanche report for the local newspaper's **Mountain Report**. He also instructed a series of free snow safety clinics for the general public.

On the commercial side, the Foundation provided avalanche courses for the **Mammoth Mountain Ski School** and the **California Department of Fish and Game** (at very reduced rates).



Shown above are Julian Tooma, Taylor and Geoff Moore during a few days of skiing on the slopes around Tioga Pass

### Bardini Baseball Caps



These caps are brushed cotton, fully adjustable, in a variety of colors with embroidered logo

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and shipping\*

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PO Box 1422  
Bishop CA 93515-1422

\*combine with a shirt to save on postage

### Breathing Lessons Epilog

The "young climbers" that climbed into the clouds the day that Allan and I retreated from El Capitan in 1993 ultimately required a rescue from 800 feet below the summit. Both were suffering from mild hyperthermia and dehydration.

Although I attributed my difficulties in the Texas Flake chimney to lack of conditioning and old age, upon reflection I must explain that my first time up the Nose in was March of 1967. It was only the 8th time the route had been climbed. The chimney had not yet acquired the layers of shoe rubber and body oils that the subsequent hundreds of ascents deposited over the 26 year interim. The chimney was undoubtedly easier in 1967. ♦

# Bardini Foundation Activities - Summer 2005

## Sierra Backpack Trips

**Custom dates can be arranged from June through October**

Guided trips anywhere in the John Muir and Ansel Adams wilderness areas. Light loads, beautiful terrain, prepared meals—everything to make these trips memorable and leave time for fishing, photography, and relaxation,.

## Rockclimbing Classes

**Dates to be established on demand**

Day trips to Eastern Sierra locales for beginning, intermediate, and advanced rockclimbing lessons.

## Sierra Mountaineering

Almost every Sierra peak can be ascended by an easy route, but even the more difficult routes can be climbed when led by experienced guides with knowledge of the route. Mt. Humphreys, Thunderbolt Peak, and Bear Creek Spire are just some of the peaks planned for this summer.

**Call or email for particulars**

**The Bardini Foundation offers guide services year-round.  
Treks, climbs, and ski tours can be contracted throughout the year.**

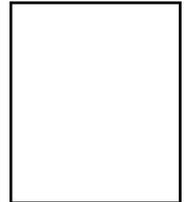
**The Bardini Foundation is in partnership with the Inyo National Forest**

**Call, write, or e-mail the Foundation at  
(760) 873-8036 or (760) 872-4413 or don@bardini.org or tim@bardini.org**



## Bardini Foundation

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## The Backside of Beyond

Volume VII

June 2005

Number 2

The semi-annual newsletter of the

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