



Featured Article

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Indemnities

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by Micah Henderson

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by Mike Smith

Cultivating Creativity
by Jen Stanchfield

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Welcome to Parallel Lines™!

We are pleased to present our members with this online and user-friendly newsletter. Our goal is to provide our members with an easy-to-read periodical that reflects the more modernized world in which we live.

In this edition of Parallel Lines there are great articles on the first ACCT Inspector Certification training and testing, ethical decision making, the developing ACCT Program Accreditation, the upcoming 26th Annual International ACCT Conference & Expo, and much more.

We encourage you to share Parallel Lines with your colleagues in your community. Remember that you can also view the publication on our website at www.acctinfo.org. As always, let us know if you have a program, member, or topic that you would like to have included. We can be reached at membership@acctinfo.org.

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About ACCT

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The Association for Challenge Course Technology (ACCT) is an Accredited Standards Developer (ASD) by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) and was responsible for the development of the first Challenge Course Technology standards originally published in 1994. These internationally recognized standards are currently being maintained by ACCT through our accredited ANSI public comment process.

ACCT serves as the leading trade association for the Challenge Course and Aerial Adventure Course industries. ACCT has 41 accredited Professional Vendor Members (PVMs) and more than 2,600 members globally (including the United States, Europe, Asia, the Caribbean, Canada, Japan, Korea, and Central America).

What is a Canopy Tour?

A guided aerial exploration or transit of the forest canopy, most commonly done by means of a series of zip lines or aerial walkways with platforms.

What is a Challenge Course?

A facility or facilities consisting of one or more elements that challenge participants as part of a supervised educational, recreational, or therapeutic curriculum.

What is a Zip Line?

A lifeline (typically sloped) suspended between support structures that enables the participant, who is attached to a pulley, to traverse from one point to another.

Letter to Our Members

After five and a half intense and wonderful years as Executive Director of ACCT, I have decided to leave the organization. I have enjoyed my time working with the staff, the members, the Board and, mostly, the volunteers that keep this organization moving forward. I am certain I am leaving you in capable hands and I know ACCT will continue to do amazing things.

Our staff is very experienced and our PVMs and volunteers put a tremendous amount of passion, time, and energy into this organization, which has made it a pleasure to work here.

The Board and the staff will be taking on some of my responsibilities as we make the transition to a new Executive Director. I look forward to continuing the friendships I have made during my time here.

For those who are concerned about me, please don't be -- I love ACCT, and I'm extremely proud of what we've accomplished! I am confident the ANSI process will be completed in the coming months. I've learned a lot and believe that I have been able to have an impact on our industry, specifically in the areas of government regulations, strategic planning, and growing the association. I'll now take some time to decompress (FYI I'm looking to lose another 25 pounds, if anyone has suggestions), and then I will figure out how to channel my experience with ACCT into something productive.

If there's one piece of wisdom that this simple visitor would like to impart upon you: have the courage to keep the door open! There are a lot of new players in the industry with no real place to call home. Please continue to embrace them as they come! I hope the ACCT will continue to create a sustainable plan to house all of our new friends and community members and truly embrace being an international association.

Much thanks to all of you for allowing me to serve this industry.

Love,
James



Achieving a Milestone

by Micah Henderson
ACCT Board Chair

The last few months have been incredibly busy at the ACCT. As you may have seen we recently submitted our BSR-9 to ANSI's Board of Standards Review (BSR). The BSR-9 form is the document used to transmit the final submittal of a candidate American National Standard to ANSI. This milestone comes after 10 years of effort by a huge number of volunteers in our Association and later by our highly dedicated staff members. The amount of time, money and obstacles that the ACCT has encountered throughout this process was much more than anyone could have imagined. It has been difficult at times to stay the course. Fortunately, the ACCT Standard has maintained its credibility and widespread use throughout this ANSI endeavor. We will never forget what we learned by attending the "Standards Wars" event hosted by ANSI. They reminded all attendees that the marketplace decides which Standards are best for the industry.

There are several Standards available in our industry now and the collaboration and competition is driving all the available Standards to be better. We have seen industry regulation increase within jurisdictions around the world. I am proud to be part of an Association

that is doing what it can to make those regulations be reasonable and effective.

As I reflect on the past 10 years of effort on the ANSI process I am amazed by how many people were a part of getting us to this milestone. I remember the original task group, set up by the Board of Directors at that time, being created to look into what it would take to start this process. I smile to myself because the information provided by that task group was so important, yet I am not sure we fully understood the complexity of what they were telling us for years to come. I remember when our standard setting procedures were submitted and approved. I realized soon after that our entire culture of standard setting within the ACCT would have to change. The Standards writing committees worked hard to prepare draft documents to be considered by a whole list of volunteer readers to get us ready for our first ballot with the new Consensus Group. When the Consensus Group was formed and members were selected I didn't yet understand how this group would do their work. Having attended several of their calls now, I am amazed at the professionalism and organization of their meetings. This group coordinates tasks between

the Standard writing committees, deliberates and ballots the drafts provided, and works with the staff to ensure all of that action is properly documented and stored for the future. As I mention the staff, I realize how far the ACCT has come since we started this ANSI process. At the beginning of this project we had one full time staff and a couple of part time staff. We now have 6 full time staff including an Operations Department to manage Standard development tasks as well as the other Accreditation and Certification programs. The contribution from the staff and especially the Operations Department have created the infrastructure we needed to get to this milestone.

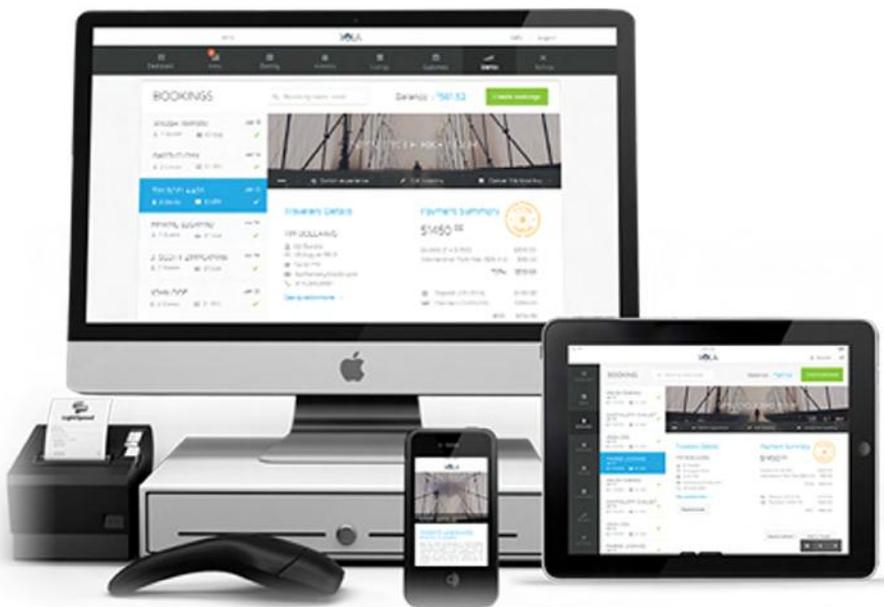
As I reflect on this process, I am honored to be a part of this team. I want to publicly thank all the volunteers, staff and contributors who have made this happen along the way. It is estimated that over 1,000 individuals were involved in the ANSI Standards process over the past 10 years. There is no way to thank them all in one short article, but if you were one of them, know that your current Board of Directors is extremely grateful for your involvement. We could not have done it without each of you.



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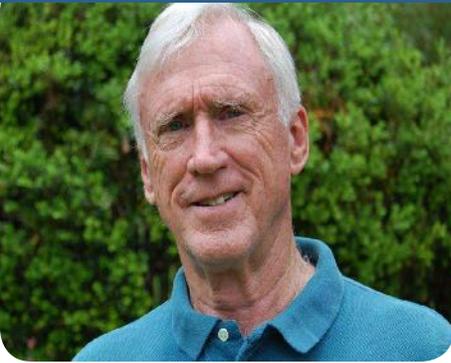
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Featured Article

Legal Corner Indemnities

by Reb Gregg

The spate of incidents in the industry this past summer reminded me of the value of agreements of indemnity. I often refer to "the under-understood, under-appreciated and underused Indemnity". And it is all that.

An Indemnity is an agreement whereby one party agrees to protect another from a described category of claims or losses. The indemnity agreement to which I refer is between the supplier of a service and the recipient of that service. (It might also be between or among several contributors of services to a client.) Relations in our industry between vendor and client have become increasingly more complex, including installation, training, inspection, and facilitation. As parties and services increase so do factors that might contribute to a client's later disappointment or loss. This is where the indemnity comes into play: it is an opportunity to allocate among or between those who contribute to an enterprise, and the recipient of those contributions, financial responsibility for what might go wrong in future operations. It is NOT a release of claims: it is a declaration of responsibility for defending and satisfying a described category of claims.

Specifically: A builds a course for B (or trains or inspects or facilitates). A might be willing to accept responsibility for losses claimed to have been suffered by future clients or staff of B to the extent they arise from A's breach of its service contract or other wrongful conduct. What A does NOT want, is to be caught in the middle of a cat fight between B (the site owner or other recipient

"Some states allow an implied obligation of contribution or indemnity --- a sharing of responsibility for a loss, whether agreed to or not. But don't rely on that."

of A's services) and an injured or disappointed client of B whose claim does not relate to anything done by A.

A's willingness to accept some responsibility for a future incident may vary (breach of contract, negligence, or "any act or omission", for example). Or nothing. B is solely in control of the future operation, after all. The piece, if any, for which A agrees to be responsible may be set out

as an exception to a blanket indemnity sought from B from claims arising from operations of B.

A and B may agree to reciprocal indemnities: each party (the indemnitor) agreeing to protect the other (the indemnitee) for claims arising out of some aspect of the contributions of the indemnitor. B agrees to protect A from a defined universe of claims, and A does the same for B. In a corporate team building or school class exercise, for example, if the corporate client or school agrees to be responsible for determining the suitability of a participant, the facilitator reasonably can ask to be indemnified by a company or school which fails in that responsibility.

Some states allow an implied obligation of contribution or indemnity --- a sharing of responsibility for a loss, whether agreed to or not. But don't rely on that. Set out the terms of your indemnity in writing as part of your service contract. Be very specific about who is expected to do what and who protects whom in the event of a claim. Again, the indemnity might run in favor of one party only, or it may be reciprocal.

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2016 KEYNOTE PRESENTER



Treehouse Masters' - Pete Nelson

The ACCT and CAA Speakers are very pleased to announce that the Keynote for the 26th Annual International ACCT Conference & Expo will be delivered by Mr. Pete Nelson. Mr. Nelson is sure to amaze and delight our attendees with his adventurous stories and incredible pictures. Be sure to join us in Austin, Texas for this amazing presentation!

"The Treehouse Guy" Pete Nelson is the star of Animal Planet's Treehouse Masters. Pete runs Nelson Treehouse and Supply, the company responsible for designing and building some of the world's most incredible treehouses. He and his wife, Judy, currently own and operate Treehouse Point in Washington state, a retreat featuring a half dozen treehouses for guests to rent.

With a reputation for limitless imagination and incomparable skills, Pete is widely known as the best treehouse builder in the world. Living by the motto "if you dream it, you can build it," he constantly pushes his clients' treehouse expectations to the max. With a arsenal of experience Pete continues to design and build treehouses the world has never seen before.

Pete also teaches people how to safely design and build their own treehouses. He has shared his breadth of knowledge in the coffee-table staple *New Treehouses of the World* and *Treehouses: The Art and Craft of Living out on a Limb*. His creations have been featured on countless TV shows and newspaper articles. He continues to challenge himself and his team to build the most luxurious lifestyles in the lofty heights of trees around the world.

Pete currently resides in Fall City, Washington.





Preparing for Program Accreditation

by Mike Smith
ACCT Board Member

An article entitled "Three Steps Operators Should Take Now to Improve Program Quality and Reduce Risk" appeared in the last edition of Parallel Lines urging Challenge Course Programs and Commercial Aerial Adventure Course Operators to take the following steps:

- 1) Engage a professional operator to review your program.
- 2) Engage a secret shopper.
- 3) Challenge yourself and staff to participate in other programs annually.

The processes of questioning current practices, soliciting and receiving feedback, and creating an environment that fosters growth are paramount to effective risk management of any program. In a field that exposes participants to both inherent and manufactured risks that include consequences ranging from hurt feelings and emotional distress to sprains, strains, fractures, and on rare occasions, death, these processes may not be adequate.

Over the past few years, challenge course programs and commercial aerial adventure course operators have had to adapt to a new and rapidly evolving marketplace which included changing standards, the introduction of new technology, emerging leading practices, and, in many jurisdictions, the adoption of regulation. These changes included the adoption of annual (or more frequent) third-party technical inspections, outside skill verification and certification of management and program delivery staff, increased engineering and documentation, and increased scrutiny by and reporting to regulatory agencies.

Despite a recent series of highly publicized accidents in the U.S. marketplace and the publication of an article in the American Journal for Emergency Room Medicine which claims that zip line accidents are on the rise, I believe that the market has actually done a better job of mitigating risks while at the same time developing and offering new and novel experiences to a broader demographic (age, weight, fitness level, and ability) and significantly greater portion of the population. Omitted from the American Journal for Emergency Medicine article was the fact that the aerial adventure course market has experienced significant double-digit growth for more than a decade and that programs are serving younger children, older adults, less active participants, and presenting experiences not even conceived of twenty years prior. That said, the conclusion is clear... accidents are not acceptable.

Regulators like to use terms like "safe and operable" which are definitive and most closely match their experience with amusement park devices. Many in our association would contend that we are adventure education experiences or even high adventure sports, both which include inherent risks that cannot be removed without dramatically changing the nature of the program and removing the value. Regardless of beliefs, the reality of our marketplace is that

we must constantly be working to better mitigate and eliminate risks, walking a fine line between outcomes and safety.

In review of recent accidents, there are clear and definitive causes. I define these as the following:

- 1) Failure to follow operating procedures
- 2) Lack of training/Exceeds ability, and
- 3) Lack of or insufficient participant screening

These are not the consequence of insufficient engineering or a lack of technical inspection, but rather a failure in the operational practices and procedures of a company and/or human error. The professional, third-party inspection standards which have been largely adopted by the marketplace have curbed immensely the number of equipment failures and design failures previously attributed to a lack of inspection and insufficient design. Based on recent findings, the industry must focus on achieving higher operational standards which can only be attained through deliberate, intense scrutiny of the operational practices of each individual company.

In the coming months, ACCT will be introducing a new program to review and accredit traditional challenge course programs and

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Preparing for Program Accreditation . . . Continued from page 8

commercial aerial adventure course operations. The program will be discussed in greater detail at the 26th Annual Conference in Lost Pines, Texas from January 28-31, 2016.

For challenge course programs which have been investing in annual, third-party professional inspections by an ACCT certified inspector (NARSO or AIMS in jurisdictions that require ASTM), third-party professional skills verification and certification of their operating staff, and who meet industry-accepted insurance minimums, the next step will be retaining a professional operational reviewer and completing the application process.

Program accreditation will require operations to work with Qualified Course Professionals (inspectors, trainers, and operational reviewers) to

review and assemble an application which will be sent to the Association for processing and approval through a review panel. This way, ACCT will serve as the accrediting body, but will keep the fees and associated expenses lower by leveraging current programs already in place, namely Inspector Certification and the Accredited Vendor Member program. While accredited programs will be required to make an annual report and update, maintain the minimum requirements, stay current on dues, and to report accidents, the operational review of the program will likely be handled bi-annually or tri-annually, or any time the program makes significant changes to its operational practices or offerings.

The Program Accreditation Task Group is currently working to craft the program and to develop the

support systems needed to educate and prepare operators, deliver the program, and to create a compelling benefits package which will include marketing/advertising benefits and a number of support services provided through ACCT and partner agencies.

The Task Group is currently seeking both traditional course programs and commercial aerial adventure park operations, as well as professionals with significant operational experience to participate in the pilot program to be conducted in 2016. Interested parties should contact the ACCT Operations Department at bill@acctinfo.org. Individuals interested in helping to develop Program Accreditation are encouraged to join us at the 26th Annual International Conference in January in Lost Pines, Texas.

2016 Conference Registration is OPEN!

Find the ACCT Conference Registration Brochure or register online at www.acctconference.com.

SAVE \$\$\$!! Early Bird Registration ends October 30, 2015.

ACCT Calendar Contest

CAST YOUR VOTE!

The photo submissions for the first ever ACCT calendar have been received and reviewed and we've got some amazing entries. Now it's YOUR job to choose the winners! **CLICK HERE** or visit the ACCT Facebook page to view the finalists and vote from October 12th – 18th, 2015. Each Facebook user can cast one vote per day, so be sure and share the link to boost your favorite photos' vote tally. Thank you in advance for participating!

Conference T-Shirt Contest

We want YOU to design this year's conference t-shirt! **The 2016 Conference T-Shirt Contest has been extended to October 30th, 2015.** Create the design for the back of this year's conference t-shirt and win a free one for yourself! Just e-mail us your design by October 30th. All current ACCT members will have an opportunity to vote on their favorite design. The t-shirt with the most votes will be selected as our 2016 Conference T-shirt!

2016 Conference Theme: Deep in the Heart of ACCT!

Rules: Submit design by October 30th, 2015 in .pdf format along with your name, phone number, and mailing address. E-Mail submissions to membership@acctinfo.org.

Vote on your favorite design:
November 1st - 15th, 2015!!



How to Fund a Forest

Recreation through aerial adventure is one of the key components Feronia Forests is using to get kids into nature.

By Adventure Park Insider Magazine
www.adventureparkinsider.com
olivia@saminfo.com

Recreation, location, education and product. It's these four building blocks that Massachusetts-based Feronia Forests relies on to propagate its Sustainable Full Forestry mission, which strives to make the greenest—and most lucrative—use of its 1,700-acre forest without cutting down a single tree.

The group behind Feronia Forests has, along with environmental specialists, developed a business model focused on sustainable managed forestry, which “puts trees to work” for both profit and education. Through its non-profit arm, Feronia Forward, Feronia Forests combines property-based ventures, including maple syrup products and an adventure park, with an educational program that educates folks, especially kids, about the importance of nature and environmental stewardship.

Recreation

Ramblewild, the property's new aerial adventure park, fills the recreation component. The park has operated with a barebones lodge since 2013, but opened in full this year, with all infrastructure in place and ready to handle large numbers.

Ramblewild is a money-making entity. It's located in the Berkshires, a popular weekend and summer destination three hours from New York City, two-

and-a-half from Boston, and two from Hartford, Conn. The park sells 3.5-hour climbing tickets to walk-ins or by reservation for \$48 per person.

All of Ramblewild's eight separate aerial courses spider web from one location called “The Hub.” They're set up a lot like a ski area, says director of programs Luke Bloom, with designated routes for beginners, intermediates and experts. Each has about 15 platforms; strung between them are approximately 150 different climbing elements, as well as multiple zip lines on each course.

The park is built on a 10-acre hemlock growth. Two “campuses,” East and West, are separated by a 100-foot ravine, which is traversed by four zip lines, and by inventive, repurposed features like a Sky-ak (a kayak-cum-aerial park ride) and a horse saddle. There's also a suspension bridge that links the two campuses, and all users must cross it to get back to the Hub once they've completed a course.

“The course designers did a good job using the topography of the land to create a dramatic effect,” says Bloom, “even on lower level courses that are only 20 to 25 feet high.”

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First International Inspector Certification Training & Testing

By Bill Weaver
Director of Operations

On September 7, 2015 at 9:00am Singapore time, the first international ACCT Inspector Certification Training workshop commenced at the facilities of Republic Polytechnic in Singapore. All of the Singapore PVMs were represented as part of the Singapore Site Committee (SSC) who served as organizers, hosts, and technical support throughout the planning and execution of this three-day workshop. There were twenty-six pre-registered applicants in attendance.

Kathy Haras served as Trainer and Standards expert throughout the training event. Joyce provided personal guidance and counsel to workshop participants as they developed their individual certification files and exam co-proctor. My role was to serve as ACCT liaison to the SSC, representatives from the Singapore Ministry of Education (MOE) and Outward Bound Singapore (OBS) and to co-proctor the final exam.



I would be remiss not to mention the investment of time, energy and resources dedicated to this project beginning with a breakfast meeting in Palm Springs back in February 2015. Members of the ICE Committee

and ACCT staff met together with representatives from all four of the Singapore PVMs to explore the idea of bringing the Inspector Certification program to Singapore. All parties voiced their support and enthusiasm toward developing a plan. Immediately following the conference the Singapore Site Committee (SSC) was formed. Terence Low served as the group's Chair; Colin Caines, Secretary; Jeffrey Chua ACCT liaison and Lye Yen Kai, Venue and Event Coordinator.



Beginning in April, the SSC met monthly via conference call with the ACCT staff to coordinate planning and preparations for the event. In May, terms for an MOU were drafted and signed between ACCT and the SSC. In June, an MOU was negotiated and agreed upon between the event Trainer, Kathy Haras and ACCT. Charles Peterson was also contracted by ACCT to revise the current Level 1 In-House practice and final exam. Charles' charge was to customize

the exam to focus specifically on the Asian culture.

Throughout this process the ICE Committee was provided periodic updates. Once completed, training syllabus, schedules and testing materials were submitted to the committee for comment and feedback.

Finally it was time to ship copies of the standards to Singapore, finalize arrival times, travel arrangements and accommodations for the trip. It is also worth mentioning that in addition to planning and executing the ICE event, our team had three PVM review site visits scheduled to complete during our nine-day visit to the "Garden City".

The inspector certification training event included both didactic and experiential sessions over the 20-hour training event. Illustrator and Pivotal Learning Trainer, Gerald Wong recorded classroom sessions graphically; while the spacious challenge course on site provided ample opportunities for trainees to apply and hone their inspecting skills.



Continued on page 12 . . .

“First International Inspector Certification Training & Testing”... Continued from page 11

Based on the final tallies, twenty-two registrants chose to test at In-House Level 1 and sixteen chose to take the Supervisors Endorsement exam for In-House Level 1. Feedback received from the participants and the SSC was very positive and supportive of future offerings.

As a follow-up to the success of this event, ACCT has been invited to speak at the Korean Youth Workers

Agency Forum scheduled for October 16th in Seoul, South Korea. I will be speaking on the ACCT Inspector Certification program. In addition, Colin Caines of Outdoor Specialists will be speaking on the benefits of vendor accreditation.

In closing, I would like to express my appreciation and gratitude to the ICE committee for their support and encouragement throughout this

project. I would also like to thank James Borishade for his vision and assistance throughout. I believe this event provided ACCT with an excellent opportunity to demonstrate our commitment to the International PVM Community and I look forward to exploring and creating future collaborations to benefit the global community.

*“How to Fund a Forest”... Continued from page 10***Education and Adventure**

Summer at the park is focused on the recreational component and pay-to-play users, but there's a big jump in educational programming from Labor Day into December. This programming targets kids in local schools, starting as young as fourth grade.

The education component is key to the Feronia Forward mission; a goal of the group is to make responsible forest conservation more widespread. The non-profit works closely with schools, and brings many kids to Ramblewild via its scholarship fund. Bloom says the area receives a lot of calls from local schools that couldn't afford to visit the adventure park for recreation, but who can visit in an educational capacity, thanks to the program.

Once kids are there, the forest is put to work. “We use (Ramblewild) ultimately as a tool to help them immerse in nature and talk about some of the nature themes,” says Bloom. “The adventure park is a great way to grab their attention. Once we have the hook in, it's easier to talk about trees and other things. Ultimately, it's the biggest, coolest laboratory around.”

Bloom says that one goal of the Forward investors is social impact. “Part of that means educating youth about how to reasonably take care of these forests. If it doesn't start with education, these forests will be gone.”

Ultimately, this is accomplished through

the adventure park. “We introduce kids to nature and give an opportunity to put their phone down,” says Bloom. “This is partly why the park was built as an aerial park and not a canopy tour, so they'd swing around and feel connected to nature. Ultimately, the idea is that they understand that they'll be stewards of this.”

Ancillary Revenue

Feronia adds to its revenue with several products made on the property: Mission Maple Syrup (missionmaple.com); Vertical Water—maple water from the same trees (verticalwater.com); and six wind turbines that provide power to 8,000 Berkshire County homes.

Eight thousand taps on the property are utilized to collect syrup in the spring. During the several-week maple run, a 7,000-gallon vat will be emptied several times on a good day. After that, a local farm boils it off and brings it back in 50-gallon kegs. It's bottled and ready to sell by June.

Such collaborations with local vendors and companies feed the fourth component, location, which also dictates that Ramblewild only hires staff from Berkshire County and that, within reason, everything used on the property is sourced locally.

The Total Picture

The park offers different education curricula for students (and adults) that tie everything together. The Sugarbush curriculum focuses on the science of

tapping trees; a Nature curriculum educates about flora, fauna, edibles and more; and a Sustainable Energy curriculum take visitors to the property's wind turbines and educates them about the pros and cons of sustainable energy.

Each of these endeavors funds and fuels each other, says Bloom. For example, for every maple syrup bottle sold, two dollars go to the Feronia Forward Fund, which in turn provides scholarships to schools. “One can't function without the other,” he says. “We utilize all of these separate entities to drive this place; it would be tough for us to scholarship schools if we didn't make maple syrup.” Bloom says the aerial adventure park is a good tool for the transfer of all this knowledge, both through the scholarship program and to other visitors as well. To that end, the park recently purchased a military Pinzgauer transport vehicle that will be utilized for forest tours that will focus on the three curricula.

And other improvements are in store. A kiddie course for kids under age seven will be added, and Bloom says that ultimately park staff would like to utilize the aerial park in the same way that people use low ropes courses for team bonding. It also plans to target military veterans, through Wounded Warriors and other groups, and invite them to the park to recreate with kids.

All in all, “It's a cool way to fund a forest without cutting down trees,” says Bloom.



Two-Step Your Way to Texas in January!

by Melissa Webb
ACCT Events Manager

Lost Pines (Austin), Texas is the host city for our 26th Annual ACCT Conference & Expo. The Hyatt Regency Lost Pines Resort & Spa, as well as McKinney Roughs Nature Park, offer our attendees a rustic ambience to take in the Texas Hill Country. Slightly removed from Austin proper and situated on the Lower Colorado River these locations have a plethora of outdoor opportunities for you to explore. If you have not already booked your hotel / dorm accommodations I encourage you to do so soon as I anticipate they will book fast.

The last several years our group block has sold out and attendees have had to make alternative arrangements. For booking information please visit www.acctconference.com and click on the venue tab to learn more about each of these opportunities.

The Conference Committee has stepped it up a notch with the certification course opportunities being offered at the 2016 event. Along with the ever popular OSHA 10 Construction Course and First Aid for the Challenge Course Professional we have Jamie Remsberg from Next Element hosting a four-day ComCorps certification course. Additionally, Jesse Williams with Petzl will be leading a three-day PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) training course. Couple that with McKinney Roughs hosting several training courses pre and post conference (details to come) and the ACCT Inspector Certification program and you have a plethora of certification training opportunities available this year.

We are excited to kick off our opening ceremony with Keynote Speaker, Pete Nelson, "The Treehouse Guy." Pete

is the star of Animal Planet's Treehouse Masters. Pete also runs Nelson Treehouse and Supply, the company responsible for designing and building some of the world's most incredible treehouses. He and his wife, Judy, currently own and operate Treehouse Point in Washington state, a retreat featuring a half dozen treehouses for guests to rent. – CAA Speakers. After his keynote address Pete will join us in the exhibit hall for a "To the Trees" themed reception along with an opportunity for attendees to meet the man behind the popular TV series.

Friday will be a busy day full of educational opportunities as we have over 100 ninety-minute workshop sessions geared towards all facets of the industry. When reviewing proposals this year the committee was pleased to have submissions from several returning presenters, but also look forward to welcoming many new presenters to our line-up.

We hope you'll join us in the Expo in your finest western wear as we gear up for the first ever "ACCT Hoedown!" A trip into the heart of downtown Austin later that

evening will allow attendees to experience the true vibes of this unique and charming city.

Wrapping up the workshop sessions on Saturday afternoon we plan to bring back some friendly competition with the ever popular ACCT Olympics. We already have numerous activities planned for the games and look forward to seeing you in action! It is not too early to register your team and start training for the games. Official ACCT conference festivities will wrap up with a closing ceremony reception Saturday evening followed by entertainment that won't disappoint!

Last, but certainly not least... REGISTRATION IS OPEN!!! The deadline for early bird registration is October 30th, 2015 so please be sure to register early to lock in those discounts.

On behalf of the ACCT Board of Directors, staff, and Conference Planning Committee we look forward to welcoming you to the Lone Star state!



Making Ethical Decisions

by Niels Damman
ACCT Board Member

Introduction

Whether we realize it or not, most of us make ethical decisions on a daily basis. Facilitators and guides may consider letting a client zip in 'hot', possibly increasing our tip, or picking an easy-to-facilitate activity even though it does not quite fit the goals of the group. Trainers, builders, and inspectors make pass/fail decisions on grey areas, and managers have budgetary considerations.

The ACCT code of ethics states "It is understood and expected that members of ACCT at every level strive to conduct business and interact with the highest good of the challenge course community in mind, including the clients, vendors, end users, and ACCT itself." (ACCT Code of Ethics, 2013)

Recently, I visited a couple of challenge courses in Africa, which led me to think about what my ethical responsibilities were in regards to courses I visit. More on that in the next Parallel lines, but it also made me realize that although the ACCT has an Ethics Committee, our members may not be aware of our Code of Ethics. With this article, I hope to provide some insight into ethical decision making. Considering the topic of this article, let me start with a disclaimer: I am not a lawyer, nor do I serve on the Ethics Committee. I do not have a degree in ethics, nor do I have extensive experience with ethical conundrums. However, I have been faced with ethical decisions, even though I did not always think of them as such.

Theory

First, a definition. According to Merriam Webster:

"ethic: rules of behavior based on ideas about what is morally good and bad."

Splendid. "... what is morally good and bad." Does that help? Not for me. Because defining ethics does not help in making ethical decisions. It does not tell us what is moral and what is not, nor does it help us recognize that there is an ethical problem in the first place. Often, we tend to think of ethics simply in terms of 'what is good and bad behavior', skipping the morality part. Many, including me until recently, considered following the rules to be the ethical component of decision making. But this is far from satisfactory. The boundary between what is or is not moral is often between doing things wrong and doing things right; according to the letter of the law. However, ethics should consider more than the legality of things and consider the intent of the law, changing the moral minimum to doing the right thing (see Table A).

Because doing things right does not equal doing the right thing. Or, in other words, legality ≠ morality. Countless examples exist of decisions that fell within the realm of legality, but which were

not ethically sound decisions. Deflate-gate would be one such example.

Table A

<p>Doing the Right Things</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the best interest of the stakeholder • Considers the future • Looks for growth and innovation • Avoids the wrong things to do
<p>Doing Things Right</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considers multiple competing stakeholders • "That's how we've always done it" • Tactically focusses on compliance • Does the wrong things right
<p>Doing Things Wrong</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involves hidden or plain rule breaking • Involves hidden or plain law breaking • Exploits stakeholders

Continued on page 15 . . .

“Making Ethical Decisions” . . . Continued from page 14

In a recent paper, I found a few ethical decision making models. I have combined these and adapted them for our industry as follows:

Ethical decision making model

The first phase in most models is recognizing that there is an ethical dilemma. This may be one of the more difficult steps, as there are no set criteria as to what is an ethical issue, and what is not. However, I've found that when I'm unsure whether the issue is ethical in nature or not, taking it through the following steps will produce the desired results either way.

Phase 2 considers the ethics of the possible answers to the issue in question. It helps us evaluate these possible alternatives to pick the one that seems most ethical to us. The Utility, Rights and Justice Model, (by DeSensi and Rosenberg, 2003) considers three yes/no questions as a criteria of ethics:

Utility: Does the possible outcome fit within the mission of the organization? If the answer is 'no', you should strongly consider not taking this approach. Ultimately, this question considers the optimal benefits of the organization.

Rights: Does it protect the stakeholders' rights? The

stakeholders may be current or future participants, community members or staff, or may refer to the owners or shareholders of the company. It should consider elementary, lawful rights such as 'free speech', 'privacy', but also societal norms and, in challenge course matters, the industry as a whole.

Justice: Is it fair to all involved? This question asks if similar stakeholders are treated similarly, whether the decision is impartial to a given party, and whether all parties involved are given due process.

Answering the three above mentioned questions will lead to one of the following outcomes:

1. The answer to all three of these questions is "yes", which makes the result an ethically sound decision.
2. The answer to all three of these questions is "no", and thus your result is an unethical solution.
3. The answer to one or two of the above questions is "no" then we need to consider additional factors:
 - a. Is the action freely taken, or does someone influence the decision from the outside?
 - b. Does one of the criteria outweigh and override the other?

- c. Are there circumstances where the outcome justifies the means?

Phase 3 is the evaluation phase. Evaluating previous ethical decisions can aid us by recognizing if the route taken was the most ethical route available. This evaluation can then create recommendations for future ethical dilemmas.

Application

A practice scenario: A client approaches you to perform a service you actually do not have much experience with. This could be a steel-pole course inspection, building a zip-line, facilitating a group of at-risk youth, providing a training beyond your skillset.

The ethical question is: Should you provide this service? If so, how?

Various alternatives exist:

- A. You do not provide the service: you do not have the required skillset
- B. You provide the service: you can probably find the information you need
- C. You provide the service with a disclaimer that you do not have much experience with this project
- D. You provide the service after partnering with a reputable colleague with experience in this project.

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by the ACCT PR & Marketing Committee

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Facilitator's Toolbox: Cultivating Creativity

*Excerpt from **The Inspired Educator, The Inspired Learner***
by Jen Stanchfield



Starting Off With Style

Think back to your most memorable learning or group building experiences, and the educators or facilitators you found most effective. How did they start their programs, classes, or workshop sessions? How did they greet you when you arrived at the meeting space or in the classroom? Chances are they intentionally planned to draw you into the learning experience.

Many facilitators do this instinctively. We consider ourselves hosts to the participants joining us for a learning experience. For years I have been using objects, postcards, quotes and activities such as writing prompts, reflective partner conversations as a way to welcome and engage group members from the moment they walk in the door. These methods involve the group in a meaningful learning experience while at the same time allowing me to take care of administrative duties such as adjusting room setup or materials, taking attendance or collecting release forms.



In our society participants are often late to workshops or meetings and the entry time from the first person arriving to the last can extend for 20 minutes or more. Using an entry activity leaves me free to set up or greet the late arrivals and makes me feel like a better host. Now that I am paying close attention to research in the field of educational neuroscience, I realize that this strategy can be considered a valuable evidence-informed

“Proponents of brain-based learning emphasize that events that happen the first time learners are exposed to information greatly impact their ability to accurately retain the information.”

practice that transfers to day-to-day group building and, teaching training programs. Intentionally creating an engaging and novel start to a session has many benefits to learners.

Proponents of brain-based learning emphasize that events that happen the first time learners are exposed to information greatly impact their ability to accurately retain the information. John Medina, author of *Brain Rules* states: “If you are trying to get information across to

someone, your ability to create a compelling introduction may be the most important single factor in the later success of your mission.” (Medina, 2008, p.116). The first few minutes of an experience or lesson are a key time to hook and engage learners. Educational psychologists have demonstrated that people remember most the first few minutes of a learning experience and the last few minutes of a learning experience (Sousa, 2006, Willis, 2010). Psychologists call this the primacy-recency effect. This idea underscores the importance of facilitating an engaging opening activity as well as providing some reflective prompt to tie it all together or “bookend” a learning experience. It also suggests that it might make sense to create as many introductory and closing moments as possible in your teaching and group facilitation.

The reticular activating system (RAS)—the brain's sensory intake filter through which all sensory input must pass—is very receptive to novelty and change, and responds to pleasure and sensory input that arouses curiosity (Willis, 2010). Novelty and curiosity-evoking events alert the RAS system to pay attention because there is something new or different that warrants further evaluation (Aamodt & Wang 2011).

Continued on page 19 . . .

“Facilitator’s Toolbox” . . . Continued from page 18

Find a Hook!

Find a Hook! Engage learners from the moment they walk in the door. Involve participants in an activity that helps them transition positively into the learning environment rather than using these precious moments to focus solely on taking attendance, collecting homework, or other administrative duties. This can be a time for them to make positive connections with their peers, explore or review the material at hand, jumpstart meaningful reflection, create context around a lesson or experience and most importantly, shift their focus to the here and now.

Coming together for the first time can feel awkward for some participants. A novel activity involves learners right away and helps draw them into a positive experience and creates buy-in, thereby increasing engagement. Learners of all ages come to our programs with things on their mind — whether it was a stressful commute, a rough morning at home, a negative social interaction with a peer, or their list of things to do. A reflective focusing activity can help learners transition into your program space and shift their focus to the present and the lesson at hand.

In past articles, I have shared a variety of activities to use as a hook/entry activity. Many of these double as reflective strategies that participants can refer to later in a program. Some of these activities include: Inspiring quotes (see Fall 2010 article), image cards, or postcards, found objects, even computer keyboard keys (see Fall 2011 Toolbox article. You might ask participants to choose a quote that resonates with them, or an object or postcard that represents a goal for the day or their mood or attitude coming into the experience (see the Inspired Educator, Inspired Learner

book or blog for more ideas at experientialtools.com).

Colorful, novel or intriguing objects draw in people whether they are tools, old toys, or items found in nature. Learners often share and reflect more readily when they can attach their thoughts and feelings to an item that can be touched and shown to a group during a discussion, or described in reflective writing. Brain research suggests that using metaphors, pictures and symbols help cement lessons and transfer learning to everyday life future learning (Willis, 2006, 2010).

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“Indemnities” . . . Continued from page 6

A very simple indemnity clause might be: “Client agrees to defend, protect and indemnify Company from any and all claims arising from the operations of Client excepting only those claims which arise solely and directly from(a description of the category of claim for which the Company is willing to be responsible, if any).” Indemnity paragraphs might also provide for notification of a claim or incident, selection of counsel, insurance coverage for the indemnity, and other matters.

Consider the indemnity. It is a fair and efficient way to distribute financial responsibility for future claims. Talk to your local counsel about applicable laws and provisions.

“Making Ethical Decisions” . . . continued from page 15

		Criteria		
		Utility	Rights	Justice
Alternatives	A	No: no income generation	No, it protects the client, but not the provider	No: the service provider loses the business
	B	Yes: income generation	No, it does not protect the client	No: information is withheld from the client
	C	Yes: income generation	Yes, the client accepts the lack of experience	No: the client and the service provider's interests are not treated equally
	D	Yes: income generation	Yes: the client receives the quality service it seeks	Yes: the client gets what he deserves, and you retain the business

Results:

Clearly, the most ethical alternative is to partner with a colleague who does have the experience. This provides the client with the quality service he requested, you maintain the business and income. Perhaps even, you will learn something along the way.

As described before though, the benefit of this evaluation is that it weighs the alternatives on their ethical merit. Therefore, option C, although not the most ethical solution, could be a viable solution if one of the criteria outweighs the other: if without this job, you will need to lay off employees, for instance, income generation may become more important.

After the project, you evaluate the ethics of the final product, and realize that this is probably a good approach if another client comes with an unfamiliar project.

Conclusion

At first this tool is a bit time intensive. Repeated use will make you more familiar with the process though, and at a certain point, it will become a natural part of any decision making process. It is the ethical thing to do.

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Did You Know?

We would like to introduce you to Otto "Rambo" Herzog (more on the nickname in a minute). Otto was born on October 5, 1888 in Furth, Germany. He was an avid climber, with over 160 ascents and 26 absolute first ascents. One day in about 1909/1910ish, Otto noticed a piece of gear being used by the local fire brigade. It was a pear shaped loop of metal with an opening to clip it onto stuff: a "karabiner."

The name karabiner comes from the German language (shocker) and is short for "karabinerhaken" or "carbine hook". For those who are unaware, a carbine is a type of rifle, and carbine hooks are used in slings and other carrying devices for various shooting gear. But back to Otto...he decided that these karabiners could be put to good use while climbing (where currently they just tied ropes to everything) and invented a modified version for such an application. Thus, the climbing carabiner was born.

In 1913, Otto climbed the south wall of the Schüsselkar Spitze (2537m) with Hans Fiechtl, a route that reached the limit of grade V (5.8/9), the highest grade in Hans Dülfer's I-V scale. In 1921, together with Gustav Haber, Otto climbed the "Ha-He Verschneidung" on the Dreizinkenspitze (2306m). Today rated 5.10, Otto and Gustav's climb was so difficult that they *broke* Hans' I-V grading scale. Grade VI had to be added onto it. Did their new tool help? I guess we'll never know for sure.

But what about Otto being called "Rambo" decades before our friend Sylvester took on that famous 1980's role with the sweet headband? "Rambo" or "Rampo" is short for "Ramponieren", which in German means "to batter" or "to bash". Otto got his nickname, not for tearing up the mountain, but for the hours he spent ramponieren tasks in his real job - he was a carpenter.

Fun Facts

by Trudy Robbins

OCTOBER

- OCTOBER is Pizza Month – Whilst Pizza Month might be a great excuse to have 30 days of back-to-back pizza with all the trimmings, it's probably not the best plan for watching your waistline! Enjoy responsibly, and spend the month sampling different types of pizza (in moderation)!
- Monday, October 12th is "Old Farmer Day."
- Friday, October 16th is "Dictionary Day."
- Saturday, October 24th is "Make a Difference Day."

NOVEMBER

- NOVEMBER is World Vegan Month – Ever considered going vegan, but not sure where to start? Vegan Month is dedicated to educating about vegan eating and lifestyles, and encouraging you to give it a go.
- Thursday, November 4th is "Men Make Dinner Day."
- Friday, November 13th is "World Kindness Day."
- Thursday, November 19th is "International Mens Day."

DECEMBER

- DECEMBER is Human Rights Month. Human rights are the fundamental rights which every living person is entitled to, and are considered to be universal rights or laws regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, country or time.
- Thursday, December 3rd is "Make a Gift Day."
- Thursday, December 10th is "Human Rights Day."
- Sunday, December 27th is "Visit the Zoo Day."

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Position 3	\$300 per month	\$275 per month	\$250 per month



Founded in 1993, The Association for Challenge Course Technology (ACCT) is the world's leading and largest American National Standards Institute (ANSI) Accredited Standards Developer focused specifically and solely on the challenge course industry. It is the mission of the organization to establish and promote the standard of care that defines professional practice and effective challenge course programs.

The Association for Challenge Course Technology is a non-profit trade association with a main office in Illinois and satellite offices in Maryland and Washington. Parallel Lines is the organization's publication sent to all of our affiliates and friends. With member organizations across the United States, Europe, Asia, the Caribbean, Canada, Japan, Korea, Central America and worldwide, ACCT is the leading organization dedicated to supporting professionals in the challenge course industry.

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