

a trip with Africa specialists Uncharted Outposts (unchartedoutposts.com), and be sure to request guide Ralph Bousfield in Botswana.

47. Volunteer after a disaster

But do your homework. Parachuting into a disaster zone like Haiti or New Orleans, with no specific skills or mission, will have less impact than texting \$10 to the Red Cross. First, get some medical training beyond first aid and CPR (training.fema.gov). Then visit the World Volunteer Web (www.worldvolunteerweb.org), a UN-sponsored clearinghouse listing opportunities for boots-on-the-ground involvement. And then: Wait. Most regions hit hard by tragedy get plenty of aid in the first few months (Haiti right now) but desperately need help a few years removed from the tragedy (Sumatra or China's Sichuan province, for example).

READER POLL: PHILANTHROPY

48. Build a school in a foreign country

First, volunteer with an NGO or nonprofit in the country you want to help (guidestar.org is a good source). While there, plan to meet with local leaders to see what's really needed. "If locals are not brought in, often that's when you see schools left unattended, teachers that aren't getting paid, and projects that kind of disintegrate," says Shannon Galpin, president and COO of Mountain2Mountain (mountain2mountain.org), a Colorado-based nonprofit that

builds schools in Afghanistan. Finding teachers is one of the biggest challenges. Try recruiting recent graduates from a local university. The last piece: fundraising. See item 40 for tips on this. Or, if you'd rather join an in-progress project, choose the region you're passionate about and scour the Internet.

49. Climb the Grand Teton

You'll breathe hard. You'll be scared. It'll take two days. That's the appeal: This iconic, 13,770-foot fang of granite is

tough and technical—but still a reasonable goal, even if you're a rock rookie. Especially if you join a trip with Exum Mountain Guides, the most elite mountain-guiding service in North America. They'll make you prove you're up to it with two days of classes—or, if you're relatively experienced, a one-day "check-out" climb. The ascent itself begins with a seven-mile approach to Exum's gear-stocked hut, on the lower saddle of the Grand Teton. Your team will rise before dawn the next morning to begin a series of roped-up pitches

that are moderately difficult (from 5.4 to 5.7) and stunningly exposed. Chances are you'll tag the summit before noon and savor some 360-degree views over Wyoming and Idaho, then it's down, down, down to Exum HQ and the best beer of your life. (From \$775; exumguides.com)

50. Learn an instrument

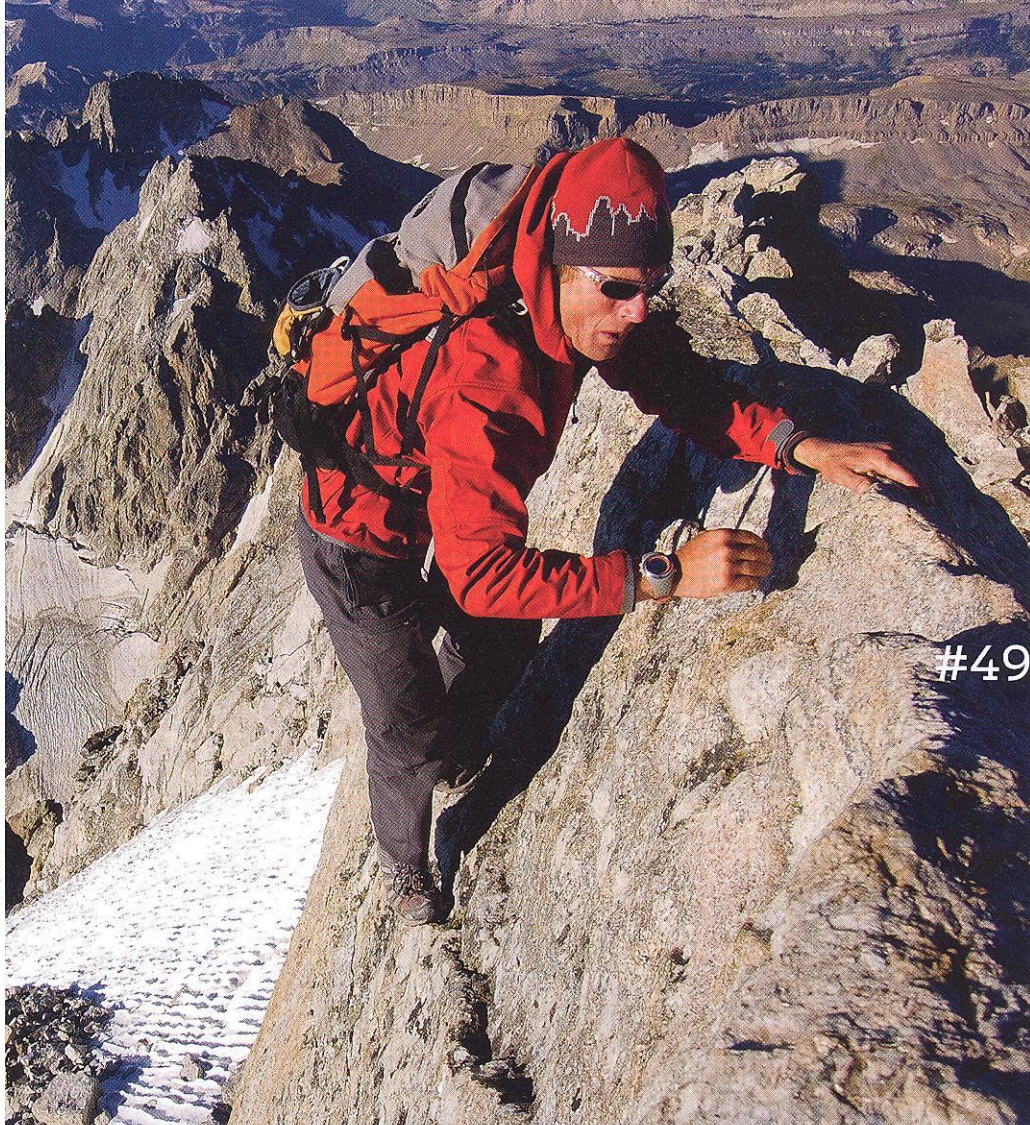
Your voice counts. See page 70.

I DID IT

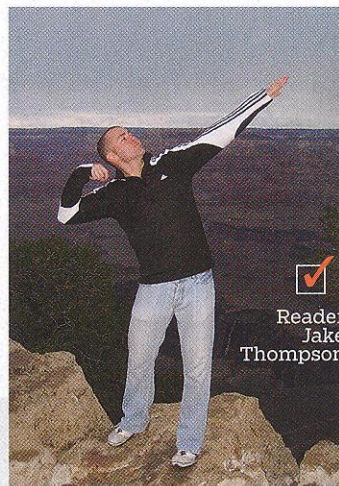
51. NEVER STOP

"The weightlessness you get with skiing is really intoxicating," says Klaus Obermeyer, the 90-year-old Bavarian founder of Obermeyer ski apparel. He became hooked on skiing in his alpine village at the age of three, using boards made out of orange crates. Since moving to Aspen in 1947, Obermeyer has missed only a handful of days on snow. "The days you miss don't come back," he says. Until recently, he liked to rip down black diamonds skiing the same speed as his age—yes, at 85, he was clocked going 85 miles per hour. But these days, Obermeyer sneaks out of his office to carve graceful turns: "They're fast and sweet and smooth and wonderful," he says, which is a lot like his view on life: "Love whatever you do, because love gives you positive energy. And embrace the wonderful gift of your body. I'm 90 and still building muscles."

—STEPHANIE PEARSON



#49



Reader
Jake
Thompson