

# GUYdelines

A few thoughts for outdoor lovers and leaders from

*WILD GUYde Adventures, LLC*

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## Our Work as a Way of Extending Goodness into the World

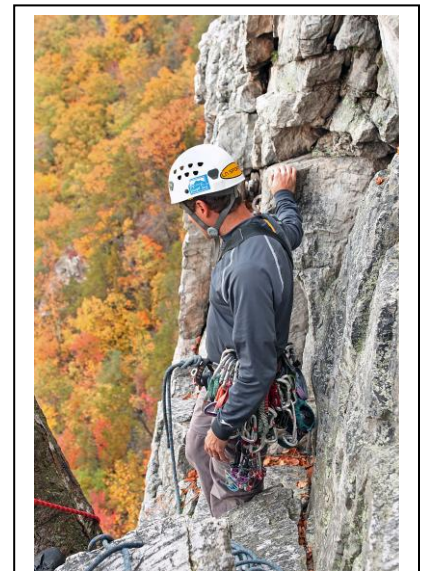
*“Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.” (Eccl. 9:10)*

*“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men...” (Col. 3:23)*

The biblical writers, led by God’s Holy Spirit, seemed not to know of any distinction between sacred and secular. This “whatsoever” was inclusive and conclusive – all of life was a sacrament, able to be presented in piety and devotion as an offering to God. Centuries later, Thomas Aquinas closed again the artificial chasm that had grown through the dark ages, when he declared, *“All the world is a monastery, and every man a monk.”* The Reformation was not only a coming to God by the common man, but a coming to the common world of men by God, formerly thought aloof from work and toil, and identified exclusively with the clergy. We celebrate this union today when we find divine purpose in our daily work, and offer it as holy and acceptable – part of our reasonable service and an expression of worship.

In my work experience, starting and now engaged in a small business as an outdoor adventure guide, I have been helped to find God’s purpose in my work each day by asking four questions. Maybe they can be helpful to you, even if your vocational setting is very different from mine.

***What is the goodness that my particular product advances? What value does my product bring into the personal lives of my clients?*** When I take clients into a cave, or up on a mountain, we are confronted with a continual visual aid of God’s creative genius. We stand in awe of the Divine Mind that created intricate cave formations, and conjured the mechanism to form them. We feel small beside immense cliffs of rock, gaping valleys, and powerful river rapids. We also are challenged to exhibit strength in the face of intimidation and fear. Many trips, I find myself saying at the end of the day, *“Courage is not the absence of fear – courage is the willingness to do the hard thing in the presence of fear.”* And if my clients are successful, then they →



I have the privilege of working in some beautiful places. This is at the top of the second pitch of Conns West (5.4) at Seneca Rocks WV.

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take home with them a picture of how they might respond to other situations in their lives when fear might dominate. Our adventures are physically challenging, and reinforce an image of health and muscle-powered activity that just might motivate individuals away from lethargy and sedentary living. Finally, my trips present the opportunity for clients to build stronger relationships with those they care about – maybe other family members, maybe members of the church youth group, or friends that they are sharing a significant outing with. Adventure has a way of driving us to realness with our companions. And adventure can give us meaningful metaphors for life. A father hired me to take him and his 14 year old son climbing. Hiking out at the end of the day, the son was about 100 yards up the trail when the dad said to me, “*You’ve talked about your kids today and I can tell that you are a Christian, and that you are pretty intentional about your parenting. Now you could probably tell today that my son and I do not have the best relationship* (this was a massive understatement). *Could I just ask you a little about how you approach fathering?*” I don’t think my answer was particularly profound or theological, but here is what I offered: “*Yes, I couldn’t help but notice some of the strain in your relationship with your boy. But think about what you did today as you were climbing together. You belayed him, which is a picture of the protective function that dads carry. You two were encouraging and cheering for each other during the effort, and high-fiving each other when you succeeded. So what if today could simply be a picture in your mind of the kind of Dad you would like to be each day at home – protecting, encouraging, coaching, affirming?*” Now these conversations do not happen every day, but they won’t happen at all unless I wake up each day and think about how my product can reach into my clients’ personal lives and promote goodness, and then prepare myself by asking the Holy Spirit to have me ready when the opportunity arises. Conveying value into the personal life can even extend to my assistant guides/employees. I feel I have a tremendous opportunity to use this business as a venue to teach young people leadership – skills and convictions that they might then apply in other purposeful missions in the world, as leaders in the church, in education, or in their future families.

***Can I create programmatic virtue; can I “give the right message” in how my business is structured, and how my product is delivered?*** An adventure guide service that demonstrates virtue will be safe – that is, staff will be competent and qualified, and equipment will be ample and in good repair. An adventure guide service that demonstrates virtue will have requisite permits and adequate insurance, not just to cover ourselves in the event of an incident, but to protect and provide appropriate care for our clients if there is a calamity. Virtue in my business means truth in advertising – congruence between message and substance, so clients get what they came wanting and needing. An adventure guide service that exhibits virtue will not brutalize the natural environment – we will be sensitive to the impacts of our group sizes, and we will use every trip to teach environmental stewardship and care. Finally, a virtuous operation will be honest. I will seek win-win partnerships with worthy others to maximize gains for both, and I will never take advantage or deceive. The way a business is organized will say something about how it intends to bring goodness into the world.

Because my operation is small, the business is identified largely with me. ***Therefore, what bearing will my character have on bringing the reality of God’s presence into the lives of my clients?*** Conrad Cain, one of America’s first professional mountain guides, wrote in 1934 On Being a Companionable Guide:

*“First, he should never show fear. Second, he should be courteous to all, and always give special attention to the weakest member in the party. Third, he should be witty, and able to make up a white lie if necessary on short notice, and tell it in a convincing manner. Fourth, he should know when and how to show authority, and, when the situation demands it, should be able to give a good scolding to whomsoever deserves it.”*

The ego temptations in this industry are great. One old quip asks, “*What is the difference between God and a mountain guide?* Answer: *God doesn’t think He is a mountain guide...*” Goodness when in a position of power means strength tempered with compassion and care. This is not capricious or dictatorial meanness, but strength used to protect the weak and the small. “*Aslan is not safe, but He is good*” Mrs. Beaver assured Lucy.

*Finally, are there evils to avoid? What are the unique moral traps that attach themselves to my industry?* If I can identify these and then strive to combat them, my work can become a testimony of redemption in the fallen working world. Yours will be somewhat different, but here is my list of evils for *WILD GUYde Adventures* to avoid:

- Bottom line, income-only thinking, leading to overwork, neglect of meaningful relationships, and loss of balance; I need to maintain and model personal balance and restoration (Sabbath, etc.)
- Over-impact on the natural environment
- Promotion of a hedonistic (pleasure-centered) or overly materialistic (gear and image-centered) value system
- Relationships overly oriented to: possessions, ego, competitiveness, and physical (superficial) appearance
- Recklessness, risk hype, and promoting unsafe exploits
- Competitiveness or broken relationships with other providers and outdoor users
- Cynicism and sarcasm toward less skilled clients (maintain the awesome humility that should come with leading people into suffering).

Adam was given a work to do, and there was no bible to write or congregation to shepherd. He didn't work for a ministry organization. Obedience for him was "tending his garden," and we can do the same intentionally, devoutly, and with the joy that comes from being God's partner in building the Kingdom. *"All the world is a monastery, and every man a monk!"*

How do you bring goodness into the world through your work? Would you like to respond to my thoughts above? As always, I look forward to hearing from you!

Are you coming to Virginia for a family vacation, church group trip, boys' club event, or escape weekend? Why not experience Virginia adventure with **WILD GUYde Adventures!** **WGA** offers guided beginner level outdoor adventures and competent instruction in activity fundamentals. We can take you **hiking, rock climbing and rappelling, caving, or canoeing**. We use various activity areas in the George Washington and Monongahela National Forests, and along Virginia's Blue Ridge. Check out the 2013 trip options below, or call to talk about your own creative adventure idea!

540-433-1637 or [lester@wildguyde.com](mailto:lester@wildguyde.com); You may also visit [www.wildguyde.com](http://www.wildguyde.com)

### How was your trip with the *WILD GUYde*?!

Thanks again for guiding us – the trip was awesome! I'm a little sore and bruised today but it makes me happy because it reminds me of everything we did. The info was clear and the location appropriate. I also really enjoyed how you incorporated learning and team building elements into our trip. (Sarah, 2012)

We arrived back in Florida late Thursday night. We had a wonderful time on our adventure with you and we have all been raving to everyone about how great the trip was! Your professionalism and encouragement allowed us to continue on even when some of us were reluctant to try (me, of course)! The boys raved about the caving and the fact that it looked scary, but once you got through it, it wasn't as difficult or scary as you thought it would be. Todd and I were both thrilled with the learning experience for the kids and feel that we have all grown as a result of facing our fears. Everyone talked about what a great guide you were for us! Overall, our adventure was a wonderful experience and the highlight of our trip to VA! (Christine, 2012)

## CHOOSE YOUR ADVENTURE: 2014 Daytrips with WILD GUYde Adventures, Harrisonburg, VA

**Top-Roping at Hidden Rocks, Virginia:** This is the rock climbing trip for the adventurous beginner – you don't have much experience, but you want a great outdoor day with your family or special friends. Thirty minutes west of Harrisonburg, we'll park just inside George Washington National Forest, gear up, and hike a scenic 20 minutes through rhododendron and hemlocks and across some mountain streams to a secluded sandstone cliff. There will be pink and white mountain laurel in June, and wild huckleberries in August. You'll be introduced to harnesses, knots, helmets, and the *belay system*; then we'll try some easy warm-up climbs to remind you that the kid inside you still likes to clamber on things. We can go on to some harder climbing that invites you to try new skills and movements. And we'll finish the day with a rappel – backing over the edge, with nothing between you and the ground below but 60 feet of air and a great view! Closer to Luray or Northern Virginia? We'll visit **Waterfall Mountain** in the Massanutten Range, or **Little Stony Man** on the Blue Ridge for TALL climbing and spectacular Shenandoah Valley panoramas! Closer to Lexington or Roanoke? We'll visit **Goshen Pass** and climb above the gorgeous Maury River!

(Full day \$175 for 1-3 people; \$45 for each additional. ½-day \$125 for 1-3, and \$25 for each additional)



**Beginner Climbing At Seneca Rocks, WV:** After 90 minutes of curving mountain highway (okay, *country two-lane*), you'll gasp to see a spectacular blade of Tuscarora Sandstone, whose summit sits almost 1000 feet above its North Fork Valley floor. Seneca Rocks is a scenic place for the beginner or family to learn the rock climbing basics, top-roping and rappelling to an awesome West Virginia backdrop. Easy routes guarantee early success, but more challenging climbs also wait to test your skills. Seneca Rocks is an awesome place to climb, just beyond the sign that reads: "*Here ends the realm of the hiker!*"

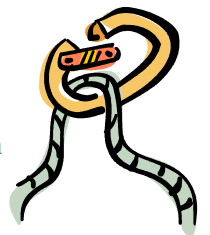
(Full day \$225 for 1-3 people; \$50 for each additional. ½ day \$150 for 1-3; \$35 each additional)

**Multi-Pitch at Seneca Rocks:** A little more experienced in climbing? Maybe you tried it at camp or the local rock gym? Ready for the next step? Join me for the multi-pitch experience, seconding the route as we lead-climb to the top of the fabled South Summit! This is the only technical summit in the U.S. east of the Mississippi. Seneca has routes at all ranges of difficulty, from starters like *Old Ladies Route* (5.2) to mid-range classics (*West Pole* 5.7) to old school hardman routes like *Crack of Dawn* and *Madmen Only* (5.10). Every one of them will give you a new appreciation for the expression "*high and vertical.*" Register your accomplishment and ruminations in the summit journal, wave to tourists way down in the valley, and then head down to *terra firma* via the three-pitch rappel. Finish the day with a splash in the North Fork River swimming hole at "Gravel Beach"; then pick up a cold drink and a West Virginia memento at Harpers General Store before sleeping the ride back to Virginia and "the Burg."

(Full-day: \$200 1<sup>st</sup> person; \$125 each addl.)

**Instructional Climbing:** This is a tutorial for those who have a little exposure to climbing, and want to gain eventual autonomy. Lots of instruction in current best-practice and hands-on trying it for you in rigging top anchors, belaying skills and equipment alternatives, movement coaching, and rappel setup and protection. There will be individualized attention and repetitive practice, as well as some exploration of the historical evolution of climbing equipment and protocol. You will finish the day with a lot more confidence in your basic skills. Bring a partner so you'll have someone to climb with later.

(150 1<sup>st</sup> person; \$100 each for 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>)



WILD GUYde Adventures offers two other rock climbing options: a **Boy Scout Rock Climbing Merit Badge** tutorial for troops and leaders. We send a booklet to get troops started on their knots and First Aid requirements ahead of time, and then spend two days going through all the climbing, gear spec., and rappelling activity requirements (\$85 each). We also offer the **PCIA (Professional Climbing Instructor Association) Top Rope Instructor Certification** course and exam. This 3-day course (\$375) and 1 day exam (\$100) is for recreational climbers who want to add an instructor certification on their resume. It is also very useful for individuals guiding with club, camp, or university outing programs.

**Peaceful Paddling:** Canoe a ½ day stretch of the **South Fork River**. This Class I and II water is ideal for families with elementary school children – just long enough to be engaging without getting boring. As we wind through pastures in the Shenandoah Valley, you'll learn basic canoe strokes and maneuvering. Dangle your feet or plunk your head to cool off. And keep watching for blue herons, turtles on logs, and cows in the water!

(125 1-3 people; \$30 each additional)



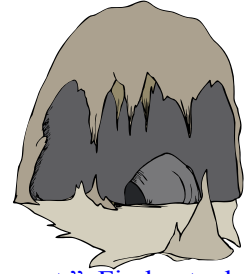


**Pick-up-the-Pace Paddling:** A full day of canoeing awaits further down the **South Fork**. This provides a little more excitement for teenagers, adventurous parents, & other paddle pilgrims! A casual start allows a review of canoe strokes and partner teamwork.

An amazing rope-swing breaks the quiet – you won't believe what comes out of your mouth when you let go (“*Geronimo!*?”) More paddling through runs and pools, always under the shadow of Massanutten Mountain. Lunch on the bank and then back into the boats. Finally, at Milepost 17, *Compton's Rapid* – a great shoot-through with some higher standing waves! Paddlers call it a “Fat II” but stay wide of Pillow Rock! Below, there's a jumping rock for another cool-off before paddling the final mile to the take-out. Load the boats and start the drive home – happy, tired, and maybe a little sun-tanned! West Virginia travelers may want to visit the gorgeous “Trough” on the **South Branch of the Potomac**. High and remote mountain walls on each side of the river, and keep your eyes open for bald eagles!

**(\$160 1-3 people; \$40 each additional)**

**Half-Day Caving:** The underground sidewalk and the tourist cave light show are not for you. You want to see it the way it was before the electrician got there! Primitive caves have all the features of the subterranean world – *speleothems* (stalactites, flowstone, soda straws, and columns), *lots of real mud*, and sometimes even *bats* (but most of them are asleep, and all of them are harmless). Pull on your coveralls, clip on your helmet, adjust your headlamp, and down we go. There are squeezes if you want them, and belly crawls for the adventurous --- but there are also corridor ceilings higher than your house, and large cavern rooms for the claustrophobic. Learn cave travel safety, underground navigation, and some “total body movement.” Find out what the year-round underground temperature is, and then finally emerge back into sunlight with a new appreciation for what happens underneath Virginia when limestone and groundwater meet. The gleam of your smile might be the only thing shining through the mud on your face! Caving trips can be **Beginner Caving** (mostly horizontal movement – walking, stooping, or crawling) or **Intermediate Caving** (for folks fit enough to handle strenuous vertical moves, and more sustained physical effort). Various locations are available in both Virginia (20 minutes from Harrisonburg), and West Virginia (between Franklin and Elkins). *Caving trips are not advised for individuals who might be unfit, excessively overweight, or who live an extremely sedentary lifestyle, or for very young children.*



**(\$125 for 1-3 people; \$25 for each additional)**



**Design Your Own Adventure:** Numerous other options exist, including hiking and climbing guiding along **Virginia's Blue Ridge** or at the **Nelson Rock Outdoor Center (WV)**, group orienteering challenges in the National Forest, a climbing self-rescue clinic, outdoor fitness training, and flatwater paddling instruction for beginners and children. We can customize to meet the interests of your family, scout troop, or youth group. Call to talk about your needs.

**Things you oughta know:**

- **Lester R. Zook** is the **WILD GUYde**. He is a *Wilderness First Responder*, and is a certified member of the *American Mountain Guides Association (Single Pitch Instructor)*. He has been leading wilderness adventures and training camping leaders for 20 years, and loves to take people outdoors! **Ethan Zook** has been a camp counselor and adventure leader at numerous camps. He is a *Red Cross Lifeguard*, a *Virginia EMT-B*, and a member of *Rockingham-Augusta Search and Rescue*. **Aaron Zook** is a climber, caver and paddler, a *Red Cross Lifeguard*, and has been through *Wilderness First Aid*.
- More detail on activity possibilities is available by visiting [www.wildguyde.com](http://www.wildguyde.com). Call or e-mail to ask questions and to arrange dates, rates, and meeting points:



**(540) 433-1637 or [lester@wildguyde.com](mailto:lester@wildguyde.com)**

- **WGA's** guiding season is 7 days a week May through August, and weekends in the spring and fall. Call early to reserve; weekends in particular can fill quickly.
- **WILD GUYde** will provide all technical equipment (ropes, harnesses, helmets, etc.). A personal *things-to-bring list* (clothing, water, lunch, etc.) will be provided.
- We can also help with **lodging ideas**. We can recommend from *primitive* to *posh* – National Forest campgrounds, drive-up motels, and some delightful Bed and Breakfast inns!
- For groups of 10 or larger, we disregard the starter fee and simply bill the per-person rate.

- Payment is by cash or check; unfortunately credit cards cannot be accepted at this time. Gratuities are never expected, and always appreciated!
- Some activities have inherent risks – that’s the meaning of the word *adventure*. Participants will be asked to fill out a *Medical Form*, and sign a *Participant Agreement* acknowledging certain dangers. Some activities are physically strenuous, emotionally demanding, or require sustained cognitive attention to task and detail. We make every effort to create a great day, but **WGA** guides do reserve the prerogative to deny access/participation if, in our judgment, the client is not likely to be successful. Clients also may not be “under the influence” of alcohol or recreational drugs at the time of the event.
- **WILD GUYde Adventures** is a permittee with the George Washington and Monongahela National Forests, and along Virginia’s Blue Ridge. **WGA** is an equal opportunity provider and employer. **WGA** practices environmental stewardship, and is a member of the *Access Fund*, the *National Speleological Society*, *Virginia Tourism Corp.*, and the *Harrisonburg-Rockingham Chamber of Commerce*.