



Shannon Stegg, 1959–2022

He staggered out of the cave sporting well-worn tape gloves, covered in cobwebs, with dirt filling the creases of his eyes and bloody elbows that he had acquired from the heinous body-smearing roof crack of an offwidth. A previous first ascent of his that at this moment was giving him trouble as a repeat. After a short rest, he charged back into the darkness only to exit with an ascent into the light. A feat I would watch him perform many times, and now he has ascended into the light for a final time.

Shannon Peter Stegg was born on August 25, 1959, in a mix-up of sorts: This lion somehow wound up with a human body in which he resided and lived like a warrior until his passing on December 2, 2022. A hero at art who worked as a firefighter and arborist and also a loving and caring father.

I could ramble endlessly on epic tails of his ascents and failures. His resumé is monstrous, with exploits ranging from Alaska to Patagonia to the Canadian Rockies. He managed to climb two-thirds of the 50 Classics and countless obscurities throughout the United States. He swallowed entire cliffs in the sandstone belt of Georgia, Tennessee, and Alabama, establishing countless new routes and areas. In the Carolinas he danced on foreboding granite canvases, establishing more individual routes than any single person on the walls of Laurel Knob and Whiteside Mountain. His appetite was truly insatiable all the way into his old age.

I could continue proclaiming his achievements in climbing, but I would rather take this time to fill you in further on his character: a ferociously determined man with endless spirit who was introduced to climbing in high school and developed a deep compassion and understanding for the mountains. Shannon walked to the beat of his own drum; he was known as a feather ruffler and someone who wasn't ever afraid to share thoughts regarding ethics, style, and conservation. Despite his reputation, he was a kind, thoughtful, and gentle person.

Shannon's father was a commander of a squadron on an aircraft carrier, and that leadership most definitely carried over into Shannon's pursuits, as he trained countless young men in the intricate art of ground-up climbing. He was a godfather to the black sheep that straggled on the fringes of the climbing community, giving myself and many others hope, inspiration, friendship, and a place of belonging. He was not concerned with your social status or where you came from. It was about where you were and your commitment to the vertical realm. If you shared his passion, he was your brother in arms.

– Dylan Valvo

Editor's Note: [Click here](#) to read an obituary written by Shannon Stegg's daughter, Chelsey.

Images



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