



THE BANFF CENTRE

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## Story of Kidnapped Climbers Featured at 2002 Banff Mountain Book Festival



Headlining this year's Banff Mountain Book Festival will be the story of four young American climbers kidnapped at gunpoint from a rock wall in the mountains of Kyrgyzstan. At the festival's opening night on October 30, Greg Child, author of *Over the Edge*, will recount the harrowing story of the six days that Jason "Singer" Smith, John Dickey, Tommy Caldwell, and Beth Rodden spent in captivity in the summer of 2000.

Using interviews with the climbers, with Kyrgyzstan authorities, and with two of the kidnapers, Greg Child has been able to re-create the kidnapping in hour-by-hour detail – from the first ricocheting bullets to the controversial decision the climbers made to gain their freedom. Child's presentation takes place Wednesday, October 30 at 8 p.m. at the kick-off of the ninth annual Banff Mountain Book Festival. Also featured on the festival opening night will be Tim Cahill. Cahill's latest adventure travel book, *Hold the Enlightenment: More Travel, Less Bliss*, solidifies his reputation as one of the most perceptive – and funniest – travel writers working today.

The 2002 Banff Mountain Book Festival takes place October 30 to November 3 in Banff, Alberta. The festival is sponsored by Canadian Mountain Holidays. Other featured speakers at the 2002 festival include Lynn Hill, Yvon Chouinard, Karsten Heuer, Eric Simonson, Dermot Somers, Roger Hubank, Jerry Kobalenko, Kathryn Bridge, and Greg Mortensen.

The Banff Mountain Book Festival is the only festival of its kind in North America. In addition to speakers, it features readings, seminars, a book fair, book signings and launches, and an international competition. Last year, 122 books from ten countries were entered into competition. "The growth in the book festival competition and in mountain literature over the past decade is a testament to the enduring power of mountain stories and images," says Bernadette McDonald, vice-president, Mountain Culture, The Banff Centre, which hosts the book festival.

### Tickets on Sale July 2

Individual festival event tickets go on sale July 2. Tickets are available by phone: 1-800-413-8368 (North America), 1-403-762-6301 or online: [www.banffmountainfestivals.ca](http://www.banffmountainfestivals.ca).

The Banff Mountain Book Festival is a program of Mountain Culture at The Banff Centre. Mountain Culture programming promotes the understanding and appreciation of the world's mountain places by creating opportunities for people to share – and find inspiration in – mountain experiences, ideas and visions.

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An electronic version of this media release and downloadable photos of festival speakers are available at [www.banffmountainfestivals.ca/media](http://www.banffmountainfestivals.ca/media).

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***The 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Banff Mountain Book Festival***  
*presented by Canadian Mountain Holidays,*  
*sponsored by Eagle Creek Travel Gear, National Geographic,*  
*Patagonia, Dunham Bootmakers, eVENT and Chevy Avalanche,*  
*with assistance from the Alpine Club of Canada, the Banff Book & Art Den,*  
*and The Mountaineers Books*