

tain guides have spurred the Forest Service and state agencies to push the Mazamas and other mountain clubs into a new Outfitter-Guide status. Mountaineering in the United States has been led traditionally by volunteer leaders, with no remuneration. Destruction of that volunteer structure by governmental agencies poses a severe threat to the very existence of mountaineering clubs.

The Trail Trips Committee was chaired by Mary Stadler. This year-round activity of the Mazamas resulted in 436 hikes with 4,801 participants. A hike leader program was initiated under the direction of Monty Smith. Winter storms in February, 1996, wreaked catastrophic damage on Northwest trails, especially in the Columbia River Gorge. Under the direction of Bus Gibson, the Trail Tenders mobilized Mazama and community effort to repair some of the damage. In addition, Ray Sheldon continued the reconstruction of the Mazama Trail on the northwest corner of Mount Hood. In its third year, this project involved many club members throughout the summer.

The Outing Committee, chaired by Joan Mosser, presented domestic outings to Yellowstone for cross-country skiing, Hart Mountain, Steens Mountains, Wallowa Mountains, Grand Gulch in Utah and a climbing outing in the Monte Cristo Range of Washington. Overseas outings included the Inca Trail to Machu Picchu in Peru, and hiking trails in the Devon Somerset/Lakes District in England, Guatamala and the Japanese Alps.

The Expeditions Committee, chaired by Stacey Williams, endorsed and provided grants to an expedition to Bolivia. Support was also given to the Cerro Aconcagua Northwest Expedition, which reached 21,400 feet before being turned back by high winds and low temperatures.

George Stonecliffe ended a distinguished year as president of the Mazamas and turned his gavel to Robert Hyslop, who joined the club in 1968 and served as president in 1977.

The Annual Banquet, held at Portland's Melody Ballroom, featured a presentation by Dee Molenaar, a classic figure in Northwest mountaineering, especially on Mount Rainier. Old-timers William and Margaret Oberteuffer were named Honorary Members during the banquet ceremonies.

Mazama Lodge was faced with the resignation of Manager Jean Korte. Jason and Louise Star were chosen to replace her, with hopes for an excellent year at the old structure at Government Camp, Mount Hood.

JACK GRAUER, *Historian*

*The Mountaineers.* The Mountaineers, with members Mike Burns, Karen Close, Steven Cox (American team leader), Don Goodman, Natala Goodman, Jim Tweedie and Howard Weaver, joined with The Himalayan Club to conduct the first Indian-American climbing expedition to the remote region of Kulu in the Himachal Pradesh state of northern India. The team climbed five peaks of varying height, including two first ascents. Don Goodman and Donna Price organized this "Parvati '96 Indo-American Himalayan Expedition."

The Seattle climbing program, under the leadership of Steven Cox, continued to experience a demand that exceeded capacity. The number of people wishing to enter the climbing courses is consistently greater than course size allows. Climbing program volunteers are doing an excellent job of finding creative ways to satisfy this demand while ensuring a safe, high-quality, enriching experience for participants and addressing as well the related issues of access, stewardship, conservation, and growth management. Most significantly, the volunteer administrators of course field trips are working actively to reduce field trip size by offering required field trips more often at varied locations. That effort matches a long-standing practice of smaller group sizes for Mountaineer climbs. In 1996 Intermediate Field Trips, under the leadership of Mike Burns, conducted training in groups never larger than 40.

There were 244 students accepted into the basic climbing course; 72 graduated. Unusually poor

weather and snow conditions led to a higher-than-normal number of students who will require a second year to graduate from the basic course. There were 34 applicants for basic course equivalency; 17 were granted. Also, 79 students enrolled in the intermediate climbing course and 13 others graduated from the multi-year class. Mountaineers members, in a club-wide vote, supported and affirmed the climbing program practice of requiring students to volunteer time toward conservation service in order to practice a lifelong commitment to stewardship. This requirement for graduation from the basic climbing course was introduced over the last two years.

After an extensive review of belay practices under the direction of Barb McCann, a significant change was approved for course curriculum. The hip belay is now only demonstrated for basic climbing course students, who are required to learn a belay technique that utilizes either a belay device or muenter hitch. Instruction in the hip belay is now reserved for the intermediate climbing course. In order to challenge and retain experienced climbers, Advanced Climbing Experiences (ACE) are being scheduled in addition to our many seminars. This year's ACE activities included an ice climbing trip to Banff.

In the spring, The Mountaineers published the first *Washington Backcountry Almanac* for National Parks, National Forests and wilderness areas within the state. The 112-page guide answers questions critical to hikers, climbers and outdoor users, such as where backcountry camping is allowed and the procedure for obtaining overnight permits and dealing with other regulations. Also included are telephone numbers of agencies that provide information not in the guide. It is a book of up-to-date facts that can readily be used as a trip planner. This insightful publication, spearheaded by Mountaineers president Marcia Hanson, is now in its second printing. With over 400 copies sold, the book is expected to be revised annually.

DONNA PRICE, *Trustee*

*Mountaineering Club of Alaska.* On April 12, 1996, Paul Claus, Carlos Buhler, Ruedi Homberger, Reto Ruesch and Charlie Sassara made the first ascent of Mount Miller on the Bagley ice field in the Wrangell/St. Elias Mountains. The ascent followed a large, rounded southern spur that joins the west ridge at about 8,000 feet. From this juncture, the west ridge continues three and a half miles over increasingly difficult terrain to the summit (ca. 11,500').

During April 611, Dave Hart, Harry Hunt, Dave Lucey and Paul Berry made the second ascent of Mount Natazhat (13,435'), 83 years after the first ascent on June 18, 1913. The peak is in the Wrangell/St. Elias Mountains on the Klutlan Glacier. The climbers made their ascent along the 7,000-foot, four-and-a-half mile narrow to knife-edged northeast ridge.

During May 110, Paul Barry, Kurt Bauer, Jacques Boutet, Brad Gessner, Dave Hart and John Lapkass climbed the south ridge of Mount St. Elias (18,008'), following the route pioneered in 1947 by the Harvard Mountaineering Club expedition led by Maynard Miller. During May 25 to June 3, Peter Haeussler and Soren Orley attempted Mount Hunter's southwest ridge, but were turned back by high winds at 12,800 feet. None of the 40 climbers who attempted Mount Hunter in 1996 were successful.

The MCA offered various training activities during the year. In January, ice climbing instruction was held at a local waterfall, and an ice climbing class was held at Matanuska Glacier September 28-29. On March 26-28, an outdoor leadership class was taught by a local University instructor. The purpose of the class, which consisted of two classroom sessions and one outdoor session, was to improve leadership skills for the development of new trip leaders. The focus was on non-technical skills, safety and group dynamics. In April, a map and compass class was held, and in May, glacier travel/crevasse rescue training was given at the Matanuska Glacier.

MARK S. MIRAGLIA, *President*