

AAC, Northern Rockies Section. After receiving word in late 1996 of the Board's decision to create this new section, we were not really sure what to do. The new section includes all of Montana, Idaho, Utah and Northeastern Nevada—quite a bit of wide open space! The idea we came up with was to start with creating chapters in some of the larger population areas throughout the section and let those chapters function as they wish. With input from the Club headquarters and other section chairs, we decided that Boise was a good place to start.

From February through April, several existing members of the club started meeting on a regular basis to discuss why we joined, what we wanted from our membership, how could we develop local activities and how we could create additional value to assist us in “marketing” the new chapter. Being the insurance guy, I had to get over the fact that our member benefit insurance coverage was not the reason everyone else joined! We decided that we should plan an event in conjunction with the local Boise Chapter members, Boise State University Climbing Club, local outdoor equipment retailers and local manufacturing reps for a combination climbing area clean-up day, equipment demo day, an interactive safety discussion, membership dinner and slide show.

Susan Bernatus, Bob Moseley, Scott MCleish, Brian and Karen Wright and I formed the nucleus of the Boise Chapter. Together with the B.S.U. Climbing Club, we had a successful clean-up day at the local Black Cliffs. The clean-up activities were followed by a demo day with equipment supplied by Five Ten, Metolius, La Sportiva, Scarpa and Black Diamond. More than 100 people of all ages, shapes and sizes participated with a smile on their face. During this time, several members and non-members discussed climbing communication techniques, belaying etiquette and general guidelines of safe cragging. Many people of all different skills levels were involved. This was followed by a membership dinner, at which we signed up several new members. Immediately following was an outstanding slide show graciously given by AAC Board Member Carlos Buhler. What a day! For the Boise Chapter, success was measured by the broad diversity of activities and skill levels of those participating.

In July, the Boise Chapter hosted the First Annual Northern Rockies Section Moondance at the City of Rocks in south-central Idaho. More than 50 people attended the non-host BBQ at a group campsite reserved by the chapter. Friends were made, lies were told and everyone agreed that we should do it again. Each year this event will occur as an annual gathering on the July weekend of or following the full moon. Everyone is invited.

Throughout these activities, many members commented that they enjoyed meeting fellow members in their area for the purpose of learning more of the local areas, hearing of new routes and meeting new climbing partners. Having just returned from a long weekend ice climbing in the Wind Rivers with several of the Boise Chapter folks I would not otherwise have known, I can personally attest to the value of meeting new people in my home town. Based on this success, I would like to see other chapters develop in Salt Lake City, Bozeman, Missoula and perhaps Eastern Idaho in conjunction with Jackson Hole. As the Section Chair, I offer my energy and assistance in organizing new activities or chapters and truly look forward to serving all members of the Northern Rockies Section. I can only do so with your input! Give me a call, e-mail me (dcol@rmci.net) or drop me a line with your comments, suggestions or ideas.

DOUG COLWELL, *Northern Rockies Section Chair*

AAC, South Central Section. The section held its annual meeting on October 27 in Houston at the Hilton Southwest Hotel. Past chairperson J. French Hill presided over the dinner and membership meeting, which were followed by a silent auction, slide show and lecture, and

raffle. An AAC conservation grant of \$500 was announced by Domestic Conservation Committee Chairperson Gail Billings for a volunteer trail project at Enchanted Rock State Natural Area in Texas. This grant was matched by another \$500 from the South Central Section. These funds, along with \$3,000 raised by local climbing clubs through the annual Gripper Climbing Competition, will be used in 1998 to fund the trail project.

The silent auction after the dinner included a number of climbing equipment packages donated by manufacturers and retailers in the Houston area. Next, renowned climber Alex Lowe presented a retrospective of his many years in the mountains and adventures in the Himalaya, Russia, Antarctica and across the globe. A raffle concluded the evening's events, with new member Vonda Covington winning a Marmot tent. The event succeeded in generating 12 new members for the club and needed revenue for the section.

The section, in association with the El Paso Climbers Club and the Access Fund, has been in negotiation with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department regarding the management of climbing at Hueco Tanks State Historical Park. In 1997, the El Paso Climbers Club recommended improvements to the TPWD for the operation and protection of Hueco Tanks SHP. The TPWD used some of these recommendations for a draft Public Use Plan for Hueco. However, the draft plan contains several objectionable elements regarding climbing at Hueco. These are currently in negotiation with the TWPD and await additional public comment.

Planned activities for 1998 include a fall annual meeting in Oklahoma (Wichita Mountains), completion of the Enchanted Rock Trail Project, and a successful resolution of the Hueco Tanks situation. After completion of the current trail improvement project, the section will solicit applications for future conservation projects.

Officers elected at the October meeting were Michael Lewis (Chairperson), Michael Bradley (Vice Chairperson) and Jack Leebron (Secretary/Treasurer).

MICHAEL J. LEWIS, *Chairperson*

AAC, New York Section. The New York Section, in the interest of serving its rapidly growing membership, continued to expand the number and frequency of its activities in 1997. After hosting the December 1996 Annual Meeting of the Club, the section began the year with a January ice climbing outing in the Adirondacks, where good weather and excellent conditions prevailed. Winter activities continued through February with a cross-country ski weekend (also in the Adirondacks) organized by Duncan and Nancy Burke. Two more climbing events followed in June: the 20th Annual Spring Climbing Weekend at the Ausable Club in upstate New York and, in August, the Second Annual Indoor Speed Climbing Competition at Ralph Erenzo's ExtraVertical Climbing Center in mid-Manhattan. Strictly a fun event, the competition featured prizes according to gender and age group, followed by an awards dinner at Joey's Paesano Restaurant in Lincoln Center.

The section's social activities also provided members with the opportunity to meet, mingle and forge new friendships. In May, Alpinfilm '97, now in its eighth year of co-sponsorship by the section, attracted the usual capacity throng of 400 climbers and film buffs. Alpinfilm, the New York International Mountain Film Festival, is a juried competition offering cash awards to winning filmmakers. The Best of Festival Award went to Godfrey Reggio's *Anima Mundi* (with a score by Philip Glass) celebrating the planet's biodiversity. The Best Film on Climbing Award was won by *Diamonds in the Rough*, a humorous look at the world of bouldering, produced, directed and introduced by Todd Skinner. Finally, the People's Choice Award went to Bill Noble of Canada for his documentary on veteran British Columbia climber John Clarke. Other significant films included *Alison's Last Mountain*, the story of