

CLUB ACTIVITIES

EDITED BY FREDERICK O. JOHNSON

CASCADE SECTION. On February 3 Section members were invited to see a slideshow, *The Chola Shan Expedition and Mountaineering in China*, at the Mountaineers Clubhouse. Two AAC Cascade members, Tina Nef and Bruce Frank were a part of this six-person expedition, and Tina became the first American woman to climb the peak, a rarely climbed mountain in the remote Shaluli Mountain Range of Western China. A two-day van ride along the ancient “tea-horse” road took the team from the metropolitan city of Chengdu to a Tibetan town, Manigange. The team joined forces with a team of Chinese and Tibetan climbers for the final push to the 20,360-foot summit.

On November 30 Andy Selters presented a multi-media show on the history mountaineering in North America. The show stems from his 2004 book, *Ways to the Sky*, which won top honors at the Banff Mountain Book Festival and the National Outdoor Book Awards. With images of historical climbs from every decade and from peaks from all over the continent, Selters’ hour-long presentation charted the progression of mountaineering and its basis in our culture. His previous books include *The Mt. Shasta Book and Glacier Travel and Crevasse Rescue*. The event, which was well attended by Northwest climbing luminaries, was sponsored jointly by the AAC, the Climbing Club of the University of Washington and Pro Mountain Sports.

On December 16 a special event was held to start a drive for support of a relief effort for victims of the Pakistan earthquake. AAC member Steve Swenson and Arc’teryx representative Marshall Balick initiated the process and REI provided the space and planning support. We heard some entertaining and sometimes harrowing stories from Jim Wickwire, Dee Molenaar, Jim Whittaker, and Steve Swenson about their experiences climbing in Pakistan. The one unifying theme was just how wonderful the local people were that they met on their travels and how much they helped these climbers in times of need. Mark Fisher, who had just returned from doing relief work in Pakistan, showed us some of the conditions that people are living in, including sleeping under tarps in the extremely cold, snowy weather. Many items were donated for an auction and over \$11,000 was raised at the event. During the following two weeks there was an incredible outpouring of support and in addition to being able to ship 460 boxes of gear (tents, sleeping bags, blankets and jackets), over \$45,000 was donated to the AAC Pakistan relief fund.

PETER ACKROYD, *Chair*

OREGON SECTION. The Oregon section has had a very busy year. Richard Bence Oregon section web master has kept the section in touch and working with Jeff Alzner and others to organize functions. Richard Bence hosts the Oregon section web site (<http://ors.alpineclub.org>) and as well as the Madrone Wall web site, (www.savemadrone.org).

We had big ice year in the Columbia River Gorge during mid December and mid February with two incredible ice formations, a rare occurrence. See Climbs & Expeditions for more information. Wayne Wallace along with Mike Layton gave a good talk about their escapades in the North Cascades for the Oregon Section and Access Fund. This took place at the Old Market Pub as a benefit for the Madrone Wall. Keith Daellenbach has published important newspaper articles in the local publications to help save the Madrone Wall. Kellie Rice of the Access Fund continues to be an important figure in the fight to save Madrone. I coordinated with the Ice Age Flood Institute and Mark Buser of the Columbia River Chapter to help create an ice age flood corridor, which includes the Madrone wall. There has also been renewed interest by Congress because of the nearby impact site of the Willamette meteorite. Richard Bence and I of the Oregon section, Kelly Rice of the Access Fund, and the Lewis and Clark College Outdoor Program, together completed the installation of a rescue cache at Broughton's Bluff. The AAC Oregon section donated the rescue litter.

Neale Creamer, Jim Onstott, and Friends of Silcox Hut, along with Timberline, continue to perform difficult maintenance tasks on Silcox Hut, an excellent base camp for emergency south side rescue operations. Oregon section member Jeff Sheets, of the Friends of Silcox Hut, is also on the safety committee for *Accidents in North American Mountaineering*.

Ruth Henneburger, a Ph.D. student, searches for extremophiles (www.astrobiology.com/extreme.html). Ruth wanted to sample at specific depths from the 40-meter cliff of the Hot Rocks Fumerole on Mt. Hood. Because of the strong sulfur gases, Ruth and I carried two 3,000 psi aluminum cylinders of nitrox, along with diving gear to the Devil's Kitchen for a one-hour descent into the "Devil's Hole." Dr. Steve Boyer belayed off two pickets. The steep rock-hard sulfur mud slope was slippery and at the limit of free climbing without crampons. Although we had on glacier glasses, the hydrogen sulfide stream badly burned our eyes and exposed areas of skin. Ruth published a paper, *Hunting Extremophiles in the Devils Kitchen*, producing the phylogenetic trees from the DNA analyses and cultures of her previous 2004 samples.

Oregon section member, Bob Speik hosted Royal Robbins at the Tower Theater in Bend. Robert is the president of the Traditional Mountaineering and raised funds with the Robbins lecture for a central Oregon land trust (www.traditionalmountaineering.org). Oregon Section members were active in many other ways as well. Doug Hutchinson, Tom Bowman, and pilot Pete Pupator climbed in Alaska during March, completing first ski descents in the Talkeetna range. Jeff Alzner's trip to the North Cascades and Canada yielded lots of climbing; Jeff is presently working on a Mike Bearzi biographical movie in Colorado. John Harlin climbed the north face of the Eiger and worked on an upcoming Imax movie that centers around the climb and his father's life called *Alps: Giants of Nature*. It is scheduled for release in March 2007, when his book, *An Eiger Obsession: In the Shadow of Dad's Mountain*, should also appear. And I spent two months in Namibia and South Africa running the Sossusvlei desert observatory and making a number of ascents on the Mesas in the Sossusvlei desert region. Bob Lockerby, Klindt Vielbig, Tom Bennett, and I are volunteering with the construction of the new Mazamas headquarters in an old church.

The Oregon section also raised money, tents, and clothing that was shipped to Pakistan by the AAC. In total the section has now raised \$7,500 for the Alpine Club of Pakistan for earthquake victims. Among the fundraising tools were The Cascade Mountain Film Festival, a local effort organized by Jeff Alzner and Richard Bence, and the traveling version of the Banff Film Festival. For these events we had over a dozen volunteers from the AAC and the Mazamas.

BOB MCGOWN, *Chair*

SOUTHWEST SECTION. After an extended period of dormancy, the Southwest Section was revitalized in 2005. It began with a formal complaint letter sent to the Club's headquarters, filled with threats of canceled membership dues, and was replied to with an opportunity for David Rosenstein to assume the reins as Chair. With the help of Ellen Lapham, Sierra Section Chair, the first-in-a-long-while Section event was held in Joshua Tree. It was a film night, with beer and popcorn, and all proceeds were donated to "Friends of Joshua Tree," a local nonprofit that raises money for JSAR (Joshua Tree Search and Rescue). All seats were full, with people standing in the aisles and in the open windows of this quaint JT venue.

After time spent analyzing the Section and its shaky viability in its preexisting state, attempts were made to reach out to a more diverse audience that may more accurately represent the face of the current climbing community. The result was likely the first-ever AAC sponsored event that focused primarily on bouldering and the young climbers who tackle those incredibly challenging problems. At Galen Rowell's Mountain Light Gallery in Bishop, we had a full house of young boulderers (and a select group of local alpinists such as John Fischer) who came to drink beer and watch multimedia presentations from Natasha Barnes (top female boulderer), Damon Corso (top bouldering photographer), and a sneak peak at the new bouldering video, *Soul Cal*, directed by Paul Dusatko.

One of the most exciting developments for the Section and the Club as a whole was the introduction to the Board for a proposed Joshua Tree Climbers Ranch, a walk-in campground situated outside the park boundaries close to the town itself. At the Flagstaff Board meeting \$5,000 was committed from the 2005 Budget to help pay for utilities at the Ranch as well as some picnic tables. An extensive due diligence process followed, spearheaded by AAC Past President Jim McCarthy, which involved legal matters as well as a tour of the property in person. At the Annual Meeting in North Conway, New Hampshire, the Board agreed to sign a Letter of Intent to develop and lease the property from the land owner (a local JT climber and Club member, who expects no profit from the arrangement). Furthermore, the Board committed to raise an additional \$50,000 as seed money for the project, to be modeled in spirit after the Teton Climbers Ranch. A warm thanks to Ellen and Jim for their efforts to make this possible.

The Section would like to express its relief that R.J. Secor (author of *The High Sierra*) survived a 1,000-foot fall on the slopes of Mt. Baldy, arguably one of the longest falls possible in Southern California. We hope you continue to heal well, RJ.

Looking ahead, much work remains to be done regarding both Section activities and the Climbers Ranch. It is the hope that these efforts will serve to invigorate the Section and its members as well as the greater regional climbing community, which is truly one of the most extensive bodies of climbers anywhere. Those of you interested in being involved at any level should feel free to contact me at bagtrango@yahoo.com.

DAVID ROSENSTEIN, *Chair*

NORTHERN ROCKIES SECTION. In September, Doug Colwell, after close to 10 years as Section chair, passed the baton to Brian Cabe. Much thanks to Doug for his past and continued service to the Club.

Zone II of Castle Rocks State Park opened to new route development on October 29, with orientation at the Castle Rocks Ranch House. Several members attended and completed new routes. Castle Rocks State Park is located in Idaho, adjacent to the City of Rocks National