

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

Reserve. In conjunction with the Access Fund, members of the American Alpine Club were instrumental in developing the climbing management plan for Castle Rock State Park, which opened for the first time to the public in May 2003. For additional information on the area, see: <http://www.idahoparks.org/parks/castlerocks.aspx>; <http://www.accessfund.com/regions/state/id>.

Section members worked with Jason Keith of the Access Fund to develop a climbing-oriented response for the scoping phase of the new Zion National Park Backcountry Management Plan. The Access Fund sent a letter to the Park Service in October.

Brian Cabe worked with the Zion Canyoneering Coalition to craft input and solicit support for comments for the scoping phase of the ZNP Backcountry Management Plan. Brainstorming at meetings with the ZCC board resulted in a letter generator, which produced over 100 comment letters. According to ZNP, the Draft Backcountry Management Plan/EA should be available for public review and comment in the fall 2006.

Several section members supported and provided input at a planning meeting hosted by the Access Fund concerning the BLM's Indian Creek Corridor Recreation Management Plan in conjunction with the Outdoor Retailer Winter Market 2005. Indian Creek, located 50 miles south of Moab, Utah, is one of the world's premier crack climbing destinations. See also Friends of Indian Creek: <http://www.moabdesertadventures.com/foic.htm>.

Local Organizations/Web sites of interest to climbers in our territory: <http://www.boiseclimbers.org>, <http://www.saltlakeclimbers.org>, <http://montanaclimbers.org>, <http://www.seracclub.org>, <http://wasatchmountainclub.org>.

BRIAN CABE, Chair

CENTRAL ROCKIES SECTION. For the third consecutive year, the Section sponsored and helped fund the Waterfall Ice Roundup in Cody, Wyoming, on February 18-20. Some 50-60 climbers from five states traveled to Cody to attend this event, which is also known as "the friendliest little ice festival in the Northern Rockies," to sample 99 local ice routes, demo equipment, and enjoy the catered food and evening slide programs. For the first time, an AAC staff member, Membership Services Coordinator Jason Manke, attended. Section Chair Greg Sievers has written a letter to the editor of *Climbing* magazine regarding the possible over-use of V-threads for ice climbing anchors and rappel stations. Numerous V-threads, slings and rap rings have been found in the drainages below Cody's waterfalls. This littering has prompted concern from the U.S. Forest Service in Cody. We hope to enlighten climbers to reuse or replace existing rappel station material before authorities become more involved in the matter.

In March we co-sponsored a dZi Foundation fundraiser in Estes Park at the Trail Ridge Outfitters store. Local legend, armchair mountaineer, historian, and walking encyclopedia on the Himalaya, Dale Vrabc provided an enlightening view of trekking in Nepal in the 1970s. Images and stories of the Makalu and Everest regions were enjoyed by all. The evening event raised \$1,000 for the dZi Foundation, which implements, supports, and funds projects to improve the basic quality of the lives of people primarily in Ladakh, Nepal, and Sikkim.

The Section advertised for proposals and offered to assist a Section member to attend the Bulgarian Alpine Club festival in Vratsa, Bulgaria, during September 21-25. Kevin Frederick was the lucky recipient. The Federation of the Bulgarian Alpine Clubs (with support from the Mayor and the Municipality of Vratsa and Vrachanski Balkan Nature Park) hosted the event. Despite rainy weather, the festival hosted 150 climbers from many countries near