

Seventy intrepid mountaineers braved the winter's blast—seven inches of treacherous snow—to attend the Ninth Annual New England Section Dinner on March 12 at Northeastern University's Henderson House in Weston. Our special guest was Kurt Diemberger of K2 renown. Kurt delivered a cultured and sympathetic presentation of his mountaineering life, his philosophical outlook, and especially his K2 experiences. In addition, AAC President Mark Richey gave a lively description of the successful annual meeting in March at Ouray, Colorado. Mark was accompanied by his wife Teresa, the second Peruvian woman to summit Huascaran Sur (6,746m), and daughter Natalia, who assisted with the door prizes.

We were especially graced by the presence of Brad and Barbara Washburn, who helped us get the annual dinner started 10 years ago by offering Brad's stunning photographs for exhibit at the first dinner.

Paul Dale, our accomplished auctioneer, succeeded in his fund raising efforts to benefit the Section by selling a day in the hills with President Mark Richey, another with guide Marc Chauvin, and a beautiful mountain photograph by our own reception area exhibitor Chris Dame.

Once again we met in June at Nancy Savickas's alpine refuge in Albany, New Hampshire, to enjoy the camaraderie of fellow climbers and to sample the grill, snarf down Nancy's excellent hors d'oeuvres, bite into some corn-on-the-cob, and share a glass of wine or a few beers. At least 30 guests attended from far and wide, including old timers Henry Barber, Ted Church, and Malcolm Moore.

Our Halloween gathering attracted more ghosts than expected owing to the threat of rain. However, the rain held off and several parties came in from climbs on the Cathedral Ledges and elsewhere on the cliffs of New Hampshire. In the evening more than 20 Halloween revelers showed up at Nancy's place for her hors d'oeuvres, grilled food and refreshments, followed by Rick Merritt's showing of summer slides of Africa and his ascent of Kilimanjaro.

Many of our members were active during the year climbing on five continents. Unfortunately, space limitations prevent a more detailed account of their accomplishments.

BILL ATKINSON, *Chair*, AND NANCY SAVICKAS, *Vice Chair*

NEW YORK SECTION. The New York Section hosts a variety of outdoor and indoor social events throughout the year. Among the perennials is a Winter Outing held each year in the Adirondacks, as well as a June get-together at the Ausable Club there. However, it is perhaps best known for its Fall black tie dinner, now in its 26th year and held this year on October 29 at Manhattan's Union Club. Looking for a change from the usual expedition slide show, we asked Eric Simonson, head of International Mountain Guides in Ashford, Washington, to share with us some personal insights on climbing from the guide's unique perspective. His talk, *Confessions of a Mountain Guide*, especially resonated with an audience who regularly rely on mountain guides to lead their major adventures. Eric spoke about the importance of experience, instinct, and also plain old-fashioned luck, even for a professional like him, in determining happy outcomes. In one expedition to Nun, one of his Dutch clients experienced problems with a broken crampon. The ensuing delay resulted in his team not being on the slope when it suddenly avalanched, killing all in its path.

Simonson praised the growing skill and professionalism of Nepalese and Tibetan guides. The day is not far off, in Eric's opinion, when guiding on Everest will be outsourced in large part to these, similar to much of U.S. manufacturing, and Americans and Europeans will

function primarily as expedition organizers and marketers. Globalization, it seems, is spreading everywhere.

In addition to Eric's main talk, one of our local members, Susan Schwartz, presented a short retrospective on the late Dr. Hans Kraus, pioneer Shawangunk climber, close friend and partner of Fritz Wiessner, and equally famous as JFK's back doctor and as an early advocate of physical fitness. Susan had just written and published Kraus' biography, *Into the Unknown*, which was a finalist at the Banff Mountain Book Festival and is reviewed in this Journal.

As usual we welcomed and introduced each of our new members as well as those attending with 25 or more years of Club membership. New members received their AAC membership pins while the quarter-century group received certificates of appreciation and a pewter membership badge.

Dinner profits were divided between the *American Alpine Journal* and the AAC Library.

At the Dinner we were happy to welcome Phil Powers, the Club's new Executive Director, on his first official trip to New York. At the Dinner Phil announced the Club's Pakistan Earthquake Relief Initiative, a drive to collect and ship gear to stricken mountain villagers in that country. Almost immediately a team of Section volunteers went into action and assembled tons of gear, including tents and clothing, all donated by local members. These were collected, sorted, and transported to JFK Airport for shipment overseas. Special thanks go to Holly Edelson and Richard Ryan for their hands-on efforts in collecting and cataloguing the material, and to Todd Fairbairn as well for transforming his apartment into a temporary warehouse. This is no insignificant sacrifice given the small size of New York City dwellings.

From time to time, we get requests from foreign visitors to experience the famed overhangs of the Gunks. This was the case last June when Ed February, a professor of botany from South Africa lecturing at Princeton, let it be known that he would like to try his hand on High Exposure and other Gunks classics he had heard so much about. It turns out that Ed is not only a noted scholar, but perhaps South Africa's most famous black climber, a pioneer responsible for opening up the sport to black South Africans. Our own Bob Hall and Steve Miller immediately responded, and the trio had a superb day on the cliffs. This was the subject of a write-up and photos in the *American Alpine News* and Section web site.

In July a group of New York Section members, including Roland Puton, Garrett Bowden, Julie Floyd, and Mark Kassner, joined Frederick Selby in an expedition he organized to Mongolia. One of the highlights was a visit, on foot and horseback, to the far western border with Kazakhstan where there are numerous unclimbed 4,000m peaks. While the group was weathered off Khuiten Uul, they succeeded on Naran.

A fitting end to our fiscal year was a delightful September Sunday in the country hosted by Olaf and Gitta Soot. Between swimming, volleyball, and climbing in the Soot backyard (yes, the Soot's Greenwich property contains a 50-foot high outcrop with a variety of technical routes) as well as excellent food and drink, "Olaf's Outing" will result in fond memories for the 40 or so members who attended.

Stay in touch with AAC events in New York, including our outings and social events, by logging on to: <http://nysalpineclub.org>. This is the colorful and informative handiwork of Vic Benes, a retired Bell Labs scientist, who created and maintains the Section web site.

PHILIP ERARD, *Chair*