

*AAC, Oregon Section.* In February, Tom Bennett and I organized the premier Mazama Denali Conference, which featured 26 speakers from all over Alaska and the lower 48 states and included Bradford and Barbara Washburn as our special guests. Jack Grauer, past president of the Mazamas, commented, "Never will there be such an incredible gathering of Alaskan alpinists. It was like living 60 years of Alaskan history in four days."

During the year, the development proposed for the Rim Rock Destination Resort loomed over Smith Rock State Park. The Mazamas, Tom Thrall, Gary Rall of the Portland Rock Gym and others wrote letters to representatives and senators to stop the Smith Rock Climbing Destination Resort from happening. There were 36 newspaper articles in the *Oregonian* about this controversial resort. Domestic conservation chair Gail Billings assisted with her talents to keep Smith Rock from being commercialized. The Portland Rock Gym also pitched in with a letter-writing campaign.

Gary Rall, Laura Potter, Candy Morgan and Andy Fritz served on the Washington State Advisory Board for Beacon Rock and Horse Thief Buttes. Beacon Rock Ranger Steve Johnson wants to open the east face to sport climbing. Gary Rall of the Portland Rock Gym negotiated the use of epoxy on Beacon for loose holds. There are three different proposals monitoring birds on the rock. Wildlife biologists want the trails around Beacon defined through the talus fields to protect rare plants and the Larch Mountain Salamander.

Currently, the best sport climbing area around Portland is closed. The Madrone Wall, which boasts 150 sport and traditional routes, may be turned into a gravel quarry. Previously, District Attorney/climber Darryl Nakahira kept the area open.

Blake Hankins, Tom Thrall and I worked at Smith Rock in preparation for the Spring Thing, during which all climbing is stopped and 200 climbers and hikers work on Smith Rock's trail system every spring.

Oregon member Jeff Alzner and partner and AAC member Fred Ziel climbed above 25,000 feet in high winds on Cho Oyu, summiting with Canadian friends. The pair had previously climbed on Broad Peak. This was their fourth Himalayan expedition.

Jim Petroske, whose son, John, has been on expeditions to K2, Manaslu, and Everest, worked with his other son, Bill, and J.P. Books to set up an excellent display of modern and historical climbing books for sale at the AAC annual meeting. Jim has mailed out his catalog of mountaineering books for eight years.

Oregon Section member Bob Lockerby this year self-published a monumental 100-year index of the Mazama annual that incorporated the work of Vera Defoes, a Parker Cup winner, along with other members.

Members Peter Green and John Youngerman and AAC Oregon Section student member Robert Johnson took Explorer scouts on an expedition to New Zealand from December 18, 1996, until January 7, 1997. The three adults and seven students climbed seven peaks. In August, the same group completed four new routes and four first ascents on peaks near the Thaikazan Glacier in the Mt. Waddington area. They dubbed one of the peaks Mt. Becker, after Terry Becker, a Mazama president who gave his life in an attempt to rescue fellow climbers. We're waiting to see if the Canadian Board of geographical names approves. Peter Green and the Explorer scouts also organized a climbing presentation by writer/climber Joe Simpson. It was Simpson's largest audience ever with 1,100 people.

Oregon section members Neil Cramer, Jeff Sheets and others ran the month of climbing weekends at Silcox Hut on Mt. Hood. The renovated W.P.A. Hut is an excellent warming hut for the south side ascentionist. Neil has done an excellent job running the Friends of Silcox Hut.

In an endeavor made possible by Outing Committee chair Barbara Becker, who facilitat-

ed a grant from the Mazamas, Tom Bennett, Harvey Schmidt, Ph.D., and I, in conjunction with Dr. Mauri Pelto of Maine, participated in the North Cascades Glacial research project, which studies glacier ablation and global warming.

On April 25 and 26, Tom Bennett, Ian Wade and I are planning a Mazama conference entitled "Mountaineering Issues of Tibet" with historical and modern themes. The conference is co-sponsored by Barbra Brower, Ph.D., editor of the *Himalayan Bulletin*, with the Geography Department at Portland State University. The 25 proposed speakers include Khandgo Chazotang, the niece of His Holiness the Dali Lama, Stephen Venables, author of *Himalayan Alpine Style*, Lowell Thomas Jr., author of *Out of this World* and *Silent War in Tibet*, Edwin Bernbaum, author of *Sacred Mountains of the World*, AAC past president Lou Reichardt, and Oregon Section member Ian Wade as master of ceremony. For information contact Bob McGown at 2535 S.W. Palatine St., Portland, OR, 97219.

BOB MCGOWN, *Section Chair*

*AAC, Sierra Nevada Section.* 1997 brought the Sierra Nevada Section continued growth and success spiced with daunting new challenges. With the addition of western Nevada to our geographic region plus an increasing number of Southern Californians wanting to affiliate, our section now contains well over 400 members.

Six events sprinkled throughout the year brought us together. Our traditional Ski Weekend at Grover Hot Springs south of Lake Tahoe drew an enthusiastic crowd of skiers and soakers bent on late-winter fun. In April, a capacity crowd convened at the beautiful San Francisco peninsula home of Dr. Jim Fries for our spring Wine & Cheese party, which featured a lavish slide show by member David Keaton. Flowering dogwood forests and raging waterfalls formed the backdrop for our Yosemite Valley campout in May. More than 30 Sierra Nevadans, plus a family of party-crashing bears, came together to celebrate Allen Steck's birthday and enjoy the superb weather, perfect crack systems and huge friction slabs of the Valley.

Two other campouts, one in June at Lover's Leap near Lake Tahoe and one in September at the Owens River Gorge, completed our outdoor get-togethers for the year. At the Owens Gorge event, John Fischer, a well-known mountain guide and section member, gave an excellent presentation on the Leave No Trace organization and its philosophy. As a result, we have decided to help raise awareness in the climbing community of the ideas and activities of this organization by distributing literature and inviting representatives to speak at our events. We have also helped member Nick Shiestel promote community activities of the Sierra Mountain Guides, who offer excellent climbing safety instruction events free of charge under their Climb Smart! program.

Our Annual Section Dinner in November was beautifully planned by Jane Koski and our out-going Section Chairman Eric Brand. The City Rock Climbing Center in Emeryville (whose space was provided by owners Mark and Debra Melvin) boasted a lavish buffet and bar and was filled with oriental carpets loaned by art entrepreneur and member Gene White. More than 100 attendees lounged, feasted, hobnobbed and enjoyed a slide show about guiding in the Alps by Armin Fisher, a California native and the first non-Italian to become a certified UIAGM guide in Italy. With section enthusiasm running high, a contingent of almost 20 Sierra Nevadans shuttled up to Seattle in December for the AAC Annual Meeting.

The Sierra Nevada membership is greatly enriched by the many distinguished authors of mountain literature among us. Outstanding achievements this year included publication of *High Altitude Medicine*, a definitive work on high-altitude mountaineering and medicine by the late Dr. Herb Hultgren, who had long and illustrious careers in both fields. Prolific author