

away, bear canisters were picked up at a concession stand approximately a mile away, and permits were issued at the backcountry parking lot. The new office, constructed in an already developed area, eliminates much inconvenience to backpackers and reduces parking problems and the excessive use of cars. Other milestones included some 800 volunteer hours contributed by more than 80 of our members and their guests, who came from Germany, Spain, Italy, Poland, France, England and China.

Many Section members made the trek to Washington, D.C., for the Club's Annual Meeting in November. Dick Duane and Tom Frost were awarded the Gold Medal for their dedication in representing the Club with great integrity, humor, and compassion in negotiations and meetings with the National Park Service. This is not an annual award, but is reserved for occasions when individuals make a significant contribution to the AAC and the climbing community as a whole. While in Washington, Linda McMillan, newly elected AAC vice president, represented the Club's interests in visits to government officials in the departments of Interior and Agriculture as well as to officials in the National Parks and Conservation Association, Natural Resources Defense Council, the Wilderness Society and the Keeper of the Historic Registry.

LYNN BAMFORD, *Chair*

AAC, Central Rockies Section. Perhaps it's the proximity of the AAC offices or just that Coloradoans are being drawn to the great outdoors more than ever, but the Central Rockies Section continues to see phenomenal growth. Only four years after the division of the Rocky Mountain Section into two parts (North and Central), the Central Rockies Section has outgrown the previous total membership for the section. As we move into the 21st century, the CRS membership will break 1,400, and we may once again look into division to maximize the personal connection between the AAC and its membership.

The Central Rockies Section was involved in several events and projects in 1999 that we hope will show the climbing community that the AAC is an advocate voice and interested partner, able to attract new members while stimulating existing members to get involved. Naturally, it's a shame that we can't "just go climbing" anymore, that issues have arisen that require either response or the possible loss of our wilderness freedom. It is imperative that we help manage the land and freedom that we have taken for granted for so long.

Immediately north of the AAC offices in Golden are the basalt cliffs of Table Mountain, which offer sport and traditional climbs through most of the winter. The Section strengthened its alliance with the Access Fund in 1999 by donating \$1,500 to the construction of the Golden Cliffs project, which provided a legal and formal access road, parking lot, trail system and restroom for the crag. The fund raising for this money was member-driven through support of the Annual Section Banquet, auction and sale items.

In April, the CRS wrote to the Jefferson County Planning Commission in Golden and attended public meetings to voice our concern regarding the proposed mining adjacent to Eldorado State Park. The open-pit mining proposal threatens the nature of the Park, which is an international destination for rock climbing. At the time of this writing, the proposal has been tabled.

In June, the Chairman met with leaders of two Russian climbing clubs in hopes of creating an exchange. Although the Russians are happy to receive guests, their economic conditions will prevent them from sending any of their climbers to this country for some time to come. If there are interested parties wishing to pursue an adventure in Russia, whether alpine ascents or rock climbing near the Black Sea, please feel free to inquire.

July saw Section members team up with the Colorado Fourteeners Initiative to provide labor toward trail restoration on Mount Harvard (14,420'). This organization, with an office in the American Mountaineering Center in Golden, is working to create a sustainable trail system on all 53 of Colorado's 14,000-foot peaks. In most cases our high peaks are being loved to death, and

new trails are needed to get foot traffic onto rock and off the tundra.

For current events in our area, please visit our web site at <http://crs.alpineclub.org>. We have added a List Service for our e-mail members. On it, you may post inquiries, reports, gear wanted or for sale, or other news. It is exempt from solicitation and marketing and is solely for members' use and enjoyment. To subscribe, please visit our web site and follow the prompt on the Home Page.

GREG SIEVERS, *Chairman*

AAC, North Central Section. The North Central Section covers Minnesota, Iowa, Nebraska, South Dakota and North Dakota. In July, 1999, Scott Christensen took over the post of chairman, which had been vacant in 1997-'98. A first goal was to make a web site similar to those of the other sections. This was completed in October and now provides members and visitors a means to learn about specific North Central items as well as national AAC issues. The web site has sections on our parent organization, upcoming events and news of the region. It also has a message board for climbers to find one another and to post messages pertinent to the local crags. Contact our web site at www.ncs.alpineclub.org.

The chairman attended the AAC Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C., representing the Section at committee meetings and meeting with members who performed much of the Club's work in the Yosemite Camp 4 development. Also, members worked at the local clean-up day at Interstate Park on the north side of metropolitan Twin Cities. This is a very popular top-rope area for Minnesota and the Midwest. As in most areas of the country, more and more restrictions have been placed on climbing. Interstate is no exception; climbing permits are now required. The goodwill from our support of the clean-up day goes a long way in keeping climbers climbing.

SCOTT CHRISTENSEN, *Chairman*

AAC, South Central Section. The South Central Section held an annual meeting in Dallas, Texas, on October 16. The newly elected officers for 2000 are Andy Jones, chair; Mike Doyle, co-chair; and Gail Billings, treasurer. Mike Lewis will assist the Section in an advisory capacity. The well-attended meeting was bolstered by public attendees who were there to see Kurt Diemberger. Kurt presented his K2 classic, "Mountain of Dreams and Destiny," and held the whole crowd in the palm of his hand throughout. The meeting was sponsored by (and could not have happened without) the generous help of Whole Earth Provision Company. Donors for the silent auction included The Sullivan Agency, Mountain Hideout, *Climbing* and *Rock & Ice* magazines, REI, Rollerblade, Camelback, Stone Works Climbing Gym, Metolius and Mike Hall (a retired climbing gear donation). The successful auction allowed the Section to make contributions to the Central Asian Institute and to the family of Alex Lowe.

The Section surveyed its membership, with 218 surveys mailed out and 40 returned. The survey was comprised of 12 questions related to the Annual Meeting, Section activities, communication and needs. The key responses were that there was interest in more activities, stepping up the political activism (e.g., the access arena), keeping the current meeting format, and gaining more information on the "goings-on in the climbing world."

With those interests in mind, it is important to know that several of our members have been heavily involved in the Sunset Report on Texas Parks and Wildlife. The Sunset Report on TPW is available at www.sunset.statetx.us and can be downloaded from the report section. This is an important document in that, after comments and final approval, it will be used in the 2001 Legislative Session to change the laws governing TPW. Access restrictions at Hueco Tanks State Park are still a topic of discussion between climbing organizations in Texas and TPW. TPW has issued a final management plan that still severely regulates access to the park for any activity, but especially climbing. Many members have been very active in meetings concerning the park