

AAC, NORTH CENTRAL SECTION. Our Section continues to grow after several inactive years without a chair. The Web site was up and running the entire year and has proven to be valuable in spreading information around the Section. Climbers have used the message board to set up trips, communicate problems, and just discuss climbing generally in our area.

A small but dedicated group of seven attended a clean-up day at Blue Mounds State Park in Luverne, MN. We cleaned the area in the morning, climbed in the afternoon, and barbequed in the evening. This park with some notable climbs is at about the geographic center of our Section, and we will continue meeting there in June. Certainly Taylors Falls, the Black Hills, and the North Shore are more popular climbing areas, but Blue Mounds is fair for everyone.

The Taylors Falls area, which is the closest climbing area to the Twin Cities, suffered a major slide, resulting in closure of the Minnesota side. The Wisconsin side remains open. The chairman has been working with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources in an effort to reopen access to this heavily used area.

A number of Section members attended the annual AAC meeting at Snowbird, UT. While there, taking early time out from skiing one day, we discussed ways to promote our Section's growth. Immediate plans include issuing a Section directory and continuing to upgrade the Web site: <http://ncs.alpineclub.org>.

SCOTT CHRISTENSEN, *Chairman*

AAC, NEW YORK SECTION. The events of 9/11 here in New York overwhelmed everything else that had transpired before or since in the Section. Virtually everyone knew someone or had friends who were directly affected by the tragedy. Particularly gratifying were the countless letters, phone calls, and e-mails we New Yorkers received from concerned friends from all over the world. September 11 and its aftermath also brought a much needed sense of perspective on the truly important things in life—family and friends—which are sometimes forgotten in the often trivial pursuits of day-to-day existence.

It was with a heightened sense of family, mutual support, and the “fellowship of the rope,” as Gaston Rebuffat so aptly called it, that a record 160 members and guests gathered on September 29 for our 22nd Annual Black Tie Dinner. Fortunately our special guest speaker, Erik Weihenmayer, the 32-year-old blind climber who had recently summited Everest, was clearly up to the task of delivering an inspirational, yet witty, presentation that resonated perfectly with the difficult occasion. Erik spoke of not accepting limitations and of the importance of teamwork in accomplishing difficult goals. To emphasize the point, he was accompanied by the members of his Everest team, whom he had invited from Colorado to share this special moment with him. Also on the program were two other New Yorkers, Sherman and Brad Bull, who were both part of Erik's team and who also reached the top. At the age of 64 and on his fifth attempt, Sherman set a new age record on the mountain. The Dinner was run as a fundraiser both for the AAC Library and the Twin Towers Fund to benefit needy survivors of the WTC tragedy. Almost \$9,000 was raised for both causes, thanks in part to a successful silent auction of climbing equipment, gear, and other valuable items. Finally, we introduced and gently “roasted” 14 new members whom we presented with their membership pins.

In addition, during the year, Section members enjoyed traditional winter and spring climbing outings in the Adirondacks, an organized conditioning hike or two in the Hudson Highlands and Catskills, and a particularly successful “Top Rope” social in the Shawangunks. A