

Member, Officer, Honorary Member, and Award Winner George Lowe, who presented an outstanding slideshow of his spectacular and successful alpine climbing career, including first ascents in the United States, Canada, Alaska, the Karakoram, and the Himalaya, which he modestly referred to as "Reflections On My Continuing Amateur Climbing Career." Given that George previously lived in the Bay Area and was a one of our members for several years, it was a homecoming of sorts for him. His friends and admirers came out in droves, and the banquet hall was filled to capacity. Many thanks to George Lowe for this special and successful evening.

It has been my pleasure to serve as Section Chair the last three years. In January 2012, Lewis Richards of Sacramento takes over that position. No doubt the Section will be in good hands going forward under Lewis's outstanding leadership.

TOM BURCH, CHAIR

Southwest Section. We had four main events in 2011, finishing strongly with a successful winter dinner. The Section enjoyed good climbing and friendship January 15-16 at Joshua Tree with the Southern California Mountaineers Association. Included was a Graffiti Removal Project arranged through climbing ranger Bernadette. On April 17 eight of us met at the Mishe Mokwa Trailhead at Malibu Creek State Park, hiked into the Echo Cliffs, and enjoyed climbing in the shade on a warm day. We returned to the parking lot for a brats picnic organized by Mike and Mary Tompkins. On the weekend of October 22-23 the Section enjoyed climbs again at Joshua Tree, camping out at Sheep Pass Campground. On Sunday a few of us joined a restoration project at Indian Cove put on by the Park Service and the Friends of Joshua Tree. The Park Service organized a highly successful project, providing the tools, plants, and equipment for the volunteers and rangers to plant 50 to 60 native plants in two hours. In November the Section helped sponsor the Fall Highball in Bishop, which included a work party at the Buttermilk area and a fund raiser with beer and music that raised about \$800 for conservation. In addition we gathered at Cal Tech for programs such as the Reel Rock Festival and the Banff Film Festival, sponsored by the Cal Tech Alpine Club.

Finally, 74 people attended the December holiday dinner featuring a slideshow entitled *From Patagonia to Tajikstan: A 40-Year Climbing Retrospective* by Jim Donini and accompanied by good French food at Taix French Restaurant. With the assistance of a no-host bar and appetizers, the crowd enjoyed visiting with old friends and making new ones.

JIM PINTER-LUCKE, CHAIR

New England Section. In February our Section helped the International Mountain Climbing School sponsor the 18th annual Ice Fest in North Conway, New Hampshire. Our members answered the call for volunteers en masse. Tim Deroehn and Robert Castro manned a booth in the mornings at IME, providing coffee and donuts to students participating in the clinics. Friday night's festivities at Cranmore Ski Area started with Jim Surette's film of Steve House soloing Recompence and Remission, two of Cathedral Ledge's toughest mixed lines. Local hardman Freddie Wilkinson was the commentator for the indoor ice competition, which had to be seen to be believed. Saturday night's Après-climbing party found Rick Merritt and Nancy Savickas passing out wine and AAC information upstairs at IME. The party raged on with a slideshow by Kelly Cordes and raffle at Cranmore, where our Section donated funds for appetizers.

We hosted our 15th annual dinner at the elegant Henderson House on March 19.

Rick Wilcox provided a display of his climbing photography, which included the second ascent of the Black Dike on Cannon Mountain and several other retro-photographs, one of our own Mark Richey when he embarked on his climbing career as a 17-year-old lad. Our guest speaker was Kevin Mahoney, who treated us to a brilliant presentation entitled *Risk, Reward and Responsibility*. AAC past-president Mark Richey and two AAC Board members, Bruce Franks and John Kascenska, were on hand for the festivities, as were New Hampshire hardmen Paul Boissioneault and Tom Callaghan, and our former chair, Bill Atkinson.

The first of our two annual BBQs was held in June at my place in Albany, New Hampshire. In the fall Sarah Garlick, our Northeast Regional Coordinator, hosted the October BBQ at Echo Lake State Park near North Conway. John Bragg, the new team leader of the AAC coordinators, came out from Colorado to help. The event was a huge success with such notables present as Mark and Teresa Richey, Titoune Meunier, Freddie Wilkinson, and Doug Millen.

On November 5 Chad Hussey hosted our third annual "It Ain't Over 'Til It's Over" cragging day. Despite not having power for over a week due to the freak fall storm, Chad was up for the task of playing tour guide at one of his local crags. Connecticut was hit hard by the storm, with several trees downed and the sound of chain saws serenading us upon arrival. This year we climbed at the Owl's Lair on Ragged Mountain near Southington. Our small group was joined by new AAC member Scott Doscher, who came all the way from Manhattan for the day. Typical of Connecticut, the climbing at Owl's Lair was awesome!

Finally, a note from Bill Atkinson. Upon the re-assertion of an old shoulder injury, his 50-plus years of climbing has come to an end. He remembers not only his first climb in the 'Gunks in 1956, but his last one there as well, an ascent in 2010 of Southern Pillar with John Reppy, accomplished with a combined age of 164 years.

NANCY SAVICKAS, CHAIR

New York Section. The New York Section of the AAC is blessed with a strong cadre of committed volunteers who help make it one of the most active and vibrant of the AAC's regional Sections. Its Annual Black-Tie Dinner has hosted many of the world's leading alpinists of the last three decades. It has become not only an annual ritual for many out-of-town members, who combine it with a weekend in Manhattan at perhaps the best time of year, but an ongoing financial resource for the Club's Library and Journal. Our lively blog, nysaac.blogspot.com, ably edited by Conor Moran, is the preferred mode of communication for our members. The blog's lengthy 2011 archives chronicle several notable indoor and outdoor events: our first Catskills Winter Outing, in February, following our traditional January Outing in Keene, New York; our Annual June Outing at the Ausable Club, which dates back to the early 1980s; and, for the first time in several years, "*Olaf's Outing*," held in September at Olaf and Gitta Soot's estate in Greenwich, Connecticut. With top ropes set up on the Soot's private crag, a large swimming pool to tree-dive into and, of course, delectable food and beverage provided by our affable hosts, this was one of our most relaxed and friendly events of the year. Among the many climbers in attendance were our friends from the New York branch of the Korean Alpine Club.

On the climbing front and thanks to the Section blog, we all followed 33-year-old Sophie Denis' attempt to summit five 8,000m peaks during the calendar year. Chronicling her adventure