



News Bulletin

October 2006

The Gunks Climbers Coalition is an advocacy group dedicated to creating and maintaining sustainable opportunities for responsible climbing along the Shawangunk Ridge and surrounding areas. The Gunks Climbers' Coalition is an official affiliate of The Access Fund.

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Welcome to our first GCC News Bulletin. We hope to do this regularly to keep everyone up to date on what we're working on. Here are a few words from our Chairman and Access Fund Regional Director, Chris Moratz:

The Rosendale event in the Widow Jane Mine in late May was outstanding and we had a huge crowd. The Dosage videos were inspiring and the music was awesome. The venue was super cool. Anyone who did not make it to Rosendale Rocks really missed out. We hope to do something like this again some time. We are looking at a potential deal with OSI and the Mohonk Preserve to acquire 50 acres of prime bouldering area and this was our event to go prime time with this high profile project.

Big Up Productions is now listed on our web site as one of our sponsors. Many thanks go out to Josh and Brett Lowell who produced the event, the Widow Jane Mine and the Century House Historical Society, as well as our Director at Large, Chris Spatz who brought the whole thing into being. Negotiations with the Town of Rosendale as well as other entities on the ridge are continuing.

The GCC remains in discussion with Minnewaska State Park officials to expand climbing opportunities in the Park. Any expansion will require establishing a backcountry Search & Rescue team, which guide Marty Molitoris of Alpine Endeavors has started to organize along with other local climbers; this will eventually become its own stand alone organization.

Preliminary also to expanded Minnewaska climbing will require a ten-year follow on impact study of climbing at the Peterskill. We have the full sanction of Minnewaska State Park in conducting this study. The impact study has been

one of our goals starting last year. It will compare present conditions to extensive data compiled ten years ago when the area was opened to climbing. The study has now been ongoing since April and we are very pleased to report good progress on the study. Opening more climbing within the Park will depend on the results of this very important work. Anyone with experience conducting animal, (small mammal trapping) and plant surveys is welcome to volunteer for the study; we could use a local person with experience in this area and the time available to participate. Please contact the GCC.

Other news: we have been in contact with The Nature Conservancy, who runs Sam's Point Visitor Center about the potential rock climbing there. The management, while not being in favor of allowing climbing, is willing to sit down with the GCC and have dialog about this.

During the last couple of years we've gotten access to excellent tools / volunteers for GIS mapping and establishing property boundary lines in relation to geological features (cliffs!) We've used these tools on all of our recent work and they're indispensable. We're building quite a database of the local property boundary lines and cliffs and hope to continue this very valuable work. Many thanks go out to our volunteer and Steering Committee member Mark Folsom (www.ridgelinegis.com).

Finally, our Board of Directors has been working with the Access Fund to change our membership model. Revised bylaws are now basically done and will be voted in at the 10/21 meeting before the Eric Hörst slide show. Following pending passage of our revised bylaws, the GCC will begin "farming out" membership to the national Access Fund. Full members will

consist only of the GCC's Board of Directors. Other involved climbers are considered Steering Committee members. All climbers who wish to join the GCC would do so through the Access Fund, where a portion of the membership would go to the GCC. Regional NY members of the Access Fund would automatically become associate members of the GCC and on our mailing list, receiving our bulletins, electronic newsletters and News Flashes. This is becoming the dominant membership model for LCO's throughout the country.

We wish you good climbing and success in all your endeavors.

Sincerely,

Chris Moratz

Access Fund Regional Coordinator

GCC Board of Directors

The GCC Newsletter

We hope you enjoy this GCC News Bulletin as a more frequent means of keeping the Gunks climbing community up to date with our activities.

We will still publish our GCC Newsletter, filled with articles, photography and literary works from the climbing community. Remember that submissions are open to everyone; member or not.

Please email essays, stories and other prose to Dell Bleekman at newsleter@gunksclimbers.org, and all visuals, including poetry, to France Menk at iam@france-menk.com.

Susan E.B. Schwartz—Hans Kraus presentation and book signing

On May 13 2006 the Gunks Climbers' Coalition hosted Susan EB Schwartz in presenting a show about her book *Into the Unknown*, a slideshow and story telling event that was enjoyed by an enthusiastic crowd at the Mohonk Preserve Visitor Center. The show was preceded by a general meeting of the GCC, where new members got the opportunity to find out what we have been working on.

Susan set up her equipment while we were wrapping up the meeting, and got started by telling the story of Hans' early boyhood in Trieste and his shipping tycoon father.

Susan told the story movingly and listeners were aware that she knew Hans personally and worked with him in writing down all the

pertinent details of his life. One felt a kind of connection with Hans by the mere presence of his biographer. Susan knows many intimate details of Hans' life and told them in an engaging manner. These stories were brought to life by many never before seen slides of a young, then older Hans and finally just before he passed away at his home in Gardiner. He continued to enjoy the mountains long after he could not climb anymore in his late seventies, and also continued his amazing and pioneering medical practice in Manhattan well into his later years. He treated many patients for free (including one member of the audience, as well as Ms. Schwartz - he would always make it a point of pride to treat climbers for free!) but also he had many celebrity patients including

President Kennedy, who he essentially cured of a very bad back problem he had had all his life. What was this amazing cure? Exercise!

This show was not so soon over, as the audience lingered over questions, observations and anecdotes well into the evening.

Our thanks to the Mohonk Preserve for providing the venue for this event.



Rosendale Rocks! A Multimedia Show from Josh and Brett Lowell

Developments with the Waterworks continue to babble along. In early March, the GCC learned from Rosendale town supervisor Bob Gallagher that a clause in the zoning code does permit recreation on the parcel, ruling out municipal management for a bouldering park.. However, needing to raise capitol for the water district, town officials began exploring options with the GCC for selling the parcel to the climbing community, provided the town can retain their water rights. One option involves creating, through a private source, a Horse Pens 40 type low-impact campground proposal which was presented to members of the town board in April; another involves acquisition of the parcel by the Open Space Institute, to be managed by the Mohonk Preserve.

On May 27, the GCC held its Rosendale Rocks fundraiser in the Widow Jane Mine. Once famous for providing the cement in the Brooklyn Bridge and the base of the Statue of Liberty, the mine is now one of the Hudson Valley's most unique performance venues.

Featuring sneak preview Doses from Josh and Brett Lowell's next Big Up release (the brothers have been intimately involved with the Waterworks project), the crowd of 200 watched Tommy Caldwell become the first person since Lynn Hill to free El Cap's Nose; Chris Sharma and Dave Graham established new bouldering test-pieces at Hueco. Preceded by the evocative trip-hop of musician Alex Schein, and Gunks bouldering clips from Urban Climber editor Joe Iterato's Fuse video production, the GCC's biggest event to date raised nearly \$1500. Half of the proceeds went to the Century House Historical Society for providing the extraordinary space of the Widow Jane Mine. The rest, originally intended for the Rosendale Water District (declined by the Water Board because purchasing discussions have been initiated), will now be used to seed a dedicated Waterworks bridge fund.

On June 12, the GCC made a Waterworks pitch to the Mohonk Preserve's Land Stewardship Committee. While the parcel is close but

not contiguous to the Preserve's northeast boundary, and managing the world-class bouldering area presents a number of staffing and fiscal challenges, the Committee recognized the significance of the parcel and decided to pursue discussions with Rosendale officials. The GCC arranged a meeting between the Preserve and members of the Rosendale town board on August 9.

From that favorable meeting, the crux for moving ahead with any deal rests with the GCC and the climbing community. We will need to raise \$100,000 to assist the Preserve with potential operating costs of the Waterworks for five years, until the Preserve can reasonably assess yearly revenues on the parcel from day and membership fees. To this end, we are pursuing state and private grants, and assistance through the climbing manufacturers and individual patrons.

Adopt-A-Crag Day and Eric Hörst Slide Show

Adopt-A-Crag day is Saturday, October 21st in the Peters' Kill area of Minnewaska State Park. It will be another busy but fun filled day, helping to maintain the trails and climbing areas, making friends, climbing free for the day, and collecting some great give-a-ways! To end the day, meet us in the Mohonk Preserve Visitor's Center at 7pm for a slide show

by well known climber and author, **Eric Hörst**. Eric will present a rock tour of his travels climbing around the world, as well as a primer on *Training for Climbing*. We will also vote on our new by-laws during a GCC Steering Committee meeting at 6pm before the show.

Memberships and Donations

The GCC is a non-profit organization, an affiliate of the Access Fund, and funded by membership dues, fundraising and donations. Visit our website to join or make donations to our General Rescue Fund.

Thank you for your support!

