



2220CIVLION  
CLIMBING WALL ASSOCIATION

# Lines: The CWA Newsletter

**Vol. 5, No. 3**

**May 22, 2009**

## **Welcome**

Dear Colleagues,

Phew, another successful CWA Conference is behind us. The event is really starting to mature and grow. We got great feedback on the event and good suggestions for improving the it in the future. It seems to get better and better every year. Thanks to everyone who participated!

The public review and comment period for the proposed certification standards has concluded. We got a lot of participation as we expected. Feedback on the certification standards was almost universally constructive. The certification standards committee will begin the work of reviewing the comments next week.

We also conducted a separate survey on attitudes and preferences regarding certification, and also some information about existing training practices. The survey showed us that there is support for the certification concept. It also revealed that how certification standards are presented and how a program is implemented are critically important to the industry. If you participated in either of these processes, thank you. Your contributions were invaluable.

Happy Climbing,

Bill

Bill Zimmermann,  
Executive Director

## 2009 Climbing Wall Summit Wrap-up

On April 30, climbing gym owners, operators, wall and equipment manufacturers and business professionals gathered in Boulder, Colo. for the third annual professional development conference. Attendees traveled from all over the United States, Malaysia, New Zealand, Canada and Bulgaria to participate in pre-conference and conference workshops ranging in focus from adaptive climbing techniques to developing a business/marketing plan.

Chris Warner, founder and owner of Earth Treks Climbing, delivered a powerful keynote address, posing challenging questions like: with a new breed of sophisticated investors and professional managers, will you survive, thrive, or splatter? More advice from Warner can be found in High Altitude Leadership, which he co-authored with Don Schmincke.

After three full days of workshops, conference attendees were able to unwind with happy hour provided by Great Trango Holdings, a slide show by So iLL, and a not-so-secret party thrown by Rockwerx.

The CWA is still collecting conference evaluations. Your feedback helps us to make necessary changes and address your needs for next year. You can fill out a survey [here](#).

Here is an example of some of the conference feedback so far:

*What workshops did you find most beneficial? Why?*

- The Guerilla Marketing Workshop - the ideas presented and the ones that came up were outstanding - I learned alot!
- Covering your assets, guerilla marketing, case law review, great information and discussion.
- Realizing a modern climbing gym. It really opened my mind to what is really out there.
- Chris Danielson's workshops were incredible - he is a wealth of knowledge that also knows how to present it!
- Loved Heather Reynolds - Creating Your Best Climbing Community pre-conference workshop. Helped me identify my core values for the biz to be able to target my market and build a gym program that not only serves the community, but my employees as well.
- Climbing Gym Start Up & Expansion with Cort - great workshop because I am considering opening my own facility.

*How would you describe this conference to someone else?*

- Invaluable.
- Informative, a great opportunity to network, a good time!
- THE place to go if you own a gym, manage a gym, or hope to one day.

- An excellent cross section of what the climbing wall industry is, it's problems, issues, priorities, and future outlook.
- A great way to get out of your climbing community 'bubble' and learn about what is going on in the industry.

*I'd like to tell you...*

- How much I appreciate the way the CWA advocates for gym owners.
  - Thanks for the work you are doing to improve the sport and to make it safer for our customers.
  - Great job again! You guys are doing a wonderful job! Thanks for organizing summit!
  - I'll see you guys next year.
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## **CWA on Facebook**

The CWA has joined the masses on Facebook. Check out our updates, upcoming events, photos, and discussion boards. Become a fan of the CWA today!

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## **Portrait of the American Climber**

Moving swiftly at about 25-miles-an-hour uphill, a '76 mustard-yellow Volkswagen bus is traveling across the country toting a big red banner with black magic marker that reads "rockadventuremovie.com." Inside the less-than-polished exterior, sits a small but efficient film crew, geographically knocking off interviews with key figures of American rock climbing history for the film project "Portrait of the American Climber."

Starting in Southern California, the crew has stopped in on names from Mark Powell to Royal Robbins, Ron Kauk to John Bachar, and Peter Croft to Joe Kelsey. They will continue eastbound, picking up interviews from big and small names alike including Lynn Hill, Henry Barber, and Josh Wharton to name a few...

This story is not just about scary climbs and funny stories, but the philosophy behind an entire world of people making a life around rock climbing. The story will cover the bigger implications about progress, wilderness, and the desire for fulfillment in man amongst the mountains.

"I was raised by a prolific 1970s climbing-storyteller who fed me climbing lore all my life, and I spent about two years researching this after I got out of film school," says director Oakley Anderson-Moore. "It's been an amazing experience to be welcomed into the homes of these different characters and hear them tell their stories, the good and the bad, the success and failures, and think about how all of this fits

into a bigger picture. With every interview, the story becomes more complex, and I've never been more sure about anything in my life than the worth of sharing this story."

The project started with a seed grant from Banff and the help of the American Alpine Club. Then the interviews started last fall with a trip to the AAC's Craggin Classic, and the Gunks Reunion in New York. The next batch of interviews will end in June and then the process of delving into editing, archives, and the filming of climbing sequences will start.

You can follow the progress of the project at the website: [www.rockadventuremovie.com](http://www.rockadventuremovie.com). Who knows, maybe you can sponsor a hot meal for the crew along the way!

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## **Support the Troops: Help Build a Wall**

The owners of RockSport Climbing Center in Reno, Nevada are enlisting the help of the climbing community to build a climbing wall for troops currently serving in the Helmand Province in Afghanistan.

Mark Gammon, owner of RockSport, is the father of Anthony Gammon who currently serves as part of a naval mobile construction battalion.

According to Gammon, "Anthony has taken it upon himself to put together some extra curricular activities to fill the little time left of the 81 hour work week."

Products can be donated to RockSport up until June 15th and can be mailed to the address below.

RockSport Climbing Center  
ATTN: Mark Gammon  
1901 Silverada Blvd, #10  
Reno, NV 89512  
775.352.7673

For more information, contact Mark Gammon.

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## **Spot Climbing School Seeks Program Director**

Interested in working with one of Boulder's top climbing gyms? The Spot Bouldering gym is seeking a program director to manage, grow/develop, and continually refine all aspects of the Spot Climbing School's indoor instruction and outdoor guiding in a creative and business-savvy manner to deliver world-class experiences and growth opportunities to their clientele.

Specifically the Program Director will:

- Manage and screen participant enrollment in indoor and outdoor programs;
- Ensure profitability of individual programs through careful analysis of costs and revenues. Manage budgets and strategic growth of the business;
- Collaborate with the Marketing Department to promote enrollment in programs;
- Serve as Human Resources Manager for the Climbing School including: staffing, hiring, and training instructors, guides, and climbing coaches for all indoor and outdoor programs;
- Orchestrate the flow of the Assistant Program Director, Head Coach, Head Guide, and up to twenty instructors/guides; Support and encourage development of professional career opportunities for staff;
- Serve as Chief Administrative Risk Manager for the Spot Climbing School including writing policy and procedures for operation;
- Secure permits for operation of outdoor programs;

Desired Prerequisites/Useful Experience;

- Significant experience in climbing gym and/or guiding industry; ideally as a Program Director, Assistant Program Director or Head Guide (submit an institutional instructing/guiding history in addition to resume);
- Trained and experienced with institutional climbing systems and risk management;
- Professional climbing experience (5 years at minimum) and formal experience teaching climbing to others;
- Formal AMGA, NOLS, and/or Outward Bound climbing instruction training;
- Certification in Wilderness Medicine;
- Applicant is ideally able to instruct 90% of The Spot's program offerings upon hire;
- Strong communication (oral, written, and e-mail), coordination, and facilitation skills;
- Strong Microsoft computer application skills: Excel, Outlook, Word, etc.;

Terms

Applicant must be willing to commit a full year (minimum) to this position. The Spot will be accepting applications through July 15th (will hire the right applicant ASAP); Pay \$12-18/hour (rate dependent upon experience, salary terms negotiable). Vacation, Insurance, & other benefits available;

Email your resumes and cover letter to: [staffing@thespotgym.com](mailto:staffing@thespotgym.com)

## Member Profile: Sterling Rope

When they're not raising the bar on quality rope design, Carolyn Brodsky and Peter Schwarzenbach, owners of Sterling Rope, are outside climbing, skiing, kayaking, cycling or golfing. When Sterling was founded in 1992 by Brodsky and Willie Crear, the mission was simple: to create the most technically advanced, highest quality rope and cord for the life-safety market and to provide the absolute best customer service, to in fact, set the standard in the industries they served.

Sterling developed three unique rope constructions. All Sterling ropes feature DryCore™, a proprietary yarn treatment that keeps the core yarn from absorbing water. Sterling's static ropes are unique as well because they feature a 48-carrier sheath (most static ropes are made on 16- or 32-carriers) allowing for more yarn in the core (greater strength) and longer lasting performance. Sterling also developed the Marathon rope series with its unique and extremely durable sheath construction. "We originally designed this rope for guides and gyms," Brodsky stated in an email. "But it has become the standard rope for sport, alpine and trad climbing due to its incredible durability."

Sterling also offers a high heat resistant rope for fire rescue and was the first to make an all Technora escape rope. The company is testing the latest rope in their new Safety Pro™ line, which they hope to premier at the summer Outdoor Retailer show in Salt Lake City.

Several elite athletes make up Sterling's climbing teams including Chris Sharma, Joe Kinder, Whitney Boland and Kevin Jorgeson.

Sterling Rope  
26 Morin Street  
Biddeford, ME 04005  
207-282-2550  
[www.sterlingrope.com](http://www.sterlingrope.com)

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**About the Climbing Wall Association, Inc. (CWA).** The CWA is a 501(c)(06), non-profit, trade association incorporated in May of 2003 for manufacturers of climbing wall equipment, builders of climbing walls, operators of climbing walls, and others involved in the climbing industry.

The CWA is the only trade association addressing the needs and interests of the climbing wall industry and climbing wall operators. The mission of the Climbing Wall Association is to support the growth, health and independence of the climbing wall industry, and to promote the sport of climbing.