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CLIMBING WALL ASSOCIATION

Lines: The CWA Newsletter

Vol. 1, No. 1

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Welcome

Welcome to the first edition of Lines, the Climbing Wall Association newsletter. We hope to make Lines a regular part of your membership experience to keep you informed of association and industry news.

If you have suggestions or content for future editions, we would love to hear from you! Submitting articles to Lines is easy, and there's virtually no limit to what you can write. All we ask is that your article align with CWA's mission, and is of interest to our members. Issues of Lines may include feature articles, news briefs, profiles, notices, and reviews.

This is your chance to let the indoor climbing community know about the news, events, and people everyone should know about. Submit all content to bill@climbingwallindustry.org, and please include your contact information.

Thanks for writing!

Regards,

Bill Zimmermann,
Executive Director

A Letter from the Board Chair

Dear CWA Colleagues,

The past six months have been a time of significant change and progress for the CWA. With the hiring of Bill Zimmermann as the Executive Director, we have been addressing important issues that have been cropping up in the indoor climbing industry for some time.

Since 1993, having been involved with both the CGA and now the CWA; I have seen pressures exerted upon our industry that did not exist just a few years ago. We are now seeing more lawsuits, more pressure from government regulators, demands from equipment manufacturers, insurability issues stemming from more diverse use of artificial climbing walls in different contexts, and a change in the way the public views and uses climbing walls. Addressing all of these issues is at the forefront of the day-to-day operations of the CWA. Bringing the industry together to address these issues and developing sound practices for our industry is imperative.

The CWA Board is very proud of the work Bill has done since joining us in March. We have made much progress in developing the groundwork necessary to move forward in dealing with government agencies, manufacturers, standards development, and continuing a strong insurance program. We look forward to more progress in the year ahead.

It is important for all of us to understand that having a strong organization, with a strong membership base, representing our interests across the country, is vitally important to the future of each of our businesses. In a few short months we have made progress because of the support of a full-time staff member working on our behalf. The CWA needs the industry's support, each and every membership, and each and every renewal is very important to us at this point - your membership dollars advance your interests.

We thank all the members who have been supporting us over the years. We look forward to your continued support, and look forward to serving you in the future.

Best Regards,

Rich Johnston, Chair
Board of Directors

CWA Board Meeting and Reception

The CWA Board of Directors met in Boulder, Colorado May 20th and 21st 2005 to discuss association business and plans for the year. The Board discussed the CWA insurance program, CWA membership, operations at the new Colorado office, legal and legislative issues facing climbing gyms, standards development, a proposed CWA conference, and business planning for the upcoming year. Board teleconferences will be scheduled after the close of each quarter. The next face-to-face meeting of the Board of Directors is scheduled for April of 2006 in Boulder, Colorado.

The Spot Climbing Gym donated meeting space and hosted a Board Reception for members in the rocky mountain region the evening of May 20th. Representatives from The Spot, Monolithic Sculptures, USA Climbing, The Access Fund, Eldorado Wall Company, and other area members attended the reception. Special thanks to The Spot and Casey Newman for organizing the reception!

Legal and Legislative Issues

The CWA is a 501(c)(06), non-profit, industry trade association for those involved in the indoor climbing industry. As a 501(c)(06) the CWA can lobby on behalf of its members to improve the business conditions for the entire industry. CWA has been busy this spring advocating for members in a number of states including Ohio, New Jersey, and Massachusetts. We have also targeted a few other key states for action this year including New York, and California.

If you are aware of legislation, high-profile cases that could impact the indoor climbing industry, or if you are facing regulatory issues and would like CWA support, please contact us. We need to be informed of what is happening in your area. The industry is experiencing more and more regulatory pressure and your activity as a member will help us to represent your interests with regulatory agencies and legislators. If we all work together through organizations like the CWA, we have a chance to be effective in various states across the country.

Petzl Original Equipment Manufacturer and Training Organization Agreements

The CWA, through our attorney Catherine Hansen- Stamp, has been working with Petzl to offer comments and suggested revisions to the proposed Petzl agreements with climbing wall builders and climbing facilities that use or rent Petzl equipment. Early drafts of the Petzl agreements placed some unrealistic expectations on original equipment manufacturers (i.e. wall builders) and training organizations (i.e. climbing gyms). Petzl has been very receptive to the feedback from the CWA and the

resulting agreements should better address the interests of both Petzl and the indoor climbing community.

OIA Transfers Assets to CWA

The CWA and the Outdoor Industry Association (OIA) have signed an agreement to transfer assets previously held by OIA's climbing specialty groups. The CWA and OIA signed the agreement on July 1st which transfers ownership of all of the ClimbSmart! Program materials, and the publications "A Guide to Building Your Climbing Wall"; "How to Market Your Climbing Gym"; "A Journalists Guide to Climbing"; "The Route Setters Guide" and the handhold strength testing project materials and data. These assets will allow the CWA to offer a broader range of member services and products in the future.

A CWA Conference?

The CWA is considering the development of an annual conference for members to address the needs for networking, professional development and education, standards development, and conducting association business. We are developing plans for an annual three or four day event with options for informational workshops, training sessions, speakers, entertainment, and networking time. We are approaching other organizations such as USA Climbing to discuss the possibilities of a co-hosted event and member organizations regarding conference sponsorship. If you would be interested in volunteering some time on a conference host committee, please contact Bill Zimmermann.

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.