



Y220CIVL110K

Lines: The CWA Newsletter

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July 16, 2008

Welcome

Dear Colleagues,

The CWA has had an eventful month. After working with one of our members, Attorney Bob Angell, and regulators in the Commonwealth of Virginia, the CWA successfully worked to exempt Rise Up Climbing, LLC from being classified as an amusement under the Virginia State Department of Housing and Community Development. This is yet another accomplishment for our organization in this long-term public policy effort. You can read more about this case in this newsletter.

The CWA participated in several climbing events this past month. The Teva Mountain Games which featured the Bouldering World Cup took place June 5-8, 2008 in Vail, Colorado. Competitors from all over the globe came to Vail to compete and the CWA staff was on hand to witness the fun and support the competitors.

Hera's annual Climb4Life took place in Boulder this year June 13-15. Andrea Sutherland, our Executive Assistant, represented the CWA on the Paradox Sports climbing team. The group climbed multiple routes in Eldorado Canyon and raised over \$1,500 for ovarian cancer research.

Finally, the CWA staff moved into its new office on the first of July. We are located just around the corner from our old office in a much larger commercial studio. This new space will allow CWA more breathing room and some room to grow.

We hope you are having a great summer. Happy climbing!

Bill Zimmermann,
Executive Director

New Virginia Gym Exempted from Amusement Regulations

At the 2008 Summit in Boulder, I spoke with a CWA member who is in the process of building a new indoor climbing facility in Lynchburg, Virginia. Our member told me that the local building department informed him the new facility would be subject to amusement device licensing and inspections under state regulations. He asked for my help in attempting to convince the regulators that the new gym should not be subject to licensing as an amusement.

Upon my return from Boulder, I began researching the Virginia statutes and rules governing amusements. I discovered that climbing walls were simply grafted onto the existing amusement regulations, almost as an afterthought. At the same time, Executive Director Bill Zimmermann sent the local building inspector a letter outlining the CWA's position on the regulation of climbing facilities as amusements. As often happens when local officials apply state regulations, the building inspector and city attorney told us that "the word from on high" was to regulate climbing walls as amusements, even though "that might not make much sense."

I decided to "go over their heads" and take the matter up with the regulators at the state level. I sent an opinion letter, based on similar efforts on behalf of climbing gyms in Ohio, to the Virginia Director of Housing and Community Development and had a rather lengthy telephone conversation with his deputy director. Through those contacts, I learned that there is a process to request exemption and an appeal process at both the local and state levels, and that the local officials' hands were not tied as some of them had led us to believe. To make a long story short, our member requested an exemption from the local building inspector, and after a tour of the new facility, the building inspector decided to grant the exemption.

Of course, we were very pleased with this outcome, but beyond that, it was an interesting process of finding and reasoning with the decision-makers. Every state is a little different in its approach to regulation; even finding the correct department to talk to can be something of a challenge, at least initially. In Virginia, we had a doubly good outcome, because the state regulators have extended an invitation to the CWA to participate in meetings for the next regulatory cycle. They are particularly interested in looking at the new regulations the CWA hammered out in Massachusetts. There is a very good chance that we will be able to influence new regulations in Virginia that will exempt climbing facilities across the board from amusement licensing, and will be appropriate to the climbing industry.

Best wishes for a great summer.

Robert Angell, Esq.

CWA Board Member

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Disclaimer: The information provided above is offered for the general guidance of members of the Association and is not intended, and should not be construed, as the provision of legal advice in any pending or anticipated matter. Please consult your legal counsel for advice regarding any such matters.

2008 State Mountain Games of the West

On Saturday, July 26, and Sunday, July 27, THE ROCK Climbing Center in Monument, CO will be holding bouldering and climbing competitions as part of the State Games of the West. This is the first time rock climbing has been part of these Games, which include 13 western states. This is a great opportunity for your competitive climbers to do a tune-up event in the middle of the summer or for new people getting into competitions to see what they're like.

The State Games emphasize participation and are run Olympic-style with opening ceremonies and gold, silver, and bronze medals for category winners. Derek Parra, Olympic medal-winning speed skater, will be the featured presenter at this year's Opening Ceremony.

The bouldering competition will be held Sat, 7/26 with youth categories (Youth D, C, B, A, -Junior) competing from 10 AM-1 PM and adult categories (Rec, Int, Adv, Master) from 4-7 PM. We are utilizing the same age categories as ABS and SCS. Sun, 7/27 will be top-rope climbing with youth categories from 9 AM-12 PM and adult categories from 3-6 PM. For both events, the format will be redpoint, with three hours to complete as many problems or climbs as you can. There are no penalties for falls, a 10% bonus for flashing, a 20% bonus for leading, and the top five scores will count. Medals will be awarded for 1st-3rd in all categories for male and female climbers. The cost is \$25 for each event if you register before July 11 and \$30 after that.

If you have questions specific to the climbing format, please contact Lara Groshong at lara@climbingtherock.com. If you want to pre-register or find out more about the State Games, please visit StateGamesoftheWest.org.

Member Profile: Earth Treks

How does a company with three 16,000+ square-foot climbing gyms, 100+ employees with almost 1000 years of combined climbing experience, and members that range from the novice to the world-class climber remain in business for nearly two decades? The answer can be summed up in Earth Treks' mission statement: To Share our Passion for Climbing.

By adopting this motto, Earth Treks has grown from an outdoor guiding service to a world-class corporation that boasts three gym locations in the cities of Columbia, Timonium, and Rockville, all

located in the Baltimore/Washington DC corridor of Maryland. The gyms feature 50-foot climbing walls with cracks, slabs, overhangs, arches, bouldering caves, and even a stalactite.

Earth Treks prides itself on the climbing community it has helped develop on the east coast. The gyms have hosted several community focused events including two HERA Climb4Life events benefiting ovarian cancer research and four Climb For Hope events which help support research for breast cancer at Johns Hopkins University. Earth Treks has also hosted several climbing and bouldering competitions including the 2007 ABS regional bouldering comp, Petzl Roc Comps, and Mammut Comp. This year, Earth Treks hosted the USAC SCS Regional and Divisional Qualifiers.

Chris Warner, owner of Earth Treks, has been climbing for 26 years and is one of only nine Americans to summit both Everest and K2. His expedition to K2 last year was the subject for the Emmy nominated sports documentary "K2: Climbing the Savage Mountain" featured on NBC. Warner is currently climbing Nanga Parbat, Pakistan's second highest mountain. You can read more about Warner's experience at sharedsummits.com.

Warner isn't the only Earth Treks employee to put up impressive climbs. Matt Bosley, Earth Treks' lead route setter, and Charlotte Jouett, Earth Treks' retail buyer, are both nationally and internationally ranked climbers. Both represented Team USA at the Bouldering World Cup held in Vail, Colorado last month.

In addition to their impressive facilities and staff, Earth Treks offers several programs for members including international mountaineering expeditions to Ecuador, Aconcagua, Kilimanjaro, Elbrus, and Everest. To learn more about Earth Treks and the programs they offer, check out their website at earthtreksclimbing.com

Earth Treks locations:

Columbia Climbing Center
7125-C Columbia Gateway Drive
Columbia, MD 21046

Timonium Climbing Center
1930 Greenspring Drive
Timonium, MD 21093

Rockville Climbing Center
725 Rockville Pike (The Marlo Building)
Rockville, MD 20852

1-800-CLIMB-UP

www.earthtreksclimbing.com

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.