



2009 CIVILIAN
CLIMBING WALL ASSOCIATION

Lines: The CWA Newsletter

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Welcome

Dear Colleagues,

Summer has finally arrived in Boulder after a wet, cool spring. The old timers tell me this is the way Colorado summers used to be before a long string of near-drought and drought years. The meadows and wildflowers in the high country are stunning, and brown season has not arrived yet and may not. The burn area from this winter's fast moving grass fire, which we can see from our office, is as green as Ireland today.

In other green news, we are all eagerly anticipating the opening of Boulder's newest, greenest climbing gym -- Movement Climbing and Fitness. The grand opening is scheduled for July 25th. We cannot wait to introduce you to the completed facility next year at the 2010 Climbing Wall Summit. We have tentative dates for the Summit and will be making an official announcement shortly, for now mark your calendars for May 13 to 16, 2010.

Finally, tragically, the climbing community lost some outstanding climbers recently. Jonny Copp, Micah Dash, and Wade Johnson were killed in an avalanche in China attempting a new route on Mt. Edgar. We also learned that legendary climber John Bachar died in a fall Sunday at Dike Wall near Mammoth Lakes. Our sincere condolences go out to the friends and family of these accomplished climbers.

Wherever your adventures take you, please take care.

Sincerely,

Bill Zimmermann,
Executive Director

Dates for 2010 Climbing Wall Summit set

The 2010 Climbing Wall Summit will officially take place May 13-16, 2010 in Boulder, Colorado. Last year, over 250 people attended the conference despite the downturn in the economy.

The 2010 Summit will take place on the University of Colorado's campus in the University Memorial Center. This new venue offers secure dedicated exhibit space, larger conference rooms, air conditioning and a variety of services and amenities that conference attendees are sure to appreciate.

As always, the CWA staff is working hard to recruit quality presenters who can share their expertise in pre-conference and conference workshops. If you would like to present at the 2010 Summit, [click here](#).

Members of the CWA can take advantage of early-bird sponsor and exhibiting opportunities. The CWA is currently accepting applications for member sponsors and exhibitors who will have first choice of exhibiting space and event opportunities. Sponsor and exhibiting opportunities for non-members will begin Sept. 1. If your company is interested in sponsoring or exhibiting, please download our Exhibitor Prospectus [HERE](#).

Stay tuned for more!

ICE ice baby

Last week, the CWA staff attended the semi-annual Outdoor Retailer show in Salt Lake City, Utah. Of the hundreds of outdoor vendors, manufacturers and non-profits, the CWA booth found itself positioned next to the only government agency at the entire show: the Department of Homeland Security. Our neighbors, National Program Manager Thomas Hipelius and Special Agent David Hudgens, work for the department of US Immigration and Customs Enforcement, better known in the world of government anagrams as ICE.

Why were federal government employees, dressed in formal suits and carrying information pamphlets attending a show frequented by Keen-wearing dirtbags who held out for 4:00 pm beer?

Their answer: to ensure the protection of American citizens and commercial companies by targeting people and organizations that manufacture fraudulent products.

According to Hipelius, last year ICE agents and inspectors from Customs and Border Protection (CBP) made nearly 15,000 seizures of counterfeit products (a seizure may include one counterfeit article like a pair of shoes to an entire warehouse of counterfeit products). The top five commodities seized include footwear, handbags/backpacks, pharmaceutical products, wedding apparel and electronic items. In

2008, China was the largest producer of counterfeit items and made up 81% of all products seized by ICE and the CBP.

The outdoor community is not immune to these counterfeiters.

"Counterfeiters are knocking off everyone's products," Hipelius said. "Ropes and carabiners are made to a certain safety standard. Counterfeiters don't care."

Although, ICE has not come across any cases of knock-off climbing gear, the agency wants to make sure they are proactive with the possibility of this kind of criminal activity. By attending trade-shows like Outdoor Retailer, ICE hopes to reach out to companies that may not be aware of their existence and their ability to help.

While many Americans may opt for the cheaper, knock-off version of Nike or The North Face, Hipelius cautions you. "The money generated from these sales goes to supporting organized crime and other illegal activities, which may include drug trafficking and possibly terrorism."

Vendors and individuals who come across counterfeit merchandise are encouraged to contact the agency at 1-866-DHS-2-ICE.

Some actions vendors and individuals can take to avoid counterfeit merchandise:

1. Purchase merchandise from reputable vendors or directly from the manufacturer
2. Be wary of online purchases especially from sites like EBay and Craigslist
3. Be careful of purchasing batteries or replacement parts online. Numerous counterfeiters utilize the Internet to sell their wares.
4. If the price sounds too good to be true - then it probably is.

Computer Software for climbing gyms

In the new era of climbing recreation, health clubs and climbing gyms are starting to look more and more similar with multi-purpose facilities adding climbing and bouldering walls to their mega-complexes and climbing gyms adding yoga studios and weight rooms.

Despite this confluence, climbing gyms still have specific needs that are drastically different than their health facility counterparts. Member management software is no exception.

At the 2009 Climbing Wall Summit, Andy Laakman demonstrated Rock Gym Pro, his answer to the climbing world's struggle with complicated computer software to manage membership and keep track of rental equipment.

"I own and operate a gym with it, so I designed it specifically for the needs of a climbing gym," Laakman stated in an email.

After Laakman opened Enclosure Climbing Center in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, he quickly noticed his current software was not able to keep up with the over 700 new members that flooded his gym.

According to Rock Gym Pro's website, "Climbing gyms are not health clubs, and trying to operate a climbing gym with health club software was costing us time and money. Thousands of dollars were being wasted each month on staff training, data entry mistakes, and poor work flow. This was all a direct result of running software not designed specifically for the unique needs of a climbing gym."

Laakman perfected Rock Gym Pro to address his gym's problems and has now made his software available to other climbing gyms across the nation.

"RGP is currently running in about 20 gyms since being released nine months ago," Laakman said. "It is 100% free and is licensed under the GNU public license."

On the other side of the Mississippi, computer science guru Barrett Myers created ClimbPoint software for friend and fellow climber Mark Lattin of the University of Kentucky. Lattin expressed frustration with managing student workers and student climbers at Kentucky's climbing wall.

"I worked closely with the University of Kentucky when designing ClimbPoint, and one of their top requests was that the program be idiot-proof," Myers said. "That sounds harsh, but I took it to heart and have designed ClimbPoint to be as streamlined and easy to use as possible. Wall staff members don't need any training on how to use the software, and creating a climber or checking someone in only requires a couple clicks."

In addition to offering simple registration of new climbers, ClimbPoint allows managers to review accurate reports on how many climbers have visited their facility in a given period of time and how often these climbers returned, providing key data and insight for a gym's future performance and contribute to industry-wide statistics.

RockBiz software was written by Stan Mish, a climber, programmer, and founder of Vertical Relief climbing gym in Flagstaff, Arizona. RockBiz was originally developed as a proprietary tool for one gym. However, a new company Vertical Relief Enterprises, Inc. was spun off as a fully independent corporation, so the product could be made available to customers throughout the climbing industry.

RockBiz management software has been used for 15 years in climbing gym operations. It is available as webware or a server-based application that integrates data from all aspects of gym operations to improve efficiency and support business decisions. Among its many features RockBiz provides strong security architecture including role-based authorization and user authentication and accountability.

In addition, RockBiz is specifically designed to support the Industry Practices, 3rd Ed., published by the Climbing Wall Association. RockBiz has evolved to meet the changing needs of growing businesses and the demands of a maturing industry.

Vertical Relief Enterprises, Inc., has formed a partnership with 7K Information Technologies, LLC. to provide sales and technical support to users of RockBiz.

"We are currently using the Rockbiz package which is awesome. The developer, Stan Mish has done a great job with it ..." Bryan Pletta, Stone Age Climbing Gym, Inc.

For more information, visit www.rockgympro.com, www.climbpoint.com, and www.rockbizsoftware.com.

Brad Bag provides fair trade, quality chalk bags

In 2006, Brad Priebe, a recent college graduate and Climb Kalamazoo employee, was strapped for cash. Priebe began designing and sewing chalk bags, using his basement as a make-shift factory, and selling his creations to friends and fellow climbers.

While the business met Priebe's financial needs, it was not until he enlisted the services of Mongolian seamstress Gereltsetseg (Gerlee) Renchin that his business became a sustainable reality.

Today, Brad Bag, LLC, prides itself on providing climbers with top-quality chalk bags, sewn by Renchin (who still remains in Mongolia) who receives fair compensation for her work. Priebe first met Renchin on a trip to Mongolia three years ago.

According to Priebe, "[Renchin] is able to sew these bags at home and make a good living. Brad Bag is dedicated to paying their partners in developing countries a better than fair wage. [Renchin] often chooses the fabrics she makes bags out of, and hand embroiders various bags using traditional Mongolian stitching. [Renchin's husband] is a talented artist and often draws traditional Mongolian symbols onto bags so [Renchin] can stitch them. Their creativity ensures that Brad Bags are a unique blend of a practical chalk bag and Mongolian cultural handiwork..."

For Brad Bag, even as business expands, fair trade will always remain a top priority. "We plan to continue to expand the business by recruiting more seamstresses looking for work in Mongolia," Priebe said. "We believe that these women or men deserve to be fairly compensated for their work so that they may build better lives for their families."

Recently, Brad Bag released their new chalk bucket, which comes complete with a roll-top closure which allows a larger opening and prevents chalk from leaking out on other climbing gear and gym floors.

"At Brad Bag, we like to think of the climbing community as a group of people that are fun-loving healthy outdoors people that support local businesses, environmentally sensible practices, and fair wages," Priebe said. "I believe that we at Brad Bag strive to support the exact same things. We try to market our bags to local climbing gyms and shops that have employees that actually climb. We like to think that the employees that sell our bags use them and sell them from personal experience."

Member Profile: Redpoint Nutrition

Climbers have always battled injuries, pushing through shoulder, joint and forearm strains in hopes of improving their strength and level of difficulty. For Jason Hendrickson and Cindy Purvance, owners of Redpoint Nutrition, compromising health for climbing difficulty is a thing of the past.

"After years of climbing too much and failing to take proper care of our bodies, recurring injuries eventually became a limiting factor in our ability to climb," Purvance said. "However, it drove home the importance of taking care of your body when you're climbing regularly, which was a huge motivation for starting Redpoint Nutrition."

In February, Redpoint released CRANK Forearm Fuel, which, according to Purvance, "helps delay the onset of muscle fatigue, increase power, improve endurance and speed recovery."

"Athletes in virtually every other popular sport in the world rely on nutritional supplements to ensure peak performance and optimal health," Purvance said. "The problem is that rock climbing isn't like any other sport in the world. As climbers we want to be strong but we can't lug meat-head bodybuilder muscles up a climb. We want endurance but we understand that endurance alone will only take us so far (usually only to the next crux move). We need something that works, something with ingredients that are backed by legitimate and compelling science, something that's proven by climbers."

According to Purvance, "Redpoint Nutrition's products consist of only the highest quality ingredients, are made in a laboratory that meets the stringent quality and manufacturing guidelines of the FDA, and are free of any substance banned by USA Climbing, IOC, NCAA or World Anti-Doping Agency."

In the few short months it has been on the market, Crank Forearm Fuel has received rave reviews from amateur and professional climbers. One customer testimonial states, "I have now gone through one container of CRANK. In the last couple of months I have noticed a big difference in my climbing. I have been able to climb harder and for longer periods of time."

(more)

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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.