



## Lower West Acquisition Complete

Thanks to the many of you who have supported this project, the long "climb" toward the acquisition of Lower West Bolton is complete! CRAG-VT closed on the Lower

West Bolton cliffs on May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2003, and is now the proud owner of one of Vermont's most popular climbing destinations! CRAG-VT is indebted to Mr. Patrick Smith who donated the 5+ acre parcel and who has worked steadfastly with us to see the transfer through, and to Pam Moreau of Langrock Sperry and Wool for her legal counsel.

The parcel encompasses the rock face including the access trails on the north and south sides of the cliff. This will allow legal access to the summit for setting top-ropes or gazing at the scenic mountain view.

CRAG-VT's acquisition of the Lower West cliff is the first land deal of its kind in Vermont where a local not-for-profit has protected a cliff specifically for climbing. We are looking forward to being the stewards of this crag! Come help us celebrate at Lower West on June 28<sup>th</sup> (see sidebar for details!).

~Heather Hibbard



©Paul Hanson/Scopixel

Pete Warner climbing Hailstorm (5.9) at Lower West Bolton.

## CRAG-VT Begins Work to Attain Quarry Access!

For years, access at the Bolton Quarry has been tenuous at best. However, the stunning vertical ice pillars and aesthetically pleasing rock climbs have kept us focused on landowner relations. CRAG-VT negotiated access to the quarry in 2002, only to have it closed again due to increased traffic, surly climber attitudes, and displeased neighbors. Please be polite when talking to any neighbor or landowner!

Now there is an opportunity for CRAG-VT to regain access to the Quarry and we need your help! CRAG-VT is discussing several options with the landowner to secure access, including the possibility of purchase, or finding a climbing-friendly landowner.

To help with this effort, please contact Travis Peckham at tpeckham@6degrees.com or 899-3455. Volunteers are needed to help write letters, do mailings, and talk to potential sponsors.



Chris Capla

Ross Perry climbing at the Quarry when it was open.

In the meantime, please respect the current landowners wishes and DO NOT climb at the Quarry! See the ACCESS ALERT! on page two for more information.Thanks!

~Heather Hibbard

## PRIZES! FOOD! FUN!

### Lower West Celebration: June 28<sup>th</sup>

Now it's your turn to celebrate with us! On Saturday June 28<sup>th</sup>, CRAG-VT and Petra Cliffs will host a trail-day celebration at Lower West. Help is needed to spruce-up the trail, repair badly eroding slopes, and install a new sign. Join us at 9:30am to kick off a stewardship day on our well-loved crag. Early birds can start the day with an 8:00am breakfast at the Bridge Street Cafe (buy your own).

#### Trail Day Details:

- 8:00am Breakfast at Bridge St. Cafe
- 9:30am Meet at Lower West (please carpool!)
- 10:00am Ribbon cutting & sign unveiling
- 4:00pm Raffle and gear auction

#### What to Bring:

Tools are needed, including shovels, rock bars, pick axes, and wheel barrows. Please wear sturdy clothes, work gloves, and boots. We'll have water and snacks, but BYO lunch and water bottles. This event will happen rain or shine.

All participants will receive a raffle ticket. Raffle and auction items have been donated by: Climb High, Outdoor Gear Exchange, Petra Cliffs, IBEX, Isis, Wild Country, Vermont Coffee Company, Intervale Compost, Bluewater, Maple Wind Farm, Raquet's Edge, and MORE!

**Please call Petra Cliffs at 1-866-65-PETRA to sign up for the event. We hope to see you there!**

**CRAG-VT is an organization for climbers and landowners. We encourage both to contact us with concerns about climbing access, landowner liability, and natural resource issues. For more information visit [www.cragvt.org](http://www.cragvt.org).**

## THE CRAG RAG

The **Crag Rag** is the membership newsletter of CRAG-VT. It is published two times/year in the spring and fall.

Issue Vol. 1 No. 2 - May 2003

### CRAG-VT Board - 2003

Heather Hibbard - *President*  
Nicole Ballinger - *Vice President*  
Pam Moreau - *Secretary (& Legal Counsel)*  
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Alden Pellett  
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CRAG-VT is run entirely by volunteers. If you are interested in volunteering or Board membership, please contact us!

### Contact Information

PO Box 614  
Richmond, VT 05477  
(802) 229-0140  
info@cragvt.org  
www.cragvt.org

### Meetings

CRAG-VT typically meets on the first Wednesday of each month at 6:30pm at the Camels Hump Middle School in Richmond, VT. The public is welcome to meetings. Call or email to confirm the time and date.

*Newsletter design by Nicole Ballinger*

## UVM Climbing Club

The UVM Climbing Club is a newly formed group that strives to bring climbing to the UVM community. Utilizing climbing facilities such as the Climbing Wall and the Bouldering Hallway, students can learn "hands on" why people get so fired up about this crazy sport. The Club also serves as a mechanism to allow the UVM climbing community to come together. It is our dream to get people interested so that they can grow and develop their own love for the sport someday. For more information about the club, email [bmerlin@zoo.uvm.edu](mailto:bmerlin@zoo.uvm.edu).

*~Brett Merlin, UVM Climbing Club President*

## A Big THANKS to...

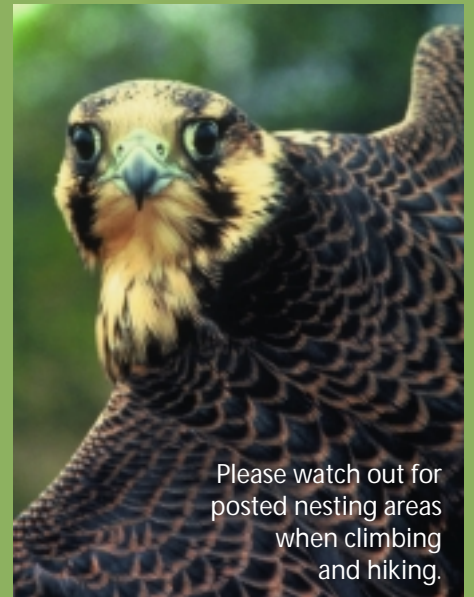
- \* **The Access Fund** for their continued generous support and advice.
- \* **Petra Cliffs** for their help with outreach at the Banff film fest and with the upcoming Lower West celebration on June 28<sup>th</sup>.
- \* **Ecopixel** for hosting and maintaining our website: [www.cragvt.org](http://www.cragvt.org).
- \* **Richmond Home Supply** for donating lumber to CRAG-VT for the Lower West sign and to **Mike Donohue** for building the sign.
- \* **Outdoor Gear Exchange** for newsletter and brochure printing.

## Peregrine Closures

Several local crags are peregrine falcon nesting sites from April to August. Listed as endangered in New York and Vermont, peregrines vanished from the eastern U.S. by the 1960s because of the pesticide DDT. Since then, breeding and recovery efforts and a DDT ban have led to a comeback. In 2002, 40 young were recorded in Vermont.

Please help the bird's recovery by staying away from posted cliffs. Safety is also important as peregrines may attack intruders to defend their young!

Contact the Adirondack State Park at (518) 897-1291 for posted sites in the Adirondacks. Posted Vermont crags include, Mt Pisgah, Smuggler's Notch, Bone Mountain, Bolton Notch, Deer Leap, and many other cliffs that are not typically climbed. For a list of all Vermont sites, call the Nongame and Natural



Please watch out for posted nesting areas when climbing and hiking.

Heritage Program at (802) 241-3717 or the National Wildlife Federation at (802) 229-0650 ext. 303. Sites are also listed at: [www.accessfund.org](http://www.accessfund.org).

## ACCESS ALERT!

The Bolton Quarry had its access revoked in early March 2003. Located on private property, the Quarry had been visited by climbers over the years but remained a fairly well-kept secret until recently. CRAG-VT negotiated access in 2002, but this verbal agreement was retracted by the landowner due to sharply increased ice climber traffic and negative encounters between neighborhood residents and Quarry visitors.

One particular incident soured adjacent neighbors and the landowner to the idea of open access. In its aftermath, two "No Trespassing / No Rock Climbing" signs were placed along the crag's access road. CRAG-VT is currently communicating with the landowner to secure permanent access (see page one), but climbing is not permitted as of this newsletter's printing.

Following up with the Access Alert! from our last newsletter (Vol. 1 - No. 1), the ban on group-climbing permits at Prospect Rock in Johnson remains in effect. Individual climbing does not require a permit and is not illegal, but is discouraged by the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) because of the sensitive issues discussed in the last newsletter, according to Michael Fraysier, ANR Lands Director.

Additionally, the privately owned crag, Secret Squirrel, near Prospect Rock remains closed to climbing indefinitely. According to Brad Moskowitz of Johnson State College, "No Trespassing" signs are posted on the property, and he is quite sure the owner hasn't changed his mind.

*~Ross Perry*

# The CHOSS PILE Vermont Climbing News...

*Got Choss? We've got it here - a roundup of what's happening on the ice, rock, boulders, and in the gym in Vermont and nearby...*

## ICE

It was an amazing ice season: virtually everything was in-shape, including local climbers. With this year's unusually thick ice, several new lines formed. Alden Pellett established Paradise Theater in Smuggler's Notch that he gives NEI4+. The route exploits a new line near Grand Illusion and passes some scary loose blocks en route to the ice.

Pellett, among others, also repeated Call of the Wild (NEI6) at Lake Willoughby. With the usual playful glint in his eye, Pellett said, "Aw, it seemed about like NEI5+." A number of other locals were eyeing a big free-hanger near Ragnarock this winter, which unfortunately broke off before an attempt. There's always next winter.

Erik Weihenmayer, who made history in 2001 as the first blind climber to summit Everest, visited Willoughby's ice this past winter. Along with Alden Pellett, Dave Furman, and Ian Osteyee, Erik climbed the The Last Gentleman's steep ice in fine style. Erik also climbed the Black Dike on Cannon Cliff, Pinnacle Gulley en route to Mount Washington's summit, and Power Play in the Adirondacks with Ian and Geoff Tabin, another Everest veteran.



© Alden Pellett

Erik Weihenmayer sailing up the steep ice at Lake Willoughby.

Two young guns from Maryland, Ian Boyer and Chris Thomas, turned a few heads in the Adirondacks. Thomas established Gold Rush Direct, one of the northeast's most impressive ascents. After a big, ground-sweeping whipper, Thomas sent it. The route is yet unrepeated, but is allegedly WI6 or harder. Earlier, Thomas did the FFA of Glass Pipe (M8) at the Exit 30 crag. Boyer later upped the ante by flashing it.

Area local, Kevin Crowell did the coveted FFA of Spike Direct, conjuring up the spirit of the late, great Alex Lowe. Joe Szot repeated this masterpiece of thin ice technique calling it, "The hardest thing I've ever done." Szot also added "H14," a mixed route left of Spike. Tom Yandon and Matt Horner were up to their usual tricks as well by sending and attempting difficult lines without fanfare. Just another day at the office!

Area local, Adam Sherman, claimed an impressive on-sight ascent of the notorious Chapel Pond Slab this winter. At NEI 2 this 700 foot route challenges even the most novice climbers.

## ROCK AND BOULDERS

The big news this season, of course, is the loss of the "Old Man" on Cannon in NH. In recent years, the cliff has seen unprecedented large rock falls. Major exfoliation has occurred on Fugue, Union Jack, Sam's Swan Song, and Whaleback Crack to name a few. The Whaleback fall deposited a Chevy

## Climbing COMMON SENSE

*Much of Vermont's climbing is on private land and some is on public land. Access on private land is a delicate matter. The following guidelines will help ensure good relationships among climbers, landowners, and land managers:*

### 1. If you don't know, ASK.

Where to park? Where to hike in from? Is the cliff closed to peregrine nesting? If you don't know, ask the landowner.

### 2. Turn down the volume.

Noise travels easily in many areas. Keep noise to the bare minimum on the approach and while climbing. Leave boom boxes and barking dogs at home.

### 3. Leave No Trace.

"Take only photos, leave only foot prints..." Stay on existing trails. Pack out garbage whether it's yours or someone else's. Don't place or leave fixed anchors without landowner consent.

### 4. Use common sense & courtesy.

Be smart and polite to landowners, neighbors and other recreational users. Climbing on private land is a privilege, not a right.

Suburban-sized boulder a half-mile from the cliff and inches from the bike path.

No reports have yet described route conditions since the Old Man dropped to the talus, such as the classic Wiessner Corner pitch that formerly topped out with a belay on the Old Man's head. Bemoaning the loss of the state mascot, *The Burlington Free Press*, reported that NH Governor Craig Benson has suggested starting a fund to reconstruct the Old Man. Hey, maybe they can put Fugue back too!

Here in Vermont, things have finally started drying out and a new season of rockgrappelin' has begun. Unfortunately, a few crags have recently been closed to climbing--a critical setback that CRAG-VT is working hard to improve. In several cases, the problem appears to be an increase in the volume and visibility of climbers on privately owned crags. When climbing this summer, please remember: access to many area crags is often dependent on landowner's goodwill. Be respectful of landowners and neighbors, do your best to minimize impact and hopefully, we'll continue to maintain the local climbing resources we've grown to love.

*continued on back page...*



Pete Warner

Travis Peckham left the boom box at home for a quiet ascent of The Rose Crack at Upper West (5.10)--a classic Vermont crack climb on private land.

## Care for Your Crag - Become a Member!

Your tax-deductible donation will help CRAG-VT protect climbing in Vermont and finalize the Lower West Bolton acquisition. Mail your membership to PO Box 614, Richmond, VT 05477, or donate online at [www.cragvt.org](http://www.cragvt.org).

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

### Yes, I'd like to join!

\$15  \$25  \$50  other \_\_\_\_

To pay by credit card please visit [www.cragvt.org](http://www.cragvt.org)

My check, payable to CRAG-VT, is enclosed.

*The Choss Pile, continued...*

### GYM

Petra Cliff's Junior Climbing Team is off to a great start! They've attended three competitions, competed well and are climbing STRONG! Some recent results:

At the Maine Rock Gym (3/8), Taylor Limanek took 1<sup>st</sup> place (Male 12&13) and Thompson Limanek took 3<sup>rd</sup> (M 14&15).

Quinn Dannies placed 3<sup>rd</sup> (F 12&13) at the Dover Rock Gym (3/22). In 2<sup>nd</sup> for males 12&13 was Taylor Limanek. Thompson Limanek placed 2<sup>nd</sup> and Jordan Berger 8<sup>th</sup> (M 14&15).

Taylor and Thompson Limanek won their categories at the White Mountain School (4/5). Eric Vecchio took 6<sup>th</sup>, Sam Stats 7<sup>th</sup>, and Ben Weiss 8<sup>th</sup> in males 14&15.

Nikki Whelan placed 9<sup>th</sup> at the Petzl Rock Comp in Maryland. Pat Tracy did Vermont proud by placing 3<sup>rd</sup> and Onlso Carrington nailing 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the Smackdown comp.

Locals also took the ABS Comp on January 18<sup>th</sup> at Petra Cliffs with Brandon Garn and Nikki Whelan placing first in the advanced category. Brandon is climbing very strong lately by on-sighting V8's and competing often. Congratulations to all and good luck!



© Paul Hansen/Ecopixxel

Brandon Garn powers through a difficult problem during the ABS Competition at Petra Cliffs in January.

### Upcoming Events...

☼ June 28, 2003 - **Lower West Trail-Day Celebration.** See page one for details.

☼ September 2003 - **SheClimbs Gathering** at Cathedral Ledge, North Conway, NH. Details: [www.sheclimbs.org](http://www.sheclimbs.org).

**Please email [chosspile@cragvt.org](mailto:chosspile@cragvt.org) to report this summer's flashes, FFAs, and other climbing/bouldering news!**

*The Choss Pile was compiled by Travis Peckham, with thanks to: WM, AP, DF, CS and others.*



P.O. Box 614  
Richmond, VT 05477

**THE CRAG RAG**  
May 2003