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Climbing photos



Autumn at Ragged Mountain

(photo by Adam Richman)

## THE QUOTABLE CLIMBER

*Good judgement comes from experience. Experience comes from bad judgement.*

-- *Evan Hardin*



## Special Report: 2007 RMF Annual Meeting

**Stacy Kellogg**  
*RMF President*

The Annual Meeting of the Ragged Mountain Foundation was held June 21<sup>st</sup> at the Connecticut Forest and Park Association. About 30 RMF members and friends attended to enjoy the pizza and camaraderie. Highlights of the evening included the slide show presented by 2006 Wilcox Award recipient Al Carilli of his Yosemite "big wall" ascent of the Washington Column. Also, the 2007 Wilcox Award was presented to Peter Schmidt and his team for their upcoming trip to the Grand Teton. The President's Annual Report and the Treasurer's Report were given, and Jeff Lea, Lisa Pesci, and Carol Parker were re-elected to serve three-year board terms.

Across the year the RMF board has worked on several projects. After meeting with the town of Southington and neighbors through the summer and fall of 2005 about

parking in the neighborhood, concerns were raised regarding what the RMF was doing to help alleviate the problem. The RMF Board decided to partner with Fuss & O'Neill to conduct a study to evaluate the existing conditions of the property, observe traffic patterns, and determine any feasible areas for potential parking access. The RMF wrote and received a grant from the Access Fund for \$4,900 to help defray the costs of the study. The Fuss & O'Neill project cost \$10,500, with the total cost to the RMF at \$5,600.

The following concerns were raised by the study: traffic speed on Andrews St. in excess of 30mph; narrow pavement width in some road sections; lack of shoulder access to the trail head off Andrews Street; curves in the road obstruct sight lines in several places; wetlands require a fifty foot buffer zone for any development. Fuss & O'Neill was also made aware of the restrictions of our current conservation easement.

*(continued on page 6)*



RAGGED MOUNTAIN FOUNDATION  
PO BOX 948  
SOUTHINGTON, CT 06489



# Ragged News Briefs

## CALENDAR

**November 1, 2007**  
**RMF Photo Contest deadline**  
*(see details on this page)*

**January 17, 2008**  
**Winter Party at Prime Climb**  
Wallingford, CT

**June 19, 2008**  
**RMF Annual Meeting**  
Connecticut Forests and Parks  
Association, Middlefield, CT

**August 10, 2008**  
**RMF Summer Party at Chatfield**  
Hollow State Park  
Killingworth, CT

**Ongoing - applications for the**  
**2008 James Wilcox Award**

### Announcing the First Annual

## RMF Photo Contest

### Categories:

- 1) Action
- 2) Landscape

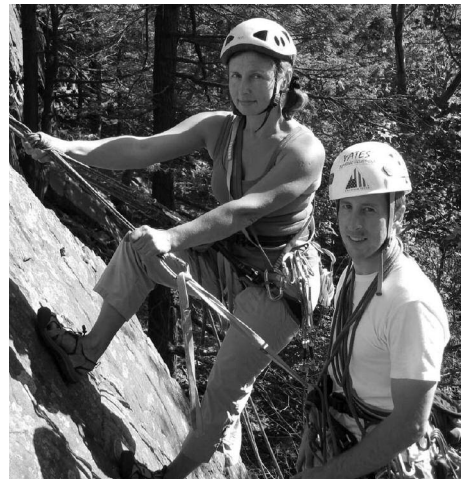
**Deadline:** November 1, 2007

Send to (digital photos only):  
[photocontest@raggedmtn.org](mailto:photocontest@raggedmtn.org)

**Prize:** Winners will receive a prize yet to be determined, and have their photos featured in the winter issue of *Outlook*.

## High Times in The Hollow

Summer picnics might be as old as the hills — but then there’s the RMF’s annual summer celebration at Chatfield Hollow State Park in Killingworth. This year’s edition Aug. 12 did not disappoint. Nearly 40 people gathered in the morning at the park’s cliffs, which were strung with climbing ropes. Later, they strolled on the Deep Woods Trail to the lakeside picnic site, where grills were grilling and coolers were cooling. “Several new memberships were issued (a deal at \$15),” said Stacy Kellogg, foundation president.



*Natasha Piskunova and Jonathan Webster practicing self-rescue techniques this summer at Pinnacle Rock during a course taught by local guide Chuck Boyd.*

**OUTLOOK is produced four times per year by the Ragged Mountain Foundation.**

**Ben Boulton, managing editor**  
**Adam Richman, production & design**

## About the Ragged Mountain Foundation



The Ragged Mountain Foundation (RMF) is a non-profit conservation group dedicated to preserving natural resources and maintaining public access to

Connecticut’s high and wild places. We work closely with the Access Fund to resolve access issues and promote the interests of the climbing community.

Our property, Ragged Mountain is governed by a lengthy legal agreement that spells what we can and cannot do with the property. We do not charge any sort of admission fee to use our land; climbers and hikers are welcome to visit our property at any time. We have to maintain insurance on our property; your dues are needed to keep Ragged Mountain open. Our ownership responsibilities include trail construction and maintenance, litter control, and working with the surrounding community.

Access work involves many things: meeting with landowners, educating the climbing community, working with government agencies, surveying property boundaries, and even hiring lawyers. Our goals are to assure responsible access and preserve our resources.

### Letters to the Editor

We don't have any. But we would if you would write.  
Address your thoughts, questions and opinions to [benboulton@sbcglobal.net](mailto:benboulton@sbcglobal.net)

### A Deal for You

Renew your RMF membership with \$50 and we'll send you the latest T-shirt. (It's the most stylish yet in the long line of RMF fashion.) Please indicate size. Tank tops also are available. By the way, please encourage Ragged Mountain visitors who are not members to join. Basic annual membership is \$15 (see form in this edition of *Outlook*).

## THE JAMES WILCOX AWARD

## Dedicated to the Adventurous Spirit of Climbing



If you’re dreaming big climbing dreams, please consider applying for the 2008 James Wilcox Award. The Ragged Mountain Foundation offers this award annually to individuals or teams attempting a challenging adventure in an ethical style, thereby honoring Wilcox’s spirit. A grant of \$500 accompanies the prize, which goes to an RMF member whose proposed ascent presents:

- Personal challenge (Does the climb push the participants to a new level?)
- Opportunity (Will the grant provide an opportunity that would not be available without funding?)
- Significance (Is the proposed ascent of interest to the climbing community?)
- Style (Will the route be climbed in good style — both technically and ethically?)

Special consideration is given to applicants who intend to leave no environmental trace of their adventure. Applicants need not be elite climbers on the cutting edge of the craft; “weekend warriors” are encouraged to apply.

Applications are available on the RMF website: [www.raggedmtn.org](http://www.raggedmtn.org)

Wilcox, who died in 2002, was an “outstanding and versatile climber, and a friend to all who had the opportunity to cross his path,” according to RMF board member Chuck Boyd. Wilcox worked to help try to solve Connecticut’s access and protection issues, Boyd said, and he passionately climbed mountains and big walls from the Northeast to Yosemite to Europe.

More information about Wilcox and the Wilcox Award can be found on Boyd’s website: [www.verticalrealms.com](http://www.verticalrealms.com)

## RMF Membership Application / Renewal Form

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

Annual dues are \$15 (All memberships and donations are tax deductible)

DUES \$ \_\_\_\_\_

DONATION \$ \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_

check donation fund preference:

- Adair Fund
- Wilcox Award
- General Fund

PLEASE MAIL TO:



RAGGED MOUNTAIN FOUNDATION  
PO BOX 948  
SOUTHINGTON, CT 06489

Receive a  
**FREE RMF T-Shirt**  
with any \$50 donation!  
choose size: S M L XL

## Annual Meeting Report... (cont.)

conservation easement. These two options use the fifteen feet of town right away along Andrews St. that was deeded back to the town of Southington by Mr. Hart. Option one provides for eight parallel on-street parking spaces, uses zero acres of RMF land, and has an approximate cost of \$43,000. Option two provides for 10 "pull in" on-street parking spaces, uses 0.40 acres of RMF land, and has an approximate cost of \$61,000. Option 3 provides for 5 parallel on-street parking spaces, uses zero acres of RMF land, and has an approximate cost of \$20,000. Option 4 provides for a thirty-seven space gravel lot, uses 0.70 acres of RMF land, and has an approximate cost of \$94,000. Options 1, 2, and 4 use the same frontage on Andrews St. and Option 3 uses a different area.

As follow-up, we attended a meeting with the town of Southington to review the findings. As requested at that meeting, we agreed to track the number of cars parked on Sheldon Road through the fall, encouraged carpooling, and changed the parking direc-

tions listed on the website. We also sent letters to the neighbors on Andrews, Sheldon, Moore Hill and Reservoir Ridge to inform them of the study. We received two negative replies. We also completed a post-project summary for the Access Fund.

In terms of direct property maintenance, RMF members have focused on the boathouse, dam, and general trail work. Regarding the boathouse, this year the RMF has removed all of the furniture and garbage from the boathouse and had asbestos removed from the structure. The board has pursued allowing the boathouse to be burned by the SFD as a practice exercise, but due to concerns of neighbors this will not be an option. The board is discussing other feasible options for the boathouse. We reconnected with the DEP regarding needed maintenance on the dam. The DEP conducted a site visit and generated a letter outlining specific needs. To that end, the RMF has removed trees and brush and is continuing to clear the spillway behind the earthen dam. Trail work was organized on Adopt-a-Crag day in the

fall and National Trails Day in June. Projects completed include trail maintenance, steps under Broadway, a water bar and steps by Unconquerable Crack, repair of a south gully stair, and work at the dam.

In terms of communication, the RMF board identified the newsletter and our own record keeping as areas of need. Board member Ben Boulton agreed to become the editor of the Outlook newsletter. With help from Adam Richman, a new layout was designed and a move to more consistent publishing dates was made. This year the board also drafted and approved a Leave No Trace Statement providing clarification for some of the uses of the property. The statement will be published in the newsletter and posted in the kiosk at Ragged Mountain. Over the years RMF records have been kept in varying fashions. The board is reviewing and organizing files to identify what historical documents it currently holds. A consistent filing system will be developed to provide a framework for future boards to reference past documents.

## National Trails Day: RMF Volunteers Clear & Build

**Ben Boulton**  
managing editor

The next time you are at Ragged's Main Cliff you might want take a moment to admire the new steps near the base of Southern Cave Slab, which were built June 2nd by a team of ten volunteers who toiled through the sultry morning.

Meanwhile, another team of ten, working amid of jungle of poison ivy, cleared debris from the Hart Pond outflow, site of an eroding dam in dire need of reinforcement. The projects represented the RMF's latest contribution to National Trails Day, which occurs on the first Saturday of every June.

"I was impressed with the turnout—20 people gave up a Saturday to help work on the property," said Gary St. Amand, longtime RMF trail crew foreman. "That says something about the way people feel about the Ragged Mountain area."

"It's no secret that the work we do is hard, starting with the approach hike, carrying in heavy packs loaded with special tools," St. Amand continued, "That walk is only a



Members of the dam crew hauling debris that was blocking water flow under the dam bridge.

Mountain who do not directly benefit from their contributions.

Work on the Hart Pond dam was performed at the suggestion of the state Department of Environmental Protection, which the RMF had contacted for advice. In addition to removing logs and a large

RMF cut down a large tree, the roots of which were eating into the dam.

And on Aug. 4th, three RMF volunteers returned to the site to clear the area of limbs and logs from the fallen tree. "The next stage will be to reinforce the dam with loads of fill, according to Stacy Kellogg, RMF president. She also added that a property owner whose house sits on the western shore of Hart Pond is assisting the RMF with the dam project

The steps at Ragged's base and in its north and south gullies prevent trail erosion. Workers use winches, called grip hoists, to drag blocks—some of them several hundred pounds—from nearby talus. With pry bars, muscle power, and usually a chorus of grunting and groaning, the blocks are set precisely in their places. If this sounds like fun, please join the next RMF work party (probably sometime in the fall) that will be posted on the RMF website: [www.raggedmtn.org](http://www.raggedmtn.org).

Participating June 2nd were Geoff Anderson, Stacey Bonanno, Ben Boulton, Tyquan Brown, Christine Burrill, Chad Charland, Mike Charry, Jennifer Decker, Thomas Dubowsky, Hugh Graham, Stacy Kellogg, Tim Linehant, Jeff Sargent, Jennifer Schiller, Jordan Schiller, Steve Schiller, Mark Sondeen, Gary St. Amand, and Jonathan Webster. Also, Joel (didn't get your last name—sorry—but you were a beast with the grip hoist.)



Members of the National Trails Day crew that built steps at the base of Ragged's Main Cliff just downhill from the start of Unconquerable Crack.

warm up for moving large rocks uphill. Yet people continue to volunteer!"

Many of the volunteers on June 2nd were first-time or infrequent visitors to Ragged

concrete block that obstructed water flow under the bridge, workers cleared trees, shrubs, and brush from the earthen dam.

On July 27th, a contractor hired by the

## THE RMF NEEDS YOU TO:

1. Join the RMF. It's only \$15 and it's tax deductible.
2. Tell other climbers you meet at Connecticut crags about the RMF. *Many don't know about us.*
3. Join us at the annual meeting and come to our parties.
4. Participate in RMF trail work and cleanup projects.
5. Write an article or submit photos to this newsletter.
6. Donate your skills: *We especially need people with expertise in computers, accounting, construction, law, and conservation.*
7. Donate extra money to the RMF.
8. Patronize businesses that support the RMF.

PLEASE  
SUPPORT  
BUSINESSES  
THAT  
SUPPORT THE RMF!



**Country Sports**  
Canton, CT

**Eastern Mountain Sports**  
West Hartford, CT

**Essential Touch** therapeutic massage  
Manchester, CT

**Prime Climb**  
Wallingford, CT

**Sax Pizza**  
Plainville, CT

**Sterling Rope Co.**  
Biddeford, ME

**Stone Age Gym**  
Manchester, CT

**Martin Torresquintero** mtclimbs.com  
New Haven, CT

# TRAPROCK TECH TIPS Better Belaying: Part I

**Matt Shove**  
contributing writer

Over the course of this spring and summer, I have witnessed some really good belaying at the crags, and I've seen some that made me want to pack up and head home. As a full time guide, I spend much of my time teaching better belay techniques. By focusing on a few points, we can make the cliff a much safer place to be. I'm drafting this in response to a few close calls that I have witnessed over the past few weeks, including a 40 to 50 foot leader fall on

anchor like a tree trunk, boulder, or artificial protection. Be sure to put your anchor on your brake hand side. For example, if you are belaying with your right hand as the brake, the anchor should come up next to your right leg. This allows you to maintain control on the brake even if you are pulled off of your feet. Tie into the anchor with the rope. After all, it is the strongest gear you hiked up to the cliff.

**Close the system.** Tie a big knot in the end of the rope that cannot slide through your belay plate. Better still, tie into your harness

**Pick a good stance.** Too often, the belayer is lounging around. No sitting, no hammocks, etc. Stand up and pay attention. Make sure to have a good position; nothing to trip over, and no rocks to roll. Stand near the bottom of the cliff, get comfortable and look up at the climber. Stand tight to and aligned with your ground anchor.

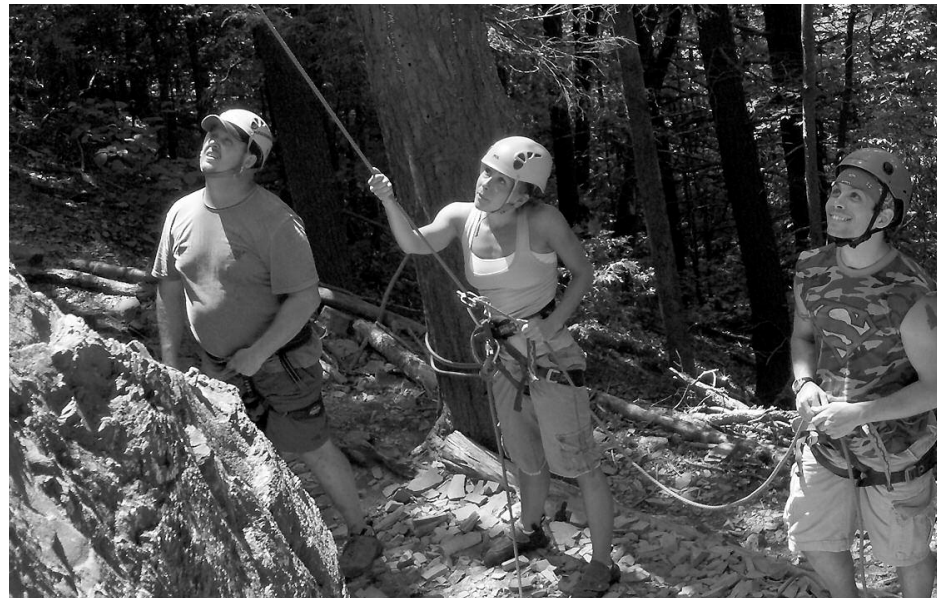
**Hands on the rope.** Keep a break hand on the rope at all times. Make it a good grip; wrap your thumb around the cord. Make it a point to keep your brake hand a few inches away from your belay device. Trust me, once your hand gets sucked into your device, you WILL let go. I've seen it! Remember, the psychology of belaying is to expect a fall at any time. Use a modern belay device with today's skinny ropes, a Jaws, ATC XP, and ATC Guide; get the ones with teeth.

**Clear and open Communication.** Speak with your belayer about your expectations. If the belay you get is less than what you desired, find a new partner. Only talk with the leader/climber; social hour comes later!

You can remember all of this by using the **CATCH** acronym: **C**lose the system, **A**nchor and **T**ight to the anchor, **C**lear communication, and **H**ands on the rope.

By reminding yourself of these points, you can offer a reduced risk experience to your partners.

*Matt Shove is a guide with Eastern Mountain Sports Climbing School & Guide Service AMGA Certified TRSM NY Guide License # 4218 Contact Matt at: mattshove@earthlink.net (203) 228-2311*



*Solid belay technique: attentive, stable, and well anchored to a very stout tree*

Main Cliff's Broadway route. Here are a few points to ponder.

**Anchor the belayer.** Often the climber outweighs the belayer. Use a sturdy ground

and have your partner double check your knot before she leaves the ground. This is a really good habit to get into. If you always tie in to the rope when you belay, you'll never lower your partner off the end.



## RMF Leave No Trace Policy

The Ragged Mountain Foundation welcomes everyone to enjoy the RMF property. Here are some rules and suggestions that we would like you to follow. By following these rules and leave no trace suggestions the experience at Ragged Mountain should remain wild and natural for generations to come:

- No fires or camping.
- Stay on existing trails and durable surfaces.
- No fishing in the lake.
- Do not remove or destroy plant and animal life.
- Pack out what you pack in, including toilet paper.
- No motorized vehicles, boats or bicycles.
- No new fixed gear.
- Consider how your actions will affect others' experience on the property.
- Respect adjoining private property.
- Show others by your actions. If they still don't get it, tell them or teach them politely.
- Join the Ragged Mountain Foundation and help on trail days!

*Remember take only memories and leave only footprints.*



*RMFer Natasha Piskunova tops out on New Hampshire's Whitney-Gilman Ridge, reputedly THE ridge climb in the East.*



*Play after work: Tyquan Brown of New Haven plays on Wiessner Slab after working on a trail crew June 2 at Ragged Mountain.*



*Going, going, gone: Bob Dest hanging out at the RMF summer picnic at Chatfield Hollow*