

OVERLOOK



Ragged Mountain Foundation Member Newsletter • Fall 1999

Changing Of the Guard

After serving in various capacities with the RMF since its inception, most recently as President, **Leslie Brown** has stepped down from the RMF Board of Directors. Leslie recently took a position in the state of Washington, with an office overlooking Mount Hood, and moved west. Over the years Leslie has put forth a tremendous effort to improve access for Connecticut climbers. Her hard work and enthusiasm will be missed.

After serving as Treasurer for two years, **David Fasulo** was elected to succeed Leslie as RMF

Photo by: Jeff Sargeant



Adios Amigos! Leslie Brown on Forearm Frenzy (5.10), at Chatfield Hollow.

President. Dave has been climbing in Connecticut since 1983. He is a part time guide for Connecticut Mountain Recreation and author of the book *How to Rock Climb: Self-Rescue*.

Michael Stokes was elected to replace Dave as RMF Treasurer. Mike is serving his first term on the Board of Directors and has been active in RMF trail work, special events and group climbing trips.

RMF Summer Picnic

The RMF held its annual summer picnic on Sunday, August 22nd at Chatfield Hollow State Park. Those who made the drive to Killingworth that overcast morning got an unexpected surprise—dry cliffs! The heavy rains that had soaked most of central and northern Connecticut the night before had thankfully missed the Killingworth area. The sun even came out by mid-afternoon.

It was too cold for swimming, so most attendees chose to spend the majority of the day at the cliffs climbing themselves silly.

Attending her last picnic before moving west, RMF President **Leslie Brown** teamed up with **John Peterson** for a siege-style ascent of a mysteriously tricky 5.8. This left most of the other attendees wondering: how can these two climb and still talk so much at the same time? However it was all in good fun.

Thanks to **Claude Mallegol** for bringing the grill, **Ray Nilson** for bringing the veggie burgers and **Mike Stokes** for providing a perennial picnic favorite: the beer!

RMF Web Site & Amazon.com

Thanks to the efforts of **Rob Szabo**, the RMF web site is becoming a fantastic resource for Connecticut climbers. The site contains links for Connecticut climbing information as well as links to other outdoor-related information. One of the new links, Amazon.com, is helping to make the RMF web site financially self-sustaining.

If you are considering purchasing books or CDs through Amazon.com, simply access them using the Amazon.com link on the RMF site. By doing this, the RMF will automatically receive a percentage of the sale. This is a great way to purchase books and CDs at the low Amazon prices and support the RMF at the same time.

Some other things you can do on the RMF web site include:

- ✓ Renew your RMF membership.
- ✓ Get information on local climbing areas.
- ✓ Get up-to-date news on RMF events.
- ✓ Check the events calendar for upcoming events.
- ✓ Find current access information or report a new access problem.
- ✓ Find friends and climbing partners.
- ✓ Check out the photo gallery (and submit your own photos).
- ✓ Submit an article for publication in the next issue of the RMF newsletter *Overlook*.
- ✓ Sell an item through the Classified page.
- ✓ Purchase RMF shirts or copies of *Ragged & Free*.
- ✓ Link to other climbing related sites including gunks.com and climbnh.com.

The RMF website saw 422 hits in September, 360 hits in October, and 267 hits in November. This is an average of 17 hits per day. Come visit us and see what you've been missing.

<http://www.raggedmtn.org>



Calendar of Events

December 1999

- 12/9 La Sportiva Shoe Demo at Prime Climb. 5-9:30 PM. Try the new shoes and see what you like. Call Prime Climb at 230-265-7880 for details.

12/16 RMF Night at Prime Climb. Show your membership card and get a discount on your admission fee.

12/31 WORLD ENDS AT MIDNIGHT!

January 2000

1/13 Dave Fasulo slide show at Prime Climb. Proceeds to benefit RMF.

1/20 RMF Night at Prime Climb.

TBA Knots Course at Stone Age Rock Gym in Manchester. Call 860-645-0015 for details.

February 2000

2/17 RMF Night at Prime Climb.

TBA Bob Clark slide show at Prime Climb. Call 203-265-7880 for details.

TBA RMF WINTER PARTY at Prime Climb. Potluck buffet, gear raffle and climbing. Details coming soon.

TBA Knots Course at Stone Age Rock Gym. Call 860-645-0015 for details.

March 2000

TBA Ann Parmenter Slide Show at Prime Climb. Fresh from her return from Ama Dablam expedition. Call Prime Climb at 203-265-7880 for details.

TBA = To Be Announced.

Overlook Evolution

Overlook is published quarterly, and like all things RMF, is done entirely by volunteers. Publishing even a small newsletter like this is a surprising amount of work. With absolutely no offense meant to anyone who helped with previous issues, it is fair to say that in recent years the format and appearance of the publication has been inconsistent.

That all changes starting with this issue. Overlook will still contain information on RMF events and access issues, but there will be new things as well:

- More and better-quality photos.
- Write-ups on new Connecticut climbing and bouldering areas, or forgotten gems.
- Advertising from local climbing gyms and outdoor retailers. This will help defer Overlook's production and mailing costs.

RMF member **Scott Zanelli** recently volunteered to

Overlook Evolution (continued)

spearhead the production of Overlook, with an emphasis on improving quality and consistency. Scott brings extensive experience with electronic publishing and graphic arts to the task. Scott will be doing the bulk of the design and layout for Overlook, although he would certainly welcome help or suggestions. Content editing will be done (for now) by Jeff Sargeant and approved by the RMF Board of Directors.

Content is where you come in. Anyone is welcome to submit articles, photos or announcements for inclusion. Please send all items to RMF, P.O. Box 948, Southington, CT 06489, Attn. Overlook. Be sure to include contact information so that we can reach you with questions about your submission.

More volunteers are needed to help with the following: copy editing, mailing and distribution, ad sales and photography. Those members who previously expressed interest in helping with Overlook, don't worry, we will be contacting you soon.

Watch for changes to Overlook in upcoming issues and let us know what you think.

It's Membership Renewal Time!

The expiration date for all RMF memberships was August 31st. If you did not renew yet, please use the form at right to renew now and maintain your membership. Renewing will ensure that you continue to receive mailings from the RMF. Annual dues are still only \$10. Your membership allows you to receive discounts at Prime Climb on selected days and a **20%** discount at EMS on Club Day. These savings easily offset the cost of your membership. We are also currently working to secure RMF member discounts at other retailers.

Recently the RMF took ownership of CT's most renowned cliff, the Main Cliff at Ragged Mountain. This transfer of ownership guarantees the preservation of this special area and secures recreational access for future visitors. This reward is the culmination of years of effort on the part of our members. We now take on the responsibilities of owning this property. Please renew your membership and help continue the mission of the RMF.

RMF

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NAME(S) _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE _____ ZIP _____

TELEPHONE (H) _____

(W) _____

E-MAIL _____

You may include my name and number in a Membership Directory: YES NO

I am interested in participating in:

- Trail Work Parties
- Group Climbing Trips
- Access Issues
- Search & Rescue
- Newsletter
- Public Information
- Special Events

Annual Dues are \$10.

DUES ENCLOSED: \$ _____

DONATION: \$ _____

TOTAL: \$ _____

(All dues and donations are tax deductible.)

PLEASE MAIL TO:

Ragged Mountain Foundation
P.O. BOX 948
Southington, CT 06489



Fixed Protection Replacement

In September, climbers began replacing the previously existing bolts at Ragged Mountain. As most know, the bolts and pitons at Ragged and other climbing areas in Connecticut were stolen several years ago. At Ragged, the bolt sleeves left behind in the rock were also damaged. Lengths of steel rod were placed into the threaded portion of the sleeves, making bolt replacement very difficult.

Climbers were faced with two replacement options. The first was to drill out the steel rod, inspect the sleeve for damage, re-tap the threads of the sleeve, then replace the bolt and bolt hanger. Using this method requires no new holes to be drilled.

The second option was to fill the old hole with a mixture of epoxy and rock dust. Then a new hole is drilled for installation of a new bolt such as a Petzl Long Life®. However, if someone tried to steal this type of bolt, much damage to the surrounding rock could occur.

Connecticut climbers chose the first option to avoid damaging the rock. As of October 15th, the bolts had been replaced on the following routes:

- Knight's Gambit
- Lavaredo Corner
- Atlantic Hurricane
- Skull & Bones
- Vajolet Corner
- For Madmen Only
- No Parking
- Vanishing Point

The following pitons were also replaced:

- One at the start of YMC
- One midway up Broadway
- Two on Vanishing Point

Sometime around October 20th, all the climbing protection mentioned above was reported missing. The cliff face on the route Vanishing Point was also apparently damaged. Approximately eight crucial holds were removed from the route, which is still climbable, but is now easier (and less exciting).

LEADERS: *Be aware that fixed protection may or may not be in place at the time of your ascent! Know the condition of the route before casting off on lead!*

Pitons cost around \$10 each, so their cost adds up quickly. Quality bolts and hangers also come at a

price. The expense of reequipping a particular route is borne by the individual that chooses to do so.

It is important to note that the replacement of the previously existing protection bolts is allowed under the Deed of Conservation Restriction that governs the Ragged Mountain property. These bolts are specified by route and number of bolts on each route.

Installation of new bolts on other routes is prohibited.

Stolen or vandalized fixed protection presents a serious hazard to the safety of climbers. Vandalism of the rock cheats everyone. These incidents were reported to the police and an investigation is under way. If you observe anyone stealing or damaging fixed protection at Ragged Mountain, please contact the RMF or the Southington police immediately.



Rick Palm leading Vanishing Point at the Main Cliff.

Photo by: Dave Fasulo

RMF Property: An Overview

There's more to the RMF property than just a pretty face. The cliff itself is only a small portion of the entire parcel. The map on page 6 displays the property in relation to our neighbors.

The property is bounded on the north by land owned by the New Britain Water Authority, on the east by the Ragged Mountain Preserve (Town of Berlin), along the south by various private homes and on the west by Andrews Street.

Though there is considerable frontage along Andrews St., there is no parking along Andrews per order of the Southington police. The only legal parking in the area is along Sheldon Rd. and Moore Hill Ave. Please park only on the downhill side of Sheldon and don't block any mailboxes. (Leave enough room so that a mail truck can easily pull up to the mailbox.) Carpooling from Timberlin Park or Ferndale Plaza in Berlin is always a good idea.

The property includes Hart Pond. This pond and the marsh south of the pond provide habitat for many types of birds. If you're into bird watching check it out. Be aware that the southern edge of the marsh

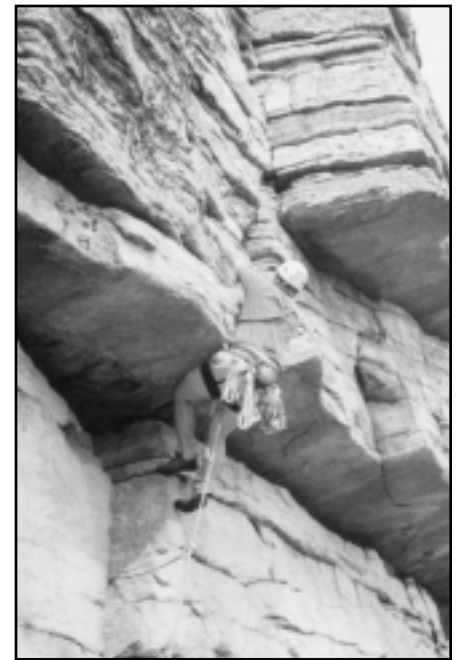
borders the backyards of several residences. Be careful not to trespass and be courteous to any residents you meet.

The home on the western shore of the pond is the former home of Stanley Hart. When Mr. Hart donated his land for preservation, this 5-acre parcel was subdivided and sold off. The new owners are very protective of their privacy, so please be careful not to wander onto their property. (The RMF property ends about thirty feet beyond the concrete bridge.)

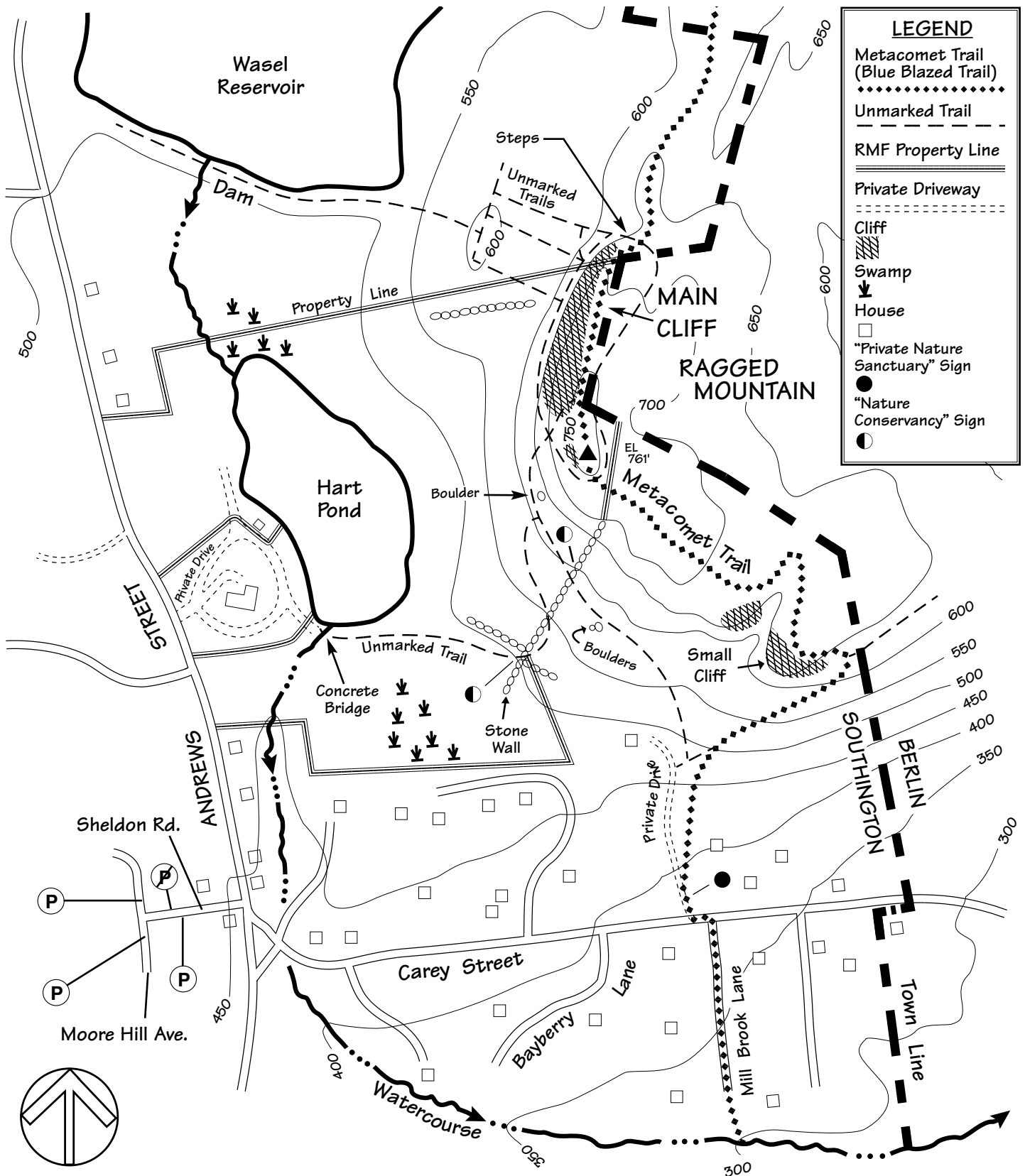
It is very important to realize that all of our neighbors have a right to their privacy and deserve the respect of all visitors to Ragged Mountain. Please practice an extra measure of courtesy when encountering any local residents. Please be quiet when close to our neighbors' homes and don't let your dogs wander.

The RMF's goal for managing this property is to preserve its natural resources, while allowing responsible public recreation. People are free to visit other areas of the property, but please be aware of where you are and behave accordingly. Enjoy this special place and care for it as if you owned it, because as an RMF member, you do.

RMF "Out and About" Photo Gallery



Left: James Hemphill on the slabs at Chatfield Hollow during 1999 RMF summer picnic. (Photo by: Jeff Sargeant)
Center: Mike Stokes works on his tan at the top of the 2nd pitch of Shockley's Ceiling, Gunks. (Photo by: Jeff Sargeant)
Right: Jeff Sargeant shows his better side at the crux roof of Shockley's Ceiling, Gunks. (Photo by: Mike Stokes)



Map Showing Marked and Unmarked Trails of the Ragged Mountain Area
 Southington and Berlin Connecticut

Prepared For:

THE RAGGED MOUNTAIN FOUNDATION

Prepared by: Regina Chartier

Date: 6/3/99

Scale: 1"=500'



Access Problems: What Can We Do?

Anyone who has been climbing in Connecticut for any length of time knows what a headache access to the crags can be. There are currently several access problems in Connecticut:

New Britain Water Authority Properties

This ban covers a lot of Connecticut's best cliffs and bouldering areas, including: Spider Wall, Grond Cliff, Graffiti Wall, Fox Den, Lakeside, Outback, Owl's Lair, Lost Wall and others.

Photo by: Jeff Sargeant



Sign of the Times.

Small Cliff

Recently closed by the landowner to allow the area some time to recover from overuse. The same landowner holds access to a popular section of the Metacomet trail and the most direct access route to the Main Cliff.

Woodbury

A landowner adjacent to the cliffs at Orenaug park has closed a large portion of the trail along the base of the cliff and is harassing climbers on the town-owned cliffs above his property, even if they rappel in from the top and don't touch the ground. The town owns the cliff faces; the neighbor owns the ground under the cliff. The majority of the climbing at Woodbury is affected.

Ice Climbing

Ice climbing has been sporadically revoked in recent years at both the Haddam road cut and the Jackson Street quarry in Thomaston.

East Rock

This traprock cliff located in East Rock Park in New Haven is still closed to climbing.

MDC Properties

The Metropolitan District Commission, which

controls large tracts of watershed in Hartford County, has been threatening criminal prosecution to recreational visitors entering their property with visible climbing gear. Hiking, jogging, mountain biking and until recently climbing were permitted on these properties. Now climbers are being unfairly singled out. Popular local bouldering and climbing areas are affected.

This list is very discouraging. Climbers in Connecticut have three choices to deal with these problems:

1. Complain about the situation, but do nothing else.
2. Ignore closures and climb in these areas illegally, sneaking around quietly and hoping not to get caught.
3. Work together to address climbing access issues in a constructive way.

Only the third choice has any hope of producing a long-term solution to these problems. The RMF is committed to working on these issues, but we need the help of our members. Getting crags reopened to climbing is a time-consuming process. It involves things like going to town meetings, talking with legislators, landowners and local residents, researching land records, local and state ordinances, and writing letters. It can involve trash cleanups or trail projects to demonstrate that climbers and other recreational visitors are a responsible user group.

Any members who can donate some time and energy to improving the access climate here in Connecticut please contact Jeff Sargeant c/o RMF P.O. BOX 948, Southington, CT 06489 or e-mail j_sargeant@raggedmtn.org.

These problems are not going to be solved overnight, but by working together, climbers can get things moving in a positive direction.

RMF Volunteers Clean Up "The Giant"

On Sunday, November 14th, RMF volunteers spent a few hours cleaning up trash from the base of the "Chin" cliff at Sleeping Giant Park.

Six volunteers scoured the base of the cliff and the scree slope below, removing years of accumulated trash. The scenic viewpoints along the Quinnipiac Trail, which runs over the top of the cliff, are often used as launching points for bottles, cans and other trash by less considerate park visitors.

Please see "The Giant", continued on page 8

“The Giant” (continued)

After the clean-up, the volunteers enjoyed some climbing in newly improved surroundings. Thanks to all who helped out: **Mike Stokes, Eric Tishler, Jeff Cretella, Sean Whalley, Jim Whalley and Jeff Sargeant.**

Although suffering from sections of loose rock, the Chin contains some enjoyable routes put up by the likes of Fritz Wiessner, Jim Adair, John Reppy and Sam Streibert. The cliff faces east and gets great early morning sun. Recommended routes include:

- ★ Wiessner’s Rib (5.6)
- ★ Yvette (5.9)
- ★ Frenchman’s Cap (5.9)
- ★ Defender (5.11)
- ★ Bolted (5.9)
- ★ Rhadamanthus (5.10)

There is even a 600-foot right to left traverse of the cliff, The Warehouse Run (5.7), put up in 1934.

Route information is rather sketchy for the Giant. There are some old copies of a crude guidebook circulating. Check the CT Climbing site for line drawings of some of the routes:

<http://members.theglobe.com/thesouthface/>



**RAGGED
AND
FREE**
FALL 1999
**SELECTED CLIMBS
IN CENTRAL CONNECTICUT**

Ragged and Free Guidebook Update

Ragged and Free, the no-frills climbing guidebook everyone has come to know and love, has recently been updated. Ragged and Free now has an easier to read format and better line drawings with 3-D shading. All this and only \$5!

To order your copy, send \$5.00 (plus \$0.75 shipping and handling) to “RMF Ragged and Free”, P.O. Box 948, Southington, CT 06489.

Bouldering at Seven Falls State Park

by Austin Zinsser

About a month ago, a friend and I were cruising south of Middletown, CT in search of a break from the institutional Aramark meals we are usually compelled to choke down. The Coyote Blue restaurant may have been closed that afternoon, but I saw something in the woods that made the drive well worth the gas money: big boulders.

A week later I was back with my buddy Andrew Barco. We were armed with climbing shoes, a bag full of chalk and a sense of adventure. We began our search from the Seven Falls parking area (see “How to Get There” at end of story). After hiking the blue-blazed Mattabassett trail over the power line cut, we came across a large freestanding boulder. “It looks like a stack of pancakes,” exclaimed Andrew, noting the rock’s horizontal faulting.



Photo by: Austin Zinsser

The Pancake Boulder. (Number 1 on map.)

The Pancake Boulder was just the tip of the iceberg. Subsequent exploration over the next five days revealed numerous outcrops and boulders hidden throughout the State Park. Most of the rock consists of solid quartzite. For reasons apparent only to structural geologists, the majority of the outcrops fall into two categories: slabby, or slightly overhanging. The latter type has been the main focus of my outings, since the rock requires little or no cleaning, and challenging lines are easy to spot.

Top-outs at Seven Falls are commonly rounded and will keep you thinking. Many of the walls have near-perfect landings, but be careful not to lose anything in the thick layer of leaves below. The problems I’ve worked on offer an incredible range of climbing: everything from giant slopers to finger-shredding

Photo by: Aya Alt



Eric Lee at Bird's Nest. (Number 14 on map.)

edges up steep walls, aretes, and through overhangs. A few lines are true highballs: a finger crack up a very steep 25-foot face comes to mind.

So just how good is the bouldering in Seven Falls? I don't know. It's a big step up from the talus at the base of Ragged's Main Cliff, but it's not quite Lincoln Woods. The answer to this question also depends on what type of lines you enjoy climbing. I'm sure that there is quite a bit of more rock hidden in the woods, it just still needs to be found.

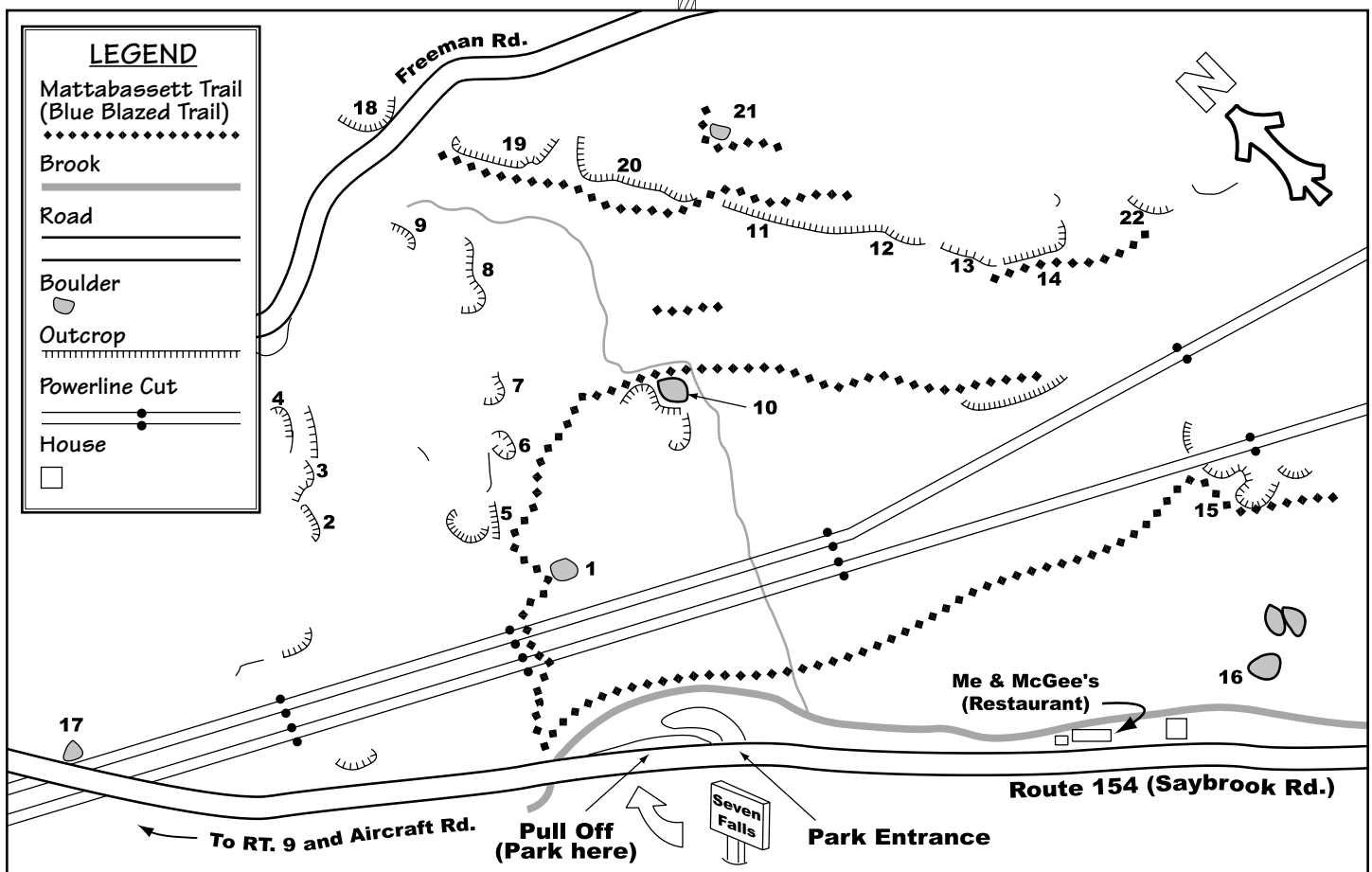
If you're interested in bouldering at Seven Falls, bring your sense of adventure. The Mattabassett trail passes close by many outcrops, but is seldom the most direct route. Access at Seven Falls is not currently an issue. **To keep it that way, please be respectful of other people and the environment. DON'T BE RESPONSIBLE FOR GIVING CLIMBERS A BAD NAME!**

For more information on the area, check out: http://www.wesleyan.edu/~azinsser/Seven_Falls.html
HAPPY BOULDERING!

How to Get There

Take Route 9 North or South to exit 10. Take a right onto Route 154 at the light at the end of the ramp. Follow for approximately one mile. Seven Falls will be on your left after the Middletown/Higganum town line. Park on the pull-off section, because Seven Falls parking lot is closed during the winter season.

Austin Zinsser is currently a student at Wesleyan University and squeezes in bouldering sessions between classes. Austin can be e-mailed at: azinsser@mail.wesleyan.edu



Map showing some of the bouldering areas of Seven Falls State Park. Visit the website mentioned in article for more info.