



November 2009

Quotation of the Month: " *If you don't let go, you can't fall off!* (Jerry Moffatt!)"

CLUB NEWS

The Annual General Meeting of the Mountain Club of South Africa, Johannesburg Section will be held on Wednesday 17 March 2010. Agenda and Minutes of AGM 2009 to follow in 2010.

New subs and entrance fees for 2010

At the committee meeting held on Monday 9 November 2009, the increase in subscriptions was discussed and decided. The increase is in the region of 18%. The reason for the proposed increases were that we had employed a Manager and needed to budget for this extra expense. However, Debbie Mulder has resigned but the committee feels that we need to accommodate the cost of a replacement, possibly not on a full time basis or on an ad hoc basis.

The new fees for 2010

Entrance Fees remain at R300.00 per applicant.

Subscriptions :

Single member R450.00 up from R380.00 in 2009

Married members: R675.00 up from R570.00

Single Country: R340.00 up from R290.00

Married country R420.00 up from R 360.00

Student member R225.00 up from R290.00

Junior member R115.00 up from R95.00

Family member R25.00 up from R20.00

Seniors (Twenty years membership and over 65 years) R225.00

Prospective Members R100.00 valid for 8 months

Permits remain R30 per adult per day, R20 scholars & students and R10 for children under 13years.

If any member wishes to resign, or wishes to transfer to another section; is leaving the country and does not want to retain their membership, please inform us before the end of December 2009. If you do not, you are still liable for the subs for 2010. We have to pay Cencom levies and this is based on the membership as at 1st January each year.

New Members:

We welcome the following new members: Chris Bowles and son Dylan;; Chantelle Crause; Jennie-Kristina Asholt; Tinus van Niekerk; Ralf and Sandra Kotter and children Joke, Johanna and Kea; Charles Els; Clive and Terry Betty and children Megan, Graeme and Matthew; Anthony & Odette Bertasso and children Diego and Kiana;

William Blackwell; Mish Middelmann and Colleen Dawson; Lazzie Modau, Pavel Morris and Luke Longridge (student); Ivo Kotze (family);

from 2010 Mareli Dreyer; Heidi Müller; Robyn – Leigh Merry; and from the YAD programme (Young Adventurers) - James Shorten; Brittany Cohen, Nicholas Warrenner, Riaghan Davies-Webb,

Land and Access:

1. Grootkloof entrance. When walking to Grootkloof from Ronnie Bartlett's place members will find a big fence and gate to go through, just behind the small gate with the Mountain Club badge on. This new gate and fence was put there with the help of Oliver Oppler and Joan von Maltitz to keep un-authorized people out of Mountain Club property. At the moment there is a chain and combination lock on the gate. The combination for the lock can be obtained from the permit secretaries. The combination will be change from time to time.

2. Break-in at Dome Pools: We had a report that there was a break- in at a car at the Dome parking. We would like to warn people to not leave valuables in the cars or hide valuables in the boot of their cars.

Hiking Group :

A few of us are hoping to get a hiking group going and ask any members who are interested to send their names and contact details to us. We plan to go out either on a club meet or somewhere else and the idea is to do start off going out once a month and depending on the participation perhaps every third week. Jan 31 Cedarberg; Feb 21 Dome Pools and March 28 Upper Hamerkop. If you can be a leader please also let us know. – Penny Ludwig 082 959 1112; Barbara Reid 083 702 0530

Events highlights:

Wednesday 9 December:

Children's Christmas Party and Bring & Braai. Please bring a small gift for your child, wrapped and with his/her name for Father Christmas to hand out.

On 20 January we will show the DVD 'UNFINISHED BUSINESS'

Starring Jeremy Samson, Justin Hawkins etc

Made by The Refresh Crew in 2009

Running Time 23 mins

A whimsical tale about whether Table Mountain should be reconstructed to it's full potential height (including snow on top) with plenty of scenes of how it would affect climbers, BASE jumpers and kite surfing.

Wed 27 January: Presentation on 'Climate Change', speaker: Peet du Plooy of WWF.

Wed 10 February: Paragliding – Pierre Carter's recent manoeuvres.

Thank you.

We wish to thank the committee members for their hard work during 2009.

Also to the patrollers, the members who help with bar/tea duty, help at club evenings by showing their slides/talks, members who help with conservation work or land & access a big thank you.

Reciprocity agreement concluded between MCSA and NZAC

The MCSA is pleased to announce that reciprocity negotiations between the Mountain Club of South Africa and the New Zealand Alpine Club, set in motion between past President Roland Magg with the New Zealand representative John Nankervis, have been successfully concluded.

A reciprocity agreement linked to mountain huts and properties belonging to the two associations was duly signed by the President of the MCSA, Dave Jones, and the President of the NZAC, Phil Doole in September 2009. The agreement states that "in the unlikely event of there being any issue with the arrangements which require resolution this will initially be addressed between the Presidents of MCSA and NZAC."

In terms of this agreement :

MCSA Members with valid membership cards visiting New Zealand will be given the same rates as the NZAC gives to its own members when they stay in any of the mountain huts and base lodges owned by the NZAC. They will also be entitled to any other privileges which that Club may from time to time grant to visiting members of overseas Clubs with which NZAC has reciprocity.

All of these huts and lodges are in prime climbing locations. It will not be necessary for MCSA members to obtain any special coupon or pre-validation for this but, when paying fees, they should show their membership cards or other evidence of current membership of MCSA. Nor will it be necessary for such visiting members to first contact the Executive Officer of NZAC at the Club's National Office.

ACNZ Members with valid membership cards visiting South Africa will be afforded the same privileges of visiting members to any of MCSA's 14 Sections. This will include access to club properties and any discounted hut-fees but will require adherence to local rules. However, because of the federal nature of the MCSA, a visiting NZAC member is advised first to contact the Central Committee Secretary who will pass him/her on to the most appropriate host(s) of the Section(s) he or she wishes to visit.

Information on Mountain Huts and Properties is already available on the NZAC Web site. A task team has been set up by Cencom to compile a similar listing of MCSA properties which will in due course appear on the MCSA web site for guidance of New Zealand visitors.

Dave Jones - President MCSA

UIAA Global Youth Summit, South Africa

Trekking, history and culture

Giants Castle "Dragon Mountains" South Africa

11 – 18 July 2009

Article by: *Debbie Mulder*

As a member of the International Mountaineering and Climbing Federation (UIAA), the Mountain Club of South Africa (MCSA) hosted the first international Youth Meet earlier this year. The Youth Meet "piggybacked" on KwaZulu Natal Section's July Camp. Base Camp this year was near the Pepper Pots in the Giant's Castle Area.

Twenty-four youths from Spain, France, Italy, United Kingdom and South Africa registered for the week-long camp, giving them the opportunity to take part in an ascent, an introduction to history and culture in the area, whilst meeting and learning about each other's cultures, countries and mountaineering traditions.

On July 10th the Youth met at the longest running hostel in Johannesburg, 'The Ritz Backpackers'. With reputation for service and clean premises, 'the Ritz' delivered as the youth enjoyed an evening meal together, playing chess, and sharing stories.

The following morning, July 11th, everyone collected their gear, loaded the trailers and began the drive south along the N3 to Giants Castle Nature Reserve. On arrival, the Youth signed the register, loaded their packs onto the tractor trailer and walked to the base camp site near the Chimney Pot. This panoramic site on the contours of the Little Berg, between Giants Castle and the Centenary Hut, rises below the "sleeping Giant". In sanction with the UKhahlambaDrakensbergPark, the venue was a welcomed backdrop. The Giant's Castle Nature Reserve is a World Heritage Site surrounded by deep valleys, grassy plateaus and rocky mountains.

On Sunday morning, July 12th, we started with an acclimatization day visiting the Main Caves, enjoying a tour of the Bushman Rock Art. Along the main road towards reception Lammergeyer and Eland were spotted.

Monday arrived and we were once again woken to the wonderful servings of hot coffee, delivered to their tents, "coffee, coffee!" After breakfast, Rob Thomas and Sonja Parnell, the official guides for the Meet, briefed the Youth on their ascent to the escarpment, and distributed food for the five days. The hike to Centenary Hut was met with much enthusiasm. On reaching Centenary Hut, her windows shattered and hinges bent, but tents were strategically positioned to brace against the unforgiving wind, which, late into the night, whipped tent walls back and forth, up and down.

On Tuesday morning, July 14th, the Youth, exhausted by evening events, walked along the grassy contours aiming for a tarn below Langalibalele Pass. Towering rock faces, icy passes and views of grandeur were met as the goal ascending up Langalibalele Pass, was collectively changed in lieu of Liz hurting her ankle. With continued support and excellent medical assistance provided by Rob, leaders and fellow youth, a decision to stay the last two nights at Bannerman's Hut allowed Liz to rest and her ankle to heal before the return descent to Base Camp.

Wednesday July 15th, was descent day. A band of fog slowly descended, wrapping Bannerman's Pass and temperatures dropped dramatically, covering the rocky pass with ice and freezing grass to brittle icicles. At 100 vertical metres from the escarpment Rob and Sonia made a safety decision to return to the Hut due to poor visibility and the promise of snowfall. A wise decision, as the Youth were able to enjoy the warmth and protection of the hut followed by snowball fights whilst building a snowman.

By Thursday July 16th, a beautiful blanket of snow had covered the ridges of the 'Dragon Mountains' changing the landscape to pure white. We began our descent to Base Camp (the decision having been made by Rob to return a day early), later to be escorted by the South African Police, as Liz rode on horseback. On descending quickly, the Youth were able to relax at reception. Many thanks to the South African Police for their hospitality, and especially a ride to the Main Gate, shortening the walk back to Base Camp by two hours.

One final day to explore the area, Friday July 17th, the Youth zigzagged through the burnt plateaus to reach the top of Chimney Pot, a panoramic beacon. Below, her boulders were discovered as the rock climbers shared their skill with onlookers photographing and cheering. Back at Base Camp, stories were shared and appreciation was given - commemorating the first ever UIAA Global Youth Summit in South Africa.

Young Adventures Program (YAD)

At the start of the year Diane Arvanitakis developed a Youth Program for youth to join the MCSA, in vision. Its members experience the MCSA's benefits and objectives to facilitate and foster mountaineering, thus offering Indoor Sport Climbing lead by Youth Leaders every Saturday over a period of 10 weeks.

Her yoYAD and YAD groups split the younger and older youths in order to climb at different times with age appropriate leadership.

This August, to benchmark the vision, the YAD program expanded, continuing to facilitate and foster its members in company with the introduction and welcome of new members and guests to the club.

Over a period of 9 weeks, eight Saturdays and one weekend, the YAD sessions offered sport climbing (indoor & @ the crag), hiking and camping allowing YADs to travel to different outdoor venues, i.e. Strubens Valley, Bronkhorspruit Dam, Magaliesberg and Eagle Mountain in Harrismith.

Youth Leaders training with the Mountain Development Trust provided their time and leadership thus further developing YAD mountaineering skills. Venues such as St Peters and Wonderwall were also utilized as drop-off and pick-up zones for parents' thus providing safe waiting areas.

Congratulations to the YADs of 2009!

We are proud of you!

Debbie Mulder, Manager

MEETS: a request from Meet leaders

Please contact meet leaders by latest Friday evening if you wish to go on the Sunday's meet.

Where possible, please use e-mail addresses to 'book' for a meet.

Many thanks to Debbie Mulder who contributed most of the material in this newsletter.

If you have any contributions, please e-mail me. No guarantees, but most material is accepted.

Newsletter Editor: Terry White terryw@marketworks.co.za

*We wish you all a peaceful Festive Season
and all Good Wishes for 2010*