



WHAT'S UP?

Seasonal Newsletter

Fall 2011

THE SCENE AT WEST COUNTY!

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- > How to sign up for Team ULI and Information
- > Monthly Specials
- > 24HHH
- > Holiday Hours
- > Get to know the staff!
- > West County Film Screening.



On Tuesday, October 18 Upper Limits West County held the Scene Film Screening. This climbing flick by Chuck Fryberger featured professional climbers doing what they do best all over the world. Not only did Upper Limits show the film on a 12 foot screen, but they also had a little pre party. Alpine Shop sponsored the event and had a tent set up along with the North Face Store. There were two awesome art vendors there as well, Crochet by Gem and Eleven Peacocks! With Perennial serving



free beer and a live band (The Instructors) the party really started to hop. Climbers from all over St. Louis were coming together for this fun filled event. The best part was Wanderlust Pizza outside serving up pizza from their 1973 airstream trailer. Whether you were bobbing for apples or drinking some hot cider, everyone seemed to be having a great time. It wasn't all just fun and games, Upper Limits was also selling raffle tickets to raise money for their

The Scene at West County Continued on Page 2...

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Team ULI is a great experience for kids who love to climb. So, if you or someone you know is between the ages of 7 and 17 Stop in or call your local Upper Limits today!

Benefits include weekly team practices and of course unlimited gym use during the season to help build technique outside of practice.

And, if that wasn't enough, team members get a 20% discount in the Upper Limits Pro Shop!

The team gets to travel to different climbing facilities in the Midwest for competitions and experience new gyms in different areas.

We always have a blast; so, get registered today and "Climb On!"

2011/2012 Team ULI Schedule

- St. Louis Session 1 or 2:
\$350 for nonmembers, \$300 for members, Session 1 runs Oct. - Dec., Session 2 runs Jan. - Mar.
- St. Louis, both Sessions
\$575 for nonmembers, \$475 for members

- BLM Session 1 or 2:
\$225 for nonmembers, \$150 for members, Session 1 runs Oct. - Dec., Session 2 runs Jan. - Mar.
- Bloomington, both Sessions:
\$375 for nonmembers, \$225 for members

TEAM ULI





The Scene at West County Cont'd

Youth Climbing Team. They even raffled off one of the Scene Climbing films before the movie even started! After the raffle everyone started getting settled in for the main event. What makes a climbing mecca? The Scene took a comprehensive look into the major epicenters of hard climbing and the characters who define them by their relentless commitment to the sport. If you haven't seen the film yet, definitely

look it up and there may even be a screening in your area!!



MONTHLY SPECIALS

November: Do Good, Save Money!

For every canned food item you bring to Upper Limits, save \$1 off a Day Pass (up to \$5 off). All items benefit a local food pantry.

December: Give a little, Keep a little

Get a free gift with the purchase of a gift certificate valued at \$100 or more!

Special Holiday Hours

November

Open Veteran's Day
Closed Thanksgiving
Open Black Friday

December

Close Early on
Christmas Eve
Closed Christmas Day

January

Close Early on New Year's Eve
Open New Year's Day

24 HHH BY: NICK REED

It was 10 am Saturday morning. Several hundred people (mostly looking like climber types) stumbled around Horseshoe Canyon Ranch like zombies. They looked exhausted, dehydrated, and (if you looked closely enough) their hands were torn up and extremely filthy. Some seemed excited by this fact, some appeared sickened as if they had just lived on power bars for a few days straight. All of them made their way towards their tents, falling into a deep sleep despite the rising sun and the heat building up. Several could be seen sprawled out on crashpads and picnic tables, some in the bed of a pickup truck and others on the reclined seats of their cars.

For those of you who are not in the know, this scenery is common following Twenty-Four Hours of Horseshoe Hell, an annual climbing competition near Jasper, Arkansas, often simply called Horseshoe Hell. Around 250 climbers gather from across the country to climb for twenty four hours straight through the night. The rules are fairly simple; you and your partner receive a certain amount of points for every route that you lead cleanly. If you fall, you must be lowered and start the route again. More points are awarded for more difficult routes as well as traditionally protected routes versus their similarly rated sport routes. For each new route your team attempts you must place quickdraws as you climb. At the top of each route are a pre-set pair of carabiners to make lowering and removing your gear much faster and safer. Additional points are given to every team whose members each complete at least one route per hour. There are different skill categories in which to compete, providing for climbers of all levels.

Training and strategy are imperative aids in this competition. Many teams' aspirations are to only climb the minimal one route per hour, some are to win their category, and some are to achieve their own personal goals. Upper Limits had many staff



Bloomington

Winter Hours

October 1 - April 30

Monday 4p-10p
Tuesday 12-10p
Wednesday 4-10
Thursday 12-10
Friday 4-10
Saturday 10-10
Sunday 10-8



24HHH CONT' D



and members competing and volunteering this year making it refreshing to bump into them at 5am. Some team's training involved climbing every 5.10 at the gym in one day, mine was to simply climb as many different routes as I could at both St. Louis gyms. Some practiced night climbing at the gym, some came to HCR to practice climbing harder routes at nighttime. Anything to prepare for climbing fifty or sixty pitches in a night.

At 10am Friday morning, after roll call of the teams, the shotgun (and many other guns) fired, signaling the start of the day. Everyone hustled out from the front of the Trading Post up to the canyon walls. We grabbed our gear bags at the camp and jogged across the footbridge and up the low hills to the North 40 crag. Several 10a's, an 8, and a 9+. Our plan was to minimize travel time and knock these out of the way but we were forced elsewhere when a line formed behind Ace in the Hole. Throughout the day we made quick work of a variety of 8's, 9's, and 10's, and accepting any amount of beta that others would contribute. For most com-

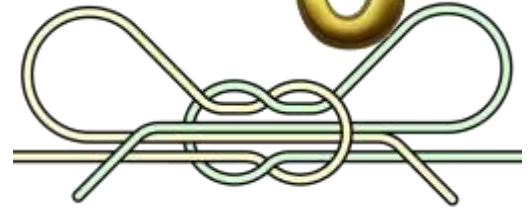
petitors, the North 40 offered more than enough routes to climb for the whole day. Periodically volunteers, competition administration, and promoters would wander past, offering tips, checking on well being, and supplying energy bars and snacks. Towards sunset the exhaustion began to set in for many, strategies being thrown out the window, resorting to the one route per hour minimum. Headlights began illuminating the cliff base and at 10pm every climber had to check in at a station, submitting their halfway done score card.

Panic would ensue when a team member's one hour window began to close, begging to cut in line. Luckily we only had one such instance, and were able to return the favor later in the night. Arguing between teammates became more common. Our routes per hour dropped, as well as their difficulty, 5's, 6's and 7's became what we looked for. Unfortunately that seemed to be what everyone was looking for and



the wait for some of these routes was 45 minutes or more. The 4am check in came and passed, providing the administration a chance to see if we were still functioning mentally. This was one of the low spots for our team as the following 5.7 was one of the more difficult climbs of the whole day. Somehow we persevered, aided by 5 Hour Energy drinks, coffee, and banana-peanut butter sandwiches.

It seemed the end was within comprehension now as the edges of daylight began pouring through the tree leaves. Competitors looked excited to be climbing and a new energy was with some. At 8 am I realized I needed 6 more pitches to reach 60, so my reluctant partner and I quickly moved through two 9's before camping out at a nearby 6 to get our one route for the 9-10am window. Once we completed this we headed back down to turn in our scorecards. All in all we combined for 101 pitches and 11,240 points, nothing compared to the 260 pitches (a supposed local) or 56,900 points (Team Petzl) that other teams put up, but we were content. Festivities marked the rest of our stay; awards ceremony, spaghetti dinner, pancake breakfast, arm wrestling and slacklining. We left with our swag bags and tender fingers, always happy for the chance to climb.



HOLIDAY CLIMBING CLINICS!

Upper Limits will be offering 2-day clinics over the Thanksgiving and Winter school breaks! The clinics will be from 1p-4p on November 25th and 26th as well as December 21st and 22nd, 28th and 29th and January 2nd and 3rd. Mark your calendars and call your local Upper Limits for more information on these exciting youth clinics!





WHAT'S UP? - FALL EDITION

11TH ANNUAL UPPER LIMITS GATEWAY BOULDERING BASH!



On Saturday, December 3rd, Upper Limits is hosting our 11th Annual Gateway Bouldering Bash & Access Fund Membership Drive at our brand new, 14,000 sq. ft. rock gym located in West County, St. Louis. Although this is the 11th year for the Bash, it is the very first competition to be held at the new gym which boasts an impressive top-out boulder. Climbers of all ages and skill levels are welcome to compete for prizes donated from sponsors throughout the climbing and outdoor industry. There will also be an Access Fund

Membership Drive held in conjunction with the event to help ensure that our climbing areas remain accessible to all climbers. This competition will push your bouldering skills to the limit with four separate divisions and three hours of intense climbing. The Gateway Bouldering Bash will be redpoint format and competitors will have three hours to climb. The accumulated points of your top five problems will determine your overall score and your placement within your division. The four divisions are Recreational, Intermediate, Advanced, and Elite.

Recreational and Advanced will climb from 10:15 a.m. to 1:15 p.m., and Intermediate and Elite will climb from 3:15 p.m. to 6:15 p.m. The Awards Ceremony for each division will immediately follow.

Although children are welcome to compete, please keep in mind that there is not a junior's division. While we strive to include kid-friendly problems, most problems are set by and for adults. Friends and family members of competitors may watch competition climbing for a \$2 spectator fee.

You can sign up over the phone by calling (314)991-2516 or by mail. You can download the registration form on the website or pick one up at either gym. Payment is required at the time of registration. In order to receive the pre-registration discount, all mail-in registration forms must be postmarked by November 15th.



GET TO KNOW THE STAFF WITH A CLOSER LOOK



Sean Kelleher, St Louis Gym

Mahalo everyone! As a new staff member this is my chance to introduce myself. I have been working at the downtown branch of Upper Limits for almost two months now and climbing during that same period almost more hours than I've been on the clock. I first stepped into the building as a young impressionable teenager about six years ago while participating in a basic indoor rock climbing class run through Saint Louis University High School, my alma mater. After the class ended there was a long hiatus in my climbing life, although I may have done a little building here and there with or without the permission of the landowner...*shh*. More recently I enrolled myself in another climbing class at Indiana University. I was determined not to let myself fall off the wall, so-to-speak, so easily this time around. I felt that simply being near other climbers and/or a climbing gym would help, so I resigned myself to getting a job at Upper Limits and here I am!

That is a brief bit of my history. I also enjoy reading, writing, and debating ideas concerning both the natural world and our place in it. I can often be found humming, singing, joking, some casual dancing, and occasionally a mix of several of the afore mentioned preoccupations at once. I think of myself as easy to approach so feel free to probe my brain or share your insight.

“Take a breath...reach...focus...stretch...GRAB!!!!” Hello, my name's Alexis Geers and I'd like to welcome you to my climbing thoughts! Although I had been exposed to climbing several years back, it wasn't until January of this year my addiction for climbing became evident. Once I became a climbing member of Upper Limits, I was instantly hooked! From the physical challenge to the mental challenge, climbing has been a new way for me to stretch my limits! There's nothing like completing a route and looking down once I reach the top. My love of climbing, which started as a hobby, has more recently spread to working at the West County gym as well. With great people and a chance to learn skills from watching other climbers, it's the perfect job for my ever-increasing climbing habit!

Before climbing became such an obsession, I was involved with helping out youth in random ways, such as planning game events, mentoring, and all around friendship with some fantastic people! My education experience has been extensive and broad, since I never decided what I want to 'be' when I grow up. I've been married to my awesome husband for just over 10 years, and he's the best friend I could've asked for! Luckily for me, he also found he has a passion for climbing! Our 2 rambunctious dogs, Hobbes and Spankie, have decided that although they enjoy being outside, climbing will not be their new past time hobby. Speaking of climbing, I'd better get back on that wall!



Alexis Geers, West County Gym



Brad Rainer, Bloomington Gym

Hi, my name is Brad and I go to school at Illinois State University. I started working at Upper Limits in September. I am a Ninjutsu instructor and have given quite a few lessons to my fellow employees. So, basically everybody at the Bloomington gym are ninjas or N.I.T. (Ninjas in training).

I climb every chance I get and I recently started setting routes too. I am super stoked to be here and can't wait to climb again! Upper Limits is my favorite place to be and I have met so many great people; so, if I haven't met you yet, I will soon! Outside of climbing I really enjoy hanging out with my girlfriend of 4 years, dubstepping and of course practicing my ninja moves!

Okay, so Brad was too busy climbing and being a ninja to actually write this. Most of what is written is true; however, I cannot be held responsible for false information. If you really want to know something about Brad, just ask! He talks to most people.



Did you notice all of the pictures of equipment throughout this edition of What's Up? Circle the four things that you should check before a climb, every time to get a special treat! Beware, a couple points might be tricky!

