

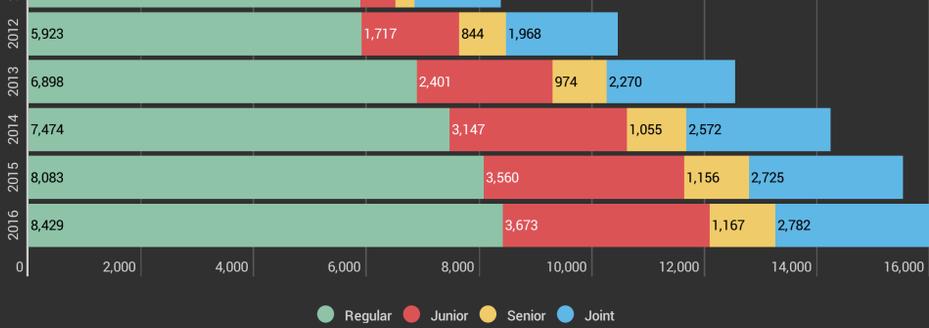
2015 ANNUAL REPORT

Thanks to our members, volunteers, and donors, 2015 was another record-breaking year for the American Alpine Club.

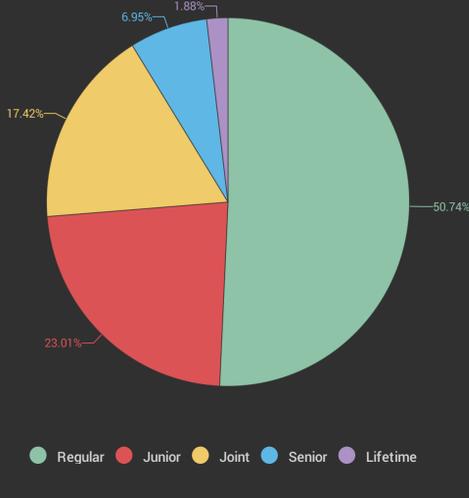
AAC member Garrett Grove

In 2015, we furthered the the core business of the Club: benefits and services to members continued to improve. Membership grew at a pace of almost 7% per month, putting us at 16,051 at the end of December, 2015.

5 Year Membership Growth



Membership Composition



Budget

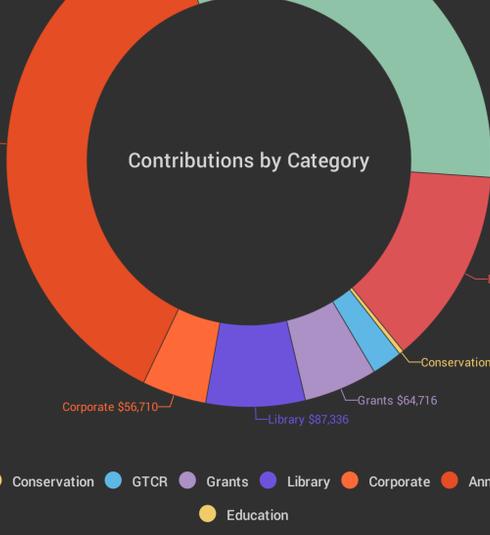
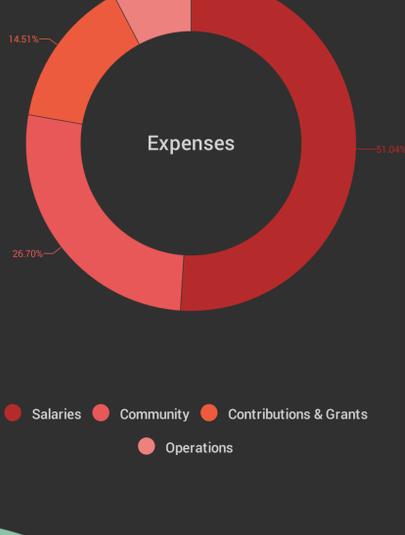
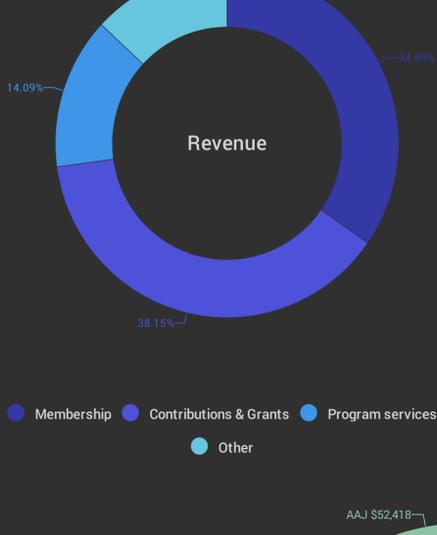
Total revenue for the fiscal year was \$11,864 less than budgeted at \$3,058,309. Expenses were \$3,029,822, or \$86,091 less than budgeted, leading to \$74,227 better than budget to end the fiscal year. Total revenue was made up of:

- \$1,421,284 in donations (26% growth over 2014)
- \$1,093,850 in dues (13% growth)
- \$500,748 in revenue from the annual dinner
- \$543,175 in earnings from publication, lodging, store sales and other miscellaneous categories (0.6% growth)

The organization realized a budgeted profit of \$28,487; \$74,227 better than budgeted. The improved financial performance resulting from our growth over the last five years allowed us to take two significant steps forward in our mission delivery during 2015: Education and Conservation & Advocacy.

Budgeted Results Table

12 Months Ended September 30	Actual	Annual Budget	Variance to Budget	% Actual to Budget
Fundraising Revenues*	1,421,284	1,365,000	56,284	104%
Membership Revenue	1,093,850	1,017,515	76,335	107%
Operating Revenues**	543,175	687,658	(144,483)	79.0%
Total Revenues	3,058,309	3,070,173	(11,864)	99.6%
Expenses	3,029,822	3,115,913	86,091	97.2%
Profit/(Loss)	28,487	(45,740)	74,227	162%



Education Program

We expanded our education program by hiring an education manager, Ron Funderburke. To date, our educational efforts have taken the forms of alerting the climbing community to common mistakes through *Accidents in North American Mountaineering* and the addition of its "Know the Ropes" feature - best practices to avoid fundamental errors. For almost a decade, the AMGA has trained Single Pitch Instructors on our behalf and there are now over 900 Single Pitch Instructor who meet the international standard set by the UIAA. Our Universal Belay Certificate, launching in early 2016, sets clear expectations for all organizations teaching climbing in the US.

Conservation & Advocacy

The AAC reignited an active role in issues that affect climbers on the national, state and local levels by drafting a Five-year Policy Strategy to guide the work of the incoming Conservation & Advocacy Director, Maria Millard. Current policy priorities include:

- Advancing and clarifying fixed anchor policies on public lands
- Streamlining the permitting process for facilitated access to public lands
- Conservation & public lands protection

So much of what we do depends on key partners. In 2015, we joined the Outdoor Alliance and worked more closely than ever with regional clubs and other climbing organizations. The financial support from the outdoor industry was at an all time high, indicating that manufacturers and retailers understand the value and relevance in the AAC today.

Rescue Benefits

Global Rescue operated thirty missions for AAC members during fiscal year 2015, with only a few missions exceeding the \$5,000 threshold covered by our program. Our reimbursement program for losses incurred within the United States is paid for by our operating budget and only saw a handful of claims.

Publications & Website

Our publications and communications improved with enhancements to the *Journal* and a first phase of new design for *Accidents in North American Mountaineering*. The 2016 edition will be full color. Its new title - *Accidents in North American Climbing* - will reflect the fact that a majority of the accidents we report occur in rock climbing situations. The publications website and search tools grew to be as big as the entire AAC website with over 25,000 unique visitors per month.

Within our membership website, we enhanced Member Share, allowing thousands of members to reach out directly to one another for everything from local information to a place to stay or a climbing partner.

Lodging

The tireless efforts of our Huts Committee and facilities staff brought our network of five AAC lodging facilities to completion. The Samuel F. Pryor III Shawangunk Gateway Campground (the Gunks) opened with a beautiful ceremony on June 3, 2015. By early fall, the new bathhouse completed our campground in the New River Gorge. Despite our newest facilities only being open for a portion of the year, the program was able to break even on its direct operations.

Grants

The Conservation and Climbing Grants, along with our extensive events programs, helped us deliver AAC resources through our expanding network of local chapters and sections. We added thirteen Chapters in 2015 and will add twenty-five more in 2016. Chapters allow for a more intimate experience with the AAC in smaller geographic areas. Through our chapters and sections, we were able to award some \$130,000 in climbing, research and conservation grants for 2015.

Climbing Grants

From cutting your teeth to the cutting-edge, the AAC's Climbing Grants are designed to support individuals in pursuit of their passion to climb. In 2015,

- \$50,000 went to Live Your Dream grants, powered by The North Face and local donations. We received nearly 700 applications; 85 individuals earned awards.
- ~\$50,000 awarded in other climbing grants.

Research Grants

AAC Research Grants, which support scientific endeavors in mountains and crags around the world, work to contribute vital knowledge of our climbing environment and enrich our understanding of global climber impacts. In 2015, \$4,100 was awarded in research grants.

Conservation Grants

Conservation Grants work to clean crags, build infrastructure, lessen impacts, and engage in climber education, advocacy, and policy development around the nation. In 2015, \$26,500 was awarded in Cornerstone Conservation Grants. Highlights include:

- Miles of trail (dirt, paved, water) built: 6
- Miles of trail or acres of land maintained: 40
- Total stewardship volunteers involved in 2015: 225
- Total stewardship volunteer hours in 2015: 6000

Finally, in partnership with the Access Fund, we launched a fund to support bolt replacement in the fall of 2015.

Events

In 2015, AAC expanded the Craggin' Classic Series to include two new events, held at Shelf Road, Colorado and Devils Lake, Wisconsin. While the parties were fun and the food plentiful, the Craggin' Classics emphasize education through clinics and mentorship and each one included a stewardship activity to care for the places we climb.

In addition the AAC offered about twice as many local events, including a nine-stop national speaking tour with Ueli Steck.

Our Annual Benefit Dinner in New York City was a grand affair with the keynote delivered by Reinhold Messner.

Awards

President's Gold Medal is given very rarely for extraordinary accomplishments in the climbing world - this was the fourth time it has been given in the Club's 113-year history. Fred Beckey was recognized this year for a lifelong devotion to climbing and first ascents that is unmatched over generations.

The Robert and Miriam Underhill Award for climbing achievement went to Kim Schmitz for his early, groundbreaking climbs. Most notably: the first ascent of Uli Biaho Tower (19,957') - *East Face* - VII F8 A4 (34 pitches), one of the great walls of the Karakoram and an early use of Yosemite big-wall techniques in remote terrain.

The Angelo Heilprin Citation for exemplary service to the Club was given to Cody J. Smith for his efforts to develop lodging for climbers. He led the AAC's lodging program from two locations - the Grand Teton Climbers' Ranch and the Snowbird Hut - to five, which now include the Hueco Rock Ranch, the New River Gorge Campground, and the Shawangunk Gateway Campground.

The David R. Brower Award, created in 1991, is an annual award recognizing leadership and commitment to preserving mountain regions worldwide. This year's awardee, Ken Yager, has shown dedication to the climbing environment exemplified by the Yosemite Facelift, which he has spearheaded for the past seven years.

The Robert Hicks Bates Award's purpose is to recognize a young climber who has demonstrated exceptional skill and character in the climbing arts and has outstanding promise for future accomplishment. Sasha Digiulian is an amazing young climber who won overall female world champion, is a three-time U.S. National Champion, and was the first North American Woman to onsight 5.14a.

The Ad Carter Literary Award was established to recognize excellence in alpine literature. This year's winner, Jeff Lowe, is recognized for a life of contribution to climbing through the written word including his book *The Ice Experience*.

In Closing

With little fanfare, your board continued to focus its attention on good governance, succession planning, and a vision for our future. We lost our President, Doug Walker, to an avalanche on the last day of 2015. He was a force in the conservation and climbing worlds and cared deeply about making sure that young people had access to our public lands and the mentorship and instruction they need to get outside safely. He will be missed. He led us well and left us with an inspiration for our future and a succession plan in place.