THE GOOSE DOWN GAZETTE

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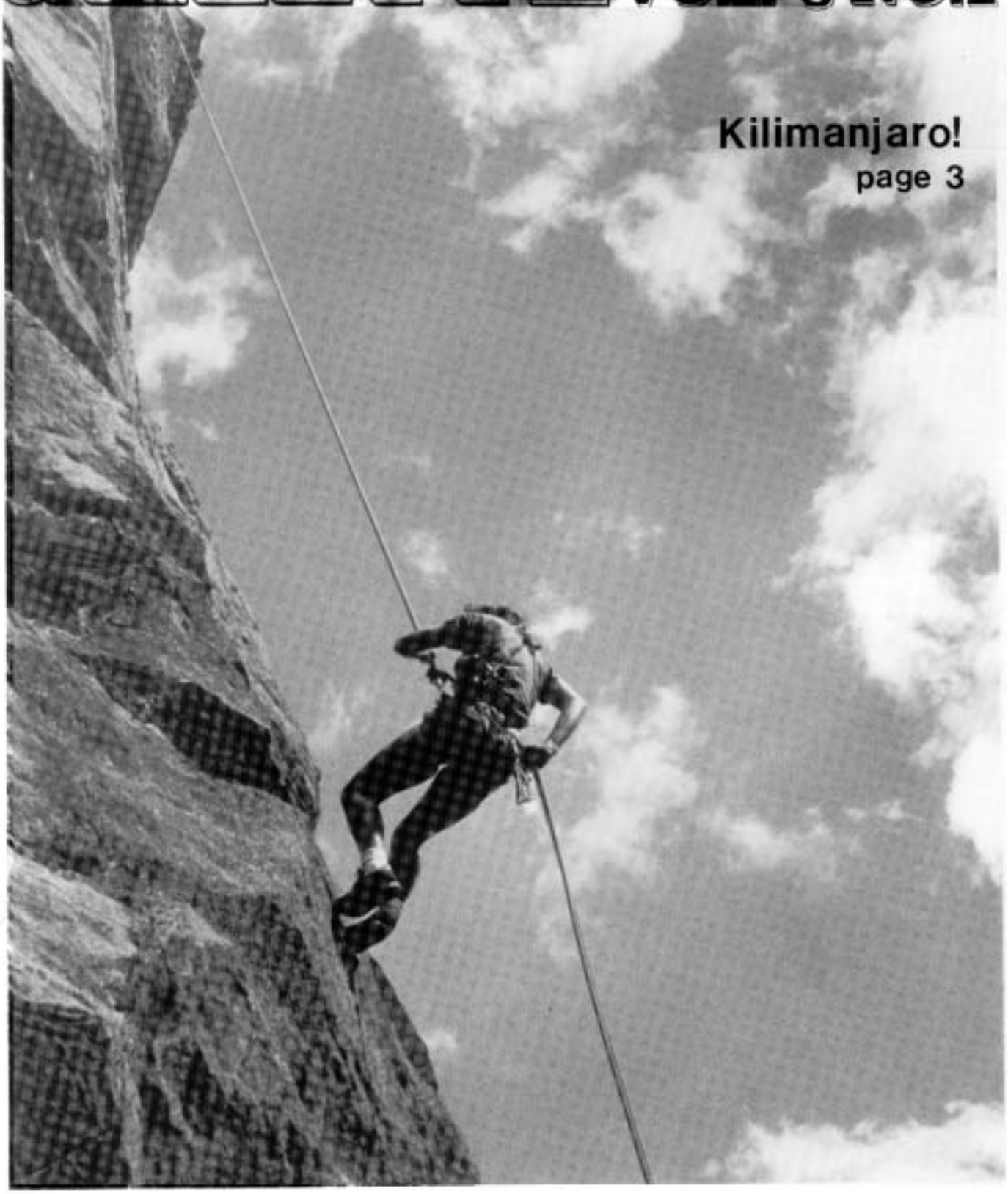

Kilimanjaro!

page 3

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The Mountaineering Club is conducting its annual basic rock climbing course this Autumn quarter, for more information on price and dates call Bill Strachan at 861-3404

The Club trip for Autumn break is skiing in the Estes Park area, leaving December 10th and returning December 20th. For more information contact the trip leaders Marci Napoli at 421-8185 or Fletch Andrews at 861-3404.

COVER PHOTO: Marci Napoli is captured in mid-rappel off the Third Flatiron in Boulder, Colorado by Larry Bortner.

CONTENTS

THE THROES OF KILIMANJARO

Jane Rielly

Inquirer: You're going where?
Jane: Africa. On safari and then to climb Mt. Kilimanjaro.
Inquirer: You're kidding? Who are you going with?
Jane: Nobody. I'm going alone.
Inquirer: Alone? Aren't you afraid?

And so, for the ump-teenth time I shrugged my shoulders, laughed, and recited to myself the saying which best describes the way in which I approach life these days.

> **It takes so much to be a total human being that there are very few who have the enlightenment or the courage to pay the price. One has to abandon altogether the search for security and reach out to the risk of living with both arms. One has to embrace the world like a lover. One has to accept pain as a condition of existence. One has to count doubt and darkness as the cost of knowing. One needs a will stubborn in conflict, but apt always to total acceptance of every consequence of living and dying.**
>
> Morris L. West
> The Shoes of the Fisherman

I am of the opinion that nothing in life is deserved, only earned, and accomplishments so earned are entitled to be recognized and/or rewarded. Thus, my journey to Tanzania, Africa, and Mt. Kilimanjaro (Kili) were a gift to myself for finishing (finally!) my graduate work. I received my masters in Rehabilitation Counseling on August 25,1983. August 26,1983, I boarded an aircraft Tanzania-bound.

Eighteen days later I hugged my safari comrades goodbye and was deluged with support as I looked back from the land rover to see the waving hands and beaming faces of my newly-formed friends screaming, "You can do it Miss Kili. It'll be a piece of cake."

The next morning Winnie, Skip, Fred, Lou, and myself were greeted early by our two guides, Godfrey and James, and our nine porters. I have to admit my confidence was a bit shaken upon meeting Godfrey as he reeked of banana beer and staggered the three miles from Kibo Hotel to the entrance of Mt. Kilimanjaro National Park. Now, one needs to be flexible in this life and learn to overlook such matters of trivia; thus, I proceeded onward.

The ten mile hike to the first hut was very beautiful and interesting as we winded our way up the fairly easy trail through rainforest and streams. We met a few groups of people retreating off the mountains, some limping, others laughing. I asked them about the climb, received various bits of advice, and was to learn later that it's better not to ask. We arrived at Mandara Hut (elevation 9,000 ft.) in the late afternoon to be suprised by what we found. On the deck of the main hut our porters had tea and crumpets ready for us, laid out on a picnic table with a table cloth, no less. I burst out laughing and though to myself how I could easily become accustomed to this treatment (and I did!). I felt like a climbing princess or something, being waited on for three meals a day, plus tea time. It's an incredible experience to be free to hike and climb while the porters carry al the gear. The porters hike in sandals or no shoes at all until Kibo Hut (elevation 15,500 ft.). A perfectly good backpack or huge wooden box is carried on their heads and, believe me, they **move**. I learned a great deal about perserverance, tenacity, and courage watching the porters travel with their great loads. My patience wore thin for the Westerners who bitched about having things tough as they huffed and puffed up the mountain with the best of gear and the lightest of loads. The porters are paid $8.00 for the entire climb and the guides only $15.00. Now, who has it tough? That evening we met up with our companions who would travel with us the rest of the climb-- 70 high school students from Moshi.

The second day was incredible. The eleven mile trail became steeper and a bit more challenging. The scenery was spectacular. The summit of Kili became visible, as well as another peak caled Mawenzi with its suggestion of surrealism. It is a technical peak which I have become obsessed with climbing someday. It is beautiful. Anyway, by now some of the group were feeling the altitude. I started sensing and hearing some negative and defeatist atitudes which worried me. I offered some support but it was rejected. At this point, I reassessed my attitudes, goals, and objectives and decided it would be beter for me to hike alone the next day. We reached Horombo Hut (elevation 12,300) in the late afternoon. The view of Kili and Mawenzi was unbelievable. I spent the rest of the day and evening chatting with the high school students. It was fun.

The next morning Lou had a severe headache and started down the mountain. Fred also wasn't well, but he pushed on another thousand feet or so and then decided to turn back. Skip, Winnie, and I pushed on. I stuck with my decision of the day before and hiked alone.

It was a beautiful day and a wonderous experience that I will keep with me forever. My energy level was so high that I hiked the 12 miles to Kibo Hut (elevation 15,500 ft.) in 4 hours. When I arrived I was alone except for the porters and I felt strange. Not bad strange-- just strange. It was such an unusual feeling that I'm not able to adequately explain it. The porters brought me some tea and I drank it on the deck of the hut, enjoying the sensory overload. I then took a rest and waited fot the others. The rest of the day we were force-fed every two hours on jelly bread, porridge, and tea. We were so stuffed that all we could do was be in our bags and laugh. It was cold, too-- **freezing**. The final feeding came at 5:00 P.M., at which time we were told that we would be bought tea and biscuits at 12:30 A.M. and, "Be ready to climb at 1:00 A.M." We drifted off to sleep to the sounds of the students praying and chanting in Swahili.

12:30 A.M. came quickly and we were off. It was well below freezing, very windy, and clear when we started. The stars were so brilliant. The climb was difficult from the start due to the scree and altitude. The firt two hours passed quickly as I chanted to myself, "I feel fine." Then the nausea began. Winnie turned back. Skip and I were left. The lights of the high school students could be seen above and they were chanting again. This helped me immensely and I continued my own chant as well.

The next three-and-a-half hours I spent chanting, "I am light," pushing on with mounting nausea, and dropping to the ground with a rock for a pillow. Lying down was the only thing that helped the nausea, but I couldn't lie down for long and was forced up prematurely by the cold, zero-degree temperatures. At about 18,000 feet, just when the sun was coming up, something my body had been hinting at became a reality. I had a major DS (Diarrhea Blowout).

I have the most painfully comical mental picture of myself with snot hanging on my nose, squatting at 18,000 feet on Kili with Godfrey, James, and Skip standing by. And it goes without saying-- two kleenexes and no place for privacy. Enough of that. Skip and James went on. Godfrey and I followed half an hour later. The remainder of the climb was bouldering with some vertical work the last 50 feet. It was extremely difficult, but I wanted to reach the sumit so badly that nothing short of death could have stopped me. I reached the summit of MT. Kilimanjaro, Gillman's Point, elevation 19,100 ft., at 7:30 a.m.. It was a sense of relief and exhilaration that I have never experienced before and perhaps never again, as this was my first major mountain and lifelong dream accomplished. My pain was gone and I was ecstatic. I hugged Skip and we both laughed.

THE EPIC OF THE BAKED BEAN

Leif Hart

Once upon a time there lived a man who had a terrible passion for baked beans, he loved them, but they always had an embaressing and somewhat lively reaction on him. One day he met a girl and fell in love. When it was apparent that he would marry her, he thought to himself, she'll never go for carrying on like that. So he made the supreme sacrifice and gave up beans and shortly after, they got married. Some months later on the way home from work, his car broke down and since they lived in the country, he called his wife and told her he would be late because he had to walk. On his way home, he passed a small cafe and the odor of baked beans overwhelmed him and since he still had several miles to walk, he figured that he could work off any ill effects before he got home. So he stopped in and before leaving he had 3 extra large helpings of baked beans. All the way home he putted and putt-putted down one hill and putt-putted up the next. After arriving home he felt reasonably safe. His wife met him at the door and seems somewhat excited. She exclaimed, "Darling, I have the most wonderful surprise for you for dinner tonight!" She blindfolded him and led him to his chair at the head of the table. Just as she was ready to remove the blindfold the phone rang. She made him promise not to peek until she returned and went to answer the phone. When she was gone he seized the opportunity, shifted his weight to one leg and let go. It was not only loud, but was as ripe as a rotten egg. He had a hard time breathing so he took his napkin and fanned the air about him. He just started feeling better when he felt another urge. He raised his leg and **riiiiiiiiip**. It sounded like a straight pipe hot rod and smelled so bad he gagged. He fanned until his arms ached. Things had just about returned to normal, when he felt another urge coming, he shifted his weight to his other leg and let go. This was a prize winner. The windows rattled, the dishes on the table shook and a minute later the flowers on the table were dead. While keeping an ear tuned on the conversation in the hallway he carried on like this for the next 10 or 15 minutes, farting and fanning them with his napkin. When the phone farewells indicated the end of his loneliness and freedom, he neatly laid his napkin in his lap and folded his hands on top of it. Smiling contentedly, he was the picture of innocence when his wife walked in. Apologizing for taking so long she asked if he had peeked. After assuring he had not, she removed the blindfold and to his surprise there were twelve dinner guests seated around the table for a surprise birthday

THE NIGHT THE RATS DESCENDED

Suzanne Workman

It was in a shelter somewhere in the Smoky Mountains where six previously unaquainted hikers were about to begin a night they would never forget. As the last dying embers of the fire crackled in the fireplace, one by one the hikers lapsed into respective states of non-ordinary reality. Some were soon busy sawing at blowdowns accross the trails of their dreams, but others lay in semi-stupor, not able to sleep yet equally unable to open their eyes.

I was one of the latter, as was Malcom, a former thru-hiker now through hiking again. As we lay in the luxuriously accomodating wire bunks, a sound came to us. The sound was not a hiss of sappy embers nor the crackle of a drying ember, but rather a squeak--a very large squeak. I tried to listen but my heart was pounding and the blood rushing through my veins sounded like the roaring surf.

Malcom the brave grabbed his Techna laser light and shot a beam accross the floor--RATS! Two, three, four, five of them. A quick flash from the laser revealed more on the rafters, climbing on packs and rummaging through the fireplace. Rats--big, grey, beady-eyed monsters devouring everything in their way. But that was not all. Another flash of the laser into the corner revealed a skunk just maneuvering through the fenced corner.

The unknowing log-sawers sawed on as we lay in terror in our bags. The rats found some edibles in someone's pack. We could not see them; we only heard the gnawing. Oh I hope it's not my pack!

A scream from below and a yell foretold of more goings-on down under. The skunk had tryed to crawl into the sleeping bag with a woman on the bottom. As I lay there laughing in hysteria, a rat ran past my head and made a flying leap for my food bag--Aughh!! I swung wildly to frighten them off. My bandana fell to the floor . I looked down at it and the rats were converging on it, trying to tear it apart.

I tried to crawl deeper into my bag. My feet hit a rat running across the back of the bunk. The gnawing resumed somewhere in the shelter, this time with a frenzy. One hiker got up and moved his pack to a new hanging place. Rats were crawling everywhere. Malcom threw fruit bits on the floor as a diversion. The rats began fighting and screaming. I plugged my ears and drew my drawstring around my head. Sleep was not forthcoming. I fought them off for a while.

Then the thunder and lightning began. A storm to beat all storms hit the shelter. Rats screeched, plastic flapped, thunder crashed, rain pelted the roof, and the skunk came back looking for a place to get warm. I buried myself in the bag and prayed for morning to come.

It came not a moment too soon and the six hikers crawled out of their bags to survey the damages. Someone had left some cheese in their pack--the remains were barely identifiable. Garbage was strewn across the floor and my bandana was covered with dirty footprints. The rain let up and all scattered, never to forget the Night The Rats Descended.

DAN'S REPRIEVE

Mark Hartinger

The climb started out almost too perfectly. It was just after midnight as a cool, brisk wind greeted our passage through Ingalls Pass at 6700feet. With the aid of a full moon we had made excellent time, never once having to rely on our headlamps coming up the relentless uphill trail to Ingalls Lake. The outstanding rock of Mt. Stuart gleamed pearly white as we gazed upon the first view of our objective in the midnight stillness. Even my sweat-dampened back cooling in the chilly evening air didn't lessen my optimistic attitude about this climb.

Making our way down the snow slope to the cirque was somewhat tedious in the dark, but by 1:00 we had located a good bivy spot and hurriedly tried to crawl into our bivy sacks and get to sleep. We had planned an early start, and would need as much energy as possible for the route we had so ambitiously planned up the North Ridge of this classic mountain. We would probably be spending the next night perched on a narrow rock ledge amongst hanging glaciers and steep rock faces, and figured on minimal shut-eye for that experience. Another prospect for both nights was the lack of a sleeping bag, a luxury left behind in the interest of traveling light.

When enough light was available in the morning to glance at my watch, I quickly yanked my hand from under my ribcage and was unimpressed with the 5:17 reading. I had only just started to toss and turn from the cold, so for what it was worth, the few hours of good sleep I had gotten weren't bad. But there was another factor at play in my waking. and by the time I manufactured a stable level of coherence I was positive that it was indeed raining. The scourge of the Cascades was upon us already. The narrow confines of my bivy bag didn't exactly cheer me up as I yelled over to Dan to make sure he was having the same dream I was.

Dan had been my partner a number of times before, and together we had shared a fair number of successful ascents. His alpine experience was lengthy, but his tries with the world of sustained rock had been a little sparse. Nonetheless, neither one of us doubted the other's ability to pull this one off with only moderate difficulty. His reply in that early morning drizzle, though, was verging on retreat. So, resigned to wait for a short time at least, we each struggled within our sealed cocoons until a break in the weather occurred.

That break came almost suddenly around 7AM, and for the first time I shoved my head out of the bag to check out the dull Washington sky. To our good fortune, the leaden masses of moisture-bearing cumulus clouds held enough gaps to warrant a push forward in the hopes of continually improving weather that day. For once I relished not having to stuff a sleeping bag, but I was reluctant to even think about what the next night would hold on a ledge at a much windier, higher altitude. Enough thoughts about that. Shove down some token oatmeal, you fool; I mentally berated myself for once again not being hungry, when I should be taking in as much food as I could.

This was my first trip into this part of the Cascades. The striking beauty of the non-volcanic rock glaring in the few escaping rays of a bright early morning sun was an inspiring sight which urged me on to the goal I had waited for all summer. This alpine cirque carved by huge glaciers lay surrounded by sharp, eroded peaks on all but it's east side, where Ingall's Creek waterfalled it's way past the numerous avalanching couloirs of Mt. Stuart's steep south face. Ingall's Lake was still densely filled with a heavy winter snowpack, but still provided a beautiful backdrop to a remarkable valley.

We had to make rising traverses up through two mountain passes this morning to gain the North Ridge, as well as cross the avalanche-swept Stuart Glacier. Stuart Pass saw us early in the game and fresh. Before crossing over, though;, we gazed up the broken West Ridge and at least I had other thoughts of forgetting the journey towards the North and just completing this fine alpine route. Dan was by now getting charged with the sense of finishing our original objective, and talked me out of any other ideas I might be harboring.

Steep snow and scree awaited our journey from Stuart to Goat Pass. The car-sized boulders laying on top of the snow at the base of the runout were tremendous incentives to make this hike a quick one before the sun did any further damage to the ice thousands of feet above us that bonded the hundreds of loose rocks to the cliff faces. The last few hundred feet up the steep slope were good indicators of the weight I would be rock climbing with on my back later that day. I quickly dashed these dark thoughts from my mind and set my sights on nearer, more pleasant goals. Like lunch in the pass.

By now the skies had almost totally cleared, and the rocks in the Goat Pass had warmed up enough to be comfortable as props for our damp backs. The view from this lunch counter swept from the upper summit of Ingall's Peak in the West to the shaded, ominous profile of the North Ridge of Stuart. We could spot a few climbers against the bright sky, noting their tiny insignificance on the long, steep ridge. The thought that they would probably finish the climb and be snug in their camps that night while we were shivering against a biting wind on the ridge was no impetus for our continuing. By now it was noon, and the traverse across the glacier at 7600feet would be no field day under the hot sun.

Fortunately the glacier was not broken up, so we made a fairly level traverse to a thin finger of snow rising 55 degrees for about 300 feet that would gain us the ridge. Digging small platforms to park our rumps, we sat at the base of this first objective and doggedly fought putting crampons on. It seemed shameful that the crampons had to be lugged along all this way for just a small part of the climb, but we tried to put them in perspective and justify their small weight by comparing them with all the other pounds of chocks and rope and webbing that loaded the packs. But the narrow gully of snow proved terrifying as I breached the upper portions and considered the fatal consequences of a single misstep in this icy couloir. I was glad I had brought my crampons.

Dan and I had improved our snow and ice climbing techniques enough to feel comfortable on such steep, exposed gullies, and thus travelled unroped on pitches like this to quicken our progression. With both hands gripped to the adze of my ice axe, I repeated the melodic rhythm of shoving the axe deep into the slope in front of me and kicking my feet into the crisp surface underneath me. We had the fortunate advantage of being second on the climb, as previous parties had kicked adequate steps into the snow, saving us from this tiring work. But each time I stared down between my legs to find the next hole to ram my boot into, I also stared at the dropoff below me as it kept getting farther and farther away.

Tiny rivulets of water ran over the surface of the snow as we neared the top of the gully, and we took the opportunity to top off our water bottles in preparation for the long effort on the dry ridge. After removing our crampons, we didn't waste any time in scrambling up the first two of three pitches of easy class 5 without bothering to set up any belays. In retrospect, I guess roping up would have been a much wiser choice, not only for the factor of safety but also to get out of our packs the 8-pound rope and a mass of other gear. The 40 or so pounds each of us hauled on our backs was obviously taking its toll, and each move over the angular granite required a surge of extra energy to offset the combined efforts of pack and gravity to pull us off balance and send us careening to our demise on the ledges below.

My impressions of the route were solidly molded after the first half hour of climbing. The fine quality of the granite was a pleasure to grasp, and from our lofty perch above three glaciers, the menacing cliffs and gullies of Stuart's North Face gave our route the aura of a major Alaskan face or one of Canada's awesome ridges. We had ascended about the first quarter of the route unroped when the next series of moves faced us with our first serious rock. Dan had fallen quickly behind and was still laboring up some vertical pitches, so I laid out all the gear and had the rope uncoiled and ready to go by the time he pulled himself onto the first belay ledge. The lure of the route before me dulled my comprehension of Dan's weakened state, and his panting pleas didn't break my spell of attaining the summit, which lay what seemed like a short 1000 feet or so directly above us.

Maybe it was a strong sense of confidence mixed with the experience of many other rock routes this summer, but something enabled me to jam up cracks and snake over tiny ledges for the first 70 feet or so of that pitch. I had gotten to a roomy ledge which would make a comfortable spot to belay from, but I stared upward at what might be above, intent on continuing this lead. Maybe I had been off route, but I was sure that the rock I had just grunted my way up was 5.6 or 5.7, and the pack had done nothing but hinder my progress during every move. I was a little peeved that I had only placed two chocks the entire pitch, but had not found any convenient stopping points which would have allowed holding my weight plus the pack to the wall while I fiddled with the rack of 13 chocks I had brought along. I consoled myself that I had not gotten gripped at any point along the way, and the speed with which I had done the pitch saved a lot of my energy which would be much needed later on.

Just then a thunderous clap of sound cracked across the eastern slopes. Quickly I jerked myself over a rock bulge just in time to witness an enormous avalanche billowing it's way down the Ice Cliff Glacier, a vertical wall of ice and snow that looked about as stable as a stack of books with the largest and heaviest ones on top. The roar of the snow smashing rock and pressurizing the air in its path filled the valley with a deafening thunder, the likes of which I had never witnessed in my experience. With more than a bit of apprehension, I found some good protection points and bellowed an "off belay" to my waiting partner.

Time passed quickly on my little ledge, and after about 45 minutes I found myself losing my patience with Dan. From the amount of rope I had pulled in, I guessed he had only progressed about 25 feet, and already the time was about 2:30 in the afternoon. In the exuberance of the lower sections of the ridge, I had guessed that we were moving along at such a good rate that the summit would be attainable before dark, and we might even stand a chance of being down along Ingall's Creek reminiscing about the events of the day before darkness fell. But now the sun was making a fast descent, and Dan's slow climbing was dashing my hopes down the cliffs with the avalanches. So far, in a period of about an hour, 8 more episodes of avalanching ice and snow had occurred.

About then, Dan screamed up to me that he couldn't make it up this one particularly difficult pitch, and that he was going to prusik up the 20 foot face. Begrudgingly, I tied off the end of the rope, and set myself free of the job of belaying. I had the opportunity to wander around on my little ledge, and climbed up a short wall of rock to gain a better view of the thundering avalanches that had filled my ears over the past hour. But after about 30 minutes of this, I was getting frustrated at the lack of progress Dan had made, and finally yelled down at him, inquiring just what in the hell he was doing. There was no answer for about 20 seconds, and then he replied, clear as a bell, that he had gotten himself into serious trouble that he couldn't get out of, and that I had better get down to him immediately.

This request was unlike Dan, so I realized that the situation must be urgent, and I set about figuring out how I would make my descent. Dan was by now screaming for slack, but since I had him tied off and his weight was putting tension on the rope, there was no hope of giving it to him. But the gods found the ability to smile on our fate that day, and there was just enough rope left for me to use the remaining footage and rappel to Dan's aid. The sight that awaited me was not only confusing, but downright frightening. A tangled mass of prusik slings and webbing hung suspended from Dan's rope, and Dan, caught in a web of perlon and webbing, frantically grasped at the air and groped for breath. His semi-conscious state was deteriorating rapidly, due to the fact that his chest harness had slipped from its hold and was now tightly wrapped in a death hold around his reddened neck. The shoulder straps of his pack were further complicating the situation. His feet dangled free from the foot loops, and blood smeared the surrounding rock from his cut hands and forearms, products of frugal thrashing on the featureless rock face.

There was no doubt that time was critical, but for the moment, the situation confused me, and a few seconds of frantic thought speeded Dans' encroaching demise. My only choice was to clip Dan into another prusik attached to my rope, and cut him free of his current bonds. But one snag threatened this solution- no knife! Dan was about 15 feet to my right, so I pendulummed over until I could grab onto his pack and hold myself into the wall. I ripped open the top compartment of his pack and started groping amongst the contents in search of a blade, my own situation being one of a very uncomfortable rappel tie-off. But after spilling a few items, I located his knife and proceeded with my plan.

The series of events that had just occurred probably took place over the span of about a minute and a half, but by now Dan hung limp at the end of the knotted, twisted perlon. I had already placed a prusik onto my rope, and with the aid of a short piece of webbing, clipped his seat harness into our common anchor. Glancing over the myriad of knots and slings to check my plan, I then set about cutting. When I had released the last anchor tying Dan to his end of the rope, the two of us went swinging into space, solely at the mercy of a few chocks which I prayed I had placed well at the top of the pitch. Any failure points now would send us bouncing down the east face of the North Ridge to join the avalanches still roaring down the gullies thousands of feet below us.

For the few brief seconds that we swung at the end

cont. on p. 10

HOW TO TELL A BACKPACK FROM A

QUACKPACK

Stephen M. Kramrech

How much should a backpack cost? What kind of material should a pack be make from? Are internal or external frames better? What IS a backpack? I hope to address these and any other questions that come sniffing at my pants cuffs in this article. I'll warn you now however, that my biases will show through, though I'll try to suppress the more blatant of them. As this is only supposed to be a guide I'll expect YOU to do some thinking about what you need; don't expect to be lead by the nose, down that path is trouble(with a capital T). With these Caveats out of the way let's get down to packs.

First off, a pack should only cost what it is worth. (This may seem like common sense to some, but it is surprising how many people over spend, not only on backpacks, but on other pieces of equipment.) Personally, I look at what a pack is worth first and then I decide what a reasonable cost would be. As this has seemed to work in the past I'll continue with this policy. However, this doesn't mean you should pass up a bargain, it just means you need to be able to spot the real bargains as opposed to the Sears bargains. It also means you'll find that bargain after you've just bought a pack at full mark-up('twas ever thus). By far the best places to go for reasonable prices are catalogues. But, if you're like me, you can't satisfy that urge to fondle with a catalogue. This is what local stores are for. Of course if you live in East Podunk with three chickens and a dog there may not be a local outdoor equipment store; so it goes. In Zinzinnati there are at least four stores of this variety as well as a few other department store types that have some camping gear. Go to all of them, or as many as is possible, and examine not only packs that may fit into the category you're interested in but, all the other packs too. There's a good chance you'll see features on packs in other categories that may not be on the ones in your category at those stores. However, when you look in the catalogues you may find these features on packs in your category and if you've done your homework you'll know the difference between a coil zipper and a tooth zipper.

Speaking of categories, what kinds are there? Well, in days gone by (like 5-10 years ago) packs divided fairly well into about 4 categories: day packs, internal frame, external frame, and specialty packs. Although manufacturers still tend to list packs in categories in their catalogues, there are so many shadings that you essentially have a complete spectrum(that goes for colors too). About the only factor you might use to divide packs would be the carrying capacity in cubic centimeter (or cubic inches if you have an English eye). The trouble is some people (no names, please) hang as much on the outside of their packs as they stuff in them, so depending on whether you're a stuffer or hanger a particular pack may be too big or too small. Anyways, if you would like a rough guide (careful, watch our for those biases) here's how I divide packs. Anything from about 300 cubic inches to 1000 cubic inches falls into my day pack class. Anything under 300 is of the fanny or belt-pack variety, of which there are a plethora. From 1000 cubic inches to 1500 cubic inches is my day pack class. Packs with 1500 cubic inches to approximately 4500 cubic inches are good for anything from a few days to about 2 weeks depending on how much gear, food, etc. you feel you need. Anything over 4500 cubic inches falls into my expedition (i.e. S and M) category.(Guess which class my pack is in. Yep, you got it.) Notice that I have no specialty category. This is because, first although specialty packs tend to come in the larger volumes there are some in every category and secondly, because they are specialty packs they really deserve to be discussed separately (How's that for milking more than one article out of a subject!). I hope from what I've been saying that you have got the impression you should look for a pack to suit your needs in terms of duration of trip, cause that's my intent. For those of you who are not sure of the length of future trips I's recommend a pack about 2500 cubic inches. It's small enough that you don't feel like you're toting a barge around on a weekend trip, but with judicious selection of equipment, you can go for a week or more comfortably.

The next topic, and one with ardent (Dare I say it? Vehement!) supporters on both sides is the issue of the internal frame versus the external frame. Time was when it was said, with good cause that if you want to carry any load over about 27 kgs. (60 lbs.) you needed an external frame. With the advent of ergonomics, computer optimization of body mechanics, light weight materials, etc., some of the better internal frame packs can comfortably carry 27 kgs. or more. Such being the state of things, I feel it is pretty much a moot point which type to purchase unless extenuating circumstances intrude. Like wanting to carry your body weight, which for us heavier persons is 75 kgs.(165 lbs.), or doing technical ice or rock climbing. For very heavy loads I feel external frames still have the edge, and when projections that can snag unwary tree limbs are a hindrance, internal frames are best.

Now let's get down to some of the nitty gritty of pack construction. If you're looking for a day pack to carry an extra sweater, rain gear and your lunch, and your are it's not going to do much else, a light weight material would be good enough, such as 5 oz. nylon taffeta. The 5 oz. refers to the weight of the material per square yard., generally the heavier, the more rugged. Nylon is the thread material and taffeta is a type of weave that is closely woven(i.e. many threads per inch), giving a more wind and water resistant cloth. The next step up is called nylon pack cloth. It has a weight of 7 oz. and is more resistant to abrasion than taffeta. However, it uses thicker threads resulting in somewhat less wind and water resistance, but it is coated in compensation with a plastic. Up once more and you come to 11 oz. Cordura nylon which has very high abrasion and tear resistance and a rough texture. It also must coated to provide wind and water resistance. Lastly, for the high tech group, a few manufacturers produce packs constructed partially or entirely of Ballistic cloth which, if you're unfamiliar with it, was first used to make bullet-proof vests. However, I am skeptical that the inflated price that comes with these packs is worth it, if anyone can show me proof of it's worth I'll gladly consider it. The sewing of the pack is at least as important, if not more so, than what it's made of. After all, if it falls apart while you're loading it from weak seams it's not worth having. If you know nothing about sewing (and I assume you don't) the key thing to look for is the number of threads per inch, which is actually the number of times the sewing needle has pierced the fabric in a length of one inch. Here, too little is as bad as too much. Since every hole is a weak spot in the fabric (as well as a place for water to enter) you don't want too many holes yet if you only have a very few holes the stress' are concentrated heavily at those holes. A good balance of holes is when you have a count of about 10-12 threads per inch. Since I've mentioned holes and water resistance I'll elaborate just a little on this. Some say and uncoated cloth is better since if things get wet they can dry more easily. Others argue that a coated

cloth will prevent things getting wet in the first place. It has been my experience that all packs leak, and therefore rain covers were invented, and some of those don't work very well. So if you desire a little more protection get the pack with coated cloth. Better yet, if you really want to keep things dry put them in heavy weight plastic garbage bags, the only reliable method I know of. I've used them on many river trips and have only rarely been let down. (By the way I've not known cloths to dry very well bunched together in a pack.) One last thing on cloth make sure the thread used for sewing the pack is either all nylon or cotton wrapped nylon, as all cotton thread tends to rot and fall apart after getting wet.

The last major construction material, if you have a frame pack, is...right! Without doubt no matter whether you choose internal or external frame the material will probably be aluminum and the ad will read something like "made with T-7079 aircraft aluminum" or some such. I once looked into the different types of aluminum produced and found a rather large assortment of types of "aircraft grade" aluminum. This is one place where you just have to take the manufacturer's word that he's not using soda can aluminum, unless you have a degree in metallurgy. My advice is to stay with a well known, established company if you are unsure. One test you can perform for an external frame pack is if you are at a store and they'll let you, set the frame ends on the floor and with some assistance, grab the top of the frame and gradually put all your weight on the frame until your feet are off the floor. It sounds drastic but a good quality frame can take it. If the salesperson won't let you try it, I'd be somewhat suspicious. The internal frame model most often used is flat bars of aluminum which are soft enough to allow custom bend to fit individual torsos, yet will retain its shape with heavy loads. Make sure all the edges and ends are rounded to prevent cutting of the pack fabric. Extra padding on the ends of the stays help reduce wearing a hole through the fabric. One more thing, I tend to stay away from frames using bolts, nuts, screws, etc. as I've heard several horror stories about packs breaking at inconvenient times. Like someone I know who had a model that broke on a trip out West, got a replacement of the same type, and had that one break too! For external frames, a single stiff wire on each side for the pins seems like the best idea (quieter than the individual small rings on each pin too!).

The last thing I'd like to mention is the suspension system and belts (no, no...not black leather, I'm not that kinky). When you come right down to it you can make do with defects in other parts of the pack but if it does not properly transfer the weight of the pack to your hips and legs every step will be misery after the first mile. Again, there seems to be many variations on a single theme, the original theme being sung by Dick Kelty who devised the first efficient belt/suspension system. A bare bones set up includes a wide, padded belt attached near the bottom of the frame and a set of shoulder straps that attach near the bottom of the frame and do up over the shoulders to a point on the frame either at shoulder level or slightly above. This setup, if properly executed, transfers most of the backpack weight to your pelvic structure, relieving the strain on your shoulders. The shoulder straps are primarily to keep the pack from pivoting away from your back, throwing you off balance. A very nice addition (personal preference) is a breast strap between shoulder straps which relieves you of the need, sometimes frequent, of stabilizing the pack and relieving shoulder strain by grabbing the straps with your hands. Any other goodies are so much icing on the cake as far as I'm concerned, except when you have an internal frame pack. Because the idea of internal frames is to keep the weight close to your back, the basic Kelty type system is modified. Here the typical system is an extra-wide padded belt, a lumbar pad, and shoulder straps that wrap around the shoulder (front, top, and back) and attach to the pack about three fifths of the distance up from the waist to the shoulders. In addition there is usually a strap from the top/front of the shoulder straps to near the top of the pack to adjust the gap between your back and the pack. Since I'm getting tired of writing (it's 12:20 pm on a Friday night), I won't go into all the other more exotic types of systems. Just use Occam's Razor in picking a suitable system (i.e. the least complicated the more reliable). And by the way, if you can coerce someone who has already been through this routine to go with you and help you, you will probably save a lot of time and gasoline (I'm available for weekend and evening consultations at a rate of cough, cough dollars per hour). And another thing, if you can rent or borrow different types to field test, you'll be well rewarded by the knowledge gained on what suits your needs/desires. And by the way, "What is your quest?"

<u>The Ocoee's Lesson</u>

Success!
Hollering through
A long set of standing waves.
My heart
And arms
Pump like pistons.
Forward brace.
Stern pry.
Steady as she goes!
The bow goes over
The lip
Of the hole
Down Down.
Will it come back up
And ride the next?
Shit.
I'm sideways.
Ride that boss!
Strong brace!
Water floods in
Fighting a ton of force,
The safe eddy
Is
Miles away.
Suddenly
The world is
Upside down.
The river
Is swallowing me.
Hold your paddle!
Don't breathe!
The water
Penetrates anyway
Gag,
And more flows down.
Tossed like
An eggshell
Into the pounding rocks
And
Menacing blue hole.
God, am I going to drown?

- Marty Huseman

SKEETER HEAVEN

Craig Patterson

Lakes and mosquitos are everywhere. The Club is in the middle of nowhere. Nowhere is Minnesota. Everywhere goes with people. Seventeen UCMC members meet at Four Four Four at the crack of a summer dawn to bolt one thousand miles north in a van and two Subarus. We have everything with us; ten guys seven girls, five Germans, thirty-four eyes, and four canoes. Chicago, Illinois...Madison, Wisconsin...Duluth, Minnesota...our wheels roll on into darkness. It is Saturday night, June eleventh, 1983. We pull into a gas station near the border of Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan and Lake Superior. The outdoorsmen tell fish stories while the Uppers (you'pers) get high. Uppers can be seen "yaa sur"ing their way through unemployed upper Michigan preparing for the two hundred plus inches of snow they will receive during a wicked winter season. But "yaa, you betcha" the uppers will surely burn their birch, marry early, and lounge in Finnish saunas. But we still have to get to the Boundary Waters Canoe Area before daylight. Sure enough, Palisade Head dead ends into Lake Superior, boasting three hundred foot cliffs and a reunion of lost cars. Two Subarus with four canoes and nine people plod ninety miles northeast to put in on Seagull Lake. A van with no canoes and eight people head sixty miles north to Ely (e'lee), Minnesota to find Pipestone Canoe Outfitters and Snowbank Lake.

It is Sunday, thirty hours from Cincinnati, and two well rounded groups of UCMC crazies are paddling on the wilderness lakes of Minnesota. Tipper, the voyageurs! Humans packed in aluminum canoes ready to rip the heads off live fish with their teeth.

"What is wrong with Craig? Why is he screaming?"
"I don't know...he seems to be in some kind of trance."
"Maybe he will snap out of it by the time the trip is over."
"Gosh, I hope so!"

Yes, the trip has only begun. Plenty of sun-soaked, rain-soaked days of paddling, portaging, swimming, camping, fishing, and relaxing lie ahead. Look! A swarm of mosquitos. Look! A bald eagle. Look! A thunderstorm. Look! A lake trout. Craig continues to stare. Forty miles of canoeing, three miles of portaging, seven days of paddling, what a wild time!

It isn't until the sky turns black that the two groups of Club crazies meet up for a second reunion on the fourth day. Both groups realize similar peculiarities in the Boundary Waters. There seems to be certain characteristic channels avid voyageurs paddle into. For example, islands are superb for everything. Often, designated island campsites have no animals and a stiff breeze that keeps even the toughest skeeters away. Rocks offer suicidal leaps into icy water and excellent free climbing. Thickets and quagmires require safety nets and bug dope to ward off man-eating mosquitos the size of birds. Bodily functions become bodily tortures. Wind can create tidal waves on open lakes, directing a lazy canoe off course. Adrenalin and stomach muscles help when your canoe is about to get fried by lightning. The local outfitters come to the rescue with Duluth packs, yokes, life preservers, canoe paddles, and canoes for rent. Canvas Duluth packs about the size of large garbage bags are needed during portages and rainstorms. They also make hanging a bear bag a snap. Yokes save shoulders when carrying canoes single-handedly on long portages and life preservers make good knee pads on day trips. At any rate, both groups meet on an island for a social feast with mountains of clouds looming in the distance. Fresh lake trout garnished with smoked herbs is passed around the open fire. Everyone in the tribe does as they please until it's too dark to stumble to bed.

The groups trade canoes and paddle away from each other the next morning, retracing each others recent trails. Arms, shoulders, and legs are stronger now. People seem closer with familiarity and coordinated schedules. The weather improves as the trip comes to an end. A brilliant sunset and a campfire the last night bid Minnesota's lakes farewell. the whine of the mosquitos lingers outside our tent. My trance has come to an end.

The remainder of our travels leads us to Pipestone Canoe Outfitters for a complimentary beer and a shower. These folks are friendly. Our group stops in Ely for pizza and beer. We are back in civilization after seven days but the mixture of birch, pine and deciduous trees along the back roads still seems remote and unusual. Fletch slams the van to a halt for a final Club reunion at Palisade Head. Two of the Germans are hitch-hiking out west while the rest of us must return to Cincinnati for some more bad air. Everyone is in a cheery mood, hovering three hundred feet above Lake Superior. Who knows, maybe these ecstatic feelings come from the red wine and Olympia beer sloshing around. No, most likely it is the sense of accomplishment of surviving and exploring new frontiers that made another Club trip successful and exciting. What would we do without them?

Life's Trail

Trees shelter me as I walk
- a temporary security
Happiness darts through the
Hissing branches
Browning my cheeks with each
Step
The creek, an inconsistent friend
Flows with me occasionally
The hill steepens
Massive boulders replace
Innocent trees
Tears of sweat drip from my brow
Wind chills me, holds me back
Will it ever be easy again?
I must learn to face myself
They say
I shut them out
Rebellious girl
Forching my feeble knees to
Lift me, arrows of pain reach
My heart
The pressure begins to crush
My innocent lungs
Happiness hides behind a
Dismal cloud
I've lost my friend
And I am Thirsty

- Marci Napoli

cont. from p.6

of a rope dangled by the hands of fate, I assessed the events leading to this precarious situation, wondering if we had possibly played the game wrong. Maybe we had been caught cheating, and were now being punished, evicted from the game. What more is a climb than pitting ability against the combined elements of rock and snow? To the winner, a reward. If we were to win, our reward would be crouching on the summit as the last rays of the sun dipped below Ingall's Peak and we hurried our descent down one of the southern couloirs. If the mountain won...?

But for now our luck was holding out, and within a few seconds we hung free and motionless. In a few minutes Dan had recovered sufficiently to rappel the remaining rope length to a narrow gully, and I reclimbed up to my pack and the ledge I had spent so much time on. For a few minutes I studied the route above, carefully planning a return to my waiting partner. A few more rappels led us to easy ledges and a traverse to the snow couloir we had climbed to gain the ridge.

Cautiously backing down its length required strength and patience, both of which we had run short on, but after about an hour we sat at the bottom, removing our crampons, each silent in his thoughts of the hike out. It was 6 pm, and gently raining. The weather had been slowly getting worse all day, and the last part of the descent required putting up with the threat of a storm. Slowly we crept back across the Stuart Glacier, Stuart Pass, Goat Pass, and onto Ingall's Lake before light of the day disappeared. The last 4 miles to the car dragged on until midnight. Unable to stay awake any longer, Dan nestled into a deep sleep, and I started the three hour drive back to Seattle.

Each year a climber might save his partner's life a hundred times, and not even consider his deeds once. It's all part of the game. The rules are set, and every climber must follow them. In varying degrees, every bit of slack, tension, holding falls and aiding each other in whatever manner needed is an act to keep one's partner from peeling from the rock to whatever fate might hold in store for them. In no other sport that I know of do we depend so much in blind faith in the other's ability. We ask no questions, and climb on, to the summits of our dreams.

BLUEGRASS LOVE

Kim Niehaus

I was borned a coal miners daughter.
I've lived in these hills faraway.
I've worked ever since I was a baby.
And never seen a dime's worth of pay.

I've searched through these woods and these mountains
I've searched every hill and every dale.
I once thought that I had found a true lover,
But he left me to suffer in hell.

This man, oh, he was quite a lover.
I thought that I would surely have a home.
He made me feel the joy of this world's bounties,
But he left me to recover all alone.

Today, I still live in Letcher County.
I live and work and hope and pray.
That some sweet day he will come a calling.
And make the bells to ring my wedding day.

Speller

ASCENT OF CASTLE PEAK

Don Speller

On July fourth, Dave Bowyer and I were camped at Cathedral Lake above Aspen, enjoying the view of the magnificent Elk Range, of the Colorado Rockies. Thoughts of our goal, the 12th highest Colorado fourteener, Castle Peak at 14,265 ft. still lay ahead. We had been above 12,000 feet only one day and weren't acclimated. Nonetheless, with time short, we had to climb to prepare ourselves for the peak. Electric Pass above 13,600 feet was our first assault, consisting of scrambling up a large scree slope, much like climbing up a pile of gravel. It was slow, tedious work, but we soon arrived at the ridge just below the summit. Rather than risk crossing below an overhung snow filed and getting caught in an avalanche, we headed straight up the slope and soon reached the top for a welcome rest.

After a while, we attempted a ridge-crossing toward Cathedral Peak, but soon found it too difficult a climb. Upon returning to the summit of Electric Pass we met two other climbers, one of whom is attending College Conservatory of Music at UC (small world!) We talked about how dull Cincinnati was and how glad we were to be in Colorado. They departed and Dave and I started down the knife-edge snow field toward the lower ridge. The right side was overhung and a step too far in that direction would plunge us down the rock slope. After a long descent, we finally reached camp.

The lack of proper acclimatization took its toll as I got sick and exhausted the next day. It was spent doing not much of anything.

On Wednesday we were finally ready for our climb of Castle Peak. But in order to reach it, we had to climb over another pass. We headed up the first snow field and then a steep scree slope between rock flakes. As we neared the summit of the pass, we encountered an extremely steep snow field. It required real ice climbing as Dave kicked steps and planted his ice ax for a belay. I followed and actually used some footholds as hand holds while standing upright and ramming the ice ax shaft into the snow for an anchor. After about 70 feet, we reached the summit of the pass and got our first glimpse of Castle Peak.

To reach the route we wanted required descending the scree slope to a road. The road was an access to the now closed Montezuma Mine. There was even an old log cabin on the summit of the Pass. We headed around the base to the right and headed into a bowl-shaped valley between the peak and an opposite ridge. It was all filled with snow but fortunately it was FIRM. The climb to the base required an ascent on an ever-increasing slope of snow into another bowl and up a steep hill of snow. It was more ice climbing than I had ever encountered, but it is what I came for.

The next step was to reach the summit ridge which was above a scree slope of shifting rocks. It was the worst part of the climb and an unbelievably exhausting effort. The summit ridge offered yet another obstacle--several false summits that had to be navigated. We would scramble around boulders only to encounter yet another outcropping.

Finally we were at the base of the summit ridge with one side covered with deep snow. The snow proved too difficult so we stayed on the rocks, gasping for air every 10 feet. The summit ridge ended in a small cliff which was easily scrambled. At last we rounded the top rock slope to stand upon the summit.

Dave and I sat for quite a while soaking up the scenery. All around us were the jagged, now-covered peaks of the Elks Range which truly gave justice to the term "Rockies." We were on the highest peak for miles around.

The descent was a story in itself. After signing the register on the top, we climbed down to the base of the summit ridge about 100 feet below the top. At this point, we would have had to scramble down the scree slope, but instead, we noticed a long snow gulley descending all the way to the bowl 300 feet below. I could not resist the urge to slide on it so I sat down and began sliding for about 20 feet. Dave was amazed and tried it for a short distance. Soon we were sliding greater distances with ice axes planted to ensure that we could stop. Finally I simply let go and started a slide for hundreds of feet, simply steering with my ice ax. Dave followed my lead and the two of us slid all the way down to the bowl. The slide (called glissading) was totally fun and well worth the climb. From the bowl we walked to the edge of the snow fields and glissaded to the bottom another 300 feet. We slid another 70 feet to the left of this and at last reached the road in less than an hour from the summit.

But the day was not over. We still had to climb back over the Pass. Slowly we inched our way up, when, about half way up, bad weather came in and dumped hail. Fortunately it didn't last and we reached the top and began to descend the slope on the other side. It was steep and dangerous. At one point, Dave hurt himself, although not badly. At last we reached camp and the storm broke, which was the only bad weather we had.

Our last day was spent sailing just outside Denver with Bill Strachan and Hal Shaw, an ex-club president. It was a great way to end our trip.

<u>The Bear</u> - Robert Frost

The bear puts both arms around the tree above her
And draws it down as if it were a lover
And its choke cherries lips to kiss goodbye,
Then lets it snap back upright in the stars.
Her next steps rocks the boulder on the wall
(She's making her cross-country in the fall)
Her great weight creaks the barb-wire in its staples,
As she flings over and off down through the maples,
Leaving on one wire a lock of hair.
Such is the uncaged process of the bear.
The world has room to make a bear feel free;
The universe seems cramped to you and me.
Man acts more like the poor bear in a cage.
That all day fights a nervous inward rage,
His mood rejecting all his minds suggests,
He paces back and forth and never rests.
The toenail click and shuffle of his feet,
The telescope at one end of his beat,
At the other end the microscope,
Two instruments of nearly equal hope,
And in conjunction giving quite a spread.
Or if he rests from scientific tread,
'tis only to sit back and sway his head
Through ninety odd degrees of arc, it seems,
Between two metaphysical extremes.
He sits back on his fundamental butt
With lifted snout and eyes (if any) shut,
(He almost looks religious but he's not),
And back and forth he sways from cheek to cheek,
At one extrem agreeing with one cheek,
At the other agreeing with the other cheek
Which may be thought, but only so to speak.
A baggy figure, equally pathetic
When sedentary and when peripatetic.

SOME THOUGHTS ON BRAIN BUCKETS

Mike Fischesser

(Reprinted from the July 1983 NSS News)

ABSTRACT: A good quality climbing helmet should be considered for certain types of caving where rockfall or tumbling falls may render a caving hardhat useless.

QUESTION: When does a caving helmet become a climbing helmet?

ANSWER: When a caver begins to expose himself/herself to a situation that might involve a fall or being in the line of falling objects.

The purpose of this article is to encourage discussion on just how good most caving helmets are. It is written by a "climber turned caver." When I first started caving I used a Bell Malibu Toptex helmet because it was comfortable, supposedly afforded good protection and it was all I had at the time. This helmet was the topic of controversy in the climbing world several years ago.

Larry Penberthy of Mountain Safety Research, whose purpose is to test and evaluate safety equipment used in mountaineering, caught the attention of many Toptex owners when he tested the helmet and reminded people that Malibu was a beach and that the helmet was designed for surfers. Many people were using Toptex at the time, and many people involved in mountain rescue still do because it cost about $15 (1971) and was considered to be one of the safer helmets. Many different climbing helmets have appeared since then. It is interesting to note that many climbers do not wear a helmet, and there are some rather good reasons for not wearing a "crash helmet" in some situations.

I later went to one of the phosphoresacent, light, fiberglass caving hard hats that have a lamp bracket mounted on the front. I didn't think much of the helmet at the time, as it compared to a good climbing helmet like a climbing helmet would compare to a full coverage motorcycle helmet. It was inexpensive, about $8 in 1975. I used this for a lot of horizontal caving and some vertical work before it dawned on me that I was using double standards. I wouldn't dream of using the caving hard hat on a rock climb, but yet here I was using it underground while exposing myself to the same dangers as climbing.

From all the information and testing being done on climbing helmets I decided to retire my Bell Toptex and purchase a Joe Brown Super for $27 in 1975. As I got into more and more vertical caving in the spring of 1977 I began using the Joe Brown for caving as well.

The reason I wanted a better helmet for caving was due to incidents I had seen while climbing. Some of the rocks I've had hit me on the helmet when climbing might have destroyed a cheaper-quality helmet. I've taken and seen others take lead falls in which the helmet saved them from serious head injury. The same dangers exist in a cave. Although most people aren't in a situation in which they might take a long fall underground, a lot of us find ourselves traversing a narrow ledge or chimneying a canyon where a slip of a foot would send one down to a jagged, boulder-strewn floor only 20 feet down. "Only 20 feet down" can do as much damage to a spine or cranium as a 100-foot fall in some cases. I just felt that my old fiberglass "glow in the dark" hard hat wouldn't provide me with the protection I wanted while caving. I think they are fine for easy horizontal caving, where a low ceiling might be the only danger. But I really question their protection in tumbling fall or if a fist-sized rock is dislodged from above. However, on the other hand, I don't believe that many severe accidents of this nature have occurred that frequently. So maybe they are doing their job.

I have to emphasize good quality climbing helmets because there are some poor ones on the market. Three that one might consider are: the Joe Brown Super, the Ultimate and MSR (Mountain Safety Research). Admittedly they all look funny, but so does a caving helmet to a climber.

The following helmet requirements should be considered when asking yourself, "When does a caving hat become a climbing helmet?"

1. It must remain on the head during a tumbling fall.
2. If it is too hot, too heavy or impairs hearing then you won't take it along.
3. It should have a rigid shell that would spread the impact force.
4. It should resist penetration by pointed objects.
5. It should have a good inside lining to absorb side blows and pad skull.
6. It must have a reasonable cost.
7. It should have a good suspension system inside that might give the skull an extra fraction of an inch more clearence from an object.
8. It must offer side-to-side rigidity.
9. The chin strap should be modified with velcro closure to enable a quick release in the event the helmet jams when rappelling through a narrow spot.

THE PETZEL ECRIN HELMET

Petzl, a caving and mountaineering manufacturer in France, recently introduced their helmets into the U.S. market. It appears Petzl has gone a step or two further than most manufacturers in its interest in refining its equipment, providing detailed consumer information and testing its products.

The Petzl Ecrin helmet is quite comfortable. It is lightweight (half a pound lighter than a Joe Brown Super) due to the reinforced polyamide shell. The shell has four ventilation holes drilled along each side that help to rid excess heat radiating from the head. It passes the UIAA drop and penetration tests. The adjustable headband and neck straps are of good quality and allow for a custom fit. The better the fit, the less likely the helmet is to be moved about on the head in a tumbling fall. A simple test is to place different helmets on your head with the headband adjusted properly and the chin strap snug and then a bit loose (looseis a more realistic test). Try shoving the helmet off your head from all directions. The Petzl Ecrin stays on better than the Joe Brown Super and the Bell Malibu Toptex. Instead of a crushable foam liner throughout the entire helmet, Petzl has decided to place four crushable foam blocks on the sides, back and front between the headband and helmet shell. These have made it lighter and are designed to absorb shock from the sides. The foam is thicker than most full coverage foams, but there is none above the top of the head. Theoretically, the top of the helmet is not supposed to come in contact with the top of the skull due to the distance between suspension system and shell. The helmet is not susceptible to weakening by paints or decals as some helmets are.

The disadvantages of the Petzl Ecrin helmet might be in its side-to-side rigidity (see correspondence between Jim Pizarowicz, NSS 16872, author of the "Caving Helmets" chapter of Caving Basics, and Mike Meredith, representative of Petzl) and coverage of ears and temple. Petzl claims that the softness in side-to-side rigidity is necessary for the entire shell to absorb energy of impact better; therefore a trade-off in helmet characteristics might be a factor in the choice of helmets. However the side-to-side rigidity is a bit more substantial than a Joe Brown. But the sides of a Joe Brown cover more of the temples and ears than the Petzl, so the rigidity might be greater in the JB than at the same level on the side of the head where the Petzl stops.

Although the Joe Brown and Ultimate cover more of the ears and temples than the Petzl, there is a poten-

tial trade-off on hearing ability and ventilation.

Another simple test is to hold a helmet up to your chest sideways, grasp it with your arms and pull in hard (slow at first). In a fiberglass layup helmet (Ultimate, Toptex, JB) you will hear and see the gel coat (outside layer of fiberglass layup) crack. Supposedly, this doesn't affect the strength of the entire shell, but the sound is disturbing. A Joe Brown helmet attached to a rescue litter was shipped recently to a customer via UPS. The helmet was returned due to numerous cracks in the gel coat simply from shipping. The Petzl Ecrin does not exhibit any of the above characteristics when squeezed, but one can squeeze in the sides quite easily.

Another destruction test (which is a bit barbaric) is to take an axe to the top of the helmet. This was only tried on a Petzl Ecrin that already had undergone a drop test. The first and second blow delivered with great force to the top of the shell with the axe bounced off. A dent was felt on the third blow, but still no crack. On the fourth, it finally put a slice in the shell the same size as the axe blade. Remember, this sample already had undergone testing once. Although not very scientific, it gives cavers a good practical test simulating an object falling from above (the chance of an axe blade hitting you four times in the same cave is rare).

In summary, cavers should value their skull and its contents. Damage to this area can have drastic results for the rest of your life. If you have doubts as to the protection your present helmet gives, it might be worth the money to invest in a new helmet.

The following edited correspondence was in regard to the Petzl helmet:

Dear Mike Meredith:

Regarding your helmets. I thought that the Petzl helmet had several very strong points to recommend its use. I felt that the suspension system was one of the most comfortable I have seen on a caving/climbing helmet. I also like the fact that ventilation holes were incorporated into the design of the helmet. The only point that I did not like about the helmet was that the lateral strength of the shell seemed extremely weak. With only slight pressure the sides of the helmet could be noticeably deflected inward. It has long been my contention that the most common fall that a caver can expect to take while in a cave is some sort of "tumbling" fall. In this type of a fall, the caver would tumble down a slope and repeatedly hit the side of his/her head. Thus it would be most important that the lateral strength of the caver's helmet be of an acceptable level. In a like manner, many rope "falls" involve a swinging component. Again lateral strength in a helmet is important. As I mentioned above, the Petzl helmet does not seem to have adequate strength along this dimension. In fact, it seems that Petzl does not even consider strength in this dimension important. In the literature provided with the helmet statements of strength are given for blows to the top and front of the helmet but no word is given regarding lateral strength. I realize that manufacturers of other helmets do not necessarily provide this information either, but in view of the fact that one can so easily bend the sides of the helmet inward with only "slight" pressure I chose not to use the Petzl helmet.

James A. Pisarowicz

Dear Jim Pisarowicz:

"Strength" is often used rather vaguely when talking of caving equipment, so it might be best to begin by asking what is expected of a "good, strong helmet."

--First and most obvious, the helmet must prevent any sharp falling object or projection on the wall or floor causing localised head injuries: it must have a sufficiently rigid shell and a sufficiently soft liming to spread the load resulting from the impact over a large area.

--Second but perhaps more important in preventing brain trauma, it must absorb the energy of the impact without unduly jolting the brain or, in more exact terms, without exerting a force on the head which exceeds certain limits.

As far as blows on the top and front of the helmet are concered, both these requirements are covered by current standards developed by the UIAA (Union International des Associations d'Alpinisme). These requirements are described in our literature.

Early drafts of the standard provided for tests on the sides and the rear of the helmet also, but all these tests gave similar results in practice, so only one was included in the final version. The test at the front is easiest to carry out and corresponds to the common occurrence of someone who looks up when a stone is falling.

The Petzl Ecrin helmet proved to be very good when subjected to tests at the front and at the sides and back well within the limits laid down by the standard (upper limit for approval 10kN, Ecrin helmet less than 3 kN).

We certainly agree with your observation that tumbling falls and rope swings are the most common risks in caving and we do consider the helmet's performance when subjected to sideways blows to be important.

Most helmets are designed with a rigid outer shell to prevent penetration by sharp objects plus a foam lining which absorbs most of the shock. The Petzl Ecrin has a shell which is sufficiently rigid to prevent penetration but is also sufficiently elastic to absorb the energy of the blow without the help of a foam lining. The right balance between rigidity and elasticity was not easy to achieve, but it is theoretically the best solution and also enables us to make a good, strong helmet which is light, well-ventilated and comfortable.

So far we have dealt with the effects of a lateral blow to the head; this is a question of what happens between the outside and the inside of the helmet, and is independent of its lateral rigidity as determined by pressing inward on the sides of the helmet. Lateral rigidity is important when the head must be protected against crushing. It is a criterion for certain industrial helmets, where a worker might be trapped between a wall and the load being moved by a crane, for example, and for mining work, where a roof collapse is feared.

A typical standard (AFNOR) stipulates a movement of less than 25 mm when 40 kg is applied laterally. Our helmet could be made sufficiently rigid to pass this test, but it would be much heavier and, paradoxically, it would be less efficient in absorbing energy, i.e., brain damage would be more likely after a sideways blow to the head. This seems to be an unfavorable tradeoff for the caver!

Given the importance of energy absorption in preventing brain trauma after a blow (including lateral blows) to the head, and given the far higher risk of stone-fall or a tumble compared to the danger of crushing, we have chosen to maximise the energy absorption capability of the Petzl Ecrin helmet, even though lateral rigidity may be adversely affected.

Mike Meredith

When thou embarkest on the lake of truth,
Mayest thou sail upon it with a fair wind,
May thy mainsail not fly loose.

- Sekhti
Egypt

I am the pure lotus
that blossomed on the horizon,
that grows in the nostril of the sungod.
I am the pure lotus,
that blossomed in the field.

- Egyptian

COLORADO SCHIZO

Larry Bortner

Catch this, babe.

Colorado-- mountains, climbing, hiking, biking. Two weeks. The four of us-- Marci Alpine, Fletcher Boulder, Amy Pedalpusher, and myself, Larry Mountain Goat. No set plans. Wild vacation. Wait-- scratch the Pedalpusher character. Something about meeting a bullfighter in Tiajuana.

Are you out there? Focus, babe, focus.

We plan to leave early Sunday morning, September 4th, after Fletch and Marci get back from their bike hike along Cape Hatteras and after my sister's wedding. After The Fireworks Saturday night, I find out that Fletch's car is having problems. For a few seconds of lunacy, I consider using my Opel, but I've been having too many failures with it lately and every time Fletch gets in, something falls apart. Should we not go, then? Ha! Make it Tuesday night, after the car's fixed. Fletch calls me Tuesday morning. The car's working fine. Let's go this afternoon. He calls again. The transmission's acting up again. Have to get a new one. Wednesday afternoon? He calls Wednesday morning, needing a ride back from the shop. I follow him to Newport. He gets in. The Opel won't start. Somehow we get it started and get back to Clifton on two out of the four cylinders. With a rebuilt transmission and two bikes securely lashed behind, we finally leave Cincinnati at 9:30 P.M. Wednesday night. This means we have to drive through Kansas in the daytime. Fletch and Marci have no inkling of what's to come.

It's over a hundred degrees on the plains, dusty, and the flies are cannabalistic; we find the true meaning of Boredom. Towards sunset, Pike's Peak appears on the horizon, followed by more of the Front Range, then Denver. Twenty-four hours after departure, we arrive at Dave and April's apartment in Boulder, too late to catch the showing of deep throat at the university. We visit this alcohol superstore and stock up on inexpensive, high quality beer and wine. We crash on the floor.

The next morning, we walk outside and there are the Flatirons. Damn, babe, it's good to be in the mountains. Huge slabs of granite lay there at a sixty to seventy degree slant, like some upturned laundry irons. Wild. We three Ohio visitors decide to climb the Third Flatiron-- only 5.2, but Royal Robbins calls it the classic climb of the area. With El Dorado Canyon just down the road, that's saying a lot. There are huge bolts every 120 feet for protection. Fletch climbs (walks?) up to each of them and belays Marci and I. A thirtyish-looking, blond, bearded man starts soloing the climb while we wait for the first belay to be set up. He is soon out of sight. The climbing is fantastic; the rock, the weather and the view are great. I climb with hesitancy at first, not having been on rock since June, but confidence quickly returns. I lead one pitch, but can't find the next bolt. As if it really matters-- the main thing is to get to the top an there are a lot of horns on the rock to provide solid anchors for slings. I am the last to reach the summit. All three of them await me-- Fletch, Marci, and Mike, the soloist. We lounge in the sun for a while, the do three rappels to get to a point where we can walk off. I run the last mile or so to the car, flying and leaping down the hill. Good fun.

We take Mike to the Pearl Street Mall in Boulder. Mike is mellow and talkative and a semi-native of the town. He tells us of the recent history and his divorce and his philosophy degree and telling his boss that day that he couldn't work, he had to get out and find where his head was. He and Fletch plan to get together later on and do some climbs in El Dorado. We return to the mall later that night with Dave and April and Greg and Phil and watch the entertainers. Some strange people with strange talents. We sleep on the floor again.

On Saturday Dave takes us to El Dorado, home of many awesome climbs. We gawk at the rock. Fletch leads the first pitch of the Bastille Crack and sets up a top rope at the convenient bolt. Dave cleans, then it's my turn to try. It's strenuous and scary, but I make it. We boulder away the rest of the day. Back at the living room base camp, we contact former UCMC-er Chris Rathweg for in-touch and going-out purposes. Get this-- he invites us to come soak in his outdoor, solar-heated hot tub, clothes optional. We drop whatever plans we have, grab the vodka, orange juice, and wine, and hop on over. We sit around and drink for a bit, wait for the water to rise to the proper temperature, then strip and get in. What can I say? Exquisite relaxation? Close enough.

Chris is a former UCMC equipment manager and a former president of the University of Colorado (UC, right? Wrong. It's CU. I guess they didn't want to be confused with our dear university in Cincinnati.), the Hiking Club. He invites us to their quarter-opening picnic on the top of Flagstaff the next day. Dave had invited us to a Colorado Mountain Rescue practice, also the next day, but it starts earlier in the morning, so we decide to picnic. I hike up with the main group starting at the student union while Fletch and Marci bike up with Chris and his girl friend. There is plenty of beer, food, people, and hacky-sacks up top. I find one person out of fifty who is a true Colorado native.

Fletch and I climb the Bastille crack on Monday, a 5.7 jam crack. Marci starts filming our feat. After we get out of range of my rinky 8mm camera, she gets bored. Towards the end of the first pitch, some bird dive-bombs a turd upon my personage-- fortunately after the crux move. The climb is class II, taking several hours and five or six pitches, Fletch leading all but one. We are wiped by the time we get to the top in the late afternoon. We return to the bottom of the canyon via a non-traditional route. That evening, the three of us motor in to Denver to visit and dine with one of Fletch's wild cousins and her two sons.

We set out for Estes Park on Tuesday to climb Long's Peak. A leisurely few hours are spent in the town proper, souvenir and post card hunting. We don't hit the trail at Long's Peak Ranger Station until four in the afternoon. The plan is to spend the night at Jim's Grove, attempt the summit via the Cable's Route, hike back down, and get back to Boulder the next night.

Above treeline we can see the tea-brown soup we had been breathing that morning. It is wild to be in the wilderness, up in the clean, clear air of the mountains and away from mechanized, concretized semi-sanity. Babe, pardon the sermon, but this is truer living than nine-to-five, rush hour, and boobing the tube; all senses are stimulated and expanded and the whole body is used and works as per the original design.

We had reserved the last site at Jim's Grove campground, but getting there at sunset, we find all sites taken. We make do. Dinner is prepared and devoured, and tarps and pads are laid out for slumber-- no tent; we travel light. The sky is clear all night

but the wind picks up, playing ominous songs through the short pines.

We get up late for an assault on this mountain, not getting on the trail until eight. The wind is fierce. Clouds are whipping over the ridge to the west and coming down steaming off the summit with increasing frequency. We meet a couple on the trail-- "It just looks too bad over on the other side of the ridge." We decide to keep at it, despite the warning. The clouds darken. It starts to rain/snow/sleet, the precipitation biting and stinging exposed skin in the growing wind. Near the top of the ridge and the start of the boulder field, we come upon a trio of women sheltered in front of a large boulder. They had made it all the way to the Keyhole before turning back to escape what the dark, western sky was sure to bring. We share the windbreak to wait for the sky to clear. But we reason that poor conditions this early in the morning are not likely to improve. So we turn back, another UCMC party thwarted in it's summit attempt of Long's Peak. But it will be there for a long time.

We take a detour and head off to Chasm Lake. The wind gusts up to 60 mph, making movement with a full backpack dicey. But we want to get closer to Long's and the Diamond to take some pictures. Fletch and I leave Marci not far from a trail work crew. We don't get too far before a heavy rain starts; we retreat, pick up Marci, and head for the shelter of the tree line. Back down at the car, the sun is shining, it's warm, and a gentle breeze is blowing. We race the storm back to Boulder and our living room base camp. Ahhh!! Showers, warmth, beer, margaritas. This is living, isn't it, babe?

On Thursday, Fletch is ill-- no climbing or boozing for him. Marci rides up Flagstaff once more. I check out the university and the Mall and the local Safeway. We watch the Bengal's pathetic loss to Cleveland then the Man From UNCLE movie. This is what you call your rip-roaring good ole time in the West.

The next day, rested and stir crazy, we arrive at Brainard Lake and the Indian Peaks Wilderness Area in the Roosevelt National Forest by motorized conveyance. On the trail again, we hike up to Mitchell Lakes on a super, super trail winding through pine trees and sunbeams. Past these lakes, the trees dwindle and the wind picks up. Oh, no! The western side of Blue Lake is three miles and two thousand feet up from the trailhead and lies in a bowl-like depression at the base of Mt. Toll and a twelve thousand foot pass. The wind is whirling and whipping around at high speeds, constantly changing directions. What large boulders we find offer protection about a third of the time. We find a clean, flat place on the alpine tundra and set up the tent. We spot Dave, April, and Greg on the other side of the lake and shout a lot. They don't hear us or see us, but they come over any way. After hearty meals, we retire early in the twilight. Greg and I forego the shelter of the tents and sleep out, allowing Fletch and Marci and Dave and April to repose in their respective tents.

We mount a summit attempt of Mt. Toll on Saturday. At the top of the snow field, Dave and Fletch decide to climb the near-vertical east face without a rope. The rest of us continue up the less steep route to the pass south of the summit and up the ridge. Greg and I get adventurous, veer off the route, and attack the south face. It's not a vertical wall, but it requires some low five's climbing, for which we should have had a rope. The climbing gets harder the higher we climb, so we traverse west, towards the pass and the ridge, right to a sixty-to-seventy degree snow field wedged between two small cliffs about twenty feet wide at the narrowest spot. With only one ice axe and an extensive drop to some nasty boulders, I chop out some steps in strategic positions and we half-rock climb and half-ice climb along the edge thirty feet to the top of the snow field where the rock climbing reduces to easy scrambling. Greg and I are at the summit in short order, followed after a time by Marci, and April. Ah, babe, it's good to get to the top of something! After a few , the two ladies head back to camp, ten minutes before their men top it out. On the way back, we glissade down what snowfields there are and learn the basics of ice axe manipulation from Dave. Fletch, Dave, and I boulder on a ten to fifteen foot wall.

Pressed by studies and employment, April, Dave, and Greg leave early Sunday. The remaining trio stay a bit longer, practicing self-arrests with an ice axe on shitty-- not just bad, I mean bird turds ;and marmot droppings all over the place-- snow. With half the day gone, we head in the direction of the living room base camp, stopping in Boulder Canyon at Cobb Rock. Fletch and I get climbing equipment and head for the rock while Marci takes the car and goes for the hills, in particular, Gold Hill where she can rent a horse for half day. Fletch starts leading a crack, but there's little pro, so he starts an easier face climb. Or so it looks. It quickly turns awkward. The moves are not obvious. The holds are rounded and sloping. After a couple of crux moves, he reaches a wide ledge and belays me up. I require only a little tension at the first crux. The climb taxes me physically and mentally. When I reach the ledge, we both stand shaking our heads, saying, "Whew!" The second pitch is more standard, offering lots of exposure. Marci meets us at the top and tells us of her adventures in Gold Hill while we walk down. There is a place that rents horses. Gold Hill itself is just a little village out in the middle of nowhere whit a vegetarian restaurant and a lot of old hippies. She plans to return on the morrow for a half-day's ride on mountain trails, something she's been wanting to do ever since we got out here.

Monday finds Fletch and I back at Cobb Rock with Marci taking off in the muffler-dragging car. We do the 5.8 start to the otherwise 5.7 Empor (cheating a little bit by chimneying instead of staying in the crack-- call it 5.6), another classic climb. As Fletch starts the second pitch, Marci pulls up in the parking lot below. Hmmm. The second pitch is good, straight-forward climbing. I curse and sweat at getting out some of Fletch's placements, but I enjoy myself. Dave has driven up to the parking lot by the time I reach the top. Pete, a local who pointed out the route to us, Fletch, and I watch a woman try to follow her one-legged boyfriend across Boulder Creek.

Back in the parking lot, Marci relates the fact that one must have reservations before one can take a horse out. Besides, the muffler was scraping all too often. Dave has come to take us on another climb further up the canyon.

Whoa! What is this? Big clouds rolling in. Pete and Marci tell us of a cold front predicted to arrive this afternoon, causing a forty-degree temperature drop. Forty degrees? Come on! But, the clouds are thickening quickly and the wind is picking up.... We cancel the climb and do Boulder for the rest of the day. Dave and April treat us to a slide show that night.

The sudden change in weather changes our plans. Originally, we were going to head up into Rocky Mountain National Park on Tuesday and head back to Ohio on the weekend. But we aren't really prepared to spend that much time in freezing mountain weather. Perhaps a simple lack of fortitude and goose down or their artificial equivalents, but school starts Wednesday and

BEARLY SURVIVING

Bill Strachan

In the last week of June, Dave Bowyer and myself travelled to Yellowstone National Park with the intent of going backpacking and mountaineering in the Gallatin Range. We had heard that in the heart of this beautiful range of mountains lay the highest peak in Yellowstone. Electric Peak (10,992') is said to be called such because of the electrical activity it tends to attract when storms develop in these mountains. This peak is in the northwestern corner of the Park and actually straddles the border of Wyoming and Montana.

When we entered from Cody, Wyoming at the East Entrance I made our intent clear, "We want to go backpacking. Where do we obtain permits?" We were told to proceed to the ranger station nearest our trailhead. We went first to the Norris Ranger Station and it was closed with a sign saying that the ranger was out. We then went to the Madison Junction Ranger Station. There, elderly volunteers were checking people in and out of the campground and giving out fishing permits. They could give us fishing permits, but for backcountry permits we would have to wait for the ranger who would be back in half an hour. After cleaning up, packing, and making phone calls, all the time watching for the ranger, we had waited for about an hour. We waited another hour before we got frustrated and decided to proceed to the trailhead according to plan. Although we felt bad about setting off without permits, we only had three days in our schedule for Yellowstone, the minimum amount of time in which to reach our objective. In other parks including Smokey Mountains N.P. and Big Bend N.P., I had been accustomed to being able to obtain permits immediately. The major difference that I feel contributed to our permit problem at Yellowstone was that the Ranger Station and Campground Office were consolidated and the rangers were so busy taking care of problems in and around the campground that they had no time for a couple adventurous backpackers among the hordes of RV campers.

We set off on the Specimen Creek trail towards Sportsman Lake in a thundershower and got a good taste of the power and electricity that storms in the Wyoming mountains typically carry. Needless to say this was one of the most beautiful, breathtaking, and enjoyable trails that I have ever hiked. Purple and yellow wildflowers in verdant meadows set among majestic pine covered meadows were cut by a gentle earthen path. As the sun came out for sunset I chanted, "Overcome by the Power of Light!"

We camped comfortably by Specimen Creek that night. The creek was cool and somewhat swollen from snowmelt. Rejuvenated by its pure sound and taste, we set off the next day alone, immersing ourselves deeper into the peace of the wilderness and the forever flowing symphony of wind, running water, and animal sounds. We had travelled these many miles to escape the noise and hassles of our modern civilization and to relish this small remaining pocket of wild beauty and it's spirituality.

About halfway through the day our peace of mind was temporarily broken as we were confronted by backcountry rangers on horses demanding to see our permits. Too much!!!! Where were they when we were looking for permits? We explained our problem in obtaining them, our situation, and reasoning. They replied that the area was closed and that there was snow ahead. This was a real joke to me and I almost laughed as I replied, "Why do you think we are carrying these ice axes?", as I pointed to my tool. We were not only expecting snow but actually looking forward to seeing it after last winter. The rangers asked about our plans and kindly condescended to allow us to proceed.

Later on that day I found the antenna from one of the ranger's radios on the trail. After we arrived at Sportsman Lake and set up camp I noticed a ranger fishing in the creek so I went to return the antenna. He was happy to see the antenna and to tell me where the best fishing was. He also said that there was a cabin for a backcountry ranger station that he would be manning all summer. This guy had it made! Then in passing he mentioned something about having to have four people to travel beyond some certain sign but I didn't get exactly what he was talking about.

The next day when we had planned to climb Electric Peak. It turned out to be a gloomy day. It showered on and off all morning and the summit pyramid was shrouded in heavy cloud cover. Then about noon the weather was seeming to break and I told Dave I was going for a hike. I at least wanted to check out the flanks of the mountain. Dave decided to fish for trout in the lake. I had scanned the mountain thoroughly with binoculars and headed for a ridge which was connected directly to the summit ridge. When I got to its base, animal trails headed straight up. At 8000' I was feeling strong and quickly ascended. I soon found myself on a narrow rock ridge which was the only way up through the snow. At 9500' I broke through the tree line and decided to cross a couple of snow fields and go for a minor summit that was at about 10,000'. As I topped the ridge I met a strong wind and retreated down behind a rock for a snack of energy food. Then in 60 to 70 mile per hour gusts I ascended a 200' high very steep pile of boulders and stood face to the wind, revelling in the great power of Nature at this place and enjoying the vista. Another storm was rolling across the bare peaks to the east and I quickly descended, reaching camp just before it began to rain again.

The next day on the way back out to the car, Dave and I hiked alone and separated, totally free to contemplate only our own thoughts and the peaceful pine forests. Some ways down the trail I met again with our ranger friend, now alone and bringing up supplies for the summer by mule. After exchanging some pleasant conversation in this more relaxed circumstance, I warned him about the ten to twenty foot snowdrifts on the mountain which covered the trail to Electric Pass. He told me that he was supposed to clear the trail and I advised him that he might not be able to open it this season. Then in a contemptuous tone he asked if I had gone up there alone. When I replied affirmatively, he declared in a huff that no one was allowed up there without four in a party because of bears. I replied that I didn't understand this rule; I had been in Glacier N.P. where there were surely more bears and the only rule besides those concerning food handling was to make a lot of noise while travelling through the woods. I had done plenty of noisemaking while ascending Electric Peak by banging the metal shaft of my ice axe against trees and rocks, making my presence known. This sort of freaked the ranger out since there had recently been a mauling, but the guy had been wearing clothes that he had cooked in. The ranger then proceeded to lecture me on the history of bears in Yellowstone and the research of the Craigheads, which I already knew. For those of you who don't know, the bears became dependent on the handouts and dumps at the tourist havens in Yellowstone. After the Craighead's research, the dumps were closed and feeding the bears was strongly discouraged. The bear population dropped drastically as

some bears were not able to read just to living in the wild. But now they are coming back and range from Cody all the way north along the Montana-Idaho border to Canada. In fact, there are so many grizzly bears in the Gallatins that the Park Service intends to close the area next year to protect both bears and humans from each other.

Now I'm not against protecting wild animals but this seemed a bit ironic and perverse that the government would go to such a great extent to protect one of the only known natural predators of man when a number of other predators in the U.S. are nearing extinction. In addition I am not particularly afraid of grizzly armed with the common sense rules of hanging food away from camp, keeping smelly clothes away from the tent, making noise while hiking, and keeping a sharp ice axe handy. I resent the government trying to take away my freedom to accept a reasonable risk to enjoy the wilderness. After all, it is the remoteness and the reliance up your own resources that makes places such as this wild in the first place. The idea occurred to me that according to science of biological populations that the grizzly bear population in Yellowstone would continue to grow with accompanying problems whether or not people were allowed in the backcountry. Since the only natural predator of grizzly bears is man, the plain truth is that they will have to be hunted in a controlled manner to control populations. If we don't do this, they will maul tourists or die of starvation when faced with food shortages such as was created by this year's lingering winter. Humankind's attempt to halt our ecological destruction is so piecemeal and puny. We make great efforts to secure this one population in this small pocket of wild mountain forest while at the same time we allow vast denuding of vegetation and wildlife habitat in other parts of the world where within the next decade millions of species will become extinct or only survive in zoos. The real loss in this is that effort of positive evolution in nature which has taken place over such a long time is being destroyed in an ignorant greed and striving for an artificial reality, one in which we delude our selves into thinking that we have full control and power in. If we don't make drastic changes in the mass consciousness and reverse these negative evolutionary trends, I am afraid that we face a very sterile future.

Bortner

cont. from P. 16

It would sort of be nice to be back home. I'd like to do at least one fourteener, but I'll be back. Let's go.

We pack and clean up the apartment for most of the following day. A farewell visit to the alcohol superstore is made to get some wine and beer to take back. Right across the street is a small store that sells "body stimulants"-- caffeine pills. I am talking El Scodzo here, babe. All it is is this concrete building with four empty candy jars on a small display counter containing six ashtrays with different-colored pills. They all cost $15 per 100. We don't want that many. We just need enough to get us back. He gives us a handful. Thank you, sir.

Amy has surfaced in Fort Collins. We give our farewells and write-soons several times to Dave and April and finally get on the road north to Fort Collins. There we spend an evening of margaritas and Mexican food and recountings of adventures. Reluctantly, we depart and traverse Nebraska in the moon light. We arrive in Cincinnati midnight Wednesday, glad to be back, eager to return.

NO LIFE WITHOUT CLIMBING

David Roberts

(Reprinted from Reader's Digest, condensed from Outside)

On Friday, January 22, 1982, two young men from Lancaster, Pa., drove to the White Mountains in New Hampshire for a weekend of ice climbing. To undertake the trip, 17-year-old Hugh Herr had skipped a day of high school, and 20-year-old Jeffrey Batzer had taken a day off from his tool-and-die-shop job. The friends had ice-climbed in Mount Washington's Huntington Ravine the year before; on that trip they had ascended Pinnacle, the hardest of the ravine's five gullies.

Hugh and Jeff parked their truck in Pinkham Notch on Friday afternoon and hiked up to the Harvard Cabin, a base for ice climbing in Huntington Ravine. The next morning they were the first out of the cabin. The weather was bad, but not terrible: at Mount Washington's summit the temperature was 9 degrees Fahrenheit, with winds of 50 miles an hour.

The ascent of Odell's Gully went without incident. Hugh and Jeff opted to hike on toward the mountain's summit. After 15 minutes in the driving blizzard, however, it became obvious that the peak was out of the question. So they turned back and plodded through waist-deep snow into the forest again. Seeing no sign of a trail, the two climbers realized they were lost.

What they had actually done was to blunder disoriented across a ridge and down into the long, shelterless valley called the Great Gulf. As they tried to follow a stream bed, Hugh broke through ice and snow into running water, soaking his boots and wool pants. Jeff and Hugh walked on until 1 A.M., when exhaustion halted them. Under an overhang provided by a large granite boulder, they dug a hole in the snow, threw down spruce boughs, crawled in and piled more boughs over themselves.

On Sunday morning the storm intensifies. The summit recorded minus 7 degrees Fahrenheit, with winds up to 73 miles an hour. After a long struggle Hugh and Jeff got their boots on and started off. They were sure that if they didn't make it that day, they were going to die.

About four in the afternoon they arrived at the junction of two trails. From that point, it was 3 1/2 miles out to the highway. The sign however, indicated that only 1 1/2 miles away stood a hut. The climbers chose that trail as offering the shortest route to safety. Lacking a map, they had no way of knowing that the trail to the hut was all uphill or that the hut was locked up for the winter.

"The trail was hideous," says Hugh. "We made three-quarters of a mile and then turned around. On the way back, I had my first signs of not being able to walk because of frostbite. I'd go ten feet and fall over. And Jeff's fingers were sticking together. We got back to the junction, found another boulder and bivouacked."

When Hugh and Jeff failed to return to the Harvard Cabin on Saturday afternoon, the caretaker put a radio call through to the Appalachian Mountain Club headquarters in Pinkham Notch. By 4:15 Sunday morning a search involving 50 people was under way.

During the next two days searchers scoured all the likely areas. Then, about 2 P.M. Monday, tragedy struck. Two searchers, Mike Hartrich and Albert Dow, got caught in an avalanche. Hartrich managed to dig out his head and one arm, and radio for help. A searcher arrived and began to dig Hartrich loose. Soon others reached the scene and launched a probe search for the missing Dow. At 3:15 Dow's body was found buried in snow.

Meanwhile, on Monday morning, Hugh waited alone beneath his boulder while Jeff, who had managed to get only one of his boots on, was making a desperate attempt to hike out. But after an hour and a half of floundering aimlessly through the snow, Jeff was back. "That was it, I was sure," says Hugh. "I just gave up. I lay there and let the cold hit me. I thought, the sooner I die, the better."

The rest of Monday afternoon, that night and Tuesday morning passed in a stupor. Then Jeff and Hugh heard a noise. They looked up, and there was a young woman ten feet away. Like a vision. "Are you the guys from Odell's Gully?" she asked. They spilled out a yes.

Melissa Bradshaw, an Appalachian Mountain Club employee had come across the footprints Jeff had left the day before, and she had traced them up the valley. At 2:30 p.m. she discovered the figures huddled under their boulder. After giving them what little aid she could, she snowshoed back down the trail to seek help.

By 3:30 an Army National Guard helicopter was taking off from Pinkham Notch, and a ground crew was speeding toward the rescue site.

At 7 p.m. the helicopter carrying the two victims, who were by now severly hypothermic and suffering from deep frostbite, landed at the Littleton, N.H., hospital. As a combination of hypothermia blankets, hot-tub immersion and intravenous fluids warmed the climbers up, they began to feel intense pain. A doctor ordered shots of morphine.

Hugh knew his frostbite was bad. "Right away I asked the doctors what the chances were of losing my feet. They couldn't tell me." On February 11 Hugh was transferred to Presbyterian Medical Center in Philadelphia. When a surgeon saw the 17-year-old's feet, he admitted that it was the worst case of frostbite he had seen. On February 20 Jeff was moved to Lancaster General Hospital.

On March 2 Jeff had the thumb and fingers of his right hand amputated down to the first joint. Three days later doctors had to amputate his left leg below the knee, and by May a portion of his right foot was amputated. On March 10 Hugh's legs were amputated six inches below the knees.

Dealt such a catastrophe, a young man might be tempted to retreat into the harbors of underachievement, using his invalidism as an excuse. But no such thought would occur to someone with Hugh Herr's resilience.

"They just loop the calf muscle over. It pads the bone." Thus, in almost blasé tones, Hugh describes the operation that made him a double amputee. "As soon as they cut off the gangrene, I started to feel normal again. I got all this energy." The energy was focused on the most important question in Hugh's universe: Could he climb again?

The Herr family is a close-knit one, and Hugh is the youngest of five children. Brothers Tony, 24, and Hans, 20, are climbers also. Tony was, in fact, Hugh's first partner and teacher on the rocks. By the time Tony was 15, the boys were dragging their father along on rugged mountain hikes. The parents indulged their

some" passion even when it spread to technical climbing.

Unmistakably, climbing became the be-all and end-all of Hugh's life. Hugh took up rock climbing at age 9 and made his first lead when he was 11 years old. At 13 he seconded his first 5.10 climb. (Climbs are rated by difficulty from 5.0 to 5.13. Many a good climber has never done 5.10.) Two years later Hugh soloed the demanding northeast ridge of Bugaboo Spire in the Canadian Rockies. The following year he climbed a fiendish route in Yosemite. After school, from three to five o'clock, Hugh would practice on real rock, the way other kids go out for football or track.

By age 17 Hugh was considered one of the top rock climbers at the East's most competitive cliff, the Shawangunks ("Gunks") in New York State. Russ Clune, a Gunks regular, called him "one of the top dozen climbers in the country."

After the surgery, Hugh's parents realized how important climbing still was to their son. "I knew Hugh couldn't face life without it," says John Herr. "So I kept telling him, 'If climbing means that much to you, get out and do it.'" As a family, the Herrs all seemed to combine a realism about what had happened with deep love and support.

Before Hugh could climb, however, he would have to learn to walk again--or so his therapists reasoned. When prosthetic feet are attached to newly formed stumps, it takes the stumps a long time to become tough enough to bear the punishment.

Hugh was moved to Philadelphia's Magee Rehabilitation Hospital for therapy. Whenever he could, Hugh would sneak off, raise himself out of his wheelchair with pinch grips on windowsills and go on to practice traverses. "They knew I was really crazy," he recalls. He was allowed to go home the first weekend, "but they wouldn't let me bring my legs home. The second weekend, they let me. I went out with Tony, and we did a 5.9 climb right off. I just barely got up it."

The activity strikes Hugh as eminently logical. "A baby climbs before he walks," he says. "I was a baby at 17."

In May, still only two months after his operation, Hugh and Tony traveled to West Virginia to try to put up a new route at a cliff just being "developed." Hugh still had his temporary plaster-of-Paris "pylons," or training legs. The cliff lay a mile of bushwhacking away from the road. On the way in, Hugh hobbled along with two canes. The brothers succeeded in climbing the new route. On the way out, Hugh found the woods so steep that he resorted to a new form of locomotion: he threw his canes about 30 feet ahead, slid on his rear end, gathered up the canes and then repeated the process.

Hugh's return to the Gunks took place in July. "My closest friends are there," he says. "They really stuck by me." One of them later told him a story. While Hugh was on a climb, an acquaintance spotted him from the ground and shouted, "Hey, Huey." His companion corrected him: "That can't be Huey. He lost his feet."

By August Hugh had two sets of feet: a conventional model for normal use, consisting of a plastic core surrounded by rubber that gets softer as it nears the surface, and what he calls his "little stiff feet," which he had custom-made for climbing. (In general, small feet are an advantage for a climber.) They have a wood core and a hard rubber exterior, with a flexible toe. Over them Hugh first wore climbing shoes, but then switched to rubber pads attached to the bottom of the feet. Before a climb he wraps his legs carefully with elastic neoprene bands that give the whole unit stability.

"Feel," so vital to a climber, was something Hugh had to relearn from scratch. He claims that he has learned nuances of side-footing that he never dreamed of before. To most climbers, the fact that Hugh has no ankle to flex seems an immense handicap. Hugh, however, began to see advantages in artificial feet. "I have no idea what it feels like to have sore calves anymore," he says.

At the suggestion of a machinist friend, Hugh developed an "adjustable ankle." It amounts to a metal radius block that swings inside a square block and serves to attach his foot to his artificial leg socket. With a wrench, he can set his "ankle" to tilt the foot at any angle, sideways or forward or backward. In October Hugh led his first 5.12 climb with artificial feet. Last June he climbed Sugar Crack (a 5.13), one of the most difficult climbs at the Gunks.

Meanwhile, Jeff has been scaling "mountains" of his own. In his free time after work at the tool-and-die shop, he counsels new amputees, helping them return to an active life. He also speaks to church, civic and school groups about the importance of sports safety. Jeff's current athletic enthusiasm is for bicycle racing, and he hopes to enter a race at Mount Washington this fall.

Despite their triumphs over adversity, I wondered about Hugh's future. He doesn't plan to go to college, and has a part-time job at a machine shop. What he cannot imagine is a time when all else will not be subordinated to his obsessive, limitless dream of climbing.

At the Gunks, Hugh has acquired the nickname "the Mechanical Boy." He's pleased with the moniker. The idea of himself as a bionic man seems to fuel his enthusiasm. Hugh has painted red and blue designs on his legs. "It shows off that I'm mechanical," he says. "In the future, with technology, people will be less afraid of losing something. They'll just come back and be better, stronger, faster. We have almost everything artificial available now. The point I'm trying to make is that maybe with mechanical means you can go beyond the natural."

Hugh also told me that he no longer felt any pain. But his father said, "The winter of '82 won't go away. Even now Hugh has a lot of pain in the morning when he gets up and starts to walk." In a gruff, loving voice, he added, "You have to remember that Hugh can climb a whole lot better than he can walk."

We are all children
Seeking the fountain
We are all children
Washed by the rain

We are the dreamers
We are the dancers

Life is the music
Love is the song.

- Leonard Nimoy

Let us unburden ourselves
of the disguises
the roles,
the weights,
the chains . . .
Which hide and bind
The children
That we are

For we are,
All of us -
Children.

-Leonard Nimoy

12:00 HIGH

Craig Patterson

Burdensome on my mind is an incident which occured this weekend at the Red River Gorge Ohm Cave.

It takes a long time to get out of Cincinnati because of late classes or work, packing, and a number of run-of-the-mill preperations like eating at Ponderosa. By the time we get to the gorge it is eleven o'clock, slippery with fog as thick as the clouds. Dave Bowyer, Mary Szabo, Maureen Sullivan, Cheri and I make our way up the ridge in the dark to the Ohm Cave overhang. Equipment is there, but no people were around. We sat in the cave until we heard a horrible sound and slip--Oh no, Nancy!

Immediately it is obvious what confronts us. A 100 foot fall off a ledge, a body, and a 12:00 PANIC. James, Nancy's boyfriend is already on the verge of rapelling down to see her. Dave, Cheri, and I take the flouresecent lamp down a trail about a half mile long to the bottom. Screams from James assures us she is dead, but when we get there we hear a second murmuring voice. There she is, delerious, swaying, back and forth on a ledge, ready to fall another 15 feet. Dave climbs to James. They lower her down, knocking rocks on top of me in their haste. I give climbing instructions while Cheri checks Nancy's spine.

Once she is off the ledge, there is still 500 feet of rough brush and trail-breaking to get her to the trail. Dave and James carry while Cheri and I find the easiest escape route. Dave says he will go for help with Cheri. That leaves James, Nancy, and myself to get to the road one mile up and one mile down. But my wrist is not completely healed from the break in Scotland, and its condition is chancy. But to save a life...

James and I carry Nancy piggy-back. She moans, complains, and calls for her four year old daughter, Sarah, and ex-husband, Terry. She knows and recognizes James, good sign, and keeps slipping off our backs.

I bet right now you think because of her bloody nose and mouth, dead eyes, and bloody skull she is going to slip into a coma. The thought has crossed our minds with the possibility of paralysis. But actually all Nancy wants to do is to go home. She also likes to lie flat on her stomach which makes moving her 110 lb., cramped five foot frame difficult.

Well, James and I slip and slide down the steep trail to the road and find the car with no sign of Dave and Cheri. Oh, no! Where are they?! James looks for a blanket in the back of his black dodge pickup, while Nancy falls asleep in my lap. It is quiet, foggy, and eerie with a three-quarter full moon and the flooded Red River flowing softly below. "Oh God!" Flashlights appear on the trail in the distance. It is Dave and Maureen. James returns and says he has no keys. Dave offers to drive them to the hospital while Maureen and I look for Mary and Cheri, looking for James, Nancy and me on the trail. We all meet and return to the overhang for restless 4:00 a.m. sleep.

Meanwhile, according to Dave, Nancy reacted to the warm moving car by throwing up 3 or 4 times, while James had to be calmed from crying hysterically on the way to the state park lodge. An ambulance picks the couple up and takes them to Whinchester, and then to Lexington. Dave returns to the overhang at 6:00 a.m. I haven't slept and it is now getting light.

We finally get up from our up-every-hour sleep at 12:00 noon. We pack their belongings, untangle the rope at the bottom of the ledge, and carry their packs to their truck. Cheri and I return for ours, and we all hike down the road to clear out. As we arrive, I see two men trying to break into the truck. I yell and soon see the tired faces of James' and Nancy's fathers in the afternoon sun. Afraid to ask, they tell me she has a fractured skull, but will be o.k. Nancy's dad returns to the hospital while James' father leaves us with steaks, bacon, and a million thanks. The trauma is over for our group but not for James. Nancy's father is James' boss, Nancy's mother wants to know what James and Nancy were drinking and smoking, and James will have to deal with a million questions of what made what happen.

Nobody should have to justify or explain time or fate. They are both predetermined and irreversible. Unfortunately, horrible memories are hard to erase.

EQUIPMENT CHECKLIST

Don Speller

New members are often unsure just what is needed for weekend trips and might be reluctant to go on one for fear of forgetting an important item. Listed below is a guide for basic equipment for a backpacking weekend trip. The list will vary due to weather, length and type of trip, and personal choice.

1. ESSENTIALS - CLUB EQUIPMENT

back pack	stove & cook kit
sleeping bag	fuel bottle
ensolite pad	compass
tent	

2. OTHER CLUB EQUIPMENT (optional, not complete)

climbing gear	X-country skis, poles
ropes	ice axes
caving helmets	maps & books
climbing helmets	day packs
raft & canoes	tarps

3. ESSENTIALS - PERSONAL EQUIPMENT

Clothing - varies in weather conditions, wool and layers in winter, light weight cotton for summer. Jeans are usually not best (they are too hot for summer and become stiff in winter) A weekend trip requires one change of clothes

Boots
Coat or Jacket
Rain gear or Poncho (which also can cover Backpack)
Water Bottle
Flashlight
Mess Kit - spoon, fork, plate, cup
Toilet Kit - Toothpaste & Brush, Comb, Wash Cloth, Towel, etc.
"Survival Kit" - Mathces, aluminum foil square, twine, candles, knife, vinyl covering or ground cloth, whistle, plastic bags
Food - varies, most beginners start with canned or prepackaged foods and learn a better menu with experience.

4. OTHER ITEMS

Extra plastic bags - all sizes
Large garbage bags - 2

Spare batteries	Hat
Lighter	Bandana
Camera	Maps
Sun Lotion	Sunglasses
Insect Repellant	

This list is not complete but is only a guide. Do not worry if you do not have all items but essential items are listed.

"WHEN A MAN DESPOILS A WORK OF ART WE CALL HIM A VANDAL. WHEN HE DESPOILS A WORK OF NATURE WE CALL HIM A DEVELOPER."

- Colin Fletcher