

THE GOOSE DOWN GAZETTE

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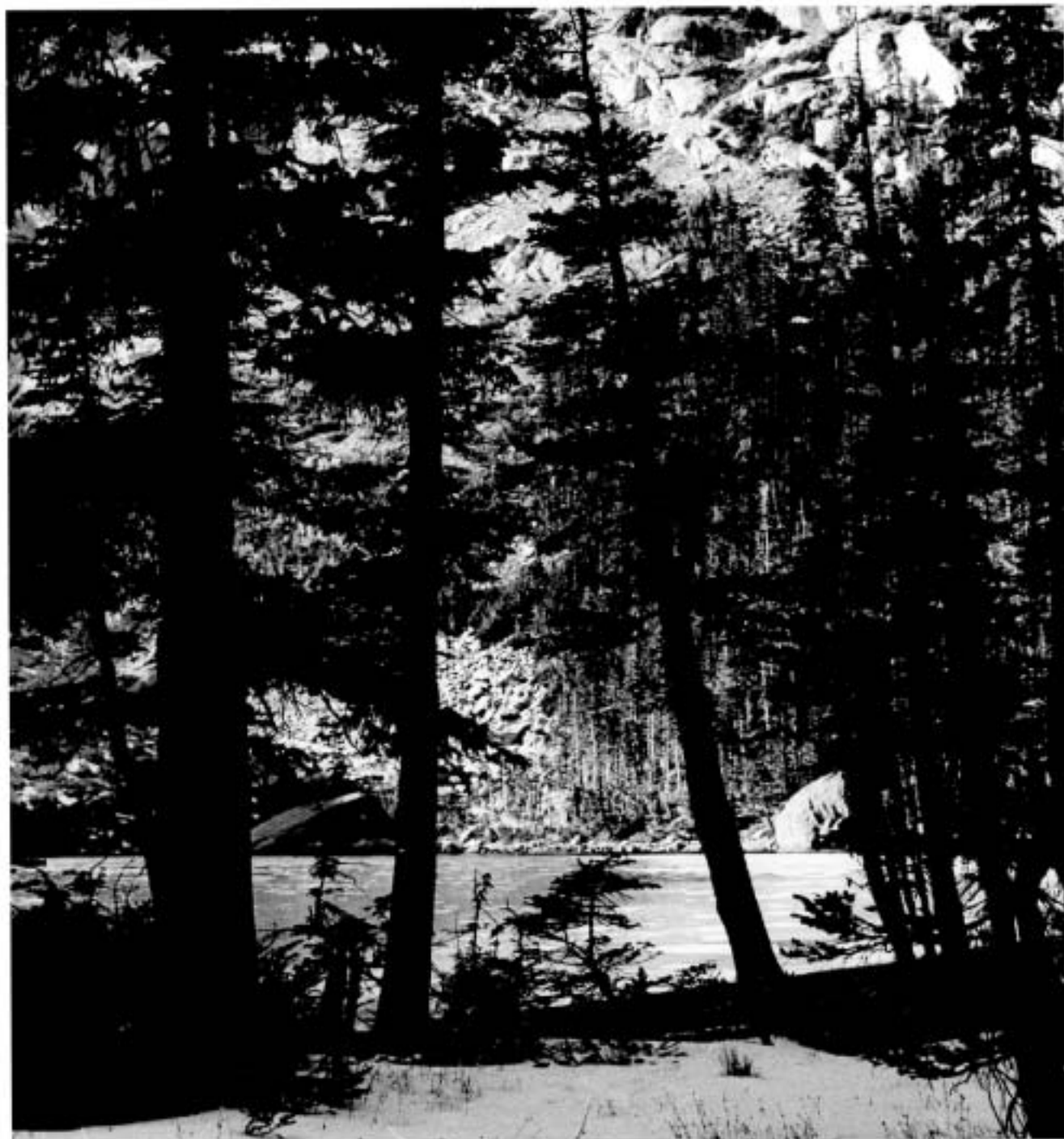


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The Goose Down Gazette is published occasionally by the University of Cincinnati Mountaineering Club, a non-profit organization dedicated to having fun and growing outdoors and in deep, muddy, underground passages--you know, the kind of things most people only dream about doing, be they nightmares or epic adventures. Feedback and/or contributions should be sent to following address:

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Amy Noreen took this shot somewhere in Rocky Mountain National Park last winter.

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Fall and Winter Highlights

Karen Riggs

Caving

The club had a lot of cavers this year exploring the deep dark crevasses below us. Some of the same old caves were explored and also some new ones. Mike Daulton headed up a trip that required some rappelling work and the ability to deal with a lot of mud! Karen Riggs asked Bob Kessler to lead a trip since she was not experienced enough to lead one. Much to her dismay and her request not to go to Screaming Willy's (due to past experience), they went to Screaming Willy's. The mud slide at the end of the trip was just enough to let Karen forgive her friend Bob. Mark Guttadaro introduced some of us to Goshland Cave not far from Pine Hill. The caving course was a success once again thanks to our instructor Bob.

Horseback Riding

A group of 10 members went to Tennessee for a beautiful fall weekend of horseback riding. (See article this issue)

Climbing

As always, the climbers were off and climbing on every conceivable warm day. For all those who would like to climb and get formal training, the club is offering a Climbing Course this April.

Whitewater

A happy little troupe took off for the Cumberland River for some whitewater rafting and canoeing. The tattered, overused raft that is going to be replaced next year made it through the journey unscathed. But our poor canoe looked like a silver pancake once Steve and Gwen got done with it. It was a long paddle to the takeout point with 2 orphans in our raft and an unfit-for-water-travel canoe being dragged behind the raft, causing it to shear off course through miles of flat water. Attitudes also sharpened as it got darker and darker with no sight of the takeout. One good point was that the canoe didn't

cause as much wind drag on the way home since it had no depth to it.

Backpacking

The club held its Basic Backpacking Course during the Fall quarter. The turnout was not as large as we had hoped, but the participants enjoyed the course and gained some backpacking knowledge. Several backpacking trips were held during the past 2 quarters. Trips ranged from the old standbys Red River Gorge and the Smokies, to new areas such as Shawnee State Forest and Cumberland Gap (Ky., Vir., and In.). The Cumberland troupe experienced every season during their January trip. The first day, it was t-shirt weather and they explored a small cave to cool down. That night the rains came. Campers were lulled to sleep only to awake to the sound of hail hitting the tent in the morning. The weather then proceeded to creep up on us at a settlement where suddenly the fog hit and you couldn't see the person 5 feet away from you. During the night while we cooked spam and onion in the cabin's fireplace. The snow fell and we awoke to 5 inches the next day, just in time for the hike out.

Parties

Karen had a Christmas Party and an Open House Party at her apartment. People were a little rowdier at the second party, playing hacky sack in the living room with my plants being innocent bystanders, and blasting my modest stereo on a Wednesday night, wanting more power. Gwen had three parties, the first on a rainy, chilly day at Minton Woods. Thank God for good friends and volleyball under the pavillion! Another party was to drink the beer bought for the Minton Woods Picnic. And, last but not least, a Halley's Comet Party the weekend before finals complete with a heavy overcast for better viewing. Thank God for White Castles! Right, Ricardo? And without fail, Bob

and Cindy had their Halloween Party which everyone enjoyed, even though Allan could have dressed up instead of coming in his street clothes. Green Hair and safety pins all the way, Allan!

Winter Fun

Wasn't much winter but we made the best of it. One fond weekend for many of us was the combination Ice Skating and Sledding. Fond, that is, once we taught little punk hockey players not to tick Karen off on her second home (ice). A little checking into the wall never hurt anyone! Right? We sped off to Mt. Storm to meet others for a little sled-riding till 2:30 in the morning. The combo sled with 4 inner tubes and many many people proved to be an experience each ride. A few people even found time to go cross country skiing. The midnight skiing at Perfect North Slope proved to be a lot of fun but the trip to Snowhoe, West Virginia probably had a better view!

Break Trips

See in this issue of the Goose Down Gazette two articles; one is on the Winter break trip out to Colorado for cross country skiing in the mountains, downhill skiing, and Rock Climbing. And who said we were not diversified? Also be sure to read about the Spring break trip down to Louisiana for canoeing in the swamps. This trip had 11 participants, one of the largest trips for quite sometime.

General Fun

Members got together to go to the Zoo, Conservatory, Nature Center, Movies and many more activities.

Guest Lectures

Besides the fine lectures given by our members at the meetings we engaged Fred Beckey for a slide show on his trip to the Chinese Alps. This proved to be a good show but financially, we barely broke even. Maybe next year!



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Colorado Rockski

Steve Must

The most important thing I learned from our trip to Colorado is, never go anywhere without your climbing shoes. But I had no idea that it would be almost 50 degrees out in

Boulder on the first day of 1986, and that a past UCMC member and serious rockhead would invite me to climb with him in Eldorado Canyon.

The climber was Dave Christenson, who graduated from UC with a degree in Chemical Engineering, moved out to Boulder and then looked for a job. He obviously had his priorities set straight. Larry Bortner, the trip coordinator (not to be confused with the trip leader(s)), contacted Dave from our condo in Boulder on New Year's Eve— "What's this?" you ask. "A group of rugged UC Mountaineers out in Colorado, roughing it in a condominium?" Believe me, we deserved it after two freezing nights in three-season tents on the side of a mountain in the Rocky Mountain National Park.

Let me start from the beginning. We pulled out of Cincinnati, Saturday Dec. 28, a bright and early 11 a.m., only three hours later than planned, about par for this group. After driving for twenty-four hours in Dan's trusty van (unfortunately Dan himself couldn't join us) without any major problems, the seven of us pulled into Boulder just in time for breakfast. The first thing most of us noticed was that there wasn't much snow on the ground. Soon we were gaining altitude, and we stopped in Estes Park for some last-minute supplies. Everywhere Karen looked, she saw ice; everywhere I looked, I saw rock. Her feet tingled as she thought of gliding across a secluded pond; my fingertips perspired as I thought of cranking up an exposed overhang. But we had come here to ski in the first place, and by this time some of us amateurs were seriously concerned about the lack of snow. Fortunately— or for most of us,

unfortunately, — our anxieties had a new direction when we all donned full packs, stepped into our cross-country skis, and attempted to climb a mountain. No problem with a lack of snow this high in the Rockies; there was 4 to 6 feet on the ground and 8 inches fell on us the next day! Every time you stepped off your skis, you were up to your *derriere* in the white stuff. The two pair of club snowshoes were a great convenience, especially for those late night latrine runs.

As darkness closed in, we pitched camp, and those who weren't completely exhausted cooked some dinner. We were all snug in our tents by 5 P.M., and didn't venture out until late the next morning, unless it was completely necessary. Brian, who slept in my tent, didn't set foot outside either night for any reason. I'm talking 14 hours each night. I think he has mastered the art of bladder control.

As I lay there sleeping, then waking every half hour, a lot of thoughts entered my head such as, "What in the hell am I doing up here?" or, "I could be at home with the family sitting in front of the fireplace" or, "I could be at home with the family sitting in the fireplace!" Good God, was it cold up there!

I did peek out of the tent a few times, and the sky I saw was gorgeous. This far up in the mountains, away from the glare of city lights, it is incredible the number of stars you can see. Nowadays people in the cities don't even notice them. And the stars would probably be forgotten altogether if it wasn't for lovers and Carl Sagan.

The next morning, I crawled

out of the tent expecting bright sun and spectacular vistas. But as I said earlier, 8 inches fell on us and we were lucky to see the person on the trail in front of us. Looking at the bright side, the skiing was great on the fresh snow. It was also a little easier going without a full load of winter camping gear on our back.

Everyone survived another night, and we all reached the van safely, some of us sooner than others. I refuse to elaborate. We loaded up and headed back to Boulder to find sunshine, temperatures in the upper forties, and an empty condo with a warm shower, but alas, no hot tub. So much for hardcore mountaineering. After settling in for New Year's Eve, we all went to the Liquor Mart, where we stocked up on the essentials. I had never been to a store as big as Krogers, where all they sold was alcohol; Vicki thought she was in heaven. We grabbed a couple of grocery carts and attacked the store.

We returned to our partyhouse and soon Dave dropped by to tell me I was going climbing with him the next day. I argued, quite unconvincingly, that it would be rude for me to leave the group like this. Fortunately, everyone urged me to climb. Now that I think about it, they all seemed eager to get rid of me for a while. All except Desmond, who couldn't hide his envy of a chance to climb in Colorado.

So after an eventful New Year's Eve of *Big Time Wrestling* and Michael Keaton movies, there I was on the side of a cliff in Eldorado Canyon on the first day of 1986. Luckily the whole night before, I had been loading up on carbohydrates.

an important part of every climber's diet. I followed Dave on a 5.8 called *Green Spur*. It was up in the 40's, but of course the sun went behind the clouds when we started up the route. For me, the climb was a mixture of cold rock, numb fingers, and smashed feet jammed into someone else's shoes and jammed into tight cracks. Being used to Clifton Gorge and brief routes where you can expend maximum energy on a few tough moves, I have never worked so hard for so long as I did on this climb. But that made it all the more satisfying when I stepped up to Dave's belay.

Earlier, I had asked Dave what his first lead fall was like, and he could hardly remember. I soon found out what mine was like when I lost my balance on a one-pitch 5.8 crack. It was a little unnerving, but I didn't hesitate to attempt it again, this time successfully. I think the experienced climber I was with actually enjoyed seeing me fall, and felt it was good for me. He said it would make me less intimidated to try leading harder climbs.

We bouldered until the sun went down, and I even ran into a guy who graduated from my high school. He is a year younger than me, and I recently found out that he is currently out in California leading 5.12's! I finally returned to the group and told them about my adventures. They all had a good time cross-country skiing on groomed trails all day, where everyone became expert skiers.

After the climbing, I would have been content to call it a trip and head home, but there was a lot more. We woke early the next morning, and headed to the top of the Continental Divide to go downhill skiing at Winter Park Resort. The weather was ideal, the mountains were spectacular, and the skiing was fantastic. The rush I got from flying down a mountain just on the edge of control almost rivals climbing. I was overwhelmed by the immensity of the place. I mean, the only downhill experience I had before this was challenging the treacherous Hoozier slopes of

Perfect North. I rode up with Karen on our first run; she went left, I went right, and I never saw her for the rest of the day. It turned out that our accident-prone President had fallen just after we separated and cut her head open with the end of her ski in a hellacious wipeout. It didn't stop her from skiing later in the day and she even got to ride down the mountain in a snowmobile which she didn't mind at all. Being such a large place, I didn't see anyone else from our group almost the entire day. This wasn't so bad because there was always a cute girl to ride up with on the lift. Unfortunately, once we started down, I couldn't keep up with any of them. I stayed on the beginner slopes most of the time until I ran into Larry towards the end of the day, and we hit a few intermediates. Usually my skiing bordered on the edge of control; on the more difficult runs I was out of control the entire run. Mike, Vicki, and Brian had never been on skis until this trip, but they all caught on really well, and everyone had a great time.

We ended the trip staying at

the YMCA of the Rockies. We went cross-country skiing again in the National Park and of course it was cloudy and snowed all day. Finally, on the last day we loaded up the van and headed out to do one last short trail. The sky was clear and the sun was bright. We even saw a group of mule deer run across the our path, a lone coyote trotting alongside the road, and a large herd of bighorn sheep grazing on the side of hill.

Overall, the trip was great and everyone got along well, at least when Karen and Desmond weren't exchanging words. The chance to climb in Eldorado Canyon, a place I had been hearing about for the past year, was an unexpected opportunity that made any winter camping discomforts well worth it. I'll have to admit, I had only been backpacking once before in my life, and sleeping on the side of a mountain in the middle of winter took me by surprise. Maybe after a few more years of experience, I'll be able to enjoy myself in the wilderness. But for now, I'm content to bask in the sun on the side of a crag, and sleep under the summer stars.

Morning

Morning's first green is gold,
Her hardest hue to hold.
Its early leaf's a flower,
But only so an hour.
Then leaf subsides to leaf,
So Eden sank to grief,
Then dawn turns into day,
Nothing gold can stay.

Emily Dickinson

Spring in Atchafalaya

Dennis Dziech

Throughout the winter quarter, I spent much time investigating the condition of America's wetlands. As the facts poured in on the shape of these areas, I was very

much impressed with two things: their ecological purpose of balancing the delicate water tables and the amazingly fast rate that man is destroying this much-needed resource. There are several functions that these areas serve to benefit not only nature, but also man in his imperfect balance with nature. Instead of spending so much time talking about the rate of destruction, I would like to talk of some people's attempts to save these areas and those who have special relationships with the wetlands of America.

With the recent controversy over the Oxbow area at the confluence of the Whitewater and Great Miami Rivers just west of town, the club became interested in visiting a swamp. This is where the search began. Looking for an area where a group of crazy people can go to canoe for an extended week was not an easy task. When the club learned that Okefenokee Swamp was booked solid for the season, things started to look pretty gloomy. A book was located that listed all the wetlands in the country and was mailing began. After receiving a good lead on the Atchafalaya basin, a contact was needed. Due to liability insurance, none of the outfitters in Louisiana were willing to lend any support in locating possible canoeing routes. As the end of the quarter approached, things were looking sad. Finally, an outfitter in Lafayette gave me the name of a local photographer familiar with the swamp.

Of all the vast, far-fetched vacations that I have been on, this was the first time that I have ever met a man who was as generous and accommodating as the photographer Greg Guirard. Greg grew up in the swamp and is very proud of the Atchafalaya

area. He is in love with the swamp and was delighted to find that a group of people from another part of the country was interested in his lady. It was as if Greg knew what we as outdoors people wanted to see in a swamp and he showcased her beauty to its greatest possible extent.

In our travels through the wetlands, the first part of the trip was not what we thought it would be. We traveled through a network of canals that led through the swamp in meandering, unpredictable directions. These canals were dug by oil companies in search of the swamp's most valuable resource to man-- oil. Even though one might not expect to see such civilized structure and organization on a dream wilderness get-away, the oil-rigging crews were as much a part of and in harmony with the swamp as the crayfishers were. As we traveled farther, I realized how much we were the intruders, not the people who depended on the swamp for their livelihood. Nonetheless, everyone we ran into were more than kind, and most knew Greg. Being the only canoe amidst the many fishing boats, I realized how much the fishermen would go out of their way to slow their work so as not to disturb the peaceful presence of the surroundings.

The cycle of life in the swamps is very clear to any traveler in her waters. The first thing that a visitor notices is the evidence of death so closely associated with the commonplace picture that one might conjure up in one's mind. But when one spends more than one or two hours in the swamp, they will see past the images of broken tree stumps and Spanish moss to the vibrant life that

will throughout the years take the place of long-dead and diseased trees. The budding is continuous of all types and forms of trees that cohabit with birds and animals which, even though in remote areas, are smart enough to stay away from man.

I read somewhere in my research for this trip that a person either grows to love the swamp or detest it. The UCMC group of eleven grew to love it over the spring break. We did not want to leave it. The environment that the swamp had to offer cannot be touched with words and my pictures don't even come close to the beauty. The swamp can also be harsh and unforgiving; for our luck, we did not experience this side of her temperament. All that I can do, now that I am back in Ohio, is to wish that I could lead the life of people like Greg Guirard in the Atchafalaya basin. For these wishes, I want to thank Greg for the little part of the swamp that he shared with us and to dream of the good times that our group had there!

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Way Down Upon the Shawnee Shiver

Barbara Boylan

Once upon a weekend weary,
While I was hiking,
Oh so leary
Of the hills that rose
before me,
I thought of what I'd
thought before.

When this trip I was
conceiving,
The snow was gone,
I was believing,
But the weather was
deceiving,
Now my thoughts one burden
bore,
As I buttoned up my jacket,
Feeling frozen to the core,
Quoth the leader,
"Nevermore!"

Actually, this early March trip was quite pleasant. The six of us— Jeff, Steve, Ricardo, Brian, Larry, and me— got off to a fumbling start searching for that trailhead in the woods after leaving Cincinnati fifteen minutes after I said to meet at Scioto (If it hadn't been for Larry, we would have left on time. Is This a record for the Mountaineering Club?). Once we found the trail, we traveled on ridgetops for the whole fourteen miles. I found that I did not need my heavy winter coat or my gloves while I was hiking— at least until we stopped and stood around for a few minutes!

We took a worthwhile detour down off the ridge to see Bear Lake. Everyone enjoyed the view and a few of us got into skipping stones across the lake. Stones skip a long way across a frozen lake and when the ice is less than an inch thick, the skips are accompanied with a sound that can only be described as that coming from a ray gun blast in a bad science fiction movie. Since no

one wanted to walk out on the lake and pick up all the rocks, we left them there for the spring thaw. The fish had better be careful.

We camped down in a small valley and got a fire going for warmth. Everyone's shoes were wet, so we tried to dry them out near the fire. I kept mine well away from the intense heat, but I realized later that I had charred the nylon tops. It was sad to lose a good pair of boots that had been with me on so many adventures. Another piece of Yosemite leaves me, sniff, sniff.

Larry and I were the first to rise. The best defense I had against feeling the miserable cold was laughter. Larry and I did our best to stave off the cold, but I'm not so sure the others appreciated our peculiar survival tactics so early in the morning!

When Jeff got up and put his boots on, he found them too frozen to walk in, so he held them over the fire. Soon the others joined him. It was a

curious sight to see three guys cooking boots instead of bacon and eggs for breakfast!

We were making good time that day, so I took an easy pace and surveyed the landscape. Compared to the West, where I've done all my hiking the last two summers, the southern Ohio terrain is very mild. It has a subtle strength, though. The rolling hills and small mountains here have still not been conquered for all the years of weathering that has laid siege upon them. The mellow, rounding contour reminds me of a large, lumpy goose-down quilt ruffled up on a bed. This landscape, coupled with the stillness of the land, gave me a feeling of peaceful calm, but the blowing wind reminded me that there was much life here.

Well, maybe winter camping is all right sometimes.

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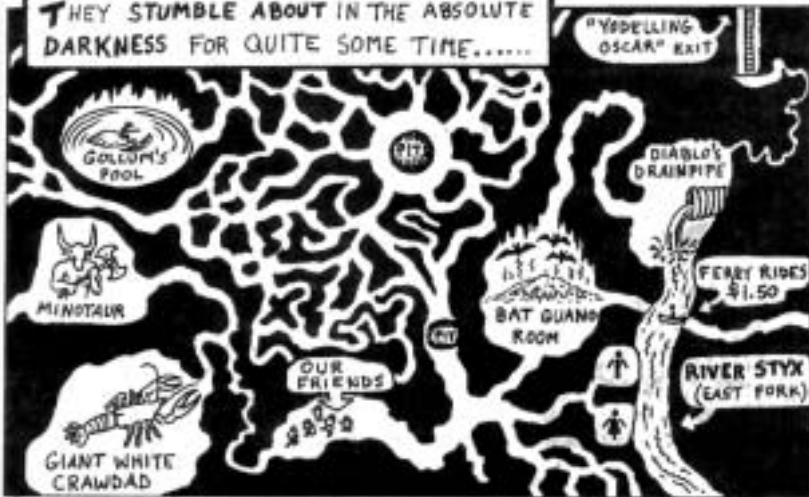
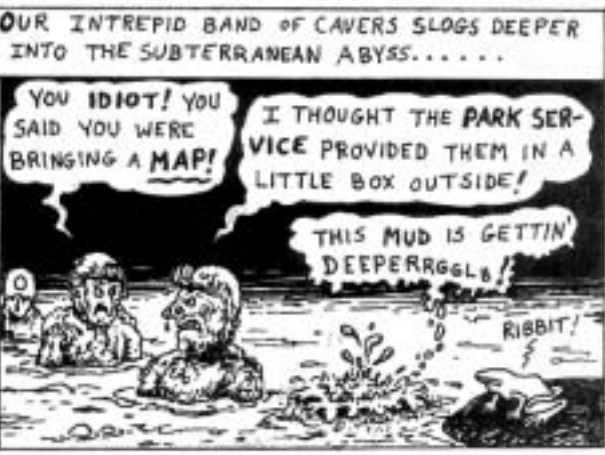
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"DIABLO'S DRAINAGE DESCENT"

OUR STORY OPENS SOMEWHERE SOUTH OF THE MASON-DIXON LINE, WHERE A GROUP OF U.C.M.C. MEMBERS ARE PREPARING AN ASSAULT ON THE CAVE SYSTEM KNOWN TO SPELUNKERS AS "DIABLO'S DRAINPIPE"...



HEY, HOW DEEP IS THIS THING? MY LIGHT DOESN'T SHOW BOTTOM!



WHAT ABOUT THE TREES????

Amy Norman

Logging is something that doesn't hit us very close to home these days in Ohio. On a recent trip to Washington State last September I saw what logging really is. While admiring vistas of incredible mountains like Mt. Shuksan and Mt. Baker in the North Cascades, the lower surrounding tree-covered mountains stood scarred by large clear cuts. In some places the mountain was shaved bald as far as I could see.

Logging companies often buy private land for cutting, but a large bulk of the timber is cut from land leased from the National Forest Service (Or the Forest Circus as it is known in some circles.). This is a big source of income for the Forest Service. Under the Reagan Administration, timber funding has increased by 13%. This includes aiding the timber companies in building those steep, winding logging roads that we see scarring the mountain sides. As taxpayers, we are unwittingly spending nearly million a year on logging roads. We also lose the recreational capacity of our National Forest by this road building because many roads are carved out on top of our hiking trails.

Once the roads are built deep into our wilderness, the cutting begins. Erosion is an obvious problem. With the trees no longer there to hold the topsoil in place, streams gather dirt and gouge deep ditches as new run-offs scar the land. Some slopes are so steep they actually use hot air balloons and helicopters to lift the mammoth logs to the trucks below.

Salmon in the northwest have trouble spawning in streams and rivers where the trees have been cut right up to its banks. The lack of shade warms the water temperature to a point where it is too warm for the salmon to reproduce. Some of the more conscientious logging companies leave buffers of a few yards of

trees around a river to provide the needed shade. Buffers also sometimes surround roadways, so we don't see what they have done-- an attempt at a cosmetic solution.

So how long are these trees going to last? Of the original forests of the United States, at the current harvest rates, they will last only to the year 2030. The midpoint of a forest's life is 500 years, so no matter how fast we plant new trees, we can't catch up. A 1500- to 2000-year-old tree in the northwest is not uncommon. But this is a prize to a logger and they will cut it down without a second thought. Yes, we are running out of trees.

Replanting is being done (I think it is a law). In Washington some areas are being replanted by convicts from the state penitentiary! Many varieties of trees are cut, but in each area only one species is replanted. Have you ever seen a

natural forest with only one species of tree? This mono-planting creates problems of its own.

We talked with an old-time logger on a dock on Washington's Olympic Peninsula. They were loading ton after ton of logs for export to places like Japan and Korea. They pay good money for our wood. The old timer told us that many companies are already running out of trees to kill. They are cutting smaller trees, replanted forests from 20 years ago. These trees are only big enough for paper production, sawdust, and mulch. I was surprised to find out that we import many times the amount of building timber than we export. This is a global problem. We are heading towards deforestation of the world. Will we ever learn to sacrifice profit for the sake of future generations?

(Facts pulled from various magazines... Audubon, National Geographic, Outside)

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RISK of ADVENTURE



...Or How Not To Climb A Mountain

Bill Herbert

To take chances, to test oneself, to challenge the wilderness on its own terms, that is the lure of the mountains for many climbers. In fact, the prospect of death, however real or imagined, intensifies the experience and becomes part of the attraction.

As a group, we climbers are notoriously independent, with a healthy dislike for do's and don'ts. We are definitely not supporters of the current national mania to make everything as risk-free as possible. Witness the current rage to solo a 5,12 cliff, to go "light and fast" on a mountain. In his classic, *Climbing Ice*, Yvon Chouinard advises, "Carry light packs and leave most of the 10 Essentials and other impedimenta behind."

However, if we neglect to consider the importance of conditioning, acclimatization, route finding problems, and the insidious stealth of storms, darkness, and life-sapping cold, we may find out the hard way that we are in the mountains.

An example of this disregard occurred last summer in Grand Teton National Park. The result was a disaster of major proportions.

On Wednesday, Sept. 11, at approximately 9:30 A.M., a party of two and a party of three left the base camp area for the summit of Grand Teton, an ascent of 2200 ft. to an elevation of 13,770 ft. Forty hours later at 1:30 A.M.

Friday, four Rangers from the Park reached two survivors, the leaders of each group. They were both lying in the snow, unable to move; one was at the top of a rappel, the other at the bottom, all tangled up in the rope. Later Friday morning, the bodies of the lost climbers were found. One was at the foot of a cliff he had slid over, the other two were lying in the snow where their companions were forced to leave them.

Why and how did this happen?

Because of their geological formation, consisting of an abrupt, almost vertical rise on the east and a gentle slope westerly to the Idaho potato fields, the Teton mountains are subject to sudden storms in the summer and fall. The skies can be cloudless at noon, and at 2:00 P.M. a violent thunderstorm may be howling through the canyons and around the peaks. (This reporter can attest to this.) By September these storms can be vicious blizzards.

Normally, the ascent from the Lower Saddle (the usual base camp area) takes three and one-half to four and one-half hours, and most climbers start early enough to be on their way down by 10:00 A.M. These two parties were starting up when they should have been starting down. Rain had been forecast for the day but the weather was "beautiful" when they left. When they were about three quarters of the way up, it began to snow. The storm came in from the

northwest, its approach not being visible to the climbers who were going up the southeast face. They continued to climb for a short while in the snow, until the really tough part of the climb was behind them. Here, a few hundred feet below the summit, the two parties met and joined forces. By now, the snowstorm had turned into a howling blizzard, and they decided to get down as quickly as possible. Utilizing three rappels the group reached an area known as the Upper Saddle, from which the remaining down climb is mostly scrambling on the standard descent route.

By now though, it was dark, and guess what—among the five climbers, there was one flashlight. Rather than wandering off some cliff, they decided to bivouac there for the night. Although reasonably dressed, none of the five had extra clothing and all but one of the survivors wore tennis or canvas-topped shoes. They spent the night in a pile, rotating positions every thirty minutes or so, and consumed what little food they had between them.

When daylight arrived Thursday morning, the snow was falling so heavily and being blown so hard by the 60-80 mph winds that visibility was limited to 25 feet. A central rib leads south-westerly from the Upper Saddle and the standard descent follows a couloir (This is the Owen-Spaulding Couloir named for the pair who first climbed the

(Please see RISK... p.15)

Snakes Alive!

Allan Sutherland

Imagine yourself backpacking at the Gorge on a warm, sunny afternoon. You're growing drowsy from the monotony of hiking since breakfast, and you can't wait to find a good place to sit down and eat lunch. The pathway winds closely along the bottom of a cliff, where bright splashes of sunlight dot the trail ahead. Suddenly you are jerked from your musings by the feeling of your foot coming down on something soft and wriggly. The injured snake swings its head around in an attempt to bite its attacker in the same instant you realize what has happened. What will you do next? Have you prepared in advance for such occurrences? To some degree, your chances for survival are excellent.

Let us begin by dispelling some common myths about venomous snakes. You may have heard that a rattler won't cross a horsehair rope, so that a sleeper is safely encircled in one. The simple fact about this and all other "snake repellants" is that they don't work. Also, snakes have erroneously been given supernatural powers and are still used in remote parts of Appalachia in cults and for "snake medicine". And what hiker doesn't get paranoid as soon as the word "copperhead" is spoken? Yes, it's easy to imagine a cold, bloodthirsty and evil serpent lurking in wait for unwary hikers-- that is, until you understand snakes. The truth is, there is absolutely nothing magical in the daily life of a venomous snake; only humans take stock in superstitions. This isn't saying that snakes don't deserve special attention; only that they must be dealt with rationally instead of hysterically.

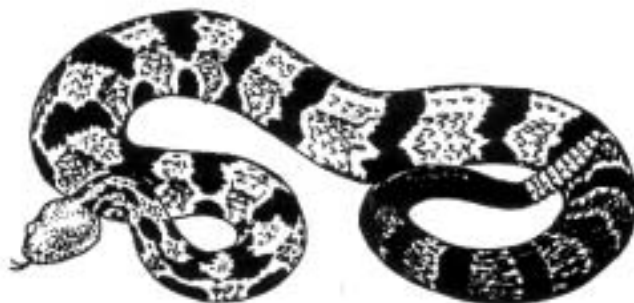
The reasons that venomous snakes have poison are simple. First, they use it to kill food. Snakes aren't agile enough to chase rats and birds so the venom allows the snake to ambush its prey. Second, many animals eat snakes, so the venom is protection. As a rule, poisonous serpents aren't aggressive without reason. They usually give a warning or try to escape before striking. The exception comes when they are suddenly surprised.

To Bite Or Not To Bite?

Proper identification is the first step in avoiding a snakebite. Anyone who spends time outdoors will eventually meet a snake, but most people have trouble telling a harmless species from a dangerous one. As a result, all snakes are popularly hated and often killed on sight. This is a terrible shame since all types of snakes eat great numbers of rats, mice, and insects. In fact, of the many species of snakes found here, only four types in the United States are venomous. These are the the Rattlesnake, the Copperhead, the Water Moccasin, and the

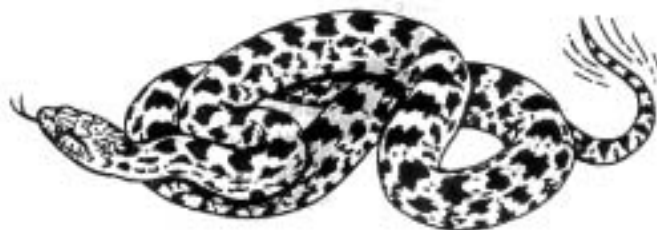
Coral Snake. Only the first two are found in our area. At first glance, some harmless species look like venomous snakes. The best way to distinguish snakes is to get a field guide and learn the species by sight. Once you know to look for key traits, snakes can be identified at a glance.

As mentioned previously, only four venomous snakes live in the U.S., but some have harmless look-alikes which you should recognize.



Venomous

Rattlesnakes come in many species but all are essentially the same. They usually buzz their rattle when alarmed. But rattles do break off, snakes may be surprised, and newborns can't rattle (But they do bite!). All rattlesnakes have a distinct diamond-shaped head and visible rattle.



Harmless Look-Alike

Many beneficial rodent-eaters like Black Rat Snakes and Bull Snakes try to scare off attack by coiling up, hissing, and vibrating their rattle-less tail tip. Dry leaves or grass make this sound just like a rattle! But these snakes can be identified by color, a stream-lined head and body, and a slim, pointed tail tip.

first aid for snakebite

SYMPTOMS

The symptoms of snakebite can be divided into two categories:

1. **Mild-to-moderate.** Mild swelling or discoloration, mild-to-moderate pain at the site of the wound, tingling sensations, rapid pulse, weakness, dimness of vision, nausea, vomiting, and shortness of breath.
2. **Severe.** Rapid swelling and numbness, followed by severe pain at the site of the wound. There may also be pinpoint pupils, twitching, slurred speech, shock, convulsions, paralysis, unconsciousness, and no breathing or pulse.

FIRST AID

The victim of a snakebite must have prompt medical attention. The most important step is to get the snakebite victim to the hospital quickly. Meanwhile, take the following first aid measures:

1. Keep the victim from moving around.
2. Keep the victim as calm as possible and preferably in a lying position.
3. Immobilize the bitten extremity and keep it at or below heart level.
If the victim can reach a hospital within 4 or 5 hours and if no symptoms develop, no further first aid measures need be applied.
4. If mild-to-moderate symptoms develop, apply a constricting band 2 to 4 inches above the bite, but not around a joint—elbow, knee, wrist, or ankle—and not around the head, neck, or trunk.
The band should be $\frac{3}{4}$ to $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide, not thin like a rubber band. The band should be snug but loose enough for a finger to be slipped underneath. Watch for swelling. Loosen the band if it becomes too tight, but do not remove it. Periodically check the pulse in the extremity beyond the bite to insure that the blood flow has not stopped.
5. If severe symptoms develop, keep the victim lying down and comfortable and maintain his body temperature. If breathing stops, give mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. If there is no pulse, perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR)—if you have been trained to do so.

As soon as possible make an incision over each fang mark and apply suction immediately. Apply a constricting band if that has not already been done, and make cuts in the skin through the fang marks. Use a sharp, sterilized knife. Cuts should be no deeper than just through the skin and should be $\frac{1}{2}$ inch long, extending over the suspected venom deposit point. (Because a snake strikes downward, the deposit point is

usually lower than the fang mark.) Cuts should be made along the long axis of the limb. Do not make cross-cut incisions. Do not make cuts on the head, neck, or trunk.

Apply suction with a suction cup for 30 minutes. If a suction cup is not available, use your mouth. There is little risk to the rescuer who uses his mouth, but it is recommended that the venom not be swallowed and that the mouth be rinsed out.

If the hospital is not close — that is, if it cannot be reached in 4 or 5 hours — take the following measures:

1. Keep trying to obtain professional care, either by transporting the victim to a place where medical care is available or by using an emergency communications system to obtain medical advice.
2. If no symptoms develop, keep trying to reach the hospital and give the general first aid described above in steps 1, 2, and 3.
3. If any symptoms at all develop, apply a constricting band, make incisions, and apply suction immediately, as described above in steps 4 and 5.

Other Factors To Consider

Identifying the snake. If you can kill the snake without risk or delay, bring it to the hospital for identification, but exercise extreme caution in handling it.

Cleaning the bitten area. You may wash the bitten area with soap and water and blot it dry with sterile gauze. You may apply dressings and bandages, but only for a short period of time.

Medicine to relieve pain. Do not give the victim alcohol, sedatives, aspirin, or any medicine containing aspirin. Some painkillers, however, may be given. Consult a doctor or other medical personnel for specific medications that may be used.

Snakebite kits. Keep a kit accessible for all outings in primitive areas or areas known or suspected to be snake infested.

It is not recommended that cold compresses, ice, dry ice, chemical ice packs, spray refrigerants, or other methods of cold therapy be used in the first aid treatment of snakebite.

The information on this poster is based on a report prepared for the American Red Cross by the National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences.

American Red Cross



Snakebite prevention practices that can eliminate needless illness and worry may be learned in a Red Cross first aid course. Call your chapter to enroll.



Venomous

Water Moccasins are sluggish and usually seen near water (obviously). Their color varies from being brown with black bands to solid black. They are told from water snakes by a very stout body and distinct diamond-shaped head. They may warn attackers by opening the mouth to display the white interior, giving it the name 'cottonmouth'.



Harmless Look-Alike

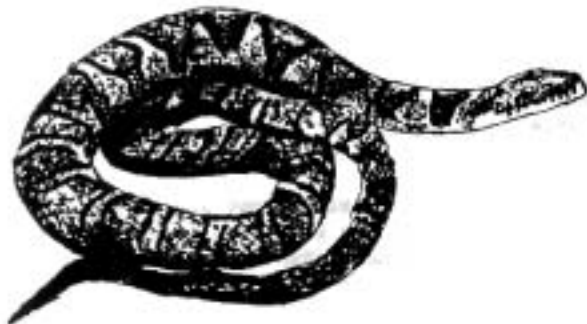
Milk snakes and scarlet kingsnakes mimic the bright colors of the coral snake, but their bands are in a different sequence.

The rhyme.

Red meets Black, Venom lack...

Red meets Yellow, Kill a fellow.

will always tell them apart.



Harmless Look-Alike

Water Snakes are found near water and are brown with dark bands. They have a long, slim body and a more streamlined head than the moccasin. They are quick, active, and usually bite if caught.



Venomous

Copperheads are camouflaged but distinct and shouldn't get confused with any other snake (except for baby moccasins, which are a close relative). Luckily, copperheads are so peaceful that a hiker can walk within two feet of one and never be any wiser for it.



Venomous

Coral Snakes are shy and bite only when handled, but their venom is very dangerous. Bright banded colors serve as a warning.

Rattlesnakes and copperheads in our area are usually found on dry ridgetops, around cliffs, rocky dens, and in log piles. All snakes are fond of basking on warm rocks, stumps, and on roads. Snakes are usually out hunting at night, so gathering firewood after dark is risky business, folks. They have excellent camouflage and tend to sit motionless, so be aware of the ground ahead when hiking. If you see one on the path, please don't try to kill it. Harassing a venomous snake only causes trouble. It is much simpler to detour around a peaceful reptile out enjoying the sun, just like yourself, than it is to risk possible death or injury.

On Strike.....
(And first aid)

Dangerous serpents come in two main classes: Vipers and Elapids. Vipers (rattlesnakes, copperheads, etc.) all have the arrow-shaped head and a pair of long fangs that erect when the snake strikes and fold back when the mouth is closed. Viper venom destroys tissue like a meat-tenderizer, breaking down blood and muscle. Elapids (coral snakes, cobras, etc...) have two small, permanently erect fangs. Elapid venom attacks the nervous system and results in arrested breathing and paralysis.

Snake venom, which is produced from glands in the head, flows through ducts in the hollow fangs and is injected into the wound. This all happens in a flash at the moment of the strike's impact. Strangely, about 30% of all strikes produce dry bites where no venom is injected (So if struck once, jump away to prevent another shot!). If you are bitten by a venomous snake kill it if possible (But only if you can do it safely!) and bring it to the hospital for positive identification. The reason for this is that each species has unique venom and the wrong antivenom may prove disastrous for you. Beware of dead snakes, though. They have powerful reflexes for several hours after death, and even a severed head may inflict a second bite.

Snakebite is a very serious risk we all face when climbing rocks or hiking in remote country. If we all learn to recognize snakes and respect their way of life, that risk would be greatly reduced. Never act macho by picking up snakes you can't positively identify as harmless-- unless you want sympathy. Spare their lives if given the choice. Snakes are by far less harmful to people than the other way around! As well as eating rodents, snakes enrich our outdoors with life. I count myself very lucky to have seen a live copperhead while hiking. Spying one proves you have sharp eyes, and eliminates the risk of having to use this information in bad circumstances.

(RISK... continued from p.)

Grand.) down the west face of this central rib. The couloir is reached by traversing southwest along the Upper Saddle. They had no compass, and proceeded southeast, reaching instead the other face of the central rib. They started climbing down what is known as the Mall Street Couloir, which dead ends in a series of cliffs. Upon reaching the cliffs, they realized they were lost, and spent the day trying to find a way down. Two of the men climbed back up the saddle and retrieved a bit of "impedimenta" they had left there-- their one and only guidebook. They returned to the couloir and remained up high waiting for the others to join them. As they waited, one of the two was overcome by hypothermia and collapsed. His buddy moved him over to some shelter, said goodbye, and proceeded down the gully to the others. Meanwhile, as the day progressed, the condition of two of the three climbers lower down began to deteriorate. One of the two slipped and fell, was unable to recover, and slid past his friend and off the cliff at the end of the couloir. When the survivor from above reached the remaining two, one of them collapsed and was unable to even crawl. He too was abandoned.

The two survivors were desperate and realized they must get off the mountain as quickly as possible. They set up to rappel down the cliff their buddy had fallen over. By now, the remaining two had frostbitten hands and feet and their vision was becoming blurred. It took about four hours to set up the rappel, and darkness set in and the snow had stopped falling. One of the two rappelled down, and collapsed. The other, who owned the only flashlight, saw a flood of light from down below and began to flash SOS. He received a response after a while, and continued to flash until his batteries ran out (no spare batteries). He sat in the snow, semi-conscious, until the rescue party showed up.

The story of the rescue is a bit of a story by itself. Briefly, four Rangers were in the

Lower Saddle area when the faint light up on the mountain was spotted, about 9:30 pm. Instead of spending the night there as planned, the four set out for the flashing light. The batteries held out long enough for them to determine the location on the mountain. They climbed up and down, over ice and snow, and at 1:30 A.M., guided by his weak shouts, they found the first survivor. The other was brought back up the cliff, a bivouac set up, and treatment for hypothermia initiated. In the morning, the Rangers led the two down to the Lower Saddle, from where they were flown by helicopter to the hospital in Jackson.

The "10 Essentials", as established back in the 30's by the Mountaineers:

1. map
2. compass
3. flashlight (spare bulb and batteries)
4. extra food
5. extra clothing
6. sunglasses
7. first aid kit
8. pocket knife
9. matches in waterproof container
10. firestarter

We may not always need all 10, but we must always exercise common sense. The predictability of unpredictable weather should have been recognized, and at least the first five "essentials" taken. Had they been, there might well be three less names in the statistics.

Colorado '78 Revisited

Excerpts from the journal of UCMG Alumni Bill Strachan and Hal Shaw

What's Left of Topeka?

Sunday - 8/6/78

Hal seemingly makes a wrong turn at Topeka, Kansas, in the middle of the night. We find ourselves drawn by "power" to Council Bluffs, Kansas, ancient meeting place of Indian chiefs. It is here that in recent times Rolling Thunder, chief medicine man of the Shoshone Nation, demonstrated his spiritual power to a group of white doctors and psychiatrists by healing a man's infested leg. "...before their very eyes." And here in Council Bluffs we are given the power of a sunrise.

Welcoming Party

When we arrive at Hal's friend Dan's house, the party is already in progress. Hamburgers are on the grill, plenty of food and beer. We are in Denver and it is great! When we arrived, an informal band of three guitarists and the "Whoever Want's To" Singers were providing entertainment. Dave, one of the guitarists, provided entertainment even without the guitar. Among the people at the party were Dan Rothschild, Tom Grobe, and Gary Justice, who were all in Hal's high school class. A little rain brought the party inside for a while. After the rain, volleyball continued. The lifetime "smashed" score was evened as Dan the Spike massaged Hal's face and glasses with the volleyball.

Crestone Peak Head Clamp: Better a Head Clamp than a Dead Clamp

Wednesday - 8/9/78

Today started with breakfast and a lazy wakeup for Hal. Shucks! The pots didn't wash themselves overnight. Although it was a late start, we started toward Crestone Peak. Gear included 1000 ml. water, gorp, apricots, first-aid kit, down jackets, rope, chocks, and helmets. Hal's moleskinned heel of the earlier day still needed attention. Our lowland course passed several flat campsites

along the way, through flower infested tundra, deep into the cirque. Hal's memories were rejuvenated by the beauty and Bill was just impressed. The pace was slow and full of panting, up the headwall toward the ridge between Humbolt and Crestone Peak. The golf course on the way to Kit Carson Peak was open but no one was playing. Our eyes constantly analyzed the direct route up Crestone Needle at every angle, expecting to go that route the next day. The cairn-marked path was followed around the west side of Crestone to the concave west face. A big mistake would have been made if we went up before reaching the face. By now Bill had a pronounced headache. More food, water, and Roloids might have prevented this. Thunderheads began building to the NW; still, we scrambled to 500' below the summit. The day pack was stashed away with 300 more feet of scrambling up the hard rock gulley to go. Hal led the last two pitches to the summit. Bill followed. The closest lightning storm was judged to miss us to the west. Because a second storm was close, Bill waited at the last belay for Hal to take summit pictures before descending. Quickly rappelling and down-climbing, the cairn path was reached. Sleet began falling and we met two climbers that we saw earlier on Crestone Needle. Impressed with the urgency of the situation, we trudged down toward the uppermost lake as the sleet turned to rain. Many instructions were shouted back toward the other climbers much behind us who were now engulfed in the storm clouds. Quite wet by now, soaked from the knees down, we arrived and dove into camp. The Roloids helped, dinner was after a short nap, and later the sky cleared and the moon peaked over the mountains; a beautiful, cool evening.

Lost in Space

Thursday 8/10/78

Too pooped to climb Crestone Needle, we dedicated the morning to laziness. Bill tested the stream for bathing and gave it a 4.0 on the SS scale. Hal figured it wasn't worth the bother. Bill finished some sewing while Hal caught some rays. Earlier, the local buck (magic deer) and squirrel had visited. We packed up and left after noon. The trail down was much easier. We just made it to the car when the drizzles turned to a full-fledged downpour. The W.A.B. almost got totalled when, in the rain, we were unsuspectingly run off the road by three fucking redneck pickup trucks. One was really a VW that thought it was a pickup truck. The branded fenders marked these people as being exiled from the Cleveland shoreway. We drove south of Mt. Blanca to the Sand Dunes National Monument. With almost all of the campsites taken and past dusk, we were forced to camp on the dunes. The tent (The Green Mart) and sleeping bags were taken up out of sight of nearby lights. A near summit was scaled with Hal continually fighting off a mutiny by Bill who wanted to dive off into one of the bottomless "...black holes toward the center of the earth." By reminding Bill that even Reebus Kneebus didn't make it, his "dogged nerve and rubber determination" were calmed. A close encounter ensued when we heard two or three couples having a grand old time. Hal went towards the people forty feet below in a small dark hole. Hal threw a growl at them, temporarily spoiling the party, as he came flailing out of the dark and over the knoll. The clouds soon dissipated, revealing a half moon and shooting stars. A very peaceful sleep in the desert followed.

Without Any Brains (W.A.B.)
Friday 8/11/78

We are woken up to a mellow desert sunrise by early morning hikers and quickly leave to avoid the rangers. We arrived back at Dan's in Denver at 1:30 P.M. Dinner time arrived with breaded steak and pudding. (If you don't eat your meat you can't have any pudding). Evan had brought over a guest, Sandy, who was a technical representative for Diamond Shamrock (Hal's employer at that time). He had many stories of partying within Diamond Shamrock; golf carts and whoras at Quail Hollow, etc.... Bill especially enjoyed the corporate partying that night. Then the slide show began with Evan's projector set up. His slides of the Teotihuacan pyramid complex in the Valley of Mexico revealed the science of God. The evening ended with well wishes on our next wilderness experience tomorrow.

Aspen Is Happiness for the
Nouveau Riche But Is Confusion
for Those Trying to Find the
Path

Saturday 8/12/78

The intense partying the night before gave us a late start for our next wilderness epic. The drive to Aspen turned out to be a long six hours over winding mountain roads. Bill's West Virginia driving style made Hal nervous. Our arrival in Aspen was a trip. Bill had never seen so many expensive clowndo's in one place. We deopped from the W.A.B. and made our way through hordes of beautiful Colorado women to the quaint Courtyard Cafe where we spent an unbelievable amount of money for a sandwich, a salad, and a Michelob. A cute young female at the table next to us, who was blonde, under 18, new riche, and had three turquoise rings on one hand, wanted to leave Aspen. WHY??? We had to leave the Aspen madness, as it was too much of a temptation, and headed up to Snowmass Ski Area in search of our trailhead. We headed up the Snowmass trail and crossed over a creek to a meadow where our mountaineering trail was supposed to start. It was hard to find the trail among all the aspen trees and it was getting late, so we camped in the meadow.

We set up camp in a small alpine meadow, just below K-2 Pass separating Mt. Daly from Capitol Peak (14,410', tied for the third highest peak in the lower 48 states). After renditions of Dixie, Camp Town Ladies, The Blind Melon Chittlin' Blues, and Bring It On Home were played on Bill's Blues Harp, a great meal of ham, spaghetti, chicken soup, and fresh mushrooms was devoured. Through Hal's telephoto lense, we watched a large mountaineering party traverse the Capitol Peak arete as thunder/snow/sleet storms began. We hit the sack hard as darkness came.

A Typical Cleveland Day or Only
Clevelandites Get the Snowed-
In Blues

Monday 8/14/78

We woke up to the pitter-patter of ice crystals hitting the dome. No summit attempts today. Ice, snow, lightning, and gusting winds continued throughout the day. At first, the weather humbled Hal; he started to get paranoid. Surely this is a preview of the winter to come which will paralyze Clevetown. People in Aspen, get your skis out.

The Capitol Peak Epic
Tuesday 8/15/78

Waiting and waiting
Through thunder, lightning, and
snow,
The cold wind blows,
The night sky clears,
The climb of Capitol Peak
Is going to go.

Shoving some wet, cold, granola
Down the old schnozzolla.
We're going to need that energy
From head to toe.

Dark blue sky,
Ice and snow covered granite,
We trudge up the cirque,
Travelers on another planet.

Holding on to sharp, cold,
angular, granite,
We move slowly along the arete.
High exposure, breathing labored,
Struggling up the last roped rock
moves,
We climb to the summit.

Have a Cow, a Sacred Hindu One,
That Is

Sunday 8/13/78

We made our way through the trunks of the beautiful white aspens. The trail turned out to be moderate. We met two other mountaineers who gave us some hints on following the trail. Our Spruce Knob trip (in Seneca, West Va.) had been Hal's lesson in talking to plants. Now came Hal's lesson in talking to animals, as Bill talked a couple of small herds of cattle out of and off our trail. We ate lunch at a nice campsite below Mt. Daly. We then "climbed the Mt. Daly drainage for 1000 feet vertical" and, just before we made it to the top of the pass, a hail storm broke out. We covered up and sat it out. We finally made it to the top after the storm dissipated. We started across the lunar landscape of snowfields and boulderfields toward our mountainous objec-

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Bodies are tired,
But there is no time.
We have to descend to the Green
Wart
Before dinner time.

A glissando of pure white,
We slide down the mountain
To eat before night.

Aspenlite
Wednesday 8/16/78

We woke up and packed,
ready for the hike back to Aspen.
A guy from Aspen on a day hike
fishing trip came up to our camp
as we were ready to leave. We
told him about the small plane
that had buzzed us about forty
feet over our heads on the
Capitol ridge and then did a
barrel roll. He told us that the
guy was an ex-WWII fighter pilot
who now stocked the alpine lakes
with fish from his plane. We
literally trucked down the
mountain and ran into a lot of
people near the bottom. We drove
down the road playing tapes and
when we got to Aspen we were so
freaked that we could hardly get
our shit together enough to find
a place to eat. We ended up at
the *Cooper Street Pier* and
drank a pitcher of beer. That
tasted great! Although it was
hard, we finally left on the
journey back to Denver. It was
late when we arrived at Dan and
Sue's and we went out to eat for
a light dinner of salad and beer.

Twenty-five-mile Trucked Water
Omen

Friday 8/18/78

Off to Canyonlands National
Park in Utah, Bill's first time
in the state. After stopping in
Grand Junction for beer, Colorado
National Monument was our
lunching spot and our first look
at canyon walls, spires, and
tunnels. The water was trucked
in twenty-five miles. On the
short cut to Moab, along the
Colorado River, the M.A.B. went.
Arches National Park was closed
so we went back along the river
to find a campsite for the
evening. The M.A.B. went through
many washouts and dodged suicidal
rabbits to get us there, def-
initely earning it's rest.

Back to Stonehenge
Saturday 8/19/78

Up with the noisy cars and
off to La Hacienda for breakfast.

Steak and eggs was again found
to be a good deal, so we
succumbed. Although a slow cook,
it was still worth it. We passed
The Hole in the Rock on the way
to Canyonlands needle district.
Reebus would have jumped. Hal
would have jumped for some
dynamite and a midmorning
commando raid on the hole.
Another omen reading, "NO BATHING
AT PUMP", set us at the ranger
station, a mere trailer. Topos
were bought and water bottles
filled to 1 3/4 gallons total.
Immediately the red walls,
canyons, and spires motivated our
walk. The heat was enough excuse
for a shady rest. Bill read
about chief Rolling Thunder, the
rainmaker, and Hal read more
Dune Messiah. Druid Arch, a
red stone monolith with two
arches, rose above our camp on a
rock ledge. Dinner brought the
day's water usage to one gallon.
Without a tent, we watched the
stars, vulnerable to all the
noises and their makers.

Dancing Days Are Here Again
Sunday 8/20/78

As we hike through the hot,
stinking, desert and sandstone
canyons, the no water paranoia
set in. It looked like it could
rain, but it didn't. I decided
to give things a little help and
do the rain dance learned from
Rolling Thunder. We then hiked
up the canyon, got underneath an
overhang, and waited for the rain
to come. When it came, it wasn't
much to speak about. When the
raindrops hit our collection
pots, they evaporated immedi-
ately. After some more hiking
with overcast skies, we decided
to go back to the car. We drove
back to Moab and took a nude bath
in the chilly Colorado. A little
girl down the beach saw us and
lost her virginity. We picked
the *Golden Stake* restaurant in
Moab for dinner and then started
through an intense lightning
storm towards the Tetons.

Grand Expectations
Monday 8/21/78

Early morning brought us to
Jackson, Wyoming. We went to the
visitor's center to buy a guide-
book and register for the next
two nights and a climb of the
Grand Teton. The hike started
out easy on a beautiful, sunny
day. The view of the valley and

lakes was great, a welcome change
from the desert. The walk was to
be eight miles to the Lower
Saddle. The hike progressed into
a grunt drive which halted at the
moraine below the saddle. We
realized that we had under-
estimated the remaining distance
when we noticed three speck glis-
sading down the Lower Saddle
snowfield some half mile away.
Sufficiently impressed by the
distance and altitude yet to go,
we camped on a gravel platform.
An additive-made soup was dinner.
We passed into sleep thinking of
the next day's climb.

The Grand Blowaway
Tuesday 8/22/78

We woke up much earlier
than expected to a driving
rainstorm that uprooted the tent
pegs, violently played with the
Green Wart like an accordion, and
almost inverted us. As we waited
for calmer weather, two rangers
roused us for a look at our
permits. Although we were not
camped where we were supposed to
be, we got no real hassle but
were reminded that we were
supposed to be camping in the
Lower Saddle. When we asked the
rangers about the weather fore-
cast, they told us a front was
coming through that could bring
similar weather for the next
several days. Bummed out, we
trucked back down to the car,
leaving for Devil's Tower via
Dubois, Wyoming. We arrived at
the closed Devil's Tower Camp-
ground around 2:00 A.M. and had
to sleep outside of the park,
pulled off to the side of the
road.

Durrance and Other Head
Problems

Wednesday 8/23/78

After eating breakfast in
Hulet, we went to the Tower
Visitor Center for advice and
climber's registration. Since
Bill had last been there the
ratings in the Visitor Center
guide had been inflated. The
easiest route called the
Durrance Route was now 5.8
instead of 5.4 (Editors note:
The *Durrance Route* is now
officially rated 5.7 and deserves
this rating.). We headed towards
the base of the climb being
questioned by amazed parasites
(genus *tourae*, species *climber*
clingual), and got the second

spot in a line of three. After the fourth class scramble to the base of the climb, we caught some rays while we watched the first party do the first two pitches. When their second got off the first belay ledge, Bill started up the first pitch on lead. By this time, the third party had reached the base of the climb and were waiting. Plenty of fixed protection was encountered on the first pitch, as it would be on the rest of the climb. The entire route is a fairly straight-forward series of jam cracks. When Bill got to the first crux, he had all fours jammed and when he started to make the next move and got his hand stuck. So he had to squat down, remove the hand, and move it up. The second crux of the pitch was a face move out of a flaring chimney up to a mantle on the belay ledge. We were climbing the double-roped European Style, so the ropes were carefully stacked on the belay ledge where two fixed, leaded eyebolts were the belay anchor. Hal courageously led the second pitch called the *Cussin' Cracks*. This pitch entailed continuous and strenuous 5.6 - 5.7 climbing and involved jamming with the right leg in a large crack while the left leg was stuck out perpendicular to the body to stem against a smaller crack. Very sustained climbing! Another climber named Bill, who was a veteran British climber, had dined up *Sundance*, a 5.8, and was heckling his motley crew from a belay ledge above. Our Bill took back the lead up what turned out to be very enjoyable and protectable 5.4 - 5.5 rock, finishing up on the ledge with the British climber and his mess of ropes. This crazy British climber was belaying a leader and someone following on the pitch below with two Sticht plates. After some waiting, Hal led up and across the tricky "step across" while Bill S. helped the other Bill direct the belaying action. At the top of this pitch we met a young woman whose tee shirt advertised her as a member of *World Maniacs United* and talked with her and her two male partners who had aided the *East Face Direct* route which is rated A2. More fourth class scrambling brought us all to the summit where we had a close encounter

with the flying ants from outer space who were really the aliens from the movie. Sharing ropes with the other parties, we set up four 150' rappels without end, amen, amen, which brought us back down to earth where we were almost immediately deluged by the obnoxious *tournee climber clingy* and given an more intense interview than if we were on the *Wide World of Sports*. Questions of, "Did you climb that?" almost floated Hal's head right off of his shoulders. After we threw our gear into the M.A.B., we drove to the Devil's Tower Post Office for beer, stamps, a phone call, and conversation with other climbers. We went into *Sundance* for dinner and camped illegally in a Wyoming Public Fishing Area.

*Reunion Rock First
Thursday 8/24/78*

You know it's time to get up when a pickup truck passes your tent like it was standing still. We again had breakfast at the cafe in Hulett and were off to the Black Hills of South Dakota. By lunch we were in Hill City eating at the Donut Cafe where, "The truck tipped over on the way to town," was big on the minds of cafe regulars. Cruising is a popular pastime in these parts. A year's permit fee got us into Custer State Park and we proceeded on to Sylvan Lake which is backdropped by the Inner and Outer Outlet Rocks. The urge to wander through some rocks overcame us at the Needle's Eye. Right past the eye, the road narrowed to a tunnel just barely one foot wider than a tour bus, as was later demonstrated. There we found an ever-widening crack behind the eye, which separated it from another pinnacle. This was to become the site of a doubly humbling experience. Hal's many attempts at getting off the ground finally got him high enough to fall and pop the top off two shaky chock placements, landing him barely caught by Bill on the ground. Bill tried another approach and yanked a small pecker out on his way down. Apparently Bill wasn't impressed at all by the duality of humility and went for the same crack on the other side of the pinnacle. On this side it was a much wider body-to-spread-eagle crack. These wide, smooth cracks

presented the reason for the much bolder leading seen in this area. The first half of the climb was well protected and 3/4's of the way up, Bill got the crazy holds and finished with a thirty foot runout up the ticklish spread eagle chimney moves. The reward at the top of the pinnacle was a little-noticed vantage point of the tourist-filled parking area. The *tournee* who waited to watch us were impressed by our rappel escape. Down the road and around the corner, we stopped at the Cathedral Spires Overlook. Here we met Bob Archibald, a stocky, bearded, and happy local climbing bum who teaches climbing through Yellow Hair Outfitters in Custer. Bob was checking the front face of Reunion Rock for a first ascent. We offered a belay and he took off up the nearly unprotected face. After setting his first pro as a knifeblade under a thin flake, he pulled out his bolt kit for his second and final piece near the top of the 80' pinnacle. A tour bus group stopped and stared with the old ladies almost having a heart attack as they watched Bob's insane antics. Bill cleaned the climb, which turned out to be a very enjoyable 5.8 face climb with crystal nubbins for holds. Thus Hal and Bill ended their trip as conspirators on a first ascent in the Needles.

UCMC Alumni Club Proposed

With this special alumni blast from the past article, this issue will be sent all over the country to former UCMC members. With it will be a packet containing the proposed Certificate of Incorporation and By-laws of The Cincinnati Mountaineering Club to be a non-profit corporation. The proposed Certificate and By-laws are very similar to the present UCMC constitution in purpose and organization. More information will be announced as this effort proceeds.

GIDDY UP, HORSEY!

Karen Riggs

On the most beautiful weekend of the fall quarter, a group of 10 mountaineering club members took to the saddle and rode through the Big South Fork Park area in

Tennessee. The group arrived at what they hoped was the home of the horse guide in the wee hours of the morning. The van was greeted by several dogs barking, a sure warning to the occupants that someone was near. The group decided to send me to knock on the door in hopes of a warm welcome from Sam the horseman. The tension is always high when knocking on a stranger's door in the middle of the night in the middle of nowhere. Well, I knocked and I knocked, then finally the door opened. It was Sam, he wasn't upset, and he left his shotgun on the rack. I was relieved, to say the least. He buckled up his pants and came out to greet everyone. He told us to set up tents anywhere we wanted to and we did.

The next morning Sam was up bright and early, rounding up the horses and saddling them. We got up a little later. We proceeded to select our horses. I, of course, picked Sam's horse and couldn't have it so I reselected. I am glad that I was the one who had to deal with the horse I selected next instead of someone else, seeing that I was the group leader. The horse was a female from another stable and didn't like other horses near her. It was bucking time, with me on top for the entire trip. *Ride, Cowgirl!* I did surprisingly well after the first bucking episode. My horse also had another characteristic. It was bound and determined to get Sam and I together. During the entire trip, my horse would walk up next to Sam's horse and press close to its side. This of course meant that Sam and I would be close to each other with our legs smashed between the two horses.

The group set off down the trail on a beautiful day. The colors in the trees were at their peak. The trail started off down a deep incline to a gully. The horse proceeded down while you laid almost completely flat on your back to avoid tumbling forward. Sam and his teenage nephew came with us on the trail. It was an uneventful day as far as excitement. Just a lot of good views and good friends. Every now and then someone would encourage their horse to pick up pace. No sooner did they pick up pace so did the rest of the pack. I was not very pleased about the galloping, fearing that Sam would get upset since he asked us not to run the horses. Well the group seemed to maintain an even balance between walking and running and Sam didn't get upset. At one point during the second day people were getting a little more gutsy and had the horses flying down the road. It began to get scary since the beasts wouldn't slow down and their footing was not steady on some parts of the road. Finally we were able to slow the horses down only to start the horsing around once again.

Sam was the perfect host. We camped overnight down the gully from his farm. He had hauled in firewood for us to burn before we arrived. It was a perfect campsite next to a stream and a waterfall. We enjoyed the night and our campfire stew that seemed to take forever to cook. The next morning we were rustled out of bed by a stampede of 2 horsemen and 12 horses running into camp. Each selected their horse from the previous day and set out for another wonderful day on the trail.

A few of the other horses had some personalities of their own. Mike Daulton's horse had a thing for walking in the brush with Mike on him. The next day, Mike switched horses with Kari. Pete, our novice horseman, had a interesting experience on his first horse trip. While leisurely riding through the woods, we came upon a small, trickling stream crossing the path. Pete's horse somehow slipped on the rocks and began to fall. The horse caught his fall in the one direction but then began to fall in the other direction. Pete jumped in the air hoping to land somewhere besides under the horse. The horse missed Pete and Pete was relieved. It took a few seconds for the horse to get up. Everyone was fine and soon we were on our way again.

All of our horses joined in on a group participation activity. We took them into the stream for a drink of water. Everything went well till they decided to have a splash-the-rider party. They took their front legs and kicked up the water. Sam warned one of the riders that his horse looked like it was going to lay down for a bath with him on top. We finally got the horses under control but we were a little wetter than when we started.

We headed the horses back to the stables around dinner time only to lounge around the farm for a while, eating homemade cake and inspecting the sorghum syrup facilities. Everyone had a good time and bid goodbye both to their horses and Sam and headed for Cincinnati at the end of a perfect weekend.

Spelunk!

Scott B. Roat

The footsteps receded down the cave entrance. I followed. Though I couldn't see their owner, I knew she was less than twenty feet ahead of me. The echoing footsteps marked her progress in the dark. Fast and frantic upon remembered straight-aways, slow and cautious at the turns.

The girl was scared. Her innocent eyes widened further because of the heavy darkness. The cavern surged with her hurried footsteps; her breathing, a black, desperate cadence of its own. Her sharp blonde hair, though it had reflected the light at the mouth like a gliding beacon, shone no more. The girl was only fifteen years old and running down the cave passage for her life.

I knew the caves as well as she did, and we both knew the shaft would dead end where it lay submerged beneath the underground river, Rainbow Creek. I needed only to keep leisurely on her trail. I ran relaxed and sure, also fifteen years old, and suddenly in no real hurry.

She rushed into the dazed room that began Rainbow Creek. A slight gash from where water poured in from the surface lit the room. I slowed my pace when I heard the cadence surge only with the falling water-- no echoing footsteps.

When I stepped into the dimly-lit room, she screamed; a cold terrible scream that caused only a smile to curl my lip. I stepped forward and stood over her in a narrow shaft of sunlight. She was angry; her wild, innocent eyes screamed at me, "How could you have me do this?", but she remained quiet, passive.

She knew what I wanted. No words were said. She reached over her head and pulled off her sweater, her eyes still glaring with reflective fire. Next she unfastened her small bra, slid

off her pants and panties. She dropped them unceremoniously to the cave floor at my feet, unabashed, naked, waiting.

I picked up the clothes with one swoop of my hand and dashed out of the cave, dancing. I could hardly wait to try them on.

The Day Before Christmas 1985

*'Twas the day before Christmas
and in the Medicine Bow
the wind was a'raging
full of blowing snow.*

*Hal and Bill were decked
with their best winter gear.
They even had along
a pint of good cheer.*

*As they approached
Snowy Range Pass however,
They encountered a drastic
change in the weather.*

*Soon they got hit
with 50 m.p.h. gusts
which periodically knocked them
right to their butts.*

*With white out conditions
and a wind chill of 20 below
they could no longer see
where the trail did go.*

*Knowing that Mother Nature
had them beat,
From Snowy Range Pass
they made a hasty retreat.*

*Out of the wind
and into the trees,
They prepared the night's camp
with cheerful glee.*

*After a hearty meal
they went to bed
as dreams of future adventure
danced in their heads.*

Excerpt from the WMC Winter 1981 Saucky Mountains Trip diary:

It's always hard to write, even to say what you feel. I can only say, that after a year of being away from the Mountaineering Club, I'm damn glad I'm back. I mean where else and with whom else can you feel so good, ache so bad, talk so little and so much; want so much and actually receive. But what do we get?... dirty faces, sore feet, tired muscles, delirious giggles and friends and friends and friends. You ask me where to find it and I'll tell you-- here!
-Molly Reilly

Long ago on a night of danger and vigil a friend said, "Why are you happy?" He explained (We lay together on a hard cold floor.) what Prison meant because he had done time, and I talked of the death of friends. "Why are you happy then?" he asked, close to angry. I said, "I like my life. If I have to give it back, if they take it from me, let me only feel I wasted none of it, let me not feel I forgot to love anyone I meant to love, that I forgot to give what I held in my hands, that I forgot to do some little piece of work that wanted to come through."

"Sun and moonshine, starshine, the muted gray light off the waters of the bay at night, the white light of the fog stealing in, the first spears of the morning touching a face I love. We all lose everything. We lose ourselves. We are lost. Only what we manage to do lasts, what love sculpts from us; but what I count, my rubies, my children, are moments wide open when I know clearly who I am, who you are, what we do, a marigold, an oak leaf, a meteor, with all my senses hungry and filled at once like a pitcher with light."

Be happy; above anything,
be real.

Rock Climbing: A Beginner's Perspective

John Steuver

Although I've experienced many types of fun and exciting outdoor activities since joining the UCMC, my initial reason for joining was to get into climbing.

I'd been involved in hiking and camping from a very young age, but I'd never done any technical climbing. My chance came one day last fall when Steves K., L., & M., Larry, Gwen, and I headed up to Clifton Gorge. After making the traditional stop at the Young's Jersey Dairy, we arrived at the gorge and set up some top ropes on some easy routes. Steve K. hooked me into a belay and said, "Go to it, there are hand and foot holds everywhere." I looked at the cliff face before me and wondered what he was talking about. An experienced climber would be able to find lots of holds, but all I saw was a slab of rock. I made a few feeble attempts and then went over to another climb that Gwen had just completed. The first 10 feet were the most difficult, and after surviving my first fall I was able to get to the top by using trees and bushes for handholds.

My second and last climb that day was a face climb called Twin Ledges. It too had lots of holds, but it took me half an hour and all my strength just to get to the second ledge. I was 10 feet from the top, but I didn't have enough energy to go the rest of the way and had to rappel down. That was all the climbing for me that day. After Steve M. was finished impressing some girls with a difficult 5.9 route that he had "wired" earlier in the summer, we took off for Ha Ha's Pizza (another tradition) and home.

That trip had quenched my desire to climb for a little while, and I didn't go on the next two trips to Clifton Gorge.

A few weeks later, however, I felt like giving it another try, and a group of people were talking about going to Red River Gorge for two days of climbing. Some people in the club said that Red River Gorge isn't very good climbing because it is sandstone, but Hugh had climbed there often, and I knew from backpacking that it would be very scenic. The next Saturday Dan K., Desmond, Hugh, Mark D., Steve M., and I headed off to the Gorge. We met Hugh's friend Allen at the Tower Rock turn-off and headed up the trail leading to the cliffs. Hugh and Dan stopped at a crack climb. I was apprehensive, having never climbed a crack, so Steve, Desmond, and I headed for an easy climb called Caver's Route.

Steve lead the route and was soon out of sight somewhere up on the first belay ledge. After climbing the first 20 feet, I came to the base of the first chimney. My eyes followed the rope 30 feet up through the chimney, and at the end of the rope sat Steve, the club's resident Rock Stallion in his element. A chimney climb was something new, unexpected, and a little frightening. But my enthusiasm outweighed my fear and lack of experience, so, putting my faith in Steve's belay, up I went. The first few yards were quite difficult. I experimented with several techniques, I settled into a rhythm, and after a few minutes of cautious contortions, I found myself on the belay ledge. "Good job," said Steve. These few words of encouragement made the successful ascent of the chimney all that much more enjoyable. After securing

myself into the belay anchor, I had a chance to look both down to where I had come from and out across the gorge. That morning when we left Cincinnati it was cool and cloudy, but 130 or so miles south it was warm and the sky was bright blue with scattered white clouds. The view from the belay ledge was spectacular, with several large rock outcroppings visible across the gorge and the Red River winding its way through the valley below.

Next it was Desmond's turn to try the chimney. After Desmond reached the belay ledge, we began looking for the cave that the route was named for. After a few false starts we found ourselves crawling blind through a small passage that went through Tower Rock and came out the other side. On this side was another chimney that led to an arch in the tower. From there a short climb led to the top. On top, Steve, Desmond, and I started looking for the other climbers. It had taken us longer than expected to reach the top because of the "spelunking" and the fact that we had three climbers. We thought we would be the last up. We walked to the other end of Tower Rock and were surprised to see Hugh and Dan just climbing over the edge. After rappelling down we found Mark and Allen. Dan and I tried some bouldering while the others climbed the first pitch of a difficult crack climb called Arachnid.

Saturday night we camped by the Red River. There wasn't a cloud in the sky, and it was so clear we could see the Milky Way arching across the sky.

The next day we went to Princess Arch to do some top rope climbing. We had to rappel down to the base of the cliff, and I was elected to go first. When I reached the bottom, I realized that we were going to do a crack climb. Off in the distance, through the woods and across the Red River, I could see a road. My mind filled with thoughts of having to walk (swim?) to that road to be picked up if I couldn't make the climb. Before anyone else rappelled down I tried climbing the crack using the "layback" technique, but was unsuccessful. Steve, Dan, and Desmond came down, and Steve hooked into the belay and began climbing. I decided that if I didn't want to walk out I had better watch Steve very carefully and learn very fast. I watched his technique as he climbed the crack and imitated it as best as I could when it was my turn. The crack angled away from the wall and became more difficult

the higher it went, but I was actually climbing it! Upon reaching the top I was awarded with an oyster from Hugh. The other climbers all climbed the crack, and then we moved to another more difficult crack next to it. Dan tried first and fell, being caught by the belay rope, and I did the same thing. We asked Hugh to show us how to climb it. He demonstrated the right way to use a hand jam. After trying a very difficult face climb, we came up an easy climb called Beginner's Nightmare.

On the way back to Cincinnati that evening we stopped at Joe Bologna's Italian restaurant in Lexington, yet another UCMC tradition.

Since this second climbing trip, I've been waiting anxiously for warm weather to arrive so I can do some more climbing, and I have recently received a permit for climbing

on the Old Reservoir Wall in Eden Park.

Climbing is one of the most intense outdoor experiences. When you climb, you use every muscle in your body and every thought in your mind. You search for a route, carefully selecting hand and foot holds. Occasionally you go for a hold, hoping fervently that it is there and not knowing if it will hold your weight even if it does exist, but knowing that the rope is there in any case. It combines the beauty of nature, the physical workout of athletics, and the mental challenge of chess. The use of a rope and climbing hardware make the chance of injury small. The UCMC is offering an advanced climbing course this spring taught by Steve Must and Larry Bortner, and I highly encourage everyone to try it. You might just get hooked on it too.

STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN (Climber's version)

There's a climber who's sure
All his line is made of gold
And he's climbing a stairway to heaven.
When he gets there he knows,
If his placements all hold,
That here he can get what he came for.

There's a feeling I get
When I look to the cliff
And my spirit is crying for leading.
In my vision I have seen
Strings of rope through the trees
And heard signals voiced while belaying.

If there's a bustle an aid route won't go.
Don't be alarmed now.
There's a lean Bean who can flash it clean.
Yes, there are two routes you can go by.
But in the long run,
There's still time to change the hold you're on.

You're hands are numbing
And it can go, in case you don't know,
The leader is signalling you to join him.
Dear people, can you hear the wind blow?
And did you know
A climber's spirit soars on the howling wind?

"On belay", has been called,
But he wants to be sure
That his second has caught the meaning.
The anchors are strong,
Bombproofed into a bong
To hold you if off the face you come flinging.

I'll tell you that soon,
If you call this climber's tune,
That an urge to scale rocks will overcome your reason.
And a new day will dawn,
If you climb hard and long,
When you will be an expert leader.

And as we slide on down the rope,
Hoping our rappel anchors all hold,
There climbs a mountaineer we should all know,
Who teaches us to tie knots and wants to show
Why all his line is made of gold.
And if you're grunting very hard,
That 5.12 climb will come to you at last
When you're at one with the rock.
And this route is all,
To lose your foot but not to fall.

Bill Strachen

Shaft Cave

Mike Daulton

Shaft Cave is a cave just outside Bloomington, Indiana, with two small holes leading to a 84-foot pit as a entrance-- not a cave for wimps.

I had taught a group of friends how to rappel and ascend and thought Shaft Cave would be a good place to do the real thing. So the next Friday, we loaded up our gear and headed for the cave. We got there about 11:00 P.M., set up camp, and decided to take a little walk down to a different cave. After walking down this muddy trail about 15 minutes, we found the entrance and looked around for a while, then went back to camp, getting in bed after one in the morning. We got up late the next day-- it was noon before John started down. He was first both because he had rappelled before and because we needed somebody down at the bottom to belay the rest of us. Allen went next, followed by Ron, Barbara, Vicki, Elaine, then me. I was last so I could check the others' gear. As we shall see, someone should have checked my gear.

I hooked up and started down through the bigger hole, the rope going through the second one. As I got through the hole, I turned to face the wall and felt my pack hit the wall of the other hole behind me. Then I heard my spare 6-volt battery bouncing off the walls on its way down. I yelled out, "ROCK!", but no one heard me over the noise the battery was making. It hit a log leaning against the wall then zipped past Allen's head, landing on the other side of the pit. I didn't know if anyone had been hit, so I came on down the rope a lot faster than I normally would.

After I got to the bottom and found nobody hurt, only scared, we started on into the cave. Climbing up a passage 30 feet, we found an overlook back into the pit we had just been in. We then looked at the map of the cave to find out which of the two other passages lead to the break-

down room, our final destination. According to the map, we should take a left so we took a left. Wrong! We crawled about 30 yards before the passage narrowed too much to get through. So we turned around and took the other passage this time.

After another 30-yard crawl, we came to a 20-foot pit. We had to use a cable ladder to get down. Since no one wanted to be under me again, I had to go first. When I stepped off the ladder, I started to sink into a couple feet of mud. I quickly stepped back up onto a log someone had placed there. It was here that I started thinking, "This isn't a fun cave."

The next couple of hours was just a long crawl with a couple of doses to rest in. When I was ready to say, "The hell with this!", we found the breakdown room. By this time, we were tired, wet, muddy, and hungry. The first thing we did was to eat, then to look around. After a while we were ready to start the crawl back, something no one was looking forward to.

The trip back went well until I started untying the cable ladder. The webbing was too caked with mud to untie, so I had to cut it. We got back to the rope and started up one by one. It went pretty slow. Vicki had just gotten up, leaving me and Elaine, when we heard a pinging sound over us, coming closer. Then Vicki calls down, "Rock!" at the same time something landed next to us-- what we soon found was the casing for a Gibbs ascender. Two close misses on one trip is way too many for anybody.

We were all out and on our way to the nearest Pizza Hut in a hour. Once we were at Pizza Hut,

Elaine decided to wash the mud out of her hair, which took a while. After eating two large pizzas and several pitchers (the bill was over 40.00), we headed for home, ending a very rough cave trip no one wants to do again.

DRINKING WATER?

While grocery shopping this week, I stood in front of the bottled spring water pondering its cost. Could I afford to buy the pure water we all should be entitled to? Or should I take my chance on that stuff that comes out of my kitchen faucet? Hmm. 98 cents a gallon... hmm... now wait a minute... gas is currently 70 cents a gallon... probably falling in price as I write. I wrinkled my forehead. Water, the most abundant element on earth, can now cost more than gasoline. There's something wrong here. It's not the price of gas. Nor the price of water. I think it's the scarcity of this abundant element in its pure form that bothers me.

Amy Norman

It's not the freedom of independence, but of interdependence... We do not break away from everything and become alone. Rather, we go out and give ourselves to nature and are embraced by it. It is the feeling that this world is a part of us and that we need to be a part of it. When we go out and obtain this union, we feel a release and are refreshed.

Are liberated and independent the same?

Living On The Precipice

Allan Sutherland

The great Himalayan mountain chain, stretching from Afghanistan to China, was born millions of years ago when the Indian subcontinent collided into Asia. The lands

buckled, folded and cracked as slow pressure forced them together, creating one of the most rugged areas on Earth. The Himalayas are characterized by some of the world's highest peaks, enormous river gorges, and huge, grinding glaciers. It is a land of extremes.

Clinging to these steep, barren slopes and rocky cliffs are the supreme mountaineers, the wild goats called Markhor and Ibex. No other large animal (including climbers) is as surefooted, nimble, and capable of defying gravity as are these incredible beasts. Himalayan goats have been seen to descend a slope by stepping casually off a cliff and landing on a narrow ledge 20 feet below. A goat's climbing equipment consists solely of stocky, muscular legs, hooves with a slightly soft pad for traction, and an excellent sense of balance.

Markhors come in several different races which are distinguished by the shape of the male's corkcrown-spiralling horns. A tight spiral is found on the Turkomen, Kabul, and Sulaiman markhors, while a pair of widely flaring horns marks the Kashmir and Astor races. Each race is named after the area where it occurs. A male markhor has a sweeping beard that grows from chin to chest and nearly brushes the ground. The Siberian Ibex has huge curved horns that arc behind the animal's head. Ibex usually keep above timberline to reduce competition with the markhor of lower altitudes. Their only sources of food are grasses and shrubs, a very limited resource in the frozen, rocky meadows of the Himalaya.

The natural enemies of wild goats are few. Wolves in the high Asian ranges usually



Turkomen Markhor

hunt alone or in pairs. If a herd of goats is attacked they head for the nearest cliffs where the wolves have no chance. The snow leopard is a hidden danger, silent and the color of rocks and ice. They often stalk in broad daylight, going undetected until they rush into the herd. Snow leopards are great wanderers that only pass through an area several times a year. This, coupled with the fact that only 700-800 leopards survive in their vast mountain range, means that goats do not have much to fear from wild predators.

As is often the case however, the future of the wild goats is in jeopardy. Their kingly horns have made them favorite trophy targets and thousands have ended up enshrined in the dens of hunters. Also the growing number of people living in these areas of scant resource are crowding out the wild creatures.



Ibex males clash horns to establish rank.

(Continued on Third column, p.26)

Backpacking with Harmony

Jeff Streba

I sat quietly in an apartment in Westminster, Colorado (just outside Boulder), awaiting my first "real" backpacking excursion. I've been camping with my parents and Boy Scouts before, but this time I was going to take it a bit farther. There would be no one there to hold my hand. I was responsible for myself, my home was to be carried on my back. Everything I needed to survive was within arm's reach. I longed to get away from the hustle and bustle of city life. Not because I didn't enjoy it, but because I knew that there was more of life that I needed to experience. I looked forward to seeing majestic views that I only saw in pictures. Waterfalls, unique rock formations, and beautiful forests. I had drastically underestimated what I was in for.

We (my brother and I) proceeded to Boulder, Colorado to get a permit to hike in the Indian Peaks Wilderness area of the Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forest. From Boulder we headed west to Eldora, then about seven miles up a dirt road to the trail head. The whole time I was being informed on the rules of primitive camping.

Once at the trail head, with backpacks on, we started to walk the trail. We walked through dense forest but it soon thinned out to nothing; because of the high elevation along with the scarcity of the thin oxygen, tree and plant life can not survive. The first leg of our trip was up the side of the mountain. It was a steep uphill climb with many switch-backs. I was ahead of my brother, in fact, quite a bit farther, when he told me to stop and rest. He explained that moving at a fast rate would use a lot of energy, body heat, and with the wind blowing I could be a victim of hypothermia. But what he said after that made more sense to me. Simply stated, he said, "You're

out here to enjoy it. We don't have to be anywhere today. We don't have to be anywhere tomorrow." At that time I sat down and looked at the surrounding terrain. A feeling of pure independence and freedom began to creep through my body and mind. I began to realize that we were miles away from civilization and the odd thing was, it felt like home.

We hiked the trail to a place named "4th of July Mine." Here we found an old steam engine of some type that was probably used to extract minerals from the earth. That old piece of machinery stimulated thought about the people that lived up here and worked the land to survive. Those people were here years before we were. They had to build their own homes, hunt for their own food, and make their own clothes to live on the mountain side. The adrenaline in my body began to run rapid. I was feeling oneness with the miners of the area, oneness with nature.

We couldn't have been at a better spot in both displacement and feeling to break trail and go bushwacking for a campsite. While bushwacking, we crossed streams of crystal clear water, found dozens of lakes and ponds of equal crystal clearness, and even happened upon two deer (a buck and a doe) having lunch. After finding a campsite at the base of the Continental Divide, we ate supper. Then the clouds rolled in and the rain started. Oddly enough I wasn't disappointed to see the rain, for I realized it was part of the harmonic balance of nature.

As I laid my body down to sleep, I felt very rested and comfortable. I had experienced a oneness with life that I had never felt before. In the beginning, I thought this trip was going to be a scenic nature hike, but instead, it turned out

to be a experience of working with nature and not against it. My five senses were used to their fullest, for I wanted to capture all I could, never to be lost. My strive for independence and freedom finally saw light at the end of the tunnel.

Since this first "real" backpacking trip, I have gone on many backpacking trips with the U.C. Mountaineering Club. Each one has increased my love of life and respect for nature.

Wild goats must compete with large domesticated herds which eat their food and transmit diseases. The snow leopard is forced to prey on the plentiful livestock, which results in many being shot. Consequently, ever fewer leopards, sarkhor, and ibex exist, pushed into the poorest and most remote areas of a harsh land.

The Cincinnati Zoo exhibits all of these animals and attempts to perpetuate their races. But is an ibex on a concrete rock or a snow leopard in a cage the same animal that once roamed one of the most wildly beautiful regions on Earth? Perhaps we will someday see these animals for what they really are, not just as trophies and sheep-killers. They are magnificent, tough creatures, shaped by the mountains over millennia to eke a living out of an extreme and wonderful place.



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A Word About Water

Karen Riggs

In almost all outdoor activities, you expend energy and become thirsty, thus facilitating the need to have a drink of water, Mountain Dew, Kool Aid, iced tea or whatever satisfies your thirst hankering. In most cases you will have to provide your own drinking supply since there are no pop machines in the middle of the Gorge or where ever you happen to be.

There are several ways of getting the drinking supply you desire. You can calculate the amount of liquid you will consume (this includes cooking water when applicable) and carry this amount with you and ration it out accordingly. Or a survey of the available natural water supply at the outdoor area will tell you if you need to carry your water or you can obtain it from the land.

If you choose to obtain the water supply from the land you should be prepared to treat the water and purify it bacterially, and, if you choose, filter out

methods available to purify your water. The newest method is a pump/filter that you can not only filter out bacteria but also obtain crystal clear water from the muddiest water around. This method works well, but after a period of time the filter becomes clogged, making the pumping process difficult. One of the old standby methods is the iodine pill that you drop into your water supply. This method kills most bacteria but does nothing to clean the water of debris. The iodine pill does give your water a different taste. If you are real ambitious you can take coffee filters along to strain your water before you treat it with iodine to remove the debris. It is also a good idea to strain the water before you use the pump/filter; this helps keep the filter from clogging and becoming difficult to use. If you choose to not treat your water with filters or pills then I suggest you boil your water to kill bacteria. This method, however, is not guaranteed to kill off all

bacteria.

What you should not do is count on others for your water supply. Those that have planned for their water supply and rationed accordingly, did not plan on you using up their water supply. It puts people in an awkward position when you ask for their water that they have planned on using and, needless to say, have been carrying around. So be prepared for your own use and respect other people's water supply.

The best water to use is water from a spring or seepage off rocks. This is usually the cleanest water, but should be treated for bacteria. River and lake water tend to have more animal excretions, thus creating more bacteria, giving you the potential to get giardiasis and have the runs for 6 months. So let's be careful out there and treat the water.



Letter From the President

Dennis Dziech

The *Goose Down Gazette* serves the members of the Mountaineering Club with a running guide post of past events. More importantly though, the *Goose Down Gazette* informs not only the members, but the community of the activities and events of our outdoor club. We hope to generate interest in activities such as rock climbing, rafting, caving, canoeing, bicycling, mountaineering and backpacking through our enthusiastic stories of past trips and tense moments.

The club is open to anyone who wants to join. As an outdoors person you might say to yourself, "This is great, but I do all these activities by myself. What does the club have to offer me?" A similar question came to my mind when I played with the idea of joining the club. After my first meeting I realized that even though I enjoyed being in the outdoors by myself there are many other people in the club that do also, and are more than willing to share experiences or go on trips where you need another person.

The club has a vast storage of gear for our dues-paying

members to use on trips. What is really good about the club's equipment is that the club owns enough gear to provide the gear needed for fair-sized group outings. It has enough gear to outfit 15 climbing harnesses for 15 people plus enough backpacking gear for at least 10 people. This means that as a dues-paying member you can enjoy outdoor activities that you only dreamed about before, due to the high cost of equipment.

On the other side of the coin though, there may be the inexperienced person who is interested in all kinds of activities but does not know how to go about learning the skills to perform the adventures that he dreams of. For these people, we have courses in different areas such as rock climbing, caving, backpacking, survival skills, and orienteering. These courses are open to members and non-members and usually a different course is held each school quarter. These courses fill up fast and generally are very inexpensive for the instruction that the student receives. In the Spring quarter a course on Rock Climbing will be offered. Even though I am the president of the club, I

will be taking the course. One of the larger misconceptions of the club is that people believe that the members are all experienced to an advanced level and that the average outdoors person will not fit in. Members of the club are interested in learning about new areas and there is usually someone else in the club who is able to teach the skills in these areas. So in the end, everyone learns from the experience of others; this is what makes the club strong.

As a new president of the club I would like to thank all those who worked hard to put the *Goose Down Gazette* together. I am excited about the upcoming events of the club and hope to gain the enthusiastic support of the members that has been such a part of all the club activities that I have been of. Also, I would like to thank the other officers who do a large part of the work holding the club together. Finally, I would like to thank the advertisers on the behalf of the club, because without them the club would not be able to distribute the *Goose Down Gazette*. I am looking forward to the upcoming year and hope to see members and newcomers at future meetings.

Mountain Men:

Initiation

Larry Bortner

Here he was, lost in one of the most remote, wildest portions of the continental United States in the most severe, windiest thunderstorm he had ever experienced. His girlfriend of two years had just dumped him, he had a touch of acute mountain sickness, and his tent was on the verge of collapsing.

He hadn't had so much fun since his tonsillectomy.

The tent shuddered violently in a gust of wind and ripped at the low end. He decided it was time to get his pack and bag together and see if he could find some shelter. He regretted losing the tent that

had served him so well over the years. But at times like this you worry about your skin and not your wallet. The lightning was strobo-scopic, illuminating the torrent of water gushing in through the ever-widening gash.

Jack Elliot, Mountain Man.

Right. It was a stupid nickname. What did people in Cincinnati know about the mountains? Jack would admit to being a hardcore. He enjoyed 36-hour cave-mapping trips and 26-mile kayak trips down the Gauley and winter solo ascents of Mt. Washington. Maybe he did tend to swagger and boast a bit when relating such experiences. To most people back home, he supposed he was a mountain man.

But he knew better.

There was an tremendous flash

and an immediate roar of thunder. His hair stood on end from the ground currents. *Shit! Time to move!* He jumped out through the hole in the tent, dragging his sleeping bag and his pack with him. Stumbling over rocks in the half-darkness with his boots half on, he headed for the nearest overhanging rock. He reached it just as the lightning struck.

He got the shock of his life. Everything lit up just like it was supposed to when you died. He knew he was dead when he saw the Devil himself there at the end of the tunnel. Jack and the Devil screamed at the same time. Then came blessed darkness.

To be continued....