

# THE GOOSE DOWN GAZETTE

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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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Allan Sutherland took this shot somewhere in Costa Rica.

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# Indisputably Wild

Amy Norman

---

I feel so darned good today. The sun is shining so brightly here in Juneau-- that morning feel is in the air. Clouds of my breath vaporize as I breathe into the

cool day. I have sat down here to write about my encounter with a grizzly bear in Kluane National Park, Yukon, Canada, four days ago in August, 1986.

Mark and I wanted to take an easy/moderate 3-day backpacking trip. After some talk with the wardens (rangers), we came up with this trip up the east side of the Slime River towards the Kaskawulch Glacier. We drove the 4 mile dirt road to the trail head and took off hiking.

Our first grizzly appeared soon after we crossed Vulcan Creek. I think he must have been fairly close, as when we saw him he was running away from us, but parallel to our line of travel, about 75 yards away, looking at us as he ran. I think he was spooked pretty good. Spooked me too, but I reasoned this is the true wilderness... nothing came about this area. We circled around, far into an open area so he knew where we were and stayed away and vice versa. It usually works that way. There were 3 other guys in the area that day. They caught up to us here and we told them where we last saw the bear.

We made camp near a high bluff about 6 miles from our start. It was sandy and open with a grove of small cottonwoods nearby where we hung our packs in a tree for the night. The Slime River braids amongst mud and quicksand in a wide valley lined with steep sided, loose rock mountains rising from its banks. Ahead, up river, a view of Maxwell Mt. and the tongue of the Kaskawulch Glacier. There, the glacier meets the river and gives it life. Light was with us till 11 p.m., although the sun disappeared behind the mountains much earlier. My concern about

bears in this kind of country is constant. Although by now in my experience, I'd begun to reason that this was the bears' country and we simply had to follow the rules and take precautions to avoid problems. I slept like a log that night, unafraid.

In the morning the sun finally came into our steep valley and we headed up river for our day hike to the glacier. Six or seven miles later-- at the mouth of the glacier the river is born, flowing over falls formed by a block of ice. We were among the moraines now, probably formed when the glacier last advanced, leaving behind piles of rock and pools of turquoise blue waters. Mark and I headed back down river towards camp about 4:00. As we passed the camp set up by the 3 guys we met the first day, we noticed they weren't yet back from their day hike. Their plan, they had told us, was to hike up Vulcan Mountain a ways to get a good view up the Kaskawulch Glacier, which leads to the Wrangel-St. Elias ice field. Up there-- poking through the ice-- lies Mt. Logan, the second highest peak in North America.

We rounded a bend and were in a very wide open space. To our right up the side of the mountain was one of the numerous alluvial fans that over the ages has brought down dirt and rock from the mountain tops, possibly the result of some catastrophic flooding.

Well, I'm kind of avoiding the point. There are occasional patches of brush in this alluvial fan area and from out of nowhere behind one of them, came a grizzly running towards us-- about 100 yards from where we stood. I must add at this point, that we were following all the

rules that one must respect when traveling in bear country. We had noisemakers hanging from our packs, clanging wildly in the wind. We had the wind at our back, blowing our scent in the direction of travel, and we were in a wide open area, fully open to sight. These things are done to alert the bear that you are in the area, to give him plenty of warning so as not to surprise him. Normally, or maybe even 99% of the time, the bear will leave to avoid human encounter. Most times you would probably never even know a bear had been nearby.

Well, he was running straight at us, a canter or lope I would call it. Thank God it wasn't a full speed gallop. Mark and I stopped in our tracks, continuing to clang our noisemakers. Sometimes a bear will make a false charge. Mark was saying, "It's going to be a false charge-- We'll move slowly towards the river and go around him." The bear slowed a little, then kept coming, resumed his speed with his eyes on us-- straight towards us. He had our scent, he heard our noise-- he knew people meant food-- a "bad bear" they call it. "Set everything on the ground," Mark said. He continued to talk towards the bear in a stern, calm voice. Many times this will make a bear turn.

He was still coming. My camera was around my neck, over my pack-- tangled as I was trying to remove them. My hat fell, Mark's hat fell and finally (quickly, really), we had everything we were carrying on the ground. We backed off slowly (but quickly!). One mustn't simply run because this brings out a "chase" instinct in a bear-- prey runs, predator chases. When the bear reached our packs we were 15 to 20 feet

back. He sniffed one hat, then the next, then began effortlessly ripping into Mark's black pack with his jaws. He was busy, so we ran, back in the direction we came from. My muscles are tense and my heart beats fast as I write this. We ran in our clunky boots in the sand, Mark ahead, but allowing me to keep up with him. He looked back every little bit and assured me the bear was still consumed with our packs. Ahead we saw a small grove of cottonwoods. Praise God! We ran probably 1/2 mile. We had been in wide open space.

Quickly we surveyed the trees for a tall, climbable one. Mark boosted me and followed up close behind. Most of the low branches were dead and snapped off with weight. It was a delicate task but soon I was 20 feet up the tree and Mark below me 10-15 feet up-- he really wasn't high enough. I had the view. In the direction of the grizzly, I couldn't see where our packs lay. It was behind brush or over a small rise in the land. I scanned in many areas to see where he would be next.

Below us and away from the small grove by 20 yards was the camp of the three guys with whom we had become acquainted. In this grove we towered in, their food was tied high in a tree, about 10-20 yards away. Out of nowhere the bear appeared again. I didn't see him coming. He must have followed our tracks, our scent. The bear smelled their food, went up on his hind legs and jumped for it vigorously. Oh, man! A couple high jumps. He couldn't reach it. Back down on all fours. Towards our tree he came. Mark yelled loudly, "Get out of here!" The bear turned away and became distracted by the sight of the two tents. Thank God again.

At the appearance of the bear we each had scrambled about 10 feet higher in the tree. I was 30 feet up, Mark at 25 feet. I couldn't have gone more than about 3 or 4 more feet. I'd run out of tree. We were both shivering. The wind was blowing about 30 miles an hour over the open river plain, picking up a chill from the ice field and

glaciers. We both had on polypropylene tops and light cotton pants. Our warm pile jackets were in our packs we'd left by the bear. I thought we might be spending the night in the tree. It wasn't comfortable! And hypothermia did cross my mind.

The bear was at the tents. He took a couple sniffs at the smaller tent, then-up on his hind legs, he proceeded to pounce on it, chewing on everything inside.

He drug a few things around, then went on to the next tent. He sniffed, pounced and tore apart everything. It was a dome tent that bounced back up a couple times before the poles snapped. We were at a safe height in the tree. Although we were scared, cold and shivering, and I was a little concerned that the strong wind would push the flimsy thing over with our weight in it, I was so glad that Mark and I were in the same tree. We could talk, plan, look, touch. I'm sure this helped calm us both. I know it helped me.

Well, we weren't alone in this. A mile up the river shore we could see from our perch the movement of 3 people, our friends whose camp was just destroyed. The bear had gone to feeding on the berry bushes now and digging up roots, ambling slowly up river but still within sight, towards the three unsuspecting men.

We had remained as quiet as possible in the hopes the grizzly would forget about us. Even against the strong wind the bear could hear our whispers and would raise up to look at us on his hind legs when we spoke. Their senses are amazing.

As the three rounded a bend, 1/2 mile from their camp, we could no longer see them or the bear because of the brush. There were no trees to witness some unpleasant things.

To alert them, Mark yelled in his strongest voice into the wind, "Bear, BEAR, BEAR!!" They came running, not knowing what was said or what the danger was. One, two, three, they appeared-- no bear in pursuit-- as far as we knew. We had decided our best plan now was to get the heck out of there and back to the truck. This bear had no good intentions and could not be predicted. Kind of like a person, a killer maybe, gone crazy. By now we had been in the tree for an hour.

We told the series of events-- in short form-- to the three guys-- a Canadian, an Australian, and a German-- and advised them to get out, too. It was 8:00 P.M.

Scared for our lives, we ran towards our camp, still 2 miles down river. We retrieved our chewed packs (minus the food) and clanged our noisemakers back to our camp which was untouched by the bear. Quickly we tore down the tent and moved on down the trail. It was probably 9 o'clock by now, two hours of daylight left to make a trip that took us 5 hours when we packed in. A trail was sometimes there, sometimes not; there were many side trails. The route simply follows the Sliss River, so we knew we could do it in falling darkness. Through mud, swamps, thick trees, and a couple of steep bluffs, we made our way, clanging our noisemakers and yelling into the empty evening. Through my fear, I did happen to notice it was a beautiful evening.

We had decided and hoped that the grizzly continued in the opposite direction of our travel, that the 3 other people were not far behind us, and that the bear we had seen at Vulcan Creek was nowhere around or not interested in us. Vulcan Creek is an open area-- another alluvial fan I believe-- just rocks everywhere. As we neared Vulcan Creek it was probably 11:30; dark. We waded across the snow-fed creek. Our feet were already wet and muddy to the shins, from accidental, darkened steps in deep mud holes. The cold water felt good. We  
(continued on page 7)

# Echoes of the Tall Walls

Bob Nessler

---

In the morning the sky was cloudy; that was not good. The weather prediction was for widely scattered thundershowers, and the consequences of a storm had both

Cindy and me worried. Hiking in canyon country is not a place to be when it rains. Because of the scarce vegetation, exposed rock, and thin topsoil, a hard rain even miles away could mutate into a deadly flash flood. A section of narrow canyon under bright blue skies could become a roar of muddy water from a storm completely out of sight.

But at least in that situation you are spared the anxiety of worrying about such an event; after all, what sense does it make to fret over an occurrence that cannot be perceived. However, when storm clouds churn above your head, your mind starts to envision all sorts of catastrophes.

So, as we hoisted our packs onto our backs and began our hike in Paria Canyon Primitive Area, Cindy and I nervously watched the sky, glanced repeatedly over our shoulders, and pointed out the accessible high ledges along the canyon walls. We were committed now. And besides, it hadn't rained in over a week.

Paria Canyon is located on the border of Utah and Arizona, near the western shore of Lake Powell and the Glenn Canyon Dam. This four-day hike was to be the highlight of our two-week vacation of the deserts of Southwest Utah. The hike is a trail-less trek along 35 miles of the Paria river as it drops from the plains through sheer canyons, emptying into the Colorado River. The standard foot wear is either tennis shoes or cheap hiking boots, since the majority of the time is spent walking through the shallow water. The trip features spectacular sheer rock walls, amazing multicolored landscapes, unexpected patches of quicksand, as well as the ominous threat of flash floods.

Since the hike does not allow for a loop, we had arranged with a local to drop us off at the upper end of the canyon. That way, when we emerged at the bottom, 35 miles later, our car would be waiting for us.

So, with imaginary floods roaring in our heads, we set off. The canyon started off wide, at least a few hundred feet from side to side. The walls that contain the river were gently rolling mounds of wind-sculpted rock, white and red in color. The riverbed, though wide, only contained a trickle of water. It was easy to keep our feet dry, stepping on rocks as we crossed the constantly meandering stream.

I felt a few drops of rain. Hm-m-m. Here there was no real worry of flooding. Later, when we entered a section of the canyon called *The Narrows*, flash floods could fill the riverbed with 10 to 20 feet of water. Luckily, we noticed that the skies up river seemed to be clearing. Less and less it seemed that we would die this day, and we began to enjoy the growing depth of the canyon.

We were the only ones entering the canyon this day, and quiet was disturbed only by the occasional passage of a jet far above us. Irritating as the presence of the airliner was, I can't help but muse about the various forms of locomotion available to me, and my desire to forsake them all and walk.

At about four miles in, we entered *The Narrows*. The walls were now over two-hundred feet high on both sides. At times we could almost stretch our arms out and touch the sides. The rocks wave, giant vertical meanders. Though the sky was clearing, we could now only see a thin sliver

of it, and our flood worries returned. In an emergency we figured there are cracks in the rock that could be climbed to a safe ledge, but I wondered if there would be enough time to do it.

Six miles brought us to *Rock Slide Arch*. Here, a slab of rock the size of a large house had fallen into the stream, creating an arch through which the river now flowed. We stopped to take pictures, walked around and under the arch; the scale was nearly incomprehensible. A half-mile later we reached the confluence of the Paria with another canyon called *The Dive of the Buckskin*. Here the stream was full of quicksand.

Quicksand, contrary to Hollywood, is more irritating than dangerous. It ranges from ankle to knee deep, tending toward the former. Unless it has recently rained, one can usually walk over it with only a slight quaking of the earth to signal its presence. If rain has just flooded the area, then the quicksand becomes fast, often sending you plunging the second you step into it.

Luckily for us, the quicksand was slow and we could play with it, tapping our feet on an area of seemingly firm earth that slowly developed ripples, then collected moisture from below the surface, and finally tried to absorb the foot causing the disturbance. We became experts at sensing the density of the quicksand below our feet and reacting accordingly.

Finally we reached the first official safe camping area at 5.8 miles in. The canyon widened but the walls still rose hundreds of feet above us. Giant sandbars provided high campsites

and we found a rock overhang to camp for the night. The sky had cleared by now, and we relaxed under the brilliant blue skies.

The next morning was still clear and we were excited to continue. The next nine miles were indeed a case of sensory overload. Around every bend the canyon seemed even more spectacular than before. Just when you were getting tired of the blank, sheer walls, a incredible side canyon would appear. When you were just staring to ignore the color of the rock because of the predominance of one color, suddenly a new color would greet you around the next bend. The next meander brought walls pocketed with bus-sized holes, another revealed multi-colored mudflats dried and crazed by the sun. Deep water here, and little waterfalls there. A lush spring with cottonwood trees at this bend contrasted with the large sandbar around the next. We took lots of pictures but knew they could never capture the variety unfolding before us.

By the end of the second day, we were about 16 miles in, almost halfway. It was about this time that something strange began to happen. Earlier in the afternoon we were passed by two young men with Germanic accents. Incredibly, they were day-hiking the canyon. They had only some water with them, no provisions should they not complete their 35 mile "jaunt." We talked to them briefly, then they hurried off. We joked about the enthusiasm of youth. Then, about two hours later, a family of four strode past us. Again, they were of similar European origin, and planning to hike the Paria in a day. This time, though, they were not crazy college students, but a middle-aged couple and their teenage son and daughter. We tried to talk to them but they were in too big of a hurry. We could hardly blame them since the day was beginning to wane and they had a long way to go.

Dumbfounded, we soon were passed by eight more folks, in groups of two and three. We got some to stop and talked and

learned that they were a group of fourteen on a tour of Southwest USA. They were all to do this day hike before continuing on to Las Vegas. None were prepared to camp overnight, but clearly half would not make it out before dark. Sadly, I shook my head as the last four passed us at about 5:30; at their present speed, not accounting for the added difficulties of a night hike, they would still be hiking at midnight. Later, when we were out we asked a ranger if he had heard of those "crazy Germans," but he had not. We were sure they would have some tales to tell back home, as well as some inept trip planner to crucify.

The third day continued our string of good weather. At 16 miles in, we took a side trip to Wreather Arch. The map located the arch one-half mile up a side canyon. By the time we bushwacked through the heavy undergrowth in that side canyon, we swore it was more like a mile and a half. Still, the arch was impressive, one of the largest I had ever seen, perched high up the wall of the canyon.

Back in the Paria, we traveled another mile and entered another area of significant change. The stream gradient increased rapidly, cutting deeply into the floor of the canyon. The air was full of sound as the little waterfalls were amplified by the echoes of the tall walls all about.

As we camped for the third night, we talked about what to do the next day. With 11 miles to go, we had heard that the canyon opens up to desert prairie. There would no longer be tall canyon walls to shade us from the heat of the sun. We could either take two days or one long day. The advantage of the one day version was to get the open desert hiking over with all at once, instead of getting up to do it again on the second day. We decided to give the one day push a try.

The last eleven miles turned out to be impressive in its own way. Though nothing like the splendor of the narrow canyon we had just left, this part of

the Paria had its own unique beauty. On one side of us were crumbly rock cliffs, and on the other was rolling, sandy hills. At one point we passed an old ranch; all that remained was a dilapidated corral, the dark wood contrasted against the brilliant white sand.

Now the long, wide meanders were bisected by trails cutting across open desert flatland, and we could see cliffs ahead of us that marked the beginning of the Grand Canyon and the Colorado River—our destination. Light clouds flew overhead, reducing the intensity of the sun, and we knew we would make it out that day. Visions of Italian food danced in our heads, and we talked about day hikes in the Rockies on our drive home.

The day turned to dusk as we hiked the last mile and we were treated to a spectacular sunset. It seemed a fitting farewell to a most unique area. The Paria Canyon Primitive Area was an unforgettable experience for both Cindy and myself. It offers some of the best desert canyon hiking in the southwest. It won't be the only time we will visit it.

Information on hiking the Paria can be obtained by writing:

Bureau of Land Management  
318 North First East  
Box 459  
Kanab, Utah 87471

There is a 75-cent fee charged for a copy of the trail map.

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# Smokie Says...

Jeff Streba

---

Everyone likes to sit around a campfire roasting marshmallows and telling ghost stories. Campfires stimulate hope on a cold winter's night and warm the

backpackers' chilled bones after the morning frost. If not properly built, a campfire could be harmful in part or in full to the environment.

It is your responsibility as a camper to determine if a fire should be built. If it's the dry season in the area you're camping at, then the danger of wildfire is great, and a fire should not be built. Campfires should be avoided in the high Rockies because the soil is very thin and there is not a lot of wood to be found. It takes 500 years to make one inch of top soil. Some state and national forests have areas that prohibit fire building for the reasons mentioned above.

Safety should always be on the top of the fire building list. Don't build your fire under low branches or near your tent (nylon melts quickly). I've heard of a situation where some campers built a fire over a tree root and the root burned underground like a fuse for days before igniting the trunk of the tree. Rocks taken from lakes and riverbeds have been known to explode when the moisture inside them is heated. When building a fire, dig down to the mineral soil, gravel, or sand. Don't build on the dark, spongy woods floor which looks like dirt; it could smolder for days before starting a full-fledged forest fire.

Your main goal when constructing a fire should be that when it is time to leave you can easily erase any evidence of there being a fire. The old technique of making a ring of rocks to contain a fire is not very environmentally sound. When people use rocks for fire rings, the rocks get charred, which will

last for decades, and the algae and fungus that grows on them are killed. Instead, use a trowel to dig a fire pit several inches into the soil. If you're building a fire in the grass, cut out the sod and place it far away from the fire. Be sure to keep it moist and replace it when the fire is extinguished. When camping in the winter, don't make a fire on deep snow because it will sink. Pile green sticks or logs from a recently fallen tree as a base for your fire.

Now that you have your fire pit dug, the next step is to gather wood. Try to collect wood from a large area in the forest so you don't denude one section. You'll need tinder, kindling and fuel for your fire. Tinder should be light and dry and is used to take the flame from the match to the kindling. Tinder comes in many forms such as sap balls from evergreens, Birch-bark, dry grass, twigs, pine-cones, a candle stub, fire starter paste (commercially bought), or even dried cow chips.

Kindling is a bit larger in size, about 1/4 inch to two inches in diameter. It's a good to use soft wood for kindling, that is, wood from needle-bearing trees. Soft wood burns quickly, sparks, and smokes a lot. Such wood can be found on the ground, taken from fallen trees or broken off the lower trunks of evergreens. A good rule of thumb is that if you can't snatch, snap, or stomp it, don't take it.

Fuel is the third size wood you'll need. Fuel is greater than two inches in diameter. Hardwood works great, burning slowly and leaving a good bed of coals.

When building a fire, start with a small mat of leaves or sticks on the ground so that when you light the fire, the ground

doesn't take the heat from the initial flame. Next place a loose pile of tinder on top of the mat of leaves. Gradually increase the size of the twigs and sticks (a teepee structure works well), making sure to leave air space and also that when lit, it won't collapse and smother the fire.

Light the fire from the windward side, blowing if needed. Be patient and slowly add small twigs as the flame grows, making sure air can circulate. Once the thumb sized pieces are burning, you've got yourself a fire.

Burning leftover food and garbage is a good idea because it doesn't attract wildlife to the campsite. Dispose of liquid by pouring it around the perimeter of the fire to help contain the fire.

Never leave a fire unattended and keep a container of water and a small shovel near by. When it's time to put your fire out, drown it completely with water or dirt while raking it with a green stick. Hold your hand over the doused fire to feel for heat. Also feel the ground around it for hot spots.

I gain a warm satisfaction from building an efficient campfire with no possibility of endangering the woods. And I have a sense that I'm practicing a skill that both puts me in touch with those who roamed the woods before me, and also could save my life someday.

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*(continued from page 3)*

were hot and sweaty-- didn't want to get caught without our coats again. All around us in the open area in the darkness appeared bear-like bushes or rocks or rock piles. We yelled louder as the wind blew, now into our faces. We were only 15-20 minutes from the car now, but still in bear country. The trail is difficult to follow in the open area past Vulcan Creek unless you can see the cairns. We entered the trees without our trail and followed several confusing side trails.

We wandered about an hour in here-- so damned close! We almost stopped to sleep instead of wandering like senseless beings in the night. Thank God we pushed on for 10 more minutes. We found the dirt road we had driven in on. Shortly we reached the truck. I have never been so thrilled.

Still worried and wondered about the other three. We left a note on their car and drove to notify the warden. There was a road block set up on our dirt road. "Area Closed-- Bear Active." Active-- no shit. Someone else must have had trouble. There were 2 others, we were told by the sleepy warden-- it was now 1 A.M. Chased by the bear, chewed their packs to bits and followed the woman up a tree. Most grizzlies aren't supposed to be able to climb trees, only black bears. We weren't as safe as we thought we were in that tree. That bear came within 12 inches of her boot, sniffed and retreated. Those people said they'd never backpack again.

We went up to the campground at 2 A.M.-- finally got some sleep. "Alive, we're alive," I thought. "by the grace of God, we're alive." I can't describe how I felt. We slept in the truck. No desire to sleep outside.

We woke up early. I could hear the helicopter in the distance. We went to the warden station to fill out the bear report. The helicopter picked up the 3 other guys as they hiked out. They packed up what was left of their camp and tried to catch up with us that night. As darkness fell, they felt it would be best to wait out the night where they were. They built a fire and pretty much stayed up all night. I was so glad to see them in the morning even though I didn't know their names.

Apparently the incident with the other couple and the bear happened at 2 P.M. At 7 P.M., they reached the warden. At 7 P.M. we were in the tree with the bear below. The plan was to fly the helicopter in that evening and evacuate the 5 other people in the area (us). The helicopter pilot was on vacation. Another one couldn't arrive till morning. What a sight that would have been to us from the tree-- a helicopter landing on shore to fly us away.

Well, I was scared out of my wits, but I am proud that Mark and I remained calm (in calm's panicky way) and got ourselves out of this situation on our own power, as we had gotten ourselves into it. In the true wilderness where the food chain lives on-- and we are part of it-- only

the strong and the lucky survive. Thank God for our endurance, about 18 miles worth that day, and our will that pushed us on-- no dinner and no water. Our water bottles had been chewed by the bear, not much good for holding water. Our feet were blistered and bleeding in heavy boots.

The next night, after a full day of "bear talk", we got "back up on the horse" as they say-- slept in the tent and went for a short hike. It will still take me a little bit of time to feel comfortable in the wild. But I won't give up, I'm too dumb to do that!

I don't know if they found the bear yet. The wardens in the helicopter had the intent to find it and shoot him. Positive identification should be easy because of the black scar on his left rear flank that I noticed from our perch in the tree. A bear that has lost its fear of humans is a dangerous thing in backpacking country. Sometimes they tranquilize and remove them to another area. Sometimes they shoot them. I don't know if that's right, but I'm glad to be alive.

I knew that bear was hungry. He was after food. I guess he was smart enough to know people carried food and are fairly defenseless to a bear (without a gun). We're probably killing all the smart bears-- the brave ones. Maybe he was also defending his territory. Maybe he was tired of people trampling all over his land... making noise... scaring him away in his own territory. Maybe he was just tired of it all. I don't know. I respect him. I feel a little bit like a trespasser.

*Author's Note:* This is a very rare incident... very unusual behavior for a bear. Don't be afraid in bear country because of this! Just follow the recommended precautions. Most people can spend a lifetime in the wilderness and never encounter any problems or threats. Hopefully this will be my first and last.

# I Must Be Crazy

Mitchell B. Diccianni

---

"Go! "

I couldn't hear him say it, but I could see his mouth form the word. "What is he, crazy?" I thought to myself.

Then logic hit me; he's probably not talking to me!

"Go! "

Again I could see his mouth the word. Still I thought that he must be talking to someone else. But then again, I was the only one out there and he's supposed to be talking to me. I decided that before I end up doing something stupid, I better make sure of what he's saying and that he really is talking to me. I eased back to the door and asked him, "What did you say?"

"Go! " He shouted.

This time I heard him and knew he was talking to me. He wanted me to go back out to the edge and go! I eased back out and looked back at him again. Looking very agitated, he again yelled, "Go! " I decided to listen to him this time, so I looked straight ahead, then lifted my head up, said to myself, "You're crazy," released my hands from the wing strut of an airplane that was 3500 feet above ground, and began my first skydive ever.

At about 9 A.M. that fateful day in May, we began our drive up to the Waynesville Airport. Common thoughts going through my mind while I drove up there were, "Am I really going to jump out of an airplane?" And, "I must be crazy." (a very common thought). We arrived up in Waynesville, filled out the release form (effectively signing our lives away), and began an eight-hour training session. Five hours of it were videotape (on what it's like to skydive and how to do it properly) and about three hours of field training (i.e., jumping off a ladder to simulate landing and hanging from the ceiling in a parachute rig to practice procedures in case of malfunctions). At about seven P.M. that night, we were ready to jump.

The small, two-seater plane we were to jump from had the second seat removed so you could easily cram four people (three students and the jumpmaster) and the pilot into it. Our jumpmaster, Andy, decided I would be the first one to jump from our plane and asked if that was okay with me. "Fine," I replied, hoping he didn't notice my legs shaking and still thinking, "I must be crazy." We loaded the plane and before too long, we had reached our jumping altitude of 3500 feet. To get our position over the airport correct, Andy opened the airplane door. No



training could have prepared me for the rush of air that occurred when Andy opened the door. I checked my static line (the line that would automatically start deployment of my parachute) and grabbed the leg of the pilot's seat for dear life, all this while Andy hung halfway out of the airplane, giving directions to the pilot.

When our position was right, Andy leaned over to me and asked, "Are you ready to skydive?"

"Yes," I gulped while still thinking, "I must be crazy," and checking my static line for the umpteenth time.

"Get your feet out of the airplane."

I grabbed both sides of the door and swung my legs out. Then I moved my left hand out to grab the airplane wing strut (which was difficult against the force of the wind). The sweat on my left hand immediately dried in the wind. Andy

then said, "Get all the way out". This was it. I eased out to where the strut meets the wing, dangled my feet 3500 feet above ground, and wondered why my body wasn't parallel to the plane (we found out later that the plane was only doing 85 MPH, which was much slower than the plane in the videotape where people hung parallel). I turned to Andy and waited for his jump signal... "Go."

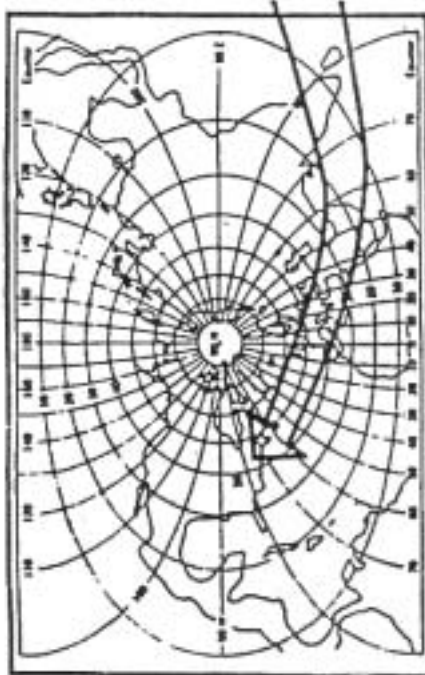
Five seconds after I finally let go, all of my fears were relieved, the parachute opened fine, and I began floating to earth. The feeling was exhilarating and the view fantastic. You could see all of Caesar's Creek Lake and it looked great. Then I started looking for the airport, it was tough to find since everything looked like a farm from up there. The golf course, the forest, the airport and the farms all looked the same. I eventually did find the airport, and headed for it. Unfortunately, I didn't quite make it back to the airport. Where I landed was in a corn field just past the end of the runway. However, I did land standing and managed to land between rows, so I didn't even step on a corn plant! The end to an exhilarating day that will be always remembered.

\*\*\*\*\*

In the time of your life, live-- so that in that good time there shall be no ugliness or death for yourself or for any life your life touches. Seek goodness everywhere, and when it is found, bring it out of its hiding-place and let it be free and unashamed. Place in matter and in flesh the least of the values, for these are the things that hold death and must pass away. Discover in all things that which shines and is beyond corruption. Encourage virtue in whatever heart it may have been driven into secrecy and sorrow by the shame and terror of the world. Ignore the obvious, for it is unworthy of the clear eye and the kindly heart. Be the inferior of no man, nor of any man be the superior. Remember that every man is a variation of yourself. No man's guilt is not yours, nor is any man's innocence a thing apart. Despise evil and ungodliness, but not men of ungodliness or evil. These, understand, have no shame in being kind and gentle...

In the time of your life, live-- so that in that wondrous time you shall not add to the misery and sorrow of the world, but shall smile to the infinite delight and mystery of it.

William Saroyan



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# Costa Rica

## Gem of the Tropics



Allan Sutherland

Last April, all my childhood fantasies of being a jungle explorer finally came to pass with a vacation to Costa Rica, a small Latin American country. Costa Rica

is a tropical paradise with friendly people, beautiful beaches, massive volcanoes, and jagged mountains clothed in lush rain forests. Dave, my brother (and Spanish-speaking guide), took some time off from his Peace Corps job in Honduras to meet me and check out a few of the great national parks the country has to offer.

April 5, 1986

My flight from the states was uneventful except for passing over Cuba. I just sat back and hoped that Fidel wouldn't use us for missile practice. Our plane landed in San Jose, capital city of Costa Rica, where Dave and I met with much rejoicing since he'd been away for a year and a half. San Jose became base camp because of its central location in the country. I was surprised by how closely it resembled American cities, down to the Pizza Huts and Colonel Sanders (what was "Kentucky", senior?) which I didn't expect to see in a developing nation.

April 6

Our first expedition took us to a nearby volcano called Volcan Poas. It also initiated me to "the dreaded Latin American bus", a cruel machine that would be our lifeline for the next two

weeks! Poas has two craters, an extinct vent whose forested sides slope down to a sparkling blue lake, and an active crater which issues a plume of steam from a desolate pit. At least, that's what Dave told me. All I could see was fog and drizzle, since a heavy cloud was glued to the mountaintop the entire time we were there. Still, we took some good pictures in the mist and got to stand at the active crater's edge. Looking down, all you could see was a vertical cliff vanishing into fog and a strong, wet wind blasting up into your face. The image was kind of eerie.

April 7-10

The next morning, we boarded a crowded bus (Aaag!) with our huge, obnoxious gringo tourist packs and set out for a reserve called Monteverde. The three days we spent there were worth the entire trip. This world-renowned spot features cool, high "cloud forests" teeming with wildlife, and has extensive hiking trails. One of the main tourist draws is the Resplendent Quetzal, the sacred bird of the ancient Maya Indians. The males are glowing red and green with streaming tails. We saw 14 of these rare birds, including three nesting pairs.

In between Quetzals, we were forced to look at orchids, jewel-colored frogs, toucans, towering tree-ferns and other breathtaking scenes.

I was amazed by the atmosphere of this place, which I found to be unusually refreshing. I remember the moss and waterfalls, strange birdcalls piercing the fog which would suddenly roll in, and sunlight through dense greenery as we hiked leisurely along, enjoying life to the maximum. The weather and lack of bugs made great camping. I especially remember the time Dave shook me awake at 5 am and handed me the binoculars. We had a perfect view of Halley's Comet through the tent door and we didn't even have to leave our sleeping bags to see it!

April 12

The spine-shattering bus ride back from Monteverde left us in a grim mood for our next day trip, which was to Volcan Irazu. The summit of this volcano reaches 11,150 ft. and is still nearly barren since it suffered a major eruption only 40 years ago. After a long ride to the top, the bus driver announced that we had a leisurely 15 minutes to enjoy the park before he left. I'll just say that we

were pissed off and leave it at that, especially when the guard hit us up for park fees! Still, the place was pretty cool. A lunar landscape of craggy cliffs and desolate gray ash dunes surrounded us, while a venomous green lake bubbled slightly at the bottom of the vast crater. The thin air was cold at that altitude, even with the tropical sun on us. (Costa Rica lies only 10 degrees north of the Equator.)

April 13-15

After this last experience, all we wanted to do was lose ourselves in the jungle and relax, so we stocked up on canned tuna, bread, and cheese and began the cross-country bus ride on gravel roads that were surfaced like a washboard. Our destination was Manuel Antonio National Park on the Pacific coast. After arriving and eating our sardines and mangoes, the camp critters came by to see what kind of leftovers we had. Not raccoons, these beggars, but a whole troop of white-faced monkeys!

It was so hot that night that we decided to leave the rainfly off the tent for air... until a driving tropical rainstorm hit and we had to scramble out and put the thing on. All our stuff got soaked, so the next day we spread everything out to dry and went hiking. Manuel Antonio's beaches are gorgeous coves with turquoise water, white sand, and rocky cliffs crowned by jungle growth. Land crabs, lizards, and many other kinds of animals seemed to be everywhere.

That afternoon we rode into Guepos to buy more tuna and bread. As we waited for the ride back, a tremendous storm blew in from the ocean and soaked our stuff again. This storm was so powerful that trees had fallen all around our tent and crashed onto the row of outhouses, splintering them into rubble. After Dave miraculously reconstructed our tent from the sodden masses of gear, we sawed our Bacardi rum bottle open with a Swiss Army knife and did shots till everything



Harlequin Toad



Resplendent  
Quetzals

seemed kind of humorous. The next morning was cleanup and damage inspection and a short hike until the ominous sounds of thunder could once again be heard. We high-tailed it out, which was a good thing because a couple we had met there later told us that the worst storm came that night. "Well, I guess the dry season's over, huh?"

April 16

We rode the famous "jungle train" to arrive at the final destination of our trip on the Atlantic coast. This train winds through the forested mountains, past roaring whitewater torrents, and over deep gorges, slowly descending to the coastal lowlands. It gave us a great cross-sectional look at the country as well as a welcome break from the dreaded buses. The end of the trail that night was a filthy town called Puerto Limon, which is famous for its muggings. We stayed in a cheap place named the Hotel Fung (like in fungus). Our room was a small bare box that contained only two beds and an electric fan.

Early the next morning I looked out to witness a vision that shocked me towards understanding the poverty a developing nation must suffer. Down in the street in the drizzling rain, a large flock of vultures, a scruffy dog, and a bum were all fighting over the garbage in front of the market place. Beggars and street vendors were a common sight.

(continued on page 13)

# Riding the Leader Ship

Laura King

A year ago, NOLS was a foreign name to me. I had just joined the UCMC one year ago and had little experience backpacking before last year. My idea of camping

was to go to Lake Cumberland on weekends with my family to their mobile home and be isolated from the telephone and TV for the weekend.

Well, living at 444 Dixeyth for a year and hanging around Bill Strachan has changed my perspective on the outdoors and camping. I had a chance to take the UCMC Survival Skills Course over Memorial Day weekend. Pat Artman and I were the only two students and had very individualized help with Bill Strachan, Paul and Jane Wieland, and Dave Bowyer as our instructors. Bob Kessler also helped prior to the trip with some valuable information on map reading, first-aid, how to pack backpacks and resources of places to contact when planning trips. This weekend was great training for NOLS. I'd like to thank everyone for helping me realize I didn't need my make-up kit along to backpack! Thanks also for everything else. Pat and I learned so much together!

Most of you who are new to the UCMC are probably wondering what NOLS stands for and what it is all about. NOLS stands for National Outdoor Leadership School. Its main headquarters are in Lander, Wyoming. Branch headquarters are in Kenya, Alaska, Washington, and Mexico. College credit is available for each course you take. The course offerings range from mountaineering and climbing to fishing, skiing, photography, natural history, and sailing. The time span also varies from a week to a month to a semester, depending on the course.

The course I selected was the Outdoor Educator's Course in Wyoming from June 23rd to July 16th. This course appealed to me since I currently am an educator

and teach students with learning disabilities at Clermont Northeastern H.S. Most of the people on my course were either educators or interested in teaching.

My course included learning about map-reading, route-finding, cooking, hazard evaluation, emergency procedures, basic climbing, and fly-fishing. We also touched on learning more about the wilderness environment, identifying wildflowers, and recognizing animal tracks. The other thing my course offered was an overview of the operation of NOLS. At the conclusion of our course, we went back to NOLS headquarters to discuss aspects of budgeting, wilderness management, permitting, insurance, and people who manage the procedures required to place over 1500 NOLS students each year in wilderness training courses.

We had three instructors and seventeen students on our expedition. Most of the students had little experience backpacking and the instructors were great at taking the trip at a pace the group could handle. Our course was 21 days in the Bighorn Mountains. The route had fairly short travel days; many were at high altitude and off the trail.

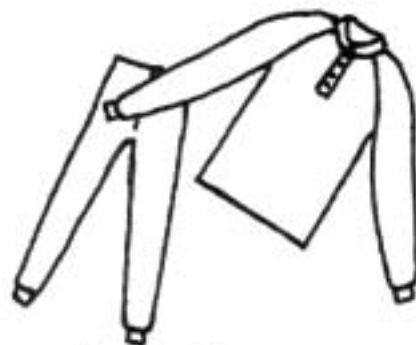
The trip was incredible! I was amazed how much I learned about myself and people. We worked a lot in small groups and were able to get very close to everyone in our group. There is so much I want to share about this trip and have decided to spread this NOLS experience out in a few Goose Downs. Be sure to look in the next issue for the continuing saga of my NOLS experience. Things to be looking forward to are secret recipes in the wilderness, highlights of my trip, and how you can make NOLS your experience too!

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# Fallen Thoughts

Barbara Boylan

(continued from page 11)

April 17-18

We thankfully blew off Puerto Limon and arrived at Cahuita Natl. Park, our real goal. At this spot, we were only a few miles North of the Panama border.

Cahuita is mostly flooded jungle with one long hiking trail that runs between it and the beach. We were treated to some exotic sensations, like the troop of howler monkeys that called from some low trees next to the path. Howlers make a weird noise that reminds me of a tornado sweeping through the jungle, so loud that a troop may be heard from a mile off. We also got a rare close-up look at the spectacled owl, a strikingly colorful but shy bird.

And we ate yet another delicious lunch of canned tuna, cheese, and bread, which really stuck in my throat when we discovered that we had no liquid except sea water within 4 kilometers! U2p! We eventually got a drink at park headquarters and took a break from hiking in the cool Atlantic, bodysurfing in the great waves.

Epilogue:

Two weeks is never enough time to see everything you'd like when you're having the time of your life. All too soon I found myself back at the airport in a typical Central American scheduling snafu with my plane flights. I said bye to Dave for another 8 months and eventually boarded a flight. Now all I can do is think back on all the things we saw. The tropics are endowed with so many live things it staggers one's senses. We saw glowing blue butterflies the size of saucers, screaming parrots, purple hummingbirds, the basilisk lizard that can sprint across open water, and the agouti, a chihuahua-sized rodent, all in the dim, peaceful forests. The local people as a rule were much friendlier than people are to strangers in the states. I really believe that this trip opened my eyes to something new. Overseas, things are all so very different... and also, so incredibly familiar. I urge you all to go!

Under harsh fluorescent lights,  
I think back on my summer spent on  
Isle Royale, Lake Superior as I sit

here in the Mountaineering office. Isle Royale is a national park. It's 40 miles long and closer to Canada than to the U.S. mainland. It was formed by lava layers that were thrust up from the lake floor at a tilt so the Island is a series of ridges. You'll do fine as long as you walk parallel with them, but try to go in the other direction and you've got more ups and downs than the U.C. campus!

I did a lot of campouts and canoe trips, saw moose and loons, watched the fog settle and the storms break. I also worked as a cook, 8 hours a day, 5 or 6 days a week. We had about 60 employees and we were pretty well isolated on that island with each other for the summer. Imagine having all your friends living in the same apartment complex or dorm with you. Add to that the fact that all your friends know each other so there is no getting away from them. Some weeks we were very cohesive; toward the middle of the summer we all hated each other because we were sick of being cooped up together! But, we settled down into our sub-groups after that.

In comparing here to there, I'm glad to be back where I can see movies and plays and concerts because I was starving for some cultural entertainment. I met a guy there who told me he was into Reggae, but he'd never heard of Bob Marley!

I miss being able to go out at night, anytime, and walk in the woods or watch the shoreline or go rowing. I realize that here in the city it's virtually impossible to go out at night and watch the stars, away from buildings, without being breaking the law because parks close at 10 or 11 P.M. I also miss the freedom of movement I had on the

Island. Everything was within walking distance and if I ever wanted to visit someone or go to the store I could just go. No hassles with a car like getting gas or finding a parking space. Of course, the weather stopped us sometimes; you can't go boating in the fog!

\*\*\*\*\*

Spectacled  
Owl



Something hidden.  
Go and find it.  
Go and look  
Behind the Ranges-  
Something lost  
Behind the Ranges.  
Lost and  
Waiting for you.  
Go!

Rudyard Kipling

# A View from the Top

Steve Must

---

The majority of the activities that this club participates in involve a certain amount of risk to the individual. Granted, the club has an almost spotless

safety record, and the well-being of everyone involved is a main priority of the person leading the trip, but accidents do happen. I think that this danger element makes these experiences more exciting and more memorable and are way to escape the boredom of a routine, day-to-day existence. However, I realize that everyone is different, and not everyone has what it takes (usually, all it takes is some free time) to leave the security of their home and venture out into the rugged outdoors. What most of these people don't realize is the availability of risks that they pass by every day. I don't mean in the business sense, but more in the sense of social interactions. Lately, I have been hearing from TV, radio, books, everywhere, about the problems young people are having in meeting people. How often does someone approach a total stranger for no other reason than to be friendly? Here is a risk whose worst consequence might be silence or an unkind word. Hardly life threatening. How can someone have trouble meeting people? They're everywhere. There are so many people out there that it shouldn't be that much trouble sifting through and finding the people you enjoy being with. But it does involve risk, and that is what makes it worthwhile.

What I really wanted to talk about here is the personal enjoyment I get from the anti-social, death-wishful, insane activity known as rock climbing. In defense of the sport, I think it is as dangerous as the participant makes it. A climber knows her/his abilities and limits, and initially has complete control over how dangerous a situation she/he is getting into.

Some of the most indelible,

satisfying experiences that I store in my memory result from the physical and mental intensity that climbing demands, coupled with the inherent risk that's involved. Physically, the body is pushed to its limits. Like a puzzle, a climber must decipher the sequence of moves that will most effectively gain altitude. Lead climbing especially demands mental concentration to overcome that very rational fear of falling, or that psychological fear of being somewhere or in some position that your brain does not feel is natural. Finally, you receive such a wonderful feeling of accomplishment when you pull up on that last ledge or on that pinnacle and look out on the grandeur of our planet. This country looks much better from a higher vantage point. Climbing is so symbolic; everyone wants to rise above the decadence, the disease, the deceit, the destruction that is so much a part of our society.

What young child isn't compelled to climb a tree or hill or anything they encounter? It may be an inborn trait that the majority of people painfully suppress or unfortunately outgrow.

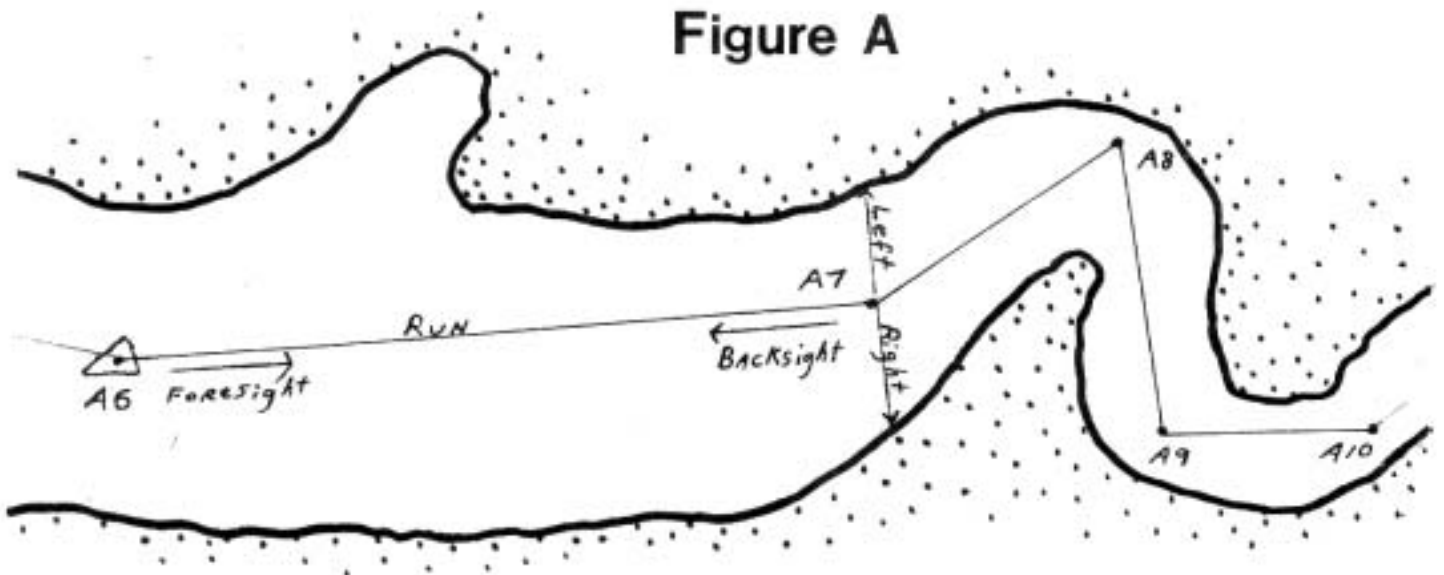
I have never actually climbed a mountain. Up to now I have been content perfecting my technique on difficult vertical walls. In fact, sometimes I'm satisfied in maneuvering, quite gracefully of course, across an old reservoir wall no more than two feet off the ground. It becomes an art form, comparable to dance or ballet, yet involves an endless variety of movements upon a more unique dance floor. The innumerable amount of rock in this country and throughout the world offer endless arenas of creativity.

The extent of my climbing

so far has been limited to low altitudes; but my impatient nervous system, that so quickly becomes discontented with idleness, will soon need something more challenging, more stimulating. Maybe it needs that greater risk factor. The danger involved with climbing is appealing to us T-types (Thrill seekers, a most disreputable breed--Ed.), but sometimes I can't help think what a peculiar sport it is. I'm sure most climbers have experienced that moment of panic, when you're in some serious, even mortal, danger (or just think you are), and the thought, "What in the hell am I doing here!" flashes across your mind. However, once you reach the top, that adrenalin-filled moment makes the climb all the more satisfying, and that moment of doubt quickly fades. Finally, I must add that the beauty of climbing lies not only in the experiences you share with nature, but more importantly, in the relationships you build with your partners through these experiences. Climbing, especially extended mountaineering, requires complete trust in the person on the other end of the rope.

For my future I will continue to develop my bouldering and building skills while I'm at UC. Cincinnati is obviously not a breeding ground for alpinists, but through the enthusiasm of many club members and other climbers I've met along the way, I think I will soon hear the call of those snow-covered peaks. And I want to climb in Yosemite... and attack the sea cliffs in England... and I'd love to see Australia... and just do some backpacking all over the U.S.... and of course go skiing every winter... and... what's that?... graduate from college and get a job?... it slipped my mind. Life's too short.

### Figure A



### Figure B

Surveyed Passage		Stream and Pool	
Underlying (dotted) Passage		Flowstone	
Vertical Drop in Passage with Depth		Rimstone Dam	
Passage Ceiling Height		Clay	
Large Breakdown		Sand	
Small Breakdown		Bedrock Pillar in passage	
Sketched Passage		Survey Station	
Sloping Passage		Cross Section	

Common cave map symbols from The 1976 NSS Standard Map Symbols in *The NSS Bulletin*, v. 41, no. 2, April 1979, pages 35-48.

# Subterranean Maps

Mark Guttadauro

---

For those of you who have gone caving before, you probably noticed the trip leader often pull out a map and check his route. Have you ever wondered where those

maps come from or how they are made?

Constructing a cave map is a long and tedious process. First, someone has to survey the cave before the map can be drawn. Surveying a cave is the process of collecting all of the data for a passage or room that would be needed to construct a map. This is done in steps by setting up a survey point or station, collecting information at that station, then setting up a new station and repeating the process. Keep in mind that each survey shot from an established station to a new station must be in a straight line, then consider how many shots are necessary to survey a tight, sinuous crawl. Often, in large passages, survey shots can be up to 50 meters in length, and in passages with sharp curves as short as one meter. Surveying can be very slow work because of the detail involved.

A typical survey team is made up of four people. The point man is to explore ahead and mark survey stations and also to run the tape to the new station. The survey leader is the person with the survey book and is usually called book man or book. This person has the job of recording all data taken by the others and also to make a quick sketch of the passage. Shape and details are important on this sketch, not scale, because that is already covered in the survey data. The sketch is used as an aid in drawing the actual map. Next is the tape man, who carries a spool of tape 30 or 50 meters long. The tape man is responsible for all length measurements. The last person is the compass man and he carries a compass and an inclinometer. The compass shots and the inclination are his jobs.

Suppose this team is surveying a cave and they have just finished with station A6 (see diagram A). The point man marks survey station A7 by using his carbide lamp to make a soot mark on the ground. The tape is then run from A6 to A7. It must be stretched tight and touch nothing between stations. The distance is recorded to the nearest tenth of a meter. Next, the compass man takes the compass readings starting with the foresight, which is shot from A6 to A7, but it is not yet recorded. The backsight is taken; this is exactly opposite the foresight, A7 to A6. Since the compass shots are exactly opposite, the readings should vary by exactly 180 degrees. The allowable error is one-half of a degree, so if the readings are not within one-half of a degree of being 180 degrees, the process is redone until satisfactory. Once this is accomplished, the foresight and backsight may be recorded. The inclination is taken from the same spot as the foresight. An inclinometer resembles a compass turned on its side so that you are looking straight ahead and still sighting along its face. A number can then be read off the dial from approximately -12 to 12. A negative number means that the new station is lower than the one you are at; a positive number means a rising grade. A zero represents a level passage. Lastly, while the compass man is busy, the tape man and point man collect all of the miscellaneous data, such as the distance from A7 to the left wall, to the right wall and the distance the station is above the ground (usually zero, but not always). These measurements are done with the survey tape. Also, the height from floor to ceiling is measured or estimated. The book is working on the sketch during the

data collection and making a note of any unusual features around the station. Many of the interesting names of passages, rooms and formations get named during the survey, unless the person who first discovered something has already named it. For example, in Flint Ridge-Wmamoth Cave System, Agony Avenue was named by the unfortunate survey crews; something about a passage two feet wide, two feet high and six inches of very gooey mud that inspired such a name. Luckily, it was only several hundred meters long...

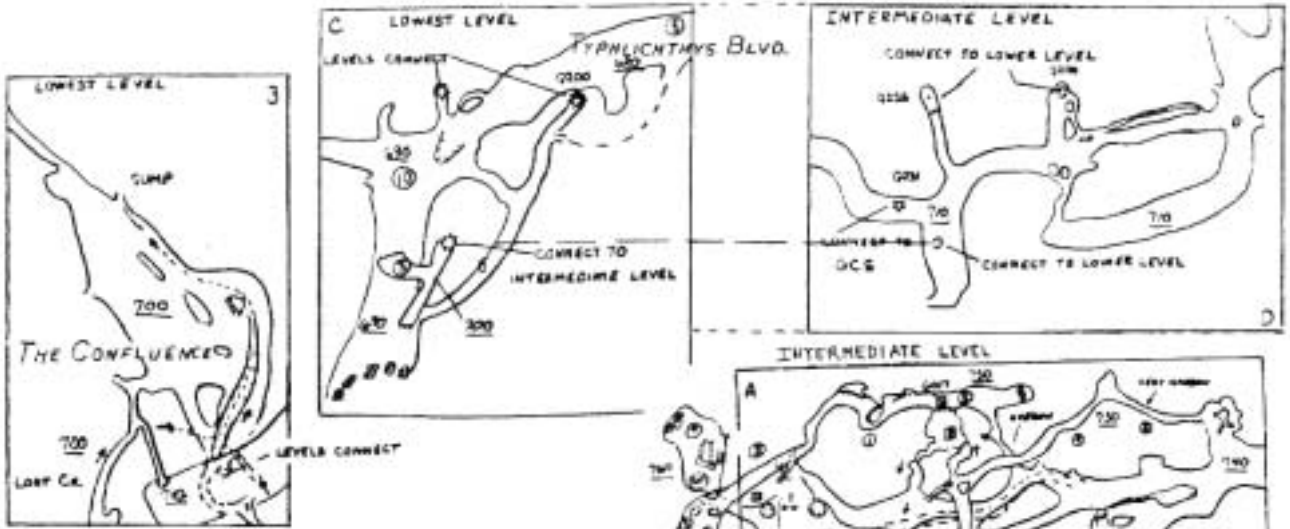
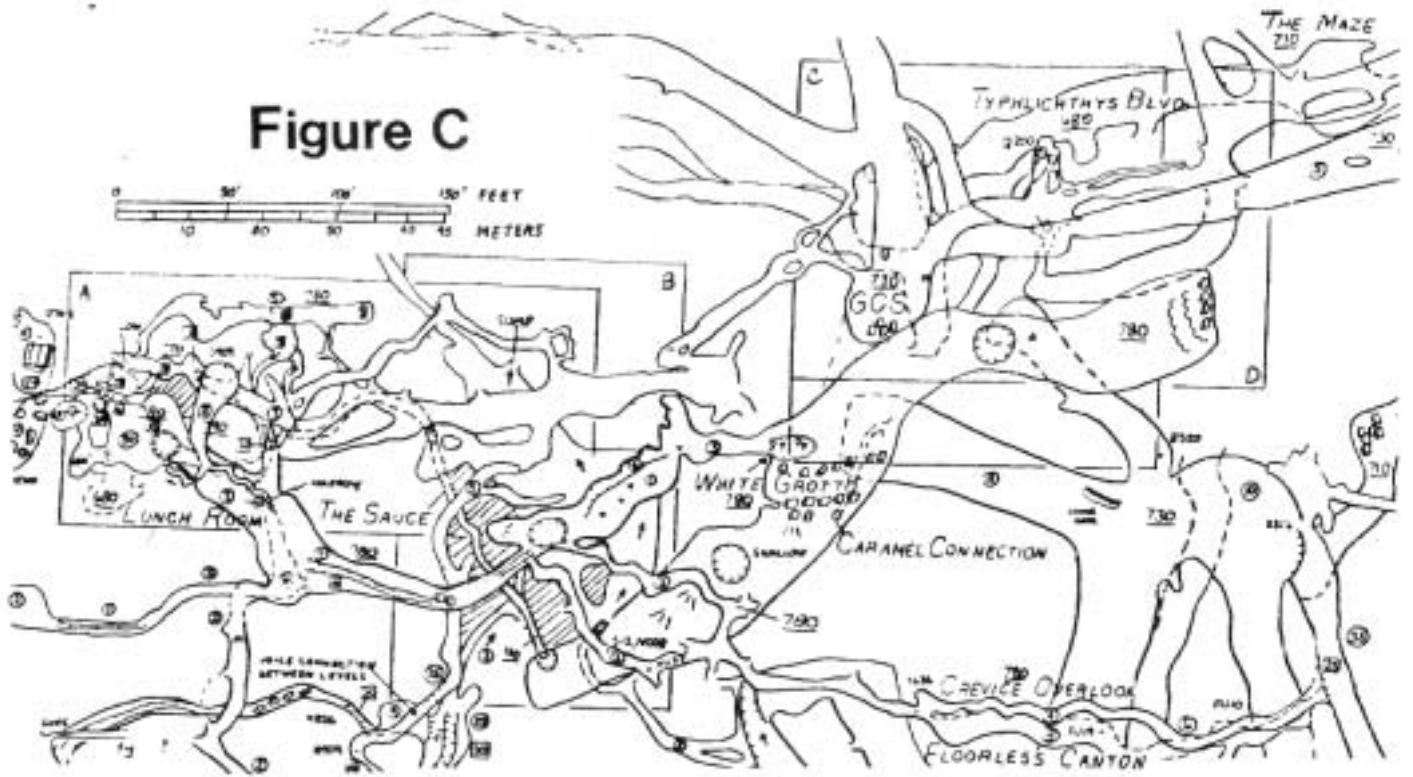
There is an art to reading cave maps. Many people often have trouble reading some of the more complex maps, such as a three-dimensional maze of several levels layered on top of another.

It can be very difficult to interpret which level is which and if one passage connects to another (see diagram C). Some maps have separate views of each level to aid in clarifying the harder areas. The only way to become a good map-reader is by experience. Study the map before going into the cave, know what all of the symbols on the map represent, and what you will need to traverse any section of cave passage you might encounter. For example, a 15 meter vertical drop in a passage will require the use of descending and ascending gear to pass that particular obstacle. Remember, while caving, unexpected means unprepared.

The National Speleological Society, NSS, has suggested standard symbols for use in making maps. This system is widely used and very popular, especially among the grattoes (member organizations of the

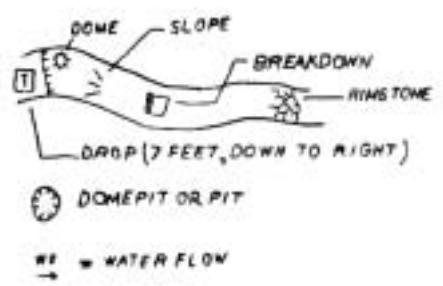
*(continued on page 21, col.3)*

Figure C



LEGEND

- CIRCLED NUMBERS = CEILING HEIGHT, IN FEET
- UNDERLINED NUMBERS = ELEVATION, RELATIVE TO ZERO STATION, IN FEET
- THREE OR FOUR DIGIT NUMBERS = SURVEY STATIONS, AT DOTS
- DASHED PASSAGE = LOWER RELATIVE LEVEL



# Sloan's Valley Cave System

PULASKI COUNTY, KENTUCKY

## GRAND CENTRAL SPAGHETTI SECTION

SILVA COMPASS, TAPE, AND CLINOMETER SURVEY  
 BY CENTRAL OHIO AND BLUEGRASS GROTTOS OF  
 THE NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

# UCMC Goes International

Jeff Streba

There is a magic in the feel of a paddle and the movement of a canoe, a magic compounded of distance, adventure, solitude and peace.

Sigurd Oisen, *The Singing Wilderness*

A group of four of us; Mark Suer, Mark Guttadauro, Ed Gempertine and myself planned a week long canoeing trip to Canada's Algonquin Provincial Park. Located about five hours north of Toronto, we estimated a 16-hour drive to our destination. With food bought and equipment packed, we left for Algonquin Friday at midnight. We were all nervous that the border patrol would require proof of U.S. Citizenship and we would be detained for a while. When it came right down to it, they just asked us what we had planned and told us to have a good time.

Our plan was to travel to the northern part of the 7571 sq. kilometer (3028 sq. mile) park and spend the first night at the outfitter's place (where the canoes were rented). Sunday we would start our six-day, 90-mile canoe trip. We figured we could travel 15 miles a day with portages.

Sunday afternoon we arrived at the outfitter's after a long drive on a one lane dirt road. The outfitter was glad to see us and treated us like kings. He showed us to our camping area, gathered wood for our fire, told us to take the canoes out if we wanted. There was even a sauna we could use. It was kind of ironic that there was no electricity but they had a sauna.

The rest of the day was filled with repacking gear and talking over the logistics of our trip.

## Sunday--The Beginning

We planned on getting an early start on the water. We did start early but didn't get on the water until around 10:00 A.M. First we had to canoe over to the ranger station, then back across

the lake to the Amable du Fond River to enter the park. The trip to the ranger station would have been quite funny to anyone watching. Mark G. said, "Our boats must look like we have two engines and no steering wheel." After leaving the ranger station we were getting a little better working the keelless canoes. Soon after entering the river we came across our first of many beaver dams.

Our plan was to paddle hard and lodge the front of the canoe on the dam. The front person would get out and drag the canoe up the dam to the midway point. Then the back person would climb up the canoe, get out on the dam, drag the canoe just past the midway point and let the front person get back in. Once there was weight at the front of the canoe, it was easy to push it back in the water and jump in.

The Amable du Font River was easy canoeing. Silk-like grass grew to the surface of the water, but having the current in our direction, steering through the many switch-backs was more important than paddling.

As we rounded a corner, Mark G. spotted a huge bird which landed near the water's edge. As I slowed our canoe and reached for my camera, some other canoeists were trying to negotiate a log in the water and scared the bird away. I was quite mad that I did not get a picture of the large bird we saw. The bird was the Great Blue Heron; a tall, long-necked, bluish grey bird with a spear-like bill.

Shortly after we saw the bird, we came to our first portage, 135 meters. I was

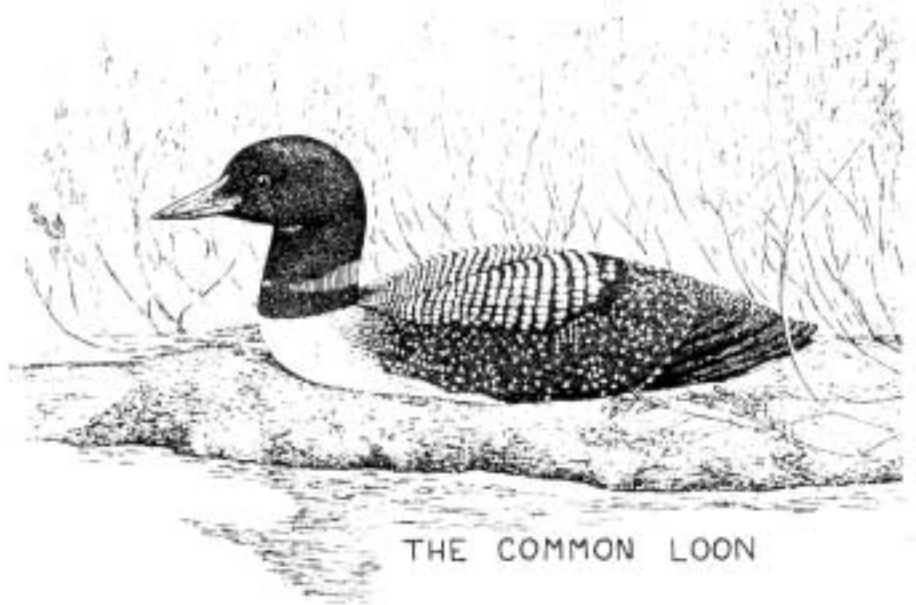


anxious to see how difficult a portage was, so I offered to carry the canoe first. The 135 meters were no problem. We were back in the water and heading for the next portage and the beginning of the park. The next portage was 255 meters, which ended at the park's entrance and the huge North Tea Lake. Along the portage, I spoke with people who spent four days just canoeing around the lake. For us to get to the other side was only 1/3 of our planned day. As we canoed across the lake we came across three moose wading in the water (a cow and two calves). We slowed the canoe and took as many pictures as possible before the

moose moved slowly inland. From there, after three short portages, we entered Biggar Lake and made camp. That night as we sat on the beach we saw the Northern Lights. Northern Lights occur when the upper atmosphere is excited by charged particles trapped in the earth's magnetic field. The lights looked like one of those big spotlights at shopping centers. We all turned in early because the next day would bring some long portaging.

*Monday, Bloody Monday*

Our day started with a hearty breakfast and a hastened pace. We were going to try to make up the lost distance from yesterday and also cover the distance we planned for today. Shortly after entering the water we came to our first portage, 2010 meters or about 1 1/4 miles. The portage seemed like it took forever. Loughrin Creek was at the end but it could have been called Loughrin Swamp. We had to canoe 250 to 300 feet back and forth to go 100 feet forward. It seemed as though we were canoeing on shag carpet. While canoeing through the swamp we saw many different types of frogs, toads and Ed spotted another moose. The swamp was getting to us; over half the day was gone and we had not reached the place we were supposed to be at yesterday. When would this damn swamp end? The water ahead looked clear. It was, but it was also shallow. We heard the canoe bottom rub against the rocks and we were stopped. We dragged the canoes about 300 yards to the next portage which was 640 meters. Finally we were at Loughrin Lake, the place where we were supposed



THE COMMON LOON

to be last night. We were still optimistic that with some fast paddling through the next couple lakes we could make our destination. The lake ended with a 495 meter portage, a small lake, a ten meter portage, a small lake and the sun setting. As we sat at the beginning of a 1950 meter portage, we realized our vacation would not be enjoyable if we kept up this pace. We canoed back to the ten meter portage and camped between the two small lakes. I caught a glimpse of Ed's map, which was 4 years newer than mine, and noticed we could still plan a new route without much backtracking.

*Tuesday— Peaceful*

We figured out that, in our haste to cover distance yesterday, it brought us to the deep backwoods of the park. We did not see anyone but ourselves

yesterday and it would be unlikely we would see anyone today. We were indeed in the wilderness.

Before we broke camp we saw a loon take off from the water. Loons aren't like other birds which just jump from the water and fly; they must run and flap their wings along the surface of the water before they get up the necessary speed to fly. Loons have short wings just big enough to permit them to fly. They are better swimmers than fliers or walkers. Loons are capable of lightning quick movement under water to catch their prey. They can stay under water for as long as three minutes, but normally stay only 45 seconds. Algonquin Park is filled with loons, but unfortunately their days are numbered. Because of the acid rain problem, it is estimated that in ten years the fish will have all died and the loons will be gone from the park forever. Every night we spent in the park, we could here the eerie cries for which the loons are known for.

We put our canoes in the water and went at a casual pace. Our paddles struck the water with the sounds of silence, once, twice, and we glided for 30 feet. Then again. We came to a long 1000 meter portage but we were in no hurry. Along the

*(continued on page 21)*

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# Chicago Afterburners

Craig and Cheri Patterson

What happens to mountaineers living 900 miles from the Black Hills, 900 miles from the Ozarks and 900 miles from the Appalachians? Why would Euell Gibbons take

trains, expressways and elevators to work fifty weeks a year? No mountains? No caves? No rocks? No time off? Not quite, there is life after Cincinnati in Chicago.

Craig and Cheri Patterson moved to Chicago last year after eight years of exhilaration with the UCMC. They now comprise part of a new sector of the UCMC known as the Weekend Warriors. These timid weekday professionals turn into raging maniacs on the weekends. No country road in the midwestern heartland is immune to their wanderings. You can spot them scavenging for trash in the Red River Gorge or melting snow in the Porcupine Mountains, the toughest afterburners to hit Chicago since Al Capone.

Some of the areas that we recommend within driving distance of Chicago are listed below. There are no 3000-foot mountains within 500 miles of Chicago, but there is plenty of fresh water.

Lake Michigan boasts the Gold Coast of Chicago, a recreational mecca for urban crazies, bent on tearing loose. On the quieter side of the lake, vacationers visit the Door County Peninsula just north of Green Bay, Wisconsin. Manistee National Forest on the Michigan side of the lake offers a remote getaway for hikers and fishermen.

Lake Superior is harder to get to, but hey, this is a big country. The Porcupine Mountains and the Keweenaw Peninsula of the upper peninsula of Michigan are cold, harsh environments with prolonged autumns and buried winters. Isle Royale and the Apostle Islands have sunsets that Edmond Fitzgerald still appreciates.

The Minnesota Boundary

Waters reside west of Lake Superior and Pallsade Head, an area of grandeur and insects. The park is a haven for bald eagles, an excellent place to fish for lake trout and to canoe through miles of waterways.

Our latest thrill came from northeast Iowa. The Mississippi River from Davenport, Iowa to Lacrosse, Wisconsin is virtually unspoiled God's country. Pike's Peak State Park has a view of the Mississippi River that draws stories from the farmers and the old timers of Iowa. The Yellow River State Forest contains hardwood trees and gorges ten years behind most parks.

Mississippi Pallsades State

Park in Illinois and Devil's Lake State Park in Wisconsin have unlimited climbing. Starved Rock State Park, Illinois and Hardy Lake State Park, Indiana are on the top of our list for weekend camping and hiking. So when the club heads out west via I-94 or I-90, the Pattersons will gladly extend their hospitality to any UCMC travelers. Who knows, we may drop everthing and join you.

*Editor's note: Word is the Patterson's are moving back to Cincinnati. Which is not to say that they would not be glad to give you more pointers on trekking around Chicago.*

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*(UCMC Int., cont. from p. 19)*

portage there was a large area of maple trees beginning to turn fall colors. Even though the day was overcast it seemed the sun was shining because of all the red, orange and gold trees.

At the next lake the water was again like glass. We found an old log cabin and went exploring. In front of the cabin on the water grew beautiful, small, bright red flowers.

The next portage was about 900 meters and was to end at Birchcliff Lake. While on the portage, I spotted a ruffed grouse. It stood around for a while before scattering into the woods. The one time I didn't bring my camera on a portage, we came across two moose. The cow walked slowly into the brush when she saw us but the calf kept walking along the trail. We stood at our position awhile, being certain not to cross between the cow and her calf.

The end of the portage brought us to a swampy bog about 200 yards short of the lake. We all went forward without canoes or gear to scout out a trail. Ed almost lost a shoe in knee-deep mud, but survived. I felt like a pioneer in the wilderness, trying to find a suitable trail to transport our gear.

Once to the lake, we made camp and we all had the feeling that we owned the lake. I guess that's what being in the wilderness is all about. You can be hundreds of miles from home yet feel as secure and peaceful as you would in your own living room.

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*Wednesday-- The Good,  
The Bad, and The Ugly*

From camp, Mark S. spotted two moose on the other side of the lake. He hiked along the shore line for some pictures while the cow swam right toward

him. Fifteen feet in front of him she came up on shore and went in the woods. We hung around and took some pictures when she returned.

We broke camp and canoed across the lake and entered Birchcliff Creek. After a 200-meter portage, we entered the part of the creek we were warned about. The creek was narrow with many switchbacks, overhanging bushes, and trees, fallen logs, shallow parts, sand bars, and beaver dams. It took a good part of the day getting to Bigger Lake.

We crossed the lake to our camp site and proceeded to wash out the canoes. The canoes got very dirty from always getting in and out of them in the creek. Ed realized he picked up a leach and went hysterical. Mark S. thought it was neat. Mark S. wanted to get a picture. I realized Ed was freaking out so I sat down to watch. Ed was yelling for help and a lighter to burn it out with. After it was out we all had a good laugh, except Ed.

*Thursday--History Lesson*

No canoe routes. We hiked to the site and found about a dozen old deteriorated houses. The houses were apparently used when there was a lot of logging going on in the area. The park still allows logging but on a limited scale during special hours of the day, and only in certain areas of the park. We found old artifacts like lanterns, pop bottles and five-foot crosscut saws.

Back on the water, we canoed toward North Tea Lake. The waves were almost whitecapping, as a storm was rolling in. We canoed to an island and set up camp. On the island we found a chipmunk that ate gorp right out of our hands. The storm started and rained heavily for two hours. After the storm, the clouds cleared and a new day awaited us.

That night was spent on the beach, star gazing. It was a moonless night. Venus and Mars were so bright we could see their reflection off the water. We

also spotted two satellites passing over head. This was the last night we spent in the park. Friday we would canoe half the day and drive home that evening.

Our trip to Algonquin Provincial Park was a success despite the hardships. We saw a wide variety of wildlife and vegetation along with historical sites. We worked with nature and left no evidence of our presence. We greeted the day and night with joy and that was our success. All nature was our congratulations.

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*(Maps, continued from page 16)*

NSS). Some of the more common symbols are shown in diagram B. All maps have a title block which includes the name of the cave, the cartographer, the county in which the cave lies and the date the map was made. Often included on the map is a list of the surveyors and a legend containing non-standard map symbols and a bar graph marked off in feet and/or meters to show the scale of the map. Sometimes, a note is included to pass along information about unusual features, special dangers in a cave, or anything else significant.

I hope this has provided you with information that will help you to better use and appreciate cave maps than you have in the past. If you are interested in helping to map a cave, let the fact be known at the UCMC meeting and you may get a chance. I wish you all good caving and I hope you remember the NSS slogan:

*Take nothing but pictures  
Kill nothing but time  
Leave nothing but footprints*

# Mountaineering Fourplay

Dennis Dziech

---

The steps that run from the Ohio river to the church at the top of Mt. Adams were determined to see my death. We were climbing them to condition our bodies for a

mountain that was so far away, the Grand Teton.

Finally the day arrived where the broken steps of Mt. Adams would no longer need to be pounded by the eight feet of uncertain climbers. Climbers, who through rigorous training had gained confidence in the task that none had ever before performed, realized that task was still far off; after all, there was still the drive through the endless state of Nebraska and the acclimatization that all safe mountaineers must endure while waiting to strike at the goal. So while dreaming of the next week's departure, we walked into the now familiar surroundings of the Mt. Adams Bar & Grill to finalize plans and equipment checklists. We realized that some of our activities in this establishment were also practice for post-summit festivities in Jackson Hole.

The day arrived that Nick came to my house and we overloaded his car with tons of gear we planned to haul to the summit of this distant beast. The short trip to Dan's house to pick up the van that was to carry us to the mountain seemed much longer than any intra-city trip I can remember, what with all that gear on my lap. We got there and, after Mike's mother's insistences that we all have hamburgers (much to our resistances), we were under way. The first part of the trip was short, but then we entered Nebraska. The days turned to nights, the nights to days, the weeks to years, then finally we were out of Nebraska! The Herberts (club members) were waiting for us as we arrived in the Tetons late Saturday night, a day after we left. Soon we were asleep.

The following day, Bill Herbert took us for a short, 20-mile jog up to Amphitheater Lake at ten thousand feet. On the way up, a girl descending told us that a moose was ahead on the trail. Being card-carrying Midwesterners, we had never seen a moose before, so we all quickly set our cameras and hurried up the hill to see the beast! Mike was in the lead and walked right past the biggest, ugliest-looking horse I had ever seen. Realizing that this was the moose, I mentioned to Mike that the moose was back here 10 feet from me. Pictures were taken and we climbed to the lake.

The following day, we went backpacking in the mountain range by taking a ski tram to the summit of a 10 thousand foot peak called Rendezvous Mountain. From there we hiked to Moran Lake and saw our last two moose along the way.

I am a backpacker confirmed in the hills of the Midwestern states, but the size of these western hills and the altitude

were enough to make me feel weak and ready to retire my pack on the first day. The second day at backpacking was much better for all of us. It was then that we descended to the valley floor and prepared for the main goal of our trip. Everything had happened as planned this far and views of the summit were very reassuring in terms of clear weather for our climb.

I vowed to maintain a lighter pack for the summit attempt than that damned pack I had been carrying while backpacking. The summit pack was feeling pretty good until I realized that the group gear had not yet been divided. Soon I donned a back a few pounds heavier and I found myself on that same hill leading to Amphitheatre Lake that a few days earlier had seemed so steep when I was carrying just a day pack. We got off this trail, though, and headed up Barnett Canyon to the Lower Saddle and our base camp.



While in the canyon, I remembered Ann Herbert saying that we only needed a quart of water from the Aspitheatre Lake trail to the Saddle. I had taken three quarts and was out. She also had said that the climb to the Saddle was long but easy. These boulders that I was climbing over with a 50-lb. pack on did not seem so easy! It all became clearer upon reaching the base of the Saddle when a descending climber asked us why we had not used the trail. Looking back at the pretty switchbacks behind us, the question seemed legitimate.

Feeling rather like an ass, I decided to turn in early after visiting the high-tech outhouse on the Saddle. We had been told that 4 A.M. was a good time to start the ascent to the summit, so we set the alarm for four in the morning. At 4 A.M., the alarm was abused to the point of breakage and four mountaineers went back to sleep.

At six A.M., we got up and climbed to the Upper Saddle. This was the point that scree and boulder fields ended and roped climbing began. We were climbing in early September, the same time of year that a party of climbers had been caught in a winter storm and died on this mountain just last year. Our approach was along the west face of the Grand and led along several ledges traverses and up several chimney

climbs. We had been advised to be off the summit by noon, as the threat of storms in the day increased from this point on. As noon approached and the summit seemed no closer, the thought of the Brits climbing to the Exxum Route on the east face was that it was lonely up here.

A storm had passed through the Tetons on Sunday and there was much ice on the route. Most climbers had been turned back earlier this week. John, our leader, started to lead climb a section and turned back, claiming it was too icy. I don't know whether it was the thought of downclimbing the mess that we had just come through or the thought of a lost summit that compelled me to take the lead, but I did. I climbed up the ice and snow from the belay ledge to another ledge, trying to find a place to set a piece of protection in the iced cracks. I went further out from my belay-- finally I was fifty feet out with no pro: my friends were asking me to come back to the belay. It was at this point, ice axe in hand and cutting steps toward a jutting rock, that Nick yelled to place a piece of webbing around the rock.

At last, pro! Then I realized that I had never led a climb before. Ecstatic, I found a piton in the rock, maybe an original from Owen and Spaulding's first climb of the Grand. Then another piton, and another, and soon I was across

the ledge and had a belay set for the others. It was here that I ran into the Brits whistling their way down from the summit. They said it looked as though us "chaps" had taken the harder way up that day. We both knew the Exxum Route to be harder during normal conditions. The Brits had climbed in the sun all day while we watched the clouds roll in from Idaho in the cold of the west face.

They told us that it was only a short hour to the summit and, after a great lead up an iced chimney by Nick, we were at the summit at 3:00 p.m. It was great and the first time we were in the sun all day. It was all down hill from there. Stumbling down the hill in the dark with headlamps, I fell many, many times but my spirit could not be broken. I made it to the van at midnight and fell asleep: after eighteen hours of climbing, I slept well.

As our first mountain, the Grand Teton was an experience that was shared with John Steuver the trip leader, Nick Day, and Mike Shirner. Thanks, you guys.

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(continued from page 25)

by his head and scuttling along rocks further uphill. Without any further prompting, they both followed the arrow up the hill. Jack wished he had taken the time to tie his boots. Hopping and running along the rocks was perilous enough without such a disadvantage.

"Believe me now?" yelled his bearded companion.

Jack didn't know what to believe. "What year is this?" he yelled back.

"1823, you fool! Why?"

Any answer would have been drowned out by Hazeckiah's groan. He had scooted ahead and stopped. "Riarrocked! We're done for!"

Jack looked over the 2000 foot sheer drop. "Downclimb!"

To be continued...



# The Wreck of the Mercedes

Neil Kilcoin

---

Back in the first week of April of '85 I was transformed into that most dangerous of animals: the college student on spring break. After almost four years of

school, I felt myself ready for a change from another cold, dreary Illinois spring. So a friend and I took advantage of our nine days of freedom to drive to Fort Lauderdale and wallow in self-indulgence and sunshine.

But wallowing to excess can be dull, so the adventurer in us all gave me an alternative: "Go diving". As luck would have it, a ship was sunk two days after we arrived-- a large Portuguese freighter, the Mercedes I. Just down the beach from my hotel, demolition experts had exploded four large charges that produced Volkswagen-sized holes in her sides and drove her to the ocean floor. Somehow I managed to miss the entire event and it took me a couple of days to understand all the gossip about the explosion of some expensive foreign car. "Was this another college prank?"

But no people, it wasn't. The Mercedes had quite a history of "pranks", the strangest of which was running aground on a private beach during a violent storm. After the November squall subsided, the ship refused to be moved despite numerous attempts. November slid into December and still she sat. And like any great beached beast, it rotted and decayed. The once smooth hull was attacked by rust, her light blue paint peeled and the ship was stripped and looted. Finally on the first Monday in April, five months after hitting the beach, men hauled the rotting carcass off the sand, floated it out to an appropriate spot and sank it, providing a home for thousands of sea creatures and something for the author to write about.

By that Wednesday, I knew that I had to dive this ship. After calling a few dive shops

and hearing about "explosion hazards", depression set in-- not because of the danger, but because it seemed that no one was diving the freighter. The next day proved to be similar until I made a personal visit to Lauderdale Diver, a shop that was offering a trip out. I rented my equipment, reserved a spot on the dive boat and was then told to show up at a different shop in the marina the next day.

On Friday I got up early for a change and skipped breakfast-- something every landlubber should do before setting foot on a ship. I grabbed my few pieces of diving paraphernalia, drove over to the ritzy Bahia Mar Yachting Club Marina and was stunned. The Pro Dive Shop looked like a play ground of the rich and famous: quaint, rag-tag fishing nets mixed with brass compasses and the best technology. After inspecting their prices, I made damn sure to hold onto my receipts. The manager was a loud man named Mike who also doubled as the ship's captain. After explaining my situation, he nodded and said, "Now you need to find a dive partner from one of the others coming along."

With these words ringing in my ears, I walked outside and there met Steve, a kid from New York City who was on vacation from his job on a ferry boat in N.Y. harbor. As we sat waiting for our ship, I realized how he was a "stereotypical" New Yorker: dark haired, slightly larcenous and talking with an accent that could annoy the dead. Soon the ship was set and the customers got their less than spotless scuba gear and secured it on the Pro Diver, a forty-foot ship outfitted for tourist diving. As we paired off as dive buddies, Mike noticed that there was an

extra man. So Steve and I reluctantly got an extra partner. Paul was a balding, forty-ish psychologist who was also from New York and who didn't look like he was prepared in any way to dive. But the decision wasn't mine and soon we were out into Florida's huge intercoastal waterway.

The water was dirty, which somehow matched the cloudy skies.

No suntanning time would be lost today, we all thought. The trip to the wreck site seemed to take forever. Part of it was taken up by Mike wondering if I had actually paid. I still was clutching my receipts from earlier in the morning. As we pulled out into the ocean, the waves got heavy and as the ship rolled and pitched, tossing people and their bags about, the conversations all turned to everyone's favorite, seasickness.

Our last minute add-on, Paul, turned various shades of grey while simultaneously explaining that this "always happened." To make a long story less lengthy, he lost his breakfast overboard. This caused a chain reaction among a number of the passengers including Steve. While I stared off at the horizon to settle my guts, I asked him how he could survive his job. He answered, "At the salary they pay, you don't mind it so much." and then spat into the water.

At the site we dropped two anchors and each person helped their partner on with the cumbersome tank. Paul was in no condition to dive, so Steve and I rolled into the cold water without him.

Scuba diving is something like hanging in space. You don't sink or float if you've got the proper amount of weights to overcome the body's natural

buoyancy. But I had put on too many and, as a consequence, sank like a rock.

The barracuda were the only fish at the ship and strangely, hung at odd angles, perhaps still stunned by the blasts. The water was grainy and sounds were dulled. As we dropped along the forward anchor line, the Mercedes came more into focus but one lost the "whole picture". It looked dead-- still waiting for burial; she lay at a slight list, cables laying on the deck and gaping holes in her sides. I grabbed the railing and pulled myself aboard, not feeling any of the cold due to my excitement, and caught up with my partner who was trying to open a hatch. It was ranted. The cargo hold was open and claustrophobia could be felt as we entered. It was a huge space yet the bubbles from our regulators were trapped by the ceiling. The light was dim and the walls were very solid. In that space, they dominated my thoughts. Confinement. Prison. Grave. Weight.

Struggling up from the

depths onto the fore deck helped me lose those odd feelings that depth can cause. As Steve glided over the ship, inspecting the hull, I "walked" the deck, pushing off from the ship to avoid the other divers. A quick jerk with a thumb soon signalled my next destination, the inner cabins.

We entered a small cabin off the deck, painted light blue, empty but for some garbage on the floor. My depth gauge read eighty feet below the surface. And there I stood while a street urchin from New York pulled out his diving knife and carved into the nearest wall:

S.T.J.  
N.Y.C.  
5-6-85

If I could have laughed without gagging, I would have. But all I could think of was subways and spraypaint. Pollution. Graffiti is everywhere, even under the ocean.

This strange environment we were in couldn't last and soon

our air was running low. Finding no worthwhile souvenirs, I gave the thumb up and we began the long rise to the surface following the path of our bubbles. At fifteen feet, I stopped to take a final look at the Mercedes and thought about the experience. In one hundred and ten feet of water lay a construct of man that was slowly being reclaimed by nature.

At the Pro Diver's ladder, oppressive weight returned and ended the experience. My legs were exhausted from the effort and I slipped on the slick deck, getting a bruise as my only trophy of the trip. Back at the dive shop, Mike tried to sell me overpriced "I Drove the Mercedes" t-shirts without much success. Instead I took his business card and went back to my hotel to wallow in self-indulgence once again.

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(continued from page 30)

echoed off unseen cliffs. The bearded man ran to catch up with Jack.

"There! There! Ya hear that?" Hezekiah asked at Jack's side. "That was an Injun signal if I ever heard one!" You got a gun?"

Jack sighed. "It was just a coyote, Hezekiah. And, no, I don't have a gun."

They heard a few more howls, closer this time.

"A coyote? You mean you can't tell the difference between a coyote and an Injun? Boy, how you been able to stay alive out here?"

One howl was very close.

Hezekiah was very agitated. "Aw, shoot, they know where we are! Say your prayers, Jack Elliot, we're gonna have a helluva haircut!"

Jack's smartass rebuttal was cut short by an arrow zipping

(continued on page 23)

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# A Word About Winter

Karen Riggs & Stephen Kramrech

---

The forest is turning into a melody of fall colors. Bright reds, vivid oranges, and golden yellows brighten up the sky overhead. The breeze begins to have a

crispness to it that is surely a welcome relief to the muggy days of summer. Our senses are refreshed by the scent of freshly falling leaves. The sounds of singing birds and the snap, crackle, pop of a campfire fill the air. People hope they have time to rush down to Red River Gorge to absorb its peak beauty for that one precious weekend that comes and goes so quickly each year.

Once this weekend passes the forest takes on a new personality. It suddenly becomes a dull brown. The crispness of the breeze will become sharper and sting the nostrils. Campfires will become havens for numb toes and fingers. The campfire songs will turn into steam as your hot breath hits the cold air. The flowing creek will have a deep, dark, cold blue color to it as it winds around the bright, white-covered rocks and sand. *Winter has arrived!*

Winter seems to be the cruelest season of all. No more enjoying nature till Spring. *What? Such Blasphemy!!* Winter can be one of the most beautiful seasons to see nature in its purity, whether you are hiking, cross country skiing, downhill skiing, or just ice skating on a secluded pond. The trees are bare of leaves, giving you a clear view of the animals that inhabit the branches above. Brush is down, allowing you to see the ground animals unobserved. The blanket of snow will give you clues as to who is hopping down the trail besides yourself, whether it be a snow bunny, a size 12 backpacker, or maybe even Bigfoot. The activity in winter is keyed to the animals' survival, such as chipmunks and squirrels digging through the snow for buried acorns, or the deer searching for

grass under the snow. The beauty of icicles and snow formations on rocks, trees, bushes and cliffs can be breath-taking. The excitement you feel when you come upon a flowing creek with snow-covered rocks and ice patches is worth the effort to enjoy nature during its cold season; an added plus is the absence of annoying mosquitos and horseflies.

Enjoying the cold season does take responsibility on your part. You must be prepared to be able to appreciate everything Winter has to offer. I'd like to offer you some guidelines to help ensure that you can participate in nature safely and comfortably during the winter months.

## *The Main Frame*

Everybody deserves to have a good set of long underwear. It is well worth the investment in a high-quality polypropylene or silk top and bottom set, which can be purchased at most outdoor shops. You should consider, when selecting long underwear, the different warmth ratings to correlate it with the type and length of activity you plan to do. This is your base layer. You should always build on this base layer for added warmth. To increase your warmth, be sure to have a wool sweater or a wind breaker (Gore-tex or nylon) for your torso and mid-weight wool pants for your lower body. Need even more warmth? Add a down or polyester parka. This layering method is the most effective since it will trap more body heat in several thin layers rather than the one thick layer and allow you to fine tune your warmth needs.

## *Your Tootsies*

Keeping your feet warm is one of the hardest things to do in the winter. The best

recommendation is a thick wool sock (or 2 thinner socks) over a liner sock (cotton, silk, polypro, or wool blend) and a good boot. Make sure to have extra socks in case one pair gets wet crossing creeks; you also want to be able to change socks at least once a day since the socks will become loaded with moisture and will not insulate as well as a dry pair. Once again, layering is better for trapping heat, plus the liner absorbs perspiration away from the feet to keep them dry and blister-free. The feet, however, usually do not get the proper gear. The first problem is the boot. When selecting boots, people usually do not ensure that there is adequate room for 2 or 3 socks and the wiggling of toes. Thus, the boots are too small and only one pair of socks will fit. Be careful not to lace your boots too tightly, which cuts off blood circulation and produces cold feet.

A winter boot needs to be water resistant. You can achieve this through using a wax (SnoSeal) or a silicon spray. Keeping your feet dry helps to prevent blisters. Be sure to carry moleskin, molesfoam, and first aid tape to give attention to blisters before they get out of hand. If you have a tendency to get blisters, I suggest taping those areas before you begin your hiking. You may want to bring goose down- or polyester-filled booties to wear in camp and while you sleep to keep your tootsies warm and comfy. To keep your feet warm, you keep them moving (walking, x-skiing, massaging). If you have naturally cold feet or poor circulation, be extra careful when outdoors in the winter to avoid frostbite and frostnip. If these occur, **DO NOT RUB WITH SNOW**, or use any other "home" remedy. Remember,

these injuries are similar to heat burns and should be treated similarly, i.e. keep clean, bandaged, and do not irritate.

#### Your Feelers

You need to keep your fingers nimble and active to set up the tent and stoke the fire. Two layers are recommended. There are several ways to do this. The first includes two mittens; a wool mitten on the inside and an outer mitten such as nylon to keep the wool dry. The mittens allow your fingers to provide warmth through their contact. However, the mitten does not allow dexterity for such detailed tasks as tying knots or working a stove, and you often have to remove them, exposing bare skin to the elements.

Another method includes a wool glove under the nylon mitten. The glove provides better movement without total exposure to the cold. However, you lose warmth by separating your fingers. The choice is up to you.

#### Your Noggin

Your head is a very important factor in how warm you are.

*You lose more of your body heat through your head and neck than any other part of your body, from about 40% to 60%.*

So tap into the heat source and keep the heat in by wearing a wool hat and possibly a down hood. You may want to have your face protected from the cold and wind. Some hats have face guards or you may use a scarf or bandanna. Depending on your activity, a pair of sunglasses or ski goggles may be necessary to protect your eyes from wind, cold, and especially intense ultraviolet rays reflected from the snow-covered landscape. It is also a good idea to apply a strong sunscreen and lip balm to protect your face and lips from windburn and sunburn.

#### Your Nest

If it's not a nice condo with a fireplace, be sure to have

a sleeping bag that will keep you warm at the temperatures you will be subjected to on the trip. Your JC Penney family camper rectangular bag will not do. The most warmth for the minimum size and weight is the mummy (daddy?) shape, usually with a hood to cover the head. While many people initially feel claustrophobic in one you can learn to tolerate it. Also, the lower the temperature rating you desire, you will find less selection in shape. At about a zero-degree rating most manufacturers cease offering anything but a mummy style. Make sure you have an appropriate bag, whether it is down or synthetic material. Down bags cost more, have a larger comfort range, and are light, but lose almost all warmth value if wet. A synthetic bag costs less, weighs more, but retains most warmth even when wet. A thermally insulating ground pad is an absolute necessity in the winter. This keeps you off the cold ground and forms a warmer layer between you and the ground.

#### Your Shelter

Make sure you have a tent even if you plan to stay at a trail cabin. Several things could happen, like finding it burned down, not finding it at all, finding it critter-infested, or not being able to reach the cabin and having to tent it. The tent should have a rain (snow) fly that fits over top of the main tent body and comes down almost to the ground. This will help keep the heat in. A loosely-pitched tent with open doors or windows will create great discomfort when the wind blows and the fly flaps in the wind all night. However, be sure to have at least 2 openings to allow air to circulate during the night. This prevents condensation build-up both on the inside of the tent and in your sleeping bag.

#### First Aid

As mentioned above, frostbite and frostnip are not things to ignore (as if you could). Once again let me remind you to treat the affected area gently. Never rub it or put any ointments or lotions on it. If kept clean and protected

(bandaged), your body will heal itself quite well without your help. If your toes are affected, be very careful; if you must hike, keep your boots loose, and, if possible, redistribute your load among your trailmates to save your feet.

The progression of symptoms leading from frostnip to frostbite are as follows: sharp pains in the affected area; total loss of sensation; the skin becomes white and waxy-looking and loses its resiliency; and finally it becomes black (gangrene quickly follows).

But, as bad as frostbite can be, hypothermia is even worse, since this is a lowering of the temperature in the core of the body. Although the prime conditions for hypothermia are 40-50 degrees air temperature, rain, and a moderate wind, it can occur anytime. Symptoms are intense, uncontrollable shivering, followed by reduction of higher mental processes and an "inability to get warm", loss of coordination, slurred speech, irrational behavior, loss of voluntary muscle control, and ultimately, death. Prevention is actually very simple. Add, to what has been said in the article, putting wind/rain clothing on before you become wet/chilled, stopping physical exertions to conserve heat, and eating foods with a high caloric content that are rapidly metabolized, i.e. candy, cheese, peanuts, etc. On no account should you drink alcohol; while it provides a temporary feeling of warmth, it costs your body more energy (read heat) to metabolize it than it provides.

# Sloan's Surprise

Mark Suer

Spending a day in one of Kentucky's largest caves can lead to many unexpected surprises, especially when one is travelling a passage that is new to him.

So, out of curiosity and adventure, I decided to lead a trip to Sloan's Valley Cave, mainly to explore the Appalachian Trail via the Post Office Pit.

On August 15, Steve Niseman, the Heltkamps— Katt, Brenda and Jerry—, and myself arrived first at the sight late Friday night under a clear starry sky. As we were preparing our camp for the night, the remaining members of the descent team arrived— Mark Guttadauro, Bill Banks and the Strebas— Jeff and Bob. We spent the rest of the night psyching ourselves up by playing a few friendly games of euchre.

Since we were going to be underground for a long time, I decided that it would be a good idea to get everyone up at six-thirty, which in the end turned out to be one of the most dangerous missions of the trip. However, after having breakfast and a short hike, we were ready to descend into Post Office Pit, which surprisingly is located behind a post office. The pit is twenty-five feet deep and has a small concrete structure over it with a permanent cable ladder attached to it. Before we entered, I explained the general laws of caving to the first-timers: "Take nothing but pictures, leave nothing but footprints, and kill nothing but time." I also explained my own personal amendment: "No one eats any 'White Castles' (commonly known as rectal rockets) before caving." The main reason being that it can be catastrophic if one lets one loose in the vicinity of a carbide lamp in a tight crawl. Thank God the nearest "White Castle" was in Lexington.

As I began to take pictures of the entrance, I realized I forgot one other law— Murphy's

Law: "Anything that can go wrong, will." A particular favorite corollary of mine is, "The most critical part of any plan stands the greatest chance of being omitted." Murphy's Law is the only law I not only observe quite often but the only law I can consistently obey. The White Grotto (a room full of spectacular formations) will just have to wait for my photo session due to a dead camera battery.

At the bottom of the pit at a fork, there was a good display of flowstone. The passage quickly turned into a three-foot crawl which ended at a hole in the floor. Mark decided to chimney down the hole first. However, as he began to lose his footing on the slippery walls, he asked Bill and me to hold his arms, but he just slipped through our hands into the hole. Although the hole was only nine feet deep, I thought I was a good candidate for triple bypass surgery as I saw him slip into nothingness. However, Mark was OK and the rest of us safely climbed down. After taking a couple of short detours (definition: going the wrong way due to an error in reading the map), we found ourselves in the Wall Room — a twenty foot high room filled with large breakdown. As we continued our quest for the Appalachian Trail, we saw some excellent displays of rimstones on the way towards the Fountain of Youth.

Just before we arrived at the Fountain of Youth, I managed to make yet another detour at a fork [I have trouble discriminating between my left and my right] and ended up in a long crawlway. Knowing that we were going the wrong way, we worked our way back to the fork. After a short time Mark and I managed to find the way to the

Fountain, a small hole through breakdown. While I went ahead to confirm that this was the correct route, Mark waited for everyone else to show them where the hole was. The Fountain is a pit twenty feet deep and twenty feet in diameter with a small trickle of water entering it from the ceiling. After traversing the pit on a ledge (Bill tapped-denced on the ledge to display its safety), I looked at the map seeing we were headed towards the Big Room. The Big Room is about 300 feet long, 200 feet wide and 75 feet high (Big is an understatement!), with two routes connecting it to the Fountain: the North and South overlooks. Since the North overlook is a 25 foot drop, I chose the South overlook which has a drop of only eight feet, or so I thought.

As we approached the overlook, I noticed that the drop was at least forty feet! Wondering where the eight foot drop was, Mark called out saying he found a rope bolted to the wall which dropped down to a rock about four feet in diameter. This was the eight foot drop— if you missed the rock, it magically became another thirty feet. After checking the quality of the bolt and the knotted loops in the rope, I descended first and safely made it to the ledge which widened as one traversed it. One can only appreciate the size of the room when one is on the bottom and he can see lights forty feet above himself.

After everyone safely descended, we met three other fellow NSS (National Speleological Society) members from Akron who were going to raft from the Big Room to the Fountain. After conversing with them on the various aspects of caving, we wished them well on

their excursion and headed towards the Bedroom. To get to the Bedroom, we had to climb a thirty-foot steep slope (80 degrees). One could free climb the slope, but we used the rope left behind by the Akron rafting party to assure our footing on the loose rock. From the Bedroom, we headed directly into the Appalachian Trail which is where we stopped for lunch (quite a long morning). We stopped at Echo Junction where the passage is about 100 feet wide and 70 feet wide, which permitted us a little elbow room to eat. Bill,

sitting on the other side of the passage, set his carbide lamp directly to his left which threw frightfully obscure shadows on the far wall. As he ate, we watched Bill's shadow, which resembled a huge science fiction creature, with a large head but relatively tiny hands, devouring a rather large chicken leg. The quality of the entertainment far exceeded the quality of the food, which was the standard gorp (raisins, peanuts and M&M's) and water from an old shampoo bottle which mysteriously tasted like "Head and Shoulders" — quite appetizing.

out. However, we did not make that mistake again as we headed down the crawl way to the Connection Dome, out of which we had to climb. One has to chimney up a three-foot wide crack for about forty feet. This is Jeff's favorite part of the cave as he nicknamed it "The Crevice." Once we climbed out of the crack and crawled toward the entrance, it dawned on me that the whole route from Garbage Pit to Screamin' Willy's was basically all crawling. It was hard to believe that we had been crawling for the past two hours.

As we were putting our food back into our packs, we heard this large splash which was Bill struggling to get out of the slippery pool he had stumbled into. When he returned to where we were, we asked him how wet he got. He just replied, "Up to Sorbonne", referring to the lettering at armpit level on his shirt. So as to avoid any complications with hypothermia, we decided to get moving to warm ourselves up, especially Bill. We headed down the remaining passage of the Appalachian Trail, avoiding the First Lake Room (for obvious reasons), and arrived at the Garbage Pit Entrance. At this point we had been in the cave for about six hours. Katt and Brenda, who were a little tired, and Bill who was a little wet, decided to exit the cave while the rest of us headed for the Screamin' Willy's Entrance.

We were not out yet, however. To get to the Screamin' Willy's entrance, which is a 54 foot pit, one has to climb into a small hole in the wall about ten feet off the floor. After some of us had climbed into the hole and into the pit, Mark unsuccessfully tried and fell sharply on a rock, severely bruising his leg in the process. Since Mark was unable to climb due to numbness in his leg, I sent Jeff to get the rope so that we could assist Mark in climbing the wall. However, as Jeff was climbing the cable ladder I had rigged before we had descended, Mark found an alternate route. There was a small crawlway under the wall that I did not know existed. Although Mark did not have to climb the ledge, he still had to climb the ladder, which he was practically unable to do. After I had ascended to the surface, I quickly rigged a belay and beckoned Mark to begin climbing. Although he did slip a couple of times and took many rest, he finally reached the surface in good shape and spirits. I was relieved that Mark was OK and the injury was "relatively" minor. After we were all out, it was six o'clock. We quickly collected our gear and headed for some real food— Joe Bologna's, a USMC tradition.

At this point, I gave the map to Steve who wanted a little practice in map reading, for I knew the way to Screamin' Willy's. The first passage was a crawlway which led us to the X Corner via the Music Room— a small room filled with brown formations. From the X Corner, Steve directed us down another crawl, the Scowling Tom Junction (which branches off to the Scowling Tom Entrance) to the Grand Central Station. Steve had a little trouble finding the continuing passage at the Station because it is a little hole under an overhanging rock. In this passage on a previous trip, we made the mistake of going down to the base level where the mud was so slick one could barely climb

During our dinner we reflected on the day's events and were content with the amount of excitement we experienced for one day. It was one trip that contained more than its share of unexpected tribulations and problems although it still remained very stimulating. Maybe too stimulating.


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# Mountain Men: Cliffhanger

Larry Bortner

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*(If you recall the initial exciting installment of this ongoing tale of rugged men in the mountains— or boys running away to the hills if you prefer—, we left Cincinnati Jack Eliot lost somewhere in the Wind River range in Wyoming, sitting down to tea with the Devil. Or was it screaming under an overhang in a severe thunderstorm? Careful, Jack, your tea might get weak....)*

Cold. Too cold. A shiver aroused him. Pain. Discomfort. Hell of a headache.

Jack Eliot hugged his soggy sleeping bag tighter and wriggled to find a more comfortable position to no avail. Too many rocks.

What was that digging into his back? He felt with his left hand. His pack? How'd that get there? He opened his eyes, suddenly wide awake. Where was his tent?

The predawn grayness revealed an eerie landscape of dark, wet rocks and hinted at mountains lurking behind the cover of a misty rain. But no green tent.

Then he remembered the storm. The lightning, the rip in the tent, the frantic rush to the overhang, the Devil—the Devil?! Did that mean he was in—?

Something behind him moved.

He was sharing this shelter with something. He held his breath and froze. Was it a devil? Or a bear? Did it matter? He slowly turned his head to get a view of it.

"Eeerrrrrgggghhhhhlll!"

Jack heard the deep scream at the same time he sensed out of the corner of his eye a huge, dark shape lunge toward him. He screamed back at the apparition and rolled quickly away, abandoning his bag and his pack. He ran out into the boulder field to escape. Hell or no Hell, he

wasn't about to succumb to torture or mangling or whatever.

He glanced over his shoulder. The thing— It was the Devil!— was chasing him and yelling its head off. It was fight or flight for Jack. In his untied boots and his polypropylene long johns, he wasn't going to go far. Maybe he couldn't win against the Devil, but he might earn His respect; he didn't want to lose his own. He found a clear patch of tundra and turned to face it.

It was soon upon him, coming over the top with what looked like a big old pigsticker of a knife. Instinctively he threw up a cross block with his forearms to catch the Devil's arm below the wrist. Stepping to the side, he grabbed the wrist and twisted. The knife dropped free and the thing dropped unceremoniously to the ground, immobilized by Jack's hold on its wrist.

Breathing heavily, the adrenaline still rushing through his veins, Jack took a closer look at his attacker. Maybe it wasn't the Devil. Or else the Devil hadn't been through any of Master Helms's karate classes. It looked sort of like a man. Ragged, dirty clothes and a big mass of tangled, unwashed hair on the back of its head. It was hard to tell in the wet twilight.

"Well, what ya waitin' for, ya cussed Injun?" a voice came from beneath the head. "Git it over with."

Jack was startled. "Uh, get what over with?"

"Aw, hell, I knew it. You damn Blackfeet are all alike. You're into torture and sacrifices. Why don't you just take my scalp and get it over with!"

"What?" Jack twisted the arm and got a look at a bearded face. "You're not the Devil!"

He released the man, who spun around on his knees to face Jack before he stood up warily. "Course I ain't the Devil. And you don't look like no Injun."

Jack picked up the knife and tossed it from hand to hand. "I ain't no Injun. Jack Eliot's the name."

"Hezekiah Marker." He kept an eye on his knife. "What do you do? You shore ain't no trapper."

Jack laughed. "No, I'm not a trapper. I'm just a lowly student out here hiking around for a few weeks. Hey, maybe you can get me back to Big Sandy. Know where it is?"

"Big Sandy?"

"Yeah, that's where my car is." Jack tossed the knife back to its owner. "Tell you what. I'll whip us up some breakfast and you can tell me how to get out."

Hezekiah was puzzled. "Look, Jack Eliot, I don't know what your doin' here, but I do know that Blackfeet stole my horse and my fixin's and they won't stop till they get my scalp. If you got any way to git out, git."

Jack, who had started back to the overhang, stopped and turned. "You must be one of those Viet Nam veterans who couldn't handle civilization when they got back, so they took to the wilderness. Fine. I don't care if you still think there's a war on and the gooks are now 'Injuns'. If you can tell me how to get to Big Sandy, I'd appreciate it. If not, it's been nice knowing you." Jack headed to the overhang, shaking his head.

Hezekiah stood agape, as if he couldn't believe Jack's words. The mist was lifting and the sky was brightening. A distant howl

*(continued on page 26)*

# Letter From the President

Dennis Dziech

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The *Goose Down Gazette* contains enthusiastic stories of past trips such as rafting, caving, canoeing, bicycling, mountaineering, and backpacking that have been taken by

members of the Mountaineering Club. It not only reports on, but also generates interest in these sports. The *Goose Down* is also a newsletter for those members of the club who have the misfortune of not being able to attend the weekly meetings held in room 510 Swift Hall at 7:00 P.M. Wednesday.

The club is open to anyone that is interested in outdoor adventure. There is no charge by the club to participate in club activities; however, use of club equipment is restricted to dues-paying members. The fee is minimal at \$5.00 per quarter, or \$10.00 for Fall, Winter and Spring quarters. Our equipment inventory includes backpacks, sleeping bags, tents, climbing and caving gear, cross-country skis, two canoes, and a white water raft. Not only do we have all the necessary equipment to enjoy these activities, but our experienced members love to teach those interested in learning outdoor skills.

UCMC is currently selling our popular *Couch Potato* design T-shirt. The shirt features the classic Allan Sutherland rendition of a catatonic couch potato that gained instant popularity last year on our open house posters. The theme of "Mash a Couch Potato!" echoes one of the tenets of the Mountaineering Club: Why sit around watching TV when you can be outside *doing* something?

The Club offers many leisure time activities to ward off the couch potato syndrome, for everyone from

the beginner to the hard core. Recent events include partying at Riverfest, biking on the Loveland Bike Trail, horseback riding near East Fork Lake, canoeing the waters of Canada, and mountaineering on the Grand Teton in Wyoming. One of the more interesting events to which the Club was invited was a pre-showing of a mountaineering play called *K2*, after which the members went backstage, met the two actors portraying the mountaineers, and discussed the play with them.

The Club has many trips and interesting lectures scheduled for this year. The Club also offers exciting slide shows and helpful hints for improving your outdoor skills. One of these will be a course lasting through the year on leadership. In the Fall we will have a backpacking course, in the Winter a caving course, and in the Spring a basic climbing course. There are also sprinkled throughout the year (usually) fee-less seminars on more specialized activities such as canoeing and cross country skiing.

I would like to ask for the members' appreciation of the Club officers, both formal and informal, and the staff of the *Goose Down*, as well as any others who have contributed their time and energy to keeping the Club a fun group. Anyone interested in becoming an officer or contributing in any other way should express their desires to one of the officers.

Let's have some fun together this year!