The Goose down Gazette

Winter/Spring/Summer/Fall 1989 Volume 12 Number 1

A Note from the President

Carl Bolyard

I would like to extend a warm welcome to readers both new and old— the *Goose Down Gazette* is finally here. Allow me to take this opportunity to express my excitement about our club and to toast to our success in the coming year.

I was proudly paging through our famous *Goose Down* archives yesterday afternoon and could not help taking some time to reflect upon the club's achievements. Great trips, good writing, dazzling slide shows, and a close bond among those of us who love and admire the outdoors have made the Mountaineering Club's program *great*. This is something we can be proud of as a club and should hold on to. The question you may ask, though, whether you are apathetic or ardent about the coming year with the club, is, "How can we maintain our exciting program?" I honestly feel that we have no major obstacles to overcome this year and that our plan for success need not be complex.

One of our first strong points needs to be our newsletter itself. The "Goose Down Gazette is our legacy to future clubs and a record of our achievements. Items ranging the gamut from exciting to funny to informative have graced these pages and will continue to do so. As a way to interest new members and entertain current ones, I urge folks to please continue writing about all that is pertinent to us. I would also like to thank all of our contributors to this issue.

Of course, there are also our trips, without which we could not have all these interesting articles, much less the club itself. By all means, we plan on taking some great trips this year. In the past few months, we have been canyoneering in Utah for our T-shirt picture, mountaineering in the San Juans of southwestern Colorado, and climbing new as well as classic routes in the Pacific northwest. The club went cycling in Nova Scotia, backpacking on Cumberland Island off the coast of Georgia, and canoeing in the waters of Canada's Algonquin Provincial Park. Members managed to get to Yellowstone to see the burn, Mt. St. Helens to see the crater, and numerous spots in Kentucky (all underground) to take pictures and go where no *homo sapiens* has gone before. We cosponsored an excellent campus-wide program by Alan Kesselheim and Mary Pat Zitzer on their two-year canoe trip across Canada, and we just ran our rock climbing class on the coldest weekend in history. This doesn't even begin to scratch the surface of our activities.

Although I can't ruin the surprise for you by revealing all the places where members are headed for this year, I can tell you that we anticipate a very high instructor— as well as student— turnout for our spring climbing course, winter caving course, the wilderness skills and backpacking seminars, and of course, the putt-putt golf tutoring. Trips are the best way to meet our members and we do instruct those who feel like they need more experience before they leave on a trip. I definitely recommend getting outside with our members. You won't be disappointed.

The club is also geared toward helping protect and preserve the environment that we play in and enjoy. In addition to launching a recycling program and running our own cleanups of heavily-used areas, the club makes contributions to groups such as the Nature Conservancy, National Parks, and the Sierra Club's Legal Defense Fund. Our volunteerism shall remain high for protecting and preserving our environment, not only to benefit ourselves, but also to encourage others to save precious natural spaces.

Finally, a very simple factor comes into play that is healthy for our club and will make this year a good one. The French refer to *esprit de corps*— and they're not speaking of the yuppie clothing line. I'm talking about that love of the outdoors that creates a warm, fuzzy feeling deep within us and brings diverse, interesting people together. Like I've said before, if you haven't gotten out recently, go on a club trip! Keep up the fun stuff by writing, traveling, cleaning up, and meeting people outside, 'cause that's what we're about. If *anyone* sees a stranger at a club meeting, please utilize your right hand for shaking and smile when you introduce yourself. This is a fun group of folks, so let's get to doing just that— as a club that everyone can enjoy.

I'd like to thank everyone who has helped out so far this year, as well as all the members in general for their enthusiasm and support. Keep it up, guys, the good stuff is just starting. If anyone needs anything, I am in the office in 217 TUC, fending off Republicans. For you heavy breathers, my home phone is 751-6150. Call if you need anything or if you want to go outside this weekend. That's all for now, guys— We're out of here!

Volume 12 Number 1

The Editors

Well, Great Sufferin' Horny Toads! The 1989 edition of the *Goose Down Gazette*, an epic masterpiece of the travails of the trails, to coin a phrase, is here. Some of you may wonder what happened to the spring edition. For the past few years we've been coming out with at least two issues a year. For one thing, we've changed our production methods; we have gone from 30 monkeys in a room full of typewriters to 3 monkeys on 3 PC's with 3 different word processors— talk about progress! For another thing, we've had 4 different editors and publication kept having a low priority.

The Goose Down Gazette is the official publication of the University of Cincinnati Mountaineering Club. It is published approximately twice a year, depending on the schedule of the editorial staff. All illustrations and text of this publication are ©1989 by the U.C. Mountaineering Club. Articles for the next edition are now being laughed at— uh, *accepted* at the UCMC office or mailing address. Constructive criticism of this publication will be kindly accepted, but completely ignored unless the author of the comments offers his talents for future journalistic endeavors. Write or visit the club's office at:

Goosedown Gazette

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Steve Must on rappel off of a virgin summit in the Northeast Cascades. Illustration by Pat Artman from a photo by Alex Cudkowicz.

Are we having fun yet?

The Goosedown Gazette

1989— The Whole Year Volume 12 Number 1

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Goose Down Gossip

What's Smelly and What's Not

The Nose

The current pervasiveness of scandal and corruption in Washington politics is all too apparent, but it hits a raw nerve when it occurs within our midst, between the previously untainted walls of 510 Swift.

The 1989-90 UCMC Officer Elections were held at the meeting on May 24. The race was wide open with a near record number of presidential nominees. All of the six nominees were young, enthusiastic members, each one with leadership potential and their own personal contribution to offer the club. After each one had a chance to express their intentions as leader of the club, they were ushered outside while the remaining members raked them over the coals and shot down this one and that one while lobbying for their favorite. The debate dragged on and many of the **Honorary Members** (a.k.a. **Ye Olde Tymers**) cried out to end the fiasco and vote. In a change of protocol, all three officers— President, Vice President, and Treasurer— were elected before any of the nominees returned to the meeting. Although all the candidates had decided to run for president, there appeared to be confusion as to who wanted to be in the running for VP and treasurer.

The results were as follows:

President— Karl Bolyard
VicePresident— Phil Wilkin
Treasurer— Beth Reimers

As the congratulations and condolences were being presented, **Jerry Bargo** announced that there had been foul play in the vote for treasurer and a re-election for that position would be held the following week. This was a close race between **Steve Neiman** and **Beth Reimers**. It turned out that some of the eligible voters had withheld their VP ballot and turned in more than one for the treasurer election. This was determined by the presence of a few conspicuous similarly handwritten ballots for treasurer.

Steve, who had not made it clear that he was even interested in the position in the first place, gracefully ended the controversy by declining to run again for the position. He felt that two years was more than enough.

Late breaking news as we go to press: **Phil W.** has tendered his resignation as VP, effective the moment the first champagne bottle pops at The New Year's Party at Hueston Woods. Reasons? Something about schoolwork. Special election to be held on November 29, '89. Good job, Phil... Speaking of resigning VP's, is anyone surprised that **Mona Bracey** hasn't shown up?

Gosh, has it been a whole year since the last issue came out? My, my, my. We must have been very *busy* going on all these fantastic trips and excursions, too busy to tell anyone about it. Or maybe we've just been having too many ***parties***, hmmm? Let's see, where shall we start? Ahhh... 1989 began with a bang at the annual **New Year's Party at Hueston Woods**. Good food, good company, moonlight hikes, snowball fights, and ice sculpture contests were some of the highlights... Some Olde Tymers (**Larry B., Dan L., Roland E., Laura J., Jeanne V.,** and **Anne O.**) went to Aspen last February. Unconfirmed reports indicate they actually got some skiing in... **Steve Must** had a graduation party at 444 that drew quite a crowd... **Gwen Wise** had a big, big party out at her folk's place in Indiana, highlighted by a barbecue in the barn (couldn't keep the fire going in the rain) and the annual midnight skinny dipping... **Bob and Cindy Kessler** had their annual open house at their renovated homestead in Loveland. The ropes course, as well as the killer croquet, was, as usual, quite stimulating... **Larry Bortner** had another pig roast out at his parents' place. **Roland E.** chose not to play volleyball, but was a rather strict referee... **Mark Carter** threw a Kiwi-type housewarming up in Lebanon, complete with roast lamb... **Allan Sutherland** moved across the river into Kentucky and gave a party to celebrate his new digs... **Paul Even** stepped in to throw the club **Halloween Party** when Bob and Cindy had business committments. **Jerry Bargo** came as an old hag that nobody recognized for a few hours. **Matt Lehr** and **Brian Quinn** were very convincing as Hans und Franz. Many ladies showed up, stayed late, and still congregated in front of Scioto the next morning at 7 a.m. for the Ladies Only backpacking trip.

UCMC, the Second Generation: Cyndy (Schmid) Driehaus gave birth to **Danielle**, just about the same time **Lisha and Chris Gerding** brought **Benjamin** into the world. Less than a week after their baby shower, **Laura and Bill Strachan** became first-time parents with the birth of their daughter **Suzanne Nicole**. And congratulations are in order to **Jane and Paul Wieland** for their pending young one. When are we going to have our first Toddler's Climbing Course?

Down the Trail (Things to look forward to): the **Fifth Annual New Year's Party at Hueston Woods**. We rent a couple of cabins for a couple of nights, drink a lot of beer (for those so inclined), and eat huge group meals. It's a great time; don't miss it. Contact Amy Kruse, who fronted the money for the cabins this year... Ski trips! (Not just day trips to Perfect North or Mad River or General Butler...) Over the Martin Luther King 3-day weekend, **Fay Belt** has offered her folk's place as basecamp for X-C-ing, downhilling, or snowshoeing in upstate New York. Hey, guys, no goats or chainsaws this time, okay?... A bunch of **Ye Olde Tymers** are flying out to Lake Tahoe Jan. 26 to Feb. 4. Notice how they're discriminating against students by going about as far away as possible, and right during midterms? Prospective Ski Pirates and Schussbucklers hunt down **Larry B.**... Another **Kessler Canyon Trip** is shaping up for next September... Odors from my crystal ball are growing faint... What's this? More canoeing in Canada?... Hiking out West?... Climbing in the Bugaboos?... Mexico?... Patagonia?... Nepal?... Iceland?... Red River Gorge?...

A mountaineer may be satisfied to nurse his athletic infancy upon home rocks, and he may be happy to pass the later years of his experience among the more elusive impressions and more subtle romance of our old and quiet hills. But in the storm years of his strength he should test his powers, learn his craft and earn his triumphs in conflict with the abrupt youth and warlike habit of great glacial ranges.
—Geoffrey Winthrop Young

Pick Slickrock Over Quicksand

Mark Guttadauro and Paul Kramer

Kicking through the desert and canyons around Escalante, Utah

(This is a continuation of ***Didacts and Narpets*** *from Vol. 11, No. 1)*

A nice day for a hike", was someone's comment as we all stood around the van. Slowly, one by one, each person finished arranging gear in their backpacks and set off down the road. The van was parked at the end of the so-called road on the Early Weed Bench, which is on the rim of Escalante Canyon. A few hundred yards back down the road, Steve and I stopped at our jumping-off spot. This was where we were to cut across the open slickrock and climb down into Fox Canyon. The view was amazing. You looked out upon desolation, flat ground going on forever. It was hard to imagine that there was a canyon out there somewhere...

As we crossed the slickrock, everyone commented on how strange this was, like sand dunes turned to stone. Up and down we went, but mostly down, and eventually we crossed the upper reaches of Fox Canyon and began to look for a way down into the main part of the canyon. A fifty-foot friction walk down steep slickrock followed by a thirty-foot sand hill and we were in the bottom of the canyon. Great! Now it would be all easy cruising from here.

Hey! Where did all these trees and weeds come from? This is like fighting your way through a jungle! Hey, Bob! Are all the canyons going to be like this?

We struggled along Fox Canyon, pushing through heavy undergrowth, packs catching on branches and prickly weeds scraping our legs. Finally, we broke into the open and we could see Twenty-five Mile Wash in the distance. There was even a dry stream bed to walk in to get there. "Too bad", said Bob. "It's quicksand! Let's take to the weeds." Soon Bob, Paul, Steve and myself stood in the ankle-deep water of Twenty-five Mile Wash looking around to bigger canyon and playing in the quicksand. Unfortunately for Cindy and Allan, they didn't see us detour around the quicksand and blundered right in to our great amusement. Only a foot deep! What a shame.

By early afternoon, we realized that we were in trouble, that we weren't making good progress because the wash meanders much more than we thought. As the day wore on, we became more and more strung out. Paul and myself reached the Escalante River almost an hour ahead of anyone else. Steve and Allan were next and they looked very relieved to have finally reached the river. Mark S., Mike, Bob and Cindy brought up the rear as one big group. Cindy's only comment was that had she known the hike to the river was this long she would have suggested camping before this. Oh, yeah! The Escalante River was about fifteen to thirty feet wide, anywhere from ankle-deep to waist-deep, and very muddy. But the canyon was awesome. Three-hundred feet high on each side and it took days to achieve the perspective to appreciate the view.

Now the fun began. It was time to purify water. Sound easy? Wrong! The Escalante is a very muddy river, so it was necessary to use a water purification pump. An easy quart of water every five minutes. One quart down, only fifteen to go...

Sand became your best buddy. No matter where you looked, there it was, in your shoes, sleeping bag, backpack, dinner, tent, and camera.

The next three days seemed to flow together. Hiking in the river was the hardest walking I'd ever done on a level surface. Walking on sand was hard to start with; cover it with muddy water so you couldn't see the bottom, mix in a few submerged rocks to trip on and there's your trail. Just remember to avoid the quicksand. If you don't like the river, you can always hike on the beaches, but then you are back in the weeds trying to fight your way along a cow path.

The most interesting part of these three days was exploring the two side canyons, Moody Canyon and East Moody Canyon. On the one side canyon, a group of us hiked up to a rincon, a point where a meandering river has eroded through the wall of a canyon, leaving a passage for the water to run straight through and bypass the older, less direct path. This same side canyon was littered with pieces of petrified wood. Another interesting encounter was when we spotted Anasazi Indian ruins high up in the middle of the cliff walls.

During these three days it ranged from partly cloudy to totally overcast. Bob kept telling us, "It never rains in the desert." There were a couple of times Bob had to tell us that it was just a heavy dew. Sometimes even a few days worth all at once. We won't even mention the flash flood we had one night.

Animal tracks were everywhere. No matter where you looked, there were a set of tracks. We identified tracks of a bobcat, cougar, beaver, ring-tailed cat, mule deer, frog, heron, and of course, the ferocious range bear (also known as a cow).

The fifth day was different. A short stroll down the river and we had arrived at Scorpion Gulch. It was time to begin our ascent to the canyon rim. The first mile consisted of tall, thick weeds a la Fox Canyon and then we were in the section that tested your scrambling and stemming proficiency with a full pack— why didn't they teach this in the climbing course? Soon after this, we passed the last pool of water and decided to stop and have dinner, right next to a cow skull. After dinner and a long rest, we filled our water bottles and continued on up Scorpion Gulch. After a short detour up a dead end box canyon, we were back on track, into sand and hiking uphill to boot. The scenery more than made up for the rough going. It was absolutely fantastic. Then we ran out the sand dune— an eighty-foot climb up a steep hill of sand. The view from the top— great!! The other side was an eighty-foot climb down. All that work for nothing! Luckily, we were then able to hike for a half mile on level sand, having a great time, let me tell you! Then we saw our exit, a one-hundred-and-fifty-foot climb up a steep hill of sand to the slickrock above. Paul

Daniels

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We've got the food, the fun, the drink. Just bring in your friends to make your evening complete.

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summed up how we all felt— "This sucks."

Suddenly, we were on top. My only thought was, "Just slickrock now, no more sand!" If I only knew what those last five miles involved before I said that.

Section #4

Cursed by Zipsplat, the god of zippers, my tent mate, Mark Suer, and I were left without a screen to protect us from the creatures of the night. It wasn't long after we had settled into our tent when a single mosquito buzzed in to join us. Normally, I try to respect all forms of life and avoid killing creatures if at all possible, but after several hours of having the creature buzz in our ears, I proclaimed, "That damn mosquito is gonna die!" Mark agreed. So we spent a good portion of the night, lying and listening and waving and slapping at the enemy we couldn't see. This was our Vietnam and, quite frankly, we lost big time. Sometimes, it seemed that sucker (and I'm using that term literally) didn't just want our blood; she wanted to torture us psychologically, to humiliate us to the point where we were actually talking to an insect. It worked.

The next morning when we got up (notice I didn't say "woke up"), we found that no one else had slept very well either. We had four and a half miles of open desert to cross to reach the van. By starting early, we hoped to cross the arid landscape of sand, slickrock, and scattered plants before the heat of midday had set in. That was a good plan.

As has been documented in many old movies and some stupid books, walking through the desert can cause one to have hallucinations. Most people hallucinate about water or food. I was hallucinating about women, but Mark Guttadauro claims he saw an animal. "A jackrabbit the size of a deer. It must have weighed more than a hundred pounds," he explained. I was hoping that somehow our hallucinations had been combined into one reality and that what Mark really saw was an out-of-work Playboy Bunny from the recently closed Playboy Club in Las Vegas. No such luck.

It was a pretty rough hike and we were sweating like humans when we reached the van, but we were in pretty good spirits. So, the smelly eight of us hopped in the van and began traveling the dirt "road" to the gravel road which led to a paved road which eventually led to the town of Escalante. Crossing the dirt "road" can be credited to the road maintenance efforts of Cindy, Mark S., and Mark G. as well as Bob's Evil Kneivel style of driving.

Something must have happened to us during our hike across the desert, because suddenly this gang of outdoor adventurers had metamorphosed into something resembling a FAMILY OF MIDDLE CLASS AMERICAN TOURONS!! (*Organ music swells. A scream is heard in the distance, is suddenly cut off...*)

For the next few days, we hit some of the tourist hot spots— Bryce Canyon, Mesa Verde, and Monument Valley. We stopped to go shopping in Durango, Colorado, and hit a lot of Mom and Pop restaurants.

For a while, Cindy ("Mom") was driving while Bob ("Dad") was sitting in the passenger seat reading us ("kids") stories from the National Star about subjects like, "Statue of Elvis found on Mars!"

Early in the trip, Paul proudly claimed that he could fall asleep anywhere, anytime within five minutes. If he ever tells you this, *don't doubt him!* Five minutes is an exaggeration— most of the time it only took him two or three minutes. If speed dozing ever becomes an Olympic sport, Paul is sure to bring the U.S.A. a gold metal.

Escape from Ohio:

Flight 315 New Orleans— Belize

Allan Sutherland

Welcome to the Jungle— the real jungle— and ancient Mayan ruins

Rarely is that a trip goes off without some kind of unforeseen crisis popping up, especially if you're vacationing in a less-developed tropical country. Anything can go wrong, from having your plane flights canceled to being interrogated at gunpoint by suspicious guerrillas. Adding to this the fact that,"... all our arrangements had been made for us," Joyce Turner and myself were a little apprehensive when we got off the plane in Belize without a clue as to what we would be doing, or if anyone would be there to meet us at all.

But first, some background info... Almost two years prior to this, Joyce and I had donated illustrations for a children's book written by Sharon Matola, director of the Belize Zoo. In gratitude, she had offered us an all expenses-paid trip to Belize last July. We chose to fly out from New Orleans, which turned out to be the perfect jumping off point for the tropics. We arrived at our hotel in the French Quarter in time for Bastille Day, which was not quite Mardi Gras, but still makes our Oktoberfest look like bingo night at a senior center. The next morning brought a remarkable change to the town. The barf had been hosed off the sidewalks and the Quarter was alive with exotic charm. The colonial architecture and French names blended perfectly with the palms, magnolias, and huge live oaks draped in Spanish moss. While we were walking past a line of street artists, a drunken man pulled up next to us for directions. When we told him we were from Cincinnati, he said,"No kiddin'! I'm from North College Hill!" Hmmm, small world.

Before we were ready to leave, we found ourselves on the flight to Belize. Baggage claim was madness in the hot darkness of the cramped airport, but when we stepped out into the tropical sunlight, everything started to come together. Someone *was* waiting for us, and we were driven inland to Chaa Creek where we met our traveling group. Sharon Matola was leading an International Expeditions tour through Belize and Guatemala, so she just added us onto the group as her guests. We ended up with a great package deal— transportation, itinerary, guides, meals, and lodging included.

Our cabin at Chaa Creek looked exactly like a fine jungle lodge should. The roofs were elaborate patterns of support poles covered with palm thatch. The floors were flagged with tiles and the windows had no screens. At night, bats flew doughnuts in the rafters above us, making sure that bugs kept away.

After breakfast the next morning, we went canoeing on the Mocal River. It was similar to a canoe trip here except for all the exotic birds and huge green iguanas that we saw. After hauling out, we visited Rio Frio Cove, a former habitat of ancient Mayan Indians. The cave ran through a hill and was shaped like a horseshoe, open at both ends. The ceiling was about fifty feet high, and there was a white sand beach and pool, as well as some amazing giant flowstone down one wall. As we were leaving the cave, Sharon excitedly pointed out a huge white butterfly gliding through the trees, identifying it as a rare white morpho (as opposed to the usual bright metallic blue). Then we saw another, and the two white morphos fluttered together briefly before vanishing into the forest.

That afternoon we drove high up to the Pine Ridge to swim in a river that runs through a series of rocky pools. While lounging about in the water, I noticed some very typical-looking white boys walking up the rocks. As they got closer, I jokingly asked if they were from North College Hill and one guy said,"What?" We asked where they were from and he proudly answered,"Cincinnati, Ohio!" (Cincinnati is the kind of town that haunts you. Even if you travel far, you haven't *really* left...)

The next morning after our bird walk and typical breakfast featuring refried beans and plantain, we all piled into the tour van and headed to a Mayan ruin called *Xunantunich* which lies in Belize near the Guatemalan border. We had to get ferried over a large river where the local people bathed and did their laundry. Once at the ruins, we passed through the ball court where the Maya played a strange sacrificial game, and climbed to the top of the highest temple. It was incredibly hot up there, and we could see far across the country below.

Then it was back into the van and across the border into Guatemala where we had to brave the usual hordes of customs agents, money changers, and kids trying to sell fried plantain chips. Our destination was the ruined city of Tikal, center of the ancient Mayan empire. The road to Tikal also resembled an archaeological site, and provided a great cross section of socio-economic life in rural Guatemala. Had it not been for our driver's skill and stamina, we would have either broken an axle or hit one of the dogs, pigs, people, horses, turkeys, or other vehicles that used the road with wild abandon. After many miles of this, we stopped at an inn called *El Gringo Perdido* (The Lost Gringo) on the shores of beautiful Lago Peten Itza for a much-needed swim. The crystal-clear waters were so inviting after riding in the van that we hardly noticed the warning sign for crocodiles.

Much rejuvenated, we climbed back into the van and continued on to Tikal National Park. Just before the entrance stood a huge tree inhabited by a colony of Montezuma oropendolas, a bird that makes a long, hanging, sock-like nest. Their call is one of the weirdest noises that we heard in the jungle.

Finally, we pulled up at the Tikal Inn and were shown to our room. It had a lot of jungle charm, complete with

mosquito netting over the beds and a complimentary tree frog in the bathroom. We were strictly warned, however, not to drink the tap water and to shower at our own risk. The reason soon became clear when we saw the sole water supply for the area— a fetid little pond off in the jungle. We drank bottled water and the local *Gallo* beer.

We awoke early the next day and hiked into the jungle to a tree that had been rigged with a series of wooden ladders and platforms that went all the way into the upper branches. The view from the top was fantastic, a panorama across the forest canopy with mist rising in front of distant temples. Then we were shown around the heart of Tikal (a Mayan word meaning, "Place of Whispers") by Ricardo, a local man with an interest in archaeology. Once we got to know him a little, he started telling us how to cast Mayan curses and the like. He occasionally studies with a shaman and has experienced rituals where psychotropic drugs play a part, following the ancient Mayan traditions.

That evening we climbed up a steel ladder to the top of a temple that rose high above the forest. The view was awesome as the sun lowered to the horizon and cast purple light on the other pyramids that pushed up through the jungle.

I walked around on the thin stone parapet that led all the way around to the back of our temple and saw a troop of spider monkeys passing below in the forest canopy. I attracted the attention of one as it stopped to feed; it looked up at me as it stuffed leaves into its mouth.

The climb down the ladder was a little funky, since the sun had set and my group had vanished, but we all made it back in the long run. After dinner that night, Joyce and I made an emergency beer run to the Jaguar Inn next door and were amazed to find copies of our book for sale in their gift shop (I'll drink to that!).

On our last day at Tikal, I woke early and joined a small group who went to the ruins at dawn. A place like Tikal is surreal normally, but it is truly awesome when clothed in fog and ringing with the calls of jungle birds. We climbed to the top of a ruin called *The Lost World* and watched birds from treetop level. We saw parrots and toucans, as well as some crested turkey-like birds, and army ants running along in a line. As we were hiking back, a troop of howler monkeys started calling near the trail. The male was very large and impressive as he roared and gurgled at us.

Temple of the Giant Jaguar at the ruins of Tikal

Ricardo led us on a tour of the museum before we left, and was good at interpreting the strange Mayan writing on the artifacts there. Then we got back on the treacherous highway to Belize. The rustic visions of rural Guatemalan life were contrasted sharply by the chilling scene of a field full of uniformed teenagers training by the roadside. We crossed back into Belize and stopped that night at the Outreach Ranch.

The Outreach had more of an English flavor rather than Spanish, since Belize was British Honduras until 1982. After a good hot shower, I went out in the yard to investigate rumors of giant caterpillars. I found them clustered in a tree. They were very colorful and *huge*! We took some unique publicity shots of Sharon with these rubbery beasts all over her face.

Finally we got to the Belize Zoo, *THE PLACE* as the sign out front told you. This was where we said our goodbyes to Sharon and the other people on the tour. They were going down to snorkel in the Keys, leaving us mid-western kids on our own to fly back to Cincinnati the next day. This is where the worst luck of the whole trip hit us. While walking around the zoo, deadly sharpshooter mosquitos launched an attack much worse than any we had been through before. Relief came in the form of Laura Busby and Rick, old friends from Cincinnati, who drove up and took us to the Baboon Sanctuary at Bermudian Landing. *Baboon* is the local name for howler monkey, and the reserve is made up of land donated by concerned people for the monkeys' benefit.

After dinner, Rick and Laura drove off into the night and Joyce and I retired to our guest cabin. The isolated little shack was like a clubhouse with a loft and rain tank out back for showers. The next morning, we drove to the airport for a long day in the sky. We were glad to see Chris Gerding waiting to pick us up that night. It's hard to believe that we had seen and done so many new things in only 9 1/2 days away from Cincinnati. That is, if we ever *really* left....

The Horny Bitch of Red River Gorge

Jim Stanley

In the fall of '89 Jerry Bargo and I went climbing in Red River Gorge. This was my first lead climbing experience, so we started out with *Route 48*, an easy 5.6 climb. We had no problems topping it out and decided we were ready for *The Horny Bitch*, a more difficult 5.8 climb. After racking up with the necessary protection, Jerry got into the crack and started to climb. When he had gone about as far as he could go (limited by the length of the rope and availability of belay spots; this distance is called a *pitch*), I followed him up the rock, picking up the pieces of protection he had left. We didn't think we could finish the route, but we finally made it. Although my back was all scratched up and I often thought I was stuck, *The Horny Bitch* was worth the effort. Moving on, Jerry and I then completed *Blue Runner*. This was my first 5.9 climb, the successful attempt of which Jerry still owes me a six-pack.

The Cumberland Zone

Jeri Best

Wildlife encounters and hiking on an island off the coast of Georgia

Saturday March 18, at approximately 1:00 p.m., ten of us left the overcast skies of Cincinnati for Cumberland Island. This was my first long trip with the UCMC, as well as my introduction to the infamous Dan Van. The third seat had been taken out and there was more room than I expected. Five of us were up front in the seats, the other five were relegated to the rear floor of the van (covered with EP's) and the precarious pile of gear stacked against the rear doors. So, to the accompaniment of The Who on Paul Kramer's boom box, we began what was to be an exciting and eventful journey.

The drive down went very smoothly except for some minor space problems during the night (especially for Mark Holtegel whom you have to fold 2.5 times to make him fit). Since I don't sleep well in cars, I really envied Paul's ability to sleep *anywhere* (usually the chairs, desk, or floor of the UCMC office). We stopped for dinner at a Po Folk's restaurant that was a "country mile" from the exit. I'm still not sure how far that is, only that it's far enough to piss off Mark Guttadauro. When we got inside, there was a wait for a space large enough for us all, so Phil Wilkin entertained us by pitting his engineering skills against pre-school blocks that were in the waiting area. After we were seated, we confiscated a number of peg games from other tables and worked on those while we waited (except Mark G. and Paul who spent most of their time fighting over the pegs).

Early Sunday morning we stopped at a gas station near St. Mary's to ask for more complete directions to the ferry. The attendant assured Steve Nieman, "There ain't no ferry at St. Mary's." We went anyway and found the Cumberland Queen floating peacefully in the morning light. Since it was about six thirty a.m. and we had an hour and a half to kill before we caught the ferry, we drove back a few miles to Bob's Big Boy for breakfast. The weather was already warm enough that most of us were wearing shorts and the clear skies promised a beautiful day.

Returning to St. Mary's, we piled out of the van into the sand gnat equivalent of "Dawn of the Dead." Clouds of the little biters arose from the grass and descended upon us in a feeding frenzy, causing a mad scramble to find where in the hell we'd packed the bug repellent. Steve found out he had misread the time on our ferry tickets. Our crossing was scheduled for 11:45 a.m. instead of 8:15 am. Undaunted, he put us on the waiting list and we were lucky enough to make it across on the early ferry.

We spent some time getting our camping schedule and permit as we received an informative lecture by a ranger about the island and its animal inhabitants. Our first campsite was called Yankee Paradise, a 7.5 mile hike through sunshine, Palmetto bushes and live oaks. It was a long walk after the fifteen hour drive and I was exhausted by the time I finally reached camp. The first order of business was a nap. Unfortunately, Mark G. and Paul decided to play a game of pine cone baseball and had oriented themselves in such a way that my bed became right field and—'nuff said. When I finally roused, all I could do was help with dinner, hang food, and crawl into the tent. Strangely enough, even after all that exercise, I had a hard time falling asleep. Brian Quinn, Niloufer Modi and Paul decided to take a night hike to the beach. I was still awake when they returned a few hours later but fell asleep soon after that.

Most people slept in on Monday morning to make up for what we had missed in the van. After breakfast, under the threat of rain, we left Yankee Paradise for a three-and-a-half mile bike to Brickhill, our next campsite. We would be staying there for two days. The day had ended up being sunny and, after setting up tents and eating lunch, we all headed to THE BEACH! It was great! Great to walk without a pack and great to be going to the beach, our first "vacation" outing. The walk to the beach along South Cut road was a little over a mile. There is one stretch that passes through a swampy area where the first person in the group would usually see an alligator. Unfortunately it would leave by the time the rest of us caught up. The approach to the beach was like a scene from a movie. We had to climb a 20-25 foot sand dam that obscured our view and when we reached the top, the beach was spread out before us— pretty neat. We spent a couple of hours playing in the 60° F. water, picking up shells and dodging dead jelly fish. Niloufer and Brian had planned to stay on the beach until dark, so everyone else returned to camp— except Pat Artman and Phil who wanted to go up the beach and come back to camp by North Cut trail.

It was late and dinner was still being prepared when darkness fell. Thus, there were still food bags on the ground, which attracted a racoon who carried one (shared by Phil, Sharon Yee, and myself) off a little way to gorge itself. We eventually heard it and Mark H. scared it away. Pita bread was the only thing it ate (Strange!).

Phil and Pat showed up at the tail end of dinner and had a hard time finding their way back in the dark without a flashlight. Brian and Niloufer still had not returned but we thought they had decided to stay on the beach and we knew Brian had his pack with them so we didn't try to search for them. Tuesday morning everyone was up early and preparing for a day hike. We were about to leave when Brian and Niloufer stumbled into camp. Apparently they had been stranded on the beach because a herd of feral horses were blocking their return path. They had a chilly, sleepless night among the dunes. Needless to say, they remained in camp while the rest of us split into two groups and started hiking. Phil, Pat, Sharon and I headed to Terrapin Point at the northern end of the island. We saw armadillos, hogs and deer along the way. When we reached Terrapin Point, we climbed down to the beach to find it covered with small crabs (by small, I'm talking a half inch or less). There were times when hundreds would be moving in tidal waves, flight away from our tromping feet, the air filled with clicking. We retraced to the main path after a while and took North Cut out to the beach. At this point we decided to split up. Sharon and I went back to camp. Phil and Pat (armed with a flashlight this time) decided to go back up to the North end to find Little Cumberland Island. Turtles are supposed to gather there.

The others had almost finished dinner when Sharon and I returned. We fixed our meal under the disco-like gyrations of our flashlights and discussed the hikes. Later on we gathered in the girls' tent for a game of "Oh Hell."

We were almost done when Pat and Phil strolled into camp— they had missed the trail in the dark (not hard to do with all the open spaces) and were lost again.

I gathered this trip was a little more adventurous (animal wise) than the first, but I don't remember the details.

Phil and Pat were covered with ticks (thus another name was coined for Mr.Wilkin— "tickophilic") that were only as big as a freckle, making them *devilishly* hard to spot in the dark using a flashlight on a person who has their fair share of freckles anyway.

Wednesday we left Brickhill for Hickory Hill, carrying water with us to avoid drinking from the sulfur water well that is there. The walk was 4-5 miles under cloudy and occasionally drizzly skies. Mark G., Mark H., Brian and Steve, who left earlier, were caught by the rain while setting up camp. The guys took off for the beach and to explore the swamp. On this particular day, the beach was exceptionally windy and Phil said you were forced to lean into the wind to stand up. The girls talked, slept or read until the male contingent returned. A card game was started and the rest of us spent until dark talking and eating M&M's which eventually became dinner when the rain began again at 6:30 p.m. No one wanted to bother with cooking and we retired to the tents to sleep or talk some more.

Thursday morning, Steve made breakfast for everyone (actually he had the only stove set up and hot water at the ready) and we all headed out *together* through the swamp— even swampier after the previous day's rain— to the beach. Mark G. got his jollies running us through all the muddiest spots they had found the previous day while he hung back (under the pretense of looking at animal tracks) to cut though the dry areas— you're all heart, Mark.

We all finally got to see an alligator at the same time when we crossed the wooden boardwalk over the marsh to the beach. He was about an eight-footer who almost had Steve for brunch when Mark H. (after many days sans nicotine and beer) prodded the 'gator into coming a little too close for Steve's comfort. The rest of the two-mile walk along the beach was pretty chilly. In fact, Thursday night was the first time I really needed the sleeping bag I'd been toting around.

Stafford beach was a neat campsite. Dunes on one side, pine forest on the other. The campsites were about 30 feet apart, covered and separated by live oaks. A truly beautiful place. After lunch, some folks went to the beach one last time— Paul, to put a ring around the ocean so the rest of us wouldn't strap him to the top of the van for the drive home. Others had a late lunch or slept. Pat left to take a short walk in the midafternoon (without a flashlight).

When the bathers returned, we whiled away the afternoon in the usual fashion (sleep, cards or conversation). Dinner was uneventful (except for teasing Paul about putting back on the sweater he'd been sporting all week) until we realized Pat had not yet returned. It was dark and we decided to organize a group to search along her last known route when she walked into camp. This was doubly good because she had taken a totally different walk than she originally intended and we never would have found her. Since we were all dressed up with nowhere to go, a night hike to the beach was decided on. The sky had cleared after an afternoon rain/hail storm and the stars and moon were above us. One of the prettiest things to see is the moon over the ocean. The night was cool and the tide was in. There was easily 50 feet of beach during the day and now there was barely 15 feet. We went back to camp after an hour or so and went to sleep.

Unfortunately this last night's sleep was interrupted in the early morning hours by the sounds of growling, tearing cloth and the tramping of animals in the underbrush.

I awoke to find Phil quietly unzipping his sleeping bag. With all the animals on the island it was kind of scary to think what might be out there making those sounds. Phil got his flashlight and jumped out to confront the night marauders which turned out to be a couple of masked bandits after the gorp Phil had accidentally left in his pack. His pack cover was pretty much history but he caught them before much more damage was done (ask Phil for more details).

Friday, our last day on the island, dawned bright and sunny. After a wonderful vacation we were going home. We spent some time drying gear out from the day before, then left to walk the beach to Sea Camp. The day became overcast but remained relatively warm. We all collected seashells on this, our last day at the beach. What weight I lost in food, I gained in shells! The walk was about 1.5 miles and the showers (our reason for going to Sea Camp) were welcome albeit with temperatures somewhere on the double-digit Kelvin scale (*Cold!*). An official lunch was missed and people set off from Sea Camp in two's and three's to go to Dungeness or Sea Camp Dock. The ruins at Dungeness were fun to speculate about and filled the hours before we were to catch the ferry (4:45 p.m.) back to the mainland. The day had cleared up and the weather was reminiscent of Sunday and Monday.

We ended up being a split group; some boarding at Sea Camp, the rest at Dungeness.

We made record time from the ferry to the van to the nearest grease pit, another Big Boy restaurant (we narrowly escaped healthier food at the Cracker Barrel due to a *long* line). The trip home was uneventful and only Phil and Steve drove. The drive through North Carolina at 3:00 a.m. was really beautiful in the moonlight. For me it was simply heaven to sit down and go somewhere at the same time! We arrived in Cincinnati at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday the 25th. Phil, Niloufer and I were dropped off at U.C., the others were off to 444 or their own way home. A great trip— my many thanks to Steve— but it was good to be home: hot shower, soft bed, and the celebrated loss of my faithful travelling companions (I'm referring to the sand gnats, of course!).

Climb the mountains and get their good tidings. Nature's peace will flow into you as sunshine flows into trees. The winds will blow their own freshness into you, and the storms their energy... —John Muir

Lost Horizon

Mark Guttadauro

The story of how to find and explore a virgin cave or why college students should buy a front loader

The Find

Steve Nieman, Paul Kramer and myself set off to go caving on a cloudy, rainy Sunday. Our goal was to head to Rainshelter and push a lead near the entrance pit in the hopes it went to the Wall room, saving John Neack the trouble of doing a thirty foot climb to check out a lead. Unfortunately, it was very wet and upon deciding that we were unable to drive down into the valley, we changed our destination to Horizon Cave. After quickly suiting up, we hiked down to the cave with the intention of either surveying the cave or just running through the cave. Upon arriving we found that John had already surveyed the cave, (When was the last time you had *that* problem?!) and decided to go ridge walking. Heading up the valley from the resurgence of Horizon, I found a small entrance on the opposite ridge near the valley floor, blowing a rather large amount of air. Advancing only thirty feet into the cave, we ran into a 4 to 6 inch slit with air blasting through. Paul decided that it didn't go, but I had to disagree because of the large quantity of air blowing in my face. Steve thought we should try to dig out and around the slit. Hours later, it was decided that another trip was needed to dig our way through.

The Dig

One week later, Steve, Mark Suer and myself found ourselves gearing up and preparing to head down to our soon-to-be cave (We hoped!). Looking around, I saw that we had all our tools ranging from crowbar, hammer, and chisels to an ice axe and other esoteric cave exploration apparatus. What it really comes down to is that we moved quite a lot of dirt until we were tired, but we still couldn't get through. So I decided to give it one more shot. I pushed in until I was sitting up and that's where the problems started. On both sides and behind me, a wall of clay and mud pushed against my body, in front of me a rock face squeezed my chest and extended down to touch my legs sticking out in front of me. This is no way to move. Flexing my leg I tried to curl it under me. My knee hit the wall and stopped me. Just like every other time. In a fit of rage, I blarled my body and I found myself free and above the tight spot. Who ever said a bad temper doesn't help a situation? Well, he was wrong! Looking around, I saw a nice walking passage. Bingo!

"Hey guys, come on up," I said, thinking that if I had made it up, surely Mark and Steve would be able. Such was not the case and twenty minutes later they were both up, after quite a bit of digging, struggling, and teasing. They struggled, we all did some digging, and I teased the hell out of them (After all, do you think I'm ever going to get another chance to laugh at Mark because he was unable to fit in a passage that I did? I had to get a lifetime supply of teasing into twenty minutes!)

Soon, the three of us found ourselves heading down a small passage. It continued to shrink until finally all we were left with was a right bellycrawl. This is the historic spot where my carbide lamp died. Water had decided not to use the inside of the small metal cylinder to drip down, but rather the outside had become the path for the water. Thus a filter was completely soaked. Bad, very bad.

Fortunately, my mini-mag was handy and up to the task and I pushed into the crawl. Oh no! A five inch dogleg to the right. "Hey Steve, run back and fetch the crowbar."

Five minutes work and I passed the tight spot and continued on into a small room. Exploring the room, we found three passages heading out of the room. Mark checked the first two: one dead-ended and the other ended in a sump. The third passage turned out to be the right one, as it continued for quite a distance. We passed several domes, which Steve went up to and took a quick look at and said there were several leads. Eventually Mark Suer lead us into a large room with a 50-foot dome. We decided to name the room The Hall of Absent Paul in recognition of the fact that Paul couldn't come on the trip and told us he would kill us if the cave *did* turn out to go . . .

On the way out of the cave, we spent the time naming various places. Our big excavation was named the Spinebender and the crawl with the dogleg became Crowbar Crawl. The junction beyond we decided to call Celebration Junction. We talked about a name for the cave and I suggested Lost Horizon (because it's probably a paleo cave of Horizon Cave) and nobody could suggest anything better, so it stuck.

The Aborted Survey

A few weeks later, we managed to get all four of us down to the cave. On this occasion we decided that we would begin the survey in order to catch up to where we were exploring. Upon arriving at the cave, I found a small flashlight at the entrance. Paul screamed, "Give me my flashlight, I lost it on the trip that we found this cave!" As we began to get the survey gear out, we heard Mark start to curse. It seemed that he had cracked the bottom edge of his carbide lamp and acetylene was escaping. He was extremely unhappy about this and decided not to go caving. Meanwhile, while Paul and Steve were beginning the survey, I was inside the cave searching for a second entrance. The main entrance had a very unstable breakdown choke wedged between the two walls. We decided it would be much safer if a different entrance could be found. I picked the first side lead I found beyond the Spinebender and began to crawl down the passage. For 50 feet I crawled along until suddenly the passage became filled with mud and leaves. I could hear Mark Suer talking outside the cave and soon we had a voice connection.

While Mark and I were discussing the possibility of digging out the newly found passage, Paul and Steve had surveyed in until they reached Spinebender. Paul was unable to contort his body enough to pass quickly managed to piss himself off and decided to go ridge walking. Mark joined him and soon Steve and myself were left alone in the cave. With only two of us, surveying seemed quite a chore so we began to dig open the second entrance. Luckily for us, the material consisted of loose dirt and leaves and the job moved along rather quickly. After a few hours,

we had covered approximately 30 feet and we were nearing the entrance. Just then, Paul and Mark returned and the last tight spot was passed after a small delay. We now had a second entrance that bypassed both the unstable breakdown block and also Spinebender.

The remainder of the day was spent looking at a few of the many sinkholes that Mark and Paul had found earlier in the day. Paul also took this opportunity to lose his mini-mag again.

The First Survey

On the next trip, we all came prepared to survey. We had decided to survey into the second entrance and connect into our existing survey.

This was great fun, if you happen to enjoy spending an entire day in a passage 18 inches tall and 3 feet wide, with a strong breeze blowing out of the cave.

After four to five hours of work, the four of us had only amassed 280 feet of total survey, but had covered the entire crawl leading into Celebration junction, the beginning of the main passage.

At this point, Steve decided that it was too late for him to do anything else, so he headed out of the cave. The rest of us decided to continue exploration down the main passage. We moved quickly down the passage and soon found ourselves nearing Absent Paul's Hall. Since Mark and Paul were taking the high route into the room, I decided to stay low near the stream bed and found that the stream bypassed the room. I rejoined the others as they came down out of the room and we followed the stream until it disappeared into a low, wet crawl. While Mark explored the crawl, I started working my way into the breakdown off to the left in an effort to pass around the bottleneck. In this respect, at least, I failed. However, after twisting and weaving around blocks the size of refrigerators and bigger, I noticed an opening above me. I climbed up and found myself standing in a big room (not *the* big room). If anyone has ever wondered what it's like to find a large room in a virgin cave, I mean the kind where your light doesn't illuminate the far wall, well, I can only say one thing. Try it, you will like it. A lot! If you do— find one, that is—, try to pick one with an obvious exit. After several hours we had turned over only one possibility. Down under all the breakdown, Paul had found a pool which was being fed by a small stream. From the location and direction of the water, we were pretty sure that we had found the other end of the stream crawl that Mark had looked at earlier. Where was all this water going? We still don't know, but are looking forward to our next opportunity to find out.

The Push Trip

(ghostwritten by Paul Kramer)

Well, the quartet did not go into the cave again for a while. The next time we met at Mark Guttadauro's house. Well, not all of us. Mark Suer decided that he'd rather rebuild his carburetor than go caving. One person down. Next, Mark Guttadauro told me that he couldn't go; neither of his lights (electric or carbide) had decided to function, not even after five hours of extreme violence directed towards them by Mark. So it was just Steve and me. We decided to push the big room or at least take a look at it! We drove down, slightly concerned about water levels (the crawlway entrance is base level). We parked the car and suited up. However, the homemade electrical system that I was up until 2 a.m. the previous night rebuilding now did not work. Great, I thought, as I got out the toolbox. Steve Nieman and I replaced the battery and tried to repair and retape every electrical connection. Next, after 45 minutes of work, we changed the light bulb (a very complicated repair for those who have never done so). OK, now it worked. We began hiking towards the valley. After about five minutes my light's performance worsened. The clamp holding it together fell apart (along with the entire battery pack). Steve went back to the car and got his SAK. After breaking his SAK, we used a wrench I carry in my cavepack to repair my battery pack. Finally, we hiked to the cave, where Steve Nieman couldn't light his carbide lamp. So after fixing it, we entered the low crawlway into the cave. My light went out— I mini-magged it through. Whenever I crawled, my light didn't work, so I tried to avoid crawling as much as possible. The next obstacle, Crowbar Crawl, was wet with up to a foot of deep water. Luckily only the area before the crawl was wet because the crawl itself is only 12 inches high. So from there we cruised through the cave to the big room. After we entered the Hall of Absent Paul (I *don't* like that name.), we went pushing and found a rocky, wet, muddy, blowing crawl. After moving rocks and jamming our bodies into the crawl for about twenty five feet for about an hour, we decided to exit the cave, leaving the crawl for someone else (M & M) to push. However, we learned some important things about the cave: (1) the drain in the big room doesn't go anywhere yet; (2) we have a lead or two in the Hall; (3) the water from the hydrostatic sump seems to exit the cave via Crowbar Crawl area; and (4) Steve Nieman found one of the mini-mags that I had lost last November on a previous trip. It still worked.

Oh, well, until next time.

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(Not) For Ladies Only

Orb Smith

11 women find they can do quite well by themselves on an overnight hike

On the last golden weekend in October, the first (annual?) "Ladies Only" backpacking trip took place. The weather was perfect, the company was grand, and the weekend was a success—so much so that a repeat weekend in the spring seems likely.

The original idea for a ladies only trip had come from several other members, who had thought that it would be fun but had never gotten down to organizing it. Remembering my early experiences in backpacking, I saw it as a good place to introduce new members to needed skills while keeping things low key and fun. Plus, I felt that there had been a real lack of training in basic skills for new members.

So how was I to know that our officers had noticed that same lack and decided to do something about it? The first planning problem I had was when they announced a backpacking seminar trip for beginners, to take place on the same weekend as the ladies' trip. From no training to two competing courses! No sooner was *that* conflict resolved than we had to prevail upon Paul Even to change the date of his Halloween party so that we could attend. He did so, even though it meant that he couldn't be at the festivities (I've thanked him repeatedly, but I want to do it here in print, too. What a great guy!).

The rest of the planning wasn't any easier. A big problem for UCMC trip leaders is that you never know how many people will be going until the morning of the trip. With 19 women on the sign-up sheet, and others expressing an interest, I had to worry about meals, equipment, an transportation for a group of anywhere from 4 to 20 people! Then there was a question of where to take such a large group, considering the diverse abilities of individuals to handle a given trail and the ecological impact of so many people. For this, being new to the area myself, I had to rely on the suggestions of experienced backpackers from this region; I appreciate all the assistance that was provided in these planning stages. We also had offers of loans of equipment if the club couldn't outfit everyone, and my thanks to all for that as well.

Well, the planning got taken care of one way or another and, following a *great* Halloween party at the Evens' home, 11 women gathered in the parking lot in front of Scioto Hall at 7 a.m. Saturday morning. After some repacking and shifting of packs, my car was loaded with packs, Lisha's van was loaded with women, and we were out of the parking lot by 8:15 (*only* 15 minutes later than I had planned).

It was a 3-hour drive out to Vesuvius (*if* you do the speed limit, right, Jeri?), but the morning was beautiful and traffic was light, so it was a pleasant drive with good company. When we arrived at the trailhead, we spent some time going over the basics of low-impact camping, then we shouldered our packs and were on our way. We took the Lakeshore Trail which (guess what?!?) follows the shore of Lake Vesuvius to its head, then continues down to the opposite side. It was a lovely trail, first winding along the shore, allowing us to appreciate the sunshine, the lake, and the autumn colors of the trees across the lake. Then, as the lake narrowed, the trail climbed to a low ridge and we were hiking through a cool stand of hardwoods, with crisp gold and brown leaves underfoot. Coming down from the ridge, the lake had narrowed to no more than a deep stream, and we were walking through evergreens, with a rock ledge on one side and the stream on the other.

Our plan was to locate a big enough campsite which Jeff Sipes had told me about. His directions were excellent and we found it just as described; unfortunately, we found it already occupied by a group of men, one of whom, when our group walked out of the woods, shouted in some amazement, "*Women!*"

It's certainly *not* that we don't like men. You guys in the club *know* we love you! But that's not what this weekend was about. Besides, if we had wanted male company, we'd have brought along our favorite club members, not go picking up strangers along the trail! So we kept on walking and, with a suggestion from one of the usurpers, found an alternate campsite.

Setting up camp and fixing dinner went smoothly, which was surprising in that most of the group had never done this before. Those with a little experience at a task helped those who had none, finding themselves sudden experts at such things as lighting a cookstove or pitching a tent. After dinner and cleanup, we sat around the fire and talked. It was a great time to get to know each other better. We had to politely discourage an offer of company from two of the men down the trail, but that was only one more fun thing to laugh over on this trip.

The next morning was another clear day, though cold, and we shivered about our chores of breakfast and breaking camp. We were a little slow about getting out on the trail, but we were in no hurry. When we did leave our campsite, I was really proud of the band of hikers that left no sign of occupation. The hike back up the other side of the lake went much faster than on the way out— but then I always feel that way at the end of a trip. By sunset, we were back at the Scioto parking lot. As I watched people head back to home or dorm, I was satisfied with the results of the first UCMC trip I had led. I think it was a good learning experience for *all* of us, but most importantly, it was just plain *fun*!

Your conclusions may be a bit hasty, Captain. In general, I'd agree with you. It appears to be a warm, comfortable planet with abundant water, which probably means luxurious plant growth... which in turn means some sort of animal life to provide a balanced ecology. Because of the large extent of oceans which serve as a heat sink, I'd suspect that the general planetary climate is very steady, with no violent weather patterns. However...

—Spock

Rock Climbing in Germany

Eberhard Waldhor

An intimate heightseeing guide, just in case you're in the neighborhood

So, tell me. Where are you from?

More than a hundred times I was asked this question. I suppose everyone knows the answer by now. Almost as often, I was also asked, usually after question number one, what rock climbing in Germany is like. From Stuttgart in the middle of South Western Germany— where I used to live— one can really reach all major German and alpine climbing areas within eight hours at the most.

Four hours to the northwest is the *Pfalz*, a very scenic area with sandstone walls and towers. The *Pfalz* is especially known for crack climbing and sometimes marginal protection. Furthermore, the use of chalk is forbidden which makes climbing on a hot summer day particularly challenging.

The same distance to the northwest is the *Frankenjura*. The rock— limestone— is quite similar to Springfield Gorge. Strenuous face climbs protected with bolts dominate. Here you can find the most difficult climbs in Germany.

In the Danube Valley some 706 miles to the south lies another well known area: The *Donaudurchbruch*. It offers prime limstone climbing in all difficulties. You might have heard of the route *The Face*.

Then there are of course the Alps, in which everyone should find a suitable climb. Although only a tiny section belongs to Germany, there is some prime limestone climbing— walls up to 1800 feet and rock that is so sharp that it cuts your fingers. The two main climbing areas are near Garmisch-Partenkirchen and Berchtesgaden. One shelter near Garmisch-Partenkirchen in the *Oberreintal* is legendary among climbers. Fantastic alpine rock climbing, an overwhelming scenery and bavarian beer are well worth the three-and-a-half hour hike in.

Some smaller climbing areas lie scattered across the Black Forest to the southwest. They offer mostly granite and gneiss and are rarely visited except by locals.

Close to Stuttgart, 20 km to 80 km east and about 20 to 100 km south, is my favorite climbing area. Numerous limestone cliffs are strewn out along the northern edge and the valleys of the *Schawoebisch Alb*. The heights range from 15 to 350 feet, the rock from gravel to concrete, the routes (more than 2000) from fantastic to alpine adventures.

Prime climbing times are spring and fall. In these seasons it is one of the most beautiful areas in Germany. A sunny day climbing under (and over) autumn colored trees is unforgettable. Climbing season starts in April and ends usually in October; however, there can be rain all summer and sun on Christmas. Some cliffs can be crowded on weekends but the selection is big enough.

Due to the mentality of the local climbers, the *Alb* has long been known to insiders only. Climbers are quite uncommunicative to foreigners and tend to stay to their own. Furthermore, they speak a dialect most people from other parts of Germany do not understand. The best time to talk to other climbers is in the evening in one of the local bars.

If someone recommends some climbs to you, be aware of the German understatement. It's usually harder and more dangerous than they tell you. If someone claims to climb 7 (5.10), this means that he can lead that at any time under every condition.

Though ethics are no big deal, top roping is not considered real climbing. You haven't done a route unless you have lead it. Anyway, top roping is not necessary: there are plenty of bolts and pitons, so you won't even have to place pieces.

Some areas I want to recommend are:

- Donautal near Sigmaringen: prime climbing on the highest cliffs of the *Alb*.
- Blaubensen west of Ulm/Donau: face climbs on shallow holes and tiny flakes. It's hard!
- Roggental, Geislingen/Steige: moderate climbing in a very scenic valley. Have a *Weizenbier* in the *Roggenmuehle*, a restaurant with a beer garden in a 400 year old mill!
- ReuBenstein, LenningerTal: climbs lead right into a 12th century castle. Crowded on weekends.

The 4th Annual Christmas Disaster Trip

Getting there is half the fun and sometimes it's all the fun

or

The Death of a Spelunker Clunker

Here we stand, all ready and packed.
Looking forward, eager to cave.
Everyone's arrived, only Keith we lack.
For Paul couldn't read the directions he gave.
Oh Keith! We're only an hour late
Here we go, on our three hour drive.
Paul's out of luck, it's just plain fate
That's too bad for our band of five.
Bang! A nasty crash.
Tis the end of his car. What a mess!
Our plans, all gone in a flash.
What happens now is anyone's guess.
Now a sad song we sing.
In the rain we stand, Oh what to do?
Spend the day at Burger King!
And laugh at the pictures we all drew.
Oh Paul, why so glum?
"Hey, my mood's not so black.
After all, I'm not quite that dumb.
I got to sleep, all the way back!"

Mark Guttadauro

A Nova Scotia Accident Report

Bob Kessler

Even the safety-conscious among us are not invulnerable

Last July a group of UCMC bicyclists went to Cape Breton Island in northern Nova Scotia, intending to ride a series of roads that would encompass a loop of approximately 150 miles. Driving for 35 hours non-stop, the group arrived at a small commercial campground in a village known as Margaree Forks, named after a group of streams and lakes nearby.

We were going to be "touring," carrying all our camping gear on our bikes, mostly in bags attached to the rear wheels. The group totaled nine individuals, but this story will deal with the events that particularly affected Cindy and Bob Kessler.

Preparation for this trip included a series of conditioning rides back in Cincinnati to prepare us for the rigors of the mountainous Cape Breton terrain, as well as the "feel" of the added weight on the bike.

Early on the morning of the first day, Amy Elsen and I started out on the road, with Cindy and the others to soon follow. We were going to meet two other Cincinnatians who had traveled to Canada separately, and were now waiting for us at the next town, Margaree Harbour, about 2 miles away. Cindy would never make it.

I immediately noticed a problem with the steering of my bike as Amy and I traveled down the slowly descending road. Despite the training runs with weight, the real packing of my rear bags was much heavier and the effects more noticeable. The weight tended to make the front wheel run high, almost floating above the pavement, and thus difficult to control. In fact, I found that if I wanted to go at any reasonable speed, I had to keep a firm grip on the handlebars; not much fun. I reflected about the advice I had heard that front panniers helped stabilize a bike, and wished I now had them.

Eventually, Amy and I reached the next town, and stopped at a restaurant where we met up with Linda and Steve, the previously mentioned couple from Cincinnati. It was a bright, sunny day and we relaxed out on the lawn while we waited for the rest of the group to catch up.

And we waited.

After a while, we began to wonder if someone had a bicycle breakdown. We began to speculate that we may have to backtrack to find out where they were. I had part of the group repair kit and knew that a major repair might have to wait for the tools I carried.

Just then a car pulled up and a man got out. As he walked past us he paused to tell us that there had been a bad accident involving a bicyclist just up the road. The man said it was a woman who had been hurt, but knew nothing else. The one fear we had not discussed apparently had come true. As I got on my bike, I hoped it wasn't Cindy, but just as we started back up the road, Jean Weingartner arrived in a car to tell us what had happened. She looked at me and I knew that the worst was true. "Cindy's fallen off her bike, Bob. She's hurt real bad."

I assured myself that Cindy would be fine (though I had no reason to know that to be true). As I crested the hill I saw a large traffic jam just a quarter mile away. A large group of people circled the center area of the road where Cindy laid prone.

It seemed ironic to me that Cindy was within five minutes of me, and now might not be with me much longer (my worst fear).

As I pulled up I dumped my bike and ran to where Cindy lay. Immediately I felt better, despite the fact that Cindy was quite banged up. Mainly, she was conscious and talking, though she had lost part of her memory and didn't remember anything about Nova Scotia or the bike trip. A fourth year medical student had stopped and now cradled Cindy's head in his hands.

Cindy lay on her back. Her helmet was off, and she had a series of large "road rashes" (abrasions) on her left knee, hand, elbow, shoulder and nose. There was also a cut on her nose that was exposing the cartilage. Her nose slowly bled, but otherwise she seemed to be in no immediate danger.

Later, we were able to piece together basically what had happened: Cindy was in the lead of Jean and Pat Attman, traveling on level ground that was slowly starting to rise. She was trying to taking a picture of the valley as she rode her bike, holding her camera in her right hand as she snapped the picture. After she took the picture, she put both hands back on her handlebars and looked down. The bike was drifting toward the edge of the road, and she turned the bike more towards the center. The weighted rear caused that turn to exaggerate. Cindy tried to compensate but the bike swerved, sending her over the top of her handlebars. She landed on her head and left shoulder. Her helmet probably saved her life, but the impact still gave her a severe concussion. Her sunglasses jammed into her nose, tearing a half inch section that would take eight stitches to close. Her shoulder was dislocated momentarily and her left side received multiple road rashes.

Cindy ended up face down when Jean reached her. Jean was quite distraught and immediately turned Cindy onto her back. Though she does not remember, Jean apparently removed Cindy's helmet. Jean does remember that Cindy's body was stiff and after a moment, she began to convulse. Pat timed the convulsions which lasted for two minutes. (Apparently convulsions are a "normal" result of a coricussion).

Jean went for help while Pat watched Cindy. Cindy woke at this point, and was disoriented. She could not recall any details of the Nova Scotia trip and couldn't believe what had happened to her. At this point the medical student arrived and shortly thereafter I showed up.

Within twenty minutes of Jean's call for an ambulance, it arrived, and we were soon on our way to the hospital in a small town called Inverness.

Never having ridden in an ambulance, much less been in a personal emergency situation before, I may not be the best judge of proper procedure, but the next twenty hours made me particularly skeptical of the Canadian Health System.

We arrived at the hospital without incident, though it was a fifteen minute drive on a winding two lane highway. The building looked relatively new, probably built within the last ten years. The parking lot was small and nearly empty; This was clearly not a busy place. The emergency room was empty, and after a doctor briefly looked at Cindy, she was left alone. Since she was apparently not in a traumatic situation, the doctor decided to wait till later that day to have a different doctor stitch her cut nose. Almost as an after thought, he accepted a nurse's suggestion that Cindy's abrasions be cleaned. The attitude was definitely casual.

I was about to get the second shock of the day. It seems that despite the Canadian free health care system, its ambulance service was still a private concern. The drivers had gone to their boss to prepare the bill, and were now requesting payment— in cash. The owner of the ambulance company was charging me the "special foreigner's rate" of $280.00 for the 15 minute ride. The drivers apologized, saying that were I a local, the bill would have been more like $80 - $100.

The owner would explain that he would only take cash because too many Americans had promised to pay later and defaulted; he also hinted that I was to make up for the past lost revenues by paying the inflated rate.

Needless to say, I was not happy with the situation. I did not have that kind of cash with me, so I suggested getting a cash advance with my Mastercard at the local bank. However, once we went to the bank, we discovered that the bank only handled Visa transactions. The closest bank with Mastercard capabilities was thirty minutes away and closed in twenty.

A seemingly hopeless situation was remedied by the timely arrival of Jean, who had hitched a ride to the hospital to check on Cindy's condition— and who also had a Visa card. Cash in hand, I pleaded for some mercy from the ambulance company owner, and he "generously" reduced my bill by forty dollars.

Cindy was finally stitched up after several hours and put in a room for the night. Several people from our group had gotten the cars we had ridden to Canada back together, and had come to visit. We got a pizza, and ate in Cindy's room. Pat and Jean told their version of the accident (the first time I had really heard and understood). Cindy, was starting to remember details of the trip again, but still could not recall the accident itself. It would eventually take a couple days, but she would finally remember all but the moment of impact and the next several hours when she was first taken to the hospital.

The hospital doctors were friendly, but seemingly too casual about the fact that Cindy had suffered a seizure. I had called my mother from the hospital, and with her nursing background she emphasized that the first twenty-four hours after a seizure needed careful monitoring. She said that Cindy should be woken up every couple of hours to make sure she did not go into a coma. When I asked the doctor about this, he seemed to think it was a good idea but probably not necessary. Distrustful that the doctor was not taking the accident seriously enough, I made a point of coming back to Cindy's room frequently in the night to check on her.

By the middle of the next day Cindy was able to check out, though she was barely able to move; so much of her body had been bumped, scraped, and torn. The hospital also wanted cash, but I insisted that I could be trusted to pay later (which I did do). The hospital bill was $236.00, and the surgeon wanted $70.00. By comparison to the ambulance bill, we felt this was quite reasonable.

The remainder of our vacation was basically a time of convalescence for Cindy. We continued the bike ride, shuttling Cindy by car to the next campground each morning. She would usually sleep all day and be joined up with the group in the afternoon. Continuing the trip allowed Cindy to recuperate without the inevitable interruptions back in Cincinnati. It was a relaxing opportunity neither Cindy nor myself would like to repeat.

A Short Rafting Play

Mark Guttadauro

Act I, Scene I. The New River Gorge, West Virginia. River is at flood stage. Four people in a raft entering Double Z rapids.

Jane and Paul: Look out!

Mark and Roland: Uh-oh!

Mark: What do we do now?

Roland: Swim!

The End

(Stay tuned for our next exciting episode, "Roland Has Knee Surgery." This will be followed by "Roland Goes Skiing", and, shortly after that, "Roland Has Knee Surgery, The Sequel")

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Fear and Loathing in Dixie

Steve Must

Spring break, climbers, and operational(?) vehicles: the exploits

The alternative spring break trip this year was sandstone rock climbing in the Southeastern states. Although we had planned to focus our efforts in one area for the whole week, the unpredictable Spring weather forced us to behave in a Nomadic fashion. This trip turned out to be a whirlwind tour of the hard South: hard men, hard rock, and hard weather. We existed on an unbalanced diet of Alex's morning ritual cowboy coffee, which was appropriately Nick-named "Seattle Sludge", a constant supply of Ebi's favorite, *Chip's Ahoy* chocolate chip cookies, and cheap beer.

The group met at noon on Saturday in the Scioto parking lot along with the Cumberland Islanders. We made an attempt to wrestle the Dan Van from their grasp, but we were outnumbered 10 to 7. Once we picked up Mikie O., the eight of us and gear piled into two cars and a pickup and left right on UCMC time. We hit the highway around 2:30 p.m., and the vehicles were soon sweeping all three lanes of the highway tearing up through the cut-in-the-hill. Of course the Toyota was in the truck lane and Alex had to let the semi's pass us, and we all wondered how long the Nova's "suspension" would hold up, and how long the passenger in the back seat could hold his breath.

First stop Chattanooga...

Mother Nature teased us with a gorgeous first day of climbing in clear skies and 60-degree temperatures. We tried to get in as much climbing as possible because rain was in the forecast. We had camped in the Tennessee River valley at the base of the Tennessee Wall. This south-facing stretch of sandstone offers some of Chattanooga's best crack climbing with dihedral after dihedral of superb hand cracks, occasionally topped by strenuous overhangs, and intermingled with heinous finger cracks on otherwise blank walls. The eight of us paired off and even met up with a large number of other Ohio climbers. Unfortunately, the full day of climbing would have to hold us over for quite awhile.

The rainy evening did much to dampen our spirits, not to mention Brad and Alex's sleeping bags. It seemed that Brad's tent, the San Diego special, was designed for the coast because it behaved quite remarkably like a sponge. The pathetic structure spent the rest of the trip strapped to the top of the Toyota. After the West Coast boys returned from the laundromat, we did manage to find a few dry routes on the wall, and we ended the day with a hearty bean-burrito fest.

As the rain was expected to continue, the restless group set out for North Carolina. I have still tried to figure out why. It appeared to be a mutual decision. I mean, think about it— OK, it's raining in Chattanooga, so let's drive east. Doesn't the weather in these parts travel east? But not just drive east, let's drive up about 3000 feet in elevation. Hey, maybe the rain will pass below us!

Rather than think logically, I think we all just wanted to be moving. A change of scenery would boost morale, and we left with a slight hope that the rain would miss us. The road trip in Nick's truck went something like this:

Oh God, Chris just got pulled over! Flag down Alex and let's stop.

Hey Keith, those flashing lights mean pull over, please inform your driver.

Now where the hell did they go?

They must be up ahead, we never passed them.

(40 minutes later.)

We must have passed them.

Oh well, we might as well stop and see Mona since we're in the neighborhood.

Party? No time, we're just passing through, tell her we said hello.

At least we've got a meeting place, now we sit and wait.

While we waited at the gas station we imagined the worst case scenario: Chris is in jail for rear-ending a cop, Ebi's being interrogated by the KGB branch of the FBI, O'Herron's busted by the Zero Tolerance squad for traces of THC under his fingernails, and Alex, Brad and Keith made a wrong turn and are on their way to Myrtle Beach.

The morning greeted us with a cold, dense fog and some friendly park rangers informing us that we couldn't sleep at the Table Rock parking lot. We thanked them for the information and spent a leisurely morning hiking and kicking the hacky sack. The fog burned off by early afternoon, and we spent the day on the soft end of the rope due to the high moisture content of the routes. It turns out that most of the routes at Table Rock are on the north side of the rock. By late afternoon, Ebi and Alex had started up some grungy, multi-pitch water slide, while the rest of us messed around on the strange gneiss and schist down by the chimneys as we looked out over the Linville Gorge.

Not a bad day, but it sure was starting to get cold. "This rain will turn into snow tonight," we all laughed. But no such luck. As I lay in my bag the next morning, it seemed to me that the wind wasn't penetrating the tent wall at all. As Mike started pushing on the wall, we soon realized it had a thick coat of ice! Desperate to break off this coat of ice before we all suffocated, Mike proceeded to attack the outside of the tent and send all the moisture on the inside of the tent onto my head.

Needless to say, it was damn cold. The cars had a quarter inch of ice on them. Those optimistic few who did not bring sufficient clothing were reserved a seat in the Nova while the rest of us cooked up some tea.

It was so cold, Alex didn't make any coffee that morning! In fact, this man, who has done innumerable routes in the Cascades and Canadian Rockies was heard to say, "These are the worst @$&*#! conditions I've ever seen!"

A treacherous, slippery walk to the water hole demonstrated that an attempt to drive down the 6.8 mile switch backed, washboarded, gravel road to the highway would be foolhardy. But as we sat in the vehicles with nothing to look forward to but some backissues of **JAMA**, our restlessness could not be contained. A scouting party came back

and said we had a chance at it. With the chains on the Toyota, the truck in the rear, and Mike walking in front to clear any fallen timber, we started down the road. The drive went fine since the trees held most of the ice, and blocked the wind from freezing the road. The most eventful part of the ride was coming upon the *Outward Bounders* out for their morning jog. The Downward Bounders proceeded into town and spent the morning drinking coffee and eating overpriced food at a sleazy restaurant.

"Climbing develops characters, not character." This quote is attributed to a Downward Bound, dirtbag Ohio climber.

Before heading to New River Gorge for a solid weekend of sun, *seventy degree* temperatures, and sandstone, we had the good fortune of crashing out at Chris's brother's in Johnson City, Tennessee. I don't think his bathtub will ever be the same. We repayed him for his hospitality by constructing the geometrically perfect, three-foot diameter geosphere that had been on his bookshelf for four years. He was overwhelmed.

As always, New River climbing was excellent. Gee, Robert, the bridge looked sort of empty without a parachute floating below it. We met up with some more Ohio climbers, a crew from Miami U., and some Eastern climbers. As luck would have it, David Lee Roth was not climbing in the area that weekend.

Just as the climbing got good, the end of Spring Break had arrived. The eight of us meandered through West Virginia, across the Ohio, and crawled into Cincinnati in the early hours of Spring quarter.

TRIP CLICHES

Phillip Wilkin

In grade school I learned that cliches were statements that, over hundreds of years, were overused and worn out. But on a recent trip to Algonquin Provincial Park in Canada, I was once again able to prove my teachers wrong. It does not take hundreds of literary years to make a statement wear out, but only three days. Yes, folks, in three days the seven participants of this trip were able to create hundreds of cliches which spent the remaining nine days being driven into the ground. What is to follow is a list of the cliches I remember, even though I have tried to forget.

1. *But Why????*

This was a clause used by Sharon Yee and Barb Hudson to reiterate the fact that they were just children in the grown-up world of advanced canoeing.

2. *Tastes like chicken.*

This cliche was used heavily in describing food items such as snake, frog, and human.

3. *Fish for dinner.*

Eric Miller heard this one the most. The meaning resides in the fact that Eric fished heavily most of the fourteen days out and caught lots of fish for a total of two pounds. Don't ever rely on the wild for your food source.

4. *Bert.*

Not so much a cliche but a nickname for me. Its origins date back to the time of Mark Hotegel. He used to call me Philbert, but due to increasingly less intelligent life forms, it has been shortened to Bert.

5. *Woo Wooo!*

Copyrighted by Sharon, it was used by her to describe something sexy, something scary, something close, something far, something big, something small, and basically everything else.

6. *Shithead.*

Again, not much of a cliche, but a hell of a nickname for me. Used primarily by Barb, it was counted as being said 42 times in a three day period by her alone.

7. *Butthead.*

My name for anyone in the seven-person party. Generally not appreciated but almost always responded to.

8. *Food is my business.*

This statement was the standard comment to a particular action. Eric never missed an extra portion of food and was always complaining about the size of the portion.

9. *Can't cook, can't clean, can't deal, ...can't count, ...can't (insert anything).*

This cliche constantly grew until it became so immense that no one could remember all that Steve Nieman could not do. Each time Steve screwed up we added to the list.

10. *I'll get her.*

A manly statement used by Mark Guttadauro in the days after Sharon had tipped a canoe with him in it. He might not have been so set on revenge had he not just donned a clean shirt minutes before the unfortunate dip.

11. *I'll climb!!!*

Chris Boylan has been accused of getting sexual pleasure from trees. This anxious exclamation to a question of who was going to hang the food to isolate it from various critters was a hint to the validity of the claim.

12. *Too late!! [with the appropriate hand gesture]*

Originally from Tomma the anti-drug speaker, this catchy yell was adapted to the trip by Chris and me. Used mainly to emphasize that someone blundered (See 14.).

13. *Take Off! (To the Great White North)*

A cliche which is usually followed by, "A wootoko ka ko ko kooo, a wootoko ka ko ko koo." The song lyrics were imbedded in our brains due to Mark's insistence on playing Bob and Doug McKenzey's album in the van on the ride up.

14. *F*@K.*

Probably the most useful word on the trip. It was use as a noun— "Get a F*@K."—, a verb— "F*@K you."—, an adjective— "F*@King canoe"—, a name — "Hey, F*@Khead!"—, and even an adverb— "I paddled F*@Kingly well."

15. *The top of the valley.*

Innocently said by Barb to explain that we had just climbed a big hill, this statement was then used constantly to point out to Barb that you can't get to the top of a valley.

The trip was a success, but if you ever want a statement cloned, please talk to Chris Boylan, Steve Nieman, Barb Hudson, Sharon Yee, Mark Guttadauro, Eric Miller, or me, Phil Wilkin.

False Peaks

Mark Suer

Looking for summits in all the wrong places

"Get in."

I looked at Nick's truck and pondered if there really was enough room. Thank God I am a caver.

"Alright. I just hope it isn't too uncomfortable."

All four of us were heading out west in Nick's pick-up. Accommodations were going to be a little cramped. How else could we make a round trip to Colorado for less than $40? For Nick's truckbed, we built a wooden platform which was partially supported by the wheelwells. Under the platform, we stuffed all of our gear, and on top the platform, we laid our sleeping bags and EP's. The vertical space between the platform and the top of the truck cap was lacking. It was only two and a half feet. The idea of going out west in this fashion suddenly lost its appeal. ("Whose idea was this anyway?!?") Apprehensively, I struggled in, taking full advantage of my caving abilities. Much to my surprise, the bed of the truck was more comfortable than my bed at home. And the movement of the truck could quickly lull you to sleep. I tried to keep this haven a secret from the others, but it didn't last past Indianapolis.

As I quickly became accustomed to my confined quarters, we departed from Cincinnati on a hot mid-September afternoon. Destination: the San Juan Mountains to climb Wilson Peak, Mount Wilson and El Diente. These mountains are considered to be some of the most difficult to climb out of Colorado's Fourteeners, mountains that top out at over fourteen thousand feet. The challenge was extremely appealing. My fellow mountaineers on this trip were Paul Even, Nick Day and Amy Kruse (a.k.a. Bill, the "five more minutes" clutch dumper). Nina Meadows, driving her own car, also accompanied us to Colorado, for she was headed to her new co-op job in L.A.

After a long ride in the rain, we finally reached Grand Junction where Nina's and our trails diverged. As the daylight became dimmer, we sped south, trying to reach our destination before dark. Due to the difficult driving on the winding mountain road at night, we decided to crash (i.e., sleep) next to the road and arrive the next morning. When we awoke, we saw Wilson Peak, which was inspiring enough for us to get moving early, except for Amy who wanted "five more minutes" of sleep. By afternoon, we were setting up our base camp (10,500 ft.) after a short 2-3 mile hike. Our camp was situated next to an old, unstable cabin, a relic from the silver mining days. Even though the cabin was somewhat unstable, it did provide sufficient wind protection while we cooked our dinners.

The next day (Sunday) was spent checking out the area, going over the following day's route, and acclimating to the altitude. Because of the past mining activities, there were jeep trails up to 12,000 ft., which facilitated the hiking. Beyond the trails, the terrain consisted of loose scree and talus fields. That night we discussed out route to the summit. We would travel south into the basin and then head up for the saddle (13000 ft.) which was west of Wilson Peak. Then we would circle around to the south side and head diagonally up the south face to the summit. The hiking was a bit arduous due to the fact that we were not yet fully acclimated. We were keeping good time until we started to head for the saddle. We had to go up a steep slope (class 3-4) that consisted of loose rocks and scree.

Every step practically initiated its own landslide. I found the going nerve-wracking as well as exhausting.

After going up about 400 feet, we came upon a small trail of firmer rock. As we looked back we saw that there was a switch back which we could have taken to avoid these nasty loose rocks. We had missed the trail because it went up in a northerly direction and we were headed up in a southerly direction. Also our topos did not show this trail because this area was last checked in 1954.

When we reached the saddle, we got our first look at Mt. Wilson and El Diente. Their monstrous masses were awe-inspiring as well as intimidating. I did not dwell on this fact and just concentrated on the matters at hand. As we were climbing up the south face, I began to feel the effects of the altitude, which is somewhat similar to that of suffering from the flu. My stomach became extremely upset, and I felt extremely lethargic. Every step became a chore, and due to the loose and unstable rock we were going over, it was downright frustrating. After what seemed to be forever, we were at the bottom of the final push. Due to the unstable rock and the exposure, we decided to go one at a time. Nick went first. When he got to the top, he told us it was a false peak. To get to the summit we had to downclimb, traverse across the headwall of an avalanche chute and then do a 5.0-5.1 rock climb for 100 feet to the summit.

After a short discussion, we decided to go for it, even though we didn't have a rope. Unfortunately, Amy backed down. Although it was somewhat dangerous, the final push was not that difficult. After some congratulatory remarks and a few snapshots, we quickly headed back down because it was starting to snow. After a hefty dinner, we all crashed and slept very soundly.

The next day (Tuesday) was an "off" day. We went up to a small steep ice field and practiced the crampon techniques that we might need on the Mt. Wilson-El Diente climb and traverse. Although we got about an inch of snow that night at basecamp, it quickly melted, but the snow remained on the peaks. We were concerned that the snow would transform into verglass (very hard, slippery ice) after that day's thermal cycle. We would just have to see the next day.

Wednesday morning, 5 a.m. Once again we were headed south up into the basin. It had snowed quite a bit the previous night and we were expecting much more on the peaks. Of course, at 5 a.m. it was dark, and we were walking in a dense fog. It seemed like the mountains were luring us into a trap as we continued walking in the gray cotton. It was a most eerie feeling -- something that I would expect a nuclear winter to be. By the time we started to hike up to the saddle the sun was coming out and the fog was lifting. Fortunately, it was going to be a beautiful, cloudless day.

After some initial confusion, we finally found the switchback that avoided the steep slope of loose rock. At the saddle, we looked at the snow-covered mountains. Here, the snow was much deeper, from 6 to 12 inches. To get to the summit of Mt. Wilson, we had to go down the other side of the saddle to about 11000 ft. and then go back up to 14,250.

I first thought the snow would make the hiking easier, but it became more treacherous. As on Wilson Peak, practically every rock moved away under your weight, but now your foot would slip off the rock first due to the slick snow. The climb would have been much easier if the snow was consolidated. To avoid the rocks, Nick and I tried to go up the ice field. The ice, however, was rotten, and we were forced to deal with the unstable rocks on the north face.

Although the climbing conditions were not ideal, everyone was now well acclimated. Paul, who did not enjoy the Wilson Peak climb and had to be persuaded into climbing again, was going up the mountain like a climbin' fool. He was just a powerhouse.

The further we climbed, the more unstable the mountain became. Instead of mid-sized rocks, we were climbing boulders that were somewhat unstable. After some gutsy moves with extreme exposure, we found ourselves on the shoulder of the peak. All we had to do was to traverse a knife-edge ridge to the peak. Nick took one look and proclaimed that he wasn't going any farther. He said that it was too unstable for him. Paul, Amy, and I gingerly continued on. To the left was a 1500-foot drop-off and to the right was the treacherous north face. Each step was taken with extreme care. Finally, we arrived at a point which we thought was the base of the peak. However, to get to the top, one had to traverse an avalanche chute and do a 5.0 boulder climb to the summit. Because of the conditions, Amy and Paul did not want to continue. As I traversed the headwall at the avalanche chute, every rock I touched dropped away from me. Paul and Amy were extremely nervous for my sake, and I would call out every time a rock would give away.

The final 60 feet— up a spire of boulders. I climbed, scared to death; any of these boulders could come out and take me down the mountain.

When I got to the top, I felt elated, but I was quickly deflated when I saw the true summit right in front of me. Another false peak. I was sitting on the spire of boulders, the top of which there was barely enough room to sit on. To the summit, I would have to go back down and then back up. I was short by 100 feet in elevation of the summit, and my nerves were spent. After taking some pictures, I somehow climbed down the unstable, snow-covered spire. Connecting back up with Paul and Amy, we realized that the mountain was too much for us that day; what we needed was some snow to consolidate the loose rock. We quickly downclimbed and trudged our way back to the base camp, exhausted. We returned by 6 p.m., ate dinner and then slept for 12 hours.

We decided to hike the next day (Thursday) and catch some sights, possibly do another climb. We went to Telluride (or as Nick calls it, To Hell You Ride) and found the upscale, touristy, touron town to be not our style. At the time it seemed to be a utopia for motorcross dirt bikers because they were all over the place and practically took over the town. Ouray was, however, the scene we were looking for. After a decent dinner at a small restaurant and a call home, Ouray began to be taken over by these migrant dirt bikers. Somewhere I saw a sign proclaiming the Ouray 500; so it must have been a tour for the dirt bikers.

Instead of heading home early, we decided to climb Mt. Sneffels, another fourteener. Since it was early afternoon, we packed up our gear, taking only some clothes and our sleeping bags, and camped at the foot of the mountain. At 12,000 feet we bivouacked in the cold mountain air. Once again we were the victims of a false peak. The ridge displayed many peaks and it was difficult to ascertain which was the summit. We did not have a map, just a poor topo reproduction of the mountain in the guidebook. We picked out what we thought looked like the summit, but we were wrong. The climbing was fairly easy: there was grass up to 13000 feet. When we got to the top, Paul and I realized our mistake, for the true summit was really never in view the entire climb. Upon hearing the news, Amy decided to turn back; Nick was having breathing problems and had turned back earlier in the morning. Since we did not have time to reach the summit by 1 p.m., Paul and I decided to just enjoy the view we had— snow-covered mountains and a deep blue sky. Although we were disappointed that we did not reach the summit, we were very satisfied with what we had done. As Nick said, "If you got back alive and unhurt, then you have succeeded."

The San Juans are called The Land of Endless Mountains. I'd modify that to The Land of Endless False Peaks.

Hiking back to the truck, the hot sun was a welcome change from the bitterly cold night. We decided to go south to Durango. Spending the afternoon in the small shops provided some temporary comic relief, but the thought of driving home was depressing. However, we did have one more adventure before the fat lady sang. Since we were passing by the infamous Colorado sand dunes, we were going to stop to see them. However, it was close to midnight. As we pulled into the parking lot, I thought it was strange that there were about ten cars there also. As we started heading for the dunes, we read some of the signs describing the place. It was very bright— we didn't need our flashlights because of the full moon. Just as we started to walk up the dunes, we heard people beginning to bay like wild dogs on the other side of the dune. I looked at my watch. It was midnight, exactly. A full moon, midnight, people baying like coyotes. Nick suggested devil worshipers, which sent us all scampering back to the truck and back to Cincinnati.

Everybody falls now and then. You're not a failure until you blame somebody or something else.

"It's a tree bug with antlers!" Jennie Vennemeyer, upon seeing a walking stick in the great outdoors.

Goose Down Gourmet

Larry Bortner

More exciting recipes from the guy who likes to make a mess on the trail

Normally, this column is devoted to scrumptious recipes the average camper can fix on the trail with available ingredients (i.e., foodstuffs you wouldn't mind carrying on a week-long backpacking trip such as pastas, rices, beans, dried veggies, etc.). *But* (notice the emphasis here) since I have received several requests for the following recipes, I revert to the typical cookbook approach for typical cooks in typical kitchens. Historians may note, however, that the PB soup recipe is an adaptation of a trail version published here in the pre-Star Wars era.

As a matter of fact, all of these are adaptations of recipes that I found elsewhere and are a result of my approach to cooking and life. I prefer to follow a meandering trail through the woods than to march rigidly in step with others in a band parading down the street. A recipe is a rough guideline to a finished product; you can follow the directions exactly or you can tweak it a little here, stretch it a little there, or substitute ingredients. What do you like, what goes together well for you? In short, you can *play* with it.

The quantities are approximate. I have not yet calculated the conversion factors for a couple of shakes or a half handful or a pinch. Use what I suggest and adjust to your taste.

Larry Cookies

The Secret revealed

No secret, really. Just follow the Toll House recipe and use butter and whole wheat graham flour (1/4 to 1/2 cup extra since it's not as dense as pastry flour). Use half the vanilla called for and add that much orange and/or lemon extract. Add spices (cinnamon, cardamon, allspice) and 5 ozs. of white chocolate chips or chunks in addition to the 12 ozs. of semi-sweet chocolate chips. Use an ice cream scoop to form the cookies on the pan. Take them out of the oven when they're still soft but not like the uncooked batter.

Pumpkin Soup

I don't know— does it taste like pumpkin pie?

This is a curried soup that goes down smoothly, but the spicy hot, tingling effect is on a slight time delay. By itself, paradoxically, this concoction can be bland, but add some shrimp or surimi or even left over turkey or chicken to it and it's absolutely wonderful (Thanks, Allan Sutherland!).

1/4 cup (1/2 stick) butter
2 medium onions, chopped
1 garlic clove, minced
1/2 tsp. fresh ginger, minced
1 teaspoon curry powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
1/2 teaspoon black pepper
2 15 oz. cans chicken broth (or 3-4 cups vegetable broth)
1/2 cup quick brown rice
1 15 oz. can pumpkin (or 2 cups cooked fresh pumpkin or squash— yes, even zucchini)
1 cup light cream
1-2 6 oz. cans tiny shrimp (or 1/2-1 pound fresh)

Melt butter in large saucepan-- nah, this is somebody else's recipe I'm following. The way I make it— and I realize it may be wrong because it bruises the subtle flavors of some delicate ingredient, but it turns out OK, anyway— is to throw the butter, onions, garlic, ginger, curry, salt, and peppers into a 2-quart pot on medium heat. Cook until the onions are clear. Add the broth and rice, bring to a boil, then simmer for 15 minutes or however long it takes for the rice you use to cook. Stir in pumpkin and cream. Serve immediately. Makes 7 cups. Or so.

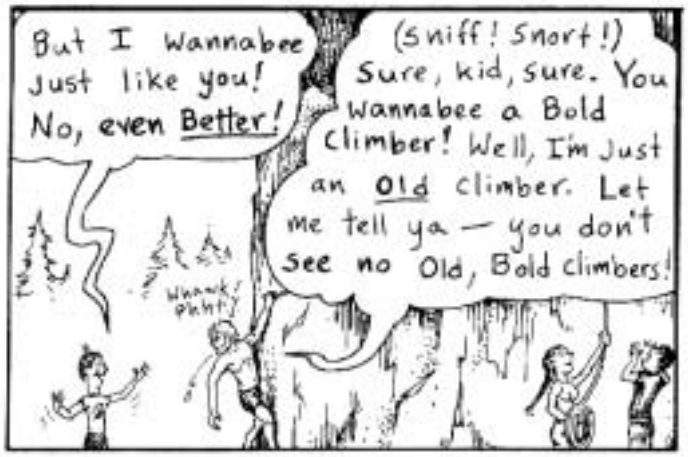
Peanut Butter Soup

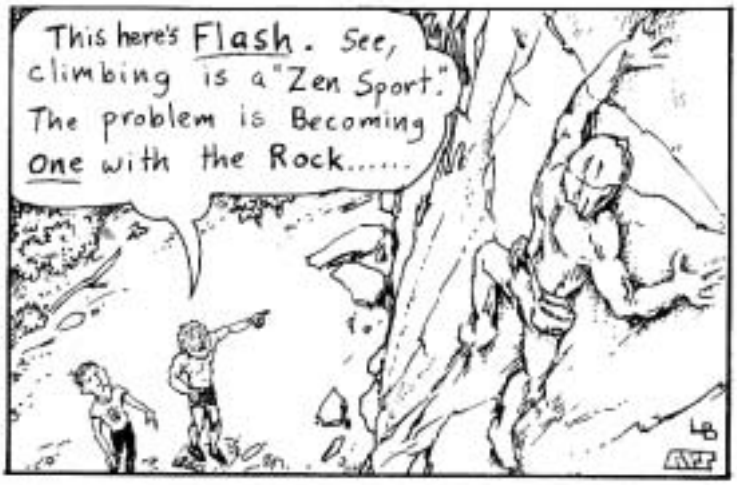
You've got to be kidding

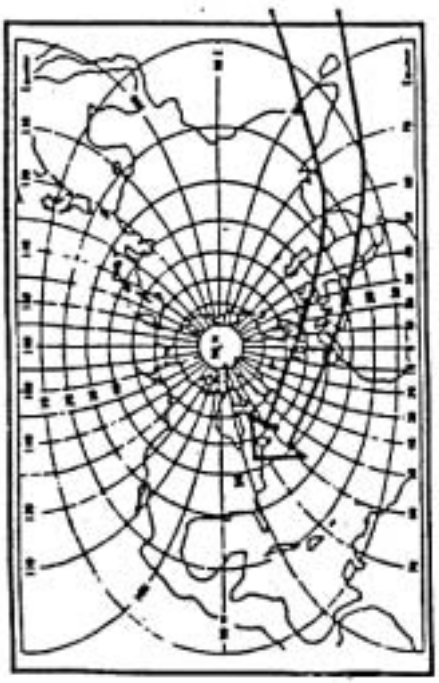
This is a thick, rich soup that sticks to your ribs, as well as the roof of your mouth. Like the pumpkin soup, no meat is involved. True vegetarians can substitute for the dairy products. I know the name turns up noses, and a more accurate label might be "Cream of Mushroom/Sweet Pepper Soup with Peanut Sauce," but this has been the working title as I've developed the recipe over the years. Use your own discretion when you tell people what it is.

2 tablespoons butter
2 medium onions, chopped
1 garlic clove, minced
1/2 teaspoon fresh ginger, minced
dash curry powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
1/2 teaspoon black pepper
1 green pepper, chopped
1/2 pound mushrooms, sliced
1 bay leaf
2-3 tablespoons flour or cornmeal
2-3 tablespoons Parmesan cheese
1/2 cup powdered milk
4 cups water
1 cup peanut butter
1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese

Throw the butter, onions, garlic, ginger, curry, salt, and peppers into a 2-quart pot on medium heat. Cook until the onions are clear (Is this starting to sound familiar?). Fold in the pepper and cook for a minute. Stir in the mushrooms and cook for 30 seconds. Add the bay leaf, flour, Parmesan, and powdered milk and stir until the vegetables are coated. Pour in the water slowly, stirring constantly until well blended. Cover and wait until it boils. Blend in the peanut butter, reduce heat, and add the cheddar. Simmer for 5-10 minutes.







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Matt and Brian's Excellent Adventure

Matt Lehr and Brian Quinn

They don't have to travel to pass their history test, but that doesn't stop them from bringing chaos to the west...

It all started one drunken and dreary December night in a small, dingy bar called Daniels'. Brian and I were, as usual, shooting our mouths off when we came up with a lamebrain idea to take our summer off and do one great big trip.

Several months and scores of beers later, we decided it was time to buy a van. We found a beauty— light blue and rust color and an engine with a heart of black gold. Thanks to some help from Steve Must and she was up and running great. As the time drew closer for our departure, many frantic preparations were being made. Finally the day came!!! And we were still not ready!

It was Tuesday, July 4th, 1989. John, Paul, Brian, and myself assembled at 444. By 5:00 p.m., we were on the road. Our goal: Seattle by noon on Thursday. At dusk we reached Peoria, Illinois, and were greeted by a spectacular fireworks show. Off into the night we drove. Iowa, South Dakota, Wyoming— a brief stop at Devil's Tower—, Montana, Idaho, and finally Washington early on Thursday morning. We pulled into Seattle at 7:00 a.m. with a spectacular view of Mt. Rainier that we shared with the half million other people parked on the highway. We headed for Hal Shaw's to freshen up, then we were off to the airport to meet Steve, Ebi, Gunter, Debbie, Bhavani, Chuck, and Mark Carter. Unfortunately, we missed Tracy and Sharon. The next stop was REI to rent our mountaineering equipment. When we got there, Steve realized that he had the keys to Ebi's car, which was stranded at the airport along with Ebi, Gunter, and Debbie. So back to the airport we went. After getting out of REI again, we said good-bye to Ebi and Gunter who headed off on their own to climb.

Later that day, July 6th, we were off to Mt. Baker. We arrived late at night and crashed in the woods by the parking lot. The next morning we began to climb. We pushed basecamp above 8,000 feet the first day and summited the next. Then came a long, tiring trudge back down to the van. After that, most of us, being completely exhausted, swore we would never climb again. We started the drive down Baker and were relieved to sit and relax. But soon the brake pads were billowing white smoke; we were once again on our feet walking down the rest of the mountain.

As we headed down Interstate 5 towards Mt. St. Helens in a repaired van, we began looking for a place to sleep. We found one at 3:00 a.m., a beautiful rest area under renovation. Mark staggered from the van, barely able to stand from the carbon monoxide poisoning. Steve and Bhavani pitched a tent behind a dumpster and the rest of us sprawled out on the grass. The next morning, July 9th, we reached our destination. We found a great campground for a couple of days, with hot showers and free wood... and all for only $4 a vehicle (What a bargain for 9 people!). On Monday morning, July 10th, we set out to climb St. Helens. It was a bit dusty, but a nice climb, especially when somebody found BEER in their pack at the top.

On the way down, we lost Brian, Steve, and Bhavani. Several hours later, the rangers rescued them from the roadside. That night we camped at the campground again (too much of a bargain to pass up).

But this night we were graced with the presence of Robin Hood and His Merry Band of Redneck Archers. They practiced their skills in a crowded campground, with real arrows. The only injury was a redneck impaled while trying to catch an arrow!

On Wednesday, July 11th, we vanned into Portland, Oregon, bandaged the tailpipe, and struck out for Mt. Hood via the scenic Columbia River Gorge. Over half the group made it to the summit. There was a little friction between John and some Seattle Mounties, but we avoided a confrontation when John could not find them again.

After climbing Hood, we drove north to Mt. Adams. Between the van gassing and dusting us to death and the road up the side of Adams being one big pothole not fit for a jeep, we were all getting a little tense. The gas gauge being on empty didn't help either.

But leave it to Chuck to loosen things up when he dropped the keys to his rental car into the outhouse.

It didn't take long to fish them out with a coat hanger. By this time, the majority was too burned out to climb and only three of us endured the summit attempt. At some point we stopped worrying about going all the way and just looked forward to rest and relaxation on Vancouver Island.

Coming down off Adams, we once again headed north on Friday the 14th. We got the van's oil changed in the morning, then headed for the Canadian border. Here a polite Canadian customs official informed us that we could go into the country, but we might have a problem getting back out. This was because Mark the Kiwi forgot his visa (but he remembered his American Express). So, with an illegal alien on board, we decided not to take a chance and we turned around and headed for the [illegible] customs. There we were greeted by a "wonderfully polite" border guard who treated us as sub-citizens. The van was pulled out of line and searched. We were escorted into some building and detained without restroom privileges. They couldn't find any drugs, pornography, or nuclear bombs, so they let us go and we headed to Anacortes to catch the San Juan ferry. Once on the island, we camped at the "cheap" Lake Dale

campground (only $21.50 a night). On Saturday we were touring the island, when suddenly a giant kelp attacked the van's antenna. We tried to remove it, but it stuck with us for thousands of miles.

On Sunday the 16th, we shopped in Friday Harbor on San Juan Island, then caught a late afternoon ferry back to the mainland. We arrived at the airport late and dropped off Chuck and Mark for their early flight home. Steve, alias Harold Cummings, got the rest of us a room at the Allstar Inn. In the morning at the airport, we said our good-byes to Bhavani and Debbie. Now Steve, John, Brian, Paul, and myself were all that were left; shortly Steve took off by bus for the Cascades to meet Alex, and we were back to the original four.

Before leaving Seattle, we wanted to thank Hal for his hospitality and bought him a six-pack of his favorite, Weinhearts or something like that. But he was not home, so we left it as a door prize. We sat outside his house for a while, pondering whether to go to Alaska or California.

After we made our minds up, we headed south. We reached Portland that night and stopped by Barb Boylan's where we were allowed to crash in her backyard. That night it began to rain, so we crawled under the neighbor's car. The next morning we were greeted by giant slugs and the neighbor showing his car to a prospective buyer. It was Tuesday the 18th and Barb decided to join our band of merry men in our quest for Yosemite. We left Portland for Cannon Beach and the rest of the Oregon coast. Down the coast we went, stopping at Oregon Dunes the first night. The next day we went down into California. Wednesday night the 19th we stopped just short of San Francisco and slept in a field with lots of lady bugs. We hit the Golden Gate Bridge at rush hour and spent the morning in San Francisco where we modified the van's bumper. Later that day we headed down to Yosemite.

Before going into the park, we found a nice swimming hole in the Merced River where we cooled off from the searing heat. Inside the park in the valley, we experienced the massive overcrowding and hysteria. Luckily we found a spot at the backpacker's camp. The next day, Paul, Brian, Barb and myself took off for three days on the trail while John searched Tuolumne Meadows for a climbing partner. Yosemite's backcountry is truly beautiful and not terribly crowded. John met us at the pickup spot on Sunday the 23rd. We spent the next two nights with a friend of Barb's in a small town outside Yosemite called El Portel.

On Tuesday the 25th, we bid farewell to Barb and headed to Lake Tahoe.

I can't describe how beautiful Lake Tahoe is, the sun gently caressing those gorgeously curved and tanned bodies. The lake was nice, too!

We swam in the crystal clear waters all afternoon. Later that night we hit Reno. After I lost $35, Paul lost $10, and Brian won a significant amount, it was once again time to move on, We drove all through the night and by morning reached Idaho and the Sawtooth Mountains.

We took the first day off there, July 26th, and saw the mountains behind our big rig. The next day we bummed around and on Friday we took off for the backcountry. That night we camped by gorgeous Alice Lake. Saturday we footed it to Toxaway Lake, also extremely pretty, ten miles from the road and packed with Idahoan day hikers.

We set up camp there and found that the water was teeming with these funny-looking creatures that resembled tiny leeches. Even though it was many miles away, we decided to hoof it back to the van that night.

We got to the van with enough time to shower and to catch the Stanley Stomp (Stanley is a small town in Idaho on the Salmon River, population 167.). We stomped for a while and had a few beers with the locals. On Sunday the 30th we checked out the hot springs flowing into the Salmon River, then the Craters of the Moon National Monument, and finally headed east.

Late that afternoon we entered Yellowstone. We camped by Lake Yellowstone where we were treated to a smashing sunset followed by a lightning storm. The next morning we took a road tour of the park and checked out the fire damage; it wasn't as bad as we thought it would be. Later that night we left Yellowstone for the Tetons.

We found a cozy spot at the base of the Grand Teton in the Lupine Meadows parking lot to crash for the night. Unfortunately, a park Ranger didn't think it was so cozy. He told us we could camp for free in the Teton National Forest, so we did!

August 1st we spent in Jackson Hole deciding if we wanted to climb the Grand. After changing our minds three times, John and I chose to climb. We took off early on Wednesday the 2nd and had a basecamp set up in the glacial moraine by early afternoon. It seemed to take forever for the sun to go down, but we finally got to sleep. The next morning we were up at 4:30 and climbing within 5 minutes. After enduring some harsh winds, we hit the summit about 9:00 and had it to ourselves for a half hour. Coming off the Grand is probably harder than climbing it.

Meanwhile, Brian and Paul had joined the Chris Wall cult in Jackson Hole. Later that night we hit the Million Dollar Cowboy Bar! We camped south of Jackson and took off for Colorado the next day.

We drove the better part of the day before pulling into Rocky Mountain National Park where we picked up a semi-road-kill biker who had about thirty yards of road rash. After touring the park by van on the 5th, we went into Boulder and hung out for much of the day around the Pearl Street Mall. When night came, we crashed in the mountains outside of the park. The next day was Sunday, our 34th day, when John realized that his planned week-long vacation was long behind him. As for Brian and I, our aimless, drunken vision had finally been accomplished. We were on the road again, but this time headed towards home. But not before Colorado could bid us a farewell with a huge hailstorm. We pulled into Cincy early on August 7th and immediately began to plan next summer's adventure!

It must be a poor life that achieves freedom from fear. —Aldo Leopold

He who does not at some time consent to the terrible in life or even exult in it never takes possession of the inexpressible fullness of the power of our existence but walks on the edge and sometime, when the day of reckoning comes, will prove to have been neither alive nor dead. —Rilke

A General Guide to Ropes

Jeff Sipes

Isn't it about time you found out why you don't use a clothesline to go rappelling?

Rule number one: *There is no one rope perfect for every use.* Before acquiring a new rope you must first determine what the rope will be used for—caving, mountain climbing, water sports, rescue, window washing— the list goes on and on. After that think about the environment and terrain you will be using it on. For example: gritty rocks, surf (salt water), sand, mud, snow, ice. Give these factors due consideration and then select the rope or ropes that will best fit your needs.

Before you can make an intelligent decision it is advisable to know the various types of rope construction and materials and how they relate to you. The remainder of this article will deal with the above issues and more.

Rope Construction

Laid (or Twisted)

These ropes are made by twisting together bundles of fibers. This type of construction has been in use since Neanderthal days. Most laid ropes tend to untwist when suspending a load in midair, causing the load to spin. The untwisting also causes kinks and hockels to form in the rope. All of the load-bearing fibers appear at the surface a number of times through the length of a twisted rope. Any abrasion or surface damage has an immediate and direct effect on the rope's strength. Laid ropes are very susceptible to abrasion, due to their construction. They also tend to be stretchy which can be a disadvantage in some rappels.

Eight-strand Plaited

Very soft, supple rope construction that is very easy to handle. Extremely susceptible to abrasion and "picking" of bundles by being snagged on equipment, rocks, or edges.

Braid On Braid

At first glance, these look a lot like kernmantle ropes. A braid on braid rope has a braided core with a braided sheath. Most ropes of this design are based on marine ropes. This type of rope is also susceptible to abrasion and picking of the fiber bundles. Due to the loose braid on the sheath, it is easy for dirt and grit to get inside the braided core, causing abrasion from within.

Dynamic Kernmantle

This type of construction is most often found in sport ropes intended for rock and ice climbing. They are very stretchy (35% to 45% at failure). This stretchiness is meant to absorb some of the energy generated in a fall, thereby lessening the force that would be transmitted throughout the system, especially to the person who has fallen. In rock and ice climbing or any situation where a fall of greater than factor one (more about fall factors later...) might occur, a dynamic rope must be employed. This same stretch can be a disadvantage in many common rope related activities. Many operations often involve lowering equipment or people, and the stretch in dynamic ropes may cause loss of control at critical times, increasing the danger to the people involved. When ascending a dynamic rope, the climber must first pull out all the stretch before he leaves the ground, adding a considerable amount of nonproductive motion. Dynamic ropes are manufactured with a thin sheath which will wear out quickly. Most manufacturers recommend replacing dynamic ropes after stopping one fall greater than fall factor one. U.I.A.A. ratings are merely the number of test falls a rope has supported without breaking. Do not assume that a fall rating of 5, 6, 7, or higher means you can safely fall that number of times. U.I.A.A. testing is done in a laboratory (details to follow) and the conditions in the field will not be the same as in controlled lab test. If your intended use is strictly rock, ice climbing or mountaineering, then a dynamic rope may be the only type you need.

Static Kernmantle

This type of rope has a braided sheath (the mantle) over a core (the kern) made of parallel untwisted fibers. Static ropes have a very low stretch (15% to 20% stretch at failure) compared to dynamic kernmantle ropes. In most kernmantle ropes, the core bundles contribute most of the rope's strength. So the important load bearing fibers are inside the rope where they are protected from abrasion by the tightly woven sheath. The core bundles are continuous in length and run parallel, which not only reduces stretch but also eliminates spin when suspended in air. Currently, a static kernmantle rope is preferred for most rappeling, ascending on a fixed line, or in lowering or raising loads. These ropes should not be employed as a dynamic belay line or a safety line when the potential fall factor exceeds one. For these applications you should use a dynamic rope. For fall factors of one or less a static kernmantle rope should be satisfactory, assuming the user has an adequate harness, the entire system is properly rigged with good hardware, and the rope is protected from cutting and abrasion. Be aware that when a fall is stopped using static kernmantle rope, the stop will be much quicker than with the dynamic rope and that the force transmitted to the climber will be higher, so the stop may not be as soft as it would be on dynamic rope.

CAUTION: In situations as outlined above, it is important to remember that the entire system is only as strong as the weakest link.

Even with the strongest rope, a system can fail at an anchor, carabiner, knot, seat harness or other points. Always carefully inspect every component in a system that will support a life. Don't tempt the hand of fate.

Fall Factors

Perhaps the most common question heard is: What is a fall factor and how do I compute it? A fall factor is a number which expresses the maximum distance a load can fall on a given length of rope. To compute the fall factor, divide the distance a load attached to the rope could fall by the length of rope between the anchor and the load.

The accompanying Figure 1 should help to clarify this point. In the example on the left the person is standing on the same ledge the rope is anchored to. Obviously he can only fall the length of the rope. This is a fall factor of one. The total length of the rope does not affect the outcome. A ten foot fall on a ten foot length will always compute out to one. The same is true whether the length is 10, 100, or 1000 feet. The illustration in the center shows the anchor above the load. In this situation the fall factor will be less than one. For example, assume the rope is 100 feet long and it is anchored 30 feet above the load. If the load is dropped, it will fall 70 feet on a 100 foot length of rope, and in this case the fall factor would be less than one (.7 to be exact). In the illustration on the right the load is the full length of the rope above the anchor. If the load is dropped it will fall twice the length of the rope for a fall factor of two. Fall factors cannot exceed two, as it is impossible to fall more than twice the length of the rope. Use a dynamic kernmantle rope when the potential fall factor is greater than one. This type of potential is common in rock, ice, and mountain climbing. When the potential fall factor of less than one, it is proper to use a static kernmantle rope. Factors of one or less are common when rappelling or top rope climbing.

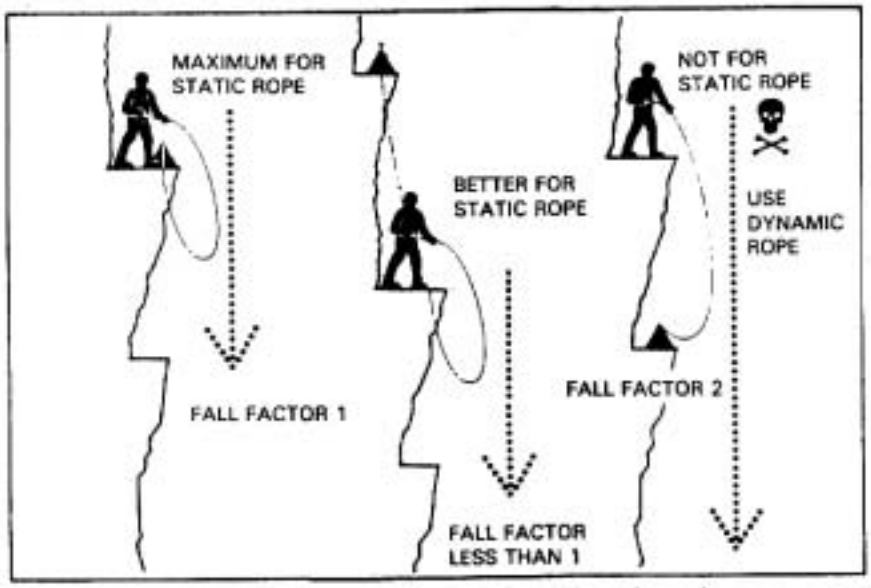


Fig.1: Explanation of Fall Factor. Triangle is anchor point.

Rope Size And Strength

Rule number two: *No One Rope Size Or Strength Will Be Perfect For Every Need.* Rope strength is probably the more important of the two. Rope strength is usually expressed as tensile strength at break. Simple, right? Wrong! There are as many ways to measure and describe rope strength as there are manufacturers of rope. In testing, many factors come into play, any of which can move test scores up or down. The rate at which the pull is applied, the temperature of the rope, the diameter of the mandrel used in the pull— these along with other factors can change the test results. Descriptions can be just as bad. Maximum, average and minimum all are terms commonly used to describe tensile strength. Obviously you can not compare one manufacturer's maximum strength to another's minimum strength. And there are manufacturers who only list a nebulous safe working load, not tensile strength at all.

Before selecting a rope, you should first determine the greatest working load you will expect the rope to support in its lifetime. Will it be a rappel for one person or a lowering line for two people, litter, and equipment, or a high line in a long Tyrolean traverse? If your load was 300 pounds, would you use a rope that was 300 pounds strong? Of course not. You would use a rope which is a number of times stronger than the load. This extra margin is called the safe working load or safety margin. This is most often expressed as a ratio. The higher the ratio the greater the safety margin. For lifting noncritical loads such as equipment, a ratio of 7:1 is adequate. For live or critical loads, national standards recommend a conservative ratio of 15:1.

Rope Fiber

Natural Fibers

Natural fibers have been with us since before written history. They lose strength with time whether they are used or not. They are attacked by molds, mildews, and fungus. They are brittle and they lack ability to absorb shock loads. Natural fibers are not continuous throughout the length of rope. Temperatures as low as 180 degrees Fahrenheit have been known to damage natural fibers. It is easy to expose ropes to temperatures higher than that. Due to the above shortcomings, natural fiber ropes should not be employed in critical operations.

Polyolefin Family

Polypropylene and polyethylene fibers are used in and around water where floating rope is desirable. They also are impervious to acids and will not conduct electricity when dry. Polypropylene will met at around 270 degrees Fahrenheit and polyethylene will melt at approximately 225 degrees Fahrenheit. The polyolefins have a very low resistance to abrasion and will wear out quickly. Polyolefin fibers are made in monofilament and multifilament versions. The monofilaments are larger in diameter, stiffer, and more brittle than are multifilament fibers. Multifilament fibers are smaller in diameter which makes a soft supple rope when compared to monofilament. Other than in water operation ropes, the polyolefin family is not a good choice for ropes.

Kevlar

Kevlar is among the strongest of manmade fibers. It also can resist much higher heat than other synthetic fibers. Kevlar has a very low elongation (stretch) at break, which means it is not capable of absorbing energy generated in a fall. It also is very susceptible to abrasion. The fibers are very brittle and tend to break when wound too tightly (such as in a knot).

Polyester

Polyester fibers are used in many ropes. Dacron is Dupont's trade name for one type of polyester fiber. Polyester has good resistance to heat and will melt around 480 degrees Fahrenheit. Polyester fibers are strong and have a high tensile strength even when wet. Wet polyester will lose only about 1% of its dry strength. It also has a very good resistance to ultraviolet radiation, making it a good choice when the finished product is exposed to a lot of sunlight. Polyester fibers do not elongate much, and because of this low dynamic energy absorption ability, the fiber can not handle shock loading or repeated loading as well as nylon.

Nylon

Nylon is the most common rope fiber in sport ropes. "Perlon" is not another word for kernmantle as many people think. It is a European name for type 6 nylon. The first kernmantle ropes were made in Europe of Perlon fibers. As a result, many people started calling all kernmantle ropes perlon. Nylon is manufactured in two different types: type 6 nylon and type 6,6 nylon. Both are similar, the major difference being type 6,6 has a slightly higher melting point and is a little tougher than type 6. Ropes made of type 6,6 will stand up to abrasion and wear slightly better than will equal ropes made of type 6. New, dry nylon is about 10% stronger than polyester, but nylon can lose 10-15% of its strength when wet. Nylon can absorb approximately 15,000 pounds of force per pound of dry rope, so nylon can cope with about twice the shock loading that polyester can, wet or dry. Nylon is a very inert material, and most chemicals do not have any adverse effects on it. Some acids will degrade nylon ropes, so avoid exposing nylon to any acids.

Color

The color choice may be because you or your group has taken a fancy to one color or it may be for a more utilitarian purpose. Bright colors such as orange and lime green are much easier to locate by sight than darker colors and they are widely used by climbers because of this reason. Darker colors such as black, brown, and o.d. green tend to be used for winter rope operations. A frozen dark-colored rope will absorb more heat from sunlight, thawing out quicker than a light-colored rope. Dark colors are also easier to see against a background of snow or ice. Having several different colored ropes make rope management much easier. When more than one color rope is deployed it is much simpler to communicate which rope or ropes need to be raised or lowered. A colored sheath over a white core also may help you spot cuts and abrasion much sooner than a white sheath on a white core.

Any coloring of the nylon will reduce the strength slightly over that of raw white nylon; however the amount of strength loss will depend on how the color is added to the nylon. Nylon that is dyed by extrusion— mixing the raw nylon with a pigment and then extruding it into solid filaments— is not as strong as nylon that has first been extruded and then dyed by bonding the color to the filament surface. The reason for this is that the pigments which are extruded along with the nylon slightly weakens the bonding of the nylon molecules to each other. The dye bonding process is a more expensive process but the added strength more than justifies it. Recently ropes with a colored plastic coating have shown up on the market. Applying a plastic coating makes the rope stiffer and more difficult to work with. The plastic coating is slick and can make control of a rappel or lowering operation much more difficult. The plastic coating is only on the outer surface of the rope and may wear off with time, leaving you with a plain white rope.

Classification Of Dynamic Kernmantle Climbing Ropes

Dynamic ropes are designed to absorb impacts developed in falls of factor one or higher. Dynamic climbing ropes are very stretchy. They are made in two major types: Single ropes and Double ropes. The standard for different climbing ropes are set by the U.I.A.A. (The International Union of Alpine Associations— Hey, I can't help it that the French can't put their words in the right order.). Single ropes must sustain, on one strand, a minimum of five test falls with a drop weight of 80 kilograms (176 pounds) without breaking. Single ropes usually measure 10.5 to 13 millimeter in diameter. A single rope should be employed any time the potential exists for stopping a fall of factor 1 or more with a single strand or rope. Double ropes, with an approximate 9 mm. diameter, must hold on one strand a minimum of five test falls with a drop weight of 55 kg. (121 pounds) without breaking. In normal use, two strands of a double rope are used together like a single rope.

U.I.A.A. Testing of Dynamic Ropes

U.I.A.A. Testing is performed on dynamic ropes only. It is not applied to static ropes as this type of rope is not intended to absorb the energies developed in falls greater than factor 1. In a U.I.A.A. drop test, a piece of dynamic rope 2.8 meters in length must hold a weight of 80 kg. for a single rope or 55 kg. for a double rope, dropped from a height of 5 meters. The rope runs over a deflection edge with a diameter of 10 mm., which is approximately the diameter of a carabiner. The current U.I.A.A. standard requires that a rope should sustain at least five drops without breaking. The U.I.A.A. drop test has a fall factor of 1.78.

FP- Fixed point with carabiner
DE- Deflection edge (10 mm. diameter)
W - Drop weight of 80 kg. (single rope), 55 kg.(double rope)
LD- Absorbing rope length- 0.30 m
LC- Free rope length- 2.5 m
H - Drop height- 5.0 m

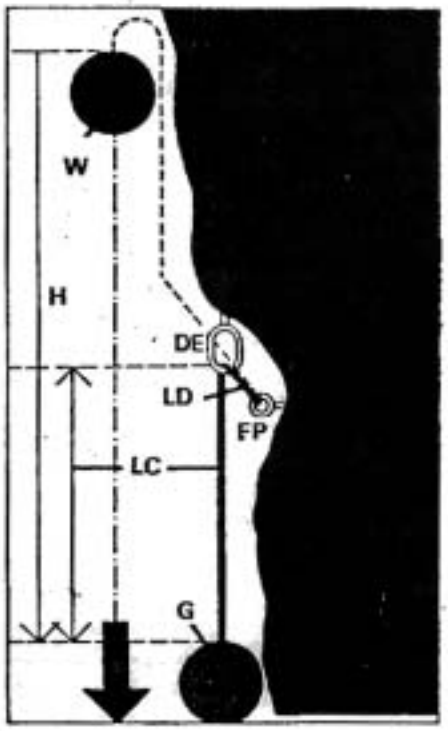


Fig. 2: Laboratory testing of dynamic ropes.

A Craving for Caving

Jeanne Vennemeyer

The last person you'd expect to go on a caving trip does so and lives to tell about it.

My caving trip began on Friday night at the Clifton Walgreens. I stopped there on the way home from an art showing in Kentucky I had attended with Allan Sutherland. The show featured the senior thesis projects of U.C. art students. Bizarre stuff!

The hottest attraction was a seven-foot sculpture made of baby diapers held together by tree limbs and tar. Equally intriguing was a miniature sculpture of two perfectly symmetrical hot pink elephants. The painting entitled "Shadows of Dreary Mists in a Gloomy, Forsaken Harbor" perplexed us all, but it was certainly dreary and definitely gloomy. Modest Allan, a REAL artist, politely complimented everyone's work and thought secretly how glad he was that he had studied Biological Parks Management, not Fine Art.

Back to Walgreens...when I asked the sales clerk where to find "caving gloves," he knew exactly what I meant. I was really impressed! After locating the gloves and carefully selecting one industrial strength battery, one large can of Planter's honey-roasted cashews and two pairs of pantyhose, I was ready to cave. (The pantyhose were for work on Monday.)

Cheerful as ever, Mark Guttadauro met me at 7 a.m. on Saturday morning. We picked up Allan and headed South for Goochland Cave. In Mark's new truck we listened to Peter Gabriel and Jethro Tull, but mostly we listened to Allan Sutherland describing the colors in the sunrise.

After carefully maneuvering down a pitted road, we floated the truck across a running stream to get to the cave entrance, like intrepid pioneers tumbling their wagons across the ford.

Dressed for adventure in our spelunking attire, we entered the cave and were suddenly enclosed by complete darkness and immovable, massive rock. Near the entrance we noticed several groups of bats vacationing—hibernating for the winter. I accidently woke one up, and both Allan and the bat screeched at me. We all felt sorry for disturbing the little creature so we babysat it for a while to make sure it was OK.

Next we walked the "Miracle Mile," a thoroughly enjoyable stretch that didn't require any bending, crawling, swimming or mud eating. During our stroll we discussed enthralling topics such as building walrus cages, testing cat food and delivering pizzas.

Deep inside the passage, we were challenged by waist-high, chilling water. Mark acted like it was nothing, so I acted like it was nothing too, even though I was mentally dialing 911. Further on we admired the "Fountain of Youth" rock formation, reflecting upon Ponce de Leon's unfruitful search.

When the massive slabs of rock around us began to look like magnificent portions of Hershey chocolate, we decided it was time for lunch. Mark led us up to a ledge to eat where he pointed out a tiny mud sculpture of a voluptuous goddess. "It's been here for years," he said with wonder, "...there used to be a little American flag stuck right next to it." Allan and I weren't sure what to think of the goddess or what the flag had to do with anything, but we were pleased that Mark pointed out this hidden treasure.

For lunch I had the honey-roasted cashews I bought from Walgreens and a cheese sandwich. Allan had half a jar of peanut butter and Mark had about five candy bars. After lunch we felt the heaviness of our drenched clothing and full bellies, so we decided to head back. Allan tormented Mark and me by vividly describing how wonderful it felt to get out of mucky clothing into freshly laundered cottons and socks.

"The best part about caving is getting out of the cave," Allan concluded.

When we exited the cave it was still daylight. On the way home we couldn't decide whether to go to Pizza Hut or to Wendy's, so we ate at Arby's. That night I dreamt of exploring miles of endless caverns, but when I awoke on Sunday, it was back to reality. I wondered when I was ever going to get a chance to return my caving gear since I never attend meetings.

The Three Men in a Tent Expedition

JeffSipes

The following statements are the profound thoughts and phrases which arose from the most recent expedition undertaken by the infamous group "Three Men in a Tent". One wonders what kind of a mind could think these thoughts; more to the point, what type of person would spend an entire weekend inside a VE-25 to develop such a fine literary document. The moral of this experience is, "When you make a statement, think about it first; someone might be writing it down."

How am I going to go for my morning jog in here?

Put it in the vegetable!

I have to piss sometime—Isn't that what the snow tunnels are for?

Is the candle lantern burning a hole in the center of the tent?

Another beer?—I've got a hole in my face.

We should have brought a 12 pack.

We'd be too much at home with a twelve pack.

Well, we're out of beer—how much tougher can it get?

Let's eat.

I think all the cold air in this tent is attracted to an open zipper.

That's pretty bad—the only way to stretch out is to lay down.

I can't believe you're pissing uphill of the tent.

Gin (the card game): I am so far away from Gin, I'll have to pack a lunch to get there.

When's lunch?

Observe all signs.

Nah—that'd take all the fun out of it.

Have you seen my other pfoota boot?

continued on next page...

Whitewater Rescue

Orb Smith

Could somebody tell me why you'd want to rescue whitewater?

It's now the Tuesday night before Thanksgiving, and I still haven't written this article for the Goose Down Gazette. I don't know why I'm having so much trouble with it— I usually *love* writing! Maybe it's so difficult to do because every time I sit down to write, I start daydreaming about all the fun I've had since this spring.

There were a couple of fun river trips over the summer, like the canoe trip where Steve K. and I swamped our canoe in less than a foot of water because I was busy rescuing a drowning damselfly-in-distress. Then there was the rafting trip on the Ocoee where we collapsed our raft in the middle of the put-in rapids and got to practice self-rescue techniques. With so much trouble keeping a boat afloat, it seemed like a good idea to take the Ohio Department of Natural Resources' River Rescue for Paddler's course when it was offered in September.

This is a fun, educational, and inexpensive course that I highly recommend to anyone who enjoys river sports. Steve Kramrech, Mark Guttadauro, Jim Wilhelm, and I took it this year and had a great time doing it. Two evenings of classroom instruction covered the basics of river dynamics, planning, equipment, medical considerations of hypothermia and cold-water drowning, and the theory of rescue approaches, which included dry-run setups of various rescue rope systems. This was followed by a two days of mock-rescues on Paint Creek during a water-release weekend— and that's where the *real* fun began!

We could have camped out at Paint-Creek State Park for the weekend, but decided that a warm, dry place to stay would be welcome after a day on (and in!) the river. So we made reservations at that garden spot of Hillsboro nightlife, the Greystone Motel. Arriving after midnight on Friday night, we found the place to be less than palatial. But we began to appreciate its comforts Saturday morning when we woke up to temperatures in the forties and a torrential downpour (You'll notice I'm starting to get into writing this— I'm using all these impressive descriptive adjectives!).

Saturday morning in the rain and the mud and the cold, we practiced such fun things as: self-, shore-assisted, and shallow-water rescues; boat-assisted rescues and unpinning a canoe; and boat-based rescues using rope systems. By afternoon we were far from expert in the various techniques, but we had learned a great deal. We finished up the day with a quick trip down the creek to familiarize ourselves with the water in preparation for the next day's mock rescues. The sun had come out at last, the air had a crisp, fresh-washed feel to it, and it was a fun ending to a long but worthwhile day.

The next morning was clear and not so cold and we were all looking forward to a day on the river. Our first "rescue" was pretty disorganized. We spent most of the morning trying to unpin the canoe that had been wedged between two rocks. Jim spent most of that time in the water trying to rig a workable rope system while other class members sat on the dry rock, shouting suggestions and encouragement. Meanwhile, Steve, Mark, and I were lucky enough to be on the bank end of the rope system, contributing muscle and ideas to the effort.

We trashed the canoe that had been sacrificed for this practice, pulling out a thwart and a seat and bending it almost double around the rock, but we never did get it unpinned.

After the river level had dropped later in the day, another group of paddlers freed it and left it on the bank.

It would be nice to be able to say that by the end of the day we had our techniques perfected and that our last rescue effort went off smoothly and effectively— but that wasn't the case. We continued to look like a Keystone Kops Komedy Show; at one point we actually had six rescuers being swept downstream while our three rescue-ees remained firmly entrapped (I was one of the rescuers swimming and I hope it was just lack of skill that made my fellow UCMC members' throwbags land too far away for me to reach them!)! However, we did learn a lot about the potential problems and solutions in river rescue, and had a lot of fun doing it. There was also plenty of time Sunday afternoon for playing in the rapids. A lot of unplanned rescues took place at that time. As Jim pointed out, what better place to take a chance and try a new paddling technique than here, where there are a dozen throw ropes and rescuers to help you out?

We learned enough to offer a weekend-long canoeing seminar to the club this fall. Steve did most of the organizing and Steve, Jim, and I imparted some of our knowledge to the eager attendees. Details, I think, should be given by one of the students:

What the hell is a pfeeza boot?

This is a pfeeza boot—Don't those look like pfeeza boots to you?

Shit—I thought pfeeza boots were ambidextrous— I got 'em on the wrong feet.

Oh, no! My pfeeza boots don't fit this way either.

I NEED WATER!!

Ya know, you don't realize all the stupid shit ya say until somebody starts writing it down.

No, I've got Koosh armor on.

Hell— What's a koosh?

There's a herd of Nalgene in here.

Yeah. And they're migrating.

The 2nd semi-seasonal Nalgene migration.

Who checks the sleeping bag tags anyway?

Why can't you take 'em off?

There is an energy return on this koosh.

I CAN FLY!!

What is that?

Jane Fonda's high impact tent stretches.

I'd like to see Jane do 9" long screeches in here.

Nahhh. Stay away from Heinz Line.

Shit disappears in a long sleeper bag.

There's just something not right about this.

The preceding public service announcement was brought to you, uninterrupted by commercial breaks, by Three Men in a Tent.

U.C. MOUNTAINEERING CLUB

"We do more than climb mountains."

Rafting

MEETING

WEDNESDAY

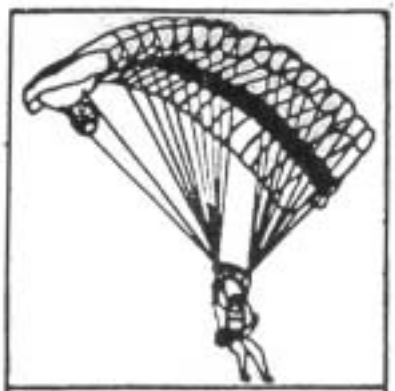
7:00

(7:30 SUMMER)

Office 217 T.U.C 556-6014

Caving

Backpacking



Sky Diving

Biking

Rock Climbing

Canoeing

Skiing

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