



## NEWS OF THE P.A.T.C. MOUNTAINEERING SECTION

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### DANGERS OF EXPOSURE (STREAKING)

Memorial Day weekend, Bill Thomas, well known instructor of female rock climbers was taking his 35th student to the top of Seneca Rocks when a near accident took place which almost spoiled his perfect safety record. While resting at the base of the Gendarme (the 30 foot balanced monolith near the summit) his student, Stevie Smith, received a vivid demonstration of Bill's lesson on the importance of hard hats when she was almost struck by a falling peton hammer which missed her by about 18 inches.

A party of seven spirited young people from various small towns in Virginia (no club affiliation) had gathered around the Gunsight area and one had climbed to the point of the Gendarme and was joking about what comment to write in the summit register when someone suggested that he be the first to streak on the Gendarme. His party below (including one distaff member) egged and cheered him on. With the backing and enthusiasm of the group, he proceeded to strip, which is no simple matter considering the difficulties of removing ones pants when wearing a belay rope and a complete assembly of climbing equipment while balancing on the knife edged point of the summit with a sheer fall of over 300 feet on either side. It is easily understood how he overlooked the hazard of inverting his holster and not noting how his hammer was hanging during the operation. After braving the cold wind just long enough for a photographer to record the feat, he wisely donned his clothing for a free body rappel directly over Stevie, who was disappointed that she missed the entire show except for seeing his face when he had peered over the edge to see where his hammer fell.

### At Base Camp

A PATC-MS membership directory is to be published August 1. Please get in touch with Joan Templeton, 3903 Wendy Lane, Silver Spring, Maryland 20906, phone (H)933-2174, (W)443-3390, with any additions or changes.