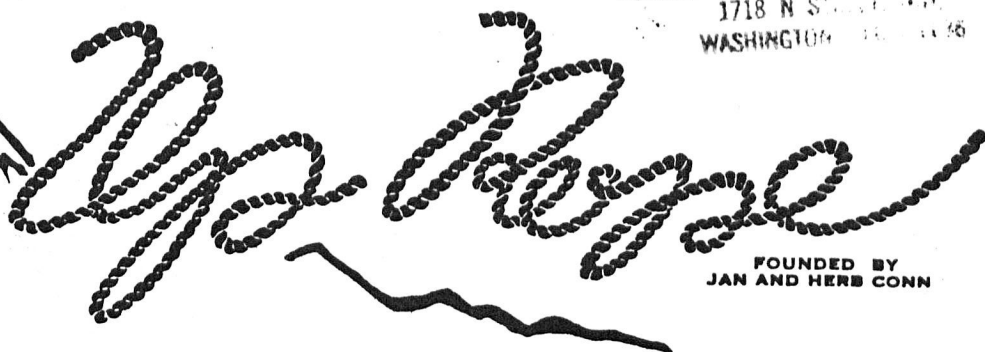




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FOUNDED BY
JAN AND HERB CONN

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

1718 N Street, N.W. Washington DC 20036

VOLUME 37, NUMBER 10

OCTOBER 1982

Hanging Around



OLD RAG - Sept 12, 1982

Superb climbing weather brought out a fairly good number of climbers to the parking lot by Appalachian Outfitters on Sunday morning. After some coffee and a little chit-chat, the group got on its way and three hours later found itself on top of Old Rag, raring to go!! (Actually, somebody in the group wanted to show off his aerobic capacity and kept up a pace that left most of the party gasping for air, too exhausted to do any serious climbing until they had a chance to rest a while.)

No one on the trip knew any names of the climbs there, so an account of the routes rigged has to be a little sketchy. Initially, it was impossible to see where the better climbs were by simply looking down over the cliff, so the party descended under the band of rocks and proceeded to do some lead climbing to get back to the top.

John Christian led a climb of three pitches of medium difficulty, while Charlie Dorian put up another route -- also of medium grade. Top ropes were

(cont on page 3)

Left:

John Christian leads a pitch at Old Rag.
Photo by Pete Grant.

- MINUTES -

General Meeting September 8, 1982

Ed Cummings, Treasurer, presiding.

1. Ed Cummings opened the meeting with an explanation of the absences of the Chairman and Vice Chairman -- both of whom are out of the area on climbing trips.

2. Ad Hoc committee of past PATC presidents to investigate various club sections still has not met. (Ed. See minutes of July 14 meeting.)

3. Several minor delays in getting UP Rope out resulted in most people not receiving theirs prior to this meeting. An apology was made by the editor.

Meeting was adjourned.

After the meeting entertainment was provided by Greg Collins with an excellent slide show of his recent trip to climbing areas out West.

Pete Grant
Secretary

Equipment Notes

CLIMBING GEAR AT A DISCOUNT

"Reasonable prices on our climbing equipment" claimed the cover of the flyer that had been placed on my car's windshield at the Gunks on Labor Day weekend. I was about to trash-can this unwanted bit of "junk mail" but then thought that a good laugh wouldn't hurt either, so I opened up the flyer, expecting to see standard list prices for their merchandise. To my surprise, the prices really were reasonable -- lower than I've seen around here. For example, a pair of EB's are offered for \$65.00; Edelweiss 11mm 150' rope for \$108.00; a #3 Friend will set you back \$31.50; and wired Rocks range from \$3.25 to \$3.50 depending on size.

The name of the advertiser is "ROCK GEAR". They are located at 113 North State Street, Clarks Summit, PA 18411. They operate a mail order business and you can get a copy of their catalogue by writing or calling their mail order desk at (717) 586-9148. Visa and Mastercard are accepted.

Pete Grant

(EQUIPMENT NOTES cont on Page 6)



UP ROPE is the monthly newsletter of the Mountaineering Section (MS) of the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club (PATC) of Washington, D.C. Climbing articles, letters, and comments are welcome and should be addressed to Editor, Up Rope, Potomac Appalachian Trail Club, 1718 N. Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. Deadline is the 20th of each month. Subscriptions for MS members are included in the dues. Annual subscription price for nonmembers is \$4. Current PATC members interested in receiving Up Rope may obtain a subscription at no charge. MS members must belong to PATC. Applicants for membership can join the MS by obtaining sponsorship from a current MS member. Send subscription and address changes to Mountaineering Section, P.A.T.C., 1718 N Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

MOUNTAINEERING SECTION ACTIVITIES

The MS holds meetings at PATC headquarters (1718 N Street N.W., Washington, D.C.) the second Wednesday of each month except August. There is a brief business session followed by a slide show, film, or other type of entertainment. Sunday trips to nearby climbing areas are sponsored on most weekends. Check the Climber's Calendar on back of this publication for scheduled trips. Weekend and longer trips are also scheduled periodically. Sunday trips are usually to areas where there are a complete range of top rope climbs; however, we ask that each participant has had some training or experience prior to the trip. Weekend trips are usually for lead climbers and experienced seconds only, and everyone is responsible for finding his or her own climbing partner.

PATC MOUNTAINEERING SECTION

Chairman	
James Eakin	587-6062
Vice Chairman	
Charlie Dorian	362-7523
Secretary	
Pete Grant	960-6033
Treasurer	
Ed Cummings	332-6100

UP ROPE STAFF

Editor	
Pete Grant	960-6033
Circulation Manager	
Joe Farness	265-5877

HANGING AROUND (cont) OLD RAG (cont from page 1)

rigged and some climbed the routes; but others only tried. Charlie Dorian very patiently gave instruction to the less experienced climbers. Art Karp climbed one of the routes which had been set up for belaying from top, and ended up being the permanent belayer for the remainder of the afternoon.

Due to the sun's heat, an abundance of bugs, insufficiency of water, and aching legs from the long hike up, the planned move down the mountain to another set of cliffs failed to materialize. Instead the party remained on the original rocks and wrapped things up around five P.M..

On the way down, another "race" must have been on. Half of the group took the longer but easier way down while the more "hardy" ones back-tracked via the Ridge Route -- running half of the way.

Pizza and beer brought the trip to an enjoyable end. Participants were: Gary Beil, Winston Burt, John Christian, Charlie Dorian, Nick Dorian, Pete Grant, Art Karp, Marcy Logan, Dave McClure, and Gretchen Schwartz.

Pete Grant

* * * * *

From the Editor's Chimney

First, I want to apologize for being late with last month's UP ROPE -- the first issue under my editorship. I learned once again the hard way that events seldom occur as scheduled unless one leaves plenty of "padding" in his itinerary. It didn't take many two-day delays to get it in the mail a whole week after the target date. I promise to do better in the future.

Now, I would like to clue you in on what you can expect in the way of changes from your new editor. I have no great aspirations to "improve" UP ROPE or to make a mark in PATC history as one of the great contributors to the Mountaineering Section. I think that the past editors of this bulletin did an excellent job and I only hope that I can carry the load as well as they did. "If it works, don't fix it!", as they say.

For the past few years, every month I looked forward to the arrival of that month's UP ROPE, and when it arrived, it was the first piece of mail to be opened and read -- often from cover to cover before any other mail was looked at. That goes to show you how big of a part UP ROPE has been in my life. My special thanks go to Lin Murphy who not only managed to twist many arms (in a friendly sort of way) to get material for this newsletter, but also provided super editorials in almost every issue.

Talk about twisting arms. I do not like to hassle people to write articles for our publication, so I am making a plea to all of you that if you have any material for UP ROPE, please take the time to write, clip it out, draw it, or whatever, and send it to me. Written articles can be handwritten, typed, computer print-outs, or any other method that you can come up with. The only requisite is that I must be able to read it. Photography can be prints (color or monochrome), negatives, or slides. I will return originals of art work, if desired. Mail the material to:

Editor, UP ROPE
1718 N Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20036

I want this publication to be our newsletter -- not Pete Grant's magazine. The only way we can accomplish this is by enough of the membership participating in providing articles and other items of interest to the people of the Mountaineering Section.

Ed

Climber's Calendar

NELSON ROCKS WEEKEND

Want to make a first ascent? Would you like to have it recorded in a climbing guide? Read on, there's still room to explore new lines at nearby climbing areas and receive credit for finding and describing new routes. One such area is Nelson Rocks near Seneca Rocks in West Virginia.

In the past couple of years, climbing interest at Nelson Rocks has been declining. Scanning through past issues of UP ROPE I noticed that our club has not scheduled a trip there for quite some time. What a pity! These crags offer some very fine climbing, being a part of the same geological uplifting as Seneca Rocks and, therefore, consisting of same type of rock. In height Nelson Rocks nearly equal Seneca but are more accessible. Car can be parked at the base of the talus slope, and a short scramble will place one at the start of the climbs. In addition, Nelson House is close by, offering an excellent place to spend the night (Ahhh... party time!!). Many fine routes, ranging from easy to "extremely severe", as the British would say, have already been done and many more are waiting to be discovered. Why, then do we so very seldom climb at the Nelson Rocks? I suspect that the primary reason is lack of information -- a climbers' guide -- to this area.

At the next meeting, a proposal will be made to undertake the preparation of a new guide to our climbing areas. If approved, I will volunteer to begin the effort by coordinating a guide pamphlet to Nelson Rocks.

To start the ball rolling, I plan to have photographs of the cliffs available by October meeting, on which routes can be marked. I would like to ask those of you who have knowledge of climbs on Nelson Rocks to try to attend the meeting and help record them.

The next step will be to make a climbing trip to the area to verify the current status of routes, and to help refresh the memory of those who can't quite remember exact locations of the climbs. Such an excursion is scheduled for the weekend of October 23d and 24th (see Climber's Calendar on back page). I want to extend to those climbers who have climbed there previously, a special invitation to join us and spend a weekend climbing (or, if you no longer wish to climb, just looking over) the old crags. Saturday evening we can have gettogether at the Nelson House and compare notes, as well as stories, of the day's climbs. See you there!!

Pete Grant

To get to Nelson Rocks, drive to Petersburg, WV, and take WV-28 South. Drive 33 miles (past US-33 junction at Seneca Rocks) to a bridge crossing the North Fork River. Turn right, staying on WV-28, and drive 0.6 miles to Nelson Gap Road. Turn left, enter through gate, and drive 0.9 miles to a fork in the road. Turn right, going through another gate, and drive 0.9 miles on a rather rough road to a white house on the right. Approximate distance from Washington, DC, is 175 miles via VA/WV route 55.

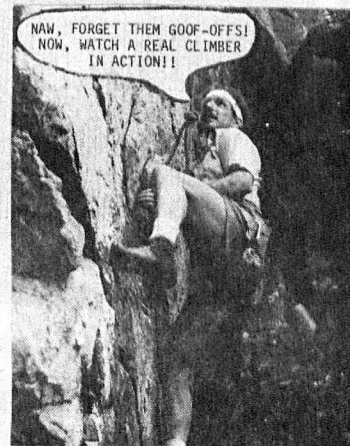
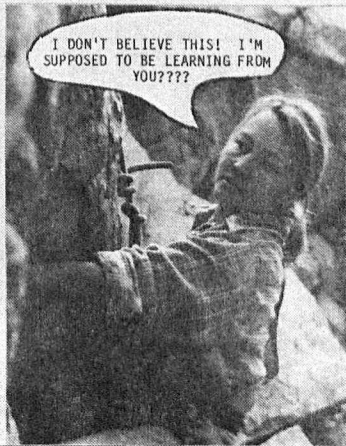
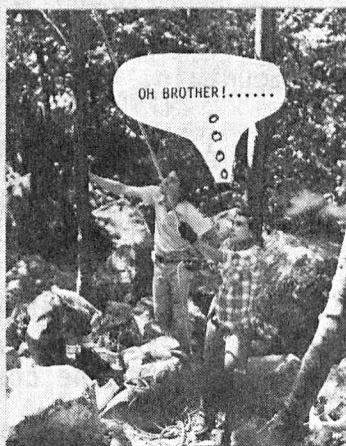
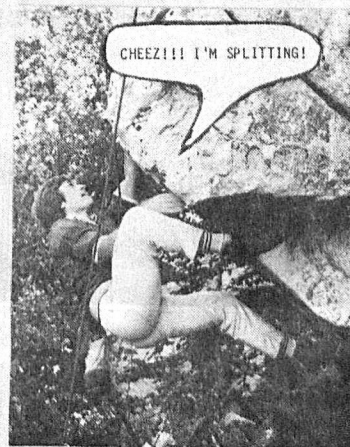
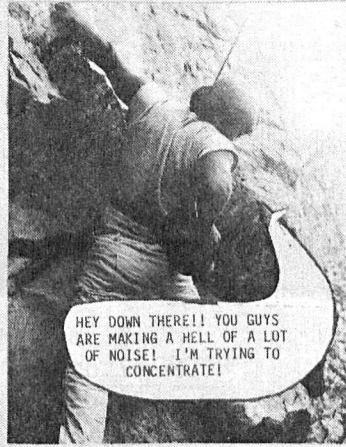
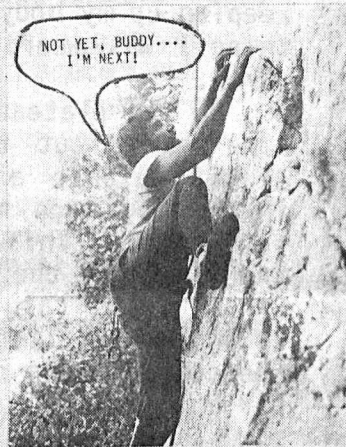
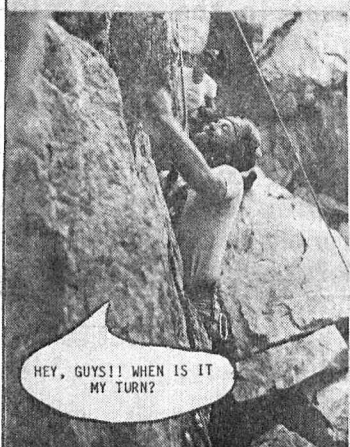
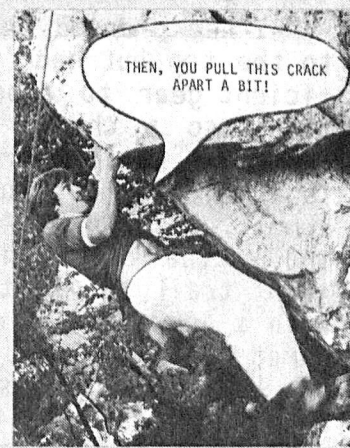
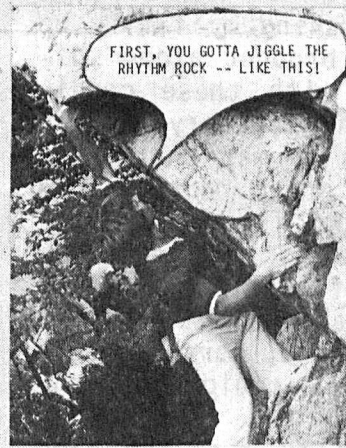
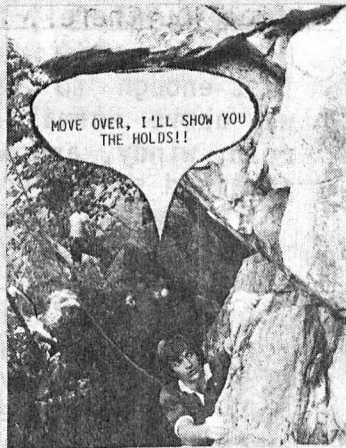
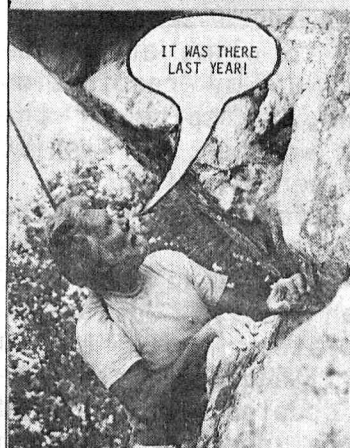
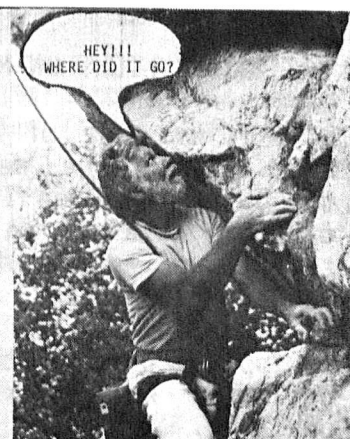
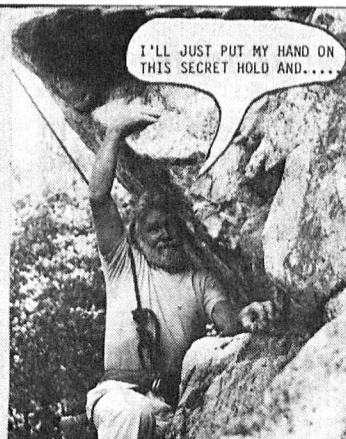


NELSON HOUSE

"THE SUGARLOAFERS"

BY

PETE GRANT



EQUIPMENT NOTES (continued)

GOING LIGHT ON MOUNT KATAHDIN

It was one of the coolest days in August, with the mercury right around the 50° mark, when I arrived at the base of Mount Katahdin in Maine, the Northern terminus of Appalachian Trail. Wind was bending the trees, lowering the wind-chill factor to who knows how low, and to top it off, black rain clouds dropped their load down upon us every now and then.

I had planned on taking my family up to the top but hadn't brought along sufficient gear to cope with these conditions, so a change in itinerary was in order. I noticed from my map that there is a fairly short but steep route to the summit -- known as Abohl Trail -- starting on the other side of the mountain. Abohl trail is about four miles one way with a 4000 foot elevation gain. I figured that if I went alone, carrying only the bare necessities, I could make the round trip in a half a day. I packed a small day pack, kissed my wife and kids good bye, and took off.

My gear consisted of:

Running shoes	18 oz
Socks	3 oz
Drawers	2 oz
Running shorts	2 oz
Cotton T-shirt	7 oz
Total worn initially	32 oz

On the back:

Day pack	13 oz
60/40 Parka	29 oz
Rain Parka (coated nylon)	14 oz
Rain Trousers (Goretex)	12 oz
Camera & lightmeter	38 oz
Map & compass	4 oz
Total pack weight:	110 oz

TOTAL GEAR: 142 oz
(6 lb, 14 oz)

Note that this is not modern "ultra-light" equipment. A Goretex rain parka could have replaced both the 60/40 and rain parkas, saving about 20 oz, but with my meager military salary, the purchase of a \$200 MMW All Weather Parka has been pre-empted by to new shoes for the kids, etc.... Another pound or so could have shaved off by taking a modern lightweight camera such as the Olympus XA.

But, back to the hike/climb! With the extra light load, it was easy to run or jog up the trail until the going got so steep and rough that I had to start using my hands (class three scrambling). However, I continued to climb at a pace fast enough to keep up my respiration way above normal and, in spite of the cold, windy, and wet weather, my T-shirt remained soaked from perspiration.

About a mile before reaching the summit, but only about 600' below it, the trail leads to a plateau where it joins the Appalachian Trail. Just before reaching this plateau was the bottom of a thick fog layer I had seen from below. Its moisture, coupled with the wind and colder temperature, prevented me from keeping up my body heat in the scant clothing I was wearing. On went the 60/40 parka.

On the plateau I tried to start running again, but the wind kept knocking me off balance and the poor visibility in the fog made me slow down to a more safe speed. This further cooled me off and I put on the Goretex rain trousers. Finally, the rain got heavier and I had to put on my last item of protection -- the coated nylon rain parka.

On the summit itself, it was cold enough for my pack to collect a layer of rime while I attempted to take a photograph to prove my conquest of this mountain. I say attempted because:

1. The fog was so thick it was difficult to see clearly even the short distance between the camera and me.
2. My lightmeter had a dead battery and I had to guess at the correct exposure.

3. I had no tripod and had to prop up the camera on a rock so close to the ground I couldn't look through the viewfinder to get an accurate aim.

(Sigh! Life can be difficult at times.)

On the way down I realized yet another benefit of going light. Because of the light load, I was able to jog on even the steepest sections by hopping from boulder to boulder. It was hard on the leg joints, to be sure, and the risk of falling and injuring myself was increased manyfold, but the joy of freedom made me forget the pains and I kept on running -- to the delight of some other hikers who stopped to take pictures as I ran by.

How much did my light packing help in conquering this mountain? To that question I can't give an exact answer; however, some comparisons can be made. For example, I passed a small group of hikers no more than 5 minutes into the journey. On my way down, I met them again coming up the trail at barely past the half-way point to the summit, obviously struggling with their over-stuffed packs and heavy hiking boots and clothing. At first glance, it appeared that they were on an overnight trip; however, it turned out that they were only on a day hike. Apparently, their philosophy was quite opposite to that of mine: take along everything that could possibly be needed.

As for the adequacy of my equipment, I must admit that there were times that I would like to have had just a little more clothing; maybe a wool shirt to ward off the chills while picture taking at the summit. But as long as I kept moving, I was never uncomfortably cold. Safety, however, was sacrificed to some extent as a slip resulting in an immobilizing injury could have brought on hypothermia unless someone happened to pass by fairly soon. Without hard exercise, my skimpy clothing would not have kept up body heat very long.

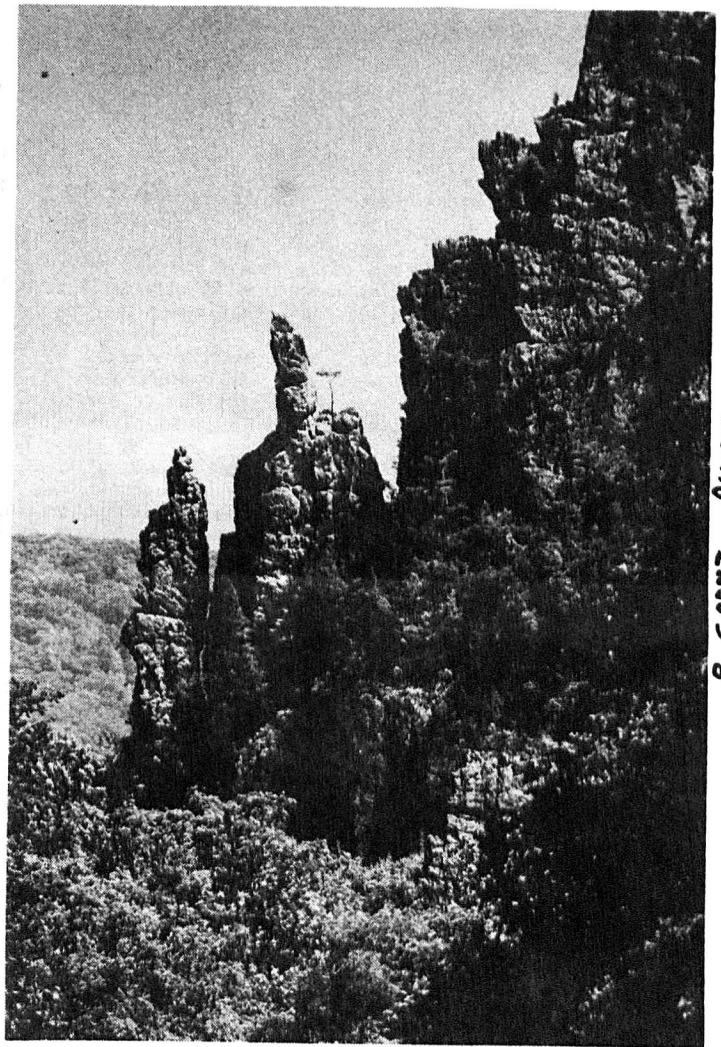
Pete Grant

M A R A T H O N

The marathon of the nation's capital area -- Marine Corps Marathon -- is being run on Sunday, November 7th. I, for one, plan to participate. If there are others in PATC Mountaineering Section who will be running, it would be great if we got a group photo of us in UP ROPE.

If you are running in the Marathon, please meet me at the start-finish line 20 minutes before the start (8:40 A.M.). Also, please call me before the race so that I will know whom to expect and get the photo taken as soon as all of us are there.

Pete Grant
960-6033



P. GRANT PHOTO

NELSON ROCKS, WV
(SEE WRITUP ON PAGE 4)



From Other Peaks

WHAT!! OUR HERB - LOST?? In a mustache?

Adapted from The Seattle Times.

CUSTER, SD -- That's right, Herb Conn got lost once in Teddy Roosevelt's mustache. He was doing repair work on Mount Rushmore at the time -- one of the few peaks that is off-limits to rest of us climbers in the Black Hills range that marks the beginning of the Old West.

"For a while there I didn't know exactly where I was," said the diminutive 62-year old adventurer and explorer who lives with his wife, Jan, in a remote cabin outside Custer and just a few miles from the rock formations he has loved to climb for decades (Ed note: THE NEEDLES).

Such a Black Hills climber is Conn that he was selected by the U.S. Park Service to do the annual repair work on the four presidents immortalized so indelibly on the face of the mountain. He has dangled off the nose of Lincoln, rubbed elbows with the eyes of Washington, crawled along the Rooseveltian mustaches and hugged the granite cheeks of Thomas Jefferson.

"Jefferson is the easiest but, I suppose, Washington is the most fun....."

"The scariest thing that ever happened was when I was on the nose of Washington and they were having an air show at Rapid City. Well, the Navy's flying team, the Blue Angels, decided to pass right in front of Mount Rushmore -- right at the level where I was working -- and I didn't know they were going to do it. They must have been only about 50 feet from me and I didn't see them coming."

The sonic blast nearly sent poor Conn up the adenoids of the father of our country.

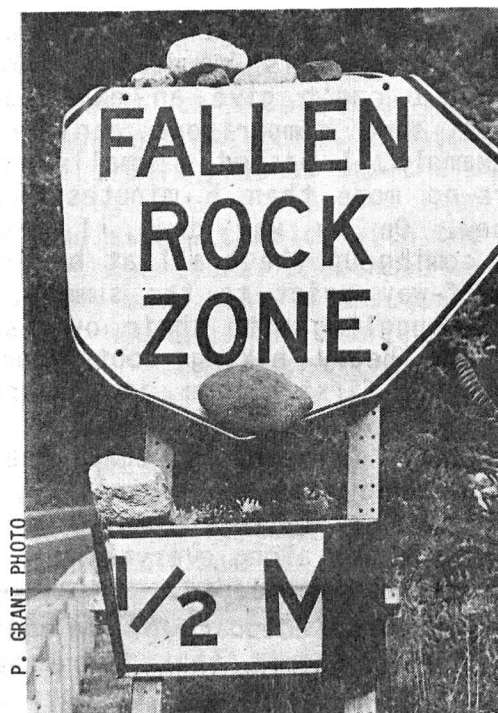
Herb did the repair work annually for 13 years, spending about a week each year patching the faces with a putty made of granite dust and linseed oil.

"There were a few exciting times ... you would go over the edge of Washington and have to work sideways. Your cable might catch on an eyebrow or something and you'd swing a bit." A fall would have ended in certain death 200 feet straight down.

The Conns fell in love with the Black Hills as climbing places in 1947 when they came West to attempt to climb Devil's Tower. They were the seventh party to climb to top of the Tower and Jan became the first woman to ever do so.

Prior to moving to South Dakota, Herb and Jan climbed extensively in the Washington, DC area -- and pioneered many of our favorite routes at Carderock. They were among the earlier members of PATC Mountaineering Section and are the founders of UP ROPE.

Article submitted by
John D. Mendenhall, Seattle

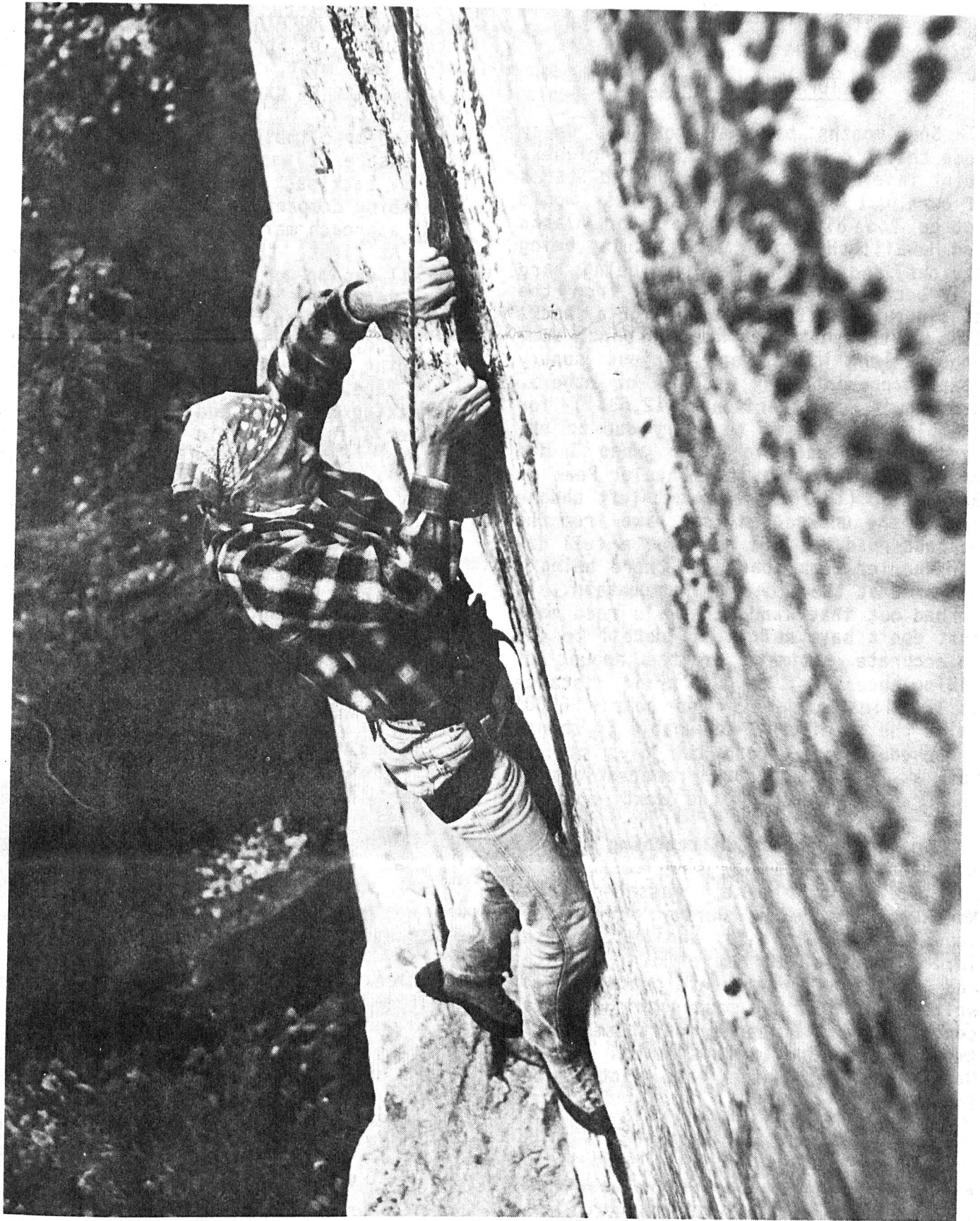


Vulgarians been at it again??
Scene at Shawangunks Labor Day weekend 1982.

Training Briefs

MOUNTAINEERING MEDICINE COURSE

Phil Cardon will give a course in mountaineering medicine in early November. Contact Martha Hale, 762-4769, for more info. Note that this is not a first aid course. Those interested in 1st aid, contact Harold Driscoll, 966-9091.



P. Grant photo

JOE FARNESS ON BULL RUN OVERHANG.

Belay Ledge

ON TOP OF THE STATES

Some months back, I got the crazy idea that I'd like to stand on the highest point in every one of these United States of ours. I thought that the task would not be too difficult except for Alaska and Hawaii; the former's difficulty being obvious, and the latter one being hard only because of its distance from the contiguous 48. Boy, was I in for a shock! Some of the peaks are hard to find, some require long hikes, and various sundry reasons prevent easy ascents of others. Humphrey's Peak, Arizona (12,633') for example, was closed to entry due to extreme fire hazard in July when I had made plans to climb it. Wheeler Peak in New Mexico (13,161') also got left undone due to the unexpected long hike from the nearest road. I had reserved a full day for Wheeler Peak, based on there being a ski area at the side of the mountain. It turned out that Rand McNally's road maps just don't have sufficient detail to get an accurate estimate of the amount of hiking necessary, as the trail distance is 12 miles one way, and nearly 6000' below the summit. I was unable to change my schedule and spend two days at the task as I had campground reservations at the Grand Canyon for the next evening.

So far, progress in reaching my goal has been slow, to say the least. I've done Colorado, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Tennessee, South Dakota, Virginia, and West Virginia: a total of 10 out of 51 (50 states and D.C.). As I bag these peaks, I will write reports of the most significant ascents, which will appear on these pages; two of which are in this issue. One is Mount Katahdin, Maine, and another one follows:

SPRUCE KNOB, WV

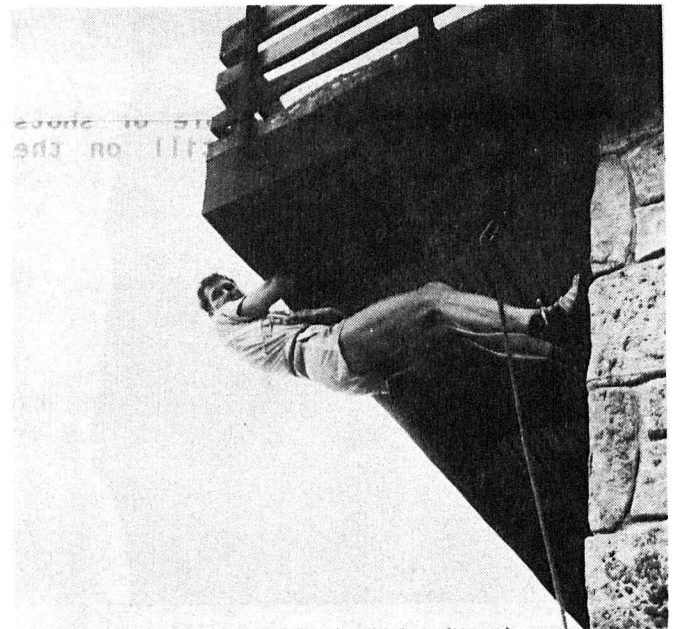
As the morning fog slowly dissipated, the summit of Spruce Knob began to emerge from the mist, showing its mysterious appearance to us at the parking lot as we gazed at it in awe. I carefully inventoried my climbing gear, checking it over to ensure it was all there, then hoisted on my back pack, and along with my three climbing companions (my daughters) began the approach march.

At first, the going was easy. The trail was on an almost level plateau and was very well maintained. Soon the difficulties began:

"Daddy, I gotta go potty!" Karen cried holding her legs crossed, turning red in the face. We ran in the bushes, after shucking my rope and climbin bag, and after a long struggle with her belt and zipper, got that problem solved. "Whew! What's next?" I wondered out loud as I picked up my gear and resumed our march towards the summit.

Soon the going got a bit rougher. We left the paved blacktop trail and took a short cut across a grassy meadow with scattered boulders to slow us down. No real problems, though. After this long and arduous hike-in of at least 3 minutes, we found ourselves at the East face of Spruce Knob's summit structure.

(text cont on next page)



Ascent of Spruce Knob
(Karen Grant photo)

* MEETING WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 13TH! *

(cont from previous page)

Directly in front of us was a sheer wall of at least 80°, capped by a huge overhang. I could see a weakness in the mountain's defenses that appeared to be reasonably "doable" and decided to give it a try. I was selected to lead the first pitch. I carefully roped up, selected items for my lead rack (1 biner, 1 runner, 1 hex), and began the summit assault.

The near-vertical wall went without incident and I soon found myself under the huge roof. "At least a 5.10!" I shouted down to my partners. "Make sure you got the camera ready and get a shot when I go for it!". I placed the hex in a space between a metal beam and the balcony floor boards, extended it with a runner, and clipped my rope into it. "Looks kinda shabby," Helen remarked. "I sure wouldn't trust my life on it!". "That's OK.", I replied. "It's only for the picture!" I looked down at the ground below me: a lump appeared in my throat as I saw the exposure -- must have been at least 2000 m.m. straight down!

My palms started sweating as I traversed along the metal beam to the edge of the roof. I reached for some pro -- Oh no! My lead rack was empty! Trembling, I pulled the overhang, knowing that a slip so far above protection would surely result in a fall all the way to the ground.

"Helen," my voice cracked. "This is the crux move; you got me real good?"

"Yeah, dad. I got a couple of shots already and my finger is still on the shutter!"

"No! Not that! I mean do you have me on an extra good belay?"

"What belay? I thought you just wanted me to stand here and take pictures while you make a fool of yourself!"

Sure enough, there was the rope, neatly coiled on the ground with no one even close to it, let alone giving me a belay.

"Whaddya mean a fool of myself?" I snapped back. "This is serious mountaineering! I....."

"Hiya Daddy!" a tiny voice greeted me from above. My youngest daughter's face

was over the railing, widely grinning.

"How'd you get up there?" I asked.

"Walked up the steps, like they did." she pointed at some tourists I hadn't noticed before.

"Johnnie! Get away from there!" the mother yelled at her kid who was also peering over the guard rail wide-eyed. Lowering her voice, the mother continued "He may have escaped from a nut house."

They quickly toured the summit, glancing at me every now and then with suspicious looks. When they left, they turned to look once more and shook their heads as I finished my climb.

NOT to be continued.
(That's a promise!)

Pete Grant

Expeditions

MOUNT ARARAT

A team of seven Italian and one British climbers led by Victorio Chiado and guided by the Turkish Climbing Brothers Fikret and Ahmet Gurbuz, reached the summit of Mount Ararat (5165 m) on August 24.

For the past 13 years, Mt Ararat has been a restricted area to foreigners. Earlier this year the Turkish government lifted the total restriction and in April the group applied for permission to make the ascent of the famous mountain, higher than any in Europe and legendary resting place of Noah's Ark.

The party left from Dogubeyazit on August 22 and walked to a base camp at 3000 m. The next day they climbed to another camp at 4150 m from which the final ascent was made by snow and ice.

Taurus Expeditions
Istanbul, Turkey

CLIMBER'S CALENDAR

October 2 (Saturday)	** Aid Climb Course	John Teasdale	262-9128
October 3	Harper's Ferry, MD	Pete Grant	960-6033
October 9-11	* Shawangunks, NY	Charlie Dorian	362-7523
October 13	Meeting at P.A.T.C. Headquarters		
October 17	Crescent Rocks	TBA	
October 24	Sugarloaf	Don Kocher	949-2239
October 23-24	* Nelson Rocks, WV	Pete Grant	960-6033
October 31	Great Falls, VA	Paul Torelli	299-8039
November 7	Annapolis Rocks	Martha Hale	762-4769
November 10	Monthly Meeting		
November 14	Sugarloaf	Barbara Llewellyn	871-6197
Nov 11-14 (Vets Day)	* Linville Gorge, NC	Pete Grant	960-6033
Nov 25-28	Southern Rocks	Charlie Dorian	362-7523

For trip information, call the leader or Charlie Dorian (362-7523). Day trips are to top-rope climbing areas. Weekend trips are to lead climbing areas -- please arrange for your own climbing partner.

* Designates a weekend (overnight) trip to a lead climbing area.

** Aid climbing course will be at Great Falls, VA. Please call the instructor as soon as you decide to attend (limited class size).

Up Rope

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