

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

1718 N Street, N.W. Washington DC 20036

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### BASE CAMP

#### October and November Meetings.

As per tradition, the meetings were opened by Chairman Stuart Pregnall and business accomplished sequentially: committee reports, old business, new business. The easement to the Bull Run property which PATC acquired will apparently be taken to court by the Virginia Outdoors Foundation, who contend they own the property. At present, VOF will consider us trespassing, though it is hoped that upcoming meetings will clarify the controversy. PATC maintains that its easement and legal rights are valid. New climbing calendars through January were distributed and trip leaders were encouraged to sign up. If there is an interest. Pete Grant has expressed willingness to teach telemarking on a snowy weekend. He has also indicated that he would be interested in coordinating the Training and Safety Committee next year. Carderock Conservation was discussed. and, "short of astroturf", suggestions are being sought for further work. Safety guidelines will be made available in December for review and voting planned for

January new business included old movies which PATC has received, one showing Donald Duck's traverse on the Virginia side of Great Falls and one a teaching film made by the MS including the practice of dynamic belays on "Oscar II". John Gregory's Carderock guidebook will be reprinted by PATC with a revised introduction. The book itself will remain unedited. Comments regarding this decision and suggestions for the introduction will be gratefully received by Selma Hanel. Those interested in helping should also contact Selma. Rich Cunningham expressed interest in building a climbing wall for indoor training. Anyone with ideas on this, especially as to location, please contact Rich.

A discussion and vote to affirm the decision to send Stuart Pregnall to Denver for the annual American Alpine Club meeting in December was made. This year's meeting will focus on liability insurance and provide a unique opportunity for the MS to contribute to the climbing community in the states regarding liability. The work of many Section members, including Tom Isaacson and Jeannette Helfrich in drafting Safety Guidelines and Ed

Cummings for finalizing the draft represent considerable thought toward dealing with liability problems. This is also evident in our current release of a liability form. The easement acquisition of Bull Run represents another management challenge by which the MS efforts could add recent experiences to the meetings, discussion and recommendations. It is with these contributions that the decision to send a representative, Stuart Pregnall, to the AA meeting was made.

October's meeting featured Kaz and Ali Lorentz who patiently answered many questions while showing slides of the long trek to the base camp in the Kangchenjunga and then of its ascent. Rosie Andrews gave a technical rock climbing show to 100 people on 6 November, a show sponsored with the Washington Women's Outdoors. Focusing on women climbers, Rosie Andrews gave her perception of how women successfully overcome the physical and mental challenges that all climbers face. From terrific seaside cliffs in Scotland to familiar Gunks routes done solo, the diversity of rock and women was shown; prompting questions on how best to train. Randy Starrett spoke at the November meeting, showing first a 1956 Soviet film of the ascent of Mt. Pobody in the Pamirs, and then a snapshot video of his 1985 trip to the same peak.

-Selma Henel, Secretary

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#### CARDEROCK CONSERVATION

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Anyone having ideas about future work to be accomplished

at Carderock, please contact Janet Young (202/966-9091), or present your ideas at the next MS meeting.

#### WEEKEND CLIMBING

Please call trip coordinators before the last minute. We need time to make transportation arrangements, etc.

#### 1987 MEMBERSHIP DUES

Members should begin receiving dues notices. Some of you who haven't signed release forms will be getting those, too. If you've already signed one there's no need to sign another. If you haven't signed one and don't receive it in the mail, let Joe Wagner know. (202/966-6379)

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#### A LITTLE CHRISTMAS MAGIC

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Santa clawed at the scarlet lycra binding his crotch and scowled upward through shaggy eyebrows. An overhang the size of a Buick loomed. "What the hell is that?", he demanded. An elf, motley in green leopardskin stretch pants said, "that's the line you saved for the next generation." "Well, they can have it," Santa grumbled, and dumped a pair of Sportivas out of his rucksack.

"Next generation, indeed!" thought Santa. He had seen it all--all the latest in climber chic from tweed plusfours and hobnails to Terswiry caps to painters pants to these...abominations! Santa plucked at a shiny crimson buttock. "Thank goodness Lycra is rumoured to be defunct on the West Coast."

Santa had hated the Gunks ever since that bunch of Vulgarians on the roof of the AAC hut peed on his ermine trimmed cap as he popped back up the chimney. He dreaded these yearly excursions that were getting harder and harder--so unlike the bygone days when he had joined Fritz and Hans and their pals putting up fun routes like "Bunny" and "Madame Grunnebaum's Wulst". That crazy physicist who finally freed Whoops or Oops found switches and lumps of coal in his stocking!

"Well, never mind. At least I'm not watching Ms. Claus running it out like a madwoman on North Carolina friction." Santa had a hard enough time on the slick slate roofs of Georgetown.

He was startled out of his grumpy reverie by shouts and curses from the ranger truck. The reindeer, still in harness seemed to be mutinying, with Vixen as ringleader. Santa ran over to the bucking mass of reindeer flesh and tangled leather and lashed into them, using a handful of Air Voyagers as a whip. Finally he got the animals settled, and reimbursed the ranger for the box of season passes the beasts devoured.

Santa insisted on climbing near the Uberfall to keep an eye on the team, so the elves grabbed "Retribution".

Santa had a hard time getting off the ground. "What do I do here...I mean, what's the beta on this?" Santa asked querulously. "Put two pads on the wrinkle and dyno for the buck," an elf suggested. Real trouble began under the tricky overhang. Santa strained and grunted and hung on tension and the piton trying to figure it

out. Lowered down, panting, to a more restful stance he shouted inarticulately up at his belayer. "It's easy 5.9 after you pull the hang, man," a voice called, somewhere far, far above.

Someone in the small, scornful knot of climbers who gather below Retribution like fruit flies said, "that's what you call the static approach." There were more sniggers, and another young tiger called up, "Hey, Santa--lower off, and I'll clean the pitch for you."

In the end, harried, furious, and determined not to give the little devils the satisfaction, Santa fumbled a pair of prussiks onto the rope and hobbled up the double nines.

"Look," said Santa. "Let's do something a little more my style." The elves were hot to do "Open Cockpit", but gave in to the old man's plea.

Santa tied onto the sharp end beneath "Updraft", a 5.5 put up long ago by Fritz. "More my speed," said Santa.

But he wasn't honed, and "Retribution" had pumped every ounce of strength from his aging body. He hunkered down on the ledge beneath the wide crack in the upper roof and whimpered a little.

"Come on, Santa--we want to run up "Supercrack".

Santa wearily wedged himself into the chimney and resolved to stick to low-angle ice and snow in the future.

"Come on, Santa--we want to run up "Kansas City."

Santa squirmed a little higher, and tried listlessly to get in some pro.

"Come on, Santa--we want to run up "To Have and Have Not."

Exasperated fury flooded

him like a drug. His reddened eyes were more than a little crazed as he bellowed down the rope at his faithless elves, "A little Christmas magic is in order here."

So laying his finger on the side of his nose, and giving a nod, up the chimney he rose.

-Nori Gessler

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### A WINTER'S TALE

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Verily I say unto thee: the Apocalypse approacheth; for who can ignore ominous portent? None but the Fool. Have ye not seen the cows and geese of the barnyard, together in conversation, their eyes upon ye? And have ye not heard of the pumpkin grown to the very shape and likeness of a poet? And what of the happenings of the Mountaineering Section? What of those? Can anyone explain the rhyme or reason for those events, save to express them as apocalyptic advent? Haste now, listen to me whilst I chill thy livers with tales of Section sights too strange and terrible to say by dark of night.

Some have whispered the man of the Chair, who reigned over the pure and impure alike, with nary an ill thought of their habits now cavorts in the white arts, the Magicke of Chalke. Shudder those who have seen his hands rise dripping with ghastly flakes of ghostly dust, thus to smear and mark with mysterious pattern and likewise annoint the Rocks of the Aged. Worse still, he has enslaved a fair young maiden, improperly clothed her in garish Lycra, and led her onto

ever bleaker and terrible ground.

Another, who was known for tenaciousness (especially on tens), hanging dogs with a vengeance, until the noosemen, those who long held her tightening rope, made hollow threats to let the victim drop; this same tigress, now has secluded herself atop the terrible Nerdwand, where she plots and plans, studies the parts of animals and casts designs for an ever more elaborately fashioned castle with unclimbable ramparts, jacuzzi moats, where dim lights recessed in vaults cast shadows on gold fixtures and appointments sumptuous throughout.

And have you heard of one who now worships the mythical Black Turbe, that shining fleet beast grown of rabbits? That it prances forth, yet for none but its sycophants leaves its shrine, nor yet whistles sweet music, is in truth part of its fascination. Yet none may naysay its power or attraction, for many are to be seen coveting the Turbe, yet upon few bestowed its grace.

Who speaketh of spectres, brocken or nay, whispering through the dark in cavalcade? Four horsemen! More! But hold, these shapes have other appearances: legs that whirl round in blurs of dervish motion that once poised motionless on tiny holds; iron fingers calloused and bent from days gone by: these shades are the Fallen Greats, whose cabalistic ceremonies, scheduled by the phasing of Luna's ticking, to coincide with the eves worshipped by Germanic Tiu and Norse Thor, gods of war, now have turned to saturnalian delights, whizzing



around and around the Least Mountain, known in the Germanic as Leesbürg, till revelried exhaustion drops them to babble incoherently in Boschian groupings by the wayside.

Yet who can say what portent is omened by one so formerly calm, quiet and wise, that man of letters who now can be seen thundering across the horizon with the Gypsies? Has he been taken by their wild ways? Some say that it is the fair golden southsayer who spins charming tales soothing to the ears, that it is this one who has wooed the downfall, but others point to the grey-eyed one whose shining cornsilk hair curls round her innocent face--her saucy nature revealed by the red lace which she flaunts.

Ah, but who truly knows what this means? The Apocalypse? Perhaps. Swift and cutting changes in the future? A certainty.

The cows and geese are calling.

Our Leader, who are on belay, bombproof be thy protection. Thy first ascents come, they routes be done, in the magazines and the guidebooks. Give us this day our daily adrenaline; and forgive us our hangdogging, as we forgive those who hangdog our ropes. Lead us not offroute, and deliver us from falling. For the summits, the classics, and the fame be yours, now and forever. Off Belay.

-Contributed by an Anonymous Chairman.



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## HYPOTHERMIA, FROSTBITE AND OTHER COLD INJURIES

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By James A. Wilkerson, Cameron C. Bangs, and John S. Hayward. 1986, Seattle. The Mountaineers. \$8.95 softcover.

M.S. Section members take note: You should read this one. We spend so much of our time outdoors that it is necessary to understand the effects of cooling on the body to prevent getting into situations we wouldn't want talked about.

"Remember so-and-so on the last climbing trip? Yeah, got hypothermic standing around belaying someone. Had to be rewarmed. Yup."

Wilkerson's effort to clearly explain the causes, treatment and prevention of cold injuries is extremely successful. Hikers, trail workers, skiers, mountaineers and SAR types will learn something from the 100-odd pages, as will water sports enthusiasts. And understanding cold injuries is the key to preventing them.

With winter coming on, the timeliness of this book couldn't be better. Get it as a stocking stuffer for your favorite outdoorsperson. Then you can practice rewarming techniques in front of the fireplace.

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## DEVIL'S TOWER: A CLIMBER'S GUIDE

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By Steve Gardiner and Dick Guilmette. 1986. Seattle, the Mountaineers. 136 pages, \$6.95 softcover.

**PATC. MOUNTAINEERING SECTION**

Chairman: Stuart Pregnell	202/543-3988
Vice Chairman: Pete Grant	703/960-6033
Secretary: Selma Hanel	301/274-7594
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Publicity: <i>Rich Cunningham</i>	202/332-1931
Nelson House: Nori Gessler	703/524-2068
Carderock Conserv.: Janet Young	202/966-9091

**UP ROPE**  
Nori Gessler, Editor 703/524-2068

Up Rope is published monthly, except during August, by and for members of the Mountaineering Section of the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club of Washington, D.C. Editorial contributions are welcome and should be sent to: Editor, Up Rope, Mountaineering Section, PATC, 1718 N Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036 before the 20th of each month.

Although the Mountaineering Section may be more interested in this book than most PATC members, the photos and 50-plus pages of history and other useful information about Devil's Tower make this a welcome addition to anyone's bookshelf. And if you're planning a trip West, you shouldn't miss our on a vist to this amazing formation.

Many people remember the Devil's Tower as the site of "Close Encounters." It was also first climbed by two ranchers who built a wooden ladder to the summit and also the scene of a well-publicized parachutist who landed on top and spent the next six days wondering how to get off. (Jump, of course). PATC will be proud to note that two of the first four routes put up at the Devil's Tower were climbed by Mountaineering Section members.

Lavish photos and solidly crafted descriptions will make any climber happy--especially those who puzzled through the old guide, spuriously written by someone purporting to be

"Dingus McGee". Now if you get off route, it's **your** fault. There are also good notes on descent routes and pro needs.



## "Southern Exposure"

or

### "Hardmen Don't Need Tents"

Rich Cunningham and I set off for Seneca early Saturday morning, November 15th in hopes of getting in some late season lead climbing. Notwithstanding the frigid D.C. weather, we relied on John Markwell's reports of excellent weekend weather predictions. It began snowing in Strasburg, Va. and soon we were in near blizzard conditions. After skidding off the road once and pushing a number of other cars up a hill, we continued west to Seneca.

Seneca had received a light snowfall and temperatures were near freezing. All the action was at the Gendarme store. We played with the prototype Chouinard friend which will be a big hit with those able to pay the expected high price. Because of their greater cam retraction range, the four Chouinard friends cover the same range of widths as six Wild Country friends. They are about 40% heavier than a comparably sized friend but do not need to be slung with Kevlar to be used in shallow horizontal cracks. The trigger can be operated with one finger.

After much tech talk with Pete Absolon and Jeff Brown (who was waiting for his partner to get through the heavy snows) we faced the horrifying prospect of actually climbing. We struggled through Roy Gap mud and arrived at the banks of the knee-deep Potomac. Still haunted by visions of his plunge into the arctic waters of the McKinley river, Rich reluctantly agreed to make the icy crossing. We rearranged our latest in Patagonia and Gramicci activewear and forded the nearly frozen torrent, an undertaking I was certain would rival Washington's paddle across the Delaware in American history of noble river crossings. To add insult to agony

we then saw a local hunter gallop painlessly across the river in hip length rubber waders.

Over the next two days we each lead portions of Marshall's Madness, Castor and an unnamed crack left of Manual Dexterity in almost uniformly atrocious style. However, since the 5.9 barrier (like the old four minute mile) is more psychological than technical, we were quick to forgive each other's stylistic transgressions. Having crossed over to the hard side of the force, all bets were off. Rich was seen looking longingly and closely at Pollux, which is even harder than its twin sister Castor-Rich's longtime nemesis. I bought a #1 RP in anticipation of some future thin crack desperate.

Several hearty meals at the Rock View, a trip to the Nelson House to retrieve Bob Gasser's belongings and a restful night at (gasp!) the 4-U<sup>motel</sup> completed another Seneca adventure.

Tom Isaacson

#### EDITOR'S NOTE:

As many of you may already know, Bob Gasser took a bad leader fall at Seneca Rock and is now recuperating in Walter Reed Hospital, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Room 15.

Tel: 576-1558.

See January UpRope for more details.

**NOMINATIONS SLATE:**  
 Chairman: Stuart Pregnall  
 Vice Chairman: Rich Cunningham  
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## CLIMBER'S CALENDAR

Dec 3	Executive Committee Meeting	Stuart Pregnall 202/543-3988
Dec 7	Caudey's Castle, WV	Rich Cunningham 202-332-7931
Dec 12	Monthly Meeting, 7:30	PATC HQ, 1718 N St., NW
Dec 14	Crescent Rocks, VA	Anne Baron 202/223-4001
Dec 14	Holiday Drop In 2001 N. Adams St., #1029 Arlington, VA 22201	Nori Gessler 703/524-2068
Dec 21	Sugarloaf, MD	Tom Russell 301/869-8058
Dec 28	Great Falls, ?	Stuart Pregnall 702/543-3988
Jan 4	?	*
Jan 7	Executive Committee Meeting	Stuart Pregnall
Jan 10-11	Canaan Valley, WV (Skiing, Elkins Ice)	Pete Grant 703/960-6033
Jan 14	Monthly Section Meeting	PATC HQ, 1718 N St., NW

Beyond...Because of the unpredictable and disappointing local winter weather conditions climbing for the winter season will be on a conditions-specific basis, i.e., snow means skiing, dry weather means rock, and cold means ice. Call Pete, Stuart or Tom for the weekend plans.

#Weekend trip to multi-pitch lead climbing area. Experienced leaders and seconds only. Please arrange your own climbing partners.

\*Trip coordinators needed. Please call Pete Grant 703/960-6033 if interested in leading a trip, or to suggest other climbing areas.

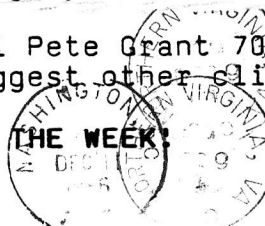
PLEASE CALL TRIP COORDINATORS EARLY IN THE WEEK!



1718 N St NW  
Washington, D. C. 20036

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EARLY  
FOR  
CHRISTMAS

