

FOUNDED BY  
JAN AND HERB CONN

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

Vol. 43 Number 1

Winter 1989

### 2ND FILM FESTIVAL ON MARCH 16

In search of a second success, the Mountaineering Section will present the Second Annual Mountain Film Festival on Thursday, March 16, 1989 at 6:30 p.m. at the Cineplex Odeon Embassy Theatre, 1927 Florida Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009 (3 blocks north of DuPont Circle near Connecticut Ave.).

Last year, Madeleine Carter and Ken Andrasko conceived and directed the First Annual Washington Mountain Film Festival. We sold out the 280-seat Biograph movie theatre in Georgetown in Washington, D.C. Shown were five of the best films from the annual mountain film festivals in Banff, Canada and Telluride, Colorado, including several French and Italian films which were simultaneously translated by Anne Baron and Ed Cummings. The festival was partially sponsored by Recreation Equipment Inc. (REI) who assisted us with publicity and donated climbing gear and outdoor equipment to be raffled off as prizes.

In this year's festival, we will again show 5 or 6 of the hottest American and European rock climbing, mountaineering, and outdoor adventure films, many of which won awards at various festivals. First, second, and third place awards for the best films will be given. We are currently previewing films from England, France, Germany, and the United States for consideration at the festival.

Based on our success with the festival last year, we are moving to a larger theatre -- the Cineplex Odeon Embassy Theatre north of Dupont Circle which seats 550 persons. Be sure to bring all your friends. Beginning at 6:30 p.m., we will show the first group of films followed by a wine and cheese reception at intermission.

After intermission, our sponsors will raffle off donated climbing and outdoor gear. A second group of films will follow after the break.

Many of the local outdoor equipment stores are helping sponsor the festival this year by providing such services as sending out publicity to their mailing lists, selling tickets, distributing posters, donating cash for expenses, and donating equipment for raffle. The sponsors will have display booths at the festival. The sponsors include: Recreational Equipment Inc. (REI), College Park, MD; Outdoor Provisionaries, Great Falls, VA; and Eastern Mountain Sports (EMS), Alexandria, Virginia.

Tickets are \$10, available for sale at REI, Outdoor Provisionaries, and at the PATC headquarters. If you would like to help us sell additional tickets, please call Claire Ganz, Ticket Sales, 265-2385 (home) or 994-3920 (work). For other information about the festival, call Madeleine Carter at 362-5036, Ken Andrasko at 337-0498, or Jeanette Helfrich at 585-9119 (home) or 586-5267 (work).

### ELECTIONS HELD

The membership unanimously elected as nominated the following slate of officers for 1989 at the annual meeting held January 11, 1989. The new officers are:

Jeanette Helfrich, Chairperson, (301) 585-9119 home, (202) 586-5267 office;

John Yanson, Vice Chairperson, (202) 667-4334 home, (202) 347-1511 office;

Jeffrey Levy, Secretary, (703) 461-0649 (home), (703) 934-3899 office; and

Jeff Kramer, Treasurer, (703) 820-8770 home, (202) 639-6286 office.

Many thanks to Rich Cunningham and Gary Prince, for their energetic leadership as Chairman and Secretary, respectively, during the past year. Rich Cunningham and Stuart Pregnall served on the nominating committee.

### SELMA HANEL IS LIAISON WITH THE MOHONK PRESERVE

Selma Hanel has agreed to serve as the Section's liaison with the Mohonk Preserve in New Paltz, New York. She will monitor the policies and developments of Mohonk Preserve, Inc. concerning rock climbing in the Shawangunk mountains, communicate with the Preserve when necessary concerning the Section's interests, and keep the Section notified of new developments and policies. In recent years, the Preserve has implemented a number of restrictions on climbing and related activities including the Skytop area. In December 1988, the Board of Directors adopted a Climbing Instruction Policy to govern guiding and organized teaching of rock climbing at the Gunks.

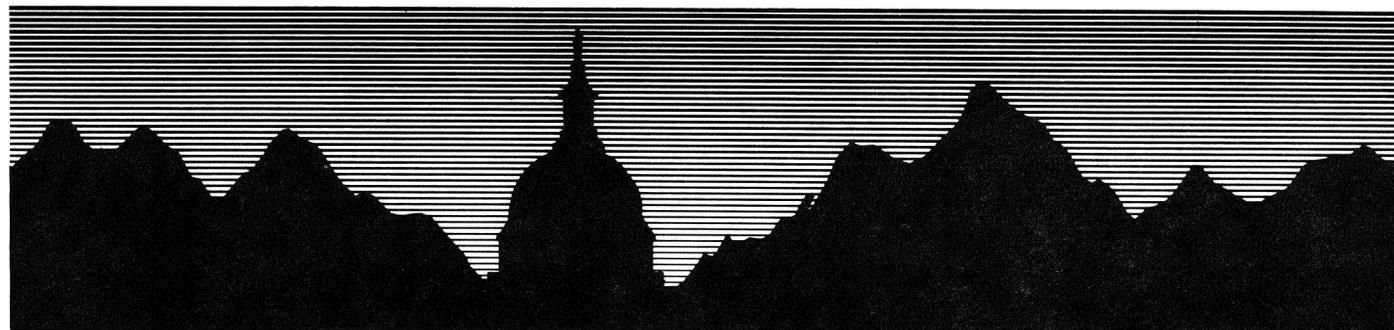
Selma recently moved back to D.C. after spending several months doing botanical research near New Paltz. She was Secretary of the Section in 1986 and 1987.

### JOHN MEENAHAN VOTED HONORARY LIFE MEMBER

At its monthly meeting held December 14, 1988, the Mountaineering Section voted unanimously to award John Meenahan with honorary life membership in the section. The vote recognized Mr. Meenahan's many contributions to the Section, particularly his recent efforts toward preserving the Section's history.

The Mountaineering Section of the  
Potomac Appalachian Trail Club  
presents

THE SECOND ANNUAL



WASHINGTON  
—MOUNTAIN—  
FILM FESTIVAL

THURSDAY, MARCH 16, 1989—6:30 PM  
CINEPLEX ODEON EMBASSY THEATER

1927 Florida Avenue, N.W.

3 blocks north of DuPont Circle off Connecticut Avenue

Three hours of award-winning European and  
American rock climbing and mountaineering films.

Door Prizes – Wine and Cheese Reception

TICKETS \$10 in advance or at the door

—SPONSORS—

**REI (Recreational Equipment Inc.)**

College Park, MD (301) 982-9681

Tickets Available

**Outdoor Provisionaries**

Great Falls, VA (703) 759-7950

Tickets Available

**EMS, Eastern Mountain Sports**

Alexandria, VA (703) 354-8664

Tickets Available

**Potomac Appalachian Trail Club**

1718 N Street, N.W., Washington, DC (202) 638-5306

Tickets Available

The Section's letter to Mr. Meenahan stated: "During discussion on the motion to make the award, Section members highlighted your many hundreds of hours of diligent work in locating, obtaining and preserving the Culverwell painting which now hangs at PATC headquarters, the tremendous effort that you spearheaded in restoring the two films "Up Rope" and "Belaying the Leader," similar efforts in locating and restoring the television pilot film "The Gambler," and the most recent and spectacular success, the two volume pictorial history of the climbers and climbing in the Washington area. Although we recognize that during all these efforts, you have been assisted by many people, we feel that without your leadership, determination, talent and vision, these valuable projects would never have been completed, much less even begun [sic]. Honorary Life Membership in the Mountaineering Section is just a small token of appreciation, but it is extremely heartfelt. We hope you understand the deep level of our wish to thank you for your support and efforts.

The Section will cherish the history and rich details of our past that you have preserved, and we shall try to continue in the traditions established by our mentors." The PATC Council has also awarded Mr. Meenahan an Honorary Membership in PATC for one year.

### **CRESCENT ROCKS REDUCTIO -- PASSIM**

On a number of weekends from November through February various club members have gone to Crescent Rocks in search of winter warmth. So far, Kit Pollok, Rich Cunningham, Stuart and Karen Pregnall, Hugh and the family Brown, Ellen Hall, Jeannette Helfrich, Michael Mergi, Sue Hartley, Jeffrey Levy, Jeff Kramer, Don Holtzer, Doug Craun, Dave Coffey, and your loyal editor have participated. We have avoided climbing in sub 20 degree weather, although one weekend was pretty close. We have hit a number of days with good weather in the 30 - 50 degree range.

The base of Crescent Rocks tends to be sheltered from the wind, although the top and the walk-in can be, according to one member, "a bit parky."

The main wall stays dry even after snowstorms, so don't even try that excuse for not joining in the fun. The climbs tend toward the vertical with a few overhangs for good measure. Because of the cool weather and general malaise, most people haven't been hitting any high points. Michael and Karen, however, did complete long-running projects on Coordination Street (5.10a), and Hugh wired The Dish (5.8) into submission. Many members flashed Stuart's Nose (5.10) which indicates it's boulder-problem start is more weird than difficult. Your editor had good results on 3-D direct finish (5.11b). Rich and Stuart came the closest to mastering Popeye's Last Crank (5.12c), but no one has solved the direct start to the climb between The Dish and Coordination Street. Even if you cheat on the start by using Dish footholds, the climb gives you three 5.10 sequences. We have focused considerable attention on Washingtonian Wall, which now sports a 5.9, three 5.11's, a 5.12, and two obvious lines waiting to be done.

Tom Isaacson

### **CARDEROCK REGULARS**

Several club members braved the wintry weather at Carderock for most of December and January, enjoying some wonderful 50 degree weather along the way. The group usually included Doug "Dr." Craun, Don "Jet Propulsion" Holtzer, Jeff "Bluejeans" Kramer, Rick "Biceps" Forbes, Dave "The Bhagwan" Coffey, and Jeffrey "Climbing is my Life" Levy, with other members joining in. Don hauled himself up Biceps again, but this time he was joined by Jeff and Rick. Everyone managed to get up Ronnie's Leap the hard way, and some other climbers introduced us to Meenahan's, a funky layback edge. For some reason Doug hates the nice sunshine on the rightmost face, but that didn't stop us from scrambling up Triple A two different ways. Generally, handwarmers were the order of the day, but Rick and Jeffrey found a warm day and camped out on Jan's Face. Rick got the two 5.10 moves up top, Jeffrey managed to work through one of them, and peace finally returned at about 5:00 PM. It's truly amazing how many people show up when it's sunny and warm!

Jeffrey Levy

### **JIM MARTIN HEADS WEST**

(Excerpts from a letter Jim sent detailing his exploits)  
Last September/October I dropped by Lover's Leap southwest of Lake Tahoe. An incredibly fun formation, there are horizontal dikes you can ladder your way up at lightning speed if you seldom stop to piddle with protection. Camping is beautiful and on the spot; access from U.S. Route 50 is easy. We then drove down to Yosemite, my first time there. First-timers should set aside "big wall" apprehensions and do the trip. After several days of climbing between rain showers, we believed a sunny forecast and planned our "big one." The target was Snake Dike on the SW face of Half Dome. We left the Valley floor at 3 AM and began the climb at 9:30 after a long cold hike. The 5.7 route is about 1500 feet up a vertical dike system. The holds are extremely secure but quite airy; the only protection possible is the bolt ladder, with bolts usually set half a place adds a new dimension of nerve and composure to basic 5.7 leading! I read in December's issue of a group headed for Everest in February. Perhaps we'll cross paths; I leave Feb. 24 for Kathmandu also. I'm leading a 6-man lightweight trek/climb. Although my partners have varying rock/ice/snow experience that will help, I am the only one with experience at those altitudes, so my main concerns will be health and motivation!

Jim Martin

### **PATC HEADQUARTERS MAY BE MOVED**

Over the past several months, the Council of the PATC has been discussing various proposals for relocating the PATC headquarters or renovating the current building on N street. The proposed timetable contemplates moving to new or renovated quarters by January 15, 1990. For more information, contact Sandy Mara, Jack Reeder, or Lee Collyer at PATC, or Rich Cunningham with the Mountaineering Section. (Sure would be nice to have a good auditorium, high quality audio/visual equipment, and a climbing wall???)

**DUES DUE**

Dues for 1989 are now due: individual \$15.00; family/joint membership \$15.00 + \$10.00 per member; non-resident, \$10.00. Please make out your check to PATC/MS and send to Jeff Kramer, Treasurer, 918 F Street, N.W., Suite 308, Washington, D.C. 20004.

**ROCK CLIMBERS SCALE GORILLAS' CLIFFS**

(Reprinted from the December 19, 1988 Washington Times)  
 BOSTON - Climbers who set out to scale the cliffs at a new gorilla exhibit at the Zoo were trying to prove it couldn't be done. But, despite a lack of places to grip and a tough overhang they did it. Officials at the \$26 million African tropical forest exhibit said they wanted to establish that the zoo's gorillas would be unable to reach the peak of the cliffs and thereby gain access to the public. They said niches would be filled in to prevent climbers of all species from gaining a grip.

**MAILING LIST OF CLIMBERS**

The executive committee asks your help in compiling a mailing list of climbers in the area who are not members of MS but who are active climbers but who might appreciate information concerning our special programs such as the film festival. Please help us out by sending us the names, addresses and phone numbers of other climbers you know or by getting this information from other climbers when you are out climbing. Who knows, some of them might even join MS.

**CHARLES NELSON PASSES AWAY**

We received the sad news that Charles S. Nelson of Circleville, West Virginia passed away in December 1988. For many years, the Nelson family generously allowed members of the Mountaineering Section to climb on Nelson Rocks and to use the Nelson farmhouse while climbing at Seneca Rocks. For more information, please call Nori Gessler at (301) 949-3595 or Bill Smith at (703) 668-6928 or (202) 475-4966.

**RED CROSS NEEDS RESEARCH DONORS WHO HAVE TAKEN ANTI-MALARIA MEDICATION**

The American Red Cross is seeking donors for blood research at its Biomedical Research and Development Laboratory in Rockville, Maryland. The laboratory is in constant need of continuing blood supply for current research studies on various blood cell functions and development of new methods to process and store blood components. Specifically, the researchers need as research donors: individuals who have taken anti-malaria medication in the last three years; individuals who have had hepatitis before age fifteen; individuals who have had cancer and have been in remission for five or more years. If you can participate, call Lidi L. Reuling, T.N., at 202-728-6447, to make an appointment to donate at 2025 E Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. from 7:00 a.m. to 9:15 a.m.

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**

The next executive committee meeting will be held at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 1, at a location to be announced. For information, call Jeanette Helfrich, 585-9119. All members welcome.

**UPROPE GOES UPTOWN**

First of all, the Uprope staff apologizes for the delay in producing this issue. The wait was necessary, however, as major goings-on were taking place at the PATC-MC print shop. As you may have noticed, the newsletter has a new look, one we're excited about. Enjoy!

Sincerely,  
 Tom Isaacson, Editor-in-Chief  
 Jeffrey Levy, Copy Editor  
 Michael Mergi, Publisher

P.S. As the Winter drags on, may this poem inspire you to hit the rocks hard this Spring!

**NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION**

#1: Resolved, to return all borrowed climbing and mountaineering equipment, books and maps to its owners.

**THE ROCK**

Grunt, reach, one more stretch,  
 this impossible climb stares  
 down from above,  
 daring me to continue.  
 As I wonder, how and why do I do  
 this to myself,  
 my eyes find the next holds,  
 and I'm suddenly three feet higher.  
 My friends' eyes search  
 the rock face to help me,  
 but I swear I'll do it alone.  
 Grunt, stretch, one more reach,  
 this very possible climb looks  
 disappointedly up from below,  
 and thinks it'll try harder with the  
 next one.

Jeffrey Levy

## SOME IDEAS ON TRAINING AND BODY MOVEMENT, PART IV

The following issues have arisen through observations of other climbers' techniques. One idea has to do with the use of thumbs while climbing, and the other has to do with a dismaying lack of enthusiasm. My pocket dictionary defines a "thumb" as "the short first digit of the hand, opposable to each of the other four digits." Its definition should give a clue as to what follows.

Many climbers use only the "other four digits," and their thumbs just seem to tag along, flopping about on the rock like so many fish. This practice is a waste of your strongest digit, as well as a waste of a useful tool. Let's look at a couple of uses for the thumb and how they can help. First, think of the typical bucket hold. Place a hand on the edge of a table to simulate one. Most of you have your four fingers extended in a straight alignment, with their entire length (up to the third joint where the fingers meet the hand) flat on the table. (You don't want to use the so-called "cling grip" on a big bucket -- it damages the finger joints. A flat hold is just as strong and less damaging.) Now look at your thumb. Chances are, it's sort of propped up next to your index finger, providing little support because probably only the first joint extends up onto the edge of the table. Ok, so how do you improve the use of those thumbs? Try lifting your hand a bit and curling your thumb under your palm. The higher you lift your hand, the more thumb you can curl underneath for support. It may feel weird at first, but it's a very useful technique and lessens the amount of finger strength you use on those buckets. Why waste fingers on big holds?

The same idea is good for smaller holds. I frequently climb using my thumbs to hold onto so-called finger buckets. You can hook your thumbs onto lots of holds, especially if the rock isn't vertical. If you can't get the hang of it right away, try using your thumbs while resting on a stance. You'll be saving finger strength and learning a new technique and learning a new technique at the same time!

The ideas noted above are pretty useful on lots of routes, but the thumb uses that follow are fairly

specialized. Read them and think about the theory -- you may find an application for one the next time you go out.

The dictionary mentions the "opposability" of the thumb. That capability is one of its most important climbing applications. As an example, you can use your thumb to oppose your fingers on a hold. All pinch holds are opposition holds, for example. Take the idea of a pinch hold, though, and make the hold much smaller. Ask Rich Cunningham about the gnarly right hand hold on Oyster(5.12) at Great Falls. It's a tiny flake, big enough for four fingers, but only half a pad's worth. The rock is steep at that point, and the torque on your body is pretty fierce. As a result, those half pads are none too secure on the hold. I suggest using the thumb to grip the other side of the flake. It's much smaller, about a quarter pad's worth, but the additional stability gained is amazing. And if you can't pinch, then push. Frequently, if there's something on the other side of a hold to pinch, you can find something opposite the hold to push against with your thumb. Again, you gain stability, even if only temporarily.

Anyway, these are just a few uses for the thumb that are worth considering. I'm not going to get into thumb stacks, finger stacks with opposable thumbs, and other technical jams at this point.

Stuart Pregnell

### Supplement To The Membership List

The following members were inadvertently omitted from the membership list as published in the November UP-ROPE. If you would like a copy of the complete list, please write Jeffrey Levy, Secretary PATC-MS 1718, N St nw Washington, D.C. 20036.

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Baltimore MD 21218

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Dale William  
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Sterling VA 22170  
(703) 444-6716 (703) 481-7178

Arnold Wexler  
10401 Grocvenor Place Apt 1514  
Rockville MD 20852  
(301) 493-6965

## CLIMBERS CALENDAR

Feb 18-20**	Ice Climbing Lessons	Pete Grant	960-6033	TBA
Feb 18-20	Rieglesville	Jeanette Helfrich	585-9119	TBA
Feb 25-26	Lock Haven Pa	Rich Cunningham	332-7931	TBA
March 1	Executive Meeting			HQ
March 4	Great Falls Va	Stuart Rosenthal	527-5247	
March 5	Bull Run	Sue Hartley	824-0012	
March 8	Monthly Meeting			HQ
March 10-11	Ski Show, Las Vegas Red Rocks, Joshua Tree	Stuart Pregnall	543-3988	
March 11	Great Falls	Tom Kawecki	237-7227	
March 12	Carderock	Pete Grant	960-6033	
March 11-12	New River Gorge	Tom Isaacson	332-3710	
March 16	<b>MOUNTAIN FILM FESTIVAL</b>	<b>CIRCLE EMBASSY THEATRE</b>	<b>6:30</b>	
March 18	Bulges/Great Falls Md	John Yanson	667-4334	
March 19	Crescent Rocks	Michael Mergi	683-2649	
March 25	Sugar Loaf	Tom Russel	869-8058	
March 26	Rock State Park	John Yanson	667-4334	
April 1	Great Falls	Madeleine Carter	362-5036	
April 2	Harper's Ferry	Ken Andrasko	337-0498	
April 5	Executive Meeting			
April 8-9	New River Gorge	Tom Kawecki	237-7227	
April 12	Monthly Meeting			HQ
April 15	Annapolis Rocks	Tom Isaacson	332-3710	



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