

Up Rope

FOUNDED BY
HERB AND JAN CONN

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

Mountaineering Section elects new officers

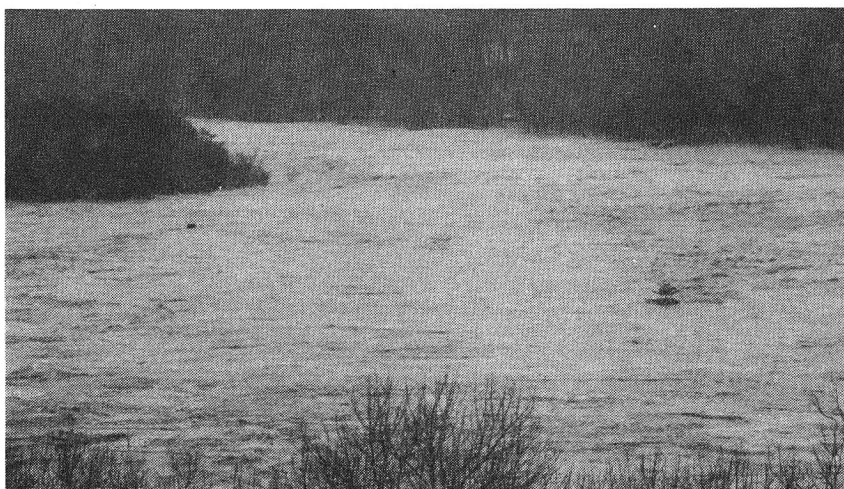
Don McIntyre is the Mountaineering Section's new chairman, taking over the reins (and reign) from previous chair Dave Godwin. The chairmanship and other elected positions were unanimously voted in and finalized at the February meeting. The one-month vote delay was due to the canceled January meeting.

Demian Larry was elected vice chairman (taking over for Scott Pearson) and Peter Ro was elected treasurer. Rick and Mary Dotson will share the role of secretary (taking over for Jim Southward).

Don said his plan for 1996 is to "promote climbing in all its aspects, sport climbing, intermediate, beginners and ice climbers". He also vowed to bring in "name climbers" to give talks at PATC/MS meetings, as well as to promote more of a relationship with the American Alpine Club. Other goals Don mentioned: focus on access issues, have more club-sponsored trips and promote greater involvement in climbing/community upgrades, such as the upcoming, March 30 Great Falls cleanup and the twice yearly Friends of Seneca trail projects.

Don comes to the position with plenty of experience. Aside from more than 20 years of Alpine mountaineering (including five Himalayan expeditions), he has served as past Chairman of the MS in the 1970's.

WINTER SNOW MELT CAUSES FLOODING



Great Falls Matter Gorge viewed from north under flood conditions.

The C&O canal and tow path were damaged by severe flooding in late January-early February and flooding levels were high enough to put most (if not all) Great Falls Virginia climbs under water. (See photo.)

Climbers needed for Great Falls cleanup

PATC/MS members can help foster good relations with the Great Falls Park by donating their skills and about three hours to help clean up these climbing areas.

The scheduled date is Saturday, March 30 from 9a.m. to 12 noon. Park Ranger Dennis Cardy told Up Rope "Experienced climbers would be a big help for cleaning up the area. I'm not going to send inexperienced people out there to clean up the area. If we don't get climbers to help, the area won't get cleaned up."

There will be a registration table set up at the Park, and rubber gloves and trash bags will be given out. Volunteers should try to arrive by 8:50 am. For further information, contact Tony Sanders at 202-362-3819 or via e-mail at: UpRopeEd@aol.com.

The cleanup is being sponsored by the Alice Ferguson Foundation.

MS members wishing to send money to help in the reconstruction of the canal and towpath can write to:

C&O Canal and Towpath
c/o Supervisor Faris
P.O. Box 4
Sharpsburg, MD 21782

Make checks payable to: US Dept. of the Interior, National Park Service.

Note: We're not sure if your check would be tax deductible.

Cerro Aconcagua

Eat, Drink, Man, Mountain

This fall the Mountaineering Section sponsored a trip to the western

hemisphere's highest mountain, Cerro Aconcagua (22,800 feet). The trip leader was Jim Southward (now of Monterey). The others were Bill Fike (now of Wyoming), Henri Bartholomot (Bethesda), Lere Solsvig (Denver), Scott Stanton (Chicago), John Baker (Seattle), and myself.

While I succumbed to the altitude just short of Camp 2 (at about 18,000 feet), the rest of the team summited with little incident. (Bill soloed to the summit after we returned to the states, but that's another trip report.)

Mendoza

We started our journey from Mendoza. A 4-hour bus ride through vineyards and foothills brought us to Punta de Inca, just short of the border from Chile. The bus dropped us off in front of the "hosteria" and we were greeted by our mule boss Andreas. In the winter he runs the ski patrol at the nearby resort. After checking in, we gave him our mule bags for transport to Plaza Argentina, the base camp for the eastern approaches of Aconcagua. The next morning, we paid our respects at the "andinista" cemetery, got in the pickup, and Andreas drove us to the trailhead at Punta de Vacas.

The trail was very rocky and unblazed—for all of the approach, we followed mule drop-pings to stay on route. We made it to the Las Leñas shelter in 5 hours and set up camp. After dinner I lay in my sleeping bag picking out new constellations in the southern sky. I saw a shooting star before dozing off.

frigid Rio Vacas and continued up the valley. Just past Las Leñas, on both sides of the valley are rock faces that are 6 to 9 pitches tall; I doubt that they've seen any ascents. Above the valley walls are 16,000 foot peaks. By

noon, I was well behind the rest of my party and came upon a herd of guanacos (lama guanicoe). I was just able to squeeze off a photo before the shy animals bolted off and disappeared. At 5 pm, I reached our camp at Casa de Piedra—

house of rock, literally a stone shack built into the side of a huge boulder.

The first thing next morning, we crossed the Rio Vacas again, though it was easier this time (we just rolled up our pants instead of taking them off), and hiked up the narrow Rio

Relinchos valley. Because our acclimatization plan limited our gain to no more than 1,500 ft per day, we made camp by mid-afternoon.

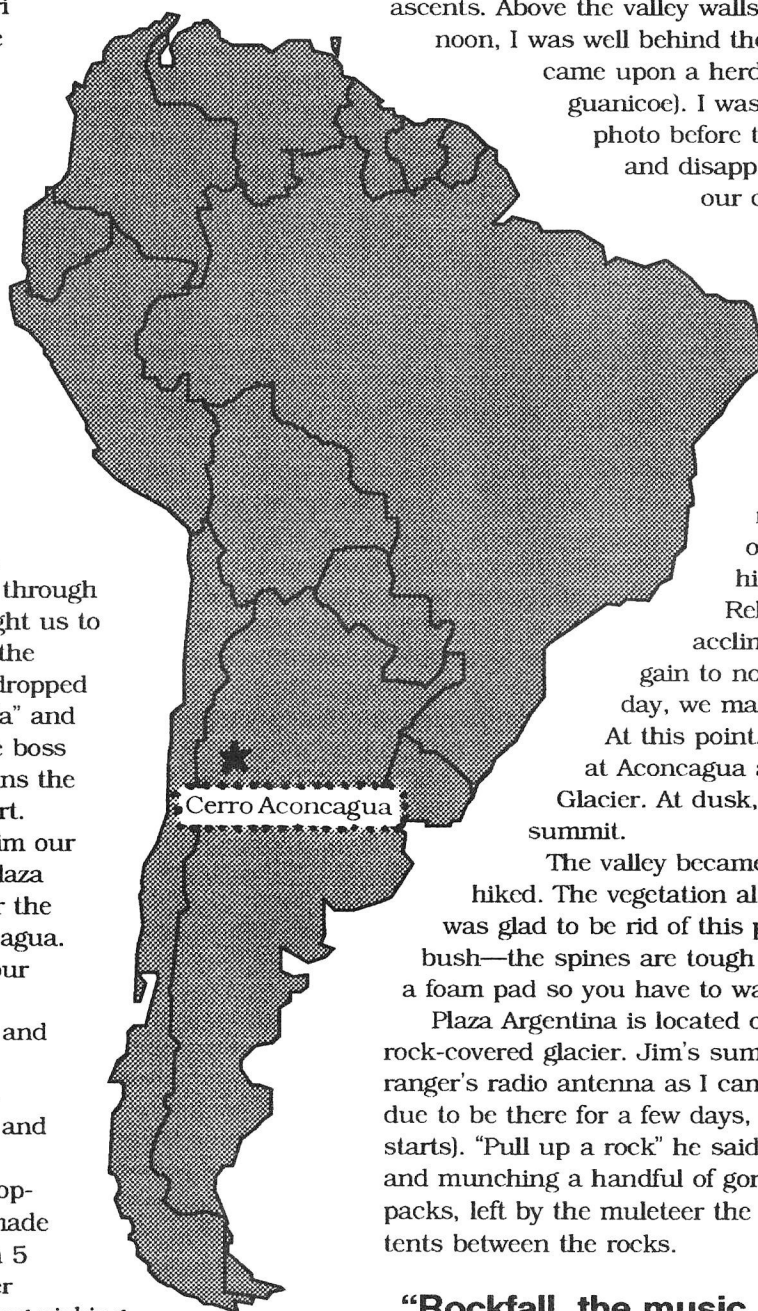
At this point, we got our first good look at Aconcagua and our route, the Polish Glacier. At dusk, a plume was visible at the summit.

The valley became flatter the higher up we hiked. The vegetation also became more sparse. I was glad to be rid of this particular kind of thorny bush—the spines are tough enough to pierce through a foam pad so you have to watch where you sit.

Plaza Argentina is located on the bottom end of a rock-covered glacier. Jim's summit flag was on the ranger's radio antenna as I came up (the ranger was not due to be there for a few days, when the climbing season starts). "Pull up a rock" he said huddled behind a boulder and munching a handful of gorp. We found our mule packs, left by the muleteer the day before, and set up our tents between the rocks.

"Rockfall, the music of the mountains"

To help acclimatize, we carried a load from base to the first high camp—the "climb high, sleep low" strategy. The route was through "penitentes," a field of frozen snow.



The approach to base camp

The next morning we crossed the

stalagmites. Traveling through them was difficult, hence the name.

Because going through the penitentes was so draining, the first camp was established too low and was later moved 900 ft higher to the real Camp 1 site. I was glad about this, too, because this first camp was at the base of a crumbling cliff that dropped rocks every so often.

The altitude hit me while I was traversing the snow field on the way to the real Camp 1. I was the last to stagger into camp. Henri carried my tent up and had set it up. I leaned against a rock while waiting for the three Tylenols to kick in (don't tell Bill, he got on my case for doing this on Orizaba).

Camp 1 has stone walls to break the wind, and glacier melt in the afternoon to replenish our water. Unfortunately, the rise overlooking the camp is covered by dried scat from previous expeditions; you also have to search far to find a windless spot to squat.

Our next camp was at Ameghino Col. After zig-zagging up a steep scree slope, the trail went over a ridge and deposited us onto a wide, windy bowl. Jim had arrived earlier, had set up the tent, and continued on to carry a load to Camp 2. I tossed my sleeping bag in the tent and crawled in. A solar collector was improvised out of a black garbage bag and foam pad to melt snow into slush. After dinner, we melted the rest of the slush and filled our bottles. I went to sleep with the sound of the tent material flapping in the wind.

I woke during the night with a splitting headache. "That's it," I told the others the next morning, "I'm going to base camp." I jammed my things into my pack, wished them luck, and scurried off while they ascended to Camp 2. Further below a trio of Spaniards were coming up very fast. I met them on the snow field. In international sign language and broken English, the first Spaniard inquired about the conditions on

UP ROPE BETA BOX: ARGENTINA—

This ain't no banana republic

If you have ever traveled south of the US border, then you are in for a treat when you get to Argentina. Mendoza is a medium-size city on the front range of the Andes; it is surrounded by vineyards and the population is mostly ethnic Italians. The city streets are tree-lined and the tiled sidewalks are mopped daily with kerosene. Expedition members were reminded of traveling in Europe. The custom of siesta is preserved here—almost everything shuts down or stops at 1 PM and re-opens at 5. Restaurants open for dinner at 8 PM and families can be seen in the well-lit city parks into the late hours of the night. The biggest problem we observed seems to be the crazy (reckless?) motorists who slow down and switch on headlights only when approaching intersections—we were amazed that collisions aren't more frequent.

Dining and provisions—If you follow the ways of AA or Overeaters Anonymous, then put on your sack cloth and start self-flagellating now to pay penance for the best wine and beef to be found in one place. Start your journey to hell at the El Meson de España (Montevideo 244) and order the steak with egg, ham, and vegetable. For a truly carnivorous feast, Carlos the ranger at Plaza Argentina suggested El Boccara (Mitre 1976). We ordered the mixed grill. For siesta, the Piwy (Colon 428) features beer and sandwiches. Hone up on your social graces though, this sidewalk cafe is located in front of a women's apartment.

Fill up your food bag at El Metro, an American-style "supermercado" chain. They have an excellent deli with sausage, bread, and cheese. There are mom-and-pop packaged goods stores that can be found on almost every block, as well as an occasional bakery and candy shop.

We weren't able to confirm the availability of butane cartridges before we left the US but our mule agent said he can procure some if needed. White gas ("bencina blanca") is readily available. We had no problems burning this stuff in our MSR's.

Lodging—In Mendoza we stayed at the Hotel Nutibara (Mitre and Montevideo). Double rooms are \$82 a night and includes continental breakfast. The rooms were a bit tight with all of our gear but are equipped with air conditioning and bidet; I conducted a science experiment in the bathroom, verifying that the whirlpool does indeed spin the opposite direction in the southern hemisphere.

A bunk at the Hosteria Punta de Inca was \$25 per person and includes continental breakfast. The restaurant in the hostel features fix-priced dinners for \$15. Be sure to hang a memento on the dining room wall at the end of your expedition.

Transportation—Mules: We employed Sr. Fernando Grajalas to arrange transport of our gear to base camp. Though his rates are higher than others, he provided shuttle to and from the trailhead and other "andisista" services. We found his services to be reliable. **Buses and Taxis**: Public transportation is clean, cheap, and efficient.

It costs about \$7 one way between Mendoza and the hostel at Punta de Inca and another \$4 for the taxi between the hotel and bus terminal.

Permits—Climbing permit costs \$80. You must bring your passport, specify your route, and apply at the tourist office (San Martín 1143). Be sure to carry the permit at all times in the mountain.

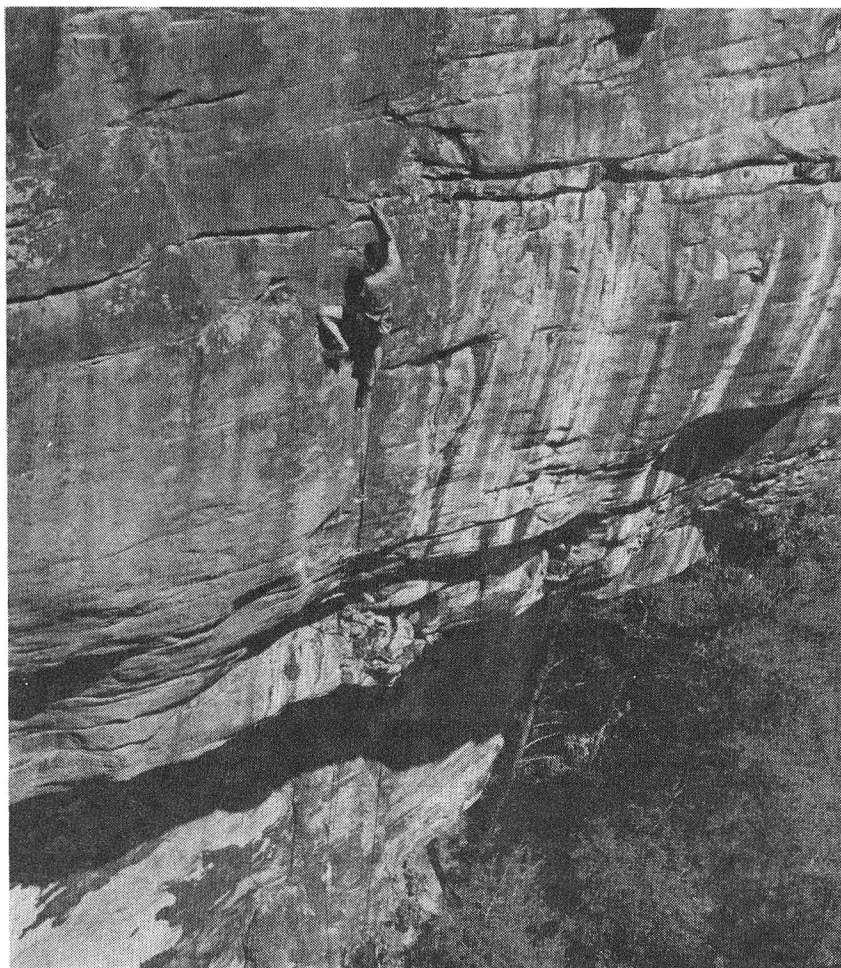
Books—"Argentina, Uruguay, and Paraguay—A Travel Survival Kit," 1992 by Wayne Bernharson and Maria Massolo, published by Lonely Planet Publications.

"Aconcagua: A Climbing Guide," 1994 by R. J. Secor, published by The Mountaineers.

The Club Andinista Mendoza moved 3 years ago and the address is wrong in the guidebooks. We did find an American expatriate living across the street though. Ask the tourist office for the new address.

(Continued on page 11)

THE NEW IN REVIEW



MS Member Tom Isaacson is a former editor of Up Rope. Here, he offers a review of his and other MS members and friends' climbing at the New.

Photo: Tom Isaacson on Harbinger Scarab 5.12c.

REFLECTIONS ON CLIMBING AT NEW RIVER GORGE

Because past reviews have incurred the wrath of certain readers, I will tread lightly and try not to disturb anyone's peaceful hibernation. One caveat: the New is a big place and the vast majority of events entirely escape my notice. Much of what I hear is many times removed from the original source (who may not have been telling the truth anyhow). Thus, for those of you who believe that history is a discernable and knowable set of facts, this review should be treated with great caution. For those of you who believe that history is an artifice

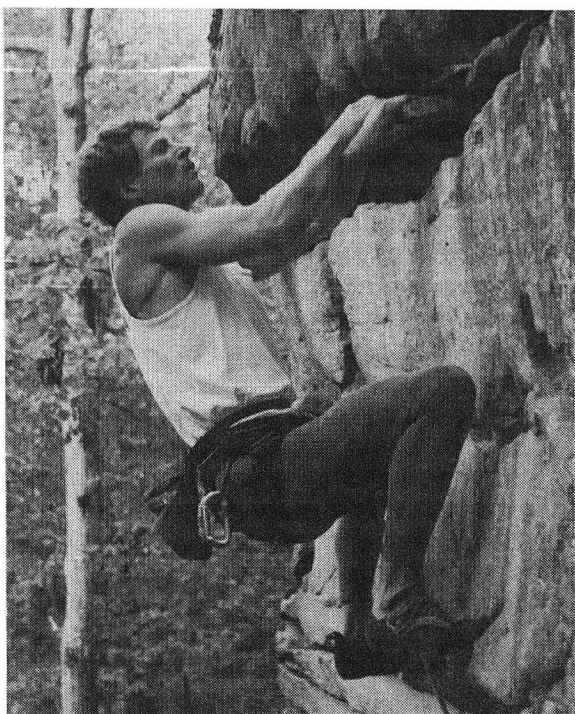
created for entertainment, money or propaganda, this review is must-reading.

Rick Thompson, formerly of Pittsburgh, moved to Boulder to work for the Access Fund. With the probable exception of Doug (Calendar Boy) Reed, Rick has done more than anyone to develop the New and help maintain access. His 1986 guidebook is still the best source of information on trad routes. His bolts scattered among almost every major cliff at the New represent about seven years of creating sport climbs for the enjoyment of climbers at nearly all levels of ability. His 5.10a

classic Rico Suave (Rick's nickname, sort of) might be the most popular route at the New. Rick deserves much of the credit for the three sets of ladders at the Endless Wall. Rick spent many hours on various access projects which have benefitted us all.

Us and them

There are a lot of amenities that climbers at the New might take for granted: access, ladders, trails, bridges, bolts, cold shuts, lichen-free faces, steep routes with permanent quick draws, etc. I frequently hear a climber say "they ought to do something to fix this," etc. Climbers



Stuart Pregnall on Satisfaction Guaranteed 5.11c.

forget that there is no "them," just us. Although hundreds (thousands?) of people climb at the New with some frequency, relatively few have done most of the work to make it such a convenient place to climb. Rick is one of those people. Even if his example does not inspire others to make similar contributions, climbers should at least be aware of what he's done.

Rick left behind two unfinished projects at the Endless Wall which hopefully will entice him to return from time-to-time.

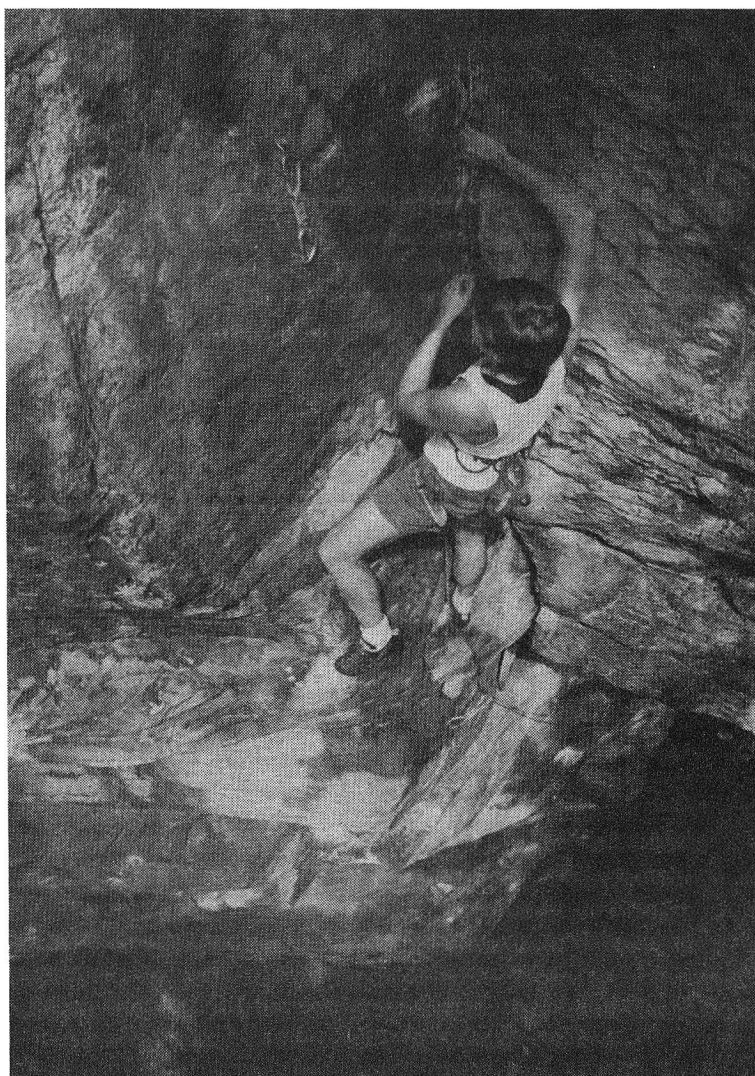
The past two years have seen relatively few new routes. In part, this may be due to the ban on motorized drilling within Park property which affects all of Kaymoor and the Endless Wall downstream of Fern Creek Falls. [I think the ban is absurd for many reasons. Regardless, please obey the Park rules.]

Upstream Endless gets new routes

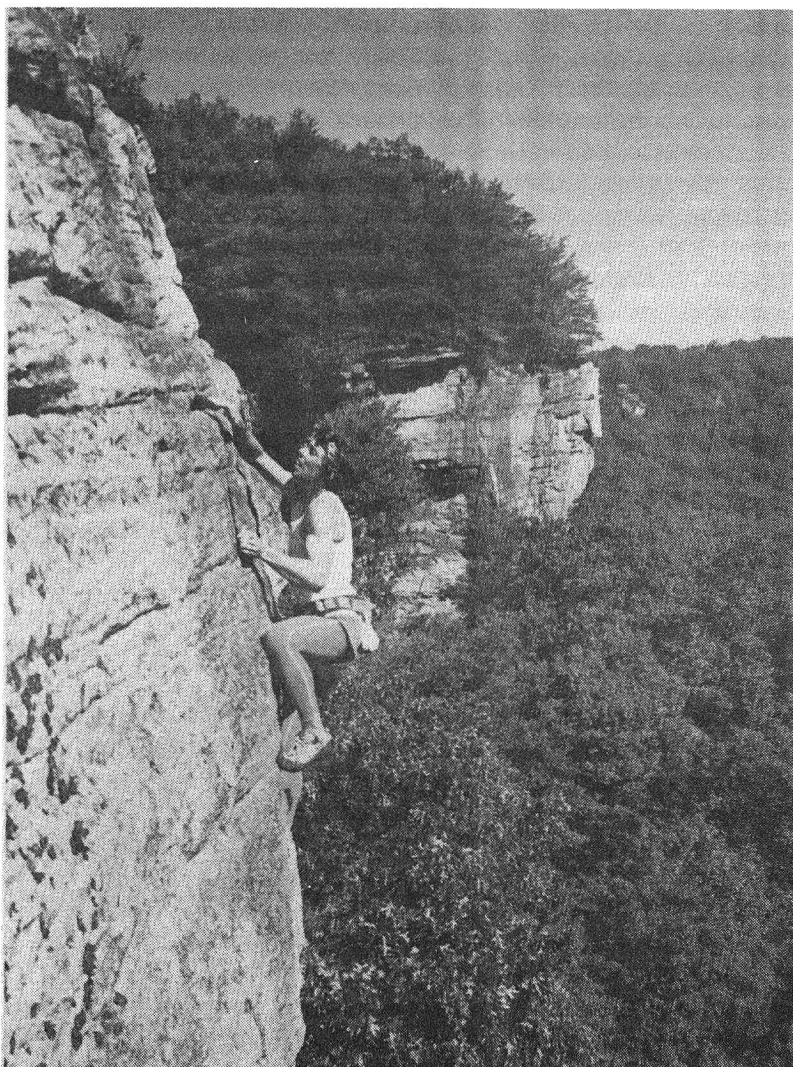
There appears to have been some activity upstream of Kaymoor, but not enough to lure many climbers to make the 40-minute hike to Domino Point. Doug Reed and Rick Thompson added many routes at the upstream section of the Endless Wall between Jacob's Ladder and the Cirque. A new wooden ladder makes access to some of these routes quite reasonable. To date, these routes are nearly all 5.12 or harder,

except for the excellent Churning in the Butter, 5.11b. Eddie Whittemore bolted several projects in the Coliseum at Summersville which look very hard. Brian McCray bolted three new lines in the vicinity of Long Dong Silver, also at Summersville, and is rumored to have completed one of them at 5.13c. DC's own Shaine Smith added Baby with a Nail Gun, 5.10c, at the Assassin's Wall at Summersville. This route is between Strong Arming the Little Guy and She Got the Bosch... It is a quality route that adds to the appeal of that wall as a destination. Angie McGinnis' Glass Onion at Central Endless is a popular new warm-up and Doug Reed's Tatoo also receives rave reviews.

On the three-day holiday weekends, the New has been intensely crowded, especially at Kaymoor and Summersville (the sites of many easy sport routes). Otherwise, there has not been a dramatic increase in climbing activity there. The hordes that have swarmed the Gunks appear to have stayed away from the New.



Elizabeth Ershine on Hard Core Female Thrash 5.11c.



Ken McLain on Jesus & Tequila 5.12 b/c.

They came from the West...

As always, a few talented climbers from out West visited the New, many in connection with the Clipper City national comp which was cancelled at the last minute when the gym burned. Jason Campbell, a California youth, flashed or on-sighted a host of 5.13s, including all three routes in the Coliseum in a day. Mike Pont (Colorado) and Steve Schneider (California) also passed through, each on-sighting the Lactic Acid Bath, 5.12d, and making quick ascents of numerous other hard routes. After a multi-year hiatus, the Racist saw its sixth, seventh and eighth ascents by McCray, Campbell & Schneider (not necessarily in that order). Flyin Brian's ascent refuted the myth that this test piece is beyond the reach of anyone under six feet. Roxanna Brock became, I think, the second local female to climb 5.13, doing Apollo Reed, Quinsana and possibly others.

There have been sporadic reports of thefts of bolts and other fixed gear from routes. But this does not

appear to have become an epidemic. If you're working on a route, I would not advise leaving your quickdraws on it for an extended period of time unless the route is either really steep or you consider your draws relatively disposable. Most climbers appear willing to leave their pack unattended at the cliff (something you wouldn't do at the Gunks) but this may change absent a renaissance of family values. One other gripe, some climbers have started leaving twist locks as retreat gear. These are often hard to remove and it weakens the hanger if climbers are forced to place a draw on top of the twist lock. Don't be cheap, leave a biner—not a sling or a twist lock.

Return of the Trads

There appears to have been a minor resurgence in trad climbing. Junkyard, home to many classic trad routes, has been packed lately, though many of the climbers are top-roping or taking classes. Steve Cater published a revised and expanded guide to the New. Although I have quite a few criticisms of the guide, there's no denying that it is a huge improvement over his earlier guide. I'm fairly familiar with the New, but I still consult his guide from time-to-time.

Access

The approach to Beauty is fluid as ever. The normal approach down the path to the Brain area clearly is displeasing a local landowner who has started a major junkyard along the trail and unleashed his nasty dog. Some people have reverted to the old upstream access which is a longer hike but has the virtue of avoiding most trouble. A new trail exists at the Nuttall Cemetery (follow the signs from the usual downstream access point) which is quick and convenient. It's only a matter of time before some idiot climbers endanger access here by littering the cemetery or disrupting mourners. More likely, some non-climbers will do that and climbers will get the blame. In the meantime, please be quiet and respectful if you use the cemetery access.

Summersville access is becoming a major problem due to a private land development. I have no advice on what will be the best access in 1996. Ask around. You can usually rent a boat at the Marina for \$35 and use it for access to the cliffs, though I do not recommend it if you're in a hurry or the weather looks iffy. We may need to go back to the old trail that starts under the bridge and follows along the top of the cliff near the shoreline. This should keep you off of private property but parking may become an issue.

(Continued on page 10)

TRAVEL TIPS: THE STUFF GUIDEBOOKS DON'T TELL YOU

When your climbing aspirations take you to far-off places, here are some helpful tips. These are in no way complete so feel free to send comments or additions to Up Rope.

Stuff to get:

Besides the usual climbing gear, a few travel necessities needed:

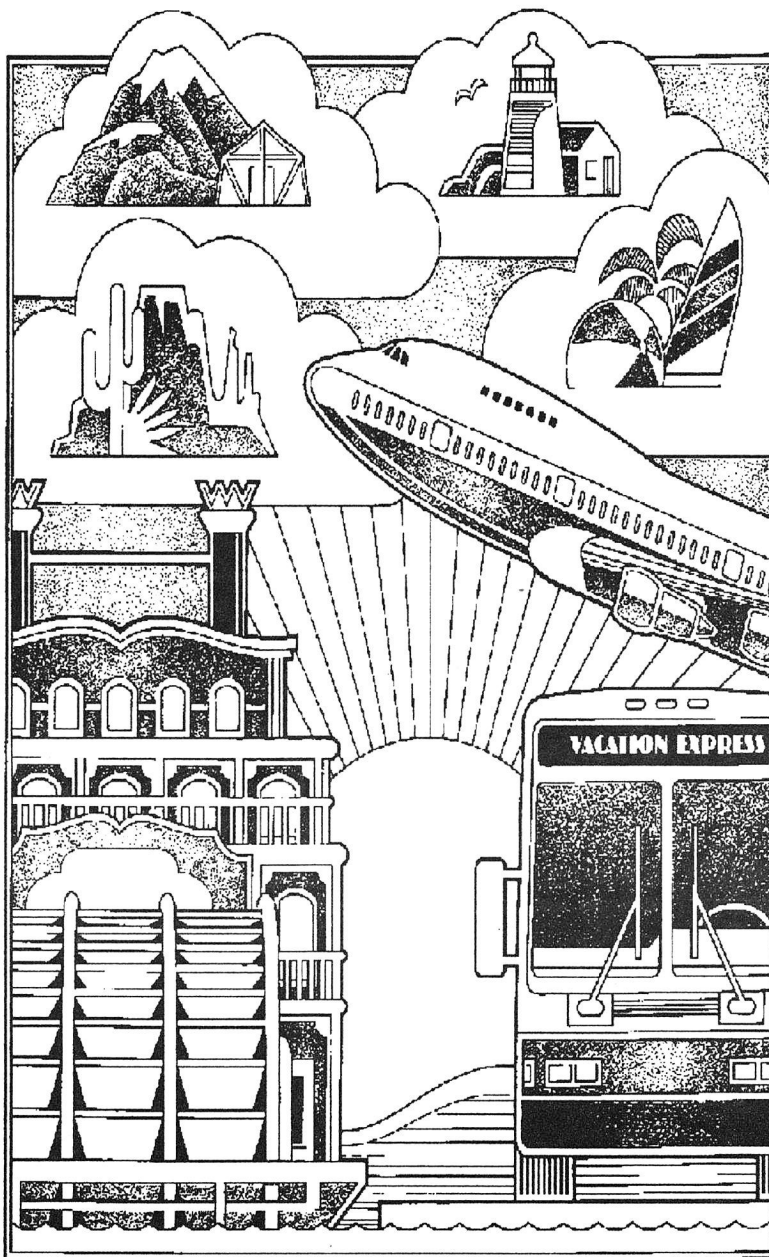
- * Get a money belt or pouch, to carry passport and extra currency inside clothing. Keep this on your person at all times. I'm wary of carrying valuables in a fanny pack because it's easier to rip off.

- * Bring spare prescription glasses in a hard case and with eye-glasses retainers. (Tip: Crazy Glue your glasses so they'll stay together in stressful situations).

- * Get a large duffel bag to put your backpack while in transit. I use military-style duffels because they are cheap and indestructible. Many

surplus stores carry double-size duffel bags (30" x 50") that will accommodate your largest backpack. Avoid getting a "NATO bag"—the length-wise zipper easily breaks. Get a gym lock to lock the duffel.

- * Get a tourist guidebook in addition to the climbing guide. These are especially useful for logistics, learning the local culture and language, and transportation. I heartily recommend the "Lonely Planet" series



of guidebooks. But beware, specific information in these books become outdated very quickly.

- * Get some stout freezer bags (not sandwich bags) to organize your small stuff. And while you're at it, grab some heavy-duty garbage bags. These can be used as emergency rain poncho, gear cover, or even to haul out garbage.

- * Fit yourself with a pair of sport sandals (e.g., Teva) to use in the hut, in camp, and for river crossings.

- * And bring one or two paperback books. You never know when you're going to get stuck somewhere.

What to do:

After you've figured where and when you are going, do these as early as possible:

* Make lists.

Being habitually disorganized, I was forced to learn to organize the hard way:

- * To do list
- * Gear list
- * Menu/food schedule

- * **Order street maps, topos, and guidebooks.** Determine your approach, rough-in the logistics, and make alternate plans and objectives. Count on having bad weather so you won't be totally bummed.

* Get permits:

Find out what camping/climbing/trekking permits are required. Get permits early especially if there is a quota.

* Reserve

airline ticket: Reserve early to get the best fares and schedules. If using frequent-flyer mileage or coupons, find out the policy on changing itineraries. Employ a travel agent -- they can find the best rates that fit your itinerary. Be sure to ask about consolidators who buy seats and rooms in bulk and resell them.

By all means, pay by credit card for all reservations!!! You can get your money back if the service is not

delivered. Read on for other reservations...

*** Reserve rental car:** I recommend against driving in countries where the public transit systems are better and cheaper than in the US (almost always the case).

If you do rent a car, be sure to ask for a free upgrade or additional discount specials—they might say YES. A non-smokers' car can also be requested.

*** Reserve lodging and huts:** Reservations are essential during the busiest tourist season. For all reservations, be sure to ask for refund if rates drop and about the cancellation policy. Many places hold rooms for last minute walk-in's but don't count on it. Find out amenities at wilderness huts to save on your load carry.

Don't overlook low-cost alternatives such as hostels and campgrounds.

*** Apply for passport:** Even if a visa is not required to visit the foreign country, get passport for identification and re-entry back to the United States. Avoid bringing birth certificates, naturalization papers, or other important documents, lest they get lost, damaged, or worst, unrecognized by local authorities. Apply early—the busiest season is between March and September.

*** Get the BETA:** Guidebooks are to get you started. Contact local climbing clubs, park rangers, outfitters and guides, etc. Also find out about the availability of stove fuel (not allowed on the plane).

*** Insurance:** Health: Make sure your policy covers foreign travel.

Mountaineering/Rescue:

Membership in the American Alpine Club includes "rescue insurance" potentially worth thousands of dollars. In the event you or your party need to be plucked off a mountain side or hauled out of a crevasse. Double-check with the AAC to see if your expedition's area would be covered. And don't forget to verify if the area you're going to has search-

and-rescue services. AAC membership won't work if the area you're in is unequipped to handle an emergency. The AAC is located in Golden, CO and can be reached at: (303) 384-0110; 7:30-5p.m. (MT).

Luggage:

Lost luggage means an end to your trip. You can at least get compensation. Consider the options listed below (from The Kiplinger Washington Editors, Inc. (c) 1995). In any case, be sure to document with photos and receipts of EVERYTHING in your luggage to maximize your claim in the event of loss:



"Excess-valuation coverage. Most airlines offer this in addition to the \$1,250 liability for loss. The coverage costs \$1 or \$2 per \$100 valuation. Most carriers, however, cap the amount you can purchase, usually at \$2,500 or \$5,000. And many carriers won't let you buy insurance to cover liability exclusions, such as cameras or gold jewelry.

"Homeowners or renters insurance. Your policy may include coverage of off-premises property that's stolen or damaged by vandals, fire or water. But certain items, such as laptops that are used mainly on

the road, may not be covered, and some policies have limits on high-value items. For foolproof insurance, buy a floater that covers a specific item regardless of where or how it was lost or damaged. Floaters can cost between \$10 and \$40 per \$1,000 of valuation.

"Credit cards. Some cards provide secondary protection that kicks in after the maximum \$1,250 airline liability is fulfilled. Citicorp Diners Club, for instance, offers free coverage for up to an additional \$1,250 for both checked and carry-on bags, and covers all items, even jewelry and cameras, at replacement value.

"Travel insurance. Most travel insurance comes as a package that either includes baggage coverage or lets travelers add it on. Access America, for example, offers baggage coverage of up to \$2,000, at a cost of \$4 per \$100 of valuation. However, claims for cameras, jewelry and other valuables are capped at \$1,000, and the plan pays the depreciated value of the item, not the replacement cost. The cheapest option is to purchase trip-cancellation-and-delay insurance and add on the baggage coverage. For a trip anywhere in North America, the cost of trip-cancellation insurance would be \$16 for \$300 worth of insurance."

Do these one-to-two months before departure:

*** Make an appointment with your physician for immunizations and to discuss health matters pertaining to foreign travel. Assemble a first aid kit, stocked with common drugs.**

*** Listen to the latest travel advisories, call into the State Department's Consular Information Sheets Hotline: (202) 647-5225, FAX (202) 647-3000, or BBS (202) 647-9225. This info is also on the Internet (see my resources list).**

*** Join AAA to take advantage of their travel services.**

*** Exchange money. Allow extra time when exchanging money for**

less-traveled countries. Be sure to exchange enough currency for a few day's use—lodging, taxi, bus, dining, provisions, post cards, bribes, etc.

The exchange houses I know of in DC are Rigg's Bank (202/835-5240 or -5402) and Thomas Cook Currency Services (202/338-3325 or 202/872-1233) though most commercial banks will accommodate you. The best deal I've found is at AAA as they have no-fee travelers' checks (both US and some foreign currencies) and good exchange rates. Unstocked currencies can special order for a small fee. In all cases, call the exchange house to be certain they carry the currency AND have sufficient supplies on-hand.

For security, carry travelers' checks and change them to currency as needed. Use credit cards for emergencies. Many credit cards also offer travel services and sometimes at no cost.

Do these 1 week before departure:

* **Buy food:** If you're traveling to remote regions, devise a meal schedule so you'll bring just enough food. Be sure to increase your caloric intake by 1/3 to make up for the exertion and cold. I re-package backpacker meals and dried food-stuffs into plastic bags at home and buy perishables in-country; be sure to wash fruits and vegetables in treated water and peel before eating. (Tip: buy foods that you like, you need all the calories you can get -- I quickly tire of oatmeal and Power Bars).

If you're packing a water filter, bring iodine tablets too. Otherwise your filter can clog more than once, leaving you with no potable water.

* **Pack:** Consolidate group gear with other members of your party. And pack light—you'll never know when you'll have to hoof it with all your stuff. Be sure to leave some room in your bags for souvenirs. (Tip: don't pack a big wardrobe—wash your clothes on the road).

I'm overly cautious about my luggage getting ripped off. Put your backpack inside a duffel and seal it with a lock or wire. Grab a handful of luggage tags at the airport and put 'em on the OUTSIDE and INSIDE of your luggage. Never, never, NEVER CHECK UNCOVERED BACKPACKS.

* **Photo:** Protect your film from heat, moisture, and X-ray machines. Don't bother getting lead-lined film carriers—I carry film in a plastic bag on my person and insist on visual inspection at the airport. Carry camera gear on your person too—it's too easy to steal and insurance rarely covers it.

* To prevent mail theft, notify the post office to suspend delivery. Suspend newspapers too.

Travel Day:

* I leave my car with a friend who lives closer to the airport and have a taxi pick me up there.

* Bring sweater, reading material, and food for the flight.

* Arrive at the airport and check-in 2 hours prior to departure time to compensate for airport security, crowds, and to avoid being bumped. To prevent theft keep a tight grip on your bags or use the buddy system.

* **Security:** I seem to harp on this but it's no fun being a victim. Be alert of your surroundings and keep your wits about. Don't even let your guard down to personnel who are supposed to help you. Remember, you're targeted because you're a traveler.

DEALING WITH THE AIRLINES:

It's not exactly the friendly skies since deregulation:

* **Check schedules:** Domestic carriers are usually good about keeping schedules but not the foreign airlines. Call the nearest airline office 24-hours prior to flight to get up-dated departure times. No KIDDING!

* **Getting bumped or**

interrupted: If your journey is interrupted because of the airline's fault, demand compensation, whether it's free flight coupons, lodging and meal vouchers, or whatever. Don't be shy about pressing your case, especially when you are inconvenienced. When you do check into the hotel, DO NOT give them your credit card number or any kind of "deposit". Happy climbing!

—by Peter Hsi, with Ozana Halik

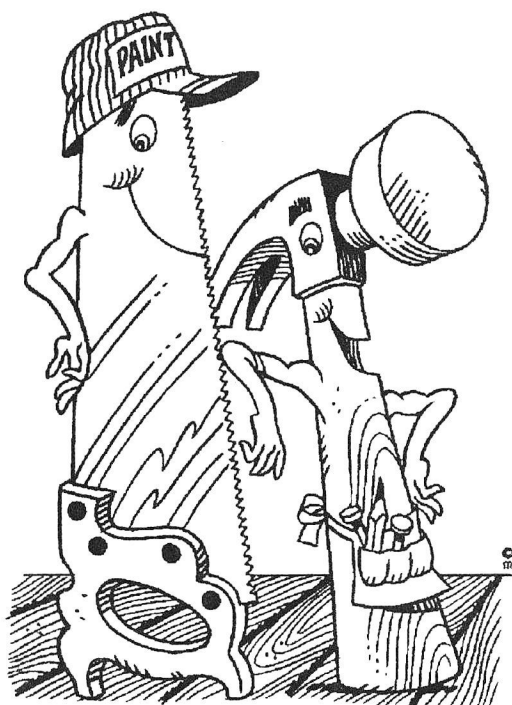
PATC/MS gets California, Colorado chapters

Several longtime PATC/MS members have relocated out West. (And whether they know it or not, they've informally become our newest "correspondents" for Up Rope.)

Former MS Chairman Pete Hsi has become the Mountaineering Section's honorary Rocky Mountain chapter chief. Pete can be reached at: P.O. Box 26120, Colorado Springs CO 80936-6120; (719) 596-3826. His e-mail address is: hsi@ichange.com

MS member (and Navy Lt. Cdr.) Jim Southward and his family have moved to Monterey, Calif. For now, Jim can be reached via his parents in New Mexico at: 1308 Evelyn Ct, NE Albuquerque, NM 87112

Phone (505) 299-0503
Jim's e-mail is:
75112.417@compuserve.com



Seneca Trail Project Update

Get ready for spring climbing by volunteering to help the Friends of Seneca maintain the trails. The first F.O.S. trail maintenance weekend is set for sometime in April. Call (304) 567-2115 or (304) 567-4000 for details.

MS member mentions

I saw Beth Logan at the New several times, usually accompanied by Gary Beil. She mentioned that she has not taken a leader fall since one several years ago on Greenpiece (which I belayed). Gary has been a fixture at the New these past years and can regularly be seen cruising lots of hard routes, especially at Kaymoor. Gary recently established quite a few sport routes and trad routes (conveniently equipped with cold shuts). His Dark Shadows (5.12b at Beauty) probably is the best of the bunch. His 100% Real Cheese (5.11a at Kaymoor) might be the biggest sandbag sport route at the New.

Elizabeth Erskine did Mind Shaft (5.12a/b), Freaky Stylee (5.12a), Grow Hole (5.12a), and Bullet the New Sky (5.12a) and a lot of hard 5.11s such as Magnitude (5.11d). Tom Halicki did Reckless Abandon (5.12b/c) and Freaky Stylee. He also did a rare ascent of Crimes of Fashion (5.10a) a major trad extravaganza.

Stuart Pregnall did Stealth 'n Magic (5.12c) and Reckless Abandon and had many other worthy projects nearing completion when cold weather set in. Dan Hague did Slash & Burn (5.12d+) on a miserably humid day in August when that climb's little edges were barely usable. Dan also did Stealth 'n Magic, numerous 5.12a and 5.12b routes and was close to completing Dissonance (5.13a) when the weather crapped out. I saw Tim Rader, an old PATC member, back at the New after he returned from living out West.

Jeanette Helfrich did Bullet and Grow Hole and many 5.11s, including Under the Milky Way (5.11d). John Rayner did Bimbo Shrine (5.11b) and Legacy (the right version-5.11a).

I did Dial 911 (5.13a) after falling on the last real move on eight redpoint tries in a row, and Dissonance. I did eight of her routes graded at least 5.12c, including relatively rare ascents of Armada (5.12c/d), the Haulage (5.12c/d), Maximum Leader (5.12 c) and Doug Reed's excellent unnamed 5.12c near Dining at the Altar. For some perspective, it took Steve Schneider three tries to do the Haulage. Thereafter, he on-sighted 27 consecutive 5.12s.

The rest of the best

There is a substantial contingent of climbers associated either with Sportrock or the erstwhile Clipper City gym who are regulars at the New. Most of them are not PATC members and their individual praises will not be sung here. But, many of them are sending, if not flash-ing, 5.12 after just a year or two of sport climbing and some of them have ticked off a few 5.13s. The contingents from the D.C. area have a significant presence at the New and the growth of memberships in the local gyms will likely increase that trend. If a few of them get drills, the scene might really take off.

—by Tom Isaacson

(The New in review- continued from page 6)

New food review: Biscuit World

The big news was the much anticipated arrival of a new restaurant at the corner of Court St. and Route 19 in Fayetteville. Hopes ran high as visions of exotic culinary delights enfolded the speculation. Alas, a Tudor's Biscuit World opened up. In my experience, one of their potato or apple biscuits should power you through the day. Two biscuits might be a mistake. On the bright side, camping at Kaymoor (variously called Roger's, Fox's, or Rocky Top Retreat) now gives climbers a good, cheap alternative to noisy rafter-infested campgrounds. On another bright note, I think we've managed to go another year without a climbing fatality at the New.

*(Cerro Aconcagua continued
from page 3)*

the glacier, but I didn't know. I pointed at my head and said that I was descending. "Maybe next year" said the third man. "Si," I nodded.

Life at Camp 2 and the Summit

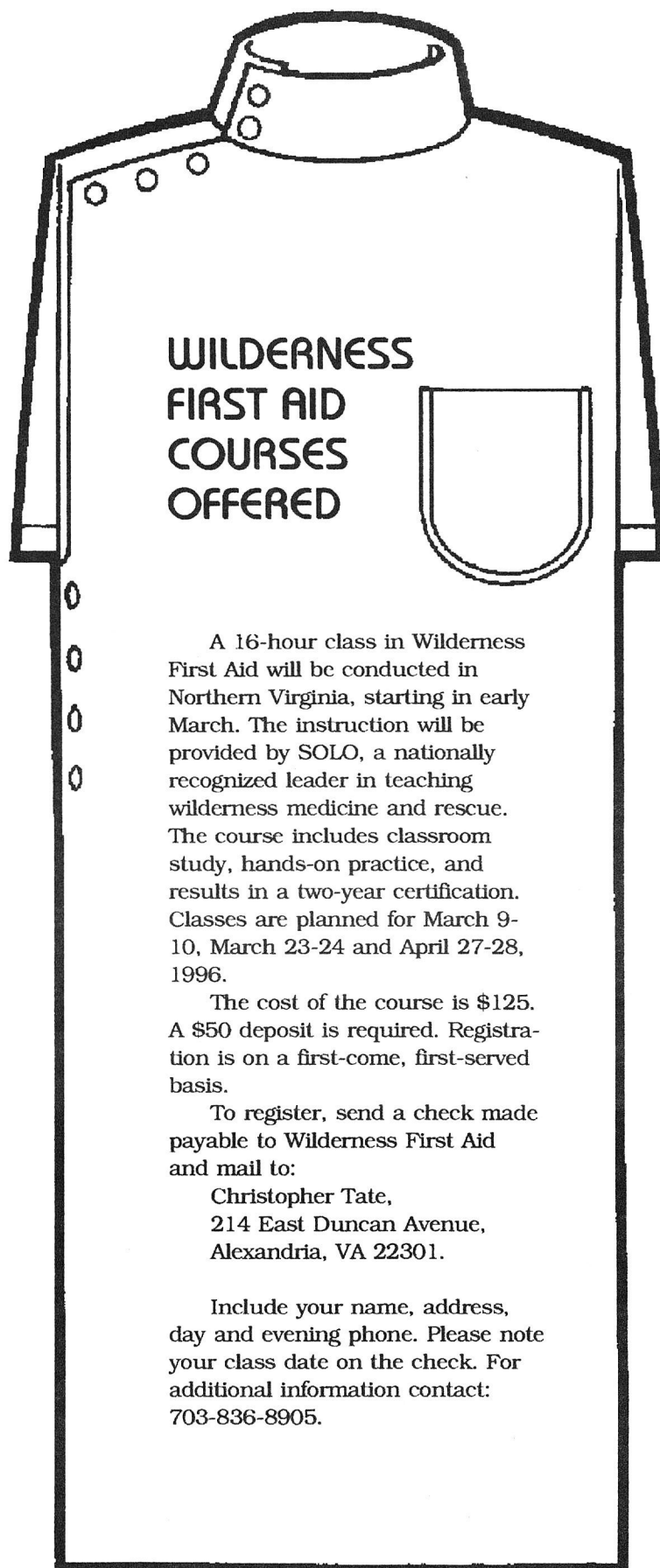
From Camp 2, the rest of the party made two summit attempts and waited out a storm in between. The first attempt, up the Polish Glacier Direct, was hampered by the extreme cold and loopiness just below the summit ridge. After waiting out a storm, a second attempt was made up the Falso de los Polacos, a long route that traversed the north face of Aconcagua and intersected the Normal Route at about 20,000 ft. The Canaleta, the infamous loose rock gully, was glazed with ice, requiring careful crampon technique (an Argentine team fell to their deaths descending this gully just before we arrived in Argentina.) The last summiter returned to Camp 2 at midnight, after being on the route for 18 hours.

At the end of the seventh day at Camp 2, they returned to base camp with provisions running low. The descent was no easier, carrying overflowing packs. They arrived in base camp tired, scruffy but happy.

Eat, drink, shower

It is the last night of our expedition and our mule bags are packed. Tomorrow we will load our gear on the mules and hike to the trailhead in one long day. I am thinking about hot showers and steaks and wine while I lie in my bag. It is a windless night and I leave my tent door open. A shooting star leaves a bright trail across the starry sky.

—Peter Hsi



A 16-hour class in Wilderness First Aid will be conducted in Northern Virginia, starting in early March. The instruction will be provided by SOLO, a nationally recognized leader in teaching wilderness medicine and rescue. The course includes classroom study, hands-on practice, and results in a two-year certification. Classes are planned for March 9-10, March 23-24 and April 27-28, 1996.

The cost of the course is \$125. A \$50 deposit is required. Registration is on a first-come, first-served basis.

To register, send a check made payable to Wilderness First Aid and mail to:

Christopher Tate,
214 East Duncan Avenue,
Alexandria, VA 22301.

Include your name, address, day and evening phone. Please note your class date on the check. For additional information contact: 703-836-8905.

RESOURCES LIST

Name	How to Contact	Remarks
Parks and Gov't Agencies		
Canada: Alberta Tourism	(800) 661-8888	Request the tourist info package
Canada: British Columbia Tourism	(800) 663-6000	Request the tourist info package; hotel reservations booked here
Canada: Parks Canada http://www.worldweb.com/ParksCanada-Banff/	(800) 651-7959	Request the tourist info package; Web page has links to other parks in Canada
USA: Passport Office	Call your post office for application info	Long lines always busy
USA: State Department's Consular Information Sheets Hotline	(202) 647-5225 Fax: (202) 647-3000 BBS: (202) 647-9225 http://www.stolaf.edu/network/travel-advisories.html	Recording
Clubs and Organizations		
Appalachian Mountain Club Club house: (617) 523-0638 Reservations (Crawford Hostel): (603) 466-2727 Book order: (800) 262-4455	Club house: 5 Joy St	Boston MA 02108
Canadian Alpine Club Potomac Appalachian Trail Club	Canmore club house/hostel: (403) 678-3222 CAC reservations and info Club house: 118 Park St Main: (703) 242-0693 Mountaineering: (703) 242-3501 Colorado: (800) 283-5222 Potomac (DC-metro): (703) 222-8200 National help: (800) AAA-HELP	Vienna VA 22180
AAA		
Weather and other conditions		
Avalanche: Colorado Springs Road conditions: Colorado State: (303) 639-1234 Weather: Colorado Weather: Elkins, WV Office: (304) 638-1200 Weather: National Weather Service http://thunder.mel.fsu.edu/~nws.wxchwy.html Weather: New Paltz, NY Weather: Wyoming	(719) 520-0020 Denver and west: (303) 639-1111 (303) 398-3964 Recording: (304) 636-5000 (914) 452-1035 (307) 635-9901	Detailed mountain weather Many links to other international weather sites
Lodging and Campgrounds		
American Youth Hostels HI-AYH	733 15th St, Suite 840, Washington DC 20005 (202) 783-6161 (800) 444-6111	
N. America reservations:		Unreliable; members only
US Forest Service Campground	(800) 280-2267	Always busy
Vendors and Guides		
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Shewmaker's Camera	30 N. Tejon, Colo. Spgs, CO 80903 (719) 636-1696	Photo sales and repairs photo lab

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IT'S DUES TIME!

MS revamping membership roster

New MS Chair, Don McIntyre, plans to upgrade the membership roster and make sure it includes only current, dues-paying members. MS members need to pay their 1996 dues soon--or else they'll stop receiving Up Rope and will miss out on notices of upcoming special events. Want to know more? Attend next month's meeting, Wednesday, March 13, 8 PM and write a check for your annual dues (\$15 single; \$25 family).



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