



Volume 60 Issue THREE

HOT SUMMER

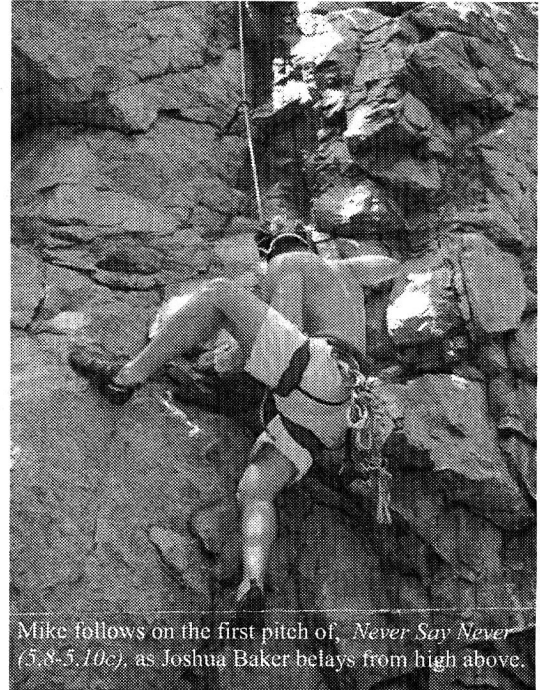
FALL 2005

Return to Nelson Rocks by Nestor Filmagii

The road to Nelson was closed for a brief and harrowing period this August, after the park was overwhelmed by safety and environmental concerns. A few weeks elapsed and the storm of interest festered until the park released a statement re-opening the climbing area to organized climbing groups at the discretion of the NRP. Within 24-hours of the announcement a team was assembled to take the 3 hour trip to West Virginia.

The under construction Corridor-H project, which tears a conduit through the West Virginia heartland, shaved a good 30 minutes off the trip. The weather was a factor in reaching escape velocity, for the fog was rather thick in Vienna. Our Heros assembled in the rally point parking lot, hopped up on Starbucks endlessly chanting the postman's motto...

(continued on page 2)



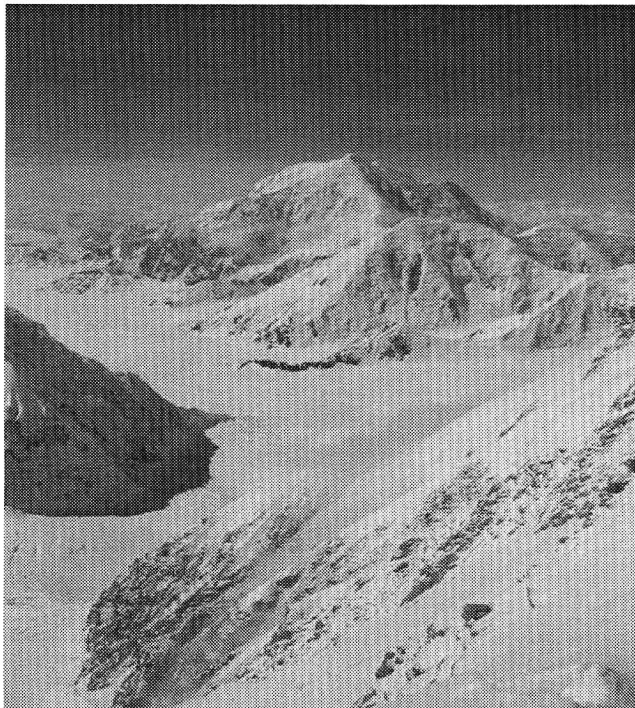
Mike follows on the first pitch of, *Never Say Never* (5.8-5.10c), as Joshua Baker belays from high above.

Denali: Failed attempt

By Jason Sandridge

On May 2nd, Eric (not yet a PATC-MS member) and I flew to Anchorage to begin our month-long expedition in the Denali National Park and Preserve, located in the Alaska Range. Our plan was to climb Denali's West Buttress, the "easiest" route up North America's highest peak. We flew into Denali Base Camp (7,200') on May 5th with 31 days of food and fuel with ambitious goal of "bagging" Denali in 21 days or less and then making an alpine-style push up Mt. Fouraker's Sultana Ridge, which although also the easiest route up this particular mountain, earns an Alaska Grade III by being more difficult and much more dangerous than the West Buttress.

(Continued on Page 15)



Mt. Fouraker and NE fork of the Kahiltna Glacier from the "edge of the world". the edge of the world is a 5000' cliff that borders the south side of the basin where the 14,000' camp is located.

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(Nelson-cont from front page)

The official notice from Stu Hammett on the website read like a terminal cancer diagnosis with a glimmer of hope at the end:

Regretfully, Nelson Rocks Preserve has announced that it is closed to rock climbing until further notice.

Several factors influenced this decision. Since the Preserve was formally opened for climbing access in 1998, there have been a number of serious accidents at NRP involving roped climbing parties. Fortunately, none of these were fatal, but some climbers have suffered permanent disabilities, and full-on rescues have been required, involving large numbers of volunteer rescuers, both squad members and individual climbers.

Meanwhile, climber traffic has been increasing dramatically, doubling between the second quarter of '04 and this year. Obviously, this further increases both the risk of serious mishaps, and the potential for environmental impacts. During the period of closure, NRP intends to conduct an internal assessment of these impacts and issues. Input from the public is welcome and may be directed to NRP at P.O. Box 93, Riverton, WV 26814, tel. 304-567-3169, fax 304-567-3244.

Exceptions will be considered for groups organized by established outdoor clubs, schools, etc. If you feel your group may qualify or have questions about this policy, please don't hesitate to contact NRP. Any such exceptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis and in NRP's sole discretion.

So, after a historic but brief closure, our heroes, the early rising, motivated, Nelson Rockers, thumbed their noses at weather reports, and soaring gas prices to make the 3-hour pilgrimage for a picture perfect, absolutely private day of climbing at Nelson Rocks Preserve.

We were on the rock before 1000. Ian, Judy and Joe blasted off for area 51. Julia and Brian made short work of the south end. The remaining climbing force began at the 007 wall.

Kurt, Joshua and Jennifer (Kat), did the 3s a crowd thing on ez-wider's 2 pitches, and made very short work of it. Peta and Vincent followed directly behind them, with Vincent leading the first pitch and Peta the second.

Kat did a mock lead of *Diamonds are forever* (5.6-5.8), and then lead it outright! Vincent lead *Disney channel* in order to set up a top rope for *Never Say Never*. The remainder of the day was spent climbing variations of *Snake oil* (5.7) and *Sticky Fingers* (5.7), trading leads and ridiculing each other just for fun!

Near epic of the day. At 3:30, our forward scouts

depart for *Sorry Howard* (5.9), a beautiful 14 bolt, 165 foot route 2/3rds the way up the stairmaster towards the summits of the east and west fins on the Upper Corridor west. "Don't leave without me", were the last words. 4 1/2 hours

later there is no sign of our climbers. The leader at the time made it up 10 bolts and ran out of gas but didn't have enough rope to lower since the route was so long. They had to lower and clip and lower etc until they had enough rope to switch leads and finish the route. Judy Joe and Ian returned to the south end for some leads.

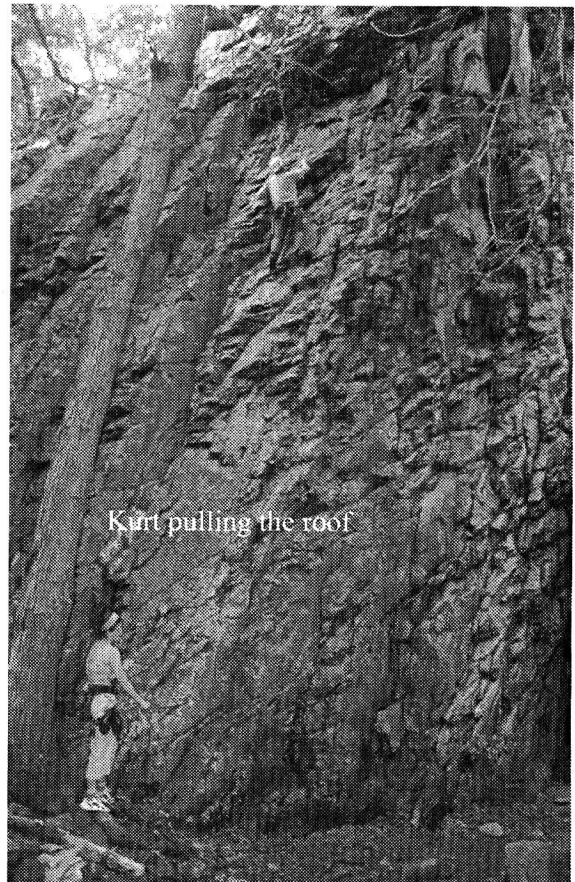
Kurt finished the day by climbing a 5.8 ramp on the south end and pulling the roof in typical conan climbing style!

All in all, an utterly fantastic and historic return to Nelson Rocks for the Potomac Mountain Club.

®



Judy on Lead



Kurt pulling the roof

Buzzard Rocks Trip report

By Robert Graver

Others please feel free to correct my rapidly deteriorating memory and fill in the blanks.

Everyone that took the chance and fought their way through the morning fog to Buzzard Rocks on SUN was rewarded with a stellar day of fun climbing and wonderful weather - definitely the coolest it's been in a while.

Myself, my son Jeff, a friend Mark as well as Nancy, Taylor, Rose, Alex, and Johanssen all made the journey to the Front Royal highlands.

My son, Mark, and I headed out about 0700 after a party at the house SAT night that raged (this is a very relative term for a fat old guy) into the wee hours of SUN morning and everyone showed up right on time at the trailhead. After sorting and dividing gear and water for the approach we headed up about 0930 and were climbing sometime after 1000.

Nancy joined Mark, Jeff, and I at the Three Amigos are while Taylor, Alex, and Johanssen headed to the slabs to the right. I believe they lead Raising Arizona, Failure to Communicate and the other slab routes between there and Melungian Brotherhood. Mark lead and Jeff Nancy, and I followed Three Amigos and then I lead Unknown Slab. Rose joined us Unknown and while Mark belayed her there Jeff, Nancy, and I moved right. I lead Pulp Friction and then belayed the other three up while I enjoyed the view and slight breeze wafting across the top of the Fort Valley. We were force to climb the easier start of this route as the crux first 12 feet or so were still dewy, slimy, and unclimbable. I tried everything from rubbing and chalking to cursing and begging the indistinct bulges and seem that serve as holds on this section - all to no avail. This was the only section we came across all day that was adversely affected by the wet weather of the previous day.

The rest of the route was perfect and we still had the small blank crux section up high to keep the challenge up. After everyone made it up to my belay and lowered I rapped down the routes just to the right. We pulled the ropes and took turns leading and racing each other (not really) up Raising Arizona, Failure to Communicate, and Failure... Right. Taylor joined us here for a while and then went to join Alex and Johansson and lead Melungian. He promised to join us later at Anonymous Flake.

Nancy headed home, our group gathered our stuff, and headed to the Anonymous Flake area to close out the day. We rigged an anchor and I rapped the route on double ropes while the rest of the group opted for the thrash down to the right. I've lead AF a couple times before but thought that given my stamina and the state of my hangover from the previous evening, I wanted to have the option of NOT LEADING it this day. I opted to TR the route and was VERY glad I did. This is a great route but I almost puke from the run out every time I lead it. I DEFINITELY would have painting the rock on SUN! I climbed AF and also the 20 Feet Right route. This is the first I've climbed 20 FR. This is a GREAT route but there's no way I would lead it on the ONE rusted bolt it offers as pro. Maybe we can talk someone into upgrading (not adding more) this and the bolt on AF. The bolts on both of these routes are wonderfully placed (easy run outs below and challenging gear placements above) but definitely need to be whipper-proofed.

Taylor linked back up with us and after everyone enjoyed a turn on AF. Afterwards Mark, Jeff, Rose, and I broke down and headed home while Taylor went in search of the others and a couple more routes before heading off to the flatlands of Ohio.

Thanks to everyone that turned out!

Bob

Proposal for the Creation of a PATC Climbing Guide Book Database

Marty Comiskey

Last month, one of our PATC members (Simon Carr) put on the web bulletin board a solicitation for climbing guide books to Devil's Tower, WY and the Needles, SD. It was a once in a lifetime visit to this area, and he was looking for information, beta, etc. I was able to help him out by loaning him two of my books for that area. As we only had three days between his bulletin board posting and his departure date, Simon and I had some difficulty in arranging a convenient time to make the book transfer.

This got me to thinking - "Wouldn't it be nice to have a list of all the PATC member's various climbing books?"

I am not proposing that PATC start a lending library. Rather, instead this would be a database of climbing guide books owned by PATC members who would be willing to share &/or loan their book(s) to other members (for a brief time) so they could investigate, plan and prepare for upcoming climbing trips.

Since this is my proposal, I am also offering my services to maintain and update this database. I have had conversations with several other PATC members and they are enthusiastic and have encouraged me to do this.

Of course this whole project could go down in flames the first time a book borrower returns a book late or damaged or ultimately fails to return the book. The success of this database/loan proposal hinges on the maturity and responsibility of the borrower to return the book in its original state and in a timely manner.

Member's who would be willing to share/loan their books should send a list of their guide books to me at comiskey@erols.com in the following TEXT FILE format:

State	for example: WY
Climbing Location	Devils Tower
Guide book Title	Devils Tower National Monument
Publisher/Author/Date of publication	Devils Assoc./ Guilmette/ 1995
PATC member's name	Marty Comiskey
PATC member's phone number	703-437-7425
PATC member's e-mail	comiskey@erols.com

I have already written a very simple database (it is really a spreadsheet using Microsoft Excel) and have forwarded a copy of it to Vincent for viewing purposes on the PATC web site.

PATC members interested in looking at a book should contact the owner directly, either by phone or by e-mail. I imagine we could share/loan/pass along the book(s) at monthly meetings, or at any of the many climbing outings that we attend, or at the convenience of the individuals (at work or the evening, etc.)

Obviously, to make this program work we need book lenders as well as borrowers, so the more people who make their personal libraries available the better.

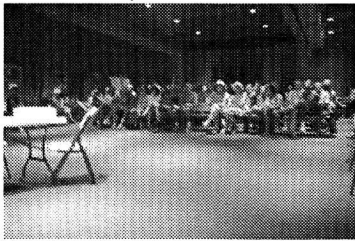
Let me know what you think and if interested send me a list of your guide books. Thanks.
Climb hard and climb safe!

General Management Plan Ripples local Climbing Community: Chilly Reception

Not often has the local climbing community faced a crisis as the proposed cliff closures at Great Falls National Park and demonstrated a solidarity by networking to call an emergency meeting at the Patagonia Store in Georgetown. Assembled representatives of the Potomac Mountain Club, American Alpine Club, Access Club, She Climbs, Earth Treks, Sport Rock, Virginia Climbers, John C. Christian and others of the climbing community addressed the concerns ACC chairman, Simon Carr presented to the group. Instead of a free-for-all as we feared, the climbers bore the marks of sophistication, responsibility and coolheadedness. The coalition agreed on points in common: more information on the areas of endangered species affected by climbers, genus and species, clarification on language about bolting, cliff closures and the unanimous objection to climbing permits. The group, who is well connect, funded and well read, will address the concerns at the Public Hearing at Great Falls September 17.

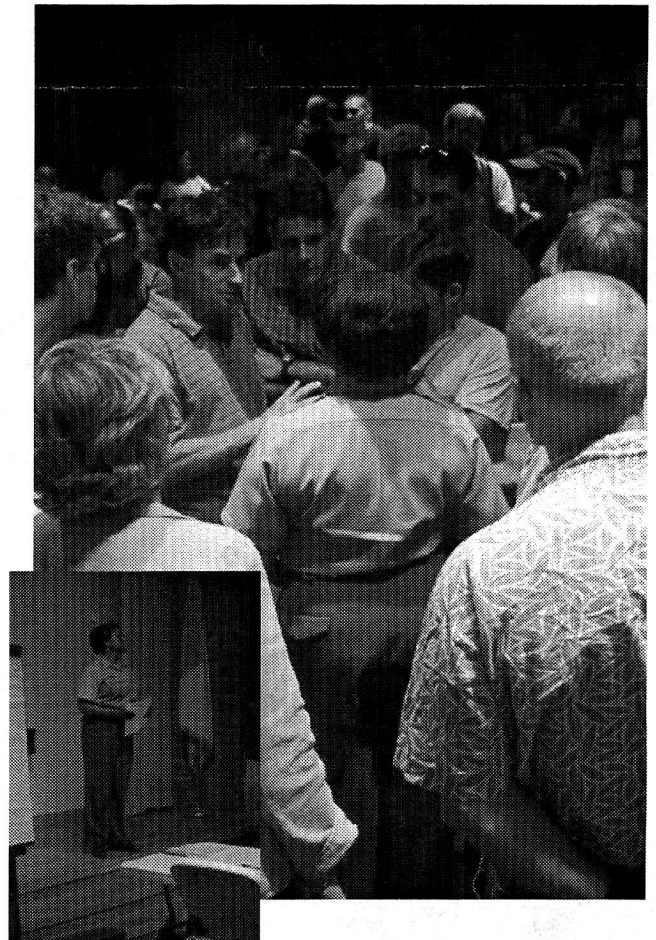


"There is no question conservation of our recreational resource is important, but not many are in favor of trading bolts for cliffs."



September 17th meeting

Great Falls National Park hosted a public hearing to entertain the issues addressed in the General Management Plan which impacts many users of the Park other than climbers. The Public Hearing September 17th at the Great falls National Park's Visitors Center will go down as a bonafide success for the newly banded Climbing Coalition of Greater Washington D.C.. With 3 weeks in which to organize a unified response to the NPS General Management Plan, and despite STEALTHY Publicity, 105 citizens recognized their recreational priorities that day to attend and voice their concerns. The Park Superintendent publicly agreed to a private meeting with key members of the climbing coalition to receive our official position of cooperation and ensure a level of participation in the Climbing Management Plan.



Submitting Articles

- Keep articles under 2000 words-short and sweet
- Most picture formats will work
- Most text documents will work.
- Send pictures separately and please do not imbed pictures in text documents; it makes for formatting nightmares.
- Snail Mail : UpRope NewsLetter, PO BOX 16377, Alexandria, VA 22302

How to join the Potomac Mountain Club

1. Down Load membership form from the following website:
2. http://www.patc.net/chapters/mtn_sect/join.html
3. , mail in \$15.
4. Sign up for the LISTSERVER at the following:
5. http://www.patc.net/chapters/mtn_sect/listserv.html
6. Go climbing

ROCKFALL

- New Vice Chair
- Welcome New Members
- Club directory out soon
- Club Calendar on-line
- Submit NPS comment on Great Falls-See website
- **OCTOBER MEETING Agenda: Slide Show: Climbing in Peru-Dave Raboy; Great Falls GMP Update.**

2005 MS CLUB OFFICIALS

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North Carolina Trip Report

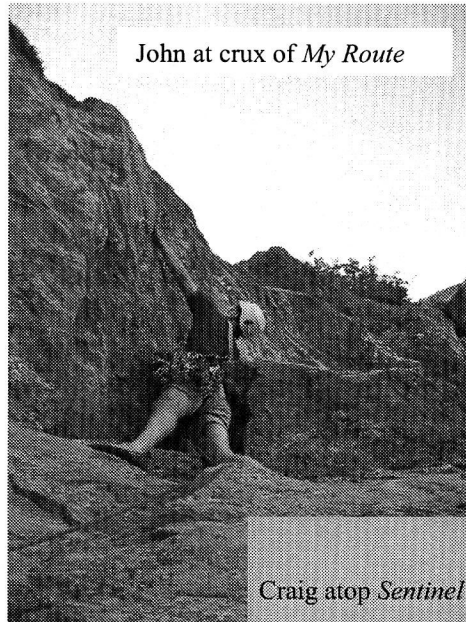
What does North Carolina offer to climbers from the DC area that the Gunks doesn't have? Well, besides a lack of traffic, excellent camping opportunities, and no crowds...not much. The Gunks is no doubt a fantastic climber's destination, but North Carolina offers an alternative worth experiencing at least once. Doug Halonen, Craig Yamaoka, Reed Bumgartner, and myself sampled the areas near Table Rock over Labor Day weekend and enjoyed a terrific trip.

The Climbing. After driving most of the way Thursday night, Craig and myself headed to Moore's Wall Friday morning. It broke up the drive to the Table Rock area, and was a nice intro to NC rock. We think we were the only ones there on a Friday before Labor Day weekend. With no one around, it took us a while to figure out where the *Sentinel Buttress* route was. A nice 2-pitch 5.5, it finishes with a wonderful view of the valley below. Adjacent to this climb is an area classic 5.7, *Zoo View*. IF you know where you are going, and have a high clearance vehicle, it's about a 15 minute approach from the car. You can also enter via the Hanging Rock State Park trail system, but we elected to save time and take advantage of Craig's Jeep (I believe we christened the 4WD on this trip...whoo-hooo!).

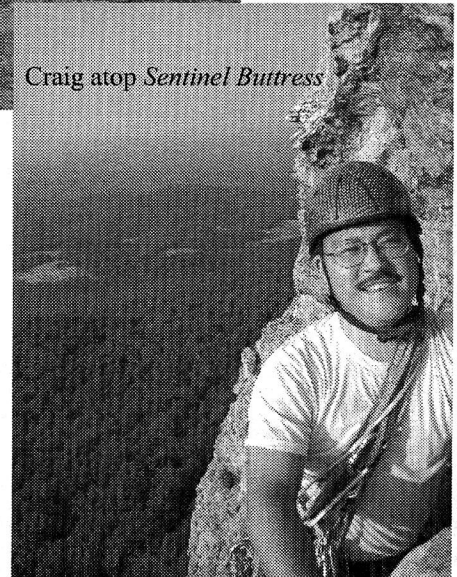
Saturday Craig and I headed to Table Rock and linked 6 pitches to the top. We started on a three pitch 5.4 *Jim Dandy* and then finished on a three pitch 5.6 *My Route*. Highly recommend both. The crux on the second pitch of *My Route* is memorable. The routes at Table Rock are mostly bolted, but you may want to supplement with pro. Plan on placing gear for cruxes and long run-outs between bolts. Most of the bolts I saw looked decent. We met Doug and Reed on *My Route* and then headed to Spears BBQ to cap off the day.

Sunday we braved the long approach and remoteness of Linville Gorge. The parking is the same as for Table Rock, but you head in the opposite direction from the Table Rock climbs, following the ridge for maybe 45 minutes. The ridge trail is in excellent condition and relatively flat. After following the ridge you take a trail to the right and head down for about 15 minutes to the descent gulley proper. Caution: I highly suggest you go with someone who knows how to find the trail that leads from the main ridge trail to the descent gulley. The guidebooks I've read are misleading. We were fortunate to run into a couple heading over to climb the Daddy and got beta from them. If you're going to find the route yourself, the GPS coordinates marking the trail that leads to the descent gulley are.

Continued on page (17)



John at crux of *My Route*



Craig atop *Sentinel Buttress*

Annual Adopt-A-Crag at Great Falls National Park: Working success

Thomson Ling

On September 10th 2005, a large group of climbers from all over the DC area came together to give back to Great Falls Park, VA. Thank you to those of you who made Adopt-A-Crag Day at Great Falls Park, VA such an incredible success. It's wonderful to know that the DC area has such a strong climbing community. It never ceases to amaze me how much energy and enthusiasm our local climbing community has. Below is some information about Adopt-A-Crag at Great Falls Park, VA:

Attendees

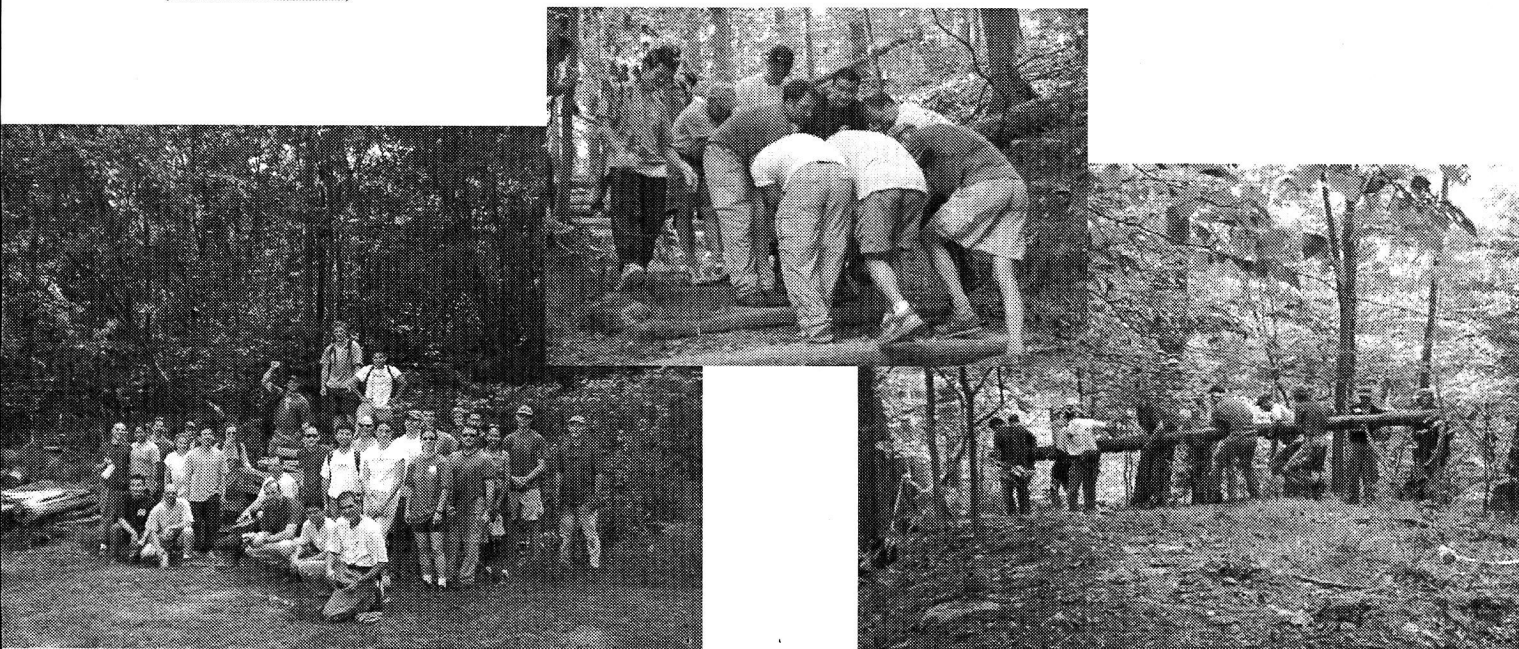
This years event was attended by approximately 46 volunteers representing many affiliations. Climbers indicated their affiliations (see percentages) and groups represented at Adopt-A-Crag 2005 include (I think I got them all):

- 27% - The Access Fund (www.accessfund.org)
- 14% - SheClimbs of DC (www.sheclimbs.org)
- 24% - PATC Mountaineering Section (http://www.patc.net/chapters/mtn_sect/)
- 11% - VA Climber (<http://www.VaClimber.com>)
- 9% - American Alpine Club, Blue Ridge Section (<http://brs.alpineclub.org>)
- 16% - DC Outdoor Rock Climbing, Yahoo Group (<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/dcoutdoorrockclimbing/>)
- 4% - Quantico Orienteering Club
- 5% - Earthtreks (www.earthtreksclimbing.com)
- 22% - Sportrock (www.sportrock.com)
- 40% - REI (www.rei.com)



Ranger Lindsey addresses the volunteers before a day of work on the trails at GFNP.

"This is the most Gung-ho group we had so far, Hands down", Ranger Peter Lindsey says.

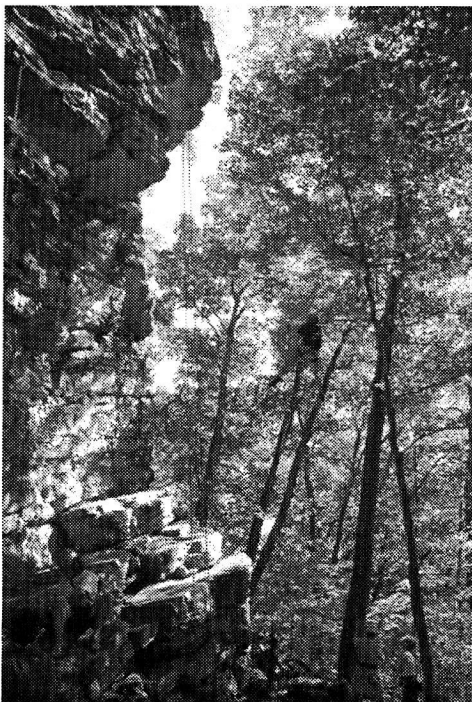


Talking Headwall a well kept secret

We have such a wonderful group of people in our climbing club. Every time we all get together to climb we all just mesh. I notice even the newest climbers to our group are relaxed and play well with everyone, Thanks to everyone for coming and Danny for grilling!

We all met at 0800, all hopped up on Starbucks. We soon piled in and roared off into the west and an hour later we met up again. The climbing area is in a beautiful location right on the highway. From the parking lot you walk back EAST and around the BLIND bend in the road to the trail up the hill. Poof you are there. At one time there were 10 ropes set up and climbers were pulling roofs and everyone sailed through the air when they popped. I would have climbed all day. There are sport routes and trad stuff. ALL accessible for TR. Beautiful Bolted anchors with rap rings- ya gotta love that....anyway....this place is definitely someplace we want to go to regularly.

http://www.patc.net/chapters/mtn_sect/THW.htm



The Gunks Labor Day 2005 by Rob Graver

What a spectacular trip! The weather was perfect (sunshine with daily high temps in the low 80s) and we spent our days touring some moderate classics.

FRI: *Easy O* (5.2) - Eric led the first pitch and Bob the second.

***Horseman* (5.5)** - Bob led and combined both pitches into one (requires a 60m rope and is definitely a recommended option - especially if climbing in group of three as we were) and Eric and Jeff followed this Uberfall classic.

***Laurel* (5.7+)** - Bob led this fun single pitch and Jeff and Eric TR'd it. ***City Lights* (5.7+)** - Bob led and Eric styled thru the funky start of this challenging and technical face climb.

SAT: *Disneyland* (5.6-) - Bob led and Jeff followed both pitches. Jeff's toughest multi-pitch route to date (this was only his third day and, as I'm sure you can tell, Dad is pretty proud). He really enjoyed (nod, nod, wink, wink) the long hand traverse to the overhang on the second pitch of this one but pulled it off cleanly.

***Bunny* (5.6)** - Bob led and Jeff followed.

***Rhododendron* (5.6)** - Bob led and Jeff followed.

***Easy O* (5.2)** - Jay led the first pitch and Eric led the second to complete leads of that entire route over the course of the trip.

***Frog's Head* (5.6-)** - Jay led up to the bulge on the first pitch and down climbed. Eric led to the high point, cleaned gear and down climbed. This was a great display of judgment and self-rescue.

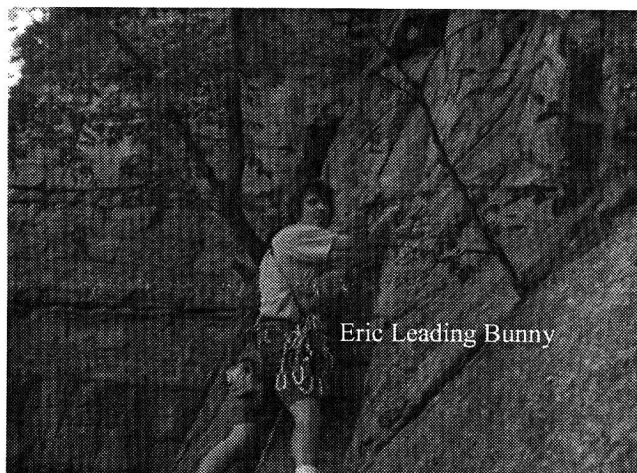
Jay headed home SAT evening while Eric, Jeff, and Bob enjoyed the outstanding food and fine local brews (9 different ones) at the Gilded Otter. Sadly, none of the other club members decided to take me up on my "first round" offer to join us that evening.

SUN: Jeff decided to sleep in while Eric and Bob headed to the Trapps at sun-up for one more MEGA-

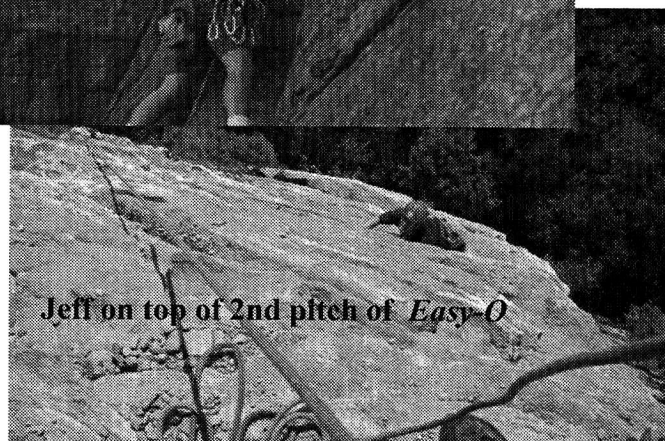
Classic before hitting the road.

Psycho-Exposure (5.6): Bob led the short first pitch of High Exposure, Eric led from there to the GT Ledge up the first pitch of Psychedelic (a wonderfully fun 5.5 corner), and Bob led the final pitch of High E. The wide-eyed look on Eric's face and his "I'm glad you led that" confirmed that this 5.4/5.5 section of the route (if you discount the first move off the GT) had turned out to be the highlight of the trip that I hoped it would be.

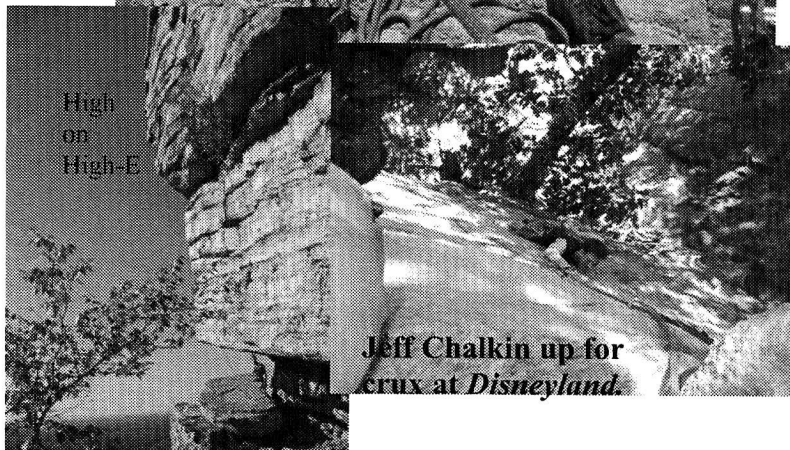
We rapped, woke Jeff, sorted gear, and after a quick lunch headed south and enjoyed a pleasant trip thru the megalopolis.



Eric Leading Bunny



Jeff on top of 2nd pitch of *Easy O*



High on High-E

Jeff Chalkin up for crux at *Disneyland*

High Points Continued

by Dave Green

Last year's installment announced my intention to climb the highest point in each of the 50 states. I even went so far as to join the Highpointers Club this year. For more information, see <http://www.highpointers.org>.

Last year's expedition was such a success that I planned another 6-week excursion for 2005. It was a full itinerary with not an hour to spare. Having had no trouble with my 1980 van last year, I tempted fate again – this time with food in mouse-proof containers.

I departed on July 1 in order to reach Illinois's highpoint on one of the 4 weekends that it is open each year. Fate caught up with me after a brief visit to the Pennsylvania 9/11 memorial as the van sputtered to a stop on the Ohio turnpike. I managed to get it to a shop and underway again, but I was behind schedule and too late for my Chicago dinner date.

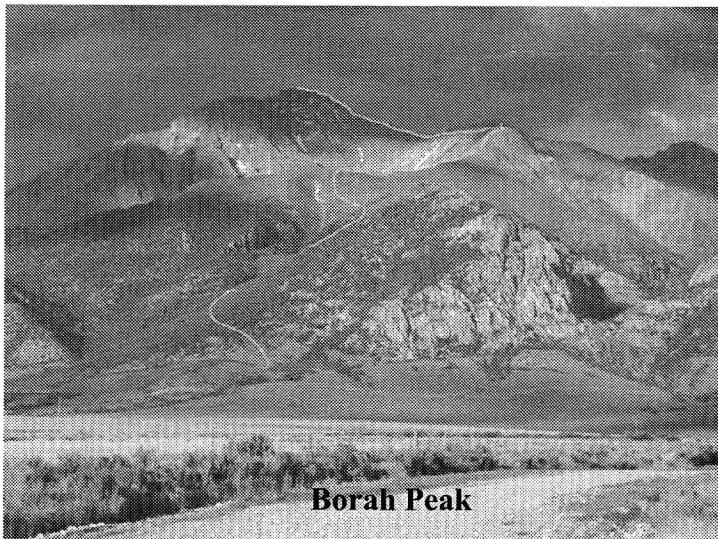
Over the next few days I did some sightseeing, a lot of driving, and summited the likes of Illinois's 1235-foot Charles Mound, Wisconsin's 1952-foot Timm's Hill, Michigan's 1979-foot Mt. Arvon, and North Dakota's 3506-foot White Butte. The biggest challenge was finding these places. By the time I reached Great Falls, Montana, an awful noise was coming from the van's transmission in all but 3rd gear.



Chinese Wall in the Bob Marshall Wilderness

Determined not to allow a lot of noise to ruin my schedule, I picked Carol Parker up at the airport and proceeded to the Benchmark trailhead of the Bob Marshall Wilderness. The "Bob" is the largest wilderness area in the lower 48 states, so in 4 days we barely scratched the surface. We did visit the Chinese Wall, a 12-mile-long, 1000-foot limestone scarp forming the Continental Divide – lots of climbing there for rock hounds who don't mind a 20-mile approach. The wild flowers were spectacular and we had the place nearly all to ourselves.

After returning Carol to Great Falls, I made an unfortunate 100-mile (50 miles of which were on dirt road) return to Benchmark to retrieve some equipment left in the parking lot. Over the next couple of days I struggled to stay on schedule as I noisily ground my way through Helena, Grant-Kohrs Ranch, Butte, Virginia City, Bozeman, and finally to Idaho's 12,662-foot Borah Peak.



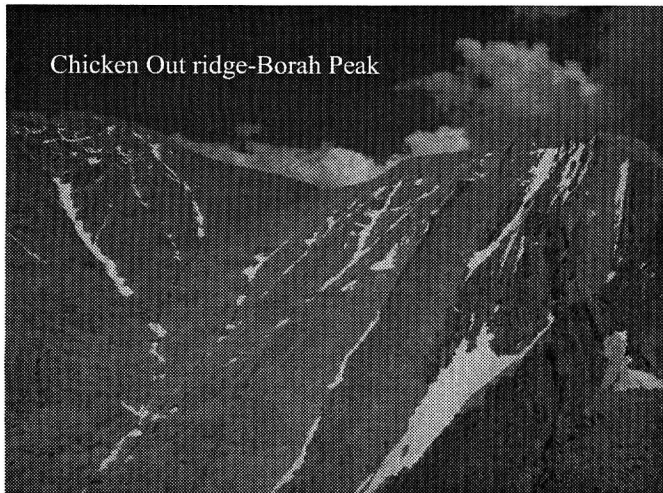
Borah Peak

Borah Peak is ranked the 6th most challenging state highpoint with 5,500 feet of elevation gain and notable obstacles such as Chicken Out Ridge and a steep snow couloir. Given my concern with exposure, I was apprehensive attempting this on my own. I arrived at the trailhead parking area/campsite at 11:30 PM and only managed a 7 AM start on July 13th. The first 1.5 miles of trail was steep and led to a ridge where the rest of route and summit were dramatically visible. There was an unusual vertical layer of brown rock in the otherwise gray rock mountain.

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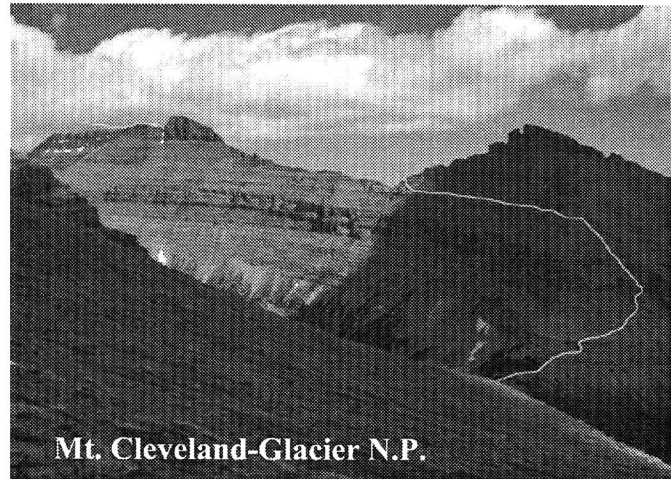
High Points (continued from p.11)

-The next 0.5 mile ascended a well defined trail on the ridge to about 11,300 feet. At this point (Chicken Out Ridge), the trail disappeared and the ridge became rock with precipitous drop offs on either side. For the next 0.5 mile, I traversed around and up this rock. There were always good hand holds where scrambling was required. At the end of the ridge there was a 15-foot down climb to the top of the snow couloir. A couple with a dog made it this far, but the dog refused to go farther. I was having doubts about the prudence of my proceeding on my own, but summit fever kept me going. I used an ice ax and crampons to cross the couloir even though the snow surface was soft and there were tracks from others who had crossed before. On the other side, the trail was again well defined and it gradually ascended to the summit where there was an American flag flapping in the stiff breeze and a register to record my achievement. There were no afternoon thunderstorms and I made it back to the van via the same route by 6 PM.



Chicken Out ridge-Borah Peak

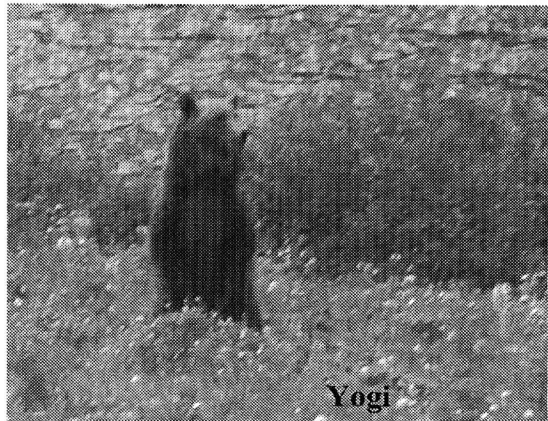
I continued noisily grinding my way to Craters of the Moon, Sun Valley, and Hell's Canyon on the border of Idaho and Oregon. I spent a day in the canyon rafting the Snake River and also enjoyed the jet boat ride out. Then it was onto Missoula and Glacier NP where my daughter was working at Lake McDonald Lodge. I gambled again and took the van over Going to the Sun Highway and on to Canada's Waterton Lakes Park for a day trip to Goat Haunt. The Canadian customs



Mt. Cleveland-Glacier N.P.

agents were so enamored of the van that they spent half an hour checking every nook and cranny.

When I returned to Kalispell to meet Chris Nolen, Mike Moran, and Warren Tracey, we left the van at a transmission shop. Scheduling a 9-day backpacking trip in Glacier NP is bureaucratic nightmare, but we managed to get the trip we wanted. I even allowed time for a rafting trip with my family to celebrate my daughter's birthday in the middle of the trip. Our itinerary included two mountaineering routes and an attempt at the summit of 10,466-foot Mt. Cleveland, the highest peak in the park. We quickly learned that any off trail route in the Glacier backcountry is a challenge and that J. Gordon Edwards' route descriptions in A Climber's Guide to Glacier NP are very understated. However, the Glacier backcountry is a land of incredible beauty – rugged high points, huge waterfalls, mountain lakes, glaciers, colorful wildflowers, and bountiful wildlife. We had numerous close encounters with mule deer, sheep, mountain goats, moose, and even a grizzly bear.

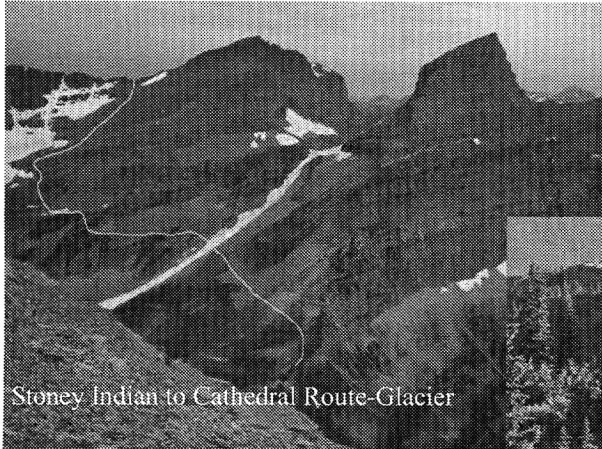


Yogi

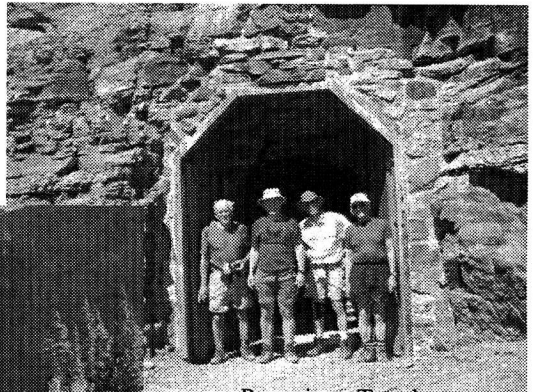
THE NEWSLETTER OF THE APPALACHIAN TRAIL CLUB MOUNTAINEERING SECTION

When we returned to Kalispell, I was relieved to find the van repaired and ready to go. It was a good thing, because I only had 3 days to make it to Atikokan, Ontario, to meet my Boy Scout troop for a 9-day canoe trip across Quetico Provincial Park and the Boundary Waters Canoe Area. This was different kind of wilderness experience. What it lacked in high points it made up for in pristine lakes, loons, eagles, and fishing. However I do prefer carrying a 35-pound pack in the mountains to paddling and carrying canoes and 100-pound Duluth packs over portage trails. The person shuttling my van to Virginia, Minnesota, made it to within a quarter mile of the rendezvous before the van died in a busy intersection. It had to be towed, but this time the problem was only a bad battery.

Before leaving Minnesota, I climbed one more state high point – 2301-foot Eagle Mountain. That makes 37 with only Nevada, Texas, and the southeastern states to go. I think I can make it, but I'm not sure about my van!



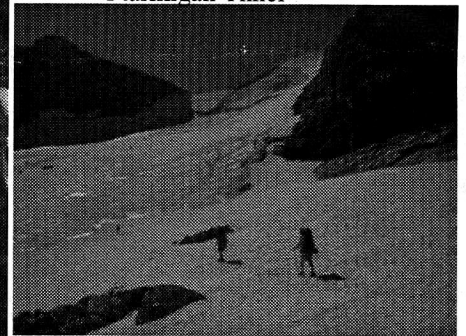
Stoney Indian to Cathedral Route-Glacier



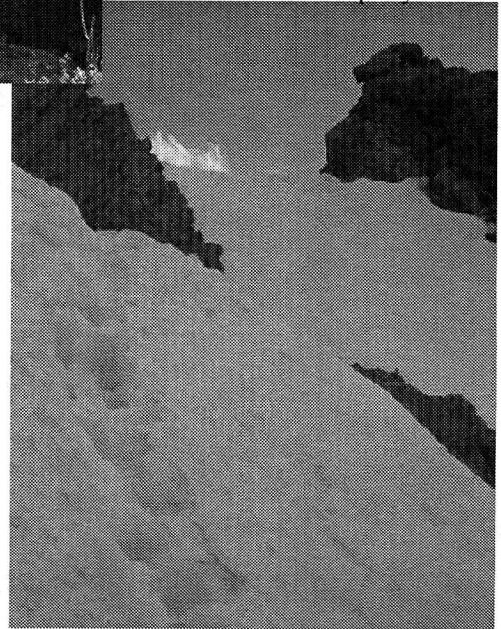
Ptarmigan Tnnel



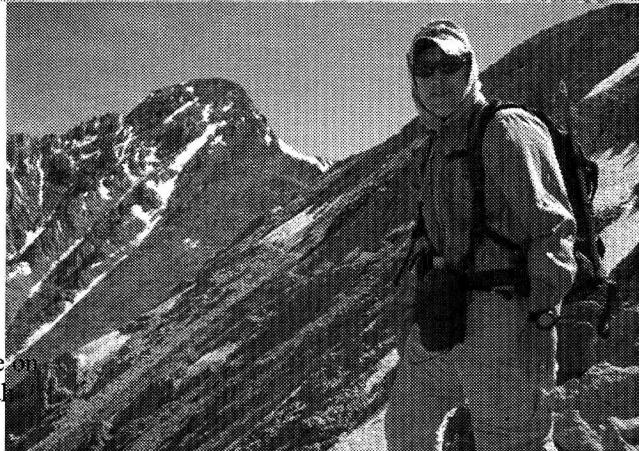
Bullwinkle



Sperry Glacier



Borah Snow Couloir



Dave on Borah



Movie Check out List

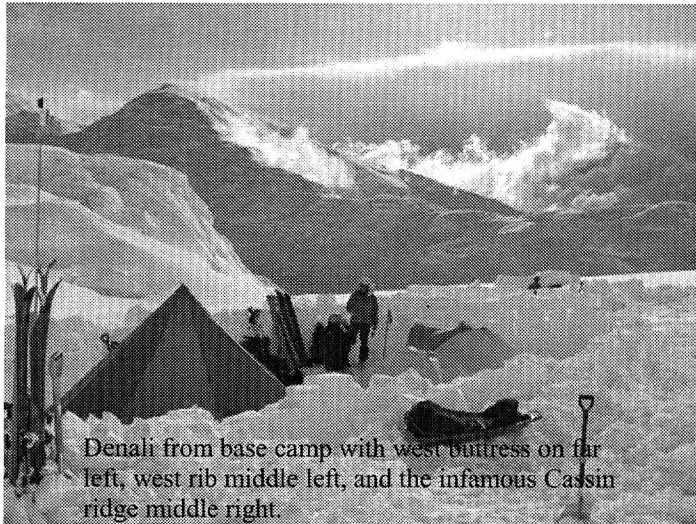
The PMC has the following movies on DVD for club members to check out on an honor system at the monthly club meeting. The way it works is you sign out with the club secretary excom-peeps and you are free to go! ENJOY these Classics!

- Alpine Ice, Jeff Lowe's climbing techniques, Instructional video, 170 min.
- Avoiding The Touch Self Rescue Pt1, Instructional video.
- Cliffhanger, Movie.
- Climbing Fast, Instructional video.
- El Capitan, 60 min.
- Hard Grit, Climbing in Britain, 80 min.
- K2 The Ultimate High, Movie.
- Masters of Stone III.
- Rock Climbing Skills, Instructional video.
- Stay Alive, a guide to survival in mountainous areas, Instructional video, 90 min.
- Southern Faces, Climbing in New Zealand, 90 min.
- Training To Rock Climb, Instructional video, 37 min.
- Touching The Void, Movie, 1hr. 47 min.
- Up Rope, PATC Instructional video.
- Uncommon Ground, Northeastern climbing, 50 min.
- Vertical Limit, Movie.
- Vertical Rope Skills, Instructional video, 70 min.
- The Eiger Sanction, Movie, 129 min.
- The Video Guide to Aid Climbing, Instructional video, 75 min.
- The Video Guide to Knots, Instructional video, 50 min.
- Waterfall Ice, Jeff Lowe's climbing techniques: Instructional video, 180 min.

Denali, (continued from Cover)

-Denali is 20,320' Fouraker is "only" 17,400'. After acclimatizing on Denali for three weeks, we (foolishly) anticipated a 4-day climb to the summit of Mt. Fouraker.

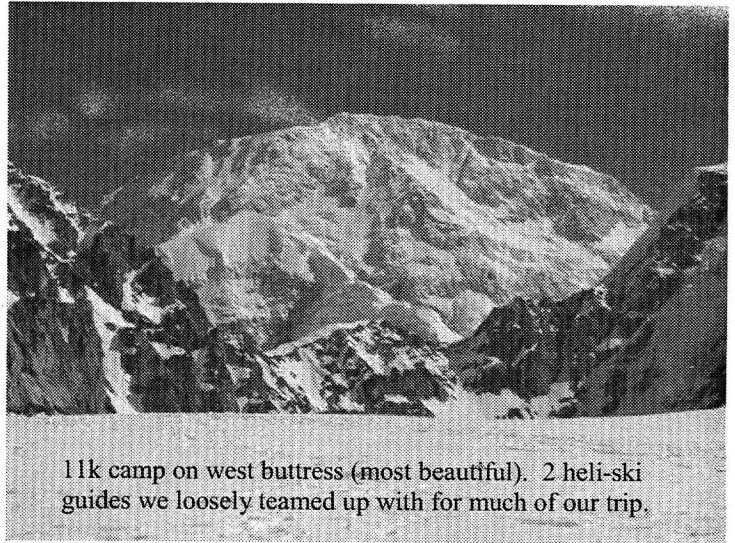
For those of you who are not familiar with climbing on Denali, you might not even call it climbing. Although temps are colder than the summit of Everest, 1500 people attempt Denali annually in a two and a half month climbing season. "Climbing" the West Buttress is more a lesson in endurance and cold weather survival than climbing. All but a small handful of the "climbers" are on the West Buttress Route, making is an international party scene choked with guided clients and amateurs. The National Park Service maintains a permanent presence at the advanced base camp at 14,000, and no less than three physicians were on patrol while I was there. Denali Base Camp and the 14,000' camp can have more than 100 climbers on any given day during the peak season.



Denali from base camp with west buttress on far left, west rib middle left, and the infamous Cassin ridge middle right.

After a day of crevasse rescue practice at Base Camp, we set out on our climb with 150 pounds of gear each, including 2 gallons of white gas and 28 days of food. Most people double-carry up to 14,000', which entails carrying all of your non-essential gear and extra food to the next elevation, returning to your camp at the lower elevation, and moving camp up to your cache the following day, carrying a backpack and hauling sleds on the Kahiltna Glacier. This way, you climb the entire lower mountain twice (good for acclimatization, bad for morale). Although we followed

this strategy for most of the mountain, we decided to "single-carry" to Camp I (7,800'). Although this move involved a relatively small elevation gain, carrying/dragging 150 pounds each for more than five miles



11k camp on west buttress (most beautiful). 2 heli-ski guides we loosely teamed up with for much of our trip.

proved to be much more difficult than we expected and it took almost eight hours. Despite being tired and dehydrated, we recovered well and, thanks to good weather, reached 14,000' in only one week (a very respectable time for anyone other than Mark Twight).

That is where our luck and Denali's kindness ceased. We spent a total of 10 nights at 14,000' waiting for an appropriate weather window to open up and allow us to push on to the summit. We spent storm days playing hacky-sack volleyball (a brutal sport not yet recognized by the Olympics) and roaming the camp looking for a good conversation. The one good thing about constant low pressure systems is that the cloud cover kept things relatively warm for early season on Denali; it never dropped below -25 the entire time we were there.

We did make it to the High Camp at 17,000', but had to retreat when a storm blew in. Altitude illness (minor), a foot injury, and a withering morale from our stagnated progress started to wear on us. After three weeks, we decided that is was time to head home. But Denali decided to make even our retreat difficult. We had planned on leaving 14,000' at midnight and pushing all night to arrive at Base Camp by mid-morning.

(Continued on Page 16)

Denali, (Continued from page 15.)

Unfortunately, another storm blew in and we had to bivy in Kahiltna Pass, a section of the Kahiltna Glacier at 10,000' known for high winds and horrible whiteout conditions. We hiked out in a total whiteout the next morning and arrived at Base Camp at 5pm.

Of course, no planes were flying, so Eric pitched out tent while I dug up our Base Camp cache which included, among other, less important items, a fifth of whiskey. That night, there was a raging party at Base Camp (led by an Alpine Ascents guided team with 6 Japanese clients who could not speak English but had cached about a gallon of whiskey each). Since the low at Base Camp was a balmy +15, we stayed out into the late hours lamenting our failure to climb Denali's "easiest" route. The next morning brought the most beautiful weather we had experienced on the mountain and Denali mocked us from 18 miles away. This was my second unsuccessful attempt on Denali.

Although we didn't make it to the summit, Eric and I had a great time in Alaska and will go back again to attempt to climb North America's highest peak. I do not plan on returning next season, unless I am accepted as a volunteer paramedic on a NPS Ranger Patrol enjoying heated tents and bacon, eggs, and hash brown every morning at 14,000'. Now that's REAL climbing.



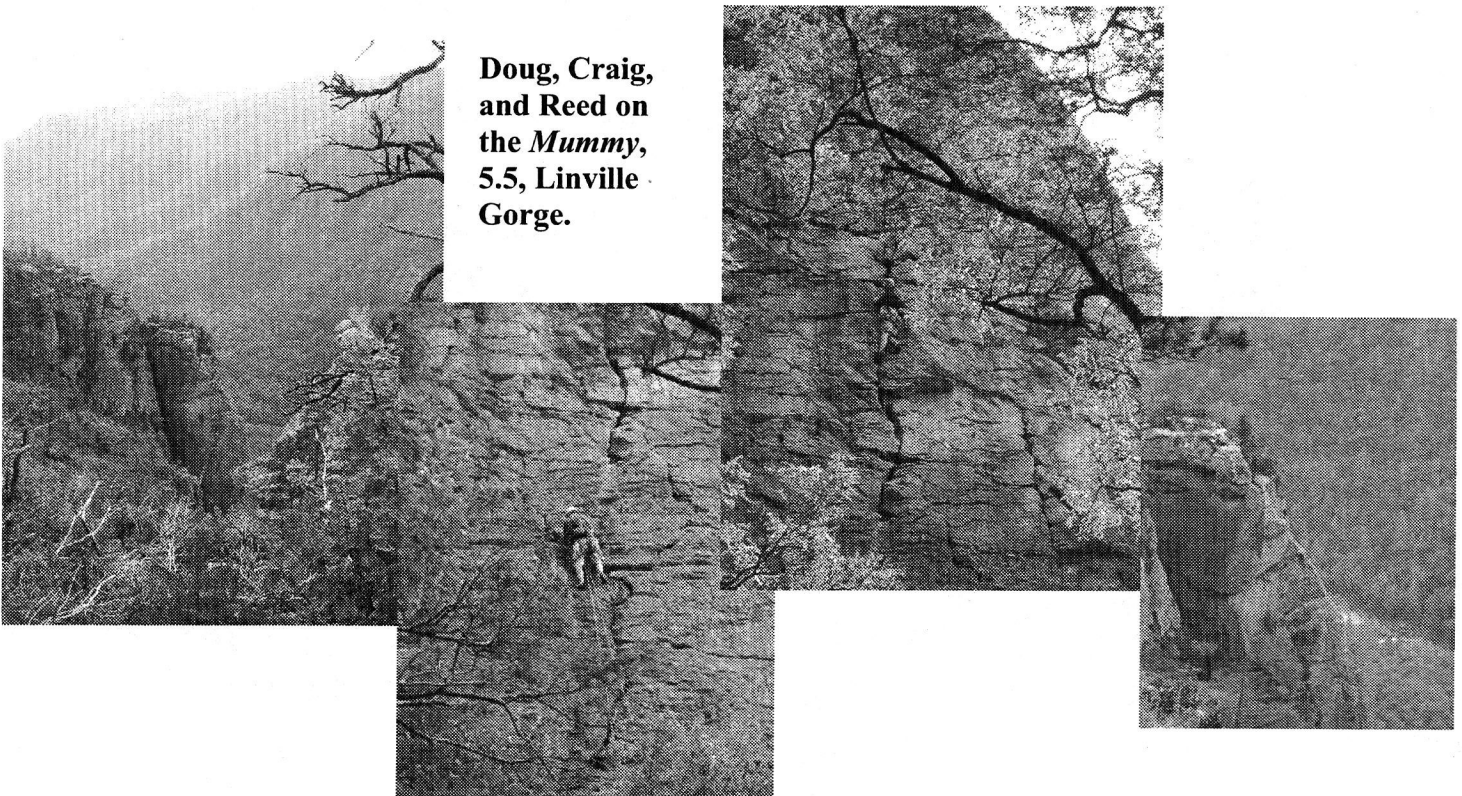
Hackysack volleyball 14000'. yep...me on my ass! minor injuries only which didn't really matter since we weren't going anywhere anytime soon.

North Carolina, (continued from page 7)

It took around 15 minutes for us to reach the top of the descent gulley. We dropped our packs, gathered what minimal stuff we needed for the climb, and descended another 45 minutes to the base of the *Mummy*, 5.5. It was difficult for us to know we were at the start of the *Mummy*. A climber confirmed our position later. Here's a clue that may help to locate the base of the climb. The start is in an area free of brush and there is a tree that lines up with the route. The tree has 'M4' and 'M2' carved into the side of the tree not facing the wall. 50' of slab climbing leads to a crack system. We think Doug combined pitches 1 and 2, using up nearly all of the 60 m rope length. Reed also led the climb, but stopped about 100' up at a small ledge. The second and third pitches are much easier than the first. It is an incredible setting. While the *Mummy* buttress is huge, the surrounding area dwarfs it. I elected not to lead this climb, and instead made myself useful (I think) by hiking back up the descent gulley and locating the trail off the top of the *Mummy* Buttress. Getting off the climb can be tricky for a first-timer, but there is a definite trail and it hugs the edge of the amphitheater rim, sometimes precariously. The hardest part is finding your way once you cross over from the *Mummy* buttress to the main amphitheater wall. You will come to a wall of rock, which I believe is the Reggae Wall. If you head climber's right along the base of the wall, then up a short gulley and back climber's left, you will be positioned at the top of the Reggae Wall. From here, finding the trail is relatively straightforward. The trail ends just above where the descent gulley (where you dropped your packs) starts. It was starting to get dark, and after another 20-30 minutes of uphill, we were back on the main trail. We hiked the main trail back to the cars in near-darkness and it took around an hour. Count on 45 minutes in daylight to get back to the parking lot. I really enjoyed the hike out. It was a beautiful night, with a nice breeze and deafening sounds of crickets and frogs.

(continued on Next Page)

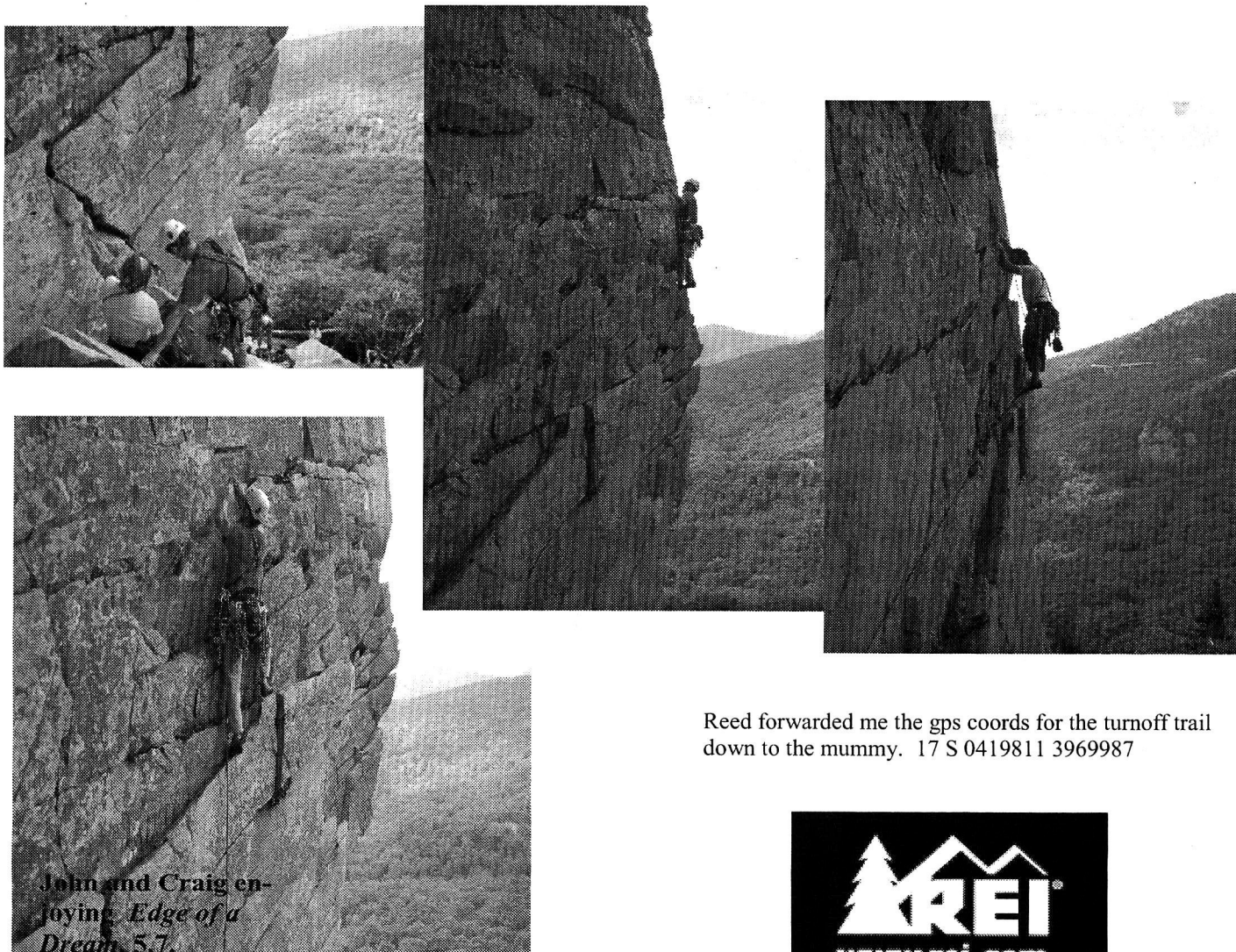
**Doug, Craig,
and Reed on
the *Mummy*,
5.5, Linville
Gorge.**



North Carolina, Continued from page 17)

Monday, Doug, Craig, and myself headed to Shiprock on the Blue Ridge Parkway. Awesome setting and only about a 15 minute approach. With some encouragement from Doug, I did my first trad 5.7 lead, *The Edge of a Dream*. I highly recommend this one. We found the climbing excellent all weekend. Despite the classic nature of the routes we chose, we did not have to wait on other climbers.

Eats. Linville Falls. If you favor barbeque, Spears is a great stop to refill after a hard day climbing at Table Rock. For you aficionados, the pork is 'sliced' versus 'pulled'. They have other options on the menu and a decent selection of brews. I plan to try a rack of ribs next time I'm there. Getting back via headlamp after an epic day? This happened to our group coming off the *Mummy* and we ended up heading to Spruce Pine to hit Bojangles for a feast of chicken and biscuits. Something to keep in mind if you are looking for a restaurant open late. The only other option we had was Walmart...yes they have it all. There were some restaurants near a town called Little Switzerland that look worth checking out.



John and Craig enjoying *Edge of a Dream*, 5.7.

Reed forwarded me the gps coords for the turnoff trail down to the mummy. 17 S 0419811 3969987



North Carolina, (continued from page 18)

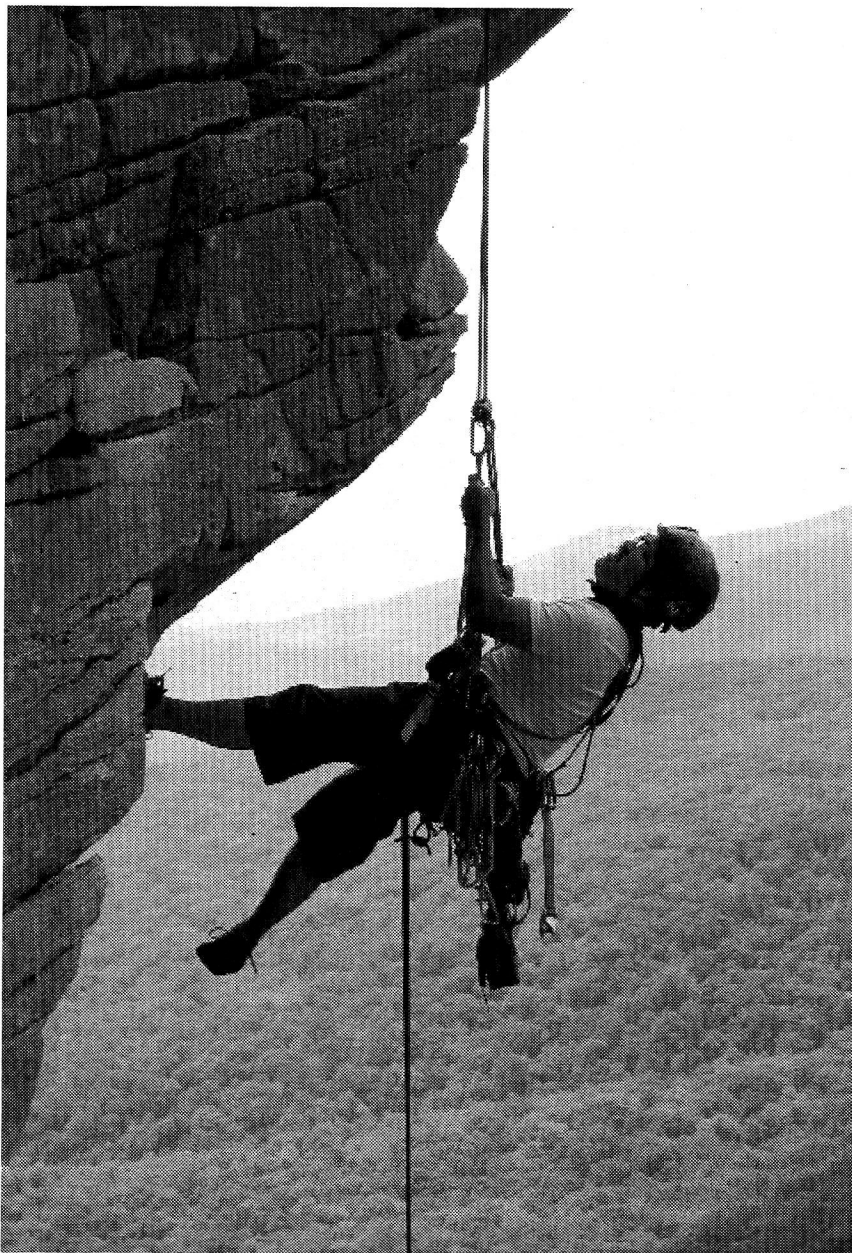
Camping. We stayed at a spot along the Blue Ridge Parkway called Bear's Den. Nice spot with plenty of great sites, family-style amenities, and those all-important hot showers. It's a bit of a drive to the Table Rock area and there is a short cut that you should look into if you are going to stay here. There is a section of the Parkway that is closed and navigation can be tricky. We obtained excellent directions from the folks at the Bear Den main office. The cost was \$30/nite, a bit steep. You can have five people per site, but most sites are good for two backpacker-style 2-man tents. We scoped out site B-5 as the best choice if you want to squeeze three or four tents on one site.

www.bear-den.com

We think a better option for camping may be found at Linville Falls. Caution: there is another town called Linville, so don't confuse the two. Linville Falls is much closer to Table Rock. There is a national park campground, Linville Falls that has a great atmosphere, but no showers. You can have 2 tents on a site and the norm is to have 4 people per site. Cost is only \$14/site plus a one-time charge of \$10 to reserve. There are no showers at this facility, but they suggest heading to the commercial campground in town and paying \$3 for a shower. Certain sites can be reserved. We were informed that sites 15 and 16 are the most popular, as they are near the river (another 'shower' possibility). The commercial campground is nearby in Linville Falls. We didn't scope it out, but with hot showers it looks like a nice possibility for a slightly higher cost.

Table Rock option. The 8-mile access road to Table Rock offers free camping on side pullouts. Sweet looking places to crash, but no running water. This could be a good choice for a small group of uber climbers looking to cook in camp and maximize their climbing hours, with no interest in showers.

We headed back, taking 221 through the town of Galax, to 77 North, to 81 North and into DC. Congestion was non-existent, but that may have been due to high gas prices.



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