



September 20, 2021

VOLUME 65, ISSUE 7

---

## What's New?

This issue of UpRope was edited by Jenna Schueler.

Here's the latest happenings -

The club instagram has been resurrected - follow us at @potomacmountainclub

Currently, we have about 300 active members and 200 inactive members whose memberships have expired or lapsed. The software that the club uses allows for a maximum of 500 contacts. I will soon be forced to start deleting inactive members so we can add new members to the group. If you are an inactive or lapsed member but you wish to keep your PATC-MS account, please renew your dues which you should do because we have a lot of cool events coming up this month!

PATC-MS is getting a new website sometime in the near future. Stay tuned for some big changes.

We have a new Member-at-Large! Thank you Jay Bishop for publishing our PATC-MS google calendar. See his bio after the "upcoming events" section.

Nicole Horvath, Member at Large, leads the ladies of PATC-MS in some post-climbing yoga. The club will continue to have events for those who identify as women or non-binary every month. The next one will be September 29th.



---

## Meeting Recap

The club had another highly successful meeting at Carderock on September 8th. Club members learned how to make tourniquets in the field, reviewed heat injuries, splinting, primary/secondary assessment, allergies, bites and stings. Thank you to our wonderful volunteers for sharing your time and expertise with the club. If you'd like to give a presentation, please contact (*email removed*).

Our next meeting will be at Rick's house on October 13th. We will have a cookout and a presentation from Garry Blevins, a guide at Seneca Rocks Climbing School.



---

# Mountaineering Section Carderock Restoration Project 1981-2012

**By John Gregory**

Carderock Recreation Area is a popular place for DC area locals to escape the city and enjoy nature. With the Potomac River to the south and the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal to the north, it offers stunning views on both

sides. People have been climbing on the rocks at Carderock since the 1920s. In fact, it is one of the oldest climbing areas on the East Coast. Members of the Mountaineering Section of PATC have been climbing there since 1937, when the Section was first established. In the decades that followed, the area experienced many environmental changes and members of PATC-MS have worked hard to conserve the area for future generations of climbers.

One particularly challenging time occurred in the winter of 1981, when the Potomac froze solid. The spring breakup tore soil and vegetation from the banks of the climbing area, essentially eliminating access to parts of the cliff and impacting about half of the cliff area. Members of the Mountaineering Section of PATC organized and signed an agreement with the National Park Service to restore the base of the cliffs.

The Baltimore & Ohio Railroad donated ties, a lumber yard provided material to build a boardwalk, DuPont donated landscaping fabric and the contractor building the second wave tank at the David Taylor Surface Warfare Center trucked in twenty tons of rock and soil. The Soil Conservation Service provided trees that would withstand flooding. Much of the original work is still in place, protecting this historic climbing area from further erosion. However, the work never truly stops.

Ongoing efforts will concentrate on creating artificial log jams to slow the current and trap silt from the flood waters. The only artificial material required is rebar. Cutting brush to maintain trails and relentless efforts to control graffiti continue. Conservation requires constant vigilance so that future climbers can continue to enjoy this area for decades to come.







---

## Upcoming Events

[Click here to sign up for an event!](#) See the website for details on each event.

### **Great Falls Top-Roping Trip**

Saturday October 2nd, 2021, 8:00 AM

Great Falls National Park, McLean, VA

### **Carderock First Wednesdays - Top Rope Climbing**

Wednesday, October 6th, 2021, 5:00 PM

Carderock Recreation Area, Billy Goat Trail C

### **Rappel and Anchor Cleaning Clinic**

Wednesday October 6th, 2021, 5:00 PM

Carderock Recreation Area

**Annapolis Rock Top-Roping and Trad Trip**

Sunday October 10th, 2021, 8:00 AM

Annapolis Rocks

**October Monthly Meeting**

Wednesday, October 13th, 6:30 - 8:30

Rick's house

**Buzzard Rocks Sport Climbing Trip**

Saturday October 16th, 2021, 8:00 AM

Buzzard Rocks Parking Area

**Seneca Chili Cook-off**

Friday, October 15th- Saturday October 17th

Seneca Rocks, WV

**Ladies' Climbing Meetup**

Saturday, October 30th

Sugarloaf Mountain

---

## New Member At Large: Jay Bishop

I started climbing nearly 20 years ago, although it wasn't as consistent as I'd have preferred. I got my first taste of climbing in high school during a Boy Scout outing to Paul's Steele in South Central Pennsylvania. While it wasn't a massive hit with all the scouts, me and a few friends took to it immediately and found ourselves frequenting the Climbnasium in Mechanicsburg, PA and Earth Treks in Columbia, MD.

I shipped out for Army basic training in the Fall of 2003. I deployed twice to Iraq twice (in 2004 and again in 2007) as a photojournalist and public affairs specialist. Upon completion of my active duty time, I re-enlisted in the Massachusetts Army National Guard while attending The Art Institute of Boston full-time in pursuit of a photography degree. Upon graduation and the end of my military service, I landed in North Virginia, where I would eventually take up employment with the federal government.

After having an 8 year gap since the last time I climbed, I was reintroduced to climbing in spring of 2018, when I started attending the weekly meet-ups with Team Red, White and Blue at Sportrock Alexandria. Shortly after, I started volunteering with Team RWB first as the main climbing coordinator, and then as the Chapter Captain and State Coordinator for the whole DC area. I completed my time with Team RWB this summer.



Since returning to climbing in 2018, I've made a point to visit as many crags as I can, to include but nowhere near limited to frequent visits to the New River Gorge, WV; Cachi, Costa Rica; Red River Gorge, KY; Pilot Mountain, NC; the 12 hour event for 24 Hours of Horseshoe Hell 2019 in Horseshoe Canyon Ranch, Arkansas; summiting the Grand Teton in Grand Tetons National Park, WY; and most recently - Hnappavellir, Iceland.

Currently I stay connected to the climbing community at large through being an instructor (basic skills, lead 101) with Sportrock, while looking for new ways and new groups to lend my knowledge and experience. I share my love of climbing with my fiancée Pauline (to whom I proposed atop the Grant Teton this summer), and our awesome crag dog Lucy.



# Trip Report: Coopers Rock

What happens when you fall in love with a climbing area but can never make it work with friends' schedules to get back out there? You sign up to lead a trip there so you can get lots of other people to go with you. Or at least that's what I did so I could get back out to climb at Coopers Rock State Forest outside of Morgantown West Virginia.

This spring when I approached the club leadership about a Coopers Rock trip they said sure AND what do you think about seeing if the Explorer's Club of Pittsburgh (ECP) would want to join. Since it's their local crag and I had only been there once I jumped at the chance to have others who knew the area take the lead on the climbing logistics while I focused on the camping logistics. A few emails and one google meet later, we had a plan and were ready to advertise the trip.

Many of the PATC-MS members arrived at the Chestnut Ridge Park Campground on Friday evening while most of the ECP members met the group at Coopers Rock on Saturday morning. Saturday was spent getting acquainted with the gristone while climbing in "Rock City". Climbs were set in the 5.5 to 5.9 range and the bouldering crash pads also came out.

After a full day of climbing, many of the trip participants enjoyed a group meal on the outside deck at Tropics, a restaurant that brings a taste of Hawaii to WV. Once the 80's cover band started it was time to return to camp for another campfire.

Sunday was spent climbing around the Sunset Wall. Now that the group was familiar with the rock it was time to try more challenging routes, including a fun chimney. Many PATC members wrapped up their climbing around noon to start their 3 hour drive home. We were so thankful to ECP for brining a ton of their clubs gear and for showing us around the crag. We're excited to continue to build a relationship with the club and hope to host them for some climbing in the DC area in the spring or next fall.

Coopers Rock is about 3 hours from DC. There is a campground at the park or you can stay 5 minutes away at Chestnut Ridge Park Campground. While most guidebooks focus on the bouldering there is plenty of top rope lines to keep a climber busy for days, as well as some trad climbs. If you plan a trip here definitely bring friends because there are so many climbs you'll want to set a few different lines. Also, make sure you take time to go to the overlook to check out the Cheat River Valley and if you have time squeeze in a hike or mountain bike ride. On a nice weekend definitely get to the park early because it is very popular.

We found the best guide for the area, especially for rock city was the guide used by ECP.

-Nicole Horvath





---

## Trip Report: Mt. Rainier

On Thursday, Aug 5th, five PATCMS members, Mark Maier, and another Utah climber descended upon the state of Washington to tackle Mount Adams and Mount Rainier over the course of five days.

Thursday, the members arrived at a VRBO rented cabin in Packwood, WA and assembled a Denali expedition's worth of food. After moaning about the weather carried in by a low-pressure system making Rainier inaccessible for a Friday/Saturday ascent, a split point of action was agreed upon. A contingent of three climbers, including the writer, set out for Mt. Adams while the remaining four climbers would acclimatize on a more moderate mountain in Mt. Rainier National Park (MRNP).

On the gravel roads towards Adams, the three climbers got to know each other as they passed the Mad Max ATV club, warily stopped at Baby Shoe Pass, and got their first glimpses of Mt. Adams. It was going to be a long day. After climbing the rental car-wrecking roads to the campground, they arrived at camp in time for a nice night of wind-scoured sleep.

The next morning, the party woke up and ascended the trail to the start of the snow field, where they donned crampons and ice axes. First up, an easy but icy snow slope made the party feel alive. They were doing the mountaineerings. After several tedious scrambles through rock patches and a few more snow slopes, the party took a break at 9500ft to admire the views and the satisfaction of a pace well-traveled. This was a great idea!

Meanwhile, the party of four left at the cabin struck out for MRNP to climb Mt Ruth, which splits the Winthrop and Emmons Glacier. They too were bound for acclimatization at 8700ft and had fun doing it. The adventure involved all sorts of terrain including fun tree bridges across glacial runoffs.

Back on Adams, the party of three found themselves at the mercy of Park ranger bro's poor advice that crampons were "only a little sketchy". The snow kicked back to a steepening angle and the writer began kicking steps for a microspike clad member. As the snow became truly steep, especially given the near vertical sections of snow scoops, the microspike clad member wisely bailed to the goat turd talus ridge nearby. This marked the true start of the suffering.

The two snow climbers struggled to contain their heart rates until finally they arrived at the top of the snow field, where they were greeted by almost a thousand feet of climbing on stacked marbles and car tires alongside the third member. None were happy when they arrived at the top of the ridge at 11,500 feet. It was at this point that two of the unacclimatized lowlanders realized their grave mistake in removing themselves from the sweet, succulent oxygen of sea level. The writer's AMS progressed to full on migraine. With cold, reluctant logic, the party realized that they had to tag the nearby summit for no other reason than to never set foot on the mountain again. The party set out and soon summited at ~12,280ft with crystal blue skies and fantastic views of Mt. Rainier, Mt. St. Helens, and the Tatoosh mountain range. The crisp 30 degrees and 30mph matching winds chilled the party, so they quickly descended back to the safety of the ridge atop Satan's Jenga tower.

After refueling and rehydrating, the climbers made a suicide pact to glissade the snow instead of descending thousands of feet of volcanic boogers. After an initial scree-ski, the glissade chute was attained. The writer

flung himself down the slope first while the others waited to observe his fate. All climbers arrived safely at the base exuberant from the child-like thrill. Good alpinists have short memories, and the glissade almost made the writer forget he had decided to never climb a mountain again. Then came the long, slow hike out. Mountaineering sucked again.

The Adams climbers, after scoring food in the... quaint... town of Trout Lake, stealthily rumbled into the cabin at 1am on Saturday, trying not to wake those who wisely chose a small, nearby mountain that day instead.

Later that day, Saturday, the entire climbing party hung out at the cabin, prepping their gear and their bodies for a Sunday/Monday ascent of Rainier's Disappointment Cleaver route. You would be surprised how much food seven mountaineers can put down. Or maybe you wouldn't?



Sunday soon arrived and we hauled our 50-pound packs up the Paradise trailhead and on to the Muir Snowfield. Completely soaked in, we picked up a Richmond climber on much the same mountaineering career

trajectory as many of us (Rainier>Aconcagua>Denali). We thoroughly evangelized her regarding the benefits of PATCMS before sending her back down. Ana, if you're here now, welcome.

Climbing out of the clouds, we caught our first views of Rainier, and they were spectacular. Mountaineering was fun again. Even though we followed a well-worn boot track, the remote beauty of the mountain made the trek feel like an adventure. Even if you don't plan on doing glaciated routes on Rainier, you should definitely trek up to Camp Muir and spend a night.

The party arrived at Camp Muir a couple hours later at 3pm where the climbers set up camp to rest for an 11pm summit bid. By the time the party set up, fueled up, and talked to the rangers, only a few hours remained for sleep. Of course, that was of no consequence - nobody slept.

The 10pm "wakeup" came bitterly. The wind howled. The temperatures were lower than expected. Nonetheless, the party decided to proceed, hoping the conditions would improve along the way. Two members, including the writer, elected to stay behind due to the route's objective risk and altitude sickness. As 11pm came, the remaining five climbers' headlamps disappeared off into the distance over Cathedral Rocks.

Those still at basecamp settled in for a nice morning of sleep with periodic checks of the inReach for messages from the climbing party. Time came and went without any messages, and the writer got up to watch the sunrise around 0545. Spectacular. Looking towards the Disappointment Cleaver, a party of three to five could be seen from Camp Muir. Perhaps this was the PATCMS group. As 0700 came and went, the party remained unmoved on top of the Cleaver. An uneasy feeling set in that something was wrong.

After climbing through and past the objective dangers of the route, the climbing party heaved up the heinous scree-and-talus fest that is the Disappointment Cleaver, guided by a never-ending series of red reflectors illuminated by headlamps in the inky darkness. The Disappointment Cleaver may be the most popular route on Rainier, but when most of the seasonal snow is melted off there is an awful lot of very poor rock to scramble over. At the Cleaver top, the group took a victorious break for ten minutes after which members checked in on their mental and physical state. Two members felt bad, so the break continued. As one member felt better, the other member collapsed. The summit attempt quickly transformed into a rescue situation. The group deployed emergency gear to keep the patient warm, started running first aid protocols, and prepared to use the inReach.

Just before they did, RMI and Alpine Ascents guided parties arrived and several EMTs among the guides took over first aid, deploying oxygen, first aid, and radio communications with the climbing rangers. After about 45 minutes it was decided that nothing would be done until the climbing rangers arrived after dawn. An RMI and Alpine Ascents guide stayed with the patient and all settled into a cold huddle in the dark and wind.

About five hours later, after sunrise, a climbing Ranger team arrived and decided on a helicopter evacuation of the patient was ordered, who oscillated between various states of consciousness overnight. The climbing team headed down as the Cleaver top was cleared of all but the rescue team.

Down at basecamp, the two camp bound climbers knew something was wrong when a ranger began clearing space for an incoming helicopter. When the helicopter came, they hovered over the site where the patient was, skillfully landed on a small rock helipad at Camp Muir, came up with a game plan, and deployed a rescuer from a long 200ft line underneath the helicopter. The rescuer dropped onto the ridge, where he secured the patient to the line and lifted him off the ridge. Back at Camp Muir, it was determined the patient should go to the hospital, so he was then flown down to the Rainier parking lot and evacuated to the hospital.

The rest of the party soon arrived back at basecamp where we immediately packed up and headed down the Muir snowfield, with many glissades saving much time, energy and knee pain. Back in the parking lot, we sorted through arrangements for our sick partner, sorted gear, and grabbed much needed refreshment at a local restaurant, the famous Wild Berry Restaurant.

As of the time of this writing, the patient rescued is doing much better and has made it home.

Mountaineering is a messed-up sport. You buy into the game with your life and are only ever promised suffering. Train hard and see you out there.

---

## Are you a new member?

*Welcome to the club! Here are a few suggestions to help you stay connected to the group.*

### **New Members Guide**

Check out our [New Members Guide](#) to learn about what we do and how you can get involved.

### **Monthly Meetings**

Join us at [Club Meetings](#) for a great opportunity to come and meet the members of the club and see what we do!

### **Carderock First Wednesdays**

Everyone is welcome at Carderock Wednesdays, which usually kicks off around 4pm. Sign up through the [Events Page](#).

### **Get involved on Social Media**

*The Listserv* - The Google Groups [Listserv](#) this is how a majority of club members communicate. To join:



1. Go to [PATC-MS Google Groups Page](#).
2. Log in to your Google account (“Sign in” button at top right corner)
3. Hit the button at the top of the page that says “Ask to join group”. There is no approval process - once you hit Ask to Join, you are in!

Facebook - Follow [Potomac Mountain Club](#) on Facebook or join the [Potomac Mountain Club Facebook Group](#).

---

## 2021 Club Officials

### Chair

Rick Dotson

[chair@patcms.org](mailto:chair@patcms.org)

### Vice Chair & Up Rope Editor

Caroline Mosher

[vicechair@patcms.org](mailto:vicechair@patcms.org)

### Secretary

Adam Nicholson

[secretary@patcms.org](mailto:secretary@patcms.org)

### Treasurer

Andy Bernat

[treasurer@patcms.org](mailto:treasurer@patcms.org)



## Up Rope History

Did you know

***Up Rope Newsletter***

has been around  
since 1944?

Check out past issues

on our

[Archives Page!](#)

---

## Up Rope Submissions

**Trip Report Submissions:** Please send all trip reports to [upropeeditor@gmail.com](mailto:upropeeditor@gmail.com). Please put in the subject line TRIP REPORT: Name. Please include the full first and last name of the writer and full names of as many club attendees as possible. If you have it, logistics information such as guide services, camp grounds,

restaurants, etc. would be useful at the end of the story. Please list who is in each photo and who took it. There is no word limit for trip reports.

**General Submissions:** Submissions for climbing news, member of the month, and gear/book/gym reviews can be sent to [upropeeditor@gmail.com](mailto:upropeeditor@gmail.com) at any time. Aim to keep them between 200-400 words.

*All submissions will be edited for grammar and length when necessary.*

---

## COVID 19 Safety

Let's all make sure we're balancing caution with passion! Here are some resources to help protect ourselves and our community during these trying times. Here are some resources to help you stay informed.

- Check out the Access Fund's [Climbing During the Coronavirus Pandemic](#).
- Learn about the CDC's [Considerations for Events and Gatherings](#). (If you must gather, be safe!)
- Stay up to date with the CDC's [COVID-19: What's New & Updated](#) page.