

The ROC

In search of adventure

hiking mountaineering climbing ice rock paddle
cave kayak canoe snowshoe skiing Adirondacks
hudson soc mexico white mountains Clarksville
spelunking Africa N E S West finger lakes
waterfall bouldering equipment axe crampon
'biner FLG bat 'coon skin hat spoon outdoors
class (when?) weekends weekdays sweat dust
fun rafting packs patch passion obsession
catharsis rappel jump cliff diving banquet
barbeque square dancing turtle island biking
trails maintenance 200+ members bleachers mud
propane stoves space food geeks engineers
scientists mathematicians EMAC psychologists
crazy fools loving life ☺

The summer ended and only the memories remained...

Does anyone remember the dismal start of summer? Rain, rain, and more rain! Well, lucky me decided to try and hike the NH section of the AT and ended up a soaked, bruised, and worn out mess. Not to mention that I was 50 miles or so shy of my goal in what appears to be a repeat of May's glorious weather. I set out July 28 or 29th and the first days were magnificent. Me and two compadres hit rain the second day. The third day one of my friends left and it rained until the seventh day when my second friend called it quits. I continued on for another 30 miles and decided that after 12 days of nothing but rain, viewless peaks, and hurtin' knees that my adventure was over. I successfully bagged eight more of NH's 4000 footers, but overall my trip was sort of a disappointment. You know that feeling after you hump a hefty pack up a mountain and the breathtaking expanse below you makes all the toils seem trivial in comparison? Well, take the workout, subtract the view, and add some rain and there is a decent synopsis of my experience. I guess my sun-dance was not quite enough to make the gods smile! Either that or one of you fools did a far superior rain dance?

Brian Sadler

Wednesday, May 21, 10:00 pm. Decide to take a vacation day on Friday and spend four days in Yosemite.

Left PDX at 2:30 am Friday. Partner eats gas station burrito named "The Bomb" en route. Burrito lives up to name, effects apparent for rest of trip. Breaking in new (to me) car this trip. Determine that 1 Subaru mile = 1.2 normal miles. Also hear frightening metallic rattling sound. Upon closer examination, decide that it's only an exhaust bracket. Pleased my new car has character. Pass through the entrance gate to the park at 2:00 pm.

Friday afternoon: Enter the valley. Three pitch route, Sloth Wall, (5.7, with dirty 5.5 slab approach) on Knob Hill (near entrance to valley) to get acquainted with granite. Tour the valley from car, almost wreck car many times while staring at El Cap, get a few supplies in Yosemite Village, then head to the tent cabin (20 miles outside the park, closest we could find).

Saturday: Penelope's Problem (5.7), with a second 5.5 pitch at Swan Slabs, then over to Five Open Books. Much searching for the base of The Caverns (5.8) resulted in climbing Munginella (5.6). Leader got off-route and wound up getting in a fun 5.8 face after all. Shot many pics of sunset on Half-dome from base of route after climb.

Sunday: Something about a route called "Nutcracker" (5.8) on the "Manure Pile" didn't appeal to me, so I went for a hike while partners climbed. Partners climbed route and got stuck behind very slow party. Partners now understand where the route should have gotten name after sitting for many hours in hanging belay.

I left car at 12:20, arrived in Curry Village 7.5 hours, 19 miles, and 4500 feet later. View from Glacier Point, of Illilouette Falls, and of Nevada Falls well worth the hike. Annoyed that all trails seemed to be paved (or had been paved.) Arrive in Curry Village 15 minutes before friends. All-you-can-eat buffet gets ravaged.

Monday: Stop at Curry Village to get large pro. Observe flora and fauna in meadow by car in the form of two blondes in bikinis rubbing each other with tanning oil. Dirtbag climbers next to us have binoculars out before we could even reach for ours. Explore approach to Arrowhead Spire (Erin Kaufman: "WAHOO!!! GOOD TIMES!!!"). Approach reminiscent of North Cascades via the (Fred) Beckey Guides. "Traverse along cliffs to obvious gully" my ass. Drop back into valley after I convince the others there's not enough time to do the climb anymore. Partner claims: "We did the dreaded "find the fucking route" 5.15e on the approach to Arrowhead Spire". Receives no arguments from other partner. I say the rating is conservative.

Got in Uncle Fanny (5.7 chimney) and Church Bowl Lieback (5.8) at Church Bowl on spectacular flakes. Stop off at gift shop for last minute road supplies, t-shirts, and ice cream. Reorganize back of wagon for visibility upgrade. First attempt to leave park fails due to photos at meadow east of El Cap. Second attempt fails due to photos at El Cap meadows. Observe climbers 1200 ft or so up El Cap. Third attempt to leave park succeeds, despite many other photo opportunities. Stop by Merced River outside of park for quick "shower". Leave river at 7:30 pm. Drive home uneventful aside from needing 3 quarts of oil. Partner declared it was a 3 red bull and 3 coffee night shifts. Partner's red bull and caffeine induced jittering shakes whole car. Arrive back in Portland at 8:00 am. Drive directly to work, walk in wearing same clothes worn for past few days.

Keith Langenwalter, MTLE '01

And the semester begins...

"Where's my canary?"

– Erin Kaufman

*Upon seeing the entrance to her first cave:
Clarkesville*



Hawaii and the Frogs

By Erin Kaufman

The Saddle. Far off the ocean crashes against the rocky shore. I wipe sweat off my forehead and gaze at the Palila wondering if I'll ever see one again. I came all the way to Hawaii to help control its predators and I can only hope that we aren't fighting a losing battle. Already the Silverswords were nearly gone, the most beautiful plant I had ever laid my eyes on.

The rocky terrain is intense and the heat radiates from the floor. I have yet to see the ocean up close and laugh at the thought of never seeing it. Promising myself I'll go over the weekend I turn back to my GPS and try to figure out the coordinates of where the Palila landed.

Standing on the edge of the road with my thumb out I think about the logistics of going by myself. I check to make sure I have my water bottles and a bit of food in case I become stranded. I'm headed to a remote green sand beach at South Point. The most southern point in the entire United States and once a nudist beach I cannot wait to see the green sand and

layers of rock surrounding the exploded crater. I was picked up by a native Hawaiian high on something, smoking something else and excited about the upcoming ceremony (that I am invited to) where we will see the Great Spirit. I quickly gain an understanding of exactly how this will be done. Apparently they meet every Sunday at noon, but this coming Sunday is a holiday and they are going to meet on the top of a mountain. High altitude and pot. I wonder how "great" he would be this year. Thankfully, I arrive intact at South Point. Barron land and no habitation save a few lone horses and 16 windmills. I start my 4 mile trek and at 2 miles find myself at the shore of the most beautiful blue blanket- the Pacific Ocean. Two miles later, Green Sands.

The sand is a light green mixed with the black volcanic rock. The hollow, blown out crater is carved with natural steps. Very well hidden, I can see the capabilities it has for a nudist beach. The ocean was bathwater warm and felt so good to wade it. I had to be careful of undertows and rip currents so I stayed close to the shore but still, I was nearly alone (two other couples were there) and I felt so peaceful surrounded by silence and simplicity.

I did not stay long because I knew that I should get somewhere before dark, the tide was coming in and I needed a ride back. I retraced my steps and where I would normally turn up to the road I saw a family who was more than happy to offer me a ride to the road and a bit beyond. As luck would have it a Monk seal was washed up on the shore and I had the privileged of seeing one of the 5 that lived around the Big Island. She was beautiful and I got amazing photographs of her angelic face. When she started to become stressed by our presence we backed away and drove to the black sand beach where the endangered Hawksbill turtles thrived. Again, a few turtles made their way up to me (one swam into me) and a beached turtle (who had it's fin bitten off by a shark) lay on the beach. I made it more comfortable, took some pictures and left it in peace. I firmly believe in photography, especially of endangered species, as a way to influence people to conserve. Like the

seal, I took coordinates, it's tag and would later report it to the correct place with photographs so that the researchers will know how they are doing.

I returned to the rainforest and our humble adobe and found out that our lack of funding would force the interns out. After only a month I couldn't believe it! I quickly packed and left taking three days and lots of airline terminals to get back. When I got to airport number 4 they found a Swiss army knife in my pack! I had traveled from HI, been specially searched as each point and now they were finding this?! I was appalled.

When I returned home I got a job at a local conservation center and worked with poison dart frogs for the remaining of the summer. These 1-2 inch little guys were brightly colored, has personalities all their own, and became my best friends. I worked 7 days a week in a simulated rainforest (it was quite authentic with real plants, insects, peat and more, especially after living in one for a bit in Hawaii) and took care of them with all my heart. These frogs were the "just in case" frogs if the ones in Central and South America die off. That very fact inspired me to learn more and was eventually invited to join the team in Panama this winter to save the Golden Frog (provided it didn't interfere with classes). If it wasn't for their fragility, beauty and obscure behaviors that they presented I would have been extremely upset about the rapid release and the treatment I received before leaving. I thank the frogs.

Photo by Erin Kaufman

Kukamba and the Witchdoctor

By Erin Kaufman

Nepal was having a civil war. Kenya was having their first democratic election. We decided on the latter. Less chance of death.

I had been living with the Acamba for a bit over a week. The language, Kukamba, was still so unfamiliar and the last three weeks of intensive Swahili seemed to blur as I kept hoping that they would suddenly switch to it. We climbed up to the highest point in their village. A beautiful overlook that took us all morning (and part of the afternoon) to hike. Actually, it would have taken an hour or so if they didn't keep stopping because of the "white persons weak bones" or "thin skin" or our "small lungs." It had been six years since they last saw a white person and they seemed to be in desperate need for a refresher course. The 10-20 minute breaks every 5 minutes were getting old. Finally, we arrived. I looked out over their village and smiled. Such simplicity.

My stomach was uncomfortable on the way down. I attributed it to waking up early and frustration with the language. I started to welcome the pace and by the time I got down I was really uncomfortable.



Thanks to the British it was time for chi and it seemed the entire village stopped for afternoon tea. Incredibly delicious, for the first time since arriving in Africa it didn't settle well. After tea we went back to work caring rocks up from the hillside and smashing them to pieces for the floor of their new science center (complete with 3 flasks). After a few hours school let out and Mariah and I walked back to our new home with an Acamba family. On the way back I mentioned my discomfort. We dismissed it. Still, I decided not to go to a party that night and asked for a lantern to "study" with so that I could sit down and be left alone for a while. They already thought the "white people" were fragile and I felt no reason to increase worry.

As the sun set and the bugs came as I showed my first bit of physical illness. At this point the beetles had moved in and I resided myself to the nightly ritual of fighting beetles over beetles on the walls interspaced with cockroaches, mosquitoes and bed bugs. The family I was staying with was freaking out and by the time my roommate came home I was near delirium. The bugs wouldn't stop, I couldn't find my flashlight and without it when I walked outside to use the bathroom the dogs would attack, and the small hole that we had to aim for when going to the bathroom was not working. It wasn't pretty.

My family, worried, was gathered around and staring at me. Being in Africa this constituted as around 15 people (counting a few friends that showed up) all gathered in a small house staring at the sick, helpless, white girl. Night had long fallen; my roommate (and only English speaker around) had finally come home when someone had gone to fetch the eldest son at the party. I felt a bit better that I could finally communicate with someone. It seemed the only English word anyone knew was "malaria" and I really wanted to know the context they were saying it. I convinced myself that they were happy that I didn't have it. It was better than the alternative. The son, I would later learn, took off and walked over an hour to find help from the nearest village. He came back with an English speaking witchdoctor.

First there was the food. In Africa, probably as a way to prevent children from becoming malnourished and dehydrated, they force food and drink into the sick person. I pleaded American and took a few bites to stop them from pleading with me. They took the most acidic food for me to eat.



What happen to bread products? Toast would have worked better than the orange. But since it was their only orange I felt bad about telling them "no." Kind of like the uncooked chicken that they fed to me a few days before. The one they had me help slaughter. They really do run around with their head cut off! I heard words being uttered in a calming way above me. I looked up and saw arms up and a prayer being recited. I closed my eyes and said my own prayer for American medicine. Any American medicine.

Truth is I recovered well. I had a few problems but they worked themselves out and today I look back and laugh. The funny thing is that I think I was also laughing then. After the mosquito net fell and the dogs started barking I figured things couldn't get any worse. They did.

Even so, I was lucky. You never know.

I Can't Breathe

or

Why Not To Use a 2-Stroke Chainsaw in a Cave

by Greg Wallace

Sometime this spring a massive tree fell into the sink at Sellecks Cave, blocking off most of the entrance to the cave. Once the snow had melted and it was safe to start work, a group of us (Jon and Joan Allison, Mike Chu, and myself) went to the cave with the intent of hauling the tree out of the hole. We brought along the usual supply of ropes, carabineers, and Mike's brand new chainsaw. Mike and I both have substantial experience with chainsaws on and above the ground, so we figured that subterranean work would be no problem. The two of us rappelled down into the cave with the chainsaw clipped into the back of my harness and began to work.

Mike started the saw right up and began cutting through the 1.5' diameter log. About halfway through his arms got tired (It was a very awkward cutting position because you had to hang halfway upside down with your arms wrapped around the log so that you wouldn't hit the wall of the cave with the saw blade.) and I took over. About 3/4 of the way through the log, the saw started to lose power. The chain would simply stop spinning and if you let the saw idle it would simply stall out. Mike and I decided that something was obviously wrong and began to disassemble the engine to find the source of the problem. The first thing we checked was the air filter to make sure it wasn't clogged, since it seemed like the engine wasn't getting enough oxygen(GIANT HINT #1). The air filter was OK, so we moved on to other components like the carburator and the spark plug, but everything else seemed fine. After a few minutes of putting the engine back together, we decided to ascend back up to the surface. While getting ready, I brushed my hand against the part of the log we had been cutting and the giant chunk simply fell off of the rest of the log. Apparently we didn't need much more in the way of sawing on that piece. Back on the surface we started the saw again and it ran good as new. This is when Mike and I realized that the engine kept stalling for the same reason that we kept coughing while down in the cave. A look down into the pit showed a large blueish cloud of smoke which had been suffocating us and the chainsaw.

A few months later Mike and I decided it was time to take another crack at it. This time we decided to take his generator, a long extension cord, and an electric chainsaw along. This way we could park the engine on the surface and not worry about dying from the smoke below. With the new saw we managed to cut half a dozen two foot long chunks off of the log in short order. Mike and Joe Baj (both of whom had just returned from the NCRC cave rescue course) set up a 3:1 hauling system with which we brought a few of the chunks up to the surface. While the other chunks were waiting to be hauled, we piled them on top of the part of the log which was still lodged in the fissure which creates the entrance to the cave. While moving one of the chunks into position to be hauled back to the surface, I somehow managed to dislodge the supporting log and suddenly a few thousand pounds of log fell straight down from beneath my feet 20 feet to the bottom of the

pit. Thankfully I was still on belay and managed to escape unscathed. Right around this time, another caver showed up with a large steel cable to use as a zipline across the entrance to the cave. We put up the cable (which will make it much easier to haul out the pieces still at the bottom of the cave) and decided that we were all tired and should probably come back another day to keep the near death experiences from becoming actual death experiences.

WAY BACK WHEN

Wright Peak

Early one Saturday morning in February, five masochists using the aliases of Roger Harris, Linda Banche, Shelley Witkop, Carlos Barraza and Tom McCrory, left Troy for a comparatively easy day trip to Wright Peak. Using the old “Albany-to-Adirondacks-weather-conversion-factor”, we assumed we would be digging the car out of the snow at the end of the trip, but we pressed on nevertheless. After an excruciating stop at Potter’s, we pushed on for Heart Lake.

Arriving at 9:20, we hit the trail, and with Shelley in the lead, running for the trail junction. After slowing down somewhat, we headed for the waterfall, following the tracks left by another party of snowshoers. At one point we were headed up a fairly steep pitch which included a couple of pair of snowshoe tracks that slid off to the right, ending fifteen feet below in the trees. As I surmounted the steepest part, I felt myself slipping - quick - turn - thrust into the snow with the ice axe - rip! - chop! - hold the handle tight. Whew, that was close! Wait a minute... rip? Yes, in putting in my ice axe to keep from falling, I cleverly pinioned myself to it by putting it through my wind parka. A good joke on me, at which I laughed heartily.

We arrived at the Wright - Algonquin col at 11:05 and stopped for lunch and put on our ice creepers. I said, “Shall we warm up for Wright by doing Algonquin?” No one said anything, so off we went up Algonquin, with the other snowshoers waiting for us to break a trail.

Carlos led through the ever more scraggily pines. We wound in and out around the trees, wading through mantraps and gazing back at Wright Peak.

Then came treeline and still we went up, with the hard snow crunching beneath our boots and ice axe tips. This is real winter mountaineering, this push upward on snow and rock slopes, part of what we stumble through miles of snow down below for. And then the trail stopped going up, and a little cairn of rocks lay ahead. We took some summit pictures and ate our M&Ms with frozen fingers while gazing down at the Colden Dike. When the other snowshoers started playing “king of the mountain” on the summit boulders, we headed down.

But to leave without the peak we came for? Never! So up the trail to Wright we go. After the great warm-up we got on Algonquin, Wright was fairly easy. Arriving at the top, we once again engorged M&Ms and took in the beautiful view (I’d like to have a nickel for every M&M I’ve ever eaten on a mountaintop). On the way down, we came to mantrap, which the first four in line fell into up to their waists. I stood at the brink and yelled to Carlos as he pulled himself out on the other side, “I’m going to...” Whoosh, the whole thing caves in under me and I’m up to my neck in snow. Carlos nearly falls in again laughing.

Back at the col for the third time, Linda seemed a trifle bushed, so in my naiveté, I said, “Why don’t you lead off?”, thinking she’ll set a nice slow pace down the trail. Carlos and I conversed for a few seconds, then turn to follow. But where are they? We started running down the trail to catch up. We’re not catching up! We started sprinting, dressed in full winter mountaineering regatta. I put the ice axe through my wind pants. Finally we both yelled “STOP!” and way up ahead Linda, Shelley and Roger slowed down. We charge down and stop by falling on our faces at their feet as they leapt out of the way.

The rest of the descent was relatively uneventful, with Linda explaining how when she feels tired she goes slower uphill but faster downhill. After returning to the car (which in defiance of the weather formula, had only one half an inch of snow on it) we stopped at Hamburger Mary’s and thence to Troy for hockey.

T³ (Tom McCrory, RPI ’71)
February 28, 1970

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INCIDENT ON MACOMB (or “Beware of the Ides of March”)

“These conditions are ideal for avalanches,” said Roger Harris, 23 years old and a five-year veteran of winter Adirondack climbs. Within ten minutes, he would be swept away by one.

The power of moving snow was dramatically demonstrated to three climbers Saturday, March 15, 1975, on Macomb Mountain, a 4405-foot high peak in New York’s Adirondacks. The party consisted of:

- 1) Roger Harris, a 23 yr. old graduate student at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy, New York, and a member of the Rensselaer Outing Club. Harris, an ADK 46’er, was to have nearly completed his winter 46 during this weekend.
- 2) Richard Tocher, also a student at RPI and a member of the ROC. Nineteen years old, Tocher has 19 of the Adirondack 46 peaks in winter and two seasons of Adirondack winter camping and climbing to his credit.
- 3) Richard Estock, 30 years old, a computer specialist from New Jersey, completing his first season of winter travel in the Adirondacks. His previous winter experience had been limited to New York’s Catskills, the lake country of Minnesota, and northern New Mexico’s mountains. He has five ADK winter peaks, including Marcy, and was planning to bag more this weekend.

The party began their trip the previous day, starting from the caretaker’s home on the road leading to Elk Lake. The day was overcast but visibility was good. At Elk Lake, both Marcy and Haystack were visible to the north. The temperature was estimated at about 25 degrees. Snowshoes were used, conditions being zero powder over a thin icy crust. Travel was easy. During the days preceding the trip, temperatures above freezing were common.

Four miles in at Slide Brook Lean-to, camp was made. Rather than climb Dix that day as had been originally planned, the group decided to climb Macomb via the north slide the next day. Snow was forecast, and about 7 p.m. that evening, heavy flakes began to fall. The night was generally warm, with the winds about 15 miles per hour from the west.

By seven the next morning, the snow had stopped, and the sky began to clear. Estock noted the temperature was 21 degrees. About six inches of powder had fallen during the night. By 8:30 a.m., after a hot breakfast, camp had been broken and the party began the bushwhack toward Macomb under full packs.

Harris was the logical leader, having the most experience of the three, and having made winter ascents of Macomb by the same route in the past. The decision was made to follow the brook rather than stay in the trees, in order to reduce the amount of fresh snow that would be falling on the climbers. Most of the trees were birches, presenting nominal snow problems to the group. All wore snow protection gear and snowshoes fitted with Army crampons. Each carried an ice axe.

The plan was to climb Macomb, camping that night on the ridge sheltered among the trees. From the ridge camp, Dix, Hough, East Dix, and South Dix were to be climbed that day and the next before descending Macomb via the same route.

That should have been an easy hike, two hours at most, to the slide turned out to be a very long trek. The six inches of new powdery snow made the footing difficult in many places along the brook, and balance was maintained only by frequent use of vegetation holds.

As the party emerged onto the slide, gaining ground became arduous work. Harris, leading and breaking trail, remarked it was the worst he had seen in six years. Because of the icy crust, much thicker now, one 40-foot stretch up a 30-degree slope took 15 minutes. Step-kicking was largely ineffective, unless they blasted away at the slope to gain sufficient footing. But without snowshoes, their weight with full packs easily broke through the crust. On one occasion, Estock sank up to his hips, before putting his snowshoes back on for good!

It was now approximately 12:30 p.m. They stopped for lunch and a short rest. Soon they began climbing again, with Tocher breaking trail and switchbacking up the slide. All were having varying degrees of difficulty in maintaining a steady pace.

At this point, progress being very slow; they agreed to limit the climb. By now, the skies were a clear blue, with the sun shining down in all of its glory; the air temperature was probably above freezing. Packs were dropped, and they decided to climb higher without packs to enjoy the view and take some photographs, since they all carried cameras.

They stopped about one-third of the way up, resting on a snow-covered boulder. They enjoyed the clear view, naming each of the peaks on the distant ridge, while the sun shone brightly. Tocher climbed a little higher to get to a better vantage point. While sitting on the rock, Harris sighted a small but fresh snow slide near the bottom of the slope. Since it was uniformly covered by a light layer of snow, Harris guessed the slide occurred during the night. He noted the bright sun, warm temperature, loose powder, and the steep slope.

“These conditions are ideal for avalanches,” he observed. Inasmuch that avalanches are not a common Adirondack happening, and because there were no danger signs (e.g., cracks, sunballs) on the surface of the snow, they felt they had a fair safety margin remaining. Nevertheless, they wisely chose to start down.

THE AVALANCHES

Harris was about to do a glissade on snowshoes. Tocher was about 300 feet above Estock and was waiting for Harris and Estock to reach bottom. Harris did a controlled slide of about 50 feet, leaning on his ice axe in arrest position. To his surprise, as snow piled up in front of him, he triggered an avalanche. Estock did not see that Harris had started this first avalanche, but only heard Tocher cry out “Avalanche” from above.

Estock turned around to face a swath of snow moving his way. Hurriedly, he began moving out of the channel he was in, perhaps laterally moving eight feet to a point where his snowshoes would not take him any higher without step-kicking. Harris was facing down-slope, his back turned to the onrushing snow. He apparently did not hear Tocher's original warning.

"Avalanche!" Estock yelled to Harris.

No response.

Harris heard Estock, but thought Estock was screaming about the avalanche triggered by him and which was now sweeping away their packs and other gear.

Estock yelled again, but by this time, the avalanche had reached him, snow moving across his snowshoes. The body of the snow was perhaps twenty feet across, about two feet thick at its deepest, and about twenty feet in length. It took about eight seconds for it to travel the 300 feet from Tocher to Estock, indicating its speed was about 25 miles per hour. Beyond Estock, it dropped to a steeper pitch, gaining more speed and accumulating more snow as it hurtled towards Harris.

Harris finally heard the deep, muffled sound behind him. Too late to move out of the way, he turned and met the rush of snow.

"I turned and saw a solid wall of snow coming at me. I was instantly thrown off my feet and began to try to swim to the surface. I was unable to gain any control as my snowshoes prevented me kicking and, with the tumbling chaos around me, I was helpless to control my destiny. I did manage to push myself partially free as the slide began to slow. Perhaps 500 ft. below my starting point, I came to rest, nearly buried, with only one arm and part of my face protruding above the snow. Without the free hand to clear my mouth of snow, I might have been unable to remain conscious and free myself." - Harris

Estock and Tocher lost sight of each other and of Harris as a cloud of snow particles enveloped the slope. It soon cleared, but Harris was not to be seen. Estock and Tocher both began calling for Harris, but there was no response.

Tocher began to climb down, but triggered a third avalanche, which cascaded down the same chute. Most of the snow was already off the slope and it failed to accumulate much snow, passing Estock but stopping near the base of the slide. This third avalanche was only six inches thick when it sailed past Estock.

Some anxious moments passed with Estock and Tocher becoming increasingly alarmed about their friend. Just then, Harris called to Estock. "Hello, up there!" Harris said, apparently all right. Estock relayed the good news to Tocher.

There stood Harris, some 500 feet below Estock. Some three minutes had passed since the second avalanche swept Harris away. Tocher then began to descend and triggered a fourth avalanche, much larger than the preceding three. This one was probably some 50 feet across and as long, and three to four feet deep. Fortunately, it headed down a different channel on the far side of the slide.

Estock then called to Tocher to stay put. Estock began to descend, on snowshoes, one step at a time, down the icy crust glistening in the strong sunlight. No powder remained where the avalanches traveled.

Estock reached Harris and found him to be in good shape, except for a bump and a minor cut on the chin. Harris explained he managed to free himself from the avalanche debris, but that while he was tumbling, his mouth and

throat become jammed full of snow. [Note: This type of suffocation is common among avalanche victims.] Having difficulty clearing his mouth and throat, he was not able to immediately answer the calls of his partners.

The packs were gone. Harris' ice axe was missing, and his balaclava was lost. A fallen tree in the way of the avalanche was snapped in half.

They called to Tocher to begin his descent; they stayed out of the way, carefully watching the upper slope for yet other avalanches. Tocher took very careful steps. Slowly he traversed the slide, keeping clear of the natural paths, finally following Estock's path down to his waiting friends.

They found Estock's pack off to one side. Probing with the remaining ice axes, they located the other packs, covered with snow but not deeply buried. They then moved out of the chute into the trees, one man having watched the upper slopes at all times.

Well into the shelter of trees and far enough away from the slide, had a major avalanche been triggered from the very top, the trio stopped for a much needed rest and a snack. Harris was hoarse from his experience, but otherwise was in very fine spirits and in good condition.

Having had enough for one weekend and otherwise fully intact, they walked out and returned to their car, and very grateful to be able to do so on their own. They left, much the wiser about avalanches in the Adirondacks.

Dick Estock

Drag 'Em Off the Interstate, Sock It To 'Em J. P. Blues

You'd think Doug MacBain, Lee Deck, Al McEuen, Roger Harris and Al Mathews would tire of trekking up to the Adirondacks every weekend, but on Saturday, February 19th, the group assembled at the 15th St. Lounge at 4:30 AM once again. Snow was coming down, but undaunted they proceeded to the Rt. 7 Hess station. After the attendant poured an exceeding large amount of gas into a 90% full tank, they winged off to the Northway.

The day's plans were drawn up. They choose their objective... Bill's Restaurant, Warrensburg. They sang cheery songs and watched the snow come down. Doug asked what would happen if it didn't get light at all that day and it was generally decided that they would climb anyway. But at 6 am the day began to dawn as they drove thru Warrensburg. Entering Bill's, they were met with cheery music from the jute box... "I just got a brand new pair of roller-skates", right Al? Since they were all in the mood for more good music, Lee fed the box and played "Drag 'Em Off The Interstate, Sock It To 'Em J. P. Blues" and such other golden favorites, such as "Hello, I am a Truck".

Back on the road again, they flew off the Northway at good old exit 30. The snow was still coming down and things seemed a mite slippery. In fact Al was not entirely surprised (only to a state of complete shock) when the car slid down the road, bouncing from one snowbank to the other in front of Roaring Brook Falls.

They pushed into Keene and bopped into a gas station. Al complained about the slow service until he turned around and saw the gas-station attendant listening to him. Good move, Al!

Spirits were high as they bombed thru Keene. A great day to climb and without a Potter's breakfast. But the car decided that their spirits were too high, so it decided to run on one cylinder. Luckily after a short rest it decided to behave and they were on their way again. Soon after, a rowdy group of ruffians jumped out of the car at the head of Whiteface Memorial Highway.

of these feet complain of numbness, tingling pain, and itching. The feet look white or mottled in disgusting shades of blue, gray, and burgundy. On rewarming the pain does much more than tingle, and swelling and redness occur. Severe cases crack the skin and bacterial invasion is imminent. Avoid aggressive rewarming. Skin-to-skin is best. All cases need to be kept warm and dry. Walking may become difficult. Painkillers often help. William Forgey, MD, "Father of Wilderness Medicine", suggests an ounce of hard liquor every waking hour to promote circulation to the damaged feet until a doctor can be found.

As the icy tendrils of winter swirled around his house in 1862, Maurice Raynaud took pen in frigid hand to first scratch out the description that would bear his name. Raynaud's syndrome results from intermittent spasms in the peripheral vessels of fingers or toes, and occasionally ears and nose. Color changes accompany this painful response to cold - usually white, often red or blue. Nobody knows what causes Raynaud's syndrome, but thousands suffer with the slightest drop in temperature.

Many treatments have been tried including avoidance of cold (which ruins winter fun), tranquilizers, vasodilating drugs, hormones, and, in extreme cases, a sympathectomy (cutting the sympathetic nerves so the blood vessels can't constrict).

For the past decade researchers at the US Army Research Institute of Environmental Medicine, Natick, Mass., have been experimenting with techniques to countercondition these syndrome-impaired nervous systems. Test subjects were required to keep their distressed parts in hot water for 15 - 20 minutes while the rest of their bodies stayed cold. Then, with hands or feet still in hot water, they were moved to a warm ambient environment for 15 - 20 minutes. A couple of times a day and eventually, depending on the severity of the case, the brain is conditioned to keep the peripheral vasculature open, without the hot water, despite the changing air temperature. Sometimes it doesn't work, but the Institute says 90 percent of their patients improve and conditioning may last for years before it has to be repeated.

As a final word, the human body is more susceptible to problems of cold weather than warm. But the human brain is capable to making up the difference. Use yours.