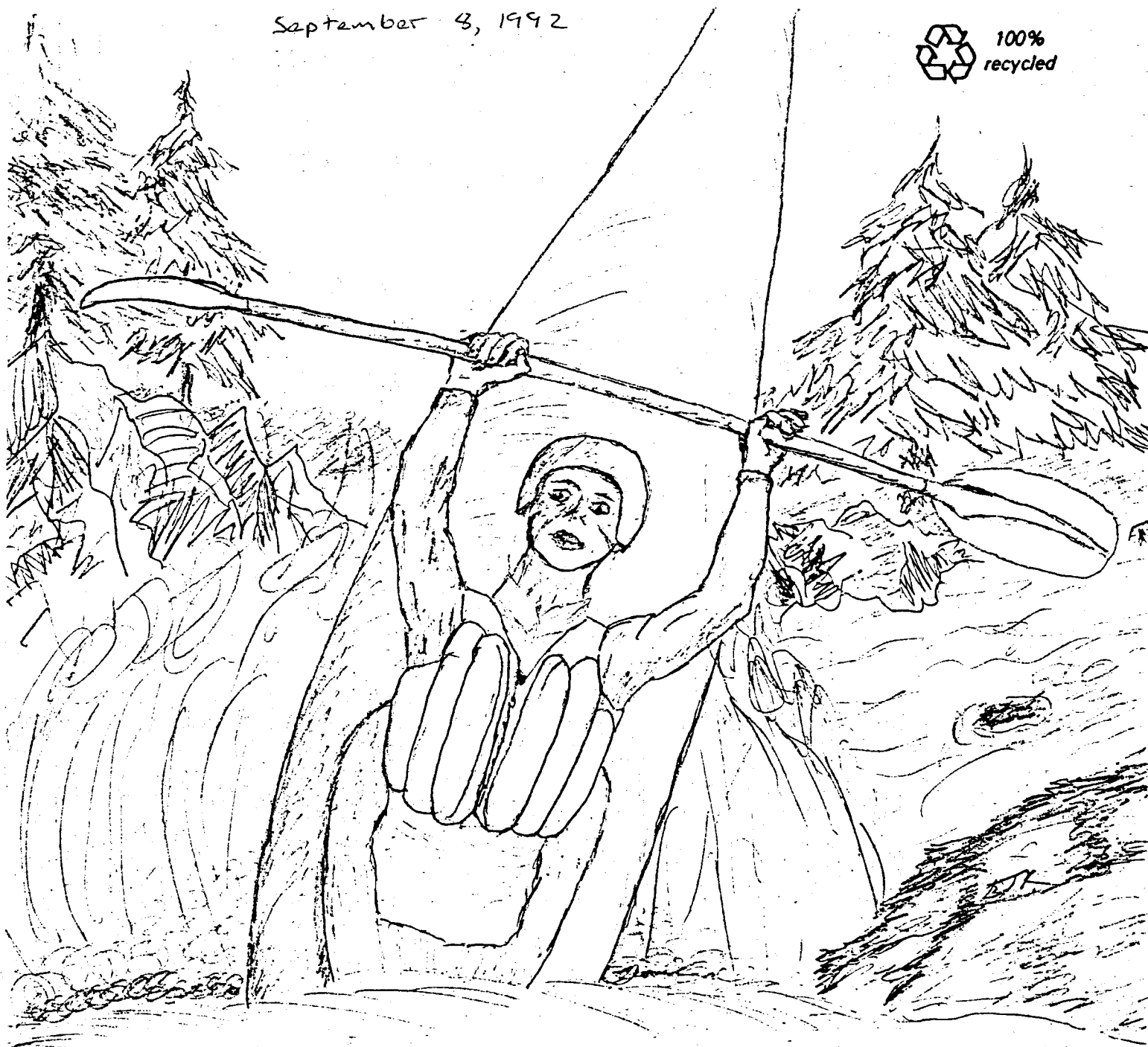
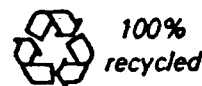


THE ROC CAIRN



—RENSSELAER OUTING CLUB, INC.—UNION BOX 26, R.P.I., TROY, NEW YORK—

September 3, 1992



Not from the Editor

Hello all, welcome back and welcome to all you new members. I hope you had a marvelous and active summer! I had a gook time here in Troy rock climbing. I even started leading.

Well, here is the first *Cairn* of the new year, and may there be many more. The *Cairn* is the news letter of the Outing Club, and its existence depends on you. I need people to write about their experiences and opinions in order to publish. So, get out your pens and pencils You can give your articles to me, or leave them in Union box 26 in the Student Government suite, or email a file to my account! I love files in Tex or MSWord format, but I can probably work with other formats. Many thanks to Kevin, Ken, Randy and Jeff for making this issue. You will also see a few interesting top 10 lists and some environmental tips from "50 Simple Things You Can Do To Save The Earth" which I picked off of USENET.

Speaking of USENET, if you don't know what that is, it is a program that allows access to discussion groups covering just about any topic you can think of. People all over the world have access to the same groups, so you will read many different perspectives. To get involved, log into AIX from your RCS account, type RN and see what happens. Some news groups of note are: rec.climbing, rec.backcountry, and rec.boats.paddle.

I guess I should mention; besides the Cairn, the club has canoes, kayaks, tents, sleeping bags, caving helmets rock climbing ropes, ice axed, cross country skis, lots more gear, and books to tell you how and where to do it. So stop by the Pit and say hi to Jeff, and go out on some trips!

One last thing; I would like to have a Forum discussion about first aid policy in the next Cairn. If you have an opinion, please write about it. Or, talk to me. I would be happy to help get you started.

Eric Kirchner
kirchner@unix.cie.rpi.edu

The production of livestock meat uses three times the fuel energy, twenty times the land, and many times the water it takes to produce a vegetarian diet. Also, meat is more expensive. Maybe you don't want to become a pure vegetarian. That's okay. But you'd do a lot of good for environment and pocketbook alike if you tried having one, two or more "meatless" meals every week. Buy a vegetarian cookbook and experiment with a few dishes. You might discover a few new favorites.

From the President

To all our new members, welcome to the Rensselaer Outing Club. To everyone who was here last year, welcome back. The primary goal of the Outing Club is to have fun. Don't be fooled by Willy's unique rock climbing trip reports, or Andy's and C.J.'s talk of kayaking with icicles forming on their helmets; we really are into fun. Specifically, fun in the outdoors, through all forms of wilderness travel: hiking, caving, canoeing, kayaking, rafting, rock climbing, ice climbing, cross country skiing, and winter mountaineering. There are usually several trips going out every weekend in different activities, for all levels of experience and ability.

There are also longer trips over Thanksgiving break, winter break, and spring break. In past years these have included caving in West Virginia, hiking in the White Mountains and in Colorado, and Skiing in Maine, Yellowstone Park, and the Tetons.

One of our biggest events of the year is Fall Lake George, an annual event for nearly forty years. Each year we get together with outing clubs from a dozen or more northeast schools for two days of fun and friendship on Lake George. Last year over 100 people attended, going canoeing on the lake, hiking and climbing in the surrounding hills, dancing in the evening, and only getting rained on a little. Look for more news as FLG weekend (October 2-4) approaches. Mark your calendar now!

In case you have already been indoctrinated into the RPI mentality, and fun is no longer sufficient motivation, there's more! Not only can you get out of Troy every weekend, but you can get PE credit for doing so. Yes, you can fulfill one of your four PE activity requirements by going on only five Outing Club trips. Sure beats half a semester of bowling.

So join up (see C.J. at a Tuesday meeting, or stop by the Pit on Friday and talk to Jeff), and go on a few trips. Try some activities you've never tried before. Get out of Troy and see what the area has to offer. It's your club, make the most of it.

If you see a recycling bin for alumin, then for gosh sakes don't put your candy wrappers in there. An excess of unrelated and unwanted materials in recycling bins can lead to the whole load being thrown out. If your trash doesn't belong, then either redirect it to the appropriate recycling bin or find a general-purpose garbage can.

Leadership

Leading wilderness trips can be difficult, frustrating, and a little scary, but in the end it is intensely rewarding. It is an opportunity to introduce others to the peace, the excitement, the challenge, and the achievement that we have ourselves found in wilderness travel.

Unfortunately, after a few years of actively leading Outing Club trips, an ugly thing happens to many of our trip leaders. They graduate. Those few unfortunate enough to find jobs may even move out of the area, leaving a terrible void behind. However, you can help alleviate this tragedy: you can become a new leader! All you need to do to become a leader is demonstrate competence in your chosen activity and to meet the first aid requirements. Competence is judged by the activity chairman and the leaders of the trips you have been on; the first aid requirements are Red Cross Standard First Aid and the SOLO Wilderness First Aid course. The Red Cross course can be taken at any of several local Red Cross offices, and is offered throughout the year. I will announce specific dates and times at club meetings. The SOLO course is held on campus once a year, sponsored by the club. This year we will probably have it midway through the fall semester. I will announce a date once it has been set. Even if you do not anticipate becoming a club trip leader, consider taking the SOLO course. It is an excellent introduction to practical first aid: how to make do with improvised equipment; how to stabilize a victim when professional help can't be there in five minutes, or even five hours; and most importantly, how to avoid accidents and injuries in the first place.

Besides trip leaders, the club also needs officers. There are seven officers who make up the executive committee. Elections for these positions are held every spring. To vote and run for office you must be a "Patch Member": one who has shown a higher level of commitment and involvement in the club. To become a patch member you must have been on trips in three different activities, including one overnight, and have done some sort of service for the club. I became Equipment Chairman in the spring of my first year in the club, and President a year later. You can too.

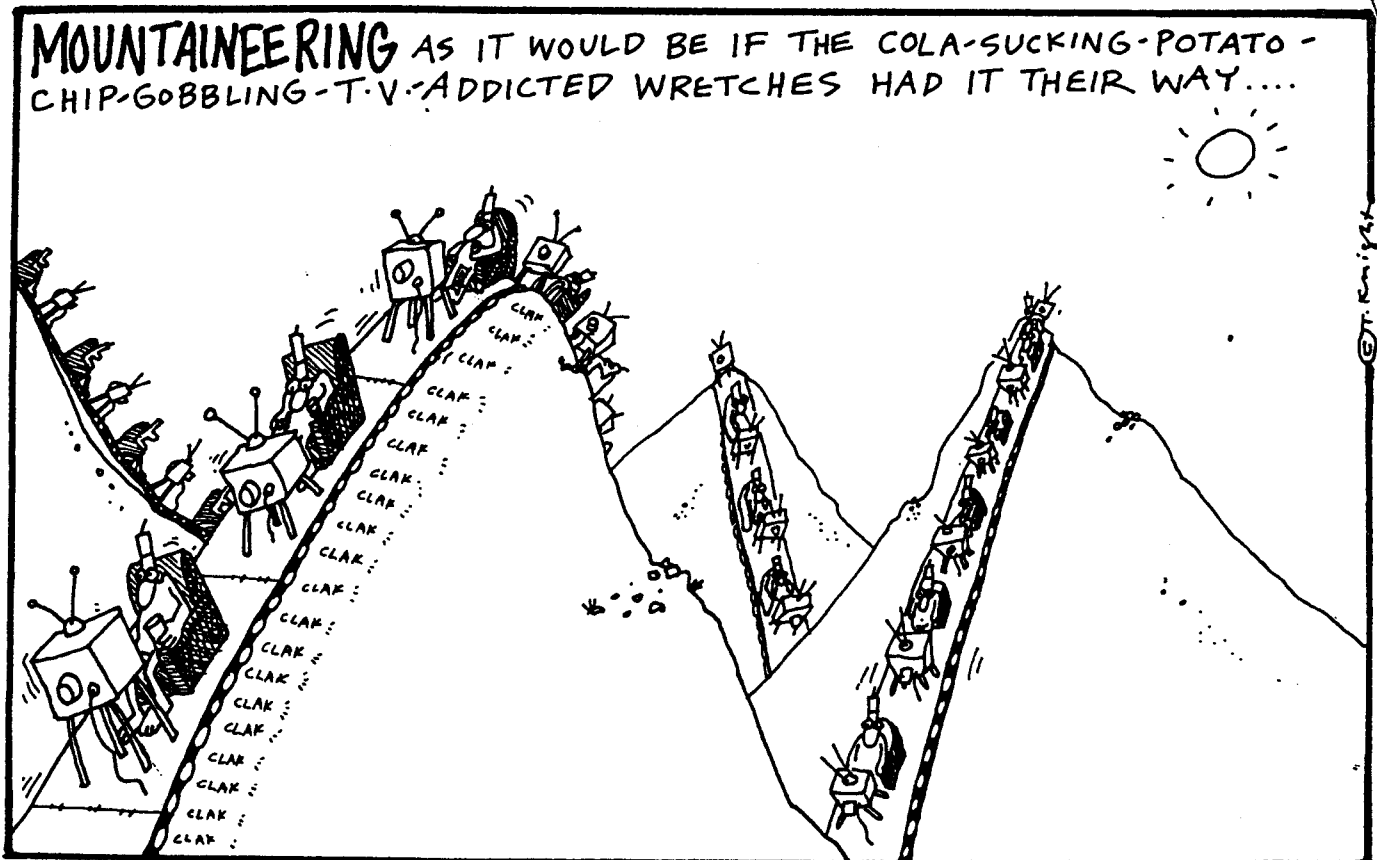
• Drive less. If it's a mile or two, walk. If it's a little further, see if you can bike. Use public transportation when you can. When running errands, try to combine trips.

The ten top reasons why climbing is better than sex:

10. Friction is a positive quality.
9. The rocks never expect you to call afterward.
8. Having a belay slave is not a criminal offense.
7. No matter how many times you fall off, you can always climb back on.
6. A hand jam in the crack can be as satisfying as any other kind of crack jam.
5. You can get belayed without first bekissing.
4. There IS such a thing as being too overhung.
3. You can reuse your protection, and someone else even cleans for you, provided you don't put it in too deep.
2. If you climb with someone other than your regular partner, no one gets mad, in fact, you can all three climb together and share protection !

...and the number one reason why climbing is better than sex is,

1. When you climb, you only have to get yourself to the peak.



A Message From THE PIT....

Welcome to the Rensselaer Outing Club! I'm Jeff Maling, your friendly neighborhood Equipment Chairman. For those of you who have just joined our club, I'd like to send a special welcome. You have just become a part of one of the largest and most unique clubs on campus. The Outing Club has been in existence here at RPI for over 50 years and has always been known on campus for its exiting activities and traditional events. In virtually all of the club's activities, you will have the opportunity to push yourself farther than you ever thought possible and feel the natural high that comes from successfully doing something you didn't think you could do.

My job as Equipment Chairman is to keep track of all of the club's gear. It's my responsibility to make sure that all Outing Club members have the gear they need for a safe and enjoyable wilderness experience. If you stop by "The Pit" in the Armory basement, you will see that the club has an extensive array of gear for all of our activities. We have everything from frying pans to ice climbing boots! As a Rensselaer Outing Club member, you will have full access to all of this gear. You can sign it out for club trips, or for your own personal use.

I have set up two hours a week when I will be available in the pit for gear sign-out. Right now, these hours are 3 to 5pm on Fridays. I do occasionally change these times depending on my schedule, but I'll try to give at least a week's notice before doing so. These two hours tend to be quite busy, so bear with me - I'll get to you as soon as I can. Please make it easier for everyone by not starting to gather gear before talking to me.

We make every effort to keep the number of rules governing the sign-out of gear to a minimum. There is, however, a real need to keep close track of all the gear that gets signed out. For safety reasons, we can not allow technical gear such as rock climbing ropes and vertical caving gear to be signed out to anyone unless they have demonstrated that they have enough experience to use the gear responsibly. This decision is up to the chairman for each activity. The same is true for the more valuable items that club has. Things like canoes and dry suits are easily damaged and very expensive to replace, so you may be asked to put down a deposit in the form of cash or a check before being allowed sign out this kind of gear.

One of the club's policies that tends to make new members very happy is that we reserve the gear that's in the best condition for new members. Every year, we spend literally thousands of dollars buying new stuff and replacing old, worn out gear. It's really important to us that the newer, less experienced members get the first shot at using new, top quality gear. It's our hope that this will help everyone, from

novice to expert, enjoy what the wilderness has to offer. In general, you're welcome to use any of the club's gear for a reasonable length of time. You must keep in mind that there are over a hundred members of the Outing Club that deserve the same opportunity to use our equipment as you do. For this reason we ask that you return any gear that you have signed out as soon as you are done using it. As you will find, there are many avid members who go out all the time. This is evidenced in outdoor kayaking trips in the middle of February and in caving trips where people don't see the light of day for weeks at a time! In cases like this, it's generally OK for you to hold on to gear for an extended period of time, as long as you make me aware of it. You will, however, be expected to return the gear if someone else needs to use it.

There are rare cases where this policy is ignored. There are a number number of things that I can do to recover gear that has not been returned. The first thing I will do is make every effort to contact the persons involved and let them know that they must return the gear they have signed out. In the majority of the cases, people have simply forgotten that they have gear out and are happy to return it as soon as possible. If, after making contact with the people, the gear still doesn't get returned, the next step is to simply bill them for the full replacement cost of the gear they have signed out. If necessary, charges can be made directly to the student's account through the Rensselaer Union Administration Office. Along with these charges, the student will permanently loose their privileges to sign out gear - no second chances. I consider this very drastic action and luckily I have never had to take it that far. Rest assured that I will try very hard to make sure this doesn't happen in the future.

Last, but certainly not least, is our policy regarding priority gear to be signed out. In all cases, people going on club trips which are announced in our weekly meetings and for which there is an open sign-up have first shot at the gear in The Pit. Next in line come the last minute trips that get put together after the meetings, but for which there is an Outing Club leader in charge. Personal use is at the bottom of the list. This is the only fair way to guarantee that everyone going on club trips gets what they need. Further limitations on personal use of gear include only being able to sign out gear for yourself and possibly one guest, depending on gear availability. Rensselaer Outing Club gear is ONLY to be used by students and staff of RPI. Exceptions to this policy are rare, but special circumstances will certainly be considered.

All of this may seem kind of complicated, but it really isn't. In most cases, you will be able to use any of the club's gear for as long as you need it. If you have any questions (and even if you don't), please feel free to stop by the pit on Friday afternoon and talk to me. I'll do my best to make sure you have everything you need to have a GREAT time in our club!

A Trip to Fall Lake George...

by Randy Friedline

Fall Lake George is about an hour to an hour and a half north of Troy. The drive was uneventful, but when we got there the fun began. We arrived at Camp Chingachgook late in the afternoon and started unpacking the car right away. By the time we got our canoes packed and ready to head out to the island, the sun had already set. It was a warm, clear, and still night. The water gently lapped at our canoe as we paddled out to the island. The only sounds heard were the paddles as they entered and exited the water. And the sight..... incredible! Picture yourself in the middle of a lake, on a warm night, with no wind and a completely cloudless sky. You could see every star in the Northern Hemisphere! It was truly a breathtaking view. One of the people in the canoe we were buddying with knew many of the stars and constellations and he was pointing them out as we paddled. The canoe trip was about two hours, but the time just flew by...it was soooooo peaceful.

It was quite a trip trying to find the island. The island was marked with yellow and white lights, but we couldn't really see the lights from where we were approaching. Add to that the fact that there were about half a dozen other islands in between. Heh...it was fun ducking in and out of the islands trying to find the right one. We finally made landfall sometime after midnight. My canoe and tent partner, Tony, used the flashlight so that we could pull the canoe up on shore. We wandered around in the woods until we found an empty campsite and pitched our tent. We didn't do too much because we were fairly tired, so we went to sleep.

The next morning was beautiful. It was a little cool, but the sky was cloudless...and the view! You have to remember that I had never been out there before, so to see the lake and the island and the mountains for the first time was, again, incredible. Then I had the stupid thought of dunking my head in the water to wake up and wet my hair and face. Heh...can you say COLD!!!!!!!

Well, we got dressed and went down to the main campsite to cook breakfast. We all had eggs, bacon, and french toast, as I recall. That day we all gathered together for a brief meeting and to find out who was leading what trips; i.e. hiking, canoeing, kayaking...etc. A group of us decided to go hiking up

Tongue mountain. We had a terrific time, although I did break off from the main path and wander through a hornets' nest (bad idea). I only received a few stings and thank God I wasn't allergic to them. We had to canoe out to the mainland which was right across from us (about 200 ft.) to go hiking. I remember when we got up to one of the peaks of Tongue mountain and looked down towards the lake, we saw a couple of kayakers with what seemed to be a string of canoes leaving the mainland and heading for the island. Heh....apparently the kayakers had gotten the bright idea of leaving us stranded on the mainland, forcing us to *swim* back over to the island. Well, a few of us wound up doing that, but I was fortunate enough to be with a few people who had carefully concealed their canoe. This was a good thing.

We had a delicious dinner that night including steak or fish, baked potatoes, and corn. There were also a lot of munchies and hot cider, compliments of ROC. We also had the square/contra dance. Now that was a fun time!! At first people were hesitant and only a few wanted to join, but after a little while we got just about everyone swirling around, doe- se doe-ing and swingin' their partner all over the place!!!! That lasted until about 10 or 11pm and by that time everyone was exhausted. Of course we all stayed up and talked all night anyway. Some were cooking popcorn at one end of the island.

Most of us finally went to sleep sometime Sunday morning. We slept in fairly late and then got up for breakfast. It was a leisurely Sunday morning --- most people still tired from the previous day's activities.

We left Sunday late morning/early afternoon. By 3 pm both the island and the mainland camp were deserted.

So. there you have it, and that was a condensed version! A time of doing outdoor stuff, meeting people from other schools, getting away from school, and just having a great time!

This was from my FLG trip of '89. I was Member @ Large last year, and, hence, was in charge of the FLG last October. Last year's Fall Lake George was just as good as my first one, even though we had a few visit's by some raccoons. We learned very quickly to string up our food to protect it. I really can't emphasize enough just how much fun this event is. I think, however, in order to understand, you should go and find out yourself, yes? :) :)

Don't let
this blank
space represent
the future of
the (air-ns)
submit your
articles.
Today!

Why Climbing is Better than Sex (a woman's perspective*):

- 1) The rock is always hard.
- 2) Rocks are never busy watching football when you'd rather climb.
- 3) Rocks don't complain about the kind of protection you want to use.
- 4) You can go climbing with another woman and nobody will call you names or hassle you.
- 5) You can use ropes and nobody will think you're kinky.
- 6) You can go climbing any time of the month.
- 7) It's over when *you* reach the peak.
- 8) You won't die of embarrassment if your mother finds your rock gear.
- 9) If it's in too deep, you can yank on a nut.
- 10) Nobody ever got pregnant rock climbing!

• Use e-mail, not snail mail, whenever feasible; print out only what urgently NEEDS to be printed out.

• Plant a tree.

Warm Desires.

by Kevin A. Dumont

The reasons people go caving are as varied as the personalities of cavers themselves. Some people enjoy the physical challenges involved. Others find caves to be peaceful and go for spiritual reasons. Still others are lured by the unknown. Scientists enter caves to study the unique geology and biology found there. In reality, most cavers' reasons are a combination of one or more of these. But one thing that all cavers have in common is that they enjoy caves and they enjoy being in them.

I began caving because it sounded neat and I continued caving because it was neat. Eventually, I lost some of my interest in sport or recreational caving and became obsessed with the prospects of finding new caves or new cave passages that had never before been seen by human eyes. This is what is known to the U.S. caving community as "exploration".

Exploration can be roughly divided into two methods: Digging and diving. Since diving is generally more expensive and dangerous than digging, I purchased a shovel and began a fairly short and uneventful career of digging in New York State. The key to a successful dig is perseverance. A classic example of this occurred recently in our own Schoharie County.

After 2 years and many unsuccessful dig sites, a group of diggers from New York City broke into a cave system this past spring of relatively huge proportions. There have already been 9000 feet of passage surveyed with over 80 leads (passages that have not been checked) logged. There is a very good chance that as the system is pushed and expanded that it will surpass the current longest cave system in the state which is McFail's Cave with just under 7 miles of mapped passage.

Perhaps the reason why discovering a new cave is so exciting is that the explorer can be quite sure that the places they find are indeed untouched by people (at least in the traditional sense). Besides the awesome philosophical implications, every discovery presents to us an opportunity for new understanding of the cave world through science. In my opinion that is why exploration is so important.

So if caving sounds neat to you, try it. Ask questions of club members that are cavers. When you walk down a cave passage that is half a million years old formed in rock that was created over 400 million years ago, ignore the hundreds of footprints on the floor and the broken formations and imagine what it would have been like to have been the first person to walk that path. And if the lure of virgin cave is strong, get yourself a shovel and some willing friends, and if your respect for the cave is deep enough it might give up some of its deep, dark and wonderful secrets to you.

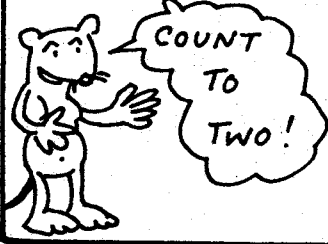
CAVERS? OFFTTTTT ICE CLIMBERS?

WHO'S GOT FEWER SLICES IN THE OL' LOAF?

SO WE'LL INTERVIEW A CAVER AND AN ICE CLIMBER AN' HOPEFULLY THISSIL RESOLVE THIS BURNING ISHOO!

① THE INTELLIGENCE QUERY: IS THERE ANY ACTIVITY AT ALL IN THE BRAIN CELLS !!

SOMEONE INTELLIGENT:



COUNT TO TWO!

CAVER



I CAN'T!
I CAN'T SEE MY FINGERS!
MY BAT'RY JUST KICKED THE BUCKET!

ICE CLIMBER:



LISSEN... I NEVER REALLY DID VERY WELL AT MATH IN SKOOL SO HOW ABOUT A TINY HINT?

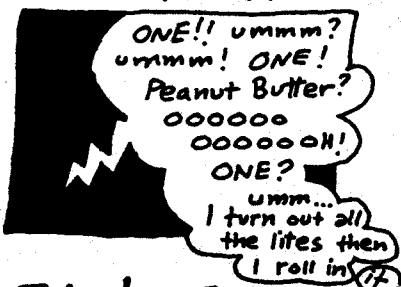
② THE RUBBER ROOM INQUIRY: are these people likely to do evil things to small furry animals?

SOMEONE WHO EATS PEANUT BUTTER ON TOAST!



TELL US HOW YOU PREFER TO EAT PEANUT BUTTER!

CAVER



ONE!! ummm?
ummm! ONE!
Peanut Butter?
OOOOOO
OOOOOH!
ONE?
ummm...
I turn out all the lites then I roll in

ICE CLIMBER



I FREEZE IT AN' SLICE IT UP AN' I LINE MY HELMET WITH IT AN' WHEN MY PARTNER IS RUNOUT SIXTY FEET FROM THE LAST SHITTY SCREW I, ahh...

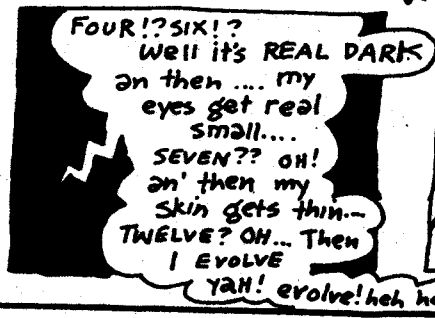
③ THE SHRINK'S FAV'RIT !!

SOMEONE WHO HAS NO NEED TO TELL!



Describe to us yer most persistent fantasy!

CAVER



FOUR!?! SIX!?! Well it's REAL DARK an then ... my eyes get real small... SEVEN?? OH! an' then my skin gets thin... TWELVE? OH... Then I EVOLVE YAH! evolve! heh heh heh

ICE CLIMBER



That's EASY! I'M RUNOUT EIGHTY FEET ON THE MOST HEINOUS, ROTTEN, DRIPPING, TOTTERING GRADE AN' THEN MY 'POON FALLS OFF AN' I BREAK A TOOL BUT... BLEEDIN' FROM THE EARS I MAKE IT! THEN LATER ON I

© T. Kunkin

Cold Breath

Copyright 1991, Ken Davis

Imagine, three cavers digging all weekend in a lead at the bottom of a sink. They've been lying on their sides now for hours passing mud and stones from one man to the next as they inch forward in a narrow crack. Suddenly, the lead man calls back, "I think that I can get my head beyond the bend now." The others are envious of his good fortune, but wait in happy anticipation for the report. After a couple minutes of wriggling and a few good grunts, he is able to finally squeeze his helmetless head far enough down the crack to bring the digging team's fantasies crashing down to cold, hard reality.

"It's a no go," he calls back.

From behind him, he hears a loud "Shit . . . let me have a look." Although each of the three men respects the others' hardiness highly, they must each have look, as if they somehow believe that they will be able to go beyond where the other two can, or fear, not go. It takes a half hour, but each man has his turn. The verdict is unanimous. The lead is dead.

Though wet, muck-covered masses of tired human flesh, they are still able to marvel at the beautiful afternoon which greets them as they climb out of the sink. The sun is warm, and it is agreed that such a day should not be wasted. They fan out in the woods and walk further downhill along the depression they know too well. The line of sinkholes and sinking streams tells them that there is a void somewhere beneath their feet. They do not know how big it is or if there is any possibility for human entry; they just know it is there.

As they pass last weekend's dig site, the grade of the hill becomes much steeper, and two of the men choose to follow a deer trail which takes the most sensible route downward. The third man, however, picks his way down the incline through a tangle of raspberry bushes (of course, he is sampling the tasties as he goes.) Looking back up the hill, he notices a band of moss leading downward from a small outcrop. On closer scrutiny, he realizes that the mossy rocks are actually a dry stream bed. He scrambles toward the outcrop ignoring scratches from the raspberry bushes. His mind goes wild. "We've never looked for something like this. The resurgence is near the bottom of the hill; could this be a flood wa" He is there.

The small horizontal slit at the base of the outcrop looks like a mouth and the mossy stream bed like a long green beard. The man peers into the mouth, and it breaths a steady cold breath on his face. "Yes!"

The man's companions hear his shout and come crashing toward him through the brush. In seconds, they are by his side. The slit is only a few inches tall, but they are prepared. Shovels feverishly rip the earth. Dirt flies, and the mossy carpet at the men's feet turns brown. Debris is heaved behind them as they widen the hole. They can barely contain themselves long enough to take turns digging in the small area. It is now apparent that there is a solutional tube leading into the hill. The tube is nearly filled with sediment, but the men have dug enough to see its outline, and the small air-space above the sediment provides just enough of a view to keep them interested.

Although their enthusiasm does not wain as the sky begins to darken, the men begin to realize that their weekend is over and that

the dig will take hours. Reluctantly, they admit the obvious: the booty must wait another week to be claimed. They gather their tools and march uphill into the setting sun. Slowly their excited jabber fades, and the forest is still again. But, the earth is not at ease.

Far below the summer sky, far below the sweet raspberries, below even the tree roots, there is a cave. The cave is afraid; the cave is angry; and it sings out . . .

Cold breath on a warm summer's day.
My teeth were clenched, but air escaped
to widen your eyes and feed your dreams
with images greater than I could ever be.

Dreams to drive you . . .
I will break them.
Hungry dreams . . .
I will shake them.
I will never let you in.

You'll strip my skin and lay me bare
to steal my soul for glorious air.
. . . slice me open and bring disease.
Having conquered, you will leave.

I know how you work; yes, I know your type.
You'll take my beauty and degrade my life.
You do it for yourself and no one else.
How can you be so proud?

Grand illusions corrupting your thoughts.
Morals and compassion swallowed by lust.
A tarnished heart and a bloated head
to push you forward yet block your path.

Dreams to drive you . . .
I will break them.
Hungry dreams . . .
I will shake them.
I will never let you in.

Wide eyes staring blind in the night.
Thoughts racing over what I hide.
I've got nothing to offer you
except these teeth, this spit to make a tomb.

I know how you work; yes, I know your type.
You'll take my beauty and corrupt my life.
You do it for yourself and no one else.

How can you be so proud?