



NO. 526 - October 20, 1976

A newsheet published by the Ski Mountaineers and Rock Climbing Sections of the Sierra Club's Angeles Chapter. Send subscriptions & Address changes to: Tim Ryan, 708 Loma, Hermosa Beach, 90254. Subscriptions \$2 per year. This is an 8 page issue.

**SUBSCRIPTIONS TO MUGELNOOS NOW DUE**  
 The annual subscription fee to Mugelnoos is now due, and should be sent promptly to the Mugelmailer, Tim Ryan, 710 Loma, Hermosa Beach, CA., 90254



**SIERRA CLUB DUES INCREASE**

New Sierra Club dues rates went into effect July 1. New rates are as follows:  
 Life Membership \$750, Contributing membership \$100, supporting membership \$40,  
 Regular membership \$20 (with spouse \$28) Junior thru age 14 \$8, student \$8  
 (with spouse \$13) Senior (age 60 and over \$8 (with spouse \$13)

**ANGELES CHAPTER PRESENTS K-2 CLIMB PROGRAM NOV. 5**

In the spring of 1975 a team of American mountaineers set off to climb K-2, the world's second highest peak, dominating the Karakoram range of Pakistan. Located near the border of mainland China, the heart of the world's highest range of peaks had been closed to mountaineers for political reasons until 1974.

Sierra Club member Galen Rowell was a member of the American 1975 K-2 Expedition. His slides and film of the expedition will be featured at a Gala Fund Raiser to be held on behalf of the Angeles Chapter.

No stranger to mountaineers and armchair travelers alike, Rowell is a veteran rock and mountain climber, photographer, journalist and a director of the American Alpine Club. His work has appeared in National Geographic, Mountain Gazette and many other magazines and journals.

His lecture and film will describe the adventures of the 1975 American K-2 expedition which attempted to climb the second highest mountain of the world by an entirely new route. Since K-2 lies on the Pakistan-China border the expedition encountered a number of political, economic and porter problems. This Gala will feature select pictures from the 15,000 taken, accompanied by carefully selected narration.

This is the one event put on by the Chapter for a fundraiser. Get your tickets now. Send your check and SASE to 2410 Beverly Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90057. Location: Embassy Auditorium, 843 S. Grand Ave, Los Angeles, free parking at 9th & Grand corner. Time: No Host Bar 7:00 pm, Show time: 8:30, cost: \$5.00 per ticket. (NK, RDM)

**R C S MEMBERS ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING**

Come out and elect your new officers (the old ones are tired (that's what he said-ed)) Express your opinions and have them voted on. Fun-but no games.

The Dept of Water and Power cafeteria serves good food.

LOCATION: Department of Water and Power, Auditorium  
 111 North Hope Street  
 Los Angeles

November 3 (Wednesday), 7:00 P.M. (LR)

**RESCUE SEMINAR**

A Rescue Seminar for RCS members is scheduled for Sat., Nov 6 @ Mt Rubidoux, Riverside. Others who have a good background in climbing and anchor placement accepted also. There is a max limit of 30. If you have not sent a large SASE with \$2.00 for materials you are not registered. This will be a problem oriented session. Among the things covered will be: Lowering a climber with a head injury, Assisting a climber with a broken arm, and rescuing an unconscious climber who

(continued page 2, right)



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NEXT ISSUE: November 17, 1976  
 DEADLINE: Friday, Nov. 12, 1976

CALENDAR

- Oct. 24 RCS Annual Picnic, Big Rock, Perris Res, contact T. Jeter
- Nov. 3 RCS Annual Business meeting, DWP Building aud., 7 pm
- Nov. 5 K-2 Climb films, Embassy Aud,pgl
- Nov. 6 Rescue Seminar, see page 1
- Oct. 26 Ski Mtnr Central Comm see pg 3.
- Nov. 17 Mugelnoos Meeting - 8 p.m.

MUGELNOOS MEETINGS 3rd Wednesday of each month, 8 p.m., Lemon Grove Recreation Center, 4959 Lemon Grove Ave., L.A., just off Hollywood Fwy. near Melrose exit  
 Trip news, program, refreshments, etc.  
 Climbers, Skeirs, guests welcome!

NEW ADDRESS

Lois Malone  
 Box 1108, Boston, MA, 02104

KNOT WITH A CATCH

The right way to spell Prusik is with one "s" (not Prussik), according to Ray Smutek, Editor of Off Belay,  
 Dr. Karl Prusik invented the knot

NOTE TO RCS MEMBERS

Please notify the secretary of all changes of address or phone number. Who's the secretary--find out at or after the Nov 3 meeting! LR

OLD ISSUES STILL NEEDED

Old Mugelnooses for 1950, 1952, and the first half of 1953 are still needed for the American Alpine Club library in New York. Frank Meyer, former RCS member has generously offered his file for the rest of the 1950's. The Mugelnoos set will be bound in a beautiful shade of aqua, and preserved forever. Please contact Ruth Mendenhall if you can help the cause along (RDM)

SOVIET-AMERICAN CLIMBING A SUCCESS

The six U.S. members of the 1976 Soviet-American Mountaineering Exchange team report a successful trip to the USSR in July and August. Climbing with 12 Soviets they made 37 alpine ascents, including ten firsts, in six weeks' climbing in the Pamir and Tien Shan ranges and the Caucasus. Nearly all ascents were made by combined US-USSR teams. The Russians have been invited to send six climbers to the USA in 1977. (RDM)

MISSING STRETCHER

The stretcher is still missing from the Tahquitz South Face Base location. The Fire Department, Sheriff's Department and Forest Service know nothing about it, per a personal check with each agency on 10/3/76 (LR)

RESCUE SEMINAR (Continued from Page 1)

is hanging by a Swami belt from an overhang. (Have you ever given that one any thought?) Send your SASE to: Andy Fried, 538 N. Bronson Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90004 Ph:466-0480.

ANOTHER NEW ADDRESS

Doug Mantle, SMS Chairman  
 15 - 15th St., #H - 12  
 Hermosa Beach, CA 90254  
 376-9090

HUT MADE SHIP - SHAPE

An overflow crowd of 18 showed up for the Baldy Ski Hut work party on Oct 2-3. Wood cutting was the main chore, and a couple of the gals straightened out the cellar area to make room for additional winter wood supplies. The Hut's chain saw was buzzing all weekend, frequently running out of gas from non-stop use. Much wood was stuck away, but a good cold winter would doubtless exhaust the supply.

Other projects completed were replacing the front porch flooring with steel grating, so snow from boots will fall thru instead of being tracked inside. Also, the remaining supply of Walt Davie's custom made hinges was used up on installations on the east facing windows, so the Hut is now about as vandal-proof as is possible short of going to metal siding.

The workers were fed in grand style by chef Betty Powers' sweet and sour ribs with all the trimmings. Reflective trail markers will be posted on the route this winter, after one party lost their way at night last Feb, finally arriving at 5 AM following a harrowing trip thru the snow in darkness.

On a related subject, the BMTC ice axe leaders decided at their Sept. meeting that taking large numbers into a single area for practice is not a good idea, and they resolved to break up into small groups for their sessions and disperse the locations. They also resolved to plan on using areas other than the Baldy Bowl, assuming enough alternate sites can be found. This should not be difficult, given the groups smaller sizes. (See "Dogpatch", Page 8-ed.) (JW)

DON'T FORGET THE RCS ANNUAL PICNIC EXTRAVAGANZA @ BIG ROCK SUNDAY OCT 24  
 FREE FOOD--Perris Reservoir near Riverside, look for RCS arrows, all day, notify Tom Jeter if you plan to attend.



## COLUMBUS DAY WEEKEND YOSEMITE CLIMB, OCTOBER 9 - 11

Perfect weather, good climbs and some unexpected adventure made the weekend of October 9-11 in the Valley a most enjoyable one for 26 people.

Saturday in addition to climbing on Ranger Rock and The Footstool there was the now massed masses\* at Monday Morning Slab. Several climbs didn't get started because of parties already on the route. While waiting, an informal contest developed at the beginning of the Harry Daley Route. About ten variations were developed for the start of this route during which it was between RRs & EBs and with a pair of Sheonards working out also.\* This reporter won't say who won but if you talk to the following individuals you'll get answers: Fried, Wing, McPherson, Endo, Master, Hinegardner, Bagdon.

Saturday night a traverse was made to the Mountain Room ostensibly to view the climb of Everest. The traverse varied from class 1 to class 6 depending on the participants, as did the return trip.

Sunday morning brought forth much ambition as two parties (Pies & Perkins, Bagdon & Alborn\*) climbed the higher Spire while Russ, Fried & McKellop\* did the Lower Spire.

Because of many exigencies (coupled with the fading memory of the leader who had climbed it some twelve years before) Bagdon & Alborn rappelled in the dark. Bagdon used a flashlight as a landing field beacon while Alborn adjusted his pre-flight carabiner brakes with the aid of matches. I must say the moonlight was matchless.

The grand adventure remained for Tim Ryan and his friend Barbara Schoetz. Checking out for Panorama Cliff (III) at 8 AM Sunday morning and returning at 3pm Monday afternoon (Oh, Mindy, you house mother, you! -ed) As I said earlier the weather was perfect.

MB

\*Indicates a disclaimer by the editor as to spelling and meaning of terms as translated from handwritten original.

## TAHQUITZ SEPTEMBER 25 AND 26

Twenty-five people signed out for climbs Saturday morning under rather doubtful looking weather. By about eleven o'clock it began misting rain and most people backed off their routes. Jensen's Jaunt (Pies and Lippuner), Angel's Fright (Carlsen and Masters, Mundwiler and Perkins) and Fingertip Traverse (Ryan and Nowell) were completed in spite of the rain. Saturday afternoon after waiting (without success) for the rain to stop, Jeter & Davis swam Angel's Fright, Bosted, Anderson and Moore swam The Trough.

Sunday, the weather was clear and several teams made up for Saturday by doing some of the longer routes we usually don't do Sunday. Ryan and Erskine did the Northeast Face, Mundwiler, Lippuner and Rapolee did the North Buttress, Nissen and Ferrand climbed West Lark. An unnamed team set some sort of record for Sunday--signing out for the Fingertip Traverse at 9:30 and returning (last) at 6:30.

Jeter and Tidball did an interesting variation on the Angle Iron Traverse, starting with the first pitch of the Fingertip Traverse and climbing the right side of the dihedral in the Fingertip lie back pitch as the second pitch.

Everyone was back by 6:30 and down to Humber Park before dark. (JTM)

## SKI MOUNTAINEERS TO MEET

The SMS Central Committee will hold a meeting on Tuesday, Oct. 26, at Sierra Club Headquarters. Main topic will be the spring ski touring schedule (think snow!). Members are welcome to attend or send in suggestions for Alpine ski tours to Chairman Doug Mantle--note new address (page 2) (BJL)

## MOUNTAINS OF NEW MEXICO

Barbara Lilley spent 8 days in the Wheeler and Pecos Wilderness Areas in early Sept. thus escaping all but 1 day of the bad weather plaguing the Sierra at the time. In addition to Wheeler Pk. (13,161'), New Mexico's high point, climbs were made of 3 13,000' peaks and 5 12,000' peaks in the Pecos Wilderness Area. All were CL 2 or under--some even with trails to the summit--and would be of little interest to rock climbers. There are few lakes (most of which have camping limitations) but plenty of streams; tall trees grow to 12,000' (thus limiting the views!). Most scenic approach to the better peaks of the Pecos Wilderness is from the north (Rio Santa Barbara); closest approach to Wheeler Pk. is from the Taos Ski Area. Wilderness permits are required for both Areas but there are no entry restrictions. A more detailed write-up of these mountains as well as the Beartooth Mountains of Montana will appear in a future issue of the Sierra Peaks Section newsletter. Non-subscribers to the SPS "Echo" who wish additional information may send a "SASE" to the writer at 8421 Lindley Ave., Northridge, CA 91325. (BJL)



## JOHN MUIR GREATEST CALIFORNIAN

California historians have selected naturalist John Muir as the greatest Californian of all time in a poll of history scholars and interested laymen throughout the state.

The poll, conducted jointly by the California Historical Society and the San Jose Mercury-News, sought to establish the greatest persons in California history—living or dead—in each of 10 categories.

Muir, a Scottish-born naturalist, was selected the most outstanding Californian of all time.

The nine other greatest Californians, chosen from 45 nominees, included novelist John Steinbeck, literature; photographer Ansel Adams, visual arts; Junipero Serra, pioneering and exploration; Walt Disney, performing arts; William Randolph Hearst, journalism; Gov. Hiram Johnson, politics and government, banker A.P. Giannini, commerce; horticulturalist Luther Burbank, science and medicine, and Hubert H. Bancroft, scholarship and education.

In conducting the poll, the sponsors asked more than a dozen historians to nominate five persons in each of the ten categories. The nominees were then submitted to all 700 members of the California Historical Society for a vote.

L.A. TIMES 7/11/76

## ON HARNESSSES AND BELAYING

In the September Mugelnoos, Ruth and John Mendenhall presented a discussion of MSR climbing harnesses and belaying methods. I offer here my opinions on these subjects which in some areas agree, but in others disagree, with the Mendenhalls.

My sons and I have used the MSR polypro harness for several years and find it to be far superior to a swami belt or tying into the climbing rope. It holds the body upright after a fall and doesn't put stress on the internal organs. Its advantages over other harnesses on the market are light weight and low cost (especially the tie-it-yourself version). A disadvantage is that the polypro material used is easily melt-abraded. Under a large load, such as from a leader fall, very little rope movement (even an inch or two) can cause melt-abrasion. There is no such thing as a completely static belay. Initial slack in the system, combined with stretch in the climbing rope, always gives a dynamic belay.

Although melt-abrasion can also occur with other synthetics, heavy nylon tubing or webbing is more resistant to melt-abrasion than the light-weight polypro used in the MSR harness. A more durable but heavier harness can be made with 1" or wider nylon tubing using the MSR pattern. Whatever material is used, it is most important not to allow the belay rope to rub against the harness webbing.

I disagree with the Mendenhall's conclusion that the body belay is safest. It is much safer to connect the climbing rope directly to the anchor. Modern climbing ropes are designed to provide an optimum dynamic belay using the inherent elasticity of the nylon. Rope slippage allowed by the belayer only subjects the falling climber to further risk of injury from striking rocks, ledges, etc.

The dynamic belay is a holdover from the days when manila ropes were used for climbing. These ropes did not have the elastic properties of nylon and a gradual application of belaying friction was necessary to prevent excessive deceleration forces. Inserting one's body between the anchor and the load of a falling climber adds a relatively weak link to the belay chain. With a well-padded back and wearing gloves, the body belay can hold a load of 300-400 pounds (see Summit Magazine, July 1969). This is inadequate for leader falls which can generate loads of several thousand pounds.

In 1974, the committee on climbing safety of the UIAA tested various belaying methods and devices (see Off Belay Magazine, October 1974). The belaying method finally recommended uses the Munter friction hitch on a locking carabiner connected directly to an anchor (now called the UIAA belaying technique). It is relatively simple and requires no special gadgets. In regular use, the friction hitch causes less wear on the rope than the normal abrasion received from contact with the rock. MSR tests using the friction hitch have shown that it takes 32 hard falls at the same spot to wear through the sheath of a kernmantle rope. Most climbers would retire a rope long before this.

I have used the friction hitch (as well as the body belay) to catch the bucket drop at Stony Point and Pacifico. I found the friction hitch gives a good dynamic belay with far less effort and potential harm to the belayer. Although less spectacular to watch (since no one gets yanked off their feet), the uninjured free-of-pain belayer is in much better condition to tie-off the rope (prusik loops are not needed) and assist the fallen climber.

Unless one has a really "bomb proof" anchor, two (or more) anchors should be used, connected with a sling so that the load is shared (not multiplied!) between them. It is important that the connecting sling pass through the belaying carabiner with a loop in one half of the doubled sling. Otherwise, the sling will slip through the carabiner if one anchor fails. The belaying carabiner should be a locking type or two nonlocking carabiners with gates reversed may be used.

The friction hitch is also excellent for rappelling, using the connecting carabiner on a two-piece harness or a carabiner attached to a sit harness or diaper sling. It eliminates the need for brake bars and other rappelling devices.

(continued page 5)

"On Harness and Belaying," cont'd:

The wear on my climbing ropes, after dozens of rappels, is negligible.

The body belay and duffersitz rappel are necessary when one does not have a carabiner and, therefore, are important in the climber's repertoire of skills. Otherwise, the UIAA approved technique is safer. I recommend that its use be encouraged in the RCS and taught as a part of the RCS training program.

(GN)

+ + + N E C R O L O G Y - - -

FATAL FALL AT TAHQUITZ

After a climb, John Halcomb and John Ripley returned to Lunch Rock at about 3 pm on October 3. They and others nearby heard what sounded like a large rock beginning to slide down somewhere between the Trough and the Maiden. Looking up, they were horrified to see a person cartwheeling in huge arcs down the face for at least 200 feet, all the way to the talus below their level. The victim was rapidly located, still breathing, but with head injuries and apparent internal injuries; he was not conscious.

Various climbers (eventually about 15) showed up and assumed a role in getting the victim down. Dave Russell, local Sierra Club member and son of Bill T. Russell, was the first person on the scene who had any knowledge of first aid techniques. The victim had lost considerable blood from massive head injuries by the time Dave reached him in about 10 minutes after the fall, and stopped the loss of blood. The victim was placed in a litter, but stopped breathing about  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the way down the trail. Dave then administered mouth to mouth artificial respiration while the litter was carried the rest of the way down the steep trail. The litter party was met by Forest Service personnel and an ambulance crew with resuscitation machine who were waiting for them at the junction of the good trail and the steep trail to Lunch Rock.

He appeared to have some chance of survival at the time the ambulance left, about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hours after the fall. However, it was later learned that he was dead on arrival at Hemet Valley Hospital.

Those at the scene never learned the details of the mishap. A short newspaper note identified the victim as James Cameron, 17, of San Diego, who with a friend "had attempted to climb the 8000 foot peak". He had no swami belt or rope attached, but his companion arrived within 10 minutes of the fall, apparently ruling out a slip from the summit. His friend had no technical gear, both were wearing hiking boots. It seems probable that they were up on the face of the rock unroped or with an inadequate tie-in.

In the absence of further information, it seems reasonable to conclude that this fatality did not involve "real" climbers. It is no less lamentable for that, but it should not reflect on the sport as we practice it.

(J.R. & T.J. combined articles)

DEATH ON SHASTA

A Santa Barbara woman is dead and her companion is in critical condition after the pair was crushed by a rockslide on the upper slopes of Mt. Shasta Sept. 22.

The Siskiyou County Sheriff's Office has identified the victim as Sue McNeal Laula, 33, of Santa Barbara, who received massive injuries when melting ice sent tons of rock crashing down as she and Dr. David Steven Swimmer, 35, of Beverly Hills were climbing the mountain. Swimmer was removed from the precarious slope by helicopter and transferred to a hospital in Medford, Ore., where he was listed in critical condition.

Sheriff's Capt. Ray Seeley, who led the rescue effort, said Swimmer, a physician, and Miss Laula were heading for the summit on the southwest slope of the 14,162 foot peak when the slide let loose at the 12,000 foot level. The site was an area known as "The Heart". Seeley said members of another climbing team in the area told rescuers they "heard a rumble" and looked up to see rocks descending on the Southern California couple. Two of the witnesses, said Seeley, hiked out to a ski resort to report the incident while two others from the party went to the aid of the victims. The rescue chief said his office received word of the tragedy at 11:20am and rescuers reached the scene by helicopter little more than an hour later. Swimmer was evacuated unconscious from the slope and given emergency treatment before being transferred to the Oregon hospital. Members of the second climbing party, believed to be from Marin County, said as the temperatures rose on the mountain after a freezing night, they could hear ice cracking and could hear small slides coming down before the larger slide descended on the victims.

"When we got there," Seeley said, "there were boulders as big as cars just sitting there on the ice, waiting for it to melt so they could come rolling down on us". "This is probably the worst time to climb the mountain. This freezing and thawing always causes slides," he added. Seeley said the party that witnessed the accident returned to their camp at Lake Helen and reportedly planned to continue their own climb.

(sent by B&T G from the Sacramento Bee 9/23/76)

## CLIMBER FALLS TO DEATH FROM YOSEMITE PEAK

Robert Locke, 22, Suisun City, was killed Oct. 5 when he fell while ascending Mt. Watkins from Yosemite Valley. Park spokesmen said Locke was one of two climbers scaling the 2000 foot mountain across the valley from Half Dome when his rope broke. He fell 200 feet before his fall was broken by his haul line.

His climbing partner, Chris Falkenstein, climbed down to him, and found him alive. He placed Locke in a sleeping bag, gave him water and rappelled down to the valley floor for help. A 12 man rescue team began operations that evening and, during a daring night-time descent, two climbers reached Locke about 4 am Oct. 6, but found him dead. Park officials said a U.S. Coast Guard plane with a powerful searchlight helped in the 1000 foot descent during the night.

--Santa Monica Evening Outlook

THE QUESTIONABLE PRUSIK LOOP

By Ray Smutek, Editor of OFF BELAY

Ever since the Chouinard catalog recommended "guarding against the hazards inherent in rappelling" by using a Prusik loop, the practice has become widespread. Also widespread are reports of climbers becoming "hung up" when a Prusik used this way jammed. The item in the July Mugelnoos is a good example (on Mt. Clarence King).

In a Jam

I propose a second look at this technique, one which suggests an opposite point of view -- that using a Prusik is inherently dangerous & serves only to instill a false sense of security in those using the procedure.

First, the problem of jamming. The whole idea behind using a Prusik is that it will grip the rope with the least provocation which it does all too often. On a low-angle rappel, it is a nuisance which is easily taken care of. If the rappeler climbs up a bit, taking his weight off the Prusik, it can be freed and he can proceed with the rappel -- until it locks again. The real problem arises with overhanging and totally free rappels. It the knot locks, it cannot be freed! The only way to release a Prusik knot is to take the weight off it. This is impossible if there is no place to stand. I know of many cases where rappellers have hung themselves up so thoroughly that a knife, deftly applied to the Prusik sling, was the only solution.

The counter argument here, of course, is to manage the knot properly. Keep it loose and under control. But wouldn't it be better to apply that concentration to the rappel itself, to making sure it's rigged properly, to checking your partner, to watching the line of descent, to avoiding loose rock, to just plain being careful?

No Real Protection

A second, more meaningful argument is that if you genuinely lost control & fell while rappelling, the Prusik knot would probably not hold anyway! The following excerpt from a British Mountaineering Council report issued in 1973, analyzes an accidental death caused by failure of a protection Prusik. The climber was top-roping a pitch, not rappelling, but the precipitating incident was a fall, which supposedly was protected by the Prusik. The BMC report: "On examination of the rope afterwards, it was found that a short piece of the Prusik line was fused through and to the rope at a point where the sheath had been rucked after slipping over the core. The Prusik loop had been of nylon or Perlon kernmantel line of 4mm diameter, which had a breaking load when new of about 200kgf.

"It is evident that the Prusik knot slipped down the rope for some distance before it failed and that friction-generated heat contributed to the failure of the loop. Calculations based on the mass of material in a Prusik knot of 4mm line and known specific heat of nylon or Perlon show that failure due to melting is inevitable..if the climber falls only one foot and any slip at all takes place between the Prusik and the standing rope.

"It is tempting to assume that the Prusik might have held if it had been fully tightened on the rope beforehand, but it is very doubtful whether any Prusik of 4mm line could have withstood this fall no matter how tightly it was pulled. Tests have shown that such a Prusik fails at about 230kgf and this force could only be expected to hold a falling climber if the working length of the 11mm rope is many times the height of the climber. Indeed, the nearer the climber approached to the peg securing the fixed rope, the more certain it was that the Prusik would fail. A Prusik knot of thicker line would have to be stronger but not by enough to load the fixed rope sufficiently to absorb the falling climber's kinetic energy, while the risk of slipping and consequent heating and weakening of the knot would be increased.

The forces involved in holding a falling climber are likely to be so large that anything in the nature of a weak link between the climber and his rope should be avoided. The Prusik, even if perfectly formed, is much too weak to give reliable protection to a falling climber; its tendency to slip if not fully tightened is a further hazard."

Give you the Creeps?

...Translating to a rappel, the Prusik gives the least protection near the top where protection is needed most. Further, if not locked when the fall occurs, it will probably melt rather than lock.

Further evidence of the lack of protection from a Prusik is shown by a series of  
(Continued page 7)

tests by members of the National Speliological Soc...The results were enlightening. During a free fall, the natural urge is to grab the rope, especially with the hand already on it guiding the Prusik. The result is predictable -- it insures that the Prusik will not lock and the rappeler simply rides the Prusik down. In the tests, most experienced cavers were not able to release the Prusik after free fall began.

Rappelling has proven to be one of the more dangerous procedures used in mountaineering. Most of the accidents, however, are the result of anchor failures. Obviously a Prusik does nothing to reduce this hazard. Thus it appears that a Prusik "safety" does nothing except needlessly complicate an already complex maneuver.

Rappelling, reduced to its simplest terms, is a "self-belay." As with other forms of belaying, safety lies in understanding the procedure, practicing it under controlled conditions, and being careful. If this is not enough - when beginners are involved, when fatigue or cold muddle the mind, when rockfall poses an extreme hazard to the rappeler - then provide additional protection that is meaningful, namely belay with a second rope.

(Ray Smutek says he will use this article in a future issue of OFF BELAY, but in recognition of the inspiration, Mugelnoos has first shot at it)

submitted by RDM

#### CLIMBERS RESCUED AT 19,600 FEET; HELICOPTER SETS WORLD RECORD

"It must have been days ago that we fell from 20,000'..days since the other two girls had gone for help..no word..Jenifer still can't move..thought her back or neck broken..fuel's gone, little food..can't get Jenifer down without killing her. She keeps talking about dying anyway.Sleep, got to stay warm..A noise, a helicopter, a red helicopter.. waving, yelling, screaming, waving..Oh God, it didn't see us!

Bud Woods kept the power on as he passed over the girls, guiding the Hiller Turbine conversion up the south face of Mt.McKinley, climbings towards the group where the two girls had gone for help. Early that morning of June 3, the two girls had managed to reach another party on the west side of the mountain and had used that group's radio to call for help. Arriving in Talkeetna that morning, after his 19th successful climb of McKinley, Ray Genet heard of the plight of the two stranded women. Genet has been climbing mountains for most of his forty years in the Americas and Europe, as well as working with the military as a civilian consultant for Alpine operations. The past few years he has spent as an expedition leader based out of Talkeetna at the foot of McKinley. Genet and Woods have worked together in the past few months using the Hiller Turbine Conversion on two high altitude rescue operations and Genet felt that the only chance for survival of the injured girl was in the Hiller Turbine with Woods piloting."With a broken back or neck she wouldn't have survived the usual sled rescue". Genet located Woods as he was boarding a plane for Denver,asking him to come back as he was the only person able to rescue the girl in time. Woods turned back to Palmer where he runs Woods Air Service, Inc. The Park Service was in a quandry,they had already started normal rescue procedures but they couldn't get a ground party up for several days.Yet the Hiller Turbine was only certified by the FAA for operation below 12,000'. After being convinced that this was the only possible chance of saving the girl, the Park Service finally allowed Woods to"volunteer"to make the rescue. Woods arrived with the Hiller at the 7500' base camp late that afternoon. Immediately he headed up the mountain to look over the situation and determine the capability of the Heli at that elevation. As he climbed for the top the weather that had been good all day deteriorated to hardly more than a thousand feet visibility. Woods flew down to the rescue base camp. Picking up Genet, he ferried fuel to several locations on the mountain for emergency use. After making the fuel drops, Woods turned the Allison powered aircraft toward the top of the mountain to give Genet an overview of the situation. On the way up they passed over the girls, making a low level drop of fuel and survival food. At a gross weight of 2200# they approached the summit climbing 6-800ft/min and"still going strong" In a 2-3mph wind he hovered the ship for a landing 20' short of the summit at 20,300'.As the weather was deteriorating, Genet decided to descend on foot to the stranded women at 19,600' while Woods went back to bring up rescue gear. "I woke up with a start-something bumped me and I turned and saw Ray Genet striding down on us like an angry Olympic God". "As I looked at Jenifer to see how bad she was hurt, I got her coherent,asked if she could stand up,and she said yes and did, she still looked in serious condition but nothing seemed to be broken. Woods brought up another climber and eqpt, landing at a prearranged staging area a thousand feet below. Genet got the women roped to him and moved to a wind shelf chosen as the landing site. As Genet packed down the snow on the 10'wide shelf,Woods hovered the HUL2-J3 for a landing. Gently touching one skid with the other over space,the blade tips barely cleared the mountain face. Genet lifted Jenifer into the Heli & Woods dropped off the shelf,down to the 7500' base camp. As Paula saw the girl she had cared for the past 36 hours heading for safety,she decided she could make the descent to the staging area where Woods could make a safer landing. Woods made two more trips that day,taking out Paula and the volunteer climber and again for Genet and the eqpt. left behind. Woods didn't set out that day to prove anything, he went up that mountain to save two lives, even though the insurance on his ship and his own life insurance were void when he passed the 12,000 ft mark. Piloting the Hiller Turbine Conversion he did break the existing altitude landing record of 18,600' for North America and according to all available sources every international record as well.

---General Aviation News, submitted by Ray VanAken



## DOGPATCH DILEMMA

## ACT 1, SCENE 1

SETTING: A snowy winter's night last March, high in the local mountain country. MAMMY YOCUM, LITTLE ABNER, and MOONBEAM McSWINE warm themselves around a potbelly stove in Moonbeam's cabin.

MOONBEAM: (jumping up and down and squealing in rage) We'uns has got to do somethin 'bout these here hords o' flatlanders a comin up Dogpatch!!! They's got no respect fur private property; they all'es a poopin an a snoopin 'round ma cabin! Why ah even cotched one uf um a peekin thru ma keyhole tuther day!!

LITTLE A: (with a woebegone look) They's everywhere these days. Why can't they leave us po folks alone? Ta'nt right, we'uns was here fust.

MAMMY Y: (puffing thoughtfully on her corncob pipe) Ah reckon ah'm to blame. That flatland reporter sweet talked me into writen 'bout Dogpatch sassity fur his newspaper. Ah guv um some Dogpatch history un even told 'bout the gold mines up here.

LITTLE A: Yup, after that came out, ever flatlander fur miles 'round bin comin up here whoopin & hollerin, un carryin a skinny little pick. Must figure on mining our gold with it, un carryin it out in thur fancy little backpacks.

MOONBEAM: Keerect! No respect fur private property!! Yo should uf seen the herd uf um what come by this mounin! They wuz gnawin on chicken legs un throwin the bones over thur shoulders!! Ma friends in the pen out back otter give um some lessons in trail etiquette!!

MAMMY Y: Ah thinks we'uns need to put some adverse publicity into the Dogpatch Gazette. We'uns could say the Injins is on the warpath, un tourister fellers had best stay away or risk gittin scalped.

MOONBEAM: Right! Un touristers is anyone who ain't wearin skiis!!

LITTLE A: Hold on! Ah heerd they's a new group o'fellers calls theyselves "ski touristers".

MOONBEAM: Ah seen some onest, but they'ns got the wrong kind o' skiis un's the wrong kind o' people!!

LITTLE A: Guess yo is right. Onest a flatlander, all'es a flatlander. Reckon yo cain't make a silk purse outen a sow's ear. Oops, sorry Moonbeam, a didn't mean that.

MAMMY Y: Ah got an idea. Fust, we'uns gets ourselfs designated as state "Historical Landmarks", un gets Moonbeam's cabin placed on the "Endangered Species" list. Second, we'uns gets the Sierra Club to lobby fur a "Dogpatch Mountain Wilderness Area" to protect us'ns un our way o' life.

MOONBEAM: Good idea! Then we sets ourselfs up to issue permits to come in here! Only them whats a wearin the right kind o' skiis gets in !!

LITTLE A: Hot dog, no more undesirable types in Dogpatch! But supposen some flatland touristers tries to sneak in a carrin skiis?

MOONBEAM: Simple! We gives um a skiin test, un them what can't ski good enough gets a swift kick back to where they come from!

MAMMY Y: We'ns got a good chance to get a bill through congress. Ah heerd the President's bin a sayin he's gonna spend more money fur National Parks un conversation.

LITTLE A: (at the word "President", jumps up to attention and salutes) Ah is a 100% red blooded Hamerican boy, un ah respects the President uf the Hewnited States! Hit's our patriotic duty to protect Dogpatch un our way o' life!!

MOONBEAM: Hooray! Ah'll write to Senator Foghorn, un all them Sierra Club political fellers!! Ah kin hardly wait to git to ma typewriter!!!

END SCENE 1

(TJ)

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## NOTE ON ROCKCLIMBER'S "GORY, GORY" SONG

The text of ths song was submitted to the Editor for publication in Mugelnoos, but space limitations prevented this. The present Editor would be happy to send a text copy to anyone sending in a SASE to him. @3629 Ocean View Ave LA, CA, 90066

YOUR OCTOBER EDITOR ANNOUNCES WITH THE (Groan) END OF THIS MASSIVE MUGELNOOS THAT H E DECLINE\$ TO BE EDITOR FOR AT LEAST TWO YEARS AS TRANQUILLITY ERODED!