

So you want to be a @*\$#ing mountain climber?

DAN PIERGALLINI

Some of you might remember the recent article by Alistair Anagnostou about Abercrombie and other clothing brands that have shirts "with logos that shout out 'I'm a @*\$#ing mountain climber that engages in life threatening but exhilarating sports'". Well, now you can be a @*\$#ing mountain climber here at NCSSM. Sort of.

Although the closest mountains are a good two and half hours away, NCSSM has the next best thing: its own climbing wall. In 1999, a group of students built the wall for Special Projects Week in the PEC wrestling room. While a climbing wall

is not a mountain, the principle is still the same: you climb until you reach the top. The climbing wall is more than just a your or-

trator will tell you, it takes 15 minutes (at most) to get certified, then you can come back and climb as much as you like.

The certification process requires that a student learn how to tie the correct knot (a double figure eight), put on a harness, and be able to belay another climber (using the proper commands). Students can

are holds for the climber to use for their hands and feet. Some of these holds are organized into courses, so that anyone from the beginner to the most advanced are challenged while climbing the wall. And since the holds are removable, the climbing wall can always be changed to make different and more challenging courses.

When you go to the climbing wall, you won't be alone. There are over 65 certified climbers for the climbing wall. However, they don't climb all at once. There are usually six

or less people at the wall every night, meaning that if you want to climb, you'll have plenty of time to do so each night. And even if you don't climb, you can always come hang out on the gym mats in the wrestling room and just watch and socialize, as many people do. And the climbing wall is open from 6:30-7:45 PM Monday-Thursday every week, so come by one day and give climbing a shot. Even if you don't like it, you can still rightfully wear your shirt that says "I'm a @*\$#ing mountain climber".



Safety is an important aspect of climbing

Ashley Rankin

dinary wall, it has other purposes as well. Besides just using it to climb, you can also use it to get a good athletic workout and it's also a good place to just hang out at.

You might wonder what it takes to get to climb the wall at NCSSM. As each wall adminis-

get certified by any of the three wall administrators: Tommy Miller, Anna Grant, or Alistair Anagnostou.

The wall is able to handle up to three climbers at a time. Each of these climbers climbs on a particular section of the wall. On each of these sections, there

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Gettin' jiggy with Mrs. Link

APRIL PRIDGEN

Many of you have seen Marilyn Link around the Biology floor teaching students the wonders of dissecting cats. However, Anatomy and Human Physiology are not the only classes Mrs. Link teaches. Every Thursday night, she straps on her gold dancing shoes and spends the evening instructing more than fifty beginning and advanced ballroom dancers.

when she decided that headstands were not for her. Ten years after getting married, Mrs. Link finally convinced her husband to take dance lessons. Now, the couple has been dancing off and on for thirty years.

The ballroom dancing seminar now taught by the Links at Science and Math began as an evening activity for Special Projects Week (which has now turned into Mini-Term) in the mid-1980s. The kids who took

many types of cued ballroom dances including waltz, tango, cha-cha, two-step, and jive. The dances are usually cued over the music by a cuer so that the dancers know exactly what steps to do.

"Because it is cued over the music, people who aren't strong dancers can do more complex dances," said Mrs. Link.

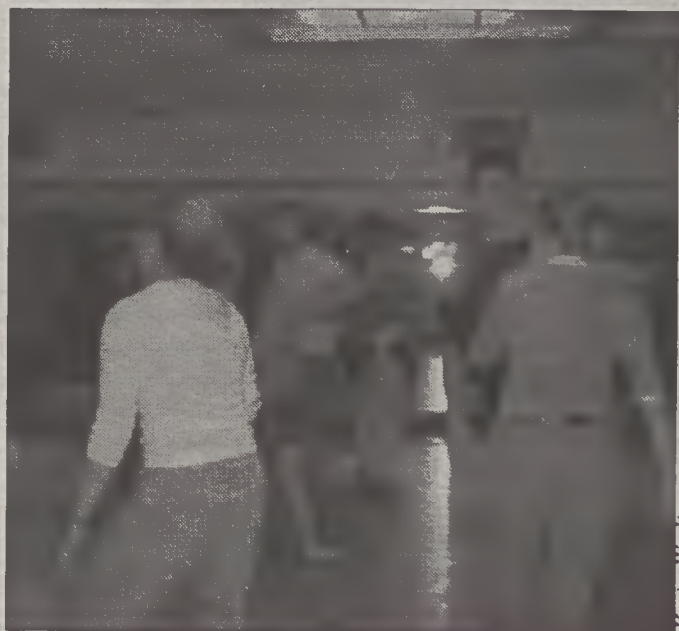
Many students admit that the advantages of taking ballroom dancing are much greater than learning a few more dance moves. Dancing is a great way to meet people and relieve stress.

"This is my second semester (of ballroom dancing) and I absolutely love it. It reminds me that this school is about more than just academics. It helps us develop as people," said Senior Kiki Murphey.

Mrs. Link also agrees that the seminar is very helpful to some students. There are times when a student who is having difficulty in his classes will take the seminar as a stress reliever, and his grades will actually improve. Once, a student with coordination difficulties joined the class and stuck with it for a whole year. Other students en-

joyed the tango so much that they composed one of their own for Latin America class. One student even went so far as to drop out of Case Western for a year to pursue professional round dancing. (However, Mrs. Link assures us that this is not her goal in teaching the seminar.) Yet, whatever the reason, ballroom dancing usually provides students with a sense of accomplishment.

Mrs. Link says it is always great when students finally catch on to a hard dance. "There's a spontaneous burst of applause. Nobody ever does that at a lab practical!" she said.



The Links have been teaching ball room dancing for many years

Katie Watlington

Mrs. Link began to cultivate an interest in ballroom dancing as a teenager when her parents began taking her and a group of friends to folk dances in Maryland. Those special memories helped her make the transition from gymnastics to ballroom dancing in college,

this class enjoyed it so much that they requested a seminar. Seminars have been taught off and on ever since according to student interest. Last year, the Links offered ballroom dancing as a "stress reliever activity" and it became a seminar class once again by popular demand. Mrs. Link's students learn

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