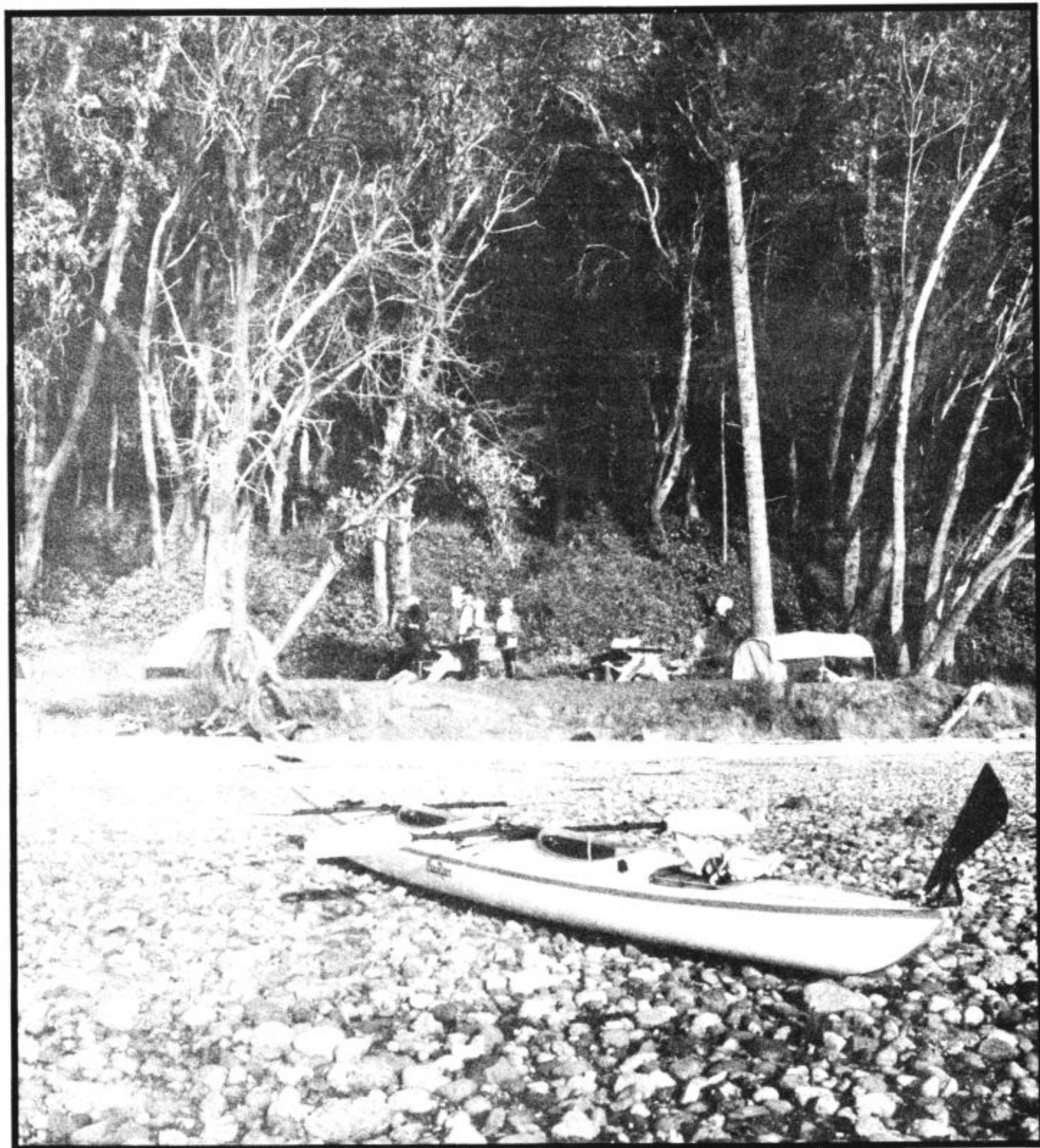


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# Pack & Paddle

VOLUME 3, NUMBER 3



RANDOM VIEW—

Wet Willy Lynch, Cool Craig Apperson, and Damp Daisy Ward on a very rainy day on the Mowich Lake road.

Jane Habegger

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On a winter kayak camping trip: Diana and Bert Cripe, and Ann Marshall. Blake Island State Park, Washington. Photo by Lee McKee.

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### WE CAN COEXIST

From recent Letters to the Editor, it appears some *Pack & Paddle* readers remain misinformed concerning grizzly bear recovery in the North Cascades (February, page 4). Let me clarify a few issues.

Designation of a recovery zone is a far cry from establishing this area as the sole domain of the grizzly bear. A visit to Yellowstone or Glacier National Parks (with a combined visitation of over 5 million visitors each year) quickly dispels the myth that grizzly bear recovery restricts the freedom of those who choose to visit a recovery area.

Drive off the paved highways in those areas and you'll see that logging, mining, ranching, hunting, fishing, horseback riding and hiking are continuing—as they have for decades prior. In some cases too much of the former are still allowed, but steps are being taken to better *manage* these lands.

The buzzword of the '90s is and will be ecosystem management. For an animal that requires large tracts of land to sustain itself, the grizzly bear gives us an opportunity to look much more broadly at how we manage our lands than what we have done in the past.

By focusing not *on* the grizzly bear itself, but instead on how we manage this area *for* the grizzly bear, we in turn aim for a much higher goal. For in so doing we ensure that habitat for a diversity of plant and animal species, from the spotted owl to the gray wolf to salmon, remains intact.

Does this change in philosophy affect us? Of course it does. It forces us to re-evaluate our behavior and actions when visiting these lands. Does it preclude our earning a livelihood or continuing to enjoy the scenic beauty of the North Cascades?

Ask any traveler at Logan Pass or Old Faithful if being in a grizzly bear recovery zone is ruining their vacation. Ask any farmer or rancher if they are being forced out of business because of grizzly bear recovery. I think you'll find that the answer is no on all accounts. It is not people's *freedoms* being changed by grizzly bear recovery; it is simply people's *attitudes*.

A case in point: Augmentation was opposed by many in the Cabinet Mountains of northwestern Montana. After careful placement of three collared grizzly bears in that recovery zone, weekly status reports were sent by wild-

life biologists to area newspapers showing location information for these bears.

Initially this data was front page news—week in, week out. But after a time, when no one started bumping into these bears in the backcountry, this information was placed deeper and deeper into the depths of these newspapers, until finally it's been removed altogether.

Why? Because people adjusted to the change and learned that, yes, they can indeed coexist—bear and human—as we can here in the North Cascades.

For the bears' sake, and ultimately for ours, we must try!

Randall D. Payne  
Renton, Washington

### GRIZZLIES HAVE ADVERSE IMPACT

Much has been written eloquently about—and against—the plan to import artificially grizzly bears into areas in the Cascades where they now exist in very small numbers, if at all.

It is one thing to protect some animals in some areas by hunting and trapping restrictions; it is another to transplant them forcibly from elsewhere to increase their numbers. The impact on humans, among others, using these areas for the purpose of well-deserved recreation is adverse.

However rare hostile encounters may be, grizzly bears represent a danger to hikers and backpackers. The heirs of the victims of fatal encounters will find little consolation in the infrequency of such occurrences, and so will those who suffer serious injuries. *Why should a dangerous situation not now existing be created?*

Mr. Bela Vadasz  
Bellevue, Washington

### TURN NORTH CASCADES INTO JURASSIC PARK?

My prime objection to introducing grizzlies to the North Cascades is on the grounds of physical safety. Granted, the odds of grizzly bear attack are rather long, but if you are the one in ten thousand listening to your own bones being crunched the odds shorten rapidly and considerably.

I have no desire to wipe out all the grizzlies, but I just don't want to spend

time with them. If grizzlies move in on their own, okay, but let's not encourage them. History seems to indicate that an exotic species reproduces rapidly in a new habitat lacking natural controls. The argument could be made that grizzlies once existed in the area being considered. However, in the short run they would be exotic because the environment has changed, at least to some extent.

If grizzlies, why not lions and tigers or carnivorous dinosaurs? They all existed at one time on the land underlying the present surface. Maybe converting the North Cascades park to Jurassic Park could bail out the federal budget!

I would think that wildlife biologists would have learned their lesson with the mountain goat fiasco in the Olympics. They introduced the goats which rapidly reproduced in the high country. The goats' sharp hooves demolished the plant cover on the thin erodible soils.

I have another objection which I believe is more than philosophical—trail crowding. When I first visited the North Cascades nearly 45 years ago you could hike for a week without seeing another person. As we all know, that is no longer the case.

I believe that grizzly introduction would deter people from using trails within the area and concentrate use on the grizzly-free areas, to the detriment of those areas.

I suppose the argument could be made that introducing grizzlies throughout the North Cascades and other wilderness areas around the country would solve the overcrowding problem. Only those willing to risk the chance of listening to their bones crunch and those comfortable with living on the edge would enter the wilderness areas. Perhaps if I was 50 years younger, I might subscribe to that theory, but not today.

Sure, our forefathers coexisted with grizzlies, but many of them were gnawed on and most of them carried firearms for hunting and protection. Today if you shoot a "b'ar" you might end up *behind* bars.

There are plenty of grizzlies in the woods. Let's keep them where they are!

Bill Keil  
Portland, Oregon

# BACKCOUNTRY NEWS





REPORTS AND CONDITIONS

## INTRODUCTION

See "How to be a *Pack & Paddle* contributor" on page 3. All readers are encouraged to contribute to *Backcountry News*. Information that is particularly helpful includes: distance & elevation gain, condition of trail or route, hazards such as tidal currents, rockfall, avalanche danger, washouts, bees' nests, etc. and pleasant or fun things you encountered.

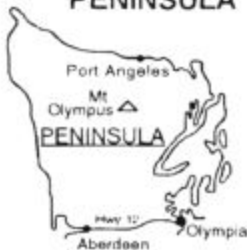
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-  —Hiking, backpacking on trails.
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-  —Snowshoeing and cross-country skiing.



## PENINSULA



 **GREEN MOUNTAIN, not Gold** (DNR; USGS Wildcat Lake)—The original plan was to meet P&P editor Ann in Port Orchard and climb Gold Mountain, 1761 feet, the highest summit in her county, Kitsap. Thinking this trip would be a piece of cake, and perhaps nothing more than a scenic car-climb, Karen and nearly-4-month-old Aaron were happy to come along on this crisp sunny day.

Ann and Lee gave us an informative tour of the rooms and computer centers where this magazine is produced. Yellow Cat even made a cameo appearance. Unfortunately, Ann had monkey-wrench news for us.

She had found out that the usual access roads to Gold (including the one described in *Footsore 4*) are now closed to public access because they enter Bremerton's drinking watershed. To double check this advice, however, we

explored the southeast and south approaches to Gold only to be stopped by gates with "ABSOLUTELY" serious signs speaking of fines and imprisonment for proceeding.

A little disgruntled, we car-circled clockwise around Gold to its northwest side where we came upon a trailhead at Gold Creek, just southeast of Tahuya Lake. Here was a nice informative map that showed a trail to the top of Green Mountain up its west flank, not shown on the 7.5-minute Wildcat Lake quad. Its summit is about 1.5 miles northwest of Gold, and is one of a series of fourteen Green Mountains in Washington.

The trail appeared to be about 1.5 miles long with about 1100 feet elevation gain. This seemed do-able, so we changed our objective and the baby, and loaded him in his pack.


The trail has a few unmarked forks lower down, but common sense kept us on course. It was often unpleasantly rocky, frequently more like a foot-deep, dry stream bed than a trail, and the distance seemed closer to 2.5 miles with squirming Aaron requiring various position and parent changes.

But the goal was absolutely worth the effort. Shortly before the summit, Ann spotted tall, spindly rhododendrons, and near the top, a picnic area opened up to reveal touchable views of the entire Olympic Range, from Ellinor to Walker and all the more familiar summits in between. The Brothers were only 17 miles away.

Low-angle winter sun cast defining shadows in the numerous river valleys emptying this side of the range. In a

few more feet, the rocky 1689-foot "vista" top offered a wonderful look at the Cascades, including a view of all five volcanoes, and 22 miles straight out to downtown Seattle, close enough to recognize the buildings by name; and Daniel and Stuart, two peaks you don't see from Seattle; and Bremerton and the Puget Islands; and much more.

The true 1700-foot summit was a couple of hundred yards farther south, sporting a large communications tower, a 1954 benchmark, and closer views of the antenna-adorned Gold Mountain, which is still on the books for another day soon.—John Roper, Bellevue, 2/1.

 **DUCKABUSH RIVER** (Olympic Natl Park; USGS Mt Jupiter, The Brothers)—Having never "winter camped" before, I decided to broaden my horizons. Don Abbott, a fellow Olympian member who had never winter camped either, and I picked the Duckabush trail.

Arriving at Collins Campground (which is closed) at 8pm Friday night, we parked at the horse corral lot to spend the night. Knowing it would be COLD I brought along two boxes of wood and a 3-hour Duraflame log for an instant fire, which we put into effect 5 minutes after arriving. With a full moon shining down through the trees, a sky full of stars, and our beautiful fire going, we sat and ate a late dinner.

Up and on the trail by 8am, destination Tenmile Camp (1500 feet). Clear and cold weather. Saw five other people, and the parking lot showed three spots where vehicle glass was on

## BACKCOUNTRY NEWS

### DEADLINE: March 22

Submit your trail reports by this date for the next issue. (Deadline for other departments is earlier; check with us for details.)

the ground.

There are at least 12 streams to cross; some we could jump over and others we had to rock-hop—and then there are the ones that got our feet wet. After getting past Little Hump and Big Hump the trail is an easy walk. Some of the trail damage in the first 4 miles consists of washouts (three), branches on the trail, a few down trees, and soft spots that we had to walk quickly over.

We stopped at a look-out point near Big Hump to take in the sight of Saint Peter's Dome, soak up the sunshine, and snack and rest. There are numerous campsites along this 10-mile stretch, all inviting, and water never a problem. We passed three people who were camped a little past Five-mile camp.

About ½-mile after Big Hump is a 10-foot section of the trail that was a solid sheet of ice, which landed me on my rear end! A big blow-down is at about the 6-mile marker, but we easily maneuvered around.

We had scenery of white frosted trees along the river, sunshine filtering through big timber, crying rocks, and icicles surrounding plant stems.

Arriving at Ten-mile, a very nice campsite, at 3pm, we set up our camps and proceeded to get firewood. Everything was wet. At 4:45pm it was 35 degrees. Don had brought a small bag of wood with pitch on it, we had gasoline (from the stove), a candle (wax works well), newspaper, and lots of matches. That little fire took about 4 hours of our time to get going. With my 6 layers of

clothes on I actually had a good night's sleep.

We had a nice first winter-camping experience, with lots of laughter (over the fire), sharing stories and ideas of hiking.—Kerry Gilles, Westport, and Don Abbott, Aberdeen, 1/29-30.

**HURRICANE RIDGE**—About 108" of snow at the top now. The road is not plowed during the week, and some equipment breakdowns have meant that plowing is behind schedule. Be sure to call the Visitors Center for current road conditions: 206-452-0330.—Ranger, 2/23.

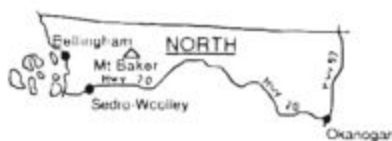
**WILDERNESS BEACHES**—The Mosquito Creek shelter collapsed in a winter storm. The debris will be removed this spring and it will not be rebuilt.

A sand ladder was destroyed by high surf at North Taylor Point near Third Beach. A hand-line remains, but the ascent and descent of the bluff may be tricky at best and impossible for some.

Some campsites above the high tide line at the forest edge have been washed away by storm surf.—Ranger.

**STAIRCASE RAPIDS LOOP**—This is no longer a loop. The bridge 1 mile up was hit by a log and is not safe to cross.—Ranger, 2/15.

## NORTH



**SAUK MOUNTAIN (USGS Bacon Pk)**—Mark DesVoigne, Gail Pritchard and I chose to do the northwest face and north ridge since snow conditions were very good although the weather deteriorated on us during the climb.

Normally you can drive only 3 to 4 miles on the road but because of the low snowfall, we were able to drive almost to the 6 mile marker (3500 feet). We followed the road to just below the summer parking area (trailhead), then made an ascending traverse to the timbered west ridge.

Descending, and traversing northeast, we reached the base of the northwest face. The route up the face is about 500 feet, ranging from 40 to 55 degrees. The crux section was a traverse on steep snow with a few icy spots. Once you reach the crest of the north ridge, follow it south to the summit. This ridge is

narrow and steep in sections. Just before the summit, you have to descend on the west side of the ridge to bypass a vertical step.

The climb took 4½ hours. Besides crampons and a rope, a second ice tool and a few good snow pickets and ice screws are recommended. Under good conditions, this is really a nice climb.—Dallas Kloke, Anacortes, 2/6.

**SALMON RIDGE**—This area has groomed cross-country ski trails. Located on roads 3070 and 3075 off the Mount Baker Highway.

Call the Mount Baker Ranger Station for information: 206-856-5700.—Ranger, 2/18.

**HIGHWAY 20**—Closed for the season at milepost 134 (Ross Lake trail) on the west side and at Early Winters on the east side. Will reopen in late spring.

**METHOW VALLEY**—Sun Mountain got 6" of new snow last night; Mazama got 1 foot. And that's on top of all the new snow we got over the last weekend. All the Methow Valley trails are groomed and we've got better skiing now than we did in January.

Backcountry skiing is also quite good, with powder on a good base. For more information, call MVSTA, 800-682-5787; Methow Central Reservations, 800-422-3048; or Sun Mountain, 800-572-0493.—Don Portman, Winthrop, 2/23.

**HELI-SKIING**—North Cascade Heli-skiing is in its fifth season. Heli-skiing trips are offered to advanced downhill and strong intermediate nordic skiers.

The heli-skiing permit covers over 350,000 acres and 80 designated runs. The program runs into April. Call 509-996-3272.—Ranger, 2/23.

**OKANOGAN NATL FOREST**—For several weeks, bald eagles have been spotted along the Okanogan, Columbia and Methow Rivers, where they usually winter. These birds primarily feed on fish, but may also eat winter-killed and road-killed mule deer carcasses.

The birds also fish the open waters of both the Okanogan and Methow Rivers. The eagles can often be seen perched in the cottonwood and poplar trees found along the water.

Logging continues right through the winter on plowed forest roads, some of which are closed to the public on weekdays. Check with the appropriate ranger station for road closures: Twisp, 509-997-2131; Tonasket, 509-486-2186; Winthrop, 509-996-2266.



Sea stack on the Olympic coast.

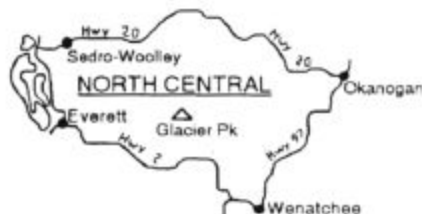
Don Paulson



# BACKCOUNTRY NEWS

REPORTS AND CONDITIONS

## NORTH CENTRAL



### BEAVER LAKE TRAIL

(Baker-Snoqualmie Natl

Forest; USGS White Chuck Mtn)—This is a good lowland winter hike a few miles south of Darrington. The trail follows an old railroad grade along the Sauk River, passing between two beaver ponds, stands of virgin cedar trees, and decaying trestles.

This is a level trail until you get to the site of the old Sauk Ranger Station. Here there is a huge cedar tree that was used as a fire lookout. The climbing spikes are on the back side away from the trail.

From here, the trail climbs a short hill to the Mountain Loop Highway for a total of 3 miles from end to end. The trail is muddy in places and there are a couple of trees down that are easy to get over. The bridges were slippery and a couple had rotten planks. We saw a new beaver dam at the northeast end of the bridge between the ponds.

Mount Pugh towered above with fresh snow. We enjoyed our lunch on the shore of the slough that runs along the upper end of the trail.

On the way out, I remembered I had left my wallet on top of the car! Our last half-mile was at a fast walk. Luckily the wallet was still there when we got back to the car.—Linda Rostad, Bothell, 1/27.

### MOUNTAIN LOOP HIGHWAY—

When Steve and I finished our Beaver Lake hike (above) we decided to continue over Barlow Pass to Granite Falls on the Mountain Loop Highway. Usually it is closed by deep snow this time of year, but we saw no "road closed" signs.

We came to a nice day-use area that is wheelchair-accessible with a view of White Chuck. Clouds clung to the top of the peak while we were there.

Trees that had fallen on the road have been removed. The road is in good shape with some potholes. Just before Barlow Pass there was some snow on the road, with tire tracks through it. On the other side of Barlow Pass the road was bare.

As we passed the Mount Dickerman trailhead, we noticed a car parked. I imagine this trail is snowfree for at

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# BACKCOUNTRY NEWS

REPORTS AND CONDITIONS

least a mile or two. We also noted that the Big Four Ice Cave trail is open. —Linda Rostad, Bothell, 1/27.



## WHITECHUCK BENCH

(*Baker-Snoqualmie Natl Forest; USGS White Chuck Mtn*)—Walt Bailey, Lisa Darling, and four others came along with me on this trail. It's about the same as described in the last issue (*February, page 7*).

The fun came when we had to cross the fallen log across the stream (raging) at the east end. One lady in the group had never been hiking before—she slid down and crawled up with the best of us!—Randy Patterson, Mill Creek, 1/29.



## FORT EBEBY STATE PARK

(*State Parks; USGS Port Townsend North*)—All but the road for "beach access" and to Lake Pondilla are gated for the season. There is a parking lot and sani-can at Ebey's Landing—end of Ebey's Road south of Coupeville.

Hiked along the bluffs from "beach access" to the old walk-in campsites in the gully at the south end of the park. The trail from there to the beach is in fine shape *except* for the top 15 feet which slid over years ago, officially closing the trail. An open path has been cut through the brush up hill from the slide. It accesses the bluff above the intact portion of the trail.

Farther south, at the north end of the lagoon a good trail climbs to the bluff top and continues south to Ebey's Landing with open views of Ebey's Prairie.—Ramona Hammerly, Anacortes, 2/3.



## NATIONAL PEAK

(*Baker-Snoqualmie Natl Forest; USGS Monte Cristo*)—This peak is about ½-mile southwest of Silvertip and appears on maps as Point 5630.

### ALWAYS CARRY THE TEN ESSENTIALS

1. extra food
2. extra clothing
3. map
4. compass
5. knife
6. matches
7. fire starter
8. first aid kit
9. sun protection
10. flashlight

The name derives from a mining claim on its slopes (see page 162 in *Monte Cristo Area: A Complete Outdoor Guide* by Majors-McCollum). From the south, the mountain appears as an almost perfect snow cone (no trees).

Approach: Park at the Silver Creek trailhead. The trail is what remains of what was once the road to Mineral City. We used our bikes to make short work of this stretch (from here, you can hike to Poodle Dog Pass and then down to Monte Cristo).

At Mineral City, there is a drainage coming down on your left (west). Take it a few hundred yards and then exit right (north) up into the timber well before the waterfall. The travel is a little brushy at first but becomes pleasant soon enough. The high country is wide open and the summit is an easy snow stomp. Conditions were perfect and the view stupendous.

Time: From Mineral City, allow 3½ hours. There are no technical difficulties; however, take crampons.—Garth Warner and Mark Owen, Carnation, 2/5.



## WEST CADY RIDGE

(*Henry M Jackson Wilderness; USGS Benchmark Mtn, Blanca Lk*) We drove out of the fog on frosty roads to the North Fork Skykomish River road. We were able to get within a mile of the West Cady Ridge trail. It was cold and clear in the mountains and we wanted to get up high for some views.

There was about two feet of snow at the trailhead. Most of the trail was snow-covered in the trees, but only about 6 inches or less deep. The icy trail was easy to follow. Crampons would have been nice, especially on the trip down.

Some of the bridges were a bit tricky with how the snow had melted away in places. Our ice axes came in handy for balance. The trail switchbacks up the ridge to a low spot before turning east to follow the ridge line. Here, we continued south to a sunny open place in the trees to have lunch. Just before we left, some owls hooted at us from the forest to the west of us.

We got back on the trail for a short ways. There was an orange ribbon marking a switchback to the left. We continued straight up through the snowfields and patches of trees to the ridge top. At 4400 feet we crested the steepest part.

As we climbed higher, we also headed to the north for a view of Glacier Peak. Behind us the Monte Cristo Mountains looked majestic covered with snow. We also got a glimpse of the top of Mount Rainier to the south. Winter days are too short and we had to

turn back. We did not want to be on the icy trail in the dark. Two spotted owls called back and forth near where we had lunch as we hiked out.—Linda Rostad, Bothell, 2/3.



## MOUNT TOWNSEND

(*Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest; USGS Baring*)—Mount Townsend is a good winter and spring trip with close-up views of Mount Baring, Merchant Peak, and Gunn Peak. Round trip is about 10 miles, with 3700 feet of elevation gain.

To get to the trailhead, take Highway 2 to Baring and turn left on Road 6024. Follow this road for 4.3 miles until it ends in a parking area.

Hike 2 miles to Barclay Lake, which lies below the imposing north face of Mount Baring. The lake was covered with three inches of ice, which crackled loudly as it settled. The noise echoed eerily off of the cliffs.

The trail takes an obvious turn to the left at the end of the lake. That begins the uphill trek to Stone and Eagle Lakes, gaining 1000 feet. The way is marked with orange tape and paint. We also saw some pink ribbon laying out a new trail. Later the Forest Service office in Skykomish told me the route is still up for discussion.

We lost the orange markers in a rockslide, and spent a little extra time in talus. The route goes up the left side of the rocks.

We hit snow in the basin below Stone Lake, where we were met by a party of three mountain goats. We continued to Paradise Meadow below Eagle Lake and had lunch. This is a beautiful destination in itself.

The summit is another 2000 feet higher. We cut up through trees until we reached open slopes. By this time we realized that we did not start early enough to make the summit. Instead we settled for gaining the ridge about half a mile from the top. Glissades made quick work of the descent. Allow five hours up and three down.—Don and Ann Schaechtel, Seattle, 2/5.



## FROG MOUNTAIN

(*Baker-Snoqualmie Natl Forest; USGS Blanca Lk*)—This trip was proposed as a compromise. We needed a trip that had a reasonable meet time and had a summit that showed white on the map, not green (no bushwhacking). This was not to be a regular Bruce trip.

Five of us drove up the Beckler River Road, nearly to Jack Pass, and parked. This is probably one of the few years that one is able to drive this far in the winter.

We left the car at about 9:15 and



# BACKCOUNTRY NEWS

REPORTS AND CONDITIONS

followed an old overgrown Forest Service road until we were able to head up the ridge to the top of Frog Mountain. While the skies were overcast, the visibility was good.

The open slopes had views of clear-cuts all the way up to the unobstructed 4872-foot summit. Once on top, everyone stood around and named all of the prominent peaks from Snoqualmie Pass to the Monte Cristo massif.

After doing a quick check of the map, we agreed that we could easily satisfy the loop requirement by heading clockwise over to peak 4682, which we affectionately called Tadpole Mountain, and then following the forested southwest ridge to a road that led to our car. Upon reaching Tadpole Mountain, we enjoyed a leisurely lunch. We then headed down with John and Chris leading the way.

Of course, one can never go on a Bruce trip without doing *some* bushwhacking, and this was no exception. As John and Chris disappeared from sight, the rest of us struggled with icy, hard snow under the trees on the upper slopes and tangled undergrowth on the lower slopes. We arrived back at the cars by 2:00 and were home by 4:00.—El Coyote, Seattle, 2/11.

**MOUNTAIN LOOP HIGHWAY**—The Mountain Loop is not plowed from the Darrington side, but Snohomish County is still plowing it from the Verlot side clear up to Barlow Pass. There's about 2 feet of snow at Barlow Pass.

Skiing is good from Barlow Pass out the Monte Cristo road, and also good up the Deer Creek road. There is room enough along the road shoulder for parking at Deer Creek.

To check on current conditions, call the Darrington Ranger Station, 206-436-1155.—Ranger, 2/23.

**SUIATLE RIVER ROAD**—Snow-covered.—Ranger, 2/23.

**CHELAN DISTRICT**—Cross-country skiing is good at Echo Ridge. Trails are track set. Echo Ridge is operated through a partnership with the Lake Chelan Nordic Club and the Lake Chelan Ski Club. There is a suggested donation toward trail maintenance and plowing of \$6 per person.

Echo Ridge is located north of Chelan. Call the Ranger Station, 509-682-2576, for directions.—Ranger, 2/15.

**ENTIAT DISTRICT**—The Entiat Sno-Park is 25 miles up the valley road. Watch for snowmobilers and dog-sledders.—Ranger, 2/15.



Jennifer Stein Barker

Skiing on Table Mountain north of Ellensburg.

**LAKE WENATCHEE DISTRICT**—Cross-country ski trails are groomed at Lake Wenatchee State Park and Kahler Glen Golf Course. The See-n-Ski trail, along the upper Wenatchee River on the Chiwawa Loop road, is also groomed. Sno-Park permit required.

A cross-country ski guide to Lake Wenatchee trails is available at the ranger station for 50 cents.—Ranger, 2/15.

## CENTRAL



## SCENIC HOT SPRINGS

(*Baker-Snoqualmie Natl Forest; USGS Scenic*)—Since this was recently written up in a popular regional magazine, I see no reason to keep quiet about it any more. The problem with publishing accounts of places like these in magazines (even magazines for us) is that sometimes the "wrong" people find them and destroy, vandalize or threaten the attraction and the serenity of others who have come to enjoy the place. My hope is that the "right" people will find the hot springs.

This was my second trip and I invited several friends to come with me. We hiked up the logging road to the un-marked trail (not very far from

Scenic) and carried our snowshoes. It's about 2 miles and 1500 feet elevation gain to the hot springs.

When we arrived we found that the best of the three springs was occupied by another group. These springs are definitely hot—the first pool is 105 degrees. The second is moderately warm and about the right size for four people. The lower pool, number three, is the largest and the coolest but plenty warm to qualify as a hot spring.

We all got into the pools in various coverings (bathing suits, underwear, polypro) except Chris, who patiently waited for Bruce to climb out of the pool so they could go climb something. After about an hour of sampling the pools, Bruce, Chris and Larry set off to climb one of those numbered peaks above the springs. The rest of us dawdled for another hour.

The only unpleasant aspect of visiting the hot springs is getting back into your clothes; they always feel cold and gritty. It's a good idea to have an extra set of dry clothing in your pack to change into.

This makes an excellent trip on a gloomy winter day—the hot springs are sufficient reward for traipsing through the Northwest gloom and drizzle.—Karen Sykes, Seattle, 1/2.



## COWBOY MOUNTAIN, BIG CHIEF MOUNTAIN

**TRAVERSE** (*Baker-Snoqualmie Natl Forest; USGS Stevens Pass, Scenic*)—Mark DesVoigne and I left the parking lot at Stevens Pass (4061 feet) at 8:30am and headed for Cowboy Mountain.

We stayed in the trees to the north of the ski slope until about 4800 feet, where we crossed the hard, icy ski run to the northeast shoulder of the mountain. Our ascent to the 5853 foot summit was across another ski run, and then up a moderate slope with small trees to the summit ridge on the east flank.

We descended the south side a few hundred feet, staying right and below the south ridge. Regaining the ridge crest, we followed it easily down to the 5200 foot saddle and a ski run. This is the only area where we encountered many skiers. We ascended east up the edge of the ski run, past the top of a chair lift, and continued on up an easy ridge top to the summit of Big Chief (5858 feet). The traverse from summit to summit took 1½ hours.

Our descent off Big Chief was down the north side by way of steep snow (40 degrees) and then into the trees leading back to the parking area, staying east of the ski runs.

This was an easy, enjoyable traverse on firm snow. The round trip time was 4½ hours.—Dallas Kloke, Anacortes, 1/30.

#### DUWAMISH RIVER (City of Seattle; USGS Seattle South)

—It was pouring rain with strong wind when Lee and I left the house, but we didn't think Lee Moyer would cancel this trip, and we were right.

It was the second day of an intensive two-day kayak seminar. After a full day of instruction and pool practice, our class would spend this day on salt water. Because of the weather, our instructor Lee Moyer chose the Duwamish, which would give us a reasonably sheltered place where we could still experience currents and tides. Judy Moyer and Tom Steinburn came along as assistant instructors.

The put-in is easy to reach and find: drive Highway 99 to Diagonal Avenue, just south of the Spokane Street bridge. Turn west on Diagonal (a small sign marks this as a public water access) and drive to the parking lot at the end, right across the river from Kellogg Island.

The tiny park is being developed by the City of Seattle, with cooperation from the neighboring LaFarge cement works. There's plenty of parking but no restrooms. A short carry across a patch of dirt and down a rocky beach got us to the water.

We explored Kellogg Island, then went upstream for a ways, sometimes under the docks (out of the rain). Although this is generally a placid, easy trip, there are a few dangers. Lee Moyer cautioned us not to get caught under the sloping ends of barges, or between a

ship and a dock, where current could easily trap us. Boat wakes from ships in the narrow channel are also hazardous.

If the weather had been better, we would have continued downstream to Harbor Island and Elliott Bay. As it was, we spent four hours just poking around the Duwamish. We'll save Elliott Bay for another time.

About half a dozen put-in sites are located between Harbor Island and 10th Avenue South. Call Lee Moyer or anyone else at Pacific Water Sports, 206-246-9385, for information on how to reach them.—Ann Marshall, 2/13.



#### WEST DEFIANCE PEAK

(state and private; USGS Bander, Chester Morse Lk)—Traveling east on I-90, take exit 38 and turn right on old Highway 10, following the signs to the "Fire Training Center." After 2 miles the road crosses under the freeway and a few hundred yards later the road is gated.

In 1/4-mile, cross the Snoqualmie River on a bridge and after another 1/4-mile, just after crossing a creek, when the road bends to the left, take the overgrown logging road branching off to the right. In 1.5 miles (2500 feet) pass a side trail to Dirty Harry's Balcony.

A little way past this junction we broke out of the shade into the sunshine. It felt like a spring hike. Around 3300 feet, the shaded portions of the trail had a light covering of snow.

At an exposed switchback at 3800 feet, with an excellent view of McClellan Butte, we stopped for lunch. Fransing and Barb didn't feel like continuing to the top, so I hiked the last mile to the summit (4650 feet). This part of the trail was snow-covered, with 1 to 2 feet of snow at the summit. The snow was so hard, I never broke through the crust.

Great views of Rainier and the tippy-top of Adams to the south. To the north Baker, Glacier Peak, Mount Garfield and the rest of the central Cascades could be seen. I caught up with Barb and Fransing just as the trail reached the paved road. We were the only people on this hike today.—Joe Buoy and Barbara Kirkevold, Kent, 1/29.



#### MOUNT PHELPS (Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest; USGS Mount Phelps)

—The distinctive fan-shaped summit of Mount Phelps is visible from the Puget Sound, but getting there is not easy. After two failed attempts in summer we had agreed that snow cover would make the trip more pleasant. We were right.

John Roper's April 1992 story in *Pack & Paddle* gives excellent driving instructions. Drive the North Fork Snoqualmie River Road 20 miles from North Bend and take a hard left before reaching Lennox Creek. Here it becomes road 5730.

Go 3 miles and turn left onto a spur road signed 113 (5736 on the map). Park just before the end of the road, where an old road goes steeply up a clearcut. You may have to park a half mile before this if your car doesn't have much ground clearance.

Walk up the abandoned road to the creek. This is the old "Blackhawk Mine." The objective is to climb 1000 feet through or around the clearcut to exit from the upper left corner. We went up through the left third of the clearcut. In places we followed a path, otherwise we climbed over and through debris. This took about an hour.

After exiting the clearcut we continued uphill on the right side of the creek. We finally hit snow at about 3800 feet. When the view opened up, we angled toward a gap in the summit rocks rather than going to the saddle. This opened into a nice snow basin which narrowed into a chute higher up. The hard snow conditions made this a safe approach.

The chute bends to the left and becomes quite steep. We kicked steps until we reached a large tree just below the col overlooking the steep northeast face. We put on crampons and ascended a steeper snow chute and then walked to the broad summit. This was a clear, windless day and the view was magnificent. Time up was 3½ hours. Total elevation gain was about 3000 feet.

We descended the same route, glissading the lower snow basin.—Don Schacchtel, Dave Collins, and Robert Lipe, Seattle, 1/30.



#### THE TOOTH (Alpine Lakes Wilderness; USGS Snoqualmie Pass)

—This trip got a late start due to the leader's discovering his boots had been left in Federal Way. The group insisted he pay penance by driving back alone to get them. On return he found the group had waylaid another member so we were six. The hike in went fast thanks to the well consolidated snow.

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# BACKCOUNTRY NEWS

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The climb was fun and quite snow free, except for the two larger ledges. Two waited on top for some fifteen minutes and waited for the other rope of two, enjoying limited views of the area. Two others decided to turn around at Pineapple Pass.

The hike out was fun and light as it was a first time up The Tooth for three of the group—a winter ascent, no less.—OSATers Matt, Connie, Jim, Chuck, Jim and Dave, 2/6.



## STANDUP RIDGE (Wenatchee Natl Forest; USGS Red

Top Mountain)—JH was able to drive to where the pavement ends on the North Fork Teanaway road. We then walked the road about 1.25 miles to the Stafford Creek road junction.

The ridge just north of this Y is known as Standup Ridge. The lower couple of hundred feet are very brushy, but then it is an open slope to the site of the old Stafford Creek Lookout. After leaving the old lookout site we were on snow most of the time.

The ridge varies from timbered and broad to a rocky knife-edge. The snow made the knife-edge a bit tricky, so after getting our fill of that we stopped at a nice viewpoint, point 4298. On the way back the sun had softened the snow and we occasionally punched in a post-hole; still, there was no need to don our snowshoes.

It is a treat to get in to the Teanaway this early. The ridges are fun to run, with or without snowshoes, but generally in the winter the road is closed too far from any reasonable starting point.—TG, Skyway, 1/27.

**SKYKOMISH DISTRICT**—Cross-country skiing is available on Maloney Mountain road 68, Miller River road 6410-12, and Foss River road 6830.

The Foss road is plowed up to the trestle, then snow-covered. No Sno-Park permit is necessary to park here. Snowmobiles use the first mile of this route, then they turn off up the Tonga Ridge road.

The Miller River road is plowed 2 miles up.—Ranger, 2/15.

**NORTH BEND DISTRICT**—Go on a snowshoe walk with a ranger; it's fun, it's free! Call the Snoqualmie Pass Visitor Center for details: 206-434-6111.

New snowfall ranges from 6 inches to 4 feet. Trails in the National Forest are snowcovered, but you can find snowfree places to walk in the Snoqualmie Valley. Call the Ranger Station for information, 206-888-1421, or try the Issaquah Alps, 206-328-0480.

Call the I-90 Corridor Sno-Park report, 509-656-2230, for ski trail and grooming conditions.

Ungroomed trails are available at Gold Creek (Exit 54), Price Creek (Exit 61), and Kachess (Exit 62) Sno-Parks.

State Parks has removed the snowsheds along the Lake Keechelus portion of the Iron Horse trail. Watch for falling rocks along the former snowshed sites. The trail is open and groomed for cross-country skiing between the Lake Keechelus and Crystal Springs Sno-Parks.—Ranger, 2/15.

**COULTER CREEK ROAD**—This road is being plowed for log trucks this winter.—Ranger, 2/15.

**LEAVENWORTH DISTRICT**—The Tronsen Meadow/Blewett Pass ski touring area has been signed and is a great place for untracked skiing. A map of these trails is available at the ranger station in Leavenworth.—Ranger, 2/15.

**ENCHANTMENTS**—Permit applications are available by calling the ranger station, 509-548-4067. Processing will begin March 1. After March 15, walk-in applications will be taken.

There will be self-issuing day-hike-only passes at those trailheads requiring permits; they will also be available at the ranger station. (This system eliminates the need for seasonal day-hike permits).

Maximum group size is 8 people. You are limited to one reservation per area per permit season (6/15 to 10/15).—Ranger, 2/15.

**CLE ELUM DISTRICT**—With the new snow, cross-country skiing is great from Mineral Springs all the way over the top to Tronsen Campground.

New this season is a self-powered winter recreation area on the east side of Highway 97 from Hurley Creek to Swauk Sno-Park, bordered by the 9711 and 9716 roads. Ski routes take off out of Swauk Campground and Pipe Creek.

All routes are ungroomed *except* Pipe Creek and Wenatchee Ridge.

The upper Cle Elum valley also has great ski and snowshoe routes. Call the ranger station for current info: 509-674-4411.—Ranger, 2/16.

**NACHES DISTRICT**—The Bumping Lake area got 16 new inches of snow last weekend, so skiing is looking up. The Wild Rose campground on Highway 12 is open year around.

Remember your 10 Essentials, and take a friend—two heads are better than one.—Ranger, 2/16.

## SOUTH CENTRAL



## SUGARLOAF MOUNTAIN (private; USGS Cumberland)

—A return visit considerably dampened my Christmas Day enthusiasm (see February, page 10). The loop trail which passes near the hill's summit was muddily gouged by trail-bikes, making for an unlovely tramp.

At the top of the loop, a short path leads to a summit very recently logged and bulldozed flat. There are expansive but somewhat dull views out of the clearcut north, across the Cedar River valley to Rattlesnake Mountain. I take it all back—Sugarloaf is a *poor* alternative to Cougar and Tiger.—Andy Carr, Bellevue, 1/29.



## EAGLE PEAK (Rainier Natl Park; USGS Mount Rainier West)

—By the time we reached the Nisqually entrance of Mount Rainier National Park it was raining. We had also left late enough that we had to pay the entrance fee to the Park, which meant a budget dinner later. We drove to Longmire and parked. Not surprisingly, there were no crowds at Longmire today.

The trail to the saddle is steep, about 3000 feet. The first part was snow-free and in the gloom I was amazed—as I often am—at the many shades of green on display: the golden-greens, the blue-greens, the gray-greens, the bright greens, the dark greens ...

About 1.5 miles in we began to hit snow and at 2 miles we needed snowshoes. We soon reached the avalanche slope which is a talus field in the summer. We could see where avalanches had come down. The snow was crusty with soft snow underneath—slab conditions. We stayed to the left and worked our way up through the trees and soon met the trail again.

The weather was deteriorating and about 100 feet below the saddle we stopped. There was no visibility at all and the snow didn't look good. We saw no point in going on. We enjoyed hot chocolate and fudge under a clump of trees before retracing our route back down.


We had the whole place to ourselves. In spite of the weather, I was surprised. Where does everybody go on a day like this? [We stay home!—AM]



# BACKCOUNTRY NEWS


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We stopped at the Wild Berry on the way home.—Karen Sykes, Seattle, 1/16.

 **MOWICH LAKE** (*Mt Rainier Natl Park; USGS Golden Lks, Mowich Lk*)—There was about 2 inches of snow on the ground at the Paul Peak trail parking lot (3700 feet). The snow was really icy. Even with the gentle incline of the road, our waxless skis slipped occasionally as we pushed off.

About 2.5 miles up the road (4300 feet) we put on our skins and skied the old Grindstone trail up to Mowich Lake. Under less icy conditions, we normally would not put on skins until the last half-mile of the trail starting about 4600 feet (third section).

It was a beautiful clear day when we arrived at the lake for lunch. About 15 minutes later the fog rolled in and reduced visibility to less than 100 feet. Because of the icy conditions, we were able to ski the entire way back to our truck with hardly any poling.—Joe Buoy and Barbara Kirkevold, Kent, 1/16.

 **UMTANUM CANYON** (*L.T. Murray WRA; USGS Wymer, The Cottonwoods, Ellensburg South, Kittitas*)—We chose this hike partly for some good east-side weather and partly to check on the herd of mountain sheep seen there each spring.

The trail along the canyon floor was a sheet of ice, so we headed north up a side-canyon. Just as we started to climb out of the side-canyon we spotted a couple of bighorn ewes. They were as interested in us as we were in them.


and we stood inspecting each other for about five minutes.

After parting company from this pair we started north over a gently rising plateau, where we found about a dozen more bighorns. Eventually we hiked over to the rim above the Yakima River to find a sunny lunch spot.

This trip was so enjoyable we came back two days later. In order to get a little more exercise this time we climbed out of the canyon to the south—it's about 2200 feet to the south rim. It was a beautiful day, although a little breezy on top. Even so, I was surprised to see Mount Hood.


Dropping off the rim to get out of the breeze we took a long break, basking in the sun while watching a small band of deer to our east. Yet when we came to one of the side canyons, the trail through it was a sheet of ice.

When we got home and discovered the fog hadn't burned off in the Puget Sound region, we congratulated ourselves for another fine sagebrush trip.—TG, Skyway, 1/17 & 19.

 **YELLOW JACKET ROAD** (*Gifford Pinchot Natl Forest; USGS White Pass*)—Sam and I skied Yellow Jacket Road near White Pass on a grey Saturday. No view of Mount Rainier and the Goat Rocks this day. It is glorious when it is clear!


The snow was quite sticky and I forgot to bring Maxiglide, a lubricant which helps in these conditions. Sam has waxable skis and he adjusted the wax several times, finally electing to

scrape it all off.—Jane Habegger, Olympia, 1/16.

 **COPPER CREEK ROAD** (*Gifford Pinchot Natl Forest; USGS Mt Wow*)—With lots of new powder, it was great to finally be able to ski on Copper Creek road in the middle of February. This is Daisy's favorite place to ski because of the great view of Rainier (Saint Helens and Adams, too, on a really clear day).

She also really likes the little downhill slope beyond the saddle for fast skiing. After a stop at the Mount Tahoma Trails Association headquarters in Lou Whittaker's Bunkhouse in Ashford, we headed up to the Sno-park on Copper Creek road.

Although a big snow storm was predicted, we were just ahead of it and we could even see Mount Rainier at the top!—Jane Habegger, Olympia, 2/12.

 **PACK FOREST** (*State; USGS Eatonville*)—Pack Forest, an experimental site for the College of Forest Resources of the University of Washington, covers over 4000 acres and offers several trails and miles of quiet forest roads for winter hiking. These are well covered by Harvey Manning and Penny Manning in *Footsore 4*. Listed below are additional trails not mentioned in their book, as well as a few changes or updates.

1. An old obscure trail leads from Kirkland Pass to Windmill Peak. Find the beginning at Kirkland Pass (elevation 1593 feet) a few dozen yards up the

## BULLETIN BOARD

Notices on this Bulletin Board are free to subscribers and may be "posted" for up to three months. You may list your used equipment for sale, post lost-and-found announcements, locate partners for trips, or other non-commercial items. Commercial advertisers are welcome to contact the Pack & Paddle office for ad rates.

**CANOE**—Old Town Solo, green with wood seat. Two paddles and life jacket. Barely used. \$350. 206-923-9567 (Olympia).

**GEAR**—Bibler I tent and vestibule, two doors, little use. Paid \$740, now only \$490. VE-25, North Face, \$175. Kayak paddle, 8-foot graphite Werner Camano, \$245. Bicycle, 58cm Colnago Super, with Campy Nuovo Record, \$550.

Call Keith, 206-747-8698 (Issaquah) evenings before 10pm.

**SLEEPING BAG**—Feathered Friends

Snow Bunting sleeping bag. Gore-tex shell, 700 fill down, long, barely used. \$160. 206-244-2978 (Seattle).

**SKI RACK**—Thule ski rack for sale. For vehicle with gutters. Locking version holds four pairs plus 3 more pairs without lock, plus kayak attachment. \$90. 206-462-6089 (Bellevue).

**SKIS**—200cm telemark skis with bindings. \$95. Nancy South, 206-483-5037 (Lynnwood).

**SKI RACK**—For 10 pairs of skis. Specially designed Barreccrafter got full size vans. \$95. Nancy South, 206-483-5037 (Lynnwood).

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Carabiners, \$4 each. Chouinard Super-gaiters, used, size 29. 206-852-1718 (Kent).

**FOR SALE**—1 couch (twin bed), 2 chairs, \$100 for set. Two weed eaters, like new, \$15 each. Four metal plant stands, \$2.50 each. Freestanding swing, canvas seat, \$35. Two 15" wheels (nms, no tires), \$10 each. Lawn mower, \$120. Drying racks, \$2.50 each. Blinds, \$2.50. Call Lisa or Dennis, 206-325-3465 (Seattle) between 7am and 7pm only.

**INTERESTED IN HIGH LAKE FISHING?** Washington State Hi-Lakers meets third Wednesday of each month at Mercerview Community Center, 7:30pm. For information, all George Bucher, 206-821-5752 (Kirkland).

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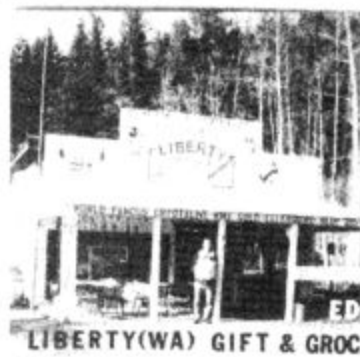
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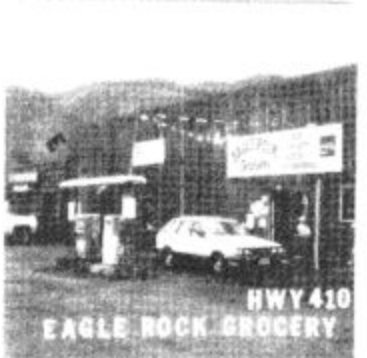
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# BACKCOUNTRY NEWS

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northern branch of road 2000; it looks like an ancient woods road on the right.

Obvious at first, the track becomes more difficult to follow as it climbs and occasionally traverses up the steep north slope. Near the top it winds through salal and scrub trees before reaching the old weather station and the end of road 2040 (elevation 2054 feet). This trail gains (or loses) 461 feet in about 0.5-mile.

2. Another old trail connects the southern branch of road 2000 with Windmill peak. This path begins 0.4-mile from Kirkland Pass at about 1650 feet; its origin has been partly obscured by bulldozing and tree cutting on the upper roadbank, and you may prefer to travel it downhill from Windmill Peak rather than hunt for its lower end.

This trail is wide and obvious, following straight along the ridgetop except for a few turns at the upper end. It joins with the trail from Kirkland Pass just before reaching the weather station. This trail gains (or loses) about 400 feet in about 0.5-mile.

3. In *Footsore 4* the Hugo Peak trail is described as starting 0.5-mile from the parking area up the southern branch of road 1000. This trail actually crosses the road at that point, meandering for about 0.6-mile down to a gap in the hedge along the south side of the entrance drive just a few feet from the highway.

Unfortunately, a 300 foot portion of this lower trail has been destroyed by selective logging operations; however, with persistence you can find your way and make your Hugo Peak trip a nearly roadless experience.

4. If you are walking along the northern branch of road 1000 looking for the lower end of the Reservoir Trail, note that the "Reservoir" sign mentioned in *Footsore 4* has been replaced by a sign for "Road 1050." This is just beyond the crossing of 27 Creek. The reservoir and the trailhead are about 0.25-mile up road 1050.

5. New roads and numberings have confounded the Canyon Peak Loop instructions in *Footsore 4*. Road 2300 starts out as described, but now veers southeast and heads off for at least a mile beyond Canyon Peak into uncharted territory. Meanwhile, I'm not sure which branch to take for the 1.5-mile loop around Canyon Peak, but it's probably road 2310 or 2320 (or both).

As the Mannings point out, Pack Forest is a dynamic functional experimental station, not a preserve. Hopefully, any damaged trails will be restored as part of the management's enlightened philosophy which encourages public use.—Mick Campbell, Puyallup, 2/15.



Ski tracks in Hogback Basin, Goat Rocks Wilderness.

Ann Marshall/Lee McKee

## SOUTH



### SWIFT CREEK SKI

#### TRAIL (Saint Helens NVM;

USGS Mt Saint Helens)—The large Marble Mountain Sno-park is about 13 miles northeast of Cougar on road 83. A new log warming hut has been built with snowmobile and Sno-park funds. On weekends with good snow conditions expect the lot to be overflowing.

With plans for a 3-day/2-night trip, Ann and I chose the Swift Creek ski trail. Thrown off by some confusing trail markings, we had a more difficult start than we should have. Fortunately, the signs became much better after the first few junctions.

Starting at just over 2600 feet this trail climbs steadily. Several people (one on snowshoes) had broken trail in the fresh snow making the going a little easier. Just before the junction with the June Lake trail at about 3490 feet, we found a good site to set up camp off trail. We had traveled about 2 miles with full packs and were ready to call it a day. Under heavily falling snow, we stomped out a tent pad and set up housekeeping.

Snow fell continuously during the night, adding about a foot and covering our tracks from the day before, and kept falling all day. Leaving our comfy tent and good books was too

great a challenge, so we spent until early afternoon huddled up reading.

We finally forced ourselves out of the tent, realizing we needed to burn off some energy before nightfall. As we started out, we were surprised to see it stop snowing. By the time we reached the lava flow between Swift Creek and June Lake, the sky had partly cleared and the sun shone brightly.

The trail is well marked through the trees and across the lava flow except for the last bit before it drops to the lake. This is not a problem when heading toward the lake, because you can see your destination. Starting from the lake, though, you would have to do some route-finding to locate the first trail marker on top of the flow. Getting back to camp just after sunset, we were treated to some views of the mountain before the clouds closed in and the snow started again.

Only a few inches fell during the night, but it snowed heavily as we broke camp. Fortunately the path back to the Sno-park was well broken, and the soft snow allowed us easy control—which is important when you're skiing downhill with a heavy pack (especially when you're thrown off balance by the pack and it plants you securely in the snow—luckily that happened to me only once).

This area has developed a good trail system for skiers and snowshoers. If you're not from southwest Washington and don't want to camp, the Lone Fir Resort in Cougar (206-238-5210) provides a modest and cozy place to stay which is close to the Sno-parks. We did this several years ago and it worked quite well.—Lee McKee, Port Orchard, 2/18-20.

## IDAHO

### SAWTOOTH NATL REC AREA—

Avalanche hazard is generally low at all elevations, but be sure and check conditions before you go into the backcountry. Call 208-622-8027 for avalanche info.

The Prairie Creek loop is 18 miles north of Ketchum on Highway 75. It starts at 6923 feet and climbs to 7202 feet in 4 miles. It is part of the North Valley Trail System and a trail fee is required. Dogs are not allowed on this trail.

For cross-country skiing information in this area, call 208-726-6662.—Roma Nelson, Sawtooth NRA, 2/14.



DEBORAH RIEHL

# RESCUE EPICS

—STEVENS PASS DEJA VU—

Back in the 1974-75 ski season, I worked on the professional ski patrol at Stevens Pass. I was fresh out of college and wanted to spend a winter doing nothing but *skiing*, hoping to get ski fanaticism out of my system.

It didn't work. I'm into my 24th year of ski patrolling. The pay isn't great but I get all the snow I can eat.

One thing nice about pro-patrolling is I get weekends off—banker's hours. During the week, however, I work 48 to 56 hours. On the weekend of January 22-23 I was lying around Bill's house recuperating from a long week (hot tub and ham radio).

At 9:30pm my Ski Patrol Rescue Team pager went off. SPART members are ski patrollers who in addition to their ski area duties perform backcountry, primarily winter, rescue.

Shortly thereafter Seattle Mountain Rescue was also called out. SMR specializes in technical mountain rescue on rock, snow and ice.

A downhill skier at Stevens Pass had apparently skied out of bounds and failed to rendezvous with his friends. He was described as a "hot dog" skier of intermediate-advanced level—with a poor sense of direction.

I hunted up some clean long underwear and Bill and I hopped into his trusty VW Dasher which looks like a porcupine with all the antennas. At midnight we rendezvoused with the SMR rescue truck and several rescuers at the Woodinville Park and Ride.

As we drove up the Stevens Pass highway the sheriff radioed to keep an eye out for a young man in a teal parka hitchhiking near the town of Index. Our subject was reportedly wearing teal.

His mom, however, insisted he would have called from the first available phone if he'd made it to the highway.

Due to my extensive experience at Stevens Pass in the ski area and in the backcountry, I suspected the subject had wandered down either Mill Creek or Tunnel Creek. Mill Creek is a 6-mile slog out. Tunnel Creek takes

routefinding abilities to navigate its numerous cliff hazards.

As we neared the summit I tuned in the Stevens Pass Ski Patrol radio frequency. It was just in time to hear a patroller who'd been following a set of tracks down the Tunnel Creek drainage announce he thought he had voice contact with the subject. The tracks had led to the edge of one of the cliff bands. At the bottom he could hear a voice.

The young man was bedded down at the base of a tree. He'd injured a knee in the fall off the cliff and that had convinced him to stop trying to ski out in the dark. In his day pack he had some food and his one-piece teal powder suit had kept him reasonably warm.

We arrived at the summit to find the ski hill ablaze with lights. They'd left everything on hoping to guide the lost teenager in.

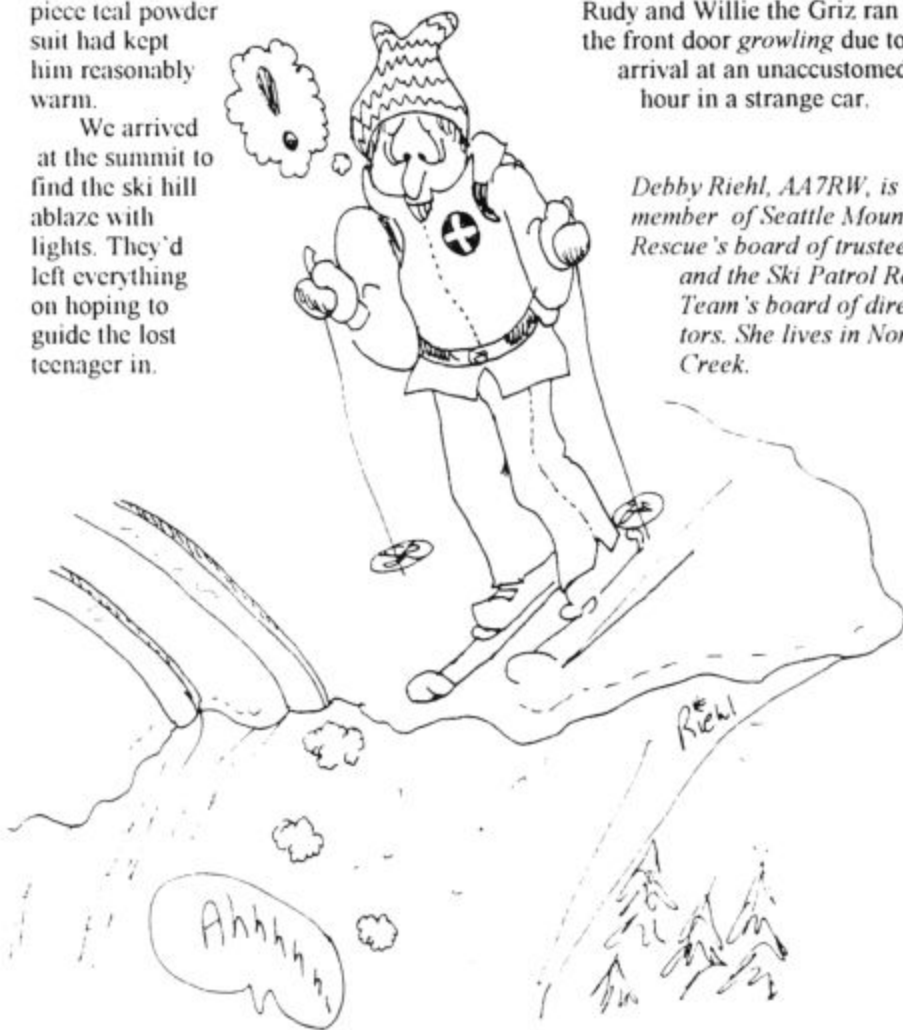
After his knee was checked out by the ski patroller the young man was able to travel slowly. A mixed team of SPART and SMR personnel started in to assist with the evacuation.

A little after 2am the rescue team united with the subject and his ski patrol escort. Back at the patrol room it was old home night as I caught up on my friends from twenty years ago, from those who were still there. Some were now actually respectable citizens!

By 3am we all started for home. Bill and I "bivouacked" at my house at the base of Stevens Pass. My brother was startled to see us stagger in to bed at 5am. He reported my watch-kitties Rudy and Willie the Griz ran to the front door *growling* due to our arrival at an unaccustomed hour in a strange car.

△

*Debby Riehl, AA7RW, is a member of Seattle Mountain Rescue's board of trustees, and the Ski Patrol Rescue Team's board of directors. She lives in North Creek.*



KAREN SYKES

# A Day on the Rowena Plateau

—A LITTLE PRESERVED MAGIC—

Ruth Taylor and I drove down to the Columbia Gorge last spring for a weekend of photography. Our destination was the Rowena Plateau, famous for its display of wildflowers.

From Portland take I-84 eastbound. Six miles past Mosier follow the road that goes off to the right, and 6 miles after that you'll reach the Rowena Plateau at the Tom McCall Preserve.

We had dinner in Hood River and found affordable lodging at the Vagabond Motel (next to the famous Columbia Gorge Motel).

The next morning was overcast but we were up and on the road early. We drove to the large parking area and took the lower of the two trails (through the turnstile). The upper trail goes to a viewpoint but it was extremely windy (as it often is in the Gorge!). Ruth commented that it was so windy the only thing we'd be able to photograph was the lichen on the rocks.

Views across the Columbia River were grand. Ruth impressed me by being able to identify every bird we saw. In spite of the wind, we spent three hours on the short trail and took quite a few pictures.

The Tom McCall Preserve is privately managed and owned and is located within the Columbia Gorge National Scenic Area. The preserve is dedicated to the late Thomas McCall, Oregon's former governor, whose commitment to preservation was an inspiration to others.

Long before I-84 existed, the first known inhabitants to enjoy the plateau were the Wasco Indians. They hunted and collected edible plants on the plateau and fished from the Columbia River.

This area presented a challenge for the pioneers who came later as they traveled the Oregon Trail. When they reached the cliffs that begin at Rowena they faced two unpleasant alternatives. They either had to raft the dangerous river or follow a rough trail around Mount Hood.

In the late 1800s the area was settled by ranchers, drawn by the grasslands. It is probable that the grassy tableland once served as a natural corral for their livestock.

The first 34 acres of the preserve were acquired in 1978. Since then it has been expanded to 230 acres thanks to the support of individuals, foundations and organizations. The Nature Conservancy is a non-profit, private organization dedicated to the protection of natural diversity. All lands are managed and acquired through private donations of land or money.

The Rowena Plateau has something for almost everyone. A geologist would enjoy looking at the basalt cliffs, deposited in a series of major lava flows several million years ago. These lava flows eventually covered 80,000 square miles of eastern Washington and northeast Oregon. Then came an ice age, and floods, and a major eruption of Mount Saint Helens that deposited 4 feet of ash.

The end result of this drama is an area diverse in species and in habitat. The Plateau lies in the transition zone between the moist west side of the Cascades and the drier prairies of the east. You can see the contrast between east and west as you stand on the Plateau.

For the botanist, hundreds of species of wildflowers live on the Plateau, some unique to the Columbia Gorge such as Thompson's broadleaf lupine, Columbia desert parsley, Thompson's water-

leaf and the Hood River milkvetch.

Ruth and I also saw shooting stars, lomatium, glacier lilies, and yellow bells. Ruth heard that the Plateau is covered with purple grass widows in early March; our trip was in April and we saw the last of them. Balsamroot also puts on quite a display in mid-April and May.

Not surprisingly, wildlife is diverse on the preserve. Lewis' woodpeckers and great horned owls are attracted by the oak woodlands. We saw several Steller's jays which nest in ponderosa pine. We heard meadowlarks, too.

Just as we were leaving, a large group of naturalists hiked in. We had timed it just right. While large groups seem intrusive in such a setting, it also seemed inappropriate to resent them—they were there for the same reason we were.

The Conservancy asks that everyone stay on the trails. Camping, fires, and hunting are prohibited. Visitors are asked not to remove or disturb flowers, wildlife or scientific study markers. Dogs, horses, or vehicles of any kind are not allowed.

Visitors may well feel they have found paradise but, alas, there are some hazards—ticks, rattlesnakes and poison oak. I encountered one of the hazards myself: two ticks crawling on my pant legs.

For more information about the Preserve, contact:

The Nature Conservancy  
1205 NW 25 Avenue  
Portland OR 97210  
503-228-9561.

There are few campgrounds in the area so plan your trip well in advance. Hood River is very crowded at times with wind surfers and you may need to call ahead for reservations.

△

*Karen Sykes, of Seattle, has been a member of The Mountaineers for 14 years.*



*Shooting star.*

DALLAS KLOKE

# THE TWIN SISTERS RANGE

—A FEW CLIMBS FOR SCRAMBLERS AND MOUNTAINEERS—

Over the past 33 years of mountaineering, I've climbed in mountain ranges from Alaska to Peru. One small range of peaks in my own back yard, however, is my favorite of them all.

The Twin Sisters Range, located southwest of Mount Baker, is a unique group of peaks ranging in elevation from 5700 feet to 6932 feet. The two highest summits, South Twin Sister and North Twin Sister, dominate the range at its north end.

The reddish-brown rock weathers to a very rough-textured surface which provides excellent rock climbing. The rock ridges, slabs and faces are well-jointed with cracks as well as being quite solid overall. The range runs north and south and is 6 miles long, with the largest body of exposed olivine in the western hemisphere. The range has two main glaciers located at the north end, the Sisters and Green Creek Glaciers; both flank the east side.

Very little mountaineering had been done in the range prior to 1963, when I first ventured into the area. The South Twin was first climbed in 1891 by a party of three. Seven years later, a party of nine ascended the North Twin. Of course their exploits didn't have the luxury of logging roads to approach these peaks as I did in May of 1962. At that time, the timber on the west side of the range had been significantly clear-cut right up to the base of the peaks.

In May of 1963, our party of four approached the south end of the range from Hamilton and a logging road up Howard Creek. At that time the land was owned by Scott Paper. We climbed two small peaks from a high camp several hundred feet below the ridge. The two summits, Shirley and Saddle Slab Peaks, were named later after our first ascents. Since 1963, all the other peaks plus several towers were climbed and named. Fred Beckey and three companions made the first winter ascent of the South Twin on January 26, 1963.

For me, the appeal of the Twin Sisters Range, besides the quality of rock,



Grant Myers

The Twin Sisters area.

is its closeness to approach and climb, and seldom do you encounter other climbers in the area. Lastly, the region has an aesthetic attraction that draws me back year after year.

I can recommend several climbs for mountaineers that are enjoyable and in an alpine setting with fantastic views of Mount Baker and the San Juan Is-

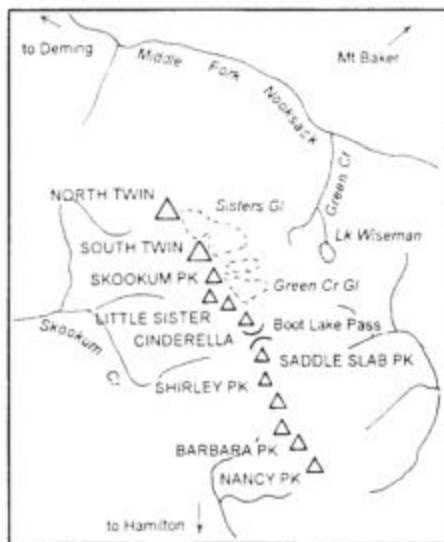
lands. The west ridges of the North and South Twins are popular and provide excellent scrambling from class 2 to 4. From the car both routes are 3 to 4 hours long.

Skookum Peak has two short but interesting ridge routes. The northwest ridge is easy class 5 and the west ridge is class 4, both on solid rock.

At the southern end of the range is a small peak called the "Stepsister." If you can drive the spur road to its end, it is only an hour to the summit which requires a little class 3 scrambling up the south side.

For the hiker, a short but worthwhile hike is into the basin and cirque between the North and South Twins. Using the approach to Dailey Prairie, an old spur road heads east and eventually into a mountaineers' trail. The trail leads into the forest, over a large boulder slope, and finally up an open slope to the edge of the basin which is reached in about an hour.

Orsino Creek roars out of the basin where there are several meadow benches



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JENNIFER STEIN BARKER

# WHAT THE BEAVERS KNOW

—A SAD STORY OF AN OLD-GROWTH FOREST—

Upper Geary Meadow used to be so beautiful. Beaver worked the creek, building dams and lodges. Indeed, they had *created* the meadow as the ponds silted up behind their workings and grass, moss, and riparian plants began to grow in the new soil.

Surrounding the wet areas were aspens, eagerly drinking up moisture from the high water table created by the impounded stream. Willows stood with their feet in the rush of spring melt-off, and perhaps there were also lodgepole pines, which the beavers chewed off and dragged to their dam or lodge to shore up the construction.

Above the beaver-created flats, where the moist meadow transitioned to a well-drained hillside, towered giant old-growth pine. In diameter they ranged from about 24 inches on up, and in age from 300 to a limit of about 800 years. These were already old trees when George Washington crossed the Delaware.

Since the Europeans had come to the forests of the inland northwest, and suppressed the fires which used to kill other species, Douglas fir and white fir had become well-established under the canopy of grandfather pines. The stand of trees was more dense than the land had historically supported, but in the lush, green years of the '50s and '60s, no one questioned whether this could

continue.

But this scenario doesn't date from the '50s or '60s. These idyllic conditions still existed in upper Geary Creek less than 10 years ago. Then one week the trees on the east side of the creek were marked for cutting. The entire hillside was stripped within the next few years of its towering giants.

What was left were the pretty young Douglas firs and true firs which had sprung up underneath them within the last 50 years. Residents of the valley were assured that these trees would grow tall and strong in their turn and, faster than the old pines, would be available for the next round of harvesting.

The beaver didn't wait around to see. Perhaps someone shot them. Or perhaps they left because the creek, which had always flowed year around in the past, now dried up every August. It was no longer home without the water.

Remnants of their dam are still visible on the banks where spring runoff erodes a bare gully down the center of the meadow. Willows which valiantly sent up sucker shoots every spring, only to have them gnawed off each summer by grazing cattle, have given up the fight. Only a few gnarled ancients, too tall for bovine mouths to reach, survive.

On the hillside above, the grass grows lush each spring. The logger who

cut the trees did a beautiful job. He carefully removed the marked ones as he was instructed, doing almost no damage to the soils, ground cover, or the fir trees he was told to leave. Very few thistles grow between the dying firs.

The Forest Service still blames the drought for the crisis of dying fir all over the eastern part of the state, but the beaver know better. They remember other droughts, before the sheltering cover of pine was removed from the hills, when the springs and creeks did not dry up each August. They remember when, even during the driest part of the year, the soil was covered with moisture-conserving grass and sheltering trees.

The snow melted, the dry season came, but the life-giving moisture remained in the ground long months later. Now, as soon as the spring snowmelt has run off down the creeks, the water table begins to drop.

By mid-July most years, the soil among the thinned-out firs, sparsely covered with overgrazed grass, is crunchy-dry. Doubly stressed by low rainfall and logging-and-grazing-caused drought, the trees succumb to insects and disease. The Forest Service, while quick to lay blame for past mistakes on "natural" causes, claims to have learned from the past and to have changed its ways.

Which made it doubly disillusioning when recently I visited upper Geary Meadow, to see how they had marked the upcoming Silvies NW timber sale on the adjacent west hillside. You see, the last time only the east side of Geary Creek was logged. They chose the best, of course, and left the other side for later.

"Later" came around last year, and as a Forest Service botanist, I dutifully surveyed the unit for "T & E" (threatened and endangered) species. I found a sensitive species, known as Sierra onion (*Allium campanulatum*) and



flagged the tree under which it grew.

The tree was an old-growth ponderosa pine, one of the very nicest on the hillside, and as I flagged it I thought with satisfaction that I had assured that it would live to be a grandfather tree. I knew that the public policy was now that they would leave at least a certain number of the best trees within each unit for genetic stock, and I thought that surely—especially with the sensitive plant underneath—this tree would be one of the chosen.

The site unit was marked. Only trees marked with orange paint would be left uncut, and every other tree could be cut at the option of the logger. I went to see. My beautiful old-growth pine, its flagging still in place, stands unmarked and available for slaughter.

I went into the Bear Valley district office, and asked to speak to the sale planner. Jan, the planner, told me that the unit had been marked according to the "prescription" written for it by the silviculturist (my dictionary says silviculture is "the art of cultivating a forest").

He said that such a prescription is public material, and he got a copy of it for me to look at.

Becky, the silviculturist, had recommended reserving "healthy ponderosa pine overstory trees" and cutting everything else. This is not a clearcut, of course, because they are leaving a few trees.

Armed with the "prescription" and a clipboard for notes, Lance and I set out

this morning for a second look. We noted, as the silviculturist had, the scattered old-growth ponderosa pines towering over a dense, thickety understory of fir (many with evidence of insects and disease). We read with approval her recommendation to leave the healthy ponderosa pine overstory trees, and clear out diseased fir to push the stand of trees back to a majority of pine.

Why wasn't this what we were seeing on the ground? To confirm what I was seeing, I began to take notes and count trees as they were marked.

When we were done with our (admittedly un-scientific) study of unit 46, we found that of the 141 old-growth ponderosa pine we saw on our tour of the stand, more than half had been marked to take, including three beautiful, live, broken-top trees which are supposed to be left as wildlife trees.

We took photos of a few of the best, with Lance or me dwarfed beside them in the picture. With few exceptions, the trees marked to cut were bigger and more beautiful than the trees marked to leave in the same area. Many were loaded with what may well be their last crop of pine cones.

We documented what we saw as best we could, determined to come back and count the growth rings in the stumps later. The trees have already been sold. There is nothing we can do to save them.

What we can do, and will do, is to get involved in the next sales in our

area from the beginning. They are already on the planning map, and as soon as I am done writing this I will write the letter to the District Ranger asking to be involved in the "Starr" and "Van Aspen" sales.

The first process sales go through is called "scoping" and it is at that stage that citizen involvement can make the biggest difference.

Don't wait until trees you love are marked for slaughter before becoming involved! The locations of upcoming sales are public information.

Write to the ranger districts you are concerned about, and ask for a schedule and maps of sales in the planning process. This does not commit you to anything, but it may inform you if trees you care about are in danger!

I didn't even live here when they first planned the sale we are documenting now, but I won't let another opportunity to get involved pass me by.

△

*Jennifer Stein Barker, of Canyon City, is a botanist. She and Lance live on a solar-powered homestead in eastern Oregon, where she publishes Morning Hill News.*

*The forest she writes about here is part of the Malheur National Forest.*

## THE TWIN SISTERS RANGE *continued from page 17*

for relaxing. You can continue up into the cirque and scramble to the saddle on the ridge connecting the two peaks.

It's so remarkable that within 3 hours of leaving home, you can be in such a barren, isolated alpine location. The area is fragile, so be careful of your impact.

The Twin Sisters area is now owned by Crown Pacific Ltd, which usually closes the land to the public from July to October for the fire season. The main approach into the north end is from Highway 9 and the Mosquito Lake road. A logging road off the Mosquito Lake road goes up around the north side of Bowman Mountain to

Dailey Prairie.

The southern approach is off Highway 20 near Hamilton, where the old Scott Paper road 200 takes off. A gatekeeper is on duty every day from 6am to 10pm. There is no fee but you do have to sign out. My suggestion is to call Crown Pacific LTD at 206-826-3951 before going into the area just to make sure entry is permitted.

Fred Beckey's *Cascade Alpine Guide*, red book, is the best source of information and climbing routes for the Twin Sisters.

Every year I try to make at least two trips into the range: one in the spring and the other in the fall. I never

get bored climbing the same peaks or routes and usually you can find variations to spice up the climbs.

Someone wrote in *The Mountaineer*, 1916, how the morning sun "shouts its rays upon the jagged, rocky tops of the Sister Range, flooding them in a rich mellow light."

△

*Dallas Kloke, of Anacortes, is the author of Boulders and Cliffs.*

*He is credited in Beckey's "red book" with many first ascents in the Twin Sisters region.*

SHARI HOGSHEAD

# Grand Canyon Odyssey

—SEATTLEITES VISIT THE SUN COUNTRY—

I had the amazing good fortune last spring to be invited on a private trip to float the Grand Canyon. Diane Troje had been planning a Troje family trip down the canyon and, after a 7-year wait, she had received her permit.

The permit was for 18 days for 16 people—four kayakers and 12 rafters on six rafts, a perfect size group. The trip was to be split into two parts: the first eight days from the put-in at Lee's Ferry to Phantom Ranch; and the final ten days from Phantom Ranch down stream to the take-out at Diamond Creek.

The group consisted of trip leader Diane Troje, her mom (Fran) and sib-

lings and various and assorted spouses, mates and friends.

My daughter Debbie and I felt honored to be included in such an elite group of water-oriented people. From the beginning I knew that this trip promised excitement and fun, both of which we had in abundance.

Debbie and I, along with Jim Dixon from Illinois, joined the trip at Phantom Ranch for the final ten days, which included most of the really exciting rapids.

We flew into Phoenix, and then over Sedona to Flagstaff on a Saturday. After picking up our rental car, we drove to the canyon rim that evening. We got an early start for the hike on Sunday morning. It was a crisp, clear, cool morning but warmed up quickly as we hiked lower and the sun rose higher.

We were happy to reach the river, but the hardest part of the walk was the last bit along the river and across the Bright Angel bridge to the ranch.

Here we met our compatriots, having just passed the three departing rafters we were replacing on their way up the canyon. We told them where to locate the rental car which they would return to Flagstaff on their route home.

As we grabbed our gear (which we had sent ahead for use by the three re-treating boaters) and boarded the boats, the sun was straight above and the temperature was in the 90s. Since it was only May 30, we Seattleites had not become used to heat or even sun.

We thought sympathetically of the other three ascending the Bright Angel trail in the afternoon heat. Soon, however, our thoughts were focused on negotiating Pipe Springs Rapid and we were wetter and cooler as we anticipated Horn Creek Rapid and then our camp at Monument Creek.

This was Day Eight for our compan-



Exploring side canyons.

Shari Hogshead



Shari Hogshead

*The canyon walls provided shade from the sun. The canyon walls provided shade from the sun. ions but we were all awestruck by the beauty here, as well as the sense of being totally cut off from the rest of the world.*

Many times during this trip I tried to sense what it would have been like to have been one of those first adventurers to travel down the river, battling the rapids, immersed in this magnificent but potentially cruel canyon, never knowing what lay ahead or how far it would be to a place where one could escape.



For reading material, we found *A River Runner's Guide to the Grand Canyon* most interesting.

Each day we consulted our waterproof copies of *The Colorado River in Grand Canyon—A Guide* by Larry Stevens. Besides being a guide to the river itself, describing rapids, campsites, side canyons, and river miles, the book gives a history of canyon explorations. Chapters deal with canyon geology, biology/ecology, weather/climate, as well as listing commercial river companies. There is even a chapter devoted to private groups like ours.

Our days consisted of floating such rapids as the infamous Crystal and Lava, setting up camp, pumping and filtering water for cooking and drinking, cooking and preparing meals, reading, chatting, bathing, swimming, and hiking beautiful and varied side canyons such as Burro, Blacktail, Deer Creek and Matkatamiba.

Other hiking locales included the Tapeats Creek area and Havasu. Once-lovely Havasu has been torn asunder by several recent devastating floods. Many of the travertine ledges have been torn apart and some of the famous turquoise pools no longer exist.

Ancient cottonwood trees along the bank have been savagely uprooted. The entrance to Havasu has also undergone great change and it is quite difficult to negotiate a large group of rafts to shore.

As we descended the river, we noticed one thing about our companions who had been on the river for nearly two weeks—cracked and bleeding hands and feet. It is so easy to get into the habit of going barefoot on the sand. That fine, smooth sand, however, seems to leach the body moisture right out of your feet.

Hand problems mostly were caused by dish pan hands. We had four buckets washing dishes. One for first rinse, the next for washing, one for second rinse, and the last for a bleach/water rinse.

We learned to be careful to immerse only hands covered by rubber gloves in the bleach mixture. Each day, we took turns pumping water for all our needs.

We used solar showers, of course, placed on the beach for bathing. Some days, we just swam in the river.

Kevin Lewis, a veteran of eight Grand Canyon trips, administered the toilet facilities. Everything, of course, was carried out except urine, which



*A calm part of the Colorado River in the Grand Canyon.*

was added to the 8000 cfs that the river generally ran during our trip.

Approaching Lava Falls, we clambered ashore to scout the rapid. Knowing that the raft I was riding and its inhabitants had parted company during several past descents here, my nerves were on edge.

My confidence was shaken further when, immediately after reaching our scouting vantage point, we saw another party's raft flip. Our boaters all visually picked their line and off the first few of us went while the rest remained for photo opportunities.

Safely through, we in turn became the photographers. The kayakers in our group—Pam Klute, Dave Troje,

Charles Graves and Lana Lewis—were all in perfect form through Lava Falls.

However, our days in the sun were numbered and, after a delightful and congenial trip, we approached the take-out at Diamond Creek.

The van which would carry us and our gear back to Flagstaff awaited us. Boats were dismantled and gear loaded. Some of us boarded flights for home at the sparkling new airport, while others started the long drive home.

*Shari Hogshead, of Bellevue, works for the Issaquah School District.*

CHUCK GUSTAFSON

## DIAMOND J EXPRESS

—EATING & SKIING HUT TO HUT IN COLORADO'S 10TH MOUNTAIN DIVISION HUT SYSTEM—

The 10th Mountain Division Hut Association was formed in 1980 to build a series of cabins and ski trails in the backcountry between Vail and Aspen, Colorado.

It was founded by former members of the fabled 10th Mountain Division who trained during WW II at Camp Hale, south of Vail. The 10th Mountain system currently includes 13 backcountry cabins, 3 dude ranches and inns, and almost 300 miles of marked ski trails laid out roughly in a circle around the edges of the Holy Cross Wilderness.

It is the largest backcountry hut/cabin system in the United States and certainly ranks as one of the premier systems in the world.

My wife Alice and I are both experienced Nordic skiers and snow campers, but had previously only done two short hut trips, both to the Stark's High Camp in the Washington Cascades. We had talked about skiing the 10th Mountain system for several years, but the impetus came in 1989 when with 3 friends we made our second attempt to ski around Crater Lake. Alice decided that this was her last winter camping trip—no more tents in snowstorms.

Matt Coco, a friend who had skied the 10th Mountain System with Paragon Guides, raved about his great trip. We had never been on a guided backcountry trip and were concerned about a) the extra cost and b) not being independent.

Against this we weighed the advantages of not having to carry a sleeping bag, carrying only a small quantity of food, and enjoying the guide cooking that Matt so vividly described.

We finally decided to make reservations with Paragon Guides for their "Diamond J Express" trip scheduled for March of 1993. This was a 6 day/5 night trip that started at the Diamond J Ranch and then followed the trail system north to the Harry Gates, Peter Estin (2 nights) and Polar Star huts,



Our group, starting from the Diamond J Ranch.

exiting at the West Lake Creek trailhead near the Arrowhead Ski area in Vail Valley.

Since we were traveling all the way from our Seattle home and hadn't skied in Colorado in 20 years, we decided to make our trip an extended ski outing. We left Seattle in our new Explorer, loaded with skis, boots and poles, overnight packs, long underwear, banana bread and brownies. The drive to Colorado and the lift skiing helped acclimatize us to the altitude. Since we live at sea level, flying to Colorado and then trying to ski at 8000 to 12,000 feet can be difficult, if not dangerous.

We skied at Steamboat Springs for 3 days, then at Vail for 3 days. Colorado had just finished a long series of storms. When I complained to a local about the lack of new powder snow, I received little sympathy, as this was their first sighting of the sun in over a month. The lift skiing was great and we quickly forgot about Washington's "Cascade cement" and skiing in the rain.

On March 6 we drove in fresh snow to the Paragon Guides Backcountry Center at the Arrowhead Ski area for orientation and skills training. Our

group was to be led by senior guide Dan Ostrowski. Dan calls Vail his home, but is a native of Michigan and has been a seasonal Park Ranger at Yosemite, Yellowstone, Mount Rainier, and more recently Denali.

The rest of our party consisted of Howard Landan (engineer from Providence, New Jersey), Trish Roach and Rob Martin (banker and commercial photographer from Boston), and Bob Smith (retired engineer and executive from Evergreen, Colorado). We also met Karen Peck, the Paragon Office Manager who efficiently handled every detail of our pretrip planning, and Buck Elliot, director and co-founder of Paragon Guides.

Our first activity was to form a circle and throw a bag to learn each other's names and home towns. It seemed silly at first, but worked well to break the ice.

Dan then went over our personal equipment for the trip. Each of us was expected to use metal edge backcountry Nordic skis, heavy duty Nordic boots and climbing skins. We all carried our own clothing for the trail and the huts, as well as the normal equipment for day touring, such as head lamp, sun-

Chuck Gustafson

screen, and water.

Dan issued us each a sleeping bag liner and pillow case and told us we would also be carrying a bag of fresh food weighing about 5 pounds. Paragon's literature describes average pack weights of 20 to 30 pounds. At the start of our trip Alice's pack weighed about 20 pounds and mine weighed just under 40 pounds. During the summer, sleeping bags and dried and canned foods are cached at the huts. The guides carried huge packs with repair kits resembling a ski shop, tent, sleeping bag, stove and large first aid kits.

Following the orientation, we practiced basic Nordic techniques on the flat. Then we took the lift to the top of Arrowhead and practiced trail breaking, skiing in a variety of snow conditions, slowing down and stopping, and finally downhill techniques.

The next day, at 8am, we met Karen firing up the wood stove in the Paragon Guide cabin and were introduced to our assistant guide, John Swanson. Over juice, coffee, tea, rolls, and fruit, we completed our orientation and at 9:00 drove away in the Paragon van. We drove west on the new I-70 along the Colorado River. It was a gorgeous day and we had spectacular views of the Glenwood Canyon.

The guides had planned a surprise hike/conditioner to Hanging Lake on the north side of Glenwood Canyon. The hike was 1¼ miles and 1200 feet vertical on a snow-packed trail. The trail ascended a narrow box canyon beside a frozen snow-covered creek. High red and beige walls flecked with snow in the rock bands hung above us.

Emerging from a steep exposed section of the trail, we suddenly found ourselves on a shelf filled with a small jewel-like lake. Trout swam in the shallows and an ice waterfall filled the upper end. Above the lake was another waterfall that had formed a huge ice stalagmite at its base. It was magical to stand behind this translucent ice sculpture with the light pouring through.

After picnicking in Glenwood Springs, Don (a senior guide and our shuttle driver) insisted on stopping at the last vestiges of civilization, a Baskin & Robbins. Then he forced us to eat large ice cream sundaes. The trip was getting rougher than we expected.

Our shuttle continued up the beautiful Fryingpan River valley to the Diamond J Ranch at 8250 feet. The Dia-

mond J Ranch is a small traditional Colorado dude ranch owned by Bill and Martha Sims. The old log ranch house was rustic, comfortable and very clean. Outside was a hot tub and sauna. The Ranch was guarded by Meatball, a golden retriever who never refused a pat.

After an acclimatization ski, a hot tub soak, and relaxing in front of the fireplace, we regrouped for a ranch dinner of homemade bread, a veggie-noodle dish named "Diamond J Jamboree," fried chicken cutlets, and pie a la mode. Dan gave an excellent presentation after dinner on the geology, history, flora and fauna of this area of Colorado. By 9pm, we were all fast asleep.

On Monday we awoke to another gorgeous day and the smell of breakfast. We took that old saying "breakfast is the meal that gets you through the day" to heart and chowed down on a sumptuous meal.

After the obligatory group photos, we walked down the road to the trailhead, put skins on our skis and took off. It quickly became hot in the Colorado sun, something we hadn't expected at this elevation and this early in the year. The snow thawed from a frozen crust to wet and soft. This was starting to remind us of Cascade skiing.



Alice on the Iron Ridge trail.

After several breaks for blister control, water and clothing, we took a long snack break of fresh fruit, GORP (good old raisins and peanuts) and granola bars. This was followed by a late lunch of sandwiches.

We were finally able to remove our climbing skins for 1½ miles of downhill, followed by a short uphill grunt to the Harry Gates Hut at 9700 feet. We had skied 6.6 miles and gained over 2000 feet in 6 hours.

The hut was already full, but Dan and John quickly reorganized the bunks and opened up a spare bunk room on the ground level for Rob, Trish, Alice and me. Sharing the hut with us were two groups of senior skiers from Boulder and Denver who had been skiing for 50+ years. They had made much of their equipment and were full of stories.

The Harry Gates hut has a sophisticated solar electrical system with solar collector cells on the roof, large deep cycle submarine batteries in the basement and 12 volt lights throughout. There are 3 wood stoves, one in our basement suite, one upstairs for heat and melting snow, and a cookstove in the kitchen.

The kitchen has a sink, 3 burner propane stove on a timer and a generous mishmash of dishes, utensils, pots and pans. The main floor has numerous rough tables and benches for eating and socializing. The bunks are built in and have covered foam mattresses. In front is a large deck and in back is an outhouse with glass windows.

As soon as we arrived, Dan and John prepared a snack of potato chowder with oyster crackers and juice. We all helped split firewood, stoke the stoves and carry snow in buckets for the giant aluminum melt pot on the front room wood stove.

After dinner John gave an avalanche lecture. Then Dan tried to get us enthused for a moonlight ski trip. He claimed that this was the closest the moon would be to earth for 15 years. Because the snow was now a frozen rutted crust, some of us wimps walked instead of skied. The sky was full of stars and a bright moon glowed. Some of our group spotted the lights of our next hut. Peter Estin.

We all went to bed early. Rob and I started a fire in our basement stove, but the heat migrated upstairs, keeping everyone but us warm. Taking pity on us, Dan gave us extra sleeping bags. Sound





Chuck Gustafson

*Dinner at the hut—with fresh-baked bread.*

carries easily through the hut and we could look up through the knotholes in our ceiling and see the folks on the next level, but we slept like rocks.

The next morning we hustled to the table for our first hut breakfast of potato/veggie stir fry, fresh banana bread, cold cereal, fruit, juice and coffee. After hut chores, we skied away at 9:00 in the sunshine.

Unfortunately, the trail hadn't thawed yet and was icy and rutted. Our route took us to a spectacular overlook of Lime Creek Canyon, where we stopped for pictures, then past John Denver's ranch.

With the sun getting higher, the snow became soft and heavy, but much more skiable. Finally, at 2pm we stopped for a lunch of tabuli, crackers, pita bread, cheese, dried fruit, GORP and chocolate.

Re-energized, we skied through aspen groves as we climbed a narrow ridge. To the west of our route we sighted the debris of slab avalanches, probably initiated by the prior day's strong sun.

We skied through an old shepherds' camp where many of the aspen trees had been initialed and dated by the shepherds. We found one dated 1938.

Dan pointed out the claw marks on the trees from cubs and adult bears and also where the porcupines had debarked the trees.

At 4:30 we arrived at the Peter Estin Hut at 11,200 feet, after a final steep section of ridge. It was snowing

to the south and we were starting to get a few flakes. On our second day, we had skied 7+ miles, losing 500 feet of elevation and gaining over 2000 feet, in 7.5 hours.

The Peter Estin Hut is similar to Harry Gates, but has a larger kitchen with two sinks. We shared the hut with two other groups, one of which called themselves the "Monkey Boy Ski Club." Each member of their party tried to out-cook the other members in a competition for best gourmet meal.

For a snack Dan and John prepared a chinese noodle soup accompanied by crackers, snack mix, cashews, juice and whole wheat fig newtons. While some of us napped, Dan gave a presentation on the history of Colorado mining and the mining towns.

After a delicious dinner, we had "hut ice cream." Hut ice cream is made from a can of cherries, a can of condensed milk, and snow. To further raise our sugar level, we supplied Raspberry Frangos from Seattle.

Wednesday was our layover day and we all took advantage of it to sleep late. It had started snowing during the night and by morning about 2 inches of new snow lay on the ground. Breakfast was coffee, juice, hot applesauce, date walnut pancakes with hot strawberry or maple syrup. Most of the group went for a morning ski.

Feeling very lethargic after lunch, it was difficult to initiate an afternoon ski, but six of us left in snow showers for Prospect Peak. Two to four inches

of new snow covered the worst of the melted frozen crud and breakable crust. The sky had a leaden look and the light was fading fast as we climbed Prospect Peak in gusty wind and snow showers.

Upon reaching the summit, we sighted Charles Peak. Despite the late hour and poor conditions, I had to ski my namesake. John and I reached the summit of Charles Peak, 12,050 feet, at 4:30pm. This was the highest elevation I had ever reached on Nordic skis.

Skiing down with fogged glasses on wind packed powder and sastrugi, I fumbled on my turns while John skied like he was in a Warren Miller movie.

Dinner was another "guide success" of slaw, corn bread, rice with corn and Bill Clinton's enchiladas. We then played Pictionary and the "Tamales" (Alice, Chuck, Howard and Rob) soundly defeated the "Squids" (Dan, Trish, John and Bob). For dessert we enjoyed petrified chocolate brownies (left in the cookstove about 1 hour too long) and cherry ice cream.

Thursday we awoke early to prepare for our longest day. Outside it was blowing and snowing heavily with a temperature of about 25 degrees. We were finally getting Colorado powder snow. After shoveling off the deck, stacking firewood, doing dishes and other hut chores, we left, bundled for a wintry day.

I was privileged to break trail down the infamous Iron Ridge trail. This is a very steep route with many switchbacks through heavy woods. The snow was superb with 6 inches of new powder, and I must admit that I made more than a few whoops and hollers.

Regrouping at the bottom of the ridge, we kicked and glided past several old homesteads as the snow slackened and the sun peeked out.

The trail then climbed through aspen groves, finally topping out on a ridge in a beautiful grove of pines. Here we hungrily ate a lunch of pita bread with tuna salad and cabbage, petrified brownies (yes, we ate every one), Gouda cheese, and fig newtons.

Following lunch, we were enjoying a long downhill traverse when Dan broke his right Rossignol ski under the binding. John and Dan quickly made repairs by remounting the binding.

We started the last steep climb at the same time as a group of three Texans who had started from another trail-head. Everyone was almost too pooped to enjoy the views as we arrived at the Polar Star Inn, 11,040 feet, at 5 pm.

We had skied 8.2 miles in 8 hours, losing 2000 feet of elevation and gaining over 1800 of it back.

The Polar Star Inn is a private hut that is booked through the 10th Mountain Hut System. Alice and I got our own room in the loft with a double bunk. This hut had a smaller kitchen, living and dining areas than the others. Unlike the others, it also had running water from an outside tap, a wood-heated sauna, a propane lighting system and two chemical pit toilets on the back porch.

Following a beautiful sunset, we had a dinner of wine, juice, applesauce bread, crab salad with Vasa bread, raisin coleslaw and a homemade rehydrated stew. This night was the clearest and coldest of our trip. When we got up in the morning it was -2 degrees F on the back porch and probably 15 degrees colder outside. Breakfast was pineapple, peaches, pancakes with hot maple syrup, coffee and juice.

Part of our group took a tour to the top of the ridge. After taking photos, I followed their tracks through 2 inches of new snow to the ridge top. The vistas were very impressive with sparkling new snow in the foreground and a crystal clear sky amplifying the distance.

It was warm in the sun and soooooo very relaxing. I turned back as the tracks headed uphill into the cold shade and reluctantly glided back to the hut to finish packing on this last day of our trip.

Back at the hut, I met the owner

John Seipel, who had just skied in. Obviously very proud of the Polar Star Inn, he skis in frequently. Finally we said our goodbyes and left about noon.

It was still cold, clear and sunny with super powder snow. This was the coldest day of the trip and I wore my Wisconsin hat (with the lambs wool ear muffs) all day.

We skied through meadows, dense trees and gentle terrain, finally stopping for a late lunch at the upper section of an old jeep road.

At 4pm we arrived at the Westlake Creek Trailhead, 8220 feet, where we were met by the Paragon van. Dan and John promptly broke out the champagne and Avalanche Beer to celebrate our completion of the trip.

This last day we skied 7+ miles in 4 hours, losing 3030 feet of elevation. The totals for the entire trip were 34.3 miles and 8050 feet (net) of elevation.

Would we do another hut or guided trip? Yes and yes. The 10th Mountain Huts are well designed and maintained, and cooking and sleeping in the huts is very comfortable compared to snow camping. This is not a true wilderness experience, but it is more relaxing and closer to what many might think a vacation should be.

Using the huts allows you to carry a lighter pack (no stove, pots or tent). Using guides means an even lighter pack (no sleeping bags and less food) and the luxury of having meals cooked (we were encouraged to help if we de-

## TRIP PLANNING

**Season:** late November to early April.

**Skiing ability:** strong intermediate Nordic or Alpine.

**Mountaineering skills** (route finding, first aid, survival): advanced intermediate, assuming you don't use a guide.

**Conditioning:** strong.

**Equipment:** metal edged Nordic skis and stiff heavy duty boots, climbing skins, avalanche beacon, shovel, summer sleeping bag, overnight pack, food, clothing and personal gear for weather ranging from -20 degrees F to hot spring sun.

**Write:**

10th Mountain Division  
Hut System  
1280 Ute Ave  
Aspen CO 81611  
(303-925-5775)

or: Paragon Guides  
PO Box 130  
Vail CO 81658  
(303-926-5299)

sired). The guides also were experts on the "hut routine," took responsibility for repairs, first aid and route finding (I was able to pare my repair and first aid kits down to the minimum).

Starting as a group of strangers from across the country, we were soon working as a team under the leadership of our guides, Dan and John.

In addition to being superb athletes and cooks, they are great people who love the mountains and want to share it with outsiders. From the first minute we were introduced until the final goodbyes, they never quit trying to make the trip a "peak" experience for everyone.

△

*Chuck Gustafson, of Seattle, can be identified on the trail by the brownie crumbs in his beard. He may be the only known person to have gained 5 pounds while climbing Mount Rainier.*



Chuck Gustafson

Views of Holy Cross Wilderness on the way to the Polar Star hut.

KARL ULLMAN

# ... WATER ...

## —WHAT TO DO WITH IT IN THE BACKCOUNTRY—

As I walked north from the Mexican border on the Pacific Crest Trail last summer, obtaining water was always one of the day's top priorities. Because it wasn't uncommon to walk 20 to 25 miles between water sources, where and when I found water often dictated the day's schedule: where I would eat, where I would rest, and sometimes how far I would walk.

Having done most of my previous exploring in Washington's wet Cascade Mountains, the scarcity of water along certain sections of the PCT was intimidating at times.

The guidebook, however, proved to be very accurate on where to find the next spring, creek, pond, lake or river. After drinking from sources as diverse as the muddiest seep to the huge cement-lined aqueducts in California, I learned a great deal about collecting, carrying and filtering water.

### The Collapsible Bucket

To collect water, I use my trusty collapsible bucket: a self-modified 10-liter "Fold-a-Carrier" made by Reliance.

To make a Fold-a-Carrier into a bucket, simply cut the top off, including the built-in handle and pour spout. The resulting container looks like a cube with the top square missing. I use the bucket to scoop water from streams, to pour water into my filter, and to reach into tiny crevices where water is trickling down (since the bucket bends, it fits where rigid containers can't).

It is big enough to dunk my head into for a good hair washing and also to wash clothes in. When I'm done, it folds up nicely to fit into a small corner of my pack.

Early on I considered leaving it behind to save weight—now I take it with me on all of my walks.

### The Water Bag

Walking with a pack for 25 miles on a warm day requires more drinking water than the usual two 1-liter bottles

that I used to carry. The solution is the water bag: it is lightweight and folds small when not in use.

I used the relatively inexpensive and simple 2-gallon Sova brand water bag which consists of a removable inner bladder made of plastic and a protective outer covering of nylon.

The 2-gallon capacity was sufficient for my drinking water needs to walk 25 miles in 100-degree temperature. After five months of daily use, I only needed to replace the bladder once.

Other hikers found the MSR "Dromedary" bag acceptable, but it is more expensive and heavier.

### Can I Drink It?

The primary concern about potability in the mountains of the west coast is giardia. I've been told that giardia can be found anywhere, even in glacial runoff. I've also been told that some people show symptoms when they have giardia in their systems, while others do not.

Accordingly, few people agree on when it is necessary to filter water for giardia. The safest way is to filter all of it.

When I left Mexico, I filtered all of the water that I drank. Over time, however, my practices evolved. If it came from a spring or a seasonal stream, I drank it as is. If the water came from a lake or a perennial stream, I filtered it.

Not a very scientific approach, but it worked for me. I don't advocate this method for others; I simply state what I do. Perhaps I'm one of those who doesn't show symptoms.

Of the people I met who have *previously* become ill from giardia, all of them filter without exception to lessen the chance of becoming sick again.

I've seen two types of filters that work well: the Hiker's Friend and the Mini-Katadyn. I used the Hiker's Friend and I think it's wonderful. Rather than requiring laborious pumping, it works as a siphon. It has a coated nylon bag that you fill with water and hang from

a branch. A flexible tube affixed to a Timberland-brand filter tethered to the inside of the nylon bag runs down to your water bottle or bag.

Simply start the siphon by sucking on the tube and then relax as filtered water streams into your container. The system is inexpensive, lightweight and functional.

My original system is still going strong; the only drawback is that the filter must be replaced after extended use (two weeks at two gallons per day for me). I found that pouring the water through a bandana to remove sediment before filtering, even if the water looked clear, lengthened the life of the filter dramatically.

For those who are addicted to pumping, the Mini-Katadyn found favor with other hikers. I didn't hear positive comments about any other brands of filters.

### Drinking It Down

Remember that the main component of our bodies is water. For good health, especially while exercising, we must stay hydrated.

I drank one-half liter per hour as I walked the Crest; if I drank less, I felt achy and seemed more prone to injury.

An excellent source for learning more about water in the backcountry is *The Pacific Crest Trail Hiker's Handbook*. Most of what I've learned on the trail, and also written here, is a field test of what is written in that book.

The book and also the Hiker's Friend water filter are available from:  
Adventurelore Press  
PO Box 804  
LaPine OR 97389.

△

*Karl Ullman, of Orinda, California, is presently wintering over in a cabin on the side of Mount Adams. He plans to continue his PCT trek when the snow melts.*



PETER KRYSTAD

## JIM HILL MOUNTAIN

—“NICE DAY,” I THOUGHT ... THEN WE FOUND THE INJURED SKIER—

This fine trip to Jim Hill Mountain had two quite different halves. On January 29, we left the Mill Creek Nordic Center parking lot about 9am, carrying our skis up the hard-packed road. Burgdorfer's directions are accurate for getting up the valley to Lanham Lake. With the stable snowpack we followed easily the steps kicked straight up an avalanche chute on the side of the ridge above Lanham Lake. We reached the crest of the northern arm of Jim Hill Mountain about 100 yards north of the saddle at 5400 feet.

The two high ridges guarding Jim Hill's northern basin had turned a skiff of snow at Stevens Pass into 5 inches here, and then kept it cold and sun-free for a week. We continued up to the notch at 6200 feet and ate lunch, enjoying the last direct rays of the sun we would get on this perfectly clear and calm day.

We swept down the slope into the basin, sandy hoarfrost spraying loudly left and right. Stopping at treeline, we admired our tracks. I dropped my pack and headed up for more, while Carl and Paul began negotiating the descent out Henry Creek.

I made it to a notch at 6400 feet on the eastern shoulder of Jim Hill, gaining good views of the Whitepine drainage and the Chiwaukum Range shining in the late afternoon sun. Turning around, I dropped steeply into the basin again, looking past the tips of my skis down and out the valley, thousands of feet to the highway. Nice day, I thought.

I picked up my pack and set off down the floor of the drainage. At first the scrubby avalanche-battered firs in the floor of the basin were spaced far enough apart to allow skiing with carefully placed turns. Then they thickened enough to require careful sideslipping. Finally, they turned to slide alder.

I caught sight of Carl and Paul a little farther down. They had dropped their skis and were hiking up the side of the hill. I hustled and caught them, calling up to them to ask where they

were headed. They replied they had heard calls for help, and had found a badly injured skier several hundred yards up the side of the valley. The character of the trip quickly changed.

The skier had fallen from very near the top of the ridge above, over one thousand vertical feet of cliffs and gullies. The skier's partner had built a shelf for him in the steep avalanche chute where he had come to rest, put a traction splint on his broken femur, and gone for help.

The skier had been lying alone for almost two hours, was cold, in shock, and in a lot of pain. We piled all our spare clothes on him, and encouraged him as best we could.

We had heard a helicopter only a few minutes before, so we assumed help wasn't far away. The wait was distressing. It was quite cool in the shade, and we stood in icy avalanche debris, wondering how long it would take. As the skier squirmed in pain, making sounds I wished would stop, I looked up the hill at the stains in the snow, a spot every fifty feet or so.

After 45 minutes the Snohomish County Search and Rescue helicopter arrived, hovering in the middle of the valley, then coming in amazingly close, allowing a man to jump from the door and onto a small tree nearby. He came over to check the victim, and evaluated how best to evacuate him. We "packaged" him tightly in a collapsible stretcher.

We were almost finished with the packaging when the first of four people arrived on the ground, having skied in from the Nordic Center. All four were ski patrollers from Stevens Pass. The victim and his partner were also both in the ski patrol.

I had assumed we now had enough

people to carry the stretcher down the icy chute to the valley floor. But that was not the plan. The helicopter returned and approached even closer than before.

The pilot flying this machine was amazing. He nosed the helicopter in, and everyone hunched down in the wash, glancing up at the swirling yellow circle that marked the tips of the rotors. When they were within two feet of the slope, the "go" shout came and we heaved the stretcher above our heads and slid it in the open door.

The helicopter sank and wobbled in the air with the new weight, then began to lift away. In a few moments the valley was quiet again.

We gathered up our gear and went down to the valley floor. We heard the roar of the Airlift Northwest helicopter as it started its run to Seattle. Nearly two hours had passed since we came on the scene. It was now after 4:30.

In the big timber lower down the travel wasn't too bad, skidding on the icy hard snow. Then, as we came out to the mouth of the valley, the forest filled with thick brush. It was dark by this time, and the snow had thinned enough that we were carrying our skis.

As we came closer to the highway, we could hear the cars and trucks. We would be coming out quite near the east portal of the train tunnel. The continuous falling and stumbling of seven people, two without headlamps, the whipping of branches, the accumulated exhaustion, and finally the steady roar of an idling freight train put a surreal touch on the end of the day.

Ski patrollers had seen our headlamps and picked us up as we dropped onto the road at 6:30pm. We gulped gatorades and wolfed sandwiches, amazed at the whole day, trying to get the roar of the chopper out of our heads.

△

*Peter Krystad lives in Seattle.*



JOHN ROPER

# NIÑA, PINTA, and ZEKES

—THE PEAKS OF LAKE ISABEL—

Three distinct summits—though ones only a bump enthusiast could love—lie between Lake Isabel and the Wallace River, about 4 miles northeast of Gold Bar.

They are easily recognized from the Skykomish valley on Highway 2 from before and beyond Sultan, appearing as a triple summit, upriver (right) of Mount Stickney and the deep Wallace River cut. Despite their strategic location, they have long been overlooked because they are unnamed and have only modest elevation.

We'd been eying them for several years as a possible winter destination, but didn't give them serious thought until 1992. That year was the 500th anniversary of Columbus's exploratory voyage to the New World, and because these summits lie above Lake Isabel, we came to call them "Niña" (4695 feet), "Pinta" (4760+ feet), and "Santa Maria" (4865 feet; aka Peak 4888 on the old map)—from northwest to southeast.

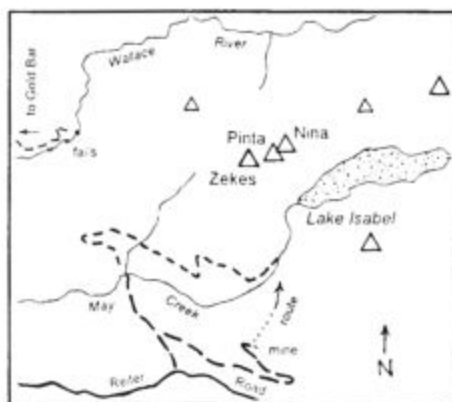
Isabella I (1451-1504), queen of Spain in 1492, came up with the bucks to launch Christopher's ships, as you know.

Later, we've learned that Zeke (of hamburger fame) and Pargeter's updated map called Peak 4865 "Zekes Mountain." So Niña, Pinta, and Zekes evolved, a curious twang.

Last winter, Bruce, Chris and I made a couple of pathetic, unsuccessful stabs at the trio. This year the three of us recruited Dave, Kal and Amy, and upgraded the plan to a full traverse with a car shuttle, leaving one vehicle at the Wallace Falls trailhead, and driving the other around to the Lake Isabel/Copperbell Mine "trailhead."

Finding the latter is a little tricky. In fact, the whole trip was a little tricky, if only because it's right on the corner of four different 7.5-minute quads.

Hints to Lake Isabel: Take a left on Reiter Road about 2 miles east of Gold Bar. In less than 1 mile, continue straight ahead (leaving the pavement) to mile post 2, just past a gravel pit.



Turn left. Go 0.4-mile, through a frighteningly huge mudpuddle, and under powerlines.

Turn right. Go 0.7-mile to a hairpin turn back west at 900 feet (high clearance, or disregard for your vehicle's underbelly, required). 0.6-mile beyond the hairpin is a switchback right. Ignore it. 200 feet farther take the uphill (right) fork which soon switchbacks right and ends at the 1200-foot "Copperbell Mine" (per the 15-minute *USGS Index*), or "2 Mines" (on the new 7.5-minute *USGS Index*). 75 paces west of the mine is the unlikely trailhead, marked by a few blazes on a tree.

Scramble uphill a few feet and find a superb trail heading left that smacks of miners—wide and steady. This intersects the old (abandoned) May Creek Road at about 2000 feet after a mile. The road bends right (east) a few hundred feet farther up.

Pay close attention here. In a few more steps, at 2300 feet, a steep leftish spur road goes straight up the hillside. Take it, and in a few more feet of uphill on the spur, find a trail diving left in the woods again. Once on this final leg, the path is fairly easy to follow to the lake, though there are some tricky spots as the trail gets quite steep just right of the impressive outlet waterfalls.

Lake Isabel, 2847 feet, is a nice destination in itself. Kid Chris the Quick whipped those of us over 50 up here in an hour and 25 minutes. This is a huge lake, 176 acres, and very deep, 200

feet. The only natural lakes in Snohomish County that are larger than Isabel are Lake Stevens, Lake Roesiger, Lake Goodwin and Blanca Lake. A plane crashed here last winter.

We turned left at the outlet, clambered over a small hill and down to and across a second outlet—peculiar—jammed with logs, icy and slick. Splashes and deleted expletives were heard as one of the taller party members tested the water temperature with a dip of the toe up to his knee.

The 2000 feet up to Peak 4865 ("Zekes") was pleasantly open. In the non-winter of January '94, solid snow did not begin until 4400 feet. Atop, we basked in the sun with 360-degree views, including the buildings of downtown Bellevue and Seattle, and the mountains of Vancouver Island.

The snow was crisp enough to suggest crampons to most of the group on the intermittently steep traverse to the 4760+ foot middle peak, "Pinta," and on to Peak 4695, "Niña," which was no problem. Summit snows buried any chance of seeing if any cairns or registers marked previous visits.

As we descended the west-northwest ridge of Niña toward Wallace River, a clearcut reached up to grab us with tight second-growth at about 4200 feet. After muscling and grunting through this, we were embarrassingly happy and surprised to hit motorcycle tracks at 3700 feet on a well-grown-over logging road that shows up on the old 1957 15-minute Index quad.

We followed this road 2100 vertical feet down to a bend east at 1600 feet, then cut right through timber down to the Wallace River, and boulder-hopped to the opposite bank just above the lower (main) falls, picking up the popular trail here. We were back to the cached car just before dark, 9 hours and 15 minutes en route. Good trip. △

*John Roper, of Bellevue, is an inveterate peak collector.*

# PANORAMA

NEWS FROM ALL OVER

## COUGARS AND BOBCATS—

Fourteen cougars were shot and killed last fall in confrontations with humans, according to the Department of Wildlife. An additional four cougars were killed by authorities after complaints from homeowners. Many more reports of sightings and encounters have raised the number of cougar "incidents" to unprecedented heights. An increase in cougar population as well as an increase in human population has probably caused the surge of encounters, according to state biologist Steve Pozzanghera.

Because young cougars must establish their territory outside the "turf" of an older, established cougar, the younger one is sometimes forced into areas frequented by humans.

Generally cougars prefer to flee rather than attack and often will investigate without being aggressive, according to biologist Pozzanghera.

In mid-January, a bobcat made its way to a West Vancouver (BC) neighborhood to lounge beside a pool. Constables and residents were concerned, but conservation officers said bobcats weigh only about 20 pounds, eat birds and rodents, and are not a threat to humans.—*from various news sources.*

**MCQUINN STRIP**—The McQuinn Act of 1972 authorized the transfer of ownership of 61,360 acres back to the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Indian Reservation, with a 20-year phase-in period. That period expired in September 1992.

The public may continue to use Highway 216, Highway 26, Road 42 and Road 58 for through traffic, but the land adjacent to those roads is open only to tribal members. The high lakes east of Olallie Lake will remain open for fishing. Public camping is permitted in the two Forest Service campgrounds within the McQuinn Strip: Bear Springs and Breitenbush.

The tribe plans to do additional signing and fencing to discourage trespass. Contact the Warm Springs Natural Resource Department (503-553-3233) or Tribal Police (503-553-3272) for more information.

**LLAMA RENDEZVOUS**—The Backcountry Llama Rendezvous will be held May 14 and 15 at the Cowlitz County Fairgrounds, 45 miles north of Portland. This is the first Rendezvous

for llama packers and anyone else who is interested in hiking with llamas.

A variety of classes and fun events are scheduled, along with special information for using llamas for packing, companionship, 4-H, wool, and other uses.

A brochure will be available in a month; send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Backcountry Llama, 2857 Rose Valley Loop, Kelso WA 98626.

## MILITARY OVERFLIGHTS—

Despite 3-year-old studies highlighting the problem, National Wildlife Refuges continue to suffer from damaging overflights by military aircraft, according to a report by Defenders of Wildlife.

The report draws heavily from a 1989 study by the General Accounting Office and a 1990 study by the Fish and Wildlife Service, which administers the Refuge system. But recent interviews with Refuge managers show at least 35 Refuges continue to be plagued by overflights that disrupt mating, feeding and other rhythms of Refuge denizens.—*from an article in the Seattle Times.*

**ROSLYN RESORT**—Much of Kittitas County is designated commercial forest land, which bars intensive development—except for 7600 acres of timberland owned by Plum Creek Timber Co.

Plum Creek says the land is too close to Roslyn and Cle Elum for logging to be the best use. They want to build golf courses, tennis courts, horse and cross-country ski trails, convention facilities and up to 5000 houses.

**NEW BC PARK**—The *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* has reported the formation of a new provincial park in British Columbia.

The 560,000-acre Ts'yl-os Provincial Park is centered around 30-mile-long Chilko Lake, about 150 miles north of Vancouver in the Coast Range, according to the *P-I* article by Joel Connelly.

Chilko Lake is similar to Lake Chelan, with rugged, 3000-meter peaks at one end and gentle plateau country at the other.

**SHI SHI TRAIL PROGRESS**—The old trail to Shi Shi beach was closed about 3 years ago by the Makah Nation because no legal right-of-way existed. Tribal attorneys were concerned about the legality of the whole thing and felt

it was best to close the trail to public use temporarily. The Makahs have been working ever since to come up with a solution.

In spite of what you may have read in a major Seattle paper, the decision for a new trail is neither complete nor official. Progress, however, is being made. Will the trail be open by this summer? Maybe. We'll keep you posted.

**HELISKI SCHEDULE**—Many of the mountains in the Whistler-Pemberton region have been given to heliskiing companies for their use. The two largest companies are Tyax and Whistler Heli-skiing which jointly operate primarily in the Callaghan-Brandywine, Spearhead Range and Ispoot Mountain areas.

If you are planning to visit these areas and wish to avoid running into heliskiers, you are advised to contact the companies beforehand, preferably at least a week in advance, as they claim they will avoid conflicts by avoiding the area.

Their numbers are:  
**Tyax Heli-skiing Ltd:** 604-923-7007 (fax: 604-932-2500).

**Whistler Heli-skiing:** 604-932-4105 (fax: 604-938-1225).—*from the BC Mountaineering Club newsletter.*

## SNOQUALMIE PASS EXPANSION

—In response to public input, Ski Lifts Inc. has modified its expansion proposal at Snoqualmie Pass. The changes include:

- Moving the proposed Creek Run Lodge from between the Silver Fir chair and Hyak to the base of the Silver Fir chair, and increasing parking in the immediate area.
- The Frog Lake chair has been eliminated.
- Both the Radio Mountain and Lodge Lake areas are no longer proposed for immediate expansion, but may be considered at a future date.

During this winter, SLI, Forest Service and Sno engineering Inc (EIS consultant) will continue to collect operating data and refine the project plan. After the snow melts, physical and biological resource studies will be conducted. The results of these studies will be incorporated into the Draft EIS which will be issued in late 1994 or early 1995.

The environmental review process welcomes public participation. Ques-

*continued on page 30*



# REST STOP

EQUIPMENT, RECIPES, TIPS

**CAMP TRAILS**—For my 66th birthday I gave myself a wonderful Camp Trails backpack which has served me superbly for two years.

Last summer, while resting briefly on the trail to Cascade Pass, I saw a young woman carrying the same pack. As she came up, I said, "Congratulations! I see you have discovered the backpack designed by a woman, for women."

The young woman's male companion had just come struggling up behind her. He commented, "As you can see, I'm not so fortunate. My pack was designed by a man for *nobody!*"—*Mary Watson, Gig Harbor.*

**MAXIGLIDE**—I sympathized with Jane Habegger when she wrote in a report in this issue that she had forgotten her Maxiglide on a ski trip!

Lee and I discovered Maxiglide 6 or 7 years ago, and just this winter bought our second bottle of the stuff. It's a liquid Teflon that keeps waxless skis from icing up and collecting great gobs of snow on the bottoms.

Maxiglide comes in a 4-ounce bottle. It's expensive, but it lasts a long time. A few drops rubbed into the bottoms of your skis will keep you sliding all day, but won't gum up the pattern for

climbing uphill.

Maxiglide also works on bindings, crampons, and snowshoes. If you can't find it in your local store, write Maxiglide, PO Box 415, Stow MA 01775.—*AM.*

**SKIING TOO LONG**—You've been skiing too long when:

—you have more money invested in ski equipment than stereo gear;

—you can remember when REI started to sell skis.—*Louis Boitano, in the Mount Tahoma Trails Newsletter.*

**CHICKEN CURRY**—This is a recipe from last summer's backcountry cooking contest sponsored by the Peninsula Wilderness Club.

**1 package curry sauce (Knorr)**

**2 cups instant rice**

**enough powdered milk for 1 cup**

**1 small can chicken**

**raisins (handful to taste)**

**red bell pepper, dried or fresh**

**2 cups water**

Mix the milk powder with the curry sauce mix and stir in a small amount of water until it's smooth. Add remaining water and bring to a boil.

Add rice and chicken and simmer about 10 minutes. Add raisins and

chopped pepper. Stir and let stand for 5 to 10 minutes. Serves two.—*from Judy Guttormsen, Poulsbo.*

**WATER BOTTLE**—Tree Top has come out with a great plastic jug for their apple juice which will make a super camp water bottle. It's a gallon size and is sturdy plastic with a nice handle.

I'm a fanatic about making sure we have plenty of water in camp even if we have to do an evening water run to a creek or snowfield. I carry plenty of containers and was amazed when we met a man near Glacier Peak last summer who had to hike out because he lost his *one* water bottle!

Mr. Maphead says I could survive weeks without food but only 10 minutes without water!—*Mystery Hiker, Granite Falls.*

#### WIN FAME & ADMIRATION!

Send us your favorite recipes for hiking and paddling; a review of your newest (or oldest) piece of gear; a safety tip; or tell us about modifying or making your own gear.

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## PANORAMA *continued from page 29*

tions regarding the process or additional comments about the proposal should be directed to:

Larry Donovan  
Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest  
21905 64th Avenue West  
Mountlake Terrace WA 98043  
(206-744-3404).

**NEW HUT SYSTEM**—The Kettle Range Ski Club and the Forest Service are cooperatively developing a backcountry winter hut system at Sherman Pass, between Kettle Falls and Republic.

One temporary hut has already been put in place and is being used this winter. A permanent hut will be constructed this summer in time for next winter. The temporary hut was planned initially for warming and cooking only but, says Snow Ranger Keith Wakefield of the Republic Ranger District, many skiers are using it for overnight use.

The temporary hut is located 3½ miles south of Sherman Pass (Highway

20) on the Kettle Crest Trail, at an elevation of 6500 feet. The permanent shelter will be 7 miles in, on the west side of Snow Peak at about the same elevation. The permanent shelter, Keith says, will be a simple log cabin.

"I think the hut idea is great," he told *Pack & Paddle*. "It provides opportunity to get safely into the backcountry in snow. And with a hut nearby, skiers can venture much farther into the Kettle Range for winter exploration on multi-day trips."

Although this area of the Kettle Range is not designated Wilderness, it is a non-motorized Primitive Area where snowmobiles are not allowed. Sherman Pass—the highest highway pass in this state—has a Sno-Park.

For more information on the Kettle Range hut system, call Keith Wakefield at the Republic Ranger Station: 509-775-3305.

**OLYMPIC COAST SANCTUARY**—It looks as though the Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary is on its way to becoming official. The last step is for the Governor and Congress to review the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's "Notice of Designation" by the end of March.

The Sanctuary will be twice the size of Yellowstone National Park, stretching more than halfway down the Washington coast from the Canadian border in the Strait of Juan de Fuca to the southern boundary of Copalis National Wildlife Refuge near Moclips, and from 30 to 40 miles off shore.

NOAA is putting in place the Congressionally mandated prohibition on oil and gas drilling within the boundaries of the Sanctuary. The final proposed regulations also prohibit the use of Sea Lion Rock as a practice Navy bombing site. *from "Washington Sanctuaries," newsletter of the Center for Marine Conservation.*

# EDITOR'S JOURNAL



Kitchen duty—melting snow for water.

## NOTES FROM THE MAILBOX—

"Hope your maps are being filed by Yellow Cat."—*from Andrea, who used to keep the maps in order at the old Signpost barn.*

"I'm a newcomer to the area and *Pack & Paddle* affords me the opportunity to learn about and appreciate the beauty of my new home."—*HL.*

"I enjoy the magazine and the different points of view."—*JL.*

"I do wish there were a few articles on short day hikes for people with small children."—*JC.*

"I don't go as far or as fast as I used to, so I like reports on local trips. Keep up the good work."—*WS.*

**GETTING WET**—Since Lee and I wanted to learn some kayak safety techniques, we took a class recently. It involved several hours of classroom sessions and an evening in a swimming pool, practicing rescues and "wet exits."

My first wet exit was completely accidental. I held my paddle the wrong way for a brace and over I went. Probably a good thing. It would have taken me ages to do it intentionally.

**WARM WINTER**—I've enjoyed the flocks of varied thrushes that have come to visit during the last few cold winters. They eat our stale bread and sing in our evergreens.

This year, however, it's just been too warm. I haven't seen or heard even one varied thrush.

**BABY ON THE PCT**—Several *Pack & Paddle* readers reported seeing the young couple, Pat and Gary, with the tiny baby and two llamas hiking south on the PCT last summer.

You might be interested to hear what they're doing now. The latest issue of "Backcountry Llama" reports that they made it to the Columbia River. They had planned to winter over and continue their trip in the spring, but changed their plans. Instead, they sold their two llamas and are bicycling south along the coast, heading for Guatemala.

Baby Andrew is thriving and doing just fine.

"Backcountry Llama" hopes to stay in touch with this free-spirited family, so we may be able to bring you additional reports of their travels.

**SNOW**—Finally, we're getting snow. Next summer's planned High Routes were looking pretty desperate, but the recent addition of several feet of snow in the high country puts a brighter look on things.

I went alpine skiing with a group

of friends a couple of weeks ago and due to clever organization, Mystery Hiker and Mr. Maphead joined us for the morning. Super-skier Nancy South showed us how to do 360s.

Mystery Hiker works at Stevens Pass—stop in at Guest Services and say hi to her.

**STEHEKIN**—When you're in Stehekin this summer, admire the renovation work being done on the North Cascades Lodge by the new management, Lake Chelan Recreation Inc. (the same folks who run the passenger boats on Lake Chelan). LCRI will operate the lodge year around, starting next winter.

Call them for a boat schedule and trail information: 509-682-4584. Be sure to say you saw it in *Pack & Paddle!*

See you in the backcountry,

Ann Marshall



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