PACK & PADDLE

... covering the backcountry in
Washington and the Pacific Northwest

MARCH 1995
$2.00

Pack & Paddle

VOLUME 4, NUMBER 3

RANDOM VIEW—

Jane Habegger

Bill Lynch straps on snowshoes

Features

Departments

COVER PHOTO:
Bert Cripe manuevers his kayak through the inlet slough at Lake Ozette. Olympic National Park, Washington. Photo by Lee McKee.

HOW TO BE A *PACK & PADDLE* CONTRIBUTOR:

Send us your stories, reports, and photographs. *Pack & Paddle* is written by its readers and we welcome your ideas, input, and material. Submissions are considered contributions—if payment is requested it will be a modest amount. We take great care in handling your work, but we cannot guarantee against damage to or loss of materials. Please don't be offended if we can't use your stories or photos.

Need more guidance? We'll send our Writers' Guidelines; just ask. And we're always happy to discuss an idea with you on the phone: 360-871-1862.

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Hiking, backpacking, climbing, skiing, snowshoeing, canoeing, kayaking and related activities are potentially hazardous. It is the responsibility of the individual to learn and understand the proper techniques associated with safe participation in these activities, and to fully accept and assume all risks, damages, injury or death which may result from following route descriptions or other advice in this publication. This publication is not meant as a substitute for personal instruction by a qualified person.

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Staff

Publishers: A. Marshall and L. McKee
Editor: Ann Marshall
Business Manager: Lee McKee
Administrative Assistant: Yellow Cat

With help from: All Readers

These nice folks have helped us by sending articles from their local papers and newsletters. Thanks to our "Clipping Service" this month:

Walt Bailey
Sharon Cline
Margaret Farley
Kerry Gilles
Harvey Manning
Julie Newberry
A. Nonymous
Denny O'Callaghan
Randy Patterson
David Ryeburn

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LETTERS to the EDITOR

This is an open forum and does not necessarily express the opinions of the publishers

LOOK FOR LARCH INSTEAD

Re: Don Potter and aspen. For golden color, how about searching out the gem of the northwest—alpine larch in early to mid October.

At the southern extreme of its range are the trail to Ingall's Lake, and the Enchantments.

From the North Cross-State Highway 20, larch are found at Easy Pass, Heather Pass, northbound on the Cascade Crest Trail, and around Blue Lake (a short hike from Washington Pass).

There are some low-land aspen on the south side on Highway 20 between the bridge across Swinomish Channel and the refinery access on March Point here on Fidalgo Island. Nice in the fall, but otherwise easily mistaken for alder as their trunks are quite dark. I've not trespassed to check if it's coke dust.

Ramona Hammerly
Anacortes, Washington

Ed. Note: And Ramona ought to know, having illustrated the book *Northwest Trees.*

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MEETING ON THE TRAIL

My friends and I enjoyed your accounts of the Carne Mountain/Leroy Creek trip of last July, first reported in the August issue (*page 13*) and expanded in fine style for the February edition (*page 20*).

We were the party leaving Carne Basin as you approached. I wondered at the time if that was you and your companions, all eagerly identifying flora species and looking much more energetic than we had been at that point of our hike in the day before.

We hope Joan has recovered fully.

Mick Campbell
Puyallup, Washington

Ed. Note: Pack & Paddle readers are around every bend in the trail! Joan was in a colorful cast for several weeks and has recovered sufficiently to teach skiing as usual this winter.

•

LEFT OUT PART OF STORY

I liked your story, "A Ladies' Outing" (*February, page 20*) because I happen to be one of the ladies. However, you left out one very important part: how the group formed a relay and carried my heavy pack up 500 feet to the Chipmunk-Box Pass at the end of our second day.

I was not hurt, just out of shape and tired. They didn't put me down for being slow, but were just glad I was with them this trip for I hadn't seen much of them during the year (the much-needed training time).

I have been with the group for five years and now as I ponder how I would describe these wonderful women (including Nancy, Sharon and Phyllis who couldn't make the trip) I have come up with a list of how I see them.

1. The common denominator is we love God's creation.
2. The camaraderie is the best of two worlds.
3. Never macho—no "women's lib" here.
4. Never an argument or cross word.
5. Always encouraging.
6. Loving, caring and giving of each other.
7. Kindness beyond words.
8. Full of life, laughter, fun, and occasionally tears.

They are like rare wildflowers colorfully displayed on a hillside, blended so beautifully by the hands of the Father. As the morning sun touches the earth, the dewdrops in these flowers are like sparkling jewels, the unspoken character of each of them. I am blessed.

Gert Graham
Freeland, Washington

HARRY KELSEY

Readers of the original *Signpost* will probably remember witty and informative trip reports signed "hmk."

Harry M. Kelsey "retired" to Oregon a few years ago to run a book store, but returned to Washington whenever he could to hike with his friends. He was among the first subscribers to *Pack & Paddle.*

Sadly, he lost a battle to "the big C," as he called it, and passed away September 18, 1994, at age 73.

To the very end he hoped to get out on the trail for a few more hikes. He loved the mountains and hiking with his friends.

He was generous with his expertise, but could be testy with those he felt weren't living up to their potential. Nevertheless, the trails will be very lonesome without his companionship.

Memorials may be made to Evergreen Hospice in care of Shirley M. Wilson at **Rainbow's End Book Company, 250 Broadalbin SW, Albany OR 97321.**—*Kathe Stanness*

Kathe Stanness

hmk on the Klanawa River cable car, West Coast Trail, Vancouver Island.

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.

Space is limited; we may have to cut your report to fit available space. Typing is not necessary; we can read just about anyone's handwriting. We're interested in ALL trips, easy and hard, ordinary and exotic.

We use the following symbols to help you plan your trips.

—Climbing, scrambling, mountaineering, off-trail and cross-country travel.

—Hiking, backpacking on trails.

—Canoeing, kayaking and water trips.

—Snowshoeing and cross-country skiing.

PENINSULA

GENERAL CONDITIONS—Snow. Expect road and trail damage from recent storms and floods.

TAHUYA LOOKOUT *(DNR Tahuya State Forest; USGS Lake Wooten)*—I belong to a group of women hikers called "Tuesday Trotters" and very frequently we schedule hikes to the sites of old fire lookouts. We've been doing this for 10 years, so we've ascended the trails and roads to about 140 sites.

One of our "newer" members twisted my arm into going back to re-do some of the earlier hikes, and Tahuya Lookout was one we did in February 1991. This is by no means a mountain (443 feet), and it is hard to imagine a lookout having been on the site, but the concrete pillars remain. We knew we were in the right place from my altimeter.

For those of you not familiar with Tahuya State Forest, it covers 23,000 acres, all criss-crossed with dirt bike trails. Although the trails on the ground that are not on the map are closed to dirt bikes, and they are supposed to stay on the approved trails, I think many extra trails were made before this rule went into effect. Weekdays, however, see very little traffic.

From Shelton, take Highway 3 north toward Bremerton. At Belfair, turn left on Highway 300. Just past Belfair State Park to the right is a road marked Tahuya-Belfair road. Turn here.

When you reach the Elfendahl Pass road, turn right and follow this past the swampy lake on the right to a very nice parking lot, with restrooms, picnic tables and a covered picnic area.

Across the road from the parking lot is the 4x4 trailhead. The dirt bike trail to take is the one nearest the sign. Follow the blue diamond markers to the gully, and turn left and follow the road up the hill.

At the first intersection go left, and follow the main road to its second junction with a major road to the right. The site of the old lookout is in the angle of this and the main road. (I use the term "road" loosely.) We followed the road around to its junction with the Elfendahl Pass road, and hiked back up the road to the parking lot.

At the Mission Creek trailhead, we had picked up a nice DNR map of the area, and the 6 authorized trails would make promising weekday hikes.

We were scouting our hike on Saturday, and the dirt bikers were polite and friendly. One young woman even asked this grandmother if she enjoyed hiking in the rain. I refrained from asking her if she enjoyed dirt biking in the MUD.

This is an area thick with rhododendrons and is beautiful with blooms in May or early June. It was also pleasant in the forest on a very rainy January day.—Olive Hull, Olympia, 1/28.

EGLON TO HANSVILLE *(NOAA 18573)*—Only minor wind-wave action greeted us as we pulled into our launch point at Eglon Beach Park north of Kingston. Launching and heading northward, our goal was to round Point No Point and make Hansville our turn around for this 8-mile round trip.

This section of Kitsap County coastline between Eglon and the beach at Point No Point is mostly steep, high mudbank. Numerous partial staircases from several houses on top of the high bluffs told a tale of lots of mud slides along the bank. The beach along this section is very narrow at high tide during the winter.

In contrast, the land changes to flat no-bank waterfront within a half-mile or so of the Point. The beach land around and for a ways to the south of the Point is public, so it's a convenient spot to put ashore for a break and a snack. At the south end of the beach is a path which leads to the top of the bluff. This is part of Point No Point County Park.

Depending on tide conditions, there can be quite a current and wave action

BACKCOUNTRY NEWS DEADLINE: March 21

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

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directly off the Point. This morning, with a slack tide, conditions were relatively calm.

Three eagles, several hawks and kingfishers and one seal was the animal count for this trip. With the balmy late January temperatures, this made for a pleasant break from skiing.—LGM, Port Orchard, 1/28.

DUCKABUSH *(The Brothers Wilderness; USGS Mt Jupiter, The Brothers)*—We left the trailhead about 8:30am, still wearing our jackets because of the cold morning air. As we started to climb Little Hump the jackets came off. When we topped Big Hump we were a little wet with sweat but it felt real good to stand there with the sun shining down on us and look up at the cold snowcovered peaks above.

We both have internal frame packs by Trigon. I've had mine a while but this was Kerry's first trip with hers.

We headed down the other side of Big Hump and stopped at the second camp along the river. The temperature was between 30 and 35 degrees and it felt like we were setting up camp inside a freezer. After the tents were up, we decided to eat lunch, then take a day hike up the trail.

We got about ¼-mile and came to a place where ice covered 20 feet of uphill trail. An overhanging rock wall was dripping on the trail and freezing. It was too slippery and too dangerous so we went back to camp.

We busied ourselves with gathering firewood and following a game trail along the river. When we got back to camp it was still only 2pm. I brought along a game called Yahtzee and we played that until we got cold.

Our fire started slow—the frozen wood didn't want to burn. Kerry decided it was time to throw on our fire guarantee, a Duraflame log. That did the trick. It was really nice sitting around our fire roasting marshmallows, and what little sky we could see was filled full of stars.

The next morning I asked Kerry when she wanted to head out and she said, "As soon as the sun shines on us." I told her she might be here for awhile as the sun wasn't going to get high enough to shine on us.

By the time we climbed back up on the Big Hump, we were in the sun for a while. We passed several day hikers and checked out a couple of side trails that led to campsites on our way out.

On down the road we stopped at the Interrorem cabin and hiked the Ranger Hole trail. It's a nice hike with great scenery and lots of sword ferns.—Kerry Gilles and Don Abbott, Grays Harbor County, 1/21-22.

AVALANCHE HOTLINE
Washington Cascades and Olympics: 206-526-6677
Oregon Cascades and Southern Washington: 503-326-2400

BOULDER LAKE / CRYSTAL RIDGE LOOP *(Olympic Natl Park; USGS Mt Carrie)*—Took off up the road/trail toward Olympic Hot Springs at 7am with a quiver of skis stuck in my day pack. I assumed that, with luck, I might be able to ski a little in the basin of Boulder Lake for a couple of hours, then return the way I came.

The snowline started in earnest about ⅓-mile past the trail fork beyond the hot springs. Well consolidated snow allowed me to skitter right up to Boulder Lake without too much trouble. Some old avalanche debris resulted in the usual difficulties.

Boulder Lake basin was beautiful, with solid, consolidated snow. I decided that the snow was quite safe, and set off for the pass above the lake toward Happy Lake Ridge. Climbed steeply on safe, thickly treed slopes to the magnificent viewpoint at 5000 feet on the west end of Crystal Ridge.

I decided to explore Crystal Ridge, bearing easterly in a curl around the head of Crystal Creek. It was magnificent, with little glades and a sprinkling of trees. I continued out the ridge on firm snow, with some ups and downs to avoid minor peaks. Before long, I was at the end of the ridge, looking at the inviting hogsback leading directly down to Olympic Hot Springs.

Although not in the original plan, I decided that I had the time to drop down the ridge. The drop was very steep, but relatively safe, and I was up to my neck in the hot springs within 90 minutes. Walked out the road in the dark to reach the car at 6pm.

This is the first time I ever carried a cellular phone with me. I made a test call, and talked to a friend in Port Orchard clear as a bell!—Larry Smith, Port Orchard, 1/22.

SAND POINT TO CEDAR CREEK *(Olympic Natl Park; USGS Ozette, Allens Bay)*—Reports of icy snow conditions and crummy cross-country skiing on ungroomed trails made it seem like a good time for a winter beach hike. With a cold front anticipated in two days, Ann and I set out from the Ozette parking lot for Sand Point under overcast skies.

We easily stepped over one small tree down across the boardwalk. The Sand Point shelter was typically wet and gloomy, but a brand new outhouse is a pleasant change.

Tides were almost perfect for beach hiking with the high around 9am and the low around 4pm. Walking was easy and we were soon around the headland that separates Sand Point from Yellow Banks.

Last year our winter hike was about a month later, and the skunk cabbage was already in bloom. This year, we were early enough to see the daffodils that grow in a small patch on the north end of the Yellow Banks beach—a bright dab of yellow amid the brown-green bank.

We reached our chosen spot a couple of miles south of Yellow Banks and had camp set up as dusk turned to dark. We enjoyed dinner sitting beside the warmth of a campfire.

The next day was clear and warm for a very comfortable day trip to Norwegian Memorial and Cedar Creek. The sign for the memorial is now set up in the forest and is not obvious as you walk along the beach. Also, all reference to the Allens Bay trail is gone. It won't be long before you won't be able to find where it starts unless you know where to look or someone marks it.

The shelter at Cedar Creek is in good shape. The old donkey engine (left over from mining days) in the woods south of the creek is slowly rusting away.

Back at camp just before sunset, we got ready to enjoy an evening fire under starry skies.

By the middle of the night, though, we were awakened to a most unusual noise for beach camping—snow hitting the tent. The cold front had arrived.

Morning came with gray, windy skies and snow. Although it had snowed continually only a trace was on the beach rocks and logs.

Breaking a soggy camp, we headed into the storm for the trudge back to the trailhead. Quite unusual to be walking along the surf with snow falling.

On the boardwalk we use homemade shoe pads of indoor/outdoor carpet to give traction on the slippery surface. They worked just fine on the snow except snow clumps periodically balled on their bottoms. (Where was my Maxiglide? Should I add it to my list of essentials for beach travel now?)

The drive from the Ozette parking lot to the Clallam Bay road was quite an experience: lots of snow with downed trees and power lines. The storm had caused a lot of damage through this section. Fortunately the

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trees had been cut to allow passage—LGM, Port Orchard, 2/10-12.

ENCHANTED VALLEY TRAIL *(Olympic Natl Park; USGS Mt Christie, Mt Olson)*—One lonely car was in the parking lot when we pulled in. We really didn't expect to see any. On the trail by nine, it looked like we were going to have a great day.

There are at least a dozen small blowdowns between the trailhead and Pyrites Creek and one good-sized one about two thirds of the way down to Pony Bridge. All are easy to go around or over. The creeks were up to the point that it was difficult to cross some of them.

We arrived at O'Neil Camp about noon, set up camp and ate lunch. This was Kerry's first time in this area so we looked around and discovered a new outhouse not quite ready for use. I also showed her where the old shelter used to be—there are still two foundation logs half buried in the ground.

After gathering about a ton of firewood, we decided to hike up to Pyrites Creek for a little more exercise. About a half mile before Pyrites Creek there is a 6 to 8 foot chunk of trail that slid into the river. You have to climb high up on the bank to get around it. On our way back we saw several elk cross the trail ahead of us.

It was a beautiful warm day and we hated to see it end, but by six o'clock it was dark. We ate dinner and had a nice evening fire thanks to Kerry and her Duraflame log.

We woke to the pitter patter of raindrops on the tent and tried to stay in bed as long as we could. I got up and hung a tarp over our cooking area so we could cook breakfast and stay dry.

After a leisurely morning we packed up and left around noon and were back at the truck at three. On our way out from Pony Bridge we met several day hikers.—Kerry Gilles & Don Abbott, Grays Harbor County, 2/4-5.

DRY CREEK TRAIL *(Olympic Natl Forest; USGS Lightning Pk)*—Arrived at the small parking area located just across the causeway at the head of Lake Cushman on road 2451 at 7:30am.

Signed in at the left of the metal private road gate, and followed the gravel road past many summer homes. In a short time this road crossed a creek by way of a private wood bridge. After a few more summer homes the road turned into a trail.

Just beyond this point I saw the only wildlife on the entire hike—a red fox skirting the lakefront. From the trailhead the path is in fairly good condition. A small waterfall cascading onto the trail is an indication of some wet areas ahead.

Several small bridge walkways appear to be in worse condition than they really are. Past the last of the bridges and after a slight elevation gain is the trail marker that points downhill to a campground.

The trail from this point is excellent as it follows an old logging road. This wide trail gains approximately 1000 feet in elevation and then descends to another campsite at Dry Creek.

According to *Olympic Mountains Trail Guide*, one has to cross this creek on rocks and logs. This is no longer true—I found an excellent log bridge complete with a good handrail. Once across Dry Creek the trail is still in good condition and begins to climb steadily by way of many switchbacks.

I followed this trail only as far as the pass and then started my descent back to the start. I did encounter three young men from the nearby community of Union on their mountain bikes; they had gone as far as the first campground.

The following weekend I attempted to complete the last portion of this trail by going in from the west and south side from road 2379 just above Brown Creek. This road is closed just past the Brown Creek area and according to the sign will not open until April 30th.—James V. Latteri, Lakebay, 1/22.

LOWER SOUTH FORK SKOKOMISH TRAIL *(Olympic Natl Forest; USGS Vance Creek)*—My original intent was to finish the Dry Creek trail from the west

BACKCOUNTRY NEWS REPORTS AND CONDITIONS

side. Upon finding road 2379 closed and gated until April 30th, however, I looked for another approach. After driving the entire length of the road that leads through the Brown Creek area, I found that it circles around all the way back to the seed farm and then back to the paved road 23. I arrived back at the gated road and the trailhead for the lower South Fork Skokomish trail by 9:30am. It was raining hard, so the conditions called for full rain gear including gaiters.

The trail climbs immediately but then crests and starts a gradual descent to Lebar Creek. From the creek to the old Lebar Guard Station are many washouts and several a bit difficult to get through, over or around.

Just before the 2-mile marker at the Lebar Station and campground was a major flood that required a bit of searching and jumping before I regained the trail that was basically under water most of the way.

From the Lebar Station to the 4.5-mile marker are at least three bridges partially washed out. The majority of the trail that day was under 3 inches to a foot of water.

Did see a deer back at the Lebar Guard Station that made a total of seven. Water was entirely over the Skokomish Valley Road in six different places on the drive back to Highway 101.—James V. Latteri, Lakebay, 1/29.

RIALTO BEACH—Took Jake to Rialto Beach. A couple of nice ladies helped me lift his wheelchair over the logs, and we watched the surf for a couple of hours.—Larry Smith, Port Orchard, 2/4.

HURRICANE RIDGE—Between peak travel and congestion hours of 11am to 2pm, the Hurricane Ridge road will be closed to all private vehicles and visitors will be required to take the new shuttle bus to reach the ridge. An exception will be made for vehicles with four or more passengers or handicap designation.

The private vehicle restriction will be in effect all weekends until March 12, 11am to 2pm.

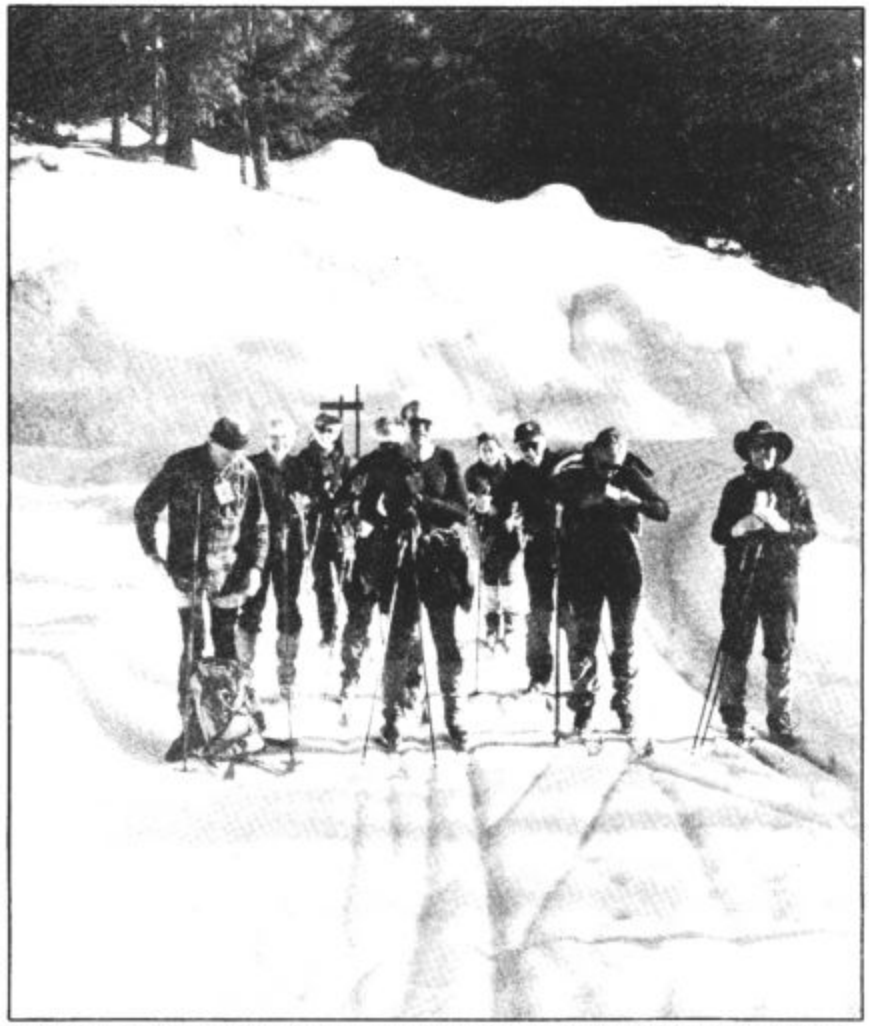
The Hurricane Ridge Shuttle will cost $3 per person (children under 6 free). Tickets will be sold at the Peninsula College parking lot. Bus passengers will not be charged the standard Park entrance fee.

The shuttle will leave every half-hour from the west end of the Peninsula College parking lot at East Lauridsen Boulevard and Ennis Street in Port Angeles.

Service will begin at 9:30am, with the last bus leaving for Hurricane Ridge at 3:30pm. The 9:30am bus will also stop to pick up passengers at the Visitor Center at about 9:35. The last bus will leave Hurricane Ridge at 4:30pm.

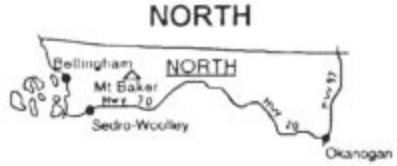
Prior to the shuttle operation, crowds were so bad the Park had been forced to hold visitors at Heart o'the Hills until parking spaces became available at the ridge.—Ranger, 2/10.

Ed. Note: The shuttle service means that overnight parking hassles for snow campers are over—just take the bus!



Lee McKee

Gathering forces for the climb to Rendezvous Hut on the frozen-solid Cub Creek road, Methow Valley. In front are Dick Searing, Dan Bodien, Luci Boyle and Rosie Bodien.



GENERAL CONDITIONS—Snow. Expect road and trail damage from recent storms and floods.

METHOW VALLEY—For those not familiar with skiing in the Methow Valley, trails on this 150-kilometer system are divided into three areas: Sun Mountain, with a number of trails of varying difficulty around Sun Mountain Lodge; Mazama, with generally lower elevation trails around Mazama; and Rendezvous, with

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

BACKCOUNTRY NEWS REPORTS AND CONDITIONS

trails going to higher elevations that join a series of huts. To ski the trail system requires purchasing a trail pass which helps pay for trail grooming.

Our group of 16 Mountaineers had set aside 5 days between January 30th and February 3rd to experience—as Sally Portman's book is titled—"ski touring Methow style." Since travelling from and to the Seattle area takes the better part of two days, we had three full days of skiing.

The first day we went to the Sun Mountain trails. Parking is available either at Sun Mountain Lodge or at the parking area part way up the Sun Mountain road. Parking at the Lodge means an initial downhill run when you start since it is several hundred feet higher than the lower parking area, but it also means you must regain that elevation at the end of the day.

There are lots of trail combinations to choose from and a shelter is located amid the system. Unfortunately this was the week of unusually warm weather over the state of Washington which resulted in a day of skiing in the pouring rain for us.

On the positive side there is nothing like skiing with a group of true outdoor people to make even miserable conditions enjoyable.

Dried out and ready for more skiing the next day, part of our group chose to ski the Rendezvous system. The rain had stopped and the skies were almost clear as we left our cars at the Cub Creek parking lot. This is one of two parking spots for accessing the Rendezvous system.

Cub Creek provides the most direct path to Rendezvous Hut which was our goal. The distance to the hut varies depending on which trail combination is taken; the elevation gain is a little under 1400 feet.

The system had not been groomed recently and the trail was quite icy. In spite of that, most of the group reached the hut after several hours and enjoyed lunch with views of the surrounding countryside. On the return several of us skied down Little Cub Creek trail which is rated "most difficult."

In *Cross Country Ski Tours 1* this route is described as "4½ miles long on a steep trail that is difficult to ski when icy." All of us returning this way would heartily agree. I certainly would not ski it again under similar conditions unless it had been recently groomed.

For the third day our group again split, with the majority returning to Sun Mountain.

Hearing that the Rendezvous system had just been groomed, Ann and I decided to further explore it by skiing to Fawn Hut. Parking for the Fawn Creek route is at an official Sno-Park and a sign advises people to have valid Sno-Park stickers displayed in their cars.

The trip to Fawn Hut is relatively short but quite steep—the trail is rated "most difficult." A portion of the trail gains just under 1200 feet in about 1½ miles. Fawn Hut is of the same design as Rendezvous Hut and after enjoying the views, we headed back.

Because the trail had just been groomed, the return trip was exceptional. Skiing in our usual controlled manner, we dropped 1100 feet in just 19 minutes. More aggressive skiers would have been even quicker.

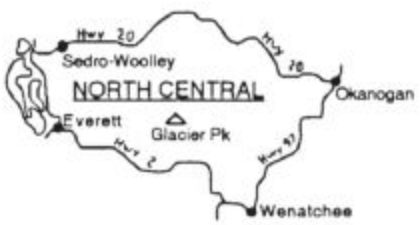
Besides the variety of skiing, the Methow Valley also has a variety of places to stay. From the luxury of Sun Mountain Lodge to the backcountry experience of the Rendezvous Outfitters hut system, there is lots to choose from. Our group stayed at the North Cascades Basecamp in Mazama which provides comfortable home-style accommodations, a hot tub, skating rink, and meals.

The snowpack in the Methow Valley is well above normal this year. A weather column in the *Methow Valley News* forecast combinations of sun, rain and snow for the month of February. This appears to be a great year to try skiing in the Methow Valley.—Lee McKee, Port Orchard, 1/30-2/3.

OKANOGAN NATL FOREST—Along the Okanogan River, all snow has melted and foothills are snowfree. This is not necessarily an indication winter is over. The Methow Valley and higher elevations still have lots of snow.

The recent warming trend has been helpful to birds and deer. Right now, deer are running on fat reserves.—Ranger, 2/7.

NORTH CENTRAL



GENERAL CONDITIONS—Snow. Expect road and trail damage from recent storms and floods.

WHITE CHUCK BENCH TRAIL *(Baker-Snoqualmie Natl Forest; USGS Whitechuck Mtn)*—Caroline joined Steve and me on a winter hike near Darrington. We started at the White Chuck Campground.

The unsigned trail climbs a steep bank to a road above, where the trail officially begins. We walked high above the river with views of Mount Pugh and Sloan Peak. The trail then drops down level with the river. Several trees are down over the trail, but we were able to get over, under, or around them without too much trouble.

Lunch was in a sunny spot across from Mount Pugh. We were able to get up the trail about 4.5 miles before having to turn back because of the time.—Linda Rostad, Bothell, 1/26.

MOUNT PILCHUCK—Due to flood damage this road is inaccessible at milepost 1.1. A large section of the road has been washed away.—Ranger, 1/23.

BOULDER RIVER—The *P&P* office received a report of vandalism at this trailhead. It occurred the night of February 4 while two hikers were camping overnight on the trail. Although the hikers left nothing valuable in their truck, they returned to find the windows smashed, speedometer destroyed, and maps and tapes scattered.

PILCHUCK CREEK *(USGS Stimson Hill, McMurray)*—The house I'm building this winter a little outside Darrington would have to wait. We gathered our gear, loaded our kayaks, and called a few people who had paddled the river before to try to get some advice. I've lived in Darrington for a couple of years now but have never had the opportunity to run "The Creek." Butch and Pete haven't either. It's only runnable when local rivers are near flood levels, and falls fast after the rain stops. Perhaps this late November 1994 day would be our chance.

During a confusing search near Lake Cavanaugh for the launching sites we fortuitously met up with Bruce Jackson, the Pilchuck Creek paddling guru, who was on his way to check out how high the creek was with all the rain. He didn't have time to paddle but was willing to show us what our options were and to help road-scout the creek.

We squeezed into our boats and were off. It was 3pm; we had about an hour and a half of daylight left to paddle what the guidebook called a 2-3 hour run. Ah, the sweet taste of adventure.

Fallen trees and portages took time; I nervously looked at the darkening sky. The river was filled with big waves and holes that demanded attention. At one point some big boulders appeared mark-

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ing a bend in the river.

This must be the big class 4 rapid that Bruce said we should run on the left. Pete and Butch, who were ahead of me, ran it right, rather uneventfully. I knew, however, that you were supposed to go left. It must have been far left.

Directly ahead of me was a huge, deep, turbulent hole. It was too late to avoid it; I dug in with my paddle. About two-thirds up the back side I felt myself getting sucked back in. I cartwheeled backward and landed upside down right in the maw of the hole.

I easily made it to shore, and for about the next mile (or so it seemed) I swam. I finally caught up with Pete who had my kayak (minus a footpeg), but, alas, not my paddle. We debated in the increasing darkness whether we should continue or leave our boats in the bushes to be retrieved later and hike out through the forest to the nearest road. I would have to paddle with Butch's long, awkward breakdown paddle and without a footpeg to help me balance and control my boat. I didn't feel like walking through clearcuts in the dark and figured that we could make it if we paddled hard downstream with minimal stops. Off we went.

Finally, peering into the darkness ahead, I made out the Highway 9 bridge where our car was waiting. We hauled our kayaks up the banks and walked to our car.

We had survived Pilchuck Creek. Barely. I think we learned a thing or two about running unfamiliar rivers at high water with minimal daylight. Meanwhile I can't help but keep my eyes on the clouds, waiting for that next big rainstorm.—Dayle Massey, Darrington, 11/94.

CENTRAL

GENERAL CONDITIONS—Snow. Expect road and trail damage from recent storms and floods.

TAYLOR RIVER AREA *(Baker-Snoqualmie Natl Forest; USGS Lk Philippa)*—Routine maintenance was performed on the trails in the Taylor River area during 1994, so these trails should be in relatively good shape for an early-season hike this year. Brush was removed on the Snoqualmie Lake, Nordrum Lake, Marten Lake, and Taylor River trails.

The two logjams at 3.5 miles along the Taylor River trail were cut through. They were the heritage of heavy snowfalls and rapid melt-offs back in the early '90s. Intimidating to casual hikers and inconvenient to dedicated fat-tire bikers, they meant the end-of-the-line for gas burners. We will see if problems return, now that the way is cleared again.

The Taylor River trail is usually hikeable if the Middle Fork road is passable, but that is actually saying quite a lot. The road is rough, with potholes turning into spring mudholes big enough to swallow small vehicles whole, so I'm told. The Road 56 fork beyond the first Taylor River bridge is scary in the best of conditions.

At the far end of the Taylor River valley, the Snoqualmie Lake trail is in excellent shape, and is most likely the first high trail to open. The Nordrum Lake trail, on north-facing slopes, opens later. There is one short, easy boulder scramble about ¾- mile from the lake.

Despite efforts to control the thick brush, the Marten Lake trail is still a very rough and dangerous hike even in the best of late-summer conditions. Most day hikers should keep to the main Taylor River trail, perhaps stopping at 3 miles to watch the trout below the aging Marten Creek Bridge, or continuing 2 more miles to the falls at anomalous Big Creek bridge.

A safer trip under less certain weather conditions is the Quartz Creek road. It turns west at the trail signs ½-mile past the Taylor River trailhead area. Though wide open and suitable for all kinds of travel, this area has little traffic any time of the year. The road is suitable for bicycles as far as the washout at about 4½ miles, and is passable beyond that. For the explorer, abandoned side roads lead up the slopes to the north, brushy but passable, with open views.—Larry Trammel, Issaquah.

"AVALANCHE MOUNTAIN" *(Alpine Lks Wilderness; USGS Snoqualmie Pass)*—One mile northwest of Snoqualmie Mountain and .8-mile east-northeast of Snow Lake is an unnamed 5360+ foot peak on the Snow Lake / Rock Creek / Thunder Creek divide.

"Avalanche Mountain" seemed a good name since (1) avalanches make "snow thunder" or "rock thunder" and (2) the Source Lake basin, just south, is famous for this treacherous phenomenon—of both the snow and rock varieties. As a peak with about 500 feet of prominence in such a popular area, it warrants recognition.

Jeff and I parked at the upper Alpental/Snow Lake parking lot (3200 feet), snowshoed up, and headed straight uphill (north) from here, aiming for a little lake at 4958 feet on the ridge above Snow Lake. Here we dropped 400 steep feet and contoured to the west slopes of "Avalanche," then angled uphill to the summit through open timber.

The top was wind-blown snow over rocks with spectacular views of the plastered Denny-Tooth-Chair-Roosevelt ridge, and the impressive 1000+ foot northwest face of Snoqualmie Mountain.

To satisfy loop requirements, we returned by way of Snow Lake Pass where the trees couldn't have held another ounce of snow and rime, it seemed. Can't wait for the pictures to come back. 4 hours up, 2.5 hours back.—John Roper, Bellevue, 1/22.

CASCADE MOUNTAIN, North Peak *(Alpine Lks Wilderness; USGS Grotto)*—This is the 5553-foot high point on the Cascade Mountain ridge just south of Francis Lake on the Grotto quad. This summit has about 900 feet of prominence above a pass between it and the 5591-foot Cascade Mountain shown 1.4 miles farther south on *USGS Snoqualmie Lake*.

The road was plowed approximately 4.5 miles from Highway 2 to the West Fork Miller River bridge, where soft snow foiled our plan to shuttle a car 4 miles farther up the East Fork Miller Road.

Bruce and eight of his closest, unsuspecting friends parked at 1300 feet and walked up the abandoned West Fork road (which was more of a creek for the first ½-mile). At about 2.5 miles from the cars, we turned south, crawled across the West Fork river on a slippery log, and followed open old growth to Francis Lake, passing it on the east side to a 5040-foot saddle. Here we turned right on the ridge, negotiated one steep down section, then contoured right around the north side cliffs to the summit.

It was overcast and fairly warm, with an occasional twag of sun hitting us and the surrounding peaks. We need more winter—the up trip was done essentially without snowshoes on spring-like snow. Shortly into the descent, though, we put on our Sherpas for the heavy, wet, soft stuff.

To satisfy loop requirements, we exited a different route, by way of Tumwater Lake. Kal did a masterful job finding an unlikely route down the

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south shore cliffs. We lucked out again by choosing the right (south) side of Great Falls Creek, bypassing the main 100+ foot waterfall by way of a fast 250-foot vertical, sitting glissade down a zippy gully. One party member practiced somersaults here.

Our luck ended when we reached the East Fork Miller River. Finding no log, we had to wade the knee-deep winter waters to get across to the road. The next 4 miles back to the cars on snowshoes in wet, cold, sloshy boots took about 2 hours—the last hour in dark. Some of us chuckled at how awful it was, others were pretty glum. 5.5 hours up, 5 hours return.—John Roper, Bellevue, 2/5.

SOUTH CENTRAL

GENERAL CONDITIONS—Snow. Road and trail damage due to heavy rain.

PARADISE *(Mt Rainier Natl Park; USGS Mt Rainier East)*—Longmire at 9:30am. Chain up, coffee and wait. At 10:40 the gate opens. Reach Paradise 11:15. Flurries, two other vehicles in lot, large group of snowshoers coming out.

Poor visibility, near whitcout, some ice, some drifted snow. Mostly good skiable stuff. A firm base, but everything beyond my ski tips is just white—can't tell if I'm up, down or sideways.

Reach Glacier View at 1:15. Lots of blowing snow. Return to parking lot by way of Alta Vista and Edith Basin. Visibility worse, sleety snow with wind. Do lots of long switchbacks with kick turns. No style or grace but I am a recreational skier. Telemark is a turn not a way of life. Three cars in the lot when I got back at 2:30.—Paul Schaufler, Olympia, 2/16.

MT RAINIER NATL PARK—Not enough snow to ski at Ipsut campground. Green Lake has very little snow; edge of lake is melting. Carbon Glacier trail has several large logs down. Mowich Lake has about 6 feet of snow. White River has little snow with large bare sections.

SOUTH

GENERAL CONDITIONS—Snow. Road and trail damage due to heavy rain.

RANDLE DISTRICT—Road 23 is closed 22 miles south of Randle due to

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. Please limit listings to outdoor-related subjects; thanks.
Commercial advertisers are welcome to contact the Pack & Paddle office for ad rates.

OSAT—A clean and sober climbing and mountaineering club. 206-236-9674.

FOR SALE—One pair Alpina cross-country ski boots, size 42 (men's 9). Like new. 75mm, general touring. Paid $100, will sell $45.

One pair Monteliana backcountry/telemark cross-country ski boots, recently resoled with Asolo Extreme soles. $120. Size about 9½ men's.

Call Don, 206-643-1543.

WANTED—Want to buy cross-country ski boots similar to above, size 10 men's (44 European). Call Don, 206-643-1543.

FOR SALE—Two pairs Asolo Extreme Pro boots (double buckle): men's size 72 EE, will fit size 8 foot, and women's size 6. One pair Asolo Snowfield ski boots; women's size 6; $125. Two pairs Fisher GTS skis, metal edge, single camber, wax base, 190cm and 205 cm; $125 each pair. Two pairs Epoke 1000 touring skis, wax base, 190cm and 205cm; $125 each pair. Call 360-830-4746.

CABIN—Secluded seaside housekeeping cabin on Orcas Island available for weekly rental May-October. Hiking, fishing, beachcombing, wildlife viewing. Rustic, comfortable accommodations. Sleeps eight; reasonable rent.

Write 1819 Hickox Road, Mount Vernon WA 98273 for more data; SASE appreciated.

FOR SALE—Set of tent poles for Early Winters light dimension pack tent. Call Jim Ledbetter, 206-523-0095.

LOST—green "Eddie Bauer" umbrella on Mount Si; other side of the basin in the trees. If found please call Sally at 206-363-6978.

FREE TO GOOD HOME—Women's size 6 hiking boots; Danner; good shape. Call Lisa Darling, 206-325-3465, 7am to 7pm only.

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a washout.

PETERSON PRAIRIE CABIN—Call the Ranger Station for remaining rental days this season: 509-395-3400.

SAINT HELENS—Climbing permits are required 5/15 to 11/1. Applications for the '95 season are being processed now. Call 360-750-3900 for info.

IDAHO

SAWTOOTH NATL FOREST—Avalanche hazard is high to extreme at all elevations. Remember to call the Avalanche Hotline before your trip: 208-766-1200-8027.

Twin Falls Ranger District reports over a foot of new snow. Many trails are groomed on the National Recreation Area. Fees are charged to ski on NRA groomed trails. Trails in the Sawtooth Valley have boxes for donations at the trailheads.—Ranger, 2/14.

CANADA

100 MILE HOUSE—I enjoyed a great cross-country ski trip recently in the 100 Mile House, BC, area. Six of us drove up there in early February. We found the roads—Trans-Canada Highway 1 and then Highway 97—in excellent condition. It took us about 7 hours from Sedro-Woolley.

We rented a chalet at Health Hills Resort at 108, BC, where we shared three bedrooms and did most of our own cooking. Kitchen facilities were adequate.

A huge network of groomed and, in most cases, machine-set tracks covers a vast area from Mile 99 to Mile 108. Various levels of difficulty make it convenient for differing abilities. At Mile 99, there is a pleasant cabin with a wood stove, making it possible for those who return early to have a nice place to wait.

At the end of the day we were able to use a swimming pool and hot tub at our resort.

The only problem was that we received less than accurate information on the amount of snow when we telephoned the resort just before the trip. However, it developed that most trails were in fine condition and while not deep, the snow was sufficient for 5 days of wonderful skiing. I definitely plan to return there.

For the past several years I have done most of my skiing at Mount Bachelor, but I consider the 100 Mile House area at least as good and far less crowded.—Virginia Walsh, Concrete.

OREGON

TAMOLITCH DRY FALLS—Took advantage of the warm weather and mostly clear trail to hike the 2.1 miles (4.2 miles round trip) to Tamolitch Dry Falls.

The hike follows the McKenzie River through beautiful lush forest and over moss-covered lava flows. Encountered snow about half way to the falls as the trail began to climb. Previous hikers had marked the trail with their footprints.

Arrived at the "dry" falls to find water pouring over them courtesy of the recent snowmelt and rain. Check trail conditions at the Ranger Station at McKenzie Bridge as snow is possible through April.—JoAnn and Dick Bertram, Camp Sherman, 2/5.

BLACK BUTTE / UPPER BUTTE LOOP—Warm dry weather has melted the snow off the two new hikes (there is also a Lower Butte Loop).

These two trails (13 miles round trip) are part of the Forest Service "Roads to Trails" program. Both loops are suitable for hiking, mountain biking, cross-country skiing and horse back riding. Carry water.

The route follows former logging roads and trails around Black Butte with periodic views of the surrounding hills through the trees. Road intersections are marked with 4x4 posts indicating the trail route.

A downed tree at one intersection almost resulted in a wrong turn as it covered the trail marker. There are two well marked trails connecting the two loops. Saw elk, deer, coyote, and mountain lion tracks, but no animals. Maps available at the Sisters Ranger Station. Five hours hiking time.—JoAnn and Dick Bertram, Camp Sherman, 2/11.

SOUTH RYE TRAIL *(Butte Falls Ranger Dist)*—The best starting point is at the Sno-Park on Highway 140, which is 1.2 miles west of the Fish Lake junction. The trail is 4 miles long, ending at the lower Canal trail.

The trail runs along the north side of Highway 140. It can be reached from either end, the east-west direction providing a good downhill run.

A tough loop trip follows the PCT, the Fish Lake Tie trail and then through the Fish Lake campground.

For more information, call the Butte Falls Ranger Station, 503-865-2700 or write PO Box 227, Butte Falls OR 97522. We have free brochures and maps you can purchase.—Ranger, 2/3.

HOW TO CONTACT US

Write:
Pack & Paddle
PO Box 1063
Port Orchard WA 98366
Phone:
360-871-1862

LEE MCKEE

Hiking the Loowit Trail

—INSIGHT INTO THIS SPECTACULAR TRIP AROUND MOUNT SAINT HELENS—

"The trail is not easy ... strictly for the experienced ... no better place to fully appreciate the cataclysm ..."

The description of the Loowit Trail in *100 Hikes in Washington's South Cascades and Olympics* by Ira Spring and Harvey Manning sounded both interesting and foreboding. Now, having hiked the trail, I fully agree.

The Loowit Trail circles Mount Saint Helens at between roughly 3800 and 4800 feet, with two drops—one down to 3200 feet at the South Fork Toutle River and the other down to 3400 feet at the June Lake trail junction.

Although the circle distance is just under 28 miles, the trail can be reached only by hiking in from any one of several feeder trails, adding several additional miles.

This is not a trail to be taken lightly —many challenges exist for the backpacker taking it on. Here's what you'll find.

WEATHER

Consider exposure to the elements. The nearly 12 miles on the east, north and northwest sides of the mountain between Ape Canyon trail 234 and Castle Ridge trail 216G are bare of trees—boulders and steep gullies offer the only protection from sun or storm.

Last July, Ann and I started our trip in this exposed area in fog and windblown mist, knowing it would clear.

We travelled the 2.5 miles from the Windy Ridge Interpretive Site parking lot on trails 207 and 216E to the junction with the Loowit Trail in these conditions, then hunkered down in a gully for an hour and waited for the clouds to clear.

Besides not having views, we knew dense, wet fog and strong wind could turn the trip into one of simple survival.

After the clouds lifted we had the flip side—sun and heat. The views are great, but so were our concerns for dehydration and heat stroke, with no shade for miles.

WATER

We both carried two full quarts of water and were careful on the first day across the north side not to let our water supply run too low.

We found several streams running between where we joined the Loowit Trail and where it drops down the Sasquatch Steps (travelling counterclockwise).

From that point until the South Fork Toutle, roughly 6 miles away, we found only one other very slow trickle of water. It was warm and slimy and we couldn't bring ourselves to drink it.

Several other streams on the north side were clear and flowing fast, but the warm temperature and heavy growth of slime and algae made them unappealing to drink.

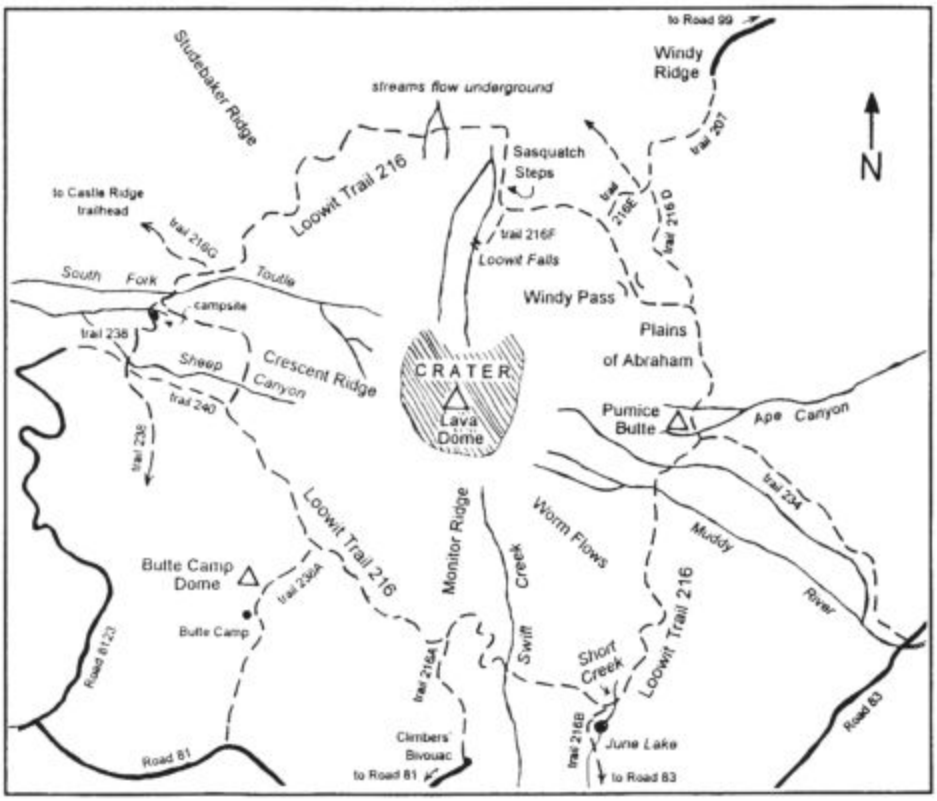
Later we learned that the water is warm because it percolates through heated rocks in the crater.

Just after crossing the South Fork Toutle, before reaching the junction with Sheep Canyon trail 238, we found clear, cool water flowing over the trail —a welcome sight.

We took the advice in *100 Hikes* and headed down trail 238 to the "excellent campsite" about a half-mile away, where a fast-flowing, cold stream provides ample water.

The next morning we were not so careful with water. We didn't break camp until after 9am—too late for such hot weather—and carried only a quart and a half of water each, expecting to find water in at least one of the stream beds shown on the map through this area.

We realized we had a problem in about 5 miles, after we reached the junction with Butte Camp trail 238A having found no water. We met a couple coming from June Lake who



told us we would continue to have no water until we reached one of the glacial streams about 4 miles farther.

When we reached that water at Swift Creek, we found it full of silt and unappetizing. Knowing clear water could be found three miles ahead at June Lake, we hiked swiftly on.

We were two very thirsty and dehydrated hikers by the time we reached June Lake and stopped for our second night. There's plenty of water and we drank our fill.

On our third and last day, we started out early with thoroughly-hydrated bodies and two full quarts of water each.

A short way past the June Lake trail junction we found Short Creek, the inlet to June Lake. It flows in a ravine off trail. If you're willing to make your way down to it, it provides an alternate to dropping into June Lake for water.

We found only two other sources of water between Short Creek and Ape Canyon trail 234. One of those was just a seep in a stream bed.

Past the Ape Canyon trail, the next water was a small flow where the trail bends around the north face of Pumice Butte. That was the last water we found.

Since we took trail 216D back to Windy Ridge, we can't say what the water conditions are over Windy Pass. We suspect there is none.

Lee McKee

Loowit Falls, from the end of trail 216F on the north side of the volcano.

Of the three groups we met doing the loop trip in the opposite direction (we went counterclockwise), one of the first things everyone asked was, "Where's the next water?"

We always replenished our supply if needed regardless of the condition (except for the warm, slimy water). For the glacial water, we allowed some of the silt to settle out in a pan before transferring it to a water bottle. Naturally, we also treated the water before using it (we chemically treat instead of filtering our water).

Water conditions can change depending on the time of year and what the weather has been like. July 1994 had been very hot and dry and that affected the conditions we faced.

Earlier in the year or during a wet season, the dry stream beds should be flowing and major ones like the South Fork Toutle may be high.

That may pose another problem as well. It appeared from the markings on some of the stream beds that depth can fluctuate quite a bit. As it was, all our stream crossings were simple jump-overs or short boulder hops.

WHERE TO CAMP

A further challenge is finding a camp. This is another aspect which makes the Loowit Trail a difficult trip. No camping is allowed in the Restricted Area as well as a number of other areas marked as Study Areas.

Outside those spots, you are faced with finding suitable terrain as well as potable water. We reached the Loowit Trail from the Windy Ridge Interpretive Site. Using this trailhead breaks up the north and east sides very conveniently. They must otherwise be travelled in one day.

At the camp on trail 238, we found only two sites; however, the nearby flood plain of the South Fork Toutle is immense and looked relatively flat. It appeared this could be a less comfortable but more spacious alternative.

Between South Fork Toutle and the June Lake trail junction were a number of level spots where a person could set up camp along the trail—if water were available (earlier in the season, for example) and if the spot isn't in a Study Area.

We went all the way to June Lake for our second night. Alternatives would be Butte Camp and Climbers Bivouac, both of which require dropping farther off the Loowit Trail.

A short way past June Lake heading northeast is a flat area off-trail that could be used (this is not an established site) where water from Short Creek could be obtained by dropping into the ravine on the north side of the trail.

Past here and before reaching the start of the restricted area on the east side, camping possibilities are limited.

The area around the junction with Ape Canyon trail is flat in places with a smattering of trees, but no water.

Around the north side of Pumice Butte was the small flow of water previously mentioned, but the terrain, although flat, is totally open and exposed to the elements. Conditions naturally will vary with the season and year, so other alternatives could exist.

BE READY FOR ANYTHING

Besides water, camp spots, and exposure to the elements, be ready to deal with blowing dust getting grit into everything, losing and regaining elevation to cross steep and unstable ravines, sections of trail made with sand and pumice that give way as you walk on them (we found a walking stick and ice axe helpful in those conditions as well as providing a measure of safety), and sections of the trail which cross rough lava fields.

In the lava fields, tall posts marked the trail at intervals. The problem is how to get from post to post through the jumble of the lava. The secret is to look for small survey sticks. If you can see them, they will lead you on the best path between the main posts.

Without them, it is very difficult to pick the way since it all looks the same —there is no trail. During periods of limited visibility (like fog) route finding would be very difficult here if you couldn't see the main posts.

We found our pace to be slower than normal, due to a mixture of trail conditions, hot weather, and stopping to gaze at awesome views of the volcanic landscape.

As we made our way helicopters routinely passed overhead, providing, we speculated, a sight-seeing service. We also met lots of day hikers, especially on the portion that is easily reached from the Windy Ridge Interpretive site.

TRY IT

The trail is a study of contrasts. Through the eruption impact zone from northwest to northeast sides, vegetation varies from absolutely none to starting oasis-like gardens near streams. The Plains of Abraham on the east side looks just like the Mojave Desert.

Lee McKee

Ann on the trail across the Plains of Abraham, on the volcano's east side.

Outside the eruption zone on the west and south sides, the trail travels through a mixture of forest land, fields of incredible wildflowers, lava beds, and sandy, deep ravines.

We took three days to do the trip, starting and ending at Windy Ridge. Travel times of other people we met varied from a solo person doing the entire trail in one day to a couple planning to take four days. Two men had climbed Saint Helens one day and hiked the Loowit Trail in the following two days!

Of the people we talked with, we were the only ones starting from the north, which we would certainly recommend. The others reached the Loowit Trail either from June Lake or from Climbers Bivouac.

If you're up for a challenging backpack with superb scenery, try the Loowit Trail this summer.

For more information, see:

Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument Trail Guide, by the Northwest Interpretive Association. $13.95 from outdoor shops or Forest Service offices.

100 Hikes in Washington's South Cascades and Olympics, by Spring and Manning. $12.95.

△

Lee McKee is Pack & Paddle's business manager.

JEFF HOWBERT

Mountains on the Agenda

—AN UNPLANNED ENCOUNTER WITH THE LOCAL HARDCORE—

It started quite innocently, with a phone call, looking for partners. The next thing I knew, I was caught in a stampede, knocking off three snowbound summits in one day.

They call themselves the Bulgers, they told me afterward. ...

Since moving to Bellevue in '93, I've spent as much time as possible hiking and learning to climb. This winter I developed a taste for snowshoe ascents of moderate elevation peaks, but have had trouble finding others similarly inclined.

Then I saw a couple of pieces in *Pack & Paddle* by John Roper on his ascents of Little Saint Helens and Troublesome Mountain.

Although I didn't know him, I decided to take a chance and call him "cold," to see if I could tag along on his next outing. The weekend of January 14, John called back, and graciously invited me to climb with him and his friends.

Our objective would be the northwest summit of Granite Mountain (Point 5565), about ⅔-mile due northwest of the main summit. I was excited—this was exactly the scope of climb I had been doing, and wanted to find partners for. John added something about doing Pratt Mountain, too, if we had time, but it didn't sound very definite. ...

It turned out to be a large party, once we all assembled at the Issaquah Park & Ride at 6:45am. John, Amy, and Jim joined me in my rig, and Mike, Chris, and Bruce rode with Kal in his.

We drove up Road 9030 as far as the packed, icy snow would allow, and parked the cars at the second left switchback (2120 feet). At 7:55 we set out, walking the rest of the road, then following trail 1039, more or less, toward Talapus Lake.

The old, crusted snowpack from late December was nearly continuous from 2300 feet on. At about 3000 feet, we crossed to the east side of Talapus Creek, and took a direct line northeast up the flanks of Granite.

Jeff Howbert

The summit of Pratt Mountain: Bulgers during an uncharacteristic moment at rest.

We donned snowshoes around 3600 feet, when the new snow reached a depth of a few inches. After laboring up a couple of steep slopes, we eventually broke onto the ridge that comes southwest from Point 5565, where the route became easier, being both more open and less steep.

At 11:20, the lead group, composed of Jim, Mike, Chris, Bruce, Kal, and myself, reached the top. John and Amy caught up soon after, having paced themselves a little more sensibly.

By this time, I was experiencing the first of many insights and revelations about the people I was traveling with. One was obvious from the strenuous pace—I had not only found a peer group for hard scrambling, but also probably met my match.

And I soon discovered why. On the drive up, the Bulgers were mentioned a couple of times in passing. It was a name I recognized from *Pack & Paddle*, where it usually appeared in connection with some relentless off-trail vertical bushwhack deep in the wilderness, the kind of travel not even the gold-crazed miners of yore would voluntarily undertake.

Along the ridge, I asked Bruce whether he'd ever gone out with that group, and he replied, "We *are* the Bulgers!" That's when I knew it was going to be an interesting day. ...

On Point 5565, a couple of spirited debates ensued, both of which had been simmering since we started. One concerned John's proposal to "name" this summit Tusk O'Granite, to signify the way it rises like a tooth from the side of Granite Mountain.

There was a nice bit of word play to this, since the alternative spelling, Tuscogranite, accurately defines its location on a line between Granite's main summit and (Lower) Tuscohatchie Lake.

The only real dissent came from Mike—his personal rules for ascents require a summit to be named on an official map, and since he couldn't count Tusk O'Granite for anything, he didn't see the point in naming it. He wasn't buying the argument that every peak had to get its name for the first time, somehow, sometime.

This played into the second debate, which concerned where we'd go next. Mike wanted to follow the ridge around to Pratt Mountain, then cross to Bandera Mountain (the "Full Talapus Traverse"); this would get him the most number of previously unclimbed peaks.

Others lobbied for a quick jaunt to the main summit of Granite, coming back to do the ridge to Pratt, then going down. Everybody agreed there was no way we could handle all four peaks, but it was clear to me these guys were serious about doing at least three.

Immediately after it was decided to go with the Granite-Pratt option, I got another, somewhat shocking, revelation: Bulgers don't take breaks, at least not when they've got an agenda like this.

We had been on Tusk O'Granite less than 10 minutes, and I was just starting to enjoy a snack and some Gatorade, when Chris, Mike, and Bruce took off for Granite. Never one to shirk a challenge, I hurried after them, realizing I was going to have to figure out how to refuel on the fly.

Jim and Kal decided to wait for John and Amy on Tusk O'Granite, then take that group on ahead toward Pratt and break trail for the rest of us.

The passage to Granite's main summit was straightforward and enjoyable, with an average of 6 to 8 inches of new snow over the old crust.

On the main summit (5629 feet), we had our best views of the day—the clouds lifted enough to see Tusk O'Granite, some of the lakes in the surrounding valleys, and Low Mountain, over toward Denny Creek. After a quick couple of photos, we were back underway and reached Tusk O'Granite again at 12:35.

From there we picked up the trail the other group had forged down the ridge to the west-northwest, which was steep enough in places for a sitting glissade.

At 4500 feet this turned southwest, dipped down to the Olallie Lake-Pratt Lake saddle (4140 feet), then rose west-northwest again toward the summit of Pratt Mountain.

On the lowest mile or so of this ridgeline we were stuck weaving our way through thick trees, but the clouds were so low by now we couldn't see to either side anyway. Finally, just after 2pm, with the group strung out along the ridge and beginning to fade, we topped out on Pratt (5099 feet).

Chris, who'd broken trail much of the day, was again in the lead and still going strong, but he let me take over on the final gentle stretch, so that I got the honor of arriving first. This seemed to put me in good stead with the Bulgers in general, and made me feel accepted into the tribe thereafter.

Although the group's energy was flagging, their sense of humor certainly wasn't. The early arrivals on Pratt decided to pimp Mike with a great show of enthusiasm for going on to Bandera.

This backfired, of course. When Mike caught up, he was as tired as everyone else, but after some ponderous sighing and groaning, he said, "Okay, let's go for it." Maybe he was serious, or maybe it was a reverse pimp—no one wanted to find out for sure, so they quickly disavowed any part in the idea. ...

A traditional requirement of Bulger outings is that they must inscribe a loop; that is, you cannot return the way you came. That was trivial to satisfy on this trip, since no one was eager to climb back over Tusk O'Granite.

So, after a veritable eternity on top of Pratt (maybe 15 minutes), it was southeast down the hillside through the woods past Talapus Lake, and on back to the cars around 4:30.

Jeff Howbert

Summit of Granite Mountain: Chris and Mike.

While we loaded up and changed, I was indoctrinated into further Bulger mysteries, some of which sounded suspiciously made up for the occasion.

One was that the rookie on any trip is responsible for writing it up for *Pack & Paddle*—whence this account.

Another was that Bruce, who appears to be the spiritual leader of this group, must receive favorable mention, if not top billing, in the story.

Which reminds me, I left out the part about the avalanche, and how three of us were buried and our hearts stopped, but how Bruce was able to swim across the top of it, and then, working purely from memory, yank each of us from our icy grave, revive us with CPR, and still have time to catch the other party on its way to Pratt.

Of course, since we were unconscious, we only have Bruce's word for some of the details. ...

All in all, it was one of the most satisfying days I've ever spent in the mountains. It easily exceeded anything I'd previously accomplished under winter conditions (three summits, 5300 vertical feet).

Most important, I found a circle of like-minded souls, people who like to start early and push to their limits, yet think it's all marvelous fun, so long as it's outdoors in the glorious Washington Cascades.

△

Jeff Howbert is a research chemist who lives in Bellevue. He recently returned to the Northwest after a long sojourn in Indiana.

DR MICHAEL KOERNER

INSIDIOUS HYPOTHERMIA

—SELF-EXPERIMENTATION YIELDS SURPRISING RESULTS—

Introduction and Apology

My wife developed an interest in kayaking long before I did, but I suspect this was due to visions of white tropical beaches, rather than a fascination with the more technical or demanding aspects of the sport.

This benign perspective was reinforced, at least for me, by the attractive young models in kayak magazine advertisements who seem to prefer to avoid the encumbrance of even clothing, much less PFDs, wetsuits, and the like.

With the arrival of our son, we bought a triple and took up kayaking as an occasional family sport. We read several instructional books, purchased the recommended safety equipment, and dutifully went to pool practice a number of times. My wife even attended a course.

Furthermore, we felt our experience in other outdoor activities would be of help. And obviously, we would never take on even remotely hazardous conditions, especially with a small child on board. ... Sound familiar?

However, we had learned (often through bitter personal experience in other outdoor arenas) that textbooks, gear, practice in artificial conditions, and enthusiasm are not sufficient, and that considering oneself skilled in a related activity and/or being macho adds only further danger.

At times, our judgment as to whether conditions were hazardous or not has been proven to be dramatically wrong. Finally, our review of published accident reports forced upon us extremely valuable additional perspectives.

So, limited by time and safety constraints, we set out to "short circuit" the learning curve as much as possible. The following is one of our experiments:

Methods

I had always been curious as to just how long I could continue to safely function while becoming hypothermic, and what real self-rescue was like.

After several years of delay I finally took our single to a beach in Mukilteo last April to give it a try. It was late afternoon and the air temperature was 60 degrees. While a modest breeze from the north was fading away, there were still occasional whitecaps and wave action up to 1½ feet. The water temperature was 54 degrees.

I dressed as I usually would for the conditions: a long sleeve cotton T-shirt, regular (lightweight) unzipped Farmer John wetsuit bottoms, lightweight neoprene gloves, mud boots, and an unzipped PFD.

I placed all our rescue equipment in and on the boat just as I usually do, and even clipped a shoe on a cord to my spray skirt closure to simulate the way I usually stow our radio.

My only concessions to comfort were a nose plug and a mask. I was determined to simulate self-rescue until I could no longer function. My support and rescue team consisted of my wife and my son.

Quite correctly, my wife insisted I not begin until she was present, and so, while waiting for them to obtain necessary supplies (latte and ice cream respectively), I paddled about vigorously, working up a sweat and becoming slightly fatigued.

When they returned to the beach I found I was very reluctant to begin. It was not so much because of the prospect of becoming cold and miserable, (which I have come to associate with periods of rest and relaxation such as climbing trips) but because the filth in the water made me fearful of infection. However, after some vigorous hand signals from my already-bored wife, I checked my watch and began the process.

Results

I capsized and rolled and capsized and rolled ... The water was cold, but only moderately unpleasantly so. I should point out that I am not a very experienced kayaker and, in the pool, am happy if I can roll at all. However, I rolled successfully perhaps six or seven times until, even when extending my paddle, I could roll no more and had to wet exit.

For amusement, I attempted to re-enter without using a paddle float and was able to do so after several tries. As I expected, the shoe/radio was a moderate nuisance. I then replaced the spray skirt, pumped out the boat, and stored my equipment.

Without too much delay, I resumed the process—capsizing and rolling. I managed almost as many rolls, but ultimately had to wet exit. This time, I was more serious and rigged a paddle float outrigger to re-enter the boat.

This posed no significant problems, but I discovered a few minor points concerning our gear and the procedure which we had not noted during pool practice. Again, I pumped out the boat and tidied up. And so it went until, after approximately forty minutes, I had completed four or five sequences of capsizing and rolling to roll failure, followed by self-rescue.

By now I was bored and mildly fatigued. I was able to roll only a lesser number of times with each sequence, and only once during the last sequence. Otherwise I noticed no significant deterioration of cognition or motor abilities —I was able to maintain the position of the kayak away from the beach and various rocks and was able to perform the self-rescue drill without difficulty. The spray skirt, however, did seem increasingly difficult to replace.

I was cold, but not terribly so. My arms, covered only by a wet T-shirt, were mildly uncomfortable. Neither stiffness of my face and the associated difficulty speaking or pain, clumsiness, and numbness of my hands, that I had come to expect from my mountaineer-

Lee McKee

Most kayakers are genuinely concerned about safety—but we've also got to practice our skills.

ing experience, were developing, nor was I shivering.

I did notice slight nausea and a curious bitter metallic taste. Finally, and only on careful assessment, did I note a constriction, not of my field of vision, but rather of my attention (which, however, remained effectively focused on the tasks at hand).

It was late, my wife expressed concern as she perceived each rescue to require a longer period of time, and I concluded I had learned enough. So I thought it fair to abort the experiment and come in, even though I felt I was still functioning fairly well.

I was able to land the boat, help load and secure it to the car, and even stand (more or less) on one foot to take off my wetsuit. My thinking, however, seemed somehow slightly off, and sounds seemed slightly distant and distorted. But I must have looked fairly well and seemed no more confused than usual, as my wife treated me normally (with primarily mild annoyance and amusement).

Then she remembered that the point of the exercise was hypothermia research and gave me a thermometer and told me to put it in my mouth ... *My temperature was 91.6 degrees F!*

I was dumbfounded. On repetition it was still 91.6 degrees. I was aghast, as I recognized dimly that I had foolishly placed myself in some danger.

I knew hypothermia experiments with human subjects were terminated at 95 degrees because of the associated medical risks below this temperature, including cardiac arrhythmia.

My wife became animated to the point of near panic and hurried me into dry clothing and then into the car. I recognized that I had best not do the driving and so my wife drove us home.

In transit, perhaps fifteen minutes after leaving the water, my temperature was 92 degrees. Once home I took a long, hot shower and went to bed with a mug of hot tea. In another forty-five minutes or so I reached 95 degrees and felt fairly well.

Soon thereafter my temperature reached 99 degrees and then 98 degrees. I joined my family for dinner, and then was able to "resume all normal activity."

Discussion

My first concern was that our experiment was flawed by inaccuracy of our digital thermometer, especially at the lower end of its temperature range. When I tested it against a medical hypothermia thermometer in a water bath, however, it was quite accurate.

My second and most obvious concern was the questionable correlation of oral and core temperatures. Medical texts are surprisingly non-committal on this matter, as it turns out that the temperature of hypothermia victims is difficult to measure in the field, and no acceptable conversion factor exists.

However, an oral temperature can be used as an estimate and I am quite confident I was indeed hypothermic to some degree.

And, as I was not planning to reach a specific temperature, but rather experience the onset of hypothermia, I feel the experiment was valid.

The most obvious and important lesson was that hypothermia can come as a surprise. Indeed, every text suggests this, as impairment of mentation and judgment is always listed as an early sign, and this is what happened to me.

My cognition, at least in regard to an accurate appraisal of my predicament, was impaired. But I did not feel especially cold, and I did not shiver. And shivering is always listed as a prominent early sign of hypothermia which occurs specifically before impairment of mentation begins. (I have shivered at other times.)

On more careful review, however, it turns out that my experience was not unique. Some hypothermia victims do not shiver. This is mentioned by Randall Washburne[1] but not in any of the other kayak books, or in a standard lay wilderness medical reference which I reviewed.

One medical text[2] refers to an experiment where as many as 10% of subjects did not shiver. Furthermore, not everyone feels cold. The occurrence of unexplained cold water diving accidents and certain hypothermia experiments has led to the development of the concept of "insidious hypothermia."

In one experiment a healthy cold water diver, being warmed by 85 degree water circulating through his suit during a dive, became hypothermic without feeling significantly cold and without significant shivering[3].

In another experiment, some subjects in a more protected life raft with a tent-like cover cooled more than the subjects directly exposed to cold water by immersions[4].

These findings remain difficult to explain. Why some hypothermia victims

do not feel significantly cold is not known. Shivering is probably regulated mostly by skin temperature (as opposed to core temperature as sensed by certain deep brain structures) and one can speculate that if the skin, or perhaps a certain critical area of the skin, is not cold enough then shivering will not occur ***and a very important indicator of impending hypothermia and mechanism of heat generation will be absent.***

Conclusion

We all know that hypothermia, with and without immersion, is perhaps the most significant hazard faced by the kayaker.

At times it can be doubly dangerous when "insidious" and not heralded by a significant subjective sensation of cold and/or shivering. Its consequences, even when very mild, are impressive, as discovered by personal experience. We hope that study and all manner of preparation and practice may aid in prevention and prove to be useful antidotes.

After the above article appeared in *The North Sounder,* editor Ben Zarlingo followed up with this addition:

Most kayakers are genuinely concerned about safety. Witness all the safety gear they purchase, the popularity of "incident" reports and the degree to which safety matters make up kayaker discussions. This is as it should be. But as Mike's experience demonstrates, equipment and armchair discussions aren't enough. We've got to try out the gear and test our skills in the sort of conditions in which we paddle: We are virtually certain to encounter difficulties and hazards we didn't meet in our mind's eye or in the pool.

There are a number of lessons to be learned from this experience. Principal among them is the danger from hypothermia that doesn't make itself apparent suddenly and clearly. How many of us have, at one time or another, read an account of someone who did something unwise and then got into trouble and said to ourselves, *"That hazard doesn't mean much to me—I'd never do anything that stupid."* From this example we can see that perhaps those folks didn't start off that stupid either.

Genuine cases of hypothermia may be much more common than we appreciate. Insidious or incipient hypothermia probably plays a role in many close calls, even if the participants are unaware of it. George Gronseth provided several pieces of advice in just this area: Watch for early signs of hypothermia (paddlers get quiet and withdrawn; paddlers take chances and get sloppy).

If you see these signs or if someone takes a swim, get to shore and get them warm immediately. Don't assume they'll get better without help. Don't assume hypothermia will always make its presence clearly known, by shivering or any other obvious sign.

A further conversation with Mike Koerner explored these questions:

Mud boots—These are sometimes called gum boots or knee boots. They are very practical for kayaking but a persistent concern is whether their weight when filled with water or their clumsiness is a hindrance to a successful self-rescue. In this case, at least, they were reported to pose no problems at all.

Radio and rescue gear—Some of us carry VHF radios on deck or below the deck in a waterproof bag. Mike carries his tied to the closure of his spray skirt. This was slightly clumsy for him, but he has not yet found a better place to carry it.

His philosophy is to carry on his person everything he would need for rescue while he is in the water. This also includes rescue gear stowed in the spray skirt or in pockets in the PFD. The obvious assumption is that in a bad situation one might not remain in contact with the boat.

A paddle leash may help in this regard (since you need to hold on to the paddle or the boat, but not both), but is no guarantee.

Reentry without paddle float—This seemed like an interesting tactic for a single, but as a practical matter it may be more of a pool trick.

Mike was able to perform this feat in open water but felt it was not at all something to depend on. It's nice if you can accomplish it (since it might get you back in the boat quicker than setting up a paddle float) but would be counterproductive if it failed.

It would delay the (well-tested and much more reliable) paddle float reentry and the paddler would be colder and weaker by the time the paddle float was used. In addition, the reentry attempts would likely get more water in the cockpit, making self-rescue and bailing more difficult.

Paddle float reentry—A potential problem in challenging real-world conditions is loss of the paddle float. Some paddle floats (Mariner, for example) come with a bungee tether and a clip, helping prevent loss of the float. One tactic to consider in an emergency is the use of the PFD as a paddle float.

This should be balanced, however, against the increased potential for drowning and the more rapid loss of body heat when the PFD is removed. An alternative strategy I use is to carry an Eddyline "Back Float" paddle float as a backup, clipped around the seat (in addition to a Mariner paddle float stowed and clipped on deck).

Cold hands—Cold, stiff hands can foil a self-rescue attempt even when the paddler is still relatively warm and strong. Mike wore lightweight neoprene paddling gloves which helped considerably, and he says that he wears them most of the time.

△

Mike Koerner, of Everett, is a neurologist.

This article was reprinted with permission from Ben Zarlingo, editor of The North Sounder, *the newsletter of the North Sound Sea Kayaking Association, in Everett.*

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Mountain Gallery

by Dee Molenaar

Everest, West Ridge.

JOHN ROPER

Grassy Point

—MY ADVICE? GO BACK THE WAY YOU CAME!—

"I stood looking at the very steep drop-off into rocks and brush with a hollow feeling of desperation in the pit of my stomach. I did not want to go down. But I simply had to drop over that edge of Grassy Point if I wanted ... not to louse up the whole weekend."

These could have been words out of Karen's mouth. But they were words out of Helen Nieberl's pen. As soon as the January *Pack and Paddle* arrived with Helen's story, "We're Not Lost," I raced to read it to Karen.

Grassy Point sounds like a benign enough place. And getting there is not so hard. If you do, you will be at one of the great viewpoints in the North Cascades. Glacier Peak doesn't get any closer and better than this, and right across the Suiattle River is Dome Peak and the Ptarmigan Traverse country.

But I think that Helen and Karen would now agree: Here, at least, don't "stand by your man," and follow him down; rather, turn around and go back the way you came.

Here is our story.

If you are going to climb all the named summits in the Skagit River drainage, you have to climb Grassy Point.

Karen and I set off to do it on August 27, 1988. It was a beautiful day, up to 90 degrees in town. We drove to the end of the Suiattle River Road (pronounced Sue-attle, or Swattle, not Sue-ee-attle) and packed up the trail and over the bridge pictured in Helen's story and continued up the Milk Creek trail. The Suiattle River drains into the Sauk River which flows into the Skagit.

I had not been as discerning as Tony Nieberl, Helen's husband, and missed Tabor and Crowder's hint regarding the abandoned trail to Grassy Point described in their classic book, *Routes and Rocks, Hiker's Guide to the North Cascades from Glacier Peak to Lake Chelan*. This obscure blazed trail takes off left, about 1.5 miles after the bridge. If I'd been paying attention like Tony, I'd probably have tried to locate this path on our descent, as well.

At this point on our hike, Karen and I were paying more attention to a butterfly that had attached itself to Karen's pack for a free ride up the Milk Creek trail for about a half-mile before releasing to the sky. "A good omen," we both thought.

At the fork in the Milk Creek trail, 6.5 miles from the Suiattle Bridge, Karen changed into shorts and halter-top, and we started the sweaty switchbacks up the north-northwest ridge of Glacier Peak in the blistering sun, through salmonberry and slide alder patches.

The crooked-winged deer flies spotted her glistening flesh and the lunch bell rang. As many as 15 to 20 flies at a time landed on her bare skin. A slap would take out a half dozen of them, but replacements were soon in biting position. Occasionally, they were thick enough to be inhaled. The lady was unhappy.

The heat was evil, and the bugs were evil, but the bugs won out. Karen grumbled and changed back into long pants, content to defend just her arms. John always hikes in total-body polyesters from Value Village, and was unfazed by the onslaught. Besides, he smells bad to bugs, and humans, within 10 feet.

We finally crested the ridge and started the traverse into the East Fork of Milk Creek. The previously crystal sky seemed a little smoky up here, and within a few feet of leveling out on the crest we spotted a peculiar, brightly-colored silky cloth high in a tree. What the heck was that?

The answer soon followed as we continued our traverse. The trees on the ridge above us were on fire, and talking. A voice from above apologized for ruining our wilderness experience, explaining that they had parachuted in to douse a lightning blaze.

Those were their parachutes we'd

John Roper

Glacier Peak and Kennedy Peak from the PCT at East Fork Milk Creek.

seen in the trees. They were being aided by Tony Reece and his helicopter which was dipping buckets of water out of an unnamed lake just east of appropriately-named Fire Creek Pass.

We made a camp that night in the wonderful meadowed cirque of the East Fork of Milk Creek. The evening winds blew the smoke such that we hardly knew there was a fire nearby.

But fire followed us to camp. In the middle of cooking dinner, the gasket on our Svea stove blew, shooting a jet of flame into the sky. We dumped a quart of water on the stove (and our dinner) before the whole canister erupted, and had a diluted, half-boiled meal. Realizing our breakfast would be uncooked, we added water to our oatmeal to let it soak for the night and retired.

Shortly before midnight, under a full moon, with Glacier Peak and Fortress and the Bath Lake/Stonehenge Peaks gleaming in the beams, John dragged Karen out of the tent to ask her for her hand (and all the rest) in marriage. She was surprised enough to say yes.

The next morning, we ate the soggy oatmeal and drank the cold hot chocolate and laughed about our engagement.

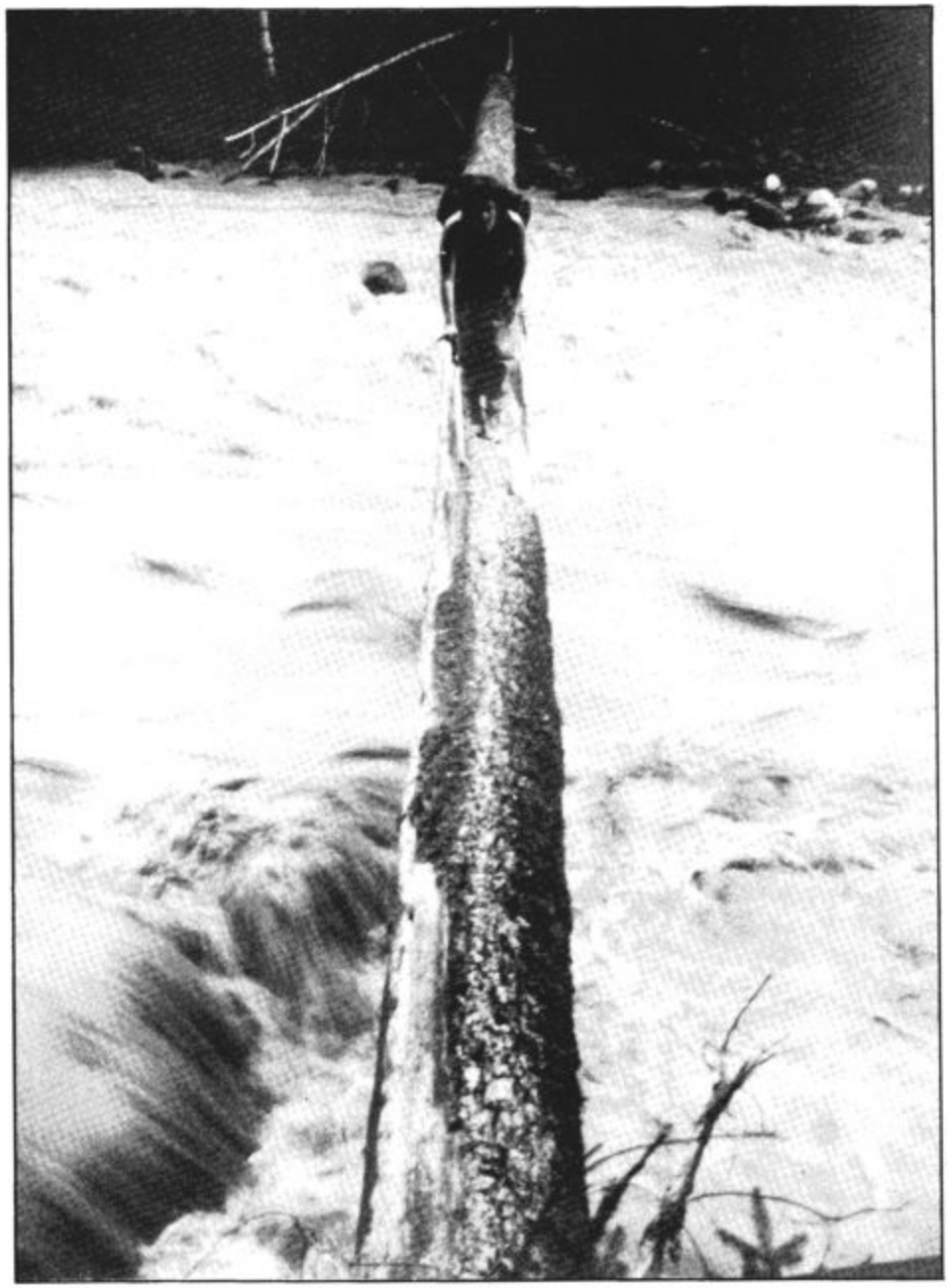
We continued along the Pacific Crest Trail past our turn-off to Grassy Point into another fabulous meadow above Dolly Creek.

John had spotted one more "named summit in the Skagit drainage," Vista Ridge, and set off to descend this wooded knoll, while Karen basked in the morning sun, watching a family of marmots play. Soon John returned and, ignoring the temptation to go for Gamma Peak, we headed north on a pleasant ridge for Grassy Point.

Wading through the "grass" of Grassy—fields of hellebore, mountain dock (John's personal favorite flower —he's a doc who loves mountains), and lupine—we reached the higher 6596-foot east summit of Grassy Point by lunch time, and were somewhat surprised to find this remote place occupied by two women and a dog.

They thought it a little strange that we would want to continue west another ¾-mile to the lower 6505-foot summit just because the words "Grassy Point" were stuck here on the map.

Though meticulous lookout-researchers Ray Kresek and Byron Fish/Ira Spring do not list Grassy Point as a lookout site, it smacks of such a place, if only for a tented summer or two.



John Roper

Karen ignored my advice to crawl, and walked boldly across the log.

When the word "Point" appears on a Forest Service or USGS map, it is almost always associated with a former lookout site.

And the Forest Service probably did not build the trail that the Nieberls and Tabor and Crowder describe just for exercise. This spot gives a good look down and up the Suiattle. Was it perhaps the predecessor to Sulphur Mountain Lookout across the river?

Atop Grassy Point, I showed Karen the map. We could either (1) retrace our route clear around the headwaters of the East Fork of Milk Creek, back to the trail then through the fire and the flies, or (2) drop 4500 feet down a steep forested and brushy slope off the north side via terra incognita to river incognita, and hope we could find a crossing of the Suiattle to the trail on the other side. This would then leave just 4 more miles to the car.

"Flies" was the operative word here. No question. We would do a direct descent to the Suiattle—anything to avoid another encounter with those obnoxious beasts.

We apparently duplicated Helen and Tony's descent west off Grassy Point to a flat at 5200 feet, and we too saw no hint of a trail.

From here we split from their route and looked at the quickest way to civi-

lization by way of a direct bash north to the Suiattle.

That was easy enough to say. I was accustomed to this stuff and had mountain boots and an ice ax (which I find just as useful in the woods). Karen had her trail boots with worthless rounded heels, and found the ice ax more of a hindrance than a help.

The hillside was quite steep and very dry. The fir needles on the ground made for a very slippery duff. Though she tried to stay upright, Karen frequently found herself doing "sitting glissades" in varying degrees of control into the next large tree down the fall line. Thoughts of engagement-disengagement came to mind.

At one point, a "rest" stop was definitely in order, so we sat down to sip the last of our warm water. After only a few seconds, I was surprised at how quickly Karen stood up to go on, letting out a blood-curdling scream. A yellow jacket sting had punctuated her peace.

Tired, thirsty, and in pain, Karen was near the end of her rope, contemplating the end of her Roper. And only 2000 feet to go to the river.

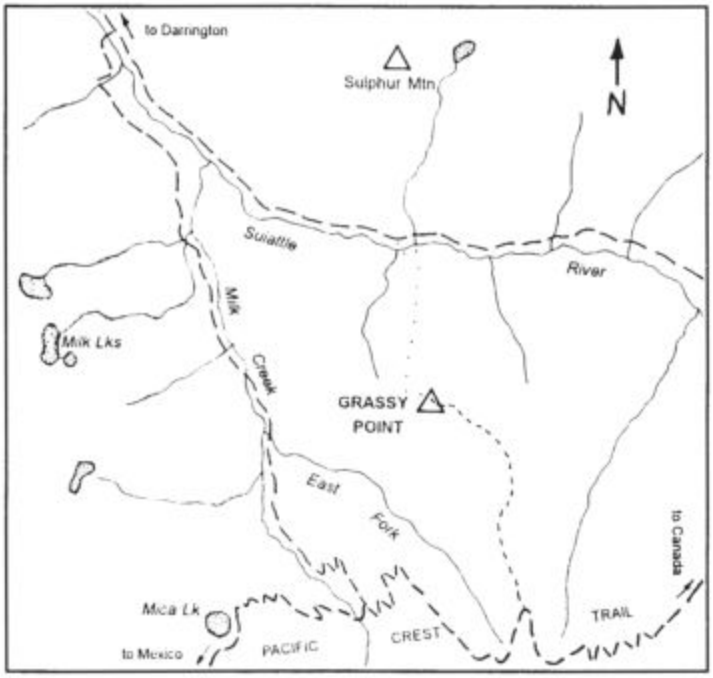
Finally, after forever, we reached a flat of devils club before the river. Several hundred yards more of us whacking it, and it whacking us, we reached the water. It was worse than expected.

Why I even thought there was a chance of our being able to ford the effluent of the sum of the Honeycomb, Suiattle, Cool, Chocolate, North Guardian, Dusty, Vista, and Ermine (eight!) Glaciers at the end of a hot August day is now beyond me.

But just to make sure, I tried a few steps out into that milky brown torrent to see what it felt like. It was deep; it was fast; it was wide; it was powerful. It was scary. No wade. No way.

The bridge over the Suiattle would be a 3-mile brush-bash downstream. Only a hundred yards down though, we spotted an island that might split the mighty Suiattle into manageable parts. This, to me, was the obvious way to turn.

But it meant climbing up and over a blocking 200-foot vertical cliff. Karen felt that she did not have 200 feet of uphill in her, and voted to look for an upriver crossing. We bashed the brush about 200 yards upstream to a point where we could see that there was no prayer of getting across the river for at least another 200 yards.



Karen finally agreed that we should look downriver. Back through that 200 yards of devils club and huckleberry we went, then up and over that 200-foot cliff she did not have in her, and down to a good log out to the island. But from the other side of the island, there was still no livable way to ford the remainder of the river.

We talked about the options from here. Dark was about an hour away. It would be flashlight time through the jungle long before the Milk Creek trail and the bridge over the Suiattle, then another mile back to the car.

I was obligated to do at least that. People at home would worry if we were not out that night, and I did not want to trigger a false rescue. And just as important, I had a couple of dozen people who were waiting to see me in the office on Monday.

Karen was wiped, and was offered these poor choices: (1) spend Sunday and Monday night there in the tent by herself with the remaining 6 peanuts and moldy finger-sized piece of cheese and squashed, no-longer "fun-size" Snickers bar, waiting until I could come back on Tuesday, my day off, and pick her up (there were thoughts of bears and other carnivores, and rising rivers, and being alone and hungry), or (2) follow along.

"This is the guy I wanted to marry less than a day ago?" she wondered.

Luckily, a couple of hundred yards more downriver, we came upon a 100-foot log that spanned the entire Suiattle torrent. I rejoiced with reservation. We had a chance of being able to make it out that night.

Used to such North Cascade problems, I tight-roped across that treacherous log, and turned to yell back to Karen to crawl across to my side.

To my considerable horror and head-shaking concern, she ignored my advice to crawl, and walked boldly across the narrow log. She looked solid, but I held my breath.

We both shudder now as we look at the photo hanging over our fireplace of her crossing the Suiattle. I am distressed at the thought that a slip into that muddy water would have been the end. Son Aaron and I (and Karen) are mighty glad she made it.

In another 15 minutes we were up to the trail. A horse party passed by in the fading light. The thought of hitching a ride crossed our mind, but we hiked out those last four miles, the final two by flashlight.

Karen summarized her feelings in the car, "I'll still marry you, John, but I might not hike with you again."

Exactly one year after our engagement on Glacier Peak, on August 27, 1989, we were married on Delta Rock, the last "peak" on the Skagit River, where it flows into the salt water of Skagit Bay. And regarding the hike strike, earlier that summer of '89, we made a memorable trip into Shangri-la, the Napeequa Valley, but that's another story.

Thanks to Helen and Tony for rekindling the memory of Grassy Point.

△

John Roper is an inveterate peak collector. He lives in Bellevue with Karen and their son Aaron.

BILL LONGWELL

THE CHELAN LAKESHORE TRAIL

—THE SOUND I HAVE WAITED FOR ... SILENCE—

When the ponderosa pine trees of the Chelan Lakeshore Trail finally block out the drone of the deHavilland Beaver engine, I find the sound I have patiently waited for and dreamed of for more than a year. Silence.

After a hectic three-quarters of a noisy school year, my last of a thirty-year teaching career, the silences of the Chelan Lakeshore serve as a soothing balm for sore ears. And psyche.

This is the first day of my spring vacation, and I know the nine days will fly by. I count the days of my vacations. Tomorrow morning I'll wake up and say to myself, "Eight days remain." For this reason I usually allot just two days on Lake Chelan in the spring: one walking the entire Lakeshore Trail (I *have* taken up to three days to hike this trail) and one walking various trails leading away from Stehekin.

Stehekin is my personal Shangri-la and has been for over thirty years. So on this day, on my 17- mile day hike into Stehekin, I intend to revisit old haunts, regenerate old memories and soak up as much of the Lakeshore as I can. In my retirement I can afford to take the approach advocated by Harvey Manning, the inch-by-inch approach.

I know this trail well. I know which slope carries a carpet of lanceleaf springbeauty. I know that in a glen just beyond the thirteen switchbacks of the first major climb of this hike I can find glacier lilies. I know that in a few steps I'll begin to hear the hollow sound of Domke Falls, 3 miles ahead and a mile across Lake Chelan. The sound and size of the falls will grow then decrease as we proceed uplake.

I also know from many years' experience that even though the 17-mile distance is short, I will find a dramatic change in flower growth along it; the flowers of the southern part of this day hike, mostly growing on open hillsides, are much more developed than those of the north, most growing in deep forest. Trilliums, "the official announcement of spring," as Harvey Manning writes, will just be pushing up through the roadside forests a mile above Stehekin. I often find snow along that road. In the twenty years I've hiked this trail, I've found snow along these 17 miles just once, in the glen that produces the glacier lilies.

Two of us have arrived by plane, a plane that has set us down on a sandy beach in a tiny cove on the north side of Prince Creek.

Why the plane? Remember, I count the days of my vacation. I've landed on my secluded beach just twenty minutes from Chelan.

On our flight we crossed over Wapato and Alkali Lakes at 125 miles per hour, soared past Falls Creek and Safety Harbor Creek where I always look up to the beginnings of the Chelan Summit Trail and the highest trail pass in Washington.

Smoke from three different locations in the Bear Creek drainage snaps me to attention. The passenger flying with the pilot tells us that the Forest Service has set "controlled burns" to enhance wildlife habitat. On our views downlake during the morning part of our hike we often note that smoke rising into the sky.

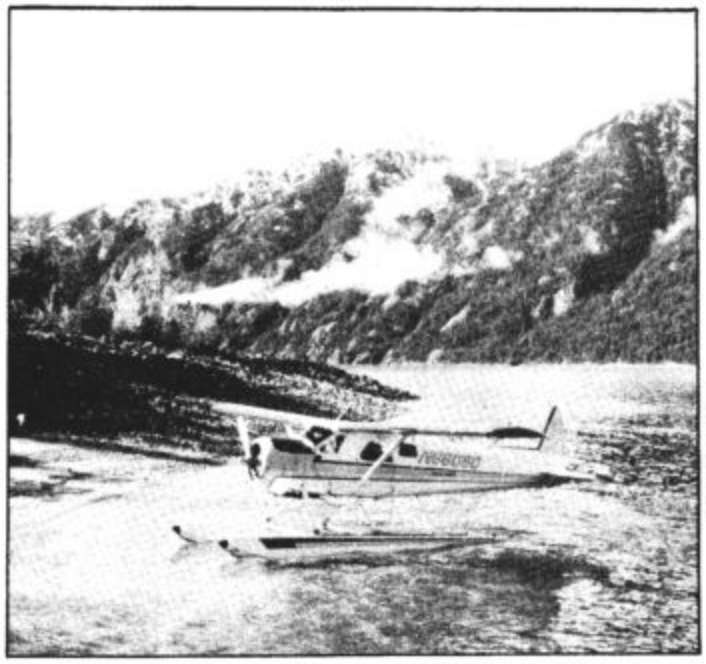
The pilot begins his descent well before Canoe Creek. The pilot lands the plane smoothly, as always, taxis beside the outfall of Prince Creek and cuts the engine—too soon, it always seems to me. He knows what he's doing, however, because we always drift right to shore.

Even while in deep water, the pilot opens his door and crawls out onto the right pontoon, waits, and jumps to shore. He intends to run along the shore to catch the wing rope so he can turn the plane. He wants us to depart from the pontoon's rear end, but he has some trouble because the plane drifts away from his reach.

The other passenger paddles with a stick and maneuvers the plane to the pilot's grasp. We step onto the pontoon, grab our packs and jump to shore. In less than a minute the plane taxis, takes off, and we stand in silence. The beach we stand on will be under water by June 1. Or earlier, this year.

We shoulder our packs, cross the driftwood that lines this beach and reach the path climbing to the junction of the Lakeshore and Prince Creek Trails.

Few signs exist on these trails any-



Ken Hopping

The deHavilland Beaver arrives at Prince Creek.

more. Signs used to list mileages; that's *verboten* now in the Wilderness.

I used to delight in the green and white mileage signs that indicated how much farther Stehekin lay along this trail, but the Forest Service removed them to accommodate new Wilderness regulations. Too bad. They're gone from the Summit Trail also. Well, anyway, I know both trails so well I can point out the exact trees that once held the mileage signs.

Prince Creek fills its banks—it's no winter stream this year. The spring melt has already begun and the season is well in advance over more normal years. Every time I stand on the edge of the grassy slopes and look down into the wide, boulder-strewn delta of Prince Creek, I think of 1948.

Spring that year didn't arrive on Lake Chelan until May 20, when sudden hot weather lowered snowpacks and sent raging waters down Prince Creek. Forest Service buildings and a huge campground disappeared into Lake Chelan. For 44 years the Prince Creek delta has been trying to heal itself (is that the correct term for a *natural* event?). Each year, it seems, more and more trees gain a foothold there.

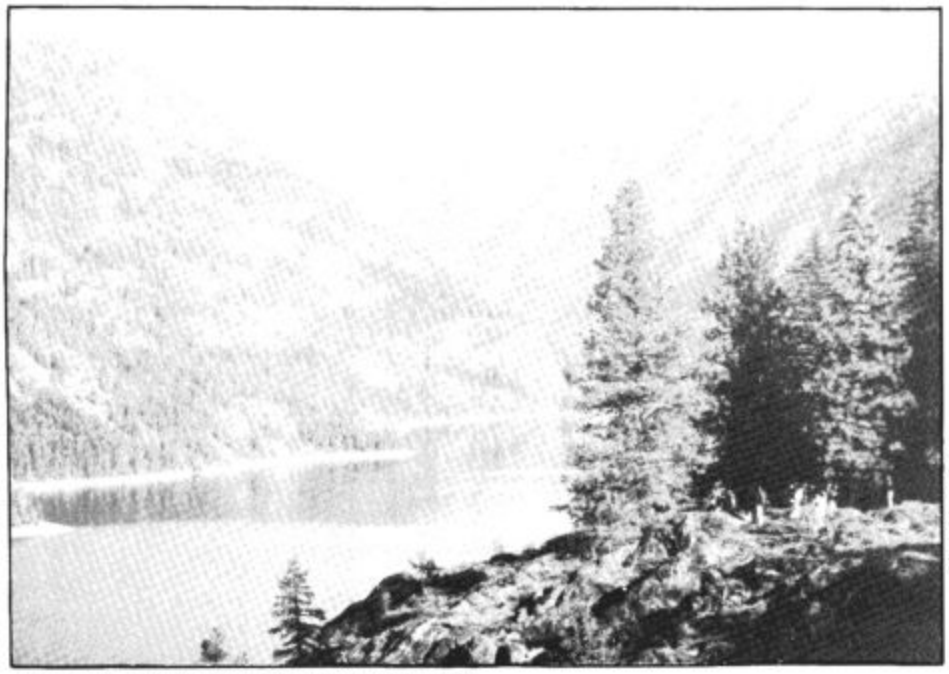
What we saw from the plane told us that yellow was the dominant color of the Lakeshore Trail. Balsamroot has developed this April like no other year in my memory. On open hillsides bouquets of this flower line every few steps of the trail!

Hikers ahead of us have brushed these blossoms and several single petals lie on the trail. Some blossoms show just a few petals. When these flowers fade, the already developing lupine stands ready to take their place.

As we take our first steps along the trail, we note that bees working the kinnikinnick flowers produce a steady musical background to other sounds we are just beginning to hear.

On the first open hillside we encounter flowers I had seen only in books. The chocolate lily with its mottled, dark-brown-and-green flower hardly seems real enough to share space with the yellow spike of death camas.

On some years I have worn a heavy shirt or raingear for this hike. One year I walked a mile in a blizzard and had to wait out the worst of it under a dry tree. I even carried an open umbrella for this whole hike. Not this year. The umbrella I carry in my pack serves as an insurance policy to keep away the rain and we walk in warm, genial sunshine.



Ken Hopping

The north end of Lake Chelan from Hunts Bluff.

The creek hollows are different this year from other years. Maple trees are already in leaf. So are the dogwoods. I don't think I've ever noticed dogwoods in bloom on this trail before this year.

Also, an abundance of red-flowering currant lines the creeks. In 1990 I counted forty-four creek crossings along this trail. Most creekbeds show *no* water this year.

In walking western Washington trails over the years I have learned to grasp overhanging branches between thumb and index finger and snap them off. It's a neat trick that doesn't work with eastern Washington branches! Hotter summers and severe winters make these branches tough; most refuse to bend!

The first miles of trail cross several open hillsides, wind in and out of numerous tree-filled gullies, always in sight of the lake. The farther north the trail wanders, the fewer open hillsides.

After two hours of walking, we descend under cliffs, contour along a rockslide and almost touch the lake at a stock gate, now open. In past years we found the gate shut and dutifully closed it after passing.

Ahead now stand thirteen short switchbacks that climb to the glacier lilies and the first expansive view uplake. That's the location of our first real rest. Also here, high in a tree well above reach hangs the first of several trailside artifacts, a Daugh's insulator. Since mileage signs have disappeared, I have over the past several years looked instead for these old-time insulators that once carried a telephone line uplake and to the lookouts on the high peaks on this side of the lake.

By 1945 more than 63,000 miles of these single-wire telephone lines linked nearly 5000 lookouts in the Pacific Northwest. No lines exist today, but the insulators still hang from the trees, usually about ten feet above ground level. A careful observer can also spot the old poles, now cut down, that carried this line on hillsides with no trees.

From this first view uplake a hiker can see the first of several buildings that dot the lakeshore. Below in the Rex Creek drainage stand two or three such buildings and a small orchard.

These buildings with their bright metal roofs are at least two generations old and may shock a hiker accustomed to true wilderness trails. However, they represent a part of summer usage and even attempts at homesteading. It's the newer homes, some completely out of character with this wilderness, that are obscene.

In Rex Creek, besides finding ticks, I looked for the past several years for an old shelter. I know I passed it on my first visit here, but I've not found it since.

Our immediate destination is a lunch stop at Meadow Creek, 3 miles from Rex Creek. Directly across the lake from us Domke Falls pour onto an open

beach, and we can hear it. When the lake fills, the Falls pour directly into the lake, and boaters can maneuver close to it. But from now on we leave the Falls behind us.

Lucerne and Railroad Creek will soon swing into our across-lake views. Their human use is tame now compared to their sometimes lusty past.

Thoughts of the history of the upper lake occupy me as the trail alternately climbs and descends and contours around the stub ends of small ridges. We often spot small herds of deer. They do not contour. Instead, they leave the trail and climb over the tops of the low ridges and descend back to the trail. Sometimes these shortcuts (much easier for the agile deer than for humans) are more evident that the official trail.

Once on our 1992 hike we saw a herd of ten deer scattering into the woods ahead of us. They follow melting snows and reach the Summit Trail sometime in June.

Near the former Mile 13 the trail passes under a refreshing spray of a spring waterfall. I look forward to stopping here to rinse my hands and face or wet my headband. Some years, however, this waterfall does not exist; it is dry by April.

After a stiff climb from the waterfall site, we begin listening for the muffled roar of Cascade Creek. Slippery logs straddle the crossing and we pass with care. From Cascade it's about a mile to Meadow Creek, our lunch stop.

Perhaps the most beautiful woods along the Lakeshore Trail lie between Cascade and Meadow Creeks. Sunlight here filters through trees smaller than other miles, the trail is easy and I'm often tempted to stop and rest. Almost always a ruffed grouse drums along a particular section of this trail.

I'm still looking for the trees that carry insulators, hoping that one has fallen to the ground. Occasionally I'm lucky.

At a gentle corner, the trail suddenly turns and descends into the roar of Meadow Creek. Just before this descent I look for the obscure Blue Jay Trail that climbs toward an old mine and the Chelan Summit. This trail is so easy to miss that on most of my visits here I pass right by it.

This trail, along with the also abandoned Horton Butte Trail across Meadow Creek, stand near the top of my list of future hikes. Their mystery always seems to pull me up a hundred yards or so. In 1992 someone was working the Blue Jay mine.

Before the descent and junction with the Blue Jay Trail, the Lakeshore Trail enters a 1985 burn. The whole character of the next half mile of this trail has changed since that fire. Burned out trees have fallen, fewer this year than previous, and the forest has opened up. Grass grows on the trail and flowers of the open hillside have colonized these fire scarred slopes. This is "Harvey's Burn."

In 1985 three doctors from the East Coast walked along the Lakeshore Trail. They had read in Harvey Manning's *100 Hikes of the North Cascades* that toilet paper should be burned.

They did and set this forest on fire. The flames raced up the hillside, obliterated much of the lower mile of the Horton Butte Trail, but curiously bypassed man-made objects.

The Meadow Creek shelter was untouched, but fire caught trees within fifty feet of it. The fire (or firefighters) spared the three-generations-old Meadow Creek Hotel, down on the lakeshore from the shelter. The irrigation system was also untouched.

After subduing the fire, the Forest Service/National Park Service goodnaturedly (I think) blamed Harvey for his toilet paper advice. Harvey was honored. Mysteriously, in the 1986 hiking season, two signs appeared in trees at both ends of the burn.

They read "Harvey's Burn, 1985." One still exists, twenty feet from the shelter and facing a Forest Service sign advising hikers at the shelter to "Burn Your Garbage."

The shelter stands in dry woods above the creek and the ingenious waterworks system. It provides so much pressure that a faucet at the Meadow Creek boat dock continuously sprays water into the lake. In April the lawn in front of the hotel is emerald green and *soft*. At night a visitor can look out across the lake and into the lights of Lucerne. A mineshaft exists nearby and the ancient miners built an ore dock just south of the hotel.

After a brief lunch stop we look for the Horton Butte Trail. In 1986 I followed this trail for a mile through the new burn to the Meadow Creek crossing and then reluctantly turned back.

I've reached Horton Butte, an old lookout site, from Muleshoe Camp on the Chelan Summit. That lookout is worth visiting, but don't go if you suffer from vertigo.

Now, after lunch, we begin the serious business of finishing this hike. Since we are hiking non-stop (well, in a manner of speaking) we expect to reach Stehekin in about four more hours. Just as we leave the shelter, we pause to watch a red-breasted nuthatch feed its young in a hole hollowed from a burned-out tree.

After a short climb to the old Mile 10 mark, the trail levels out and heads for Moore, another site packed with human history!

We have been following signs since Prince Creek indicating that the Forest Service is working through an eradication project of a bothersome plant. Trail signs and mileage signs are out of vogue, but not these signs; they line the trail.

Twice, this section of trail passes through groves of quaking aspen. Generally, more water flows in this stretch of trail than in others; that may be the reason for the aspen.

The trail reaches a road that descends to an enormous house, built in the 1980s. Boat travellers can see this house as they ply the lake. The road, an eyesore and even now travelled by autos, apparently serves an on-and-off-again logging operation A sturdy dock on the lake accommodates autos sent uplake by barge.

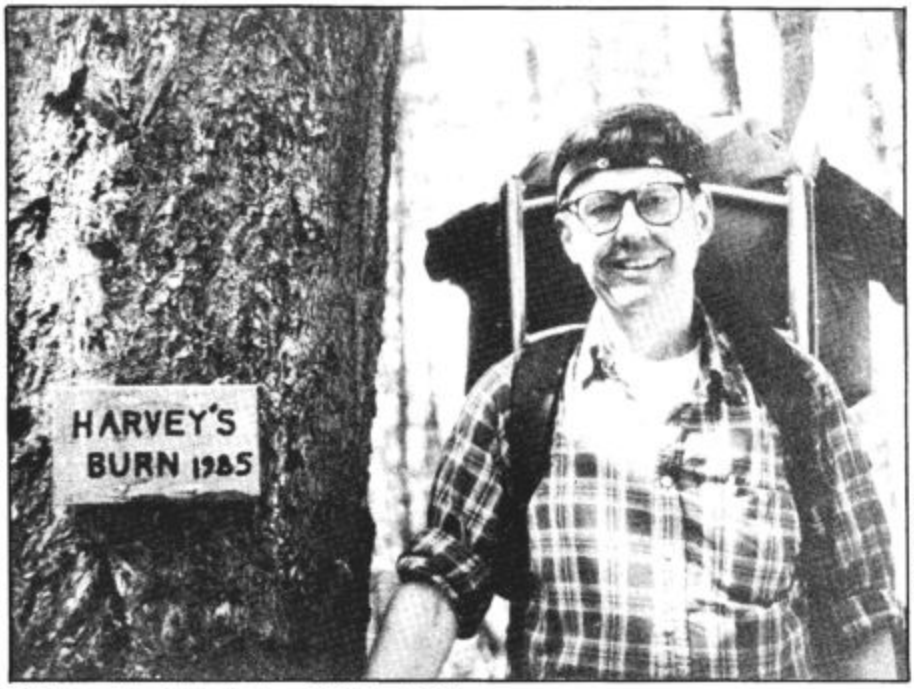
After leaving the roadend, the tread follows a level path through dark woods, takes a sharp left turn and descends via five switchbacks to a large man-made meadow and quaint stone wall. Boat passengers can also view both from the lake.

A quick walk from the meadow takes the hiker to a marked trail junction and a 1990 bridge across Fish Creek. Most hikers walk the half-mile down to Moore and its campground and dock. Twenty years ago an old hotel swimming pool was still here. Look in vain for the pool because it's now filled in.

In 1990 the Forest Service removed the Fish Creek Shelter and rebuilt it at Moore—why I don't know!

Across the bridge and a five minute walk along trail brings the hiker to the old shelter site, a junction with the Fish Creek trail and still another road. It's another five minute trip down to a dock on the lake.

For a great side trip, walk 1 mile up the Fish Creek trail to an ingenious and well-engineered irrigation system. An engineer-owner of a young orchard just up the road built this system to serve



Ken Hopping

Bill Longwell on the Lakeshore Trail, April 1994.

his trees. Walk down the irrigation system on a great trail to the orchard and road.

Until recently a caretaker sold apples from this orchard at Seattle's Pike Place Market. When the caretaker left, the orchard fell into disuse. Some of the oldest buildings on the upper lake stand near the orchard.

The next stretch of trail is the most serious of this hike, but the miles are short. The climb to Hunt's Bluff intimidates some hikers, but I'm always amazed how quickly the Bluff rounds into my view. I guess I'm accustomed to the climb.

I stand on the promontory and look back down the lake. The Moore Peninsula, Moore Mountain and Domke Mountain dominate the views. Domke once served as a lookout site. The old Mile 5 marker, gone now, shared the same tree that still carries the Hunt's Bluff sign.

A few steps north on the trail give tired hikers their first views of upper Lake Chelan, McGregor Mountain and the buildings of Stehekin. The trail is mostly easy from here.

After the Hunt's Creek crossing, the trail stays just above several lakeside buildings, passes a curious oval track with no outlet, crosses a creek scoured by a 1991 raging flood and drops to the lake's edge at the Chelan National Recreation Area sign, a hundred yards short of the Flick Creek shelter.

What's a National Recreation Area? Your guess is as good as mine. What does it allow? Just about everything. A new building 1 mile ahead will shock some hikers. In fact, too many buildings exist on this final stretch of trail.

What protection does a National Recreation Area give to the land and its visitors? Guess again. Walk here in the fall and you may have to duck bullets. This should be National Park territory. In fact, the whole Lakeshore Trail should be part of the North Cascades National Park.

If I day-hike the entire Lakeshore Trail, I usually plan my last rest stop at the Flick Creek shelter. A short, stiff climb and descent and almost a mile of walking separates the shelter from Flick Creek, but the shelter carries the name anyway.

My best memory of Flick Creek shelter comes from a warm, clear, early April evening. The constellation Orion stood directly over Castle Rock and a waxing moon lit up the lake. Just at dusk a canyon wren sang its descending "waterfall" song. That was the only time I ever heard the canyon wren's live song, but I had known it for thirty years. Any oldtimer who remembers the film "Glen Canyon" heard the canyon wren's twilight song in the film's soundtrack.

A short climb past the old Mile 3 marker, another expansive view of Stehekin and McGregor Mountain, a long step over Flick Creek and a sharp right turn brings the hiker right into civilization's back yard, literally.

A newly built, two-story house with accompanying litter and a dock built over a once-favored camping beach provides a sudden jolt. This house is completely out of character with the Lakeshore Trail, which passes within feet of the back porch.

What's worse, the house is for rent and "doing nicely" for its owner. A young couple who flew out with us the next day was renting the house for the weekend. They had day-hiked into Stehekin and back.

This house is symptomatic of what occurs in a National Recreation Area. Apparently, anything can happen. Look up valley for more obscenities: a plethora of architectural styles, other newly built, multi-storied houses too close to the road, and the ugly car graveyard 2 miles up the Stehekin Road.

In the thirty-two years I've been hiking into Stehekin, the road has grown progressively littered. My Shangri-la is coming apart. The 2 remaining miles of the trail and a sighting of paintbrush cannot quite blot out the memories of the new Flick Creek house.

From Fourmile Creek, waterbars appear and the trail suddenly widens. This section of trail receives early maintenance because it's part of the Stehekin day-hiking area. More stone walls and more roofs remind the hiker that Stehekin lies just ahead.

My favorite time to enter Stehekin is at dusk. An otter swimming the dark lake just below the trail once accompanied me much of my last mile into a darkening town.

Stehekin on an early spring evening is a much quieter, a much lonelier place than Stehekin on a summer evening. Not much moves around Stehekin in early April.

Camping on the edge of town at Purple Point, waking at night and listening to the uneasy honking of Canada geese out on the mud flats of the lake all add to the quiet, to the loneliness, to the attractions of Stehekin in early spring.

I'm sure I'll return to this trail even after I begin my retirement—and I'll be able to take my time doing it.

△

Bill Longwell, of Renton, is a retired teacher who has built many of the trails through the Issaquah Alps.

PANORAMA NEWS FROM ALL OVER

GROWING BUSINESS—Hiking shoe manufacturers such as Nike, Merrell, Reebok and Hi-Tec report a 55% increase in outdoor footwear, according to a recent article in the *Modesto Bee*.

Nike spokesman Judy Smith attributes the growth to a general desire for serenity and connection to nature, rather than pounding pavement or working with machines in a gym.

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DUNGENESS LIGHTHOUSE—Since the Dungeness Lighthouse is no longer staffed by the Coast Guard, the US Lighthouse Society is providing volunteers.

YOU can join the Lighthouse Society and volunteer for a stay at the Dungeness Lighthouse, too!

Volunteers have specific duties to the lighthouse station and the visiting public, including giving tours from 10am to 4pm daily, and maintaining the grounds.

Because of the number of visitors, volunteers are sent in groups of four, in combinations of couples and/or singles. Volunteers are transferred by vehicle at a Saturday lowest-low tide, which can occur, as tides do, at odd hours. The stay is one week. Bring your own food.

Volunteers must be members of the Lighthouse Society. To join, send $35 for a single membership, or $50 for a family membership, to:

US Lighthouse Society
New Dungeness Chapter
PO Box 1283
Sequim WA 98382

Or call Fran Sales for an application at **360-681-2438**. Fran is the person who schedules volunteers and she told *P&P* that the calendar is almost full for 1995. She does keep a stand-by list, however, to replace people who need to cancel. Occasionally she needs just one person to fill out the week or a partial week, and she is developing a list of those who would be available to volunteer on short notice.

Volunteers stay in the house adjacent to the light. Contact Fran for details on what you need to bring.

•

MANNING LEAVES MOUNTAINEERS—The February issue of *The Mountaineer* announced that Harvey Manning has resigned from the club because of "the board's decision to support continued shuttle bus access on the Stehekin Road."

According to *The Mountaineer*, Harvey "favored the Park Service proposal to close the road to all motor vehicle traffic."

"I have no campaign against the club," Harvey told *P&P*. "It's a simple matter of principle." His decision to leave the club reflects "a lot of things piling up," he added.

Harvey, who joined the club in 1948, continued, "I'm going away with a friendly smile and good wishes—but I'm going away."

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JET BOAT ON SKAGIT?—A commercial outfitter has applied for a permit to operate a jet boat on the Skagit River. They would run three trips a day from the upper Skagit at Newhalem down to Concrete from May through September.

For more information, call John Vanderheyden or James Chu at the Mount Baker Ranger Station: 360-856-5700. —*from the WKC Bulletin*.

•

CISPUS RIVER—The folks who want to build a dam on the Cispus are appealing the state's denial of their proposal (see *February, page 29*). The hearing will be held in May.

In the meantime, the Washington Kayak Club is running trips every weekend on the Cispus. For more information, call David Van Cleve, 206-852-9702. (For WKC membership information, call Kim Corn, 206-822-3037.)

•

CASCADIA TRAIL PERMIT—The permits are due in from the printer *any day*, according to Mary Monfort at the Washington Water Trails office.

Permits for the Cascadia Marine Trail will allow permit holders to stay overnight at many small, sometimes primitive campsites from Olympia to the Canadian border.

Cost for the permit this first year will be $14 per person. Permits must be purchased in person and will be available at several outdoor stores and at State Park offices in Olympia and Burlington. Call the Burlington office, **360-755-9231**, for locations.

For information about the Cascadia Marine Trail or membership in WWTA, call the office at 206-545-9161.

•

PERMIT SYSTEM ON ADAMS—In the past three years, use on the South Climb route on Mount Adams has increased by 35%. This data was obtained from the non-limiting permit system that started in 1992.

In 1994, over 6500 climbers registered to use this route. Since most of the route is within Wilderness, the increase in use has the Forest Service concerned about maintaining the standards of the Wilderness Act, and also about litter and human waste.

Mount Adams Ranger District is proposing a climbing permit system to limit use on only the South Climb route. They would like your input. For more information or to be put on the mailing list, contact Mary Bean, Mount Adams Ranger Station, 2455 Highway 141, Trout Lake WA 98650 (509-395-3353).

ISSUES A LISTING OF CURRENT BACKCOUNTRY ISSUES OPEN FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

FIRE RECOVERY—Wenatchee National Forest is planning long-term recovery from last summer's fires. The planners would like to hear any ideas or thoughts you have about fire recovery. Write Public Affairs Office, Wenatchee Natl Forest, PO Box 811, Wenatchee WA 98807.

METHOW FOREST WATCH—This small local group is working to prevent salvage logging in the Long Swamp Roadless Area, on the edge of the Pasayten Wilderness. They can use donations. Send a check to: Methow Forest Watch, PO Box 473, Twisp WA 98856.

They are also asking for letters in support of fire as a natural process in a healthy forest, to prevent road building in the LSRA. Send letters to Don Rose, Tonasket Ranger District, PO Box 466, Tonasket WA 98855.

PUBLIC MEETING—The Forest Service has agreed to hold a public meeting in the Puget Sound area to discuss alternatives for the Long Swamp Roadless Area (above): March 15, 6pm to 9pm at the Baker-Snoqualmie USFS office, 21905 64 Street West, Mountlake Terrace (exit 179 on I-5).

For more information, or to join a car pool to the meeting, call the Washington Wilderness Coalition, 206-633-1992.

REST STOP

EQUIPMENT, RECIPES, TIPS

LEAD FOOT—In running, each foot strike is equivalent to your weight times five.

By comparison, each foot strike while hiking is 1½ to 2 times your weight.

SLICK LOGS—In an article last month, Kerry Gilles mentioned having a difficult time crossing a slick log.

A couple of readers mentioned what sounds like a great way to cross slick logs: take off your boots and walk across in your wool socks. It's not a guarantee, but it sure improves your odds.

The socks grip much better on wet wood than vibram soles. Because of its rough texture, wool, rather than other fibers, is the best choice.

Anybody have any other suggestions for crossing logs?

COOK POT TIPS—To make measuring easier, scratch marks on the inside of your cook pot and cup in 1-cup increments for the pot and ½-cup increments for the cup.

This works whether your utensils are metal or plastic. You can use the tip of a pocket knife, a screwdriver, or a nail, but be careful you don't scratch marks on yourself.

Shiny pots are pretty, but we've heard that black ones heat up faster. Don't bother washing the outside of your pot; let it get black.

IMPROVEMENTS OR NOT?—I've been caught up in recent changes in clothing, altimeters, and skis but am now wondering if new is better. Let me share some misgivings with you to consider if you are thinking of purchasing new equipment.

I was totally sold on synthetic material for clothing layers to the point of almost doing away with wool. Then, while backpacking along the ocean last year, I sat close to a crackling campfire. One of the sparks landed on my new polypro top and before I could react I had a hole the size of a dime melted through it. Wool can get holes burned, too, but not that fast. I am now very apprehensive wearing "plastic" clothes near fire.

I recently purchased one of the new altimeter "watches" because I wanted a new altimeter and I liked the advertised features. What I didn't stop to consider was that you have to remember how to use all the buttons if you want the instrument to function properly—or you need to carry the instruction booklet with you into the backcountry.

All altimeters need to be calibrated to known elevations as you travel to account for atmospheric changes. With a simple mechanical one, you just need to move the dial. With the electronic one, you need to operate several buttons in a prescribed manner to adjust it.

Also if the "watch" has a temperature readout, you probably will not get a correct reading if you wear it next to your skin ... things you don't realize when you read the advertisement hype.

I have started looking at the new short and wider cross country skis that have shown up in outdoor stores this year. I haven't formed a definite opinion one way or another yet.

But something to consider is that if you are with a group that is breaking trail and if you're the only one with wide skis, the broken trail will not be as wide as your skis.

That means you will be continually using a little more effort than if you were wearing skis the same width as the others in the group. You may have a better time on the downhill, though, which might make the extra effort worth it.—*LGM, Port Orchard.*

SCRAPING SKIS—One of those 50-cent plastic car window scrapers makes a great tool for scraping ski bottoms. Many have a hole for a hanging cord. —*VB/MA, Arlington.*

CARRY PRUNERS—It seems that the Forest Service isn't brushing out roads as often as they used to, and some favorite ski roads can be impassable when fresh snow bends the baby alders over into an impenetrable thicket of branches. Can't get over, under, around or through!

Often just a small section of road is the problem. Breaking or bending branches is difficult if not impossible. We carry a small garden hand pruner for clipping our way through.

Even a fairly large branch can be "scored" so that it is much more easily snapped off. Also useful for eye-level branches you don't want to hit on the way back down.—*VB/MA, Arlington.*

BAG EXTENDER—If you want to do some early season camping but only have a summer-weight sleeping bag, extend its range by putting a liner inside, or by putting your bag inside a lightweight bivvy bag.

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.

PACK & PADDLE
PO BOX 1063
PORT ORCHARD WA 98366

Gear Review—your most favorite / least favorite equipment

CURRENT MASTER—One of the steps you should take before going on a saltwater paddle is to figure what the tides and tidal currents will be doing.

Got a computer (PC, not Apple)? Then I strongly recommend purchasing the Current Master program from Island Canoe of Bainbridge Island (you're probably already using the charts and tables they produce to figure it manually).

Enter a date and location and the computer does the rest. Besides giving you the current and tide for the day you want, it will also tell you what the average conditions are so you can see if the trip you're planning will be under more extreme conditions than usual. You can also print the information to take with you.

I first started using the program last year. As with tide charts, you need to purchase a new program each year. This year, besides just updating the tide and current information, they have changed the format. The old format was just fine for me, but I will admit the new one has some advantages to it.

The reason I like the program is that it makes it so easy to determine tides and currents. The program does all the work for you, and you don't need to be a computer whiz to use it. The cost is $21.95, and you should be able to find it at the same stores where you purchase tide charts. If not, **Island Canoe** can be reached directly at **206-842-5997**.—*LGM, Port Orchard.*

EDITOR'S JOURNAL

Gaining elevation on the way to Fawn Hut, Methow Valley.

FROM THE MAILBOX—"I applaud Lee's 'Secrets of Snow Camping'—a fine article full of good tips."—*Renton.*

"I do snowshoeing, sea kayaking, and hiking. I'll be retired in 2 or 3 years—then I'll *really* get out frequently!"—*Bainbridge Island.*

"*P&P*'s a little too bland for my taste. With so many urgent backcountry issues needing exposure, we need more help."—*Mazama.*

"Thanks for doing such a good job to keep us informed about the Great Outdoors!"—*Edmonds.*

"Would like even more feature articles on remote Washington backpacks and scrambles."—*Snohomish.*

SOGGY—Because of the torrential rains, we thought about calling the Avalanche Hotline the Flood Hotline this month. Hope you're drying out!

RENDEZVOUS HUTS—Lee and I were very impressed with the Rendezvous Huts when we visited two of them early in February.

It was fun to read through the log books and to recognize names of subscribers who had been there before us.

A couple of weeks after we returned, I ran into Penny Faulknor, Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, at my mother's house. Penny said she had just returned from Rendezvous and had enjoyed seeing *our* names in the log books!

STAN DAVIS UPDATE—Stan's bone-marrow transplant occurred in mid-February. According to the latest report on the message phone he continues to do well and at press time had been up to do "47 laps" (of what we're not sure). He'll probably be at Fred Hutch for about a month.

WITNESS TO ACCIDENT—Linda, Nancy and I were riding up one of the chairlifts at Stevens Pass on a recent weekday. Linda turned to look at the scenery—it was a beautiful day—and called our attention to something falling down one of the steeper runs.

It was too big for a loose ski, but it was falling the same way a loose ski does—straight down and *fast*. We finally decided that it was a snowboard and, to our horror, we realized that a person was attached.

We watched the fall until the snowboard and the person disappeared from view in the trees. We could see that no one else was on the run, and probably no one else would come down it for a long time since it was very icy. We decided to report what we had seen when we reached the operator at the top of our lift.

He immediately radioed for help and we skied on our way.

We met Lindy and Manita for lunch and told them about the fall we had seen. It turned out later that Lindy knew the parents of the snowboarder. He had indeed been seriously injured (but is recovering) and we like to think that our action helped speed rescue to him.

WINTER VANDALISM—I always thought that trailhead vandalism during winter was an almost-unheard-of thing.

But for the Darrington District this winter, it's been a real problem. After *Pack & Paddle* received the report about Boulder River (see *page 9*), I talked to Dick Lamore, Darrington's Law Enforcment Officer.

He said nine or ten car break-ins had occurred throughout the district this winter; he couldn't remember any other time when it had been such a problem this time of year. Both the North and South Forks of the Stillaguamish have been hit—places such as Deer Creek, Beaver Lake, and Marten Creek, as well as Boulder River.

Snohomish County has added an extra full-time deputy to the backcountry patrol, said Dick, and they will visit as many trailheads as they can.

The road to the Boulder River trailhead, he added, has been snowfree most of the winter and has been getting a lot of use.

See you at the Stan Davis Slide Show,

Ann Marshall