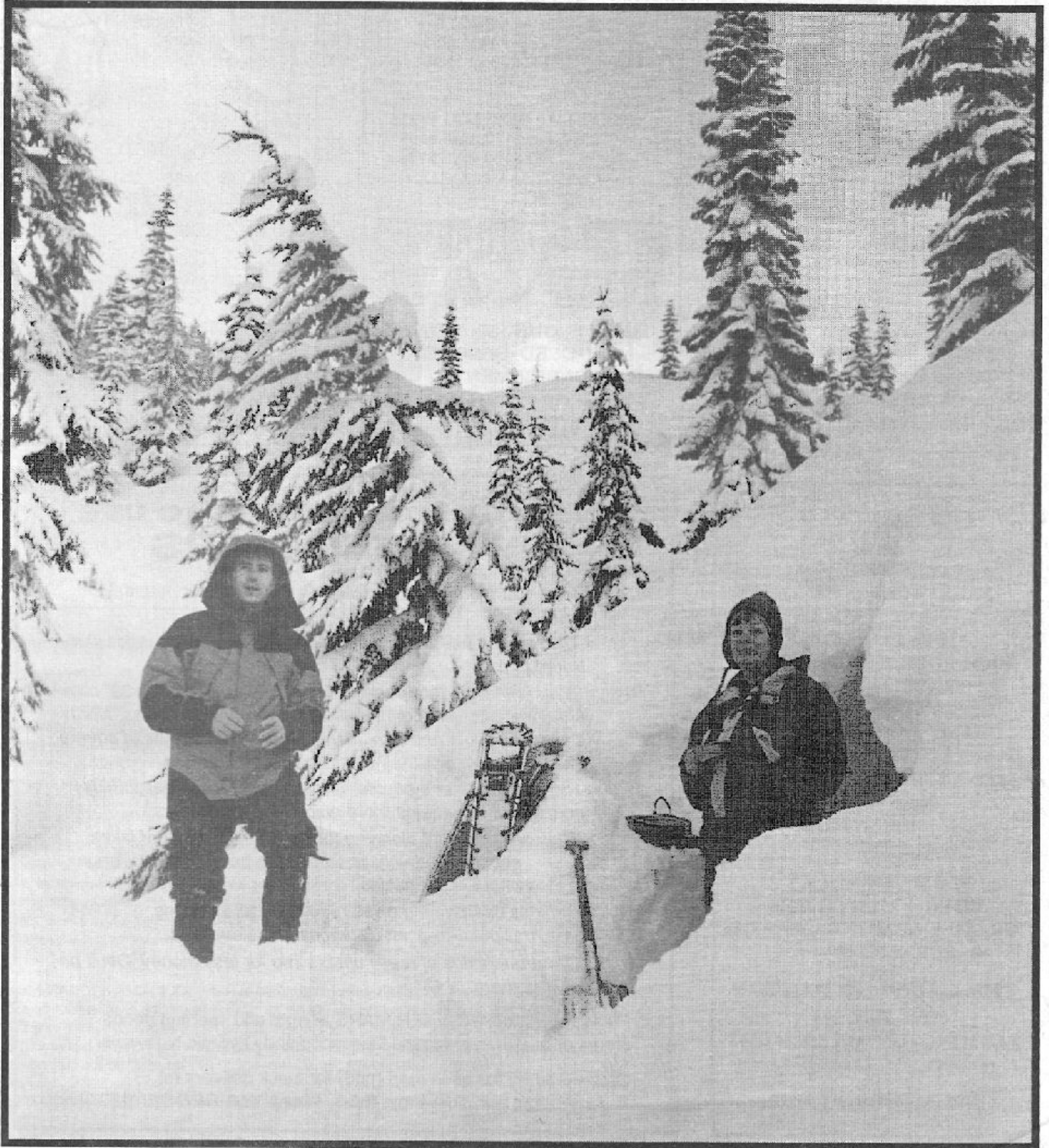


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VOLUME 6, NUMBER 2

RANDOM VIEW—



Lana Holman

Ed Reilly and friend on the summit of Wind Mountain, on the Washington side of the Columbia Gorge. Dog Mountain is in the background.

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Dale Klotz and Ann Marshall, breakfasting at the entrance to Ann and Lee's snow cave. Grace Lakes, near Stevens Pass, Washington. Photo by Lee McKee.

HOW TO BE A PACK & PADDLE CONTRIBUTOR:

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GOODBYE TO WINCHESTER

My best hiking and scrambling friend died two weeks ago. Together we had explored the mountains for fifteen years. He had bagged over two hundred peaks, most by cross-country scrambling routes and never complained about the weather or his aches and pains. During our treks he never harmed woodland creatures and always stopped to admire the wildflowers he loved so much.

A superb routefinder, his skills got us out of trouble more than once. I recall one sunny morning leading a steep scramble up two thousand feet through numerous cliff bands and chutes. As we reached the top, the weather turned quickly sour.



Winchester atop Red Mountain, with Snoqualmie Mountain in back.

Engulfed in dense fog, we could barely see each other let alone the tricky and only way down. I thought of waiting out the storm, but he offered to take the lead and beckoned me to follow. Somehow he found the route down the mountain, now a mass of steep slippery rock.

I'm going to miss his companionship and ability, but I know that my good friend, Winchester, the best dog I've ever had, will be there in spirit as I wander the high ridges and top new peaks.

Mick Campbell
Puyallup, Washington

SOMBRIO BEACH SQUATTERS

This morning's CBC news included a segment on evicting squatters from Sombrio Beach, about 70km west of Victoria. Some of the squatters have

been there for 20 years.

Parks Canada can evict the squatters from Crown Land (and remove their improvised shelters), but they still have not succeeded in contacting the owner of some private land.

This area is about in the middle of the San Juan Trail that was to be constructed to take the pressure off the West Coast Trail.

As I like improvised architecture and noticed that Parks Canada could cope with the Indian Reserves (probably as there was no choice), I'd rather they backed off. Let the hippies leave as numbers get too oppressive, or set up refreshment stands, in their own time or way.

Ramona Hammerly
Anacortes, Washington

LAND EXCHANGES ARE VIABLE SOLUTIONS

A recent letter to the editor criticized the proposed land exchange between Weyerhaeuser and the Forest Service. I would like to offer your readers some additional information on this important topic.

Under the proposal, Weyerhaeuser would trade about 30,000 acres of land between Stevens Pass and Mount Rainier that is intermingled with national forest lands to the Forest Service.

While much of this has been logged, there are several thousand acres of unroaded lands, some of which are forested. Also, these lands contain several miles of trail (including the PCT) and 7 miles of river, including segments of the Skykomish, Snoqualmie and Greenwater rivers.

In addition, Weyerhaeuser has agreed to donate 2000 acres, half of which will be added to the Alpine Lakes Wilderness, near Loch Katrine. Because it is donated, no congressional legislation is needed to expand the Wilderness. Part of the donated lands are on the slopes of Mount Index.

In return, about 4700 acres of national forest land near Enumclaw would be traded to Weyerhaeuser. These are in 7-mile-square pieces in a checkerboard pattern, surrounded by private land clearcuts. They are mostly mature forest with some patches of old growth and clearcuts. Even under Forest Service plans they are available for logging.

The Sierra Club, The Mountaineers, Washington Environmental Council, Alpine Lakes Protection Society and North Cascades Conservation Council support this exchange/donation package.

We believe it is in the best interest of the ecosystem and the public now, and even more so in the long run.

Certainly, some of the lands need restoration, but this will only come with acquisition by the Forest Service. The Forest Service has pre-allocated most of the land to designations preserving or restoring the forest.

Upcoming is a trade with Plum Creek Timber Company. Under active consideration are public acquisition of 40,000 acres of roadless land. Since this is checkerboarded with national forest lands, continued Plum Creek logging could affect nearly 80,000 acres of roadless land and over 70 miles of trails.

In addition, lands on several key river corridors could be acquired, including the upper Cle Elum and Yakima Rivers. The tough part is, as always, finding suitable lands to trade to Plum Creek, such as lands already roaded, fragmented or isolated.

Before a decision is made, a full EIS will be prepared with opportunity for public comment. As a means of reducing the need for trading away national forest lands we have proposed that the remaining 1600 acres of Plum Creek land in Silver Creek near Easton be purchased this year, but we need congressional appropriations.

I encourage *Pack & Paddle* readers to become involved in these discussions. Call the Forest Service to get on the appropriate mailing lists.

Remember that at one time all of Alpine Lakes, William O. Douglas, Clearwater, and Norse Peak Wilderness Areas, Mount Rainier National Park and Mount Saint Helens National Monument were checkerboard. They are now solid public land due primarily to land exchanges.

Congress gave these huge grants to the railroad in 1864. Today, however, we are faced with tough choices for our forests, rivers and trails. Carefully crafted land exchanges are viable solutions.





Charles Raines
Director, Cascade Checkerboard Project
Sierra Club

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.

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-  —Snowshoeing and cross-country skiing.



PENINSULA



GENERAL CONDITIONS—Deep snow. Expect storm damage.

 **DUNGENESS SPIT** (*Dungeness NWR; USGS Dungeness*)—Bill and I took some time off work between Christmas and New Years. The original plan was to go to Stehekin and do some skiing. What I found after calling there made us change our plans—see Stehekin under "North Central."

Plan B was Bill's idea: try Hurricane Ridge. We were going to leave for Port Angeles on Monday, 12/30. By then the ice storm had come and gone and we'd had our power back for a couple of days. However, Highway 101 was closed. We waited one more day then headed north. We arrived in Port Angeles to find a couple of feet of snow in town and the road to Hurricane Ridge closed with

high avalanche danger.


So now it was time to turn to Plan C: Dungeness Spit. We've hiked fairly extensively in the Olympic Mountains but had never hiked on the Spit. The path starts at a well marked trailhead. There is an entrance fee.

It's about 7 miles to the lighthouse. We hiked about two-thirds of the way, then turned around as we were losing daylight and it looked like rain was heading our way. It had absolutely poured the day before and we didn't want to push our luck.

This ended up being a nice beach hike, and a good alternative to the mountains. We stayed two nights in Port Angeles. Both nights we treated ourselves to dinner at our favorite French restaurant, C'est Si Bon. The food is wonderful and the owners are delightful.

Highway 101 was closed north of Quilcene, due to flooding, for our return trip home. We took the Hood Canal Bridge and returned home by way of the Kitsap Peninsula and Tacoma.

Snoqualmie, Blewett and Stevens Passes were all closed on the days we would have wanted to head east to Stehekin. It was just as well that we had not made reservations at Stehekin. It wasn't meant to be this time.—Jane Habegger, Olympia, 12/31-1/2.

 **LOWER LENA LAKE** (*Olympic Natl Forest; USGS Mt Washington*)—The Hamma Hamma road to the trailhead was clear except for the last 2 miles, which were covered by 12 to 18 inches of snow. Four-wheel

drive was necessary, and we stopped to help shovel out a couple of guys whose car was high-centered by the snow.

Sarah and I had hoped to slow down her golden retriever puppy, Kaya, by strapping on her new dogpack. We laughed as she rolled in the snow to try to remove this impediment. Soon after, however, Kaya's curious nose caught wind of the strong forest smells and the dogpack was quickly forgotten.

The trail was in good condition, with a few crossable blowdown trees and was relatively snowfree, except near the lake. Winter is a great time to hike it—we saw only five people all day. At the lake, views were mostly obscured by clouds and countless fat snowflakes dancing down to the earth.

Six miles round trip and 1200 feet vertical.—Eric Keeler, Seattle, 2/2.

 **CHILEAN MEMORIAL** (*Olympic Natl Park; USGS La Push*)—Parked at the "half lot" at Rialto Beach Saturday morning for an overnighter near Chilean Memorial.

There are miles and miles of snapped-off alder trees from the west end of Lake Crescent all the way to Forks and into Mora. The snow load really did its thing!

I hit the beach at the very highest tide, so I just wandered behind the main driftwood line. The swells were running at about 20 feet, so the surf was absolutely exploding into the spruce zone! I was temporarily distracted by the sound of applause. As I started to take a bow, I realized that the "applause" was just the sound of mil-

BACKCOUNTRY NEWS DEADLINE: March 20

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

lions of rocks rolling and jockeying for position in the colossal backwash of the breakers. So, there goes my "stardom" for the day.

The surf started to recede after about an hour, so I was able to dodge my way down to Hole-in-the-Wall. There is a lot of evidence of heavy erosion from the intense storm we had over the holidays. A fair number of trees have slid down with the mud flows from the bluffs. I used the overland trail to get around the point, and dropped into the nice crescent beach beyond. The smooth black sand looked like a sheet of mylar shimmering in the pale sunshine.

I camped at the point just before Chilean Memorial and enjoyed visiting the long-lived sea anemone that I first observed in 1958. The evening was cool and clear, and the only competition with the Milky Way were the lights from the shipping lanes. I wandered down to the Chilean Memorial area early Sunday morning, checking out tidepools and looking for interesting flotsam.

I packed my gear and headed back to Rialto, stopping at the bore channels just north of Hole-in-the-Wall to watch the powerful surf send up white geysers. —Larry Smith, Port Orchard, 2/8-9.



Darren McKee makes some music on a beach hike, near Chilean Memorial.



THE NARROWS (NOAA 18474)—Sixteen kayakers from the Olympic Kayak Club went on a paddle from Wollochet Bay ("bay of the squirting clams") to Gig Harbor, through the Narrows on a one-way, current-assisted trip.

We did a car shuttle from the point of launch on the west side of Wollochet Bay to the public boat ramp on Randall Drive in Gig Harbor. See *Afoot & Afloat* for good directions to both put-ins. The shuttle took about 30 minutes round trip.

The Wollochet Bay ramp is not signed, has limited parking, and no restroom facilities. The Gig Harbor ramp is signed and has plenty of parking, at least this time of year. Restrooms are available at the small park on Crescent Creek where Randall Drive intersects 96th St NW.

From the bay we paddled along the shore, looking at the houses, to the Narrows. Just past Point Fosdick is a DNR beach about 2300 feet long. It is covered with small rounded rocks and is not too difficult for landing a kayak except when southwesterly winds are blowing.

The currents at the Narrows can reach a velocity of 5 knots. There is a lot of boat traffic. The currents around the bridge abutments can be very dangerous. Stay close to the shore to minimize the effects of the current.

Another DNR beach just north of Point Evans, 2600 feet long, is sandy with a lot of large rocks. The current along the south shore from Point Evans to Gig Harbor flows south somewhat on an ebb tide.

The entrance to Gig Harbor is marked by a lighthouse. We landed here to look at the sights, pulling our kayaks up out of the water since there is a lot of boat traffic to and from the harbor.

The best time to go through the Narrows is about two hours before maximum ebb current. Our trip took about four hours with three stops. We were underway from Wollochet at 12:40pm and arrived at Gig Harbor at 4:40. Maximum current at the Narrows was 3.2 knots at 3:15. Distance covered was about

12 miles. We had great views of the Olympics and Mount Rainier.—Bob McBride, Silverdale, 2/15.

HURRICANE RIDGE—18 inches of snow fell just before the last weekend in February, keeping the snow depth up to about 9 feet. Even when the road is scheduled to be open, weather conditions may delay or prevent the road from opening, or may force an early closure.

For recorded information on the road and weather conditions, call 360-452-0329.—Ranger, 2/21.

ELWHA RIVER—The road up to the hot springs is closed at Observation Point. The Whiskey Bend road is open to the trailhead.

The Elwha trail has been cleared for 3 miles, to Humes Ranch, and next week we hope to clear Rica Canyon. Between Michaels Cabin and the Lillian, it's a mess. In those 2½ miles, 106 trees are down.

We'll do the best we can to get it cleared.—Ranger, 2/21.

LAKE OZETTE—Reservations are required for beach hiking between Memorial Day and Labor Day from the Ozette River to South Sand Point. You can make reservations 30 days in advance.

Call the Ozette Ranger Station, 360-963-2725.—Ranger, 2/21.

STAIRCASE—Road in is icy, with 4 miles of real bad potholes.

The Rapids Loop trail has some ice, and bridges and footlogs are slippery.—Ranger, 2/5.

DOSEWALLIPS—Road is closed at Park boundary until spring. Snow closes road at 8 miles, however.—Ranger, 2/5.

HAMMA HAMMA ROAD—Closed at 8.3 miles at Lena Creek bridge. Tree blocks road at 6.5 miles. And none of that makes much difference, because ½-mile beyond the cabin (about at the Forest boundary), the road is so dangerous with compact snow and thick ice, that folks can't get very far anyway.

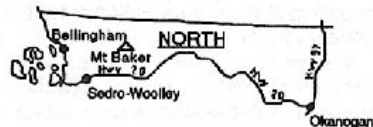
It's just not melting out, even with rain, and we recommend that people don't try quite yet. For current conditions, call the Hood Canal Ranger Station, 360-877-5254.—Ranger, 2/21.

DUNGENESS ROAD—Closed due to snow, ice and slides.—Ranger, 2/13.

BACKCOUNTRY NEWS

REPORTS AND CONDITIONS

NORTH



GENERAL CONDITIONS—Deep snow. Expect storm damage.



METHOW VALLEY—

Leave for Winthrop late Wednesday, January 29. Freezing rain on windshield at Carlton, snow at Twisp. More snow and freezing rain overnight.

Thursday morning we assume best chance of early grooming would be in vicinity of Sun Mountain so head for Snoasis parking lot. Try Thompson Ridge trail; too icy.

Beaver Pond and Short Cut doable but very icy, break through crust over 2 inches of snow over ice. When groomer shows we follow it and cover Little Wolf and lower trails. As we exit Aqua Loop-Fox we find groomer at Hough Ranch awaiting double bypass so end day at 3pm.

Talked to skaters who had tried Mazama area Wednesday. Grooming then took place during freezing rain; they reported too hard to ski. In hopes of regroom and recognizing that Rendezvous would be folly, decided to try Mazama.

Groomer had just preceded us to great kick and looong glide day. Did Jack's, Methow and River Run trails, the last twice with a look-see at Base Camp. Cassal Ranch offers hot drinks, warm house and hospitality.

Not able to solicit a ride to Mazama to do Community Trail so on Saturday skied up from Winthrop. Sticky snow required early stop to apply paraffin. Met groomer about 2 hours after start and moved a lot faster with set track.

Arrived at Wolf Ridge resort warming hut around 11:30, stopped to light fire and then skied a ways past the river overlook for some fast downhill on the way back. Lunch at hut and then easy back to Winthrop. About a 12 mile day, our best.

We like to start out about 8am for quiet and solitude, but the drawback is that we often end up on ungroomed trail the first hour or two.

Would be nice if someone could set up a shuttle service for people who want to do the Community trail from Mazama to Winthrop.—Paul Schauler, Olympia, 1/29-2/2.

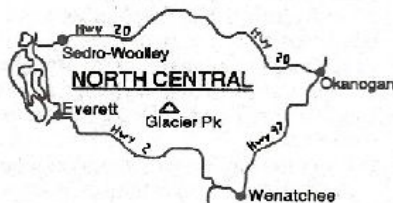
METHOW VALLEY—Temperatures in 20s at night, mid-30s during the day. Icy in the mornings, but spring condi-

tions in afternoon. Call MVSTA, 800-682-5787 for current information.

In Mazama, snow is 4 feet deep. They plan to ski here until April this year. The last storm dumped quite a bit in the backcountry, so backcountry touring is great.

Sun Mountain has 3 feet of snow, with all trails groomed. Patterson Lake has ice about 2 feet thick.—information from MVSTA, North Cascades Basecamp, Mazama Country Inn and Sun Mountain, 1/21.

NORTH CENTRAL



GENERAL CONDITIONS—Deep snow. Expect storm damage.

SKAGIT RIVER to LA CONNER (NOAA 18423 or USGS Utsalady)—Our Mountaineer group of 10 single and 2 double sea kayaks set out shortly after 10am for a day of bird watching in the Skagit Delta.

We launched into Freshwater Slough from the boat ramp near the Skagit Wildlife Recreation Area headquarters (see *North Puget Sound Afoot & Afloat* for directions on the ramp location). The plan was to paddle north to Goat Island, then take the Swinomish Channel to La Conner where we would take out at Rainbow Bridge.

After positioning cars for a shuttle, we were on the water with the current in the Slough propelling us toward the bay at a good clip. The delta is quite shallow with lots of the flats exposed at low tides.

Although water still covered the flats by the time we reached the bay, there was barely enough to float a kayak—and that was only if you happened to luck out in choosing your path. Most of our group waded, pulling their kayaks varying distances before being able to paddle freely.

Once everyone had reached deeper water, our leader Vicky King pointed us in the direction of Goat Island. We spotted several eagles as we paddled, along with grebes, loons, and a variety of ducks. Around 1pm we pulled out on a beach on the southeast end of Goat Island for a lunch break. The tide was on its way in so we were watchful that our boats didn't float away without us.

Back on the water two of our group headed toward the fish hole in the jetty between the mainland and Goat Island to reach the Swinomish Channel while the rest of us paddled around the west end of the island and into the channel. The current in the channel was slack just before flood, making for easy paddling, and with only a few power boats on this winter day boat wake was minimal.

Just before Hole in the Wall Ann and I veered to the right, paddling our double over to the jetty in search of the fishway opening. We found it, as well as a log blocking the opening. The two paddlers who had chosen this route had to portage their boats over the jetty because of the log.

Before long we had the Rainbow Bridge and the boat ramp in sight. Although we didn't get the anticipated sighting of snow geese because of the tides, we saw lots of other birds and had an enjoyable day on the water in mid-winter.—LGM, Port Orchard, 2/8.

"EAGLES PERCH" (*Baker-Snoqualmie Natl Forest; USGS Verlot*)—This ridge-like summit is located a little over a mile east of Mount

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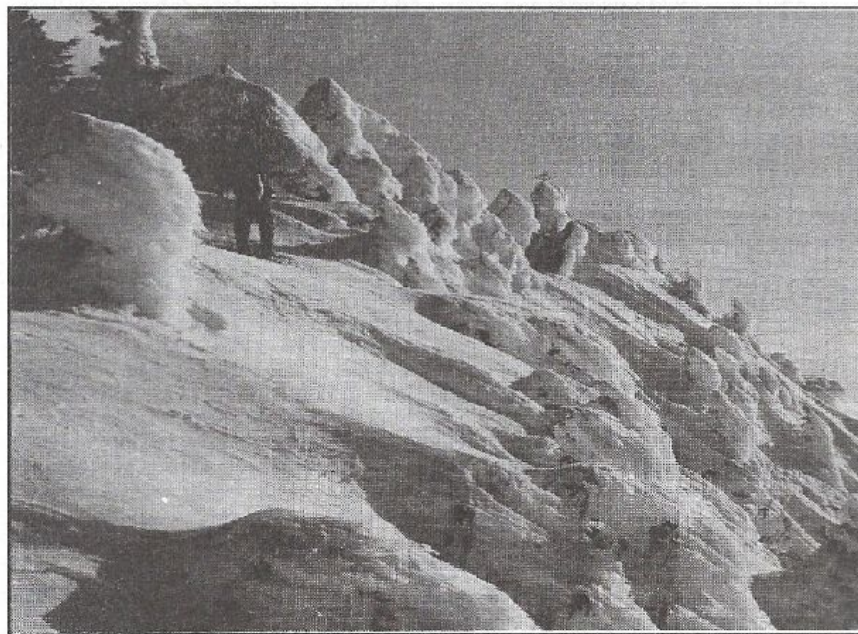
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BACKCOUNTRY NEWS

REPORTS AND CONDITIONS



Grant Myers

Snowshoeing on Mailbox Peak.

Pilchuck. It has a 2600-foot north face above Lake 22.


There are three prominent towers located on a ridge extending north off the west end of the summit ridge. Our party of four reached Lake 22 (2435 feet) by way of the 2.5-mile trail from the Mountain Loop Highway.

From the lake, we made an ascending traverse on the east side of the lake, then climbed up to a low point in a tree-covered ridge extending off the northeast side of the mountain (3500 feet). We followed this ridge past two granite crags and then made a steep traverse (left) southeast under the rocky cast flank.

From the southeast side, we climbed forested snow slopes (up to 45 degrees) to the final, open east ridge leading to the top. The highest point is debatable

in the winter as there are at least four point of fairly equal height topped with cornices. A rope and slings are advisable.

The snow was soft most of the way up although we didn't use snowshoes. Time up for the climb was 5 hours.—Dallas Kloke, Anacortes, 2/9.

 **KELCEMA LAKE** (*Boulder River Wilderness; USGS Silverton*)—With better weather Elaine and I went skiing again. The Kelcema road begins from the Deer Creek parking area on the Mountain Loop Highway—usually where the snowplow stops in winter.

One other skier was getting ready to ski so once again Elaine and I were first to break trail. Not so easy this time as someone (we named him Murphy for Murphy's Law) had post-holed about a mile up the trail in boots, for what possible reason we could never ascertain. We finally decided Murphy was a lunatic and kept expecting to run into him but Murphy never appeared.


The snow and the views were perfect. The sky was blue, the snow was fresh and white, and all the trees were wearing lace collars. We finally got past Murphy's tracks and onto some older ski tracks which we followed, taking turns breaking trail.

Elaine had loaned me her husband's shorter/wider skis and I was smitten with them. New skis are the next thing on my never-to-be-finished shopping list. Eventually, a younger, stronger crowd caught up with us and as the day

went on we ran into several people we knew, including John Bell, a Mountaineer climber and snowshoer.

We reached the trailhead for Kelcema Lake (buried of course) and agreed to go on as long as conditions were reasonable. With a certain amount of lunging and lurching we got close to the lake before calling it a day.

Skiing back down the road was perfect. The combination of good snow and better skis was wonderful. It was the kind of day we hated to see come to an end. We did not stop for pie at the Timberline. We both had husbands at home waiting for dinner.—Karen Sykes, Seattle, 1/26.

 **MOUNT BARING** (*Baker-Snoqualmie Natl Forest; USGS Mt Baring*)—Although I've climbed Baring twice before in the spring, I couldn't resist climbing it in winter during such a good spell of weather.

Chris Weidner, Chet Moritz and I started from Highway 2, as road 6028 was snow-covered. Even if the road is snowfree, there are trees down and past 1.4 miles it becomes very rough.

We took the spur road at 1.4 miles, following it roughly another 1.5 miles to a large clearcut. We were able to ascend the right (east) edge of the clearcut to the timbered slope above and then into the prominent stream gully.

We followed this low-angle gully all the way, except for a couple of detours to avoid stream openings. Above the gully, one makes an ascending traverse left up a snow slope to the crest at 5000 feet. A descending traverse is made into a snow basin and then up a wide gully to the V-gap at 5000 feet.

The final ascent is up the easy south slope (except for a short, steep section out of the gap) to the summit. Our time up was 5½ hours with an elevation gain of 5400 feet.

Chris and Chet climbed the South Peak from the V-gap, a class 4 ascent for 200 feet, then 300 feet of easier snow to the top. Trees are available for anchors.—Dallas Kloke, Anacortes, 2/6.

STEHEKIN—Bill and I had wanted to visit Stehekin at the end of December, but we changed our minds after checking the current information. Basically the National Park Lodge is open only on weekends in the winter.

If we wanted to go mid-week we would need to stay in a cabin and bring our own food. The person I talked to at the lodge was very nice and said that they hope to have things open more in the future but it is dependent on how much demand there is now in

ALWAYS CARRY THE TEN ESSENTIALS

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

the winter.

Maybe we'll try it another time on a long weekend.—Jane Habegger, Olympia.

STEHKIN—Here's some current information from Stehekin that we hope will clear up any misunderstandings:

The *Lady Express* is on its winter schedule, which is one run daily except Tuesdays and Thursdays. It shifts to its summer schedule on March 15, when it will run daily.

On May 1, the *Lady of the Lake* will also go back into service for the summer.

The National Park Lodge is open year around. But the restaurant is open for lunch on boat days only, and for other meals on weekends. If you go mid-week, you do need to be prepared to fix your own meals. The house-keeping cabins at the lodge have kitchen facilities.

For boat schedule and fares, call 509-682-2224. You can also request a "vacation planner" that gives helpful information about visiting the isolated community of Stehekin, including other places to stay. For information about the lodge and its facilities, or for other questions, call 509-682-4584.

CHELAN DISTRICT—Expect snow everywhere, and please check the avalanche report before heading out.

Echo Ridge is NOT a Sno-Park this year. For those going to Echo Ridge, there is now a mandatory \$5/person fee to ski at Echo Ridge per day. Passes are available at the trailhead. Kids 12 and under are free.

A reduced cost for a season pass is available if you are a Lake Chelan Nordic Club member. If you would like to join the club (\$35 fee includes season pass at Echo Ridge), write to Lake Chelan Nordic Club, PO Box 245, Chelan WA 98816.

Grooming will take place once for the weekend and once midweek.—Ranger, 2/21.

LAKE WENATCHEE DISTRICT—

There is about 4 feet of snow at lake level (1900 feet), and it gets deeper as you get higher. Call the ranger station, 509-763-3103, for current road conditions.—Ranger, 2/21.

CENTRAL



GENERAL CONDITIONS—Deep snow. Expect storm damage.



MOUNT SI (DNR; USGS Mt Si)—Five Mountaineers and one Marine decided to get a little exercise at Mount Si. I had listed it in the bulletin as a "call me Wednesday night and we'll decide where to go" hike.

All arrived at the trailhead in North Bend by the appointed hour of 8am. We put on boots, raingear and hats and headed up the trail at 8:30. It was my second experience on Mount Si. I was there several years ago but had hiked the old trail. For everyone else, it was their first time.

A short time up the trail people began shedding various layers of clothing. The rain quieted to an off-and-on mist. The trail was in good shape to the 3-mile marker. Our altimeters said it was about 3000 feet when we hit snow on the trail and light snowflakes began coming down.

Shortly thereafter, we found about an inch of new snow on a sheet of ice. Another hiker said the ice gets worse and worse each week through the winter.

We met a number of people with in-step crampons and some with regular crampons. Two of us had ice axes and the rest ski poles so we made it okay, albeit slowly.

Two and a half hours after we left the car, we arrived on top. It was snowing steadily and with a slight breeze was fairly cold. My pack thermometer said just under 30 degrees. We took a look at the haystack and remarked that no one in their right mind would try that in present conditions.

We put back on all the clothes we'd taken off at the bottom of the trail and had a brief lunch in the trees near the top where there are some benches. A dog had followed us from the car in spite of our attempts to chase him away.

His persistence paid off as he managed to get sandwiches, crackers and various other food from us. Camp robbers swooped down from adjoining trees and ate from our hands. Soon everyone began to feel cold and we began our slippery descent to the 3-mile marker. Several in the group made many three-point landings during this journey.

The rest of the trip to the cars was uneventful and the dog escorted us all the way back where he deserted us for another group. We saw many people on our hike and wondered how far those in tennis shoes would get and how those runners did on the ice.—Edythe, Judy, Connie, Robert, Rick and Brian, Aberdeen, 2/2.



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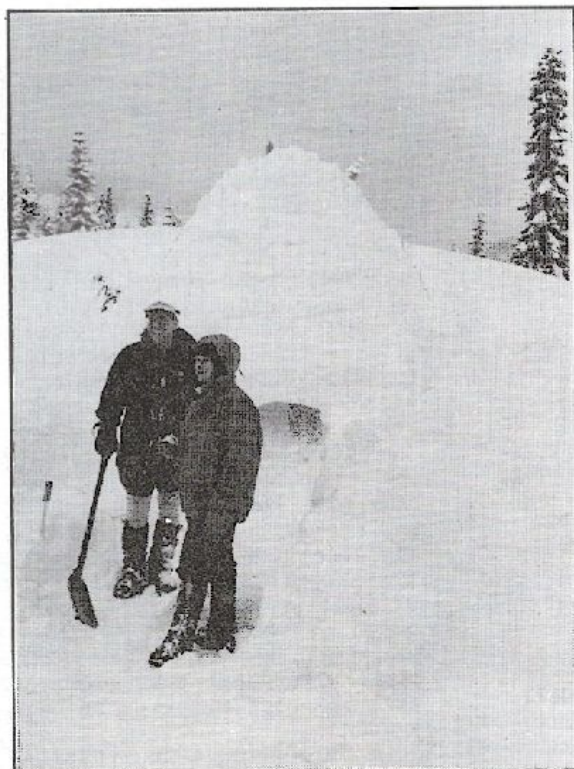
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3/97



Perry Pugliano and Linda Meyer with their igloo, at Grace Lakes, near Stevens Pass.

LOCH KATRINE (*Alpine Lks Wilderness; USGS Mt Phelps*)—Drive the North Fork Snoqualmie road about 16.7 miles from I-90's Exit 31 in North Bend. You should see a wide place to park on your left and a gated road on your right. To get to Loch Katrine, hike the road to the right. Stay left on the major roads. See Green Trails Mount Si 174.

There was little snow on the road to the bridge over Philippa Creek. From there on, it became progressively deeper and icier in places.

At the 2660-foot level, the last switchback in the road to the lake, post-holing became time consuming, because every time Shortstop disappeared through the snow, we had to pull her out. Seriously, post-holing tired the group quickly and at the last turn we headed back. We all wished for snowshoes, but it was a great hike.

The North Fork road had many blow-downs. Most were removed, and the rest were small enough to drive over.

On the drive back, we stopped to photograph the west wall of Mount Si. To the east of us was an Army helicopter hovering over a ridgetop. It was dropping supplies and men. When they saw us with cameras and binoculars, they stopped unloading and circled us. It was intimidating, so we left. Later, I

found it was a maneuvers place for the Reserves.

If you want to drive Weyerhaeuser roads, the annual permit is \$50 plus a \$5 write-up fee. The permits are available at Weyerhaeuser or Buffalo Bill's in Issaquah.

The Spur 10 gates are open from 3:30pm to one hour after sunset weekdays and dawn to dusk September through December. After hunting season fcc access is on weekends only. For more information call 800-433-3911. —Robert DeGraw, Seattle, 2/1.



KENDALL PEAK

(*Alpine Lks Wilderness; USGS Snoqualmie Pass*)—After two weeks without much new snow, and a week of clear skies and freezing temperatures, we decided it was time to leave our skis home and go climbing. We chose Kendall Peak as a destination.

The Kendall Peak we are describing is the location shown on the new 7.5-minute Snoqualmie Pass map, elevation 5784 feet. Older maps show it on the southeast end of the same ridge.

We parked near the Sahale Ski Club and walked up the cat track toward Commonwealth Basin. We then worked our way to the right side of the right-most fork of Commonwealth Creek. We passed a waterfall and continued another ¼-mile before heading up the east slope in open timber. The grade was not too steep and offered pleasant travel. We reached the open slopes below Kendall in 2½ hours.

We took the direct route up the couloir that leads to the summit, as recommended in Dallas Kloke's excellent *Winter Climbs* book. The snow was very hard in the couloir, and in hindsight, and in consideration of my bruised toes, we should have put on crampons.

We worked our way up the couloir, kicking steps and planting our ice axes deep for self-belay. At our first chance we exited the couloir to gain the left ridge and softer snow. From there it was an easy walk to the summit and spectacular views. Total time to the summit was 3½ hours.

We descended by way of the gentler west-facing slopes north of the summit.

Here the snow was still powder, although an annoying ice layer made footing difficult on the upper slopes. We followed this slope down and then traversed back to the open area beneath the couloir. This would make a fine alternate ascent route. Both routes are visible from the highway. We followed our tracks back down to the car, arriving in 2 hours.

This is definitely a trip for stable snow conditions. Both routes have the potential for avalanches, and that ice layer will probably cause some problems later in the season.—Don and Ann Schaechtel, Seattle, 2/9.



KENDALL RIDGE ROAD

(*Wenatchee Natl Forest; USGS Snoqualmie Pass*)—The Kenworth Engineering Hike Club outing was snowshoeing on easy terrain by following the Kendall Ridge road 9090.

There was a good turnout with four KW engineers, George, Jack, Dan, Doug, a retiree (me), and three guests: George's friend Keith, and two ESAR buddies of Doug's, Seth and Jeff. We rendezvoused at Ken's Truck Stop and car-pooled up to Exit 54.

It was a great evening with a good layer of new snow and we had a great time. We found a lone ski planted at the side of the trail at about the 3800-foot level. (It was still there two weeks later when Goran and I went to Kendall Lakes.)

The floodlights for night skiing across the valley reflected down from the clouds and negated the need for headlamps. On the way back down we left the road and went crosscountry between the switchbacks. There was plenty of snow coverage and we felt comfortable that we wouldn't be damaging any plants.

This was a great experience and I highly recommend snowshoeing on this road at night when the ski areas are operating.—Fred Redman, Woodinville, 1/23.



MOUNT MARGARET

(*Wenatchee Natl Forest; USGS Stampede Pass, Chikamin Pk*)—Sunny and cold temps, around 10 degrees, made for bracing conditions.

Start at the end of the plowed road, past Gold Creek with the snowmachines. Despite the cold temperatures the road wasn't bad to ski, with skins anyway.

We made our way to just below the ridge crest. Wind and windcrusted snow made sections of that upper clear-cut difficult.

Out of wind, just in the big trees, and in the sun made for an incredible lunch

and lounge spot. Chit-chat with a view.

The best was yet to come. The cold had held that deep powder in perfect condition. The skiing down through the trees was heaven.—Dave N and Pete S, Tacoma, 1/26.



AMABALIS MOUNTAIN (Wenatchee Nail Forest; USGS

Kachess Lk)—Amabalis Mountain must have been the only place in the state it wasn't actually raining.

It was cloudy but not raining when Elaine Maxwell and I reached the Sno-Park. It was also very crowded as a race for youngsters was going on and there were clumps of young people everywhere. We bypassed the race zone and headed up the Amabalis Mountain road, rather surprised to be the first people to break trail on the road.

The snow was truly awful—ice and crust and avalanche danger high because of all the rain and the heavy snow pack. We took turns breaking trail and agreed to go only as far as we felt safe.

After we'd skied a couple of miles we saw a group of people catching up with us—it turned out to be John Witters, who leads a lot of trips for the Mountaineers, and his group.

Elaine and I continued to the end/beginning of the Amabalis Loop and skied left (west) a short way before agreeing we didn't like the looks of the slope above us. We turned around.

I felt like I was being shot out of a cannon and was surprised how much more control Elaine had going down than I did even though she was newer to skiing than me.

Well, her skis are shorter and wider and apparently that makes a great deal of difference. We continued down and I occasionally rocketed past her, doing my best to avoid a head-on collision with trees or other people coming up at the end of the switchbacks, but a couple of planned falls saved me and we were soon on more level ground.

We both did better than we expected and knew we had pulled one off when we got back to the parking lot just as it was starting to rain.—Karen Sykes, Seattle, 1/18.

ENCHANTMENTS—Reservations for the Enchantments area began February 24. Reservations are being provided by Reservations Northwest, which also operated the program in 1996.

You can make reservations up to six months in advance of your trip by calling Reservations Northwest at 888-953-7677. Hours of operation are 8am to 5pm Monday through Friday. Begin-

ning 5/1 until about Labor Day weekend, summer hours will extend to 8pm. Specific details of the reservation system are available on the Alpine Lakes Wilderness Hotline, 800-627-0062 (from Seattle call 775-9702). The quota permits for overnight use are required from 6/15 to 10/15.

Reservations Northwest has made a number of improvements that should make reservations easier this year. An increased number of operators, expanded hours, and a backup computer system are expected to prevent a backlog of incoming calls.

For those persons unable to obtain advance reservations, the Leavenworth Ranger Station will continue to offer permits for 25% of the daily quota on a lottery basis on the day-of-trip. The lottery drawing is held at 7:45am at the Ranger Station.

In addition to the Enchantment Lakes, other lakes in the permit area include Colchuck, Snow, Nada, Stuart,



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BACKCOUNTRY NEWS

REPORTS AND CONDITIONS

Eightmile and Caroline Lakes.—
Ranger, 2/18.

SCOTTISH LAKES—Weather this weekend is clear, with temperatures in the mid- to high-20s, and *11 feet of snow* on the ground!

We're open daily through April 27, and late-season rates take effect 3/30. Now that the holiday crunch is past, cabins are available with just a week or two notice, and reservations really open after 3/15.

Call for more information: 888-9HI-CAMP or 206-844-2000.—Don Hanson, Scottish Lakes, 2/23.

SOUTH CENTRAL



GENERAL CONDITIONS—Deep snow. Expect storm damage.

RIVER RUNNERS—The Green River is reported to have hundreds of floating trees and logs from the storms. Scout carefully.

MOUNT WASHINGTON AND "CHANGE MOUNTAIN" (*state and other land; USGS Chester Morse Lk*)—Twelve winter hikers from the ranks of Group Health Cooperative's physicians set forth with John Roper as leader to hike Mount Washington (4400 feet) and the peak to the east (4360 feet).

The day was cold and rather clear, although fog hung in the valleys as we drove to the trailhead off I-90 at Exit 38. After parking and loading up at the Olallie State Park trailhead (1200 feet), we headed up the trail, which was littered by fallen trees initially, later with snow-laden trees intruding on the path.

We carried snowshoes but never used them, due to the firm although sometimes slippery ice layer under the foot or so of new snow. Beautiful sights surrounded us, both of the distant and nearby peaks as well as of the hoarfrost-covered trees. We saw a few animal tracks, but no wildlife.

We followed the trail past some waterfalls to the Owl Hike Spot, then on up the valley on the east side of Washington Creek. Sometimes we sank thigh-deep in the snow near trees or bushes.

Nearing the end of the valley, we had a somewhat harrowing, short but steep climb up a 70-degree slope to reach the ridge between Washington and Change Creeks. We followed the snow-covered road up to the nearby 4360-foot peak which we dubbed Change Mountain, named for the creek to the east.

After lunch, we hiked back down to the ridge, and further followed the snow covered road southward to the Seattle Water District's boundary, overlooking Chester Morse Reservoir.

Turning westward, and after a mile or so, we left the road and ascended through the deep snow to "conquer" Mount Washington.

Our descent involved several delightful glissades, then tromping down the same trail to our automobiles. We glimpsed all day only three other hikers in the distance.

We covered about 14 miles round trip and gained 3000+ feet elevation. The day was superb, the goals worthy and attained, and the camaraderie excellent.—Don Potter, Bellevue, 1/26.

POO POO POINT; TIGER MOUNTAIN

(*Issaquah Alps; USGS Maple Valley, Hobart*)—The Kenworth Engineering Hike Club's goal for this afternoon's outing was to be Poo Poo Point on Tiger Mountain.

We parked at the small parking area close to the High School in Issaquah, just off the Issaquah-Hobart road.

The lower section of the trail was fine but we soon started running into masses of blowdowns, and had to leave the trail numerous times to get around large downed trees.

The gully where the bridge crosses the creek was a disaster with the bridge no longer usable. We turned right on West Tiger Railroad Grade. The trail gets a bit hard to follow after a while on the RR Grade but goes down the ridge to a trail intersection with signs. The trail you go down the ridge on has a sign that says 1 MILE TO ISSAQUAH HS.

The trail to Poo Poo Point is clearly marked. This last section of trail is a total disaster with the trail completely

blocked by masses of downed alders all the way to the Rest Area. The views from Poo Poo Point of Issaquah and the I-90 corridor are great.

It was dark for our return trip down the trail which made it *really* interesting. Watch out for the bats flying around the rest room at dusk!—Doug, Jack, George, Dan and Fred, 1/30.

RATTLESNAKE LEDGES

(*USGS North Bend*)—George, Jack, Don and I carpoled from Kenworth Engineering's Yarrow Bay offices to meet Don at the Rattlesnake Lake parking lot.

The trail was in excellent condition, dry for once with patches of ice in the higher elevations. It took us 50 minutes to get to the second ledge. We had to scramble out onto it, but the wind was fierce and cold without the shelter of the trees. We didn't linger long and carried on to the third ledge, which is not quite as "hair raising" to get out on.

The trip down was quick, and we didn't need to use our headlamps for once, which made for a lot of comments about how nice it will be when we have daylight until after 9pm.—Fred Redman, Woodinville, 2/6.

MOUNT CATHERINE

(*USGS Snoqualmie Pass, Lost Lk*)—Jeff, Ihab and I headed to Snoqualmie Pass for a winter scramble of Mount Catherine.

The morning air was clear, but very cold (15 degrees) as we left the Hyak Ski Area parking lot (2600 feet). We worked our way up the plowed road north of the ski area, passing cozy cabins, until we reached the edge of the ski area.

Since the lifts weren't running yet, we ascended a blue run, got on a cat-track and hiked to the west border of the ski area boundary. A fine view of Mount Catherine greeted us to the southwest. With good snow conditions, it appeared the east ridge would be the quickest route. However, the foot or so of dry, granular snow on top of the solid base made us opt for the more gentle west ridge.

We strapped on our snowshoes and followed next to a groomed cross-country ski trail. While crossing Mill Creek on a bridge, we were able to see the season's tremendous snowpack—at least 6 to 8 feet next to the creek.

Our route led toward a forested saddle northwest of Mount Catherine. After ¾-mile, at a small open area, we began climbing south to reach the west ridge. The slope rose quickly and the traction became slippery. Jeff removed

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his snowshoes and led farther up the steepening gully until it became a little dicey.

We decided to downclimb at this point and find a kinder, gentler slope farther west. We glissaded down the gully, traversed west another 1/4-mile and snowshoed upward on a moderately steep grade to reach the ridge. As we ascended the pleasant ridge, we passed through a symmetrical, almost orchard-like grove of trees. We continued for another 1/4-mile, with the last 100 feet to the top crossing wind-swept, hardened snow.

The summit (5052 feet) was an open platform that gave us great views of the immediate peaks north of us: Kaleetan, Snoqualmie, Red, Kendall, Rampart Ridge, and farther back, Chikamin. To the southwest was the imposing wall of the north face of Tinkham Peak. We guessed the air temperature to be 0 to 10 degrees, with a cold wind, so we did not dawdle or take a summit nap.

We followed our ascent route on the way down, glissading and plunge-stepping the steep parts. Mount Catherine would also be a good ski mountaineering trip—proof provided by a skier we passed close to the summit.

Eight miles and 2450 vertical feet. 5 1/4 hours up, 3 hours down.—Eric Keeler, Seattle, 1/25.



MOUNT CATHERINE

(USGS Snoqualmie Pass, Lost Lk)—This ski trip had a purpose. But what trip doesn't. Unfortunately, it was going to cost me. I picked up my lift pass at the ticket office at the Ski Acres cross-country center and rode up.

I skied the trails to Grand Junction, and then toward Hyak until I found the blue diamond. My purpose was to follow that trail of blue diamonds on the "common corridor" across the pay-to-ski trails to Nordic Pass.

After crossing the last of the groomed trails I was left with the essence of skiing. Me, new snow, quiet forest, and nothing mattering more than being there, right then.

My mind went back to the first time I had skied through here, before it was taken over by grooming machines.

All too soon I had traversed around the head of Mill Creek and was at Nordic Pass. I then followed the route up Mount Catherine until time ran out.

But that was but half the purpose. After returning to the first-mentioned diamond, I crossed the groomed trail and started to follow the diamonds south through more quiet forest past Hyak Lake and down until I came out on a powerline and the diamonds had

run out.

I had to make a decision. To the right the powerline swath went to Hyak and a walk back to the car. To the left a small climb and trails back to the Silver Fir chair and Ski Acres. To my dismay time again made the decision and I went left.

So in the end I had a wonderful ski through untracked snow and quiet forest, new memories to put with my old memories of a place so familiar but different.

In the end my original purpose was unfulfilled, that of finding the start of the elusive "common corridor," but so much more was gained that it doesn't matter. Well, not much.

I would still like to find the start of that trail and not have to pay to access that untracked snow and quiet forest.—The Postman, 1/24.



MEADOW CREEK ROAD

5483 (Wenatchee Natl Forest; USGS Stampede Pass, Lost Lk)—Goran and I drove to the Price Creek Snow Park. The morning was glorious and we looked forward to a great day of skiing, but as we approached the pass we could see we would be soon fogged in.

The temperature was about 20 as we got ready to ski and the fog made it feel colder. The trail was in reasonable condition but icy.

The plan was to go up road 5483 to the end of the groomed section on the King-Kittitas boundary. Crossing the Keechelus Lake dam the wind hit us and made the cold even worse. The groomed grooves on the dam were so frozen we opted to make our own tracks for better headway.

After 1 1/2 hours the fog started to burn

off and we could see blue sky, with wonderful views of Meadow Mountain.

After passing the intersection with road 5484 we stopped for lunch just before entering old growth trees. Beyond the trees the grooming ended and we were on very rough snowmobile tracks. Once we broke out of the forest into a large clearcut we realized that somehow we had goofed.

Making the most of the situation we worked our way up to the top edge of the clearcut before turning around and swooping down. We realized our error when we got down to road 5483; right at the Z bend at the 3500-foot elevation, we had failed to notice the sharp right turn and carried on straight, on a spur that goes up to the PCT.

It was a great day. Took us 3 1/2 hours in and 1 3/4 hours out.

We were passed by about ten snowmobiles during the day but they all showed great courtesy and slowed way down as they passed us.—Fred Redman, Woodinville, 2/7.



LOST LAKE / TWILIGHT

LAKE (Wenatchee Natl Forest; USGS Lost Lk)—Ole and I drove with Goran up to Price Creek Snow Park. Weather was not very promising, but at least the cloud cover was high. It was about 25 degrees at the pass and the downhill run to start the trip was chilling.

The section of trail to and across Keechelus Lake dam was incredibly icy. Once we on the Lost Lake road the snow was great, churned up by many snowmobiles over the weekend.

The fast pace up to Lost Lake had me dripping sweat, and down to two poly-layers and questioning my continued



John Roper (left front)

The laughing GHAS (Group Health Alpine Society) on "Change Mountain." Trip-report-writer Don Potter is fourth from right.

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insistence on a full survival pack of 25 pounds.

A quick snack at the lake, then we continued to follow road 5480 on the north side of Lost Lake. At the first spur on the left we turned and headed toward Twilight Lake. The lake is totally covered by snow, but we crossed the valley and somewhere crossed the PCT and picked up road 5044.

The road became a mass of snowmobile tracks, none seeming to go where we wanted, so we left them and headed up the ridge until we crested the ridge on the county border. By this time the sun was shining with a mostly blue sky.

Lunch on top of the ridge and a few photographs. The views from here are worth the effort. South sides of Tinkham and Silver, north side of Meadow and Mount Stuart to the northeast. We dropped from the ridge and picked up road 5483 for a quick run back down to the lake and the parking lot.

The run down was undulating high up, equivalent of ski moguls caused by snowmobiles. Total elevation gain for the day was 2100 feet and a time of 5½ hours. Ole said it was about 20 to 22 miles but it really didn't feel that far. Maybe I'm getting in better condition, only fell three times and two of those were on the ice near the dam.—Fred Redman, Woodinville, 2/10.



BUCK CREEK TOUR

(Baker-Snoqualmie Natl Forest; USGS Sun Top)—I met Jenni and Chuck and their children Sarah and Cole at the McDonalds in Enumclaw for a day of cross-country skiing. Jenni chose the Buck Creek tour mostly because it has a mild grade and she thought it would be a good choice for the kids. It was.

Sarah, who is now 10 years old, kept up with the grown-ups. She has mastered the sport. Both her coordination and maturity have increased to the point that she could go on a serious ski tour with Jenni and me.

Cole, age 5, held his own, trying to catch up with his mom and older sister. We skied uphill for about an hour and a half. Most of the way Cole was self-propelled. After he started getting tired, Chuck devised a rig in which he looped together Cole's two ski poles and attached them to his own backpack to pull Cole along. It worked pretty well.

After lunch the kids couldn't wait for the fun part—skiing downhill. Sarah did fabulously. Cole was a trooper. Jenni and Chuck did a combination of tricks to assist him on the downhill. These included having him ski between their legs; skiing between the two of

them with his poles held between them; and last with him lying on the back of Jenni's skis and holding onto her ankles after he'd decided to take his skis off and walk downhill. This definitely added to Jenni's workout.

The Buck Creek Tour is 10 miles round trip and gains 1800 feet. We estimated that we went about 3 miles round trip. The directions in the first edition of *Cross Country Ski Tours in Washington's South Cascades and Olympics* indicates that road 7160 is on the left. It is on the right. The correction was made in the second edition.—Jane Habegger, Olympia, 2/1.



MOUNT TAHOMA SKI TRAILS

(Gifford Pinchot Natl Forest; USGS Mt Wow)—February 4: Checked out route from road 59 Sno-Park to Copper Creek hut. Road to Sno-park bare to last ½ mile. Trails very icy, very little loose snow for controlled descent.

Round trip about 9 miles with 1000 foot or so elevation gain. Four hours including lunch. Need new snow.

February 8: Our party of six skied from the Sno-Park on road 59 to Copper Creek hut. No new snow but groomed preceding Wednesday. Very skiable. On return from hut took marked trail up south side of ridge instead of following road route we took

on way in. Most preferred the route on the south side. North side route icier and steeper.—Paul Schaufler, Olympia.



REFLECTION LAKES

(Rainier Natl Park; USGS Mt Rainier East)—Bill and I stayed at Longmire for a night for my birthday and got in a little skiing at Mount Rainier. On Saturday we skied down the Paradise Valley road toward Reflection Lakes.

The snow was great and there was lots of it! It was raining, though, and we got pretty wet. We tried to spread out our wet gear in our room that night but found it a little bit too small to be able to get all of our things dry by the next day.

On Sunday we awoke to find it had been snowing very wet snow all night and because of high avalanche danger the Park Service elected not to open the road to Paradise past the Cougar Rock Campground.

We headed down to the West Side Road to see if we could ski on it. We hiked a bit of the road to try to get up high enough to ski and snowshoe. We did not have a lot of success so we decided to try someplace else.

After a little diversion in which our car got stuck in deep soft snow, I skied and Bill snowshoed one of the side roads off the main road up to the trailhead to High Rock Lookout.—Jane Habegger, Olympia, 11/30-12/1.



MAZAMA RIDGE

(Mt Rainier Natl Park; USGS Mt Rainier East)—Once again it was time for Troop 70 to build snow caves and spend the night in them. We chose Mazama Ridge at Mount Rainier because we've been there many times before and there's always plenty of snow. As for running into crowds, people are not exactly fighting each other for space to build snow caves on Mazama Ridge in February.

There were three adults (John, Dave and myself) and seven Scouts, including Willie who always seems to have some unusual incident on every outing. The weather was favorable as we set out in the Happy Car and a new-used Jeep (it hasn't been named yet). The road to Paradise was snowfree all the way to the top, always a relief.

We put on our packs and started down the road to Reflection Lakes. The snow was very hard but it's still easier to get about with snowshoes so we put them on immediately. As always I was amazed at Duncan (the smallest boy in the troop) who is very strong and energetic, managing a



Jane Habegger

Sarah and Jenni Creveling ski up Buck Creek, off Highway 410.

pack much bigger than he is.

We snowshoed down to the bridge and began our ascent of Mazama Ridge. We saw a few other people heading up the ridge with tents so we weren't totally alone. We were pretty sure we'd be the only people building snow caves.

John, as usual, picked the steepest, scariest snow slope imaginable for our cave—the boys picked gentler slopes. As John and Dave began to dig the interior of our cave, I built a walk-way from the ridge to our domicile wide enough for us to walk with our snowshoes and packs.

The snow was good for building—the men worked the inside and I shoveled the snow out of the doorway and down the slope (much easier than what they were doing). Incidentally, we wear rubber glacier gloves over liner gloves—a perfect combo for working in snow.

Four hours later our home was ready to move into. John and Dave had perfected a 7x10-foot room, 4½ feet tall and even squared off at the corners. There was plenty of room for the three of us, plus our packs, and we had the luxury of being able to cook inside (we added a couple of ceiling holes for ventilation).

We were very tired but before we could set up our gear, Devon and Chris came over to our cave to say they needed some help. John and Dave went off to help them finish their cave. Then

Willie came along and said they needed help finishing their cave, but John's response now was "Just keep digging."

The boys kept digging and eventually the caves were (barely) roomy enough for all the boys.

Dinner was a luxury inside the cave—we had candles stuck in the wall and it was very cozy. We leaned back against our packs as if we were sunning at the Riviera and thoroughly enjoyed our meal.

Just as we finished, Devon and Chris turned up to tell us their stove wasn't working. John got it going for them. We were tucked in and ready for sleep by 7:30pm. We all slept well and were rested by morning.

The morning was especially cold and windy and becoming overcast. Dave mentioned there were a few small slices of blue in the sky but the clouds were winning the battle. We enjoyed breakfast in bed before tackling the battle of getting our gear together for our departure.

It was so cold that nobody wanted to stay on the ridge any longer than necessary. John and I started out, Dave brought up the rear and we descended the ridge to the road at our own paces. John and I got to the cars first, changed clothes and waited for the boys.

Shaun and Matt, the older boys, were the first to appear. We waited quite a while for Willie and Dave. Finally we saw them hiking toward the cars and as

my dad used to say, Willie's lip was so long he could have tripped over it. He was the picture of sorrow.

It turns out he had tumbled coming off the ridge and in the process actually lost a snowshoe. He and Dave spent 40 minutes looking for it but the snowshoe never materialized.

If you find a single Sherpa snowshoe somewhere on or near Mazama Ridge please contact *Pack & Paddle* and we will get in touch with you.—Karen Sykes, Seattle, 2/8-9.



MOUNT TAHOMA TRAILS

—This weekend is gorgeous, with good skiing out of the 59 and 92 roads. It seems whenever the weather warms, the snow melts right out at

CLASSIFIED ADS

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BULLETIN BOARD

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

WANTED—Atomic Leader skis in good or better condition. 200 or 205cm. Chuck Gustafson, 206-367-0112 (Seattle).

FOR RENT—50-year-old log cabin, fireplace, loft, indoor plumbing. At Mount Rainier, Nisqually side. \$150 month annual basis.

Write "Cabin," 2919 71st SE, Mercer Island WA 98040.

FOR SALE—Men's Merrell "Ultra" mountaineering 3-pin ski boots, leather, size 9½ med; hardly used, exc condition, \$140 OBO. Phone 206-488-3441 (Kirkland).

FOR SALE—Prijon T-Canyon whitewater kayak with accessories. Excellent condition. \$500.

Koflach Ultra climbing boots, double, plastic, size 13½, excellent condition. \$130.

Phone 360-794-9821 (Monroe).

FOR SALE—Solomon SX61 downhill ski boots, color red. Men's size 7½. \$25.

Joe or Kathy, 360-871-0291 (Port Orchard).

FOR SALE—Thule rack with Adventurer box combo, excellent condition. Box used only once. \$325. 360-331-6114.

LOST—A single Sherpa snowshoe, near Mazama Ridge. Troop 7D would sure like to get it back. Call *Pack & Paddle* office, 360-871-1862, to return.

HIKING PARTNER—Mountain girl, 42, seeks male companion for hiking, skiing. Mt Rainier, South Cascades & Olympics are my haunts. Jo, 360-264-2128.

HIKING PARTNER—I want to dayhike the Appalachian Trail from 4/20 to 5/20.

I plan to try to average as close to 25 miles per day as possible for 30 days. Daily hikes would be planned for 20 to 30 miles depending on road access.

To make this work I need a partner either to shuttle a car, or to do a key exchange with two cars.

I am 48 and have nearly completed the PCT. My longest day hike is 38 miles. If you're interested, please call Linda, 360-866-3947 (Olympia).

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

WASHINGTON SKI TOURING CLUB—Meets first Thursday of each month, November through April, at Phinney Neighborhood Center, 6615 Dayton Ave North in Seattle, at 7:30pm. **HOTLINE** for more information: 206-525-4451.

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

BACKCOUNTRY NEWS

REPORTS AND CONDITIONS

Sno-Park 1, so there is about a mile of walking before you get to good snow there.

There's a couple of feet of snow at the Copper Creek Hut, and conditions at the Snow Bowl are great. Call 360-569-2451 for information on the trail system and huts.—2/23.



GENERAL CONDITIONS—Deep snow. Expect storm damage.

RIVER RUNNERS—The North Fork Washougal is reported to have many floating logs and trees from the storms, and many new log jams and strainers. Scout carefully.

GIFFORD PINCHOT NATL FOREST—On the Mount Adams and Wind River Districts, the weather has prevented opening some Sno-Parks, and for those Sno-Parks that are open, conditions can be less than ideal.

There is no access to Oldman Pass or Lone Butte, due to the Wind River Highway not being plowed above the Carson Fish Hatchery. Alternate areas below the hatchery do not require Sno-Park permits, but these areas are not groomed and parking is limited.

At the Volcanic Monument, snow is covering the area, creating beautiful views from the Visitor Centers. Highway 504 is plowed as well as the roads leading to the Sno-Parks.

On the Randle District, the Burley Mountain Lookout is available for rental. Call the Randle office at 360-497-1100.—Ranger, 2/19.

MOUNT SAINT HELENS NVM—As one of ten Forest Service sites in the Pacific Northwest, Mount Saint Helens NVM is collecting user fees as part of a Congressional pilot program.

Unlike National Parks, where an entry fee is charged, we are collecting fees at popular sites which require substantial maintenance and staffing. These are true user fees. Other activities on the monument, such as hiking and sight-seeing, remain free.

Without this pilot fee program, we would have had to close at least one of

our visitor centers and curtail other recreational opportunities. Over the past 7 years, visitation has increased 230% here.

Beginning 3/1, a Monument Pass will be required at the following developed recreation sites:

Mount Saint Helens Visitor Center
Coldwater Ridge Visitor Center
Coldwater Lake Recreation Area
Loowit Viewpoint
Johnston Ridge Observatory (scheduled to open 5/17)
Road 99 Viewpoints:
Windy Ridge Interpretive Site
Smith Creek Viewpoint/Picnic
Donnybrook Viewpoint
Cedar Creek Viewpoint
Harmony Creek Viewpoint
Meta Lake Interpretive Site
Miner's Car Interpretive Site
Road 99 Entry and Viewpoint
Bear Meadows Viewpoint/Picnic
Ape Cave
Lava Canyon Recreation Area
Lahar Viewpoint

The Monument Pass is a *per person* charge and is good for up to three days. Costs are:

\$8 regular pass: ages 16 and over
\$4 discount pass: Golden Age/
Golden Access Passport holders
\$24 annual pass: ages 16 and over
\$12 discount annual pass: Golden Age/
Golden Access Passport holders

Beginning 2/1, a user fee was put into place for the mandatory climbing permit on Mount Saint Helens. The Climbing Permit is a *per person* charge and is valid for 24 hours, starting at midnight of the day of use. Costs are:

\$15: 24-hour permit, all ages, no discounts
\$30: annual pass, all ages, no discounts

Sale of the climbing permits is handled by Jack's Restaurant and Store, 5 miles west of Cougar on Highway 503.

Other aspects of the Climbing Permit program remain the same. A quota season limiting the number of climbers to 100 per day is in effect from 5/15 to 10/31. Up to 60 permits per day are available through advance reservation. The remaining 40 unreserved permits are distributed by a lottery each day at 6pm at Jack's for climbers wishing to climb the following day.

The Mount Margaret Backcountry trails and facilities are scheduled to open in late 1997. Once the Mount Margaret Backcountry Management Plan is implemented, overnight camping will be by permit only and restricted to designated sites.

As part of the fee program, a user fee

will be charged for each camping permit. The camping permit is a \$10 *per site, per night* charge. The program is still under development and we'll release more details as the date for the opening approaches.—Lynn Roberts, Monument Manager, 2/18.



FLYING L RANCH—

There's still plenty of snow at the Sno-Parks above Trout Lake. We have a couple of feet of snow still here at the ranch, but it's getting a little patchy. You can find good snow only about 3 or 4 miles away from the ranch, though. Conditions are good, with cold temperatures at night, warming during the day.

Here in Glenwood there's plenty of parking available, and no Sno-Park permits are required. We've got good ski maps of the area that we'd be happy to give to anyone who wants to stop by.

Call us also if you want current conditions about skiing in the area, or information about accommodations: 509-364-3488.—Darvel Lloyd, Flying L Ranch, Glenwood, 2/23.

OREGON



SADDLE MOUNTAIN

(*Coast Range*)—The turnoff from Highway 26 to the trailhead to this hike is located about 20 miles east of Cannon Beach where we were staying for the weekend. The road to the trailhead is about 7 miles long. This hike is 6 miles round trip and gains 1600 feet in elevation.

There is evidence of 1995-96 winter and spring storm damage on this trail in a number of places, with trail wash-outs and detours. Rebar and hand holds have been added where needed.

We hiked to the top of Saddle Mountain and found one of the clearest days yet on this hike. We enjoyed the views of Mounts Rainier, Adams and Saint Helens and of the Oregon and Washington coastlines, Astoria and the mouth of the Columbia River.—Janc Habegger, Olympia, 11/10.

EAGLE CREEK (*Columbia Gorge*)—

The campground was not washed out, as the report in P&P intimated last month. It will be open this season once it is cleaned up. The flood did wash out the suspension bridge and part of the road.—Ranger, 1/21.

DEBORAH RIEHL

Rescue Epics

—THE RETURN OF A KILLER—

This winter has seen a return to snowfall totals more typical of 25 to 30 years ago—and consequent avalanche activity. Hazards will remain well into spring and early summer. Let this be a cautionary tale.

Two 19-year-old men disappeared a few days before Christmas 1996 while on a winter camping trip and climb of the infamous Chair Peak near Snoqualmie Pass.

Foul weather and extreme avalanche hazard prevented extensive air and ground searches. Both young men had outdoor experience and one had some search and rescue training. They were too young, however, to remember a winter like this one.

Early in the morning on Christmas Eve a small team of Ski Patrol Rescue Team members snowshoed in to the Source Lake area to look for clues and assess the avalanche hazard. Two slides that came down as they paused to eat convinced them this wasn't the day to be there.

Christmas Day dawned sunny but with several more days of bad weather forecast to arrive around midnight. I listened with foreboding to the weather radio on the way to my youngest brother's house for the family gift-opening.

Sure enough, in the midst of the gathering, the pager went off. A few phone calls, a few pages, and while the troops were assembling, we finished the presents.

There was a snowcat trail about a mile in toward Source Lake from the day before. Snow conditions were an ice crust that would *almost* support your weight from previous freezing rain, sealing in two feet of fluff over another ice crust, over "air."

The first three teams dispatched were a mixed group of SPART, Mountain Rescue, Alpentel professional ski patrollers, snow specialists and Explorer

Search and Rescue Scouts.

King County's Guardian I helicopter flew over the search area with Eric of SPART as a spotter.

In the basin on the ridge above Source Lake, the helicopter sighted a yellow tent partially buried and collapsed by snowfall. The tent fit the description of the subjects' tent. It was too windy to land. Tracks left the tent and went about 500 feet to an avalanche chute which is the usual ascent/descent route.

The teams on snowshoes struggled to get as close as possible. Finally in the early afternoon the winds abated enough for Guardian I to fly Bob Hornbein (yes, he's Tom's son) of the Alpentel pro patrol into the basin.

Bob confirmed the tent was empty and then followed the tracks to where they ended in the chute. The chute was choked with avalanche debris. He listened with his avalanche transceiver—and heard two faint signals.

After a quick beacon search Bob began digging and soon found an ice axe. Three other searchers soon joined him.

At 3:47pm the sad news was received at base confirming the find of two bodies. "Merry darn Christmas," muttered a saddened radio operator.

Guardian II (a larger helicopter) was requested to short-haul the bodies out but wasn't available. The winds were rising again.

The bodies were placed in sleeping bags to be laboriously dragged down the mountainside by the team of four until they could meet up with the other teams.

A ground team finally made it to the tent. The next team up found their tracks covered by fresh avalanche debris. The teams in the field requested more help. Another small team was dispatched by snowcat. Litters made moving the victims easier.

The sheriff called the Red Cross to bring up hot food for the weary teams.

The Medical Examiner was summoned. By 10pm everyone was out of the field.

One SPART member, Pete, showed me his shins battered by repeatedly breaking through the snow crust.

Postscript: The two young men died of suffocation though they were buried only two to four feet deep.

They were entombed in snow that set up like concrete as soon as it stopped moving.

Here is some advice:

- Local ski patrols are familiar with the snow conditions near their areas. Talk to them.
- If you're new to backcountry winter travel, go with an experienced, cautious leader.
- Outdoor clubs and stores often have avalanche awareness and winter travel courses. Educate yourself.
- Learn how to use a beacon and wear it. Although expensive to buy, beacons can be rented from many outdoor shops. Taking one of the above-mentioned classes can help you use one efficiently to locate a buried companion.
- A beacon is of little use, however, if you and your party aren't carrying shovels.
- Time is of the essence when searching for avalanche victims. Don't abandon a buried victim to "go for help" unless your group is large enough to do both. Search now!
- The avalanche hotline is 206-526-6677 for the Washington Cascades and Olympics, and 503-326-2400 for the Oregon Cascades and southern Washington.

△

Debby Riehl, of North Creek, is a member of the board of directors of the Ski Patrol Rescue Team.

ANN MARSHALL

Prater Snowshoes

—HAND-CRAFTED IN ELLENSBURG—

Perhaps some cosmic anomaly has sparked the current snowshoe craze. You've seen the blitz—magazine articles, eye-catching advertisements, snowshoe-specific clothing, stories by local outdoor writers, and maybe even testimonials by your non-skiing friends.

I admit to becoming a player in the snowshoe game this year. But for me the spark was the desire to find an alternate method of winter travel besides cross-country skis.

Struggling through Cascade concrete and plummeting down sheets of ice on skis have lost their appeal. I now plan ski trips around new, dry snowfall, spring skiing on corn snow, and groomed runs.

But with typical Northwest winter weather, that still leaves too many days with the cross-country skis hanging on the wall. Snowshoeing is a perfect alternative, especially since I already have a pair of hand-made Prater snowshoes about 15 years old.

To become more proficient in this type of winter travel, Lee and I enrolled

in The Mountaineers' Winter Travel/Snowshoe course. The course provides an introduction to safe winter travel as well as the specifics of snowshoeing.

(Many other clubs, outdoor stores and community recreation programs offer some kind of winter travel instruction and/or snowshoe outings.)

On each of the outings and field trips I went on during the class, people looked curiously at my snowshoes.

"What kind of snowshoes are those?" they would ask.

That was the perfect opening for me to explain that they were made by Gene Prater, and that his son Eric Prater is still making them.

PRATER NAME

The Prater name holds a special place in the history of snowshoeing in the northwest. Back in 1969 Gene wrote *Snowshoe Hikes in the Cascades and Olympics*. It was the first winter-travel guide for this area, and in the mid-'70s he followed it with *Snow Trails*, another guidebook, and

Snowshoeing, an equipment and technique textbook that is still in print today, in its third edition.

The basis for his books was years of travel on snowshoes, starting when he was about 12. He and his brother Bill grew up on the family farm in Ellensburg. Bill made his way to Puget Sound and Boeing, but Gene became an alfalfa farmer and stayed in Ellensburg on the family land.

Although the farming lifestyle restricted his free time so he never became a world-traveling expedition mountaineer, he nevertheless climbed and snowshoed all over the Northwest.

THE SHERPA CONNECTION

In the late '50s, Gene began experimenting with snowshoe design. About 10 years later, he produced a snowshoe with an aluminum frame and a narrow width, excellent for climbing. He liked this style very much and loaned them to Bill, who liked them too. This became the prototype of the design that Bill Prater used a few years later to start his business, Sherpa Snowshoes.

The name "Sherpa" comes from the east-slope Sherpa Climbing Club in which both Prater brothers were active.

In the early '70s, Bill was laid off during the Boeing depression. He was also a snowshoe tinkerer who had been experimenting with bindings and construction methods for years. He and his wife Barbara thought the lay-off was a good opportunity to start their own business, and Sherpa Snowshoes took off.

Bill eventually sold Sherpa Snowshoes. The company is now based in Burlington, Wisconsin.

PRATER SNOWSHOES

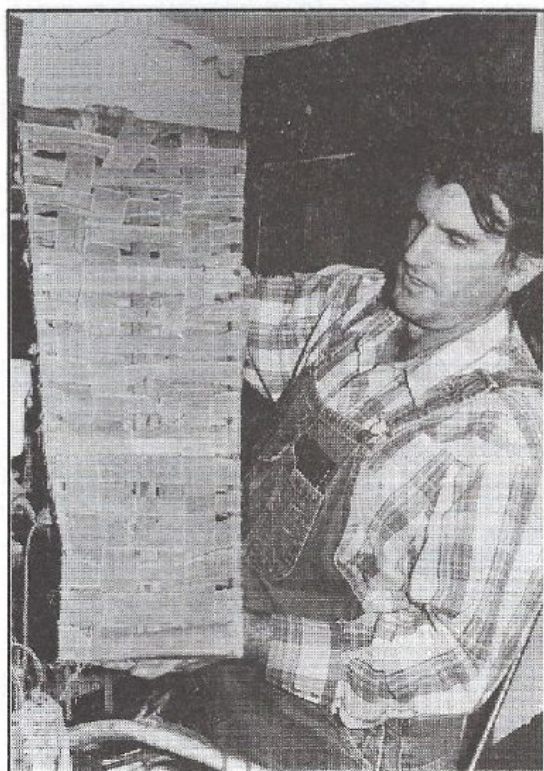
About the time Sherpa Snowshoes was sold, Gene decided to make his own snowshoes available commercially. In the late '70s he began marketing Prater Snowshoes.

His workshop was a small farm building, where he handcrafted each pair from patterns drawn on the wall.



Eric Prater, left, works on a snowshoe, with friend Neil Sautter helping with the assembly process.

Lee McKee



In his "snowshoe museum," Eric has some strange and wonderful examples of snowshoes.

But in February 1993 Gene died of cancer; he was 64. For a couple of years Prater Snowshoes were simply unavailable.

Until ... two years ago a small notice showed up in *The Mountaineer*. HAND-CRAFTED MOUNTAINEERING PRATER SNOWSHOES, it read. FREE CATALOG.

Then Carolyn Price in *Sports Etc* ran a story about Gene's son Eric—he was making snowshoes!

Eric has followed in his father's footsteps in more ways than snowshoeing. He too is a farmer, raising organic vegetables on part of the same piece of land that has been in the Prater family since 1893.

In the winter, the "off-season" for a farmer, Eric has decided to pick up Gene's snowshoe-making business. He is using Gene's measurements, patterns, and tools, but has made a few changes, and will be making some more.

Eric grew up snowshoeing and making snowshoes with his father. He says some parts of the construction process remain because he's "always done it that way."

For example, some snowshoe manufacturers use rivets to hold the decking material to the frame. Riveting is faster, but Prater Snowshoes have always been

laced. Lacing is more difficult and time intensive, agrees Eric, but the look of the lacing is pleasing, and he thinks easier to repair in the field.

All Prater Snowshoes come with standard toe crampons. Eric thinks that heel crampons are a valuable safety feature, however, and he plans to start adding them as well.

He can provide a heel crampon kit to be added to existing Prater Snowshoes. If you don't want to do it yourself, he can do it for you. (Contact him for prices.)

My old snowshoes do not have a left or right, but newer Praters do. The binding is slightly offset to reduce fatigue. This is now standard on all Prater models.

Starting from scratch, it takes Eric a full day to make a pair of snowshoes. With his friend Neil Sautter helping by assembling the various parts, the process can go

somewhat faster. (Neil has been making snowshoes a long time, too—he got his start by helping Gene.)

Even though each set is hand-crafted, orders are filled within a week.

Prices are reasonable. They range from \$150 to \$260, including bindings, with the 8x26-inch "Ellensburg" model that I have being \$220, a middle-of-the-road price—you might even consider it a bargain for a made-in-Washington, hand-crafted product.

Want to try a pair? Give Eric a call. He'll provide you with "loaners" for a day of "test-driving."

ICE AXE BASKETS

An ice axe basket is a removable disk that turns an ice axe into a ski pole. Baskets used to be common. Now they have been replaced by fancy trekking poles. I like my ice axe and was reluctant to give it up, so when I heard, in the snowshoe class, that Eric Prater was probably the only person in the universe still making ice axe baskets, I knew I had to have one.

I called Eric to find out how to order a basket. Because of all the various sizes and styles of ice axes these days, he said to send him my ice axe and he would make one to fit.

It took about a month, and cost \$35 (the price can vary according to the style of your axe). Add another \$10 for shipping it back, and you have a pricy ice axe basket, almost the cost of a pair of trekking poles! But it's handmade, unique and very useful—and it lets me continue using my ice axe.

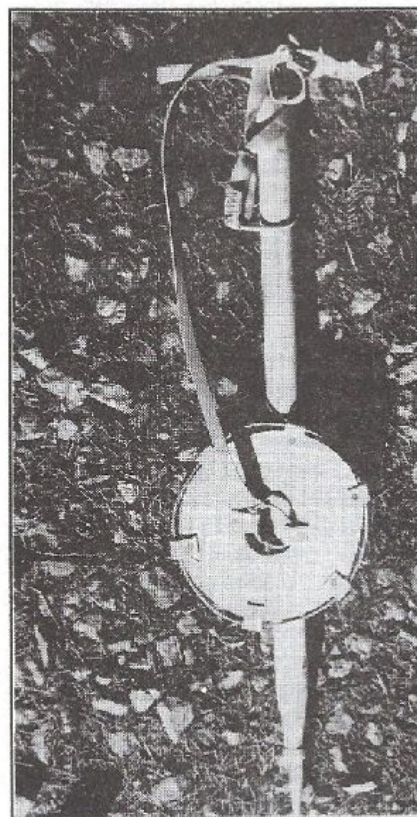
Snowshoes do provide the alternative I have been looking for in winter. They make travel on ice, in breakable crust, or deep concrete possible when I don't want to venture out on skis.

And if you're looking for a local, down-to-earth touch in the glitzy new snowshoe world, check out Prater Snowshoes.

For a free catalog, contact
Prater Snowshoes
3740 Cove Road
Ellensburg WA 98926
phone and fax: 509-925-1212
email: eprater@televar.com

△

Ann Marshall, of Port Orchard, is the editor of Pack & Paddle.



A hand-crafted ice axe basket, ready to slip on the axe.

Lee McKee

CHUCK GUSTAFSON

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More Wilderness Ski Expeditions

—ACCESSIBLE AND INEXPENSIVE—

Almost every year I organize one or more mini ski expeditions. The goals of these trips are to: get away from civilization, ski new terrain, enjoy the mountain scenery, minimize time spent carrying an overnight pack, and enjoy a manageable amount of adventure.

In 1992 I reported on trips to Horse-shoe Basin and Spanish Camp. (See *Pack & Paddle*, March 1992, page 11.) Here are two more trips taken in 1995 that fit these criteria. As with the earlier trips, these mini-expeditions are low cost (assuming you already own the gear, both trips are no more expensive than staying home), and both are only a day's drive from Seattle.

1. INDIAN HEAVEN WILDERNESS

MAPS & GUIDES

USGS Gifford Peak; Little Huckleberry Mountain; Lone Butte; Sleeping Beauty

100 Hikes in the South Cascades & Olympics, 2nd edition, #54: Lake Wapiki. #55: Indian Heaven Loop. #56: Racetrack.

Cross-Country Ski Routes in Oregon, 2nd edition, Upper Wind River, Chapter 2.

TIME OF YEAR

I prefer snow camping from the middle of March through the end of April. At this time of year the days are at least as long as the nights, the temperatures are warmer and the snow pack is usually close to its maximum. I also prefer to ski most of the trip, versus hiking in mud to the snow line. After many years of strange winter weather, however, I am starting to lose my confidence in predicting when the snow pack may be at its best.

Bob Green and I started this trip on March 25, after a long, warm dry period that ended with another taste of winter (big dump and freezing levels below 1000 feet). We had fresh snow at the Sno-park and more than enough at

our camp.

Skiing out on the last day, however, after two days of warm weather, was marginal for the last few miles of road. One more day of melting would have meant several miles of walking. I would suggest scheduling this trip from late February through March.

DRIVING

It is 235 miles and 5 hours of driving on very good roads to the Lone Butte Sno-Park. Drive I-5 to the Columbia River, then take Highway 14 east to Carson. Dee's Diner in Stevenson has good cheap meals to stoke your metabolism.

Drive north on Highway 30 to the Lone Butte Sno-Park. This is a fancy new Sno-park with paving, sani-cans and even a warming hut.

[Ed. Note: Skamania County is not plowing Highway 30 this year beyond the fish hatchery, still some 15 miles from Lone Butte Sno-Park. Save this trip for late spring, when the snow has melted, or wait until the county again



Skiing in to Indian Heaven: "Chuck, are you sure your compass bearing is correct?"

has funding to plow the road.]

If Road 51 is snow free (this road is not plowed), drive back past the Swift Reservoir, a very scenic drive.

DIFFICULTY

This is a relatively easy ski trip, but requires good skill (and concentration) with map and compass. The approach is on snowmobile-packed roads to the edge of the Wilderness.

Then it's through the trees, continuously referring to map and compass with few viewpoints for surveying the route. An altimeter is also helpful. Distance into the first lake is 7 to 8 miles and 1800 feet of elevation. The terrain is much more complex than it appears on the topo, but most difficulties can be circumvented. Our most difficult skiing was on East Crater, which was heavily tread with slope angles exceeding 45 degrees in sections.

A skier with strong touring skills and heavy duty boots could enjoy this trip. Telemark skiing ability, while helpful on some of the steep sections, is generally not needed on this trip.

RISKS

Avalanche risk on this trip is minimal for the Cascades. The approach to the lakes has almost no avalanche risk. Short avalanche slopes are scattered throughout the Wilderness, but most of these can be avoided. Larger avalanche slopes are found on Lemei Rock, Bird Mountain and East Crater. In an emergency you are within a half to a full day's ski from an active Sno-park.

ROUTE

Get your wilderness permit by mail, since the trailhead permit boxes will probably be buried. Park at the Lone Butte Sno-Park, 3200 feet. Take the right fork east (road 30) about 1.5+ miles to another fork. This road is heavily traveled by snowmobiles.

The preferred route (not the route we took going in) is to turn right (south) at the fork on road 65. Ski about 1.5 miles

Chuck Gustafson



Chuck Gustafson

Our camp in the meadow near Elk Lake.

to a bridge over Rush Creek. Cross the creek and turn left or east into the trees. Follow this drainage for 2 or 3 cross-country miles in medium open forest to the area of Elk Lake and Lemei Lake. Camp in meadows near a lake. This was the route we used to ski out.

We managed to make our inbound route more adventuresome. At 3600 feet I discovered that I had left the tent and sleeping pads in the truck. I skied back to retrieve them, while Bob relaxed and worked at reducing his food supply.

After continuing, we turned left, or north, on road 65 instead of following our original plan to ski up the Rush Creek drainage (a mistake). Then we skied about .5-mile to a small pass east of Lone Butte.

From here we skied east about 1 mile on road 420 (snowmobile tracked) to the Placid Lake trailhead. Trail breaking from here was very difficult and within 100 yards we had lost the trail.

We finally reached Placid Lake (I think by accident) and then skied on a bearing of 142 degrees toward Elk Lake. This was a long hard uphill slog in open forest with many detours around terrain features which made us unsure of the accuracy of our bearing.

At 6pm we were wet, tired and losing our light, but had not found our lakes. Finally at 4700 feet we skied into a large clearing which we declared to be a lake. We carefully calculated the best spot for morning sun and pitched camp.

Awakening to heavy frost we noticed that we were still in the shade. In fact, the sun didn't hit our tent until 11am—we had camped in the shadiest spot.

We were in a meadow 5 minutes from Elk Lake. This turned out to be fortuitous, since we had several days of very high east winds that would have made a camp on the lakes unbearable.

On day two we skied a loop to Bear Lake, Lemei Lake, Clear Lake and Deer Lake. That evening we skied to Elk Lake and took a starlight tour.

We skied to the west rim of East Crater at 5240 feet on the third day. The views from the rim include Mounts Jefferson, Hood, Adams, St. Helens, Lemei Rock and Gifford Peak. We made a loop from the rim by skiing down the west slopes of the crater in verry steeep trees and then traversing north. To our amazement we arrived exactly at our lunch spot (no, really—this was just good navigation.)

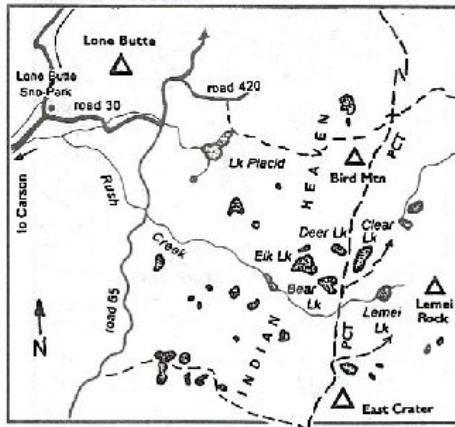
On day four we skied clockwise to Deer Lake and Clear Lake using Sunday's tracks. Our goal was the summit of Bird Mountain, but because of winds gusting to 50 mph and fatigue we aborted and skied to the meadows east of Lemei Lake.

After a long break we continued, finally reaching 5300 feet on the north ridge of Lemei Rock. Surprisingly we topped out in gentle meadows at the highest safe spot on the north ridge. From the meadows we had good views. Skiing to the summit of Lemei Rock would be almost impossible and it would rate as a winter scramble or climb.

SUMMARY

This is a very accessible trip. The skiing is advanced touring, but it is not macho. The area is idyllic with skiable forest, lakes and meadows. It is surprisingly rugged between contour lines.

One negative is the constant air traffic overhead, as the area is in the north-south flight path and the Portland landing pattern. This interfered with our wilderness experience, but was masked by several days of windy weather. We skied a mellow 36 miles and 4700 feet in 5 days (4 nights), but a more energetic party could certainly add more



miles by skiing Bird Mountain, to the Indian Race Tracks, and to more lakes.

2. WILLIAM O. DOUGLAS WILDERNESS, WHITE PASS

MAPS & GUIDES

USGS Spiral Butte; White Pass
Green Trails 303 White Pass
Cross Country Ski Tours 2, #69: Sand Lake
100 Hikes in the South Cascades & Olympics, 2nd edition, #20: Tumac Mountain / Twin Sisters Lakes. #24: Indian Creek / Blankenship Lakes. #25: Sand & Dumbbell Lakes

TIME OF YEAR

Our trip was from April 12 to 16, but it could be done anytime from December through early May, depending upon the snowpack and avalanche conditions. To really enjoy the area I would suggest late February through April when the days are longer.

DRIVING

From Seattle to White Pass on Highway 12 is 150 miles. Our driving time was 4.5 hours including a breakfast stop at the Wagon Wheel in Morton. The official overnight parking lot is just west of the Nordic Center and the White Pass Village Inn on the north side of Highway 12.

DIFFICULTY

This trip is of moderate difficulty with only 1500 feet elevation gain and 7.5 miles into the area of lakes and meadows north of White Pass.

Steep areas on the approach include the traverse of the ridge north of Sand Lake and the drop from the saddle to Buesch Lake. Losing the PCT (easily done) can get you into much more rugged terrain.

There are Telemark possibilities on Tumac and Cramer Mountains and on the ridge north of Twin Sisters Lakes, but basically this is a tour. On my first snow camping trip here in 1978 I used light touring equipment and lacked skins and beacon. On the 1995 trip I used heavy leather boots, metal edged backcountry skis, skins and a beacon. An advanced (or even a gutsy intermediate) touring skier in good physical condition could enjoy this trip.

We had very stormy weather for the first 3 days (we delayed our start one day, staying at the White Pass Inn to wait for a weather improvement). On

our approach day we had high winds, heavy snow (12" of new in about 24 hours) and temperatures in the mid-20s.

The snow was some of the best of the season; however, it made route finding difficult and the approach cold and exhausting. Trail breaking was hard. We had high avalanche conditions, due to all the new snow and wind, and later in the trip, from rapidly warming temperatures. This changed our routing and eliminated several destinations for tours.

RISKS

This is a moderate risk trip. There are some avalanche slopes on the approach, particularly if you get off route as we did. Navigation is mostly by map and compass with frequent referral to compass bearings.

We saw no other skiers until we reached Deer Lake on the return. During the height of the ski season you will probably encounter numerous day skiers until past Sand Lake, as well as snow campers at Sand Lake and at the lakes north of Cramer Mountain. This would be helpful in an emergency.

In any case, unless the trail breaking was difficult, you are never more than a half to a full day of skiing from help at White Pass.

ROUTE

Leave the White Pass Nordic Center parking lot at 4400 feet and ski around the south side of Leech Lake on the White Pass track system (north side has avalanche chute). At about .5-mile on the northeast corner of Leech Lake, find the PCT trailhead and fill out a Wilderness Permit.

During the peak ski season the PCT is easy to follow, with a heavily tracked trench from many skiers. If it has snowed recently, is midweek or early or late in the season, this trench may be very hard to follow.

The PCT markers are few, white and generally buried by the deep snowpack, so don't plan on seeing them after the first several miles. Navigation is by constant reference to map and compass, with some assistance from the altimeter.

The correct route is to Deer Lake, then Sand Lake and then along the PCT across a bench on the east side of the ridge to a saddle west of Cramer Mountain.

On the 1978 trip, Fay Pullen, our



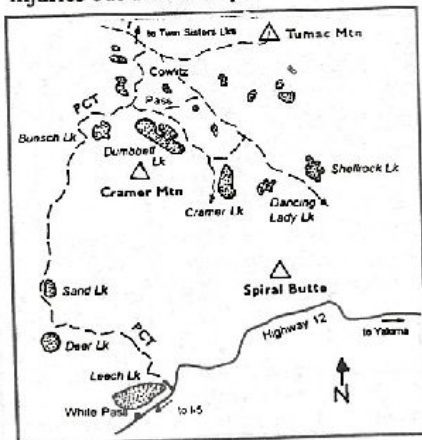
In camp, Hans, Walt and Brent plan the day's tour.

leader, followed the PCT like an arrow. In 1995 we lost the PCT at Deer Lake and traversed the ridge too low. The terrain got very rugged and steep with blizzing drifts and bottomless tree wells.

We dropped lower to get into gentler terrain and then followed a drainage to the saddle (5300 feet) west of Cramer Mountain. Late in the day, wet, tired and cold, we broke out onto Buesch Lake at 5100 feet. We camped at the northwest corner of the lake out of the worst of the cold northwest wind and where we would have the morning sun (always optimistic).

On day two we skied to Dumbbell, Cramer, Dancing Lady and Shellrock Lakes. This is a very interesting tour through meadows, medium density old growth forest, along streams, and up and around small ridges and knobs. The snow depth was about 8 to 10 feet. We had heavy snow squalls with very low visibility interspersed with hot sun.

During the day we heard small planes and helicopters. We later learned that this was a search for a downed plane near Bumping Lake. Sadly, the pilot apparently survived the crash with few injuries but died of exposure.



We left for Twin Sisters Lakes on the third day. We followed our tracks to Dumbbell Lake and then skied on a bearing of true north toward west Twin Sisters Lake. Again, very interesting terrain with semi-open forest, meadows, and many small knobs and ridges. This lake is the largest on the plateau and is located on its northern edge.

Our group split into three: Hans Schnceberger and John Kelly skied around the Lake; Brent Spilsbury and Walt Viebrock did a Tele run on the ridge to the north, and I napped.

On day four we reluctantly left in rapidly warming weather. We picked up the rerouted PCT by following the rib to the west of Buesch Lake south to the main ridge. Here we traversed a bench, gaining elevation to 5600 feet and constantly looking for easier terrain. With avalanche conditions high, we were forced to take several detours. Finally at noon we picked up the shadow of our inbound trail and at 12:30 encountered fresh ski tracks.

SUMMARY

In 4 days we skied 36 miles and gained 4300 feet. We had no regrets about delaying the start of our trip, but if the weather had been better we certainly could have used the fifth planned day (or even a sixth). We had to skip skiing Tumac and Cramer Mountains. Another lakes tour would also have been interesting.

Once you lose the PCT, the route finding is much more difficult and the ridge traverse is physically demanding in stormy conditions.

We planned to camp at Dumbbell Lake, but ended up camping at Buesch Lake. This turned out to be a good choice, although earlier in the season it might not have been so private. The touring is excellent, especially if you appreciate old growth forest, although there are also Telemark possibilities on Cramer and Tumac Mountains.

A highlight of our trip was seeing no one else until we found ski tracks into Deer Lake on our last day.

Chuck Gustafson, of Seattle, has been skiing for 30 years and snow camping for 20. Every trip is still an adventure.

BECKY WANDELL

Some Enchanted Evening

—PEG AND BILL STARK COME TO SEATTLE—

Last summer, I coordinated a workshop to train teachers in a new wilderness education curriculum. I was looking for a way to introduce the values and importance of Wilderness to these educators.

On advice from a friend, I invited Bill and Peg Stark, of Leavenworth, to give their slide presentation about the Enchantment Lakes.

Now I know that the Enchantments are revered for their beauty, so if nothing else, I expected a nice slide show for the class.

What I got was an inspirational and moving experience and, most surprisingly, a deeper understanding of Wilderness for myself.

The slide show is Bill's compilation of over 35 years of beautiful Enchantment experiences. However it is Peg's narration that makes the show an art piece, a profound and beautiful statement for what Wilderness can mean to humans. It was an experience I knew I had to share. So I'm bringing them to Seattle.

On March 6, Bill and Peg Stark will present their slide show, "How Deep the High Journey," at 7pm at The Mountaineers Building, 300 Third Avenue West, in Seattle. Their slide show is truly a journey we all should take.

To Bill and Peg the Enchantments are "one of the most profound and beautiful songs to the earth that has happened." In their 80s now, the Starks have been hiking to the Enchantments since 1959.

Through over 100 trips throughout all seasons of the year, the Starks have made the Enchantments their own special place—and the Enchantments have made the Starks very special people.

I think of this while I strive to hike more and different trails each summer. I rarely return to the same spot in order to see all there is to see. But the Starks



Bill and Peg at High Camp, Scottish Lakes.

have found their place in the wilderness and return again and again to nurture a beautiful relationship with the rocks and tarns of this high alpine area.

During the 1960s, Bill and Peg Stark founded a group of about 35 people who proposed many of the place names used in the Enchantment Lakes area. Although these names are "informal," they are used by many who travel the Enchantment region.

For a map giving a partial listing of these names, see Beckey's *Cascade Alpine Guide: Columbia to Stevens*, second edition, page 223. For more detail, contact the *Pack & Paddle* office for a photocopied sketch map.

They also participated in public meetings to help designate the 393,000-acre Alpine Lakes Wilderness in 1976. The Wilderness is managed by both the Baker-Snoqualmie and Wenatchee Na-

tional Forests and is currently the centerpiece of a plan to create a permit system to protect the area from overuse.

This slide show will illustrate the magic of this Wilderness Area and how important it is to protect its character.

The event is a benefit for the WildLink Program of the Washington Wilderness Coalition. Tickets will be sold for \$5 to \$10 at the door.

Since Bill let me know that it takes an important event for them to make the trip over the pass from Leavenworth, I know that their appearance validates this worthy cause.

WildLink develops education programs that provide a link between people and the wild areas of Washington State. We are lucky to have the opportunity to teach our children about the importance of these areas, and with 6% of our state's natural heritage currently designated as Wilderness, we truly have some-

thing to celebrate!

So mark your calendars for March 6. Attend this event to support critical education programs for our youth and share a journey you won't forget. I hope to see you there. Believe me, you'll want to share this with a friend too.

Becky Wandell is the Wilderness Education Director of the Washington Wilderness Coalition.

For more information on the Starks' slide show, call Becky at 206-633-1992.

Ann Marshall

KERRY GILLES

Through Saint Peter's Gate

—IN SPITE OF EARLY MISHAPS, OLYMPIC TRIP TURNS OUT GREAT—

August 9. Friday at 3:30 I'm at Don's house saying, "Let's go!" At the town of McCleary Don's spare tire falls off his Toyota and rolls down the street.

By 6:30 we're hiking up the 3.5 mile Lena Lake trail with switchbacks on an easy grade. We get to our favorite campsite and I realize I have blisters.

August 10. We leave camp at 7am to climb The Brothers trail and don't get back to camp till 7:30pm. With its two peaks The Brothers is one of the most conspicuous landmarks in the eastern Olympics.

I found it to be strenuous and difficult at times. A re-route is very clearly marked with pink ribbons but we managed to miss it. We crossed three log bridges and a creek. Lots of available camp spots and many people on the trail. On top, Mount Rainier looked like it was floating in the air. My contact case mirror broke on the way up.

August 11. Leaving our camp as is we drive back to Westport for different boots so I can continue. A 7-hour round trip and a bag of foot repair stuff puts us back at camp at 3:30. I was a bit sore from The Brothers climb and my feet needed to rest so we just kicked back for the remainder of the afternoon.

August 12. It's a 3½ hour struggle to arrive at Upper Lena Lake. Dropping our 7-day packs is the first thing we do. This trail is up, rooty, rocky, and at times wet from streams.

The 26-acre lake lies between Mount Lena (5995 feet) and Mount Bretherton (5960 feet). Upper Lena Lake occupies a depression carved in the slate and sandstone by an ice age glacier and is surrounded by meadows, scree slopes, and subalpine forest.

Campsite 9 (Don's favorite) was taken so we rehiked (yes,

with the full packs) all the way back around to campsite 3. After going in and out of the lake three times my body finally accepted the cold water and I had a very enjoyable swim.

After camp was set up we hiked up to Milk Lake less than ¼-mile away. It's a small lake, aquamarine in color, with snow reflecting in it from the basin. A waterfall, an S-shaped stream and a profusion of wildflowers all enhanced the beauty of this spot.

Leaving there we followed a goat trail to the top of Mount Bretherton, an elongated double-summitted peak—what a climb! Views were of Mount Rainier, Milk Lake, The Brothers, Mount Baldy and an excellent aerial view of Upper Lena Lake.

To the west we could see some lakes

(actually tarns) that we would find tomorrow. It took 1 hour to climb up Bretherton as well as 1 hour to get down. The ranger came into camp and did his routine. Mother deer and fawn came through camp, too, noses sniffing at the cooking smells.

August 13. It took us only 45 minutes to find those tarns. Most of them had crystal clear water. In meadowland we wandered aimlessly among the flowers. Our direction was whatever our eyes feasted on that needed a closer look. Around gray-white boulders, up over knolls, down to a secluded campsite.

We ended up at Deerheart Lake (2½ miles from Lena), a little tarn enclosed by rocky slopes. Two campsites, view of Mount Stone, and endless wander-

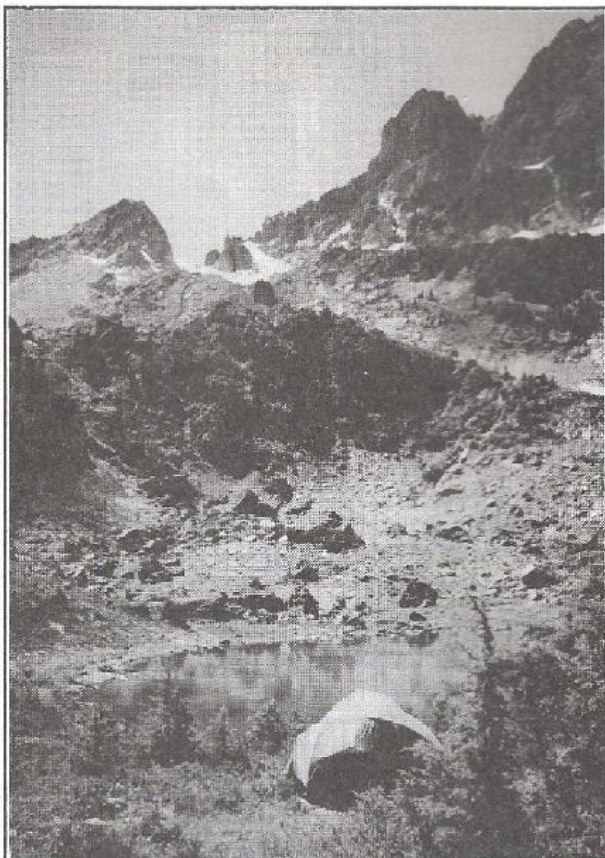
ing made me wish we had camped there.

It was early still so we headed for Mount Lena (Mount Baldy) by way of the meadowy hillsides. The climbing route says "easy slopes to the top" but since we were doing it backwards there was no "easy!"

Coming off the top we went through brush taller than us, traversed a hillside so steep I thought my feet would come out the sides of my boots, waded through a wet marshy swamp, but came crashing out of the woods right by our tent.

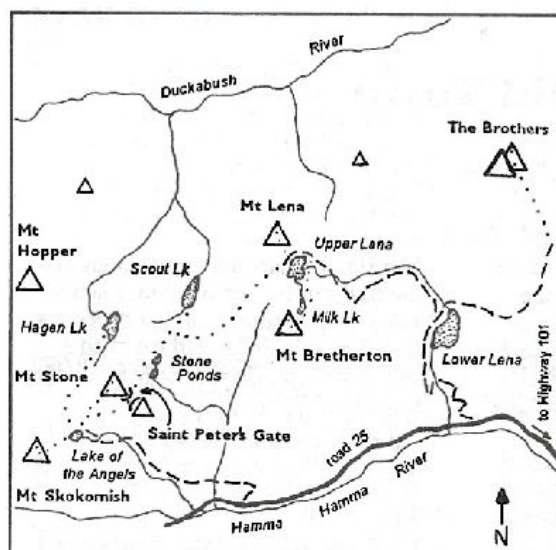
We ate our dinner on the small gravel bar behind our tent on our "lake front property." Later that evening we had the pleasure of watching an osprey dive for fish to take back to its nest.

August 14. On our way to Scout Lake Way-trail I re-read Karen Sykes' "The Challenge of Saint Peter's Gate," (*P&P*, August 1993) for more trail description. The path she talks about is now a full-blown trail! I agree with her on the "jeepers creepers" descent at the final pitch to Scout Lake.



Our camp at Stone Ponds, below Saint Peter's Gate.

Kerry Gilles



We left our packs there and hiked without them down to the lake. It's long and narrow, intense indigo in color, bordered by steep slopes and a rock-bound shore. Camping is not allowed though evidence shows otherwise.

After retrieving our packs we hooked up with the Stone Ponds Way-trail. Meadows dotted with tree-covered knolls, outcrops of rock and smoky-glass ponds brought smiles to our faces.

Of course we managed to find the "beat the brush" route down to Stone Ponds. We wandered in amazement among waterfalls, snow patches, green meadows, big boulders (reminding me of giant papier-maché spit-wads clumped together), rock tower walls, trees and all that blue sky.

Dragonflies were busily eating up mosquitoes, much to our delight. The sun disappeared behind Jabberwocky Ridge at 5:15, causing some really neat sunbeams.

August 15. Letting the dew dry off our tent, we finally headed for Saint Peter's Gate at 9:30. It was a strenuous hike up, but good footing made it possible to do in two hours. I put crampons on for the last stretch to the top.

We spent a good hour of resting, looking around, taking pictures and identifying the funny ridges like "Jabberwocky," before we even thought about heading down to Lake of the Angels.

A short distance down we turned southwest, left our packs, and while Don climbed Mount Stone (a sharp, multiple-peaked mountain) I did the smaller rock mounds.

We saw two goats near our packs

on our return but they ran away. The rest of the trail down is clearly evident and we were setting up camp by 5pm with our first sighting of clouds in six days.

Our camp was above the lake, with great views. Our water came from the upper basin snowmelt. The mosquitoes are losing—I've killed a billion!

August 16. We awoke to a gray sky and fog coming up from the east. At 10am we hiked up to the southwest (weather looked better) and saw many campsite possibilities.

Don went to climb Mount Skokomish, a massive peak, and I hiked down to a large tarn. I hiked up some tree-knob hills that allowed me to look down into huge meadows to see another pass to the south. An eagle and hawk flew by.

I inspected rocks, watched a baby grasshopper on its mother's back, and took note of the bees pollinating each pink heather blossom. Back at camp we found goat hair stuck to everything.

The camp deer came too close and a marmot kept up non-stop whistling. A hike to the southeast after dinner led us to even more campsites.

August 17. Going northwest toward Hagen Lakes and Mount Hopper looked to be the best bet weather-wise. Only one really nasty spot (worse than Scout Lake) to negotiate. We hiked across

loose scree, rocky hillsides, up a gully and came out looking down into Hagen Lake. We also saw the "Great Stone Arrow"—made with rocks on the ground—and wondered about how long it's been there.

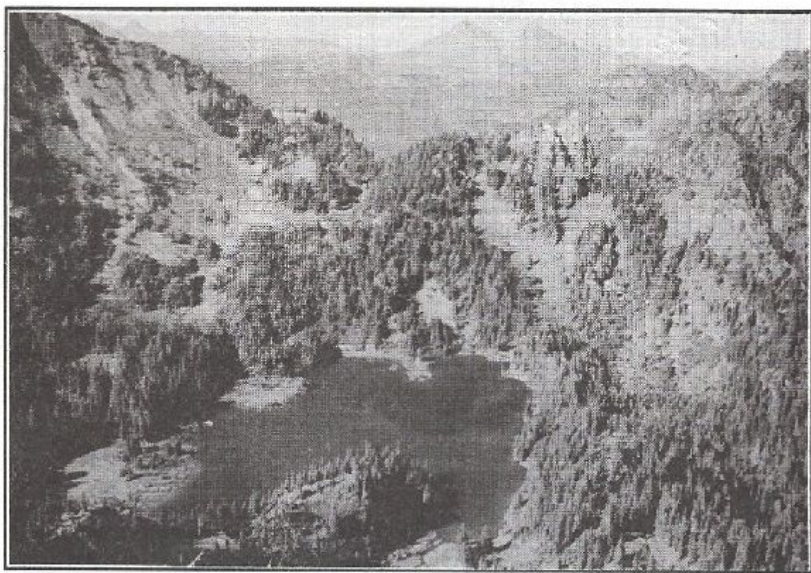
We crossed knee-high flower-filled grasshopper-hopping meadows that were stupendous. We saw Mount Hopper and the other Hagen Lake. As we sat eating lunch and talking with two guys, we learned they too were hiking last year, but in the opposite direction, the Pyrites-Martin Lakes traverse and had heard about us!

Five minutes after we arrived back at camp, it poured for three hours. I was allowing myself 4½ pages a day of the August *Pack & Paddle*, but with the rain I finished it and started reading it again. Though more than 18 people were camped here, the area consumed them.

August 19. We waited till others left (hoping they would knock the wetness off the bushes) before going down the steep Putvin trail. Don was able to catch a ride back to Lena Lake trailhead, saving him from road-walking 4+ miles while I stayed with the packs.

To anybody looking for a backcountry traverse hike with some beautiful scenery, I recommend this highly!

Kerry Gilles, originally from Port Townsend, now lives in Westport and has been hiking for 8 years.



Looking down on Upper Lena Lake from Mount Bretherton.

Kerry Gilles

ED AGIUS

Old Friends in an Old Town

—CAMPING ON BLAKE ISLAND—

It was late one Sunday afternoon when Sal and I pushed off into Yukon Harbor, in Kitsap County, for Blake Island State Park. The Old Town canoe was outfitted with all the gear essential to spend a comfortable night. We also carried firewood to ensure a friendly fire around which we could reminisce.

Sal had just moved back from Kansas City. He missed the Pacific Northwest. The days of his past naval service in Bremerton had left a lasting impression on him as with me, for I never left.

This was our chance to share the adventurous spirit once again as we had done in the past in places like Hong Kong and Dubai.

It was a blustery day and the water was a bit threatening. Sal hadn't been in a canoe before and didn't know conditions weren't quite ideal. As it turned out, the twenty minute crossing of open water went just fine. As long as the canoe was kept at the proper angle to the oncoming waves and wakes, we were okay. My concentration was focused thus.

In the bow, Sal couldn't see my facial expressions nor my many corrective strokes. He would ask, "How's it going?" and I would reply in a pleasantly calm voice, "Great!"

Originally we had planned to paddle around Blake and pick the most scenic campsite for the night, but with the water conditions as they were we put in at the first site available.

As I was erecting the tent and Sal was splitting firewood a park ranger passed on his evening tour of the island. He looked at our canoe, then at the choppy waters, and shook his head, commenting, "I'd prefer something more substantial under me," and off he went. We were quite pleased with our mini-adventure.

I mentioned to Sal that if the waters happened to calm we could take a sunset paddle along the sheltered western side of the island. He agreed, so the plan was made to round the Northwest point where we could see the Seattle skyline in the distance.

Meanwhile, the thought of exploring

Blake Island's Tillicum Village and an empty water jug sent us off down the island's perimeter trail. I had never been to Blake and was looking forward to visiting the village famous for its salmon roast and native Indian dancing demonstrations.

We arrived in the village just as the commercial tour boat was leaving allowing us to explore the exhibits in peace. As we walked the grounds I looked around in the marina at the sailboats, powerboats, and cabin cruisers. I felt a special bond with the past for we had arrived by canoe as the natives of yesteryear must have done. The village was charming but we longed for the solitude of our campsite and dinner.

As we devoured our dinner the sun dropped behind the Olympics. The winds had subsided and the Puget Sound waters were quickly settling. It was time for our evening paddle. I prepared the campfire for our return, doing everything but lighting it.

Off we went, headed for our view of Seattle. By the time we reached our destination it was dark. The lights gleaming from the Emerald City, the glass-like waters and the aura of Blake all combined to cast a spell. We rounded the sandy point and with Seattle in view continued on our course. We decided not to retrace our route but to revive our original plan to paddle the circumference of the island. We didn't miss a stroke, the decision was made that quickly.

As we continued, the night became firmly established. Blake was now a sil-

houette, the stars our companions and the lights of the surrounding countryside our light source and guidance system. The solitude of darkness had a calming effect. Occasionally a shooting star would flash.

The water was nothing less than magical with its high phosphorous content giving it an effect normally reserved for a sailor who gazes into a late-night wake. The effect I speak of is that of a luminous green glow emitted by the phosphorous when any water-disturbing movements are made. As our paddles quietly moved the water about, the water responded with an electrifying glow.

As we passed shallows and disturbed small schools of fish, bolts of phosphorous shot in every direction. We couldn't see the fish themselves in the dark. It was a wondrous sight that brought back memories of lonely nights in the Indian Ocean.

The circumnavigation of Blake Island took merely an hour but that hour had some of the most mystical, magical moments I've ever spent in a canoe.

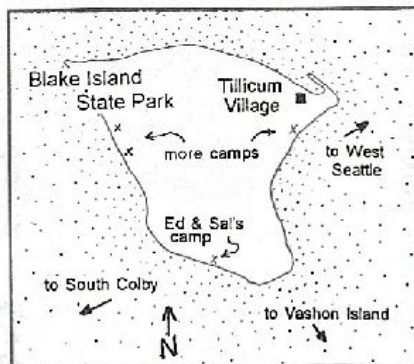
Trying to locate our site proved to be a bit of a chore. The tide had gone out some and our landmark, a makeshift lookout platform made of driftwood, was obscured by the darkness. A meticulous scouring of the shoreline as we slowly moved through the shallows did eventually land us at our site.

We portaged our vessel above the high water line. While Sal secured some miscellaneous gear for the night I lit the fire. The next couple of hours we reminisced in the past and speculated on the future. Eventually our eyelids let us know what time it was.

We awoke to a beautiful day with a slight breeze into which we pushed off to make our way back to the quiet community of South Colby, savoring the last few moments in our humble craft.

△

Ed Agius, of Bremerton, is retired from the Navy. He is an avid backpacker, has been paddling about 4 years, and is a student in this year's Mountaineer Scramble class.



MARK OWEN

Big Four

—A WINTER WEEKEND ON SNOWSHOES—

It is the job of the Scoutmaster to be nervous about details such as avalanche danger and frigid temperatures.

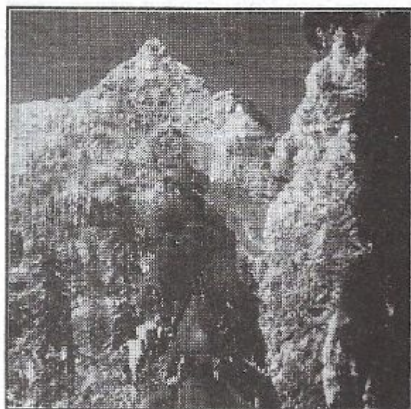
Tom fit the bill as just such a leader, and so it took Jace considerable effort before Tom gave the clearance to organize a snowshoe hike along the Mountain Loop Highway from Deer Creek to Big Four on the weekend of January 25 and 26.

With REI-rented Tubbs and MSR 'shoes, Troop 85 of Seattle drove to Granite Falls for a big breakfast at the Timberline Cafe.

Tom stopped at McDonald's, surely by accident, and thus had to watch us put down our delicious meal before we drove to road's end on slush.

The weather was beautiful as we made our way about 1½ miles to the snowed-in parking lot at Big Four. Only once did snowmobiles buzz past us, a little too close for comfort.

Jace had the idea of swapping 'shoes at our campspot so we could all compare the shoe differences on our way



Hall Peak from the South Fork Stillaguamish River.

out Sunday. But we all liked our Saturday snowshoes, so trading was out of the question!

We hiked the Ice Cave trail to the river and then ventured eastward. We found a great camping spot within 10 minutes of the bridge. (There was so much snow on the bridges that our feet

were above the tops of the railings!)

Big Four and Hall Peak loomed above us as Larry and Dennis prepared a delicious rice and bean dinner.

Several of us plowed up to the base of the mountain, including Jace on his cross-country skis. Zach and Garrett carried snowboards up to the huge hill below the Tower route. Their struggle was rewarded by a two-minute run on virgin powder.

With none of the comforts and distractions of home we were in bed by 8pm.

Sunday was another beautiful, cool day and with sad hearts we packed to go. Before hiking out we enjoyed a special church service put on by Tom and Larry. (The 12th point of the Scout Law is: A Boy Scout is reverent to God.)

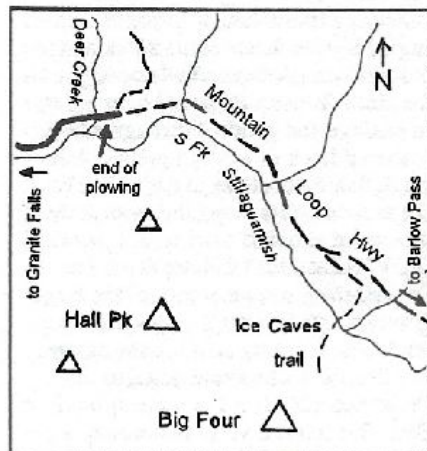
A quick hike out and we soon found ourselves back at the Timberline Cafe for more good food. The calories we dropped snowshoeing were back in their rightful place.

△

Mark Owen, of Shoreline, is an elementary school teacher. Besides hiking, he has been climbing for about 15 years.



Dennis at our cooking center.



Mark Owen

Larry Rudolph

SHIRLEY VANDER VEEN

Lummi Island

—SOLITUDE IN THE SAN JUANS—

We launched our double sea kayak at the Fairhaven boat launch with the DNR campground on Lummi Island as our goal. The forecast for this February 8th was for a fair day with temperatures in the low 40s, but at 9am it was still hovering in the low 30s.

The Fairhaven boat launch is a protected site for most wind conditions even though Bellingham Bay is very open. Launch fee is \$3.

My husband Keith took a reading on his GPS for Fairhaven and set it as a waypoint. Possible fog was forecast for Sunday morning and we wanted to keep our options open. (But mostly Keith just likes playing with his technological toys.) We pointed the kayak bow at the middle of Portage Island and started paddling.

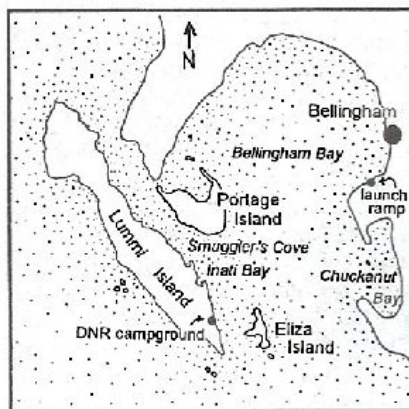
The tide was ebbing southward and the wind was perhaps 10 to 12 mph northward. So we hedged our bets and pointed a little north of where we wanted to make landfall on Lummi.

The campground was about 5.6 miles as the crow flies but we did not want to take a direct course to it. As it turned out the tide and the wind pretty much cancelled each other, giving us only occasional whitecaps and a generally lumpy sea. We passed near the south shore of Portage Island and continued to Lummi.

Portage Island had a couple of bald eagles in attendance on its shore and an old squaw duck flew off when we got too close. We saw the usual cormorants in passage and paddled through a large scattered flock of western grebes. A few small fishing boats were out on the bay but mostly it was very quiet with little motorized activity.

We hit the Lummi shore at Smuggler's Cove just south of the large gravel pit that makes a very visible landmark. Turning southeastward, we paddled the rocky shore down to the Bellingham Yacht Club's site at Inati Bay. This too is a very sheltered spot with a good sandy beach.

We have never camped at this area,



but I understand that camping is allowed. It has pit toilets and some grassy areas for tent sites. Perhaps more importantly, if one has the time, it has good access to some old logging roads to walk and explore. Inati Bay was just our lunch spot today.

With Inati Bay now added to our GPS waypoints we set off southward again to the DNR site where we would camp for the night. The steep rock shoreline begins again as soon as Inati Bay is left behind and makes very scenic paddling.

The DNR campground is less than a mile from Inati Bay. Very auspiciously we saw another bald eagle sitting in a tall dead tree on one of the small points that makes up the DNR site.

We bypassed the first small beach at the campground for the somewhat more protected one on the south. Since we expected a very high tide on Sunday morning we manhandled the kayak as far up the beach as we could go, and then put it on the highest driftwood logs.

The campsites were in good shape as is usual for the DNR San Juan campgrounds. There are six campsites total here. Some of them had newly constructed tent pads of gravel. Most campsites are well protected in the woods high above the water.

One site is on a little islet connected to the north beach. It has the best views, but of course it is the most exposed to

winds from the north, south and east.

Keith and I have fond memories of camping on the islet one late October weekend with a full moon beaming down on us. It was very still and warm that night. Sometimes we get lucky with the weather!

As on that October night we had the whole campground to ourselves. It was cold but we had brought a bundle of Presto Logs with us to be sure we had plenty of firewood. Usually we do without a campfire but this time it seemed warranted. With the light of Bellingham shining in the distance and Grouse Mountain lights visible above Vancouver, it was a very good night to sit up over a campfire. Late that night after turning in, we could hear an owl calling in the near distance.

Sunday morning was fair and calm during breakfast with fog obscuring the shoreline only right at Bellingham. By the time we had broken camp the wind had risen from the north and was dispersing the fog.

By 9:30am the tide had gone out enough to give us plenty of room on the beach to launch. Today there were no whitecaps to be seen as tide and wind moved southward together.

We chose a more southerly course and passed near Eliza Island's most northerly point to return to the Chuckanut shoreline south of Bellingham. Mount Baker just peeked over the high Chuckanut ridgeline as we paddled across.

We encountered the same large gathering of western grebes as the day before in the middle of the bay. A few seals popped up to watch our passage. As we reached the shoreline we saw more ducks such as harlequins, goldeneyes, and buffleheads. A pleasant paddle north to the boat launch concluded our weekend trip.

△

Shirley Vander Veen, of Issaquah, works as an accountant.

PANORAMA

NEWS FROM ALL OVER

BOARD MEMBERS NEEDED—

Washington Water Trails Association is looking for people interested in serving on its board of directors and continuing the successful development of the Cascadia Marine Trail.

Experience with special events, fundraising and local corporations is needed more than paddling expertise. Contact Andree Hurley, 360-738-2995 (email: ahurley@viewit.com) for more information.

MORE BOARD MEMBERS—The Mount Tahoma Trails Association is also looking for board members. The most pressing qualification at the moment is interest in the trail system.

Contact MTTA, PO Box 206, Ashford WA 98304, for more information.

POINT DEFIANCE PARK—On the second Saturday of each month, the Tacoma Branch Mountaineers has a 5-mile hike on the forest trails of Point Defiance Park in Tacoma.

The group meets at the Boathouse Grill parking lot at 9am and finishes at noon. Guests are welcome; no sign-up required. For more information, call the leader, Elmer Price, 206-752-2333.

DEEP SNOW—We all know it's been a good winter for snow. But just how good is it?

The Department of Agriculture's water outlook report says that the snowpack is 166 % of normal, down from 230% of normal at the end of December, due to normal rain and snowfall in January.

Specifically, north Puget Sound river basins were at 136%; the Olympic Peninsula was at 116%; and the Lewis-Cowlitz basins were 171%.

The Nooksack had the lowest amount, 107%, and the Yakima had the highest, 187%.

In eastern Washington, the Spokane basin was at 164% and the east slope of the Cascades at 159%.

ORIC MOVES SOON—On March 12, the Outdoor Recreation Information Center will move from its location of more than 20 years in the Federal Building to the new REI store.

The new spot will be on the second floor of the store, near the travel section. They will continue to sell Forest and Park maps and books, and provide

all kinds of outdoor information for Washington public lands.

The Center will have a new phone number, but it hasn't been assigned yet. Call the old one at 206-220-7450 until the change is made.

WALKING SOFTLY—Here's a way to visit hiking areas of Europe in a small group (average size is 10) with experienced leaders, Amy and John Osaki. Walking Softly offers two hiking trips in '97: one to the Pyrenees National Park on the France/Spain border, September 11 through 27; and one to the Dolomites in the Italian Alps, August 13 through 26.

Both these trips emphasize flexibility and fun. Days are spent on the trail, and nights at inns or mountain refuges. Amy and John are former park rangers who now live in Portland.

For a brochure, contact:

Walking Softly Adventures
PO Box 86273
Portland OR 97286
503-788-9017 (fax: 503-788-0463).

RIVER CLEANUP—May 17 is National River Cleanup Day. The target river in western Washington is the Skykomish, North and South forks. Volunteers are needed for both land- and water-based cleanup projects.

Contact Allison Warner at the Skykomish Ranger Station for more information: 360-677-2414.

NORTH CASCADES INSTITUTE—The latest catalog for North Cascades Institute is out. It is full of wonderful seminars to increase your knowledge of the outdoors.

On March 8th or on March 22nd, you can take a bird-watching tour of Padilla Bay by kayak. All equipment and instruction is provided, and you'll learn lots about the birds you'll see. Fee is \$90.

Or spend the weekend of May 3 and 4 learning about the wildflowers of the sagebrush country on the east slope of the Cascades. You'll stay at a car campground near Ellensburg. Fee is \$95.

Sign up quickly! For more information, contact:

North Cascades Institute
2105 Highway 20
Sedro-Woolley WA 98284
phone: 360-856-5700 x 209.

SPIDER MEADOW—Thanks to the Trust for Public Land, the Forest Service has purchased 335 acres of private land along Phelps Creek (see *P&P*, March 1996, page 25).

The Phelps Creek trail leads to Spider Meadow, one of the most popular destinations in the Glacier Peak Wilderness. Several sections of private land along the creek drainage were purchased by a logging company in 1994, and the company applied for permits to harvest the timber.

The Forest Service tried to purchase the land from the timber company, but could not obtain funding quickly enough. The Trust for Public Land stepped in, purchased the property, and spearheaded efforts to raise additional funds to aid the Forest Service in repurchasing the land.

MISLEADING ADVERTISING—

The current issue of *Trail & Timberline*, the publication of the Colorado Mountain Club, contains a letter to Motorola criticizing Motorola's 2-page ad in *Popular Science* that says: "Think a pair of two-way radios is expensive? Priced a decent search and rescue mission lately? You just can't find a decent rescue for under \$100,000 these days. ..."

The letter was written by Drew Davis, president of the Colorado Search and Rescue board. He chides the company for falsely portraying the cost of search and rescue.

He asks that Motorola replace the offending ad with one that offers correct information in a positive tone.

In a footnote, the CSAR board reports that they received a response from Motorola. The company says this ad cannot be pulled from its scheduled run until after February, but it offered to use its public relations department to correct the misleading image of SAR that it has created.

NO PERMITS THIS YEAR—The Wenatchee and Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest have been planning to expand the Alpine Lakes Permit system to two additional areas of the Wilderness, Snoqualmie Pass and the West Fork Foss.

But the new permit system will NOT be in effect this year due to dropping recreation budgets.

REST STOP

EQUIPMENT, RECIPES, TIPS

FOOD—Once again I am getting my hiking food ready for the new season.

One thing I like is instant grits, but I use my own seasonings. The seasoned packets are good, but I can't have the salt in those amounts.

One seasoning I use is called Jensen's Broth, made by Hidden Valley Mills. I get it at health food stores. It has fourteen powdered raw vegetables and is seasoned with yeast. It also makes a tasty hot drink. The powdered shrimp flavor with garlic powder and a little salt is good.

For packaging the seasoning I use paper envelopes, as the powder clings frustratingly to plastic bags.—*Marian Mae Robison, Wapato.*

EMERGENCY TOOLS—Survival Incorporated of Seattle has introduced what they term The Ultimate Survival High Performance Outdoor Tools line for people involved in outdoor recreation. Products so far in this line are the Star Flash signal and utility mirror, Saber Cut hand chain saw, Blast Match one-hand fire starter, and Wet Fire smokeless fire starting tinder.

Pack & Paddle took the opportunity recently to check out each of these tools. Here's what we found.

Star Flash signal and utility mirror: The mirror we tested is 2"x3", weighs less than an ounce, and is made of Lexan polycarbonate. It has a sighting hole in the center of the mirror for aiming and instructions printed on the back.

Comparing it to a glass signal mirror of the same size I carry with me when sea kayaking, it seemed to be just as bright when reflecting light. The obvious advantage to the Star Flash is its lightness, and *it floats!* The retail price is \$7.95 for the 2"x3" model and slightly more for the 3"x5" model.

Saber Cut hand chain saw: This is a 24-inch section of specially constructed chain saw blade with webbing loops on either end for your hands. The blade is constructed with teeth (extremely

sharp!) which cut in both directions. It readily cut through a 5-inch fir tree that had blown down outside the office during the windstorm.

The Saber Cut comes with a carrying case which is a definite must because of the sharpness of the saw teeth. The whole package weighs 6 ounces and costs \$29.95.

Blast Match one-hand fire starter: This is a special-alloy flint bar contained in an ABS handle with built-in tungsten carbide striker. Sparks are generated by plunging the handle with striker down the flint bar. We've tried other such devices with mixed results, but this package really worked and generated lots of sparks. The device is 5" long, weighs less than 3 ounces, and costs \$19.95.

Wet Fire smokeless fire starting tinder: The tinder comes in singly packaged cubes roughly 1x2 inches, weighing less than 1/4-ounce. It is made of a specially compounded solid chemical material which readily ignited with sparks from the Blast Match.

The tinder burns for just a short time, so you need to have a ready supply of small twigs or other fuel to start a fire. Wet Fire is sold as a package of 12 cubes for \$5.95.

We were pleased to find that each of the tools performed as advertised and appeared to be well constructed. Depending on your needs, they would be suitable for a home or auto emergency kit, or for certain kinds of camping. Each of the products is currently available through company-direct catalog sales. Call toll-free 888-237-3239 for a product brochure or to place orders. The company's address is:

SOS Survival Incorporated
2633 Eastlake Ave E Suite 103
Seattle WA 98102.

—LGM, Port Orchard.

UNSTUCK—When Bill and I got stuck in our car in deep, heavy snow with no one in sight to help push us out, we got out our yellow tire ramps.

Even low gear in 4-wheel-drive was not enough! We put the tire ramps behind the two rear wheels and they provided enough traction to help us get out. Our collapsible shovel from REI helped, too.

We got our tire ramps from L.L. Bean, but we've also seen them in auto stores.—*Jane Habegger, Olympia.*

VHF MARINE RADIO LICENSE UPDATE—On October 26, 1996, the FCC released a *Report and Order* eliminating the individual licensing requirement for voluntary ships operating domestically.

"Voluntary ships" are those not required by law to carry a radio—like a sea kayak or canoe, and "operating domestically" means ships not travelling to foreign ports or transmitting radio communications to foreign stations.

Even though station licenses are no longer required in such cases, the existing FCC operating procedures for VHF radios are still in force.

And if you wish, you can still obtain a license or renew an existing one even though you may meet the requirements for *not* having one. In such cases you write "VOLUNTARY SHIP" or "VOLUNTARY SHIP RENEWAL" on the license form.

If you do have a current license issued after July 18, 1994, and you want to return it, you can have some of the license fee you paid refunded to you. The amount refunded is based on what the original license fee was and when you paid it.

To obtain additional information on VHF Marine Radio requirements write:
FCC, Seattle Field Office
11410 NE 122nd Way, Suite 312
Kirkland WA 98034
or call toll-free 888-225-5322.

CAMERAS—We've received several responses from readers, and we have room for a few more. Send yours in.

Tell us what kind of camera you use in the backcountry, for hiking, skiing, or paddling. How do you protect it against rain, mud, salt water? Do you like automatic or manual features?

Does weight make any difference? Are you satisfied with the quality of your photos? Have you ever had a camera malfunction while you were in the backcountry, and what did you do?

BEE STINGS—If you carry an epinephrine syringe in your first aid kit, check to make sure the fluid is clear. If it is cloudy, discard it and replace.

SUNGLASSES—Protect your eyes on snow by always wearing good quality sunglasses. For more protection, add side shields. You can purchase them ready-made, or make them of cardboard.

READERS!

This magazine is written by YOU—Your contributions are wanted! Send us trail reports, recipes for hiking and paddling; a review of your newest (or oldest) piece of gear; a safety tip; or just tell us what's on your mind.



Dinner at camp.

FROM THE MAIL BOX—"Would like to see better directions to hikes."—*Marysville.*

"I love to read all the land-based news (I'm not a paddler ... yct.) My white cat says hi to Yellow Cat."—*Tenino.*

"I have every issue back to 1972 from the old 'Signpost' days."—*Olympia.*

"Thanks for such a good magazine. I read every word, every issue."—*Issaquah.*

JENNIFER AND LANCE—On a trip to distribute copies of her *Morning Hill Cookbook*, Jennifer Stein and Lance Barker stopped in Seattle in early February.

You might remember Jennifer from her days as owner and cook at the former Garrison Springs Lodge (now private property) on Table Mountain.

Driving a '68 VW bug (restored by Lance), they motored up from their eastern Oregon homestead to visit friends and sell books.

They stopped at our house to spend the night before heading back home, and pulled into the driveway just in time to take a leg-stretching walk through the woods before dark.

Although Lee and I enjoy our flora and fauna to the best of our ability, we had never paid much attention to our lichens before. Jennifer and Lance pointed out what beautiful and happy lichens we had. We'll have to take more notice.

SNOW CAVE—The last field trip of The Mountaineers' Winter Travel/

Snowshoe course is an overnight at Grace Lakes. Students team up to build snow caves or igloos, aided by instructors, and spend the night in their structures. Lee and I, students in this year's course, had never built a snow cave and found the experience very interesting.

With the help of our instructor Dale Klotz, we learned how to incorporate such terrain features as rock walls and shrubs into our decorating scheme. In a few hours we had built a two-room snow "cabin" with kitchen.

After the shelters were completed, we all took a general tour. This was the most fun. Everyone's shelter was different. One huge snow cave had room for five people. Some had snow chairs and snow tables. Tom and Sara Matoi's igloo was a work of art, and Tom's snow lanterns were beautiful.

The next day we had to destroy our architectural masterpieces, as snow shelters left standing pose a late-season hazard to other travelers.

We learned that caves are, indeed, comfortable to sleep in, but are best suited to base camps of several nights because of the amount of construction time needed.

Now that we know the basics, we'll probably try a snow cave again—although I still prefer our tent for quick, easy set-up and dry interior.

SKUNK TREATMENT—Several readers sympathized with Yellow Cat's skunk encounter and related their own stories. YC is much better, but still retains the faintest of skunk aromas.

Joe and Kathy Weigel, of Port Orchard, sent along an article about de-skunking. Although a tomato juice bath is a popular remedy, says their info, it's probably the scrubbing action rather than the juice itself that "cures" the skunk smell.

In the article, chemist Paul Krebaum suggests washing the subject (human or animal) with a mixture of one quart 3% hydrogen peroxide, ¼-cup baking soda, and 1 teaspoon liquid soap. Bathe and rinse.

The oxidizing properties of the hydrogen peroxide will break down the sulphur-containing compounds of the skunk spray, he says.

SKUNK STILL HERE—We're grateful to the Weigels for sending that information, as we may yet need it.

When I went into the wellhouse to fetch my gardening bucket, I discovered, to my sudden and complete surprise, that the skunk was apparently moving in. We left the door open and scattered a generous amount of mothballs on the floor.

Next morning—no skunk! I hope the move is permanent.

PHONE CALLS—The phone rang off the hook last month when *Pack & Paddle* didn't show up on time!

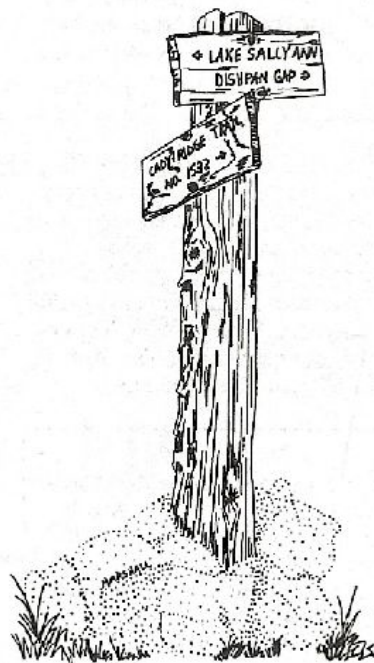
We apologize for the delay—our printer was upgrading some equipment which caused the press to be shut down for several days, and *Pack & Paddle* to be printed later than usual—but it was sure fun to talk to all of you who called, and nice to know you watch for *P&P* and miss it when it doesn't show up!

STARKS' SLIDES—On March 6th, Bill and Peg Stark will be coming to Seattle from Leavenworth to show again their wonderful slides of the Enchantments. See page 23 for details.

We'll be there, and hope you will, too.

See you in the backcountry,

Ann Marshall



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Amy and John Osaki's

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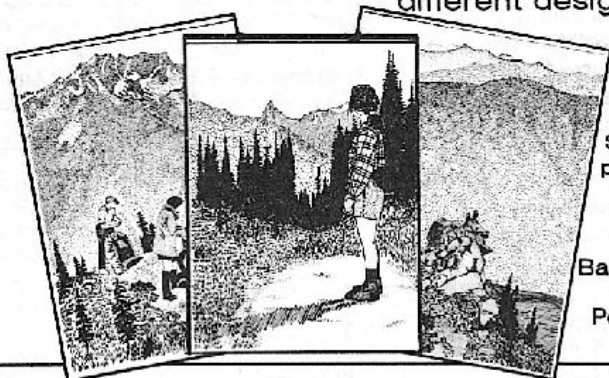
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PO Box 1063
Port Orchard WA
98366

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