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VOLUME 8, NUMBER 4

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Mark Owen

Paul Cho climbing Silver King's northeast ridge

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Kathy Mahan on the Lewis River trail. Gifford Pinchot National Forest, Washington. Photo by Don Paulson.

HOW TO BE A PACK & PADDLE CONTRIBUTOR:

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PACK & PADDLE (ISSN 1059-4493) is published monthly by Pack & Paddle Publishing, Inc. Office of publication is 4450 Lakeview Dr SE 98366 (do not send mail here). Mailing address is PO Box 1063, Port Orchard WA 98366. Telephone is 360-871-1862. E-mail is ycat@packandpaddlemagazine.com. Subscription rate is \$18 (US funds) for one year. Washington residents add \$1.46 state sales tax. Periodicals Postage Paid at Port Orchard WA 98366. Printed by Little Nickel, Lynnwood WA.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Pack & Paddle,
PO Box 1063, Port Orchard WA 98366.

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

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with soy-based ink

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BACKCOUNTRY NEWS

REPORTS AND CONDITIONS

INTRODUCTION

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

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

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



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



—Hiking, backpacking on trails.



—Canoeing, kayaking and water trips.



—Snowshoeing and cross-country skiing.



PENINSULA



QUINAUT NATIONAL RECREATION TRAIL SYSTEM

(USGS Quinault Lk East)—

Heather and I have been hiking in the Quinault area for years and never have we seen such storm damage as on this trip. The area was recently hit with some intense wind storms that have laid havoc to the wonderful trail network here in the Quinault rainforest.

Over 150 trees (some old growth giants) have tumbled onto the trails. There have also been some serious washouts as well. The Forest Service has actually closed some of the trails so check at the ranger station before heading over here.

We actually were still able to get a 7 mile hike in—and with minimal discomfort. We started at the Gatton Creek

trailhead and headed up that trail to its junction with the trail that parallels Falls Creek.

We followed the old Falls Creek trail to its start, returned and then went up to Cascade Falls. We followed this trail a bit—but many windfalls prompted us to return.

On the way back over the Gatton Creek section we diverted to the Wrights Canyon road and back before completing our hike. By this time the rain was falling hard and we had exhausted our hikeable trails in the network. Nevertheless, it was a fun and interesting day.—Craig Romano, Seattle, 2/12.



HUMES RANCH (USGS Hurricane Hill)

—This was a Troop 14 hike with five adult leaders who like to get out in the backcountry, and two very inexperienced boys. Not a bad ratio!

Took the long way down to Humes Ranch. Stopped to wonder at the "giant" yew tree, the eddy and the narrow jaws of Goblin Gates. Admired the Anderson Ranch elk herd. We took our time wandering down through Krause Bottom and before we knew it we arrived at Humes Ranch.

Since the Whiskey Bend parking lot was empty, we assumed that we would have the whole place to ourselves, but there was a group of young men from Port Angeles whose parents had dropped them off earlier in the day.

Even though it wasn't raining, we set up a dining fly immediately "just in case." I eyed the boys' pup tent with

suspicion—no rain fly. I told them to sleep under the dining fly if the tent started to leak. After we ate dinner, we walked up to the old cabin. A heavy rain started soon thereafter and we stayed up late talking under the fly. It rained all night.

In the morning I went to check on the boys. Predictably, there was more water in the tent than there was on the ground. Due to the fear of bears, cougars and sasquatches, they had not followed instructions to get up to sleep under the fly.

Indeed, one of the boys claimed to have heard a bear growling just outside the tent. Upon further questioning we determined the source of the menacing sound was one of the snoring leaders. Two of the leaders were also in a sub-standard, leaky tent. However, the one who has the packframe-that-converts-to-a-cot backpack slept high and dry above the flood. I'll never make fun of his pack again.

After everyone was warm, dry and fed we walked up to the suspension bridge. (Just how did that steel girder get bent on the downstream side?) The original plan was to go on to Anderson Ranch but we decided to start for home. We went back by way of Michael's cabin and the high route.—Dave Parent, Freeland, 3/12-13.



OIL CITY, JEFFERSON COVE

(USGS Destruction Island, Hoh Head)—The forecast was for strong storm conditions out on the coast by evening, so left Tuesday morn-

BACKCOUNTRY NEWS

DEADLINE: April 20

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

BACKCOUNTRY NEWS

REPORTS AND CONDITIONS

ing for Oil City. I figured the impending storm would be a very nice test for the Outdoor Research bivouac bag that I was reviewing for Ann Marshall [Ed. Note: Reviews will appear later this spring]. Of course, "storm" would turn out to be an understatement in this case!

The parking lot was empty, and I parked the Old Beater right up against a mammoth spruce tree to protect from any flying debris if the wind really kicked in later. The 1-mile trail down to the beach along the banks of the river was in okay shape except for a few detours around washed out sections.

The first view of the beach was breathtaking. The perspective looks right down the center of the river to the surf line. The trail petered out at a huge Driftwood Heaven approximately five acres in size!

The tide was just past peak, so I scampered just above the surf line and below the driftwood line to the little headland before Jefferson Cove. I waited about an hour here for the tide to recede more. The photo opportunities were wonderful, and I scrambled around in the driftwood, finding a nice glass float. These floats are few and far between any more, so it was a nice surprise. I also took out the bivy sack and set it up for practice.

Rounding the small headland, Jefferson Cove appeared as a magnificent crescent beach. The black sand was interspersed with colored gravel sections. The sun came out briefly—I actually felt some warmth!

As the sun was sinking into China, the wind started picking up. I decided to look around for a sheltered spot just into the trees. Found a nice small level spot behind a windbreak of stubby trees.

Getting dark, so I hunkered down in the bivy sack with a book and headphones. The trees were starting to move pretty good, and soon small branches were filtering off and flying like little kites into the main forest. There was very little rain, but the wind had picked up to about 30 mph, with gusts to 40 or so. The bivy sack was starting to flap around, so I put the book away, turned off the headphones, and just listened to the howling.

At about 11 o'clock, the trees really started moving! It seemed like all of a sudden the wind had transformed into a mammoth Aeolian being. Even behind the windbreak, the bivy sack was rattling with the gusts. My guess is that the wind was hitting the 60 to 70 mph mark. The larger gusts were breaking some limbs off, and I could hear crackles and pops in the forest. The bivy sack was perfect for keeping dry and

staying low.

The wind seemed to increase to roughly 80 mph at first light. Again, the rain was not heavy, although some of the short showers were flying sideways. The tide was starting to come in, so I put on all my fleecce, polarguard and coated nylon and headed out. I could hear the gusts coming, so would hunker down just before they hit, then trot a few hundred feet down the beach before kneeling or laying down for the next gust. In this manner, I made good progress down to the mouth of the Hoh.

The exposure was pretty evident here, and the wind was screaming like a banshee up the valley. I was relatively safe, as there was nothing to hit me except wind and spray. Truly magnificent!

I could not stand, so I basically crawled about 300 feet along nice gravels to get back to Driftwood Heaven. Once there, I was able to snake my way to the trail. In a couple of spots, I was puzzled by an "electronic" humming sound. I realized it was the various pieces of twisted driftwood vibrating in the wind! What a chorus.

The car was fine in its sheltered location. I had to put a tow line on two small trees on the road out to the highway. The Old Beater came through, with its 87 horsepower of raw fury pulling those trunks aside. I had to pull the folding saw out of the trunk to cut another larger tree, and then I just dodged large branches in the road.

The scary part of this trip was trying to keep the car tracking straight on the highway. The wind was still incredibly strong, and I kept both hands on the wheel all the way home. I was pleasantly surprised to see the Hood

Canal bridge open.—Larry Smith, Port Orchard, 3/2-3.



GREEN MOUNTAIN (USGS

Wildcat Lk)—Lew and I left the Green Mountain Gold Creek trailhead and headed up the very well laid and maintained trail to Green Mountain Vista. Views on the 1000-foot rise opened first to the west where we enjoyed the entire Olympic Range.

We then swung around the north side to the summit, always staying out of sight of the tower and transmitter maintenance road until we got close to the top. View spots there presented us the Cascades from Rainier to Baker and to the west again; even better than before with large parts of Hood Canal in view. We then headed down the Wildcat Trail to Green Mountain Campground; nicely set up for horse parties. The trail is multi-use and Lew has heard motorcycles in past visits but we saw only three small groups of mountain bikers.

From there we walked down the Beaver Pond trail, crossing the roads three times, then up to a junction with the Gold Creek trail. The total hike was about 7.5 miles and surprisingly nice for one so accessible. Free loaner trail maps were even available at the trailhead, courtesy of the Department of Natural Resources.—Tom Karasek, Lake Goodwin, 3/20.

HOH RIVER—The trail is clear of downed trees from the Visitor Center to Olympus Guard Station.

A significant washout has occurred at Mineral Creek (5.5 miles). Another washout has occurred at Clide Creek (7



Paddling at the mouth of the Skokomish River; Hood Canal.

Lee McKee

miles). Both washouts require easy scrambling.

There is a 40-foot long washout just upstream of the junction with Hoh Lake trail. Six big trees were undercut by the river and took the trail out with their rootwads when they fell. The washout can be skirted without major problems, but the snow above Olympus Guard Station is reported to be deep and collapsing. Beyond OGS the trail is under continuous snow.—Ranger, 3/23.

ELWHA RIVER—Approximately 25 to 30 trees are down across the trail in the first 12 miles to Elkhorn Ranger Station. Hikers can easily get around most of these trees. Snow begins to cover the trail near Lillian River. The meadows near Elkhorn are covered by 18 inches of snow, while under the tree canopy the trail is mostly snowfree.—Ranger, 3/13.

BEACH: Oil City to Mosquito Creek—From the trailhead to the beach, the path is washed out extensively in numerous places. The detours around the washouts are relatively simple with limited bushwhacking.

Diamond Point (the point south of Jefferson Cove) has changed radically since a large rock slide dumped debris into the ocean immediately north of the point. What was once a climb down used at medium tides is now a step down onto large boulders that extend north to the beach of Jefferson Cove.

Hoh Headland trail is in relatively good shape with several blowdowns and some small sections of the trail pulled away by tipped rootwads. A blowdown on the steep south side of the headland trail has made passage interesting but not difficult.

Evidence of extensive flooding and coastal erosion is apparent at the mouth of Mosquito Creek. The vegetation near the mouth of the creek was scoured clear by high water and is now a gravel bar extending up canyon for approximately 150 yards. Large gravels, five to 10 feet deep, have been deposited on top of sand north of the creek for approximately 100 yards.—Ranger, 3/15.

ADVANCE NOTICE—Highway 101 at Lake Crescent will be closed at the east end at Govens Hill, just east of mile marker 231, for at least three weeks starting on or around September 12. The road will be closed to repair chronic problems with slumping of the ground supporting the highway. The alternate route around Lake Crescent is on highways 112 and 113.—Ranger, 3/13.

SOL DUC ROAD—The road is open as far as the Sol Duc Hot Springs Resort. Parking is available in the small lot in front of the Ranger Station. The road has not been plowed past the intersection at the resort, so you can ski or snowshoe up to the trailhead. There are two downed trees on the road to the trailhead.—Ranger, 3/22

BOGACHIEL RIVER—The Trail was cleared from the Forest Service trailhead to the bluff just beyond Mosquito Creek on 3/18. At Mosquito Creek, the upstream side of the bluff now requires a scramble down to the section which follows the river.

Work to clear most of the windfall on the Bogachiel to just beyond the intersection with Snider Jackson trail (Hoh-Bogachiel) will continue.

There is no snow on the Bogachiel trail as far as the Snider Jackson trail (roughly 10 miles from the trailhead). On the Snider Jackson trail, snow is soft and about 3 feet deep at 3000 feet.—Ranger, 3/23.

ROYAL BASIN—The Royal Basin access via the Upper Dungeness trailhead is closed due to major washouts on the Forest Service roads into that area. There is no anticipated date of opening.—Ranger, 3/23.

GRAYWOLF—The lower Graywolf trailhead is accessible; however, the trail has blown out in many sections. This means that the Graywolf and Cameron Creek areas of Olympic National Park will remain less accessible due to the additional problems on the Graywolf trail. Access to the Park via the upper Graywolf trails from Slab Camp is unknown at this time due to snow.—Ranger, 3/23.

SOUTHWEST



CHEHALIS RIVER, Lincoln Creek (USGS Centralia)

—The recent rains provided a unique opportunity for a paddle I have been wanting to do since the Great Flood of February 1996. The flooding Chehalis River had caused the bump in the flood plain on which our house and two others are located to become an island.

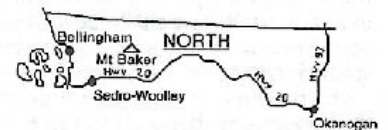
The conditions were right for a never-before-attempted circumnavigation!

Sue helped me get the Ranger canoe launched in the pasture and my daughter Lindsey and I climbed in. We first paddled over the fence to the driveway to pick my son Phillip up. After a wary ride in six inches of water he was ready to get out! We then paddled down the street and into the neighbor's field. The water was about 3 feet deep and getting deeper as we went.

We had to blast through brush to get to a logged off area with small firs growing in it. Which way to go? Our route was obscured by blackberries. Without taking out my compass I made a seat-of-the-pants route decision: straight through that tangle! The thorns didn't hurt the canoe's finish, but my own finish got damaged a bit. We weaved our way through trees, stumps, a glade, more blackberries and bushes, till we finally burst through to an open field about a quarter mile "upstream" from our house. Here the water was much browner than before—the influence of the river—as contrasted with the water nearer our house, which was from Lincoln Creek.

We shot the "rapids" as the floodwaters flowed through a saddle across the neighbor's driveway, bumped open the gate into the pasture, and we were home, exultant, just as the rain began again. . . .—Ray Berg, Chehalis, 2/25.

NORTH



MOUNTAIN LAKE and TWIN LAKES (USGS Mt Constitution)

—Heather and I spent 3 wonderful days on Orcas Island integrating two of our passions—hiking and biking. I was able to revisit some favorite spots, check out some new areas, and it was all new for Heather.

The clouds rolled back in today, but it didn't rain and the weather didn't stop us from doing an 11-mile hike to some of Moran State Park's best spots.

We left Cascade Lake and headed up the trail that parallels Cascade Brook to Cascade Falls. This stretch of trail is highly scenic for it passes through a magnificent stand of old growth forest. Cascade Falls and the neighboring smaller falls were roaring.

We continued on the trail to Mountain Lake. Another lovely section of

trail, passing through a pretty ravine. We hiked the northeastern shore of the lake—still more great old growth forest. We then hiked to and around the Twin lakes.

The smaller Twin lake loop was impassable due to flooding; the bigger lake loop was fine. There were three hooded mergansers in the small lake.

We returned the same way—opted to hike the other side of Mountain Lake and completed our loop back to Cascade lake. The trails are all in great shape—surviving the winter of 1999's wrath!—Craig Romano, Seattle, 2/27.



OBSTRUCTION PASS DNR TRACT (USGS Blakely Isl)

This was a short hike Heather and I did while taking a break from bicycling.

Just outside the tiny village of Olga on Orcas Island is a small tract of public land with hiking, camping, and beach walking opportunities. The land is managed by DNR, but it feels more like a state park. It is one of the better secrets on Orcas Island.

When we got to the parking lot only one truck was there. We hiked down the .6-mile, very-well-groomed trail to the Obstruction Pass Beach. At this point are backcountry campsites and a beautiful secluded beach. Great views out to some of the other San Juan islands and a nice madrona forest as well.

We had lunch here and then returned to our bikes. This area is small, but further explorations can be made.—Craig Romano, Seattle, 2/28.



SAN JUAN ISLAND (USGS Roche Harbor, False Bay,

Richardson)—Leaving on the 9:40am nonstop ferry from Anacortes, my sister and I arrived in Friday Harbor at 10:45am giving us almost two full days to explore the island. Many people think that most of the hiking up here is at Moran State Park on Orcas Island, but San Juan has much to offer the hiker as well.

After we had our fill of Friday Harbor, which didn't take long, we headed off to American Camp National Historical Park at the south end of the island. Following the Cattle Point Road, we first stopped at American Camp's Interpretive Center where the congenial ranger told us about the park's many trails.

The park's brochure shows the trails of American and British Camps better than the topo maps. After touring the few historic buildings in the area, we hiked a 3-mile loop trail encompassing the open fields and boulder-strewn beaches of South Beach. Since we picked two sunny days for our trip, the

views stretched forever.

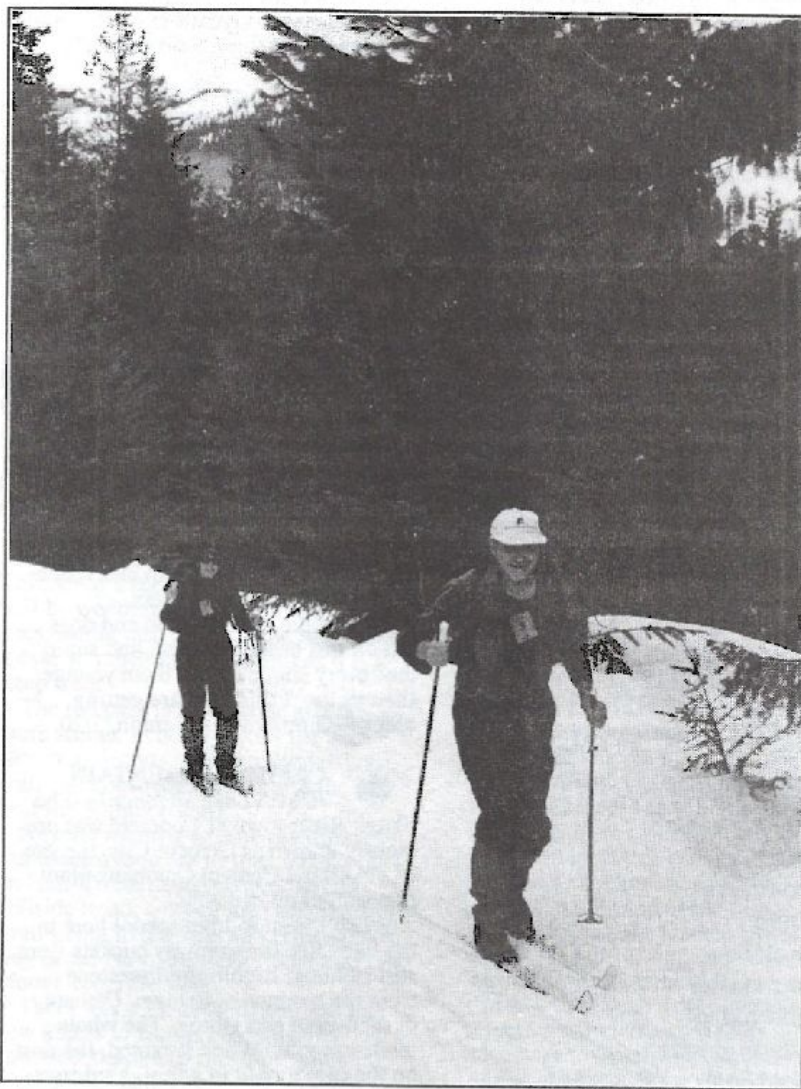
Then we headed to Jakle's and Third Lagoons on the north side of the park. Here we walked on quiet trails and old roads in deep woods as well as along the cobbled lagoons. Before leaving the park, we took the short trail to the Cattle Point Lighthouse, an ugly thing not even worth a picture. It is much more impressive when viewed from afar.

By now it was getting late so we headed to Roche Harbor Resort at the north end of the island where we had reservations for two nights. We opted to stay in the charming old Hotel De Haro and had a room with a harbor view for \$75. The bathroom was across the hall but the hotel was virtually empty so we had the place to ourselves.

Getting an early start the next day, we first explored Roche Harbor itself.

An interesting side trip took us to the Mausoleum trail. Be sure to get the informational pamphlet at the hotel before going so you understand what you are seeing when you get to the Mausoleum.

Next stop was British Camp National Historical Park just a few miles from the resort. There are two really neat trails here. Bell Point trail is an easy forested path that winds along the shore of Garrison and Westcott Bays. There are a few restored buildings and garden in the parade ground where we took a snack break at the end of the trail. Then we headed up the one mile (seems longer), 600-foot gain trail to Mount Young, stopping at the small British cemetery. Views abound from the glacier-scoured rocky knoll viewpoints along the way. We could see



Rosie Bodien and Sam Fry ski up the Cub Creek road; Methow Valley.

Lee McKee


BACKCOUNTRY NEWS

REPORTS AND CONDITIONS

west to the Strait and south to the Olympics.

After soaking up the numerous views on Mount Young, we drove south to Lime Kiln State Park where we hiked first to a picturesque lighthouse and then on trails along the hillside cluttered with remnants of old lime kilns.

In two fairly full days, we managed to cram in the island's highlights. I recommend going off season for three reasons: trails are open year-round, no ferry lines, and off-season hotel rates. —Ginny Evans, Renton, 3/5-6.

 **PNW TRAIL** (USGS *Bellingham South*)—Lew and I left the Windy Beach trailhead south of Bellingham on Chuckanut Drive and headed up the fairly good but steep Pacific Northwest Trail east. Some good views and generally good trail conditions except for a couple of downed trees on the steep slope.


In 1.8 miles we reached a junction with a steep trail 2 miles north to a knob. We chose the south route to a viewpoint and the continuance of the PNT. Switchbacks changed to a pleasant inland trail through some clearcut then back to the switchbacks south reaching a plateau in .5-mile.

Here we met a road used by hang-gliding enthusiasts, as we came to two obvious launch points: south and west, both steep drop-offs with wind flags. Views were very wide to the west with all the Olympic Mountains and San Juan Islands and to the south was the entire Skagit Valley.


We continued a short distance on a nice wooded portion of the PNW trail heading east, but time dictated we turn around. We went up the road north until it began to drop southeast, probably crossing the PNT.

Returning to the car I managed to

whack my head on a splintered tree over a fallen log. Looked like I had been in battle, but nothing I needed leaked out, I think. Careful, y'all.—Tom Karasek, Lake Goodwin, 3/10.

 **FRAGRANCE LAKE** (USGS *Bellingham South*)—Lew and I left the trailhead across from Larabee State Park south of Bellingham and headed up to Fragrance Lake. This is a very good early season warm-up hike and we were able to walk side by side for much of this excellent trail.


There was a good viewpoint of Lummi Island and Guemes Island, then a short mile to the lake. The trail around the lake was pretty good but a bit muddy in places. We came back on the Lost Lake road (gated) which was fast but actually farther. But, the light rain helped select the return route. Only saw two people the whole time. Overall trip was about 5 miles. Nice one!—Tom Karasek, Stanwood, 3/2.

 **OYSTER DOME** (USGS *Bellingham South*)—Since this was the best weather we've had all winter, we weren't about to let this day go by without getting out on a hike.

I selected Oyster Dome above Chuckanut Drive south of Bellingham as an ideal place for two reasons: no snow and the incredible views. Using *Footsore 3* as our only guide and following the sketch map in the book, we got lost only once and added an extra mile to our hike.

We took the Pacific Northwest Trail right from Highway 11 and did a counterclockwise loop to the Dome. Views everywhere including the San Juans and Olympics. We explored the Bat Boulders on the return trip and watched the climbers on the rocks.

There were many people and dogs out on this beautiful warm and sunny day, every single one of them younger than us too. I think we are getting older.—Ginny Evans, Renton, 3/20.

 **CEMENT MOUNTAIN** (USGS *Lake Shannon*)—The Skagit River town of Concrete was previously known as Cement City, the site of a Portland Cement Company plant that started up in 1905.

When I went to high school here in the late '50s, the tramway buckets were still running, highlining limestone from the mountains to town. Cement dust covered everything. The whole town was gray. When it rained, the dust on the cars turned to a thin, hard frosting of concrete.

For years, I've eyed the first summit northeast of town as a possible winter destination. You can even see it from I-5, and closer from Highway 20, appearing as the first summit left of Sauk Mountain.

Drive off Highway 20 through downtown Concrete, turning left at the fire station T, and cross Baker River on what used to be the longest single-span, arch bridge in the US. Make an immediate hairpin left turn and snake uphill past views to Baker Dam and powerhouse to Everett Lake. Go right around the lake, and uphill another half mile to a gate at 1000 feet.

Here we unloaded the bikes, then pedaled and pushed for an hour enjoying wonderful views down to the pastureland along the meandering Skagit and south to the snowy hills of Loggers Island. Shortly after snow stopped the bikes, it stopped the feet, until we strapped snowshoes on them.

We ambled up through second growth, crossing various switchbacks on logging roads until we broke into open views on the main ridge coming southwest off the summit at the pleasantly low elevation of 3400 feet. From here on, Mitch and Tom and I delighted in recognizing our many long-winter-lost mountain friends, calling out their names as we spotted them one by one in shadow and sun. Ian salivated over possible future ski adventures on Baker and Shuksan.

The ultimate 4769-foot summit of Cement Mountain has been spared the logger's saw and is still covered in old growth, so we stopped at the bare bump just before and had a long lunch on this first delectable, warm, sunny day of the year. It's finally almost spring! That last winter was a bad one, and the diving-board cornices on our ridge laid proof to it.

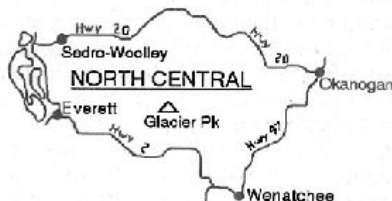
From the actual summit we could see how far back the mysterious Jackman Creek ran, an area rarely explored by climbers, even though the valley rim sports several 400-foot prominence summits, including the one we were standing on.

We did a straight-shot descent south down a snow gully/stream to a logging spur and were back to the bikes in short order. 5.3 hours up, 2 down. The bike ride that took one hour up took 10 minutes down, creating big grins on middle-aged men.—John Roper, Bellevue, 3/19.

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

NORTH CENTRAL



BABY ISLAND (NOAA 18423)—My son, Travis, and I got out of work at noon, grabbed the double kayak and launched at Freeland Park at the end of Holmes Harbor. It seemed like the first warm and sunny day of the year and we needed to take advantage of it.

We paddled into a 10-knot north wind with 1-foot breaking waves against a mild flood tide. At least, we reasoned, all these things would be in our favor on the return trip. We stayed close to the eastern shore of Holmes Harbor to avoid the heavier weather midstream.

Large rafts of western grebes and surf scoters were waiting for a break in the wind. Loons were common. It took about two hours to finally reach Baby Island, a speck of land connected at low tide to the shore by a sandspit.

We stretched our legs on the island which is about 30 yards long by 20 yards wide. At one time, there was a house and a dock here but now all that remains are some rotting pilings and concrete footings.

Bird life was abundant. Large numbers of black turnstones were so preoccupied with feeding, fighting and courting that they ignored us sitting 5 feet away. An oystercatcher presided over its smaller relatives. Offshore, great rafts of scaups, goldeneyes, surf and white-winged scoters fed in Saratoga Passage. Black scoters added their mournful voices to the assembly.

As soon as we headed back our expected tailwind died to nothing and the harbor's surface took on a glassy appearance. We pointed our bow directly at the barely visible park restroom and glided silently home. An almost continuous flight of scoters, grebes and loons took wing in the opposite direction. Heading north.—David Parent, Freeland, 3/20.

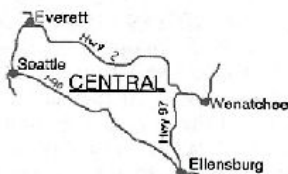
CASCADE RIVER ROAD—The road is plowed nicely to MP 13 (just past Hard Creek). Then there is abruptly 2 feet of snow in both lanes making it impossible for even 4WD to continue (no tracks or ruts at all). Ski conditions in sunlit areas pretty good, but because much is shaded there is a lot of variation.—Ranger, 3/23.



Mark Owen

Mitch Blanton, Paul Cho and John Roper take a rest on Arrowhead's east ridge; Alpine Lakes Wilderness boundary.

CENTRAL



KAMIKAZE FALLS (USGS Mt Si)—Shortstop, "One-I'ed" Rick and I were on the trail to enhance the trail to Kamikaze Falls, located on the west side of Mount Teneriffe (Green Trails maps 206 and 174). The trail is now clean and the view is better than ever.

Whoever cleaned the Hillside Road also made a new trail. The trail parallels Kamikaze Creek. In the summer it will be wonderful because it is in the trees. Being next to the creek will make it ever so much more tranquil as it is a steep trail.

The old path is still usable and is more scenic. I choose to call the path shown in *Secrets of Si* the Winter Trail, with its unobstructed view, and the new trail the Summer Trail.

Anyone wanting to hike the trails can make a loop out of it by ascending on Half-Circle Road, turning left on Hillside Road, finding the Old (Winter) Trail going to the falls and returning by way of the New (Summer) Trail and the Mount Teneriffe Road.

There was a lot of work put into that new access to Kamikaze Falls. My heartfelt thanks to those people who logged long hours providing another access to the Falls and eventually

Mount Teneriffe. Your trail will be in my next edition of *Secrets of Si*.—Wanderbuns and Shortstop, Kirkland, 2/13.



CHOIR BOY (USGS Lake Phillipa)—Choir Boy kneels at the foot of Preacher Mountain just across the new bridge over the Middle Fork Snoqualmie at Taylor River.

At a modest 2120+ feet, it still stands out as a significant Washington landform on the basis of its steep sides and a 400 foot prominence. And it is quite prominent, and cute, even, as viewed from Quartz Mountain to the northwest.

We parked at the overly huge parking lot 11½ miles up the perpetually potholed road, elevation 1000 feet. Most every car in the lot had a ticket.

Hike under the delicate, laminated, kissing arches of the Middle Fork bridge, enjoying a deep pool in the river and the summit downstream—South Bessemer (labeled "4 WD" on the 7.5-minute quad) which looked especially nice decked out in winter whites. The upriver summit from here is "Pumpkinseed Peak" (4860 feet) reported on by Garth Warner and Mark Owen a few years back.

Immediately across the bridge, head straight uphill on a steep primitive track that soon disappears. Basically, just stay on the west ridge crest all the way to the top. Unfortunately, some directionally-challenged folks felt it necessary to litter this entire, obvious route with flags. It's a ridge, for Pete's sake—it doesn't need plastic. Our

pockets were bulging with so many orange flags by the top we could hardly walk.


There are sneak-a-views here and there down to Rattlesnake, Green and Bessemer, and up the Taylor River to The Ark (aka Resonator or Rooster Mountain).

At the 2000-foot subsummit the west peaks of Garfield are particularly intimidating. The top looks up to the gentle, open, undulating upper slopes of Preacher. Overall, a nice, short winter woods walk.

Got back to our car to find that the Trail-park ticketers had returned to nail the rest of us. Why is it you so rarely see the Forest Service actually clearing a trail, but always see their tickets on cars at trailheads lately?

Don't get me wrong: I don't mind paying the 25 bucks—cheap entertainment for a year of fun.

How about spending some of this money right here, this year, getting a crew up to do something worthy, like running a trail from the other side of the bridge to the trail up the fabulous Pratt River valley? That would be a useful connection.—John Roper, Bellevue, 3/6.

 **THE TOOTH** (USGS Snoqualmie Pass)—This winter has had a high percentage of dangerous avalanche conditions, but finally on March 7, after previous cancellations, a break in the weather presented a window of opportunity. Off I went with Tim Monet, Morris Kittleman and Jim Nelson (the extreme team).

I had climbed The Tooth in summer a couple of times but had always wanted to do it in winter. The south face was the route I had done before but Jim suggested a route that would satisfy the loop trip requirement and offer more variety in climbing—the northeast slab to the ridge and then run the ridge to the summit.

From the upper parking lot at Alpentel we followed the valley trail on the left (west) side of the creek. (If the ski area backcountry is open the trail is packed out.)

Tim, Jim and I skinned up on skis while Morris went on snowshoes. Just before Source Lake is a break in the trees and a nice up route that leads to a small basin beneath the Tooth and Pineapple Pass.

We parked our skis and extra gear in the basin and got organized to do the climb. The climb begins north of the east face but before the first gully at about 5000 feet. The terrain is mixed ice and steep snow (to about 70 de-


grees). We went up and worked slightly left to a good tree anchor and then up to the ridge crest at about 5400 feet.

The ridge is narrow to begin with but gradually widens as it goes south to the summit at 5600+ feet. The ridge is mixed rock and snow with a final short chimney at the finish.

We rapped off the south face and swam through deep snow by way of Pineapple Pass to get back to our skis, completing our loop. Getting to Alpentel on skis took no time at all; snowshoes slightly longer.

Equipment used: 60 meter rope, 3 ice screws, 1 titanium piton, small rack to 1 inch, ice tools and crampons.

Note: This area has high potential for avalanches. Besides calling the Avalanche Report I also called the friendly Pro Ski Patrol at Alpentel for up-to-the-minute advice on conditions. Generally if the Pro Patrol opens the Alpentel backcountry you're okay but it doesn't hurt to call and find out what's been going on.—Ian Mackay, Seattle, 3/7.

 **AMABILIS MOUNTAIN** (USGS Stampede Pass)—Start from the Cabin Creek Sno-park. Cross the freeway to the groomed cross-country trails. At the first split go right and as the trail drops see a road heading off and up on your right again.

Follow this road until the start of the second switchback; follow to the left. At the next intersection either choice will take you to the top. The gully of Cedar Creek on the right hand link is known to be avalanche prone.

We had been following icy tracks up to the end of the first switchback. They ended and the hard work of breaking trail began. With three of us taking turns it was not too bad.

Then at about 1½ miles we were caught by another group of three we had talked to at the start. Thankful for the easy time they had up to that point they joined forces with us.

After check of conditions and going single file we went through on the right hand route. Quickly passing through the gully area we broke out of the woods on a long traverse on easier windblown snow. As we turned the corner on the upper shoulder of the peak we were blasted hard by strong winds. Back in the trees out of the wind it was lunch time, and turn-around time for the other three.

Refueled, we made short work of the last distance to the summit. There we enjoyed limited views, mainly of the Snoqualmie peaks but also partial views of Mount Rainier.

After watching a couple head off to

ski the steeps of the south face we made our own way back, retracing our road and loving the little bit of speed it afforded us. We made the trip down, even with frequent stops, in less than half the time that it took to go up.

I have been up Amabilis several times but I still enjoy it and it was a good trip for my companions, as beginning intermediates, under these conditions.—Dave N, Michael Kaegan, Rob Gramenz, Tacoma, 2/20.



IRON HORSE TRAIL

(USGS Thorp)—Headed over the pass to find some much needed sunshine. Decided to do a section of the Iron Horse trail, running west from near Thorp.

Taking the Thorp exit from I-90 we headed through Thorp, parking in a wide spot in the road near where the trail crosses. We headed west on the trail. In a couple of miles we were in the Yakima River canyon.

A number of horse trails branch off the main trail. We followed one of these to the top of the ridge above for lunch with great views, particularly north to the snow-capped splendor of the Stuart Range.

Returning to the main trail we continued through a short tunnel, to a second tunnel, at which point we turned around and headed back. We had the thrill of watching two westbound freight trains on the BNSF main line across the river.

You can go as far as you want on this trail. We did about 6 miles for a 12 mile round trip. We got the sun we went looking for.—Leigh Champlin, Seattle, 3/7.



HAWKINS MOUNTAIN and HUCKLEBERRY

(Green Trails Kachess Lake)—On October eleventh, 1998, we tried Hawkins (7160 feet) from the west side, having climbed it from the east in 1986, before Sasha was born.

The drive is a little shorter from the west, and we had been into the Esmeralda Basin a couple of times that summer, so variety was another motive. An additional attraction was a mountain close by, Huckleberry (5667 feet), that neither Sasha nor I had climbed. In fact, we had done a successful reconnaissance of the latter a week earlier on a dark and drizzly day, and had found the somewhat obscure start of the trail.

From the Salmon la Sac road, continue on the Cle Elum River road. The 1997 map suggests turning right for the Boulder Creek trail, but you should keep left and park right away.

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The bridge, described as "out," has been replaced, but the road (4W305) is unmarked, and is suitable only for hiking. The people who replaced the bridge have a territorial dog, who was aggressive but intimidated by trekking poles.

After a couple of miles an unmarked road takes off back westward and upward to an old mine. From there, ascend to the ridge and thence to the summit of Huckleberry. In that weather, there was no view whatsoever, but I suspect it would have been quite good of Mount Stuart and environs.

A week later the weather was better, and for Hawkins, we continued on the main road; there is no real terminus of the road as the map suggests, and abandoned roads continue higher.

At a campsite with three or four lawn chairs (!) a trail continues straight ahead, over a washout. This trail doubles back north, and after a while ends near some steep gullies below the western cliffs of Hawkins.

We didn't explore the gullies, but I suspect they would lead to very near the summit. Instead, we found a tread into the trees leading back southeast which ended on a ridge. From there, we traversed northeast to the notch east of the true, western summit.

This was a little tricky because of 1 to 2 inches of snow, and the summit wind was gale-force, but the view was outstanding. The elevation gain was nearly 4000 feet, and it took us four hours. It was Sasha's 266th summit, but the Siberian Princess was interested only in lunch, after a retreat down into some scrub cedars. To my surprise, we got home—in Seattle—by 6pm.—Warren Guntheroth, Seattle, October.



LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN

(USGS Teanaway, GT Cle

Elum)—This 3465-foot landform looks like a melting Diamond Head. The trip makes an excellent beginner's snowshoe outing. It's gentle with a constant incline and no avalanche danger, short, and has great views into the wintery Stuart/Enchantment range.

Driving I-90 east past Cle Elum, the summit, with 1185 feet of prominence, is quite notable if you regard it. Green Trails 241: Cle Elum is an adequate map here.

We turned off I-90 at Exit 85, and followed Highway 10/970 about 2.4 miles east, continuing straight on 10 where the main drag turns northeast as Highway 970 headed for Blewett Pass. Continue another 2 miles or so to a left on Taylor Road, and then, quickly, a right on Hart Road which was plowed past the Little Lake spur to a radio fa-

cility (dishes) at 2900 feet (shows on the "Topo!" USGS map we had).

There were lots of private property/no trespassing signs in every possible direction here, so we returned down the road just a bit to an unmaped spur north with no negative signage.

We needed snowshoes from the 2720-foot start, but that didn't dawn on us for a couple of hundred yards of postholing. Then properly shoed, we continued to the end of the spur, and on up the south-southwest ridge to the 3465-foot top. This route avoided all private property worries (at the present, anyway).

The views were great as well up the Yakima and Teanaway Rivers with vistas circling from Peoh Point to the Cascade Crest to Jolly, Hawkins, Ingalls, Earl, Navaho, et al, on to the Enchantment Peaks. Try it, you'll like it.

1.7 hrs up, less down.
Easy.

Hitchman's *Place Names of Washington* has an interesting note that "this name often indicates the use of a peak for fire lookout, but in this case comes from an Indian named Lo-kout. He was a participant in the Indian wars of the 1850s and was the son of a Yakima war chief."—John Roper, Bellevue, 2/20.



TEANAWAY BUTTE LOOP, Indian Creek Campground

to 29 Pines Campground (USGS Red Top Mtn, Teanaway Butte)—After setting up a car shuttle between 29 Pines Campground and Indian Creek Campground, our party of 9 happy snowshoers set off on a sunny Sunday morning for Teanaway Butte.

Blinking in the rare sunlight, we gained a quick 520 feet, intersected the winter recreation road and paused 1 mile into the trip. John, Ian, Liz and Priscilla, unaccustomed to being ahead of the group, began to wonder what had befallen the stragglers when Steve caught up, wearing Dave's snowshoes.

Dave's boots were too big for the snowshoes he borrowed from Deborah after breaking a pair on Yellow Hill last week, so Steve switched and got a pair of rakish Atlases, which soon put him up front as we moved along to the saddle and up the ridge to Teanaway



Jim Nelson

The beginning of a winter ascent of The Tooth; see Ian Mackay's report page 10.

Butte, 5 miles in.

On the summit we enjoyed first lunch, but a brisk breeze had us on the move again despite great views of the Stuart Range with Bean Basin's peaks in the foreground.

We headed due east along the national forest boundary, dropping to a saddle at 3600 feet and then up Peak 4385, which is nameless.

Some party members were induced to go up this bonus peak by the offer of an opportunity to name it, but once there, Jeff and John wouldn't settle on one of the many suggestions, among them Cowpie, Sorckback and Tarzan (Jungle Creek is due north)—this was good for humorous conversation over second lunch.

The pause also gave John a chance to shoot mug pix of people not currently in his collection of obit portraits. Steve, Priscilla and Liz were so honored, but they had to take off their sunglasses and hats.

Turning our westerly sides on the peak remaining nameless, we took the downside going east and enjoyed a descent through trees gradually opening to sloping forested meadows in clear sunlight. Here fragrant smoke drifted above a slash pile melted out of

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the snow, still burning after a long snowy winter.

Mike and Steve were the first to reach Jungle Creek road and scared an unfortunate skinny bear caught napping in a ditch. The rest of the party arrived in time to see only the look of wonder left on Steve's face and retreating bear tracks.

From this point it was a pleasant, mostly flat trip in afternoon sunlight to the bridge across the North Fork and back to 29 Pines Campground.

We were pleased with a good trip in fine conditions totaling 9½ miles and gaining about 3000 feet. It feels like spring might be just around the corner.—Priscilla, Lynnwood, 3/14.



BLEWETT PASS (USGS Swauk Pass)—We were not exactly sure where we wanted to ski. I had only been to this area twice in the past, once skiing the road to the west of the pass and the second time was the Hog Loppet last year which finishes at the main east side parking. Ptc had never been.

We parked at the Pipe Creek Sno-Park and looked at the books and maps. Settling on a trip we headed out, skiing a narrow road that paralleled the highway and brought us out at the main parking lot at the pass. From there we skied up the road a short way until we found the marked trail that heads to Tronsen and Haney Meadows.

It was a pleasant ski through trees and across some clear cuts, a little bit of down but generally gaining elevation at a easy pace. It was fairly cold but warm in the brief sunny spots between trees and clouds. Light snow fell intermittently. We decided to turn around at a long slope coming down off Diamond-head Peak. Here a group of five we had been switching trail-breaking duties with headed up in trees to ski the steep slope.

Meanwhile another six skied by and on up toward Hancy Meadows. The ski out was wonderful and fairly fast, zipping along through the trees on silky dry snow. We topped it off by carving a few turns on the last clearcut before the road. We altered the final return by going up the road a little farther and hitting an alternate route back to the car.—Dave N and Pete S, Tacoma, 3/6.



SWAUK PASS (USGS Swauk Pass)—Starting out mid-week from the Swauk Pass Sno-Park was a smart thing to do, since this is a very busy snowmobile parking lot.

Lec and I hoisted our big winter-camping packs and skied south on road

9716 for about a mile, then took the skier cut-off to Tronsen Meadow into the non-motorized zone. We set up camp on an open snowfield with a great view over to the Stuart Range and the Teanaway peaks.

Many trails and routes invite exploring here. We sampled only a little of it. The Spring/Kirkendall book *Cross-Country Ski Tours* is very useful. Swauk Pass is far enough east to get sun when the Cascade Crest has clouds and rain.—Ann Marshall, Port Orchard, 3/17-19.



CLARA LAKE (USGS Mission Peak)—Jock Kinne and I approached this lake on snowshoes from a parking spot at the last switch-back before reaching the Mission Ridge ski area parking lot. A small amount of snowmobile traffic shares the first portion of the route.

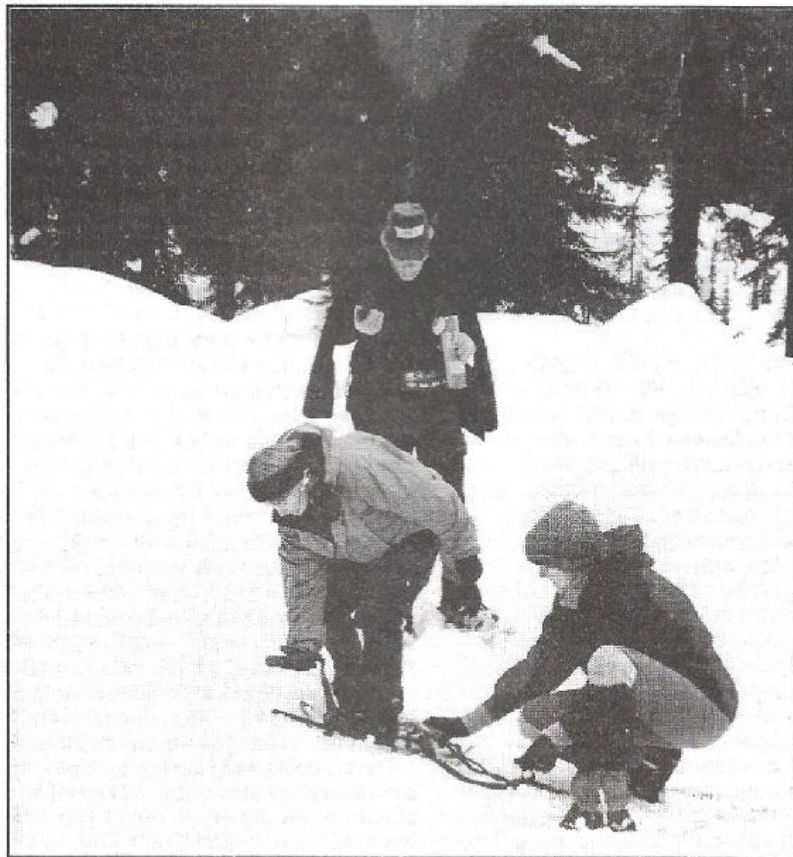
We followed the logging spur west for about one-third mile. At a narrow opening above, ascend straight uphill to join the Pipeline Trail above. Cross this, still ascending toward Point 5380 above. A meandering route from here leads to Clara Lake.

The route passes several excellent viewpoints, showing the Columbia River far below and across to the Mission Ridge Ski Area.—Charlie Hickenbottom, Wenatchee, 3/7.

ICICLE ROAD—The road is plowed all the way to the entrance to Bridge Creek campground, where there is limited parking. Eightmile campground is gated closed, but may be used on a walk-in basis.—Ranger, 3/16.

ENCHANTMENTS—To obtain a permit application, call the Leavenworth Ranger Station, 509-548-6977. Processing began on 3/1. Permits received between 2/21 and 3/1 were processed in random order. All permit applications received after 3/1 will be processed in the order they are received. Applicants will receive a confirmation or rejection notice within approximately 4 to 6 weeks after processing begins.

Overnight permits are required in the Enchantments from 6/15 through 10/15.—Ranger, 3/16.



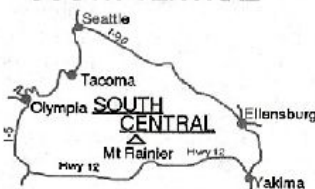
Instructor Charlie monitors the progress of students Linda and Monika as they learn to use avalanche beacons in a Mountaineers club class.

Ann Marshall

BACKCOUNTRY NEWS

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SOUTH CENTRAL



SQUAK MOUNTAIN SE

(USGS Issaquah; Squak Mtn SP)—State Parks has developed a fine trailhead facility off May Valley Road, with plentiful parking and restrooms. The trail map posted here is the most accurate I have found for the mountain, and is worth copying down. A short gravel path leads to the South Access Road ("trail S1").

The road intersects Lower Equestrian Loop Trail S4 in 3/4km, which contours east to cross Phil's Creek over a stout bridge. Private access paths from neighborhood farms enter at several places. Beyond the last of these, a short ascent leads to an unmarked Y (trails S6 and S7 on the map); I went right, skirting new home construction atop 221st Ave SE.

I then arrived at a junction and went right on the Perimeter Loop Trail which led to a day's worth of explorations.

After passing through a swampy area, I came to an unmarked junction; took the right-hand fork, a 1km trail that as it contours eastward loses elevation back to the base of the mountain.

I emerged at an equestrian training ground (ring, jumps, barricades) under power lines. Southwest on the power-line road leads to a near intersection with 230th Ave SE (private road); northeast passes under cliffs and heads down Issaquah Creek valley (access possibilities unknown).

Returning to the previous junction, the main trail follows the edge of a small plateau, with maple leaves thick on the ground as winter snow; then contours to another junction. The right-hand fork follows a rude flagged route, plowed through salal, around the southeast corner of the mountain.

The tread fades but the red flags continue about 1.5km up the east side of Squak, contouring fairly open slopes at about 330m elevation. I turned around at a scoured watercourse opposite Poo-Poo Point.

Returning to the previous junction, the main trail follows orange flagging and continues 1km up into a vale under Southeast (Sam's) Peak; the Douglas-fir are huge up here. The path dwindled to nothing atop a saddle (420m) laced with remnants of January's snows.

With afternoon waning I returned to the Equestrian Trail, followed it to its upper intersection of the South Access Road, and dropped quickly 2km back to the truck.—Andy Carr, Bellevue, 2/12.



SQUAK WEST PEAK LOOPS

(USGS Issaquah; Squak Mtn SP)—I prize the Mountain-side Drive trailhead for its quick access to Squak's main trails. Oftentimes the parking circle is deserted, as was the case on this grayish holiday.

From North Access Trail N1, I took the Coal Mine N3 cutoff to West Access Trail W1 and hence to Chybinski Trail W4 (aka "West Summit Loop" in *Foot Hills & Lowlands*).

This ancient forest road passes through colossal wind damage as it swings around the northwest corner of the mountain. The "Chybinski Loop" cat track branches off right at an oblique angle; it appears to be a rough go through blowdowns.

I continued 1.5km on W4, passing the Block House and rounding the southwest corner, to arrive at a three-way intersection. The middle fork was my return route; the right-hand fork, unsigned, is shown on the State Park map as a segment of the Perimeter Loop Trail. I followed it south, then east as it traverses the south slopes of West Peak at about 530m elevation. A mild-mannered trail, narrow but easy to follow, swinging through quiet country.

After a half hour I came to the headwaters of Bullitt Creek and a T intersection, the signed PLT continuing right (south). I turned left on Valley Connector Trail C3, a steep climb up to a saddle; then a vague track through cold and dreary woods to a junction with West Peak Trail W3 and Bullitt Fireplace Trail C2, perhaps 1/4km west of the fireplace.

I turned left (west) on W3, which crudely surfs a ridge and ravine before climbing to the wooded summit. Beside the "Green House," a triangular ladder climbs far up the trunk of a giant fir ... very intriguing. The trail follows electrical cables as it descends the west ridge to arrive back at the Chybinski-PLT junction and complete the upper Peak loop.

Turning boots contentedly homeward, I descended mainline trails (W4 to C2 to N1) and closed the outer loop just before the rains came.—Andy Carr, Bellevue, 2/15.



POO POO POINT

(USGS Issaquah)—After hearing about the new trail to Poo Poo Point (*Ed. Note: see March issue, page 9*), my wife

Donna, dog Beau and I decided to try it out. It turned out to be a pleasant surprise.

We drove from Issaquah on the Issaquah-Hobart Road about 3 miles southwest to the parachute and hang glider parking lot and landing area on the left side of the road. Go directly across the field in the center and find the trailhead, bike maze and start of hike.

In a short 100 feet or so, stop and read the trail epic under the stone cherub embedded in a tree, on the right side. The trail, built by hang gliders and 'chutists, starts a long upgrade to the southwest on tread constructed in 1990-91 and partially reconstructed by King County Parks. Look for numerous traces of the old trail.

Ascend steadily but comfortably on good trail through a shady regrowth forest of evergreens, passing a small talus slope and cliff with the distant drone of auto traffic fading with each step.

Finally after a mile of this, round a windy corner to your left and spot a small view pasture right off the trail. Continue, now on a nicely overgrown forest road 1/4-mile which soon crosses a "sometimes creek."

Depart the road sharply left, upward one again. Your first reprieve from the relentless up comes at about 1100 feet, at a bench with grass, smallish alders and tantalizing peekaboos of the views to come.

Continue upward on old trail, sometimes new, with increasing views northeast to a small takeoff area for gliders and great views to the southwest and Mount Rainier—but this is not *the spot*. Cross the grassy field to a dirt road. Watch on your immediate left for a good trail to the real prize.

Walk up another 6 or 7 minutes to a marble bench (dedicated to a soarer), pause and take in the vast views to the northwest, Puget Sound, Lakes Sammamish and Washington and the village of Issaquah. Walk another 100 feet to the picnic table with its "primo" views and watch the hang gliders and chutists make their daring takeoffs.

If you miss the trail and walk the road, it's a bit longer. Just stay left until you see the large takeoff area.

The route is about 1200 to 1300 feet up in an estimated 1 3/4 miles. Plan on an hour and 20 minutes to the top view and about 45 minutes down. Take more time to enjoy the peacefulness and marvel at the workers who in '90-'91 constructed and maintained the original trail.

To reach the trailhead from I-90 take Front Street in Issaquah south through

town about 3 miles. Watch for the field and parking area on your left.

After the hike, write King County Parks and thank them for banning mountain bikes on this trail.—Jack and Donna Melill, Issaquah, 2/20.

TIGER MOUNTAIN (USGS Hobart)—We had not been to Tiger Mountain State Forest since the new parking lot was opened. We headed up the West Tiger 3 trail, turning left in just a few hundred yards on the TMT.

I cannot find details of this trail in my copy of *Walks & Hikes in the Foothills & Lowlands around Puget Sound* (Harvey Manning & Penny Manning, Mountaineers, 1995). I know a lot has changed in the past couple of years. Need to see if there is a new edition of this great book.

The trail heads east and contours around the peaks. After two stream crossings on what appear to be expensive new foot bridges the trail joined what seemed to be called the "railroad grade trail." This trail doubled back and climbed higher toward the summit.

When we met the summit trail we decided to remain on the railroad grade and bypass the summit, since we had encountered hail and snow, as well as sunshine. The trail continued to contour around and soon joined the main summit trail which we followed back to the parking area.

All in all it was a wonderful hike. We think that we did at least a 10 to 12 mile loop. We plan to return and investigate some of the other new trails in the area.—Leigh Champlin, Seattle 2/28.

SQUAK EAST RIDGE TRAIL (USGS Issaquah; *Squak Mtn SP*)—This under-publicized route provides solitude while serving as a connector to Phil's Creek Trail.

Getting there: drive Front Street 1.2km south from the Newport Way intersection to the "Sycamore" development. Follow Sycamore Drive SE, Hillside Drive SE, and SE Crystal Creek Circle 1.5km to the (current) road end. Straw beds cover the future homesites of "The Highlands At Sycamore."

The trail: walk up a gravel service road leading to a City of Issaquah water tank. Tread (well disguised by leaf-fall) proceeds straight ahead, staying near the ravine of Crystal Creek to a junction (180m) in open bottomland.

Straight ahead, signed "Squak Mtn Access Trail," curves faintly north along the edge of an alluvial terrace. In .3km is another sign "Waterfall Vista Trail," but tread ends shortly at the

edge of the next creek ravine.

Returning to the junction I took the left-hand (southerly) fork, signed "East Ridge Trail." There is an immediate crossing of Crystal Creek—an easy rock-hop across but a steep scramble up the far bank.

The trail turns downstream for a bit, then switchbacks onto the nose of the lower ridge; once attained, it turns uphill to climb the spine at a moderate grade. Mature cedars and "Lost World" ferns dominate the open forest. I traveled leisurely, clearing winter's lighter branch fall from the narrow path. Some moderate but no major blowdowns.

After passing over a knoll (330m), the tread loses continuity amid both helpful and misleading flagging; good routefinding skills are recommended. The final section, leaving the ridge line and contouring to reach Thrush Gap (460m), was especially vague.

Upon reaching the gap I emerged onto spanking new trail (!)—100 meters of perfect tread crossing to intersect Phil's Creek Trail. I later learned this is WTA-sponsored work being performed by students from Lakeside School.

I retraced my steps without meeting any other two-footed travelers. This is probably about a 6km round trip.—Andy Carr, Bellevue, 3/7.

MCCLELLAN BUTTELET (USGS Bandera)—The "buttelet" is the little bump that sits directly in front of McClellan Butte right next to I-90 and is extremely easy to attain.

Take exit 42 and park at the McClellan Butte trailhead. Hike the trail to where it crosses the upper logging road and turn right (west) until you spot the half-clear-cut, half-tree-covered Buttelet in about 1 mile. Take the spur road to the right which leads to within a few yards of the summit.

The weather was forecast to be sunny with no chance of rain, something unheard of this winter, so Jim took a vacation day and off we went. We found hard-packed snow on the trail almost



Cole Creveling waits for the rest of the group.

Jane Habegger

immediately but didn't don our snowshoes until we started down the logging road. It was shirt-sleeve weather, sunny and windless, when we arrived on top for lunch.

Views everywhere! We faced an unobstructed view of McClellan Butte with Mount Defiance and Bandera at our backs. Deciding to do a 7.5-mile loop, we continued west on the main logging road until it met the Iron Horse Trail where we headed east to the intersection of the McClellan Butte Trail. The gain was approximately 1100 feet.

Our Dalmatian, Shadow, had never hiked in deep snow before and quickly learned how to do it most efficiently. After floundering around, postholing everywhere in an effort to run, he soon realized that if he walked in the cross-country ski tracks down the middle of the road, he didn't sink in as much. But up until that point, it was a riot to watch his little behind wiggle around while his splayed legs were stuck in deep snow.—Ginny Evans, Renton, 3/11.

BREW HILL (USGS Hobart)—Haven't seen reports on Brew Hill since John Roper's seven and eight years ago (*Signpost*, March 1991, page 36; *Signpost*, February 1992, page 8). Therefore, this short account.

Brew Hill, elevation 2540+ feet, is only a slight rise on the southeast side of Taylor Mountain, having a clean prom-

BACKCOUNTRY NEWS

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innence of only 60 feet. Taylor Mountain, at 2602 feet, has a clean prominence of 1020 feet above the saddle toward higher Rattlesnake Mountain.

However, Brew is the more accessible due to the encroachment of the Cedar River Watershed boundary upon the ridge walk from Brew to Taylor. What a shame, as Taylor is also outside the Watershed.

From the beginning of the gated logging road leaving Highway 18 just south of the Raging River between I-90 and the Tiger Summit (elevation 770 feet), hike southeast 1 mile to powerlines (elevation 1140 feet).

Generally follow the powerline south 2 long miles, always turning at branchings so as to stay with the wires. At 1550 feet the road heads east into the woods, but fear not: in .4-mile it will have circled back to regain the powerlines at 1820 feet.

At 2060 feet, after a steep tortuous bit, encounter a level road. You could jog right here, then continue up under the lines, but the route is badly overgrown. Better to go left (southeast) about .3-mile on mostly open track, turning hard right where a branch heads uphill southwest. By this detour the road high point is easily gained. Clamber up west through the trees and brush a short way to the summit.

Today it was partly cloudy, with long views. Snow was solid above 1900 feet and nearly 2 feet deep at the top, so snowshoes were a boon. There were some blowdowns to negotiate.

The round trip was about 6.5 miles with a gain of 1900 feet, counting ups and downs each way. Although Brew Hill is on the *USGS Hobart* quad, take along the *USGS North Bend* map as well, as most of the route is on the latter.

Incidentally, several roads branch toward Taylor Mountain on the way up; perhaps there is a way to reach Taylor while staying outside the Watershed. Must explore sometime.—Mick Campbell, Puyallup, 3/10.



MOUNT CATHERINE LOOP

(*USGS Snoqualmie Pass*)—Lee and I left the car at the Ski Acres Nordic Center parking lot, bought trail passes, and boarded the shuttle for Hyak.

At Hyak we picked up the trail along Cold Creek and followed it to Windy Pass. From the pass we headed downhill a short way to the Olallie Meadows warming hut, where we went in for lunch. It made a cozy stop and I dried out my gloves and hat.

Continuing, we had good fast runs down from the hut, and into Rockdale

Canyon, then climbed back up to Grand Junction. Going on Peg Ferm's account from the March issue (page 12), we decided to ski down the "Serpentine" run that she described. It was awful: steep and icy, with many fast downhill skiers and snowboarders. When it ended, we had to follow another downhill run before we found, with relief, the easy trail that took us back to the Nordic Center.

It was a great outing (in spite of being psyched out on Serpentine), and the \$9 trail pass seemed like a fair price to use the nicely groomed trails, the warming hut, and the shuttle bus.—Ann Marshall, Port Orchard, 2/21.



LONGMIRE (*USGS Mount Rainier West*)

—This was supposed to be the year that it all came together. Almost all the Troop 14 boys had been on at least four snow cave experiences. We had plenty of shovels, snow saws, youthful energy and sleds to move a lot of snow in a hurry. We planned a three day trip. The only glitch was that the road to Paradise never opened.

On Thursday, we waited at Longmire until noon before the final word came in that the road wasn't going to open that day ... something about too much snow. I've been coming to this area in winter for about 25 years in some horrendous conditions and had never before been shut out.

Since there was about 3 feet of snow in the Longmire area, we opted to ski and snowshoe into the old campground just past the employee quarters. After finding a spot with a few clearings, we set up tents. The weather varied from light snow to sleet to hard rain with heavy snow bombs plummeting out of the trees.

The young men set to work piling up a 12-foot-wide by 7-foot-high snow dome which they left alone for an hour and then hollowed out. Not a bad substitute for a snow cave. Several of the boys spent the night in the cave. The

leaders built a rather tall and thin igloo. None of the adults trusted the igloo enough to sleep in it. By the time we were finished with the excavations it was time for dinner and then to bed in the rain.

Sometime after midnight, the rain turned to about four inches of snow with a couple of hefty blasts of wind thrown in for good measure. After breakfast we took a vote and decided to pack up and go up to Paradise for our second night, road conditions permitting. We caved in our snow shelters. The roof of the snow dome supported about eight hundred pounds of human biomass before finally giving way.

When we got to Longmire, we learned that the Paradise road was again closed. We decided to go back home a day early. We were all a bit disappointed but felt happy we had gone and thought we had made the most of the situation. Stopped at the famous Scaleburgers in Elbe for lunch.—Dave Parent, Freeland, 2/18-19.



PEAK 2703 (*USGS Mineral*)

—The small lakeside village of Mineral lies just east of the highway between Elbe and Morton in the southern Cascades' western foothills.

Several peaks with 400 or more feet of prominence can be found nearby, all but one (Roundtop Mountain) having an old logging road reaching the top. Most of these are between 2000 and 3000 feet high, good for winter walks.

Peak 2703 abuts the west side of the Elbe-Morton highway, 2 miles west of Mineral and just south of Pleasant Valley. It has just over 1140 feet of clean prominence. Its east side drains into the flats leading to Mineral Lake.

The rest of the peak drains into East Creek or its tributaries. An old logging road begins on the south side, 1 mile up the Forest Service road leading to East Creek and a church camp. This is Weyerhaeuser land, the logging road gated and motorized vehicles banned.

The road winds twice around the

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peak, reaching the top in about 2.5 miles. A major branch heads downhill from the north side of the lower circuit and may connect with a logging road joining the highway at about 1500 feet northeast of the peak.

Two other branches are encountered farther up, one very short to the southwest point at 2160 feet (no views), the other longer and branched, dropping about 80 feet to a southeast point at 2360 feet (good views).

At the top short alders enclose the turnaround, but by walking through them to the brink, views open in all directions. The very summit sits atop a steep open dropoff to the north.

The trip, counting the dead-end branches, gains about 1300 feet with a total distance of 5.5 miles. Take snowshoes as needed.—Mick Campbell, Puyallup, 3/20.

UMTANUM CANYON
(USGS Wymer, *The Cottonwoods*)—This is a good early season hike before the rattlers emerge from hibernation. As described in *55 Hikes in Central Washington*, we hiked 3 miles up the canyon until the walls started closing in and the swollen creek prevented any more crossings.

What started out as a "walk in the park" ended up with two mishaps that could have had tragic endings. Because of all the precipitation we've had this winter, Umtanum Creek was higher than usual. On one crossing over a particularly skinny log, for better balance I

stepped down onto an adjacent log partway across. As it turned out, the log was a floater which quickly disappeared downstream.

I lost my balance and ended up in the creek up to my waist in swift flowing water hanging onto the skinny log with both arms. Not finding the creek bottom to get a purchase on, I tried swinging my leg over the log which wasn't easy since my heavy daypack and hiking boots kept dragging me down.

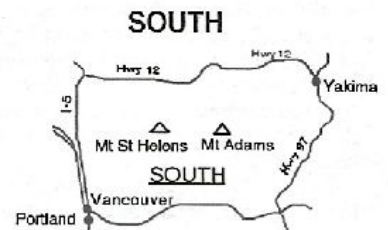
After much effort, I was finally able to get up to a prone position on the log and shimmied across to the other side. That's when Jim deadpanned, "I guess that isn't a good place to cross."

Although soaking wet, I still wanted to see how far we could go so we continued upcanyon. About three miles up the canyon and just before we turned around, we encountered long stretches of ice in the shady places on the trail. Seemed unreal to see ice on that trail. But then this is an unusual winter.

We finally turned around and just as I was starting to dry out and warm up, Shadow madly started pawing at his face. Although we never saw it, he apparently had disturbed a porcupine as his face and mouth were a mass of quills.

Out came the Leatherman's tool pliers and while Jim held Shadow, I began yanking the quills. That dog must not feel pain; he never yelped once as I pulled quills from his muzzle, gums and roof of his mouth. And some were in pretty deep.

As luck would have it, the last one broke off and there was no way Shadow was going to let me have another try at his mouth. It must have bothered us more than him because he just ran down the trail with his tail wagging. However, we stopped at the after hours vet clinic in Eastgate on the way home for a quill extraction, penicillin shot, and \$105 vet bill.—Ginny Evans, Renton, 3/14.



AMERICAN RIVER HEADWATERS (USGS Goose Prairie, Norse Pt)—Our crew of six cross-country skiers ventured east of the crest and wandered north of Yakima up Highway 410. Did you know that DOT plows the road up to about the 4000-foot level, only about 5 miles east of Chinook Pass?

We drove to the road's end on a sunny Sunday afternoon to find no other skiers in the area. We headed up the highway grade toward the pass, breaking trail in a foot or so of light snow over a 6 foot base. The gentle grade is pleasant, with views through the trees to American Ridge and the Cascade Crest.

Just over the ridge to the north lies the hurly-burly of Crystal Mountain ski area, but no crowds for us. After a couple of miles of easy climbing, we began encountering debris fans from recent avalanches, but the recent snow made traversing these areas easy. Three of our party decided to glide back down at this point; the rest of us continued upgrade, finding more open slopes and expanding views.

We continued uphill far enough to get within about 250 vertical feet of the pass, according to our altimeter, but we also watched the leading edge of a front come over the crest and head our way, so we reluctantly cruised back down the grade and stayed in the sunshine.

We rejoined our companions, who had been skiing out of another Snowpark at the west end of Pleasant Valley. Our reunited crew went back down to this area, and explored the terrain along the river until dusk finally sent us back to the van.

Our Valentine's Day present was



Barbara, Marilyn and Diana admire the butterflies on *Arnica cordifolia*; Columbia River Gorge.

Jennifer Stein Barker

blue sky, dry untracked snow, and no crowds. The upper American River Valley has numerous Sno-parks, stunning views, and great snow: recommended!—Cleve and Marty Pinnix, Olympia, 2/14.

BUMPING LAKE (USGS *Bumping Lk*)—Travel north up Highway 410 about 30 miles from the Highway 12 junction, turn west up the spur road for another 11 miles, and you'll find Bumping Lake.

Our party started at the end of the plowed road near the lake's eastern end, followed snowmobile tracks up the road for half a mile, then turned down the slope by the boat ramp to reach the lakeshore.

The water level is drawn down for the winter, so we skied west, playing on the broad, gentle expanse of the lakebed. As we continued west, we found ourselves doing considerable routefinding to make our way around several actively flowing streams.

We then encountered a weird area where the lake had frozen perhaps 8 inches thick at a higher water level, then left a jumble of "bergs" and pressure ridges when the water level later dropped and broke up the earlier ice layer. This turned out to be great fun, as we got to play at being arctic explorers, finding our way through the maze of broken slabs.

Farther west, we turned toward the south shore, all the while admiring the stunning views of surrounding peaks and the long slide chutes coming off Nelson Ridge. We decided to bush-whack our way off the lakebed to reach the snow-covered road that parallels the south shore.

After several failed attempts that ended in solid brush or impassable stream channels, we finally found a low spur ridge with a more open lodgepole pine forest, moved along the edge of a swampy meadow for a time, and clambered up through more thick brushy terrain to reach open forest, good snow, and sunshine.

After a lunch stop, we picked our way south until we intersected the roadway, then skied west for a while to take advantage of this sunny February afternoon. While this road is open to snowmobiles, we saw only two machines this afternoon. We finally retraced our tracks along the roadway, following it out to the east end of the area and arriving at our van.

We agreed that we hadn't seen nearly enough of this area. Spectacular views, great snow, and a wide range of touring possibilities make this high on the list

for a return visit.—Cleve and Marty Pinnix, Olympia, 2/15.

COWICHE CANYON (USGS *Naches, Wiley City, Yakima West*)—This 6-mile round trip gem is a ribbon of wilderness hidden within suburban Yakima. Described in *55 Hikes in Central Washington* as well as *Rails-Trails*, the trail is an old Burlington Northern railroad grade once used to transport apples to Yakima.

The trail runs alongside Cowiche Creek and crosses it nine times on numbered bridges. It once crossed the creek eleven times but bridges 9 and 10 are gone. At that point, the trail is re-routed beneath the cliffs on the south side of the canyon. The main trail is re-joined on the far side of missing bridge 10, and continues beyond bridge 11 where it ends at some houses and a road.

The canyon consists of lichen-encrusted rock columns, and occasional ponderosa pines dot the landscape. To the north above bridge 7 are two shallow caves. On the way in, we climbed up to the cave openings and ate lunch overlooking the canyon.

On our return trip, at the site of bridge 9, we climbed a 1-mile side trail out of the canyon to the south. From the top of the rim, we overlooked the city of Yakima and surrounding hills.

It was nice to hike in relatively warm and dry conditions but we had to go clear to Yakima to do so. We saw snow alongside the road almost as far as Ellensburg.—Ginny Evans, Renton, 3/13.

OLDMAN PASS, Wind River Winter Recreation Area (USGS *Termination Pt*)—What would you say if I told you that there is an area in western Washington with over 50 miles of cross-country ski trails, 20 of them groomed and tracked, that currently has over 6 feet of snow—no sharing with snowmobiles—and that on a sunny Friday only 6 other people were encountered?

What would you say? Impossible? Try the Wind River Winter Recreation Area in the Gifford Pinchot National Forest 25 miles north of Carson. This place is wonderful.

Despite being only 75 miles from Portland-Vancouver it is still lightly used, especially in comparison to nearby Mount St. Helens and Mount Hood.

On this trip Heather and I did a 14-mile ski that included the Oldman Loop—part of the Hardtime Loop to the overlook of Mount St. Helens—and the spur to McClellan Meadows. This was our favorite part. We skied off the trail and cut fresh tracks across the meadows for nearly a mile—these meadows are vast, beautiful and perfect for "free for all" skiing.

Oh, yeah—and you don't need to spend an additional \$20 for the grooming permit—the basic Sno-park Pass will do! Have fun.—Craig Romano, Seattle, 3/5.

ROAD 83—In late April, road 83 near Marble Mountain Sno-Park will be closed for repairs between MP 3.0 and



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MP 3.5, and will remain closed approximately six weeks.

The road will open for Memorial Day weekend at 3pm, Friday, 5/28, closing again at 8am on Tuesday, 6/1. The weekend opening will provide access to areas such as the Lahar and trailheads on the southeast side of Mount Saint Helens.

This closure does not block access to other popular sites such as the Ape Cave geologic site, Trail of Two Forests or Climbers Bivouac, and does not affect road 81.—Ranger, 3/24.

GIFFORD PINCHOT NATL FOREST—The Sno-Parks have lots of snow. Cougar has 6 feet; Marble Mountain has 9 feet; Atkisson has 4 feet; Smith Butte has 10 feet; Lone Butte has 6 feet; Wind River has 5 feet ... you get the idea.

Peterson Prairie reports 10 feet, and the Sawtooth berry fields check in with 16 feet.—Ranger, 3/17.

OREGON



WARRIOR ROCK (*Sauvie Island Wildlife Refuge*)—Just

15 miles northwest of downtown Portland is Sauvie Island, the largest island in the Columbia River.

A good portion of the island is part of the 12,000-acre Sauvie Island Wildlife Refuge. There are many hiking and walking opportunities on the island but seasonal closures do occur, so check first before planning a visit.

A \$3/day use fee is also required and permits may be purchased at the small country store just after the bridge to the island.

Heather and I headed out to the Warrior Rock lighthouse, a 7 mile round trip that takes you to the far northern tip of the island. The way is mainly by a good trail with options to walk on nice stretches of sandy Columbia River beaches.

There are good views of Mounts St. Helens, Adams, and Hood as well as

across the river to the Ridgefield National Wildlife refuge. Lots of birds too—tundra swans and sandhill cranes! This is a good hike anytime of the year.—Craig Romano, Seattle, 2/20.

MULTNOMAH FALLS (*Columbia Gorge*)—On January 19, a landslide destroyed about 100 feet of trail 441, the trail to the top of Multnomah Falls and Larch Mountain.

About 150 cubic yards of land slid above the east side of Benson Bridge slid into Multnomah Creek. You can see much of the rock and trees from this event in Multnomah Creek below the slide.

The Forest Service is monitoring the area to determine if there is additional movement. If the area proves to be stable, then the trail will be re-built. If it is unstable, an alternate route to the top of the Falls will be located. The trail could be re-opened this fall or early in 2000.—Ranger, 3/24.

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.

FOR SALE—excellent condition: one pair cross-country skis, Karhu 210cm XCD Kinetics with 3-pin Asolo bindings; one pair cross-country skis, Karhu 210CMXCD with 3-pin Asolo bindings; one pair cross-country ski boots, Merrill, men's size 10.5-11.

\$200 for everything. Phone Mike at 425-277-0331 (Renton).

WANTED—Does anyone have some of the old style self-arresting ski poles that have the two-prong piece that fits into the top of the handles? They were new in around 1993, but aren't made any more. I believe Black Diamond use to make them. Or if anyone has a good idea about what would be a good self-arresting pole please let me know.

David MacFarlane, 360-659-7252, or: 13800 Getchell Rd NE, Lake Stevens WA 98258.

FOUND—pair of gloves on old TMT. Call to identify. 425-881-5443 (Bellevue).

FREE—I have a virtually complete set of Signposts dating back to 1975. If anyone is interested they may have them if they wish to pick them up at my house, 309 N Poplar in Ellensburg, or pay transportation. Call 509-925-1265 to make arrangements.

SEPTEMBER BURRO TREK—Just after Labor Day a small group will take off for Whistler Basin and 10 days of hiking in the Pasayten. Inquiries welcome. Remember, no packs! Contact Mary Watson, mwatson@harbornet.com

FOR SALE—1998 North Face Cat's Meow mummy sleeping bag, rated to 20 degrees F. Size long, left zipper, 3 pounds 2 ounces (actual true weight). Color blue/black, used three trips; excellent condition. \$115 postpaid. Pete Cleland, 360-671-0554 (Bellingham). Email: eagleflyer@earthlink.net

FOR SALE—Link Hale Tye II kayak in mint condition. Includes spray skirt, paddle and storage bags. Asking \$600 or best offer! L. Larson, 206-523-8330 (Seattle).

FOR SALE—Sea kayak: Mariner Max, very good condition. Includes carbon/graphite paddle, spare paddle, spray

skirt, all dry/float bags, safety gear, VHF, etc etc. \$2000 OBO. Mark, 360-794-9475 (Snohomish)

FOR SALE—Rustic, riverfront cabin, 16 miles east of Granite Falls on the Mountain Loop Highway. Wired for generator or battery, summer/winter activity area. \$72,500. Call John Bingham, 360-658-8778.

FOR SALE—New pair of Columbia hiking boots size 9 men, or could fit a size 10 women. Worn once. Value \$100. Make an offer. Call 360-373-8676 (Bremerton).

OSAT—A clean and sober climbing and mountaineering club. 253-236-9674.

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, 425-821-5752 (Kirkland).

WASHINGTON SKI TOURING CLUB—Meets first Thursdays at 7pm at the Seattle REI. Club info line: 206-525-4451, or www.wstc.org

BETTY CULBERT

Close-In Wilderness

—A DELIGHTFUL GREEN SPACE IN THE MIDDLE OF SUBURBIA—

One of King County's lesser-known acquisitions is Lake Desire-Spring Lake Open Space, over 300 acres of wooded walks which are a delight in any season, but especially in spring.

Some of us think of it as a "little Cougar Mountain." Tucked in like Cougar among developed land, it offers a quiet green space but has about one tenth the size of the bigger park.

This open space, too, was ripe for development when a downturn in the economy in the 1960s saved it from being a "planned" golf course community on the lake. The golf course was later built at Fairwood and the two lakes now have houses all along the shores, with two public boat ramps.

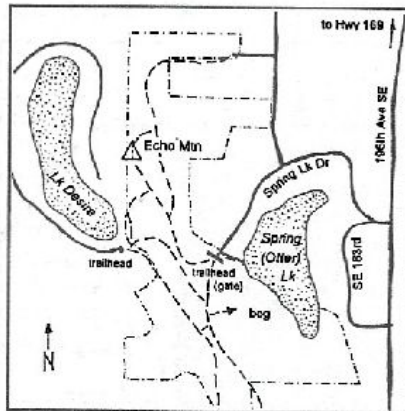
In the alder wood that grew on the clearcut for the golf course, today's walker might see remnants of the planning: brass sprinkler heads and exposed water pipes. This pleasant forest has been known by the neighborhood hikers and horse people for years and they have cared for it, clearing trails of downed trees and draining puddles.

I'm sure that Albert Spring, who sold the land to the developer to insure its natural beauty, would be pleased that it has been saved but without giving up the semi-wilderness feeling.



Wooded path through Spring Lake/Lake Desire Open Space.

Betty Culbert



Spring Lake is still Otter Lake on many maps and along one shore is an area of magical beauty we call the Swamp. It is actually a bog or, more technically, a fen, and in need of protection from heavy tramping since the paths are on spongy sphagnum moss which over time would be damaged beyond nature's repair.

King County has plans for raised platforms to take hikers to views of the bog laurel and labrador tea which grow in this acidic environment where the stunted lodgepole pines seem to float on the spongy soil.

Near the lake are iris and waterlilies floating off shore. Before the lake level was changed, natives used to come here to gather cranberries.

I was introduced to this area by the granddaughters of a Maple Valley homesteader who once met a crying Indian maiden left behind by her tribe as they pushed on to harvest camas which grew nearby in the meadows now occupied by Highway 18. I have tasted a berry from the very few low-growing bushes still left.

But the most exciting plant is the sundew, an insect-eating plant which grows in the patches of peat along the lake. It is so tiny you need a magnifying glass to appreciate it. However, until this restricted area is again open to the public we'll just have to enjoy the rest of the park which includes one of the best views of Mount Rainier around. It is so absolutely pristine you can't

even see the houses that you know stretch for miles in all directions.

The top of the highest of the two hills (900 feet), called Echo Mountain by the locals, is a wonder in the spring. Masses of chocolate lily and fawn lily live under the serviceberry bushes. Other damp areas produce monkey flowers and goldback fern, and a species of wild valerian called sea blush (*Plectritis congesta*) turns the whole meadow pink between the rock outcroppings.

Walking down through the usual mix of Northwest forest you can see false Solomon seal and fairy bells and an example of a slender toothwort which is almost indistinguishable among the similarly-colored spring beauty.

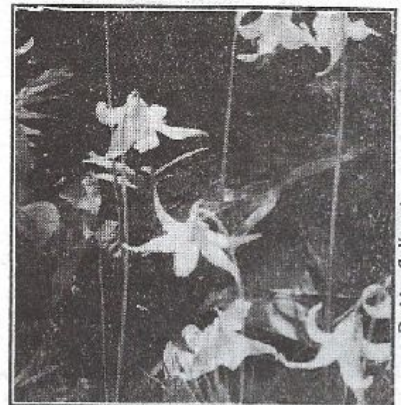
There is even a nice lunch spot along the lake and here it was that we saw otters sunning on a dock where the private and public properties touch.

Sometimes only a few feet separate the hiker from the private landowner, but you can get a true feeling of wilderness in this tiny public space which lies between the two lakes.

There are many plants which come and go in their season both in the woods and on the one-acre summit, but the months of April and May are my favorite times.

△

Betty Culbert lives near Lake Desire/Spring Lake in Maple Valley.



White fawn lily.

Betty Culbert

DALLAS KLOKE

City of Rocks

—ROCK CLIMBING IN IDAHO—

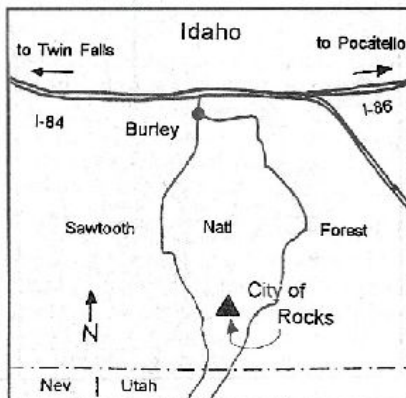
The City of Rocks is located on the southeast slopes of Idaho's Albion Range. The granitic rock, which was uplifted, then eroded over millions of years, has left a string of granite "islands" of spires, domes, walls and boulders.

Rock climbers are attracted from all over the US to this playground of granite. This area is important in American history as the City of Rocks was a junction and landmark for wagon routes between the 1840s and 1860s.

Jay Matzko and I left Anacortes on July 11th last summer for the 12 hour drive to Burley, which is 38 miles north of City of Rocks. Jay is a 26-year-old Navy pilot stationed at Whidbey Island Naval Station.

The next morning we drove the dirt roads into the City of Rocks, just north of the state line between Idaho and Utah. The area is a national reserve and has been managed by the National Park Service since 1988.

The City of Rocks is located between



6000 and 7000 feet in elevation. The vegetation consists mainly of sagebrush, grasses, juniper and pinyon pine.

The weather was hot during our trip, with temperatures between 80 and 90 degrees. There are numerous campsites, but a shady one was our goal. Most campsites are located among the huge boulders and outcrops.

Our site was shaded well from the

scorching sun in the late afternoon.

The cost for a site is \$7 a day. For those who want a fire, you must bring in your own wood.

Due to the hot weather, we didn't prepare any hot meals. Sandwiches and plenty of cold drinks were the order of the day.

The climbing area is divided into six main sections with the Upper City, Parkinglot Area and Center City being the most popular sections. Numerous granite formations are also found on private property bordering the reserve. Cattle graze much of this property.

Established trails provide access to the sections and the main rock formations.

Jay and I decided to "warm up" with several short routes on an outcrop called Practice Rock. The granite has a very rough surface and in many places forms "chickenheads" that climbers love to use for holds.

Our best route for the day was WHEAT THIN, a 5.7** route on Elephant Rock. (The ** is a star rating given routes in most rock climbing guide books. The author of the guidebook considers the quality of the route, giving it one, two or three stars. Our two-star route meant it was above average.)

We had planned our trip here to do most of our climbs on Monday and Tuesday, assuming the weekend would be crowded with climbers.

As it turned out, there weren't that many climbers even on Sunday because of the heat. We did most of our climbing in the morning and evening, although on most formations one can find routes in the shade.

Our plan for Monday was to climb the east face of Stripe Rock and Lost Arrow before noon. We hiked the 1.5-mile trail north from our camp through the beautiful Sonoran terrain which is rugged but fragile. Small outcrops and boulders abound among the larger granite domes which rise up to 500 feet.

One of the most attractive plants is a



Jay at our campsite—sandwiches and cold drinks were our fare in the heat.

Dallas Kloke

small, low-growing cactus. Several species of wildlife are found in the region. The main creatures we saw were birds. The crags are popular nesting sites for turkey vultures, golden eagles, hawks and several species of owls and falcons.

Stripe Rock has a unique route up the east face—a 5.7 route named CRUEL SHOES with a line of 31 bolts for protection. Bolted routes are called “sport routes” in rock climbing jargon. They are “clip and go” routes, meaning all you need besides a rope are quickdraws.

Quickdraws consist of two carabiners connected with a short piece of webbing. The quickdraws clip into the bolts and the rope clips into the quickdraws. CRUEL SHOES was three pitches long, around 400 feet in length.

The best and probably the most impressive climb of our trip was Lost Arrow. This spire, named after the famous one in Yosemite Valley, is about 150 feet high.

Several of the routes are very difficult and are mainly in the 5.11 to 5.12 category; however, the Classic Route is a 5.7**. I led the first pitch which was steep but well-protected with one bolt, 4 fixed pitons, plus I placed a couple of chocks.

Jay led up the final face climb on slabby rock with pockets and depressions. A double-rope free rappel tops off this excellent route.

On Tuesday we made two more

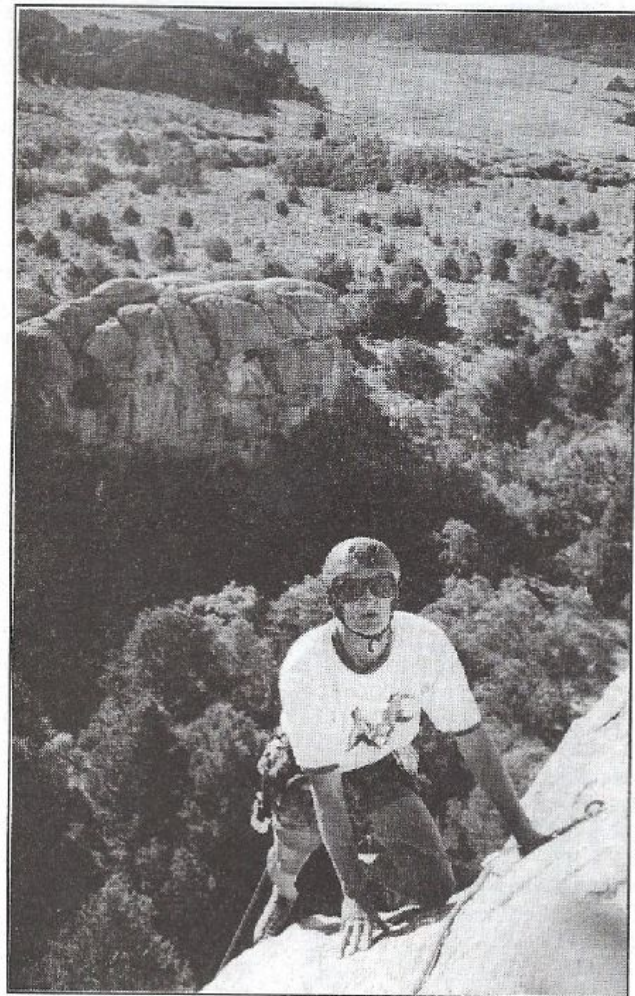
climbs, then packed our gear for the return trip home with a stop at Vantage and some climbing on the Frenchmen's Coulee basalt.

The City of Rocks offers climbs for all levels and abilities.

If you don't want to lead on bolts or with traditional protection, you can set up top ropes.

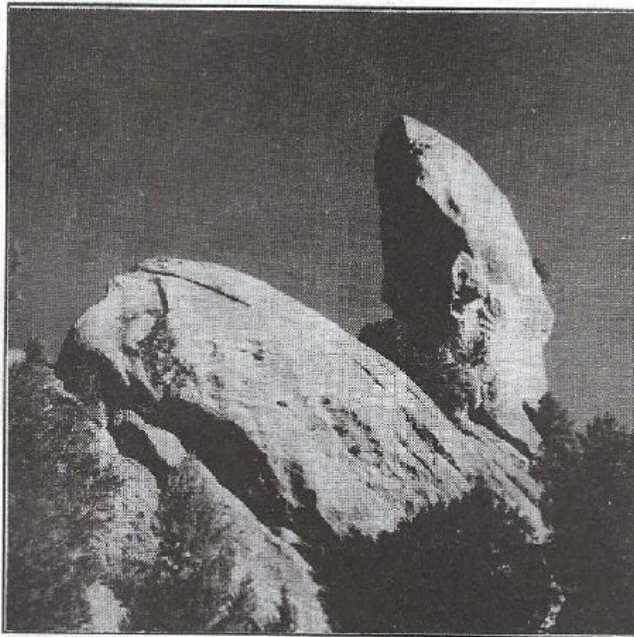
Outcrops like Parkinglot Rock, Elephant Rock, and Bath Rock are very popular because they're located just off the main road.

Most weekends are usually crowded but with so many formations and with



Jay Matzko

Dallas climbing CRUEL SHOES.



Lost Arrow.

a little hiking one can be pretty much alone.

The climbing season runs from about April to November. Probably the best time is spring and fall for cooler temperatures.

Besides rock climbing, there are established trails for hiking and mountain bike riding.

The guidebook for this area is *CITY OF ROCKS—Idaho: A Climber's Guide*, by Dave Bingham, published in 1991.

We didn't particularly like this guide because it has little information on individual routes except for name and rating. An up-dated guide is certainly needed.

The City of Rocks is well worth the long drive and could be combined with a visit to the Sawtooth Mountains to the north or the Tetons to the east.

△

Dallas Kloke, of Anacortes, is a peak-bagger-turned-sport-climber. He is the author of Boulders and Cliffs, and Winter Climbs.

ANN MARSHALL

The year of the avalanche

—WALK SOFTLY AND CARRY A BIG SHOVEL—

This winter's snowfall has been great for skiers and snowshoers, great for our glaciers, great for the water supply, and will make spring climbing easy by covering all that lowland brush.

This winter's snowfall is also dangerous. It has been dangerous for months, and it will continue to be dangerous into early summer.

There has been so much snow (in February, 20 feet of snow fell at Mount Baker in about two weeks' time) that it has not had time to stabilize. The small avalanches that normally help to secure the snowpack have not occurred, paving the way for enormous, destructive slides.

One of the fatal avalanches near the Mount Baker Ski Area was described by an observer as being the size of "an entire Fred Meyer store and its parking lot." Two of the February avalanches in the Alps caused extensive damage and loss of life.

Still to come are the spring and summer avalanches. The Memorial Day avalanche of 1998 on Mount Hood was chronicled by the Northwest Weather and Avalanche Center. The report reads, in part:

"As this was the first clear weekend day in some time on Mount Hood, approximately 100 to 200 climbers had signed up to climb the mountain. Some of these climbers who were later interviewed remarked about how beautiful the day was, and about the fact that they hadn't really considered avalanches to be a problem—after all, it was late in the season and it was such a beautiful day.

"Such remarks seem to emerge as part of a general theme of common mistakes when considering late season avalanche accidents, that 'avalanches don't happen on beautiful days.'"

In an effort to urge backcountry travelers to be extra cautious, especially on

beautiful days this spring and summer, Loren Foss of The Mountaineers wrote and circulated by e-mail a warning about the dangerous avalanche season.

Loren's experience as a mountain guide and avalanche instructor gives him the background needed to assess this winter's snowpack.

"Since moving here in 1959," he said in his now-famous e-mail warning, "I've yet to see a long term avalanche hazard to equal the current situation."

Loren's e-mail, written and distributed in mid-February, was immediately copied and re-distributed by anyone receiving it. Loren told *Pack & Paddle* that he was amazed how fast and how widely it was broadcast.

Within days, avalanche warnings appeared on radio and TV stations, and in-depth assessments of the winter snowpack were featured in newspapers around the country. The avalanche word was out, and finally it was reaching the "general public."

One avalanche expert portrays the typical avalanche victim with these words: "The victim ... has had several years of skiing or mountaineering experience, and didn't know an avalanche from a snowball."

But even those can recognize a snowball need to be aware of the different situation this year. Here are some of the points from Loren's avalanche warning:

- Lots of snow has fallen, early in the season and often.
- There has been little warming or mountain rainfall to bring down the frequent, normal winter slides that help to stabilize the snowpack.
- The snowpack lacks major sun crusts or rain crusts. Therefore, rainfall is free to penetrate deeply and completely, adding immense weight to the snowpack.
- Powerful winds have accompanied

frequent storms, forming dense, hard-slab snow conditions. These strongly bonded slabs of snow, typically formed on the lee slopes of the ranges (north and east facing) are brittle and do not easily stabilize like softer snows that creep slowly downslope.

A catalyst such as a skier or climber in these locations could trigger the huge slab avalanches that are unsurvivable.

- The end is not yet in sight. Heavy snowfall is possible through May.
- Longer, warmer days greatly increase the instability of the snow.

These factors are bad enough. But watch out when they are combined with the following spring weather:

1. Rapid warming (5 to 15 degrees) accompanied by heavy and lengthy rainfall;
2. Rapid warming with bright sun light and little or no wind;
3. Snow falling at or greater than one inch per hour;
4. Any combination of the above.

If any of these scenarios happen to occur, according to Loren, we could see destructive climax avalanches the like of which we haven't seen in a half century or more. (A climax avalanche is one which takes the entire snowpack down to bare ground.)

A large avalanche has tremendous power. It is capable of snapping the trunks of large trees, and the wind blast can knock over a person.

Sometimes hikers can see the effect of a destructive avalanche while hiking on a summer trail—by far the best place to observe these results! One such avalanche started above the Buck Creek Pass trail in the Glacier Peak Wilderness in the winter of 1994 (see accompanying photo).

The slide started from the ridge that runs from Liberty Cap to High Pass near Point 7276, took out a new swath of trees along the side of the chute, continued for 3000 feet to Buck Creek at the valley bottom, and went right up the other side for hundreds of feet, covering a portion of the trail with trees snapped off low to the ground. The trees in the photo's foreground are lying uphill.

Roger Ross of the Lake Wenatchee Ranger District told *Pack & Paddle* that this slide occurred in the winter of 1994 and was cut out in late summer of 1995. The hazardous work was all done with hand saws.

Because of the deep snow throughout the Cascades this winter, this type of large slide that exceeds its normal runout pattern is what spring and early summer travelers should be on the lookout for.

Weather by the last half of March had warmed and recently the snowpack has settled, as indicated by this partial report from the Northwest Weather and Avalanche Center on March 22:

"About 10 to 20 inches of total snowpack settlement was seen in three days ending Sunday morning [March 21]. Less settlement was seen east of the crest. The warm sunny weather caused many triggered wet loose avalanches on mainly south aspects steeper than about 35 degrees. These slides were generally restricted to the top 4 to 6 inches of the most recent snow from last week.

"Snow below the crust from a week ago should still be relatively firm and stable, as indicated in a snow pit at Stevens Pass on Friday. The last significant period of slab instability was seen early last week on north to north-east aspects, with slabs sliding on the crust from last weekend.

"These layers should have mostly settled and stabilized; the last slab release on this layer was Wednesday near Crystal Mountain, at about 6400 feet on a north aspect. Snow pack conditions east of the crest should be somewhat similar to those west of the crest, but the generally shallower snowpack and lesser snowfall accumulations appear to be causing more stable conditions in that area."

Encouraging reports like these do not mean, however, that we should relax our guard about spring avalanches. When planning trips to snow-



Linda Rostad

This July 1998 photo taken on the Buck Creek Pass trail (Glacier Peak Wilderness) dramatically shows the power of a huge avalanche.

covered terrain this spring, Loren advises: *be conservative*. He offers these pointers:

- If leading a trip to the mountains, examine every step of your route to see whether or not the terrain and conditions pose a threat. Consider staying home or changing your destination if the temperature rises suddenly by five degrees or more, if significant rain falls on the snowpack, or if bright sunlight shines directly on exposed slopes which have not had ample time (several days) to stabilize.
- If in any doubt, cancel the trip or reschedule your route or destination to a safer location with gentle, forested slopes and little snowpack.
- Always use good avalanche practice

of never traveling alone and spacing party members some distance apart in questionable spots.

- Don't rely on avalanche transceivers to keep you from disaster. This isn't to imply you shouldn't carry and know how to use them. Just proceed as if you didn't have them.
- Take an avalanche class and learn all you can about snow and avalanches.

Enjoy the sunny mountain weather that is sure to be coming and remember that avalanches *do* happen on beautiful days.

△

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

JQ

Sans Souci Up The Hoh

—CAMPING AT 5-MILE ISLAND MAKES THIS A TRIP “WITHOUT CARES”—

In the mid-1700s, Frederick the Great, who fancied himself a “philosopher king,” built a monument in Potsdam, Germany, hoping that it would be a reflection of the lofty ideals he espoused. The two palaces, tea house, terraced vineyards and pleasure grounds were all part of the estate he named Sans Souci—without cares.

Like Olympic National Park, Sans Souci has been designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Other than that, I don’t know much about Frederick or his castles, but I do like his attitude. It blends well with this guidebook description of a three day stroll along the Hoh River.

At about the 2.5 mile mark, the trail begins a short climb across a mountain spur that drops straight into the river. Here—where a fisherman’s cable once spanned the channel—deep, teal pools swirl beside the bedrock. In quick succession, Mount Tom Creek can be seen joining the Hoh, then two crossings of Mineral Creek.

The first fork of Mineral Creek (newly bridged) is a picturesque series of falls and cascades; the second is a great place to take a break. Beneath dangling strands of selaginella draped over a maple limb, one can look over to misnamed Tom Meadow.

The Park has done a nice job of shoring up the next mile or so of trail. Using tons of gravel poured between wooden planks, they have drastically improved one of the worst stretches

of muck found in the valley. Nice to see the new backcountry fees put to good use.

Around four miles out, a cluster of massive cedars serves as an entrance-way to an old landslide which rumbled down the slopes of Green Peak. Upon this rubble now grows an attractive grove of big-leaf maples and firs. Part of Cougar Creek flows underground here; the rest is deflected westerly where it used to damage the trail we just walked over.

In a few minutes the path climbs fifteen feet up to an ancient river terrace. This is a fine example of the climax stage in rainforest succession. Hemlocks dominate the entire stand. Their presence indicates that this flat dream-scape has gone relatively undisturbed since its graveled soils were deposited by the last significant glacier retreating back to Olympus. Wind-throw has been minimal and there isn’t even the tiniest crease of drainage to undercut the trees.

A friend of mine calls this area “the primeval forest bench.” Every aisle you look down, gently drooping hemlock boughs extend outward as if anticipating a handshake. Watchful eyes might catch a glimpse of elk in this forest. The herd which forages on the Five Mile Slough uses it for their afternoon siestas.

At the far end of the terrace, an alternate trail branches left. This route is used when the Five Mile Slough is full,

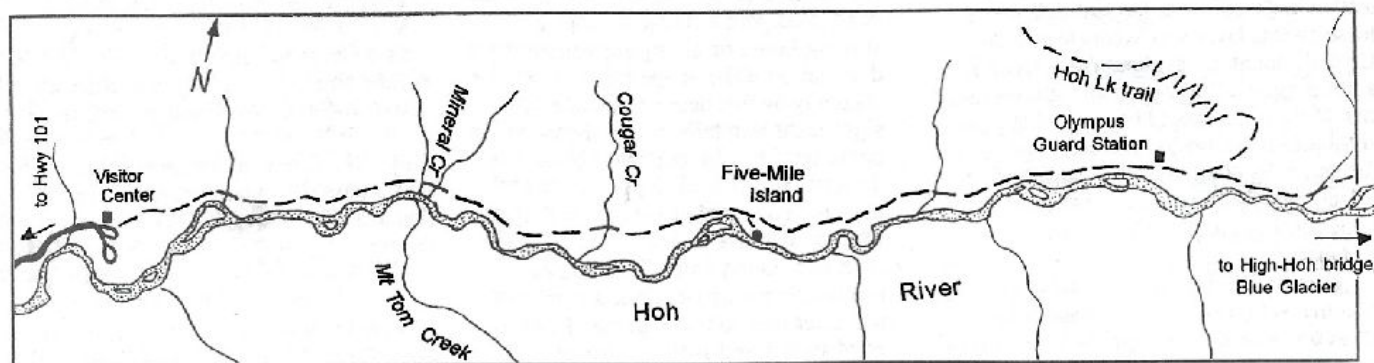
which it hasn’t been for a long time. After crossing the dry stream bed, the trail winds through one of the most enchanting areas in the Olympics. It is an open parkland planted with a Hoh rarity—fields of grass.

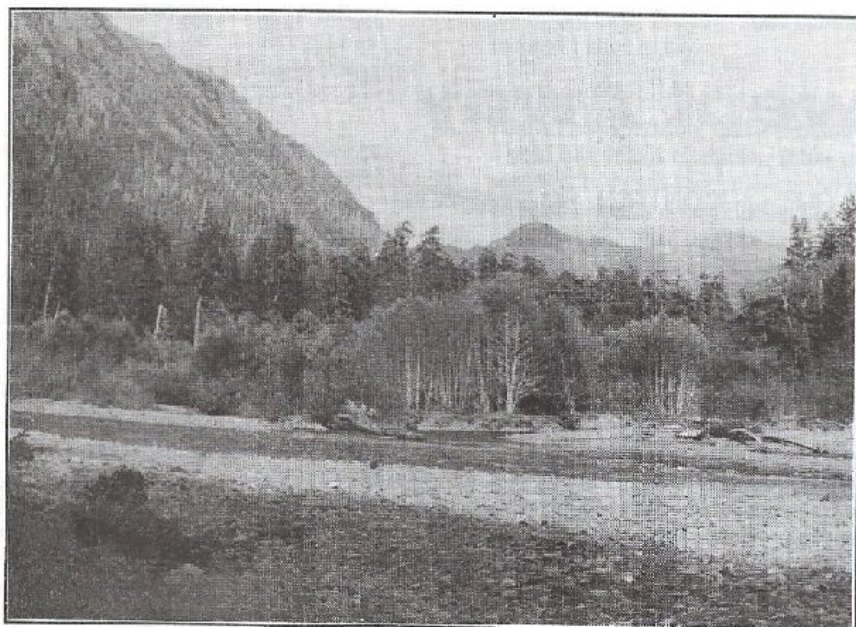
In a few hundred yards the trail intersects another sidepath leading down to campsites where we’ll be staying. Before doing so, take a minute to admire the handful of vase-like cottonwoods growing just east of here. When budding, the sticky orange and yellow capsules emit a pleasing sweet scent. Directly across the slough from this point, the high-water trail winds through a heavenly glade of maples.

After setting up camp on the riverbank (don’t forget the tarp!), a cursory look at your surroundings will reveal some basic forest ecology. Just downstream from camp you’ll notice a gravel bar supporting a growth of alders less than fifteen years old.

The bottomland your tent sits on is slightly higher and older, as evidenced by mature alders and young spruces. One level up from that, where the main trail is, the cottonwoods, maples and firs thrive. A step higher and you reach the “primeval forest bench.”

It’s not too difficult to imagine how the graduated levels were formed. The highest terrace in this vicinity once stretched across the entire width of the valley. The last Ice Age glacier that plowed this far down the valley must have paused here for a while receding





Ann Marshall

Five-Mile Island is an interesting place. The upstream view from camp includes the Hoh Burn (left hillside), Cat Peak and a slice of the Bailey Range (in the distance). You can also see alders growing on the gravel bars, and discern different levels of riverbed, right from camp.

and, like a conveyor belt, deposited the sands and gravels which all the bottomlands are comprised of.

Over the centuries, the Hoh gradually cut down through the deposits, meandering back and forth until establishing its present day depth and course.

But the same agent which helped shape the terraces is now determined to tear them down. Each winter when the river swells, it eats away at the soft banks of the shelf our tent sits on.

There's a decent chance some of us will see this layer vanish in our lifetimes. If so, you'll just have to camp back up by the cottonwoods.

After the evening meal, you might want to trace the slough to its origin and see what's keeping the Hoh out of this channel. Or just sit by the river and enjoy your fabulous surroundings. On clear days, the upstream view includes the Hoh Burn, Cat Peak, and a slice of the Bailey Range.

Aside from the usual rainforest splendor, there is one sight that can't be missed on your dayhike. That would be the Douglas-firs towering above the forest just before reaching the Hoh Lake trail intersection.

Wood pays tribute to them in his book (*Olympic Mountains Trail Guide*) and they don't disappoint. It's impossible to conceive of better specimens—anywhere. The largest certainly do ap-

proach or top 300 feet in height.

Round-trip distance from Five-Mile Island to the Hoh Lake trail is a comfortable 9 miles. You can add variety to your hike and ascend this path to gain views of Mount Olympus. But you'll have to work for it.

Another option is to continue to Lewis Meadow or even the High-Hoh Bridge (16 miles round trip from Five-Mile Island). The valley narrows considerably during the last mile leading up to the bridge where the Hoh has cut a slot canyon. This area looks more like something you'd see on the east side of the Park.

A few recommendations about the hike. First, don't do it in summer. The crowds, heat and bugs are too distracting. Worst of all is the faded glory of the epiphytes. Mid-April through May, or the last half of October are best. An early-season outing will inspire with the luminescence of spring greens; in fall, the flaming vine maples alone are worth the trip.

A great advantage in carrying a backpack only 5 miles is the luxury of bringing items you'd never consider on longer trips. Along with a large tarp and plenty of rope, a daypack can be strapped to the outside of the backpack. In addition, beverages, real food, books, camp chairs, etc., could greatly enhance your experience.

Lastly, bring along a field guide and magnifying glass to identify the galaxy of species found in the micro-world of mosses, lichens and liverworts. It's not as easy or as sexy as learning about alpine wildflowers, but just as fascinating. Good places to investigate are recently colonized nurse logs and stumps where there's some wicked competition for space.

About a dozen years ago, I was returning from a hike up to Blue Glacier when I crossed paths with three elderly men near Happy Four. All were carrying daypacks and leaning heavily on walking sticks which obviously had seen a lot of miles.

We exchanged the usual trail greetings and questions about where I'd been and where they were headed. "We're going to the Olympus Ranger Station," one of them said.

Of course I couldn't help but point out that it was rather late in the day and their destination was unrealistic.

Well, it turned out that, back in the '30s, these men helped build the very trail I had hiked the previous three days. Their pack horses arrived during our conversation. I quickly shifted from teacher to student and tried to pick their memories for as much information as possible. And they generously accommodated.

Just before parting, I asked if they didn't think that the Five Mile Slough was the nicest place to be found along the entire Hoh.

The oldest of the three smiled at his companions, tapped his stick twice on the ground, raised it and slowly drew its point across the breadth of the valley, then said, "Sonny, it's all nice."

△

JQ lives in Port Angeles and hikes throughout the Olympics as much as possible.

JULIE U. BROWN

Swept Away

—IT GOT OUT OF CONTROL SO SWIFTLY—

Our raft slides silently over a rock and catches where two of us sit heavier on the the side. We don't see it coming. It barely pillows water on its upstream side. It gives no warning.

The two of us somersault backward into the water. At first, I grab for the girl but I am drawing her farther from the boat. I push her toward the raft. Todd, my husband and also our guide, pulls her out of the water.

I focus on him, but I am too far upstream to swim toward the boat and stay feet downstream in river position. So I sidestroke toward a gravel bar on my left, thinking I can get out of the main current.

A paddle floats in front of me. I grab it. It's hard to swim with a paddle. The water is shallow, only two feet deep or less. *Stay in river position*, I tell myself as if instructing from the rafting safety lecture I know word for word. I can feel the surge of strength from adrenaline.

I focus on the instructions, sure of myself. *Keep your feet downstream*. I cling to the paddle and claw with my free hand and feet at rocks. But the current is strong. It pulls me back into deep water, into four or five foot standing waves.

Between the waves, I open my eyes to look for Todd in the raft ahead of me. He watches as my life jacket floats up around my head. *Tighten your life jacket to be snug around your waist*. I pull it down and tighten it.

The current pulls me under anyway. I gasp at all the wrong times, swallowing water. I'm losing self assurance along with my strength. I grab my life jacket by the neck with both fists, holding it down, trying to get as much buoyancy as I can get. *Keep the raft, keep Todd in sight*. I stretch my neck up for air.

It is July 13, the training run for guides on the Suiattle River, outside Darrington. My husband Todd is a three-year guide, the only one with customers for this trip.

I am here to mooch some time on the water. Each season, this first raft trip

down the Suiattle always brings a tingle to a place between my shoulders. The scenery here is of snowcapped mountains and evergreens. Small trees cling with exposed roots to cliffs alongside the river, looking like they are tended by an expert in bonsai.

The river itself is part of the lush scenery. The water is the milky green that tells you it is glacial, that its temperature will be five to ten degrees colder than a river that runs clear.

The river has boulder obstacles and log jams that could build three houses apiece. The log jams pile up at the river bends—cedar, alder, lodgepole pine, even old trucks and refrigerators, anything that gets in the way of spring melt. Every year its different.

Before the first official trip down, the owner of the raft company runs it in an oar boat with a couple of guides and a chain saw to take out trees that block the route.

Maybe my anxiety of this river comes from her emphasis on safety when she talks to the guides about this first trip before customers begin to arrive.

Maybe it is the release form that everyone signs or knowing that the guides haven't run this stretch for almost a year, if at all. Maybe it is the twenty-five foot sandy slide to the put-in that I dread. More likely, it is the river itself.

I don't get this feeling on the Wenatchee River until the water is running over 13,000 cubic feet per second. The Suiattle is a sleeper. It isn't as wild a ride down the rapids, but the obstacles are more critical. The guides have to be more vigilant.

After sliding out of control under two rafts trying to carry them to the put-in, I had begged out of helping to carry any more rafts down. I slid down unencumbered. That was tricky enough.

I stood waiting in my wet suit even though many others opted out of wearing one. By this time in the summer, the embarrassment of putting it on has worn down and the thickness of the wet suit is something of a security blanket, though not exactly a comfortable one.

As our guide instructor gave the safety lecture, I checked customers' life jackets. When someone protested, I insisted, telling them to imagine how the jacket would float them in water as I nearly took their life jackets off by pulling up at their shoulders. Most of them acquiesced.

No one came around to test my life jacket. It would have been an insult to a veteran like me. I pulled it tight, but not too tight because it is an uncomfortable fit.

Mine is the best life jacket you can buy, but slight differences in the way it was sewn make it less comfortable than similar ones that Todd and the guide instructor wear.

I'd tried to sell it so I could get a different one, maybe one with a bit less flotation, less bulk in the shoulders and under the arms.

When our boat finally got onto the water, Todd practiced paddle strokes with the crew. The best trips are those in which the crew is hot blooded and enthusiastic for the ride, when they really put their excitement into paddling.

Our boat, besides Todd and me, held five pretty girls in their early twenties. I don't mind girls in a raft, but these seemed bored by the prospect of another trip on the Suiattle, worried about their hair getting wet, how they'd look if they worked too hard.

They were porcelain dolls. They put their paddles in the water, but I couldn't feel any motion from their strokes. All the power to move this raft was going to come from Todd and me.

Now that I am out of the raft, floating in rapids, the power to control the raft is up to Todd. Ahead of me, out of reach, he calls commands to his paddlers as he watches me.

Beyond him, there is a logjam in a bend of the river. The current pulls me toward it. It isn't a big logjam, but it is a jam. All it takes is two logs crossed under water to catch a foot or hand and hold me under indefinitely.

"You need to get me in," I yell to him. I'm tired, not as arrogant as when I first fell in. Trying to keep my feet downstream in river position is an effort.

"Throw the line," I yell, remembering the throw bag clipped to each boat. He unbuckles the bag and throws it, holding onto the large knot at one end. The throw is short. I try to swim toward it but the bag is too far away.

I swim toward another gravel bar on the left bank but can't get out of the heavy current. Another log jam, easily two stories high, lies ahead.

"You really need to get me out of here now," I yell. My voice cracks and the end comes out as a sob. I hear him yelling again. It's not a voice I'm used to hearing.

"Paddle like you've never paddled before," he shouts. "That's my wife out there!" I can see them, working now, not dipping teaspoons any longer. It seems as if they are going to run over me. I turn my back to the raft.

Todd takes my paddle, grabs my shoulders. I think he is going to dunk me first to get more buoyancy to pull me out. I struggle for air. I can't synchronize my breath with his 1-2-3. He pulls me in.

I fall back on him. I can't move. He continues to shout commands to the others even though he is pinned. I can't get up. They still have to keep the raft from going into the logjam. Todd wiggles out from under me.

The girls don't respond right away to his commands. They are looking for paddles. I feel paralyzed, either from the cold, from the exertion, or from fear. This is a different kind of fear than the thrill and anxiety of running a river. It is like seeing bone in a fresh cut. Or like touching dead flesh.

Finally, I can get up from the bottom of the boat. The other girl lost her paddle when she fell out, so I don't have one now. I couldn't have paddled right anyway; I'm so shaky.

I see the lost paddle floating into the logjam. The throw bag goes in right after. That could have been me. I watch. Neither of them come out downstream.

We barely clear the log jam and pull up to a gravel bar on the right side. One of the girls starts crying. I wait in the raft in a cold silence. Someone in another boat asks me if I'm okay. I can't answer them.

I get out of the boat and try to walk normally through smoothed boulders to

get to dry land. Finally, Todd comes to me and I start to cry.

In some movies, they make a natural phenomenon, like a tornado or a wild fire, into a character. It has personality. It shows benevolence and a cruel side too. It even kills the bad guys and saves the good ones.

After we get home, I sit on my couch watching the news. I hear that two guys fell into the Sauk River and drowned about the same time I was in the water. The logjam where I struggled was a hundred yards from the confluence of the Suiattle with the Sauk.

I don't know these guys. I don't know if they did something stupid to cause their deaths. I don't know if they were drinking, if they were wearing life jackets. I don't know if they were bad guys or good guys or in between like most of us.

For a few moments, the river held me in its current. I saw the underbelly of the place where we water people love to play. It held me even though I wore the best life jacket you can buy. It pulled me from knee deep water back into the flow. It kept me in the current even though I swam with all my strength. I will be sore from the exertion for days to come.

I have admired my own strength at times, those times when adrenaline and a view of the edge have made me do what I did not think was possible. I have pride in my knowledge of the river.

Floating in the water of the Suiattle was one of those times at first. I did all the right things. I remembered the safety lecture that had been repeated before each trip for the past nine years.

I knew the rules and this was my opportunity to practice them. But my strength alone was not enough. What got me out was the connection I had with Todd, my struggle to get out, his watching me, and his struggle to choose between the raft of dull pretty women and his wife floating toward the logs, maybe toward her death.

The river pulled me toward the log jam—a sieve to hold any large objects and pass the rest. I could have been sucked down and jammed there until low water loosened my body from the logs. It was my struggle together with his that got me out of the river and back into his arms.

We both looked over the edge. It got out of control so quietly, so swiftly. It was like a smooth eddy line on the water, looking so deviously simple to

cross. There was no fanfare, no movie music to warn that I could face death in that moment.

I am overwhelmed remembering the shock on Todd's face as he realized how much I was struggling in the rapids. But, he kept shouting commands as his raft floated down river. He pulled the other girl out quickly. He tried the throw bag. He finally moved those languid women into pulling the raft upstream toward me. He pulled me out of the water and continued to shout commands and steer the raft away from the log jam.

Our guide instructor had been in a raft behind me. I had wondered where he was, why he wasn't doing anything, moving toward me, throwing a line. I couldn't afford the luxury to turn around and see.

I focused on Todd standing in the raft downstream. I'm glad he was the one who got me out. There is shame in losing a paddler and having her pulled out of the water by another rafter.

It was Todd, with a boat full of teaspoon-dippers, who got things under control at just the right time. I think back to that moment over and over.

He holds me tighter in his sleep now. To know his feelings this way is like knowing the strength of the river. I spend so much time playing in the waves and eddies, I forget the rush below.

I want to invent reasons why the river didn't take me. In my fear, I want to make the river into a character with knowledge of good and evil. I want this to be the reason why the river gave me back and took the two other guys on the Sauk.

It isn't the reason. The river just is, with its currents, playful and wild, its gravel bars, its log jams. The river is random except where it follows the rules of gravity, hydraulics, and time.

Any personality we give the river comes from our response to it, from our joy, and from our fear. I wanted to say that, on that river, Todd wanted me more than the river did. I can't say it. I can only say that Todd wanted me. And this time, that was enough.

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Julie U. Brown, of Redmond, is a poet and free-lance writer.

PANORAMA

NEWS FROM ALL OVER

BIGHORNS TO RETURN TO LAKE CHELAN—A plan to reintroduce California bighorn sheep to the north shore of Lake Chelan will be carried out through an agreement between wool grower Cass Gebbers of Brewster and the Foundation for North American Wild Sheep (headquartered in Cody, Wyoming).

California bighorn sheep were once common in north central Washington. It is believed that diseases were introduced to the herds by flocks of domestic sheep grazing in the Sawtooth Range before the turn of the century. The bighorns had no natural resistance and are thought to have died out in the late 1890s.

Gebbers, who has pastured sheep in the mountains north of Lake Chelan for a number of years, has agreed to give up his grazing permit, issued by Wenatchee National Forest.

The FNAWS is covering the costs of capturing the animals to be transported, and is paying Gebbers for his permit.

Twelve sheep will be transplanted from elsewhere in the state; half of them will be fitted with radio collars.

In 1969, bighorn sheep were transplanted from Canada to the Entiat area. Today these sheep can sometimes be seen by travelers along the highway between Wenatchee and Chelan.

LOGS IN EAST FORK LEWIS—The Gifford Pinchot National Forest wants to place as many as 385 logs in about 15 different locations on the East Fork Lewis River. The logs would be piled to resemble natural log jams to aid fish populations.

This stretch of the Lewis is popular with kayakers, who would no longer be able to use the river with the full complement of logs. Fewer logs could be placed, but kayakers' risk would be increased.

Skeptics say the logs won't stay put in high water.

The Forest Service will release an Environment Assessment and public comments will be solicited.

GRAY WHALES DIE—Fifty grey whales have been found dead near the Baja California Peninsula. An environmental organization, the Group of 100, says that it suspects environmental contamination for the deaths.

Although there are no reliable statis-

tics on gray whale deaths in past year, the total rarely reached 20, according to an organization spokesman.

LYME VACCINE—The FDA has announced its approval of Lymerix, the first vaccine against Lyme disease.

If you live or work in deer tick country, this vaccine might be a good idea. It takes three shots over the course of a year to be effective, but even then it is only 78% reliable (with two shots, effectiveness drops to 50%). The vaccine isn't recommended for children under 15.

If you only occasionally pass through deer tick country, just keep taking the usual precautions: wear long pants and long-sleeved shirts and tuck them in; use insect repellent containing DEET, check yourself and your hiking partners (including dogs) after each day on the trail.

LOGGING PLANS IN STEVENS PASS CORRIDOR—The current issue of *Alpine* notes, in an article by Rick McGuire:

"Some of Washington state's most spectacular scenery and remaining privately owned old growth forests along and near the Stevens Pass highway are threatened by Longview Fibre Company's plans to cut certain areas over the next few years. Imperilled areas include the western slopes of Gunn Peak, highly visible from the town of Index, areas along the bottom part of the new Lake Serene trail, old growth forests in Maloney Creek near Skykomish, old growth immediately above the old railroad town of Scenic, and a full section adjacent to the Henry M. Jackson Wilderness.

"... So far the only realistic solution which seems to have any chance of success is a land exchange between Longview Fibre and the Forest Service.

"... Time is of the essence; although Longview has held off logging the most visible parcels, it did log the popular Mount Persis trail last year. If [the land exchange] doesn't happen in the next year or two the views from Index and Route 2 could get a lot uglier and some irreplaceable old growth forests would be gone forever."—*Alpine is the newsletter of the Alpine Lakes Protection Society; for membership information contact Jim Knibb, 13438 98th Ave NE, Kirkland WA 98034.*

LLAMA RENDEZVOUS—If you have an interest in llamas, drop by the Backcountry Llama Rendezvous, April 24 and 25 at the Cowlitz County Exposition Center in Kelso.

Registration is \$15 per person; camping is available on the grounds for \$8 a night. Stanlynn Daugherty will give a presentation Saturday night about the Eagle Cap and Hells Canyon Wildernesses.

For more information, call 360-425-6495, or on the web: www.kalama.com/~llamapacker

MOUNT RAINIER NP—Mount Rainier National Park turned 100 years old in March. Commemorative events will take place throughout the year.

CEDAR RIVER CENTER—The City of Seattle plans to build an education center for the Cedar River Watershed along the southeast edge of Rattlesnake Lake. The complex of four buildings will include an interpretive hall, a learning laboratory, a conference center and a library.

The watershed's 90,500 acres are closed to the public, but guided educational tours are available, mostly for school students. The new facilities will triple the number of people who can come to learn about the importance of the forest ecosystem in providing clean water.

Friends of the Cedar River Watershed hope the center will open in 2000.

GLACIER SHRINKAGE—This from *The BC Mountaineering Club Newsletter* (originally appeared in the New Zealand Alpine Club's *The Climber*, by Ulf Carlsson):

The volume of the world's glaciers outside of Antarctica and the Greenland Ice Sheet continues to decline and the rate of ice loss continues to accelerate, according to a new University of Colorado at Boulder study.

... The largest glacier on Africa's Mount Kenya lost 92% of its mass in the last century and Mount Kilimanjaro glaciers have shrunk by 73% in that time period. Although there were 27 glaciers in Spain in 1980, that number has since dropped to 13. In the European alps, the ice loss has been about 50% in the past century, and New Zealand glaciers have shrunk about 26% since 1890 (although some are currently increasing).

In the Caucasus Mountains of Russia, the volume of glacier ice has decreased by about 50% in a century, according to calculations by Professor Mark Meier and researcher Mark Dyurgerov. In the Tien Shan Mountain Range bordering China and Russia, 22% of the ice volume from the thousands of glaciers there has disappeared in the past 40 years.

TRAIL-PARK PASSES—For hiking season, buy a Trail-Park Pass for use at Forest Service trailheads.

The cost is \$25 for the year (January through December); a second pass may be purchased at the same time as the first one for only \$5 additional.

To protest the Trail-Park project, contact:

Wild Wilderness
248 NW Wilmington Ave
Bend OR 97701
541-385-5261

on the web: www.wildwilderness.org
Wild Wilderness will explain the other side of the Fee Demonstration Project for you, and will send you a free "No Trail Fee" protest sticker if you ask.

MOUNT HOOD RESTRICTIONS

The Mount Hood National Forest will accept public comments on the Wilderness Protection Environmental Assessment until April 7 (not April 1, as appeared in the March issue). The proposal would restrict use on Mount Hood and in the surrounding Salmon-Huckleberry and Hatfield Wildernesses.

Three public workshops were held earlier this year. According to a Mount Hood National Forest news release, "The meetings were intense and full of discussions that revealed a full range of perspectives regarding recreation, wilderness and the Mt. Hood National Forest."

Here are some of the points brought up at the public meetings:

- People strongly support protecting the physical natural resources in Wilderness.
- People are willing to share in the responsibility of protecting their Wilderness areas.
- The damage occurring in Wilderness is due, in part, to not having enough hiking opportunities for the demand created by a nearby metropolitan area.
- If a person seeks solitude in these three Wildernesses, they can find it; use should not be limited for solitude rea-

sons alone.

•Limiting use on the South Side Climbing route will displace inexperienced climbers to more difficult routes and poorer weather conditions, thereby causing more accidents.

One proposal would limit climbers on the south-side summit route on Hood to just 25 a day, and hiking trails in the area would see similar restrictions.

Comments should be sent to:
Mount Hood National Forest
16400 Champion Way
Sandy OR 97055.

WHITNEY USE FEE—Inyo National Forest is preparing to implement a use fee for all hikers and backpackers on trails in the Mount Whitney area. The fee will be in the range of \$10 to \$15 per person.

It will be part of the Demonstration Project; therefore, most of the money will be returned directly to the Mount Whitney area to provide trail maintenance, reconstruction and maintenance of toilet facilities, management of the human waste program, increased wilderness education, campsite restoration, and monitoring of resource conditions.

Questions or comments about the Mount Whitney use fee should be addressed to:

Inyo National Forest
873 N Main Street
Bishop CA 93514.

MYSTERY DEER DISEASE—In an effort to determine the cause of a disease weakening young blacktail deer on the west side of the state, the Department of Fish and Wildlife has transported eight deer to Washington State University for observation and testing.

For the past two years, the Department has been working with several university laboratories specializing in wildlife disease to try to determine the cause of the problem, which causes deer to lose hair, leaving them vulnerable to weather and exhaustion. The actual hair loss is likely caused by high numbers of deer lice. Typically, lice numbers increase on wild animals when their immune systems are suppressed for some reason. It is hoped that by sending both healthy and affected deer to WSU, animal scientists there may be able to determine the source of the immune suppression.

The hair-loss syndrome, which first surfaced in the spring of 1997 [and was quickly noted by *P&P* readers], now affects deer in many areas of western Washington. In early stages, the syndrome causes whitish to yellow discolorations of hair over rib cage, flanks, rump and neck; with hair loss occurring in those areas as the condition worsens. Fawns and yearlings are most severely affected, although adult animals may show symptoms to a lesser degree. Excessive hair loss during cold spring rains subjects deer to severe stress, resulting in nutritional exhaustion or hypothermia. Many deer have died from the effects of the disease. Tests performed at WSU, Oregon State University and the University of Georgia have shown no viral or bacterial cause for the syndrome.

WOLF REINTRODUCTION—A federal feasibility study on a proposal to reintroduce gray wolves to Olympic National Park was released early in March by the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

The study, conducted by the University of Idaho with federal funding, found that wolf reintroduction to the park is biologically feasible but would face significant social and management challenges.

Further movement on the reintroduction proposal would depend on substantial additional federal funding for an environmental impact statement and further studies of prey availability.

VOLUNTEER—The Mount Adams Ranger District is once again providing an opportunity to help maintain its trails for individuals or families who are not members of an organization or club, and would like to lend a hand working on trails or volunteer for other National Forest projects.

The Forest Service will award each volunteer who works for two days with a 1999 volunteer Trail-Park pass.

For each day, volunteers will meet at 9am at the Wind River office, north of Carson, then travel to the project site, and returning to the office by 4:30pm. Volunteers provide their own lunch and clothing; tools will be provided by the Forest Service.

For a schedule of work days, call Mount Adams Ranger Station, 509-395-3400.

TICKS—Spring is tick season. Watch for them now while hiking on warm, east-side trails. Use a DEET-based repellent and check yourself and your companions (dogs, too) for critters.

THE ESSENTIAL BANDANNA—A simple square, cotton bandanna is practically one of the Ten Essentials. It has many uses, some of which are:

1. to drape over your head as a sun shield for your neck and ears;
2. to pack with snow and tie around your neck on a hot day;
3. to wrap around the top of your ice axe and pad your hand;
4. to tie an ice axe to a leg for an emergency splint (takes several bandannas);
5. to swish away mosquitoes;
6. to use as a washcloth for a bath;
7. to use as a towel after a bath;
8. to pick up a hot pot of water;
9. to pre-filter really yucky tarn water;
10. to clean spectacles.

LESSONS—After his unexpected night out on Mount Defiance, and given a few months of hindsight, David Laws has come up with some things he has learned (his story was in the March issue).

- You're almost better off naked than wearing cotton.
- Do not look for a poor trail in bad weather. There's plenty of good weather ahead for finding new trails.
- When you think you can't go on, you can.
- You can think about a lot of things during a 12-hour night, so if you're going to spend a 12-hour night thinking,



try not to do something stupid right before it, or this will occupy 90% of your thoughts.

- If you don't know where the trail is, it doesn't help to know where you are, but it doesn't hurt you either.
- The skin you grow back to replace skin you shred off will be a lot more tender than the 50-year-old hide it replaces.
- Duct tape is excellent for repairs on equipment and clothing.
- A handful of nuts and dates is not enough extra food to fulfill the requirements of the Ten Essentials.
- You are not carrying extra gear for 99.99% of the hikes you will be on. You are carrying it for the one time when it will *save your life*. Quit complaining. It's not that heavy.
- You can make a lot of bad jokes about losing your behind. If you've lost your behind, you can *hear* a lot of bad jokes about losing your behind. You will tire of these long before you stop hearing them.—*David Laws, Renton.*

ZIPPER PULLS—The little ribbons which garment makers now sew on zippers can't be easily grasped with a gloved or mittened hand. So I have replaced them with a 10-inch piece of one-eighth inch utility cord.

Center the cord after inserting one end through the hole in the zipper pull. Tie a single overhand knot, bring both ends together and tie another single overhand or figure-8 knot. The first knot keeps the cord centered.—*Gordon McDougall, Olympia.*

JUDGING SLOPES—Slab avalanches occur on slopes between 25 degrees and 50 degrees, with the greatest number between 30 degrees and 45 degrees (Forest Service Avalanche Handbook).

Here are two simple ways to measure slope angle if you are lost in the clouds without an inclinometer.

1. Some folks reckon when your skis stop sticking while skinning straight up a slope, you're probably getting onto grades greater than 30 degrees. I tried it once, remembering some tips from my cross-country racing coach, and got up to 45 degrees before I fell off and got my head stuck.

Depending on the width of your skins, your skis, and your rear, you'll probably come up with a different

maximum skinning angle, but at least you can make a reasonable estimate with this method.

2. If you use two ski poles of equal length, you can get a more precise measurement of slope angle by placing the poles handle to handle at right angles to each other. Let the bottom pole fall vertically and touch the snow surface.

If the tip of the top, horizontal pole also touches the snow surface, you're on a 45 degree slope (oh, dear!).

Now slide the horizontal pole exactly halfway down the vertical pole, keeping its handle just touching the shaft of the vertical pole. If its tip is touching the snow surface, you are on a 22 degree slope (ahh, much better).

It's possible to get quite fancy and mark your poles so you can measure slope angles to within 5 degrees with your ski poles.—*author unknown, from an old copy of The Avalanche Review.*

DOG SAFETY—If you are wearing a beeper, get one for your dog, too. When taking your dog skiing or snowshoeing with you in avalanche territory, he can be buried by a slide just as easily as the next warm body.

GORP BARS—

- 2 2/3 cups chocolate chips
- 3/4 cup honey
- 3/4 cup peanut butter
- 1/2 cup chopped dates or other dried fruit (apricots are good)
- 3/4 cup raisins
- 1/2 cup coconut
- 1/2 cup wheat germ
- 1 cup granola or rolled oats
- 1 cup walnut pieces or mixed cashews, peanuts and sunflower seeds

Melt chocolate chips, honey and peanut butter over low heat, stirring frequently until smooth. Mix all other ingredients in large bowl. Pour in chocolate mixture and stir well. Spread in a flat, greased pan and refrigerate. When cold break into pieces.

WIN FAME & ADMIRATION!

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

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EDITOR'S JOURNAL



Snowcamping in Tronsen Meadow: melting snow in the "kitchen."

FROM THE MAILBOX—"Bill Lynch looked mighty happy on his snowshoes (*March*, page 13). Sure was good to finally see what he looks like from the frontside."—*Wallingford*.

"The article by David Laws in the March issue was excellent!"—*Stanwood*.

"I'm familiar with the Red Barn, so this article fascinated me (*March*, page 28). Loved it!"—*Renton*.

WEB SITE UPDATES—Within a few days of going to press, the *Pack & Paddle* web site pages are updated with new photos and information.

"News You Can Use" on the web site is updated as conditions change or events occur; the most current posting is at the top. We'll be doing some rearranging this spring and adding new things.

EAGLES—In all the years we have been driving to the Methow Valley in the winter, Lee and I don't recall seeing bald eagles. But this year we saw many.

We counted eight one day driving from Mazama to Pateros, and a naturalist at Sun Mountain told us bald eagles wintered in the Methow and were increasing.

SKATING—A few days in the Methow Valley were great for the sunshine fix we needed. Perhaps it was the sun that inspired us to try something new.

We have long envied those skiers who go zipping past us on skating skis, so we signed up for lessons. Kevin Van Beuren was our instructor and was very patient with a couple of old fogies.

Once we had the basics we felt confident enough to go off on our own the next day. We skated from Chickadee to Hough Homestead and back in the morning. In the afternoon we drove up to Brown's Farm and skated on the Community Trail.

It was certainly fun and we'll try skating again.

DEE MOLENAAR—Neighbor Dee Molenaar stopped in this week for a short visit and gave Lee a break from weeding and me a break from the office. Dee has been busy in his studio, getting ready for a showing of his artwork in April.

His watercolors and oils will be displayed at the Wedgwood Branch of Continental Savings Bank, 8200 35th Ave NE in Seattle, from April 5th through 30th.

He also has a large scene of the Cascade volcanoes on display at the Washington State Historical Museum in Tacoma, as part of the Mount Rainier Centennial exhibit.

And on April 12th, he'll be the featured speaker at the monthly meeting of the Peninsula Wilderness Club in Bremerton; his slide presentation is titled "80 Years in 60 Minutes."

He was still finishing up some of the pieces for the Seattle show, he said, and headed back to his studio.

JENNIFER'S NEW BOOK—Old-timers who remember Garrison Springs Lodge and its owner/chef Jennifer Stein Barker will be interested to know that her latest book, *The Morning Hill Solar Cookery Book*, has just been released.

Now living on a solar-powered homestead in the mountains of eastern Oregon, Jennifer has continued to develop ways of preparing meals without using processed and refined foods.

Just as skiers at Garrison Springs Lodge never went away hungry, readers of either of Jennifer's books will never lack for imaginative ways to fuel their

skiing/hiking/paddling bodies.

The Morning Hill Solar Cookery Book includes excerpts from the now-out-of-print *Morning Hill News*, which give readers a glimpse into the way Jennifer and Lannoc live.

As she writes in the Introduction: "We live in a 600-square-foot house surrounded by 40 acres of second-growth ponderosa pine. The house is entirely powered by the sun through photovoltaic panels. ... We don't regard this as a hardship ..."

You can order a copy of her book by sending a check for \$14.95 to:

Jennifer Stein Barker
Morning Hill Associates
 HC 84 Box 632
 Canyon City OR 97820.

Don't have a solar cooker? Instructions for conventional kitchens are included, as well as where to get a solar cooker.

HUMMINGBIRDS—Lee and Yellow Cat have been spending some of these nice days outside and just a couple of weeks ago they noticed that our hummingbirds were back. The hummers sit on tiny twigs at the top of the apple trees, then zoom in to the porch where the feeders are. If you're standing in the way they will nearly take your ear off.

YC pretends to be bored with them, but they provide Lee and me with much amusement.

PRO MOUNTAIN SPORTS—We have heard about this store for a long time, and finally stopped in a few weeks ago. Jim Nelson (*Selected Climbs in the Cascades*) runs it. As you might expect in a small shop, he carries a lot of gear that can't be found at the mainstream outlets. If you're shopping for something, it's worth a look.

It is located at 5625 University Way NE in Seattle. Call for the hours: 206-522-1627.

See you in the backcountry,

Ann Marshall



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