

The mountains will always be there; the trick is to make sure you are, too. —Hervey Voge

# The Yodel

March 2012



## GCC Class of 2012 Report

The Students

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### ONE STEP AT A TIME (OSAT) MISSION:

To provide a clean and sober environment for members and friends of 12-step recovery groups, to participate in outdoor and social events in the spirit of conservation, preservation, and ecology.

The GCC Class of 2012

The Yodel Lady asked “What do you hope to take away from your GCC Experience?”

Dannika wants to claim “Badassery!”

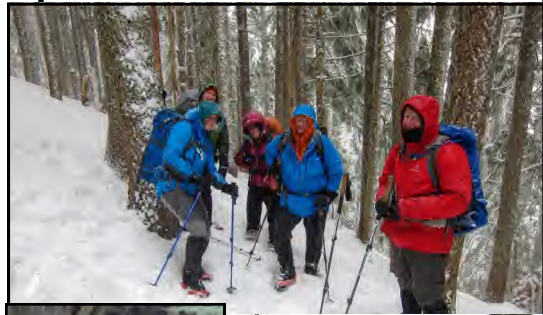


Scott would like to learn more climbing skills and take part in more group hikes with his daughter.

Erik N wants to expand his knowledge of hiking & climbing with his daughter, Erika



John Paul wants to acquire the necessary skills to continue glacier climbing.



Nik J wants “Mount Rainier!” To learn how to take part in all things outdoors



## OSAT - Dreams Can Come True

By Kathy C

June 29, 1997, my father Glenn Creighton passed away at the age of 64. He never saw me, his oldest daughter sober. My father talked to me many times about my drinking and my answer was to move 2 counties away and rarely visit. My drug and alcohol induced downward spiral continued and when he died, I hadn't seen him for 2 years. My dad had always been my hero, always telling me that I was better than I believed myself to be. He was always there with words of love and encouragement for me. And like me, he loved to laugh. Then he was gone.

My journey of sobriety began on June 15, 2006 when I came to AA and heard a message of hope. During those first years in sobriety I thought of my dad often, wishing he could see me and how my life had changed for the better. To see that I was finally growing into the woman he always knew was buried beneath the alcohol.

I went through a period in my recovery where I began to think "Is this it? Is this all there is for me?" I was encouraged by my sponsor that it was time to start living life on life's terms. We made a list of some of the things I had always wanted to do and hiking was on that list. I had been a very active backpacker & hiker in my teens and early 20's and the thought of getting back out in the woods was very appealing to me.

I joined OSAT in December 2009 and began coming up to the Tiger Mountain AA meetings on Sunday mornings. I found out about sOSAT and was introduced to Janet M who I became very close to and love to this day. When I did the sOSAT trip to Camp Muir in August of 2010, I knew that I wanted to climb more of that mountain. I joined the 2011 Glacier Climbing Course and began the adventure of my lifetime. I became close to many of the students and instructors and absolutely loved what I was doing. I had a very difficult time grasping the fact that maybe, just maybe I'd make it through the training and conditioning and be able to climb Mount Baker and Mount Rainier. I worked hard, kept a positive attitude, a smile on my face and followed direction. At the Glacier Travel Field Trip the GCC Chairperson, Kevin P was working at one of the belay stations on the fixed line route we were following. Kevin was one of my favorite instructors and nicknamed me K.C. While I was at his station, Kevin said to me "K.C., I want you on my Mount Baker climb" I was so overwhelmed to be picked to do anything I think I just stuttered "really Kevin?" So much of my life had been spent as the awkward girl who never fit in and drank to cover that up. The Glacier Climbing Course gave me confidence, not only in learning mountaineering skills but also how to be a capable female in a group of males. I am so blessed to have been a student of the 2011 Glacier

Climbing Course and I thank each of them for letting me play on their team.

At the last seminar at REI we got to list our preferences for the climbs we wanted to be on knowing there was no guarantee. When I got the email informing me I was on Kevin's Mount Baker Climb I broke down, so full of emotion. It was finally here after months of conditioning and training hard - The Graduation Climb on a real volcano. I had learned everything I needed to learn and now was the time to put those skills into action. I felt ready. Our Summit day was June 19, 2011 - Father's Day. On June 15 I celebrated 5 years of Sobriety and June 29 was the anniversary of my Father's passing. June 18 we hiked to High Camp and I shared with my fellow climbers that I planned to leave a handful of my Father's ashes at the summit. I passed around my 5 year coin for some OSAT love from the people I had come to love most.



Dan W (The Danimal) "We go that way"

Dan W, another favorite instructor, was my rope leader with Howard M in the middle and me at the end. The climb to the summit was very difficult for me. I hadn't slept because I was so nervous about FINALLY climbing a volcano. When we got to the crater and took a break, I was out of gas. I was in pain from the plastic boots I had rented for the trip and felt I couldn't go another step. I didn't know until we got back to the car that the blisters on my legs had started to bleed. When Kevin came over and asked how I was doing, I started to cry. "I can't do it Kevin, I just can't." Kevin hugged me and let me have a moment to cry. Then he said "I love you K.C. and right now I want you to dig deep, you've got this girl. You can do it." I learned later that at that moment, Dan and Howard were sure we were turning around. Howard said that as much as he wanted to reach the summit that day, he thought of his mom and knew he wouldn't want her to go



through that pain. Dan also told me later that when we reached the crater he asked Howard “are we done?” He was certain the climb was over for our rope team. Part of my training told me “don’t be the asshole” so I dug deep and then I dug some more. I got up and continued to the summit and stood at the top of Mount Baker. I Graduated!



K-Unit & K.C. Mount Baker Summit 6/19/2011

OSAT made a dream come true for me that day. At the summit, I let a handful of my Father’s ashes fly in the wind. I wished my dad Happy Father’s Day and left my 5 year coin with all that OSAT love buried in the snow. My gift for the man who never got to see his oldest daughter sober. At that moment, I was sure in my heart that Dad knew I was ok after so many years of destroying myself. Today I am grateful to OSAT for giving me the chance to make dreams come true. Not only my dreams, but Glenn Creighton’s dream to have his ashes on Mount Rainier which happened 3 weeks later on July 11. I also have a HUGE amount of appreciation for Kevin’s wife and daughter for giving up a husband and dad that weekend. And last but not least, I will always have a special place in my heart for Kevin. It was his words of love and encouragement that made it possible for me to share that special Father’s Day with my Dad.



Glenn Creighton 7/5/1932—6/29/1997

## High Altitude Flatus Expulsion (HAFE)

HAFE, increased intestinal gas production at altitude, remains unstudied. Most flatulent people and their companions find it annoying. Some individuals alternate burps and farts with each step up. Swallowing extra air while gasping for breath may be a factor. HAFE does not result in serious harm.”

Excerpted from *Altitude Illness Prevention & Treatment*, by Stephen Bezruchka, p. 21]

[Ed. Note: For information on the OSAT HAFE study, email Brian C. at bc8025@aol.com ]

## The Path

By Ponytail Bob

### Golden Buddha eyes

### Cast downward into the Void

### Try to find the path

Seattle, Washington  
April 11, 2011

*The relationship of height to spirituality is not merely metaphorical, it is a physical reality. The most spiritual people of this planet live in the highest places. So do the most spiritual flowers . . . I call the high and light aspects of my being spirit and the dark and heavy aspect soul. Soul is at home in the deep shadowed valleys. Spirit is a land of high, white peaks and glittering jewel-like lakes and flowers . . . People need to climb the mountain not simply because it is there, but because the soulful divinity needs to be mated with the spirit.*

-- 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet

# THE APE CAVE

By Ponytail Bob

# 2012 Glacier Climbing Course

In March on an early Saturday night  
We walk a mile on a road closed by snow  
In Mt. Saint Helens National Volcanic Monument  
And climb down a metal ladder into  
The Ape Cave. This is a lava tube  
Consisting of a shorter Lower Cave  
And an Upper Cave about 2 miles long.  
*A darker darkness, stone frosting swirls  
Our headlamps dance walls  
Ceiling and floor.*

There are boulder piles in the tube  
Called breakdown. They formed after  
The eruption of Mt. Saint Helens subsided,  
And lava drained from the tube. As the  
Tube cooled, it began to shrink and crack.  
These cracks weakened the ceiling and walls  
Causing parts of them to collapse.

*Our exploring band of six souls venture  
Onward in the Upper Cave; some very nice  
Large rooms with flat floor, and some large  
Piles of fallen rock that must be scrambled  
Up and over. In one way, I'm scared shitless,  
Imagining a cave- in caused by a 21<sup>st</sup> Century  
Earthquake tremor: we all are trapped and  
Buried alive. I am pushed down with a tiny  
Pocket of air. I cannot not touch nor hear  
My companions. This is the end.*

*On the other hand the Ape Cave is fascinating and  
Quite beautiful. We become lost in its examination  
Chattering away like monkeys...*

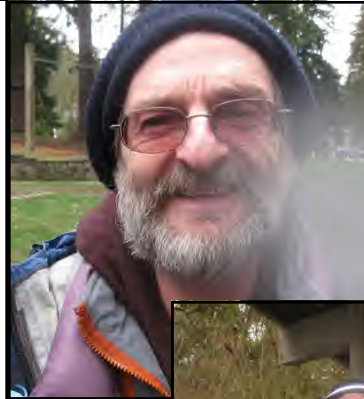
There is a skylight in the tube near the upper exit,  
With light waning in this hole above. We all have been  
Snapping away down here with our digitals, and  
Encountering others coming and going in the tube.

We get to another metal ladder at the exit; go up  
And find ourselves once again in the snow. We consider  
Hiking back to the start above ground, but we immediately  
Start post-holing and turn back, reenter the cave and return

The way we came.

*Here molten rock once reached the earth  
Liquid and glowing, ash and gases,  
Now here we stroll, after the fact,  
Evolved, exhilarated by  
The novel and the strange;  
Simple human visitors  
To a time and place from  
Long ago.*

COUGAR, WASHINGTON/MARCH 12, 2011



## KEEP CLIMBING MOUNTAINS

*Members may want to refer to back copies of the Yodel on OSAT.org for previous sections of Jim's book. There is now an index to them on the web site. Part I, The Adventure Begins, about the beginnings of OSAT was published between March 2004 and December 2005. Part II, Jim's autobiographical story, was published October 2006, January 2007, and October 2008. What follows here is the last of the four chapters in Part II that Jim completed.*  
KCM&DS, Rik

## Part II. Jim's Story Chapter 8 Compulsion Lost

It had been a long day. We were still suffering from jet lag and the meetings had been draining. For most of the day we sat in uncomfortable chairs across a table from each other. Everything had to be said twice - once in English, once in Japanese. Or more than twice, since often the same message needed to be restated in different words. Even then, whether communication had occurred was doubtful.

At the end of the day, we chose to walk rather than ride to our hotel. It was only a mile and we needed some fresh air and exercise. Besides, it was exciting to walk on the Ginza: everywhere short people in a hurry, car horns, screeching brakes and tires, flashing neon, sounds of strange music, billboards with bright colored pictures and strange symbols.

It was January, 1980 in Tokyo. Four of us from our company were meeting secretly with a Japanese company. It was "secret" because the Japanese company did not have permission from their government to talk with us - or at least talk with us without other representatives from their industry. For certain, it was back room, big business stuff involving millions of dollars. It had been 15 months since my last drink. For a year, my mind had been clear and my job had changed accordingly. Once again, I was able to quickly develop mathematical & computer models of business activities. My company responded by giving me more responsibility and I found myself on this select team working an important project directly for the CEO. Talk about visibility...

Even though we were tired, the meetings had been stimulating. Each of us could not wait to share our thoughts and impressions about what had transpired. Back at the hotel, we didn't go to our rooms. Instead we went directly to the bar. It was, after all, the cocktail hour. We continued our animated conversation, all of us almost talking simultaneously. I ordered a "coca-cora". They ordered alcohol drinks, of course.

Thinking back, they must have needed the alcohol badly.

and the liquor had been free, so my colleagues drank heavily. At one point, about an hour from landing, I was quite concerned. Two of them were very drunk and the third was asleep, passed out from too much alcohol for all I knew. How would I be able to negotiate my way through customs with three drunks on my hands? And I was the novice on this trip - the only one of the four who had never been to Japan. (Actually, I had never been out of the U.S. except for Canada and Tijuana.)

Fortunately, my sleeping colleague woke up refreshed and in good shape. Together we managed to get ourselves and the others through customs and checked into our hotel. Our drinks came. The conversation continued non-stop: "What do you think about Matsaura-san?" "What did Ita-san mean by that comment about labor costs?" "I think they are stalling. They seem to be hiding something." And so on and on.

I was fully engaged in the conversation and excited to be there. In the past I had always been left at home, but now things were different - I was clean and sober. Mike, our team leader, was an old friend who knew my capabilities well, since I had also worked with him at Boeing many years before. Although much of the subject matter was new to me, I was able to grasp the issues and make what seemed a positive contribution to the discussion. More rounds were ordered and served. The evening wore on.

Finally, with a shock, I realized that what Mike had just said didn't make any sense. Mike was quick-witted, a brilliant conversationalist, a wealth of knowledge - and, like most analytical types, he was almost always logical. I started to argue with him, and then Bob said something that I didn't understand. He had slurred his words. I looked at Rich. His eyes were glazed. I looked in turn at each of them. They were all drunk! I was sitting there with three drunk people! I looked around the bar. The noise level was high: I knew that alcohol effected hearing, but this was ridiculous. I looked at my watch. I had been there for well over two hours. Amazing. I had not once thought about the fact that I was sitting in a bar and NOT drinking. Moreover, I was happy that I wasn't drinking. I laughed out loud and mumbled something about the conversation degenerating as I said my goodbyes and left for my room. I felt light-hearted and grateful. I had been promised that someday I would lose the desire to drink and it had finally happened. As I walked from the elevator to my room, I forced myself to think of never having another drink the rest of my life. I waited. I was not engulfed by a wave of depression. The thought was pleasant. I had finally lost the compulsion to drink.

The feeling of freedom from alcohol was strengthened the following weekend. My colleagues returned to Seattle, but I hung around to do some sightseeing. The refrigerator in my room was stocked with liquor. I didn't know a soul in the city. Who would ever know, if I had a drink? Except me, of course. But I was not even tempted. The smile stayed on my face and I enjoyed a new sense of freedom.



# The Art of the Summit Pose

By Danimal

You have spent thousands of dollars and countless hours to get the best possible clothes and gear. You just spent months of hard work and sacrifice to get into the best shape of your life. You walked for hours and hours through the dark, the cold and the uncertainty of your motivation. Now you and your friends are on the top of a beautiful and majestic mountain and at the symbolic completion (you still have to climb down) of a long held goal.

You want a photo to capture the moment so you can remember this forever. You want to show your friends and family that you did it. You completed a goal and accomplished something pretty amazing. It's ok to be proud of yourself.

So you take a bunch of photos and when you get back you realize that your hair is sticking up, your clothes don't match, and worst of all you are just standing there. What was I thinking? It does not look like I was having fun at all. There is no make up picture day for this one I am stuck with what I got. My first summit of Mt \_\_\_\_\_ and I look like a boob. My friends.... do not let this happen to you!

With a little creativity and a willingness to look like a buffoon you can make your summit pose a memorable one.

## Classic Poses

**The Superman-** Place your hands on your hips and look tough.

**The Bold Mountaineer-** The ultimate classic. This one requires one hand on the hips in a half Superman while your other hand holds an ice ax planted in the snow.

**Mr. Universe-** Any type of bodybuilding pose will work but the double bicep flex is ultra-classic. Bonus if you remove your shirt.



Three Fingers Thugs

**The Rocky-** Raise both hands above your head in victory while shouting "Adrian!"



The Flying Chest Bump

**The Intrepid Explorer-** With one hand shield your eyes from the sun while pointing with the other at a nearby summit or imaginary object.

## Props

Ice ax, rope, and helmets are not just for safety. They make you look really cool.

A stuffed animal, action figure, doll or a kids toy make a nice mascot for summit poses.

Novelty food or beverage. Think outside of the box. Be ridiculous.

Flags, signs, posters, etc. This can be very fun.



I love Piper

## Advanced Tomfoolery (Group Poses)

This area of summit poses is so vast that it is beyond the scope of this article. Just remember to seek expert instruction and never let propriety get in the way of having a good time.

Climbing is a serious and sometimes sobering pursuit. But it is supposed to be fun too. It is ok to have fun and fool around. Just remember to be respectful of the mountain and other climbers around.

KCM&DS,  
Danimal



Rocking the Pendant on Defiance

# What is your Eleventh Essential?

By Janet Mau

A couple of years ago, I realized there was something either in my pack or on me that had become my eleventh essential. Is yours a good luck charm? Mine is a 10 foot piece of rope that I used to practice knots. Now I use this for many things on a hike or climb. I have used it as a belt to hold up pants where the zipper has broken. Around the waist of someone who had to borrow clothes as theirs were not enough and the size of the pants were too big. I've used it to tie snowshoes to my backpack. How did this item become such an integral part of my packing my gear? Here is the story, it starts in 2010. Two of my friends, Kathy C. & Ponytail Bob went with my on a hike up Mount Baker. Our goal was to take Kathy's freshly made chocolate chip cookies to the GCC students camped just above the railroad grade almost on the Easton Glacier. We left really early in the morning from Seattle and after getting all my gear in the car I couldn't find the belt for my pants. (At this time they were too big for me so I needed something to hold them up) I grabbed my rope remnant that I had been given in my GCC course and tied my pants on. (I'm a HUGE fan of MacGyver) Off we went carpooling up I-5. We parked in the lot and headed out following a well-traveled path through the meadow until we came to the river. There were others on the path with us so we headed up the valley below the railroad grade. I had a great time explaining to Kathy and Ponytail Bob the usefulness of the railroad grade as a handrail and we proceeded in fairly good time enjoying the weather and good company. Then we left the rocky river bank and followed the trail on the snow. At this point we were pretty much alone but the trail was well marked. We zigzagged up the side of the valley to get to the rim of the railroad

grade when a problem presented itself. The snow had receded from the rocks and dirt on the railroad grade so that the formal trail was about 7 feet above where we stood on the edge of the snow. The dirt in this area was really unstable so we walked up the edge of the snow looking for a shallower spot to get up. No such luck all we could find were deeper caves in the snow and looser rocks. Going back was an option but that meant a drop of 6-700 feet in elevation. What to do... I finally had had it. I took off my pack and threw it up on the trail, said a silent prayer for help and scrambled up to my pack. Ok – I was on the trail but Kathy and Ponytail Bob were still below. I took off my rope belt (remember that remnant from the GCC class?). I tied one end to me and threw down the other to Kathy. After she got her pack to me she grabbed the rope. My only instructions to her were to hold on and keep low. Ah, it worked now for Ponytail Bob. Of course Bob couldn't be shown up by two women so he had to do it too. All three of us were up on the official summer trail. The delay cost us the surprise of cookies in camp but the satisfaction of having conquered our little dilemma gave us a huge moral boost. The best response for this trip was Kathy posting on Facebook that she knew she had stayed close to the mountain as instructed because when she took her shower, there was rocks and dirt in her bra. I now pack this little piece of rope in my pack. Who knows, I may get to play MacGyver again someday.



# OSAT Pioneers

By Rik A

At the first GCC seminar, I found my pre-printed name tag had "OSAT co-founder" on it. Oops! I may be akin to a club historian, but I'm no co-founder. Yes, I participated in the preparations for and the eventual summiting of Rainier in 1991, but only as one of Jim Hinkhouse's climbing buddies helping him achieve his ambition of an AA meeting atop The Mountain. After that climb, Jim (a co-worker of mine at Boeing as well as a climbing friend) kept me advised of the development of OSAT, but an old ski injury kept me from any climbing in 1992 when the pre-cursors of club organization were created.

By 1993 when I helped with the climbing course again, OSAT had over a dozen voluntary committee heads, had instituted regular monthly club meetings, solicited annual dues, and in mid-1993 Jim presented the club a plan for a more formal organization including a board, officers, and by-laws. Bottom line: calling me a "co-founder" would be like calling H.W. Longfellow a Founding Father of the USA, i.e. we can tell some good stories 'cause we knew the participants and studied the history, but we weren't in there doing the founding! Jim kept a list of folks for distribution of his newsletter, until by-laws were adopted in late 2004 and Teresa F became membership chairman. The numbers (#n) below indicate the sequence Jim registered these OSAT Pioneers into his database. To set the record straight on who really co-founded OSAT, the following information about some of these folks was extracted from the early newsletters.

Here are some brief cameos of current or recent OSAT members who were listed on the roster of the "1991 AA Mt. Rainier Expedition".

Karen P (now Karen C) (#4), who hosted the pre-climb organizing picnic in her backyard for the first climb, and became the initial Social chairperson for the group.

Walt Q (#25) was a rope leader on the first Rainier climb

Tom M (#29) was consistent pillar of OSAT, along with his wife Leah who died last year. Tom is probably the most experienced mountaineer in the club, was an early and frequent climb activity leader, and is still seen often at Tiger meetings.

Bob C (#33) quickly became one of the club's most accomplished climbers. In 1994 Bob was the first

chairman of the climbing course committee and later became the second BOTS chairman.

Dick W (#39) was a college buddy of Jim's who became a running and climbing companion. Dick's involvement in getting OSAT started is described in the January 2005 issue of the Yodel, available on the web site. Dick now lives in Eugene.

Dave N (#42), was an early frequent trip leader and served on the Board of Servants (predecessor to the BOTS) in 1994-95, long-time Safety chairman and now Librarian.

Terri S (#56) was the very first BOTS (then called "BOS") chairman in 1993-94, then became the Yodel editor. Terri now lives across the Cascades in Brewster.

Kathy O (#62) was one of the three climb team leaders on the 1991 Rainier climb, and became the first Safety chairperson when initial committees were formed in early 1992.

Charlie A (#82) and his wife Janyth hosted the OSAT Christmas Party for many years at their beautiful West Seattle home. Charlie led numerous climbs and served as the club treasurer 1996-2001. Charlie and Janyth now live in Conconnaly, near Omak.

Steve S (#74) became the first Service chairman when initial committees were formed in early 1992, and was on the first BOTS in 1993.

Shirley R (#121) was an experienced mountaineer who helped formalize the climbing course committee.

Among members on the first club roster (published in the May 1991 newsletter) but who were not on the first climb are the following:

Dave B (#41) was on the original BOTS, and ran club finances from 1992 until 1996. Dave died on the Tiger Mountain cable line trail in 2010.

Ivar S (#84) who tracked club equipment in the early years

Mia W is listed on the first roster of 85 members, but that list did not include Jim's membership database numbers.

Of course there were many more people who stepped up to responsibilities in getting the club going in the early years, and many of these folks are still around as well. Among the latter are:

- Teresa F,
- Linda Z.



- Doug H
- Rod B
- Roy O

The BOTS recently approved getting the early club (and pre-club) newsletters converted to electronic form so they can eventually be added to the Yodel archives already on the web. When posted there, you will be able to read through them and get a more complete appreciation for the history of the club and know who among us are the real OSAT pioneers. Until then, if you find yourself on the trail with one of these OSAT pioneers, ask them about the people they remember and the experiences of getting OSAT going in the early years!

**A Mountain Mind by Tom Lyon (excerpted from *The Mountain Spirit*, ed. Michael Charles Tobias and Harold Drasdo, New York: The Overlook Press, 1979)**

Submitted by Mia W

Hi OSATers! I'd like to share an article which captures the spiritual essence of the climbing experience for me. Be prepared to put your college thinking cap on, because it is dense! It may take a couple of reads to get it. Below are a couple of quotes from the article and my observations. Enjoy!

"In short, without straining for it, as if absorbing it unknowingly through his body or out of the side of his eye, Muir came to sense all life as wilderness."

*One reason I am not much of a shutterbug while climbing, although I totally appreciate and enjoy the pictures others take, is because pictures don't really capture the experience for me. When I climb, all my senses experience it, and the memory is absorbed by my whole body, not just my eye, or my rational mind.*

"But to see the archadministrator, ego, as a wild and authentic being, part of a pattern, requires a leap into paradox. Once achieved, we can look at ourselves with a certain irony and calmness, as a natural being looking at a natural being. Nothing special."

*This reminds me of an experience I had on Sahale Peak*

*last year, hanging out on a ledge with Bobby S. while he was belaying Brian W., who was taking what felt like "forever" to climb up to the summit. It was a gorgeous, crystal clear July day. We had the most exquisite panoramic view of the entire Cascade Range. As I sat there, well, clung there, I thought, "Ho. Hum. Here we are." And I felt a unity with my entire life at that moment.*

--Mia W.

I have the uneasy sense that talking about mind, in a book devoted to something as solid as mountains, may seem to be an abstraction about an abstraction. In the concrete health and naturalness of mountain travel, with wild beauty all around, just *there*, what need for analysis, especially analysis of consciousness? Well, I will try not to be too finespun about it, but I think there is a "mountain mind"- a mind which is more complex and more whole than the ordinary, nonmountain, or, as it might be called, tame mind. I certainly wouldn't argue that this mind is necessarily to be found in mountaineers, or that it couldn't exist in a lowland city, but I do think there is an interesting level or quality of consciousness which is associated with the experience of wilderness and which seems particularly associated with mountains.

There are two major capabilities to the human brain, according to the psychological research of Dr. Robert Ornstein and others. One capability or style of consciousness is to process information in sequential and hierarchical patterns, to see objects one at a time in separateness, and to categorize and make distinctions. This type of consciousness is associated strongly with verbal skill. It is, as Ornstein points out, the major mode of consciousness in modern, industrial cultures. With its built-in "set" for entity, this kind of consciousness is able reflexively to consider itself as self-subsistent - an ego in other words - and to consider the rest of the objects of the world as likewise independent and egoistic." This style of mind is what we call "rational consciousness." Its tendency to be dominant, reflected in the cultural situation, is probably a logical result of this ability to focus on itself as a separate entity, and thus to be prey to a progressive security need arising from the sense of alienation. It is as if, having separated itself from the stream of things, the detached and rational pattern of consciousness must continually assert and protect itself. In time, a mechanism or logic of exaggeration can develop, and what is originally only a particular pattern in human consciousness, a neutral capability to process information in terms of entity and sequence, can become a desperate caricature of fear and grasping, running aggressively over the other "separate entities" of the world. It assumes that these other entities must likewise be engaged in self-serving ("survival of

the fittest"), and thus comes to see life as a grand battleground. The historical result is that from the position of separateness, with modern technological power at our command, we seem now to be succeeding in forcing the world into a certain pattern. We are breaking up natural mutualisms, simplifying complex wild communities, cutting ties - in short, we are making the world answer to our own peculiar, separatist mythology.

The horrors of the Christian-capitalist-communist-industrial world have been so amply documented that it would be silly for me to continue beating this dead horse. The point I think relevant here is that the sequential or entity orientation, when overemphasized, tends to cut us off from our roots in mutualistic nature. We are one of the systems, being isolated. Then, to protect the hypothetical psychic "center," we take apart the rest of the world's knit, or interdependence, so as to arrange it around ourselves as a kind of wall against our always threatened dissolution. The project is endless, I think, because having in effect lost the whole world, nothing less than the whole world could suffice for security. We program ourselves for a state of endless psychic scarcity.

However, we have a second major capability of consciousness, as proven scientifically in the research of Ornstein (and demonstrated for centuries in literature and mythology) and this mode or style tends to balance the entity orientation. On this side of the mind (the right half of the cortex, according: to Ornstein, the left half has the proclivity for entity), information is processed according to its general configuration. This mode tends to give a holistic aspect to sense data, to emphasize the relational or mutualistic flow and interdependence among seeming objects. Instead of linear reason, the right side of the brain deals in intuition; its findings and insights are rather more difficult to verbally communicate. In this relational capability of consciousness, the sense of specialness or "ego" on the part of the perceiver is not so pronounced. In romantic terminology the right side is "heart," the other side is "head." ("I stand with the heart," said Herman Melville. "To the dogs with the head!") The opposition is familiar. We have lived with this apparent dualism for a very long time, calling it various names. "Conscious" versus "unconscious," "fact" versus "feeling," "spirit" versus "flesh," if the speaker is a Puritan; in the Buddhist tradition, it is *svabhava* 'thinking versus *hihsvabhava* 'thinking; according to Carlos Castaneda's don Juan, it is the "tonal" versus the "nagual"; in cultural terms, especially in Western civilization, it is "civilization" versus "wilderness." On the one side is all that is rational, open, familiar, above-board, and godly; on the other is all that is dark, mysterious, all that upwells from strange and unknown sources in nature - all that should be (as our own cultural project has it) repressed in the individ-

ual and rearranged or subdued in external nature. So, under the exaggeration of the entity orientation, we have a culture which is resolutely egoistic, disrespectful of nature, devoted to administration which is to say, control of spontaneous activity - and at the same time obsessively fearful of even the slightest opposition.

Now I am being very quick with this, superficial, but I believe that this fundamental duality is essentially the map of human consciousness as found in the currently predominant culture. And I think that as long as this dualism prevails, the project of industrial culture will be to repress wilderness, either through obvious physical exploitation or through a more subtle process of administration in which the wilderness' "area" becomes hedged around with a specific boundary and an elaborate set of administrative rules-ghettoized, so to speak. For most of us, wilderness areas or mountains function to help us reimmerge temporarily into the holistic type of consciousness. We reassert half-forgotten physical and emotional knowledge, we are placed in a matrix rather than existing as alien manipulators, and we have an opportunity to experience, among other things, the spontaneity of weather, the cycle of daylight and nightfall, and the surrounding, enormously complex patterns of vegetation, water flow, and animal life. Robert Marshall, the great American exponent of the recreational theory of wilderness, believed such experiences to be psychologically necessary as a respite from the pressures of civilized (that is, repressed) life. Marshall particularly recommended strenuous physical activity in wilderness. In terms of Dr. Ornstein's research, Marshall is proposing wilderness as an avenue into the neglected right side of the brain. In wilderness, we may actually experience the so-called "primitive" mythopoeic consciousness of being in the world.

For most of us, however, time in wilderness is vacation time, clearly set apart from the "real" world. This fragmentation of time corresponds to the geographical and political fragmentation of the wilderness area. We are conscious of going into a special, segregated situation; the essential dualism of the tame mind may not only remain unaltered, it may be reinforced. Eventually, we come back to the city, as we knew we would. This seems to be a typical pattern. But it may happen that wilderness experience, and mountain experience in particular, with its awareness heightening element of danger, can provide a setting for consciousness that quite transcends both sides of the duality I have been describing. A recognition may begin to dawn that is neither totally alien and rationalistic nor totally "oceanic" and mystically negated as a self, but includes both and goes beyond. To take almost at random merely one. suggestive example from the rich possibilities in mountain literature, Reinhold Messner says, "Being in the mountains encourages one to meditate and

to find and retain an internal balance .... "

How does such a balance arise? Perhaps it is as simple as Kenneth E. F. Watt's speculation that there may be an "optimum rate" of stimuli for the human perceptual system, and wilderness is the natural source for that rate. Perhaps in wilderness we find little external encouragement for an overweening sense of egoistic importance and little evidence for rectilinear interpretations of life. Everything we see is calmly going about its business of existence; we do not (rationally) understand the totality of the patterns before us, around us, in us.

We cannot understand them in linear and verbal fashion, because they do not operate in that simple way. So, little by little, the surface consciousness may recede from its domineering position, somewhat nonplussed; and, little by little, in balance, the other mode of consciousness opens. The "unconscious;" the "wisdom of the body," "the wisdom of the heart," whatever this aspect of the psyche may be called, begins to feel its natural, evolutionary correspondence with the coevolved world of nature. And yet the rational sense is not lost. What awakens now is akin to a new sense; a paradoxical but undeniable sense which combines both modes of consciousness in their rightful proportions, letting them both operate, and thus (mysteriously) goes beyond them into the realm of paradox, which is to say, the real world. We are, we now see, both particle and stream, ego and connection, and so is everything else. C. G. Jung said that the contents of the unconscious "are without exception paradoxical or antinomial by nature, not excluding the category of being:" Perhaps in wilderness we are simply getting the chance to affirm our natural paradoxicalness, our likeness through and through to the rest of paradoxical nature. The traditional opposites, alienation and merging, are now held in suspension, each free to express its own pattern, but known now from a deeper standpoint. Are we here somehow keyed into the "quick" of life? We stand suddenly respectful, not knowing with rational precision what it is that fulfills us, but not really caring to have that kind of grasp. D.H. Lawrence said in his poem, "The Third Thing,"

Water is  $H_2O$ , hydrogen two parts, oxygen one,  
but there is also a third thing, that makes it water and  
nobody knows what that is.

The atom locks up two energies  
but it is a third thing present which makes it an atom.

The experience of John Muir is an interesting practical example of the development of this higher insight. Muir's early training was firmly (even fanatically, it seems) Christian; he received, in short, the heavily dualized, special-creation mythology that characterizes Western culture. Then, at the University of Wisconsin,

he took scientific training, which probably would have further emphasized his entity orientation. He was proceeding in a fairly typical direction, a skillful industrial inventor on the rise, when an accident gave him four weeks of enforced quiet. Having punctured the cornea of one eye, he was kept in a darkened room on doctor's orders. During his confinement, Muir decided against continuing in the cultural mainstream. After the accident, he says in his autobiography, he decided to devote the rest of his life to wilderness travel. Upon recovery, he wandered from Kentucky to Florida, then took ship for California and eventually found his way to Yosemite. But the impetus for Muir's first extended mountain-wilderness experience came not from a desire for it, per se, but from a disagreement. The state geologist of California had declared that the dramatic Yosemite Valley was the result of a cataclysm; Muir believed it to be the result of glaciation. (One of his professors at Wisconsin had been influenced by the great glacial theorist, Louis Agassiz.) To prove his thesis, Muir traveled deep into the Sierra Nevada looking for evidence of glaciers. He developed an amazingly light backpacking style, going without a sleeping bag and carrying small amounts of simple food. He spent weeks at a time living alone in the wilderness, patiently taking notes and imbibing the general scene. After long, "loving study," as he called it, Muir found enough evidence for a convincing account of the Sierra's glacial past, and his theory was accepted. However, his notebooks and journals of the period are probably more significant as a record of a radiant and comprehensive consciousness. Muir had both a scientific faculty and an intuitive, physical-emotional sense of place, and then something else. His writing glows with the fusion of perceptual capabilities and the mysterious apperception of the paradoxical life quality, the "inner." He had lain on the rocks, sensing their grain and guessing how they might crack under tons of flowing ice, and he had experienced day after strenuous day and through reflective, quiet nights, going inside the wilderness, devoting himself to it, and accepting its conditions.

Traveling light in the mountains, with his attention focused primarily on the data he was gathering rather than on the self and its delights and trials, Muir became open to the wilderness around him. "These beautiful days," he wrote " ... saturate themselves into every part of the body and live always." His study of the Sierra and its glacial history enlarged in his mind until he realized he was describing only one microcosmic example of the universal pattern of flow and interpenetration. He became capable of gnomic, comprehensive statements like "The clearest way into the Universe is through a forest wilderness." In short, without straining for it, as if absorbing it unknowingly through his



body or out of the side of his eye, Muir came to sense all life as wilderness.

Some of Muir's inheritors, I suppose, have idealized wilderness and thus distanced themselves from it. But Muir's experience with wilderness was spontaneous, implicitly trusting. Again and again in his writings he recommends that we trust nature, inner and outer wilderness that is, to reestablish the basic connection. It is a matter of relaxation, or "going home," as Muir put it. "Going to the mountains is going home."

Our problem is that from the ordinary or tame mind's standpoint, wilderness is the Other, so that even when we favor the wild and put down the tame, we are not quite wild. We are not yet seeing the "third thing." We might realize that the civilized mind is, in the end, just another spontaneous, natural pattern which is quite as wild and valid as anything else the fecund universe has grown. But to see the archadministrator, ego, as a wild and authentic being, part of a pattern, requires a leap into paradox. Once achieved, we can look at ourselves with a certain irony and calmness, as a natural being looking at a natural being. Nothing special. Somehow, we become less urgent and demanding. What is all around, the wilderness that includes civilization, can be seen in something like its full nature because, finally, we don't want anything from it and we don't want it to be anything else. We are enjoying a bit of free space. Now we may, perhaps, get to know what the poets mean, and what any ordinary day tries to tell us. And if we slip back, as we often annoyingly do, we can later see ourselves as merely having made a trip into one of those valley regions that make mountains so interesting.

Robert Ornstein, *The Psychology of Consciousness* (New York: The Viking Press, 1972).

Garma C. C. Chang, *The Buddhist Teaching of Totality* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1971), see p. 85, for example.

Robert Marshall, "The Problem of the Wilderness," *Scientific Monthly* 30 (February 1930): 141-48.

4. Reinhold Messner, *The Seventh Grade* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974), p. 103.

. Kenneth E. F. Watt, "Man's Efficient Rush Toward Deadly Dullness," *Natural History* 81 (February 1972): 74-82.

C.G.Jung, *Psyche and Symbol* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1958), p.86.

Biographical information on Muir is found in Wolfe, Linnie Marsh, *Son of the Wilderness: The Life of John Muir* (New York: A.A. Knopf, 1945).

Linnie Marsh Wolfe, ed., *John of the Mountains: the Unpublished Journals of John Muir* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1938), p. 53.

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## SWITCHBACKS UP THE WOODED NORTH FACE OF THE BUTTE

By Ponytail Bob

Far below  
We can see it  
From up here  
A little ribbon,  
The Interstate Ninety  
Corridor highway  
McClellan's Butte  
Our vantage point  
And then  
We push off  
And fly, leaving  
Our packs behind,  
Winging it  
For sure

Seattle, Washington  
September 2, 2011

OSAT Quick Reference		OSAT Traditions
<b>Board Of Trusted Servants (BOTS)</b>		1) Every OSAT activity has a designated leader. The leader makes the decision as to who is qualified for the activity. This decision must be based on principles and not personalities. 2) Alcohol and illegal drugs are not allowed on any OSAT activity. 3) Party members are not to separate from the group without prior permission of the activity leader. 4) An OSAT leader should have completed a MOFA course or ensure that at least one participant in the activity has done so. 5) When in a wilderness area, each party member will carry the 10 essentials. 6) Outdoor activities start with the Serenity Prayer while holding hands in a circle. 7) Each OSAT glacier climb will have at least two rope teams that include a person with crevasse rescue training. 8) Anyone can volunteer to lead an activity, even a technical climb. As a participant, you may want to “qualify” your leader. As leader, you should be certain that everyone on that activity has signed a Release and Indemnity Agreement. 9) Party size for OSAT activities will adhere to the rules of the appropriate jurisdiction.
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<b>12 Step Meetings</b>		
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<b>OSAT Club Meeting</b>		
The monthly OSAT club meeting is held on the second Wednesday of the month at 7:30pm. Located at 4545 Island Crest Way, take the Island Crest Way exit from I-90, the church is 1.6 miles south of the freeway, on the right. The meeting is held upstairs in classroom #6.		

**The OSAT Echo** is our email list. There have been some problems maintaining the list lately. We will try to assure the list is current with respect to wishes expressed on your web site membership profile, but this is not automated at this time, so please bear with us. To post a message: send email to [echo@osat.talklist.com](mailto:echo@osat.talklist.com). Please keep



in mind that this goes to a large list. Try to keep messages short and appropriate to OSAT members. Please do NOT "Reply All" to messages from the Echo, reply instead to the person posting the message.

To unsubscribe from the list: send a blank email to [echo-off@osat.talklist.com](mailto:echo-off@osat.talklist.com). If you are new and have not been getting OSAT emails, please send an email to any of the following [omembership@osat.org](mailto:omembership@osat.org), [owebsherpa@osat.org](mailto:owebsherpa@osat.org), or [otreasurer@osat.org](mailto:otreasurer@osat.org) to be added.

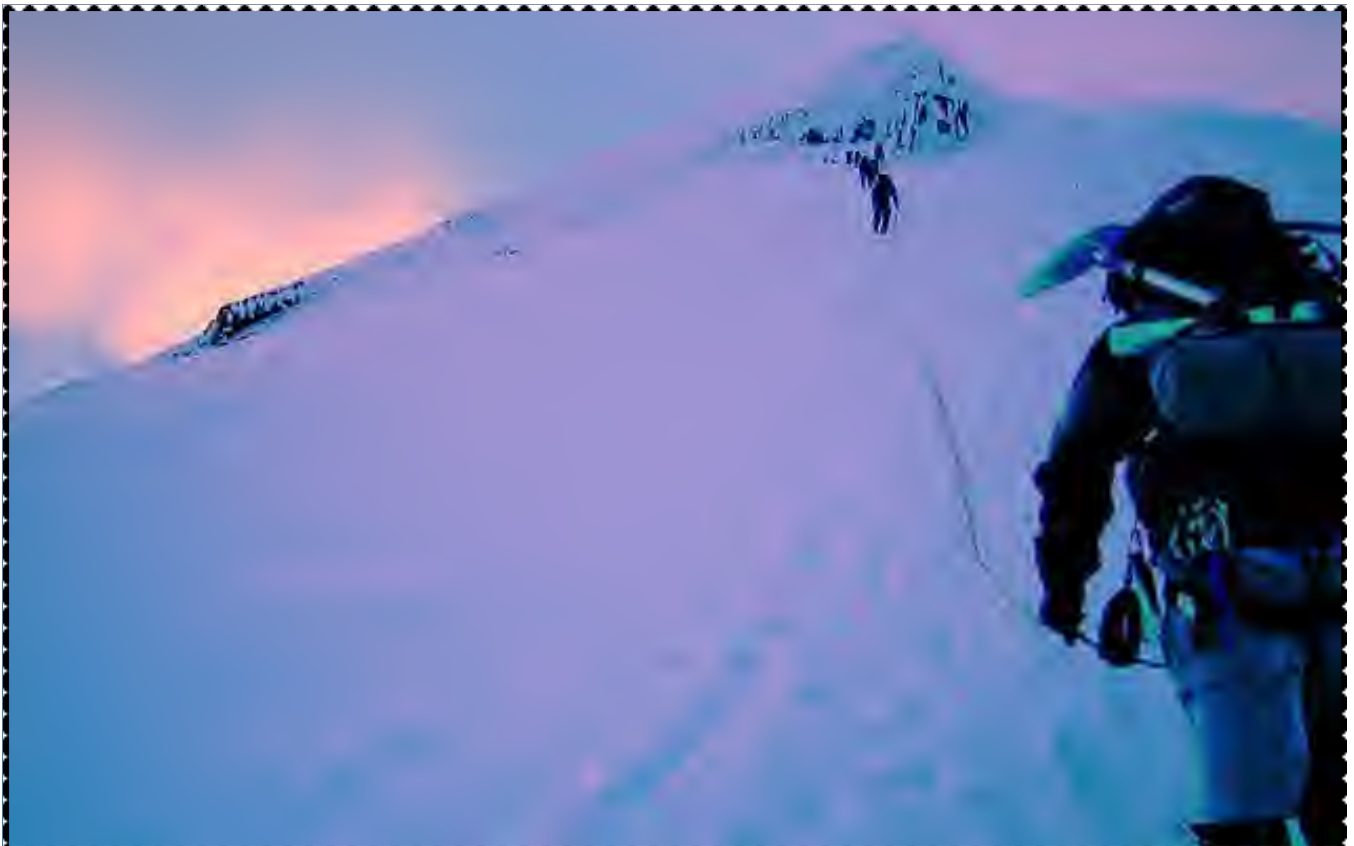
Thanks! KCM&DS!

*OSAT HISTORY: Dave N, Jim Hinkhouse, Shirley R, Rod B, and Rik A atop Little*



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# The Yodel



*Ascending Mount Baker — Photo by Trevor Z.*