

The Yodel

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Keep climbing mountains and don't slip!

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Glacier Climbing Course Begins

What's it all about?

by Louisa Peck

I signed up for the Glacier Climbing Course with OSAT for one reason and one reason only: I wanted to climb Mt. Rainier before I got too old. Or, to be even more honest, I wanted to be able to *say* I'd climbed Mount Rainier, which meant I probably ought to actually *do* it, which meant joining OSAT because it was cheap enough, and in turn jumping through this silly hoop they had called the Glacier Climbing Course, so I could get on with it. I didn't plan on learning anything. I knew plenty; after all I'd been hiking in the Cascades and Olympics since I was a kid, so what's to learn?

In retrospect, my attitude bears a striking resemblance to that I brought into my first AA meeting. I wanted to learn how to control and enjoy my drinking, plus maybe cut down a little on how often I wanted to kill myself, but I certainly didn't need to learn anything about *living*! I mean, I'd been doing that already for 34 years, had I not?

Well... in both cases, I couldn't have been much more wrong. And in both cases, worlds I never knew existed were opened before me by generous people passing on their experience — tools and practices to which I'd previously been a total stranger.



Josh R. hangs out in a crevasse on Baker, GCC 2006

Just as I am excited to continue my life as a sober woman and discover what new situations and demands I'll have to rise to, so am I excited to continue climbing mountains and discover more of what's out there and what I'm made of within.

Based on all I've learned since, I'd say entertaining the thought that I could summit a glaciated volcano like Rainier because I'd done some alpine hiking was about on par with believing I could sail solo to Greenland because I've taken the Bremerton ferry. I didn't know how much I didn't know.

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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."



At a recent OSAT function, one of our members referred to last year as the 15th year for the Glacier Climbing Class (GCC) and 2007 would be the 16th.

The thing about birthdays is that they are always a year behind, so when you are 59 years old, you are actually in your 60th year! So, OSAT got started in 1991, and the 1st GCC run by OSAT was that year; thus 2006 was the 16th GCC and in 2007 we will be running the 17th GCC. This has caused problems in the past, and we've even had cakes atop Tiger for

that first meeting in the spring with the wrong number on it! The GCC number is always one more than the age of the club, because the first GCC was when the club was ZERO years old!

In short, OSAT is 15 years old, and next March at the first Thursday in Daylight Savings Time, OSAT will celebrate its 16th birthday.

Keep Climbing Mountains, and Don't Let a Year Slip By Uncounted! §

—Rik Anderson

The Autobiographical Jim Hinkhouse



Jim on Rainier, 1991

Our new editor, Louisa, reminded me that many current readers of the *Yodel* may not know the history of OSAT and Jim Hinkhouse. When Jim died on Denali in 1995, he left the draft outline for a book about the founding of OSAT, including full drafts for about a third of the chapters. We have been publishing Jim's draft one chapter at a time (OCAT?) in the *Yodel*, beginning March 2004. Archived copies of *Yodel* are now available in the members section of the web site at <http://www.osat.org/members/MYodel.cfm>, the March 2004 issue provides additional background concerning Jim's book.

This month's installment turns decidedly darker in tone, as Jim continues his autobiography with some thoughts as to why he became an alcoholic; anyone new to OSAT may want to refer back to web copies of the *Yodel* from the past three years for other sections that are more uplifting!

KCMADS, Rik

Keep Climbing Mountains

Part II. Jim's Story

Chapter 2: Garbage and Low Self-Esteem

Chapter one recounted the bright prospects of Jim's youth — a happy family, high grades, a natural gift for sports, being voted "best liked" in his high school, and a financial award for the college of his choice — in short, nothing a good case of alcoholism couldn't devastate.

But it was not as rosy as all that. Somewhere along the way I had collected some garbage in my head. I didn't believe that anybody liked me. Why should they? I didn't deserve to be liked. I was ugly and I was a fraud.

In particular, women found me totally unattractive. After all, I had a grotesque jaw that jutted out below my upper teeth. My voice had a nasal quality that most people found unpleasant at best. If girls (later women) were nice to me, it was because I was a good athlete and/or very smart. But these were gifts of nature — attributes which I did nothing to develop on my own, so therefore were undeserved. I was jealous of men who seemed to attract women, but I kept my feelings secret — sometimes even from myself.

I got along well with most men because I was a good team player and had a sense of humor. But the terrible truth was that I had no strong opinions on anything. I just didn't know what I believed in. I admired guys who knew or pretended to know what life was all about, who should be elected, who was the best actor, which was the best car, and so on. I didn't have a clue about such matters. I only knew about math, and math wasn't important, because it wasn't real. Deep inside me, I thought I was a fraud. But this too I hid from myself and others.

I was almost thirty years old before I became aware that "garbage" like this resided in my subconscious mind and directed much of my life. Where did this garbage come from? That's not important to this story. What is important is

that these negative thoughts helped me to become an alcoholic.

How? I'll try to explain in a few words.

There are two necessary ingredients in the recipe for making an alcoholic: (1) a biological makeup that allows one to easily become addicted to mind altering chemicals and (2) ingestion of lots of mind altering chemicals.

I think of alcoholism as analogous to heart disease. A person may have a biological predisposition toward having a coronary heart attack, but will not necessarily have one if proper exercise and eating the right foods become a lifelong habit.

There were probably lots of environmental reasons why I drank alcohol. Suffice it to say that alcohol assuaged my feelings of loneliness and despair that were a result of this low self-esteem garbage that lived in my head. Consequently, I drank enough alcohol to become addicted physically and emotionally - past the point where I could drink in moderation without problems.

Someone else who had less of a predisposition toward addiction to chemicals (a genetic difference at the cellular level) may have drank what I did and not become an alcoholic. Others who may have had a stronger predisposition might have become addicted from less alcohol use.

Whatever. I need to get on with my story. Boring as it is to me, it may be interesting to you, the reader. §



Jim and Rik, 1991



L to right: Will A., Dan L., Rik A., Ken M., and Terri S.

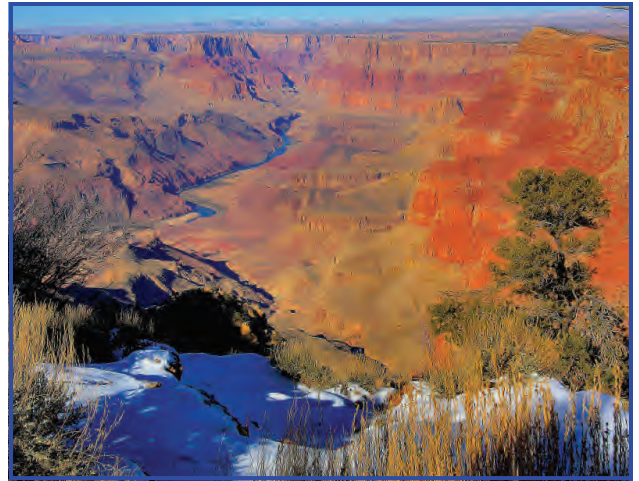


photo by Terri Steele.

Grand Canyon Trek

By Rik Anderderson.

Five OSAT climbers turned mountaineering skills to canyoneering in early December, spending five days in the Grand Canyon. The hike was organized by Ken M, and largely followed the itinerary of his 2005 7-day winter trip as shown at a club meeting program earlier this year.

After spending a night in Flagstaff, Dan L and Rik A. warmed up with a climb of Humphreys Peak, at 12,633 the highest point in Arizona. They then rendezvoused with Ken, Terri S., and Will A. at the Bright Angel Lodge on the South Rim. On December 1, they began their trek down at Hermit's Rest, about 10 miles west of the South Rim village. The weather was beautiful, with clear skies and perfect (cool) temperatures. After descending the Hermit Trail two thirds of the way down to the Colorado River, they started their traverse eastward on the Tonto Plateau to the first camp at Monument Creek.

The next morning Will and Rik hiked a mile and a half down to the Colorado to check out Granite Rapids. The hike to the next camp was mostly along the Tonto Plateau, but because of the radiation contamination hazard in water at the camp on Horn Creek, it involved the heaviest packs of the trip as everyone was carrying 1.5+ gallons of water. The hike included several spectacular view points down into the Inner Canyon (the lower 1500 feet from the Tonto Platform down to the River), and through the spectacular Salt Creek canyon with views up to the Hopi Wall and the South Rim. A full moon made for easy evening walking around the Horn Creek camp without headlamps, even though darkness fell quickly after the 6 o'clock sunset.

Late in the morning of the third day the group reached the Bright Angel Trail, one of the two main routes into and out of the Canyon. Here they encountered the first people seen in two and a half days. Hiking the Canyon in the winter is a great way to avoid the crowds! And the mules! The hike down the switchbacks to the River Trail and across one of the footbridges to the north side of the Colorado brought the OSATers to the cottonwoods and friendly confines of the Bright Angel Creek

canyon. After setting up camp, Rik hiked 1.5 miles up the deep Bright Angel Creek canyon while the others explored the area closer to camp. All enjoyed beef stew at Phantom Ranch that evening with the mule riders and others who stay in cabins there. Although a number of the ranch cabins were in use, there were only a few campers in the area.

The fourth day hike followed the South Kaibab Trail up to the Tonto, and then west along the Tonto back to the Indian Garden campground on the Bright Angel Trail. This is a large camp, potentially accommodating up to 50 campers, but the OSAT group were the only ones in camp for their last night in the Canyon.

The following morning they hiked the remaining 3000 vertical feet out of the Canyon on the busiest 4.5 miles of trail in the Grand Canyon. Although numerous hikers and one or two mule groups were encountered, this final leg in the five day trek was a welcome return to civilization. For those who like to avoid the heat, but still want to enjoy the experience of hiking one of the greatest natural wonders of the world, a hike through the Grand Canyon in December is highly recommended!§



Photo by Terri Steele

Trips Past: Sahale Peak, June '06



Pete, Elisha, Ed, Scott, Cody, Brent, Adam, and Caleb, ready to roll toward the Sahale Peak trailhead

by Scott Harder

This trip was a graduation climb for some students in the '06 OSAT glacier course. We left Everett at 5am, arrived at Marblemount around 7am, and got our permit. The road was still closed, but we all brought our bikes to push to the trailhead.



I figured it would be a good trip to bring the skis. I was able to get under 40lbs with my new BD Skylight Tent (kicks ass) and a little under 60 with the skis, boots, and skins (no need for the skins the entire trip). Carrying an overnight pack with skis and boots on a bike proved quite a challenge for biking uphill on that steep paved road, so I did walk most of it.

The weather was drizzly and we were socked in for most of the day, with the weak high pressure system never making its way into the Cascade River Valley. Since most of the students were newbies, we hiked the trail to Cascade Pass. No bears *this time*, only a curious young deer. At the pass, we started to ascend the partially melted out switchbacks and then make a beeline straight for the lower Sahale Arm once we reached continuous snow.

One of the students was on the steeper slope and took a fall, arrested quickly, but then slipped again and started an uncontrollable slide down the slope. Her heavy pack kept her face down, and she could not regain control of her ice axe for about another 25 yards, since the steep and sugary snow was

very fast. By the time she got her axe in it was too late: she'd landed in a pile of talus and shouted for help. It was at that time I realized the trip had been compromised. We all ran down to her and began assessing the situation, getting her warm, checking for injuries. She had mostly internal bruising with a twisted ankle. We decided we had to make camp, and the only place to do so was 500 feet below us at Cascade Pass.

The group pulled together to assist her. Elisha was unable to put weight on her injured foot, so we placed a harness on her and a 30m rope. To help her get down the slope, two of us stayed behind her in a V formation, and two went in front. I was in charge of her pack, which I tied a long runner to and pushed it downhill, side-slipping the slope with my skis. Several times the pack wanted to take me down the hill, so it was arduous work.

Once at the pass, we got her in a tent and made her comfortable. It was still drizzling, so the attitude of the group slowly fizzled out. Around 9pm, the sun came out on the west side of the pass and allowed us to finally see some peaks (HLP/The Triad/Eldorado/Torment). We shot some pictures, and then I decided to hit some of the corn on the arm just south of Cascade Pass on the way up views kicked ass with the alpenglow effects.

We all slept well that night, and awoke to much better views the next morning, although none of us felt like heading up to Sahale that morning (now regretted). Instead, we all hiked up to the top of the arm south of the pass and got great view of Sahale and the other Cascade Pass peaks. The ski descent was awesome, creamy corn...

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Sahale Peak, *cont.*

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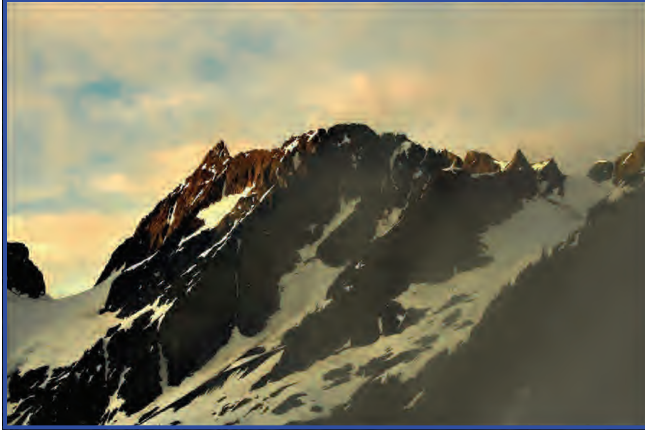


Photo by Ed Miller

We packed up and started the descent. Everyone in the group took one or two things from Elisha so that her pack could weigh next to nothing, which really helped her descend. Down at the



Return from Sahale

Photo by Ed Miller

trailhead, everyone was very stoked to have the bikes there (except for Cody, who rode a flat tire all the way down to MP21). The other bummer was that when we got back to the Eastmont Park n' Ride at x189, another student, Caleb, was in for a shock: "Dude, where's my car?" It had been stolen! Two days later it was recovered — big bummer though, especially since had just moved down to Hood River, OR. §



Triplets in mist

photo by Ed Miller

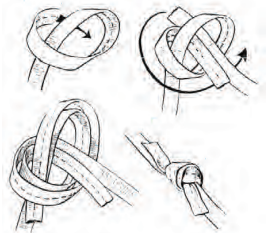
Glacier Climbing Course, *cont.*

(Continued from page 1)

So what about you — wanna take on Rainier? Maybe Baker? Well, show up at the seminars, sit up, and pay attention to *everything* you're taught in this course, because there is nothing extraneous: you're going to need every bit of knowledge and skill that's offered you. Take part in as many conditioners as you can because, trust me, no matter how much you train, at 10,000-plus feet you're going to be wishing you could sprout a third lung.

Make sure you plan ahead for the overnight field trips, because they tend to sneak up on you (especially if you need to arrange childcare, dogcare, etc.) and demand an overnight just at the time when you have to take care of something. In fact, that's how most of the class attrition occurs: when it comes time to put their skills into actual practice in the mountains, people flake. Miss one, and you're off the major climbs — and with good reason. You need to have experienced snow camping so you can rest up at Muir, and you need to know about crevasses because you're going to be crossing some big ones. Glacial crevasses are, to use the technical term, some scary-ass shit. You'll want to know that you and your rope team have the skills to get yourself or your teammates out.

You'll learn some of the most basic knots and what to bring in your pack. For some reason, I didn't click originally on the fact that no fairy-godmother was going to be following me around on the various field trips and ascents tying all my knots for me, so it seemed being



able to follow the diagrams to tie knots would be enough. By the end of the summer, however, I was bringing my rope remnant (*why do we need rope remnants?* I'd thought originally) with me to every AA meeting so I could practice tying without looking. It was soothing, a bit like knitting or crocheting (despite a little excessive interest from the kinky folks), and I eventually got the hang of all of them (much better than I have right now). Try it. Let's just say that at 2:00 AM if you're at 12,000 feet on a Rainier climb in a high wind and you've unroped to tend to some unexpectedly pressing digestive business, your entire party will appreciate it if you can tie in again quickly. Not always can others check out your knots, either, so you'll be grateful to yourself knowing they're done right.

You'll also learn how to arrest yourself from a fall on steep snow with an ice axe. It will seem to you like you're being forced to over-practice this arrest process. But I fell once on Mailbox, an ordinary conditioner, and had a hard time arresting as the rocks below skidded rapidly closer. Which way's up? How do I get my weight over this thing? You'll want to react definitively. Again, you might try imagining you're on a drop-off slope of Rainier, looking down through the dark to the twinkly lights of another party several thousand feet below. The rope and the axe are your only safeguards.

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Glacier Climbing Course, *cont.*



The author on the DC Rainier climb

Photo by David Baxter

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You'll learn how to navigate with map and compass, climb a rope with prusik knots, set up a z-pulley, dig a platform for your tent in the snow, master a lot of little tricks to make yourself more comfortable, descry the symptoms of hypothermia and altitude sickness, gauge avalanche hazard – more than I can possibly list here because these skills collectively make up the bulk of the course.

Some of these abilities I thought I had; others I admitted to being clueless about but was reluctant to admit were crucial, so I remained something of a skeptical student until the final weeks of the roped travel and crevasse rescue field trips, and the Rainier climb itself. What I learned on that mountain was, once you climb high enough, *all* of it is crucial. You have to look after yourself *and* your group.

That said, two of the most valuable things I got out of this course were not skills per se, but shifts in perspective. Firstly, I acquired what I'll call mountain humility. I gained a deeper sense of what a privilege it is to walk and breathe among spectacular peaks such as those which preside over our humdrum workaday lives from the horizon they define, and the altered terms and conditions of life that come about when you are among them. With mountain humility, I realize with heightened clarity what a small squeeze-packet of 98.6-degree guts I really am, and how incredibly fragile. Always, now, I try to scale down my climbing hubris by keeping that in mind. As a

Second Ascent clerk once corrected me, I shouldn't say I'm going to summit such-and such mountain; I should say I'm going to *attempt* to summit. The reason is easy to see: whether or not I summit anything hinges not only on my abilities and preparedness but more crucially on countless God-dependent conditions over which I am utterly powerless.

And because we are all so small and powerless, we need to be useful to one another. This is the second shift in perspective I experienced. I came to feel that everyone on a given climb is, at least for that interval, family. In this OSAT family we look after others as we'd hope they might look after us, share information (and cookies), do what our leaders tell us, and are honest with each other – we don't pretend to be more confident or bad-assed than we are. Like most real families, we can be a little dysfunctional at times behind the scenes: we can feud, discredit each other, act selfishly. We are not saints; often, too, we are people who ordinarily would not mix. But OSAT is founded on the core principles of AA, so “live together or die separately” takes on double meaning for us. We hold AA meetings in the mountains where we show up as ourselves, complete with ongoing pains and inner struggles, and we come to glimpse in each other expressions of that same Power that sculpted the mountains around us. At least, that's how it's been for me. I learned how to be there genuinely for my fellows, and to trust that they got my back. §

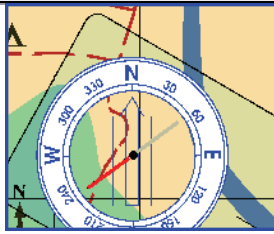


John C. assures Ryan it's a piece o' cake photo David Baxter

Climbing Safety

By Doug Hutton

In the past month there have been three highly publicized searches, one in the Snoqualmie pass area and two in Oregon. Besides proving that the media can descend on these events like Wildebeests on kill in the Serengeti, these crises showed that people do get lost with some level of frequency. Sometimes circumstances make this unavoidable, but if you act responsibly you can help your self and those that may come looking for you.



Before You Leave Home:

Make sure you have all the equipment, food, and clothing you'll need for your trip. Use a checklist to make sure you haven't forgotten anything. Before you leave, give someone you trust a written copy of your trip plan. This plan should include:

- Your estimated time of departure
- The names, addresses, and phone numbers of all group members
- Any relevant medical conditions
- Your vehicle's make, model, and license number
- Your expected route of travel (including trailhead information and camp sites)
- Your final destination and expected time of return

Agree on a procedure for contacting the authorities (the County Sheriff in the county where the trailhead is located) if you do not report in by a certain time. Leave a photocopy of your itinerary in your vehicle. If you change your plans, call your contact before you start and give them the update.

While Traveling in the Backcountry

Check your map regularly, even if you are walking on an obvious trail. Get acquainted with how markings on your map depict the topography around you. Keep your group together. Hiking individually can lead to someone getting separated or lost at a trail junction. If you do get lost, remember:

STOP (Stop, Think, Observe, and Plan)

Stop: If you feel lost, stop, count to 10, drink some water, eat a snack and assess your situation. Young backcountry travelers should be taught to stop and "hug a tree" if they feel lost.

Think: Where were you when you were last certain of your location? Can you navigate back to an obvious landmark that appears on the map? If so, carefully return to that spot and re-evaluate your options.

Observe: Can you return to a known trail or location? If not, stay put. It's easier for rescuers to find you near your original path

Plan: If you are with others, discuss a plan. If you are alone, it can be helpful to say your plan out loud. If the situation changes as you follow that plan, use "STOP" again to work through the solution. §

A Few Thoughts on Sobriety

Stick with the Stickers

By Nancy S.

Reprinted w. permission from The Grapevine

As I had never known anyone in recovery when I hit bottom, the process that I surrendered to in search of sobriety was totally foreign to me. Part of the protocol for a self-referral in my military setting was to attend a two-week alcohol and drug addiction class while being introduced to Alcoholics Anonymous meetings. In the first day in this class, the seasoned recovering soldier up front declared that we would be able to obtain sobriety if we would do just five things. As he reached for the chalk to write on the board, I reached for my pen and paper. I desperately wanted to stay sober and was eager to learn the secrets that I had not been able to find on my own (despite trying all the things our big book describes). He wrote:

1. Don't drink (when everyone sighed, he added that the remaining four ensured #1)
2. Go to meetings
3. Get a sponsor
4. Read the book
5. Stick with the stickers

The rest of the class that day focused on the disease of alcoholism, and while I was interested and listening, I kept pondering the five secrets to achieve lasting sobriety.

As I said earlier, I had no previous exposure to recovery, and I had some incorrect assumptions about it. I thought that meetings were more classes to teach us where we had previously gone wrong with our sober attempts and then we would go on with our lives. I thought the slogans on the wall posters, coffee mugs, and bumper stickers were summary reminders of the secrets that would aid us to stay true to the lessons. Thus, I made every effort to read and memorize all the bumper stickers that I could. I craved sobriety and wanted to be a good student, so I studied these slogans in an effort to "Stick with the stickers."

During this two-week class, my program consisted of not drinking, listening at meetings, planning to get a sponsor when I found the perfect one, reading the big book, and sticking with bumper stickers. When I heard people in meetings say that they had been sober for periods over a month or two, I felt sorry for them that they were such slow learners. I had been a secret drinker, and learning to share in recovery was a very slow process. I stayed to myself and rarely talked to anyone at meetings, and thus never asked why people were at meetings when they had been sober for a while.

On the last day of class, our instructor again wrote the five secrets on the board, and this time he commented on #5. He said, when you're at meetings, look around and find those folks who keep coming back. Stick with those stickers. They are the winners, as recovery is not only about not drinking but also about learning to live happy, joyous, and free lives while sober.

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Thoughts on Sobriety, *cont.*

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Huh?! I nearly fell out of my chair with this news. This was a life-long program? I needed to become part of this “fellowship” that I heard about at meetings? I should get close to these people? My head spun and my heart raced with panic. Only by the Grace of God, I was willing to listen and try to follow his suggestions.

Today, I am sixteen years sober and living an incredible happy, joyous, and free life. I wouldn’t trade it for the anything, and I owe it all to AA. The program and the fellowship have enabled me to live without alcohol and have enriched my life beyond my wildest dreams. The fellowship holds the closest friends I have ever known, and I trust my life to them on a daily basis.

Whenever I hear the slogan, “Stick with the stickers,” I smile and say a prayer of gratitude for both my original interpretation as well as the intended meaning of the words. I needed and will forever cherish both the AA bumper stickers and those recovering folks who have gone before me and so graciously pass the program on. §



Photo by Terri Steele



Cody H. and Gerard M. on Cool Glacier, Glacier Peak photo by Nodair R.

Reflections on OSAT

Nature’s Call

By Janice Brady

Well before I came into recovery, I loved the wilderness. In my youth, I camped, fished, and drank a lot with my family and friends in the Florida wilderness. Peacefulness overcame me, whether in the woods or on the beach, sober or drunk (when I could remember it).

I also loved getting calendars with pictures of the great US National Parks. I knew one day I would drive thru the California Redwood tree and smell the rotten egg sulfur of Yellowstone. I did not know I would cry when I saw my first snow covered peaks, Calaveras County, gateway to Yosemite. Ironically, a drunk landed me in California.

California introduced me to a greater love of the outdoors: big mountains, climbing, back packing. Eventually, other loves, drugs and alcohol, overshadowed my love of nature. Fortunately, years later, when my thirst for nature was not even a memory, Sobriety called. Like a cub hearing it’s mother’s yelp, I came to sobriety for nourishment and life.

I trudged the road, full of rough terrain and deep valleys but I finally put a few sober months together. And I finally got



Hidden Lake

photo by Louisa P.

back into the woods and on the rock. Every outdoor experience added joy and a sense of accomplishment to my new life. Sponsors, like climbing partners, taught me how amazing life can be when we cooperate with others with a common purpose. The experience of climbing taught me to enjoy the journey just as much as the summit. I still have to remind myself to enjoy the journey when dealing with everyday life’s vicissitudes. We work hard, have a good time doing it and rejoice in the outcome (even when some outcomes are not that good, like spending the night on a mountain - unexpectedly).

Sobriety has expanded my soul and increased my need to commune with nature. I always here a phrase, “Be still and know that I am God” when I am in the deep solitude of nature. No drink, accomplishment, or personal relation can replace the feeling when I’m in the mountains. The beauty I see and the tranquility I find in the wilderness goes beyond breathtaking to wonder and amazement. The cycles of nature remind me I am from the earth living as the trees do, vacillating between Spring’s growth and renewal and Winters’ destruction and decay. The hikes and climbs become more challenging but the

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Reflections on OSAT, *cont.*

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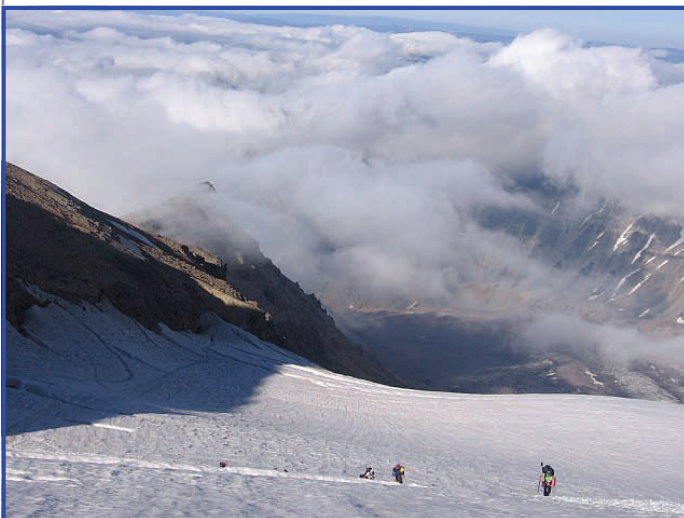
rewards are worth it, just like working the steps no matter how many times I've done them before. I must stay in (a) step to live the life I want and, of course, to keep from slipping and falling.

I haven't done a lot with OSAT over the years; summiting Mt Rainer is not on my list of things to do. Even Tiger can be an obstacle on some days. Yet my wilderness goals are worth the training and effort. This past year, the two nights at Summerland and the two nights in the Olympics were dreams come true for me. The Hidden Lake Peaks hike was challenging but the views were tremendous. I will go back and stay a while longer next time. I hope to see more and do more in 2007. Whether it is with GCC, SLOSAT or somewhere in between really doesn't matter. I just want to move closer to the perfect Spirit that waits for me there. And, with any luck, I'll get a view. §



Sunset on the Easton Glacier, Baker, Crevasse Rescue Trip

photo by Nodair R.



Ascending Emmons Glacier from Camp Curtis, Rainier

photo by Nodair R.

Return to Goat Rocks

by Rik A.

I have a bit of a history with Goat Rocks Wilderness, that often overlooked wilderness out of Packwood that includes "the mountain formerly known as Curtis Gilbert" now called "Gilbert Peak." This history began Labor Day 1999, when original OSATer Kathy O'T led a bunch of us, including Nancy T and me, into Snowgrass Flat for an enjoyable scramble of Ives Peak and Old Snowy (highest point on the PCT in Washington), and the beautiful and memorable hike out the Goat Lake trail, still one of my favorite high meadow cirques.

The next chapter in my book on Curtis Gilbert (CG) was set in August of 2000, when an OSAT trip that began with six of us evaporated down to only Nancy T and me showing up at the trailhead, and ended with me being lifted off of Klickton Ridge by a U.S. Army Blackhawk helicopter on my way to a couple of 5-plus hour surgeries and a lifetime of telling the tale over and over again. As you might imagine, that's another story! (see www.summitpost.org – search on "Klickton").

I'd planned a couple of return trips to the scene of the rescue with the intent of finally bagging the summit, but they hadn't worked out. Happily, a number of OSATers — Doug H. and his friend Dan, Sally, Gary, Nancy, Bill, and Andrew — agreed to accompany me last August. The southwest approach, same as the Snowgrass Flats entry, is much more attractive than the Tieton River (east) side where my accident occurred, mostly because it avoids a mile or so through cow pastures. So I gave up my hope to return to the scene of my misadventure, and instead tackled a route that doesn't read as being very inviting in the guide books and web postings, with lots of griping about loose rock and maze of gullies! But being a reasonably hardened PNW volcano climber, I considered this more or less typical and was drawn to new territory on the mountain as well as a chance to test some scramble route-finding skills.

Saturday morning we wound our way up the PCT, through the late-season wild flowers to the beautiful Cispus Basin. A single tent occupied the nice camp site at the trail, so we went further up the basin to a more remote spot. Several of the group went up the west side of the basin toward a large herd of goats, but found them to be much more wary than the goats of the Enchantments, never letting anyone get closer than a 100 yards before scrambling up the shale and talus to keep their distance.

The next morning we watched the sunrise on Mt. St. Helens and then worked our way up to the 6900 ft saddle, where we looked across the Klickitat headwaters towards Mt. Adams and surveyed the first half of our West Route traverse. The West Route to CG is decried as loose and dangerous, but we found that careful route finding (aided by watching the goats, who've been passing this way much longer than we have) got us to the peak safely and without undue exposure to party-inflicted rock-fall. I had studied two photos in the Beckey guide. On the photo from the SE, both the upper and lower west routes are

Continued on p. 10

Goat Rocks, *cont.*

Continued from p. 9

marked. But on the photo from the north, there's a little upside-down u-turn arrow at the upper saddle, and no line coming down from Goat Citadel, which is the upper line taken by those who don't like this side of the mountain! This proved to be the key to the relatively benign lower traverse route.

Climbers are frequently lured to go up, when going across is the better route, and that seems to be the case for the west routes on CG. Instead of going all the way up to the high basin, we followed the goats, traversing a band of white aggregate that was reasonably solid as compared to the rest of this side of the mountain. Once we got to a notch behind a black prow and looked across the latter half of the 7500 ft traverse that seemed to end with an intimidating 100ft scramble, the alternatives were a couple of gullies, with indeterminate conditions higher up.

But after a straightforward class three move around a short rib below the notch, we found a reasonably well-defined goat path (the goats had disappeared), and when we reached the far side, the scramble to the 7600 ft saddle proved to be a non-event. From here, the climb is little more than a hike across a rock-

strewn plateau, with views north to Mt. Rainier, and ending with a pleasant class 3 scramble to the summit. We were able to see the scene of my broken leg from the summit a couple of

(See www.summitpost.org – search on “gilbert west” for more pictures and more complete route description.)§



*Andrew (top), Doug, Bill, and Dan at the summit of Curtis Gilbert
Photo by Rik Anderson*

Featured Photo



Caleb harnesses up to climb Prusik Peak before a dawn-lit Little Annapurna in the Enchantments

photo by Nodair R.

OSAT Quick Reference

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12 Step Meetings

| | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| Thursday Tiger | thurstigerleader@osat.org |
| Sunday Tiger | suntigerleader@osat.org |
| Carkeek Park | carkeekleader@osat.org |

OSAT Club Meeting



February's club meeting will be held on Tuesday February 13th at Community Center at Mercer View, 8236 SE 24th on Mercer Island. The meeting will start at 7:00pm.

The entertainment will be a presentation by Dan Mazur on the Himalaya's. Dan was recently involved in a rescue on Mt. Everest.

2007 Glacier Climbing Course

The Glacier Climbing Course is designed for people who enjoy the outdoors and want to learn more about, and participate in, mountaineering and glacier travel. Registration is still open as of this writing.

Completion of the course requires 100% attendance at all field trips and seminars. This also includes graduation climbs of Mt Baker, Mt Rainier, and others. Mandatory seminars, lectures, and field trips take place from February - June. Glacier climbs are scheduled throughout the summer.

The Course Fee is \$25.00, plus \$12.00 membership dues to OSAT, the club. Details are available at:

www.osat.org/HikeGCC.cfm.

OSAT Information Line

This hotline is available to the public to contact OSAT, leave messages, and hear about 12-Step meetings and other club events.

206.686.2927

OSAT Online - www.osat.org

New members receive instructions via email on how to activate their account to access the Members Section of the OSAT Website. If you are a current member and would like to set up an online account email emembership@osat.org.



We did it! GCC 'class of 06 graduation

photo Bill Davis



GCC Leaders: Jay, Russell, Rebecca, Bill, & Pete

Photo by Bill Davis

The OSAT Echo

Subscribing: Members are added upon joining. You can also manage your Echo subscription in your online account settings.

Posting: Email message to echo@osat.talklist.com.

Unsubscribing: Send a blank email to echo-off@osat.talklist.com. You can also manage your Echo subscription in your online.



OSAT Event Calendar*

Want to announce a trip here in addition to the website?
Call/e-mail it to us and we'll list it!

January

20th Beginning Snow Shoe

27th Beginning Cross Country

29th Glacier Climbing Course, 1st seminar

February

3rd Ice Skating

4th Superbowl Party

17th WTA Volunteer work party

**For detailed and up to date information see the online activities calendar or contact Janice B at getaview@comcast.net.*

OSAT 12 Step Meetings

Tiger Mountain

When: Thursdays @ 7pm (April—October only)
Sundays @ 10am

Location: The Tiger Mountain Trailhead is on the south (right) side of the High Point Way Exit (1st exit east of Issaquah) off I-90. Make a reverse U-turn onto the road parallel with the Interstate. Park as close as possible to the west end of the road to use the cable line trail.

Notes: We meet in the trees just below the summit of West Tiger 3. The hike gains 2,000 feet in less than 3 miles. Bring warm clothes and a flashlight for the evening meeting.

Contact: thurstigerleader@osat.org, suntigerleader@osat.org

Carkeek Park

When: Mondays @7:30pm

Location: Take Exit 173 to Northgate Way and turn west. After you cross Meridian, Northgate Way becomes NW 105th Street and crosses Aurora Ave. N (Highway 99). Turn right on Greenwood Ave N. and left on NW 110th Street (look for the crosswalk lights above the street). After 6 blocks, NW 110th Street becomes NW Carkeek Park Road and winds down into the valley for 1/2 mile to the park entrance.

The group meets at the beach (weather permitting) at 7:30pm. This park has beautiful sunset views of the Sound. Be sure to dress very warmly and bring candle lanterns and headlamps, as it is dark and usually cold. If it is raining, the group meets in the shelter at the north side of the parking lot.

Contact: carkeekleader@osat.org

OSAT Traditions

- 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 leader, you should be certain that everyone on that activity has signed a Release and Indemnity Agreement. As a participant, you may want to "qualify" your leader.
- 9) Party size for OSAT activities will adhere to the rules of the appropriate jurisdiction.



*Gratitude Banquet '06: Well fed diners sit back and watch as GCC students receive their diplomas.
photo by Bill Davis*

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How to Contribute

SEND US STUFF!! WE NEED YOU!! REALLY!

The *Yodel* wants your trip reports, reflections, climbing stories, and photos! Send your idea or send a finished piece to: eyodel@osat.org.