

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

The Yodel

Volume 14, Issue 2

April 2007

Keep climbing mountains and don't slip!

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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 Spirit of OSAT

by Sharon L.

I wish I'd had my camera with me, but I didn't, so just imagine this scene: the Tiger Mountain meeting has just ended and people are gathering up their stuff to head back down the trail. It's foggy out and there must be, oh, thirty people or so, half a dozen dogs, and everyone is chatting and mixing it up.

Dave F. asks for a few *strong* souls to help out, moving a new log to the clearing where the meeting is held. I stay behind to watch the packs and chat with a couple who've just shown up to munch on a sandwich and rest up before their trek back down, OSATers from ten years ago. Only a few of us are left and it's very quiet at the meeting spot. From down over the embankment and across the cable line trail you can hear a couple of dogs off in the distance barking; sounds like a dog fight, almost.

All of a sudden you hear this noise. Sounds like a bunch of guys grunting and groaning and maybe playing football? Then, out of the woods you hear this, "One, two, three... Ho-ooo-ooo!!!" It comes over and over again, really loud now. And next thing you know, out of the fog come a bunch of these really burly guys, about twelve of them, hauling a big, 20-foot piece of log, sawed at either end. Must weigh about a thousand pounds! Anyway, together they haul that thing up the hill at least fifty feet and across the cable line trail, through more brush, and then set it in place at the back of the clearing for us all to sit on at subsequent meetings. *Wow!* What a sight it was to see such team work and combined exertion for a common cause.

It would have made a beautiful picture for the *Yodel*. Never again will I leave my camera behind in the car! Thanks guys, your hard work is truly appreciated. Even though only a few of us were around to witness your energy and commitment to making our meeting place a comfy one, it will be appreciated for a long time by those of us that make it up there to sit on your log.

A Little Jaunt Up Glacier Peak

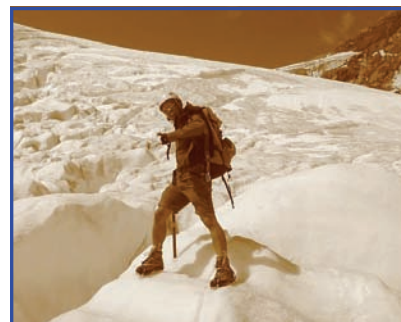
Story and photos by Nodair R.

September 2, 2006. Alarm clock goes off at 4:45. Here we go again. Take a quick shower and head upstairs to eat some blueberry waffles. Grab my pack and lunch and head out to my dad's Pathfinder since my car engine melted the week before coming home from Mt. Adams. Man, its warm outside!

Get to Cody's house and knock. "Aw, shit!" is the first thing I hear. I've woken him up. He jumps in the shower and grabs a cup of coffee as we chat about different rock routes we've done. Slings on his 40-plus-lb pack with ice screws and we head out. I'm feeling good about myself now: my pack is barely pushing 30! We drive over to pick up Gerard, and... what the hell? His pack is *tiny*! He's barely pushing 20 lbs or so. Damn, I think: I need to learn how to do that!

We hop in Cody's little truck, hit up Safeway, and then head for the freeway. The Cascades are beautiful, but Glacier Peak is nowhere to be seen. We stop in Darrington, get some gas and last minute things. We're at the parking lot by 9AM, b.s. around getting ready. Gerard has the idea of hiking in our tennies. Good thing, too! If it wasn't for that, I don't know if I could have made the out without hamburger feet. Lesson #1: Take care of your feet!

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Going into this climb, I was mentally prepared for the long approach of 18 to 20 miles, so the lengthy hike to the intersection of the PCT was no surprise. We took a break after two hours, after which Gerard started leading and Cody fell behind. I kept up, barely. We waited for Cody. He approached hunched over, saying that the pace was a bit aggressive. I agreed with him. Damn, that Gerard is an animal! He hiked the whole Pacific Crest Trail averaging 20-30 mile days! Cody wanted to stash some gear half way up the switch backs. It was hot; we were wearing shorts and no shirts and still baking. Gerard persuaded Cody that most of the gain for the day had already been made -- a white lie, at best (though neither Cody nor I knew it at the time). Gerard and I took on some of Cody's gear and after another 45 minutes we finally intersected the PCT at 8.4 miles.

We all ate loads of blueberries under a cloudless sky. Sloan Peak was rising up over everything, and the Monte Cristo Range had emerged to the south. We decided to take the longer route up and over Red Pass to gain the glacier. The party a few minutes behind us had opted for White Pass. White Pass is a bit steeper, but much more direct. If I'd known what was to come, I'd have gone their way.

The traverse to Red Pass was mostly level but it was HOT!!! We took another food break in 30 minutes. I didn't like all these breaks. I wanted to get into the basin already and set up camp. At last we gained Red Pass and -- voila! -- got our first peek at the mountain. Shit! We were twelve miles in and that mountain still looked a hell of a long way off! We looked at the map, trying to route find. We decided to stay on the PCT a little further to find a more level approach to the basin, trotted to where the trail should be, but found none. So, we navigated through a meadow of heather and blueberry fields, stopping to fill up at a creek. We filled up completely, thinking that there wouldn't be any water above, though there was actually plenty all the way up to White Chuck. Great, I love carrying lots of water...

We gained a climber's trail and reached a small basin of silt with little creeks. Here we had to decide whether to go up the creek bed or head south around the ridge. Our Becky guide said to head south, and so we did. Lots of boulder hopping for 30 minutes or so until we gained a level spot with beautiful white granite. Wow, that rock was so clean, so perfect! Hiking up towards the basin we passed one of the most beautiful lakes I have ever seen. So remote. A geologist camping out there was searching for ancient wood revealed by the receding White Chuck Glacier. By now it was around 6PM, the sun getting lower and reflecting off the lake, ponds, and

small streams. Random boulders in the meadow and the greenest of moss and plants surrounded the area, contrasting with the geologist's tent. Wow! But we had another 90 minutes to Glacier Gap, where we wanted to camp, so we headed on up.

I was getting hungry, Cody was tired, and Gerard was about ready to call it a day. We hiked for another 30 minutes or so to a small tarn and set up camp at 6500', about 13.5 miles in. We had it all to ourselves, a somewhat precarious spot under a hill that looked prone to rock slide; but we were all tired and a slide didn't look *that* likely. Man, I was nearly out of food! I cooked both packs of noodles and saved half of one for the return trip. By the end of dinner, all I had left was a pack of granola, half a bag of chips, a handful of dried mangoes, one pack of cliff shots, and half a dinner. Could 900 calories last me the entire next day? We walked up on the



ridge to figure out a route up to Glacier Gap and realized that the entire north lobe of White Chuck Glacier has melted away. Any skeptics to global warming ought to visit to this area.

Alarm clock went off at 5:45AM. Ate that blueberry granola stuff -- not too tasty. We were off by 6:30. Some boulder hopping until we reached the base of the south lobe of the glacier. Shit! It was pure ice, so we got off on the tongue, only to encounter... glacial quick-

sand! Our boots were sinking 6-9 inches into this goopy, silty, cement-like gunk. Gerard and I picked our way through it and got onto some boulders. But Cody, a little behind, didn't see it coming and plunged right on in up to his calves! GODDAMN!!! We thought that was the end of it, but we had about 300 more feet of this shit. We tried to stay on the big rocks, but you had to hazard your way through sometimes, trying to go light and quick. Of course no one had gaiters. One plunge I took sank me to within a few inches from my knee. That fine silt got down my shoe, in my sock. Cement-like gunk! My pole almost got engulfed!

Back on solid ground at last, we navigated some gullies, crossed a small glacier and gained the main gully to glacier gap. We took a ten minute break to scrape the worst gunk off our shoes and socks, met up with another team behind us, then took off. Man, I felt super strong hopping up these big, chossy boulders. We were making good time and once we gained the saddle, the sun broke through and panoramic views of the Suiattle made the whole trip worth while. Such beauty! High alpine glaciers, and Glacier Peak coming into view again! We could see most of our line to the summit now, and it looked pretty easy.

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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

Next Meeting: April 11

Entertainment: Anna's trip to Kilamangaro .

The monthly OSAT club meeting is held on the second Wednesday of the month at 7:30pm at 4545 Island Crest Way. From I-90, take the Island Crest Way exit; the church is 1.6 miles south of the freeway, on the right. We meet upstairs in classroom #6.

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.

The OSAT Echo

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

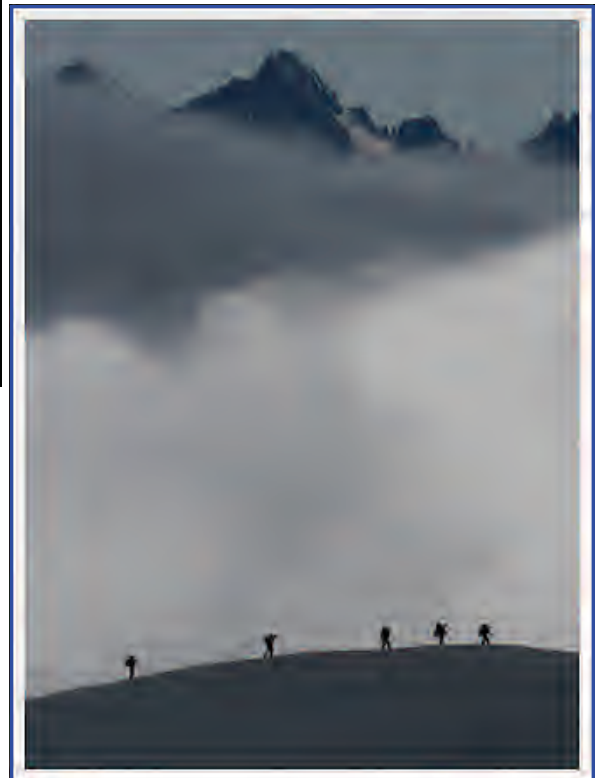
Unsubscribing: Send a blank email to echo-off@osat.talklist.com. You can also manage your Echo subscription in your online account settings.

The rules of the game must be constantly updated to keep up with the expanding technology. Otherwise we overkill the classic climbs and delude ourselves into thinking we are better climbers than the pioneers.

—Yvon Chouinard

To put yourself into a situation where a mistake cannot necessarily be recouped, where the life you lose may be your own, clears the head wonderfully. It puts domestic problems back into proportion and adds an element of seriousness to your drab, routine life. Perhaps this is one reason why climbing has become increasingly hard as society has become increasingly, disproportionately, coddling.

— A. Alvarez



Crevasse Rescue '06, photo by Ed Miller, who is much missed

Cont.. from p. 2

We walked up the ridge and took another break just before hopping onto the glacier. At this point, my food supply had dwindled to a handful of mangoes and the half dinner I had at camp. Gerard and I were keeping a pretty wicked pace, which made me feel guilty because we kept dropping Cody. This made Cody feel out of shape while the truth was, he was carrying too damn much and Gerard and I were going wicked fast. Gerard and Cody shared another Spizz Fizz or something that had loads of taurine and B3.

I gave Cody my pole and he rocked the ice ax/pole combo. We gained about 500 more feet and decided to traverse right to the Cool Glacier. We preferred to negotiate the icy, jagged seracs rather than scramble up chossy, steep volcanic rock. Cody was struggling to keep up and tried to tell us that he wouldn't be able to make the summit. We talked him back around, and all agreed that if anyone complained too much, we would tell them, "Why don't ya just have a nice cuppa shut-the-f*ck up?!" or "Don't make me bust out my Russian gymnast coach on you!" Cody persevered. We slowed down for him just a tad, but our pace was still intense!

To get to the seracs, we had to traverse under some steep cliffs that were dropping rock constantly. We saw a couple of stray rocks launch off the cliffs into the rubble below. Better travel fast! I was thinking of just dashing a straight shot through the rock fall and onto the seracs, but the rockfall was coupled with huge gaping crevasses. The three of us scattered to different lines across it, which was unwise. Gerard was leading out about 30 feet in front when I heard him yell, "ROCK!!!" Rocks ranging from tennis ball to basketball in size were launching off the cliffs and landing about 50 feet from us. I ran from them, watched in awe the way they just shot off of the cliffs above! The rock fall lasted a couple of minutes, and we agreed it was best to just red line it and run across.

Safely across, we took a five minute break and donned our crampons for the serac field. We probably should have been roped up for this, but we'd left our rope and harnesses at base camp on the advice of that other climbing party. Perhaps we risked too much here. Gerard led out to find a route to the east, but I cut away and found my own intricate path across that involved stemming a three foot wide crevasse, then climbing a five foot pitch of ice. I told myself, *just don't*



slip! We all made it across to solid ground. Now the summit rose right in front of us. We could hear rock fall from the SE face, but we were out of danger. We stepped onto the Cool Glacier and climbed west back to the ridge, hopping several crevasses. One had a sketchy snow bridge that we bolted across. We gained the ridge and scuttled up to the cliffs under the summit. I led up the ridge.



Man, I started feeling stronger and stronger. Of course, Gerard kept up, but we agreed that the pace was fast, and that if we went any faster, we would burn out. The wind had picked up quite a bit, and I started getting cold. But Cody was nowhere in sight. I waited until I saw the top of his helmet coming up, assuring me that he was all right, then bolted a couple hundred feet to some huge boulders that would protect me from the wind. We were about 300' from the summit. Gerard and I waited up for Cody, who was hungry and tired with only one cliff bar left. He downed it, and after five minutes we made our push for the summit.

There were patches of steep snow and loose, loose rock. We had to be wary of rock fall, but it was a short section. In front of me I saw the last slope to the summit, and once I'd gained it, I ran all the way to the top! AHHH... finally! I was there! I could see Baker, Eldorado, Sahale, smoke from Stehekin fires, Pilchuck, Shuksan and countless other peaks. I was zipping around like I had infinite energy! Gerard and I put our packs down and I waited for Cody while Gerard scrambled to the true summit. I got the greatest pic of Cody making those last steps: 100% exhaustion -- but he *did* it! We moseyed up to the true summit and kicked back.

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OSAT Event Calendar

APRIL

- 11th Activities Meeting - 5:30**
Roberto's, 7605 SE 27th St # 111 Mercer Is.
- 11th General Club Meeting - 7:30**
Hear about Ana's trip to Kilamangaro
- 15th OSATs Camp Stove Cookoff**
Contact Janice at 425-681-1715
- 17th Monthly BOTS Meeting—6:30**
Residents' Club at Island Square Apartments,
2758 78th Ave SE, Mercer Island.

MAY

- 7th Seminar #4—6:00**
Glacial travel, REI
- 25th SLOSAT Olympic Hot Springs**
Contact Janice
- 26th Vantage Sasquatch Festival**
Cragging @ French Coulee; bands @ Gorge

*For detailed and up to date information consult the online activities calendar.

OSAT 12 Step Meetings

Tiger Mountain

When: Thursdays @ 7pm
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.

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

Carkeek Park

When: Mondays @ 7:30pm

Location: Take Exit 173 to Northgate Way and turn west. After crossing 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.

A Note from the Editor

Remember when you were in high school hell, and when the yearbook came out ~ SURPRISE! ~ it featured all kinds of pictures of people in the editors' clique and practically none of you or your friends? Well, I notice something of that happening to the *Yodel* — but not intentionally! Only because most of the folks who've responded to my calls for contributions have been my friends.

If you want to be included the along with your friends, PULEEAZE send me articles, photos, quotes ~ anything! Trust me, you're cool enough!

—Louisa

How to Contribute

You can either write something up and send it to the editor, or send an idea for an article. Photos and advertisements welcome, too.

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cont. from p. 4

I signed the register and took a group photo. We could see the party of six about 45 minutes below us on the ridge. They were the only party we'd seen all day, but they had an extra day to camp, whereas we were planning on going *all the way out* that same day.

The wind was pretty strong, so we descended about twenty feet to find some wind protection and eat a bit. I was completely out of food. I had nothing -- only my half dinner back at camp. Cody was completely out as well. Gerard came to the rescue. He divided his ham sandwich with Cody and was about to give me some. But I'm a vegetarian! It was so damn tempting to end my nearly three years of commitment right there to down some nice fatty calories, but I resisted. I'll live, I thought. But, damn, that sandwich smelled good!

So Gerard pulled out some tuna and shared that with me. Man o' man, was that the best tuna ever! I could have easily eaten it all, but I resisted. It was Gerard's, after all. After that meal, the only food we had left was my half-ass meal and two dehydrated meals Cody had at back camp.

I was so hungry!!! We started the descent. The team of six was now right below us and we had to be careful not to cause rock fall on them. After the steep choss, we reached the softer gravel and Gerard nearly broke into a run. He was making some ridiculous time down and I was trying to keep up. We descended 1000' in 15 minutes, back onto the glacier and negotiated our way through the crevasses to the serac field. I just had to do a photo op here. We crossed the serac field, took off our crampons and were heading for the rock fall area when we came upon a one-foot-wide snow bridge spanning a gaper that looked pretty sketchy. Cody took it first, then Gerard. I heard a definite crack and decided I'd rather go around it into the rock fall area. There I had to negotiate more ice and huge gapers with chossy boulders, running as fast as I could to get out of the danger. Damn! We got separated on a crevasse/boulder field *again*! Not good! All that running made me even more hungry.



I met up with Gerard a bit lower and we re-grouped. Most of the dangers were past. Boot glissading was our preferred method of travel down the glacier. Cody decided to ass-glissade, right over a crevasse! After gaining the gap, we

headed back down the gully with Gerard setting a pace that seemed *insanely* fast, though in fact he had a better sense than we did of just how much distance we had to cover. This time I couldn't keep up -- at least not without breaking my ankles off. All I



could think about was my hunger. I started dreaming about smoothies... Mmmmm... mango, strawberry and vanilla ice cream... I started counting each step to take my mind off the hunger. 1,2,3,4...5,6,7,8... Isn't that what it's all about? One step at a time? If I could continue to do that, I'd make it... Once at the bottom of the gully, we decided to shift our route a bit to the west, farther from the glacier, so we wouldn't have to deal with the quicksand.

Boulder field after boulder field, stream after stream. Gerard and Cody were out of water and they drank from a stream -- risky! It felt like a death march back to camp, with 15 miles left to go after that. Got to camp, and the first thing Gerard and Cody did was filter water. I took off my shoes to dry out my socks that got ruined by the quicksand, and started my half-ass dinner. That had been all I could think about on the descent -- food, food, food -- and now that I was actually eating it, it tasted gross! I told myself, "Man, c'mon Nod! Eat, you picky bastard!!! You won't get ANY other food until Darrington." Still, it was so gross to me that I actually tossed some of it. Then we were officially out of food.

Our trek to the car started at 4:30PM. I predicted that we would be safely there by 8:45. Gerard was still pushing a crazy fast pace, but I knew I had to hold back to not burn myself out. We hiked through the basin, where the geologist was camped, with White Pass looming overhead. Following the stream gully and into the silty basin, we found a trail! Hooked up with the climbers' trail and boogied awhile, lost it again and had to meadow stomp to regain the PCT.

This last stretch of trail, through some steep heather toward the PCT, really did a number on me. Once we gained that, I thought, shit yeah! Only ten or so miles left! I put on my tennies and Cody led out. He was setting a decent pace. My stomach started to hurt at this point, which caused me to freak out. I was also getting overly tired and out of breath. Shit! This better not continue, or even get worse! I put it out of my head and drank some more water. The pain did die down in about 45 minutes, but Cody was hurting, too, so Gerard resumed the lead. We let Cody fall behind, slowing now and then just enough to keep him in sight, though he wasn't with the 'pack,' so to speak. In about fifteen minutes he called out to us to wait for him, saying that it was easier when he could hike with us. Alone, you just get slower and slower. Once he'd rejoined us, he sped up and everyone was happier...

Climbing 600 feet up Red Pass, the last elevation gain! Almost there... 1,2,3,4... 15,16,17,18... And then, finally: Bam! No more elevation gain! Cody led out with Gerard

second and me in the back. I wanted to savor those last nine miles or so, staying back a ways to take pictures and be with myself. The sun was sinking low, throwing unbelievable colors above Sloan – something I knew no film or camera could capture.

We got back to the blueberry field and I gorged myself. Cody and Gerard were out of water, so that was all they were thinking about. I, on the other hand, had plenty of water but was starving my ass off! I just kept eating the berries while they filled up on water. It was around 7:30... SHIT! We wouldn't be at the cars till 10 or so! We donned our headlamps and within a few minutes I was in the back inhaling all the dust they were kicking

up. Cody stopped to remove some layers and stalled a bit, muttering that he wasn't feeling so good... 'What the hell do you mean, *not feeling so good*?!' I thought. 'Who of us is?'... But then he started to puke. The puke was bright red, and there was a lot of it. Oh my god, was that blood?! He puked, and puked, and puked... No, thank god: it was blueberries and water...

Watching Cody puke made me feel sick, too — the power of the mind. We rested for a bit so Cody could collect himself, and Gerard gave him some antacid. Good god, I thought, what *didn't* Gerard have in that tiny pack of his?! He'd brought more food than either of us, had carried the tent *and* the stove, and he *still* had by far the lightest and smallest pack! Live and learn, I guess.

We started hiking down, taking various breaks help Cody get back into form from whatever he was suffering from, poor guy. But he kept on! What a trooper; in his place, I don't know that I could have. I'm such a weenie when it comes to stomach issues.

Talk on the way down was about food, rest, zip fizz, and girls -- the necessities of life! We were clipping along as it was 9:45PM... Still two hours to the car! Shit! I hardly dared sit down to rest, thinking I'd never stand up again. I needed a smoothie... a Snickers bar... don't stop... count your steps... watch for signs that we're getting closer... YES! The camp ground! Only two miles left... Cody started to break into a run! Shit, Cody: you should have puked sooner! I looked at my altimeter... only 300 vertical feet left! Our pace was now that of Olympic Speed-walking! More horse shit, we must be so close! Skunk Cabbage and a wide trail! Yes! A few more feet! And then, — bam! The trailhead sign came up and I saw a red reflection from a taillight!

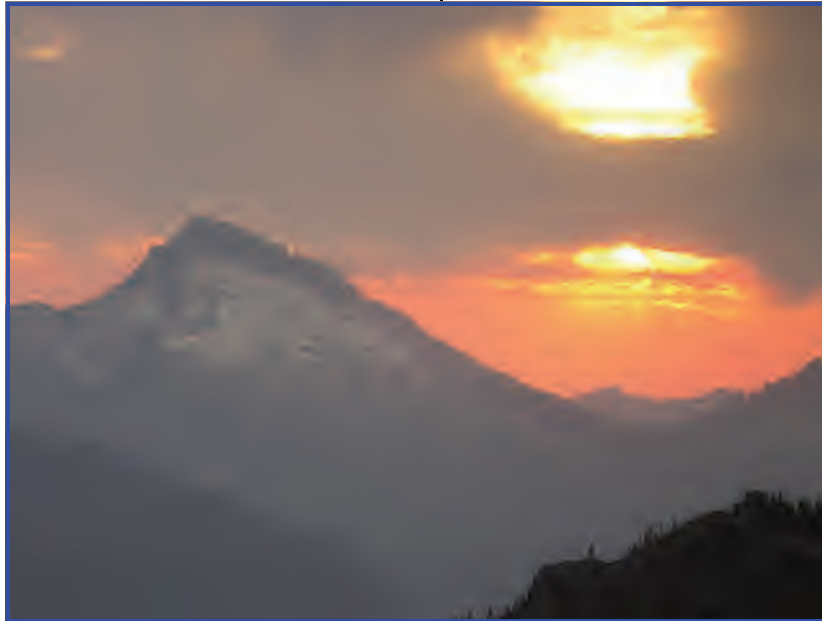
Wahoo!!! Hugs left and right -- we'd made it! Just a few minutes past midnight.

Threw all my shit in the truck and was getting in the driver's seat to relieve Cody of driving the long haul. He insisted he drive, and I soon saw why. He got behind the wheel, put on some INTENSE music and hauled ASS! Forty mph on a one-lane, pot-holed, gravel road blasting something that sounded oddly familiar... very hardcore. Drums, a quick beat, electric guitar... What the hell was it? The theme song to *Predator II*... He was playing it 'cause that's what he felt like in the woods! Man, I lay back in the back seat, feeling the

bumps in the road, the car flying through the night, seeing trees pass overhead with this crazy music... It was nuts... Drifting in and out of consciousness after a climb like this... It was a very special moment.

Darrington. The convenience store was *closed*. God, why?! But the store lady was still out front talking on her phone, and there must have been *something* about the way we looked, 'cause she re-opened it just for us. Thank you! We rocked the place! Bought like \$15 of junk food, running around and laughing our delirious asses off, looking like absolute shit with our bloodshot eyes. I chowed down my muffin, corn nuts, Snickers bar, Gatorade, and Lifesavers... The best junk food I've ever had in my life!

I was home in bed by 3:45AM. Thank you, Glacier Peak, for not killing us... §



Nodair, Gerard, and Cody at the summit



Pete S. (left) and Rod B. at the summit of St. Helens



Above: Lisa, Nikki, Bill, Nancy, Chris, Dan, Rik, Mark. Foreground: Cheryl and Deb'

Getting a Jump on St. Helens

by Pete S.

My introduction to OSAT occurred in 1992, and my first OSAT climb was up to the rim of the Mt St. Helens crater that same year. Jim Hinkhouse, and several other OSATers gave me the encouragement I needed for my first day back on crampons in sixteen years.

In the years since then I have gone up St. Helens with OSAT several times, and I missed those OSAT climbs during the two years that the mountain was closed to climbing due to volcanic activity. The Powers That Be decided to reopen the mountain on July 21, 2006, with a limit of 100 permits per day. Rod B. and I were able to get a climbing permit for that opening day. A ranger told me there was still ski-able snow in some of the gullies, so we decided to haul our skis up.

On the 20th we decided to get a jump on the 98 other permit holders and bivied alongside the trail around 4500 ft. A group of local mountain rescue folks had the same idea and woke us up around 11:30 PM. We got going around 12:15 AM, to a good start. Although we had to stop a couple of times due to me getting AMS (Acute Mountain Sickness) we got to the crater rim at 4:30 AM, just in time to see the sun coming up from behind the Goat Rocks.

The volcanic dome was much larger than the last time I'd seen it. It looked quite active, with constant small rockfalls and white smoke coming from multiple vents on its flanks and summit. One of the mountain rescue people showed me a picture he took before sunrise, showing red glowing areas on the summit.

We headed off to find a ski route down. The snow initially had large amounts of ash and dirt in it, but farther down wasn't as bad. The snow didn't hold out as long as we would have liked, so eventually we traversed back over to the trail and finished by hiking out. I had been shivering at the summit, but by the time we got back to the trail head I was in shorts and t-shirt, as the temperature was heading up towards 100 F.

It was a great first day back on St. Helens and I look forward to getting back there this winter and spring. §

Yellow Aster Butte

By Rik A.

Twelve OSATers met last October at the upper reaches of the Mt. Baker highway to do this wonderful North Cascades day hike. The group included four from OSAT-BC.

There was a little fresh snow high on the slopes above the trailhead, and descending campers reported a dusting on YAB earlier in the morning, but it was gone by the time we got up there. Tom and Deborah got an early start and were returning by the time the main group was on their way up the mountain. We stopped, chatted, and took group photos before continuing on our way through the huckleberry fields.

The weather was partly cloudy, with sucker holes revealing quick views of peaks in the neighborhood (Tomyhoi, Larrabee, Winchester, and Goat Mountain). We never saw more than the lower portions of glaciers on Shuksan, and didn't see the summit of Baker until our hike out. But the blueberries were everywhere, as were all the warm colors of fall, from bright yellow through the entire spectrum to bright crimson -- fabulous.

The trail winds around from the east side of the mountain all the way to the west, mostly above the timber. After reaching the point where the trail overlooks the tarns in the valley to the southwest of YAB, we continued up the steep trail to the south summit, and the crossed to the easy scramble of the true summit to the north.

We placed the Ed Miller Traveling Summit Register Memorial atop the 6241 summit, with a pinch of Ed scattered in the breeze. The summit ceremonies included a reading of the following meditation from Master Yoda in memory of Ed: "Death is a natural part of life. Rejoice for those around you who transform into the Force. Mourn them do not. Miss them do not. Attachment leads to jealousy. The shadow of greed that is. Train yourself to let go of everything you fear to lose."

This is a beautiful hike with lots of fine views. Since the weather cheated us out of the best of these, we resolved go back in 2007. We have an overnight planned for the weekend of August 18-19 which will include a second scramble, up Tomyhoi Peak. §

Thoughts on Dan Mazur

by Anna O.

Daniel Mazur was not at all what I expected.

I'd never been to an OSAT business meeting, but hearing that Mazur was giving a presentation there, I drove out to Mercer Island Community Center on February 13. After all, Mazur was an accomplished mountaineer. And not just any accomplished mountaineer – he'd summited Mount Everest. And not only had he summited Everest, but last May he'd scuttled his own plans for another ascent in order to save a stranger's life at 28,000 feet.

So naturally I'd imagined a man with an outstanding physique, a strong chin, an air of self-assuredness... You know, Superman. But when I first saw Mazur, he was fumbling with the slide projector before the meeting and muttering something about technophobia. Not recognizing him, I thought maybe he worked for the community center and was trying to help set up the equipment.

After the monthly OSAT business had been briefly addressed, the man with sloping shoulders, a balding pate and glasses covering his wide eyes walked to the front of the room and introduced himself as Dan Mazur. My jaw dropped open a click. Dan Mazur was more like Clark Kent.

He presented three subjects that evening: a short film about the Mount Everest Foundation for Sustainable Development in Nepal and Tibet; a slideshow of his first Everest ascent, with Roman Giutashvili; and a TV spot about his May rescue of Lincoln Hall.

Where I'd expected self-confidence, ego, and pride, Mazur instead exuded humility, kindness, and regret for others. His discussion of the Mount Everest Foundation evoked sympathy and generosity. He spoke of his momentous climbing endeavors with humor, self-deprecation, and doubt, often pausing to think, or to pose difficult questions.

After his presentation, Mazur asked for input from his listeners. For each OSATER with a question, he walked out into the audience to shake hands, saying, "What was your name?" Then, "Hi, I'm Dan."

Some time that evening I realized that my assumptions had

been wrong. You don't have to be a superhero to perform super feats. With the right combination of passion, determination and luck, we can all achieve our goals; we can all climb mountains.§



GCC in Retrospect

by Mandy H.

You know, a mummy bag never seems as tapered and tight as when you're trying to put pants on over long johns over socks, I swear. Your hands are shaking, you've only had about four hours sleep, and your tent partner's head lamp is randomly blinding you. Once you finally get your pants, socks, shirts, gloves and coats on, you step outside the tent and here begins the real challenge: can you put on your boots and crampons without taking your gloves off? It's around midnight and you stop to ask yourself, "Why the hell did I choose to do this, again?" I think it takes a strange bunch to decide to walk up a volcano in the freezing cold darkness.

When I signed up for the GCC, I just wanted to climb Mt. Rainier. I was hesitant about training with OSAT because I'm not actually "in the program." Initially, I thought I could just show up to the minimum number of conditioners, attend the seminars and field trips, stay under the radar, and just make it up the mountain. Then I went on my first field trip -- the Ice Axe Arrest training. Before I knew it I was laughing and throwing snowballs and sliding down a hill upside down and backwards with a deadly weapon gripped in my mitts. When I got home and was trying to tell my sister about the awesome fun I had that day, it struck me that nobody besides the other students would understand how great that day was.

By the time the Crevasse Rescue field trip rolled around, I was looking forward to my adventures on the weekends. I was talking /dorking out during the AA meetings, and I looked forward to that, too. I remember kicking back with Patty, waiting for our turn to rappel into a crevasse when she said, "I'm gonna miss this." For some reason I hadn't thought of that before; I was gonna miss hanging out on a glacier with these folks, taking in the breathtaking views, freezing our butts off, complaining about moving too slow. We were sharing experiences that the bulk of the population will never experience. I started trying to take everything in. I didn't want to forget any detail.

After I attempted Mt. Rainier, I didn't see anyone from the course for a long time. I had all these fantastic memories and the more I thought about it, the more I realized I had never felt as much a part of something as I did when climbing with OSAT. Joining the GCC and climbing with OSAT was one of the best decisions I've ever made. I have never felt so welcome and understood and appreciated. .

As winter approached this year, I started thinking back to the first outings I participated in with the GCC. I never planned on "giving back" to the course when I started it last year, but here I am, looking forward to the opportunity. I hope I can go on the Crevasse Rescue field trip again, I hope I can stand on top of more of the mountains around here. Mostly, I hope I can share the weirdness of waking up at midnight and trying to squeeze into fifteen layers of clothes, and tying onto a rope with a bunch of other crazy people.

To those who are just starting the GCC and maybe overwhelmed, take it all in while you can. 'Cause when it's over, you're gonna miss it.§



Photo by Nikki D.

Crevasse Kvetching

by Louisa P.

In my opinion, the Crevasse Rescue field trip is the *piece de resistance* of OSAT's Glacier Climbing Course. In it, you put to use almost everything you've learned in the previous four months: you snow camp, you rope up for glacial travel, and you hang your life on your climbing gear. When the actual Rainier climb rolls around, knowing you've been down inside a crevasse and gotten yourself out again either alone or with the help of your rope-mates' Z-pulley skills offers a substantial psychological boon. You'll need it as you leap, encumbered with pack and ax, across small crevasses or skirt around the edges of vast ones, peering into their time-marbled depths. *No biggie*, you can psyche yourself up, *been there, done that*. In my experience, every mental advantage I could summon was crucial in my battle against self-doubt, which grappled throughout the entire ascent with my resolve to climb.

That's why completion of this field trip is *required* for every student who wants to climb Rainier.

Last June, when my alarm went off 3:50 AM on the Saturday of the Crevasse Rescue field trip, I sat up in bed with a wicked sore throat, headache, and achy body. I was *very* ill with the flu. I'd have called in sick to work no question, but only one thought took shape in my mind: "*Must climb Rainier.*" So I got up. I'd told John C., my best friend and OSAT buddy, that I'd be at his house ready to go by 5:15. But I was dragging hardcore. Looked like shit. So I got there, as it turned out, by 5:20. We threw my stuff in the bed of his truck, then I popped back in the passenger seat and tried to doze.

Imagine that weak and crappy feeling when your entire body feels like an congealed mass of slimy meatloaf, when inertia weighs so heavy that it's really not worth getting up from the sofa to answer that phone or retrieve the TV remote from wherever you left it, so you'll just go ahead and watch an entire infomercial on colon issues. You there? Imagine feeling that way, slinging on a 40 lb pack (Bill and Nancy brought a scale), and climbing 3,000 feet in three miles

through snow and ice with 36 healthy and energetic hiking enthusiasts, 90 percent of them decades younger than you. Let's call it hell. I stayed directly behind John and focused on his heels the whole way. I couldn't eat much; my Luna bars tasted like pre-barf, just *rarin'* to revisit in reverse. To rest, to sleep, lie down and dream — that's all I wanted. People kept rousing me from my stupor by asking how I was doing. "Not so good," I'd summarize. The end of each break felt like a fatal summons. But I kept trudging.

Mind you, almost everyone on this trip had a splendid time. When I look at the photos, I want to double check whether I was on a different trip. Everything about my experience was skewed through the haze of illness.

When we had to cross a large brook and my turn came, I got halfway across, dizzied, and froze up. The water was rushing by loudly, humping over blurred rocks I was supposed to step on. I called across to John: "*I can't!*" He reached out a hiking pole for me to take, but I thought he meant to pull me across with it, so I let it fall into the current. After a panicked but brief fiasco (which got him wetter than me), I got across all right. When we fell in behind a huge group of Mountaineers or some such, dozens of them marching in a long train ahead of us, it seemed we should all be chanting something dark and soulless -- *OLEE-O! OOH-HO!* -- like the winged monkeys in *The Wizard of Oz*.



Photo by Nikki D.

Later we climbed a 200' wall of snow, following the kick-steps punched in by the Mountaineers (or whoever), much like mounting a 200-step fire ladder. By this point I was so woozy, I had lost all sense of "up." I'd only watch the heels of John's boots right in front of my eyes and take steps exactly in sync with his. My legs ached; my head throbbed. I tried not to think, period: not about how if I fell, I'd take out at least ten people below me, not about how far we had left, not about what would come after.

Finally, we reached the plateau where we were to camp, beneath the lofty, steaming summit of Baker. I could hear all the happy, chipper voices of the group, everyone so delighted the sun had come out! Oh boy, what a spectacular snow field! Just look at those gorgeous peaks! Ha,ha,ha!! *Whatever!* Dave



Camp OSAT photo by Nikki B.

F. had kindly loaned me a kerchief for the sun. I unrolled my thermarest, flopped down, and covered my face with it. More chipmunk sound-effects from the healthy twerps. John did everything to set up our camp; I did nothing, nada, zip, except lie there and be cynical. It seemed like everybody in the world was complimenting John on his tent. They'd say more or less the same thing about how great it was, and then he'd answer with more or less the same stuff about what kind and size and weight it was, over and over. I mean, talking is so *stupid!*

Dave F. brought me some hot tea, something to boost the immune system, which helped a little. By the time word came that we were supposed to rope up and go out to the crevasse, I felt like a child. *Me*, rope up? Couldn't these guys see I was *dying* here? Couldn't John maybe write me a *note* or something? My feeling was of ultimate doom. I was extra slow (even by OSAT standards) to gather my gear and arrive at the rope-up area, so the teams were already pretty much chosen. Russell expressed his sympathies and mercilessly added me onto a rope of three. It seemed Josh, Adam, and Roy were less than stoked to have me on their team, especially since I'd forgotten how to tie in. I whined. Someone did it for me. I stood. People futzed. Time passed. Nancy by this time understood that I was feeling quite ill; she kept checking in with me. There was something about her being a woman that made me feel safe enough that I'd almost cry every time I spoke to her. In fact, maybe I did, just a bit. But I didn't want any of them chipper folks to see.



Crevasse edge photo by Ryan S.

We started up the glacier, with a false start and a double-back. When we reached the crevasse, they had my team clip onto a safety rope about thirty feet upland of it and wait, because there were not enough ropes to go round. Dammit! — *not*. From where I sat, the edge of the crevasse resembled a huge wave arrested on its course up the mountain. The lip of it undulated gracefully, and I could see just a bit of blue ice on the far side. The effect for me was oddly like swimming beside a blue whale — that sense of a sublime power. I saw David B. approach for his turn, look into the depths, and shake his head no. I watched Jay assuring him he'd be safe. Dave looked down several times and, subtly but solidly, shook his head no. *Right on, dude!* I thought. *Just say no to crevasse shit!* They ended up sending Andrew over first. He disappeared, and about twenty minutes later his head popped up again at the edge. He was almost out, but for some reason couldn't get over the "crown" of the crevasse. He'd try, and his group would pull, but then he'd drop back, maybe five or six times. I kept waiting for that fading, echoing, howl as he plummeted coyote style into obscurity, but instead, the dude just kept cracking up. Like, he thought it was funny. What the hell did this guy have -- a death wish?



Andrew literally (this time) over the edge... photo by Ed M.

At one point there were maybe four students over the edge. All I could see was their ropes going down into nowhere, wiggling a little. I was sweating under my hat but freezing everywhere else, and I'm pretty sure I had a fever 'cause I kept zoning into half-dreams. I knew I *could not* do what these people expected of me. Why the hell was I even *with* this OSAT gig, anyway? Who *were* these people? I didn't understand them and all their gear talk, like: "*Dude! just scored a new ricochet interpolator shaft!*" "*Awesome, man, what's it weigh?*" "*Three point two without the carpulatrix.*" I wasn't *like* them. Okay, fine: I was a wimp. When my turn came, I'd just have to burst into tears, crumple into a pathetic ball, and give up on Rainier.

But from the heights behind us, a darkness began to gather. Rain-heavy clouds were brewing above the summit of Baker, and some of them began to roll down toward us. I closed my eyes and prayed into my gloves: *Gaia, send a storm! Please. I don't care if it wrecks our camp, I don't care if we all get*

lost and freeze to death; just don't let me have to choose between that crevasse and losing Rainier! The wind picked up – yes! The clouds seemed to roil in place for a while, but gradually they extended over us, and slushy rain began to spit down on the exercise. For a long time, Jay, Russell and the others ignored it. What's a little water? They kept calling people down, shouting over the wind. Yet I felt all the students were growing a tad restless: how bad did it have to get before our instructors would call it a day?

For as long as I live, I will remember the sight of Bill L. standing beside the crevasse and slightly to my right, frowning doubtfully up into those dark clouds and then, in a definitive gesture everyone saw, drawing a finger across his throat to signal "cut." We were scrapping the exercise. Had Gaia herself ascended from the crevasse in a chariot of fiery white light and bestowed on me – I don't know what – the key to Nirvana, I couldn't have happier. Thank god! I didn't have to do it!

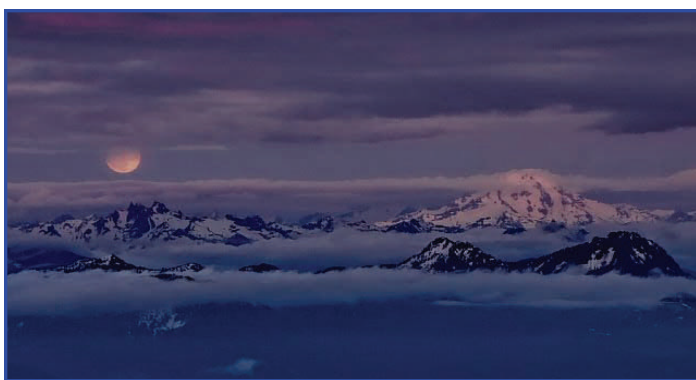


Photo by Nikki D.

And I must be a frickin' witch or something, because no sooner did we start back to camp than the wind let up and the clouds pulled back. At camp I burrowed into my sleeping bag while John fixed me tea and cooked dinner for me. I fell asleep at 7, missing that night's AA meeting under the stars and the full moon that John said was amazing, rising big as a twin planet over the peaks.

I woke to brilliant sunshine and thought: "*Damn it!! I'm still up here!*" There'd be nothing but snow and ice to greet me outside, nowhere to lounge, no blankie and pillows. I perched on my sit-rest and had some tea and oatmeal, and noticed I felt a lot stronger. I even strolled over to the neighbors, Cody and Gerard, and boasted of my success at the snow privy. When we roped up, I was not a child anymore. I knew that, come hell or high water or death or impalement on giant ice chards or being unearthed by archeologists in 3050 or what-the-f*ck-ever, I was gonna go down that frickin' crevasse.

I got plenty cold waiting, but finally Bill moved me to a team with Caleb, Patty, and David B.. I helped set up some Z-pulleys and saw the fun other people were having with this. Then my turn came. Getting ready, I tried to recall all the things Cody and others had told me gave him trouble down there. Clip your pack leash in front where you can reach it, drop your pack between your legs not to the side. Be sure your chest prusik goes through your waist harness and your chest harness.



Edge waiters, photo by Chris P.

Shaking like mothafuckah I tied my knots. I hedged against my vertigo up to the edge, looked down into the blue frozen space below, and said to David F., who was tending the edge, "Tell my friends to take good care of my son." He laughed, though I was not quite joking, and reminded me Andrew would have me on belay. That didn't stop my involuntary muscles from warding me away from the edge like a repelling magnet. But I sat down and scooted til my feet were over, flipped onto my stomach, and said – a total lie – "I'm ready."

Chwwwww! The edge and the bright sky and Dave's face slid away. Chwwwww! I dropped some more. I yelled up, "Okay, that's good! I'm down!" Just below me was an overhanging ledge of ice I did not want to drop under. Dave called to my team, "Enough!" I hooked up my chest prusik and began trying to pull the loops of my foot prusiks over the spikes of my crampons, but it wasn't quite working out. Then I dropped some more. This is when my language became extremely colorful, not wholly suitable for print in these esteemed publication. "What the f*ck was that! There's a f*cking overhang here and I don't want to--" I dropped another three feet under the overhang. I yelled out, "*Jesus f*cking Christ!!!*" I'm dropping! What the hell are they *doing* up there?" Dave called, "They've got ya. That's just stretch on the rope." Finally I got my foot loops under my crampons. I slid the chest prusik up, leaned back, slid the foot prusik knot up, and climbed my first ten inches successfully.

Then I dropped another two feet. And three more. What I yelled I couldn't even tell ya, and even Dave conceded, "Uh... they're workin' on it." I was about 25 feet down by now and so damn pissed at my teammates that all my fear had burned away. Obviously, I'd have to get *myself* out! Still shaking like mad but focused now, I leashed my pack to the rope, wiggled out of the shoulder straps, and, somewhat incredulously, let it drop between my legs. Down about four feet it tumbled, bumped into the wall and got snow all over it. But climbing was a lot easier now. I cinched my way up until I got to the outermost protrusion of the overhang. Working the knots over that edge was tough, because my weight had grooved the rope into the ice. I remember looking at the ledge surface in front of me and wondering, "What's all that reddish-brown shit in the snow? F*ck: the rope has red in it." Then I

glanced at the back of my hand and saw it was coated with blood. My knuckles were grated. I thought: "Cool: nothing to do with the rope." It sort of struck me how little I cared.

Once I got above the overhang, I was able to plant my crampons on the ice in front of me and look around. The next student was distant from me, so the quiet was almost perfect. Like a library. Light in the ice glowed a purer blue than the sky, as if illuminated from within. The walls were mottled according to a logic all their own, narrowing with an eerie grace toward the dark crack at the bottom that was partially obscured by chunks of fallen ice. I was in a kind of place I'd never known existed, inside the heart of a glacier. Sunlight striking the crest of snow from the world above was melting drips that plunked randomly here and there. My team wanted to pulley me up the rest of the way, and Russell wanted me to prusik out, so I had some lag time while they talked. Before long I saw Josh begin to descend about 30 feet to my right. He dropped in a few jerks of the rope and started yelling, "I'm f*cking slipping, here! What the hell?! F*ck! I keep dropping!" I called to him several times, "The rope stretches!" but he was not in a place where he was ready to hear that. He was at the extremely colorful language stage.

All of a sudden, I was well. I felt terrific, vividly alive and keen in all my perceptions. I realized I loved the glacier, and that few human beings ever get such a chance to meet one. It sounds woo-woo, but that glacier had a spirit. The ice around me was centuries old, and far below me, millennia. It was engaged in a slow and constant obedience to unseen laws of the universe. I was a fleeting non-event, a blip of life and emotion disturbing its peace momentarily. I thought of global warming – would this glacier die during my son's lifetime? I prayed not.

Then into the space between Josh and me, Pete L. zipped down, leaned back and planted his crampons in the ice and glanced about leisurely like he was easing back in a Lazyboy and had misplaced his popcorn. Good job, he told. Maybe some day, I'd be as relaxed as he. Maybe some day, I'd do this kinda of thing just for fun.

I climbed all but the last three feet, where Pete snapped this picture of me, and the team pulled me out the rest. I laughed with them; they told me about a few little slips of the initial ax anchor and asked if I'd noticed. I told them it helped 'cause I had to climb outta there to kill 'em! Looking around, exhilarated and filled with strength and gratitude, I could finally see how spectacularly beautiful this place



was – with jagged, snow-strewn peaks of the North Cascades echoing out in tiers to the horizon, and behind us the rising shoulders of Baker's snow-thick slopes, up and up to its crater, where the bowels of the earth sent smoke-signal puffs of steam into the bright sky, because that volcano is alive. I felt grateful to everyone: to John for taking care of me, my perky classmates for their support, the GCC leaders, and most of all to OSAT itself for expanding my world.

Then about half an hour later, I felt like shit again, but... oh well!

So I think of it this way. At Rainier's summit, when I trudged those last steps up the crater's edge to look down on lacework of Puget Sound and let the knowledge that I had done this thing reverberate through my mind, the path that lay behind me wasn't just a matter of vertical feet and distance traveled. It included everything I'd done prior to that ascent, including getting out of bed sick as a dog, putting my pack on, and not allowing myself to succumb to self pity and despair that weekend. To succeed you have to really want it, they say. And we all did. §



Above, photo by Chris P. (except he's in it...)
Below, Patty the warrior woman, photo by Ed M.



The Ten (?) Essentials

by Will A.

Yeah, yeah — we all have heard of the ten essentials. We all want to have them in our packs. GCC instructors and mentors encourage the new students to pack them. So do we really carry them? Know how to use em? WANT to use them?

Before I fell into OSAT, I did not have a clue about the ten essentials. How could I fit them into my pack on this particular trip, along with the three quart pot for cooking

mussels at Shi-Shi beach? My 4.5 lb sleeping bag was huge. We had some kind of a tent that weighed too much. We had fresh butter and garlic, french bread, and other good stuff. We did have cool sunglasses, can't remember the brand but they were the latest, so I was developing my ten essentials kit at the time. My pack was

big. Oh, I also had sunscreen (but didn't use it), and of course we had matches, lots of matches so we could start beach fires in the middle of the summer day to cook the shellfish. We had not discussed what to do if someone got burned, stung, slit, stabbed, broke something scrambling on the rocks above the beach (which have since gone away due to the rising ocean water around the world - Global Warming? - nah!) so we probably didn't have a first aid kit. Did not know first aid anyway. We were young and new in sobriety and still bullet-proof. Was I concerned if my pal got stung my some weird jelly fish? By the way, we also had knives, had to have a Swiss Army with all the features in case we decided to slip and needed a cork screw. So overall, we had shelter, sunglasses, sun screen, matches and knives.

What else was needed? This was summer, no need for a rain jacket or rain pants. Can't get lost on the trail to Shi-Shi; no compass, no map needed. Bullet-proof so no first aid kit. What else?

Well, the story is not about some mis-adventure at Shi-Shi. It's about feeling comfortable enough to ignore the suggestions of having the ten (11?12?) essentials or whatever the new term is, versus having the knowledge and wisdom to use them. I do it. The friends I hike with do it. Sometimes I rely on others to have the stuff. We get out there and ask to borrow the map. What — no map? Well why didn't you bring the map? Because maps are for

dummies, you dummy. Back in the 80's at Shi-Shi we didn't know how to use a map anyway. Today I have some basic knowledge of maps and, being somewhat anal at times, you may find me with a Tiger Mountain map at the Sunday meeting.

Comfort??? Lost????

So there we were, three trail hardened veteran hikers high in the Sawtooths between Twisp and Lake Chelan. We were comfortable... back at the car. We weren't brain dead. This

was 2006. We knew our way around and we were lost!! What we had done was trusted our thinking. We overshot the lake we had actually seen from the ridge, no trail to the lake, and ended up in a swamp with 3-4 inches of new snow in the dark. It was so *%&# cold that my sweat-soaked shirt froze into the shape of some twisted car accident victim when I hung it

on a bush. We had stumbled around in the woods over blow down, through creeks, in the brush, and finally through consensus admitted we had to settle in for the night. One of us managed to get a fire going on the snowy ground. We fired up the stoves and had tea and hot chocolate. We were not going to die. But it was a major inconvenience and we were not happy. It would have been much more fun to be in a dry, lakeside camp site.

What happened? In our comfort we had chosen not to take a compass bearing to the lake. We chose not to consult our maps and altimeters for positioning. We chose not to confer amongst ourselves (still maybe a bit bullet-proof twenty-some years later?).

The next morning we did all that. Estimated that it would take 30-40 minutes to go straight up the 50-60 degree slope in front of us and get to the lake. After having to physically lift dogs up the slope, it proved steep, and crawling over more blowdowns (with those old style heavy packs some of us still lug around) and crossing some streams, we arrived at the edge of the lake in 35 minutes. It was a nice spot. Too bad we'd been so "comfortable" the day before.

Next time I cross country I will shoot a bearing. Consult my map. Drag out the altimeter. Check in with my pals. Consider the comfort of a nice campsite. And I will definitely have those "Ten Essentials." §



Avalanche Awareness & Safety

by Doug H.

This is the time of year when many erstwhile mountaineers and alpinists begin shaking off the doldrums of the long winter and heading back into the mountains. This season, in and of itself, increases the chances of an avalanche occurring somewhere in the backcountry. While avalanches can and do occur year round, the winter and spring are the times of year when we seem to see the most of them.

Many factors contribute to avalanches; weather, snowpack, recent snowfall, temperature, slope angle, slope orientation, human intervention, and what is or isn't under the snow. Most of all, any number of variables in these elements, along with that wonderful discovery of Sir Issac Newton, gravity, can contribute to avalanches occurring.

Avalanches come in all shapes and sizes. The average snow avalanche is two to three feet deep at the fracture line, about 150 feet wide and will fall about 400 feet in elevation. That's a slide area bigger than a football field! What's more impressive is that the average avalanche travels at speeds around 50 M.P.H., a little faster than most of us like to ski! The average time duration of a slide of this size is less than 30 seconds. This is the kind of avalanche that catches and kills most backcountry travelers.



There are many resources out there that outdoor adventurers can draw on to help them predict the avalanche danger in the areas where you will be traveling. These range from topo maps of your route, which can help you determine slope orientation and angle along your route, to custom forecasts from various sources such as the Northwest Avalanche Center (www.nwac.noaa.gov).

The key to avalanche safety awareness is to be prepared with knowledge of the area you'll be in and how any number of the above mentioned factors play into your plans. Before you leave home, gather as much information as possible! Contact your local avalanche forecast center's recorded avalanche hot line and listen to weather reports on the TV and radio. The local Ski Patrol may also have information regarding the latest avalanche forecast. Invest in a commercially sold cross-country trail map if one exists for the area you plan to visit. Often, dangerous avalanche zones are noted, giving you advance warning of problem areas.

What should you look for when on the trail? Beware of changing weather patterns, especially unusual changes in wind, snowfall and temperatures. The first thing to look for is storms. Remember that 80% of all avalanches occur during or shortly after a storm. This is often due to the fact that the existing snowpack cannot support the weight of the new snow, especially if stressed by the added weight of a skier or a snowmobiler. §

Searching for OSAT

by Rik A.

How many times a day do you type in "google" into your web browser? Or maybe you're partial to the Yahoo or MSN search engine. Do you realize that every time you do a search on the web, someone is getting paid for the ads that come up along with your search results? How would you like it if OSAT got a piece of the action? Well, here's your chance.

Go to www.GoodSearch.com the next time you search the Internet. The first time you use it, type "one step at a time" in the "Who do you GoodSearch for?" window; it will find OSAT right away. If you like a browser toolbar for your searching, you can load a GoodSearch toolbar, too. The site is powered by Yahoo, so you'll get the same search results that you would if you did your search on Yahoo! What's unique is that GoodSearch.com shares the money they get from ad revenues with OSAT (or whatever other non-profit organization you put in the window).

Now every time I do a search, \$.01 goes to One Step at a Time. Helping the club, one penny at a time! (OPAT?) We need to get at least \$20 by September OPAT to qualify. As of the first two weeks since this opportunity was mentioned in an OSAT Echo-letter, we are nearing 100 searches (\$1), so if we get a few more people to sign up and use this regularly, it should be easy to qualify. §

The Yodel

P.O. Box 6461
Lynnwood, WA 98036-0461

These Boots are Made for WALKING!

I'm taking my hiking feet to the street for the Seattle Breast Cancer 3-Day this September. With my mom and sister, I'll be walking 60 miles in three days to help raise awareness and money for critical breast cancer research.

Please support me in this important cause! You can visit www.the3day.org/seattle07/ericaben for more information or to make a donation. Thank you!

Erica Ben
Rainier '07

FOR SALE

- ◆ Scarpa Plastic Glacier Climbing Boots Size 12-13 exel cond \$65.00
- ◆ Moonstone Goretex Bivy with hoop. Used twice \$60.00
- ◆ Woodshaft Ice Axe (Old School) \$10.00

Contact Dave S. 206-229-9390
shiftyd1@comcast.net

REMEMBER:

Activities meeting @ Roberto's Pizza
7605 SE 27th St # 111, Mercer Island
April 11, 5:30 pm
Contact Janice B: 425-681-1715



Beginning snowshoers in OSAT's Snowshoeing 101