

2011 The Mountaineers Minor Incidents Report

(No Dr. Visit, but possible injury, near miss, other incident or informational)

St Edward State Park
Event date: 2011-01-08
Category: Logistics – Party Organization

Two hikers appeared at the trailhead independently who were not registered for the hike. Both had a copy of the January edition of the Mountaineer and said that they did not know that they had to register for the hike because the hike description was in the section titled "Open to All." They both interpreted "Open to All" to mean that they could just show up at the meeting place without having to register. Because I had room on the hike and both of the hikers said that they were members of The Mountaineers, I allowed them to participate, but informed them that they need to register for official Mountaineers hikes.

Perhaps a sentence or two is needed in the "Open to All" section of the Mountaineer indicating that registration is required in order to participate in official Mountaineer hikes. Unregistered hikers showing up at the trailhead puts trip leaders in an uncomfortable position. Had the hike been full, or if either of the hikers were not members, I would have been required to not allow them to participate.

Of note, when I tried to update my roster with the two additional hikers, I could not find one of the hikers in the Mountaineers database

Indian Creek
Event date: 2011-01-15
Category: Illness – Knees / Ankles

Minor - MM complained his knee bothered him when we descended a steep section.

Wallace Falls
Event date: 2011-01-22
Category: Logistics – Party Separation

Every members was a new / non-member (yeah to me for getting interest), but overall the group got along well and worked together. However, one hiker (MK) was significantly slower than the rest of the group. This caused the group to split and a few hikers did not stop at a trail junction, and went the wrong way.

When I got to the trail junction (about 3-5 minutes after the lead pack) I didn't know what way they went. I asked a few people coming out if they had seen my group and one person said yes then pointed me down the trail to the left. I had those with me wait at the junction and then jogged up the trail to find the group. I found them within about 5

minutes then brought them back, had another lecture about staying together and stopping at all trail junctions. For the rest of the hike everyone did stay close together and everything ended up well.

Wonderland trail-longmire trailhead

Event date: 2011-02-13

Category: Fall – Fall on non technical terrain

JV fell on ice getting out of her vehicle at Longmire first thing in the a.m. She went on the truncated Wonderland trip, but excused herself from the Paradise walk.

Deception Pass State Park - Goose Rock

Event date: 2011-03-12

Category: Fall – Fall on non technical terrain

One hiker, FH, slipped as we were crossing a rock field on the beach, cutting her thumb. This minor injury was treated on-site with an antiseptic pad and a band aid.

Lime Kiln Trail

Event date: 2011-03-19

Category: Fall – Fall on non technical terrain

One hiker fell while walking on the trail and banged up his knee a little. First aid person took a look at it and said it was fine, just needed to be cleaned up. Hiker said he was fine and finished the hike with no problems. Asked him about it again at lunch after the hike and he said it was doing fine.

Index Town Walls/Aid Climb Outing

Event date: 2011-03-26

Category: Fall – fall on rock (roped)

One of the participants, ZD took a leader fall 5 feet from the top. Marginal piece being tested popped and then micro nut that she was on pulled. She ended up about 10 feet down and upside down. Hit her knee and scraped her knuckles, but appeared OK otherwise.

Cowiche Canyon

Event date: 2011-03-27

Category: Logistics – party Organization

Participant JW left her fanny pack at a rest area and didn't notice it was missing until we were at the trailhead. Because she had all her money, ID, credit cards and keys in the pack, it was essential that we return to look for the pack. I drove JW back to the rest stop, a 60-mile roundtrip drive, while SL led the rest of the group on this easy urban hike. Fortunately JW pack was still at the rest stop and still intact. We returned to the trailhead, caught up with the rest of our group at their lunch spot and were able to complete the remainder of the hike as a group. Thanks to the great assist from SL, all members of our group were accommodated despite the misadventure.

Basic Rock Evaluation Field Trip - INSTRUCTORS (Clubhouse)

Event date: 2011-03-26

Category: Other - Informational

There was a report of a student not clipping in to the rope properly when preparing to rappel, another student noticed the problem and brought it to their attention.

Chumstick Mtn

Event date: 2011-03-26

Category: Other - Informational

Coming down, about 400' below the ridge top and in an open embayment as we were entering forest, several party members experienced a snow WHUMP. It was audible, they felt it, and the snow settled several inches under their feet. The gradient of the slope at that point was quite moderate and the snow didn't slide. The avalanche forecast was for moderate risk at the 5,000' level we were at and the west facing slope we were on should not have been on a lee slope to the prevailing winds of the last storm cycle. One of the deeply buried layers of faceted snow the NWAC has been mentioning evidently collapsed under the weight of 4 to 6 people.

Basic Rock Evaluation Field Trip - STUDENTS (Clubhouse)

Event date: 2011-04-02

Category: Hit/Cut – Cut by equipment

Leader took a pinhead size nick out of finger while closing the hatch on his car/van after getting the credit card out to pay for the pizza. Rough edge on plastic handle of the van hatch has been there for some 5 years and has bit me several times over the years...but leader found it and filed it off finally after this incident...

Advanced Scramble Module #1 - Bivy/Continuing Students

Event date: 2011-03-31

Category: Other - Informational

A fox kept waking us up every three hours at night looking for food. Walked right into the student bivvy's. Obviously very habituated. Ranger said this one has been a major problem and they plan an intervention using bad tasting food to break him.

Middle Fork Snoqualmie River

Event date: 2011-05-01

Category: Illness – Knees / Ankle

One hiker tripped on a rock and tweaked her ankle. Our MOFA person, a doctor, inspected it and thought it was all right. Hiker declared that she was doing okay and wanted to continue hiking. She made it through the rest of the hike fine and in good time. Her ankle was slightly swollen at the end of the day.

Norse, 6858'

Event date: 2011-05-01

Category: Other - Informational

See General Activity notes above about the cornice. The person who set it off said that he could see enough rocks poking through the snow to be reasonably confident of being safe. Sure enough, it didn't break off where he was standing, but it was much too close for comfort. The rest of us took a wide detour away from the edge at that point.

Poo Poo - West Tigers 1 and 2

Event date: 2011-05-04

Category: Hit/Cut – Hit/cut by natural object

Category: Hit/Cut – Hit/cut by natural object

Two of us (including me) were hit by falling branches, which was odd as the evening was wind still. A little broken skin on JV but no real harm done.

W Granite

Event date: 2011-05-06

Category: Logistics – Party Organization

Category: Preparation – Conditioning

Category: Fall – Fall on snow

Where to begin? So many things happened. It was quite a day. This was my first trip as a scramble leader. We made several mistakes. The first two occurred at the meeting place. RC discovered that she forgot to pack her ice-ax and I miss-counted heads and drove off to the mountain missing one participant (FS). (RC decided to accompany us until ice axes would be needed, at which point she planned to turn around. As it turned out, RC stayed with us the whole day. Regarding FS: we left the parking lot about ten minutes after the

meeting time, and FS had not appeared nor did he call my cell phone. I guess he was a no-show, but I should have noticed and should have tried to reach him.

We decided to approach West Granite from the Talapus Lake TH, shortening the trip by about 500 vertical feet. Snow blocked the road at about 2500 feet elevation, at the 7th switchback, about a quarter mile before the TH. Started hiking at 8:40.

We reached Talapus Lake without incident, and surmounted a very challenging creek crossing a bit below the outfall of the lake. From then on, we were breaking trail. The snow was deep, new, very soft, and very heavy and wet, as it rained lightly the entire day. Snowshoes were essential.

We had a slight navigation malfunction, which we detected fairly quickly and corrected, but it probably added an extra ten to fifteen minutes to the trek to Ollalie Lake, and it put us on the west side of the lake instead of the east side. We circumnavigated half way around the lake and started climbing to the saddle NE of the lake. We had hoped to find a good place to practice ice ax self-arrest skills, but the snow was too deep and soft. ET demonstrated extraordinary stamina, breaking trail most of the way.

When we reached the saddle at 4500 feet, we could see that there was lots of sloughing in the bowl, and huge cornices along the ridge. After an extended discussion, it was decided that since some members of the party were uncomfortable about continuing up, we would instead change course and head for Pratt Mt. We descended to the saddle at 4200 and started climbing Pratt.

We climbed 100 feet and one of the members of the party (MS) indicated that she was too tired to continue on. The time was 2:10 and we had been climbing for 5 and a half hours. MS was content to wait for us while we headed to the summit. She was given a bivy bag, an extra heavy coat, and a foam pad to augment her own supplies. We estimated that we could make the summit in another hour and would return to her in less than two.

We made the summit in 50 minutes (3:00 pm) without incident, but we did note that the one short steep section (around 4600 feet?) would be treacherous to descend.

Descending the ridge, at about 4800 feet, JZ took a fall off the south side of the ridge, which started a large slough. He could not self-arrest, as the snow was moving with him. We watched (in horror) as he descended more than one hundred feet, then disappeared from view. At that point, the valley floor was 1400 feet below us. When he finally stopped, he was able to yell to us that he was OK and that he would attempt to climb back to us. We later learned that in the fall he lost his ice ax and pole, but was able to stop by grabbing a passing tree. He estimates that he fell 300 vertical feet.

Meanwhile, the five of us left on the ridge had an extensive brain storming session to come up with a plan. We were concerned with wondering whether JZ would be able to climb back up and with getting word to MS. Knowing that we still had a treacherous

section of ridge to descend, we eventually reached a consensus that the five of us should stay together and focus on aiding JZ, reasoning that MS would wait patiently. We were able to reach MS's husband by cell phone and informed him of the situation, but were unable to reach MS's cell.

It took JZ nearly half an hour to climb up to us (without ice ax or pole. He took one of his snowshoes off and used it to belay himself.) However, once JZ ascended to our elevation, he was on the west or uphill side of the gully created by his fall and we were on the downhill or east side of the gully. It was not possible for JZ to safely cross the gully, especially without ax or pole.

Fortunately, I was carrying my brand new emergency rope that RN had insisted I buy just the week before, and fortunately I had just taken RN's advanced scramble class where we covered the use of a rope in an emergency. Luckily, RC and CS had enough climbing experience to prevent me from messing up the knots. We tied ET into one end of rope and CS belayed him as he traversed the chute, carrying an extra ice ax. My 75 foot rope was just long enough; we had less than 6 inches to spare. ET secured himself on the other side and JZ used the rope as a hand line (using the double arm wrap) and once he was safely across, CS belayed ET back across.

The six of us then descended together through the treacherous section, and then I sent CS on ahead to check on MS, who was remarkably mellow about being left alone for three and a half hours.

The rest of the descent was uneventful. We made it to the car safe and happy, but exhausted, at 7:40, precisely 11 hours from the start of the hike. I applauded the calm, level-headed teamwork and the entire party. Every member was an asset to the group.

Echo Lake (Greenwater)

Event date: 2011-05-14

Category: Illness – Previous injury

BD slightly strained her left ankle while walking on snow. She was using her trekking poles, but she slipped laterally. She stated she has broken this ankle badly once, and sprained it severely at least a couple times. She was wearing good (high topped) boots. She stated she was not surprised with the injury given her issues with this ankle. She very capably hiked out, and did not hold up the group. We kept two male hikers around her to help her with getting over blowdowns, or any other assistance she needed. The co-leader was immediately behind her. The ankle was wrapped within approx 30 minutes of the injury at the co-leaders urging, and it did not appear to the co-leader to be overly swollen. BD wanted to wait until after the hike to take Ibuprophen, which she did at dinner afterwards.

Program Center Meeting

Event Date: May 12, 2011

Category: Other - Informational

As EH and I were leaving the PC on Thurs, evening, around 9 pm, from the author signing for the Rosalie Edge book event ... we witnessed what could have become two very serious accidents ... car vs Mountaineer.

As one woman came up the three steps, started directly onto the street, I yelled at her to STOP and she did in her tracks. The car then stopped and let her cross. She admitted she never looked to her right, as she didn't even think there was traffic on that street. SB had just passed by and confirmed how bad the traffic is.

Within minutes, another older member came up those steps, immediately walked out onto the street without looking. A car was fast approaching. I yelled to her to stop but she just kept coming across the street. When I said that she could have been hit, she said "Well, he had to stop". I said that the car did not have to stop, that she was "in a traffic lane ... because there is no crosswalk marking and no pedestrian signage. She insisted she had the right of way.

There was a great deal of traffic leaving from the MAC that evening ... but I suspect that it was not unusual.

Basic Snow Travel Skills Field Trip - STUDENTS

Event date: 2011-05-08

Category: Hit/Cut – Cut by equipment

SS got a small cut above her left eyebrow from her ice axe during practice. It was very minor and she continued on after consulting with me on if it would need stitches (it was a scratch at most).

Bellingham Falls Practice

Event Date: May 22, 2011

Category: Hit/Cut – Cut by equipment

Category: Fall on snow

I think there may be a learning opportunity (at least for me) in those 2 minor accidents that happened today to me during the falls practice. Since you were there I'd like to go over them with you if you're amenable.

Accident 1. I have a suspicion that the picket failure could have hurt me a lot more than it did -- for instance what if it came at me point forward instead of broadside. I also wonder if it was inevitable that the picket would hit me-- it was attached to the rope and so was I, and the rope came down fast; and what could have been done to prevent that (other than setting the picket better)

Accident 2. Do people get their shoulders ripped up trying to stop a fast fall by self-arrest of someone who was roped above them. My left shoulder which was holding the pick down hurts now because I was trying to force it down when the impact pulled me up and back. Maybe I wasn't doing it exactly right. It seems to me that even if your stance holds and your pick is gripping well the impact could pull your shoulder pretty hard.

In any event, I'm glad the falling exercise was the last thing we did.

Greenwater (Meeker) Lakes

Event date: 2011-05-22

Category: Fall – Fall on non technical terrain

While climbing over one of the blow-downs, JF slipped and fell, scraped her leg and may have ended up bruising it. She said she was fine and hiked the rest of the way on her own. We asked again in the car if she was ok and she looked at her leg - it just looked red and said it was fine.

Fragrance Lake and Gates Overlook

Event date: 2011-05-28

Category: Illness – Previous Injury

One 10-year-old with a history of twisted ankle complained of a slightly strained ankle about .5 miles remaining to the car, and other than giving up her pack, using a trekking pole, and slowing her pace for the last distance out, she was able to walk out unassisted. I suspect that the "sympathy strain" from the 7-year-old led to mimicking the girl's ankle strain by doing the same thing though I imagine it was from improper sized shoes more than a second strained ankle and am only reporting one. The 10-year-old's was slightly swollen (7-year-old was fine and doing cartwheels shortly thereafter once she got the shoes off); I suggested the 10-year-old elevate, ice, and rest it for a few days and go see someone if the swelling does not go down within 1-2 days.

Jim Hill Mtn, 6757

Event date: 2011-05-29

Category: Fall – Fall on snow

There were two instances of people having to ice ax arrest while descending the N ridge toward Lanham Lake. In one case the individual made a quick arrest; in the other case the individual lost her grip of the ice ax, but managed to stop before hitting anything.

North Mtn Lookout

Event date: 2011-06-04

Category: Logistics – Party Separation

\At several points the group got too spread out, with me at the end unable to see or communicate with several folks who zoomed out in front. The one person with me decided she was not feeling well and wanted to wait at that spot. I went ahead to rein in the jackrabbits and when we got back to the spot where X was supposed to be waiting, there was no sign of X. Turns out that X had decided to start back down the road and had asked some passing ATV people to relay the message to me. I never got the message. Nothing bad happened but at the end of the hike I had the group discuss the safety problems that can result from being too spread out, namely if one person is not visible or separated from the group and is injured the rest of the group has no way of knowing. I also stressed the importance of staying put if you say you are going to stay put and how I had to deal with the situation where I had no idea what happened to X, whether she had wandered off into the woods or was heading back down the road.

Point 6289 (Mowich Rivers)

Event date: 2011-06-04

Category: Other - Informational

Ran into motor bikers on the trail - it's not legal for them to be up there before June 15

Unicorn Peak/S Side

Event date: 2011-06-05

Category: Hit/Cut – Hit/Cut by natural object

Basic student ET was climbing the short rock pitch to the summit. About half way up he dislodged a large rock (~1 foot on a side, ~150 lb, as determined by JB, ropeleader and Geo Technician). The rock exploded as it impacted the rock face and sprayed shrapnel all around. Four other people (two ropeleaders and two Basic students) had already climbed the route and had "used" that rock as a handhold. Basic student DA (he had already climbed and rappelled back down) was hit by a sizeable piece of rock, in the left-rear of his torso, just above the hip. He was in some immediate considerable pain/stinging, which subsided fairly quickly. There was a red crescent abrasion and some smaller abrasions. The skin was not broken, and there was no blood. We had him take some deep breaths to check on possible rib damage. He felt no pain. In fairly short order he said that he was fine. We continued climbing (there were two other Basic students to get up the route. I and my assistant leader, during the balance of the climb, on the way out, and at the trailhead before DA left, checked on his condition frequently. He always said that he was fine. He had carried a rope in, we passed the rope to another student on the way out. He exhibited no difficulty on the way out. I made a final check at the parking lot, and he said that he was fine. I'll follow-up with him in a few days.

Leavenworth - Icicle Canyon/Various

Event date: 2011-06-11

Category: Fall – Fall on rock (roped)

Squamish [an alternate site selected] is the fourth weekend field trip for LOR, where students are paired with an instructor and will lead on the sharp end of the rope. Morning rain on Saturday kept us off the Lower Apron multi-pitch routes, so we re-located to Smoke Bluffs. JO lead up Mosquito Crack (5.8), got a solid foot jam in and blew on a handhold taking a short leader fall on gear. He lead up the remainder of the pitch, belayed his partner up and rappelled down. On the rappel he noticed he “tweaked” his left ankle. Later, it swelled up and he retired to camp chair with ice, ibuprofen and elevation. JO's assessment was his foot was still in the crack when he blew and that led to the twist. Thus far it does not seem to warrant a visit to the doctor.

Merchant Peak

Event date: 2011-06-12

Category: Fall – Fall on snow

A student fell on some steep snow, but successfully ice-ax arrested.

Follow-up: The student was attempting to change from downclimbing backwards into forward plunge-stepping (i.e. turning his body and footing) without maintaining self-belay with his ice ax through the transition. No crampons, and the snow was not hard - the snow allowed good solid steps. I would not have attempted this slope if the snow had been hard/icy. He was just being a bit too cocky. He was able to arrest in a short distance despite the steepness, a testament both to his reaction time/training and to the quality of the snow.

This led to a discussion of the merits of maintaining self-belay when making these transitions - which found a more receptive audience. The rest of the party (including myself as leader) descended backwards through this section without difficulty.

Heather Lake

Event date: 2011-06-12

Category: Fall – Fall on snow

With all the snow melting out we did have one person JL, fall through the snow above the boardwalk and creek. She said she was fine & hiked out on her own.

Kendall, 5784

Event date: 2011-06-18

Fall – Fall on non technical terrain

JS fell in to stream during one of the crossings. She had the extra clothes and was not injured.

Sea Kayak Coastatl Navigation & Trip Planning

Event date: 2011-05-21

Category: Kayaking - Other

Class was proceeding according to plan until we landed on the southwest side of Ketron Island. This is a secluded area without any houses. It has heavy brush with trees, and a high tide line with suitable logs to sit and eat on. During lunch we heard gun fire close by. The first round was just a bang coming slightly to the south and up on the cliff; the second was a wizzing sound through the trees about 30 yards from us followed immediately by another bang!!! We shouted and blew our whistles, and ducked for cover!!! We heard another wiz-bang-thud near our kayaks (about 30 yards from our lunch site). Again more noise by us. Never heard a sound from whomever was firing the shots. One participant had a cell phone, and we called 911 and spoke with a sheriff officer. We informed him of our situation. We were not sure who was shooting, what they were shooting at, or if they even knew we were there. Shortly thereafter we heard some more shots from several hundred yards to our south. We quickly suited up, got in our boats and left. The sheriff phoned us several minutes later and we informed him we were out of danger. To our knowledge the sheriffs' office did not follow-up on the incident.

Baring, 6125

Event date: 2011-06-25

Category: Fall – Fall on snow

During the descent of the route, we set up a scramble line to protect the steep snow down to the col. The students descended this with a prusik belay without incident. We had a scramble graduate from some years past, who did not have a prusik and diaper harness in her equipment; consequently, I anchored her ice axe to the scramble rope on the traverse with a biner. When over the steepest portion of the snow she fell. Unfortunately, while the ice axe remained anchored to the safety line, she lost her grip on the axe, and slid approx 25' down the slope to a tree, which fortunately stopped her fall. (had the tree not stopper her, the runout actually was ok, about another 25' down the slope). While she had no injuries in this fall, this was lucky. This same scrambler had failed to arrest earlier in the descent, whereupon i inserted myself in her fall line to stop her fall.

Recommend: that leaders carry spare equipment sufficient to compensate for scrambler deficiencies. a spare prusik and sling would have made a difference here.

Lake Serene

Event date: 2011-06-25

Category: Fall – Fall on non technical terrain
Category: Fall – Fall on non technical terrain
Category: Illness – Knees / Ankles

Participant A - About 5 minutes before arriving at the lake there is a rocky section with a steep drop off to the right onto rocks. This participant stepped on a loose rock and fell to the right. After stopping, this participant was inverted. After freeing this person from the inverted position, the injuries sustained were abrasions to both shins just below the knees and abrasions to the right forearm. The participant also claimed to have re-injured a vertebrae in the neck. The participant was able to self-administer first-aid with some help from two other people in the group. The participant was then asked if they were able to continue to the lake or wished to turn around. The reply was to continue to the lake. Upon arriving at the lake, the participant was able to turn their head and appeared to be moving fine.

Participant B - During the descent from the lake, the participant slipped on a muddy, wet rock and used their hands to brace them-self during the fall. As a result, the participant sustained a cut to the right hand between the thumb and palm. The wound was washed, a bandage was applied and the group continued the descent.

Participant C - During the descent, this participant stated that their right foot was in pain due to pressure being applied by the boot to the lower end of the fibula. The participant re-laced their boot but the pain continued. Upon reaching the waterfall, it was suggested the participant soak their foot in the cold water for 5 minutes which the participant did. After 5 minutes, the participant put their boot back on and started walking. The participant claimed the pain was gone and the group continued to the trailhead.

Given the above events, all participants stated they now see the reason to carry the 10 Essentials and have a well prepared first-aid kit.

Mt Baldy

Event date: 2011-06-25

Category: Fall – Fall on non technical terrain

60 deg. dirt incline, someone fell 15 feet down it. I did not witness the fall but asked if the person was Okay and they seemed Okay, and told me yes, the fact they landed on their pack was helpful.

Mt Baker/Boulder Glacier

Event date: 2011-06-24

Category: Other - Informational

Not so much an incident as conditions. The hard (cold) steep snow was more than a typical Basic student would be expected to handle. If I had been climbing with experienced friends there would have been a discussion about... rope up or not.

Kendall Peak

Event date: 2011-06-25

Category: Fall – Fall on snow

One member slipped while traversing down the slope below Kendall and did not arrest but rather ran over a small tree they were able to hold onto. They were not hurt but were not able to use their ice axe arrest skills.

Esmeralda Basin/Gallagher Head Lake Loop

Event date: 2011-07-02

Category: Preparation – Conditioning

One of the participants was significantly slower on descent from Sunnybrook Meadows to the Dosewallips Campground. I split up the group and allowed the hikers with a "normal" pace to return to the campground, while I stayed with the one participant to shepherd him back to the campground, arriving approximately 2 hours behind the other participants.

Dragontail

Date: July 3, 2011

Category: Logistics – Helping another party

Glissading climber falling over subsurface waterfall below Aasgard Pass

Location: Halfway below Aasgard Pass on Dragontail side

Reported by: EK, Seattle Mountaineers, leading a trip of 6 people on Dragontail Mountain in the vicinity of the incident, participant in the rescue/retrieval activities along with EC, JC, SR, HK and JC .

NOTE: Information reported here is from relayed information from people involved in the incident and personal experience. Not all of the information is accurate. It is recalled to the best of my ability for record purposes only. No newspaper articles or media was consulted before writing this.

Between approximately 10:30 and 11:15 am a climber (Julia) was glissading down on Aasgard Pass and glissaded over a waterfall landing in a moat between the snow and the rock at the base of the water fall. Another climber (Jessica) heard a scream, looked up and observed Julia glissading over a waterfall and fall out of sight. Julia was climbing with 3 other people: her boyfriend (Peter?) and two others (John and Larry). Her

boyfriend searched at the base of the waterfall but she could not be found and was not responding to her name being called. It appeared she was unreachable without a rope. He ran out to the Stuart Lake Trailhead for help with the car keys. John and Larry remained on the scene but were in a state of shock. Jessica and her two climbing partners Jake and J? called for help from anyone with a rope above. At approximately 10:50 two climbers from the Washington Alpine Club (Will and Wayne) at the top of Aasgard Pass heard yelling and an ice ax being struck against rock in series of 3. They descended and were asked if they had ropes which they did not. They had seen a party of 6 people climbing Dragontail who might have ropes so they climbed back up Aasgard Pass. They found the 6 Seattle Mountaineers descending Dragontail and shouted to them that they needed a rope.

The Seattle Mountaineers (SM) group descended to Wayne and Will at Aasgard where a plan was formed. Will and Jacob stayed at the top to call 911 while Wayne and the SM group descended to the waterfall where Julia was reported missing and met Jessica. John and Larry, part of Julia's party, were approximately 100 feet below scene but unresponsive. Will made first contact with 911 at 11am and reported that a female climber had fallen into a "bergschrund" (which was the information they had) on the Colchuck Lake side of Aasgard pass. Cell phone reception was poor and only available at the top of the pass. Jacob descended approximately half-way to the accident scene and confirmed via hand signals that one climber was involved and was in "critical" condition at 11:30am. Will relayed this to 911 at 11:40am.

At the accident scene, Julia's name was shouted repeatedly again into the base of the waterfall with no response. A glissade path was observed leading directly over the waterfall. Over the next few hours the following activities occurred. The WAC and SM group and several others began digging out the snow at the base to try to open up the gap. Another hole was dug about 5 feet below the gap. Julia was not spotted. Additional holes were dug 10-20 feet below the gap, approximately 3 feet deep did not penetrate through the snow to the water. There were multiple ice axes and one shovel supplied by Heather. A snow anchor was built with 3 pickets to lower one climber with full gortex rain gear into the only hole that penetrated to the water about 5 feet below the gap. Constant communication was maintained with the belayer. EC explored as far as possible and observed a 45 degree angled rock that disappeared over a cliff (see sketch). She found and retrieved Julia's ice ax. The ice axe was lodged at a point where the snow approached to within 1.5 feet of the bedrock leaving only a small gap for the water to rush through. EC was not able to proceed any farther due to the constriction point, and was only able to see a short distance beyond this due to the angle of the snow. After retrieving the ice axe, she was hauled from the icy, cascading water. Will, on belay, widened the hole at the top of the gap greatly to try to see better the rock terrain below the waterfall. Jacob and Jessica set up a signal for the helicopter using a large, silver foil and other markers. Wayne marked the glissade path to reduce the likelihood of future accidents.

3 members re-ascended Aasgard Pass to report a missing climber again and the need for a helicopter and search and rescue expertise. This call went out approximately 2pm. HK descended with a report that a helicopter was en route and met Will, who was on his way

up. HK then took this message down to the accident scene. When Will reached the top of the pass, SR told him that the sheriff's office wanted GPS coordinates for the helicopter. SR relayed coordinates from Will's smartphone to the sheriff, informing them that the coordinates were for the top of the pass, not the accident location. Several other snow holes were attempted below the point where the ice ax was found but none reached the water. Jacob from Jessica's party lowered two ropes repeatedly in to the gap in hopes of getting some communication with Julia.

At approximately 2 pm?? Keith who was associated with Seattle Mountain Rescue (but out on a personal trip) arrived. He ascended to the scene to assist when he heard about the incident while hiking with his wife at Stuart Lake. Then Keith directed us to dig a hole approximately 20 feet below the gap and instructed us on the right technique to use for digging deep holes. Each person digging was on belay and people took turns shoveling. Jessica, Jacob and J?, who had been at the scene the longest, departed as they needed water, they would have needed harnesses to wear while digging, and they had to hike all the way out that day. At approximately 4 pm a helicopter from Whidbey Island arrived and lowered two Navy rescuers (Brian and Brent?, the medic) at 4:10pm. They assessed the situation and called in additional snow removal equipment including probes, snow saws and a chain saw.

Water was heard in the hole by SR as he was digging. The hole was now approximately 10-15 feet deep. The snow broke through to water. The opening was widened by the digger on belay. Approximately 4:15pm two US Forest Service people also arrived to assist with communications. Approximately 4:30pm another helicopter drop was made with a litter and two men from Chelan Co. Search and Rescue. Seattle Mountaineers built an anchor with 3 pickets and lowered Brian using an ATC belay directly to the anchor. Brian was wearing a climbing helmet, headlamp and gortex jacket on top of his Navy flight suit, down into the hole approximately 15 feet. He spotted Julia. He was hauled out directly by multiple people. After collecting a second rope, rigged with an ATC directly to the anchor, to attach to Julia and webbing for a waist and chest harness Brian was lowered down again. He was not able attach the harnesses due to Julia's position and was hauled out again.

Brian was directed by Keith to girth hitch webbing around her waist. He was lowered again, attached the webbing and both Julia and Brian were hauled out on separate ropes at approximately 5:15pm. Brian was shaking from the severely icy water and was assisted by Will and others with clothing ?, food? , and getting off-belay . The Navy medic removed Julia's helmet and checked for vitals. Julia was loaded into the litter and airlifted out with the two Navy Rescuers at 5:25pm .

Members of Julia's climbing party, John and Larry, hiked out, presumably after seeing the litter (I think Jean said that they were already heading out before seeing the litter lift), assisted initially around the lake by Jean. The remaining people from US Forest Service, Chelan SAR, WAC, SM and various bystanders collected their gear and descended

I was part of the Mountaineers climbing group which assisted in the search and rescue for hiker Julia Rutherford, who fell underneath the snowpack after glissading over a rock and into flowing water on the steep snowfield that connects Aasgard Pass and Colchuck Lake.

I'm including my perspective, as I was in the unique situation of assisting the remaining climbers in Julia's party from their position when we arrived on the scene (they had begun to descend the snowfield) down to a safe spot at the bottom of the snowfield. After our group arrived at the scene, we began digging with ice axes and one shovel. I participated by digging platforms to rest our packs on; the slope, steep enough to be a black diamond or double black diamond at a ski area, was too steeply angled to just rest one's pack on without it sliding on down the slope, potentially for 1000 feet or more. I also placed one deadman anchor for eventual use for belaying a roped rescuer into a hole in the snowpack. Then I helped dig one of the holes further down the slope. This was all in the space of about 15 minutes. We were working on adrenalin at first, and I, like others was trying to figure out what to do, how best to help.

Meanwhile, one member of another party helping with the rescue (Wayne, I believe), noticed that the two remaining members of Julia's party appeared to be continuing to slowly descend. About 200 feet below us, we didn't understand why they were headed down instead of helping. Wayne ran down to get some information from them. He relayed that the older of the two men, Larry, had been injured before the current incident. His shoulder was badly hurt and he was unable to assist. The younger of the two men, John, was very badly shaken up by the incident and also had fear of heights. They were getting stiff and cold and desired to get to flat ground to get into their sleeping bags. I verbalized that we should help them. I offered to be the one to assist them down and asked if anyone else wanted to come with me. I don't remember if I actually got permission from our climb leader. I decided it needed to be done and went, assuming that another climber or two would follow me and aid in getting the two men down. As it turned out, three other climbers in our party were assigned, after I left the party, to ascend the pass and contact 911 again, so no other party members descended with me.

I quickly descended to the two men. They were very slowly scooting down the steep slope on their bottoms. Larry, the fellow with the injured shoulder was attempting to slide his pack down the snow, having attached a strap from his pack to his ski-pole. He was struggling with it as I called out to them. They stopped and waited for me. I explained that we (I) were going to help them down. I took his pack and put it on my front and was going to carry both his and mine, but quickly decided it was too unwieldy. I dug out a small shelf for my pack and left it in the snow. Larry pointed out below where they had let another pack slide down to a rock outcrop. That pack belonged to his son, Peter. Peter, Julia's boyfriend, was the 4th member of the party. He had headed out to the trailhead soon after the incident in search of help. I told them that I or another Mountaineer would get that pack as well.

I asked them what their plan was and Larry said that they just wanted to get to a flat spot and rest. Over the course of the time I spent with them, he filled in some of the details of the incident. He himself had, earlier that morning, slid down the snowfield about 20 feet. His ice ax was on a tether but he had lost hold of it. He almost had it back in hand when

he slammed into a rock with his shoulder. He complained of being very stiff in his upper back and neck and in a good deal of pain. He could move his fingers and was able to push a little with the hand of his injured arm into his other hand, so he didn't think he had broken his humerus. Still he seemed to be rather seriously injured and in pain. And though he was shook up and emotional, he was thinking fairly clearly. John, a college friend of Peter's from Milwaukee, WI, however, seemed to be in a state of emotional shock. He was very scared of the slope steepness, and seemed traumatized by the event. As we were walking down, I encouraged them to plunge step, demonstrating the move and that it was essentially safer than glissading. I showed John how to back down the hill on the steeper parts using the ice ax in self-belay position with both hands. When they did begin to glissade, I showed John how to brake with the ice ax. We descended slowly but safely.

A young guy heading up the slope called over to us and we traversed over and across a shallow gully to him. He was part of the party that was first at the scene after hearing Julia scream. He had run down the slope to find a rope and was just ascending after finding some. He had left his pack above and was terribly thirsty, so I gave him water I had tucked in my jacket and a bar. He continued on up. The two fellows and I continued to descend. We passed an older man who described himself as an "alpinist". He had good suggestions about what the rescuers should be doing. I encouraged him to ascend as quickly as possible to help the others, but that I felt my mission was to help the survivors and make sure there were no further casualties. Others above could help with, what I thought, as did Larry and John, I surmised, was going to amount to a recovery mission. I was pretty sure Julia was dead, but the Alpinist said she could be alive, be in a coma and/or be unable to communicate. I hoped he was right, but felt it was a pretty slim chance.

Another party passed us. They had camped at the base of the snowfield and visually directed me to a good spot to which to get the men. It took us about 45' to an hour total to get down. The spot was at a huge boulder with some flat spots for sitting. The previous campers had flattened out a tent spot in the snow. Soon after we got there, I left Larry and John after Larry assured me they could get out their sleeping bags and that they would drink water and eat. I left my harness and coat and turned around and headed back up. On the way, I passed the Alpinist again, he urged me to get up there and get into the icy stream. I assured him I thought others were on that task. Then I saw my pack – it had tumbled about 200 feet down the hill from where I had placed it. So much for my "shelf" carved out with an ice ax. I think the warm sun must have shifted the snow a bit. I left it and kept on up. ER saw me coming up and came down about 100 ft. She reported to me that she had gone down on belay into the icy river tunnel and had found Julia's ice ax, but that Julia had apparently slipped down into a small aperture at the base of the tunnel that led further down the slope under the snow. ER was unable to go further. I thought it extremely courageous of her to go down in the hole. I was glad to have some news for the fellows. But not good news. ER instructed me to wait down at the rock for a couple of our party members before going further, so that our group could remain in contact with each other. I had been contemplating helping the two men continue down the trail, if and when they were ready to head out.

I descended, grabbed Peter's pack, still resting against the rocky outcrop about 300' below the incident scene, then continued down to where my pack had tumbled. I tied Peter's back to mine and just then a man named Keith (?) walked by and helped me put the two packs on. He said he was a trained Mountain Search and Rescue person and said that he had heard the news, and though he was off-duty camping, had ascended to help. Larry, the older fellow, later explained to me that he had advised his son to tell everyone on his way out what had happened so that if anyone had some experience or tools to help, the news would be broadcast. That turned out to be true and something we should all take with us from this event: to broadcast the news on the way down. While not a life-saver in this case, it could be in another situation.

When I reached Larry and John, I told them the news from above. I told them there was nothing they could have done. And that people were continuing to search, and that we heard from Search and Rescue that teams were on the way to help. Larry was pacing in discomfort. He would sit for a while and stand and pace for a while. He was very stiff and cramping. I had brought with me my stash of ibuprofen from my pack. I suggested he take 800 mgs with water, then wait a bit and see if that took care of the pain. I also made him an ice pack with a sandwich bag and had him put that on his shoulder. We drank water, put on sunscreen, and ate a variety of food that we pooled together. I suggested they eat salty foods to combat cramping. I also helped them fill up their water bottles. John was distraught. He sat with his head in his hands, sometimes sobbing, sometimes moaning. I asked him if there was anything I could do, if he wanted to talk. He said no. Then he said, "I just can't get the image out of my head; I was just behind her and I saw her go over the edge." All I could do was say, "I'm so sorry." We sat and watched. We could see the scene, but it was too far away to make out any activity. Larry was in a better state of mind and felt physically more comfortable after taking ibuprofen, using the ice and eating and drinking. It seemed like a long time before the helicopters finally came. I also was waiting for our party members to descend and maybe for some rescuers to walk by. I must have been getting water when two Forest Service Rangers walked by. John said they had walked by and they hadn't seen us. Now I wasn't sure that any official rescuers knew that these two men potentially needed help getting out. I was concerned that they would have to walk out by themselves and that seemed hazardous. We watched as the search and rescue team was lowered by helicopter. From where we were it was difficult to see what was happening.

Finally, JC from our Mountaineers group descended to the rock. He relayed news from above. I asked if anyone was coming down to help the two men. He didn't have any information about that. Some time later, the 3 members of the party that first came to assist at the scene, including the fellow who had run down for rope and whom I met while we were descending and he was coming back up, stopped at the rock. They agreed to take Peter's pack and also guide the two men down in the absence of other rescue assistance. They went on ahead to pack up their camp, about ½ mile ahead. We packed up our stuff. I left my pack and took Larry's and discussed a plan with JC so that he could communicate with the rest of our team. We agreed that I should walk with the two men for one hour (until 5:45 pm) then head back. If our team came by before I got back, they could take out my stuff and bring it back to our camp spot on Colchuk Lake. Getting

thru the brushy alder terrain between the snowfield and the boulderfield was hell. I hadn't been that way before because we had ascended up the Colchuk snowfield/glacier that morning, up to Dragontail, then down Aasgard pass. So now, following a bad route, we got tangled in thickets of alder with Larry only able to use one arm and John already freaked out. Alder branches, snow patches covering rivulets, then boulder fields requiring all four limbs to pass. It was not fun to lead people across. I felt terrible about it. We got thru it though and the two men complained not at all. We passed the other party as they were breaking down their camp. We continued on. Larry suggested he lead, so as to set the pace, we moved at a fairly good pace. I walked the men to the end of Colchuk Lake. I helped Larry get his pack on, gave him the rest of my ibuprofen and gave him some tips on protecting the shoulder by keeping the shoulder strap on the injured side very loose and keeping the weight on the good shoulder. They seemed to be moving pretty well.

I hugged them goodbye. It was a very emotional farewell. Tragic things happen to good people. I felt close to them, having been present to the uncovering of the heart that happens in times of intense circumstances. These are good people. I hurried back. The team of three that had taken Peter's pack was heading down, gaining on Larry and John, so I felt assured they would have company descending. Later, at the boulder field, I saw the Rangers. I stopped and talked with them and informed them of Larry and John's situation and that their help might be needed. They had been apprised of the situation, so were already en route to help. Also I gave them a piece of paper on which Larry had written their contact info.

A little later I encountered my team who had grabbed my gear and pack. ER filled me in on the rest of the rescue. Finally back at our campsite we shared perspectives and mulled over the implications. I understood later, that Mountaineers generally tries to keep groups together in at least parties of 3. In retrospect, I could have done a better job of getting my leaders' attention/permission regarding my thoughts on the importance of getting the two men to safety and also getting another party member or two to come with me. All in all, I felt grateful that our team and the others on the scene came together in a noble effort and tried our best to help in a tragic situation.

Little Tahoma/E Shoulder

Event date: 2011-07-06

Category: Logistics – Party Organization

At approximately 10,500 ft on our descent, a student set their pack down and it fell and nearly hit two climbers in another party that were 100 ft below our party. The pack then continued to fall out of site. The student was a diabetic and the pack had their insulin (and our car key). We were very concerned about whether we could recover the pack, because if we couldn't, we would have had a medical emergency. Our plan was to descend as quickly as possible to try to recover the pack and if we couldn't recover the pack, call the park ranger on our cell phone to request assistance. We had established good rapport with the other climbing party earlier in the trip (checking in at the ranger

station and at Meany Crest). We talked with them about the potential medical emergency and asked them to check in with us on their descent in case we needed their assistance. It turned out one of them was a surgeon. Also, one of our own party was a nurse. Anyway, we descended approximately 200 ft to a point that we could see the Whitman Glacier and observed what appeared to be the pack, 1,500ft below us. One member of our party was very slow on the descent because this person did not know how to self-arrest (see confidential participant performance notes). I split the party in two and sent an intermediate student rope-lead, the diabetic, and the fastest member of our party down to retrieve the pack. The forecast was for 30% chance of thunderstorms after 11am and it was approximately 10am. We could see clouds coming in, slowly but surely. If we did not retrieve the pack before the weather engulfed us, we would not have been able to find it. I told the pack-retrieving rope-team to meet us back at the Whitman Gap at 9,060ft in case we lost contact. The rope-team was able to retrieve the pack and met us at the Whitman Gap. Lower down on the Frying Pan glacier the other climbing party approached us and we let them know that everything was OK. After arriving at Meany Crest, at about 11:45, we were engulfed in a white-out.

Kendall Katwalk

Event date: 2011-07-16

Category: Fall – Fall on non technical terrain

One hiker slipped while crossing the creek and fell into the creek up to her hip on one side. Had a hard time getting out again, was assisted by other hikers. No injuries.

Merchant Peak

Event date: 2011-07-23

Category: Logistics – Party Organization

We had one No-Show BH, for whom we waited 20 minutes at the meeting point. I had an email waiting for me on my return, indicating that the party member had been unexpectedly taken ill. There was nobody on the waiting list and the slight delay did not present a problem for the trip. I replied to BH to stress the importance of cancelling off trips in good time and taking care to eat healthily and get good sleep the night before an activity (he claimed some sort of food-related illness). I do not want to write him up as a No-Show, but this issue may need to be revisited if BH misses other events.

The only other minor glitch occurred as we exited the canyon of the main gully on the trip out: as noted in the route description, it is critical to follow the leftmost branch of the scree flow. This rockfall outwash must be correctly chosen JUST as one exits the bottom/gully of the canyon: following other (more rightward) branches of the scree risks missing the trail and bridge/creek crossing and a bash/wallow through devil's club, downed/rotting trees, etc.

I must have been watching my footing, or chatting, or something, since I managed to follow the wrong debris trail. While I recognized this well before hitting Barkley Creek, a large intermediate debris pile (stagnant avalanche snow covered in demolished trees and limbs) prevented us from turning left and recapturing the correct rock-course.

We turned my mistake into a useful field navigation exercise, checking the maps, etc., then bashed up the creekside (in the direction of the lake) for a hundred feet or so before sighting the footbridge, and then another couple of feet before attaining it. No significant delay or anxiety resulted.

I should probably shoot a bearing from the canyon exit to the start/destination point on the Barkley Creek trail and incorporate that into the route description...

DeRoux, 6260

Event date: 2011-07-23

Category: Illness – Other Illness

As mentioned above, one person complained of swelling in her wrists and hands. I could see the swelling around the band of her watch before she took it off. Although she is a student this year, she is very active; she also does a lot of sea kayaking. So, it was of concern to her that she had never experienced this before. So, as described above, we chose an easier option for our scramble. As the day progressed, the swelling would die down a bit when she rested, but would return soon after starting to move again. As far as I could tell, she might have done fine if we had done Skookum, but we felt it was better to do the safer option.

Vesper Peak, 6214

Event date: 2011-07-24

Category: Logistics – Helping another party

A person not in our party went out of control descending Headlee Pass, careening into the rocky wall not far from me. Fortunately he escaped serious injury. He was shaken, however, and not sure he could get down. I had him put on my diaper harness and boot-ax belayed him down to where the slope moderates.

Columbia Peak/W Spur

Event date: 2011-07-27

Category: Fall – Fall on snow

Category: Fall – Fall on snow

We had two unplanned occurrences - in one case the lead person was near the transition from snow to rock and plunged down a six foot hole when the snow bridge collapsed - he

was ok and continued on but did hit his knee which was still sore at the end of the trip. I guess a point about looking out at transition points.

In a second case, high up we were crossing a patch of snow and one person slipped, their self-belay came out and they slid down 15-20 feet into a moat. They were ok and actually it was good because if they had continued on and not been able to arrest the run-out was bad. I guess really walking in balancing and making sure to plant the ice axe well.

Mason Lake - Ira Spring Memorial

Event date: 2011-07-30

Category: Fall – Fall on non technical terrain

One person tripped on the descent. Minor abrasions below the knee. The wounds were cleaned and bandaged.

Crystal Lakes - Rainier

Event date: 2011-07-30

Category: Logistics – Party organization

While this didn't necessarily happen as part of the official activity, one participant, LL, had a vehicle breakdown on the trip back to Seattle. A few of us chose to drive through the national park to soak up some views and photos. When we reached Longmire, LL noted that her car was having what appeared to be transmission problems. We were able to drive until she got service when she called a friend-a mechanic-who gave her some advice on a quick fix. The quick fix worked for a while and our goal was to get as close to anything regarding civilization as we could. Finally, at mile marker 19 on Highway 7 her car decided to call it quits. Fortunately, we had room in my car and everyone squeezed in and we drove to Spanaway. Lauren was able to arrange for towing and had us drop her off at a shopping complex (Walmart, McDonalds, etc) for her to wait. I checked in after getting home and received a message shortly after midnight saying that she was safely home.

Peak 6821 (Paddy-Go-Easy), 6821

Event date: 2011-07-30

Category: Logistics – Party organization

One of our party members left their boots in the car at the Salmon La Sac RS, so I drove her back to retrieve them. Resulted on about an hour delay.

Echo Rock, 7862

Event date: 2011-07-30

Category: Logistics – Party organization

There were some snafus with the car pooling, as two people were late. Nevertheless, we got going by 8:30 (we were supposed to meet at 8:00). One person who hadn't expected to drive discovered as he got to Mowich that he was very low on gas. So, while some of us did Observation, he and another driver went down to take care of that. As it turned out, they had to go all the way to Buckley, and as it turned out, he had enough gas to get there, so 2 cars wound up making an unnecessary round trip from Mowich to Buckley.

Eldorado Peak/Inspiration Glacier

Event date: 2011-07-23

Category: Logistics – Helping another party

The accident did not involve one of our party, but we effected the rescue. I have tried to write the following in a format that can be sent directly to Accidents in N A Mountaineering if you think that appropriate.

Joshua Eveland (23 y/o) completed a solo climb of Eldorado in North Cascades National Park the morning of July 24, 2011. Our group of 12 from the Seattle Mountaineers had met him on the summit, and saw him walk by in the snow as we were breaking camp. Shortly thereafter he was glissading when he went into a hole made by a stream flowing beneath the snow. Two nearby hikers saw him fall in; that was probably what saved Joshua. They called to our group who were just above, and we came to help. Joshua managed to climb out by himself despite his injuries. He had pain in his ribs and hip but the immediate problem was that he was severely hypothermic, so cold he could barely speak and was shivering uncontrollably. Members of our group got him out of his wet clothes (jeans!) and into two nested sleeping bags with a space blanket over and insulating pad under him. They then got a camp stove and made a hot drink with lots of sugar to warm him. At that point he was able to speak sufficiently to describe his injuries and give us his name. Using the first aid training that is part of our climbing course, they also gave him an examination to assess his injuries. Joshua was a model patient, lucid and cooperative.

We had no way of knowing what internal injuries Joshua might have. Thinking he might need to be flown out, we sent two strong, fast party members out to initiate the rescue. Within a half hour, however, Joshua felt he might be able to walk out with assistance. The descent involved some difficult terrain - 2,000' of talus followed by another 1500' of steep trail. Joshua was in pain but did seem to be improving and made steady progress. Members of our party took his pack and equipment so at least he had no pack to carry, and we gave him poles for balance.

Part way down, we encountered an Alpine Ascents guided party. One of the members was a nurse and the leader had a satellite phone. The nurse did an examination and concurred that Joshua could probably continue unless he worsened. The guide phoned out and told Park officials to cancel the rescue our two were going to request. Near the

road, we met a park ranger who was coming up to meet us. He agreed to convoy Joshua to the Park office, and then we said our farewells. Subsequently we heard from Joshua's parents in Hawaii that he went to a hospital in Sedro Woolley where x-rays showed that he had no fractures. Our main concern throughout was that he might have a fractured rib, which could be dangerous.

Joshua is a fine, strong and (excepting a bad glissading decision) sensible young man. Though our climb was in late July, the snow level was what one expects in June; i.e., well down into the trees and talus zone. Joshua does not have a lot of high altitude experience, and probably did not recognize the danger of continuing to glissade after reaching the level where the snow is retreating and moats are forming.

Our party of mostly Basic Course students performed an excellent rescue, recognizing and treating hypothermia, assessing injuries, giving TLC, and formulating a reasonable rescue plan in a calm and reasonable manner. It could not have been done better, I think. One student commented that it was just like a scenario in his recently completed first aid course. This speaks well of our training, and of course of the character of the people involved.

The Tooth/S Face

Event date: 2011-08-06

Category: Other - Informational

We rappelled the gully from Pineapple Pass, and set off a rock slide about 30 meters below the rappel station. The trailing rope must have looped a key piece, because when I flicked it to clear the rope while descending, a rock slide began, slow moving but with one large block. The slide buried the bottom 20 ft of rope, which was fun to pull out from above so we could finish the rappel (a nick 5 ft from the end), but we steered clear of the sliding stuff by crabbing sideways on the more solid rock. Double rope rappel touched down on snow (small moat but could step across). Recommend using saddle bags if descending this route. It's always a loose gully, but the melting snow is keeping things moving particularly easily.

Rock-Thunder, 5360+.

Event date: 2011-08-03

Category: Fall – Fall on non technical terrain

LN stumbled on the Snow Lake trail on the way in, fell and cut her face in 3 places. A couple minutes recuperation and a bandage to stop bleeding in one place were sufficient to complete the trip without further problem.

Mt Thompson/W Ridge

Event date: 2011-08-06

Category: Fall – Fall on rock (roped)

Leader fall on 2nd pitch about 35-40 meters up with no injuries. About 30 m up there is a ledge, short ramp to right and then gets a bit more vertical with several options for next moves. Leader fell 30 or more feet cam held. Combination of the belay and the ledge caught him. His tie-in knot very tight indicating that he fell on the rope. He also hit the ramp and fell on back on pack.

My guess is, and from what he described, and from what I saw in climbing the section, He attempted to make a more difficult, overhanging move than was required if he had looked around a bit. The area where he fell had a complicated bulge with many move possibilities some more than 5.6. I did not see him making the move, he was out of sight, but I did see him before that puzzling out route finding, and it appeared that he was giving too much attention to what looked from below to be poor choices. I suspect inexperience caused a poor route/move selection.

We were climbing as a team of 3. I lead up with belay from the 3rd in party, clipping into his pieces. Set up a belay where he was. Checked him out and we continued with the climb.

I've climbed Thompson before. We brought rock shoes. I led 1st pitch in boots, feeling comfortable on that pitch in boots and rock was cold. 3rd person put on shoes at base of climb. The individual in question kept boots on for 1st pitch. As he racked up for 2nd pitch we had a short discussion of switching to shoes and he elected to stay in boots. He finished the climb in boots.

The individual had great spirit, no complaints. He continued on without the incidents hindering or delaying us. I did not suggest that he lead again and he did not volunteer. The individual did quite well on the trip. There was quite a bit of stiffer than average snow travel on the return to camp which he handled well. Overall he performed at an "intermediate" level and I would climb with him again. I discussed with him careful selection of climbs so as to remain in his ability.

Mt Cruiser/SW Corner

Event date: 2011-07-30

Category: Fall – Fall on non technical terrain

I was descending a 12 foot cliff band unroped using tree branches as a green belay. The cliff had moss and running water on it. I was almost down and my foot slipped. I banged up my left elbow and shock loaded my left arm. I tried to right myself and lost my grip and slid down about 3 feet to a snow base.

Mt Ruth-Icy Peak/Traverse

Event date: 2011-08-13

Category: Fall – Fall on non technical terrain

One participant fell on the way out on the trail and banged her knee on the ground and head on a small rock. She was ok, took her time to gather herself, we gave her Advil and checked on her regularly and she was ok. At the trailhead she had a headache but no other signs of problems.

Stillaguamish, 5683

Event date: 2011-08-14

Category: Illness – Feeling weak

One participant was not feeling his best, and decided he needed to turn around before we left the trail. After some consideration, I decided to let him go back on his own. I've known him for many years, he is very experienced, and the trail was in good shape. Also, I knew there was a Mountaineers hike that was on its way up the trail, and there would certainly be others hiking up later. We gave him a spare key to one of the other cars so that he could put his rider's change of clothes in it, which also served as a way of assuring us that he had made it back. I also checked back with him when I got home.

Forbidden Peak/W Ridge

Event date: 2011-08-16

Category: Logistics – Helping another party

The accident did not occur to our party, it occurred to another party and we assisted them. I have sent our climbing chair the report. Here is a copy of the email:

I lead a Mountaineers trip of Forbidden on Aug 16/17. It was a mentored lead for SF. The party consisted of 4people.

While on route we were joined by two other parties. Upon descending we were faced with rappelling the couliour or the rock bypass. The plan was to descend the couliour, so we stuck with it. The other parties (one from San Diego and the other from NY) descended the bypass. The NY team descending first. We had just entered the couliour and I was setting up the second rappel, when we heard a tremendous rockfall. LN heard someone scream rock rock and saw shadows of boulders rolling down the hillside. I was lower in the couliour heard a huge rock fall and a “life ending” scream. I had felt the rumbling from the rocks. We continued to descend the couliour. In the back of my mind I was expecting to come to a catastrophic scene at the base of the bypass. At the crux area of the couliour, one of the parties from NY (Don) yelled up to me that his partner needed help. I asked if he was ok and I asked if he saw the party above them, and he did. At this point I started to pull the rope and asked for the team to fix the rope, so we could descend all the way to the NY team in one rappel and some downclimbing. I was unable to communicate the plan, so decided that we should continue with the rappels. We continued down the last of the couliour.

While the team was rappelling I down climbed and got visual of the San Diego team assisting the NY team find the camp of the San Diego team 7000 ft by guiding them by headlamp. This was a relief. All parties were able to at least walk. I was very conservative and set deadman with our pickets for rappels down the rest of the steep slope. The slopes were getting icy and the team was fatigued and worried. We reached the flat area of the slope at about 9pm. There was blood near the base of the gully and at intervals down the mountain. SF had a PLB, but we decided to make contact with the injured party before activating it.

Our team then went to the climbers camp. Here we found the NY party (Don and Jay-injured). Jay had a large laceration above his knee. Don (a surgeon) was able to dress the wound but still couldn't stop the bleeding with the supplies from the San Diego team. Our team provided first aid kit to the injured party. At this point Don was able to redress and stop the bleeding in the Jay's leg. He splinted the leg using foam pads and trekking poles. The San Diego team had provided food and hot water to Jay to help. Jay was in good spirits and able to have conversation.

I asked what had happened, and after the first rappel, the San Diego team began downclimbing the gully, at a point, one fellow climbed down to a large block, and pulled on it. It pulled out from the mountain and it fell with him. He was able to push the block away and stop his fall. This block triggered a much rockfall. The NY team was on the last rappel, (I think that being at the last rappel helped them avoid the greatest rock fall as this area looked steeper so the rocks probably mostly flew out onto the snow slope.) Jay had been hit by some of the rock and was able to dodge a catastrophic accident. They were all lucky.

I had seen many large tents at the upper climbers camp around 6200ft, and thought we could get more assistance. It was also a better landing zone for a helicopter. We discussed the PLB, but we decided that the best option was to assist Jay to the camp where I had seen the large tents and reassess at that point. We set a hand line across a traverse and down the rest of the way to the "upper Climbers Camp". Jay prussiked on the rope with assistance from Don. Our team tended the pickets, set the lines and cleared the ropes/pickets.

We reached the upper climbers camp, roused the sleeping members and asked for assistance. (Around 12am) After some discussion, they identified themselves as NOLS group and said they had a satellite phone. We asked that they call the county for a helicopter rescue. This was the best option. Jay was stable at the present time, bleeding had been stopped. They found him a comfortable bivy site near their tents on the dirt. And helped get him warm and tended him. We continued out, with the plan to go to the ranger station and make sure they had initiated a rescue. (this was around 2am)

We quickly found the lower climbers camp and at about 2:30 am decided to bivy for a few hours to give us rest and have daylight for the trail down. We woke at first daylight (5:30am) and continued down the trail. We ran into Rosemary, a first responder ranger

for the NPS near the trailhead around 8am. They had received the 2am call, but had incorrect information about the incident. The NOLS group had provided lat/long that pinpointed the subject at 4000 feet, so they thought that someone had fell on the trail.

We provided accurate information to her, she relayed it to the incident commander. We then went to the ranger station to provide a full report. They called in the helicopter for rescue. We were able to provide all the details they needed.

The rangers told us that our team had been instrumental to the rescue and thanked us for our assistance.

I included all the members of the team on this email if they would like to add anything.

Again, thanks to everyone for their abilities and wiliness to help the injured party!

Slippery Slab Tower/NE Face

Event date: 2011-08-20

Category: Illness – Previous injury

ZK aggravated an old knee injury. He hiked out with his gear at a good pace, declining repeatedly to let others help.

Mt. Stone - Olympic Mts./Route 1

Event date: 2011-08-21

Category: Fall – Fall on non technical terrain

DT suffered scrapes and bruises as well as a laceration to his right knee after tumbling down the talus slope near the southwest corner of Mt. Stone. The incident began when he dislodged a loose rock about 18" x 18" x 18" in size. The tumble was estimated at 50 feet down a 25 degree slope. The group closed, covered and wrapped the wound. He self-evacuated.

Hidden Lake Peak 7088

Event date: 2011-08-20

Category: Fall – Fall on non technical terrain

On our descent on the trail through the meadow, one person slipped on some wet rock where a minor stream crossed the trail. She took a tumble that included a complete somersault; I was afraid there might be a head injury, but the only bleeding was from a small cut on the end of one finger. She was able to hike out just fine; on the drive home she said that her shoulder was a little sore.

PCT: Rainy Pass to Stevens Pass/Trail 2000
Event date: 2011-08-13
Category: Illness – Previous injury

The snow slowed our trip down, and combined with a participant's injured thigh caused us to detour out the white chuck river. Unfortunately, not much is left of that trail, so we followed the river for several miles to the road, where construction workers helped us out.

Ballard/Fremont Walk
Event date: 2011-09-01
Category: Illness – Other illness

One of our party, KC, has an allergy to salmon and even though she ordered chicken the waiter got her order wrong. She did not notice it being salmon as opposed to the chicken she had ordered and ate a small amount before recognizing her mistake. One of the party had a benadryl capsule which she decided to self administer. We encouraged her to consider getting to an Emergency Room for treatment but she decided she would take a taxi back to her car in which she had an EPI pen. My wife volunteered to ride with her in the taxi for the 5 minute drive back to her car to ensure she successfully self administered the EPI pen. After KC successfully self administered the EPI pen at her car my wife encouraged her to consider getting to an Emergency Room for treatment but KC decided to simply go home. I spoke to KC later in the evening by phone and she reported she was at home with her husband with an extra EPI pen and doing well.

Dewey Lake via the Naches Peak Loop
Event date: 2011-09-05
Category: Illness - Blisters

JG was a trial member who had a brand new pair of boots and ended up with blisters. I did my best but he declined my offer of a bandaid or mole skin. He sent me a thank-you email, so I hope the blisters didn't put him off of hiking.

Cruiser Rock climb
Branch: Olympia
Event date: 7- 31- 11
Category: Fall – Fall on non technical terrain

We met July 30th to climb Mt. Cruiser. The climb started about 8:30 AM Saturday morning. We climbed up to Flap Jack Lakes and made camp. The next morning we left camp about 6:30 AM and proceeded up the trail. After gaining about 400 feet of elevation the trail was completely covered with snow. We continued on up using features to guide us. We gained a nice gully and continued up after a short break. After another 400 or so

feet of elevation gain I determined that we were too close to the Fin and needed to top out on the left side of the gully and traverse in a descending line on the back side. We were almost down when we encountered some cliff bands. The route I chose was covered with moss and had running water on it. Not the best, but it wasn't all that bad either. On the plus side, there were scrub cedars growing beside it with a lovely green belay to assist me. I started down and was almost to the bottom when my right foot slipped and my right hand gave away because I was still holding my poles. Had I put my poles away or if I would have been using my ice axe things would have been different. All the weight of my body along with my pack was on my left arm. I pulled up to regain my footing and my left hand gave away. I then cheese grated down about three feet to a snow base. My elbow was banged up and the bursa sack began to swell. BK rigged a hand line and everyone came down except PT. He had found a way through higher up. BK then preformed MOFA on my arm. We proceeded to the base of Needle pass and put on crampons. The fall had knocked the stuffing out of me which was quite surprising to me. I determined that we didn't have enough time left to climb Cruiser so I proposed that we climb to the top of Needle Pass and call that our summit for the day. Everyone went up except DP and BKn who stayed with him.. DP's crampons would not stay on because his shoes weren't stiff enough. After the mini summit we proceeded down and back to camp. We picked up the trail and we were able to find our way back to camp. We packed up and headed out. We got back to the parking lot about 7:30 .PM. All in all a good adventure. It just wasn't the intended one.

Mt Shuksan/Sulphide Glacier

Event date: 2011-08-27

Category: Fall – Fall on non technical terrain

On the walk out, one participant fell when stepping from the trail onto a moderately steep snow field. During the fall, he ran in to another participant who also fell. There were no injuries. The runout was fairly steep but short. The climber mis-read the condition of the snow... it was harder than expected, but he committed his weight before understanding that.

Mt Dickerman

Event date: 2011-09-10

Category: Illness – Heat Exhaustion

Within a half a mile of the beginning of our descent, one hiker complained of a cramp in her thigh and appeared to be suffering from heat exhaustion. Her skin was red and she complained of being very hot and nauseous. I sat her down in the shade and asked her if she had been drinking any electrolytes. When she said that she didn't have any, I pulled an extra liter of Gatorade from my pack and had her drink a few slow sips. After resting in the shade for several minutes, the hiker was able to stand and said that she felt a little better. We had to stop in the shade and let her rest and drink more Gatorade throughout the trip down the mountain. Two of the hikers alternated carrying her pack. When we

reached a small waterfall, I dipped the hiker's hat in a pool of cold water, which seemed to provide immediate relief when she placed the hat on her head. With the Gatorade, rest, cold water, and assistance carrying her pack, the hiker was able to walk out on her own and said that she felt good when we reached the trailhead.

Palisades Lakes - Mt. Rainier NP

Event date: 2011-09-11

Category: Illness – Heat Exhaustion

Category: Illness – Heat Exhaustion

Category: Illness - Blisters

Heat issues. Day was warm but there was enough of a breeze to mask it. Hike was at a higher elevation than some hikers had experienced. One guest did accept electrolyte tablets at lunch. Others did not speak up until the end of the trip when leg cramps had set in and one individual was nauseous and vomiting on the way home. I treated an extra 1.5 litres of water with iodine tablets at lunch and we used it all on the way out even though everyone did have the two litres of fluid I had specified. We did take a luxurious 2 hour lunch at the lake, most of us with our feet in the water for part of that time so we were rested and cooled off for the return trip. One participant also had problems with her boot rubbing which she asked for help with and we were able to mitigate. It was a good day with lots of positive lessons learned and individuals eager to continue hiking in the future, with better preparation. I will follow up with an email to everyone reminding them of the need to have adequate fluids, the hazards of too much water, the need to eat/nibble throughout the day, and the effect of hiking at high elevation.

Longs Pass

Event date: 2011-09-16

Category: Logistics – Party Organization

I discovered after about 3/4 mile along the trail that my car keys were missing. (4 of the 8 carpooled in my car). I thought I had left the keys in my car or in the door as I went back just before we left the trailhead to put the parking permit on the rearview mirror. As the party had an experienced firstaider (SW) and alternative very experienced leader (SG) we agreed that SG would lead the group on at a slower pace and I would return on my own to retrieve my car keys. I would then catch up the group higher up the trail. I felt confident to go back on my own as there was excellent visibility, SG knew the route, there were other hikers on the trail that morning should I have had an accident and I felt fit enough to rejoin the group without more than 30 to 45 minutes elapsing. This plan worked well. I found my keys in the car door and caught up the group at the start of the trail split where the Longs Pass trail left the Lake Ingalls Trail.

What I learned from this is the importance of checking with each driver (including the leader) that they have their car keys carefully stowed on their possession before leaving the trailhead.

Comet Falls

Event date: 2011-09-17

Category: Fall – Fall on non technical terrain

One person slipped on a wet rock and fell down, but was not injured.

Crater Mtn

Event date: 2011-09-24

Category: Logistics – Party separation

Some folks went ahead -- wasn't clear which way they had gone so the group wound up delayed a bit waiting.

Bryant, South Peak, 5801

Event date: 2011-10-08

Category: Logistics – Party organization

One person got lost driving to the trailhead. With directions provided by cell phone, she got there but it delayed the start of the scramble by half an hour or so.
