

Mountaineer

EXPLORE • LEARN • CONSERVE

in this issue:

A Path to Healing

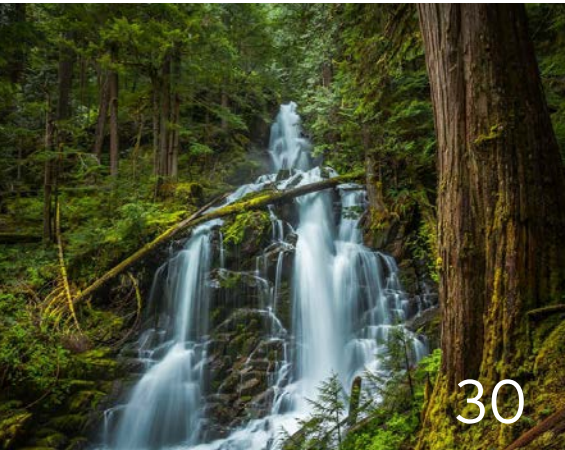
How to Choose a Backpacking Trip

A Mountaineers Legend

Forays into Forest Bathing

Summer 2021 | Volume 115 | Number 3

The Mountaineers enriches lives and communities by helping people explore, conserve, learn about, and enjoy the lands and waters of the Pacific Northwest and beyond.



On the cover: Clockwise from front-left: Mountaineers Legend Award winner John Ohlson, Super Volunteer Mija Lee, and former Executive Director Martinique Grigg on the summit of the Tooth in 2014. Photo by Greg Lewis.

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Discover The Mountaineers

If you are thinking of joining, or have joined and aren't sure where to start, why not set a date to Meet The Mountaineers? Check the Branching Out section of the magazine for times and locations of informational meetings at each of our seven branches.



It's May 19, 2009, at approximately 5am. I scrunch my toes in my boots. I have been slowly climbing for eight hours in silence. A silence only broken by my labored breath through my oxygen mask and a light breeze. It's -40F and I climb on in the cold and dark, savoring the work of the present and envisioning the hours ahead when the warming sun will rise. Soon, I will hopefully arrive at the famed Hillary Step and climb it successfully to emerge triumphant and exhausted on

the summit of Mt. Everest. For now, nothing is certain but each step, each breath. I try to remain optimistic and have done the hard work to learn the skills, train, and acclimate. I have trained for success, but only time will reveal what lays ahead.

While climbing Everest was an adventure of my choice, not all adventures begin that way. Within a month of stepping in to serve as the club's Board President last year, The Mountaineers made the decision to shut down all in-person activities and courses. Suddenly I, along with all of you, found myself on another cold, dark summit ridge. Nobody knew how long it might take, how perilous our route would be, or if our supplies and training were sufficient for survival. While it's been an incredibly trying time, I'm inspired by how we came together to imagine what an equitable future looks like for The Mountaineers.

As we slide into summer, I'm filled with relief, excitement, and hope. I feel like the sun is now rising and its rays are illuminating the path ahead, its warmth slowly reviving me after a very long year. I'm proud of how our organization - our members and leaders - are willing to dig deep to learn and grow, especially during difficult times. I remain hopefully optimistic for what lays ahead: hungry for adventure yet careful; I know my skills may be rusty.

I can't wait to see Mountaineers courses full of students eagerly learning skills to enjoy the outdoors in new ways. I'm hopeful that we can soon work shoulder-to-shoulder again brandishing Pulaskis and shovels to restore our most over-loved trails. I'm very much looking forward to experiencing live presentations from world-class adventurers and Mountaineers Books authors. And finally, I'm eager to huddle by the fire at one of our classic lodges after a day on the slopes.

We reflect on the past with gratitude that our preparation, decision-making, and team of donors and volunteers helped us grow by activating new muscles and leveraging new skills. In many ways we will emerge not just stronger on the other side, but permanently transformed for a better, more equitable future.



Vik Sahney, Mountaineers Board President



The Mountaineers is a nonprofit organization, founded in 1906 and dedicated to the responsible enjoyment and protection of natural areas.

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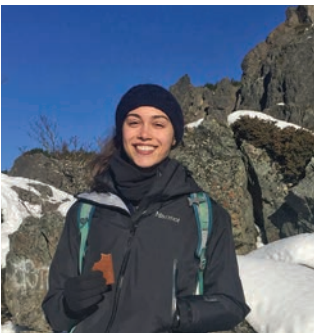
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Summer in Vantage. Photo by Carl Marrs.



Hailey Oppelt
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Photo by Paige Madden.

Not all introductions to outdoor sports are stellar. I was 19 and had just roped up for my very first day of climbing. It was December in Vantage, and I was wearing base layers, two coats, a beanie, jeans, and borrowed tennis shoes. When I wasn't wearing gloves, I wished I was, because it was cold.

The sun was beginning to set as it was rounding 4pm, and I was already shivering through the six inches of polyester enveloping my torso. I felt like the Michelin Man on a 5.7 and I was not stoked. Clearly, this was not my idea.

Looking back, I can't say it was a complete bust - seven years later climbing is now my outdoor sport of choice. After a hilariously bad introduction, I stuck with it and found that the natural spaces, goal-oriented mindset, and offbeat community make climbing how I want to spend my free time (I've ditched the tennis shoe sends, though).

I've since taken a number of courses with The Mountaineers, and I've been amazed by the degree of thoughtfulness and enthusiasm our volunteer instructors bring to each course. The way in which we show people how to do new things, or new ways of doing things they already love, is the reason why we've cultivated the incredible community we see today.

So when I reached out to our members and asked for "how to" stories for this edition, they responded exactly as I would have expected; with passion and bucket loads of information.

On our cover is Mountaineers Legend Award winner John Ohlson leading a climb of the Tooth. Celebrated in the piece *A Mountaineers Legend*, John Ohlson truly is a legend in every

sense of the word, lending countless hours and personal expertise to the renovation of the Seattle Program Center. From Mountaineers Books author Cindy Ross we have stories of self-understanding and perseverance in *A Path to Healing*. The founder of River House PA, a nonprofit facilitating combat veteran wilderness therapy, Cindy shares stories of some of the vets she's met and why she chooses to pursue this important work.

From 29-year member Courtenay Schurman we enjoy a slow walk in the woods in *Forays into Forest Bathing*, an exploration of the Japanese practice that cultivates a connection with the outdoors that a fast-paced hike or backcountry run can't quite replicate. We also have a fun feature on non-traditional uses for trekking poles, complete with illustrations from Emma Switzer.

Our usual columns are jam-packed with information as well. In a special expanded *Peak Performance*, we learn how to prep for a multi-day trip in the backcountry (and how to rest for it as well!). In *Trail Talk*, Mountaineers Books guidebook author Craig Romano offers a comprehensive look into how to craft your perfect day hike, as well as how to avoid potential disaster. And don't forget to take a look at *Retro Rewind* this edition, as we learn the family history behind the 1932 painting of Edmund Meany about to take its permanent residence in Meany Lodge.

Whether you want to know how to explore the forest in a new way, learn a novel trekking pole hack, or find inspiration from a Super Volunteer with decades of experience, this edition has something for you. And that's the beauty of The Mountaineers - we offer courses on hard skills, but many of our members also walk away with insight into how to meet some of their deeper needs. My first day on a rock wall wasn't only about learning how to rope up and find hand holds - I discovered that even crappy days outdoors can be an opportunity for growth. It's about learning what the outdoors can bring to your life, and what we do with that information makes all the difference.

Hailey Oppelt



In *The Speed of Love*, Megan Bond described the love that she and Fred Beckey shared during the final years of his life. Readers were touched, and their appreciation for the "most famous mountaineer and explorer most people have never heard of" poured out:

"So incredible! Looking forward to the book!"
-Joy Featherstone, 1-year member

"King of the dirt bags!"
-Stephen Boruch, Mountaineer reader

"He is still an inspiration to me... living for the mountains!"
-Alex Jankoski, Mountaineer reader

"I had the pleasure of meeting Fred Becky on Irene's Arête in the Tetons. He definitely was a character!"
-Jim Palo, Mountaineer reader

"Beautiful tribute - thanks so much for sharing."
-Nick Mayo, 18-year member

In *Not Another Day at the Dog Park*, Alison Dempsey-Hall told the harrowing story of a cougar attacking her dog, Blue, on a popular central Cascades hike. Our community responded in support of Alison and Blue:

"Thanks for sharing this story and especially for reminding us what to do should we find ourselves in a similar situation."
-Brittany Zablo, Mountaineer reader

"Alison, thank you for the article. Glad you're safe and Blue is fully recovered."
-Harumi Williams, 9-year member

"Thank you for sharing such a scary experience. Hopefully it helps save pups in the future. So glad yours is okay!"
-Kristy Jayne Long, Mountaineer reader



In *Why We Need a Bold Investment in the Forest Service*, we shared that The Forest Service and other land management agencies have been starved for funding for decades, and made a plea for an investment in our public lands. Our community responded in kind:

"The Forest Service is literally a shadow of its former self, and the pandemic made it worse (if that's possible)."
-Kurt Helling, blog reader

"Yes! This is essential"
-Mara Owens, blog reader

"Yes!"
-Dawn Erickson, blog reader

For this year's April Fools' joke, Foothills branch leader and Super Volunteer Gabrielle Orsi created a fake "Wilderness Pooping Course" for the LNT-challenged among us. Many in the outdoor community laughed, commiserated, and encouraged us to make the "course" a permanent offering:

"I really wish this wasn't an April Fools 'joke. 'Cause somma y'all nasty."
-Adam Wilson, blog reader

"I mean.... most jokes come from a place of truth. Think this might be totally necessary!"
-Kendra Crismier Daoang, blog reader

"Anything for a badge!"
-Steven Payne, 15-year member

In our *February 2021 CEO Update: State of the Organization Recap*, CEO Tom Vogl shared COVID-19's impacts on The Mountaineers and the changes that have been made in response. Members voiced their support for our organization, and shared how we helped them navigate this uncertain year as well:

"Thank you for keeping your programs going during a difficult time. The programs have really helped myself and my friends not only get through a challenging time, but also enjoy and learn more about getting outside safely."
-Jan Fitzpatrick, 4-year member

"Tom, your steadfast leadership of The Mountaineers throughout this challenging stretch instills confidence in me as a donor and deep gratitude in me as a member. THANK YOU!"
-Anita Wilkins, 15-year member

"Thank you for moving many courses onto Zoom. I have attended more courses than usual since it's so convenient (no driving). It's a good way to learn and I hope you'll continue that as an option for future courses when possible. It's great when the courses are recorded and the recording is made available to view later."
-Mark Olsoe, 30-year member





Name Tom Eng
Hometown New York City (Manhattan)
Member Since September 2017
Occupation Semi-retired (former veterinarian, epidemiologist, and tech startup founder)
Favorite Activities Hiking, backpacking/camping, trail running, mushroom foraging, fly fishing, photography, scrambling/rock climbing, snowshoeing, and canoeing

Lightning round

- Sunrise or sunset?**
Sunset
- Smile or game face?**
Other: Whichever works!
- What's your 11th Essential?**
My mirrorless camera and zoom lens usually live in my pack.
- What's your happy place?**
I'm saving up for a ticket (hopefully a roundtrip one) to see the Earth from space; I think the trip will be a blast!
- Post-adventure meal of choice?**
Either Thai Pad Kee Mao or fresh ramen (with chips and donuts of course)!
- If you could be a rockstar at any outdoor activity overnight, what would it be?**
Hard to decide on just one! Is the outdoors decathlon a thing?



A backpacker by Ingalls Lake. Photo by Mike Warren.

How did you get involved with The Mountaineers?

I first got involved with The Mountaineers many years ago when I went on an overnight snow cave building trip. My group's snow cave stayed intact but most of the other groups had to deal with collapsed caves in the middle of the night! I learned quickly that careful preparation and teamwork matters! Fast forward to several years ago when I finally had more free time to pursue my passions. I rejoined The Mountaineers to further develop my outdoors skills and expand my network of friends who love the outdoors.

What motivates you to get outside with us?

On Mountaineers trips, I know that everyone is prepared, has at least a basic set of skills, and will have each other's backs in case of trouble. I enjoy the social aspects of trips and continue to make new friends through The Mountaineers. Learning about people's life stories, sharing ideas for adventures, and interesting conversations make the uphill seem a lot shorter!

What's your favorite Mountaineers memory?

I have lots of great memories, but here's one that stands out: A few years ago, I attended a weekend retreat at the Baker Lodge. One night, I led a group to Artist and Huntoon Point to see and photograph the night sky. We were fortunate to have a totally clear and calm night. When we arrived

at our spot, a few in the group laid down on their pads comfortably wrapped in sleeping bags and chatted about life while the photographers were immersed setting up our long exposures. All of us were completely mesmerized as we watched the moon set over Mt. Baker and I can still see the millions of stars that lit up the night sky. Truly a shared spiritual experience!

Who/what inspires you?

I'm inspired by those who dedicate their lives to science & health, the environment, and conservation. Many thanks to the professionals who keep us healthy and have given us a path back to normalcy, those who protect the planet from the climate crisis and pollution, and those who help preserve our wild places for future generations.

What does adventure mean to you?

Adventure means to continually challenge yourself to improve in all facets of life - physical, mental, and spiritual. To me, adventures aren't limited to outdoor experiences, they could also include quitting your stale job to pursue your passions, raising kids to be productive members of society, moving to a totally different area, or developing new connections with people who don't agree with you. Adventure means stepping out of your comfort zone and living a life of memories rather than regrets! ▲▲

You're six weeks out from your big multi-day summer adventure. You want to be in peak condition before you go, and you have an opportunity to simulate your outing once or twice to check your preparedness and adjust your training program. Through back-to-back training - heavy and longer pack carries on successive days - you can assess the physical demands you'll encounter on your trip and determine whether you are physically ready. After you head into the mountains for your first of two simulated trips, you'll transition your strength workouts away from building strength and toward increasing stamina. If you intend to travel to high-altitude areas, add one or two weekly pack-carrying intervals workouts on hills or stairs as well. The simulations will help you refresh yourself on gear management and pack loading, at which point you'll want to slowly decrease the intensity of your training to allow your body to be as well-rested as possible.

Follow these tips to get in shape and maximize your fun on your next big outdoor adventure.

Simulated trip

By far the most important element of any training program is making sure you're prepared to carry weight on successive days. In doing so, your body will learn how to perform without your usual recovery time. Knowing that you can work through the discomfort will boost your confidence and help you feel more comfortable when you experience fatigue on a trip.

A back-to-back is exactly what it sounds like: carrying a pack on one day for a hike, then with no recovery, hiking again the next day. Don't worry so much about replicating the exact elevation change and distance of your trip on both days of the back-to-back, and if you're unable to do two back-to-backs before your adventure, then focus on getting in quality day hikes two days in a row. Train with slightly more weight than you think you will be carrying on the heaviest day of your trip, so that if you encounter unexpected obstacles (such as carrying extra group gear, navigating blow downs, or facing route-finding issues that add mileage or gain), you will have built extra reserves of strength, endurance, and stamina.

Based on the itinerary of your overnight trip, you can create a simulated trip to mimic what you will experience on your adventure. Many trips such as glacier climbs require a heavier approach pack and a lighter summit pack. If you are preparing for a three-day climb of Mt. Rainier, for example, on the first day of your simulated trip carry the heaviest pack weight (an overnight camping pack, anywhere between 35-50 pounds) for eight miles with at least 3,500 feet of elevation gain. The second day plan to carry half that weight for 8-12 miles to mimic the longest trip day.

Other trips might call for shorter days getting to base camp, from where you will explore the area carrying a daypack. Backpacking trips may have a short first day with the heaviest

Continued on page 33



Orca: Shared Waters, Shared Home

By Lynda V. Mapes, Mountaineers Books Author

Lynda V. Mapes admiring a pod of Orca whales. Taken under NOAA permit 21348. Photo by Steve Ringman, courtesy of The Seattle Times.

The following is excerpted from *Orca: Shared Waters, Shared Home* by Lynda Mapes, a new book from Mountaineers Books conservation imprint *Braided River*. Through interviews with scientists and Northwest Native tribal members, Mapes lays out the human causes behind the orcas' precarious situation, revealing that the health of the southern residents is deeply entwined not only with Chinook salmon, but with the entire natural world of the Pacific Northwest. A powerful story, *Orca* offers a window into these creatures' lives - their remarkable intelligence, rich culture, lifelong family ties, and elaborate communication skills - as well as hope for their future. Read on as Mapes shares a joyful memory of a special day with the southern resident orcas, and highlights one of the problems they face.

Downtown Orcas

The southern resident orcas still seek the fish returning to Puget Sound rivers, surging even all the way into the urban waters offshore of downtown Seattle, hunting chum, coho, and chinook. The special time for Seattle-area residents is when the southern residents, in their final seasonal rounds of the year, come here at last. Downtown orcas. Who else has that?

Sometimes the southern residents are here for days on end, thrilling ferry riders crisscrossing central Puget Sound and people flocking to beaches all over West Seattle and Vashon and Maury Islands to watch orcas blow and breach, right offshore. One day in November 2018, J, K, and L pods were all here at once. Dozens of orcas were cartwheeling and spy-hopping, right past the Superfund site of the Asarco Smelter at Ruston near Tacoma, right past the dense-packed housing along the long-ago logged-off hillsides. They sculled underwater upside

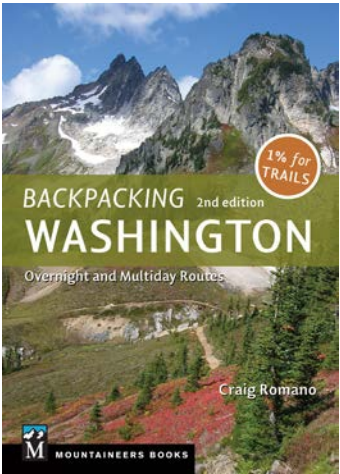
down, their bellies glowing white through the green water, and slapped their pectoral fins and flukes seemingly just for fun or maybe simply to hear the loud, resonant, smacking sound.

As the sunset painted the water gold, people thronged the beaches and shorelines, enchanted all over again at what it means to live here, in a place still alive with salmon and orcas on the hunt.

The southern resident orcas that roam the region's urban waters are like black-and-white-robed judges of a truth-and-reconciliation commission. They remind us all of what is still here and what is at risk—what we took for ourselves, what we took from them. Their hunger is an indictment, because we caused it. Their hunger points to what's missing. At stake as the region gets richer is whether it also will get poorer, with only the grandmother orcas remembering the salmon that used to be.

To better understand what the southern resident orcas need, I traveled north, to lands and waters where orcas are still thriving. The land of the northern residents is a place that looks a lot more like Puget Sound used to. The orcas living there are the same animal as their urban counterpart, the southern residents. The only difference between the northern resident orcas that are thriving and the southern resident orcas headed to extinction is... the millions of us who live in their home territory. They were here first. They belong here. But now, they contend for survival amid all of us. ▲▲

Orca is available for purchase at our Seattle Program Center bookstore, online at mountaineersbooks.org, and everywhere books are sold. Learn more and find information on upcoming events at orca-story.com.



Backpacking Washington, 2nd Edition

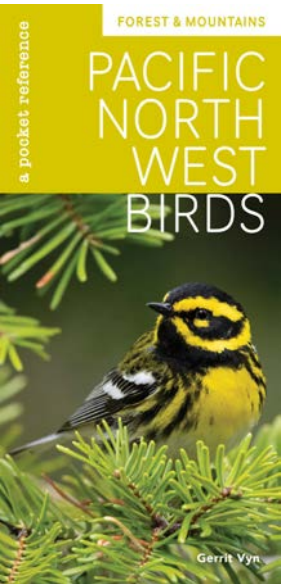
By Craig Romano

In this completely updated guide to one of our favorite warm-weather pastimes, veteran backpacker and guidebook author Craig Romano takes you to stunning destinations throughout the state. From Olympic Coast beaches to windswept North Cascades peaks to the lofty spine of the Kettle River Range, Romano expertly guides you on 80 spectacular trips ranging from 14 to 50 miles. With an emphasis on weekend trips, routes range from overnights to weeklong treks, and include options for extending trips or taking nearby day hikes. Featuring detailed route descriptions, topo maps, trip stats, driving directions, quick-reference icons, and an at-a-glance trip planner for easy selection, the new edition of *Backpacking Washington* is a must-have.

Campfire Stories Deck: Prompts for Igniting Stories by the Fire

By Ilyssa Kyu and Dave Kyu

The perfect summer activity! From the creators of the bestselling book *Campfire Stories: Tales from America's National Parks* comes this collection of cards with 50 storytelling prompts to help people of all ages find new ways to connect with family and friends. While the glow of a campfire is ideal for telling tales, these cards can be used anywhere - on a camping trip, in the backyard, or around the dining room table - to spark a story. Examples of prompts include "Tell a story about the strangest thing you've seen on the trail" and "Tell a story about a time when you left something behind." The right card can unearth forgotten history, recall exciting adventures, or help inspire future plans. Don't miss this chance to unearth your hidden storyteller.



Pacific Northwest Birds: A Pocket Reference (Lowlands & Coast, Forest & Mountains)

By Gerrit Vyn

From award-winning wildlife photographer Gerrit Vyn comes two pocket references on birds: *Pacific Northwest Birds: Lowlands & Coast* and *Pacific Northwest Birds: Forest & Mountains*. Particularly useful for the novice birdwatcher, these full-color visual guides consist of folded and laminated panels showcasing 40 of the most common species found across Washington and Oregon - including perennial favorites such as Belted Kingfisher, Pigeon Guillemot, American Dipper, and Mountain Chickadee. Ideal for hikers, backpackers, car campers, and beachgoers, these handy guides include brief descriptions, where to look for birds, and what they sound like.



Expanding Access to The Mountaineers Gear Library

By Hannah Tennent, Associate Youth Outreach Manager

This past January, Satish Shanmugasundaram was thinking about what resolutions to set for 2021 and getting outside more was at the top of the list. One of the first adventures inspired by his resolution was a snowshoe trip to the banks of Lake Kachess. There, he first learned about The Mountaineers.

“I was struggling with the directions and I saw a group. One of them told me that they were from The Mountaineers, and I immediately signed up. After that, almost every Saturday and Sunday, I’ve been on trips,” shared Satish. In the winter, he took the Basic Snowshoe Course and the Winter Camping Course, which both require specialized gear to stay warm and access winter environments. Through these courses and the course leaders, Satish heard about The Mountaineers Gear Library.

On his first snowshoe trip with the Everett Branch, Satish’s snowshoe broke and the trip leader, Hillary Shearer, recommended the library as an avenue to explore different types of gear. Since becoming a Gear Library cardholder, Satish has borrowed gear for Mountaineers courses and activities, as well as personal outings with his two sons.

Gear for everyone

Housed in the basement of the Seattle Program Center, The Mountaineers Gear Library aims to make outdoor activities more accessible by providing low cost gear to anyone. Living in the Pacific Northwest can be an outdoor enthusiast’s dream come true, but outdoor recreation isn’t easy for all to access. Gear can be a barrier because it can be expensive, tricky to use without the know-how, and limited by stores that don’t carry a full range of sizes.

You don’t need to have the most expensive or most commonly advertised equipment to have safe outdoor trips, but functional gear is important. It’s easier to travel through deep, fresh snow with snowshoes. It’s safer to hike in the rain when you’re protected from becoming hypothermic. And it’s possible to go backpacking if you have access to a tent and a backpacking stove. For those in our community who experience barriers to outdoor recreation - from a lack of representational mentors to a history of outdoor trauma - our hope is that the Gear Library makes it easier to get outside.

When it was founded in 2018, our Gear Library only outfitted Mountain Workshop participants and youth groups. The gear has traveled around Washington State with students of all ages - from camping and climbing trips in Vantage to cross-country ski outings off I-90. In January 2021, the library expanded to support individuals, families, and adult groups too. We knew youth weren’t the only audience that could benefit from affordable, high-quality gear! Now, any Mountaineers member can become a Gear Library cardholder and borrow gear for hiking, backpacking, and camping trips. Students of Mountaineers courses and graduates with snowshoe or ski badges can also borrow the snowshoes and cross-country skis for winter recreation. The gear can be checked out, utilized, and then returned for the next person!

Satish shared one piece of why it worked well for him, personally: “I don’t do winter camping often, but I did want to experience winter camping, and a zero degree sleeping bag is a costly option. It’s not going to work for the rest of the seasons. And therein lies the rub.”

Gear Library partnerships

Our Mountaineers Gear Library was founded in the model of the Outdoors Empowered Network (OEN) and luckily, we had a founding member of OEN nearby to learn from. Washington Trails Association’s (WTA) Gear Library was founded in 2013 to provide gear to local youth groups. Along with gear, they host a robust outdoor leadership training program to educate teachers and other youth leaders on outdoor skills in hiking, camping, backpacking, and snowshoeing. Currently, any group leaders using our Gear Library are required to attend one of WTA’s workshops, with the exception of cross-country skiing. Packed with information, the workshops are excellent for beginners who will gain the skills they need to safely take a group out. They are also a wonderful community space for experienced outdoor educators to network and share their skills. Within these workshops, WTA has trained over 350 educators since founding, which has led to over 7,690 youth and 3,310 adults to have outdoor experiences supported by their gear. We have plans to offer cross-country skiing workshops next winter.

The Mountaineers and WTA’s expansion throughout the years demonstrates the success of this model and the need for affordable gear in the Puget Sound area. In 2017, WTA’s Gear Library moved to a larger space in Seattle’s Atlantic neighborhood, and WTA is currently working on opening a second location in Pierce County. “As we have trained more and more leaders from the South Puget Sound, we’ve received feedback that a barrier to accessibility was the location of the Seattle gear library. Many schools and programs don’t have the capacity to send a staff member to Seattle for the day to pick up gear,” said Jean Bartholomew, Outdoor Leadership Training Manager.

“I love hearing testimony from our partners about the impacts their trips have on youth, and the joy they find from discovering something new,” Jean said. “I’ve heard about how outings help students and teachers form better relationships, which improves classroom interactions. Also, participants are in awe at discovering the Milky Way for the first time.”

Looking forward

For much of 2020, the Gear Library was quiet as people stayed home, stayed safe, and refrained from group gatherings. As we’ve learned more about how to recreate outdoors responsibly in the time of COVID, groups and individuals are returning to borrow gear. I’ve been thrilled to support Mountaineers students in cross-country ski, snowshoe, winter camping, and backpacking trips as they find affordable ways to participate in the courses, try out different styles of gear, and then borrow gear to take their families out with their newfound skills. Being able to gather and spend time together outside is an experience I won’t take for granted again.

As Satish shared, The Mountaineers is a unique community where it’s possible to expand our knowledge while having a good time: “The thing I like about Mountaineers is it’s not the usual spots, so you get to meet these great people who’ve gone ahead and checked out places, and then come up with exciting things to do. [In March] we went to the east Baker Lake hike and there were like 40, 50 trees that were in the way. It was like an obstacle course. It was so much fun.”

The Gear Library is a community resource aimed at breaking down barriers to getting outside so that everyone can enjoy these outdoor obstacle courses. We’re happy to play a small role in introducing the outdoors to more people, and in watching their spirits come alive through outdoor play. ▲▲



ACCESS OUR GEAR LIBRARY

Whether you’re a brand-new Mountaineers member or an active volunteer, check out our Gear Library! We hold orientations monthly that detail what we currently stock and how you can check it out. Send us an email at gearlibrary@mountaineers.org and come learn about how to make your outdoor adventure goals come true.



Matt Vadnal, Evy Dudey, and Lorna Corrigan during the Hög Loppet ski tour on Blewett Pass in 2009.

Lifelong Engagement through Leadership

A guide to planning your legacy with Lorna Corrigan

By Brianne Vanderlinden, Associate Director of Development

Over my last four years working for The Mountaineers, it has been a great honor to observe and learn from three amazing Board Presidents, each with their own unique abilities and unwavering commitment to the health of our organization. I may be biased in my admiration of strong women in leadership, but one president stands out as particularly inspiring to me. This spring we honored retiring Board President Lorna Corrigan, an accomplished attorney and 30-year member of the Everett Branch who recently completed her third and final year of presidential leadership. If you’ve ever had the chance to talk with Lorna, you’ve likely noticed her poise, felt the magnetism of her passion, and been inspired by her sense of purpose. Lucky for us, Lorna has arranged for her contributions to far surpass her tenure in the presidential seat by including The Mountaineers in her estate plans. To celebrate her years of service and to learn

more about why she chooses to give to The Mountaineers as a volunteer and a donor, I reached out and asked her to share more about what has moved her to give her time, talents, and treasure so generously.

Growing up in Mountaineers lodges

Lorna’s story begins with early childhood tales of weekends in Mountaineers lodges. As we spoke, she reminisced about a vibrant and active scene, spending the day on the Snoqualmie rope tow, her dad’s never-ending work on the cable bindings, meals and storytelling around the dinner table, and the evening programs with happy faces singing and dancing about the lodge.

“As a child I received the great benefit of growing up in an atmosphere of healthful activities in the outdoors, with friendships that created a second family for me. I am serious

when I say people that we met through The Mountaineers are still family friends today.”

As Lorna describes it, her experiences through The Mountaineers changed her life in the most positive way, providing an education to safely experience our wild landscapes and inspiring action to protect the places we hold dear. Our community provided her the courage to explore in ways she didn’t think she could on her own, and provided leadership pathways, allowing her to give back to an organization that has given her so much.

Charting a path for the future

Over the years, Lorna has shared how proud she’s felt to be the president of an organization famous for volunteer-led outdoor activities, courses that teach lifelong skills, and creating personal connections with the places we enjoy. She is also continually inspired by the role Mountaineers Books plays in opening the eyes of the public to the natural beauty of our wild landscapes, encouraging readers to become advocates and protect public lands for generations to come. As she reflects on what she values most about being a member, it’s not just the technical expertise of our volunteers - the communal optimism and support for each other offers meaning as well. These are some of the many reasons Lorna has decided to plan for the future of The Mountaineers with a bequest in her will.

“At 65, I have started to think about how I can leave something behind for the community that has provided so much and will carry on the values that matter to me. I am confident that this organization will continue to be a relevant and important part of my life as I continue to age, and this is a major reason why I always want to be able to give back to The Mountaineers. That act of giving back is an integrated aspect of membership for me, and I trust The Mountaineers to take actions that will help to preserve our wild places and empower people to enjoy those places in a safe manner. It is important to my personal ethic to contribute somehow to the world, which is why I’ve chosen to leave a bequest to The Mountaineers.”

Creating her own legacy

Charitable bequests may sound like a complicated term, but it is simply a gift planned out in a will or trust. It is one of the easiest ways to support the mission of The Mountaineers, or any other organization you care about, and to make a lasting statement about what matters most to you. Some members have shared that they’d like to make a will, but they’re not sure where to start. Lorna kindly allowed me to ask her about the first time she set up her own.

“I made my first will when I was in my 30s. I lost my father when I was young and through that, learned firsthand what happens when someone passes away. As I thought about my own life, I wanted to be organized, knowing it would be easier and take some of the burden off of the people I love. I wanted to make sure that the things I wanted to happen would happen and the way to do that was to create an estate plan for myself.”

“Once you have your will completed, you feel like patting yourself on the back because you’ve done something that you want to have accomplished. You want to influence how your legacy will be created. And when you’re done, you get to check that off your list and say, ‘Okay, I’ve got things in order for me and my loved ones.’ And to me, it’s a great feeling to have done that for The Mountaineers.”

The sky’s the limit

Towards the end of our conversation, I appreciated knowing that Lorna’s time as a Mountaineers leader was not coming to an end; it would simply take on a new form. When I asked about what was next for her involvement as a volunteer, Lorna shared how she will continue to be engaged through the Board’s Litigation Committee. Inspired by the growing role of Equity & Inclusion within leadership development and recruitment, she’s also recently agreed to join the Governance Committee and will continue to provide input to the Board and the organization at-large.

As far as what’s next on Lorna’s outdoor goals, she’s looking forward to recovering after an upcoming knee replacement before returning to more aggressive hiking and backcountry skiing. Before the next ski season, she’s planning on spending the summer exploring Idaho and Wyoming, where her family has a home. “I’d really like to explore the National Parks outside of Washington State. I’m embarrassed to say I’ve never been to Yosemite and there are also areas of Mt. Rainier I haven’t visited yet. The sky’s the limit!” ▲▲

YOUR GIFT MATTERS

Make a Big Impact with a Future Gift

When you include The Mountaineers in your estate plan, your generosity protects the future of outdoor education, conservation, and advocacy in the Pacific Northwest and beyond.

If you’d like to make arrangements for a legacy gift but are not sure where to start, The Mountaineers has invested in a new resource for members just like you: **mountaineers.planmylegacy.org**

Contact Brianne Vanderlinden at (206) 521-6006 or briv@mountaineers.org for additional information, or to chat more about the different options for including The Mountaineers in your will or estate plan.

The information included in the new website resource is not intended for use as tax or legal advice. Please consult with your professional advisor before making a gift.

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Fostering Clear Pathways to Leadership

By Nick Block, Volunteer Collaborations Manager

Near White Pass on the approach to Glacier Peak. Photo by Nick Block.

The Mountaineers is an organization that lives and breathes through the hard work and dedication of our talented volunteers. For 115 years, our programs have taught the next generation of hikers, climbers, paddlers, and more, and these students have chosen to contribute back to the programs they came from, sustaining our community. Yet, as demand for our programs continues to grow, recruiting a sufficient number of leaders to run programs is a constant challenge for volunteers within the organization.

Under the current system, aspiring leaders in many of our activities find it challenging to understand and navigate the requirements to become a leader in their activity. One strength of our programs is that they’re tailored to local branch communities, but when the process to becoming a leader varies by activity and branch, it can create confusion. Transparency about the process is necessary to encourage those who are interested in leadership opportunities, and a lack of it creates a perception of needing to “know the right people and make the right connections” to have a role as a leader in The Mountaineers.

A well-documented and accessible leader pathway is a critical step towards inviting new volunteers into the club. It also helps volunteers and staff point aspiring leaders in the right direction, and is an important step towards increasing equity and inclusion. Representation matters, and as we aspire to be a club where everyone truly feels welcome in the outdoors, our leadership pathways need to be open to new voices.

So how can volunteers make their leadership pathway more transparent? Let’s look at a few examples already in place.

Climbing modular leadership

The Climbing Leadership Development Committee (LDC) is a group that represents all branches to tackle challenges related to leadership within climbing. This committee, with the guidance of the Climbing Summit group, has been working for several years to overhaul their leadership structure to a modular format. This format allows leaders of varying skill levels and backgrounds to work their way into a leadership position, lowering the initial barrier of entry and distributing leadership across a wider pool of volunteers. Additionally, each role has its own requirements and prerequisites, and the process to obtain leader status is documented on the website.

For example, the original leadership structure offered only one role: Climb Leader. This position required years of training and experience, and for good reason. A Climb Leader takes students and members on trips into all types of technical climbing terrain. Alpine rock, glacier, ice, or single-pitch climbing at the crag; the Climb Leader was responsible for doing it all. As such, the process to get the qualification was daunting. The documentation to become a Climb Leader was also different between branches, and the information limited. This not only made things challenging for aspiring leaders to navigate, but it also placed a huge burden on Climb Leaders to be responsible for running every type of climbing activity, as no other types of leaders were able to take on lower-level roles.

Many branches recognized this problem early on. Several had already created their own version of a modular leadership structure, but all leader types were housed under the single “Climb Leader” badge. Because of the single badge system with

multiple branches, different structures, and limited visibility between them, things were hard to track for volunteers. It was even harder for members and aspiring leaders. With more branches wanting to adopt their own version of the tiered system, it became apparent that seven branches, all with their own unique badges and leader structures with varying requirements, would quickly become overwhelming. Thanks to the hard work of the LDC and Climbing Summit group, a unified system is now in place.

With the new structure, there are now 11 leadership positions. While adding this many roles does appear to increase the complexity of leader standards, it is simpler overall than each branch running their own system. Now, our Climb Leaders don’t have to shoulder the burden of leading every type of activity. Aspiring leaders can choose pathways that they are most interested in, and barriers to entry are lower. The badges that represent these 11 leadership positions are on the website, and each badge includes the scope of the role as well as how to achieve it. Everyone can see what those roles are and exactly what they need to obtain them.

Another benefit is that the barrier to entry in climbing leadership is much lower. While the high-level leaders still maintain the same rigorous qualifications necessary for the demands of leading climbing trips in the alpine, the entry-level roles make it much less burdensome for someone with less experience to start their leadership journey. For example, the Climbing Conditioner Leader needs a year of hiking experience and to have demonstrated leadership through several Mountaineers outings. This means that someone who has a lot of experience in leadership, mentoring, and maybe even another outdoor activity can get started in climbing leadership, even if their technical climbing skills are not as strong yet.

While climbing is one of our most complex activities to run, this structure sets the climbers up for success by giving current leaders, prospective leaders, and members a clear view into what leadership in climbing looks like. However, other committees will not want or need to implement a structure this complex. So what does a simpler version of a clear pathway to leadership look like?

Setting the standard for trail running

In 2019, the Foothills Trail Running Committee worked with other branches interested in this activity to develop the first Trail Running Standards for the club. Through this collaborative process, they created Frontcountry and Backcountry Trail Run Leader types with clearly and thoroughly documented roles and responsibilities, including the process to achieve leader status. Like the Climb Leader roles, the descriptions are with the badge on the website. The Trail Running Activity Overview page lists the leader roles, providing a quick and easy way for anyone interested in getting involved to see how they can become a leader. Offering multiple leader types gives volunteers the flexibility to focus on their interests, not requiring more of leaders than is necessary and being mindful of volunteer bandwidth and time.

The trail runners started as a group that relied on collaboration and differing viewpoints to publish their standards. Now, they have embraced that mindset to the fullest. Most activity committees

meet annually or bi-annually for a summit meeting to facilitate cross-branch communication and discuss important issues. A regular Trail Running Committee meeting includes members from all active branches. Their message to anyone who wants to join? Everyone is welcome - they just want all who are interested to experience the fun of mountain running.

Start simple and make it easy

Both the trail runners and the climbers built their leadership pathway through a collaborative, multi-branch effort. Some committees may have slightly different leadership processes. While it’s recommended that activity groups align on their standards, we encourage all committees to post their own leader pathways to help those interested become leaders.

Complex leader structures or even badge systems are not the only way. Simply documenting your leader types, the qualifications for each, and the process of obtaining the leadership role on a committee page can go a long way towards bringing in new leaders. Want to take things a step further? Create a subpage on your committee page dedicated to leadership in your activity.

The most important part of Mountaineers leadership pathways is providing all members easy access to get more involved. Having a consistent and well-documented leadership progression might feel like a big undertaking, but it doesn't have to be overwhelming, and it goes a long way towards making our programs more equitable for all.

Are you on an activity committee and want to help your committee better document your leader process? We encourage you to speak with your committee and document your leader process on your activity committee page. The benefits can pay dividends towards the future of your committee by providing a strong pipeline of volunteers and leaders. Our programs depend on it. ▲▲

WAYS TO CLEAR THE PATH TO LEADERSHIP

While not all options may be the best fit for your activity committee, we encourage you to see if there are any steps you can take to help clear the path to leadership:

- Document how to become a leader on your activity committee webpage
- Document leader types and qualifications on your activity committee webpage
- Create a subpage on your committee webpage dedicated to pursuing leadership
- Consider working with other branches to develop cross-committee leader standards
- Analyze leadership structures and identify what works, what doesn’t, and what can be improved

Smoky Summers and Shorter Ski Seasons

The future of the northwest in the face of the climate crisis

By Betsy Robblee, Conservation & Advocacy Director



Climbers on the Coleman Glacier. Photo by Emma Agosta.

Few have directly witnessed the insidious change that our warming climate has wrought on the Pacific Northwest. Those who have seen the impacts are often outdoorspeople who have been intimately connected with the land for decades, watching as it slowly morphs under the pressure of a changing climate. Pat O'Brien is one of those people.

An alpine climbing instructor for the Washington Alpine Club since the 1980s, Pat has seen the change most readily in mountaineers' bread and butter: glacier travel. "One of the most glaring things I've watched over the years is the receding of the Coleman Glacier," said Pat, who has been teaching an ice climbing course on the Lower Coleman for more than 30 years. He remarked that you used to be able to hike to the glacier overlook and descend on a trail directly onto the glacier. "I was once able to carry a student up it," he joked. Where there was once a trail is now an abrupt cliff into the glacial moraine, and "where there used to be a large mass of ice, there is only broken rock."

Whether you talk to a longtime climber like Pat or look at photos

from an old Mountaineers book, shrinking glaciers are one of the more obvious impacts of climate change in our wild places. A warming climate will also change our outdoor adventures in other ways, from smokier summer hikes to shorter, drizzlier ski seasons. While we can't predict with certainty exactly what the future holds, scientists are in agreement that the changes we've begun to see in recent years are only projected to get worse.

What does the global climate crisis mean for the future of our outdoor adventures? And how can outdoor enthusiasts make a difference?

Smokier summers

In the Pacific Northwest, many of us patiently endure gray, wet winters for the promise of glorious summers. Unfortunately, recent summers have been cruelly shortened by late summer wildfires, resulting in forest closures and unhealthy smoke that obstructs our views and impacts our health.

Warmer temperatures means drier summers and more severe

wildfires. According to the 2018 National Climate Assessment, our region has warmed about two degrees Fahrenheit since 1900, and this trend is expected to continue and potentially worsen. Shorter, warmer winters result in a smaller snowpack, which dries out our forests more quickly and makes them more susceptible to wildfire. Unfortunately, the larger and more frequent wildfires we've seen in recent years will only become more severe - and closer to home.

Shorter ski seasons

A warming climate will cause ski seasons to become shorter and more unpredictable. University of Washington studies show that the average length of snow seasons in the Northwest will decrease by up to 46 percent by the 2040s. Those same studies emphasize that our winters will continue to be variable, but the general trend is towards warming and more precipitation falling as rain instead of snow. One can imagine a day when skiing at Meany Lodge is a thing of the past.

Shallower snowpacks have greater consequences than just fewer powder days. Snowpack in the Cascades provides drinking water for many communities, irrigation for agriculture, and cold water salmon need to survive, impacting Native tribes. A warming climate will drastically affect our region's economy, quality of life, and cultural heritage.

Access challenges

As we see more extreme weather events due to the climate crisis we may see more intense storms, like those that caused major flooding in Mount Rainier National Park and the Glacier Peak Wilderness. These storms washed away entire campgrounds, bridges, and sections of road. It can take years and millions of dollars in scarce government funding to repair this damage, and in some cases, such as the Carbon River entrance to Mount Rainier, access simply isn't restored. Impaired access to public lands doesn't just impact recreationists, it reduces the ability of land managers to care for our natural landscapes.

More dangerous conditions

Traveling in the mountains could also become more perilous as our planet warms. According to the University of Washington, glaciers in the Pacific Northwest have shrunk by 27-56% over the past century, and they are increasingly fractured and treacherous to navigate. Mountaineers climb leaders are seeing the changes wrought from melting ice firsthand. The period in which glaciated peaks like Mount Rainier are climbable is shrinking, and later season trips often must navigate widening crevasses, circuitous and quickly-shifting routes, and loose rock.

Melting ice also increases the danger of rockfall in mountain environments. Cooler temperatures allow ice to essentially cement parts of the mountain together, and when summer temperatures inch up, rocks can unexpectedly come loose. Rockfall is always a hazard with climbing and scrambling, but climate change could raise the risk substantially. Warmer days in the alpine and more variable weather conditions could also mean a higher likelihood of avalanches.

Human impacts

Changes to our outdoor adventures pale in comparison to the

far greater impacts on human health and vulnerable populations across the world. The communities on the front lines of climate change - Indigenous peoples, the economically disadvantaged, and communities of color - experience the first, and often the worst effects. Native tribes in particular rely heavily on the natural environment for their culture, heritage, and livelihoods.

What can you do?

It's easy to feel overwhelmed and dispirited when faced with the realities of climate change. The climate crisis is a global, systemic, and complex problem and no one organization or individual is going to solve it. But we can all pitch in and do our part.

At the individual level, small changes like biking and carpooling, composting, and flying a little less can make a difference. Even just discussing climate change with family, friends, and fellow Mountaineers can help. As Jason Vogel, Deputy Director of the UW Climate Impacts Group said, "Making the commitment to speak loudly and often for the importance of protecting our natural wonders from climate change can go a long way toward normalizing the conversation and making people comfortable moving from 'Is it happening?' to 'What can I do about it?'"

Mountaineers and outdoor recreationists have a powerful story to tell about the impacts of climate change on wild places and our outdoor adventures, and we can be part of the groundswell of support motivating lawmakers to act. We're not climate experts, and we don't think you need to be, either. But we can use the power of our community to make this a top priority for lawmakers.

By speaking up and being part of the change we wish to see, we make it more likely that future generations of Mountaineers will be able to learn how to ice climb and experience the wonders of wild places. While their experience will inevitably be different, our actions today will shape their future - and the spectacular landscapes we cherish. ▲▲

WAYS YOU CAN MOVE THE NEEDLE

Although any one individual or organization can't stop the climate crisis, we can resolve to work together to enact change. Below are a few actions you can take:

- Reduce your carbon footprint** through individual actions like biking to work, composting, decreasing air travel, and purchasing fewer consumer items.
- Speak** with friends and family about the climate crisis.
- Advocate** for conservation and climate solutions by contacting your legislators.
- Donate** to organizations that advocate for climate-friendly policies.



A portrait of Army Ranger Travis Johnston, illustrated by Cindy Ross's son, Bryce Glatfelter.

A PATH TO HEALING

Treating combat veteran trauma in nature

By Cindy Ross, Thru-Hiker, Mountaineers Books Author, and Director of River House PA

Cindy Ross is the author of nine books, including her first, *A Woman's Journey on the Appalachian Trail*, which has been in print for nearly 40 years and has become a hiking classic. A former contributing editor for *Backpacker Magazine*, her column "Everyday Wisdom" was one of the publication's most popular features. In April 2021, Mountaineers Books published her 9th book, *Hiking Toward Peace: Veterans Healing on America's Trails*, featuring stories of veterans who have struggled with PTSD and their journeys toward healing. This article includes excerpts from her most recent book in italics.

Walking on uneven ground while navigating the wild forces your mind to constantly assess and reassess your environment. You have to watch the ground, evaluate weather, and manage your body heat and nutrition. You need to be aware of your surroundings, scanning for anything out of the ordinary or unpredictable - anticipating surprises such as wild animal encounters, approaching storms, and so much more. You function in a super-charged state, even if it might not feel like it at the time.

This hyper-engagement exercises the brain in stark contrast to a life spent indoors focused on screens and electronic devices. The latter seems to breed disorders like depression and anxiety, whereas hiking feeds both the body and the brain. For people suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), the benefits of time outside are even more profound.

Post-traumatic stress disorder can result after a terrifying event. For civilians this most often happens after a natural disaster, a serious accident, a terrorist act, a rape, or other violent personal assault. Many veterans return from combat having experienced more than one of these types of terrifying events. Symptoms of PTSD may include flashbacks, nightmares, severe anxiety, and uncontrollable thoughts. These symptoms can interfere with your ability to work due to

memory problems, lack of concentration, panic attacks, and emotional outbursts.

People with PTSD often have a difficult time assimilating into what many of us consider normal life. That's because our brains run on electricity, with different wave patterns involved in different experiences and activities. Being in nature - whether walking in a park, paddling on a lake, or going on a longer hiking trip - helps shift the brain to a relaxed, focused electrical brainwave pattern. Studies show that spending time outdoors leads to a happier, more fulfilled life. These magical places significantly decrease your body's concentration of cortisol and lower your pulse, blood pressure, and sympathetic nerve activity (the flight-or-fight response), all while increasing your parasympathetic nerve activity (the rest-and-digest response). Learning to switch into these relaxed patterns helps rewire the emotionally dysregulated PTSD brain into a calmer, more focused place - one capable of processing new learning and experiences. For some, the path to healing is a rather literal one.

An unexpected path

My husband Todd and I both know how valuable long trails are, and what gifts can be had from walking their length. I have



Fellow veterans push Gilbert's wheelchair up and down the trail. After 10 years of being in a wheelchair, Gilbert underwent surgery and alternative therapy, and is now walking, hiking, and the leader of a PTSD hiking group hosted by River House PA.

spent my whole life speaking, writing, and living long walks. Leading our small children and llamas across the entire 3,100-mile Continental Divide Trail, we witnessed firsthand how time spent in the wilds can influence and shape a life.

So while not completely out of left field, it came as a surprise to our family and friends when Todd and I created River House PA, our nonprofit designed to help veterans heal in nature. It seemed an unlikely marriage: an organization for combat vets paired with two freedom-loving, adventure-seeking, Triple Crown-hiking pacifists. Yet it made sense to us, and for seven years we've been privileged to join veterans as they fight to heal their minds and bodies.

It started back in 2013, when a group of veterans started down the Appalachian Trail (AT) on Springer Mountain, Georgia, with their eyes set on reaching Mount Katahdin in Maine over the course of six months and 2,100 miles. Prior to their trip, I was contracted to write a magazine story about the group of four. Following their progress on Facebook, I watched as they slowly made their way north, navigating the joys and perils of long-distance hiking. Their path was filled with lush forests, river crossings, cold nights, and swimming through multiple feet of snow in Georgia. As the days went on, I watched the trail slowly carve them into lean, strong legged-hikers. I found myself more and more invested in their journey.

Although I was not a member of their elite club - I had never served our country nor experienced war - we did share membership in another specialized group: the long-distance hiker. We were comrades in that sense, and at our home in Pennsylvania a little beyond the halfway point, the four vets came as guests to our hand-built log home in the woods.

A connection

I was planning to host the vets for one night, figuring they'd walk right back out of my life. But on the first morning they decided to day hike north without their fully weighted backpacks (known to thru hikers as slack-packing). At the end of the day I picked them and drove them home for another night of good rest and big meals. One day of slack-packing quickly turn into two, then three, then four. The time in nature and rest and relaxation at our home was clearly doing them good. They jumped out of a tree into the refreshing river and swam at my friend's pool. We laughed around the picnic table every night over supper, and they took turns doing dishes. They started to feel like regular family members.

When they began to trust us, they began to talk.

They shared their deeply moving stories of war and their



Top to bottom: A campfire cookout after a hike. A group of veterans take a day hike on the Appalachian Trail. Wayne Storm hiking an impressive 4 miles on crutches.

suffering. It wasn't enough to pack thirty pounds on sore knees and aching muscles; they also hauled war-induced nightmares and memories up the mountains. The trek spurred recollections of years in the service: images of dead comrades, the torment of second-guessing orders, questioning their own survival while others had perished. These thoughts haunted the veterans as they climbed. Mile after mile, though, they began to leave such thoughts behind, to deposit memories on the valley floors and ascend to greater heights of acceptance

of their lives and their service. Through hiking, these vets came to terms with much of what they saw, experienced, or may have had to do, just as they accepted nature's harsh terms of steep climbs, rocks and roots, and stormy weather. Their dark pasts began to recede, much as the mountains they summited faded into the distance. They weren't walking away from their histories; they were learning to live with them and themselves. You cannot get rid of the past, but you can learn to live with it, grow from it, and work to be free from its emotional turmoil.

As they traveled the Appalachian Trail, these veterans experienced a roller coaster of emotions. They shed tears of joy at the beauty of the world and the fate that allowed them to return home while their best friends perished. There were also tears of regret over death and the horror inflicted on fellow human beings. These emotions - survivor guilt, grief, moral injury, shame over killing fellow humans, fury and desolation that others had killed their best friends - fueled their PTSD. As the miles passed, they were able to move, oh so gradually, toward acceptance and forgiveness as they walked toward peace with each step.

Before these intimate conversations, Todd and I were clueless. We have no family members in the military. No contact with war. When these four vets opened their hearts to us, Todd and I learned of the heart-wrenching struggle of the returning veteran from war, and we wanted to do something more to help.

Since 2001, more than 2.7 million veterans have been to the war zones in Iraq and Afghanistan. According to a March 2019 annual report on national suicide prevention by the US Department of Veteran Affairs, one in five veterans have been diagnosed with PTSD. Many veterans who suffer with PTSD never seek help and have never been diagnosed. An average of seventeen veterans (the number is twenty if you include active duty and National Guard) die by suicide every day, totaling almost sixty thousand veterans since 2010. That is more than the total number of lives lost in more than eighteen years of combat in the Middle East. This is a tragedy and a failure as a nation.

These staggering numbers have forced therapists, caregivers, and researchers to think outside the box to find alternatives to traditional therapies and prescribed medications for veterans with PTSD, depression, and anxiety. One of the most innovative approaches is ecotherapy, which uses outdoor activities in nature to improve mental and physical well-being. Hundreds of studies have been conducted in the past decade or so convincing even the most skeptical that spending time in nature has healing power. Since walking is so accessible, the activity of hiking is one of the easiest ways to reap the benefits of nature's healing.

One veteran, Travis Johnston, whom I became very close with, exhibited one of the most profound changes I've witnessed after prolonged time on the trail. Travis was a Special Forces Army Ranger, serving on the most intense missions and experiencing intense trauma. Consequently, the more war trauma, the longer the path to healing. Upon reaching the AT's northern terminus on Mount Katahdin in Maine, he shared this:

"Hiking from Georgia to Maine gave me a new mission and my trail family became my new brotherhood. I learned that being completely isolated is not good for me. I need a family who is experiencing the same hardships and joys as I am, just like in the military. I also learned that I had to be patient and accept this new experience, replace those bad memories with new good ones. War is not normal but being in the woods and hiking the trail felt normal, it felt good, and it wasn't a masking agent like drugs or alcohol. Looking back now, I had been so close to dying many times. When I descended off Mount Katahdin in Maine, I didn't feel like I had just finished the AT; I felt like I was starting the rest of my life. Anything moving forward was possible."

Travis went on to complete the entire Pacific Crest Trail and the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail, earning the coveted Triple Crown of Hiking.

"The trails were a kind of beautiful bridge in my life. They helped me see things more clearly, for hiking strips away everything that doesn't matter. The trails helped me grow and set me up for the long term. Before, I could not believe that I even had a future. I simply could not envision one. I never thought that I would live this long, or even want to. Who I am today is very far from that Ranger who just arrived home from deployment."

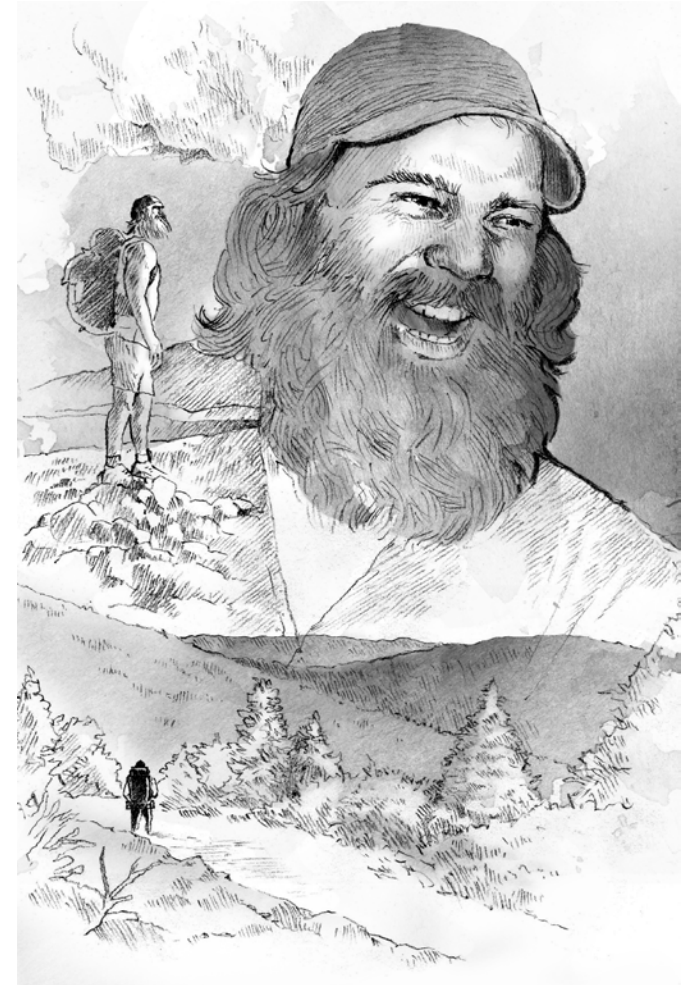
Finding peace

While a short hike in nature is beneficial, a long walk can reap even more benefits. Sometimes, more than one long hike is needed for the most tormented of souls. The Appalachian Trail can be the first five million steps to healing.

My experience with these long-distance hiking veterans inspired me to form River House PA so I could help those individuals who had already given so much of themselves. The nature-based outings we conduct are mostly hiking and paddling, but we've also been known to throw an inner tube down the river, take a bike ride on a rail trail, and even host a yoga class. In the depths of winter, we go on owl walks with local birding naturalists, attempting to call in the elusive birds. We make campfires, serve home-cooked meals, and provide a safe space for vets to experience camaraderie in the peace of the outdoors.

We often work in tandem with recreational therapists at nearby Veterans Administration health facilities. Local veteran hospitals and medical centers bring vans filled with veterans enrolled in rehab programs for PTSD, substance abuse, homelessness, or all of the above. They are accompanied by their recreational therapists, many of whom have become close friends as we work together to help the vets create a satisfying life where they can make healthy and positive choices. The easy part is experiencing how time spent in nature can make you feel so good.

Gratitude poured from the veterans' hearts - gratitude for being alive (some have attempted suicide), gratitude for coming to a place of light after so much darkness, gratitude for a second chance, gratitude for the woods and nature and the hike, and gratitude to the rec therapists for believing in nature-based therapy. Some veterans had never been in a forest before nor on a hike. They spoke of their renewed desire to climb out of the



Tommy Gathman, "The Real Hiking Viking," illustrated by Bryce Glatfelter.

dark hole, to make wiser, more healthy choices. Tears silently trickled down some of the veterans' cheeks.

At our events, we don't ask our veterans about their war memories unless they want to talk and share. We provide a welcoming place for them so that they can talk amongst themselves. When the vets come to our log home and forested property, we show them our large organic orchard and garden. We have them crank homemade ice cream. They sit around the campfire and admire the stars. All of this has the potential to culminate into tremendous peace, and for many it has.

Through the veterans' collective stories of wartime traumas and their present lives, what has become clear to me is that anyone suffering from any form of PTSD may discover the powerful comfort and healing that can be found in the outdoors. You just have to take the first step. ▲

Walking Toward Peace: Veterans Healing on America's Trails is available for purchase at our Seattle Program Center bookstore, online at mountaineersbooks.org, and everywhere books are sold.



You've been day hiking and are ready to have your first overnight in the wilderness, but you're not sure where to start. Below are a few steps to take before you go to maximize your chances of having a fun, successful trip:

Step 1: Gather Resources

Many sources of information exist to help with planning. Spend time researching where you want to go, when, and what to expect when you get there. Start with these resources:

Guidebooks: Mountaineers Books publishes many guidebooks, and you can never own too many - my shelves include more than 90, starting with my AMC White Mountain Guide purchased in 1966. Plus, Mountaineers members save 20%.

Maps: Both paper maps and mapping apps like Gaia and Caltopo can be useful sources of information, and are important resources to bring with you to ensure you don't get lost.

Public agency websites: Sites like the National Park Service website for Mount Rainier National Park include useful trail and road condition reports.

Crowd sourcing: Websites like WTA.org, Mountaineers Trip Reports, and NWHikers.net include information and recent updates from individuals who have backpacked the trail. These days you can also find information on social media. Facebook has a lot of groups that share recent conditions and trip ideas.

Step 2: Research

Once you've gathered your resources and figured out where you want to go, use them to plan your trip by considering the following factors:

Trail: What are the trail conditions like? Is it rocky, steep, brushy, or exposed? Are there any unabridged stream crossings? Do you have distance options based on possible campsites? How many feet of climbing and descending are required? Remember, hiking with a full backpack is more difficult than hiking with a daypack.

Road: How far a trailhead is from where you are and the road conditions getting there are important to keep in mind. Do you need a high-clearance or 4WD vehicle? Is the 5 miles of access road rough washboard, taking you 45 minutes to drive rather than the hoped-for 15? Are there washouts or blow downs? Knowing these things can help prevent mishaps and delays.

Location: When planning campsite locations, guidebooks are a good resource, and maps provide information on possible off-trail campsites. When figuring out where to camp, your proximity to water is important - each gallon you have to carry is an additional 8 pounds in your backpack. Also consider the views from the trail and at the campsites. Since I enjoy star viewing, I look for a campsite with a clear unobstructed view of the sky. I love to swim in alpine lakes, so swimmable lakes is another factor for me in route and campsite selection. What



Explorers hiking down Carbon River Road. Photo by Kevin Ouyoumjian.

features do you value in a campsite?

Wildlife and bugs: The presence of wildlife and bugs at your campsite can be a positive or negative experience. One of my most memorable trips was a fall trip in Olympic National Park where a nearby herd of bugling Roosevelt Elk serenaded us at night. Concerns like human-accustomed black bears or bugs are less desirable. Some areas are buggier than others, such as those campsites close to stagnant ponds. Wind may help disperse bugs, but to a large degree, you can avoid bugs by visiting at a different time of year.

Permits and quotas: Another important factor that might determine where you backpack is permits and quotas. Generally, campsite quotas are an issue in Washington only for the National Parks. Each of the three National Parks in Washington have their own, constantly-changing rules for obtaining a permit. Check their websites for the latest information, and just know that long-advance planning, applications, and luck may be required.

Step 3: Decide when to go

When you go backpacking relates to where you are going. This involves both short-term and long-term planning. An example of short-term planning is checking the weather forecast for the next weekend to see whether it will rain, snow, or be sunny. If your goal is wildflower viewing, longer term planning might include what time of year wildflowers are most spectacular.

Below are a few factors that change depending on the season:

Wildlife and bugs: Mosquitos may be worse in spring and early summer where the snow has just melted, and when temperatures exceed about 50 degrees. In alpine areas, July can be one of the worst times for mosquitoes. Hornets and yellow jackets seem to be worse later. Some animals, like elk, might be most active during their fall mating season.

Flowers, trees, and berries: Depending on location, flowers may be best in June and July. Fall colors, such as larch trees, may be best in late September or early October. Some destinations have prolific blueberries and other edible berries. The peak time varies by location, but late August and September are often a good bet.

Snow: Planning your trip around the snow level can help you avoid route-finding difficulties. In early and late season, the trails may be covered by snow, which makes navigation much more difficult.

Tides: If you're on the coast, planning around the tides is essential. Trips along the Olympic Coast may involve sections only safely travelled at low tide. For these trips, it is important to time your trip based on low tides. The Olympic National Park website has this information, be sure to check it.

Moon phase: If you're like me, you enjoy viewing stars and planets in the night sky. For optimal viewing, you'll want to pay attention to the moon phase. I select a moonless night by checking the moon phase online. If I want to snowshoe under a moonlit sky on a long winter night, I wait for a full moon.

Other Factors

Company: While beyond the scope of this article, there are other factors to consider in planning a trip. One of those is who to go with. I've learned a lot from backpacking with others over the years, but I've also learned a lot from going solo. Consider what you want out of the trip as you decide group size and companions.

Gear: Another thing to consider is what gear and clothes to take. You can find suggested packing lists online - take a look at a few and decide what your priorities are, and how much weight you can comfortably and safely carry.

Safety: It's also important to think about what to do if things go wrong. This includes first aid training, emergency notification options (such as a satellite messenger), and bail-out routes. Also equally as important are food planning, and figuring out how you're going to treat your drinking water on-trail. ▲

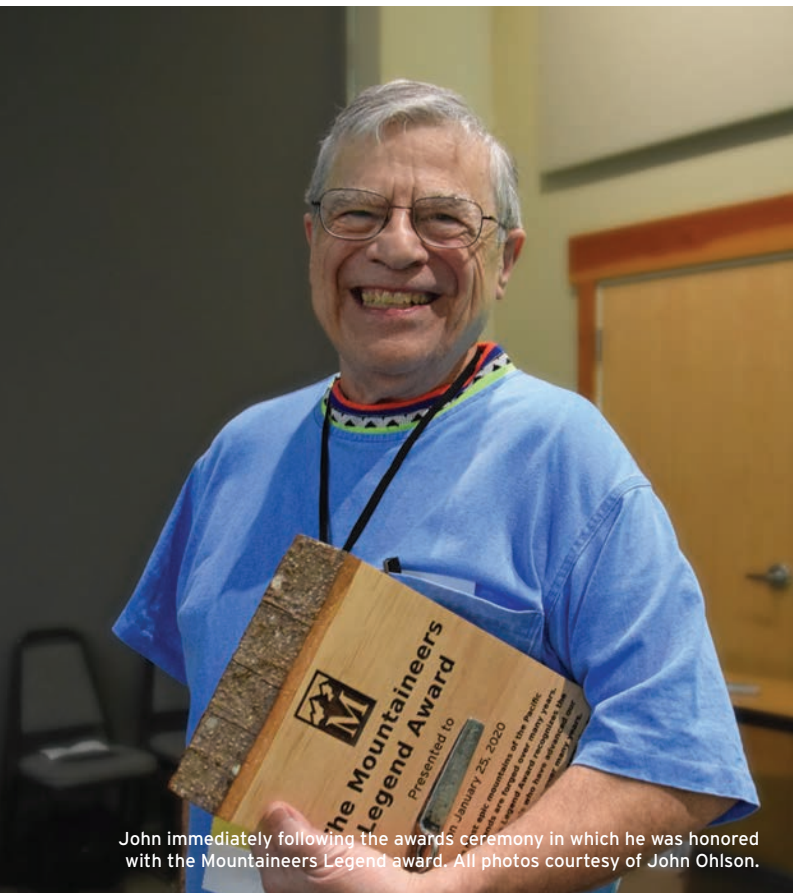
TAKE A BACKPACKING COURSE WITH US

Want to learn the finer details of everything from camp cooking to staying warm at night? Join us for one of our Intro to Backpacking courses! Offered at multiple branches, this is a great way to kick start your summer adventures. Find courses at mountaineers.org/find-courses



"Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember,
involve me and I learn."

-Benjamin Franklin



John immediately following the awards ceremony in which he was honored with the Mountaineers Legend award. All photos courtesy of John Ohlson.

A MOUNTAINEERS LEGEND

Recognizing John Ohlson

By Tiffany Ban, Communications Associate

The word “legend” often evokes tall tales, stories whose veracity is less relevant than our collective belief in the incredible. Amidst the giant lumberjacks, sea monsters, and ‘there be dragons’ marks on the map, however, there do exist flesh-and-blood legends. Their footsteps are a little smaller and their voices a little softer, but they are there, crafting history.

One individual has made such an impact on The Mountaineers. His contributions were so consequential, in fact, that as an organization we had to craft a special award just to recognize his efforts – The Mountaineers Legend Award.

While this individual was the inaugural recipient of the award in 2020, we know that in the future there will be others. The Mountaineers community attracts dedicated and passionate volunteers; people who truly make up the heart of our organization. The Legend Award recognizes those extraordinary individuals who have advanced our mission in countless, exceptional ways over the course of many years. By leading courageously, giving generously, and sharing selflessly, Mountaineers Legends inspire others to become their best selves through the transformative power of the outdoor experience.

The first recipient of The Legend Award, and the person whose contributions were the inspiration for the award’s inception, is John Ohlson. John is a Mountaineers member, Super Volunteer, and member of our Board of Directors. Had it not been for

many of John’s countless acts of service for the organization, The Mountaineers would not be what it is today.

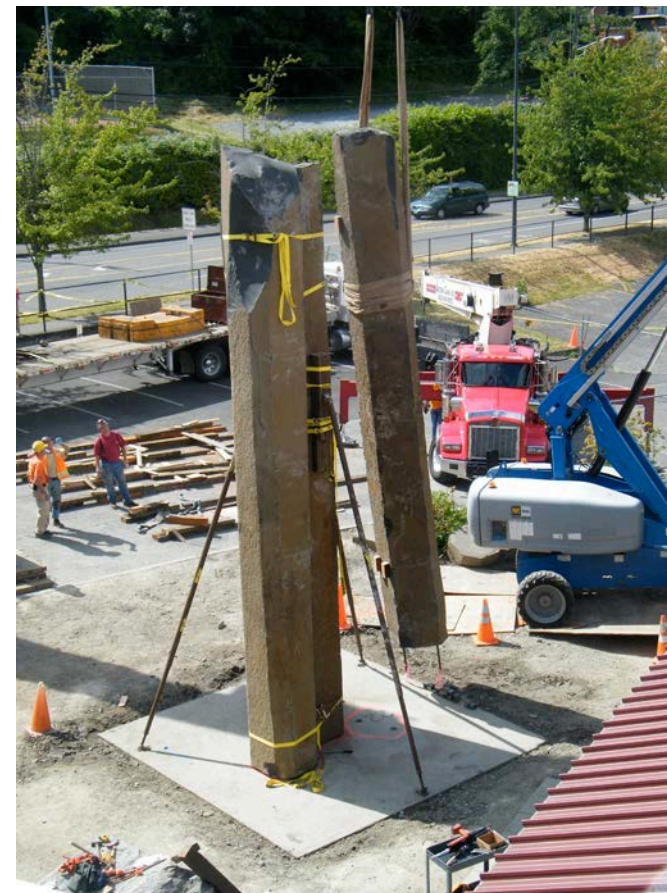
A legend in the making

John recognized his love for the outdoors as a young child when he was a Boy Scout. “I loved going out in the woods and the mountains,” he said. “I always wanted to see what was around the next corner or up the next thousand feet.”

His inquisitive nature led him to MIT and Stanford. He taught Electrical Engineering at USC and the Naval Postgraduate School as a Full Professor. He then joined a satellite communications company in Silicon Valley. “The toughest transition I ever made, hands down.” John retired at the age of 60 and climbed non-stop in the six years following his retirement before slowing a bit, ice climbing in the winter with rock and glacier trips in other seasons. He loved every minute of it.

As a young father, he shared this love of the outdoors with his children. John’s two daughters and son accompanied him on many hikes when they were young. During this time, work and fatherhood left little time for alpine pursuits, but John recalled a story that revived his love for climbing, and initiated a lifelong passion for his son.

“In the mid-80s, around the time we were doing a lot of hiking, my son David saw some ‘stuff’ in one of my closets,” John recalled. “David said, ‘What’s all this stuff?’ I said ‘Oh, that’s my old climbing gear’, and he said ‘CLIMBING GEAR? Let’s go



Basalt Columns being placed near the entrance of the Seattle Program Center.

CLIMBING!” John did make the time to take David climbing, and when he did, “he just went nuts over it. At that point, in my early 40s, I thought I was totally over-the-hill for climbing, but the bug bit him enormously, and it bit me again. I’ve been climbing on and off – mostly on – since that time.”

David went on to summit both Everest and Denali, among other notable achievements. John proudly states that his son’s climbing “has now moved far beyond any of my climbing skills.”

John’s own start in climbing originated from college fishing trips with his buddies. They’d hike to little-known mountain lakes where his friends would fish, but John couldn’t get into the fishing part. Instead, he wanted to scramble every nearby peak while his friends sat with their rods and reels. After “scaring the dickens” out of himself a few times scrambling, John decided he needed formal training and enrolled in a climbing course with the Sierra Club while he was still a graduate student at Stanford.

It wasn’t until after John retired and planned to move back to his native Washington State that he became involved with The Mountaineers. He earned his Basic Alpine Climbing equivalency while on a short visit to Seattle, completed a couple of climbs with the club, and then completed the Intermediate Alpine Climbing course while he was still living and working in California. He flew back and forth between California and Washington for lectures and field trips, completing the entire course in a year, a feat in and of itself!



Prior to opening, goats were brought in to help clear the brush around the south plaza. They also sent a few routes on the boulder on the south climbing wall while they were at it.

John says that one of the primary reasons he joined The Mountaineers was that he figured there would be a Mountaineers way of doing things, which “makes for safety in a climbing environment. If everybody knows the same skills, then if you have an accident, people are going to be rational and logical, and will know what to do. And that was true.”

The year he graduated from Intermediate Climbing he also became a climb leader, joined the Seattle Climb Committee, and became the Seattle Branch Safety Officer. In this role, he processed and investigated multiple climbing accidents over the years. Several years later, John joined our Board of Directors, serving as Secretary for a term, and has been on it ever since, an experience he has deeply enjoyed.

One man’s dedication

John Ohlson’s list of contributions to the club are truly impressive, both in what he has contributed and how long he has been paying it forward.

One of his biggest gifts to The Mountaineers was the work that he did on the Seattle Program Center (SPC). When getting the current PC ready for move-in, Gene Yore, who was the SPC Renovation Project Manager, told John that they could use some of his electrical engineering background to help route electrical utilities (power, phone and Internet) into the building.

“Gene and I, two PhDs, well outside of our comfort zones (him with an aerospace degree and me with satellite experience),



went out and mapped where all of the manholes were. We had to run cables through these to get utilities to the renovated building, and to find out where the power was currently coming from, because we had no idea,” John said with a chuckle.

When John took on the role of Building Committee Chair, he worked tirelessly to make the transition from the old Mountaineers building to the new PC as smooth as possible. He renegotiated the lease for the PC, which originally only included the upper portion of the building, and was able to get the basement included in the lease, allowing for expansion of our instruction area. In addition, because we had spent more money on the building renovation than anticipated and all the money spent on the renovation was going against our rent, there was going to be a lot of credit left at the end of the lease that would end up being lost. John and the President of the Board approached the city and renegotiated the lease to extend it 10 more years, allowing us to use up that credit. That negotiation saved many hundreds of thousands of dollars in rent for The Mountaineers.

John also had a hand in bringing all of the climbing walls in and around the PC to fruition. The walls have not only become essential to Mountaineers instruction, they also serve as gathering places for our community.

If you’ve ever climbed on the bouldering wall in the basement, the basalt columns in front of the building, or the friction slabs on the north side of the building, you’ve unknowingly reaped the benefits of John’s handiwork. In the case of the bouldering wall, you’ve come face-to-face with his handiwork in a literal sense. John lovingly hand-painted the entire thing with three coats of paint and crushed glass.

The basalt columns were actually inspired by one of John’s family trips. The Ohlsons stopped at the rock shop in Vantage on their way home from Montana and John noticed a miniature display of basalt columns. He thought, “If I could get some big ones like that, that would be really great for climbing.” He and Gene Yore got right to work on making it a reality. They hand-picked the columns from a quarry near Moses Lake, selected the spot in front of the building for erecting them, and saw to it that the columns were installed in the most stable way possible – a challenge that required a massive underground concrete slab with 16 steel pilings extending 35 feet below ground.

While many of John’s contributions can be seen, touched, and climbed on, others are less tangible but equally as important. He came up with the idea for the Intensive Basic Alpine Climbing course and taught the course for multiple years, authored and edited sections of Editions 8 and 9 of Freedom of the Hills, and set up the subtenant leases in the basement of the PC as an additional income stream for the club. He helped in the renovation of the Tacoma Program Center by serving on our Renovation Steering Committee, and has played a key role in fundraising for The Mountaineers, leading major fundraising projects and participating in others. He also signed on as a charter member of Peak Society, The Mountaineers annual giving program.

A legend is recognized

Last year, in January of 2020, Lorna Corrigan (the Board President at the time) presented John with the Legend award at The Mountaineers annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner. Today, John displays a smaller version of the award in his home in Kirkland, while the larger award adorns the Summit Room of the Program Center.

For so many of us, the COVID-19 pandemic meant canceled plans in 2020 and 2021, and this was no different for John. He and his son David had long planned their fourth climb together of Cathedral Peak in Yosemite in May of 2020 to celebrate John’s 80th birthday, but they had to cancel. Undeterred by any obstacle, vertical or viral, John forges on, thinking about the future of The Mountaineers and what will come next. You’d think that with his endless list of achievements thus far, he would take some time to kick back and enjoy the fruits of his labor. Yet John shows no signs of slowing down.

A living legend in the truest sense of the word, John Ohlson is both a servant and a leader, providing an example for us all of what deep, sustained commitment and generosity look like. We are deeply grateful for John and all that he has done, and we look forward to honoring those who will follow in his footsteps as a Mountaineers Legend. ▲▲

NON-TREKKING USES FOR TREKKING POLES

By Kristina Ciari, Membership & Communications Director
Illustrations by Emma Switzer

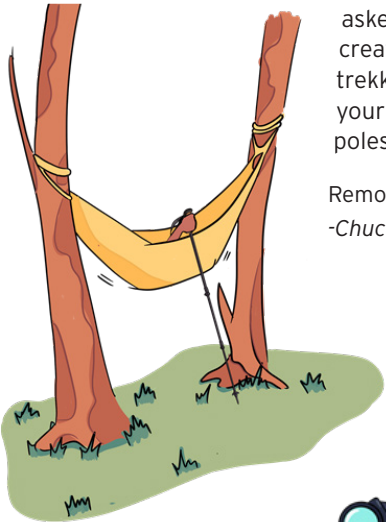
The car is locked, and the keys are inside. Having already endured a 3am start, many miles of skinning in tough conditions, and a sporty ski and hike back to the car, the disappointment at not reaching Shukan’s summit is now dwarfed by the locked car doors. Facing the prospect of hiking another 10+ miles out in ski boots, we get creative.

Imran pries the old Subaru’s rear window away from the car with an ice ax. Alexis wedges a trekking pole into the space to keep it ajar. Then, ever so gingerly, I insert an avalanche probe diagonally across the car. Poke after poke I miss, but eventually I hit the unlock button on the front passenger door. We’re in!

The manufacturers probably did not design these tools with breaking and entering in mind, but they rescued us nonetheless.

In the spirit of creativity, we asked you to share the most creative ways you’ve used your trekking poles. Here are some of your more unexpected trekking poles uses:

Removing a snake from the trail.
-Chuck Largent



I had to use my poles to drag my small backpack out from under a thick blackberry bush that an animal dragged it into while I was tent camping. Yes I know, dumb of me to leave my pack out.
- Gladys Nicely

I’ve used one for swinging myself in my hammock.
- Carrie Vallone

I removed the basket and duct-taped a hunting knife to a pole. I passed it up to a friend who was standing atop two other friends’ outstretched hands against a cliff wall in the darkness. He used it to saw through the cord suspending his food bag, while a bear laid at the top of the cliff eating the contents of another food bag he had successfully pulled up. We used that technique to save the other seven bags from the bear.
- Mike Cutcliff

Not really original, but I use them a lot to whack water off brush before I walk through, or to clear cobwebs. And sometimes, when I’m feeling troublesome, to knock water off trees onto my partner’s head.
- Jessi Loerch

A friend’s sandwich slid into a tree well and she stabbed it with her pole to retrieve it!
- Nancy Krupin

I’ve used one as a monopod for my binoculars
- Travis Christiansen



FORAYS INTO FOREST BATHING

Exploring nature one tree at a time

By Courtenay Schurman, 29-year member

Foliage on the Baker Lake Trail. Photo by Gabe Purpur.

Forest bathing, or shinrin-yoku, is a Japanese nature therapy practice to help individuals develop strong connections with nature and reap the physical and emotional benefits that this connection provides. Although its roots are far older, the modern understanding of this practice began in 1982 when the Japanese Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries instituted a national forest bathing program. Now gaining traction internationally, forest bathing is a tool that many are beginning to explore. Read on to learn about one member's experiences, and steps you can take to begin your own forest bathing journey.

Exploring forest bathing has been one of many touchstone experiences on my two-year journey towards a better life balance, deeper self-discovery, and a recovery from addictions to sugar and exercise. This Japanese practice of self-care and mindfulness involves opening your senses to all that the forest has to offer, without the need to get to the top or finish in a specific time. As a self-proclaimed doer, meditation in its many forms never held my interest until now.

In early spring 2021, I joined a small group for periodic forest bathing walks at a local park. Our leader, a woman with two-toned hair and a melodic voice, explained that our practice

over the next two hours would be to explore our five senses, let go of our worries, and return to "the world" renewed and refreshed. It sounded blissful, and although skeptical, I was curious and willing to try it.

A new experience

Our guide led us to a shady spot surrounded by trees where we formed a socially distanced circle. We were, after all, still coping with a pandemic. She instructed us to keep a soft gaze as we gently twisted to look behind us in both directions, and then looked up, familiarizing ourselves with the shapes,



Courtenay and her trail companion, Ajax, on Tiger Mountain. Photo by Grace Parker.

textures, light, colors, sensations, and sounds surrounding us. She offered us a dab of a pine-scented essential oil to help us drop into a parasympathetic "rest and digest" state. She invited us to focus our attention on something that made us happy or curious.

On my first visit, I enviously watched as several hikers made their way to the top of a distant knoll behind us. I longed to join them and explore the view from the top. But I had agreed to try something new. I squelched the "doer" urge to reach the top and stayed with the group, trusting that I'd experience something new if I gave it a solid try. Following subsequent visits, I was indeed rewarded with new insights I could apply to my daily life, my job as a coach, and my passion for writing.

During the second visit a week later, I was eager to see what else I could learn. I realized something inside me had already shifted when we repeated the first exercise. As I leaned against a peeling red-bark tree I dubbed Magic Madrone, I mulled over my upcoming surgery for removal of a basal cell carcinoma. I pictured myself free of cancerous cells, summoning the tree's strength to confront the challenges ahead.

At the dermatologist four days later, as the local anesthesia containing epinephrine caused my heart rate to spike, I imagined the feel and smell of the mossy branches to manage my escalating pulse. I was delighted to realize my short foray into forest bathing was already making a difference.

Arboreal friends

Our guide gave us another invitation for exploration: find a "non-human being" to study up close.

I wandered through the forest feeling moss and bark on trees until I spotted a large Douglas fir with deeply grooved bark and sturdy bare branches at the very top, much like I imagined its root ball extending beneath my feet. Unlike all the younger trees with thin branches that danced in the breeze, this one stood stoically with an air of mystery, like a wise grandparent.

For some reason, the name Beatrice popped into my head, but it felt wrong to give a tree a human name. I didn't know anything about this beautiful tree other than it spoke volumes without saying a word. Beatrice quickly morphed into Be-a-tree.

Befriending Be-a-tree and Magic Madrone felt both odd and compelling. On subsequent visits, I knew exactly where both stood and how to identify them, and I made sure to send both trees a friendly hello. So much of my three decades of hiking experience has been about getting to the top on tried-and-true paths. This was different, and it was delightful.

Tasting the forest

The sense that is most under-utilized during forest bathing is, understandably, taste. Our guide introduced us to several ways to explore it. As we strolled into the forest, she taught us how to gently harvest tiny boughs of cedar (toward the trunk, so we wouldn't damage the branch) to fill our noses with their scent and, later, sip tea she steeped from fresh fronds. At the end of each day, we enjoyed a small pouch of freeze-dried blackberries, a square of organic pure 100% cacao, and a couple ounces of cedar tea. All treats harvested from non-human friends.

Reflection

Our final experience on each visit was to find several mementos from the forest floor to place on a centerpiece as a symbol of our time in the woods. Trusting that something would draw my attention, I strolled along a dry streambed. On a flat boulder, I left two half maple seeds as eyes with a round pebble as a nose



Blueberries found on a Mountaineers Youth trip. Photo by Mountaineers Summer Camp staff.



A hiker enjoying a stately old cedar tree. Photo by Mike Short.

and a bit of moss as a smile. I brought back a plain, worn, round pebble and an angular, layered, moss-covered rock.

I thought about Magic Madrone, Be-A-tree, a cawing raven that flew overhead, and an Anna’s hummingbird that visited me during one of our exercises. I reflected on my own journey during the past two years and how much I’ve changed, free from sugar, exercise addiction, and skin cancer.

When it was my turn to share, I said the round pebble signifies the “go-go-go” me, before forest bathing. Eroded, worn-out, smoothed over. The moss-covered rock, on the other hand, has roots and presence. It’s not afraid to sit and be what it is. Both belong in nature, just as the “doer” and the “thinker” reside within me, but on this day, I recognize the mossy rock as a more authentic symbol of who I am becoming: a dendrophile.

Forest Bathing Activities

Eager to dip your toes into forest bathing? Try one of these activities to slow down and tune into the sights, sounds, smells, and more around you.

Crossing the threshold: For your first visit, set aside 15 or 20 minutes and find a forest or tree-rich park to walk through with no objective other than to engage all of your senses and pay attention. Choose something to mark your entrance into and exit from the woods, such as walking across crunchy gravel, circling or hugging a particular tree, or opening and closing a gate. As you enter the forest, set your intention to become childlike again, much like discovering the forest for the very first time. You are!

Gentle gaze: As you head into the forest, see if you can expand your peripheral vision or awareness beyond the “tunnel vision” we get used to from extended screen time. Shift your eyes ten to fifteen times left and right, as far as you can without moving

your head. Then look up into the canopy and beyond the highest branch. When you look down again, stretch your gaze as far into the forest as possible. Bring your attention back to an object within several inches of you. Now, try “seeing” all that you spotted at once. How long can you maintain this “gentle gaze?”

Sit spot: Find a place you can sit quietly for five minutes. What sounds can you hear from your spot? What happens to your breath, to your muscles, to your thoughts as you listen? How do the sounds make you feel? Can you distinguish between how manmade and natural sounds affect your body? If you participate with a friend, at the end of your exercise, share what each of you noticed.

Sink into smells: Get up close and personal with an object of interest such as a cedar tree, a branch covered in moss, a flower, or a muddy riverbank. What smells in the forest appeal to you and why? Do they remind you of anything in your past? Do they evoke any other sensations or emotions for you?

Color cues: While you’re in the woods, close your eyes and turn directly toward the sun, then imagine whatever color you like as vividly as you can. Turn from the sun and when you open your eyes, see if you can spot something of that color. Try this from the same spot, with three or four colors. If you can’t find anything of a certain color, go on a “color hunt” to try to find it.

Found object: To engage your sense of touch, pick up something that speaks to you, such as a round pebble, a whole pinecone, or a fallen piece of bark or lichen. Carry it with you as you wander. What appeals to you about that object? Is it the weight, texture, or temperature? Can you connect it to your current stresses in “the real world” and find peace, strength, joy, or comfort from it? If you like, place it in a memorable spot near your chosen threshold, and see if it’s still there when you return on your next visit. ▲▲

pack (think food!) and get progressively longer and lighter as you go. If you are planning on going on a week-long backpack, for example, your simulation may involve carrying the heaviest weight on day one (anywhere from 30-50 pounds, depending on duration) for the length and elevation gain of the hardest day (6-8 miles, 3,000’ gain). Then on day two, carry slightly less weight (25-45 pounds) but cover even more distance (8-10 miles). These are merely meant to be examples - infinite trip possibilities are available to you.

Recovery

Schedule one or two rest days after any back-to-back. This might mean doing some stretching, light walking, yoga, Tai Chi, flat biking, or gentle laps in a pool. Soaking in a hot tub or contrast bathing (i.e. alternating hot/cold water in a shower) can also help speed recovery. After strenuous outings where your body has been taxed for multiple hours, under heavy weight, and without recovery, rest becomes crucial so that you can continue to progress with your program. For the rest of the week, ease back into your training with lighter workouts. In the second and third weeks following a back-to-back, you can ramp back up to your higher intensity training, targeting any areas in your program that still need development.

Increase stamina

Strength workouts during the last 2-6 weeks before your trip should focus on increasing overall stamina by involving exercises with higher repetitions and lighter weight. Circuit training is a good way to build stamina. Such training involves performing an exercise for 30-60 seconds, or for 15-25 repetitions, with 10-15 seconds of rest between sets. If you have been doing hour-long strength workouts by this point, try doing a circuit for 30-45 minutes consisting of eight to twelve exercises, once or twice a week.

Interval training

If you plan to travel at altitude, if you need additional metabolic conditioning for weight management, or if you need to develop speed, consider adding interval training once or twice per week. A mid-week stair-climbing or hill climbing workout with a pack, anywhere from 30-60 minutes, is a great way to increase your time with a pack while also building leg and core strength.

Troubleshooting your program

By examining your performance on your first back-to-back, you can figure out where you may need to modify your program. If you struggle with heavier pack weight, be sure you’re hiking with a loaded pack twice per week. If you can’t hike that often outside, carry your pack on local walks, hills, or stairs, or indoors on a stair machine, incline treadmill, or elliptical trainer.

If you experience sore knees or hips, make sure you have not added too much weight too quickly. The body can adapt to loads <10% gain per week; more than that and it’s likely you’ll get sore. Stretching may also help.

If you get sore on one side of the body, try redistributing the weight in your pack so that both sides of your spine and both

hips carry even weight. If you find yourself fumbling with your equipment, or if something you took on your first simulated trip doesn’t work right, you have time to adjust your gear so that it performs the way you want. If you feel great after your first back-to-back, then keep doing what you’re doing!

Taper

I suggest five days of tapering before a two-day trip, or ten days before longer overnight trips. Properly executed, tapers allow your muscles, tendons, and ligaments to recover from all of your training so that your body becomes supercharged - almost antsy in its readiness to perform. Training hard right up to the day before your trip may result in sub-par performance or muscle strain on your trip. Rest is equally important as work at this stage, so allow yourself several days of relaxation before you hit the trail. ▲▲

With proper training and tapering, you have given yourself every opportunity to succeed on your trip. Hopefully the weather will cooperate, and your trip partners will be as well-prepared as you are. I'd love to hear how Peak Performance tips have helped you, so if you care to share your success story, or if you have questions about your training program, please send an email to court@bodyresults.com.

TEN DAY TAPER

Try out this ten day taper before your long backcountry trip. Only going for a weekend? Start off at day 5 and work your way to 0.

Day 10: Last hard-effort interval workout

Day 9: Last endurance workout

Day 8: Last hard-effort strength workout

Day 7: Last hike, carrying half of your anticipated max trip weight

Day 6: Off

Day 5: Last interval workout, with half the pack weight of your hardest interval workout

Day 4: Last strength workout at half effort, 1-2 sets for each exercise

Day 3: Off

Day 2: Light, short aerobic training at a conversational pace

Day 1: Off

Day 0: Start your trip!



How to Plan the Best Hike Ever

Or at least a pretty darn good one

By Craig Romano, Mountaineers Books Guidebook Author

Hiker Ted Evans enjoys a beautiful sunset at Blue Lake from his campsite. Photos courtesy of Craig Romano.

I've been hiking and backpacking for more than 40 years now. Along the way I've learned a few things from research, the guidance of others, the trials of my own errors, and random luck. It's not only helped make me a successful guidebook author, but a confident hiker, backpacker, and trail runner. Below are a few of my hard-earned, trail-tested tips on how to have a pretty darn good hiking adventure.

Seek trusted sources

Start with planning. Sure, spontaneous can be fun - but it can also be a waste of time, a big disappointment, or a disaster. As a result always research, and always consult trusted sources. I seek out information from respected guidebook authors, knowledgeable seasoned hikers, and experienced backcountry rangers.

Aside from good guidebooks, I also consult experts from area hiking groups and clubs. I visit the official websites of the managing agencies for the trails I'm interested in checking out. And I purchase and study real maps! I rely on maps from respected sources like Green Trails and the Appalachian Mountain Club, not crowd-sourced map apps which are often

rife with errors and misinformation including unofficial trails, routes, and paths through private lands.

Rules and regulations

In my pre-hike fact finding missions, I gather information on fees and permits needed. I annually buy both a Discover Pass and an America the Beautiful Pass, which gets me into every national park and wildlife refuge, and allows me to park at national forest trailheads from coast to coast. But when visiting other states' parks or national and provincial parks in Canada, I like to know ahead of time what passes are needed, how to get them, and if I should get an annual rather than a daily pass.

I also consult my trusted sources for seasonal closures and rules and regulations. Hikers with dogs will want to pay close attention to those rules related to their four-legged companions. Overnighters will want to know all of the special rules pertaining to backpacking. Check for quotas and park closing info, too. You don't want to be turned away because you arrived too late - or forced to spend the night in the parking lot behind a locked gate because you came back to the trailhead too late! And be aware of whether the place you're planning

on hiking was recently impacted by a big weather event like a forest fire, flood, or hurricane, as you can expect there will be some trail damage and closures.

Weather

Learn the weather patterns of where you want to hike. The Northwest is full of micro-climates and rain shadows. Get to know them and you might have yourself a dry hike while others wallow in the rain! There are some excellent books on local weather (Jeff Renner's are must reads), and excellent weather websites - MountainForecast.com is among my favorites.

Shoes and clothing

Dress for the occasion! When it comes to footwear, I make no recommendations. Everyone is different and will need to figure out what works best for them. Some hikers prefer trail running shoes while others need more support with a rigid high top shoe. Always test shoes before your hike - this goes for other clothing items and gear too. Make sure the stove works before you're 20 miles deep into the wilderness. New to hiking and backpacking? Tag along with some seasoned pros before you branch out on your own to help you learn techniques and gear tips on the trail. But whatever you do, don't short yourself when it comes to performance and high-quality gear. You do not need to go top-of-the-line, but good quality gear and clothing will last you. Years ago lightweight and durable cost a small fortune. This is no longer the case.

Food

I always pack enough food so that I finish the hike with food in my pack. No, I don't want to munch on granola bars on the ride home (cheeseburgers and burritos will do, thank you!). I just want to have an adequate food supply if I need it on the trail - especially if I'm forced to spend the night out.

When I'm on a long hike, I find that grazing is the best way to go. The constant caloric intake keeps me humming along without blood sugar spikes or bonks. I always pack a few emergency performance snacks for a pick me up, and my 11th essential is chocolate-covered espresso beans. Also consider learning what you can eat on the trail. There are some great guides on edible plants (Pacific Northwest Foraging by Douglas Deur is a good start). Besides making some truly organic salads and fruit cups in the backcountry, some of these plants just might get you through an emergency.

Gear

I pack light but not ultra-light, and I try to have it so that some of my items serve two purposes. Camp shoes are also river crossing shoes (croc's are a popular choice). Trekking poles can be used as a tarp support. I always have rain gear, sunglasses, and sunscreen in my pack. Count on confronting showers and glare on many of your hikes. I also bring a roll of duct tape, some safety pins, and extra straps. You can do a lot of gear fixing and rigging with that combination.

A few other things that I find are super handy include a collapsible water bucket for my overnight trips. This makes water hauling easy, and with the bucket I only need to make



Craig Romano at High Pass in the Glacier Peak Wilderness during one of his best backpacking adventures ever.

one trip. Re-sealable plastic bags are also great to have in a pack. And who needs to worry about batteries going dead with a solar-powered camp light?

Get creative

I enjoy the company of others but I eschew crowds. Social distancing was my specialty well before Covid-19 disrupted our lives and sent everyone heading to the hills. My best hikes and time outdoors are away from crowded places. I have written ad nauseum about how to find the trail less traveled. And my books are loaded with excellent trails that the Instagram masses just aren't interested in—but you'll be.

Finally, look for golden opportunities and seize them. During the no-snow, low-rainfall year of 2015, I made it a point to hit just about every trail in the Olympics that required a river ford. During that year fording the Queets was never so easy. During a recent wildfire episode that left most of western Washington cloaked in smoke, I studied some weather maps that showed the smoke was staying below 4,000 feet. So I took a chance and drove to Artist Point, where I found clear blue skies and a mostly empty parking lot. My family and I had Table Mountain all to ourselves. Road washouts can also be a blessing for an excellent adventure. I have mountain biked past washouts to trails void of hikers. Take advantage of hiking a popular trail without the crowds!

It really is all about the journey, not the destination. I find that every moment I'm on the trail beats being cooped up inside, tethered to a screen, and going through the motions in the "civilized" world. I hope these tips help you find similar solace. Happy hiking! ▲▲

Craig Romano is an award winning author who has written more than 25 books including Backpacking Washington 2nd edition, Urban Trails Vancouver WA, and 100 Classic Hikes Washington (Mountaineers Books).

Hidden but not Forgotten

A portrait of Edmund Meany

By Tiffany Ban, Communications Associate



George Rogers picking up the portrait of Edmund Meany from our Program Center.

In 1953, George Rogers stood atop the stunning Mount Olympus with a group of fellow climbers from The Mountaineers. At the time George knew his family history was deeply intertwined with the club, but he had no idea just how much until, 67 years later, he saw a Retro Rewind piece in Mountaineer magazine entitled “An Olympic Summer, 100 Years Ago.” A sentence caught his eye - “The most summits by a single member was eight, completed by Phillip Rogers, Jr.” His first thought was, “Could that be my dad?”

He started digging. He wanted to find out just how deep his family ties were to The Mountaineers.

George reached out to Lowell Skoog, the Chair of The Mountaineers History Committee. Lowell mentioned The Mountaineers, A History by Jim Kjeldsen and sent him a link to The Mountaineer Annuals, released from 1907 through 1994. George was delighted with the wealth of information. As it turns out, the Phillip Jr. that stood on top of eight peaks in 1920 was George's father. Not only that, his maternal grandfather George Wright was chairman of the outing, accompanied by his daughters Elizabeth and Annah, the latter of whom would one day be George's mother. George's paternal grandfather had also attended a summer outing in 1915, cementing a family legacy of Mountaineers involvement on both sides.

How George's father and paternal grandfather became involved with The Mountaineers is still a mystery, as both Phillip Jr. and Phillip Sr. were living in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He may never

know how his father's side connected with the organization, but he likes to believe this fated trip led to his very existence. To put it another way, the climb was destiny.

A family of Mountaineers

Raised in Milwaukee, George's dad Phillip Meinhardt Rogers (Phillip Jr.) attended the University of Wisconsin before continuing on to Yale Medical School. Following his academic success, he was ready for a new adventure - and he longed for it to be in the Pacific Northwest. Hoping to deter him, his father Phillip Sr. convinced the Dean at Yale to talk with his son. The Dean reported back that Philip Jr. “could have any position he wants on the east coast, but he is determined to go out to the ‘boonies of the northwest.’” He had fallen in love on that 1920 trip, and there was no going back.

Phillip Jr. made the move and soon officially joined The Mountaineers. He was a member of our 1922 annual trip, which was slated to go to Mount Adams, Mount St. Helens, and the Goat Rocks region. Once again, he was able to convince his father Phillip Sr., as well as his sister, to join in the fun. Everyone had a grand time exploring the Pacific Northwest.

As fate would have it, George's mother, Annah was also on the 1922 trip with her sister and father, George Wright. One can only imagine what happened next, but suffice to say Phillip Jr. met Annah again on that trip and they were married four years later, in 1926. Phillip Jr. continued to work as a doctor and satisfied



George E. Wright, George Roger's grandfather and namesake.

his love for the outdoors as a ranger at the Dosewallips Ranger Station for several summers. Born and raised in Seattle, Annah was a gifted artist and graduate of the Chicago Art Institute, often painting and drawing as her children grew.

In 1932, Annah was presented with a unique opportunity to apply her creative talents. The Mountaineers hoped to have a portrait painted of long-time president, Edmund Meany, who was also an esteemed professor of botany and history at the University of Washington.

According to a 1936 Seattle Times article about the painting, Professor Meany didn't have time to sit for a portrait, so Annah attended his classes at UW for two months to sketch him while he taught. “She was so taken by him,” George said of his mother's admiration for Professor Meany.

Annah showed her sketches to the professor, who then agreed to sit for her so she could paint a proper portrait. She even wrote a poem about Professor Meany to accompany the portrait.

Edmund Meany died just a few years after the painting was completed in 1932. For many years the portrait of the white-bearded professor hung in The Mountaineers in Lower Queen Anne, quietly surveying the old clubhouse.

A lasting legacy

George never got to see his mother's famous painting as a youth. However, he did have the joy of spending time at

Mountaineers facilities. He skied at Meany lodge and frequently saw plays at the Kitsap Forest Theater. He went to Wisconsin in 1954 to finish high school before attending college and joining the Marine Air Corps. When he finished his military service in 1964 he became a pilot for Pan Am, spending the latter half of his career as a Boeing 747 Captain. He finally returned to the Northwest in 1995, and only then did George see his mother's painting for the first time.

Several years ago, George and his wife were at The Mountaineers Seattle Program Center and he realized he didn't see Professor Meany hanging anywhere. When he inquired about his whereabouts, he learned the painting was sitting in the basement in storage, where it had been since The Mountaineers moved from Lower Queen Anne to Magnuson Park. He thought it a shame that the painting wasn't being displayed anywhere, so he asked The Mountaineers if he could try to find another home for it.

He contacted the University of Washington to see if they might like to hang it in Meany Hall, and searched for Meany's kin. No one wanted it. The Mountaineers Meany Lodge also crossed George's mind as a suitable place, as it's named after Professor Meany and because George had skied there in his formative years. He was, however, concerned that the temperature and humidity fluctuations at the lodge wouldn't be good for the artwork.

Into a new home

That's when George was contacted by our Meany Lodge historian and committee member Matt Simerson. Matt said he would build a protective box for the painting so it could be safely hung in the lodge.

“I think it's a good solution, and I think it'll hold up well,” George said. “I want it be up somewhere, and that's a good place.” He emphasized his gratitude to Matt Simerson and Lowell Skoog for offering the resources that allowed him to research his family's history in The Mountaineers, and for helping to place his mother's painting back into the public view, where it belongs.

If you visit Meany Lodge after this summer, you will likely be able to see the portrait that Annah Wright Rogers lovingly painted of Professor Meany. George is grateful to The Mountaineers historians for helping him dig into his family's past, but we are equally grateful to George for sharing this piece of his family's history, and Mountaineers history, with our community. ▲

Interested in discovering your own family history? Published from 1907-1994, *The Mountaineer Annual* is a yearly snapshot of our explorations and achievements. Learn more at: mountaineers.org/the-mountaineer-annuals

Sources

Author Unknown. “Anna [sic] W. Rogers Tells of Making Meany Painting” The Seattle Times, 19 April 1936. (Sourced from the newly-released Seattle Times Archive, dating back to 1895)

Kjeldsen, Jim. The Mountaineers: A History, Mountaineers Books, 30 September 1998.



Across the Andes in the “Other Patagonia”

By Cheryl Talbert, Global Adventures Leader

Sunset over Cerro Tronador from the Otto Meiling Hut. Photo by Cheryl Talbert.

The last brilliant fuchsia tones faded away from the slopes of Cerro Tronador as we looked across the deep chasm of the Rio Alerce. We were perched on the porch of the Otto Meiling Hut, and the 3,470m mountain (translated to “The Thunderer”) was the seventh stop on our nine-day trek.

Our Mountaineers Global Adventures group was traversing the northern Patagonian Andes, beginning in Bariloche, Argentina. Backpacking across the granite balds and craggy crystalline peaks of Nahuel Huapi National Park, the largest and oldest national park in Argentina, in two days’ time we would be connecting to a ferry along a string of enormous montane lakes that would carry us nearly all the way to the west coast of Chile. While most international trekkers think of the far south and Torres del Paine when they hear mention of Patagonia, many guides and hardy backpackers have told me that their favorite spots in the region are in this northern Patagonian park, part of the aptly-named Lakes Districts of Argentina and Chile. So far our route had brought us wild and lonely lakeside camps, high ridge traverses, 360-degree views of lakes and peaks, stays at a few of the park’s cozy huts that offered food, libations, and comfy communal bunk rooms, and camaraderie with other intrepid explorers.

At the Meiling Hut we were treated to the tradition of sharing yerba mate, a somewhat bitter, grassy tasting leaf said to have pre-Colombian origins. The tradition, deeply anchored in Argentine culture, is a communal activity in which the participants sit in a circle and one person, the server or cebador, prepares the drink by packing mate leaves into a gourd and adding hot water, passing the vessel around the

circle to the right. One finds out quickly that you never move the bombilla, you take your sip efficiently and don’t hog the gourd, and perish the thought that you might misunderstand and walk away with the gourd thinking that it was made just for you! We found the mate ceremony everywhere we went in Patagonia, among young and old, the grizzled greybeards and the dreadlocked backpackers, in the high huts and on the posh streets of Buenos Aires. To be invited to participate in the mate tradition (and to feel enough mastery to avoid a serious mate faux pas) is to feel that you belong here.

Upon leaving Cerro Tronador we crossed a flat glacier, descended a cirque gushing with waterfalls, and crossed a knife-edge ridge to our last night’s hut, Refugio Agostino Rocca. After our stay we steeply descended along Rio Frias through the ancient moss-draped forests of Alerce (also called Patagonian Cypress, which can grow to be some of the oldest and largest trees on earth), before arriving at Lago Frias. From there, some in our group took a ferry-bus combo across two lakes to return to Bariloche, and others chose to carry on into Chile to hike its volcanoes, explore a granite canyon, and enjoy great wine and seafood. On our ferryboat we passed perfectly conical volcanoes reflecting up at us from the deep blue lakes. Nestled in the mountains and crystalline waters of what felt like paradise, we couldn’t help but wonder what the next day would hold. ▲▲

Join Cheryl Talbert as she brings our Global Adventures program back to Patagonia on two back-to-back trips held in February and March of 2022. You will be backpacking and hut-hopping from Bariloche to Tronador in Argentina before completing your Andes crossing, then day hiking among some of the loveliest lakes, volcanoes, and hot springs of Chilean Patagonia! Learn more at mountaineers.org/globaladventures.

Summer Book Sale

July 1–30, 2021

- 25% off all books and maps
- 35% off all book bundles
- 40% off all logo merchandise

The Mountaineers Bookstore
Mon-Fri 9am-5pm
7700 Sand Point Way NE
Seattle, WA 98115
206-521-6001



Image by J.K. Rockett

CREATE YOUR LEGACY WITH THE MOUNTAINEERS AND MOUNTAINEERS BOOKS

Plan Your Beneficiaries Today

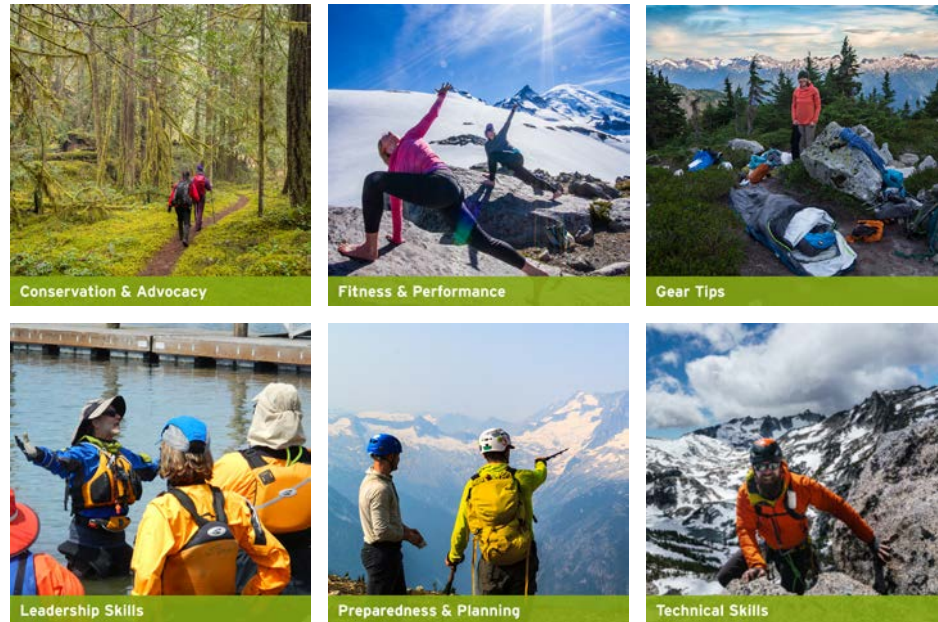
No matter your age, you have the power to make a lasting statement about what matters most to you. If you prefer the flexibility and ease that beneficiary designations offered through IRAs, 401(k)s, pensions, and life insurances provide, you can plan for the future of outdoor education in three easy steps:

- 1 Request a beneficiary designation form from your plan administrator, insurance agent, or bank representative, or simply download a form from your provider’s website.
- 2 Name The Mountaineers, include Tax ID 27-3009280, and identify the gift percentage. Sign, date, and return the form to your administrator.
- 3 Let us know! We want to ensure that your charitable intent is carried out. Call Brianne Vanderlinden at 206-521-6006 or email briv@mountaineres.org.

If you’d like to learn more about beneficiary designations or other ways you can leave a lasting impact, we have a new online resource for members just like you. Visit mountaineers.planmylegacy.org for easy-to-use toolkits and other resources to help you plan the management of your personal estate.

Virtual Education Center and Calendar

We're excited to invite you to check out our new Virtual Education Center and Calendar, your home base for accessing all of our great virtual learning tools! Find activities, events, and classes held online and browse our educational resources for skills and more.



How to Get Involved

Step 1: Visit mountaineers.org/courses/virtual-education-center

This is your first stop to find everything you need for outdoor education and exploration.

Step 2: Choose what you want to learn

There's so much to explore! With a wide range of topics - from leadership tips to how to coil a rope - there's something for everyone. We also have a special 'Just for Fun' section if you need a laugh.

Step 3: Decide what kind of learning experience you want to have

Would you prefer to read a blog or complete an online course? What about attending a live webinar with an open discussion? We offer multiple educational formats to choose from so that everyone can find what works for them.

14

Online Courses

What You'll Find

100+

Educational Blogs

29

Virtual Events & Activities

How to Sign Up for Activities

Step 1

Visit our website

www.mountaineers.org
Click on the big green 'Find Activities' button, or hover over the 'Activities' tab and choose 'Find Activities'.

Step 2

Filter your activity search

Define your search using the filter options in the green column on the left. To view activities by location, choose 'Map' in the upper right.

Step 3

Select an activity & register

Click on the activity of your interest to learn more. If you like what you see, select the orange 'Register' button. You'll be added to the trip roster and receive a confirmation email.

*Note: Activities **require registration** unless otherwise noted. You will also need a current waiver on file with The Mountaineers to participate.*

How to Sign Up for Events

Step 1

Visit our website

www.mountaineers.org
Click on the 'Upcoming Events' button on the left of the main page, or click 'More' and choose the 'Events' tab.

Step 2

Browse for local events

Scroll down to view our most popular events, or choose a branch or program center calendar for more events in your area. Browse through your options, and click on an event to learn more.

Step 3

Select an event & register

Many events are free but require you to RSVP via the orange RSVP button. Events that require tickets will have a link for online ticket purchases.

Frequently Asked Questions

What if I'm not a member? Many of our activities - especially day hikes and urban adventures - are open to the general public. You simply need to sign up for a guest membership at www.mountaineers.org/join. Guests can participate in two activities for free before joining.

What are some easy ways to get started? Sign up for an activity without prerequisites. These includes day hikes, backpacking trips, stewardship activities, photography outings, and occasional sailing opportunities! Also, consider taking a basic or introductory course like Basic Snowshoeing, Introduction to Rock Climbing, Navigation, and much, much more! Visit www.mountaineers.org/courses to see what's currently available.

How are events and activities different? Activities are primarily daylong outings that require participants to use skills in an outdoor setting. Examples include hikes, naturalist walks, or snowshoeing - in short, you are outside doing something. Events are open to the community, and are primarily opportunities to see presentations and socialize. Examples include summer picnics, branch banquets, and our BeWild speaker series.

What if I don't meet the prerequisites for an activity? Some of our technical activities, like climbing and kayaking, have prerequisite skill requirements. If you want to learn the prerequisite skills, we encourage you to take one of our courses. If you already have the prerequisite skills, you might qualify for equivalency. Email info@mountaineers.org and we will help you apply for equivalency so you can participate at the appropriate skill level.

Why do some activities say 'Leader Permission Required'? All of our Mountaineers activities are led by volunteers. To assure everyone on a trip has a set of specific skills, some volunteers require you to contact them in advance to participate. Before signing up for a trip that requires leader permission, please contact the leader by clicking on their name in the course/activity listing and sending them an email. You can always email our member services team with questions at info@mountaineers.org.

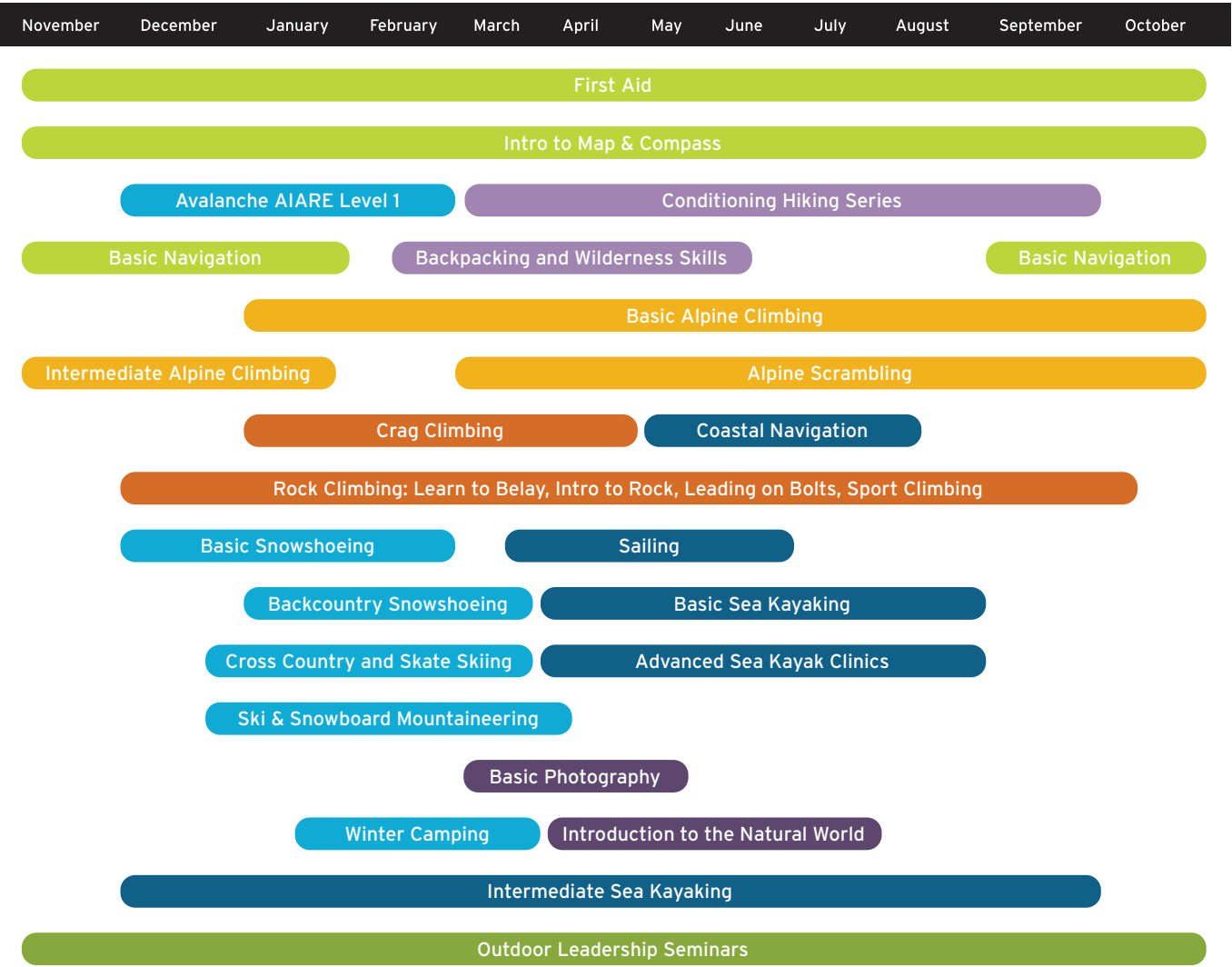
What if the activity is full? Sign up for the waitlist! Yes, it works. We have roughly a 10-20% drop-out rate in courses and activities, so spots often become available.



The Mountaineers Course Overview

The Mountaineers is a volunteer-led community built around sharing knowledge and skills to safely recreate outdoors. We offer courses every season and some all year round. The same course may be offered by multiple branches, and you can take a course with any branch. Exploring our clinics and seminars is also a great way to refine or expand your existing skills. Practice skills taught in our courses, learn about new techniques or gear, and explore new possibilities within our organization, like becoming an activity leader. Our clinics and seminars are often open to both our membership and the general public.

To learn when our courses are coming, take a look at our course calendar:



You can access all of our offerings online, with up-to-date information on subject matter, materials, and rosters. If you already have the skills covered by one of our introductory courses and want to participate in that type of activity, contact member services at info@mountaineers.org to find out how to qualify for equivalency. To see our courses, visit www.mountaineers.org. We hope to see you outside!

Due to COVID-19 risks, access to our lodges is extremely limited. Please visit our lodge webpages and mountaineers.org/covid19 for more details.

Open to Mountaineers members and the general public, our lodges provide visitors with unparalleled access to skiing, snowshoeing, hiking, and more. The Mountaineers is also home to the Kitsap Forest Theater, a historic outdoor theater showcasing two musical productions a year which are open to the public and a family favorite.

LODGE WEBPAGES Information about schedules, availability, meals, group rentals, and special events can all be found on the lodge webpages. You can also book your stay online. To access our lodge webpages, visit the direct links listed below or go to mountaineers.org, click on 'More' in the top menu, and then click on 'Locations & Lodges' in the dropdown menu.

VOLUNTEER Our lodges and the Kitsap Forest Theater are run by dedicated volunteers, and they can use your help! Visit their webpages to learn how you can contribute to the teams that keep our outdoor centers running.



Baker Lodge
mountaineers.org/bakerlodge

Our rustic Mt. Baker Lodge is nestled in the spectacular North Cascades and is a beautiful getaway all year round. The lodge is located within walking distance of the Mt. Baker ski area and numerous summer and fall hiking trails. We are closed to general booking during COVID-19 measures, but may be available for single-purpose groups. Please direct inquiries to mtbakerlodge@gmail.com or lodge chairs.



Meany Lodge
mountaineers.org/meanylodge

Meany Lodge operates a rope-tow on our ski hill for ski lessons, cross-country skiing, and snowshoe excursions. This year Meany Lodge will be most enjoyed by those happy to spend the day outside, with bathroom access only and no overnight stays. Visit our webpage to sign up for an upcoming work party.



Stevens Lodge
mountaineers.org/stevenslodge

Nestled near the Stevens Pass ski area, this rustic ski-in/ski-out lodge is open to PCT thru-hikers and mountain bikers in the fall, and skiers in the winter. Tired of the hustle and bustle of the big city? Come for a quiet respite to a cabin in the woods, with bunks for the whole family. Several trails are a short walk or drive from the lodge.



Kitsap Forest Theater
foresttheater.com

Theater inspired by a magical place! Join us for a grand adventure as you stroll down the forested trail to our breathtaking theater and create a treasured family tradition. The show must go on!

We are excited to present *Little Women*, *The Broadway Musical* throughout the summer. This timeless, captivating story is brought to life in this glorious musical filled with personal discovery, heartache, hope, and everlasting love. Shows are at 2pm every Saturday and Sunday from June 12-August 22, excluding two weekends in July. Tickets available online - visit our website for dates and details.

Little Women, based on Louisa May Alcott's American classic, guarantees an afternoon filled with laughter, tears, and a lifting of the spirit. This Civil War story of love and family stands the test of time and is a perfect outing for the entire family. We invite you to join us as we celebrate gathering together again for live theater in a safe and beautiful outdoor setting.

Due to COVID-19 risks activities, courses, and events may be canceled or postponed. Please visit mountaineers.org/covid19 for more details.

The Mountaineers is home to seven branches, each offering a number of courses and seminars. Our branches also host a variety of events like picnics, film screenings, and guest speakers. Regardless of which branch you join, you can sign up for offerings with any branch. Learn more at mountaineers.org/locations-lodges.



BELLINGHAM

Chair: Jack Duffy, jackduffy12@gmail.com
Website: mountaineers.org/bellingham
COURSES & ACTIVITIES: Climbing, first aid, hiking & backpacking, scrambling, and stewardship.

You'll find the Bellingham Branch tucked alongside the craggy expanse of the North Cascades. Our close-knit community offers climbing courses, hiking trips, and more. We're also home to one of the most popular Mountaineers getaway destinations, Mt. Baker Lodge.

BRANCH COUNCIL MEETINGS are on the fourth Tuesday of each month. Visit our branch calendar for details.

EVERETT

Chair: Elaina Jorgensen, elaina.jorgensen@gmail.com
Website: mountaineers.org/everett
COURSES & ACTIVITIES: Avalanche safety, backcountry skiing, climbing, cross-country skiing, first aid, hiking & backpacking, navigation, scrambling, sea kayaking, snowshoeing, and stewardship.

Founded in 1911, the Everett Branch offers over a dozen programs. As a smaller branch, we value companionship and regularly host events including monthly open houses and annual gatherings like our Salmon Bake, Gear Grab & Potluck, Annual Awards Banquet, and more. Check our branch calendar for details. Our branch is also known for our unique Lookout and Trail Maintenance Committee, which restored and continues to maintain the historic Mt. Pilchuck lookout.

KITSAP

Chair: Bill Bandrowski, bill.bandrowski@gmail.com
Secretary: Christine Grenier, highroadhiker@wavecable.com
Website: mountaineers.org/kitsap
COURSES & ACTIVITIES: Climbing, exploring nature, first aid, hiking & backpacking, navigation, outdoor leadership, scrambling, sea kayaking, snowshoeing, and youth & family.

The Kitsap Branch draws members from throughout western Puget Sound, from Gig Harbor to the Olympic Peninsula, including Pierce, Kitsap, Jefferson, and Clallam counties. Join us at our program center, conveniently located in Bremerton.

BRANCH COUNCIL MEETINGS are held in February, May, August, and November. Our annual branch celebration is in October; please join us! Visit our branch calendar for details.

SEATTLE

Chair: Jared Pearce, jared.pearce@gmail.com
Website: mountaineers.org/seattle

COURSES & ACTIVITIES: Avalanche safety, canyoning, climbing, cross-country skiing, exploring nature, first aid, folk dancing, hiking & backpacking, navigation, outdoor leadership, photography, retired rovers, sailing, scrambling, sea kayaking, snowshoeing, and stewardship.

The Seattle Branch began as the sole club location in 1906 when The Mountaineers was founded. Our Meet The Mountaineers open houses are held about once a month and are a great way for new and prospective members to learn about our many offerings. Our branch is also home to the Seattle Program Center, which features a book store, indoor and outdoor climbing walls, event spaces, and more.

BRANCH COUNCIL MEETINGS are held every other month to discuss new and ongoing initiatives. Our branch is growing rapidly, and we are actively seeking people to support our community - no prior experience required. Visit our branch calendar for details.

FOOTHILLS
(I-90/I-405 CORRIDORS)

Chair: Cheryl Talbert, cascadehiker@earthlink.net
Website: mountaineers.org/foothills

COURSES & ACTIVITIES: AIARE avalanche safety, backcountry and downhill skiing, conservation and stewardship, cross-country skiing, first aid, hiking & backpacking, navigation, scrambling, snowshoeing, and trail running - and a brand new climbing program!

The Foothills Branch is the club's newest branch, founded in 2004 and encompassing the eastside communities along the I-90 and I-405 corridors. In addition to our educational and activity programs, we host stewardship events with the Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust, film screenings, guest speakers, and other community events. We are also excited to be a close partner with Meany Lodge!

Our branch is growing rapidly, and we are actively seeking people to support our community - no

prior experience required. We invite you to get involved in branch leadership and committees to get our communities outside. Contact the branch chair if you might be interested.

BRANCH COUNCIL MEETINGS are held every other month (except summer) to discuss new and ongoing initiatives. All branch members are welcome! Visit our branch calendar for details.

TACOMA

Chair: Curtis Stock, cstock34@msn.com
Website: mountaineers.org/tacoma

COURSES & ACTIVITIES: Avalanche safety, climbing, first aid, hiking & backpacking, navigation, outdoor leadership, photography, sailing, scrambling, sea kayaking, snowshoeing, and youth & family.

The second largest of all seven branches, the Tacoma Branch maintains its own program center in the Old Town neighborhood of Tacoma as well as the Irish Cabin property located near Mt. Rainier. A great way get involved is our Meet the Tacoma Mountaineers event, consisting of a meet-and-greet and a 90-minute interactive presentation giving you opportunities to learn about our history, our website, and how you can get involved.

BRANCH COUNCIL MEETINGS are held every six weeks to discuss new and ongoing initiatives and general branch business. Visit our branch calendar for details.

OLYMPIA

Chair: Bob Keranen, keranen@hcc.net
Website: mountaineers.org/olympia

COURSES & ACTIVITIES: Avalanche safety, backcountry skiing, climbing, cross-country skiing, exploring nature, first aid, hiking & backpacking, navigation, outdoor leadership, scrambling, sea kayaking, stewardship, snowshoeing, wilderness skills, and youth & family. Our branch is known for its robust stewardship program.

EVENTS: Our speaker series and potluck is postponed until further notice due to COVID-19 concerns.

BRANCH COUNCIL MEETINGS are held on Zoom the second Wednesday of the month. Members are encouraged to attend. Contact Neal Kirby for info.

Get Involved With Your Branch

Visit Your Branch Page Go to mountaineers.org and click on 'More' in the top menu; then click 'Locations & Lodges' and select your branch from the dropdown options. On your branch home page, you'll find branch news, upcoming events, contact info, and more. You can also access your branch page using the direct links listed in the branch summaries.

Browse Branch Courses & Activities To see what's available, visit mountaineers.org and click the big green 'Find Courses' button or 'Find Activities' button. You can then narrow your search by branch using the filter options in the green column on the left. Remember, you can sign up for courses and activities offered by any branch.

Branch Events With picnics, open houses, banquets, guest speakers, and more, our branches host an array of events for you to get involved. To check out what's next, visit mountaineers.org/events. From this page, you can select your branch calendar.

Branch eNewsletters Branch eNewsletters are a great way to stay up to date. To opt into these emails, visit mountaineers.org/profile. Login, then scroll down and make sure the box next to 'Branch Communications' is checked.*

**The Seattle Branch doesn't have a branch-wide eNewsletter, but several activity committees publish eNewsletters, including climbing, navigation, photography, and naturalists, and many activities have a Facebook presence. To learn more, contact the committee chairperson. To find a committee, input the committee name into our search bar at the top of our website.*

Volunteer Our branches draw on people with a range of skills and interests to power their programs. Instructors, event planners, admin help, and more are all needed. Volunteering is a great way to plug into our community. Reach out to your branch chair to get started.

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For more information, visit mountaineers.org/benefits

Please keep in mind that some businesses may have adjusted hours/operations or may not be honoring discount benefits. Remember to follow CDC guidelines when shopping in person.

Photo by Rafael Godoi.

Wildfire-Resilient Plants

By Tiffany Ban, Communications Associate

Wildfires. It seems that every summer, they're in the news. Whole towns have burned to the ground in recent years. Thick smoke blanketed the entire west coast in the summer of 2020, forcing us to stay indoors. Anticipating and preparing for fire season has become the norm in some areas of the world, but what if I told you that our forests have been preparing for imminent fires far longer than we have?

Fires are actually part of the life cycle of healthy forests, and some trees need them to reproduce. Read on to discover which plants are specially designed to survive (and even thrive) after a fire, and how our forests change after a blaze dies down.



Pinecones from a lodgepole pine. Photo by Sean Buchan in Nederland, Colorado.

Serotinous cones

Many trees such as lodgepole pines have serotinous, or resin-covered cones. These cones carry seeds that the tree uses to reproduce, but they stay sealed within the cones until a fire sweeps through. When exposed to heat, the resin melts, unlocking the seeds so that even if the tree burns up and dies, the seeds can start the cycle of life all over again. Some serotinous cones can sit on a tree branch for decades, receiving nutrients from the tree while waiting. Once the cone is open, the seeds fall to the ground and are dispersed by wind and birds.

Bark and branch adaptations

Douglas firs and ponderosa pines are two examples of fire-adapted tree species that have thicker, fire-resistant bark. This protects the vascular cambium, or living tissues within the tree that carry nutrients and water. Some trees also shed their lower branches, eliminating the potential for a low brush fire to climb its way up the tree.



Quaking aspens. Photo by Tim Nair.

Post-fire resprouting

Quaking aspens are famous not only for their beautiful yellow color in the fall and fluttering leaves, but also for being one of the tree species that quickly regenerates in fire-scarred forests. Quaking aspens and other tree species have extensive root systems or underground stems with stored nutrients and dormant buds that can quickly sprout, even if the entire above ground tree system was wiped out.

Fire-activated seed germination

Some trees have seeds with a hard, protective coating that prevents the seed from germinating. Even if the seed is dispersed, it contains chemicals that keep it dormant. The only thing that will crack this coating, allowing germination, is a disturbance caused by a fire. Sometimes the heat of the fire causes the disturbance, but smoke or nutrients in the soil following a fire can also crack the coating. Whatever the mechanism, this disturbance allows the chemicals that keep the seed dormant to escape, and germination can begin.

How a forest changes

Other interesting things happen in a forest following a fire. The chemical composition of the soil can change, making way for plants that favor these new conditions. For instance, the lower levels of nitrogen in fire-ravaged soil makes way for the striking lupine. Burned tree canopies also often mean that more light can reach the forest floor following a fire. Plants that may not have been abundant in the area before the fire may take advantage of these new bare soil patches and increased light and can thrive.

When faced with the threat of the fire, these rooted living organisms cannot move out of harm's way. Luckily, these unique adaptations have helped them to survive and regenerate after fires throughout history, ensuring the continual growth and rebirth of the forest. ▲

THE MOUNTAINEERS GALA

Adventure with Purpose

Presenting The 2020 Volunteer Awards - Thank you!

On Thursday, April 29, our outdoor community joined together for the 7th Annual Mountaineers Gala: Adventure with Purpose, raising over \$360,000 to directly support the programs and publishing efforts of The Mountaineers.

At this year's Gala, we celebrated our 2020 volunteer award winners Patti Polinski, Tom Bancroft, Travis Prescott, and Matt and Joni Swenson. These inspirational award winners have gone above and beyond to support The Mountaineers community through their outstanding leadership, service, and community support.

Our members and volunteers are the heart of our organization. Together, we're making an impact to help people explore, conserve, learn about, and enjoy the land and waters of the Pacific Northwest and beyond.

Thank you for standing with us in celebration of our people, places, publishing, and programs. Thank you for making a difference by giving what you can.

You made this a Gala to remember, and we can't wait to see you next year!

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