

# Mountaineer

E X P L O R E • L E A R N • C O N S E R V E



## Solace in Mountain Solitude

lookout tower art PAGE 14

## Observable Differences

North Cascades glacier recession PAGE 16

## Snow Spelunk

Mount Hood cave explorations PAGE 20

# tableofcontents

Nov/Dec 2015 » Volume 109 » Number 6

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.



## Features

- 14 Solace in Mountain Solitude  
lookout tower art
- 16 Observable Differences  
glacier recession in the North Cascades
- 20 Snow Spelunk  
Mount Hood cave explorations

## Columns

- 7 **MEMBER HIGHLIGHT**  
Carrie Grage
- 8 **OUTDOOR EDUCATION**  
I'm a Mountaineer!
- 11 **PEAK FITNESS**  
habitats for good nutrition
- 12 **TRAIL TALK**  
makeshift memorials
- 25 **NATURES WAY**  
the seeds of Thor
- 26 **CONSERVATION CURRENTS**  
uniting our collective voice
- 28 **SAFETY FIRST**  
a step ahead of avalanches
- 31 **BOOKMARKS**  
over 250 birds in one book
- 43 **IMPACT GIVING**  
investing in adventure



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**Mountaineer** uses:



## 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.

**on the cover:** Erik Chelstad standing outside the "Pure Imagination" Ice Cave on Mount Hood. Story on page 20.

**photographer:** photo courtesy of Erik Chelstad

## Heroes in the Mountains and The Mountaineers



Dan Lauren on Mox Peak SE Spire

“The climbing of mountains also gives us heroes who we might look up to and strive to emulate. I also discover that heroes are as important to me now as they were in my youth. Heroes are for all ages.” - Tom Hornbein, first ascensionist West Ridge of Mt. Everest

When we're very young, our heroes are often the stuff of myth, comic-book characters emblazoned on a lunchbox and Thermos. Soon we look to living legends for inspiration: famous alpinists, pioneering scientists, or innovative artists. At The Mountaineers, we give ordinary people an outlet to share their passions, time, and talents. They become our heroes.

If you've taken one of our courses, you've witnessed the power of volunteer-led instruction and seen an unmatched level of commitment and generosity of spirit.

Out on a volunteer-led Mountaineers trip, an essential element you may take for granted in other situations is leadership. The alpine environment is unpredictable and a place where leadership skills are tested and enhanced. Nowhere else will a newbie Mountaineer rely on a volunteer to ensure their safety, talk them through a situation or help them focus on the next move above – not the exposure below. Just a reassuring, “you got this” is sometimes all it takes.

However, through valuable leadership, first-aid, and back-country preparedness, Mountaineers often go well beyond motivational and navigational leadership. It is in the hardest of situations, where someone has fallen or been hurt that the true leader – the hero – comes out. And, like the classic comic-book characters that shaped our perception of heroism, Mountaineers with leadership skills will never walk by a hurt member of a stranger's party without seeing what they can do to help. And often, it's a lot.

Just this past July, a Mountaineers alpine scramble group who was headed to Mount Adams via the south spur saw another group who appeared to be in the same place for hours – so they sent one of their group members over with a first aid kit and radio to check it out. Indeed, a member of the other group was hurt and another missing, so the Mountaineer radioed back and the entire Mountaineers group prepared packs and climbed up to the party in trouble, bringing them back to their camp and reassuring them that everything would be ok. The missing person was found by another group of Mountaineers on an unofficial trip – and everyone made it out safe, even the injured person who hobbled out on a swollen ankle.

There are numerous other reports like this. As Mountaineers, we embrace the opportunity to create thousands of fierce protectors of our natural playgrounds by sharing powerful outdoor adventures that connect people to these places. Our volunteers and members make these experiences possible – passing them down to future generations – and everyone else in the outdoor community who might be lucky enough to meet a Mountaineer on the trail.

At The Mountaineers, we believe that heroes aren't born, they are made. Every day, we see heroes rise up out of our ranks, from the long-serving board member to teenagers volunteering for the first time. Just as Tom Hornbein said, these are heroes for all ages and they are as important now as ever before.

Dan Lauren, Board President



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

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## Anticipating the magical world of snow

Everything is so quiet and peaceful after a snowstorm. The sky is bluer and the world is brighter. It's like magic. We're looking forward to that this winter, with events like Winter Trails Day (learn more on page 10) and upcoming courses like backcountry skiing. Not to mention the lodges. Meany, Stevens and Baker all have plenty of opportunities for winter fun.

Of course, the past couple winters in the Pacific Northwest, snow has been lighter, further away or at higher elevations, and less dependable. Skiers worry that their favorite resorts might become favorite hiking trails instead, a la Mount Pilchuck. We have a good article in this issue, called *Observable Differences* – about glacier recession in the North Cascades (page 16). Did you know there were five glaciers that have disappeared entirely over the past two decades in the area? Neither did I – until I edited this article. Learn about how the glacial landscape has changed over the past 32 years.

When the landscape is changing as fast as it has been, with unpredictable snow and ice, it's always good to err on the side of caution. That's why I recommend reading our safety column this issue, *A Step Ahead of Avalanches*, written by certified AIARE course leader and avalanche forecaster, Oyvind Henningsen.

**And while we have glaciers and snow** to explore – we also have... snow caves! Turn to page 20 and read about one of the most compelling local cave explorations I've ever read in an article called *Snow Spelunk*. Just watch out for the cave monsters.

There's something about caves though – and nature in general. It brings out the introspective side in us all. To read how one artist is filtering

his world into paint (and a personal lookout tower) turn to page 14. Tori Karpenko has taken the turmoil in his life and smoothed it out with the serenity of nature and art. Read about his journey in an article called *Solace in Mountain Solitude*.

Speaking of solace – Craig Romano brings up an interesting question in his *Trail Talk* column this issue: Are memorials an eyesore in the backcountry? Read the pros and cons and I bet you pay more attention to memorials next time you come across one in the wilderness (page 12). It just makes you more aware of the one constant in life: change. This is the topic of Steve Scher's *Last Word* column on page 43.

And since we just celebrated Halloween, it might be a good time to catch up on nutritional advice in our *Peak Fitness* column on page 11.

Speaking of seasons – have you bought your tickets to Banff yet? Having sold out almost immediately in Seattle the past few years, we changed venues: to Neptune Theater! It will be an exciting show this year.

As always, thank you for reading and for your support of our Mountaineers mission – to get more people outside together – enjoying and conserving the natural landscapes of the Pacific Northwest and beyond.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Suzanne Gerber".

Suzanne Gerber, Publications Manager



Mount Hood Ice Cave - story on page 20. Photo by Erik Chelstad



## Can you identify the location in the foreground?

Send your answer to Suzanne by the first of December: [suzanneg@mountaineers.org](mailto:suzanneg@mountaineers.org). If you guess correctly, you'll receive a \$15 gift certificate\* good for Mountaineers purchases, and we'll publish your name in next issue's column.

\*Not redeemable for cash. Mountaineers employees or persons shown in the photograph are not eligible.

In case of a tie, one winner will be chosen at random. Each month we'll publish a new mystery landmark and identification of the previous one.

*Adventurer?* Please send in your trip photographs for possible publication as a mystery location! (see email address above)

The winner of last issue's *Summit Savvy* was Susan Hanley, who correctly identified Anvil Rock (see below).

## Last issue's summit savvy: Anvil Rock, Mount Rainier NP

Begin at the Paradise parking lot. Depending on the season you may be starting on snow or you can pick one of the many trails that travels up the hillside towards the Muir Snowfield. Later in the season you'll travel from a botanical garden of wildflowers to rocks and then the Muir Snowfield with Mount Rainier in full view the whole way. At Camp Muir views of the Tatoosh Range, the southern Cascades and far down to Oregon are a sight that will be in your memory forever.

**Activity Type:** Scrambling

**Seasons:** June, July, August, September

**Length:** 10.0 mi

**Elevation Gain:** 4,600 ft

**High Point:** 10,000 feet

**Trip report by Louis Suhr from May, 2015:** Beautiful weather brought out the expected hordes. Parking lot was getting close to full when we left Paradise at 8:30am. Clear route to follow, taking the 'directissimo' route up to Pan Point, then a higher sidehill traverse than usual, well above Pebble Creek. Up to Camp Muir, busy as expected. Heading down, visited Anvil Rock with some great views down to the Cowlitz and Paradise Glaciers. We were able to get some glissades in, before getting lower where the snow was quite slushy.



Anvil Rock. Photo by Victor Chinn

# The Martinique Grigg 2015 Excellence in Leadership Award goes to...

by Eric Linxweiler,  
VP Mountaineers Publishing



Leah Schultz poses with Lauren Linxweiler at The Mountaineers Program Center. Photo by Suzanne Gerber

**W**hen Martinique let us know that she was moving onto something new, we knew we had to do more than just thank her. We wanted to commemorate her to celebrate what amazing impact her tenure had on our 100+ year old organization. We wanted her to remain part of the legacy she helped create and was leaving behind - a legacy that most certainly involved getting youth outdoors.

That was the genesis of the "Martinique Grigg Excellence in Youth Leadership Award." It memorializes our reaffirmed commitment to youth, thanks our many volunteers who generously donate their time and talents to these initiatives, and ensures we have an annual conversation about who our notable youth leaders are.

As obvious as it was to identify this new award, it was equally obvious who our first recipient should be. Leah Schulz has been involved in the Mountaineers for nearly a decade, but four years ago, she had an idea. She knew she wanted more kids to have climbing and the outdoors made available to them, so she reached out to The Mountaineers Youth Education department.

"My experiences in the outdoors have made a huge impact on me. I would not be the successful business person I am today without

challenging experiences that helped me find my confidence and resilience, and taught me that it's okay to take on risk. These are important lessons that we need to pass on to young people today," said Leah. From that, the Mountain Workshops were born and has been a huge success. We provided over 6,000 youth opportunities outdoors last year alone. It even surprised Leah. "I never imagined the program would reach so many kids."

Tab Wilkins, Mountaineers board member and long-time volunteer knows how important it is to expose youth to the outdoors. When he asked a room full of members at a recent 50-year luncheon, "Did your parents take you camping or skiing when you were a kid or were they Mountaineers members as a teenager?" at least 60% of the hands went up.

The Mountaineers recognizes that connecting young people with the outdoors is critical not only to their health, but also to the health of our natural landscapes. Youth need the benefit of a healthy, active outdoor lifestyle, and our landscapes need the protection of individuals with a strong connection to the outdoors.

So, join me in celebrating this amazing foundation that hundreds of kids are now benefiting from! ▲▲

# memberhighlight

ten essential questions



Carrie enjoying the snow with Rainier peaking over the slope in the background. Photo courtesy of Carrie Grage

**Name** Carrie Grage  
**Hometown** Seattle - but grew up in Hawaii  
**Member Since** August 2015  
**Occupation** Account Executive  
**Favorite Activities** hiking, backpacking, running, snowshoeing, kayaking

## How did you get involved with The Mountaineers?

I have an ever growing list of areas I want to explore and my lack of glacier travel skills are standing in my way. Turns out, this is a course you offer! As well as several other things I would like to learn. I became a member straight away and am so excited to be a part of it.

## Why is getting outside important to you?

I grew up hiking/backpacking with my family. Those are some of my best memories and it's still my favorite thing to do. My kids first hikes were all in the pack until they could walk on their own. Creating those memories and that bond with them is very important to me. When my daughter got cancer in 2010 we put all our energy into that fight. Three years later she won that battle and last year we were able to get back out there. But my mindset is different now. Everyday is a gift. Doing what you love and seizing the day doesn't just seem important. It feels urgent. Acquiring new skills allows us to take advantage of all the opportunities we have to get out and see this amazing world.

## Favorite Mountaineers memory?

As a new member I don't yet have any but considering the breadth of what you offer for adults and kids, I certainly will soon!

## Who/What inspires you?

Well, first Kilian Jornet. I have a bit of hero worship going on! His strength of mind, speed, and skill are astounding! Second, organizations like this. I love that your goals are to help people enjoy outdoor activities safely and with integrity. Cheers to you guys for helping us be cautiously curious!

## What does adventure mean to you?

To me, adventure is when you explore somewhere new. The route planning, trip prep, the actual journey and destination culminate to be a fantastic mix of wonderful, exhausting, rewarding, and a tiny bit terrifying.

## Lightning round!

Sunrise or sunset? Sunrise

Smile or game face? Smile

Superpower? Flying!

Post-adventure meal of choice?

Burgers and beer

If you could be a rock star at any outdoor activity overnight, what would it be? Ski mountaineering

## I'm a Mountaineer!

by Cara Dee, Mountaineers Crag Climb  
and Qualified Youth Leader

Left to right: Cara, Caitlin, Matt and Sydney on top of the Tooth. Photo by Michelle Miller

During Junior Mountaineers Summer Camp in 2014, nine-year-old Sydney Swenson confidently announced to then Youth Programs Manager Caitlin O'Brien that she was planning to climb The Tooth in celebration of her tenth birthday. In January 2015, Sydney's dad Matt Swenson sent an email to some of his friends in The Mountaineers climbing community asking if anyone was interested in joining him and Sydney on the celebratory Tooth climb. I know Sydney and Matt from volunteering with the Mountaineers Explorers Youth Program, which Sydney, Matt and Joni (Matt's wife and Sydney's mom) are very active in. When I saw the email, I jumped at the chance to join in the climb, as did Caitlin. We selected a date for the climb in the summer of 2015, deciding that while Sydney would turn ten in February, a climb around the time of her half-birthday would be a better choice.

With the objective stated and a date on the calendar, Matt and Sydney began to train – hard. They hiked up local steep trails, including old Mailbox Peak and Muir Snowfield. They went top roping at the climbing gym and at local crags. They had big days. When I saw Sydney at Explorers outings in the months ahead, her eyes would glisten with determination and excitement when she talked about training with her dad for her big day.

On Thursday, August 6, Sydney and Matt parked at the trailhead for the Tooth and hiked to a clearing beyond the talus en route to the Tooth, just below Pineapple Pass, camping gear in tow. They had a father-daughter evening of stargazing and fell asleep full of anticipation for the following day.

On Friday, August 7, like many Mountaineers before us, Caitlin and I met early in the morning at the 65th Street Park and Ride to carpool to the trailhead for the Tooth. At 6am we arrived at the trailhead and saw fellow a group of Mountaineers climbers, led by John Bell. They were racked up and headed towards the same peak. We exchanged pleasantries, and Caitlin and I began our hike to Sydney and Matt's camp. When we arrived at camp, Sydney and Matt were packing up camp and getting ready for the climb. Final preparations and organization of gear and people took us some time. Our fellow Mountaineers passed us as we headed towards the base of the route.

Team Sydney made its way up scree and talus to the base of Pineapple Pass. We scrambled up the pass, traversed along the backside of the Tooth and then arrived at the base of the climb. The other Mountaineers were climbing very efficiently, and two out of three rope teams had begun climbing by the time we made it to the base of the route. We sat at the base of the climb and talked about our plan of attack – Matt would climb first. Caitlin would belay Matt. Sydney would follow Matt, who would belay her from above. Sydney would not clean the gear – she would just unclip it. I would climb close behind Sydney on a separate rope and clip the gear Matt placed. Caitlin would clean the gear. This way, Sydney would not have to worry about using a nut tool or properly engaging cams to loosen them from cracks, and two people would always be pretty close to Sydney – a little above her at the belay and just below her climbing. It was a good plan.

Then, the climbing began. Matt climbed the first pitch and set up

a belay from above. Sydney began climbing. I began climbing just beneath her. About twenty feet up, Sydney shouted down to me, "Cara - I'm scared. I don't see the move. Give me the beta, Cara." We talked about the possibility of a high step. Sydney executed it flawlessly and for the rest of the pitch I could barely keep up with her as she floated up the wall. We climbed another pitch. Then, we unroped and scrambled to the base of the final pitch. The climbing was fun and it was sad to see that it was ending. For the last pitch, Matt gave Sydney two options – the straight-forward way or a variation – Sydney voted for straight-forward. Within minutes, the four of us were at the top of the route. Sydney had just arrived at her first alpine rock summit.

At the top of the climb, we were reunited with the party of six Mountaineers climbers. John Bell asked us if we would like some cake. He explained that his party had actually brought two full cakes to the top of the route – a cake to celebrate John's birthday (which we learned was actually that day) and a cake to celebrate the graduation climbs of the three Basic students in the party. Then Caitlin pulled out two red velvet cupcakes and candles which she had brought to celebrate Sydney's birthday (the half birthday of which we were closer to in actual date). Caitlin lit the candles, we sang happy birthday and Sydney blew them out. Then the ten of us basked in the sun on the top of the Tooth being silly – taking lots of funny-faced photos, giggling and eating up sugary desserts.

Michelle turned to Sydney and asked, "Are you going to become a Mountaineer when you are older?" I thought to myself, "I wonder if Michelle meant Mountaineer or mountaineer..." Sydney quickly responded, interrupting my thoughts with, "I *am* a Mountaineer!

And I'm in Explorers." Then I realized that whether Michelle meant big M Mountaineer – as in a member of The Mountaineers organization – or little m mountaineer, this experience had created a Mountaineer for life in Sydney.

Then I looked around the group – our collective Mountaineers group on the top of the Tooth spanned over a huge age range and experience level. Besides ten year old Sydney, John Bell was celebrating his birthday. John has been a member of the Mountaineers since at least 1991 and was faster in movement and systems than anyone else on top of the Tooth that day. Then there were those in their 20s, 30s and 40s - some new to climbing and some seasoned - all coming together to collectively achieve this high point of sugary treats and gentle sun. The summit was special in and of itself, Sydney achieving her goal was commendable, but the best part of the day was the community - and seeing Sydney experience her part in the community as an emerging member and future leader. Like Sydney, all of us could answer, "I am a Mountaineer" with pride.

We then collectively rapped that route as a group of ten, pooling ropes. Caitlin and Matt carefully set up and checked each of Sydney's rappel set ups. With each rap, Sydney exclaimed, "Geronimo!!!" full of smiles.

Safely back on the ground, we began our scramble and long hike out – definitely the hardest part for a ten-year-old, and maybe for all of us. As we left the trailhead for our cars, Matt declared the day a success, but noted with mild concern that Sydney may believe that there are cakes at the summit of every climb. I'm okay with that, and think maybe there should be. Climb on! ▲▲



Sydney managing ropes with the help of Caitlin. Photo by Michelle Miller



## Finding Paradise in Methow Valley

by Chris Ensor, Mountaineers Trip Leader

Chris (far right) and friends ready to take on winter trails. Photo courtesy of Chris Ensor

I fell in love with the snow as a child. We didn't have a lot of the white stuff where I grew up near London, England but I was fortunate in that my parents took my brother and I skiing in Austria. Every winter after that I tried to get in at least one ski vacation.

It was on one of these vacations in Chamonix, France that I met a woman named Val who has since become my wife. When I first visited Val and her family in Kent, WA, I was delighted to find ski slopes were just over an hour away – as well as hiking, snowshoeing and water sports, depending on the time of year. It was at this time I knew I really wanted to make Puget Sound my home.

Val and I first found out about the Methow Valley (pronounced "Met-how") and the fact that it has the largest Nordic Trails system in the US by chance. About ten years ago, Val won a silent auction item at the annual OUTDOORSFORALL gala auction for two weekend trail passes. We had both recently taken up cross country skiing, so we looked on the map and found that the Methow Valley is located north of Chelan. We booked lodgings and took off wondering if the five-hour journey would be worth it.

What we found was a winter paradise and in its center the picturesque western theme town of Winthrop. We have returned every winter since. We also discovered what a fabulous place it is for hiking and as a base for trips up to the spectacular North Cascades.

I joined the Mountaineers in 2010 shortly before I retired from

running a small disability nonprofit in Pierce County. One of my retirement goals was to share my love of the outdoors and of snow in particular with other people. I trained to be a Nordic ski and a hike leader with the Mountaineers. I also trained to be a professional ski instructor. One of my key goals was to share the magic of the Methow Valley with others from this side of the pass.

Starting five years ago and working with other Mountaineer leaders, I was able to help bring National Trails Day to the Methow each June. It was a step closer, but I really wanted to show people what a wonderful winter wonderland it can be.

Finally, last January we were able to organize the first Winter Trails Day event – complete with activities for all ages from skiing and snowshoeing to ice skating and horse-drawn sleigh rides. It's time now to organize it for 2016 and you are invited.

**winter**  
2016 **trails**

Enjoy a weekend of fun outdoor winter activities in the beautiful Methow Valley. **January 8-10, 2016**

[www.mountaineers.org/wintertrailsday](http://www.mountaineers.org/wintertrailsday)

# Habits for Good Nutrition

by Courtenay Schurman,  
MS, CSCS



Courtenay's daughter surveys her not-so-healthy options post-Halloween. Photo by Courtenay Schurman

Atkins. Paleo. Zone. Low-carb. Low-fat. Gluten-free. There are as many eating plans out there as there are individuals, and just as much confusing information about which is best for the active outdoors enthusiast. The following habits recommended by Precision Nutrition require no calorie counting or food weighing, yet provide you with a healthy, functioning body that will get you where you want to go.

## Slow Down

As Americans we eat way too fast, a consequence of our rush-and-hurry high-tech lifestyle. By paying attention when we eat, chewing food thoroughly (forty chews per bite), and setting down the utensil between bites, we give our salivary glands time to do their digestive work before food reaches the stomach. Shoot for 15-20 minutes per meal and stop at 80% while you are still slightly hungry. You can always eat more later.

## Consume Vegetables At Every Meal

As long as you're not loading up on trans-fat- and/or sugar-laden dressings, vegetables are your friends and should be eaten with every snack or meal to provide fiber and macronutrients. When possible, choose organic non-GMO vegetables and eat from the rainbow – every color, at least once per week. Eat seasonally for freshness. Portions: females should shoot for one or more fist-sized servings per meal, males two.

## Include Healthy Fats

Nuts, seeds, eggs, meats, extra virgin olive oil, nut butters, organic butter from pasture-raised cows, fish and fish oils all have health and brain benefits. Low-fat diets have made our nation's citizens unhealthy and fat. Your body needs fats high in Omega-3 fatty acids rather than vegetable oils rich in omega-6 fatty acids.

Portions: shoot for a thumb-sized serving per meal, whether you're male or female.

## Limit Starchy Carbohydrates

When it comes to carbohydrates such as pasta, bread, rice, potatoes and grains, ask yourself: *Have I exercised today?* If you are trying to lose or maintain weight and the answer is no, eat a double portion of vegetables instead. If you answered yes, allow yourself a cupped fist serving for females, two for males in the meal right after you have exercised.

## Consume Protein-dense Foods

To get leaner, stronger, and more powerful, it's likely you need to consume more protein. Shoot for grass-fed, pasture-raised organic (whenever possible) meats, seafood, and poultry. Portions: one palm-sized portion per meal for females, two for males. If you consume primarily a plant-based diet, be sure to also consume enough B-12, calcium, iodine, omega-3 fatty acids and vitamin D.

If you find yourself reaching for alcohol, cookies, candy, burger and fries, or potato chips, remember your healthy habits and treat your cheat as a meal. Include a serving each of protein, fat, and vegetables, save half the starchy carbohydrates for another meal, and quit when you are 80% full. Expending the extra effort to make the meal complete means you may be able to avoid temptation in the first place.

*Courtenay Schurman is an NSCA-CSCS certified personal trainer, Precision Nutrition Level 1 Certified nutrition coach, and co-owner of Body Results. She specializes in training outdoor athletes. For more how-to exercises and tips, visit her website at [www.bodyresults.com](http://www.bodyresults.com) or send a question to [court@bodyresults.com](mailto:court@bodyresults.com).*

## Makeshift Memorials

Leaving a tribute or an eyesore in the backcountry?

by Craig Romano, guidebook author

They're all over Latin America. Along roadsides and in town squares; makeshift memorials honoring the lives of so many who departed this world prematurely. Usually placed on location of a terrible accident; these memorials allow us to reflect on the life taken from that very spot—and perhaps to lament the unfortunate situation leading up to it – alcohol, speed, negligence, distraction – the list goes on. In heavily Catholic Latin America most of these memorials make reference to the Blessed Mother. Folks pray at these spots that the departed are now at peace in the Kingdom of Heaven. Some of the memorials are simple – some elaborate – some artistic – some derelict and strewn with litter. When I've walk the roads of South America or hiked the winding trails leading high into that continent's hills and mountains I've come to accept these memorials as part of the landscape – part of the culture – part of the experience.

Back here in North America I am noticing with more frequency the proliferation of makeshift memorials (usually for victims of drunk drivers) along our roadways – and I am noticing more and more makeshift memorials along our trails in the backcountry. The trailside ones however are not as uniform in their purpose. I've encountered a few memorializing an untimely death at the spot due to a climbing accident, weather incident, or other unfortunate occurrence while out in the backcountry. But more and more I am stumbling upon memorials of folks who didn't die at the spot, but want to be remembered there.

The urge for immortality is strong in most human beings and we want to somehow live on this earthly plain forever. For many of us, spiritual or not, the natural world is a sacred place. We may wish to have our ashes scatted upon our favorite trail – from atop our favorite mountain – along the shoreline of our favorite lake – or tossed into the surf at our favorite spot along the coast. And if we believe in an afterworld or nothing afterward at all – our souls have moved on – our earthly remains like our time on the planet ephemeral. Ashes to ashes, dust to dust, let a Douglas fir take root and come to life in what was once a being.

This need however to mark our passing with something concrete is quite different. It's one thing to have a loved one toss your remains to the winds from atop Mount Rainier – or perhaps (although illegal) to have your body decompose in the wilderness as Ed Abbey requested. "I want my body to help fertilize the growth of a cactus or cliff rose or sagebrush or tree," he wrote. However, even Mr. Abbey has an inscribed (by some of his friends) rock somewhere in the desert backcountry. But to construct something material to leave alongside the trail or deep in the backcountry memorializing your passage doesn't nourish the circle of life nor honor the purpose of life – that all things must pass. As more and more of these memorials appear – some quite elaborate and I dare say obtrusive (nobody will ever know that your ashes lie along the trail) – I'm afraid it just may be compromising the nature of the backcountry – distracting from the living's relationship with the natural environment – and in the case of Wilderness areas, is a direct violation of one of our strongest pieces of environmental legislation.

I'm going to die someday too, so perhaps I should just lighten up and live with these memorials, right? And I too have a strong need to be memorialized and remembered after my passage. I contribute to conservation causes as part of my legacy. I have a

young son that I will pass the torch on, hoping he will continue to enlighten others on the need to protect our environment. And if I'm fortunate, perhaps someday I can donate enough money to have a trail or park named after me! But leaving a permanent object marking my short time on the planet for all to see whether they want to or not; and regardless if they knew me or not (and few do and will as time moves on) can be viewed as just plain obtrusive. And image this scenario as it multiplies. One memorial here or there – no big deal, right? Soon one becomes two-then three-then ten – then on and on nearly every trail. Walk a road in rural South America if you want to see where this can go – but then again maybe that is okay – or is it?

I admit that I've been fascinated with several memorials that I have stumbled upon in the backcountry. One in particular – a stone plaque with a Coast Salish art style raven (the creator) etched into it sitting on a knoll high on Mount Jupiter in the Brothers Wilderness was absolutely beautiful. And in my eyes it harmonized well with its natural environment. At almost all of the memorials I have passed in the woods, I have paused briefly – reflected upon who the person was or could be and what happened – and then moved on. Admittedly none of these memorials compromised my wilderness experience. Others I know feel differently. And I have never removed one. My Catholic roots and respect for the dead would never allow me to sleep in peace again if I did. But I know of others that have and will remove these memorials as they do with unauthorized cairns, flagging, and illegal campfire rings. To these folks, these memorials no matter their intention are a pure violation of the Wilderness Act and have no place in these earthly natural environments.

I know I'll see more of them – giving me plenty more time to reflect on more lives lost and if they should be remembered by something solid in the backcountry.

How do you feel about these memorials in the backcountry? Are they even an issue with all of the more pressing problems out there like climate change, refugee crises, and continual loss of habitat – issues that have far graver results for the natural world than a scattering of monuments honoring the deceased. Do you want to leave something concrete behind at your favorite piece of wilderness heaven?



**Craig Romano** is an avid hiker, runner, paddler, and cyclist, and has written about these passions for over two dozen publications, including *Seattle Met*, *Backpacker*, *Northwest Runner*, *AMC Outdoors*, *Northwest Travel*, and *Outdoors NW*. He is the content provider for [Hikeoftheweek.com](http://Hikeoftheweek.com),

author of ten books and co-author of four others including the recently released *Day Hiking the San Juans* and *Gulf Islands* and *Day Hiking Mount St Helens*.

Listen to Craig talk about his most recent book, *Day Hiking Mount St Helens* in Olympia on December 2 at a Meet the Mountaineers and Adventure Speaker Series Potluck. Go online to [www.mountaineers.org](http://www.mountaineers.org) and click on Olympia branch events to find out more.



Memorial on Mount Jupiter in a wilderness area. Photo by Craig Romano

A detailed acrylic painting of a mountain stream. The water is dark and reflective, mirroring the surrounding forest. A large, bright white snow patch sits on the left bank, with a vibrant blue waterfall cascading into the stream. The foreground is filled with smooth, brown and tan rocks. The background shows a dense forest of evergreen trees under a soft, overcast sky.

# Solace in Mountain Solitude

by Tori Karpenko, artist and Mountaineer

'After the Storm' Acrylic on Masonite, 36" x 24" - Painting by Tori Karpenko

*Every morning I wake to the heaviness of dread and scattered anxiety. Big life-shaking questions bombard me the minute I realize I've stopped dreaming. Every effort to create mental order in my overturned life is like opening closet doors only to have the contents of my life spill into a giant mess at my feet. Would I have to move away? Quit my job that I love? Leave the house that I built on eleven acres and leave behind my community and deep relationships in a giant dust-cloud of failure?*

**T**hat was three years ago. In the wake of my divorce, my young and only son moved four hours away to live with his Mom and there was nothing I could do to stop it. I was devastated. Eventually I came to grips with the fact that I needed to accept my new reality and allow myself to truly grieve but I felt lost with no map to guide me. How long is it going to take me to move on? Faced with the most difficult challenge of my life I sought solace from the ensuing emotional crisis in the North Cascade Mountains.

## Tranquil Solitude

The vast silence of raw wilderness gave me a place to begin calming an anxious and grief stricken mind. One hike in particular stands out as the catalyst for the path forward. On a solo trip to Snowy Lakes in the fall of 2013, I knew there was a chance of thunderstorms but I was determined to go. Sure enough, I spent the night floating on my sleeping pad in the middle of a drowning tent as thunder echoed around the bowl of Golden Horn. After the storm I was immersed in an altered world of mist and sun play, with not a human sound to be heard for the next two days. In

this remarkable setting, I discovered parts of me that were forged before the crisis. Parts that had endured other adversities – the resources needed to heal and find mental clarity buried deep inside. I just had to coax them out.

On the return hike from Snowy Lakes something started to crystalize and I saw a path emerging through the grieving process. In addition to the obvious casualties of divorce, I had drifted away from my studio practice, one of the most important disciplines I have for maintaining life balance. I hadn't made a significant body of work in three years – a relative eternity for an artist. By the time I got back to my car I made a vow to myself that I would produce ten paintings over the course of the next year. I wanted the subject matter to express the transformation I was experiencing as I shed layers of emotional baggage by going into the wilderness.

As I began to feel the mountains coaxing me into equilibrium, a friend serendipitously shared Richard Brautigan's poem, 'Karma Repair Kit: Items 1-4:'

1. *Get enough food to eat, ...and eat it.*
2. *Find a place to sleep where it is quiet, ...and sleep there.*
3. *Reduce intellectual and emotional noise until you arrive at the silence of yourself, ...and listen to it.*
4. ...

Number four is left blank. In beautiful simplicity, Brautigan's poem captures the power of solitude and describes arriving at a tranquil, accepting state of being. By giving voice to a complete contrast

of the terrifying emotional chaos I lived in, the poem became a mantra for me. As I hiked in to the mountains the agony of my mind receded and I became immersed in the silence of myself and I listened.

Along the way I discovered stories of other people who had been profoundly affected by mountain solitude. In a book titled, *Poets on the Peaks*, John Suiter depicts the creative and spiritual transformations of well-known beat poets Gary Snyder, Phillip Whalen, and Jack Kerouac in their years surrounding the summers they spent in the North Cascades as fire lookouts in the 1950's.

*Then I'm alone in a glass house on a ridge  
Encircled by chiming mountains  
With one sun roaring through the house all day  
& the others crashing through the glass all night  
Conscious even while sleeping*

-Philip Whalen on Sourdough Lookout

Imagine the impact of 50-60 days of continuous solitude high above the tree line with abundant time to watch the mountains, explore the depths of your soul, and make art! Through their stories, the lookout cabin – one of the Pacific Northwest's most iconic hermitages – became a crystalized symbol of the sanctuary that I too found in the mountains. I now understood the power of place-based healing, and became passionate about creating more of it.

## A New Lookout

A few months into my dedicated painting endeavor a symbiotic relationship emerged between my solace treks in to the mountains and the contemplative environment of the studio. If mystical alpine experiences provided rich fodder for the studio, and the studio led to a deeper understanding and appreciation of those adventures, would it follow that even more time in both settings would amplify the cathartic healing?

Because I could not afford to escape the existing responsibilities of my life to live in a lookout on top of a mountain, I decided to bring the lookout to me in the form of a mobile studio/gallery space that I could visit and create within whenever I wanted. Over the winter months, despite many obstacles including a demanding full time job, single digit temperatures and snow, I poured countless hours in to constructing a 14' x 14' lookout-style cabin based on antiquated Forest Service drawings and my own observations from pilgrimages to various lookouts around the state. I repurposed 15 single-pane windows from a 1930's era Fire Management Warehouse built by the Civilian Conservation Corps, who also built many of the fire lookouts in the Pacific Northwest in the 1930's. As my lookout deepened with historical references, it also took on new meaning by serving as a community "creative share space" in response to the devastating 2014 Carlton Complex fires. My lookout had become a healing space not only for myself, but for others as well.

The growing body of new paintings surpassed ten and I found myself returning most often to the enchanting colors of small, pristine, and often un-named alpine lakes. Majestic and flawless, high and lonesome, they became the perfect symbol for the state of mind I've found through place-based healing. Countless times I've sat by the shore shedding layers of emotional drama, letting them metaphorically settle to a resting place at the bottom while

serene, crystal clear water radiates above. In the studio, a similar regenerative focus depicting those places and the transformation that happens there brings me to a similarly quiet and uncluttered state of mind.

For me, spending time in the mountains pondering the essence of this precious purity, or to reflect deeper on those experiences in the studio, is to get in touch with the big-ness of creation, my own smallness and mortality, and the relative insignificance of my human drama in the grander scheme of things. So why not, as Kerouac says, take life as it comes and try to be more like the mountain? I now know that if it were up to me, I would fill in line number four of Braughtigan's poem with the words: "Find something pure, ...and visit often."

My story has some surprising silver linings. The past three years have been full of harmonious co-parenting and all three of us get to enjoy the best parts of both sides of the mountains. I see my son all the time and he is currently my favorite hiking partner, wet side or dry.



Tori and his lookout cabin. courtesy of Tori Karpenko

Tori lives in Twisp where his studio is located. His work will be featured at Traver Gallery (110 Union Street, Ste. 200) in Seattle starting Thursday, November 5th. The show will feature 12-15 of Tori's paintings created over the past 18 months along with the lookout cabin itself, which will be dismantled and reconstructed inside the gallery. The show runs until December 23rd and features a special night of poetry readings with NW author Saul Weisburg, director of the North Cascades Institute, on November 21st. The artist will also host a gallery tour and talk on December 5th. For more information, go to [www.travergallery.com](http://www.travergallery.com). To see more of Tori's artwork, go to [www.torikarpenko.com](http://www.torikarpenko.com).

# Observable Differences glacier recession in the North Cascades

by Tom Hammond and Mauri Pelto, Professor of Environmental Science



NCGCP 2015 team makes their way to the Lower Curtis Glacier. Note several years of rockfall and avalanche debris exposed due to excessive melting this year alone. Note too that the feeder ice falls south and east of the glacier are now essentially disconnected from the glacier. Photo by Tom Hammond

*Mauri Pelto is a research scientist, and Tom Hammond a long-time field assistant who have taken a special interest in how climate change is affecting glaciers of the Pacific Northwest. In 1984, they began working on the North Cascades Glacier Climate Project (NCGCP). The goal was to study the impacts of climate change across an entire mountain range.*

*The project measures a variety of glaciers across the North Cascades – from the south end of the range on Mount Daniel to the north end on Mount Shuksan; and from the West side on Kulshan (Mount Baker) to the dry East side on the Ice Worm Glacier (aka Hyas Creek Glacier). The glaciers are a critical resource in the region, providing water for farm and crop irrigation, hydropower, salmon and other wildlife, along with municipal supply.*

*For 32 consecutive summers, Mauri investigated the glaciers of the North Cascades. During the three decades of research, he's seen a range-wide loss of 25% of glacier volume. This year was particularly noable as the warmest on record with very low snowpack. This led to record low streamflow from rain, groundwater and snowpack from non-glacier areas. In turn, the warm temperatures led to an increase in runoff from glacier-fed basins – but how many more summers will these glaciers survive? In this article, written by Tom and Mauri, you'll learn about how they measure these glaciers and what their recession means for recreationists. - Suzanne Gerber, Publications Manager*

## Measuring Glaciers

Glaciers owe their existence to rates of snow accumulation that exceed rates of melting. The North Cascades holds the record

for greatest observed annual snowfall. If climate cools and/or snowfall increases dramatically, accumulation increases, which forces the glacier to expand and advance – as all glaciers on Mount Baker did between 1950 and 1980. When melting exceeds accumulation due to warmer and/or drier conditions, the glacier loses mass by retreating at the terminus and/or thinning, as has occurred on the same Mount Baker glaciers from 1980-2015. Since glaciers record climate 24 hours a day, year in and year out, they have long been recognized as key climate indicators.

The glaciers we measure are all in Wilderness areas, so no motorized vehicles or equipment is used in gathering the data and doing the science. This means we hike (or ski) everything in and out. In the course of this study, we've spent over 600 nights in tents, hiking/skiing over 4000 miles across glaciers, eating countless packets of oatmeal to get us started each day. On these trips, we've observed wildlife and wildflowers too. There's been an increase in mountain goat herds in several areas, and a decrease in ice worm populations. In addition, this study has provided the opportunity to train and work with more than 60 different scientists.

To collect our data, we measure the glacier mass balance – this is the difference between annual snow and ice accumulation and snow and ice melt on a glacier. The NCGCP has done this on the same ten glaciers every summer over the course of 32 years (and counting): Cache, Columbia, Daniels, Easton, Foss, Ice Worm, Lower Curtis, Lynch, Rainbow, and Sholes. We hike from crevasse to crevasse measuring the snowpack on the crevasse walls and assessing their depth. Analogous to reading tree rings,

the thickness of each year's snow layer is evident. We place stakes in the glacier to measure ice melt and additional data is gathered by directly measuring snow-depth with a heavy-gauge steel probe that's about four meters long. It can penetrate ice lenses and other seasonal events, while stopping hard at the surface of the previous year. Our snow depth probe is used even more for finding our way safely through the crevasses. In the 600-plus days on these glaciers, we haven't had a single crevasse incident.

## In the field

**Fieldtrip 1: August 1984** – As the heat of the day begins to dissipate, it's time to hike into our very first glacier of the project, the Columbia Glacier. We are at the Blanca Lake trailhead, a modest pullover along the side of a forest service road – not the current trailhead. We were the only car. The ensuing three hours of switchbacks took us to the first snow patches at Virgin Lake, salmon berries by Blanca Lake, a very cold ford across the lake outlet, and a bushwhack through alder on the way around the lake. The avalanche fans were filled with snow that was not going to melt that summer. The marmots were free to roam the open alpine meadow laced with melt streams that cascaded from above. The glacier rose in a convex front dramatically above a small ridge over which a magnificent waterfall plunged.

**Fieldtrip 210: August 2015** – At the same time of day, 32 years later, we park at a packed Blanca Lake Trailhead and head up to the glacier. It's approximately our 210th hike into to a North Cascade glacier for observations. We passed lots of descending day hikers. There was no snow at Virgin Lake, and the lake was no longer draining. The salmon berries had passed, the shore of the lake by the outlet was a mess, littered with intertubes, paper towels, food wrappers, and balloon pieces. At the far end of the lake we set up camp in the usual area, no longer a meadow, as alder and fir have developed a young forest that the marmots do not find as appealing. There was no snow in the avalanche chutes and the glacier's shallow, concave front was dirty and snow-free ending in a newly expanding lake, a good distance from the ridge.

The changes are striking.

## Glacier change over time

If you were born a century ago you would have observed that there were more glaciers in the Pacific Northwest – and that they were larger. However, this was during a period of retreat, just after the Little Ice Age, when glaciers of the Pacific Northwest were experiencing substantial retreat from 1900 to 1945. Terminal retreat averaged 1400m among larger Mount Baker glaciers, 1200m for 38 other North Cascade glaciers we examined, and 1900m for the Nisqually Glacier on Mount Rainier.

This 20th century's second substantial climate change began in the mid-1940s, when conditions again became cooler and precipitation increased – initiating an increase in mass balance and the advance of some (but not all) North Cascade glaciers.

The Coleman Glacier on Mount Baker was noted to be advancing in 1948 along with all of the mountain's major glaciers, by 480m on average. Major Cascade glaciers such as the Easton, Lower Curtis and Eldorado became more crevassed as they accelerated and advanced. Most small North Cascade glaciers did not advance, but the large, steep glaciers generally did.

The difference is that the faster a glacier moves, the faster its response to climate change. Factors causing rapid movement include steeper slopes, high elevation accumulation zones, thick glacial ice, and a narrow terminus. Glaciers that are slow to respond generally lack several of these characteristics. For instance, the flattest glacier on Mount Baker, the Easton, was the last to begin advancing after the 1940s and the last to begin retreating after the 1970s.

## Global Warming Effects from 1970 to 2015

Between 1970-2012, climate observations in the Pacific Northwest showed an accelerated warming of approximately 0.2°C per decade (Abatzoglou et al, 2014). By the mid-1980s, all the Mount Baker glaciers that had been advancing in 1975 were again in



Measuring Snow depth on Easton Glacier Crevasse, Mount Baker. Photo courtesy of Mauri Pelto



Limited retained snowcover on Columbia Glacier (accessed from the Blanca Lake trailhead) August 5, 2015. The dark bands are annual layers from winters as long ago as 2011, exposed by melting even in the upper part of the glacier. With no portion of this glacier high enough to be considered an accumulation zone, it is doomed. Photo by Tom Hammond

retreat. As of 2005, all 42 remaining glaciers were in retreat and five glaciers we observed had melted completely away, including the Lewis in 1990, Milk Lake in 1992, Lyall in 1994, North White Chuck Glacier in 2001 and Spider Glacier in 2005. This pattern of retreat is not confined to the North Cascades. From Alaska to California retreat has been substantial in every mountain range.

Glacier retreat in 2015 was the most extensive we've observed in a single year. Easton Glacier retreated 40m, Lower Curtis Glacier 35m, Columbia Glacier 27m and Sholes Glacier 25m – all single year records during our 32 years of observations – and each amounting to more than 10% of the total retreat in that period. During the course of this study, there were 22 years of negative mass balance, five years of break-even, and five years of positive mass balance. However, the positive mass balance years only increased by small fractions of a meter. On average, yearly loss has only been about one-half meter per year – but with summers like this, that number will grow fast and more glaciers will disappear.

### Forecasting glacier survival

We did not anticipate developing a model for glacier survival when we started this study in 1984. When climate warms, a glacier responds by retreating (losing the lowest and warmest region of the glacier). If this retreat does not stabilize at some point, the glacier is considered to be in disequilibrium and the glacier will ultimately disappear. That is, unless a glacier is high enough to support an accumulation zone given the current conditions. The clearest symptom of disequilibrium is thinning of the upper portion of the glacier, which indicates a lack of a consistent accumulation zone where at least part of the year's snowfall can survive through the following melt season. In order to survive, a glacier needs 60 - 70 percent of its area to be an accumulation zone. Of the North Cascade glaciers we have been mapping, 75% are thinning as much in the highest areas (former accumulation zones) as near the terminus, indicating they are in disequilibrium and destined to melt away for good.

In 2015, of the nine glaciers we examined in detail, six had less than 2% retained snowcover, which was gone by the end of August. Two more had no 2015 snowpack greater than 1.7m in depth, which also melted away before the end of summer. Average ablation through melting or evaporation during the August field season was 7cm per day of snow, and 7.5cm of ice. Only Easton Glacier will retain snowcover at the end of the summer. The lack of snowcover is evident on every glacier.

### A glimpse into the future

Because the glaciers this year had mostly ice, not snow at the surface, melting was enhanced. We found during a three week period in the Skykomish Basin that glacier runoff was 12% of the total flow despite covering only 1.3 % of the basin. The North Fork Nooksack glacier runoff was 74% of the total flow and only 6.1 % of the basin has glacier cover. In both cases the glaciers contributed a river flow percentage 12 times greater than the percent of basin area they cover.

The changes felt by the White Chuck Glacier may provide a glimpse into the future of other struggling glaciers in the North Cascades. The original USGS topographic map of the White Chuck Glacier shows northern and southern branches, each with separate accumulation zones, joining shortly above the



Gaging and met station at Sholes Glacier to measure glacial runoff. Photo by Mauri Peltó

terminus. At the peak of the Little Ice Age, the combined White Chuck Glacier covered an area of 4.8 km<sup>2</sup> and in 2015 it was reduced to 0.4 km<sup>2</sup>.

The effects of this dramatic change upon local hydrologic and biological processes are profound, and the cumulative effects throughout the Cascades is even greater. Glacier runoff from July-September declined 90%. Several new alpine lakes have formed where there used to be glaciers. There's was a loss of 0.55 and 0.65 cubic meters/second for the Whitechuck River during the July-September period. The water was less sediment-laden and warmer meaning less water for the fall salmon runs, and less food for stream invertebrates, on which salmon feed downstream in the Sauk and Skagit Rivers. One glacier that fed this watershed has already disappeared – the Milk Lake Glacier – last seen in the 1990's.

Between 2009-2015, warm weather generated a rise in stream temperature by at least 2°C in the Nooksack River basin. As the glaciers continue to retreat the North Fork will trend first toward the more limited impact of the Middle Fork and then the highly sensitive South Fork where warm weather leads to declining streamflow affecting the salmon population.

The Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association has completed numerous salmon restoration efforts, but climate is one challenge that cannot be restored locally. The reduction of the glacial melt component augmenting summer low flows is already resulting in more low-flow days in the North Cascade region.

### What it means for recreationists

The reality of decreased mass balance for glacier travel is limited snowpack late in summer, leading to challenging and sometimes more dangerous terrain. It reduces and in some cases, eliminates the opportunity for skiing on a glacier. We used to complete most of the measurements on skis in August, but a series of years from 2001-2005 made it clear skis were no longer productive with the diminished snowpack. The resulting glacier thinning leads to fewer crevasses as a glacier slows down, however, melting can also expand the width of crevasses and more importantly expose them as the veneer of snow bridges is removed.

This year, every crevasse was exposed early and widened by the long melt season, making navigation difficult. The reduced area of glacier coverage leads to greater exposure of unconsolidated glacial deposits that must be crossed, new lakes in basins that can impede access and steep new exposed bedrock at the head of many glaciers. ▲▲



Rainbow Glacier, September, 21 2015. On our annual trip to the Rainbow Glacier to image the terminus at the end of the hydrologic year, an observation we have made over the past few years was painfully evident: glacier ice-falls such as from the Upper Curtis on Mount Shuksan, or even the mighty Park Ice Cliff on the NE side of Mount Baker seldom calve. Where glaciers used to lean forward, pushing tons of thick ice forward in the form of seracs tumbling and smashing downslope (Shuksan means "Thunder" in the Nooksack language not due to lightning, but due to the history of ice avalanches), they now are in repose, melting in situ, thinning convex surfaces that leaves the observer with a sense of environmental empathetic despondence. Photo by Mauri Peltó



# Snow Spelunk

## cave explorations on Mount Hood

by Kristina Ciari, Mountaineers Marketing & Membership Manager

Dave enters the cave. Photo by Erik Chelstad

**A**s he stood at the mouth of Pure Imagination, a newly discovered ice cave on Mt. Hood's Sandy Glacier, Tyler Jursain felt apprehensive. "I don't even know if we're welcome here," he thought, glancing to his partners Dave Perez and Erik Chelstad. They had been planning this trip for months, and now they found themselves standing just feet from their final destination. Countless decisions had been made to get them here. There was just one more to make. With a deep breath, Tyler cocked his head to the side, pointed his ear toward the back of the cave, and listened for monsters. He heard nothing. He took his first step.

### The Unexplored

Only fully discovered in 2011, the Sandy Glacier Caves are the largest and most extensive glacier cave system in the lower 48. The caves are caused by erosion of the rapidly retreating glacier, creating caverns where ice meets rock. A combined 7,000 linear feet make up these caverns, comprised of three main caves: Snow Dragon, Pure Imagination, and Frozen Minotaur. Snow Dragon, the largest and most explored of the caves, collapsed one month before their trip.

The idea for this trip came from Erik. A friend had skied near the cave and posted a few alluring photographs online. Erik was immediately stoked to see it for himself. He did some research

and learned these caves had only been reported in early 2000 and painstakingly mapped by a team of experts in 2011. He knew he had to go.

Erik sent an email to his adventure buddies Dave and Tyler. Initially, their excitement about the trip was underwhelming. So, like any calculating Mountaineer, Erik would tactically drop reminders every few weeks via email. Just as the last photograph was starting from fizzle from memory, he strategically chose another little "nugget" to deliver to their inboxes. He found maps and pictures and articles and videos and was relentless in his sharing until everyone was as stoked as he was. They picked a date.

### Brought together by The Mountaineers

Dave, Erik, and Tyler are all members of The Mountaineers and intermediate climbing students. Originally from the East Coast, Dave spent a few years in British Columbia before moving to Olympia in February 2012. He didn't know anyone and wanted to explore his new home with people who loved the outdoors. Searching for people who meet in the mountains, Dave discovered The Mountaineers through Google. It was too late for him to get into a basic climbing class in Olympia, so he enrolled in the intense scrambling course in Seattle. There he met Erik.

Much like Dave's Google search, Erik was looking up a good place

to go snowshoeing in the moonlight and found The Mountaineers. "It looked like a cool crew and a good community so I signed up," he said. He enrolled in the intense scrambling course too, meeting Dave and kicking off years of adventuring together.

Tyler lives on the coast in an isolated community. He needed an outlet and his Uncle Mark – who had taken Basic Climbing with us a few years prior – handed Tyler his old course book and told him to go for it. "It seemed like a fun thing to do," Tyler said, and he Tyler enrolled in Olympia's Basic course in early 2013 alongside Dave.

The three finally met in the Tatoosh. Dave was there with some friends, Tyler was on a Mountaineers trip, and Erik was climbing Unicorn on a separate Mountaineers trip. They all ran into each other in the campground and the rest, as you say, is history.

## Finding the cave

The Cave Boys planned their trip for the first weekend in April. To access the vast caves system, you drive NE-1828 to the Top Spur Trailhead on the northern side of Hood via the Zig Zag Ranger Station. NE-1828 is not maintained in the winter, requiring an additional 7.8 mile approach from Muddy Fork Road. The road would have normally have still been snowed-in, but it was late enough in a particularly dry season they drove right to the trailhead and had a really comfortable hike in on the trail. They reached McNeil Point Shelter, and from there a long, exposed traverse off-trail is required to reach the mouth of the caves.

Clouds rolled in just as they reached the shelter, obscuring their view. They could no longer see their destination. There were no tracks to follow - they were officially off the grid.

Using navigation skills they learned in The Mountaineers, they did their best to pick a safe spot for camp while considering the

recent snowfall and potential avalanche danger and run off zone. After pitching their tent just as the sun was setting, there was a break in the clouds. For a fleeting moment they see the caves and just how close they were. "It was like a beacon of hope, being able to see that we are so close. It totally rejuvenated us," said Dave.

In the morning the boys spent hours slogging through fresh snow to reach the mouth of the cave (snowshoes had hastily been left at the trailhead). Just went they thought they couldn't slog anymore, they were standing in front of Pure Imagination.

Prior to the trip, Erik had searched far and wide for beta about the caves. He found an organization of spelunkers with some great info, but relatively speaking this area is still pretty unexplored. This made them all feel both excited and nervous. "We knew that we had several different sources of information, but that conditions are always changing," Erik said. "Openings close, structures collapse, and for days we had been fighting whiteout conditions. Every little adventure like this is a series of trust exercises, where you stop and evaluate what's going on with the people around you helping make the right decisions."

One of the email nuggets Erik had found was really crucial to safe decision-making: "approach the mouth of the glacier cave, peer in, cock your head, and orient your ear towards the back of the cave. If you hear 'monsters', do NOT go in." What are 'monsters' exactly? Rolling boulders or chunks of falling ice. A roaring river so loud you can't hear anything else. Sounds of instability.

They listened and heard nothing.

## Into the cave

"It's definitely scary as you take your first steps inside," said Dave. "But once you're in there and you're doing it, it's incredible. The magnitude was just grand and epic. It makes you feel so small."

[story continues on page 26 >>](#)



View from the back of the cave. Photo by Erik Chelstad





*Man is a creature who walks in two worlds and traces upon the walls of his cave the wonders and the nightmare experiences of his spiritual pilgrimage.*

**Morris West**



Approaching the cave. Photo by Erik Chelstad

<< continued from page 23

Tyler had a similar experience. "It was humbling. I felt nervous going in but then just in absolute awe once I got inside. We get to walk on all these glaciers but we never get to see the underbelly," he said.

Once inside, they encountered super-thin ice frozen onto the rock. They ended up rappelling down some sections that were pretty steep, the ice too sheer for crampons to really be effective. They were only a few feet apart, but with water rushing past and the immense echo they couldn't hear each other and had to rely on lessons from The Mountaineers. "We really got to use everything we learned in The Mountaineers on this trip." Erik said. "We got to do all of it: navigation, trip planning, decision making, snow camping, glacier travel and identifying instabilities in snow, building an anchor and rappelling off of it. We didn't place pro, but we basically used everything we learned."

In total, they spent little time in the cave compared to getting there - much like climbing to the summit of a mountain. But their memories and these incredible pictures will last a lifetime. "I'm 35 years old and I've been playing in the mountains since I was 15. I've never seen anything like that," said Dave

### Continuing the legacy of exploration

Like Mountaineers from 100 years ago, these cave boys sought to go a little off the beaten path. This trip wasn't an epic uncharted territory, but it was new ground for each of them and offered a chance to explore for the sake of exploration. They

all live in different towns but made an opportunity to meet in the mountains. We all have busy lives and busy schedules, but they emphasized the value of taking a weekend and putting "adventure" on your calendar.

And I think that's what's cool about this trip, and frankly what's cool about The Mountaineers. It doesn't matter that it wasn't an epic because it still felt like an adventure with friends. Friends they met through The Mountaineers.

I had to ask if any of them would have considered the Sandy Glacier Caves without the Mountaineers. They all said "no". Without our Mountaineers community they wouldn't know each other. They wouldn't think it was a good idea to go camping in a hillside in the middle winter or launch a cave exploration trip. Dave first joined The Mountaineers looking to find people to get outside. "I succeeded in my goal with The Mountaineers," he said. "After meeting Erik, we hit it off with two other people in our scrambling course and together had a full summer of adventure. We get together pretty frequently and now with Tyler there are my go-to people when I want to go outside."

When I asked if they would recommend this expedition I heard a resounding 'yes.' But a caution for spelunkers – be educated and in the approach. Don't go when there's summertime snow conditions, which could be any time of year with recent weather patterns. Learn safe off-trail and glacier travel skills. Go with a buddy, and, most of all, listen for the monsters. ▲▲

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# The Seeds of Thor

by Rose O'Donnell

The sprouting seed of an almendro tree (*Dipteryx panamensis*). Photo by Thor Hanson

If you have breakfast at Thor Hanson' home in the San Juans, you will experience the amazing variety of seeds: wheat in your pancakes, cotton for your pajamas, pepper in your bacon, jam from strawberries, and of course that most stimulating of seed brews - coffee.

Conservation biologist Thor Hanson is fascinated by seeds.

It started with his doctoral work studying seed-dispersal genetics in a Central American rain forest. Toward the end, he realized he still had questions about what prompted seeds' germination, or how dormancy worked. It's only natural, then, that Thor's latest book is the well-received *The Triumph of Seeds: How Grains, Nuts, Kernels, Pulses & Pips Conquered the Plant Kingdom and Shaped Human History*.

Thor is a Guggenheim Fellow, a Switzer Environmental Fellow, and an award-winning author. His 2011 book, *Feathers: The Evolution of a Natural Miracle*, won the John Burroughs Medal.

He is an engaging speaker who will read from both books at a Naturalists Study Group lecture at 7pm November 11, 2015, in Goodman A at the Seattle Mountaineers Program Center.

Thor is captivated not only by the biology of seeds but by their human connection. Each feature that led to seeds outperforming their ancient predecessor, spores, also underlies the reasons humans benefit from them:

- The nourishment that seeds carry also feeds humans.
- Seeds' profound innovation of breeding in the open air advanced the mixing of genes exponentially.
- Seeds become dormant and can be stored - and passed along.
- Their defenses are useful, even entertaining, to humans.
- Seeds set themselves up so animals, including early man, could help them travel.

Seeds have been described as a baby in a box with its lunch. The baby will turn into a new plant. The lunch is to nourish the plant that will emerge. The box is its transport system, often armed with defenses. "Each feature that makes seeds so successful also underlies the reasons we are dependent on them," he says.

Luckily for humans, seeds' "lunch" will also nourish us. Seeds transformed early nomadic hunters into farmers. In turn, we help the seeds find fertile ground. From the seeds' defenses we derive spices, stimulants, pharmaceuticals, even poisons. Humans find so much benefit from seeds that our futures have intertwined: We are interdependent.

"The fundamental driver for the evolution of seeds is about the future," Thor says. It's a huge, complex process that is a form of time travel, putting the baby seed in just the right place to continue its genetic lineage.

"We feel a deep connection to seeds," Thor says. We pass along Grammy's favorite green beans, or Uncle Javier's tomato that is best adapted to our climate. Seeds play a traditional role in human ceremonies: Rice has been thrown at weddings for generations.

Over time, humans learned to be creative with seeds, giving us hybrids that have evolved into today's forays into genetic modification. Thor says GMOs join a long list of technologies humans have invented that we struggle to make peace with: nuclear power, for example, or drones. The challenge, he says, is to put parameters on their use, to find ways to control these technologies in ways we can be comfortable with. "We can agree on one thing," Thor says. "It's worth having this discussion."

Come hear Thor talk about his studies on seeds at The Mountaineers Seattle Program Center - Wednesday, November 11 at 7pm, as part of the Naturalists Lecture Series. Learn more about him online: [thorhanson.net](http://thorhanson.net).



## Uniting our Collective Voice

by Tania Lown-Hecht, Outdoor Alliance Communications Director

Tania's brother-in-law over Benson Pass during this year's backpacking trip. Photo Tania Lown-Hecht

**T**his August, while backpacking through the Hoover Wilderness in California with my husband and brother-in-law, I ran into a woman about my age. She was headed down the trail in our direction so we hiked together a few miles, chatting about our work, her Pacific Crest Trail thru-hike the previous summer, and our mutual love of solo trips. She was a teacher out on a three-day trip before the school year started back up. I told her about my work with Outdoor Alliance and our efforts to bring together the outdoor recreation community to protect public lands.

In a funny turn of events, my dad met the very same woman on the train in San Francisco just a few weeks later. They had struck up conversation about ultramarathons when he started talking about his daughter who works at Outdoor Alliance. "Was she recently backpacking in the Sierras?" the woman asked my father. It was a chance encounter that is also a testament to the interconnected communities of people who love the outdoors.

At Outdoor Alliance, we mobilize this community of outdoor enthusiasts to come together to protect the public lands and

waters we collectively love. Outdoor Alliance began as an informal coalition of outdoor recreation groups who realized that the overlap in their policy goals lent itself to more substantial collaboration. Whether this was protecting a special place with a permanent designation, or improving policies to improve the outdoor experience, we soon realized that by working together, our collective voice was much louder and more powerful than any individual group. By uniting the voices of mountaineers, climbers, paddlers, mountain bikers, and backcountry skiers, we have been able to strengthen our efforts to protect important places and promote smart conservation policies.

An early project that demonstrated the power of our collective voice was our work on the Colorado Roadless Rule. Outdoor Alliance brought valuable data and comments from the united outdoor recreation community to improve how National Forest land was classified and managed in Colorado. We collected detailed data from whitewater paddlers, mountain bikers, backcountry skiers, and climbers to determine the most important "parcels" that needed increased protection. By uniting outdoor recreation

groups and coordinating with other stakeholders including outdoor businesses, we made a big impact on the final Rule. We more than doubled the acreage in upper tier protection, from 562,000 acres to 1.2 million acres. Almost 40% of the increased upper tier acreage came directly from Outdoor Alliance's joint comments and data about important parcels of land.

At Outdoor Alliance, we are mobilizing a community of people who, despite their passion for public lands and their experiences on them, tend not to be "joiners." We are a community of people who appreciate solitary experiences, the beauty of remote places, and escapes from cities and crowds. Uniting this community requires both a broad vision of what the outdoor community can do, and an appreciation for the specificity of particular places and what they mean to people.

## The Mountaineers and Outdoor Alliance – Our Partnership

Both regionally and nationally, The Mountaineers has been crucial to the work of Outdoor Alliance. We are deeply rooted in the outdoor community of the Pacific Northwest, and bring a depth of knowledge and expertise on Washington's public lands. Our members and volunteers' strong relationships as passionate outdoor adventurers in the Pacific Northwest enriches Outdoor Alliance's efforts on both regional and national policy issues.

As a community of outdoor enthusiasts passionate about our public Lands, we bring an indispensable boots-on-the-ground voice to conservation work in Washington State and Washington DC. When it comes to protecting the places we love to play - like the Mountains to Sound Greenway - Outdoor Alliance supports The Mountaineers in working with other local groups, like American Whitewater, Washington Trails Association and Washington Climbers Coalition, to advocate for these special places. And our membership in Outdoor Alliance amplifies our ability to weigh in on national policy issues, like the reauthorization of the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

Over the last 50 years, the conservation community has accomplished so much, resulting in the protection of millions of acres of public lands. However, there continue to be critical challenges facing our public lands. Here in the west, wildfire reform is crucial, especially as the wildfire season is longer and more intense than it has been in the past. The recent effort



Entering the backcountry of Yosemite National Park. Photo by Tania Lown-Hecht

to seize public lands and turn them over to states and private entities threatens our access to the places we hold dear. The human-powered outdoor recreation community has a direct and intensely personal connection with public lands and waters. By joining together our voices to speak out about places and policies that matter to us, we can have a powerful influence in how we conserve public lands and protect our experiences on them.

Outdoor Alliance is a conservation and recreation nonprofit based in Washington DC made up of the following member organizations: Access Fund, American Alpine Club, American Whitewater, American Canoe Association, International Mountain Bicycling Association, The Mountaineers, and Winter Wildlands Alliance. OA's mission is to protect, enhance, and promote the human-powered outdoor recreation experience by uniting the voices of outdoor enthusiasts to conserve America's public lands. [www.outdooralliance.org](http://www.outdooralliance.org)

**M** The Mountaineers

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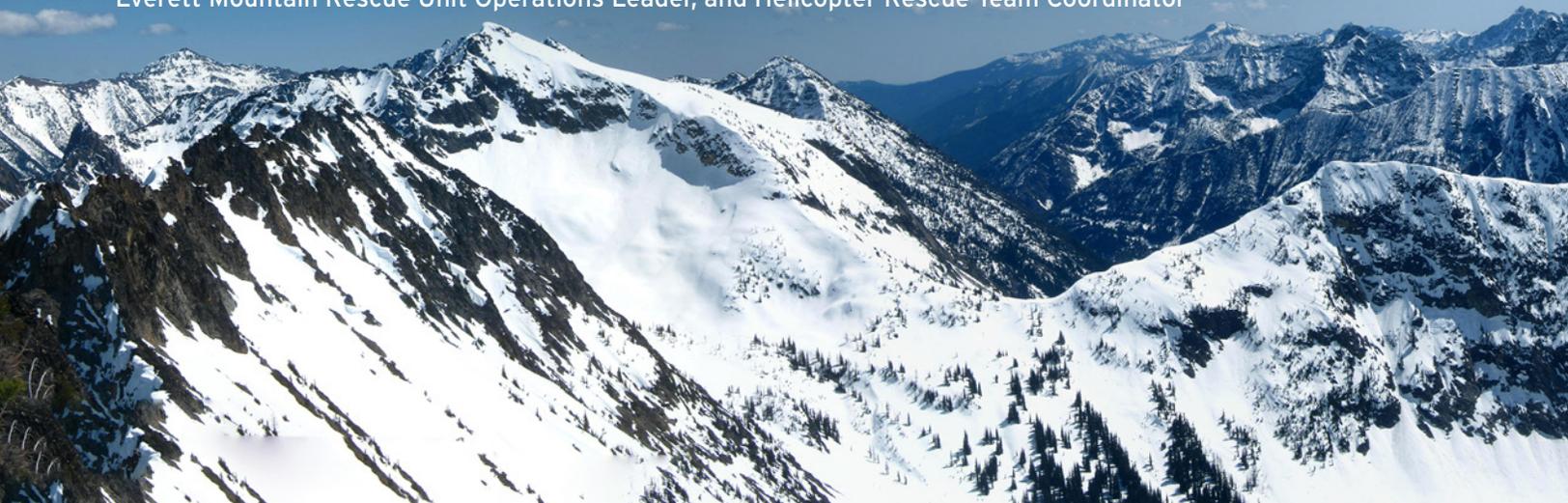
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## A Step Ahead of Avalanches

by Oyvind Henningsen, North Coast Alpine Guides Owner, AIARE Level 3 Certified Avalanche Forecaster, Everett Mountain Rescue Unit Operations Leader, and Helicopter Rescue Team Coordinator



**O**n December 29, 2002 a party of seven Mountaineers were involved in an avalanche accident in Cement Basin near Crystal Mountain. While skiing, they triggered a slide that buried one and partially buried three. One person was killed and another sustained a broken leg.

More people are killed on national forest land by avalanches than any other natural hazard. On average, 29 people per year have been killed by avalanches over the past five seasons in the United States. Last season was a statistical anomaly due to lack of snow and for Washington, this resulted in a year of zero fatalities. Almost all fatalities are people doing what we all love to do in the winter; backcountry skiing, snowshoeing, climbing, snowboarding, or snowmobiling. Roughly 90% of victims die in slides triggered by themselves or a member of their party. Most die from asphyxia while about a third die from trauma. If you are buried more than 35 minutes you only have a 27% chance of surviving.

These statistics should be scary enough to give anyone a healthy respect for dangers present in a snowy environment. Fortunately, avalanches are not entirely unpredictable. They happen for particular reasons, at specific places and points in time. There is no doubt that education, information and experience are components of staying safe in the mountains. A good start to your adventure would be to familiarize yourself with the following four important concepts.

### **Planning is key to safety**

Mountain travel at any time of the year requires planning in order to optimize safety. Beware of the seven P's: Proper Prior Planning Prevents Piss Poor Performance. Your adventure should begin in the comforts of home where you can, stress-free, research and decide on a trip that is appropriate for mountain conditions and fitting for the folks in your group. Doing proper trip planning helps you foresee, mitigate and avoid hazards. Your plan should

incorporate avalanche and weather forecast, snowpack analysis, terrain assessment, human factors, and emergency contingencies. Obtain and review the avalanche forecast at [www.nwac.us](http://www.nwac.us). Here you will find the experts' opinion of current danger and a travel advisory for the day. Account for this advice in your plan for the day. Plan for several route options and estimate how much time it will take you to complete your trip. Consider your gear needs and what to do if you have to spend the night – or an accident happens. Leave a detailed description of your trip plan with a reliable friend, so they know what to do and who to contact if you are late. Include your whole group in the planning process and agree to travel together, decide together, and build consensus as a team. If you get things right at this stage, chances are you will return home happy and with a great sense of accomplishment.

### **Choose the right terrain**

Your terrain choice is a primary key to your safety and if avalanche is the question, terrain is the answer. You can explore the mountains in any winter condition and be safe; it just depends on where you choose to go. It's important to identify where in the terrain the avalanche danger is present. A slope angle of 30-45 degrees is bull's eye for an avalanche. A steep, sparsely treed, wind loaded slope with rollovers, gullies and cliff bands will be more dangerous than a low angle, heavily treed slope or a ridgeline.

In addition, consider your routes exposure to the sun, type and amount of anchors, elevation, size, evidence of previous avalanche activity, potential trigger points and terrain traps that are present on the slope. To gain a better understanding of the terrain consult maps, guidebooks, online forums, pictures, knowledgeable friends, and professional guides. Take time to identify specific terrain to avoid. Red mark these on your map so you won't forget or be tempted to ski the line or take the shortcut.



Washington Pass Panorama. Photo by Dennis Kielerich

### Look for signs of unstable snow

Nature has a way of warning us about danger so keep your senses alert to signs of unstable snow. Current avalanching is the most obvious sign of instability. This suggests that similar slopes that have not avalanched are highly unstable. Cracking snow, shooting cracks or the sound of snow collapsing is an indication of buried weak layers. This is a clear sign that avalanches could happen given a sufficiently steep and open slope. If it sounds like you are walking on a drum with hollow sounds, you are likely in a thin snowpack area where avalanche triggering is more likely. Wading to your armpits in snow is evidence that there is a lot of snow available for a loose snow avalanche. Stepping through heavy snow on the surface into lighter snow beneath indicates the possibility of a slab avalanche. Evidence of past or current wind transported snow indicates areas of wind slabs. Quickly warming temperatures or if its starting to rain is a sign that its time to head back indoors. It is important to be observant and heed the warning signs of nature.

### Establish good backcountry habits

Have a great time in the backcountry, but don't forget, your danger assessment could be incorrect, so employ sound habits to reduce your overall risk exposure. These habits include choosing the most cautious route following low-angled or treed slopes and ridge crests whenever possible. Don't stop, regroup, or take photos in exposed areas and terrain traps. Travel one at a time through hazardous areas and keep your partner within sight. Assign someone to be in front and in back. When choices about your route or safety are required make sure to stop and consult the whole team. Make decisions as a group and continuously monitor human factors that might be affecting your judgment. Don't travel above someone on a slope. Avoid traveling alone and splitting up from your party. Stay far away from cornices; don't travel on them, don't travel below them. If you are uncertain if

a slope is stable or not, increase your safety margin and choose a different path. Insist that your partners are as attentive to safety as you are.

### Are you ready for Snow?

The Mountaineers have many wonderfully experienced mentors within its membership and most of the branches offer industry standard avalanche education at reasonable prices. Consider signing up for one of these courses to learn more. Understand that making decisions in the mountains is difficult and absolute certainty and accuracy might not be within reach. Apply yourself to getting educated and employ a structured process for planning, making decisions, and execution of a trip. Look back and reflect on every trip to understand what you did well and in what areas you could improve. This process of reflection will help you develop as a decision-maker and result in increased safety for you and your team in the winter landscape. ▲▲



Ski Boundary Sign. Photo by Jason Speer

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## The Living Bird: 100 Years of Listening to Nature

With the Cornell Lab of Ornithology  
Photography by Gerrit Vyn

personal note from Kate Rogers, Editor-in-Chief of Mountaineers Books.



Bluethroat. Photo Gerrit Vyn

**M**ountaineers Books recently published *The Living Bird: 100 Years of Listening to Nature*, by The Cornell Lab of Ornithology. This project was exciting for so many reasons! We got to collaborate with a prestigious national conservation organization; promote the stunning imagery of a Seattle-based photographer, whose fascinating work takes him around the world studying and recording birds; and feature the warm yet brilliant writing of renowned writers Barbara Kingsolver and Jared Diamond, among others.

But I think what has made this book even more meaningful for all of us here is the subject itself—birds. When the project first came to us, photographer Gerrit Vyn used the title “Why Birds?” It’s a good question. Why do we care about them? What makes them so interesting and draws our attention? How is it that so many birds are iconic and for so many different reasons? Think of the Bald Eagle, American Robin, Marbled Murrelet, or Wild Turkey: each conjures a different idea or image in our collective experience. Of all the animals in nature, birds are frequently the most accessible, most visible (or, at least, audible), living in our backyards and twittering in the forests that line our trails. Almost everyone I know has a “favorite” bird, or at least one memorable experience involving a feathered friend. For me, there are two stand-out moments: As a kid, I attended summer camp in northern Ontario where the camp director was a licensed Canadian bird-bander. In three different places across the camp’s acres, bird nets were stretched out and campers monitored them throughout the day, in between swimming,

canoeing, and compass practice. I learned how to gently untwine a caught bird, hold it properly, and carry it back to the office to deposit in a special bird box, where it awaited banding and data recording. Over those summers, I held many birds—finches, warblers, a Cedar Waxwing, even a fledgling Kingfisher—but the most memorable was a Ruby-throated Hummingbird, so small it almost could have flown *through* the holes in the net. The speed of its tiny beating heart was unfathomable, and unforgettable!

Many years later, when I stood in a lush garden on Bainbridge Island, about to say my wedding vows, my intended, Tom, and our guests were astonished when first a Bald Eagle and then, just minutes later, a Great Blue Heron each landed on different trees rising above where we stood. The eagle is Tom’s favorite bird; the heron, mine. Obviously, we took it as a very good sign for our marriage.

“All the birds among us offer a window into a different kind of knowing,” writes Lyanda Lynn Haupt in her essay included in *The Living Bird*. A different kind of knowing, a different kind of pleasure, a different kind of lightness – Mountaineers Books is so proud to share this intimate look at all the wonderful birds among us.



### New hardcover from Mountaineers Books:

*The Living Bird: 100 Years of Listening to Nature*, with original essays by Barbara Kingsolver, Jared Diamond, John W. Fitzpatrick, Lyanda Lynn Haupt, and Scott Weidensaul. Includes 250 images, of over 100 North American bird species.



## Investing in Adventure for the future of wild places

by Mary Hsue, Director of Development & Communications

24 new Peak Society members joined at The Mountaineers BREAKTHROUGH fundraiser in April 2015. Photo by Luke Humphrey

### Adventure is a gift

There's no seeing adventure. You feel it. It brings you back to life like a blade of grass touched by the morning dew and fills a gap in your lungs you didn't know was there.

There's no fatigue. With soaking boots, you push through knee-high snow and do so happily. Tired, knees screaming, you wonder what it was like for Mountaineers when they took these same steps 100 years ago. Thinking this, you feel history.

You enjoy the serenity and clarity that comes with a mind focused purely on your footsteps, on a babbling brook, on a question you seek only to understand. This is you feeling adventure and connecting with the natural world, a place that is both fragile and eternal.

Adventure is the natural world's gift to you, and as a Mountaineers member and supporter you know that your gift back to the natural world is the action you take to protect it.

### Visionary investment to deliver on a promise

At the heart of The Mountaineers is conservation – to ensure the wild places we see near and far remain in the picture, healthy and wild for generations to come. It's our promise to generations of Mountaineers who created the national parks and wilderness areas we enjoy today.

Protecting this natural playground takes time and energy. Protecting it for future generations take significant investment and visionary aspirations.

Thanks to Peak Society, a community of Mountaineers investors,

our wild places have a voice. Launched just over four years ago, Peak Society has grown from a community of 35 members to 125 members as of the end of fiscal year 2015, each investing \$1,000 to an extraordinary \$20,000 in annual support to create and expand efforts to transform lives and conserve our wild places.

All of our members and supporters play an important role in getting thousands of kids outside to explore the nature, giving voice to our wild places, and enabling volunteers to transform lives. But the programs that deliver on our promise would not exist today without the bold investment of Peak Society members.

### Getting better all the time

2015 marks just over four years at The Mountaineers for me. This place is not the same as it was in 2011. It's better. It must have been a vision of what we are today that drove The Mountaineers board and executive leadership to attain 501c3 status and launch efforts to deliver on our promise.

Today, The Mountaineers is a vibrant and growing organization that connects more and more people with the outdoors to build a strong, vital community of individuals who enjoy and value the natural world. We got here by dreaming big and confidently pursuing those dreams – together.

It's been thrilling to support this growth over the past four years, but our work is not complete: our adventure is not over. It's clear that we need continued investment and commitment to our success. We couldn't have made it this far without the generosity of our Peak Society supporters, and together we have new summits to reach.

# The Mountaineers Peak Society Members (as of September 30, 2015)

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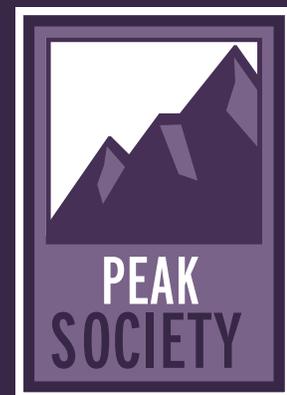
\* denotes charter membership

## The Value of Membership

Peak Society members provide critical, aggregate funding to sustain programs vital to The Mountaineers mission and to support emerging initiatives vital to our vision.

The Peak Society is comprised of individuals and families who make annual gifts of \$1,000 or more to The Mountaineers Annual Fund. We offer members the opportunity to be inspired and expand their knowledge of key issues through periodic, complimentary Peak Society-hosted occasions to engage with influential leaders and fellow members. We hope you will join us and be a part of this visionary society that makes big dreams achievable.

Go to [www.mountaineers.org](http://www.mountaineers.org) to donate today.





Meany Lodge in winter. Photo courtesy of The Mountaineers

## Baker Lodge

**Nov. 27-29, Mount Baker Lodge:** Join us Thanksgiving weekend for the opening of the skiing season at Mt. Baker. *The future of Baker Lodge is at risk, but you can help! Find out more on the next page.*

[www.mountaineers.org/about/locations-reservations/baker-lodge](http://www.mountaineers.org/about/locations-reservations/baker-lodge)

## Kitsap Forest Theater & Cabin

**Rent the Kitsap Forest Theater, Kitsap Cabin and/or the Kitsap Yurt:** Are you looking for a unique venue for your event or celebration - weddings, meetings, birthday celebrations, corporate events, concerts, workshops, reunions or retreats?

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There are hikes available on the property (20 acres) and on the adjacent Rhododendron Preserve. "Big Tree" is a popular destination and is one of the largest old growth firs on the Kitsap peninsula.

During our show season (spring and summer) we have limited weekend availability, but there are several available summer weekends, and the fall is a great time to visit this unique and special place. During the week we have much more availability. Get away from the city and stress and enjoy our peaceful and magical venue.

The Kitsap Cabin, built mostly by Mountaineers women in 1918, is the social hub of the Kitsap Forest Theater, the Kitsap property and Kitsap Branch. It is the spring and summer home base for The Mountaineers Players as they rehearse and perform at the beautiful Kitsap Forest Theater. It is also the home base of the Kitsap Forest Adventure Camp and The Mountaineers Kitsap Branch. The Kitsap yurt was installed on the property several years ago and is a perfect meeting and gathering space.

Kitsap Cabin and yurt are surrounded by the Rhododendron Preserve,

a 460-acre private reserve operated by The Mountaineers Foundation. The preserve is one of the largest remaining parcels of Puget Sound Lowland old growth forest in the Puget Sound Basin, and acts as a buffer protecting the Kitsap Forest Theater and salmon spawning creeks from encroaching development.

Please contact us for details and pricing: 206-542-7815

## Meany Lodge

**Work Parties:** Check out the workparty page and see what they are proposing to do. Upcoming days: **Oct 18th, Nov 6th - 8th, 13th - 15th**

**Meany Winter Season Pass:** Remember, If you just come to Meany for 5 winter weekends, you will start saving money. If you include any other times (ie holiday week), then you make out like a bandit. Remember our full day access to the slopes, means full day, as long as the tows are running you can use them. **Adult \$475.00, Child (13 and under) \$325.00**

**Meany Holiday Week:** Meany is open Dec 27th thru Jan 1st. New Years is a trip unto itself. Dinner is prime rib, Killer dessert prepared by the Meany Kids. For the younger crowd, we have a "early New Years" celebration - including fireworks, and parents can put them to bed early. Around 11:15 PM or so, we open the Lane for night skiing/snowboarding and a Bonfire is started. Around 11:30 or so, the non-skiing/snowboarding individuals begin to gather on the hill, libations are passed around and at midnight we add fireworks, more libations, grapes (ask Mercedes - it is a Spanish tradition) and the Meany camaraderie. A very nice, safe and comfortable way to welcome in the New Year. Cost, per overnight stay: **Adult member \$65, Child member \$35, Adult Guest \$80, Child Guest \$45, Toddler Free.**

**Winter Weekends:** Besides Holiday week, Meany is open every weekend starting the weekend of Jan 1st and going through the weekend of March 4th (Carnivale di Meany). Come up and play for the weekend or just a day. you will definitely enjoy yourself. <http://www.meanylodge.org>

**Meany Winter Sports:** Meany has its own Winter Sports School run by our own indomitable Patti Polinsky. Email her to find out what she is planning on scheduling for this coming season: [sports\\_director@meanylodge.org](mailto:sports_director@meanylodge.org) If you are part of a group that is looking for a place to hold a meeting,

retreat, reunion or other kind of overnight get together, consider bringing your group to Meany. We are open to groups as small as 12-15 folks and can make room for up to 90. We're planning to keep our prices at \$45/person/night inclusive of the same quality food we always serve.

## Stevens Lodge

The Mountaineers has a fantastic facility for members to enjoy at Stevens Pass. Located just above Lot 4 at the Stevens Pass Ski Area, Stevens Lodge is one of the only ski-in, ski-out facility on the pass. We are open every weekend from December to April, including holiday Mondays in January and February.

The lodge has three dorms with 12-24 bunks in each dorm. Bathrooms are shared and there is a shower in each restroom. The main living area has a large dining room and lounge area with a fireplace. Meals are included in your price of lodging: breakfasts on Saturday and Sunday and dinner on Saturday. Meals are prepared by volunteers and served family-style

at a posted time. Please note any dietary restrictions when making your reservation.

Guests are asked to contribute to the running of the lodge by picking up at least one "chore" a day, which can be shoveling snow, serving dinner or hauling firewood. This community effort is what keeps the lodge ticking.

**It's easy to make a reservation** to stay at Stevens Lodge during the season. Visit The Mountaineers website and click through to Stevens Lodge, then register under "Lodges and Centers." You can also make a reservation online through Brown Paper Tickets: [www.brownpapertickets.com/profile/248152](http://www.brownpapertickets.com/profile/248152)

We welcome individuals as well as group reservations for birthday parties, youth groups, etc. Please call Member Services at 206-521-6001 if you have any questions about visiting Stevens Lodge.

*Cancellations for lodges and outdoor centers must be made before noon of the Thursday prior to the weekend of the reservation. They will be refunded minus a small service fee.*

## The Future of Baker Lodge is at Risk

The Mountaineers are considering the future of Mt. Baker Lodge and are soliciting input and support from the membership as to the best next steps. If operations at Baker Lodge are to continue as they have, since the 1950s, a new core of volunteer stewards must be found. Otherwise alternative business models will have to be pursued in order for the Lodge to maintain financial and operational viability. It is "gut check" time for the Mountaineers membership as to whether or not this long-time resource for outdoor enthusiasts will remain a volunteer-led and operated entity or will migrate to some other management model, possibly without local control by members.

### BAKER LODGE'S COMMITTEE NEEDS

If we want to maintain the option of continuing to operate as a volunteer-led enterprise we need new members to supplement and enhance the current Baker Lodge committee members' capabilities and, over time, to replace some members, as well as bring in new ideas. About fifteen dedicated volunteers make up the current Committee, but a number of long-time members have expressed an interest in reducing their involvement in the day-to-day operations over the next year; they would be glad to help new members get up to speed. This provides the perfect opportunity for a smooth transition from the current guard to a new cadre of volunteer leadership. The institutional knowledge of the current Baker Lodge committee is not only vast, but fascinating.

### VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Desirable interests and/or skills needed from volunteers to maintain Lodge operations:

- **Leadership: a Chairperson(s) to provide oversight, motivation, and coordination of the entire team**
- **Financial oversight/treasurer**
- **Marketing**
- **Cafeteria or large group cooking**
- **Repair, maintenance & capital improvements coordinator**
- **Hosting diverse user groups and providing a welcoming atmosphere, while delegating tasks**

Looking forward, in addition to recruiting new volunteers and Committee members with the necessary interests and skills listed above, we need to add members with skills in strategic planning for the future. We want to conduct an analysis of our operations to see if we are preparing adequately for the future and using the Lodge in the best ways to meet the needs of the organization and our members.

### TYPICAL TASKS AND OBLIGATIONS

Each year the lodge is used about 70 nights a year, mostly in the winter months. Volunteer "hosts" open and close each weekend and serve as coordinators for the cooperative preparation of nourishing

breakfasts and dinners, dish washing, snow shoveling, and general upkeep of the facility. Over the summer, in addition to being open to the public and club members, there are work parties of volunteers to do annual repair, maintenance, and improvements at the lodge.

### BAKER LODGE'S VOLUNTEER HISTORY

Volunteers have been the lifeblood of the Baker Lodge from the beginning. Work on the lodge began in the fall of 1956 when the remains of an old barn were burned and topographical information obtained. The Board appointed the Mt. Baker Building Committee in March 1957 and the Forest Service issued a building permit in June. Between July and September 25 concrete footings were constructed with the help of 28 volunteers on the day of the pour. Starting in early 1958 work parties in Seattle milled all beams and posts, which in June were loaded on a logging truck and transported to the building site. Over 30 volunteers showed up on July 4 to start construction and after an additional 14 work parties the lodge was open Thanksgiving to a capacity crowd. Total cost was \$12,383. Since the lodge opened it has been financially self-sustaining.

The Mountaineers' Mt. Baker Lodge provides a retreat setting in the spectacular northern Cascades, offering access to the Mt. Baker ski facilities, backcountry skiing & snowshoeing in winter, hiking in the summer and numerous other outdoor recreation opportunities year round for those who want to explore, learn from, and enjoy the outdoor recreation opportunities of the Pacific Northwest. It serves Mountaineer members as well as non-members, individuals and groups (scouts, public & private schools, clubs, weddings, etc.), who are willing to form a temporary community, sharing space and tasks in an atmosphere of camaraderie and cooperation.

### FUTURE IMPACT OF THESE VOLUNTEER ROLES

This is a tremendous opportunity to shape the future of this historic lodge, and we need people committed to creating a vibrant, financially stable, and well-staffed lodge as weekend volunteers or as Committee members providing oversight and helping to determine improvements to operations. Running the lodge is like running any small business and the experience is incredibly rewarding.

### HOW TO HELP

If you would like to join in the exciting task of writing the next chapter of the Baker Lodge story, let us know!

Contact the vice President of Outdoor Centers - Geoff Lawrence: [geoff.lawrence@tacomamountaineers.org](mailto:geoff.lawrence@tacomamountaineers.org)

Leadership Development manager - Chris Williams: [chrisw@mountaineers.org](mailto:chrisw@mountaineers.org), 206-521-6034

Or our Baker Lodge Chair - Dale Kisker: [dskisker@comcast.net](mailto:dskisker@comcast.net), 206-365-9508.

# branchingout

Welcome to the seven branches of The Mountaineers



Propelled by dedicated and skilled volunteers, all branches offer a number of courses and seminars. Many courses, such as climbing, scrambling, kayaking, backcountry skiing and others, require a set of learned skills to enjoy safely and follow a common curriculum from branch to branch.

See course events in the "Go Guide" section of this magazine. Although our program curricula are coordinated to meet Mountaineers-wide standards and policies, each branch offers a slightly different flavor or character to its offerings. Though you may want to join the branch nearest to your home, you may join any branch of your choosing. For current activities and links to branch websites, visit [www.mountaineers.org](http://www.mountaineers.org).

## BELLINGHAM

**Vice Chair:** Minda Paul  
[mindapaul@hotmail.com](mailto:mindapaul@hotmail.com)

**Website:** [www.bellinghammountaineers.com](http://www.bellinghammountaineers.com)

The Bellingham Branch was founded in 1983 with 50 members. You will find it tucked alongside the craggy expanse of the North Cascades. It features a vital, close-knit community courses in first aid, basic and intermediate mountaineering.

It is also home to one of the most popular Mountaineers getaway destinations, Mt. Baker Lodge. From the lodge, Mountaineers and guests can also recreate to their heart's content year-round. In addition to the courses noted above, Bellingham also offers hiking trips and

snowshoe tours.

**BRANCH MEETINGS:** Public Meetings are held on the 2nd Tuesday of each month and Branch Committee Meetings are on the 4th Tuesday of each month. See the website for time and locations.

**VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:** We would love to have additional hike and snowshoe leaders along with backcountry ski and youth program coordinators. We are also currently looking for a branch treasurer and a branch chair-elect. Email Minda for details.

## EVERETT

**Chair:** Matt Vadnal,  
[matthewvadnal@aol.com](mailto:matthewvadnal@aol.com)

**Website:** [everettmountaineers.org](http://everettmountaineers.org)

The Everett Branch of The Mountaineers was founded in 1910 by H.B. Linman, an Everett dentist. The new organization successfully sponsored over a dozen hikes that year. Its first outing was a hike to Lake Isabelle. Several hundred members of the public attended "stereopticon" presentations at the Everett High School auditorium. Dr. Linman, his wife,

and seven other branch members reached the summit of Glacier Peak in August 1910 during The Mountaineers' annual outing. The branch was not "officially" founded until 1911 when The Mountaineers charter was amended to provide for branches. This anomaly allowed the branch to hold its centennial celebration in 2010 and 2011!

Everett members share a wide variety of activities. Please explore the branch website or attend one of the branch monthly meetings to discover more about the branch.

**MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS:** To learn more

about branch activities and meet some nice people who happen to be Mountaineers, attend the monthly meetings on the first Wednesday of most months and often feature a guest presentation. The meetings take summer off and resume in September. Members, guests and the general public are invited to join us at 7 p.m. in the Snohomish County East Administration Building, 3000 Rockefeller Ave., Rm F107 in downtown Everett.

The Everett Branch has unlimited volunteer opportunities for those who want to lead climbs, hikes, scrambles, ski tours, kayak trips and trail maintenance activities.

## KITSAP

**Chair:** Jeff Schrepple,  
[avdfan@aol.com](mailto:avdfan@aol.com)

**Website:** Kitsap Branch on [www.mountaineers.org](http://www.mountaineers.org)

Founded on March 6, 2003 the Kitsap branch counts in its backyard the trails, waters, and mountains of both the Kitsap and Olympic peninsulas.

Over slightly more than a decade, this branch has developed very strong climbing, hiking, and sea kayaking programs and in the past year

its conservation/education program has also grown significantly. Other Kitsap Branch courses and activities include snowshoe/winter travel, navigation, first aid, wilderness basics, hiking & backpacking basics, and trail running. The branch is currently exploring the possibility of starting a naturalist committee.

Our activity committees sponsor four or more stewardship efforts each year and recurring events include our spring and fall Salmon Safaris. The branch hosts an Annual General Membership meeting every October. A major goal of the branch is to add more family activities in 2015.

**BRANCH MEETINGS:** Most branch meetings and courses are held at the historic Kitsap Cabin at 3153 Seabeck Highway, which is located on the Kitsap Forest Theater/Rhododendron Reserve property between Silverdale and Bremerton. However, some meetings may be held at other locations throughout Kitsap, Jefferson, or Clallam Counties, depending upon the activity or the audience to be reached. Branch council meetings are held quarterly on the third Thursday of the designated month at 5:30 pm. To find the day and location of the council meetings please check the Kitsap Branch event calendar of The Mountaineers website.

## SEATTLE

**Chair:** Peter Hendrickson,  
p.hendrickson43@gmail.com

**Website:** [www.mountaineers.org/about/branches-committees/seattle-branch](http://www.mountaineers.org/about/branches-committees/seattle-branch)

The largest of our branches, Seattle gives lovers of the outdoors an opportunity to try out hiking, backpacking, scrambling, climbing, skiing, snowshoeing, wilderness navigation, first aid, family activities, folk dances, leadership training,

naturalist study, photography, singles events, Retired Rovers activities, Under the Hill Rovers activities, sea kayaking, and sailing.

**MEET THE MOUNTAINEERS:** The Seattle Branch holds a Meet The Mountaineers open house at The Mountaineers Program Center periodically. These allow new members and prospective members to learn about The Mountaineers offerings. Keep an eye on the website for information about the next one.

**FOLK DANCING:** Every Tuesday from 7:30 to

9:30pm (unless it is a parks or national holiday). Location: Peter Kirk Community Center (also known as Kirkland Community Senior Center) 352 Kirkland Avenue, Kirkland, WA. For more information, check the online calendar of events for the Seattle Branch (not to be confused with the Seattle Program Center).

[www.mountaineers.org/events](http://www.mountaineers.org/events)

**INTRO TO MAP AND COMPASS:** Learn the basics of how to keep from getting lost in the wilderness. See website to register.

## FOOTHILLS

**Chair:** Steve LeBrun,  
stevelebrun@comcast.net

**Board of Directors Branch Representative:**  
Cheryl Talbert  
cascadehiker@earthlink.net

**Website:** [foothillsmountaineers.org](http://foothillsmountaineers.org),  
[FoothillsWinter.org](http://FoothillsWinter.org)

The newest Mountaineers branch, founded 11 years ago, the Foothills branch encompasses the eastside communities along the I-90 and I-405 corridors. The "little branch that could" sponsors activities and classes that focus on backcountry skiing, hiking, backpacking, first aid, navigation, and snowshoeing. Our signature programs include a comprehensive Backpacking Building Blocks (B3) backpacking course, and our Foothills Winter Program which offers Ski & Snowboard Mountaineering, Multi-Week Ski Lessons, Avalanche Awareness, AIARE Avalanche Certification and Glacier Travel, Crevasse Rescue, winter camping, sports

conditioning, and leadership training courses. Foothills leaders offered 143 different hiking, backpack and snowshoe activities in 2015 as well over a dozen different courses.

Visit the Foothills Branch web page often for information on upcoming activities, film and speaker events, trips, classes and courses.

The Foothills branch also seeks to be a vital community presence in promoting safe and enjoyable recreation along with conservation advocacy.

Are there activities you would like to Foothills to do or do more of? More hikes or backpack or ski trips of a certain kind? Additional training in outdoor skills? Certain special events or speaker topics? Let us know, and we'll try to make it happen. Email branch chair Steve with your comments or ideas. Do you want to stay better informed about Foothills plans and activities? Then consider a Foothills branch affiliation by accessing "Your Account" on the club website.

**MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS:** Branch Membership meetings as well as Branch Council meetings

(open to all members) are held from time to time at Issaquah, Mercer Island or Bellevue locations. See the branch website and calendar for specific events and meeting dates. Membership meeting are social in nature, and typically include a guest speaker, outdoor-themed film, or a slideshow presentation of backpacking and global adventure trips taken by members.

**VOLUNTEERING:** Are you looking to develop or utilize your knowledge and skills while making new friends and working with like-minded outdoor enthusiasts? The Foothills branch welcomes new activity and trip leaders, course content developers and instructors, writers, and event planners. The branch offers the training and mentoring support to help those interested become a confident hike and backpack trip leaders. We also appreciate volunteer support with administrative tasks such as bookkeeping, publicity, website blogging scheduling - the sometimes mundane work vital to the success of the branch.

*The Foothills Branch – your Eastside community of outdoor friends & recreationists.*

## TACOMA

**Chair:** Jim Paxinos,  
jim.paxinos@tacomamountaineers.org

**Website:** [www.tacomamountaineers.org](http://www.tacomamountaineers.org)

The second largest of all seven branches, Tacoma maintains not only its own program center in the Old Town neighborhood of Tacoma, but a property close to Mt. Rainier, the Irish

Cabin on the Carbon River. Tacoma Branch offers an extensive list of activities and courses, including backpacking, hiking, conservation, scrambling, climbing, first aid, snowshoeing, skiing, sea kayaking, sailing, bicycling, singles events, wilderness navigation, avalanche awareness, folk dancing, photography and family activities.

Learn more about us by visiting our branch website to view our activities, our events

calendar and other offerings.

**MEET THE TACOMA MOUNTAINEERS:** Tacoma Branch holds a free meeting on the third Friday of every month (except June-August and December) to introduce prospective and new members to the branch. The meeting starts at 7pm with a presentation about The Mountaineers, followed by an interlude to talk with various activity reps (hiking, climbing, sea kayaking to name a few of the 22 activities).

## OLYMPIA

**Chair:** Brian List, [balancingdogs@gmail.com](mailto:balancingdogs@gmail.com)

**Website:** [www.olympiamountaineers.org](http://www.olympiamountaineers.org)

Meet the Mountaineers, Potluck and Adventure Speaker series on first Wednesdays from September through May, excluding November, at the Friends Meeting Hall at 3201 Boston Harbor Rd. NE. The potluck meal begins at 6 p.m. Bring a dish to share and your own plate and flatware. The adventure presentation begins at 7 p.m. Contact Carolyn Burreson at [ccburreson@q.com](mailto:ccburreson@q.com).

**DECEMBER 2 ADVENTURE PRESENTATION**  
-Craig Romano is an award-winning guidebook author who has written for over 2 dozen publications and authored or co-authored 14 hiking guidebooks. Drawing from his latest book, Day Hiking Mount St. Helens, Craig will spotlight St Helens' best trails through words

and pictures - from short, scenic, nature trails to multi day, backpacking adventures.

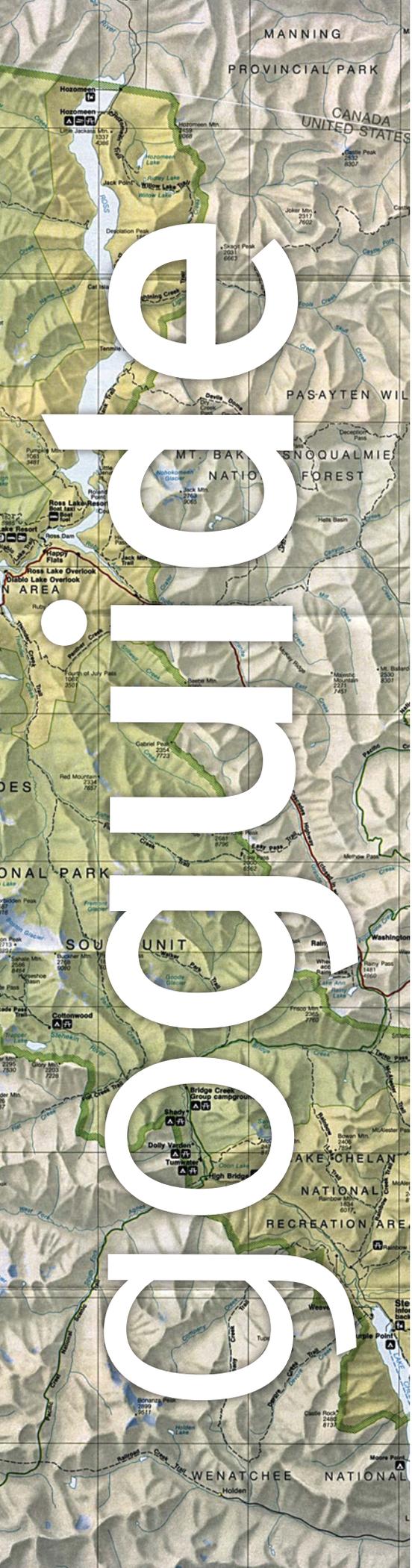
**ELECTION RESULTS.** This year, 133 members marked their ballots to decide the officers who will lead our branch into the future, starting on October 1, 2015. They are: Chair-Elect Andy Weber, Community Relations and Social Chair Donna Krueger, Treasurer Kim Pohlman, and Member-At-Large and Past Chair Greg Lovelady. Thanks to all officers who have completed their terms and to those who stepped up to volunteer.

**BANFF MOUNTAIN FILM FESTIVAL** returns to Olympia on Saturday and Sunday, December 12 and 13, at the Capitol Theater, with different films each night. Tickets are \$15 per night (Sunday only: \$12 for OFS members, Mountaineers, and military) or \$26 for both nights. Films start at 7 p.m. (doors at 6 p.m.) Saturday and 6 p.m. (doors at 5 p.m.) on Sunday. For more information, check the branch website or contact Ken Nelson at [kenhnelson@comcast.net](mailto:kenhnelson@comcast.net) or 360 528-0763.

**GET READY TO MEET THE OLYMPIA MOUNTAINEERS.** The annual open house for prospective students and new members is scheduled for January 5 at St Martins Worthington Center. Volunteers should contact Donna Krueger at [djkrueger@comcast.net](mailto:djkrueger@comcast.net) to help. See the branch website for details.

**THE BRANCH OFFICERS** meet the second Wednesday of the month at 6 p.m. at the Olympia Center, 222 Columbia St NW. The next meetings are November 11 and December 9. Members are encouraged to attend. Contact Brian List at [balancingdogs@gmail.com](mailto:balancingdogs@gmail.com).

**BRANCH LIBRARY:** Contact Maxine at 360-786-6512 (8 a.m. to 8 p.m.) or [maxdunk@comcast.net](mailto:maxdunk@comcast.net) if you'd like to come by to browse, check out or return materials, or request items for pickup at the monthly potluck. The catalog is listed on the branch website. GearX on 4th Ave. has a drop box. Bear resistant containers are also available.



## Ready for Adventure?

The Go Guide offers **just a sampling** of the thousands of Mountaineers trips, outings and events each year. Please go online to [www.mountaineers.org](http://www.mountaineers.org) to gain a fully-detailed view of all up-to-the-minute listings. Many of our activities - especially day hikes and urban adventures - are open to the general public who sign up as guests, as an introduction to Mountaineers activities.

If you are looking for camaraderie with a particular branch of The Mountaineers, check out the color-designated abbreviations at the end of each listing: **BEL** = Bellingham, **EVT** = Everett, **FH** = Foothills, **KIT** = Kitsap, **OLY** = Olympia, **SEA** = Seattle, **TAC** = Tacoma. **SIGN UP** for the trip or event of your choice online, and remember that you may register for an event or course in any branch, regardless of the one you belong to.

*note: Events and trips require registration unless otherwise noted. You will also need a current waiver on file with The Mountaineers to participate. Following are guides and keys to interpreting the trip listings.*

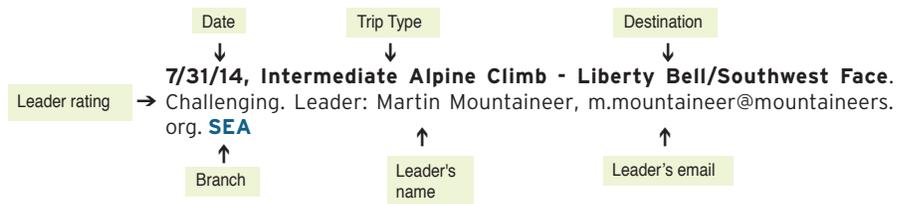
### Mountaineers Ten Essential System required on all Mountaineers trips:

1. Navigation
2. Sun protection
3. Insulation
4. Illumination
5. First aid supplies
6. Fire starter
7. Repair kit and tools
8. Nutrition (extra food)
9. Hydration (extra water)
10. Emergency shelter

### List of potential abbreviations:

CG—Campground	E, W, N, S—East . . .
USGS—US Geological Survey	GT—Green Trails
Hwy—Highway	I—Interstate
ITC—Issaquah Trail Cntr	Jct—Junction
MRNP—Mt. Rainier	NP—National Park
NWFP—NW Forest Pass (fee)	mi—miles
FS—Forest Service	P&R—Park and Ride
Rd—Road	RS—Ranger Station
RT—Round Trip	SP—State Park
SR—State Route	TH—Trailhead

### ACTIVITY LISTING KEY



### COURSE LISTING KEY



## How to use the Go Guide:

We use the same category names as online, so if you find an activity or course you would like to sign up for, just go to our website and click on the *Explore* or *Learn* tab. You can then filter your search by category (for example, *Day Hiking*). We've recently updated our privacy guidelines, and are no longer listing the volunteer leaders' phone numbers in this public format, unless requested.

## We're conducting a survey!

We'd like to find out how often you read the magazine and what your favorite parts are. Starting in 2016, we are considering making the magazine seasonal, with four issues per year: winter, spring, summer and fall. Fill out the attached post card and mail it in, or go online to [mountaineers.org/magazinesurvey](http://mountaineers.org/magazinesurvey).

If you have any suggestions, questions or feedback, please send an email to Suzanne Gerber, publications manager, at [suzanne@mountaineers.org](mailto:suzanne@mountaineers.org).

# activities

Below is just a sampling of The Mountaineers activities. To see the full listing, go to [www.mountaineers.org](http://www.mountaineers.org).

## climbing

**12/12/15-12/13/15, Intermediate Alpine Climb - The Tooth/South Face** (Challenging) Leader: Stephen Bobick, sbobick2@gmail.com. **EVT**

## day hiking

**11/5/15, Day Hike - Soos Creek Trail to Lake Meridian Park** (Moderate) Leader: Dick Hayek, richardhayek@aol.com. **TAC**

**11/12/15, Day Hike - Des Moines Creek Park** (Easy) Leader: Dick Hayek, richardhayek@aol.com. **TAC**

**11/14/15, Day Hike - Point Defiance Park** (Easy) Leader: Dick Hayek, richardhayek@aol.com. **TAC**

**11/15/15, Day Hike - Lime Kiln Trail** (Easy) Leader: Bob Pankl, pankl@earthlink.net. **SEA**

**11/17/15, Day Hike - Bonneville Power Administration Trail** (Moderate) Leader:

Dick Hayek, richardhayek@aol.com. **TAC**

**11/18/15, Day Hike - Green River Trail and Natural Resources Area** (Easy) Leader: Christopher Ensor, ctrails@comcast.net. **SEA**

**11/27/15, Day Hike - Mount Walker** (Moderate) Leader: Brian Carpenter,

## sea kayaking

fleasgach@gmail.com. **SEA**

**11/29/15, Day Hike - Indian & Moonlight Trails** (Easy) Leader: Christopher Ensor, ctrails@comcast.net. **SEA**

**12/4/15, Day Hike - Lake Fenwick via the Rabbit Loop** (Moderate) Leader: Christopher Ensor, ctrails@comcast.net. **SEA**

## snowshoeing

**11/15/15, Sea Kayak - Indian Island Circumnavigation** (For Beginners - Getting Started Series) Leader: Don Rice, drice@olypen.com. **SEA**

## stewardship

**12/25/15, Sea Kayak - Commencement Bay** (Moderate) Leader: Vern Brown, hohfern@gmail.com. **KIT**

**12/20/15, Intermediate Snowshoe - Kendall Peak Lakes** (Moderate) Leader: Lawrence Landauer, lawrenceglennlandauer@yahoo.com. **FH**

**11/20/15, Stewardship - Elwha River Restoration Project** (Moderate) Leader: Katherine Hollis, katherineh@mountaineers.org.

## urban adventure

**11/13/15, Indoor/Outdoor Wall Climb - Mountaineers Tacoma Program Center** (For Beginners - Getting Started Series) Leader: Lonna Frans, lonnafrans@gmail.com. **TAC**

For more, go to [mountaineers.org](http://mountaineers.org) and click on the Explore tab.

## 2015 - 2016 Naturalists Lecture Series Seattle Program Center, 7pm

**Nov. 11, 2015 (Wed) - Thor Hanson**, who recently published "The Triumph of Seeds."

**Jan. 13, 2016 (Wed) - Paul Hessburg**, USFS forest ecologist, will focus on how our forests have evolved without fire, and what they should look like.

**Feb. 11, 2016 (Thurs)** The geology of Mount Rainier, by **Mike Harrell**, scientific instructional designer at the UW's Earth and Space Sciences department.

**Mar 10, 2016 (Thurs) - Carolyn Shores** of the UW's Predator Ecology Lab focuses her research on predator/prey relationships, particularly the impact of returning wolf packs on coyotes and their prey.

# courses

Below is just a sampling of courses offered. See [www.mountaineers.org](http://www.mountaineers.org) for complete and up-to-date listings.

## avalanche safety

**Avalanche Safety 1/12/16-1/24/16, AIARE Level 1 Avalanche Course - Foothills.** An AIARE certified level one avalanche course. Members: \$275, Non-members: \$325. Contact: Chuck Mac Laren, avy@foothillswinter.org. **FH**

## climbing

**11/5/15-2/28/16, Self Rescue II - Everett.** Members: \$ 50. **EVT**

**11/18/15-12/31/15, Intermediate Alpine Climbing Course.** Intermediate Climbing Course - Seattle Members: \$400. **SEA**

**12/6/15-10/30/16, Basic Alpine Climbing Course.** 2016 Seattle Basic Alpine Climbing

Course Members: \$550, Non-members: \$700. **SEA**

**1/20/16-10/31/16, Basic Climbing Course - Kitsap.** Members: \$350, Non-members: \$450. Contact: Ralph Wessels, ralphwessels@comcast.net. **KIT**

**1/20/16-10/31/16, Basic Climbing Course - Everett.** \$525. Contact: Nicholas Mayo, nicholas.e.mayo@gmail.com. **EVT**

**1/30/16-1/31/16, Introduction to Alpine Ice - Everett.** Intermediate Alpine Ice and Winter Mixed Members: \$300, Non-members: \$400. Contact: Ivan Breen, ivanbreen@gmail.com. **EVT**

**1/30/16-10/22/16, Basic Climbing Course Second Year - Tacoma.** Members: \$63, Contact: Sarah Holt, sarah.hlt@gmail.com. **TAC**

**2/2/16-12/31/16, Basic Climbing Course-Olympia.** Members: \$300, Non-members: \$500. Contact: Bob Keranen, keranen@hcc.net. **OLY**

**2/10/16-10/22/16, Basic Climbing Course - Tacoma.** Members: \$475, Non-members: \$575. Contact: Tim Helton, timh948@gmail.com. **TAC**

**2/10/16-10/22/16, Basic Climbing Course - Tacoma.** Members: \$475, Non-members: \$575. Contact: John Vankat, vankatjj@gmail.com. **TAC**

**2/16/16-10/18/16, Glacier Travel Course - Seattle.** Basic Glacier Travel Course 2016 will teach skills that will allow graduates to be part of a glacier rope team. Members: \$300, Non-members: \$450. Contact: Manisha Powar, manishap@live.com. **SEA**



## exploring nature

**11/11/15, Naturalist Lecture Series 2016 - The Triumph of Seeds.** A series of talks and seminars presented by the Naturalists committee. Members: \$0, Non-members: \$5. Contact: Rose O'Donnell, r.a.odonnell@icloud.com. **SEA**

**1/13/16-1/13/16, Naturalist Lecture Series 2016 - Paul Hessburg.** A series of talks and seminars presented by the Naturalists committee. Members: \$0, Non-members: \$5. Contact: Rose O'Donnell, r.a.odonnell@icloud.com. **SEA**

## navigation

**1/1/16-1/1/30, Mentor Session for Wilderness Navigation - Seattle.** Mentor Session for Wilderness Navigation Workshop Members: \$0, Non-members: \$0. Contact: Tim Lawson, timlawsonwild@msn.com. **SEA**

**1/1/16-12/31/16, Wilderness Navigation Course Seattle.** Members: \$65, Non-members: \$65. Contact: Brian Starlin, brian.starlin@comcast.net. **SEA**

**1/21/16-10/3/16, Smart Phone & Dedicated GPS - Seattle.** Smart Phone & Dedicated GPS - Seattle 2016 Members: \$20, Non-members: \$25. Contact: Brian Seater, bseater@gmail.com. **SEA**

## outdoor leadership

**12/5/15, The Mountaineers Leadership Conference.** A day reserved for current and

aspiring leaders to foster new ideas and skills. Esteemed outdoor community speakers and interactive sessions punctuate a program designed to enhance your leadership and personal growth. Please come and participate in this fun and exciting event spotlighting what The Mountaineers have been best at for over 100 years: Leadership Development. Members: \$25, Non-members: \$200. Contact: Glenn Eades, geades@seanet.com.

## sea kayaking

**11/1/15-11/15/15, Beginning Kayak Roll - Seattle.** Kayak Roll Clinic - Seattle 2015 Members: \$150, Non-members: \$300. Contact: Teresa Wittmann, teresawittmann@hotmail.com. **SEA**

**11/1/15-11/22/15, Roll Class Clinic - Tacoma.** Kayak roll class Members: \$125, Non-members: \$150. Contact: Alison Reinbold, areinbold@comcast.net. **TAC**

**11/7/15, Don Beale Paddle Carving Workshop - Kitsap.** Don Beale Paddle carving workshop Members: \$135, Non-members: \$0. Contact: Vern Brown, hohfern@gmail.com. **KIT**

## ski/snowboard

**1/1/16-3/31/16, Winter Travel Course - Everett.** Our Winter Travel course is an all inclusive course covering snow travel techniques for skis and snowshoes to ensure you'll be exploring year round. Members: \$150, Non-members: \$200. Contact: Rachel Sadri, rachelsadri@gmail.com. **EVT**

**1/6/16-2/10/16, Multiweek Telemark and Randonee Ski Lessons - Foothills.** Multiweek Telemark and Randonee Ski Lessons 2016 Contact: Greg Woodman, gw\_sea@yahoo.com. **FH**

**1/12/16-1/23/16, Basic Nordic Skiing - Olympia.** This series of four lectures will include an orientation to backcountry travel, avalanche awareness and safety, route selection, cold weather ailments, clothing, and equipment. Members: \$40, Non-members: \$50. Contact: Tom Eckhout, teckhout@msn.com. **OLY**

## snowshoeing

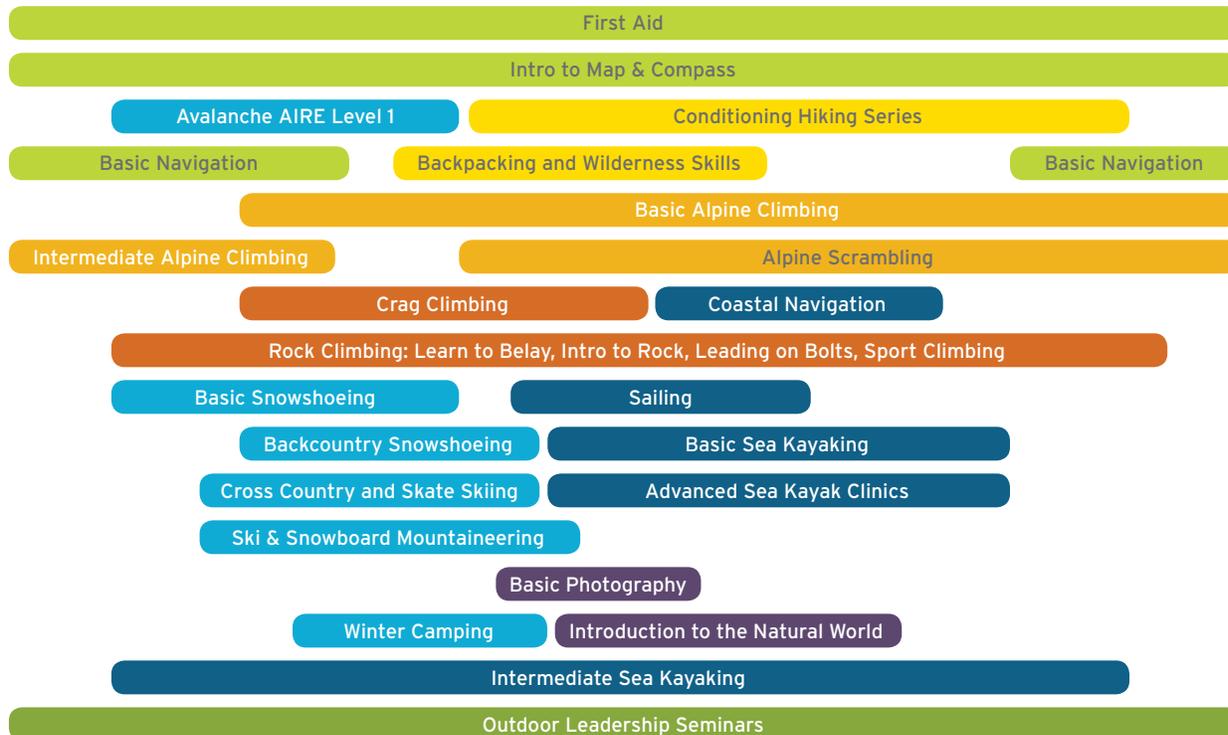
**1/7/16-4/30/16, Basic Snowshoeing - Tacoma.** Basic Snowshoeing -Tacoma Class2 Winter 2015/16 Members: \$75, Non-members: \$85. Contact: Charles Celmer, remlec@yahoo.com. **TAC**

**1/11/16-4/25/16, Basic Snowshoeing Course - Foothills.** Introduction to Snowshoeing: be prepared, be safe, be skilled, enjoy winter - Foothills Branch Members: \$75, Non-members: \$95. Contact: Steve LeBrun, stevelebrun@comcast.net. **FH**

This is just a sampling. For complete listings and the most up-to-date courses, go to [www.mountaineers.org](http://www.mountaineers.org) and click on the Learn tab.

## The Mountaineers Course Overview

November December January February March April May June July August September October



## Unexpected Wonderland

by Cheryl Talbert, Mountaineers Global Adventure leader

Long-time leader Patti Polinsky had planned a lovely hut-to-hut Nordic ski and snowshoe trip between rustic backwoods lodges in Maine this past February, when a huge blizzard with 20 inches of forecasted snow threatened to block roads to their starting point. With the help of her local Appalachian Mountain Club partners, she was able to round up a two-door sedan and driver a day early, and four passengers and all their gear shoehorned themselves inside and scooted up the road, reaching their first lodge before the storm hit (seeing two moose along the way!).

Patti's Mountaineers group, along with 10 companions from the AMC, spent two nights in each of three lodges over the next week, enjoying ice skating on a frozen pond, snowshoeing between the lodges in the winter wonderland, relaxing in front of a roaring fire, and savoring gourmet meals including Cornish hens and cream puffs. Just goes to show that sometimes the unexpected events that happen while traveling can prove more amazing and memorable than the original well-laid plans, especially in the hands of an experienced trip leader!

The little cabin to the right is a hexagon shape. History says that a confederate war veteran with only one arm built the log cabin. He could not manage a 8 foot log. So he cut the logs 6 feet. He made it hexagon so he could have a larger log cabin than if he had built a square cabin. Photo by Patti Polinsky, Mountaineers Global Adventure leader

## Explore the world with The Mountaineers Global Adventures

### XC or Backcountry Ski the Canadian Rockies

February 15 - 21, 2016

Beginner to intermediate cross country and backcountry skiers will love the Canadian Rockies' spectacular scenery and powder snow. Mt. Assiniboine is the "Matterhorn of the Rockies". Deluxe beautiful Assiniboine Lodge has a main lodge, indoor flush toilet, private bedrooms, heated log cabins, bedding and towels, hot showers, sauna, avalanche gear, and famous history! This outing is fully guided and catered. Helicopter in and ski out (option to helicopter out). **Price:** \$2,000. Register online by August 1. **Leader:** Craig Miller, craigmiller@comcast.net

### Backpack or Trek Northern Patagonia's Lakes, Volcanoes, and Rainforests

Feb 28-March 10, 2016 with optional extension to March 17

Explore for nine days on high ridges among innumerable lakes and high peaks to the huge Tronador volcano in Argentina's Switzerland - Nahuel Huapi National Park. Stay in mountain huts and camps; carry your own overnight gear, or hire a porter and carry only a daypack. Join an optional seven-day extension into Chile on the famed 'Andes Crossing' ferry, day-hike high on the flanks of two more snow-capped volcanoes, and explore for 4 days in the unspoiled Cochamo valley, the "Yosemite of Chile", staying in hotels and mountain huts. **Price:** \$3,000, +\$2,200 extension, by Nov. 1, 2015. **Leader:** Cheryl Talbert, cascadehiker@earthlink.net.

### Ski/Winter-Walk France

March 4-20, 2016

Begin by staying in and touring Anney, "The Venice of France"

before moving to a small traditional French village with a ski-in/ski-out hotel which with views of mountains in all directions. Finish skiing in Val d'Isère before going to Geneva to fly home. Land transportation, American buffet breakfast and multi-course dinners included. **Price:** \$2,750 **Leader:** Patti Polinsky, MeanySports@me.com, 206 525 7464

### Ski Mountaineer British Columbia's Rogers Pass

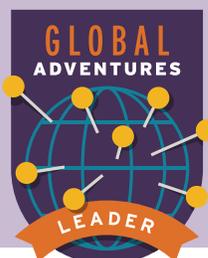
March 26 - April 3, 2016 M3G

Rogers Pass has some of the best accessible backcountry skiing in North America. We will traverse across a glacier with an overnight pack to Glacier Circle Cabin and back. The skiing and scenery are amazing. Very strong, expert backcountry skiers, with glacier travel training. **Price:** \$600. Register online by January 1. **Leader:** Craig Miller, craigmiller@comcast.net

[www.mountaineers.org](http://www.mountaineers.org)

Click on the Explore tab, then search "Global Adventures."

### Interested in being a Global Adventures leader?



Find out what it takes and see if you qualify. Visit the Global Adventures Committee page on [mountaineers.org](http://mountaineers.org) and take a look at the "Requirements and Steps to become a Global Adventures Leader." Questions? Contact the Global Adventures Committee Chair Craig Miller at [craigmiller@comcast.net](mailto:craigmiller@comcast.net).

# businessdirectory

We thank the following Mountaineers business owners for their support:

## ARCHITECTURE

**Grace Kim** (Joined 2001)  
Schemata Workshop  
www.schemataworkshop.com  
grace@schemataworkshop.com  
206-285-1589

## AUTOMOTIVE

**Lee Wilcox** (Joined 1995)  
Lynnwood Auto and Truck Service  
lynnwoodautoandtruckservice.com  
lynnwoodautotruckservice@gmail.com  
425-776-5888

## CONSTRUCTION

**Louie Coglas** (Joined 1987)  
Louie Company - Roofing Specialist  
www.LouieCompany.com  
earthhumor@comcast.net  
206-963-4521  
WA Lic #: LOUIEC902C6

## FINANCIAL SERVICES

**Mearl Bergeson** (Joined 2011)  
Merrill Lynch Wealth Management  
www.fa.ml.com/mearl\_bergeson  
mearl\_bergeson@ml.com  
206-464-5632

**Diane Jochimsen, CFP®** (Joined 1987)

White Raven Financial Services  
www.whiteravenfs.com  
diane@whiteravenfs.com  
360-653-0198

**Leah Schulz** (Joined 2006)

Tri Star Finance  
www.leahschulz.com  
leah@TriStarFinance.com  
206-523-1288

## HEALTH CARE

**Kevin Rindal** (Joined 2015)  
InHealth Sports Injury and Performance  
www.inhealthseattle.com  
drrindal@inhealthseattle.com  
206-315-7998

## MIND AND BODY

**Hope Maltz** (Joined 2007)  
Moving Into Comfort -  
Feldenkrais Method®  
www.MovingIntoComfort.com  
hope@MovingIntoComfort.com  
425-998-6683

## OUTDOOR RECREATION

**Barbara & George Gronseth**  
(Joined 2009)  
Kayak Academy/Issaquah Paddle Sports  
www.kayakacademy.com;  
www.issaquahpaddlesports.com  
info@kayakacademy.com  
206-527-1825

## REAL ESTATE

**Leah D. Schulz** (Joined 2006)  
The Force Realty  
www.RealEstateByLeah.com  
leah@leahschulz.com  
206-523-1288

## Want to become a Mountaineers Business Member?

To find out more about increasing your small business' visibility with The Mountaineers membership and to become a supporting business member of this group, contact our Membership & Marketing Manager, Kristina Ciari, kristinac@mountaineers.org or 206-521-6023.

As in all things Mountaineers, the idea for a Business Member category was started by a dedicated volunteer and board member, Leah Schulz, who saw this as a means to strengthen support for the organization and the benefits of Mountaineers membership. To find out more about opportunities to get more involved with this group, contact Leah: leah@leahschulz.com or 206-523-1288.

Business Members receive the following:

- Business Member Directory listing on the Mountaineers website, including link to business member's website and in the magazine
- A 25% discount on advertising in the *Mountaineer* magazine
- Business Member Directory included in new-member packets distributed to all new members
- Opportunity to publicly showcase support of Mountaineers organization

And remember: since The Mountaineers is a mission-based and volunteer-driven 501(c)(3) non-profit, your membership dues are tax-deductible.

Check the weather and  
avalanche forecast at  
**www.nwac.us**  
before heading out.

# MAKE EVERY TRIP A ROUND TRIP

Become a member  
of the Northwest  
Avalanche Center  
and support the  
service.



Ad Space Courtesy of The Mountaineers  
Photo © Scott Rinckenberger

# Change

by Steve Scher



Climbers on the top of Mt. Shasta, March 2015. Photo by Jordan Tursi

Flying back from San Francisco recently, our route took us directly over Mount Shasta. I looked down right onto the top of the brown peak, speckled with a few snowfields. I still remember when it was the snow covered obelisk, glistening, beckoning, forbidding against a blue horizon. The snowpack is dwindling, the glaciers disappearing. The old volcano is changing. Again.

Climate change is a good term. The climate changes. That is not in dispute.

We live in a world of change. We see it daily with the rise and the setting of the sun, with the growth and flowering and fruiting of plants, with the birth and death of spiders and our beloved pets and our family members. If we think the regularity of our cycles indicates sameness, we should probably just chalk that up to the good old human habit of creating order out of the unfolding relentlessness of time and space.

When it suits us, we embrace change. New job, new lover, new house, whoopee! And we often tell ourselves there is more to come; there is more good stuff just ahead. It is not so quickly cuddled when it goes off in another direction, lost job, lost lover, repossessed car, homeless. Change is gonna come, that's the given. It won't always feel good.

There is an order to the universe, but whether a blue planet spinning a little longer around our still yellow sun is a part of it, well that is a little harder to discern, though humans try.

We can agree that there are the rules to the physics of the place though. We know cells split, tectonic plates shift, our brains crave love. And hence, our understandings of the science of climate change. Heck, hence our understandings of change at all.

Ashes to ashes and all that. The cells that I call me, once having served as the cells of what I call butterfly in what I call a jungle in South America or a sand dune in Africa will soon enough be worm food and fish bait and maybe a few bits of a Gray whale. If the planet keeps working for all the oxygen breathers, that is.

It's too late to hold back our impact on this planet. We have made the changes and put more into motion. The watchword now is adaptation, which philosophically incorporates the concept of change and yet gives us a way to think towards a future. That old human habit again, creating order, seeing a future – making the changes we need to make in order to be a part of what keeps on changing.

*Steve Scher is a professor at the University of Washington and currently teaching a course on Interviewing for Journalism. Prior to his teaching career, he was a long-time public radio host on KUOW in Seattle and has interviewed countless individuals over the past three decades. He chose to live in the Pacific Northwest, drawn by the mountains and the sea.*



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## SEATTLE

The Neptune Theater  
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## OLYMPIA

Capitol Theater  
206 5th Ave SE, Olympia  
Dec. 12 & 13, 2015

tickets and info: [www.mountaineers.org/banff](http://www.mountaineers.org/banff)