

Mountaineer

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

Ready, set . . .
WINTER!

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Mini-guide
to courses pg. 13

Jan/Feb 2012 » Volume 106 » Number 1

Enriching the community by helping people explore, conserve, learn about, and enjoy the lands and waters of the Pacific Northwest.



7



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the *Mountaineer* uses . . .



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DISCOVER THE MOUNTAINEERS

If you are thinking of joining—or have joined and aren't sure where to start—why not attend an information meeting? Check the Branching Out section of the magazine (page 32) for times and locations for each of our seven branches.

On our cover: Photographer Jason Hummel captures a bluebird day while his buddy descends Mt. Baker on a trip to the Coleman Headwall in 2010.

New Year means taking on new challenges

2012. The New Year brings the opportunity for new beginnings, new hope and, of course, new resolutions.

I have plenty of aspirations for the New Year, among them are:

- Get in better shape, to dust off my backcountry ski gear and to get out in the snow with my one-year-old son and my husband
- Learn the skills I need to safely take my family outdoors during the winter

I'm not the only one with these types of resolutions; I suspect I share them with many Mountaineers members.



January is always a busy time for The Mountaineers, in fact it's our busiest time of year. Our membership grows with new students, youths and participants eager to fulfill their resolutions, get in shape, learn a new skill or technique, or just simply get outside and have some fun. Our 800 trained volunteer leaders are ready to teach their courses, lead trips and give you the opportunity to make good on your resolutions.

Our Basic Climbing Course kicks off in January. For some it will be an eight-month commitment to learn the fundamentals of alpine climbing—tying knots, setting anchors, glacier travel, navigation and first aid. Finishing the course takes dedication. Even our popular ice climbing, avalanche, outdoor photography and backcountry-travel courses, although shorter in length, require a commitment, a resolve to show up, participate, learn and then practice and master new skills.

Modern life is a constant juggling act between work, family, friends and fun. Sometimes it seems difficult or impossible to make space for new resolutions, but at The Mountaineers we get to see people do it all the time. We see students lead their first climb or master beacon skills; we get to see new volunteer leaders share their love of the outdoors when delivering their first lecture or leading a field trip.

What always impresses me is watching the transformation from unsure beginner to confident outdoors person. And if there is one thing I've observed, it's that resolve is a necessary ingredient in turning aspirations into reality.

Yes, it's about learning a new skill, but it's also about challenging yourself, dedicating yourself to a single purpose and accomplishing your goals. Those who follow through on that personal commitment reap the rewards of more time spent outside, but also enjoy the sense of accomplishment that comes with achieving.

The Mountaineers provides lots of opportunities to learn, get outside, volunteer and challenge yourself, but you turn those opportunities into reality.

So as we enter the New Year I encourage you to set your sights high. Sign up for that course. Go on that trip. Volunteer to lead. Give yourself the opportunity to meet your resolutions. We are here to help. We are committed to your success.

All the best in the New Year.

Martinique Grigg

Martinique Grigg, Executive Director

Welcome new directors! We would like to welcome our newly elected directors, whose terms start January 1. On October 19, Lorna Corrigan, Rich Draves and Gene Yore were elected from a field of four candidates that also included Jim Adcock.



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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I suggest you...

<http://feedback.mountaineers.org>

Praise goes to youth programs

Plaudits to our new Education Manager Becca Polglase for launching the youth and family programs described in the Sept/Oct magazine (p. 10-11).

These are exciting times. Youth and family programs are, in my opinion, key to enhancing our ability to support our mission of "Explore, Learn, Conserve."

Our *Annual Report 2010* (www.mountaineers.org, under "About Us") discusses on pg. 7 the importance of "Creating the Next Generation of Outdoor Enthusiasts." Becca has significant experience—both with youth and climbing—witnessed by her whizzing through both the Basic Climbing and Crag courses this year. Her enthusiasm bodes well for fulfilling our mission. May we keep up the good work.

John Ohlson

At-Large Director, Mountaineers
Board of Directors

The 'pedestrians'

There is a view held by some in the climbing community that national parks are a bad thing. I know because in my fitter days, I mingled with some who felt that national parks restrict the freedom of the hills and hamper alpine endeavors through regulation and through the occasional actions of over-zealous rangers.

The perspective of those

climbers—the *pedestrians*—reaches only as far as the end of their rope. They do not see that beyond the pitch is an ecosystem in far greater danger. We humans are not the only users of parkdom—for us it means recreation, both physical and esthetic. For the non-human inhabitants it is 24/7, a matter of life and death, of persistence and extinction.

All the massive evidence that has been hard won in recent decades tells us that the larger a contiguous reserve, the more likely endangered (and non-endangered) organisms will survive.

So, fellow climbers, extend your view beyond your favorite climb, ask yourself whether that is a short-sighted, even selfish *pedestrian* view. Recognize our moral obligation to the countless animals and plants, for their welfare, when we humans manage our unique landscapes. And support the management choice that both provides for climbing activity and promotes ecological integrity.

John Edwards

Meany event outstanding!

Emilio, Jerry, Patti, and the others I don't have the addresses of... (The Meany Mushroom) Weekend was outstanding! Our group had so much fun and we're now enjoying eating the mushrooms we came home with.



Craig Romano photo

Everybody was so nice, knowledgeable and approachable—I think we may have caught the mushrooming bug. It was also nice getting to introduce my friends to Meany Lodge. This is my third trip and I know I'll be coming back again and again. My friends were truly charmed by the community you have built here.

Brian, Elisa, Tim, Kelly,
and Jill Keller

Thanks for high-quality articles

You have taken the magazine to a new level. It is professional-grade! I appreciate the space made available to the Naturalists, and am proud that the Naturalists have professional writers who have volunteered to contribute high-quality articles for the magazine. Thank you!

Dave Shema

Letters welcome! We invite your thoughts, concerns and joys in regard to not only *The Mountaineers* but the greater outdoors community. Please keep your letters to fewer than 200 words. All letters are subject to editing for length. Please sign off with your name and address. Thanks.

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FIRSTASCENT.COM

Watch big-line skier Lynsey Dyer
talk downlines inspiration from
Las Leñas, Argentina

Photo: Will Wissman | © Eddie Bauer, LLC 2011

Doing the kick turn

A fun way to turn around at the end of your practice area is the kick turn. This looks fancy, but once you catch on it is a snap. You will need your poles for this. Practice away from an audience for the first few times. To kick turn, follow these four steps:



1



2a



2b

Excerpted from
*Cross-Country
Skiing: Building Skills
for Fun and Fitness*
(Mountaineers
Books ©2005)

1. Turn so that your shoulders make a straight line with the tips and tails of your skis. Place your poles behind you, one basket planted behind both tips and one basket planted behind both tails of your skis. Flex your legs and sag slightly onto your poles.

2a. Swing the leg of your front ski back and then forward.

2b. As it swings forward, lift and open your knee to swing the tip around 180 degrees to point in the opposite direction.

3. Step your weight onto that ski, and then repeat step 2 with your other leg.

4. Bring your shoulders back into normal alignment and your pole baskets to either side of your feet.



3



4

Five fabulous ski runs



After summiting his first Himalayan Peak—22,349-foot Ama Dablam—on November 4, Doug Walker has made it back home in time to share some of his favorite ski runs with our readers. These four favorites may be where you find Doug, a Mountaineers Advisory Council member and Peak Society co-chair, during the Pacific Northwest winter:

Snoqualmie Pass: "Great Scott Bowl (below the tooth), runs down to Snow Lake, Red Mountain, the Slot Couloir. Short drive with moderate and challenging runs."

Washington Pass: "Many easy and hard runs, once SR-20 opens."

Sahale Peak: "Blue run down the Quien Sabe. Best when you can drive the Cascade River Road."

Rainier: "Nisqually Chute all the way down to the bridge—5000' vertical."

Interglacier: "Below Camp Schurman once the road opens."

Yes, I did flatten that cherry pie . . . for the trail

The world's largest cherry pie may live in George, Washington. But the world's flattest may reside inside Tacoma Mountaineer Amy Mann's backpack. Dubbed 'pie bark' by Amy, here is her recipe for a trail treat best served with hot tea:

Buy (or make) a pie. Run it through the blender with just enough water to make a slurry. Pour the slurry out on your dehydrating sheet and dehydrate it for 12-14 hours. Spread the slurry out as a sheet and cut with scissors into portions when dried. Or you can drop as you would cookie dough, spreading each spoonful out to make a round that is sort of uniformly thin.

Bannick's birds: the owl and the woodpecker

A heavyweight: the snowy owl.



Paul Bannick photo (www.paulbannick.com)

Photographer Paul Bannick knows a bit about owls and woodpeckers. He's been busy rousing audiences across the country to take an interest in birds since the success of his book, *The Owl and the Woodpecker* (Mountaineers Books 2008).

"We protect what we love, and we only love what we know," Bannick muses. Creating a sense of excitement and intimacy between the birds and his audience is his primary goal.

For those who already know birds like the ferocious "flying tiger," Bannick promises fresh photographic footage and inspired new insights at his **upcoming January 12 talk** with the Naturalists of The Mountaineers Seattle Branch. Bannick will celebrate the two

species and the diversity they represent with vibrant oratory, photography and bird sounds.

Washington is home to more owl and woodpecker species than any other state in the country, thanks to the diversity of landscape. Fourteen of the 19 owl species found in this country and 13 of the 22 woodpecker species nest in our state's desert areas, wet forests and mountain ranges.

Avid birdwatchers may recognize the diminutive northern pygmy owl or the incredible wingspan of the great grey or "flying ghost" owl, both local residents. Winter enthusiasts own ample opportunity to catch the season's white snowy owl in action—easily the heaviest of the owl species,

weighing in at almost five pounds.

Audiences can expect to marvel at the 200-some photographs that examine the surprising ways these birds have evolved.

Bannick's job isn't easy. Capturing the essence of these birds on film requires time, patience, and mental and physical fortitude. Serving a full work week as director of development with the non-profit conservation group, Conservation Northwest, leaves Bannick with too little time for birdwatching.

To tell the stories behind the birds' behaviors, he recounts many adventures, from getting lost in grizzly country, to carting a metal tripod through a lightning storm, to holing up in a rat-infested cabin to build trust with a researcher.

Owls and woodpeckers are considered indicator species of their ecosystems. Each is intertwined with the place in which they live. In fact, woodpeckers craft the cavities that owls inhabit. A growing population is indicative of a healthy habitat, and something as simple as one tree species can alter the indicator species' behaviors.

"There's a danger in talking about conservation," Bannick says, noting it can sound "preachy and negative." So he takes a different approach—celebrating the species through visual and auditory immersion, thus providing an "uplifting and inspiring" experience. ▲▲

Going 'bats' in the city

Did you know bats can live 35 years or more? Washington is home to 15 bat species and 12 are found west of the Cascades. They're not out to drink your blood, but they will eat their share of insects. Important to our state's economy, especially for apple orchards, bats munch on destructive moths.

Learn about the fragile existence of these flying mammals and how you can help them survive when state wildlife biologist Christopher Anderson talks about "Bats and Their Urban Ecology" on February 9.

Naturalists' Thursday night lectures

January 12 : Paul Bannick, "Owls and Woodpeckers"

February 9: Christopher Anderson, "Bats and their Urban Ecology"

March 8: Ralph Haugenud, "Glaciation of the Puget Sound Lowlands"

(Lectures will be held 7-9 p.m. at The Mountaineers Program Center. Naturalists' Study Group members: free; others: \$5 donation asked)

Leave No Trace principles do not hibernate

By Sarah Krueger
Public Lands Program Manager

As a Leave No Trace master educator,

I spend a lot of time thinking about how I can lighten my impact on the backcountry. I have always been the kind of girl who walks through mud puddles to avoid expanding trails, swallows her toothpaste when camping and repackages energy bars to avoid fly-away wrapper corners.

So when it came to the logistics of my first winter camping trip in the Pacific Northwest—two nights with friends in a snow cave at Mt. Rainier National Park last New Year—I felt somewhat liberated from the seven principles of Leave No Trace. With a deep base of snow I could forget about designated campsites and traverse alpine meadows without fear of trampling wildflowers and heather. Winter camping without a trace would be a piece of cake . . . right?

Continued on page 9



Plan ahead and prepare

- Educate yourself by taking a winter backcountry travel course.
- Know the area and what to expect; always check avalanche and weather reports.
- Use a map and compass to eliminate the need for tree markings, rock cairns or flagging. Batteries in GPS units may not work well in cold temperatures.
- Night falls early and everything takes longer in cold weather; plan accordingly for travel and camp setup.

Travel and camp on safe, durable surfaces

- Stay on deep snow cover whenever possible; in muddy spring conditions, stay on snow or walk in the middle of the trail to avoid creating new trails and damaging fragile trailside vegetation.
- Camp at a safe, stable site out of view of heavily-traveled routes and trails.

Dispose of waste properly

- Protect water sources and pack out solid human waste if it cannot be properly buried.
- Strain and scatter dishwater away from heavily-used areas and campsites.
- Expansion of food and liquids, caused by freezing, can make a mess. Use flexible containers.

Leave what you find

- Destroy any snow shelters, igloos, and wind breaks before leaving your campsite. They become unsafe as they melt and they encourage concentrated use.

Minimize campfire impacts

- Campfires cause lasting impacts in the backcountry. If you do make a fire, consider a fire pan so all ash can be saved and discarded in an appropriately hidden location, rather than leaving a mess in the snow.

Respect wildlife

- Winter is an especially vulnerable time for animals. Protect wildlife and your food by storing rations and trash securely.

Be considerate of others

- Separate ski and snowshoe tracks where possible. Avoid hiking on ski or snowshoe tracks.
- Pack out or bury all dog feces.

Old-Growth forests—what makes them unique?

There are few places in the world where truly old trees and old forests remain, and one of those places is the Pacific Northwest. Old-growth forests have special attributes that make them structurally and functionally unique. This uniqueness is evident in the answers to a variety of questions:

- Do old-growth forests release more carbon than they absorb? And how do we know the answer to this?
- What special features enable trees to live so long in this part of the world?
- What are some of the age records for trees?
- How do trees get water and mineral nutrients from ground level to its limbs 400 feet above the ground?
- How do old-growth forests interact with clouds, fog, and the Pineapple Express?
- What might climate change do to old-growth forests?
- Is there already evidence that climate change is indeed affecting old-growth forests?

These questions and more will be answered and illustrated with slides from the Canadian Rockies to the Sierra Nevada, from southeast Alaska to Muir Woods. Presenter and Mountaineers member Tom Hinckley chairs the University of Washington School of Forest Resources. **THIS FREE PROGRAM** will be **FRIDAY, JANUARY 27**, at 7 pm in **THE MOUNTAINEERS PROGRAM CENTER**.



Tom Hinckley photo

Paying to play: Discover Pass

Launched on July 1, the Discover Pass attempts to fill a \$64 million gap in general funds which have historically been available for recreation on state lands. Visitors to lands managed by Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Department of Natural Resources or State Parks must display the \$30 annual pass or \$10 day pass in their vehicles. Initial sales of the Discover Pass have been slower than anticipated, with many recreationists still learning about the pass and arriving to state lands unprepared to pay.

Fees for access to state lands are never overwhelmingly popular, but in light of the state budget crisis, the pass appears to be a welcomed alternative to closing popular parks. A recent survey by Washington Trails Association illustrates general support for the pass among the hiking community but points to a very clear opportunity for improvement: 87 percent of hikers surveyed do not think that one-pass-per-vehicle is a reasonable structure for the Discover Pass.

Unlike the Northwest Forest Pass that can be transferred among users, the Discover Pass is restricted to one license plate. Recreationists with multiple vehicles must therefore purchase individual passes for each of their vehicles. In August, 49 state lawmakers signed a letter opposing the one-pass-per-car rule and requested that agencies not enforce it.

At a recent meeting with Mountaineers trip leaders and staff, representatives from the state's three land management agencies asked for feedback on how to improve the fledgling Discover Pass. The transferability issue, as well as confusion around Sno-Park access, led the discussion.

Lawmakers are expected to tackle Discover Pass transferability during the upcoming legislative session.

Leave No Trace principles (continued)

After our first night, I observed fox tracks in inquisitive loops near the entrance of the snow cave as I started to prepare for our afternoon snowshoe to Panorama Point. We stowed our food and trash in the park-issued canisters, but upon our return, we were shocked to find the campsite splattered with carnage of Pinot Noir. We had neglected to stash our cardboard wine carton. The shiny label must have inspired camp-robber jays to take a stab at the abandoned vintage.

After two days of camping and cooking in the same spot, our sparkling, snowy-white campsite was something of a Leave No Trace disaster and a reminder that low-impact camping still requires a lot of thought in the winter. If anything, winter camping is less forgiving—every spill, lazy dishwashing or bathroom run is recorded on the white of snow.

For a more low-key winter camping experience, consider the principles of Leave No Trace (shown on the opposite page) and learn more at www.LNT.org.

Taking our legacy into the 21st century

By Becca Polglase
Education Manager



Mountaineers volunteer Leah Schulz introduces mountaineering to fifth grade students in Seattle

Since 1906, The Mountaineers has provided outdoor education, recreation and conservation to the Pacific Northwest. We have volunteers and members who joined the organization more than 50 years ago, and new members who join every year.

If you ask a 50-plus-year member and a recent alpine scrambling graduate who just joined what makes The Mountaineers so great, you'll probably get similar answers.

Volunteers make all the difference: thoughts from our education manager

All non-profit organizations understand the value of volunteers, but I have worked in the non-profit world for 15 years in five different states, and I have never experienced a culture of volunteerism that is as vibrant and impassioned as that at The Mountaineers.

About 10 percent of our members are active and frequent volunteers, and the number of hours they devote just about equals the hours by staff. Our volunteers are bright, creative, passionate about the outdoors and highly skilled. But perhaps most importantly they are people of excellent character. The instructors, editors, board members, facility volunteers and event volunteers I've interacted with are reliable, hard-working, humble and compassionate. They inspire others to learn, grow and give back. Here's what two volunteers said when asked why they volunteer for The Mountaineers:

"I've been given knowledge, experience, passion, and friendships that will last a

Continued on page 19

People love The Mountaineers because they form lifelong friendships through our programs, they learn skills that allow them to recreate safely and responsibly in the outdoors, and they get to know highly-skilled volunteers who serve as lifelong mentors.

This is our legacy: a culture of volunteerism, a passion for outdoor education, a focus on safety, and the joy of experiencing incredible, wild places.

The Mountaineers is perhaps best known for alpine climbing; our Basic Climbing courses serve over 200 students every year, and our signature publication, *Mountaineering: The Freedom of the Hills*, is sold worldwide. We also maintain facilities—in the city and in the mountains—that help us provide educational and recreational opportunities to members.

Our strong partnerships with

organizations like Washington Trails Association help us to steward the lands where we learn and play. Over the years, The Mountaineers has expanded beyond alpine climbing to meet a growing diversity of outdoor pursuits; while our alpine climbing program remains as strong as ever, we now have volunteers teaching everything from backcountry skiing to nature photography to sea kayaking.

As an organization that celebrates more than a century of innovation in outdoor education,

Continued on page 19

Splitboard popularity on the rise

By Liz Daley

Davide De Masi photo



Liz between runs in Chamonix

Though they have been around for years, splitboards are just beginning to thrive in abundance and appeal due to improved technology. In general the use of splitboards has grown slowly in the Pacific Northwest, especially compared to other places I've been, like Utah, where people had been struggling to find the right equipment for years.

On the other hand, during my season spent in Chamonix last year, people were baffled by the thought of a splitboard. No one had seen a setup like mine and I only saw two others the entirety of my three-month trip. The recent growth in popularity in the past year or two owes itself to recent advances in technology and availability.

I was a snowboard bum at Mt. Baker while I was in college, taking the winters off to "shred pow." It seems like so long ago, but really it was a mere four years. I remember looking out into the side country of Mt. Baker from Chair 6, over to Table Mountain and Mt. Herman. Every once and a while there would be a distinct boot pack straight up a shot on Mt. Herman or a couple random tracks down Little Alaska. It seemed so far away, difficult to get to and dangerous because it wasn't controlled.

On a Sunday last year I made the trip up to Baker and that same side country that was rarely touched back then was completely tracked out! It didn't look any better than in-bounds. There were splitboarders, ski-tourers, snowshoers and boot-packers abounding, all out there earning their turns. Some people think it's a shame, but I say the more the merrier; there will always be an abundance of back-country and good snow if you're willing to work for it. We might just have to work harder for a better result in some cases.

Last year I rode the Prior Brandywine 158.

This was the first woman-specific splitboard on the market and it was great! Last winter in Chamonix was the warmest and driest on record in the past 40 years and I rode this board on almost every kind of snow you can imagine, including blower powder; heavy, knee deep slush; steep icy faces; long, icy cat tracks, bumpy chunder; hoar frost, a foot of sugar on top of blue ice; etc. I even took it in the park a

couple times. It's a great all-around mountain split.

Jones Snowboards is using the newest innovative technology for free-ride and all-around, mountain-crushing snowboards and splitboards. The Solution by Jones is what I'll be riding this year. I demoed it last year and it was an absolute delight! The rocker design makes the transition when turning in powder dreamy and effortless. It has traditional camber underfoot and magna-traction on the inside and outside edges that make the board feel incredibly stable and catchy when you need your edges the most while riding and in touring mode. It's pretty stiff, so it charges through choppy, ridden-out chunder or slush.

Continued on page 44



Jason Hummel photo

How to get fit for upcoming Mountaineers courses

So what does 'be in good condition' really mean?

By Mark Scheffer

So you've enrolled in the climbing or scrambling course. Now what? Those summer trips you've read about sound like fun, but the thought of that 50- pound backpack hanging off your shoulders for three days sure doesn't. Are you over your head or is it far easier than everyone is telling you? The answer is both and neither.

There tends to be three types of students: those in excellent shape that already have a strong exercise program; those that do not have an exercise program yet, but start out with an idea of what they want to achieve and what level of fitness it will take, as well as a plan for how to get there; and those that never give it a second thought until they show up at the trailhead and suddenly feel like Atlas just shoved the planet into their pack. This third type of student is going to spend a lot of the trip suffering and likely go home with no summit, a need for ibuprofen and ice for sore muscles afterwards.

So you're not a super athlete, but you want to make sure not to be a subpar student? When should you start exercising and what should you do to ensure you're in shape? The answer is start now, build up slowly, and find the routine that both works for you and fits your schedule. You want to be realistic about your goals for the summer and how much time you can allocate weekly to achieving those fitness goals. The key to success is consistency when it comes to conditioning.

An example program might look like the following:

- **January-February**—Easy cardio workouts 2-3 times a week in the gym. On the weekends throw in an easy hike such as Tiger Mountain, Oyster Dome, or Little Si to get used to new boots and try out gear while seeing how your fitness progresses.

Continued on pg. 16



Mike Sweeney photo

When the weather turns cold Mountaineers courses heat up

climbing . . . SCRAMBLING
SKIING . . . snowshoeing
NATURALISTS . . .
photography

This mini-guide summarizes 2012 Mountaineers courses and seminars that start between first of the year and the first of March. Branches and outdoor centers are identified as follows: BAKER = Baker Lodge; BEL = Bellingham; EVT = Everett; FH = Foothills; KIT = Kitsap; OLY = Olympia; SEA = Seattle; TAC = Tacoma. **Getting Started Series (GSS)** are courses free of prerequisites that generally range from one evening or day to a two- or three-week series introducing students to a new outdoor sport or adventure. The months that class sessions usually begin are indicated after the branch abbreviation. Visit our website, www.mountaineers.org, for verified details about dates, fees and contacts for enrollment.

Alpine Scrambling

This course bridges the gap between hiking and technical mountaineering, taking the student to summits off trail. It covers the gear, route-finding, avalanche awareness and avoidance, rock and snow travel, ice-ax arrest, glissade techniques and wilderness ethics. Enrollment still open: EVT/FEB; KIT/FEB; OLY/JAN; SEA/JAN; TAC/FEB

Avalanche Course

The AIARE-certified Level 1 Avalanche Course introduces stu-

dents to the primary factors that cause avalanches while emphasizing ways to avoid avalanches. It consists of three evening lectures at The Mountaineers Program Center in Seattle and a two-day field trip based at The Mountaineers Mt. Baker Lodge. The tools introduced in this course are just as applicable to managing all sorts of mountaineering hazards as they are to safety in avalanche terrain. Companion rescue methods are also covered. SEA/JAN

Climbing

Enrollment for all basic and intermediate climbing courses ends soon after New Year's for branches other than Seattle and Bellingham.

Getting Started Series (GSS)—Those with little or no experience can learn to safely belay and rock climb or get a taste of advanced rock and snow travel. Courses vary from month to month, so browse the website often or call 206-521-6001.

Basic Climbing—A one-to-two-year course consisting of

classroom instruction, field instruction and climbing experience designed to provide the basic skills necessary to safely climb rock, snow and the glaciated peaks of the Pacific Northwest. EVT/JAN; KIT/FEB; OLY/JAN; TAC/FEB

Intermediate Climbing—This course is for basic climbing graduates who wish to take their skills to the intermediate level (generally up to 5.7 rock, 55-degree snow and ice, easier mixed). EVT/JAN; KIT/JAN; TAC/JAN

Advanced Water Ice—Learn

Continued on pg. 14

winter course guide

and practice advanced water-ice techniques. Start with one day of expert instruction from an AMGA certified guide in Canmore and spend the next few days practicing your new skills. SEA/FEB

Water Ice Seminars—Learn and practice advanced ice techniques for improving efficiency, speed and safety. The seminars consist of midweek evening meetings. Each seminar focuses on a specific topic. Keep an eye on the website for more.

Intro to Leading Bolted

Routes—Learn the fundamental technical skills and gain experience necessary to safely lead well-bolted, single-pitch routes. The course consists of six 3-hour sessions. SEA/JAN

Folk Dancing

Mountaineers International Folk Dance classes offer fun along with almost-weekly instruction in a variety of international dances. No partners required, nor is prior experience. For all ages. Informal attire. SEA/ALLYR; TAC/ALLYR

Hiking/Backpack

Intro to Hiking and Backpacking Workshop—An easy way to learn more about hiking in the Northwest and with The Mountaineers. A one-evening lecture covers clothing and equipment (including the Ten Essentials), conditioning, outdoor etiquette, safety and other topics. SEA/ALLYR

Hiking Leadership—Ready to learn hike leadership skills? Focus is on safety, trip planning, map and compass, and effective leadership during three evening

classes, plus two mentored leader-experience hikes with in-field training and testing. The goal is to have you offering successful hikes with confidence, by March 2012. KIT/FEB

Naturalists

Intro to the Natural World—

This course features four lectures and three field trips to exceptional areas for viewing nature. SEA/MAR

Navigation

Basic Navigation—Learn to navigate safely through wilderness. Relate features on a topographic map to your surroundings, use your compass to determine bearings afield, use a map and compass to determine your location and desired direction of travel. SEA/JAN

Photography

Basic Photography Course—Add an extra dimension to your outdoor adventures by bringing home great photographs. SEA/FEB (watch Foothills, Kitsap and Tacoma websites for evening workshop discussions)

I Got a New Camera for Christmas—Now what? Learn how to use it with skill at this three-hour session on January 12. SEA/JAN

Skiing

Cross-Country Ski—Kick and glide your way through the Northwest winter scenery while staying in shape, making new friends and enjoying the outdoors. Depending on the branch, the courses can be multiple weekends, one day or half-day; some branches offer multiple courses based on skier ability

and technique level. Foothills and Seattle offer a wide variety. EVT/JAN; FH/JAN; MEANY/JAN-FEB; OLY/JAN; SEA/JAN; TAC/JAN

Backcountry Ski—Learn how to safely ski in the backcountry and avoid avalanche danger. Discover the freedom and thrill of skiing untracked powder snow in the backcountry; extend your ski season by skiing all year long on the slopes high above the lift areas. Depending on branch, the courses can be multiple weekends, one day or half-day. FH/NOV; TAC/JAN; EVT/NOV

Telemark Ski—Learn the free-heel turn and how to safely telemark in the backcountry. Depending on branch, the courses can be multiple weekends, one day or half-day. SEA/JAN; MEANY/JAN-FEB; TAC/JAN

Multi-Day Ski Lessons—Weekly lessons in telemark and randonee skiing skills. FH/JAN; SEA/JAN

Snowshoe

Snowshoe Lite—Gives beginning students a solid foundation in snowshoe travel: techniques, proper clothing, gear selection, Ten Essentials, food, safety and related topics. Number of lectures and field trips varies among the branches. EVT/JAN; FH/JAN; KIT/DEC-JAN; SEA/JAN; TAC/JAN

Snowshoe Winter Skills—For graduates of Snowshoe Lite. Takes snowshoeing to the next level, addressing the skills needed for safe travel and survival in the backcountry, including emergency shelters, ice-ax arrest, avalanche awareness, safe route-finding and incident response.

One lecture and one field trip. EVT/JAN; SEA/FEB; TAC/JAN

Winter Camping—Open to snowshoe, alpine scramble, and climbing graduates. Learn how to make a comfortable camp in the snow, including digging and spending the night in a snow cave. One lecture, then one all-weekend field trip. SEA/FEB

Winter Travel—Snowshoers and Nordic skiers can take advantage of this course covering avalanche awareness and safety, the Ten Essentials, backcountry etiquette, cold-weather ailments, clothing and equipment, and building overnight shelters. Increase your safety in the backcountry. KIT/JAN; OLY/JAN

Wilderness Skills

Open to all—Mountaineers and the general public—this course teaches the basic skills necessary to safely and enjoyably venture into the forests and mountains, whether day hiking, backpacking or on more adventurous outings. (It is a prerequisite course for Olympia alpine scrambling and basic climbing students.) OLY/JAN; other branches pending.

Other offerings

Meany Lodge features an entire winter sports program (keep an eye on www.meanylodge.org/winter/ski_program.html and the Outdoor Center section of this magazine). Lessons for all ages, 4 to 90-somethings, and all levels are taught by certified instructors.

Mt. Baker Lodge hosts its Mt. Baker Ski Camp in late winter for advanced beginners to advanced telemark, randonee and alpine skiers. Heather Meadows provides the setting. ▲▲

Are you 'avy' savvy? Tips for safe fun in the snow

By SuJ'n Chon

A general malaise descends upon the Pacific Northwest around wintertime. There are universal complaints about the short daylight hours, collective moans about windy storms, and commiseration with strangers in public places as we, together, prepare to step out into the cold. However, also present is the inner smile, most often shared with other adventurers, because this time of the year also means winter mountaineering. For some, it may mean putting on the skis; for others, the snowshoes; and still for others, the crampons. Whatever your pleasure, we welcome winter.

At the same time, winter adventurers also know that with snow come different dangers in the backcountry. Phrases we put away in the summer come out from their storage places: "avalanche rose" and "snow-pack analysis." They creep into discomforting thoughts: Do I remember all the steps to staying safe? What if my skills are rusty? Am I up to date on the latest information?

Understanding and identifying avalanche hazards play a major role in determining which trips, if any, you should attempt on any given winter day. Most tragedies can be avoided by making good choices before and during a trip. In many cases, it may mean just staying home.

Northwest Weather and Avalanche Center (NWAC) uses the "Avalanche Triangle" as the framework for avalanche awareness: weather, snowpack and terrain making up the three sides of the triangle. These three words are key to assessing which areas are safest for snow travel at any given time. But you are ultimately in the center of the triangle. You and each person in your group have the power and responsibility to assess the risk factors and make smart decisions that will keep everyone safe.

Nothing replaces proper training when it comes to safe backcountry snow travel, but everyone can start with the basics. In the days before a trip, repeatedly check weather reports and NWAC's website (www.nwac.us) for trends and new information. Map your route ahead of time on a topo map and mark potential terrain hazards. Check Washington Trails Association's (wta.org) recent trip reports as well as from past winter seasons for a history of reported risks on your route.

Even if you've assessed a minimal-risk trip, don't let your guard down. Once in the field, constantly be on alert for changing conditions: rapid warming, presence of adventurers on the slope above you, that nagging feeling in your belly. Always put safety ahead of your original course and destination; be mindful that your risk-taking puts your group members and potential rescuers at risk too.

Free one-hour avalanche awareness workshops, conducted by Friends of NWAC instructors, are held throughout the season at various retail outlets, such as Seattle REI and Marmot Mountain Works. **The Mountaineers will also host a session at the program center open to all members, their friends, family and the general public. Mark your calendars for Tuesday, January 17, at 7 p.m.**

David Pettigrew Memorial Foundation (www.pettigrewfoundation.org) offers its own avalanche awareness workshops as well as workshops in mountain safety, companion rescue, and avalanche terrain observation skills at Alpentel, Stevens Pass, and Mission Ridge ski areas. Their cost? The donation level of your choice.

Finally, serious backcountry winter adventurers should attain the three-day AIARE (American Institute for Avalanche Research and Education) Level 1 certification. The course fee is not insignificant, but **members of The Mountaineers can take these courses generally for \$50-150 less than courses taught by other local outfits.** Everett, Seattle and Foothills branches are now all accepting registration for their AIARE Level 1 courses.

For the more studious, consider reading these Mountaineers publications:

- *ABC's of Avalanche Safety*, Third Edition, by Sue Ferguson and Ed LaChappelle
- *The Avalanche Handbook*, Third Edition, by Peter Schaerer and David McClung
- *Staying Alive in Avalanche Terrain*, Second Edition, (also available in e-book format), by Bruce Tremper ▲▲

Are you fit for upcoming courses? (continued from pg. 15)

- **March-April**—Build on the intensity and length of the gym workouts. Start adding more and progressively harder trips like Tiger Mountain 1 and 2, Mt. Si, Granite Mountain and Mt. Tenerife. Some of these are snowshoe trips this time of year and provide additional exercise after a fresh snow due to the need for trail breaking.

- **May**—Time to start throwing more weight into the pack and simulating what you would be taking on some of the more strenuous trips you hope to sign up for.

As your training season progresses, pay attention to how you feel during AND after each trip into the mountains. This will give you a

good indication of how you're progressing towards your goals. If you find your schedule just hasn't allowed you the time to do all of the training you had planned in January, there are still options available. Research the trips typically offered to find some of the easier ones that your conditioning level would be a fit for before signing up. It may be that you need to seek out the easier trips in June and July and work to get in better shape before trying something more difficult in August. Be realistic with yourself about where you are in your conditioning. With a little planning up front in January you will find yourself reaching your summer goals AND enjoying the trip. ▲▲

And how fit should I be for hiking?

By Ed Kula

Are you thinking, "I can't wait to get hiking again, I am such a slug in the winter?" In the spring, do you say to yourself, "I am getting in shape on these easy hikes for serious hiking later this year?"

Well, why not get a jump start on next year and really have fun this off-season? You *can* maintain or even improve your hiking condition during the off-season.

The key areas for hiking fitness are your aerobic conditioning (the ability to generate energy using oxygen at the cellular level), your legs (quad muscles particularly), your flexibility (to help prevent injury), and stability. Here are some winter tips to both maintain and potentially improve your hiking prowess.

Stay active with a friend: The trend in personal and club training is to work out with a friend. While this may sound like a gimmick to get two exercisers instead of one, it truly helps your regimen. Psychologically you are more likely to stay with an exercise program if you are committed to it with another person. You tend to stretch yourself just a little more—maybe you are competitive or you simply don't want to be left behind. Whatever the reason, partnering is effective.

Try something new, outdoors or indoors: Take advantage of the fact that we are lucky to live in an area where we can go snowshoeing and cross-country skiing. Either of these are aerobic if you do them at the right pace. If you have never tried an exercise club, there are plenty of good deals that occur around the end of the year which allow you to try a club for a month (sometimes a free exercise consultation is thrown in).

Now is the time to build the muscle strength:

Known in the exercise industry as periodization, take advantage of the off-season. This is the time to build the muscle strength, which aids in preventing injury along with making you stronger for hiking. If you join a club, concentrate on exercises like leg presses or quad machines.

Make sure the routines you do are similar to the demands of hiking. Snowshoeing or skiing up a hill and a "step" machine in the club will

improve your hiking conditioning while yoga won't. (Yoga is great for flexibility, however.)

Where to go: There are low-level and/or nearby hikes that you can do in the winter. Just be prepared for the rain and cold. Try the Chuckanuts near Bellingham and the "Three Sisters of the East Side"—Cougar, Squak, and Tiger. If you need to stay closer to home, take advantage of the many neighborhood stair climbs (see page 29) or parks like Discovery or Point Defiance to name just a couple.

What not to do: Winter is a time where you can easily fall prey to more than the usual amount of reading, movies, or watching TV. Balance "sit" time with exercise.

Don't forget your weight! We burn a ton of calories hiking but may not burn as many during the off-season. Consider what you eat.

Don't give up...just do it. Use your imagination and find what interests you physically during the off-season. There are lots of ways to stay in shape in the winter in anticipation of that wonderful time of the year when the snow melts and the trails open up. Stay healthy! ▲▲

About the authors



Mark Scheffer (left), known in Mountaineers circles as the "climbing ambassador," is chair of the Seattle Branch Climbing Committee. A climb leader for The Mountaineers since 1993, he says it is the introduction of the sport and its splendor to new climbers that thrills him most.



Ed Kula (right) has been a certified personal trainer since 2002 and is the exercise coach and a hike leader for the Seattle Branch offering, the Conditioning Hiking Series. He can be reached at edkula@gmail.com.

Training: the three pyramids to success

By Gavin Woody

I like to think of “training” as the top of a three-legged stool supported by: 1) exercise, 2) fueling, and 3) proper recovery. All three components must remain in balance to achieve optimal fitness.

I focus on activity-specific exercises. Of course, the best preparation for any activity is to actually go do it, but most of us can't get into the mountains every day. This is where you have to get creative.

If you go to the gym, focus on exercises which mimic the motion you will be doing. For example, now that snow season is upon us (bring it, La Niña!) I know I'll have to wield a shovel for one reason or another. Thankfully, I've never had to dig through avalanche debris, but I've spent plenty of time digging snow pits to assess snowpack conditions.

To prepare for this in the gym, I'll perform sets of “dumbbell shovel” exercises to work all the affected muscle groups. While running is the backbone of my training, to develop leg and core strength needed for skiing, I'll do one-legged squats on a Bosu ball.

And if you can't get into the mountains but can get outside, lace up your alpine boots, throw on a heavy pack, and find a set of stairs to climb (see pg. 29). In between sets, perform multiple reps of putting on your pack, taking it off, picking it up, and setting it down a few feet away. This might sound silly but your back and obliques will thank you once you get into the backcountry. Bottom line: have fun with it!

And if you can't get into the mountain
... lace up your alpine boots, throw on
a heavy pack, and find a set of stairs to
climb (see pg. 29)

There are two parts to fueling: eating right and hydration. You can find tons of information about what to eat, but less about when to eat. When in the backcountry or on long runs, I almost exclusively eat trail mix and energy gels (GU). I also drink Perpetuem (a Hammer product) for a total combination of 300 calories per hour. However, I do have friends who eat “real food”—you have to test out what works for you.

The important point is that a steady stream of calories is much more beneficial than stopping every few hours for a larger meal.

Post-activity fueling is also critical; you have a short, 30-minute “glycogen window” after exercise in which to fill your body with solid nutrition. You can opt for a protein shake but don't overlook my favorite: chocolate milk. It has the recommended 4:1 carb to protein ratio needed to promote rapid muscle repair.

For hydration, my biggest lesson over the years is that it doesn't begin at the starting line or trailhead. Aim to “supersaturate” your body with water (or better yet, a low concentration of an electrolyte tab like Nuun) for 2-3 days prior to the event.

Aim to “supersaturate” your body with
water (or better yet, a low concentration
of an electrolyte tab like Nuun) for 2-3
days prior to the event

Recovery is one of the most overlooked aspects of training. Many think that this just means getting a full night's sleep, but equally important is to have specific workouts just to flush toxins out of your body. This might mean a very easy hike or a slow jog the day after a hard workout. Don't be afraid to go very slowly (a heart rate monitor can be a great tool to keep your heart rate at 70 percent of your max)—you'll be able to make the next hard workout really count and minimize your potential for injury.

See you in the backcountry! ▲▲

About the author



Gavin Woody, a sub-three-hour marathoner and finisher of multiple Ironman triathlons, has been focusing more time on endurance activities in the mountains. He recently completed the Cascade Crest Endurance Run, his first 100-miler, and is excited about participating in or creating adventures like his 2010 “Rainier Triple Threat,” an 80-hour, single push to bike from Seattle to Paradise, summit Rainier, and run the 93-mile Wonderland Trail.

Alaska Wilderness League honors Mountaineers publisher with award

Editor's note: Mountaineers Publisher Helen Cherullo was recently honored with the 2011 Voice of the Wild Award from the Alaska Wilderness League for her work as executive director of Braided River, the conservation imprint of The Mountaineers Books. Amy Gulick, last year's award recipient who is also the photographer and author of *Salmon in the Trees: Life in Alaska's Tongass Rain Forest* (Braided River, 2010), introduced Helen during the ceremony at the Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture in Seattle. Following are excerpts from her introduction.

For those of you not familiar with Braided River, it got its start with a dramatic story that even Hollywood couldn't dream up. To tell this story, we need to go back in time to 2003 . . . The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge made headline news with repeated attempts to open the Coastal Plain to oil development. Enter Helen. Through The Mountaineers Books, Helen was about to publish a book called *Arctic National Wildlife Refuge: Seasons of Life and Land* by photographer Subhankar Banerjee. Timing is everything, and with ink still wet from the printing press, this book was rushed to the floor of the U.S. Senate by the Alaska Wilderness League, and thrust into the air by Sen. Barbara Boxer during an oil drilling debate. The book provided irrefutable proof that the Arctic Refuge was not a "vast nothingness" and that both wildlife and people rely on its remaining intact. The subsequent vote to open the refuge to oil drilling failed to pass. A victory!

But wait. Shortly thereafter, the book's photographer, Banerjee, received notice from the Smithsonian Institution—which depends on Congress for its funding—that his photographic exhibit of the Arctic Refuge, slated to show in a prominent location of the museum, was



Mountaineers Publisher Helen Cherullo and author Amy Gulick

banished to the basement and stripped of any meaningful content.

. . . A blow to the efforts to protect the Arctic Refuge? Hardly. There's nothing like controversy to stir up a firestorm of media publicity, and there's nothing like compelling photographs and stories to engage and endear people to the wild places that we all work so hard to conserve. And where some may have viewed the Smithsonian debacle as a defeat, Helen saw an opportunity, and Braided River was born. She has since gone on to publish 10 more books—books that have not only ended up on the Senate floor, but have also made their way into the hands of President Obama and onto the desks of officials who manage our cherished public lands. Well done, Helen.

Richard Rutz, champion of Elwha restoration

At a celebration in November, Mountaineers conservation volunteer Richard Rutz was presented with an award for championing the removal of the dams on the Elwha River.

Rutz—one of the earliest "agitators" on the Elwha, according to Shawn Cantrell, executive director of Seattle Audubon—crafted the original Federal Energy Regulation Commission (FERC) intervention in 1986. He recruited the four groups that joined the Elwha tribe in pushing for dam removal and was a constant force, said Cantrell, in guiding the campaign through the passage of the 1992 Elwha Act and the subsequent battles to fund and implement the act. (See the November/December 2011 issue of the *Mountaineer* magazine.)

Removal of the two Elwha dams finally commenced this past September. Cantrell gave pieces of the razed dam to members of the audience as mementos of the historic occasion.



Into the 21st century (continued from pg. 10)

we are proud to have maintained not only relevancy but also leadership in outdoor education in the Pacific Northwest through the changing times.

In the 21st century, our volunteers continue to embrace the challenge of meeting the needs of the community in today's world while continuing our legacy for which we are so proud.

Our volunteers have created new, short courses, introductory courses and modularized courses to improve accessibility as people pack more and more into their already busy lives. These new courses neither detract from nor water down our larger, more intensive courses. Instead, they serve as a gateway to our larger courses, which continue to fill; only now with many students who have tasted an activity through our short courses, know what it is they're committing to, and have a higher probability of success.

We continue to upgrade our facilities so that they can be state-of-the-art educational centers for our students and the public. Our Tacoma Program Center will be adding more classrooms and two new climbing walls, and our Kitsap Cabin property recently acquired a yurt, which provides additional indoor space for our education programs.

We also have reinvested in youth so that we can not only foster the next generation of mountaineers, but we can better serve our communities' growing needs for youth access to the outdoors.

As The Mountaineers grows and changes with the times, we continue the legacy that began with our founders in 1906. All of our education programs are run by passionate, skilled volunteers, who focus on safe and responsible outdoor recreation. Our partnerships continue to expand, and each year more than a thousand Mountaineers give back through land stewardship projects.

Our strength as an organization comes from the passion, innovation and hard work of our thousands of volunteers, who will continue to drive us into the future. ▲▲

Volunteers make all the difference

(continued from pg. 10)

lifetime. I'll never be able to give back to The Mountaineers as much as they have given to me . . . but I can try," says volunteer Stephen Sherman.

"I was given the chance to learn by the Mountaineers on many occasions, by literally hundreds of volunteers, and I feel like I am repaying that debt over time by giving other folks the same opportunity I was given to enjoy the outdoors and Mountaineering," notes volunteer Adam Hollinger.

Our volunteers are the lifeblood of our organization. Over 1,000 students each year are taught by experienced volunteers. Last year in Seattle, we presented 31 youth programs, including a week of summer camp, all new to the organization, and all taught entirely by volunteers. Just this past month, five youth outreach programs were taught by 35 volunteers.

Our volunteers are the reason we can deliver so many programs to the public, and most importantly, they are the spirit of The Mountaineers. ▲▲

— Becca Polglase, Education Manager



Volunteer Richard Lintermans teaches a 'Learn to Belay' short course to adult students



Volunteer Adam Hollinger teaches lead-climbing to Mountaineers teens

Mike Warren photo

Women's ACL injuries

*Editor's note: The following article is excerpted from **The Healthy Knees Book**, by Astrid Jujari, M.D., and Nancy Schatz Alton (Mountaineers Books/Skipstone, 2010).*

For roughly the last decade, many researchers have focused their energy on the following fact, reported in a 2008 New York Times article titled "The Uneven Playing Field": "Female athletes rupture their ACLs at rates as high as five times that of males." This statistic reflects ACL rupture rates in sports such as soccer, basketball, and volleyball.

Researchers have uncovered at least four theories to explain this high incidence of ACL injuries in women:

- Females' hormonal fluctuations may be related to increased ACL tear rates. This research focuses on how hormones affect the ACL, but results have been conflicting, with no definitive findings.
- Females have wider pelvises than do men, leading to greater stress on the knee joint and its ligaments.
- The intercondylar notch, the space between the two condyles, or bony protrusions, at the end of the femur or thighbone, is smaller and more A-shaped in women, which can grind

and weaken the ACL.

- Biomechanical or neuromuscular differences between women and men may lead to more ACL tears in women. Females control and move their bodies differently than do men.

Researcher and biomechanist Tim Hewett, professor and director at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Sports Medicine Biodynamics Center, thinks research findings give the most support to the biomechanical/neuromuscular theory.

The other three theories may factor into the higher female incidence of ACL tears, but the only factor females can readily change is the biomechanical difference.

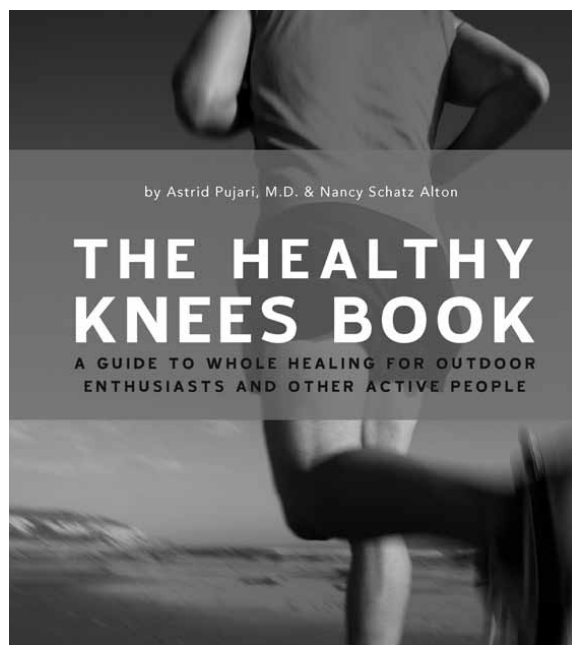
"After undertaking neuromuscular training, females can go out on the field or court to play and show changes in their injury risk profiles. Several studies showed drops in ACL injury risk between 20 to 80 percent," says Hewett.

In ACL injury prevention programs, girls teach their bodies to move in ways that support their knees better. Exercises and training focus on:

- Increasing muscular strength and core stability. Players learn to use all muscles, including pelvic, abdominal, and hamstring muscles to execute moves, as opposed to relying on the quadriceps, muscles and ligaments.
- Increasing muscular balance so both legs are strong and flexible, as opposed to having a dominant leg.
- Learning how to jump and land correctly. Women tend to lock their knees when they move, instead of bending their knees.
- Participants also practice stopping and cutting correctly.

You can find information on ACL injury prevention programs online.

Locate the PEP (Prevent injury, Enhance Performance) Program, created by the Santa Monica ACL Prevention Project, and search for Dynamic Neuromuscular Analysis (DNA) Training on the Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center's website.



THE HAUTE ROUTE is perhaps the most famous ski tour in the world and the one to which all other great ski tours are invariably compared. Originally called the “High Level Road,” it was trekked by hardy 19th-century pioneers who did not benefit from the extensive chalet system that is in place today. The route remained popular among summertime hill walkers until 1897 when a French team, led by Dr. Payot, completed the route on skis in four days—still without extensive huts or ski-lift areas, and with 19 kg of camera equipment. The team renamed it “the Haute Route.” The route has many variations but is generally accepted to begin in Chamonix, France, and end in Zermatt, Switzerland. Along the way, the intrepid ski mountaineer travels upwards of 120 miles amidst incredible alpine scenery while surmounting technical rock and ice passes, crossing glaciers lined with crevasses and skiing down steep couloirs. The pack is kept light on the route, as lodging in fantastic stone chalets—breakfast and dinner included—is available.

Continued on page 22

Fulfilling a dream—the Haute Route

By Holly Beck

Skiing the Haute Route was not my dream—

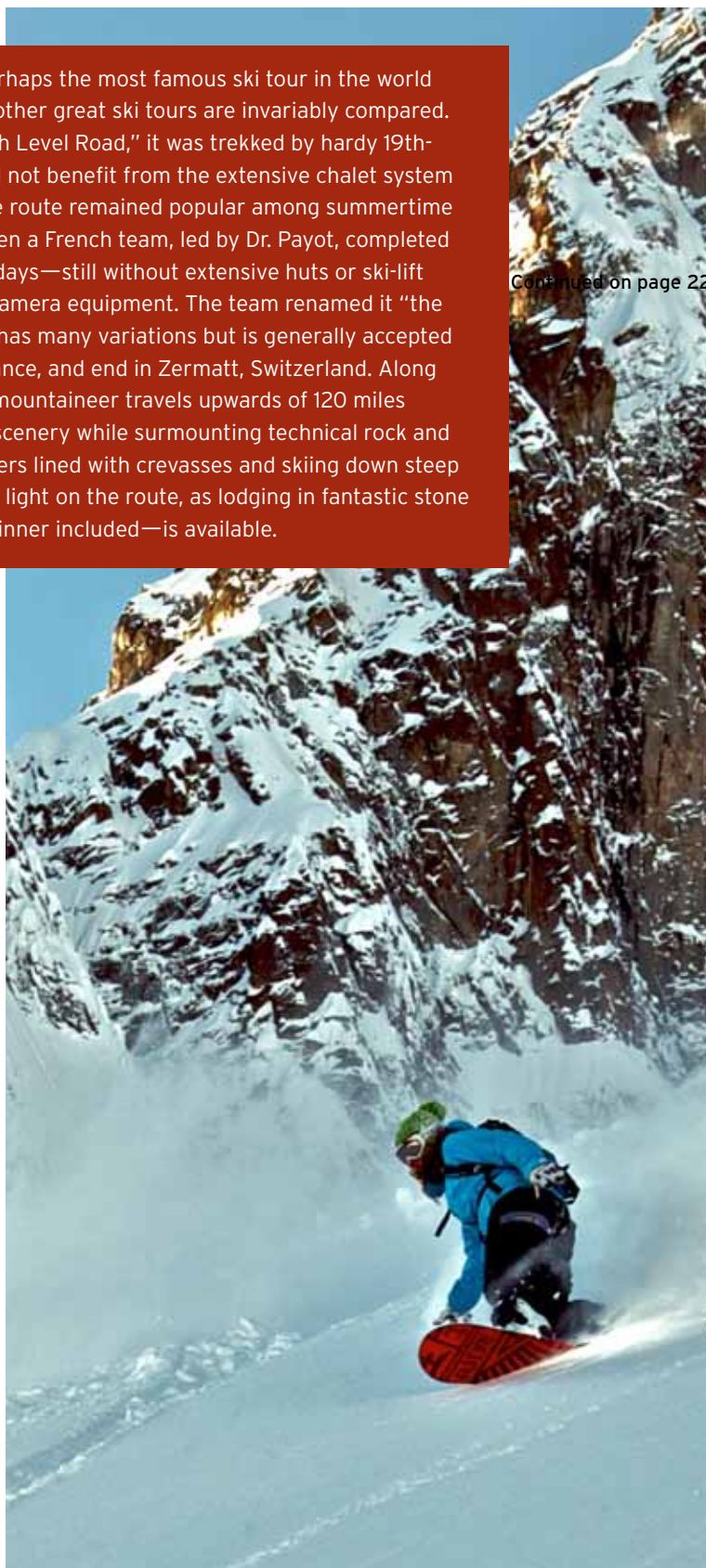
it was my boyfriend Jeff’s. Mostly a lift skier, I had done a few days of ski touring. But when I started living in Yosemite and dating Jeff, ski touring came back into my life—mostly because he just loves skiing and good lift skiing was not to be found nearby. Jeff soon tried to convince me that skiing the Haute Route had always been *my* dream.

As his insistence continued, I bought him some books on the topic. Jeff had all sorts of reasons to convince me to go on the trip—one being to preview the great north faces of Europe, with the idea that we would return one summer after the ski trip to climb such peaks as Mount Blanc and the Grand Jorasse. Finally, I agreed to go with him.

Suddenly I was planning a European ski adventure, though not at all convinced that I had the skiing skills for such a trip and so, in a way, quite terrified. Seeking to comfort me, Jeff commented repeatedly, “You’ll be fine, Babe,” and “What could possibly go wrong?”

I read as much as possible online about skiing the route. It seemed that every account or bit of information talked of skiing the route with a guide. A part of me wished that we could hire guides, too. But, in climbing we always do

Continued on pg. 22



Daide De Masi photo

'I read as much
as possible online
about skiing
the route'

*Day One: Jeff approaches the Col
du Chardonnet, the "psychological
crux" of the route.*



Holly Beck photo

things our own way and like making our own decisions. We didn't like the idea of being on a fixed schedule—we would rather sit out a storm for days than skip part of the route and rejoin it later.

We eventually read an article about families with young children skiing the Haute Route, so I felt better—though it went unsaid that little Italians are born on skis. The decision was then made and we opted to go guideless.

Wary of all the details in preparing for unfamiliar terrain and knowing that skiing in Europe is not the same as climbing at home, we enlisted tons of help. The day after Christmas, 2009, found us poring over maps and route options with backcountry ski

instructor-author Martin Volken. We discussed every detail of the trip and my huge list of questions. But mostly the guys focused on the maps and the skiing.

Martin graciously gave us every hint he could muster, even down to the names of his favorite taxi companies and various storm options. After reading his Haute Route tips online—the only web document we found on doing the Haute Route unguided—we contacted John Race, a ski guide based in Leavenworth, and received much guidance (and many waypoints!) from him and his wife, Olivia.

The righteous fear that I felt
about skiing the route spurred me into action.

Starting just after the holidays, I began a fitness program, including regular cardio and strength routines, which I followed religiously. I trimmed about nine pounds from my post-holiday weight, lowered my body fat, and felt super-fit. Although I tried to gain sympathy, no one felt sorry for me that the new work clothes I bought in January were falling off of me by March.

And we SKIED! I worked in Seattle, so much of that winter that I was able to lift-ski all around the Northwest and spent many weekends ski touring, alone and with The Mountaineers. My favorite trip was to Camp Muir and back down. It was one of the best

Continued on page 30

About the authors

Holly Beck is a climber, skier and has been a Mountaineers member since 1997. Her favorite half-day ski tour is from the top of Yosemite's Badger Pass, down the backside, following Rail Creek through its thin blanket of snow while trying to ski *all the way* to the road. In between writing this article she was raking oak leaves and waiting for winter to descend on Yosemite.

Jeff Webb, a National Park Service ranger since 1998, is an outdoor athlete with a special love for climbing and skiing. His favorite saying is, "What could possibly go wrong?!" followed by a very big grin. Jeff makes a much-anticipated, annual, 10-mile ski to the Ostrander Hut for an overnight stay, dinner with the hut keeper, and sometimes an NPS snow survey. His New Year resolutions include many first-time-for-him ski descents and tours through the rock gullies and high places of Yosemite.



A Q&A with guide Margaret Wheeler

By Emily White
Publicist, Mountaineers Books

MARGARET WHEELER, president of the American Mountain Guides Association (AMGA), began skiing as a young child in Vermont. She learned to climb in college and became a self-proclaimed ski bum in France after finishing school. She became interested in ski mountaineering while living in Europe and later moved to the Northwest where she now guides in the realm of ski mountaineering, alpine and rock objectives. An instructor of guide training for the AMGA, she is also involved in avalanche education through her work as an AIARE (American Institute for Avalanche Research and Education) instructor and trainer. She is the co-author of *Backcountry Skiing: Skills for Ski Touring* and *Ski Mountaineering* (Mountaineers Books) with Martin Volken and Scott Schell.

(Continued on page 24)

Steve Sutorius photo



'The mountains
don't care
if you are male
or female'

*Joyful students of
Wheeler's course—
She Rocks Intro to
Backcountry Skiing—
on the summit of
Snoqualmie Mountain*



You are currently the only female guide at North Bend-based Pro Guiding Service, and in 2006 you became the second woman in the United States to complete IFMGA/UIAGM certification. Do you think more women will be drawn to guiding in the future?

I do think more women are being drawn to guiding. Currently there are seven female American IFMGA guides. Between 1994 and 2006 it went from one to two, and between 2006 and 2011 it went from two to seven. And at Pro Guiding Service we now have an aspiring female guide working with me. I think there is a huge need for it—and it's just a natural part of the evolution of the profession.

Did you have any particular outdoors experiences as a youth that led you to become a guide?

It all converged. I learned to ski at a young age and grew up skiing every weekend of the winter in Vermont. Then I learned to climb in college. I became a ski bum in France after college before I became an engineer. And then I was exposed to guiding, which appeared to me to synthesize so many things I enjoy . . . such an awesome profession in that way!

Any advice to females, of any age, about pursuing their outdoor adventure dreams?

This is one thing I learned firsthand: If you are insecure about being a woman in the outdoor realm, then you may very well be creating your biggest challenge. Take the time to identify your insecurities and understand when they are affecting your actions—because the mountains and the outdoor environment don't care if you are male or female. If YOU care, then that becomes your own problem. If you don't have a chip on your shoulder, then you are much more free and able to follow your dreams.

Speaking of following dreams, do you have any outdoor athlete

heroes who inspire you, female or otherwise?

My good friend and mentor Hillary Nelson O'Neill. I had the amazing fortune to join her on a few women's expeditions to India and Mongolia, and those experiences, as well as our early climbing and skiing adventures, really opened my eyes to many new things in the outdoor world. Sounds cheesy, but I really had no idea how much was out there—Hillary was a big part of that light bulb going off for me.

And any Northwest-based resources you recommend for females looking to be inspired about the outdoors?

Yes! We have a women's program at Pro Guiding Service—it's called She Rocks the Alpine. It's a small community, but there are two parts: one is that I run instructional and guided courses in the summer and winter; the second part is that we get together to share stories, photos (and wine) as a way to grow the community of women in the outdoors. Hard to describe how much fun it is . . .

As a female, do you ever find your authority as a guide challenged by your clients? Are there rules you've learned to assert your leadership in those situations and establish trust?

It rarely happens in a direct way—but I do have lots of funny stories about how subtle biases come out. Some are generational (guys in their 50's aren't used to a female guide), some are profession-based (e.g., Navy Seals), but most are just the lingering cultural biases that surround us. One great example: After guiding a fellow in his 50's up Mt. Blanc, he told me, "Please don't take this the wrong way, but you were very inspiring for me on this trip. You are a woman, and I figured if you could climb it, then I must be able to!" I took it as a compliment, but just barely.

I have found that the mountains tend to take care of things—once

Continued on page 31



Make an impact on The Mountaineers and outdoor community for years to come

The Tacoma Branch of The Mountaineers is in the midst of a renovation and expansion of its program center—a project that will help advance The Mountaineers' mission, maintain our tradition and strengthen The Mountaineers' standing in the South Sound outdoor recreation and conservation communities. Most importantly, however, it stands to inspire and connect the next generation of Mountaineers with the great outdoors.

This great stride forward for the Tacoma Branch and The Mountaineers is all due to a generous bequest from one of the branch's longtime members, an avid Mountaineers climber, backpacker, skier, basic and intermediate climbing graduate whose life was enriched by The Mountaineers.

For over 100 years The Mountaineers has served as the foremost outdoor recreation organization of the Pacific Northwest—an organization dedicated to educating and inspiring people to explore the outdoors and conserve and steward public lands. By electing to make a planned gift, our Tacoma Branch member has ensured that The Mountaineers can continue to carry out its mission well into the future.

The Summit Society recognizes forward-thinking individuals and couples who choose to invest in The Mountaineers with a planned gift and truly give toward tomorrow

Just as our Tacoma member vested her passion in the future of the outdoors, a simple bequest can enable you to make a significant impact on building a better future for outdoor education and conservation. Whether you want to support our mission today or design a plan that

benefits The Mountaineers after you're gone, you can feel good knowing that you are helping The Mountaineers sustain outdoor programs vital to our mission while supporting our emerging programs and initiatives so integral to our vision.

We would love to know if your plans already include a bequest to The Mountaineers so that we may show appreciation for your generosity and recognize you as a member of the Summit Society. It would be our pleasure to welcome you into this special circle of recognition.

By informing us of your intentions, you help The Mountaineers plan for its future. If you choose to be publicly recognized, your gift may inspire others to consider a planned gift as well.

Supporting The Mountaineers through a bequest is easy to do. For more information or for sample bequest language for you to discuss with your attorney, visit The Mountaineers website or contact Mary Hsue, maryh@mountaineers.org or 206-521-6004. Only here can you give a gift of tomorrow.

Giving to The Mountaineers

The Mountaineers became a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization in April 2011. Your donations are now deductible to the fullest extent of the law. A 501(c)(3) designation ensures that 100 percent of your gift to The Mountaineers goes to support The Mountaineers' highest priorities.

Prior to April 2011, portions of The Mountaineers philanthropic endeavors had been overseen by The Mountaineers Foundation. While the foundation has long supported The Mountaineers, two-thirds of donations to the foundation's general fund support grant programs outside of The Mountaineers. The foundation plans to increase its external community grant programs so that by 2014, 100 percent of its donations will support external programs and zero percent will support The Mountaineers.

Now, donations must be made directly to The Mountaineers to ensure that 100 percent of your gift supports our mission to enrich the community by helping people explore, conserve, learn about and enjoy the lands and waters of the Pacific Northwest.

Tacoma renovation: building our future

Wandering through the natural world—hiking, backpacking or climbing—has always been extraordinarily important to me. I remember when climbing became a passion. My family had moved from Grand Junction, Colorado, to Salt Lake City, Utah, where the Wasatch Range was the mural I woke up to every morning. As a child, my dad took me to a Disney movie—“Third Man on the Mountain.” The story was set in Zermatt, Switzerland, and was all about adventure, challenge and had a happy ending. I was hooked.

While my dad, Walt, is no longer around to inspire, The Mountaineers are. We all know that

The Mountaineers teach activity-oriented skill sets like how to climb, sail, kayak, hike, backpack, navigate and how to do many other outdoor activities. But through our courses we teach so much more than outdoor skills—we teach life skills, like goal-setting, teamwork, confidence and planning. We teach people how to prepare for a challenge and how to work through adversity to reach goals.

Thanks to a generous estate gift from a longtime member of the Tacoma Branch, Tacoma Mountaineers are embarking on their own challenge and an amazing opportunity—a bold renovation of the Tacoma Branch clubhouse, soon to be known as The Mountaineers Tacoma Program Center.

The renovation project is scheduled to begin soon and will add a second story, two new meeting rooms, an office/bookstore, larger kitchen and bathroom facilities, indoor and outdoor climbing walls, and a “green” or environmentally-friendly roof.

The renovated facility has been designed to include elements of the original facility, built by Mountaineers volunteers almost 55 years ago on donated land and with donated materials. The additional meeting space and instructional tools will improve our ability to grow and adapt to the changing needs of our members by providing expanded outdoor education, recreation

and conservation opportunities, and a diverse community of members who share a love of outdoor recreation.

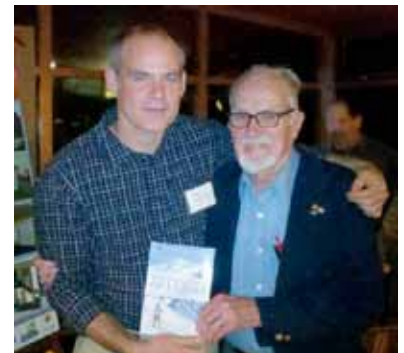
While we have made a great start toward funding renovation of The Mountaineers Tacoma Program Center—so far raising nearly \$50,000—we need your help to get us to our goal of \$250,000. Invest in the future of The Mountaineers and the South Sound community by joining our effort with a gift in support of the Tacoma Program Center renovation. Just visit The Mountaineers website at mountaineers.org or contact Emily at 206-521-6006. For additional information, contact Jim Feltus at jimfeltus@msn.com.

– Jim Feltus, Chair of the Fundraising Committee
for The Mountaineers Tacoma Program Center Renovation

A Seattle challenge

The Seattle Branch has stepped up to help its neighbors in Tacoma and the South Sound community by challenging other Mountaineers branches to step up as well.

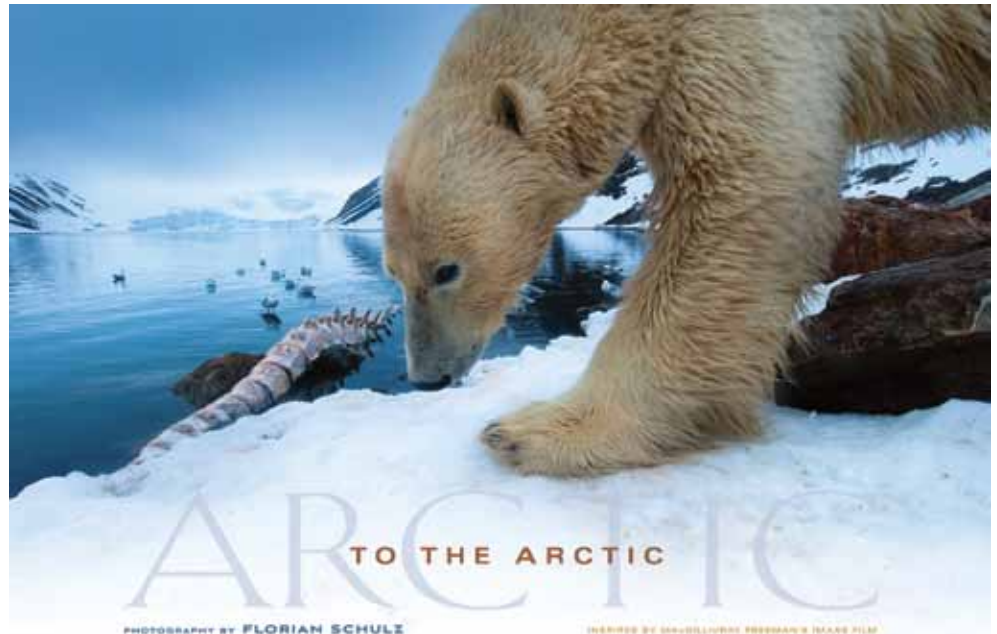
The Seattle Branch offers to match every dollar, up to \$5,000, from members of branches outside Tacoma, all for the cause of bringing the outdoors community another Mountaineers outdoor learning center. Just donate by January 31 to gain a match from the Seattle Branch. To donate or gain more information, please contact Mary, 206-521-6004 or maryh@mountaineers.org.



Mt. Rainier icons Mike Gauthier (left) and Dee Molenaar during a fundraising event for the renovation of The Mountaineers Tacoma Program Center.

"Books from The Mountaineers and Braided River are touchstones for the love of wild places and for the inspiration to protect our natural treasures"

--Richard Nelson,
award-winning author of
The Island Within and former Alaska
State Writer Laureate



Braided River is taking on Hollywood. The nonprofit publisher from Mountaineers Books has been working for the past two years to produce the official companion book to the new IMAX® film, "To The Arctic 3D," from Warner Bros. Pictures, MacGillivray Freeman Films and IMAX Corporation. Scheduled for release in IMAX® theatres in 2012, the film follows a mother polar bear and her two cubs as they navigate the changing Arctic wilderness they call home.

The companion book, *To the Arctic*, follows the film storyline closely, taking readers to some of the most remote places in the world via more than 160 panoramic images from award-winning wildlife photographer Florian Schulz. Braided River worked closely with MacGillivray Freeman Films during the production of "To The Arctic 3D," sending Schulz to photograph alongside the film crew in Norway. The 212-page photography-driven book was released in November. For more information on the book, visit www.WelcometotheArctic.org.

Not only will the book be available as a film keepsake, but it will also help build awareness around the recently announced "Arctic Home" campaign. Coca-Cola, in partnership with World Wildlife Fund, announced the launch of this joint initiative on October 26. "Arctic Home" aims to raise awareness and funds to help protect the polar bear and its habitat. Footage from "To The Arctic 3D" is featured on the Coca-Cola "Arctic Home" website (ArcticHome.com) as well as in television advertisements.

"We're delighted to be associated with this consortium of high profile, committed brands," said Helen Cherullo, executive director of Braided River. "Through images and stories, our books transport people to some of the most extraordinary and vulnerable places on Earth. With the unprecedented exposure of this campaign, we hope to stir public sentiment and inspire action to protect the Arctic." (**See more about Helen's and Braided River's work in the Arctic on pg. 18**)



BRAIDED RIVER

Braided River, a publishing imprint of Seattle-based The Mountaineers Books, focuses on preserving the last wild places in western North America. As a nonprofit foundation, Braided River was established to raise funds to support books, exhibits and outreach campaigns that bring awareness to important conservation issues. Publishing and outreach work is made possible through book sales, grants from individuals and foundations, including the Seattle-based Campion Foundation. More information on Braided River is at www.braidedriver.org.

Climber or hiker, 'ultimate' trek offers full Himalaya experience



Nepal's Cho La Pass

Racheal Lee photo

Editor's note: Craig Miller recently finished leading his 13th Mountaineers Himalayan trek (all within 14 years!)—"Nepal's Ultimate Mt. Everest Trek Plus." Following is his report of the trip—whetting the appetites for those thinking about his 2012 trek to Everest (see below).

All of us flew a DeHavilland Twin Otter STOL airplane to Lukla (one of the most amazing airstrips in the world) and then began the Ultimate Everest Trek: from Lukla to Namche Bazaar (I

demonstrated four pieces of safety medical equipment that we carried with us—pulse oximeter, oxygen bottle and regulator, Gamow bag, and satellite telephone), on to Tengboche Monastery and Kala Patar (classic Mt. Everest viewpoint) and the Mt. Everest base camp, over Cho La and then over Renjo La—all in 14 days.

At Thame, six of us climbers camped at and scrambled over the 19,000-ft. pass, Tashi Labsta, then climbed Pachermo Peak (20,500 ft.). Meanwhile, the six trekkers

hiked down the historic trail to Jiri.

According to my altimeter, the high point was 20,500 ft. (Pachermo Peak), total cumulative elevation ascent was 42,000 ft. descent was 47,000 ft. Altitudes ranged from 3,000 ft. (Jagat) to 20,500 ft. (Pachermo Peak). The varying altitudes provided much variety in temperature (hot to cold), climate (wet to dry), agricultural crops (rice, corn, wheat, mustard greens, millet, barley, cauliflower, potatoes), cultures (Indian to Mongoloid), and religion (Hindu to Buddhist).

At Everest base camp, only a Spanish film crew remained. I talked with an "icefall doctor" (Sherpa), who was carrying the ladders from the Khumbu

Icefall to Gorak Shep for the winter season. We saw another climbing up through the icefall to remove more ladders. I brought five large contractor trash bags and cleaned the trails from Kala Patar, Mt. Everest Base Camp, Gokyo Ri, Cho La, and Renjo La.

Seven of us rafted the Trishuli River (Class III-IV rapids) with outfitter Ultimate Descents Nepal on the first two days of the trip—lots of fun!

We all enjoyed hearing the Buddhist monks chanting and the musical ceremony at Tengboche and Pangboche monasteries. We looked for yetis (abominable snowmen), but saw only two skulls at the Khumjung and Pangboche monasteries!

Himalayan trekking, climbing

A free, two-part program about Himalayan trekking and climbing will be held **Friday, January 13**, at 7 p.m. at The Mountaineers Program Center. In the first part, Rob West will present photos from the 2011 "Nepal Ultimate Everest Trek" and the Pachermo Peak climb. In the second part, trip leader Craig Miller will discuss The Mountaineers' 2012 Nepal trek and the climb of Mera Peak (space available for 2012).

Ski the Alps in Austria March 1-18, 2012

Preview: http://web.me.com/mrbunz/Site_4/Ski_Austria_2012.html. Join a grand adventure in Zurich, Appenzell, Innsbruck, Munich and two weeks in Austria for winter walking, snowboarding and skiing: downhill, on or off piste, or cross-country. Spend Week 1 in Schruns, Austria, with expansive terrain on groomed, powder slopes. Return to refreshments, the spa, a six-course dinner and live music.

In Week 2 we go to Lech, the highest valley of the largest ski area in Austria, St. Anton, with over 50 interconnected lifts for

all levels of skiing on and off piste. **Cost:** \$3,495 (12-16 people); \$1,000 deposit with registration. **Leader:** Patti Polinsky, MeanySports@me.com, 206-525-7464.

Hike three weeks in Italy's Dolomites

Aug. 23-Sept. 13, 2012
The Dolomites of northern Italy encompass some of the most beautiful hiking areas in the world. Green alpine meadows, stretching between charming village-studded valleys, rifugios (high-altitude mountain huts) and craggy, awe-inspiring karst mountains provide visual feasts in every direction. The hike rating

is upper-moderate to strenuous with long hiking days, but pace is moderate. **Cost:** \$3,750. **Leader:** Shari Hogshead, skimntr@aol.com, 425-957-4548.

Nepal: Climb Mera Peak or Trek Everest

Oct. 18-Nov. 9, 2012
This outing combines Himalayan culture, spectacular scenery, and the highest peaks on Earth. Trekkers will stay in lodges, hike up to the Sherpa village Namche Bazaar, Buddhist Tengboche monastery, Mt. Everest base camp, Kala Patar viewpoint, Cho La pass, beautiful Gokyo Lakes, and Gokyo Ri viewpoint.

Meanwhile climbers will follow the standard Mera Peak route up a low angle glacier, guided by local experienced Sherpas. This is a strenuous climb because of the altitude, but porters will haul your overnight gear, so you carry only a daypack. For a daily itinerary, visit mountaineers.org/activities/nepal_itin.html. **Cost:** \$3,900 (10-13 people), \$4,400 (7-9 people), \$4,900 (4-6 people). \$2,000 deposit by March 1 with leader's approval. **Leader:** Craig Miller, craigmiller@comcast.net, 206-285-2399.

Go to www.mountaineers.org for all details on Mountaineers global outings

education

Train to maximize your backcountry season

By Chris George and Eric Fletcher

Olympic Physical Therapy

If you want to maintain your overall fitness between those long days of powder skiing or in preparation for your upcoming climbing or scrambling course, it is pivotal in your training routine to understand from where you draw your power and stability for any of these chosen activities. It's in your core. To be precise, your pelvic floor, the transverse abdominus (deepest layer of your abdominal layers) and multifidus (the segmental stabilizers that run deep along the spine).

These muscles work synchronously, regardless of whether the arm, leg or trunk is initiating the motion, to

provide support for our various movements. When we develop persistent pain or symptoms that do not seem to be in proportion to our level of activity, the fault often lies in the core muscles.

When the core is failing, trying to train through the problem by strengthening one or more parts of the body will likely fail, as the core needs to be functioning properly to provide a foundation for improved strength and function in surface muscles of the trunk or extremities. Working on these larger surface muscles is problematic if the smaller stabilizers are not being trained properly.

Because your stabilizers are internal, when developing them you should only feel tension between your pubic bone and your tailbone. Slowly and gently contract these muscles as if you are drawing a sling upward and inward into your pelvic cavity. Avoid using your abdominal, gluteal or inner thigh muscles to cheat. Your back, legs or pelvis should not move. Hold the contraction for at least 10 seconds or longer while breathing deeply. Practice this and then check to see if you have these muscles activated as they transition into the outdoor exercises listed at the end of this article.



Try single-step laterals

In simple terms, your deep core stabilizers will be the difference between a season for the ages or a reminder of your age as you sit in a physical therapist's office hearing that dreadful phrase, "Your core is weak."

Think isolation vs. integration. Isolation would be cognitively learning how to engage your deep core muscles while stationary. When that becomes seamless, integrate these techniques into your dynamic exercise routine. This will program your core musculature to operate specifically and effectively when it is time to perform under stress.

The program below is for all of us who live in the city but call the backcountry home. From the graceful glider to the relentless post-holers, these routines serve as an invitation to a beautiful season of health and wellness like you have never experienced before.

Eastlake stairs: Lakeside to Broadway

1. Double-stair walk (warmup) — two sets of 10 push-ups on Broadway
2. Single stair jog — two sets of 10 deep squats on Broadway*
3. Single stair angled jog — two sets of 15 push-ups on Broadway*
4. Double stair jog — two sets of 15 deep squats on Broadway*
5. Double stair walk (cool-down) — one set of 20 squats/one set of 20 push-ups*

(*Modifying squats to jump squats and adding weight to ankles or back will be a great way to progress this routine)

Alternative stair locations: 5th Ave. and Galer on the EAST SLOPE OF QUEEN ANNE and 13th Ave W. and Wheeler for the WEST SLOPE. Also, there's another great set off of GOLDEN GARDENS DRIVE NW, towards the end near the park. The South Beach trail in DISCOVERY PARK would be another option as well.



For additional information and training techniques contact Olympic Physical Therapy: 206-545-7844, Chris George BS, Eric Fletcher PT

Fulfilling the dream: Haute Route (continued from pg. 22)

skiing days of my life as well as a favorite day on the mountain. Ski touring with The Mountaineers was a fun way for me to get in my sport-specific training on the weekends and even ski with others who had skied the Haute Route.

I returned home to Yosemite a couple times and in addition to some of our other favorite one-day tours, Jeff and I did a two-day tour—only my second overnight—to Mt. Hoffman and back from our house on the Valley Floor. Typically done in three days, we squeezed the trip into my weekend visit. For the last five weeks before our trip, I unexpectedly worked in Tahoe. I sampled all the areas, mostly skiing by myself.

Finally, around April 17, 2010, we headed from Yosemite to fly out from SFO. But, the Icelandic volcano that no one could pronounce had caused our flight and our 2010 Haute Route to be cancelled. After the sting wore off, we re-planned the trip for 2011. So now, almost two years in the making, we were prepared. Or, were we?

Somehow, though illogical, the great fear that inspired my 2010 training season wore off for 2011. Even though we had not actually skied the Haute Route, we had felt so prepared that we weren't really that nervous as we re-planned the trip for 2011. We had done everything, so we just set it aside to be picked up again the next year.

As a result, I didn't train properly in 2011. Overall I skied much less and followed no real fitness routine. Finally, with about six weeks



Holly Beck photo
Main rail station in Chamonix, France

to go, I made a call to trainer and co-Mountaineers member Courtenay Schurman to help me do the best I could with the remaining time. Better than nothing, I figured, but as my calves were burning

on pass after pass of fabulous skiing, from Chamonix all the way to Zermatt, I was wishing for more cardio fitness. I spent many a glorious "down-skis" stopping in the middle of the hill to sit on my behind and wait for the burn to pass.

In the end, we skied our chosen route with only a few miscues:

— The Verbier variation took us first from Chamonix to Trient. On this day we discovered my crampons really did not fit my boots, which made for an exciting down-climb of the Col du Chardonnet.

— Day 2 included a ski to Mont Fort via a wrong turn to the Orny Glacier—with a view of the Orny hut and an extra ski down an awesome col—followed by a call to a taxi (instead of the intended bus/train combo), without which we would not have caught the last gondola to our hut at the end of the day.

— On Day 3 we skied via the summit of Mt. Rosablanche—where we met "Team Italiano" (our favorite, speedy friends on the route)—to the Prafleuri hut, where we finally settled into the hut routine and figured out how to order a big lunch when we arrived. Someone forgot their skins at Mont Fort and it was not us!

— On Day 4 we skied to Dix, which was challenging due to the lack of snow, and ended up there with a wrong reservation (for the day before). But this turned into a stay in the Winter Room because there was no space for us in the normal hut, and we loved it. The hut keepers eventually forgave us.


— On the Day 5 we skied from Dix to Vignettes, which was a long day with a big up-ski and Team Italiano racing so far ahead we could hardly believe our eyes. A soft and mushy down-ski (oh, my legs!) took us to the Vignettes cabin with a jolly Santa-like hut keeper.

— On our last day, we started out towards Zermatt and the Matterhorn, to ski between open crevasses and, finally, when the snow ended, hobbling into town with every calorie spent and every mystery solved. Hello Zermatt, Hotel Bahnhof and rest days!

We learned a lot on our first Haute Route trip and would plan better the next time around, but only because of experience. I wouldn't have changed a thing about how we planned the trip. But you better believe that I am already training for this June's trip to the Kichatnas, as better fitness would have made the Haute just a bit sweeter. ▲▲

Editor's note: Jeff Webb contributed to this article.

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Margaret Wheeler Q&A (continued from pg. 24)

we are in the mountain environment the biases don't seem to last long.

In 2008 for *The Avalanche Review* you penned a highly-praised article about “gender heuristics” in the backcountry—that is, how male or female stereotypes can affect a wide range of decision-making. How have your perceptions changed since then?

They have not changed—in fact the “list of stereotypes” has been expanded by more people sharing their experiences! The subject of that article is sort of an ongoing project I like to discuss about what we can do (whether you're a guide or just a backcountry adventurer) about the perceptions/stereotypes that can cause blind spots in communication or group dynamics.

Do you think you are getting better in avoiding the heuristic trap?

I am getting better at identifying some of the dynamics. But the problem is that every group is different, and there will always be some new way that a dynamic manifests itself every time you form a new group! Especially as a guide, you have to have constant vigilance.

Can you describe some moments when heuristics played a role in how you guided your team or were forced to change plans?

Every co-ed group always has some gender dynamic in there, but



Matt Farmer photo

Wheeler on a crag

the gender issue is only one of many heuristic issues that groups face. Each day I guide I am adjusting my goals and techniques to the needs and goals of my group/person. One recent example: a troop of Special Forces guys in their late 20's signed up with our guide service to climb the three toughest mountains in the Alps, and it took a week for them to realize—and communicate—that they really didn't want to actually suffer to climb them!

A backcountry trip is affected by the way one communicates goals and options as the adventure unfolds, as well as by what goals and options one starts out with.

You co-authored a Mountaineers book on backcountry skiing and mountaineering in 2007. Any future educational goals that are motivating you right now as a guide?

Several! I teach guides' training courses and avalanche courses (recreational and professional) and I am fascinated by the need for ongoing training for professionals as their decision-making skills grow and develop. For example: What are the human factors that mountain guides deal with as they become expert decision makers?

Is there a particular moment in guiding that you like most? Is it at the summit, or some other point along an adventure that you love to experience with clients?

One big one: the moment whenever (summit or no summit) someone steps out of their comfort zone and is AMAZED with their self and the experience.

You've been banished to a desert island but you get to take ONE mountain's ski descents with you. Which mountain do you take?

It has to have steep tree skiing in deep powder—it's a dead heat between Alta and Whistler, British Columbia. ▲▲

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AREI

Welcome to our 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. Some, however, may have slight differences in the names of the courses they hold in common, such as Snowshoe Level 1 and Snowshoe Lite; Snowshoe or Backcountry Ski Course and Winter Travel; or Sailing Course and Crewing Course. Just look for the descriptions when visiting course information online or in this *Mountaineer*. 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. Note that once you are a member you may participate in trips or courses in any branch. One way to gain a taste test of a particular branch is to attend a new/prospective members' meeting. General dates of these meetings are noted under each branch heading. For all current activities and links to branch websites, visit www.mountaineers.org.

BELLINGHAM

Vice Chair: Minda Paul

Website: bellinghammountaineers.org.

The Bellingham Branch, tucked alongside the craggy expanse of the North Cascades, features a vital, close-knit climbing program, as well as courses in first aid and alpine scrambling. It is also home to one of the most popular Mountaineers getaway destinations, Mt. Baker Lodge. The lodge facilitates many of the courses and seminars offered by the branch. 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, snowshoe tours and backcountry ski trips.

Learn more

In most months other than summer, the branch hosts a meeting and slideshow for prospective members and new members to better orient them to branch offerings:

Jan. 10, Tue. - Pred & Kelli: Climbing in Croatia - 7:30 pm at Backcountry Essentials.

Feb. 14, Tue. - Sky Sjue: Canadian Ski Traverses - 7:30 pm at Backcountry Essentials.

EVERETT

Chair: Carrie Strandell, wolfwoman0819@hotmail.com

Website: 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—now with over 850 members—to hold its centennial celebration in 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.

Learn more

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 each month (except for July, August, and December). They start at 7 p.m. in the Dwell Conference Room of the Snohomish County East Administration Building, 3000 Rockefeller Ave., in downtown Everett.

SNOWSHOE COURSE: The Everett Introductory Snowshoe Course will be open for enrollment up to the night of its first session, Wed., Jan. 11 at 7 pm. See www.mountaineers.org for more about registering.

NORDIC CROSS-COUNTRY SKI COURSE: Enrollment for the course will end Jan. 10. Register via www.mountaineers.org. Registration also ends Jan. 10 for the **Winter Camping Course**. See www.everettmountaineers.org for details.

HELP RESTORE TRAILS & LOOKOUTS: For more details about volunteering, contact Forrest Clark, LOTM@everettmountaineers.org.

BASIC CLIMBING ENROLLMENT OPEN: The Everett Basic Climbing Course registration is now open and will close Jan. 24, when the course starts. Registration can be done online at www.mountaineers.org.

The Basic Climbing Instructor Review will be held on Thu., Jan. 12 and Sat., Jan. 14. For more info contact Nick Mayo, nicholas.e.mayo@gmail.com, or Adam Clark, aclark20@gmail.com.

FOOTHILLS

Chair: Fran Troje, foothills.branch@gmail.com.
Website: foothillsmountaineers.org.

The newest neighbor in The Mountaineers hood, Foothills Branch is continuing to add new programs and adventures to its offerings,

year by year.

Covering communities on the Eastside, from Bellevue all the way to Ellensburg, the branch offers opportunities for safe and enjoyable outdoor recreation year-round.

The branch offers conservation and recreational access advocacy, hiking, photography and skiing. As its membership grows, the branch is looking for **volunteers** to steer current and new programs, and provide new ideas for additional programs. You might even want to become one of our leaders or instructors! We can put you on that trail. Just notify Foothills Chair Fran Troje, foothills.branch@gmail.com, 425-746-6726.

Learn more

The Foothills Branch meeting for new and prospective members is held most months throughout the year. They usually start with a socializing session at 6:30 p.m., which is followed by a brief update on branch goings-on and a feature presentation at about 7:20 p.m. Meetings are held in Issaquah at the King County Library System Service Center. Watch the Foothills website (listed above) for the announcement of coming meetings.

SKI CLASSES ON HORIZON—Foothills Branch, in conjunction with Seattle Branch, will offer more than a dozen Nordic ski courses this winter season. For more about the courses, visit www.foothillsmountaineers.org. To register, visit www.mountaineers.org. The **Foothills Annual Nordic Ski Swap** will be held Fri., Dec. 2, from 6 to 9 p.m. at St. Andrews Episcopal Church, 111 N.E. 80th St., Seattle. See the Foothills Branch website for details.

KITSAP

Chair: Mike Raymond, branch@kitsapcabin.org.

Website: kitsapmountaineers.org.

The Kitsap Branch is home to a preserve, a program center — the Kitsap Cabin — and an outdoor stage. All of these allow a potpourri of activity and delight for Mountaineers and guests.

Kitsap offers courses and programs in climbing, alpine scrambling, hiking, snowshoe-

ing tours, photography and sea kayaking. Its Salmon Safari for youths—streamside observations of spawning salmon in the Rhododendron Preserve—is only a short hike from Kitsap Cabin amidst some of the longest standing old-growth forest in Western Washington's lowlands.

Also a short hike away is the magical Kitsap Forest Theater, home to two **Mountaineers Players** stage productions each year.

Learn more

The Kitsap Branch holds quarterly membership meetings at 7 p.m. at the Norm Dicks Government Center in downtown Bremerton (345 6th St.). Anyone interested in programs offered by The Mountaineers is encouraged to attend. We'll share slides of our activities followed by a feature presentation. Refreshments will be served. Watch the Kitsap Branch website for coming dates and times.

PHOTOGRAPHY SHOW: The Kitsap Branch will hold its Sixth Annual Branch Photo Show on Mon., Jan. 9 at the Norm Dicks Government Center in Bremerton. This beloved annual event grew from small beginnings to become the most anticipated branchwide event on our calendar. Amazing photos showcase branch activities and member travels in the past year. Celebrate the fun that we have had and admire the impressive talents of the photographers among us. Photography Committee Chair John Davis will award certificates of merit in a number of categories and prizes for the top three photos.

BECOME A HIKE LEADER! Kitsap Branch is looking to train new hike leaders hoping to offer some spring trips. Contact Dave Burton, davidbburton@msn.com for course description/schedule.

VOLUNTEER ALERT! We are always looking for volunteers to make our Kitsap Cabin more accommodating. If you're in the mood for cutting up some wood for our beautiful fireplace or wish to share your carpentry skills, let us know. Also, if you have some dry, burnable wood to spare at home, we could use it! If you can help in any of these ways, contact Mike Raymond, branch@kitsapmountaineers.org.

CONSERVATION/EDUCATION PROGRAMS: To find out the latest about Kitsap conservation projects, contact Katha Miller-Winder, conservation and education chair, info@salmonsafari.org.

OLYMPIA

Chair: Bob Keranen, keranen@hcc.net.

Website: www.olympiamountaineers.org.

The fastest growing of the branches, Olympia has been offering Mountaineers programs and training to the South Sound for

more than 45 years, including hiking, skiing, sea kayaking, snowshoeing, backpacking, climbing, outdoor leadership, and naturalist activities.

Learn more

The Olympia Branch holds a potluck and special adventure presentation for prospective, new, and current members on the first Wednesday of each month from September through May (excluding November). It is held at the Olympia Center, 222 Columbia St. NW, in rooms 101-102. The next event will be **Jan. 4**. Socializing and the potluck meal begin at 6 p.m. The adventure presentation begins at 7 p.m., followed by dessert at 8:30 p.m. This is a great opportunity to meet fellow Mountaineers, share ideas, learn about others' escapades, and connect with a greater community of outdoor enthusiasts. Contact Carolyn Bureson, cbbureson@q.com, if you have questions.

JAN. 4 ADVENTURE PRESENTATION/TOWN HALL: Leslie Romer's favorite kind of hiking is visiting old forest fire lookout sites—especially the ones that are not in the guidebooks. (See related article on pg. 38.) Last spring she led a trip to Grand Canyon National Park. Come see what they found! Mountaineers Board President Tab Wilkins and Mountaineers Executive Director Martinique Grigg will join us.

FEB. 1 ADVENTURE PRESENTATION: Larry Cowan will share his recent travels in Patagonia and Peru, featuring trekking with magnificent views of Mount Fitzroy, Cerro Torre, Torres de Paine and the back door to Machu Picchu. Hear about the hilarious winds of these remote lands and how to turn canceled flights and missed bus rides into a roaring good time! Larry reports that the beer was better than any he could hope for! Come enjoy an adventure in these raw and beautiful lands.

COURSES BEGIN: Attend Orientation Night (see below) or check the branch website for more details. Classes beginning in January include Winter Travel, which includes snowshoeing and Nordic skiing—you can take either or both—planning evening sessions on Jan. 11, 12, 17, and 18, and field trips on Jan. 21 (ski) and Jan. 22 (snowshoe). Contact Judson Lang for more details: 360-352-2794, judson.lang@us.army.mil, or langjjc@comcast.net. Wilderness Skills, an introduction to backcountry travel, will hold an evening session on Jan. 24 and finishes with two Saturday sessions, Jan. 28 and Feb. 4. Basic Climbing, Alpine Scrambling, Mountain Oriented First Aid (MOFA), and Intermediate Climbing start in February, with Sea Kayaking and Leadership following in April. You can sign up for all of these classes at the orientation. And if you're interested in Sea Kayaking, Orientation Night is likely your

only opportunity to sign up, as it usually fills immediately.

ORIENTATION NIGHT: Meet The Mountaineers at our annual orientation information fair on Jan. 10 at St Martin's Worthington Center (5300 Pacific Ave. SE, Lacey) between 6:30 and 8:30 p.m. This is your—and your friends'—best chance to learn about upcoming courses, talk to activity representatives, join The Mountaineers without paying the initiation fee, and maybe win a door prize. Those who join The Mountaineers during Orientation Night and register for a class will see their \$35 initiation fee waived—this night only!

BRANCH AWARDS were presented at the annual banquet on Oct. 22. **Henry Romer received the branch Service Award** for his dedication to the creation and long-term support of the branch's highly popular kayaking program and for his enthusiastic support, problem-solving skills, leadership and dedication to doing whatever the branch has needed. Bruce Towhey received a posthumous Service Award for his years of service to the branch as a board member and a leader in the climbing division. Paul Wiseman received a posthumous reissue of his 1964 Mountaineers Service Award. Jack Sisco received the 2011 Frank Maranville Memorial Stewardship Award for his long-term participation as a certified sawyer with the U.S. Forest Service. Jack led cross-cut saw work parties in the forests of the Pacific Northwest.

Jon Ewen and Bonnie Betts received the Cascade Classics peak pin. Lisa Berntsen, Dan Lauren, and Scott Rice earned the Olympia Peaks pin. Ralph Owen, Peggy Owen, and Henry Romer earned the Olympia Lookout Group One Patch and Ralph Owen and Peggy Owen earned the Olympia Lookout Group One Rocker. Scott Rice and Steve Townsend earned the Olympia Scramble-Copper peak pin. Henry Romer also received the South Sound Inlets Paddle Pin and Will Greenough accepted his Riptides and Rapids Paddle Pin. And Mike Kretzler received the Olympics Trail Patch. See "Awards" on branch website for details.

THE OLYMPIA BRANCH BOARD meets every month at 6 p.m. on the second Wednesday of the month. The next meetings are Jan. 11 and Feb. 8 at Alpine Experience in the Hyak Room. Members are encouraged to attend.

OLYMPIA BRANCH LIBRARY: Located at Maxine Dunkelman's house, 5418 Lemon Rd. NE. Contact Maxine at 360-352-5027 or maxdunk@comcast.net if you'd like to come by to browse or check out or return materials. Returns can also be made at Alpine Experience (in the box behind the front counter). Books, DVDs, and maps owned by the branch are listed and searchable on the branch web-

Continued on page 34

site. Maxine also attends our first-Wednesday potluck presentations with a selection of books to check out.



SEATTLE

Chair: Timmy Williams, mtnrntimmy@clearwire.net.

Website: seattlemountaineers.org.

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 and sailing.

Learn more

Mark Tue., Jan. 31 to **MEET THE MOUNTAINEERS**. Join us from 6:30 to 9 p.m. at The Mountaineers Program Center. Dozens of volunteers from the branch committees will be eager to introduce you to all things Mountaineers. Members of The Mountaineers Board of Directors are on hand to find out what you'd like to see in the organization. Snacks and beverages will be available.

INTRO TO AVALANCHE AWARENESS:

Not sure if you're heading into potential avalanche territory? Want to know more about the causes of avalanches, pre-trip indicators, and backcountry hazards? The Seattle Branch Snowshoe Committee will host a free Introduction to Avalanche Awareness workshop on **Tue., Jan. 17**, at 7 pm at The Mountaineers Program Center. Presented by Scott D. Schell, Education Coordinator for Friends of NWAC (NW Weather and Avalanche Center), the workshop is open to all but registration is requested to accommodate for seating. Visit "Learn" at www.mountaineers.org for registration.

FREE HIKING SEMINARS: Do you have the hiking or backpacking bug but you just need to know a little more about how to get started in the Pacific Northwest? The Seattle Branch offers a free Beginning Hiking Seminar most months. The next one is set for 6:30 p.m. on **Jan. 19** at The Mountaineers Program Center. Though they are free, it is requested that participants register online for these seminar to make sure there is enough seating available.

NATURALISTS' EVENTS/LECTURES: See pg. 7 of this *Mountaineer*.

DO YOU WANNA DANCE? The Seattle singles group and the Folk Dancing Committee hold dances and lessons. Contact Karen Ludwig, karenludwig2000@yahoo.com, for upcoming singles dances and visit www.mountaineers/seattle/folkdance.

PHOTO COURSES: I Got a New Camera for Christmas and the Basic Photography Courses

are open for enrollment. The former will be held Saturday, Jan. 21 at 9 p.m. at The Mountaineers Program Center. The latter starts Wednesday, Feb. 29 at 7 p.m. at the program center. Register via www.mountaineers.org. **ADVANCE NOTICE!** Join us for a weekend hiking trip to the sunny Methow Valley—leaving on Fri., June 1, and returning Sun., June 3. The weekend will include optional lodging at Sun Mountain Resort for Friday and Saturday nights, your choice of Mountaineers-offered hikes of varying distance/gain on Saturday, and an optional Cowboy Dinner/trail ride offered on Saturday night. For more information on the weekend, contact Chris Ensor, cvensor@comcast.net, or Kelly Cleman, masterhiker@gmail.com. To see more about Sun Mountain Lodge, visit www.sunmountainlodge.com.



TACOMA

Chair: Geoff Lawrence, geoff.lawrence@tacomamountaineers.org.

Website: www.tacomamountaineers.org.

The second largest of all seven branches, Tacoma hosts its own program center and hub (soon to be renovated and expanded) in the quaint Tacoma neighborhood of Old Town near Puget Sound. Close to Mt. Rainier and to yet another Mountaineers property, Irish Cabin on the Carbon River, Tacoma Branch offers an extensive list of activities and courses in 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.

Visit our website and browse through our activities, our events calendar, the "Who We Are," and learn about us.

Learn more

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 7 p.m. 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 22 activities) Due to the Tacoma center remodel, the January 20, February 17 and March 16 meetings will be at Pierce County Library PAC, 3005 112th St. E., Tacoma (just south of Highway 512, about halfway between Interstate 5 and Puyallup).

INFORMATION NIGHT, JAN. 11: Want to learn snowshoeing? Telemark and/or cross-country Skiing? Mountain Climbing? Alpine Scrambling? Come to Tacoma Mountaineers' FREE Information Nights—next one being Wed., Jan. 11 at 6:30 p.m. at Wheelock Library,

3722 North 26th Street, Tacoma.

EDGEWORKS CLIMBING GYM has announced an approximately 15 percent membership discount to all Mountaineers! For more details visit their website at <http://www.edgeworksclimbing.com>.

PROGRAM CENTER REMODEL: During the current upgrade of The Mountaineers Tacoma Program Center (formerly Tacoma Clubhouse) meetings and classes will take place at other Tacoma locations through May. Contact activity chairs for information on when and where. A **Funding Committee** has formed to raise the \$250,000 necessary for completion (see pg. 26).

FOLKDANCING: On the fourth Saturday, Sept.-April, the branch offers Scandinavian folkdance, waltzes, Schottische, polka and mixers at Normanna Hall at 7 p.m.. \$10 admission; no registration required. Contact Karen Goettling, 253-759-3731, karengoettling@gmail.com, for more.

SERVICE AWARD: Tom Shimko, a 26-year Tacoma member, is the recipient of the branch's 2011 Service Award.

MOUNTAINEERS-WIDE: PLAYERS

Escape to the Kitsap Forest Theater and stroll down the forested trail to our unique, breathtaking stage. Create a treasured family tradition!

The Players are excited to announce the 2012 lineup: "Fiddler on the Roof" this spring (directed by Craig Schieber) and "Footloose, the Musical" this summer (directed by Ken Michels). Guy Caridi will be choreographing both shows, featuring wonderful stories, memorable music and fun dancing. For more, see our website, www.foresttheater.com.

Help wanted: If you are interested in helping in any capacity, please contact Gala Lindvall, 206-542-7815, galabaskets@comcast.net, and/or Nancy Estill, 206-595-8610, nestill@u.washington.edu. Visit www.ForestTheater.com.

Auditions for "Fiddler on the Roof" and "Footloose, The Musical," will be February 25 and 26. We need lots of men, women, teens and youth for both shows. Consider being a part of this wonderful group of Mountaineers. All the details can be found on our website.

Kitsap Forest Adventure Camp: The Players are excited to announce a new adventure camp for youth, grades K-3. Dates of the camp are July 9-13 and July 16-20. Enroll your kids to play, explore and create at the Kitsap Forest Theater. Their creativity and imagination will bloom with exciting activities, including art, music, drama, hiking, forest skills, creek stomping, story-telling and just plain fun. Visit our website for additional information or call 206-542-7815.

outdoorcenters

Mountaineers lodges are open year-round for members and guests. Reservations are made through a prepay system which accepts payment by either credit card or a check. If paying by credit card, simply call 206-521-6001 by 5 p.m. (for all lodges except Meany which is via www.brownpapertickets.com; 800-838-3006) on the Thursday prior to the weekend. If paying by check, the payment must be received by 5 p.m. Thursday prior to the weekend you wish to reserve. All we ask of you thereafter is to call the program center, 206-521-6001, by 5 p.m. on Thursday to confirm that your payment has been received and that a reservation has been secured. **Cancellations:** All cancellations, except for Meany, must be made at the program center by 5 p.m. on the Thursday before the lodge visit. The cooks need to know you're coming! This is also the refund deadline.

Baker Lodge

The Mountaineers Mt. Baker Lodge is nestled in the spectacular beauty of the North Cascades and just a short walk from nine ski lifts operated by the Mt. Baker Ski Area Co. (www.mtbaker.us). Within a short distance from the lodge there are snowshoe routes and cross-country ski trails (www.nooksacknordicclub.org/overview.php). Watch the Baker Lodge website via www.mountaineers.org (under "Outdoor Centers," "Baker Lodge" and "Search & Register") or www.bakerlodge.org for updates and details on openings this winter. Unless otherwise indicated, the lodge is open to the public on all dates, with reservations on a first-call basis through online registration or by calling 206-521-6001. Payments are made at time of reservation with credit card.

Questions can be answered by contacting Bill Woodcock, 206-725-7750, Judy Sterry, 206-366-2750, jsterry60@comcast.net, Dale Kisker, 206-365-9508, dkisker@comcast.net, or by visiting the Baker Lodge website.

Winter Schedule/rates: Baker Lodge is open all weekends from Thanksgiving through early April, provided there is adequate snow and registrations. Additionally, the lodge is continuously open from the day after Christmas through New Year's Day. Please click on "Calendar and Reservations" in the upper right corner of the Baker Lodge website's home page at www.bakerlodge.org.

Amenities: The lodge is normally open by 7 or 8 p.m. on Fridays. If you need a more specific opening time, call the host listed online.

The trail from the parking lot to the lodge is marked with flagged poles and lights until approximately 10:30 p.m. when the lights are turned off. If you arrive after 10:30 p.m. be prepared with a flashlight or headlamp. Each person should bring a sleeping bag, pillow, personal gear and a flashlight. Cars should have a shovel and chains. Saturday/Sunday breakfasts and Saturday dinner are served on weekends.

Baker Lodge welcomes the public, all ages and abilities. Families with children of age 5 or under should call the host prior to registering.

Fifth graders can obtain a free lift ticket from the ski company's Bellingham office (9-5:30 weekdays) after completing an application and providing proof that they are in the fifth grade. Visit the ski area website at www.mtbaker.us for the application and

additional information.

Get involved: Do you enjoy hosting people at parties, special events or in your home? Do you enjoy being a part of a team that puts meals together for others? If so, Baker Lodge may be your next opportunity.

The Baker Lodge Committee is looking for energetic individuals/couples/families to assist with general operations throughout the year. You can become hosts for Baker Lodge with just two weekends of training. Specific duties range from opening and closing the lodge, assisting with and/or supervising meal preparations, and coordinating lodge activities. The possibilities are limited only by your imagination.

Members of the Baker Lodge Committee are interested in exploring new ideas for maximizing this "beautiful little gem of a lodge" that sits in the shadows of Mt. Baker. Couples could team up with other couples to serve as hosts. Families could come together and welcome other families in for a family weekend. **Hosts stay for free.**

Those who lead Mountaineers trips and activities are always welcome to bring your group of Mountaineers members and guests to the lodge for any overnight or weekend.

Mt Baker Telemark/Randonee Ski Camp - March 3-4: Presented by the Foothills Branch. Meet at Heather Meadows Mt. Baker Ski area at 9 a.m. Members: \$190, Non-members: \$210. Leader: Shannon Marie, (206) 849-3203, smarie123@aol.com (st1/15-2/29)

Driving directions: N. on I-5 to Bellingham, take Exit 255, the Mt. Baker Highway, and go E. on SR-542 about 54 mi. to the ski area. At the Firs Chalet, turn right onto the one-way loop road that leads 0.3 mi. to our lodge on the right side of the road. We are about 1-1/2 hours from Bellingham and three hours from Seattle.

Kitsap Cabin

Built mostly by Mountaineers women in 1918, the Kitsap Cabin is home to The Mountaineers Kitsap Branch and The Mountaineers Players during spring and summer as they rehearse and perform at the Kitsap Forest Theater. The Players also hold their Youth Theater Camp at the Forest Theater.

Kitsap Cabin is surrounded by the Rhododendron Preserve, a 460-acre private reserve operated by The Mountaineers Foundation. It is one of the largest remaining parcels of Puget Sound lowland, old-growth forest in the Puget Sound Basin and serves as a buffer

from encroaching development not only for the theater but also the creeks that are vital for spawning salmon each fall.

The cabin and theater are available for private rentals. For rental information, please call 206-542-7815.

For more about the Kitsap Branch, visit www.kitsapmountaineers.org.

For information about the 2011 Players' season, visit www.ForestTheater.com.

For information about The Mountaineers Foundation and the Rhododendron Preserve, visit www.mountaineersfoundation.org.

Meany Lodge

Meany Facebook page: We continually add info and pictures about Meany events. Don't worry if you don't have a Facebook page; all info is posted on the Meany website and sent out monthly via e-mail.

Informational emails: We send a general information email about once or twice a month. So if you are interested in anything Meany has to offer, visit our website at www.meanylodge.org and fill out the email request information.

Meany rentals: Meany is available for private rentals and Mountaineers events for the winter season. If you want a nice, secluded cabin for a retreat or seminar, then visit our website, www.meanylodge.org. Go to "Contacts" and send an email telling the chair that you are interested.

Meany Winter Sports Season: Did you know that of all the Mountaineers lodges, Meany is the only one with its own winter sports facilities and school? We offer a wide variety of winter sports and it is not too late to sign up for any of our programs. Go to www.meanylodge.org/winter/ski_program.html and see what is available. If you don't think you need lessons, then come up and try our hill. If you can ski Meany, you can ski anywhere! For the price of a full day pass at Snoqualmie, you get a weekend with meals, a place to sleep and as many and as much winter sports as you want.

Meany Winter Season Pass: So, do you think you want to spend all your winter weekends playing in the snow? Well, do we have a deal for you. The Meany Season Pass entitles you to come to Meany, get fed, have a place to sleep and play in the snow whenever Meany is open. Of course, you also get to enjoy the Meany camaraderie—priceless. Prices follow:

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Adult (14 and up) - \$500

Child (5-13 years) - \$350

To purchase, visit <http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/194598>.

Meany instructor-led trips: Did you know that our own Patti Polinsky, when she's not skiing at Meany, leads a series of trips across the globe? In 2012 it will be her "Ski the Alps in Austria" tour with great on- and off-piste skiing complemented by hotels serving grand, multi-course dinners and post-ski spas. To preview the trip go to http://web.me.com/mrbunz/Site_4/Ski_Austria_2012.html. For more info contact Patti at MeanySports@me.com or see pg. 28 of this *Mountaineer*.

Snoqualmie Campus

Snoqualmie Campus is available for group rentals on Saturdays and Sundays only. Please contact The Mountaineers Program Center, info@mountaineers.org (preferred) or 206-521-6001, if you are interested in renting the property for your group.

Stevens Lodge

Visit www.stevenslodge.org to view current activities at the lodge. For more information, contact Angela or Greg, 425-258-4847, greg@stevenslodge.org.

Bring a warm sleeping bag, toilet articles and a towel for the shower, suitable clothing, your gear and a flashlight. Some pillows are available, but feel free to bring your own if you desire. Bring a padlock if you wish to secure your equipment. Stow your gear in a pack or sled suitable for walking the 600-foot distance to the lodge.

Driving directions: Take US-2 to the Stevens Pass Ski area. Turn into the parking entrance just below Tye Creek Lodge (the old West Lodge) on the W. side of the summit. Stay left at the entrance and go around the hairpin turn at the far end of the lot, then continue to the upper level parking area, Lot #4. Park here. Look for a steep Cat track/service trail leading up the bank at the far end of

the lot. Stay on it and turn right at the top. Go past the lodge on the left (Penguins' Ski Club) for 500' until you come to a sharp 90-degree bend in the trail. The reddish-brown, four-story building is the lodge.

Foothills/Seattle Nordic Ski School

Multi-Week XC Ski Classes are offered as half-day sessions on three consecutive Sundays, Jan. 8, 15, 22, 2012. Course fee is \$85 for Mountaineers members, \$100 for non-members. **To enroll or view complete course descriptions**, go to www.mountaineers.org. Overview of the Multiweek Telemark/Randonnee ski lesson program is posted at www.foothillsmountaineers.org/winter/tele.html.

Classes

Intro to Cross Country Skiing
Intermediate Cross Country Skiing
Intro to Skate Ski
Intro to Cross Country Skiing
Intermediate Cross Country Skiing
Hills, Hills, Hills: Mastering Hills on XC Skis
Intermediate Skate Skiing

One-Day XC Ski Classes are offered as an all-day session on Sunday, Jan. 22, 2012. Course fee is \$60 Mountaineers members, \$70 non-members.

–Intro to Cross Country Skiing: 1 Day
–Cross Country Skiing Refresher: 1 Day
–Intro To Skate Skiing: 1 Day
–Mastering Hills on XC Skis: 1 Day

Half-Day XC Ski Classes are offered as on Sunday, Jan. 22, 2012. Course fee is \$40 for Mountaineers members, \$45 for non-members.

–Intermediate XC Skiing: 1/2 Day
–Intermediate Skate Skiing: 1/2 Day

To enroll or view complete Nordic ski class course descriptions go to www.mountaineers.org. Overview of the Nordic ski school program is posted at www.foothillsmountaineers.org/winter/nordic.html.

The 2012 Multiweek Telemark/Randonnee Ski Lesson Program at Summit-at-Snoqualmie is scheduled for Wednesday evenings, Jan. 11, 18, 25; Feb. 1, 8, 15. Payment for 2012 will be made directly to the Summit-at-Snoqualmie Summit Learning Center (SLC). Course fees: \$160.

Mt. Baker Telemark/Randonnee Ski Camp, March 3-4. See Baker Lodge, pg. 35

Seattle Branch Snowshoe Courses



We offer a full range of snowshoe courses, designed to take you from novice snowshoer all the way to experienced winter camper. Learn how to travel safely on snow and even build a snow cave!

Registration for all courses are now open:

- Basic Snowshoe (Jan 2012)
- Backcountry Snowshoe Skills (early Feb 2012)
- Winter Camping (late Feb 2012)

See our website for full details!
www.seattlesnowshoe.org



The Mountaineers

Foothills Winter Program



Offering a full range of courses and outings to get you safely into the winter backcountry



[foothillswinter](https://www.facebook.com/foothillswinter)

info at:

foothillswinter.org

certified



provider

LESSONS FOR ALL AGES, ALL ABILITIES: downhill, snowboard, classic Nordic, telemark: visit www.meanylodge.org

Meet your 2012 goals, meet The Mountaineers

The New Year, for many of us, marks a time of reflection, resolutions and renewal. Turning the page on a new calendar can be the perfect time to learn a new skill, pursue a new activity or widen your circle of friends. If this rings true for you, why not tap into The Mountaineers community this year to help you make your list and meet your goals in the months ahead? Here are just a few ideas to jump-start your motivation.

Mountaineers Top Ten To-Do's in 2012

1. **Get inspired:** enjoy member **discounts on maps and new book titles** from Mountaineers Books
2. **Get fit:** use member benefits to join a gym—**Magnuson Athletic Club** (Seattle), **Edgeworks Climbing Gym** (Tacoma), or sign up for yoga teacher training classes at **Living Spirit Yoga** (Olympia)
3. **Get started:** explore a new challenge—such as Beginning Hiking, Open Climbs, Basic Map and Compass, Learn to Belay, and more—through the **Getting Started Series**
4. **Get active:** check the Mountaineers website regularly and sign up for at least four Mountaineers activities this year (**goal: at least one Mountaineers outing per season!**)
5. **Get prepared:** before winter play, consider supporting the **Northwest Weather & Avalanche Center** (NWAC) with membership (see ad on back cover), or brushing up on snow safety skills through avalanche awareness training with The Mountaineers
6. **Get outside:** attend **Winter Trails Day, January 7**, with friends and family. Enjoy a day of free snowshoeing at Snoqualmie Pass Campus (see ad this page)
7. **Get outside again:** use member benefits to plan a ski trip to **Snoqualmie Summit**, with discounted ski vouchers, or the Methow Valley using the **MVSTA 2-for-1 ski voucher**, or stay overnight with your family at one of **The Mountaineers Outdoor Centers**: Mt. Baker Lodge, Stevens Lodge, or Meany Lodge
8. **Get connected:** update your **member profile** on The Mountaineers website with preferences, volunteer interests and skills to better keep you in the loop
9. **Get involved:** “each one reach one” and invite a friend to a **Meet The Mountaineers event** to learn about upcoming courses and activities (Olympia, January 10; Tacoma, Jan. 11, Seattle, January 31)
10. **Give back:** volunteer to teach a class, join a committee, lead an outing, join **Peak Society** or make a donation to The Mountaineer Access Program (MAP) to provide scholarships for **youth programs**

For a complete list of benefits and how to access them, log onto our website and check out our MEMBER BENEFITS PAGE, www.mountaineers.org/membership/benefits.cfm or contact Member Services at 206-521-6001. And remember: as a mission-based and volunteer-driven, 501(c)(3) nonprofit, we rely on the philanthropic support of our members to continue our recreation, education and conservation efforts in the community, and all but \$10 of your dues are tax-deductible. TO LEARN MORE about the Membership Program, contact Valerie Normand, valerien@mountaineers.org, 206-521-6023.

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Winter trails

The 32th annual Winter Trails day starts too good to be true, but it's true!

JOIN US JANUARY 7, 2012, FOR A DAY OF FREE SNOWSHOEING AND CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING.

If you are new to winter sports, Snowshoe and Cross Country are easy to learn and fun for all ages. Making them perfect for families and groups and they are a great way to get some exercise. We'll have the experts and equipment on hand to help you get started, all you have to do is show up ready to have fun.

Visit **WINTERTRAILS.DNE** to discover more fun.

DAY!

THE MOUNTAINEERS
Snoqualmie Campus

WWW.MOUNTAINEERS.ORG
FOR DIRECTIONS AND MORE

Saturday, January 7, 10am-4pm

The hunt for lost lookouts

By Leslie Romer



Presentation: January 4

A book, *Tree Towers of the Grand Canyon* by David Lorenz, inspired Leslie Romer's search for lost lookouts in Grand Canyon National Park last May. Three Mountaineers women joined her for a week of camping and lookout hunting.

She will share her discoveries and challenges at the monthly **Olympia Branch potluck on Wednesday, January 4, at 7:30 p.m. in the Olympia Center.**

The branch will also award its Lookout Award to qualifying members.



At last count, Leslie had visited 395 lookout sites

When I left my office job a decade ago, I knew I would be spending more time hiking. I joined a local women's hiking club and met some members who focused on hiking to forest fire lookouts—those still standing and those where former lookouts once stood. Lookouts make good hiking destinations, as they are almost always built on the highest point in the area. And they had to have either roads or trails for the Forest Service staff (also known as "lookouts") to get up to their posts. A quiet day on a hiking trip in the Stehekin allowed me to discover *The Mountaineers* book, *Lookouts, Firewatchers of the Cascades and Olympics*, by Ira Spring and Byron Fish. Once I started reading about the human lookouts that used to guard the forests of Washington, and looked at the lists of lookout structure locations, I was hooked—history, geography and an opportunity for endless exploration! What could be better?

Lost lookouts are those (usually sites, but occasionally towers) that are listed in lookout books, but whose routes or specific locations are not clearly identified. The information in the lookout lists may disagree with the maps; the old roads or trails may no longer appear on maps, or the maps available may disagree on where the roads, trails or summit are. Lost lookouts can also be sites featured in old guidebooks, whose former routes have been made unworkable by road closures and gated roads.

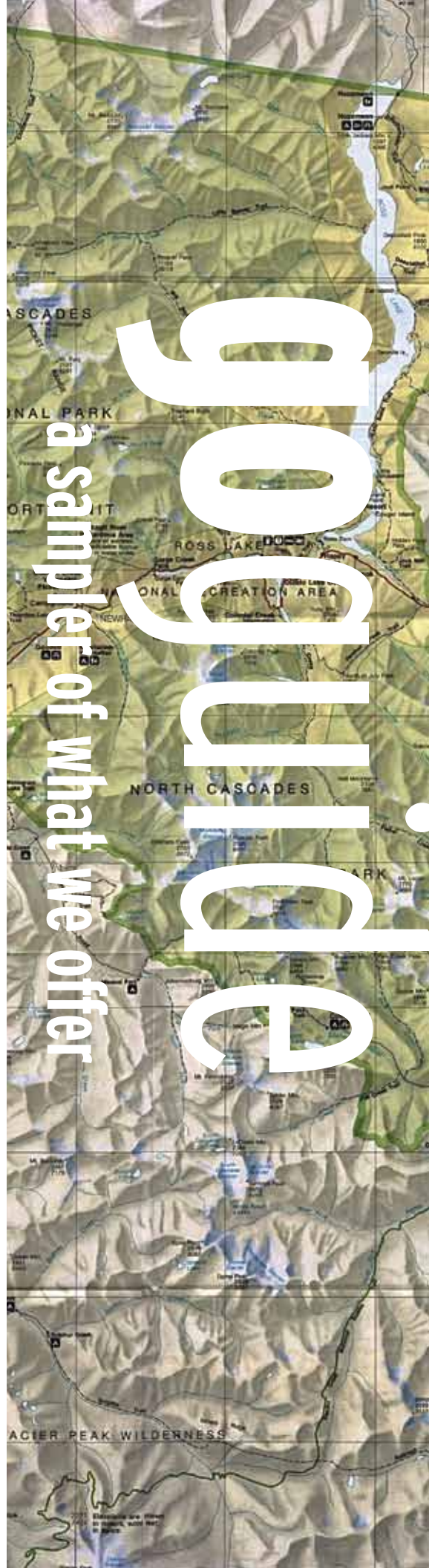
My first hunt started with the words "location unknown" for a Wenatchee National Forest lookout in the Spring-Fish book. *Trips and Trails I*, another guidebook, cited a campground in that forest with the same name and suggested "follow tourist trails and old switchbacks constantly uphill to a former lookout site." The next time I was in that area, I hiked that informal trail and eventually found four large cement footings—fairly convincing evidence that a lookout tower had formerly stood on the site. My discovery was confirmed by an author (Ray Kressek) of yet another lookout guidebook, *Fire Lookouts of the Northwest*, and the Forest Fire Lookout Association. An addendum about the site was thus added to Kressek's book.

Last spring I journeyed out in search of low-elevation lookouts in Northwest Washington. Spring and Fish referenced a former state forestry website that, according to my maps, indicated a particular lookout was probably located in a suburban area. A look at the Google Earth site showed the lookout area was still forested, with a number of houses nearby. I approached the house next door to the lookout location, identified myself as a lookout hunter interested in seeing if any artifacts remained of the former lookout. The resident said, "yes," there used to be a lookout next door, but people in the neighborhood had not been able to find "the metal plate that identified it" since the property had been logged a few years before.

My hiking companion, the neighbor and I then hiked the short distance to the hillock and started searching among young trees, downed logs and lots of blackberries. In a few minutes my companion spotted the brass USGS benchmark with the name of the lookout and the date, 1941. After snapping a few photos, my companion and I went away happy, and the neighbor was already on his cell phone telling family and friends that the lost landmark had been found. Finding a new route can restore a destination to the local hiking community, as well as add a lookout name to the lookout hunter's tally! ▲▲

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courses, please visit
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a sampler of what we offer



Splitboards (continued from pg. 11)

About the author

Liz Daley is a 26-year-old splitboarder, rock climber and alpinist who grew up in Tacoma and moved to Bellingham to shred Mt. Baker and attend the university. She possesses a BA in environmental education and sociology but notes, "What those years really instilled in me was a passion for snowboarding, the mountains, mountain culture and the addictive thrill of vertical extremes." She spent a year in Tahoe, then two winter/spring seasons in Chamonix, France. She has snowboarded from the summits of Rainier, Baker, Shasta and Adams, and owns two first female snowboard descents. "This winter I'll be shredding Utah powder and working ski patrol."



Davide De Masi photo

Jones is working on building a women's line of big mountain splitboards and non-splits. Stay tuned for their debut, I know they'll be incredible boards.

The Karakoram binding setup is groundbreaking in splitboard-binding technology right now. Twin brothers, Bryce and Tyler Kloster, out of Snoqualmie, Washington, launched onto the scene last year with a revolutionary binding system that has made backcountry touring easier than ever. It's light, easy to work, quick to put together and is as solid as any other snowboard binding you'll see on the market for non-splitboards. I ride my split like my normal board because the bindings hold the board together so well. Only Karakoram hardware comes with clips that clamp down, pulling the two pieces of the board together, thus creating one strong and sturdy deck. I got kicked out of the board park in France by an angry Frenchman who said splitboarders weren't allowed in the park! He obviously didn't understand the superiority and high quality of the Karakoram setup. I guess I don't blame him; it's hard to believe how avant-garde they are.

Karakoram sells the bindings and hardware, including the clips and the heel risers. You can find splitboard skins on Voile's website along with avalanche safety essentials like beacons, shovels and probes. I use Black Diamond's extendable poles and I love them.

Splitboard.com is an excellent resource for answering all your questions about what gear you need and a great place to spray your stoke by posting pictures and trip reports.

When thinking of splitboarding in the backcountry, slashing glorious powder turns, summiting impressive peaks, face shots and pillow lines come to mind. So, before you set foot in the backcountry, be sure you have the proper gear to keep you safe in the case of an avalanche or any type of emergency. Have the knowledge or travel with someone with the knowledge of the current snow pack, avalanche conditions and snow stability. Get a backcountry skiing book and check various sources online for the destinations you want to shred. Know what you're getting yourself into and be prepared.

Splitboarding has seen some massive progressions in the past couple years. Hopefully the technology will continue to improve so that we won't be perceived by many skiers as invalids with an illogical means of travel. And, as I've written the word "splitboard" (forced compound) many times in this piece, maybe at some point the word will be recognized by most spell-checks. ▲▲

It's a new year—stretch your goals, limbs and dreams

We invite our readers to stretch it a bit this winter—literally and figuratively. Stretch your knowledge, your horizons, your joints, muscles and goals. While at it, stretch your winter activity calendar. If the snow is anything like last year, you will see bonus days on the slopes.


Stretch your knowledge with some insight on winter and early spring classes in our course mini-guide (pg. 13). Find out how to advance to your next basic cross-country move, the kick turn (pg. 6). Or learn about the raptors you are likely to see on your coming outings (pg. 7).

Stretch your knowledge of options for staying fit by reading what works for some of our arduous Mountaineers hikers and climbers—all the way down to how to preen those core muscles for all the activities or courses you plan to tackle this winter (pgs. 12, 16, 17, 29).

Stretch your imagination for potential destinations by piquing the vicarious bones in your body as Holly Beck and Jeff Webb employ the cancel-then-go method of doing the Haute Route (pg. 21).

While we are at it, let's stretch into the second year of a new *Mountaineer* magazine format (our postal statement to the right as required by the U.S. Postal Service). We hope you enjoy this issue.

Brad Stracener, Managing Editor

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<small>I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including civil penalties).</small>			
<small>PS Form 3526, September 2007 (Page 2 of 3)</small>			

i'mwhere?

Can you identify the summit in the foreground here? Send your answer (by February 1) by post or e-mail: brads@mountaineers.org; I'm Where?, the *Mountaineer*, 7700 Sand Point Way N.E., Seattle, WA 98115. If you guess correctly, you'll receive a \$15 coupon good for Mountaineers purchases, and we'll publish your name in next month's column. In case of a tie, one winner will be chosen at random. Mountaineers employees or persons shown in the photograph are not eligible. Each month we'll publish a new mystery landmark and identification of the previous one.



- **Send your photographs** for possible publication as a mystery summit (include identification for our benefit). See e-mail and mailing address at left. If we use your photo, you will receive a \$15 Mountaineers coupon good for Mountaineers purchases.
- Several correctly identified Unicorn Peak in the September/October *Mountaineer* but Dean Taylor of Olympia won the drawing. The photo was taken by Jessica Todd.

Many people who don't understand climbing or climbers assume they must be thrill-seekers with a death wish. Often, many climbers can't find the words to explain their passion, leaving others to do it for them.

"The pleasure of risk is in the control needed to ride it with assurance so that what appears dangerous to the outsider is, to the participant, simply a matter of intelligence, skill, intuition, coordination—in a word, experience," wrote Al Alvarez, poet and author. "Climbing, in particular, is a paradoxically intellectual pastime, but with this difference: You have to think with your body. Every move has to be worked out in terms of playing chess with your body. If I make a mistake the consequences are immediate, obvious, embarrassing and possibly painful. For a brief period I am directly responsible for my actions. In that beautiful, silent world of the mountains, it seems to me worth a little risk."



Dale Baskin photo

New from Your Mountaineers Books

STAFF PICKS:



Faith of Cranes

"Beautifully written. Left me thinking about the message long after the last page."

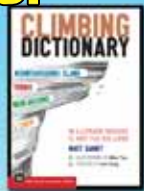
- Art F., CFO



The Urban Farm Handbook

"Thick with smart, fresh information. Better even than my expectations when we signed it."

- Kate R., editor in chief



Climbing Dictionary

"Both fun and funny, my climber friends and I are loving this. Totally bizzlin!"

- Emily W., publicist



Backcountry Skiing and Staying Alive in Avalanche Terrain

"I'm re-reading these for the Foothills Branch BC Ski & Snowboarding course. It reminds me that these are without question the best books available for this sport."

- Doug C., director of sales & marketing



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Photo © Stephen Matera



The Mountaineers Basic Photography Course

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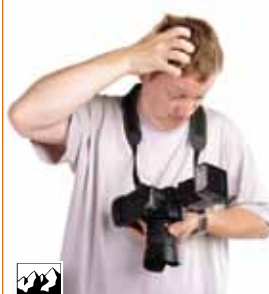


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January 21, 2012 – 9am-noon

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