



# OLYMPIC MOUNTAIN RESCUE NEWSLETTER

A volunteer organization dedicated to saving lives through rescue and mountain safety education  
May 2004

## Meeting

Next meeting : May 11. The topic will be ONP Helicopter Ops by Larry Nikki.

## Missions

OLYMPIC MOUNTAIN RESCUE  
2004 MISSION REPORT

**Mission No:** 2004-3 (04-0908)

**Mission Name:** Michael Hernandez; Camp Govey Search

**Date:** April 28

**Location:** Vance Creek, Mason County

**Type:** Search

**Personnel:** (Field team) Jim Groh (OL), Deb Legg, Loring Bemis, MacDowell, Dick Waldo, Dave Steidle, John Stieber, (In-Town) Roger Beckett

Kitsap County Department of Emergency Management called at 0325 hours asking for a team to support Mason County in the search/rescue of an auto off logging road steep bank in area near steel bridge (FS road#2350). The team assembled at Westgate at 0630 for planned meeting at Camp Govey near the accident site at 0800 with Mason County Sheriff Bill Adams. Loring to meeting team at Govey or in route. Met Loring at Fish Hatchery and team arrived at Govey site 0745, wait until after 0800 for Sheriff Bill Adams to arrive, while many others from assorted Mason rescue agencies appeared on scene. Some briefing details were that local loggers passed accident site late Tuesday and reported accident. A couple deputies were on scene about midnight using handline

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## Training

Upcoming : May 15 - 16 - Annual Rigging training. This is the last scheduled basic rigging class. If you have not attended one of the previous classes, you should make every attempt to attend to remain on the call out list.

## A Word From The Editor

I am back from my forced exile in New Hampshire. During the time I was back there, I experienced the coldest weather that had hit that area since 1950. The day time high reached -15 degrees. With the winds at 15- 30 mph, the wind chill factor was dipping down to almost -40 degrees. If you think that was bad, on nearby Mount Washington the wind chill factor a bone numbing -125 degrees. I don't think I will feel the same about a nice warm 30 degree day around here. At any rate, if anyone has something they would like to see in the newsletter, just let me know and I will try to get it in the next newsletter. If you send me something I will email you in return letting you know I received it and if it is going in the next newsletter. If anyone has some newer pictures of any of OMR's activities, if you could get them to me I will use some of them in the newsletter as well. Most of the pictures I have are older pictures. I know that most of you would like to have newer views to see.

## Truck Maintenance

As you all know in order to keep the rescue truck running certain things need to be done. One of those being periodic checking of the fluids. Oil and radiator fluid being two of the big ones. Recently upon returning the truck, it was noticed that there was radiator fluid leaking out. While the truck did not overheat, the antifreeze was very low. A check showed that the caps for the radiator and the overflow tank were loose. If you check the fluid levels, please make sure to tighten any caps you loosen to do so.

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off patrol car bumper to reach car and do hasty search... found no victim or obvious signs of trauma. They were able to ID car and positively link to Hernandez who had not been seen since 4-18-04. OMR team was directed to take full charge of technical (low angle) search at scene and report back to Adams at Govey base as progress was made. Estimate 0845 at accident site. OMR truck parked on the road was used as a hasty anchor for John to lower to car and do evidence search and evaluate the slope just below car. Meantime a 200 rope was set up to a tree anchor for second rappel system, which Mac started down shortly after John cleared the car. It was quickly discovered that a lot more rope was needed to get team down far enough for effective search of gully below car wreck. Added 300 then 600 rope to system with both John and Mac attached at this time. Used brake bar lower when 2nd rope was added and 2-man load, terrain allowed cautious walking angle for minimal rope loading. Mac eventually made it to creek bottom and scouted up and down water short way. Entire search revealed NO sign of person going down this slope from car, either on foot or rolling (falling). Some beer cans were found on the slope that must have rolled out of the car in the upset, also glass debris was on the slope. Passenger compartment was still intact and car was pinned tightly to a downhill tree. Initial reports of extreme angle were exaggerated, however estimate of 200 below car to creek was way low since we ended up using nearly 1,000 of rope. John and Mac were brought back up to road by team using 3:1 and 1:1 raise/belay technique. Ops at road site were secure 1145. Very smooth field operation. Debrief back at Govey with Sheriff Adams, dismissed about 1215. The OMR team was back home (Westgate) by 1415.

*Prepared by Roger Beckett with input from Jim Groh*

Total Personnel: 8

Total Hours: 76

Total Mileage: 388

## Summer Standby

That time of the year has come again to sign up for summer stand by. A list is already going around and will be at the next meeting. It is requested that each member sign up for at least two weekends each. This should cover all of the available spots and ensure that we have a good stand by team for each weekend. If you have any particular weekends in mind, give Duane Stewart a call at 253-857-6031 or come to the meeting and sign up. A stand by weekend runs from Friday evening thru Sunday night. If there is a problem with taking a whole weekend contact Duane or the OL signed up for that weekend and something may be able to be done. Many times our weekend calls come on Sunday night. If you are on standby you may end up on a mission that lasts into Monday. It may not always be logistically possible to bring you out of the field.

## The Stuff on Stuffing Ropes

Not too long ago a problem came up when we were using a couple of our rescue ropes. When we went to use the ropes, we found that they had been stuffed incorrectly and were tangled severely. The ropes had to be completely pulled out of the stuff sack and untangled before they could be used. The proper way to stuff the ropes is as follows. Start at one end of the rope, with the end hanging out of the sack, about five feet or so. Begin stuffing the remainder of the rope into the sack a little bit at a time. This needs to be done carefully, so as not to make any large loops that have to be stuffed in afterwards. These will get tangled up. If the stuff sack starts to get too full, pick up the sack by the edge and gently tap it on the ground. This will settle the rope into the sack. Continue to stuff the rope into the sack until there is only about five feet of this end hanging out of the sack. Tie the two ends together with an overhand knot and place into the stuff sack. The end of the rope from the bottom of the sack stays out in case it needs to be tied off to an anchor or if it needs to be tied to another rope. The last end or the working end is free to be taken out of the sack as needed. A properly stuffed sack will make it much easier for the next person who uses it.

## Is Anybody There?

During the last mission, we had a situation that OMR normally would not have to deal with. Our operation was being operated on a dirt road, with blind corners both uphill and downhill of us. The downhill corner was not too bad, as the Sheriff's car was between us and the corner. However, the uphill corner was only about 70 feet from where our rigging was set up. If any vehicle had come around the corner, even doing the speed limit, it would have had a difficult time stopping before impacting our operation. We had the permission of the Sheriff to block the road, but we did not take into account the hazard of the corner. When operating in an area such as this it would pay to have a safety watch posted at the corner to flag down any oncoming traffic. Luckily we had vehicle traffic to contend with that day. Otherwise we could have ended up looking like a bug on a windshield.

## Up Coming Climbs

One of the ways we get to know each other better and to hone our skills is to go out on climbs together. Earlier this year, a list of the trainings for the year was put out with a list of unit climbs at the bottom. If you would like to join one of these climbs or lead one yourself let us or the climb leader know and you can get the information as needed. In the spirit of this, I am leading a climb up Mount Rainier, on June 24 - 27. The plan is to stay on the summit for two nights and explore the ice caves during the intermediate day on the summit. If for some reason the overnight climb is canceled, due to a lack of committed people, an alternate plan is to make a rapid ascent with very light summit packs. The alternate plan will happen during the same time period. If you are interested in making the summit of Rainier, contact John Stieber at 360-830-0914 or email him at [janddstieber@earthlink.net](mailto:janddstieber@earthlink.net). See you

## Membership Applications

If you know someone who wants to join OMR, it is now easier to get the membership application. The OMR website now has the application paperwork in the general public section. All a person needs to apply is go to the website and download the application papers, fill them out and bring them to a meeting. If you do not already know the OMR website, it is [www.olympicmountainrescue.org](http://www.olympicmountainrescue.org). We are always on the lookout for new faces to bring in to the unit.