



OLYMPIC MOUNTAIN RESCUE NEWSLETTER

A volunteer organization dedicated to saving lives through rescue and mountain safety education
September 2005

Missions

Mission No : 2005-9 (DEM 05-T603)
Date: August 19
Location: Mt Ellinor, Mason County
Type: Incident-Equipment recovery
Personnel: Greg Barron and Steve Leslie

The following e-mail was received on Monday, August 15.

Susie Graham, Trail Manager for the Hood-sport area, suggested I contact you for help. I hiked to the summit of Mt Ellinor on Saturday, 13 Aug., and while at the top, set my backpack down in an unstable spot and it rolled down about 75 feet, lodging on a ledge just above a drop off to the great void below. It was too dangerous to retrieve without ropes & climbing skills. I am wondering if your organization would be able to retrieve it for me. I would be happy to make a nice donation for its rescue. It's a big loss for me... in it I had some expensive hiking clothing, prescription glasses, cell phone, and the pack itself.

Linda Mather

Mazamas hiker

Greg & Steve volunteered to go get the pack and they climbed Mt Ellinor on August 19th to search for the pack. Steve down climbed the gully that the pack fell down, but the pack was not located. It is assumed the pack had been retrieved by another party. Steve contacted the owner and explained that the pack was not there. At that time, the party who recovered the pack had not contacted the owner.

Hours: 20
Miles: 162

Meeting

Next meeting : Sept. 13th. The topic being discussed is planned to be Crime Scene Preservation.

Training

Upcoming training : Saturday, September 17th. Helicopter training. This training is planned to be held in two parts. The first part will start at 0900 at the Kitsap Airport. It is planned to last through the morning and will entail discussions on the aircraft's capabilities and safety procedures around the aircraft. The second part of the training will take place after lunch (weather permitting) up on Green Mountain. This part of the training will cover selecting an LZ, working with a hot helo and lead line handling, with a possibility of a demonstration of a cliff pick off using the helicopter hoist.

The aircraft which is to be used for this training is the Coast Guard J-Hawk. It is similar to the Blackhawk which is utilized by the Army. Not many of the members in the group have had a chance to work around a helo of this type. So this is a good chance to come to the training and get a feel for this aircraft.

This is the last chance for those of you who missed the helo training earlier this year. This is a bi-annual training requirement. If you did not go to a helo training last year, then you must attend one of the trainings this year to remain on the callout roster.



And Into The Future . . .

Back in July, John Stieber and his brother Forrest planned a hike which was put out to the group to see if there was anybody that wanted to go with them. As it turned out, no one was interested in going on the hike. While it may seem to be an oxymoron, for this reason, this turned out to be one of the best hikes I have ever been on. The reason for this is that Forrest and John decided to take their kids on the hike.

It was to be the first hike of this size that any of the kids had been on. The hike went from Lower Lena Lake to Upper Lena Lake to Mount Stone and out past Lake of the Angels. This is different from our original itinerary, but what can I say we did not want to scare the kids away.

The hike started much as any other, full of confidence and energy. In order to make it as fun as possible, we had decided to stop and play for at least one hour during the day's hike. The dry bridge was our play spot. Dropping their packs the kids immediately began to climb around on the moss covered rocks, exploring the nooks and crannies. The exploring was soon over and we had to don the packs and continue on towards our first night's camp.

This camp was located at the far end of Lena Lake. Near where the stream enters the lake. The kids wanted to start exploring, but there was a camp to set up and we reigned them in. This was the only camp at which we were allowed to have a camp fire. Since we had thought to have smores after dinner, we set the kids free to gather wood for the fire.

After dinner, we relaxed while eating the smores and stared into the fire. There is just something about looking into a campfire that is very comforting.

Day 2, we knew, was going to be the longest and hardest of the days. This due to the fact that we were headed toward Upper Lena Lake and beyond a mile or so.

Near the bottom of the steep section up to the lake we had stopped to top off our water supply and play around. While Forrest and John were filtering water the kids were tossed rocks into the stream, seeing who could make the biggest splash. Filtering done we set off to explore the stream. Crossing onto a gravel bar we set off upstream. Soon we heard on of the kids yelling for Dad. Naturally, with the way they yelled we thought that there was some kind of wild animal



The first look at Upper Lena Lake From the trail.

near by. As it turned out they were merely spell bound by an outstanding view, up the valley, of Mt Brether-ton.

Onward to the upper lake we continued. The day was really starting to heat up as we reached the lake. This was a good time to soak our hot feet in the cool water.

I for did not know how big Upper Lena Lake was. For I had never been up there when there was no snow covering the lake. Each time I have been up there in the past the lake was at least one third covered with snow.

After resting and refilling our water bottles, we continued on to camp. As it turned out this was approximately halfway between Upper Lena and Scout Lake. We were forced to conserve water, as there was no easily accessible water nearby, between the two lakes.

While preparing dinner John lost a piece to his stove pump. A sacrifice to the weather gods. Good weather was assured now.

With dinner done, during clean up the missing piece was found. We were exuberant with the find.

Retiring later that evening we thought nothing of it, as the skies were clear.

Late that night, John was awakened by one of the kids yelling that it was starting to rain. This was an understatement. It sounded as if Noah's flood was returning and we had not put the rain flies on the tents.

An answer to our water problem was at hand. With the torrential downpour, water was streaming off of the tent. With careful placement of water bottles and cups John was soon harvesting the water. This may not

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sound like it would get that much water, but within two hours six liters of water was harvested.

The next morning, just when we thought we would have to hike in the rain, the weather dried up and within a couple of hours had completely cleared up.

With hills rolling hills on the ridge line, the day went uneventfully. We passed Scout Lake, on our way to Mt Stone. This took some trail finding ability, as there is no trail between Scout Lake and Mt Stone.

Dropping into the saddle, we got our first unobstructed view of Saint Peter's Gate, from the back side. While we had not had any snow to contend with during the first part of the trip, that was soon going to come to an end. We could see the snow pack was still quite evident for nearly half a mile before the gate. Not dissuaded by this and with the great weather boosting our spirits we continued on.

Shortly before reaching the snow field, we stopped for a well needed break to eat and play. We had just climbed up a long and steep scree field and needed the rest.

While resting the urge over took us and we could not help but to roll some rocks down the hill. As we were no where near the beaten path and we could see all the way to the bottom of the hill, we were not concerned with the possibility of someone being down below us. Once we had our fill of rolling rocks, we joked that the next time they did a topography check on the mountain they would find it a few feet shorter.

On to the snow we continued hiking. It was firm and we had no problem with post holing.



Lake of the Angels seen from Saint Peter's Gate



Berry time on the trail.

Near the top of the snow field, one of the kids yelled "look at that!" A mountain goat had just come down from the area of the Gate.

Shortly after the seeing the goat, We made it to the top and Saint Peter's Gate and began our way down towards Lake of the Angels. Forrest and the girls want to try for Mt Stone, while John and his son decided to continue on down to the lake.

Reaching the lake about an hour later, John and his son set up camp, then wandered around the lake, relishing in the breeze which was keeping the mosquitoes away.

A while later, Forrest's group arrived at camp. As he pulled out his gear to set up his tent. We realized why the weather had cleared up so quickly. Somewhere back during the days hike he had lost the poles to his tent. Oh well, they had to sleep out under the stars for the last night. Spreading out the tarp to sleep on, we also erected a low barrier out of the packs to block most of the wind for them.

The night passed quickly, with the stars shining brightly overhead. The beginning of our last day on the hike dawned with a bright sun. We began our final day's hike out.

As we soon found out, the wild flowers were just reaching peak bloom in the area below the lake. Hiking through the blooms, with my son, with the scent wafting over us was as close to a dream as you can come in real life.

Soon we began to find ripe blue berries along side the trail to snack on. Our play time for the day came when

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we passed a waterfall near the trail.

An hour after leaving the waterfall, we came to the trailhead and the end of our hike.

Reflecting on the hike, while waiting for our ride, my son came up to me with a smile on his face and asked, “So when are we going on our next hike like this? I had a great time.”

A future mountaineer has been born.

Upcoming Items

Sometime in there near future the board will be sitting down to plan out next year’s training schedule. If there is a training that you would like to have or maybe a specific area that you would like to train at or on, let one of the board members know or come to one of the board meetings an hour before the general meeting each month.

It is a little early now, but time is slipping away from us quickly. Starting next month (October) the sign up sheet will be going around at the general meeting for the winter stand by. Time to start thinking about which weekend(s) you would like to be up at Hurricane

Summer is Over

Summer time is nearly over. The members of the board and the Stand by coordinator would like to extend thanks to everyone that signed up for a stand by weekend.

The commitment shown is a testament to your dedication to helping others in need.

Again thank you from all of us.



Waterfall along the Putvin Trail to Lake of the Angels