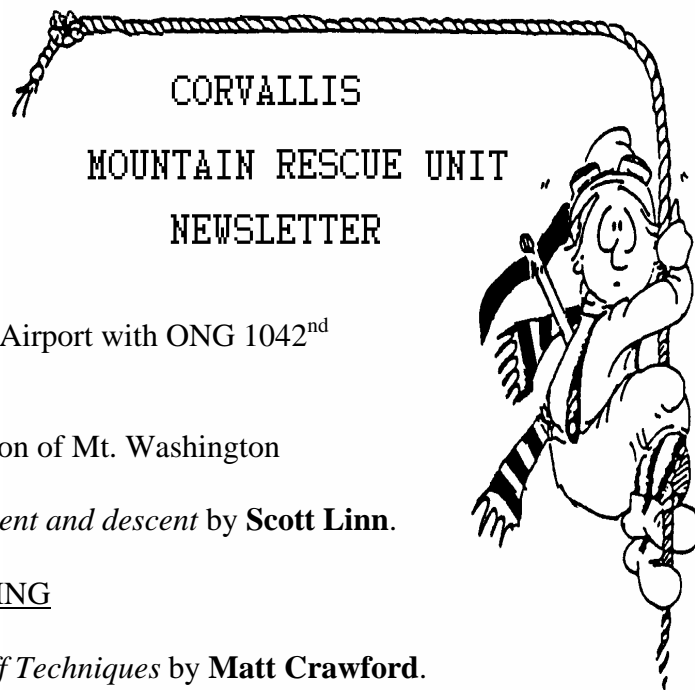


Calendar

- July 5 7:00pm UNIT MEETING – Training: *Map, Compass, GPS, & Navigation* by **Casey Sullivan**.
- July 9 8:00am HELICOPTER TRAINING – Salem Airport with ONG 1042nd MEDEVAC Company.
- July 16 9:00am FIELD TRAINING –Circumnavigation of Mt. Washington
- July 20 7:00pm TRAINING SESSION – *Vertical ascent and descent* by **Scott Linn**.
- July 25 7:00pm EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
- August 2 7:00pm UNIT MEETING – Training: *Pickoff Techniques* by **Matt Crawford**.
- August 6 8:00am HELICOPTER TRAINING -- Salem Airport with ONG 1042nd MEDEVAC Company.
- August 17 7:00pm TRAINING SESSION – *Medical Equipment: Unit Owned and Improvised* by **Matt Crawford**.
- August 20 10:00am FIELD TRAINING – Rock Practice, Steelhead Falls (or not).
- August 29 7:00pm EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING



CORVALLIS

MOUNTAIN RESCUE UNIT

NEWSLETTER

MISSION REPORT 05-03: Injured Climber, Mt. Washington, Linn County

Member hours: 95

At about 1530 on Friday, July 1st, a 24 year old Hillsboro woman was belaying her husband on the east side of the North Ridge (below the notch, in the vicinity of the Gendarmes – yes, they were ‘off route’). He was about 15 feet above her when he threw a runner over a rock horn for protection and pulled out the rock. The rock flew directly at the belayer who attempted to protect herself with an upraised hand/arm. The rock struck her and she (apparently not anchored in) fell off the east side and landed in a moat. [If she had bounced out of the moat or struck the steep snow patch, it is very likely she would have “taken the big one” and pulled her husband off too.] Her husband was able to work his way down to her and called for help on his cellphone. It is unknown which PSAP received his call, but most likely Albany since Linn County took to lead on this mission.

Camp Sherman Hasty team was activated along with Deschutes County SAR. Air Life airlifted at least one team (and perhaps more) to a LZ in the meadows below the west bowl. CMRU was activated 2 ½ hours later and was told a helicopter (from the National Guard) was not available. Seven members of the Unit responded to the staging area at Ray Benson Sno Park. As we were leaving the valley, the “unavailable” helicopter was making radio contact with “SAR Base.” While we drove toward the staging area, Deschutes and Camp Sherman teams and 1042nd flight medics accessed, assessed and packaged the patient. She was not in a position where she could be hoisted directly so a raising system was rigged to bring the SKED to the ridgetop.

As the sun went down, fog began to form around (just) the mountain. When CMRU arrived at the staging area, the patient had been raised into position for a helo pickup, however the fog was blowing in and out of the pickup point. The helicopter lifted from SAR base about 2230 and tried for the next half hour to gain access to the ridgetop pickup site; but to no avail. There just wasn’t a long enough clear period to allow a safe hover/hoist operation and at approximately 2300 the helo departed for Salem (leaving their medic(s) on the mountain with the SAR teams). In the meantime, Linn County’s SAR Explorers (although I’m not sure they are still an Explorer Post but I don’t know what they are officially called) and mounted Posse hit the trail from the Big Lake Youth Camp to the PCT and climber’s trail(s). CMRU remained “available” in the staging area until about midnight when we retired to the lodge at Hoodoo for some sleep – subject to immediate recall if necessary.

MISSION REPORT 05-03: (continued)

Since a pickup of the subject was not going to happen this night, the teams on the mountain prepared to lower the SKED down the west bowl. They had about 800' of line on scene (to do a 1600' lower). The lower commenced around midnight and by approximately 0200 they were at the bottom of the scree slope. When the helo departed, it was understood that it would return to do the pickup as soon as the patient was in "clear air." The team reported they were ready for the pickup, but were advised it would be 1 ½ - 2 hours before the helo would be on scene – and Air Life would not fly until after sunrise (almost three hours away). The Linn County SAR folks were within about ½ mile of the patient around 0300 and continued toward the bottom of the scree field from the "ridge climbers trail." The fog was now spreading to the bottom of the scree. The helo arrived on scene before sunrise (0525) and was "on top" of the clouds at 7800' looking for a way to get down through. After about 45 minutes, it departed to Redmond to refuel and let the fog dissipate (as the sun warmed the air).

CMRU was called around 0530 and told to prepare for a wheeled evacuation (of either patient or gear). We reported to SAR Base around 0615, were briefed, and departed for the trailhead at the Big Lake Youth Camp. As we readied our gear, the helo returned and was able to find a clear opening to approach the pickup point at the bottom of the West Bowl's scree field. (After spending much more time than we should have) CMRU continued toward the PCT and Climber's Trail junction as the helo proceeded to do the hover/hoist operation. Upon arrival at the climbers trail, we met three women with pack horses (including Anne Gredigan's sister, Sue) who had spent the night there in anticipation of carrying out gear. Teams from the mountain (Camp Sherman, Deschutes, and Linn Co. SAR) arrived shortly before 0800 and we were all out of the field by 0900. The patient was flown to St. Charles in Bend for treatment of her injuries.

PARTICIPANTS: L. Clunes, D. Myers, N. Vitaglilano, J. Killian, T. Shechter, M. Crawford, J. Linn, B. Freund

MT. WASHINGTON UNIT CLIMB -- revisited**A Journey Up Mt. Washington: or "What kind of batteries does your ice axe use?"**

So there we were a little after 0900 on a muggy Saturday in June at the PCT trailhead heading to the North Ridge of Mt. Washington swatting at the mosquitoes. Jerry, Katie, and I had arrived in Jerry's Westy to find Chris wandering the road in his truck (wondering if it was the right trailhead) and Aaron curled up on the ground in his bag and bivy by the side of his rig. We expected Matt to show by about 1015 and figured he would catch up to us. Well, by the time we split up some group gear -- which consisted of two light ropes and some webbing, and determining that an ice axe was likely necessary. It was 1000 as we left the trailhead, a little later than planned but so far so good.

The hike was pleasant and uneventful. We generally went at a moderate pace with only a few comfort stops on the way up the climbers trail. When we reached the ridge we started talking about when we thought Matt might catch us at which point he popped up the spine of the ridge as if on cue. Apparently he was unavoidably detained by no less than 5 fifth wheel rolling road blocks tugging up route 20 who were not about to pull over for a lowly Subaru. Anyway, our merry little band continued up the ridge in the fairly decent weather talking about various important subjects such as which is the best climbing movie ever. I think *The Eiger Sanction* won out.

At this point things stepped up a notch as it was time to pull out ice axes and helmets for some real alpinism. We encountered some spots of steep and tricky snow that needed to be carefully negotiated on our way to the "notch" on the north ridge. We reached it at around 1330 or so and proceeded to put on harnesses and get out ropes for the tricky parts. While we were preparing for the final push, I distinctly remember someone saying how calm and nice it was for once at the notch. Bad ju-ju my friends, bad ju-ju.

I suggested that in the essence of expediency and the groups experience, we could use a rope on the easier and less exposed direct rock route of the first pitch by free climbing with a safety prussic slid up as a we each climbed. Everyone was comfortable with this idea and it was working well as the weather turned worse (wetter and colder!) by the second. I was the last to go and as I started my ascent I thought about announcing a turnaround due to the deteriorating conditions (what was I thinking, this was great!). I reached the crux move about 15ft below the others when I went for a move and heard the loudest rifle crack ever! No boom, no rumble, no flash, not much of a warning, no kidding. I called up "HEY GUYS!" and for a few seconds I heard nothing but the wind, as my body decided to go down before my mind did, at which point Matt yelled over "RAP DOWN, GET DOWN!!" in a very emphatic way. He didn't have to say anything, I was already halfway down. Like I said, bad ju-ju.

At the same time at the top of the pitch, the scene went something like this (correct me if I'm wrong team);

Chris: Matt, my ice axe is humming.

Matt: Yea, I think mine is too.

Chris: Isn't that a bad thing?

Matt: It isn't good.

At the sound of the loudest rifle crack on the planet they all hit the deck into a low crouch, some saw the flash, others felt the zing through their feet. It took a couple of nano seconds for what just happened to register. It was time to go before Mother Nature had her way with them. Then Matt yelled down to me.

I should say that no one was in a panic, everyone was calm, and that that was the fastest I have ever seen five climbers make an "exit stage right" off of a mountain. Of course it did help that it was a single line rap on an 8mm line, go figure. With everyone "safely" in the notch, we quickly packed up and made our exit, today was not going to be the day to summit out, sorry Aaron. We got down around the corner and the weather let up some, the graupel that had been coming down had slowed as we picked our way down through some snowfields. We contemplated a quick glissade down a nice area that we spied on the way up. I acquiesced to one member of the team who was worried about slogging through rain and puddles at the base of the bowl so we continued down the ridge. About thirty minutes from the notch we looked back and the sun came out, the summit laughed at us (well, at least at Aaron). The mountain and valley looked beautiful in the sun.

We continued our journey back to the vehicles and arrived somewhat energized (sorry, I had to say it) by our mountain adventure. We quickly changed (OK, some of us are a little slow) while we swatted at the mosquitoes and loaded up to go. It was around 1830 and we had to journey back to the rainy valley. It was a good day. Did I fail to mention, it was one rifle shot, that one clap of thunder, that one lightning strike was all that we saw or heard all day. Ah well, better to climb again tomorrow when Mother Nature might let us up the rest of the way to the top of the mountain.

NEW MEMBER – Welcome, Todd

Todd Shechter has been accepted as a Trainee-LD with the Unit. Todd is already a member of Marys Peak SAR and is SAR certified. Todd now has another radio identifier to remember: 4 Rescue 6 – in addition to his Marys Peak ID.

INSURANCE – the good, the bad, and the ugly

Insurance usually breaks down into a few categories (e.g. Liability, Property, Health & Life). When you are on a mission with CMRU, the requesting agency usually handles the liability issues. It is your responsibility to perform to your level of training and not to do anything "grossly negligent" (as in doing something beyond your level of training or *scope of practice*). Benton County has (liability) insurance which covers you as an individual (as long as you are operating as a volunteer with their permission) but does not cover CMRU as an organization.

It is doubtful that any of your property is protected by insurance other than what coverage you personally may have. So if you drive your own vehicle, you are providing the coverage. Same goes for any of your climbing or outdoor equipment and clothing.

As for health insurance, if you are injured on a mission your personal coverage is primary. Some counties have additional coverage for their volunteers, but even these are secondary coverage. This is why it is so important to get "signed-in" on the county's sheet while on a mission. As a final bit of coverage, if you have medical expenses for which you have had to pay "out of pocket," it may be possible to receive some reimbursement by petitioning the State of Oregon Emergency Board. This has only been done a few times and is usually handled by the county for which you were volunteering.

In general, it would be best to never put yourself in a position to find out if there is insurance coverage for a particular action, but "stuff" happens. Stay within your training and think before you act.