

# June 1998

## Vol. XXIII No. 6

Member of the Mountain Rescue Association  
The *Corvallis Mountain Rescue Newsletter* is published monthly  
to keep friends and members of the Unit informed of our activities.  
Editor: Bob Freund

### Calendar

June 2	7:00pm	UNIT MEETING - Training: Radio Communication by Susan Leach.
June 17	7:00pm	TRUCK WORK PARTY at truck garage. Bring your own tools and Cleaning supplies.
June 19 - 21		MRA MEETING at Timberline Lodge.
June 29	7:00pm	EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
July 7	7:00pm	UNIT MEETING - Summer Social: First-ever stove competition and wilderness cook-off at Avery Park.
July 15	7:00pm	TRAINING SESSION - Helicopter Operations by Matt Jarvis.
July 18		HELICOPTER TRAINING EXERCISE
July 27	7:00pm	EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

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### **ANNUAL ROCK PRACTICE - a trainee's perspective** by Matt Jarvis

We arrived to find most of CMRU on hand for this year's rock practice - a good sign that this is one of our most popular training events. Promptly at 10:00am Susan came running into camp, screaming like crazy that someone had gone over the edge and was badly hurt. Myself (and Jon?) went at a full sprint for the edge to assist before being called back by Don. Aha! Realism is a good thing. Susan's performance was worthy of an Academy Award nomination.

We quickly sent out the hasty team, while the rest of us mobilized the remaining gear. Spencer went over the edge to triage the patient (Tim) while the rest of the Unit set up a raising/lowering system with belay. Don did a great job running things, and each station had an expert on hand to see that things were done properly.

After the entire system was in place (under the watchful eye of Anne, the Safety Officer) we practiced raising and lowering. Luckily Bob had the foresight to go ahead and rig the raising system during some downtime at initial set up - a real time saver when it came time to actually use it. To add realism Bob had arranged for some dreadful amounts of rain that morning which put our patience and raingear to the test. Safety Tip: wet vertical rocks are slippery. After tearing down the system, during a lunch break we all felt pretty good about how things had gone. Consistent communication and safety were the highlights of discussion.

For the afternoon session, Tim took charge and now it was the Trainees turn to rig the system. Oh Baby! Tim even saw to it that we had much better weather. Way to go Tim!

Anne and I set up the Belay station, Bob and Keith were busy setting up the raising/lowering system, while Dustin and others were edge attendants and prepared the litter and rock. Jeff made his rounds as Safety Officer - a job he seemed to relish with a vengeful glee.

Eric made his first run as a litter attendant and seemed to be having a great time. Learning Note: as with rappelling, getting over the edge, both going up or down, seem to be real issues requiring a lot of practice. Another Learning Note: Don't let a 4 to 1 mechanical advantage fool you - it takes A LOT of work to move something upwards.

After tearing it all down and a discussion about the job we had done - dinner time! Everyone took off for Terrebonne for Mexican food while Dustin and I stayed behind and enjoyed the solitude while building a fire at our main campsite. When everyone returned, the evening's conversation was filled with lively debate on various gear, stories of heroic deeds and good camaraderie.

Sunday was rappelling/ascending practice which everyone seemed to enjoy. We were joined by a few folks from Jefferson County SAR to see how we did things. We also broke into groups and practiced setting anchors in the rocks at the bottom of the cliff and each group shared what they had come up with. All of them looked pretty solid!

After everyone was back up on top the real fun began. Highlines!! We split into two teams and went about the complex task of setting up the Anchor ends, Belay station and Tension system. A carriage was rigged up with tag lines and tag line hangers. One of the J.C. folks 'volunteered' to be a deadweight for the return trip on the carriage, and we learned how much work it was to set up a system like this.

Participants: Benson, Fitzpatrick, Freund, Gent, Greenwood, Harney, Jarvis, Lacer, Leach, Mitsch, Sears, Vertanen, Wood

### **NEW MEMBER - Keith Vertanen**

During its May meeting, the Executive Committee interviewed Keith and extended an invitation for him to become a Trainee member of the Unit. He has previous outdoor experience in Minnesota and will be finishing graduate work at OSU in Computer Science next year. In addition to already completing the SAR certification through Benton County earlier this Spring, Keith has also completed a nine day "Wilderness First Responder" course. Welcome to CMRU, Keith.

### **NEW EQUIPMENT - update**

In the same manner that the four Bendix-King portables are "loaned" to CMRU by Benton County, an aircraft band portable has been loaned to us. We have configured it with a battery pack into which alkaline AA cells can be placed. It will be stored without any batteries in the pack, so it needs to be "battered-up" whenever it might be used - just like the avalanche transceivers.

### **MT. HOOD AVALANCHES - close encounters of the worst kind**

The middle of May saw moderate snowfall at high elevations (>8000') in Oregon and set the stage for a couple weekends of significant incidents. On Memorial Day weekend, a climbing party was swept away by an avalanche triggered by a climbing party above them. They stopped before being carried into any crevasses and there were no injured climbers who required evacuation. However, on the last weekend of May, a Mazama climbing class was swept away by a slab avalanche which reportedly had a 1/4 mile wide fracture line and ran about 100 yards. This accident resulted in one death and two seriously injured climbers who required evacuation.

