

NEWMEMBERS

Caroline Hobbs
Philip Armiger
Beth Blattenberger
David Harrington

GUYE CABIN WORK PARTIES

We do lots of little work parties at Guye Cabin, but to make it easy on everyone that would like to come up and help out, we do them the second Saturday of each month in the summer. (usually)

This summers dates! Mark your calendar!
Saturday May 14 from 9-3
Saturday June 11 from 9-3
Saturday July 16 (This is actually the third Sat) from 9-3

Our goal on May 14 will be to stain/varnish the new paneling we put up.

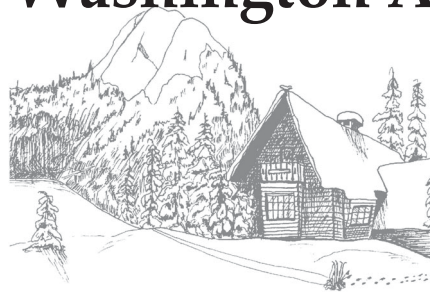
There is lots of other stuff to do! Dust and do windows, split wood, transplant trees from the back to the front, gather rubbish from the property to go to the landfill, put up more paneling, enjoy the day.

We always have a potluck cookout lunch of burgers. Work parties are fun! It is a good chance to meet and get to know others from the WAC interested in Guye Cabin. Mike

SKI AREA SEASON PASSES EXTENDED TO NEXT SEASON

Booth Creek made it known at a SNOPAC meeting recently that the 04-05 season passes to Snoq Pass ski areas would be honored in the 05-06 season.

Washington Alpine Club



May 2005

Vol. 87 No. 5

BULLETIN

BOARD MEETING

	June 11	Work Party Guye Cabin
May 12th Thursday	7:00 PM	STP Bike Ride
Meeting to be held at Gasworks Park in the picnic shelter area.		Board Meeting at Gasworks Park
	July 09/10	Work Party Guye Cabin
	July 14	Hobnailers at Guye Cabin
	July 16	Hobnailers at Guye Cabin
	July 17/23	Hobnailers at Guye Cabin

LOOKING AHEAD

May	07/08	Climbing Class at Snoqualmie Pass
May	12	Board Meeting at Gasworks Park
May	14	Work Party Guye Cabin
May	14	MOFA Instructor Class begins
May	12/15	Climbing Class at Cabin with Alpine Climbs, weekend 1
May	17	Infant/Child CPR at Queen Anne Community Center
May	20/22	Climbing Class at Cabin with Alpine Climbs, weekend 2
May	22	Yakima River Bike Ride, see announcement above
June	04	Hanford Reach Float Trip
June	09	Board Meeting at Gasworks Park

PRESIDENT'S CORNER MAY 2005

As soon as we completely gave up on snow, a series of storms came through and allowed all the ski areas to open for a brief three-week season! We were at Alpentel on two weekends and the snow and skiing was excellent. Eric Knudson, Kirsten, Nate, Pete Bustanoby, Doerte, and others also took advantage of the good snow. As always there will be many folks still getting some runs in the backcountry all through the summer. Camp Muir, Mount Baker, and even the July 4th trip to Mount Adams are on the agenda.

It is again membership renewal time! Save the Club time, and money, and proactively send your renewal to Lynne Miller. I'm

WASHINGTON ALPINE CLUB
PO Box 352
Seattle, WA. 98111
Address Correction Requested
DONOTFORWARD

FIRST CLASS

WASHINGTON ALPINE CLUB
 Organized 1916 Incorporated 1923
 MEMBER OF: Federation of Western
 Outdoor Clubs, Washington Trails Assn.
 Washington Environmental Council.
 Washington Wilderness
 Coalition.MidFORC Coalition
*The primary objective of this club is to
 encourage the healthful enjoyment of
 the great outdoors, to preserve its
 natural beauty and to promote good
 fellowship among all lovers of nature.*
PO Box 352 Seattle Wa. 98111
206-467-3042
WAC Home page:
 www.washingtonalpineclub.org

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1 st V P	Pat O'Brien	206.527.6881
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Jr Secretary	Ronda Jalili	425.442.7821

Alpine Division

Climbing Class	Pat O'Brien	206.329.4523
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Winter Division

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Back Country	Pete Alderson	206.409.9657
Skiing		

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Special Activities

Special advisor	Bill Hooper	206.325.2851
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Do you plan to move?
 Send change of address forms to:
 Washington Alpine Club
 PO Box 352
 Seattle, WA 98111

sending mine in today! I'll include the yearly Cabin fee, and an extra donation for the Club to do more Guye Cabin improvements and create the parking area! If you're not on a tight budget please include an extra donation!

The 2005 Climbing Class as been up at Spire Rock in pouring rain and on Mount Erie in bright sunshine. Soon they will be on Snoqualmie Pass for their first snow class and later be at Guye Cabin on two weekends for climbs of The Tooth, Snoqualmie Mountain, Lundin, and other summits. They are an excellent class again this year! I wonder how many of them will complete the mountains required for their Chief Six Pin? Pat, Murray, George and Christie are doing a wonderful job running the class!

We had two Club Outings in April and both were big successes! John Sargent led the Klickitat Trail and Historic Columbia River Highway Bike rides. Last weekend he was up again on the Iron Horse Trail. John always does a fantastic job organizing the ride from start to finish! Is the Seattle to Portland Ride next? Many WAC members participate in that big ride each year. For the fourth year in a row the WAC again participated in the Olympic Wilderness Beach Cleanup. We were 14 strong, and working as a team easily made the beaches look like they did when Captain Cook sailed by 500 years ago! It is a great feeling to take an opportunity to give something back" and enjoy great beauty and wilderness at the ocean. All of us came back with a story and

a new experience! We will do it again next year!

Don't forget Mike Brown's annual Hanford Reach Columbia River trip on June 03. Patch the hole in the canoe or kayak and join the fun. If you can get your hands on a boat this is something you'll never forget. This trip is always one of the highlights of the beginning of the summer season!

Contact Bill Hooper or Mike Brown for the details. Please check often our excellent Washington Alpine Club web page that Sim Larkin and others have put together. Everything you want to know about the WAC is there! You can find out what is happening in the club, find members email addresses and phone numbers, check trip reports, and gather information. You can send your photo to Sim to upload. It is great fun to look through and see all the photos of the smart people in our Club! If you haven't already, send your photo to Sim today!

This year we have one of the most active, involved, dedicated Boards ever. Everyone is working hard for the best interest of the Club. We continue to work to reduce expenses, and keep the Club overhead at a minimum. Beginning this month we will again have the Board meetings at Gasworks Park at the shelter. Always the second Thursday of the month at 7:00 PM.

Our first work party of the year will be on May 14th. We'll fire up the grill and have a potluck cookout of burgers and stuff. Come on out and visit the Cabin, and find a project to work on. Join the ranks of hard working dedicated members! We will have these work parties the second Saturday of June and third Saturday of July.

Our Cabin was originally built, expanded, and maintained since 1932

exclusively by WAC members volunteering their time and skills! See something that needs to be done? Continue this long tradition by fixing what needs fixing, and joining a Guye Cabin Work Party. Don't know what you can do? Come on up and learn something new! Work Parties can be small informal events of one or two people, or large gatherings such as last year when the cabin was painted outside. They are fun! What do you get for your labor? A sense of pride, and ownership in the Cabin and the WAC! Contact our Cabin Chair, Bill Hooper if you have an idea, or want to participate. There is always something we can do.

Mike

Renew your Membership Now! - Why wait to the last minute? While you are thinking about it, go ahead and send in your 2006 renewal to our Membership Chair Lynne Miller! Lynne has done a fantastic job eliminating mailing expense for new members. Everything is now sent via email! This is so important for a non-profit all volunteer Club like the WAC! Membership is still a bargain at \$30 per person! (I know of another outdoor Club that is \$61 a year!) Want to support Guye Cabin? Send in your Cabin Fees for the year at the same time!

For the entire year it is only \$70.00 per person, \$100.00 for two, or \$120.00 for three or more family members (13 and older). Kids under 13 are always free! This is a great way to not have to worry about sending in your fee every weekend to the WAC Treasurer. Plus the added benefit of knowing that YOU are helping to support Guye Cabin!

Recently cashed in those loose coins? Found some extra dollars when you balanced your checkbook? Please send in an extra donation to the WAC! It will help with the Guye Cabin restoration projects and the creation of the off street winter parking area!
The Washington Alpine Club
c/o Lynne Miller
3040 NW 57th Street
Seattle, WA 98107

BULLETIN DELIVERED TO YOUR COMPUTER

Once again you will find the bulletin will come directly to your email address. If you have not emailed me already, please respond and let me know which method you prefer. We will not remove anyone from the snail mail bulletin without an email okay! Those of you that have indicated you prefer the pdf version, thank you!
Our editors and publishers, Dave and Bill, are looking into modifying the format to be more readable in the pdf format.

You will just need to click in the link to open the bulletin in pdf format. You will be able to read it online, save it to your collection on your computer, or print it out. There are over 350 WAC members with email and this method will translate into a significant \$\$\$ savings for the Club over the course of a year. If you want the bulletin to come to your email account, or have comments or doable suggestions please email mike@grandcanyontreks.org. And of course, if you don't have email, or like to get something in the snailmail box besides bills, you can continue to receive the mailing.

Mike

HANFORD REACH TRIP

The Hanford Reach Trip is planned for this year for Saturday, June 4. This year the trip is privileged to have Walt Grisham along for day. Walt grew up in the town of White Bluffs before it was taken over by the US Government in 1940's. Walt will give personal reflections of the area during the day.

The plan for the day is to meet at the Vernita Bridge (WA Route 24 north of Richland; <http://pacific.fws.gov/planning/draft/docs/WA/Hanford/vernita.pdf>) at 9:00 AM, June 4th, float down the river, and arrive at Old White Bluffs Ferry landing by 5:00 PM. During the lunch break at the beginning of White Bluffs, there will be an opportunity to climb to top of the Bluffs to get a gorgeous panoramic view of the area. If you are staying in the area, you are invited to share food and reflections of day at Atomic Ale, 1015 Lee Blvd, Richland. Call Bill Hooper at 206.325.2851 or Mike Brown 509.430.3450 if want to come

OLDTIMERS REUNION

Once again, we will hold what has become an Annual Oldtimer's Reunion. For the benefit of the newcomer's, I identify an old-timer as anyone who remembers when we skied on our own hill. Amazing as it must seem for the "thirty something crowd", this includes many of you!

All former and present members are included. If you know of someone who dropped out of the club years ago, you might invite them to see how great the cabin is being kept up by the current members.

This year the date is Saturday, August 20th. The cabin will be open by 10:00 AM. and we'll have our usual extraordinary potluck around 1:00 PM. We'll charge a reduced day fee of \$2.00. For your information it is now \$4 for active members. We'll have reminders in future bulletins, but save the date now. Questions? MJ Steele 206-523-9309.

FREE INFANT/CHILD CPR CERTIFICATION

Tuesday May 17th at 7:00 PM at the Queen Anne Community Center.

The Seattle Fire Department offers free a Infant/Child CPR Classes. The WAC will organize these once a year, or on an as needed basis. Seattle firefighters, as well as others from fire departments throughout King County, serve as instructors for Medic II. Classes are held in convenient locations throughout the region and are available free of charge.

The program offers a three-hour adult CPR class, a one-and-a-half hour refresher course and a four-hour infant/child CPR class, which also focuses on injury prevention and safety for children.

Please call (206) 684-7274 to register and for more information on class dates, times and locations.

Become a MOFA Instructor - You must act now! Announcing Spring MOFA Instructor Course. Join a Spring MOFA instructor course #57423 to be held on weekends. Dates: May 14th, 15th, 21st, and 22nd. Times 8:30 AM. to 5:00 PM. Location: Bio-Rad Woodinville, 14620 NE North Woodinville Way,

Woodinville. The course tuition is \$70.00 (If you are already an American Red Cross instructor you may be excused from six hours of the May 14th session.)

For questions or registration for Instructor Course # 57423, call the American Red Cross Safety Services at 206-726-3534. NOTE: Enrollment minimums will be required for the courses to be held.

PARKING UPDATE

Bill Higgins has been working with Rosemary Daszkiewicz to get an easement request from the neighbors put together. We hope to have this ready soon to present to Sahalie. Also, Dryco Surveying will be up again to resurvey the parking area to correct the topographic portion of the survey. Both Bill and Rosemary have donated lots of time and energy into getting this project off the ground!

SAMHILL ACQUISITION

The Trust for Public Land and the WA Climbers Coalition raised over \$8,500.00 to contribute toward the purchase of 40 acres of private land that includes some popular Icicle Creek Canyon (Leavenworth) crags at risk of development and access restrictions. These crags include Sam Hill, Ski Tracks Crack, The Underhill, Trundle Dome, Whoopsie Pillar, and the classic Fridge Boulder.

The Trust for Public Land (TPL), a national nonprofit organization, has put together a combination of a large grant from the Icicle Fund, a Leavenworth-based environmental foundation, and smaller grants from

donors like you and the Access Fund, a national climbers' advocacy group. The Washington Climber's Coalition spearheaded the grass-roots effort among Washington climbers, and your participation made a difference. About four weeks into our fund-raising campaign, the Trust for Public lands changed their "position" on this purchase and exercised their option, based in part on our showing that we were likely going to be able to raise the needed money. TPL is now going to purchase the land and turn it over to the Chelan-Douglas Land Trust, which will serve as the property's long-term owner and steward. Climbing access will be preserved. The Chelan-Douglas Land trust needs a \$20,000.00 endowment to cover the long-term expenses of owning and managing the land, and a grant proposal from the Access Fund remains outstanding.

MARA JEFFRESS TO WALK THE PCT

WAC member Mara Jeffress will embark in the early summer on a 1,000 mile solo backpacking trek along the Pacific Crest Trail (PCT) of the United States, and is seeking contributions to assist Doctors Without Borders.

Mara, 33, a medical scientist, who graduated from the University of Washington in Seattle, Washington, last August with a Ph.D. in Molecular and Cellular Biology, now lives in Orinda, California. Currently, she is intensively training for the expedition, planning and fundraising.

After examining the missions, budgets and fundraising efficiencies of several aid organizations, Jeffress decided to raise money for Doctors

without Borders, which, according to Forbes magazine, spends 86% of its small 4 million per year income directly on program services, such as sending doctors to aid tsunami victims in South East Asia. Founded in 1971 on the belief that all people have a right to medical care, Doctors without Borders delivers emergency aid to victims of armed conflict, epidemics, and natural and man-made disasters, and to others who lack health care due to social or geographical isolation.

Mara is one of the few women to tackle the Pacific Crest Trail alone. She plans to hike the 1,000 miles of trail from the Canadian border through the Cascade Mountains of Washington and Oregon for charity and then continue through California to Mexico, walking a marathon every day, to complete the entire 2,650 miles of the PCT. The trek will begin after her brothers' wedding in June, and end sometime in the fall. Mara will make the journey with a small lightweight backpack containing everything she needs to survive for several months in the wilderness including food, shelter and water.

Contributions may be made by visiting the website <http://jeffress.net/mara/1000miles.html> or www.doctorswithoutborders.org.

THE OLYMPIC COAST CLEANUP 2005!

The Washington Alpine Club participated in this annual event once again for the fourth year on April 23/24, 2005! Our strong, and committed team of volunteers enjoyed a great time at the Olympic Coast and gave a little back! We had an excel-

lent turnout and very nice weather overall!

The Olympic Beach Cleanup is the idea of our friend Jan Klippert. He was hiking the Olympic Coast and noticed a variety of debris that had washed up on the beaches. The current across the Pacific Ocean carries objects from as far away as Asia! Jan went home and started making phone calls. He now has a growing annual event with over 500 volunteers participating, as well as the Park Service, Cities of Port Angeles, and Forks, and even the Makah Indian Nation. The WAC is also one of the sponsors.

The Trailhead at Oil City is at the end of a dirt road, at the Olympic National Park boundary. Most people don't know it, but there is no city, nor any oil, at Oil City. At one time it was a drilling prospect in someone's dream. Now it is only a place in the Hoh Rain Forest, at the mouth of the Hoh River. The Hoh River begins its journey high above on the Blue Glacier of Mount Olympus. Oil City is an ugly name for an extremely beautiful place. The silver lining in the name Oil City? It helps keeps folks away! Ruby Beach sounds much more inviting, but isn't really.

It is less than two miles to the Hoh Beach and the Pacific Ocean. As usual, we set up camp above the high water line, sheltered from the wind by big driftwood logs. We had a group kitchen area, and the tents dispersed following large group camping procedures. We practiced "Leave no Trace".

Hoh Beach is interesting in that large amount of logs and driftwood accumulate on the beach each winter. They wash down the Hoh River, and

are deposited on the beach by the high storm tides. Each year the beach has a different character as logs and wood are washed away or redeposited. What is a sandy beach one year, might be a huge pile of logs the next.

This year the low tide was a 7:00 AM. We immediately headed North along the beach and cobbles around Diamond Head to Jefferson Cove. Only Michael and Jonathan were able to make it. The rest of us were too late with the storm surge raising the tide beyond the 8 feet predicted.

In the past, with more debris on Jefferson Cove we carried it to the far North end of the beach where we made a big cache high above the High Tide Line. Jan arranges a vessel and a Zodiac to come and pick up all the backcountry caches.

At the North end of Jefferson Cove is some wonderful tide pools at low tide. There is also a big sand beach. This all disappears at high tide. I bet there are clams there! This is also the place where a ladder takes hikers off the beach to the trail that goes over the impassable Hoh Headland to Mosquito Creek. 17 miles, two creek crossings, a waterfall, and two other Headlands later hikers exit at Third Beach.

Michael and Jonathan were able to return in the early evening when the tide again receded. They carried 4 bags around from Jefferson Cove to Hoh Beach and later to the trailhead. Thanks you guys!

We had learned from our friend, the NPS Ranger, that the styrofoam and plastic were the worst, as it continues to break down into smaller and smaller pieces, and leeches into the water.

Armed with trash bags we picked up floats, styrofoam, plastic bottles, rope, pieces of fishing nets, prescription glasses, and other good stuff. There always seems to be metal cables, chains, plates, and other big metal items. There was even a big 40 gallon barrel. This stuff is considered okay pollution wise so we didn't worry about hauling it out. Our only interesting finds were a water bottle from Japan, and a water bottle from Australia. The mild winter resulted in less debris washing up on shore.

Joelle Nelson, with the very sharp eyes, found some treasures along the high tide line. Two examples are a shark pouch, and some vertebrae. The famous Japanese Glass Floats are still found occasionally along our Ocean, but not near as many as in times past.

Evening saw the team have some great fun! We had a big Beach Fire and enjoyed appetizers all evening. We ate fresh mussels (supplied by Chris), deluxe Jiffy Pop, and reportedly, the best Smores ever! At 10:00 PM raindrops signaled time to retreat to the tents for the night. The fire burned all night, and served as a signal to passing ships.

The lighthouse far offshore on Destruction Island came on exactly at sunset. Does anyone know why it is called Destruction Island? We made a big bon fire to signal passing ships.

Sunday morning saw the sunlight streaming down the Hoh Valley and lighting the monuments in the Ocean. Soon we were basking in the warm sunshine. Sunday Morning and John Sargent cooked up a super deluxe egg mcmuffin breakfast! Remarks such as "yummm!" and "best I ever had!" were frequently

heard. Bald Eagles perched in the Sitka Spruce high above, while others soared at the edge of the sky. The Bald Eagle, which is our national bird, is the only Eagle unique to North America.

At one time, the word "bald" meant "white," not hairless. Bald Eagles are found over most of North America, from Alaska and Canada to northern Mexico. About half of the world's 70,000 bald eagles live in Alaska. Combined with the British Columbia's population of about 20,000, the northwest coast of North America is by far the most dense area for Bald Eagles. They flourish on the Olympic Coast because of the salmon. Dead or dying fish are an important food source for all Bald Eagles. More about Bald Eagles at <http://www.eagles.org/moreabout.html>

We even saw a Sea Otter! Almost 150,000 northern Sea Otters inhabit the coastline of Alaska down to California, and there are approximately 9,000 in Russia. Two hundred years ago, demand for the otter's pelt nearly led to its extinction.

Unlike other marine mammals, the sea otter does not have a layer of blubber to help keep it warm. If an otter's fur gets coated with oil or any other substance, the otter can easily die from cold and exposure. Southern sea otters typically reach about four feet in length. Females average 45 pounds, while males average 65 pounds. Alaskan or northern sea otters can reach up to 100 pounds! Sea otters are one of the only mammals other than primates known to use tools. Otters use small rocks or other shellfish to pry prey from rocks and to hammer or pry open their food. They can dive up to 180 feet when

foraging for food. Their favorite foods include sea urchins, abalone, mussels, clams, crabs, and snails. More info at http://www.npca.org/marine_and_coastal/marine_wildlife/seaotter.asp A leisurely morning and then a leisurely hike out on Sunday. A grand time was had by all.

Everything collected on the Hoh Beach had to be hauled out to the Trailhead for pickup by volunteers from Port Angeles. We left them a large load of 21 bags, a tire, and big pieces of plastic.

Thanks always to our leader Jan Klippert for organizing this huge event.

Thanks to Jonathan Balise, Michael Balise, Lee Parsons, Sean Parsons, Tim Sargent, Chris Sargent, John Sargent, Joelle Nelson, Victor Caro, Laura Sargent, John, Audrey Pitigliano, Doerte Mahanay, and Mike Mahanay for taking time out to participate in the cleanup!

For more information on visiting the wild Olympic Coast: <http://www.nps.gov/olym/wic/coast.htm> Online trip report and photos are at: <http://www.grandcanyontrkts.org/olympiccleanup2005.htm> Mike

SPIRE II - NOAH'S ARK

Posted by: Victoria and Kristin.
Date of Trip: 2005-04-16

I woke up Saturday morning listening to the sound of rain pounding the pavement outside and thought, "This is going to be horrible". Then I thought of our fearless leaders who were already in Spanaway setting up anchors and prusik stations and realized I didn't have it so bad - yet.

After loading my gear into the car, I set off to pick up Megan, who was still slapping the peanut butter on her toast while I waited patiently outside her apartment. We eagerly left Seattle, excited for the opportunity to climb on slimy slick rock in heavy boots.

Hydroplaning down I-5 we both thought how great it will be to test our gear and our skills in the wettest conditions possible. As luck would have it, buckets of rain fell from the sky in Spanaway as well. Enthusiastic instructors, clearly excited about being soaked to the bone by 8:00 AM, greeted us with hot chocolate and cookies.

We all agreed the rapell stations were our favorite. Rapelling wasn't quite challenging enough, however, so some of us chose to fall over on our asses during the rapell to see if we could get out of our inverted positions in the rain with our packs on. When that had lost its thrill we moved to the prusik station where we further challenged our strength and skills by prusiking with leg loops that had stretch in the rain so much that we were only getting 6 inches of travel with the harness prussic as opposed to 12 inches. It's always more fun when you get to work harder with cold wet hands.

There were instructors flooding the place, literally... they were everywhere. Why are all these people coming out in the rain to come and help us newbies? They all had a smile on their face and every now and then, between episodes of wringing out clothing and sneaking in an occasional grimace they were laughing, encouraging and demanding we do things correctly. Pat bellowing on top of Spire Rock " don't take your

rain gear off, it won't be gone for long" George giving hugs after mistakes and then demanding "please don't ever let go of the rappel rope again, that scares me" Sim with umbrella in hand giggling to himself as we seem to get lost on the simplest of trails in the great Spanaway forest. (I was proud to know that most students took the adventure route, rather than the safe route to the river.) Jason making laps around Spire rock, must have paced a few thousand miles to check in on his crew... Martina and Phoung organizing, motivating, trying to read warped plans, never faltering from the plan.... Eric and Jonathan once again constructing another spectacular, death defying crevasse field that took our breath away. To all the instructors that came we thank you (we know we left out many of the names, but it was only because the rain washed away the ink on the helmets.....)

Once again the great Spanaway terrain has proven to us that even the scariest of neighborhoods can produce difficult terrain and dangers unknown to the common student. It will be a lesson for all of us to take with us. The fact that we were actually able to bypass Tacoma on the drive was a victory for many, but little did we know that the skills and lessons acquired on Spire Rock, the Great Spanaway Glacier, and the vast complicated Spanaway forest would be the building blocks to progress us to be able to drive to Anacortes and reach the base of the tremendously threatening Mt. Erie.....

The fun is yet to begin.....As a class, we apologize for the lack of trip reports up to this point, we have

spent so much time practicing our knots, reading our books, and spending every spare moment getting in shape for the weekends ahead of us. The message has been heard...the trip reports trump the training, they will be the top of our list....and like we expect with our climbing skills, they will get better each week....

TSUNAMI

WAC members Jennifer Lind and Eric Semsak were in Thailand this past December when the tsunami devastated the region. This is the rest of their report that was inadvertently omitted last month. Ed.

December 27, 2004. Railay Beach, Thailand.
CNN first reports ten thousand dead.

As a cell phone rings "It's a Small World After All".

It's surreal to be this close to disaster.

All around is an echo of destruction.

This Gilligan's Island now a bamboo landfill.

Boats in trees. Kayaks inside out.

Waves rock the skeleton of a 22-foot sailboat against the crags.

Sand has un-paved paradise and disappeared civilization.

The tsunami has filtered all that we cling to and separated the important from the expendable.

People emerge to wait on the beach with their belongings for transport - they rush to the sea that had tamed them only yesterday in hopes it will deliver them today.

The Thais have worn their life vests all night long. Most have never

learned to swim. The ocean an even more intimidating adversary now.

The frantic searching has stopped — either because the lost have been found or hope has been lost.

Thais and tourists self-soothe with cigarettes.

The breeze still carries a faint scent of spilled diesel and kerosene.

Selfishness has largely replaced the selfless-ness, the focus turned inward, as people fight for position on the departing boats.

High tide is back again — ironically comforting in the wake of its disappearance before the tsunami. And so the sea has reclaimed the beach where the stranded stood in the hours before. Now fully loaded ferries cross the horizon in a hasty retreat from holiday.

The sea is calm — clean and clear as a sheet of blue glass. Its expression reveals no conscience, as if this is the way it has always been.

"Happy New Year," an array of multi-colored garlands hangs undisturbed from the ceiling in the hotel lobby. They flutter in the breeze. Glitter of sunlight.

