

❄️ Caldera Chronicles ❄️

Volume 1 Issue 9

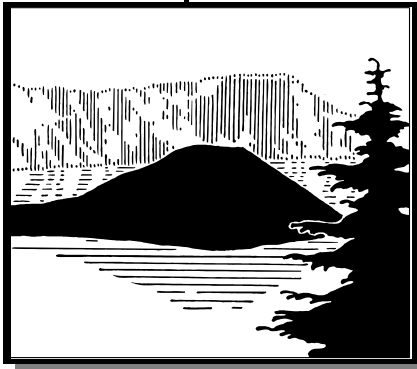
Winter 2000

WELCOME TO WINTER 2000

Greetings from Crater Lake National Park! On behalf of park staff, I would like to extend a warm welcome to members of the patrol. I hope that your winter is going well and your holidays were happy. We have made it to a new millennium and a new era of the ski patrol. I will try to keep this article short. Things are going pretty smoothly, so I have very little patrol business to address here.

We have 11 new members and I have already received several inquiries for next year. As of this writing, I have received two information requests from the local media regarding the patrol. This is for good reason. Ski patrollers have assisted on two rescues, completed a snowmobile training program, have marked several popular ski trails and have assisted on one snow survey this season.

The winter season is looking very good right now. Although we have received less snow than we did at this time last year, the forecast calls for continuing snowstorms passing our way throughout the first month of a new century. The long range forecast calls for another long winter. With a long winter comes longer skiing for the patrol. It also brings with it a chance for near disasters by the visiting public. This is why the patrol is as vital as ever! Every single park employee here realizes how important you all are to the mission of the National Park Service. I am constantly being asked to pass on thanks to you from other employees. The public we serve also reminds me that they too consider the patrol to be a vital part of this organization. All of the



people we have rescued this winter (see accompanying article in the newsletter) have expressed a sincere thanks to the patrol for their help!

We will be continuing to provide as much initial training to our new members as possible. We will also be trying

to provide more advanced training to our “old timers”. This training is of great importance. It not only helps the public by providing well-trained patrollers, but it also helps the individual patrollers become better skiers and outdoor users.

We are still in need of some patrollers to be here in April. If you are interested in patrolling extra weekends during this time, let me know. I will be happy to

schedule you in.

I look forward with a great deal of pride and joy to working with the patrol for another exciting season. You are truly an important aspect of this park. Welcome to another season of “Having Fun and Skiing Safely”

John Broward

Building Relationships Through Visitor Contacts

The primary focus of the Crater Lake Ski Patrol is accident prevention through public education. To accomplish our goals, our communication skills need to be polished and effective. The nature of our work involves a variety of visitor contact situations, i. e. sharing park information, providing corrective feedback for rule violation, and general check-in conversations. We identified these Key

Concepts to consider when patrollers interact with park visitors:

Use a greeting ritual to identify yourself when approaching a visitor, that is. "Good morning, my name is Sam with the Crater Lake Ski Patrol."

ALWAYS be aware of your personal safety, especially when you are giving corrective feedback. If the interaction becomes confrontational, back off and call a ranger on the radio.

Be aware of your and the visitors NON-VERBAL /BODY LANGUAGE. Assume a posture of openness and curiosity for active listening. Take off sunglasses for eye contact. Keep palms of hands up and open to avoid finger pointing or putting hands on hips. Be aware of personal space and try to get down to children's level.

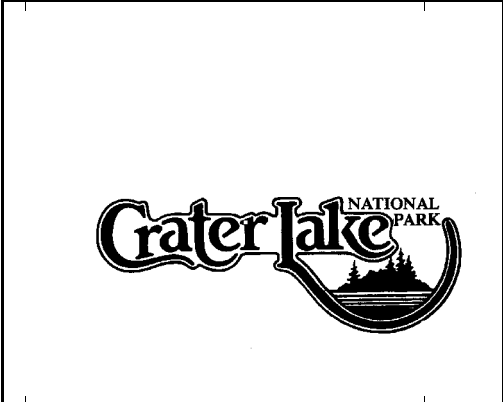
Explain the WHY when we are communicating a park rule or procedure. Focusing on their personal safety or environmental impacts is helpful.

Be persistent - don't give in or give up. To be effective as an organization, we all need to be firm and consistent in

how we promote rule compliance.

Documentation is key in certain situations, make sure to get names, license plate numbers, times, and location.

Be friendly in our demeanor. Use a positive approach. Remember! We will get more bees with honey



Provide positive feedback to people who are following the rules and respecting the park. This will encourage and reinforce the safe behaviors and environmental awareness we want to promote as patrollers.

I encourage all patrollers to be aware of how we interact with park visitors. Conscious communication builds relationships, promotes safety, and protects our natural resources.

Dan Miller

Fifty Years of Ski Trails

Not until the first months of 1949 did the rangers at Crater Lake begin marking trails for cross-country skiing. This stemmed from a decision made about that time to officially keep the park open all year long. An upsurge in winter recreation following World War II gave planners a chance to evaluate whether Crater Lake National Park was suitable for development as a ski area. They rejected anything more than allowing local clubs to set up their portable rope tows for downhill skiing on weekends, but wanted to encourage visitors wanting to try Nordic skiing away from where others congregated at Rim Village and Park Headquarters.

The popular route around the lake that follows Rim Drive is so obvious that markers are superfluous. It remains the most heavily used ski trail, but some visitors also like to explore the park's forested backcountry. The rangers of 1949 indicated how to follow a couple of hiking trails by affixing metal indicators to trees along the way. These markers were round, roughly six inches in diameter, and painted red for visibility. A few of them can still be seen on the Dutton Creek Trail, along with several other types of indicators used subsequently over the past half century. This route seemed to be a great choice for one of the park's first marked ski trails because it drops about one thousand feet in less than five miles from Rim Village to Annie Spring, making for a nice afternoon trip.

Summer backcountry use increased throughout the 1970s, but hikers also started to see cross-country skiing as a complementary winter ac-

tivity. The greatest expansion in the number and mileage of marked trails at Crater Lake took place by the end of that decade, partly because the Alla Mage Ski Club of Klamath Falls and a man named John Day did much to popularize the sport in southern Oregon. The "Crater Lake Ski Service" fueled this interest by providing equipment rentals at their base in Rim Village from 1978 to 1984. They not only helped to promote Nordic skiing to visitors, but also named two new trails. The Hemlock Trail attracted beginners with an easy loop that started near the Community House, while the Raven Trail challenged advanced skiers by following an old road below Crater Lake Lodge to Park Headquarters.

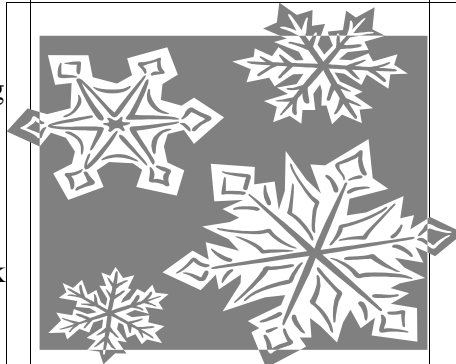
The park's network of ski trails continued to expand beyond Rim Village, with the latest additions coming at Thousand Springs in 1988 and in Mazama Village several years later. Interest in cross-country skiing at Crater Lake remains strong, even if relatively few visitors choose marked backcountry trails over the Rim Drive. These routes offer solitude on even the busiest winter weekend, with some like the obscure South Bound-

ary Trail coming with a virtual guarantee that you won't meet another soul on this or any day!

Steve Mark

Fun Facts

Did you know, from 10/1/98 through 9/30/99 (aka FY99), Crater Lake had 63 volunteers who donated their time to help our park? Together, they contributed a total of 5052 hours and worked in almost every division. Twenty-five of those volunteers belonged to the Crater Lake Ski Patrol and



logged a total of 1152 hours. All of our volunteers certainly play a vital role in helping us take care of park resources and visitors. *THANK YOU!*

Did you know, in FY99, park interpreters contacted approximately 221,610 visitors at Crater Lake? These visitors sought information at

park visitor centers, attended a wide variety of interpretive programs, participated in education programs and bus tours, or were lucky enough to encounter a ranger on a trail or one of the many view points around the lake. Let's hear it for visitors making use of the many services we provide!

Also in FY99, approximately 214,000 people, both in the park and around the world, learned some things about Crater Lake by receiving our park newspaper or checking out our web page.

Marsha McCabe

Thanks

On December 5 and 6 I was invited by fellow rangers to come up to Crater Lake and participate in your winter skills training. I gladly accepted the invite with anticipation of maintaining winter skills and learning a few new over-snow travel tricks. I learned and was exposed to more, much more, than a handful of snow skills.

I was reminded of the positive power of organization, passion, and esprit de corps. In my 23 years as a NPS Ranger I've never seen a group of volunteers so dedicated to a park, to each other, and to a cause. I found myself caught up in your enthusiasm and passion toward supporting the park and each other. I was very impressed by the skill level of instructors and their ability to practice patience, demonstrate skills, and to teach effectively and learn from others at the same time. As a unit of Ski Patrol Volunteers working with the National Park Service consider yourself a well-tuned elite group who have no peers.

I was also struck by the similarities between Crater Lake National Park and Lassen Volcanic National Park. I've always referred to them as "sister parks" due to geology and proximity but there's so much more aside from physical similarities. Deep snow and Winter Ranger Operations are one of many common denominators between the two Cascade volcanic parks. Few parks compare to Crater Lake's snow pack; however there are years where Lassen can come close. Both parks have winter recreation oriented visitation on the weekends and holidays and have a ski mountaineer following within the region. It is imperative that park staff, and particularly Rangers and Ski Patrol, have expertise to not only rescue others but also most importantly take care of themselves under unfavorable winter conditions. The importance of experience, training, and teamwork as a functioning SAR organization is paramount. All of these attributes you have as a group. You can be proud of being a Crater Lake Ski Patrol member. I can only hope, here at Lassen Volcanic National Park, that we can emulate and build upon your

success.
*Pray for snow
and wish for powder.*

**Mark C.
McCutcheon**

North District Ranger
Lassen Volcanic National Park



Ski Patrol To The Rescue!

On Dec 26th, 1999, a 19-year man was walking near the lodge with his pet dog "Tucker" off leash. Tucker decided to take a run for the Caldera where he slid off the edge and over a 40-foot vertical drop. The dog's owner also slid down to the top of the vertical drop to try to find his beloved pet. Rangers and Ski Patrollers were dispatched a little while later. Rangers

and Ski Patrollers initiated a rescue to bring up the dog's owner, who was not hurt in the incident. They also started a search for *Tucker* that continued on periodically throughout the holiday week. The dog was never found.

Not long after Rangers and Patrollers finished putting gear away from the above rescue and they were hit with another one! A pair from Portland was attempting to ski around the lake as a way to spend the New Years holiday. They became trapped just north of Hillman Peak and unable to continue their journey without assistance. On the afternoon of 1/2/2000 they called the park with a cell phone requesting help. Due to the severe weather on the second, and the closing darkness, the park had to postpone a rescue attempt until the following day. On 1/3/2000, patrollers Evan Olson, Kevin Groh and Jeanette Gilbert joined Rangers Pete Reinhardt and John Broward. The couple hired a snow-cat from Diamond Lake. The park rescuers climbed aboard and headed to North Junction. The rescue team met up with the couple sooner than planned and the Portland pair was taken by snow-cat to the north entrance, where they were transported by car back to their vehicle parked at the rim. The rescue team skied the 10 miles back to the entrance and completed another Ski Patrol adventure!



Hawaii Park Ranger Shot and Killed

The National Park Service is mourning the loss of one of its law enforcement Rangers. Ranger Steve Makuakane-Jarrell was shot and killed by Eugene Frederick Boyce III, who is described as an unemployed transient on the big island of Hawaii. Makuakane-Jarrell was killed when he responded to a call while on duty at Kaloko-Honokohau National Historic Park. Boyce was arrested by NPS, FBI and State agents shortly after and has been charged with first-degree murder.

Ski Patrollers Complete Snowmobile Training

Seven Ski Patrollers completed the Oregon State snowmobile safety course held at Diamond Lake on December 18th, 1999. (Evan Olson Bill Bloom, Willie Ondricek, Jeanne Langan, Susan Huntley, Kevin Nussbaum, Niel Barrett). This is the first step in completing Crater Lake snowmobile certification. Patrollers who attended this course will now be able to accompany

rangers on routine snowmobile patrols, and upon gaining additional experience, will be able to operate these machines during emergency incidents.



OH WHAT FUN IS TO RIDE...

:
John Broward walks into Canfield Building, with a solemn look on his face, jaw set, throws a manual to me and says, "here is the Snowmobile regulations booklet for Oregon, you'd better start reading it, we leave for Diamond lake at 1115 hours for training and certification"

Needless to say I was elated that we were going to be able to pick up more skills and in so doing be of more use in special instances to the

Park, and to the Ski Patrol. Per schedule we left in convoy at 1115 with Mary King Towing the snowmobiles due to her VAST experience of towing vehicles on icy roads.

We arrived at Diamond Lake without incident, and prepared for the written portion of the certification, which consisted of 100 questions. *Willie Ondricek* scored the highest on the written with 98 of 100 correct, congratulations Willie.

We then went out to the test track, at which time John Broward proceeded to show us the correct manner in which to drive the course, after which ALL OF US had no problems in following his professional lead. We had a great time learning new skills, and of course having great camaraderie among the returning Patrollers, and the new candidates.

I for one look forward to spending some time with the Rangers in the Park setting, adding to those basic safety skills, and perhaps helping them out in times of qualified personnel shortages.

Thanks to the entire Park and Patrol personnel that made this an enjoyable event.

Wild" Bill Bloom



SO YOU WANT TO BE AN SNOW ENGINEER?

If you've ever spent the night in an igloo or a snow cave, you might give this outrageous activity of snow camping a try and let your inner-engineer skills run wild. It's challenging and it's beautiful, and it brings out the spirit of play. But it is hard work, but having done it once, you may swear never to do it again. Or you may swear never to stop doing it.

I've participated in snow camping classes where elaborate structures were made, split-level snow caves, even one with a spiral staircase fashioned out of rock and snow. At night the snow engineering team toured by headlamp, traveling from one snow palace to another to see if we were keeping up with the Joneses

A cave can be small or large, depending on the party size and snow conditions, but smaller caves are warmer. Sometimes caves are built with mere survival in mind, and knowing how to build one could save your life. This is when your engineering skills will come in handy and my even save your life or the life of your patient.

May the winter scenery wake up the soul. The wind blows and shapes snow into soft, sen-

suous shapes and the sky is like torn, colored silk. Sunrise and sunset can be subtle or intense, especially on the rim but even if the weather is not clear, the scenery is pure, with trees seeming to pray, limbs bent down by the weight of the snow.

Perhaps some of us cannot appreciate the wilderness until we've endured extreme conditions, where you'll also find extreme beauty.



Here are a few tips to remember for your next winter camping trip:

You do need knowledge of mountainous terrain where you plan on visiting and the winter hazards associated with the area. Remember to dig a hasty pit to check current avalanche conditions. Your life may depend on your skills to read the data collected from your hasty pit and surroundings.

Never camp at the bottom of an avalanche slope. An avalanche slope can be identified by its lack of "anchors" such as trees

or rocks.

Camp in the trees or on top of a ridge if it is not too windy.

Don't camp beneath a cornice. A cornice is a "frozen wave," a collection of snow created by wind action that hangs on the leeward side of a ridge. Sudden changes in temperature can cause the cornice to break off and trigger an avalanche.

You will need navigation skills, as there are usually no visual trails to follow. Carry a map and compass and be prepared.

If you are going into terrain where avalanche is a possibility, everyone in the party should have an avalanche beacon tuned to the same frequency, and know how to use them.

Cooking is a challenge in the frozen environment. Keep foods simple, this is not the time to try a gourmet recipe. Unless you prepare your foods at home and place them in a Seal-A-Meal bag. Then all you need to do is place your Seal-A-Meal into boiling water for a few minutes. If you don't have a Seal-A-Meal, don't diet, since you need plenty of food to keep going, as cold temperatures will quickly eat up your energy.

Water bottles will freeze unless you keep them inside. Keep your boots inside your shelter, or the laces will freeze.

When you are working, stop frequently to eat and drink water. You need fluids even when it is cold. Once you are inside your shelter, tent, snow cave or igloo, change clothing completely even if you think you are dry. Your clothing will be damp from perspiration.

One of the best parts of snow camping is sitting in your igloo over a plate of hot pancakes garnished with Dan Millers special Vermont syrup

Niel Barrett

**WILLAMETTE
PASS
BACKCOUNTRY
SCHEDULE OF
EVENTS**

JANUARY

1/9: Basic MTR
(classroom): Ashland: 8
am

1/13: Basic MTR
(classroom): Ashland:
6:30 pm

1/16: WBSP Open
House: Patrol Cabin:
9:00 am

1/17: Basic Avalanche
(classroom): Eugene:
TBA

1/22: Basic MTR (field):
Mt. Ashland: 8:00 4 am

1/22-23: Adv. MTR Over-
night (shakedown): Mt.
Ashland: 5:00 pm

1/24: Basic Avalanche
(classroom): Eugene: TBA

1/30: Basic Avalanche
(field): Willamette Pass
8:00 am

FEBRUARY

2/8: Basic MTR
(classroom): Eugene: TBA

2/15: Basic MTR
(classroom): Eugene: TBA

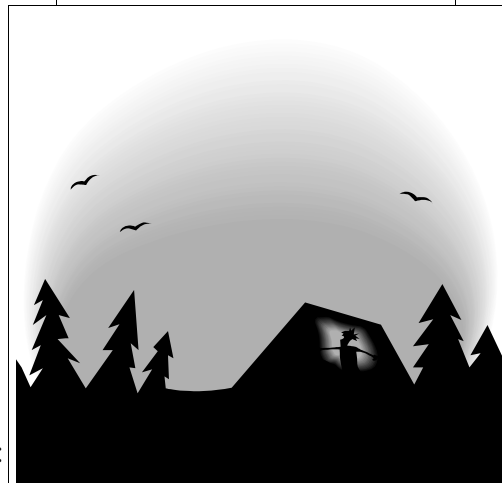
2/22: Basic MTR

(classroom) Eugene:
TBA

2/26: Basic MTR (field):
Gold Lake Snow Park
8:00 am

2/26-27: Adv. MTR
Overnight (shakedown)
5:00 pm

MARCH



3/27: Adv. MTR
(classroom) Eugene,
TBA

APRIL

4/8-10 Adv. MTR
(field): *Crater Lake Na-
tional Park: 10:00 am*

Kenneth Coen
Email: LMAYTAG-
MAN@NU-WORLD.
com



Be Prepared

Coat... hat... gloves... gaiters... boots... wool socks... thermal under-wear... snowshoes... radio... first aid kit... water... chocolate. As I prepare to lead a snow walk, I'm always struck by how much preparation is involved. Most of the time, humans can't just step outside into the weather at Crater Lake National Park unprepared, even to spend an hour or two. The equipment checklist for spending a night in the backcountry wouldn't fit on this page.

And yet, Crater Lake is home to many kinds of plants and animals. We see several kinds of trees on our snowshoe walks, burdened by snow, and we often see tracks of animals. Life finds a way to survive—even thrive—despite the harsh conditions. Plants and animals do so the same way we do: by being prepared, each in their own way.

Many of Crater Lake's plants and animals go dormant in the winter. Trees and other plants virtually shut down against the cold. Drought is a factor too—for despite fifteen feet of snow on the ground, most of the available water is frozen, and harsh winter winds suck moisture from exposed leaves. Hemlocks bow under the weight of the snow and wait for spring.

Animals hibernate, too. Marmots and ground squirrels are excellent examples. In the summer time, ground squirrels race madly along the Caldera rim, looking for seeds and nuts and berries. Their hearts race at four beats per second, and their lungs pull 100 breaths per minute. In the winter, they sleep. Buried under the

ground or under the roots of trees, their hearts slow to one beat every six seconds, and their breathing slows to only four breaths per minute. Their body temperature drops to 38 degrees, the temperature of the snow.

Not everything sleeps, however. Mice and voles stay awake all winter long, tunneling under the snow, looking for seeds and roots left over from the summer. You'll see the remnants of their tunnels in the spring, just after the snow has melted, before these traces are erased by the weather. Pikas spend the winter awake, too, in their burrows. Throughout the brief summer you may see them gathering leaves and grasses, and drying them in haystacks on the rocks. These reserves last them through the long winter.

On the surface, snowshoe hares stay active, seeking whatever food they can find and avoiding bobcats, foxes, and pine martens. All wear thick coats of fur against the cold. Predators must eat enormous quantities of food to keep their metabolisms high and their bodies warm. In addition to chasing snowshoe hares, they dig through the snow in search of mice or hibernating squirrels. Loose, pow-

dery snow is best for smells to pass through; the dense, icy snow base we have so early this winter means that many predators will have a harder time finding food, and will go hungry.

Life isn't exactly easy for Crater Lake's plants and animals. But this is the life to which all are adapted, and each is well prepared in its own way for the harsh conditions. And winter is the normal circumstance



here. Temperatures hover around freezing for half the year. Snow buries the ground for eight to nine months. The average snow depth, measured every day over the last seventy years, is 49 inches. Winter is nothing unusual—it is the day-to-day challenge for which all must be prepared.

Including rangers leading snowshoe walks.

Kevin L. Bacher

AVALANCHE SAFETY

In 1993 to 1998 a study on Non Avalanche related Ski Industry Deaths conducted in North America revealed 32 trauma fatalities. Ten were from asphyxiation. Of these 10, eight were skiers of advanced level and expert level, and 2 were snowboarders. These deaths occurred near the boundaries of Ski Areas Non - Ski Area related deaths are not known.

How did this happen? All of the 10 deaths occurred immediately after or during heavy powder snowfall. Tree wells were the most common feature of the fatalities, particularly the soft snow around the base of coniferous trees. The victims were skiing or boarding in heavily gladded areas either within a ski area boundary but off designated trails, or out of boundary but accessed via ski area lifts. The victims fell headfirst into a deep snowdrift and could not free themselves. The snowdrifts surrounding the victims were from 5 ft to 9 ft deep and occurred at the downhill side of the trees. Three victims were skiing alone at the time of death. Four were skiing in groups of two to four people. One was a 9-year-old girl, expert level, skiing with a race class. No one saw what happened. A search was immediately called, and by the time rescue teams found her she was dead. It was thought that she may have jumped off side an intermediate ski run and landed off the designated run in a tree well. Several hours later an avalanche rescue dog was brought into the search. The dog followed the path between where the girl had been last seen and where the instructor noticed her absence (approx. 492 feet). Within minutes the dog found the submerged girl in a tree well.

The rest (2) of the victims were found in drifts not related to tree wells all of the victims were found head down. Searchers could see none of the victims. All of the victims were found with their skis or boards still firmly attached to their feet. All of the equipment was hidden by 3 to 12 inches of soft powder snow. Because of the rarity of these kinds of deaths, prevention measures, such as use of avalanche rescue dogs at ski resorts and by Search and Rescue teams, have not been implemented. However, with more and more Boarders and Skiers taking to the out of bound deep powder extreme sports these type of deaths will occur with more frequency.

Prevention is the key. In a carefully controlled experiment during the winter of 1998-1999, volunteer Alpine skiers and snowboarders were placed inverted into a packed snow hole that simulated a tree well. None of the 10 volunteers could rescue themselves. Alpine skiers who were able to remove their skis by using their feet to undo their bindings only fell DEEPER into the holes.

* The snowboarders could not unfasten their boards. It was found

that most ski clothing acts like a funnel when inverted. All of the volunteers complained of snow falling onto their bare torsos, suggesting that hypothermia could be a major complicating factor.

Prevention also consists of educating ski patrollers and other res-



cuers about the danger of tree wells. Avalanche rescue dogs should be available and should be used immediately rather than as a last effort, particularly when snow conditions are such that a fallen victim may be hidden. Ski areas should alert the public with signs and brochures to the dangers of tree wells in gladdened runs. Young skiers in particular should be alerted. In a survey of 863 young skiers at an advanced lift, all under the age of 18,

63% had skied a timbered run, either in or out of bounds, at least once a day.

Gladding ski runs has become common practice in ski areas as it reduces environmental impact, and it is known that many skiers young and old love to ski between trees. Ski areas should cut the lower branches of the trees that cause tree wells to form. And they should increase the distance between the trees to prevent skier collision trees too close together forces skiers to ski closer to the trees to prevent collision.

How to rescue yourself? Hazardous tree wells are generally found in areas that get little skier traffic. The low hanging branches of coniferous trees create a sheltered area around the base of the tree, where a well of loose snow with air pockets can form. Usually there is no easy way to identify a dangerous tree well by sight, but the risks are greatest during or just after a major snowstorm. Tree wells are also more common on the downhill sides of trees because snow on the uphill side tends to compact against the tree. Tree wells are also more common in areas sheltered from the wind. Strong winds break up snow crystals and increase snow density.

The most important prevention step is resisting the urge to ski through the trees during extreme powder conditions, no matter how inviting the untracked powder looks. But, if you just can't stand it, and you got to go, do the following:

* Buddy up with another skier or snow boarder and stay within sight of each other. That means watching your partner descend and stop. Then you descend while he watches you.

* Carry rescue gear just as you would if you were skiing through avalanche territory like a backcountry skier. Avalanche beacon, shovel, probe, and whistle.

Each person carries their own. Each of you must know how to rescue a victim. This means taking a class in avalanche rescue. Keep in mind that the snow will compact around your warm body. When you fall the snow will be fist hard, but in 15 minutes will become knife hard. Meaning you have to cut it with a sharp object to dig through it.

Remove your pole straps while skiing so that in case of an inverted fall, your arms are free to make airspace around your face so you can breathe.

*If you are going down, do everything you can to keep yourself from becoming inverted. Grab branches; hug the tree, anything to stay above the surface. If you have done all you can, but still find yourself inverted,

* Do not struggle. Struggling causes you to go down deeper more snow to fall in and compact faster. Your skis or board may knock branches and cause more snow to fall off, covering you com-

pletely.

* Make an air pocket around your face with your hands and arms. Do this calmly and carefully.

* Do NOT remove your skis. Your ski clothes will act like a funnel pushing your body out like a sausage and leaving your waist and lower torso exposed.



* Rock back and forth carefully to hollow out the snow and give you more air and space to breathe. The idea is to take control of how the snow compacts, using the very thing that can kill you, to rescue yourself. Your goal is a bell shape, with the area around your head the biggest. Stay calm and wait. Hopefully, your partner will have seen what happened and will rescue you within minutes. If you are able to do the above, your chances of survival are excellent if you are able

to maintain your air space. In time the snow will compact around you, and you may be able to work your way out.

Taken from THE PHYSICIAN AND SPORTS MEDICINE, Dec. 1999.

Y2CL (Why To Crater Lake?)

Now with the passing of the much anticipated Y2K bug conundrum, sighs of relief can be heard everywhere. I think living with its' looming uncertainty, caused everyone to experience some degree of anxiousness. Since the world, as we know it, has been relatively unchanged by the turn of the page, we can again look forward to bright hopes for tomorrow. For each of us awaiting our next visit to Crater Lake, thoughts conjure images, which quickly turn to warm emotion.

Why is that? I have pondered this question often, but still cannot give a definitive answer as to why I or anyone else sees Crater Lake, not as a formidable environment, but rather as a very desirable winter destination. If you have ever experienced the bitter discomforts of cold, fatigue, hunger, and even despair, all of which are readily available when trekking in Crater's outlands during stiff winter storms or too many miles away from anywhere, it makes one wonder what the appeal *really* is.

I believe there are some common factors, universal to individuals

who go beyond mere visitations, to those who devote a segment of their lives in service to the Crater cause.

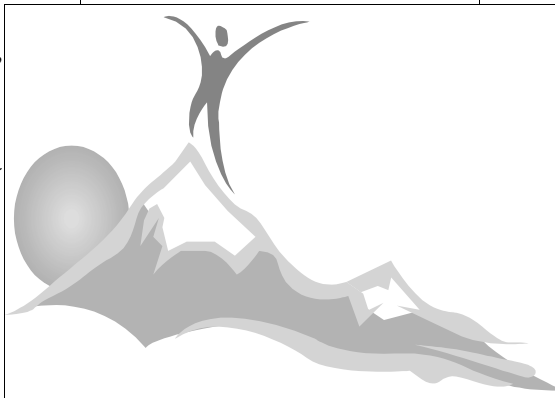
I was introduced to Crater Lake in 1975 at the behest of Niel Barrett, who wanted to develop a friend into a ski partner; much as an Army drill Sergeant conditions men and equips them for battle. As time went on, the Crater Lake Ski Patrol was born to those southern Oregonians who not only loved to ski there, but wished to contribute in a way that would make the Park a winter wonderland experience available to everyone.

Though much of my early ski training involved hardship (and still does), I was continually drawn back for reasons more clearly understood now. Let me share some of my ideas.

Of the few places you can actually drive up to, that offer consistent winter recreation opportunity, certainly none can compare in majestic beauty. For instance: the sharp contrast to other forested landscapes, the welcome of old growth forest; and the ever-impressive snow-wall-lined roadway. Then, upon arrival to Rim Village, you feel the ex-

cited anticipation of viewing the awesome azure pool, lined with snow-covered crags and cathedrals; exposing you to an unmistakable, sub-arctic environment. But there is more to it than that.

There is something about this extremely *real* encounter that can never be duplicated in our urban environment; never be appre-



ciated in full from any book or television set. There, we realize that we're far from the treadmill that takes up most of our daily life; a place free from distractions, in which can be gained a sense of natural reality. More importantly, I truly believe we are drawn to place ourselves in a setting powerfully removed from the perplexity of civilization, in order to gain a seldom grasped comprehension of the handiwork of a loving Creator we innately long to know. When thought

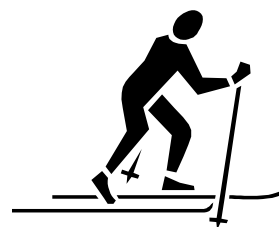
of in this light and taking it all in, isn't it common for each of us to experience feelings of smallness, vulnerability, and an awareness of being much less in control of one's surroundings? Could it be, that operating in this framework, a keen sense of solitude brings us to wonderment of how this all came to be; and question how our lives belong in the world we see? What a great perspective from which to experience rejuvenation and healing, a genuine sense of oneself, and that we truly are *not* alone out there. Add to the recipe, fellowship with others, who share a common mission and satisfaction of serving together in such a unique way, and joy is temporarily redefined!

Perhaps, these things I have illustrated are somehow particular only to myself, and read like the blathering of a surrealist. So be it. Yet, I pose the possibility; if you are unsure of your deeper motive for spending your precious time in a place like Crater Lake, then next

time you're there for a while: stop; look around..., then to the sky, and ask for the meaning of it all. Then for a moment forget about what you think you know; patiently listen to your heart for the answers, and take a new, clearer look around.

Happy Trails

John Bellon



WAXING WEBSITES

For you WWW waxers, here are a couple of waxing websites:

<http://www.nexcski.com/articles/spwaxn.htm>

At this site you will find a photographic sequences and a commentary lesson on waxing cross-country skis

<http://www.swixsport.com/f4.shtml>

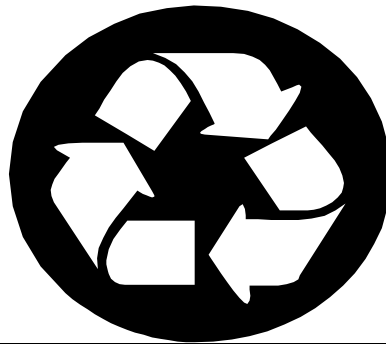
Swix F4, an alternative to Maxi-glide for waxing no-wax skis.

<http://www.tokowax.com/english.htm>

The Toko Nordic waxing site answers the reason “why” to use wax skies. *The Skier with regular use of the right wax can get more glide than the skier on no-wax skies.* A skier can turn better on wax skies, than no wax skies. Because you can control your speed by applying the proper wax, thus the skies will be easier to maneuver down steep hills

Prepared wax skies also boost a skier's safety since wax skiing requires less physical effort. As

they say, you will get more bang for your buck. Wax bases are more resistant to damage, and the life of the equipment is extended. Also the risk of small injuries to the base is lessened.



LEAVE NO TRACE TIPS FOR WINTER BACKCOUNTRY USERS

We winter backcountry users love the solitude of nature in winter, we love the pristine sparkly new snow, the sound of the wind through the trees, and the sun or snow on our faces, and most importantly for some, the lack of human traces on this splendor. Here are a few tips for all of us to become less impacting and more informed backcountry enjoyers.

Minimize Wildlife Disturbance

One of the most important concerns in winter is wildlife disturbance. Although in my personal Crater Lake winter experience I have not wandered across great herds of elk and deer, or confused black bears out on a winter stroll, but I have seen signs of wildlife quite often. It is important to remember that we are guests in their homeland and should avoid approaching wildlife too closely when they are spotted. A guideline to how close we can approach them, is to retreat when they are aware of you. When selecting a campsite avoid highly used areas by critters such as their feeding, watering or sleeping grounds. These will probably be identifiable by a greater proportion of existing animal tracks. Animals tend to be as disturbed by one person as by a whole group, so try to travel in groups rather than splitting up when traveling near animals.

Jeanette Gilbert



Human Waste Disposal

In heavily used areas always consider packing out feces. Although this may not sound like much fun, it is actually more pleasant than doing this in the summer. Frozen feces are almost odorless. If this is not your method of choice, remember that a feces decomposes fastest in sunlight and deposit it in a cat-hole close to the surface. By spring and summer time your gift will

now be laying directly on the ground, so pick your spot carefully. With your urine waste try to take into account drainage systems and any water source this may eventually leak into. A good pee spot is in a grove of trees, where urine will eventually drain into the soil under the trees, and you have a little bit of a wind barrier. Remember to put fresh snow over any urine spots in the snow, because yellow snow is an unpleasant visual impact.

GARBAGE IN THE BACK COUNTRY

None of us want to litter, but sometimes even little pieces of plastic and garbage are left behind by the best of us. Removing pre-packaging and even wrappers before a trip and storing all food items (such as granola bars) in one bag, can successfully eliminate micro trash that fills our jacket and backpack and often slips out into the snow. Bring plastic bags that have color so they will be more visible. Consider also bringing toilet paper with a design or color to it, as it is much more visible against white snow than standard white paper. Always try to pack toilet paper out with you. Wastewater can also be an

issue, attempt to scatter waste water on to an area free of snow (such as patches of road here at CRLA), if there are no bare areas pour waste water into a sump hole (one single area). Make sure wastewater is poured away from areas where others may use the snow for water. Always pack out left over



food in extra plastic bags.

Jeanette Gilbert Broward Elected To Council

During the patrol orientation in early December, Jeanette was elected to the patrol council by unanimous vote. She will now take over as council member in charge of public education and safety. This position has been vacant for 5 years and has been

assumed by Randy Benham as part of his other council duties over the years. Please get in touch with Jeanette if you are interested in helping her.

Ski Patrol Rescues OSU Researchers

OR

Crater Lake Weather Available on the web.

Due to instrument failure in the fall of 1999, Oregon State University and NPS researchers found themselves on the West Rim of Crater Lake on January 8, 2000 attempting to dig out (as in shovel) a 30 foot weather tower and six guy-wire supports. The tower was laid out flat, on the (previously bare) ground, to replace the base, and update some (back-ordered) instrumentation. An overwhelming task at best, but not impossible, because the Crater Lake Ski Patrol came to the rescue. Five unselfish volunteers helped with the effort (J T, John, Randy, Carolyn, and Sean). Because of their help, you will soon be able to access up-to-date-weather from the Rim Weather Tower at www.seawfo.noaa.gov/data/forecasts/00latest. SEAOSOCRA. Currently weather from the headquarters area is available at that site.

The rim tower is part of several ongoing programs at Crater Lake National Park, including a Global Climate Monitoring Program, the Northwest Avalanche Center Avalanche Forecasting Program, and the Department of Energy's Remote Sensing Program. The weather data is used to better understand climate-lake relationships that drive lake ecology, to predict avalanche hazards, and to ground truth satellite multi-spectral imaging.

Thank you, ski patrol, for contributing to these important programs. NPS and OSU staff (*Mark Buktenica, Pete Kalk, Chris Moser, Dale Hubbard, and Nick Piskas*).

A WORD FROM THE MAN

Greetings to all. I hope everybody had an enjoyable and memorable holiday season. It was kind of quiet up at the Park for Christmas, but the New Years Party livened things up quite a bit! Dancing and carousing in the Community Center was followed by staying warm around the bonfire just outside... a great way to bring in the New Year! See you up here next year?

The snow pack was thin, and the skiing conditions were rather icy before Jan. 1, but winter kicked into gear soon thereafter... I believe we're finally up to (or maybe above) the average snow pack depth for this time of year. It's somewhat troubling to know that we have a base layer consisting of layers of ice - it could provide for big avalanches later this season. Avalanche hazard has been fluctuating between considerable and extreme with this recent set of storms. I encourage everyone to take interest in this years snow pack - dig some pits, wear and pack your avalanche rescue gear, and keep your eyes and ears open for the

hazards that lurk out there.

Patrolling "early" this season has proven to be pretty exciting. We've performed a rope rescue into the Caldera, helped some stranded skiers near the North Junction with a snow cat ride to safety, and have fixed some broken bindings out on the trail. Sure, a



little action is fun, but let's hope it doesn't get too much worse. Make sure you inspect your gear before you come up for a weekend... I recently discovered some stress fractures on my binding toe-plates, effectively forcing me to replace them. I'm just glad I caught the weakness before I found myself dropping onto a steep slope, or while skiing around on the north side of the Lake!

There's lots of skiing and training to be done this season, so again I encourage all of

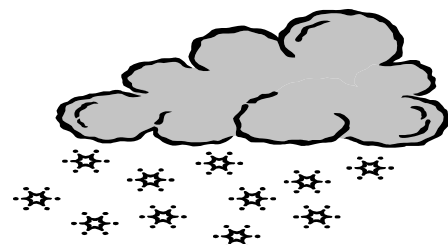
you to stay eager and involved in the Patrol. Our volunteerism is a HUGE benefit to the Park and the public who visit it, and the unique nature of our "job" is (for the most part) incomparable to any other Nordic patrol in the PNW.

Think about it the next time you find yourself breaking fresh tracks at the start of a new day, or sweeping a trail at the end of a day... the satisfaction of doing a good job, the pristine beauty of the Park, the good friendships that just happen... I think you'll see what I mean.

Something to keep in mind: we're planning on hosting an advanced Mountain Travel and Rescue at the Park the second weekend in April (4/8-10/2000). It will be organized by National Ski Patrol folks from the Willamette Backcountry Ski Patrol, and will involve snow camping and practicing advanced backcountry skills. If anyone from CLSP is interested in shadowing the training entourage, please contact me so I can get you some more details. Past NSP training sessions at Crater Lake have always been very instructive (and a lot of fun!), so please consider attending if you have the chance.

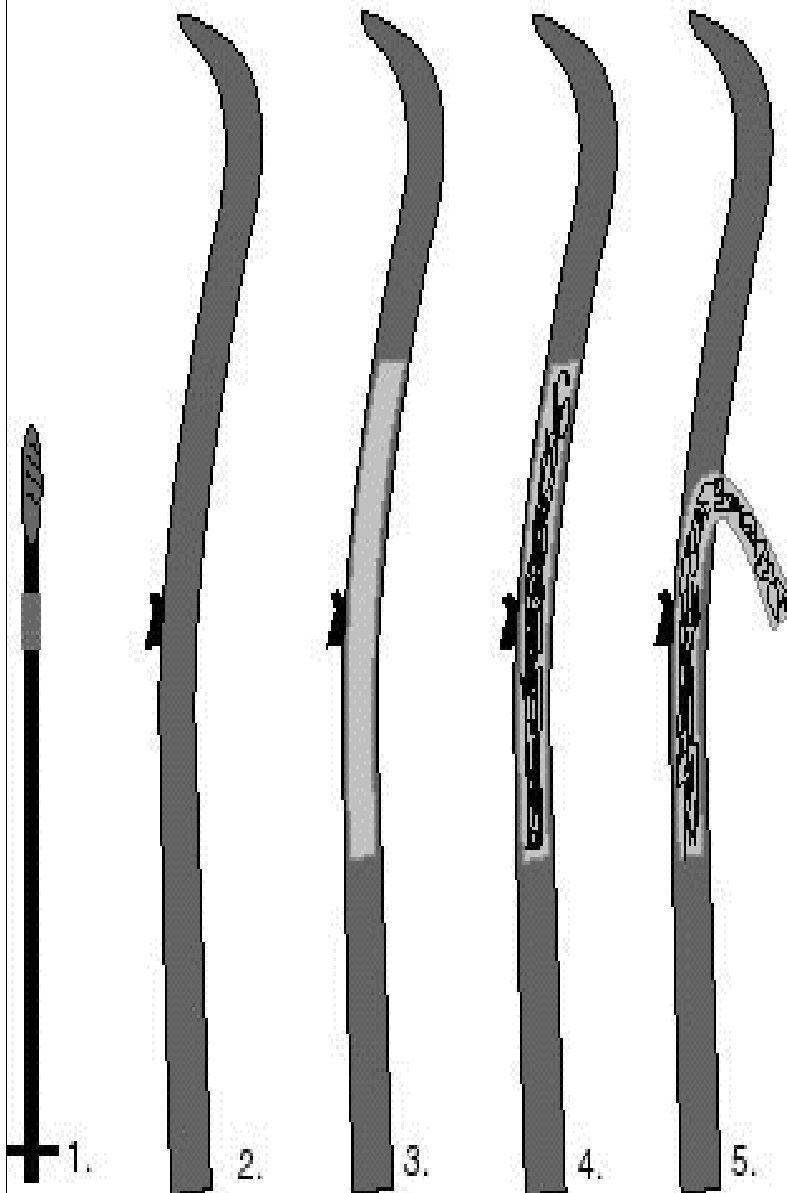
I hope that all of you will have some great skiing in this New Year... see you on the trails!

Evan Olson



TECH TIPS

By Randy Benham



Have you ever had to make that decision whether or not to throw those heavy, bulky skins into your pack. Especially on a day you didn't think you would use them. Then it turns out you run into a steep climb and exert all your energy to get up the darn thing, and then you wish you had thrown them in! Well, with the creation of duct tape you shall never be without skins ever again. Here's the trick! Since all good patrollers carry a wad of duct tape rolled up on their poles (1) your half way there. Next you need to head to the local ski shop and pick up a tube of klister (the stickier the better), or a canister of the wet snow wax (usually used for the two wax method). This will complete your set of skins and it only weighs a few ounces. The next step is to take your ski (2) and tear off a piece of duct tape (the length will depend on the grade of the hill, usually 36" to 48") and stick it to the bottom of a

dry ski (3). Next take your klister or wax and rub it onto the duct tape (4). Now you can tackle that hill with a lot less energy. You will be amazed how well your new skins climb. If you need more traction add more wax or a longer piece of tape. The best feature of your new skins is they can be ripped off at the top of the hill (5) and there's no mess to scrape off the bottom of your skis. These won't take the place of your standard skins but they can sure help out in a bind!

Would you like to write a article for the
Caldera Chronicles ?

Submit articles to:

Crater Lake National Park

John Broward

Crater Lake, OR 9604-0007

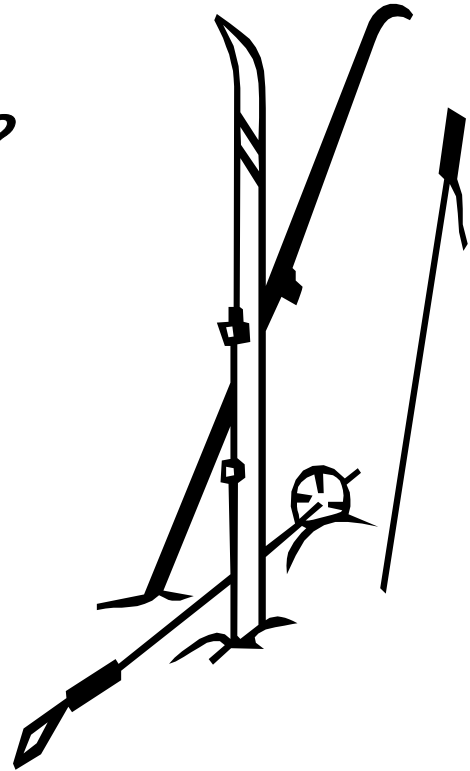
Email mail address: John_Broward@nps.gov

OR Mail direct to the editor:

Niel Barrett 432 N 5th

K-Falls, OR 97601

Email address: wheels@cdsnet.net



REMEMBER TO ALWAYS :



Ski Safely and Have Fun!



Return
Address

Forwarding
Address