

## UNIT KIT HELPS SAVE INJURED HIKER

*The following is a copy of the text sent to our web page by Rick Barton of the King County Sheriff's Department. To all of the members who have helped put the kits together at the Unit Kit Parties this letter should be a big thank you for your efforts. Editor.*

To TMR, I wanted to send you a note about one of your survival kits. I am a Deputy with King County SAR. We had a mission on Sunday 2-19-08, overdue and lost hikers off Exit 27 and I-90. Long story short is that one of them got wet from the knees down and could not feel his feet. They had to stop due to deep snow and called 911. The party of three stopped and started to bed down, time was about 1830. About the only piece of equipment they had was one of your survival kits. They began collecting pine boughs and made a bed of them for the now hypothermic subject, 6'1" 240 lbs, wearing levis and tennis shoes. They took out the space blanket, wrapped him in it, then placed even more pine boughs on top of him. When we reached him with the Helo I only saw the two subjects waving at us until I asked where he was they both pointed down at the large mound of pine boughs and then I saw the subject underneath. We grabbed all three and flew them out back to the CP where the subject was transported for hypothermia, body temp had dropped down to 94.5!

I just wanted to let you all know that your survival kit was definitely a part of his survival on this one, not to mention his buddies using their collective heads with providing some shelter to him.

The conditions at the scene were very clear Temps in the low 30's to high 20's at the scene with a mild wind. They had set out at 1300 for a 3 hr hike. Subject was taken out of the field at about 2230.

If you want some more info on this one, feel free to give me a call. And by the way, as a part of the helicopter crew I always carry my 24 hr pack which has one of your survival kits on board! So thanks a lot for your efforts on this kit.

Rich Barton

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In the early days the Tacoma Mountain Rescue Unit was supported by donations from the members and the occasional fund raiser. However, as the Unit grew and more Unit equipment was needed (such as a rescue truck) a more stable and dependable form of funding was needed. An event happened during the building of the Schurrman Hut that would eventually lead to the creation of the kit.

The following is from an interview with John Simac, one of the Unit's founders: The original kit was born on Curtis Spur on Mt. Rainier. It was during a hike and carrying in supplies of canvas for the navy bunks at the Schurrman hut. Two guys by the name of Max Eckenburg and Joe Savenney (*please forgive me if I have spelled Max and Joe's names incorrectly. Editor*) and myself were carrying this canvas up to the Prow. When we got to Curtis Spur, Savenney ran out of gas. He stayed at the Spur for the night, and I went on up to the Prow and then came back to stay the night with him. We didn't intend to spend the night there, but a storm came in and we couldn't move up over the Prow. I had pretty much the same ingredients that were in the kit in a little different can than it was later put into. It was something that I

put together, and we used that kit to spend the night because we didn't have the sleeping bags at Curtis Spur. When I got back and we were talking about it, Ev Lasher said what we ought to do is put together a kit like that, since it could save a life, and sell it. *(There were many others such as Gene Fear who also helped design and market the kit. Editor)*

The first ones we sold for two dollars; it was incredible, we were making them by the wheelbarrow load and there was a really good market for them. We got tremendous feedback from the whole thing; we got letters where they credited the kit with saving their lives. The kit has done its job, plus the fact that it has furnished the Tacoma Mountain Rescue Unit with all the equipment necessary to do our job, except for our present truck.

**TACOMA MOUNTAIN RESCUE  
BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
February 27, 2008**

These minutes as published are unofficial and subject to approval at the next regularly scheduled board meeting. Convened 1908.

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Rick Wire, Christine Davies, Gus Bush, Dan Deprez, Chris Berryman, Chad Johnson, Greg Lang

**OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT:** Tracy Berryman, Ken Davies, Ken Capron

**TREASURER'S REPORT:** Lynn Severy  
Rick reported on the January treasurer's report. Motion was made, seconded and passed to accept the report as presented.

**KIT REPORT:** Tracy Berryman  
Tracy discussed whether we should continue to put matches in the storm shelter packages.

The manufacturer has lost the pattern for the matches and Tracy recommended either just leaving the matches out, or replacing them with a whistle. The decision was made to switch to whistles as soon as the matches are used up.

**OPERATIONS REPORT:** Gus Bush  
No operations since last meeting.

**TRAINING REPORT:** Berndt Bittlingmeier  
Chris reported on the Rigging 1 training held in February. Saturday was a small turnout, but those who attended were mostly new members, who all received great training on the basic rescue systems. March training is Rigging 3, which is snow anchors. It will probably be held at Paradise, but in case of closed road it will be Snoqualmie Pass. April training will be Vantage Rock Climbing for the entire weekend. This will probably include rock climbing training, but also fun time for climbing and hiking with our families. Rick reminded everyone that when members teach classes we need to continue seeking new members.

**EQUIPMENT REPORT:** Chad Johnson  
Chad got another estimate for the truck repair.. A motion was made to spend/allocate funds for the repairs. Greg will check with a relative who may be able to make the repairs.

Chad reported that he purchased chains for the small trailer. They will be stored in the Cache.

**COMMUNICATIONS:**  
No communications report.

**SAFETY & EDUCATION:** Chris Berryman  
Rick will be doing an avalanche talk to a group of Boy Scouts on March 10th, in the Lakewood area.

Chris will be teaching at Irish Cabin for the Mountaineers on April 12 and 13.

Rick will be teaching a decision making seminar for the Mountaineers.

Radical Reels is a film festival on March 3, and Chris needs some volunteers to staff a table. The event is sponsored by the Mountaineers. Chad and Ken C. will help. This is a great recruiting event.

**MEMBERSHIP REPORT:** Dan Deprez  
Dan reported that he is working with one person to complete the IS requirements. There are also a couple of other individuals who are interested in applying.

**MRA:** Jeff Sharp  
No report.

**SAR COUNCIL:** Christine Davies  
Christine reported that she was ill and did not attend the February meeting. Christine had a check from SAR Council, for reimbursement for the 2007 SAR Conference registration fees. She also had the check that comes from the Boeing Employee Community Fund,.

**AIR OPS:** Tim Greminger  
No report.

**OLD BUSINESS:**  
Rick has not heard from anyone volunteering to coordinate the 50th Anniversary Banquet. He is still looking for a volunteer.

**NEW BUSINESS:**  
Rick read a letter the Unit received from a law firm representing family members who died in the plane crash in October. They requested copies of any pictures taken by our team members. After discussion it was decided that Christine would talk to Cindy

Fajardo, but the most appropriate response will probably be that we turned our pictures over to the County Sheriff, and they should request them from that agency.

Meeting adjourned at 2005.  
Respectfully yours,  
Christine Davies, Secretary

### **KIT PARTY**

The following members attended the Kit Party on 8 Feb 2008.

Greg Lang  
Chris & Tracy Berryman  
Ken Capron  
Steve Showalter  
Cindie Taylor  
Bill Weber  
Gus Bush

They made 262 Kits.