

# MOUNT TAHOMA NEWS



*.... And We're Off!*

*On the great race to raise \$150,000. for a new Snow Cat!*

## February 2007

# CALENDAR & SHORTS

## MTTA

### Winter Pre-Season

November 11 - Dec. 28

### Winter Season

Dec. 29— March 31,  
2007

### Moonlight Dinners

March 31 (see p.12)

### Winter Post Season

April 1— April 29

### MTTA Board Meetings

Second Saturday of each month

September thru May,

10:00 a.m.

(5 miles south of Elbe)

Call 360-569-2878 for location.

## Recent Good News

We have had a very good ski season so far this year. With only the North District open (due to the flood damage) the trail has seen record use.

Over one thousand people have signed up to stay overnight at Copper Creek Hut. The snow depth peaked out at about 6 feet a couple of weeks ago, and even with the recent rain we still have 3 feet as of this writing.

We have had two expeditions to the huts south of the Nisqually River, all is well. The roof at the Yurt was shoveled off and the Web Cam re-started.

Reports indicate that access to the south side should be available by next fall.

Need Information?  
Try our new Web Site  
[www.skimtta.com](http://www.skimtta.com)

## Election Results

The results of the recent election are in with the Amendments to the Articles of Incorporation being approved by a vote of 125 yes votes and 7 no votes. The name we have been using for the last several years (Mt. Tahoma Trails Association) is now legal and official.

If you are interested in MTTA's structure, rules, or Mission statement you can now view them on our Web page at [www.skimtta.com](http://www.skimtta.com).

The MTTA Board election had a record seven candidates running. Judy Scavone and Mike Dunn were elected to three year terms on the board. Mike and Judy received 55% of the votes with the remaining candidates sharing the remaining ballots.

## Rod Henderson Appointed Ski Patrol Director



Rod Henderson stepped forward to fill the vacant Ski Patrol Director job and was appointed Ski Patrol Director by the MTTA board on 2/10/2007.

MTTA's Ski Patrol Director is a critical position for the success of the trail system. Training, outfitting, and scheduling the patrol insures the success of our winter trail operation.

Each winter MTTA volunteers contribute 5000+ hours: grooming the trails, removing debris, maintaining equipment, checking our huts, and acting as trail ambassadors.

Let's all step forward to help Rod in his new position. He will need help with patrol training next fall and if you are interested in signing up to patrol next season, give Rod a call at 360-871-4420., or email him : [rodnejj@tscnet.com](mailto:rodnejj@tscnet.com)

Cover: MTTA Future Snow Cat

**MTTA Board and Officers**

**President**  
Bob Myrick  
6015 Pacific Ave.  
Tacoma, WA 98408  
206-473-7455

**Director 07-2010**  
Judy Scavone  
P O Box 262  
Ashford, WA 98304  
360-569-2878

**Vice-President**  
Mike Smith  
9105 102th St. S.W.  
Lakewood, WA 98498  
253-589-1270

**Director 05-2007**  
Gene Glasunow  
12119 125th St. E  
Puyallup, WA 98374  
253-279-3662

**Director 05-2007/Treasure**  
Tony Abruzzo  
4554 Westway Dr.  
Port Orchard, WA 98366  
360-871-5754

**Director 06-2008**  
Delbert Reed  
22705 70th Ave. E  
Graham, WA 98338  
253-847-8647

**Director 07-2010**  
Mike Dunn  
1456 Saddle Club Road  
Port Orchard, WA 98366  
260-876-5253

**Secretary**  
Judy Scavone  
P O Box 262  
Ashford, WA 98304  
360-569-2878  
[mtta@skimtta.com](mailto:mtta@skimtta.com)

**Key Field Operations Staff**

**Ski Patrol Director**  
Rod Henderson  
9827 Cove Way SE  
Port Orchard, WA 98367  
360-871-4420  
[rodnevi@tscnet.com](mailto:rodnevi@tscnet.com)

**Grooming Coordinator**  
Jim May  
12201 138th Ave E  
Puyallup, WA 98374  
253-841-3645  
[wemay@comcast.net](mailto:wemay@comcast.net)

**Copper Creek Hut Manager**  
Louis Boitano  
7316 36th St. E.  
Fife, Wa 98424  
253-922-1168

**High Hut Manager**  
Mary Lonebear  
Bill Youngblood  
Silverdale, WA 98383

**Yurt Manager**  
Pat Gleason  
937 Ash Place  
Bremerton, WA 98310  
[Pgyzz@cs.com](mailto:Pgyzz@cs.com)

**Snow Bowl Hut Manager**  
Mike Smith  
9105 102th St. S.W.  
Lakewood, WA 98498  
253-589-1270

**Reservations**  
Judy Scavone  
P O Box 262  
Ashford, WA 98304  
360-569-2878  
[mtta@skimtta.com](mailto:mtta@skimtta.com)

**Editor/Publisher**  
Bob Brown  
PO BOX 2  
Elbe, WA 98330  
360-569-2878  
[Skipatrol10@hotmail.com](mailto:Skipatrol10@hotmail.com)

# MTTA NEWS

NO FEE



NOT FREE

## Mt. Tahoma Trails Publication

December 2006 Volume 15 Number 6

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**Membership Application Short Form – Mail to MTTA Office**



LAST NAME	FIRST NAME
ADDRESS	CITY, STATE & ZIP
HOME PHONE	WORK PHONE
E-MAIL ADDRESS	DATE

- I would (check box) like to receive my news via e-mail
- \$35 Regular Family (All Members of a Family Annual)
- \$25 Regular (Annual Individual Member)

To Help even more I am enclosing an additional donation: \$\_\_\_\_\_

**GROOMING PLEDGE:** If you like groomed trails, check one or both boxes below. You will be billed at the end of the season. \$0.01/mile for actual snowmobile mileage, \$0.10/hour actual snow cat hours, or both. Your max. bill will not exceed \$25 for each box you check. Pays for fuel, maintenance and equipment

Snowmobile Miles  Snow Cat Hrs

Newsletter materials/articles should be sent to News Editor: Bob Brown at P O BOX 2 Elbe, WA 98330. Phone (360) 569-2878 OR E-Mail material to [mtta@mashell.com](mailto:mtta@mashell.com). Material must be typed, e-mail (or attachment file), 3.5" disk (MS Word). In order for articles to be included in the next Newsletter they must be received by the 20th day of the month prior to publication. Short announcements may be received as late as the last day of the month, prior to publication. Mount Tahoma News is published and distributed to members four time each year! Business advertising space is limited to eight 2" x 3.5". \$25 for one issue or \$20 for more than one issue purchased at the same time.

For MTTA Information try our Web Page at: [www.skimtta.com](http://www.skimtta.com)



Debbie Hannevig enjoys a crystal clear morning at High Hut.



Leyton Jump celebrates after a 3-hour struggle to dig out the propane tank and turn the valve on.

## **2007 SOUTH DISTRICT RECONNAISSANCE: AN EPIC JOURNEY**

Leyton Jump, Patrol 41

January 13-15, 2007

On November 5-6, 2006, Mt Rainer received 17" of rain. The resultant surge in the Nisqually River did a great deal of damage, and destroyed access to the MTTA South District. MTTA Ski Patrollers were unable to get to the South district to check on the facilities. The web cam at High Hut had ceased to operate in mid November, and there was concern about snow build-up on the Yurt roof, which could cause another roof failure.

I was scheduled to patrol at the Yurt in mid January, and had decided to honor this commitment in one way or another. Bob Brown suggested I contact Debbie Hannevig, a Mt. Rainier National Park Ranger, and cross-country enthusiast, and attempt a trip to High Hut to get the web cam back on line. Debbie had soloed a one-day trip to High Hut in mid-November, fording frigid Catt Creek, and trekking hard from dawn to dusk. Because of his great stamina and backcountry experience, I invited MTTA Patroller Dave Hogan to round out the party. What a depth of experience we had: over 100 years of backcountry travel experience, including river crossings, between us. The physical ability and teamwork was awesome. On both Saturday and Sunday, this group was able to ski for 4 hours nonstop, and still had energy for activities such as shoveling out High Hut or shoveling snow off the Yurt roof. Dave broke track and shoveled snow with endless energy. Debbie understands backcountry travel, and has a wonderful sense of time. Often she would spur us to action so we would achieve our goal before sunset. At the darkest, coldest moment of our trip (High Hut, 6:30 p.m., 22 degrees inside, no propane, heat or stove) she handed out homemade chocolate chip cookies and hot tea.

Our trip started with a drive over a rough road, covered with snow and ice: 4 x 4 required! After several starts, Debbie located a rough and tumble cross-country route down to Catt Creek. Steep snow and ice made hiking difficult, and overhead branches would tangle our cross-country skis. Dave had brought fishing waders, and Debbie and I had planned to use rubber farm boots for the stream fording. The temperature was in the low 20s, but the fast-moving water level had risen and was now easily above the knee. Our rubber boots quickly filled. Ski poles were an absolute necessity to avoid falling. Once across, we appreciated warm dry socks and ski boots. Fighting the thick underbrush which constantly tangled our skis, we traveled up stream into heavy timber, and then steeply climbed 500 vertical feet over numerous logs, underbrush, and fresh blow down. After 0.5-miles and 75 minutes of travel from the truck, we arrived at the 1 Road for our lunch break, and the beginning of the ski.

An Epic trip has many components. We had just completed some of the hardship. For the next 5.4 miles to High Hut, we would ski on bone dry powder, among trees covered with fresh snow, and a wilderness that was unmarked by grooming equipment, snowmobiles, or motorized devices. After our radio battery went dead, there were no radio calls. Animal track abounded. Our ski tracks typically would sink in 2-4 inches. Travel was occasionally slowed by photo ops or downed trees. Of course, as always, the ski to High Hut is uphill, for this trip about 2500 vertical feet. Unlike starting at the Sno-Park, we preceded this climb with a very strenuous cross-country bash. Even though it is incredibly beautiful, fresh snow does slow you down: our trip to High Hut was 3.5 hours.



### **Getting there was only half the work:**

***Dave Hogan shovels his way in to the Hut. The team then proceeded to shovel 4 feet of snow from the propane tank, in order to get the heat on ..... With temperatures in the teens, and winds at 30 mph, this was truly an epic adventure!***

High Hut appeared solid, the solar panels were clear, and most of the windows and doors were covered with snow. At 16 degrees and a 30 mph wind (- 5° relative), our experienced trio immediately broke out shovels and worked to gain hut access. It was quiet and dark inside High Hut, 22°, but much more comfortable than outside. The propane had been turned off at the tank. Another not so enjoyable part of the Epic adventure. Over the next 2.5 hours, we would work at finding the propane tank, removing the 4 feet of snow over the tank, locating the valve, and unfreezing the lock, in hopes of making our abode more comfortable. Avalanche probe technique proved beneficial in finding the tank. Ski patrol training at work. During the moments of rest, we made contingency plans on how to survive in a cold hut with little fuel to melt water. We had not brought all of our outdoor winter camping gear. Until the High Hut radio went dead, we appreciated input from many MTTA ski patrollers, especially Jennifer Lyne's input: use the MSR stove to thaw out the lock. Without heat, there would have been potential for Epic discomfort. By about 6:30 p.m. we had propane, heat, and light. We celebrated when the indoor temperature went past 32°. By bedtime it was a balmy 55°. We ate simple and good food, shared stories, and dried out our clothing in preparation for the next day's activities.

The web cam started working, worked all night, exhausted the battery, so by morning we had no electricity. The sunrise sky was clear, the morning quiet, and we momentarily dallied enjoying the beauty: Mt. Rainier, Mt. Adams, Mt. St. Helens, snow-covered Cascades, and clear skies. After breakfast, reprogramming the web cam, and relocking the propane tank, we started off for the Yurt. My colleagues allowed me to lead them on a bit of downhill fun, the Ben Jones Cut Off Route, a shortcut to the High Hut-Snow Bowl Y. This is such a delightful route with 6 inches of dry powder over a fairly firm base. After this bit of fun, the work began as we skied directly to the Yurt. As before, the skiing could not be better, powdery snow: beautiful trees and mountains, pristine wilderness, and great company. Epic enjoyment!

Fortunately, we found the Yurt in wonderful shape, except for 3-4 feet of snow that had built up on the roof over the mud room exit and regular front door. Dave and Debbie immediately grabbed shovels, and went to work on the roof, practically non-stop for 2 hours. I managed to find the propane tank, and had heat going to help melt the snow off the roof. More shoveling. My colleagues were kind enough to allow me to shovel some of the snow off of the Yurt roof. Finally, a cup of hot chocolate, cheese, crackers, and smoked salmon before the last final push. Debbie reminded us it was a necessity to make the Catt Creek crossing before dark. In the spirit of an Epic, I suggested that we travel the Lower Yurt Trail, a different way home. The distance is the same, and the flat terrain of this trail makes for wonderful afternoon travel.



**Dave Hogan arrives at the snow-covered Yurt**



**Leyton takes over clearing snow from the Yurt, thus preventing a snow-load collapse.**

There is no need to repeat a detailed description of the last half-mile. The steep descent over ice covered logs, the thrashing through the underbrush to find our water crossing shoes, and the even deeper, faster freezing waters of Catt Creek did not prepare us for the harder last quarter-mile thrash up the snow-covered hill to where the ice-covered truck was parked. At times like this, we considered naming this trip, "Dumb, Dumber and Dumbest." There will be no details about which one of us fits which of these names. We arrived at the truck at last light, the trip completed, with stories of the Epic Reconnaissance just beginning.

I could not have asked for better traveling partners. We traveled about 19 miles in 2 days through a winter wonderland, the untouched South District. As always, time tends to soften the difficult experiences. This Epic definitely had periods of hard work, fantastic enjoyment, and potential for danger and difficulty. You should really think many times before considering following in our footsteps.

*Editor's note: On behalf of all of us here at the MTTA, I would like to thank Leyton Jump, Debbie Hannevig and Dave Hogan, for performing an invaluable service, in checking up on the South Side facilities. We applaud you for getting the Web Cam up again, and for shoveling the snow off the roof of the Yurt. Ever since the Yurt collapsed in 1998 under deep snow, this has been a real concern for us.*

*We would also like to extend a big thank you to MTTA Patroller Jon Epstein, who recently made a 3-day solo expedition, checking on all 3 huts on the South Side.*

*"You guys are the best!"  
(And that goes double for Debbie!)*



## ***Bob Brown is Retiring!***

*(from his day job, that is, after 33 years with the DNR)*

All are invited, to help Bob kick off his retirement, with a BBQ at the Eatonville Eagles Hall on April 1st, at 2 pm.

Bring your own side dish or dessert, and a 'roast'!

We hope to see you there!

Sincerely,

The MTTA Board of Directors

*Tony Abruzzo Gene Glasunow Mike Dunn*

*Delbert Reed Judy Scavone*

*Bob Myrick*, President *Mike Smith*, Vice President

***Come Enjoy Good Food and Good Company!***



Snowmobile Training: Jennifer Lyne instructs John Hager on routine maintenance of the 4-cycle Skidoo.

## ***Adventures in Trail Maintenance: on the road to a new Snow Cat***

by Judy Scavone



Louie Boitano grooms the fresh snow.

**Thank you! ..... To all the ski patrollers and volunteers, who have kept the trails groomed so beautifully this year, and racked up almost 2000 hours of trail maintenance time, in an effort to meet the matching grant requirements for the new Snow Cat.**

**We are calling on everyone to help!**

**Trail maintenance is easy, so bring a friend.....grab a tool.....and join the fun! Help us get all the trail maintenance hours we need!**



Cathe Linn covers icy spots.



Judy Scavone trims branches.

***Join us on March 24th***

***for a Lop-to-the-Hut work party. We will provide the lunch and the tools. Just show up at the MTTA Office at 10:00 am: we promise good food and good company, to go with your good deed!***

## How do we purchase a New Snow Cat?

In the past we would not even consider the purchase of a new \$150,000 snow cat. But this year, because of an IAC Grant we are within reach. The IAC Grant will provide 50% of the cost (\$75,000). Currently we have \$12,000 set aside in a dedicated Snow Cat account.

**The answer to the question, we can accomplish this goal if we all work together.** We have another \$63,000 to raise before the end of June 2007. It will take all of our efforts to accomplish this goal, but it will be very worthwhile.

Currently we have two old Snow Cats that continually need repairs to keep them out on the trail. One of these machines no longer has parts available because the manufacture is no longer in business. A new machine will come with a service contract and provide many years of reliable service.

When you come out to ski the trail or use the hut, you want some certainty that you will not have to break trail thru three feet of new snow to reach the hut. If you are a volunteer you want equipment that is reliable, you can groom the trail and return to your vehicle without a breakdown.

Currently there is a 30% chance that the equipment will breakdown while out on the trail. This usually occurs at the worst time; when deep snow keeps trail users from reaching their destination, or when our trail volunteer needs to get home to work or family.



It is not unusual for our LMC to break down .Repairs often take a long time as parts have to be rebuilt or manufactured.



A new PistenBully 100 will provide reliable service for many years. It will come with a service contract and be more fuel efficient. Our volunteers can get out and get the trails groomed and not have to worry about breakdowns.

**Read pages 10 and 11 for details on how you can help accomplish the goal of purchasing a new snow cat for next season.**

# Raising the Money

At the time of this writing we are still \$63,000 short of the money needed to purchase a new snow cat. That means that we have already raised \$87,000 and have another five months to raise the remaining money.

You can help in the traditional ways: make a cash donation, encourage others to donate, sign up for the March Moonlight dinner, etc. This year a number of people have sent in larger than normal donations: one couple donated \$1,000.

**Doug Savage has stepped forward with a challenge to all our members: Doug will donate \$500 if five other people step forward and donate \$500. Since Doug made his offer two others have donated \$500. If three more individuals match Doug's \$500 his offer will raise \$3000. Don't let Doug off the hook! Step forward and donate \$500.**

Last year we worked with a professional grant writer and as a result we now have a fund raising tool "Case Statement". You can e-mail [mtta@skimtta.com](mailto:mtta@skimtta.com) and request a word document version of this Case Statement. Write your own cover letter and get it in the hands of potential donors. Many companies and corporations have grant programs and may consider a donation if they are aware of a need. We need to coordinate who receives Case Statements (to avoid duplication) so check with us at [mtta@skimtta.com](mailto:mtta@skimtta.com). Any potential funding sources can be referred to our web page: [www.skimtta.com](http://www.skimtta.com).

Mike Dunn is making some contacts with the State Legislature with the hopes of getting some funding. If you have any personal contacts with members of the legislature, give Mike a call at 360-876-5253.

Our Ski Patrol members are working at getting the word out, that the purchase of a new snow cat is our #1 priority.

Please send any suggestions to us at [mtta@skimtta.com](mailto:mtta@skimtta.com).

**Your participation is the key to our success!**



Gabriella Meyer of Kaiser, Oregon enjoys the groomed trails with her family.

## Volunteer Hours Are Also Needed

We need to generate another 3000 man hours in order to access the money in our IAC grant. If you are a member of the MTTA Ski Patrol come out as often as possible and perform the required trail maintenance work. Make sure you record your hours! Another option for Ski Patrol Members is to bring a friend or friends and sign them up on the Volunteer Sheet on the office table.

If you are a trail user or MTTA member you can come out and sign up as a volunteer. Stop at our office behind the Ashford Fire Hall on weekends and sign up. We have tools at the office, you can use these tools to clear overhanging branches on the trail. You can leave the tools at the hut or return them to our office. We have a number of priority trails that we can show you (on a map) which need trail clearing.

### *Lop-to Hut-Weekends:*

On March 24th and April 28th, you can stop by our office in Ashford and sign up as a volunteer. We will issue you trail clearing tools and show you where work needs to be performed. We provide lunch at the Copper Creek and you can leave your trail clearing tools at the hut.



Fred Inman enjoying the groomed trails.

Volunteer hours include your travel time to and from the trail to your home. If you spend 3 hours in travel and another 4 hours doing trail maintenance you have contributed 7 hours of volunteer time. This will allow us to access our \$75,000 in IAC Grant money.

Families, scout troops, church groups, etc. can generate a lot of hours. Earlier this year one scout troop generated 200 hours of volunteer time. We will make special arrangements to work with groups that want to come out at any time. Contact Bob Brown at 360-569-2878 evenings.

*Volunteer Hours are the Key to paying for 1/2 the cost of a new snow cat.*

Check out our web page [www.skimtta.com](http://www.skimtta.com) for information on our summer work parties. They will be scheduled for the second Saturday of each month: June, July, August, and September. You can stay overnight at the hut and we provide dinner.

*Please Consider Donating Some Volunteer Time!*



Mt. Tahoma Trails Association  
 P O Box 206  
 Ashford, WA 98304

**Return Service Requested**

Postage  
 Here

Mailing Label Here

**Moon Light Ski & Prime Rib Dinner  
 Copper Creek – March 31, 2007**

On March 31 we will hold the second moonlight ski trip to Copper Creek Hut this year. This dinner will include a complete prime rib dinner. The cost is \$30 per person and the dinner coupon below must be filled out and mailed to the MTTA office (post marked no later than March 26th). Attach your check for the people in your party (\$30 per person).

Dinner will be served from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m.

Dinner will be a complete Prime Rib Dinner, served with a beverage, appetizers, salad and dessert. Arrive early and enjoy the fireplace and the Hut.

We will make a sweep of the trail around 8:30 p.m. to make sure everybody gets safely back to their vehicle.

**Moonlight Ski & Prime Rib Dinner**  
**Copper Creek Hut (6:30 to 7:30 p.m.)**  
**March 31, 2007**

Mail to: MTTA, P O BOX 206, Ashford, WA 98304  
**Post-marked no later than March 26, 2007.**

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Total number of people \_\_\_\_\_ **(\$30 per person)**

(\$30 x Number of people) Amount enclosed  
 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*Make Checks Payable to MTTA!*

**Music at the Mountain!**

**Come enjoy some great live music & support a good cause!**

[www.mountrainier.org](http://www.mountrainier.org)

**March 23-25 Ashford, WA**

MTTA OFFICE PHONE (360) 569-2451 >Approximately December 29, 2006– April 2, 2007 Saturday & Sunday 9 a.m. until 5

**For Information Contact Our MTTA Web Page: [www.skimtta.com](http://www.skimtta.com)**