

# SILVER STAR SEARCH & RESCUE

1220 "A" Street Washougal, WA 98671  
Telephone (360) 835-3131



**Our Headquarters Building**

Check out the new website: [www.silverstarsar.org](http://www.silverstarsar.org)

Volume 18 Issue 1

## 2007 NEWSLETTER

Non-Profit Organization

*Silver Star Search & Rescue is a non-profit organization dedicated to wilderness and urban search and rescue. Our volunteers are on call 24 hours a day. We are supported exclusively by donations from the public and have no paid staff. We have provided emergency services to Clark, Skamania and Cowlitz Counties for over 40 years. Our rescue vehicles include a military 6x6 -2 and 1/2 ton cargo truck, a snow cat, a 4-wheel drive Suburban, a motor home and a mobile 10K generator. Our communications include a paging system for members and 15 handheld radios for field communications. All of our vehicles are also equipped with radios to communicate with personnel in the field. We maintain our own headquarters in Washougal, WA 11 miles east of Vancouver just off of Highway 14. Our business meetings are held on the first Saturday of each month at 7:00PM. Anyone interested in membership and the general public is invited to attend. We also have junior memberships for those that are 16-17 years of age.*

### Silver Star at Mt. Hood

During the extensive search for the three missing climbers on Mt. Hood last December, Silver Star was called upon by Emergency Services in Hood River to provide our Snowcat and a support team to assist with the mission. Our role was to transport searchers and supplies up and down the mountain.

We joined three other snowcats from other teams, and started our assignment from the Cooper Spur Ski Resort, and drove the snowcat up the Wagon Wheel trail to the remote SAR base at Cloud Cap Inn. It was a huge effort, well coordinated by the local authorities. In between trips, our crew of Rick Blevins and Chris Schloe helped with logistical support at SAR base.

We continued to make these trips, about 12 miles each way, over the next few days, also carrying members of the media covering the effort. The weather greatly complicated the mission, and despite a huge coordinated effort with various teams, none of the climbers were rescued alive. One of the climbers was located in a snow cave after having succumbed to the elements, and the other two have not been found as of this writing. All three were experienced climbers, but mountain conditions in winter are harsh, often changing, and unforgiving, and rescue under these conditions are always difficult.



**A rare break in the weather, two days into the search, allowed the successful recovery of one of the climbers.**



**SAR base at Cloud Cap Inn**

### SWIFT Grant

In 2006 Silver Star applied for a grant for radios and computer equipment from the Swift Foundation. Our application was successful, and we have put this equipment to good use.

Over ten of our members are licensed as amateur radio operators, also known as Ham radio. The equipment and training give us much better communications in the field.

We also were able to purchase a laptop and projector, used for training and during missions. We use computer mapping software and GPS transceivers to track our members on field missions. Being able to locate searchers in the field, and having better communications keeps our members safer and more effective on our missions.

Many thanks to the SWIFT board for their consideration of our application.

**Silver Star Search & Rescue. Established 1963**



**Editorial Comment:  
Personal Responsibility in the Wilderness**

Survival in the wilderness is a function of many factors, not all of which are within our control. Certainly, there are events or conditions that could not be foreseen that create accidents, often with disastrous consequences. What we want to address here are some of the elements that you can control to increase your enjoyment and safety in the outdoors, and your responsibility to know and practice them.

As Search and Rescue volunteers, we get to see the consequences when things don't go as planned. There are some fairly common practices and precautions that will help keep you from appearing in the missions list to the left. The first is don't go out alone, or if you must, be sure to tell someone where you're going and when you should return. These greatly reduce the search area if we have to go find you.

Be prepared, not just for your planned activity, but for the unexpected. If you get lost or injured, and spend a night unequipped in the wilderness, the experience can turn from unpleasant to lethal very quickly. The "10 Essentials" is a popular concept among outdoors experts for over 50 years, although different lists include varying numbers and combinations of items. The basics include some means of shelter from the elements such as appropriate clothing for the weather, adequate water and food if you get delayed, navigational aids such as map/compass/GPS and skills in using them, a knife, a kit for fire starting, first aid kit, headlamp or flashlight, and a means of signaling such as a whistle.

Don't get the false sense of security just because you have these items shrink-wrapped in your pack—without the knowledge and experience in using them, they won't help much when you're under duress. Seek out information from books and experienced sources for the practical application and improvisation that will help you survive a mishap.

Finally is the psychology of survival. It is important to assess your situation when things go wrong, think through the options, and make the best use of the resources you have. It is important to have a conscious change in your attitude from hiker/hunter/skier/climber/biker or whatever to SURVIVOR when the situation demands. The greater your knowledge and experience, the greater your confidence in dealing with these situations, but overconfidence can be detrimental as well. Forget your initial objective for that day, and address your current situation accordingly.

We hope you'll enjoy the great natural scenery and wilderness opportunities our region provides, but please do so in a responsible and safe manner.

**Looking for Outdoor Training?**

Check our training schedule on the website. Most training events are open to the public. We may also be able to come to you—Silver Star members routinely provide presentations that are both educational and fun to work groups, school classes, and other clubs. Topics include

- Outdoor Safety
- Navigation
- Survival Skills
- Ropes training
- Local hiking Spots
- Snowmobiling

**For more information see [www.silverstarsar.org](http://www.silverstarsar.org)**

**2006 MAJOR CONTRIBUTORS**

|                          |                      |
|--------------------------|----------------------|
| SWIFT                    | Shane Yanagisawa     |
| Smith-Root Inc.          | Gary Confer          |
| First Aid Only           | Mike & Joanna Lowrey |
| Nautilus                 | Judy Sullivan        |
| BBA FiberWeb             | Stanley Drew         |
| Bergstrom Nutrition      | Wilho Aho            |
| Heaven and Earth         | Ned Stuart           |
| Enterprises              | Donald Ochs          |
| Sno Busters              | John Peers           |
| Gillespie Dental         | Janet Mulwitz        |
| Columbia Machine         | Harriet Sprouse      |
|                          | Kathleen Betts       |
| Milford & Sandra Roberts | Jill Allyn           |
| Bill Halberg             | Gyla Murdock         |
| Thomas Krautschied       | Roy Elmer            |
| Thomas DuBos, Sr         | Phyllis Hutchinson   |
| Roger Vaughn             | James & Barbara      |
| Maynard Moe              | Williamson           |
| George Kinsey            |                      |

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**WE NEED YOUR HELP**

Our annual operating expenses are totally funded by your support. We are staffed and managed entirely by unpaid volunteers. Your continuing support is greatly appreciated.

**COME TO OUR RESCUE AND SEND YOUR TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATION TODAY!**

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

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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Enclosed is a check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Your check is your tax receipt)

Make check payable to:

**Silver Star Search & Rescue  
 PO Box 443  
 Washougal, WA 98671**

All money received is used by Silver Star only. We do not use, employ or pay outside promoters or fundraisers.



Vancouver Veterans Day Parade



Jeff Peck and Neil Blakeslee as they head off for military duty

## SILVER STAR SEARCH &



Rick driving the Snowcat on Mt Hood Mission



Snow survival training



Community service award from ARES/RACES

Postal Patron

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