"She said she didn't feel it, but she saw the houses shaking, so she turned around and all she could see was a big cloud of dust," Olson said. "She didn't know what had happened to us."

As someone who has taught at the American Alpine Institute in Bellingham, is a climbing ranger at Mount Rainier, and who works as a Safety Manager at the Mount Baker ski area, Olson thinks of himself as knowledgeable and prepared for emergencies and danger in the wilderness. This, however, caught him off guard.

After the earthquake, they decided they'd head home to check on their place. They found it in shambles. It is just a few feet from where a landslide took out some homes. But it didn't take them long to put the experiences of the quake in perspective. They were back in Index on Monday with plans to climb the wall several more times this week.

"After all that, I feel really lucky," Olson said. "It was scary, but it won't keep me off the wall." (Source: Doug Sanders, Everett Mountain Rescue Unit Washington Region and *The Everett Herald*, from an article by Leslie Moriarty, March 7)

(Editor's Note: Active volcanoes, earthquakes, avalanches, and interesting weather always make the Pacific Northwest a challenging place to climb.)

CLIMBING ALONE AND UNROPED–FALL INTO CREVASSE, INADEQUATE CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT

Washington, Glacier Peak, Sitkum Glacier

My climbing group, which included Jason Cass, Janie Cogen, Jon Hayes, and Yoav Bar-Ness, left camp in Boulder Basin about 4:00 a.m. on May 27 and roped up at the base of the Sitkum Glacier. We could see several other climbing parties starting up the route behind us.

A group of climbers with no rope or rescue gear passed us while my team was roping up. We soon caught up to them where they had stopped near a hole in the snow with an ice ax beside it. Looking down into the hole, the group had found a man about 20 feet deep in a crevasse, bundled up in a bivy bag. The crevasse victim, Kurk Balin (30s), had been descending Glacier Peak after summiting late the previous day. He was traveling alone on the Sitkum Glacier following footsteps made by climbers earlier that day and fell into a hidden chevron crevasse about 50 feet north of a small rock ridge at about 8,200 feet in elevation.

My roped team arrived next at the accident site, fully prepared with proper equipment for crevasse rescue. We decided to work with Marty Johnson, from the first climbing party at the site—and who was a member of Seattle Search and Rescue, to extract the victim from the crevasse. Marty set up snow anchors and a Z-pulley with rescue gear provided by my rope team. I used my harness prusik attached to an anchored rope as a self-belay to approach the crevasse lip to communicate with the victim, who was amazingly uninjured and in good condition after spending the entire night in the crevasse. The crevasse was extremely over-hung on all sides of the two by three foot opening. Looking into the hole, the crevasse appeared to trend northeast from rocks to the south

toward the middle of the glacier. I used the victim's ice ax, which was still at the surface, to pad the crevasse lip, and anchored it with a second ax. We hauled Balin's pack out first, then I lowered a harness down to Kurk. However, the harness had become tangled during lowering over the crevasse lip. After I got the tangles out of the harness, it took awhile for Balin to get the harness on securely, as he had trouble figuring out how to put it on properly—and needed some instruction. The hauling team (some members of my party and a couple other climbers) raised the victim to the base of the crevasse lip, about two feet below the surface. I lowered a double-length runner, which the victim grabbed with both hands, then pulled him out to about chest-level. Balin was then able to push-up on the snow with one arm as I pulled on the runner, and he was freed from the crevasse.

We were surprised to find that the victim was wearing blue jeans, a cotton T-shirt and a Gore-tex jacket, and that he was not hypothermic. By this time several climbing parties had arrived at the site and watched the rescue from nearby rocks. Another team had heated some water for Kurk, and part of that group accompanied him back down the glacier.

Analysis

Kurk said he didn't know there were crevasses on the route. I reminded him that he was extremely lucky. If the weather had been severe that day and/or no climbing teams been on the route, he probably would not have been found alive. Additionally, if the victim had been injured, an evacuation would have been quite difficult due to the relative remoteness of Glacier Peak. (Source: Chris Cass)

FAILURE TO FOLLOW ROUTE—WEATHER, FAILURE TO TURN BACK, INADEQUATE CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT, DEHYDRATION, HYPOTHERMIA, FROSTBITE

Washington, Mount Baker, North Ridge

James Genone (25) and I began the approach to the North Ridge of Mount Baker on June 7. We had checked the weather and [noted that] a storm was expected. The route was reported to require six to eight hours from a basecamp, so we thought we had an adequate window.

We stopped at the American Alpine Institute (AAI Guide Service) to check on conditions and were told that there was some fresh snow on the route and that it was a little slushy at lower altitude, but that overall, the route was in good shape. We inquired about the weather and were told that it was expected to be okay until the weekend. This corresponded to our own research.

At our bivy below Heliotrope Ridge, we were passed by an AAI expeditionary course. They had just completed an ascent of the North Ridge and confirmed the report that soft snow made for slow going low on the route.

We began climbing before sunrise the following morning. The weather was clearly unsettled, with lenticular clouds over the summit, apparently high winds higher on the mountain, and scattered and gradually building cumulus clouds. The lights of Bellingham were clear to the west, and we hoped conditions might improve. We made rapid progress, as the boot tracks from the AAI group