

returned to the Kautz Heli-base to drop off one of the rangers. During the observation flight, the pilot exceeded the aircraft's capabilities, causing it to overheat. The climber eventually tired of waiting for the helicopter to return and skied down to Paradise. There were no injuries or accidents due to the overheating of the aircraft. Said Gottlieb, who was also IC for the second incident: "It is our responsibility to respond to requests for assistance proactively; a delayed response costs lives here." (Source: Patti Wold, Incident Information Officer)

(Editor's Note: While this is not counted as an accident, it illustrates a potential for a problem when cell phones are used and helicopters are brought into play. It is also interesting to note that the climber who apparently was not lost in the whiteout decided to ski to the base without his partner.)

WEATHER – STRANDED

Washington, Mount Rainier

Two climbers, Mrs. Mariana Burceag and Mr. Daniel Vlad (ages unknown), suffering from hypothermia and frostbite, were airlifted from Camp Muir on Mount Rainier at 6:15 a.m. on June 18 by a Chinook helicopter. They were taken to Madigan Hospital and from there by ground transportation to Harborview Medical Center in Seattle. Mr. Eduard Burceag (age unknown), the husband of Mrs. Burceag, died of injuries sustained in the incident. His body is being removed from mountain this afternoon.

The three individuals are experienced mountaineers who had visited Camp Muir in the past and have enjoyed hiking and climbing on Mount Rainier for many years. Two had previously reached the summit. On June 16, they became trapped on the Muir Snowfield by a sudden blizzard while descending from a day hike to Camp Muir. Early on June 17, a 911 emergency call came through to park rangers advising them of overdue climbers on the Muir Snowfield. Due to heavy, drifting snow, 70 mph winds, and near zero visibility, a rescue team was unable to initiate a search safely at that time. At 7:15 a.m., one member of the party found his way to Camp Muir and was able to direct a search team, made up of climbing guides and park rangers stationed at Camp Muir, to the party's location near Anvil Rock. All three were under shelter by 8:30 a.m. Three doctors who were at Camp Muir as clients of one of the park's guide services provided immediate medical care. Mr. Burceag was unconscious and unresponsive upon arrival. Rescuers were unable to revive him.

The shelter at Camp Muir is warm, dry, and well-stocked with food and water. A carry-out rescue could have been initiated following the rescue; however, rangers and doctors determined it would be in the best interest of the patients to spend the night and wait for a break in the weather to safely fly the next day. This morning dawned clear above Camp Muir, with

heavy clouds below. The Chinook helicopter arrived at 6:00 a.m. and in approximately 15 minutes, lifted Mrs. Burceag and Mr. Vlad, along with one of the park's climbing rangers, into the helicopter by hoist and cable. Those on scene report that the cloud ceiling had risen somewhat by the time the helicopter arrived and that the rescue occurred amid swirling clouds that threatened to engulf the mountain in fog.

Analysis

Every year, roughly 9,000 people climb Mount Rainier and only about half of them reach the summit. Thousands more take day hikes or overnight camping trips to Camp Muir (48 were registered there on that night). These individuals are attracted by the majesty of the mountain, the wilderness experience, and the breathtaking beauty of mornings like this one, high above the clouds on the side of the volcano. Like many things in life, there are inherent risks in the wilderness. Sudden storms like Monday's blizzard can catch even the most experienced and prepared hikers off guard. Visitors should check in with park rangers for the latest information about conditions on the mountain and should always be prepared for an emergency. (Source: Edited from a report on the mountrainierclimbing.blogspot.com)

FALL ON ROCK – SCRAMBLING WITH FULL PACK, WEATHER and FALL OFF LOG – STREAM CROSSING

Washington, North Cascades National Park, Inspiration Traverse

On July 26, Cathleen (50) and Bob Terczak (50's) were on day four of an alpine traverse across the southern section of the park known as the Inspiration Traverse. This traverse involves route-finding from heavily wooded valley floors to subalpine ridges and on to significant glacier crossings. Mountaineers often include numerous peak ascents along the traverse. While the trip can be made without significant technical climbing, glacier experience is necessary and conditions and terrain warrant the ability to negotiate steep forest and rock sections with a full pack.

The Terczaks spent the night of the 25th bivied on the summit of Primus Peak. On the 26th they hoped to make a camp on the eastern Inspiration Glacier, after crossing sections of three other glaciers first (North Klawatti, Klawatti, and McAllister). Near the end of the day, the pair reached the col that separates the Klawatti and McAllister Glaciers, which involves an approximate 150-foot ascent over rock. Complications included deteriorating weather (wind and fog moving in) and a significant mote on their side of the col. Both climbers scrambled up carrying heavy packs and checking for a route over when Cathleen fell approximately 35 feet from a ledge into a moat separating glacier ice from a rock wall. Bob descended, moved Cathleen from the moat down the glacier to a point he could erect their tent. He cared for her for 24 hours, unable to reach a cell connection, before