Outdoor Pursuits Fall 2014 Newsletter

Adventure is not in the guidebook.
Beauty is not on the map...

OUTDOOR PURSUITS

Office Hours
Monday-Friday 10am-5pm

Climbing Wall Hours
Monday-Thursday
11am-1pm & 4:30pm-10pm
Friday
11am-1pm & 4:30pm-8pm

OUTDOOR PURSUITS
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970-247-7293
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Hi folks, this is Tom with an early season snow update. First, I want to talk about the fact that yes, at some point, it will start getting whiter up high, and what that means in terms of avalanche safety. Second, I want to address what OP equipment is available for use to get out on the snow. So, I will jump right in....

There are a few ingredients necessary for an avalanche.
- A slope angle greater than 30 degrees (typical of black diamond ski runs)
- A layer of strong over weak snow, easy to find in the early season. Shallow snow facets rapidly and consists of big sugary grains that are poorly bonded. The biggest, weakest facets are found nearest the ground.
- A skier or rider makes a very good trigger, over-loading weak snow and causing an avalanche. Early season avalanches tend to be small, but can tumble a rider over rocks and stumps which may cause many injuries.
- Permanent snowfields are not avalanche immune because a thin layer of very weak snow tends to form at the bottom of new snow. The old, strong snow is often icy and slick, a perfect surface for fast-running avalanches.

So the moral of the story is, if it is steep enough to ski or ride, it is steep enough to slide, even at this point in the season.

One of the more dangerous issues with early season skiing has to do with snow depth. When the snow pack is shallow, objects like rocks and logs lurk very close under the snow. It is very easy to hit one of these buried objects and damage yourself or your equipment.

If you do plan to ski or ride in the backcountry, take the time to enroll in an Avalanche Awareness or Level 1 Avalanche course. OP will offer these clinics in the upcoming winter semester and there are numerous other sources for avalanche education in our area. For more information, please feel free to stop by the OP office in the Student Life Center.

So, if you want to get out and ski or ride, what can OP do to help you out? We are currently allowing our avalanche rescue equipment (beacons/probes/shovels) to go out for use in the backcountry. We want you to be safe out there. Due to the lack of good snow coverage across the region and state, we are not currently allowing our ski and snowboard equipment to be checked out. This will change when we feel that our gear will come back in decent shape – with a shallow snowpack, even at ski areas, there is a big potential for damage to the base and edges of snowboards or skis. We will begin to check out this gear when we feel confident that there is enough of a base at the resorts and in the backcountry to keep the equipment in good shape.
OP Seeks to Go International Again—
Sea Kayaking in Panama

Given the success of last year’s trip to Mexico to climb North America’s 3rd Highest Peak, Pico de Orizaba, OP is once again seeking to travel out of the country for yet another amazing adventure. This year the tone of the trip will change from climbing a high peak to exploring the pacific coast of Panama by sea kayak. After flying into Panama City we will make our way to the small coastal settlement of Santa Catalina. Once there we will load up sea kayaks and strike out for five days of exploration, snorkeling, and beach camping. This will be a trip to remember!

Trip sign-up is on-going, so visit OP today for more information or to hold your spot with a $600 deposit.

Trip Dates: Saturday, March 21st to Sunday, March 29th
Cost: $625 (food, lodging, transportation, equipment) + Airfare ($700 to $900)

Important Dates:

Monday, December 1st, 2014
$600 Airfare Deposit

Tuesday, January 19th, 2015
Remaining Balance of Airfare Due

Monday, March 2nd, 2015
Trip Balance Due
Notes from the Field: Yoga in the Backcountry

A Semester Reset
This time of the semester is always full of midterms, essays, and busy work. When stressed and exhausted, there is nothing more reviving than a weekend in the back country doing yoga. The recent OP “Yoga in the Backcountry” weekend created a sense of peace in each of us that we can mentally return to when times get tough again. This relaxing trip saved my sanity and has rebooted my exercise routine, mental sanity and eating habits. Everyone needs a reset button.
-Miranda Lanning
Graduating Seniors

**Major:** Anthropology
Outdoor Passions: hiking, skiing, climbing, trail work, and good old adventuring.
Future Plans: Hopefully working at my favorite museum in Massachusetts, lots of traveling (especially going back to Ireland), and spending all my free time on the ocean or in the mountains.
Must see/do in life: See Newgrange on the Winter Solstice, climb Denali, and learn to glass blow.

**Madison Vlass**

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**Major:** Environmental and Organismic Biology
Outdoor passions: Hiking, sitting on mountaintops, and under desert sunsets, swimming in the ocean and scuba diving with the fishes.
Future Plans: I will be staying in Durango for a few years working at the Namaste Health Center while studying to become a holistic health coach. Beyond Durango, I plan to travel, work with animals, and pursue my passion in photography. Eventually I plan to obtain a master’s degree in nutrition and open a wellness practice.
Must see/do in life: I want to connect with animals, immerse myself into cultures, and witness the wonders of this planet. I want to contribute to the conservation of wildlife species, and influence a higher vibration of wellness.

**Shelby George**
Some times things happen that aren’t so good. Some times our cars break down or we lose someone we care about or we get injured. These things are easy to get stuck on and before we know it, we’ve lost sight of all the good things. So here’s a list.

Good things.

-Lisa Ivester, OP Intern.
Devin Wilkinson
Major: Psychology
Minor: Adventure Education
Favorite Outdoor Activity: Hiking, exploring, sleeping under the stars
Words of Wisdom: Now I see the secret of the making of the best persons: It is to grow in the open air and to eat and sleep with the earth. -Walt Whitman

Amanda Finstad
Major: Adventure Education
Favorite Outdoor Activity: Rock Climbing
Words of Wisdom: Adventure is out there! -UP

Forrest Kohere
Major: Adventure Education
Favorite Outdoor Activity: Skiing, Surfing, Trail Running, Climbing
Words of Wisdom: The joy of life comes from our encounters with new experiences and hence there is no greater joy than to have an endlessly changing horizon, for each day to have a new and different sun. -Christopher McCandless

Charlie Shew
Major: Engineering major,
Minor: Small Business and Entrepreneurship
Favorite Outdoor Activity: Mountain Biking/Bike Packing
Words of Wisdom: There is only one world, the world pressing against you at this minute. There is only one minute in which you are alive, this minute — here and now. The only way to live is by accepting each minute as an unrepeatable miracle. Which is exactly what that is — a miracle and unrepeatable. -Storm Jameson
Nicole Lovato
Major: Native American and Indigenous Studies
Favorite Outdoor Activity: Backpacking
Words of Wisdom: There are two ways of spreading light: to be the candle or the mirror that reflects it. -Edith Wharton

Matt Henry
Major: Molecular and Cellular Biology
Favorite Outdoor Activity: Backpacking
Words of Wisdom: I can’t change the direction of the wind, but I can adjust my sails to reach my destination. -Jimmy Dean

Francis Liaw
Major: Adventure Education
Favorite Outdoor Activity: Whitewater Rafting
Words of Wisdom: Do what makes you happy, everything else will fall into place.

Kevin Lindlau
Major: Adventure Education
Favorite Outdoor Activity: Slacklining/climbing
Words of Wisdom: The faster you go, The faster you’ll get there. -Coach Kellogg