



*Volunteers spent nearly 24 hours rescuing a woman with serious injuries from the woods east of Darrington in very technical terrain, wind, rain and sleet, cutting a cross-country trail, a difficult four-pitch rigging rescue, and a 1/4 mile pack-out.*



November 2020

### **Dear Friends of Snohomish County Volunteer Search and Rescue,**

In January of this year, you probably felt moderately prepared for your usual activities, but then came March and you found yourself very unprepared for something you couldn't have imagined. This is much like what happened to Courtney Cox when she set out on a trail run with her boyfriend on October 29th. Courtney has been hiking in the mountains for 7 years, having completed several sizable trails in that time. She knew what she was doing. Despite packing adequately for her planned outing with her boyfriend that day, she found herself woefully unprepared for what the day would bring.

On their way up to Crystal Lake, the brush covered trail made the run difficult for Courtney and her boyfriend. After spending time at the lake, they stumbled upon someone else's tracks through what appeared to be a much better path for the way down. Despite her boyfriend's gut feeling that they should go back, Courtney convinced him to continue on this different path. The path led to a forest road that headed the wrong way, which led to 3000 feet of bushwhacking over a trail-less mountain, and finally led to a 10 foot avalanche chute.

This avalanche chute was covered in granite rock which seemed to be secure. On Courtney's way across she grabbed a rock covered in moss. Time slowed when she immediately knew she was going to fall. She turned to her boyfriend and said "I'm falling." She then fell onto her stomach and began somersaulting down a 100 foot



drop. She hit a log, her leg flipped over, and her head hit a rock. Everything went black for three seconds and all she could think was “I’m dead.” When her body finally stopped, her patella was in her thigh and she knew that she had to get up enough strength to scream so her boyfriend would know she was ok. She screamed his name and he screamed back to her. She then continued to scream “I’m here, I’m here!”

And isn’t this where we are all at right now? We have suffered something terrible and are screaming out from isolation for help.

Fortunately for Courtney, this is the part where her very complicated rescue begins. Her boyfriend gave her all the helpful items he had and hiked out four miles to call 911 which triggered the deployment of Snohomish County Volunteer Search and Rescue (SCVSAR). Thus began nearly 24 hours of helicopters, ground crews, very technical terrain, wind, rain and sleet, cutting a cross-country trail, a difficult four-pitch rigging rescue, and a ¼ mile pack-out to a clearing created by cutting down several trees. Courtney was then air-lifted to Providence Regional Medical Center for further care.

After all was said and done, Courtney remarked “I can’t believe I’m alive. I’m very thankful for the crew that got me out and saved my life.” She was lamenting what a large bill this was going to be when one of the rescue volunteers told her that this is a free service we provide to those in need!

**It is your donations that power this 100% volunteer, non-profit organization to save lives like Courtney’s.** With COVID-19 prompting unprecedented numbers of inexperienced people to go into the wilderness, there has been a large increase in the number of rescue missions this year.

**Right now we humbly ask that you give what you can to help us continue to be there for anyone whose day out in nature goes terribly wrong.** In a time where so many need help, please choose to make a difference by joining our SCVSAR supporters. Our supporters and volunteers are a team that makes real our motto “that others may live”. **Please contribute today.**

Sincerely,

Heidi McKeon  
Snohomish County Volunteer Search and Rescue President

**SNOHOMISH COUNTY VOLUNTEER SEARCH AND RESCUE**

5506 Old Machias Rd, Snohomish, WA 98290    [info@scvsar.org](mailto:info@scvsar.org)    [www.scvsar.org](http://www.scvsar.org)

To change your mail preferences, contact [info@scvsar.org](mailto:info@scvsar.org)