

# A Dream Came True

By Aleksa Jacimovic

It was an early December morning. I was woken up by my host brother who ran into my room and started pulling me out of the bed excitedly. On a regular day I probably wouldn't be very happy about that, but that cold dawn on the 31st of December turned into one of the most amazing days I've had in the United States so far.

We loaded the car and set off to the nearby Mt. Hood for a day of skiing. Skiing has always been my favorite sport, and an activity I enjoyed more than anything else. I've been skiing for thirteen years now, and skiing in the U.S. was one of my dreams. I was watching travel shows about American mountain resorts and picturing myself on those steep slopes covered in sparkling white powder. After almost three hours of driving, we arrived to the foothills of the highest mountain in Oregon. The day was more than perfect for skiing. It was sunny, cloudless and cold enough to prevent the snow from melting. At Ski Bowl, a ski resort we went to, there were over 50 inches of new powder-snow that was compressed and promising a great

day of skiing.

And finally the moment I was waiting for! I'm riding the ski-lift and checking out the surrounding runs impatiently. Those ten or fifteen minutes of my trip to the summit seemed like an eternity. When I finally found myself on the top of the mountain, I rushed down one of the slopes, trying to compare the feeling of skiing in the U.S. with the one of skiing in the Alps or some of the ski resorts in my native Serbia. My dream came true... While I was descending, I remembered myself as a six-year-old who wrote a letter to Santa asking for a plane ticket and a ski-pass for one of the American ski resorts. It was great to hear the wind whistling around my helmet and goggles for the first time after April, 2010, when I went skiing last time...

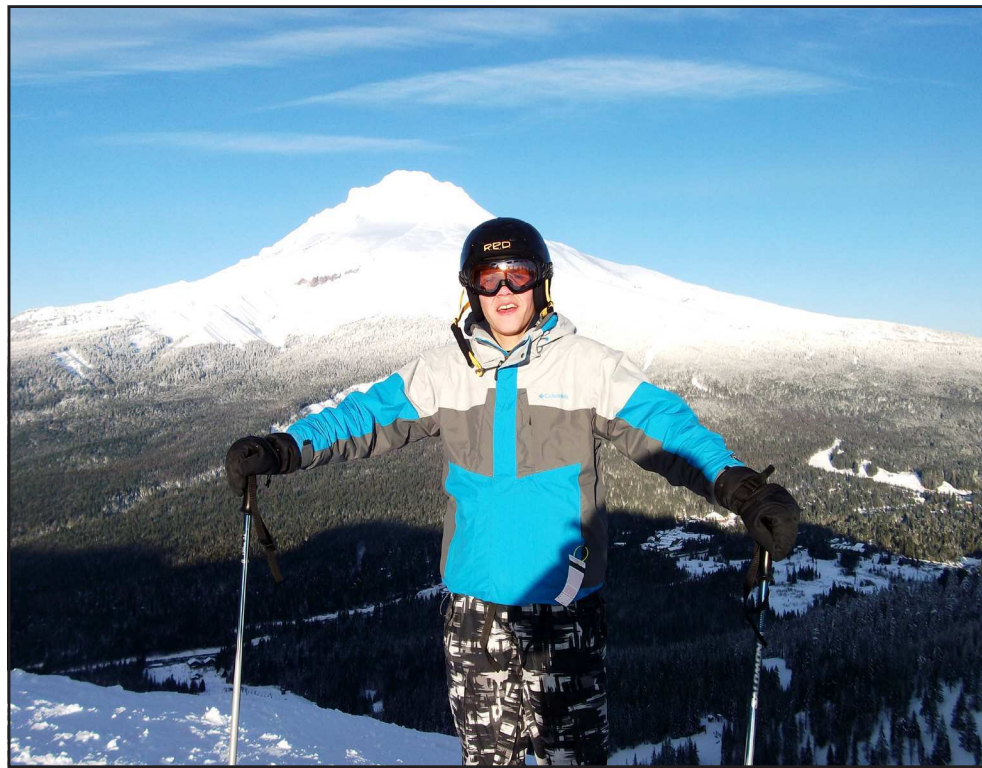
Then, all of a sudden I realized it was December 31st, the New Year's Eve. "It looked like Santa was really going to grant my old wish," I thought and laughed loudly. And just when it looked like it couldn't be any better, one of my host brothers took me to the other side of the resort where there were almost no people. As a cherry on the top of the cake, that side of the mountain mostly

consists of Black diamond (expert) slopes that give you an opportunity to experience the best skiing, if you know what you are doing.

It was the best New Year's Eve I've had. After a quick dinner and a cup of hot chocolate, we greeted 2011 racing

down the black diamonds in America's largest night ski area.

*Aleksa Jacimovic is a foreign exchange student from Serbia, attending Vernonia High School and living in Vernonia for one year.*



## CCSO Animal Control Helps Injured Dog Recover

With injuries to her feet that possibly came from a boat propeller, a female Chesapeake Bay Retriever rescued near Mayger Beach is now on the mend.

Columbia County Animal Control officials recovered the dog January 17 with serious wounds to her hind feet and appearing to be undernourished. Officials began cleansing and caring for the wounds with the help of the Companion Animal Hospital in Scappoose. Animal Control staff have given the retriever the name, "Coconut", and say she is very compliant with the medical staff dealing with her injuries.



Once the dog is stable, it is expected she will need to have two of her toes removed for health reasons. After that, it will be more special

treatment until she is ready for adoption. Even then, it will require an adoptive family that can provide her with a proper home for her full recovery.

The Columbia County Animal Control Unit is part of the Enforcement Division of the Sheriff's Office, and operates with revenue from dog license fees and donations.

If you would like more information about "Coconut", or how to make a donation to help the Columbia County Animal Control Shelter with the treatment and care of injured animals, contact the Animal Control Shelter at (503) 397-3935. The Shelter is located at 2084 Oregon Street, St. Helens.

## Oregon Seat Belt Safety Campaign

The Columbia County Sheriff's Office will be participating in the Oregon Safety Belt Campaign Blitz February 7-20, 2011.

Lack of belt use was a major factor in half of all Oregon motor vehicle occupant deaths during 2009. One in three (28%) children under age eight killed or injured in crashes were using adult belt systems (205 children) or were totally unrestrained (14 children) rather than riding in child seats appropriate for their size. Half of all motor vehicle occupant fatalities were also riding completely unrestrained. Speeding and driver impairments were the other most common factors causing crash injuries.

- Oregon's safety belt overtime campaign is committed to reducing traffic crash injuries and deaths by promoting safety belt use and discouraging speeding and impaired drivers.
- Thirty-one Sheriff Offices, 67 Police Departments and OSP Patrol Division are participating in federal overtime grants this year.
- Consistent safety belt use is the

single most effective way to protect motor vehicle occupants from injury and reduce fatalities in motor vehicle crashes, according to the US Department of Transportation.

• "Proper use" is required by Oregon law and means using the appropriate type of restraint. For adults, that means using the entire belt system, lap belt low across the hips and shoulder belt over collarbone and crossing center of the chest. Belts should be free of slack and lying flat with no twists or knots. If the shoulder belt portion of an adult safety belt rides up onto the neck or feels uncomfortable, comfort may be increased by sliding the built-in adjuster up or down or by moving seat position. The shoulder belt should NOT be placed under the arm or behind the back. This can cause serious internal injuries or ejection in a crash. Vehicle dealers or vehicle manufacturers' customer service departments can help with repair, installation or retrofitting of safety belts.

- CHILD RESTRAINT LAW: A child weighing less than 40 pounds

must be restrained in a child safety seat. A child less than one year of age or weighing less than twenty pounds must be restrained in a child seat, rear-facing. A child more than forty pounds but under age eight or less than 4'9" tall must be restrained in a booster seat that elevates them so the lap/shoulder belts fit correctly. For help with child safety seats, refer to the seat manufacturer's instructions, vehicle owner's manual or call ACTS Oregon Child Safety Seat Resource Center at 1-800-772-1315.

• Probably the greatest dangers to unbelted or improperly belted occupants are the significant likelihood and consequences of ejection. Unbelted or improperly belted occupants are five times more likely to be ejected in a crash than one who is belted. Odds of surviving ejection from a motor vehicle are estimated at one in four. This is why Oregon law also prohibits minors from riding in an open bed of a pickup truck, where no restraints are available to hold the occupants inside the vehicle.

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