

## Climbing 4 Spina Bifida Spring Newsletter

Greetings sponsors, friends and supporters,  
I hope this spring 2009 finds you and all those you love doing well!

With the start of the spring climbing season underway and a successful ascent of Mt. Rainier to start things off we are ready to get back underway! First as always we need to thank our sponsors for all their support and we hope to see you all involved anyway you would like to be!

I would like to thank our West Coast team for their hard work and dedication! Gwen Hobbs and Brian Janes have gone above and beyond to give not only their time energy and money but their dedication. They have beaten the odds by summiting Rainier as they were told by Professional climbers that this time of year they had a 10% chance to top out. Brian also proposed to Gwen on the summit so I wish them huge congratulations and all the best in life! Here is a great gear review written by them.

### Cold Avenger Mask

Between beanies and baclavas, there is little room left for other gear that can help keep you warm and comfortable. The cold avenger mask was quite the exception. The mask fits over the nose and mouth and has vents to allow air flow both in and out. These vents also reduce condensation build up, which can actually make you cold. We first tested this item on Mt. Shasta at about 9,000 feet at tree line while doing some crevasse rescue training in preparation for Mt. Rainier. On a cold and very windy day the mask kept my face warm and made breathing very easy.

The next use came while in Mt. Rainier in southern Washington. While hanging out for a day in white out conditions and 30 plus mile winds, we donned the mask and ventured out of the tent to periodically dig out snow and build a snow wall to help block the wind. Wearing the mask in these conditions I felt that “it was not that bad” out. The next day I wore the mask at 2am leaving base camp for the summit. It was nice having a warm face even though it was very cold out and eventually turned very windy and limited visibility. Even when climbing into the wind, I was still warm and had no issues with breathing, even at 12,000 feet where we were turned around. When we got back to base camp the wind was howling and blowing snow all over, enough that it stung the eyes as ice crystals hit you over and over. If it were not for the Cold Avenger mask, there would have been no way to get back to camp without being torn up. The next morning we were able to climb to the summit and even though the weather was much better, I still wore the Cold Avenger mask for the early hours of the morning till things warmed up a bit to keep me warm and moving well. I definitely love this item and when combined with a pair of goggles, it is like having a full-face helmet on of protection from the elements. Wind, snow, cold, nothing gets through. The mask is about as small as a beanie and weighs even less so there is no reason not to pack it on a trip. Not only useful, but the Cold

Avenger mask draws lots of attention and looks pretty cool too. We have called it the "vadar" mask.

One of our east coast members also went on the Rainier trip and broke an altitude record for himself. Joe Lesson has been the main stay on our East Coast Teams and has a fantastic partner in Nancy Rios. Joe has gone way above to make things happen and I could never thank him enough for all he has done. Joe has turned out to be my best friend and I am dedicated to making his as well as Brian and Gwens dream of the seven summits happen for C4SB. Here is a gear review and brief summary of how Rainier was for Joes first time on a big hill.

Here is a brief explanation of what happen on Rainier and a little about myself and how I feel about the ColdAvenger. If you want me to do an interview I would be more than happy. Feel free to call my cell phone at anytime, I have left my contact information below. If I don't happen to pick up just leave a message and I will make sure to get back to you as quickly as possibly.

I've reached summit 8 peaks in the White Mountains in New Hampshire and am used to the extreme conditions. Due to past experiences on Mt. Washington that has the record for worst weather and highest recorded ground wind speed and is known for harsh conditions during the winter months. I was even caught in a storm 2 years ago that resulted in a wind chill leading to temperatures at (-70) degree Fahrenheit which made me hypothermic due to breathing in cold air. At that point I knew that protection of my airway was important.

Our trip on Rainier would prove to be my first true experience with high altitude climbing and would prove to put my mountaineering skills to the test. Mt. Rainier is a challenge and a needed step and in my view a necessary feat to anyone in continental Unites States that wishes to expand there climbing into the global atmosphere such as the Andies, Alps, Himalayas, and any of the seven summit peaks. As someone who is training for the seven summits Mt. Rainier is a training ground and a vital step in the right direction. After reviewing the climate conditions, terrain of any mountain I take time reviewing the gear that I bring. To all climbers the weight of a pack is critical and the weight of all items must be taken into consideration. Every item has be viewed as invaluable to the climb and if it is not it isn't worth bringing, "every ounce counts". After viewing that weather conditions can be rough and cold I deiced to bring along my ColdAvenger to put it to the test. I have to admit I was skeptic at first, I've used products in the past that supposed to make breathing easier and accomplished nothing but the opposite. Breathing is critical and anything that is blocking airflow can prove to be am annoyance or hazard to a climber. The first day of our climb started ay a moderate pace but my team and I were forced to settle around 8,100 feet due to an approaching storm. We prepared camp and settled in ready for the worst. My teammates bunked down in a tent and I stayed in a bivy sac. The storm came as promised and proved to be a test to our nerves. There wasn't much we could do but just stay in our shelters to stay warm. Around 4 a.m I woke up to notice that the high winds had actually buried my bivy sac

under a great amount of snow. Now I dug myself in under 2 feet to keep away from the winds but it seems it wasn't deep enough. I knew at that time I would have to go outside in extremely cold temperatures and dig out my bivy and clear a new pit. I put on all the necessary gear and saw the ColdAvenger in my pack. I decided it was time for the test. I put it on and noticed that it felt conformable and in no way got in the way of my breathing. I got out of the bivy and started to clear the snow and was in total awe that my breathing was easier, in fact I was enjoying the benefits of the mask. It was not only keeping my face dry but making it so I can breathe while completing the task. After I was done with the job I went back into my cold bivy and decided to sleep with the mask on. That's Right! I decided that I was going to try to see if I would be able to be so comfortable in the mask I would sleep in it, and you know what I was able to do! Even with high winds blowing my bivy and extreme cold I was able to have a great sleep and stay dry and breathe comfortably with the ColdAvenger. After being in white out conditions the following day we were finally on the move to camp Muir. On the way up I was once again experiencing high winds and cold temperatures so I took out the mask again and once again proved to make the job easier and did exactly what it says it would. In fact other climbers and skiers often stopped and were asking what it was and proud of the ColdAvenger's ability's I took time with everyone explaining the features and benefits it has to offer. The next couple of days at Muir I was dealing with a mild case of altitude sickness so I wasn't able to be part of my team as they went for the summit. The difference between a good climber is the ability to know when to stop. Reaching the summit is only half the battle. This being my first time at a high altitude I knew that I would prove to be a possible threat is something was to happen to me and decided to remain around 10,000 feet and acclimatize and traveled around the Glaciers and crevasses. I wore my face mask and it helped me feel better and keep me moving over crevasses and up and down the mountain with not affecting my breathing in a negative way but actually helping. Some people might think that I would be upset not to summit on Rainier but believe it or not it was not my goal. My goal was to ensure the safety of my teammates and to access my gear and effects of high altitude. I've learned that The ColdAvenger was a vital part of my gear. It is light and makes my breathing easier and keeps my face dry and protected from the wind. I would definitely recommend it to other climbers as a vital piece of gear. My partners I am proud to say were in fact the only team to summit that weekend and most climbers on the mountain turned around after staying only a day or two. We were able to stay for 5 straight days with fluctuation winds and temperatures.

To make a long story short, The ColdAvenger works I've suffered Hypothermia due to breathing cold air and believe that it could have been avoided with the use of the face mask. Rainier was a great learning experience and I can't wait to get back up and go for my summit. I know the gear that is needed and the ColdAvenger is definitely on the top of the list. As a climber with high ambitions I realize what is the difference between gear that will make my climb easier and will slow me down and with bigger peaks in my sights I will only trust the gear that will stand up to my tests and prove to me its worth and your ColdAvenger has proven itself worthy and is going to be an asset on my many climbs to come.

Thank you

Sincerely,

Joe Lesson Climbing for Spina Bifida

Please visit our sponsors whenever you can because without them there is no C4SB.

So with the climbing season underway we had hope to have many more peaks summated but in life things happen that take priority so we are just getting set to get underway. We had hoped to do some winter climbing but had no winter gear to do so safely. Next winter look for our C4SB teams to be out there with the help of a great sponsor Mount 7 for winter outer gear. Also rest assured that we will finish what we started and continue to raise awareness and provide our sponsors with everything we promised.

Speaking of sponsors not a newsletter goes by without a big thanks to our good friends at Asolo and Lowe Alpine. They have a couple of really cool sites up and running so please join up and check it out. It's a chance to get your adventure pictures out there.

Here is a link for Asolo Fits <http://asolofits.ning.com/>

Here is a link for Lowe Alpine <http://thelowedown.ning.com/>

These are fantastic sites and I encourage you to join up and post your pictures.

Our climbers will also be featured in the sponsored athletes section on the Talus site and it is a great honor to have Outdoor Media and Talus with C4SB. Here is the latest press release from Outside Media and a giant thanks to Hillary !

Talus Provides Gear for Spina Bifida Awareness Climb on Mt. Rainier

Climbing 4 Spina Bifida tops the Cascade's highest peak with ColdAvenger in tow

Missoula, MT--May 7, 2009 --

<http://www.talusoutdoortech.com>

Talus Outdoor Technologies, LLC

is proud to report a successful recent summit of Mount Rainier by the Climbing 4 Spina Bifida team. Talus is the official facemask of

<http://www.climbing4spinabifida.org>

Climbing 4 Spina Bifida

. Climbers Joe Lesson, Brian Janes and Gwen Hobbs spent four days on the mountain in a severe snowstorm before Janes and Hobbs reached the 14,411-foot summit April 20th.

Mount Rainier, in Washington, is an active volcano and the highest peak in the Cascade Range. With 26 major glaciers, Mount Rainier is the most heavily glaciated peak in the lower 48 states.

The Climbing 4 Spina Bifida team wore Talus

<http://www.coldavenger.com/>

ColdAvenger

face masks. The ColdAvenger features soft shell wind resistant Polartec fleece and a medical grade polyurethane ventilator that mixes inhaled cold air with exhaled warm air to achieve a dynamic balance of warmth and humidity to protect the airways from the damaging cold while keeping the face dry. The ColdAvenger's patent-pending technology keeps temperatures inside the mask 40-60 degrees higher than outside air.

Climbing 4 Spina Bifida is a non-profit organization focused on climbing to raise awareness and money to fight the birth defect that affects up to 2,000 newborns in America each year. The climbers who donate their time and money say their passion for the outdoors is the perfect outlet for drawing attention to the cause.

“Mountains are so strong and inspiring that they're the perfect connection to our mission for healthy babies,” says climber Joe Lesson, “We're behind this effort because we're grateful for our ability to climb, and we want kids to grow up to be able to do the same thing.”

Spina Bifida is the most common neural tube birth defect, which results from the bones in the spine not forming properly. Spina Bifida develops in the early stages of pregnancy and can most commonly be attributed to folic acid deficiencies. Among its messages, Climbing 4 Spina Bifida reminds women of the importance of folic acids like leafy greens and legumes in the daily diet.

[www.climbing4spinabifida.com](http://www.climbing4spinabifida.com)

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Founded and headquartered in Missoula, Montana, Talus Outdoor Technologies™ is a leading innovator in technologically-advanced outdoor gear. Talus is dedicated to helping outdoor enthusiasts Stay Out Longer.™ In 2007, Talus introduced the ColdAvenger®, an advanced, high-quality cold weather protection mask developed by a

physicist and a skier. The ColdAvenger® is the result of more than two years of research and development testing in Northern Rocky Mountain winters to achieve four functional goals: thermal comfort, ventilation adequacy, moisture control and ease of breathing during exercise. Talus is proud to provide an elite product while being socially and environmentally conscious.

[www.talusoutdoortech.com](http://www.talusoutdoortech.com)

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As always a giant thanks to our fantastic web designer Bill at Raven Ridge Designs!

We hope you enjoyed this spring newsletter and we look forward to writing up the summer newsletter. Please check back often for new information and pictures. We thank all of you for your friendship and support. Until next time stay safe and healthy and God Bless you !

