

# Climbing Mount Shasta is not your ordinary walk for charity

Jackie L. Ney of Rockland Township participates in one of *Backpacker Magazine's* Summit For Someone benefit climbs.

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By Jeremy Carroll

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Jackie L. Ney put her heart and soul into a fundraising walk last month that was nothing like your typical walk for charity.

The 29-year-old Rockland Township resident's walk was actually a grueling snowy hike up California's Mount Shasta, which peaks at 14,162 feet.

Ney participated in one of *Backpacker Magazine's* Summit For Someone benefit climbs in support of Big City Mountaineers (BCM). BCM, a non-profit organization based in Golden, Colo., is devoted to providing a summer outdoor mentoring program to urban teens throughout the country who are in existing youth development programs.

Ney, a native of Elizabethville, Dauphin County, and the photo editor of *Backpacker Magazine*, decided to become a part of this fundraising adventure last fall.

"Summer camp was the joy of my summers," said Ney, who credits her mother for always finding a way to send her to camp in spite of tight finances. "BCM helps kids that may not have the resources to go to camp or be out in the wilderness.

"These experiences give them a new perspective, and I feel every child should have that."

To earn the right to climb Mount Shasta, each participant had to raise a minimum of \$3,500 from sponsors. Family and friends came through in a big way for Ney, who managed to raise \$3,710.

"I am so very thankful for my supporters, because I had no trouble raising the money," she said. "You should never underestimate the power of having a good cause."

Climbing the mighty mountain, however, was not quite as easy as racking up sponsors.

Ney began training in earnest for the rigors of a snowy mountain climb in January. She maintained a five-day cardio workout routine and a three-day weight-lifting regimen. She also practiced snowshoeing while wearing a heavy backpack to prepare herself to carry a 40-pound pack of supplies and equipment during the hike.

Ney arrived in northern California a few days before her May 27 hike to acclimate herself to a higher altitude. The first-time mountaineer met her group, consisting of six other hikers and two guides, on May 26. After driving to the Bunny Flat area of Mount



Photo courtesy of Jackie L. Ney

**Jackie L. Ney climbs Mount Shasta in Northern California as part of a fundraising event.**

Shasta, which has an elevation of 6,950 feet, they hiked to their base camp situated at an altitude of 7,900 feet. They then set out at 1 a.m. on May 27 to reach the summit.



**Jackie L. Ney**

Shasta and climb to the summit one day, said the friendships she formed with her fellow hikers was another positive aspect of the trip.

But the group had to stop its climb near the 11,000-foot mark because of extremely poor weather conditions, including 40 mph winds and avalanche conditions.

Although her climb was cut short, Ney still gained quite a bit from the experience. "There were moments when the climb was hard, but it was a good hard, and I had a good feeling," she said. "And the training has helped me tremendously."

Ney, who hopes to return to Mount

Shasta and climb to the summit one day, said the friendships she formed with her fellow hikers was another positive aspect of the trip.

"Meeting these wonderful people was priceless, and it was wonderful to be part of such a great cause," she said.

The money raised by each Summit For Someone climber finances an eight-day backpacking trip for five teenagers and a youth agency leader. In the 2006 Summit For Someone climbing season, which runs from April to September, 130 climbers are participating in a total of 17 climbs on 11 North American mountains.

For more information on the BCM organization and the benefit climbs, go to [www.summitforsomeone.org](http://www.summitforsomeone.org) and [www.bigcitymountaineers.org](http://www.bigcitymountaineers.org), or call BCM at 1-303-271-9200.

Those interested in participating in a climb in the 2007 season should send an e-mail to [2007@summitforsomeone.org](mailto:2007@summitforsomeone.org) in order to be placed on the contact list.

Registration for next season takes place in October.

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