

to the follow
for their eff
these trails
character

* Kirk
* Me

Wednesdays

Stephanie Smith

Jul 30, 2020 4:56:51pm

I feel like I've been sitting on my butt this whole week...
would you be free sometime soon to go on a walk/hike?

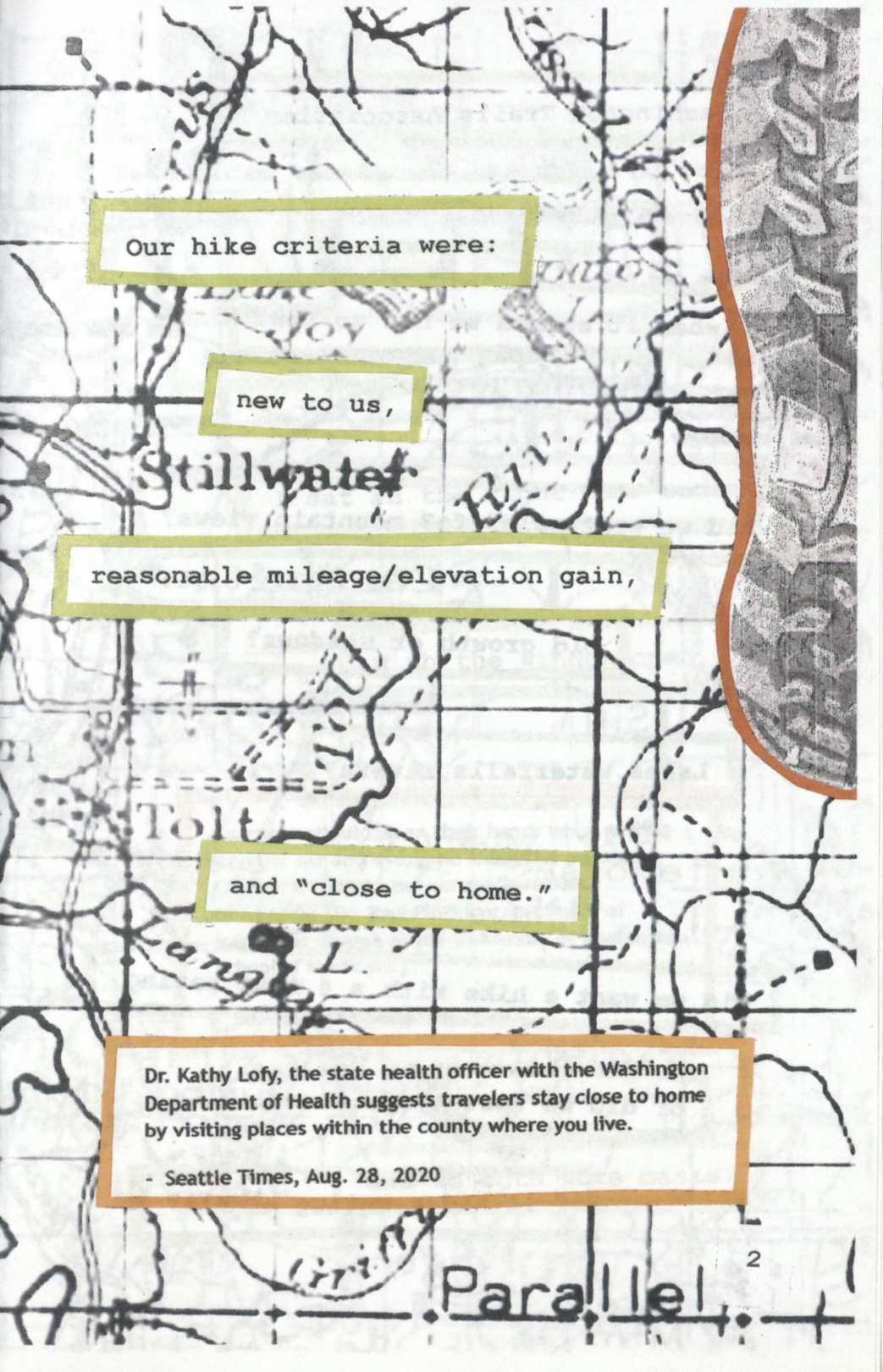
Jul 30, 2020 5:42:47pm

Absolutely! I've been sitting on my butt all
week, too. Anytime, you name it.

Late summer 2020 to spring 2021,

my son and I walked or hiked

every Wednesday.



Our hike criteria were:

new to us,


reasonable mileage/elevation gain,

and "close to home."

Dr. Kathy Lofy, the state health officer with the Washington Department of Health suggests travelers stay close to home by visiting places within the county where you live.

- Seattle Times, Aug. 28, 2020

Parallel



Washington Trails Association

gave us choices

when it seemed we had so few.

Did we want wildlife? mountain views?

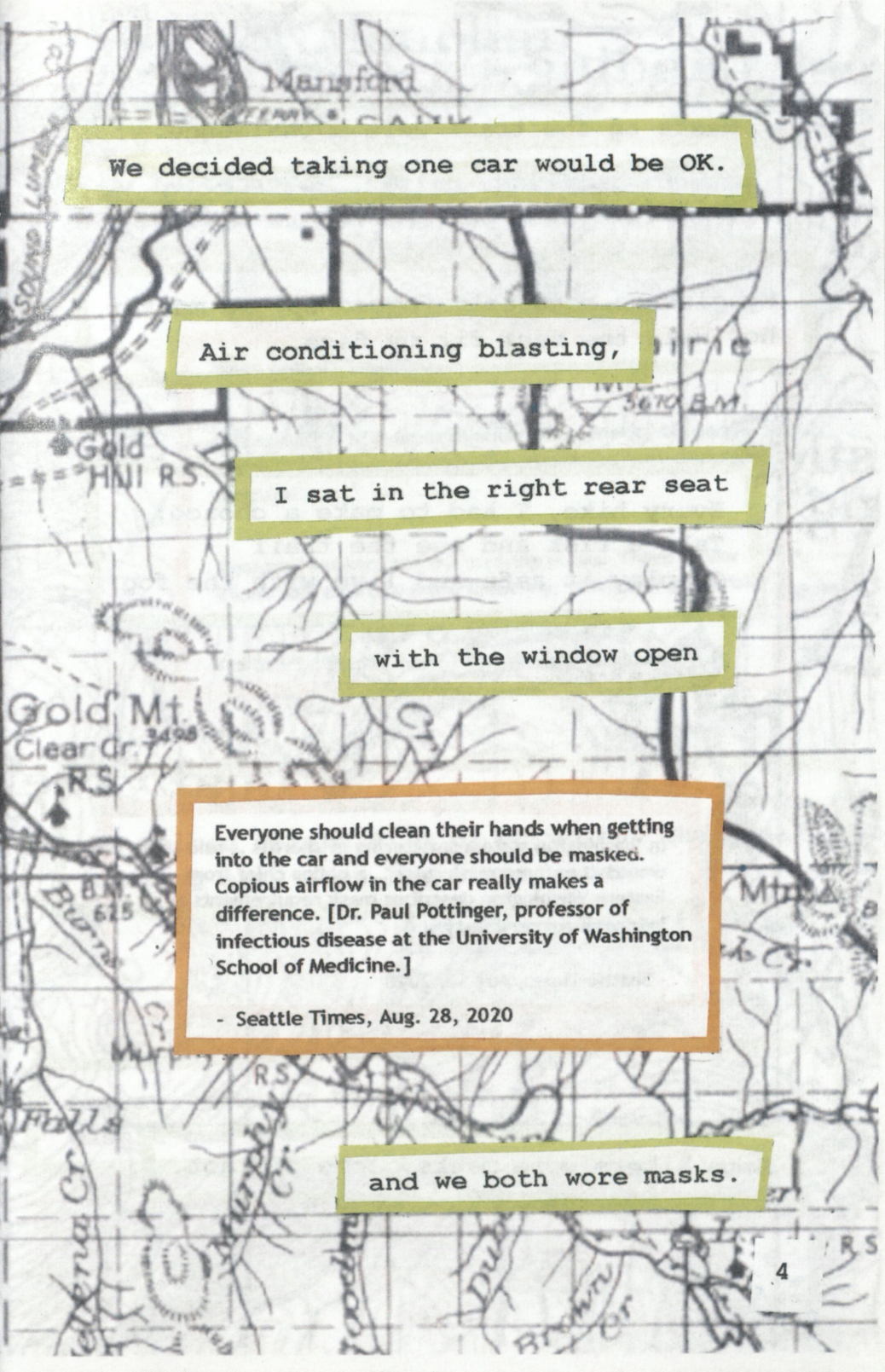
Old growth or meadows?

Lakes, waterfalls, rivers?

Did we want a hike with a 4 star rating

or did we care

if it had a rating at all?



We decided taking one car would be OK.

Air conditioning blasting,

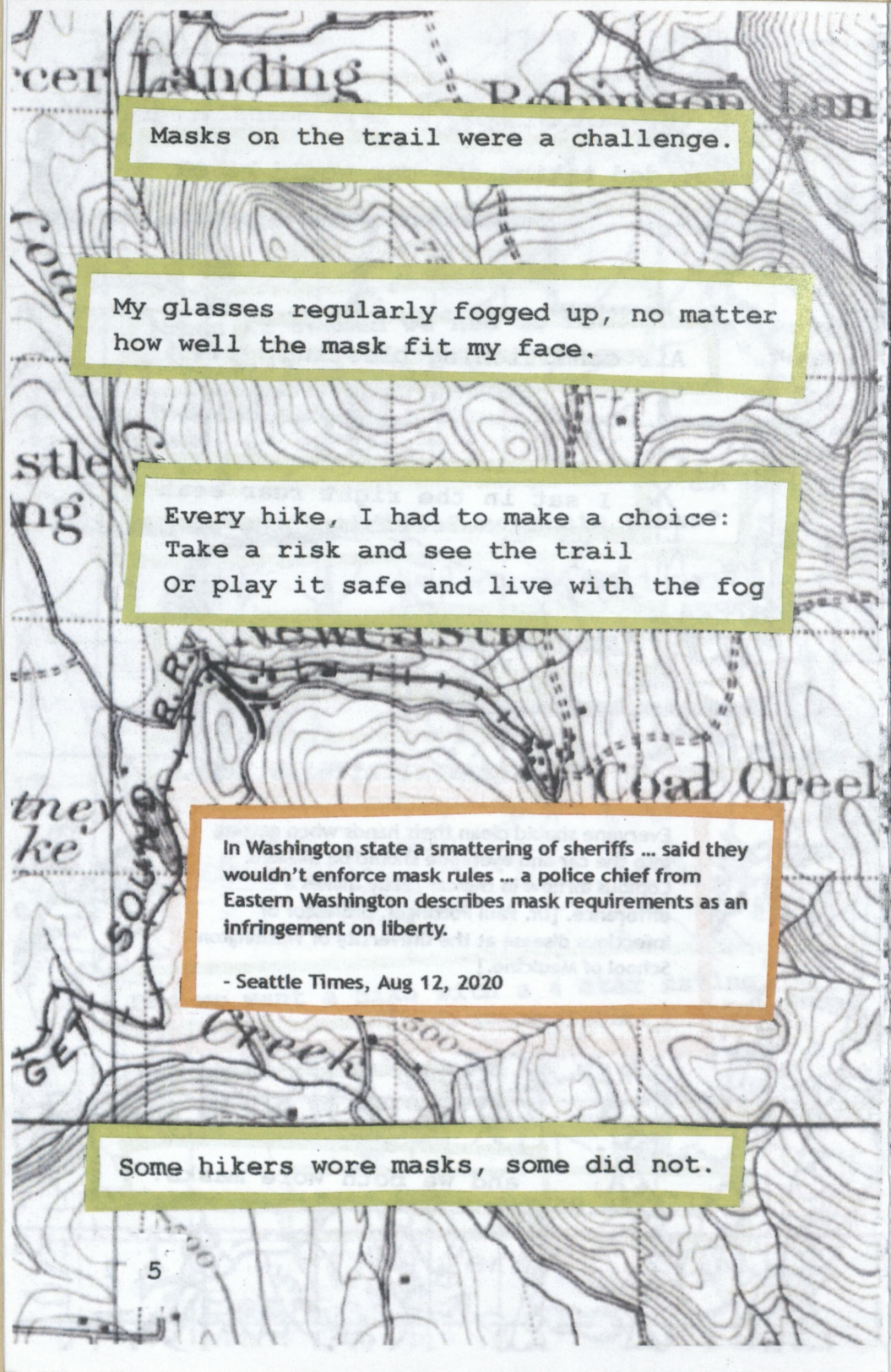
I sat in the right rear seat

with the window open

Everyone should clean their hands when getting into the car and everyone should be masked. Copious airflow in the car really makes a difference. [Dr. Paul Pottinger, professor of infectious disease at the University of Washington School of Medicine.]

- Seattle Times, Aug. 28, 2020

and we both wore masks.

A topographic map serves as the background for the entire page. It features contour lines, a trail marked with 'x' symbols, and various geographical labels. Labels visible include 'cer Landing', 'Robinson', 'Coal Creek', 'NEWELL'S CREEK', 'SOUND', 'GET', and '500'. Four text boxes are overlaid on the map: a yellow box at the top, a yellow box below it, an orange box in the middle, and a yellow box at the bottom. The text in these boxes is in a typewriter-style font.

Masks on the trail were a challenge.

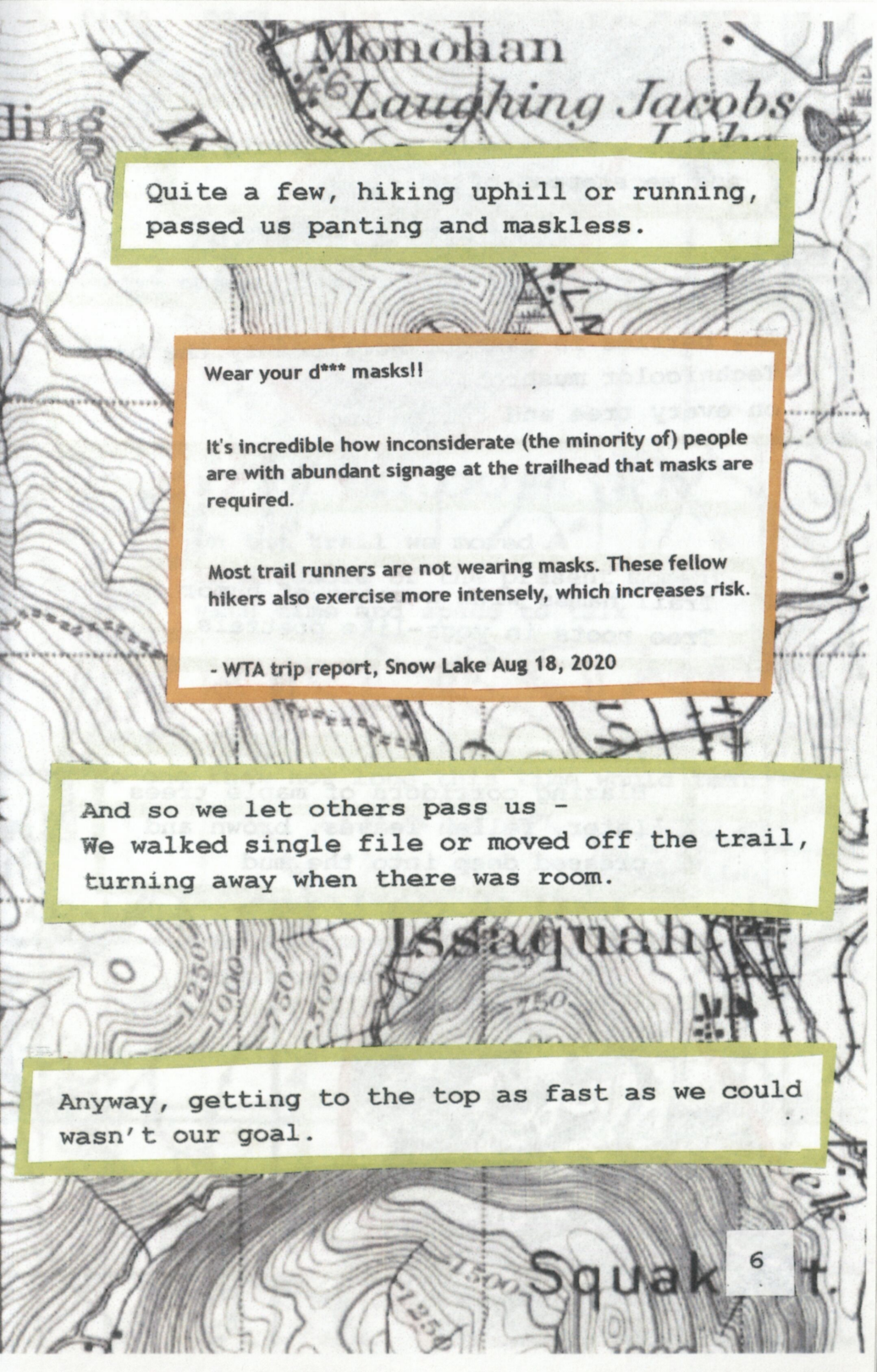
My glasses regularly fogged up, no matter how well the mask fit my face.

Every hike, I had to make a choice:
Take a risk and see the trail
Or play it safe and live with the fog

In Washington state a smattering of sheriffs ... said they wouldn't enforce mask rules ... a police chief from Eastern Washington describes mask requirements as an infringement on liberty.

- Seattle Times, Aug 12, 2020

Some hikers wore masks, some did not.



Quite a few, hiking uphill or running,
passed us panting and maskless.

Wear your d*** masks!!

It's incredible how inconsiderate (the minority of) people
are with abundant signage at the trailhead that masks are
required.

Most trail runners are not wearing masks. These fellow
hikers also exercise more intensely, which increases risk.

- WTA trip report, Snow Lake Aug 18, 2020

And so we let others pass us -
We walked single file or moved off the trail,
turning away when there was room.

Anyway, getting to the top as fast as we could
wasn't our goal.

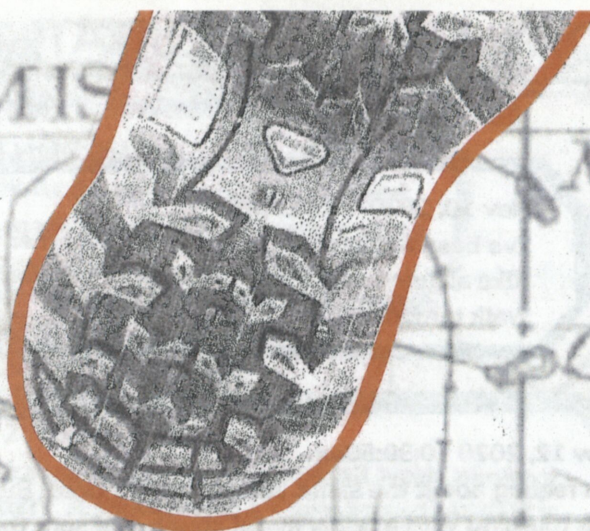
Our pace was steady and moderate,
and we stopped often:

Any berries in season, huckleberry the best
Technicolor mushrooms
on every tree and fallen log

Trail names with a sense of humor
Tree roots in yoga-like pretzels

Blazing corridors of maple trees
Later, fallen leaves, brown and
pressed deep into the mud





On the trail we moved
in a bubble of the present moment,
with time and space to talk.

No one knew how long this time would last.

But while we lived in the space of
that moment,

we were safe, protected.
We were OK.

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

307/59

3(M)

308/58

ELECTION DAY

4

Nov 10, 2020 4:35:26pm

I've been feeling a little under the weather today (like sinus-y) so can we reschedule our normal walk tomorrow?

Nov 12, 2020 10:39:50am

I'm feeling about the same. Just generally tired. But A [redacted] woke up this morning with a really awful cough and sore throat and some trouble breathing so we went to get him Covid tested this morning.

314/52

NO

315/51

11(M)

Nov 13, 2020 3:14:25pm

I'm still feeling pretty crummy, sorry! Also still waiting for the results of A [redacted]'s Covid test

NO G
316
COVID

Nov 13, 2020 4:27:14pm

A [redacted]'s test just came back positive. I'm waiting in line to get myself tested although I'm sure after spending the whole last day together mine will be positive as well.

5P-

321/45

1700h

322/46

Nov 13, 2020 5:30:58pm

I think the likelihood of transmission to you is pretty small. We wore masks in the car and the whole time we were hiking except briefly when we were on the beach and there were like 30mph winds

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

310/56

Nov 14, 2020 4:22:00pm

Doc said he thinks it's extremely likely my test was a false negative and I should assume that I have covid as well.

Nov 15, 2020 1:12:24pm

I still feel about the same as I have all week, maybe a little better? A shower and a shave helped! A [redacted] is doing much better. His fever finally broke in the middle of the night and most of his body aches are gone

316/50

317/49

VETERANS DAY

Nov 16, 2020 12:09:01pm

A [redacted]'s lost his taste and smell now. I'm going in this afternoon to get retested because I still have some symptoms (although no fever)

Nov 17, 2020 11:01:11pm

I still feel about the same. A [redacted] is doing much better, his taste is coming back, no fever, cough mostly gone

323/45

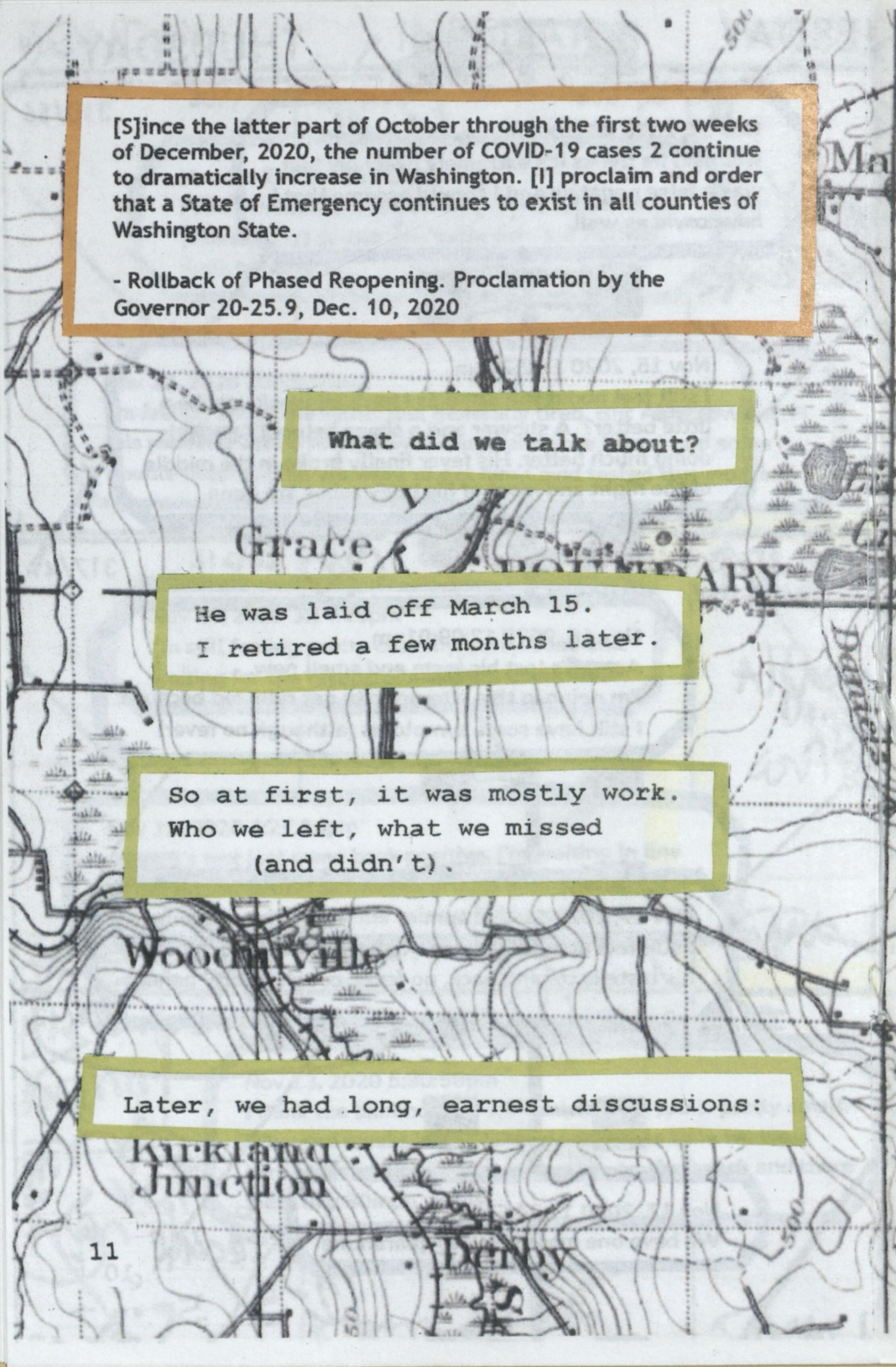
324/42

Nov 17, 2020 11:24:52pm

We have one more week to quarantine

10

2-5/50



[S]ince the latter part of October through the first two weeks of December, 2020, the number of COVID-19 cases 2 continue to dramatically increase in Washington. [I] proclaim and order that a State of Emergency continues to exist in all counties of Washington State.

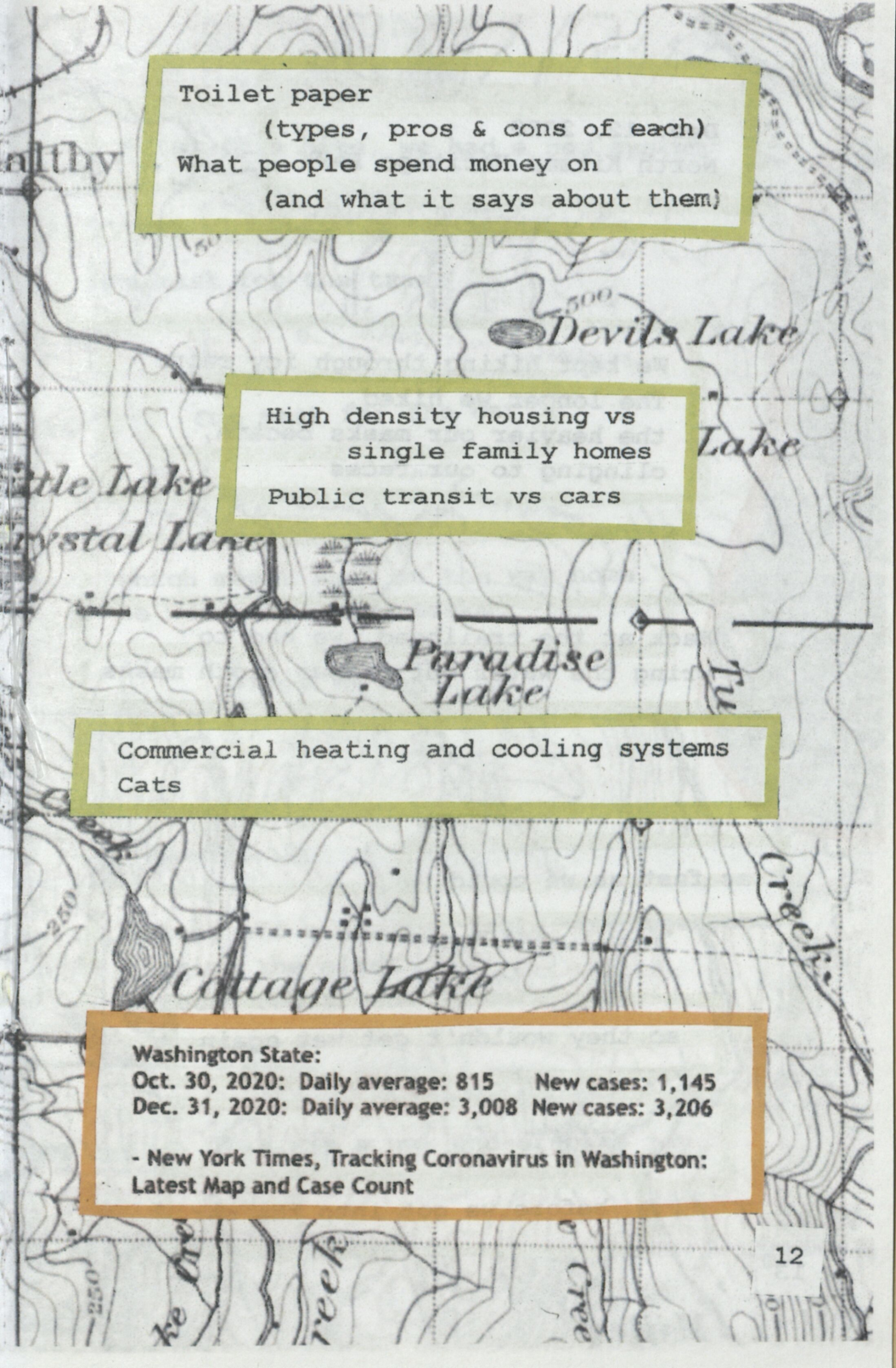
- Rollback of Phased Reopening. Proclamation by the Governor 20-25.9, Dec. 10, 2020

What did we talk about?

He was laid off March 15.
I retired a few months later.

So at first, it was mostly work.
Who we left, what we missed
(and didn't).

Later, we had long, earnest discussions:



Toilet paper

(types, pros & cons of each)

What people spend money on

(and what it says about them)

High density housing vs
single family homes

Public transit vs cars

Commercial heating and cooling systems
Cats

Washington State:

Oct. 30, 2020: Daily average: 815 New cases: 1,145

Dec. 31, 2020: Daily average: 3,008 New cases: 3,206

- New York Times, Tracking Coronavirus in Washington:
Latest Map and Case Count

Dec. 12, 2020

North Kitsap Heritage Park

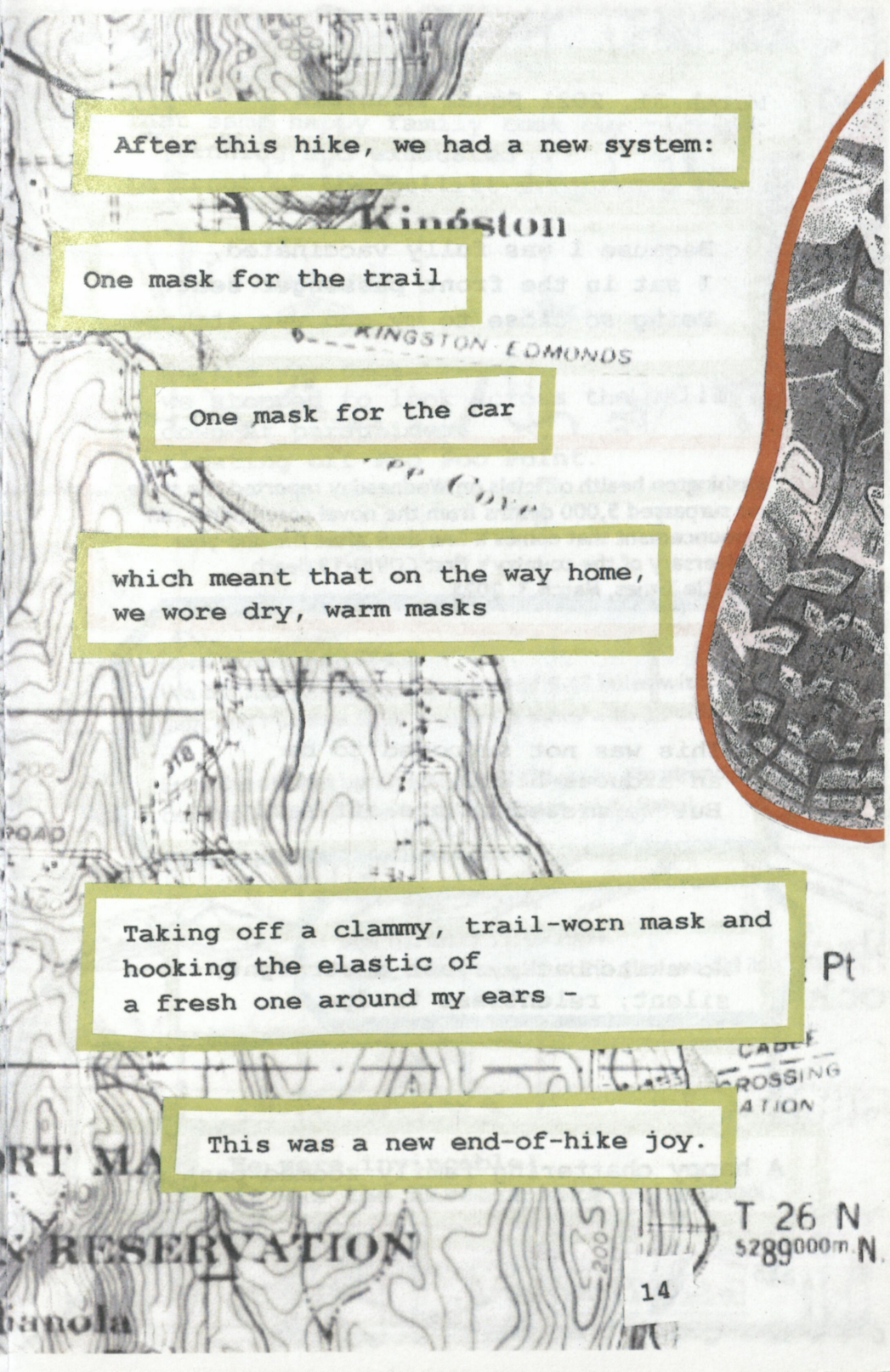
We kept hiking through icy rain.
The longer we hiked,
the heavier our masks became,
clinging to our faces

Back at the trailhead, we had to
wring the water out of our cloth masks

as fast as we could

so they wouldn't get wet again

before we got into the car

A topographic map serves as the background for the page. It features contour lines, place names like 'Kingston' and 'Edmonds', and a road labeled 'PORT MA'. A large, detailed graphic of a boot sole tread pattern is positioned on the right side. Five yellow rectangular text boxes are overlaid on the map, containing text about hiking masks.

After this hike, we had a new system:

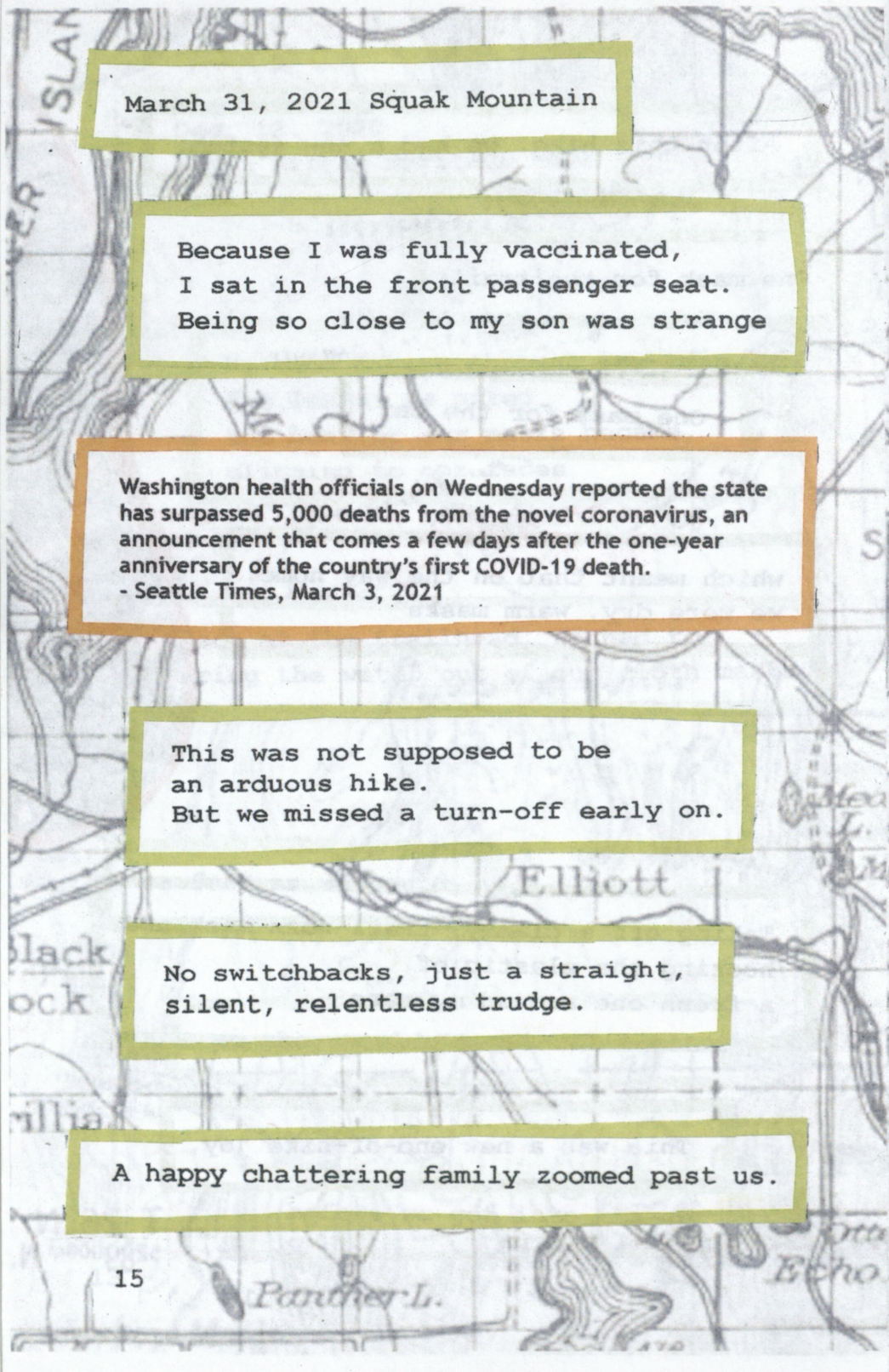
One mask for the trail

One mask for the car

which meant that on the way home,
we wore dry, warm masks

Taking off a clammy, trail-worn mask and
hooking the elastic of
a fresh one around my ears -

This was a new end-of-hike joy.



March 31, 2021 Squak Mountain

Because I was fully vaccinated,
I sat in the front passenger seat.
Being so close to my son was strange

Washington health officials on Wednesday reported the state
has surpassed 5,000 deaths from the novel coronavirus, an
announcement that comes a few days after the one-year
anniversary of the country's first COVID-19 death.
- Seattle Times, March 3, 2021

This was not supposed to be
an arduous hike.
But we missed a turn-off early on.

No switchbacks, just a straight,
silent, relentless trudge.

A happy chattering family zoomed past us.

That same happy family took our picture
- grinning and exhausted -
in front of the Bullitt fireplace.

On the way back,
we stopped to look across the valley,
down at paragliders
floating off Poo Poo Point.

Apr 01, 2021 5:03:36pm

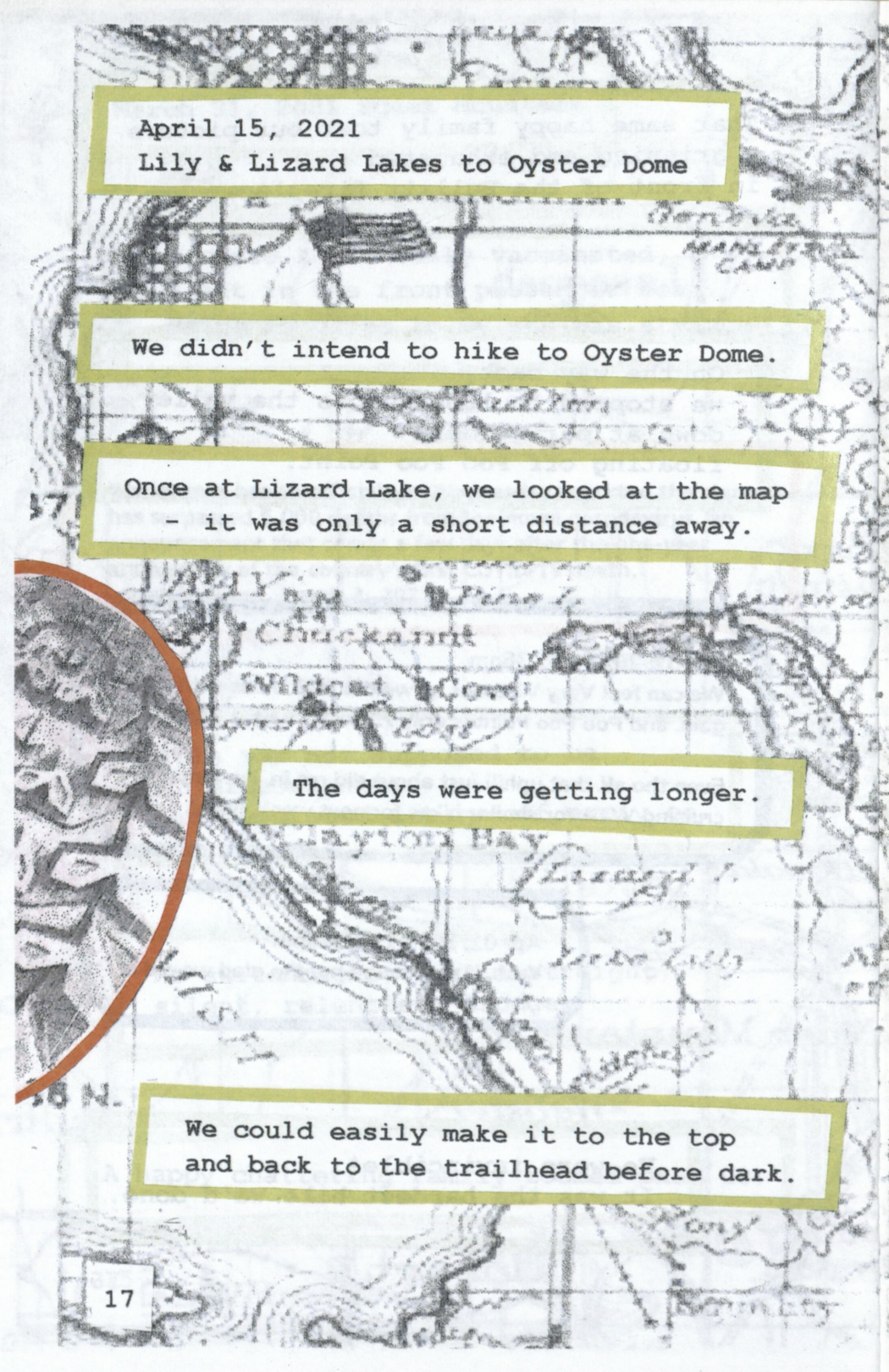
We can feel Very Virtuous as we did 9.43 miles with 2,353'
gain, and Poo Poo Point is only 7.2 miles with 1,748' gain.

Even tho all that uphill just about did me in, I'm already
cruising WTA for similar hikes for next week, haha!

Apr 01, 2021 11:19:19pm

Yeah, it was tough but I'm glad we did it!

We were invincible!
It was the hardest hike we'd done.



April 15, 2021

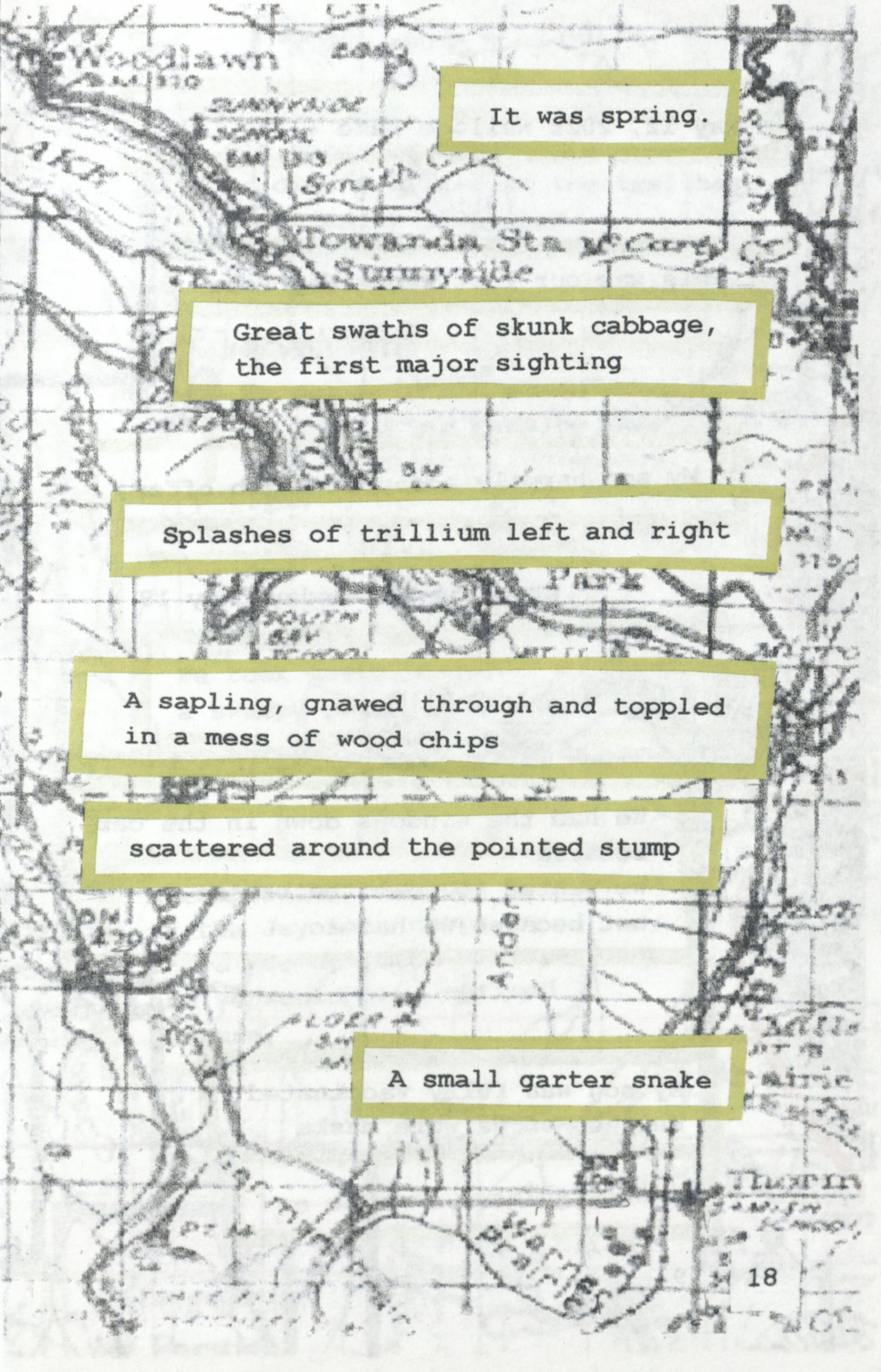
Lily & Lizard Lakes to Oyster Dome

We didn't intend to hike to Oyster Dome.

Once at Lizard Lake, we looked at the map
- it was only a short distance away.

The days were getting longer.

We could easily make it to the top
and back to the trailhead before dark.



It was spring.

Great swaths of skunk cabbage,
the first major sighting

Splashes of trillium left and right

A sapling, gnawed through and toppled
in a mess of wood chips

scattered around the pointed stump

A small garter snake

May 12, 2021 Wallace Lake & Jay Lake

This was our last Wednesday hike

My son happily accepted a job offer,

starting Wednesday, May 19

We had the windows down in the car
because
we wanted to feel the breeze,
not because we had to

My son was fully vaccinated
Neither of us wore masks

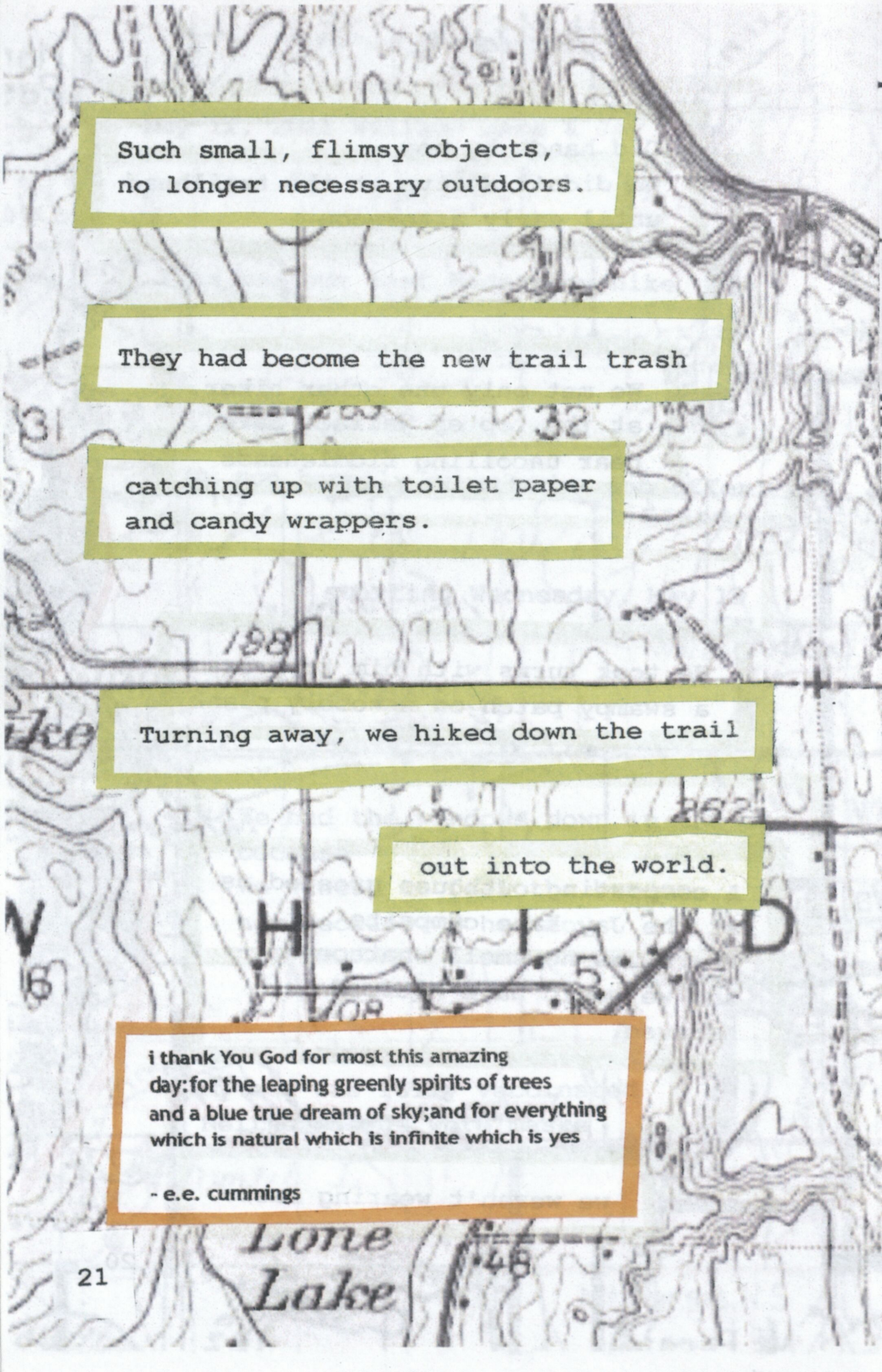
Old hands by now,
we didn't arrive at the trailhead
until early afternoon

We met only one other hiker,
at the top of Wallace Lake,
near uncoiling fiddleheads

We took turns with him to cross
a swampy patch on a wobbly plank

A composting outhouse greeted us
at the Jay Lake campsite
There was no smell whatsoever -
and we would have noticed
because

we weren't wearing masks.

A topographic map with contour lines, elevation numbers (e.g., 31, 32, 198, 262, 48), and place names like 'Lone Lake'.

Such small, flimsy objects,
no longer necessary outdoors.

They had become the new trail trash

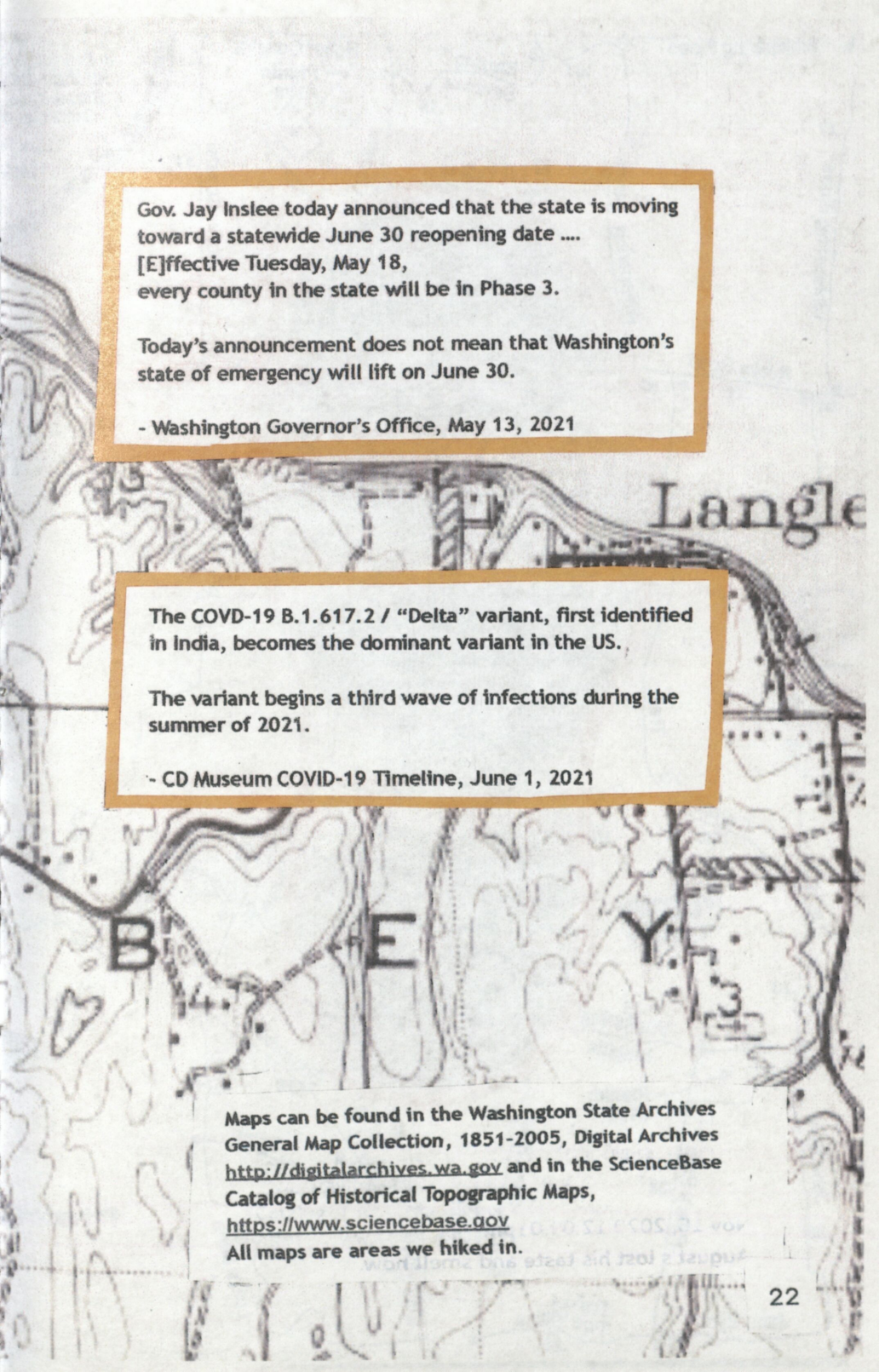
catching up with toilet paper
and candy wrappers.

Turning away, we hiked down the trail

out into the world.

i thank You God for most this amazing
day: for the leaping greenly spirits of trees
and a blue true dream of sky; and for everything
which is natural which is infinite which is yes

- e.e. cummings



Gov. Jay Inslee today announced that the state is moving toward a statewide June 30 reopening date

[E]ffective Tuesday, May 18, every county in the state will be in Phase 3.

Today's announcement does not mean that Washington's state of emergency will lift on June 30.

- Washington Governor's Office, May 13, 2021

The COVID-19 B.1.617.2 / "Delta" variant, first identified in India, becomes the dominant variant in the US.

The variant begins a third wave of infections during the summer of 2021.

- CD Museum COVID-19 Timeline, June 1, 2021

Maps can be found in the Washington State Archives General Map Collection, 1851-2005, Digital Archives <http://digitalarchives.wa.gov> and in the ScienceBase Catalog of Historical Topographic Maps, <https://www.sciencebase.gov>
All maps are areas we hiked in.

