



MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF ALASKA

BOX 2037

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99510

MARCH, 1979

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MARCH MEETING

Wednesday, March 21 at 3:00 p.m. in the Pioneer School House, Third and Eagle, Anchorage, Alaska. Paul Haertel, Alaska Director for the National Park Service, will discuss the implications to Mountaineers of the recent expansion of the National Parks in Alaska. As a recent arrival to Alaska with the NPS, Paul has expressed a desire to work closely with local hikers and climbers in order to develop an effective management system. This is an opportunity to express your feelings and desires about the parks as well as to gain insight into the current plans for the park system. Your summer outing plans should begin at this meeting. Dick Thayer will also present a few slides about the March 30 - April 1 Mint Glacier ski trip.

-MAPS-

Have you planned your summer trips yet? Do you know which maps you'll need? If not, decide before the March 21 MCA meeting. This is the deadline for placing your order to qualify for the 30% discount. All USGS maps will be 30% off with a minimum \$20.00 order list-price, so bring your list of maps and your checkbook and see Craig Renkert.

The AMERICAN AVALANCE INSTITUTE, INC. will be presenting a 4 day field course in snow, avalanche and stability evaluation for ski tourers and mountaineers on March 17-20. The course will begin at 8:30 a.m. at Summit Lake Lodge, Mile 45 of the Seward Highway. The cost is \$160.00 not including room and board. A non-refundable \$35.00 deposit had initially been requested 14 days before the course. However, due to this lapse in time, contact Jim or Steve Hackett, P.O. Box 595, Girdwood, Alaska 99587; phone No. 733-4762, as soon as possible for further details.

!!!EXPEDITION TO MEXICO!!!

Are you interested in climbing three of the seven highest peaks in North America (Popocatepetl at 17,837', Ixtaccihautl at 17,343' and Orizaba at 13,700') between April 6 and the 16th? Are you in reason-

Expedition To Mexico, Cont:

able condition? If the answer is yes - contact Craig Renkert for details at 277- 9783 or at the March MCA meeting.

*** K-2 ***

Jim Whittaker and Diane Roberts will present a special program on K-2, Thursday, April 5, time and place to be announced. Watch for posters in climbing stores and the new REI store. The program will include a tape of Jim Wickwire on the summit.

*** ANNAPURNA ***

The wheels are in motion to present another special expedition program to the club - The Women's Annapurna expedition has been contacted and we are anticipating the presentation for June or July!!! Details are forthcoming.

RESURRECTION TRAIL SKI TRIP

The party, consisting of Lou Buteria, Duncan Kerst, Chet Franz, Hugh Cargill and Craig Renkert left Anchorage Saturday morning, February 17. A last minute effort by Chet permitted us to stay at the Swan Lake Cabin Saturday night. The weather was beautiful and although the trail was well packed by snow machines, none were seen as they are prohibited on the trail after February 15. Duncan tested the merits of a toboggan while the rest of us used conventional packs... His experiences, although inconclusive, were educational for all. We have concluded, nevertheless, that 5 people in a Toyota Land Cruiser is a bit crowded. Sunday night we made use of an old trappers cabin at Fox Creek which is apparently still inhabited at times, although its condition was such that Forest cabins appear luxurious in comparison. Avalanche danger was high in certain areas as evidenced by the recent aftermath of an avalanche which reached the edge of the trail. We completed the trip in just over 43 hours and we were grateful for the experience.

LIBERALIZATION OF CLIMBING REGULATIONS IN MCKINLEY PARK

In a letter addressed to the MCA, Robert Gerhard, Mountaineering Ranger of McKinley National Park, has requested our comments regarding the proposed changes in climbing regulations. After a discussion of why the regulations need to be changed and how they have worked in the past, it is proposed that all current regulations be dropped and replaced with the following:

1. Registration with the superintendent is required prior to any mountaineering in the Alaska Range above the 5,000' level. Upon completion of the trip, the registrant is required to check out in the manner specified by the registering official.

Liberalization of Climbing Regulations in McKinley Park, cont:

2. Mountaineering means any multi-day trip requiring a significant amount of roped travel.
3. These regulations appear to be very reasonable. They reflect a concern that anyone attempting a climb in Mt. McKinley National Park be adequately informed. They demonstrate that the National Park Service, as the responsible agency, has exercised legitimate control over this activity without undue constraint.

I concur with the NPS that the above regulations are "very reasonable". Restrictive regulations have traditionally been a "can of worms" that neither climber nor ranger enjoyed. Furthermore, restrictive regulations reflected little on a person's ability to climb. Under the new regulations, the necessity to carry a radio but not an ice ax is eliminated. This is a conscientious attempt by the NPS to insure that the climber is informed rather than regulated. I enthusiastically support this attitude of the NPS and feel that future decisions along this philosophy should be encouraged. If there are no comments to the contrary, I will notify Robert Gerhard that the MCA supports the proposed change in climbing regulations. Please voice your opinions at the March 21 meeting. Craig Renkert.

- PAMIRS 73 -

The following summary is a condensed account of my observations and experiences during a 6-week visit to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics this past summer. I participated in an exchange program between the American Alpine Club and the USSR Federation of Mountaineering from July 1st to August 15, 1978. Our six-man USA/USSR Mountaineering Exchange team visited the Pamir Mountains in Southcentral Soviet Union.

Our Soviet hosts kept us to a confined and unflexible itinerary while travelling through Moscow, Tashkent, and Dushanbe, so the chances to make formal contact with Soviet earth scientists or mountaineers were limited to a few unexpected visits while travelling in the Pamir Range. Our first opportunity to talk with Soviet geologists was during an acclimatization trek in the Zeravshansky Mountains just north of Dzhirgatal, Tadzhik S.S.R. We came upon three helicopter-supported and surprised mining geologists examining a skarn deposit at the 5000-meter level on the flank of a tin-bearing? (my own observations) granitic pluton. Our conversation was very brief and formal. Other contacts were made with Government and University geologic field parties who were studying glaciology, alpine geomorphology and snow hydrology and climbing in the Fedchenko Glacier region along the north flank of the Pamirs. These informal chats were very open and warm--discussions addressed a variety of subjects of mutual interest and included topics from comparing USA and Soviet scientific approaches and systems, to general observations and

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personal philosophies about life and work.

Tadzhik S.S.R. lies in the far southeastern part of Central Europe bordering on Afghanistan and the Chinese Peoples Republic, separated from Pakistan only by the 20 mile wide "Afghan corridor" just north of Kashmir. This southerly Soviet Republic is approximately 90,000 square miles and has a population of 3,000,000 people, the majority of whom are Tadzhiks with a large number of Uzbeks, Tatars, Kirghizes, and an increasing number of Russians. The greater part of Tadzhikistan is occupied by the extremely mountainous Pamir Range, the northern backbone of the Himalayas and less than ten percent of the area is on a plain or has an elevation lower than 1500 meters. Broad valleys which support extensive irrigated agriculture stretch between the mountains. Highly developed industries predominately staffed by Russians include mining, petroleum, machine tool factories, cotton and silk manufacturing, and vegetable/fruit canneries. Most native peoples are directly involved in state collective agricultural activities which grow cotton, maize, and fruit in the valleys and sheep-breeding by the nomadic Tadzhik peoples in the mountains. The Russian people are generally diplomatic, official and distant while the thinly-populated mountain people are extremely hospitable and warm with a dwindling culture that stretches back into the ninth century.

A complex hydrological monitoring system was commonly seen throughout the Pamir Mountains with every major and most minor rivers being monitored by water volume and rate instruments. Almost every drainage basin up to 5,500 meters contained snow depth markers and all villages and road intersections had manned weather observation stations. The Tadzhik S.S.R. is also situated in a relatively active seismic region: Extensive earthquake damage was observed throughout our travels as well as recent engineering and construction activities influenced by earthquake-hazard design.

Our six weeks in the fairly remote mountainous regions of the Tadzhik S.S.R. was an interesting and unique experience for me. Because all USSR systems are extremely structured, the more progressive and ambitious people have a very rigid lifestyle. Mountaineering "freedom of the hills" is also structured and is a recognized national sport with many defined levels of proficiency and opportunities. Personal choice and freedom is experienced only after attaining elite status levels. Our exchange group of six American mountaineers interfaced, lived and climbed with thirteen upper-level "high altitude technical" Soviet mountaineers representing a variety of vocational occupations from many regions throughout the USSR. Three members, Chuck Kroger, Rich Sylvester, and Ben Read, of our exchange group reached the summit of Pik Kommunism, 7495 meters (24,590 feet) and three of us, Carlos Buelher, Steve Hackett and Reilly Moss, climbed the summits of adjacent peaks (up to 22,500 feet) via new routes during our stay in the Pamirs. A slide show depicting mountaineering activities will

be given at the May MCA meeting

Steve Hackett

SKI TOURING SCHEDULE

March 17 and 18, Sat. and Sun.- Glen Alps to Williwaw Lake at the base of Mt. Williwaw (5,445'). About 12 miles round trip, 800' elevation gain with some ups and downs. Climbers can try Mt. Williwaw via the southwest gully and south ridge.

March 30,31 and April 1, Fri.-Sun. - Mint Glacier. About 16 miles round trip, 2,500' elevation gain from Little Su Roadhouse to Mint Glacier cabin.

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Jim Nagan of the Copper River Basin area would like to hear from members who are interested in day-treks during March and April to areas such as Gunsight Mt. He can be contacted evenings at 322-5509 or by mail at Box 341, Glenallen, Alaska 99588.

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Those of you not receiving the Scree or those of you who know members not receiving the Scree, please contact Pierce McIntosh or Craig Renkert at the next meeting.

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DUES: Send to Pierce McIntosh at 4231 Chess Dr., Anchorage, AK 99504
Family: \$10.00; Individual: \$7.50; Junior and Out of Town
(50 miles): \$5.00.

EDITOR: Vickie Crawford; 300 E. 15th Apt. 1, Anchorage, AK 99501
Phone number 274-5377

TYPING: Beverly Ackerman

DUPLICATING: Meg Leonard

MAILING: Pauline Chase