



MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF ALASKA

BOX 2037

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99510

JANUARY 1983

Volume 26, Issue #1

### January Meeting

The meeting will be held Wednesday, January 19th at 8:00p.m. in the multipurpose room of Central Junior High School, 15th & "C" Streets, Anchorage, Alaska. After the business meeting, former MCA president, Tim Neale will present a slide show on the club's Eklutna Traverse trip of last summer.

### Minutes for MCA December General Meeting

The December meeting was held on December 15, at Central Junior H.S., multipurpose room, at 15th & C Streets, Anchorage, AK. The meeting was called to order at 8:18p.m. by President Rick Severn. The reading of the November general meeting was approved as published in SCREE with the following exception. "If a renewing member mails in their dues, he or she must enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope to get their membership card by return mail. Any member not including a stamped, self-addressed envelope may pick up their membership cards from Reggie Buchanan.

Treasurer Reggie Buchanan reported:

95.00	Checks from the mailbox
235.00	Petty Cash
2,117.83	Bank Account
2,903.99	Money Market
<u>\$5,351.82</u>	Total

Welcome to all new members that joined the club. Dues for 1983 will once again be collected at the January meeting for new and old members. Members who wish to avoid the time consuming task of standing in line at meetings can mail their dues direct to MCA, P.O. Box 2037, Anchorage, AK 99510, Attention of Reggie Buchanan, and enclose their \$7.50 single membership or \$10.00 family membership. Please remember to include any change of address and phone number. Membership cards will be sent by return mail to those enclosing a stamped self-addressed envelope.

### COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Hiking: Dona Agosti 243-0039

Plans for next summer's chartered trip will be to Gates of the Arctic. The dates are from July 23-August 1 or 2, depending upon the wishes of the group. There will only be 15 places available with Brooks Range Aviation. (This is due to there only being two lakes suitable for landing.) The charter service will drop the group off at the trip entrance, Chimney Lake, and will pick them up at the trip exit, Summit Lake. Group will also climb 7,000 feet Doonerak Mountain. Cost of trip will be \$576.00 per person.

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Huts: John Dillman 279-1246

No report.

Programs: Ernie Borjon 344-8661

Nothing to report.

OLD BUSINESS:

NONE

NEW BUSINESS:

Miche Thompson with the Alaska Center for the Environment addressed the MCA on the Trailside Discovery Camp. This camp hopes to promote an increased sense of the environment; knowledge of plants & animals; man's impact on the environment; as well as use of map & compass and classes in outdoor survival. Miche is looking to the MCA for expertise in various subjects as well as a source of funding toward the A.C.E.'s 1983 Monetary Camp budget. Miche suggested that we sponsor a child by paying his or her tuition to camp. If you have any questions on this, you can contact either:

Miche Thompson 248-5701

Rennie Sumner 279-8315

Alaska Center for the Environment

1069 W. 6th Ave.

Anchorage, AK 99501

274-3621

Pt. Woronzof Motor Speedway (alais, Indianapolis by the Inlet)

An area of 240 acres just south of the city's sewage treatment plant near Anchorage International Airport was studied as a site for a multi-faceted park, including stock car, dragster, off-road and snowmachine race tracks by a group called Motor Recreation Inc. In consideration of the club's stand on the Coastal trail, a resolution was made by Mike Frank.

"The MCA is opposed to the creation of a motor sports complex at Pt. Woronzof."

After a show of hands, the resolution failed with a vote of: 33 in favor of the resolution; 39 opposed to the resolution. No resolution favoring Pt. Woronzof was made.

The municipal Parks and Recreation Advisory Board will once again discuss this plan at its January meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

All memberships will be expiring 12/31/82. If you wish to receive your SCREE or use MCA equipment after December, RENEW NOW! \$7.50 single membership, \$10.00 family membership.

Meeting place for the MCA January meeting will be at Central Junior H.S. in the multipurpose room. Meetings for February-May, inclusive, will also be at Central. The school is located at 15th & C Streets. The meeting time will still be at 8:00p.m.

Nike Frank now has the library. Mike will be needing volunteers to help set up and organize it. His address & phone number along with a map will be in the next SCREE.

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Dona Agosti's book "High Country Backpacker" is available to MCA members (holding a current membership card) for \$10.00.

Sleepout for Winter Solstice will be Saturday, December 18th. Go on up and carry on this 23 year old tradition.

If you would like to provide refreshments for the monthly club meetings, please contact Bernie Helms at 243-3124. All monies to pay for the refreshments are reimbursed by the club.

Thank you Mark Skok for your slide presentation on the Ruth Glacier, Marcus Baker, and Mt. McKinley's west buttress route.

Refreshments provided by Eileen Cavanaugh, Audrey Matteson, and Bernie Helms.

The meeting adjourned at 8:59p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bernie Helms

#### Gates of the Arctic-Summer '83

Dona Agosti, MCA hiking chairman, has chosen the Gates of the Arctic section of the Brooks Ranges as the destination for next summer's big backpacking trip. The trip, which will take place in the general vicinity of Wiseman, includes about 37 miles of hiking and will last from July 23-August 2, 1983. Cost of transportation round trip from Anchorage will be about \$546/person. The plan includes a Wien flight to Bettles; charter from Bettles to Chimney Lake; hiking from Chimney Lake to Summit Lake; and a charter flight from summit lake to Bettles. For more information or to put your name on the waiting list, call Dona at 248-0089.

#### General Mountaineering Class-Nov 13 & 14

Thirteen people turned out for the winter general mountaineering class. The class was held at sheep mountain. Accommodations provided by the fine folks at Sheep Mountain Lodge.

Everyone had a chance to use the avalanche rescue beacons, self arrest, practice snow climbing techniques, building snow shelters and of course postholing through two and half feet of snow.

After dinner all the folks who brought their skis spent a couple hours head lamp skiing on the skitrails set by sherman from Sheep Mountain Lodge.

The following people participated in the class: Denise Saigh, Katy Byrne, Gegory Pekar, Audrey Mattson, Peter Porco, Susan Olson, Pat Thompson, Eileen Cavanaugh, Bill Spearman, Dwight Anderson, Bruce Melzer, Michael Reese and Kathleen McCoy; instructors included Steve Dager, Diane Olson and Tim Neale.

Tim Neale

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### TRIP SCHEDULE

Sunday  
January 30      Portage Pass. Ski across Portage Lake, up to the pass and drop down into Whittier just in time for the Super Bowl. Then take a short train ride back to Portage. Leave Fred Meyer's parking lot at 9a.m. The train arrives at Portage at about 8:00p.m. and costs \$4.25. Bring adequate clothing, as Portage Pass can get very windy. Willy Hersman or Skip King (278-9829) for questions.

### HISTORY CORNER

Rising sheer above Rabbit Lake, the awesome West Faces of the twin Suicide Peaks have impressed many a fledging Alaskan mountaineer. At 5065 and 5005 feet, these summits are the lowest of the Skyline 5000 footers. They are separated from each other by a 4000 foot pass appropriately named Windy Gap.

The naming of these peaks dates to pre 1950, but initially it was erroneously applied to only the lower South summit; a correction has been submitted to USGS by the Club. The name assumably indicates the pioneer attitude of climbing such mountains in the pre-climbing era of Alaska.

The Suicides incorporate an area that gives rise to many creeks including Rabbit, McHugh, and Rainbow to the West, Falls Creek to the South, and branches of Indian Creek to the East. Many approaches are possible to the upper reaches. Most commonly used is the approach from Rabbit Lake up the huge chute on the north side of the South Peak known as Hauser's Gully (William Hauser was the editor of 30 Hikes in Alaska). Once in Windy Gap the North or South Peak is easily attained. At one time a scenic trail from Falls Creek at the ocean led to the South Peak, but this has fallen into disrepair.

Early climbs on the Suicide is obscure due to the loss of the North's register. Vin Hoeman listed the 1st known ascent as July, 1961 by Carson, Gendwell, Godwin, and Hart. Vin himself climbed both peaks May 30, 1982 and left a C-ration can register on the top (SCREE: 4:9:3). The 1st reports of Winter climbs in the SCREE were in 1967; Ned Lewis and Dave Meyers did the South Peak on Feb. 12 while Steve Stewart and Hans VanderLaan did the North on March 11 (9:6:2).

Both peaks now have ABS pipe registers placed in 1980 by Valerie Herschberg, Rick O'Kelly and myself. A trip to look for register remnants in Sept. 1980 by Tim Neale, Pete Sennhauser, Ernie Borjan, and I yielded only an old pepsi can.

This article completes the series that I have been doing on the Skyline 5000 foot peaks. By the time it is printed, I should be living out of state, but as most Club members know, the Chugach is near to my heart. I have enjoyed perusing the old records to prepare this series, and I hope it is of some value to those interested in the area.

Greg Higgins

Editor's Note: The following article was submitted to SCREE by the Arctic Bicycle Club.

### High Altitude Training on Mount Sanford

Four members of the Arctic Bicycle Club, Paul Roberts, Laura Pillifant, Rick Hatten and Bjarne Holm, decided to take a different approach to early season training for bicycle racing this year by heading for thin air on Mount Sanford. Stories about benefits from training at high altitude have been widely circulated. There has been talk about sending the national bicycle racing team to the high altitudes of the Andes Mountains. And, who hasn't seen advertisements for those ungainly contraptions designed for runners and bicyclists, which simulate high altitude breathing.

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Well, Mount Sanford may not be the Andes, but the air gets about as thin, and climbing sounded like much more fun than riding around with a breath depriver. On April Fool's Day the crew headed off, driving from Anchorage to Chistochina Trading Post, just northeast of Glenallen. All civilized people were asleep when the crew reached Chistochina, but the group found a cabin near the lodge which offered shelter from the wind. Red and Sandie James operate the lodge. Red is a tall and very hospitable ex-cop who is quick with a warm smile, and who made every effort to be of help to the climbers. He and his wife cook up a mean hamburger, and their two kids, Chris and Jeff, kept everyone entertained.

High winds kept the climbers at the lodge all the next day. The following day Lynn Ellis, of Ellis Air Taxi, tried to fly the group into Sheep Glacier at the base of Mt. Sanford. But remember, it is the exercise which this crew was out after, and high winds were cooperative, preventing the crew from landing too close to the mountain. The group ended up at a hunting cabin on Windy Ridge, 3,840 feet, two days travel from the traditional landing site on Sheep Glacier.

Finally underway, each member was loaded down with a pack and a sled. Nobody was going to go hungry on this trip. When training always eat well. Besides, the food, not to mention the frying pan, gave the group that much more to take along for the exercise. Each person received two pork chops the first night. Beef stroganoff with "real" beef was served up the following evening.

Within two days Sheep Glacier was reached, and a base camp was established. Camp at 9,100 and 12,200 feet were set up during the next two days, as planned, keeping elevation gain while at higher altitude to 2,000 feet per day to allow for proper acclimitization. Lynn Ellis buzzed the climbers with his Cessna 180 while on his mail run, just before camp was established at 11,200 feet.

A cloud cap formed over the mountain that evening as winds started howling. Wind gusts reached 60 mph and everyone thought that at least one of the two tents would fail. The storm continued until the following evening. That night the moon showed, and the next day promised to be a good one for climbing. However, before dawn's light could reach camp another storm roared in full blast. Two days and three nights were spent at 11,200 feet. Progress was finally possible the next day and high camp was established at 13,150 feet.

On the following day, April 9th, the summit push was underway. Spindrift was hurtling across the ground surface, driven by cold winds which had dropped to -25 degrees F the night before. Two of the climbers, Rick and Bjarne, reached 15,800 feet by 5p.m. Exhaustion and a new storm prevented further elevation gain, at this point less than 500 feet from the 16,237 foot summit. The two climbers found their way back to the tents by following wands through whiteout conditions of the new storm. A warm dinner, prepared by Laura and Paul, awaited Rick and Bjarne.

The team was too exhausted the next day for another summit push. Also, an arrangement had been made with Lynn Ellis for a pickup on the glacier below the following day, unless they were able to send a message with their 5 watt CB and make other arrangements. Repeated attempts to contact someone on the radio to relay a message to Lynn Ellis were unsuccessful.

With loads still heavy enough to require the use of three sleds on the descent, the crew started down using crampons rather than skis. Bjarne and Paul were trying to see who could punch their feet through the most crevasse bridges to find hidden voids. They tied at four each, but Bjarne took the cake by finding one which swallowed him up to his waist. That evening an airstrip was marked by wands in the newly fallen snow of the latest storm. Camp was set up next to the

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strip, located at 7,300 feet on Sheep Glacier. Later that evening extra supplies were retrieved from the base camp, located two miles away, with the use of headlamps.

Ah, lets not forget conditioning. Once again high winds came to the rescue. All of the newly fallen snow had blown off of the runway overnight, leaving only an irregular melt crust surface, difficult, if not impossible to land on. Lynn Ellis tried twice that day to fly in, but without success. The following day, April 13, the crew once again mobilized packs, sleds and skies to head back 11 miles towards Windy Ridge. It was Tuesday again and above the group saw Lynn Ellis' Cessna 180 on his mail run. He flew back and forth above the crew until he had spotted all four climbers. Two hours later they again reached the hunting cabin at Windy Ridge.

A 5a.m. the next morning the roar of the PA 18 was heard. Lynn Ellis had found a way through the clouds. It was a well fed crew which Lynn picked up, but a good deal more fit and trim than it had been two weeks before.

Note: This was Bjarne's second attempt for the summit of Mt. Sanford. In 1973 he had reached 15,600 feet with another team. It was the first time Rick and Laura had ever used crampons.

#### MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF ALASKA OFFICERS & BOARD MEMBERS

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>HOME PHONE</u>	<u>WORK PHONE</u>
President	Rick Severn	344-7269	279-6522
Vice-President	Ernie Borjon	344-8661	---
Secretary	Bernie Helms	243-3124	248-2758
Treasurer	Reggie Buchanan	333-7649	272-0504

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John Dillman	279-1246	274-8691
Jim Eason	337-3515	276-2653
Mark Findlay	337-8666	263-1377
Graham Macdonald	345-5791	---
Tim Neale	274-4952	---

#### NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

SCREE is the monthly publication of the Mountaineering Club of Alaska. I would like to remind you that all items for publication must be submitted at the monthly meeting or mailed to my home at Star Route Box 9204; Eagle River, Alaska 99577. Articles should be received by the 25th of the month for the following month's issue. Your cooperation will be appreciated. Marty Bassett, Editor.

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