



MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF ALASKA

BOX 102037

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99510

SEPTEMBER 1987

Volume 30, Issue 09

### SEPTEMBER MEETING

The meeting will be held Wednesday, September 16th at 7:30 pm at the Pioneer Schoolhouse, Third and Eagle Sts., downtown Anchorage. After the business meeting Ray Koleser will show slides of Mt. St. Elias.

### MINUTES FOR THE AUGUST MEETING

The meeting was held August 19th at the Pioneer Schoolhouse. The meeting was called to order by the President at 7:45 pm.

#### I. COMMITTEE REPORTS

##### A. Hiking and Climbing

1. Paul Denkewalter announced that the ice climbing class will take place the last weekend of September. It will be an overnight trip to the Matanuska Glacier. You need to be a member to attend. (See article in this SCREE.)
2. Bernie Helms announced the MCA picnic on Friday the 21st of August at the park strip.

##### B. Parks Advisory

Rick Maron announced that the Forest Service authorized the construction of the Olympic Nordic Ski Training Camp on the Eagle Glacier.

Rick also announced that Chugach State Park would be soon gathering comments on three proposals for a possible downhill ski area within the park, helicopter landings within the park, and the Eagle River Greenbelt plans. Much discussion followed, after which, the members present were too divided in opinion on the ski area to make a motion for a club position on the matter. There was no discussion about the Greenbelt plans, and as for the helicopter landings, the club has already stated publicly its opposition to the landings. (Please see the article in this SCREE for time and place of the hearings.)

## II. OLD BUSINESS

None.

## III. NEW BUSINESS

### A. Huts

1. Willy Hersman made a motion to appropriate \$500 for repairs at Pichler's Perch. The motion was seconded and passed.
2. Dave Pahlke made a motion to appropriate \$40 for a stainless steel pot for the Mint Hut. Motion seconded and passed.
3. Dave also brought up the matter of food left at the Mint Hut. The amount of food hanging in the hut is excessive, and people should pack out what they pack in, except extra fuel. It was recommended that the Hut Committee come up with a list of rules for the hut, to be reviewed by the membership.

### B. Bylaws Amendment

Mark Findlay discussed the proposed Bylaws Amendment as printed in SCREE. It was recommended that in addition to officer status given to trip leaders, an official definition of sanctioned trips and authorized leaders be put into the club bylaws for the future. No motions made. Matter was tabled.

### C. Nominations

Mark Findlay reminded the club that nominations will begin during the September meeting for the 4 officer positions and 3 board positions. Nominations will continue through to the elections in October.

## IV. ANNOUNCEMENTS

### A. Todd Miner

1. Found a pair of brand new boots, size 5 at Snowbird.
2. Gave out flyers and calendars announcing classes and events
3. Announced a gear swap on Oct. 2nd at the university. (See article.)

B. Rick Maron announced that he is going to organize a group map purchase from the USGS. It will allow members to buy topo sheets for half-price. Orders will be taken during the October meeting. Non-members are also encouraged to participate. (See adze this SCREE.)

C. John Baker announced that the Indian Pass trip on Sept. 12th can be an overnigher if there is interest. Contact John or Marcy Baker. (See Hiking and Climbing schedule this SCREE.)

### TREASURER'S REPORT

\$ 85.00 - Petty Cash  
521.00 - Checking  
4703.00 - Money Market  
\$5319.00 - Total MCA Monies

MCA members benefit from: opportunity to participate on club trips and classes, opportunity to check out books at the club library, use of club equipment such as crampons, helmets, ice axes and avalanche beacons. See back page for details of paying dues.

I hear your slides of New Zealand and Sweden were nice, Tim and Marcia, sorry I missed them.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Marcy Baker

### ADZE

#### Half-Price Maps

I will be organizing a bulk map order from USGS for MCA this fall, similar to the order we had during the summer of 86. In order to receive the 50% discount, we need a minimum order of \$500 (at full price). Based on our experience last time, in order to meet that minimum, club members are encouraged to spread the word to their outdoor friends outside of the organization as well.

I will be gathering orders at the October meeting as well as the week before and the week following and expect to get the in-state part of the order about Nov. 10th.

This discount applies to basically all USGS maps, with a few exceptions (blue line copies are one exception). Out-of-state maps can be included in the order. Plan ahead if you want out-of state maps - write to the USGS asap requesting any indexes you may need:

Distribution Branch  
U.S. Geological Survey  
Box 25286  
Federal Center  
Denver, CO 80225

I have an index for a couple of western states and the USGS offices in town may have copies you can look at. The local USGS offices also have Alaskan indexes and are located at:

701 C St. Room E-146  
(SE corner Federal Bldg.)

4230 University Dr.  
271- 4159 M-F 8:30-4:30

Rick Maron  
h- 349-3064

#### FOR SALE

Koflach Viva boots, plastic ice-climbing boots. Women's size 6. Used twice. \$85.00 must sell.  
Marsha 243-1550.

#### PUBLIC HEARINGS

Chugach State Park Master Plan Revision Public Hearings will be held starting 7pm on Sept. 9th in Eagle River (library above Garcia's), the 10th in Wasilla (Jr High theatre), the 15th in Girdwood (Little Bears Childcare), and the 16th in Anchorage (Museum of History and Art). the hearings will cover the Eagle River Greenbelt, helicopter landings and resort development. The deadline for written comments is Sept. 30. Al Meiners, Dept. of Natural Resources, Div. of Parks, 3601 C. St., Suite 1280, Box 107001, Anchorage, AK 99510-7001, ph 762-2617.

#### OUTDOOR GEAR SWAP

*An outdoor gear swap will be held October 2nd from 5-8pm at the University's Campus Center Cafeteria. Co-sponsored by the Alaska Wilderness Studies Program and the Campus Center, there will be no percentage taken. Skiing, backpacking, biking, climbing, boating, etc.....786-1468 for more.*

#### AAC Meeting

The annual meeting of the American Alpine Club, Alaska Section will be held Oct. 25th at the Clarion Hotel. No other details at this time.

## TRIP REPORTS

### Ridge Walk, Turnagain Pass

On Saturday, July 25th, a group consisting of Marty Bassett, Kathy Burke, Doris Curtis, Kris Erikson, Joan Katz, Linda White and myself walked the ridgeline west of, and parallel to, the Seward Hwy. through Turnagain Pass.

The hike began at a "scenic viewpoint" 1 mile north of the pass, cut to the west through moderate alder brush and up steep tundra to the ridgeline, where the rewards of great views were immediate. We followed the ridgeline southerly, side-hilling around some of the high points (doing so put us onto steep tundra-covered slopes). The southern end of the hike involved descending 2500 vertical feet, down steep tundra and through alders, to cars waiting at Granite Cr. Campground.

This was a full day hike, with the last hour spent descending through alder/spruce vegetation. Consensus of the group was that this hike would be more realistically rated a "C", based on its trailless nature and the bushwacking at the beginning and end. Great views of the Kenai and Chugach - even a glimpse of Marcus Baker!

Rick Maron

### White on White; Passing, Passing

This trip was born in the wet weeds of Whittier. Chasing the sun on July 15, Willy Hersman, Tom Choate and I set off from the Matanuska Glacier parking lot to sweat our way up glacier to a campsite near the outflow of Wickersham's eastern drainage. Up glacier the big peaks glistened in the sun.

The next day we worked into the high valley above, and worked to the stream's headwaters on the ridge SE of the summit. This ridge led to the top at 11:30 am. Two entries were found in the summit jar: Grace Hoeman's first ascent of 7-5-69, and Mellen Shea-Bassett, Chris Arend and their dog Arrow's trip of 8-8-78. Both these climbs were reported in the register to have been up the NE face, although Grace approached from the Mat Glacier and the others from Glacier Cr. In her final write-up Grace corrected her route to read the E face (see SCREE: 12:8:5 and AAJ 1970 pl12).

From the summit we traversed back across the SE ridge to Peak 7000+. The scrambling was steep and rotten, and we had to rappel the 6900' gendarme before the summit. On top was a cairn and an old lemonade package with no sign-in. We placed a film can register, then rode the eastern snow slopes back to camp.

On the 17th we hiked game trails to the south into the drainage of the first stream that flows into the glacier that branches to the west off the Matanuska. We hiked the ridge south of this stream to the steep E ridge of Peak 8400+. We summited at 3:20 pm, and just off the top on the S ridge found a cairn with a single sing-in from 8-14-75. The climber was Dennis Schmitt, and he mistakenly called this Peak 8350, and wrote it up as Peak 8380 (see AAJ 1976 p437). After refurbishing his cairn and placing a new register, we retraced our route to camp.

The following day was spent moving camp up glacier to a pleasant site due west of Peak 8555 (VABM Fog). This area was bug-free and perched above the glacier beside a magnificent waterfall. On the 19th we traversed various routes on the western side of Peak 8555 to its upper snow slopes. Lower down we passed through dense ground fog to brilliant sunshine above. On top we found the survey marker and some debris from the survey work, but no cairn or register. We assume they helicoptered onto the summit using the huge bench on the eastern side. In all directions the highest peaks of various ranges marched before us. Eventually we committed ourselves to the wet thrill of the 2000-foot glissade, and went back out the western streambed to camp.

On the 20th we hiked the moraine and ice back to our waiting car. It was another day of sunshine; our sixth in a row. Greg Higgins

### Harding Icefield Traverse

July 18-25

Six people accomplished the 1987 traverse of the Harding Icefield from Tustamena Lake, up the south fork of the Tustamena Glacier and across the icefield to the Exit Glacier trail. A new route up the north side of the south fork proved easy and allowed the mountaineers to complete the traverse a day early. Good weather prevailed. Chris Zafren, Ken Zafren, Mike King, Sylvia Lane, Mike Sharp and I formed two teams for ropes, tents and cooking.

With the volcano Redoubt looking over our shoulder we cramponed up the lower Tustamena, camping one night below the glacier and one night on a small snow patch on the ice near Arctic Lake. The next day we carried our heavy packs to the fork in the glacier, where after lunch we put on skis and roped up for an easy ski up the moraine to the icefield.

Our fourth day of sunshine brought us near the high point of our traverse where we built a snow wall and set up camp on the ice flats. The next day had been intended as a rest day, but we rested in rain and fog. In the morning we headed across the ice flats in total whiteout, navigating fifteen miles by compass through the cloud. We were glad in the morning when the sun burned off the fog to verify our position and we proceeded under bright sunshine to ski down to the Exit Glacier trail. Dan O'Haire

### Three Sundays on Bellicose

Trips that fail don't make it to print as often as the ones that succeed. It's the way we view failure, I guess, but there's something learned on each trip to the mountains, summit or not. It's the details that help others in the future, why else write about it? Just as frustrating as accounts that are long on gibberish are the ones that amount to something like, "And then we were on the summit." There's a touch of ego in it that says, "I figured it out, so can you." Anyway.

I was looking for a climb around the first of August when Jim Sayler said he and Karen Cafmeyer were headed to Eklutna Gl. to try Benign and Bellicose.

Never gave those peaks much thought before but it sounded challenging, so on Aug. 1 we three rode our bikes around the lake and hiked up to Pichler's Perch. Next day we headed across the West Fork of Eklutna under partly sunny skies towards the SW ridge of Bellicose Pk. (7640). The first ascent had been done by this same ridge in 1963 by John and William Bousman, who gave few details except to mention one rappel.

Things went well. We ascended the long scree gully to the gap at 6350 early in the day. The route was a moderate scramble on lousy rock, dipping below the ridge to the east at times. At 7100 three towering gendarmes blocked the way to the easy-looking summit block. The climbing called for a rope, so off I went on Jim's belay. Within 10 minutes I found myself dangling over the east face, victim of Chugach crud. I had barely touched the rock which chose that instant to disintegrate. I hung for a moment thinking of Pat Murray and two broken arms in a bout with rotten rock a few years ago. I readjusted my helmet and went back up.

Somehow the towers looked less inviting, the gullies deeper, the rock more rotten. We decided to find a different way around, rapped to a lower point and looked a long time, but basically we would have needed more rope to do the job of fixing our return from the summit. Okay so the Bousmans had more courage. We went down in sunshine, and to make us feel better did the 7th ascent of Moonlight Mt. (6250). On the 3rd we went home bypassing Benign for another day.

Now Bellicose was getting under my skin a little. A call came a few days later from Stuart Grenier, who had just returned from Japan. He would go back with me to give it another try. A four day trip, we could get another summit or two as well. Greg Higgins said he wanted to do the peak also, but on a long day from Eklutna Lake. He would look for us.

On August 7 Stuart and I camped just beyond Bombardment Pass (5050), overlooking Peters Cr., in the rain. On the 8th we climbed Mt. Rumble (7530) via Hoeman's gully (large S gully, go right where it splits, climb nearly to top, go right along easy scree and snow to upper gully, scree and scramble to top). Greg would be on Bellicose the next day, so we waited. On the 9th, Stuart and I headed over Rumble Pass (5050) and down easily to "Wall Street" Glacier. Incredible view; the biggest walls in the Western Chugach are in this deep valley.

Our objective was the NW ridge by way of The Shroud (historic name given to the hanging glacier on Bellicose's west face). We cramponed up a long 40-degree gully, the only obvious weakness in the wall, safely away from the hangers of The Shroud. I looked up and saw Greg shortly before noon. Hoots and hollers followed and we thought he saw us. He was in a difficult spot on a rock face above us; something like a little fly silhouetted against the blue sky. We continued, the exposure becoming more apparent with each step. Stuart balked. We took a break; above us Greg had disappeared. Stu had misgivings about the drop below and didn't want to push it; I was on my own.

I continued on crampons to The Shroud, where everything became clear. This was the way! No difficulties above; a clean shot to the ridge on 50-degree snow and an easy-looking walk to the top. But there were crevasses. Three or four big ones split my intended path, still bridged, but how well? I hooted and

hollered for Greg, but no answer, in fact no sign that he was above. A sentence from an old Hoeman article came back to me, "Dave Johnston and I looked...from an aborted attempt on the NW ridge on Bellicose." There were no other details of their failure, but something had stopped them, and it would stop Greg. I looked at the mouth of the bergschrund and it seemed to say, "Okay how macho are you?" 900' to go, I headed home.

For two days I worried about Greg because we hadn't seen him on our descent. He finally called me..."I thought you guys were yelling at me from Rumble!" He never saw us, just voices bouncing in the hallway of the Chugach.

Now that should have been the end of the story. Maybe next year, I figured. It's not good to let a mountain get to you, but it happens. August 14 I'm on the bike again, heading to Pichler's with Tom Choate and Mike Miller. It rained all day the 15th, but Sunday skies looked better. Across the Eklutna we headed, delayed a few minutes for a broken crampon (who needs the front points anyway), and over the 4350' bench to the valley between Benign and Bellicose. Sunshine ended for the day as we strolled up scree to the NW ridge at 5650.

We rappelled to wet snow on the W face and traversed south to The Shroud where the bergy was still waiting for me. Roped now to Mike and Tom, I crossed safely and kicked wet steps up the moderately steep slope to regain the NW ridge. We couldn't see a thing but it mattered not; we passed below two gendarmes on the snow and finally reached a cheval ridge at 7400. Tom took the lead along the short rock section, followed by fresh snow and soon Mike was digging out the register. The only entry was June 1976, Brian Okonek and Dick Griffith, who had stood on the summit at the extremely prudent hour of 6am (Bousman's cairn, if any, was probably destroyed in the 64 quake). This is undoubtedly the easiest way to the top, but would be a spooky winter route if the snow wasn't right.

Willy Hersman

### Sunlight Mt.

On August 17, after drying out from Bellicose, Tom Choate, Mike Miller and I headed up glacier to the SE ridge of White Lice (6650). I always misunderstood the name of this peak, it seems so ridiculous. Tom said it might have been a joke by Vin Hoeman. When John Muir encountered domestic sheep in the otherwise pristine Sierras he would sometimes refer to them as "hoofed locusts". It's possible that Vin was reminded of this when he climbed this peak in 1961 and saw sheep on the ridges below (just as we did), and called them "white lice". Anyway, Tom and Mike scrambled up the ridge to the summit while I waited 200 feet below, bummed by the constant hand and foot holds that pulled out. Todd Miner soloed this peak in July.

On the 18th we ventured up the W Fork Eklutna, past Moonlight Mt., to where it bends west. On P 6390 Mike and I scrambled up scree on the S ridge, meeting Tom higher up where his snow gully on the W face met the ridge. An easy scramble put us on top of "Sunlight Mt." (in sunshine of course), only 3 3/4 hrs from Pichler's. We spent an hour admiring the way clouds seem to form from nowhere and put a cairn and register on the summit boulder (a 2-person summit at best). No previous evidence of humanity was found.



Mike returned to the hut to avoid the gathering clouds and Tom and I went west to make the 2nd ascent of Icicle Peak (7050), first climbed this summer by J. Sayler, K. Cafmeyer, J. Cafmeyer, S. Lane, and F. Jenkins. We followed the easy E gully and ridge (last 45' was not so easy on snow-covered rock). Real nice register guys! Sayler's snow route was visible below leading to the Icicle Gl. as was most of the traverse to Mt. Soggy along the ridge. The climb took an hour and another hour might have put us on Soggy, but how many peaks does one need to do in a day?

Willy Hersman

### Climbing Notes

Icicle Peak is the name given to the 7050' peak near Soggy, mentioned last month, by the party which climbed it. (Since it sits just above the Icicle Glacier.)

The register for Kings Mt. was brought down by Dan Shearer, Nan Shearer and Mitch Skinner after their July 25th climb. It will be placed in the archives.

On August 22 Jim Sayler, Karen Cafmeyer and Larry Hartig followed our week-old tracks to the summit of Bellicose (7640), after camping in the hanging valley to the north the night before. The next day Karen soloed Benign (7250) via the large SE gully. No register was found on the summit. She was unaware of the ascent taking place just below on the W face. Karen's ascent is approximately the 5th of Benign, and took 5 hrs.

On August 23rd Charlie Sassara and John Mitchell did one of the most difficult climbs in the Western Chugach to date. The west face of Benign is a 3000-foot wall of Chugach crud, with very little of anything that looks climbable, especially without much snow. Charlie reports that they ascended a gully of steep rock and snow averaging about 60 degrees. After the climb they descended Karen Cafmeyer's tracks on the east side of the mountain and exited via the Eklutna Gl., putting them overdue by a day. They named the climb "Malignant Gully".

Willy Hersman

### HIKING AND CLIMBING SCHEDULE

- |           |   |
|-----------|---|
| Sept. 5-6 | <u>LOST LAKE</u><br>Labor Day Weekend. Easy Class C hike just north of Seward. Stay at the lake can be shortened to make this a one-day hike or extended to make it a three-day outing. Call for details.<br>Leader: Marty Bassett 694-3917 |
| 12        | <u>INDIAN PASS</u><br>12 miles, 2100' elevation gain. Class B. Call for details and sign -up.<br>Leaders: Marcy and John Baker 274-0105   |
| 26-27     | <u>ICE CLIMBING CLASS</u><br>Matanuska Glacier.<br>Leader: Paul Denkewalter 272-1811  |

## TECHNICAL ICE SCHOOL

Place: Matanuska Glacier  
Date: September 26, 27  
Fees: \$5.00 class, \$7.50 access to glacier  
Classroom Session: September 22  
Time and Place to be announced (or call Paul). This class is MANDATORY! If you cannot attend please do not sign up.

This school will present the techniques necessary to become at least a competent second on steep ice, such as waterfalls and gullies. We will not be teaching any glacier travel techniques.

PRE-REGISTRATION WILL BE REQUIRED. Sign-ups were at the August meeting for present members and will be at the September meeting for present and new members. If you cannot attend the September general meeting you may call Paul at AMH, 272-1811. We will not be signing up students (or new members) at the classroom session. All students should be members by the September club meeting.

This annual extravaganza will begin Tuesday September 22nd, with an indoor session. This class will include equipment, knots, clothing and answer your questions. Students are required to bring their boots, crampons and ice axes for inspection. Rental equipment will be handed out. (Please try to borrow equipment as the club has limited supplies.) Groups will be assigned. Fees will be collected. ALL STUDENTS MUST ATTEND.

The outdoor session will begin at 10 a.m. on Saturday, September 26th, at Matanuska Glacier at the parking lot closest to the glacier. Plan on leaving Anchorage no later than 6:30 a.m. or go up Friday night.

### ICE CLIMBING CLASS EQUIPMENT LIST

(Everyone must have all equipment.)

Ice axe - 70cm or shorter, curved pick with a web sling

Crampons - 12 points, hinged or rigid

Helmet

Harness - 1 or 2 piece or 22 feet of webbing

Locking carabiner

Rigid sole mountain boots - no hunting boots or wafflestompers

Ice hammer - optional, get one if you can

Day pack - for all this junk

Lunch - for two days, a thermos is nice

Wind parka and pants - Goretex or other semi-waterproofs

Wool or pile pants - no jeans or cotton

Wool or pile jacket - or polarguard type

Wool or pile hat

Wool or pile gloves and mitts - bring extras, it's wet out there

Overmitts - water repellent

Gaitors

Sunglasses, glacier cream, bandana, visor hat, camera, guitar, violin, sax, trumpet, drums, walkmann, etc.

Camping gear for overnight

# MAP TRIVIA

