



MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF ALASKA, INC.

BOX 102037

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99510

DECEMBER 1988

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### DECEMBER MEETING

The next monthly meeting of the MCA will be held Wednesday, December 21st, 7:00 pm, AT THE KINCAID / PT. CAMPBELL OUTDOOR CENTER, in Kincaid Park. There will be a potluck dinner, with turkey and refreshments provided. Members are requested to bring something to add, but no alcohol, thank you. Please use the following scheme to avoid redundancy:

Last name begins with:

A-C

D-H

I-N

O-Z

Bring:

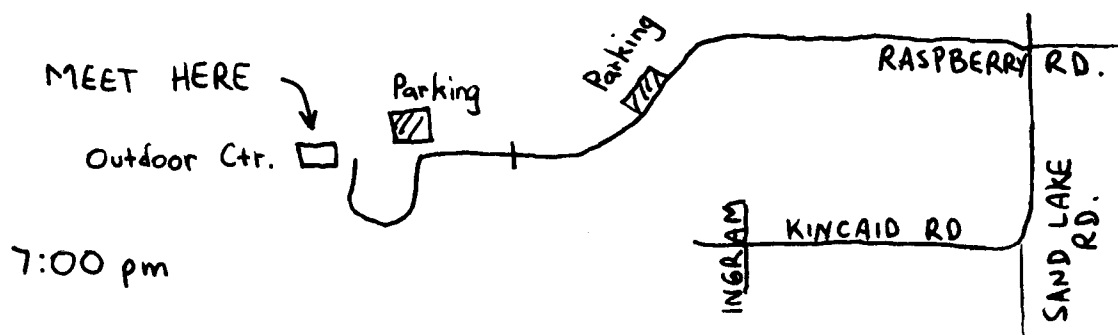
Vegetables

Salad

Bread

Desert

The slide show will be like last year's; bring in about 10-15 of your favorite recent slides of Alaska trips to share with us. The MCA will provide the projector, of course. Also...bring your skis...FULL MOON! If you don't know how to find Kincaid, call Pete Sennhauser, he's been there. Or follow this map somehow:



## HIKING AND CLIMBING SCHEDULE

### Dec. 17-18 FLATTOP SLEEPOUT

Winter solstice sleepout held every year. Be prepared for cold and high winds and possible avalanche hazard. No leader.

### 20 MOONLIGHT SKI

Leave sometime after work. Ski up to Indian Pass and back. Up to 2000' gain and 10 miles round-trip are possible, Class B.  
Leader: Rick Maron 349-306

### Jan. 21-22 SNOW SHELTERS

Learn how to make shelters. Igloos! Caves! Trenches! Full moon! You dig em, you sleep in em. No tents. We'll go to Manitoba Mt. so bring skis and skins and plan on some great skiing, too. Articles of destruction/construction needed: shovels (no wimpy ones), snow saws, extra mittens. Plan on getting wet.  
Leader: Willy Hersman 338-5132

The Hiking and Climbing Committee is always looking for leaders. If you have an idea for a trip, whether for an afternoon or for several weeks, give Kathy Burke a call at 346-2841. H and C Committee: K. Burke, Chairperson, B. Wakeland, D. Hansen, M. Bassett, W. Hersman.

## MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER MEETING

The November meeting was on the 16th, held at the Pioneer Schoolhouse. John Baker presiding. The reading of last month's minutes was waived, but there was one correction: the avalanche beacons, which Paul Denkwalter was offering, are not dual frequency, but they do have a volume control switch.

### TREASURER'S REPORT:

Petty Cash	-	120.74
Checking	-	456.32
Money Market	-	3594.22
Total Monies	-	\$4171.28

Annual dues are \$10 - single, \$15 - family (co habs). For payment by mail, please include a self-addressed envelope along with a signed club waiver (next to last page of the newsletter) and we will sit has tremendous advantages, like free gear rental, like helmets, crampons, ice axes and now in the winter we added another important service for those cold bivouacs: Escort service! Yes it's the MCA's answer to a cold sleeping bag. So feel free to join, for after that it's all free.

COMMITTEES: Training... Rick Maron is the chairman. He announced a beacon practice session for Tuesday the 29th. This is important since most folks are a little rusty and slow without practice and after all time is of the essence, when it comes to finding a victim. So partake a session, which we will offer now and then. Willy Hersman will have a snow shelter class on Jan. 20/21.\*\*\*\*\*Hiking and Climbing... Mike King had a trip planned for Nov. 19/20 to Powerline Pass. Neil O'Donnell has a trip planned for Dec. 3rd to Indian Pass. The Flattop sleepout was announced for Dec. 17th. Bring warm gear. Rick Maron will have a trip to Indian Pass Dec. 20th. This one will be after work and under a full moon. For additional trips call the Hotline.

Programs...December meeting will be at Kincaid on the 21st with slides from anyone who wishes to bring them. Ideally bring 10 slides of your favorite trip. In January the show consists of slides from the different proposed hut sites.\*\*\*\*\*Huts...The Hut Committee decided to finance its effort to build and maintain huts by selling mugs and T-shirts. A motion passed to loan the committee \$350 to get the cups produced. This money will be paid back to the treasury as they sell. One of several designs was chosen by members. Those who may have a T-shirt design of their own can drop that design off at Blaine's Art and Frame c/o Gretchen Reeve.

The Honorary Membership Committee presently consists of Tim Neale, Willy Hersman and Pete Sennhauser. According to Tim one has to have gray hair to qualify. The idea is to honor folks who have done extraordinary deeds. The committee has been meeting lately to formulate rules and qualifications for nomination. See board minutes.

OLD BUSINESS: none.

NEW BUSINESS: Tax exempt status. The IRS needs \$150 filing fee. A motion passed to allocate the \$\$.\*The Alaska Mountain Safety Center proposed a two-day workshop to cover avalanche safety, cost might be around \$80/person. There was insufficient interest. Rick Maron had maps from the map drive available.\*Alan Julliard passed a survey around concerning the climbing wall. A lot of input is needed. The parents of Lynn Salerno, who died on Denali this year offered several thousand dollars toward this goal.\*Tom Meacham allerted us to the proposed road which may go in next to the Russian River along the first six miles. This is just to determine if a mining claim has potential. Public comment period ends Nov. 16.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Rick Maron informed us that the Chugach State Park Advisory Board, a citizens' board, has several vacancies. Apparently there is a desire to get folks on it, who represent groups like the MCA. You need to present some kind of resume explaining why you'd like to be on it. Also coming up is the issue of the Army training on the Eklutna Glacier. If you have any input on that, please contact the advisory board.\*Ed Bovey was selling calendars.\*Lulie Williams sent a letter trying to enlist interest in Ski Jouring. That's where you hook your dogs to a sled and to yourself and make skiing easier on yourself; cover 20 miles in just two hours, I guess it depends on your dog. They meet every 2nd Wednesday at the Animal Shelter.\*Dan O'Haire has a slide show on the Harding Icefield at UAA.\*Scree deadline is still the 25th!

The president's axe was presented to Willy along with a plaque commemorating his term as club pres.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Pete Sennhauser

#### MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING November 15

The Board basically discussed two items, huts and honorary membership committee. Issues concerning huts are well-covered in the regular meeting minutes and various articles. The Board adopted the following policy for the Honorary Membership Committee:

## MCA HONORARY MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

### Honorary Membership Committee Rules:

1. The Committee shall consist of 3 or 5 members (an odd number being best for breaking ties), appointed by the Executive Committee.
2. Committee members must be MCA members in good standing and must have been a member of the club for six years (not necessarily consecutively).
3. Committee member terms shall be for three years.
4. The Committee shall submit its nominations to the Executive Committee each year by December 31st.
5. The Committee may submit no more than two nominations per year.
6. a) Although recommendations may come from any source, all nominations to be submitted must originate in the Honorary Membership Committee.  
It is important that any discussions pertaining to perspective nominees be avoided at the MCA general meeting, and that the presiding officer at the meeting defer such discussion to a committee level.  
  
b) In any case, any recommendation must be in the form of a written proposal.
7. The Executive Committee shall make the final approval for Honorary Membership through a majority vote at an Executive Committee meeting.

### Criteria for Honorary Membership:

1. Past or present membership in the MCA is not necessary.
2. Must be living.
3. Must have made an outstanding contribution which is in alignment with the purposes of the club (Article II of the Articles of Incorporation).
4. Cannot be currently holding an elected office in the club.

### Honorary Membership Benefits

1. Lifetime member with all the benefits of membership.
2. Certificate from the MCA.
3. Honor should be bestowed at a regular MCA meeting no less than six months after election to Honorary Membership. It is desirable, but not necessary that the Honorary Member be present.

### International Summits Quiz #3

The Alps - Part 1 (Courtesy Tom Choate.)

1. In which country is the highest peak, Mt. Blanc?  
A) France B) Switzerland C) Italy D) France and Italy E) Switzerland and Italy
2. What is the second highest peak?  
A) The Matterhorn B) Monte Rosa C) The Dom D) The Jungfrau
3. What is the height of the highest in the Alps?  
A) over 15,500' B) 15,000-15,499 C) 14,500-14,999 D) 14,000-14,499  
D) under 14,000'
4. The Alps (range) entirely within Switzerland:  
A) Penine B) Savoy C) Rhaetian D) Bernese E) Hohe Tavern
5. The Gross Glockner (12461') is the highest point in:  
A) Switzerland B) Austria C) Germany D) Italy E) France

### History Corner

Willy Hersman

Pioneer Peak, the classic landmark of the Matanuska Valley, and a fine prize for many local climbers was actually one of the first peaks to be climbed in the Anchorage area. Paul Crews, Sr. was a member of one of the early ascents on Pioneer, having made the climb 35 years ago. Each year Paul spends some time at Sun Valley with a group of Pacific Northwest skiers for a little reunion of those who remember when there were no tows. Last year he was a bit surprised to find that one of the group, Walt Little, had climbed Pioneer before him. Paul had been under the impression that his climb with Harry Pursell and Warren Crosby had been the first. Walt was there in July 1945, eight years before.

Well I was kind of wondering about all this. Vin Hoeman wrote an article in 1965 for the 1966 American Alpine Journal entitled "The Western Chugach Range, Alaska." Vin claimed that Pioneer was the first peak ever climbed in the Western Chugach, a somewhat irresistible point that colonial Mat Valley pioneers had to look at every day. In the article Vin gave credit for the first ascent to Vernon Haik, John Wolffe and a third man whose first name was Joe. Joe and the gang really go back...1936!

Now there was another Joe who played a big part in all this, Joe Pichler. (Pichler's Perch, remember?) Okay, well Joe P. is to have done the climb nine times between 1949 and 1961 to a point on the west ridge called "Mary's Mountain." I forget who Mary was, but maybe that can be left for another history corner. Anyway, in case you might be keeping score, the first three recorded climbs of Pioneer look like this:

June 1936: Haik, Wolffe, and Joe via Central Gully-West Gully, Northwest Face. July 1945: W. Little, J. Curran, D. Hartley, J. Jacobsen, T. Prassas via NW Face. August 16, 1953: P. Crews, W. Crosby, H. Pursell via North Gully.

Walt's one-day climb in 1945 went like you might expect for back then. "We parked by a steel bridge, and went directly up the NW face. Toward the top the snowfield was very steep, and we weren't well-equipped. Rope, of course, and substitute alpenstocks cut from willows en route. They weren't any good. Broke some in an unanticipated fall on the way down. Thankfully, we had gotten below the steep part. We did make the summit."

## HUT SITE PROPOSALS

### Bomber Glacier Proposal

Dave Staeheli

A hut to be placed in the Bartholf Creek drainage of the Talkeetna Mountains. The specific location would be just SW of the pond across Bartholf Creek from the Bomber Glacier in section 29. A scouting trip determined this to be the best location except for possible sites at the base of the Snowbird Glacier. Of historical note, an old map refers to this area as "Wonderland." Reasons for this proposal:

1. The approach terrain is difficult enough to screen certain character types from using it. This is referring to casual vandals and snowmachine users. Everyone else will be a friend you just haven't met.
2. The site is approachable in a day. Previous experience indicates a party in good order and good conditions should reach the hut in five to six hours. Allow more time for winter conditions.
3. It is supported by other huts in the region. Namely, the Mint Hut, the Lane Prospect Hut and Harry's Cabin.
4. There will be four common routes to the hut. The longest route over Kommando Col is supported by the Lane Hut. The probably equally long route to the hut via Snowbird Glacier would go through Snowbird Pass. The quickest route will be via Bomber Pass and Glacier. The multiple routes will give different traverse combinations. Other traverses and routes are possible.
5. It would open up mountains and routes for climbing. Examples would be unclimbed routes on Lynx, the West Face of Montana, the peaks around the Bomber Glacier and the peaks to the north of Montana Peak. The hut might also prove useful in accessing the peaks in the Kashwitna headwaters.
6. This hut site would be an excellent base for great backcountry skiing. The hills immediately behind the hut appear to be wonderful telemark terrain. All season skiing on the Snowbird Glacier has proven to be popular. The Bomber and Penny Royal Glaciers promise to be also. The routes through Back Door Gap and Snowbird Pass are historically free of avalanches. Care should probably be taken with Kommando Col and Bomber Pass.
7. This hut should see a significant amount of use by club members. It should see use by both the hikers and climbers which make up MCA. Technically the routes in are very easy. Most would not even require crampons and ropes would be optional.

After discussions with building supply stores, siding suppliers and Soloy Helicopters, an estimate for inserting a hut into this location has been formulated. A solidly-built, but plain-jane hut similar to the Mint Hut can be fabricated for an estimated \$1600 to \$2000. Helicopter estimates run from \$750 to \$1500. This building should be completely sided with metal to prevent the animal problems we have had with the Mint Hut.

Since this hut will be transported by helicopter, a good method of constructing it is available. By pre-fabbing the hut in town, using power tools, spare time and possibly "barnraising" weekends, we can construct a quality hut.

It can then be transported with an available flatbed trailer and flown into the site in separate wall, floor and roof panels. Assembling the hut on site should prove quick and efficient.



## Matanuska Glacier Proposal

Willy Hersman

The MCA is long overdue for a new hut, the last one having been built 17 years ago. Huts are very popular with the members and provide safety, as well as convenience. Several considerations dictate what makes a good location for a MOUNTAINEERING hut. I propose that the MCA build a hut adjacent to the Matanuska Glacier in the Chugach Mountains. Specifically at the point where the Matanuska Glacier splits east and west, on a lateral moraine in Section 20, Anchorage C2 quad. I like to call this point "International Corner" due to the proximity of the Scandinavian Peaks. Reasons for this proposal:

A. The hut would not be accessible to casual travelers. As we have learned from the Mint Hut, there are more problems when access is an easy hike. Huts sustain less damage if they are "guarded" by glaciers. This hut would be reached only by those with a knowledge of glacier travel.

B. The hut would require two days' travel in winter or a very long day in summer. The entire approach is without avalanche danger, a very wide glacier. Getting onto the glacier is easy, and once under way you can travel for many miles without even needing crampons (easy moraine), or a rope.

C. The hut would be a base in new territory altogether. There are endless places to explore. Most of the peaks are yet unclimbed, Marcus Baker and Mt. Thor are not far away, and there is a great traverse possible, as shown in Skiing Alaska's Back 40, going to the east to the Powell Glacier.

D. The land is under BLM control, an agency very conducive to allowing such a hut to be built. This is not a Park, Forest, or a Management area.

E. Once built, maintenance would be the easiest of all our huts, since it has a very good site nearby for landing a ski plane. No helicopters and no special permission needed.

The hut would need to be prefabbed in town as were all the other huts. It could be driven to the parking lot at the front of the glacier and then sling-loaded to the location. I would estimate four 30-minute round trips from the parking lot, plus an hour from Palmer and back. Many items could be taken in by fixed-wing, which is less expensive.

Prefabbed hut	\$1000
Helicopter cost	1500
Roofing metal	300
Benches, tables, windows	200
Paint, nails, etc.	50
Rocks to hold it down	<u>free</u>
	\$3250

A place to store the structure will be needed. A truck to transport it will be needed. Volunteer builders will be needed. Lots of effort goes into this kind of thing and it will be important to be sure there will be adequate volunteers or the whole idea should be abandoned.





### Other Proposals

There is at least one other site under consideration. A proposal to put a hut on the Harding Icefield was submitted, but nothing in writing had been received by press time. There is also the proposal that we not build another hut at all. These proposals may appear in the next issue.

### ALPINE ANIMALS - A SERIES OF NOTES

Tom Choate

#### NO. 2 Dall Sheep ( Ovis dalli )

For some mountaineers the real treat of climbing is to come face to face with mountain sheep on some high ridge. In Denali National Park and in parts of Chugach State Park there are tame flocks which will allow approach within 100 feet. Since sheep may be hunted in the State Park, there are many areas where rams are unapproachable, and I'd appreciate information from readers on where and when (and how many) and how approachable sheep are, so I can map out the best places for future club trips. The most popular currently is the valley south of the Twins (hike from Eklutna Lake). In spring, watch for new lambs. Ewes typically seek a well-protected spot to lamb about mid-May, and do not return to the herd for a few days. Find a spot where you can scan the cliffs of the same valley system as the rest of the sheep, and see if you can find ewes with newborns.

The Falls Creek and Twins herds are well-known and can be approached most times of the year as they make a pretty localized vertical migration, staying mainly on the warm (S-SW) slopes in spring. But what about the many wilder, less accessible herds in the Chugach or Talkeetnas? You mountain people are a valuable source of information, so please write down what you see, where and when.

Rams are usually pushed out of breeding herds at 1 1/2 - 2 1/2 yrs. (at which time they look somewhat like ewes) and form batchelor herds which frequently live in quite different places, at least until rutting season, in November.

Quiz answers: 1. D) 2. B) (15,203') Dufour Spitze 3. A) 4. D) 5. B)

## ARTIFICIAL CLIMBING WALL INTEREST SURVEY

There is currently an effort by climbers of diverse interest and backgrounds to construct a climbing wall, either indoor or outdoor, for the purposes of instruction, training, practice of technique or for just plain sport. We are currently in the planning phases and need input from you, the climbing public, on this proposal. Please take a moment to circle the choices which most represent your own feelings.

Would you prefer an indoor or outdoor facility?

Indoor

Outdoor

What time of day would you most likely use a wall?

Morning

Afternoon

Evening

What time of the week would you most likely use a wall?

Weekdays/nights

Weekends

How many time per month would you most likely use a wall?

1

3

5

10

More than 10

Would you be willing to pay for using such a facility?

Yes

No

How would you prefer to pay for such a facility?

Per each use

Monthly

Annually

How much would you be willing to pay for use of such a facility?  
(please circle your choice from each category)

Per each use

\$1

\$3

\$5

Monthly

\$5

\$10

\$20

Annually

\$50

\$100

Dec 88

\$200

How would you principally be interested in using the facility?

Working out

Skill training(classes, informal teaching, etc.)

Are you affiliated with any climbing groups (MCA, AAC, AWS, AMRG, etc)?

Yes

No

How would you be willing to help the construction/maintenance/operation of the facility?

would not

construction

labor

financial donation

material discount/donation

maintenance/operations

If you are willing to help please print your name, address, and phone below:

Comments or questions?

For more information call 786-1468.

Please fold, tape or staple, and mail before January 1, 1989 to:

**CLIMBING WALL  
AWS-UAA  
3211 PROVIDENCE DRIVE  
ANCHORAGE, AK 99508**