



MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF ALASKA

BOX 102037

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99510

APRIL 1988

Volume 31, Issue 04

APRIL MEETING

The meeting will be held Wednesday, April 20th, 7:30 pm, at the Pioneer Schoolhouse, top floor, 3rd and Eagle Sts., downtown Anchorage. After the business meeting, Kris Ericson will present a slide show on his travels in Africa.

MINUTES OF THE MARCH MEETING

The meeting, which was held at the Pioneer Schoolhouse on March 16th, was called to order by President Willy Hersman at 7:50 pm. The reading of the February minutes was waived by the membership. On behalf of the club, Willy further congratulated Vern Tejas on his recent successful solo winter ascent of Denali. Vern of course couldn't be here since he intended to celebrate his birthday with even better friends than us, if there is such a thing. Bravo Vern!

New members and guests were introduced and welcomed, most of them seem to have been attracted to this meeting due to the slide show on Nepal by Mark Findlay. New members this month include: John and Margaret Wolfe, Debra Price, Dean Webb, Kneeland Taylor, Jake Schlapfer and Barry Bruninga.

I. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Hiking and Climbing

1. Kathy referred to the Scree for details on the proposed session at her house, members were asked to call in by phone if they couldn't attend.

B. Huts

1. Gerry Minick informed us that a supply hauling trip, planned for March 26, has been postponed until Lowell Thomas, the pilot, can fit it into his schedule. Materials hauled will be stored at Pichler's Perch, so they can be used this summer.

C. Library

1. Kathy Burke is looking for a successor to handle the library affairs, volunteers shall contact Kathy for details.

II. OLD BUSINESS None.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. Patches

Willy entertained a motion for \$250 to order new patches for the club, motion passed.

B. New Hut

The building of a new hut was mentioned. If you're interested in suggesting a location for a club hut consider the following points: Location, size, estimated cost, type of materials, benefit to members, ease of maintenance, possible donations (materials, air support, etc.). Gerry Minick, Hut Chairman, will coordinate your input.

IV. TREASURER'S REPORT

Petty Cash	-	19.40
Checking	-	51.45
Money Market	-	<u>4823.57</u>
Total Monies	-	\$4894.42

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Slide shows

1. Ama Dablam North Ridge - Steve Davis. April 14, 7:30 pm, UAA Campus Center. \$3.00. All proceeds benefit the Alaska Mountain Rescue Group.
2. John Baker asked members to call him if they have any slide shows.

B. Important Misprint

The book Alaska Wilderness Medicine has some mix-ups in the description of two plants, one of them edible, the other quite deadly, they're Angelica and Poison Hemlock, please refer to the February Scree for details, meantime don't eat any Hemlock, cause you will die.

C. Hot Line

Mark encouraged members to use the club hot line (number on back page). You can leave messages on avalanche conditions, trips in the making, etc.

D. Avalanche Legislation

Doug Fesler is asking for our support on legislation soon to be introduced which would support public education, research and data collection in avalanche hazard evaluation and search and rescue. Letters should be sent to Al Adams, Chairman, and Pat Pourchot, Vice-Chairman of the House Finance Committee and to Rick Halford and John Binkley, Co-Chairmen of the Senate Finance Committee. Box V, Juneau, Ak 99811. Call Kenny Powers, 276-3550w, 243-6483h, if you want to help spread the word. Copies of all letters should be sent also to Alaska Mountain Safety Center 9140 Brewster's Dr., Anchorage, Ak 99516.

E. ANWR

Ken Zafren informed us of a hearing ON Area 1002 to be held at the Fairview Center. Fish and Wildlife has more details, call them.

Meeting adjourned. Thanks to Mark Findlay for his slide show on Nepal.

Respectfully Submitted,
Pete Sennhauser

ADZE

Parka, Marmot Goretex, X-Small Woman's , w/hood, zippered arm pits, \$80, call Jim at 694-9838.

Gear Swap and Dance
April 30, 1988

Outdoor Gear Swap:

Bring in gear....9:00am - 12:00
Gear Sale.....12:00pm - 6:00p
Pick up gear.....6:00pm - 7:00p
(20% handling fee)

Dinner.....6:30pm - 8:00p
Dance.....8:00pm - 11:30

\$6.00 - Dinner (Gourmet Mexican)
\$6.00 - Dance ("Moondance", West. Swing, Classic Rock)

ALL THIS TAKES PLACE AT:

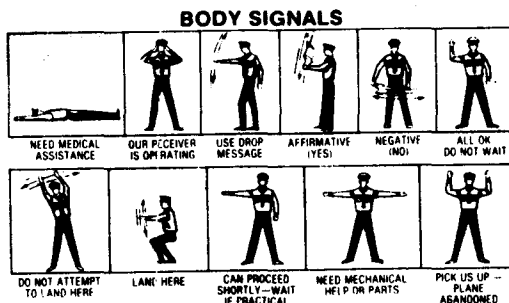
UAA Campus Center Pub

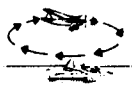



Sponsored by:

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NOTICE

Chugach State Park rangers advise park visitors that Lower Canyon Road, the only road to the Rabbit Lake and Suicide Peaks trailhead, will be closed to all but residential traffic for the rest of the winter. There is no maintained parking area at the trailhead and no room for parking along the road because of the heavy snowfall this year. For more information contact friendly Superintendant, Pete Panarese at 345-5014.



GROUND TO AIR SIGNALS		
— Make signals not less than eight feet — Provide maximum contact — — Attract attention with radio, flares, smoke and reflected light —		
MESSAGE	CODE SYMBOL	
REQUIRE ASSISTANCE	V	 MESSAGE RECEIVED AND NOT UNDERSTOOD
REQUIRE MEDICAL ASSISTANCE	X	 MESSAGE RECEIVED AND UNDERSTOOD
NO OR NEGATIVE	N	 NEGATIVE
YES OR AFFIRMATIVE	Y	 AFFIRMATIVE
PROCEEDING IN THIS DIRECTION	↑	

TRIP REPORTS

An Alternate Matanuska Glacier Access

Todd Miner

The last weekend in February I checked out the access to Matanuska Glacier via the route described in Skiing Alaska's Back Forty. For winter access for overnight glacier practice, ice climbing, or exploratory mountaineering it is far superior to the traditional Glacier Park Resort access as there is no gate, no hassle with property owners and no fees. This new Caribou Cr. route offers a fun and scenic three-mile ski that also avoids the majority of the extremely broken portion of the glacier and saves several miles if final destination is higher up the Mat. The glacier itself is further away - no quick jaunts back to the car - but that same distancing gives it more of a wilderness air. It also provides a great view of the imposing 1400-foot east and South faces of Lion Head, a porphyritic intrusive of Tertiary Age (30-50 million years ago).

Access is quite simple; just drive to Caribou Cr. (Mile 107, Glenn Hwy.) at the bottom of the first hill past the Long Rifle. The pullout 100 meters past the bridge will hold at least half a dozen vehicles. One hundred feet back towards town is a rough road heading down and to the south. Follow this on foot to a sign saying no parking (summer put-in for the Lion Head Rapids) where Caribou Cr. can be easily accessed. On the right the naked rock of Lion Head, stripped clean by the glaciers, towers above, taunting the rock jock in anyone. Stay on the creek bed (the road is a private drive) for about a mile and a half, watching for overflow, until the Matanuska River.

Usually frozen December through April, it's hard to believe that just downstream Class V rapids roar as the river is squeezed between the Mat Glacier and Lion Head. To the right, down the river, the terminus of the glacier can be seen; ignore this and aim for the narrow canyon directly across from Caribou Cr. Following the main creek channel avoids the great majority of the ugly alder-bristling moraine and entails little bushwacking. Several clearings on the right invite camping that is sheltered from the wind and offers alder-revenge in the form of much firewood. A mile past the Mat and the canyon opens on to the glacier itself. This opening provides a large, flat camping area with good views, easy access to the glacier (within snowball range) and some firewood though it's exposed to the ubiquitous cold draft draining the high Chugach peaks.

It is easy to get on the glacier via several low-angled ramps. Once on the glacier, travel is fairly straightforward as the majority of the jumbled mess so frustrating at the terminus is absent. Approximately the first half-mile is unsuitable for ice climbing or crevasse rescue practice due to an impenetrable surface layer of rock. There are many good campsites there however, if glacier camping is sought. Once past this ground moraine the glacier levels out and travel looks easy. Several traverses, countless unclimbed peaks and Marcus Baker, the highest point in the Chugach all beckon.



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Book Review

K2, Triumph and Tragedy, Jim Curran, The Mountaneers, Seattle, WA, 1988, 256 pp.
(This is a new addition to the MCA/Vin Hoeman Library.)

Most of us here in Alaska with an interest in mountaineering are familiar with the disastrous events which took place on Mt. McKinley in the summer of 1967, the Wilcox expedition. Bad weather combined with poor judgment resulted in a sort of classic chain of events, which we look back on as almost predictable in its outcome. "Don't get audacious and assuming in the mountains, especially at altitude," is a lesson repeated over and over. Jim Curran tells the story of such a summer which took place on K2 in 1986. The title seems to match the grim facts, twenty-seven people summited the mountain but thirteen died in the effort. They were all experienced climbers.

Jim was on the British expedition as a climbing cameraman. He spent most of his time in base camp, both during the attempt on the Northwest Ridge, and afterwards when most of the British climbers had gone home. He was therefore witness to the atmosphere at base camp as the events unfolded, one after another, on the mountain. Al Rouse remained to make another attempt on the more popular Abruzzi Ridge, teamed up with a Polish climber, and succeeded in becoming the first British climber to summit K2. He never returned.

As one reads this story it becomes evident just how far the sport of climbing has evolved, in just the past decade, or even half that time. One of the ascents took only twenty-three hours! Hard to imagine. It seems quite acceptable to breeze ones way up such a peak with hardly adequate gear, depending heavily on the mountain's kindness (if it has any), or in some cases on the resources of other climbers. How can you feel sorry when they hang it out so far? Avalanches, rockfall, equipment failure, things of that nature, while perhaps to some degree preventable, are more acceptable as risks. But here we had cases of the most preventable kind. The climbers didn't take enough fuel, food or shelter. Fixed lines were poached, rappel ropes cut for slings, strangers climbing together, weak people left alone, unroped crevasse falls. You can only shake your head.

Jim Curran makes this conclusion: "Different people allow different margins of error, and repetition will strengthen learned habits. Thus a cautious climber, who has often backed off in the face of bad weather, will be more inclined to do the same next time. Conversely a bolder climber will remember that last time he pressed on and got away with it, so, given a similar situation, he'll do it again. Only serious misfortune, old age and infirmity, or death, will ever change the pattern, for by definition every climber's experience always works in his favour, until it doesn't." Sounds logical to me. Hey, if you're into stories with sad endings, don't miss this one.

W. Hersman

TRIP CLASSIFICATIONS

The classifications below do not consider individual trip hazards such as river crossings, scree slopes, snow fields, bears, etc. Trip leaders are required to inform the trip participants of any such hazards either verbally, on the sign-up sheet, or in the trip description. Leader approval is required for all trips.

NON-TECHNICAL: Following are a few standards used to classify non-technical trips. The classification is made in terms of hiking distance and altitude gain. Many trips are not on established trails.

CLASS A: Easy hikes with a maximum distance of 8 miles for day trips or 4 miles per day for overnight trips. Altitude gain up to 1200 feet.

CLASS B: Trips involving a maximum distance of up to 12 miles for a day hike or 6 miles per day for an overnight trip. Altitude gain of 1200 to 2500 feet.

CLASS C: Trips up to 15 miles for a day hike or 8 miles per day for an overnight trip. Altitude gain up to 3500 feet. Scree, steep grass, or other rough terrain problems may be encountered.

CLASS D: Hikes and climbs with an altitude gain of over 3500 feet or a distance of greater than 15 miles for a day hike or greater than 8 miles per day for an overnight trip. Peaks in this classification may require minimal climbing skills.

CLASS E: Hazardous climbing conditions may be encountered. A Basic Mountaineering Course may be required.

TECHNICAL: Technical trips are open to all qualified climbers. However, the registration on any particular trip must be restricted to a safe and manageable number of climbers. Registration is made directly with the leader who determines the qualifications needed for the trip.

TRIP PARTICIPANTS have the obligation to acquaint themselves with the nature of the trip and to verify that it is within their capability and experience. Anyone wishing to participate in any trip above CLASS A must have completed one or more trips of the next lower classification, or the equivalent.

Approved by MCA Board, March 1987

LEADER QUALIFICATIONS:

1. Must be a member of the MCA.
2. Must have approval of the Hiking and Climbing Committee (A simple majority.)
3. Must have participated in trips of the same or higher classification showing competence in the opinion of the leaders of those hikes, or equivalent experience acceptable to the Hiking and Climbing Committee.

LEADER GUIDELINES:

1. Follow the general rules for MCA Sanctioned Trips.
2. Must have a sign-up sheet with all participants' names on it and turn it in to the Hiking and Climbing Committee at the end of the trip.
3. Must select a meeting time and place and disclose this information only to those persons on the sign-up sheet, unless call-ins are acceptable to the leader.
4. Must verify that each participant has signed a valid waiver and that it is on file.
5. Can require special equipment and refuse participation to any person that is ill-equipped.

6. Has the authority to split the group (fast and slow), but must select a co-leader to help.
7. Must report any injuries to the MCA President.
8. Must report any personnel problems to the Hiking and Climbing Committee

Approved by MCA Board, March 1987

HIKING AND CLIMBING SCHEDULE

- | | | |
|-------|-------|--|
| April | 8-10 | <u>PICHLER'S PERCH</u>
Supplies are to be flown in for hut repairs this June. Ski up to Eklutna Glacier, meet the plane and sled the stuff over to the hut. Glacier experience necessary. <u>NOTICE:</u> if you plan to do the Eklutna-Girdwood Traverse any time this year and want us to take some fuel up there for you on this flight, now is the time to buy it and give Gerry a call. <u>TECHNICAL.</u>
Hut Chairman and Leader: Gerry Minick 274-7389 |
| | 23 | <u>RAINBOW PEAK</u>
4 miles roundtrip, 3350' elev. gain. Class C.
Leader: Don Hansen 279-0829 |
| | 30 | Open Weekend |
| May | 7 | <u>WOLVERINE PEAK</u>
10 miles round trip, 3400' elev. gain. 55 Ways #34. Class C.
Leader: Rob Schwebel |
| | 14-15 | <u>WILLIWAW PEAK</u>
Camp at Williwaw Lakes (16 miles roundtrip, 1400' elev. gain). Additional 2600' to summit. Class D. Ice axe and ability to use it required. 55 Ways #33
Leader: Don Hansen 279-0829 |
| | 21 | Open Weekend |
| | 28-30 | <u>CHICKALOON-BOULDER CR.</u>
20 miles, 4400' elev. gain. Class C. 55 Ways #48.
Leader: Marty Bassett 694-3917 |
| June | 4 | Open Weekend |
| | 11 | Open Weekend |
| | 17-20 | <u>PICHLER'S PERCH</u>
Hut repairs. Details later.
Leaders: Gerry Minick, Willy Hersman |
| | 18-19 | <u>FLATTOP SLEEPOUT</u>
Traditional. No leader. |

- 25 BLACKTAIL AND ROUNDTOP
Leader: Kathy Burke 346-2841
- July 2-10 LAKE CLARK
Turquoise Lake to Telaquane Lake. Backpacking and day hikes.
Minimum 5, maximum 15 people. Approximate cost \$250-\$300 each.
\$50 deposit one month prior to trip. Class C.
Leader: Don Hansen 279-0829h, 261-4565w
- July 2-4 ROCK CLIMBING AT FERN MINE
In conjunction with the American Alpine Club. Easy to hard climbs.
Some instruction given, but not for beginners.
Leader: TBA
- 9 Open Weekend
- 16 PENGUIN RIDGE TRAVERSE
Bird to Girdwood via Penguin Peak. 9 1/2 miles, elev. gain 6500'.
Class C. Bushwack at the beginning, no trails.
Leader: Rick Maron 349-3064
- 17 HIDDEN PEAK-RAMP-WEDGE
10 miles, 3000' elev. gain. Class C.
Leader: Don Hansen 279-0829
- 23-Aug 6 ARRIGETCH PEAKS HIKE
Minimum 6, maximum 12 people. Approximate cost \$400-\$600 each.
\$50 deposit one month prior to trip. Class D.
Leader: Don Hansen 279-0829h, 261-4565w

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. Ideas need not be limited to the so-called open weekend dates, anytime is fine. H and C Committee: K. Burke, Chairperson, B. Wakeland, D. Hansen, M. Bassett, W. Hersman.

Climbing Notes

Kenai Fjords National Park ranger Bud Rice reports on a few more climbs on the Harding Icefield that he knows about, in addition to the ones mentioned in the Scree (02/88 pp. 5-7).

On July 6, 1985 Burr Henriksen and Bud climbed the peak of granite rock marking the NW corner of Kenai Fjords N.P. shown on Kenai A-1, R5W T1S S9, elevation 5355. And during August 1986 Bud also climbed to the summit of the ridge just north of Exit Glacier on Seward A-8, R2W T1N S7, elevation 4790. It is composed of dark metamorphosed rock, probably graywacke.



MAP TRIVIA