



MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF ALASKA

BOX 102037

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99510

JANUARY 1989

Volume 32, Issue 1

### JANUARY MEETING

The next monthly meeting of the MCA will be held Wednesday, January 18th, 7:30 pm, at the Pioneer Schoolhouse, top floor, Third and Eagle Sts., downtown Anchorage. The meeting will focus primarily on hut site selection. Please refer to the proposals printed in Scree last month, and the ballot in this issue.

### WINTER CLASSES

#### Jan. 21-22     SNOW SHELTERS

Overnight trip to Manitoba Mt. (not a climb) to learn how to make igloos, caves, trenches, etc. Need warm clothes, extra mitts, warm sleeping bag and pad, stove, thermos, sleeping pads, etc. Also, if you have them, shovel, snow saw, headlamp, and candle(s). Skis or snowshoes will be needed to get to where we'll dig.

Leader: Willy Hersman 338-5132

#### AVALANCHE BEACON PRACTICE

Tuesday night, 7:00 pm. Practice/training session. Bring beacons shovels, probes (optional), warm clothes. Meet at leader's car (orange VW Rabbit) at parking lot at Russian Jack Park.

Leader: Rick Maron 349-3064

The Hiking and Climbing Committee and Training Committee are always looking for leaders. Ideas for trips should be directed to Kathy Burke at 346-2841. H and C Committee: K. Burke, Chairperson, B. Wakeland, D. Hansen, M. Bassett, W. Hersman. And for classes call Rick Maron at 349-3064.

### MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER MEETING

The December meeting was held at the Kincaid Ski Chalet on December 21, 1988, 7:00 pm with President John Baker presiding. Reading of the November minutes was waived. Since this was a Christmas potluck as well, the business part turned out short, especially since folks got into the food before the meeting really started and those who didn't, would have liked to.

# TREASURER'S REPORT:

Petty Cash	-	77.88
Checking	-	242.82
Money Market	-	3641.45
Total Monies	-	\$3942.15

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 (found in the newsletter) and we will send you your membership card. The club offers free gear rental, like helmets, crampons and ice axes, stored at AMH.

COMMITTEES: Huts...Gretchen Reeve announced that the mugs, which we hope to sell to help finance hut repairs or new construction, haven't arrived. She thanked Karen Cafmeyer for the design.\*\*\*\*\*Training...Marcy Baker and Rick Maron will hold an avalanche beacon training class on January 24th at Russian Jack, see Scree.

OLD BUSINESS: The climbing wall was briefly discussed.\*\*\*\*\*Doug Fesler and Jill Fredston will not hold a club-sponsored avalanche workshop. John Baker encouraged members to seriously consider taking one of their excellent courses; it's about as cheap as insurance comes.\*\*\*\*\*Club members will vote during the January meeting if to build new huts and where. There are two proposals for a location. Members unable to make the meeting may mail in their ballots. Folks are encouraged to VOLUNTEER to haul building materials to the various huts, if they happen to plan a trip to one of them.

NEW BUSINESS: none.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: zip.

Thanks to those members who brought some of their slides to show after the meal.

Gretchen Reeve and Dave Staeheli seemed to have been the only ones who made it up to Flattop for the solstice. They didn't say, though, if they actually spent the night. For all we know they might have been fooling the rest of us whimps, ha.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Pete Sennhauser

## 1989, SEVENTH ANNUAL VALDEZ ICE-CLIMBING FESTIVAL

Sponsored by the Alaska Section of the American Alpine Club, and by the Valdez Alpine Club, the 1989 Ice-Climbing Festival will be held on the Washington's Birthday Weekend, Friday through Monday, February 17-20. The Festival is an occasion when ice-climbers from all over Alaska gather, along with some out-of-state and foreign climbers. Originally just a sociable climbing weekend for members of the Alaska Section of the American Alpine Club, the event has grown as interest has spread. Past years have seen visits by Japanese, Austrians, Canadians and New Zealanders as well as those from Washington, Colorado, California, Kentucky, Arizona and elsewhere. Floor space, and use of kitchens and bathrooms, is available in the homes of local climbers, though there are motels (with discount packages) available as well. During the weekend, climbing slide shows, films, and videos are shown, and a spaghetti dinner is traditional on Saturday evening.

The appeal of Valdez is partly that it contains some of the best and most highly concentrated ice climbing anywhere in the world. For example, in or near the city limits there is more climbable ice than in all of Colorado, Montana and Wyoming, and as many routes as are listed in the guidebook for the entire Canadian Rockies. In addition, climbing conditions are exceptionally consistent. Moderate temperatures (20 to 30 F), sea-level location and lots of precipitation ensure thick, relatively plastic ice and greater comfort than in most places. Especially in Keystone Canyon, approaches are minimal (100 yards or less from the road). More than 180 routes have been climbed, so far, in or near the city limits, of all ranges of difficulty from the easiest to several of the harder routes anywhere. Several are longer than 600 feet, and there are new route possibilities. A guidebook is in the final stages of preparation. There is some skiing available, both cross-country on a course up Mineral Creek, and downhill at Thompson Pass.

Those interested in coming to the Festival this year are encouraged to do so, and though there is no charge for attending, the festival chairman would appreciate hearing in advance who's coming. Those hoping to stay with local climbers MUST call or write in advance for reservations, as space is limited. Signups for the spaghetti dinner will be taken before Saturday evening; cost will be \$10 and expect to be put to work cooking. Those wishing to check on conditions (which can change rapidly) should definitely call ahead as well. Those wishing to come for a longer period than just the weekend may do so, preferably coming the week prior. The traditional center of activities (slideshows and films, mountaineering library, and sauna) has been the home of Drs. Andy Embick and Kathy Todd (see below). Other local contacts are John and Karen Weiland (835-2626), Bob Shelton (835-5127), and Brian Teale (835-5182). For motel reservations, contact the Village Inn (835-4445). In Anchorage, for ride-sharing arrangements, and general information on the Festival, and the American Alpine Club and its Alaska Section, contact current Section Chairman Paul Denkwalter at Alaska Mountaineering and Hiking 272-1811, or current AAC Board member Gary Bocarde at 345-6499.

In general, it is a good idea to come with a climbing partner, though not absolutely necessary. The actual ice climbing season is from some time in November or late October, to March or early April. Before February, thin, brittle ice, short days, cold, and wind can be less than idyllic, but climbing is very feasible. After February, the ice gets steadily thicker and more plastic, though eventually too soft, some time in April.

For further information, contact Andrew Embick M.D., Festival Chairman  
P.O. Box 1889, Valdez, Alaska 99686  
telephone (907) 835-4200(home); 835-4811(work); 835-2249(24-hr message/radio)

Hut proposals will be presented at the January Meeting. If you are unable to attend you may mail in your ballot, but it must be received by January 18, 1989. Please refer to the preceeding articles, which give more detail.

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* Do you want MCA          NO          YES          *
* to build a new          ☐          ☐          *
* hut?                    *
*
* If you voted YES, which hut site would you prefer to build on first? *
*
* Bomber   ☐          Matanuska   ☐          Harding   ☐          *
* Glacier  *
*          Glacier          Icefield          *
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* MCA members only should vote. No vote counted without a signature. *
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* Signature: _____ *
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Now is the time to submit your designs for an MCA T-shirt. Designs must be submitted by January 31, 1989. They may be submitted to Gretchen Reeve at the Dec. or Jan. meeting, or dropped off at Blaine's Art and Frame Shop (Spenard Rd. and N. Lts.). Please ask that they be given to Gretchen. Also make sure your name is on the back of the design.