



MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF ALASKA

BOX 102037

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99510

APRIL 1992

Volume 35, Issue 04

APRIL MEETING

April 15 7:30 pm Wednesday, Pioneer Schoolhouse, 3rd and Eagle Sts.,
downtown Anchorage, Alaska.

Slide Show Dan Hourihan, ranger of Wood-Tikchik State Park, will show slides
of the park. Climbing and hiking opportunities will be the focus.

HIKING AND CLIMBING SCHEDULE

April 12 Crevasse Rescue Practice
Noon at Boy Scout Rock.
Leader: Dan O'Haire 561-1141

16-20 MT. RAINIER
Climb via the standard route (Disappointment Cleaver).
Class: GLACIER TRAVEL. Must be a competent climber.
Leaders: Dan O'Haire, Maxine Stoddard 561-1141

18 BIRD RIDGE
Class C. 3000 feet elev. gain. Nice views of Turnagain
Arm. Snow on the upper part may require an ice axe.
Leader: Don Hansen 243-7184

Apr 25 - May 2 RUTH GLACIER
The Don Sheldon Mountain Haus has been reserved by the
leader. For those unfamiliar with the hut, it sits in the
Ruth Amphitheatre at 6000' with commanding views of Denali
and other Alaska Range giants. Activities can be suited to
everyone's skill level. It is not necessary to stay for the
entire week. Class: GLACIER TRAVEL.
Leader: Mike Heinz 376-7723 (Wasilla)

May 2 DAY TRIP
On skis. Moderate backcountry skiing ability. Class A.
Leader: Mike Padden 346-1325

3 March for Parks
To raise funds for security of Parks parking areas and
campgrounds from vandals and thieves.
Leader: Dan O'Haire 561-1141

2-17 PARIA CANYON
Leader: Bill Wakeland 563-6246

- 9 GULL ROCK
Trip follows trail along the coast from the town of Hope.
Round trip 9 miles. Class A. Ok for children who can
travel this distance.
Leader: Don Hansen 242-7184
- 16 O'MALLEY PEAK
Ski or climb up Little O'Malley notch and cross over ridge
to base of O'Malley and up the snow gully. Need ice axe and
skins for the skis. Class C.
Leader: Don Hansen 243-7184
- 23-25 CHICKALOON-BOULDER CREEK
Memorial Day weekend. Class B. Backpack trip on
established trail.
Leader: Marty Bassett 694-3917
- June 14 EKLUTNA LAKE
Mountain bike trip around the lake. Class A.
Leader: Don Hansen 243-7184
- 20-21 FLATTOP SOLSTICE
Traditional overnight on the summit. Class C.
Leader: President O'Haire 561-1141
- June 20 - July 5 LOGAN MOUNTAINS, N.W.T., CANADA
Exploratory backpack trip in the Logan Mountains. (This is
not the same as Mt. Logan.) Will charter from Watson Lake,
Yukon to Glacier Lake. The terrain contains numerous
spectacular Yosemite-like walls so the route will depend on
what we can hike. There are no trail systems. There will
be some glacier travel and possible fourth-class climbing.
Moderate pace. Cost of the charter is estimated to be \$500
(U.S.). Limit 4 people. Class: GLACIER TRAVEL.
Leader: Dave Logan 243-4887
- June 27 CROW PASS - EAGLE RIVER
Second annual 27-mile hike. One-day hike on good trail,
approximately 11 hours. Class D.
Leader: Allan Shayer 338-0341
- 27-28 WILLIWAW LAKES
Easy beginner's overnight trip on good trail. 12 miles
round trip. Class B.
Leader: Eric Teela 349-4292
- July 3-6 HUT CONSTRUCTION ON MATANUSKA GLACIER
One day to hike in, one day to hike out, two days for
construction. Tools will be needed. Call leaders. Class:
GLACIER TRAVEL. Crampons, ice axe, etc. No skis (no snow).
Leaders: Willy Hersman 338-5132, Neil O'Donnell 274-5069
- 4-16 PORCUPINE RIVER
Charter plane from Fairbanks to Old Crow, Y.T. 300-mile
descent of the river to Fort Yukon. Moderate pace, from 10
to 14 days. Participants may permanently break from the
group and proceed on their own. Cost of the charter
estimated to be \$350.00 per person. The flight from Fort

Yukon to Fairbanks is around \$100.00. Collapsible boats must be used.

Leader: Marty Bassett 694-3917

6-12 SCANDINAVIAN PEAKS

Continuation of July 3-6 trip, after hut construction. Club hut built in 1990 will serve as base for climbs. Class: FIFTH CLASS for the climbs, GLACIER TRAVEL for approach. Members may elect to fly in to the hut, approximate cost \$100. It takes two days to walk out.

Leader: Tom Choate 333-5309

11 or 12 MYSTERY MOUNTAIN

Only if July 6-12 trip does not go.

Leader: Tom Choate 333-5309

18-25 HARDING ICEFIELD

Tustamena Glacier to Exit Glacier. Glacier travel skills required. Get equipment list from leader. Class: GLACIER TRAVEL.

Leader: Dan O'Haire 561-1141

? SHIP LAKE

Eric Teela

? REED LAKES

Eric Teela

25-26 ROGAINE MOUNTAIN ORIENTEERING

A rough outdoor group activity involving navigation and endurance.

Leader: Chris Tomsen

July 25 - Aug 8 BROOKS RANGE

Two-week backpacking trip. Optional nontechnical climbs. Upper Alatna River area. Class C. Strenuous packing with easy rock scrambling day-trips.

Leader: Don Hansen 243-7184

August 15-16 MINT HUT

Nine-mile hike to the club's hut and then do rock climbs and walk-up climbs. Class: FIFTH CLASS or Class E.

Leader: Tom Choate 333-5309

? BLACKTAIL-ROUND TOP-VISTA

Leader: TBA

TRIP CLASSIFICATIONS

The classifications below do not take into account 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 participation on 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 trip 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 a 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.

GLACIER TRAVEL: Trips requiring roped travel over glaciers. Knowledge of crevasse rescue, and ice axe and crampon skills are required. Basic understanding of ice and snow anchors is also required.

FIFTH CLASS: Trips which involve fifth class climbing. A Basic Mountaineering course or equivalent is required. Knowledge of belay and rappel techniques and placing anchors is required. Climbing difficulty varies widely with each 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.

TRIP REPORTS

Ski-Jouring Mt. Susitna

Tim Kelley

Whenever I look west of Anchorage, Mt. Susitna always catches and holds my attention. Bulging abruptly out of the Susitna River drainage the "Sleeping Lady" is inaccessible by foot for most of the year. In summer Mt. Susitna is surrounded by a moat of muskeg, guarded by legions of mosquitos and fortified by dense taiga black spruce, alders and devil's club. It is said that the best way to climb Mt. Susitna in the summer is to land a Super-Cub on top, hike down to tree-line and then back to the top (Rod Wilson, Scree 09/83).

In winter Mt. Susitna is much more accessible and, as I found out on the weekend of February 8-9, can offer a fantastic winter outing. To get to the base of Mt. Susitna I started ski-jouring from the Pt. MacKenzie dairy farms area. I was pulling a 60-pound Iditaski-type sled loaded with dog food, camping gear and more dog food. Accompanying me were my ever-ready-for-adventure canine companions, 220 pounds of Malemute/MacKenzie River Husky mix.

From the dairy farms I followed the Enstar pipeline right-of-way west across the Little Susitna and on to the Big Susitna and Bell Island. The gas pipeline trail is straight, flat and easy skiing and used heavily by snowmachines. There was an open slough on the west side of Bell Island so I had to detour up to Alexander Creek and then back down the west channel of the Susitna to regain the pipeline.

A mile later the treeless Chedatna Lakes begins, where I broke trail and had my dogs follow. In the middle of this frozen marsh area I came across recent tracks of a wolf pack. My 120-pound Malemute had paw prints that were half the size. As the snow got deeper I switched to snowshoes and followed a streambed leading to the large gully that empties to the southeast off the south peak of Susitna.

Nearing the base of the mountain I had to negotiate through a band of black spruce and then on through open cottonwood forest. I took a tumble snowshoeing over a log and plunged my hand into a clump of devil's club buried under the snow. Even in February you can't escape this nasty weed!

From the base of the mountain, an elevation of about 600 feet and 25 miles from my starting point, the slope increased quickly through scattered trees. I began wading uphill through heavy, chest-deep snow. The dogs followed in the trench behind me. At 1500 feet I set up camp.

The next day, using snowse next day, using snowshoes and carrying my skis, I beat a p to treeline and on to the base of the southeast ridge of the south summit. I had taken a chance with the weather service, whose prediction was for clear weather. They were right! To top it off, the northern lights were bright enough to travel by.

The gradual south ridge of Mt. Susitna that can be seen from Anchorage, the "sleeping lady's hair," has a Tanaina name: Ch'chihi Ken, meaning "ridge where we cry." It is said that ancient peoples of this area used to climb this ridge to look out across their homeland and cry for their ancestors. No doubt they ventured to the top of Dghleshna, Tanaina for "Little Mountain." The legend of the sleeping lady was not a Tanaina myth, most likely an old prospector's yarn.

I cached my snowshoes at the wind-pack level and followed the steps of my mountain beasts, reaching the south summit at 9:00am. On top I hitched up the dogs so they wouldn't stray onto the overhang on the west side of the summit. There was a small communications station that looked similar to the state police station on Government Peak.

After descending from the south summit I climbed to the plateau of the main summit. Here I hitched up to the dogs and ski-joured across the plateau. Skating along behind my frolicking team I enjoyed one of the most spectacular 360 degree panoramic views I've ever seen in Alaska.

There is a large communications station on the middle of the summit plateau. A diesel generator housed in a quonset hut gurgles away, nurtured by a 30-foot fuel tank. The door looked unlocked, but I didn't have a shovel. Also should the legend of the sleeping lady be true, I wouldn't want to be inside when she awoke. I was surprised at how much debris was scattered over both summits.

The true north summit (4396) was less than a mile round trip from the communications station. I returned by the same route that I ascended. I broke camp at noon and made it back to Pt. MacKenzie by 6:30 pm. I'd recommend this trip highly. It is a safe winter climb up a unique mountain. By using dogs I was able to travel quickly. Slower skiers should allocate a day each to get to and return from the mountain on this route.

Arctic to Indian

Joel Babb

Twenty-five came. Twenty-five skied. Twenty-five returned. At least we think they returned. The consensus of the mopup crew was if they were left behind, too bad.

We had a great crew. Everyone showed up on time with proper gear, a strong heart, and adequate mental faculties. None of these prerequisites are a given on this type of day excursion.

Dick Griffith, designated morning trail breaker and day-long ramrod led the assault. We began at the last turnout below the Arctic ski resort with a bit of apprehension. From the previous week's trail reports, I had visions of tree branches skewering skiers. Fortunately, a recent light snowfall provided enough of a cushion to negotiate the icy narrow trail that leads down to Ship Creek.

After a short break and headcount at the bottom, we began a wonderful trail ski through the spruce trees along Ship Creek. Groups of two and three set their own rhythm and we skied at a brisk pace. In relatively quick time, we climbed an embankment, crossed a snow bridge over the creek and found a spot to take lunch a half-hour ahead of schedule.

A little moleskin was cracked out, sandwiches devoured and conversation picked up. An underground movement to reclaim some trails for dogs was discussed. We learned that we were lunching near an old Iditarod roadhouse. Our trail breaker indicated he knew every tree out there. Eric Teela assembled everyone for a group photo. (By the way, if you go on a trip with him do not bother to bring any equipment. He comes fully loaded.) It was also determined that a cellular phone does not work on this trip.

The spring warmth caused a shedding of layers as the sprint team charged ahead. We at the rear made the gradual ascent above treeline to Indian at a more deliberate pace. By three o'clock most of the group had made it to the pass and then it was all downhill. By half past four all were out and many on their way back to Arctic. We even had an abundance of shuttle car space and no one had to reverse the route. Great planning!

Thanks to the shuttle car drivers. If this isn't, it should be an annual club trip.

Hut Hauling on the Mat

Willy Hersman.

The second stage of putting in the next hut took place on the last weekend of March. It started out on the wrong foot two days before departure when I got a call from Jeff Young, who had volunteered to drive the materials on a flatbed from his work. He said a co-worker had driven several miles on regular gas. It's a diesel truck. Oops.

Dan O'Haire suddenly found himself as the driver of a rented truck. Six of us followed him on Saturday to Eureka Summit, where the lift would be staged. By noon our hero pilot buzzed onto the lake behind Eureka Lodge in his Beaver. Paul Claus of Ultima Thule Expeditions would put four of our group on the glacier along with three planeloads of hut stuff using skillful landings on a very short section of ice southeast of Mt. Wickersham. Randy and Cathy Howell helped load the plane, but were left behind.

Jim Sitkiewicz, Dave Hart, Bertrand Poinsonnet and I spent the remainder of Saturday and all of Sunday grunting 2x4's, plywood, metal siding, windows, doors, nails, foundation timbers, etc. over crevasses and 200 feet up onto a bench near the landing site. It was heavy, awkward work. By Sunday evening the whole mess was resting in a snow hole, tied up and waiting for the snow to melt and the workers to return in the summer.

There would be no flight out; the strip was too short. So on Monday we roped up and skied back to the Glenn Highway, taking eight hours to get there. The site is approximately 9 1/2 miles from the parking lot at the terminus of the glacier and 8 1/2 miles from the Scandinavian Peaks Hut. Thanks to those who gave voluntary time to haul the hut and special thanks to Paul Claus who did a great job and cost the treasury less than the flatbed.

ADZE

Looking for pictorial material on Mt. McKinley, particularly in photographs of views from the Muldrow Glacier area.

Roy Kerswill

1033 E. Northern
Phoenix, AZ 85020

**COMPLETE, ADD TO, OR
BEGIN YOUR COLLECTION OF
MOUNTAINEERING
MAGAZINES AND JOURNALS.
BACK ISSUES OF CLIMBING,
ROCK & ICE, SUMMIT, OFF
BELAY, MOUNTAIN, ASCENT,
THE MOUNTAIN WORLD,
AMERICAN ALPINE JOURNAL,
ACCIDENTS IN NORTH
AMERICAN MOUNTAINEERING
AND OTHERS. SEND FOR
LIST. MOUNTAINEERING
PERIODICALS BOUGHT AND
SOLD. JOE KRAMARSIC, BOX
1342, DILLON, COLORADO
80435.**

OUTDOOR CONFERENCE REPORT

Paul Petzoldt, founder of the National Outdoor Leadership School and lifelong climber, was the first and most memorable speaker at this first formal Alaskan assemblage of Outdoor Educators. His message included reminders that to learn leadership, you need to "...go beyond the roadhead. No shrinks, ministers or policemen go out there."

He spoke on trends in lessening impact on the environment, and evolving university curricula. Recounting his bivouac and ascent of the Grand Teton in 1924 at age 16, he noted the only reason he didn't die was that hypothermia was not in the dictionary. He sought to encourage real education in how to make and execute decisions, as opposed to passive classroom techniques of memorization and regurgitation.

The various workshops on programs, curricula development and opportunities provided great networking and information-sharing. Look for an Alaskan chapter of the Association for Experimental Education soon! Contact Alaska Wilderness Studies at UAA for future developments.

Chris Tomsen

MINUTES OF THE MARCH MEETING

Dan O'Haire called the meeting to order and introduced new members.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Money Market	-	\$4223.22
Checking Acct	-	919.55
Petty Cash	-	52.10
Total		\$5194.87

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Hiking and Climbing.

Don Hansen announced a committee meeting for March 19. Future trips will be discussed and planned.

Hut Committee.

Maxine Stoddard reported the Bockstahler hut is ready for transport. National Air Guard transport was requested but not approved. Construction will be in July.

OLD BUSINESS

Trailhead vandalism efforts continue.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dan will present a slide show at REI of the Harding Icefield.

Debbie Brown at REI is organizing a May 4 march for state parks starting at Potter Section House. Proceeds go to trailhead vandalism.

Two-for-one Alpenglow coupons were made available.

Russian ice screws were announced as still available.

Alex Sidorski introduced Sergey Chebotov, director of Youth Tourist Center, IYTB "Sputnik." Sergey organized a tour for the Sidorski family which, including food, cost less than \$30/person/day through Russian national parks. Alex said contact is best by mail or telex. Sergey Chebotov, 680021 Russia, Khabarovsk, per Leningradsky, 9 or telex 141134 PTB SU.

Igor Vavilov and Nick Gostry from the Scientific Centre "Kiev" joined the MCA (probably the first MCA members from the Ukraine). Igor is sponsored by the Kiev Insurance Company and is seeking contacts for exchange mountaineering trips. Igor has contacts for the Pamir and Caucasus. He can be reached at Box 1786, Nome, Alaska 99762. His FAX is 044-228-7272. Welcome to Alaska!

Respectfully Submitted,

Chris Tomsen