



APRIL 1994

A Publication of the Mountaineering Club of Alaska, Inc.  
Box 102037, Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Volume 37 Issue 04

## APRIL MEETING

Wednesday

April 20, 7:30

Pioneer Schoolhouse, 3rd & Eagle Streets  
Downtown Anchorage

**Slide Show:** Robert Teissler will show Fann Mountain in the Caucasus and Big Wall climbing in the Pamir.

**Gear Swap:** Bring in your unwanted outdoor gear, your checkbook, and prepare to make deals.

**More slides:** Bring in a few of your recent slides for sharing with us after the main show and gear swap.

## HIKING AND CLIMBING SCHEDULE

Apr 9-10 **Bold Peak**  
Western Chugach. NW Face route. Class: Fifth Class. Skills required include: self arrest, avalanche assessment, snow anchors, and snow climbing. Good physical condition. Limit 7 plus leader. See leader about gear required.  
Leader: Jonathan Rose 278-3189

Apr 23 **McHugh Peak**  
Western Chugach. Need sturdy boots, ice axe. Self-arrest ability required. Class B. See 55 Ways trip 30.  
Leader: Mindy Baum 338-6396

23-24 **East Fork Trail**  
Trail maintenance. Mountain bike past Eklutna Lake to trailhead. Bring overnight gear; the majority of work is too far in for a day-hike. Meet at Eklutna Lake parking lot 9:30 Saturday. Bring brush saw and long-handle tree pruner, if you have them.  
Leader: Willy Hersman 373-4734



- May 14-15 **Bird Peak**  
Western Chugach. Class C. Ice axe and self-arrest ability needed. Contact leader. Leader: James Larabee 345-5406
- 21 **Blacktail and Roundtop**  
Western Chugach, Eagle River area. Conditioning hike. Class C. See 55 Ways trip 39. Leader: Scott Bailey 696-7250
- 27-30 **Clearwater Mts.**  
We will depart Anchorage Friday evening. These mountains are located on the north side of the Denali Highway and are an area that the club has not visited in recent years. We will backpack in a couple of miles to a lake and climb Peak 6215 and possibly an adjacent peak, both in the southwest corner of the mountains. Class C. See leader about gear. Leader: Dave Logan 276-2666
- June 11-12 **Wiliwaw Lakes and Peak**  
Western Chugach. Hike to lakes on Saturday, climb on Sunday. Need ice axe and self-arrest ability. Class C. See 55 Ways trip 33. Leader: Dennis Morford 522-1179
- 18-19 **Flute Glacier**  
Near South Fork of Eagle River. Class Glacier Travel. Need ice axe, harness, crampons. Contact leader for details. Leader: Dave Logan 276-2666
- 18-19 **Flattop**  
Traditional solstice sleepout. Class C. No leader needed. See 55 Ways trip 31.
- 26 **Peak 5450**  
Western Chugach, Eklutna Lake. Non-technical climb. Class D. Elevation gain of 4500 feet. Leader: Mindy Baum 338-6396
- July 23-  
Aug. 7 **Vampire Peaks, N.W.T., Canada**  
This is a return to the area visited last year. Varies from easy walking to technical, both rock and ice. We will have 2 or 3 camp form which we will climb nearby peaks. \$500 flight to the peaks. Class: Glacier Travel. Leader: Dave Logan 276-2666

- July 23-  
Aug. 8 **Arrigetch Peaks, Gates of the Arctic**  
Backpacking trip to this scenic granite mountain area with lots of day hikes and optional easy climbs. Transportation costs are \$600 from Anchorage, but you can save \$200 by driving to Fairbanks. Fly commercial to Bettles, then charter to Circle Lake. Bears may be common. Class C. Leader: Don Hansen 243-7184

## TRIP REPORTS

### Ramblin' Man

by Mike Miller

**I**t was cold. There was no snow. There was no skiing. But there was ice! Everywhere. Harry Hunt and I went in search of the promised route, devoid of the usual avalanche threat from above. We were headed to Portage, home of The Brown Moose.

But on the way down, ice captured our spirit. Not the ice we have talked about, the ice we have read about, the ice that has already been climbed, but unknown ice. Unknown to us and probably to most. Snows during a normal year must hide all these silvery-blue ribbons streaming in every nook and cranny among the folds of the mountains.

We drooled over the sight of the Brown Moose for a few minutes through the early morning light of Feb. 27th. But the excitement of exploration got the better of us and we split. We drove back to the start of the Portage Valley, out by the highway. On the east, right side of the valley snuck a long, narrow, winding thread of ice. It wandered way up into the trees and parts looked steep from the road. We found a dirt road that took us back around a small lake and through a small stream, and we parked just outside a gate barring access to some homes.

A short hike gave just enough warm-up before reaching the base of the climb. The start was like the start of Ripple, about 40' of dead vertical. Then it laid back for another 960' of grade II ice. It just rambled up and up, around corners and alders, demanding the name "Ramblin' Man." It was fun to swap 300' leads, moving fast over the good ice. There were no steep upper pillars we had hoped for from the road. But it

was a good 1000' of grade II ice, and the thrill of the unknown drove us upward to the top.

After rappelling and down-climbing, we headed down the road for another glory piece we thought we had seen on the drive down. Back toward Girdwood the ice we had seen at first light now looked low angled and short. We soloed one 700-foot, grade maybe 1.5, and called it a day. So much for the adrenaline-pumping grade IV with the mind-numbing descent. But searching the bounds of the unknown gives a thrill all its own.

### Split Screen

by Charlie Sassara

**C**On the Sunday of President's Day weekend, John Mitchel and I climbed a new three and a half-pitch mixed route on the north face of The Wedge. The route follows a line of steep, right-facing corners just right of the large easternmost couloir. The first pitch involved classic Chugach frozen-crud stemming with moderate angled mantles. It did not look too tough, so we third-classed the pitch to a snow patch below the verglassed corner that identifies the route. The second pitch continued up the corner on steep verglass. Deep in the corner the ice was two to four inches thick, but further out and about where your right foot should be, the ice feathered to rock. Fortunately, good rock protection was found on the left wall. The third pitch ascended a short snow gully up a broken vertical chimney beneath the largest chock stone in the western hemisphere. After some rotten snow, the route angled right and continued up the rock corner to a beautiful belay. Another short, but easy pitch ended on the low-angled scree.

This is a cool, high quality route that is hard enough to demand attention, but never desperate. "Split Screen": WI 4, 5.7, 500'.

ADZE



#### Found

Ice axe. Near Flattop. You describe it, you claim it.  
Chris Brown 696-5207.

## EDITORIAL

### Climbers React to Peak Fees



Coming to Alaska from Europe the responsible attitude which climbers have to their sport has truly impressed me. The access to training is second to none. Alaska Wilderness Studies, Alaska Mountain Rescue Group, Alaska Mountain Safety Center and the Mountaineering Club of Alaska all promote excellent mountain safety. The philosophy is that you are on your own and can expect to get yourself out of the trouble you got yourself into. Alaskan climbers have a good track record on mountains, including Denali. Sadly foreign climbers do not. It is their fatalities and rescues which get public attention.

Denali has a different character from other mountains in North America and Europe. High and fearsome, with unpredictable weather, it is Alaska's mountain and demands respect. This respect is shown by the climber learning from experience, his own and that of others, and obtaining relevant education and training. It is not shown by providing a more elaborate rescue service. Quite the opposite in fact.

The Park Service proposes to charge all climbers a summit fee to subsidize a rescue service that it claims it can no longer afford. I suggest that the Service retracts the proposal, and, in collaboration with local climbers, reduces the scale of the rescue operation. The Service should promote safety, awareness and preparedness in collaboration with national mountaineering organizations.

The Service envisages administering a summit fee. Surely, it would be better directed designing a self-financing permit system based on a climber's experience.

Address the cause and not the symptoms!

- Jonathan Rose



It was noted at the public hearing on the proposed peak fees for Denali and Foraker that nearly all present were against the Park Service proposal. That's no surprise. Climbers are an independent group of people who would rather



not be taken care of by the government. It was also noted that Park Service officials had pretty much made up their minds beforehand. That's no surprise. We've been sliding downhill as a democracy for generations. And it was also noted that the Park Service is not interested in making the mountains safer, just in making their jobs safer. That's no surprise, either, they took the easy route.

The hard route would have been to take climbers' advice and get out of rescues, which they are not required to do and now say they cannot afford. It might be easier to accept if money was needed to clean up litter or safeguard the park from development. It might be easier to accept if other groups in our society were asked to pay for their rescues. But that's not the way, and most of that money will go for administrative costs and a standby helicopter we did not ask for.

How typical of the government to keep us dependent. How typical to encourage irresponsibility; to assess our needs for us and then make us pay for it. Climbers are an easy target; not well-organized politically, not well understood by the public, not very rich. What are you gonna do? Pay the man or go somewhere else, I guess. It's his park.



- Willy Hersman



### MCA Western Chugach 7000-Footer Recognition

Tim Kelley

At past board meetings the subject of an MCA local mountaineering achievement award has been discussed. Several other mountaineering clubs in the U.S. have local mountaineering awards that their club members actively pursue. In Colorado there's the 14000-Footer Club and in New York and New Hampshire there are '46er' awards for climbing all 46 4000-foot peaks in each state.

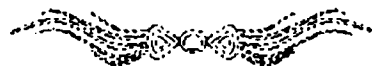
An MCA mountaineering recognition would emphasize climbing peaks in our "backyard" - the Western Chugach. Here there are challenging climbs that are accessible without much expense. In light of this, the board voted to institute an "MCA Western Chugach 7000-Footer Recognition." This recognition will be given to those who climb all 21 7000-foot peaks in the Western Chugach.

The 7000-Footer achievement does not imply alpine expertise. Many of the 7000-foot peaks are not technically demanding. The intent is to offer a goal to those who patronize our local mountains. As there will most likely be no large number of climbers summitting all 7000-footers on a regular basis, the board decided to make the 7000-Footer Recognition unofficially governed. No official rules, no calling this an 'Award' or "Club," no forms and no validation (we all have enough bureaucracy in life!). If you eventually summit all Western Chugach 7000-foot peaks and feel like letting your club newsletter know, for history's sake - great. If you don't want to let anyone know - that's fine too.

A list of the 21 7000-foot Western Chugach Peaks follows. All of the peaks listed are 'true' peaks except possibly two. A Western Chugach peak is considered a 'true' peak when it has at least a 500-foot drop off all ridges leading to the summit. The two peaks that don't meet this criteria are Benevolent Peak and Icicle Peak. However, these peaks are included on the list because they have historically been recognized as members of the 7000-foot group of Western Chugach peaks.

R

1. 8005	Bashful Peak	ANCH	B-5	14N	3E	S14
2. 7950	Baleful Peak	ANCH	B-5	14N	3E	S24
3. 7640	Bellicose Peak	ANCH	A-6	13N	2E	S2
4. 7549	Hunter's Peak	ANCH	B-5	14N	4E	S15
5. 7535	Mt. Yukla	ANCH	A-6	13N	2E	S28
6. 7530	Mt. Rumble	ANCH	B-5	14N	2E	S34
7. 7522	Bold Peak	ANCH	B-5	15N	3E	S33
8. 7465	Troublesome Pk	ANCH	B-5	14N	4E	S22
9. 7450	Mt. Kiliak (West)	ANCH	A-6	13N	2E	S17
10. 7280	Beelzebub Peak	ANCH	A-6	13N	2E	S25
11. 7265	Mountaineer's Pk	ANCH	B-5	14N	4E	S1
12. 7250	Benign Peak	ANCH	B-6	14N	2E	S25
13. 7240	Devil's Club Pk	ANCH	B-5	15N	4E	S36
14. 7190	Mt. Soggy	ANCH	A-6	13N	2E	S22
15. 7150	East Kiliak	ANCH	A-6	13N	2E	S17
16. 7135	Whiteout Peak	ANCH	A-6	12N	3E	S15
17. 7126	Benevolent Peak	ANCH	B-5	14N	3E	S23
18. 7050	Icicle Peak	ANCH	A-6	13N	2E	S22
19. 7040	Peril Peak	ANCH	A-6	13N	3E	S18
20. 7030	Korohusk Peak	ANCH	A-6	13N	2E	S7
21. 7005+	Insignificant Pk	ANCH	A-6	12N	3E	S2



## Powerline Proposal for Talkeetnas

A proposed electrical powerline may soon threaten the Talkeetna backcountry. The state of Alaska wants to build the line between Sutton and Glennallen. The intertie would run along many parts of the front range of the Talkeetnas, going up Boulder Creek and over Chitina Pass. Also included would be Alfred, Squaw, and Caribou Creek drainages, depending on the final route selected by Copper Valley Electrical Association (CVEA).

A citizen's group called ACRED (Alaska Citizens for Responsible Energy Development) has been formed to oppose the project. However, it is essential that everyone write or call their legislator and the governor immediately and express their opposition. The draft Feasibility Study clearly demonstrated that CVEA does not need the powerline (which would provide 350% more power than CVEA customers currently use). It also showed that smaller scale hydro projects in the CVEA service area would be better and cheaper.

Pressuring Hickel will put pressure on the Community and Regional Affairs Commissioner to disapprove the project. Ask the legislature to repeal the \$35 million appropriated already (we can't afford it anyway). Call 258-8111 (public message), or write the governor at Box 110001, Juneau 99811, or call Chris Rose 745-6000.

### MINUTES

## MARCH MEETING

March 16th 1994. **Dave Hart** called the meeting to order and had new members introduce themselves. Business was to be kept to a minimum because of the length of the evening's program.

### TREASURER'S REPORT.

Money Market	4470.94
Checking	4127.53
Petty Cash	<u>50.00</u>
Total	8648.47

## COMMITTEE REPORTS.

### Huts.

**Willy Hersman** announced that anyone going up to the Mint Hut should contact him or Maxine Franklin to bring up a new lantern (and if you forget, then at least carry out the broken one).

### Hiking and Climbing.

**Don Hansen** announced the meeting of the climbing and hiking committee at his house on 17th March at 7:30.

### Programs.

**Jonathan Rose** announced that next month, after the main slide show, there would be an opportunity for club members to show slides of trips that they had done — a few slides each. There will be one 80-slide carousel available.

### OLD BUSINESS.

None.

### NEW BUSINESS.

None.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS.

**Willy Hersman** announced that orders for freeze dry items would be collected after the meeting and sent in as soon as possible.

**Mike Miller** announced that there is a letter that he has drafted and which is available for anyone to sign objecting to the proposal to charge a \$200 summit fee for Foraker and Denali, starting in 1995. He also announced that there will be a meeting where the Park Service will present the reason why a summit fee will be charged at the Loussac Library Theater on Wednesday 30th March at 7:00 PM. The Park Service has asked for written comments to be addressed to the Superintendent of National Parks by 15th April. He urged members to write and also attend the meeting to testify against the proposal. The addresses to write to are:

National Park Service  
PO Box 9M  
Denali National Park and Preserve, AK 99755

Roger Kennedy, Director of Park Service  
US Dept. of Interior  
PO Box 37127  
Washington DC 20013-7127

Jack Moorehead  
Regional Director National Park Service  
2525 Gambell St.  
Anchorage, AK 99503-2892

Bruce Babbitt  
1849 C St. NW  
Washington, DC 20240

Ted Stevens  
222 W 7th Ave. #2  
Anchorage, Alaska 99513

**Dave Hart** announced that the DNR has proposed another hut three miles from the parking lot of Eklutna Lake and that hut fees will be charged for Alex's cabin. Comments are required by 31st March.

**Dave Hart** also announced that the Chugach State Advisory Board will meet at the Anchorage Pioneer Home on April 11th where the proposed \$2 user fees for Eklutna Lake Parking Lot will be discussed. It is expected that user fees may also be charged for Glen Alps and McHugh Creek parking lots starting in 1995.

**Dave Hart** also announced that the State Troopers had informed him that ice climbing on the Seward Highway was causing a hazard to motorists and could he ask MCA and other climbers to minimize any interference with traffic.

**Paul Bezilla** announced the Banff Film Festival on 23rd March at 7:00 at West High.

Thanks to all who participated in the Denali Preparation Evening, particularly **Nick Parker, Vern Tejas, Mike Miller, Julia Moore, Peter Hackett and Kevin Moore**. Much useful information was exchanged and discussed.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jonathan Rose

### MCA 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.

Approved by MCA Board, March 1987

### General Rules for MCA Sanctioned Trips

1. Proper equipment is listed at the end of the rules.
2. No dogs. (Among the reasons are bear problems.)
3. The leader's suggestions are to be followed. Do not go off alone, return or rush ahead without his (her) permission, and don't ford a stream before the leader assesses the situation. Remember, this is a club trip and the leader must know where all participants are. Anyone separating from the group without the leader's approval is no longer considered a participant in the MCA Sanctioned trip.
4. Trip participants who, in the leader's opinion, put themselves or other members of the group in danger by disregarding the leader's suggestions, shall be subject to sanction by the club. Sanctions may include, but are not limited to, reprimand at general meeting, exclusion from future trips.