

#### **DECEMBER MEETING**

Wednesday December 17th , 7:30 pm First United Methodist Church

9th & G Streets

Next to the Phillips Building (you may use marked parking after hours...)

**Downtown Anchorage** 

SLIDE SHOW: Membership Slide Show Bring 10-15 slides and show folks where you adventured this year

# ANNUAL CHRISTMAS POTLUCK

If this is your first MCA Potluck, here's the program... The club provides the turkey, stuffing and beverages. You are invited to bring something, according to your last name...

A-D: Salads or Fruits E-I: Relish Plates, Bread or Chips J-N: Desserts O-Z: Casseroles or Veggie Platters

See You There!

# HIKING AND CLIMBING

December 13 Williwaw Lakes

The trip is 10-12 miles long with less than 1500 feet elevation gain. We will meet at the Glen Alps parking lot at 10:00 a.m. Bring lunch, thermos, appropriate gear, smiles, and warm clothing. No dogs, please! Class B Leader Amy, 338-3979

December 14 Mount Significant

Bag a 5000 + footer!

required equipment: Crampons, ice axe, avalanche gear. Class C Leader Tom Dolan 223-1308

December 20 - 21 **Annual Winter Solstice Flattop Party** Come join La Presidente and other brave souls for the traditional overnight winter camping stay on our local Flattop. Details will be provided at the December meeting.

# HIKING AND CLIMBING

#### December 28 Eklutna Ice Climbing

Celebrate the long days with an ice climbing ad venture in the Eklutna Canyon. Grades III and IV climbs will challenge even the most experienced climbers. Must have proficent skills and your own gear. Prefferably sign-up in person at the meeting. Limit 12. Class: Technical Climbing 5th Class. Contact Trip Leader for further details. Trip Leader: Richard Baranow/Jayme Mack, 694-1500.

#### January 3 Hurdy Gurdy Snowshoe Adventure

Join us in hiking a gnarly trail, 2500' up, into the Hurdy Gurdy drainage; below the awesome north face of Eagle Peak (6951'). The terrain is step in places, requires boulder hopping skills and bushwacking techniques. Round Trip: 8 miles. There will be an informal gathering at the trip leader's home afterwards. BYOB and party snacks requested. P.S. Don't forget your headlamp. Class B Contact trip leader, Richard Baranow, 694-1500.

#### January 4 Hurdy Gurdy Ice Climbing

Take advantage of the wonderful trail provided by fellow MCA members and quickly journey up to the rarely climbed Hurdy Gurdy ice climbs. Grades II, III and IV ice formations, accompanied by incredible views of the Eagle River drainage, will help you pummel the ice all day long. Must be in good shape, have profiecent ice climbing skills and be selfsufficient. Preferrably sign-up in person and with a partner at the monthly meeting. 8 miles round trip. 2500' elevation gain to base of climbs. Class B + Technical Climbing SkillsContact trip leader for more details. Trip Leader: Richard Baranow at 694-1500.

#### January 10 Ram Valley Ski Tour

Depending on the current snow conditions, we will ski, snowshoe or hike up into the magnificent Ram Valley drainage, up to Bombardment Pass; gateway to the upper Peter's Creek drainage. Class C. Contact trip leader, Richard Baranow, 694-1500 for further details.

#### January 17 South Fork Eagle River

Ski Trip with Matt Nedom.Contact Matt for details. Class B Leader Matt, 278-3648

February or March, 9 or 10 days, Pico de Orizaba, Mexico A Mexican volcano (18,405 feet). A moderately paced, non-expeditionary sample of high altitude climbing. A good ice axe arrest, helmet and crampons are required. There may be some roped travel. There will be time for acclimatization, Class D and Basic Mountaineering skills Limit 4 team members or 8 if there is a co-leader.. Leader John Recktenwald 336-2675



#### Avalanche

by Tom Dolan

November 30th, I got caught in an avalanche.Lost my skis! but kept my life so guess I can't complain. Kristin got buried. Sean dug her out before I could even get down there. Myself and Annette and Nancy, one in front of me and one behind were all just blown down the mountain about a hundred feet. It was so fast you can't even imagine. I saw it when I looked up at the Annette, who saw it first and tried to yell at me but the wind was blowing about 35 miles an hour so we couldn't hear each other unless you yelled in thei ear; when I saw her turn around like she was going to ski down I though "Now what's Annette doing? Isn't she going to take off her skins ??? "Then I saw it- just a wall of snow (powder and big chunks) so I'm thinking, ok I've got to ski out of here ! I don't even think I got one ski turned around and it hit me, so hard it almost took my breath away. I got turned over end over end about 5 or 6 times. It was so weird, it was slow, but very fast ... I had time to do all the things your supposed to do, swim through it but you can't do that when your being rolled. Every time I got level I would kind of do this doggy paddle thing. When I started to slow down I got my one arm up! I didn't see day light the whole time. On one roll I got my face smashed into the snow really bad. What saved me from getting my mouth full of snow was I had my mamba sock (neck gator) on because of the violent wind. I also had goggles on and my Gore-Tex hood over my wool hat (which help keep it all on). Anyway, when that happened I remember thinking, ok I have my beacon on but I have to be able to breath for as long as it takes to get dug out ! I concentrated on getting my arm over my head and mouth when I started to slow down. And I did well. I was only a little buried with one hand up and the other sort of by my head ! The initial panic of looking for my companions when I realized I wasn't buried set in immediately ! Annette was above me sitting there very dazed but waved at me as I was screaming at her. Nancy was below me (before we got took out) I saw a blue shape below me ( which was her ) but it didn't register because I saw Sean and Kristin far below me. At first glance it looked only like one body because he was kind of on top of her. So I though it was either Sean or Kristin right below me, ok that's four and we were five ! I'm screaming for Nancy and trying to run down the mountain ( in 4 or 5 feet of avalanche debris on top of two or 3 feet of powder (the debris hadn't set up yet and it didn't not like its supposed to at least not by the time we got off the mountain ) and with no skis running wasn't happening too fast but when I got a bit closer I guess she heard me and turned around and waved so it was ok. Then I looked back down to where the run out stopped and saw that there were really two down there, one digging the other out.

All in all it was a trip. This happened at Hatcher pass, which is a very dangerous place; people die there every year with out fail ! and I knew better than to be there. I've never really been that scared of avalanches but my one rule that I have always stood fast to, I broke and that is to NEVER go out the day after a big storm ! Also we were skinning up a 38 degree slope that was wind loaded.

The full names of the other members of our group are, Sean Bolander., Kristin Dahl, Annette Everson, and Nancy Perry

#### **Rosie's Roost**

#### by Stu Grenier

This ball got rolling when Richard Baranow came to a meeting last winter and said, "Rosie's is going to blow away, the ballast boards have collapsed." So we made plans for a daring rescue. We had to save Rosie's. A team of volunteers would climb 5000 ft. up to the Eagle and travel the four miles to Rosie's Roost over treacherous glacier ice. Five of us with great expectations left the trailhead.

I originally planned to go in over the Milk, but a recon with John and Karen Beebee found both the Raven Cole Headwall and the headwall next to it, were badly crevassed. So a second recon up Goat Ridge with Christian Wilkens proved to be the charm. I basically used a route I learned from the APU Ski Team that traverses around the nasty part of the ridge.

We made it up to the glacier and played it real safe roping up on the snow-covered ice. When we got within sight of Rosie's Roost we were off the snow and decided to unrope. This set off a mad dash for the hut and its treasure. Jumping crevasses and running around the big ones, I made for the traditional route by dropping down below the hut and then going straight up. As I was climbing up to the hut I stopped to scan the glacier for the others below me. No one was there. I continued to climb and then looked across the way and saw the others trying to take a short cut. "The dogs", I thought to myself.

As I approached the hut I looked across the way again. I could see people backtracking. I guess the short cut wasn't so short after all. Snicker snicker.

When I arrived at the hut I was happy to see I was the first person there. I chucked my gear in all my favorite places. Then Jon Evenson showed up. Next Tom showed up, and we ate dinner. After dinner I went straight to bed and don't remember anything until 3 am when somebody snoring woke me up. On Jon's urging, I went to see the moonlight reflecting off the glacier as if it were liquid water. The stars were out and a comfortable breeze was blowing. It was divine.

The next day after a black sow and cub visited the hut, we all worked to fix the ballast boards and Tom put in two new windows. Greg Bragiel painted the door. The weather was perfect so we accomplished everything on the to do list. Tom on the other hand decided that the hut needed more windows. He even found one windowpane with a note form President Neil O'Donnell (early 1990's) requesting that it be installed.

That night we ate and drank and recited poetry. Tom shared his latest successful Denali account and one of his new poems.

By day three, having finished our official maintenance task, I was ready to head home. The snow was coming down pretty hard and I had been caught up there before by avalanche conditions, for me it was time to go. John Multas and I took our fair share of gear and trash and headed out. I warned Tom that if he puts anymore windows in, the DEA would have to patrol Rosie's to keep the Girdwoodians from using it as a green house. When we left, there were nine windows and Tom showed no sign of stopping. He especially seemed to enjoy Mark Miraglia's battery powered skill saw.

John and I had an eventful night decent of our route in on Goat Ridge. With six inches of fresh snow and clouds, we met the third black bear of the trip. In the dark, its blackness showing clearly on the white ridge, it moved like a specter. Judging form its tracks which we kept crossing, it eventually used the same route to descend that we did. A rather unique climbing partner.

When we got to the willows we found that winters onset had forced the willows to kowtow. Our trail had disappeared so we bivied. The morning light found us comfortable in our sleeping bags underneath snow covered willow boughs. The green and yellow of the leaves and the new whiteness of the ridge above us made for an exceptional morning. It made me question if hanging out in huts and tents is the best way to enjoy the outdoors.

Eventually, the others found their way home. We saved Rosie's! Mission accomplished.



#### Eagle River Traverse

by Steve Anderson

Participants (cast of characters) Neil Murphy Co-Leader, Guide Steve Anderson Co-Leader, GPS tech, e-Imaging Erik Teela Film Photographer Tina Boucher Trail Breaker Sadie Murphy Lead Dog (Standard Collie) Connor Anderson Route Finder (Border-Collie) John Murphy Strong Hiker (and Neil's son) Jim Szender Cameo Hiker, Rescue Driver

#### The Journey

Eagle River Nature Center (0.0 miles)

Neil Murphy and I both live in Eagle River. So for us the drive to the Nature Center takes less than 15 minutes. When I arrived near 7 AM, Neil and Erik were both there. Erik and had driven from Girdwood to do this hike. I was very impressed. Tina showed up several minutes after me. We had all hit slick/icy road spots. At 7:30, Neil, Tina, and Erik picked up John and went to the trial head. I waited until 7:50 for any stragglers. No other MCA hikers showed up at the Nature Center.

Steeple Drive to Mile High Saddle (1.9 Miles) JD Eckelson generously allowed us to park on property and access the trail from his yard. The hike started off very well as the days light increased. The trail was frozen and firm but not particularly slippery. Throughout this stage, and contrary to the forecasts, the weather was very benign.

*Mile High saddle to Tucker Peak* (1.5 Miles) As we reached the saddle before Tucker point, we saw a lone figure at the top of the ridge. It was Jim Szender. Jim told us he wanted to make it to the top of each small peak along this ridge walk. Jim joined us to hike to Mt. Magnificent.

*Tucker Peak to Mount Magnificent* (1.0 Miles) While the weather continued to be mild, the hike became more exciting after passing Tucker. We blithely hiked to a point from which the route became somewhat slippery and exposed.

At this point, John, who had shown himself to be a strong hiker, felt he had reached his comfort limit. John decided he wanted to try the Mt. Magnificent ridge line in less slippery conditions.

Jim reminded us that after going to the top of Mt. Magnificent—only about 100 yard away—he would be returning to his car at the bottom of the tail to Mile-High Saddle. Jim offered to accompany John and give him a ride home. Neil and John took shelter, ate lunch, and waited for Jim. Further up the ridge, the rest of us bundled up and ate our food as well. While waiting for Neil to retrace his steps back to our impromptu picnic, we all were getting colder. After Neil's return, we immediately got going. Quickly attaining the summit of Mt. Magnificent; Tina walked right on over and kept going. We all quickly followed. Today, this was just a local high point in the long ridge ahead.

Mount Magnificent to Mount Significant (4.9 Miles) While we were planning this trip, Richard Baranow stressed that once we got to the top of Mt. Magnificent we would be less that 1/3 of the way across the traverse. We were feeling good and energetically hiked on. While there were some clouds coming down the valley, the weather looked favorable.

About half way between the two peaks, we took a break for more food, water, etc. Sadie and Connor both did a good job getting treats from the rest of us. Next time Connor gets to carry his own pack. By this time, we could see thickening clouds moving in from both ends of the valley and feel the winds increasing. We had to get going again. We knew that the day was short and that we had lost more than 45 minutes waiting at Mt. Magnificent.

By the time we reached the saddle below the summit ridge of Mt. Significant we were walking through horizontal to upward-blowing snow. Everyone but Neil had mentioned feeling fatigue and the grunts and groans of exertion and/or discomfort were becoming more frequent. The winds increased and the snow came down ever heavier. Actually it never came down, but blew across our faces, plastered itself into the dogs' fur and Neil and Erik's beards. Connor used Sadie as a windbreak; constantly shifting his position to remain on her leeward side as we continued up the mountain. As we neared the summit, I was thinking that we were planning to omit a trip to the top to stay out of the worst of the winds. Just then, Neil turned to us and said that we should turn left to go to the summit. We had passed the summit by a few hundred feet and had to work our way back-almost happily—enjoying the change in the apparent direction of the wind. At the summit we spent only enough time to get some pictures. It was too windy to add or remove clothing and opening a pack was an invitation to gear loss.

Neither Erik nor Neil had protective glasses and the bite of the wind-blown snow must have been terrible. It was bad enough for me and I was wearing lightly tinted sport glasses.

Mount Significant to Ram Valley (2.3 Miles)

We were headed toward the end of our trip. I do not think that I allowed myself to consider that we were only 2/3 of the way to the Nature Center. The winds continued or even strengthened. The wind blew so hard it was difficult to plant our poles. Talking and being heard was difficult.



When the winds stopped, briefly and abruptly, we would stagger, no longer needing to oppose it's force. According to the trip co-leader, "the wind was at least 150 mph...and it snowed at least 12 inches...." I would say that the strong winds and amazing gusts made one feel as if ones feet briefly left the ground. For safety and visibility we moved a few feet off the ridge line. Entering the shelter of Ram Valley we saw that we still had a long way to go. We wanted to get to the top of the trail that led down to the Nature Center before dark.

Ram Valley to Eagle River Nature Center (3.7 Miles) We slowly worked our way down the West side of the valley and found a promising trail. We quickly found two moose parked upon the trail and decided not to try to scare them away in the failing twilight. We cut through some low brush, crossed a small stream and rejoined the trail. After hiking down into the valley, we had to hike back out, "...between the second of three bumps" in Loch Ness Ridge on the south side of the valley. To reach the ridge we needed to cross one more stream or walk around a small lake in the dark. While considering our options, we realized that it was dark and turning on our head-lamps we examined the most likely crossing point. This section consisted of a slick rock, a threefoot gap filled by several foot deep fast glacial runoff, an ice covered rock with an exposed apex followed by several feet of smaller slick rocks. We decided that jumping was out. Erik quickly decided cross by planting his poles in the center of the stream and stemming between the two larger rocks. Following Erik's lead we were on our way up to the top of the ridge. At the top of the ridge we expressed our happiness about only having to go down from here. I did not tell anyone that the trip down is nearly 2500 feet. Other than numerous slips/falls and briefly losing Connor-I think he snuck off and fell asleep-the trip down was uneventful, dark, and long. According to the trip co-leader, "...the [trail] down from the Loch Ness Ridge was as slick as an Olympic bobsled run." It was a steeper slope, plastered with wet snow-covered grasses, branched, roots, rocks and scree.

#### Post Hike Party

The anticipated party was brief and took place in the Eagle River Nature Center parking lot. We were all tired.

Distance: 15 miles Duration: 13.5 hours

#### The Future

Keep your eyes open for an official MCA winter crossing of the Eagle River Traverse or a similar adventure

## TRAINING

#### January 21 Mountaineering School Enrollment

Mountaineering Club of Alaska's Basic Mountaineering School.

This is a 5 week course starting Thursday January 22, 2004 through Sunday February 22, 2004.

Have a desire to get out in Alaska's wilds in the winter but lack the basic skills? Want to cross a glacier but don't know how to do it safely? Need to get to the top of one of our beautiful peaks this winter but don't know how to avoid the dangers? Or would you just like to brush up on your mountaineering skills? If any of these questions cross your mind, this is the school for you. We start with the basics, teach you to camp, find your way, avoid avalanches, arrest a fall on a slippery slope and get your friends out of a crevasse.

#### Class Schedule:

Jan 22,24-25: Snow Camping and Shelters Jan 27, 29, 31-Feb 1: Avalanche awareness Feb 5, 7-8: Back Country Orienteering Feb 12, 14-15: Snow Climbing Feb 19, 21-22: Glacier Travel and Crevasse Rescue

Sign up at the December or January General Meeting or Give me a call. The cost is \$75 to cover classroom rental, supplies and equipment. Instructors are not paid with money, just the satisfaction of passing on their knowledge to kindred spirits.

PS: We need instructors also, Please call or sign up at the meetings.

Steve Parry MCA Training Chair: 248-8710

### 2003-2004 CALENDAR

This calendar in the first ten days sold more calendars than any MCA Calendar has ever sold in a year. We printed 300 and as of Dec. 2 are going into our second printing of at least 100 more calendars. There will be plenty of calendars at the December meeting.

Calcom would like to give those people who did not pick up their pictures last month the chance to do it again this month. So if you have yet to get your entries back please come get them. Also if anyone would like to help sell calendars we may still be able to use the foyer at REI. Many places in town now are selling the calendars. They are AMH, Tidal Wave Books, The Alaska Rock Gym, and Girdwood Ski and Cyclery, but if you come to the MCA Meeting in December or January you will be able to get them for just 10 bucks

Stu Greneir, Calendar Chair





# **BOARD MINUTES**

#### Information Wanted

A highly experienced Outside climber will be visiting me (a not-so experienced one) in June/July 2004. He has never climbed in Alaska. We would like to plan a 3-5 day trip in Chugach (or elsewhere) involving glacier travel, challenging but not too technical climbing, spectacular views and guaranteed good weather (flexible on the last requirement). We'd also like to take our two strong but less experienced teenagers.

Would appreciate any suggestions. Bonnie *swansong222@yahoo.com*  5 November 2003

Attendees:

Stu Grenier announced the calendar will be complete and for sale at the 11-19-03 membership meeting. The board discussed the price and agreed to purchase 300 calendars and sell for \$10 each, with the possibility to print more if there is a demand.

Pichlers Perch and Serenity Falls Hut will be unavailable for public use June 14-16, 2004. The National Mountain Rescue Association (MRA) annual conference will be using the huts for rescue training. Inreturn they will do repairs and swap human waste barrels for the MCA. Alaska Mountain Rescue Group member Bill Romberg successfully petitioned on their behalf.

Amy Murphy wants to revive MCA t-shirt sales. She will put forth a proposal for vote at the next meeting.

Leader orientation class will be taught prior to the next general meeting 11-19-03.

Library – Sean Bolender will move the Vin Hoeman collection from AMH to Bill Romberg's house temporarily 677-3993. AMH renovation left no room for this collection. Looking for permanent institutional location in Anchorage.

Jayme Mack wants to revive the member survey to help guide the board direction in 2004. Stay posted for future details from Jayme.

Christmas dinner will be December 17 at the general meeting.

Meekins climbing scholarship award (\$250) was not yet awarded. Dave Hart to send a letter to Mike explaining that we will solicit for more funds and advertise it better for 2004. No applicants in 2003!



# MCA Directory Updated 11/25/2003

Mailing Address: Mountaineering Club of Alaska P.O. Box 102037 Anchorage, Alaska 99510 http://www.mcak.org/

Club Meeting Time:	Third Wednesday of each month 7:30pm-9:30pm					
Club Meeting Location:	First United Methodist Church, 9th Avenue and G Street					
Club Dues:	\$10 single, \$15 family					
Missing SCREE? – call SCREE Labels committee chair or Treasurer						

Club Organization								
Office Name Home Work Fax	Email							
President Jayme Mack 694-1500 272-1811	jaymack@alaska.net							
Vice-President Carl Battreall 258-0075	carlbattreall@yahoo.com							
Secretary Dave Hart 868-2673 273-3979 273-3	•							
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# Mountaineering Club of Alaska

#### Officers

#### Board Directors

President Vice-Presiden Secretary Treasurer	Jayme M Carl Battr Dave Hart Joe Klum	r <b>eal</b> t	694-1500 258-0075 868-2673 751-7001		Richard Baranow Matt Nedom Hans Neidig Randy Howell Sean Bolender		w 694-1500 278-3648 357-2026 346-4608 333-0213	
Annual me	mbership	dues:	Single Family	\$10.00 \$15.00	(one	Scree	per	family)

Dues can be paid at any meeting or mailed to the treasurer at the MCA address below. If you want a membership card, please fill out a club waiver and mail it with a self-addressed, stamped envelope. If you fail to receive the newsletter, or have questions about your membership, contact the club treasurer. The post office does <u>not</u> forward the newsletter.

SCREE is a monthly publication of the Mountaineering Club of Alaska. Articles and notes submitted for publication and other communication related to the newsletter should be mailed to Scree Editor Box 102037 Anchorage, AK 99510, or e-mailed to mtndamsel@alaska.net. Articles should be received by January 14th to be included in the December issue. Sorry, no exceptions.

Paid ads may be submitted to the attention of the Vice-President at the club address and should be "camera ready" and pre-paid. Your cooperation will be appreciated... Amsl Apflauer, Editor.

Missing your MCA membership card? If so, stop by one of our monthly meetings to pick it up or send us a self-addressed stamped envelope and we'll mail it to you.

MAILING LIST/DATABASE ENTRY: don smith

HIKING/CLIMBING CHAIR: richard baranow, 694-1500, matt nedom, 278-3648, HUTS: hans neidig, 357-2026 or hansn@mtaonline.net EQUIPMENT CHAIR: carl battreal, 258-0075 or carlbattreal@yahoo.com CALENDAR CHAIR: stu grenier, 337-5127 or oinkmenow@hotmail.com WEB: www.mcak.org (go here to change your address) MAILING LIST SERVICE: mcak@yahoogroups.com

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