



# the SCREE

## Mountaineering Club of Alaska

September 2007  
Volume 50 Number 9

Think of all the beauty  
still left around you  
and be happy.  
Anne Frank

**Mentastas  
Tailfeather  
Ice Festival  
Indianhouse  
55 Ways checkin  
Montana**

**Monthly Meeting  
Wed, September 19 @ 7:30  
Program: TBA**

# The Mountaineering Club of Alaska

***"To maintain, promote and perpetuate the association of persons who are interested in promoting, sponsoring, improving, stimulating and contributing to the exercise of skill and safety in the Art and Science of Mountaineering"***

Join us for our club meetings the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month at the First United Methodist Church, 9<sup>th</sup> and G Streets next to the Philips Building (you may use marked parking after hours)

Contact information is provided on the back page or visit us on the web at [www.mcak.org](http://www.mcak.org)

**Cover photo:** Carrie Wang tops out on Peak 8235 in the Mentastas. Photo by Wayne Todd.

**Article Submission:** Articles and photos are best submitted on the web at [MCAK.org](http://MCAK.org). You can also attach a word processing document to an email. Due to formatting problems please do not submit material in the body of an email. We prefer articles that are under 1,000 words. To get on the cover a photo should convey the feeling of mountaineering and show human endeavor.

## Contents

**POM, Peak of the Month – Tailfeather**

**The Mentastas**

**Jayme's Corner: Upcoming Ice Festival**

**Indianhouse**

**55 Ways checkin**

**Montana**

**ADZE, Calendar, Club news, Member in Iraq**

## Hiking and Climbing Schedule

September 26, Ice festival meeting

Mandatory participant meeting, detail in this issue. Meeting at 7 P.M. in the First United Methodist Church, 9<sup>th</sup> and G Streets. Bring crampons, boots, harness.

Jayme Dixon, [mca\\_icefest@yahoo.com](mailto:mca_icefest@yahoo.com)

September 28-30 MCA ICE FESTIVAL

Open to all abilities, details in this Issue

October 27 Vista Peak

Join Andy Rembert on a hike up an Eagle River classic. Vista Peak sits just behind Blacktail rocks. Contact the trip Leader:

[Andyrembert@yahoo.com](mailto:Andyrembert@yahoo.com)

November 3, Wolverine Peak

A relatively easy climb up a Front Range Peak that grants beautiful views to those who summit. Ice axe, crampons and helmet, Sean Bolender is the trip leader

[seanbolender@yahoo.com](mailto:seanbolender@yahoo.com)

November 22-25, Bomber Traverse

Yeah, now we're talking. 4 day trip through the

Talkeetna Mountains. Up to 10 miles on skis each day with a full pack. Visit the Mint, Bomber and snowbird huts. Sean Bolender is the trip leader.

[seanbolender@yahoo.com](mailto:seanbolender@yahoo.com)

December 1, Ice climbing

Join one of our MCA leaders on this Saturday adventure to one of the local Ice climbs. Climbing harness, helmet and belay device.

Contact Sean Bolender for more info:

[seanbolender@yahoo.com](mailto:seanbolender@yahoo.com)

December 8, More ice climbing

Yee haw, more ice climbing as above.

[seanbolender@yahoo.com](mailto:seanbolender@yahoo.com)

January 19-20, Powder time

Let's find some of that January powder that everyone talks about. Maybe Girdwood's Winner creek or Hatcher Pass. Randonee or Tele gear, avalanche gear (and know how to use it). A limited number of beginners will be allowed to join the crew.

Contact: [seanbolender@yahoo.com](mailto:seanbolender@yahoo.com)

## **Oops, Corrections**

In the article on Big Timber Peak in the May 2007 Scree, Ross Nofsinger refers to an ascent of the Gorgemeister by Richard Baranow and Wendy Sanem. Natalia Aulenbacher was also on the ascent of the Gorgemeister. Ross advises us that he inadvertently omitted her name.

In the August 2007 Scree, the Editor mangled both Ross Noffsinger's and Greg Bragiel's names. They have been corrected for future downloads from the web.



# Peak of the Month: Tailfeather

by Steve Gruhn



Mountain Range: Western Chugach Mountains;  
Bird Ridge

Borough: Municipality of Anchorage

Drainage: North Fork of Ship Creek and South  
Fork of Ship Creek

Latitude/Longitude: 61° 5' 29" North, 149° 24' 33"  
West

Elevation: 4960 feet

Prominence: 1310 feet from Bird's Eye Peak  
(4970) or 510 feet from The Wing (4950±50)

Adjacent Peak(s): The Wing and The Sail (4255)

Distinctness: 510 feet from The Wing

USGS Map: Anchorage (A-7)

First Recorded Ascent: June 5, 1993, by Tim  
Kelley and Tim Miller

Route of First Recorded Ascent: Southeast  
gullies from pass between Bird's Eye Peak  
and The Wing

Access Point: Indian Valley Trailhead

On June 5, 1993, Tim Kelley and Tim Miller ran the Indian Valley Trail through Indian Creek Pass and then 1 mile north of the pass headed east to a western spur of Bird Ridge. They then climbed The Wing, descended to the pass between The Wing and Bird's Eye Peak, and crossed to the north side of the pass. From this point they began their climb up the gullies on the

southeastern slopes to the summit, where they built a cairn and descended their ascent route, climbing The Wing on their return. Tim Kelley's trip report appeared on page 2 of the October 1993 Scree.

Tim Kelley tried to preserve the historical record of the first ascent of this peak in subsequent Screes. On page 10 of the December 1993 Scree, he reported that Mark Fouts and Brian Okonek first climbed Tail Feather Peak in July 1979. On page 4 of the January 1994 Scree, Tim revised his earlier report to state that Mark Fouts and Scott Jeffryes climbed Tail Feather Peak on July 2, 1979, and called it Bird's Eye Peak. But recently Mark stated that Jeffryes and he climbed Peak 4970 and named it Bird's Eye Peak, the name by which it is known today; they did not climb Tail Feather Peak.

Exactly six years after the first ascent, on June 5, 1999, Tom Choate and I climbed Tail Feather Peak from the Bird Ridge trailhead, climbing The Wing before descending to a point where we joined the first ascent route on the southeastern gullies. In the interim Wendy Sanem and Bethan Gilmartin had visited the summit and named it Tail Feather Peak, in line with the bird theme of the area. Tom left a register documenting the ascents and we descended the snow-filled northwestern gully and climbed The Sail. Tom's trip report appeared on pages 2 through 4 of the January 2000 Scree.



# The Mentastas Mountains

by Wayne L Todd

Striking 'The Pose' on the false Summit

For a brush-free, mostly bug-free, respectful rodent, seldom visited, weather just-when-you-need-it hike, with fine views, consider an excursion to the Mentasta Mountains.

Rounding a corner on the Nabesna road, a brown bear briefly plays chicken with my moving truck. Packing the just-purchased bear can is no longer an option.

In early June, Carrie Wang and I hike on cobblestones up the Lost Creek drainage, geared for a week-plus of mountaineering. The upper creek has sections of summer snow, more excellent

hiking. Level campsites are scarce once in the canyon, but we find a 'flat' spot at the valley opening to Peak 8,365. We are glad to be in the tent when heavy evening rains and a thunderstorm strike.

The morning approach to Peak 8,365 is pleasant with crisp clear air and long shadows. Ample views of the southwest side offer route options of snow or scree/rock slopes or slight ridge spines. We try all these options of this 'classic Alaska climb': 40-50° dirt, loose rock (only one rock is rolled on a climber), unconsolidated snow and occasional ice under said snow (grabbing ones attention when the feet slide and the Whippet (pole, not dog) comes into play). As the summit beckons, deteriorating weather presses the pace even more on the gravity sucking slope. We manage a few minutes of views from the summit.

On the descent, a snack break is interrupted by a 10 minute hailstorm, followed by rain and strong winds. After the rain storm, warming sun rays reflect from the sloping tent, a fine sight indeed.





climb Noyes Mountain. Moderate slopes of loose rock segue into steeper slopes of loose rock, short bits of scrambling and wet snow. Topping out on a level snow-covered ridge section east of 8,235, we now see an easy snow route just east of our ascent route. (Easy perhaps when the snow is not water saturated). We are on good snow for the remainder of the ascent; up a 45° slope to a false summit, down a gentle slope, then up a chimney to the summit. This is a Triple A climb: aesthetic route, views and peak.

Returning to the level section, we decide against a corniced, direct ridge approach to Noyes and instead, glissade the very wet 'easy' snow slope. Water pours off the glissaded snow onto rocks as we look at route options for Noyes. Already uncommitted to now climbing Noyes, a natural avalanche 'rooster tails' over our intended ascent route. We turn for camp, satiated with our climbing day. Amidst the barren moraine, a teal tinged lake hosts a mix of birds. Back in camp, month old lambs entertain us playing 'king of the rock', jumping on a resting adult and chasing each other. The adults mostly ignore them and graze along. Alpine flowers punctuate the mountain beauty.

#### **Carrie Wang on 8235**

The following day we move up the southeast fork of Lost Creek on snow between vertical rock columns, giving way to creek stones. Sheep with lambs traverse Pass 6300 before us. Hiking up Peak 7,040 from the pass, we pick potential camp sites in the Trail Creek drainage. Upper reaches of intended peaks are obscured by clouds though, creating only guesses of possible routes from the mountain-base views. Scree slopes and sheep trails make a fun and fast descent to Camp Two.

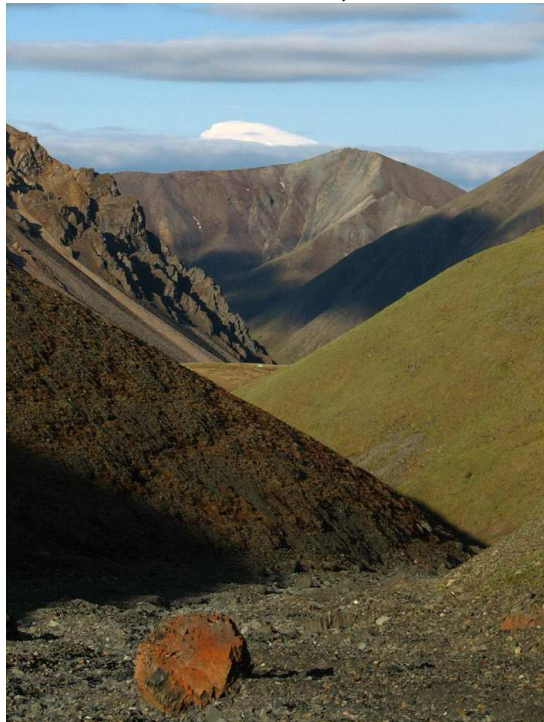
Despite low morning clouds, we hike up-valley over a barren landscape of rocks, hoping the clouds will abate to allow another day of climbing. The clouds dissipate as we enter the glacier cirque, revealing route options. We decide to climb Peak 8,235 by the innocuous looking southeast ridge and 'then'

Rain clouds move us down-valley the next day, first over tundra, then miles of cobblestones to Nabesna road.

#### **Something for the geologists**



Mt Sanford in the distance, tent in the center



## Details

The Lost and Trail Creek loop is 21 miles long and about three thousand feet of elevation gain, nicely suited for a relaxed hiking trip or a solid day run. (See trip 50 in the 5<sup>th</sup> edition of 55 Ways). More than half the trip is on riverbed stones. The pass southwest of Peak 7,040 is shorter, but slightly higher and steeper than the pass northeast of Peak 7,040. As there are more camping options further up the Trail Creek Valley, I'd recommend looping from Trail Creek to Lost Creek.

Upwards of ten peaks are accessible along the route. An ice axe, helmet and crampons are all we used. The rope, pro and hardware can stay at home for the routes and conditions we encountered (there is a glacier on the north side of 8,235). We spent five days in the range but only traveled 25 hours due to the short distances involved. The creeks are only two miles apart at Nabesna road so multiple vehicles are not needed.

Nabesna road offers numerous hiking trails and there are even several free scenic campgrounds.



## Ice Fest Corner by Jayme Dixon

### SAVE THE DATE.....

Don't forget to mark your calendar for the upcoming annual 2007 MCA Ice Climbing Festival. The festival will be held Friday, September 28<sup>th</sup> – Sunday, September 30<sup>th</sup> and is being put on by the MCA Ice Festival Committee.

**New** this year is pre-registration via regular US mail. A registration form will be printed in the Aug. and Sept. Scree. (*next page, Ed.*) Just print this form off and mail it to the address provided, with a check or money order made out to MCA. Once your payment is received you will officially be registered for the weekend. Although, you may pre-register we will be having late registration at the September general meeting and at the mandatory Ice Festival Participant meeting on Wednesday, September 26<sup>th</sup> at 7pm. Remember all participants must have a current MCA membership.

Also the MCA Ice Fest Committee is soliciting instructors for the '07 Ice Fest. Lead instructors must have already taught at a previous festival and assistant instructors will be approved based on experience. Ultimately all instructors will have to be approved by the MCA Board of Directors.

The Ice Festival is one of the biggest MCA functions to date and requires a wealth of volunteers; the Ice Fest Committee is also soliciting volunteers for late registration at the September general meeting and for the Participant meeting on Wed., Sept. 26<sup>th</sup>. Interested parties should contact the Ice Fest Coordinator.

If you have any questions please call or e-mail the MCA Ice Fest Coordinator:

Jayme (Mack) Dixon at (907)382-0212 or (907)245-3251, e-mail: [mca\\_icefest@yahoo.com](mailto:mca_icefest@yahoo.com)

# MCA ICE FESTIVAL REGISTRATION AND QUESTIONNAIRE

*Directions:* Please answer all applicable questions and submit with money to the Ice Festival Coordinator.  
Mailing info on pg. 2

1. Have you attended a previous MCA Ice Climbing Festival?

Yes      No

If so, what experience level? (please circle one)

Novice      Beginner      Advanced Beginner      Intermediate      Advanced

2. Do you have previous experience with: (*circle all that apply*)

- a. Walking in crampons
- b. Belaying/belay commands
- c. Ice climbing (*if you circle this option please answer questions 2a & 2b*)
- d. Rock climbing

2a. If you have ice climbing experience, how many times have you been?

- a. 1-3 times
- b. 4-6 times
- c. 7-9 times
- d. 10 or more times

2b. If you have ice climbing experience, do you have experience leading? Please explain (i.e. climb names, rating and dates).

3. Please list one goal that you have for this weekend?

4. Special Requests:

Instructors: \_\_\_\_\_

Want to be paired with friends: \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact information:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Emergency Contact:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

***PLEASE SUBMIT REGISTRATION AND MONIES TO:***

***(please include a check or money order for \$50, all monies should be made out to MCA)***

MCA ICE FEST COORDINATOR

830 BRINY CIRCLE

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99515



# Indianhouse Mountain

## (Western Chugach Mountains) April 28, 2007

by Steve Gruhn



Over the years I have tried to lead numerous trips to the summit of Indianhouse Mountain. But for one reason or another, none of these trips succeeded in reaching the summit. One year I canceled the trip because I had to attend an out-of-town funeral. Another couple of years the trip was aborted due to high avalanche danger. Another year we got close to the summit, but increasing rockfall in Notch Gully caused us to turn around. And last year, I was having such a good time in the perfect weather that I missed the gully on the east side of the peak and led the party from the south side of the mountain clear to the north side. And despite not reaching the summit on any of these trips and despite my notoriously early morning starts, the MCA trips always proved very popular and I frequently had to turn people away to keep the number of participants to a manageable level.

This year proved to be the year that I finally succeeded in leading a MCA group to the summit of Indianhouse Mountain. The weather was ideal, but the majority of the 11 people in our group couldn't tell because their eyes were still closed at the 4:00 a.m. meeting at the Huffman Road Carrs.

Luckily we found a few drivers willing to keep their eyes open for the short drive to Indian.

We started from a small pullout on the north side of the Seward Highway just west of the corner that is west of Indian. The pullout has room for about four vehicles. We started up the small trail to the northeast and followed that as it turned to the west. In the pre-dawn darkness, though, we soon lost it and began our bushwhack through the trees. Fortunately, there was no snow and the leaves had not yet budded, so we made quick work of the bushwhack and found the trail still to our west as we climbed above the timber. We reached the 2500-foot point of the south ridge of Indianhouse Mountain just as the sun was rising over Bird Ridge. Only here did we encounter our first significant snow patch.

We continued up the ridge to about 2800 feet and then moved north across the snowy east face of the mountain. The temperature was in the high 20s and the snow was firm. We walked across the slope, just below the cliffs, until we had crossed a couple gullies. Notch Gully descends on the east side of the mountain from the prominent notch just south of

the summit. In the spring a snow-filled couloir makes this gully obvious when from Indian or the Bird Ridge Parking Lot. However, when viewed from up close, it appears similar to many of the other gullies on the mountain. Fortunately, the gully still had plenty of snow that descended into the trees, so it was obvious from our vantage point.

We headed up the gully, but partway up we spooked a couple of Dall sheep rams. Unappreciative of being roused from their perch, they fled up the gully, knocking rocks down on us. Notch Gully somewhat resembles the gutter of a bowling alley tilted on end. When Mother Nature throws gutter balls, it's a bad place to be. We moved out of the center of the gully until the sheep were no longer knocking rocks down on us.



Notch Gully forks. We took the northern (right) fork. The route beyond that point is hidden from view from below, but the gully continues, forking again (again we took the north [right] fork). Rick Hagen opted to wait for us shortly after the first fork, so after he moved to a spot safe from our fall line, we moved to the top of the gully. The snow was quite firm and several participants put on their crampons to move up the gully. Near the top of the gully we exited on the west (left) side just below the ridge crest.

Once on the ridge crest, Neil Murphy led us the couple hundred yards to the summit. Soon we had 10 people on the summit. The views to the east were fantastic. We saw flocks of snow geese and Canada geese migrating west above Turnagain Arm. But as we sat on the summit, the weather to the west began to get worse. Clouds descended from the peaks and were blowing toward us.

So, after our short snack we retraced our steps to the bottom of Notch Gully where the snow became

softer. From this point we glissaded down the east face of the mountain to the timber. There is a small waterfall in the gully that had melted out; necessitating a short downclimb in the middle of our glissade, but the rest of the glissade was tremendous. Each one of the 11 of us had a smile spread from ear to ear as we reached the bottom of the snow. The glissade makes the month of April the ideal time to climb this mountain.

We began a bushwhack through the temperate rain forest, crossing the creek and descending down and to the southeast. Along the way we encountered a freshly skinned porcupine pelt. I figured that there was an animal with a bunch of quills in its face or paws in the general vicinity – just what I wanted to have while bushwhacking.

But the critter never made an appearance and we walked to the end of Chickweed Lane and followed that road to Indian Valley Road to the Seward Highway just west of the Indian House restaurant (after which the mountain was named in 1963), and back to our cars. We arrived at about 2:15.

The trip participants were Neil Murphy, Yukiko Hayano, Randy Plant, Lisa Ferber, Eric Holloway, Glen Troullier, Theo Hunt, Brian Gross, Kevin Downie, Rick Hagen, and myself. We all had a wonderful day.

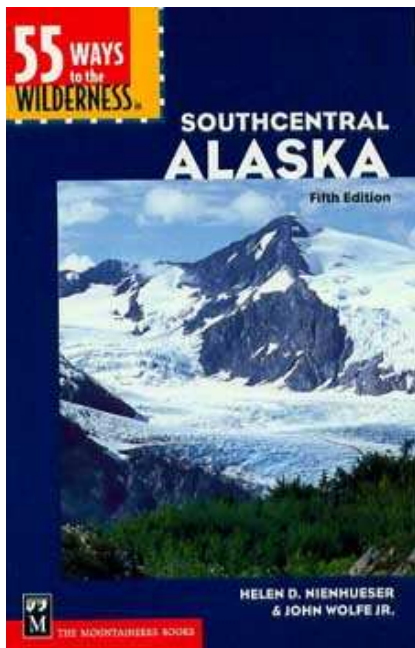


As great and as popular as this trip was, I'm going to let someone else lead it next year. It's been quite a popular trip over the years and I'd like to see it continue as a MCA tradition. So, if you've participated in any of the trips I've led, consider giving a little something back to the club by leading this trip next April. It's been my experience that trips can be even more fulfilling when I lead others into the mountains.

# Checking Trails, Time, Wordage, and Stamina (The classic '55 Ways...')

by Marie Lundstrom

Two long-time friends, Helen Nienhueser and I, have become hiking partners again. Helen wants to check out trips in order to update **55 Ways to the Wilderness in Southcentral Alaska**—trail conditions, changes in signs, distances, landmarks, description in the book, and access. I am trying to build hiking stamina after being sidelined for umpteen years with arthritic knees. My year-old titanium and polypropylene wonder knees require regular workouts; my legs have to get stronger; and I need to lose more weight and get in decent hiking condition after decades of walking pain and couch potato-hood.



So far we've gone to Arctic Valley to check out part of the Rendezvous Peak trail, ambled up a sizable portion of the recently accessible Rabbit Lakes trail, and zipped down to Whittier and climbed up to Portage Pass. In none of these, did we do the entire trail, whether from lack of time, my limited staying power, or bushwhacking. On the other hand, we both got out in the more-or-less wild, soaked up sun (or Whittier's "mist"), moved muscles and joints, enjoyed good company, and appreciated the ever wondrous views, greenery, flowers, and dramatic country we live in.

On the way to RENDEZVOUS PEAK, Thursday, July 19, the Arctic Valley road is not one I'd care to drive every day—lots of washboarding. But getting up high in good weather made enduring the road worth the bumping. We didn't hike very far in late afternoon—time crunch for Helen. But sunshine, delicious mountain views, and an easy trail for nearly an hour made a good end-of-day outing. Helen went farther on the trail than I did—I practiced not using my trekking poles on the slight downhill to strengthen my legs. Seeing gentians was a treat by itself!

A week later, July 26, we headed up the RABBIT LAKES trail, again in the afternoon. This trail is not in the current 55 Ways (5<sup>th</sup> edition) because of past access problems. Those issues have been resolved, so the public can once again drive all the way up DeArmoun Road, take Upper DeArmoun to Canyon Road, turn right, and follow it to a gate. Parking is limited, so we would recommend NOT going on a weekend. We were there on a Thursday, and so were lots of cars, people, and dogs. The trail—as far as we took it—is an easy incline with lots of fist-sized rocks to stumble over, above-the-head alders on both sides of the trail, and several small streams flowing out of the hillside to the left. We did see a young male moose with a velvety rack munching on high grass. I turned around after an hour and 15 minutes; Helen went on farther although facing another time crunch. I saw one rabbit on the way back to the car, plus four or five groups of hikers plus dogs and a couple of mountain bikers heading up-trail.

PORTAGE PASS, which we did July 30, treated us to great views through filmy fog after roughly a mile of baseball-size "gravel" trail up from the trailhead, just a short distance from the Whittier Tunnel end. Though we had serious rain in Anchorage, Whittier had "mist." No sunglasses needed. But raingear was essential because of all the wet willows, alders, salmonberries, and devil's club that slapped us along the trail. We plodded along, enjoying the views, conversation, and uphill workout. At the top of the pass we found a small pond, near where we ate lunch. From the pond, it's downhill on the other side through brush to Divide Lake and on to



Portage Lake. I went back down our “gravel” trail; Helen went on past the pond and on to Divide Lake along the brushy no-gravel trail where bushwhacking was in order. Going down was, for me, more problematic than I had expected. I leaned a lot into the trekking poles, slipped on wet rocks, and found my legs getting tired, enough so that in the last eighth of a mile downhill pitch, my legs started shaking. I had to stop several times and let them straighten out and get calm. It made me realize that taking this hike so soon after the foray I took the previous evening part way up FLATTOP (my third effort) was not a wise move. Bonnie Murphy, formerly fitness director at the senior center, says mature bodies need at least a

day or two of recovery time after strenuous training. My shaky legs proved her point. But no knee pain at any time! Helen is in better shape than I am—no shaky legs for the downhill—but she hadn’t tackled Flattop the night before, either.

A side note about FLATTOP. My aim is to get to the top (and back down) with my new knees. My son Skye, who accompanies me, suggested it a year ago, and Dr. Kavanaugh said, “Why not?” In three trips, I’ve still to make it to the second saddle, but I go farther each time. Skye, of course, at age 25, goes from the parking lot to the top and back in under an hour. Youth!

Helen Nienhueser would like updates for *55 Ways to the Wilderness in Southcentral Alaska* from recent travelers. If you found the trip description still accurate, she would like to know. Even more, if changes in trail conditions, distances, signage, or access have occurred, she would like you to call her at 277-9330 or John Wolfe Jr at 279-4663 with whatever new information you have.



## Continental Divide Trail – Montana

by Amy Murphy

One of my numerous dreams is to some day hike portions of the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail (CDT), which runs 3,100 miles between Mexico and Canada. It follows the Continental Divide along the Rocky Mountains and traverses five U.S. states: Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado and New Mexico. While we were riding through Montana on Ron Ramsey’s motorcycle this past June, We decided to take a day off from riding and go for a hike on a nearby portion of the CDT to stretch our legs and start acclimatizing to the higher elevations.

We rode up to Chief Joseph Pass and Trailhead outside of Missoula, which is also the site of a wonderful cross country ski trail system. This pass and trailhead is named after Chief Joseph, the famous leader of the peace-seeking Nez Perce Indians that traveled through this area as they tried to escape from U.S. Military troops and flee to freedom in Canada. Chief Joseph Pass is a few miles away from another mountain pass that

**Guess who is in charge of MCA Tshirts**



derived its name from the past; the historical Lewis and Clark Expedition. Lost Trail Pass got its name because this is one area that historians aren't able to decisively pinpoint the trail that Lewis and Clark took to get through here; their trail is "lost."

This area has an elevation of a little over 8,000' and received 8" of snow three days before we got there so we weren't sure what the hiking conditions would be like. The CDT is well marked and maintained here so it's obvious where to get on the trail and how to follow it, even though there were numerous side trails. After a mile or so we came up to a great-looking cabin and decided to check it out. We knocked and called out and nobody answered so we went in to investigate and were impressed. It was big and roomy with tables and a kitchen area and had a loft for sleeping.

#### **A Montana 'public use cabin' – whoa!**



On our way back out we met a lady staying at the cabin and learned it is a public use cabin, built and maintained by the local Nordic ski club and the Park Service. During the winter folks can stay in the cabin for free on weekends and open it up to skiers to use as a warming hut during the day. Outside of the winter months it only costs \$35 for the whole weekend. What a bargain! We wished Alaska's public use cabins looked like these or had the same price, but this cabin is relatively close to the road system, which makes a big difference. If you're ever in this area, be sure to contact Montana's Park Service to see if you can rent the cabin. Or if you're through-hiking on the CDT and nobody's there, it would make a great place to hole up for an evening or two.

#### **Springtime in Montana**



After viewing the cabin we continued on along the CDT and commented on how easy it was to follow, mainly because the mountains here have very little undergrowth so the trails are not covered by overgrown and sometimes-unfriendly vegetation like we have here in Alaska. (We sure didn't miss plowing through cow parsnip and devil's club!) As we hiked along admiring the scenery, the snow cover on the ground increased and the trail got muddier and wetter from wet snow melting. We continued on until the ground was completely covered by snow and/or deep puddles and our feet started getting wet. Since we didn't have gaiters or good boots for hiking in snowy conditions, we decided to turn around and head back to the trailhead before the dark clouds moving in dumped more precipitation. As we meandered back we came across a bench sitting on a small rise and decided to use the bench for a quick respite. Among other activities, we took advantage of the opportunity to relax, soak up intermittent sunshine and enjoy the scenery and total peace and quiet. Ahhhh.....

Our excursion lasted about three hours and this section of the CDT is well marked and fairly flat with very gradual ascents and descents and made for a



delightful afternoon hike. There is also a downhill ski area at nearby Lost Trail Pass, which is located near the Idaho and Montana state borders. This is a favorite destination because you can ski in two states in one day! In case you ever decide to visit

this area, we recommend staying at the Lost Trail Pass Hot Springs Resort where there is camping and cabins, great food, cheerful camaraderie and hot springs to relax in at the end of the day.



### Adze

For Sale- Mountaineering Tent. Hillberg NalloGT-3 Red with ground sheet. Like new \$400 firm. Contact Scott @ 696-7250.

climbing shoes-women's size 8 boreal-vector and chalk bag \$70 338-2238

Wanted

Fritschi or silveretta bindings in good shape.  
lisa\_ferber@yahoo.com 770-0793

### Calendar

Stu needs horizontal photos for the 2008 calendar. Please bring your 8X10/12s to the September meeting. You can print them at Costco for a few dollars.

### Club Corner

Refreshments, Mary Beth needs someone to pick up refreshments for the club meetings for the rest of the year. Please give her a call at 569-3008

Annette sends a thank you to Mark Miraglia for sharing his photos of New Zealand at the August meeting.

Elections are coming up in October. All officers and 3 board members will be elected by the members present at the October meeting. For information contact Sean ([seanbolender@yahoo.com](mailto:seanbolender@yahoo.com))

**MCA member Joe Cardenas in Iraq**



**With any luck, he will be back mid-September**



## 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 nontechnical 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 or stream-crossing 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 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: MCA Board, February 15, 2000

## General Rules for MCA Sanctioned Trips

1. Proper equipment is available from the trip leader.
2. No dogs. (Among the reasons are bear problems.)
3. The trip leader can require special equipment and refuse participation to any person that is ill-prepared (e.g. inappropriate clothing/gear).
4. 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 the MCA Sanctioned trip.
5. The trip leader has the authority to split the group (fast and slow), dependent upon current conditions. However, he/she must appoint a qualified co-leader to lead the second group using the guidelines specified in the current Trip Leader Responsibilities.
6. 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, termination of annual membership, or lifetime exclusion from the club.
7. You must sign up on a trip roster (club meetings) or contact the leader, and you must have signed the club waiver to be on a club trip.
8. If you find you cannot participate after signing up on the roster, please let the leader know, both for transportation and gear-planning and so someone else can go. If you are the leader, help find a replacement.
9. Total number of people on club trips:  
Minimum: 4 (for safety reasons)  
Maximum: Leader option, depends upon the trail and campsite conditions, but generally limited to 12 in trail-less areas or State/ National Parks
10. Firearms are not encouraged, and please let the leader know if you want to carry one - it will be leader's option. Aerosol bear repellent is preferred.

Approved: MCA Board, February 15, 2000

# Mountaineering Club of Alaska

President	Sean Bolender	333-0213
Vice-President	Annette Iverson	222-0581
Secretary	Bridget Paule	230-9903
Treasurer	Travis Taylor	382-4823

Board member	Steve Gruhn	344-1219
Board member	Don Hansen	243-7184
Board member	Randy Howell	346-4608
Board member	Andy Rembert	688-3230
Board member	Sara Ellen Hutchison	382-7097

Annual membership dues: Single \$15, Family \$20

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 will not forward the newsletter.

The 'Scree' is a monthly publication of the Mountaineering Club of Alaska. Articles, notes and letters submitted for publication in the newsletter should be submitted on the web at [www.mcak.org](http://www.mcak.org) or e-mailed to the Scree Editor. Articles should be received by the monthly club meeting (third Wednesday of the month) to be in the following month's Scree.

Paid Ads may be submitted to the attention of the Vice-President at the club address and should be 'camera ready' and pre-paid.

Missing your MCA membership card? Stop by our monthly meeting to pick it up or send a self-addressed stamped envelope and we'll mail it to you.

Mailing list/database entry: Yukiko Hayano and Randy Plant 243-1438  
Hiking and Climbing Committee: Randy Howell – 346-4608, Jayme Dixon – 382-0212  
Huts: Greg Bragiel - 569-3008  
Calendar: Stuart Grenier 337-5127  
Scree Editor: John Recktenwald 346-2589  
Web: [www.mcak.org](http://www.mcak.org) (change your address here)  
Mailing list service: [MCAK@yahoogroups.com](mailto:MCAK@yahoogroups.com)

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