

# the SCREE

## Mountaineering Club of Alaska

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June 2017

Volume 60 Number 6



**Monthly meeting:** June's monthly meeting will be replaced by an unguided hike up Rainbow Peak. Meet at the Rainbow Trailhead of the Turnagain Arm Trail at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, June 20, rain or shine.

**"We live in a wonderful world that is full of beauty, charm and adventure. There is no end to the adventures we can have if only we seek them with our eyes open."  
- Jawaharlal Nehru**



# The Mountaineering Club of Alaska

[www.mtnclubak.org](http://www.mtnclubak.org)

***"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 outing at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, June 20, at the Rainbow Trailhead of the Turnagain Arm Trail.

<https://www.google.com/maps/dir//61,-149.640656/@60.9989753,-149.6512973,14z>

For the MCA Membership Application and Liability Waiver, visit

<http://www.mtnclubak.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=members.form>.

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## Cover Photo

Kakiko Ramos-Leon steps up Explorer Ridge.  
Cory Hinds leads in the distance.  
Photo by Wayne Todd

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**Article Submission:** Text and photography submissions for *the Scree* can be sent as attachments to [mcascree@gmail.com](mailto:mcascree@gmail.com). Articles should be submitted by the 24th of each month to appear in the next issue of *the Scree*. Do not submit material in the body of the email. Do not submit photos embedded in the text file. Send the photo files separately. We prefer articles that are under 1,000 words. If you have a blog, website, video, or photo links, send us the link. Cover photo selections are based on portraits of human endeavor in the outdoors. Please submit at least one vertically oriented photo for consideration for the cover. Please submit captions with photos.

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## Hiking and Climbing Schedule

**June 11:** Bird Peak (5505 feet) rests north of Penguin Ridge and is briefly visible in impressive fashion from the Seward Highway. Accessed from the Bird Valley Trailhead, this peak involves 12 to 14 hours of mountain biking, off-trail hiking, and snow climbing with crampons, helmet, and ice axe. Email Nathan Hebda at [ndhebda@gmail.com](mailto:ndhebda@gmail.com) for more details.

**June 17-18:** Flatop Mountain sleepout. No leader.

**June 20:** Rainbow Peak. Meet at the Rainbow Trailhead of the Turnagain Arm Trail at 6:30 p.m., rain or shine. No leader.

**June 23-July 1:** MCA Summer Mountaineering Instructional Trip. This is a vigorous hiking, climbing, and glacier-travel traverse through the Talkeetna Mountains, the Bomber Traverse, wherein the group stays at various locations that lend to the specific instructions. Basic mountaineering skills, snow travel, ice axe/tool use, ice climbing, glacier travel, navigation, route finding, rappelling, rock climbing, fun, exploration, leadership skills, and confidence building. Glacier travel. Approximately 30 miles. Trip leader: Greg Bragiel, [unknownhiker@alaska.net](mailto:unknownhiker@alaska.net) or 350-5146.

**Late July or August:** Symphony Lakes Backpacking and Mountaineering Trip. Matt Nedom will be leading a backpacking trip above Symphony Lake with goals of climbing Cantata Peak, Triangle Peak, and possibly Calliope Mountain. He plans to stay two nights, Friday and Saturday, possibly three, sometime near the end of July or in August, depending upon his work schedule and schedules of those wanting to join. Contact Matt at [mattnedom@gmail.com](mailto:mattnedom@gmail.com) or leave a message on his home phone at 278-3648 with your name, telephone number, and days that you cannot participate. Group Size Limit: five people, including the leader.

Online? Click me!



**Check the Meetup site and Facebook for last minute trips and activities. Or, schedule one that you want to organize.**

## ***Eklutna Traverse Huts***

To any groups traveling the Eklutna Traverse, conditions as of April 2017:

Pichler's Perch — Human-waste (poop barrel) 1/3 full. Three gallons of stove fuel present.

Han's Hut — Human-waste barrel full, no lid. Six and a half gallons of stove fuel present. Stove not working well, second burner bad.

Rosie's Roost — Human-waste barrel ½ full. One and a half gallons of stove fuel present.

WAG bags for these huts to pack out human waste are available upon request.

So that necessary plans can be made to service these huts in 2017, please report back to the MCA Huts Committee Chairman, Greg Bragiel and/or the MCA board your findings on human-waste barrel conditions, fuel, and any other needed repairs.

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## ***Letter to the Editor***

### **Climbing Notes Correction**

Under Climbing Notes in the May 2017 *Scree* it was reported that on April 22 (2017) a group climbed peaks, including Peak 5050 and Peak 5750. *The Scree* Editor inaccurately reported these as first recorded ascents. Had they made these climbs in summer they would have found registers on both summits. Carrie Wang and I climbed Peak 5050 on July 8, 2016, and Peak 5750 on July 9, 2016. After the climbing portion of our fly-in trip, we descended to the East Fork of the Twentymile River and boated to the Seward Highway, which was quite an adventure. GPS tracks and additional pictures are available upon request.

Respectfully submitted by Wayne L. Todd

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## ***On the Web***

Planetmountain.com reported that in April Greg Boswell and Will Sim climbed two new routes from the Buckskin Glacier in the Alaska Range. The first was a 1,400-meter, 30-pitch route on the southeast aspect of Bear's Tooth and the second was on the west aspect of Peak 7350 in the Buckskin Glacier and Coffee Glacier drainages. The ascent of Peak 7350 might have been the first ascent of the peak. For more information visit <http://www.planetmountain.com/en/news/alpinism/alaska-greg-boswell-and-will-sim-climb-two-big-new-climbs-routes-above-buckskin-glacier.html>.

We look forward to reading a detailed trip report in an upcoming issue of *the Scree*.

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## ***Choate's Chuckle***

- Tom Choate

Some Yosemite climbers are very funny. In fact they're real crack-ups!



6614-Foot Polar Bear Peak in alpenglow, taken from the Eagle River Valley.  
Photo by Brent Voorhees



## Isthmus Peak

Text by Josef Chmielowski



*Route Photo: The team skinned from camp about three miles to the base of the rock rib, deposited their skis, and then booted up with crampons the last 1000 feet to the summit. Crevasses and avalanche potential were concerns.*

*Photo by Lee Helzer; annotations by Joe Chmielowski*

In early April, Dave Hart asked if I wanted to climb Truuli Peak in the Harding Icefield on the Kenai Peninsula. I had never heard of this peak, so I checked on it, and at 6612 feet it was the tallest peak on the peninsula. It turned out that there was some locally made vodka with the same name and a picture of the mountain on the label. All that said, we attempted a fly-in April 28<sup>th</sup>, but got weathered out. We were looking at attempting another fly-in on May 11<sup>th</sup>, but the weather window looked bad for a fly-out. We didn't want to get stuck on the Harding Icefield with impending snow and no exit possible, so we canceled again. Dave reassured me, "Don't worry; I have a backup plan. We can do Isthmus Peak."

Once again, I hadn't heard of Isthmus Peak, so I quickly looked at <http://peakbagger.com/> and found that it was 6532 feet high and situated between Seward and Whittier at the head of the Spencer Glacier. "Why in the hell did Dave pick this random peak?" I thought to myself. Then I saw that the prominence was 5838 feet and I had my answer. I double checked Truuli and its prominence was 6061 feet. "OK, that makes sense for Dave." For those of you who don't know, mountains in Alaska are defined by having at least 500 feet of prominence from their clos-

est higher neighboring peak (for comparison, Colorado uses 300 feet and some peakbagging lists in England use 50 feet). Steve Gruhn can tell you all about prominence (and probably has), but suffice it to say, for some climbers this is a big deal. It defines the list of 120 peaks in Chugach State Park and is the Alas-



*Dave Hart skiing back to camp.*

*Photo by Wayne Todd*

ka cut-off for a “true” mountain.

Anyhow, Dave had been on a new peakbagging spree where he was climbing some of the top 100 ultra-prominent (>10000 feet of prominence) peaks around the world and some of the 64 ultra-prominent peaks in Alaska (>5000 feet of prominence). [Ed. note: visit <http://www.peakbagger.com/list.aspx?lid=41303> for a peek at the list of ultra-prominent

peaks in Alaska.] Both Truuli and Isthmus fit the bill, and thus his obsession with those two peaks. Well, with the short weather window, Truuli was out, but Isthmus was possible because Dave casually mentioned that we “can always ski 15 miles across glaciers to Whittier and then hitchhike out to the road.” Hmm ... seemed a bit sketchy, but also like an interesting adventure.

So at 6:30 p.m. on May 11<sup>th</sup>, Dave Hart, Wayne Todd, and Lee Helzer convinced their buddy Conor McManamin to drop them off in the middle of an icefield between the Spencer, Trail, and Blackstone Glaciers. They set up three two-person tents and established a base camp at 60° 37.177' North, 148° 52.599' West with an altitude of 2400 feet.

At 4:30 a.m. on May 12<sup>th</sup>, I woke up exhausted and drove Dave’s mini-van, or “Peakbaggin’ Wagon,” as he called it, to meet Josh Allely and Cynthia Cacy. We drove to Portage Junction in tandem and dropped off their car in case we ended up skiing to Whittier and hitchhiking out. Then the three of us drove to Seward and met the pilot, Jim Craig (of AA Seward Air Tours) at 7:30 and checked in. At 8:00 he fired up the engine and we were flying north toward the Spencer Glacier. Lee had texted us the base camp’s coordinates via his satellite InReach device and we had no trouble finding the three tiny tents.



*Left to right: Cynthia Cacy and Josh Allely (team) and Joe Chmielowski and Dave Hart (team). Prince William Sound in the background, with a potential ski route to Whittier.*

*Photo by Wayne Todd.*

I knew that Dave, Wayne, and Lee would be chafing at the bit to get going, so when we jumped out of the plane we were ready to rock and roll. I only had time to ditch some food and unroll my sleeping bag inside the tent. Fifteen minutes later, at 9:00 a.m., we roped up and were skinning three miles across the glacier toward Isthmus Peak.

Dave led the first section and never put in a single switch-

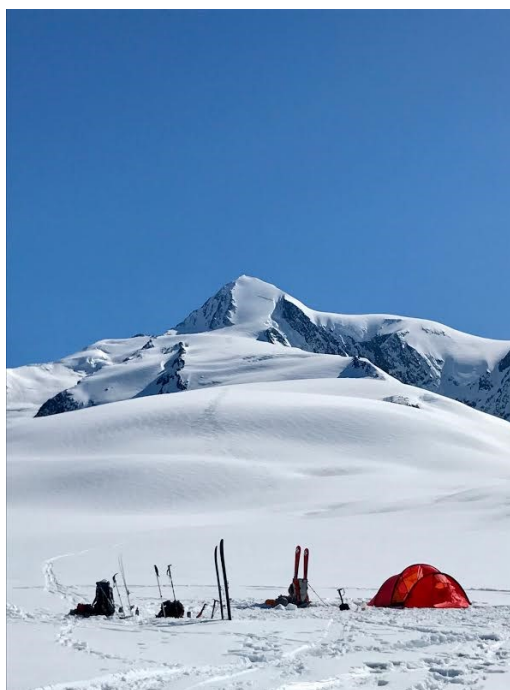
back, I think he has one style for skinning – straight up. Wayne and Lee led the next bit and worked around some crevasses. It was like chasing jackrabbits up a hill. At 12:00, we were at 5500 feet and decided to take off our skis (I have a splitboard) and evaluate the conditions. There was about 2 inches of powder on top of a hard wind slab, so we decided not to ski off the summit. There was a snow-covered bergschrund about halfway

up the face that was a potential avalanche hazard. Instead, we donned our crampons and booted up the last 1000 feet.

We stayed climber’s left near a rock rib that also kept us in the shade. I forgot to mention that it was hot and sunny and we were sweating buckets. The boot-up was steep, maybe 50 to 55 degrees, and Wayne and Lee did a great job kicking in a nice set of steps. We stayed roped in for potential crevasses, not for falls – as we never had to set protection.

At 1:30 p.m., exactly four and half hours after starting, we summited Isthmus Peak. It was hot and sunny with no wind and we could stand around without hats or gloves. Wayne broke out his customary summit chocolate and shared it with the whole team. We were enjoying the amazing views of

Prince William Sound and I could even see a bit of Turnagain Arm. We agreed that we could stay up there forever, but in the distance we could see some black clouds forming. “Maybe we should do an InReach text to the pilot and get out of here to-



*The prettiest camp I never stayed in. Altitude about 2400 feet at the head of the Spencer Glacier. Note our ski tracks leading toward Isthmus Peak.*

*Photo by Joe Chmielowski*



night,” Dave suggested. “How about we just call him?” I answered. People flipped on their phones and sure enough, we had five bars. I guess that’s one of the advantages of ultra-prominent peaks – good cell phone reception.

“You want to be picked up? When?” the pilot said from the other end of the line. “How about 5:00 p.m. tonight?” “Well, OK, I just drove home. I guess I’ll head back.” So we quickly booted down the face, attached our skis and snowboard and enjoyed a mellow ride back to camp. I had to roll up my sleeping bag and put my freeze-dried food back in my pack and that was it. We took down the tents and were ready to go at 4:00 p.m. It was the nicest camp I never stayed in. Right on time, Jim landed at 5:00 p.m. and Josh, Cynthia, and I were once again airborne and heading to Girdwood. We chose Girdwood because it was a shorter flight and Cynthia’s friend could help us pick up the car at Portage. After Jim dropped us off in Girdwood, he returned to the Spencer Glacier to fly Dave, Lee, and Wayne to Seward, where they picked up the van and drove home later that evening.

We ate at Chair 5 Restaurant and were back home at 8:30 p.m. After showering, I sat in my Lazy Boy chair and marveled at how surreal the day was. In under 16 hours, we had driven to Seward, flown to the Spencer Glacier, climbed Isthmus Peak, skied down, flown to Girdwood, and driven home. Honestly, I felt a bit cheated by not being able to do the epic ski to Whittier, but early the next morning Todd Kelsey called to report that the weather was horrible in Portage and Whittier. It turned out that the team made the right call and we could all enjoy a relaxing weekend biking or climbing more peaks.



Wayne Todd having fun. This is a great photo of Wayne demonstrating his sense of style with some sort of rag on his head for sun protection. The mustache just looks cool.

Photo by Joe Chmielowski



The team on the summit. From left to right: Joe Chmielowski, Dave Hart, Josh Allely, Cynthia Cacy, Lee Helzer, and Wayne Todd.

Photo by Wayne Todd

## Frontier Peak ... Or Moksha Peak?

Text and photos by Daniel Glatz and Theresa Pipek



*Looking east at Skybuster (a.k.a. Ice Cream Cone Mountain) in the distance. The ridgeline leading to Frontier Peak can be seen on the right side of the photo.*

In late April 2017 the good, ol' soggy Alaska springtime weather arrived. Many of the approach trails in the Western Chugach Mountains were loaded in slick ice during the early morning hours and turned to slush as the heat of the sun reached them. After scouting out a few trails with my girlfriend, Theresa Pipek, we left Anchorage a bit disappointed with the trail conditions we found. As we were driving home across the Palmer Hay Flats, the peaks north of the Knik River caught my eye. The peaks appeared to have good southern exposure and the ridgelines appeared to be snow free.

The Jim Creek drainage area was completely new to me, so when we got home I used one of my favorite resources, [Peakbagger.com](http://Peakbagger.com) to check if there were names or trip reports listed in that area. Listed on there was "Frontier Peak," which caught my eye, being that it is over 6000 feet high with 1000-plus feet of prominence. Frontier Peak was the best option for the following day, as it was a new peak to me, and appeared to be the perfect snow-and-slush-free climb to catch a good view of this area.

On Sunday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>, we set out to climb Frontier Peak. To  
*Scree*—June 2017

access Frontier Peak we drove to the end of Maud Road and began hiking the "Rippy Trail" that is located on the northeast corner of the dirt parking lot. A quick quarter mile later we turned left and followed a small drainage flowing from the south face of Frontier Peak. We followed the stream for a couple hundred yards, and noticed a faint trail that climbed an eroded hillside and appeared to lead toward the southeast ridge, which we were aiming for. Following this trail was the best decision, as it was flagged and led us through a maze of alders that would have made for a miserable bushwhack. Once we reached 3000 feet, we were in open country. Then a quick 2,000-foot scramble landed us on the southeast ridge, just a mile and a short scree slog later we found ourselves on the summit.

The views from the ridge all the way to the summit were spectacular! Bold Peak, Bashful Peak, and Baleful Peak rose above the rest to the south with the Knik Glacier visible to the east and the very prominent summit of Skybuster (a.k.a. Ice Cream Cone Mountain) stole the show to the northeast.

At the summit we found a register and were confused when we



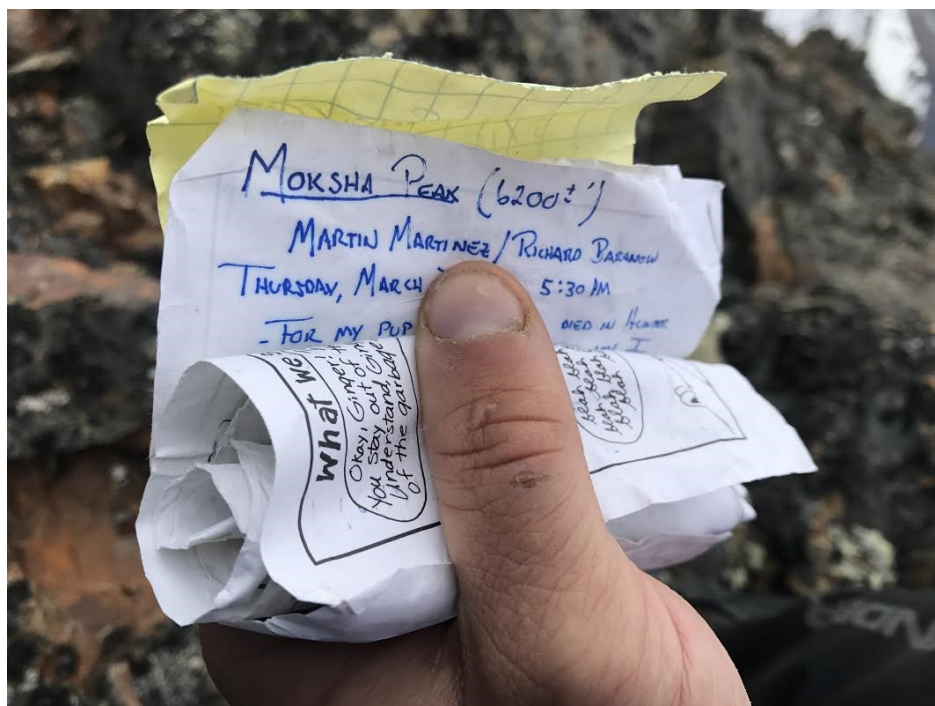
found a note written by Richard Baranow stating the peak's name was actually "Moksha Peak." Thanks to a bit of investigative work, I found out that the name of the peak was, in fact, Moksha Peak, named after Richard Walsh's dog. Moksha is reportedly a term from Hinduism meaning "all enlightenment." Frontier Peak is actually located east of Moksha Peak in the Jim Creek valley. [Ed. note: Moksha Peak was incorrectly called Frontier Peak in the September 1988 and October 2011 issues of the Scree.] All in all, climbing Moksha Peak was a great climb that allowed us to see a new part of this state that we are so privileged to live in, as well as to learn some climbing history regarding the peak!



Hitting the open country at 3000 feet with Jim Lake and the Knik River far below.



Theresa Pipek scrambling up the last few feet to the summit.



Discovering the actual name of Moksha Peak.



# Tordrillo Mountains FlightSkiing

April 14, 2017

Text by Matt Nedom



*Left to right: Scott Amy, Kneely Taylor, and John Hess before departing Lake Hood.*

*Photo by Matt Nedom*

I love to fly airplanes. I love to ski. I love to be in the wilderness. I love to explore new territory.

In the beginning of April I met Scott Amy, who owns a Cessna 185. I flew a C-185 a few years ago and had been looking to fly one again, to get more experience in that aircraft.

I asked Scott, a certified flight instructor, about how I could arrange to fly with him, taking me up for some training. The first thing he asked was if I backcountry ski, offering to take me up with him to go skiing in the Tordrillo Mountains.

How could I say “No” to an offer like that?

I jumped at the chance to fly up into the mountains and go skiing!

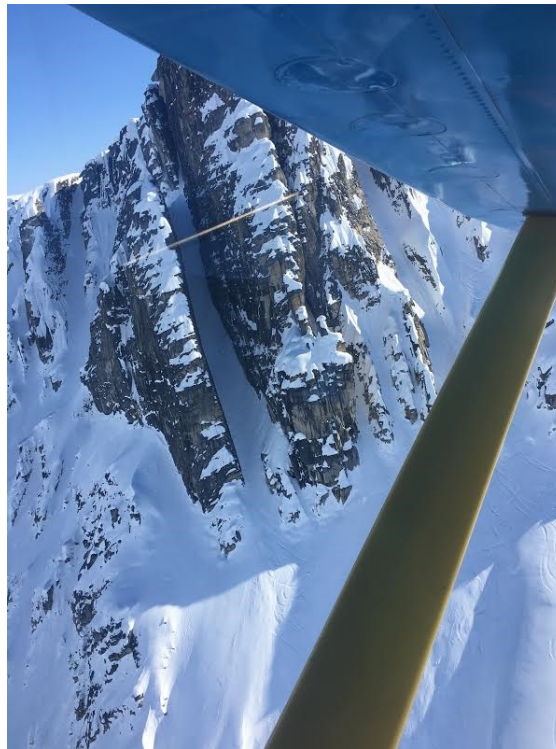
Spring was arriving. The snow and ice in town was beginning to melt. I knew we had to go soon. I told him that we should go the upcoming Friday before

Easter before the snow and ice were gone. To fill the two other seats, I called two backcountry skier friends I know from the Mountaineering Club, John Hess and Kneely Taylor, to join us.

Thursday night I packed my skis and boots, parka, camera, sunscreen, water, avalanche and other gear. Seeing a tent, pad, and sleeping bag, with lots of extra food, my family asked if I were spending the night. I told them that I hoped not! But we had to be prepared.

Friday morning we met Scott at Lake Hood to load the plane and go over the specifics. It was a bit chilly that morning, which was good, because we wanted to be wearing warm clothes in the airplane in case of an emergency.

After loading the skis and gear, we squeezed ourselves into the airplane. Being the largest, John sat in front with the pilot. Bummer. That’s where I had



*Rock flakes jutting from a ridge in the Tordrillo Mountains.*

*Photo by John Hess*





*Scott Amy with his kite on the Triumvirate Glacier.  
Photo by John Hess*

wanted to sit.

We departed the ice of Lake Hood into the beautiful clear sky, open to unlimited visibility. We could see the mountains, white, on the horizon. I began to feel excitement as we flew past Mount Susitna. The sky was crystal clear.

As we climbed over the glaciers, above the ridges between the peaks, we looked for ski tracks to find an area suitable for skiing. Then on a saddle we saw tracks from skiers and from an airplane. Near the tracks I saw two tents surrounded by a windblock. We flew over to check out this spot, seeing a wide open face to the east asking to be skied, but no signs of the skiers. They had already taken off for their day's adventure.

That looked like a great place to land to begin our adventure into that magical place (Tyonek (C-6) quadrangle, approximately 61°



*Left to right: Scott Amy, John Hess, and Kneely Taylor unloading the plane after the second stop.*

*Photo by Matt Nedom*

35' North, 152° 12' West).

Sitting on the saddle, the airplane's altimeter read 4600 feet. After unloading, we ate lunch and skinned our skis. Standing in the sunshine, I felt my legs beginning to grow very warm. My black pants absorbed the direct sunlight and that reflecting off the snow surrounding us. Each of us added another layer of sunscreen to our faces and now also to exposed hands and forearms. This was going to be a great day!

After a gear check and a discussion of how we wanted to proceed, we checked our beacons and began our climb up the northwest face. Once we reached the top of the ridge, Kneely pointed out some of the peaks, including Mount Gerdine, 11258 feet, and Mount Torbert, 11413, and areas he had climbed 25 to 30 years ago. It was great having Kneely there, sharing his experiences in this range. We stood still, absorbing the beauty of the mountains and views surrounding us.

Then it was time we pointed our skis downhill. Kneely, Scott, and John chose a steeper face for their descent. Because of the crunchy surface, and being out of practice, I chose the more cautious route. The only time I'd been on my telemark skis in the past few years was two weeks earlier, skiing the beginner runs of Chair 3 at Alyeska. I was about to put my memory of technique and leg strength to the test! The turns came naturally in the beauty of this wide-open face, all alone, nothing but mountains around me, not a cloud in the sky. It took me a few turns to get back the technique. My tracks could be identified by a few sitz-marks!

Meeting again at the airplane, we decided to take off and find another face to ski. We flew around through this temple of mountains, rock, snow, and glaciers checking out a surprising number of ski tracks. Many began on the top of a knife-edge ridgeline. These were from the heliskiers. The young ones, with bigger cojones than I.

Some of the tracks that began at the ridge seemed to disappear, flying off the mountain. I felt like I was a part of a Warren Miller movie. We flew past flakes of rock, jabbing out from the face of the ridge. Inside one set we saw ski tracks! "WOW! Did you see THAT! There are ski tracks in that couloir!" John recognized the chute from a video he'd seen on YouTube (Cody Townsend's Epic Chute. It's 1:29 long and can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xIXk49Mh7go>).

We landed on another saddle for our second opportunity. Being later in the day, the snow was now soft, begging for turns. Upon reaching the top of the face to the east, we again stopped to absorb the scenery surrounding us. That saddle again was at about 4600 feet, north of the Triumvi-





*Kneely Taylor and Scott Amy checking the descent from the saddle to the Triumvirate Glacier from the second landing.  
Photo by Matt Nedom*

*Below: View from the second ridge.  
(The airplane is at the saddle. Mount Foraker is visible in the distance at right).  
Photo by Matt Nedom*

rate Glacier.

That route again proved to be a fantastic climb and ski! I was able to make continuous turns the whole way down, no sitzmarks that time! I watched John and Kneely coming down, making slalom turns with their alpine touring skis. I want to try those next time!

Together again at the plane, we were all feeling great, commenting about our second ultimate ski. Wanna go again? The route down to the glacier looked doable. John and Kneely wanted to ski down. I wanted to climb up again for another ski from the top. Though being on tele gear, I was wary of possibly icy conditions for the route below us. Instead of skiing, I climbed into the cockpit to fly with Scott to check the glacier below. We wanted to make sure the glacier would be okay for a landing, and that there were no unseen cliffs, before they committed. We told them that if they saw us parked below, to continue all the way down.

Once on the glacier, I looked up the mountain make sure they could see us and to watch them descend while Scott again pulled out his SpeedWing to take advantage of the glacial winds. It was getting close to 8 p.m. and cold as the wind blew down the glacier. The sun was about to hide behind the peak. It was time to load up and fly back to Anchorage after one absolutely fantastic day of skiing the mountains.

Experiences like this are why I live in Alaska.



*John Hess making alpine turns past Matt Nedom's giant-slalom telemark tracks descending to the saddle above the Triumvirate Glacier.*

*Photo by Matt Nedom*

## Classic Explorer with an 8 Pack

Text and photos by Wayne Todd

April 16, 2017



*The team tops out on the Explorer Glacier plateau. From left to right: Carrie Wang, Mike Argue, Dave Rhodes, Kakiko Ramos-Leon, and Matt Green.*

With a mix of Explorer Peak veterans and newcomers, eight of us skin the crust below the power line toward the Explorer Glacier. Despite clouds, another sunny day is expected after weeks of great weather.

At our standard entrance gully, we are stunned to find significant avalanche debris extending up beyond our view. We assume whatever caused this has released all or most of the harm from above. Skinning up frozen debris is problematic with even the experienced taking slips and slides. A few boot hike up, which is probably the wiser mode of travel. This debris extends over a half mile with clear, sheared, vertical snow-wall sections further exemplifying the exuded force, and the vulnerability of humans.

Above this we rope up as teams of Cory and Elena Hinds; Dave Rhodes, Kakiko Ramos-Leon, and Matt Green; and Carrie Wang, Mike Argue, and me. The likely cause of the debris, a significant avalanche from the west ridge still shows a faint undulating crown face. Of all the previous trips in here, the most avalanche debris we'd crossed was perhaps a hundred yards. [Wonder if this significant avalanche is a new event due to miscellaneous factors or that we'd always been earlier than a regular big event?]

The glacier has noticeably shrunk. Skinning toward the plateau, some sections are noticeably steeper than in the past. At the right ridge conflux, our standard crampon-up spot, the clouds abate to reveal the short ridgeline.

Mike leads out, making very firm steps. Soon the ridge steepens significantly, partly due to a lack of cornices, so I lead with pickets until empty. Cory then leads with all the groups' pickets and we continue with running belays until the top. This is the first time we've ever placed pickets on route.

The views are glorious as ever, possibly more so for the new folks; up the ridge to Byron Peak and Carpathian Peak, down the

*Kakiko Ramos-Leon starts up the Explorer Peak ridge.*





Skookum Valley with noticeably long, thin avalanche run-outs, to the Kenai Mountains and back around to the Chugach Mountains and Portage Lake.

We amazingly keep the ropes organized, despite all the moving for views and pictures. An overabundance of summit chocolate emerges, Easter-related and not. The ridgeline toward Middle Glacier Peak looks inviting, as always, but we're satisfied with another great Explorer day. Teams file out and down the very picturesque ridge and deem pickets unnecessary.

Back at skis the real fun is about to begin, as we de-rope for the ski. The snow is good. Numerous members are very good skiers, but Dave is impressive, and supportive. Kudos for Kakiko, who's newer to skiing, and especially to Mike, the only one in the group wearing mountaineering boots. He got an extra work-out on the descent. Too soon we're back at the debris. Alas, but logically, we boot-hike down the debris, and ski the flats to the cars to conclude another excellent Explorer day.



*Carrie Wang ascends Explorer Ridge. The Placer River Valley is in the background.*



*The team all roped up on the top of Explorer Peak. From left: Wayne Todd, Carrie Wang, Mike Argue, Kakiko Ramos-Leon (kneeling), Dave Rhodes, Matt Green, Elena Hinds, and Cory Hinds.*



*Dave Rhodes (left) and Cory Hinds view the ski descents of others. The Explorer Peak ridge is in the background.*

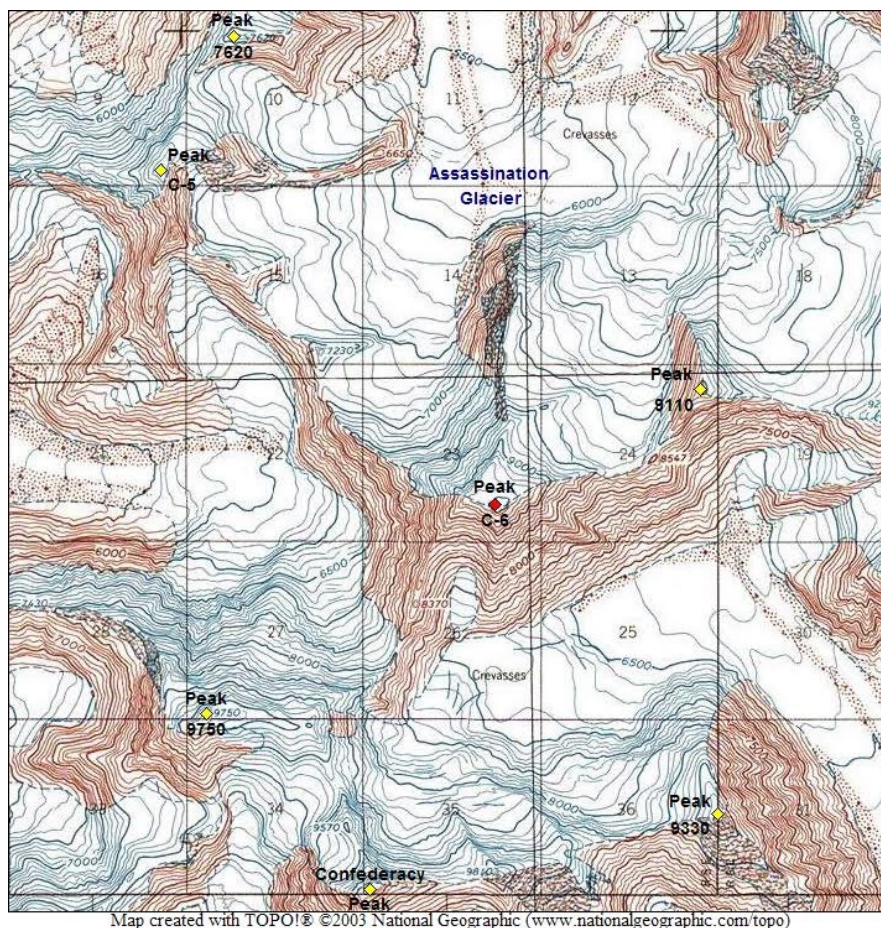


*Backdropped by Portage Peak, Mike Argue leads Matt Green and the rest of their party as the team makes its way up the extensive avalanche debris on Explorer Peak.*



## Peak of the Month: Peak C-6

By Steve Gruhn



**Mountain Range:** Chugach Mountains

**Borough:** Matanuska-Susitna Borough

**Drainages:** Assassination Glacier and Marcus Baker Glacier

**Latitude/Longitude:** 61° 32' 41" North, 147° 56' 45" West

**Elevation:** 9650 (±50) feet

**Prominence:** 1400 feet from Peak 10310 in the Marcus Baker Glacier drainage

**Adjacent Peaks:** Peak 9110 in the Assassination Glacier and Marcus Baker Glacier drainages, Peak 9750 in the Marcus Baker Glacier drainage, and Peak C-5 (8050)

**Distinctness:** 1300 feet from Peak 9110

**USGS Maps:** Anchorage (C-3) (1:63,360) and Anchorage C-3 SW (1:25,000)

**First Recorded Ascent:** This peak might be unclimbed.

In the 1960s Vin Hoeman worked on writing a book about the mountains of Alaska and the Yukon Territory. After Hoeman died in an avalanche on Dhaulagiri on April 28, 1969, leaving the book unfinished, his widow, Grace Hoeman, took up the task and worked toward completing the book. Upon her death in an avalanche near the Eklutna Glacier on April 12, 1971, work on the manuscript ceased. For over 30 years the unpublished manuscript languished in the MCA's Vin Hoeman Library. Eventually, the MCA donated the manuscript to the University of Alaska Anchorage / Alaska Pacific University Consortium

Library where it is now housed in the archives and special collections section.

Among other topics, Hoeman's manuscript identified a few hundred unclimbed peaks that he thought would be worthy of an ascent. One of the peaks Vin Hoeman identified as worthy of climbing was the 51st-highest peak in the Chugach Mountains west of the Copper River. He called this mountain Peak C-6, the first letter being a reference to the Chugach Mountains.

More than 48 years after Vin Hoeman's death, I do not know of a single attempt to climb Peak C-6. Yours could be the first.



# MCA Board of Directors Meeting Agenda

Monday, May 8, 2017, 6 P.M. — BP Energy Center, Fir Room

Attendees: Stephen Austria (Director), Ralph Baldwin (Director), Jennifer DuFord (Director), Nathan Hebda (Director) called in, Cory Hinds (Past President), Max Neale (Secretary), Charlie Sink (President), Katie Strong (Vice-President)

Scribe: Max Neale

## 1. Welcome Guests (None)

## 2. President's Report (Charlie Sink)

- a. Charlie will lead one trip per month for the next four months.

## 3. Committee Reports

### Vice-President (Katie Strong)

- a. Clint Helander will do a Holden Hut Fund Raiser slideshow on his recent Mount Huntington ascent this fall!
- b. There will not be a general membership meeting June, July, or August. Katie will consider alternative events.

### Treasurer (Brian Miller)

- a. Brian will continue to investigate the amount of revenue the Club can bring in from MCA merchandise and calendars as per 501(c)(7) status.

### Secretary (Max Neale)

- a. Update Google Docs folder.
- b. Will report back to Board with information about solar PV for the Holden Hut.

### Huts (Cory Hinds)

- a. Cory is leading the hut-development process, the next steps are to finalize architectural drawings and order the structurally insulated panels; construction is scheduled for early July.
- b. Holden Hut lease is out for public comment through May 22. If there are no substantive comments, the lease will move forward toward approval.
- c. Katie will submit a comment for the Holden Hut regarding liability.
- d. Ralph has filed a special-use permit with Mat-Su State Parks for helicopter staging for Holden Hut construction. Ralph will be the safety officer for the event.

### New Member Engagement (Ralph Baldwin)

- a. Nothing new to report.

### Training (Mentorship)

- a. Four summer mentees connected with mentors for rock

climbing, 15 new mentees expressed interest for the summer; we still need more mentors.

- b. Crevasse-rescue training: it will be a three-session course in evenings with two in-town sessions with a field date in June.

### Parks Advisory (Jennifer DuFord and Ralph Baldwin)

- a. Katie will keep the Board up to date with U.S. Forest Service and National Park planning.

### Hiking and Climbing (Ed Smith)

- a. Charlie will contact Ed to discuss organizing trips.

### Library (Charlotte Foley)

- a. Nothing new to report.

## 4. Unfinished Business

- a. Katie will coordinate waste-barrel removal at the Eklutna Traverse huts, with assistance from Greg Bragiel. Marcin Ksok volunteered to assist with this (fly in and help with the barrel transfer). Katie will confirm pricing, pay Alpine Air, and find a septic hauler to accept the barrels. \$1,900 cost estimate for Eklutna Traverse huts; \$1,200 estimated for Bomber Traverse huts.

## 5. New Business

- a. Club will develop a long-term hut-maintenance and replacement plan to inform financial planning and fundraising.
- b. Jennifer will assist the summer mountaineering course by hiking in ice tools on June 24.
- c. Ralph is leading the development of a grant proposal for the Holden Hut, due in late May.
- d. Ralph will learn more about access at the Matanuska Glacier.

## 6. Announcements (None)

## 7. Board Comments

Stephen is deploying to Honduras in July. He will be a voting Board member until the end of his term in October.

## 8. Time and Location of Next Meeting

Monday, June 12, 6 p.m., BP Energy Center, Fir Room

## Mountaineering Club of Alaska

President	Charlie Sink	258-8770	Board member (term expires in 2017)	Stephen Austria	402-540-7037
Vice-President	Katie Strong	441-0434	Board member (term expires in 2017)	Nathan Hebda	310-3255
Secretary	Max Neale	207-712-1355	Board member (term expires in 2018)	Ralph Baldwin	232-0897
Treasurer	Brian Miller	517-402-8299	Board member (term expires in 2018)	Jennifer DuFord	227-6995
Past President	Cory Hinds	229-6809			

Annual membership dues: Single \$20, Family \$25

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 Membership Committee at [membership@mtnclubak.org](mailto:membership@mtnclubak.org).

*The Scree* is a monthly publication of the Mountaineering Club of Alaska. Articles, notes, and letters submitted for publication in the newsletter should be emailed to [MCAScree@gmail.com](mailto:MCAScree@gmail.com). Articles should be submitted by the 24th of the month to appear in the next month's *Scree*.

Paid ads may be submitted to the attention of the Vice-President at the club address and should be in electronic format and pre-paid. Ads can be emailed to [vicepresident@mtnclubak.org](mailto:vicepresident@mtnclubak.org).

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

Mailing list/database entry: Brian Miller - [membership@mtnclubak.org](mailto:membership@mtnclubak.org)

Hiking and Climbing Committee: Ed Smith - 854-5702 or [hcc@mtnclubak.org](mailto:hcc@mtnclubak.org)

Huts: Greg Bragiel - 569-3008 or [huts@mtnclubak.org](mailto:huts@mtnclubak.org)

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Find MCAK listserv at <https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/MCAK/info>.

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