

**"It's not the load that
breaks you down, it's the
way you carry it."
— Lena Horne**

the **SCREE**

**Mountaineering Club
of Alaska**

August 2019

Volume 62, Number 8



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AUGUST MEETING: Wednesday, August 7, at 6:30 p.m. outside at the Eagle River Nature Center. Share stories and history about the peaks in the Crow Pass to Eagle River area. This is not a potluck, but participants can bring snacks and drinks if they like.

"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."

This issue brought to you by: **Editor**—Steve Gruhn **assisted by** Dawn Munroe

Cover Photo

Mat Brunton and Sam Inouye at Rabbit Lake on the approach to North Suicide Peak (left). South Suicide Peak is at right and the saddle between the two peaks is known as Windy Gap, as it channels the prevailing southeast winds of Turnagain Arm.)

Photo by Brian Harder

AUGUST MEETING

Wednesday, August 7, at 6:30 p.m. at the Eagle River Nature Center. Gerrit Verbeek is organizing it and it'll be a session sharing stories/history about peaks in the Crow Pass to Eagle River area. This is not a potluck, but participants can bring snacks and drinks if they like. <https://www.ernc.org/find-us>

Article Submission: Text and photography submissions for *the Scree* can be sent as attachments to mcascre@gmail.com. Articles should be submitted by the 11th 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. Send high resolution file photos separately, including captions for each photo. 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 don't forget to submit photo captions.

Mentorship Program

Interested in furthering your skills? The MCA has a volunteer-driven Mentorship Program that connects beginner and intermediate folks seeking technical experience in specific mountaineering disciplines with mentors who help you gain and work on new skills.

If you would like to become a mentee or mentor, please email mentorship@mtnclubak.org.

Calendar Photo Contest

We are launching an online contest for MCA members to select photos for the 2020 MCA Calendar (horizontal format). There are four photo categories: 1. scenery/landscape, 2. climbing (rock and ice), 3. hiking/mountaineering/slogging, and 4. skiing. Each person is allowed four photo submissions total. You can choose to submit one photo per category, all four photos in one category, or any other combination. Photo submissions will be accepted between July 31 and August 14 and voting will be held from August 21 to 28. To participate in the contest, login to your MCA account via the website (<http://www.mtnclubak.org>), click on the Membership page, and then scroll to the bottom to see the contest submission links (there is one link for each category). Guidelines are detailed in the contest websites. The winning photographers will be asked to briefly share about their selected photo(s) at our September 4 General Meeting. If you have questions, please email info@mtnclubak.org.

For the MCA Membership Application and Liability Waiver, visit <http://www.mtnclubak.org/index.cfm?useaction=members.form>.

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Online? Click me!



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

Hiking and Climbing Schedule

August 11 6 a.m. — 6 p.m.: Crow Pass Crossing Hike/Run (Girdwood to the Eagle River Nature Center) for advanced hikers/mountain runners. 22.6 Miles with about 4,000 feet of vertical in 8 to 12 hours (roughly 2-mile-per-hour pace) with one major river crossing. Carpooling will be organized among participants. It will be a fast hike and/or trot for a lot of the trail with a few short breaks, pack light and plan to go at a good clip. It's beautiful! It's challenging! It's a great way to check out the trail. Great way to hike the trail with a larger group for bear safety. Primary Risks: Bears, river crossings, snowy/slick trail, rain/snow/sun (heat/cold-related injuries). Participants should email Jen Aschoff at jaschoff@gmail.com to sign up! Expect to hear from her in late July as she might be out of email contact. Gear details will be provided upon signing up.

August 24 — September 26: Pacific Crest Trail (PCT) Section Hiking (Ashland, Oregon, southbound to near Quincy, California) Trip Leader: Shaun E. Sexton. Sign-up Details: Send Notification of Interest and statement of qualifications to SeSexton@gci.net.

Physical Demands: Non-technical; 484 statute miles; total elevation gain = 85,000 feet. Class 1 Hiking.

Potential Hazards: slips, trips and falls; attack by wildlife; insect bites; lightning; fire; cold injury and illness; dehydration; heat stress; plant toxicity; gastroenteritis; musculoskeletal and stress injuries; altitude illness; sunburn; urinary tract infections; blisters; and other.

Requisite Skills (physical and/or technical) for Safe Participation on Trip: Experience hiking with 25-pound backpack for a week or more. Fitness to average 15 miles per day with daily average ascents and descents of approximately 2,600 feet. Responsible management of personal health issues, including, but not limited to diabetes, allergies, seizures, and heart disease. Tolerant. Tolerable.

Trip Description Examples: Section hike southbound up to 484 miles of the PCT in northern California beginning near the border with Oregon (Ashland, Oregon). One rest day per week, on average, in resupply towns near the PCT which may include the California communities of Buck's Lake, Quincy, Belden, Chester, Old Station, Burney, Mount Shasta, Dunsmuir, Castella, Etna, and Seiad Valley. Party members who wish to participate in only a portion of this undertaking may join or depart at any of these or other safe locations of their choice. Options for public and or private transportation are left to decision of the individual.

The ideal party member will be: a fully experienced long-distance hiker with adequate knowledge of equipment, shelter, and food; fully competent at self-management of personal health and welfare; comfortably fit; and have no disruptive schedule or budget constraints. Trail closures by fire or other natural or man-made phenomena are typical and must be expected. Delays are anticipated. Seniors are encouraged to participate.

Choate's Chuckle - Tom Choate

Q: Long ago in the early days of using chocks for protection, one climber stole a set from another. Soon he fell, lost gear, and had more bad luck. Why? *Answer: on page 23.*

Climbing Notes

On June 22 Joe Stock emailed that Elliot Gaddy, James Kesterson, Paul Muscat, Matt Sanborn, Glenn Wilson, and he had climbed four peaks in the Yentna Glacier drainage of Denali National Park in the Alaska Range. The four peaks included two 9250-foot peaks above the Southwest Fork of the Yentna Glacier and Peaks 9350 and 10150, both in the Chedotlothna Glacier and Yentna Glacier drainages.

On July 6, with Jen Aschoff and Joe Nyholm, Laron Thomas reached the summit of Baleful Peak, thereby becoming only the tenth person to visit all 21 summits over 7000 feet in the Western Chugach Mountains. Congratulations, Laron!

On July 11 Dylan Miller emailed to report that on July 4 he had climbed Peak 3770 in the Hasselborg Lake and Windfall Harbor drainages on Admiralty Island.

We look forward to reading full reports of each of these trips in an upcoming issue of *the Scree*.

Geographic Names

On June 13 the U.S. Board on Geographic Names approved the names Mount Mary and Santa Ana Peak for two peaks in the Kenai Mountains east of Seward. Mount Mary is a 4883-foot peak in the Godwin Glacier and Shelf Glacier drainages. Santa Ana Peak is a 4754-foot peak in the Shelf Glacier and Bootleg Lagoon drainages. MCA members and Seward residents Harold Faust and Dan Michaud spearheaded the effort to make the names official.

Dolly Lefever Presentation at REI

Friday, August 2, 6 to 8 p.m. Join REI at 500 East Northern Lights Boulevard for a celebration of a lifetime of mountaineering accomplishments with Alaska's own Dolly Lefever, the first Alaskan woman to summit Mount Everest and the first American woman to complete the holy grail of mountaineering: the Seven Summits. A member of the Alaska Sports Hall of Fame, Lefever will be on-hand to share Seven-Summits stories and an intimate discussion of what has driven her to a long, successful and well-lived life in the out-of-doors.

Limited seating, register here:

<https://www.rei.com/events/92848/dolly-lefever-iconic-alaska-a-lifetime-of-mountain-travel>.

Hut Needs and Notes

If you are headed to one of the MCA huts, please consult the Hut Inventory and Needs on the website (<http://www.mtnclubak.org/index.cfm/Huts/Hut-Inventory-and-Needs>) or Greg Bragiel, MCA Huts Chairman, at either huts@mtnclubak.org or (907) 350-5146 to see what needs to be taken to the huts or repaired. All huts have tools and materials so that anyone can make basic repairs. Hutmeisters are needed for each hut: If you have a favorite hut and would like to take the lead on checking on the hut and organizing maintenance, the MCA would greatly appreciate your help!

Tetlin Peak (8365 feet) and Peak 7078, Mentasta Mountains

Text and photos by Shane Ohms

May 25-27, 2019

Three thuds ring upon the outside of my car, yanking me from my sleep even before I hear the call to action; “WAAAKE UP!”

“S--t, I must have slept in.” I bolt for the back pick-up door; determined not to keep Chelsea Grimstad and Gerrit Verbeek waiting a moment longer, but I’m stopped. “They’re just drunk,” Sophie Tidler’s voice whispers, clearly unamused. I look at my watch; it’s 2 a.m. We had agreed to get up at 8. The lady outside is announcing to her partner (and seemingly the whole world) that she “can’t pee while you’re looking, babe.” I do my best to forget the fact that someone is urinating not 5 feet from my truck in a pull-out equipped with a perfectly operable restroom, and I resume slumber. Thanks, Sharpie, or Sparky, whatever her name was ...

End scene. It is now a wonderful Saturday morning in Gakona. Sophie, Gerrit, Chelsea, and their two dogs had driven from Anchorage the previous day, and I from Fairbanks. The objective for this Memorial Day weekend is Tetlin Peak in the Mentasta Mountains. After some milling around, we load up in my pick-up and embark on the quick, bumpy drive into Nabesna. At Lost Creek, we encounter a local who assures us the travel up the creek is easy. It is. Stream hopping, snow bridges, and cool rocks cause pause in an approach that otherwise flies by. The sky is clear and the sun harsh. Mount Sanford is visible behind us. As we get higher, the entire Lost Creek becomes a well-packed snowfield with the occasional trench engraved by running water.



Mount Sanford as seen during the Lost Creek approach.

Lost Creek narrows at 4000 feet and some light canyoneering is enjoyed, at least the steep walls offer us some shade. High above us there are some sheep. We make camp on a cool ridge feature at 4600 feet where a few streams converge. We have a good and lazy lunch. Two people are spotted, also coming up from the Lost Creek side. Eventually we resume our approach up Tetlin Peak with lighter packs. It is an uneventful approach until I notice something different about a second cluster of sheep. “Check it

out; a wolf is chasing that sheep.” Before she has had time to turn around, Chelsea sounds off a loud and angry “BEAN!” effectively calling her dog off of the chase. We wait as Bean makes his half-mile return over the expansive scree fields. Bean is sentenced to a leash for the following days in order to protect his feet, but in the meantime, we have Tetlin Peak to address.

At the base of Tetlin’s southwest scree fields, there are a multitude of gullies exhibiting various degrees of recent snow slides. We take the gully that looks as though it’s already released all the snow above. It can’t slide twice, right? We don crampons/Kahtoolas, which make the vertical quite easy. Our gully deposits us at a saddle west of the summit, and from this saddle the summit is easily gained. Sophie and I summit Tetlin about 10 minutes after Gerrit, Chelsea, and the dogs. It is a little cold up top, particularly since we have stopped moving. I take a lot of pictures and a video, and enjoy the views from my highest peak to date. Some clouds obstruct of the giant Wrangell Mountains to our south, but there is more than enough to take in and we are fortunate to have the weather we’ve had.



The Tetlin Peak summit party looks south.



Peak 8235 and Noyes Mountain as seen from atop Tetlin Peak.

I glissade down the same gully and near the bottom, notice that a wet slide is happening three gullies to the east. Odd, considering we hadn’t observed any in the heat all day and the hour was now 7 p.m. and cooling. We return to camp. Having chosen to

travel sans tent, I brought two bottles of box wine. Pinot Noir is served with dinner! The dogs who have bragged energy all day now radiate a catchy tiredness. Yaaaaawn, we all turn in for the night.

Ten mosquito bites through my head net later, it is Sunday morning. We pack up camp and make way for the 6000-foot pass that will bring us to Trail Creek. Half a mile into the day, Gerrit realizes we are in the wrong creek bed. We correct ourselves and continue. At the pass, we rest and have views of Peak 8235 (Noyes Mountain is just out of sight). A sheep trail deposits us nicely into Trail Creek and through the heat we walk down empty streambeds, passing four caribou sheds and two more parties of hikers. I make a proposition to climb Peak 7078 later that day. [Ed. note: Peak 7078 is known as Spotforth Peak on bivouac.com.] We make camp at 4100 feet in Trail Creek. I prop my jacket on some bushes for shade and take a nap. I feel energized after the nap and prepare my pack for a solo of Peak 7078.

Sophie leaves to take a stroll in her sandals around the base of the adjacent Peak 7420. While I am gone Chelsea and Gerrit will take turns climbing the nearby Peak 5750.

I depart for the pass north of Peak 5750 which will lead to Little Jack Creek, and then to Peak 7078. Sheep are hanging out at the pass when I head out. I fully expect them to move away when they notice my approach, but as I get closer and they remain stationary, I realize that they are all rams. They let me come within 200 meters and I get some great pictures. On the back side of the pass

I discover and utilize a sheep trail that ends up cutting 1000 vertical feet off my round-trip detour. When the sheep trail is no longer useful, I dip down to cross Little Jack Creek and make way for the east face of Peak 7078. All the while I am trying to decide how to best climb the peak. At the base of its eastern scree fields, I take some zoomed-in pictures and play them back to aid in my

gully selection. I pick a gully and get into a rhythm heading up my chosen scree line. As it turned out, all of the eastern scree fields would have worked (as well as the eastern ridge), but alas, I had successfully found and taken the easiest route.

On top of Peak 7078, I look over at Point 7075. With the inaccuracies of whatever surveying equipment found those numbers once upon a time, there is a chance for Peak 7075 to be higher. But with my naked eye, I can't detect the 3-foot difference at a mile away. I take in the views and my camera takes pictures. With no signs of previous ascents, I decide to build a small cairn before departing and retracing my steps back to camp. Back at camp a small creek-side fire is enjoyed along with cabernet sauvignon and warm meals. The dogs are even more tired this night, resting at the foot of the tent in wait for the humans to retire.

Monday morning rolls around and some inconsequential clouds eat away at the mountains behind us as we make our exit down Trail Creek.

No cool rocks or snow bridges are found in Trail Creek, which disappoints me. But at least it is a peaceful day and the miles are easy. When we reach the road, we have two miles left to walk back to my truck parked at Lost Creek. Back in Gakona we are pleased to find Chelsea's car undisturbed. My friends make the drive to Anchorage and I to Fairbanks. As I am repositioning my hands on the wheel to keep the sunburn shaded, I can't help but revel in how perfectly another trip panned out.



Rams at the pass north of Peak 5750.



View of Tanada Peak and Lake from atop Peak 7078.



Summit selfie on Peak 7078 with Point 7075 pictured behind.

While Shane climbed Peak 7078 to the west and Sophie explored the flanks of Point 7270 to the east, first Chelsea and then Gerrit completed a mellow loop climbing Peak 5750 via its east ridge and descending to the north col and bank to camp via a dry streambed. No cairns were encountered, but given the proximity of the peak to a well-traveled trail literally on Trail Creek and ease of the ascent, it is impossible to believe that we were the first. A herd of about a dozen sheep did not begrudge a pair of bipeds the use of their extensive trails but had no desire to meet up close. Likewise, a bald eagle perched on the easternmost high point on the ridge took to the skies once it became apparent the approaching visitor was too large to eat.

Gerrit Verbeek

Mustang Peak (6750 feet) and Colt Peak (5847 feet), Coast Mountains

Text by Dylan Miller

June 28-30, 2019



Mustang Peak as seen from the southwest.

Photo by Dylan Miller

It's Saturday, day five of my ten-day shift at the Pack Creek bear-viewing observatory. The weather has been phenomenal, and I'm really hoping it will last through next weekend, which are the days I have off. I'm alone, and no bears are out, they're likely doing what I'm doing, hiding in the shade from the blaring sun. Under an umbrella, I flip through the channels of my radio to the NOAA weather channel, position the radio so it transmits clearly, and listen for the extended forecast. Finally, today will be the first day that the forecast predicts into the following weekend, the time I have off. The monotonous male voice of the artificial weather report goes through the coming week's weather ... Thursday partly cloudy, Thursday night mostly, and for Friday mostly cloudy chance of rain. "Damn," I say to myself, as a sense of nervousness comes over me. "Ah, it's far out; I bet it will get better," as I reassure myself. For the next four days I look forward to listening to Mr. Weatherman, as a kid looks forward to Christmas the night before, for going climbing is like Christmas for a climbing enthusiast. And each day I listened to that weather report get better and better until: Friday mostly clear, Saturday clear, and Sunday partly cloudy. Yessss!

It's now Thursday and we're heading back to Juneau in our usual mode of transport: floatplane. I take the back seat, throw on my headphones, play some Grateful Dead (*Sugar Magnolia* to be exact), and watch awestruck as the magical landscape of Southeast Alaska moves below us. I reach in my pocket and turn on my phone. A few more mountain ranges and valleys to fly around and we'll be in phone service. I get signal and text Matt Callahan, my go-to climbing partner: What's the word? What are we climbing?

Later that day he responds: Mendenhall Towers, Adolf Knopf, or Mustang. What's your preference? I tell him Mustang; he agrees. It's settled. I change out of my work uniform and go straight to Temsco Helicopters and ask how much a one-way flight to Mustang would cost. Four hundred forty-one dollars, the pilot says. Perfect. It's booked for 8 a.m. the next day.

The first time I saw Mustang Peak I had that experience that many climbers have when they see a rock formation for the first time and say, "That has to be climbed someday ..." Bright silver granite forming a pyramid panel wall makes up the south face of Mustang Peak. It's obvious from most mountaintops, sitting above the Herbert and Eagle Glaciers. The sliver 1,200-foot wall illuminates like a massive mirror in the sunlight. It was 2013 when I first had that thought that it should be climbed. At the time I likely didn't think it was me that should go, but now it's 2019 and here I am packing for Mustang. Funny how things happen like that; careful for what you wish for.

Matt and I meet at 8 a.m. at Temsco and before we know it we're flying toward the Juneau Icefield. We snap some photos of our descent route, and then watch as that wall of Mustang gets bigger and bigger until we're looking straight up. We jump out of the heli and it's gone.

"Wow ..." we both say, looking up at this thing. "What a wall!" Our plan is to attempt the face this day, so we get on it. We discuss route options and pick the obvious line of corners that runs straight up the middle. We rack up and traverse the base of the cliff, looking at all the different possibilities, eventually getting directly below the route we intended. Steep roofs and a corner so big it makes it look impossible to escape right or left. But from the ground it looks good.

The first two pitches we simul-climb, mostly 3rd-class ledges with one steeper 5.7 section. This brings us to the base of the first and largest of the corners. It doesn't look good, and there are no options to go left or right. Steep climbing with thin cracks make it intimidating, not to mention the three consecutive roofs that jut out above ... But the day is going by, so I say what the heck. A half hour later I'm blanked out and run out. The only options are to nail the rest of my way up this corner or rappel. "Damn it, we're not aid climbers!" I yell out loud. I pound in a blade and rap back down to Matt. We decide to rappel down out of the big cor-

ner and look for another way up. I continue down another 30 feet and am able to pendulum left around the corner. "Wow!" Above me cracks and flakes run everywhere. I tell Matt it looks good and we should continue up. I build an anchor and Matt joins me on a ledge. Two long pitches of incredible steep and juggy 5.10 climbing bring us to the halfway point on the wall. But things aren't looking too hot for us (in actuality things are looking too hot for us). It is now 5:30 p.m. and we have drunk most of our water and we're both dehydrated to the point of fuzziness. Not only that, the crack system we are following ends, meaning we have to decide to go left or right, both looking uncertain. After some water-deprived, brain-dead discussion, at least on my part, we decide the smart thing to do is go down. Three and a half full, 60-meter vertical rappels bring us back to the snowfield below at 7 p.m.

After proper rehydration we decide to take a walk around the mountain and assess other route potential. On the east side of the peak, we find a shorter, 600-foot wall that meets the northeast ridge of Mustang peak and also connects to another unnamed peak. A moderate-looking line would take us to the saddle between the two peaks.

The next morning we're back at it. Matt takes the first lead, traversing ledges and climbing mostly 4th class and some moves of 5.6. We simul for another 30 meters or so, eventually entering steeper terrain. The next pitch is short, steep rock broken by ledges. The hardest moves are some tricky 5.9 face climbing. Another long 5th-class traverse pitch brings us to the ridge. From here we are now able to look north toward the Gilkey River valley at peaks rarely seen, such as The Tusk, Horn Spire, the Icefall Spires, Glacier King, and Unicorn Spire. A cool breeze and views stoke our fires as we head up the ridge.

Matt leads the ridge as I bring up the rear. Another 600 feet of fun, blocky 3rd- to 5th-class scrambling and one 30-foot 5.6 crack take us to the top.

We celebrate in a splendid summit experience: warm sun, clear skies, fresh snowmelt, and apple fritter. Once again we scan the Juneau Icefield and name out all the peaks we see and want to climb. After a while we consider our descent options. A shorter, 400-foot wall to the northwest takes us to the glacier below and a short walk back to our camp. We are down by 1:30 p.m.

We have already decided to start our way back to town via the Herbert Glacier. So we pack up and head out. As we approach the edge of the icefield where the ice then pours down 1,000-foot icefalls into the Herbert valley, making up the Herbert Glacier, we have been eyeing a beautiful peak. At first it looks like a technical rock climb, but as we gain a view of its southern aspect, it appears to be a scramble. So we decide to take a break of glacier slogging and put on our running shoes and run up there. Twenty minutes

and 600 feet later we are on top. Awesome! Super fun. We dub this peak Colt Peak, keeping the theme of horses.

The rest of our evening we spend roped up navigating crevasses. Lucky for us, the snow is in still good condition. By 10 p.m., we're halfway down the Herbert and on blue ice. We pitch our tent on a flat snow patch. The next day we're back home by 2 p.m.

Our routes: as for the half-climbed route on the face we dub it "Shadowfax," 5.10, 1,200 feet. Of course we get that someone else can climb it to the top and make their own changes.

As for our second route: East ridge, 5.9, 800 feet, new route? [Ed. note: Mustang Peak was climbed in 1984 by Charles Richard "Dick" Ellsworth and Bruce Tickell.]

And Colt Peak is a likely first ascent peak. Talking to most people who know the history of the Juneau Icefield, no one believes it had been previously climbed.



*Dylan Miller with Mustang Peak's south face in the background.
Photo by Matt Callahan*



*Matt Callahan leading the first pitch of the 600-foot wall to gain the east ridge of Mustang Peak.
Photo by Dylan Miller*

"The Fifth Element" on Fifth Tower (6650 feet) and "The Sixth Sense" on Sixth Tower (6750 feet), Mendenhall Towers

Text by Dylan Miller

I was at work, getting ready for yet another field trip for the U.S. Forest Service. The weather: phenomenal like it had been all summer ... hard to believe it was only the third sunniest summer on record, I can't imagine what the first two were like ... I guess I experienced them since I'd lived in Juneau my whole life. This one just felt hot! I'd been texting with this guy named Jason Nelson, I knew of him by his internet pages and mountain project write-ups on his Mendenhall Towers trip back in 2009. I also see his name pop up in guidebooks like Indian Creek. He apparently was in town looking for a climbing partner because his other partner Gabe Hayden had to work. I told him I was most likely busy and had to work myself. In all honesty I was hesitant to go climbing with Jason because I knew he was friends with Ryan Johnson who earlier in March passed away on the back side of the Towers. I thought, "Hmmm, what if he's some hotshot alpinist that wants to do some extreme route or something" ... Ryan's death really shook me sober from the fearless "I can do anything" feeling when I was young and running up mountains constantly.

As I was getting gear ready for that work field trip, my boss, who was also in the mix with the climbing community and knew Gabe Hayden, asked me if I knew that Jason was in town and looking for a climbing partner. I told him yes and that I'd been chatting with him. My boss then said, "Do you want the time off and go climbing?" At first I was reluctant, but before the day was over, it was official: I was going to the Towers with Jason.

On July 30th Jason and I hopped in an A-Star headed for the Towers. By that time I'd gotten to know Jason a bit better. I didn't realize he was 40 years old, so he'd been around and knew his s--t and probably had chilled out. And to my finding he was a very calm and relaxed person, yet still possessed that passion or obsession or burning desire, whatever you want to call it, to climb hard, new routes, which is a good thing, right? I mean someone's gotta climb those things; they're amazing and it's sooooo fun!

We landed, set up camp, and scoped our line: the "Dawn Wall" of the Mendenhall Towers, which really wasn't anything too crazy, but it did get first sunlight early morning and had never been climbed on, even though it was this 1,500-foot face that had potential all over it. We scoped our line by picking out a few awesome-looking splitters and filling in the blanks on the way. We watched the sunset and toasted a sip of whiskey to our beloved friend Ryan Johnson who had had such a huge influence in climbing in Juneau and around the world.

The next morning we were at our climb on the Fifth Tower. I took the first lead, which was this long, irregular, left-trending break in the rock. It was fun 5.8 climbing. Jason led a mostly 5th-class pitch after that. I was on for the third pitch, which was somewhat wandery, due

to discontinuous cracks, 5.8. So far what looked like a pretty steep wall from below was seeming a lot less committing. Jason led out on the fourth pitch and went out of view. It was my turn to climb and when I got about halfway up, I saw a beautiful 40-foot splitter finger crack. Finally something good! And it was. We swapped leads for five more 5.8/5.9 pitches and then topped out. We rappelled the Solva Buttress, the most traveled route in the area, and were back down at camp by 5:30. That was a new experience for me, it seemed that all of my Tower trips up to that always ended with rappelling in the dark and stumbling in to camp around midnight, dehydrated and too tired to cook. I liked climbing with a pro climber!

We then devised our next route for the next day. We were planning for a pick-up that day as well so we would need to make it fast. From our camp the Sixth Tower kept drawing our attention. With its bright, silvery walls and steep continuous cracks, it soon became our objective. Neither of us had been on it and it really hadn't seen much action at all, besides a few ascents up the standard ridges. We scoped a line up a steep buttress that ran up the middle of the granite peak, aesthetics and good-looking climbing were all there.

Just as we anticipated, this Sixth Tower Buttress offered steep cracks, great rock, and sustained pitch-after-pitch climbing. There were off-widths, hands, fingers, and chimneys throughout. Eventually taking us high up on the eighth pitch, which ended on this awesome little detached tower. The ninth pitch started by stepping over the gap between the tower and the main wall. Small crimps, bad feet and only micro nuts to protect made this the crux move. But a hidden jug allowed us to quickly make it over. The pitch was finished with an exposed leftward under-clinging crack around a corner. One more pitch of fifth class and we were on top. A steep clean rap line offered a swift retreat and we were back at camp packing and toasting beers to our great climb, to G. Ryan Johnson, and my birthday, which it so happened to be. Before we knew it we were back in town. It's always an odd feeling being "out there" and then back in town that fast ... flying is modern-day time travel, if you consider it.

Jason and I were psyched with the route we did on the Sixth Tower. We graded it 5.11-, yet it offered mostly 5.9 and 5.10 climbing, no loose rock, and fun diverse climbing, a new classic we presume! We dubbed it "The Sixth Sense." As for the line we did on the Fifth Tower, we called it "The Fifth Element," 5.10. By then Jason and I were good friends, at least that's how I felt. And we talked about getting together for more Mendenhall madness the next summer.

What's Worth Doing is Worth Doing Right, Especially When You're High in the Mountains

Doing What You Love:

Summiting Denali (20310 feet) 2019, Churchill Peaks

Text by Dan Koepke

Pre-Denali Training May 2019: Mount Shasta and Lassen Peak ski descents and rock climbing at Smith Rock

Starting in Paradise (5400 feet) from the parking lot beneath Washington's Mount Rainier (14411 feet) the afternoon of Sunday, May 5, I ski toured to Camp Muir (10188 feet) for the day's last light and a 4700-foot ski descent back to the parking lot. Turning past my father's footsteps, my own footsteps, the Muir Snowfield, and where my brothers and I played as kids, the line stood out as one of the longest, sweetest ski runs of my life. I crashed in the rental's truck bed lower on the mountain and the next morning returned to casually ski from Paradise to Panorama Point (6940 feet) and back. After a season of Alaskan backcountry skiing beginning in October, these moderate tours continued the low-intensity training for ascending 3,000 to 6,000-plus vertical feet consecutive days at altitude on Denali.



Dan Koepke climbing at Smith Rock.

Photo by Ed Shred

Tuesday, May 7, I met Ed Shred at Portland's airport and we immediately headed southbound for California's Mount Shasta (14180 feet) with an excellent weather window. That night we met spiritual guide and California native Jim Sweeney and prepared to take Ed Shred for his first tour up Shasta the next morning. Ed wanted to keep it casual, and as best friends of course our styles aligned. Ascending about 4000 feet from the Bunny Flat Trailhead (6950 feet), Ed and I toured just above Helen Lake where Jim stopped and descended right before us. Next day Ed and I toured up to 9000 feet around Sargents Ridge for two ski runs and another 4000 feet of vertical.

While discussing summit strategies on Thursday, May 9, Ed mentioned the idea of summiting Shasta from around 8000 feet just above Horse Camp where the timberline thins. A 6000-foot ascent and ski-descent seemed very attractive, especially thinking about Denali's summit (20310 feet) from Camp 4 (14000 feet). Friday we rested, skinned in with our camp, set up shop, skied back to the parking lot for dinner and the remainder of the gear, and then returned to camp and crashed at 8000 feet.

We easily coordinated timing from our previous days' touring and Saturday, May 11, left camp after sunrise in order to ski-descend in the afternoon after the snow softened. Especially considering our timing and experience, we were wary of the ice- and rock-fall in Avalanche Gulch. Surely enough, just before reaching Helen Lake, a helicopter rescued someone who took a rock to the face, which knocked him out and sent him sliding face-first hundreds of feet. Blood on the snow painted a bright reminder of the danger we still faced on our way up as dinner-plate-sized rocks flew by, making keeping an eye above essential. Shortly thereafter someone came tumbling down the snow unsuccessfully trying to self-arrest and eventually stopped about 1,500 feet later.



Dan Koepke on Mount Shasta's Avalanche Gulch.

Photo by Ed Shred

All the carnage made us extremely cautious and appreciative about making it to the ridge above Red Banks, where we both waited for the snow to soften and winced while listening to folks ski-descending Misery Hill who were not quite as patient. After snacking and watching with surprise as guys drank beers in the sun at 12800 feet, we then ascended Misery Hill and passed Shasta's fumaroles to its summit, where we signed the register. We did not ski-descend the last 100 to 150 feet of rime and rock, but we may have witnessed one brave gnardog who did. Ed and I simply stepped in and out of our skis beneath the rime around 14000 feet for a long 6,000-foot ride back to our camp. For many reasons this North American classic beat my recent ride on Rainier as the best ski run of my entire life. Best in Ed Shred's memory, too. We'll see how Rainier's Fuhrer Finger compares in May 2020.

For context, 6,000 vertical feet surpasses everything in Alaska's Front Range, the highest points in most (32 of 50) of the United States, and also the prominence of any peak in the Western Churchill Mountains. Summiting the Grand Teton (13770 feet) in July 2019 demanded ascending (and then descending) over 7,000 feet in a day - my biggest daily vertical ascent ever on a technical route. *Can't always climb close to home if you want to go big!* That said, Denali boasts the greatest vertical ascent (over 13,000 feet) of any

big mountain route in the world - of course including Mount Everest.

Ed and I nailed our primary objective and everything worked out just right after giving it the attention and time it deserved. Shasta's lesson inspired comfortable confidence about Denali that was coming fast: *what's worth doing is worth doing right, especially high in the mountains doing what you love.*

I knew Ed Shred and I could casually climb and ski nearby Lassen Peak (10463 feet) via its north face on May 12, the day after summiting Shasta because I had climbed Lassen solo in 2018 carrying a buddy's borrowed downhill skis, Ed and I were now stronger, and 2019's snowpack was even fatter. After skinning most of the way, I succeeded at my self-imposed challenge of continuously boot-packing to the summit without stopping. On the other hand, I did not ski from the true summit like Ed Shred; it just seemed gnarly and unnecessary when I could easily walk down a bit for more chill turns and still enjoy a run of about 4,000 vertical feet back to the parking lot. After Shasta and Lassen, the confidence of successfully returning to climb familiar mountains inspired me looking to Denali. Mountaineers returning to relatively unchanged mountains may notice how evolving impressions and reflections represent our own changes and developments, and perceiving this growth typically feels both beautiful and empowering.

Ed Shred and I arrived in the late afternoon spring sun at Oregon's Smith Rock on Monday, May 13, and climbed a few lines on its high-friction volcanic tuff before sunset. We discussed rock-climbing together many times close to home around Montana and Alaska, but until that trip we hadn't climbed together outside those places near where we lived. Basking in the success of Shasta and Lassen, it felt like an excellent road trip and we looked forward to more like it in the future after Denali next.



Dan Koepke leading "Five Gallon Buckets."
Photo by Ed Shred

Tuesday, May 14, after flashing "Five Gallon Buckets" (5.8) and beginning to belay Ed, the strong and gray climber I noticed earlier rope-soloing in hiking boots asked if he and his crew could jump on the classic route next. "Of course!" I remember hoping to effuse a cheery

and welcoming enthusiastic spirit in my voice, especially recognizing I was feeling good. As Ed Shred climbed, I noticed the cameraman and so much value in the Rock Warrior's sage words as I saturated all the articulate wisdom I could. Eventually when the time felt right, I interjected a question about intuition and soon with a smile I asked, "Are you some kind of living legend?"

Yes, we were speaking with Arno Ilgner, author of The Rock Warrior's Way, and he was dropping some legit knowledge. Later in June 2019 while reading that book at the American Alpine Club's Climbers' Ranch in Grand Teton National Park, I appreciated how much that experience made his extremely profound words come alive in a powerful way for me. This served as yet another reminder of how precious those personal connections in our community prove to be.

Climbing on the road made all these climbers and their stories come alive as I fused their stories into my own: climbing at Lover's Leap on "Bear's Reach" and feeling the spirit of Dan Osman, or on "Fantasia" and connecting with Royal Robbins, summiting Mount Dickey after reading Bradford Washburn's 1956 *American Alpine Journal* article about its first ascent, or reading John Long and recalling climbing in Yosemite Valley and Tuolumne and Joshua Tree, or climbing and skiing with Jim Sweeney after reading Alaska Expedition: Marine Life Solidarity while climbing on the Ruth Glacier, listening to Bill Briggs at the Jackson Hootenanny while looking up at the Grand Teton's north face, and shaking the hand of Vern Tejas at Camp 3 and wishing him good luck on his 60th Denali ascent and K2 before he offered quick tips and profound guidance via something as casual as a song. I've known the first part for years, but hadn't ever heard Vern's finish:

*Go slow and ya always go.
Go fast and ya never last,
and the mountain will kick you in the rear.
So go slow to the summit, go home, eat pizza, and drink beer.*

Before leaving Smith Rock Wednesday, May 15, Ed Shred and I scoped the Monkey Face. With added inspiration we soon planned to return around May 2020 to climb it, Mount Hood, and Mount Rainier with a ski-descent of the Fuhrer Finger. *Anyone else wanna come along?*

Commencing Denali 2019 Expedition 20310 on May 22

Ed Shred and I decided to climb Denali on solo permits this time. Especially after my attempt with a Denali solo permit in 2018, our strategy was important to me and made sense to him, too, because it provided the opportunity to continue and summit even if one of us needed to turn around. This framework also highlighted



Ed Shred ski-descending Lassen Peak's north face.
Photo by Dan Koepke

the salient strength of teamwork whenever we synchronized and shared it, which was not always, but often.

With excellent weather Ed Shred and I landed at Kahiltna International base camp (7200 feet) early afternoon Wednesday, May 22, and about 3 p.m. began skiing to Camp 1 (7800 feet) where we cooked and crashed that night. Carrying a load from Camp 1 to Camp 3 (11000 feet) on Thursday, May 23, around 9600 feet we ran into friends Paul Strickland, Brandon Calhoun, Edward Doueih, and Les Reaves, who had flown in a day before us, and then Ed Shred and I skied soft corn snow back down to Camp 1. We returned to Camp 3 the next day, and just for fun I enjoyed skiing powder above Camp 3 on Motorcycle Hill in the soft, serene, and quiet light before midnight that I always love in the mountains. Fat conditions and past experience made us super comfy and I never roped up above Camp 3. Ed Shred, Paul, and I left Camp 3 unroped but around the same time the next morning Saturday, May 25.

Weather called for a storm coming with winds picking up in the afternoon. That made us wary, especially around Windy Corner, since in 2017 Ed's toes suffered frostbite during a long single-carry from Camp 3. I recognized we might turn around before Camp 4 due to the high wind, but still wanted to move before the storm really blew in, and I decided to take a light load without skis and without a sled. By the time we got above Motorcycle Hill and on Squirrel Hill around noon, winds were gusting at least in the 20s and it was getting nasty. I had been scoping cache spots and saw large groups of climbers gathered before Windy Corner, where Denali Dispatches had reported blue ice and a rescue after a fall that was delayed four days due to poor conditions. I did not want to get stuck waiting in a line in the wind there and I did not want to get pinched regarding finding a cache spot, so the best conservative decision seemed to be caching at the top of Squirrel Hill and returning to Camp 3. Paul, who was on a solo permit, too, was relatively committed to Camp 4 after carrying his first load up there the day before, and we wished each other the best before he continued ascending. Ed Shred and I buried our cache, descended, and we liked our decision as the windy storm buffeted Camp 3 that afternoon.

Then Sunday, Day 5, the storm almost-fortuitously forced Ed and I to rest aside from caching our skis above Squirrel Hill in the evening. The next day on Monday, May 27, utilizing three small caches total, I ascended up to Camp 4 unroped, but often near Ed Shred until after Squirrel Hill. Immediately we ran into Paul at Camp 4 and met a young guy from Indiana, Nate. Paul, a kind logistical mastermind, began mentoring Nate at Camp 4, and Nate greeted us with a black trash bag of snow for water.

On Tuesday, everyone on the mountain wanted to move and take advantage of the great weather. In the morning I back-carried

some food I had left above Windy Corner, then around 3 p.m., I began carrying a load up the Headwall. I modestly aimed for at least the bergschrund and maybe a lap up the fixed lines, feeling fairly acclimated and strong. I hoped that cache would enable returning for a summit push whenever conditions permitted one. Felt excellent cruising up with skis awhile on the Headwall and then on crampons as I began ascending the fixed lines. I ran into Ed Shred and Paul as they descended the fixed lines after their cache run to Camp 5 with half their time waiting in traffic, but timing was perfect for me that day because all the traffic was early and gone late. I was happy to bury my light cache right atop the fixed lines without dancing farther on the ridge. I first heard about good and improving summit conditions while at Camp 3, and there was more



Overlooking Denali's Camp 3 above Motorcycle Hill.

Photo by Dan Koepeke

encouraging news at Camp 4 as more summitters descended with stable weather, but I also met climbers who had been stuck at High Camp during the storm and returned with frostbitten fingers.

At Camp 4 I also learned about the numerous deaths on Mount Everest, which made me reflect on the overcrowding and inexperienced climbers I had seen during three consecutive seasons on Denali. Some examples contributing to injuries and rescues include impassable bottle-necking, guided clients completely unable to rappel and thus necessitating being lowered by guides on the last section of fixed lines, inefficient and dangerously-slow travel on fixed lines by rope teams with unnecessary and redundantly-redundant application of ropes. The Denali rangers described how to defecate on the mountain for about a half-hour in the mandatory orientation meeting, but they have literally said, "You can google that" when asked why there is no discussion of essential climbing and safety techniques. Sanitation proves paramount to safety, and that just seems backward. It would obviously be in everyone's best interest for the rangers to allocate even five minutes for checking that every single unguided and guided mountaineer *before flying to base camp* knows how to appropriately don crampons themselves,

how to ascend a fixed line, and perhaps even basic crevasse-rescue techniques; currently rangers are simply *enabling* incompetent climbers to compromise the safety of others as well as misuse public resources for rescues. Is this *status quo* some odd sort of job security, or just negligence? Incompetent climbers perpetually put other climbers and rangers at risk, and it seems like an outstanding opportunity – if not a responsibility – for the rangers to actively minimize the number of incompetent climbers on the mountain. The average unguided climber bears the brunt of this impact, but it also trickles down to ranger rescues, helicopter evacuations, and even medical attention that would otherwise be available for non-climbing citizens, too.

Let's address current international mountaineering ethics and values that are very pertinent after a deadly climbing season on Everest resulting from overcrowding and too many inexperienced climbers. Experienced as well as up-and-coming mountaineers in our community desperately need to step up and discuss this topic. To be clear: the Seven Summits is certainly not my "holy grail" as an Alaskan international mountaineer, and that also seems to be true for the best contemporary alpinists around the world. What happened to the simple, deep joy of camaraderie and pushing the limits of alpine *technique* and human performance compared to superficial social-media posts and sponsorship? Why do so many wannabe mountaineers value lists so much more than the experience? Okay, that answer seems obvious. Have elite mountaineers like David Lama, Tommy Caldwell, Hansjörg Auer, Ueli Steck, Alex Honnold, or other modern alpinists of the youngest millennial generation pursued the Seven Summits? Of course not! Very different from bold pioneers like Reinhold Messner profoundly expanding the limits of human performance in the alpine, millionaire businessman Dick Bass established his Seven Summits list as a commodity that could be bought and sold; this particularly appeals to greedy Ministries of Tourism, capitalist businesses, and hordes of inexperienced mountaineers endangering themselves, others, and the environment around the globe. Where is our community's leadership and what are they saying about this? For the love of the mountains and the planet, it needs to stop, or at least to be managed much more responsibly. Does Nepal's Ministry of Tourism treat Everest like a sacred mountain? No, a sacred mountain like Macchhapuchre (22943 feet) is completely off-limits for climbing in Nepal; Mount Everest is simply open for business. *Responsible mountaineers: f--k Everest and the contrived Seven Summits, at least in the near future until there is adequate sustainability, which we must develop ourselves. What's worth doing is worth doing right. Responsibly learn your craft and create sustainability, or create your own meaning and your own list and your own "holy grail" if the mountains and wilderness are truly sacred to you.*

Weather reports were somewhat discouraging regarding going for the summit: they called for good conditions on Wednesday, May 29, before a storm moved in Thursday with heavy snow predicted for Saturday. Rather than ascending and getting stuck at Camp 5 to endure the storm, Ed Shred and I enjoyed skiing deep soft powder above Camp 4 on the West Rib Cutoff instead. By Thursday as snow blew low-visibility in and forced a rest day, the weather report evolved from heavy snow Saturday to snow, clouds, and wind below 15 miles per hour Saturday with clearer, but windier, weather expected to come Monday. Especially given the brief weather-window appearing, I was considering a solo 6,000-foot push from Camp 4, but that would be a bold move. The potential benefits of teamwork appealed to me more, but I knew coming to a consensus about a plan would be challenging and essential for effective teamwork on summit day.

Around 8.30 p.m. Thursday – our Day 9 – while discussing the newest 8 p.m. weather report with Ed and Paul, Paul briefly went out and brought Indiana Nate to join the conversation. While initially somewhat distracting and frustrating, that also proved to be productive for the three of us who had been on Denali before and knew each other best. Nate, who I later learned had brought quartz, but no lighter, on the mountain, wanted to simply wait for an ideal weather window, and he was even concerned about moving with a forecast of 70 percent chance of snow independent of the accumulation. Someone else casually and despondently added that there was not much we could do but wait a week or so for good weather.

I said, "*No, I am not just going to wait.*" I knew this was not the type of blizzard or intense storm that would lock up Denali for a week at a time like what I had seen the past two years. Paul asked if I wanted to leave in the snow first thing in the morning. No, executing plans takes time and preparing that late in the cold seemed unwise: I planned to prepare the next day (Friday), listen to the next weather report Friday evening, hope to leave Saturday for Camp 5 without rushing, and perhaps summit Sunday if the conditions allowed. I believed Saturday's weak snowstorm would keep winds calm, like my summit day on Aconcagua in January 2018, and Saturday to Sunday appeared to be the best window in the next week, due to weather reports calling for the winds to increase into the 30s on Monday. High winds seemed to be the most dangerous factor regarding wind chill and frostbite. Incorporating a contingency plan, I believed Saturday would at least be good enough for a cache run to Camp 5; if the conditions were bad, we could simply leave my Trango-3 tent and more food there for next time. All that solid communication united the three of us and enabled us to efficiently continue making progress up the mountain together.

Fortunately, both Ed and Paul liked my assured idea and my perspective, especially after Friday's weather report reinforced my take on it. The weather predicted on the board at Camp 4 was far from perfect, but it was so beautifully interpretable that I took a picture of it Friday and asked Ed to take another picture Saturday when we knew it was time to ascend. Ed, Paul, and I ascended from Camp 4 early in the afternoon Saturday, June 1 – Day 11 for Ed and me – and we made great time to Camp 5, where we settled into a good spot among pre-existing snow-block walls. Each of us recognized that was our best chance ever as we prepared everything before crashing Saturday night.

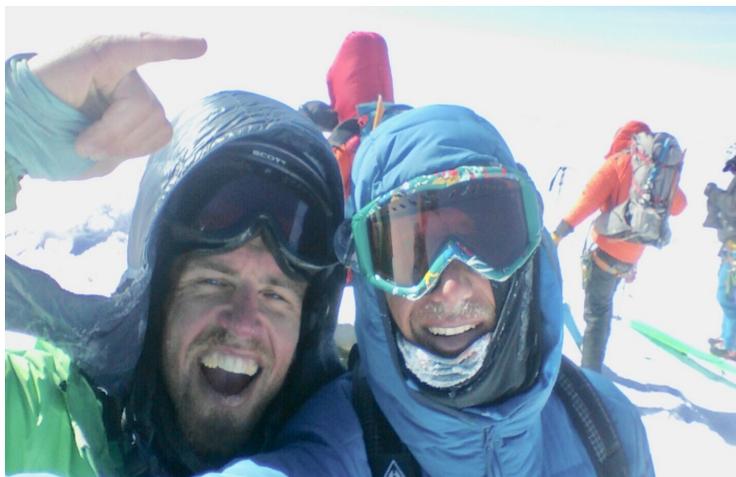
Awaking at Camp 5 in the morning of Sunday, June 2, I may have barely felt my only altitude-headache, so I took half an aspirin, Ed felt great, too; that says a lot about our acclimation. We certainly felt the cold, though! Outside the tent in the cold, wiggling toes kept me busy as we geared up and melted snow for everyone's water. I was so ready to get moving and go! As we headed out of camp, the ranger informed us it was a "no rescue day" due to the wind. Despite that chilling warning, it felt fantastic to warm up on the Autobahn. Modestly inspired seeing the summit so far away as I made the turn around Denali Pass and climbing higher than I had ever been on Denali before, exploring the new terrain felt like a whole new world and I relished all of it. I cherished learning more about what it took to earn Denali's summit, now visible and so tangible, and I embraced my fatigue approaching Pig Hill behind some skiers who humbled me, even when they exhaustedly asked, "Why are we doing this?"

I knew countless reasons why I was en route to the top of Alaska and North America. That said, Ed and I were also very glad about not carrying our skis' weight up there that day. Ski-descending from the summit finally made sense to me compared to only imagining it before ever seeing it – so maybe next year. Denali's summit ridge was somewhat more exposed than I had envisioned, and reaching the summit was as sweet as could be, even with clouds obscuring some of our hard-earned, spectacular view. I clearly remember Ed and I hugging and congratulating each other at the summit, ensuring we got some decent summit photos for ourselves and others, and the fear of frostbite when exposing fingers to the cold. I also remember almost sadly deciding to descend and then cherishing every step, especially when high-fiving climbers we passed on their way up. Each and every step counted, particularly on the windblown Autobahn where snowy and windy conditions forced a down-climb traverse essentially the entire way back down to Camp 5, which had doubled or tripled in size during the day as snow cleared and winds increased. At Camp 5, Paul was immediately thrilled about returning to Denali in 2020 – it was only on the summit ridge that I knew for sure he turned around behind us after Denali Pass. Who else is Denali 2020 dreaming? Eddie and Bran-

don had arrived to Camp 5 and they congratulated me with happy hugs, and I accepted staying one more night there. Helping me appreciate aggressively gunning for the summit in that slim weather window that had emerged, Brandon and Eddie would endure five days at Camp 5 before summiting and also rescuing a mountaineer on the summit ridge. The camaraderie Paul, Ed Shred, and I shared together while I melted snow in the tent that night made the wind's ceaseless, noisy whipping a fair-enough trade.

Monday, June 3, the three of us were all eager to get out of Camp 5's wind and to descend to Camp 4, where we retrieved caches, distributed extra food and fuel, and organized gear in the sun. Then after Paul on snowshoes and before Ed with his skis and sled, I descended on skis past Windy Corner with almost no visibility whatsoever. Skiing past everyone piled up on the lower side of Windy Corner and down to the top of Squirrel Hill felt like a luxurious thrill, and then I began enjoying a sustainable sort of backwards side-sliding that I continued down Motorcycle Hill until the warm, sticky snow forced me to sidestep the very last part.

I looked forward to using the cached sled from Camp 3 down, and I enjoyed walking it like a dog and letting it pull me down to Camp 1. Paul and I ate at Camp 1 as we waited for Ed, and then the three of us roped up for one last bittersweet leg on the Kahiltna Glacier back to base camp. Paul was blown away that we descended 10,000 feet, and the three of us slept in our sleeping bags in the open air under the stars before the warm sun woke us. Waiting lazily for the plane to fly us back to Talkeetna, Denali provided one last dose of humility: we met Will Miner, 20 years old, who was a great guy and Denali's youngest solo summitter in history.



*Ed Shred and Dan Koepke on Denali's summit.
Photo by Ed Shred*

Pioneer Peak (6398 feet) Any Year, Pioneer Ridge

Text by Mat Brunton

Pioneer Peak is an iconic Western Chugach peak; it's the mountain featured on the Alaska driver's license. It's north face (pictured on the driver's license) is a classic spring alpine climb and a prize ski descent. Not to say it hasn't been skied on a below-average snow year before, but all reports are only of it being skied on big years ... when the entirety of its 6,300-foot north face can be booted up without crampons let alone technical gear like mixed climbing pro, ice tools, rope, ski crampons, etc. While skiers tend to limit their fathoming of this line to above-average snow years when the technical equipment is not required, the technical approach is the standard fare of alpine climbers that enjoy the ascent annually each spring.

I've wanted the line for years and waiting for that above-average year, that seems ever more fleeting due to climate change and a sea-level snowpack seeming more and more like a thing of the past, became too ephemeral for my temperament. As I've become more entranced by climbing in recent years, and remain ever entranced by steep skiing, it was time to put the two together. After all, Alaskan ski culture was late coming around to a purer form of steep skiing and ski mountaineering: a form that didn't involve high carbon emissions and deep pockets, the form of the Randoist. This form is found flourishing in places like Jackson, Salt Lake City, and many areas of Europe.

So it began on April 7, 2016, that Sam Inouye, Russ Johanson, and I headed to the Old Glenn Highway for our shot at de-mystifying the North Face of Pioneer (colloquially known as "The Driver's License" to bro-brahs).

On an average to below average year, with little to no low-elevation snowpack, expect to:

- Walk on dry ground and scree for about 0.25 mile and 500 feet;
- Walk on chunky, icy avalanche debris (perhaps mixed with scree in areas) for another approximately 0.25 mile and 500 to 1,000 feet;
- Climb a short pitch of thin and hard-to-protect WI2-3 for the direct route, or head to a gully on climber's right for a steep, somewhat 'shwhacky ascent line that had a fixed rope in spring 2016;
- Boot another 500 to 1,000 feet of steep, icy snow in either of the lower ascent gullies
- Skin or boot another 1,500 to 2,500 feet of variable, moder-

ately steep snow (ski crampons recommended for skinning in this section);

- Deal with about 500 feet of more-exposed terrain, requiring a pitch of hard-to-protect M4 or WI3 climbing for the direct route, or a

long, steep traverse on climber's right up a thin snow chute then hard left along an exposed snow ramp above cliffs;



Lower slopes of the North Face of Pioneer Peak.

Photo by Mat Brunton



Sam Inouye climbing ice on Pioneer Peak's North Face.

Photo by Mat Brunton



Sam Inouye near the top of the couloir on Pioneer Peak's North Face.

Photo by Mat Brunton

- Boot or skin another approximately 500 feet of moderately steep snow (softer and more sheltered in this area);
- Boot a final 1,000 to 1,500 feet of steep snow (softer and sheltered) to the summit ridge; and
- Scramble class 3 to 4 along the ridge to the summit.

For the descent:

- Follow your tracks down for about 2000 feet to above the most-exposed terrain of the route (where you either did the direct M4/WI3 pitch or the exposed traverse);



Sam Inouye and Russ Johanson on the summit ridge of Pioneer Peak.

Photo by Mat Brunton

- Traverse skier's left of your ascent route (if you went direct through the ice or mixed terrain) through exposure and look for a chute that connects the upper and lower snow-fields (the chute is skinny with thin snow through the choke, likely requiring a bit of "dry-skiing" on below-average snow years);
- Descend the lower gully on skis or snowboard as far as possible, minding the encroaching vegetation and exposure below. If you climbed the direct gully with the lower ice pitch, descend the next gully skier's left to avoid a rappel;
- Boot down the gully (crampons recommended) and descend the steeper part using the fixed line, "veggie belays," or rappel on your own line if deemed necessary;
- Walk back down the icy avalanche debris; and
- Walk back down the scree and dry ground to the road.



*The chute on the North Face of Pioneer Peak.
Photo by Mat Brunton*



*Mat Brunton's skiing down Pioneer Peak's North Face.
Photo by Sam Inouye*



*Mat Brunton on Pioneer Peak's summit ridge.
Photo by Sam Inouye*



*Russ Johanson skiing through the choke point in the chute on Pioneer Peak's North Face.
Photo by Mat Brunton*

Recommended gear:

- Skis: shorter and lighter to allow for more efficient travel and easier technical climbing (e.g., Voile Objective, Black Diamond Helio 88, Dynafit Cho Oyu);
- Bindings: we're talking about exposed, steep skiing. Ripping and hucking this sort of terrain is borderline suicidal. Tech bindings under 200 grams are more than enough for careful, calculated turns and make the ascent more efficient and enjoyable. Check out the options from Dynafit, Plum and Kreuzspitze;
- Boots: do you really need more than two buckles? The Dynafit TLT6 has excellent ski-ability and is still a capable boot for this

level of climbing even on more technical years. Arc'Teryx has a new boot that seems like it will be a very capable climber, that can also ski. Sportiva, Scarpa, and Fischer have other lightweight options with acceptable ski-ability;

- Skins: a lighter-weight mohair mix is where it's at for this and similar-type adventures. I can vouch for Black Diamond and Pomoca;
- Ski crampons: they're often a must for secure skinning on the regularly hardpacked snow areas of the Western Chugach. I use Dynafit ski crampons because I have Dynafit bindings. B&D ski gear seems to be another quality option;
- Crampons: I'd take lightweight aluminum crampons even if it were a bigger year with little to no ice, and steel crampons on thinner years when more technical climbing is required (e.g., CAMP XLC 390 or XLC Nanotech; Black Diamond Neve, Cyborg, or Snaggletooth). The CAMP crampons fit ski boots great right out of the box. The BD crampons may require a larger toe bail that's sold separately;
- Ice tools: Black Diamond Cobra or Viper for the more-technical years; Black Diamond Venom for less-technical years. Something like the Cassin X-Light or Petzl Sum'Tec might be the sufficient ticket for the range of climbing conditions from year to year;
- Rope: I'd recommend being comfortable soloing this sort of terrain before committing to this adventure. That said, I'd still bring a light rope. Since you'd be comfortable soloing, and aren't going to fall, a dynamic rope in the 7-millimeter range would be an efficient choice. The Beal Gully Unicore is my choice.
- Protection: again, I'd recommend being comfortable soloing WI3 and M4 before committing to this climb and ski. That said, a few shorter ice screws and a handful of pitons would be prudent. My life regularly relies on Black Diamond climbing protection;
- Pack: it's tricky to find one that works great for this sort of thing; that is, dealing well with both skiing and climbing gear. Brian Harder has made some alterations to a Patagonia Ascensionist that might be among the best things I've seen. I think the new Cirque pack from Black Diamond is also among the best things out there; and
- Clothing: light and breathable for high-output climbing and skiing with lightweight insulating and shell layers. I typically incorporate items from Patagonia, Black Diamond, Outdoor Research, and Mountain Hardwear. They all offer great products.

A great place to explore gear for serious ski-mountaineering is SkiMo Co.

North Suicide Peak (5065 feet) and Homicide Peak (4660 feet), Suicide Peaks

Text by Mat Brunton

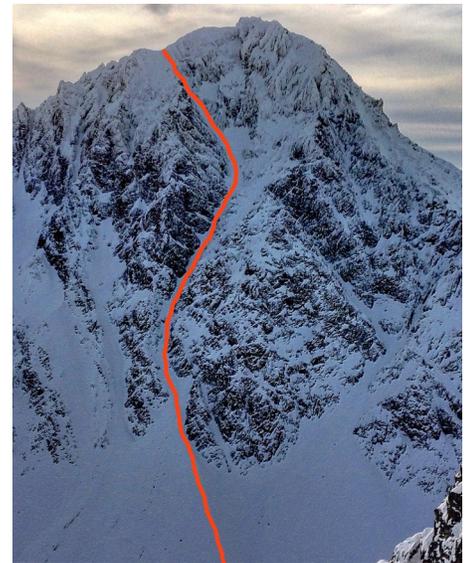
This trip report is about my favorite line in the Front Range proper (not all of the Western Chugach or Chugach State Park): the northeast couloir of North Suicide Peak. It should be mentioned that North Suicide Peak, much like Ptarmigan Peak, is one of the best peaks to play on in Anchorage's backyard mountain playground. It holds a few absolutely world-class steep ski descents: the northwest face, the southwest face, and the northeast couloir. As of the spring of 2018 I'd skied the northeast couloir three times. My first time was, hands down, the best. Despite the line being north facing, the HUGE walls that frame it get covered in rime and snow and have some solar exposure, which shed into the northeast couloir once spring arrives. Both times I've skied the line in April it has been almost entirely slide-for-life and with either a down-climb at the crux, or a section of thin side-stepping with ice axe/tool sticks.

This trip report is about a descent of the northeast couloir on February 25, 2017, with Sam Inouye and Brian "Randoman" Harder. We had a nearly full Randoist Posse (minus Travis Baldwin), and were prepared with nearly all of the tricks of the trade (harness, rope, pitons, ice tool with hammer, etc.). With a bit of fresh snow and in late-February conditions with no sun-affected snow, the line was thoroughly prime. The northeast couloir of North Suicide was just the start. We completed a linkup that also included the north couloir of Homicide Peak and southwest face of South Powerline Peak.

After tagging the summit (Sam hadn't stood on it before), we down-climbed back to the couloir entrance and found a rock horn anchor to belay me into the couloir for stability assessment. While not the technical crux of the route, the entrance was a big and steep slope

that funneled into a narrowing and twisting couloir. An error in stability assessment would have been catastrophic, as even a small avalanche (or slough) that caused a loss of control could have proven fatal, given that the line was over 1800 feet with exposure at the narrow crux and abruptly walled-in (which could provide for a brutal pinball effect).

About a third of the way down the line, the couloir twisted from north to east, and that was the crux: a cliff section (at least in both the 2017 and 2018 snow seasons) provided only a narrow egress on the skier's right. In February 2017 it was ski-able, but less than 200 centimeters wide. In late April of 2017, it was too icy and thin (scraped and scoured from the shedding rock walls above) to even be sidestepped and was down-climbed with an ice axe (an actual ice tool would have been more comforting) and crampons. Earlier in April (of 2018), it was sidestep-able, but those sidesteps were accompanied with ice tool sticks in the very firm snow.



Line of descent of North Suicide Peak's northeast couloir.

Photo by Mat Brunton



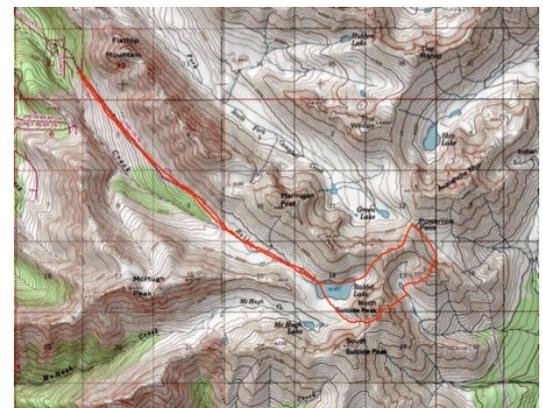
Sam Inouye (left) and Mat Brunton on the summit ridge of North Suicide Peak just south of the summit.

Photo by Brian Harder



Mat Brunton heading up the southwest couloir of Homicide Peak from the base of North Suicide Peak's northeast couloir.

Photo by Sam Inouye



Helios Peak (5584 feet) and Solars Mountain (5354 feet), Grant Lake Peaks

Text and photos by Mat Brunton



The south ridge of Helios Peak with Solars Mountain in the background.

Helios Peak and Solars Mountain are two prominent, relatively high, but seldom-visited Kenai peaks. There is a great alpine access trail, but it is open to off-road vehicles several months of the year. After about three miles on the double-track trail, the route is entirely off-trail alpine travel with a short (and easy by Alaska standards) bushwhack and creek crossing. Besides the short boulder problem to reach the true summit of Solars and the 3rd-class ridge between the two peaks, the creek crossing was the crux of the route in late season with high water. It was knee deep and swift on October 14, 2018.

The choice between trying to stay dry (crossing in undies and bare feet with the risk of slipping or cutting feet on the brushy bank) or just busting it out (and getting pants, boots, and socks soaked) was daunting. After hemming and hawing over the decision for about 15 minutes, I chose to just bust it out. That rendered me with wet and cold feet for the rest of the day. My feet were mostly dry after hiking up the moraine, but once I got into the snow around 5000 feet, there was enough residual moisture to freeze up my boots for the rest of the day. Bringing a pair of crocs or light shoes for the crossing, and leaving them there for the peakbagging, might be worth it. Otherwise; good gaiters, Gore-Tex, and quick steps might make for drier feet. In summer, the creek crossing and wet feet would be no big deal and just a normal feature of Alaskan backcountry travel.

The Falls Creek valley features some pretty epic Alaskan terrain, as STEEP slopes rise up from what little valley floor there is for a few thousand feet on both sides. These are big mountains, with very complex avalanche terrain. It seemed like a spectacular zone to ski/ride, but, considering the entire valley is a terrain trap for at least a few miles, accessing it when the snow is reasonably stable seemed like it would be tricky. In the summer, the Falls Creek Trail provides access to some absolutely world-class alpine trekking and peakbagging (tons of options for multi-day trips through eye-popping terrain).



Helios Peak, the access moraine, and the upper Falls Creek Trail (at the end of the section open to off-road vehicles).



Looking up the Falls Creek valley at the aptly named peak The Unicorn (on right side of valley below the sun).



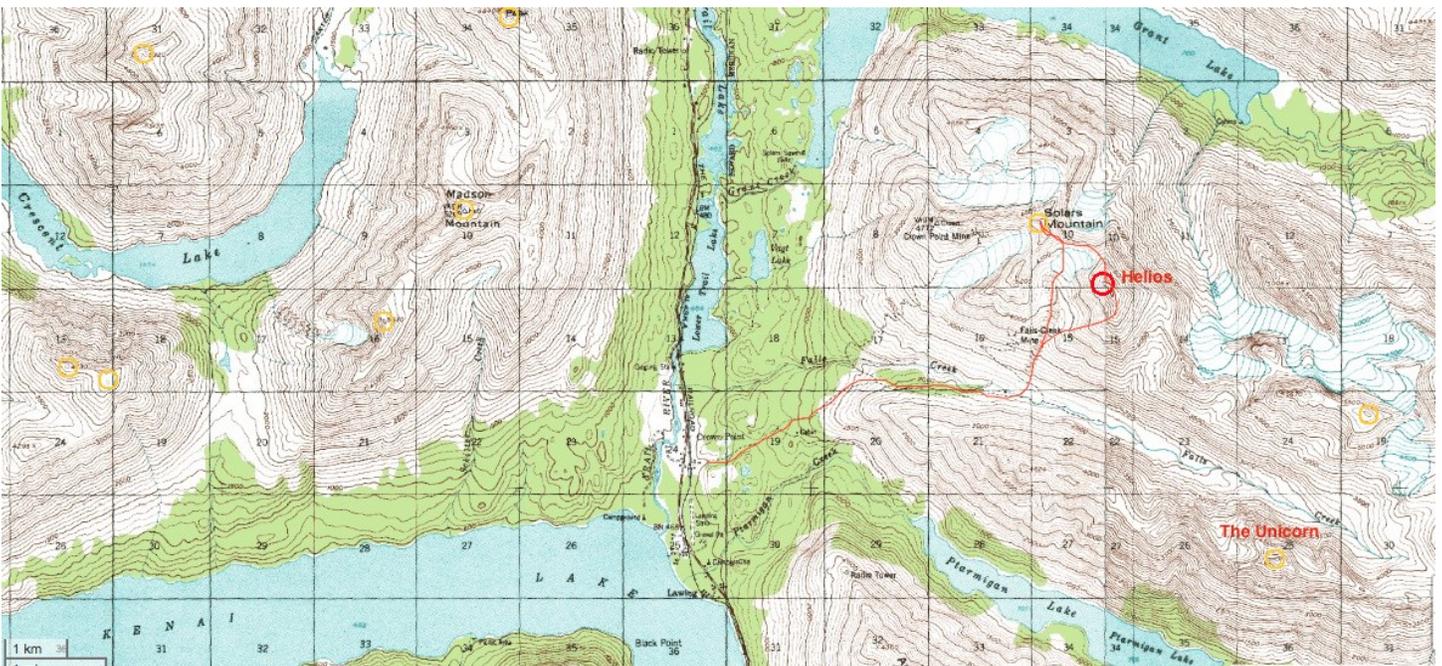
The third-class ridge between Helios Peak and Solars Mountain, as viewed from Helios Peak.



Looking down the southwest face of Helios Peak toward Kenai Lake.



Looking down the north ridge of Helios Peak toward Grant Lake (Lark, Merlin, and Shrike Mountains on the skyline above the lake).

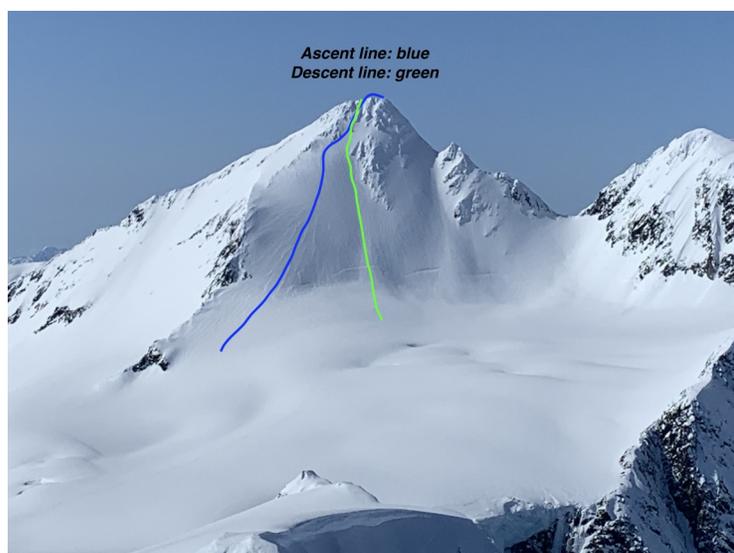


Girls Mountain (6134 feet) and Acapulco (6815 feet), Central Chugach Mountains

Text and photos by Mat Brunton



View south from the summit of Girls Mountain with Acapulco (and its northeast face that Mat Brunton climbed and skied) pictured as the big peak second from the right border. Hershey's Kiss is to the left of Acapulco, and to the left of that is Sapphire Peak.



*Ascent line: blue
Descent line: green*

Acapulco, as seen from Girls Mountain.

It's pretty crazy what's possible in the Valdez-to-Thompson Pass corridor of the Central Chugach Mountains via human power. The lines are endless; there's no point even trying to catalog them. Prominent (500-foot-plus) peaks are dime a dozen, but at least those accessible via human-powered daytrips are comprehensible. Coming from the Western Chugach, where LONG and heinous approaches are the norm for big lines, it seems like the peaks around Thompson Pass are low-hanging fruit. That is, if you're comfortable with STEEP terrain and lots of glaciation.

If you want to make 50-degree turns in the Western Chugach, you might have to trespass, hike up in trail runners, do some

brush-bashing, faceted and unsupportable post-holing/skinning, and then finally weave through bare tundra patches to get to a couloir apron (given the much-less-reliable snowpack it's generally better to stick to couloirs, rather than faces or open slopes, for steep turns). Even then, you're probably only going to get a few hundred feet around 50 degrees and maybe only a turn or two around 55 degrees. In the Central Chugach 55-degree faces, spines, flutes, and ramps are abundant. You can make a few hundred feet of 55-degree turns, and options abound for keeping slope angles above 50 degrees for several hundred feet.

I love it. Being a Western-Chugach-based steep skier, the possibilities in the Central Chugach are very rewarding and satisfying. It's SO STEEP! Booting up exposed 55-degree snow for hundreds of feet? Yes, please bring the Zen!

It's too bad the culture there is so motorized. I've come to terms with the sled scene: at least those guys aren't commercial. While their chosen form of recreation is much more high impact and less sustainable than touring, at least they're out enjoying Nature and their public land (without trying to make money off a public resource like the worst sort of capitalist pig). The heli scene is another story. It's RIDICULOUS. Alaska Snowboard Guides and Valdez Heli Ski Guides (which once belonged to the legendary Doug Coombs) seem like the most notorious business that thieve road runs.

I've heard countless stories of the dangerous situations they create: buzzing recreationists, dropping in on them, and have experi-

enced similar situations myself on several occasions. Yes, non-motorized ski tourers have even been sloughed off mountains by heli groups!

Fortunately, I did not get buzzed on the day of this trip report. But that seems to be the exception rather than the rule, as I've been heli-harassed as many days as I haven't. Returning to the area two weeks later to climb and ski Hershey's Kiss (a.k.a. Repeater Peak), I was buzzed by a heli and a group was dropped directly above me on a lower ramp of Hershey's Kiss as I was skinning up 40-degree-plus terrain directly below it! The heli pilot and guide definitely knew I was there; they had dropped a group on Acapulco's shoulder earlier, and flew directly over me to check me out as I was climbing up Hershey's Kiss. Luckily, they dropped in off another aspect of the ramp and I was only sprayed with rotor wash. Maybe that was because I made sure to wave my poles before they landed directly above me, flip them off, and scream, "F--K YOU" from a few hundred feet below after the heli left and its noise dissipated. I was skinning through heli-rider slough from the previous day...

Given that I'd been making trips to the Central Chugach monthly since September, and have seen the glaciers go from bare to climax snow coverage, the spring glacier travel is pretty casual. These are coastal to transitional snow climate glaciers. With good visibility, I feel like you'd have to try very hard to have a crevasse mishap. That said, I'm comfortable with the solo glacier travel come spring. Around the Port of Valdez, it's like the sky gods poured 30 feet of concrete over the mountains. The Worthington Glacier area, while not quite as cemented as the Port, is similar.

With reassurance from Central Chugach guru Taylor Brown that the solo glacier travel would be chill (besides, bears and other wildlife do it all the time), I set off for that solo loop in late March of 2019. It was a classy one. With fitness, light gear, calm head for exposed ascents/descents, and a solid steep turn; it was an easy daytrip.

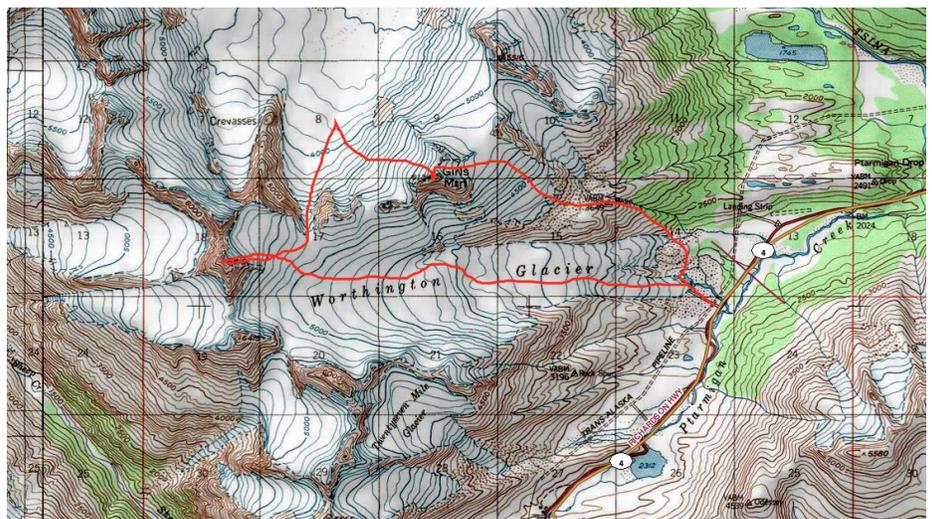
A 2000-foot descent of the heavily glaciated northwest face of Girls Mountain brought me to the Hoodoo Glacier (the big face still had plenty of clean and untracked powder, but had been heavily harvested by helis and sleds).

This is a highly recommended loop tour (and there are many other options for varying abilities in terms of descents along the way).



Above: A very sweet alpine ice climbing line that looks to be at least two full pitches of WI5 (it seems to have minimal serac/ice fall exposure).

Below: Looking back at Acapulco from the Worthington Glacier.



Peak of the Month:

Peak 10310, Hayes Range

Text by Steve Gruhn, photos by Toby Schwörer

Mountain Range: Alaska Range; Hayes Range

Borough: Unorganized Borough

Drainages: Black Rapids Glacier and East Prong Glacier

Latitude/Longitude: 63° 31' 32" North, 146° 22' 6" West

Elevation: 10310 feet

Adjacent Peaks: McGinnis Peak (11400) and Peak 10750 in the Black Rapids Glacier and East Prong Glacier drainages

Distinctness: 460 feet from McGinnis Peak

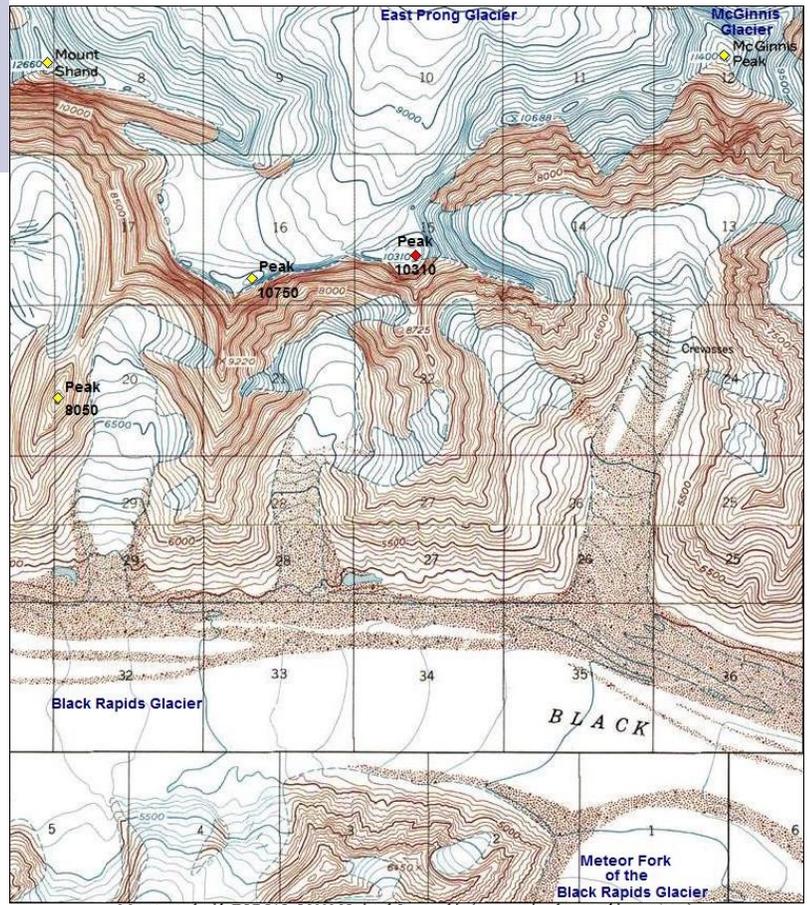
Prominence: 460 feet from McGinnis Peak

USGS Maps: 1:63,360: Mount Hayes (C-5), 1:25,000: Mount Hayes C-5 SW

First Recorded Ascent: February 1987 by Doug Buchanan and Mark Wumkes

Route of First Recorded Ascent: East ridge

Access Point: Black Rapids Glacier



By my count Peak 10310 is the 305th highest peak in Alaska, the 87th highest peak in the Alaska Range, and the 20th highest peak in the Hayes Range.

Much of the exploratory mountaineering in the Hayes Range occurred between 1941 and 1978. By the mid-1980s only six Hayes Range peaks above 10,000 feet remained unclimbed.

In February 1987 Doug Buchanan and Mark Wumkes were flown to the Black Rapids Glacier. When the airplane left, they set out on a three-week trip to investigate moulins. As a side trip from their expedition, the team ascended the glacier that emptied the south couloir on McGinnis Peak. After ascending a little over a mile from the Black Rapids Glacier, the pair departed to the west of the glacier and ascended to the east-southeast ridge of Peak 10310. The two spent the night in a snow cave at a notch on the ridge. The next day the duo endured large amounts of spindrift being blown off the summit plateau by westerly winds as they followed the ridge westward and slogged through deep, sloughing snow to the summit, thereby making the first recorded ascent of what had been the fifth-highest unclimbed peak in the Hayes Range.

I don't know of a second ascent of Peak 10310.

The information for this column came from page 6 of the December 1987 *Climbing* (issue No. 105); from a report titled

"Mount Kimball, P 10,310 and P 11,288" that appeared on page 118 of the 1988 *American Alpine Journal*; from my correspondence with both Mark Wumkes and Toby Schwörer.

Southeast aspect of Peak 10310 in the left foreground, as viewed from the summit of Peak 7286.



Southeast aspect of Peak 10310 in the right foreground, as viewed from the summit of Peak 7286.



Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

May 29, 2019, 6:00 p.m. at UAA 105A CPISB

Roll Call

Michael Meyers (President) - Present
Gerrit Verbeek (Vice-President) - Absent
Jen Aschoff (Secretary) - Present
Katherine Delia Cooper (Treasurer) - Absent
Max Neale (Director) - Present
Tom Meacham (Director) - Absent
Lila Hobbs (Director) - Present
Jonathan Rupp Strong (Director) - Present
Charlie Sink (Past President) - Present
Visitors: none

Scribe: Jen Aschoff

Committee Reports

President (Michael Meyers)

- Slideshow for introduction to each general meeting is in progress.
- Paxson Woelber is working on a Five Hut Traverse Map to benefit the MCA.
- Need to meet with Kurt Hensel regarding the Chugach State Park fee for the campout.
- Mint Hut plaque from the Rainery family was approved.

Vice-President (Gerrit Verbeek)

- June 22nd Summer Solstice Campout.

Secretary (Jen Aschoff)

- Eagle River Nature Center is booked July 11 for potluck gathering at 6:30 p.m.

Treasurer (Katherine Cooper)

- Nothing to report.

Training Committee (Gerrit Verbeek)

- First Aid/CPR course is being coordinated.
- Mountain photography course with Andrew Holman was a success. About 20 people attended. We will distribute the

slideshow via email for all members.

- Motion passed to spend \$800 to train 10 trip leaders in CPR/First Aid and there are trip leaders waiting for the training to be organized.

Strategic Plan Task Force (Max Neale)

- Key performance indicators are being developed to guide Board reporting.
- Looking into American Alpine Club grant for waste removal at Mint Hut.
- Assisting coordination of a grant with Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation for the Mint Hut.

Liability Committee (Tom Meacham)

- 14-, 15-year-olds can attend MCA trips with parents on low-risk trips.
- The revised liability waiver will soon be sent to the State Park.
- We will propose two-year terms for board members in the forthcoming by-law revisions.

Parks Advisory (Tom Meacham and Ralph Baldwin)

- The Board is considering submitting a comment on a proposed development project that would further commercialize the Ruth Gorge Wilderness area in Denali National Park.

Trips (Needs chair. Acting chair—Jen Aschoff)

- Jen trained two new leaders: Shaun Sexton and Mary Vavrik
- Two new trips were proposed: Shaun's Pacific Coast Trail trip and Jen's Crow Pass hike
- Trips committee chair is still needed, and volunteers to train other trip leaders.

Scree (Steve Gruhn and Dawn Munroe)

- *Scree* submission deadline is the 11th of each month..

Huts Committee (Greg Bragiel, Cory Hinds, and Victoria Lytle)

- 10-Year master plan is in the works. Recently, we have solicited member feedback via *the Scree* and the May general meeting.

- Huts team is currently prioritizing items that might be good candidates for Mat-Su Parks and American Alpine Club grants.
- Rosie's Roost to get a re-skin in 2020. The committee is working toward a budget in the fall.
- Motion was made and approved to "create a pilot Mint Hut caretaker program to improve education in hut use/overuse" to start in 2019, volunteers pending .

Awards Committee (Tom Meacham, Cory Hinds, and Steve Gruhn)

- Nothing to report.

Communications Committee (Lila Hobbs)

- Website update: small updates made by Lila, but more major updates awaiting Billy Finley. Billy has volunteered to support, but efforts have been delayed months. Committee hopes to gain Billy's support to implement website redesign this summer.
- Comments on Hatcher Pass regulations were collated and provided regarding the heli-ski operation proposed at Hatcher Pass.

Mentorship (Alexandra Janczewska)

- Lila/Katherine are taking over the Mentorship program for now. Lila is completing the organizational/administrative tasks and Katherine will help match mentors with mentees.

- New mentorship email address (mentorship@mtnclubak.org), updated mentor/mentee Google Forms, outreach happening soon. Lots of progress here.

Library (Charlotte Foley)

- A member expressed concern about the precious books in the MCA library. The President has removed books and is putting them in storage.

Calendar Committee (Mike Meyers, Lila Hobbs, Vicky Ho, and Andrew Holman)

- Significant research and planning has occurred to bring the calendar to a modern, online submission and voting process. We will likely use Woobox for online photo submissions.
- After a plan has been finalized, the committee will reach out to the membership with submission instructions and timeline

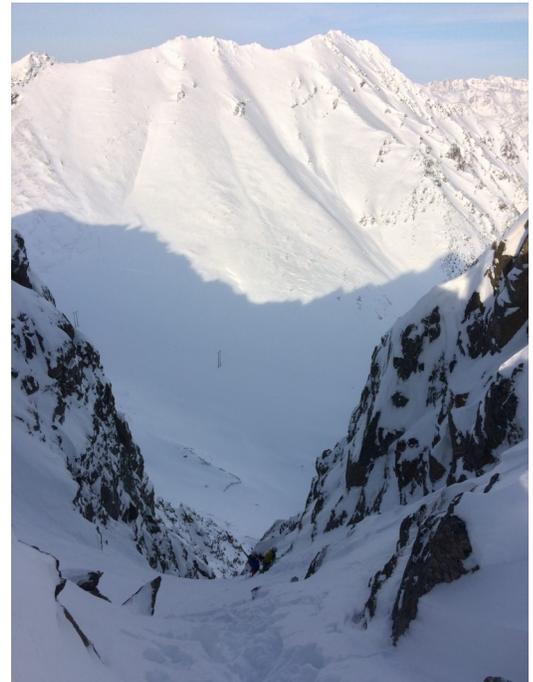
Time and location of next meeting

August 28 at 6 p.m. on the UAA Campus, ConocoPhillips Integrated Sciences Building, Room 105A (main floor by the coffee stand).

Choate's Chuckle - Tom Choate
A: The chocks were hexes.



Brian Harder (left) and Mat Brunton in the north couloir of Homicide Peak. Photo by Sam Inouye



Mat Brunton (left) and Sam Inouye on the summit ridge of North Suicide Peak just south of the summit. Photo by Brian Harder

Mountaineering Club of Alaska

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|--|-----------------------------------|----------------------|--------------|
| President | Mike Meyers | mcmeyers24@msn.com | Director 1 (term expires in 2019) | Tom Meacham | 346-1077 |
| Vice-President | Gerrit Verbeek | 903-512-4286 | Director 2 (term expires in 2019) | Max Neale | 207-712-1355 |
| Secretary | Jen Aschoff | jlaschoff@gmail.com | Director 3 (term expires in 2020) | Jonathan Rupp Strong | 202-6484 |
| Treasurer | Katherine Cooper | 209-253-8489 | Director 4 (term expires in 2020) | Lila Hobbs | 229-3754 |
| | | | Past President | Charlie Sink | 529-7910 |

Annual membership dues: Single \$20, Family \$30

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@mtclubak.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. Articles should be submitted by the 11th 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@mtclubak.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: Katherine Cooper —209-253-8489 - membership@mtclubak.org

Hiking and Climbing Committee: Gerrit Verbeek—903-512-4286 or hcc@mtclubak.org

Mentorship: Katherine Cooper and Lila Hobbs - mentorship@mtclubak.org

Huts: Greg Bragiel—569-3008 or huts@mtclubak.org

Calendar: Stuart Grenier—337-5127 or stugrenier@gmail.com

Librarian: Charlotte Foley—603-493-7146 or library@mtclubak.org

Scree Editor: MCAScree@gmail.com Steve Gruhn assisted by Dawn Munroe (350-5121) dawn.talbott@yahoo.com

Web: www.mtclubak.org

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

Russ Johanson and Mat Brunton on the summit ridge of Pioneer Peak.

Photo by Sam Inouye

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