

"Christmas will always be as long as we stand heart to heart and hand in hand."

– Dr. Seuss

the SCREE

Mountaineering Club of Alaska

December 2020

Volume 63, Number 12

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DECEMBER MEETING Wednesday December 2, at 6:30 p.m.

Please join to hear from Ira Edwards. Ira was paralyzed 10yrs ago in November. He has volunteered to talk about his background, the accident and resulting injuries, and his "time in the hospital and then the choice to live life again.

"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—Gerrit Verbeek assisted by Dawn Munroe

Cover Photo

Dan Glatz on summit of The Gorgomeister. Inner Lake George sits below.
Photo by Brendan Lee

DECEMBER MEETING

Wednesday December 2, at 6:30 p.m.

Please join to hear from Ira Edwards. For those who don't know him, Ira is a lifelong Alaskan who suffered a spinal injury while working for Alaska State Parks ten years ago, nearly to the day. The MCA Board has noticed a build-up of stress due to COVID, politics, and more regular sources like holidays. To provide a bit of an outlet and opportunity for conversation, we are trying to invite members to speak or write about their outdoor experiences involving uncertainty, fear, injury, stressful group dynamics, etc. Ira has volunteered to talk about his background, the accident and resulting injuries, and his "time in the hospital and then the choice to live life again and how that process worked."

Check the Facebook page or MCA website calendar, or join directly via this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85204383944?pwd=M05TZ21HYTdOTXNDcFV2S1hTOHZRUT09>

Trips

Dec. 5-6: Ship Creek/Arctic Valley Trail Clearing - Trip leader is Greg Bragiel (unknownhiker@alaska.net, 907-350-5146). Trail maintenance of ~ 5 miles from Arctic Valley trailhead. A great opportunity to help keep this Arctic to Indian corridor open, tune up winter camping skills OR to start learning how to camp in snow and cold weather.

Dec 19: Winter Solstice sleepout (no leader).

Article Submission: Text and photography submissions for *the Scree* can be sent as attachments to mcascree@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.

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

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Announcements

Calendars

2021 MCA Calendars are available for purchase at AMH, SkiAK and Hoarding Marmot for \$15. Thanks to the photographers and committee for a stellar final product!

Upcoming Elections

The January 6th General Meeting will include votes on new officers and proposed by-law amendments, in addition to the 2021 budget. Officer elections typically take place during the October general meeting but were postponed this year due to general disorder from the COVID pandemic and low attendance at the recent general meetings held online. The speaker is T.B.A.

The proposed budget and by-law amendments, and descriptions of the officer and director roles are printed in this issue. If you would like more information, feel free to contact a current Board member.

High turnout is critical

Attendance of the virtual meetings has been much lower than the in-person meetings prior to the COVID pandemic. In order for a vote to reflect the interests of club membership, the Board would like to see at least 40 members attend the January meeting. Please plan to attend the meeting, scheduled for January 6th, 2021. The meeting will be held online using the Zoom video conferencing service, and a hyperlink will be distributed soon in the Scree, the Club calendar, and social media.

Check the Facebook page or MCA website calendar, or join directly via this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85034014887?pwd=aEhtMHJVY0xnR3FMOUg1N29GOVR1Zz09>



In early November winter came to Eklutna Lake in Chugach State Park, as its ice began to freeze. Bold Peak, at 7,522 feet, is in the background.

Photo by Frank E. Baker

The Gorgemeister (5755 feet), Western Chugach Mountains

Text and photos Brendan Lee



61.368, -148.624



Dan preparing to drop into Gorgemeister Valley. The Gorgemeister stands in the left background.

I've proposed hundreds, perhaps thousands of terrible mountain slogs to Dan Glatz over the years. Normally, Dan will assist me in reigning back ambition with a healthy dose of reality. Every now and then an idea will slip through the cracks; we'll find ourselves in the midst of a classic sufferfest which was pitched as a great idea over beers and a map. Perhaps our trip for The Gorgemeister followed the latter.

Our Gorgemeister plan was to access Knik Mountain via the traditional means and game trail. Once above brush line we planned to sidehill southeast below Hale-Bopp Peak, cross Big Timber Valley and drop into the unnamed valley west of The Gorgemeister. This valley would provide us access to the fabulous scree gullies on The Gorgemeister's west face.

Our plan became a reality on August 14th. It was a foggy soggy morning as Dan and I started up the game trail to Knik Mountain at the leisurely hour of 8 a.m. Above brush we began our south-east traverse and followed a moose trail for ~1 mile before we were dumped onto the sloped terrain below Knik and Hale Bopp peaks. We maintained 3500 feet and navigated through several rock ribs, sidehilling the rest of the way. Visibility was nonexistent

but Dan navigated us with intuition and of course GPS. The fog would occasionally lift revealing bears ~20 yards from us and, no sooner than it lifted, the fog would return consuming our visual contact with the roaming beasts. We crossed Big Timber Valley and climbed atop the 3800-foot pass that separates Big Timber Valley from Gorgemeister Valley. We dropped over 1,000 feet into the Gorgemeister Valley which reunited us with beloved brush and vegetation. Once on the valley floor we pressed onwards and upwards towards the toe of a rock glacier which begins at ~3000 feet. We spotted a beautiful campsite but noticed two bears lounging in the sun. We politely asked the bears to depart, which they graciously obliged. We had a 3-minute discussion on dinner and sleep versus pressing for The Gorgemeister and we both agreed dinner would wait, The Gorgemeister called for an evening ascent. We cached our camp gear, including placing our food in a "scent proof" bear bag which was placed inside a "bear proof" yellow bag.

I sent my wife a quick inReach update and we departed our camp at 4 p.m. for a summit bid on The Gorgemeister. We trekked south on the rock glacier and looked for gullies on The Gorge-

meister's west face. Eventually we climbed a gully that took us halfway up the mountain; at the termination of this lower gully we climbed a steep chimney to connect with a gully to the north which was our ticket to freedom. For the connoisseur of choss, this route will deliver the finest samplings in the Western Chugach.

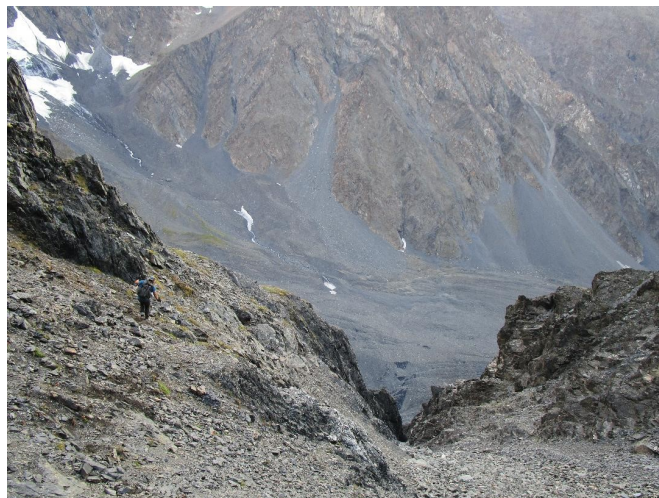
Summit views were fantastic and worth the slog. Knik River, Knik Glacier, The Gorge, Inner Lake George, Colony Glacier, and the skyline of the Chugach State Park to our west. The register noted 3 previous parties: Tim Kelley and Bill Spencer in July 1990 (first recorded ascent) via the north ridge; Richard Baranow, Wendy Sanem and Natalia Aulenbacher in 2007 via west gullies; Wayne Todd, Carrie Wang, Ross Noffsinger in 2014 via west gullies. The summit register did not have a pen so we were unable to sign it; so bring a pen/pencil if you take on The Gorgemeister! We soaked in the scenery and reluctantly agreed to head back to camp after ~45 minutes on the summit.

We returned to camp as the darkness of the night crept in. We spotted two large creatures at our camp cache and realized the bears had returned. We spaced in azimuth and descended on our raided camp. Reluctantly and annoyed, the bears again ceded the grassy patch to us. I spotted one of the bears running away with a yellow bag dangling from its mouth: our food!! Three days worth of food was lost, and at that moment we realized our trip was over. It was pitch black as we sat down hungry, confused and tired. We quickly inventoried our remaining nutrition; one can of chewing tobacco, two Jolly Ranchers, a snickers and half a sandwich bag of beef jerky. It was 11 p.m., the last real meal we had was breakfast and there was no chance of another real meal until tomorrow evening; neither one of us said it, but we both were thinking the same thing: time to dig real deep. We thought our evening was over, but it had just begun as darkness arrived.

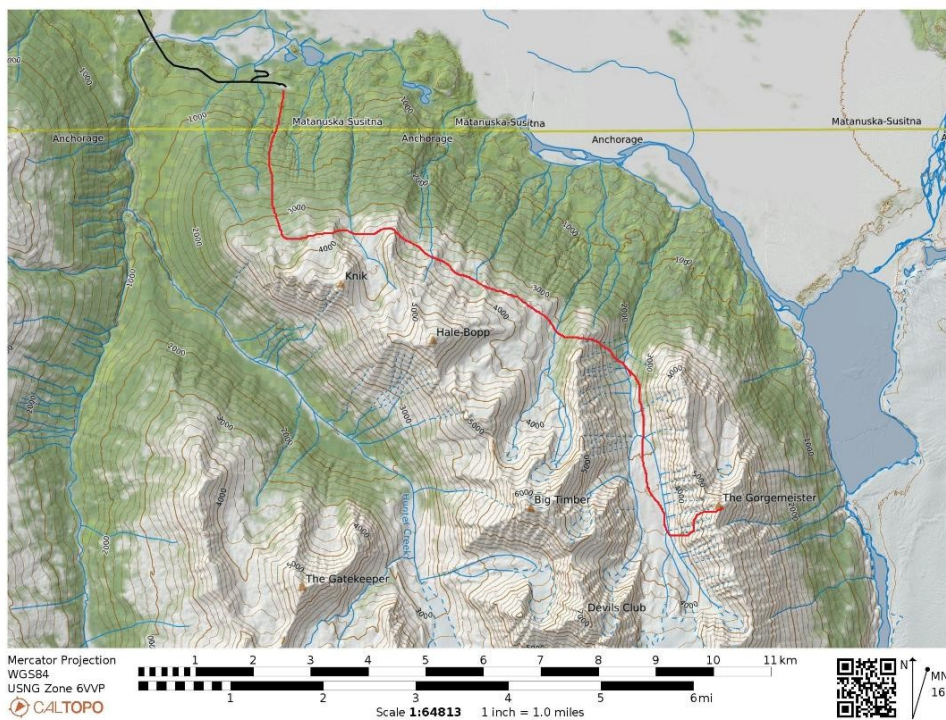
We knew our campsite was now associated with a tasty meal and if we stayed for the night we would most likely be revisited by the bears. We packed our camp, moved 1 mile down the valley, crossed the creek, and tried to determine if we were being stalked by the bears with my headlamp. We slept on a rock outcropping to limit bear avenues of approach and didn't bother to put up the Mega Mid. We were surrounded by thick brush, so we hoped to hear bears snapping branches if they were to approach us. We drifted off, I left in my contacts in to enjoy the abundant show of stars.

We awoke the next morning and laughed as we rationed breakfast. We departed camp and slowly climbed out of the Gorgemeister Valley to the pass above Big Timber Valley. We ran on empty, but with minimal complaints, we arrived at my truck 8 hours later.

Our stay in this valley was cut short to 1 night, however we had plans for 2 nights and 3 full days in this magnificent valley for further exploration. There is more climbing potential in this valley, but our trip was unexpectedly halted. If you're looking for more beta on this valley and possible routes email me at: brendanlee718@yahoo.com, there is a good deal of unfinished work in this valley.



Heading down the lovely west face of The Gorgemeister. Unbeknownst to us, our camp was being devoured by bears.



Route overview.

The Sail (4255 feet), Western Chugach Mountains

Text and photos by Marcin Ksok



61.107, -149.429



Marcin enjoying the sun's rays after a dark winter.

In late spring of 2020 Greg Encelewski and I took advantage of perfect snow conditions to ascend this somewhat remote and obscure peak. We hiked in, carrying cross-country skis and just as the trail left the creek and started to gain the slopes leading to Indian Creek Pass, we reached snow. The surface was firm, allowing us to quickly reach the tipping point and teeter over to the other side. The real fun started there, we glided down effortlessly and in a matter of minutes reached Shaman Dome's north buttress.

After shedding the skinny skis we dropped down into the small valley south of our objective and without much postholing ascended The Sail's southwest slopes to reach its north ridgeline. The peak's more direct, southwestern aspect proved quite steep which isn't truly seen on the topo map, necessitating the more circuitous route. Once on the ridge gaining the summit was quite easy. Most of the day was sunny and clear therefore we enjoyed stellar views from the top.

After retracing the route we reached the cached skis and although now heading uphill the progress was quite expeditious over still solid snow. A teeter-totter move at the pass directed the tips

downhill again over increasing difficult terrain. At one point I proceeded to descend a short drop and my skis found a soft pocket and buried themselves in an earnest stop, sending me face first into the powder. The situation would have been nothing but comical except once I got up and tried to ski again my left boot came free of the binding, or I thought. Actually the whole binding came free of the now cracked ski. After fifteen years of hard forced labor the old boards reached the age of retirement.

The malfunction now necessitated a snowboard like technique on a single skinny ski to get down below snow line. At first it worked well until I reached lower elevation and softer snow couldn't support my weight any longer and I started to break through on occasion. Luckily the difficulties only lasted for about

a mile and didn't delay us greatly. If you were ever wondering, be assured that skiing on a single board is very possible and under right conditions quite enjoyable. By this time the day's heat thawed the earthen trail, transforming the return from being a dry, frozen delight to a wet, slippery mess. A low price to pay for the heavenly crust we enjoyed up higher.



Greg on the summit.

Aging Gracefully

Aging isn't that bad of a proposition in Alaska, even during a pandemic

Text by Frank Baker



Frank Baker in Chugach State Park near the toe of the Eklutna Glacier.

Photo by Radu Girbacea.

I'm 75 years old and part of the high-risk group. Yet, I have not suffered paranoia during the prolonged coronavirus pandemic. I would prefer, however, to wear a NASA space suit when leaving the shelter of my hermetically-sealed house; and through an air-lock perfected at Pasadena's Jet Propulsion Laboratory.

Months of confinement have forced me, and I'm sure many others, into thinking about our advancing years, and the aging process itself.

My doctor happily plays along with my penchant for age-denial, informing me that 75 is the new 65. With sunglasses, baseball cap and dyed beard, I try for 55; but few buy it. I knew the jig was up about 15 years ago when folks started calling me "sir." Or, if I stopped on the side of a hiking trail for a rest, young folks passing by might ask, "sir, are you all right?"

I no longer expect young women to look my way, and they don't. Dogs still come up to me.

There are your run-of-the-mill age deniers who drive sporty cars, wear jeans with ripped out knees and employ text-message lingo. And then you have the real pros like me--Zen masters of self-delusion. I pass by mirrors quickly and avoid others if the light isn't right. I neither request nor accept senior discounts at restaurants. After a recent knee surgery I was given a cane, but I called it a "walking stick." I routinely refer to senior citizens extraneously as "those people." I conceal my Senior Voice magazine when walking

out of the post office.

I ascribe to comedian Billy Crystal's saying: "It's more important to look good than to feel good." If I knew how to use mirrors like noted illusionist David Copperfield to conceal my age, I would. If I lived in a country that reveres the elderly, such as British Samoa, I could abandon this desperate resistance to aging.

With unabashed vanity, for 15 years I've been applying a topical solution, minoxidil, on my head to abate hair loss. It hasn't done any good. The top of my head looks like a forest that's been ravaged by a wildfire. What's even more troublesome, that forest of hair has taken up residence in my nostrils and ears. I have a small, battery-powered device to remove that hair, but a miniature weed whacker would be more efficient.

Eye glasses mercifully conceal the bags under my eyes and droopy eyelids. I thought about cosmetic surgery, but my vanity only goes so far. Besides, someday I might be able to help out on my granddaughter's college expenses.

I was always proud of my memory, both long-term and short-term. But proper nouns, mostly people's names, are as elusive as a property tax cut in the Municipality of Anchorage.

I hate using the phrase "what's his name?" But in conversation it crops up more than I'd like.

There is always Google.

In the U.S. Navy, my hearing in both and high and low frequencies tested “off the charts.”

At remote work locations in my younger days, I always heard the airplane coming before anyone else. Today, I have difficulty segregating different pitches. My wife accuses me of “selective hearing,” but I’m no longer adept in hearing overlapping sounds. For example, If someone speaks to me while I’m talking on the telephone, I hear neither. The same applies for TV newscasters and political debaters talking over one another. Maybe that’s a blessing.

Luckily, my eyesight hasn’t diminished much over the years. But I can’t conceal my envy of a friend who has better than 20/20 vision and spots wildlife before anyone else.

No, my nemesis has been two parts of the human anatomy upon which I think God could have improved: the lower back, and the knees. But then, and here comes the brag: I was a laborer for many years, helped several people pack out their moose and other wild game, and have been obsessively hiking Alaska’s wilds for 60 years. Was the human body designed to hike thousands of miles and climb hundreds of vertical miles? Some people I know, like famed outdoor adventurers Dick Griffith and MCA’s Tom Choate, got away with it. But not that many on their way to the 80s.

So, one starts doing things differently. You have surgery if you need it. You get on a first-name basis with physical therapists. You hike with walking sticks, but make sure they look more like walking sticks than canes. You wear a lighter pack. Your hikes aren’t as steep and as far, but with the camera’s telephoto lens you can make pictures look like you’ve traveled farther than you really have. You wear knee braces concealed under your pants. You take anti-inflammatories if your kidneys allow. Sometimes you might cheat and take a small piece of Tramadol (pain killer) before a hike. There are anti-inflammatory patches one can apply to the back and knees. You cross train – with bicycling a good remedy for rehabbing knees. You brace when you lift things. Many people get into yoga. If stretching is an acquaintance, ice is a dear friend. When asked about your aches and pains, you lie.

All the other measures, diet, sleep, vitamins, stress reduction, alcohol moderation, are obvious. The rest is mental. I’m probably repeating myself (another symptom of age), but when I was about eight years old I pointed to a mountain in Seward that my father had climbed and asked him how he had found the strength. He smiled and pointed to his head: “60 percent here.” And then he pointed to his legs: “40 percent here.”

For many years on the 4th of July I climbed to the top of Race Point [Ed. Note: the locally-famous 3022 foot point on Mt. Mara-

thon] in Seward to watch the races. Among the hundreds of race participants, there were consistently many in their 40s, 50s, 60s and even 70s who were extremely physically fit and getting after it. I witnessed the same on the annual Lost Lake Race to raise funds for cystic fibrosis and other events. It’s no exaggeration to say Alaskans are among the toughest Americans and atypical of this country’s aging curve.

Today, I operate on the “rusty gate” theory. If I don’t move, I freeze up. I continue to “think young,” even though on many mornings my body feels like someone dropped me from a three-story building.

Even though I probably should, I won’t admonish our youth on how to comport themselves during this pandemic. I’ll keep myself safe, even if I have to step off the trail into deep snow this winter (as I did last winter) to maintain a social distance.

I quit drinking and smoking about 30 years ago. I’ve been generally blessed with good health, but realize it’s not so easy for many others. The modus operandi, I guess, is to do what we can, when we can and where we can. Getting off the couch and into the outdoors is the best fountain of youth I’ve found. And believe me, I’ve looked everywhere. It’s certainly not in the medicine cabinet.

And also important, especially during this difficult time... we need to remember to laugh, even if it’s at ourselves.

I think that as Alaskans, we know how lucky we are. They say aging is not for the faint hearted. But up here, despite the long and dark winters; it’s really not that bad. Alaska’s population is relatively young and the people around us are inspirational. The land is spiritually uplifting. Just look at the beautiful mountains.

And I’ll openly admit-- in writing this piece, I only had to refer to Google twice for a memory assist.

A lifetime Alaska resident, Frank E. Baker is a free-lance writer who lives in Eagle River with his wife Rebekah, a retired elementary school teacher.



*Frank Baker recovering from total knee replacement in 2017.
Photo by Frank Baker*

A Conversation with Dave Imus

Text by Dave Imus, Transcribed by Gerrit Verbeek

Edited and condensed for clarity and length.

Dave Imus is a cartographer based in Oregon who has produced a slew of award-winning maps since founding Imus Geographics in 1983. That set of maps includes a 2000 map of the [Chugach State Park](#), awarded 1st place and Best in Show at the 2002 joint annual awards of the American Congress on Surveying and Mapping (ACSM) and the Cartography and Geographic Information Society (CaGIS), and a map of the [State of Alaska](#) which also won 1st Place in 2004.

The Chugach State Park map is unique in its attention to detail and inclusion of locally recognized names which are not shown on maps by federal government agencies such as the USGS. In February 2020, Dave Imus got on the phone to talk about the map. 2020 is both the 50th anniversary of the Chugach State Park, and the 20th anniversary of the State Park map.

The Start of the Chugach State Park Map

"I traveled up to Alaska with a couple of friends from Oregon to go backpacking in Denali. We stayed with a friend who had moved up there to Anchorage on our way to Denali. She took us hiking up to Crow Pass, which isn't exactly in the park but it's nearby. She was talking about this big Chugach State Park, and teaching us how to pronounce 'Chugach,' and I learned a little bit more about it: here's this alpine wilderness area, that sits right next to a quarter of a million people and there wasn't a map of Chugach State Park. And I thought 'hey, pretty cool place, I think I can make a map of it.' I had recently published a map of the Wallowa Mountains in Oregon at the same scale as the Chugach State Park map. And the design had won top national honors for the year the Wallowa Mountains map was published, so we just basically used the same design for the Chugach map too.

Somebody had published a set of two maps. I think they were different scales, one covered the Turnagain Arm part of the park and one maybe the Hillside, I forget. Nobody had made a single detailed map of the park and I thought 'well, here's my opportunity.'

That was August [of 2000], when I was up there to go to Denali. I was back up there in November doing my research, going out to the park and talking to everybody. So it got going really quick.

I worked with another cartographer on this. I didn't have a computer at the time, and I had started collaborating with a guy, a cartographer who was well up to speed on the digital end of it. I did the research and design and he did the artwork, and he did a damn good job too. A guy named Pat Dunlavey who had paid his dues making maps for orienteering. So he's totally into detail Scree—December 2020

and accuracy and taking care of all the little details. We had a great time collaborating for many years on stuff and this is one of our first collaborations. That's an important part."

Sources of Information

"I've been making maps forever, and I kind of know how to get information and who to talk to. And so I contacted the park, and some people who had written books and wrote columns in newspapers and stuff, I figured they'd be expert. And then I learned about other people like this Dick Griffith guy...

These people were a wealth of information. I interviewed them all and we pored over maps. I had all the quadrangles taped together. We'd set them down on the floor and go over them and they'd say 'No, this trail's really here' and stuff like that."

Including Local Names

"OK... "Mountain peak names are the ones recognized by the Geographic Names Committee of the Mountaineering Club of Alaska." [Ed. Note: this note is printed on the Chugach State Park Map] And the Native place names, which are in parentheses on the map, were provided by Chugach State Park. That was the park supervisor at the time, Al Meiners, who people called the 'Mayor of East Anchorage' because he was a fairly charismatic guy. He wanted to have a lot of native place names on there too, probably for political reasons and stuff but he was a very decent and inclusive guy. And I wanted to work with the park, so if you want native place names on there I'm happy to do that. That's sort of how that came about. Any place names that weren't covered by those two sources, I used what was on the USGS quadrangles up there."

Sounds like the effort was to make it comprehensive, at least.

"Right, and reflective of reality. And not what somebody in Washington, D.C. thinks it ought to be."

Philosophy and Goals

"Cartography is a highly technical field, and I'm not highly technical. I'm an artist as opposed to an engineer. I don't know a damn thing about the engineering of maps, other than it exists! (haha) What I like to do is draft lines and arrange type labels and do shaded relief and make things look really legible, but that's not the interest of your average cartographer. They want to explore the latest software and getting the machine to do the work instead of doing it themselves.

And my view is that cartography that is mechanical by nature is

nearly not as expressive as maps that are made basically by hand using a computer. It's like writing a book: if you just input data into a word processor and had it write a book, it might have all the data in there but it wouldn't be this human-to-human communication that makes sense to the reader. And I think the same thing happens with cartography. They input all this data into their computer, it outputs it, and the result is this mechanical thing that doesn't have any life to it, that doesn't communicate as deeply as it could.

And this is true of the Chugach map: All the details were taken care of. All those contour lines on there, those were hand-drafted by somebody that knew how to draft contours and generalize them properly and all of that. And that's just not the interest of your standard cartography worldwide, really. And when you do it that way the work is way more human and accessible and rich and alive. So, anyway, I think that's one of the reasons that it won a lot of national awards.

The Chugach map was selected as the best map made in the year that it was published, for all of North America. Serious dang work of mappery! I just got off on another tangent."

On Digital Tools

"I think you could probably program a computer, create software that would write a book. But is that what we want? Is that the best way for an expert to communicate what's in their mind to the mind of another human being? I say no. (*haha*)

The author can use a word processor to write a book, but as an extension of the author instead of as a replacement for the author. And the way maps are made, they use computers to replace the author instead of being an extension of the author's hand, like a paintbrush or something is an extension of the artist's hand. I use a computer as an extension of my hand, instead of a replacement for it."

Data visualization: it has to be beautiful to be arresting and appreciated by people.

"I really believe in that idea about beauty. People who are trained illustrators recognize that they're trying to show the subject in the best light, to bring out its inherent beauty. All natural things are beautiful when you look at them in the right light. I can't think of anything that wouldn't qualify as beautiful in the natural world if it's depicted in the right light. I'm trying to make things really clear and representative and I've really gotten into the concept of capturing the physical essence or the geographic essence of places. When you reflect the beauty of something people are much more apt to look at it."

How do you sense-check what is clear to a broad audience?

"Well, beauty is the absence of ugliness, and ugliness can be defined as things that are eye-jangling, or confusing. That make you work to figure things out. Say on my United States map, let's say I'm treating a small town in Indiana. And there's a river going through it and there's a couple of highways that come together at or near the town, features like that. So what I do is make sure that my tiny rendition of those features is understandable. You move the roads a little further away from the river, you exaggerate the intersections of the highways so that they're crystal clear. And then you make sure you put the symbol for the town exactly where it is in reality.

For the second edition of my US map I used online mapping sources and zoomed in on every town on the map so I could decide where the central business district was so I know where to put the label. And it just makes everything more organic and believable.

I create all the details, like on my United States map. I drafted all the lines, I placed all the type labels. And I analyze them all for whether or not I can understand it. Do I have one line covering up another line, or am I confusing the eye in some way? And work out the details when there's a problem. And there's lots of problems (*haha*) so there's lots to do!

But let's say there's a million details on my United States map and I've attended to every one of them to make each one of them clear. A detail can be like a meander in a river or something like that. If each one of those is legible, if it's accessible to my eye, then it's accessible to your eye or anybody else's with typical vision. The process of making things clear and beautiful is just to get rid of the things that aren't and dealing with them.

And that's not just the tiny details on the map, it's the broad details. Do mountains look like mountain ranges, things like that? I'm just trying to paint a pretty picture, just like someone with a paintbrush would do."

How do you get a feel for a place? Is it important to visit the area? Look at photos?

"Having on the ground impressions is hugely important. I've never done five minutes of field work that I thought was a waste of time. When I made the Chugach map, I traveled to every trailhead with a GPS unit just to make sure we had everything exactly right. And I GPS'd all the mileposts along Turnagain Arm, and stuff like that. Because they're not spaced a mile apart in Alaska. You can't tell where they are using measurement, because they're historic locations! They're not exactly mile markers.

With my US map, I've been to 45 states or something like that, and I pay attention. I'm a very visually oriented person, so I sort of have snapshots of every place I've been in my entire life tucked

away in my brain. And so on the U.S. map I try to make places look like I remember them. That said, I think I would do it differently in the future. If I do Canada or Mexico or something in a similar style I'll use their photographs and satellite imagery and on-the-ground imagery and stuff like that to help with the process. Treating the US map as an illustration, I was just inventing this thing. And you can always make the second one better! Even though I think I did a fairly darn good job on the terrain for the second edition, there's always room for making the second effort a little bit better.

So even though I think that on-the-ground impressions are essential, it's always helpful to use other sources of information. And an interesting thing about the way maps are made, and the Chugach map applies to this too, is that they're not rendered to look like they do from the sky or from above. They're actually rendered to have the same vertical exaggeration as things appear from the ground. Because the earth is really pretty smooth, even up there in Alaska! (haha) It doesn't have as much roughness to it as a basketball. So if you don't exaggerate the vertical, it doesn't look like it appears to us from the ground. The mountains look huge and tall from the ground. If you're looking at a mountain that's five miles away and it's two miles higher than you, it's gigantic! But two miles is less than five miles! Horizontal distances are so much greater than vertical distances and we exaggerate things to make them look right."

What's on your to-do list? What's the most challenging quality to convey that you're still trying to develop?

"Well, with the second edition of my US map my transition from being a technical cartographer to being an artist was complete. I've never known how to do GIS stuff. But I still tout myself as a cartographer, which is more of a technical thing. The first edition of my map, the shaded relief is a cartographer's shaded relief. I didn't do anything special to it, I just manipulated it for a couple of hours in Photoshop and made it more contrasty. It was going to print light, so I knew it had to be contrasty in order to show up.

In the second edition I spent 2000 hours in Photoshop to render a custom illustration. And it took me into a totally different realm in reproduction. (haha) I spent all the money I had and then a lot more trying to get it printed by traditional printing presses and it never captured the work. So I lost my shirt doing that, and was sort of forced to accept that the only way I could reproduce my new artistic work was by way of inkjet printing. Which is far more expensive, instead of a sheet costing me \$2 when I get 10,000 of them printed, it cost me \$35. So I've got to sell them for a lot more money and people are not as excited to spend a hundred dollars on a map anymore.

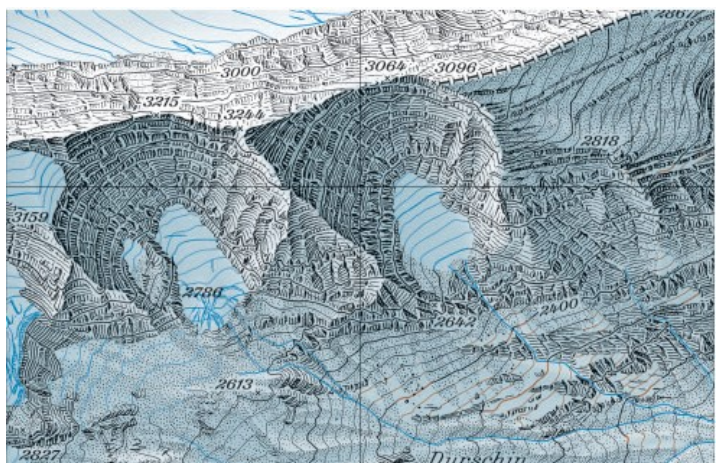
That's a big challenge: moving from the technical field of cartography to the artistic field of illustration, and figuring out how to do that. It's a whole different market. Metsker Maps of Seattle sold lots of my first edition maps, but they don't even want to sell my hundred dollar second edition, which I think is a revolutionary and important type of cartography (*haha*). So it's just a challenge to get the world to come along to my way of thinking! So that's sort of where I am in the general picture.

But there's a couple more pieces that I really want to do. I have an essential geography of Oregon map/illustration that I want to rework into the same design as the second edition of my U.S. piece. So totally excited about that, I'm itching to pull the trigger, get some images and start working!

Also on my list to do is a map of the St. Elias Range, or maybe just the Mt. St. Elias area. Because it's some of the most spectacular relief on earth. Mt. St. Elias is like 18,000 feet high, and it's only - I measured - seventeen miles from saltwater. Someone else said it was eleven miles from salt water. That's a lot of relief, man! With glaciers sweeping down to sea level. There's saltwater and there's glaciers and a little bit of forest and there's mountains and it's immense. Man, I gotta try that out! So that's on my list too."

Influences on the Chugach State Park Map

"The design is after Swiss cartography. Swiss topographic maps have roughly the same spectrum of information as the Chugach State Park maps. But they have the additional feature of rock illustrations. I don't know if you've seen Swiss topography, but go online sometime, check it out! They illustrate the rocks. They're exquisite, they're amazing. But without having the skill to do that, if we'd have tried to do rock illustrations for the Chugach State Park map it may have looked clunky. And you can also argue that's more information than people need, and by not having rock illustrations the form of the land itself takes on



Example of Swiss rock-drawing on topographic maps, from Map 1193, Tödi. Reproduced from Jenny et al., 2014.

greater clarity.”

And let's be honest, I love the Chugach to death but it doesn't have the prettiest rock in the world!

“Haha, yeah, it's kind of crumbly too!”

On the Intersection of Art and Maps

“You know, Denali was mapped in the Swiss style. I forget the name of the person who did that [Ed. Note: *Bradford Washburn and Swiss Federal Office of Cartography, 1980*], but a Swiss cartographer did a gorgeous map of Denali.

But the problem is that style of cartography is so expensive to create. You can't do it for everywhere. So maybe 1% or 5% of the earth's land surface has been mapped that way. And it's my contention that if the entire earth were mapped in a form that illustrates the land with clarity, much like Swiss maps do, that geographic illiteracy would not be a problem that it is today. I really feel that we need to map the world, or illustrate the surface of our planet, with the same level of expression that artists

have been illustrating wildflowers for four hundred years.

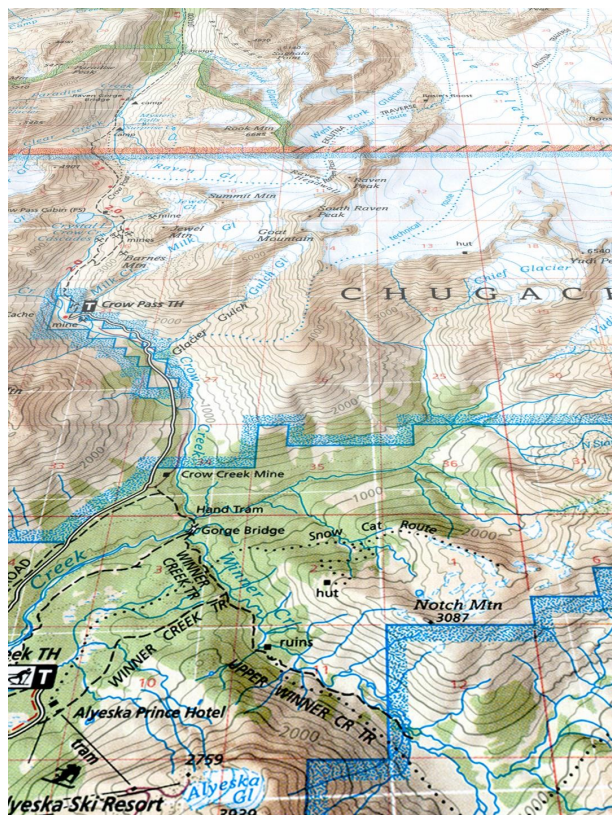
And if we did that, if we illustrate the land as clearly and expressively as artists paint flowers and things, geographic illiteracy would not be the problem it is today.

In fact I think this information would have a similar impact on geographic literacy that the printing press had on general literacy. The masses were illiterate until the invention of the printing press, which allowed the printed word to be available to the broader population. Only then did the broader population become literate. And I think we have the same problem in geography; we don't have the proper information available to people to allow the broader population to become literate in geography. And it's my thing! It's my whole life to see what I can do about that (*haha*).”

The Chugach State Park map is available for purchase on Imusgeographics.com, and Dave has just published Edition 2, Version 3 of the Essential Geography of the USA.



Excerpt of the just published Edition 2, Version 3 of the Essential Geography of the USA



Excerpt of the Imus Geographics Chugach State Park Map

Peak of the Month: Peak 5433, Schwatka Mountains

Text by Steve Gruhn

Mountain Range: Brooks Range; Schwatka Mountains

Borough: Northwest Arctic Borough

Drainage: Noatak River

Latitude/Longitude: 67° 36' 17" North, 155° 20' 59" West

Elevation: 5433 feet

Adjacent Peak: Leucosticte Peak (6074 feet)

Distinctness: 813 feet from Leucosticte Peak

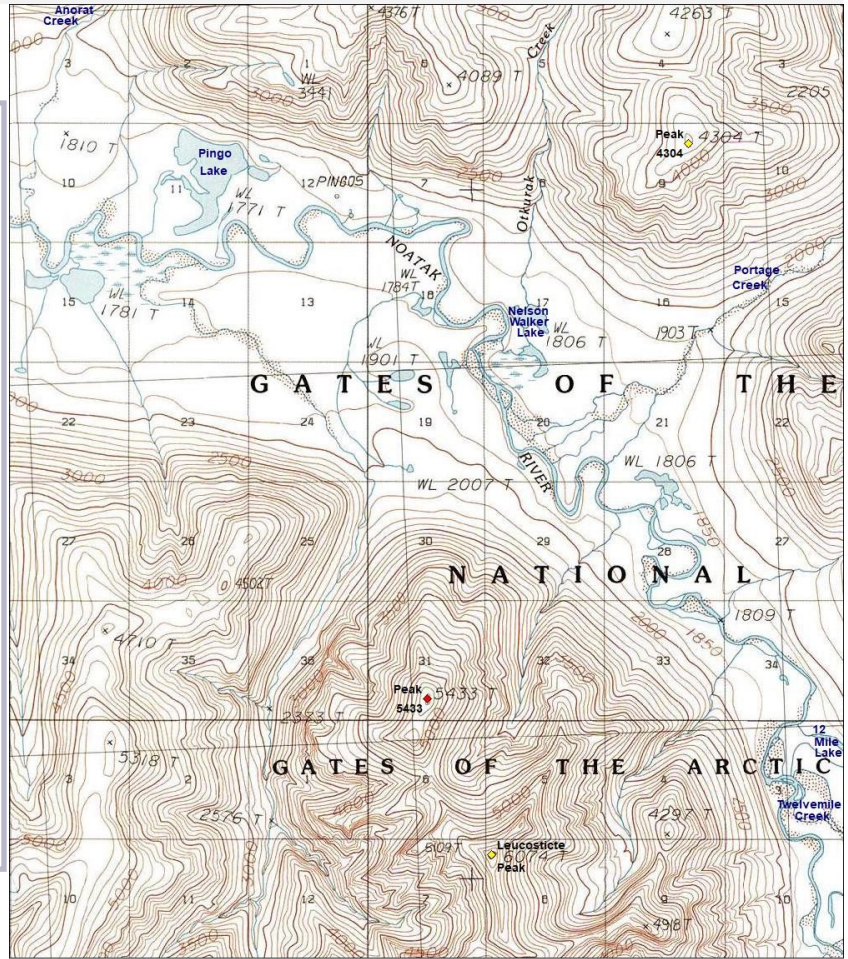
Prominence: 813 feet from Leucosticte Peak

USGS Maps: 1:63,360: Survey Pass C-5; 1:25,000: Survey Pass C-5 SW

First Recorded Ascent: Early August 2008 by Darcy Dugan, Diana Johnson, Stefan Milkowski, and Tobias Schwoerer

Route of First Recorded Ascent: North ridge

Access Point: Nelson Walker Lake



On August 3, 2008, Brooks Range Aviation flew Darcy Dugan, Diana Johnson, Stefan Milkowski, and Toby Schwoerer in a de Havilland Beaver floatplane from Bettles to Nelson Walker Lake northeast of the Noatak River. The team established a base camp near the point where Otkurak Creek flowed into Nelson Walker Lake. Their aim was to hike in the upper valley of the Noatak River and then kayak down the river, which cleaves the southern Schwatka and Baird Mountains from the Endicott and De Long Mountains to the north to drain the western Brooks Range.

The following day all four climbed Peak 4304 between Otkurak Creek and Portage Creek in the Endicott Mountains and northeast of their base camp.

On August 5 the party crossed the Noatak River and hiked up the north ridge of Peak 5344 in the Schwatka Mountains. A band of caribou accompanied them on their hike. Their descent was via the same route.

On August 6 the team removed their base camp and paddled their Klepper kayaks down the river to a campsite between the

Kugrak River and Karumnulima Creek. The next day they climbed Peak 5509 west of the Kugrak River in the Schwatka Mountains. On the 8th they continued paddling downriver, supplementing their diet with fresh grayling, char, and salmon caught along the way. On August 18 the four climbed Peak 2102 in the Maiyumerak Mountains above the Noatak Canyon on the recommendation of Sepp Weber, who had previously climbed it. The following day the team continued paddling downriver, arriving at the community of Noatak on the 21st. During their trip, they observed a rare funnel cloud and frequent evidence of tundra slumping and solifluction due to thawing permafrost.

While it's certainly possible that others might have visited Peak 5433, I don't know of any other confirmed ascents.

Then information for this column came from Dugan's private blog; from Schwoerer's blog (<http://teleturn.blogspot.com/2008/10/noatak.html>); and from my correspondence with both Dugan and Schwoerer.



*View down the north ridge of Peak 5433 toward the Noatak River.
Photo by Stefan Milkowski*



*Outkaste Picket (left spire of center massif) and Peak 5950 (right), Coast Mountains
Photo by Earl Redman*

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

October 28, 2020, at 6:00-8:00 p.m., conducted online via Zoom

Roll Call

Mike Meyers (President) - Present
Gerrit Verbeek (Vice-President) - Present
Curtis Townsend (Secretary) - Present
Katherine Cooper (Treasurer) - Present
Tom Meacham (Director) - Present
Jonathan Rupp Strong (Director) - Present
Lila Hobbs (Director) - Absent
Andy Kubic (Director) - Present
Heather Johnson (Director) - Absent
Nathan Pooler (Director) - Present

Scribe: Curtis Townsend

Committee Reports

President (Mike Myers)

- Stan Olsen, Sally Balchin and Charlotte Foley all got their mug and they were very thankful.
- Thank you to Lila Hobbs for fixing the dimensions of the Bomber hut on the website.
- Board positions will be voted for in January (board voted that minimum 25 members to be present for all votes via zoom).
- By-Laws will be voted in January if notes run in the Scree
- 2021 Budget will be voted in January if note runs in the Scree for 2 months.

Vice President (Gerrit Verbeek)

- Christmas Party - cancelled due to COVID.

Secretary (Curtis Townsend)

- BP energy center is closed through January 4, 2021. They will reassess after that date.
- Curtis to call PayPal to see if he can resolve the REI calendar invoice issue.

Treasurer (Katherine Cooper)

- Please give Katherine any receipts or due to/forms for 2020.
- Create MCA volunteer Thank You fund
- Katherine presented the budget information.

Liability Committee (Tom Meacham)

- Nothing to report.

Awards Committee (Tom Meacham, Charlie Sink, Max Neale)

- Presentation to Steve Gruhn when meetings are held again (Covid).

the Scree (Gerrit Verbeek, Dawn Munroe)

- Recognize volunteers in Scree? Would this be a monthly volunteer spotlight?

Trips Committee

- Mary Vavrik is planning a trip to Mt. Eklutna. Nathan has sent her the COVID waiver that gets signed before trips (as well as MCA waiver)
- Greg Bragiel will host an MCA Trip December 5-6, 2020 Trail maintenance of ~ 5 miles from Arctic Valley trailhead. A great opportunity to help keep this Arctic to Indian corridor open, tune up winter camping skills OR to start learning how to camp in snow and cold weather. Contact Greg Bragiel unknownhikher@alaska.net or 350-5146)

Training Committee

- Recording a trip leader training event to use for future training is in the best interest of the club.

Huts Committee (Jonathan Rupp Strong, Greg Bragiel, Cory Hinds, Vicky Lytle)

- Hut trailhead signs for the Gold Mint parking lot
- Planning is moving forward for next season to install new windows and construct a foyer addition. Jonathan will be preparing a grant application for additional funding from Matsu Trails for that project.
- Mike reviewed the website for up-to-date info on huts and travel and it does need some work.

Mentorship (Lila Hobbs, Katherine Cooper)

- Nothing to report.

Communications Committee (Lila Hobbs)

- MCA ListServ is going away at the end of 2020. Carlene Van Tol to explore groups.io as a replacement.

Calendar Committee (Vicky Ho, Lila Hobbs, Heather Johnson, Mike Meyers)

- Calendars are ready for pickup.

Date and Location of next Meeting

- General meeting Nov 4 via Zoom, 6:30 pm
- Next Board Meeting on November 25, 2020 from 6:00-8:00 pm via Zoom.

Proposed MCA 2021 Budget

2021 Budget						
REVENUE	Budget 2021	2020 Appr. vs. Actual	Actual 2020	Approved 2020	Actual 2019	Actual 2018
Membership Dues <i>received during calendar year</i>	\$14,500	(\$2,226)	\$13,774	\$16,000	\$15,608	\$11,985
Scree subscriptions <i>scree included in membership dues</i>	\$0	(\$180)	\$0	\$180	\$225	\$225
Training <i>BMS, ice climbing, rock climbing, other</i>	\$2,500	(\$5,500)	\$0	\$5,500	\$5,086	\$4,760
Photo Calendar	\$3,000	(\$566)	\$2,434	\$3,000	\$2,423	\$2,901
MCA Products: T-Shirts, Patches, Etc.	\$400	\$230	\$630	\$400	\$710	\$95
Interest on Accounts	\$100	(\$100)	\$0	\$100	\$0	\$96
Other - Donations, etc <i>Donations, check reimbursements</i>	\$500	\$6,675	\$7,175	\$500	\$455	\$10,140
TOTAL REVENUE	\$21,000	(\$1,666)	\$24,014	\$25,680	\$24,507	\$30,201
EXPENSE						
Training <i>Campsites, access fees, instructors, trip leaders</i>	\$3,500	(\$4,420)	\$80	\$4,500	\$3,702	\$3,914
Scree <i>Postage, mailing, printing</i>	\$2,000	(\$12)	\$1,988	\$2,000	\$1,240	\$2,164
General Meeting <i>Rent, refreshments, entertainment</i>	\$400	(\$859)	\$941	\$1,800	\$43	\$1,091
Administrative <i>Supplies, PO box, web site, ads, travel, misc.</i>	\$4,500	(\$328)	\$672	\$1,000	\$579	\$514
Hut Construction & Maint. <i>Materials, supplies, hut equipment, lease fees</i>	\$8,400	(\$466)	\$19,534	\$20,000	\$3,176	\$30,002
Insurance <i>Reincorporation fees, insurance</i>	\$110	(\$110)	\$0	\$110	\$100	\$104
Club Equipment <i>Climbing gear, misc equipment, storage</i>	\$600	(\$283)	\$517	\$800	\$480	\$452
Library <i>New books, periodicals, storage</i>	\$75	(\$150)	\$0	\$150	\$0	\$259
Other: <i>Miscellaneous expenses</i>						
Photo Calendar	\$1,800	(\$525)	\$1,275	\$1,800	\$1,530	\$0
MCA Products <i>T-Shirts, Patches, Etc.</i>	\$200	(\$500)	\$0	\$500	\$300	\$0
Other - Awards	\$350	(\$500)	\$0	\$500	\$0	\$102
Other -	\$0	\$162	\$162	\$0	\$0.	\$981
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$21,935	(\$7,991)	\$25,169	\$33,160	\$11,149	\$39,584
DUE TO (FROM) RESERVE	(\$935)	\$6,324	(\$1,156)	(\$7,480)	\$13,358	(\$9,383)

MCA Board Roles

President:

- (a) To preside at all regular and executive meetings.
- (b) To coordinate the efforts of the officers and committees.

Vice-President:

- (a) To assume the duties of the President in the absence of the President, or at the request of the President.
- (b) All other-duties as assigned by the Executive Committee.
- (c) Provide programs and entertainment at club meetings and other club social activities.

Secretary:

- (a) To record the minutes of all regular and executive meetings.
- (b) To maintain complete business and historical records of the organization.
- (c) To initiate and answer correspondence as directed by the President.
- (d) All other duties as assigned by the Executive Committee.
- (e) To Arrange for a meeting place for all regular meetings and the annual meeting.

Treasurer:

- (a) To receive and disburse all club dues, fees, and other monies.
- (b) To maintain complete financial records of the organization.
- (c) All other duties as assigned by the Executive Committee.

Directors:

- (a) To act as an advisor to the Executive Committee concerning matters of policy.
- (b) All other duties as assigned by the Executive Committee.

Proposed By-Law Amendments

[Ed. Note: These amendments will be put to a vote by the membership at the January 2021 General Meeting. Additions are bolded in green text, removals are struck through in red text. The major proposed change is to instate 2-year terms for all Board members except the past President. An increase in the number of Directors from 4 to a maximum of 6 was approved by membership in October 2019.]

MCA By-Laws 2014 (existing) version

Directors (4): (a) To act as an advisor to the Executive Committee concerning matters of policy.

(b) All other duties as assigned by the Executive Committee.

Past President (1): (a) To advise the Executive Committee on matters of policy.

(b) To provide some year to year continuity of information to the Executive Committee from the person best informed about such matters.

(c) All other duties as assigned by the Executive Committee.

Term. The President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and Past President shall serve for one (1) year from date of election, or until their successor is elected. Directors shall serve for a two (2) year term, with two (2) directors being elected at each annual meeting. The office of Past President is filled by the immediate past President

Vacancy. Upon resignation or removal of any officer or director, the Executive Committee shall appoint a member to fill the unexpired term. ~~In the case where the President is re-elected, an election shall be held for an additional Director for a one (1) year term.~~ [Board Note: removed when we went from 4 to 6 directors]

MCA By-Laws 2021 (proposed amended) version

Directors (4): (a) To act as an advisor to the Executive Committee concerning matters of policy.

(b) All other duties as assigned by the Executive Committee.

(c) There shall be a minimum of four (4), directors, to a maximum of six (6) directors.

Past President (1): (a) To advise the Executive Committee on matters of policy.

(b) To provide some year to year continuity of information to the Executive Committee from the person best informed about such matters.

(c) All other duties as assigned by the Executive Committee.

Term. All positions in the Executive Committee shall serve for two (2) years from date of election, or until their successor is elected. Two (2) officers shall be elected or re-elected at each annual meeting, to promote continuity on the Executive Committee. A minimum of two (2) directors and a maximum of three (3) directors shall be elected at each annual meeting.

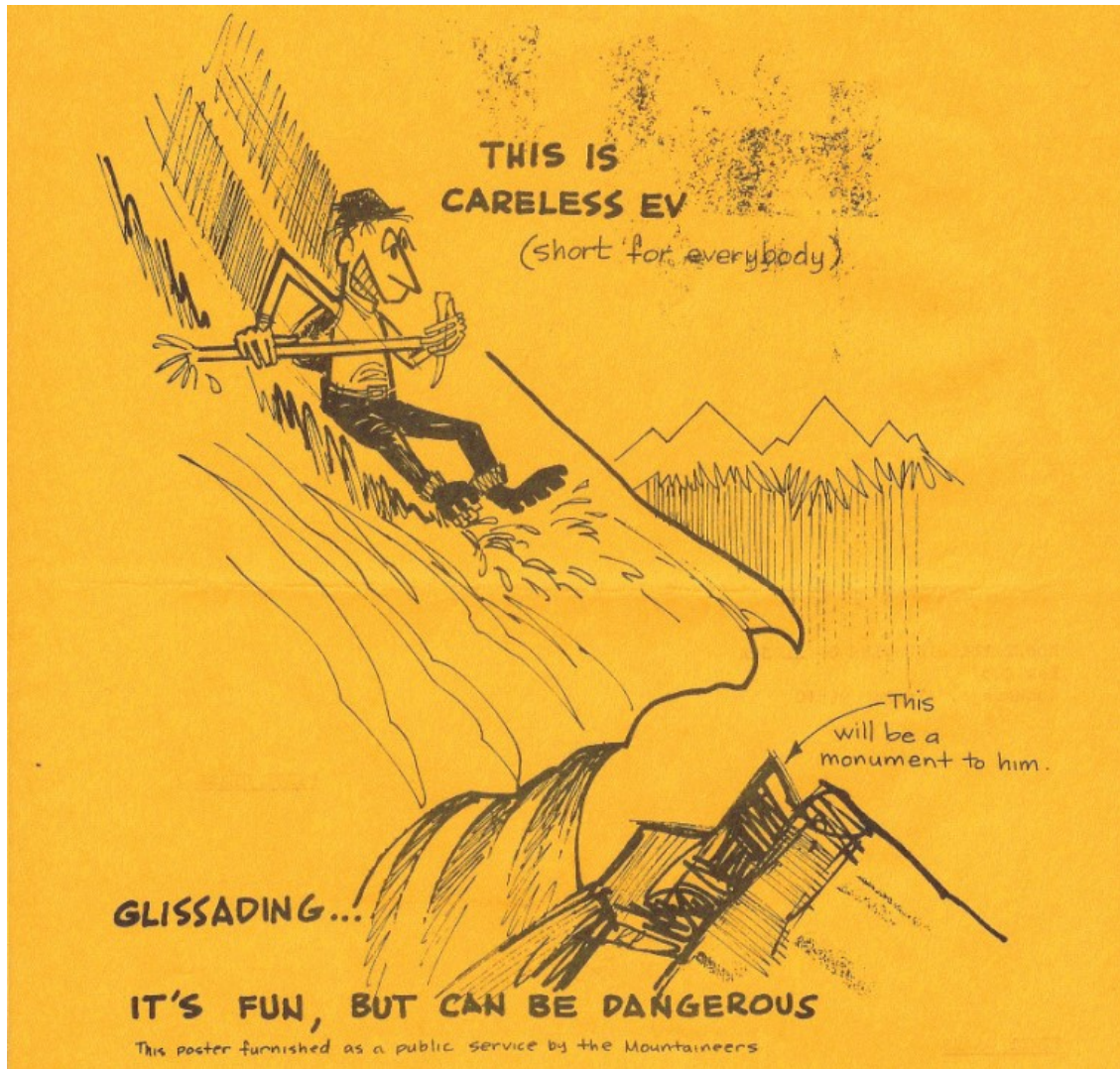
The office of Past President is filled by the immediate past President, for a one (1) year term.

Vacancy. Upon resignation or removal of any officer or director, the Executive Committee shall appoint a member to fill the unexpired term.

The Return of Careless Ev(eryman)

The Mountaineering Club of Alaska was founded in 1958 to “to encourage mountain climbing interest, to instruct on climbing, encourage exploration and form mountain rescue teams.” (*the Scree* December 1958, quoting *American Alpine News*)

In 1971 the MCA-affiliated Alaska Rescue Group published a series of cartoons featuring Careless Ev, drawn by Dick Pargeter. Nearly fifty years later, human nature and natural hazards are still the same. So here are a few again, as they were printed on the Club’s signature goldenrod paper. Enjoy, and stay safe!



Reprinted from the *Scree*, December 1971

Mountaineering Club of Alaska

President Mike Meyers president@mtnclubak.org
Vice-President Gerrit Verbeek 903-513-4286
Secretary Curtis Townsend 355-9820
Treasurer Katherine Cooper 209-253-8489

Director 1 (term expires in 2020) Jonathan Rupp Strong 202-6484
Director 2 (term expires in 2020) Lila Hobbs 229-3754
Director 3 (term expires in 2021) Tom Meacham 346-1077
Director 4 (term expires in 2021) Heather Johnson hjohnson@mdausa.org
Director 5 (term expires in 2021) Andy Kubic andy.kubic@gmail.com
Director 6 (term expires in 2021) Nathan Pooler Nathan.lee.pooler@gmail.com

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@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. Material 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@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: Katherine Cooper — 209-253-8489 — membership@mtnclubak.org

Hiking and Climbing Committee: Vacant — training@mtnclubak.org

Mentorship: Katherine Cooper and Lila Hobbs — mentorship@mtnclubak.org

Huts: Greg Bragiel — 350-5146 or huts@mtnclubak.org

Calendar: Vicky Ho — 512-470-8640 or hovcky@gmail.com

Librarian: Gwen Higgins — library@mtnclubak.org

Scree Editor: Gerrit Verbeek — MCAScree@gmail.com assisted by Dawn Munroe (350-5121 or dawn.talbott@yahoo.com)

Web: www.mtnclubak.org

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

Dan Glatz sidehilling to The Gorgemeister in low visibility.

Photo by Brenden Lee

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