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mountaineering club of alaska
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happenings on the way

member meeting...again at Ben Crawford Memorial Park, 3rd and Eagle, December 11, 8 p.m. Program attraction will be slides of the first ascent of Ice Cream Cone Mountain by John Samuelson, Dave Johnston, and Van der Laan during July 1-6 last summer (see July issue of Scree for amusing account of this adventure written by Dave Johnston). Following the slides and commentary will be a discussion of winter climbing equipment, using samples to be brought by Ray Genet. (NOTE: This will be the regular MCA meeting place from now on, and the meeting date will regularly be the second Monday of each month.)

Skylark

ATTOP, Friday, December 22. Second annual climb and summit sleep-in Midwinter's Night. Leader: STEFFEN MAAGOE, phone 752-1163.

BOWBIRD MINE, Saturday-Sunday, January 13-14. Ski in to the cabin and climb according to desire, experience, snow conditions, and weather. Leader: BILL HAGUE, phone 862-0136.

VALLEY PEAK, Saturday, January 27. Full day trip to the prominent skyline peak above Anchorage. Skis or snowshoes required for approach. Leader: PETER VLASVELD, phone 272-8326.

happenings that were

ROCHER PASS

November 26, 1967

Tony Bockstahler

About 7:30 a.m. the following people met at my house in Eagle River: Ernie Lewis, Lotte Kramer, Dick Barquist, and Roger Crosby. Normally we drive from there to Independence Mine Ski Area takes about 1½ hours, but because of several delays in fitting chains on our two cars and missing some people who didn't put on theirs, we didn't arrive until about 10:30.

After changing boots and having a cup of coffee at the lodge, where Bill Myers joined the party, we left the area at 11:00 and skied down parallel west of the road for about a mile. Then we headed west up the valley leading to Hatcher Pass. We were all on skis, some using climbers and some using climbing wax. We proceeded slowly and reached the pass about 1 p.m. Some of us then climbed the small peak south of the pass.

Bill and Sally Hague and Mac and Lucy Myers, who arrived at the lodge after we'd gotten underway, followed us up the pass on skis and made much better time than the first party.

Coming back down the valley was a pleasant and easy downhill run. We then had a small climb back up to the ski area, although it seemed long after the day's activities. The last of us reached the ski area about 3:00 p.m.

I think we all agreed that this is a nice, not too difficult, ski-touring area.

No Executive Committee Meeting this month!

december 1967

CANTATA PEAK", First Ascent August 26, 1967
6410' NCCS II, F5...via Southeast Ridge

Dave Johnston

Karen Courtright and I didn't get very far above the highest homestead up the South Fork of Eagle River Friday evening, August 25, before darkness determined that we camp. A newlocked gate, built by homesteaders in defense against thieves and vandals, forced us to park some five miles below the end of the road. Future parties would do well to know someone with a key.

Fortified Oat Flakes were so deliciously trimmed with Milkman, sugar and handfuls of blueberries that it was 8 the next morning before we waddled away up the valley. Fortified as we were, and encouraged endlessly by Violets, the under Laan's famous dog, we should have made good time. But you must allow for our lack of willpower concerning blueberries. I could write a dissertation on this delicacy, but suffice it to say, it took us four hours to cover the four mile miles around the north shore of Eagle Lake to the 500' cascade where the valley steepens. Another thing we discovered en route is how comfortable travel bars can be for naps.

the sun cruised by its apex, we began getting our bods in gear. Also, fortunately, blueberries began to dwindle. We followed Bill Hauser's and Bob Hansen's route to the col between "Icy Peak" 6810' and our "Cantata Peak" 6410'. (See July Scree for Bob Hansen's account.) From that pass we had our first good look at the gendarmed southeast ridge. Rock on the crest looked temptingly solid, but it was 3 p.m., so we thought we'd do best to follow the line of least resistance. A talus shelf contouring around the right side of the ridge seemed best, so we followed it a quarter mile or so to the base of a deep, prominent couloir. We scrambled several hundred feet up this dark, rotten device until a steep section forced us to rope up.

Until this point, Violets had run circles around us. But here, no amount of determination could compensate for her tendency to overbalance. Again and again she tried to follow Karen up the pitch. Again and again she peeled off with various sounds of scraping and scratching followed by the rumble of a Chugach waterfall and the odor of burnt rock dust. Our hearts were in our mouths when she finally retreated to the bottom of the couloir to seek a better route.

Karen and I were on our second roped pitch (F5) when we spotted Violets heading back up our gully, deftly dodging the cannonade we couldn't help dislodging. Somehow she reached the foot of the steep section and began singing a most mournful lament. The quavering, sorrowful howls that reverberated up the black gully were completely unnerving. I suggested turning back, but luckily Karen wouldn't hear of it. The third roped pitch proved to be much better: rock was more solid; we crested the gentle ridge, and best of all, we couldn't hear Violets as well!

A goat peered curiously at us from the gentle southwest slope as we scrambled a few hundred yards to the summit by 5:20. Goats may have been to this small, rounded summit before, but as far as we could tell, no people had. So we collected our first first-ascent summit kiss and then set to work: I to build a cairn and place a register, and Karen to photograph the sunset over Cook Inlet.

Snow flurry accompanied us down the scrambles to the three roped pitches of ascending where Karen did a fine job of setting up belays in the rotten rock. The howling of Violets, of course, got louder as we got lower, and finally, there was old Violets, just really flipped out to see us again! Her old dog-- Hans is going to have to sew her a direct-aid harness!

It was dark by the time we reached the pass, so we bivouaced curled up around Violets until the moon came up. Thus we passed the night, alternately stumbling from shadow and bivouacing. We reached firewood for our fourth and final bivouac and finished the night in a comfortable series of hour-long catnaps curled Indian fashion around the fire.

The next day, August 27, we walked and napped leisurely through the blueberries around the south shore of Eagle Lake and back to our tent by early afternoon. We were sacked out there when Mac Myers came by. Mac and Mike Speshock had reached 5000' on the west ridge of "Cantata" the day

before but had turned back because of rotten rock. Mac told us we could catch a ride down in Mike's jeep that was at the highest homestead, so we folded up camp and rushed out, back to those steaks of which we had dreamed the night before!

A NOTE ON THE NAME "CANTATA PEAK"

Karen Courtright

Since Symphony Lake has been submitted as a name for the small lake southeast of Eagle Lake, and in keeping with the idea of naming geographical features in the same area with related thematic names-- in this case musical terms--we decided to name 6410' "Cantata Peak" to continue the musical idea started by Bill Hauser's suggestion of the name Symphony Lake.

bits and pieces

MCA equipment for rental and use by members will be at the Merricks' home, 1827 E. 27th, during December and early January because Dave and Carol DeVoe will be away during that time. Merrick phone: 272-5243.

Since meetings will henceforth be on the second moMonday of each month, Scree will come out sometime during the previous week. This means that articles about trips, especially all scheduled club trips and first ascents, should be in to the Scree editor ten (10) days before the meeting date! Since Scree is usually put together and typed on the weekend before the weekend before the meeting and actually run off on the Monday before the meeting, it means trip leaders and other people with material for Scree will have to move up their schedules along with the Scree staff! Please send all material to Box 4-964, Anchorage 99503, or call 277-0846 with stuff for bits and pieces. NOTE: All scheduled MCA trips should have an account written of them regardless of the success or failure of the attempt--at least other people who may wish to try the same trip will have a better idea of what they may have to contend with!

Address, telephone, or name corrections for the membership list should be sent to Box 4-964.

January Scree will go only to paid up members of MCA. Dues: adult membership, \$5.00; junior membership (under 18), \$2.50; family membership, \$7.50; out-of-town (over 50 miles from Anchorage), \$2.50.

Reservations are now being taken for a new batch of super-puppies, maternalized by Pialotta (Violets) van der Laan (famous MCA super-dog) and sired by an Irish Setter. The litter is due about December 15th, and early reservations are recommended for your very own Black Irish Labrador. Call a van der Laan, 277-4251.

Bill Hauser writes from New Zealand that he hopes to climb Mt Cook and Mt Aspiring this December and January.

Chet Hackney has taken off for six months of travel, mainly in Europe where he plans on climbing the Matterhorn and other peaks.

Remember that THIRTY HIKES IN ALASKA is on sale at MCA meetings... a good Christmas present for Alaskans and friends in the smaller states.

The Mountain Conservation Committee met December 1. Art Davidson is the new chairman and will give a report at the next meeting.

Scree is published monthly by the Mountaineering Club of Alaska. Scree staff: Marie Lundstrom, Joanne Merrick, Carol DeVoe, Callie Van der Laan. Articles on trips and other material to be published should be sent to Marie Lundstrom, Box 4-964, Anchorage 99503 or call 277-0846.