



MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF ALASKA

BOX 102037

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99510

JANUARY 1991

Volume 34, Issue 01

JANUARY MEETING

January 16 7:30 pm Wednesday, Pioneer Schoolhouse **Lower Basement Level**
(go in normal entrance, traverse first floor, then down stairs)

SLIDE SHOW Nick Parker will show slides of climbing in the Alaska Range on Denali, Foraker, and Hunter, from his many years as a mountain guide.

HIKING AND CLIMBING SCHEDULE

January 17 BEACON PRACTICE
Search demonstration and practice with avalanche beacons. Bring shovels and beacons if you have them (the club has some beacons). There may be races held, too. Meet 7:30 pm, Kincaid Chalet.
Leader: Mike Miller 248-2299

19-20 MCA X-C WEEKEND HATCHER PASS
For training and fun. Telemarking, ski mountaineering, track skiing, snow shelters. Night sessions of instruction. We are reserving the Mine Building (fee to be announced). Limit 25.
Leader: Karen Cafmeyer 345-7546

24 INDIAN PASS NIGHT SKI
Carpool down to Indian after work, ski the trail to Indian Pass. Headlamp, skis, skins, warm clothes. Easy trail. Class A.
Leader: Mike Miller 248-2299

27 PORTAGE PASS ANNUAL
Superbowl Sunday. Ski across Portage Lake, over Portage Pass to beautiful downtown Whittier to watch the football game. Take the train back the same day (\$5.00 fare). Keep in touch with leader just prior to trip, as the lake conditions can change. Class A.
Leader: Ken Farmer 562-7919

February 2-3 ECHO BEND ICE WEEKEND
Ski 3 1/2 miles up Eagle River. Waterfall ice, grades II - V. Camp along the river, or just do day trips if desired. Warm up for Valdez. **TECHNICAL: Fifth Class.** Need at least previous instruction from an ice-climbing school (MCA or other), or ice-climbing experience.
Leader: Mike Miller 248-2299

- March 8-9 MANITOBA MT.
 Second annual MCA trip to Manitoba Cabin, near Summit Lakes. The cabin has been reserved for Friday and Saturday nights. Sleeps 10. Each person using the cabin needs to contribute \$5.00 to the Nordic Ski Club (via the leader), others can use a tent. Great skiing plus a sauna! Cush approach, a definite Class A.
 Leader: Neil O'Donnell 274-5069
- April 13-28 GRAND CANYON HIKE
 Assemble at Phoenix or South Rim and spend 11 days in eastern un-maintained trail area, exiting at Grandview.
 Leader: Bill Wakeland 586-6246
- May 24-27 AUGUSTINE VOLCANO
 Fly in to the lagoon on the west side, climb the volcano and explore the island. Reputed to be a walk-up but there is a 4000-foot elevation gain.
 Leader: Dan O'Haire 561-1141

MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER MEETING

The December meeting, held on the 19th at the Kincaid Outdoor Center, was the traditional Christmas potluck dinner and potluck slide show. The business meeting was conducted by V.P. Alan Julliard.

<u>TREASURER'S REPORT:</u>	Money Market -	\$1438.28
	Checking Acct -	421.23
	Petty Cash -	<u>52.10</u>
	Total	\$1911.61

The Treasurer would like to remind all that dues are due NOW.

COMMITTEES:
 No reports.

OLD BUSINESS:
 Out-going President Neil O'Donnell was presented with an engraved ice axe, the last of the club's wooden axes, by Willy Hersman.

NEW BUSINESS:
 Next month's meeting will be in the basement of the Pioneer Schoolhouse. Come in the usual entrance, traverse the first floor and go down the stairs at the back of the room.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Ken Zafren announced that high avalanche potential had been observed at Hatcher Pass.

Respectfully Submitted,
 Stefan Otterson

Jan 91

HISTORY CORNER

Willy Hersman

Eleven of us carried on the MCA tradition during the solstice on Flattop. A clear night greeted us on the summit after our short trudge from the parking lot. In the distance, near the Wedge, two lights shone through the mid-winter night. We mistook them for campers until the faint sound of snowmobile engines set us straight. We made some noises of our own, Neil O'Donnell's Bing Crosby Christmas tape, jokes by the tiny fire, marshmallows on a snow wand, holiday cheer passed around.

In the morning, what to our wondering ears should we hear, but a full scale blizzard, ripping at the tent so dear. A couple of people sprang from their bivi sacks to see what was the matter. Then off down the mountain they crawled like adders. Finally aroused from a long solstice nap I thought, "We should leave fore we're blown off the map!" While visions of hot showers danced in my head, I stuffed away clothing and rolled up the bed. Then out of our camp and into the gale, we leaned to the wind and searched for the trail. Some stumbling and sliding, we soon reached the trees where the wind was not bad and we sunk past our knees. So now nights are shorter and dawn is less late. And summer's approaching. Now that's something great.

Ok, the real reason I wrote this history corner was not bad poetry, just a little history about the sleepout. The first MCA solstice on Flattop was December 22, 1966, five stayed on top, and this was followed by a summer sleepout on June 21, 1967. The club has been doing it ever since. Obviously the winter solstice is less popular, the record is 28 in 1976, not bad. A couple of times only one person spent the night, Tom Meacham in 1971 and Mark Skok in 1981. But bad weather kept everyone off in 1985 and 1986 (where was the president?).

Suggestions for Short Day Climbs

Editor

When Neil O'Donnell called me the other day asking about ideas for possible climbs this time of year, I was temporarily stumped. Go ice-climbing, I said facetiously, knowing he wanted a peak. But where do you go when days are so short and avalanches are out there lurking on innocent-looking slopes? And you don't want to spend all day driving.

Vin Hoeman pondered this question in a Scree article he wrote, January 1969. "What to climb in the winter time. It's discouraging to make big plans then fail to even reach the base of the climb in these short, cold days. And who wants to spend 18 hours in the sack in order to link two 6-hour days? Better it seems to choose short climbs."

Even short climbs will usually require starting in the dark, sometimes reaching the car in the dark. Giving up before the summit is common, especially if trail breaking is slow. That's okay, you just want to get out anyway.

The following list is from Vin's article, with a few added. Avalanche potential of course is a consideration for many of these, though I tried to leave out the worst offenders. All are one day climbs.

On the Kenai:

Pastoral Peak (4173) - past Turnagain, above Bertha Cr.
Mooswa Peak (5020) - near Manitoba Mt.
Frenchy Peak (5079) - above Frenchy Cr.
Sunrise Peak (4650) - near Hope

Along the Arm:

Pyramid Peak (3378) - w of the hwy before Turnagain Pass
Explorer Peak (3550) - above Explorer Gl., near Portage
Blueberry Hill (4490) - above Twentymile River
Penguin Peak (4305) - near Bird
Bird Creek Ridge (4650) - near Bird

Behind Anchorage:

North Suicide (5065) The Ramp (5240)
South Suicide (5005) The Wedge (4660)
McHugh Peak (4301) Wolverine Peak (4455)
Flattop (3575) Tikishla Peak (5150)
O'Malley Peak (5150) Temptation Peak (5350)
Rendezvous Peak (4050) Mt. Gordon Lyon (4150)

Eagle River:

Harp Mt. (5001) Blacktail Rocks (4446)
Highland Mt. (3650) Roundtop (4755)
Mt. Significant (5485) Vista Peak (5070)
Mt. Magnificent (4285)

Glenn hwy:

Mt. Eklutna (4110) - has an excellent gully to the summit
Lazy Mt. (3720) - for lazy days
Bodenburg Butte (881) - for real lazy days
Castle Mt. (5530) - turn off at Chickaloon
Gunsight Mt. (6441) - if you happen to be up that way

Hatcher Pass:

Government Peak (4781) - scrutinize avalanche conditions on this one
Bald Mt. (4550) - follow ridges from the pass
Arkose Peak (5350) - Vin's last Alaskan summit