

# the SCREE

## Mountaineering Club of Alaska

January 2018

Volume 61 Number 1

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Peak 3050, Talkeetna Mountains

"Eye Level" on The Dogtooth

Castle Mountain

The Tender and The Caboose

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Frank Baker's Calendar

Peak of the Month: Mount Edma



Monthly meeting: Wednesday, January 16, at 6:30 p.m. at the BP Energy Center at 1014 Energy Court in Anchorage.

Ralph Baldwin will be doing a presentation on his Alaska Range forays, describing his first expedition to the summit of Denali, climbs and a patrol on Denali, an alpine ascent of Mount Foraker's Southeast Ridge, a trip into the Ruth Glacier, and early homestead experiences in the Talkeetna Mountains with his entire family.

“ We spend January 1 walking through our lives, room by room, drawing up a list of work to be done, cracks to be patched. Maybe this year, to balance the list, we ought to walk through the rooms of our lives ... not looking for flaws, but for potential.”

— Ellen Goodman

**"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

Kathy Still (left) and Azriel Sellers descending Peak 5530 southwest of Castle Mountain in 1997.

Photo by Wayne Todd

## JANUARY MEETING

Join us for our club meeting at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, January 16, at the BP Energy Center, 1014 Energy Court, in Anchorage.

<http://www.alaskageology.org/graphics/meetingmap.gif>

Ralph Baldwin will be doing a presentation on his Alaska Range forays, describing his first expedition to the summit of Denali, climbs and a patrol on Denali, an alpine ascent of Mount Foraker's Southeast Ridge, a trip into the Ruth Glacier, and early homestead experiences in the Talkeetna Mountains with his entire family.

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

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## Climbing Note

Paul May emailed to report that on April 14, 2017, he climbed from Eickelberg Bay to Peak 2267 in the Billys Hole and Eickelberg Bay drainages of the Chugach Mountains. He also reported climbing Peak 2700 in the Jack Bay and Valdez Narrows drainages of the Chugach Mountains on April 8, 2017; and Peak 2060 in the Hidden Bay and Culross Passage drainages on Culross Island on June 1, 2017. We look forward to a detailed report in a future issue of *the Scree*.

## Hiking and Climbing Schedule

**January 31, Wednesday.** After-work full-moon cross-country (classic) ski on the Eagle River, conditions permitting. Non-technical, off-trail cross-country skiing on the frozen Eagle River, about 8 to 10 miles, about 100 feet of elevation gain, three to four hours of easy travel on flat, frozen river; parts of the river may be partially frozen. Enjoy the full moon with sweeping views up the Eagle River Valley. Meet at 6:30 p.m. at the Eagle River canoe take-out near the Briggs Bridge off of Hiland Road. Parking is limited. Carpooling is suggested. Leader: Jen Aschoff. Sign up by January 20 by emailing Jen at [jlaschoff@gmail.com](mailto:jlaschoff@gmail.com).

**February 24, Saturday.** Arctic to Indian Ski Traverse, conditions permitting. Non-technical, off-trail cross-country skiing, about 22 miles; about 2,500 feet of elevation gain; 8 to 12 hours; very strenuous; travel on skis on/off trail; some exposure to avalanche terrain; partially-frozen stream crossings; one steep descent (can be walked); primary risks: avalanches, falling while skiing/hiking, frostbite, hypothermia, drowning while crossing stream. Meeting details to be determined based on trail conditions. Leader: Jen Aschoff. Sign up by February 10 by emailing Jen at [jlaschoff@gmail.com](mailto:jlaschoff@gmail.com).

**March 12-18** MCA Winter Mountaineering Instructional Trip. Technical, about 38 miles. Training/ learning goals: leadership, trip planning, leave no trace, stream crossing, navigation, staying warm, nutrition/ hydration, snow travel, avalanche awareness/ rescue, first aid, snow shelters, 10 essentials, emergency shelters/ signaling/ fires. Participants share trip expenses. Leader: Greg Bragiel. Sign up as soon as possible by emailing Greg at [unknownhiker@alaska.net](mailto:unknownhiker@alaska.net).

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

Online? Click me!





## Lifetime Honorary Membership Award

At the December 19 meeting, Jayme Mack was awarded an honorary lifetime membership for her service to the MCA through her 16 years of organizing the IceFest and other service to the club. Congratulations, Jayme!



*Alpine Climbing at 20 years old.*



*My "baby"  
MCA Ice Climbing Festival!*



*Twenty years of my life spent on  
the Matanuska Glacier climbing  
with friends and teaching classes.*

*Photos courtesy of Jayme Mack*

## From the Editor

### Rappel Anchors, Fixed Lines, and Other Permanent Gear

Safety in the mountains is paramount to a climber's success. Route selection, training, partners, and a host of other factors play a part in this safety. As does gear. Interestingly, this gear can be placed and removed alpine-style, or fixed for an indefinite time. And there's the rub.

Fixed gear and fixed lines have always been contentious, similar to the cairns and summit register discussion in the November 2017 *Scree*.

Protecting a climber's ascent is generally easy. Place and retrieve gear as you go. The descent is a bit more problematic; hence the need for semi-permanent rappel anchors at strategic locations. Consider muted earth-colored webbing for camouflaging, though this might challenge future users to find the anchor. Remove and replace old webbing. Follow previous descent routes. Minimize rappel anchors. Some actively managed parks in the U.S. prohibit permanent protection or rappel anchors. Let's hope that Chugach State Park doesn't go down that path.

Fixed lines are a different animal entirely. I've seen a fixed line in Stivers' Gully on Bold Peak as early as 1990. In July 2017 Billy

Finley found 300 feet of static fixed line on the west side of Paradise Pass in Chugach State Park. He benevolently carried it out.

Billy referenced other locations where he had seen fixed line such as Back Door Gap in the Talkeetna Mountains and Goat Rock in Chugach State Park.



*Paradise Pass fixed line 2017*



*Photos by  
Billy Finley*

*Goat Rock fixed  
line 2017*

Perhaps the most egregious fixed line installation happened this past summer when someone placed a fixed line on Chickenshit Gully on the upper slopes of Bashful Peak in Chugach State Park. There is no need for this type of litter. If you want to use a rope, fine. Use one. I would, too. But please, take it with you when you are done.

Let me be clear, I believe there is no place in our sport for leaving fixed lines as a routine practice for future users. Sure, sometimes folks might have to retreat quickly and leave a rappel anchor or two, but a fixed line for future users has no place

in our sport. It is unsightly and demonstrates laziness, or at a minimum a complete misunderstanding of and disregard for our sport.

Let's try to keep the mountains as close to clean as we found them for future users.

*The Scree* welcomes other points of view on the use of rappel anchors, fixed lines, and other permanent gear.

Dave Hart

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## Letters to the Editor

Hi, Dave.

September 12, 2017

Hello, Helga.

As an "honorary member," I thoroughly enjoy reading *the Scree* every month, and reading about the many climbs and explorations of Alaskan peaks. In the August 2017 issue, my best climbing partner, Paul Crews, was remembered.

Thank you for your letter regarding the 1959 MCA ascent of Iliamna Volcano and Paul Crews' contribution to the rescue of the John Day party on Denali in 1960.

Unfortunately, I was unable to attend the memorial earlier this year, but will be visiting Anchorage and the Crews family in October for the distribution of his ashes.

Art Davidson wrote a touching obituary of Paul Crews that appeared in the September 2017 *Scree*. It mentioned Paul Crews' role in the rescue of the Day party on Denali.

I would like to mention two omissions in the "Editor's notes" (August 2017 issue).

Regarding the ascent of Iliamna Volcano, Rod Wilson discovered mention of an 1852 ascent of Iliamna Volcano by a party sent from the Imperial Academy of Sciences at Saint Petersburg, Russia. Rod found the record on page 136 of Eliza Ruhamah Scidmore's 1893 book titled, Appleton's Guide-Book to Alaska and the Northwest Coast. Scidmore's account also mentions a party in 1869 that reached the lower crater to find molten lava in it and was turned back from the upper crater by smoke. So, we didn't consider the 1959 ascent of Iliamna Volcano to be the peak's first ascent. The summary of Rod's finding (and Paul's reaction to it) was included in the February 1994 *Scree*.

(1)The first "First" ascent of MCA members was a year after its founding (in 1958), namely in June of 1959 when Paul and I, together with Gregg Erickson and Erik Barnes, ascended Iliamna Volcano. It was written up in *the Scree* by Paul. [Ed. note: Actually, it was Helga herself who wrote up the trip report in the June 1959 *Scree*.]

(2)One of Paul's important ascents was Mount McKinley's West Ridge in May of 1960.

I noticed that there are going to be more stories about Paul's achievements in the September issue, so it may be too late for me to comment that Paul was the one whose actions actually saved the "Day party," which had an accident. Paul wrote a day-to-day report in *Summit* and I will send you that in the next mail, because it's one of the more important things he did at the time when the "Highest Mountain Rescue ever in America" occurred.

Thank you for your interest in these items. We appreciate your letter.

Dave Hart

Best wishes,

Helga Byhre (formerly Bading)

*Scree* Editor

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There is a proposal from the board to increase membership to \$30 from \$25 for families. This only applies to family memberships. The membership will be asked to vote on this proposal at the January 16th meeting.

P.S. I am sending this today, as I only read now you are going to make more comments in September, but will send you another letter tomorrow.

**Choate's Chuckle** - Tom Choate

**Q:** How can a good rock handhold be like some liquor stores?

Answer: on page 20.



## Letters to the Editor (continued)

Dear Dave,

September 13, 2017

After procrastinating for a month, I see that there will be more stories about Paul Crews, the founder of the MCA, in the September issue. Probably will be too late to send this now.

For example, I intended to attach the *American Alpine Journal* article on our First ascent of Iliamna Volcano, in my letter yesterday, but was in a hurry to get the letter off. So, here it is, a copy of the AAJ describing the first ascent [Ed. note: *Paul Crews' report appeared on page 106 of the 1960 AAJ.*]

I am sending a copy of *Summit* August 1960, where Paul described what happened during our ascent of Mount McKinley in May 1960. On page 5 he described witnessing the accident of all four members of the "Day party," which was doing a speed ascent of the mountain.

John Day, an Oregon millionaire, had hired both Whittaker brothers and Pete Schoening for this speed ascent. It was Paul and Andy Brauchli who witnessed their fall and Paul had the strength to climb back up to the injured Day.

There are some more paragraphs that explain that it was Paul, with the help of Andy, who took charge of getting the Day party rescued. (None of that was mentioned in the books that each Jim Whittaker and Lou Whittaker wrote [Ed. note: *Jim Whittaker's A Life on the Edge* and *Lou Whittaker's Memoirs of a Mountain Guide*].)

Ours was the first ever party to carry a radio. It was that fact, and Paul's actions, that got the rescue going. It was published in the world's papers as the "highest mountain rescue in North America ever." Without the radio and the help of Rod Wilson, the doctor, the Day party would have had to wait for days to get any help ... what happened is now history.

I want to mention that Paul's actions are important to write about when there are more comments in *the Scree* about the life of its founder.

It's not necessary to mention that I was also "rescued" ... uh-oh, it was Paul, with the help of Andy, who took me down the West Buttress after climbing down (and back up) to get one of the akias that were dropped.

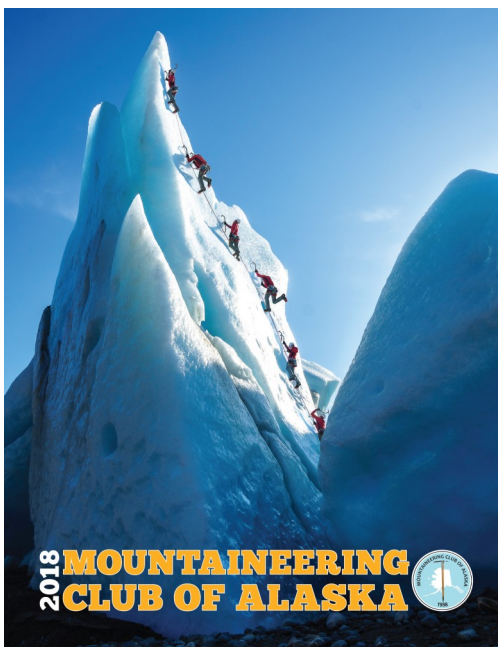
I was lucky enough to visit with Paul many times after I had moved to Puget Sound. Among other things, I was at Arctic Valley for the 50th anniversary and Paul and I visited Talkeetna a few days later to revisit some fond memories.

Best wishes,

Helga Byhre (Bading)

[Ed. note: *Enclosed were pages 2 through 7 of the August 1960 Summit, which contained Paul B. Crews' article titled "Accident on Mount McKinley." Due to copyright and space issues, we cannot include these pages in the Scree, but they will be made available upon request.*]

## MCA Calendar



The MCA's 2018 calendar is available for sale at Alaska Mountaineering & Hiking and the Alaska Rock Gym.

This block contains information about the MCA Calendar team and the cover photo. It includes a grid of small images showing various outdoor activities and landscapes. The text provides details about the MCA's mission, meeting schedule, and the history of the calendar. It also lists the names of the committee chair, editor, and graphic designer, along with contact information for the Alaska Mountaineering Club of Alaska.

**MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF ALASKA (MCA)**

The MCA is an all-volunteer organization providing opportunities in a variety of outdoor activities, including mountaineering, hiking, climbing, backcountry skiing, and hut maintenance.

The MCA meets on the third Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m., usually at the BP Energy Center, located at 1024 Energy Court in Midtown Anchorage. During the summer, alternate locations may be proposed.

The first MCA Calendar was published in 1998 in recognition of the 40th anniversary of the club's founding. Interested members submit their best outdoor activity photographs for judging by the membership. The photographs that receive the most votes in each of four categories appear in the calendar, along with the photograph that receives the most votes overall, the winner of the Kirk Towler Award. Kirk produced the first five issues of the MCA Calendar and the results of his efforts and vision were appreciated so much that the calendar has become an MCA tradition.

Find Mountaineering Club of Alaska on Facebook or visit the MCA's website at [www.mtnclubak.com](http://www.mtnclubak.com)

**MCA CALENDAR TEAM**

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Printed by Service Business Printing

**COVER PHOTO: XPLORE**

PHOTOGRAPHER: Chris Walden | Chris Walden climbs at Stranline Lake in the foothills of the Tordillo Mountains.  
CATEGORY: 1st Place Climbing Kirk Towler Award

MADE IN ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

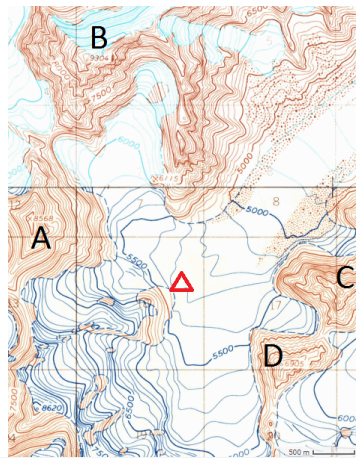
## First Ascents in the Revelation Mountains

"It's a Girl" on Prophet (6905 feet), "Langstrasse" on Mephisto (8568 feet), "Piled Higher and Deeper" on Charlatan (7350 feet), and "Alternative Facts" on Mount Obelisk (9304 feet)

Text and photos by Gediminas Simutis



Southeast face of Mount Obelisk with the line of "Alternative Facts."



East face of Mephisto (8568 feet) with the line of "Langstrasse."

An overview of the south fork of the Fish Creek Glacier. A - Mephisto (8568 feet); B - Mount Obelisk (9304 feet); C - Charlatan (7350 feet); D - Prophet (6905 feet). The triangle shows the base camp.

Ever since reading Clint Helander's article about the Revelation Mountains in the *American Alpine Journal* back in 2013 [Ed. note: see pages 102 through 113 of the 2013 AAJ], Frieder Wittmann and I had been making plans to visit that range. Work, relationships, and other trivial matters kept us from going there until last spring. In the meantime, reports of good climbing and wild places kept coming in.

Finally, last spring everything aligned and we were off to explore the south fork of the Fish Creek Glacier. Despite the activity in other parts of the Revelations, we couldn't find any information about climbing from that glacier. As soon as Paul Roderick from Talkeetna Air Taxi landed on the glacier, we were pretty excited about the valley. One side had a few steep walls, while the other looked perfect for skiing. During the next three weeks we enjoyed the snow and granite of the range.

First, for a reconnaissance we climbed a Peak 6905, just to the east of our landing spot. A pleasant ridge with a few rocky steps got us to the summit and the long Alaskan daylight still gave us some time to have a look at the other objectives in the valley. The peak was a great vantage point and we called it the

Prophet for all the promises that it gave us.

After a day's rest we picked a line on a beautiful face of Peak 8568, which we started calling Mephisto, to the northwest. Perfect, moderate névé was interspersed with a few technical pitches to keep us happy. We named our route "Langstrasse" for the training venue in Zurich that we used to prepare for the trip.

We made a few attempts to get up a beautiful mountain, Peak 8620 just south of Mephisto. However, we turned around on three different occasions: once, the weather turned sour; then we turned around again because we were worried about the avalanche danger due to a recent snowfall; and finally, we got higher up, but chose a dead-end path through a crevasse field.

After some forced rest due to snowfall, we changed our sights to a rocky peak (about 7350 feet) north of the Prophet. After a few recon trips, we decided to try its north ridge. It took us a couple of attempts and we started calling it the Charlatan by the time we went up there a third time.



One of the two highpoints on the Prophet.



Frieder Wittmann ascends one of the mixed sections of "Langstrasse" on Mephisto.



The final part of the ridge turned out to be more rocky than expected, with beautifully sculpted granite, somewhat reminiscent of the climbing in Corsica. Charlatan pulled one last trick before the summit, when I punched through a cornice. We named the route "Piled Higher and Deeper" because for both of us this trip was a post-Ph.D. treat.



*Frieder Wittmann on the summit of Charlatan.*

settle, we were back. A gully with good névé lead us to a series of mixed pitches that turned out to be the crux of the route and we had to aid through a couple of sections. After the mixed part, a snow ramp led us to a pitch of ice that looked deceptively fat, but its bottom part started disintegrating as we were climbing it. The remaining slopes went smoothly and we were soon brewing coffee on the summit as the sun was starting to hide behind other peaks.

We found the Revelations to be a great playground for adventure – remote and wild, yet accessible, thanks to the skilled pilots. The south fork of the Fish Creek Glacier, in particular, has a number of cool features: the alluring Peak 8620 is still unclimbed and Charlatan has a great-looking rock face on one of its sub-summits. Moreover, impressive couloirs are waiting for skiers more skilled than us. In terms of climbing, the southeast face of Obelisk holds a number of good lines — direct mixed climbs in a year when more ice forms, or — if you can get there in the summer — impressive granite buttresses for rock.



*Frieder Wittmann ascends the ridge on Charlatan.*

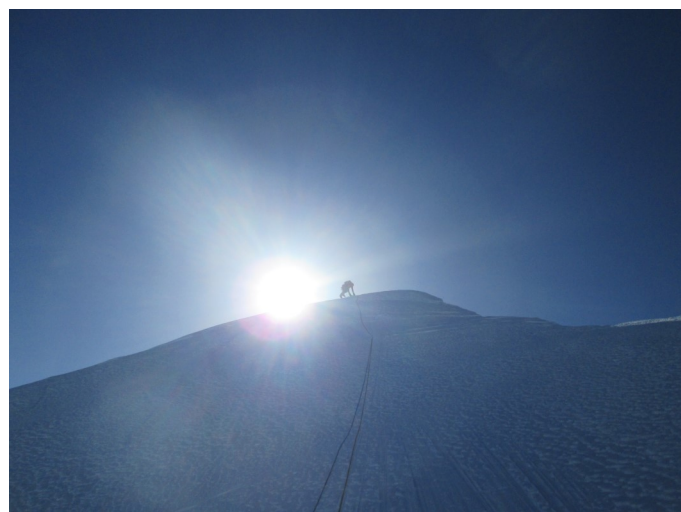


*Above: View from one of the upper gullies of Mount Obelisk.*

A couple more days of sour weather followed, during which we scouted a potential route between the granite towers of Mount Obelisk (9304 feet). The peak was first climbed in 2015 by Clint Helander and John Giraldo [*Ed. note: see the July 2015 Scree*], but the southeast face above our glacier hadn't been attempted. Using binoculars and photos we took from Prophet and Charlatan, we pieced together a line of gullies cutting through the granite towers.

Our first attempt came to a halt when we retreated due to strong spindrifts. After recuperating and allowing the snow to

*Below: Frieder Wittmann approaching the summit of Mount Obelisk.*





# Peak 3050, Talkeetna Mountains: Hidden Gem

Text by Wayne L. Todd

August 28, 2017, with Carrie Wang



*First rampart from the highway.  
Photo by Wayne Todd*



*Carrie Wang above the last rampart.  
Photo by Wayne Todd*

The steep graveled trail I found on a previous visit is a good brief workout, worse than even scree for one step up, half a step back. Carrie Wang and I overhear a conversation from the parking lot between a local and a tourist, "I've lived here my entire life and I never knew there was a trail there." The prickly roses are tempting to grab for assistance. At the serious steeps we find a moderate dirt/rock/plant scramble, and we don helmets. Rock climbers might enjoy the nearly vertical slopes nearby. Hikers might enjoy traversing right a couple hundred yards to bypass the steeper gradient as they gain the ridge.

Above, the terrain is nearly level, until the next horizontal rock band. This area is composed of nearly vertical rock terraces, upwards of 300 feet high. At one mildly brushy section, I walk right to bare rock for a better route to "ahhh," another cliff face. I now understand why rock climbers recreate here.

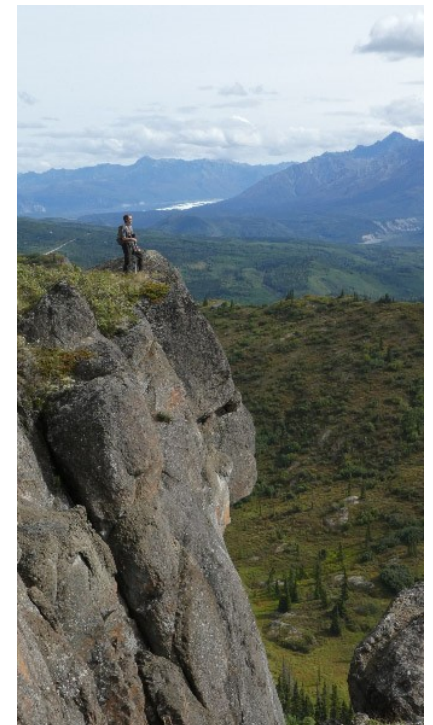
Early on, we notice old human-cut alders. Myriad animal/moose trails make for easy ingress on the lesser-angle slopes. As we quickly move above brush line (this route is only 1-½ miles one way), views of the Talkeetna Mountains from Castle Mountain to the Mound greet us. Small lakes are pocketed between the terraces. To the south the mostly snow-free Chugach "A" peaks wear cloud veils. Perhaps making up for indiscretions of the past, I now still unnecessarily wear my helmet.

Ripe blueberries slow us a bit, but soon we're on another moderately-angled mini-ridge with a vertical face to the south. This ridge leads to a blueberry-bush-covered summit. The rock shapes on the ridge are fun: a chair with arms, a Stonehenge face, contorted marshmallow men, etc. A couple tents dot a lower ridge. Oddly, we see no sign of humans, though I would surely think numerous hunters have scouted from here.

After some photo shooting we graze lightly on berries as we begin our exodus and try to stay on our ingress route as trails frequently lead other directions (helped by earlier flagging). We find an easier descent scramble and then jog down the dirt, making a "Pigpen" cloud.

Less than three hours, less than 3 miles, 1,600 feet of elevation gain.

We parked at the large pullout at the west end of Long Lake, roughly Mile 86 on the Glenn Highway. Walk directly across the highway, looking both directions first, find the trail, ascend, and enjoy.



*Above: Wayne Todd above the rampart.  
Photo by Carrie Wang*

*Below: Carrie Wang looking at the Chugach Mountains.  
Photo by Wayne Todd*





# The First Ascent of "Eye Level" on The Dogtooth (4950 feet), Rampart Range, Alaska Range

Text and photos by Zach Clanton



*Travis Powell on the summit of The Dogtooth.*



*Travis Powell on the summit of The Dogtooth, with Cripple Creek and Chelatna Lake beyond.*

On day five, round one, we were tired and defeated. Actually, we were exhausted and not making a whole lot of noise. There's only a few cardinal rules in Alaskan bushwhacking and number one is MAKE NOISE. This isn't our house. We are just visitors in a land of bear and moose. The second rule is to always use bowling ball-like momentum when it gets really thick, and it certainly was. But we were far too tired for that and it's probably a good thing. Visibility was limited to 10 feet in broad daylight, but we had a vague sense of direction. *Head for the lone cottonwood tree.* Suddenly, Titus, the dog, started growling. We hadn't heard him make that deep rumble the entire trip, so we knew instantaneously that something wild was ahead. Then we heard it, the huffing a puffing of a black bear sow. She was close and she was p----d off, but we couldn't see her.

Never have I ever sandbagged myself or my friends so incredibly hard. The whole adventure started when I convinced my poor unsuspecting victims, Reese Doyle and Robin Miller, to take a lovely flight out to my friend Matt Bertke's lodge at the stunning Chelatna Lake of the Alaska Range. We would then take an eight-mile beer-in-hand jet-boat cruise across the lake to a picturesque white-sand beach with blue-green water to begin our "hike." The objective was to stand atop an unclimbed granite pinnacle called The Dogtooth for the upcoming "weather window." It all seemed too good to be true. But as it turned out, directly after those moments of sun-infused bliss on the beach, we spent 24 hours of the first 52 on the move, fighting like hell with heavy packs through 15-foot-tall alders so dense and disorienting they blotted out the sun.

On our first attempt, we gave it everything we had. Blood, sweat, tears and more just to be stormed off the mountain at the base of the first pitch. The effort was enormous and the reward was nothing. But nobody had it worse than Titus. In one hour, he got purcupined in the face and had a Mexican stand-off with a bear and her

two cubs. One moment I was yanking sharp quills out of his nose with a pair of plyers and the next, he's growling and we're stumbling backward in the bush with a .44 pointed in the direction of the hyperventilating sounds of the defensive bear. Although we never actually saw her when she was only 20 feet away, we later saw the cubs hanging out in the tree we had been approaching. This was Alaska, but it felt like Vietnam.

After experiencing such defeat not by the climb, but by the heinous approach and weather, the logical thing to do would be to write it off as a loss and move on. But I became obsessed. The prospect of having such an incredible-looking unclimbed gem within viewing distance of Matt's sauna/hot tub that lit up with inspiration upon every sunset was just too much for me. I had to go back. So after we dried out our piles of soaking clothes and gear at the lodge and had a good night's rest, Reese and I restocked on food and beer, loaded up the jet boat with chainsaws and went back to the white sand beach. Our aim was not only to tunnel our way through the alders to make a climber's trail for future adventurers, but it could one day become a friendly hike for Matt's guests at the lodge. After three days of hard manual labor, we had a tunnel to be proud of that extended over a mile to the park boundary where we could pick up game trails (that we of course only found on the way back). The first 1.5 miles that took us nine hours on our first go-round would now take less than two. But the weather was closing in and my friends had to get back to their jobs.

A week later, the weather was beginning to improve, but my friends were less than excited to return after such traumatizing events. My next victim was Travis Powell. I thought he was just the sort of odd character that would be perfect for another sufferfest adventure, and I was right. This time I used our mandatory aerial approach to continue my off-airport flight training, completing my first big-tire short-field gravel landing in a Piper Pacer, fully loaded.

It was quite the learning experience and my first time flying myself to a remote rock-climbing destination.

We then set off with the heaviest packs either of us had ever carried and cruised the approach to base camp a.k.a. Swamp Camp. We were very efficient with the memories still very fresh in my mind and that night, we made ourselves at home where water squirted up from between our toes when we stepped out of the tent onto the tundra. Luckily, the hoards of mosquitoes that plagued us before were replaced by hoards of black flies in the two weeks that had passed. They were plentiful, but at least they didn't bite! The bushwhacking from Swamp Camp to the rock climbing was something that would simply not get better with time. It was more of the same alder jungle but it rose 3,500 feet with relentless steepness and slick rock slabs. With lighter packs and lessons learned, it was manageable and we made great time compared to the first time, where we stopped every 20 minutes to look at recon photos and debate over which one of the jutting rock spires was indeed The Dogtooth. Opinions varied with every stop. We would never suspect it by looking at the mountain from afar, but when we got up close, the terrain rising all around us was so steep and the sub-peaks so numerous, we were not even sure which mountain we were trying to approach!

What took us the better part of a day the first time was done by Travis and me in just under five hours and before we knew it, we were standing on the wildly exposed ridge, roping up for the first pitch. Sure enough, our incredible effort was finally rewarded. The classic ridge climb unfolded beautifully into 1,200 feet of 5.6 glory. The climbing was so fun and solid that we simul-climbed the entire route, entering that precious state of flow that only a climber can know. We only stopped to make belays a few times when the rope drag became unbearable and we wanted to give each other the thrill of leading! There we were, using our climbing as a creative outlet, using our imagination to trace our own line up a beautiful unclimbed peak, massive exposure on either side of us as we following this truly wild ridge. We were staying true to our own ambitions, turning ideals into action and it was absolutely blissful.

The summit was so close that we could almost throw a rock at it. I thought we had it in the bag when we heard yet another deep rumble. That rumble was much louder than Titus' growl and equally terrifying. The smoky skies, caused by Interior wildfires, had warmed the air and clouded our long-distance vision, allowing a thunderstorm to sneak up on us. That was indeed a rare occurrence in Alaska and it just had to happen then. Suddenly, a massive light-

ning bolt appeared right out in front of us at eye level. We were almost on top of the highest thing around, covered in metal and horrified. I didn't know what to do, almost frozen at a point of indecision. We had worked so hard to get there and were so close, but was it worth it? I didn't want to go down, but I didn't want to get fried to a crisp either. Suddenly, Travis took action, made an anchor on one side of the ridge and rigged a rappel to a small overhang below. We quickly escaped our high point, jumped out of our harnesses on a small ledge and hid in the cave until the thunderhead passed.

At that point, I texted Matt at the lodge via satellite phone and told him we were 20 minutes from the summit. When we got there, the storm had truly passed. It was so still and quiet that even a lone

mosquito had managed to land on my shirt. And then we heard it, the drone of a single-engine airplane! Matt was coming right for us in his Piper Super Cub! He had taken off from the lodge as soon as he got my text and proceeded to buzz us eight times with his girlfriend in the back taking pictures. It was amazing enough to just be up there after all of that effort and the beautiful climb, but that was just the most delicious icing on the cake one could ever ask for. We just couldn't help ourselves; we were hooting and hollering, laughing with reckless abandon. It was just too good to be true!

We named our route "Eye Level." Not only because of the airplane full of friends that buzzed us at eye level, the lightning that appeared at eye level nearly making us poop our pants, but Travis had also gotten stung between the eyes by a wasp when we got off route on the ap-

proach and diverted into a steep gully filled with eye-level devil's club. The named seemed more than appropriate.

After the sound of Matt's engine faded back into the silence of smoky sunset skies, we took a few more pictures and turned our attention toward the long descent. Once we reached the brush line, we were extremely tired and it was getting so dark that we couldn't bear the thought of doing that steep downhill bushwhack all over again. We then found drinking water and a flattish grassy spot to lie our heads, put on our mosquito nets, and passed right out. We were still thousands of feet above base camp and a proper meal, but we didn't care. Deep satisfaction saturated us to the bone and we didn't wake up until nine hours later when it started to rain. Then the real saturation began. All the thick brush and slick rock slabs separating us from our tent were now a non-issue. As is tradition, we arrived at our dry haven with clothes wet enough to wring out. Mission completed.



*South aspect of The Dogtooth showing the route of "Eye Level."*



## Castle Mountain, East Summit (6050 feet), Talkeetna Mountains

Text and photos by Wayne L. Todd

With Carrie Wang on September 3, 2017



*South face of Castle Mountain.*

The east summit of Castle Mountain was one of my few nemesis peaks. On the fifth go, we finally made it up. All the other trips were worthy of visiting and exploration, though.

Round 1 was with Kathy Still and Az Sellers back in 1997. We tried the south face, which I couldn't recommend. I shimmied solo up a chimney, thinking I'd find an easier way down. I didn't. Along with separating from the group, not one of my wiser choices. I did visit the 5530-foot west summit on that trip.

Round 2 was with Randy Howell, Ross Noffsinger, and Carrie Wang in early summer 2006. That practical route utilized hard snow up a prevalent gully on the southeast face. We visited the west summit and Point 5965 on that trip. The point was noteworthy, as we found an original Vin Hoeman register there and really experienced the odd geology and shapes.

Round 3 was with Carrie Wang to the west face via the Permanente Trail. That was a gorgeous fall trip, but we realized early on we weren't getting near the east summit from there.

Round 4 was a brief trip with Carrie that ultimately was the key to the very straightforward route.

Round 5, success!

With some online research I found a definitive and legal all-terrain vehicle trail, which travels within three miles of the eastern summit, the Chickaloon River Trail.

We drove to Chickaloon, made the first right after the Chickaloon River (in front of a yard) and drove onward, looking for a good place to park. Only one small spot on the right wasn't prevalently posted No Trespassing (NT). I drove the Ranger onward, up a narrow trail with significant drops to the river, and make a sharp turn (you do NOT want to try this corner with an ATV trailer). We continued straight past a couple angling roads (probably driveways). Once beyond the NT area, we found a suitable place, and fortunately above a very steep hill, which I doubt the Ranger could ascend even in four-wheel drive. (If using ATVs, just park on the Glenn Highway and drive that

route; consider the same with bicycles.) The truck driving only gained 1-3/4 miles from the river turn-off.

To the bikes we went, thinking we could bike the next five miles to the base of Castle. After just 1-½ miles, the trail split, with the right fork seemingly ending in the Chickaloon River, which looked quite capable of washing away an ATV or even a truck. We went straight instead and were quickly at an old cabin that looked too familiar, see Round 4 above. Sure of a trail that time, though, we continued on, but within a hundred yards the trail was no longer bikable. We stashed the bikes and geared up for cross-country travel. Though not horrible for off trail, and some of it even on moose trail, there were many downed trees, which hindered progress. As with another trip that summer, I really thought there was a real trail lurking around somewhere.



*Carrie Wang at a cabin*

*(if you've reached the cabin, you've made a wrong turn).*

After an hour covering less than a mile and wondering if there were to be a Round 6, we intersected a very good ATV trail. Confused, but enlightened, we hiked that trail, albeit briefly in the wrong direction. That trail was probably bikable, but quite rooty. We made good time again, then paralleling the cliffy lower east face of Castle.

At some point we determined the ATV trail no longer suited us and we ventured west for the base of the east face. Travel was reasonable and we scared both ourselves and a cow moose while on another moose trail. Then we intersected a very good ascending trail that we soon gleaned was also used by humans. Sweet!

As brush line thinned, we spied some litter adjacent to a



*South face of Castle Mountain.*

big-ass boulder. Closer inspection revealed a geocache that had been plundered. We stuffed the items back in the ammo can. Blueberries became more and more prevalent, tempting us from our quest. A few drainages lay between us and our intended route so we went high on the trail before exiting right (northwest).



*Wayne Todd on the summit of Peak 5530 in 1997.*

Already the unique geology of Castle was prevalent with a sub-peak (5291-foot Chick) directly ahead, towering with blocks, spires, and odd shapes. We skirted that to the right, slowly leaving the billions of blueberries behind (OK, maybe just hundreds of thousands). A cow with two calves ran down-slope on the ridge to the north, making us interested as to the cause.

Around the corner we saw a route that looked quite hikable to the east summit's southeast ridge, and we were packing helmets again, which we never used. The Northeast Ridge sported a huge "thumbs up," a large hole in a block, and caves below. We passed a drainage slot with ice; that was just wrong.



*A "thumbs up" and ? emoji on the northeast ridge of Castle Mountain.*

The drab mild weather of the day continued, except we picked up a wind on the ridge, from which a fall would be painful. We were then on the hard sedimentary rock, which was best traveled on





*South face of Peak 5530 with Kathy Still and Azriel Sellers in 1997.*



*Carrie Wang at a campsite on the west side of Castle Mountain in 2008.*



*Randy Howell pushing boulders in 2006.*

lower angles. The high snow-covered peaks of the Chugach Mountains were seen to the west.

On the summit ridge we hit full-on wind and it was damn cold. I layered up with all I had except a rain shell. The nearby northern peaks of various muted colors were still snow-free, but didn't have friendly hikeable-looking ridgelines. On the north bump we found a dismantled-looking cairn. I was hoping for a register after our score on Point 5965. The weather was not conducive for loitering, so we hiked to the south bump.

The ridgeline between there and Point 5965 was quite narrow and steep and enforced our stop decision from Round 3. Traversing below that ridge looked no better, even though the angles were less, as it was all very hard sedimentary (?) rock. I found no cairn nor register there.



*Point 5965 as seen while looking southwest from the north summit of Castle Mountain.*

We descended significantly before breaking out of the wind. We traversed downward, slightly lower than our ingress. Using the creek bed for travel might have been practical on the upper sec-

tion (even lower than our egress). Soon we were grazing berries on the fly and intersecting the ridge trail. We were rather curious where it ended.

The ridge trail segued to an old ATV trail, which intersected the current good ATV trail. Fast hiking again, we were still not sure where that eventually went. We hiked on beyond our cross-country intersection point. The trail dropped close to the river, and where the old trail had washed away, a crude, slightly inland, trail had started. Then we were back to our intersection, where the trail appeared to end in the river. How did we miss that?

We backtracked beyond the cabin to retrieve our bikes for the 1½ mile ride. Though short, that was fun and maybe worthy of bringing them along. At a mud-hole bypass, we met a friendly local hunter and learned this ATV trail probably ended at Mile 8 as, "Ten years ago he didn't trust even walking the bridge there." Bicycles loaded and slowly driving the trail out, we realized that section would be much faster to bicycle.

Ten and a half hours, 17 miles (3.5 bicycle), 5,500 feet. Probably would be nine hours, knowing the proper route.

The geology of Castle was unlike any I'd seen in the Chugach Mountains, or the Talkeetna Mountains for that matter. There was a fault named after it, so it must be something special.

From Nancy Darigo, a local geologist: The rock type itself is the Wishbone Formation of Eocene age (about 30 to 60 million years old), which is a conglomerate (pebbly rock) formed by steep alluvial fans eroding older mountains of different rock types, as mentioned by the different types of pebbles.

## Tender is the Night ... Tender from the Bites ... The Tender (5450 feet) and The Caboose (5055 feet), Locomotive Ridge, Kenai Mountains

Text and photos by Wayne L. Todd

September 30 and October 1, 2017



*Tina Boucher hiking north from The Caboose.*

Utilizing bikes for peak access is refreshing, and fun to some. So for climbing peaks above the Johnson Trail, they are quite logical.

Tina Boucher and John Mitchell join me for an overnight trip. For as long as I've known them, I can't believe we've never previously done a trip. It's reassuring to know that my "new" trip partners will be comfortable with shrubbery, bugs (those were unexpected), and steeper terrain.

With a near-noon start, the fall day is pleasantly warm. The mountain and lake views are accented by golden (maybe yellow?) leaves layering the trail, though the trees still hold onto some of their summer offspring. A few downed trees cause bike-carry upper-body workouts.

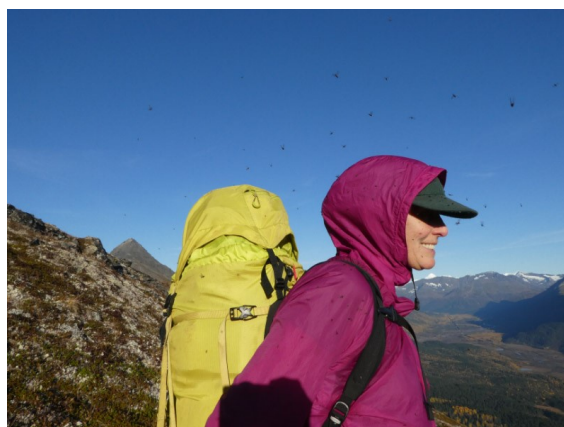
We stash our bikes 4-½ miles in, hoping the cute porcupines don't eat something of ours. All we've seen so far are grouse, a whopping nine of them.

The map shows a steady incline to steeper slopes. The initial traveling is easy under forest canopy with lush moss and many mushrooms. A neat pile of cones separated from another neat, but different, cone type is witness to a very organized squirrel midden. The terrain drops to obvious creek drainage, so we work right, but still need to descend. It's surprising how much sound a small creek can make. We expect a ravine with much water, but cross only a foot-wide channel. I joke about another knoll.

The ascent is a little more interesting with downed logs and

mini-brush oases. Topping out on this we see there is indeed another ravine to cross ("Twilight Zone" music). We work right again until crossing. More less-pleasant travel ensues with leafless pockets of devil's club, clusters of alders, and more downed trees (there are some large ones). Eventually we encounter more and more open patches of grass. Unfortunately, as we do we're escorted by more and more small black flies. The warm sun rays seem to invigorate them. As we work into alpine I guiltily don my bugnet. John resorts to wearing his wind jacket for protection. Tina extricates a fancy bug net from her pack, "Aha, I did bring it."

As we'd agreed to only bring a "mid" shelter (Hex nest) with no netting, Tina has many rationalizations why there shouldn't be bugs. As we enter shadow from The Tender and the temperature drops, the bugs quickly dissipate.



*Tina Boucher with some overly friendly flies.*



We now have open views of the Trail Lakes, Kenai Lake, and many surrounding mountains. Golden fall colors dapple the lower slopes. Topping out on the ridge, we find water at the base of Point 5010 so we're set on a campsite. While John and Tina prepare for dinner and the night, I head off for The Tender, with headlamp.



*Tina Boucher (left) and John Mitchell ascending Point 5010, backdropped by Upper Trail Lake.*

The footing is good on moderately steep boulders and hints of a trail border the ridge (goats?). The slope to the right (northwest) is very steep. The late evening light becomes more and more soothing, so I stop for picture breaks. A ¾-moon rises to the east. Numerous mountain shadows overlap in the Trail Creek Valley. On top I absorb the amazing clear evening views with increasing alpenglow. (Cairn, no register.)

Not wanting to actually use my headlamp, I descend to camp before full darkness. Jetboils are one of many amazing conveniences and I consume my warm freeze-dried dinner (another convenience) as they're finishing their second course. We nestle down, bug-free, on amazing pads (though John is a RidgeRest purist).

The freezing night is definite assurance there won't be any bugs. Occasional alpine-wetting outings in Tender moon shadow confirm there are many stars above and it's indeed a chilly night.

We head up the right ridgeline (east) after a relaxing morning. Despite seeing a few false bumps from below we're on Point 5010 sooner than expected. Ditching long underwear was

premature as a cold stiff breeze, coupled with high increasing clouds, feels a bit like winter (though we see only a few small patches of snow). Watching lower clouds roll in from the east and considering no one wants a really long Sunday, we continue north enough to intersect a south ridge at the summit of The Caboose. (El Tercero and Bystander Peak will wait for another trip.)

This mini-ridge provides excellent traveling: scenic, loaded with ptarmigan, easy walking, and begs to be skied. A black bear runs away on a neighboring slope. As the ridge steepens we appreciate alder holds. Off ridge we take the left clearing that we viewed from above. The only shrubbery encountered is a yellow-leaf-capped willow thicket. And we only travel over one small knoll before intersecting the trail.



*John Mitchell (left) and Tina Boucher descending the south ridge of The Caboose and viewing Trail Lake Valley.*

A short walk back to the bikes and then we're pedaling and coasting (more downhill than remembered, a plus) to the trail-head over even more Charlie-Brown fall leaves.

We really appreciate our early exit decision, as it's raining and nearly dark by Turnagain Pass.



*From left: Wayne Todd, John Mitchell, and Tina Boucher on Point 5010.*

## Twin Peaks – Abruptly Uplifted Mountains

Text and photo by Frank E. Baker



On an April 2010 climb, the MCA's Brent Voorhees stands near the 4314-foot (1315-meter) summit of Mount POW/MIA in the Western Chugach Mountains. Peaks from left: Pioneer Peak north summit (6398 feet); Pioneer Peak south summit (6349 feet); East Twin Peak (5873 feet); and Goat Rock (1610 meters, 5282 feet). West Twin Peak (1668 meters, 5472 feet) is hidden behind Goat Rock. These mountains are all part of a geologic complex that lies within a west-to-east-running fault called the Border Range Fault.

Major uplift of the Chugach Mountains started in the Tertiary Period about 60 million years ago. From about 2.6 million years ago (m.y.a.) to the present, a change in climate resulted in the onset of a major glaciation. Throughout the Pleistocene, from about 2.6 m.y.a. to about 11,700 years ago, glaciers were the dominant force shaping the mountains we see today. They formed the U-shaped valleys, moraines, erratics, and tarn lakes found throughout Chugach State Park. Southcentral Alaska is still under great pressures from tectonic plate motions causing continued uplift of the Chugach Mountains, volcanoes of the Aleutian Range, and frequent earthquakes.

Source: State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources

[http://dnr.alaska.gov/Assets/uploads/DNRPublic/parks/units/chugach/chugachmanageplan/cspmp\\_prd\\_ch3.pdf](http://dnr.alaska.gov/Assets/uploads/DNRPublic/parks/units/chugach/chugachmanageplan/cspmp_prd_ch3.pdf)



## With my Calendar, Winter is Only Three Months Long

Text and photos by Frank E. Baker

I believe there are some *Scree* readers who have not seen my calendar that reduces winter to about three months and stretches summer to five. Some time ago I declared, almost king-like, that since we live in such a high latitude, I would adopt a more suitable calendar. And perhaps with climate change, my calendar is becoming more accurate from a meteorological perspective. Whatever the case, I think it's a guaranteed sanity preserver, provided you are prepared to do one thing: go outdoors!

**I call the two and a half months from February 1st through April 15th spring.** By February 1st increasing daylight is noticeable and although temperatures can still be nippy, the long sunrises are spectacular and the snow is usually in great condition for cross-country and downhill skiing. Daylight burgeons rapidly by late February, early March, when, with prudence, Cayman Island-type tans are possible.



*Spring: Breakup on the Eagle River, Chugach State Park*

**Summer is my longest season, from April 15 to September 15 — a full five months in duration.** The sun has dramatically reborn itself by April 15, and snow is beginning to melt from the mountains' south-facing slopes. Hiking is fantastic in these areas, like Bird Ridge south of Anchorage and the Twin Peaks Trail by Eklutna Lake, because the leaves are not yet on the bushes and trees.

Clear-sky days in May and June are the real heart of summer for me. There is something psychologically uplifting about moving into increasing daylight. If you plan to pursue the outdoor things that Alaskans are supposed to do: fishing, hiking, camping, or biking, get with it as often as possible during these months.

July and August are often cloudy and wet, but they are genuinely good months for savoring the season's flurry of photosynthesis, both in the garden at home and in the mountains. You will notice small incursions of darkness into daylight, but try to remain positive. It will take a considerable amount of time to erode all the daylight that's been accumulated. When a sunny day pops out, drop everything and take it. Two consecutive sunny days at this time of the year are as rare as a legislator with a specific idea on how to cut the state budget.

September can produce a brief heat wave, or Indian summer, and by many old timers' reckoning, is the nicest month of the year, with all of the autumn colors, the good fishing, hunting, berry picking, and crisp, cool mornings. By my calendar, this is still summer.



*Summer: Lupine field, Flute Valley, Chugach State Park*

**Fall begins September 15 and lasts until November 1.** Trout fishing in late September and early October before the lakes freeze is excellent. Hiking is again ideal, because leaves are off the trees and there generally isn't enough snow at lower elevations to make traveling difficult. Pestiferous insects are almost unseen. Astronomy buffs welcome the reappearance of stars after several month's hiatus — and aurora borealis viewing is good.

**My winter officially begins November 1, and extends until February 1 — three months.** An equal number of holidays, Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Years, help break this up, along with a possible trip to warm havens like Hawaii or Mexico. Moonlight skiing and snowshoeing, even weenie roasts, are great winter spell-breakers, as are good books in front of warm fires.

A south-facing window, either at your place of employment or at home, is a real plus during the depths of winter. Just 20 minutes of glass-filtered sunshine are uplifting, and of course, there is full-spectrum lighting, which some people claim is highly effective in ameliorating light-deprivation syndrome, or Seasonal Affective Disorder, called SAD.

At our south-facing home we receive an hour and a half of direct sunlight on December 31, the shortest day of the year. As often as possible, I'll drop everything and crane my neck toward those precious photons. If you subtract sleeping time, your conscious exposure to winter, according to my calendar, is really only two months.

Before you know it, February 1, or spring, has sprung. I do not allow snow-on-the-ground to define seasons. Rather, the sun's warmth and light are my seasonal triggers. As I said earlier, the best skiing in the year is just beginning in February.

**In summary: Spring is two and a half months, February 1 to April 15; summer is five months, April 15 to September 15; fall is a month and a half, September 15 to November 1; and winter is just three months, November 1 to February 1.**

That's a calendar I've lived with for many years. Why not give it a try?



*Fall: Bold Peak from the Twin Peaks Trail.*



*Twin Peaks Trail in November*

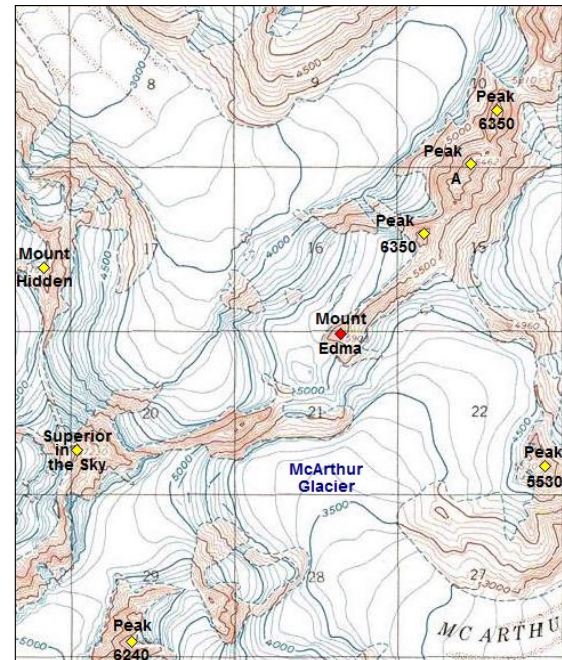


*Winter: Snow crests Fiddlehead Mountain, Kenai Peninsula*



## Peak of the Month: Mount Edma

Text by Steve Gruhn



Map created with TOPO!® ©2003 National Geographic (www.nationalgeographic.com/topo)

**Mountain Range:** Aleutian Range; Neacola Mountains

**Borough:** Kenai Peninsula Borough

**Drainages:** McArthur Glacier and Ch'akajabena Lake

**Latitude/Longitude:** 61° 7' 23" North, 152° 28' 26" West

**Elevation:** 5903 feet

**Adjacent Peaks:** Peak 6350 in Section 15 of the McArthur Glacier and Ch'akajabena Lake drainages and Superior in the Sky (7230 feet)

**Prominence:** 453 feet from Peak 6350

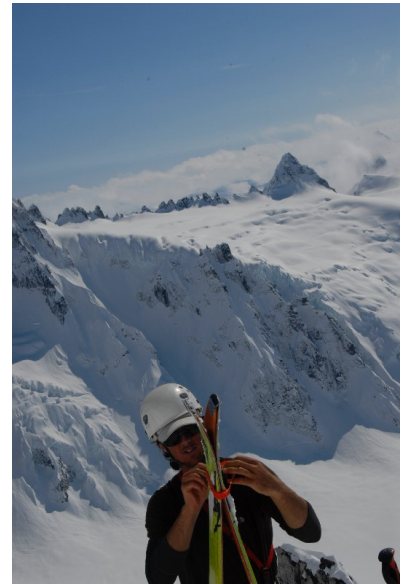
**Distinctness:** 453 feet from Peak 6350

**USGS Map:** 1:63,360: Tyonek (A-7), 1:25,000: Tyonek A-7 SW

**First Recorded Ascent:** July 1993 by Eduard Birnbacher and Martin Göggelmann

**Route of First Recorded Ascent:** Northwest face

**Access Point:** South side of Ch'akajabena Lake



*Stefan Beattie in April 2010 with Mount Edma in the background over his left shoulder.  
Photo by Tom Murphy*

On July 7, 1993, Jay Hudson flew Ed Birnbacher and Martin Göggelmann from Talkeetna to the south side of Ch'akajabena Lake, where they established a base camp. The next day the two walked about four miles south up an unnamed glacier to establish a camp on the ice at 3000 feet.

The pair then began an attempt on the 5903-foot peak southeast of camp near the head of the unnamed glacier. They climbed the 700-meter-high, 35- to 40-degree (with a few sections up to 45 degrees), northwest ice face to the base of the 200-meter-high summit pyramid. Beginning with a section of 90-degree ice that later gave way to mixed 65-degree fractured rock and loose snow, the team followed a small, steep ice gully to the summit. Birnbacher characterized the peak as having a lot of loose boulders of varying size on the face. The team named the summit Mount Edma, combining the first two letters of their first names.

Later in their trip, the team climbed a 6310-foot peak on the west side of the glacier and named it Mount Hidden.

After their ascents, the team left only a few pitons for rappelling on the steep sections and otherwise practiced "leave-no-trace" ethics.

They returned to their base camp at Ch'akajabena Lake and were flown out the following day, ending their weeklong trip to the Neacola Mountains.

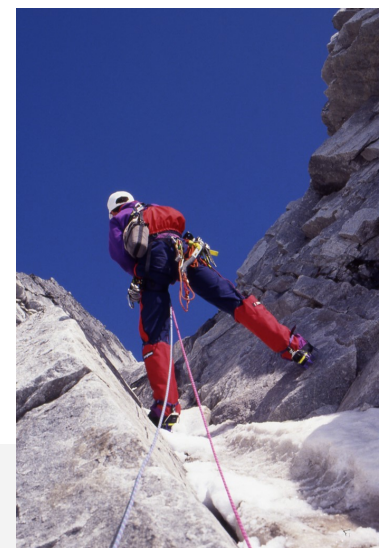
I do not know of a second ascent of Mount Edma.

The information for this column came from page 10 of the February 1994 *High Mountain Sports* (Issue No. 135); from Eduard Birnbacher's trip report titled "Unclimbed Peaks in the Chigmit Mountains," which appeared on page 123 of the 1994 *American Alpine Journal*; and from my correspondence with Ed Birnbacher, Phil Hess, and Keith Sanfacon. Birnbacher indicated that the reported elevations in the articles in *High Mountain Sports* and the *AAJ* were obtained from readings from the barometric altimeter that the team carried; they did not have topographic maps of the area. Consequently, while the journal reports indicated that Birnbacher and Göggelmann climbed a 6300-foot peak and named it Mount Edma, the peak that they actually climbed was Peak 5903.

To view Keith Sanfacon's interesting April 2010 video of Mount Edma and the surrounding area, visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uMoNx0pmeZA>.

*Martin Göggelmann rappels off the northwest aspect of Mount Edma.*

*Photo by Ed Birnbacher*



# Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

November 6, 2017

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## Roll Call

Ralph Baldwin (*Director*) - Present  
Jennifer DuFord (*Director*) - Present  
Max Neale (*Director*) - Present  
Jen Aschoff (*Secretary*) - Present  
Charlie Sink (*President*) - Present  
Tom Meacham (*Director*) - Present  
Marcin Ksok (*Director*) - Present  
Mike Meyers (*Vice-President*) - Present

## Scribe

Max Neale

## President's Report

Charlie gave an overview of Board roles and procedures.

## Committee Reports

### Vice-President (Mike Meyers)

Mike is lining up presentations and coordinating the Christmas party!

### Treasurer (Mark Smith)

Mark is going to meet with Brian Miller, the previous treasurer, to get oriented. The Board will do an audit this year.

### Secretary (Jen Aschoff)

Max set Jen up with instructions and resources for being Secretary.

### Huts (Marcin Ksok)

Marcin will be the Board's huts-committee liaison. He'll connect with Cory Hinds and Greg Bragiel to report on hut projects.

Mark will get in touch with Greg and Tom about commercial permitting for huts.

Board approved an additional \$400 for extra helicopter air-time for waste removal from Bomber and Mint Huts.

### Training (Max Neale)

Max will be the new training committee chair.

### Mentorship (Nathan Hebda)

Nathan is coordinating the mentorship program!

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

Tom will be the parks advisor for Chugach State Park.

Ralph will continue to be the advisor for the Hatcher Pass area.

### Hiking and Climbing (Mike Meyers and Jen Aschoff)

Mike and Jen are the new co-chairs of hiking and climbing.

Mike will coordinate leaders for climbing trips.

Jen will coordinate leaders for hiking and skiing trips.

### Library (Charlotte Foley)

Max asked Charlotte for an update: Charlotte procured "a bunch of new books" and has catalogued them. She is planning library meetings every month or every other month from now until May. She requests \$400 for library activities for 2018.

## Unfinished Business

The audit needs to be done before the January meeting. Charlie will help to find volunteers.

Charlie will develop a long-term forecast for hut expenses.

Charlie will work with Dave Hart on a Scree policy.

## New Business

Board members should look at the MCA member survey ([https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1owKOqcAZ1718o2zp\\_fzmep4A41ea9MRBJ\\_TOjMo\\_oY/edit#gid=0](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1owKOqcAZ1718o2zp_fzmep4A41ea9MRBJ_TOjMo_oY/edit#gid=0)).

Board will look into conducting a strategic planning session.

## Merchandise

We will discuss Holden Hut lighting/hut budget priorities at the December meeting.

## Time and Location of next Board of Directors Meeting

December 11, 2017, 6 p.m. BP Energy Center

**Choate's Chuckle** (continued from page 4) - Tom Choate  
**Answer:** A Brown Jug.



# Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

December 6, 2017

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## Roll Call

Ralph Baldwin (Director) - Present  
Jennifer DuFord (Director) - Present  
Max Neale (Director) - Present  
Jen Aschoff (Secretary) - Present  
Charlie Sink (President) - Present  
Tom Meacham (Director) - Present (arrived late)  
Martin Ksok (Director) - Present  
Mike Meyers (Vice-President) - Present  
Mark Smith (Treasurer) - Present (arrived late)

## Scribe

Jen Aschoff

## President's Report

Charlie mentioned a need for documents from accounting. There were no volunteers to help with the audit. Ralph offered to solicit club member volunteers with financial experience to help with the audit. Some discussion about the budget: Need two board members to have access to accounts. Two signers needed over \$500 unless it's already been approved by the board and in the budget. Ralph later clarified with "All expenditures are normally limited to approved budget items. All checks must have the signature of the President or Treasurer. When a check is for more than \$500 for an approved budget item, there must be written or verbal approval from two of the four executive officers (President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary)."

## Committee Reports

### Vice President (Mike Meyers)

Charlotte Foley's library event - Internet system to check out MCA library resources. MCA needs to authorize the librarian to have access to the listserv with email addresses. Board asked for a description of the online service and how it works, and some training for folks who were not able to attend the event. It was suggested that the board ascertain information about the system before we decide to give a Yes/No vote about whether to release MCA email addresses.

Backcountry.com deal no longer works and we need to re-

new it. Mike will look into renewing it.

Can we make it easier for members to get their membership numbers? Can we put these numbers as part of the login?

Discussion of food for the Christmas party ... Main dish (Turkey) - we need two turkeys from a caterer. Side dishes are organized by names. Max suggested a googledrive folder for people who want to show some slides at the Christmas party.

Film festival to be booked any time before April and this event needs to go into the budget. Looking at the 49th State Brewing Company might cost \$500. We need to be paid up through the Winter Wildlands Alliance fee.

Conrad Anker has offered to give a talk on Monday, February 19th at Beartooth. MCA members have priority on \$20 tickets. Proceeds go to the MCA. Title to be determined. Does not need to go into the budget.

Serenity Falls Hut event. Jen needs a date for the event. We need to book for the end of February. Any MCA member can show up and use the hut for free. This will need to go into the budget for 2018.

Stickers - Mike spent \$318 on the stickers (550 stickers total). Proposes \$1.50 each or a full page for \$10.

Working on a discount for Experticity for the memberlogin part of the website.

Discussed the option of limiting the Facebook membership.

### Treasurer (Mark Smith)

Contacted huts committee and Greg Bragiel for hut-related budget items \$1,000 to 1,500(?).

Do we want to print *the Scree* or go all online?

Mark will prepare a proposed budget for 2018 with Charlie and share it with the board prior to presentation to the membership. This would need to go to *the Scree* by December 19.

Transfer of accounts to Mark from Brian was completed in December 2017.

### Secretary (Jen Aschoff)

Nothing to report. See Hiking and Climbing Committee

notes.

#### Huts (Cory Hinds)

Not present, will provide Mark Smith with a 2018 budget for the Holden Hut.

#### Training (Max Neale)

Apparel and Gear Committee wants to order approximately 150 items of MCA-branded Patagonia. Max is figuring out payment logistics.

Training update: Coordinating 15 topics in a forthcoming "Alaska Wilderness Travel Training Series."

#### Mentorship (Nathan Hebda)

Nothing to report

#### Parks Advisory (Tom Meacham and Ralph Baldwin)

##### Chugach State Park (Tom)

From Citizens Advisory Board meeting – Department of Transportation proposes a large rock quarry at Rainbow; may need MCA input.

##### Hatcher Pass Management Area (Ralph)

Preliminary report on November 22 avalanche fatality is now available at Hatcher Pass Avalanche Center website.

Snowmachine boundary markers for east side motorized corridor emphasized in discussion with rangers.

#### Hiking, Skiing, and Climbing (Jen Aschoff and Mike Meyers)

Mike asked questions about the budget and how money can be spent: "How much are we allowed to write checks for? When do we need two signers?" Mark Smith researched the By-laws: "Section VII D of the 2014 By-laws reads: All checks must bear the signature of the President or the Treasurer. Checks over the amount of \$500.00 require verbal or written authorization of two (2) of the following four (4) officers: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer." "Section VII E: it's the larger of \$200 or 10%, whichever is greater. I interpret it to apply to a budget category, i.e., training, *Scree*, huts." Ralph later clarified with "Further clarification on the "10% or \$200:" This rule applies only to a specific budgeted item or the total budget. If the proposed expenditure exceeds this, the entire membership must approve."

Jen proposed several trips for the MCA. One of the trips includes backcountry skiing and this brought up some issues concerning liability. The board discussed the option of purchasing insurance for club—sanctioned trips. The gen-

eral consensus was that the board will re-investigate this option, but for now low-risk trips are easy to sanction, and high-risk trips should not be sanctioned and instead go to meetup.

We will try to advertise high-risk trips through meetup.

Need a committee to investigate hiking and climbing trip risks.

Motion (Ralph moves; Martin seconds): The board authorizes the Hiking and Climbing Committee to approve low-risk (non-technical) "trips" as long as the policy of record is followed and waiver is signed. Motion was passed unanimously.

Higher-risk trips are "to be determined."

Jen proposed advertising local non-sanctioned trips and events to encourage participation by members. No resolution was realized.

#### Library (Charlotte Foley)

Organized an event that showed a new tool for searching for, and checking out, resources.

### **Unfinished Business**

Dues increase - The proposal was to increase dues for the family memberships, from \$25 to \$30.

Dues increase proposal needs to be included in *the Scree* for December so that it could be voted on in January.

Send message to Dave Hart "Proposal from the board to increase membership to \$30 from \$25 for families. The membership will be asked to vote on this proposal at the January 16th meeting."

MCA Peak Challenge: 1) list of peaks, 2) list of ice climbs, etc. Perhaps a list of names and recognition at a meeting. Board members are asked to send in some items to put into the Peak Challenge.

### **New Business**

#### **Announcements**

#### **Board Comments**

#### **Time and location of next meeting**

Board Meeting - 6 p.m., January 8 at the BP Energy Center

Membership Meeting - January 16 at the BP Energy Center



## Proposed 2018 Budget

		Proposed for 2018	Budget Change	Approved	Current for 2017
<b>REVENUE</b>					
Membership Dues	<i>received during calendar year</i>	\$13,320	\$3,820	\$9,500	\$12,109
Scree subscriptions		\$400	(\$50)	\$450	\$460
Training	<i>BMS, ice climbing, rock climbing, other</i>	\$7,700	(\$300)	\$8,000	\$7,480
Photo Calendar		\$2,300	\$0	\$2,300	\$2,488
MCA Products: T-Shirts, Patches, Etc.		\$5,000	\$0	\$5,000	\$0
Interest on Accounts		\$75	\$0	\$75	\$64
Other - Donations, etc		\$4,451	(\$549)	\$5,000	\$19,351
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>		<b>\$33,246</b>	<b>\$2,921</b>	<b>\$30,325</b>	<b>\$41,952</b>
<b>EXPENSE</b>					
Training	<i>campsite, access fees, instructors, trip</i>	\$4,372	\$622	\$3,750	\$4,362
Scree	<i>postage, mailing, printing</i>	\$2,521	(\$279)	\$2,800	\$2,687
General Meeting	<i>rent, refreshments, entertainment</i>	\$940	(\$60)	\$1,000	\$1,013
Administrative	<i>supplies, PO box, web site, ads, travel,</i>	\$1,055	\$255	\$800	\$800
Hut Construction & Maint.	<i>materials, supplies, hut equipment,</i>	\$17,210	(\$16,690)	\$33,900	\$27,913
Insurance	<i>reincorporation fees, insurance</i>	\$107	\$107	\$0	\$104
Club Equipment	<i>climbing gear, misc equipment, storage</i>	\$477	(\$23)	\$500	\$448
Library	<i>new books, periodicals, storage</i>	\$400	(\$400)	\$800	\$0
Other:	<i>miscellaneous expenses</i>				
Photo Calendar		\$1,775	(\$825)	\$2,600	\$1,913
MCA Products: T-Shirts, Patches, Etc.		\$5,000	\$0	\$5,000	\$318
Other - Awards		\$100	(\$500)	\$600	\$130
Other -		\$500	\$350	\$150	\$13,200
<b>TOTAL EXPENSE</b>		<b>\$34,457</b>	<b>(\$17,443)</b>	<b>\$51,900</b>	<b>\$52,887</b>
<b>DUE TO (FROM) RESERVE</b>		<b>(\$1,211)</b>			<b>(\$10,935)</b>

### CASH BALANCE - All Accounts

Beginning Balance - January 1, 2017	\$62,908
Increase (decrease) during 2017	-\$10,935
<b>Current Balance for 2017</b>	<b>\$51,973</b>
Checking - Credit Union 1	\$29,534
Money Market and CDs - Credit Union 1	\$20,841
Savings - Credit Union 1	\$417
18-month CD - in trust for hut lease - Northrim Bank	\$1,176
Petty Cash	\$5
<b>Ending Balance - Revised 12/25/17</b>	<b>\$51,973</b>

## Mountaineering Club of Alaska

President	Charlie Sink	258-8770	Board member (term expires in 2018)	Ralph Baldwin	232-0897
Vice-President	Mike Meyers	202-1640	Board member (term expires in 2018)	Jennifer DuFord	227-6995
Secretary	Jen Aschoff	512-944-7530	Board member (term expires in 2018)	Marcin Ksok	928-380-2995
Treasurer	Mark Smith	717-9501	Board member (term expires in 2019)	Max Neale	207-712-1355
			Board member (term expires in 2019)	Tom Meacham	346-1077

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

Dues can be paid at any meeting or mailed to the Treasurer at the MCA address below. If you want a membership card, please fill out a club waiver and mail it with a self-addressed, stamped envelope. If you fail to receive the newsletter or have questions about your membership, contact the Club Membership Committee at [membership@mtnclubak.org](mailto:membership@mtnclubak.org).

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

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

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

Mailing list/database entry: Mark Smith —717-9501 - [membership@mtnclubak.org](mailto:membership@mtnclubak.org)

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

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

Calendar: Stuart Grenier—337-5127 or [stugrenier@gmail.com](mailto:stugrenier@gmail.com)

Librarian: Charlotte Foley—603-493-7146 or [library@mtaclubak.org](mailto:library@mtaclubak.org)

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

*South aspect of The Dogtooth.*

*Photo by Zach Clanton*

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