



MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF ALASKA
APRIL 1977

BOX 2037

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99510
VOLUME XX, NO.4

APRIL MEETING

Wednesday, April 20th WEST HIGH SCHOOL CAFETERIA.

The April meeting will be devoted to a used equipment swap and sale. Bring your used equipment (and your checkbook) to West High and see if someone might be able to use those items that have been collecting dust.

SKIING SCHEDULE

April 16-17 Denali State Park, Currey Ridge, Mile 135 Parks Highway
Overnight Ski Tour. For information call Dona Agosti
279-2901.

No further ski tours will be scheduled because of general lack of interest and necessity to travel long distances to find snow.

However, we would like to announce the following. An MCA sponsored trek in the Arctic Wildlife Range will take place from July 15-30th, 1977. Hikers will either fly from Barter Island with Walt Audi and land on a sand bar near the headwaters of Hulahula River or with Doug Butler from Arctic Village in a float plane and land on Hulahula Lake. Hikers will spend several days at a lake "on the Continental Divide", then continue down various streambeds to Last Lake on the Sheenjek for pickup by Doug Butler. Total distance is estimated at about 60 miles in ten days. Costs will run about \$466.00 (Anchorage to Anchorage) which includes an air drop. If you are interested, call Dona Agosti to place your name on the reservation list. 279-2901 (Adults only, please)

Chugach State Park Workshops.

April 14, Thurs. Homestead School, Caribou Street, Eagle River
7:30-9:00p.m.

April 19, Tues Central Junior High School, 1405 E Street, Anchorage
7:30-9:00 p.m.

For further information see page 4.

MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETING, MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF ALASKA, Wednesday, 16th March 1977,
Pioneer School House, Third and Eagle, Anchorage, Alaska.

The meeting was called to order shortly after 8:00 p.m. by President Tom Meacham. The Treasurer's report showed - Checking \$625.82, Savings \$433.77, Cash on hand \$48.61, for a total of \$1108.20.

Bill Stivers announced that the April 16-17 ski tour in Denali State Park could be rescheduled to a ski tour up Ship Creek depending on snow conditions. Bill also scheduled a ski tour up Ship Creek for March 19-20.

Chuck Evans announced that he had seen snowmobile tracks leading up the Resurrection Trail from the Hope end. He said the Troopers were contacted and that two people were arrested. He also wanted M.C.A. approval to send to the Forest Service a letter describing the problem with snowmobile use. A motion was made and seconded that the letter be sent to the Forest Service. Tom Meacham suggested that a possible follow-up letter could be sent with suggestions on what to do about the problem.

Ed Bailey then announced that he had a petition to the Game Board to raise the Eagle River drainage area for reconsideration of its hunting and trapping regulations. He suggested that the Eagle River drainage be set aside for hiking and photography instead of being used as an area for hunting and trapping. He said if this passed, it would be the first complete drainage system in the Park that would be closed to hunting and trapping.

Jim Hale then reported on the Mt. McKinley Management Committee's work. He announced that Ned Lewis, Steve Hackett and he had drafted a letter, to be sent to the Park Service, that proposed some form of climber education program which would possibly help alleviate the number of climbing accidents on McKinley. He also announced that they felt that climbers should pay their own rescue if it were available at a lower cost, such as offered by Buddy Woods.

It was announced that the Used Equipment Sale would be held at the next MCA meeting. After the break for refreshments, Steve Hackett presented an interesting slide show, complete with music, on north ridge ascents of Mt. Deborah, Mt. Hess and Mt Hayes in the Alaska Range. The meeting was adjourned.

David Newcombe, Secretary

Steve Sarison, his sister, and I decided to go skiing on this nice clear weekend. I got a topo map and looked up a flat skiable ridge for maximum scenery and downhill run. On Sat. we selected the ridge on the North side of Turnagain Pass, and hoped to follow it to VABM 3378 overlooking Turnagain Arm and coast down gentle slopes to Ingram Creek camp ground--a 3000' drop. Naturally, we drove up to the highest route up, which is a spot 2 mi. before the parking lot at Turnagain Pass that is only half as steep as the rest of the SE slope. This route is easily spotted by looking for a strip of forest extending half way up the slope, since that spot is safe from avalanche. It's only a 1500' climb to the ridgetop, with far superior views than from Tim Can Ridge on the other side--this ridge is higher above the valley floor and closer to Turnagain Arm, and further away from higher ridges blocking the view. The top of this ridge is also very wide (about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile) with gently rolling hills--ideal for skiing. It received so much heavy wet snow that the winds failed to blow it all away--100% snow cover. We proceeded to ski 4 mi. to VABM 3378 which would offer a magnificent view of Turnagain Arm; but Steve's sister wasn't in shape for x-skiing so we only got half way by 4:00 PM when the snow started freezing into a crust. We took a short cut down an avalanche chute (when wet snow freezes up, no more danger of avalanche) down to the highway 2 mi. below the starting point. I suppose the fact that this area is open to snowmachines causes this broad scenic ridge to be overlooked--it is one of the best in this area. Ski bowls on the north side lead into Seattle Creek.

This is a flat ridge--a 3 square mile plateau at 3000' near Eagle River and Fire Lake with, of course, a panoramic view of Anchorage, the Inlet, Alaska Range, Talkeetna Mts. and the Chugach; followed by a 5 mile, 3000' drop downhill run through Little Peters Creek valley. Steve Sarison and I drove up to the Swiss Alps subdivision to 2200', and climbed 1100 feet on skis heading east up a shallow valley to the east to the plateau; following it east another mile along a bluff overlooking Meadow Creek valley. There is an easy scenic ski route up the east arm of Little Peters Creek to the 4500' summit ridge of Black tail Rocks, Roundtop, and Vista Peak--but we took it easy and coasted downhill to the north, into Little Peters Creek valley, past an abandoned A-frame chalet (which might make a good mountaineering cabin), across the creek, onto the abandoned access road--down, down-- its about a 5 mile downhill run to the outlet near Peters Creek on the Old Glenn Highway as described in Hike #39. About 2 miles of this is similar to the downhill run below the Snowbird Mine cabin. The fact that this is a popular snowmobile area (with tracks almost to Roundtop) didn't seem to disturb us.

Mount Spurr, southeast ridge

Team Members: Bob La Pointe, John Tobey, Bob Shea, John Lupo, Terry Wetzel & Bill Brant

We were lured to the mountain by a clear day, a brilliant sun, and thoughts of climbing. What we experienced was a storm. At 6 a.m. the day after our arrival, we watched as the full moon and clear night sky were blotted out by layers of black clouds charging the mountain from the east. One by one, the lights of Anchorage, Kenai and the Inlet platforms blinked out. We started to climb anyway, denying the storm's approach. We were soon squeezed by the layers of clouds pressing from above and below. Swirling winds struck in gusts and our world became white as clouds and tumbling snow obliterated landmarks. Snowflakes, pulverized by the wind, slammed into faces and eyes from every direction with little stings of violence and we retreated to the quiet warmth of our snowcave.

Outside, battering and fierce gusts were followed by seconds of indifferent unexplainable perfect calm. The wind drove clouds away from the peaks then slammed them back again. We ate and drank in the tent as the wind tried to flatten it. Walls bulged inward, seams stretched toward breaking, the pole rattled and jumped but the tent stood firm. Steam from the pot danced crazily as the battering winds contracted and expanded the air trapped in the vent.

Excursions into the wind were brief but invigorating. When facing into the wind, air was forced into lungs, cold found cracks in our armour of down, and

muscles tensed to stand erect. Blowing snow streaked a foot off the ground forming whirlpools around our legs. It looked like a sea with the texture of cotton candy. The cold would win out and we would dive back into shelter

After two days we had to descend to our pick-up spot. The storm lulled as we started but returned with frightening force as we tread a narrow corniced ridge. The yawning exposure on the side disappeared as the inky whiteness returned. Then the ridge itself disappeared except for a few precious markers of rock. Fear became overwhelming and the storm was no longer invigorating. Gusts flattened each of us and fear made it hard to get up. We plunged off the crest into what had looked from above to be a giant snow bowl. All landmarks disappeared. We could judge terrain only by the snow chunks we kicked in front of us. The ridge blocked some of the winds's force and fear began to retreat. Over an edge we wallowed into armpit deep snow unable to move up or down. We pitched camp there.

Whiteout and mere wind and gloom started the next day. But soon the valleys began to clear. We could see sun on the waters of the Inlet. The clouds parted and we could see our aircraft coming. We had climbed little, but Mount Spurr had shown us a storm.

CHUGACH STATE PARK

The Master Plan for Chugach State Park is being revised. You are encouraged to attend any one of the workshops designed to gather public input before the actual plan revision occurs later this spring. See page one of ~~SECRET~~ for dates, times, and location of the workshops.

The current Master Plan for the Park was developed in 1971. Since then, a population boom and significant changes in recreational demand have necessitated a revision of that plan. Division of Parks has created a team of resource professionals comprised of representatives of the State Department of Highways, State Department of Fish and Game and the Municipal Planning Department who have studied the park since June of 1976 in an attempt to gather pertinent new data about the park. The research efforts will consummate in the publication of a technical resource document called "Environmental Atlas of Chugach State Park."

The upcoming workshops will be held in an informal setting in an attempt to provide the maximum opportunity for citizens to express their ideas for the plan revision. Copies of the existing Master Plan are available from the Division of Parks at 619 Warehouse Avenue, Suite #210 or by calling 274-4676.

(taken from the Center News, April 8, 1977)

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FIRST CLASS

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NOTE: CHANGE OF MEETING PLACE