



APRIL 2001

A Publication of the Mountaineering Club of Alaska

Volume 44 Issue 04

Box 102037, Anchorage, Alaska 99510

### APRIL MEETING

Wednesday

April 18, 7:30 pm

Pioneer Schoolhouse, 3rd & Eagle Streets

Downtown Anchorage

**Program:** Blaine Smith will show slides and tell tales of climbing *Mt. Blackburn*, *Mt. Sanford* and hiking near Nabesna.

### HIKING AND CLIMBING SCHEDULE

- Apr 28-May 13 Escalante River area of South Utah  
Class B. Two, 5-6 day backpack trips with a pit stop between. Some water, brush, rocks, and sun. We'll meet at Las Vegas airport. Deposit required. Leaders: Bill Wakeland & Don Hansen 696-6247.
- Apr 29 Byron Peak  
Class G. Hike onto the glacier and attempt the summit. Bring crampons, ice axe, and glacier gear. Leader: Matt Nedom 278-3648
- Jun 22-24 Solstice Backpack  
Leave Friday, after work, return Sunday. Location will be on the Kenai, exactly where is TBA. Leader: Matt Nedom 278-3648
- Jul 29- Aug 12 Arctic National Wildlife Refuge  
Class B. Backpacking trip into the Canning River drainage. Fly out of Arctic Village or Fort Yukon with Yukon Air Charter. Explore the tributaries of the Canning River, hike up some of the peaks and ridges in the area. Estimated charter cost is about \$600 to \$700. Leader: Don Hansen 243-7184 h, 271-6656 w

The following trips are a series of mid-week, after-work trips. These are going to be relatively fast-paced trips ranging from Class A to Class D. The destinations are tentative, dependent on weather, traffic, snow conditions, etc. Reaching the destinations with the daylight available in the spring will not be possible if anyone shows up late, so please be on time. Steve would like to gather the e-mail addresses of interested parties. The day before each excursion, he will confirm the destination and time and get a head count. Maximum of 12 people (including leader) on each trip. Dogs will not be allowed.

Leader: Steve Gruhn 344-1219 h, 276-7475 w

- Apr 10 Bear Point  
Tuesday. Class B. 5:30 PM.
- 12 Penguin Creek  
Thursday. Class A. 5:30 PM.
- 17 Winner Creek Gorge  
Tuesday. Class A. 5:30 PM.
- 19 Thunderbird Falls  
Thursday. Class A. 6:00 PM.

Apr 24 Peak 863  
Tuesday. Class B. 5:30 PM. West of Mile High Saddle.

26 Peak 1222  
Thursday. Class C. 5:30 PM. East of Mt. Eklutna.

May 1 Indian Creek Pass  
Tuesday. Class B. 5:30 PM.

3 Falls Creek  
Thursday. Class C. 6:00 PM.

10 Bird Hill  
Thursday. Class C. 6:00 PM.

### TRAINING SCHEDULE

Apr 19 21-22 Glacier Travel Course  
Planning that big climb? Or do you just want cross a glacier to get from here to there. Come learn the rudiments of how to safely get across. We will cover glacier travel techniques and the basics of how to avoid trouble, (you'll still need an experienced leader though). We'll also teach you what to do if the worst happens. Roped glacier travel, anchors, hauling systems, and of course crevice rescue techniques. We will have an indoor course and then a full weekend outdoors. You will need to know how to use an ice axe, crampons, (the club has some) and a climbing harness will be useful. Location TBA.  
Instructor: Steve Parry 248-8710

May 12 Red Cross First Aid  
9:00 AM to 5:00 PM. This is an eight-hour, one-day course offering basic instruction in First Aid and CPR. Minimum class size of six - no maximum required skills/experience: none. This is an introductory course cost: \$35 per person. location will be at the Red Cross building, 235 East 8th Ave.  
Contact: Tom McDermott 263-7258 w, 277-0774 h or [tmcdermott@bhb.com](mailto:tmcdermott@bhb.com)

May 15, 17, 19 Remote First Aid & Adult CPR  
This is a 16-20 hour course offering instruction in First Aid and CPR oriented to wilderness settings. Minimum class size of eight - no maximum required skills/experience: none. This is an introductory course cost: \$100 per person. Location will be at the Alaska Outdoor & Experiential

Education classroom at UAA.  
Contact: Tom McDermott 263-7258 w, 277-0774 h or [tmcdermott@bhb.com](mailto:tmcdermott@bhb.com)

May 16 Leader Orientation  
6:30 PM. (Prior to General Meeting). Introduction to club rules and policies for leading club trips. Minimum qualifications, responsibilities, tips and suggestions for leading club trips covered. Required for all persons who want to lead club trips and for current leaders (once every 5 years).  
Instructors: Steve Parry 248-8710/Bill Romberg

### TRIP REPORTS

#### Day Ski at Eklutna Lake

by Stu Grenier



When the trip was announced at a very wet January meeting it looked as if winter was going to skip us this year. Fortunately for the four of us who arrived at the Eklutna lake trail head at about 10:00 AM, winter had indeed arrived. With an acceptable base covered by 5 inches of fresh snow it was clear that in one day we weren't going to make the 26 mile round trip without rushing so we set our sights on Chief Alex's, just 19 miles round trip.

With the white stuff still falling from the sky and the park still closed to the motor sports crowd, the lake took on an almost defining hush. I noticed it right away but didn't dwell on it. Conversation within the group broke the silence and gave us something to distract ourselves. Then, when the group spread out, one by one we embraced the hush of falling snow as the inescapable aura of the lake and valley began to sink in.

Sticking to the road as the park service suggested we avoided the potential of thin ice on the lake. There were still long wide cracks extending out to the middle of the lake of what looked to be open water. We were more than happy to stay on the road.

Taking turns breaking trail allowed us to go much farther and faster than if we were there alone. By falling back into the rear position there was some glide to be found on a nice packed



trail. When we got to the airstrip we signed the logbook and then slogged through a half mile of deep snow to Chief Alex's. It took us about 3 and a half hours to do the 9 miles from the trail head.

The cabin was built in 1924 by Chief Alex. It has traditionally been open to whoever gets there first but now is slated to be moved to the Eklutna Village as a historic building. It currently has no stove and a door that opens only half way.

After hanging out and stuffing our faces for an hour we took to our trail and enjoyed the easy life of kick and glide back to cabin #1 and then the parking lot which we reached at 6:00 PM. We were four satisfied skiers, Donna Klecka, Jean Ward, and Ron Matviyak.

It may be time now to consider having the Eklutna Lake area placed in a time share plan where the motor sports people have access for a week and then it is left to the non-motorized folks for a week. There already is a time share plan for the summer but not for the winter. Because the new hut at the foot of the glacier will soon be open and used for over nights, having the weekends split one day motorized and one day not motorized doesn't make sense. People who motor back will have to motor out if they want to stay Saturday night. This will force the motor sports folks to drive on a non motorized day. To avoid this a new plan should have one weekend motorized and the next quiet. The fact that the lake and river don't freeze solid also forces more congestion on the road.

Another concern is if the Eklutnas do take Chief Alex's cabin out we will lose a strategically located, no reservation or fee necessary cabin. Luckily, nature has recently provided us with a whole lot of properly aged avalanche-killed trees. If we could get all the groups to agree, we could build a new Chief Alex's and have a time share system set up so we can all have it the way we want it.

## Ice Climbs of the Knik Gorge

by Martin Martinez



ucked back inside the terminus of the southern edge of the Knik Glacier is a geological wonder known as the Gorge. Water and ice have created a spectacular corridor with the blue ice walls of the Knik Glacier on one side and alpine style rock walls on the other. It is one these walls where the moist Chinook winds do their work keeping the flow of water constant; creating one of the most scenic ice climbing areas in Alaska. With over thirty routes and countless variations, difficulty ranges from long grade III to steep grade V and classic grade IV's. All the climbs offer magnificent views across the vast Knik Glacier up into the heart of the Chugach Range where Mt. Marcus Baker and surrounding giant peaks bathe in a rosy alpine glow. Below you, frozen in motion hundreds of ice blocks, some house-size, sit in an icy waterway that flows from Lake George, which is one of the largest glacial lake systems on earth.

About nine miles from the nearest road, remoteness only allows for day climbing with the assistance of the iron dog, if you happen to have one. A fast ski jouer with good trail conditions in March or April would probably have enough time to get in a climb. Skiing or snowshoeing in would involve one or two nights out. Flying involves a very risky landing that changes year to year. So, assuming you're on a snow machine, here's how you get there.

29.9 miles north of Anchorage exit onto the Old Glenn Highway. About Mile 9 take the Knik River Road, which begins at the bridge. About Mile 8.5 of the Knik Road you will cross Hunter Creek and a few hundred yards past the bridge is a parking area where you can unload your machine (*please* respect the private property nearby). Jump on your machine and head down Hunter Creek toward the Knik River. If you are lucky you'll have a trail to follow. If not, try to steer straight and right as you go downstream about two miles which will get you to the Knik. Go right, up river, staying on the south side. Be certain to watch for overflow, open water, and moose. Soon the glacier will come into view.



After about five miles the trail goes around the right side of a large vegetated moraine. The moraine will end and you will be in front of the glacial face on a frozen lake. Travel in to the right as far as possible and you will enter the beginning of a canyon. Park your machine, slap on your snowshoes or skis and continue into the entrance. Soon your path will be chosen for you. The jumbled piles of calving ice will stop you from traveling on the frozen waterway, but only for a bit. Stay right, up and across the bedrock hills, after five or ten minutes you'll see the first climbs off to the right hanging off a rock wall. They are in a small cove, reachable by hiking over a moraine-like hill. Four climbs have been done here, back in April 1996. Steve Garvey led the dicey "Eye of Opportunity," 145 ft., V and "Three Amigos," 140 ft., IV+. I climbed "Overflow," 150 ft., IV with Eddie Phay. Garvey also soloed "Happy Daze," 100 ft., III, while taking photos.

Returning to our approach into the Gorge, traverse the lower hillsides until you've passed the iceberg problem then drop back down onto the waterway. Soon climbs will start appearing around every corner. The first being "Vice Grip," 200 ft., III, a wide rock chimney filled with ice, F.A. with Richard Baranow and Wendy Sanem in December 1997. Left of it is "Chopsticks Right," 170 ft., IV, done in thin conditions by Jeff Jablonski and I, and the classic grade IV, 190-foot "Chopsticks Left." F.A. with Richard Baranow and Wendy also. Both climbs have plenty of alders for rappel.

A quarter of a mile further and around the next corner is the beautiful "Emerald City," 420 ft., III+, with many harder variations. Jablonski and I did the F.A. of this climb which is nearly 60 yards wide at the bottom and has a pillar finish on the right if you want to steepen it up high above the icebergs below.

Looking up and to the right of "Emerald City" is a steep 200-foot grade IV. John Weiland and I found a runner atop this climb in March 1998. Since I still can't find the owner, the name and the F.A. is unknown.

The next climb left of "Emerald City" is a 175-foot grade III known as "Goatsbeard," with a nice rappel alder at the finish. Left of it is a steep and continuous grade IV, 200-foot high called "Carbide," the F.A. with my partner Jeff Jablonski was done at fifteen below zero creating rock-hard ice. A fine variation right exists because of a large hole that always forms in the middle of the

climb. Forming up later in the season, left of Carbide, is "Jack Frost," a thin and sometimes rocky start thickens up after about fifty feet. The climb goes up and left for another 250 feet before topping out at the alder rappel. We figured this climb to be 300 feet, grade III+. Jablonski did a gutsy one-pitch lead on the first ascent in forty mile-an-hour winds and whiteout conditions.

Left of "Jack Frost" is a long wide climb starting out steep then lying back to grade III for 200 feet, before steepening again below the finish. The first ascent of this 300-foot, IV climb was made in minus thirty-degree temps. Dave Hart and I bashed our way up "The Other Side of Life" during the Alaska deep freeze of February 1999.

Another five minutes of snowshoeing will bring you to a partially hidden mini-canyon. You can easily recognize it by a hanging pillar that rarely touches down. Hike over or around the small moraine that blocks the bottom of these climbs from view. Once inside this small canyon, which is only 15 feet wide, one can appreciate the amount of ice as well as complete shelter from the wind. The large mass of colorful ice that spills down right of the hanging pillar and consumes most of this wall we called "The Roaring Silence", a classic 260-foot, IV, that tops out at a large willow rappel.

Continuing up the Gorge you come to a 250-foot grade II hill of ice called "Snowball." This is a great place for teaching ice climbing or just soloing around on a sunny day. A small cove left of "Snowball" holds a 190-foot, III-. Ramping up and to the right, a nice little warm-up climb Jeff and I named "Promenade."

Further up the Gorge is a sheltered little cove, which is nice if the wind is coming down glacier, it gets great late winter and springtime sun. Three climbs have been done here. Furthest left is "Old Blue Eyes," 150 ft. steep grade IV, and right of it is a wide strange ice formation Jeff and I called the "Weeping Eyebrow," 165 ft., III. This climb never stops gushing underneath and drinking water is plentiful at the rappel station. Just right of the "eyebrow" starting down low, is a thick, deep blue, steep grade IV that tapers as it rises. Jeff and I ascended "Steamroller" 190-foot right side, but if started more to the left, could easily give one IV+ or even V climbing for almost 100 feet.



Other first ascents still exist here in the Gorge. It's a bit of an effort to get there, but a great wild place to climb. February and March are the best months to climb before breakup when the corridor becomes impassible. 100-meter ropes make for long leads and single rappels, which really speeds things up during winter's short days. Rappel stations may require some digging out and in some years too much snow will mean finding new anchors, so extra slings are nice to have. Years with little snow will add some length to these climbs –exposing more ice at the starts. Avalanches are rare due to the scouring of the mountains above by powerful Chinook winds, but during snowy winters one should take notice of the slopes above the climbs just to stay on the safe side.

### **A Three Berry Day**

by Tom Choate



in Hoeman called them the Berry Peaks, even though he did not reach all the summits when he was exploring in the 1960s. I had poked around the edges for years: Mount Alyeska, Mystery Mountain, Bramble Knoll, Bearberry Point, and

Blueberry Hill in the 1980s, Notch Mountain, Sunnyside, A1, and Kern Point in the 1990s, as well as explorations up Winner, Glacier, Virgin, Kern, and Peterson Creeks and partway up the Twentymile River. Even today, only Winner Creek has a trail, and that goes less than halfway up the valley before being obscured in brush. On the west, one may make direct, steep ascents from the highway onto Kern Point, Bramble Knoll, and Blueberry Hill either on avalanche chutes that are partly brush-free or through hemlock forests. Peterson Creek has a shooting gallery and developed trail for a mile, and the creek is fairly easy to follow on foot or skis.

For years we had talked about a several-day exploration, but weather or lack of time always got in the way until August 5, 2000, when Steve Gruhn said he had a bit of time and the weather looked good. This meant I had to do a very long day blitz with light bivy gear in the style of younger, more athletic types like Tim Kelley and past MCA president Richard Baranow. I had to go extra light, but glaciers had to be

crossed, requiring a light rope (50 feet of 5/16-inch-diameter), ice axe, light prussic loops, plus minimal bivy gear (due to unknown brushy routes) and food for 15 hourly snacks.

We met before 6:00 AM and were walking up Peterson Creek by 7:00. The fog and clouds looked like they might break up, but the temperature was 34 degrees. Soon we discovered the climax avalanche conditions that created problems in the Chugach, Kenai, and Talkeetna Mountains the previous winter had affected this valley, too. Masses of splintered spruce, hemlock logs, and old snow blocked numerous areas, requiring much climbing up, down, around, and teetering on logs on both sides of the creek. Farther up, the snow provided a rough route up the stre-  
ambled, even at this late date, and we progressed well enough to have our 9 a.m. break at timberline. Clear sailing soon brought us to the ridge between Bearberry Point and Peterson Point. The Peterson Headwall Glacier was on our right as we roped up to cross the Kern Glacier. The snow was firm and crevasses few, so we could walk fast to the ramp leading right to the low pass on the divide to the Twentymile River drainage. Here the wind blew and the sun peeked out as we lounged on some decent patches of tundra for lunch.

I chose ridgewalking, so we took the circuitous route to the summit of Lowbush Peak (el. 4229, T10N, R3E, Sec. 29), enjoying fine views, especially back along the steep ridges to Blueberry Hill and over to Kinnikinnick Mountain. No cairn or signs of people were found, surprising since helicopter skiing has taken place all around these peaks in recent years. After leaving a small register bottle, we returned westward and descended the steep slopes to the north, refilling water at a nice spring. More flower-laden tundra patches and a lone billy goat were distractions along the next low ridge section, but soon we reached the third pass and descended to the Punchbowl Glacier.

Steve thought since it was early afternoon, we should go directly across to the farthest peak of the three surrounding (Lingon Mountain; el. 4098, T10N, R3E, Sec. 17) and return over the highest (Highbush Peak; el. 4669, T10N, R3E, Sec. 19). It was a fateful decision. Although the snow was now softer, it was still firm enough for good roped walking (except that we made the mistake of sidehilling too much across the slopes of Highbush Peak, a problem for Steve who likes to hike in running shoes). It seemed to take forever, but the rocky area at the pass to the Winner

Creek drainage was welcome and we scrambled easily up the west ridge of Lingon Mountain, arriving about 5:00 PM. There had been signs of helicopter landings and skiers near the pass, but again, no human traces on the summit. Here we built a cairn with the obligatory vitamin bottle register and enjoyed another feed while looking across Winner Creek to the sno-cat trails on Notch Mountain and Sunnyside.

Returning to the pass, I thought there might be a route around the nasty-looking cliffs guarding the upper part of Highbush Peak. At first we boulder-hopped easily, but the ridge narrowed to rotten gendarmes and we were forced to the right onto steep snow. Here, wishing for crampons, I had to kick and chop a hundred pigeonholes for Steve along the edge of a crevasse until I could step off onto loose garbage on the 70-degree rock heading to the ridge top. This is not a recommended route, but it might be good for properly equipped people in June.

On the summit we enjoyed the great views from the highpoint of the Berry Peaks, wrote our names in a summit register we placed, and moved on as we had lost at least an hour and it was about 8:30 PM. The route down the northwest side to Berg Peak looked a lot like what we had just come up, so we abandoned the idea of climbing the fourth peak of the day and committed to the long and less interesting return via the west ridge of Lowbush Peak. The southerly ramp of snow from the Punchbowl Glacier to Highbush Peak was not the quick way off we had hoped, as we really wanted crampons on the now-slick snow. We descended the steep headwall that we had bypassed earlier in the afternoon, navigating around a bergschrund. The lower slope went speedily, however, and before long the grunt back up the ridge west of the summit of Lowbush Peak took place. As the sun set, we hurried across the Kern Glacier, arriving at the head of Peterson Creek at midnight. We moved quickly down beside the Peterson Headwall Glacier and down the creekbed, wishing for the amount of daylight we had three weeks earlier. We lost the race when we couldn't find the right route through the fallen avalanche trees and we elected to wait until dawn to illuminate the last hour of return to Steve's truck. Nevertheless, we had an outstanding day in a wild area - Anchorage's berry patch.

**Join the MCA E-mail List! MCAK-  
subscribe@yahoogroups.com**

The MCA e-mail list service was created to help club members advertise trips, list gear for sale, look for hiking & climbing partners, and post announcements of upcoming events and activities. It allows a person to contact all club members who subscribe to the list simply by sending one e-mail to a central address. The list is only open to current members of the MCA and you can unsubscribe at any time.

To subscribe, simply send a blank e-mail to MCAK-subscribe@yahoogroups.com. Once your e-mail is received and your membership status verified, you will be added to the list and sent further instructions on how to post messages, unsubscribe or change your preferences. This is one way to stay informed on upcoming club activities and local hiking & climbing issues. For more information go to: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/MCAK>.

**American Alpine Club Board Meeting**

For the first time will be held in Alaska, on April 6<sup>th</sup> in Talkeetna. The Alaska Section will host a fund-raiser and party at the Alaska Rock Gym on Saturday night, April 7<sup>th</sup>. All are invited. Carl Tobin will show slides of his Infinite Spur climb on Foraker. Among others, George Lowe will be here with the AAC. There is no charge for admission to the gym or slide show. People can watch slides, climb, or get to know the AAC officers and board members. There will be beer and food.

**Wilderness First Aid**

AOEE Wilderness First Responder 72-90 hours  
May 5-13 (all day every day) cost is about \$500  
per person to sign up contact the Alaska Outdoor  
& Experiential Education Center at 786-4066.

National Outdoor Leadership School Wilderness  
First Responder 72 to 90-hour class will be held  
in Palmer, May 7-16 cost is \$480 per person to  
sign up contact the National Outdoor Leadership  
School (NOLS) at 641-3572 or check their  
website at [wmi.nols.edu](http://wmi.nols.edu).

AOEE Remote First AID & Adult CPR - 16-20  
hours June 14 (evening) and 16 and 17 (all day)



cost is about \$130 per person to sign up contact the Alaska Outdoor & Experiential Education Center at 786-4066.

Red Cross Standard First Aid - 8 hours five courses offered in May:

- 1) Tue/Wed May 1&2 6-10 p.m.
- 2) Sat May 5 9-5 p.m.
- 3) Wed May 16 9-5 p.m.
- 4) Sun May 20 9-5 p.m.
- 5) Thur 5/31 9-5 p.m.

Cost is \$50 per person. Location for all classes is at the Red Cross building, 235 East 8th Ave. to sign up, contact Joyce Baker or Laurie Moreno at 277-1538.

### **Orienteering**

The Arctic Orienteering Club will be conducting orienteering training at REI on Tuesday, May 15th, at 7 p.m. Cost is \$1 for maps. Contact REI at 272-4565 or Dick Hawkins at 272-4629. Pre-registration required.

### **Proposed By-Laws Change**

In an attempt to eliminate some confusion about membership applications and eliminate liability concerns, the MCA Board of Directors proposes the following change to the club's bylaws:

Revise Section II, paragraph A. Qualifications to read: (new text in brackets[])

"Any person concurring with this organization may, upon payment of applicable dues [and completion of the MCA General Release of Liability,] become a member in the appropriate classification."

This change will make it a requirement that persons wishing to become club members complete the MCA Release of Liability. The measure will be introduced at the April meeting and a **vote** will be taken at the **May meeting**. A 2/3 affirmative vote of members present at the May meeting is required for this change to occur. If approved, the Board will adopt a new Membership Policy that spells out how applications will be processed for the different membership categories.

## **BOARD MINUTES**

Eleven members attended the March 14th, board meeting upstairs, at Alaska Mountaineering & Hiking: Bill Romberg, Richard Baranow, Kirk Towner, Patty McPherson, John Hess, Tom McDermott, Mark Miraglia, Jayme Mack, Cory Hinds and Matt Nedom.

### *Duration of General Meeting*

Dolly Lefever proposed that the Board keep the business part of the meeting shorter. The Board discussed a few options and agreed to try to start the meeting promptly at 7:30 PM and to keep the business portion to thirty minutes. The meeting would break at 8:00 PM and the slide show would start at 8:30 PM.

### *Map & Plaque Presentation at Serenity Falls Hut*

Cory Hinds reported that the preparations were going well for the framing of a Chugach State Park map, the framing of a series of four quads of the area and a plaque recognizing the donation of the maps by MCA, to be displayed in the hut. Total costs were estimated at \$300.

### *First Aid/CPR Training*

Tom McDermott reported to the board first aid class offerings and costs he obtained during his inquiries to the Red Cross and UAA's AOEE program. The Red Cross offers a regular schedule of Standard First Aid & CPR and a Remote First Aid class to the regular public. They also have instructors available for hire with a minimum of 6 interested students. Regularly scheduled classes cost \$35-\$41 per student and are 8 hours long. UAA's AOEE program offers Remote Wilderness First Aid & Adult CPR and Wilderness First Responder on a regular schedule for the public. AOEE also proposed offering a Remote First Aid & Adult CPR for the Mountaineering Club of Alaska, at a cost of \$125 per person, with a minimum enrollment of 10 participants. The Board agreed that the club should offer a standard 1st Aid class in which the Board would pay for the instructor and set up the schedule. The Board will produce a sign-up sheet at the next general meeting. The Board will also require a non-refundable deposit for all interested parties who intend to participate. Possible dates might include late-April and another in May. The Board also agreed to subsidize up to \$200 of the AOEE course that the club would offer, pending interest by the general membership.

### *Officers & Director's Insurance*

Tom McDermott provided the Board with information from the insurer Brewer & Lord LLC for Board review. Possible costs might be \$900-\$1500 per year for \$1 million in coverage. The Board also decided to make inquiries to the American Alpine Club, in reference to what type of insurance they have for their officers and directors, who they have it through and how much it costs.



*AK Mtn. & Wilderness Huts Association*

The Board reviewed and passed the resolution of support for the proposed plan to build a multi-use hut in the Good Hope Creek area of Hatcher's Pass prepared by Bill Romberg.

*MCA Awards*

The board reviewed and passed, with a few revisions, the wording of the President's Award and Vin Hoeman Award. The wording will be published in the Scree and will become MCA policy.

*Denali Rescue Recovery Study*

The board discussed possible stances the club should take regarding rescues on Denali, deciding to wait on a formal response until a final report has been prepared by Mike Gauthier in April.

*Denali Backcountry Management Plan*

The Board discussed the proposed plans and will encourage the general membership to become involved in the plan but decided not to develop a position as a club.

*Tenzing Norgay Lecture/Visit*

Bill Romberg provided the club with expenses for the lecture and visit received from Carolyn Strand. The Board decided that it would not undertake efforts to bring Mr. Norgay to Alaska at this time due to the high lecture fee (\$5000) and the likelihood that there is insufficient interest among the local climbing community to support such a lecture.

*MCA Gear Swap*

The Board decided to host a gear swap at the May general meeting. It was discussed that gear would be dropped off before the business portion of the meeting (7:00 PM) and that stuff would be sold during the break.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Jayme Mack

**ADZE**

For Sale  
Ice Axes (used), various types/  
lengths \$25.00 each, aluminum  
shaft(some rubber coated).  
loveMYdell

[jim.wheeler@richardson.army.mil](mailto:jim.wheeler@richardson.army.mil)



**MINUTES**

**MARCH MEETING**

Approximately 85 people were in attendance. Nine new members introduced themselves.

**TREASURER**

**Patty** reported that the club has taken in \$1,826 in revenue, has incurred \$673 in expenses year-to-date, and has approximately \$12,000 in the bank.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

*Hiking and Climbing*

**Steve Gruhn** and **Don Hansen** described their upcoming trips (published in SCREE) and additional club trips were described by **Tom McDermott**, **Richard Baranow**, and **Tom Choate**.

Persons interested in a climb of Mt. Drum this spring with Richard B and John Hess contact Richard B (694-1500). Persons wishing to lead trips are encouraged to contact Matt Nedom or Richard Baranow.

*Geographic Names*

**Tom Choate** noted that a revised version of the new Chugach State Park map is due to printed in the coming week. Many of the revisions were suggested by the MCA to correct errors on the original map.

*Training*

**Steve Parry** announced that the telemark skiing course was full due to an instructor sustaining an injury. He also described the upcoming Glacier Travel Course.

**Gary Runa** announced that his Glacier Travel and Crevasse Rescue course was full.

**Tom McDermott** outlined available First Aid/CPR and more advanced medical training that is available in the coming months from the American Red Cross, UAA's AOEE program, and NOLS. In addition, sign up sheets were circulated for 2 MCA-sponsored medical certification courses that will have slightly lower fees. A minimum number of participants is needed to hold each course. See Training schedule for more information.

*Huts*

**Mark Miraglia** described the various repairs and equipment/window dimensions/GPS coordinate information needed for the club's huts. Those who are planning to visit any of the club huts are encouraged to contact Mark before their trip to determine supplies and repairs needed, as well





as information needed from the hut. Mark also noted that Alaska State Parks is planning to open the new Serenity Falls public use cabin for reservation beginning sometime in April. Cory Hinds brought in two framed maps that MCA will donate to Alaska State Parks for the new Serenity Falls cabin.

#### OLD BUSINESS

Comments are still being taken on the Preliminary Draft of the Denali **Backcountry Management Plan**.

Richard B. made another request for submissions of designs for an **MCA bumper sticker** that is in the works for 2001.

The President took a quick poll regarding whether those opting for **electronic delivery** of the *Scree* received their March issue ok. Also, feedback was requested on the current format of the meeting. Bill pledged to keep the business portion of the meeting to **30 minutes** whenever possible.

#### NEW BUSINESS

Bill announced that an MCA **Gear Swap** is planned for the May meeting starting at 7:00 PM. Bring your gear to sell or swap.

Nominations were requested for the creation of an **Awards Committee** that would oversee the development and implementation of two new awards established by the Board. Appointments will be made at the May Board meeting.

Bill also made a request for volunteers to step forward and provide help with the **Equipment, Library and Parks Advisory Committees** in the next few months as the current chairs of those committees need to step down sometime soon.

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS

**AMRG raffle** tickets were on sale with the drawing to be held April 1.

**Calendar** price has dropped to \$15.

There will be no **Board meeting** in April.

Dan Hourihan of Alaska State Parks gave an entertaining and informative slide show on Wood-Tikchik State Park that no doubt will entice many members to add the park to their list of "must-visit" places. Thanks Dan!

Respectfully submitted,  
Tom Choate/Bill Romberg

## MCA Trip Classifications

The classifications below do not take into account individual trip hazards such as river crossings, scree slopes, snow fields, bears, etc. Trip leaders are required to inform the trip participants of any such hazards either verbally, on the sign-up sheet, or in the trip description. Leader approval is required for participation on all trips.

**NON-TECHNICAL:** Following are a few standards used to classify non-technical trips. The classification is made in terms of hiking distance and altitude gain. Many trips are not on established trails.

**CLASS A:** Easy hikes with a maximum distance of 8 miles for day trips or 4 miles per day for overnight trips. Altitude gain up to 1200 feet.

**CLASS B:** Trips involving a maximum distance of up to 12 miles for a day trip or 6 miles per day for an overnight trip. Altitude gain of 1200 to 2500 feet.

**CLASS C:** Trips up to 15 miles for a day hike or 8 miles per day for an overnight trip. Altitude gain up to 3500 feet. Scree, steep grass or other rough terrain problems may be encountered.

**CLASS D:** Hikes and climbs with an altitude gain of over 3500 feet or a distance of greater than 15 miles for a day-hike or greater than 8 miles a day for an overnight trip. Peaks in this classification may require minimal climbing skills.

**CLASS E:** Hazardous climbing conditions or stream-crossing conditions may be encountered. A basic mountaineering course may be required.

**TECHNICAL:** Technical trips are open to all qualified climbers. However, the registration on any particular trip must be restricted to a safe and manageable number of climbers. Registration is made directly with the leader, who determines the qualifications needed for the trip.

**GLACIER TRAVEL:** Trips requiring roped travel over glaciers. Knowledge of crevasse rescue, and ice axe and crampon skills are required. Basic understanding of ice and snow anchors also required.

**FIFTH CLASS:** Trips which involve fifth class climbing. A Basic Mountaineering course or equivalent is required. Knowledge of belay and rappel techniques and placing anchors is required. Climbing difficulty varies widely with each trip.

**TRIP PARTICIPANTS** have the obligation to acquaint themselves with the nature of the trip and to verify that it is within their capability and experience. Anyone wishing to participate in any trip above CLASS A must have completed one or more trips of the next lower classification, or the equivalent.

Approved: MCA Board, February 15, 2000



# APRIL MCA AMH discount

## gear

	retail	MCA member
trango harpoon crampons	\$139	\$99
salomon powderspike	\$139	\$89
merrell wintermoc clog	\$70	\$49

## spring sale items

women's arcteryx theta jacket...\$320...marmot alpinist jacket \$275...marmot climbing jacket \$295...patagonia ice nine jacket \$299...marmot alpinist-tech sweater...\$99...marmot crestone jacket...\$160...women's marmot climbing jacket...\$325...trail runners and light-weight boots from salomon, lowa and garmont....30-50% off retail.



### BOOT DEPARTMENT NEWS:

We are now stocking the ultra-light, thermo-formable double boot liner from INTUITION. They are the industry leader in custom liners because of their superior warmth and lightweight. Compatible in all plastic boot shells this liner redefines comfort and performance in this arena.



**RELEASE OF LIABILITY—READ CAREFULLY**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (print name), am aware that mountaineering sports (including hiking; backpacking; rock, snow, and ice climbing; mountaineering; skiing; and ski mountaineering) are hazardous activities. I wish to participate and/or receive instruction in these activities with the Mountaineering Club of Alaska, Inc. (“MCA”) I recognize that these activities involve numerous risks, which include, by way of example only, falling while hiking, climbing, skiing or crossing rivers or glaciers; failure of a belay; being struck by climbing equipment or falling rock, ice or snow; avalanches; lightning; fire; hypothermia; frostbite; defective or malfunctioning equipment; and attack by insects or animals. I further recognize that the remoteness of the activities may preclude prompt medical care. I further recognize that risk of injury or death may be caused or enhanced by mistakes or negligence on the part of either my fellow participants or MCA officers, directors, guides, instructors, or trip leaders. I nevertheless agree to accept all risks of injury, death, or property damage that may occur in connection with any MCA activity, including use of MCA furnished equipment and MCA backcountry huts.

\_\_\_\_\_ (initial that you have read this paragraph)

**GIVING UP MY LEGAL RIGHTS**

By signing this Agreement, I agree to give up for myself and for my heirs all legal rights I may have against the MCA and my fellow participants in MCA activities (except to the extent that insurance coverage for any claim is provided by an automobile insurance policy or related excess insurance policies). **I give up these legal rights regardless of whether the injury, death, or property damage results from mistakes or negligence on the part of either my fellow participants or the MCA.** (As used in this agreement, MCA means the Mountaineering Club of Alaska, Inc., and all of its officers, directors, guides, instructors and trip leaders.) I understand this agreement shall remain in effect until such time as I provide signed written notice of its revocation to the MCA.

\_\_\_\_\_ (initial that you have read this paragraph)

**MY PROMISE NOT TO SUE**

I agree that I will not sue, or otherwise make any claim against, the MCA or my fellow participants in MCA activities for injury, death, or property damage which occurs in the course of my participation or instruction in mountaineering sports. Any lawsuit relating to MCA activities or this release shall only be filed in the Superior Court for the State of Alaska, Third Judicial District., Anchorage, Alaska. The provisions of this release are severable and if any part of this release is found unenforceable, the remaining provisions shall remain in full force and effect.

\_\_\_\_\_ (initial that you have read this paragraph)

**MY RELEASE OF LIABILITY**

I also agree to release and discharge the MCA and my fellow participants in MCA activities from all actions, claims, or demands, both for myself and for my heirs, dependents, and/or personal representative, for injury, death, or property damage occurring in the course of my participation or instruction in mountaineering sports.

\_\_\_\_\_ (initial that you have read this paragraph)

**MY PROMISE TO INDEMNIFY**

I agree to pay all expenses, including attorney’s fees and court costs, that the MCA or my fellow participants in MCA activities may incur as a consequence of any legal action arising out of injury, death, or property damage suffered by me.

\_\_\_\_\_ (initial that you have read this paragraph)

**MY CONSENT TO MEDICAL TREATMENT**

I consent to any hospital care or medical or surgical diagnosis or treatment which may be necessary as a result of my participation in activities with the MCA. I also understand and agree that I am solely responsible for all applicable charges for such medical treatment, including evacuation and/or rescue cost.

\_\_\_\_\_ (initial that you have read this paragraph)

**I HAVE CAREFULLY READ THIS AGREEMENT AND FULLY UNDERSTAND ITS CONTENT. I AM AWARE THAT THIS IS A BINDING, LEGAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN ME AND THE MCA.**

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent or Guardian (if under 19): \_\_\_\_\_

# Mountaineering Club of Alaska

## Officers

President	Bill Romberg	677-3993
Vice-President	Tom Choate	333-5309
Secretary	Jayne Mack	258-7571
Treasurer	Patty McPherson	336-2225

## Board

Kirk Towner	344-5424
Dolly LeFever	243-7027
John Hess	348-7363
Tom McDermott	277-0774
Richard Baranow	694-1500

Annual membership dues: Single \$10.00 Family \$15.00 (one *Scree* per family)

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 the club waiver found on the previous page 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 treasurer. The post office does not forward the newsletter.

*SCREE* is a monthly publication of the Mountaineering Club of Alaska. Articles and notes submitted for publication and other communication related to the newsletter should be mailed to my address: 1106 W. 54th Ave., Anchorage, AK 99518, or e-mailed to [willy@mcaak.org](mailto:willy@mcaak.org) Articles should be received by April 27th to be included in the May issue.

Paid ads may be submitted to the attention of the Vice-President at the club address and should be "camera ready" and pre-paid. Your cooperation will be appreciated... Willy Hersman, Editor, 561-7900.

Missing your MCA membership card? If so, stop by one of our monthly meetings to pick it up or send us a self-addressed stamped envelope and we'll mail it to you.

MAILING: richard baranow, bill romberg, don smith

HIKING/CLIMBING CHAIRS: matt nedom, 278-3648, richard baranow, 694-1500

HUTS: mark miraglia, 338-0705

WEB: [www.mcaak.org](http://www.mcaak.org) (go here to change your address)

MAILING LIST SERVICE: [mcaak@yahoogroups.com](mailto:mcaak@yahoogroups.com)



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