

MAY 1997

A Publication of the Mountaineering Club of Alaska

Volume 40 Issue 05

Box 102037, Anchorage, Alaska 99510

MAY MEETING

Wednesday

May 21, 7:30 pm

Pioneer Schoolhouse, 3rd & Eagle Streets
Downtown Anchorage

Slide Show: TBA.

HIKING AND CLIMBING SCHEDULE

- May 24 Blueberry Hill (4531)
Class D. Western Chugach. Another climb in the Chugach National Forest. One of the last peaks along Turnagain Arm to be climbed. Come find out why.
Leaders: Kneely Taylor 248-1003 (h) and Steve Gruhn 344-1219 (h).
- Jun 20-22 Mount Ascension (5710)
Easy Glacier Travel. Kenai Mountains. Start from Primrose Campground in the Chugach National Forest. Trip follows the Primrose Creek Trail to Lost Lake. Camp near Lost Lake. Limited to 9.
Leader: Tom Choate 333-5309
- Jun 21 Flattop Mountain (3554)
Class B. Western Chugach. Annual summer solstice sleepout. Start from Glen Alps in Chugach State Park. No leader.
- 21-25 Hicks Creek to Boulder Creek
Class C+. 42-mile hike through the Talkeetna Mountains. Limited to ten people. Listed in 55 Ways.
Leader: Bill Wakeland 563-6246.
- Jun 28 - Jul 6 Aniakchak Crater and Vent Mountain
Class B - C. Charter from King Salmon at a cost of \$240 - \$475 per person (plus air fare to King Salmon). Base camp will be in the crater. Trip limited to nine people including leader.
Leader: Don Hansen 248-7184 (h) or 271-6656 (w).
- Jul 11-16 The Goat Trail (Chitistone Gorge)
Class C. Fly in from McCarthy for \$200 per person. This trip follows an old miner's trail through the Wrangell-Saint Elias National Park and Preserve. Limited to 8 people.
Leader: Curvin Metzler 333-8766 (Voice)

July 13

Mt. Williwaw

Class D. From Williwaw Lakes.
Leader: Tom Choate 333-5309

July 26 - Aug 3 Mount Igikpak area of Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve

Class C. Charter from Bettles at a cost of \$430 - \$450 per person (plus approximately \$248 air fare from Fairbanks to Bettles). Climb of lesser peaks in the Mount Igikpak area. Trip limited to 8 people including the leader. Note: This trip is NOT a climb of Mount Igikpak.
Leader: Don Hansen 248-7184 (h) or 271-6656 (w).

Aug 28-Sept 1 Kesugi Ridge to Curry Ridge

Class C. 25-mile hike through Denali State Park.
Leader: Curvin Metzler 333-8766 (Voice)

TRIP REPORTS

Eklutna Traverse

by Kirk Towner



It didn't quite start according to plan. As we of the first plane load (David Hart, Dawn Groth, and Kirk Towner) unloaded our gear near the top of the Eagle glacier, the weather threatened to prevent the others (Bryan Carey, Bronwen

Wang, and Joe Anders) from joining us. So, we roped up and skied the pleasant two miles down glacier to the base of the hill upon which Rosie's Roost rests. At one point we even heard the drone of the second plane and saw a landing light, but the others were not able to land.

If you haven't been to any of the huts along the Eklutna Traverse, it's worth noting that they all share some common characteristics:

- A-Frame design with plenty of room for at least 6 in the sleeping loft,
- A small kitchen area, table, benches, 2-burner stove, and lantern (bring your own white gas),
- They are all located several hundred feet above the glacier on a hill - requiring a final bit of effort to reach them after a long day's travel.

In this case, however, the evening plane ride on Alpine Air from Girdwood to the Eagle Glacier made for a short first day. We settled into the hut and played a few rounds of cards while debating the fate of the second crew. It turns out they 'landed' at the

Double Musky that evening, while we dined on freeze-dry! To make matters worse, I later discovered that the snacks Dave and Dawn gambled with were leftover hut food - fortunately I didn't win much...

That evening the sky cleared to allow a spectacular view of the Hale-Bopp comet, and the next day dawned without a cloud. We made a leisurely exit and skied halfway up the Whiteout glacier before catching sight of the others - three tiny specks in the distance. That evening found us 5 miles along at the Whiteout Hut (Hans' Hut), and several hours later the others joined us. From this point on, our mob was broken down into three rope teams: the B team (Bryan & Bronwen), the D team (Dave & Dawn), and the T&A team (Kirk T & Joe A, a.k.a. the Crash & Burn Team).

Day 3 arrived much the same; clear skies and sunshine. If it wasn't for the grim weather stories in the hut log, we might easily have interpreted the Whiteout name to refer to bright sun reflecting off the snow - we were truly fortunate. That day as we left the hut to climb Insignificant Peak (7005) and Whiteout Peak (7135), Joe discovered the amazing power of friction that climbing skins have on gravel while sailing downhill at maximum velocity. It seems his rope mate launched downhill in an effort to catch up with the B & D teams without agreeing on a safe navigable speed for one who had never skied downhill.

Whatever the reason, it turned out that first aid was required barely 100 yards from the hut. Fortunately, my military training had prepared me for just such an event: I gave Joe a piece of gauze to dab up the blood streaming from a cut under his eye and promptly secured several strips of duct tape to his newly-reduced-loft down jacket. (Enough feathers had escaped to mark the site as a rare glacial nesting area!) Besides, humans heal; always preserve the equipment.

With the danger of death thus abated, we consulted each other on a new tactic for downhill sections and set off to join the others. Eventually, the three teams arrived at the broad saddle (6100) between Insignificant and Whiteout peaks, two miles east of the hut. A short distance up the south ridge of Insignificant, we cached our skis and changed to crampons and axes for the straightforward but occasionally exposed climb. The D team led off, and an hour or so later we were all enjoying the view from a new summit. After the requisite photos, we returned to our skis and set out for Whiteout Peak, except the D team, who had their eye on the ski down from Warm Point (6685).



The route up Whiteout from the north allows a gradual ski to within several rope lengths from the top. Using care to step around the cornices, the T&A and B teams soon arrived at the weirdly wind-sculpted summit. Another fine view in good weather. The descent and return to the hut went smoothly, and there the mob enjoyed losing a few rounds of hearts to Dave Hart (coincidence, I don't think so...). Joe seemed to prefer Dawn's RN-style medical treatment over my patch job, but she arrived at the same prognosis: he'd live.

Another beautiful day enticed the D and T&A teams to climb Hut Peak (6695) before departing for Pichler's Perch. We corkscrewed up the northeast side to gain the ridge and eventually arrive at the top. Yet another exceptional view, with just a hint of clouds. We returned to the hut, packed up, and the D team led off three miles to Whiteout pass and the East Fork of the Eklutna glacier. Looking back from our lunch stop at the pass, we noticed rapidly building clouds - our timing was perfect. The D team continued four miles down the Eklutna glacier, around a crevassed area, and traversed across the east side of the glacier to avoid the hill up to Pichler's.

The weather had definitely changed, with wind and low clouds - but the hut was warm and dry. The next morning provided the great challenge of our trip: negotiating the broken section of glacier just below the hut with a large cloud parked squarely in our path. Dave led off, linking snowy paths between blue ice ridges. After a dead-end, Joe led a while with similar results. Just after we switched to crampons in the more difficult terrain, we broke through the bottom of the cloud into clear visibility. Dave wasted no time picking a safe route through the last of the open crevasses, down a moraine, and eventually off the glacier.

A long, long ten-mile ski down the river and across Eklutna lake brought us to waiting cars and a chance to rest sore feet. With a final successful stop at the Eagle River Pizza Man, we completed our journey.

Eklutna Winter Climbing Update

by Ernie Borjon



On Sunday, February 23, Ned Lewis and I walked into Eklutna and climbed a veggie/mud route climbed four years ago, named "Mescal." The day before we climbed a route directly across from Ripple called "Wine Cooler."

What had started as a nice, semi-cloudy and calm, Sunday, suddenly turned into a windy, snowy day in Eklutna Canyon. After "Wine Cooler" on Saturday, Ned was stoked to climb more of the "Mud Routes", as Dave and I came to call them when we started doing these routes in 1993. The snow and wind arrived just as we were rappelling off of Mescal.

While we pulled the ropes down, I asked Ned if he wanted more frozen mud and wet veggie to climb today or if he had enough. Ned enthusiastically replied he wanted more, he loved this kind of climbing. "Reminds me of the stuff we did in Japan," he said. Ned an Alaskan, attended college as an exchange student in Japan. I told him we could walk back downstream and check out an unclimbed route that we looked at on the way in and that I would even let him lead it! I figured that following two Mud Routes and the stuff he had done in Japan qualified him to lead on good old Alaskan frozen mud and veggie. He was all for it so off we walked into the sudden storm.

The route that we did is about 100 yards downstream from Ripple on the opposite wall. It starts out as a turf climb, meaning you are climbing on clumps of moss, grass, a tiny bit of snow and ice and hopefully a generous amount of frozen dirt and dead vegetation accumulation. About 30 feet or so above the creek the climb enters a gully/open book and it is very narrow where the gully begins then gets so narrow you have to stem the walls outside of the gully. It opens up above the narrows and you continue up, inside the gully and exit on the right towards a generously sized Spruce tree where the route ends and the belay is located. The whole route is about 90 feet long. The rappel is to the right of the climb and a single rope, doubled will get you down to the creek. Ned called his creation, "Dos Equis."

If I remember correctly, Ned used two Spectres, a small angle piton and a teeny flexible TCU. The one piece of protection ironmongery that has made these routes possible is the Black Diamond "Spectre."

When Dave Lucey and I began doing the Mud Routes we either didn't know about the Spectre or they weren't available yet. We used one old short Snarg that I had owned for years. The Snarg worked great in Frozen turf but you couldn't drive it into mud that had been frozen all winter long, although we tried at times. We also use a set of rigid Friends, baby angle pitons, and runners on alders or trees. I like to carry about 4 or 5 runners with me on these types of climbs. As I said they are excellent as a piece of protection on a tree or an exposed root. They can help reduce rope drag if you find your route zigzagging. The TCU's in

the 4 smaller sizes are also good in Eklutna although our most widely used piece of protection is the Spectre.

Spectres are good in frozen dirt, turf, rock or ice. Some of the routes involve very thin ice on rock and the only way to protect this is with rock pro or runners on alders/trees, unless there are cracks and the rock is reasonably good, (Ha!). Due to the very poor quality of most of the rock in Eklutna, thin ice routes, such as the very first Mud Route we did, Scottish Arf 'n Arf (half and half), long runouts may be necessary with very poor protection.

Sometimes you may feel good about everything and be climbing within your abilities and still fall. Dave Miller put up "Lynchburg Lemonade", two years ago. This climb is an open book that goes to the canyon rim and is located about 75 yards upstream from Ripple, on the opposite wall. On February 8, Dave Lucey and I climbed it but in the process it spit me off at the very top for about a 12 footer and 11 stitches on the forehead. I fell on a very large Hexcentric nut and it held. Dave took over the lead after that and we completed the climb in spite of my whining.

Dave Lucey along with Ned Lewis and I have cranked up the new route activity in Eklutna because we have seen the likes of Steve Garvey skulking about the canyon and has he has done a route or two in there. We also saw Carl Tobin checking out the walls of the canyon although he was instructing an ice climbing class from APU. With the likes of these two hanging around we figured we had better start grabbing routes while we could. All in all, we thought we had better stop looking and start climbing. Ned and I made plans to return the next Saturday. During the week I made contact with Dave and he figured the only way to keep us honest was to join us, so we had a three-some for Saturday.

We walked in to the dam on the morning of March 1st and looked at a couple of things that might be interesting but we didn't like the conditions that day. So we walked back downstream to an area about 150 yards upstream from Annie Greensprings (same side of the canyon) and I led "Kahlua." This route is not very obvious and I had never noticed it before. This is mainly a veggie route for about 100 feet then changes character to a steep moss route. We set up a belay where the climbing steepens up at some alders (at about 100 feet). The climb then continues up and traverses left on moss ledges till you are forced up for 25 feet on vertical moss to a 15 inch diameter spruce. We ended the route here and rappelled off. Two 165 foot ropes got us to the river. The pro was runners, 3

Spectres, a short Snarg and a #2 rigid Friend.

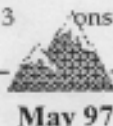
The next unobtrusive climb we found about 250 yards downstream from Ripple. Again this route began as a veggie climb for the first 100 feet then onto rock with a foot wide runnel of very thin ice meandering down. Ned did an excellent job leading this pitch. At the ice the route jogs slightly right to large Spruce trees and a belay. The route proceeds up an open book that calls for dry tooling, hooking and fancy crampon work. Dave used a small TCU and Spectres for protection here. He went right after 50 feet, leaving the open book, then immediately left to the rim. This production was termed "Duck Fart", (a homogeneous drink consisting of three beverages).

On the following Saturday we did "Virgin Mary," an obvious ramp where Thunderbird Creek flows into Eklutna from the right as you walk upstream. This starts out as frozen moss and veggie low on the ramp until you get onto thin ice then the steepest section is bare, well protected (5.8) rock. This was Ned's (reminds me of the stuff we did in Japan) Lewis' creation. Steve Garvey arrived as we were rappelling off and then proceeded to do the second ascent. He graded it M4+. Steve was featured in Climbing Magazine as one of America's "Mixed Masters," in a recent issue. Way to go Steve!

Ned used Spectres and TCU's to protect this fine 130 foot climb. Two ropes will get you safely down to the river. Rappel to the right.

As Steve was repeating our climb, we walked downstream for about 75 yards to the opposite wall and climbed what I think is the hardest route Ned, Dave or I have done in here. We broke the tradition of naming the climbs after booze with this one. It begins as steep thin veggie, enters a shallow depression that transforms to an open book about 100 feet above the ground. I set up a belay here and Dave came up and led 150 feet of frozen dirt, unconsolidated veggie, ok rock and very (don't drop that one me, please) poor rock. Vertical for about 50 feet, using Friends, Spectres (and prayers?) for protection. The route then trends slightly right, then up, left and up again, forming a rough large question mark. Following this route was difficult to the point I dropped a Spectre while removing it, off balance. When Ned came up he had to bypass a #1 Friend because he was in no position to fight it out. Dave retrieved it on rappel. Two 165 ropes will get you to the river and to the base of the one we called, "Carry On Baggage."

I called Dave Miller after my aerobic demonstration on his climb "Lynchburg Lemonade" and



told him what happened, he remarked, "Still doing those sick routes in there, huh, Ernie?" "Those routes you hope no one will ever follow?"

This being a fairly dry winter leaves this type of route almost bare of ice. We have seen them in past years where there is some ice in many of the gullies that we have climbed but not too much this year. The depressions and gullies that have snow sliding down them after a winter's many snowfalls, form ice from the mechanical working of the snow, as in an avalanche. The sliding snow leaves behind minute layers of ice as it slides down the depressions and these layers gradually build up. Then in February and March, with longer and warmer days, the snow melt can add to the ice and it really builds up, maybe a couple of inches thick. This is the result of warm temperatures during the day and freezing at night.

We have been debating, among ourselves, about how to grade these climbs. Steve gave Virgin Mary, a Grade M4+ and we feel this justified and gives credibility to what we have been climbing. But, I feel that Dave Miller's remarks must also be taken into consideration in a Grading System. This is how I would grade, Carry On Baggage, Buttermilk Zone, Kahlua, and Duck Fart. Kahlua, I would say is an M5. Buttermilk Zone is an M5AR+, Duck Fart is M5AR+ and Carry On Baggage should be M6-AR+. In reality, this may not even be climbing, which reminds me of a C&W song that sings, "It's not love but it keeps love from driving me mad." "No, it's not love, but it's not bad!"

Happiness is hugging veggie in Eklutna, November through April! It's not Bad! Climb Happy!

*Asylum (may be) Recommended

Ski Mountaineering in the Scandinavia Peaks

by Cory Hinds



The Scandinavia Peaks are a collection of rugged but fairly non-technical peaks located off of the upper Matanuska Glacier. The peaks range in elevation from around 8300 feet to over 9400 feet in elevation. Many of the peaks have long elevated ridgelines with false summits. It was these beautiful ridge routes, the density of peaks, and the proximity of the MCA's Scandinavia Hut that first attracted us to the area. As we were to find out, the

proximity of almost all the Scandinavia Peaks to relatively docile glaciers provides excellent opportunities to combine ski approaches (many to within 700 feet of the summit) and descents from most of the peaks. Combining a visit to this area with a climb of Mount Marcus Baker provided a solid two-week agenda (see separate trip report for Marcus Baker climb).

The area of the upper Matanuska just north of Mount Marcus Baker and the surrounding 12000-foot plateau has been called the "blue hole" because the area often sees blue sky when the plateau several miles to the south is socked in. This blue hole was happening for us on the first two days of our stay; and after that, it was blue everywhere for five days. After sitting out some storms on Marcus Baker, the cozy Scandinavia Hut and blue hole sun really lifted our spirits; we were ready to climb! The first day, we ferried up a load of gear from the base of Dog Bone Hill, and later took a recon ski up the north fork of the Scandinavian Glacier to look at the Northwest Ridge of Norway Peak (8960 feet). After slogging through 2 to 3 feet of unconsolidated powder at the landing strip below the hut, we were relieved to find the snow on the glacier well consolidated and the crevasse coverage excellent. The line appeared do-able, but very steep. Could we get around the rock band on the north?

Next morning, four MCA climbers (Cory and Elena Hinds, Chris Riggio, and Michelle Potkin) headed out at about 8:00 A.M. to give Norway a go. We followed the lateral moraine on the north side of the glacier for about 1 mile then jumped onto the north fork of the Scandinavia Glacier and skied up to approximately 7500 feet on the ridge. Leaving our skis and strapping on crampons, we kicked steps up the steep gully just north of the ridge. The angle was not as steep as it appears from below and we did not protect the slope until we were below the rock band and the ridge became exposed. The snow conditions were excellent; not too soft, but you'd get your whole foot on each step. When we reached the rock band, we opted to go straight up through rather than traverse above exposed slopes. Moving together, weaving the rope through the rocks, we quickly and safely moved up. Most of the rock was loose, but the climbing was not difficult. Climbing up a final 100-foot ice cap at 40 degrees or so brought us to a broad plateau just 30 feet below the summit. We dropped our packs and one-by-one climbed the summit then enjoyed lunch with a view together on the plateau in clear skies and no wind.

We could see that it would be easy enough to drop down several hundred feet to the east, and

depending on snow conditions, cross the upper basin and climb Finland Peak (9405 feet) from the same approach. This approach to Finland Peak may be preferable when the upper basin is cut off by crevasses. We downclimbed our route and skied unroped all the way to the hut, arriving in time to enjoy the late afternoon sun on the front porch (6:00 P.M.). Later, we enjoyed clear views of the comet and crescent moon.

Next morning there was not a cloud in the sky. Unfortunately, Chris and Michelle needed to head out, so they headed down while Elena and I headed up (9:30A.M.) This time our objective was Iceland Peak (8870). We could see from the map that we could get all the way to the pass (above 8000 feet) on skis, run up a relatively low angle slope, then hopefully ski all the way down the Nordic (aka Viking) Glacier to the landing strip. Again, we headed up the moraine and onto the north fork of the Scandinavia Glacier. Heading north, we dropped off the glacier at the foot of a gully east of a peak at the low point in the ridge. The snow was warming up fast in the gully so we moved up quickly. Once on the Nordic Glacier, we climbed the steps up to the pass and had lunch. Easily negotiating the ridge, we enjoyed a splendid unobstructed view south to Marcus Baker and the impressive plateau and cliffs at the head of the Matanuska Glacier from the summit. An impressive cairn with an Altoids can register said that Mike Ohms and company were up there the year before. The ski down was phenomenal; 3500 ft vertical, and no crevasse problems. Again, we were back at the hut by about 6pm relaxing in the sun and eating.

Next morning, as the weather was again perfect, we again climbed the steps (8:00 A.M. start). This time it was up the south fork of the Scandinavian Glacier toward Finland Peak. We headed up the tongue between Norway and Finland, crossing over some scary crevasses; no problems. Snow conditions in the upper bowl were excellent; we stayed right on top with skis. We ate lunch at 8500 feet at the top of the upper bowl at 1:00 P.M., then left skis and headed up the ridge with crampons. One patch of blue ice on a steep slope below the summit took an ice screw. The rest of the ridge was sometimes exposed but not technical. There are couloirs that appear to drop forever off the backside of this ridge. Found a film-case register with entry from Tom Choate and partner from 1994 and a ticket stub from the movie "Grumpy Old Men - \$1.00". Go figure... We took a good look at the access to Sweden Peak's east ridge for that was on the agenda for the following day. Also checked out Sweden's north ridge; steep, sustained and corniced, this ridge is a true classic which looks doable but very

intimidating. Skied down roped over the obvious crevasses to the base of the tongue, then unroped and cruised back to the hut, again back by about 6:00 P.M.

At this point, we were almost hoping for a weather day so we could rest. We had done three peaks in three days, and we were tired. But Sweden was the queen, the jewel...and there was added incentive because we had heard rumors that it had not yet been climbed. So again we climbed the steps (8:30 A.M. start) with sun in our faces and reached the ridge at 8500 at about 12:30 P.M. There was a lot of up and down on the east ridge, but it was not technical and the snow conditions were good (no huge cornices barring the way). We crossed a frozen pond between two bumps and gained the summit via a small north-facing gully with some blue ice at the head, then some rock scrambling directly on the ridge. We did not find a cairn or register, so we left our own. Spectacular views down over to Turtle Flats and Mt. Thor. Descending the summit, a white gyrfalcon flew over us within 100 feet; what a sight! We were back at the pass at 6:00 P.M. and at the hut by 7:30 P.M.

The next day we took a load of gear down to the base of Dog-Bone Hill, then retraced our steps to the base of Norway for a successful recovery of Michelle's missing ice axe. We began our ski out the following morning.

The weather and snow conditions made the climbing and skiing terrific. Using skis allowed us to climb four peaks in four days, spending every night recharging in the comfort of our excellent hut. The blue hole and Scandinavia Hut are a real hidden treasure.

Portage Glacier Visitor to Whittier

by Joe Anders



On March 28, our family did the Portage-Whittier traverse. I thought I'd write it up for others to keep in mind for a nice winter trip.

We left a car at the Portage train station then drove to the Visitor Center. The weather was perfect - cloudless sky, temperature in the 40's and no wind. We skied across the lake with Leslie dropping easter eggs every 100 yards or so - that gave the kids plenty of incentive to keep going. Note that the USGS map is way out of date - the glacier has receded several miles away from the mountain where you get off the lake. Aim for the first

big rock pile past the mountain. The trail over the pass was well-packed, so we took our skis off and hiked up to the pass. At the top, we slid down several snow gullies, staying to the left, aiming for the tank farm. At the bottom, the kids hopped into sleds and we pulled them along the train tracks to the train station. We caught the 5:10 train back to Portage. Seven hours one-way.

The two very proud kids who did the entire trip without any help were Leo (5) and Lisa (7). Total distance is 6-7 miles with 700' elevation gain. Be careful around the icebergs in the lake. I'm told they occasionally cut loose and rotate in the lake ice.

ADZE

For Sale

LOWA Denali plastic mountaineering boots. New-condition - used twice. \$250. Robert 786-7432 (day) or 694-8642 (eves).

Looking for Partners

Looking for people to rock climb, do Eklutna Traverse, hike and/or kayak. Denise 338-2238



MINUTES

APRIL MEETING

There were 6 visitors or new members and the total attendance was about 50.

TREASURY REPORT

Chairperson Kirk Towner was absent but Mark Miraglia announced that the total in all accounts is \$6,673. Mark reports that the Club has received 68% of the projected revenues for the year.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Hiking & Climbing

Chairperson **Steve Gruhn** presented the summer schedule of club trips. See the listing earlier in this scree. The Mt. Ascension trip scheduled for 20-22 June has been cancelled unless another leader is found to replace **Dennis Morford** who recently broke his ankle. (Speedy recovery Dennis.) In addition, a trip wishlist signup sheet and a leader signup sheet were presented. **Don Hansen** announced upcoming trips to Aniakchak Crater and Igikpak area. The trips are currently full, but interested members can put their names

on the waiting list in case someone cancels. The trip to the Igikpak area will begin on 26 July, not 19 July as reported in a previous Scree. **Curvin Metzler** announced several trips including a trip to the Goat Trail on 11-16 July. Signup sheets for these trips were posted.

Parks Advisory

Chairperson **Scott Bailey** announced that the first 4.5 miles of the Hicks Cr. to Boulder Cr. trial may end up on private land if we do not respond to the Mat-Su Borough Trail Plan. Information was presented.

Huts

Chairperson **Mark Miraglia** announced that there is no fuel at Rosie's Roost hut, but there is fuel at the Whiteout hut. Members are heading across the traverse are encouraged to bring extra fuel for Rosie's Roost. Mark also reports that parties recently back from the traverse reported high avalanche hazard on Goat Ridge. GPS coordinates for the huts on the Eklutna Traverse were published in last month's Scree. Now there is no excuse for getting lost. The club has some supplies which need to go into the Drigni Hut. Please contact Mark if you are heading in that way.

Geographic Names

Chairperson **Tom Choate** reports that state agencies are beginning to recognize that the MCA is an authority on at least names of the peaks. The committee is now working on names in the Anchorage A-6 quad. Members with information on peak names in this area are encouraged to talk to Tom.

Equipment

Mark Miraglia reported that the club now has 4 new 150 foot ropes which were cut from the 600 ft spool. In addition to these ropes, the club owns 6 other ropes which are OK.

Training

Chairperson **Aze Azegami** announced that the glacier travel and crevasse rescue training course will be on 3 and 4 May at the Matanuska Glacier. A mandatory orientation meeting will be held at 7pm on 30 April at the Pioneer Schoolhouse. Signup sheets were provided. **Steve Gruhn** announced that the Arctic Orienteering Club will be offering several map and compass training sessions. The Orienteering Club schedule was published in last month's Scree.

OLD BUSINESS

Mark Miraglia reports that the DNR has decided to combine the **lease applications** for all our huts into one application. This year, we have been requested to post a \$1000 bond for all huts, then beginning next year, lease fees would be \$50/hut/year.

NEW BUSINESS

At the May meeting, the membership will be asked to vote to approve payment of annual lease fees for our huts.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Steve Davis provided a report on the local and nationwide ~~activities of the American Alpine Club~~. The AAC has opposed the recent Forest Service plan banning fixed anchors. Steve has contacted our senators and they have contacted the Forest Service who then decided to slow the process down and re-look at the issue. Therefore, the comment period for this proposed rule is still open, and members are encouraged to write to the Forest Service to express concerns with the ban. The construction of the \$4MM American Mountaineering Center is progressing nicely. This new facility located in Golden, Co. will serve as headquarters of the AAC and other local mountaineering organization as well as house the AAC library and climbing exhibits. Anyone traveling through the area is encouraged to stop by and visit. The AAC is continuing to increase its membership. The national gained 1000 members last year and the Alaska membership is at 78. The annual meeting of the AAC will be in Seattle this year. The meeting will be in the first week of December. The trip could be done low budget as floor space is available. Contact Steve for more information. On the local level, Steve recommended that the MCA and AAC work together to generate some trailhead signs for local climbing areas. The signs would have basic common sense "do's and don'ts" (such as don't belay from the railroad tracks) and would be a good first step to prevent future access problems for climbers.

Reminder: **membership cards** will not be mailed out. Members need to come to a meeting to pick up the new cards.

Members are encouraged to visit the Great Harvest Bread Co. and thank them for the ongoing supply of bread for our **refreshments**. Members are also reminded to chip in for refreshments to cover costs.

The **photo calendar** was discussed. There will be two categories: (1) people and (2) places and things. Entries (5X7) must be received by the August meeting. The top 12 entries will be chosen and the calendar will be published and sold.

Steve Davis presented an excellent slideshow on their 1978, 40-day climb of the West Ridge of Mt. Logan. Liked that black tarp water generator.

Respectfully submitted,
Cory Hinds

EDITORIALS

Scree Editor

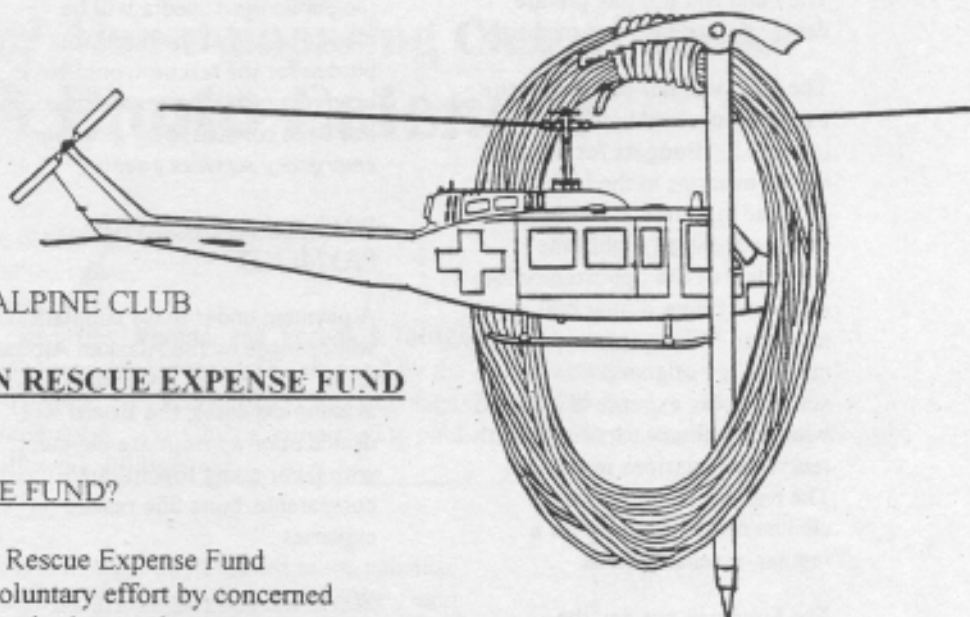
Correction: The 'Kan Club is Not Looking for Members

Our club recently received a letter from Doug Buchanan stating that contrary to an announcement made at the February MCA meeting that the Alaskan Alpine Club was looking for members, it was their policy to "encourage people to not spend money on club membership since they get only a membership card and *nothing else*." I guess that means members no longer receive Doug's lengthy tirades against the National Park Service, Alaska State Parks, the American Alpine Club, the MCA, the Mountain Safety Center, the U.S. President, all government agencies and just about anyone else who he perceives as a threat to freedom. If so, then why are non-members getting more than members? We could really do with *nothing else* as well.

Doug goes on to imply that the leadership of the MCA has been trying to keep from its members any announcement or mention of a rescue fund, administered by the Alaskan Alpine Club, called the Mountain Rescue Expense Fund. MCA leaders are equated with, among others, Deng Xio Peng and Adolph Hitler, though the logic behind this conclusion is difficult to follow. Far be it for any MCA officer to withhold such important information about "the best solution to the public expenses of mountain rescues." I am placing in this issue the heretofore "blacklisted information about the Mountain Rescue Expense Fund," so all you freedom-starved members will not feel quite as oppressed by the MCA leadership as apparently you have for the entire existence of the club.

The letter is pretty standard for Doug, with the usual name-calling and diatribes against an evil and oppressive world of beaurocrats. It all stems from a decision in 1981 by the National Park Service to not grant him one of the limited climbing concessions on Denali, a decision he has apparently still not recovered from. He has ignored advice to just let it go and get on with his life, preferring the unsatisfying role of getting even. I guess we can just keep on filing these letters, as we have for 16 years, not to hide anything, as Doug might accuse, but, well, publishing them would put the "MCA leadership" in the role of getting even.





ALASKAN ALPINE CLUB

MOUNTAIN RESCUE EXPENSE FUND

WHAT IS THE FUND?

The Mountain Rescue Expense Fund constitutes a voluntary effort by concerned mountaineers and other outdoor persons to meet the *public* expenses of off-road rescue missions involving themselves.

WHAT WILL THE FUND DO?

The Fund will pay a portion of the public expenses for off-road rescues involving Fund members. Aviation expenses will be the priority for Fund payments.

WHAT WILL THE FUND NOT DO?

The Fund does not provide a rescue organization. Membership in the Fund does not guarantee or imply that a member will be rescued at a time of need or that the total expenses of a rescue will be paid.

WHAT IS THE COST?

A contribution of \$10 will enroll a person for the remainder of the calendar year in which that person enrolls. Contributions to this Fund are tax deductible under IRS code 501c3.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO JOIN?

Any person is eligible to join the Fund. There are no requirements to be a member of any organization. Fund membership is separate from the Alaskan Alpine Club membership

WHAT RESCUES ARE COVERED?

A rescue mission is covered under this Fund if it is a bona fide rescue resulting from an accident, injury, illness or evident threat to the health of a Fund member, conducted in Alaska, Canada, Greenland or the U.S. The rescue mission must involve an off-road incident, and may include non-mountaineering activities or environments. The rescue must be conducted under the jurisdiction of a State or County public safety/law enforcement agency, appropriate Canadian or Greenlandic authority, or a recognized rescue organization.

HOW MUCH WILL THE FUND PAY?

The Fund will currently pay up to \$4,000 but never more than 7% of the Fund assets per rescue mission. As the Fund grows, payments will increase to the full public cost of each rescue.

WHO WILL THE FUND PAY?

The Fund will pay public treasuries and bona fide volunteer rescue organizations.

continued . . .



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WHO WILL THE FUND NOT PAY?

The Fund will not pay private debts incurred by Fund members.

The Fund will not pay for rescue expenses incurred by the military in the U.S. Budgets for military rescue missions in the U.S. are included in normal training funds that are spent on flight time regardless of the opportunity for realistic training during real rescue missions. Military practice rescue missions are ongoing. No additional tax expense is incurred when the military participates in real rescue missions in the U.S. The military will not assume civilian rescue missions on a regular or reliable basis.

The Fund will not pay the government for any rescues in the U.S. which are controlled by any *land managing* agency. The Fund endorses the Alaska Fish & Wildlife Federation & Outdoor Council's policy on proper agencies for rescue missions. That policy concludes that resource managing agencies which usurp emergency services detrimentally divert funds from resource management goals and fragment public rescue capabilities.

There is also a deadly conflict of interest when the same agency that writes visitor regulations which can affect accident potential, then in turn gains budget excuses from accident and rescue events within its land jurisdiction. The incentive is to facilitate increased potential for accidents and expensive rescues through regulatory policies. Power corrupts and budget excuses are a notorious priority over stated government agency goals. With budgets always under threat in the debt-ridden U.S. government, deadly abuses in this regard, some of them proven in court, are becoming prevalent among U.S. land managing agencies.

At those times when a land managing agency in the U.S.

refuses to surrender jurisdiction and financial control of a rescue mission involving a Fund member, the public news media will be made aware that the public tax burden for the rescue would have been reduced if the rescue mission had been conducted by a proper *emergency services* agency.

WHO WILL MAKE THE PAYMENTS?

A payment under these stipulations will be made by the Alaskan Alpine Club. For rescues involving non-aviation expenses, the Board will decide upon appropriate payment, with favor going toward any comparable, bona fide rescue expenses.

WHO WILL MANAGE THE FUND ASSETS?

Mt. Rescue Trust Ltd will manage the Fund's principal assets.

HOW WILL THE FUND BE MANAGED?

The Fund will be invested in commercial mutual funds. All dividend/interest monies shall accrue exclusively within the Fund.

ADMINISTRATION COSTS OF THE FUND.

The Alaskan Alpine Club will donate the time, effort and money from its administration fund to advance this program until it is large enough to sustain these costs with its own resources. A priority goal of the Alaskan Alpine Club is to assist outdoor persons in meeting their public responsibilities.

SPECIFIC EXCLUSIONS FOR USE OF THE FUND

No portion of the Fund will be used to compensate Board members or any person for any reason other than in compliance with the Fund stipulations, and other than for standard investment fees required for the investment program by a recognized,

commercial investment company. Said company may not be substantially associated with the Alaskan Alpine Club, Mt. Rescue Trust or their Directors or Trustees.

GRANTS AND DONATIONS TO THE FUND.

Additional contributions to the Fund are solicited from outdoor recreationalists and others interested. All donations are tax deductible under IRS code 501c3. Fund members are encouraged to organize fund raising activities to benefit the Fund. the Alaskan Alpine Club conducts one or more annual fund raising events to benefit this fund.

DISSOLUTION OF THE FUND.

Should this program be discontinued for any reason, after expiration or refund to all current members, all accrued monies in the Fund shall be transferred to the Alaska Alpine Rescue Group Mountain Rescue Fund to be administered in a similar, self-sustaining, long range program. The AARG Mountain Rescue Fund is designated to encourage long-range solutions to mountain rescue expense responsibilities.

EFFECTIVENESS OF THE FUND.

This Fund will be effective to the extent that individual mountaineers and other outdoor persons accept their rescue responsibilities *before* accidents involve them, and voluntarily support the program. Word-of-mouth encouragement among fellow mountaineers is encouraged.

TO JOIN THE FUND. . .

Send \$10 with your name and address to the Alaskan Alpine Club, 3641 Sandvik, Fairbanks Alaska 99709. Phone 907 479 2149. Fax 907 479 2151.

REMINDER

The *First Annual* Mountaineering Club of Alaska 1998 Photo Calendar

We need your photos by the August meeting:

- ◆ Any current (1997) club member is eligible to enter.
- ◆ Photos should be hiking- or climbing-related.
You may enter one photo in each of two categories: **People** and **Places & Things**.
- ◆ You may submit any size print (5 x 7 recommended), but it must be received by the August meeting.
Either drop it off at a meeting or mail it to: MCA / PO Box 102037 / Anchorage AK 99510-2037
- ◆ All entries remain the property of the photographer. The Club is authorized to publish the photo for use in the calendar only.
- ◆ Attach a note card to the back with the following information:

Your name, address, and telephone Category and title of the photograph Any interesting details about the photo that might be published in the calendar (was it a club trip, local area, club member, when and where was it taken, etc.)
--

We need your calendar order by the September meeting:

The calendars will be available around December, *please let us know if you want a calendar by the September meeting* so we will know how many to print. You are encouraged to enter a photo and pre-pay, the prices will be:

\$20 ◆ Normal price for non-members

\$18 ◆ Normal price for members

\$16 ◆ Rock-bottom super-discount price for members who submit a photo in the contest and pre-pay by the September meeting