

the **SCREE**

Mountaineering Club of Alaska

May 2009

Volume 52 Number 5



**Problems worthy of attack
prove their worth by hitting back.**
~Piet Hein

Monthly Meeting
Wed. May 20 @ 6:30 PM
Harold Faust presents climbs
in the Seward area.

Mount Marcus Baker, Take Two
Scandinavian Hut
Portage Peak
Knight Island Paddle Climbs
Cooper Lake to Hope Ski Tour
POM, Goose Peak, Alaska Range

The Mountaineering Club of Alaska

"To maintain, promote and perpetuate the association of persons who are interested in promoting, sponsoring, improving, stimulating and contributing to the exercise of skill and safety in the Art and Science of Mountaineering"

Join us for our club meetings the 3rd Wednesday of the month at the First United Methodist Church, 9th Avenue and G Streets next to the ConocoPhillips Building (you may use marked parking after hours).

Contact information is provided on the back page or visit us on the web at www.mcak.org.

Cover photo: Brian Dixon's photograph captures teammates on the approach to Mount Marcus Baker on the first day of the Club's 2009 trip to attempt the summit.

Article Submission: Articles and photos are best submitted on the web at MCAK.org. You can also attach a word processing document to an email. Due to formatting problems please do not submit material in the body of an email. We prefer articles that are under 1,000 words. To get on the cover, a photo should convey the feeling of mountaineering and show human endeavor.

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Hiking and Climbing Schedule

May 2, Matanuska Peak

Contact leader at least 24 hours in advance.
Leader Steve Gruhn.
sgruhn@clarus-ak.com. 344-1219

May 11, Wolverine Peak

Meet at 6 PM. Contact leader at least 24 hours in advance. Leader Steve Gruhn.
sgruhn@clarus-ak.com. 344-1219

June 6, Nantina Point

Class D, 15 miles round trip, 6,000 feet of elevation gain
Contact leader at least 24 hours in advance.
Leader Steve Gruhn.
Email sgruhn@clarus-ak.com.
Phone: 344-1219(h)

July 3 – 6, Talkeetna Peak Bagging

Spend the 4th of July climbing Mt. Monarch, Mt. Chitna and Peak 6869 (Crown Peak) in the

Talkeetna Mountains. Class D. Upwards of 30 miles and 9,000 feet of gain roundtrip. Hikers could stop at base camp with about 16 miles and 5,000' of gain round trip. Sign up at the May or June MCA meeting. Trip leader Wayne L. Todd. 522-6354

July 19 – August 1, Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

Class B/C. The trip may include elevation gains over 2,000 feet on day hikes. Destination will be Cane Creek to Red Sheep Creek. Set up food cache at Red Sheep Airstrip along the East Fork of the Chandalar River. Fly from there to Cane Creek Airstrip drop off. Spend a week in the Cane Creek drainage and backpack back to Red Sheep Airstrip food cache resupply and spend the 2nd week in the Red Sheep Creek drainage. Leader: Don Hansen,
donjoehansen@msn.com.

President's Corner: Announcement

There will be a vote on a membership fee adjustment at the June general membership meeting.

Mount Marcus Baker, Take Two

by Randy Howell



Photo by Travis Taylor

Stan Olsen and I were the motley leaders of the 2009 trip to Mount Marcus Baker. The crew was Sally Balchin, Britta Maas, Marcin Ksok, John Recktenwald, Travis Taylor, Bill Rice, Eric Holloway, Brian Dixon, and Greg Bragiel. The interest in a MCA climb of Mount Marcus Baker was huge, there were more people wanting to go on the trip than we were comfortable to lead.

Friday, March 27, as Greg and I drove to Palmer to meet the rest of the crew, we were greeted with views of Mount Marcus Baker across the Palmer Hay Flats. We met Paul Claus, owner of Ultima Thule Outfitters, at 9:15 a.m. at his hangar at the Palmer Airport, and discussed various prospects of three drop areas and pickup options. The first five passengers were loaded up into his single-engine Turbine Otter (Super Cub on steroids) and off we flew up the Knik Glacier toward Mount Marcus Baker. Noticing there was snow blowing off a few of the peaks as we approached Mount Marcus Baker we began to reconsider our landing options. Paul checked out the various sites we had discussed and suggested a fourth option, to which I agreed. It was a landing site at the top of the Knik Glacier and the Radcliffe Glacier next to a large nunatak at 8400 feet. This was large clear, safe area with an outstanding view of our objective. We had a crystal-clear day and Paul transported our group of 11 in two loads.

The NOAA weather report that we received said that the next day, Saturday, was to be our best shot at climbing Mount Marcus Baker, so we made a cache with food and fuel at the drop-off site and we headed out with five days of food and fuel across the glacier toward Mount Marcus

Baker, with the peak in view, "What a way to start a trip." We were going downhill ever so slightly away from the Knik Glacier, so this meant that we were crossing the upper Radcliffe Glacier. We then started climbing the main arm of the Radcliffe Glacier toward Mount Marcus Baker with views out into Prince William Sound to the south. The route finding was pretty straightforward; we moved quickly through areas of seracs, and avoided the crevasses which were on the large scale, making them easy to see. We probed and wanded an area between two crevasse fields at 8600 feet, and established camp just as the sun set behind the ridge. Almost instantaneously the temperature seemed to drop 20 to 30 degrees.



Photo by Stan Olsen

The next morning, Saturday, had a 7 a.m. get up with plans to start climbing around 8. It was more like 8:30 or later before we were all moving up the mountain. The higher we climbed the more the weather deteriorated. Marcin was breaking trail and making really good time

from what I could tell from the rear. Eventually he stopped and brought his rope team up to him and the next rope team moved up to where Marcin and his team are. The rope team that I was on arrived and we found out that the route crevassed out where some very large crevasses merged together across the width of the valley. As we talked about a possible route, the weather deteriorated faster than a solution could be found, so we headed back down to our camp and started making camp life more comfortable with snow walls and the erection of two floorless teepee-type tents for cooking and communal activities.

Sunday was a weather day, toward the afternoon weather improved slightly, so we decided to wand a route down through the lower crevasse field to the main glacier so part of the group could move back to the cache the next day. With visibility about the length of a rope we completed this task in relatively short order.



Photo by 'Randy' Howell

Monday, Marcin was up at 6 a.m. informing us that he could see stars and it looked like we might have another try at Mount Marcus Baker. So, a few of the group got up and started getting ready for another possible attempt. By 8 a.m. we decided that we would all go down as the weather up high continued to be unsettled. By 10:30 a.m. we were headed back down to the cache. Around 12:00 Mount Marcus Baker was trying to appear out of the clouds in a bluebird sky day everywhere else. We made comments that we made the wrong decision as we head on to the cache. At the cache we loaded up the extra food and fuel and headed over the pass and started down the Knik Glacier toward a nunatak by Mount Goode. Around 2 p.m. we took a rest stop and Eric called into his NOAA office to get the latest weather report. The report, which wasn't all that promising a forecast, maybe one and half good days out of the next 5 or 6. We also found out that Redoubt Volcano had exploded five times in the last two days. While Eric was on the phone we saw a plane off in the distance flying up the Knik Glacier toward us. It flew overhead, circling once, then a second time, then landed and taxied up alongside us. It was our pilot, Paul, from Ultima Thule in his yellow Super Cub. He also informed us that Redoubt Volcano had erupted and our best chances for flying out might be before the winds changed and started blowing

the ash our way. The group had already decided that we should head out before the major storm blew in, so Britta loaded up into the Super Cub and she flew back to Palmer with Paul. Once at the airport she helped him put away the Super Cub, and get the Otter out of the hangar and ready to fly in to get us.

Meanwhile back on the glacier per Paul's request we took all of our black plastic bags, put snow in them, and placed them going downglacier away from us about every 300 feet apart so that Paul had reference points on the glacier for visual and depth perception. The weather even at this lower elevation was now rapidly deteriorating, we could barely see the top of the pass behind us; the afternoon light was fading, the clouds were dropping, and we were imagining the grayish clouds actually being volcanic ash. Paul flew the Otter back in for us, but again had to make a couple passes as he was unable to locate the black bags until he was right on top of them. On the final approach he flew the whole distance of our garbage bags and touched down right next to us. Paul kept the planes engine running while we loaded up 5 people and gear. Due to the trouble spotting the bags Paul told us to send two people down past the garbage bags to the end of the "runway" so when he came in on the next flight he might be able to see something.

Paul took off and dropped the first load of people and gear down at the foot of the Knik Glacier then came back for the last of us. Stan and I skied down past the garbage bags and we talked about how flat the light was with no real definition of the terrain. When Paul came in this time it was smooth. We all loaded up and flew to Palmer, unloaded and then Paul headed back to get to the rest of the crew at the foot of the Knik Glacier.



Photo by Randy Howell

Even though the trip was abbreviated due to weather and volcanic activity it was a good outing in the beautiful Chugach Mountains. Everyone learned something, especially about the size of the glaciers, and a reminder about the typical weather patterns in this area. Perhaps this is a peak for a smaller group that would be able to find a pilot and leave on short notice when there is a good weather window. If one wants experience in glacier travel in big mountain terrain in typically rather unsettled weather, this is the place to be.

The MCA Scandinavian Hut Experience extended (SHEe) (The S.H.E.e.: Mother Nature)

by Wayne L. Todd



All Photos by Wayne Todd except:
Photo of Wayne by Carrie Wang

We fly with Meekin's Air Service into the Scandinavian Hut, exchanging places with a party of three who had a week of clear and cold weather. Surely, we would have the same.



Day 2. Cloudy morning so Greenland Peak is the goal. We are soon in more clouds and snow. From the windy summit we barely glimpse Iceland Peak. The ski back is problematic with flat light, rock strikes and mixed snow conditions. (Standard South Ridge route).

D3. Weather is worse, so we have a hut maintenance day, and a couple games of Settlers.

D4. Good visibility, but windy. Carrie and I, roped, follow Chris and Toby, roped, up Finland Peak* (we always follow Toby and Chris). (Standard North Ridge route).

Finland Peak



D5. A mostly sunny day lures Toby, Chris, and me toward Ya Sure. We stop at the gusty East Ridge, ill-equipped for the climb - it's steep. This scenic ski tour displays all the Scandinavian Peaks interlaced by glacier. We shoot a few hundred pictures while on tour. The thin snowpack of various layers above facets over rocks has reduced my pristine mountaineering skis to near rock skis.

Tracks toward Ya Sure



Back at the hut, Carrie cleaned the potties and started the loft window project (the frame had been blown out). We all help to make a smaller, stronger, double-pane window. (Good timing). I wonder about the MCA group attempting Mount Marcus Baker.

Toby decides to sleep outside as the weather is so nice and his -40° bag is way too warm for the $+40^{\circ}$ loft. Minutes after bedding down, the wind arises and steadily increases to 50 to 100 mph for four hours. We listen to a cacophony of sounds, including ice or rocks impacting the hut. Toby sleeps inside. My mantra for this trip, 'huts are good', is further chanted. I am concerned about the MCA party on Mount Marcus Baker. (Turns out they were flown off the mountain on D4)

As quiet resumes in the early morning, Chris abruptly thrashes in his bag. He later tells of his large-squirrel-in-a-plastic-box-he's-holding dream (sounds like the rabbit in Monty Python). The barometric pressure is sporadic.

D6. We shovel out, play numerous games of Settlers under cloudy, windy, and eventually snowy skies. Most ridges have been scoured of snow. Toby begins an igloo.

D7. Up into a snowy, peaceful low-visibility day. Toby completes his igloo. Chris makes a snowblock man and we target practice with wands.



D8. A nice day! (Clear and calm). Carrie and I, roped, follow Toby's and Chris' ski tracks over Ya Sure pass to Viking Glacier saddle (drop skis here), up Iceland Peak (great Chugach Mountain views with only a slight

breeze) and up Latvia Peak (more great views including Mount Thor and the tapering of the Chugach Mountains). Carrie and I actually pass by Toby and Chris twice during this. Carrie and I have an excellent unroped ski back to Ya Sure pass where we see Toby and Chris descending Ya Sure.

Wayne on Latvia Peak



D9. Pick-up day and the weather is good (only on our end it turns out), until 2 PM. Clouds move in and out over the glacier landing strip. Mike arrives at 4:30 PM, circles three times and, with no clearing over the strip, flies off. Two minutes later the strip is totally clear. Disappointment all around.

High winds as before buffet the hut all night. 'Huts are good,' except we are hoping to be home now.

D10. Mixed weather day. Toby and Chris get a hankering to get out, so they pack up and ski down the Matanuska Glacier in the late afternoon. Carrie and I are mildly envious. (Someone needs to stay to load the plane).

D11. Nice morning, but no plane action. We are hanging out in the loft and hear a loud thump. "Must be ice falling off the roof." (There is no roof ice). Another more definitive thump, Carrie and I: "Open the door," "No, we don't know what's out there," "Look out the loft window." We see Toby and Chris have returned. They were turned around by a cracked-up glacier and poor visibility. Chris has a nice blister of a toe.

We retrieve their items we placed on the runway for markers. On an evening bootie stroll I encounter a lone ptarmigan. I let him be for now, but think he'll be pretty tasty if we're still here in a couple of days. Carrie has read half of the books in the hut.

D12. Another nice day, so we're all ready by 9:30 AM, even though only one person flies out at a time. (A 45-minute window between flights).

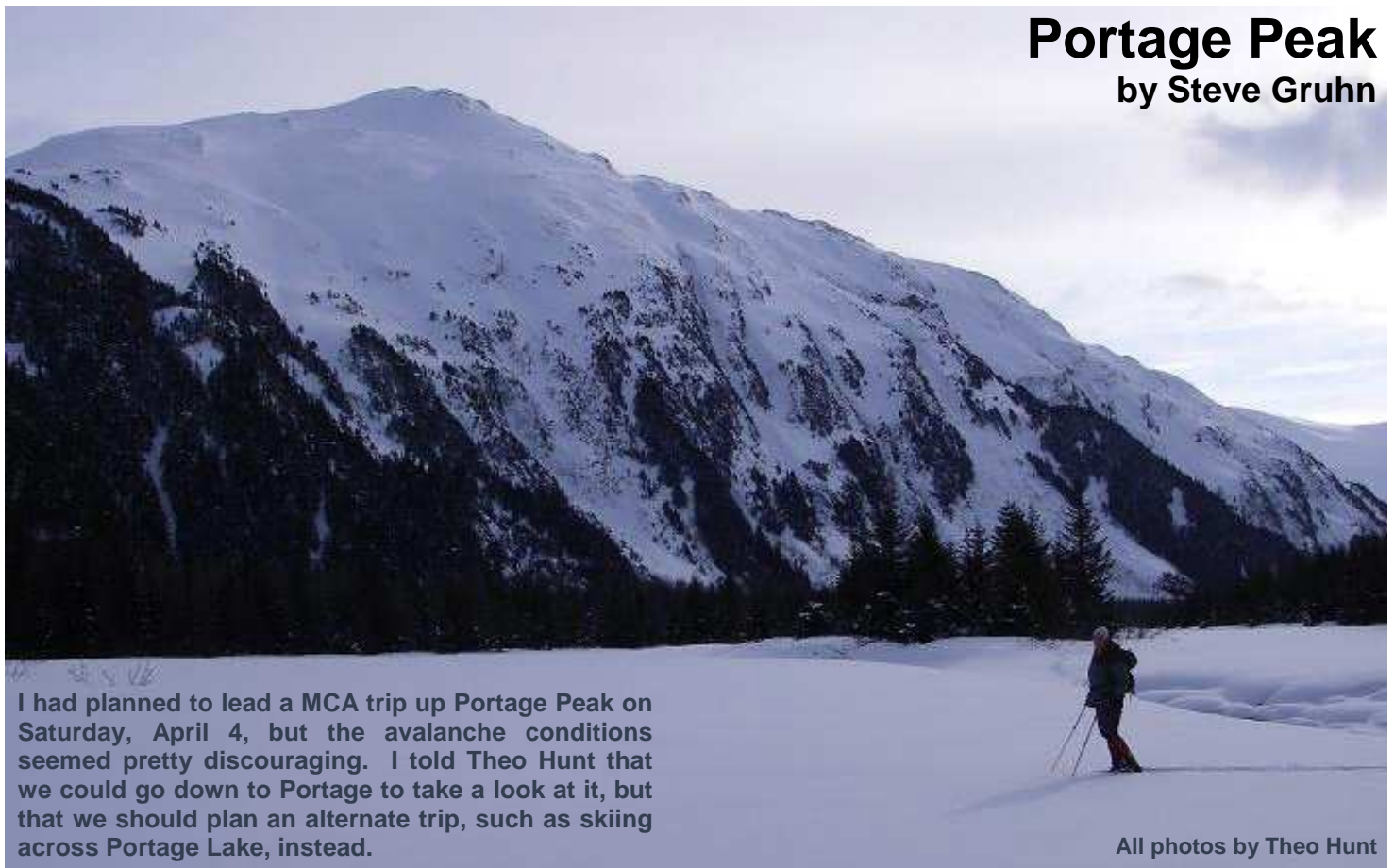
Toby proclaims, "Plane only joking." We threaten to make him fly out last. The order is Chris, Carrie, Toby, and me.

About 11 AM, Chris steps outside and proclaims "Plane." "We don't believe you. Wait, that is a plane sound, and there it is. Wait, that's two planes, crap." We doubly scramble to get Carrie out, also. Toby and I tidy up and meet the first two of a party of four that are arriving who have abandoned their Neacola Mountains trip due to the Redoubt Volcano eruption.

"Free at last from the hut." (We didn't have communications with the outside so we were glued to the hut from day eight on).

*Finland Peak: Each team of two had four pickets, which were used for the mildly steep, but very exposed, North Ridge. On our three-pitch climb, no ice screws were used. We had 5° and 10 to 30 mph winds, which made for cold climbing with two teams on the ridge. Views and picture potential were good amidst low partly-cloudy skies, but due to temperatures, Carrie and I just tried to keep moving.

March 20-31, 2009
Chris Cannon, Toby Schwoerer, Carrie Wang, Wayne Todd



Portage Peak by Steve Gruhn

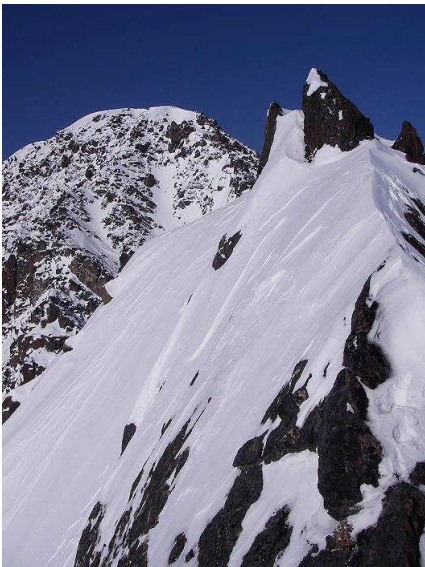
I had planned to lead a MCA trip up Portage Peak on Saturday, April 4, but the avalanche conditions seemed pretty discouraging. I told Theo Hunt that we could go down to Portage to take a look at it, but that we should plan an alternate trip, such as skiing across Portage Lake, instead.

All photos by Theo Hunt

But, after seeing Portage Peak from Portage Glacier Road, we spied what we thought looked like a possible route along the south ridge. This is the route that Wayne Todd told me that he and Kathy Still had climbed on March 10, 2000. We drove up and down Portage Glacier Road looking for a place to avoid open water while crossing the streams that feed Portage Creek from the south. After a while we found a possible crossing with only shallow open water.

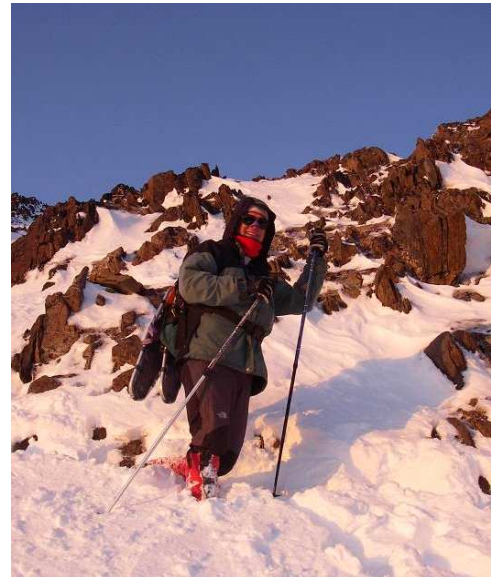
At about 9:30 a.m., Theo and I left the vehicle at the pullout for the Five Fingers climbing area on the south side of Portage Glacier Road and began walking east for a quarter mile, snowshoes in hand. After crossing the bridge over Williwaw Creek, we left the road, donned snowshoes, and headed north across the flats, crossing Portage Creek, a telephone line, and the railroad before reaching the base of Portage Peak.

We startled a moose that fled through shoulder-deep snow. Once at the base of the mountain, we could see several cliff bands. Theo tried to ascend a frozen waterfall to get above the cliffs, but I figured there had to be an easier way, so after a short while we both moved to the west. At the west base of the south ridge is a heavily forested, steep mound, which we began climbing. We headed up the mound and trended to the northeast to gain Portage Peak's south ridge. At timberline it became apparent how much the trees had been protecting us from the wind. We headed northeast one-at-a-time to avoid slopes I suspected to pose some avalanche danger. Once on top of a small knob, we zigzagged back to the northeast. From below, the slope appeared gentler than it actually was, so we continued one-at-a-time until we reached the rocky south ridge. We took off our snowshoes at about 2400 feet and left them with large rocks on top so they wouldn't blow away. We continued climbing up, noting four well-camouflaged white-tailed ptarmigan, a flock of eight swans flying overhead in formation, a bald eagle soaring aloft, and a couple mountain goats.



which we reached at about 6:30 p.m. We didn't linger very long because of the wind and we were soon retracing our steps. Because of the wind-drifted snow, though, it was at times difficult to find our tracks.

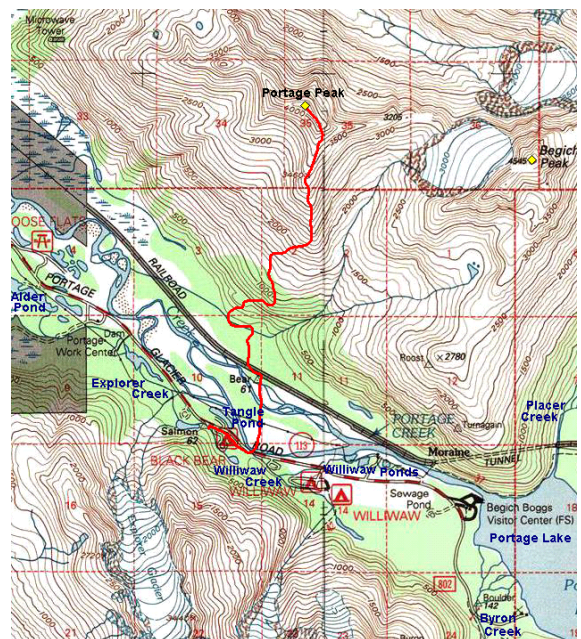
And now, as the sky turned pink and orange, we knew we were going to lose the race with the darkness. But once we had reached the snowshoes we figured we could follow our tracks. In the darkness of the timber the moonlight provided just enough illumination to guide us.



And back on the flats we began our trudge back to the car, arriving at 11:15 p.m. I was plenty tired.

There were many instances during this trip where neither of us was confident that we would reach the summit, but we communicated well and made good decisions so that we were able to make the ascent despite not having high hopes. And following the goats certainly helped a lot.

At about 3700 feet the angle of the south ridge began to increase, so we donned crampons. Oddly enough, we were able to follow fresh mountain goat tracks for much of the ascent. The goats seemed to know the easiest paths to navigate some of the difficult terrain. There was plenty of exposure and many of the rocks under the snow rolled under our feet. There were instances where we decided to divert from the goat tracks only to find that they had selected an easier route. After all, it is their home and they had spent a lot more time there than we had. The tracks led us to the east face of the south ridge and up to a false summit. On the false summit, we could see a higher summit to the west across a narrow, extremely-exposed ridge. Luckily the goat tracks led us over to that summit, too. That summit proved to be yet another false summit. But the goats seemed to know this and their tracks led us westward, again along the narrow, extremely-exposed ridge to the true summit,



Knight Island Paddle Climbs

by Stuart Grenier



The plan in 2006 was simple enough. Take the ferry from Whittier in mid-May to Chenega Bay in the south-central part of Prince William Sound and kayak north to Valdez, attempting peaks as weather and terrain allowed. We took two weeks worth of food, avalanche gear, ice axes, and snowshoes. We planned to do the east side of Knight Island as we headed north. Team members were Bridget Paule, Katie Hahn, Tom Wolff, Sean Bolender, and me. We took one double and three single sea kayaks.

As I have mentioned in previous paddle climb accounts in the *Scree*, there is a strong tendency to become distracted from the pursuit of higher places on these trips due to the myriad fun things to do on the water and beaches. As a result, we summited only two peaks. This is despite the fact that we had a wonderful stretch of pure sunshine for over 10 days. Late May is often some of the better weather you'll have in the Sound. For the sake of space, I'll limit this account to the climb of Horn Mountain and save our other summit for a later article.

After deciding to check out the east side of Knight Island as we headed north, our first target was Horn Mountain (2283 feet). From the south it looked like a white pyramid and did not look that difficult. While camped in Hogan Bay some of us took a walk to Point Helen on the south tip of Knight Island, on the way back it looked to us like there was a nice beach for landing kayaks right near the base of the southeast ridge. The next morning we launched with the intent of landing on this beach, pulling the kayaks high and dry and then climbing up the ridge. There was a mistake in this plan. When we spotted the beach from the south it was at lower tide. Now the tide was higher and our planned landing beach was not suitable for landing. We paddled right past the spot and continued to the next reasonable beach. Our preferred ridge route was now too far to easily access through the alders and pucker brush so we headed directly up to take the long north ridge. After breaking through the alders and grass we entered a long, narrowing, snow-filled couloir. With beacons on, I regretted having our team of five lined up in this ever-steepening couloir, complete with a runnel right down the middle. Looking for a way to change our situation without turning around,

we broke right for some hemlocks in ever-softening snow. Steep enough now to be grabbing hemlocks between planting our axes in shaft-deep snow, we took advantage of every limb thick enough to stand on or strong enough to pull ourselves up with. Before we reached the crest of the ridge the hemlock tapered off and we had to cut straight up some steep crotch-deep, soft snow. As we all gathered on the ridge it was clear we would rather have a different route for getting down.

Beacon Time



The ridge heading south now to Horn Mountain was gentle and rolling. Snowshoes took care of the posthole problems for the most part, but sometimes we would still fall through to waist-deep holes even with the shoes on if we happened to walk near a hemlock or over a buried tree. When we came to where the ridge started to go up steeply toward the summit, we stopped and took a rest to eat and see if we could agree on a game plan. We had two choices. One was to drop down the east face and cut across a snow-filled, concave area and then go

up the southeast ridge to the summit or just hold the north ridge to the summit, which was quite a bit steeper and more exposed than the southeast ridge.

Horn Mountain Final Approach



The ladies decided that our lunch spot would be their summit due to avalanche concerns. We guys decided on the north ridge. We spread out and worked our way back onto the ridge proper after skirting it to the east to avoid a cliffed-out area. Snowballs were shooting down from our tracks in places as the sun was really heating things up. Climbing without snowshoes, I was surprised to find the north ridge still had ice in places. I worked it a bit with my ax until I felt comfortable. It was a bit of pucker factor for my taste. I grabbed the rock and moss with my free bare hand while driving the pick of the ax in high dagger style, and then I was over it and made my way to the summit. Crampons would have made it safer, especially if we had to descend the same route. I pulled my camera out and got a nice shot of Sean, and then Tom, just coming over the lip looking north over Knight Island's east coast. The three of us were on the summit in no time. I think Sean and Tom made the summit with their snowshoes on, taking advantage of their claws. I think that was a good idea. The summit was flat and mossy and free of snow in places. There was a piece of what looked like rebar stuck in right on the summit. There were also many holes that would have been perfect for a register but the rodents or whatever lived in them probably would have pushed the container out and the wind would have blown it away. We did not leave a register. Our group summit shot had Montague Island behind us. View-wise, it was one of the nicest summits I have had. There is nothing like a good seascape to highlight beautiful white peaks. That is something that Knight Island has in abundance.

The summit was a very pleasant place with its snow-free moss areas, but I was in no mood to relax there for long. I did not look forward to downclimbing the north ridge without crampons, so we agreed to go down the southeast ridge a ways and then cut back across the east face when it looked safe. From there we would climb back up to where the others were waiting. Farther down the face, the slope decreased and the snow didn't look that bad. The plan worked fine and then we found

ourselves all back together. Looking at the southeast ridge from up there made me interested in trying that some day. It was a pity that there was no good beach to land on to access it. There appeared to be a few places where the ridge cliffed out, but after a certain point it would have been the easiest and most direct way to the summit. The top part was way easier than the north ridge. Maybe next time.

Horn Mountain Summit



Heading north, we got back on that very long, and at first gently rolling and then rather flat, north ridge and knowingly walked past our accent route. This ridge runs for over a mile. Sean led us to a very nice buttress that brought us down out of the snow. With a summit high I gladly ate the alders and pucker brush back to the kayaks. Thick leather gloves are worth their weight in gold. I had enough steep-slope, rotten snow for that day.

Hogan Bay Camp, Last Night



I'll tell you more about this trip and our other summit next time.

It might be nice to go back out to the same general area for another paddle climb. This year the May ferry from Whittier leaves for Chenega May 28. Looks like some of us may be planning on exiting at Seward.

Stu's email address is oinkmenow@hotmail.com

Cooper Lake to Hope Ski Tour

by Greg Bragiel



Dragon's Den Pass, Abernathy Creek to American Creek
All Photos by Greg Bragiel

Skiing the Resurrection Trail from Cooper to Hope is a trip frequently done by MCA members. After last year's April ski tour on the Resurrection Trail, I developed an interest in the Russian River trail also. Tom Choate and I did a reconnaissance in the fall of 2008 from the Cooper Lake trailhead to Upper Russian Lake. Stan Olsen, Sally Balchin and I did a ski reconnaissance in late January 2009 from Cooper Landing to the Barber Cabin area. These outings gave me the knowledge of the terrain and possible conditions, so I decided to add the section from Cooper Lake to Russian River Campground and make it a good stretch of the legs.

Sunday, February 22nd, dawned cold and clear. My wonderful wife, Mary Beth, and I met Amy Maclean and Donna Klecka at Uncle Billy's home in Hope and we stashed a vehicle at the Hope trailhead. She drove us up Snug Harbor Road with the expectation that we might drive in as far as the power plant access road. It was surprising to find that the road was plowed all the way to Cooper Lake. We appreciated whoever did this, as it saved us at least 5 miles of skiing that first day. We found a truck blocking the road about ½ mile from the Cooper Lake trailhead and began our journey there. The trail was packed from snowmachines, which made the journey to Upper Russian Lake hard packed and crusty, but fast. We enjoyed each other's company and the stars and did some exploring in the area the next morning. There are plenty of cabins at the north end of Upper Russian Lake of various ages and stages of (dis)repair.

Snowmachining is not permitted north of Upper Russian Lake; however, we found the going easy and followed the trail and some old ski tracks north to the Aspen Flats area where we stopped for a lunch break. Farther north,

the trail toward Barber Cabin was pocked with moose hoof holes and caution was the order for skiing this section of the trail. For the last 3 to 4 miles to the Barber Cabin, we had to drop off the trail to the valley floor. This enabled us to avoid the many huge avalanche debris piles that had slid off of Cooper Mountain during the January thaw and completely buried the trail. The Barber Cabin provided a wonderful warm place to stay, more stargazing and booming lake ice noises that night.

More sunshine and temperatures in the single digits greeted us on Tuesday, the 24th. At the south end of the Resurrection Trail, we had a vehicle positioned. We lunched there, replenished our supplies and continued skiing northward. Stan and Sally began their trip earlier the same day from the Bean Creek trailhead and we rendezvoused with them at Juneau Lake. What a team these two are! The weekend prior they had summited Mount Susitna with Stu Grenier, picked up supplies from home and headed south to meet us.

Stan and Sally had stashed 2 gallons of stove fuel at Swan Lake during the 2009 New Year's holiday wherein they experienced extremely cold temperatures and slow going in the untracked snow. Sally, always the fastest, most competitive of the group picked this fuel up and led the group on to Devils Pass under increasingly cloudy and windy conditions. Our first snowfall of the trip started shortly after arriving at Devils Pass and the wind picked up considerably that night. The stove in the hut was a bit stubborn in heating the place for us, but Stan tinkered it to life.

Donna decided to head home the next day and skied back to her car at the highway while the rest of us continued north, enjoying the fresh snow in Resurrection

Pass. The four of us stayed on the north side of the pass for two nights. On the 27th we explored Abernathy Creek and skied to the overlook of American Creek. Due to the recent wind and snowfall we hesitated to ski any steep slopes. The drop through the pass into American Creek drainage is not steep, but is a potential avalanche terrain trap with overhanging cornices. Skiing through this pass is definitely recommended only if the conditions are appropriate. Amy and Sally watched nervously as I took an uneventful tour into this 'dragons den.'

the year. However, when it is needed the most, supplies are slim or lacking.

Stan at the Devils Pass Cabin



Amy and Sally on Resurrection Creek



The trail north of Resurrection Pass has typically been hard and icy this time of year for me. Day six was overcast and we welcomed the fresh snow that made our journey very pleasant and uneventful as we skied into and out of the numerous drainages making our way north to the Caribou Creek area. Our work that evening was to scavenge the area for wood, keep the fire going and dry out the wood that we did manage to cut and chop. It is curious that the Forest Service seems to supply the cabins extremely well with firewood most of

February 28th was the final day of our 70-plus mile journey. That trail was sure nice with all the new snow!!

Alaska is such a wonderful place with so many possibilities. What about next year? Maybe Seward to Hope? It is only 10 miles longer!!

My good friends that participated in this trip: Amy Maclean, Donna Klecka, Stan Olsen, Sally Balchin

Adze

Partners Wanted

Prince William Sound Paddle-climb, Experienced sea kayakers only. Leave Whittier May 28 for Chenega. Use sea kayaks to explore and access places of interest including summits in the southern Prince William Sound area. Ice axe, avalanche gear, snowshoes, crampons, all usual sea kayaking gear needed. Currently have a team that plans to exit Seward and others who "may" join us for a while and "may" do a shorter trip and taxi back to Whittier. Return date unknown. Stu Grenier, oinkmenow@hotmail.com

For Sale

Cabins for rent, or I will return to the web.

May 9

Upper Russian Lake Cabin

July 2

Romig Cabin

July 1 & 2

Devils Pass Cabin

June 30 & July 1

Juneau Cabin

Denise 338-2238 – katmaien@gci.net

For Sale

Marmot 8000-meter parka (\$400): been on 2 trips, but never made it out of my pack. Western Mountaineering -40 degree long sleeping bag (\$500): two trips, like new. I need to sell so I can get a new pack raft.

Mike 244-4406

New Geographic Name

At its March 12, 2009, meeting, the U.S. Geological Survey's Board on Geographic Names voted to officially name a 6,720-foot peak in the Hayes Range of the Alaska Range as Waugaman Mountain. The peak was named after William Waugaman (1915 – 2003), a former Alaska State Senator, member of the Fish and Game Board, and hunting guide in the Wood River area. The peak is in the Dry Creek, Glacier Creek, and Threemile Creek drainages. The latter two streams flow into the Wood River http://geonames.usgs.gov/domestic/monthly_minutes.htm

Peak of the Month: Goose Peak

by Steve Gruhn

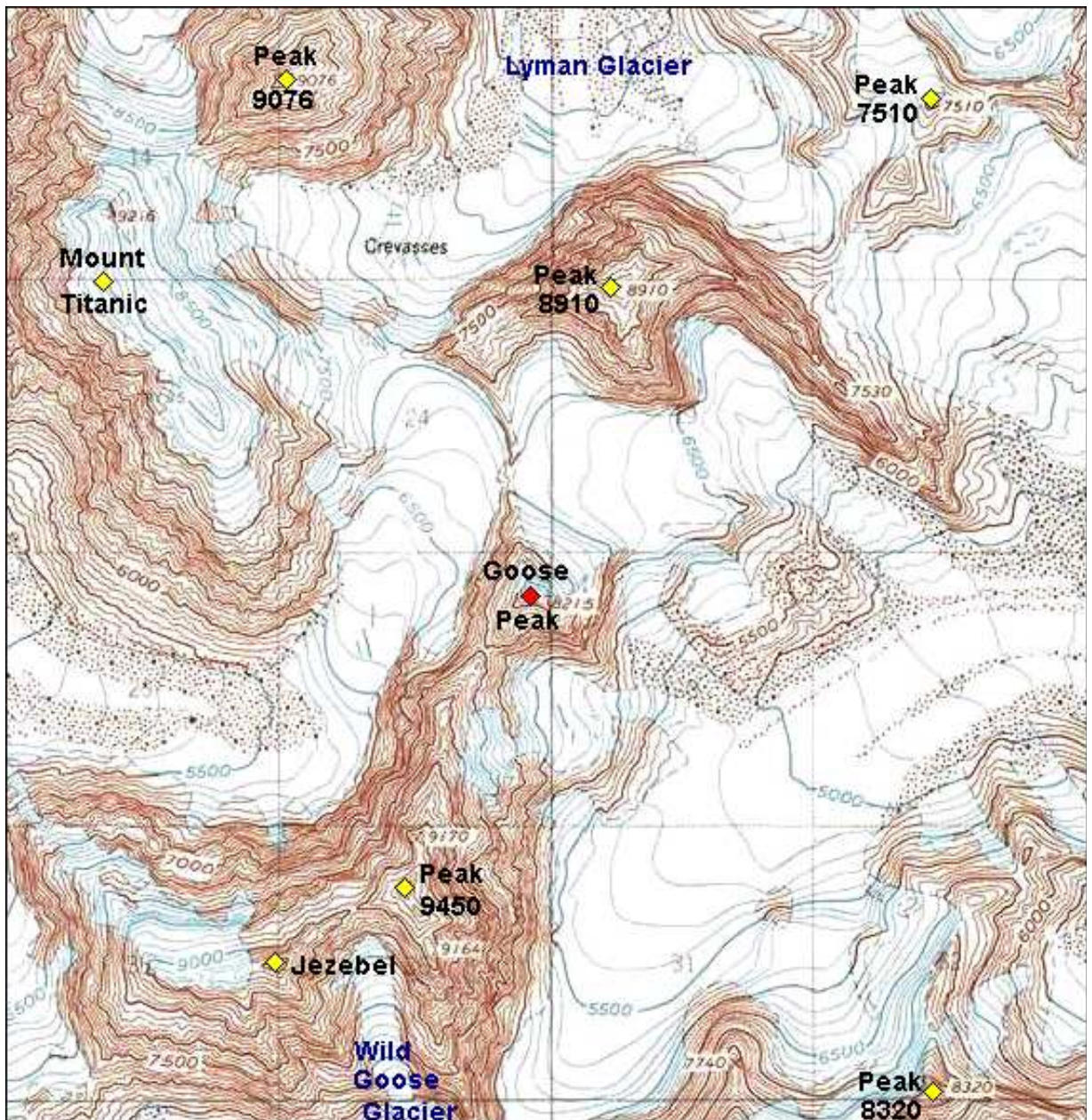
Mountain Range: Alaska Range; Revelation Mountains
Borough: Unorganized Borough
Drainage: Fish Creek Glacier and South Fork of the Big River
Latitude/Longitude: 61° 47' 58" North, 153° 53' 47" West
Elevation: 8215 feet
Prominence: 1265 feet from either Peak 9450 near the Fish Creek Glacier and the Wild Goose Glacier, Peak 8910 near the Fish Creek Glacier and the Lyman Glacier, or Jezebel (9650)
Adjacent Peaks: Peak 9450 and Peak 8910
Distinctness: 1265 feet from either Peak 9450 or Peak 8910
USGS Map: Lime Hills (D-3)
First Recorded Ascent: May 11, 1995, by James Funsten and Scott Raynor
Route of First Recorded Ascent: North ridge
Access Point: Fish Creek Glacier

On May 3, 1995, Funsten and Raynor, along with partners Calvin Hebert and Doug Byerly, flew from Talkeetna to the 5,000-foot level of the north arm of the Fish Creek Glacier with Talkeetna Air Taxi. Eight days later Funsten and Raynor climbed Goose Peak by its 50-degree ice and snow north ridge, which they rated as Alaska Grade III. They named the peak after seeing flocks of seemingly-confused snow

geese flying around them.

During the next 13 days all four climbed Peak 8950 in the Big River Glacier and Fish Creek Glacier drainages and named it Medusa Peak after seeing cloud formations seemingly emanating from the peak itself. Byerly and Hebert climbed Peak 9005 in the Hartman Glacier and South Fork of the Swift River drainages and named it Pirate Peak because they felt a bit piratic after separating from Funsten and Raynor. Medusa Peak and Pirate Peak are both south of Goose Peak.

Funsten's trip report appeared on page 179 of the 1996 *American Alpine Journal*.



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

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 nontechnical 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

General Rules for MCA Sanctioned Trips

1. Proper equipment is available from the trip leader.
2. No dogs. (Among the reasons are bear problems).
3. The trip leader can require special equipment and refuse participation to any person that is ill-prepared (e.g. inappropriate clothing/gear).
4. The leader's suggestions are to be followed. Do not go off alone, return or rush ahead without his (her) permission, and don't ford a stream before the leader assesses the situation. Remember, this is a club trip and the leader must know where all participants are. Anyone separating from the group without the leader's approval is no longer considered a participant the MCA Sanctioned trip.
5. The trip leader has the authority to split the group (fast and slow), dependent upon current conditions. However, he/she must appoint a qualified co-leader to lead the second group using the guidelines specified in the current Trip Leader Responsibilities.
6. Trip participants who, in the leader's opinion, put themselves or other members of the group in danger by disregarding the leader's suggestions, shall be subject to sanction by the club. Sanctions may include, but are not limited to, reprimand at general meeting, exclusion from future trips, termination of annual membership, or lifetime exclusion from the club.
7. You must sign up on a trip roster (club meetings) or contact the leader, and you must have signed the club waiver to be on a club trip.
8. If you find you cannot participate after signing up on the roster, please let the leader know, both for transportation and gear-planning and so someone else can go. If you are the leader, help find a replacement.
9. Total number of people on club trips:
Minimum: 4 (for safety reasons)
Maximum: Leader option, depends upon the trail and campsite conditions, but generally limited to 12 in trail-less areas or State/ National Parks
10. Firearms are not encouraged, and please let the leader know if you want to carry one - it will be leader's option. Aerosol bear repellent is preferred.

Approved: MCA Board, February 15, 2000

SIGN AND INITIAL THIS RELEASE OF LIABILITY— READ IT CAREFULLY

I _____ (print name) am aware that mountaineering and wilderness activities (including hiking; backpacking; rock, snow, and ice climbing; mountaineering; skiing; ski mountaineering; rafting and pack rafting, kayaking, and use of remote backcountry huts) are hazardous activities. I wish to participate and/or receive instruction in these activities with the Mountaineering Club of Alaska, Inc. (“MCA”). I recognize these activities involve numerous risks, which include, by way of example only, falling while hiking, climbing, skiing or crossing rivers or glaciers; falling into a crevasse or over a cliff; drowning; 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 or rescue. I also recognize that risk of **injury or death** may be caused or enhanced by **mistakes, negligence or reckless conduct** on the part of either my fellow participants; MCA officers, directors, instructors, or trip leaders; and the State of Alaska and its employees regarding MCA backcountry huts. 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. **(As used in this agreement, MCA includes its officers, directors, instructors and trip leaders.)**

_____ (initial that you have read this paragraph)

GIVING UP MY LEGAL RIGHTS I agree to give up for myself and for my heirs all legal rights I may have against the MCA; my fellow participants in MCA activities (except to the extent that insurance coverage is provided by automobile insurance policies) and the State of Alaska and its employees regarding MCA backcountry huts. **I give up these legal rights regardless of whether the injury, death, or property damage results from mistakes, negligence or reckless conduct of others.** I understand this agreement shall remain in effect until I provide a signed, dated, written notice of its revocation to the MCA.

_____ (initial that you have read this paragraph)

MY PROMISE NOT TO SUE I will not sue or otherwise make a claim against the MCA; my fellow participants in MCA activities (except as noted above for automobile accidents); and the State of Alaska and its employees regarding use of MCA backcountry huts, for **injury, death, or property damage** which occurs in the course of my participation or instruction in mountaineering and wilderness activities. Any lawsuit relating to MCA activities or this release shall only be filed in Anchorage, Alaska. The provisions of this release are severable and if any part is found unenforceable, the remaining provisions shall remain in effect.

_____ (initial that you have read this paragraph)

MY RELEASE OF LIABILITY I agree to release and discharge the MCA; my fellow participants in MCA activities; and the State of Alaska and its employees regarding use of MCA backcountry huts, 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 and wilderness activities.

_____ (initial that you have read this paragraph)

MY PROMISE TO INDEMNIFY I will pay all expenses, including attorney fees and court costs, that the MCA; my fellow participants in MCA activities; and the State of Alaska and its employees may incur as a consequence of any legal action arising out of **injury, death, or property damage** suffered by me in connection with any MCA activity or the use of any MCA backcountry hut.

_____ (initial that you have read this paragraph)

MY CONSENT TO MEDICAL TREATMENT I consent to any hospital or medical care that may be necessary as a result of my participation in MCA activities. I understand and agree that I am solely responsible for all charges for such medical treatment, including evacuation and/or rescue costs.

_____ (initial that you have read this paragraph)

I HAVE CAREFULLY READ THIS AGREEMENT, UNDERSTAND ITS CONTENT, AND RECOGNIZE IT IS A BINDING LEGAL AGREEMENT

Dated: _____ Signature: _____

Signature of Parent or Guardian (if under 18): _____

Mountaineering Club of Alaska

President	Wayne Todd	522-6354	Board member	Jayne Dixon	382-0212
Vice-President	Ross Noffsinger	336-2233	Board member	Sean Bolender	830-5102
Secretary	Anmei Goldsmith	301-7055	Board member	Mark Kimerer	360-5935
Treasurer	Travis Taylor	382-4823	Board member	Tim Harper	240-1506
			Board member	Richard Baranow	694-1500

Annual membership dues: Single \$15, Family \$20

Dues can be paid at any meeting or mailed to the Treasurer at the MCA address below. If you want a membership card, please fill out a club waiver and mail it with a self-addressed, stamped envelope. If you fail to receive the newsletter or have questions about your membership, contact the club Treasurer. The Post Office will not forward the newsletter.

The 'Scree' is a monthly publication of the Mountaineering Club of Alaska. Articles, notes and letters submitted for publication in the newsletter should be submitted on the web at www.mcak.org or e-mailed to the Scree Editor. Articles should be received by the monthly club meeting (third Wednesday of the month) to be in the next month's Scree.

Paid ads may be submitted to the attention of the Vice-President at the club address and should be in electronic format and pre-paid.

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

Mailing list/database entry: Yukiko Hayano and Randy Plant - 243-1438
Hiking and Climbing Committee: Jayme Dixon - 382-0212, Richard Baranow - 694-1500
Huts: Greg Bragiel - 569-3008
Calendar: Stuart Grenier - 337-5127
Scree Editor: John Recktenwald - 346-2589
Web: www.mcak.org (change your address here)
Mailing list service: MCAK@yahoo.com

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