

SCREE

JUNE MEETING: A PICNIC! Eldeberry Park, 6th & M at 6:30 PM, June 21. Bring food and maybe an extra hot-dog or two for any strays that wander in. If any one has a guitar or other such musical instrument bring it along. We'll have a big bonfire. So come and socialize.

Perchloroethylene danger - An article in the August 3, 1964 issue of This Week in Public Health noted that a 16-year old boy had died after sleeping in a bag that had been cleaned with perchloroethylene in a coin-operated unit. The bag was received in a roll, put in the car trunk, and later unrolled in a tent. The boy slept in it for about 8 hours, vomited without regaining consciousness, and was found in convulsions. Autopsy showed death was caused by pneumonitis due to uremia from inhaled perchloroethylene. The use of sleeping bags in close quarters in cold weather could well constitute a hazard. Sleeping bags should be carefully aired after being cleaned, before use, and before and after storage. (Source American Alpine Club News No. 54, March 12, 1965)

FLATTOP

March 14, 1965

Dave Meyers

Lacking anything better to do on the weekend, Nick Parker and I took a hike up Flattop, Nick's second trip this year.

We left the bottom of the Clark's homestead road at 9:00 AM, duly laden with (I don't know why) a 40 pound pack. By ten AM we had completed phase one, the road. Now as phase two began, we started uphill on a steeper incline. Soon tiring from the weight of my pack we stopped and a cache was made of my unnecessary gear (ski boots which I forgot to leave in the car along with the skis, skins and a few tons of pitons, carabiners, and other weighty and unnecessary items.)

Just prior to making the cache, we had donned our crampons, so our loads were now about ten pounds apiece, instead of my forty and Nick's fifteen.

Atop the Anchorage landmark, we basked in the sun, took many pictures, and found that the summit register is gone! Coming down, we roped up and ran a practice leapfrog belay down the gully. Thence to the cache, and with my junk picked up we proceeded to belly slide down a 300 foot gully. We deemed it to be fun, so went back and did it again.

On the return we greatly regretted leaving our skis behind as the snow was excellent. It had been bad at the bottom.

ALYESKA RESCUE (Ouch!)

April 4, 1965

Dele Hagen

Theresa and I left the top of the chair lift at about 10:30 AM. We crossed to the middle of the bowl and climbed up the medial ridge to what skiers commonly refer to as the top of Mt. Alyeska. This point is 3600 feet, and 700 feet lower than, what in my opinion, is the true summit of Mt. Alyeska which is one mile away and out of sight of the ski area. We ate lunch at the top of this ridge on a sun warmed rock looking down on tiny skiers below. Then we dropped down out of sight of the ski area and crossed the bowl at the head of Virgin Creek. In the middle of this bowl is a medial ridge similar to the one we first ascended. We climbed this ridge also, but it was much slower going. It was necessary to kick steps most of the way and occasionally to belay each other across exposed places. Also slowing us down, the snow was sticking to our crampons and it was necessary to knock off the snow with each step. We topped this ridge at 4200 feet at about 4:00 PM. It was a fairly easy traverse along a connecting ridge to the main peak. The main peak had been our goal. But as frequently seems to happen, we had run out of time, and we had to save the main peak for another trip. We were 900 feet above Max's Mountain and there was a spectacular view over it and out Turnagain Arm toward Cook Inlet. I took a few photos and then we started down beginning with one assis glissade. This kicked off a modest snow slide. We stopped and politely allowed it to go first. We made our descent in three hours arriving at the Alyeska lodge just at nightfall. It was rather embarrassing to discover we were the objects of search and rescue. We pleaded guilty to having spent an unusually fine day on high snow covered ridges.

NATIONAL
SALVATION ARMY
FOURTH WELFARE DISTRICT



"How's the road ahead?"

"Bad".

"Oh".

"Well, I think it's plowed out a couple miles. Guess you oughta be able to drive that far. Where you going?"

"Crow Pass".

"Got your skis?"

"Skis! No. We're planning on walking".

"Oh.....Well,Good Luck....."

On this encouraging note we left the Double Muskie and piled into the Wolfe's red Travelall. Suddenly our almost-summer hike had turned into a forbidding winter expedition. There were seven of us: Joanne Merrick, Sally Hague, Jeanne Kilpatrick, Bob Bjerre, Marty James, Bernie Kgmurrah (better know as Bernie K) and myself. It was Saturday May 22, a cool, gray day. We decided we had little to lose by trying.

The "ten-foot drifts" we'd expected to find on either side of the road failed to materialize, and we found that we were able to drive to within about a quarter-mile of the broken bridge. At the end of the driveable road a camper was close to sliding over the edge, and naturally they were delighted to see us with our four-wheel drive. Because our trip was largely a reconnaissance trip for the Girdwood to Eagle River expedition over the Memorial Day weeken, I suggested that four of the group go ahead while three of us stayed to help the camper. I wanted to be sure that some of us at least got to Crow's Nest if at all possible. We did get his camper out with little trouble, and followed the first group by an hour. But our first mistake had been made; we had separated.

We found that snow covered most of the remaining road, although the steep hillsides were bare. In places we were able to walk along a bare road edge, but for the most part, we were on snow - and occasionally IN it as a foothold gave way and we sank to our hips. Occasionally, snow sloped across the road at a 45-degree angle. It took us close to four hours to reach Crow's Nest, including a lunch stop, but reach it we did - and without skis.

At least, most of us reached it. As Bernie, Marty, and I ate lunch at the mine, we watched three figures pick their way across the scree slope above us towards Crow's Nest. The number, three, disturbed us a bit...there should have been four...but Bob must be way ahead out of sight.....

We caught up with Sally just below Crow's Nest. She'd lost sight of the other two, and had just discovered the correct route as we arrived. She greeted us with "Did Jeannie decide not to come up?"

"Jeanne!She.....She's with you!"

But Jeanne wasn't with Sally. And Jeanne wasn't at the cabin. No one knew where she was. We were appalled and scared. Bob and Joanne left immediately, with instructions to call the Rescue Group if they did not find Jeanne and she was not at the car. In about a half-hour the rest of us followed, making the descent in about three hours.

Of course, Jeanne was at the car or there would long since have been publicity on the matter. But the whole thing was pretty bad, and we all shared the responsibility for it. A large gap had rapidly developed between Bob and Joanne, fast hikers, and Sally and Jeanne. Jeanne was wearing ordinary rubber snow boots with no tread, and she found the 45 degree snow slopes rather hairraising despite the steps dug across them. She decided to go high on the bare ground above the snow slopes, but Sally preferred to follow the footsteps of Bob and Joanne. When Sally realized that Jeanne was no longer behind her, she was not overly concerned because she knew we would be along shortly. Jeanne finally got to some snow she could not cross and could not go around, she was soaking wet from falling in the snow, and she had no choice but to go back.

She had been waiting for three hours when the last of us straggled in. Our relief at seeing her was enormous. Later, we exchanged experiences over hot coffee at the Double Muskie, then headed back to Anchorage.

Editors note:

At this time I wish to elaborate further on the story by Helen Wolfe, and also make a few recommendations.

What happened on Helen's trip shows how easy it is to get into trouble, fortunately this one had a happy ending. But, this situation could have been avoided very easily. First, as she pointed out, they should not have separated. Second, when Sally realized that Jeanne was not behind her she should have waited. Third had Jeanne worn proper foot-gear she could have crossed the snow slopes with confidence. Fourth, Jeanne should have turned back at the point where she encountered the snow drift that was too difficult for her to cross, by going further up she became separated from the party.

Following is a list of recommendations for leaders of hikes and climbs:

1. The primary objective of a hike or climb is to have a good time, failing that the trip is not a success.
2. The person responsible for the trip should count off noses and see that everybody is introduced.
3. Set a pace that will accommodate the majority of the people
4. Wait when people get separated; never assume that everybody is O.K. particularly when conditions are less than ideal. What might be easy to you could be hazardous to someone else.
5. If someone is particularly slow someone in the group should fall back and keep that person company. It will make the trip more enjoyable for that individual.
6. The faster hikers have the responsibility of keeping themselves in contact with the slower members of the group.
7. Wait at places where the trail is indistinct or at a fork in the trail.
8. It may be necessary to turn someone away from a trip or send someone back. Be tactful. If it is hazardous for a person to return to the cars alone then the whole party will have to turn back.
9. The leader should check to see if everyone has proper foot-gear before departure, if someone doesn't have good gear for the trip they should be discouraged from coming. On overnight trips there should be room in a tent for everybody.
10. When skiing at Alyeska during the operating season please sign out with the Ski Patrol.
11. Never depart from a trip until all the people have returned to the cars.

These simple points can prevent a situation that Helen has described

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THE 20 O'MALLEY PEAK: Leader Gayle Nienhueser. This trip will go up the easy route, it is steep but non-technical. Register with M. Prescott BR 8-09 meet at the Safeway parking lot 9th & Gambell at 7:30 AM.
THE 26-27 CLIMBING SCHOOL Lake Eklutna area. All persons interested in attending rock climbing school please register with Gregg Erickson FA 2-1378 till 5:00 PM.

P.S. If it rains the meeting will be held at the Willow Park Recreation Hall at 8:00 PM. Let's hope it doesn't rain.

A more complete hiking and climbing schedule will be available soon.

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