



MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF ALASKA

BOX 102037

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99510

JULY 1992

Volume 35, Issue 07

JULY MEETING

July 15 6:30 pm Wednesday, Pioneer Schoolhouse, 3rd and Eagle Sts.,  
downtown Anchorage, Alaska.

SUMMER PICNIC And BBQ: Club will provide charcoal and drinks. Bring salad or  
desert and favorite grill item (old hiking boots marinated for  
two days and sliced into thin strips are great.)

HIKING AND CLIMBING SCHEDULE

- July 8 BASIC SKILLS PRACTICE  
All members welcome. 6:00 pm. Harding Icefield  
Organizational Meeting, practice session and barbecue.  
Prussiks, ascenders, knots and crampons will be covered.  
Leader: Dan O'Haire 561-1141
- 11 SOUTH SUICIDE  
From Falls Creek Trail. Use summer gear list as a guide.  
Class D. Elev. gain 5000 feet.  
Leader: Don Hansen 243-7184
- 11-25 PORCUPINE RIVER  
Charter plane from Fairbanks to Old Crow, Y.T. 300-mile  
descent of the river to Fort Yukon. Moderate pace, from 10  
to 14 days. Participants may permanently break from the  
group and proceed on their own. Cost of the charter  
estimated to be \$350.00 per person. The flight from Fort  
Yukon to Fairbanks is around \$100.00. Collapsible boats  
must be used.  
Leader: Marty Bassett 694-3917
- 18-25 HARDING ICEFIELD TRAVERSE  
Tustamena Glacier to Exit Glacier. Glacier travel skills  
required. Get equipment list from leader. Class: GLACIER  
TRAVEL.  
Leader: Dan O'Haire 561-1141
- 25-26 ROGAINE MOUNTAIN ORIENTEERING  
A rough outdoor group activity involving navigation.  
Leader: Chris Tomsen 428-2250
- 25-8 BROOKS RANGE  
Two-week backpacking trip. Optional nontechnical climbs.  
Upper Alatna River area. Class C. Strenuous packing with  
easy rock scrambling day-trips.  
Leader: Don Hansen 243-7184

- August 8-9 BOMBARDMENT PASS  
4 miles to the pass. Gradual elevation gain. Mostly without a trail, but nearly all is above treeline. Blueberries! Class B.  
Leader: Joel Babb 688-3885
- 15-16 MINT HUT  
Nine-mile hike to the club's hut and then do rock climbs and walk-up climbs. Class: FIFTH CLASS or Class E.  
Leader: Tom Choate 333-5309
- 22 BLACKTAIL-ROUND TOP  
Class C.  
Leader: Scott Bailey 696-7250
- 22 EAST TWIN PASS  
55 Ways trip # 41. Round trip 8 miles. Class C.  
Leader: Marty Bassett 694-3917

Terry Becker  
1944-1992

Terry Becker died June 8, 1992. He was murdered by a thief at Carrs Aurora Village store while making a delivery for Loomis Armored, Inc.

Terry came to Anchorage from Colorado in the fall of 1974. He drove the AlCan in an old rusty International Scout, named Zak - which was a miracle. I'm not sure why that machine ran. I drove it over the years and figured it was because Becker talked to it, like some gardeners talk to their houseplants. He steered old Zak into Anchorage and down Spenard Road and sputtered to a stop at AMH as it started to rain. It rained for two weeks, flooded the town. Becker didn't notice it though since he had caught a terrible flu.

It was quite a welcome.

Terry managed AMH for years. Fifteen years. Over the years I got to know Terry better than anyone outside my immediate family. He was taciturn. Very taciturn. People would ask T.B. a question and he would often give a one-word answer. Often it was "No." Many mistook this, the onslaught of silence that followed it, and the ubiquitous pipe in his mouth for something other than it was. Becker was merely a reincarnation of a fellow Vermonter, "Silent Cal" Coolidge. He gave an answer that fit the question and that was that. He wasn't a cutesy type of guy.

However, Terry could ramble on and on. If he got onto sea-kayaking he'd talk till you went under, and then talk some more. When he first arrived, technical ice climbing (without wrist loops and with Terrordactyls and Chouinard ice hammers) was just taking off and T.B. would pontificate on which tools for which ice. He'd drive down the Seward Highway to the Alcove and spend an afternoon climbing up and down it. I can see him there drinking coffee from a thermos, squinting through the pipe smoke that always seemed to curl straight up his face, a smoke screen between his smile and the outside world. This love of ice bouldering led him to the Matanuska Ice Climbing Class the MCA holds every fall. T.B. led that seminar for years. He liked to show other people the joys he had found; the experiences he had enjoyed.

Terry wasn't a competitive person. Didn't understand all the fuss about "first or "hardest" routes. He was secure in himself. He didn't have to tell people how good he was at something. Life was oh too short for chasing after material goods or keeping up with other people. It was more important to be, than to have, for Terry.

Terry Becker was a kind and generous man. Never one to show false emotion, he was a real person. My three daughters grew up in AMH with Uncle Terry and often referred to him as "Oscar the Grouch" (after the Character on Sesame Street). But the girls saw through Terry's shell and liked him. He treated them like the uncle he was, with respect (which often put me to shame) and love. He even changed a diaper or two. That was the way Terry was. He and I would argue at length over how the shop should be run, family matters and even life in general. But never was Terry mean or small. I never heard him say anything about people that was intended to hurt or belittle people. T.B. wasn't that type of man.

Terrance Becker was a good man, a kindly man. And we shall all be a bit less for his passing.

Paul E. Denkwalter

## TRIP REPORTS

### Second Annual Crow Pass to Eagle River Hike

Allan Shayer

On Saturday morning June 27th sixteen people met at Loussac Library to hike the Crow Pass Trail. We met at 6:00 am and arranged for cars to be left at Eagle River Visitor's Center for the return ride. Then we reassembled at 7:30 for the ride to the trailhead at Girdwood. At the conclusion of the hike another contingent of drivers picked up the cars left at the trailhead.

The hike up to Crow Pass started just after nine in the morning and finished twelve and a half hours and twenty-seven miles later at 9:45 pm. We enjoyed continual, light rain until 6:00 pm, saw two black bears, made two river or stream crossings, and otherwise had an enjoyable day.

The trip starts with three miles of switchbacks up to Crow Pass which is snow-covered this time of year. Another half mile of snow brought us to the south side of the pass. Through the clouds we saw Raven Glacier and down Raven Creek valley to the beginning of Eagle River valley. Snow and rock slopes brought us to Raven Creek where there were two separate black bear sightings and a several-mile walk to the river ford near the beginning of Eagle River. As expected the water was cold, thigh deep and easily forded. The thirteen miles of fairly level trail to the Visitor's Center took about five hours, including another cold walk through Icicle Creek.

Hikers: Allan Shayer, Donna Lind, Kate Vinson, Larry Meshkin, Larry Runquist, Linda Stanton, Mark Miraglia, Mary Grisco, Mike Mastrino, Nancy Schnetzer, Natilie Phillips, Paul Laverty, Rob Schwebel, Sandy Powers, Tom Hamilton, Wendy Long.

### Flattop Sleepout

Dan O'Haire

At 1:00 am, the lights of Anchorage glowed in the twilight and the skyline blazed orange. The big mountains of the Alaska Range were dark silhouettes and the waters of Cook Inlet shimmered. Three volcanoes stood like sentinels. This was the setting for our solstice party on top of Flattop Mountain.

### The Washburn-Bates Rib Mt. Steele, Yukon Territory

Willy Hersman

There aren't many copies of the 1938 American Alpine Journal around Anchorage these days. There's one in the Vin Hoeman Library at AMH, and you might find one in a personal library somewhere. It was my main source for planning a trip to climb Mt. Steele and Lucania Mt. this spring; along with a copy of a Canadian shaded-relief map produced sometime after the national centennial, showing various climbing routes and traverses done earlier in the century. One of those routes was done in 1937 by Bradford Washburn and Robert Bates as they made the first ascent of Lucania Mt. (17147'), the continent's 8th highest peak.

As I read Washburn's account from the AAJ and tried to follow along on the map it became apparent that something was wrong. One of them was in error. So, after writing to Mr. Washburn for clarification, I received in the mail one day a very nice letter and a copy of Life Magazine from 1937 with a full account of their trip and an annotated copy of the map. The route printed on the map had been scratched out in red and the actual route penciled in, farther to the west. This explained a lot. Subsequent expeditions over the years who thought they were following the Washburn-Bates Route were actually doing something different. All because of one map. Even the Canadian Parks climbing wardens were confused.

On June 8th four of us from the MCA, James Larabee, Steve Tyler, Bertrand Poinsonnet (of Lyons, France) and I flew to the Dennis Glacier to become, I suspect, the first party to repeat the 1937 ascent of a rib which leads to the broad ridge connecting these two great peaks. We were blessed with sunshine for two of three weeks.

My comrades had never been on an expedition and were surprised at how burned you can get. Bertrand kept praying in French for a storm and I kept countering in English with prayers for more burning. Eventually I lost (maybe God speaks better French) and we got blasted with a 6-day storm. We were all so bored from being horizontal that any thought of praying for another storm never entered anyone's mind. The storm prevented us from summiting Lucania, since we ran out of time sitting in position three thousand feet below on the "plateau."

Luckily we did manage to grab Steele first. Our ascent of the 16644-foot summit came as soon as we arrived on the "plateau" at 14100'. It had been my second attempt, the other one nine years ago from the southeast ridge. The Washburn-Bates Rib is not a difficult ascent, 30-degree snow with a short knife-edge at the base takes you safely from 10200' to 13600' and then a snow traverse takes you to the "plateau." There are 10 miles between the summits. But its a nice walk (unless you leave your snowshoes at home) and the views of Logan are spectacular.

The main objective hazard of the route is approaching the rib. You are forced by crevasses to pass under the 6000-foot north face of Lucania, which of course has huge hanging seracs waiting around. We were lucky that it was not "bowling night" on the mountain as we passed under these four times. We were lucky nothing else happened anyway since our eight-pound radio never worked.

#### MINUTES OF THE JUNE MEETING

On June 17, 1992 the monthly meeting of the Mountaineering Club of Alaska was called to order by president Dan O'Haire.

#### TREASURER'S REPORT:

Money Market	-	\$4262.07
Checking Acct	-	1023.17
Petty Cash	-	52.10
Total		<u>\$5337.34</u>

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

## Hiking and Climbing.

Don Hansen outlined several trips.

## Huts.

The Matanuska Glacier hut will be going as scheduled in July.

## Training.

Dan indicated the glacier training will have to be rescheduled.

## OLD BUSINESS

Dan offered a refined four-point plan to curtail trailhead vandalism.

## NEW BUSINESS

Scott Bailey discussed cabin locations in Kenai Fiords National Park. The proposed locations have been changed with very limited opportunity for public comment. Anyone concerned should contact the National Park service and express opinion.

Dave Pahlke outlined the contributions Terry Becker has made to the club and in particular in coordinating the ice-climbing school for 10 years. A motion was made to make a memorial contribution to the T.G. Becker Education Fund. The motion was amended and passed to reflect a contribution of \$250.00. Our sympathies are extended to Terry's family and friends.

Meagan Baker attended her first club meeting. She has bagged a peak and gone on some hikes in her first two months! Congratulations John and Marcy!!

Todd Miner presented a dramatic slide show on the ascent of Mt. Foraker via the Sultana Ridge.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joel Babb, V.P.