



JULY 2001

*A Publication of the Mountaineering Club of Alaska*

Volume 44 Issue 07

Box 102037, Anchorage, Alaska 99510

### JULY MEETING

Wednesday

July 18, 7:30 pm

Pioneer Schoolhouse, 3rd & Eagle Streets

Downtown Anchorage

**Picnic: The club will have burgers, hot dogs, drinks, plates, etc. You bring the rest - potato salad, bean dishes, chips, watermelon, fruit, whatever makes sense for summer.**

### HIKING AND CLIMBING SCHEDULE

#### Jul 14 Byron Peak

Class G. Hike onto the glacier and attempt the summit. Bring crampons, ice axe, and glacier gear.  
Leader: Matt Nedom 278-3648

#### 14-15 Rock Climbing at the Wedge

Fifth Class. Climb the established trad and bolted routes in this pocket of good Chugach rock. Bike in Saturday morning from Glen Alps, plan to bivvy Saturday night. Bring your own gear and partner.  
Leader: Cory Hinds 248-6606

#### 29- Aug 12 Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

Class B. Backpacking trip into the Canning River drainage. Fly out of Arctic Village or Fort Yukon with Yukon Air Charter. Explore the tributaries of the Canning River, hike up some of the peaks and ridges in the area. Estimated charter cost is about \$600 to \$700.  
Leader: Don Hansen 243-7184 h, 271-6656 w

#### Aug 4 Ptarmigan Peak

Class C. Plan to bike back on powerline trail and then climb to the summit from the saddle west of peak. Bring ice axe, helmet, and appropriate clothing. Limit 6 people.  
Leader: Bill Romberg 677-3993 h, 267-2366 w

#### Sep 1-3 Kesugi Ridge

Labor day. Class C. Denali State Park.  
Leader: Matt Nedom 278-3648

## TRIP REPORTS

### Back in Black

by Charlie Sassara



Carlos and I just got back from the Wrangells where we went 0 and 2 on the routes, but 2 and 0 on staying alive. A very hard trip where we used all of our toys, years of experience and borrowed heavily on Karma.

Here is the short version; we were in the Twaharpies group. Our first objective was a 5000-foot alpine face with a steep diagonal gash we climbed to half height. Our plan was to climb the face at night, stopping during the day to recover, and then descend the route with V Threads. Well, the 30 slings we cut for threads were useless. No ice, just steep snow and that meant we didn't have enough gear to rap the face. To make matters worse, the face flowed with avalanches once in the sun. During the day the gash had up to 10-foot standing waves of snow rolling down the gully down like a giant white serpent. Needless to say, yours truly stayed out of the fray during the daytime. We ended up using most of our pins and wires to construct 16 anchors. Though the climbing was easy, anchors were a bitch. To make her point, Mother Nature swept our second to last rap with a big slide. While I'm pushing up on the anchor, Carlos is playing hapless water skier being dragged behind a jet boat.

For our second objective we moved to a 5000-foot north facing ice route on Ultima Thule Peak. The difficulty we faced here was the weather. We snuck a Bibler under an ice cliff about 2500 feet up the wall, brewed some tea and waited for evening to climb the remaining 15 to 18 pitches. Then it snowed. (For three days that is) The face ran off and on the entire period, thus preventing us from descending. Then, last Tuesday night a portion of the slope above cut loose burying us as we whimpered. The next morning we got our prayers for the break, made six raps, then quietly walked out 1500 feet of the gun barrel, turned and said "thank you." I got to tell you, my latent fears/memory of being buried on Mt. Johnson were making me sick with worry.

Like they said in *Gladiator*: "Someday, but not yet."

So, there you have it. A good valuable experience I am glad is over. Nothing for the AAJ or the mags, but plenty of food for thought on a personal basis. I do not dig the idea of me and premature burials, period.

## BOARD MEETING

Nine members attended the March 14th, board meeting upstairs, at Alaska Mountaineering & Hiking: Bill Romberg, Richard Baranow, Patty McPherson, John Hess, Dolly Lefever, Tom McDermott, Mark Miraglia, Jayme Mack, and Matt Nedom. Guests included John Wolfe, Jr. representing the Alaska Mountain and Wilderness Huts Association.

### *Hut Association and Mint Valley hut location*

John Wolfe, Jr. gave the Board an update on plans for locating a hut in the Hatcher Pass area.

AK State Parks and Div. Of Mining and Lands has discouraged the group from locating a hut in the Goodhope Creek drainage and has asked the Huts Association to coordinate with MCA about the possibility of locating a hut in the Mint Valley. Board members expressed some concerns over the proposal and suggested that the Huts Association focus on developing hut-to-hut routes that do not directly overlap the MCA hut routes. Board members were open to the possibility of a new hut in the valley if a) it could be located in one of the valleys/bowls on the east side of the drainage and b) a route could be developed to the east (into Moose Creek drainage) in order to expand the hut-to-hut opportunities in the Hatcher Pass/Talkeetna Mtns area. Possible drainages and passes into Moose Creek were identified for reconnaissance by the Huts Association. An initial reconnaissance will occur the weekend of June 24. The Board suggested that a meeting between MCA, the Huts Assoc. and AK Dept. Natural Resources should be arranged for this fall to discuss this issue further.

### *Commercial Use of Huts Policy*

In light of increasing use of the MCA huts by commercial guides/outfitters, the Board adopted a policy on the commercial use of MCA huts that was forwarded by the Huts Committee. The policy establishes how the club will address commercial use and respond to conflicts that occur between club members and commercial users at the huts (see this issue for details of policy)



*First Aid/CPR Training*

Tom M. reported that the two first aid/CPR courses that were arranged with UAA for May were cancelled because the minimum number of registrants was not met. The club may attempt to sponsor another first aid/cpr course this fall if there is sufficient interest.

*Officers & Director's Insurance*

No action. Bill R. will contact AAC to determine if they currently have such a policy and with whom.

*Medical Insurance for members*

At the request of an MCA member, Patty McPherson asked whether the MCA would consider arranging a inexpensive health insurance policy for club members to buy into. The Board knew of no other organization that offered such a service to members and unanimously decided that it was not in the business of arranging for medical insurance for club members. The AAC offers rescue insurance (not medical coverage) as part of its membership fee for those who are interested.

Next Board meeting: July 11<sup>th</sup>, 7 p.m. at Alaska Mountaineering and Hiking.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Bill Romberg

**Commercial Use of MCA Huts Policy**

Approved: MCA Board, June 2001.

**Background**

In the past there has been minimal use of the huts by commercial operators. Most of this use has been in huts which the MCA has lease agreements for with the Alaska Department of Natural Resources. Use of these huts is addressed in Attachment "A" to the leases which states that "The huts will be open to the general public through membership in the Mountaineering Club of Alaska, Inc." It is expected that there will be increased public use of these huts in the future including those huts which the MCA has no property interest in i.e., the Eklutna Traverse huts. Chugach State Park has a draft policy regarding the Eklutna Traverse huts in which they state that "In the absence of a property interest being held by MCA, it is the state's position that the huts are publicly owned and are to be managed as public facilities in Chugach State Park. MCA is encouraged to continue to conduct maintenance work on the huts. However, as publicly-owned structures in the park, the state is responsible and liable for these structures."

In light of growing commercial use of the MCA huts, the MCA has established the following policy regarding commercial use of the huts:

**Policy**

1. All hut users are strongly encouraged to join the MCA to support maintenance of these structures.
2. Commercial operators (guides, outfitters, etc.) shall be contacted and informed of this policy and provided with membership applications.
3. Any conflicts between MCA members and commercially-operated groups should be brought to the attention of the Hut Committee Chairperson.
4. The Hut Committee Chairperson shall contact the commercial operator regarding all reported conflicts.
5. Conflicts occurring at Eklutna Traverse huts which are not resolved between the Hut Chairperson and the commercial operator shall be reported to Chugach State Park.

**WEB CHAT**



guardian.co.uk:

A man turned the Brooklyn Bridge into his personal jungle gym Tuesday, tying up traffic for hours before police finally coaxed him down from the suspension cables.

Police said the climber, 23-year-old construction worker Jenol Sealy, never appeared suicidal, but once down, he said he "had issues." He was taken to Kings County Hospital for evaluation. It was not immediately clear if he would be charged. "He really didn't have much to say about why he was up there," said Inspector Ronald Wasson. "At one point, he actually seemed like he was having a good time."

Sealy's high-wire act began at about 9 a.m. when he was spotted climbing the bridge's web of cables. Police officers soon closed the bridge and launched a rescue effort, causing traffic jams on the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway and attracting live television coverage.

Police officers watched as Sealy spent the next two hours scaling the cables and ignoring their pleas to come down. At one point, he asked them for a beer and cigarette. Two hours later, looking exhausted, he gave up.



# Mountaineering Club of Alaska

## Officers

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

## Board

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

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

Dues can be paid at any meeting or mailed to the treasurer at the MCA address below. If you want a membership card, please fill out 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 does not forward the newsletter.

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

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

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

MAILING: richard baranow, bill romberg, don smith

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

HUTS: mark miraglia, 338-0705

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

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

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