

# the SCREE

## Mountaineering Club of Alaska

July 2015

Volume 58 Number 7



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Kooshdakhaa Spire, New Route

Peak of the Month: Mazama Peak

**Monthly meeting: 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, July 21. CHANGED VENUE and FORMAT.**

The July Barbecue Picnic will be at the Alaska Rock Gym from 7 to 10 p.m. Burgers, hotdogs, veggie burgers, and fixings will be provided. Bring a side dish to share (see the list on page 2 for what to bring) and your plates and cutlery (paper plates and utensils will be provided for people who forget). We may have a beer donation...

Bring your climbing shoes, and harness if you want to climb. If you do not have a belay card from ARG, you will be checked. If you drink alcohol, you will not be allowed to climb.

**“It doesn’t matter how tall the mountain is, all that matters is how strong you are.”**

**- Lynn Hill**

# The Mountaineering Club of Alaska

[www.mtnclubak.org](http://www.mtnclubak.org)

**"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 meeting at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, July 21, at the Alaska Rock Gym at 4840 Fairbanks Street in Anchorage.

For the MCA Membership Application and Liability Waiver, visit

<http://www.mtnclubak.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=members.form>.

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## Cover Photo

Much Mayr high up on Mount Reaper during the first ascent.

Photo by Hansjörg Auer.

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**Article Submission:** Text and photography submissions for *the Scree* can be sent as attachments to [mcascree@gmail.com](mailto:mcascree@gmail.com). Articles should be submitted by the 24th of each month to appear in the next issue of *the Scree*. Do not submit material in the body of the email. Do not submit photos embedded in the text file. Send the photo files separately. We prefer articles that are under 1,000 words. If you have a blog, website, video, or photo links, send us the link. Cover photo selections are based on portraits of human endeavor in the outdoors. Please submit at least one vertically oriented photo for consideration for the cover. Please submit captions with photos.

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Bring your climbing shoes, and harness if you want to climb. If you do not have a belay card from ARG, you will be checked. If you drink alcohol, you will not be allowed to climb. Cheers!

Bring the following based on your last name: A-H: salad; I-R: dessert; S-Z: side dish

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## Hiking and Climbing Schedule

### Rock-Climbing Clinic

**July 25-26:** the MCA will host a rock-climbing clinic near Hatcher Pass. We will meet at 9 a.m. Saturday morning at the gate just south of the Monolith. Folks can arrive on Friday night and camp or come in on Saturday morning. Due to bridge construction, you will have to hike or bike in with your camping and climbing gear. On Saturday the focus will be on instruction. We will first review the basics and then cover climbing techniques and skills, such as setting up anchors and lead climbing. Instruction will include climbing. We will camp near the Diamond on Saturday night. Sunday will be devoted to climbing and reinforcing the skills taught on Saturday. We will climb for a half day before heading home. If you are interested in joining us, contact Aaron Gallagher at 250-9555. Sign-up will be limited to ensure a small student-teacher ratio. You will need to bring the following gear: helmet, shoes, harness, belay device, and a locking carabiner. Optional gear to be used to practice making anchors includes slings, webbing, cord, and additional locking carabiners. The MCA will provide ropes.

**September 25-27:** MCA Ice Festival at the Matanuska Glacier. Contact Jayme Mack at [jaymelynnemack@gmail.com](mailto:jaymelynnemack@gmail.com) for details.

**September 27-29:** Glacier Creek mountain climb. Come join the fun of wading the icy Matanuska River and exploring the wilds of Glacier Creek after the ice festival. Typically this is a hiking trip with some possible scrambling. Destination may be a first ascent. Class D. Leader: Cory Hinds; email [chinds100@gmail.com](mailto:chinds100@gmail.com).

Online? Click me!



**Check the Meetup site and Facebook for last minute trips and activities. Or, schedule one that you want to organize.**

## Announcements

**Congratulations to Colleen Metzger and Shaun Sexton for completing required course work of the Summer Mountaineering Trip 2014:**

Trip Planning, Leave No Trace, Navigation and Route Finding, Snow Travel, Snow Anchors, Running Belays, Knots, Rope Handling/Management, Ten Essentials, Glacier Travel, Belaying, Ice Climbing, Crevasse Rescue, Wilderness Medicine, Bouldering, Rock Climbing, Trip Leadership, Service Project, Lead an MCA-sanctioned trip.

Greg Bragiel, Lead Instructor

## Climbing Notes

Ross Noffsinger reported that on a trip from April 26 to May 2 Richard Baranow and he climbed Peak 4380 northeast of Bagg Pass and Whitecrown Peak (6390) in the Sparrow Glacier and West Fork of the Twentymile River drainages in the Western Chugach Mountains. They reached both summits of Peak 4380 on April 29 and the summit of Whitecrown Peak on April 30. With his ascent of Whitecrown Peak, Richard has now reportedly climbed all 166 peaks in the Western Chugach Mountains. Congratulations, Richard!

Shelley Biss reported that on June 9 Kyle Johnson and his partners climbed the northeast ridge of Virginia Peak (3760) northwest of Anita Bay on Etolin Island.

Joe Stock reported that during a June expedition to the Romanzof Mountains of the Brooks Range, James Kesterson, Paul Muscat, Glenn Wilson, and he climbed Spectre Peak (8625) in the Isto Creek drainage and Peak 7470 in the Jago River drainage. They dubbed Peak 7470 Lincoln Peak.

Dave Hart reported that Ben Still and he made the second ascent of Snow Tower (6572) southwest of Crescent Lake in the Coast Mountains on June 21, six days after Mike Miller and Will Wacker made the first recorded ascent.

We look forward to reading detailed reports of each of these trips in future issues of *the Scree*.

## In Memoriam

The June 15 issue of the *Alaska Dispatch News* contained obituaries for a couple early MCA members. Leo Hannan died on May 15. Hannan was the MCA's Treasurer in 1965 and 1966. Eivin Brudie died on June 1. Brudie was the MCA's Vice-President in 1970 and 1971.

On the evening of June 23, KTVA News reported that MCA member Greg Grebe had died while ascending Flattop Mountain earlier that evening.

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## Trivia

## Mountain Goat Geography Quiz

By Tom Choate

Answers on page 19.

1. Which Aleutian Range volcano is the highest?

- |                     |                       |                 |
|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| A. Pavlof Volcano   | C. Shishaldin Volcano | E. Mount Griggs |
| B. Mount Veniaminof | D. Isanotski Peaks    |                 |

2. Which of these ranges has the highest peak?

- |                       |                         |                       |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| A. Neacola Mountains  | C. Romanzof Mountains   | E. Franklin Mountains |
| B. Robinson Mountains | D. Revelation Mountains |                       |

## “Emotional Atrophy” on the Obelisk

Text and photos by Clint Helander



*Route of "Emotional Atrophy" on the southwest face of the Obelisk.*

There would be no sleeping on this night. Last evening's -25 °F freeze had given way to warmer temperatures, blown in with a ferocious storm. I knew Tad McCrea was also awake, but we said nothing and just lay there in silent fear and listened. The wind moaned a slow, agonizing cry among the summits and the lenticular clouds. Then, like a charging army of demons, it screamed down the valley, gaining momentum and strength as the surrounding walls tightened.

Like counting the growing waves on a shoreline, we began to determine when the biggest of the gusts would hit. Despite our snow walls, they seemed to blow right on us and almost through us. Our four-season tent would flatten, the fabric stretching and poles creaking. "We're not going to make it through the night," I thought. Like a captain talking to his battered ship amidst a tempest, I begged the tent to survive. "Hold strong," I quietly pleaded.

This wasn't what Tad and I had planned on when we landed under halcyon skies the previous day. In the northern heart of the Revelation Mountains, we felt alone and adrift in the unknown. I braced my side of the tent through the most terrifying of the gusts and began stuffing all of my loose

belongings in bags. "Should I put my boots on?" I wondered. "She's going to break at any moment."

March's early morning twilight began to eke through the sagging tent walls. So far, she had weathered the storm. The winds began to ebb, now only gusting to perhaps 80 miles per hour. Our snow walls were gone, the glacier scoured; a shadowy white and gray wasteland. I emerged from the vestibule in full war regalia. We dug all day, excavating a snow cave under the flat glacier. We couldn't survive another night of wind like that without it.

The brunt of the storm passed, but ceaseless wind followed for another five days. We resigned mostly to the tent and the snow cave, barely escaping long enough to catch a glimpse of our distant prize: the unclimbed monolith simply labeled Peak 9304 on our Lime Hills USGS topographic maps.

Tad was running out of time and the wind had yet to subside. We called for a weather update. It would calm the next day. We woke up at 4 a.m., but the incessant wind persisted. We rolled over and tried to sleep, but the sound of our enemy outside refused to let us kill more hours in slumber.

At 11 a.m. the wind blew away and only a quiet aura floated in the air. The pilot would be there to pick Tad up in less than 24 hours, but we skied away from camp in rapid procession. The south face of Peak 9304, a mountain I had long referred to as “the Obelisk” held its triangular form as we approached. [Ed. note: This peak was featured as the Peak of the Month in the February 2015 Scree with the name Lyman Peak.] A snow-filled chimney held my picks, but threatened to spit me out. My protection far below felt suspect. Sixty meters above, a grainy crack offered a decent spot to anchor in. Tad led a long block of simul-climbing to the base of an ice-streaked headwall. A prow reared out past vertical and the hanging daggers looked almost impossible to climb. The summit was many thousands of feet above us still. We retreated.

Tad reluctantly flew out the next day, and in his place John Giraldo arrived fresh and unbeaten by the storms. We quickly reached our highpoint on the Obelisk. I searched for courage as I confronted the looming ice above. A bad screw penetrated snow and aerated ice, then a few feet higher a good, small cam. “Watch me, John. This is really hard and scary,” I muttered. My tool shuddered and reverberated as it penetrated nominal ice and struck the granite slab underneath. A deep breath and I trusted myself to it. Another swing and a wide stem and I was still moving upward. I swung again, only this time the tool broke through the ice and into air. A two-inch crack! Hanging there, teetering on my loose pick, I excavated the crack and placed a dreamy cam. The crack continued for another 15 feet of salvation. Seventy meters of difficult climbing continued and I searched for an anchor as the rope came tight. Small cams shifted in odd-

shaped cracks and pins bottomed out in seams. John followed and I studied the anchor while I thought about him on the crux moves.



Clint Helander (left) and Tad McCrea cooking bacon, eggs, and hash-brown potatoes in their snow cave while freight-train winds blew outside. The team spent 14 of 16 days covering in their tent because of the wind.

We continued upward for hours in long blocks of simul-climbing. The absent wind seemed so strange and the sun burned our faces. We approached the summit in the afternoon, high above most of the surrounding Revelation peaks. On the top, I thought back to the stress of the previous week of fighting the endless winds. I pushed the pain of a failing relationship from my mind. Two words came silently to the

front of my mind: emotional atrophy. On the summit though, it was a brief moment of long-desired tranquility.

First ascent of the Obelisk (Peak 9304) via “Emotional Atrophy” (Grade 4 M6 WI5 A0 1,000 meters) on the Southwest Face. Clint Helander and John Giraldo, March 22, 2015.



Brrr.

## **“The Goddess” on Peak 5350 (Aleutian Range; Left Fork of West Glacier Creek and Right Fork of West Glacier Creek)**

Text by Azri-el Sellers



*View of the top third of "The Goddess."*

*Photo by Azri-el Sellers*

The rain had been pelting against the windshield on our way to Kenai, but as we arrived the clouds broke and across the water we could see distant volcanoes. It was evening by the time we flew to the base of Iliamna Volcano. We wanted to land on the south side of the volcano to climb and ski down the massive south-facing run, but it was May 2013 and the snow was mushy. The pilot was concerned that after he landed the plane, it would be stuck. He suggested the west side of the volcano on a higher glacier as our landing spot, and to our surprise, we landed in a foot of fresh powder. We started to pack down a site for camp with Redoubt Volcano towering in the distance and Iliamna looming above us. Kathy Still, Eric Opland, Jimmy Kase, Siemen Stoen, and I were stoked.

On the way in we had spotted a massive couloir that split a nearby 5350-foot mountain in two. “Land us there,” Jimmy and I kept telling the pilot, staring with our jaws dropped.

The day after landing we proceeded for our main objective Iliamna, but the couloir was still lingering in our minds. We found tons of sketchy crevasses, but managed to navigate

safely through most of them. Siemen accidentally dropped his bottle of Ullr and it slid into a massive crevasse. It was a fine sacrifice to the mountain. About 300 feet from the summit, we encountered the crux, a crevasse with a small snow bridge across it leading to a steep slope of ice with about two inches of snow on top. Jimmy let me lead across the bridge. The crossing was sketchy; my feet plunged down through fresh powder into thin air repeatedly. Once I crossed the gap things got scarier, as I soon realized the steep slope above was not snow but ice. Using my Whippet, I climbed to the top and uttered, “I’m scared.” “Put in an ice screw,” Jimmy said. So I put in an ice screw and felt much better as I belayed him up. After that fiasco it was an easy climb through boot-top powder to the summit. We reached the summit and stared into the plumes of smoke rising from the caldera in awe, but still scared. How were we going to ski through the crux? Jimmy suggested rappelling, but upon skiing to the crux stated, “I think we can jump it.” He flew through the air and gapped the crevasse beneath. I side-slipped down until I reached the ice, lost my footing, and fell. Luckily I cleared the crevasse and

landed in fresh powder. From there it was an easy ski back to base camp.

We woke up early the next morning to sunshine, ready for the couloir with a renewed confidence. Jimmy, Siemen, and I skied the rest of the way down the glacier, crossed the Right Fork of West Glacier Creek, and found a gigantic boulder where we stashed our extra supplies. We skinned up hard snow to the base of the couloir and began booting. We were mostly worried about the top portion, which was around a bend, so we couldn't see it for the first third of the climb. When we reached the turn, I was amazed. The fear dissipated; it was a line so perfect, so aesthetic, that there was no room for fear, only admiration. I waited for Jimmy and Siemen to catch up, and then began to put in the boot track to the top portion of the couloir. The bottom portion of the couloir faced east, so it was



*Azri-el Sellers makes the first turn in the chute.*

*Photo by Jimmy Kase*



*Jimmy Kase skiing the couloir with Iliamna Volcano in the background.*

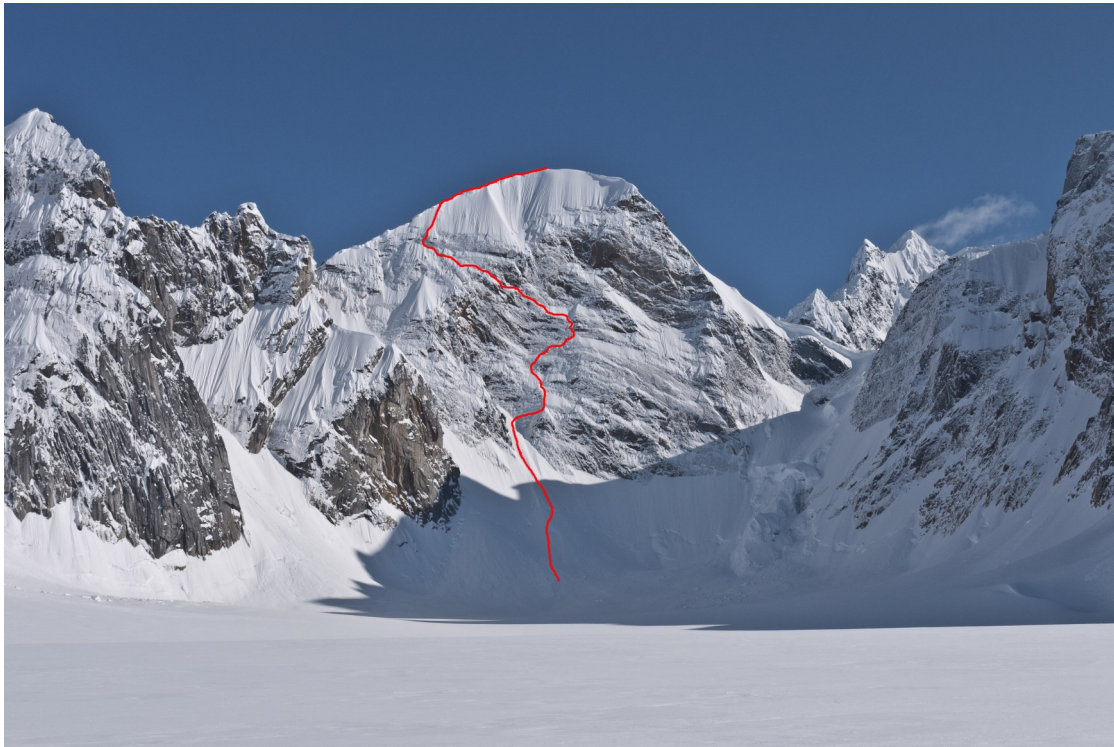
*Photo by Azri-el Sellers*

sun-crusting in the morning, but as we rounded the bend to the north-facing couloir, we encountered powder. The conditions were perfect for a couloir, a slough path down the middle to climb up with powder on both sides to ski down. We continued up and the couloir emptied to the summit of the peak, where we could see Iliamna directly across from us and a mirage of peaks in the distance. Siemen thought about down-climbing the couloir, but Jimmy and I goaded him into skiing it. The conditions were perfect. We found powder down the first half and as we turned the bend the daytime sun had warmed the snow into soft corn. Jimmy named the couloir "The Goddess" and Siemen and I liked that name.

We skied down to the giant boulder where we had stashed our gear and found fresh bear tracks in the snow. After digging into the bourbon, we messed around trying to climb the boulder, to no avail. We wore gigantic grins and laughter seeped through the air. As the sun began to set, we clicked into our skis and began the long skin back up the glacier to base camp.

# First Ascent of Mount Reaper – Neacola Mountains

Text and photos by Hansjörg Auer



*Route of "Sugar Man" on Mount Reaper.*

The mountain, located in the Neacola Mountains, rises with a stunning 750-meter-high north face from the massive Pitchfork Glacier. The summits of that range are not as high as in the nearby Revelation Mountains or the well known Ruth Gorge, but therefore the glaciers are going down lower, which implies that the faces are still up to 1,000 meters. With three different projects in my mind, I left my home in the beginning of May together with my longtime rope partner Much Mayr.

We had some pretty unstable weather (this range is well known for that) and only on the first day of our trip could we enjoy blue sky. After warming up on a rock pillar next to our base camp, where conditions were pretty bad and forced us to retreat after around 400 meters of climbing, we got stuck by a pretty intense storm. Over three days in the whiteout, constantly freeing the tent from snow, I already thought that this wouldn't be the most lucky trip. Living on the glacier, hundreds of kilometers away from civilization, demands a strong belief, a great friendship to keep high spirits, and good vibes.

Furthermore the temperatures were higher than we expected. So our objective was kind of tricky, but anyway after a day of checking out the approach, we decided to give it a go. I knew, that we need to be super light and that we had to

try the climb in less than ideal weather, to avoid higher temperatures on the face.

In the end we did it in a 12-hour push from camp to summit and back, staying on top for less than five minutes because heavy clouds were coming in. Lots of spindrift due to strong winds higher up and some really challenging steep pitches with bad protection challenged us a lot. While I was leading the crux, where a fall was out of the question, I recongized for the first time, that this route might belong under the rubric "knife-edge."

Some of the belays were made by using the ice axes only and the ice, mainly just plastered to the blank granite, really couldn't have been any thinner, otherwise our alpine-style attempt would have ground to a halt.

## **Facts:**

First Ascent of "Mount Reaper" (elevation 7425 feet)

Route: "Sugar Man" on the 750-meter-high north face

Summit on May 17, 2015, by Hansjörg Auer and Much Mayr from Austria.

Proposed grading: M7 85° A1



## Hope Point to Peak 4580: Bear-Charge Traverse

Text and photos by Ben Still

Steve Gruhn and I met at the Resurrection Trailhead on May 29, 2015, at 6:45 p.m. We left my car there and drove to the Hope Point/Gull Rock Trailhead where we planned to start a traverse from Hope Point south along the ridge paralleling the Resurrection Trail until Wolf Creek, where we would drop down to the trail and back to my car. If everything went according to plan, I would get eight new summits along this ridge, including one 2,000-foot-prominence peak, Peak 4580, and Steve, having done peaks on either end of this traverse, would get four new peaks. We started up the trail at 7:15 p.m. on a

beautiful, sunny evening. We made good time and soon were above timberline and cruising along the ridge above Turnagain Arm. We traversed below the summit of Hope Point while watching several mountain goats grazing and lounging around below us. We continued along the alpine-flower-filled ridge as the sun began dropping and hiked up and over the west ridge of Peak 3966, dropping down to a 3100-foot saddle. Here Steve traversed along a nice game trail, avoiding the elevation gain, while I ran up Point 3845 and met Steve in the next saddle. Steve had previously done this section of ridge and was keen on keeping the elevation gain to a minimum. As I caught up to Steve, we saw a lone wolf just in front of us traversing the ridge. The wolf traversed under with Steve while I followed the ridge up Peak 3955. An awesome sighting in the waning light, we stopped and made camp in the next saddle at 11:45 p.m. I brought a light sleeping bag and bivy while Steve only had his bivy sack.

Just before my alarm was about to go off at 4 a.m. I heard



*Turnagain Arm from the Hope Point Trail.*

Steve stuffing his bivy sack and walking around. I guessed he was quite cold during the night and did not sleep that well. We got up and packed our stuff up and ate a little breakfast in the chilly morning air. Steve and I both traversed around the next small bump, where I veered off and headed to the west, looking to climb a peak Steve did with Ben Radakovich in 2012, Peak 4167 [*Ed. note: see the October 2012 Scree*]. We planned to reconvene on the summit of Peak 4045. I cruised down the ridge, watching the sun rise, and made it up Peak 4167 and sent a quick text to my wife to let her know everything was going well. I kind of ran-walked down the ridge, not wanting to slow the traverse down too much with my extra peakbagging and caught up with Steve on top of Peak 4045; he got a nice 30-minute break, waiting for me to catch up and that was Steve's first new peak of the trip and my third new peak. I was able to fill my water bottle at the previous saddle in a nice snowmelt stream. From there we cruised over to Peak 4550, which my GPS gave an elevation of only 4450 with plus or minus 9 feet of error, so this peak might need a height



*Caribou antler with Peak 4167 in the background.*

reduction. A caribou made an appearance below us there, grazing on the lichen and mosses that covered this ridge. We continued along the ridge, noting several large bumps, which did not show up on the map, and eventually make it to the summit of Peak 4250. My GPS there gave a reading of 4325 feet with the same error. Hmm, the maps were not all that accurate along this ridge, we also noted that we appeared higher than Peak 4350 to the west. We enjoyed the views there, looking down on three beautiful lakes, one was completely ice free and the other two would be shortly. We ambled along this next stretch of ridge, enjoying the wildflowers and amazing views of the surrounding peaks and made it up Peak 4350, which was indeed a little lower than Peak 4250 at 4318 feet. We didn't observe any evidence of a prior ascent. Steve had already been up the next peak on the ridge, Peak 4580, in 2005 [*Ed. note: see the September 2006 Scree*], and decided he was going to head downvalley and traverse

to a pass that we would meet at before we dropped down to Wolf Creek.

I got a good head start on Steve while he napped on the top of Peak 4318 and continued down the ridge and on up Peak 4580. There was some confusion as to which summit was the high point of this peak. The map showed a 4600-foot contour on the west end of the ridge, but that summit was obviously lower than the 4500-foot closed contour on the east end of the ridge, so I planned to try to get an idea about the summit elevation on this beautiful, clear day. I scrambled up some steep scree and gained the summit ridge on top of the west summit. I could clearly see the east summit was significantly higher, so I just continued down the ridge over Point 4560, the central summit, and gained the highest eastern summit, which, as a result, we've decided to call Peak 4580.

This was the peak I had wanted to get all day, the one with 2,000 feet of prominence and the highest along the ridge west of the Resurrection Trail between Cooper Landing and Hope. I set my pack down and sat on the summit block. I took my GPS out and set it down right on top and turned it on. I heard a snapping noise. I stood up and looked down the eastern ridge of the peak and a sow brown bear with two tiny little cubs was



*Steve Gruhn on the summit of Peak 4250.*

running up the rugged ridge toward me about 200 yards away. She already saw me and was snarling and snapping her jaws. I yelled down at them, saying, "Hey, bear, stop." She continued quickly up the ridge with the cubs in fast pursuit. I could tell this bear was angry and I was in her way. I got my bear spray out and put my pack back on for protection. I removed the safety from the spray. I was thankful I had an extra-large canister of bear spray, but I was really nervous if it was going to do anything. I yelled several more times and made myself as big as possible, standing on the summit block. At 50 yards she stopped, got up on her hind legs, snarled and bared her teeth, dropped, and charged me. The charge was fast, but slow for a bear, as she was running up steep, loose, sharp scree. At 15 feet I sprayed her with a 1- to 2-second burst of bear spray. She snarled, but turned around and ran back down to her cubs. This would have been it, but her cubs, being tiny, cute, curious things, continued running toward me. The sow immediately charged back. I began spraying at 15 feet, making direct contact with her mouth and nose right as she opened her mouth to snarl at me. She fought the spray and got to within five feet as I continued to spray her directly in the mouth and eyes. Her claws kept swinging in my direction, getting unsettlingly close to my outstretched hand spraying her. I could feel a burning in my eyes and throat. Some of the bear spray was ricocheting off of her and back onto me. Finally the cubs caught up and got a full dose of bear spray. They immediately turned and ran and this, to my relief, made the sow turn and run with them; my can of bear spray was empty. They stumbled blindly down the ridge as I stood completely still, absolutely terrified she was going to make another charge. The sow's head was completely covered in red-orange bear spray. Once they finally crested over the ridge and were out of sight I grabbed my GPS and hiking pole and sprinted the other way. The sow and cubs were heading directly down the ridge to where Steve and I were planning on meeting. I sprinted 100 yards away and there was a 40-degree snow gully that dropped 1,000 feet down to the valley Steve was traversing out. In seconds I was on the valley floor, running; I can't remember how fast I went, but I was out of control and hit the valley floor running. I ran downvalley and found Steve about to start the traverse to the pass and yelled at him. He heard and was confused. Eventually we reconvened 100 feet above the valley floor opposite the bears' ridge. I was shaking and told Steve my story while scanning the slopes across the valley for the bears.

We decided to go out the ridge to the north of Gold Gulch instead of Wolf Creek. I was terrified of running into a bear then and Steve did not bring any bear spray. I found a patch of

snow and wiped my hands and face off, which helped with the burning. We made our way down the ridge and into the brush. We started seeing lots of moose sign as we crawled over beetle-killed spruce and through alders, which made me feel better. We got back to the trail and hiked back to the car. I was very grateful to be out and alive.

A successful trip, with seven new peaks and a very scary story to tell. My Counter Assault 10.2-ounce can of bear spray saved me from a serious bear mauling. Having the larger can also kept the bear at bay just long enough. A smaller can would have stopped spraying three seconds earlier and I don't want to think about what would have happened then.



## The Mystery of Peak 4380± ... Which is the True Summit?

By Richard Baranow



*View of Peak 4380±, in the foreground, from the summit of Whitecrown Peak; the northeast true summit is in the center, the southwest false summit to the right.*

*Photo by Richard Baranow.*

On the 26<sup>th</sup> of April of this year, Ross Noffsinger, Max Neale, and I began making our way under warm, snow-free, spring weather up the Winner Creek Trail from the Alyeska Prince Hotel toward two peaks deep in the Western Chugach Mountains. Although our intended area of exploration had often been visited by those who caught helicopter rides with Chugach Powder Guides and Alpine Air out of Girdwood, our intent was to hike there by foot, avoiding both contributing to the noise pollution of the area, and the need to lay out a considerable amount of cash. We also wanted to savor the scenery along the way. Why fly when one can simply walk there? In my opinion, the peaks in this area are just too darn close to justify using such means. After three days of effort, we found ourselves camped out in a beautiful open area near Bagg Pass, at an elevation of 2700 feet.

We awoke on the morning of the 29<sup>th</sup> with big smiles and great anticipation. The weather had been amazingly snowy for the past three days, with a total accumulation of about 8 inches. It was impressive to see so much depth up at the higher elevations, being so dry and snowless down near sea level. Temperatures were dropping down just below freezing at night, allowing for relatively fine snowshoe travel in the early

hours of the day. There were a few low-lying clouds about, but they seemed to be on their way out. After a light breakfast, we were off toward our goal for the day ... a trek up to the summit of Peak 4360.

After a few route-finding errors through rolling terrain and trying to keep up with Max, a.k.a. “Daddy Long-Legs,” we easily snowshoed the approximately mile or so, and topped out on the southwest summit of Peak 4360. The panorama offered from this location was absolutely amazing, with views looking down into the Lake George area to the northeast and our approach route to the southwest. This being the point marked with an elevation of 4360 feet on the USGS Anchorage (A-5) 1:63,360 map, we first assumed that we were standing on the true summit. However, after looking over to the northeast along the rounded ridgeline of the peak, I noticed another summit in the near distance that appeared to be at least as high as the point we were standing on. Could that point actually be higher? After a short discussion with my partners, I decided to trek over to this other point, solo, to check it out. Both Ross and Max seemed to believe that they were already standing on the top of the peak. I’ve always had the philosophy that if there is any question as to which “bump” is the “true” summit of a

peak, it's best to just go and do all that are suspect. This avoids any question as to whether or not you have reached the true summit. And besides, it allows one to see a little bit more terrain while doing so!

With this in mind, I checked my Suunto altimeter watch and made note of the indicated altitude of the southwest summit. Bidding "adios" to my two patient friends, I dropped down the ridgeline and headed for the, seemingly, close northeast summit. In actuality, this peak is almost a half-mile away; its relative distance apparently foreshortened by the greater peaks off in the distance. Getting to this other summit actually took longer than anticipated, apparently due to the total distance traveled and the last little uprising to its apex, which required a bit of careful scrambling. There was a bit of exposure off to the south near the summit which would have hurt if you lost your footing ... certainly, best to travel with care and avoid this potentiality!

After reaching this summit, I once again checked my altimeter. To my surprise, the altitude indicated an increase of 20 feet! Dropping to my knees, I rechecked my altimeter to discover that it indicated only an increase of 10 feet. Since my altimeter reads in 10-foot increments, I concluded that the northeast summit was at least 10 feet higher than the southwest summit. When I stood back up, the altimeter once again read 20 feet higher. This supported a modified conclusion that the northeast summit was somewhere between 10 and 20 feet higher than the southwest summit. Whatever the actual difference was, I realized that the northeast summit was the higher summit!

Taking off my snowshoes for the descent down the exposed area from the true summit of Peak 4380±, and once again making note of the altitude reading on my watch, I carefully down-climbed, face-in, to a snowy col and resumed my "slow-shoes." For the return journey back to Ross and Max, I wished I had a pair of skis on my feet. This wasn't the first time I had such a wish on this trip! It would have been practically impossible, however, to ski to the actual northeast summit along the ridgeline from the southwest after noting the exposure to the south and the steep terrain to the north. One could probably ski off from the summit to the north, making a jump off the corniced top, but you would have to either carry your skis up there along the ridgeline, or approach the summit from the northeast.



*Ross Noffsinger on the false southwest summit of Peak 4380±.  
Photo by Richard Baranow.*



*Looking toward the true northeast summit of Peak 4380± from the southwest false summit; note Ross Noffsinger in the foreground.  
Photo by Richard Baranow.*

After returning to my friends, still patiently waiting on the southwest summit, I again consulted my altimeter and noted a decrease of 10 feet in altitude from the reading on the northeast summit. This second comparison reading confirmed my original conclusion that the northeast summit was indeed the higher summit. Ross, at first, thought that I was joking with him about the relative altimeter readings. But, after realizing that I was quite serious about my belief that he was standing on the false summit, he determined to go see for himself whether or not it was true. Once again, Max was amazingly gracious in agreeing to hang tight for another 45 minutes or so while Ross went to verify my conclusions.

Upon his return, he related his similar findings in the difference in altitudes between the two summits. He was obviously pleased to have made the extra effort in making the journey; Ross, like me, is a stickler in actually getting to the top of a peak before claiming to have climbed to its



*Max Neale (right) and Richard Baranow before Max headed out on the day we climbed Whitecrown Peak.*

*Photo by Ross Noffsinger*

summit! That's what "peakbagging" is all about! And peaks only have one true summit! It was while Ross was traveling over to the northeast true summit that I saw, from the viewpoint of the southwest summit, with him in the field of view for perspective, that the northeast summit actually looked higher; without him in the picture, it was certainly hard to tell visually. And, with the USGS map being marked as it was, it is easy to see how a person standing on the false summit could make the error in assuming that the southwest summit was the true summit.

As an additional piece of information supporting my conclusion, later the next day, while climbing Whitecrown Peak off to the west with Ross (Max had left us earlier that morning to head out to meet his gal pal!), I was able to view Peak 4380± from near its loftier summit. From this perspective, from above, it is much more obvious, visually, that the northeast summit is the higher summit. It is also from this vantage point that one can see the significance of the distance between the two summits. They are two separate points on the mountain, with a separation of nearly half a mile ... but there is only one true summit, the higher, northeast summit.

It would be nice to return to the area sometime in the future and take careful, accurate GPS altitude readings of the two summits of Peak 4380± to determine their actual heights. Apparently, the USGS is in the process of upgrading and bringing up-to-date the maps of the area,

which date back to the 1950s. Regardless, and ruling out some cataclysmic change in the topography of the area, the relative elevation difference between the two points should remain the same. There is only one higher point on the mountain. And based on our four separate altimeter-comparison readings, the northeast summit is the higher of the two.

Although I would assume that the heli-ski folks have probably landed on the true summit of Peak 4380± and skied its flanks, I am not aware of anybody else who has approached the mountain by foot, without the aid of off-road motorized support, and climbed to its actual summit. And, although this peak is really only a minor peak relative to many of its neighbors, it still falls within the confines of the list of peaks in the Western Chugach... something I had been attempting to complete for a number of years. I can say with confidence that I have actually summited Peak 4380±.

After a quick snack and rehydration for Ross, Max's patience was "maxed-out" and we quickly made our descent from the false summit of Peak 4380±, retracing our up-track in the softening snow to our awaiting camp below. After summiting Whitecrown Peak the following day, completing my quest to climb all the peaks in the Western Chugach (article to appear in a future issue of *the Scree*), we packed up and eventually headed out the Winner Creek Trail to cold beers and burgers at Chair 5. It had been an adventurous, rewarding week in the Chugach Mountains. I'm anxious to get back out there and do a little more!



*A view from the true northeast summit of Peak 4380± looking north.*

*Photo by Richard Baranow.*

## Putting up a New Route, “Bad to the Bone,” on Mount Deborah

Text by Will Sim

Photos by Jon Griffith

I couldn't even bring myself to sit up and meet Jon Griffith's gaze as we sat in our bedraggled bivy tent, walls closing in, and poles on the verge of snapping. Since being dropped on the upper Gillam Glacier by helicopter 24 hours earlier, the wind had made it clear we weren't wanted. In the early hours of the morning, our base camp tent had been literally crushed, snapping its poles and making us homeless. It now lay under a meter of snow, along with all our food and gear minus our sleeping bags and a few other essentials Jon had managed to grab in a rush. This is desperate, I thought to myself, as I ran through possible scenarios for if our single-skin bivy tent was to suffer the same fate. The thought of climbing a mountain was truly well off the radar – we were just trying to survive at base camp.



*Will Sim (left) and Alex Shapiro approaching the Gillam Glacier in Shapiro's Robinson R44 helicopter.*



*Will Sim in the early hours of the morning, trying to salvage base camp from the extremely strong wind that flattened the tent.*

with a footing in the range. Now living in a spacious snow hole we'd spent two days digging, and having excavated all our kit from the destroyed tent, we felt like we were finally in a position to think about climbing, and unbelievably, the forecast was looking good.

Crossing a bergschrund is always a meaningful affair. You're showing the first level of commitment; you're getting started and showing intent and it's normal to have butterflies. Shortly before we made that step, a large avalanche flushed the couloir to our left, something we'd toyed with climbing. Shortly after we made our first steps on the face, the same thing happened a few hundred meters to our right. Although 60 meters apart, we locked gazes and talked about options. Climbing mountains is about make-or-break

The Hayes Range, located 150 miles northeast of Denali, isn't exactly designed for climbers. This notoriously windy group of mountains thrust their rotting schist faces into the sky for 2,000 meters of vertical relief. The peaks are clearly seen from Fairbanks to the north – a viewpoint on the grounds of the university in Fairbanks labels Mounts Hayes, Hess, and Deborah on the skyline 90 miles distant as if they were famous monuments on a city skyline.

The wildness and isolation of the Hayes is something difficult to find in the popular central Alaska Range, and it was this characteristic that drew Jon Griffith and me to the towering unclimbed faces on the north side of Mount Deborah.

It was four stormy days until we had ourselves established



*Will Sim skiing to the northwest face of Mount Deborah on the morning of the ascent.*

decisions one after another, and this was definitely one.

The face was far steeper than we expected; snowy ramps low on the face were actually 30-meter steps of near-vertical névé, and snow slopes were calving. We skirted a huge roof at half height on thin smears of ice, sometimes forced to move together on this tenuous ground until we were above it. The door seemed open to the upper part of the face. It was around then that the face came alive; huge plumes of snow, some like dust, some thick and concentrated, began thundering down the face in the region of our intended line.

Hours later we reached the Northwest Ridge, glad to have escaped the face's lethal mood, yet feeling the strain of close to 20 hours on the go. It was getting hard to think right.

The summit of Deborah is a house-sized cornice. "Let's call this the summit," I said to Jon as I reached his belay a safe distance from Deborah's dorsal-like crest. Day Two had been another thousand meters of up and a hell of a lot of across. A spectacular knife edge reminiscent of a reptilian spine had us concentrating to the last meter. Now it was nice to engage downhill mode. Twelve inventive rappels and a descent of the upper Yanert Glacier saw us back at our bivy for a second night. This time with a little daylight to spare, we chatted over snow-melting duties. The day had been longer and bigger than we thought.

Lying outside our snow hole 24 hours later, we gazed up at our face, now bathed in evening light. Another long and worrying day had seen us down-climb a ridge for over a mile before a committing set of raps under threatening cornices saw us to the floor, content but wasted. The fuzzy high of whiskey had taken over our beaten bodies as George Thorogood's "Bad to the Bone" found its way out of the speakers. It seemed to fit: Mount Deborah had been bad to the bone.

To view a video of the climb, visit

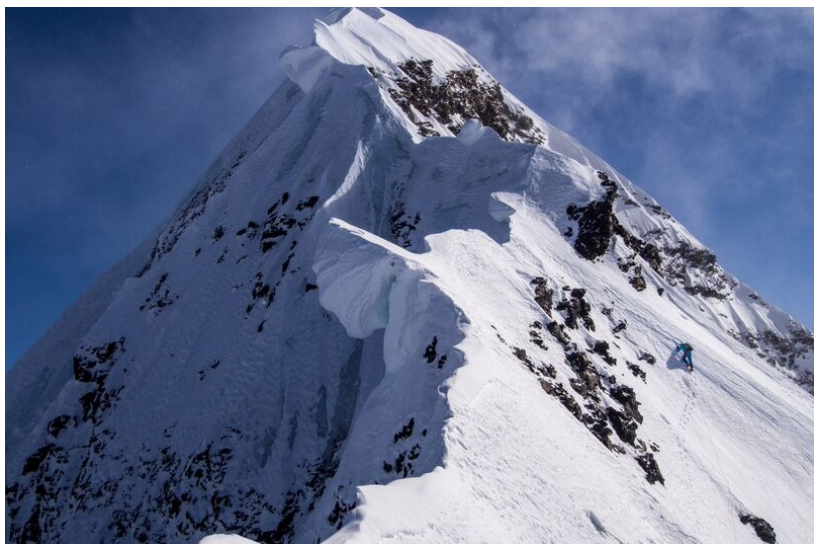
<http://www.outdoorresearch.com/blog/stories/video-putting-up-a-new-route-on-alaskas-mount-deborah>.



*Looking down the initial 1,000 meters of the northwest face as Will Sim ascends.*



*Will Sim digging a ledge for the bivy tent.*



*Will Sim halfway along the wild summit ridge of Mount Deborah.*



## Andy Simons Mountain, Vin Hoeman's Big Bad Wolf

Text by Harold Faust



*Andy Simons Mountain from the northwest ridge on August 10, 2003.*

*Photo by Harold Faust.*

With the seemingly unlimited wealth of interesting ridge lines and fine mountain peaks that surround our home ground in Seward, repeating a visit to a summit is not a first choice when the weather and timing are aligned for exploration. Views from each peak we reach reveal more routes and adventures beyond. Maps can give great clues to ridge connections, valley approaches, cirque ponds, and other worthy destinations, but when the visuals are spread out before us in full three-dimensional color, that is the true source of so much inspiration and joy.

Some particularly fine local spots do invite us back for many visits; the summits of Tiehacker Mountain, Bear Mountain, and "Big" Marathon Mountain come immediately to mind. Others leave memories of tough approaches, rotten conditions, or simply lack satisfying outcomes and likely they will never be repeated. Right Mountain and Lark Mountain fit that description for me. Been there, done with that. There are a few targets that seem to call us back for at least one repeat. Perhaps the motivation is to try a different route to

the top, or to share the experience with new companions, or maybe just to get photos that were missed before. I think all mountaineers remember fine spots they would love to get back to if things work out right.

Andy Simons Mountain rises to an elevation of 6407 feet (1953 meters) above the east side of Kenai Lake's south end. The summit is visible from the Seward Highway at Moose Pass and as far south as the Trail River bridge. Vin Hoeman, Dave Johnston, and three others [*Ed. note: the other three members of the party were Cliff Ells, Pete Robinson, and Don Stockard*] made the first recorded ascent in May 1963 (see the June 1963 *Scree*). Friends and I made several runs at the peak back in the '80s, heading up behind the IRBI Knives shop at Mile 19.5. Our attempts were thwarted by summer snow flurries at altitude and the long stretch of ridge above 5000 feet. In August 2003, George Peck and I scrambled up from Mile 21 and reached the summit in fine conditions. We came down the south side of the peak and bushwhacked out to the Victor Creek Trail – a long 12-mile loop completed in 13 hours. The thrill of finding



*Harold Faust climbing out of the brush.  
Photo by Dano Michaud.*

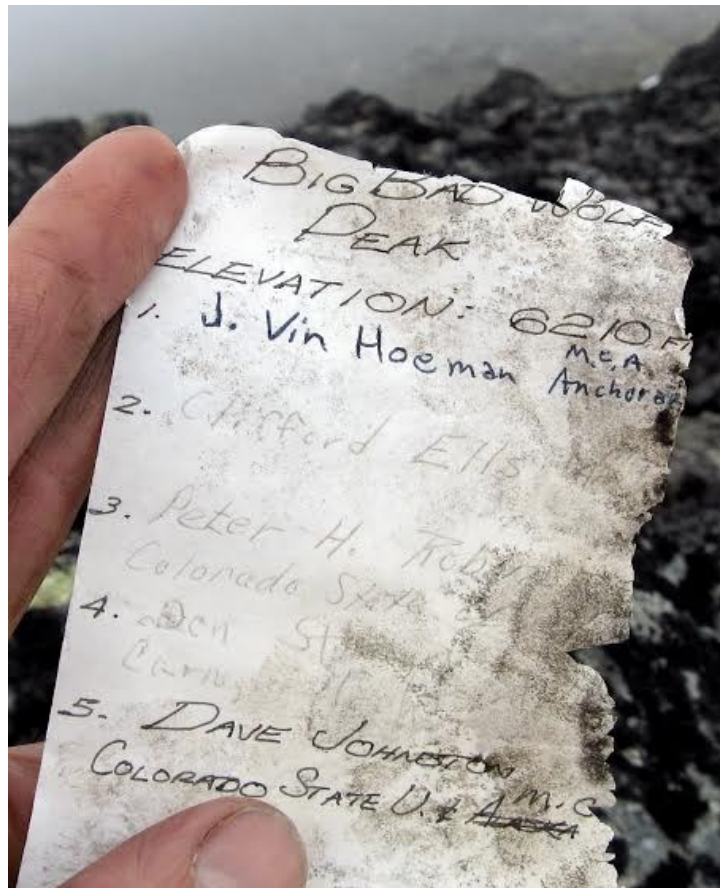
convinced Dano to commit to it. It soon became apparent that our microspikes and trekking poles were marginal equipment for the solid condition of the old snow and the increasing exposure as we wound our way up into fog gathering on this south slope. At times it took two or three kicks into the surface to get our toes to gain purchase. Gina, of course, came fully equipped and had no trouble as Dano and I struggled to maintain footing. We got off the snow several times when the steep sides of the gully presented rock steps available. Crampons here would be well worth the carry. A goat nanny and her kid kicked a few stones loose as they retreated into the fog above us. We reached the ridge crest at very nearly 5000 feet, happy to get the spikes off and follow the ridgeline east. The loose boulders of Kenai crud piled up along that undulating ridge were a fine scrambling challenge; our rate of travel in the nearly constant fog was nothing to brag about. A snapshot that Dano took of Gina and me in that section was chosen as the July photo for the 2015 MCA calendar.

We reached the apparent high point three different times, only to see another ridge section above us as the fog thinned momentarily. Temporary views of the north side glacier and peeks of the aquamarine waters of Ptarmigan Lake below

Vin's original summit note from 1963 in a glass bottle was a story I told often after that climb.

After Dano Michaud moved to Seward and we began climbing together, Andy Simons was always on his must-do list. We learned that the MCA had an interest in archiving Vin's summit notes when possible, so recovering that document was another motivation we kept in mind as other trips occupied our climbing opportunities. We explored the approach above the end of the Victor Creek Trail along with Peck and his wife Tuula in 2012, but lost too much time climbing out of a waterfall slot to get very high on the mountain that day. Coming down, we locked in the route beta, which avoided nearly all alder thrashing and stored the information for the next time. Scrambling residual snow and scree on climber's left of the avalanche chute at the end of the trail goes up to goat trails, which skirt around the west edge of a rock buttress. Above the rock there are several hundred feet of steep grass and then it's open travel in moss, flowers, and scree.

Dano and I, along with my fine scrambling dog Gina, used that route on the morning of August 1, 2014, and were soon well up into the alpine. At about 3000 feet, we crossed several small ravines on an obvious goat trail traversing to the right and then worked our way up to a prominent snow-filled couloir. I knew it was the way George and I had gained the ridge in '03 and



*Vin Hoeman's original log.  
Photo by Dano Michaud.*

teased us with what we were missing. We continued to work our way over and around the boulders. I recognized the true summit finally and we quickly spotted the glass bottle containing the summit log, its plastic lid partly cracked. The log inside was dry when we pulled it out; however, the paper was touched with mold and beginning to erode. In May of 1963 the mountain did not have an official name. Vin Hoeman wrote the name "Big Bad Wolf Peak" on his log sheet, which he later explained was in reference to the ominous nature of the peak and also a nod to the Mother Goose Glacier just east of the mountain. Shortly thereafter the mountain was officially named in honor of Andy Simons, who held the Territorial hunting guide License #1 and lived at the mouth of Victor Creek on the shore of Kenai Lake. Simons was married to Eva Lowell, the namesake of Mount Eva near Seward. Andy died in 1962 and his home site sank into the lake during the Alaska earthquake on March 27, 1964.

I was quite surprised to see that the last entry on the log was from George and me on August 10, 2003, almost exactly 11 years before. Suffice it to say the lichens on those summit rocks are seldom disturbed, by humans. We took photos of the log

sheets and then made hand copies of the first page entries and put the new logs into a Nalgene bottle to replace the glass bottle. By that time we were chilled in the below-dew point, low-visibility atmosphere and we headed back down off the rock pile. No photos of long-distance views were possible, but our feelings of accomplishment were satisfying.

We did not want to revisit that rotten ridge or consider down-climbing the snow couloir with inadequate spikes. A long diagonal rock and scree descent across the south slopes of the mountain was a replay of the route George and I had used. Once below the fog layer, views of Sheep Mountain to the south, the headwaters of Victor Creek, and the Mother Goose Glacier opened up. We eventually came back across the goat trail, down through our alder zone sneak to the Victor Creek Trail, and on out to the truck, approximately 11 hours after our start.

This is a fine, long day hike and engaging scramble for anyone who would like to top one of the highest peaks in the Kenai Mountains. A day with clear weather will reward you with fantastic views of the peaks, glaciers and lakes of this part of the eastern Kenai Peninsula.



*View northwest from the summit of Andy Simons Mountain on August 10, 2003.*

*Photo by Harold Faust.*

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### Answers to Mountain Goat Geography Quiz on page 3

1. Which Aleutian Range volcano is the highest? C. Shishaldin Volcano, 9414 feet
2. Which of these ranges has the highest peak? B. Robinson Mountains, 10750 feet

## Kooshdakhaa Spire, New Route

Text by Max Fisher

Photos by Erik Bonnett



*Max Fisher approaching Kooshdakhaa Spire.*

From May 25 to June 14, 2014, Erik Bonnett and I climbed about 45 pitches of rock, ice, and snow in a relatively unknown glacial area on the border of southeast Alaska and northern British Columbia, which bares similarities to the Kichatna Mountains. We then traveled over many kilometers of glacier, bushwhacking and packrafting our way back to civilization along the Chilkat River.

We first flew into the area with Drake Olson out of Haines, intent on making the first ascent of what we've called Kooshdakhaa Spire, the 7350-foot southern summit of Kooshdakhaa (the 7550-foot main summit) and the most prominent feature among the complex granite mountain. [*Ed. note: Will Wacker reported that Brian Delay and he climbed the main summit in April 2004, dubbing it Mount Agony. Their ascent had been previously unreported.*]

I saw this feature during three different trips with the National Outdoor Leadership School into the range from the northern Scree—July 2015

British Columbia side. Its location and aesthetic nature got my attention and when I presented the idea to Erik, he was game. I knew of one other expedition to the range, which was by a group of NOLS instructors who attempted a 300-meter spire just north of Kooshdakhaa; they were turned around by poor rock quality and weather, from what I understand.

We spent 15 days at our base camp below the spire. In that time we successfully climbed Kooshdakhaa Spire via a sustained couloir on its north side to a col, and then to the summit: "North Couloir" (600 meters, AI3 M3). We also climbed a gully on the opposite side of the spire: "South Couloir" (350 meters, AI3 M3).

Our main objective, the steep 700-meter north-facing granite wall comprising Kooshdakhaa proper, turned us away during both our alpine-style attempts, after we were met with tricky route finding, poor rock, and difficult climbing (up to 5.11) about halfway up the wall. The lower part of the climb



*Max Fisher climbing steep rock on the third pitch on the north-facing granite wall of Kooshdakhaa Spire.*

generally followed sustained and continuous splitter cracks up great rock.

We also attempted an additional couloir to the north of Kooshdakhaa Spire, on another granite feature; however, we were forced to descend about one pitch from the top. The route contained physical mixed climbing (up to M5).

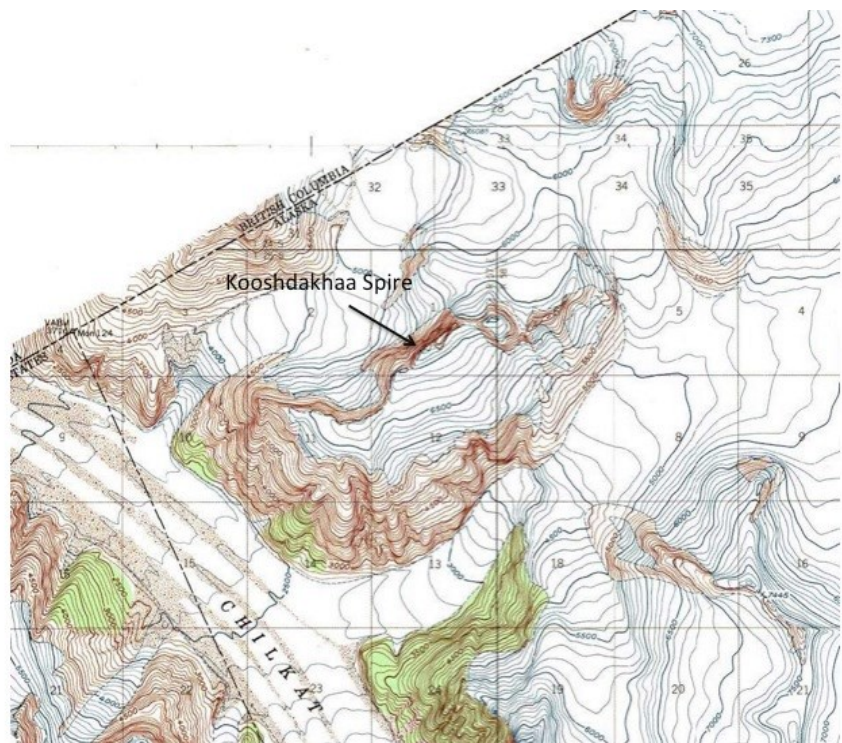
After climbing, we walked 25 kilometers across the glacier over two days and began packrafting toward the Chilkat River through small tributaries. Upon reaching the river we paddled two short sections of Class III whitewater in our packrafts before dropping to the Chilkat River Valley where we paddled more Class III whitewater. To our knowledge we were the first people to paddle the upper Chilkat in packrafts and the second team to paddle the 60 kilometers of river from the glacier to

Haines. Toward the river's mouth we encountered a thriving game area full of wolves, bears, and moose, inciting much nervousness—it was the most scared I was on the trip!

The name “Kooshdakhaa” is derived from the lore of the Tlingit and Tsimshian Indians of southeast Alaska. Loosely translated, Kooshdakhaa means “land otter man,” mythical shape-shifting creatures capable of assuming both human and otter-like forms. In many stories, the Kooshdakhaa saved a lost individual by distracting him with curious otter-like illusions of his family and friends as they transform their subject into a fellow Kooshdakhaa, thus allowing him to survive in the cold. Naturally, this is counted a mixed blessing. However, Kooshdakhaa legends are not always pleasant. In some legends it is said the Kooshdakhaa will imitate the cries of a baby or the screams of a woman to lure victims to a river. Once there, the Kooshdakhaa either kills the person and tears them to shreds or will turn them into another Kooshdakhaa.

Big thanks go out to the Copp-Dash Inspire Award; we were sponsored by Black Diamond, Mountain Hardwear, Patagonia and La Sportiva (with in-kind support from Adventure Film Festival, the American Alpine Club, the Johnny Copp Foundation, and Sender Films). We would also like to thank Alpaca Rafts and NOLS for their kind support.

We look forward to our next visit!



# Peak of the Month: Mazama Peak

By Steve Gruhn

**Mountain Range:** Chugach Mountains

**Borough:** Unorganized Borough

**Adjacent Pass:** Science Pass

**Latitude/Longitude:** 61° 27' 1" North, 146° 59' 19" West

**Elevation:** 9633 feet

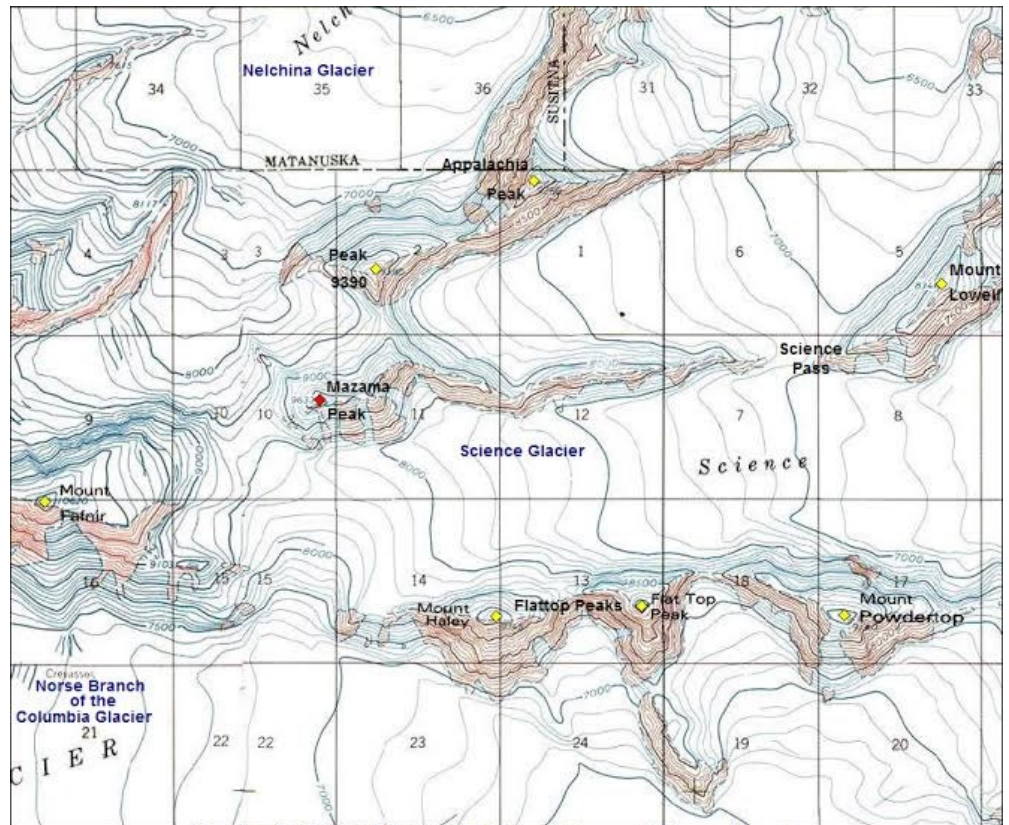
**Prominence:** 983 feet from Mount Fafnir (10620)

**Adjacent Peaks:** Peak 9390 in the Nelchina Glacier drainage, Mount Fafnir, Mount Haley (9145), and Mount Lowell (8346)

**Distinctness:** 783 feet from Peak 9390

**USGS Maps:** Valdez (B-8)

**First Recorded Ascent:** 2000 by Erica Lorenzen and five National Outdoor Leadership School participants



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

In June 1955 Lawrence E. Nielsen led a party to attempt to climb Mount Witherspoon (12012). Although the party was unsuccessful in that they did not reach the summit, they were successful in reporting on a largely unexplored area of the Chugach Mountains. In the December 1955 Appalachia, the journal of the Appalachian Mountain Club, Nielsen wrote a report of the expedition and included a map on page 535 showing the locations of several peaks that he had named, including Mazama Peak.

In 2000 Erica Lorenzen led five other NOLS participants to the summit of Mazama Peak. Unaware of Nielsen's published name, they called it Knob Hill.

The information for this article was obtained from Nielsen's article titled "Attempt on Mt. Witherspoon, Alaska," which appeared on pages 533 through 537 of the December 1955 Appalachia; and from NOLS expedition records available at the NOLS office on North Farm Loop Road north of Palmer.



West aspect of Mazama Peak.

Photo by: Lauren Cantwell

# JUNE MEETING MINUTES

June 15, 2015

**Attendance:** Cory Hinds and Galen Flint

**VP Programs** (Galen)

*June:* Flattop Mountain hike led by Tom Choate.

*July:* Picnic at Alaska Rock Gym. Board in agreement that MCA pays the fee to reserve the gym for the evening. Coordinate announcements with details.

Cory will arrange the grills, beer, and monitoring system to follow the ARG rules.

Galen will arrange the food and announcements.

Proposed August meeting at McHugh and hiking to Resolution Bluff and back for an introduction to this cool climbing area.

Option to bring ropes and drop in a couple top ropes. Galen will cancel BP Energy Center reservation for August.

*September:* To be determined

**Treasurer's report** (Aaron Gallagher is out; here is his summary)

*Checking:* \$19,527.07

*Certificates of Deposit and savings accounts:* \$20,681.89

*Other savings account:* \$410.72

*Northrim Bank CD total:* \$1,167.52

*Total:* \$41,755.94

*Revenue Year-to-Date:* \$6,707.08

*Expenses YTD:* \$2,802.08

**Question:** Advertisement in Joe Stock's book? Yes, we will find out what it costs.

**Question:** Put some money in CD or spend on other programs for club? Hold until we see what the hut rehabilitation costs.

**Secretary's report** (Max Neale)

Nothing new to report.

**Huts (Cory)**

Pichler's Perch re-skin: Work will happen June 24 through 30.

Cory is lining up volunteers for Landing Zone Attendant and Equipment Runner. Spending money on helicopter, materials, and supplies. Still anticipating under budget.

Request authorization to spend additional money to send helicopter to other Eklutna Traverse Huts to remove waste barrels. Additional authorization will likely not be needed.

Dnigi Hut relocation: Hut condition assessment and visit to new hut location later this summer.

Mint Hut: Need work party to decant barrel and install urine-separating toilet. (Summer 2015). Still looking for volunteers to help make this happen. Cory will run an announcement in *the Scree*.

*Scree*—July 2015

Scandinavian Peaks Hut has a broken window that needs replacement in the next month or two. Hope to do this in June. Paul Andrews as pilot.

If Paul Andrews doesn't work out, I will ask for the MCA to cover the cost of a flight (Meekin's Air Service).

Leases on Department of Natural Resources land need to be updated every five years. Cory's court; no action yet.

**Training**

Summer rock course – We're doing two days at Hatcher Pass, in later July or August. Aaron has agreed to organize it. Cory will help teach. John Giraldo will help out. Need another couple instructors. Will send a call for instructors once we have a date set.

Jayne Mack to organize Ice Fest, as she does so well! Cory to confirm with Jayme.

**Hiking and Climbing**

Need a volunteer on the Board to help find a replacement for the Hiking and Climbing Committee Chair; Vicky Lytle is stepping down. Cory to ask Ross Noffsinger and Rachad Rayess. Any other ideas?

Request all Board members contact at least one leader and ask them to do a summer trip. Or lead a trip themselves.

Deadline: June *Scree*, June 24th.

**Mentoring (Rachad)**

Nothing new to report.

**Library (Cory)**

Best Storage is now empty; books are catalogued and at REI!

Recommend \$50 gift certificate to Alaska Mountaineering & Hiking to recognize Charlotte Foley for the good work and leadership in getting the books straightened out. Cory to purchase. Award at September meeting.

**Equipment (Josh Clark)**

Need volunteer to organize move of equipment from Arctic to Best. Probably two to three hours. Shoot for July.

**Parks Advisory** – no report.

**New Business**

*Scree* length: agreed via email to extend length of *the Scree* to 24 pages.

**Next Board meeting:** July 20, 6 p.m., REI classroom. Next general meeting: July 21, 7:00 p.m., Alaska Rock Gym (barbecue!)

## Mountaineering Club of Alaska

President	Cory Hinds	229-6809	Board member (term expires in 2015)	Rachad Rayess	617-309-6566
Vice-President	Galen Flint	650-207-0810	Board member (term expires in 2015)	Joshua Clark	887-1888
Secretary	Max Neale	207-712-1355	Board member (term expires in 2016)	Jayne Mack	382-0212
Treasurer	Aaron Gallagher	250-9555	Board member (term expires in 2016)	Carlene Van Tol	748-5270
Past President	Greg Encelewski	360-0274			

Annual membership dues: Single \$20, Family \$25

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 Membership Committee at [membership@mtclubak.org](mailto:membership@mtclubak.org).

*The Scree* is a monthly publication of the Mountaineering Club of Alaska. Articles, notes, and letters submitted for publication in the newsletter should be emailed to [MCAScree@gmail.com](mailto:MCAScree@gmail.com). Articles should be submitted by the 24th of the month to appear 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. Ads can be emailed to [vicepresident@mtclubak.org](mailto:vicepresident@mtclubak.org).

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

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Hiking and Climbing Committee: Vicky Lytle - [hcc@mtclubak.org](mailto:hcc@mtclubak.org)

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Find MCAK listserv at <https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/MCAK/info>.

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