

SCREE



MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF ALASKA

BOX 2037

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99510

VOL. 15, NO. 8

AUGUST MEETING... Thursday, August 17, 1972...8:00 PM... Central Junior High Multipurpose Rm... Program: Minislide presentation - Come See! There will be one... Business Meeting... Refreshments... Maxislide presentation will be on the Chilkoot Trail by Helen and Gayle Nienhueser.

The Board voted to present the following proposal to the voting membership: Effective November 1, 1972, there be a rental schedule for use of the Club's ropes and tents as follows: \$1 for a week for a rope, \$2 a week for a tent and \$5 a month for a tent. Also, that there be two new ropes purchased each year to phase out the old ones. Old ropes will be cut into pieces for knot practice at the schools. In addition, that the Club purchase one 2-man tent. Money from the rental of equipment will be used to repair equipment and to purchase new equipment. Above proposal will be voted on at the August meeting.

BOARD MEETING... Monday, September 4, 1972... Tom Meacham's... 1410 H

NOTICE! The Mountaineering Club of Alaska respectfully requests that any publication using material from SCREE please quote from the articles accurately and please refrain from taking material out of context.

HIKING AND CLIMBING SCHEDULE

Interested in a good climb? Call Bob Spurr at 344-6067. Be sure and let Bob know if you are planning a climb or hike in the future or if you wish, send the date, place and what details you know along with your name and phone and it will be published in SCREE. Let Bob know by the first Monday of the month and it will be advertised in SCREE.

PRESIDENT'S PEN

It has been a long, hot summer and with the August meeting, things will be underway again in the MCA. Hopefully, we will see lots of slides and write-ups of the hikes and climbs you've been doing.

The Rock School has progressed smoothly under Bill Barnes, director, with much help from Barry Kircher and T.J. Bruce among others.

A final thought--the Japanese climbers have greatly increased in Alaska in the past two years. Many are becoming more interested in first ascents than in the bigger peaks. If we wish to beat them to it, we must climb a little harder and push a little faster. I hope we will see more first ascents in SCREE instead of a footnote saying another flag with a red sun has been discovered on a supposedly "virgin" peak.

-Wendell Oderkirk-

CONSERVATION COMMENTARY

There are two issues to report this month: one urgent and of national importance and the other local and not quite so urgent (but still important to us!).

The national conservation issue first--The U. S. House of Representatives may vote before the August recess on H. R. 7211, the most backward-looking piece of public-land legislation to emerge in many years. The bill has been reported out of the House Interior Committee by a favorable vote--and our own Rep. Begich supports most of it, I understand. He, of course, is on the House Interior Committee and owes many political debts to Rep. Wayne Aspinall, the Committee Chairman, who is prime sponsor of H. R. 7211. (The debts arose during the Native Claims legislation.) So it will take a lot of grass-roots pressure to convince Mr. Begich and others that the bill is a threat to all public lands in the U. S.

About the bill itself--H. R. 7211 would require the Park Service, Forest Service, Fish and Wildlife Service and BLM to review all their lands and recommend "disposal or retention in public ownership" of these lands. BLM has always been a holding agency for unclassified public lands, but the other agencies named have never had to worry about being forced to give up parts of their public property for private ownership and use. What might this do to Katmai, Kenai Moose Range, or Chugach National Forest?

In addition, the bill would take away the power of the President (or Sec. of Interior) to withdraw and classify any land larger than 25,000 acres. With this provision, no new Katmaís, or Arctic Wildlife Refuges, or the like will be possible without Congressional debate, vote-trading and delay. And more importantly, H. R. 7211 would take land management authority out of the agencies and give it to House and Senate Committees, which could veto any decision to not allow multiple use on any tract larger than 25,000 acres. Thus, a decision to prohibit lumbering in the Moose Range, or to forbid motorized recreation there would become a political football by law.

One problem with the bill is that it is tied to a perfectly desirable national land-planning bill. If they were separated, 7211 might not stand on its own feet. A Senate Bill (S. 632) is also a land-use bill and if they both pass, they will be conformed, but the objectionable portions of H. R. 7211 may remain. The last recourse is a presidential veto, and it is reported that the Administration hasn't yet made up its mind about what to do. Pressure might be applied here if all else fails.

The local issue is the Forest Service's long-range plan for construction of 43-inch wide gravelled trails, with steel bridges and costing lots of money, in the Chugach National Forest. These trails are justified because "that is the smallest motorized trail equipment made," and besides, snowmachines need nice, wide trails and strong bridges.

Their 5-year plan will put these miniature highways into valleys that see only moose tracks and a few footprints now. Is this what we need? Do taxpayers have to subsidize such expensive trails? What sort of impact statement has been prepared for this invasion of natural wild country? Brushed-out foot trails are one thing, but the Forest Service apparently sees as its mission the "opening up" of every valley in the Chugach to heavy foot traffic and snowmachines. What plans are being made for the solitary summer hiker or the cross-country skier?

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PIONEER PEA 5398'

July 15-16, 1971

On Saturday at 7:00 AM, John Samuelson, on his motorcycle, met Jim Rogers, Tom Rogers, George Barth and Diane Barth at the Valu-Mart parking lot.

We drove to the Knik River bridge and picked up Bob and Ed Coleman, then turned right down the road a half mile and started climbing up the small creek valley.

We were soon attacked by mosquitoes but put on some Cutters and started climbing again. We reached the meadow below the pass and ate lunch and ditched our packs. This meadow is about 2,000 feet up. We started climbing up to the pass but about halfway Bob was forced to climb down to the packs because of blisters.

After roping up to go on a steep snowfield, we reached the pass. On the way up we saw three sheep and tracks here and there. It was easy climbing until we reached the bottom of the east summit, where we had to rope up. John, George and Ed were on one rope and Jim, Tom and Diane were on the other rope. There were a few hairy places on the east side but nothing that Diane Barth who, in fact, had just climbed Flattop a few weeks ago could not master under guidance from the others.

We reached the 6398' summit at 7:00 PM. We celebrated with a few handfuls of gorp while reading the register. We stayed roped up until the bottom of the east summit. Then the great skier-glissaders, Tom, George, Jimmy, Ed and John slalomed down the rock and snow slides. We spotted nine more sheep on the way to the pass. When we got to the pass at ten o'clock, Jimmy, Tom, George, John and Ed glissaded all the way down to the base camp while Diane hoofed it down.

Bob was waiting with his tent set up and with a kind ear which listened to our tales of hardships and victory. We made dinner and set up camp. When we got up it was raining. Everybody was ready to walk out and down the creek early. We all walked out to the road without mishap. John and Tom drove down the road a little to telephone George's mother who came and picked all of us up and drove us home.

HURDYGURDY 5965' & CALLIOPE 6810 July 5-7, 1972 Larry Swanson

Not wanting the midweek sunshine to go to waste, Art Ward and I took a couple of days off from our rigorous schedules and went up the south fork of Eagle River. When we reached the end of Eagle Lake, we had walked a few more miles than planned since some reclusive homesteader had locked up the gate which is about three miles from the end of the road. Going around the lake on the way in we made the mistake of walking along the north side of the lake through the brush, but on our return we discovered a fairly decent trail along the north bank.

Once at the other end of the lake we were in sort of a box canyon type enclosure. The lake blocked off one end and mountain slopes and cliffs towered above

on the other three sides. At the end of the valley the waters from the melt of Flute Glacier plunged off about a hundred and fifty-foot cliff and all along the sides of the valley, water roared down streams, trickled down rocks and ran down shiny ledges. It was just a super alpine setting, and we were entranced by the tranquillity and pureness of it until we came upon the remains of a camp left by a group which were working on a glacier research project about five years ago. These apparently thoughtless and inconsiderate persons left empty fuel cans, food containers, tent poles, plastic and canvas tarps and whatnot strung all around their abandoned campsite. A little perturbed by the mess, we walked on a ways and set up our tent. After laying out in the sun for an hour or so, we made a nice evening ascent of Hurdyhurdy and then watched a few bands of sheep for a while before turning in for the night.

The next day we walked up past the big waterfall at the end of the valley and then along the river up toward the Flute Glacier. Before we reached the glacier we headed up the NNE ridge of Calliope 6810' (formally called Icy Peak). It was a little hairy without a rope and so when we got to the top we decided to go down via the north ridge onto a little glacier instead of the way we came up. This route was much easier, and it didn't take long to get back to camp.

The next morning was just as clear and sunny as the other two, so we laid out in the sun for a few hours before walking out.

PTARMIGAN LAKE

June 25, 1972

Eivlin Brudie

Participants: Alice Schuh and son Dan, Norm Wills, Millie Redmond, Brigitte Russel and three Brudies--Mary Pat, Eric and Eivin.

When we left Anchorage at 8:00 AM the sun was shining, so we took mosquito netting but no rain gear. Although the clouds became more dense as we went south, our choice of protection was only half wrong, for we had neither rain nor mosquitoes. Our outing was gray and cool but not wet.

The Seward area abounds in accessible easy walks which provide good scenic variety over short distances. The Ptarmigan Lake Trail is one of these. The trail to the lake is 3-1/2 miles long with little elevation gain. Three miles can be added by walking to the far end of the lake. The views are close-in rather than distant, of deep woods relieved by occasional patches of grass and wild flowers. Larger perspectives of canyons and glaciated mountains are occasionally to be found. These larger views are pleasant but not awesome.

We were told, but can't verify, that Ptarmigan Creek is populated by dolly varden, grayling and rainbow trout.

The trail is popular. Along the lake we met a half-dozen groups of hikers and campers, but isolation was easy to achieve along the irregular shoreline of this narrow lake. No one interfered with anyone else's enjoyment of the place, except for one sportsman who briefly indulged in the great American pastime of plinking with a revolver.

Our return hike was interrupted by a first aid stop. We came upon two young men who were struggling to remove several hundred porcupine quills from the nose, lips, tongue and palate of a 190-pound St. Bernard. They had lashed the dog's feet together and laid him on his side, rodeo style, but even from this disadvantaged position, he resisted their ministrations. Three of us piled on.

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Scott Muell and I began climbing the center ridge leading to Wolverine 4455' at two in the afternoon. Halfway up the ridge we spotted two Dall sheep grazing a few yards from the summit. By the time we reached the peak, the sheep had joined two more a mile further back the ridge. We could get no closer than a few hundred yards to them on our way to Elliot 4710'. Several rock ptarmigan provided a target for my camera, and we spent nearly an hour trying to get a mother and chick to pose together. Neither would cooperate, so I ended up taking one of the four-inch youngster standing alone.

Reaching the top of Elliot at about seven o'clock, we decided to descend to Williwaw Lakes and then go over the Glacier to a low point on the O'Malley ridge. The sun set before we reached the Glacier and we didn't reach Upper Huffman until nearly midnight. The road seemed to be rather forlorn until a slight rumble and a pair of headlights told us our ride was on the way.

GRANITE PEAK 6729'

July 22, 1972

Bob Spurr

On Saturday, July 22, Tom Meacham, Jan-Erik Neld and Bob Spurr made the fifth ascent of Granite Peak 6729', Talkeetnas, via its central south system of couloirs and ramps. Their circuitous route, discernible from the strip mines as a slant mirror-image Z, attempted to avoid rotten parapets and scree disgorging cul-de-sacs.

Time from the four-wheels, left on the highest tailing pile (more honestly "abandoned" but that's another story), to the summit was six hours. Pease's well-entombed plastic register bottle was found after some dismantling of the cairn (fourth ascent party will be interested to read this), but a more noteworthy discovery was Vin Hoeman and Scott Hamilton's original cottage cheese container, once housed in their 3 1/2-foot cairn but more recently preserved under a summit snow bank. (This was sighted in several pieces twenty feet sound of the summit atop bleached, lichen-free talus, together with a legible record of their 1962 first ascent - a lucky find now preserved with the later entries.)

Descent by the up-route was slow and careful. The climb established something of a culinary first when Jan-Erik lunched on caviar!

BOLD PEAK 7522'

July 30, 1972

Bob Spurr

First North to South Traverse of Bold: On Sunday, July 30, Tom Meacham and Bob Spurr traversed Bold Peak 7522, W. Chugach, ascending the N-NE ridge from its 4850' saddle to the summit and descending Stivers' giant south couloir to Eklutna River's East Fork. They departed on foot at 6:30 AM from Eklutna Road (elevation ca. 900'), hiking the now undriven four-wheel snow-station track (curse those Park regulations!) into the idyllic, trailless valley NW of Bold.

Lots of enjoyable scrambling on the lower ridge as they climbed every gendarme before a rotten, quake-shattered step at 6500' was skirted on its eastern exposure to regain the route. The summit was reached at 4:00 PM. (Fresh

WHAT-SCREE-SAID-WAY-BACK-THE-N-DEPT.

Ten years ago - August, 1962 - Gwynneth Wilson wrote a "Mount Marathon Post-Mortem" which was the spectator's viewpoint of the event. She indicated the placing of the MCA members who participated--eleventh, eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth. Vin Hoeman reported he had made the first ascent of Wolcot Mountain 6250'. It was then the highest named mountain on the Kenai Peninsula.

Five years ago - August, 1967 - Bob Spurr reported the third ascent of Lynx Peak 6536'. The party, except one member, went via the col above Spire Pass to gain the northwest ridge of Lynx.

■ BITS & PIECES

The two bound sets of SCREE have arrived and will be available on a check-out basis. Place to check them out still undecided.

The seven new hard hats purchased by the Club have thus far saved three people from being injured when hit on the head by a rolling rock.

On June 8, 1972, Rob Allen and Larry Swanson climbed Indianhouse Mountain 4350+ 50 via the SE ridge from the Seward Highway. Even though it is a small peak, it is still a nice rock scramble.

On July 3, 1972, Norm Allen and Art Ward climbed Pioneer Peak 6398' via the standard north gulley.

On July 4, 1972, Art and Pat Ward walked up Wolverine Peak again.

On June 20, 1972, Larry Swanson and Art Ward climbed Homicide 4660' via the NE ridge, after walking all the way up the south fork to the pass since the road wa sn't travelable past Flattop.

On June 27, 1972, Pat Ward, Naomi Martin, Marilyn and Holly Swanson hiked up Wolverine Peak.

On July 2, 1972, Walt Maakestad climbed The Wedge and The Ramp 5240'. The Pinnacle 5550+50 was climbed on July 9, 1972, by Walt Maakestad along with Larry, Trent and Holly Swanson.

On August 5, 1972, Trent Swanson and Scott Mueller climbed Suicide II 5065' from the south side descending the north ridge.

Bob and Anne Smith's new address is P. O. Box 99, Leavenworth, Wash. 988. They write: "It is really beautiful here and we like it so far. We really do miss all of our Alaskan friends though. It was good seeing the Curtis' at the motel where they were staying in Leavenworth before we found a place to live. Quite a coincidence. Bob hasn't started practicing dentistry yet because of remodeling of the building, but we hope to be starting soon. We have been busy deciding what we want to do with the office. The Freeny's have been here twice; Bob and Pat did a little rock climbing and hiking. Tell everyone we said hello and to stop in and see us if they happen to be in the area."

FREE to whoever can use - a double-ender paddle for Klepper boat. The giver, Dale Hagen, will bring it to the August meeting.

FOR SALE: Two pair Grivel 12-pt. crampons, sizes 8 and 10; one pair shoes to fit the size 10, two ice axes and two carabiners. Contact Howard Schuck 279-5511 (office) or 344-7365 (home).

SHORT OR LONG --any writing style--pencil or ink or typewritten copy---all are definitely acceptable for the articles, write-ups and information you wish to appear in SCREE. A phone call is also acceptable. Do tell us what you have been doing. All you contributors up to this date have impressed me - the variety and toughness of your climbs and hikes, your writing style and legibility are, indeed, commendable.

NEW ADDRESS: Capt. & Mrs. Charles R. Pease, Jr., 766 33rd Ave. B NE, Great Falls, Montana 59404.