

the **SCREE**

Mountaineering Club of Alaska

October 2008

Volume 51 Number 10



**Adventure is worthwhile in itself
~ Amelia Earheart**

**Monthly Meeting
Wed, October 15 @ 7:30 PM
Officer and Board Elections
Voting on Calendar Pictures**

**Mount Chamberlin
20 Mile River Packrafting
Mount Ewe
Mount Kiev POM
Eklutna Trail Clearing**

The Mountaineering Club of Alaska

"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 meetings the 3rd Wednesday of the month at the First United Methodist Church, 9th Avenue and G Streets next to the ConocoPhillips Building (you may use marked parking after hours).

Contact information is provided on the back page or visit us on the web at www.mcak.org.

Cover photo: Britta Maas in front of Ewe Peak, in this issue. Photo by Marcin Ksok

Article Submission: Articles and photos are best submitted on the web at MCAK.org. You can also attach a word processing document to an email. Due to formatting problems please do not submit material in the body of an email. We prefer articles that are under 1,000 words. To get on the cover, a photo should convey the feeling of mountaineering and show human endeavor.

Contents

Mount Chamberlin

20 Mile River Packrafting

Mount Ewe

Mount Kiev POM

Eklutna Trail Clearing

Adze

Hiking and Climbing Schedule

October 18, Icicle Creek trail clearing

Help clear the Icicle Creek trail at mile 6 of the Eagle River trail on Saturday Oct 18. Bring loppers and maybe a bow saw, or I have extra loppers. Call to verify times.

6am Eagle River Nature Center

6am – 8am hike to Icicle Creek

8am – 3pm clear the trail up Icicle Creek

3pm – 5pm hike to Eagle River Nature Center

Bring a headlamp for the hike in. Leader Dave

Hart 244-1722 or david.hart@pxd.com

December 5-16 (flexible dates), 12 days - Mexico

Volcano Climbing. Pico de Orizaba (18,400'), Ixta (17,100'), Nevado de Toluca (15,300'), Sierra Negra (15,200'), La Malinche (14,600'). A

moderately paced, non-expeditionary sample of high altitude day-trip climbing. Competent ice axe arrest and crampon skills are required. Roped travel required on Orizaba only. Class D and Basic Mountaineering skills. Local outfitter will be hired to provide all transport, lodging, food, and local guide at cost. ~\$1000 per person covers all in-country costs. Airfare/Alaska Airlines miles to Mexico City excluded. Limit 5 team members. \$500 non-refundable deposit holds your spot. Leader Dave Hart 244-1722 or david.hart@pxd.com

October Meeting

The October General Meeting is the time to hold Club Board and Officer Elections. Two board positions are up for election and all Officer Positions are open (President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer.) Nominations are taken during the meetings and candidates can give the members their pitch.

2009 Calendar photos will be on display and you can vote for your choices to be in the 2009 MCA calendar. Any last minute additions or questions? Call Stu Grenier at 337-5127 for more information. The calendar will be in a vertical format for 2009. High Resolution originals are needed. Samples must be in 8 by 10 or 8 by 12 with your name and contact info on the back. *(Many covers of the Scree are cropped from horizontal pictures since that is mostly what we get, so have a critical look at your horizontal pictures for possibilities – Ed.)*

Mt. Chamberlin, July 5-7, 2008

by Wayne L. Todd

Marcin and Carrie on the Summit Ridge
All photos by Wayne Todd

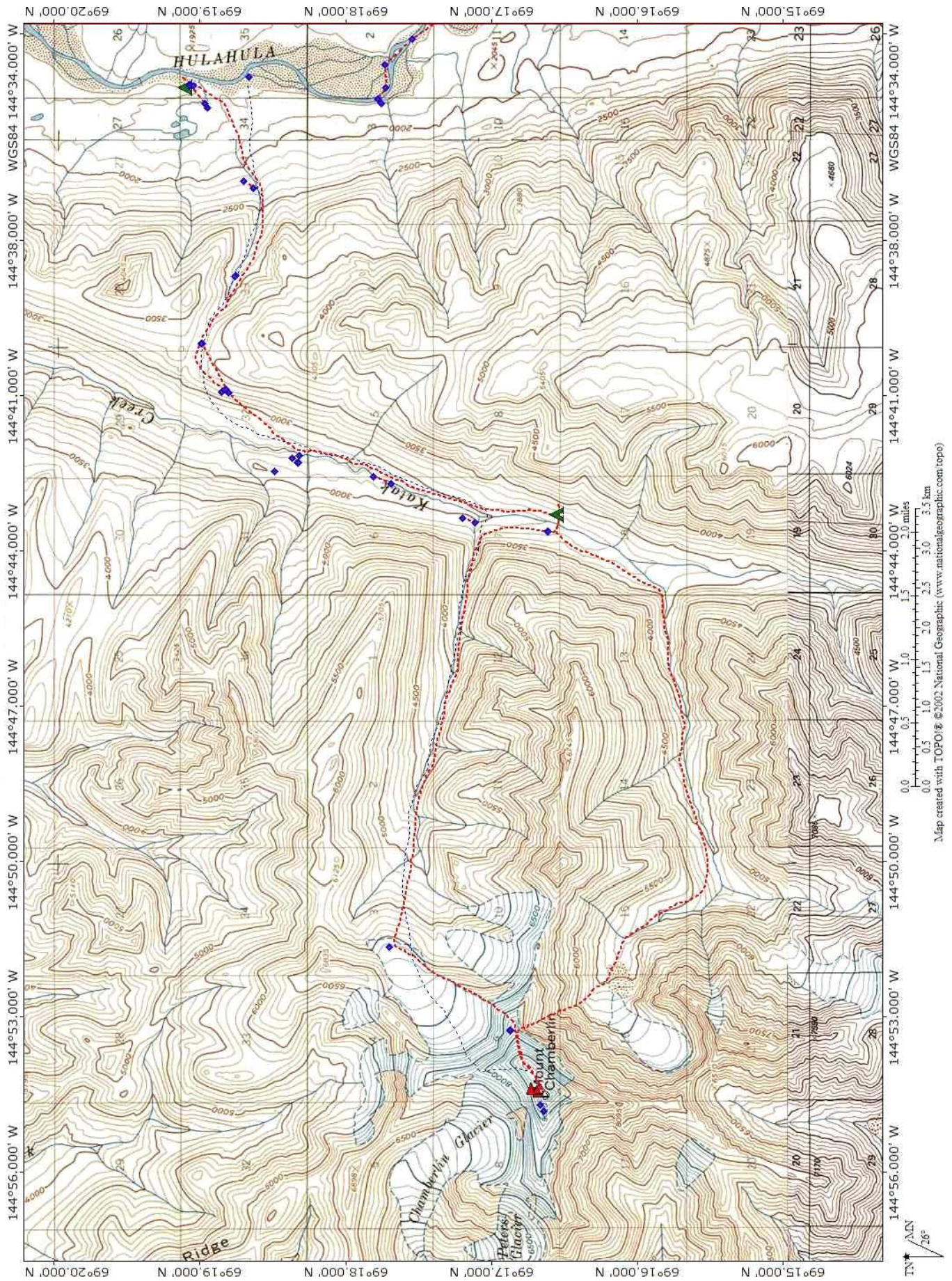
Soon we are hiking along the scenic and wildflower studded Chamberlin Creek. Mt. Chamberlin finally comes into view a few miles up where the valley broadens. The east ridge, still a couple miles away and back-dropped by clouds, faces Carrie, John, Marcin and myself; ice and snow to the right (north) and rock to the left. We continue west up a bouldered stream bed spooking a lone caribou. At 6,000', we break for lunch but the mosquitoes don't, although they are thinning. John heads back to camp from here.

Yes! The river has dropped significantly (and the weather looks good) so we are on for an attempt of Mt. Chamberlin. The raging river (Katak Creek) of the previous evening blocked our access. By 8:30 am we've crossed the river, set up a tent and stashed gear, changed clothes and donned bug nets for the intense and relentless mosquitoes.



Chamberlin East Ridge

Mount Chamberlin Route from the Hula Hula River – Blue as proposed and Red as traveled



The three of us head south along the glacier toward the east ridge, finally ditching the mosquitoes at 6,300'. The skies are now mostly cloudy with the top of Chamberlin showing, and not. Two white heads, a couple more, then half a dozen including bodies take a gander at us from a close moraine pile. These curious sheep rarely see people on this side of Chamberlin.



Spur Ridge

Climbing the highest (western most) spur ridge involves steep hiking with light scrambling and modest exposure. The spur ridge to the left (east) looks easier for descending. Gaining the east ridge, we climb mostly rock with frequent but easy fifth class moves. Lake Schrader can be seen in front of the expansive northern plain.

Toward the corniced 'top', we are forced onto snow and crampons, due to ice under the snow in sections. Below the cornice the snow is deep, wet and soft, so I stomp platform steps in the now 30 yard visibility. On top of the cornice I think we've summited but my altimeter reads low and a brief glimpse reveals something more to the left. Marcin's GPS confirms we still have 3/10 mile to go.

We rope up for cornice, avalanche and fall concerns (left, right and right respectively). The ridge drops, then steepens so I place a picket. Below us to the left is exposure of rock and to the right, high exposure of snow and ice. I err to the left.

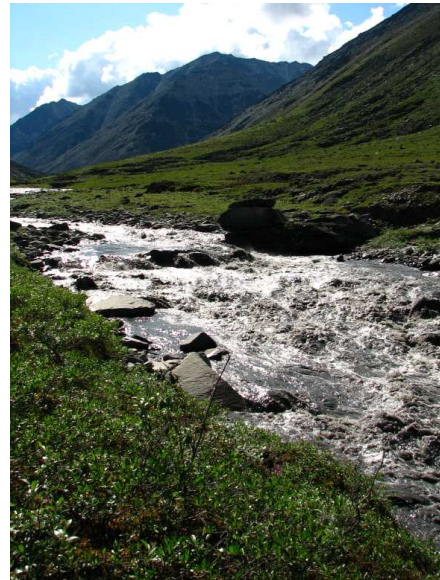
The ridge levels again. With limited visibility of thick cloud, still air and a large open crevasse running parallel to our travel, the scene is eerie. I place screws and pickets for running belays. When one leg punches thru to air, I crampon my calf in haste to exit the hole.

After a 20' rise, we attain a level section with ridges descending in three directions. We are on top, relieved but disappointed, with no views. Another climbing party was also recently on top, judging by the boot tracks in the snow. We eat, GPS and photo in the murk.

Carrie leads down, placing applicable protection. Back on the East Ridge unroped, Carrie, Marcin and I down climb the snow and ice next to the rock. On a level rocky

section where we stashed snowshoes, with rain and thunder upon us, we decide on a 'shortcut' scree descent to the south.

The descent is quick and we soon feel safe from lightning. That slope segues to a low angle alpine valley pleasant for fast hiking. Angling left from that valley we expect to see our camp valley but instead we see unfamiliar terrain. The south valley runs a bit more south than expected. We descend many more feet, corners, and some climb-arounds adjacent to a ripping stream, before re-attaining our camp valley.



Katak Creek

By 10:30pm we are gearing up to cross Katak Creek as it hasn't risen significantly, due to the mostly cloudy day. Carrie's parents direct us across at a different location. We cross grey, swift, thigh-deep water uneventfully and are reunited with the main group.



Returning to the Hula Hula River camp

20 Mile River Pack Raft Trip

by Amy Murphy

In late August, Kathy Still, Donna Klecka and I decided to do the increasingly popular pack raft trip down the 20 Mile River. I borrowed one of Kathy's pack rafts and was anticipating my first-ever float down a river in one of these small rafts. Kathy researched river condition reports before we left and also checked the tide tables to plan our trip's departure time so we would hit the tide at the right time.

We parked one car at the river's end then drove to the trailhead for the Upper Winner Creek trail, located near the Alyeska Prince Hotel. We left around 9:00 a.m. under cloudy skies, but thankfully no rain. The hike to the top of Berry Pass is extremely scenic and passes through a variety of terrain. There were lots of vibrant flowers still blooming and also lots of ripe salmonberries. We reached the top of the pass around noon and took a break to admire the stunning scenery and eat. We were amazed at how much snow was still left up there.



Berry Pass lunch break

We dropped down the other side of the pass, heading to the river. At first the trail is easy to follow, but then the well-worn trail disappeared and we ended up bushwhacking – oh joy! Eventually we found the put-in place for the river, inflated our rafts and prepared to float down. We noticed lots of ugly, nasty sweepers and Kathy had read about some obstructions downstream that might require portaging. Since Donna has the most experience riding in pack rafts, we let her go first to scout out the safest route.



I followed Donna in the fairly-swift-moving water, keeping an eye on the sweepers. As I rounded one corner I noticed a huge tree blocking the whole river. Then I saw Donna's empty raft upended against the far end of the tree – yikes! I was concerned as I didn't see Donna, but then I located her, soaking wet and clinging to some branches on the far side of the river. Her paddle broke and she wasn't able to paddle away from the tree. She knew she could be sucked under the tree with possible dire results, so she bailed out of her raft and grabbed onto some overhanging branches. Kathy and I stopped at the sand bar opposite Donna, and Kathy helped Donna retrieve her raft and cross over the big log to the safety of the sand bar.



Donna packrafting

Unfortunately Donna had to let go of her broken paddle to hang on to branches to avoid being sucked under the tree, so we were faced with a dilemma. We didn't want to split up the group, for safety's sake, but Donna wasn't able to continue down the river without a paddle. (So – here's the cliché – she was up a creek with no paddle!) After discussion, we decided the best option was for Kathy and I to continue floating out and Donna would hike back out the way we came. We were worried about Donna taking off on her own like that, but she is an amazingly strong woman with experience hiking through remote backcountry areas by herself, so we knew if anybody could do it – she could.

Kathy and I floated the rest of the way down the river and a couple other people caught up to us and joined us for the rest of the trip. The first part of the river has a fairly swift current and it was exciting and intense! As we continued down the river the



20 Mile River

current gradually slowed and we ended up having to do more paddling than floating. We enjoyed the beautiful vistas surrounding us and still, luckily, didn't get rained on. We made it to the highway bridge a little before 9:00 p.m. changed clothes and hightailed it to the trailhead, hoping Donna would be there.

Well, Donna wasn't there so we hung out for a while, debating what to do as we didn't have headlamps or enough dry, warm clothing to go search for her in the dark. Eventually we decided to go home and return in the morning to look for Donna, if necessary. Luckily, when I got home around 11:00, I called Donna's cell phone and she answered. Yeah! I was very glad as I dreaded having to call her children. So everything turned out well and we happily enjoyed another fun, exciting adventure in the mountains.



Mt. Ewe

by Marcin Ksok

My friend Britta Maas called one day asking if I was planning any trips which would burn off her winter 'layer'. "Now I am" I replied, and told her about Mt. Ewe. It was April; therefore we put on skis and headed up the South Fork, crossed frozen Eagle Lake and camped below the waterfalls at the end of the valley. I decided to bring my summer tent which leaks terribly and is hardly worthy of pitching outside of one's back yard, but it is light and we were not expecting rain. The weather had held so far, staying mostly cloudy throughout the day and filling me with good thoughts of success.

I had difficulties sleeping due to a tribe of noisy ptarmigans surrounding the tent. Their quarrels kept on late into the night and started over in early morning. I had a feeling they were up to something. In the morning we reached the top of the frozen waterfall and put on our skis, which made the going fast and easy.

Instead of following the Flute glacier to the end and reaching the ridge between Ewe and Flute, we skied up the right leg of the glacier, gaining some elevation and the mountain's northern slopes. With crampons on we reached the north ridge which, after going over a false summit, we followed to the top. Good visibility allowed for views of surrounding mountains and valleys, after studying the western gully on Flute and southern gully on Eagle it was time to head back. Skiing down the glacier posed some technical difficulties for us because of hard, windblown snow. Britta having lighter skis felt the most pain, but we both took a few falls before reaching the waterfall. Spotting the tent down the valley, sitting on its roof in bushes, we realized what has been brewing all night. The ptarmigan tried to steal it, fortunately nothing was damaged and the contents were accounted for, but from now on I will always be aware of the plotting birds and stake down the tent securely.

Peak of the Month: Kiev

by Steve Gruhn

Mountain Range: Brooks Range; Endicott Mountains

Borough: North Slope Borough

Drainages: Itikmalak River and Galbraith Lake

Latitude/Longitude: 68°19'52" North, 149°32'48" West

Elevation: 7775 feet

Prominence: 3099 feet from Peak 7850 (in the Philip Smith Mountains near Accomplishment Creek)

Adjacent Peaks:

Peak 7447 (near the Itikmalak River), Dan Peak (7050), Peak 6850 (near Galbraith Lake), and Peak 6350 (near the Itikmalak River and Galbraith Lake)

Distinctness: 1225 feet from Peak 7447

USGS Map: Philip Smith Mountains (B-5)

First Recorded Ascent: Summer 1988 by Kevin Murray

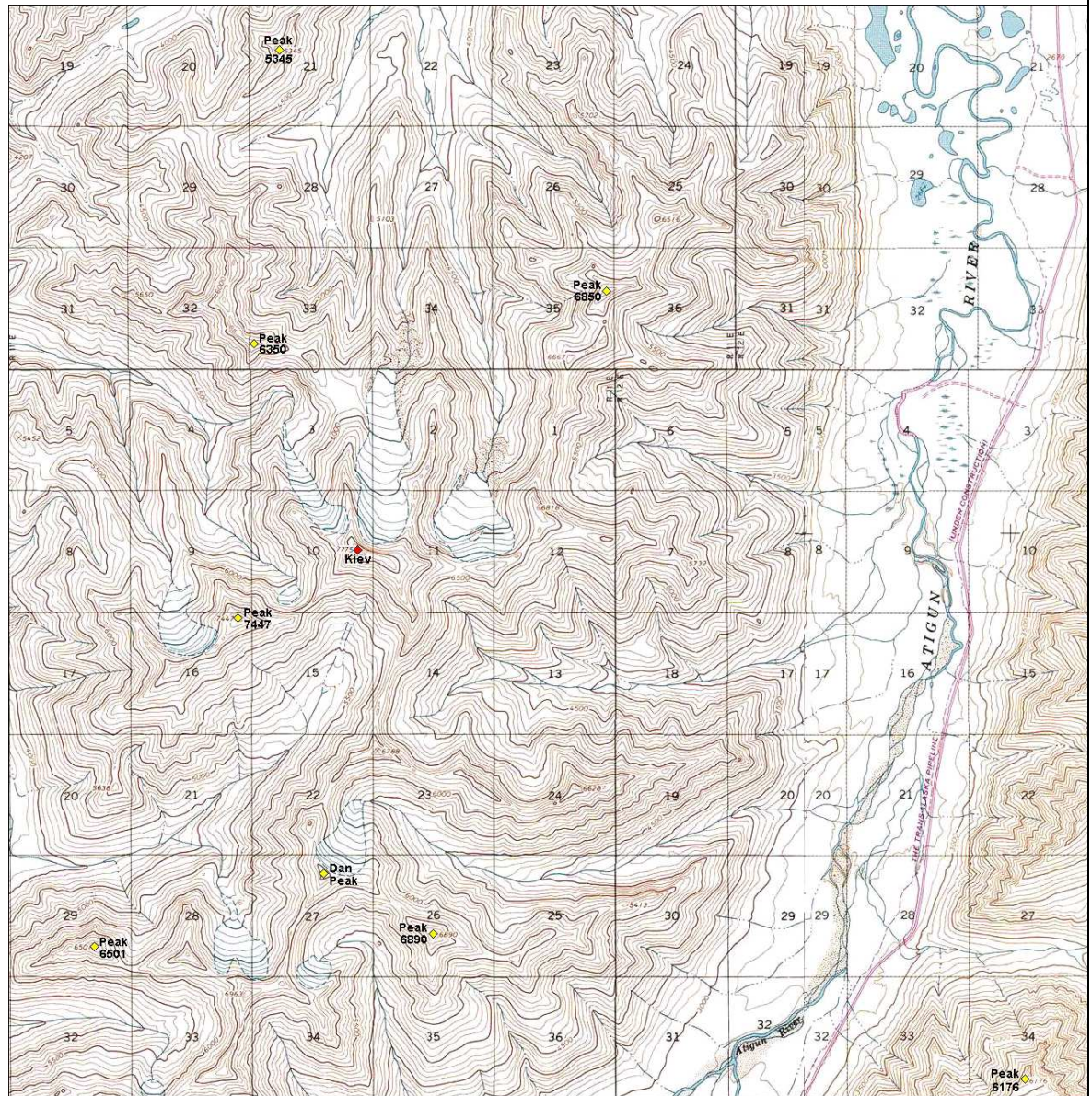
Route of First Recorded Ascent: Northeast face to the north ridge
Access Point: Galbraith Lake

In the summers from 1985 to 1988 while working at Galbraith Lake, Kevin Murray

made several ascents of peaks in the area. Murray ascended the highest peak in the Galbraith Lake drainage and named it Kiev. His route took him south from Galbraith Lake to the glacier below the northeast face of the

peak. He encountered 50-degree ice and third-class rock scrambling to the snowy north ridge from the glacier. He also noted that the north ridge could be reached from the glacier to the west of the ridge.

Murray's brief trip report appeared on page 140 of the 1989 *American Alpine Journal*.



East Fork Eklutna River Trail Clearing

by Ross Noffsinger



The photo shows the extent of the trail cleared.
The trail (which cannot be seen) is located left (east) of the river and extends up onto the 2190 foot "mound".

A special thanks to all who participated in the east fork of the Eklutna trail clearing that took place on September 6. Over two miles of sometimes heavily overgrown trail was cleared between the blue pond at the base of Bashful and the 2190 foot mound by 15 energetic soles. The weather was great, the view spectacular and the exercise fulfilling. Access to the upper east fork valley and beyond is now faster and takes much less effort.

Thanks to Dave Hart who was impetus behind the effort. Thanks to Andrew Lee and Eric Saetre for providing four ATVs to haul gear around the lake to the trailhead. Thanks to Amy Murphy for bringing blueberry muffins, and thanks to the labor and good company provided by David Stchyrba, Randy Howell, Amy Maclean, Craig Petersen, Chuck Kennedy, Willy Hersman, Marcin Ksok, Sam Pepper, Wayne Todd and Carrie Wang.



Adze

For Rent

IRIDIUM 9505A Satellite Phone for rent. \$50 per week plus \$2/minute

Dave, 244-1722, david.hart@pxd.com

Notice

Wilderness First Responder course held near the Eagle River Nature Center the week of November 8-16, 2008:

Nov 8-10, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Nov 11-13, 6 p.m. to 10 p.m.
Nov 14-16, 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.

People must attend all sessions and pass a final exam if they would like to receive the cert. The WFR certification is through the Wilderness Medical Associates. It is valid for three years and includes a three-year certification in CPR.

The cost of the course is \$500. If two people enroll together, the cost is \$475 each.
Deb Ajango at debajango@att.net

MCA Trip Classifications

The classifications below do not take into account individual trip hazards such as river crossings, scree slopes, snow fields, bears, etc. Trip leaders are required to inform the trip participants of any such hazards either verbally, on the sign-up sheet, or in the trip description. Leader approval is required for participation on all trips. **NON-TECHNICAL:** Following are a few standards used to classify nontechnical trips. The classification is made in terms of hiking distance and altitude gain. Many trips are not on established trails.

CLASS A: Easy hikes with a maximum distance of 8 miles for day trips or 4 miles per day for overnight trips. Altitude gain up to 1200 feet.

CLASS B: Trips involving a maximum distance of up to 12 miles for a day trip or 6 miles per day for an overnight trip. Altitude gain of 1200 to 2500 feet.

CLASS C: Trips up to 15 miles for a day hike or 8 miles per day for an overnight trip. Altitude gain up to 3500 feet. Scree, steep grass or other rough terrain problems may be encountered.

CLASS D: Hikes and climbs with an altitude gain of over 3500 feet or a distance of greater than 15 miles for a day-hike or greater than 8 miles a day for an overnight trip. Peaks in this classification may require minimal climbing skills.

CLASS E: Hazardous climbing conditions or stream-crossing conditions may be encountered. A basic mountaineering course may be required.

TECHNICAL: Technical trips are open to all qualified climbers. However, the registration on any particular trip must be restricted to a safe and manageable number of climbers. Registration is made directly with the leader, who determines the qualifications needed for the trip.

GLACIER TRAVEL: Trips requiring roped travel over glaciers. Knowledge of crevasse rescue, and ice axe and crampon skills are required. Basic understanding of ice and snow anchors also required.

FIFTH CLASS: Trips which involve fifth class climbing. A Basic Mountaineering course or equivalent is required. Knowledge of belay and rappel techniques and placing anchors is required. Climbing difficulty varies widely with each trip.

TRIP PARTICIPANTS have the obligation to acquaint themselves with the nature of the trip and to verify that it is within their capability and experience. Anyone wishing to participate in any trip above CLASS A must have completed one or more trips of the next lower classification, or the equivalent.

Approved: MCA Board, February 15, 2000

General Rules for MCA Sanctioned Trips

1. Proper equipment is available from the trip leader.
2. No dogs. (Among the reasons are bear problems).
3. The trip leader can require special equipment and refuse participation to any person that is ill-prepared (e.g. inappropriate clothing/gear).
4. The leader's suggestions are to be followed. Do not go off alone, return or rush ahead without his (her) permission, and don't ford a stream before the leader assesses the situation. Remember, this is a club trip and the leader must know where all participants are. Anyone separating from the group without the leader's approval is no longer considered a participant the MCA Sanctioned trip.
5. The trip leader has the authority to split the group (fast and slow), dependent upon current conditions. However, he/she must appoint a qualified co-leader to lead the second group using the guidelines specified in the current Trip Leader Responsibilities.
6. Trip participants who, in the leader's opinion, put themselves or other members of the group in danger by disregarding the leader's suggestions, shall be subject to sanction by the club. Sanctions may include, but are not limited to, reprimand at general meeting, exclusion from future trips, termination of annual membership, or lifetime exclusion from the club.
7. You must sign up on a trip roster (club meetings) or contact the leader, and you must have signed the club waiver to be on a club trip.
8. If you find you cannot participate after signing up on the roster, please let the leader know, both for transportation and gear-planning and so someone else can go. If you are the leader, help find a replacement.
9. Total number of people on club trips:
Minimum: 4 (for safety reasons)
Maximum: Leader option, depends upon the trail and campsite conditions, but generally limited to 12 in trail-less areas or State/ National Parks
10. Firearms are not encouraged, and please let the leader know if you want to carry one - it will be leader's option. Aerosol bear repellent is preferred.

Approved: MCA Board, February 15, 2000

RELEASE OF LIABILITY—READ CAREFULLY

I, _____ (print name), am aware that mountaineering sports (including hiking; backpacking; rock, snow, and ice climbing; mountaineering; skiing; and ski mountaineering) are hazardous activities. I wish to participate and/or receive instruction in these activities with the Mountaineering Club of Alaska, Inc. ("MCA"). I recognize that these activities involve numerous risks, which include, by way of example only, falling while hiking, climbing, skiing or crossing rivers or glaciers; failure of a belay; being struck by climbing equipment or falling rock, ice or snow; avalanches; lightning; fire; hypothermia; frostbite; defective or malfunctioning equipment; and attack by insects or animals. I further recognize that the remoteness of the activities may preclude prompt medical care. I further recognize that risk of injury or death may be caused or enhanced by mistakes or negligence on the part of either my fellow participants or MCA officers, directors, guides, instructors, or trip leaders. I nevertheless agree to accept all risks of injury, death, or property damage that may occur in connection with any MCA activity, including use of MCA furnished equipment and MCA backcountry huts.

_____ (initial that you have read this paragraph)

GIVING UP MY LEGAL RIGHTS

By signing this Agreement, I agree to give up for myself and for my heirs all legal rights I may have against the MCA and my fellow participants in MCA activities (except to the extent that insurance coverage for any claim is provided by an automobile insurance policy or related excess insurance policies). **I give up these legal rights regardless of whether the injury, death, or property damage results from mistakes or negligence on the part of either my fellow participants or the MCA.** (As used in this agreement, MCA means the Mountaineering Club of Alaska, Inc., and all of its officers, directors, guides, instructors and trip leaders.) I understand this agreement shall remain in effect until such time as I provide signed written notice of its revocation to the MCA.

_____ (initial that you have read this paragraph)

MY PROMISE NOT TO SUE

I agree that I will not sue, or otherwise make any claim against, the MCA or my fellow participants in MCA activities for injury, death, or property damage which occurs in the course of my participation or instruction in mountaineering sports. Any lawsuit relating to MCA activities or this release shall only be filed in the Superior Court for the State of Alaska, Third Judicial District., Anchorage, Alaska. The provisions of this release are severable and if any part of this release is found unenforceable, the remaining provisions shall remain in full force and effect.

_____ (initial that you have read this paragraph)

MY RELEASE OF LIABILITY

I also agree to release and discharge the MCA and my fellow participants in MCA activities from all actions, claims, or demands, both for myself and for my heirs, dependents, and/or personal representative, for injury, death, or property damage occurring in the course of my participation or instruction in mountaineering sports.

_____ (initial that you have read this paragraph)

MY PROMISE TO INDEMNIFY

I agree to pay all expenses, including attorney's fees and court costs, that the MCA or my fellow participants in MCA activities may incur as a consequence of any legal action arising out of injury, death, or property damage suffered by me.

_____ (initial that you have read this paragraph)

MY CONSENT TO MEDICAL TREATMENT

I consent to any hospital care or medical or surgical diagnosis or treatment which may be necessary as a result of my participation in activities with the MCA. I also understand and agree that I am solely responsible for all applicable charges for such medical treatment, including evacuation and/or rescue cost.

_____ (initial that you have read this paragraph)

I HAVE CAREFULLY READ THIS AGREEMENT AND FULLY UNDERSTAND ITS CONTENT. I AM AWARE THAT THIS IS A BINDING, LEGAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN ME AND THE MCA.

Dated: _____ Signature: _____

Signature of Parent or Guardian (if under 19): _____

Mountaineering Club of Alaska

President Sean Bolender 830-5102
Vice-President Annette Iverson 222-0581
Secretary Bridget Paule 230-9903
Treasurer Travis Taylor 382-4823

Board member Don Hansen 243-7184
Board member Andy Rembert 688-3230
Board member Jayme Dixon 382-0212
Board member Steve Parry 248-8710
Board member Tom Devine 529-0618

Annual membership dues: Single \$15, Family \$20

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 will not forward the newsletter.

The 'Scree' is a monthly publication of the Mountaineering Club of Alaska. Articles, notes and letters submitted for publication in the newsletter should be submitted on the web at www.mcak.org or e-mailed to the Scree Editor. Articles should be received by the monthly club meeting (third Wednesday of the month) to be 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.

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

Mailing list/database entry: Yukiko Hayano and Randy Plant - 243-1438
Hiking and Climbing Committee: Randy Howell - 346-4608, Jayme Dixon - 382-0212
Huts: Greg Bragiel - 569-3008
Calendar: Stuart Grenier - 337-5127
Scree Editor: John Recktenwald - 346-2589
Web: www.mcak.org (change your address here)
Mailing list service: MCAK@yahoogroups.com

Mountaineering Club of Alaska
Box 102037
Anchorage AK 99510