

MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF ALASKA

SCREE

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MEETING, MONDAY DECEMBER 7

The next meeting of the Mountaineering Club of Alaska will be on Monday, December 7 at 8 p.m. in the Willow Park Recreation Hall, 9th and Fairbanks. The slides shown will be those of Hans Metz, showing glacier climbing in the Alps.

Future Mountaineering Club meetings will be held on the first Monday of the month as has been the custom for the past year. The first Monday seems the best day for the most people and the Willow Park Recreation Hall also is available.

PATCHES ARE HERE ! ! !

The MCA is very grateful to Leona Wilkerson for the design and re-design of the patches which have finally arrived. To quote a notable woman mountaineer (anyone want to guess who?): "the patch is one that every MCA member will be proud to wear on hats, coats, parkas, jackets, ski pants, ice axes (?) and please be sure to keep some spare in your knapsack. They work beautifully to patch the hole after you sat on the crampon. (Hence the name patch)"

The patches will be on sale at the meeting on the 7th for \$1.50, so come with needle and thread and the money.

CLIMBING SCHEDULE

Norm Pichler explained over the phone that he was planning a snowshoe trip sometime in December (weather being the determining factor) in the Mt. Behind O'Malley Road area. There will be more information about this and other scheduled climbs for the winter months on the 7th.

"Who Says Climbing Season Is Over?"

by Helga Bading

The mountains are still here, and so are we. Let's not stay near the fireplace just because the old sun is low and frosty around its rim. Who's scared of frozen earlobes, not us!

Listen who's talking. Remember the trip on the Middle Glacier when the rain was pouring down and the wind lashed us and we were as wet as herrings and everybody had fun and still wanted to go on? Everybody but Helga? I've always been a great talker.

Seriously, though, winter trips can be fun. I've made them. On skis, on snowshoes, by dogteam and on foot I have travelled around and up the mountains. Many times I was miserably cold and many times I was not, and it was always fun.

You don't have to be a good skier to go out on winter trips. You don't even have to ski at all. You know we are dickering with the boy scouts to get the use of some snowshoes for club members. They will be available soon. Let's see you use them.

Snowshoeing uphill and downhill is tricky, but can be learned. Don't throw away your rappelling slings. Tie them around the bottoms of your snowshoes and they will provide enough traction for you to negotiate the average steep hill.

What should you wear? A quilted parka is ideal, but you can get by without it. Always carry a spare sweater besides the one you are wearing. Wear long johns, ski pants and earmuffs and always have spare mittens, spare socks, waterproof matches, some food and a flashlight in your packsack. Anyway, the psychologists say being cold is a matter of attitude.

There is only one problem: boots. For snowshoeing mukluks are ideal. For climbing, use bunny boots or "Korean" boots. (B & J Surplus and other surplus stores have them for a few bucks). But they don't come in ladies sizes. For you girls I suggest talking your hubby or boy friend into buying bunny boots. Then use his climbing boots with plenty of socks (3 or 4 pairs). It works well. For skiing ... suffer cold feet. It's worth it.

Let's see you come out on some trips with us. Just think of all the advantages of winter: the brush is covered with snow. Mosquitoes are asleep and so are bears. Lakes and streams are frozen over. Crevasses are all covered up. And when we come down the mountain in the afternoon we watch the long, red sunset of the Alaskan winters.

NOTES FROM JOHNNIE

A circular from the British Mountaineering Council reports ~~the~~ the death of two climbers due to the failure of a 5/8 inch circumference waist loop. It broke at the carabiner when the leader fell. I've noticed the use of parachute shroud line and 1/4 inch diameter nylon rope as rappell slings among our local climbers. It might be wise to use nothing less than 7/16 inch nylon as waist loops and rappell slings.

Rescue Team Alert Procedure

1. Primary team member contacted by authorities will alert remaining primary team and relay assembly and equipment instruction.
2. Leader will immediately report to authorities for instructions and estimate of situation.
3. Leader will relay available information to primary team members, designate members who will participate and appoint a secondary team leader, if necessary.
4. If necessary, secondary team leader alerts and organizes secondary team.
5. Remaining action dependent upon situation and wishes of authorities.
6. Primary team members are:
 - Norman Pichler
 - H. Erik Barnes
 - Rodman Wilson
 - Hans Metz
 - P. B. Crews
 - Johnnie Johnston

A Report:

Reports issued by the Rescue Coordination Center at Elmendorf AFB for the months of August and October itemize their search and rescue activities thus:

TYPE	MILITARY	CIVIL
Medical evacuation	12	15
a/c accident	3	12
a/c overdue	1	3
Evacuation	1	5
a/c search	0	1
False mission	0	1

RABBIT CREEK ROAD TO INDIAN HOUSE TRIP. Sunday, November 21st.
by Helga Bading

It was a dark, cludy morning when I stepped out of the house at 5:45 a.m. determined to get rid of Ski-Rally headaches the easy way.

But it wasn't until 9 a.m. (after a frustratingly slippery and unnecessary drive to Indian House) that we turned off Rabbit Creek Road and pointed the jeep uphill. Inside were Paul Crews, George Wichman, Bill Ivey, Bosco* and myself. We roared past "Clark's Homestead" and continued uphill for another mile and a half until a stubborn snowdrift halted our progress. Out we stormed with pick and shovel, but no luck. Then a swamp buggy came uphill behind us, manned by moose hunters and they attached their winch to our rear end and with a mighty heave we were free again. We decided to try walking.

* Ed. note: Bosco is Helga's blue-eyed mountain climbing canine.

The road winds back into a beautiful high valley up to the pass with only a slight uphill grade. We were south of the "Mt. behind O'Malley" and enjoyed a rather hazy view of the city below. The peaks around us were shrouded in clouds and it began to snow softly. There isn't enough snow as yet for good skiing, but in order to negotiate the snowdrifts we donned the snowshoes, all but Bosco and George. The latter demonstrated his ability to outrun us on his cross country skis, and Bosco outran George. The rest of us waddled along with legs spread apart and muscles getting sorer by the minute. (Its like horseback riding). The last part before the pass is steep and we climbed to the pass on a small rock ridge. It was here that the snowshoers outran the cross-country-skier.

On the pass at 12 noon (2½ hours from the jeep) we were hit by an icy wind. By now we were soaked in, but as ardent skiers we welcomed every snowflake. And who can eat a view anyway?

We sat under a rock and had lunch. Paul volunteered to drive the jeep back if we others wanted to go down the Indian Creek side. We wanted.

At 1 p.m. we started out again, headed into a strong wind and snowfall. The first 1000 ft. downhill are really nice and should be good skiing later on, but soon we ran into difficulty. On the wind packed snow our snowshoes slid from under our feet. For Bill and myself it was a matter of snowshoes off, on, off, on, off. Soon the slope was too steep for snowshoeing, the snow too deep for walking. We floundered downhill. Below us was what looked like miles and miles of valley with no end in sight and only ½ hours of daylight left. We rushed on, sometimes using the snowshoes for a toboggan. At the 2000 ft. level we got back onto the road which was almost bare of snow and would have been nice walking had it not pointed straight downhill and had it not been covered with a sheet of ice. Our rate of descent was satisfactory! At the 1000 ft. level we dove into the timber and followed the road for about 3 more miles with three uphill stretches. In the fading light we skidded out to civilization and reached Indian House just as Paul drove up.

But it wasn't the end of the day for us, for we went to see Disney's "Third Man on the Mountain". In horror we watched what "Reel" climbing is like. I want to stay alive, so I'll just go on climbing my way.

IN CONCLUSION

BUT DON'T FORGET DECEMBER 7th

We'll be looking forward to seeing you.

"Mountaineering provides good exercise in pleasant surroundings, a sense of satisfaction in overcoming difficulties, the joy, akin to dancing, of controlled rhythmic movement, a stimulating contact with danger, a wealth of beautiful scenery, and a release from the tiresome restrictions of modern life. The expert likes to practise or display his skill. Some confess to having been drawn to climbing by a physical inferiority complex engendered by their failure at school to hit a ball straight and far In the case of mountaineering it is a kind of personal identification with the hills themselves, which comes of intimate understanding and strenuous contest and which brings with it a wealth of philosophical content. Above all, in my view, the attraction lies in the memory of those rare moments of intellectual ecstasy which occur perhaps on a mountain summit, perhaps on a glacier at dawn or in a lonely moonlit bivouac, and which appear to be the result of a happy coincidence in the rhythm of mind and scene mountaineering requires a combination of technical skill, knowledge and experience."

ERIC SHIPTON

from: "Upon that Mountain"