



MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF ALASKA

BOX 2037

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99510

NOVEMBER 1987

Volume 30, Issue 11

### NOVEMBER MEETING

The meeting will be held Wednesday, November 18th at 7:30 pm at the Pioneer Schoolhouse, Third and Eagle Sts., downtown Anchorage. After the business meeting Dan O'Haire will give a presentation on the geology of the Chugach and Talkeetnas.

### MINUTES FOR THE OCTOBER MEETING

The meeting was held October 21st at the Pioneer Schoolhouse and called to order by the Vice-President at 7:45 pm.

The reading of the September minutes was waived.

#### I. COMMITTEE REPORTS

##### A. Parks Advisory

Rick Maron announced the outcome on the following State Park concerns:

- Helicopter landings in Chugach State Park will not be allowed. This applies to both private and commercial landings.
- The Eagle River Ski Area site was deemed suitable and they will move on with contracting for the site. Sites in Peters Cr., Eklutna Lake, and Eagle River drainages were deemed suitable for ski area development.

##### B. Huts

The rules for the Mint Hut were pointed out as documented in the Sept. Scree. These will be posted in the Mint Hut if there were no objections. There were no objections.

##### C. Training Committee

The sign-up sheet for the beginning mountaineering class was available. The class will take place on Nov. 7th and 8th. In addition to the gear listed in Scree members should also bring prussik slings or ascenders.

## II. OLD BUSINESS

Rick Maron took map orders at the meeting and will take them for a week following.

## III. NEW BUSINESS

A. Willy Hersman asked for a motion for the club to subsidize an amount of \$300 for an avalanche workshop to be taught by Doug Fesler. The motion was made and seconded. Discussion: This would be a two-day intensive field class geared towards mountaineering. It would cover slope evaluation, route selection and snow pit analysis. Its main focus would be on avoiding avalanches and not avalanche rescue. Participants would pay approximately \$30 each, with the MCA paying the remainder to help guarantee a sufficient number of students. Motion passed.  
(See questionnaire and sign-up in this issue.)

### B. Elections (John Lohff presiding)

- Nominations for the Board were:  
Mike King, Jerry Minnick, Don Hansen, and Pete Sennhauser.  
Mike King and Don Hansen were elected for the 2-year term.
- Nominations for Treasurer were:  
Priscilla Lukens and Marcia Bandy.  
Priscilla Lukens was elected.
- Nominations for Secretary were:  
Pete Sennhauser  
(election by acclamation)
- Nominations for Vice-President were:  
John Baker  
(election by acclamation)
- Nominations for President were:  
Willy Hersman  
(election by acclamation)

Congratulations all new Officers and Board Members and thanks for taking the interest and committment for the club.

## IV. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- A. New members and guests welcomed.
- B. Sunday, October 25th the American Alpine Club Alaska Section will hold its annual meeting. Registration begins at noon. The schedule is in Scree.
- C. There is a free slide show on November 12 at 7 pm. Jim Sayler will show slides of Chugach backcountry. This will be at the University Campus

Center Pub.

D. AMH is soliciting for a photo for its 1988 calendar. The photo should be of an unclimbed peak or route in Alaska. Black and white or color are acceptable and the photo must be in a vertical format. Contact Paul Denkewalter at AMH, 272-1811.

E. Dan O'Haire

1. Will present a free slide show on November 12 at Noon at the University Campus Center Pub. The MCA's annual Harding Icefield Trip will be featured.

2. Is looking for anyone who has traveled on the Iniskin Penninsula. (Across the inlet from Homer and south of Iliamna.)

V. Mail

A. Notice from DNR concerning a ski hut lease on the Snowbird Glacier.

B. Notice from DNR concerning the proposed ski area on Government Peak.

C. Notice from Chugach Nat. For. concerning:

1. expansion of Alyeska
2. Perry Island
3. use of Spencer Glacier by the Army
4. Coghill Lake (tent site)

D. Americans Outdoors (trail concerns)

E. American Hiking Society

F. Several advertisements for commercial operators and outfitters.

#### TREASURER'S REPORT

\$ 80.15	- Petty Cash
724.25	- Checking
<u>4741.60</u>	- Money Market
\$5546.00	- Total MCA Monies

Dues are \$10 - single, \$15 - family. Either pay your dues in person at the meetings or send your dues to the treasurer at Box 102037, Anchorage, Ak. 99510. If you mail the dues, include a self-addressed, stamped envelope for the return of your membership card. You need to have a current MCA card to check out books or equipment. The library and equipment are located at AMH on Spenard Rd. Equipment includes avalanche beacons, crampons, helmets and ice axes. Dues paid now will keep you current through December 31, 1988.

There was a gear swap after the meeting which was lucrative for some. I have enjoyed serving as Secretary for the club over the past year. I feel fortunate I was able to commit my small portion of effort to help the club run smoothly.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Marcy Baker

## ADZE

Pam Kirk is looking for climbing partners for every other weekend starting mid-October to April 88. She is training for Denali. 272-5500 w 694-0362 h

## COMMITTEES

The following are the standing committees of the club and those who have volunteered to chair them for the next year. If you have an interest in helping on any of these committees feel free to contact the chairman.

Programs	- John Baker 274-0105	Hiking and Climbing	- Kathy Burke 346-2841
Huts	- Jerry Minnick 274-7389	Conservation	- inactive
Training	- Willy Hersman 276-0925	Geographic Names	- Willy Hersman 276-0925
Equipment	- Marcy Baker 274-0105	Parks Advisory	- Rick Maron 349-3064

In addition the following are active special committees.

Library - Kathy Burke 346-2841  
Scree - Marty Bassett, editor 694-3917

## Refreshments

Special thanks to Becky Voris for providing refreshments over the past 2 years. It's real nice to have someone who takes the time to do this every month. Since Becky will not be doing refreshments anymore, the MCA is looking for a volunteer to continue the effort. It simply involves going to the grocery once in a while (all items paid for by the club), and setting out the goods at the meetings. Thanks again Becky.

## UPCOMING TRIPS

Nov. 21      SKI TRIP  
Day trip. Details at November meeting.  
Leader: Rick Maron 349-3064

26-29      THANKSGIVING TRIP  
Godwin Glacier, near Seward. 4 miles to the glacier; many possibilities for skiing or climbing. Glacier travel required. TECHNICAL. If there is insufficient interest, then we'll go to the Mint Hut (Class B).  
Leader: Ron Van Bergeyk 345-1800

## TRIP REPORTS

### Malignant

Craig Britton and I had biked and hiked into Peter's Cr. last summer. Rumble's huge couloir was an obvious attraction, but weather and time refused to cooperate. Craig headed south for Sierra rock and sun. So, Rumble had been climbed via the couloir! (Panarese, Hourihan, 1983?) Perusal of the map revealed possibilities just around the corner. Benign's west face was attested to be a massive rotten wall. Bellicose seemed promising also.

I phoned Charlie Sassara...mountain bikes, good trail, minimal gear, first ascent, six hours to the base, max. An easy two-day trip. He took the bait, and a date was set.

Past my farthest penetration the trail disappears; Rumble never seems to get any closer. Slight underestimation...eventually we round the corner, traveling up and down bluffs and then through the creek.

The north fork glacier is a huge roller coaster of rock debris. Charlie begins pointing out a buttress in the center of Benign's west face. Horrified, this wall having no similarity to any rock climb I have ever contemplated doing, I non-committally attempt to divert his attention. Then he starts up a snow canyon that climbs up a thousand feet before jutting left and out of sight, until it reappears under the summit towers. At half-height, a waterfall freefalls into the gully. Surely he is jesting.

Fortunately Bellicose appears, dazzling white over the moraines. Classic snow and ice routes present themselves. I congratulate myself on my good sense. However, after ten hours of hiking we still have over three miles of scree roller coaster to go. This is not going to be a two-day trip. Charlie is due at work bright and early Monday morning.

A plan is hatched. Up Benign's couloir, down to Eklutna Glacier and the road. With Pete Panarese on Bold, if we hurry we could catch a ride. A great traverse! We can pick up the bikes later in the week.

As usual, I sleep through my 5 am alarm. At 6 we rouse and agree we are much too excited and motivated. We fall back asleep. At 8 Charlie attempts a new hairstyle with his stove. At 9 we are slogging up the scree. We figure 4 to 6 hours to the top. The snow is good and we plod toward the bend. The initial couloir has the feel of walking an inner city street. The gully steepens and narrows, then the bend. Oh wonderful, the couloir necks down, the snow disappears, plus rock bands and a waterfall. Great fun.

At the first rock band I pull out the rope. Charlie insists that rock climbing with crampons is big fun. I teeter upwards. The rock is not going to take pins or nuts. I runner a block that does not provide needed mental relief. Charlie does a similar lead that deposits us at the base of a waterfall and an overhanging snow tongue. I start up a rock wall, but cannot connect the moves to a ledge system. Charlie suggests through the falls; I scrape upwards. At least crampons do not slip on wet rock. A few moves and I am confronted by a series of down-sloping holds. I quickly decide that underclings, waterfalls, frozen hands and crampons are not to my liking and since my only protection is a Grivel pounded into a rotten snow pile near my first attempt, I suggest

Charlie come up and see what we have.

He tries a bit farther left than my first shot. By convincing himself that a foot square chunk of ice will remain attached to the wall, he manages the moves to the ledge system. A traverse, followed by a bit of bridging between rock and snow, places him back on 60-degree snow. I pretend to ignore the pendulum effect as I follow the pitch.

The rock pitches have focused our concentration. Now that we are secure again, picks buried in the snow, it dawns heavily on us that we are playing a new game -- ASTEROIDS. The sun is hitting the summit snowfields of the left-hand buttress, loosening the rubble. We unrope and climb as close as possible to the right-hand wall without entering the bottomless moat. The couloir necks down one last time, thin ice through the center of the asteroid speedway, then into the sun and a long trudge to the col.

At the col, things do not look pleasant. The north face drops away beneath us and the gendarmed ridges on both sides appear decidedly rotten. Charlie ties in and heads in the direction of the summit. Much trundling ensues, but he does manage to place a stopper and sling a block, the only real protection on the route. A standard 200-foot pitch with a 165-foot rope.

After I am halfway across the pitch, Charlie voices misgivings as to the direction we are heading, pointing back to another col many gendarmes away and mentioning rappels. Not being able to see what he sees, I retreat to the stopper placement, pull off the pack, and reach for the map. Shouting back and forth we are able to deduce that Charlie is atop the col between the 7000-foot pinnacle and the summit. Having read the AAJ's account of the first ascent (AAJ, 1966: p 101), I know that Charlie is looking down the south gully descent route. Figuring we had 6000 feet of unknown ground to cover we decide to forego the 100-foot scramble to the top.

Scree-tripping puts us in the hanging valley and an epic. I am convinced that the descent is off the east side of the creek. Unfortunately, this has no bearing with reality. After rushing up and down looking for a way through the cliffs, we end up stumbling down the west side in the dark. One memorable rappel off a bush highlights our arrival on Eklutna Glacier. A brief nap on the rocks follows. We awake to the northern lights at 4 am. Dawn finds Charlie and I retracing our steps a few times before finding our way out of the maze and onto the Eklutna Rd.

John Mitchell

### The Great Ice-Capade

(report from the 87 Ice-Climbing Class)

(to the tune of Peter, Paul and Mary's "Man Who Never Returned")

Let me tell you all a story  
About a climber named Willy  
On a class with the MCA  
He led a dozen students up a 5.9 pitch  
And he did it without a belay.

Chorus: Did he ever return?  
No, he never returned  
And his fate is still unlearned  
He may climb forever  
On the Matanuska Glacier  
He's the climber who never returned.

It was some time later  
A climber named Paul  
Set out to look for them all  
With an ice axe in his left hand  
An a screw in his right  
He challenged that ultimate wall.

Chorus

Then ol' Mike Miller  
That waterfall killer  
With a wicked gleam in his eye  
Grabbed a pound of wieners and forty carabiners,  
Said, "I'll give that pitch a try!"

Chorus

Then Big Dave Pahlke,  
Not one to ever balk-y,  
Thought he knew what was demanded...  
With a lawn chair on his back  
And a fifth in his pack  
He attacked that ice bare-handed.

Chorus

Then came Ned Lewis  
Climbing up that blue ice  
Saying, "This pitch is so perverse,  
I'll do a one arm pull-up  
And go ahead and hook up  
A fine Tyrolean Traverse!"

Chorus

But this is a story  
That ends in glory  
Cause our leader proved to be calmer;  
Just forty days later  
The travel-weary climbers  
Arrived at MacDonald's in Palmer

New chorus: Am I on belay?  
No you're not on belay!  
And Willy proclaimed that day  
"I will serve forever as the president,  
But PLEASE! No more climbs with the MCA!"

-- by Ann Onymous

The Hidden Valley of Mt. Cockedhat  
Brooks Range

July 29-August 15, 1987

Karen Forsyth

July 29

With a late start we board the two vehicles that will carry us to Fairbanks and then over the rough gravel road into the heart of the Brooks Range.

The ride to Fairbanks is nice although McKinley refuses to introduce himself to the group.

Fairbanks becomes a comedy of errors as we take one wrong road after another failing to make sense of our map. Our van rolls into the airport with our tumbling fits of laughter at our inability to cope with the streets of Fairbanks. Riki was happy to see us even though we had not intended to go to the airport just then, but to the house of Mark Copland.

Mark soon comes to our rescue to lead us to a gas station and then to his warm and friendly home.

A friendly argument bounces through the van about where we should have our last dinner of real food before our forced two week diet of freeze dried. The Royal Fork won, but then lost when we arrived beyond closing hours. The Sizzler took us in and left us with good food memories that would haunt our minds throughout the hike.

July 30

Copelands treat us to a great breakfast of sourdough hotcakes before we say good-bye and head up the less and less populated road to the Arctic Circle and beyond. Hills of trees finally break above timberline, then to our first view of the Brooks. A few dramatic tall mountains stand along the road to welcome us to their Arctic home.

Tents are pitched along the Dietrich River at mile 224. At this point we leave the comforts of civilization and bring ourselves face to face with nature itself.

July 31

The river's icy fingers swirl around our feet as we splash our way to the other side. Spruce and brush stand shyly apart to give us an easy access to the land beyond. A tall spruce with it's orange bark has a reunion waiting for Don. We camp among its spruce neighbors on the grassy ground.

Linda and Doris start their nightly routine of climbing anything in sight.

August 1

Trees are left behind as we head into the alpine. Miles are long and hard with the soft ground billowing like soft pillows around our boots as we head up the valleys. We strain to reach our campsite finally stopping even though we think our goal is short. Later it is discovered we passed our nights stop by a good mile or more.



August 2

We head upstream gaining more and more elevation until we are on the steep incline that will take us to the pass.

Oolah Lake greets us early in the day. Small groups of day hikers spread around the lower mountain slopes avoiding the loose rock that forms the mountain's upper slopes.

The weather is cool with high overcast that has stayed with us throughout the trip and will remain tomorrow.

August 3

We head off the pass, past our lake home and down to the next valley. We walk on gravel bars on the near-by arctic ground. There are some tussock, small streams and brush along the great expanse of valley floor. Campsites are difficult to find in the wet lumpy ground. All seems worthwhile when we discover the usually hidden permafrost heaving it's icy body from it's gravelike home. Then a grizzly lumbers by seeming not to notice our presence.

August 4

A river crossing starts our day. We make our way upvalley, some heading high and others near the creek. Rain keeps our rests short. Boots become soaked to the extent that most cross the stream in them. We climb to a nice bench and lumber on toward the edge of the hidden valley. A tussock field and more wet ground are crossed before we reach our campsite. Fog settles over us for the night.

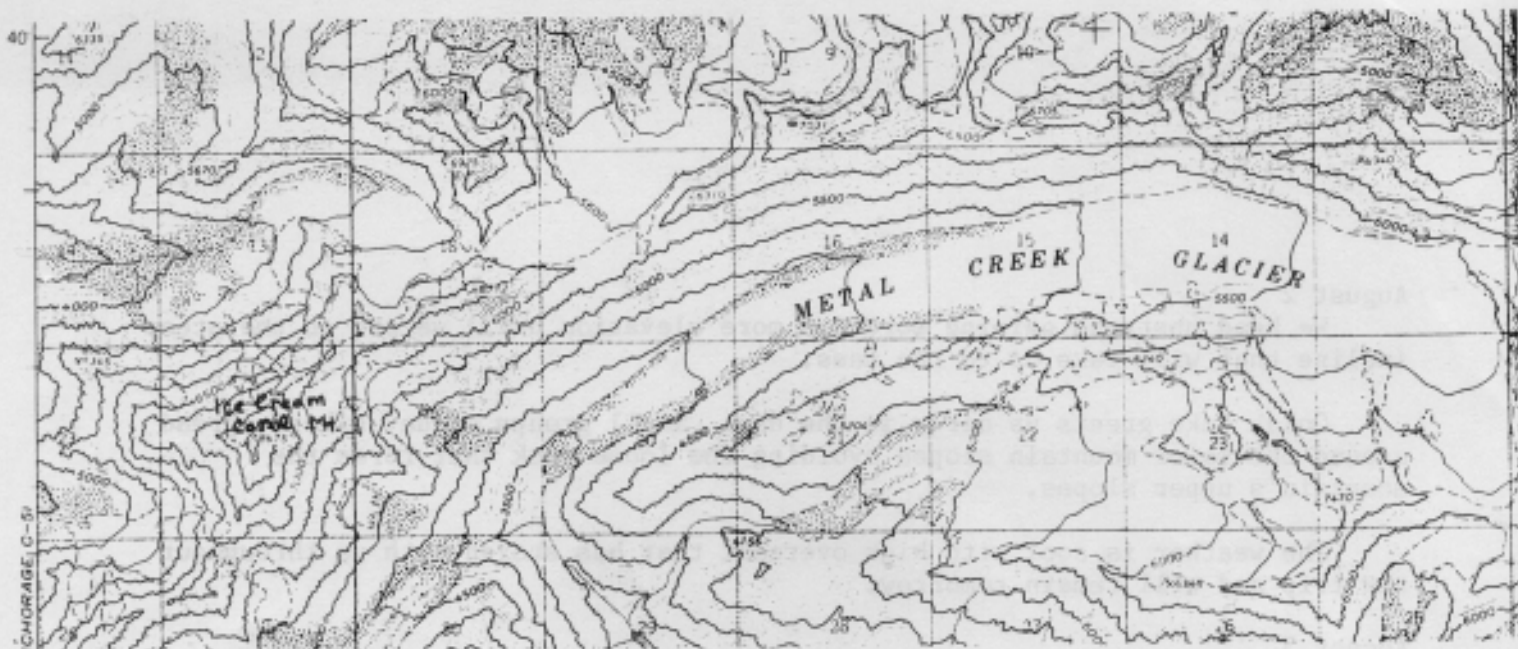
August 5

A cloudy sky hangs over our wet valley as we pack to leave for the hidden valley. Unwelcome drops of rain join our group and stay for the day. We make our way over the gravel and rocks that line the stream bed. Then up the rocky and moss covered ground toward the valley. Our raingear becomes soaked from our body heat on the inside and wet from the rain outside as we climb the steep slope. Rugged and jagged mountains of rock peek at us from all sides while still hiding behind their cloudy blankets.

The valley floor is flat--just over a mile long and a quarter mile wide. Triangles of loose rock meet the valley floor under each massive summit. Sheets of bare rock, jagged offset peaks, clouds teasing us with the view, and fog moving up the valley make it an eerie unreal scene.

Steady rain keeps us in our tents throughout the day and on into the evening. We go to sleep under a blanket of fog.

(To be continued.)



### Climbing Notes

In May 1984 Dan Shearer, Alden Alder and Scott Hickoff did the second recorded ascent of Ice Cream Cone Mt. (8675'). After approaching from Carpenter Cr. they made the ascent via snow chutes just right of the north buttress and then up the summit ridge. First ascent of this peak was in 1967 by Dave Johnson, Hans Van der Laan and John Samuelson. Willy Hersman

Willy's article on the naming of White Lice in the September Scree stirred some memories (30:9:8). My recall is that this peak was originally named White Mice, coined from the appearance of white-suited army trainees practicing mountaineering on its upper slopes. Someone then shifted the name derogatorily to Lice, and this was the one that stuck. Are there any old-timers out there who can confirm this? Greg Higgins

### Avalanche Workshop

At the October meeting the MCA voted to sponsor a two-day field workshop on avalanches. Professional instruction will be given by Doug Fesler and his associates at a location to be decided on later this year. The date set for this class is January 2-3, 1988. Tentatively the topics to be covered will include slope evaluation, pit analysis and route selection. To get a better idea of what participants want to learn a questionnaire is included with the sign-up form.

The weekend will be a long one, with instruction running from before sunup to after sundown. The Mountaineering Club will follow up the class with another class on using avalanche beacons and avalanche rescue, to be taught by MCA members.

As with all MCA trips and classes participants must sign the club's liability release. If response to this course is great enough then class size will have to be limited and a second class can be set up later in the winter. Sign-ups will be taken by mail and at the November and December meetings. The fee is non-refundable (unless class size becomes limited). Minimum size is 6.

MCA Avalanche Workshop

January 2-3, 1988

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_

- MCA Member \$30.00  
 Non-member \$40.00 (includes your 1988 dues)

What would you like to get out of this class?

- Beginner...know very little about avalanches.  
 Intermediate...have some knowledge but no formal instruction.  
 Experienced...have had a workshop before, but want to brush-up.

I would like an emphasis on...

- Good Routefinding  
 Decision-making  
 Hazard Evaluation  
 Pit Analysis and Snow Tests  
 Snow Properties (which contribute to avalanches)  
 Weather (and how it affects snow stability)  
 Learning from mistakes made in the past  
 Conditions that climbers are likely to face  
 Conditions that skiers are likely to face  
 Rescue

Write down some questions you would like answered, or things you would like covered during the class.

- Cannot attend because of the date, please hold another class.  
 Willing to help teach use of avalanche beacons and rescue at a later class.

Mountaineering Club of Alaska  
Box 102037  
Anchorage, AK 99510  
Attn.: Treasurer

Nov 87

MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF ALASKA OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>PHONE</u>	<u>BOARD MEMBERS</u>	<u>PHONE</u>
President	Willy Hersman	276-0925	Michael Rees	563-8276
Vice-President	John Baker	274-0105	Dan O'Haire	349-3599
Secretary	Pete Sennhauser	345-5577	Don Hansen	279-0829
Treasurer	Priscilla Lukens	248-9557	Mike King	694-4307
			Mark Findlay	337-8666

MCA TRIP HOTLINE 337-6679

Annual membership dues: Single \$10.00 Family \$15.00  
Dues can be paid at any meeting or mailed to the Treasurer at the MCA address.  
Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope to receive your card.

SCREE is a monthly publication of the Mountaineering Club of Alaska. I would like to remind you that all items for publication must be submitted at the monthly meeting or mailed to my home at Star Route Box 9204, Eagle River, Alaska 99577. Articles should be received by the 25th of the month for the following month's issue. Your cooperation will be appreciated. Marty Bassett, Editor.

EDITOR: Marty Bassett, 694-3917  
TYPING: Willy Hersman  
DUPLICATION: Mark Findlay  
MAILING: Priscilla Lukens and Doris Curtis

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