



November 2005

A Publication of the Mountaineering Club of Alaska
Box 102037, Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Volume 48 Issue 11

Monthly Meeting
Wednesday, November 16th @ 7:30 PM

First United Methodist Church
9th & G Streets
Downtown Anchorage

Next to the Phillips Building (you may use reserved parking after hours)

Program: Stan Olson will show slides of his backpacking trip in Himichal, Uttaranchal Pradesh and around Darjiling in India

'It doesn't have to be fun, to be fun' – Mark Twight

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Hiking and Climbing Schedule

Saturday November 12

A 2-1/2 mile ridge walk looking down on Peter's Creek to the North and Eagle River to the south.

Class C. 3000 ft. elevation gain. Winter gear, ice axe and maybe crampons. I wonder if there is a cornice up there? Stu Grenier
oinkmenow@hotmail.com 337-5127.

Saturday November 19

One of my favorite day trips. It is the prominent ridge across Ship Creek from Arctic Valley Rd. Winter gear, ice axe and maybe even snowshoes. Go ahead and get your own RAP (recreation access permit) from the Post at 384-0296.

Stu Grenier 337-5127

oinkmenow@hotmail.com

November 24 – 27

Thanksgiving at Mint Hut. We plan on skiing in on the 24th. Ski on the glaciers, Ski to Grizzly pass, maybe climb a peak. Have a group effort for Thanksgiving Dinner on the 24th. Class- C/ Glacier (for those plan on skiing on the Mint or Penny Royal) Elevation- Gain 2400'! More for those skiing or climbing Distance-16 miles/ more for skiers. Equipment- Skis, beacon, probe, shovel, rope, harness, functional brain. Hazards- Avalanche, crevasse The hut can sleep only 8 or

so. There are 15 people signed up now. Therefore the first ones on the list will have preference on staying inside. The additional people going will need to stay in tents.
Greg Bragiel - 569-3008

Training

Coming soon

The Winter Mountaineering series. Check out the membership meeting minutes in this issue for more details.

Trip Reports

Carmen Lake, Peak 4130

By: Ross Noffsinger

The morning of July 23rd found Wayne Todd, Carrie Wang and I roaring up the Twenty Mile River in crowded jet boat piloted by friend and coworker Martin Schwan. Martin's girlfriend Nicki and their four dogs were also along for the ride. The boat is designed to handle fast moving shallow water, and under Martin's seasoned guidance we made an easy go of the narrow stream leading to Carmen Lake.



Photo by Wayne Todd

Once at Carmen, Martin took us for a cruise around the lake to survey the area. Wayne, Carrie and I decided to attempt the ridge and associated unnamed peaks northeast of the lake. Martin dropped us off on the north side where we proceeded to hike up the right of two prominent gullies. Our intent

was to gain the ridge with minimal bushwhacking, follow it as far as possible and return before dark.

At roughly 1000 feet above sea level our gully turned steep. Wayne chose to continue up the gully proper in search of a route. Since there was water cascading down the gully and the rock was wet and slick, Carrie and I chose to scramble out of the bottom of the gully up a rock rib. The rib was steep and crumbly and probably went class 4, but it looked like the angle backed off after roughly 50 feet. So in a notable display of poor judgment (actually I think the idea may have been mine), we headed up the rib.

When we reached what was thought to be the top of the steep section, we encountered more steep terrain. Not wanting to down climb and hoping we were nearly past the steep stuff, Carrie and I continued up. Due to the poor quality of the rock, we climbed up through alder patches where possible since the base of the larger branches offered the only bomber holds. At one point we chose to climb up through a patch of Devils Club rather than face the exposure required to skirt around it. I opted for a swimming technique, using my forearms to brush the stalks aside. We discovered that the base of a devils club stock has relatively few stickers and makes a decent hand hold.

As Carrie and I proceeded upwards, she accidentally kicked loose a small rock. I saw it coming for my hand but chose not to move it from its hold. Another poor decision as the rock struck my middle finger at the base of the nail. The impact caused a surprising amount of pain and the finger instantly swelled, but wasn't broken. Side note: The fingernail eventually came off, but a new one has since taken its place.

Unfortunately the steep terrain did not let up. The higher we climbed, the greater our commitment to the route. The scrambling was sustained class 4 with short sections of class 5. The alder was discontinuous, leaving us to rely solely on the crumbly rock. Since we did not anticipate any technical climbing, we brought no gear, although it probably didn't matter.

Aside from the hot, mid-day July sun, the climbing was more mental than physical. We methodically proceeded upwards. Hand and foot holds were tested (and many cleaned) before being loaded.

Holds that could not be trusted were only partially loaded. Much of the rock consisted of nothing more than large aggregate packed in dirt.

Hundreds of feet up the class 4 cliff, the stress intensified as the drop grew. Our main concern was getting cliffed out and having to down-climb. We were also concerned about Wayne who must be in a similar situation. It had been more than an hour since we had split up when Wayne was finally spotted working his way up the opposite side of the gully. It appeared that 70 feet of very steep alder separated him from the gentler slopes above. Since his ordeal was nearly over, we continued upward.

Eventually the angle backed off a bit as Carrie and I emerged onto steep grassy terrain. The slope however was still steep enough to be exposed, so I proceeded up with ice axe in hand while Carrie used the self arrest grip on her walking stick. Since the grass was slick, I donned crampons and front pointed the steeper sections.



Photo by Wayne Todd

Three hours and 1200 vertical feet after scrambling onto the rib we emerged onto the heather slopes of the upper ridge. I was relieved the ordeal was over but also mad at myself for making such a bad decision, a decision that put both Carrie and I in an exceedingly dangerous situation. The decision was basically a result of our desire to avoid the alder bashing required to gain the ridge, the upper reaches of which are well protected by thick vegetation, steep slopes and cliffs.

Carrie and I took a lunch break and watched Wayne work his way up the mountainside across the gully. Eventually we rendezvoused near the ridge crest. Wayne described his ordeal in the gully. He attempted a few lines but was turned back each time, resulting in some very hairy down-climbing on wet rock. He was finally able to escape the gully via the steep alder patch where we had spotted him. He said it was among the top 3 scariest experiences he has had while peak bagging. I agreed.

Initially the ridge crest was quite broad and the travel easy. We even located pools of water to fill our depleted supply. The appearance of goat shit on snow beneath the water surface was somewhat disconcerting; however we drank the water untreated. No one experienced any ill effects.

The first high point encountered along the ridge is listed as point 3640. Not knowing whether this is a true summit, I measured the drop to the col to the east with my altimeter. Since it indicated only 400 feet, this point is not a true summit, at least by Alaska standards.

As we continued southeastward along the ridge, we encountered a nasty gendarme. Rather than climb over we bypassed it by dropping to the glacier on the east side of the ridge. Once past the gendarme we regained the ridge and followed it without incident to peak 4130.

Knowing there was not enough day to proceed to the next peak, we took a long break and enjoyed the spectacular view, which included the Twenty Mile Glacier and river valley, scores of unnamed peaks and the 4000 foot drop to Carmen Lake. We also built a small cairn and left a register.

When it was time to leave, some dispute developed over the descent route. Wayne, always in search of adventure, wanted to descend directly down to the lake. Concerned that we would encounter several hundred feet of class 4 down climbing, I wanted to back track along the ridge and follow it northwestward all the way to the north end of the lake. This route would bypass the cliff we had climbed earlier in the day. Since both Carrie and I had had our fill of adventure, Wayne gave in and we descended along the ridge.



Photo by Wayne Todd

At roughly 2000 feet above seal level, we encountered a cliff that was bypassed by descending the south face of the ridge through a mixture of alders and chest deep vegetation. Small vertical drops (up to 8 feet in height) hidden in the dense salad made travel rather interesting. As usual, Wayne somehow flew through this terrain.

Once below the cliff we made our way back towards the ridge crest and an old growth hemlock forest. The forest under the canopy was wide open making travel easy. However it wasn't long before I heard Carrie (who I was following) yell BEES! A cry heard far too often this past summer. I instantly stopped and surmised that Wayne who was in the lead must have stirred a hornet's nest, and Carrie who was following was paying the price. As I looked for a detour I was stung on the belly. That's what I get for thinking. I sprinted forward after Carrie and Wayne, relying on velocity as my defense. Now suffering from a bad case of bee-anoia, we virtually ran through the forest in fading light, down to the lake.

We reached the beach at 11:20pm and radioed Martin who hauled us to camp in his boat where we gorged ourselves and slept comfortably under the watchful eyes of three Karelian Bear dogs.

The next day on the way out Martin took us for a side trip up to the Twentymile Glacier. It is worth noting that the glacier has receded dramatically from its location shown on the Chugach State Park map.

It is also worth noting that we found no presence of other of other human travelers on the ridge. Could this be a first ascent? Who knows? In fact I am not sure that peak 4130 is a true summit because we did not travel to the col east of the summit and the topo maps for this area are of questionable accuracy.

ICE

Conditions, Festival, more. Right here:
<http://www.alaskaiceclimbing.com>

UAA Outdoor club presents

Dec. 2: Charlie Sassara - First winter summit of the West Rib. Endless first ascents.

Dec. 9: Joe Puryear - Climbed over 30 peaks in the Alaska Range. New route on Kichatna Spire - The Black Crystal Arête. Infinite Spur on Mt. Foraker and his 15-hour speed ascent of Cobra Pillar on Mt. Barrill in the Ruth Gorge

Dec. 16: Dave Johnston - First winter ascent of Denali. First ascent of Foraker's Sultana Ridge. First to do 50 summits in winter.

For more information contact Clint Helander 227-3291

New book in the library

The club has received a copy of 'Bradford Washington, An Extraordinary Life'. This book chronicles the life of the great gentleman mountaineer photographer. Few people with an interest in mountain culture will not have seen the pioneering photographs by Bradford Washington. This is not a book of photography but the photographs here are interesting. They evoke the timeless quality of mountaineering and a life well lived. Now all we need is a donation of a copy of 'Bradford on Mount Washington' published by Mr. Washington in 1928.

MCA Calendar info

Yes, they are coming.

At the October General Meeting examples of the 06 MCA Calendars were available for members to look over and there was a sign up sheet for orders. Over 80 calendars have been ordered. Calendars will be available for sale at the next General Meeting and if you are not already on the reserve list please contact Stu at oinkmenow@hotmail.com. And let him know how many you want. We are trying to figure out how many we need to print. After the November meeting the price may go up from the usual \$10 due to the increased cost of printing a smaller number of calendars.

MCA Board Meeting Minutes October 12, 2005 7:00 p.m.,

This month's board meeting was held at the Snow Goose Restaurant in Anchorage.

Items covered included:

- ? Possible nomination ideas for the upcoming elections. We will be voting on new officers and 2-3 board member positions.
- ? The direction of the club calendar was discussed extensively. We are at the point where a commitment needs to be made to either fund an off-set printing to create a high quality calendar that could be sold to promote the club and its activities (needing to sell about 500 calendars to break even) or stick with the current lower quality laser printing, which is more costly per calendar but needs no minimum quantity to print. This will be brought to the membership's attention at next week's meeting, getting an idea of which way the majority prefers to go, and inviting further input at the next board meeting (when we are budgeting for next year).
- ? The budget needs to be formulated, so it can be voted on at November membership meeting, in addition to being published in the Scree. It was decided to have another board meeting Wednesday, October 26, 7:30 at the Snow Goose. This will be the first meeting for incoming officers and board members. Committees should submit their budgets for the following year, so these can be included.
- ? During discussion of the treasurer's duties, it came to light that there are two

checkbooks to the club account, and this is making the treasurer's job more difficult trying to account for outstanding checks and not being in charge of checks being issued. The board voted on and agreed that the future treasurer should have sole control of the checkbook, so will know who has checks outstanding, and for what purpose.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

MCA Membership Meeting October 19th, 2005 7:30 p.m.

Welcome, by club president, Steve Parry.

New member introductions made. Several new faces present tonight; welcome!

Committee reports

Hiking and Climbing -- See the front sheet of Scree for upcoming trips. Sign-up sheets for upcoming trips at front of room; sign up during intermission.

11/12 - Mt. Significant (Stu)

11/19 - Ship Creek Hill (Stu)

11/24-27 - Mint Hut for Thanksgiving (Greg)

Calendar - The printer broke, but the calendar should be available at the November meeting. Stu is taking orders tonight, as those who pay now will be assured calendars (good for Christmas presents) off first printing. Also, we need input on the future of the calendar. We have to sell 500 to cover the cost of offset printing; however, this would make our calendar extremely high in quality and do our pictures more justice. The board decides on budget next Wednesday, 10/26, at the 7:30 meeting at Snow Goose. If you have an opinion, show up and give the board some input before they vote on next year's calendar budget. Note that next year's calendar will be in horizontal format; get out and take pictures!

Training - Carl will be limiting this winter's "mountain school" to 20 students. This year's topics include winter clothing/nutrition, avalanche awareness and rescue, winter camping, knots, snow/glacier travel, and crevasse rescue. The course runs five weeks and cost is \$75 this year. This includes a textbook, use of club equipment,

rental for classroom, and incidentals. Instructors are not paid for their time. We need volunteers! Carl needs 3 senior instructors and the more assistants the better. If you have ever taken these classes, this is your time to give back to the club; please talk to Carl about helping out! An interest sheet is up front, and preference will be given to those names first, particularly those who pay their \$75! Actual sign-up is at the December membership meeting. If you cannot attend in December, E-mail Carl or Carlene and get your money to them.

Parks – South Denali planning papers are available for review. Five public meetings are scheduled for late October and early November. For more info, visit www.southdenaliplanning.com or contact Miriam Valentine at 1-907-733-9102.

Treasurer's report

\$15,460.02 revenue less 8,112.97 expenses equals a net increase of \$7347.05. We now have \$15,194.75 in checking, 6,649.34 in our money market, \$1000 18-month CD at North Rim bank, and \$50 petty cash. Steve Gruhn has been covering as treasurer until tonight's elections... Thanks for the help, Steve!

New Business

Annual elections held tonight. Our new officers and board members are:

President: Steve Gruhn

Vice President: Sean Bolender

Treasurer: Debbie Arens

Secretary: SaraEllen Hutchison

Past President: Steve Parry

Year 1 (of 2 years) board members: Rebecca Bissette and Randy Howell

Year 2 (of 2 years) board members: Annette Iverson and Eric Teela

Announcements

Stu is leading an "unofficial" trip, going to Hans' Hut for 5 days over the first weekend of November. See him if you are interested in finding out more.

Dean Carman announced the mumblings of someone putting on an ice festival this winter, and that MCA may be asked to help out. He will keep us posted on this as details unfold. Steve Parry said there might be some ice climbing training this winter, as there are a large number of members interested in pursuing this.

Slide show presentation

Mark Fouts shows slides of his traverse of the Matanuska and Marcus Baker glaciers from a trip he did back in the '70s.

A special note

Please help me extend a warm welcome and sincere thanks to SaraEllen Hutchison, our new secretary! Though new to Alaska and MCA, SaraEllen has accepted the position of club secretary for the next term. I commend her on her courage to participate! I'm sure she will be a great asset to our new board!

Submitted by: Carlene Van Tol, exiting secretary

Adze

Winter gear for sale:

Mountain Hardwear Trango 2 tent roomy 2-person four season mountaineering tent with clip suspension and two vestibules used a few times, nearly new condition \$200

North Face Ibex sleeping bag down bag rated to minus 15 degrees Fahrenheit 4lbs. 4oz. weight excellent condition \$60

please call Tom at 343-6333 days or 522-0013 evenings or email tommcdee@hotmail.com

For Sale

Koflach Arctis Expe Mountaineering Boots Size 8.5-9
Used twice, new in May '05 \$295
207-233-7821

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

Mountaineering Club of Alaska

President	Steve Gruhn	344-1219	Board member	Eric Teela	240-9693
Vice-President	Sean Bolender	333-0213	Board member	Annette Iverson	222-0581
Secretary	SaraEllen Hutchison	269-6300	Board member	Randy Howell	346-4608
Treasurer	Debbie Arens	563-1960	Board member	Rebecca Bisette	375-0959
			Board member	Steve Parry	248-8710

Annual membership dues: Single \$15, Family \$20 (one Scree to a family)

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 and notes submitted for publication and other communication related to the newsletter should be emailed to Scree@yahoogroups.com or submitted on the web at www.mcak.org or mailed to Scree Editor Box 102037 Anchorage Alaska 99510. Articles should be received by November 16 (the club meeting) to be in the December Issue.

Paid Ads may be submitted to the attention of the Vice-President at the club address and should be 'camera ready' 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: Greg Bragiel - 569-3008
Hiking Committee: Matt Nedom - 278-3648, Carlene Van Tol – 748-5270
Climbing Committee: Richard Baranow - 694-1500, Randy Howell – 346-4608
Huts: Hans Neidig 355-3244
Calendar: Stuart Grenier 337-5127
Scree Editor: John Recktenwald 770-1636
Web: www.mcak.org (change your address here)
Mailing list service: MCAK@yahoogroups.com

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