

MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF ALASKA

Editor  
Clyde Wilson  
215 - 8th Avenue  
Anchorage, Alaska  
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SCREE

Secretary  
Lois Willard  
1607 - 14th Avenue  
Anchorage, Alaska  
BR 6-8534  
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MEETING, MONDAY JANUARY 2

The slides taken by the MCA party which made the 1st ascent of Mt. Spurr. Helga Bading will narrate. George Herben's pictures, taken from the air over Mt Spurr during the climb, will also be shown.

INDOOR PROGRAM:

February 6 Meeting: It is believed that a factor deterring greater participation in climbing and wilderness travel in Alaska is the lack of widespread knowledge as to the proper types of footgear for the various situations and types of terrain to be expected in this country in the various seasons. To help to disseminate such information the February Indoor Program will consist of a Panel Discussion on Footgear. We hope to have 5 or 6 experts in Rock, Mountain, Cold Weather, Snow, and General Wilderness travel present their observations as to pros and cons of the types of footgear for the many conditions; followed by a question and answer period and general discussion. It is possible that the panel members' comments will be tape-recorded, and assembled in written form for further dissemination.

Howard Schuck, Retiring Indoor Program Chairman

Steve Duncan will serve as Indoor Program Chairman beginning with the March meeting.

CLIMBING SCHEDULE:

Denner Peak - February 4 & 5: Norm Pichler, leading. (BR 8-7951) Norm encourages interested persons to contact him, but he reserves the right to select who will go. The party will be limited to 8.

TRAILING AND CROSS-COUNTRY PROGRAM:

It is thought that about 2 trips of the trail-hike, snowshoe, or cross-country type should be scheduled per month as official club trips. More will be scheduled if participation indicates they are desirable. If there is a trip of this type that you would like to see scheduled, call Howard Schuck (SK 2-9448); pass the word to any club officer, or bring it up at any MCA meeting.

January 1 - New Year's Day: Hike (or snowshoes, if snow falls between now and 1 Jan) the trail from old village of KNIK to 3 Mile Lake and return. Ice fish at 3 Mile Lake for 3 hours before starting back. Drive cars to KNIK. Meet at junction of Glenn Highway and Boniface Road 7:30 a.m. on 1 Jan. (This trip is seemingly designed to separate the New Year's Eve partiers from the party-poopers.) Leader Joe Pichler, FE 3-2101. Call him if in doubt, or just show up with car and equipment. This is an easy trip, within the capabilities of all, including children. NOTE: You should have a 1961 Fishing License, or at least have applied for one if you wish to fish. Children under 16 need no license however.

January 8 - Snowshoe School: Assuming there will be enough snow. Time: 11 a.m.; Place: Goose Lake Recreation Hut; Leader: Joe Pichler. Call him if in doubt about snow conditions - FE 3-2101.

January 14, 15 & 16: Eagle River to Girdwood via the Eagle River Old Mail Trail, Raven Glacier and Crow Pass. This trip will require some planning as to cars at either end, so it will be necessary to contact Joe Pichler or Howard Schuck by Jan 7 if one wishes to go. It is also suggested that only those with the proper equipment, some experience and endurance, and the willingness to cover 25 miles of various types of terrain, and sleep out 2 nights should consider trying this trip. For safety of the individuals, and success of the trip itself Joe Pichler will decide as to who is qualified to go. Note that this is for 3 days, Saturday, Sunday & Monday.

NOTE: If weather conditions permit putting vehicles well up on the Girdwood Mine Road, it may be possible to cover this territory in 2 long hard days. However, we must plan on taking 3 days.

February 11 & 12: Arctic Valley to Indian via the Ship Creek Old Mail Trail, Indian Pass, and down to Indian on the Portage Road. This is a repeat of the highly successful trip of last February. Leader will be Gene Horning (BR 8-9395). Contact him for details.

NOTE: This is not an easy trip, and requires proper equipment, endurance, and some determination. The participants will be decided by Gene.

Preliminary Exploration of the Eagle River End of the Girdwood to Eagle River Mail Trail  
by Howard Schuck

It was decided, along about 21 December, that some outdoor activity should be scheduled for the three day Christmas weekend if for no better reason than to counteract the large amounts of turkey to be consumed. Also, it was thought that before scheduling a Girdwood to Eagle River winter expedition, we should know a little more about the Eagle River end of the Old Mail Trail.

A small group (6) thus made this exploration the day after Christmas. The word was spread by telephone to most of those who had expressed earlier interest in this type of trip. I regret it if some were not contacted who might have liked to have gone.

We met at Eagle River Store at 9 a.m. and Gwyn Wilson very capably drove her jeep in over the icy Eagle River "Road". (Ed. Note: What Howard means is that the jeep made the roundtrip over the icy road miraculously without mishap inspite of the sex of the driver) Present: Tommy and Gwyn Wilson, Louise Voelker, Joe Pichler, Howard and Elinore Schuck. We were able to go only about 10 miles without chains, even with 4 wheel drive, due to extreme icing of the road beyond this point. At this point John Wolfe came out from his homestead (as earlier he had very kindly volunteered to do), and transported us to the very end of the "Road" in his 4 wheel - all wheels with chains - truck. From here we jumped off at 11 a.m., found the continuing trail, and hiked up the valley (on and off the rather poor trail) about 10 miles. The walking conditions were most unusual for Alaskan woods, with the trail, and all low and most high spots, a solid sheet of ice. Earlier melting of almost all the snow had frozen into ice. Snowshoes had been left in Anchorage in anticipation of a lack of snow, but we should have added crampons to our packs, as the going was very slow without them, and there were several almost serious falls on the slippery trail.

It was not a good day to be traveling through the woods, but we all enjoyed the outing and consider it a success. It has also led to the definite scheduling of the Eagle River to Girdwood trip.

We are grateful to John Wolfe for providing advice as to navigable portions of the road, and for transporting us beyond where we were able to go in the Wilson jeep. Enroute John took us up the side of the mountain to his homestead, and we briefly visited Helen Wolfe, and also Ruth Schmidt, another MCA member, and the Wolfe's Christmas houseguest. The Wolfe home is a very attractive 2 story log cabin with an outstanding view of the upper valley. We were all happy to have the opportunity to see it. (The Wolfes at present are the "authentic-in" inhabitants of the entire Eagle River Valley.)