



DECEMBER 2004 *A Publication of the Mountaineering Club of Alaska* Volume 47 Issue 12

Box 102037, Anchorage, Alaska 99510

DECEMBER MEETING

Wednesday

December 15, 7:30 pm

First United Methodist Church

9th & G Streets

Next to the Phillips Building

(you may use marked parking after hours...)

Downtown Anchorage

Christmas Dinner

The club will provide turkey, prime rib, some vegetables, condiments and refreshments. You bring the rest. Use the following "last name" guide:

- A-C Dessert
- D-H Veggie dish
- I-M Pasta, rice, potatoes, etc.
- N-R Salad, Fruit Salad
- S-Z Chips, appetizers

Also, remember to bring 5-10 slides of a recent trip you made to show after dinner.

Reminder that club calendars can be picked or purchased up at the meeting, and photos will be returned.

Looking For

If anyone has some info or photos that they feel should be included in a Rosie's Roost/ Eklutna Traverse related log please let me know.
Stu 337-5127.

Looking For

Cross-country ski boots, size 10.5 that will fit SNS Salomon bindings or 10.5 boots to fit NNN bindings. Also looking for x/c and skate ski poles for 5'4" son.
Diane dianebblas@aol.com

TRIP REPORTS

Eagle Peak

by Micah McGuire



I woke up at 8:00 in the morning of August 5th and caught a ride out to Eagle River at 8:30 with Tristan, who was dropping Wendy off at work and would swing by to pick me up and my two dogs. He had to go to the optometrist at around 9:30 or so, so we reasoned that we wouldn't be starting out on the trail until about noon. Then, as Tristan was in the optometrist's office, I decided on a whim to call Rob. I reasoned that a third person would make the time more interesting, and Rob is the only person I know who's nuts enough to want to go on a camp/climb given such short notice. When he answered the phone he sounded like he'd taken a hefty dose of valium or something. He explained that he'd just returned from a deer hunt near Juneau a few hours prior to my call, and that he had spent the night hauling 125 pounds of deer from the top of a mountain. But he wanted to come, crazy bastard. He told us that he still had to process the meat before he could leave, and that it would be some hours before he was done, but he sounded so disappointed at the idea of being left behind, I caved in and decided that we would wait until 4:00 for him.

He was done by 3:45, although Tristan had not quite completed packing by then. We picked up Rob and set off down the trail by 4:30. We made really good time out to the end of Eagle Lake, staying on the right side and following the trail that skirts the base of Cantada, but once we reached the end of the lake, we lost the trail and became hopelessly entangled in brush. After some miserable barefoot marsh-crossing and creek-wading, we finally found a decent gravel bank and followed it up to the waterfall.

We made it to the Flute sometime around 8 or so, ate a meal, took some pictures, and put on some extra clothes. Kiliak and I went down to the Flute Glacier and collected some drinking water draining straight from the ice. He performed very well throughout the trip, and never showed any signs of fatigue, despite carrying full saddlebags, until he got back to the truck the next day. Eklutna is not used to long hikes like the one out to the Flute Glacier. She was hot, tired, and sore the entire trip, but performed admirably nonetheless.

There was only one time I had to stop and coax her across some boulders on the way back, and she kept up and stuck with us the entire time. By the time we got home however, she was missing much of the skin from the pads of her feet, and we had to tape her feet up so they would heal. Kiliak's feet didn't get a scratch; he's a great hiking dog. Anyways, back to the trip, we wound up going to bed around 10 or 11.

Tristan and I had purchased these Coleman 50 degree fleece sleeping-bags at Wal-mart, and I was combining that with my bivi-sack and a sleeping pad. Tristan had an emergency blanket and a sleeping pad as well. Rob had no more than a good sleeping bag. Tristan had the bright idea of camping some distance away from Rob and myself, and on the top of a little hill overlooking the glacier, precisely where the cold wind coming off the glacier was sure to be the worst. My night, while not unreasonably chilly, was cold enough to be uncomfortable. I spent most the night in a mental debate over whether I should relieve my very-full bladder and face the inevitable cold which would come when I stood with my slightly damp body in the glacier wind, or if I should simply hold it, stay warm, and try to sleep. I chose the latter, which resulted in a very poor night's rest. By about 4:00 in the morning I started to sleep much better, and by 6:00 I was getting some good Z's, until Rob threw a rock at my head to wake me up. The best never rest.

Eklutna, who had spent the night alternately curled up behind a boulder out of the wind, and curled up next to me, could hardly move. I took her down to the creek and tied her up to a boulder where she could be in the shade or lay down in the creek if she got too hot. She objected, and continued to yip and bark long after we had left camp and started making our way up the hill. Kiliak, who had spent the night nearly as sleeplessly as I had, seemed to be unphased by the previous day's hike, and followed us up the hill with tireless vigor. We worked our way uphill into the pass that can be seen from camp. At the top of the pass, we found a patch of soft grass and moss that would have made a much nicer camping spot than the sharp rocks we had chosen.

The pass led into a large cirque that was dominated by an old glacial moraine. Only one small patch of ice could be seen amid the rubble, and we stopped there for a drink. From the cirque we had three choices for a route. The first and least desirable choice was to head straight up to the summit over what looked like cliffs and a sea of

loose rubble. The second, and only slightly more desirable alternative would have been to follow a very long and steep dirt slide to the foot of the false summit, then cut across a band of cliffs to the small S-shaped gully near the top that appeared to lead to the summit. The third choice was to cut back across the cirque towards the Flute Glacier and hike up the grassy, mild ridge onto an adjoining ridge between Eagle Peak and Flute Peak, then climb the false summit and go on to the true summit via the S-gully. We took the third option. It turned out to be undoubtedly more pleasant than the other routes would have been, and although it was slightly longer in distance, its length made the gaining of altitude much easier, and it was a much more scenic route. We headed up towards the top of a rounded hill where, on the other side, the Organ Glacier came into view. The hill was part of the ridge between Eagle and Flute, and despite being rounded and mild on one side, it was sheer, and in places overhung, dropping straight down several hundred feet towards Compass Butte on the other side.

I was concerned about Kiliak, since his total lack of fear when it comes to great heights could lead to disaster for an animal who is that stupid, so I tied him to a rock further down on the hill, in a shady area where there were no cliffs. Rob, who had performed remarkably up until that point, decided to stay behind for the sake of timeliness, take in the incredible view for a while, then take Kiliak back to camp and let Eklutna off her lead. We bade each other good luck and Tristan and I pushed on for the false summit. It was reasonably easy-going, with some loose scree, but mostly enjoyable bouldering. The exposure and danger from falling was pretty mild on the Organ Glacier side of the false summit, but at several points we were forced onto the Flute Glacier side and the exposure became much more extreme. We took a brief brunch-break on the top of the false summit, and I snapped quite a few pictures. Then we headed across the ridge that connects the false summit with the true one, and descended onto the cliff bands that led to the S-gully. The cliff bands were rather enjoyable, so long as one is cautious of the places where marble-like pebbles coat the solid rock underfoot. Before long, we were at the scree-field.

It was a long, hot, intense uphill battle ascending the scree to the S-gully, and our efforts were rewarded with more, and somewhat looser scree once we reached it. In the gully we had to ascend about 500' or so of loose rock, much of it comparable to pointy bowling balls. We

would start small rockslides all the time, we slid backwards almost as much as we had stepped forwards with each step, and we would dislodge rocks from a few feet above us such that they would roll down and hit the ankles. At the top of the S-gully, there was a choice of summits. I was about 300' ahead of Tristan, and had a bit of time to explore as his pace had slowed considerably by then, so I chose the pointy, mangled-looking left summit, which turned out to be the incorrect choice. After several futile attempts at climbing the boulders to the top, I decided to be done with it and just get along to the real summit. From the top of the S-gully, the true summit is a very short and easy walk up a ridge. Once on top, the summit is surprisingly roomy, a hundred or so feet long, and perhaps 10-20 feet wide, although it is very uneven and strewn with boulders.

We sat for a while, took some pictures, and ate some food. I had cell phone reception on the top, so I called Alex and talked with her for a while. I love being able to call her from the top of mountains. We found the peak register directly under the cairn and signed it. There were some familiar names, but the current register has only been there since '99, so it wasn't the glance back in time I was hoping it would have been.

We began our descent shortly after eleven in the morning. After descending the S-gully we debated as to the proper route of descent. We could repeat the route we had taken up, but that meant repeating the sections of bouldering we had done. While it was certainly fun on the way up, that much downward climbing over rock would not be enjoyable. Our other option was to head straight down into the cirque far below, over the steep, massive talus field, over some cliffs beneath which we could not see, through a small canyon (the terrain behind which we could only guess at), and straight back to camp. We chose the latter, and it proved to be a prudent choice. Although I'm not sure I would have wanted to climb the peak by that route, descending the scree was often quite easy, as its consistency permitted glissading for some of the time. The truly cliffy portions of the route were easily down-climbed, and there was even a small spring trickling over the rocks from which I rehydrated myself.

We were soon back at camp, and headed back towards the truck with two re-energized dogs and a well-rested Rob. After the waterfall, we found a good trail that follows gravel bars and riverbanks almost all the way to the shores of Eagle Lake with only a couple sections of wading

and no 'shwacking, which is a decent beach that can be traversed nearly all the way across on either side. We followed the same trail we had taken before, on the Cantada side of the lake, and were soon back at the car wanting nothing more than to go home and sleep.

A day at the Raven Headwall

by Ron Ramsey



I was asked to expand on an entry I entered in the Rosie's Roost log-book in August of 1987. Since I have already admitted to more than one person the somewhat dubious methods I employed to achieve my goal to visit the hut I figured I might as well come clean to all.

I believe I first learned of the hut locations after reading a story in Alaska magazine. It then took a few years to develop a strong enough delusion that I was experienced enough to attempt the trip but after laboring at it the delusion finally took anchor. Being somewhat of a nonconformist, I decided the more direct route up Raven Glacier to the Raven headwall, followed by quick climb and a fast ski down to Rosie's did not allow me enough time to appreciate the experience. So, I consulted my map and decided a route up over a narrow cut in the ridge near Barnes Mountain to Milk Glacier was more interesting to me. This route decision actually worked out rather well. I took the upper trail leading to Crow Pass until I was under the visible notch in the ridge, then just climbed slowly up through the scree to it. The only issue for me was the last fifty feet or so, which was steeper than I expected, and of course rotten to the touch. Not really an issue for some I suppose but the fifty-pound pack I carried in those days persuaded me to slow down my advancement, even though my heart rate raced on for some reason. Anyway, once over the ridge, the route was great. The Milk Glacier was only a hop, skip and short slide down a scree gully then it was fast progress up the glacier's firm surface to its intersection with Raven Glacier. There was quite a hole at the intersection point but I moved to the far-left side and was able to pass it without consequence.

Arriving at the headwall gave me a moment's pause. It had looked rather interesting but not that intimidating a couple of weeks earlier when I had hiked up for a look-see. Of course I had not had the weight on my back then that I now carried. I decided

after a short evaluation of my snow climbing gear that I was a little lacking. The ice ax was good but the rock hammer was not. The hammer would not give a deep enough purchase in the snow to suit my taste considering the bergschrund at the base of the wall. I had a snow picket but I planned on using that as a safety line anchor while climbing the wall and was reluctant to abandon that strategy. So, looking through my gear I found I had some 8-inch tent stakes made by SMC. These heavy-duty U-shaped tent stakes had a drilled hole near their top for cord that I thought would also work as screw holes. I can't remember how many times I've been told I have a couple loose screws so I figured that many people could not all be wrong so I checked my pack. Sure enough, they had all been correct, I had two to be exact. I carried a synergy pack that employed a crossbow style frame, and those two cross frames were held in place by two screws, I was in business. I removed the screws, bolted two of the tent stakes together and magically a shaky, but with limits, functional 14-inch snow stake to use for balance while ascending the wall. Hopping across the crevice as its narrowest location near the left side of the wall I kicked my front points in and began my ascent. Using my snow picket and about 9 feet of webbing as a self-belay, I climbed the wall using the ice ax and the self-manufactured snow picket. I would not recommend this type of behavior to a loved one, without life insurance anyway, but it worked for me, this time, without consequence.

The trip from the wall down to Rosie's was easy and uneventful. There was one large hole where the Glacier flowed down some abrupt underlying contour of the land but it was easily avoided by moving left. Once past the hole the trek on to the hut was uneventful especially after reaching an area of mostly blue ice where I could easily see and avoid the crevasses. I spent the night relaxing and enjoying the view at the cabin. I headed back up the glacier the next morning under a bright blue sky.

Reaching the headwall gave me pause again. It looked as though it had grown higher and steeper during my absence. I had my heart set on pizza though so I put my little invention back together, drove in my belay stake and started slowly working my way down. I would climb down to the limit of my arms reach, pull the stake while anchored off my ax shaft, drive the stake in at arms reach below me and continue down again. This technique, if you will allow me to call it that, worked and soon placed me back on the glacier's back. I repacked my snow gear and headed off down Raven Glacier to the Crow Pass trail and pizza.



MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF ALASKA

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

The Mountaineering Club of Alaska (MCA) was formed in 1958 to promote the enjoyment of hiking and climbing in Alaska and the exploration of its mountains. We welcome all who wish to become members.

Participate and Learn: The MCA conducts scheduled hikes and climbs led by experienced club members, technical mountaineering and climbing courses, and other instruction throughout the year. The club maintains eight mountain huts in the nearby Chugach and Talkeetna mountains. The MCA's Vin Hoeman Library, located upstairs in Alaska Mountaineering & Hiking at 2633 Spenard Road, contains hundreds of books, numerous periodicals, bound volumes of the **SCREE**, and a 'Peak File' with information on local climbs. The club also loans climbing gear to members, including ice axes, helmets, crampons, snowshoes, and avalanche beacons.

Stay Informed: The MCA publishes a monthly newsletter, **SCREE**, and sends it to all members. The **SCREE** contains announcements of upcoming events, the hiking and climbing trip schedule, and trip reports written by club members. A monthly meeting and slide show are held on the third Wednesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at the First United Methodist Church at 725 West Ninth Avenue (corner of Ninth & G Streets, downtown Anchorage). Special events or changes to the meeting will be noted in the **SCREE**. Be sure to visit our website at: www.mcak.org

- ◆ **Complete both sides of this form. Write neatly!** To participate in club-sponsored trips, every member must read and complete the Release of Liability Agreement on the back of this application.
- ◆ Please make checks payable to **Mountaineering Club of Alaska, Inc.**
- ◆ Annual dues are \$15 for an individual or \$20 for a family (includes electronic **SCREE** subscription – either **delivered** to your e-mail address or **downloaded** from the MCA webpage).
- ◆ Mailed **SCREE** subscriptions are \$10 per year and are non-refundable (one **SCREE** per family).
- ◆ Annual membership is for one calendar year, through the 31st of December.
- ◆ Two-year, non-refundable, memberships are available for double the annual dues.
- ◆ Memberships paid after October 1st are good through December 31 of the following year.
- ◆ If applying by mail, please include a self-addressed, **stamped** envelope for your membership card. Otherwise, you may pick it up at the next monthly meeting.

Our address is: **P.O. Box 102037, Anchorage, Alaska 99510-2037** www.mcak.org

NEW <input type="checkbox"/>	DATE <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
RENEWAL <input type="checkbox"/>	NAME <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
INDIVIDUAL (\$15) <input type="checkbox"/>	FAMILY MEMBERS <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
FAMILY (\$20) <input type="checkbox"/>	
2-YR MEMBERSHIP <input type="checkbox"/>	
Note that two-year membership dues are double the annual dues and subscription fee.	
How do you want your SCREE delivered? (check one or both)	
ELECTRONIC (Free) <input type="checkbox"/>	E-mail attachment or notify when available for downloading (circle one).
PAPER (\$10/yr.) <input type="checkbox"/>	Postal Service – please include \$15 per year if outside the U.S.
STREET or P.O. BOX <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	
CITY / STATE / ZIP <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	
TELEPHONE <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	
E-MAIL ADDRESS <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	
I am interested in joining a committee (Circle which ones: Programs, Hiking & Climbing, Huts, Geographic Names, Parks Advisory, Equipment, Honorary, Membership, Training, or ad hoc committees). _____ I am interested in leading a trip. <input type="checkbox"/>	

Do not write below this line:

Pd: \$15 \$20 \$30 \$40 \$10 for paper **SCREE** \$20 for 2 years of paper **SCREE** Membership Card Issued for Yr: _____
on Date: ___/___/___ Cash or Check Number: _____ Address Added to Mailing List

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

Officers

President	Steve Parry	248-8710
Vice-President	Steve Gruhn	344-1219
Secretary	Dave Hart	263-7672
Treasurer	Joe Kluberton	301-4039

Board

Eric Teela	240-9693
Annette Iverson	222-0581
Sean Bolender	333-0213
Randy Howell	346-4608
Jayne Mack	694-1500

Annual membership dues: Single \$15.00 Family \$20.00 (one Scree per 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 does not forward the newsletter.

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 mailed to Scree Editor Box 102037 Anchorage, AK 99510, or e-mailed to jaymack@alaska.net. Articles should be received by December 31st to be included in the January 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. Your cooperation will be appreciated... Willy Hersman, Temp. Editor.

Missing your MCA membership card? If so, stop by one of our monthly meetings to pick it up or send us a self-addressed stamped envelope and we'll mail it to you.

MAILING LIST/DATABASE ENTRY: don smith

HIKING/CLIMBING CHAIR: matt nedom, 278-3648, richard baranow, 694-1500

HUTS: hans neidig, 357-2026

CALENDAR: stuart grenier, 337-5127

WEB: mcak.org (go here to change your address)

MAILING LIST SERVICE: mcak@yahoogroups.com

Mountaineering Club of Alaska
Box 102037
Anchorage, Alaska 99510