



December 2005

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

Volume 48 Issue 12

**Monthly Meeting**  
**Wednesday, December 21 @ 7:30 PM**

**First United Methodist Church**  
**9th & G Streets**  
**Downtown Anchorage**  
Next to the Phillips Building (you may use reserved parking after hours)

**The Monthly meeting will be**  
**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

Program: Member slide show, Members are welcome to bring 10 to 15 slides to present to the club. We can accommodate digital pictures or slides.

**'The way to be safe is to never be secure' – Ben Franklin**

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## Hiking and Climbing Schedule

November 26 Ship Creek Hill (3845 feet)

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 oinkmenow@hotmail.com 337-5127.

December 10–11 Ship Creek overnight trail clearing

Head on down into Ship Creek on the Ship Creek Valley Trail. Go up valley 5 or more miles while clearing trail. Camp/party and clear trail some more on day two and head back to Arctic Valley Road. Winter overnight gear. Class B. Sled pulling or pack dogs welcomed. Ski/snowshoe depending on conditions.

Stu Grenier oinkmenow@hotmail.com 337-5127

December 23 Winter Flat Top Sleepout

As is club tradition, come up to Flat Top Mtn and spend the night, or just the evening; whatever your schedule allows. Our president cannot lead the trip this year, but he wants us to continue the tradition... Your club needs your participation. Step up to the plate and help lead this trip!

February 11 – 12 Indian to Arctic reconnaissance

Overnight trip Class D Elevation gain 1800' + Distance 21 miles Contact Greg Bragiel @ 569-3008

February 11 – 12 King Mountain

Class "D" climb, first you have to hike across the frozen Mat River, then climb King Mtn. Gear needed: AV gear, ice axe, crampons, snowshoes, and winter gear. Some exposure near the summit but basically a ridge climb.

Leader Stu Grenier  
oinkmenow@hotmail.com 337-5127.

February 18 – 19 Indian to Arctic traverse

Overnight trip. Info is same as reconnaissance above

April 01 - 02 Eklutna Traverse training weekend  
A preparation and familiarity session for Eklutna Traverse participants.

April 09 - 15 Eklutna Traverse

Glacier Travel. Elevation gain: 6000'+  
Distance is 30+ miles Contact: Greg Bragiel  
569-3008

## Training

The Winter Mountaineering series

January 19

This class is closed to registration; we have more students than we had planned for.

Wilderness First Aid Class

Date: March 4 - 5 (Tentative)

Time: Probably 9am-7pm both days

Cost: TBD (was \$140 last time)

Teacher: Deb Ajango

This Wilderness First Aid course will be taught using the American Safety & Health Institute curriculum. The 20-hour course will be held over 2 days, and will include both classroom and hands-on in the field training. National Wilderness First Aid certification provided upon successful completion of the course.

Contact Andi Andraschko at

[enviroknow@acsalaska.com](mailto:enviroknow@acsalaska.com)

September 23-24, 2006 Ice Climbing Festival/Class

## Trip Reports

### Kenai Fjords National Park – McCarty Peak

By Dave Covill and John Mitchler



his expedition was composed of Dave Covill of Evergreen, Colorado, John Mitchler of Golden, Colorado, and Kenai Fjords National Park Ranger Mike Tetreau, of Seward.

We believe that a U.S. Coast & Geodetic Survey team passed through this area in 1928. They

established a horizontal control point very close to McCarty Peak per the Latitude/Longitude data given, although descriptions of the peak did not closely match what we found on the ground. We spoke with a U.S. Geological Survey scientist in Denver, who is helping us to research the notes from this survey party.

To research Kenai Fjords' highpoint for the guidebook, John and Dave teamed up with Mike for a two-day climb in June 2005, which led to a successful summit on June 13. We submit the following brief write-up of our expedition, and welcome comments from readers.

This nunatak is not named on any topographic map, and has also been referred to in literature as West Peak or West Glacier Peak. We provide a Topozone link to the peak below:

<http://www.topozone.com/map.asp?lat=59.8080&lon=-150.1541&s=100&layer=DRG50&size=l&u=0>

The Kenai Fjords reflect scenic icebound landscapes in which salt spray mixes with mountain mist. Located on the southeastern Kenai Peninsula, the National Park is a pristine and rugged land supporting many unaltered natural environments and ecosystems. The fjords are long, steep-sided, glacier-carved valleys that are now filled with ocean waters. A mountain platform, 1 mile high, rises above this dramatic coastline. The 300-square mile Harding Icefield, 35 miles long and 20 miles wide, mantels the mountains. Only isolated mountain peaks, called nunataks, interrupt its nearly flat, snowclad surface. The Exit Glacier spills off the massive Harding Icefield, and is accessible by road. The Park's wildlife includes mountain goats, moose, bears, wolverines, marmots, and other land mammals that have established themselves on a thin life zone between marine waters and the icefield's frozen edges. Bald eagles nest in the tops of spruce and hemlock trees. Thousands of seabirds, including puffins, kittiwakes, and murre seasonally inhabit the steep cliffs and rocky shores. Kayakers, fishermen, and visitors on tour boats share the Park's waters with Stellar sea lions; harbor seals; Dall porpoises; sea otters; humpback, killer, and Minke whales.

#### **Highpoint Overview:**

? **McCarty Peak** – 6,450 feet; this is the Park highpoint.

- ? A moderate trek on a snowfield to the base of a steep snowbound peak, capped by a knife-edge corniced ridge;
- ? Strenuous hike – Class 5; 1.0 mile one-way; 1,400 feet gain;
- ? USGS 1:63,360 Quadrangle: Seldovia (D-1), Alaska (required); Alaska DeLorme: page 70; Trails Illustrated 231;
- ? Latitude and Longitude: 59° 48.48' North, 150° 9.25' West; and
- ? No Park entrance fee is required, including the previously fee-required Exit Glacier.

The Harding Icefield is a sea of mountain tops, each barely emanating from beneath the vast sheet of ice and snow that comprises 60 percent of the National Park. These mountaintops, called nunataks, rise between a few hundred and perhaps 1,000 feet above the gently undulating surface of the icefield. Of these countless nunataks, a dozen achieve the distinction of attaining the magic 6,000-foot status. Only McCarty Peak pierces the 6,400-foot contour mark. The next highest peak in the Park is Peak 6,319, a few miles due north of McCarty Peak. Although the surface of the icefield is smooth and friendly, notwithstanding the ever-present crevasse danger, the nunataks are an entirely different beast – thin, angular, serrated, steep-sided, and altogether a serious mountaineering challenge.

There are dozens of major glaciers spilling down from the roughly 5,000-foot level of the icefield to the sea, some doing so in the space of a few miles. Some climbers may opt to trek in on skis or snowshoes from sea level at a convenient glacier, while most will opt to be flown onto the icefield near McCarty Peak via bush pilot and a small plane on skis. If global warming trends continue and the icefields and glaciers disappear in thousands of years, the area will exhibit a rugged landscape of jagged peaks and glaciated valleys, with thousands of feet of relief.

We have chosen to describe the primary approach route as a ski plane landing on the Harding Icefield near McCarty Peak. Alternative approaches from a lower elevation are also described below. The most desirable location for landing is southeast of the peak in the center of the south half of Township 5 South, Range 5 West, Section 28, of the Seward Meridian, at about 5,050 feet. This flat area is easily approached from several directions, and affords a safe landing and takeoff to the pilot's

liking. Pilots prefer a takeoff that is slightly down-slope and into the wind. When we visited the peak in 2005, low clouds prevented a landing near McCarty Peak, and necessitated a drop point some 4 miles due north at a lower elevation, resulting in a backpack trek to a base camp near the peak.

Numerous air services exist in the Homer/Kenai/Seward area. Planes based in Seward tend to not be equipped with skis. We chose to utilize the services of Alaska West Air, which is permitted to land in the National Park and pilot Doug Brewer, one of the most experienced pilots on the Kenai Peninsula. We should note that helicopters are not permitted to land in the Alaskan National Parks without special permission from the Park Superintendents, which is generally granted only for scientific purposes. Flights to the icefield can also originate in Anchorage, although this increases the flying time and cost.

#### McCarty Peak Hike:

- ? A moderate trek on a snowfield to the base of a steep snowbound peak, capped by a knife edge corniced ridge.
- ? Strenuous hike - Class 5; 1.0 mile one-way; 1,400 feet of gain.

#### Key points along the hike:

- 0.0 mile – Base Camp on the Harding Icefield southeast of McCarty Peak at 5,050 feet in the center of the south half of Section 28;
- 0.6 mile – Base of McCarty Peak southwest slope at 5,400 feet;
- 0.7 mile – Base of McCarty Peak west ridge at 5,600 feet;
- 0.8 mile – Lower edge of rock outcrop on west ridge at 6,100 feet;
- 0.9 mile – Northern end of summit ridge crest at 6,400 feet; and
- 1.0 mile – Summit block at 6,450 feet.

We did not see any sign of a crevasse near the peak in June, although we certainly did further away along our trek to the prescribed base camp area.

The northeast side is very steep, and the northwest side was the site of a large slab avalanche. The snow slope at 5,400 feet is the first real challenge, where the terrain becomes interesting in a vertical sense. Here the climb begins. At the top of this 200-foot rise, there is a bench at 5,600 feet. There was rock and icefall hazard to the right (southeast),

along most of the exposed rock ridge and narrow couloirs descending from the ridge. To the left (northwest) the slope was slightly less steep, and the amount of exposed outcrop was minimal.

We roped up and donned crampons at this point, and headed for the large rock outcrop on the left-hand skyline, at about 6,100 feet. There are numerous variations available to gain the summit ridge, but we felt safest by following the right-hand (southern) edge of this outcrop almost all the way to the ridge. From here, there are two small outcrops to the right that afforded some small amount of protection in our traverse to reach the summit crest. We employed both snow pickets and slings on the outcrops for peace of mind. Once on the nearly level ridge, we ignored the significant exposure to the north, and proceeded to our right (southeast) until we encountered the penultimate outcrop. We chose to sling it, and swing around it in an awkward, but effective, fashion. This was the crux move of the climb. Once beyond here, we proceeded to the last outcrop, gaining a few more feet, then all that remained was a final ridge traverse, mostly on firm snow. This snow is heavily corniced, and we traversed it on alternating sides cautiously. After 100 feet of this, there was nothing higher before us.

We descended cautiously the same way. The sun softened the snow on this west-facing slope after mid-day. The reflected heat was staggering, and compelled us to dress in layers. We did not glissade until we were almost all the way down, after removing our crampons.

*Note:* John and Dave produce the Highpointers Club quarterly magazine, Apex to Zenith, and authored 'Hiking Colorado's Summits', a guidebook to the 64 county highpoints of Colorado. Dave and John are partnering with fellow Colorado-based author Gerry Roach to produce a new guidebook to the highest point of each of the 58 National Parks, due out in Spring 2007. John completed the 50 state highpoints with a Denali summit in 2003, and Dave is headed to Denali this June with 49 state highpoints under his belt (having climbed Mount Bona in 2003). Mike is a long-time Kenai Fjords Ranger, with extensive backcountry experience in Alaska.

## Harding Ice Field and Marcus Baker for Free

By Stu Grenier with help from Tom Choate

**I** was asked to write this account with the stipulation that some things be left out. Not interested in writing half a story I delayed writing it. I only answered, "I'll do it." That was over 20 years ago. There has been a lot of water under the bridge. Now I feel it is okay to write the truth, minus a few names. Writing about the mistakes that happen on trips, and not just the things that go right, would make this publication a lot more educational. I have often noted that because of human vanity vital lessons never make it into print. At what cost is this vanity?

Our trip up Marcus Baker started on the Harding Ice Field about a year earlier in 1984. We were traversing the Harding Ice Field from Lake Tustemina to the Exit Glacier. At the time we flattered ourselves with the idea that we were the first to traverse the Harding. Later research revealed that we were only about 200 years or so too late for that honor. The Harding had been crossed many times before, the first documented case being reported by the Russians in 1794. Vin Hoeman's research published in the AAJ 1969 concluded that when the Russians built the "Phoenix", the first vessel constructed on the Pacific coast of North America by Europeans, the fittings were brought from Kodiak to the Homer area and then over the Harding to the construction site in Seward. This route avoided the treacherous seas and coast between Seward and Homer. Hoeman concluded after reviewing the Russian account that there was no question, this team had come over the Harding.

Our, 1984 team, which included Phil King, Willy Hersman and I, got tangled up in a crevasse field around twilight about where the Tustemina Glacier meets the Harding. We had made the mistake of getting off the skiff that brought us across Tustemina Lake on the north side of the creek coming off the Tustemina Glacier. This forced us into doing some scrambling in the cliffs on that side and put us in line for some unnecessary crevasse work farther up the glacier. Learning from our mistakes the next MCA team through started on the south side of the creek and had no problems mounting the Harding.

Near twilight we found ourselves in a major crevasse field near where the Tustemina Glacier runs into the Harding Ice Field. We came to a large crevasse that we had to cross to get to smooth sailing. It was agreed that we had to jump it. The width of the crevasse was about the max that you would want to attempt in koflachs and crampons. The landing was a five foot wide fin of ice that was almost flat on top. If you did not stop in five feet you would have dropped into the next crevasse. If you did not make the ice fin you would have fallen into a fairly deep crevasse: consequences unthinkable. Lucky for us the landing was about three feet lower than the ice ridge we were jumping from. It was the best game of Chicken I've ever played.

Why Stu has knee problems

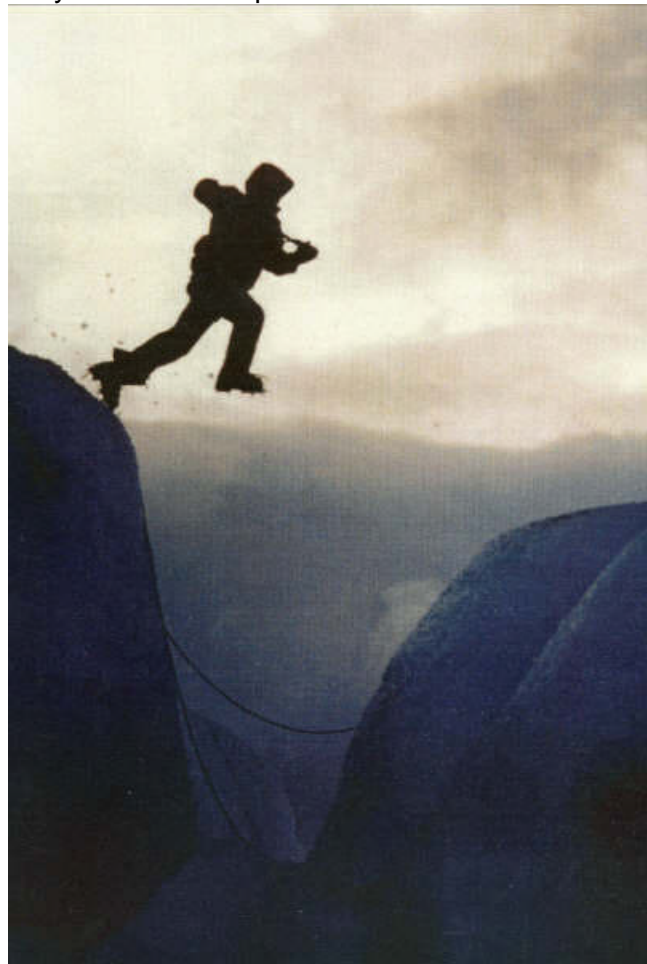


Photo by Willy Hersman

Willy, very concerned about getting across before we lost the light, was about to start his running jump with his pack on. After talking it over we agreed to take the packs off and pull them across by rope after we got one person across. Willy impressively made the leap after about a twelve

foot sprint to the edge. We threw a rope across and pulled the packs over one at a time. We left the rope hanging in the crevasse until everyone was across. Then it was my turn. Willy found a way from his side of the crevasse to enter the crevasse. He thought this would be a great place to get a photo of someone jumping. I worked on tightening my crampons and visualizing the jump. Sprinting with crampons on is not commonly done and one slip up here could be serious bad news. Taking a bit long to complete the act, Phil was giving me pep talk as I waited for the right moment. Phil standing right next to me began to shout, "go"! When I felt ready I went and Willy experiencing problems with his camera was lucky to have been able to get the shot. I landed on one crampon and immediately fell on my side to self arrest. I missed sliding into the next crevasse by just over a foot. Phil soon made the jump and we were over.

The photo Willy got of me flying over the crevasse turned out to be a winner. Willy entered it into the Anchorage Daily News photo contest and it won first place and a fly in fishing trip for two! It also won first place in the People category for the 1999 MCA calendar. Willy entitled it 'The Last Crevasse'. Unfortunately for me, Willy never gave the name of the jumper in either the Daily News or the calendar so I missed a chance at a little fame. I suspect I may have teased Willy a bit much on the trip. Being fresh out of high school and being about ten years the other members junior, I joked, "You guys better be nice to me or I am not coming to see you in the old folks home." After hearing about the fishing trip prize I half jokingly asked him when we're going on the fly in fishing trip. He said "I'm going with someone else, but I have something else in mind for you. How about a trip up Marcus Baker?" What a deal! Willy's artistic instincts and charitable nature got me a free trip up Marcus Baker, the highest Peak in the Chugach.

The Marcus Baker team included Dr. Tom Choate, Willy and myself. We climbed Marcus Baker (13,176 ft.) from about the 8400ft level of the Knik Glacier, by way of the Radcliff Glacier in May (Scree June 86). There were a number of events and mishaps on this trip that make it note worthy.

Things started to get exciting before our plane even landed. Tom being a pilot sat in front and engaged the pilot in some interesting conversation. Willy and I were in back with the gear taking in separate views from the rear windows. It was first rate

weather. None of us took much notice as the pilot pumped the little lever that moves the skis below the wheels for landing on the glacier. As the plane touched down it stopped rather suddenly and listed slightly to one side. At the time this fact was not noted.

After unloading the gear we stepped back to watch the plane take off. The engine began to roar louder and louder but the plane would not move an inch. The pilot got out and looked the situation over. "This sure is soft snow. We'll have to dig it out." He said. After we dug a runway for ten feet or so we got back to watch again. Roar went the engine but again the plane would not budge an inch. The pilot got out again looking perplexed. As we dug a little more the pilot took a look at his skis and shouted. He quickly got back in the cockpit and started pumping the lever that lowers the ski. We had landed with one ski down and one ski up. The tire that was still below the ski was buried so deep in the snow that we never noticed. We could have nosed over on landing. In hindsight, I would say keep all conversation in the plane to the complete minimum. Do not do anything that distracts your pilot.

Just a little to the north another team was unloading from another plane. We went over to meet them and they came over and met us half way. It was all smiles and then they told us they were going to do the route up the glacier just west of the Radcliff. I asked them how many ice screws they brought. He said they didn't bring any. As our team went back to our cache spot we agreed they had made a mistake.

After waiting out some bad weather we established a cache and skied up the Radcliff Glacier with two sleds. Giant open crevasses were present especially in the middle of the glacier and on the ridge on climbers left there were many large seracs. We kept the slack out of the rope and moved on. At least one of the crevasses we crossed had a very tenuous snow bridge. It is surprising what those bridges can take.

After camping a night we woke to find the next day clear and windy. Skiing up to the end of the Radcliff we turned left and climbed up onto the basin just south of the summit. Tom was leading at this point and skied onto a crevasse running 30 degrees from his line of travel. As one ski broke through, he stabbed out with the ski pole on that

side, and amazingly, it held on the far side as the bridge collapsed. He teetered over the abyss, looking back with a desperate plea: "Willy! Tighten up quick!"

We expected to see the other team coming over the knoll to the south of the basin at anytime. There was no sign of them. As we looked at the summit ridge above the basin we could see that it was white ice with an over hanging cornice at the top of the ridge. The cornice looked soft like we could punch through it. We agreed on a route traversing up the ice face and on to where the cornice looked the smallest. We changed our skis for crampons at snow line.

Moving slow and steady, placing ice screws for protection on a running belay, after two rope lengths Willy got to the cornice and cut a trench through it with his axe. Soon we were all on the summit belayed off a snow stake. It was clear and we were all elated. To the southeast the fiords of Prince William Sound were crystal clear. I could see icebergs in the black water and very distant evergreen forest. There was a gale but the summit was comfortable. It was one of those moments you return to many times years later. The way the light and sky were, the view below, the people you were with and the feeling of being on the highest peak in the Chugach. It all seemed to have a touch of the divine.

Heading back down the ice face I volunteered to be the last down. I remember down climbing over the cornice with a big lump in my throat. The transition from the snow of the cornice to the ice of the face went well. I was glad to have two tools. Soon though I thought I began feeling the climbers below me tugging on the rope. "Slow Down!" I'd shout. I thought they would pull me off my front points. Running belays don't work if people move at different paces.

Back down in the basin we stopped for lunch and switched back to skis. As we started to leave I remember fiddling with my sit harness. I was wearing an anorak with a large pocket stuffed with mittens and food. The bulge of the pocket prevented me from clearly seeing the biners on my harness. I assumed everything was in order but as Tom gave a tug on the rope to my horror I could see my locking biner was open and the rope barely hooked in. Now I remembered why I got such a great deal on this anorak. The salesman at Gary

Kings had warned me that there were a number of deaths associated with this garment design and to not use it when wearing a sit harness if I put bulky things in the main pocket.

The next day we skied back over the Radcliff Glacier to our cache near where the plane had dropped us off. The route we took put us within avalanche distance of the seracs that were now on our right side going out. The large open crevasses in the middle of the glacier seemed more intimidating than the gods of death above us. Going over large snow covered mounds of avalanche debris tempers flared as the lead skier was going down as the rear skier was going up. There was no way a rope team could move through such terrain except slowly and nobody wanted to go slow. We almost unroped.

Another event that occurred on this day had to do with the gas cans that you buy white gas in. It seems that when the metal seal was removed from the pouring hole the rim became bent. This meant that when the can was on it's side it leaked. By the time we stopped for the night some food and clothing had become drenched with gas. I'll never forget what it was like sleeping in gas soaked pile pants.

Before we flew out we did the point 10540 east of Mt. Goode. We called it Mt. Grace after Grace Hoeman.

Our pilot picked us up the next day and flew us over the Radcliff as he circled back for Palmer. I was on the left side of the plane and looking out the window, I got a sick feeling in my stomach. It was terribly obvious from the left side of the plane looking down on our tracks on the Radcliff that the seracs had slid in the last two days since we passed through. They had avalanched out onto the middle of the Radcliff. About a quarter mile of our tracks were buried in debris. Heavy ice knows no bounds when it starts to move. The mountain saved it's harshest words for our goodbye.

About the other team that tried the route west of our route. They had the risky habit of cooking in the tent. Well, they had a fire and they lost a tent and a sleeping bag. Someone had minor burns. They got off the mountain in one piece without summiting.

## Bashful Blog

### 9/2004 Roger Clifford



rossing the glacial moraine was like crossing the Gobi desert; it was hot as an oven. My first attempt on Bashful Peak ended early; the simmering July sun sapped my energy and left me dehydrated. My second attempt was shy of the summit as well, I had the energy but the ridge was covered with clouds. I know that soloists have to be extra careful, but I was still mad at myself for turning back. I keep reminding myself, live a long time to climb a lot more mountains! On August 3<sup>rd</sup> at 6am, I left the Eklutna Lake parking lot on my mountain bike for my 3<sup>rd</sup> try on Bashful Peak.

The drill was now familiar: mp3 player on, pedal bike to E. Fork Trail, hike to Stiver's Creek, head up Stiver's Gully, take small gully that branches off to the right (same as climbing Bold Peak) where the small gully ends at the rock face turn right, follow along the cliff face through short stretch of Alders to a grassy meadow, go across the grassy hillside and just around the corner Bashful Peak appears, towering overhead. From the hillside vantage point, the large gully (standard route) that goes up to the west ridge is in full view. (There may be a shorter route up in between the two waterfalls to Bashful moraine, described in past Scree issues, but I opted for less Alder-bashing)

Racing the sun, I quickly crossed the moraine and at 11am I took a lunch break at the base of the large gully. A butterfly landed on my yellow-handled ice axe and then lighted on my leg and stayed there a good 10 minutes as I ate my lunch. I enjoyed the company. Carrying 6 liters of water, I started up the gully. (Normally, I only carry 3 liters.) At first the gully was grassy, but soon turned into classic Chugach scree. As I was climbing, every few minutes I heard plunking sounds below me. It was rock from on top of the glacier falling into a large glacial pool as the ice melted in the hot sun. I felt like taking a cool dip in the pool too! Near the top, the gully narrowed, steepened and angled slightly to the right. At 4pm I was on the west ridge.

I worked my way up the west ridge and drank a lot of water to stay hydrated and happy. I studied the horizon for future climbing possibilities and found plenty. Under mostly sunny skies, I took picture after picture of the spectacular views.

On the ridge, there is quite an assortment of rocks of all shapes and sizes to bang your boots on as you travel upward. And then there's a large gendarme blocking the way. This is the crux of the climb, Chicken gully. Another climber told me that he just stayed on the ridge and avoided the gully all together, so I thought I would try the same. But part way up, I felt a little too exposed on the ridge proper, so I left the ridge and angled right over to a narrow gully. After some careful consideration, I climbed the narrow gully 200' to the top. I don't know if it's easier than Chicken gully, but I liked it better because it was narrow enough to use the sides for climbing. There were some steep spots, but also good resting-places. Sharp rocks really tore up my Gore-tex pants in this section. Upon return, two rolls of K-Tape were required for repairs. I know - real climbers use duct tape!

Once past the obstacle, the route was straightforward and at 10:30pm, I stood on the summit. Tired but satisfied, I took in the view. I thanked God for the goodness of his creation and for allowing me to climb one of His majestic mountains. Daylight faded fast and it was dark at 11pm. I didn't want to descend in the dark, so I bivvied about 300' below the summit on a nice flat spot. I had anticipated a long climb and had brought along my bivy sack. However, to keep my pack light, I didn't bring a sleeping bag. I emptied my pack so I could lie on it, then put on all my clothing and crawled in my bivy sack. It wasn't too bad at first, but after about 30 minutes I woke up shivering. The temperature was in the upper 30's with a slight breeze. I got up, walked around to get warm and then crawled back in the sack. I did that routine all night. All things considered, I felt fairly well rested at dawn. Unfortunately, my 6 liters of water was down to ½ a liter and it was going to be another hot day.

I started down the ridge and somehow managed to take the wrong gully. I down-climbed about 500' to the edge of a sheer drop off before my groggy gray matter realized the mistake. I climbed back up to the ridge and saw the route, which was pretty obvious. I had built several small cairns along the way but not here where I needed one!

Soon I had to decide how to safely descend the crux gully that I had ascended the day before. I opted to rappel and used my 30-meter rope for the job. There was a good rock horn on top, cracked but still bombproof. For the second rappel, I slung a



runner around a small horn and just tied one end of the rope to the sling. I knew that by tying one end to the sling, I would have to leave my rope behind but good anchors were hard to find and I hoped the full rope length would get me down near the base of the gully to safety. On rappel with just one thin strand of rope, I half rappelled, half down climbed. I didn't want to put my full weight on the rope. It did get me near the bottom, but one more rappel over a gnarly chock stone would be nice. Wanting one more rap and not wanting to leave the rope behind, from one end I whipped the rope up and down. It flew off the horn, yee-haa, mountain cowboy unlassoes horn! I was able to retrieve my rope and sling. After the final rappel, I heaved a huge sigh of relief and a prayer of thanks.

There was still plenty of work to do. I collected my ski pole to support my loose scree sliding descent. The sun came up on distant peaks, the Mitre, Yukla, and many more delectable mountains were painted with the gentle light of morning. Although I was eager for the comforts of home, I stopped to savor the moment. I pulled out my camera and with the early morning light on the mountain faces, got the best pictures of the climb. The camera loves the morning light too.

Retracing my steps, I worked my way back down the long west ridge. Then I descended the gully down to the moraine, going slow in places and able to plunge step quickly down the loose scree in other places. In the blazing afternoon heat, I was very tired, very thirsty, and very out of water. I was crossing the Gobi again. It was nearly 6pm by the time I reached the cool, refreshments of Stiver's Creek. I drank the creek dry and feasted on the fruit of the land, red raspberries.

Rehydrated and reenergized, I cruised down the trail. I met up with a cantankerous porcupine that stopped in the middle of the trail and flicked his tail of quills in my direction. After a time, he decided to let me pass and took up a defensive position, quills outward, beside a pine tree. I was content to leave the creature in peace, retrieve my bike and head home.

## MCA Calendar image deja vous

By Stu Grenier

Those of you lucky enough to have been able to buy a 2005 MCA calendar may remember the November shot by Carrie Wang of Wayne Todd standing atop troublesome Peak in early June above Lake George.



After the calendar was printed I kept having the strangest feeling that I had seen this picture before somewhere but could not remember where. Then one day I was flipping through old MCA calendars from years past and there it was, the exact same rock outcropping with almost the identical frame.



It was in the 1998 MCA calendar in the month of July. Jonathan Rose had taken the same shot and entitled it "4th of July in the Chugach" His write up was "This was taken on the 3rd ascent of Troublesome Peak in the Chugach Mountains; Independence Day, 1994. The Peak was first climbed on October 7, 1970." If you compare the two shots you can see that the Colony Glacier in the back ground has receded. Here are the two shots. First Carrie's from the 05 calendar and then Jonathan's from the 98 calendar.

## Bonus photo

George Peck descends Paradise Peak near Seward. See the May 2005 Scree



Harold Faust Photo

## T shirts

I would like to see how much interest there is from the membership in purchasing 100% polypropylene shirts with the full-color MCA logo on them. The material is quick-dry and moisture wicking. The shirts are grey and come in short-sleeve or long-sleeve styles. The short-sleeve shirts are \$20 and the long-sleeve shirts are \$23. Please call or send me an e-mail letting me know if you're interested in purchasing a shirt and what size you would like. The shirts would be available at either the January or February MCA meetings. Call Amy Murphy at 338-3979 or send an e-mail message to: [hayduchesslives@yahoo.com](mailto:hayduchesslives@yahoo.com).

## New geographic names

At its October 12 meeting, the U.S. Geological Survey Board on Geographic Names recently changed the name of Chakachamna Lake to Ch'akajabena Lake. At the same meeting, the USGS BGN approved the name Ch'akajabena Mountain for a 7,530-foot peak in the Neacola Mountains near Ch'akajabena Lake. An account of an attempted climb of this peak appears in the 2005 American Alpine Journal.

<http://geonames.usgs.gov/DNCOct05Minutes.pdf>

Submitted by Steve Gruhn

## MCA Board Meeting Minutes October 26, 2005

Present: Eric, Hans, Jayme, John, Rebecca (and husband), Debbie, Steve, Carlene, SaraEllen, Randy, Steve Parry

Steve: jokingly asks for recount. Ha ha. Whatever.

Thanks to outgoing board members.

After the meeting, Steve will go over the rules and duties of each officer, and each old officer will meet with the new, and transfer the notebooks. All notebooks go to new secretary so that they can be updated with new names and information.

Exchange of materials and contact information. Write down phone, home and work, fax, email.

Mundane business:

New hut. Hans discussed whether it would be worthwhile to use a new 12 X 12 hut, and the logistics of moving an old hut contrasted to the cost of building a new one. Potential locations of a new hut were also discussed. We won't be able to do much until next Spring. If we agree on a new site by early Spring, we might be able to build by fall, but it is likely to wait until 2007. Potential locations include: West fork of Powell glacier, in the Chugach. Eska basin; extension of Talkeetnas. Golden Crown and Sparrow Peaks. Sparrow and Finch glaciers area; allows you to go to Lake George. Four: Upper Troublesome Glacier, off of Elkutna traverse. Upper Chickaloon glacier; a fly only hut. We have to look at sites, judge whether it is flat enough to build a foundation, the wind, the avalanche risk, and the lease technicalities, and then we will ask the members what they like the best.

### WASTE DISPOSAL

We discussed forming a committee to deal with waste disposal and are looking for volunteers. The pros and cons of bag/pack out systems vs. outhouses were also discussed. Another issue is that the Mint hut outhouse is filling rapidly. That is a very popular hut. If we had a committee, we could look at what they are doing in other places in and outside of Alaska.

#### MCA T-SHIRTS.

The board discussed selling MCA long-sleeve polypropylene t-shirts. We will have to determine how many, what cost, and which logo design to use.

#### CALENDAR.

This year, the calendar will be pretty much the same as it has been in past years, but we are open to ideas for a flashier calendar in future years. It is too late this year to incorporate any such ideas. Calendars are currently selling at \$10. AMH may sell at \$15, REI was not interested in marking it up.

#### ICE FESTIVAL COMMITTEE IS BORN.

Jayne will head this; it shall begin as an ad-hoc committee but may end up being a permanent stand-alone committee or a sub-committee of the training committee.

#### BUDGET

During this meeting we hammered out the budget for 2006. We discussed what to leave the same and what to change for next year.

#### EQUIPMENT

There have been issues with equipment disappearing from huts, and some of it being unserviceable. As for Ice Festival gear, it will probably be bigger next year, so we hope to get more ropes, and possibly crampons and helmets.

#### LIBRARY AND SCREE

The library could be in better shape and needs some attention. We may also start binding the Scree on acid-free paper.

### **Yet another MCA Board Meeting Minutes November 9, 2005**

UPDATE ALL BINDERS  
CONDENSE ALL MINUTES FROM BOTH  
MEETINGS AND EMAIL TO ALL  
EMAIL CONTACT LIST TO EVERYBODY

Present: Sean, Steve, Steve, Randy, Debbie A.,  
Rebecca, SaraEllen, Annette

Budget: new budget approved

December potluck: Sean and Rebecca will be in charge

Awards: Hoeman, President's, Meekins, Past President's

Flattop sleepout: 12/23; this is a Friday. Should we have one on the solstice too? Or should we change the date? We are looking for volunteers to attend for the president

\$11,000 transfer from checking to savings. Passed!

#### Listserv moderator backup:

Sean Bolender's wife Kristen is the moderator. The backup moderator should not qualify new subscribers/members because it is sort of a one-person job. Kristen is expected to ask for a volunteer to help her at the general meeting.

Condition of Snowbird Hut: Discussion tabled for later.

Where should we have the meeting? We need to come up with a new location? Hot Licks? Kaladi? Conference room at Starbucks? Bear Tooth? Can't be too loud....

#### SPECIAL PROJECTS:

T-shirts; MCA logo clothing.

Getting library back in shape.

Someday it will be big enough to have a clubhouse. In the meantime, the valuables in the library may just have to be put in storage.

#### WEBSITE:

Should we add a blog? Anything that could possibly change the website has inherent administrative issues because Willie does his own web hosting. These are things that need to be taken up in the future. Willie should be invited to future board meetings when we talk about the website or the server.

### **MCA Membership Meeting November 16, 2005 7:30 p.m.**

**Mountaineering Club of Alaska  
Minutes from General Meeting  
11/16/05 7:30pm**

**7:30; Meeting called to order** by new President Steve Gruhn: introduction of the new board members and thanks to the outgoing members. Four people in the crowd introduced themselves as new to the club.

**Treasurer's Report** by Debbie Arens: Current total revenue for 2005 is \$15,460.02. Total expenses; \$8,112.97. Total due from reserve is \$7,347.05. Current balance in the checking account is \$15,194.75. Current balance in the money market account is \$6,649.34. One thousand is in an 18-month CD at Northrim Bank in trust for a hut lease and there is \$50 in petty cash. Total of all accounts is \$22,894.09.

### **Committee Reports:**

Training Committee report by Carl Battreall: Over 75 people asked about the Glacier Mountaineering Course to be held in early 2006. One must be a member to participate. Originally only 20 slots were available but enough people volunteered to help teach, so a few more will be let in. Carl took checks from people during the meeting. Those who signed the interest sheet at the last meeting and paid tonight could secure their slot. In order to do glacier travel, one MUST attend the required prerequisite sessions.

Of additional interest in the training category is the Wilderness First Aid training course offered by Deb Ajango, tentatively set for February. This course satisfies the medical training required to be a trip leader. Sign up will be at the next general meeting and the cost will be in the \$140 to \$150 range. For more information, contact Andi Andraschko at [enviroknow@acsalaska.com](mailto:enviroknow@acsalaska.com).

Equipment Committee report by Steve Parry: The equipment is still there. A beacon was found at Sunburst recently, just lying in the snow. If it is yours, please describe it in detail to Steve Parry to claim it.

Geographic Names Committee report: Tom Choate was not present at tonight's meeting. Chakachamna Lake is now Ch'akajabena Lake; Ch'akajabena Mountain (7530) south of Ch'akajabena Lake; Proposed name Ingstad Mountain (4880; Anaktuvuk Pass).

Hiking and Climbing Committee report by Randy Howell: The committee wants ideas for future trips.

Upcoming trips include Saturday November 19, Ship Creek Hill, led by Stu Grenier. Wear winter gear, bring your ice axe, and obtain your permit. Begins at 8:30am at post 340296. Next Friday is a trip to the Mint Hut. All trips are on the website.

The Solstice Sleepout is Friday December 23. This tradition has never been broken! Be prepared for wind; last year a bunch of gear was lost. This is a leaderless trip—participants are expected to make their way up themselves and meet the group up top.

Hut Committee report by Hans: If you didn't know already, the club has 8 huts and may be acquiring another—more on this in the future. If you want to learn more about huts, look online. If you're planning on visiting a hut, please let Hans know first. He would like you to return with a status report on any hut you visit. Anyone going up Eklutna—please push some *empty* human waste bags with you and leave them at the site.

Awards Committee report by Don Hansen: The committee currently has three nominations for the Hoeman award. Nominations will appear in the next *Scree*.

Calendar Committee report by Stu Grenier: Come and get your calendar; they are selling for \$10 from the club directly, and are expected to sell for a little bit more at Alaska Rock Gym, and possibly REI and AMH. This is the first vertical calendar we have had. If you would like to get a photo in the 2007 calendar, you may submit it beginning in February 2006. We want to go to offset printing for a higher quality calendar next year but it will take good effort from volunteers.

Additional business from President:

A new Committee was formed in October, the Ice Festival Committee, led by Jayme Dixon (Mack). Next year's Festival will likely be held the weekend of September 23.

MCAK Library Committee is led by Elena Hinds and Sean Bolender. They need volunteers to improve the library.

If you have any submissions for the January *Scree*, please email them to John Recktenwald, [JohnRecktenwald@gmail.com](mailto:JohnRecktenwald@gmail.com), by December 21.

Submissions for the December Scree were due November 16.

MCAK Logo T-shirt report from Amy Murphy: The club is planning on selling polypropylene t-shirts with the MCAK logo on them. You may choose short or long sleeve. A sign-up sheet was on the front table. The club is also selling patches for \$5.00.

Next meeting will concern the budget, which will be passed before we enjoy food at the potluck. If you want to show slides, please bring your own carousel or laptop. We provide the projector.

Clint with the UAA Outdoor Club announced some lectures of interest to MCAK members to be held December 2, 9, and 16. For more information, see the flyers around town, or visit [www.alaskaoutdoorclub.com](http://www.alaskaoutdoorclub.com).

Pakistan humanitarian efforts announcement by Allison Sayer: There is a gear drive underway to send sleeping bags, tents, and other winter gear to Pakistan so the people there can survive the winter outdoors. Allison will send the gear over there for you. Donate your old gear or buy new for a good cause.

Photos of the Mt. Significant Trip are on CD and free to anyone who went. Please ask Stu or Roger.

There are efforts to open a new trailhead at Prudhoe Bay. The private landowner there, Dave Braley, would like the state to buy some of his land for a state trailhead. Look in the Eagle River Star newspaper for additional reports.

Tonight's slide show: Stan Olson's backpacking in India.

Your article could be here. Articles with photos get preference. Articles that aren't too long get read. You can even get your picture in the Scree like this guy.



'Portage lake skiing', February 2005 Scree

**Mountaineering Club of Alaska**  
**2006 PROPOSED BUDGET**

	Proposed for 2006	Current for 2005	Approved for 2005	Percent of Budget	Final for 2004	Final for 2003	
<b>REVENUE</b>							
Membership Dues	<i>received during calendar year</i>	\$7,200.00	6,575.00	7,200.00	91%	4,510.00	5,977.00
Scree subscriptions	<i>(projected revenue- no history to gauge from)</i>	\$300.00	335.00	250.00	134%	200.00	140.00
Training	<i>ice climbing, crevasse rescue, other</i>	\$6,000.00	5,565.00	6,000.00	93%	4,865.00	5,781.37
Photo Calendar		\$4,000.00	2,787.00	2,800.00	100%	1,570.00	4,642.00
MCA Products: T-Shirts, Patches, Etc.		\$2,700.00	15.00	200.00	8%	5.00	43.00
Donations		\$0.00	90.00	300.00	30%	1,536.87	320.00
Other--Interest on Accounts		\$100.00	93.02	50.00	186%	436.84	89.04
Grant - REI/AAC Road Sign Project			-	-	-	-	-
Bulk Purchase - AMH Avalanche Gear			-	-	-	-	-
Bulk Purchase - Chugach State Park Maps			-	-	-	-	-
Bulk Purchase - Alaskana Book Sales			-	-	-	-	-
Bulk Purchase - Mountain House			-	-	-	-	-
Other - TRAAK Grant			-	-	-	-	-
Other -			-	-	-	-	-
Other -			-	-	-	-	-
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>		<b>\$20,300.00</b>	<b>15,460.02</b>	<b>16,800.00</b>	-	<b>13,123.71</b>	<b>16,992.41</b>
<b>EXPENSE</b>							
Training	<i>campsite and access fees, instructors</i>	\$4,800.00	2,922.81	5,800.00	50%	5,797.17	2,734.83
Scree	<i>postage, mailing, printing</i>	\$2,000.00	1,481.03	2,000.00	74%	1,615.61	1,398.98
General Meeting	<i>rent, refreshments, entertainment</i>	\$2,400.00	1,489.22	2,200.00	68%	1,847.45	2,062.44
Administrative	<i>supplies, forms, PO box, bank fees, rewards, phone</i>	\$500.00	504.03	500.00	101%	239.31	346.40
Hut Construction & Maintenance	<i>materials, supplies, hut equipment, lease fees*</i>	\$3,000.00	589.41	3,000.00	20%	1,094.65	1,246.71
Club Equipment	<i>climbing gear, misc equipment</i>	\$1,800.00	125.00	800.00	16%	1,580.68	1,108.05
Library	<i>new books, periodicals, Scree binding</i>	\$800.00	32.97	100.00	33%	-	-
Other:	<i>miscellaneous expenses</i>		-	100.00	-	163.89	55.95
Photo Calendar		\$3,000.00	968.50	2,300.00	42%	4,565.33	838.42
MCA Products: T-Shirts, Patches, Etc.		\$2,500.00	-	200.00	-	-	-
Donations - MCA donations to others			-	-	-	-	-
Grant - REI/AAC Road Sign Project			-	-	-	-	-
Bulk Purchase - AMH Avalanche Gear			-	-	-	-	-
Bulk Purchase - Chugach State Park Maps			-	-	-	-	-
Bulk Purchase - Alaskana Book Sales			-	-	-	-	-
Bulk Purchase - Mountain House			-	-	-	-	-
Other- Meekins Grant		\$520.00	-	-	-	-	-
Other - TRAAK Grant			-	-	-	-	-
Other - Awards		\$300.00	-	-	-	-	-
Other - Summit Registers		\$50.00	-	-	-	-	-
<b>TOTAL EXPENSE</b>		<b>\$21,670.00</b>	<b>8,112.97</b>	<b>17,000.00</b>		<b>16,904.09</b>	<b>9,791.78</b>
<b>DUE TO (FROM) RESERVE</b>			<b>7,347.05</b>	<b>(200.00)</b>	<b>(3674%)</b>	<b>(3,780.38)</b>	<b>7,200.63</b>
<b>CASH BALANCE - All Accounts</b>							
Beginning Balance - January 1, 2005			15,547.04			22,365.11	15,164.48
Increase (decrease) during 2005			7,347.05			(3,780.38)	7,200.63
<b>Current Balance for 2005</b>			<b>22,894.09</b>			<b>18,584.73</b>	<b>22,365.11</b>
Checking - Credit Union 1			15,194.75			7,898.18	14,768.83
Money Market - Credit Union 1			6,649.34			6,602.86	6,546.28
18-month CD - in trust for hut lease - Northrim Bank			1,000.00			1,000.00	1,000.00
Petty Cash			50.00			50.00	50.00
TOTAL ALL ACCOUNTS - for 2005			<b>22,894.09</b>			<b>15,551.04</b>	<b>22,365.11</b>
Ending Balance - December 31, 2005			<b>Not Finished</b>			<b>15,551.04</b>	<b>22,365.11</b>

## 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](mailto:Scree@yahoogroups.com) or submitted on the web at [www.mcak.org](http://www.mcak.org) or mailed to Scree Editor Box 102037 Anchorage Alaska 99510. Articles should be received by December 21 (the club meeting) to be 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.

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](http://www.mcak.org) (change your address here)  
Mailing list service: [MCAK@yahoogroups.com](mailto:MCAK@yahoogroups.com)

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