

# the **SCREE**

## Mountaineering Club of Alaska

December 2010  
Volume 53 Number 12



The opportunity is often lost by deliberating.  
~ Publilius Syrus

Dalton Highway Peak Bagging  
White Lice to Peak 5010 Traverse  
ANWR - Sheenjek River  
POM – Heart Mountain

Monthly Meeting  
Wed., December 15th @ 6:30 PM  
Program: Annual Christmas Potluck  
Details inside



# The Mountaineering Club of Alaska

[www.mcak.org](http://www.mcak.org)

*"To maintain, promote and perpetuate the association of persons who are interested in promoting, sponsoring, improving, stimulating and contributing to the exercise of skill and safety in the Art and Science of Mountaineering"*

**The December meeting will be a Christmas Potluck,  
See the note on the right.**

Join us for our club meetings the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month at the BP Energy Center, 900 East Benson Boulevard, Anchorage, Alaska.

[www.akpeac.org/conference/BPEC\\_map\\_06-04-03.pdf](http://www.akpeac.org/conference/BPEC_map_06-04-03.pdf)

**Cover Photo: Tim Kelley near the summit of Peak 6902 on the Continental Divide - the Dalton Highway on the north side of Atigun Pass is in the distance.**

## Article Submission:

Text and photography submissions for the Scree can be sent as attachments to [mcascreed@gmail.com](mailto:mcascreed@gmail.com). Do not submit material in the body of the email. We prefer articles that are under 1,000 words. If you have a blog or website, send us the link. Cover photo selections are based on portraits of human endeavor in the outdoors.

**For best viewing of the Scree on a monitor using Adobe Reader, click on 'View' and 'Full Screen.'**

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## Christmas Potluck MCA Meeting

Christmas Potluck. The MCA will provide Moose's Tooth pizza. Members may bring the following based on the first initial of their last name:

A-I dessert

J-S salad

T-Z any side dish

Members may also bring 10 to 15 digital photos or short video clips to share.

## Hiking and Climbing Schedule

January 29 - 31 Crescent Lake Ski Tour

Crescent Lake Ski tour (cabin rental fees apply). Contact Greg Bragiel for details.

February 19 - 28 Resurrection Trail

Seward to Hope ski tour. (cabin rental fees apply and must be paid when signing on to the trip, non-refundable) The Seward to Cooper landing portion is Feb. 19-22 (This portion of the trip is a challenging section of the Resurrection Trail and NOT for novices). On Feb. 22 I plan on a resupply at the Cooper Landing Trailhead, pick up anyone who wants to meet us on this day (about noon) and then continue northbound toward Hope. Feb. 22- 27or 28 is Cooper Landing to Hope. (Cabin rental fees apply and must be paid when signing on to the trip, non-refundable) Contact Greg Bragiel.

February 26 Indian to Arctic/Arctic to Indian Ski Traverse

Depending on the snow conditions, we will do this ski traverse with one group starting at each end and a key swap in the middle. Technical, Class 4. Avalanche gear required. Contact Stu Grenier at [oinkmenow@hotmail.com](mailto:oinkmenow@hotmail.com) for details. Weather permitting.

March 19 - 27 Scandinavian Peaks Trip

Fly into Scandinavian Peaks Hut. (Fees apply) Ski and climb as conditions dictate. Contact Stan Olsen, ([stan1olsen@yahoo.com](mailto:stan1olsen@yahoo.com)) for details.

April 15 - 21 Harding Icefield Ski/Climb

Dates Approximate. Fly into the Tustumena Glacier and traverse over to Exit Glacier. Scales about 30 miles +/- . Probably try to ski up or climb up something, conditions permitting. Will try to be out Fri. or Sat. before Easter. Requirements: good glacier travel experience, winter camping, ability to appreciate tent days, and a strong snow shoveler. Contact Stan Olsen [stan1olsen@yahoo.com](mailto:stan1olsen@yahoo.com)

June 24 - 26 Kenai Peninsula - peaks less travelled

SAVE THE DATE - exact details to be decided later. This will be the traditional Solstice weekend trip to the Kenai Peninsula. Destination undecided, but we usually hike in two hrs friday to a basecamp. Climbing Sat. and Sun. on less-travelled walk-up peaks. Option to do one-night or even day trips with the group. Exact valley will depend on depth of snowpack, and determined about May meeting time. Leader: Tom Choate, [mtngoatc@gmail.com](mailto:mtngoatc@gmail.com)

July 09 Mystery Mountain

Tom Choate will resurrect his 1990s tradition of 'Mystery Mountain.' He will lead a trip to a peak within 75 miles of town that no one can tell him about (no name?). Details to come! Tom Choate, [mtngoatc@gmail.com](mailto:mtngoatc@gmail.com)

Your trip could be here!

## Alaska Mountaineers

The Alaska Mountaineers is a website using 'Meetup Group' software to facilitate person-to-person communication and enable people to get together to pursue activities of mutual interest in mountaineering, backcountry skiing, ice and rock climbing, hiking and other similar activities. This is another alternative to the Yahoo Groups and the Facebook page for arranging trips that are neither official nor sanctioned MCA trips. The advantage over Yahoo Groups or Facebook is that it has sophisticated calendaring and notification features that are designed for 'meet-ups.' Here is a link to the calendar:

<http://www.meetup.com/TheAlaskaMountaineers/calendar/>

## Nuggets in the Scree

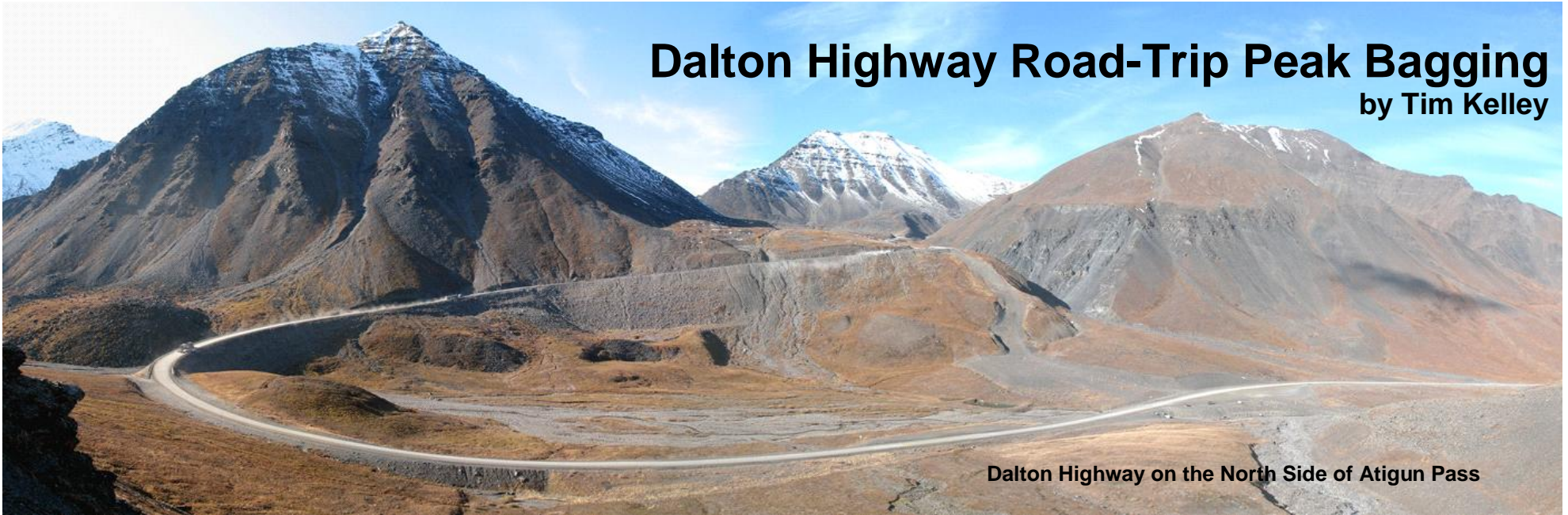
Submitted by Steve Gruhn

The British Mountaineering Council recently reported that in August Stuart Howard and Dave Swinburne ascended three previously unclimbed peaks in the Granite Range of the Saint Elias Mountains. En route to ascending Point 8150 ( $\pm 50$ ; in the Granite Creek drainage), the two climbed Peak 7750 ( $\pm 50$ ; in the Granite Creek drainage) by its northwest ridge. The duo also climbed the southeast spur of Peak 7656 (in the Jefferies Glacier and Granite Creek drainages) and Peak 7129 (in the Jefferies Glacier drainage) via its western slopes. Elevations in the BMC's report were based on GPS readings and differed from the USGS 1:63,360 map elevations reported here.

<http://www.thebmc.co.uk/Feature.aspx?id=3872>

# Dalton Highway Road-Trip Peak Bagging

by Tim Kelley



Dalton Highway on the North Side of Atigun Pass

Mythical. Remote. Hard to get to. Expensive to go there because of the cost of chartered bush plane drop-offs and pick-ups. It seems that these are the perceptions many have of the Brooks Range.

But in reality, if you live in Anchorage, Alaska, the Brooks Range is just one day's drive away. You can hop into your car or truck, leave your house in the early morning and be camping in the Brooks Range in the evening. And your only costs will be gas, munchies and the keep-alert swill of your choice.

What I'm talking about here is driving up the Dalton Highway to access hiking and climbing in the Brooks Range. From Anchorage to the Marion Creek Campground just north of Coldfoot it is 600 miles. You can do this long drive from Anchorage in a day. From Coldfoot you can then head north and get access to a cross-sectional sampling of

the Brooks Range. There are many peaks you can bag from the road and quite a few good places to camp. And access is easy, too, because you are doing it all from a well-maintained road.

What? A well-maintained road? Aren't you talking about the infamous, bone-rattling, Ice Road Truckers' Haul Road?

Yes, I am. But the legend of the Dalton Highway, also known as the Haul Road, and its brutal treatment of vehicles and drivers is now mostly just that – a legend, and hype. I now know this from experience. I've driven from Anchorage to Prudhoe Bay and back in my own vehicle each of the last two summers.

Much of the Dalton Highway is now covered in pavement-like chip-seal. And some sections are now surfaced with full-on asphalt. There are even painted lines down

the middle of the road in many places. For the parts of the road that are not paved, the state constantly waters and grades these sections so they are smooth dirt for the truckers.

Well, if the road surface is good, then the truck traffic must be horrendous to deal with?

Not at all. The cocaine- and Jack-Daniels-fueled truckers of the '70s are long gone. The companies that run trucks on the Dalton put safety first. Any driver that infringes safety rules is soon shown the door. Indeed, commercial trucks on the Dalton are plentiful, but for the most part they are courteous and respectful that they are not the only users of the Dalton.

These days there are lots of users of the Dalton Highway besides truckers. There are full-size Princess tour busses going from Fairbanks to Deadhorse and back. There





**Tammy Thiele – North of Atigun Pass**

are small tour busses; personal cars; trucks; vans and campers of people hiking, camping, and sightseeing; pickups of hunters heading for caribou on the North Slope; bicyclists; hitchhikers; and hordes of Europeans on rental motorcycles heading up and down the road.

In other words, the pioneer Haul Road that bulldozers carved through the Brooks Range in the '70s is now relatively civilized. And the Dalton Highway is a good way to check out some of what the Brooks Range has to offer for hiking and peak bagging.

As I mentioned previously, I have driven the Dalton Highway the last two years. Each time I started in Anchorage, drove to Deadhorse, worked for a week or two in the oilfields and then drove back to Anchorage. And each time I drove through the Brooks Range I would try, weather permitting, to get in some peak bagging.

If you search the web for hiking or peak bagging off the Dalton Highway, you will find

a few trip reports. So my peak-bagging forays along the Dalton Highway are nothing new. Scree archives mention Dalton Highway peak bagging, too. A 1980s peak-bagging road trip was done by Mike Miller and friends; they drove south from Prudhoe Bay and climbed in the Atigun Pass area (Ed. note: See the September 1988 Scree).

If you drive north from Anchorage to do some peak bagging off the Dalton Highway, a must-do peak is 4459-foot Sukakpak Mountain (67.60359° North, 149.74215° West). Just north of Coldfoot, Sukapak Mountain is perhaps the most climbed peak along the Dalton Highway. This striking peak is also likely the most photographed mountain along the Dalton. The west face of this peak is a towering rampart of crumbly rock, but this peak is quite easy to climb by a roundabout, non-technical route. I climbed this peak in August 2010 by heading up to where the rock meets the tundra ridge on the south and then climbing north following the spine of the ridge and then following sheep trails to the top.



**Sukakpak Mountain**

As you head north from Coldfoot, vegetation gets leaner and leaner. When you cross Atigun Pass, you get into the sweet hiking zone of the Brooks Range where brush is pretty much non-existent. There are good places to car-camp in this area, such as just below Atigun Pass, the old Atigun pipeline camp site, and at Galbraith Lake.

From the old Atigun pipeline camp site James Dalton Mountain (68.19927° North, 149.52838° West) can be climbed. I climbed this peak in September 2009. It's a straightforward tundra ramble to get to the crumbly eastern ridge and then a shale scramble to the summit. There seem to be map discrepancies on how high this peak is. The 1:250,000 map in National Geographic's "Topo!" map set seems to state the height as 7010 feet, while the "Topo!" 1:63,360 map puts this peak at 7150 feet.



**From James Dalton Mountain, Pointing to the Start of the Hike at the Old Atigun Pipeline Site**

I also climbed Peak 6902 (68.12862° North, 149.37461° West) across the Atigun River

valley, and on the Continental Divide. It actually took me two times to get to the summit of this peak. In September 2009 I got within 300 feet from the top, but with no crampons and encountering hard crust snow and plenty of exposure, I opted to turn back. I returned to this peak and made the summit in September 2010. I found a large cairn on James Dalton Mountain, but no cairn on Peak 6902.

On my way north up the Dalton Highway in August of this summer the clouds packed in around Atigun Pass while I was camping at

the Atigun Camp area, so I opted to climb some lower mountains further north where the weather was better. I ended up climbing the cluster of four mountains east of Pump Station 4 – Peak 5430 (Sec. 3), Peak 5250 (Sec. 2), Peak 4950 (Sec. 35), and Peak 5308 (Sec. 36). I found a large cairn on Peak 5430, but no cairns on the other peaks. Very nice hiking, with some scree scrambling, in this area.

Speaking of nice hiking in this northern edge of the Brooks Range – I did a couple of hikes from the Galbraith Lake areas to the west

into the Gates of the Arctic National Park. There is lots of potential for adventures, short or long, in this area.

So there you go ... the myth of the primitive frontier Haul Road, a myth that seems to live on in Anchorage, is dispelled. And now you have a few ideas of where to hike and scramble off the Dalton Highway. So hop in your car or truck and start driving north. You will be in the Brooks Range before you know it.



## White Lice to Peak 5010 Traverse

by Wayne L Todd

With the continuing fantastic weather and forecast I need to get one more trip in the Chugach before snowfall. Ross Noffsinger contemplates my plan and condenses it to a reasonable 2-½-day trip.

Driving out of town Friday afternoon, the wind is howling and the air is thick with dust, all the way to Eklutna Lake. We hope the trail is intact, which of course it is. The wind is manageable while bicycling around the brimming lake.

My curiosity is satiated as to what areas burned this spring at the end of the lake. Most of the damage is around and south of the avalanche area. (What natural disaster will strike that area now?) We leave bikes at

the start of the East Fork Trail and hike toward Pichler's Perch on the West Fork Trail.

A dozen bicycles, mostly with Bobs, lie alongside the Serenity Falls Cabin. It's mighty quiet for that many folks. Minutes later we encounter a group of women returning to the cabin.

The Eklutna Glacier continues to recede at an alarming rate. I haven't been to Pichler's in 12 years, but Ross notices changes even





since July. Though the route has been the same for decades, the steepness and technicality have increased (steel crampons are a must).

A half mile and a thousand feet below the hut Ross suggests we fill our water containers. "Oh, I have only one 1-liter bottle." I implement my fill-two-1-quart-Ziplocs-and-seal-them-(hopefully)-in-a-1-gallon-Ziploc procedure. We find the lost blue barrel (which others have reported lately) at the base of the direct route. The snow on the direct line is very firm, but has added purchase due to slightly dirty sun cups (crampons and axe needed).

Five hours after leaving the parking lot we arrive at Pichler's just before dark. Wonderfully, my Ziplocs are still intact (they would look so natural if they had goldfish in them). I attack a roof repair project, finishing by headlamp. Ross procures snow for melting, but the hut stove goes outside for a time-out because it's flaming like a campfire. Eventually it behaves and is allowed back in the hut. It's after 10 p.m. by the time chores are finished.

We plan an 8 a.m. start for White Lice Mountain to allow the "mostly cloudy skies to make way for the partly cloudy skies." I awake in the night to light pattering on the hut. "Shoot, that probably means no White Lice climb tomorrow." Outside the hut, though, there is no accumulation. The alarm fails to go off, so it's 9:30 a.m. when we leave the hut. The sky is grey and the mountains have a sprinkling of snow from 5,000 feet up. Our climb is still doubtful.

We travel south on the glacier edge except for a corner section, which is quite deeply crevassed, we skirt to the inside on scree-covered ice. We gain the ridge at the low point south of White Lice and leave overnight gear and extra food. Ross spies a black bear in the valley east of our stash, but we rationalize why he wouldn't mess with our stuff.



The talus battle and scrambling soon ensues. Unlike many trips, I am content to follow, so Ross leads the ridge. Clouds continue to lift and disperse revealing many snow-covered peaks, glaciers, and steep rock faces in the Chugach and beyond. Blue sky bursting through troubled clouds accents the view. Dave Hart and Steve Gruhn left cairns a few weeks previous, but I supplement them, in between following and picture taking. On the sun-warmed south slopes, the snow is melting. The north faces probably have their first permanent snow of the year. White Lice is quite the pile of garbage rock with frequent and prolonged exposure.

Ross and I pass the last cairn before a two-move technical spot. Descending a ridge bump we encounter a thin, exposed section with no footing on the east side and snow-covered rock on the west side. Out comes the rope for a rappel. I scramble up the next section to see if we might need the rope again but the next bump is the highpoint south of the major notch. I am content to relish facing south on the summit of White Lice.\* Shaded slopes are cold. Ross passes by to investigate the edge of the notch. We blast pictures.



After a long break, we retrace south (leaving a cairn and register). Ascending the rope on exposed, snow-covered rock is comforting. We down-climb and scramble the rest of our ascent route, relieved to find our stash intact. This section took five hours, including one hour on top. Ross comments on the exceptionally poor quality of the rock, even



by Chugach standards and feels this is a route he would not be interested in repeating.



The plans to follow the ridge to Pellet Point, then Peak 5010, then down to the river to camp are scaled back. We'll hike to the next bump, descend east, and see how far we get before dark. Most of the talus is frozen, which is unfortunate for our knees. We descend to the valley stream at 3,000 feet and then ascend to a water source on a

bench, moving a grazing black bear out of our way. We'll camp here, 1,500 feet below Peak 5010. Ross spies a black bear with two cubs across the valley. He is frequently spotting bears on this trip. Perhaps I should take his glasses.

Getting up in the night to moonlight and a star-filled sky confirms our good weather for tomorrow. Toward morning a brief, strong wind appears, but we awake to calm. The Jetboil cranks hot water as we are dusted by light snow under grey skies. More snow has fallen up higher, but "it will soon melt off." We ascend southeast to the south ridge of Peak 5010, encountering a large mountain goat, then another bear (probably the one we moved along yesterday). He "sits on the ridge fence" until descending east. When he sees us again he retraces to the ridge and toward the crowberry fields.

Near the summit of Peak 5010, we use self-arrest poles to belay a few short sections of delicate footwork on steep, exposed, snow-covered terrain. On the summit, we don rain jackets as it is snowing heavily now. Ross signs us, and his group from this spring (it was buried at the time), into the register. The register contains only three entries: Tim Kelley in 1991, Jim Saylor in 1992, and Richard Baranow and Wendy Sanem in 1996. From here on out, Ross is on familiar terrain.

The upper north ridge of Peak 5010 is mostly lower angle and pleasant for hiking. The steeper lower section abounds with alpine fall colors, abating the tough knee terrain. Just



before brush line, I find a monopod. "Odd," Ross states, "we found a camera here this spring." What will we find next, a body?



Utilizing a bear trail and open areas, we are soon on the bank of the East Fork of the Eklutna River with only modest brush and leaves on our persons. We cross the very low water on a log (questionable if the fall would be worth avoiding the knee-deep water). The trees are leafless, the fireweed tan and stiff and snow lightly falls as the search for the trail moves northward.





We find the trail, then lose it, find it again, and spend some minutes in a field southwest of the mound under thick, wet snowflakes until finding the definitive trail. Now we are set. Utilizing poles, neither of us falls on the slick descent of the mound. Quite soaked from the waist down, we finally don rain pants for the flat hike out the East Fork Trail. Two and a half hours later we're retrieving our bikes from the burned trees. The first mile of the East Fork Trail has recently been brushed and treed, with tree benches and bridges installed.

The precipitation stops and the clouds lift to reveal snow-covered peaks around the lake. We stop occasionally on the bike ride to photograph and revel in the late-evening light bathing the nearby peaks.

Wayne L. Todd  
Accompanied by Ross Noffsinger  
September 24-26, 2010

\*The summit ridge of White Lice Mountain has two high points (or summits) separated by a distinctive notch. We climbed to the

high point on the south side of the notch. The high point on the north side is of comparable height and might be higher. A research of past *Scree* articles did not confirm which summit is higher. It appears that most ascents have been to the south summit. If anyone has confirmed which summit is higher, we would love to know. We would also like to know if anyone has crossed the notch, which looks extremely difficult.



## Arctic National Wildlife Refuge – Sheenjek River

by Don Hansen

Jim Scherr and I drove from Anchorage to Fairbanks on Thursday July 15<sup>th</sup>, in 7 and a half hours, stayed overnight with Jim's friend and met up with Scott Bailey and Kris Hutchin at Wright Air for the 9 AM commercial flight to Arctic Village on Friday, July 16<sup>th</sup>. Our charter pilot, Kirk Sweetsir of Yukon Air, was waiting for us in Arctic Village. The weather was overcast and rain

in the Sheenjek River valley as Jim and I came in on the first flight to the tundra airstrip the west side of the river located about 10 miles upstream and north of Double Mountain.

Jim found good campsites on the gravel bar along the river with shelter from the wind. We quickly set up our tents between rain

showers. It stopped raining before Scott and Kris arrived on the second flight.

Saturday morning it was raining. It cleared up about noon and we went for a hike up the drainage behind the airstrip. We hiked about 2 miles west, up the drainage, and took a narrow side drainage north about a mile and headed northeast on a game trail over a

narrow pass that lead back to the Sheenjek River making a loop back to camp about a 6-mile trip. This loop circumnavigated the 5030-foot mountain behind the airstrip and our camp.



**Sheenjek Airstrip**

Sunday, July 18<sup>th</sup>, was overcast, but not raining yet. We went for a hike southwest of camp to the next drainage south of the airstrip. We discovered what appeared to be an old grave site with a wooden cross and a journal in a glass jar. There were no names on or in the journal which dated back to the 1960s. We continued hiking to the southwest drainage and ran into a deep slot canyon with waterfalls and a fast moving stream that we'd have to across to go up the drainage to avoid a steep scree slope. Scott and Kris didn't want get their boots wet in the crossing, so we went downstream to where the creek enters the Sheenjek, but there was no dry feet crossing. The weather was coming down so we went back to camp before the rains started. Monday, July 19<sup>th</sup>, was a camp day due to rain and fog.

Tuesday, July 20<sup>th</sup>, finally the weather broke with sunny skies and we broke camp and backpacked up the river about 5 miles to a major drainage coming into the Sheenjek from the west and setup camp on a tundra bench along the drainage. From this location we had a number of potential day hikes, weather permitting.

Wednesday, July 21<sup>st</sup>, we hiked 4 miles or more up the main drainage to where it forks to the northwest, west, and south, and where we had views of a hanging glacier up the south fork drainage. We hiked about a mile up the northwest drainage as the weather was changing to rain showers to hard rain as we hiked back down the drainage to camp.

Thursday, July 22<sup>nd</sup>, under partly cloudy weather and light showers that made us put on and take off our raincoats every 15 minutes or more we hiked up the Sheenjek River about 4 or 5 miles with great views along the river. At our last rest stop up the river we could see black clouds building to the north along the Sheenjek. We knew what that meant. So we headed back down the river to our camp.



**Day Hike up Sheenjek West Drainage**

Friday, the 23<sup>rd</sup> of July, brought sunny weather and clear skies in the morning and high temperatures probably in the 70s. Jim hiked in the cool of the morning up a tundra slope to the ridge leading to a 5085 foot point on the ridge northwest of our camp. Scott and Kris followed a couple of hours later. I stayed near camp to rest my knees and took pictures of the falls coming off the ridge above camp to the southwest.

Saturday, the 24<sup>th</sup> of July, we hiked back up the main drainage to the southwest about a mile and a half and headed up a side drainage to the northwest. We hiked up this steep rocky drainage about 2 miles where it forks to the west and north and peters out . We hiked back to camp down the same route.



**Caribou Cow and Calf**

Sunday, the 25<sup>th</sup> of July, was sort of a rest day under partly cloudy skies. Scott and Kris hiked up the ridge above camp near the





**Members Jim, Kris, Scott, and Don**

waterfalls a quarter mile up the drainage from camp. Jim hiked down the river looking for grayling. I also hiked to the river from camp and saw a lone cow caribou with a calf on the flood plain between the river and our camp. I got a few pictures of them. This was only large game seen except a full curl sheep

seen by Jim, Scott and Kris on the ridge of 5085.

Monday, July 26<sup>th</sup>, we broke camp late that morning and backpacked back down the river to the airstrip camp. We made good time on this hot sunny day and got back by about 3:30 that afternoon. Jim spotted a number of sheep across the river that evening.

Tuesday, July 27<sup>th</sup>, was clear and sunny. Jim, followed by Scott and Kris, hiked about two miles back upriver and headed up the pass we went through on the July 17<sup>th</sup> loop around 5030 in an attempt to hike up to the summit. I stayed in the camp area taking photos and resting my knees. Jim nearly made it to the summit while Scott and Kris got within 500 feet of the summit.



**View across the River**

July 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> were camp days of rain. We contacted our charter pilot, Kirk Sweetsir of Yukon Air, on the satellite phone. He said he would pick us up about 10:30 AM on July 30<sup>th</sup>, weather permitting. The skies cleared late the morning of the 30<sup>th</sup> and we got back to Arctic Village early in the afternoon in time to catch the Wright Air flight to Fairbanks.

Scott and Kris stayed overnight in Fairbanks at a bed and breakfast while Jim and I drove back to Anchorage that evening.



## ADZE

For Sale

Kelty White Cloud pack \$200  
Spectra, Kevlar pack. Medium  
Fritschi/Diamir AT bindings \$150  
Black Diamond Blizzard Harness \$35

Extra Small  
Red Ledge Ski Bibs \$40  
Medium

522-6354

# Peak of the Month: Heart Mountain

by Steve Gruhn

Mountain Range: Alaska Range; Cathedral Mountains  
Borough: Denali Borough  
Drainage: Boulder Glacier  
Latitude/Longitude: 62° 53' 27" North, 152° 7' 23" West  
Elevation: 6550 feet ( $\pm$  50 feet)  
Prominence: 600 feet from Peak 7236 in the Boulder Glacier drainage  
Adjacent Peak: Peak 7236  
Distinctness: 600 feet from Peak 7236  
USGS Map: Talkeetna (D-5)  
First Recorded Ascent: June 30, 2001, by Brian Davison  
Route of First Recorded Ascent: Southeast ridge  
Access Point: Porkeypile Airstrip north of Boulder Creek



**Northwest Snow Gully of Heart Mountain, Summit at Left.  
All photos by Lindsay Griffin**

The Cathedral Mountains (not to be confused with the Cathedral Spires of the Kichatna Mountains to the southwest) are a small remote sub-range of the Alaska Range northwest of Mount Russell that is seldom visited. Although mountaineers have unofficially named some of the peaks, Heart Mountain is the only officially named peak in the range.

Although I don't know the origin of the name, the USGS reported Heart Mountain as a local name in 1954.

On June 28, 2001, Paul Roderick flew Brian Davison, Lindsay Griffin, Geoff Hornby, and Dave Wallis from Talkeetna to the Porkeypile Airstrip north of Boulder Creek in his de Havilland Beaver on one trip and in his Cessna 185 on a second trip. From the airstrip, the four climbers hiked 5 miles up Boulder Creek to a mine site at an elevation of about 3,550 feet, where they set up their base of climbing operations in the Cathedral Mountains.

On June 30, they set about to explore the area. Davison crossed Boulder Creek, headed up the Boulder Glacier, and ascended the long, steep southwest-facing scree slope to the col between Heart Mountain and Peak 7236. From that point he climbed the southeast ridge of Heart Mountain to the northeastern, and higher, of its two summits.



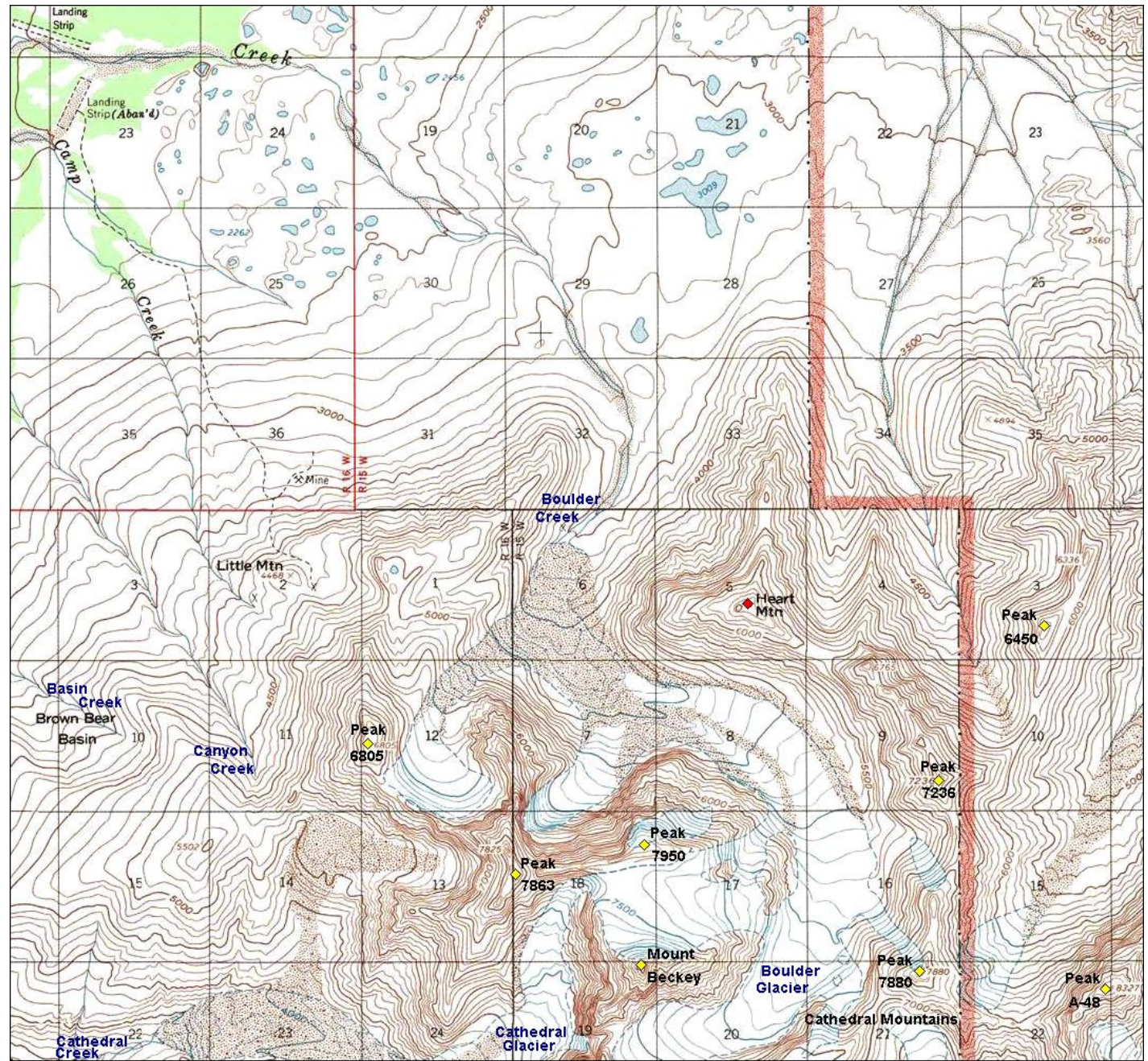
**Ridge Southeast of Heart Mountain as Viewed from near the Summit.  
Mount Russell in the Background, Peak 7236 in the Foreground Slightly  
to the Right of Mount Russell's Summit.**



Two days later on July 2, Davison, Hornby, and Wallis set out up the northwest snow gully of Heart Mountain and climbed to the summit. Wanting to avoid the precarious crossing of Boulder Creek, Griffin followed Davison's original route to the summit. Griffin and Hornby then retraced Griffin's ascent route and returned to camp. Davison and Wallis continued along the southeast ridge for 3 miles, climbing both Peak 7236 and Peak 7880 in the Boulder Glacier, Chedotlothna Glacier, and Ripsnorter Creek drainages and returning to camp 14 hours after they started.

The party spent another two weeks exploring the area, battling vicious mosquitoes, foggy weather, rain and wet snow, and near-freezing temperatures that left the snow unconsolidated. Their appetites and expectations of interesting and inspiring climbing were left largely unsated. Nevertheless, the party climbed most of the peaks in the Cathedral Mountains during their expedition. On July 28 they departed the range.

Davison's trip report appeared on pages 236 and 237 of the 2002 *American Alpine Journal*. A longer trip report appeared in the April 2002 *Mountain INFO/High Magazine*. Additional information for this article came from my correspondence with Lindsay Griffin.



Map created with TOPO!® ©2003 National Geographic (www.nationalgeographic.com/topo)



# MCA Board Meeting Minutes

## October 27, 2010

**Note:** Tasks to be completed in ***bold italics***.

1) Training Committee report (Jayme): Volunteer had rope damage on personal rope during Ice Fest, MCA is missing equipment. Discuss replacement policies, new purchases (including possible PLB purchase). Projected date for 2011 Basic Mountaineering School is end of January.

2) Calendar Committee report (Stu): Possibly need ***new Calendar Layout Specialist for next year*** (currently done by Mark Kimerer). Review December photo caption and request comments from board and committee chairs.

3) Scree (John Recktenwald): Two editors and two volunteers for layout found. ***Possibly need to purchase layout software*** (currently done with MS Word).

4) Hiking & Climbing Committee: Comparison of MCA and Anchorage Adventurers Meetup Group, ***John R. and Vicky L. will work on proposal for MCA Meetup Group***. Investigate possibility to advertise non-sanctioned MCA trips on ANC Meetup Group website but keep clear to sanctioned trips. Improve integration of MCA Facebook page.

5) Website (Wayne): Beta version is online, working on final touches. Tim Silvers will be webmaster. Membership sign-up and renewal will be possible through new website. ***Need meta tags (keywords) for website. Need new SSL certificate.*** Compare Paypal vs. commercial account.

6) MCA classification: ***Jim Sellers*** to investigate requirements and benefits of transition to 501(c)(3). ***Will provide summary of options.***

7) Volunteer shirts (synthetic, long-sleeve) in progress (Wayne).

8) Election update: Vicky Lytle and Jim Sellers will be serving for two years, John Recktenwald will serve for one year as MCA Director.

9) Current Policies: ***Secretary (Brian Aho) and President (Tim Silvers) will work on update.***

10) Budget for 2011: Randy Plant needs ***expense estimates from committee chairs.***

11) December MCA meeting: Will have Moose's Tooth pizza again, BP Energy Center has been contacted by Ross N. for approval (BP has exclusive catering contract with NANA). ***Ross will also request donation from Moose's Tooth, Travis T. will assist with pickup from M.T. and delivery to MCA meeting. Still need to determine who is in charge of beverages.***

12) Awards Committee: Need to find out if Don and Corey still interested – Wayne will call and find out.

13) MCA advertising: Dean Carman wrote email to the board with advertising suggestions. We ***need to update MCA business cards*** (remove meeting time and address) + order more (1000?). Also ***order more brochures*** and restock regularly @ AMH, REI, ARG, Snowcity Cafe, etc. Jayme will make labels to stick over outdated info current brochure version. Continue with tradition of greeters @ meeting to integrate new/prospective members.

Next board meetings:

- Tuesday, November 16 (location TBA)
- Wednesday, January 5 (tentative)

Brian Aho, Secretary



# Mountaineering Club of Alaska

## 2011 PROPOSED BUDGET

\* Last Updated 11/19/2010

		Proposed for 2011	Change 11 vs 10	Current for 2010*	Approved for 2010	Final for 2009	Final for 2008
<b>REVENUE</b>							
Membership Dues	<i>received during calendar year</i>	\$7,000.00	0%	\$6,375.00	\$7,000.00	8,315.00	7,685.00
Scree subscriptions		\$250.00	25%	\$290.00	\$200.00	160.00	305.00
Training	<i>ice climbing, crevasse rescue, other</i>	\$8,000.00	38%	\$9,918.00	\$5,800.00	7,950.00	6,690.00
Photo Calendar		\$3,000.00	0%	\$1,610.00	\$3,000.00	1,395.00	1,339.00
MCA Products: T-Shirts, Patches, Etc.		\$0.00	0%	\$260.00	\$0.00	690.00	721.00
Donations		\$0.00	0%	\$5.00	\$0.00	-	-
Other--Interest on Accounts		\$200.00	0%	\$170.58	\$200.00	215.86	344.77
Other-MCA Products for 50th Anniversary		\$0.00	0%	\$0.00	\$0.00	-	-
Other		\$0.00	0%	\$0.00	\$0.00	95.00	-
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>		<b>\$18,450.00</b>		<b>\$18,628.58</b>	<b>\$16,200.00</b>	<b>18,820.86</b>	<b>17,084.77</b>
<b>EXPENSE</b>							
Training	<i>campsite, access fees, instructors, trip leaders</i>	\$6,000.00	13%	\$5,621.50	\$5,300.00	3,218.78	3,974.59
Scree	<i>postage, mailing, printing</i>	\$2,300.00	0%	\$2,016.90	\$2,300.00	1,999.29	2,444.85
General Meeting	<i>rent, refreshments, entertainment</i>	\$2,000.00	-9%	\$1,162.00	\$2,200.00	1,978.10	1,618.32
Administrative	<i>supplies, forms, PO box, bank fees, web site</i>	\$1,000.00	0%	\$348.22	\$1,000.00	613.34	246.99
Hut Construction & Maint.	<i>materials, supplies, hut equipment, lease fees*</i>	\$2,500.00	0%	\$297.94	\$2,500.00	9,963.71	5,695.78
Insurance	<i>reincorporation fees, insurance</i>	\$3,000.00	0%	\$0.00	\$3,000.00	-	-
Club Equipment	<i>climbing gear, misc equipment</i>	\$500.00	0%	\$34.86	\$500.00	498.70	143.98
Library	<i>new books, periodicals, Scree binding</i>	\$100.00	0%	\$0.00	\$100.00	-	-
Other:	<i>miscellaneous expenses</i>	\$0.00	0%	\$0.00	\$0.00	-	-
Photo Calendar		\$2,600.00	0%	\$2,610.00	\$2,600.00	2,190.00	1,760.00
MCA Products: T-Shirts, Patches, Etc.		\$0.00	0%	\$0.00	\$0.00	-	810.50
Other-MCA 50th Anniversary Party, Products		\$0.00	0%	\$0.00	\$0.00	-	2,726.09
Other - Awards		\$1,300.00	63%	\$337.99	\$800.00	270.60	250.00
<b>TOTAL EXPENSE</b>		<b>\$21,300.00</b>		<b>\$12,429.41</b>	<b>\$20,300.00</b>	<b>20,732.52</b>	<b>19,671.10</b>
<b>DUE TO (FROM) RESERVE (To Balance)</b>		<b>(2,850.00)</b>		<b>6,199.17</b>	<b>(4,100.00)</b>	<b>(1,911.66)</b>	<b>(2,586.33)</b>
<b>CASH BALANCE - All Accounts</b>							
Beginning Balance - January 1, 2010				\$20,368.13		22,279.79	25,811.64
Increase (decrease) during 2010				\$5,859.17		(1,911.66)	(2,586.33)
Current Balance for 2010				<b>\$26,227.30</b>		<b>20,368.13</b>	<b>23,225.31</b>
Checking - Credit Union 1				\$4,350.47		2,389.79	1,401.27
Money Mkt and CDs - Credit Union 1 (.75 - 1.89%)				\$20,262.72		14,765.90	18,499.77
Savings - Credit Union 1 (.7%)				\$412.64		2,021.59	2,160.07
18-month CD - in trust for hut lease - Northrim Bank (1.25%)				\$1,151.47		1,140.85	1,114.20
Petty Cash				\$50.00		50.00	50.00
<b>TOTAL ALL ACCOUNTS</b>				<b>\$26,227.30</b>		<b>20,368.13</b>	<b>23,225.31</b>
Ending Balance - November 19, 2010							

The 2010-2011 MCA Board reviewed budgets from 2006-2010 and the following projections of revenue and expenses were unanimously approved to present to the membership. Please review as we will vote on the proposed budget at the January 19, 2011 General Membership Meeting.

# Mountaineering Club of Alaska

President	Tim Silvers	250-3374	Board member	Wayne Todd	522-6354
Vice-President	Jayme Mack	382-0212	Board member	Mark Smith	868-3155
Secretary	Brian Aho	223-4758	Board member	Vicky Lytle	351-8246
Treasurer	Randy Plant	243-1438	Board member	John Recktenwald	317-2564
			Board member	Jim Sellers	

Annual membership dues: Single \$15, Family \$20

Dues can be paid at any meeting or mailed to the Treasurer at the MCA address at right. 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, notes and letters submitted for publication in the newsletter should be e-mailed to [MCAScree@gmail.com](mailto:MCAScree@gmail.com). Articles can be submitted anytime.

Paid ads may be submitted to the attention of the Vice-President at the club address and should be in electronic format and pre-paid.

Missing your MCA membership card? Stop by the monthly meeting to pick one up or send a self-addressed stamped envelope and we'll mail it to you.

Mailing list/database entry: Yukiko Hayano and Randy Plant - 243-1438

Hiking and Climbing Committee: [victoria.lytle@gmail.com](mailto:victoria.lytle@gmail.com)

Huts: Greg Bragiel - 569-3008

Calendar: Stuart Grenier - 337-5127

Scree Editor: John Recktenwald - 346-2589

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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