

the SCREE

Mountaineering Club of Alaska

APRIL 2024

Volume 67, Number 4



April Meeting
Wednesday, April 3, 2024
6:00-8:00 p.m. at the BP
Energy Center
Presenter: TBA
Topic: TBA

“A smile is the international language and sometimes the only universal thing we have to offer.”
– Kasha Rigby

Contents:

Bremner Historic Mining District and Pentax Peak (6635 feet), Eastern Chugach Mountains

Shark’s Tooth (5750 feet) Southeast Ridge, First Winter Ascent, Coast Mountains

Peak 5640, Western Chugach Mountains

“Cold Wars” on The Mooses Tooth (10335 feet), Alaska Range

Poem: Peace

Peak of the Month: Bivouac Peak (7708 feet), Hayes Range

"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."

Cover Photo

Kassandra Liesenfeld ascending the northeast ridge of Bivouac Peak. Photo by Ryan Cudo.

APRIL MEETING

Wednesday, April 3, 2024

6:00-8:00 p.m. at the B.P. Energy Center, 1014 Energy Court, Anchorage

Presenter: To be announced

Topic: To be announced

Contribute to the Scree!

Have something to share with the Alaska mountaineering community? Trip reports for all levels of mountaineering—from Flattop Mountain to Denali, from Kichatna Spire to Bodenbug Butte—are welcome and requested. We also welcome letters to the editor, notes, essays, poetry, photos, and the occasional creative writing piece. Contributions can be emailed as attachments to mcascree@gmail.com. **Material should be submitted by the 11th of each month to appear in the following month's issue.** We prefer text in MicroSoft Word format. Photos should include captions and photographer credits and should not be embedded in the text. While we're not sticklers on word count, submissions that are more than six pages will be split into multiple issues.

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For the MCA Membership Application and Liability Waiver, visit <https://www.mtnclubak.org/membership>.



Check Facebook for last-minute trips and activities. Or, schedule one that you want to organize.



Announcements

Scheduled Trips:

Training: Self Rescue in Vertical Terrain

April 10 (evening) and April 13. Attending both days is required.

Do you know what to do if something goes wrong while climbing?

Partner getting hit by rockfall. You picked a route too hard for your partner and now have to lower or assist them while belaying from the top. Descending a multipitch climb with an unconscious/unresponsive partner. Walking up on a party that realized they have a rope too short for the route they just climbed to lower back to the ground safely?

Unfortunately all these (and more) can and do happen sometimes while we are out enjoying a day of rock climbing. Are you prepared? Join us in a climbing self-rescue course to better prepare yourself to handle the “unforeseen” circumstances that you will eventually encounter if you climb long enough.

All participants should have experience with basic climbing systems such as belaying, anchors, rappelling, and basic climbing movements. They should also be able to comfortably lead climb at a minimum of 5.7 outside. Class is limited to a maximum of eight participants!

For more information or to sign up contact Donell Irwin at mdirwin@yahoo.com.

Instructor: Pat Schmalix

Eklutna Traverse

April 15-21, 2024

Ski traverse. Glacier-travel experience required. Eight participants maximum. ~ 30 miles, ~ 9000 feet elevation gain. Trip organizer: Greg Bragiel, Unknownhiker@alaska.net. Note that there is currently a waiting list for this trip. PLEASE do not schedule your personal trips during that time period. Club-sanctioned trips have priority.

Flattop Solstice Sleepout

June 21, 2024

No leader

Mint Hut Renovation

July 18-28, 2024

See details on page 6.

Summer Mountaineering Course

August 1-7, 2024

Location: Mint Hut. Topics covered: snow climbing, rope travel, anchoring in both snow and rock, rappelling, prussiking, belaying, ice axe and crampon skills, etc. Limit 10 persons. \$100 deposit required. Looking for additional two instructors, full or part time.

Mint Hut to be closed for duration of course. Additional course details from Dave Staeheli (alpineak@aol.com) and Donnell Irwin (mdirwin@yahoo.com).



Eklutna Traverse:
61.14025, -148.94786



Flattop Mountain:
61.08922, -149.67030



Mint Hut:
61.85677, -149.07977

MCA Trip Proposal Description Template

(also available at <https://mtclubak.squarespace.com/s/MCA-Trip-Proposal-Form.docx>)

Trip Title:

Trip Leader Name:

Sign-up Details: email address is usually best

First-aid Qualified Personnel:

Trip Dates:

Trip Designation: Technical or Non-technical and sub-designations: Class 1,2,3,4,5, Ice and Mixed, Glacier Travel, Steep Snow Climbing, Backcountry Skiing or Snowboarding, Avalanche Terrain, Packrafting, Kayaking, Stream Crossing-Hazardous (indicate all that apply).

Physical Demands: approximate length, elevation gain and duration

Anticipated Terrain: trail hiking; bushwhacking; off-trail hiking on tundra, snow, ice, scree, talus or boulders; exposed hiking on steep slopes covered with snow, ice, slick vegetation, scree, talus or boulders; scrambling on loose rock; exposed scrambling on loose rock; technical snow, ice, rock and/or mixed climbing; stream crossing; glacier travel on snow, ice and/or scree.

Primary Potential Hazards: Frostbite, Hypothermia (winter camping); sprains, dislocations (slips, trips, falls)

Requisite Skills (physical and/or technical) for Safe Participation on Trip: Avalanche Level I (or equivalent experience/self-study); Snowshoeing; Intermediate-level or higher Backcountry/Alpine/Cross-country skiing; Glacier Travel; Belaying; Mountain Axe use (self-arresting); Snow Travel/Climbing (crampon and mountain axe use[RB2]); Crevasse Rescue; Snow Camping; Vertical Rock, Ice or Mixed Climbing; Wilderness First Aid and CPR

Trip Description Examples:

Arctic to Indian Ski Traverse, Non-technical- Off-trail XC Skiing, Feb. 25, 2018, ~22 miles; ~2,500'; 8-12 hrs; very strenuous; travel on skis on/off trail; some exposure to avalanche terrain; partially-frozen stream crossings; one steep descent (can be walked); primary risks: avalanches, falling while skiing/hiking, frostbite, hypothermia, drowning crossing stream. Leader: Jen Aschoff Sign-up by Feb. 10 by emailing jlaschoff@gmail.com

Harding Icefield Ski/Climb, April 2009, Dates Approximate. Fly into the Tustumena Glacier and traverse over to the Exit Glacier. About 30 miles +/- . Probably try to ski up or climb up something, conditions permitting. Will try to be out Friday or Saturday. 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

Directions For Trip Proposal Submittal:

1. Research the route with details concerning distance, elevation gain, terrain, primary hazards, and required skills and equipment
2. Fill out this form and write a short (20-50 word) description for the Scree; email the description and PDF of this form to the chair of hiking and climbing committee (hcc@mtclubak.org)
3. Once your trip is approved you may advertise it on Facebook and other social media and the MCA listserve in addition to the Scree.
4. All participants must sign the liability waiver
5. Keep a spreadsheet of the names, emergency contact information for participants and folder with all of the liability forms. Participants cannot attend without a liability form.

For Review Purposes Only

Date Submitted to Trips Committee: _____

Date Advertised in Club Publication: _____

Trip Leader Approved: _____

Club Rules Met: _____

Liability Waivers Signed: _____

Alaska Pacific University Gear Swap

The APU Gear Swap is back! The sale is Saturday, April 6th, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at APU's Moseley Sports Center. The sale is a fundraiser for the APU outdoor gear room, which supplies skiing, hiking, climbing, biking, and boating gear for student use and classes. APU takes a 15% commission and does the selling for you.

For more information, visit <https://www.alaskapacific.edu/campus-life/outdoor-programs/gear-swap/>.

Thompson Pass and Valdez Heli-Skiing Public Scoping Period

The Public Scoping Period for the proposed Environmental Assessment (EA) for Thompson Pass and Valdez Heli-Skiing is scheduled for March 14 to April 12.

There are approximately 150,000 acres of Bureau of Land Management (BLM) managed lands where four heliski tour operators have been authorized to offer services since 2005. These operators are authorized through May 2025. Any of these operators wishing to renew, as well as any new operators, will be required to submit their Special Recreation Permit (SRP) applications October 1, 2024, through December 31, 2024, to be considered for the next 10-year permit window in this area from 2026 to 2035. The BLM public scoping period offers the public the opportunity to provide input March 14 through April 12, 2024. The BLM will use scoping input and SRP application information to develop a future Environmental Assessment.

The scoping period provides the public the opportunity to submit ideas, comments, and concerns for the BLM to consider when developing the EA.

For more information visit <https://eplanning.blm.gov/eplanning-ui/project/2031076/510>.

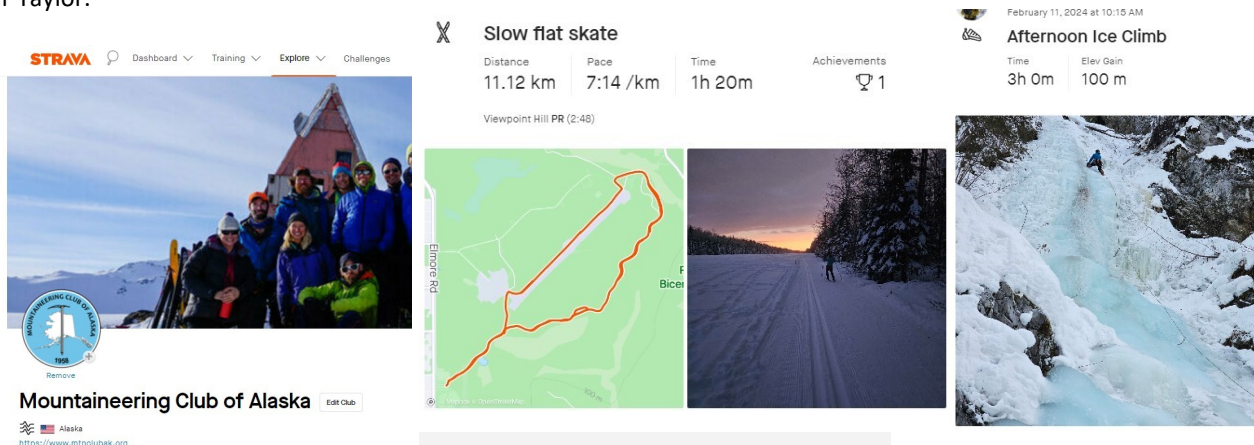
2025 MCA Calendar Photo Submissions

Photo submissions for the MCA's 2025 calendar will be accepted from July 3 through July 17. Photos will need to be in landscape format. Submissions can be emailed to mcacalendar@mtclubak.org.

The MCA is on Strava

Around 60 members are sharing the stoke on Strava, the online community for active people. It is great motivation to get out and keep fit when you see what others are doing. Cool adventure ideas inspire every day. If you are tracking any of your adventures on GPS, or are already on Strava, you should come join us. Crampons, skis, hiking boots, running shoes, bikes, skates, snowshoes – all modes are welcome. In the last couple weeks, I have seen members mountain biking in Utah, ice climbing Caribou Creek, skiing Hatcher Pass, running up a frozen mountain, hiking a Hawaiian mountain, and a ski conditions report for Hemlock Burn. You don't have to be a paying Strava subscriber; the free Strava subscription is enough to participate and see the action. Go to www.strava.com/clubs/mtclubak.

Peter Taylor.



Screenshots from the MCA Strava page.

Mint Hut Renovation Update

Plans are being made for the renovation/addition to the Mint Hut, as approved by the Board of Directors, with work to start on site on July 18 with the flying in of materials. There are several ways for club members to participate in this project.

We need to obtain a Special Use Permit from State Parks. They have indicated that they will provide the permit, but there is paperwork involved in obtaining the permit. We need one person to assist with this.

We need two people to set up the landing zone (LZ) the morning of July 17th, which mainly entails flagging and traffic cones to keep the public out. All materials need to be delivered to the Gold Mint Trailhead on July 17 to our already-set-up LZ. We need a couple trucks with trailers on the 17th to help deliver the materials to the LZ. One person has already agreed to help with this. As the materials will be delivered the day before, we will need security the night of the 17th to be sure nothing wanders off. As the materials are being delivered, we will need two or three people to help arrange the materials into helicopter loads.

Once the project is complete, about July 28, we will need to have the LZ set up again with the traffic cones, etc.

Onsite we need two or three experienced framing carpenters to work on the shell of the addition, including the foundation, walls, loft, and roof framing and metal roofing. We also need one to help with the windows on the existing hut, as this work will be done while the addition is being erected. We could also use two people a day or two early to be onsite and remove all the metal siding on the existing hut.

There will be lots of work for anyone who is not a “carpenter,” but wants to help out. Various tasks include, but are not limited to: insulation, plywood on the interior walls, loft floor framing and decking, bench and shelving building/installation, building wrap (Tyvek) on the exterior, and metal siding.

The new hut needs to be anchored to the ground, so, just as was done on the new Holden Hut, we will have “gabion baskets” at various points that will need to be filled with rocks. The baskets will be smaller than at the Holden Hut, but this a very important task.

On the remodel to the Bomber Hut, it took months for the new windows to arrive, so we have ordered the window and doors, expecting the same delivery period. However, they have already arrived and we now need indoor storage until June. We need an area about 6 feet by 10 feet. One person has already agreed to provide this space in a garage.

The wood is a big package and this is typically the best time to order wood, pricewise. To take advantage of this, we will need an outdoor storage space approximate 10 feet by 30 feet, the bigger the better, in which we can also maneuver a forklift. It may require two such spaces. Wood would most likely be available in March.

In June we will hold a painting party in Anchorage to paint the lumber and plywood that will be exposed inside the hut. This will be a big project in itself, so many people will be needed. Pizza will be provided.

Despite a large grant from the Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation, we have a tight budget. If people are interested in helping, but can't make it to the hut site or the painting party, we could use financial assistance with the purchase of materials. Such items include help with the cost of windows/doors/countertop materials/tables/lumber, building wrap, etc. If you are so inclined, please go to the MCA website (mtnclubak.org), sign-in, click on “Donate,” and make your donation. Please be sure to mention that it is for the Mint Hut and what portion of the project you would like your donation to go toward.

We expect a 10-day duration to complete the work. If you can't stay the full time, we can schedule people for when they are available. We provide food for those who can commit to a longer time duration, but may be able to feed everyone, depending on how many are on site. It may be necessary for some to provide their own food; this will be determined as the project gets closer. Everyone will need to provide their own sleeping arrangement outside the hut.

It would be great if two or three people wanted to go up a day or two earlier (July 16 to 18) to remove all the siding on the existing hut. LEAVE ALL ROOFING ITEMS IN PLACE – DO NOT REMOVE. There are tools in the hut you can use. Please stack all siding materials and compactly as possible in one location over near the outhouse.

Please contact Stan Olsen at (907) 231-3581 to volunteer or Dave Staeheli at (805) 407-7299 to volunteer for the painting party.

Bremner Historic Mining District “Base Bunkhousing,” Pentax Peak (6635 feet), Eastern Chugach Mountains

Text by Frank Lahr



Pentax Peak:
61.01065,
-143.41019



View down the Golconda Creek Valley with Bremner buildings location noted. Photo by Frank Lahr.

In August 2021 my friend Melanie Uhlenhake and I traveled to McCarthy, planning on flying to, and base camping at, Horsefeld, about 70 miles northeast of McCarthy and close to the Canadian border. However, after seeing that there was a lot of rain the prior week and with a couple potentially deep creek crossings to make, two times on each planned long day hike, we reconsidered the plan.

In anticipation of this, I had created a backup plan to go to an area about 30 miles, as the crow flies, southwest of McCarthy. This is the Bremner Historic Mining District and it looked like there were a lot of hiking opportunities in the area. We contacted the air service and arranged the change in itinerary from four nights at Horsefeld to four nights at Bremner. It turned out that there was a flight leaving that same morning to Bremner to pick up a couple hikers who had been there a few days. This was great timing, so we jumped on the new opportunity to explore some mining history and hike around the Bremner area.

The flight out to the Bremner landing strip was smooth and took about 40 minutes. The pilot informed us that the weather in the valley where the airstrip sits can be fickle and there is a better chance than average of being stranded for a time while waiting for weather to clear enough for a plane to reach us for a return flight. After landing in Bremner, we unloaded our gear and the two people leaving Bremner loaded up and flew out. With nobody else in sight, we shouldered our packs and started hiking to the bunkhouse. It was a straightforward hike to the

bunkhouse, but my pack felt heavy and I was relieved that I didn't have to haul it up anything steep or cross anything deep, cold, and flowing. The distance to the bunkhouse is about one and a half miles, one way. We found it unoccupied, so we had it to ourselves. It operates on a first come, first served basis, and is equipped with several bunkbeds and a very handy picnic table inside. Although the bunkbeds are a well-meaning addition, I found a more comfortable spot on the very spacious bunkhouse floor to sleep. There are large windows, protected by moveable shutters, to keep the interior well-lit when they are open. It's a nice perk to have this bunkhouse available. It is not technically a public-use cabin, but visitors are allowed to sleep in it, contrary to what the 2008 guidebook (mentioned later in this report) declared. At least that was the case in 2021 and it is worth checking with the local National Park Service (NPS) office if you're heading out there. There are also many places to camp in this valley.

There were other small buildings in the area to explore after we settled in. There was another bunkhouse that appeared to be for NPS rangers or a caretaker, but it wasn't in use the whole time we were in Bremner. There was another building housing an electrical generator as well as a workshop building with a Ford Model A truck parked in it. There were numerous old tools from the active mining era surrounding the old Ford. We found a stash of old miners' clothing, including shoes and boots, in one of the rooms of the main bunkhouse. Plenty of cans of “Old Dutch Cleanser” and “Lennox Lye” were stored on

the shelves, too, so cleanliness must have been a priority in the mining days. There was also a small museum of mining artifacts from the surrounding area in a separate room of the main bunkhouse. We focused on keeping the front door of the bunkhouse shut, as we did hear what sounded like a few small four-legged denizens of the local wilderness running around underneath the floor. Fortunately, they never joined us inside the living area.

This site is owned and maintained by the NPS. Lode mining for gold was carried out here from about 1927 until the early 1940s. However, before that period, placer miners had arrived around 1901. There are numerous local mines to hike to and all of them are in general disrepair and of course dangerous to enter. Per the NPS website, “The Bremner District is a historic vernacular landscape with exceptional historical integrity that preserves a

the maps I have available. I used the Gaia app to determine distance and elevation gain on the hikes.

The day we arrived at Bremner, we climbed up the valley behind the bunkhouse to Power Creek Lake and farther up to a pass above it giving us an excellent view to the north. This was a good afternoon hike at just over four miles round trip and 1550 feet of elevation gain. The name Power Creek Lake made sense to us when we saw the partial remains of a large-diameter water pipe running from the lake down the mountain to the generator shack where it was used to supply hydroelectric power to run the (still-present) electrical generator. We also hiked out to the Yellowband Mine site, which is an easy hike of about two miles round trip and 500 feet of elevation gain from the bunkhouse.



Bremner bunkhouse. Photo by Frank Lahr.

After returning to the bunkhouse, Melanie got a fire going in the barrel stove. A warming fire here takes persistence and hard work every time (and all the time) you want warmth from it. Melanie proved to be an expert fire tender with the minimal scraps of burning material available. There are no trees nearby and so no dead wood waiting to be burned. During the active mining era, the miners would travel down to Monahan Creek on a tractor to collect firewood. Perhaps some commercial firelogs would be worthwhile to haul in if staying in the bunkhouse. If the bunkhouse were occupied, the occupants would surely welcome the person who carried the firelogs all that way!

The next day, we set out for Corner Pocket Lake, which is about eight miles round trip. This is a beautiful hike up the main valley along Golconda Creek to

broad spectrum of mining technologies and infrastructure, existing as standing structures, surface remains, isolated artifacts, and archaeological sites. In the absence of major disturbances, the District is an exceptional example of a small-scale mining landscape, rarely so well preserved.” The NPS goes on to state, “The Bremner Historic Mining District embodies its period of twentieth-century mining, illustrating both its mining process and its evolutionary sequence. Unusually complete, it retains virtually all of its historic components, including an important placer site, a camp, four discrete lode mines, a mill, and an associated transportation network.”

Besides all of that, we did some excellent hikes in generally great weather in the area. Referring to the book [Hiking Alaska's Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve: From Day Hikes to Backcountry Treks](#) by Greg Fensterman (2008), I will use the names of areas and hikes found in this book as those names are different than what appear on a map, or simply don't appear on *Scree*—April 2024

Bremner Pass, which leads to the Monahan Creek Valley. It's a mellow hike until turning right, near Jack Snipe Lake, and heading south up into the valley toward Corner Pocket Lake. We made our way up along Pocket Creek and at one point we traveled through a narrow gorge. We had chosen to walk on the right side (facing upstream) of the creek, but then found ourselves facing a dead-end at a high cliff dropping into the very full creek in the gorge area. The left side of the creek looked like a better bet, so we backtracked and found a crossing over the creek. Higher up the valley we found a fairly large and spectacular waterfall just below the main lake. We also found a grassy area next to it to rest and soak up the sun. However, the weather was cold enough that August day, that we stayed barely warm enough to sit, even when the sun was directly on us. After eating some snacks, we continued around the lake and headed up toward the small glacier that fed the lake. From this high plateau, where the lake sat, we made our return descent on the

other side of the valley from the waterfall through a series of large boulders and talus, down the gorge and then farther down to Jack Snipe Lake. We noted a brown bear romping around next to, and then in, the lake. We watched for a while, but then made a hasty retreat toward the bunkhouse.

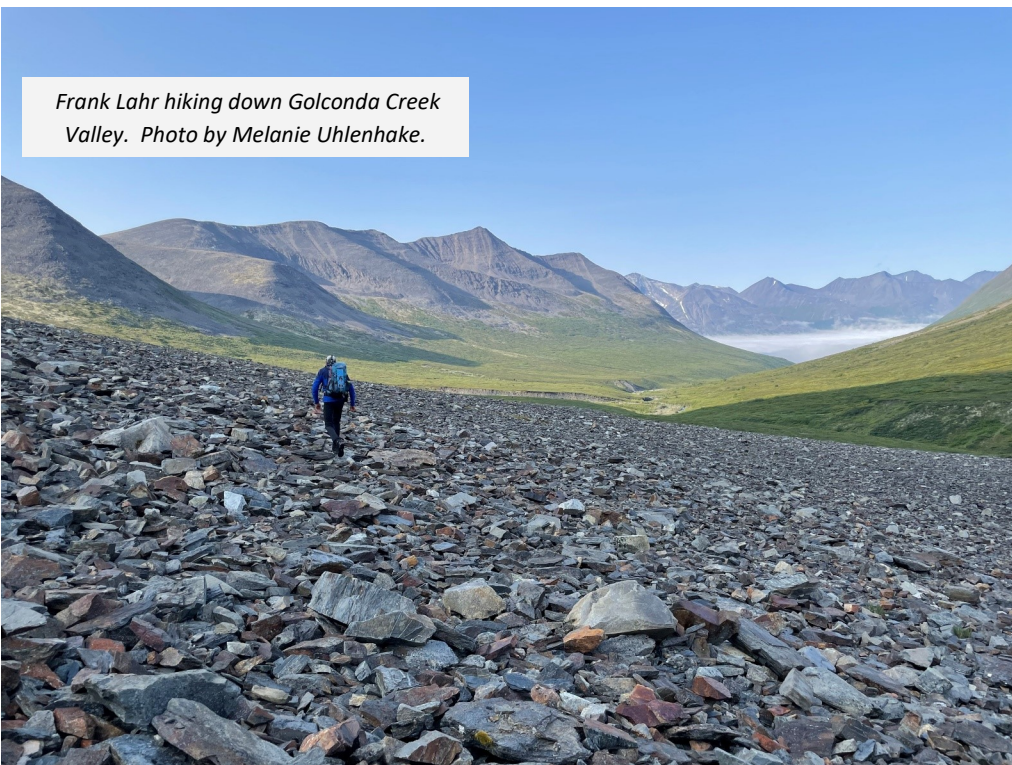
After eight miles round trip and 1770 feet of elevation gain, we felt like we hadn't had a good workout yet on this sunny day, so after returning to the bunkhouse, we refreshed our daypack supplies for another hike. Our goal then was to head up to the valley to the southeast of the bunkhouse. Up in the valley, we saw more mining ruins including an old Chevy vehicle with wooden wheels and a sign on it stating that it is private property and "Do Not Touch." Without touching it, we traveled up the nearby glacier and found a lot of timber and debris, from what must have been an old mine [Ed. note: *the Sheriff Mine*], spread out on the glacier. It was late in the day and we figured we could come back up this valley another day and try to hike up the approximately-7420-foot Adair Peak that is the highest point in the area and overlooks everything. So, we returned to the bunkhouse. From the bunkhouse, this hike was four miles round trip with 1150 feet of elevation gain.



Melanie Uhlenhake standing above the waterfall below Corner Pocket Lake. Photo by Frank Lahr.

After a good rest night in the bunkhouse, we headed for Golden Pond and possibly climbing the unnamed 6635-foot peak next to it. We hiked down the Golconda Creek Valley, passing the airstrip, which was where the trail became harder to follow. We figured out a route and ended up on hiker's left (east) side of the valley as we approached Standard Creek. Trying to stay higher

above the valley, we contoured around the corner into the Standard Creek Valley, which led up to Golden Pond. Side-hilling was the name of the game until we reached Golden Pond, which to me looked more the size of a lake than a pond. The weather was beautiful and sunny. We decided to climb the 6635-foot peak next to the lake right away, before eating lunch. We started up the peak and found that it was a straightforward hike up on scree and talus. After about an hour, we reached the summit. No sign of anyone having been there before, but who knows? [Ed. note: *Mat Brunton reportedly climbed Peak 6635 on July 23, 2021.*] (There is a visitor logbook in the bunkhouse and one can see records of people who have hiked



Frank Lahr hiking down Golconda Creek Valley. Photo by Melanie Uhlenhake.

between Tebay Lakes and Bremner. They have walked past this peak when passing Golden Pond.) The view of the glaciers and mountains to the south was incredible from the summit. We could also see the Bremner bunkhouse down below to the north and Adair Peak was visible. After enjoying the view for a while, we descended to the “pond.” Once there, we ate some lunch and prepared to return down the valley. However, as I was prepping to leave, I realized I couldn’t find my binoculars that we had just used on the summit. I figured that because I had just used them on the summit, then that is probably where they were now laying. Right away Melanie suggested we should go back up to get them. But she said she wouldn’t carry her pack and instead would leave it at the bottom of the peak. I suggested that she stay with the packs while I would trudge back up the peak in what seemed like a Sisyphean task. She insisted on going, too, and we both ended up dropping our packs at the base and hoofing it up the peak. I grabbed my food bag, wallet, car keys, and cell phone out of my pack, so I knew I’d still have them if an animal were to drag away my pack. Melanie was already making her way up the peak when I finally got my stuff together and start hiking up. Unencumbered by our packs, we get to the top in about 35 minutes and I found the binoculars laying just where I left them. Melanie headed back down immediately. I lingered for a few more minutes, enjoying the views, yet again, and then made a 25-minute descent back to where our packs were still sitting. This extra climb added 1700 vertical feet to the day. We jokingly named this unnamed peak (unnamed on my maps, anyway) Pentax Peak, after the brand name of my binoculars.

We headed back to the bunkhouse by side-hilling along the valley again and turned north into the main Golconda Creek Valley. Upon arrival back at the bunkhouse, we were both tired and our feet hurt, probably from all the side-hilling! With the additional second climb up the peak, we had covered 14 miles with about 5200 feet of elevation gain that day.

The next day, the plan was to go explore the mine we found in the valley across from the bunkhouse a couple days prior and possibly climb Adair Peak. During the night, snow had fallen to about the 6000-foot level on the nearby ridges. We headed up the easy trail to the glacier above the mining ruins, and the old Chevy, and found a route that may have been less steep, allowing us access to the top. The route we used was still very steep scree and talus and a little unnerving. We got 300 to 400 feet above the glacier and from this vantage point we could see the high mine ruins well above us much better (especially with my binoculars!). But snow started falling and visibility dropped dramatically. Neither of us liked the weather conditions for continuing up. The route up to just the mine looked risky from where we were and the summit was well beyond that. Before descending we saw the old tram cables, far above us, that must have been used to access the mine while it was operational. We dropped back down into the valley and returned to the bunkhouse after traveling just over six miles round trip with 2000 feet of elevation gain.

On our final morning the weather was not looking great for a flight to retrieve us. I used my InReach to text the air service and give them my weather observations. We packed up our

gear and made our way down to the airstrip in case they did get a plane out to us. After hearing nothing back from the air service for a while, we were relieved when they texted and said that the pilot was a few minutes from taking off. The clouds now looked far enough above the airstrip to allow a plane to reach us, according to what the drop-off pilot told me. After landing, the pilot said that the weather was marginal for flying in the valley. However, we were able to take off and first fly to the south to look at the landing conditions near the Fan Glacier area because he was scheduled to make a



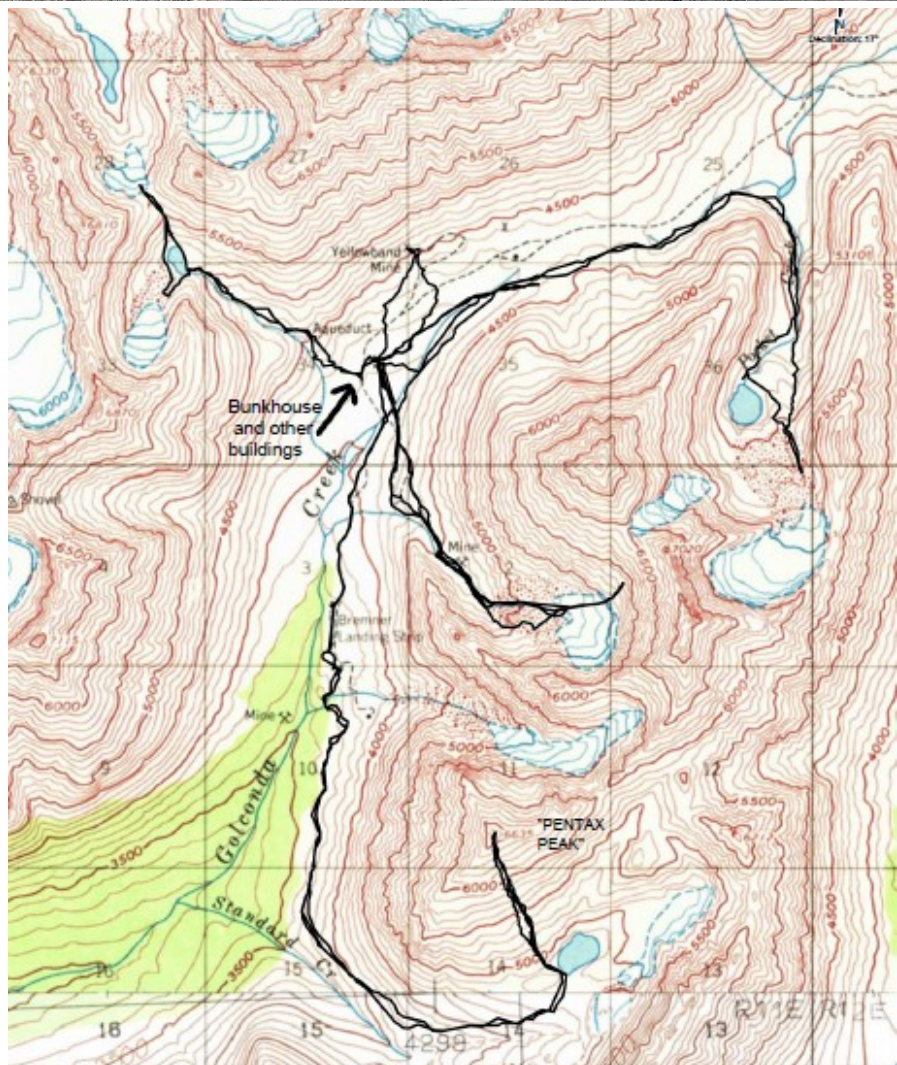
View down the gorge toward Jack Snipe Lake. Photo by Melanie Uhlenhake.

View from top of Peak 6635 ("Pentax Peak") toward Golconda Creek Valley. Adair Peak is at right mid-distance. Photo by Melanie Uhlenhake.



pickup there later that day, after he dropped us off. A nice extra sightseeing tour for us. We returned safely to McCarthy.

We covered a total of about 38 miles and gained just over 12,000 feet of elevation during our stay at Bremner. Most of the hiking was fairly mellow and we enjoyed great weather overall. There are more opportunities for hiking out there than the ones we did.



Right: Map of hiking routes in this report.

Shark's Tooth (5750 feet) Southeast Ridge, First Winter Ascent, Coast Mountains

Text by Seth Classen

IV, 2,000 feet, March 12th-13th, 2023



Shark's
Tooth:
58.71881,
-134.75845

Dylan Miller and I were eating freeze-dried dinners under a boulder in our favorite valley as the last light of the day began to fade to black. Once again, we were utilizing the same night-push strategy that we adopted previously for missions to the Mendenhall Towers. This time, however, we were in Davies Valley, likely one of the best and most consistent ice-climbing habitats Juneau has to offer. The main attractions hang off a roughly 800-foot wall, just out of reach of a continually calving icefall that hangs above the rear of the valley. But the excellent ice climbing wasn't our only lure to the valley; bigger plans were afoot. A few days earlier, while deliberating between two potential objectives that happened to be relatively close to each other, the cunning Dylan Miller suggested a plan. Thus, immediately after spending the day climbing a lovely smear called "The Terminator" (WI4+/5), we ate a quick dinner, stashed the ice screws we didn't need, and started marching toward the Shark's Tooth.

The Shark's Tooth hides from those who would seek it in a neighboring valley to the northeast of Davies. It bears a strikingly toothy shape and has some great quality granite. With some friends in the summer, Dylan Miller had established routes on both the southeast ridge and the south rib. We chose the easier southeast ridge that went at 5.7 to be our choice for the winter ascent.

From our dinner boulder we headed north, skinning up a steep tree-lined slope aiming for the bottom of a gully that fed down from the upper bowl below Dean Peak (5883 feet). The snow was deep and rotten, and the skinning was difficult, but once we gained the gully, progress became easier. The gully itself was hard packed from avalanching, so we put skis on our packs and booted up to the upper bowl. From there, we delicately skinned up and across the bowl over icy, wind-scoured snow. While focusing intently on keeping the metal edges of my skis engaged without slipping into dark oblivion below, I mourned the loss of my whippet head ski pole that had gone missing a few weeks prior.



Seth Classen and Shark's Tooth. Photo by Dylan Miller.

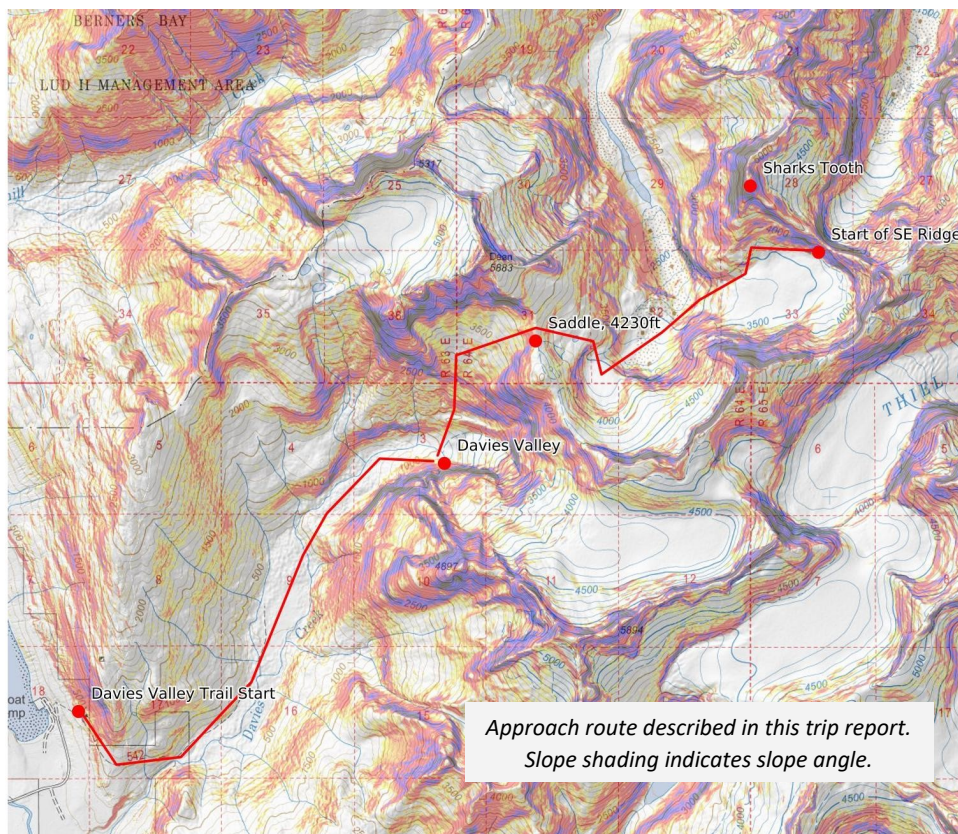
We gained the saddle roughly 3500 feet above where we started after dinner, and then enjoyed a stunning view of the stars, and nothing else. By then it had been dark for hours, and not even the moon was out. The stars were extra bright and luminous, but all we could make out aside from them were the ever so slightly darker shapes of the surrounding mountains. De-



Davies Valley view from upper bowl. Photo by Dylan Miller.

spite the lack of visual aid, Dylan shot down the slope into the next valley, dodging an occasional crack as well as one large and deceptive moulin. I skied behind, following his headlamp and wondering what invisible force was guiding him as he nailed the descent. Soon after, we started the slog up the slope leading to the base of the Shark's Tooth. I looked up at where it was supposed to be and could just barely see it against the blackness of the space behind it. Luckily, Dylan had previous knowledge of the area from that summer, so he found the way to the beginning of the route in the dark without a hitch. We traversed under the south face and then under the southeast ridge, for what felt like a long time. After a while we found what we were looking for, a weakness that would give us access to the ridge proper. We used a system of fairly low-angle AI2 ramps that granted us access to the ridge, where we then got out the stove. We took turns holding the stove and warming it with our hands so that it would eventually turn snow into drinking water. Watching the little old Jetboil struggle in the sub-zero winter temperatures inspired some feelings of concern and realization of a potential oversight in the planning worked out by our past selves. But all was well, and after an hour we had our water and continued on our way. The start of the ridge was easy, and we weaved our way around gendarmes and up snow and rime ramps as the slope began to incline. Eventually, we came to the first real pitch on the ridge, which was a 60-foot rock headwall with two options for passage. Dylan took the lead and decided to take the option on the left which went around a corner and out of sight. Watching Dylan tediously walk his front points around the corner, I could tell it was going to be a scrappy pitch, especially in the ski boots we were both wearing. By then the sun was coming back up, and light had returned. I stood while belaying and looked across the valley to the saddle and the slope that we had skied down the previous night. While thinking about the toilsome journey back to Davies Valley and then farther from there back to the cars, I began to doze off in a series of semi-continuous moments spanning minutes. I braced myself against a compelling force to sleep that arrived in waves with increasing frequency. At some point, I distinguished an audible yell which roused my awareness and meant that the belay was on. In an instant, I was fully awake and began to climb after Dylan. After creeping around the corner, I continued up a series of fun moves with delicate footwork that made me thankful to be the one following. Farther up, the rocks were covered in rime and that type of frozen snow that provided nothing of use for an ice tool. I

continued up and then was surprised to spot one of Dylan's Nomics, hammered into a manky crack above me and clipped for protection. I continued another five moves and then retrieved Dylan's second tool from another crack. I found out later that he pounded it in with the snow picket we brought (so it was useful!). Once past the second fixed tool, I then found savage claw marks in the rime that were left by Dylan as he continued to forge the rest of the way to the top with just his gloved hands. Once I gained the top of the gendarme, I complimented Dylan's determination and resourcefulness, and in turn, he showed me the belay he had made, which mainly consisted of the snow picket hammered mercilessly into a large crack. Now past the crux pitch, we climbed up another 30-foot step of snow and rime and then onto the final summit scramble. After briefly toasting our success with one last snack bar, we resigned ourselves to what would be a mere 10-hour descent. Several rappels and some ridge walking got us off the Shark's Tooth and we booked it across the valley and back up to the saddle. This time on the saddle during the day, we could look back at the Shark's Tooth and appreciate how magnificently it dominated the surrounding landscape and yet remained tucked away and hidden from any onlookers on the Glacier Highway. It is certainly a gem for the area, and the immaculate views from the rising ridge gave the climb a fun and classic feel while at the same time being very much removed from any kind of "scene." We skied down the icy bowl back into Davies Valley and retrieved the ice climbing gear that we stashed by the dinner boulder. Three and a half hours after that we arrived at the car, tired as dogs and very happy to complete our 36-hour push and first winter ascent of the Shark's Tooth.



To Be or Not Two Bee, a Peak, Peak 5640, Western Chugach Mountains

Text and photos by Wayne Todd



Peak 5640:
61.40367,
-148.89146

Mike Miller, Steve Wilson, Carrie Wang, and I rally at 9 a.m. for what I've estimated to be a 10-hour (plus or minus an hour) trip (though I'm really thinking more like 8 to 9 hours). Biking around Eklutna Lake with just a daypack is such a pleasure, especially compared to the years of biking with a robust heavy pack, which is not good for your back, by the way. It's good to see Mike can bike as well on a two-wheeler as well as a uni-wheeler.

Walking our bikes a short way up the Bold Valley Trail (BVT) for a hidey hole, we see two other stashed bikes. Wonder what they're up to. Hiking up the BVT, I'm wondering how bad the off-trail brush is going to be, as we will jump off to the north somewhere higher. Soon we're pushing through alder, on the trail, which continues for over a mile (fantasies about having a brush hog materialize).

On a natural bench at 3000 feet (exactly), we bail off for alpine hiking, which is knee-high foliage at most.

The weather is great: that is cooler than most of June, sporadic cloud cover, a light breeze, no smoke, and the off-trail travel is easy, company is wonderful, flowers are still popping, horsetails are still spring green on north slopes, we're on a semi-relaxed pace, the valleys are lush, streams are running full, bugs are mostly non-existent ...

I comment, "This is too idyllic of a day; what's wrong here?" At a break spot, I check Gaia, oops, I meant to go up that valley. Looking big picture though, our now-clockwise approach will add less than a mile and make for a loop. Presto. A glider silently soars over eastward.

We traverse fairly steep slopes to gain the saddle north of Bleak Peak (5430 feet). The "bump" between Bleak and Peak 5640 is very rugged and steep. Luckily, we easily traverse on scree/talus on the north side, finding a very-intact arrow with a hunting tip. It's left there as no one has a way to carry it without shredding something. Soon after, we find a short, older piece of cord. Related to the arrow?

We startle a herd of sheep just below to the south that make quick time on a trail toward Bright Peak (5745 feet). From the saddle the fairly easy terrain seems 500-foot worthy. (Various

From left: Carrie Wang, Steve Wilson, and Mike Miller ascending the last ridge below the summit of Peak 5640.



Gaias put it between 500 and 550 feet.)

From the top we have views of the Knik Valley (including Knik Lodge), Hunter Creek, the deep Chugach, a green valley below us west and a steeper rocky valley east. The B peaks are cloud-capped. It's now 5 o'clock. Hmm, so much for a 10-hour day, as we're already at 8 hours. "What time does it get dark?"

We exit a bit more hurriedly than our morning pace. At the saddle between Bleak and grunge bump, we drop east on some fine, joggable scree. The valley onward is low-angle, low-brush, but with pockets of bursting flowers, interesting geography (orange smear in boulder, light-green covered gravel beds). Just above the stream emergence, and water refill area, I do a jig with cussing as I get stung numerous times on my head. Just above where this stream converges with the southeastern stream, water magically cascades out the hillside, with flowers around, of course.

We essentially traverse without any gain or loss to access the

Mike Miller, Carrie Wang, and Steve Wilson on the summit of Peak 5640.



northeast BVT ridgeline. The evening light is most pleasing. At a break, well above our earlier ingress crossing, we note seriously dark clouds following us. A steeper, fireweed-accented descent gets us just above the emergence of Sdaylent Creek, so no stream crossing is even needed.

The disturbingly dark clouds overtake us and Mike states, "I think we're in for it," donning rain top and bottoms. I nonchalantly don my top, then race to get my rain pants on as the clouds release intense rain and hail. Thunder abounds, some quite soon after lightning. The intense thunderstorm continues for just ¼ hour, which Mike truly enjoys, then moves south. Steve leads the way through the water-drenched trail alders.

By the arrival at the bikes, it's sunny and warm enough to wear just a dry shirt, very nice. Cruising around the lake, well before darkness, the magical day is concluding, then, dang it, another cloudburst, just enough to get clothes wet. But there are vehicles that can blow warm air ...

July 16, 2019. 12.5 hours (OK, 10 hours plus or minus 3 hours, pushed pace on more-direct route in and out perhaps 10 hours), 24 miles (10 on bicycle). 5500 feet of elevation gain.

Mike Miller just before the maelstrom.



Interesting geology.



“Cold Wars” on The Mooses Tooth (10335 feet), Alaska Range

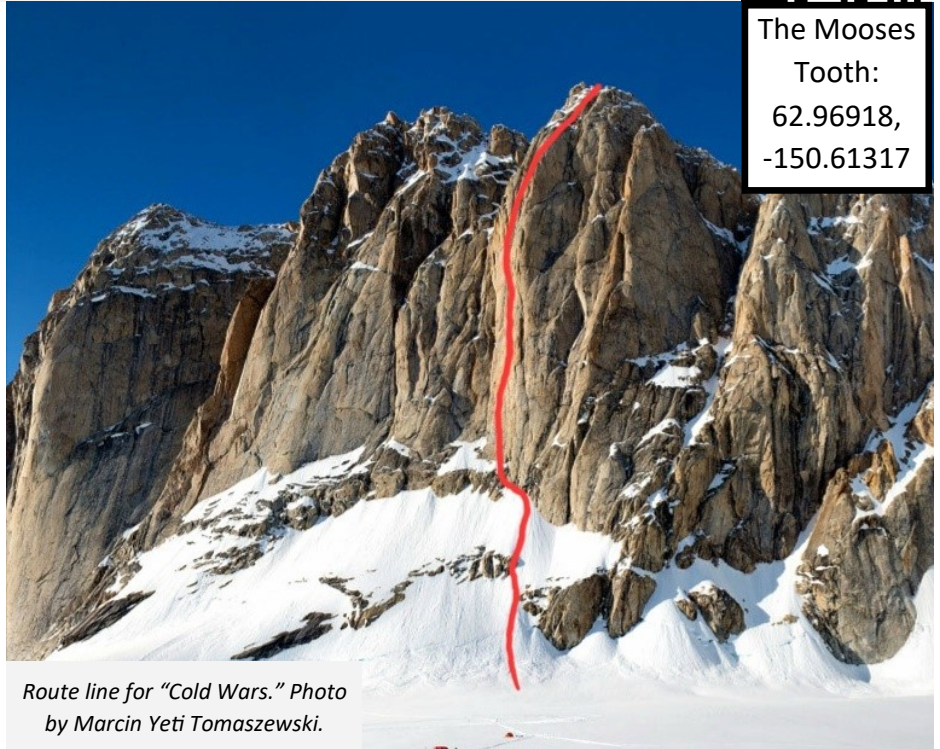
Text by Marcin Yeti Tomaszewski

February 28 to March 8, 2024



The Mooses
Tooth:
62.96918,
-150.61317

When Paweł Hałdaś and I were setting off for Alaska, we had no definite plans. We considered two areas: the Kichatna massif and The Mooses Tooth. The decision came quite naturally, we felt free to make this choice based on our feelings and intuition. We chose The Mooses Tooth peaks from the south. Searching the web before the trip, I did not find much information about the existing routes in these areas, the media was silent on the subject of winter big-wall ascents in Alaska. So, we decided to let go, take it easy, and not focus on it, but just open ourselves up to the adventure. To stand in front of the wall pointing a finger at the spot on the face where we want to climb ... like a child standing on their toes, beside their parent, indicating a coveted cookie behind the counter of a confectionery shop. Such freedom in choosing "cookies" is a wonderful feeling, but it does not come by itself. On the first morning, we set the alarm clock for 6 a.m., left the tent briskly at 7 a.m. only to return to it even more briskly less than a minute later! To our still warm sleeping bags. It was really cold. It immediately "welded" the fingers and toes, which went numb. From that moment on, I switched my alarm clock to 7 o'clock when it was slightly better. Or at least that's what we told ourselves. The approach to the wall between the main and western summits of the massif did not look optimistic. I knew that at this time of year ice was just forming and we could not count on a stable snow cover, so for fear of avalanches, we decided to ascend the 60-to-70-degree slope by using a tight rope belay between the rocks. Heavy big-wall bags did not help; when carrying them from the base camp to the wall we shifted from drifted, high-high snow to crystallizing firn. As soon as we reached the first rocks of the wall, we set up an anchor and hung our Delta3p portaledge, where we transported all the equipment the next day. The following day we started climbing, without fixing ropes or returning to the base camp. The InReach text messenger we took to the wall showed us low temperatures but, on the other hand, quite a few sunny days. As it turned out later, this affected our sunny photographic documentation from this climb. In the bad weather, snowfall and with a lack of sunshine, few photos and a short film cost us a time-consuming and stressful restoration of feeling in our hands. "We did it again," I thought almost each time I managed to restore circulation. During this activity it was vital to tuck the



Route line for "Cold Wars." Photo by Marcin Yeti Tomaszewski.

removed gloves under one's jacket so that they did not turn into an icicle in an instant. As on my recent expeditions, I applied the principle that if I lose contact with my toes or fingers, I stop where I am and warm up as long as it takes. This works and, thanks to this method, during my last expeditions both my partners and I did not suffer even the slightest frostbite. From the moment we pushed onto the first pitches of the face, the battle with winter and, secondarily, the wall began. The latter surprised us with sand-filled and rock-flooded crevices. On most of the pitches, we placed between 70% and 80% of the "bird beaks," singles, and other vertical pitons, which worked very well up to A2-A3 level. It was only in second place that we used "cams," with only a few standard pitons on the whole route. The climb required a lot of imagination and creativity, despite the logical feature in the form of a crack that led us through the wall! After fixing a few hundred meters, we moved our bivouac to a convenient shelf with snow higher up the wall. We needed this snow for cooking. One bag thrown into the tent was enough to make dinner and breakfast. The fuel we took to the wall, despite being heated in our sleeping bags all night, worked too sluggishly for us to be able to melt large amounts of water, so instead of cereal with milk in the morning we had half a chocolate and a bar, with warm coffee. The time spent in the wall and racing with the successive weather breakdowns was key. Every two days we experienced snowfall, releasing intense powder-snow avalanches from the mountain,

removed gloves under one's jacket so that they did not turn into an icicle in an instant. As on my recent expeditions, I applied the principle that if I lose contact with my toes or fingers, I stop where I am and warm up as long as it takes. This works and, thanks to this method, during my last expeditions both my partners and I did not suffer even the slightest frostbite. From the moment we pushed onto the first pitches of the face, the battle with winter and, secondarily, the wall began. The latter surprised us with sand-filled and rock-flooded crevices. On most of the pitches, we placed between 70% and 80% of the "bird beaks," singles, and other vertical pitons, which worked very well up to A2-A3 level. It was only in second place that we used "cams," with only a few standard pitons on the whole route. The climb required a lot of imagination and creativity, despite the logical feature in the form of a crack that led us through the wall! After fixing a few hundred meters, we moved our bivouac to a convenient shelf with snow higher up the wall. We needed this snow for cooking. One bag thrown into the tent was enough to make dinner and breakfast. The fuel we took to the wall, despite being heated in our sleeping bags all night, worked too sluggishly for us to be able to melt large amounts of water, so instead of cereal with milk in the morning we had half a chocolate and a bar, with warm coffee. The time spent in the wall and racing with the successive weather breakdowns was key. Every two days we experienced snowfall, releasing intense powder-snow avalanches from the mountain,

which in turn tested whether we still wanted to stay where we were and brazenly climb up. Temperatures dropped to around -30 degrees Celsius during the day. We took turns at leading each day and I don't know who was in a better position – the leader or the belayer. The latter, at the anchor, over time fell into the drowsy embrace of winter, which toyed with us effortlessly, completely ignoring us. It was simply showing its frosty face. We were the ones fighting, not it. The warmest down jackets surrendered to the pressure of the ice army after a few hours. The leader felt much warmer, but had to patiently deal with this strange formation meter by meter. Not difficult in the technical sense, but still. Standing at the foot of the wall, all we could see was its rock face, but from the images downloaded from the web, it was clear that there were a few pitches of mixed climbing ahead of us. And so it was. On March 8, the tenth day of climbing and International Women's Day, we decided to give ourselves a present on this occasion and make a summit push. After climbing the monolithic wall, we abseiled from the last anchor and set off into the unknown, toward the summit. On that day the weather was on our side. Over the course of six full pitches, we tackled both aid and free climbing parts, there was some firn and snow and finally ... the summit. Paweł got there first. "Go," I said, "feel it. Take the first steps. I already know the feeling; it will stay with you 'til the end, you will see." ... In the full sunshine I reached my partner, who was sitting smiling in the snow. "You can't get any higher!" he shouted. All around us there were the Alaskan mountains below, empty at this time of year. Dazzling! Paweł and I were very lucky, but I also know that this luck wouldn't have worked if we hadn't put our whole hearts into this climb. Go into the wall without looking down, just like a child who, fighting a fear of heights high on a ladder, doesn't look under his feet. This childhood method works. Moments like this confirm to me how important it is to be aware, to wisely lead your human reflexes and thoughts astray just to look at the world from a different angle, if only for one moment. To face



Marcin Yeti Tomaszewski aids up "Cold Wars" on the south face of the west ridge of The Mooses Tooth. Photo by Paweł Hałdaś.

humanity? Perhaps become someone else for a moment? And then come back. It's something inexplicably strange to me as, after all, we move along stone pavements on our return home just like everyone else. We are only different in our choices. The longer I climb, the more I know that climbing is only a tool, perhaps the key, to something bigger. The longer I climb, the more I have humility and affection for people as well as self-confidence, which is also important in our human relationships. I smile more often and am able to give more of myself to loved ones and beyond. To what else? I don't know yet, but I will certainly find out.

"Cold Wars," The Mooses Tooth, south face of west ridge, 19 pitches, 980 meters (730 meters A3, M5; 250 meters snow/firn to 60 to 70 degrees).



Paweł Hałdaś and Marcin Yeti Tomaszewski at the top of "Cold Wars" on the west ridge of The Mooses Tooth. Photo by Marcin Yeti Tomaszewski.

Peace

By Frank E. Baker



Grizzly Bear
Lake:
61.09376,
-149.22771

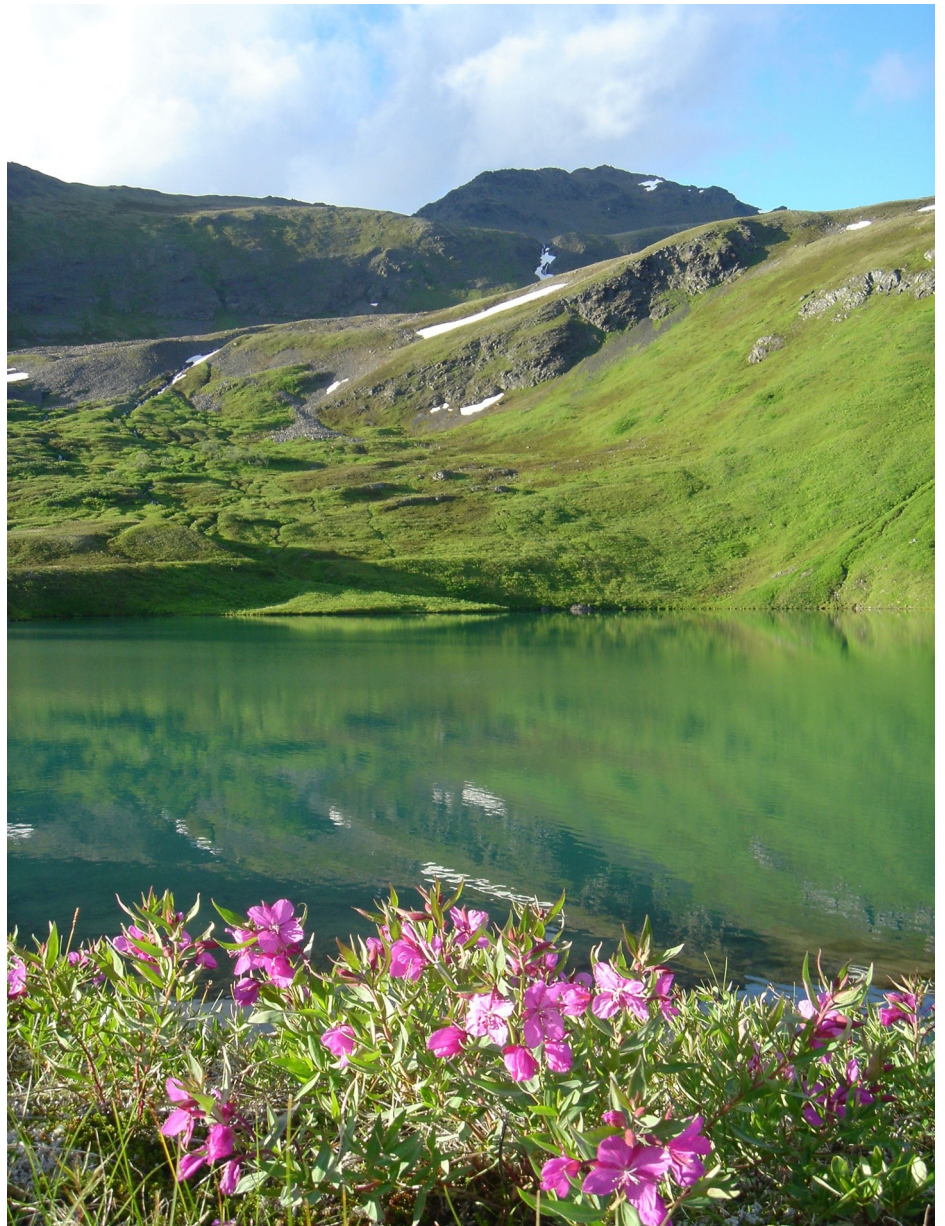
The land's face changes
in half-century spans,
green invading the rocky moraine
left by melting glaciers.

During America's Great Depression,
World War II,
atomic explosions over
Hiroshima and Nagasaki,
Korea and Vietnam wars,
the conquest of Everest,
first man on the moon,
9-11,
Middle East wars,

this lake has remained
much the same...
in summer
bordered by grassy slopes,
glacier-carved mountains,
and for a few weeks every year,
a few flowers to sweeten the air;
in winter,
a flat, smooth space
within an endless expanse
of snowy whiteness.

If somehow, one by one,
every person on earth
could sit by this lake
for a few silent moments,
as I sit here now,

would we begin to move
toward world peace?



Grizzly Bear Lake. Photo by Frank E. Baker.

Peak of the Month: Bivouac Peak

Text by Steve Gruhn

Mountain Range: Alaska Range; Hayes Range

Borough: Unorganized Borough

Drainages: Augustana Glacier and Eureka Creek

Latitude/Longitude: 63° 22' 41" North, 145° 59' 3" West



Elevation: 7708 feet

Adjacent Peaks: Peak 7535 in the Black Rapids Glacier and Eureka Creek drainages; Peak 6425 in the North Fork of Augustana Creek and South Fork of Augustana Creek drainages; Halcyon Peak (6378 feet); and Peak 6346 in the North Fork of Rainy Creek, West Fork of Rainy Creek, and Eureka Creek drainages

Distinctness: 1283 feet from Peak 7535

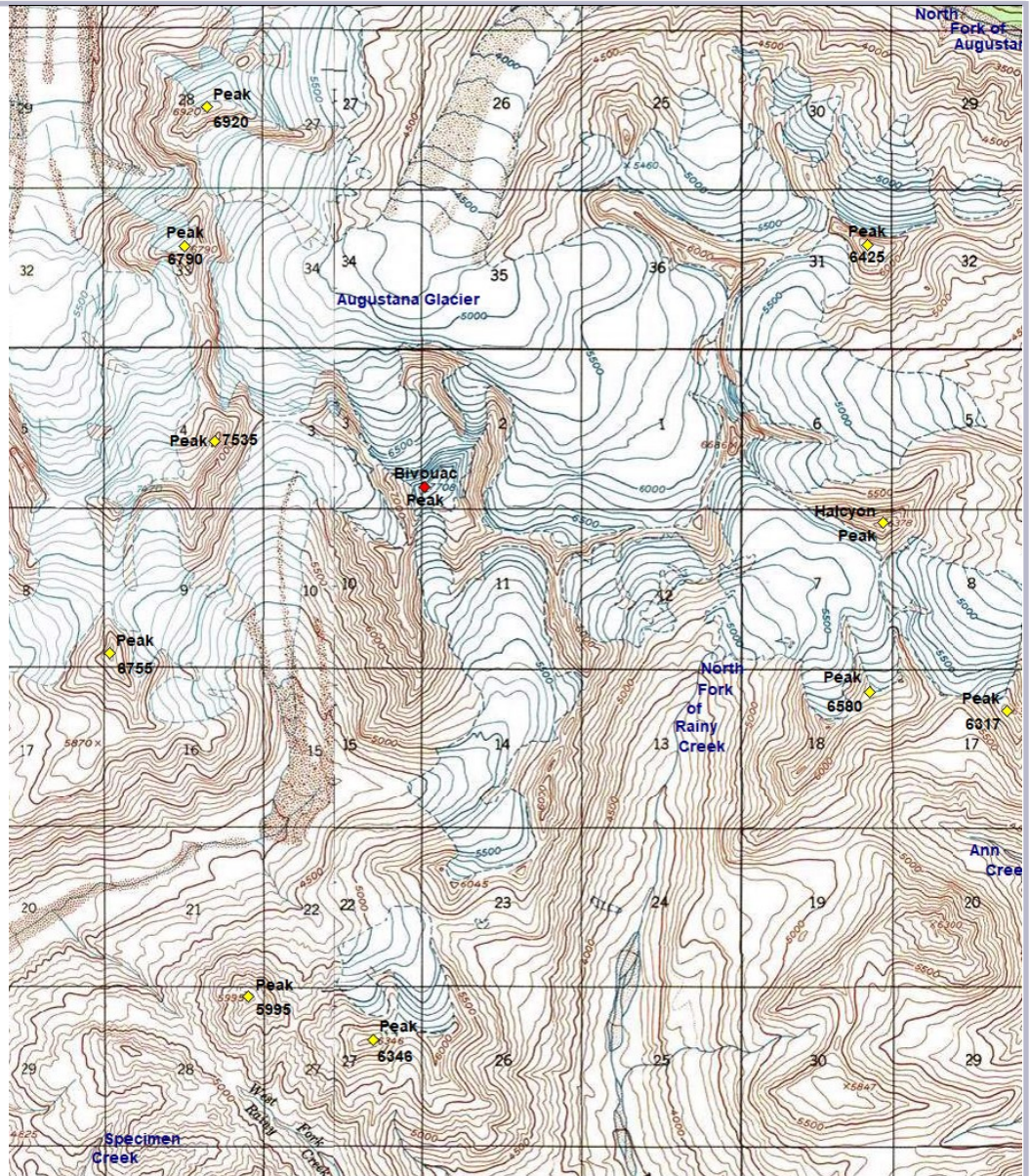
Prominence: 1283 feet from Peak 7886 in the Black Rapids Glacier and Eureka Creek drainages

USGS Maps: 1:63,360: *Mt. Hayes (B-4)*, 1:25,000: *Mount Hayes B-4 NW*

First Recorded Ascent: February 16, 1969, by Sam Corbin, Tom Kensler, and Daniel Osborne

Route of First Recorded Ascent: East ridge

Access Point: Richardson Highway bridge over Trims Creek



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

Bivouac Peak is the highest peak in the Augustana Creek drainage in the southeastern Hayes Range. Because the Delta River is between the Richardson Highway and Bivouac Peak most ascents of the peak to date have been in the winter and spring when the frozen river greatly eased access.

On February 15, 1969, Sam Corbin, Tom Kensler, and Dan-

iel Osborne skied from the north side of the Richardson Highway bridge over Trims Creek up the Augustana Creek drainage, where they established a camp a quarter mile below the terminus of the Augustana Glacier for the first night of their planned two-day trip. On February 16 they ascended the east ridge of the highest peak in the Augustana Creek drainage, arriving at the summit at sunset. They descended until forced by the darkness to chop out a

place to bivouac on the Augustana Glacier headwall. Descending the Augustana Glacier the next morning, Osborne lost a ski while arresting Corbin's fall and resorted to cutting his remaining ski in half, affixing a spare tip to the rear half, and using a crampon for a binding to return to the trailhead a day after their planned exit. To commemorate their being benighted, they assigned the name Bivouac Peak to the 7708-foot summit that they climbed. The name, despite its appearance on the USGS' *Mt. Hayes, Alaska* map, remains unofficial.

On April 10, 1976, a party of Alaska Alpine Club members ascended the South Fork of Augustana Creek and established a camp west of the creek near the base of the east ridge of Bivouac Peak. The following day they ascended Point 6686 on the east ridge of Bivouac Peak and then skied back to the Richardson Highway.

From March 19 to 21, 2010, the Alaska Alpine Club sponsored a trip to climb Bivouac Peak from the Richardson Highway bridge over Michael Creek. That trip was but one of many frequent Alaska Alpine Club-sponsored trips with the north ridge of Bivouac Peak as the objective.

On April 20, 2013, Jeff Benowitz, Ryan Cudo, Nick Janssen, Cassandra Liesenfeld, Keaton Shepherd, and Rob Wing started out from the Richardson Highway and skied up the



Kassandra Liesenfeld ascending the northeast ridge of Bivouac Peak. Photo by Ryan Cudo.



Above: Tom Kensler (left) and Daniel Osborne near the summit of Bivouac Peak, viewing southeast. Photo by Sam Corbin.

Augustana Creek drainage and established a camp near the Augustana Glacier. The following day they climbed Bivouac Peak via its northeast ridge. En route Liesenfeld found a crevasse the hard way, but Shepherd extricated her without any harm.

On February 26, 2022, Sawyer Huffman, Shane Ohms, and Rowland Powers ascended the east ridge of Bivouac Peak and returned to their camp by noon. Ohms reported that the Augustana Glacier had become "crevasse-riddled." That afternoon Ohms and Powers ascended Peak 6790 about two miles northwest of Bivouac Peak via a gully on its southeast face.

The information for this column came from the "Oddings and Endings" section of the March 1969 *Scree*; from a report titled "Fall 1975 Climbing Class," which was published in the May, June, July, August, September, October 1976 *Descent*; from Stan Justice's book, *Delta Range: A Mountaineering Playground*; and from my correspondence with Benowitz, Cudo, Justice, Kensler, Liesenfeld, Ohms, and Osborne.

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

February 28, 2024 6:30-8:30 p.m. at 2425 Hialeah Drive, Anchorage

Roll Call

Peter Taylor (President) – Present

Rebecca Marks (Vice President) – Present

Donell Irwin (Secretary) – Present

Dominick Curtiss (Treasurer) – Present

Tom McIntyre (Director) – Absent

Andrew Holman (Director) Absent

Matt Nedom (Director) – Present

G Platt (Director) – Present

Reux Stearns (Director) – Absent

Lang Van Dommelen (Director) – Present

Guests in attendance: Annie Shane, Josh Wilson, Steve Gruhn, Lane Christenson

Scribed by: Donell Irwin

Announcements

No announcements

Financial Report

Nothing significant to report. Delay in financial reporting due to a bank synchronization issue, which has now been resolved. The Treasurer will prepare updated reporting in time for the next board meeting.

General Membership

We cannot find any membership cards in the storage locker. Dominick can look through his treasurer paperwork for cards.

Matt to check the list of discount providers on the website to see if it is still valid, and if they need proof via membership card.

Renewal notifications to members (members still saying they don't get them). Could be going to spam. Members can contact membership@mtclubak.org with issues.

Memberships are now a full calendar year from sign-up date.

Huts

April Scree will have an announcement for hut needs.

Trips/Training

Gerrit Verbeek ice climbing canceled due to conditions.

Pat Schmalix Rescue in vertical terrain training April 10 and 13.

Serenity Falls trip has been rescheduled for Friday night March 22-23.

Dave Staeheli Mint Hut Trip August 1-7.

Everyone attending trips or training must be a current member and sign a waiver.

There is a form to fill out for all trip/training leaders. Lang to send Steve the trip leader form.

Solstice Flattop Sleepout scheduled for Friday, June 21, 2024.

Speaker/Outreach

Kelly Kropko will present at the Membership Meeting March 6 on Accidents.

We are still looking for speakers for April and May.

Valdez Chapter – Peter liaised with the group that organized the Valdez Ice Fest, they offered us a table at the event, and had good strong communications for possible future opportunities.

Advertising

Will continue to advertise all meetings in a timely manner. Notifications for some recent general meetings had been late getting to members.

General Discussion

Peter will ask Scott Parmelee to contact Matanuska-Susitna Borough to inquire about the tax bill we received.

Discussion and need to review by-laws for the Board of Directors. Peter will reach out to inactive Directors to see if there is still interest or engagement.

Names on the website of outdated board members need to be updated. Josh will do this.

MCA has a club on Strava with approximately 60 active members.

Ropes for long-term storage at Mint Hut – Dave Staeheli requested the MCA purchase some new ropes for storage at the Mint Hut so they would not need to be hiked in for summer courses. Board discussed and decided the MCA could not support this due to low usage, risk of deterioration of ropes due to climate, and the availability of ropes from club storage in Anchorage. They do support Dave's volunteer efforts and will help solicit assistance with getting ropes out to the Mint Hut for the courses. Donell to communicate decision to Dave.

BP Energy Center – We are still looking into the upcoming charge increase for meeting room rental.

Action Items

Peter – Ask Scott to contact Matanuska-Susitna Borough to inquire about the tax bill we received. Reach out to inactive Directors to see if there is still interest or engagement.

Josh – Update names on the website for Board members.

Dominick – Look through paperwork for membership cards.

Lang – Send Steve the Trip Leader Form.

Matt – Check the list of discount providers on the website to see if it is still valid, and if they need proof via membership card.

Donell – Inquire about the status of the MCA library relocation from The Hoarding Marmot and report on inventory of contents to move forward with the decision to present to membership.

Previous Action Items

Dominick to open a separate savings account for Mint Hut funds.

Previous/Upcoming Agenda

Library

Next meeting we'll discuss equipment maintenance for items in storage locker.

Paid position.

Strategic plan – Should we be pursuing reaching out to other organizations to collaborate with a paid position?

Need to have discussion in regards to what we want to achieve as a club and how a paid position could help support that. Schedule strategic planning meeting for April Board meeting or schedule a separate meeting.

Time and Location of next Meeting:

Wednesday, March 27, 2024, 6:30-8:30 p.m. Location to be determined.

General Membership Meeting Minutes

March 6, 2024, 6:00-8:00 p.m. at the B.P. Energy Center, Anchorage

Audience: Approximately 38 people attended.

Announcement: Asked membership if they had any additional information related to the room price increases and knowledge of other meeting spaces; Self Rescue in Vertical Terrain Course; Alaska Pacific University Gear Swap in April.

Jason Weltin checked in prior to the meeting regarding his search for why the price is being hiked up (BP and The Alaska Community Foundation have been less than helpful). One detail that he needs to know is how long the MCA has actually met in this building. He said he was going to reach out to Dominick Curtiss.

Presenter: Kelly Kropko

Topic: Safety Third: How Not to Adventure



Above: Eagle River giants. Chugach peaks overlooking Eagle River Valley (in Chugach State Park) from left are Pleasant Mountain, 6490 feet; Peters Peak (in distance), 6885 feet; Cumulus Mountain, 5815 feet; Korohusk Peak, 7030 feet; Mount Kiliak, 7450 feet; Nantina Point, 6865 feet; Mount Yukla, 7535 feet; Whiteout Peak (in distance), 7135 feet, and Harp Mountain (on far right), 5001 feet. Photo taken by Frank Baker on January 16, 2024, from Mount Gordon Lyon, 4134 feet. Special thanks to Steve Gruhn for mountain identification.

Mountaineering Club of Alaska

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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 Membership Committee at membership@mtnclubak.org.

The Scree is a monthly publication of the Mountaineering Club of Alaska. Articles, notes, and letters submitted for publication in the newsletter should be emailed to MCAScree@gmail.com. Material should be submitted by the 11th of the month to appear in the next month's *Scree*. Captions should accompany all submitted photos.

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. Ads can be emailed to vicepresident@mtnclubak.org.

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Seth Classen near the top of the southeast ridge of Shark's Tooth. Photo by Dylan Miller.

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