

the SCREE

Mountaineering Club of Alaska

OCTOBER 2023

Volume 66, Number 9



“Perseverance, secret of
all triumphs.”

— Victor Hugo

October Meeting

Thursday, October 5, 2023

6:00-8:00 p.m. at the BP Energy Center

**Presentation: MCA Calendar photographers
will share the stories behind their photos.**

Contents:

*Bluecloud Mountain (5903 feet) and the Wiseman Peaks, Endicott Mountains
Gobblers Knob (6553 feet) and nearby peaks, Central Chugach Mountains*

“Shaft of the Abyss,” Golgotha (8940 feet), Revelation Mountains

Shrike Mountain (5883 feet) and Merlin Mountain (5833 feet), Grant Lake Peaks, Kenai Mountains

Peak of the Month: Peak 3066, Kilbuck Mountains

"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

Andres Marin makes his way through a curtain of ice while climbing "Shaft of the Abyss" on Golgotha in the Revelation Mountains. Photo by Clint Helander.

OCTOBER MEETING

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Presentation: MCA Calendar photographers will share the stories behind their photos.

Call for Volunteers

Everything the MCA provides is built by volunteers. We're currently seeking folks for these roles and more:

Board Members: Elections are coming up in October and multiple current board members are planning to step down for a break. If you're interested, please consider serving a two-year term.

Webmaster: responsible for administering website content and member accounts via Squarespace and Memberspace. Time commitment: 1-2 hours per month minimum, with a stack of projects and ideas waiting if you want more!

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Upcoming Elections - October

The October 5th General Meeting will include votes on new Officers and Directors to join the MCA Board for a two-year term. If you would like more information or to express interest in running, feel free to contact a current Board member.

Many of the board members whose positions are up for election have expressed an intent to step down from the board. Please consider volunteering your skills to keep the club running!

High turnout is critical

We will take nominations for candidates for two officer positions and three director positions. You may nominate yourself or another person, although they must accept the nomination in order to run. If they wish, candidates may make a short speech about their priorities and motivation for joining the Board before voting. The current positions up for election are:

President—Gerrit Verbeek

Treasurer—Peter Taylor

Director—Andy Kubic

Director—Heather Johnson

Director – Scott Parmelee

MCA Board Roles

President:

(a) To preside at all regular and executive meetings.

(b) To coordinate the efforts of the officers and committees.

Treasurer:

(a) To receive and disburse all club dues, fees, and other monies.

(b) To maintain complete financial records of the organization.

(c) All other duties as assigned by the Executive Committee.

Directors:

(a) To act as an advisor to the Executive Committee concerning matters of policy.

(b) All other duties as assigned by the Executive Committee

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.



Matanuska Glacier Ice Fest 2023

Want to learn to ice climb or improve your current techniques?

Friday, September 22, 2023, 5:00 p.m., to Sunday, September 24, 2023, 4:00 p.m.

66500 Glacier Park Road, Sutton-Alpine, Alaska, 99674

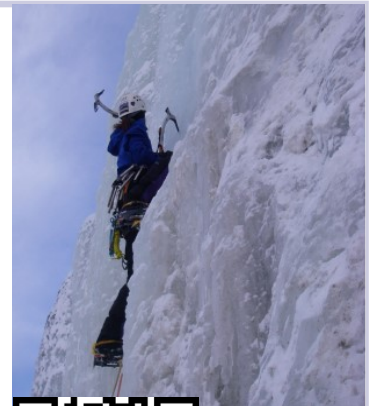
Learn modern ice climbing techniques, rope management skills, and socialize with other local climbers in a weekend. **All abilities** welcome. Must be 18 or older. Some equipment available.

Cost: \$95. (MCA membership also requires \$20-30).

Registration is only available online and will be open September 1st-15th.

Visit mtnclubak.org, the Training web-page, or Facebook to register, or for more information email mcaicefest@gmail.com.

Contact: Jayme Mack Fuller, 907-382-0212



Matanuska
Glacier

Announcements

MCA Annual Calendars Available for Purchase

Thank you to everyone who took part in this year's 2024 calendar photo contest. Join us at the October 5th general meeting to hear from some of the photographers as they will present the backstories to their winning photos. A limited number of calendars will be available for purchase at the meeting for a special meeting price of \$15. Please bring cash or check to the meeting to purchase a calendar. After the October 5th meeting, 2024 calendars will be available for \$20 at both Alaska Mountaineering & Hiking and The Hoarding Marmot. Folks who cannot attend the October meeting or make it to either of those locations (i.e. do not live in or visit Anchorage) can email the MCA board (board@mtnclubak.org) to try to arrange purchase.

Letter to the Editor

Thanks for sending this out and all the work that goes into putting these together. I am a fairly new member of the club and have loved reading *the Scree* each month. I am not currently located in Alaska, but recently traveled to the area and am hoping to relocate there. My partner and I recently did the hut traverse of the Talkeetna Mountains and are incredibly grateful for all the work the MCA has done and does to establish and maintain those awesome huts. So, all to say, a big THANK YOU for all your great work!

Also, I'm wondering, does the MCA sell merchandise? I would love to get a T-shirt, sticker, etc. with the MCA's sweet logo on it.

Thanks,

Haley Eakin

Upcoming Vote Regarding Paid Administrative Position

At the October 5 general membership meeting, there will be a membership vote on whether to authorize the board of directors to finalize a job description and proposed wages for a part-time administrative position to help manage club affairs. It would also authorize the board to meet with foundations such as the Rasmuson Foundation and Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation to discuss grants or seed funding for the proposed position. A vote in support would be in favor of a paid position being created in the near future. However, like all other club expenses, any funds earmarked for the position would first appear in a future proposed club budget for an additional membership vote before the position is listed or filled.

Editor response:

Alaska mountaineering enthusiasts can purchase an MCA calendar (see announcement on this page) and have wonderful photos taken by MCA members grace their walls! Additionally, MCA leadership is looking into introducing a membership tier/donation amount that grants members an embroidered patch of the MCA logo. If successful, additional swag options may be considered in the future (see Board of Directors Meeting Minutes on page 14).

Thank you for your support of the MCA and the Scree!

Bluecloud Mountain (5903 feet) and the Wiseman Peaks, Endicott Mountains

Text and photos by Sean Marble

Bluecloud
Mountain:
67.40643,
-150.424



Bluecloud Mountain with fresh snow.



In late July of 2022, Shane Ohms, Ben Holmgren, and I set off to climb several peaks in the Brooks Range just west of Wiseman over a long weekend. We ticked off Bluecloud Mountain (5903 feet), Barnyard Peak (5560 feet), Peak 5250, Weather Vane Peak (5645 feet), Peak 5116, Emma Dome (5850 feet), and Kalhabuk Mountain (5495 feet). Although none of them are very tall, Bluecloud is notable for its more than 4000 feet of prominence, making it the 10th most prominent peak in the Brooks Range, a mere eight miles from the Dalton Highway.

July 29, 2022. We began the trip by driving down a mining road as far as we could, then began the slog through swamp and tussocks to get to Wiseman Creek. Luckily the mosquitoes were surprisingly absent for the whole trip. Traveling up Wiseman Creek itself proved difficult, so we took to high country sidehilling on the west side of the creek. Shane did a solo turn and

burn to the 4440-foot peak north of Bluecloud Mountain. The tussocks and sidehilling really took it out of us, so we camped at a water source before cresting the col between Wiseman and LaSalle creeks.

July 30, 2022. The next morning had spectacular weather and we scrambled up the southeast ridge of Bluecloud and the west side of Peak 5560, which Shane called Barnyard Peak. A quick bushwhack and crossing of LaSalle Creek brought us to our base camp for the next two nights. Just a little way north of our

campsite was a 100-to-200-foot wall of gneiss that could host some first ascents if anyone wanted to schlep rock gear all that way. We opted not to and found a couple boulders to play on instead.

July 31, 2022. On Day 3 the sunshine streak ended. We saw the rain move in as we summited Peak 5250 during the approach to the day's main objective, the 5645-foot peak, upon which we have bestowed the name of Weather Vane Peak. This summit was the most precarious



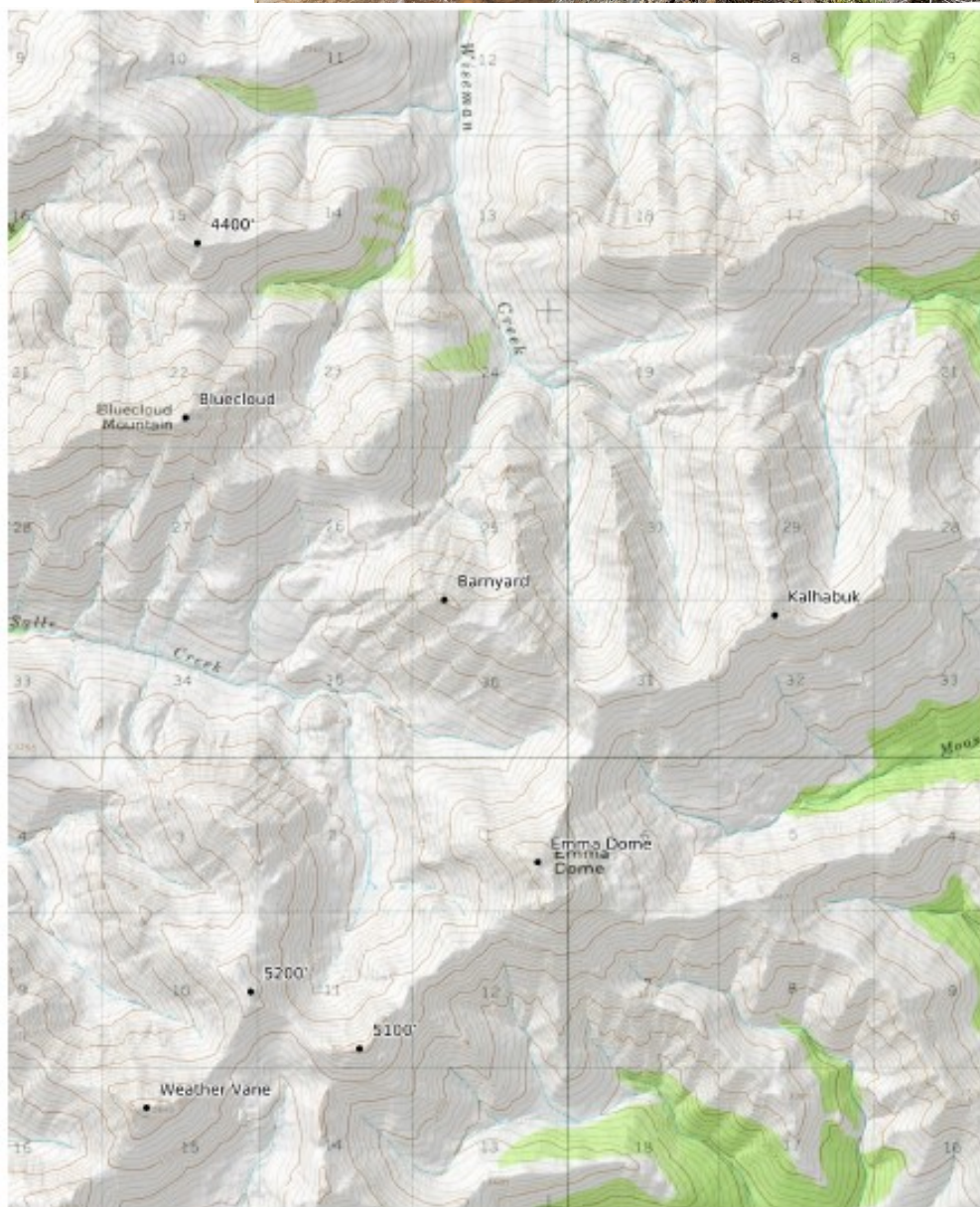
Ben Holmgren on the descent from the summit of Kalhabuk Mountain.

with a light drizzle during the Class 3/4 scramble up to the summit block. On the way back to camp, we hiked along the headwaters of LaSalle Creek for a mile, summiting Peak 5116 (located between Weather Vane Peak and Emma Dome) before dropping into LaSalle Creek, where we found three streams converge, each with a different color (red, white, and blue)! The red stream was full of iron oxide (the water tasted like blood), but we don't know what the different white cloudy substances in the other streams were. Because we were drinking this water exclusively for two days, we can likely conclude it is non-toxic. [Ed. note: The white cloudy substance is likely due to precipitation of dissolved minerals in the stream when relatively high-acidity waters become less acidic due to changes in underlying geology and/or mixing with other water sources].

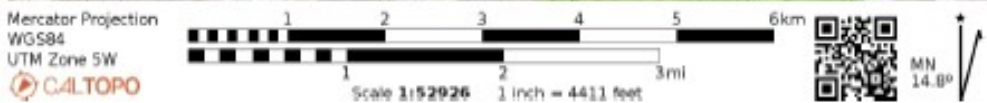


The multi-colored headwaters of LaSalle Creek.

August 1, 2022. Our last day was the biggest. After summiting Emma Dome in the morning, we walked along the Gates of the Arctic National Park boundary to the summit of Kalhabuk Mountain. We were in and out of the clouds along this whole ridge. From the summit, we gave our knees a workout on the 4500-foot descent back to the road. About a mile and a half east of Kalhabuk, Ben found a rusty pail. Midway through the bushwhack to our last Wiseman Creek crossing, we found what appeared to be a geocache in an old paint tin with a bumper sticker reading "Alaska. Coolest State. Hottest Governor." – a reference to Sarah Palin. Unfortunately, we didn't have anything as remotely entertaining as that to leave behind. Six more miles back up the mining road brought us to our vehicle and back to Coldfoot in time for dinner.



Right: Map of peaks included in trip report.



Central Chugach Mountains

Text and photos by Kaleb Notte

Gobblers

Knob:

61.24624,

-145.67529



Tahra Nelson heading up Peak 6409 ("Sloppy Top").

exploring, then went up the east face of Peak 5411 and went down its west face. To reach the summit of Max High, we climbed the east face to the east ridge.

Sloppy Top (6409 feet) -

On 28 July 2023, only one week later, we went back up the same approach, questioning why we

Gobblers Knob (6553 feet) -

On 20 July 2023, Tahra Nelson and I started our bushwhack up to the glacier north of Mile 33 on the Richardson Highway. The approach involves three cliff bands with one being Class 4 through dense coastal shrubbery, mosquitoes, and flies. Thankfully there is no devil's club, so the 'shwhack could be worse. Once in the alpine, we dropped down to the creek bed and were able to cruise down to a nice spot to set up camp near the toe of the glacier.

After dropping camp, we started wrapping around the glacier to reach the col between Three Stooges (6426 feet) and Gobblers Knob. Around 4500 feet, the glacier became snow covered and we roped up and made quick time. We went up the entire east ridge and encountered problems up to low Class 5. We had to do one rappel off the top of a gendarme around 5800 feet and left the rope as a hand line for our return. The rest of the ridge went at Class 3. We repeated our route, and I jugged up the hand line and then belayed Tahra. From the ridge we rappelled back down Class 5 to get back to easier terrain. Both rappels were directional, and anchors were very scarce.

After dropping down, we made an attempt on Three Stooges. The northwest ridge started at Class 2, and we made it to 5850 feet. From there it quickly turned into Class 5. From here we decided to call it because we were already pushing a 15-hour day and had to get back to camp.

Cheese Wedge (6514 feet), Peak 5411, and Max High (5730 feet) -

On 21 July 2023, we left camp to do a traverse of three peaks. This traverse went at Class 2 and was super scenic with running water everywhere. The first peak we hit was Cheese Wedge and attained the summit via the south ridge. We did some lake

were bushwhacking again. We were prepared with bug nets and even more snacks. We dropped camp in the same spot and carried climbing gear up, expecting to run into harder terrain as we saw three gendarmes from below. We made our way up to the northwest ridge. As we gained the ridge, we quickly realized all the gendarmes were avoidable and the ridge went at Class 3. The name Sloppy Top was proposed because on the summit there were over 50 helicopter ski wands leaving the summit top quite sloppy. We dropped down and hightailed over to Happy Top Mountain (7270 feet).

Happy Top Mountain (7270 feet) -

It was my second time up this peak, but I wanted to ensure Tahra and I finished the zone together, so I opted for another ascent. This also was her first Alaska 7000-er, so might as well make it a Central Chugach one. The route ascends a gully to reach the southeast ridge. The gully has one Class 4 section,

Gobblers Knob.



Ridge of Gobblers Knob.



making it the crux of the climb. The rest of the ridge goes at Class 2 with some Class 3 moves. On the summit nearing 9 p.m., the summit stoke quickly faded as we still had to drop 4000 feet back to camp and a big day awaiting us the next day.

Three Stooges (6426 feet) -

On 29 July 2023, we awoke to a high-overcast day. We made our way back up the glacier to the col between Three Stooges and Gobblers Knob. This time we encountered bare ice and very thin bridges. We ended up belaying eight crevasses, which all held en route to the col. We dropped down to the glacier on the south end of the col and made our way to the gully on the west face that we called the Moe Gully. At 5800 feet, we ran into a bergschrund. There was a good bridge that allowed easy belaying across. After crossing the 'schrund we unroped and started booting up the gully. We reached the base of the summit block and once again expected to bust out the rope, but it never came out of the bag. The block went at Class 3.

On our return to camp, we dropped down the gully and once again belayed the 'schrund and made it to the col with no issues. On the glacier back to camp, we were expecting a slow return, as we knew we had many belays. We had some more issues coming out than on the way in. Two bridges partially collapsed and on one both legs broke through. Luckily, I was able to spread my arms out and slide across. As I looked back Tahra was already reaching to grab the Micro Traxion and set up a rescue. I had to convince her I was safe to keep crossing and set up the belay for her. We both were very thankful we had pre-rigged anchors in the case of a rescue, but luckily, they never were used.

After eight more belays we made it back to bare ice and easy travel and slogged back to camp with no other issues.

Tahra Nelson and the 'schrund in "Moe Gully" on Three Stooges.



Shaft of the Abyss: Golgotha (8940 feet), Revelation Mountains

Text and photos by Clint Helander



61.65953, -154.17415

The east face of Golgotha.



In March 2022, Andres Marin and I finally completed our longstanding project on Golgotha in the remote Revelation Mountains.

After four failed expeditions over six years, we succeeded on the first ascent of *“The Shaft of the Abyss”* a ca. 4,000-foot direct line up the sheer east face of Golgotha. This route marked the culmination of a 14-year dream of mine, one that started when I spotted the line with the late Seth Holden in 2008.

Seth and I examined the face in 2010 but didn't attempt it. After Seth's death in a plane crash a few months later, I returned in 2012 with Ben Trocki, only to retreat after two pitches due to dangerous conditions. We continued up a massive couloir on the east face to the southeast face and, in doing so, completed the first ascent of Golgotha [*Ed. note: See the January 2013 Scree*]. I always felt like I had shorted myself by taking an easier route to the summit. This plumb line was, in my mind, the most inspiring route on the mountain. I knew I had to return.

I recruited my longtime climbing partner Andres Marin in 2016, but we were shut down by prohibitively dangerous conditions. Temperatures swung from -40°Fahrenheit to almost above freezing at 5000 feet. This shocking warm front resulted in more than three feet of wet snow in less than 36 hours. While organizing camp, we heard a resonating “boom” above the narrow confines of our base camp. We ran at a crawling pace through deep snow as an avalanche decimated our camp. The

wind blast knocked us over and we were partially buried. When we looked back, base camp was gone. Hours of digging and running from other avalanches revealed the majority of our gear, although much of it was destroyed. We carved out a makeshift bivy from the remains of our tent and endured another terrifying week before being rescued by our daring pilot, Conor McManamin.

We returned in 2017 with Leon Davis and managed to climb seven pitches up the narrow runnel of the east face before a broken crampon forced a retreat. Andres and I returned in 2018, but excessively snowy conditions on the route did not allow for an attempt.

Persistence pays off. Andres and I returned for one final attempt in March 2022, hoping to finally finish our route. Armed with the knowledge from our previous attempts, we

landed on the Revelation Glacier and ferried loads to the high pass, fixed lines into the Misfit Glacier and scoped the route from the base. On Wednesday, March 23, we left base-camp and were soon kicking steps up the entrance couloir toward the route's defining feature, the ca. 1,800-foot runnel. After four technical pitches, we opted to bivy in a protected cave we had discovered in 2017, one of the only places on the lower route safe from overhead hazards. The next day, we passed our previous highpoint and continued toward one of the route's cruxes, a free hanging dagger of ice that presented one of the major questions of the entire line. From another smaller cave at the base of the dagger, I chopped a window through a curtain of ice and surmounted the crux through a combination of mixed and aid climbing, including a small lead fall.

The thinnest part of the runnel was now below us, but much of the mountain



Andres Marin in the cave bivy.

Andres Marin climbs Golgotha.



er. It had blown so hard that a probe, which served to hold a windsock, had been bent and rendered useless. It seems we had angered the mountain.

Several more days of wind made living unpleasant and we used the remaining tent fly to make a rudimentary snow cave fortification. After nearly a week of waiting, we were picked up by Rob Jones of Hesperus Air and dropped at a remote landing strip. From there, we were taken back to Anchorage by Chris Trygg of Trygg Air. The team noted that travel to the remote Revelation Mountains has become increasingly challenging and expensive. The final cost for the flights was \$3,400 ... each. Ouch. For the completion of a

lifelong dream, I guess it's pretty cheap.

loomed overhead. We had thought we could climb the whole mountain in a push back in 2017. Now, we realized it would require at least two bivouacs. Andres led a 170-meter simul-climbing block through steps of steep ice and airy névé. Another rope-stretching pitch of thin ice over a blank slab led to our second bivy on a hastily chopped ledge. While Andres organized the gear and anchor, I laid out our sleeping pads and bags in the tent. Part of the tent hung over the ledge and, as I went to turn around inside, I slid off the ledge, tent and all. Only my 10-foot tether kept me and all the gear from falling completely off the mountain. Despite a ripped tent and a close call, we managed a comfortable night once we chopped the ledge a little bit wider.

On the third morning, another five pitches of demanding climbing took us to the summit of Golgotha. Only in the final few feet did the technicality ease. Finally reaching the summit after six years of effort and 14 years of dreaming felt surreal, but a long descent remained and the weather seemed to be deteriorating fast. Seven rappels down the southeast face and into a broken system of rock and snow led to the major couloir utilized on the mountain's first ascent in 2012.

Back at the Misfit Glacier, we picked up a small cache we had left at the base of Golgotha and slowly plodded up 1,000 feet to a pass back toward our base camp on the Revelation Glacier. The late-night ski back to camp over wind-scoured sastrugi, with tired legs and agonizingly heavy packs was an unforeseen crux. When we reached our base camp at 11 p.m., we were astonished to see that a massive windstorm had ripped our geodesic-dome kitchen tent from its anchors and it was nowhere to be found. Scattered all over the glacier for a quarter mile, we searched for remnants of our food and survival gear well into the night. In the morning, we found the tent fly, but the tent body was never found, despite lengthy searches down the glaci-

lifelong dream, I guess it's pretty cheap.

This was only the third ascent of Golgotha. After the first route up the mountain climbed by Ben Trocki and me in 2012, Slovenians Janez Svoljšak and Miha Zupin established "Father" on a gully system right of the east face in 2019 [Ed. note: See the *May 2020 Scree*]. They had previously attempted the Direct East Face ("Shaft of the Abyss") route, but had been forced to turn around after nine pitches.

It seemed my luck was running high that spring. Seven weeks after standing on top of Golgotha, I completed a new route on Mount Hunter, "Full Moon Fever," with August Franzen [Ed. note: See the *August 2022 Scree*]. It's experiences like these that make those seemingly haunted expeditions, where we spend the thousands of dollars to fly out and fester in bad weather and not climb anything, worth it.



Clint Helander (left) and Andres Marin (right) on the summit of Golgotha.

Shrike Mountain (5883 feet) and Merlin Mountain (5833 feet), Grant Lake Peaks, Kenai Mountains

July 1 and 2, 2023

Text and photos by Wayne Todd

Shrike Mountain:
60.4941,
-149.18566



Matt Green ascends the flank of Shrike Mountain.



When a good two-day weather window emerges from our rather gloomy summer, a mountaineering trip is mandatory.

My buddy Matt is up for another off-trail foray into the Kenai Mountains, so after agreeing a direct approach is the way for this set of peaks, we load up with light mountaineering gear, and packrafts.

The three-mile trail hike to Grant Lake from Moose Pass is a nice warmup. From there it's a four-mile paddle to the far east end of the lake, north corner. The oddly blue sky is reflected in the lake, along with the bordering steep peaks. A group of young women on rigid boats have ventured out from a yurt at the southwest corner of the lake. I'm rather surprised to see anyone else on the lake, except for the occasional floatplanes.

While stashing the boats a couple hours later, we discuss the quite steep (already known) and vegetated terrain that lays above us, 5200 feet in 1-½ miles. As it's already afternoon, a prolonged bushwhack is not going to work for a two-day climb of Harrier Mountain (5890 feet), Shrike Mountain, and Merlin Mountain. Plus, the weather is scheduled to deteriorate the following afternoon, including high winds.

The avalanche debris swath that I'm hoping for works wonderfully, but only for a quarter mile, as it abruptly

transitions to a waterfall. We exit left as that looks less brushy, partly due to the steep scrubby terrain. After some modest scrambling, we briefly enter brush, but by working the openings, keep gaining good elevation. Much of this is steep enough that slipping is a concern; Whippets are in hand.

After a bit we gain alpine and are rather psyched to have had a relatively easy zone segue. Continuing up on slide rock, we still can't see the potential peaks from blocking terrain and already encroaching clouds. With the weather already looking punky, we decide evening summit visits are in order for the two nearby peaks. We're excited when another potential false ridge is actually the short ridge to Shrike. And the ridge angle is much less than our ascent route.

On the summit we have peekaboo views of Harrier and Merlin, with clouds swirling around the ridgelines. A cairn is in place, presumably from the first ascent party of Tim Kelley and Bill Spencer (see the December 2000 *Scree*). Already after 7 p.m., we descend directly to the saddle to the west, toward Shrike, somewhat on mushy snow, as Matt discovers, leading. A snow-filled, double-barriered swale at the saddle seems like an idyllic campsite for wind protection, plus there's even a mini-tarn for water. We dump our packs there and make the easy hike up Merlin, now a bit windier, but with less obstructed views. The Kenai peaks in this area are rather rugged, but it's fun to identify known ones and have trip memories associated with them, numerous of them with Matt. Noting that there's good cell coverage, a weather check still confirms deteriorating weather.

By 10 we're brewing water for freeze-dried dinners, setting the tent on a nearly level snow slope, and very content with our day's accomplishments and great tent site. It's rather calm, and

Matt Green (left) and Wayne Todd (right) on the summit of Shrike Mountain. Harrier Mountain is in the background.



quiet around 11 and sack time, oh yeah. But within minutes, buffeting winds rattle the tent, then brief calm, then buffeting. We acknowledge it's going to be a long night.

Between the annoying tent flapping, and increasing winds with concerns of tent integrity, and thinking about the return paddle down Grant Lake, and not wanting to descend the forty-five-degree slope when wet, I sleep very little, Matt just slightly better. It freezes during the night, making the snow rather slick in the morning. I'm awake and ready to vacate before 5 a.m., acknowledging Harrier will have to wait for (hopefully) another trip.

The skies are looking grayer, so by 7 a.m., we're heading down, and indeed our swale did somewhat protect us, as we get hit with solid 20-to-30 mile-per-hour winds. With the wind we're actually looking forward to entering brush line. Except for using some steep snow slopes up higher, we mostly retrace our route down. Between slips and slides both ascending and descending, we both have mild arm injuries, plus I sport a bent pole, though it was a good cushion on sharp rocks.

Back at the boats, we take a good rest before jumping into the paddling as the more than 20 mph tailwinds have us concerned. At least the winds are "with us" and toward the near shore. There are definitely no bug issues.

After psych-up procrastination, and knowing the winds are to increase in the afternoon, we launch. The waves are from behind and left so we keep an eye for exceptional ones. Matt yells, "Wave" when this happens and we briefly crank to the right. After a couple of close encounters with the shoreline, we move slightly farther offshore. The bigger waves are two to three feet high. After slight shoreline protrusions, we take mini breaks out of the bigger waves.

We are highly relieved to make it back to the permanent (?) log-jam between the island and the north shore. While it is still very windy from there to the boat take out (end of trail), the waves are inches, rather than feet, high. There are no other boaters or planes this day.

After transitioning to hiking, we head up, then down-trail, meeting a few incoming groups. As we hike across the railroad bridge into Moose Pass, it begins to sprinkle. Perfect.

Post Script

The mountaineering equipment included a Whippet and tool, crampons, helmet and light glacier-travel gear. As we never gained the glacier, we didn't use crampons, rope, glacier gear, or axe (though should have for the snow descent).

If planning on also climbing Harrier along the ridgeline from Shrike, it's worth reading Tim Kelley's account of a very steep section on the ridge below Harrier.

If trying Harrier from Shrike in a reasonable snow year, another option is a prevalent snow gully, presumably sustainably steep, we saw from the glacier to the west end of the Harrier summit ridge. With lack of continuous snow from our camping saddle to the glacier, a direct rock route to the glacier looked problematic so one would need to access the glacier from east of Shrike, then work downglacier to the snow gully.



Matt Green atop Merlin Mountain.

Peak of the Month: Peak 3066

Text by Steve Gruhn

Mountain Range:

Kuskokwim Mountains,
Kilbuck Mountains

Borough: Unorganized
Borough

Drainages: Karl Creek
and Quartz Creek

Latitude/Longitude:
60° 43' 22" North, 159°
50' 24" West



Elevation: 3066 feet

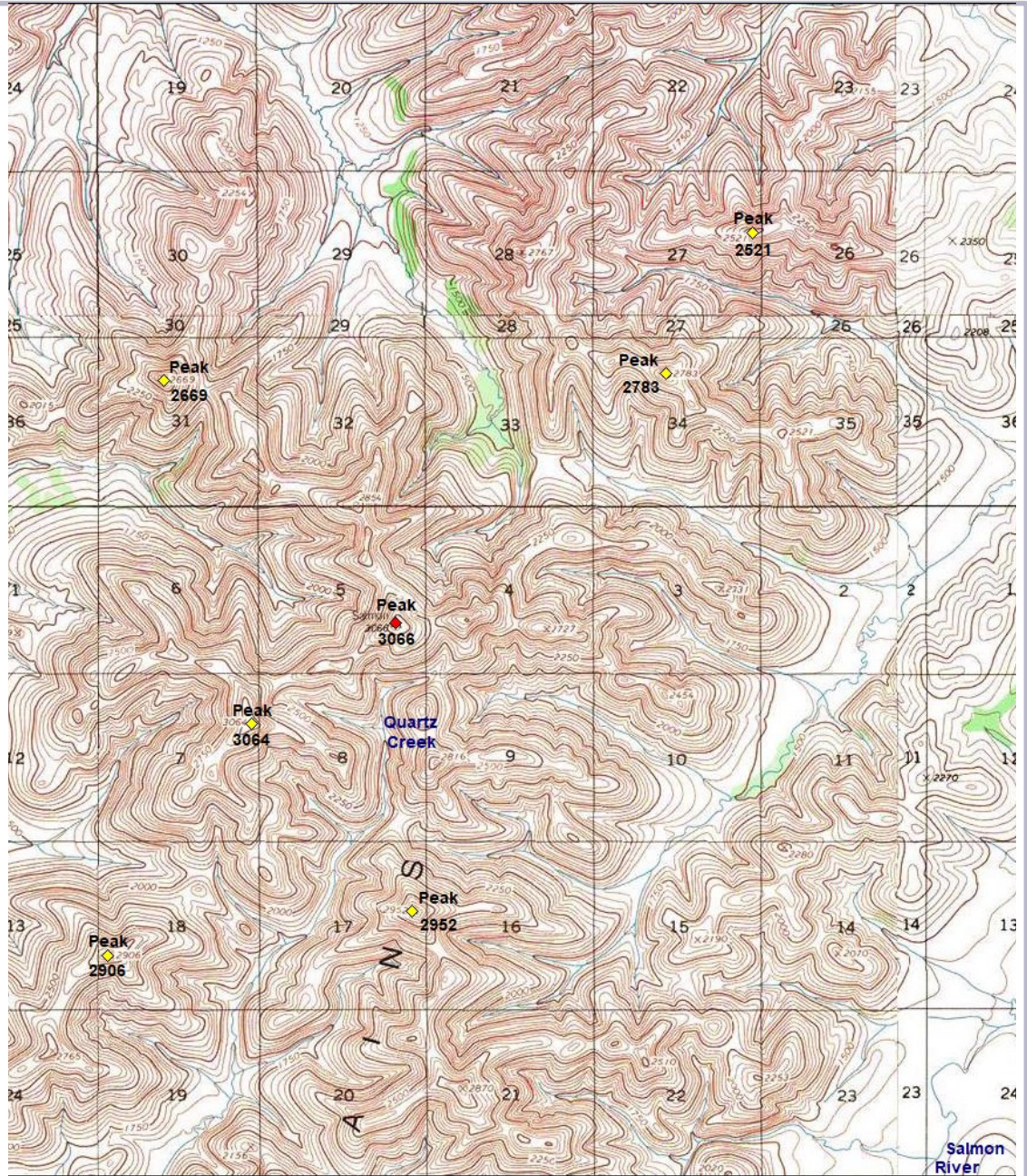
Adjacent Peaks: Peak 3064 in the Karl Creek and Quartz Creek drainages, Peak 2669 in the Karl Creek drainage, Peak 2952 in the Quartz Creek and Salmon River drainages, and Peak 2783 in the Salmon River drainage

Distinctness: 511 feet
from Peak 3064

Prominence: 1241 feet
from Peak 3450 in the
Loco Creek drainage of
the Cripple Mountains

USGS Maps: 1:63,360:
Bethel (C-3), 1:25,000:
Bethel C-3 NE

First Recorded Ascent: 1954 by a U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey party



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

Peak 3066 is the highest peak in the drainage of the Fog River, a southern tributary of the Tuluksak River, which is a southern tributary of the Kuskokwim River. It lies within the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge.

In 1954, while performing survey work in the Kilbuck Mountains, a U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey party landed a helicopter on the gently rounded summit of Peak 3066. The USC&GS party marked the summit with a standard survey disk brazed to the top of a 1-¼-inch-diameter brass pipe. The pipe

was driven into the ground so that the top projected four inches above the ground surface. The disk was stamped "Salmon 1954," referencing the Salmon River southeast of the peak and the year of the installation of the disk.

I don't know of a second ascent of Peak 3066.

The information for this column came from a National Geodetic Survey datasheet available at https://www.ngs.noaa.gov/cgi-bin/ds_mark.prl?PidBox=UV8064.

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

August 30, 2023, 6:30-8:30 p.m., Forest Park Neighborhood

Roll Call:

Gerrit Verbeek (President) – Present
Rebecca Marks (Vice President) – Absent
Donell Irwin (Secretary) – Absent
Peter Taylor (Treasurer) – Present
Tom McIntyre (Director) – Present

Andrew Holman (Director) – Absent
Matt Nedom (Director) – Present
Heather Johnson (Director) – Present
Andy Kubic (Director) – Absent
Scott Parmelee (Director) – Present

Scribe: Scott Parmelee

Announcements:

- Two volunteers, Christina Bonsell and Steve Gruhn, have stepped up to publish *the Scree*. A Microsoft Office license was purchased to provide access to Publisher. Many thanks to the volunteers!
- Officers are exploring the possibility of moving board and general meetings to a new location, allowing for extended evening meetings if necessary. More details to follow.
- The 2024 MCA calendar will be available for \$15 at the October general meeting. Afterward, calendars will be priced at \$20 in local outdoor retailers.

Financial Report:

- Annual income continues to grow with the addition of new members. MCA Ice Fest is expected to bring in new members in September.
- Annual hut leases for Hatcher Pass huts, totaling approximately \$2,000, are due for payment.

General Membership:

- The MCA Strava page has reached 50 active users as of the end of August.

Huts:

- All Hatcher Pass huts were inspected in August. Repairs were completed on the Seth Holden Hut outhouse and the Dnigi Hut's west window.
- New logbooks have been distributed to all Hatcher Pass huts (MCA and American Alpine Club) thanks to Rebecca Marks and friends for carrying in.
- Pichler's Perch requires a new waste barrel and lid. The lid will be transported over Labor Day weekend.
- Rosie's Roost and Hans's Hut will not need waste barrel replacement in 2023, but helicopter support will be necessary in 2024.
- The barrel that was mostly carried out on the Gold Mint Trail appears to have been washed downstream. Despite numerous search efforts, it has not been located. Two empty barrels remain at the hut.

Trips and Training:

- MCA Ice Fest is scheduled for September 22-24. Registration begins on September 1st at 7 a.m.

Speakers/Outreach:

- Speakers have been confirmed for the September and October general meetings.
- Two additional speakers have volunteered to present during the winter.

General Discussion:

- A liability waiver has been integrated into the new website's membership signup process. Waivers can be accessed on the hut page for hut users who are not members.
- MCA email addresses experienced multiple outages over the summer, resulting in some/all users not receiving emails.
- Peter is investigating the cost of personal liability insurance for board members and trip leaders.
- The president's seat and a few board positions will be open for elections in October. Interested members are encouraged to nominate themselves or others.
- Valdez Ice Fest is potentially seeking MCA support for upcoming events. Gerrit will reach out to discuss.
- Scott will research the feasibility and cost of introducing a membership tier/donation amount that grants members an embroidered patch of the MCA logo. If successful, additional swag options may be considered in the future.
- Discussions continue regarding the addition of a paid administrative position to the club. A member vote will occur in an upcoming meeting.

Time and Location of Next Meetings:

- General Meeting: September 6 (Wednesday), 6-8 p.m., Birch Room at the B.P. Energy Center
- Following General Meeting: October 5 (Thursday), 6-8 p.m., Birch Room at the B.P. Energy Center
- Board Meeting: September 27, 6:30-8 p.m., location to be determined

Mount Rumble (7530 feet) near the head of Peters Creek Valley. Taken from Gold Star Peak above Eklutna Valley on August 15, 2023. Photo by Frank E. Baker.

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-149.07913



General Meeting Minutes

September 6, 2023, 6:00-8:00 p.m., B.P. Energy Center

Welcome, newcomers!

Announcements

- MCA is looking for a paid administrator to work 10-20 hours a week. There was a vote scheduled for this tonight, but it has now been shifted to the October 5th (Thursday) general meeting.
- The October and November general membership meetings will be held on the first Thursdays of the months, Thursday, October 5th, and Thursday, November 2nd.
- During the October general membership meeting on Thursday, October 5th, there will be a board switchover and elections for new board members will occur. The positions up for election are President, Treasurer, and three director positions. Please step forward if you are interested in one of these positions, or would like to nominate somebody.
- 2024 Calendars are ready, and will be available for sale at the October 5th general meeting for \$15 and then available for purchase at Alaska Mountaineering & Hiking and The Hoarding Marmot for \$20.

Guest Speaker – Jake Gano gave a wonderful presentation about his travels to Peru. Thank you, Jake!

Approximately 30 people attended this meeting.

Upcoming Events

- September 27, 2023 – Board meeting, location to be determined
- October 5, 2023 – October general membership meeting will be held on the first Thursday of this month at the BP Energy Center
- October 25, 2023 – October Board meeting location to be determined

Peak 5411 in the Central Chugach Mountains. Photo by Kaleb Notte. See trip report on page 6.



Mountaineering Club of Alaska

President Gerrit Verbeek president@mtnclubak.org
Vice-President Rebecca Marks vicepresident@mtnclubak.org
Secretary Donell Irwin secretary@mtnclubak.org
Treasurer Peter Taylor treasurer@mtnclubak.org
Director 1 (term expires in 2023) Heather Johnson board@mtnclubak.org
Director 2 (term expires in 2023) Andy Kubic board@mtnclubak.org
Director 3 (term expires in 2023) Scott Parmelee board@mtnclubak.org
Director 4 (term expires in 2024) Andrew Holman board@mtnclubak.org
Director 5 (term expires in 2024) Matt Nedom board@mtnclubak.org
Director 6 (term expires in 2024) Tom McIntyre board@mtnclubak.org

Annual membership dues: Basic (“Dirtbag”) \$20, Single \$30, Family \$40

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.

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: Peter Taylor—membership@mtnclubak.org
Hiking and Climbing Committee: *Vacant*—training@mtnclubak.org
Huts: Scott Parmelee or huts@mtnclubak.org
Calendar: Lexi Trainer
Librarian: Gwen Higgins—library@mtnclubak.org
Scree Editors: Steve Gruhn and Christina Bonsell— MCAScree@gmail.com
Web: www.mtnclubak.org
Find MCAK listserv at <https://groups.io/g/MCAK>.

Tahra Nelson climbs the gully to Happy Top Mountain. Photo by Kaleb Notte.

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