

# Wrangell St. Elias News

*"Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty"*

Vol. Eight Issue Four

July & August 1999

Two Dollars

## From rails to road



photo courtesy Capt. C. L. Selbert, Jr.

**CORDOVA—APRIL 9, 1942.** Army soldiers (B Company 42<sup>nd</sup> Engineers) are shown here doing routine maintenance on rail at Simpson Lead near Cordova. The men worked under a civilian supervisor, John Vinquest, who had worked for the CR&NW for many years. (John died on the job, not long after this photo was taken.) Is it possible that photos like this one led to the erroneous assumption that the rails were removed during WWII?

**BY KENNY SMITH**

What happened to the Copper River Railways' rails between Chitina and McCarthy? There appears to some confusion over the answer to this often-asked question. In his book, "Mountain Wilderness," William R. Hunt writes: "During World War II the rails were removed, and autos began using the rail-bed as a road." (Page 174) I believe the actual facts are much different.

I recall traveling to McCarthy in 1952 in a Piper PA-14 my father was piloting. At that time the CRNR had only been closed 13 years and to a young boy peering out the aircraft window the Railways' rails and other facilities as well as the farms along the way looked like they were all still being used.

Howard Knutson was my boss in Chitina in 1960 when I first began commercial flying. Howard used to tell tales about his

(continued on page 17)

## *A note from the publisher*

BY BONNIE KENYON

The month of July is just around the corner. Rick and I are putting the finishing touches on this issue of *Wrangell St. Elias News*. We are indebted to our contributors who are the reason we hear and receive such good reports from you, our readers. Just because our local writers live in a remote slower-paced setting such as McCarthy, they are all very busy people and actively involved in day-to-day living. Their time is extremely valuable and, yet, they use it to share their knowledge and expertise with us all! Rick and I are very grateful to each one and to you all for letting them and us know how much you enjoy their articles.

The biggest event to occur in our home is the arrival of my mom, Neta Schafer, from Daytona Beach, Florida. She arrived in Anchorage on June 22 where George Cebula picked her up and she accompanied him back to McCarthy. Mom is

going to be with us until July 22. I gave her a short ride on our 4 wheeler the other day. This was her first try at this mode of transportation, and she liked it quite well. As soon as the *Wrangell St. Elias News* is mailed and distributed we plan on making the rounds in the neighborhood. Mom's last trip here was 3 years ago so there are a fair amount of changes for her to inspect!

Summer in our area has come slow this year and our garden, in particular, was late in getting planted. Shortly after we finally got the last of our seeds in the ground, a cow moose came through the front yard and headed towards the garden – and those tiny seeds! We were grateful to see that she chose the garden path instead of the fragile beds. The same moose returned the next day and once again headed for the garden. This time Rick spotted her and called out to her to “go around” the garden. This may be hard

for you to believe—but, she did!

We had another 4 footed creature meander into the yard and want to check out the garden plot. This time it was a black bear. Rick was able to discourage this intruder as well and we haven't seen him since.

This summer season has brought with it quite a number of bear sightings. I included a couple of these stories in *Items of Interest*. Our local columnist Dee Frady, had a rather negative encounter with a grizzly sow and two cubs recently while she was working in her greenhouse. Thankfully, Dee was not hurt – just badly shaken. I'm glad you were still able to write your column for us this issue, Dee!

*Wrangell St. Elias News* welcomes aboard the following subscribers: Clifford Cernick, AK; Dave and Kathy Shamel, MI; John and Barbara Rice, Jr., MO; Steve Lloyd, CA; Mark Jeffreys, AL.

### ***Wrangell St. Elias News***

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# Items of Interest

BY BONNIE KENYON

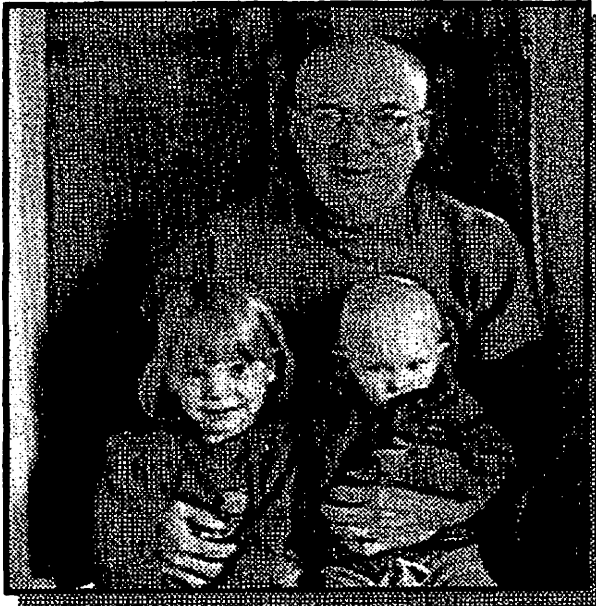
**Kenny Smith:** Rick laughingly prompted me to call Kenny the other day and this is what I heard on his answering machine: "Hello, this is Kenny Smith. I'm at my McCarthy cabin. I'm not in it at the moment; there's a grizzly bear attack in progress. I promise to return your call; that is, if I make it back to the cabin. Thanks for calling."

I discovered that Kenny had returned from a shopping trip to Valdez and before he could unpack, a grizzly bear cub had managed to climb into the back of his truck and was checking things out. As Kenny came out of his cabin to scare the cub away, he discovered the sow was also nearby as well as another cub which, most likely checking on the progress of his sibling, crawled out from under Kenny's porch. Kenny managed to discourage the intruders but you can see why he was busy and couldn't come to the phone!!!

While I'm reporting on Kenny's activities, I must share this photo that was taken recently. Kenny is a very proud grandfather (as you can see here). He is pleased to have daughter Pam, son-in-law Phil

Okeson and their two children, Alexander Marie, 4, and Makenna Mae, 1, here visiting. The Okesons plan on spending more time out in the McCarthy area. Pam and Phil own property near Rick and me so we look forward to seeing them more frequently.

**Kris Rueter:** Speaking of "bear" visits...Kris has her own bear story to tell. Because she is busy at work today, I'll do my best to relay it. Kris lives on the hill behind me. She was returning from her job at Kennicott the other night. As



she made her way down the trail towards her cabin, she met up with a grizzly bear who she thinks might have been one of "Kenny's cubs." Not wanting to rouse any more possible family members nearby, Kris retreated to a nearby neighbor's cabin – that of Andy and Cynthia Shidner. Andy, armed with a gun, accompanied Kris back

down her trail. They both hoped the bear had wandered off but that was not the case. The bear was still in the same area and Andy and Kris became concerned that there just might be a few more in the vicinity. Defending yourself from one bear is not pleasant but three, well, that's to be avoided at all possible costs!! They decided to return to the Shidner's cabin where Kris gratefully spent the night. Before falling asleep (I doubt she got much that night!), Kris made a few calls to her neighbors warning them of the grizzly bear's presence in our local area. Thanks, Kris! I am pleased to report that none of us down below the hill saw the intruder, but when she finally returned to her place the next day, she discovered the bear had eaten her snowmachine seat and bicycle seat. It had also partaken of her bird seed. Fortunately the critter didn't get inside her cabin, even though Kris said the screen door had been damaged. I'm glad all is well again up your way, Kris, and hope it stays that way!

**Kathleen "Nelson" Corcoran and Brandon Holton:** The neighborhood near Rick and me is beginning to thrive with all kinds of activity. Nelson and Brandon are back from spending the winter at the McMurdo Station in Antarctica. They are busy setting up camp on their property while they proceed with their cabin building plans. A 12' x 16' cordwood/masonry type of construction is on the drawing table (in their tent!). The water

line is in place so Nelson is finally able to do her dishes – with water, that is. (I haven't quite figured how she did dishes without water, but Brandon claims she is most capable. I agree!)

Brandon and Nelson hope to have their two-story cabin done by fall when they both return to Antarctica. Congratulations to this industrious, and I might add, fun-loving couple! Hopefully by the next issue, we'll have some photos to share with you.

**George Cebula:** George is certainly getting quite a workout at being a host to a variety of people these days. As a van driver for Wrangell Mountain Bus, he transports tourists between McCarthy and Kennicott at least 4 days a week. Then on June 12 he was on hand to greet his 3 nieces and a friend at the Anchorage airport. The young ladies – in their mid twenties and all within 6 months of each other – were escorted from there to Denali, Fairbanks, Delta Junction, Healy and finally back here to McCarthy to see where "Uncle" George spends the majority of his time now that he is retired from his weather job with NOAA.

The nieces say they try their best – and usually succeed – at getting together every four

years. This time they decided to come see Alaska. Julie belongs to George's brother Tom in Ohio; Jane is Ray's daughter from Pennsylvania; Sharon is brother Ted's daughter from Wisconsin and Lisa is a good friend of the girls who was encouraged to join them in their adventure north. Uncle George "adopted" Lisa so all



LISA, JANE, GEORGE, JULIE & SHARON.

WSEN staff photo

the bases are covered!

Of course, George made sure the girls toured McCarthy and Kennicott and he even arranged for them to have their own personal guide when he had to report to work. Rene Welty, 11, took the ladies sightseeing in Kennicott and they all took a flightseeing trip with Rene's dad, Don, as their pilot.

George let the girls take his Suburban to Valdez for a couple of days where they stayed with the Houghton family and took in a cruise of Prince William Sound. They had a great time except for saying goodbye to their friend Lisa who had to catch her flight out of Valdez.

When George returned his nieces to the Anchorage airport on June 22, he so graciously waited for my mom's incoming flight (which was an hour late) and brought her back to McCarthy with him. As you can see, George has been on the go for the month of June!

**Jim, Peggy Guntis and Kim Northrup:** Jim, Peggy and Kim

recently arrived for their annual visit. They've already received a load of building materials as well as made a trip to town for windows and supplies. July is expected to be a high activity month for them. Daniel Morrison and his crew are going to be heading up the building project of their house on the hill. In the meantime, Jim and Kim are staying plenty busy peeling logs (that's Kim's job!), transporting lumber up the hill to the

building site (that's Jim's job) and doing what they can do while they await Daniel's arrival. Peggy is keeping the food moving in their direction (that's her job!).

It sure is nice having them next door during the summer months. I hope to have pictures of their progress in the next issue. Welcome back, Jim, Peggy and Kim!

**Ken and Carly Kritchen:** The Kritchens are glad to see the rain we've been getting these last couple of days. Carly tells me they had just finished planting another acre of grass for the horses so the rain was a real blessing.

Carly's niece, Carly Umayam, from San Diego, Ca., is here for the summer and staying with the Kritchens and having a great time working for Wrangell Mountain Air. Welcome to McCarthy, Carly!

**Jim, Jeannie, Aaron, Matt and Stacie Miller:** I finally touched bases with Jeannie this morning. She is one busy lady! There is a lot of excitement in the Miller household these days, says Jeannie. I ask her what is happening. She informs me that sister Terry and Buddy are here from Malo, Wa. until the end of August.

Terry is always a big help to Jeannie, no matter if it's gardening or tossing a pizza at Tailor Made Pizza. Jeannie has Terry all checked out!

Jeannie and Terry's sister Sam was in to help celebrate Jim and Jeannie's 25<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary on May 25.

Jim's mom, JoAnn, and husband Dolan Collins are due to arrive today or tomorrow. Jim's two sisters, Evelyn and Lori, are expected to visit over the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. Evelyn's two daughters, Taylor and McKinley are from Colorado. Lori and her daughter Trista are from Anchorage. Speaking of Jim, he is working 4 (long) days a week

on the maintenance crew at Kennicott for the National Park Service this summer. On his days off (somehow Jeannie has Jim convinced he actually has days off!!) Jim runs freight runs for Jeannie and the pizza place, fills in for Jeannie and Terry on their days off, AND manages to handle Jeannie's "to do" list. Whew! This phone conversation is tiring me out!

Daughter Stacie is home and helping in the pizza place. Jeannie is a very proud mother these days. She told me Stacie made the Dean's list at UAF this

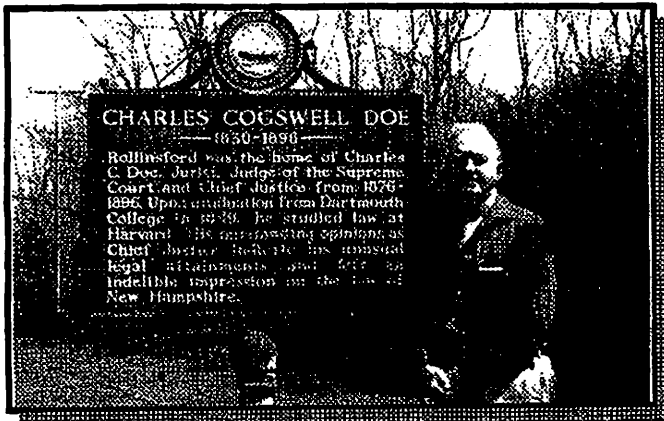


Photo courtesy Audrey Edwards

**JIM EDWARDS WITH SIGN HONORING HIS GREAT-GRANDFATHER.**

year. Congratulations, Stacie! We all are proud of you.

Jeannie is keeping Matt busy at the pizza place. Aaron is guarding the homestead and keeping an eye on their baby pigs!

One has to admit there is never a dull moment in the Miller household.

**Don, Lynn, Sarah and Rene Welty:** Lynn just stopped by and I asked her how daughter Rene was enjoying Science Camp in Cordova. Lynn says Rene is really having a blast and reports there are 25 kids attending the camp this year.

Sarah has a friend, Erika Behrends, from Cordova visiting while Rene is gone. The two young ladies are having a great time together.

Don and Lynn are enjoying a steady flow of company from Palmer and Cordova. One such friend of Lynn's, Debbie Collins, along with Lynn's neighbor, Carly Kritchen, threw a surprise birthday party for Lynn earlier this month. Pizza at Tailor Made Pizza and a special birthday cake flown in from Anchorage on one of Wrangell Mountain Air's planes was on the list of surprises for Lynn.

**Jim and Audrey Edwards:** Jim and Audrey are back home from a two month vacation to the lower 48 in their Cessna 180. They left March 29 and, according to Audrey, stopped at 19 different places. One of their adventures took them to Rollinsford, NH where they found the house that belonged to Jim's mother's family. It was built by a well-known Judge, Charles Cogswell Doe, during the 1800's. Charles Doe was Jim's great grandfather. They found the owners at home and got a tour of what is now a registered historical landmark house. They also found the house where Jim's grandfather lived and where Jim was taken almost every year as a child.

## The razing of Kennecott—part two

BY KENNY SMITH

Jack Wilson's article *The Razing of Kennecott* in your May & June 1999 issue brought back a lot of interesting memories. I too ended up with a few goodies from the old mine site.

I thought Jack's article was accurate and good but when one reflects back upon the first decade or so of the Kennecott post-mining era, not to be forgotten was the arrival of Ray Trocheateau on the scene. Around 1957, after Cordova Airlines had hauled a relatively large volume of tourists into the area for over 3 years, Mr. Trocheateau purchased all the surface rights of Kennecott Copper Corporation on Bonanza Ridge. Mr. Trocheateau lived in the Seattle area and was acquainted with Jack O'Neill. Trocheateau was interested in Kennecott after hearing O'Neill tell stories about McCarthy and Kennecott. O'Neill was friends with officials of Kennecott and relayed the news to them that Trocheateau was interested in the property.

There have been some indications that Trocheateau merely contracted with Kennecott to perform certain requirements at the site. After checking with a friend and one of the principals of Consolidated Wrangell Mining Company, who later purchased the property from Mr. Trocheateau, I found that Trocheateau had both purchased the property and entered into a contract with Kennecott to:

1. Destroy the buildings.
2. Block entry to all

underground mine openings.

3. Restrict visitor access to the site.

After acquiring the property, Mr. Trocheateau, through a small company, immediately began transporting almost all of the removable effects from the site. It was my understanding that he took the goods to the Seattle area in Washington State where it was sold in surplus stores. With the removal of supplies and other accouterments much of the intrigue associated with the abandoned mine was eliminated. I can attest to the suddenly bland appearance of the place since my first visit occurred during the pre-Trocheateau era.

It may have been a little more than rumor but word was out that Kennecott Copper was concerned about liability associated with public encroachment. Accordingly, they transferred the portion of their property rights that exposed them to the most liability. I recall all the consternation within the Cordova Airline organization at the time regarding this development. I remember one persistent argument then that questioned why Kennecott didn't negotiate a sale with the Alaska government instead of having it locked up by a private concern. Of course, Alaska was a territory at the time and a government acquisition would probably have been difficult to arrange.

I was stationed in Chitina in

1960 shortly after I began my commercial flying career. A year or so before I moved to Chitina Trocheateau's crew began stripping the surface of remaining quality copper ore. They packed it in the same jute bags that Kennecott used to use, flew it to Chitina and from there trucked it to the smelter in Tacoma, Washington.

During the summer of 1960 these crews were constructing the first vehicle haul roads to the Bonanza and Jumbo mines with a small Caterpillar dozer.

Mr. Trocheateau's foreman at Kennecott was a very likable fellow named Frank DeCaro. Frank really appreciated this country. He told me once that he kept receiving orders from Ray to fulfill Kennecott's mandate by tearing the buildings down or if unable to do that, burn them down. Frank said he didn't have the heart to comply. He did, however, make a token effort by having his crew rip the top off of the mill building early in the 1962 season before the snow was gone from the new road to the Bonanza and Jumbo mines. Fortunately, Frank was able to procrastinate long enough until Consolidated Wrangell acquired the property from Mr. Trocheateau. Consolidated Wrangell, Inc. was formed in 1964/65 and the rest is history most of us are familiar with.

So, in my opinion, the real "Razing of Kennecott" was avoided because of one man, Frank DeCaro.

# Run with the sun

## *PV-powered wheels in the Alaskan bush*

*Editors note: This story originally appeared in the February/March issue of Home Power. It is used here by permission.*

BY ED LACHAPELLE

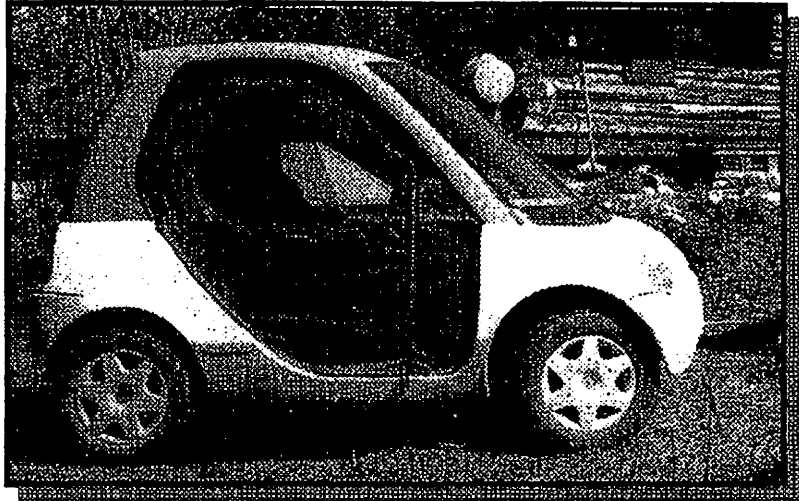
**Y**es, folks, it is possible to enjoy solar-powered transportation in an off-grid and off-road system. After several years of studying all the angles, we finally came up with a combination that has survived thorough testing during the summer of 1998.

Our site is in McCarthy, Alaska, a remote bush community where my partner, Meg Hunt, and I make our home. For eleven years we've enjoyed the full benefits of solar power (our system is described in Home Power 17).

We wanted to extend our solar usage to include transportation. None of the many vehicle conversions were exactly what we wanted. Then the Bombardier Neighborhood Electric vehicle (NEV) came on the market. We liked what we saw. But could the NEV, designed for charging from 120 volts AC, be converted to work from solar panels? I am happy to report that the answer is yes.

### **Performance**

This is a neat little car with plenty of power for real work. It is fun to drive—very quick to turn or accelerate. We have yet to try a hill it won't climb or a trailer it won't pull. Our community is separated from the road system by a river. The farthest we can drive is five miles, climbing about 800 feet in the process. With driver and passenger, this takes less than half the NEV's battery charge. The downhill return is



practically a free ride. We sized the PV array to allow this ten mile round trip every other sunny day. In practice, one clear day gets the NEV back up to full charge.

### **The Numbers**

The NEV is 100 inches long, 55 inches wide, and 61 inches high. The curb weight is 1275 pounds. The drive motor is a 72 volt, 4 KW, shunt-wound DC motor, geared directly to the rear differential. Power is stored in six GNB Type M83CHP12V27 Champion 12 volt batteries connected in series. These are sealed lead-acid batteries with absorbent glass mat separators between the plates. They are rated at 110 AH at a 20 hour rate and are designed for EV use.

The onboard charger draws 15 amps maximum at 110 volts. When the batteries are discharged to their design maximum, 80% depth of discharge (DOD), it takes eight hours to recharge. A sophisticated sensor and

display system reports state of charge (SOC) and status of the power system. A separate 12 volt, 24 AH battery supplies power for lights and accessories. The onboard charger recharges this auxiliary battery and the main battery. It uses a complex charge program for the propulsion batteries, finishing with a 2 amp equalizing charge, up to 110% of the previous discharge.

Maximum speed of the NEV is 25 mph, limited by the motor controller for safety. The design range is 30 miles. This assumes level ground on a paved road, nonexistent here in McCarthy. The NEV is fully equipped with headlights, turn signals, and seat belts. It is street legal where allowed by state slow vehicle laws.

### **Solar Modifications**

We wanted to be able to charge from both the PV array and an AC household outlet. Thanks to extensive and helpful discussions with the design



engineers, we can do this. The onboard charger rectifies the AC power and uses a microprocessor-controlled DC to DC converter to recharge the battery. I replaced the AC cooling fan in the charger with a DC fan, powered through a full-wave bridge rectifier. So we can charge the Bombardier on either AC or DC.

The PV array design was based on a season of solar power data. We logged our data with a Fluke 87 meter from the output of a single 48 watt Kyocera PV panel. We designed an array of seven 75 watt BP panels connected in series for nominal 120 volts DC at about 4 amps in full sun. This was not enough power to run the charger for its full programmed charging regime, but enough to make it work. With our marginal PV charging capacity, it shuts down after two hours. I installed a fused panel on the NEV dash, with jacks giving direct access to the main and auxiliary battery terminals. Parallel pin jacks allowed easy monitoring of the battery voltages.

### **Switching**

At Alaskan latitudes, this is obviously a summer vehicle. Very little sun is available in mid-winter, and sub-zero temperatures degrade battery performance. But no solar enthusiast is going to let all those PV panels sit idle for 6 months of the year, just when they could offer a big boost to our house system. So we've set up a system that allows us to switch from EV battery charging to charging our house battery bank.

The changeover requires switches—lots of them. Each panel connects to a double-pole, double-throw, center-off switch. In one position, all seven panels

are connected in series. In the other position, the panels are connected in parallel to a 12 volt bus bar feeding our house system. This arrangement runs the panel outputs through a lot of wires. In order to minimize losses, the switch box is located within six feet of the array.

A separate switch allows us to select the series output from either six or seven panels; six for direct EV battery charging and seven for the onboard charger. When we switch the array to six panels in series, we connect it directly to the main 72 volt battery. This works fine, but it does require manual monitoring and control. A 72 volt charge controller will be the next improvement. My present practice is to charge direct, close to the battery gassing point, then switch over to seven panels and the onboard charger to finish the charge.

The big unknown here is how this modified charging method will affect battery longevity. Good management for a lead-acid battery means only withdrawing half of its capacity and then fully recharging it. By retaining the AC charging option, I do have the occasional chance to do a programmed recharge cycle by plugging into a diesel generator.

### **Downside**

The designers of the electrical and propulsion systems of the NEV have done a first-rate job. But prospective buyers should be aware of some peculiar deficiencies.

When it comes to servicing, this vehicle is not just user-unfriendly—it is downright user-hostile. The main and auxiliary batteries and the onboard charger are mounted on a single tray weighing 480 pounds. To access

these components the NEV must be put up on a rack, and the tray lowered by a forklift using a special pallet. The main fuses for propulsion, auxiliary batteries, motor controller, and onboard charger can be reached only by removing the battery tray. If you need a forklift to change a fuse, someone was asleep at the design board.

The vehicle is furnished without a spare tire or jack, which is very optimistic for a street vehicle with a 30 mile range. Fortunately, a standard four lug, twelve inch trailer wheel serves nicely as a spare and fits in the trunk.

On a dry gravel road, driver and passenger are enveloped in clouds of dust even with the canvas hatch and door covers completely closed. Liberal use of duct tape and silicon sealer helps, but dust still boils up through the battery compartment vents.

### **Success**

We racked up an estimated 100 happy miles on the NEV this past summer (there's no odometer). It has delivered just what we wanted at this remote site—a way to get around, haul supplies, and have a little fun. Taking visitors for demonstration rides is part of the fun. Freedom from hauling gasoline or diesel oil over a long and inconvenient route was a big motive for exploring EV options in the first place. But the real reward was the satisfaction of designing the PV-powered system for pollution-free transportation. Compared with noisy, gas-powered ATVs common in this area, the silent running of the NEV continues to astonish onlookers. And if you want to use wheels to sneak up on a moose, go electric! ☺



# the Languid Lady

## Wildflowers of the Wrangells—Part 5: "The Orchid Family"

BY DEE FRADY

**I**t is mid June and so far I would have to say this has not been the best of seasons for wildflowers. Many varieties have been less prolific than the past two years and most are a week or two later than usual. The ground temperature has remained cool and even some ice from winter glacier activity has yet to melt. However many flowers are now blooming and it is finally green. Our short summer has arrived!

One of my favorite plant families is the orchid (Orchidaceae). Orchids are more commonly associated with tropical forests or hothouses but do grow wild in Alaska producing some twenty to thirty native species. Some of our orchids are showy, such as lady's slippers, and are easy to identify with the enlarged lower lips. Others such as twayblades and bog orchis with small greenish or whitish flowers require a much closer look to reveal the detail of their structure.

Alaska's species of orchids all have codependent relationships with fungi. In other words, they need each other to survive. The soil contains delicate threads of fungi that penetrates orchid roots to provide water and nutrients for plant growth. In turn, the orchid then feeds carbohydrates made through photosynthesis back to the fungi.

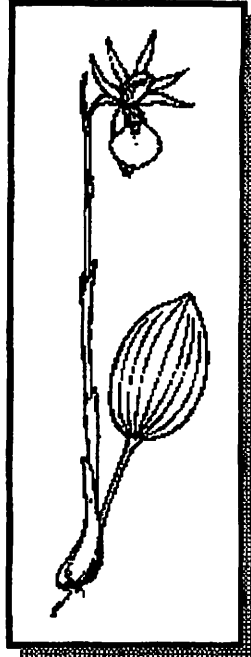
To further complicate matters each orchid species

needs a certain insect for proper pollination and, in some cases, must be quite exact. Orchids specifically shaped, colored and scented attract a single species of insect. For instance, the lower petal or lip forms a landing place and often a lure for the insects. Usually orchids having small whitish or greenish flowers and emitting only a faint perfume are pollinated by the male mosquito.

Orchids that are white and emit a heavy perfume are typically moth pollinated.

Orchid seeds are also extremely small and dust-like; a single ovary may contain up to three million seeds. Most plant seeds have food reserves stored for a good start. Due to their tiny size, orchid seeds do not have any reserves and to germinate seeds must immediately set up a relationship with a particular species of fungus in the soil to sprout and survive.

For these reasons orchids are difficult to transplant and cultivate. Avoid collecting most



Picture by Hulten

FAIRY SLIPPER  
BLOOMS EARLY.

of the time, as these plants rarely survive; try to leave them in their natural habitat.

I'll briefly touch on a few of the orchids found in our area. This is merely a brief overview; the best way to positively identify orchids is with a good flower book. Keep in mind almost all of our wild orchids grow in wet or moist soil. Although covered in a previous issue I'll begin with a review of my favorite native orchid.

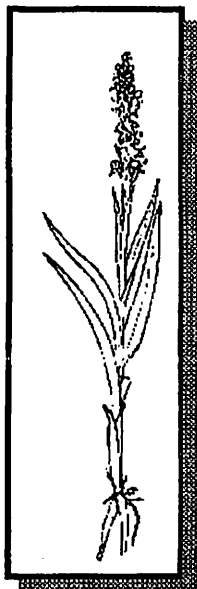
FAIRY SLIPPER/CALYPSO ORCHID (Calypto bulbosa) Orchid Family

In my opinion this fragrant flower may be the most beautiful in this family. It produces a single rose-pink "slipper" (sac-like lower flower) on a slender, 3 to 8 inch tall stem. The single, rounded, deeply veined leaf at the base is evergreen and remains so through the winter. The soon withering leaf dies when the flower blooms and a new leaf appears in August.

NORTHERN WHITE or SPARROW'S EGG LADY'S SLIPPER (Cypripedium passerinum) Orchid Family

The lady's slippers are

perhaps our best known and most striking native orchids distinguished by their large slipper-like lips. Preferring woods and bogs and blooming in June to July this perennial grows from a creeping, stout rootstock. The fragrant, single flower grows on 10 to 16 inch stems and usually has 2 to 4 hairy leaves. The overall flower appears greenish in hue; greenish sepals, white petals and a lower pouch splotted with pink to rosy-purple spots within the "slipper" make up the blossom. This plant is difficult to transplant and virtually impossible to grow from seed.



Picture by Hulten

**BOG CANDLE  
DENSE SPIKE  
OF AROMATIC  
FLOWERS**

name of fly-specked.

**NORTHERN BOG ORCHIS** (*Platanthera hyperborea*) Orchid Family

The green-flowered orchis (another common name) a perennial flower that likes wet places, ponds and stream edges from sea level to tree line, blooms from mid June to early August. The stems are heavy and fleshy, attaining heights of 6 to 14 inches and have long, narrow, green leaves. The yellow-green, sweet scented flowers cover most of the stem in a dense spike. The

flower lips are flat and project downward at the base in a "spur" (hollow-tube). They are very yellowish under poor growing conditions or after pollination. These orchis can hybridize with bog candle.

**BOG CANDLE/BOG ORCHIS** (*Platanthera dilatata*) Orchid Family

Favoring margins of lakes and wet meadows in late June to early August this tall, white orchis bears a number of long, narrow, pointed leaves on the stem. The heavy stalk of 10 to 18 inches has aromatic (sweet scented) more open flowers. According to Richard

Baldwin transplanting is possible and they may do well in a wet garden.

**SMALL BOG ORCHIS** (*Platanthera obtusata*) Orchid Family

The one-leaved rein orchid (another common name) is much shorter at 5 to 8 inches tall and only has one (rarely two) leaf at the base. It only produces a few greenish flowers, usually three to six.

**HOODED LADIES' TRESSES/ALASKA BOG ORCHID** (*Spiranthes Romanzoffiana*) Orchid Family

Also favoring lake edges and wet areas these plants can be found in alpine areas up to 3,000 feet and appear in late June through July. The 8 to 18 inch

plant has a fragrant spike of white to creamy flowers in three spiraling rows around the stalk. The flowers scarcely more than ¼ inches long have hoods with flat lips. A few grass-like leaves occur at the base along with some small stem leaves.



**HEART-LEAF TWAYBLADE  
DISTINCTIVE LOWER LIP**

**HEART-LEAF TWAYBLADE** (*Listera cordata*) Orchid Family

This insignificant orchid likes moist, mossy woods in July and early August. The common name, twayblade, means "two leaves" that are heart-shaped ("cordate") and opposing. The

small, greenish flowers sometimes a dark purple, are on a slender stalk to 7 inches. The lower lip is distinctive as it divides into two spreading prongs that come to a point. This flower is circumboreal and grows all around the northern hemisphere.

**NORTHERN TWAYBLADE** (*Listera borealis*) Orchid Family

Northern twayblade blooms in moist woods in July and early August. It produces green-yellow flowers and has two oval-shaped leaves.

**FROG ORCHID** (*Coeloglossum viride*) Orchid Family

Another orchid that grows mostly in mountain meadows is the frog orchid. It has many, small, green flowers and pointed



**NORTHERN CORAL ROOT**  
FLOWERS MATURE TO SEED PODS

leaves close to its base on a thick stem 5 to 14 inches tall.

**NORTHERN CORAL ROOT** (*Corallorrhiza trifida*) Orchid Family

The coral root is a flowering plant that lacks green color as it has no green leaves or chlorophyll. It is parasitic and utterly dependent on its fungus. The roots are not roots at all but an underground stem or rhizome, much branched that resembles coral. The yellowish, fleshy stem of 4 to 14 inches does have two to three clasping bracts. The spike-like racemes have tiny, yellowish-green flowers in late May to early June.

They mature to drooping seed pods. These plants

prefer boggy woods but also grow in open woods of deciduous trees and since they have no chlorophyll can do well in very shady places.

**LESSER RATTLESNAKE PLANTAIN** (*Goodyera repens*) Orchid Family

Arising from a creeping rootstock this plant bears a basal rosette of lustrous evergreen leaves that are commonly marked with a network of white lines. The yellowish to creamy white tubular flowers, on one side of a spike-like raceme, 4 to 10 inches tall have sac-like lips.

I have identified many of these orchids on our property and in the immediate area. However, there are many other species growing in our state. Among them are beauties such as the pink lady's slipper, yellow moccasin flower and the rose-purple orchis to name a few. If you are traveling about you are likely to spot these and several more.

## NPS begins work in Kennicott

BY KRIS RUETER

In May, the National Park Service hired 5 locals to begin the stabilization process of Kennicott. The local crew will be working under the guidance of the project manager, Ron Dorsey, who comes to the McCarthy- Kennicott area from Maryland. Ron specializes in working on historical sites and

structures and is looking forward to the many challenges of the site.

The crew's first task is to improve immediate safety issues such as patching holes in walkways, replacing handrails and treads on stairs, and creating a safe passage for the guided tours on the upper floor

of the mill building. Each improvement is done with the consideration of how it was originally constructed to retain the historical integrity. Other projects for this summer will include: roof and foundation repair, door and window reconstruction, and lead paint abatement.

"Flowers have spoken to me more than I can tell in written words. They are the hieroglyphics of angels, loved by all men for the beauty of the character, though few can decipher even fragments of their meaning."—Lydia M. Child

# GUNS ON THE HOMESTEAD

## *Part two—the high-powered rifle*

BY RICK KENYON

In our last issue we talked about the pump-action 12 gauge shotgun as being an ideal weapon for bear encounters of the close kind. Although I believe that to be true, I need to confess that the only shotgun I own is an old .410 double barrel that belonged to my grandmother. It is a great rabbit gun, but I hope I never have to use it in a serious confrontation with anything much bigger! Parked near my front door, readily accessible to family members but out of sight to guests, is a high-powered rifle.

The rifle has one main advantage over the shotgun—it has the capability of hitting a smaller target at a much longer range. And while a bear may not be considered a small target, please realize that if it becomes necessary or desirable to shoot at a bear, you do not shoot at the bear: You shoot at the bear's vital organs. Bear anatomy is beyond the scope of this article, but generally we are talking here about the heart-lung area, which is perhaps the size of that paper plate you were shooting at earlier, or the brain, which is much smaller.

While I am not advocating shooting a bear at long ranges, (remember we are talking here about defense, not hunting) there is always the possibility that your first shot will wound, rather than kill, and you will be forced to shoot at longer ranges in order to prevent a wounded bear from escaping. Or, perhaps you have determined that a certain bear has become a

menace to you or your loved ones—it has invaded your homestead on several occasions, but the only opportunity you have for a shot is further than the range that the shotgun is likely to be lethal. The increased accuracy of the rifle at longer ranges also makes it an ideal dual-purpose weapon—both for protection and for hunting big game.

The advantage of increased accuracy does come with a price tag—the need for practice! If a shotgun takes “X” amount of practice to feel comfortable with, the rifle will take “XX” amount. (In our next issue we will talk about the handgun, which requires “XXXXX” amount of practice, which is why we saved it for last!)

Unfortunately for the newcomer, rifles come in a confusing array of calibers. While the shotgun gauges we considered were few—the 12 or 20 gauge (or the 10 gauge for the adventurous!) there are many rifle calibers, each with its advocates and its detractors. Caliber actually refers to bore diameter, but in each bore diameter there are many different cartridge configurations, each with a different power level. For instance, there are .22 caliber rifles that shoot the .22 caliber long rifle cartridge, and are suitable for small game such as hare or spruce hen. They shoot a .22 caliber bullet at velocities of around 900 to 1200 foot-per-second. There are also .22 caliber rifles that shoot the 220 Swift cartridge, which

delivers its .22 caliber bullet at up to 4,000 feet-per-second and has many more times the energy and range of the .22 long rifle. In between are more than a half dozen different .22 caliber cartridges. I have used the .22 as an example only because more people are familiar with it than with any other caliber. There are no .22 caliber cartridges that I consider suitable for the task of self-defense against bears.

In the early 1980's, the U.S. Forest Service did a study to determine the effectiveness of various rifle, shotgun and handgun cartridges at the short ranges involved in stopping a bear attack. One interesting fact that came to light during the study is that some of the more powerful .30 caliber magnums fared poorly in the tests. The .300 Winchester Magnum with 180 grain bullets ended up at the bottom of the list, behind cartridges such as the 30/06, .308, and 7x57 Mauser. Even the .44 magnum handgun ranked higher than the much more powerful .300 Winchester Mag. Part of the reason for this may be that these powerful magnums are designed for long-range performance, and when used at the short distances involved in stopping a charging bear the bullets tend to break up, or fragment, thus losing much of their energy and failing to penetrate to the bear's vital organs.

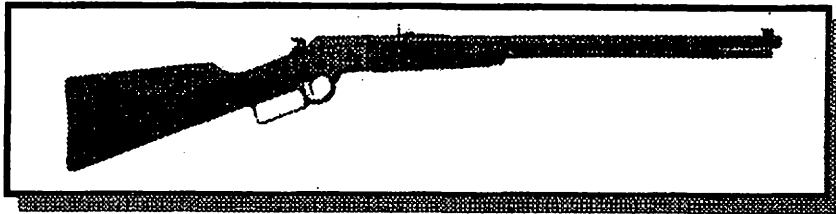
While it is probably safe to say that more black bear (and perhaps more grizzly bear) have been taken with the venerable 30-30 cartridge than with any

other, it would be hard to find a serious advocate of the 30-30 when the main purpose is protection from these animals. My advice would be to consider the .308 class of cartridges as the minimum power level for this purpose. The 30/06 with a 220 grain bullet fared very well in the USFS tests. (By the way, the .458 Winchester Magnum won top honors. I used to own a Ruger M-77 rifle in that caliber, but as much as I enjoy shooting I never did enjoy the recoil—approximately 55 ft./lbs. To put that in perspective, a 30/06 with 220 grain bullets has around 15 ft./lbs. of recoil.) In general, it seems that the heavier bullets available in each cartridge work better than at these short ranges than do lighter weight ones— especially in the .30 caliber class guns.

I recommend that you avoid any caliber less than .30. Although many bears have been killed with the .270 class rifles, (7mm Mauser, 280 Remington & 284 Winchester) I have heard of several people who have been killed by bears after shooting them with this class rifle. In several instances, both the bear and the person using the rifle were found dead. Not that these calibers will not kill bears. I have a Remington bolt-action in 7mm-08 that has taken several black bear and one grizzly, but only because that is what I had available at the time—not because it is my choice. (As far as that goes, for some time the record grizzly was one taken in northern Alberta by a young Indian girl named Bella Twin—

using a single-shot .22 rimfire! Not recommended, but proof that when you meet up with a bear, any gun is better than no gun!)

Avoid high-powered telescopic sights. At close range all you will see in your scope is hair. The common iron sights that come on many rifles are



reasonably adequate for fast, accurate shooting at close range. A type of sight that became popular with big-game hunters in Africa is called the Express sight. It consists of a shallow "V" rear sight and a somewhat larger than normal front bead sight. It is reported to be a bit faster than the standard "U" configuration. My choice is a "peep" sight, or "receiver" sight. Williams makes one they call the Foolproof. It mounts on the side of the receiver and is easily adjustable for windage and elevation. I find it faster and more accurate than standard open sights. There is also a variation of the receiver sight called the "ghost-ring" which has gained in popularity in recent years.

Of course there is a choice of action type also. The bolt-action is probably the most popular for hunting, but does have some draw-backs for our intended purpose. Many bolt-action (as well as other action type) safeties can easily be released by catching on branches while going through brush. It is much safer to carry a

rifle with the chamber empty. The problem with the bolt-action is that it is one of the slower types to bring into action when carried this way. Some favor the semi-automatic for its quick follow-up shots and its slight dampening of felt recoil. I think the same things we said about the semi-automatic shotgun also applies here—they tend to cost more, and have a reputation as less-reliable and more prone to accidental discharge than other

action types. The pump-action is available in rifles as well as shotguns and shares many of the same attributes which make it desirable— reasonable cost and quickness to bring into action, even with an empty chamber.

My favorite for close to medium range shooting is the lever action. The gun can be carried with the magazine full and the chamber empty, yet can be brought into action very quickly. The design of the lever-action makes it one of the most comfortable to carry, even without a sling. The balance point normally falls in the area of the receiver, which seems very comfortable in one's hand compared to most other action types.

Last year, Marlin introduced its model 1895G "Guide Gun." This is a lightweight, short barreled lever action chambered for a cartridge that has been well proven as a "stopper," the 45/70. When my good friend and neighbor, Doync Houghton, let me shoot his Guide Gun last summer, I knew I had to have one. A few phone calls confirmed that Marlin had a winner, and

everyone had a waiting list of customers for the new gun. Several weeks later Doyne called and said that Joe Prax at The Prospector in Valdez had one that he had bought for his own personal use. Fortunately for me, Doyne had convinced him that I needed it worse than he did, so I wasted no time in getting down there and picking it up!

While Marlin calls it the Guide Gun, to my mind they could just as well have called it the Homesteader's Gun. It combines ease of carry and use with plenty of power. The gun has a large, rubber recoil pad and the 18 1/2" barrel is "ported." Porting is a fairly recent development in firearms technology that can, if done right, greatly reduce the felt recoil and muzzle jump. Marlin got it right on this gun. I watched closely while Doyne shot the gun offhand, and it seemed the barrel rose perhaps one inch. My perception is that its recoil is comparable to my old Winchester 30/30. The only changes I have made to mine is to replace the rear sight with one of the Williams Foolproof models, and to replace the front

sight with a red plastic post-type. I also added a sling made by Butler Creek. It is nylon, with a padded area about 3/8" thick which makes it very comfortable over the shoulder. It also has provision to carry an extra 4 cartridges on the outside of the padded area. I mount mine in such a fashion that I can carry the gun muzzle-down, over my left shoulder. (With a lever-action this requires the sling to be fairly long so that the lever does not dig into your back, unless you move the rear sling attach point to the side instead of the bottom of the stock.) Such a carry style allows the gun to be brought into action very quickly and helps keep debris out of the muzzle.

One problem with the Guide Gun is that they are still in short supply. I talked with Joe at the Prospector recently, and he told me that he has 10 of them on order but none in stock. The distributor says they should be available later this year. You might also try Hook, Line & Sinker in Valdez, the Sports Page in Glennallen or one of the gun shops in Anchorage.

Speaking of Anchorage,

check out Wild West Guns on Old Seward Highway. They take a Marlin Model 1895, cut the barrel to 16.5" (or any legal length that you prefer), port the barrel, install sights of your choice, smooth and lighten the trigger pull, install a thick rubber recoil pad, and rework the gun in such a fashion that you can easily remove the barrel from the action. You also have a choice of finishes. Bring your checkbook—the guns start at \$1395!

I am pleased with the response to the first part of this series. Several of you wrote or came by with valuable information on the subject, for which I am grateful. I likely have stepped on some toes by failing to recommend your favorite shotgun or rifle, for which I am sorry. As I said in the last issue, I am not an expert on the subject, and it is obviously a controversial subject.

Please join us next time for the final segment of this series—the handgun. Until then, practice with your chosen gun, be safe, join the NRA and be *aware of your surroundings!*

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## **U. S. Census Bureau looking for team leaders in McCarthy**

BY BONNIE KENYON

**L**ee Hixson, Field Operation Supervisor for the U. S. Census Bureau, announces she plans a visit to the McCarthy area in the near future. She is looking for local team leaders to count the population of McCarthy and Kennicott for the Census of year 2000.

Those interested in participating must pass a government test, says Hixson, who will administer it at a future designated place and time.

Please watch for more information in an upcoming issue of the Wrangell St. Elias News.

# McCarthy area pioneers

## *part one—George Flowers*

Editors note: While transcribing the old *McCarthy Weekly News* articles which appear in WSEN under *Our Town*, certain names keep appearing year after year. Names such as Barrett, Jenson, Osborne, Lommell and many others. One of those names is George Flowers, of Long Lake.

BY RICK KENYON

Bonnie and I have been corresponding with Kennecott Kid Richard Osborne (son of C.E. "Cap" and Margaret Hazelet Osborne) and Richard sent us copies of two letters he had received from George Flowers. Richard is preparing to write a book "about the small world with which all Alaskans, of my vintage at least, were blessed. Particularly those of us born in Kennecott." He plans to start with Kennecott-Long Lake-McCarthy, and has graciously offered to share these episodes

with us.

Just this past week I met (on the phone) Stephen R. Lloyd, who is the son of Rodney S. Lloyd who lived at Kennecott in the mid-1920's as a teenager. Stephen has shared with us one of his Dad's poems, *The Glacierback Ride of Mt. Magee*, written at Kennecott, which can be found on page 22. I know that others of our readers have valuable stories about McCarthy area pioneers that they might be willing to share with WSEN readers. Let's start out with George Flowers, and

go from there. Any of you that can share information or stories about George (hint, hint, Inger!) or others please do so. (WSEN, Box MXY, Glennallen, AK 99588 or email [wse news@aol.com](mailto:wse news@aol.com).)

Following are two letters, originally typed on George's ancient (even in 1938) portable typewriter and duplicated here as nearly as possible. The letters were simply addressed "Mr. Richard Osborne, Fairbank Alaska." The postmarks were Chitina.

Long Lake. Alaska.  
June 14th. 1938  
Mr. Richard Osborne.  
Fairbank Alaska.

My dear old friend Rich i reseved your nice letter some time ago. Were a moore than to hear from you and the famly. I were away from home from april till may twenty first. so i have been very bussy getting in my garden. i just had a letter from Hans T Jolly boss at the mine he said that he was cleaning up the old mines and he said that this is the last summer up at Kennecott also it looks as thoe the railroad will not run another year. well Rich i red in the valdez miner last August about my nice young friend Miss or Mrs Rock rather geting married you didnt mention her name so when you write her tell her that i sends my best wishes and blessing tell mother and dad that i am feeling fine and i guest that i will began to get old in a few moorer years for i am 66 last berth day. say buddy i remmber you spending your 6th berth day donn here with me so i think it was on the 18th of june am i wright. say Hello to Dave and ed Richard i wont a pair of muck luck size 11 i wish you would send me the price of a pair and i will send you the money to puches them for me if you have time if not you can send me the adress of the place where you price them. i had a prety good winter s traping we are having a very wet and cold spring. take time and write some moore best wishes to the famly.

your old Pal George F. Flowers.



*Mr. Osborne told us the following: "My mother, who he called "Muzy" and my grandmother—who he called "gramp" first met George on his way into the country on foot from Seattle. This was in the 1910 to 1916 period—I don't know the exact year."*

Long lake alaska. July ioth 194o.

My dear old pal Richard

I reseved your nice letter some time a go were moore than glad to hear from you. also glad that you mad the trip back in iowa. I amagin that trip did you as much good as to years in chool. say old buddy this country is abslutly dead there is nothing left there ar about 3 people in Kennecott and 3 in McCarthy these to small tonns is ded and gone ha ha altho the few peoples that is left they seems to get along all write. for they knows what to do some of them make , hay whlie the sun shine myself i make it while it is cold and snow so pal i am feeling fine and helthy and douring fine i caught moor fur last winter than i caught in 10 years i have a fine garden a big straw bery patch since the railroad left the country has got lots of moose Rich i don't live donn the creek the place where you spent your 6th berth day some years ago high water wash me out of that place if you rember the place where we ust to hit the railroad track Oacar and Fagerberg are still here dohring nothing as usal Buddy the great chang that we have had here it hasnt interfeared with my life or living one instent i think that i am better off. every body left this part of the countey even Cordov Bill Berry is freighting from Valdez for McCarthy and the creeks. Pal i am sorry that i havnt any good news to write. gave Dad Muzy the Boys my best i am show that Big sister write you or the famly regluly. so when you write her tell her that i send her and Famly my best wishes and love. Buddy i were glad that you mention grand mother in your letter you said that she were getting old corse i am getting old my self i am 68. what every you do try and make Gramp as hapy as you can. tell muzy i woould like to write her a note in this letter but i don't wont deturb her for i think that she is about as happy as i am.well pal what do you think about this great great i wont say wor i will say conflick or murder think what one man cont' to do i thank it is wrong it looks like there is no safe place to live on earth

best wishes to you and famly your Pal George Flowers.

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## From rail to road

(continued from cover)

adventures working for Gordon Hizie in the early 1950's when they removed rails between McCarthy and somewhere close to Long Lake. I don't recall for certain how Hizie acquired the rail or what he did with it other than to sell it as reused rail or scrap. They used old CRNW speeders to get back and forth from camp. One story Howard told was when he and one of the Bells, from up around Copper Center, were traveling fast down the track when they hit another one of their speeders head on in the middle of a curve. Howard said they were all able to jump clear just in the nick of time.

During the summer of 1960 a fellow by the name of Joe

Lynch came up from Juneau and walked the rails between Long Lake and McCarthy to determine whether or not he wanted to purchase them from our new State of Alaska. His company was called "Alaska Junk." They purchased the rails and began removing them in 1961. Joe had some sort of deal with the Chile government where they were going to be used on a railroad down there. Over the next few years he removed all the remaining rails which were stockpiled near the dock in Valdez for pickup and delivery to Chile. Unfortunately, the rail was still on the bank when the 1964 earthquake hit. The rails can be

found today somewhere on the bottom of Valdez Arm. During the fall of 1971 the Alaska Department of Highways opened the current highway bridge across the Copper River at Chitina. In 1972 almost all of the trestles between McCarthy and Chitina were in a complete or partial state of collapse so it was still virtually impossible to drive the route in the summer. During the summer and fall of 1973 the Department of Highways completed a pioneer access type road all the way to McCarthy. So it was 36 years after the mine closed in 1938 that autos began using the rail bed as a road.

## Celebrating three generations with the Rowland family

Best wishes to Ken and Nancy Rowland, who celebrated their fortieth wedding anniversary in McCarthy on May 28!

Joining in the family fun are daughter Loyce and Ron Krogel, Kristen and Keith, Keith and Laura Rowland, Kaleb, David, Daniel and Hannah, Roger and Tammy Rowland, Kimberly, Julie, Sharon and Axel. It is the first time the entire family has been together since 1986.

Nancy writes: *We first brought our three children to McCarthy in 1974, hiking into town from the mud slide, visiting long-time friends Les and Flo Hegland. After selecting a lot (the old baseball diamond), we set up a tent and stayed for awhile. In 1977 we erected the little green*



*cabin at the top of the hill, and also purchased Tom and Molly Gilmore's house, the old railroad cook shack.*

*Our family members have fond memories of many trips at different times of year. Remember the time we brought our horses? One special memory is the year there were so few in town on the Fourth of July that everyone was in the parade. Then a few tourists hiked into town, so we reassembled and went around*

*the block again - with an audience!*

*So many wonderful times: hiking to the mines, picnicking at the glacier, swimming in the creek, hauling water, bicycling and skiing down from Kennecott, riding the trams, driving across the ice, fording the river, dealing with bears in hunting camp, making friends - and grieving for those we lost.*

*As our three children were married, each of them chose McCarthy for their honeymoon destinations. A few years later, they began bringing their own children. We are pleased that our family loves the area and we look forward to many more happy occasions.*

Ken and Nancy have 10 grandchildren - 5 boys and 5 girls. Nancy proudly announces, "And there are two on the way!"

# Iron Rails to Alaskan Copper

*The Epic Triumph of Erastus Corning Hawkins*

by Alfred O. Quinn

## Book review

BY RICK KENYON

The author, Alfred O. Quinn is a Professional Engineer, Surveyor and Photogrammetrist with extensive experience of mapping in Alaska. In *Iron Rails to Alaskan Copper* he tells the story of two railroads and two men; E.C. Hawkins and Michael Heney. Hawkins was the brilliant engineer and Heney was a likable and talented contractor. Together they built the White Pass and Yukon and the Copper River and Northwestern railroads.

Excerpts from the Forward:

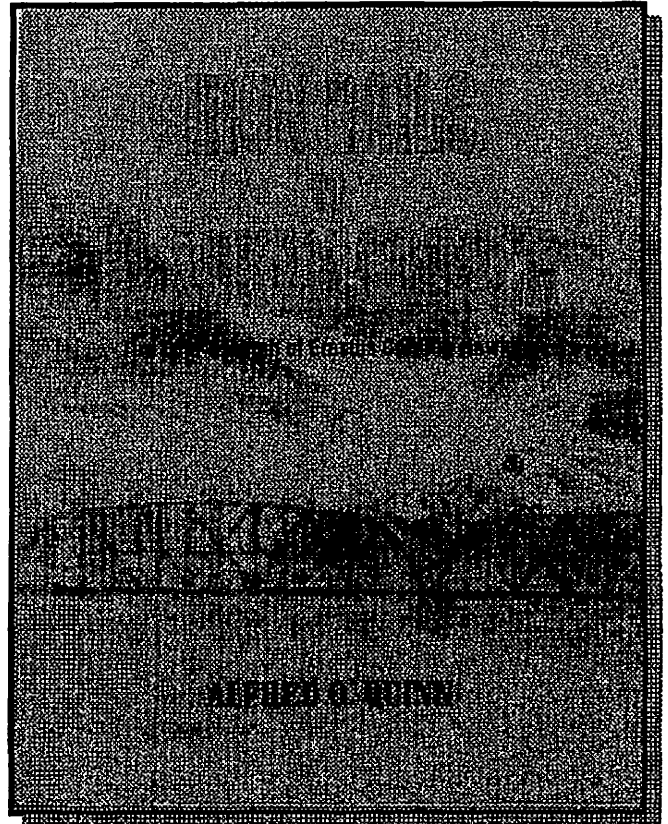
"This is the story about a wild, ferocious and frequently tempestuous river—The Copper; and a calm, lovable and brilliant engineer—Erastus Corning Hawkins."

"This is the story about a beloved and accomplished Civil Engineer who conquered both mountains and a wild river in planning, designing and constructing two major Alaskan railroads—The White Pass and Yukon and the Copper River and Northwestern. His knowledge and patience were major factors in his success, but his love and concern for people working with him were the reasons for his lasting fame."

"Also, the story is about a railroad, the Copper River and Northwestern that ran from the Port of Cordova on Prince William Sound some 190 miles north into the Alaskan interior to the very source of the meeting between the River and the Engineer, the fabulous and priceless Kennecott Copper Mines."

Of particular interest to WSEN readers are chapters 7-11, which deal with the Copper River and Northwestern Railroad, Cordova, Kennicott and McCarthy. There are lots of interesting pictures of the Million Dollar Bridge under construction, the success of which was pivotal to the entire project. On page 154 he tells of the

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well-known driving of the Copper Spike at the Kennecott Mine—heralding the completion of over 195 miles of rail in three years and four months. Although the spike is well known, I had not before heard of the copper horseshoe presented to Mr. Hawkins at that same ceremony.

Quinn also tells of the "Cordova Coal Party," at which unhappy Cordova residents shoveled Canadian coal from the steamship into the harbor. These and many other related incidents make the book well worth reading for anyone interested in the history of the area.

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"The hours of folly are measured by the clock, but of wisdom no clock can measure."—William Blake

# Good News from the Wrangells

## ***McCarthy Kennicott Community Church News***

BY BONNIE KENYON

**H**EAR YE! HEAR YE! Come one, come all to SonCastle Faire! I am excited to herald the Good News that our second annual Vacation Bible School will be August 2-6. The location is the McCarthy Kennicott Community Church "on the island" between the two footbridges. The times are 9:30-12 noon.

SonCastle Faire is a rich tapestry of Bible learning activities – fun and creative music, skits, crafts, games and Bible stories that help children explore their talents and abilities. The story goes like this:

Once upon a time, the King decreed that every child in His Kingdom be given a gift – a special talent the child could use to help others and to serve the King. Then one day, a royal feast was declared. The children of the Kingdom were to come together and display their talents for the King. T'was to be a glorious celebration. And all kids in the McCarthy Kennicott area and beyond – YOU are invited!

If you have any questions, you may contact me at 554-4454 or Lynn Welty at 554-4416.

---

**M**cCarthy-Kennicott Community Church meets every Sunday morning at 10:00 a.m. Everyone is invited and all faiths are welcome!

On Sunday July 4th guest speakers include Nigerian missionary Vincent Nwankpa and Andy and Heidi Linton who work with Christian Friends of Korea who have a special concern for the humanitarian, social and spiritual needs of the people of North Korea.

Sunday night at 7:00 p.m. everyone is invited to a Singsperation – a time of singing and making music.

---

**M**aryknoll Father Jim Travis celebrated Mass on June 27. He and some friends visited our local area after holding services in Glennallen. Father Travis served as a missionary to Africa for many years.

## SonCastle Faire

**August 2-6**

### Vacation Bible School

**Music**  
**Crafts**  
**Games**  
**Bible Stories**

**At the "church on the island!"**

**STUDY THE BIBLE!**

**WHY?**

**2 CORINTHIANS 5:10  
IN MY HOME!**

**WHY?**

**1-Study at your own pace**

**2-Use your own Bible**

**3-No one calls on you**

**4-No traveling or postage**

**(We pay all postage!)**

**O.K. -- HOW?**

**Write to:**

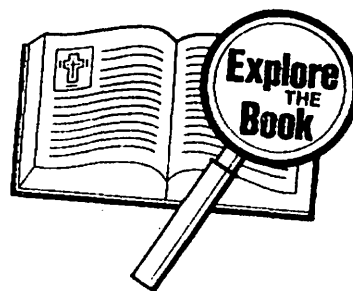
**Bible Correspondence Course**

**234 Chapel Drive**

**Gallipolis OH 45631**

**WHAT'S THE CATCH?**

**NONE! WRITE TODAY!**



# OUR TOWN

July 1924 August

Mrs. William Reed, formerly of McCarthy, gave birth to an eight pound boy this week.

Mrs. Wills, the proud grandmother, left for Cordova, on last Wednesday's train to visit the new arrival.

## MIDSUMMER PARADISES

Every summer increasing numbers of vacationists respond to a compelling desire to visit the realm of Alaska's unexcelled mountains and exquisite lakes.

Our splendid natural parks are now available as holiday playgrounds where all may enjoy the glorious scenic wonders of nature's exquisite loveliness.

July 5

## BRIDGE WASHED OUT ON RAILROAD

Owing to heavy rains in the upper Copper River Valley, the second bridge below McCarthy was partially washed away.

Out of the seventeen bents only fourteen are holding, Nos. 1, 2 and 3, have taken a trip down the river, while No. 4 bent is liable to go any minute. Bent No. 6 is completely washed out, there are only three pilings left on 6. So, taking it all around the damage will amount to several hundred dollars.

The water is just a raging torrent carrying with it trees, ice and enormous

quantities of dirt.

## THE TOWN OF MCCARTHY

Folks, do you know that the town of McCarthy has a chance for advancement that no other town in Alaska for its size can equal?

Just think what it will mean to us, when this new road to the White River is completed, and a rail-road that will have to be built in the near future from Fairbanks to this little town of ours.

Right now there is room for a bank with a working capital of \$30,000, a permanent barber shop and we think that a first class hotel would not do any harm. So, that when we do get a rush of visitors we will be able to accommodate them instead of letting them go away back to their various places of business like on the Fourth of July. Where if there had been a large enough establishment, to accommodate them we would have had that much more of their trade which is the thing that this little town of ours is looking for. Or any other town for that matter, there is lots and lots of room in this town for new settlers and just oodles of opportunities to liven it up a little by making up amateur concerts, entertainments, of various kinds and more especially by pulling our oars together.

July 12

Capt. Hubrick leaves for Cordova today, where he will start taking the pictures for the R. R. Company, to be used for their advertising.

July 19

## UNITED IN MARRIAGE

On the 20th of July, Miss Jessie Orr of McCarthy, and Antone Nelson were united in marriage before U. S. Commissioner C. H. Sundmacher. Miss Della More acted as bridesmaid and Amil Steel as best man. After the ceremony the Bride invited her friends and the Groom to an automobile ride to Nickoli, where the wedding breakfast was served. The invited guests were: Mrs. Kennedy, Mrs. Henry Olson, Bertha Albi, Lou Miller, Merle Lee, Billie King, Mr. Carl Anderson, Emanuel Johnson, Enoch Carlson, Fred Pearson, Ed Savage, John Hill, Herman Holms, Bill Hare, Bill Johnson, Jack Bishop, Walter Quon Eng, Hommer Gilkey, Pete Jacobson, Henry Olson, Paddy Devlin, and Roy Snider.

Jack Bishop acted as Toastmaster, while our Comedian, Paddy Devlin, furnished the music on a Victrola.

## THE NIZINA BRIDGE

Soundings for the bridge were made by a drill gang under Superintendent Lukekns during the winters of 1921 and 1922 in

accordance with the Territorial Authority. The bridge piers were driven during the winter of 1922-23, and capped with concrete during the spring of 1924.

Meanwhile only enough work on the road was done to facilitate sled travel. Incidentally, the steel sheet piling for the piers were purchased in Pittsburgh and came through the Panama Canal.

The north approach to the bridge will be finished in September, trusses are now being purchased in the States and will be freighted in over the snow this winter and erected by spring. The road will be finished, at least to a fair wagon road standard next summer.

## THE CROSSING OF CREEK KENNECOTT

Another local project of interest is the crossing of the Kennecott Creek between the town and the farmers to the west. This has been up several times. In June it was examined by the Road Commission and also Territorial Highway Engineer Summers.

Up until recently, a crossing of the near channel (pothole) was desired. But now the bulk of the water has shifted to the middle channel, and the request is for crossing there. In fact, a complete solution will require both crossings.

This is purely a local or Territorial project, and was disapproved for this year by

the Territorial Board; due to lack of funds.

### REVIEWING SOME GOOD POINTS OF THE COMMERCIAL CLUB

The action of the local Commercial Club at its meeting Thursday evening is likely to be one of the most important things that has happened in the town. If nothing else results, everyone pulled together for once. That in itself is a long stride in the right direction. Now everyone's asking "how long will it last?"

One of the ideas advanced was a cleanup campaign so that there would be some chance to avoid sickness from polluted streams and back yards. Another was a campaign to beautify the town by planting shade trees on the corners and urging everybody to plant flowers in their yards. It was decided that a walk should be put in from the depot to the town. The Club is going to try and have the railroad company build a new depot. This activity is the outcome of an effort to secure our share of the tourist trade.

### LOCAL NEWS

The Road Master and Mr. Douglass of Kennecott, went to the lake on the Kennecott Glacier to measure its depth, but they found the lake empty.

The telegraph line between Chitina and McCarthy, was down this week.

Mr. Date has just finished putting in a steam boiler for the water tank and has taken out the oil engine; they have also done a number of repairs to the bridge crews' cookhouse and quarters.

Miss Nellie Larson, of the Alaska Café, has just returned, after a week's wonderful vacation.

Mrs. Wells, returning from her visit to Cordova, brought with her a wonderful collection of Oriental pearls. Now on sale at the "Golden." She reports that her Grandchildren are well and happy, and if you want to see her smile, just say. Hello Granny!

(American Legion)

Mr. William Douglass, Doc. Gillespie, Jim Dennis and Robert Mooney, went fishing last Saturday across the Nizina River to a lake one mile from the Nizina and they returned home well satisfied with their catch of Grayling.

J. B. O'Neill, one of our merchant kings who has been in Cordova several days, will arrive on tomorrow's train at the Metropolis.

July 26

### \$1,500,000 FIRE KENNECOTT

This afternoon a most disastrous fire broke out in the power plant of the Kennecott Copper Corporation resulting in the total loss of the plant, at an estimate of between \$1,500,000 and \$2,000,000 dollars loss. The fire began about three fifteen on the top side of number four boiler and in two minutes it was a roaring inferno of smoke and flame, barely giving time to the men on shift to make good their escape.

The mill, machine shop, and a number of the employees residences in the immediate vicinity escaped with a similar fate through the promptitude of the men and their heroic efforts after the first alarm was

sounded. We extend our sympathy to Mr. and Mrs. Lamell, whose house was burnt to the very ground and through it being situated next door to that part of the power plant where the fire first began they were unable to save it.

We fear that owing to this calamity, there will be quite a lot of the men thrown out of work, not only at the Kennecott mines but also at the Green Butte, as all their power was supplied by the Kennecott plant, consequently all operations in both camps are at a standstill and without lights.

The McCarthy fire brigade immediately answered the Corporations signal of distress, and rendered valuable assistance.

### FATAL MINE ACCIDENT KENNECOTT

We are all sorry to hear of the death of Mr. Pete Miller, who was killed in one of the Jumbo mine levels, where he was working on the tramway system.

He was very well known in this district and was liked by one and all.

### LOCAL NEWS

Mr. James Morris left town Sunday for the oil fields in Wyoming.

Mr. O'Neill and his wife returned last Wednesday from Cordova on the speeder, accompanied by a lady friend. They sure had a most enjoyable time, and he also reports, that Cordova is doing a whole heap of business.

August 2

### MARRIED

A quiet wedding was performed here in town

over the weekend when Miss Ruth Ryan was married to Mr. Edward Savage, they were both well known here, and popular members of the younger set. Mr. Savage was given an exceptional round of congratulation from his fellow team mates, himself being one of the best catchers in the Territory.

Miss Ryan was well known in society. They were given a hearty send off on their new adventure by the community.

August 9

### WHO'S WHO

Mr. Widing and Miss Crab had an enjoyable evening at the home of Captain and Mrs. Hubrick.

Mrs. Barrett, Mrs. Thornton, Mrs. Woodman, Mrs. Hubrick, Mrs. Doze, Mrs. Underwood and Miss Marion Wills, spent Thursday afternoon at Long Lake, returning in the evening on the speeder.

They brought back with them thirty salmon, which were distributed among friends, also one of the ladies in landing a salmon, slipped, knocking a fellow down and both of them rolled into the lake. We have been unable to find out who that lady was.

Fred Overlander has been taking a few days rest and is spending them at Long Lake on his ranch.

August 16

Mrs. Martin Harris, who has been engaged to teach our school for the coming year, arrived in town Saturday and is nicely settled in the Barrett home.

Mrs. Underwood, a resident of this town for many years sold out all her interests here and intends leaving for the outside next Sunday.

August 23

## The Glacierback Ride of Mt. Magee

BY RODNEY S. LLOYD

WRITTEN IN THE MID 1920'S AT KENNECOTT, ALASKA

"Oh, my lateral moraine is itching me again,"  
Said the Glacier to the hoary Mt. Magee.  
"If you'll kindly scratch my side, I'll take you for a ride  
Down the valley to the scintillating sea."

So the Mountain climbed on board, and the mighty glacier roared  
As he rumbled down the valley to the shore,  
And the mount said, "What a marvel, to see a mountain travel  
Instead of sitting still forevermore.

Oh, I am a jolly fellow and my years are long and mellow  
And I am the greatest thing upon the earth,  
With a forest in my pocket and a river for a locket  
I am big and fat and wise and full of mirth."

Now, the glacier was no rabbit and as was his icy habit  
This one set a pace conservative and slow,  
But the mountain thought it faster than a volcanic disaster  
Or the gamboling of the winter winds that blow.

And the mountain laughed out loud as he brushed aside a cloud  
That was whispering a warning in his ear.  
Quite drunk was he with power and the freedom of the hour  
And he spurred the glacier on with lusty cheer.

Then a sound of distant thunder soon became a cause for wonder  
And broke in upon the revels of our friend.  
And at last he stopped to wonder where the glacier with its plunder  
Would bring this bloody foraging to end.

"Oh the fury of our ride has made me ill inside,"  
Said the mountain to his host benignantly.  
"Pray let me off to rest on this fertile valley's crest  
To enjoy the lovely vista of the sea."

"Oh, you'll love the ocean more when you're closer to the shore  
And can see the whirling eddies and the foam.  
There a welcome guest you'll be to my ancestor the sea,"  
Said the glacier to the mountain that would roam.

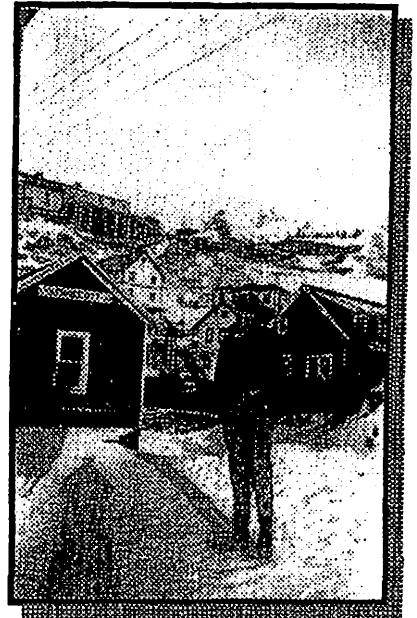


Photo courtesy Stephen R. Lloyd

RODNEY S. LLOYD



Now our hero was in terror as he understood his error  
And at last he shook himself and tried to flee.  
But the glacier held him fast, caught in crevice and morass,  
And delivered him as tribute to the sea.

There, the doughty Father Ocean shook in welcoming emotion  
To this glacial reinforcement he had won,  
"Though your blood has turned to ice, I will melt it in a thrice  
And warm you in my banquet hall, my son.

You have made a brilliant foray and return in pride and glory  
With a high and mighty prisoner in hand.  
He is stately, tall and handsome, and should bring a knightly ransom  
From my old and mortal enemy, the Land."

Now, the mountain stopped to think as he tottered on the brink  
Ere he plunged beneath the billows to the gloom,  
That a friendly warning word by his fellow mountains heard  
Might preserve them from his own unhappy doom.

"Nevermore to hold the skies up or assist the moon to rise up  
I must perish in a dark, forgotten cell.  
Led astray by gay deceiver, I must kiss the earth and leave her  
For I threw away the life I loved so well.

Let that destiny content you that the wiser gods have lent you  
And be jealous of no other's arts or fame,  
For a mountain shouldn't boast nor a sentry leave his post  
To humiliate his honorable name."

With a cataclysmic sound that was heard the world around  
The mountain plunged at last into the deep,  
Sending up a mighty wave, on the headland to engrave  
An epitaph, his memory to keep.

Now, the piney forest sighs to the overhanging skies  
And the moonlight softly shimmers on the sea,  
And a friendly little cloud drops a tear upon the shroud  
Of the hapless, old and hoary Mt. Magee.

**Rodney S. Lloyd lived for several years in Kennecott, Alaska as a teenager in the mid-1920's while his father, Clyde W. Lloyd, was an engineer for the copper mines. He attended school, worked in the general store, played tennis with his two brothers and sister, hiked, skied, fished and hunted. His time in Alaska was very special to him. He died in 1985 but left many poems, like the one above written in Kennecott, as his legacy. — Stephen R. Lloyd (his son)**

# Trees pollinate in search of a mate

BY NED ROZELL

*This column is provided as a public service by the Geophysical Institute, University of Alaska Fairbanks, in cooperation with the UAF research community. Ned Rozell is a science writer at the institute. He can be reached on e-mail at nrozell@gi.alaska.edu.*

With your next breath of spring air, you'll pull dozens of invaders through your nose. These intruders may make your nose drip and your eyes red and watery.

The airborne invaders are grains of tree pollen, specks so small that it would take eight of them to cover the period at the end of this sentence. The air is rich with pollen because spring is the mating season for trees. The first step in a tree's reproductive dance is to release sperm, held in the center of a pollen grain. Trees release an incredible amount of pollen to improve the odds of finding a female flower. One birch catkin (the cluster of tiny flowers that looks like a caterpillar) can release millions of pollen grains. Birch is the worst of the Alaska pollen types for allergy sufferers, said Jim Anderson, BioSciences Librarian for the University of Alaska Fairbanks. Anderson has a passion for pollen. He's been studying it for years with an air-sniffing instrument mounted on top of the building in which he works. Looking at years of data, he has found a few trends in the way trees and other plants release pollen. Anderson found that

birch trees begin releasing pollen about two days before leaves emerge from buds, and the concentration of birch pollen is greatest about three days after the leaves come out. He's measured more than 4,500 grains of birch pollen per cubic meter on the highest pollen days. Allergy sufferers are hit hardest by birch pollen because it contains irritating proteins. Each grain of pollen consists of a center containing the male genetic material, surrounded by a protective wall called the exine (not coincidentally the word featured on the license plate of Anderson's van). When pollen comes in contact with moisture, such as that on the nose's mucous membranes or the lining of the eyelid, protein molecules from the exine leach into a person's tissues. An allergic person's immune system produces antibodies against the protein molecules. Antibodies then trigger the release of histamines and other potent substances, leading to the cold-like symptoms familiar to allergy sufferers.

Anderson discovered that watching the weather can help him predict the day trees release pollen. By taking the average of the daily high and

low temperatures and subtracting 32 degrees Fahrenheit, he comes up with a number called degree-days. By looking at past years' pollen outbreaks and comparing them with temperature records, he found that in the Fairbanks area poplar and aspen release pollen first. The poplars are followed by birch, alder, spruce and grasses, all at specific numbers of degree-days. Though the dates of pollen release from year to year vary with the warmth of spring, Anderson said he's able to keep a running tally of degree-days. He knows, for example, that when the number approaches 232, birch trees are ready to release pollen. He's also found that birch trees tend to release pollen in greater amounts every other year. He doesn't know the reason for the biennial cycle, but he thinks it has to do with the biological makeup of birches. Luckily for those with allergies, pollen season doesn't last very long. According to pollen calendars Anderson has made for Fairbanks and Anchorage, birch trees typically shed large amounts of pollen May 10<sup>th</sup> through the 20<sup>th</sup>. Too bad you can't hold your breath that long.

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"One impulse from a vernal wood  
May teach you more of man,  
Of moral evil and of good,  
Than all the ages can."  
—William Wordsworth

# Alaska tourism up but growth slows in 1998

## *Overall numbers of visitors to Alaska up a modest 1.3 percent last year*

JUNEAU—

Although over 1 million visitors entered Alaska during the May through September season last year, the overall rate of growth in the number of visitors coming to Alaska slowed in comparison to summer 1997, which saw a 5 percent increase in visitors. The lower growth rate resulted in large part to reductions in both domestic and international air visitor traffic, which decreased by 1.7 percent and 4.7 percent, respectively. The decrease in international air traffic in 1998 can be attributed to the slowdown in the Asian economy.

While cruise ship traffic increased by nearly 3 percent in 1998, the growth is far less significant than in past years. There was a 19 percent increase

in cruise passengers in 1996, while in 1997 there was a 16 percent increase. The average annual growth in cruise ship numbers since 1989 is 11 percent.

The highway system posted the largest increase of any travel mode at 17 percent. Traffic on the Alaska Marine Highway System also increased dramatically, with 14 percent more visitors than in 1997. Growth rates for these two modes usually correspond as visitors using one mode often use the other.

The growth in highway and ferry traffic is also consistent with the large increase in border crossings on the Alcan Highway and Poker Creek in 1998. Gold Rush Centennial promotions by Alaska and the Yukon, improved ferry service

with the Malaspina shuttle in Lynn Canal and the new M/V Kennicott, and the governor's promotional program aimed specifically at independent visitors all contributed to exceptional increases in these modes.

There were no significant changes in the purposes of visitors' trips from previous years. Visitors who come to Alaska for vacation or pleasure account for over three-quarters (76 percent) of all visitors. As in past years, vacationers accounted for most of the growth in Alaska visitors, increasing by over 2 percent. However, this increase is small compared to both 1996 and 1997, which saw increases of 13 percent and 7 percent in vacation visitors.

# Being unprepared is no picnic when visiting parks

NPS NEWS RELEASE—WASHINGTON, D.C.

Every year trips to the national parks end in frustration or injury because visitors are uninformed about or unprepared for the places and circumstances they may encounter during their trip. They try to pet or feed wild animals, take a photo next to a 200-pound deer or a 2,000-pound bison, or head out on the road or trail on a hot day without water or any idea where they're going. These same visitors are likely to have their vacation ruined when they are scratched, bitten, chased, gored, hospitalized or become hopelessly lost.

An untold number of visitors end up with strains, sprains, heat or cold related injuries or minor wounds. Sadly, others travel by ambulance, helicopter, or are even carried out of the backcountry in need of advanced medical care. There were more than 6,300 search and rescue operations reported in the national parks in 1998. While the National Park Service is prepared to respond to emergency situations, many can be avoided if visitors spend a little extra time preparing before they leave their home, room or campsite.

The National Park Service offers the following top ten tips

to help visitors have a safer and more enjoyable trip to the nation's parks:

10. Distance is deceiving. It takes longer to get there than people think. Just because the map says the destination is sixty miles away doesn't mean it's an hour's drive. The risk of accidents is increased when people speed or spend too long behind the wheel.

9. Be alert while traveling to and through the park. Many people are traveling in unfamiliar areas and are looking at the scenery instead of the road. Travelers should drive defensively, and watch out for other drivers and narrow curving roads.

8. Call ahead for a bed. Summer is the most popular time to visit many of the national parks, which means campgrounds and other lodging fill quickly. Many accept advance reservations, so visitors should call ahead if possible. Sleeping in the car on the side of the road when a campsite or room isn't available is both illegal and unsafe in most places.

7. Plan for the weather. Snow may be falling in the mountain parks at the same time the temperature is climbing above 100 degrees in the southern and southwestern parks. Travelers should pack their bags accordingly. It's no fun to spend a vacation cold and wet, or on the verge of heat stroke.

6. Be prepared for outdoor activities. Most parks are best enjoyed while walking or hiking. Visitors should wear sturdy boots or shoes, take along and drink plenty of water and carry a warmer layer of clothes with them. Visitors who bicycle should be safe, wear a helmet

and follow trail signs and road rules. It's best to hike and bike with a friend. A small first-aid kit, a hat and rain gear are often in order. Let someone know where you are going and when you expect to be back. Don't forget the sunscreen and sunglasses!

5. Follow the park rules. The rules and regulations are there to keep people and those special places safe from harm, not to spoil anyone's fun. Hikers need to stay on rather than stray from the marked trails. Drivers should make sure to observe all traffic signs. Visitors should wear seatbelts at all times. Children age 12 and under should be buckled in back seats where they are safer.

4. Respect... and don't feed... the animals. They're not tame; most just don't see any reason to fear people. The larger ones like deer, bear and bison run faster than a human and may weigh more than the whole family combined. Visitors should observe and enjoy wildlife at a distance by using binoculars and cameras with

telephoto lenses.

3. Visit the Visitor Center first. The Visitor Center or Information Station is the place to ask about the latest weather, road and trail information. While there, visitors should check out the exhibits and the schedule of ranger-led activities to learn more about the park. If they don't stop and ask, they might miss something special!

2. Call, write or surf the 'net before you go. Those with Internet access should point their browser to [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov) to find a wealth of information on the 378 different National Park Service sites. The local library or bookstore can also be a good source of park information.

And the number one tip for a great trip to your national parks:

**ASK A RANGER. THE MEN AND WOMEN OF THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE ARE THERE TO HELP PROTECT THESE WONDERFUL PLACES AND TO HELP VISITORS LEARN ABOUT AND ENJOY THE NATIONAL PARKS.**

## A Celebration of Learning

### *Alyeska Central School Observes 60th Birthday*

BY KRISTIN NYGREN

For Frieda Hunter, one of the advantages of living on Sisters Island was that she homeschooled her daughter Schatzie through Alyeska Central School (ACS). "It was a wonderful feeling when I realized that I was the one who taught my daughter to read," said Frieda Hunter. Located in the middle of Icy Strait about 35 miles west of Juneau, the rocky, barren Sisters Island is surrounded by stunning scenery: the wooded shores of Chichagof

Island, the Fairweather icefields, and the Chilkat Mountains.

History of ACS. Alyeska Central School (previously known as Centralized Correspondence School until 1993) has provided Alaskans with the chance to homeschool their children since 1939, when the first 12 rural students enrolled. Approximately 2,400 students throughout Alaska are enrolled in ACS today. The first certified teacher was hired in 1960 and located in Juneau to help families teach

elementary courses. Today there are 25 permanent teachers who work from the central office in Juneau. From 1939 to 1975, the state only paid for rural students who didn't have access to a local school. In 1975, enrollment was opened to any family who wanted to teach their children at home. ACS is an accredited K-12 school taught by certified teachers, and is free to Alaska residents who do not have a high school diploma. For many years, Alaska has been the only state with its own

state-run correspondence school.

ACS' Positive Points. There are many reasons why ACS has thrived since its inception in 1939. "For one," says Tim Volwiler, a teacher at ACS, "we have a relatively big operation with many content area specialists in the secondary department." Each teacher at ACS is certified in his/her content area. Teachers encourage students/parents/home teachers to call and teachers take the time with every student to explain more clearly concepts the student may not have understood.

Anna Johnson praised ACS for its professional teaching staff, "The teachers are so helpful and professional. My daughter gets a thoughtful evaluation of her work. I was tired of attending conferences where I just heard 'smart girl' and 'good student.' I wanted to know how my daughter did on an assignment specifically and ACS did this for me."

ACS is an accredited K-12 public school within the Department of Education. Being accredited means that colleges accept students' grades and courses like those from any other public school. ACS Principal Michael Opp affirms this, "Our reputation with other schools is good. Schools accept our credits and courses because they know that our students have done the course work and learned what they needed to learn."

"ACS has a 'classical' curriculum," said Patricia Merwin, who lives in Chignik (on the Alaskan Peninsula). "The quality of the courses and support from the staff were excellent. Because the state made the program available, for free, it was superb for us. All my kids won scholarships to colleges. They were able to go to

college very successfully."

Another strength is that ACS has long focused on writing its own courses. Each course goes through a rigorous writing/proof-reading process before it is finally sent out to students. The very courses that students take are taught by the same teachers who wrote them.

Being recognized as an excellent school is an honor that has come to ACS often. In 1986, the U.S. Department of Education declared ACS a nationally validated exemplary program. In 1994, the K-S Language Arts program was one of 15 courses chosen by the International Reading Association as an Exemplary Reading Program.

Flexibility is another plus about ACS. Homeschooling works well for Alaskans who have unusual schedules. U.S. Olympic Ski Team members Tommy Moe (a gold medalist), Kevin Stell (also a gold medalist), Mike Makar, and Kjerstin Bjorn-Roli are all former students of ACS, as well as figure skaters Sydne Vogel and Sarah Deveraux. Some families, living without electricity, running water, or telephones, need their children to help more than the average family. ACS gives students that time to help out their families.

Correspondence school allows students to have experiences they might not otherwise have. Some students travel with their families while maintaining a permanent address in Alaska. ACS students have traveled to all five continents. The McCarthy family of Juneau spent time in Mongolia while the father researched snow leopards. Another student climbed Mt. Kilimanjaro. Kina Merwin from Chignik Bay was a finalist in the National Merit Scholarship

Competition. Alisha Rosenbruch of Gustavus was the Safari Club International's Young Hunter of the Year. Ramey Smyth of Big Lake ran in the Iditarod and was named Rookie of the Year. Wonder Russell of Juneau sang a lead role for the Juneau Lyric Opera during her senior year. ACS is certainly flexible!

Realizing that students taught at home often surpass their public school counterparts scholastically, it is not surprising that ACS boasts alumni who have attended colleges all across America (and the world). ACS graduates attend Rutgers University, Purdue, Johns Hopkins, Cleveland Institute of Music, and Pacific Lutheran University, just to name a few. Of course, many students distinguish themselves at colleges in Alaska: UAS, UAA, or UAF.

**Additional Programs Offered.** ACS also offers many extra curricular activities for its students. Some of these activities include Academic Decathlon, Alaska and National CloseUp, State Spelling Bee, National Honor Society, and the Math Olympiad. Last year, the ACS Academic Decathlon team placed fourth in the state.

One unique option available at ACS is "Your Choice." When a high school student wants to accomplish something that is not listed as a course, that student arranges a contract with Gail Haynes, the counselor at ACS. Learning to build homes was Bill Beatty's goal, so this McGrath student learned all about it and then built a retirement home for his parents in Hawaii. Another student designed and sold a tourism program to Anchorage hotels and businesses. Carey Walters from Eagle River started his own small motor repair business. Rachel Foster from

Barrow learned to do taxidermy and won an ARCO Scholarship for her presentation to the Smithsonian on Birds of the Wetlands. Anchorage's Stephanie Haskins wrote a music contract and now plays the piano professionally. Gail Haynes finds "Your Choice" personally rewarding to students. "When a student sets up his own business, you have to reward that. 'Your Choice' also provides an avenue for vocational education."

Another feature of ACS is the GED preparation program. This program is open to students 16 or older who have not yet received a high school diploma. Teacher Carolyn Stegner individualizes the program for each person, depending on the level of the student.

Future of ACS. ACS plans to keep up with the increasing number of students taught at home each year. For summer school this year, tutors are being hired around the state to help students complete the courses they take. Principal Michael Opp wants to increase the contact and communication between teachers and students so the students feel they are part of a school classroom. ACS will continue to implement the use of technology for instruction and communication between students. ACS plans to continue offering high quality, free, accredited education to all Alaskans.

"Because you know exactly what your children are learning

that day, you can incorporate that into your daily activities," explains Linda Cantil-Voorhees, who lives in Whale Pass (on Prince of Wales Island) and has always taught her two children at home. "If they're learning about the letter 'B,' you can make pancakes in the shape of a 'B.' Learning is not isolated to the classroom. I feel so privileged to be a part of my children's learning."

*Kristin Nygren is an English teacher for ACS and enjoys learning with her 16-month-old son. She plans on homeschooling her children. For more information about ACS, call 1-888-290-3752 or (907) 465-2835.*

## Senator Taylor testifies on S.25

JUNEAU —

Senator Robin Taylor testified before the Senate Energy Committee regarding S. 25, co-sponsored by Alaska Senator Frank Murkowski. The measure would allocate 50 percent of the revenues denied from Outer Continental Shelf development to the impacted states to offset the effects of OCS development. The bill would provide up to \$110 million annually to the State of Alaska, according to Senator Murkowski's office.

Testifying on behalf of the

Alaska State Senate and the Alaska State House of Representatives, Senator Taylor said the bill has many good points, however, it needs a few amendments. Part of the measure provides money for the purchase of private land by the federal government. "First, we don't need any more federal land in Alaska. States with more than 50 percent federal ownership should be exempted from the federal land purchase provisions of the bill," said Taylor.

"Secondly, all monies coming into the state must go through the legislative appropriation process," said Taylor. "The Alaska Constitution makes it very clear that the Legislature has sole authority for appropriating money in this state. The current version of S.25 would give sole discretion on the use of the monies to the Secretary of the Interior and the Governor. That is clearly an effort to trample on Alaska's right to govern itself," said Taylor.

### WSEN BACK ISSUES

We have most back issues available all the way back to July & August 1992 for \$2.50 each postpaid. **SPECIAL** All back issues (about 40) for only \$54! Any one year (6 issues) just \$10. We also have a few copies of That's the way it was in 1918 (A much expanded version of Our Town, covering the year 1918) Regular price is \$10 plus shipping **SALE** \$7 each, postage paid! Wrangell St. Elias News, McCarthy #42, Box MXY, Glennallen, AK 99588

# Kennecott Kids Korner

## Copper Nuggets

BY JIM MCGAVOCK

**M**y Dad was James McGavock and he was Master Mechanic at Kennecott. My mother was a Registered Nurse at the Kennecott hospital. That is how they met.

I remember when I was a boy growing up at Kennecott, my Dad would take me with him in the old family touring car out across the Nizina River to Chititu and Dan Creeks. He had staked placer claims on Rex Creek, a tributary of the Chititu. The first prospectors in the early days were searching for copper in the area—instead they discovered gold.

A large number of float copper nuggets were discovered in the area. These nuggets lay in the stream beds and also were found underground. On one trip out there we took pilot Harold Gillam with us. I can still recall my Dad and Gillam trying to load a few of these nuggets in the car to take back to McCarthy. They were big and heavy.

Many of these copper nuggets were smooth and even, with a broad level surface and little depth. Some people made coffee tables out of them.

The Copper River & Northwestern Railroad was completed with a symbolic copper spike, fashioned from heated "copper float" taken from Chititu Creek. Dan Creek produced over 40 tons of copper nuggets in the early days when gold had been the chief yield.

By the mid 1950's a 5,500 pound copper nugget so dense it was smaller than a bathtub

was discovered at Dan Creek. The lease holders wanted to have it transported to Anchorage, to help promote the sale of stock in the mine. They hired Merle "Mudhole" Smith of Cordova Airlines to fly it in a DC 3 aircraft from the May Creek airstrip to Anchorage. That was a tough job, but Smitty accomplished it.

Eventually the nugget, one of the largest to come out of the Nizina district, was given to the museum at the University of Alaska at Fairbanks.

I have often wondered what became of the "Copper Spike." Where is it at the present time? After it was driven at Kennecott on March 29, 1911, it was withdrawn, inscribed on three sides and sent to the president of the railroad in New York City according to my father. Kennecott Copper Corporation is past history, following a merger many years ago with British Petroleum.

Had there been no copper float nuggets discovered in the Nizina district there might have been no "Copper Spike."

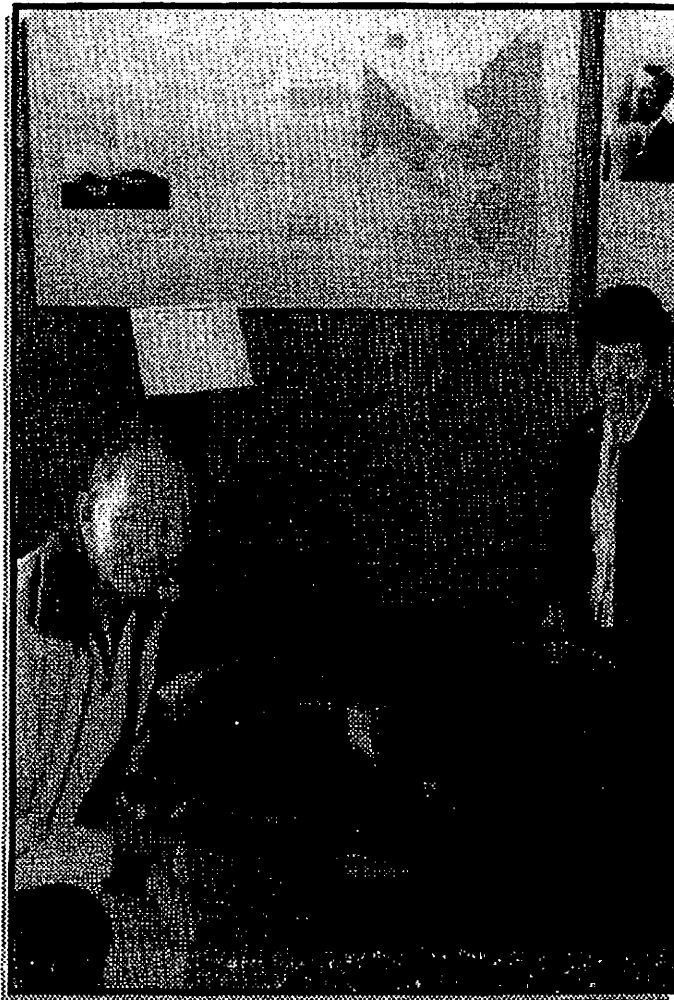


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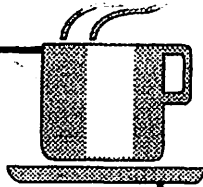
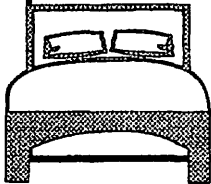
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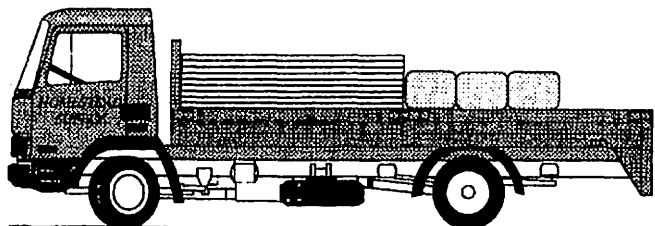


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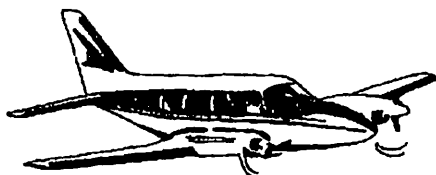
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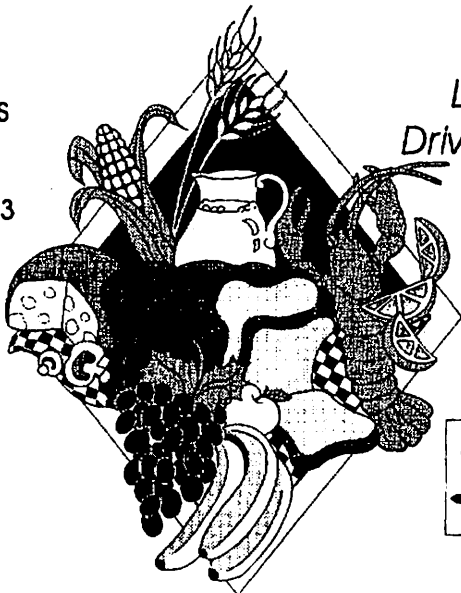
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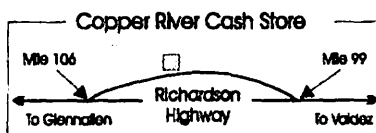
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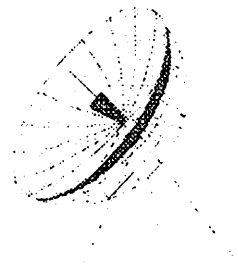
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# Cooking with Carly

BY CARLY KRITCHEN

Each time I write this column I try and visualize who its readers will be. Are they folks like me, who like to be outside working in their garden on a sunny day, and feel a lot of satisfaction in raising part of their own food? I know that at least some of you are avid gardeners like myself because of the letters I've received. I'm not sure that I would grow as big a garden if I lived closer to a city and a good farmer's market, but out here, where we live on canned or frozen produce for a lot of the year, fresh food from the garden is a special joy! One area I haven't written about before is one of the smallest but most important parts of my garden—the herbs.

I start a few herb seeds early in the spring in my greenhouse, get other starts from generous friends, and buy some plants if I get a chance to go to a commercial nursery. I grow herbs for several different reasons—partly because I like to dry them, or keep them in pots on my windowsill during the cold winter months, but I also have collected quite a few recipes that use fresh herbs in some delicious ways

*I was delighted to find a recipe for chive blossoms—it seems I end up with hundreds of them! Another fun thing to do with them is to make chive vinegar: fill a jar with chive blossoms and cover them with mild vinegar—at the end of a week, strain and your vinegar is*

ready!

## Cheesy Chive Blossom Omelet

4 eggs  
1 teaspoon water  
¼ teaspoon salt  
1¼ teaspoon pepper  
1 Tablespoon chopped fresh parsley  
1 Tablespoon butter  
4 young chive blossoms, broken up  
2 Tablespoons grated cheese (Swiss is best)

Whisk together eggs, water, salt, pepper and parsley. Melt butter in a 10 inch omelet pan until hot. Pour in the egg mixture and swirl pan immediately until coated evenly. As eggs begin to set, sprinkle chive florets and cheese down the center. Allow cheese to melt slightly, then fold omelet over and serve. Garnish with more fresh blossoms, if desired. Serves 2

*Here's a recipe for a different pesto! This pesto is exceptionally good on salmon, and also on almost any vegetable, raw or cooked.*

## Lemon Thyme Pesto

2/3 cup chopped lemon thyme leaves  
2/3 cup almonds, lightly toasted  
½ cup grated Parmesan cheese  
¼ teaspoon pepper  
1 clove garlic, minced  
1 Tablespoon fresh lemon juice  
4 or 5 Tablespoons olive oil

Blend all ingredients in a blender until the subsistence of a rough paste. Use immediately, or store for up to 1 week in

refrigerator.

*This is a great dip for raw vegetables. It looks yummy, and is fast and easy to make.*

## Red Bell Pepper Mayonnaise

½ cup mayonnaise  
1 or 2 Tablespoons finely chopped red bell pepper  
1 Tablespoon finely chopped chives

Mix together in a small bowl and refrigerate for about ½ hour to meld the flavors. Makes about ½ cup.

*This is an old favorite—when we lived in Cordova we dug and canned our own clams, and I used this recipe frequently! It's best made with flat Italian parsley, but regular curly parsley will work, too.*

## Fresh Parsley Clam Sauce

2 cloves garlic, minced  
2 green onions, finely chopped  
2 Tablespoons olive oil  
1 pound cooked clams, minced or 2 six-ounce cans chopped clams

1 cup milk  
1 cup finely chopped fresh parsley  
1 cup grated Parmesan cheese salt and pepper to taste

Saute garlic and onion in olive oil until soft. Add clam juice (from chopped clams) and milk and simmer until thickened, about 8 to 10 minutes. Stir in clams and parsley and simmer another 5 minutes over low heat. Add cheese, stir, and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Serve over hot noodles. Serves about 4.



# A LOOK AT THE WEATHER

BY GEORGE CEBULA

As in the past, April saw the end of a long winter and the last of the snow cover disappear. April '99 was about average compared to the rather warm winter of '97-'98. The high temperature for the month was 59 on the 17<sup>th</sup> (55 on Apr. 24, '98 and 60 on Apr. 25, '97). The low was -4 on the 8<sup>th</sup> (14 on Apr. 9, '98 and 6 on Apr. 18, '97). The average temperature for April was 34.1 compared to 36.7 in '98 and 34.7 in '97. *Silver Lake had a high of 61 on 18<sup>th</sup> (56 on Apr. 25, '98 and 59 on Apr. 26, '96) and a low of 0 on the 8<sup>th</sup> (9 on Apr. 1, '98 and 2 on Apr. 2, '97). The April average temperature at Silver Lake was 32.8 (34.8 in '98 and 33.5 in '97).*

The precipitation for April was about average with 0.42 inches of liquid (0.21 in '98 and 0.34 in '97). Snow was observed on 6 days with a total of 2.7 inches, this compares with 0.1 inches of snow in '98. *Silver Lake had only 0.11 inches of liquid (trace in '98 and 0.08 in '97) and 2.0 inches of snow.*

McCarthy started the month with 9 inches of snow on the ground and was clear of snow by the 24<sup>th</sup>. *Silver Lake was rid of its snow by the 22<sup>nd</sup> after starting April with 6 inches.*

The temperature stayed rather cool the first half of May

with highs in the 50's and lows in the 20's. The high temperature for May was just under 70, with 69 on the 14<sup>th</sup> (79 on May 29, '98 and 75 on May 20, '97). The low temperature was 19 on the 14<sup>th</sup> (17 on May 12, '98 and 20 on May 2, '97). The May average temperature was 42.6. This compares with 45.6 in '98 and 45.8 in '97. *Silver Lake had a high of 70 on the 15<sup>th</sup> (78 on May 30, '98 and 78 on May 22, '97), a low of 23 on the 12<sup>th</sup> (21 on May 12, '98 and 21 on May 2, '97) and an average temperature of 42.7 (44.8 in '98 and 46.3 in '97).*

The May precipitation at McCarthy was a little above normal with 1.29 inches of liquid. This compares with 0.73 inches in '98 and 1.07 inches in '97. A trace of snow was recorded on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 1.0 inches of snow on the 7<sup>th</sup>. The ground was covered with small hail the afternoon of the 7<sup>th</sup> after the early morning snow had melted. *Silver Lake recorded 1.29 inches of liquid (1.10 inches in '98 and 0.39 inches in '97). 3.0 inches of snow was observed at Silver Lake on the 1<sup>st</sup>.*

The beginning of May saw the end of the ice crossing on the West Fork of the Kennicott River as the ice began to break apart and water was moving

over the top. The river was clear of moving ice by May 21<sup>st</sup> and all the shore ice was gone by the 24<sup>th</sup>. *The ice on Silver Lake was too soft for travel in late April and it was completely gone the morning of May 15<sup>th</sup>*

The first week of June was cloudy and wet with the highs in the low 60's. The lows were occasionally dipping below freezing and with a low of 30 recorded on the 6<sup>th</sup>. The temperature finally reached 70 for the first time this year with 72 recorded on the afternoon of June 6<sup>th</sup>. Summer should be in full swing by late June. June and July are the warmest months with the highs usually in the low 80's. The temperature begins to cool in August with highs only getting into the low 70's. The all time high recorded at McCarthy was 87 on June 21, 1991. Freezing temperatures should be back by the end of August, although they can be observed at any time. Average monthly rainfall is about 2 inches (June-August). Hidden Lake should empty around the last week of July, with a rapid rise of the water level in the Kennicott River and some possible flooding. The first snow usually arrives sometime in late September.

ENJOY THE SUMMER  
WHATEVER THE WEATHER!

"If ye love wealth better than liberty, the tranquillity of servitude better than the animating contest of freedom, go home from us in peace. We ask not your counsels or arms. Crouch down and lick the hands which feed you. May your chains set lightly upon you, and may posterity forget that ye were our countrymen."— Samuel Adams, speech at the Philadelphia State House, August 1, 1776.

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Anchorage, AK

Just a quick note to say I enjoyed reading *Part one—the bear gun*; thanks—lots of good info. After our last visit with the Houghtons I saw the Marlin 1895G .45-70 down at the Hook Line and Sinker that I'd like to get my hands on!

I also enjoyed the article *Outdoors in the Wrangells*.

Sure look forward to meeting y'all one of these days soon; would love to put a cabin up in the vicinity.

Thanks for reading...Tom

*Editors note: Tom, I heard from Doyne that you did indeed get your hands on that Marlin. Congratulations! I hope that now you can put up the cabin also. We would love to have you for a neighbor. —Rick*

Seattle, WA

Bonnie & Rick,

I want to thank you for the article on Todd Salat. It was very interesting. We sure enjoy our photo of Kennicott with the northern lights. It is very well done.

We also appreciate the WSEN. It gives us a great deal of information on the area.

A "Kid"

Mike Sullivan

Xenia, OH

Dear Bonnie,

I lost my little subscription card, but please renew our WSEN subscription for 1 year. We wouldn't want to miss even one issue. We enjoy every issue so much. Of course, the first thing I do is go through it

looking for the Welty name!

Mrs. John W. Burtch

May 7, 1999

Anchorage

Dear Editor,

Not sure what you meant by Jack Wilson's article being controversial. I was there before Jack, and I think he told it very accurately.

Zach Brown and myself started the McCarthy Lodge at its present location in 1954. I was the guy who made all those old cars run and put together the Model T Speeders that we used on the railroad. Jack failed to mention that we also had two Jeeps flown in to May Creek.

Best regards,

Howard Knutson

May 8, 1999

Roseville, CA

Dear Bonnie & Rick:

Herewith renewal!

Now, unless I've missed it, how about a memoir of you two; how you met, an Alaskan resident & a girl from Florida, etc?

Enjoy the Kids Korner each month. Jack Wilson's *The Razing* (more a 'raiding') of *Kennicott*. (I recall we left many personal mementoes behind when we moved and wonder if anyone has these and would consider returning some to me if they relate to Jack & Irma Padgett & we 3 children—Ken, Chet & Irma. Mother frequently recalled left behind items, wistfully.) Also enjoyed the articles by Denner & Rick and all the other

contributors.

It's wonderful about Jo King's bell for your church. If the Kirkwoods indeed plan a 4<sup>th</sup> reunion I for one, & hopefully all who attend, plan to worship with you, even if it's a special mid-week service for Kennicott Kids. Any chance?

Sincerely,

Irma Padgett Haaland

PS—Cohen's *Lesson in Mining*—a gem!

May 10, 1999

Whiteface Mt., NY

Dear Kenyon's

We are pleased to enclose our check for ten dollars (\$10) to renew our subscription to your very fine publication. We look forward to receiving it, and we enjoy reading the wide variety of articles that you publish.

Since our research and publication of our book, *Iron Rails to Alaskan Copper* we have followed stories and articles about the Railroad and the many people who are still interested in it. The book brought us to Inger and Charlie Ricci, and we have visited them in their home in Anchorage, and exchanged correspondence with them. They are a most interesting couple. We enjoyed Inger's article in your May-June issue.

Also we keep in touch with Ron Simpson and we are looking forward to seeing the work that he has done in re-creating the railroad and the Kennecott site. We trust that you will keep us informed about the work that the Park Service does at Kennecott. At

the risk of life and limb Bruce Campbell, former Highway Commissioner, and I climbed through the old mill and several of the buildings in 1991. As Engineers, we marveled at the details of the construction and the fineness of the work. The mill, the out buildings, the tramways, the mines and the railroad are monuments to a great and historic operation. If Kennecott were in operation today you would be overcome with tourists and sightseers—Jack Wilson, take notice. Maybe the Park Service will bring back the crowds to your area.

I am sending you a copy of my book for your information and review. We love Cordova and the Copper River with its beautiful glaciers and great fish, and we look forward to

returning soon. In the meantime we appreciate your efforts in keeping us up to date.

Sincerely,  
A.O. Quinn

May 12, 1999  
Valdez

Dear Rick:

Warm and sincere thanks for your sending me back issues of WSEN. Also, for your patience. Where does the time go?!

Your newspaper is outstanding. Each issue is a treasure. All your readers appreciate you and your nice Lady Bonnie.

Please say hi! to George for me.

Thanks again,  
Jeff Bailey

Subj: Great article!  
Date: 99-06-16 20:56:59 EDT  
To: Wsnews@aol.com  
Hi Bonnie and Rick,

We thoroughly enjoy your WSEN News! Everyone here reads it cover to cover!

I wanted to ask if I might have permission to reprint the article by John Killoran published in the March & April 1999 *News*. It is very interesting and I think the Cordova Historical Society members would enjoy reading it in their newsletter. I will certainly make note of where I obtained it and info about subscribing to your news too!

Thanks — Cathy Sherman  
*John and I both say "sure!"*  
—Rick

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From time to time, we reprint letters that were written to the newspaper in McCarthy in the early days. Some things are timeless, such as the empty promises of politicians. The July 5, 1924 issue of *The McCarthy Weekly News* carried the following Letter to the Editor:

June 19, 1924.

Editor McCarthy Weekly News  
McCarthy, Alaska

Dear Sir:

Many thanks for your letter, and copies of your newspaper containing data relating to good roads for the White River Mining Precinct.

As I was instrumental enough in getting the increased appropriation from Congress, Col. Steese has promised to build a road from your town to Scolai Pass this year and finish the bridge over the Nizina.

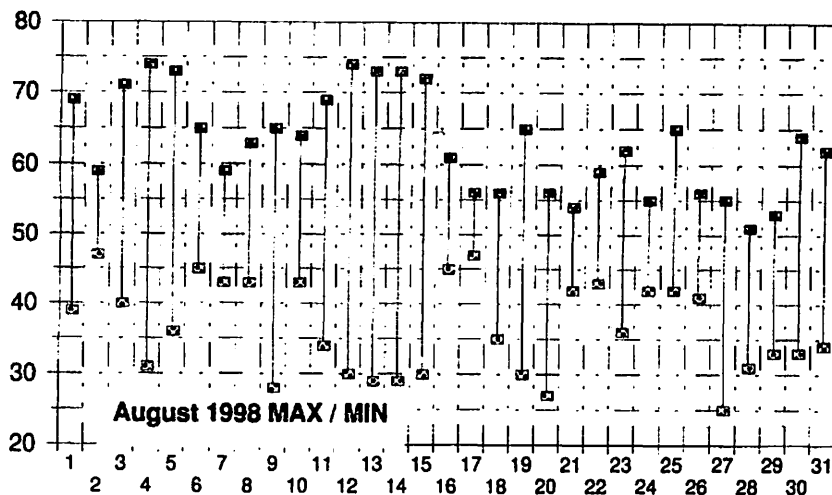
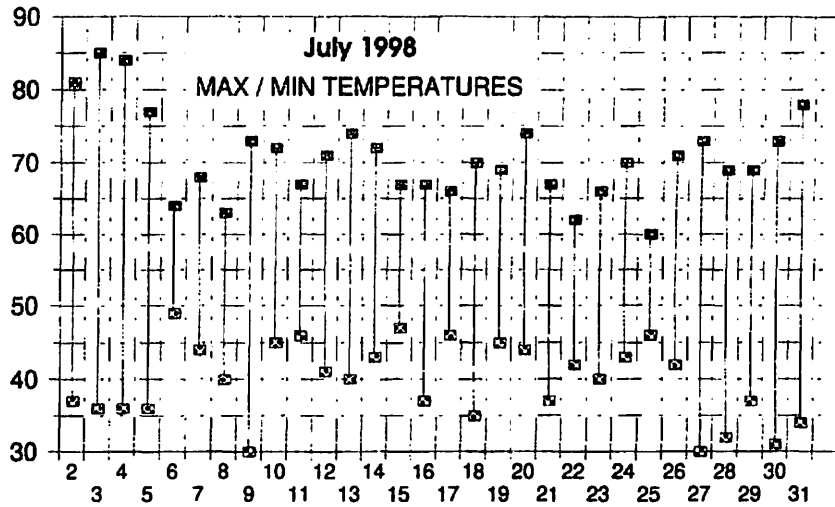
Next year we will have it expended to Chisana, and it will be the basis for the Government railroad from McCarthy to Fairbanks, which will be built in the near future.

I am very deeply interested in the White Mining Precinct, and am going to look things over in August.

When I reach McCarthy you and I will have a long chat about matters of moment and when I explain everything to you I know I can rely on your cooperation. In the meantime drop me a line, and give me your best views and ideas.

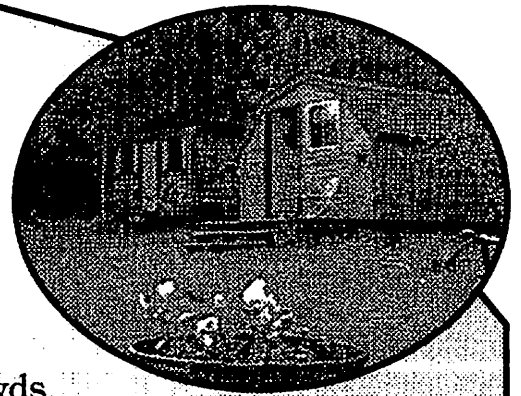
With all good wishes,  
Very sincerely yours,  
William Sulzer.

*Weather - What can we expect?*



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