

# Wrangell St. Elias News

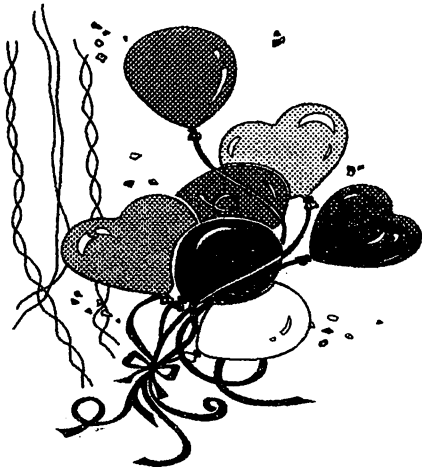
"Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty."--Thomas Jefferson

VOL. TWO ISSUE ONE

JANUARY & FEBRUARY 1993

ONE DOLLAR

## Happy New Year!



Bonnie and I want to thank our readers for their graciousness towards us this past year. It has been a year of change for us as well as for the area we live in. Reading "The Elements of Style" rather than *Sport Aviation* has been quite a change for me! I can only plead, as did the editor of *The Copper Bee* in 1916:

"DEAR JUDGE BE MERCIFUL.

This is our first offense, or perhaps better say, attempt; at having anything to do with type or press."

Our best wishes to all of our friends and neighbors, and to those who have been our guests here in the Wrangell's, for a prosperous and happy 1993.

### A NEW YEARS TOAST

*The weather's cold,  
The wind is bold,  
The snow is all around,  
But a Yukon stove,  
Is a treasure trove  
When the wood is on the ground.*

*And the good old bean  
With some bacon lean  
And a spice of garlic too,  
With a flapjack row  
Made of sourdough,  
Is a match for the sheep meat stew.*

*As we swap old tales,  
It never fails  
That the bears much larger grow.  
And we each can picture  
The pay is richer  
At the camps we used to know.*

*So fill her up!  
Our loving cup  
A pot of coffee brown.  
Here's a toast once more  
To Alaska's shore  
And old McCarthy town.*

*Contributed by a Sourdough  
resident, 1917*

## McCarthy residents say "no" to local government

McCarthy - McCarthy residents say "NO" to local government, "YES" to forum. Residents met for a town meeting at McCarthy Lodge on Wednesday, December 16.

Mark Vail served as chairman. He opened up the meeting by asking for a show of hands from those who desired to pursue a formal government. A Second Class City was recognized as the lowest form of government the community could pursue. Of the 24 in attendance, no one raised their hand in support of pursuing a legal entity at this time.

"Legal to me...when you talk legal, that establishes your right to establish rules and regulations that bind on other people. We don't want that," noted Mark. "Our

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### OUR TOWN

Life in the  
"Good old Days"



1917 - 1918

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referenda essentially is to establish how the community feels as a whole. Recognition of what the community feels on given issues...As a community, we decided not to form an entity that binds other people. Forming a corporation binds people to the corporate law -- to the corporate bylaws, and we are not doing that. Essentially what we're after is establishing the means where we can discuss issues. Have the community vote in order to establish to the outside interests that this is how the community feels," continued Mark.

At the beginning of the meeting, Mark read from a prepared speech he had written. (It is included in this issue and found on page 18.)

A second vote was taken to determine if, however, we should form a nonbinding organization. One that would not legally bind anyone, but provide an assembly to discuss issues that confront the community. All present voted in favor of it.

Several residents offered suggestions for future meetings. Meetings should be kept short -- no more than 2 hours. Establish the agenda for each meeting before it occurs. Have town meetings on a regular basis. Nancy Green thought meeting in spring, summer and fall would be appropriate. Mark could see the need for a meeting on either end of the tourist season and one in the dead of winter. Rick Kenyon noted, "There needs to be a real reason for a meeting, particularly in the busy summer months."

Randy Elliot of Dan Creek commented: "A lot of bad press and a lot of wrong information is coming out of this community. You need to make sure you have a

way to say, 'We took a vote of the people who really do live here and who are impacted here, and we don't think that every single salmon should have a little tag on its tail...' You are being stereotyped by organizations who want to see and want to hear a particular attitude out of McCarthy. It's the real danger and as the only gold miner left in the Park, I'm telling you, I get some bad press. But, they have never asked me what I want or what I think about it. So, I see this as the whole reason for meeting."

Mark brought up his concern of how the National Park is planning for McCarthy's future as depicted through various written documents. He explained that he has written Slana Alaskans Unite and the Copper Country Alliance to ask them for information. For instance, what is their purpose, how do they operate, are they incorporated, where do they get their funds to operate, and how do they establish who can participate?

Randy Elliot raised a concern that minority opinions be recognized and reported as well. Catie Bursch added that any letters written from this group be published so that all can read them. Someone else suggested minimal dues per household be raised to cover the cost of postage.

After much discussion, those present decided that property ownership and residency determines who can participate in the voting process. The property receives one vote -- no difference for the amount of property. Each person in the household -- 18 yrs. or above -- gets one vote for each month he or she is in residence during the calendar year. For instance, in a household of two adults who are property owners in

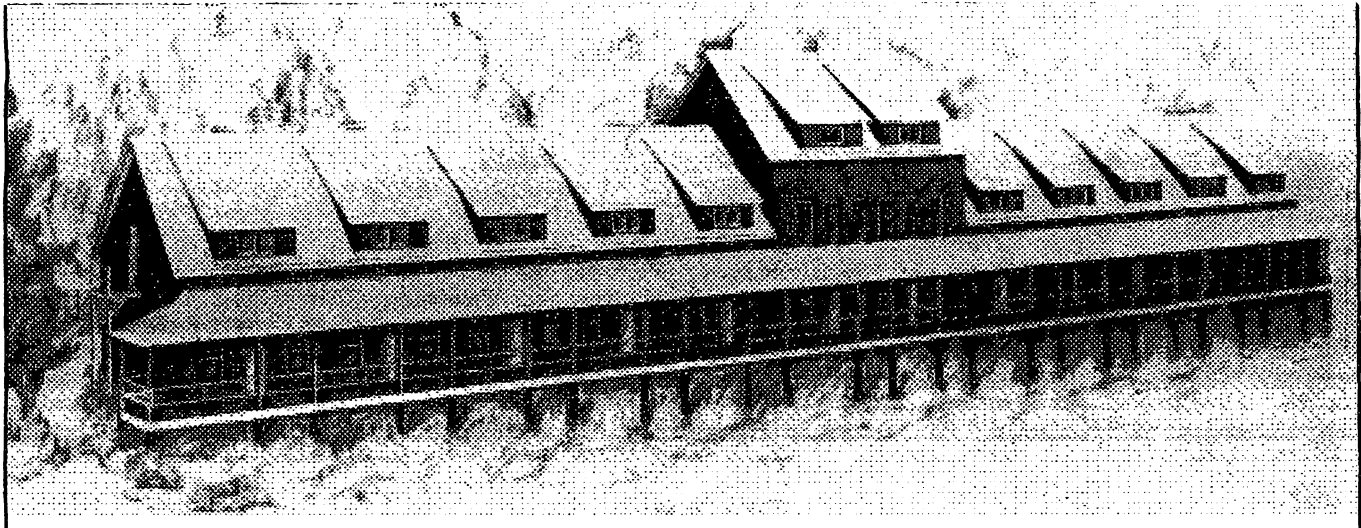
the Kennicott/McCarthy area, the property would allow 1 vote and each adult would have 12 votes on each issue. So, for that one household there would be 25 votes available towards a given issue. The suggested boundaries for the organization for the voting process were from Crystal Creek to the Canadian border.

Holding a town meeting on the first Wednesday of every month for the next 5 months was discussed and voted on favorably. January 6, 1993, was the date set aside for the next town meeting.

Betty Hickling asked if she could show a video at the next meeting that relates to "Destination '92" and the ad campaign put out by the State of Alaska's tourism division. She felt there was a need for the community to be fully aware of the outside interests that are effecting our lives. It was agreed that this issue would be on the agenda of the next meeting.

Another concern of some present related to a recent meeting of "Friends of Kennicott." According to the minutes of the October 20, 1992, meeting, participants of Friends would be going over a number of topics concerning McCarthy and Kennicott. Gary Hickling was one who questioned the need for "Friends of Kennicott" to be concerned with McCarthy. This issue will be looked into at the next meeting also.

Some other items expected on the agenda for the next meeting are a vote on a name for the organization and a vote on the priority issue facing the community at this time.



## Kennicott Glacier Lodge Phase II Expansion Project

By Bonnie Kenyon

In 1975 Rich Kirkwood was a young man just out of graduate school. He was searching for a place where he could do all the things he had been dreaming about. For beginners, he wanted to build a log cabin and live in the "bush" of Alaska. Leaving Illinois, Rich packed up everything he owned, and set out to find that special spot.

He discovered that May is not the best month of the year to travel through Alaska, but, being determined, he pressed on. A large ad in the Alaska Magazine caught his attention. The town of Chitina was for sale! To make it even more attractive, he could drive there. There was a road.

Arriving in Chitina, Rich didn't see a soul. His drive through town quickly brought him to the rock cut. As he descended towards the Copper River he could make out a sign just ahead. "McCarthy Road. No services available. 4-wheel drive recommended. No trailers." Scull and crossbones decorated the sign. Instead of discouragement, Rich sensed excitement. He decided to "check out McCarthy."

The thrill of adventure dwindled

somewhat when his vehicle got stuck in a large mud hole. Should he turn back? In the distance he could see the buildings of McCarthy and knew he couldn't quit now. He winched himself out of the hole, and continued on.

In the spring of 1975 a visitor could still drive all the way into the small community of McCarthy. Rich recalls driving right up to the front of the McCarthy Lodge. Gary Green and Fred Denner were the first two people he saw as he got out of his vehicle. After staying in the area for a few weeks, he realized this was where he wanted to settle.

McCarthy Lodge wasn't open for business that year, but its owner, Jerry Miller, approached Rich about building him a log cabin. Rich agreed. He describes the challenges of his first year in the Alaskan bush as "good experience" - even the minus 59 degrees he saw that winter.

The next year Kennicott was subdivided. Land and the old buildings were selling so Rich purchased a house. He then moved from McCarthy to Kennicott.

Others bought the 5-plex apartment building which had been used in the mining days to house Kennicott staff. The new owners hired Rich to fix and remodel the building into a lodge. This kept Rich busy during the winters of 1976 and 1977. The lodge opened July 4, 1977.

In about 1980 Rich became a 1/8th share partner in the lodge. The future of the business and the local area looked promising until tragedy struck in the spring of 1983.

In March the lodge burned to the ground. Because there wasn't any insurance on the building, all the partners "took their lumps and walked away." About a year later, unwilling to give up, Rich purchased the empty lot. Could the lodge be rebuilt and in time become a viable business? At that point, McCarthy Lodge was closed; things were quiet in the small community. What would the local people think? How would they react to his new dream? He decided to ask them. After surveying most of the people in the community, he got very positive responses. "That felt good!" said Rich.

(continued on page 4)

The first big hurdle was locating financing which took over a year and a half. "Bank financing for something this far out in the bush is darn near impossible," states Rich. Eventually, however, he was able to put together some investors. Once they got the money lined up, it only took 8 months to build.

extra 6,000 sq. ft. increasing the lodge to 10,000 sq. ft. The subcontractors finished their part on October 17.

Construction is continuing through the winter with the help of 4 local men. The project is on schedule and expected to be completed by June 1.

high wages, but we can offer a summertime in the Wrangells and some time off to enjoy it and the experience," said Rich.

Europeans. "They love the country. They love the mountains, the lack of people, the slower pace and they love to hike."

For all the work it takes to run a lodge, there is a special satisfaction that comes from serving people. "I love this area. It's been my home, and I enjoy sharing this country with other people," explains Rich. "It's fantastic to see people from all over the world come to an area like this. They may get totally grossed out by the road, come up to the lodge just ready to kill somebody and you get them to sit down on the front porch, give them a glass of ice tea. They can look at the glacier and relax. By the time they leave, they love it."

Rich is pleased to see the beginning of small businesses by local people - providing services and enjoying it. "I think that's one of the positive aspects of this time. It's nice to see people accepting that challenge. Starting to try becoming a part of the solution instead of a part of the problem. We've got a good community here."

Today Rich is the principal shareholder. When asked where Kennicott Glacier Lodge was going after the expansion project was completed Rich commented, "That's as big as we're going to get on that one site. With 25 rooms we'll be able to accommodate 50-55 people. It's a good number. It's not

Most clients write for information. Rich estimates 600 inquiry packages are sent out monthly. Each package contains a letter

*"I love this area. It's been my home, and I enjoy sharing this country with other people"*

The lodge opened during the summer season of 1986 with 12 guest rooms. These proved sufficient until this past summer. "When we first started the lodge about 6 years ago, I would have guessed that most of our guests would make reservations months and months in advance, which is good because we require a deposit. It doesn't turn out that way. I'm sure that well over 50%-probably closer to 60%-of the people that come visit us, book within a week to 10 days from the time they call. In previous years that hasn't been a problem. They could call us; we'd have a room. They'd come out to visit us. This past summer it was a problem. They'd call us but we wouldn't have a room. The month of July was full probably by the second week of June. I didn't have any rooms left, so that was kind of a problem," said Rich.

During the course of the summer and fall, eight tractor trailer loads of building materials were brought in. Earlier on in the season when the river was high, a cat hooked on to the trailer and pulled them across. In September the trucks were able to drive the loads all the way to their destination. Other materials came over on the trams. A big job for a big project!

Besides the extra guest rooms, a new, larger dining room will increase the seating capacity to 70 people. The kitchen is also being expanded. Seeing the need for a place to hold business meetings, receptions, and gatherings for special groups, a conference room will be available on the second floor. It will be equipped with a TV, VCR, slide projector and audio/visual capabilities and accommodate 45 people.

With the extra room and services, Rich expects he will need to hire about 18 employees for the upcoming season. It isn't that many more from last year's 14. He doesn't have trouble finding interested help. They generally find him. As it is, he gets up to 100 inquiries during the winter. Most are college kids or young people just out of college. "We can't offer

Rich decided to expand and do what was necessary to provide more rooms in time for next season. Turning people away is not easy. Because they were getting such a late start on the project, however, he brought in a 4-man crew from Anchorage to do the framing for a new addition. This will give the lodge an

*"I hope people enjoy this country. That's why we're doing this thing. When it ceases being fun, we'll quit."*

about the area and what a guest can expect if he or she decides to overnight at the Kennicott Glacier Lodge. Brochures from other local businesses are included.

The lodge is open May 15 through September 30. Guests have two options for accommodations. The Vacation package consists of a room, meals, transportation from McCarthy to Kennicott and back, and a guided historic tour of Kennicott - all for \$105 per person. The other option is a straight hotel room rate of \$120 for double occupancy.

According to Rich, the type of people who visit the area are independent travelers. Many are

so big you can't give everybody enough personal service. I don't ever want to be a big hotel. The thing that we hear from our guests is that they get a lot of personal attention. You get to know everybody....I want to retain that. It's a valuable experience for the guests, and makes it more fun for us. I hope people enjoy this country. That's why we're doing this thing. When it ceases being fun, we'll quit."

*Rich considers Kennicott his home. He, his wife, Jody, and their two girls, Christina 2 1/2 yrs. and Lindsey 6 mths. also have an apartment in Anchorage.*

*For Lodge reservations call 800-478-2350.*

## ***No word yet on promised phone service***

November came and left, along with McCarthy area resident's hope of seeing telephone service in 1992. In a Town Meeting held on August 7 in McCarthy, the residents voted 40 to 3 in favor of the proposed service. Copper Valley Telephone representatives said they hoped to install limited service in the fall of 1992, with full service capabilities the summer of 1993.

In October, a group of business people from the local area asked the



Glennallen area Chamber of Commerce to lend support. The Chamber approved a resolution to Copper Valley Telephone supporting phone service to the McCarthy area. The National Park Service has previously agreed to support "whatever decision the community made concerning phone service." As of press time, our letters of inquiry to Copper Valley Telephone have gone unanswered.

## ***The old horses go to the barn***

By Randy Elliot

Last week a Ford and Son tractor and a Reo model 1917 caisson puller made their last trip on the McCarthy May Creek Road. Both had made their way to May Creek after WW I to help bolster the economy of the Chititu placer mining town.

The famous Henry and his boys built the Ford and Son, and gave farmers a cost effective means to till the earth. The design featured large steel drive wheels for low maintenance and a one piece assembled engine and transmission for strength. Weighing about 4,500 pounds these tractors were just the thing for pulling a two-bottom plow. For many years they helped the local farmers produce potatoes for the miners and hay for the miners' horses. The four-cylinder gas engine was an offspring of the Model T and developed around 20 horsepower. These tractors can be easily recognized by the bucket attached to the radiator that allowed for easy filling and monitoring of the coolant.

The Reo Motorcar Company's model 1917 articulated tractor was a horse of another color. Lightly armored and built for war it sported articulated bogie assemblies for better traction over obstacles and trenches. Weighing five tons it was powered by a four-cylinder gas engine of 20 horsepower and had top speed of seven miles an hour. Its original mission was

to pull the large cannon and cartridge buggies used in WW I.

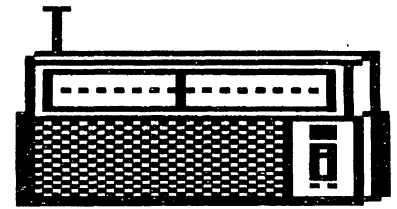
The tractor was sold as surplus, and the men on Chititu used it for all sorts of fun -- from hauling firewood to hydraulic pipe. It even appeared on the Fourth of July on occasion both as a float and tractor for others.

Most old horses are put down wherever they last work but these two returned to town in style atop a trailer courtesy of the last miner in this part of the country. It seemed fitting that they should leave as part of a miner's freight train just as they must have come over in the first place.

After a suitably exciting trip featuring getting stuck in the river and jackknifed on the side hill of the narrow McCarthy-May Creek Road, due to the icy conditions, the tractors arrived safely at the roadhead for the remainder of their journey to the museum in Palmer. The trip was made possible by the cooperation of both Kelly Bay and Fred Denner of Dan Creek who gave freely of their time and expertise. A special thanks to Natalie Bay, and Irene Koivu whose timely cooking and hospitality allow wild adventures like this to succeed at all.

Make sure and show these old tractors to your kids before they are taken to town and become as scarce as the miners who used them.

## ***Public Radio a Step Closer for McCarthy Area***



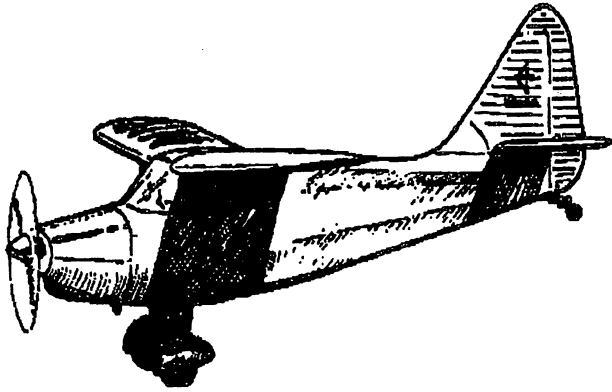
By Ed LACHAPPELLE

Good news is in store for local fans of KCHU Public Radio in Valdez, who have struggled for years with marginal reception on the AM radio band. There is a good chance that an FM translator will be installed in the area in 1993, ending the frustrations that were only partly reduced when KCHU installed a more powerful transmitter a couple years ago.

According to James Winchester, General Manager of KCHU Terminal Radio, a grant of \$7,500 has been received from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting for partial support of installing a translator in the McCarthy-Kennicott area. This grant will support the site selection tests and engineering work on the translator. Additional funds for purchase of the hardware will be sought from the State Legislature early in 1993. Persons wishing to assist in soliciting these additional funds should contact Winchester for additional information. He can be reached at Post Office Box 467, Valdez, AK 99686. Telephone numbers are 800-478-5248 (within Alaska) and 907-835-4665.

Site selection work will begin in May of 1993, with the aim of providing FM reception to as much of the upper Nizina River valley as possible. The translator will be solar powered, the first such translator in Alaska. Site selection will thus need to consider solar access as well as radio transmission factors.

A similar translator for KCHU is also being planned for the Copper River Basin. Translators are already in operation in Cordova and Whittier...



## This big bird flew the coup!

BY RICK KENYON

The strange weather we had last September seemed to confuse the migratory birds in the Copper River Valley. Early snow covered the land and birds that normally would have been enroute to warmer climes scratched for food.

One bird with a broken wing had been roosting all summer at the south end of the McCarthy airstrip. It

finally made its break on November 17, 1992, with local pilot John Adams at the controls. The big maroon and white Stinson underwent several days of "bush repair work" before flying to Wasilla. Its owner, Elaine Base, plans to restore it to like new condition. Many of you know Elaine as one of the drivers of the "Shuttle Bus" the past few summers. Our best wishes for a successful rebuild!

## Items of Interest

**Med-i-vac:** Kelly Bay of Wrangell Mountain Air handled a medical evacuation from McCarthy to Glennallen on October 22, 1992. A crew member working on the Kennicott Glacier Lodge expansion project fell from a two-story section breaking his pelvis, left wrist, and cracking his cheekbone. The injured man was taken to an Anchorage hospital where he was treated. According to Rich Kirkwood of KGL, the man is out of the hospital and recovering in Anchorage. There were no internal injuries.

**Lois Ann Holmes:** What began as a surprise call via ham radio to her folks on Thanksgiving Day turned out, however, to be more of a surprise to Lois Ann! Mrs.

**Lucile Holmes,** Lois Ann's mother, of Des Moines, Iowa, couldn't keep her secret any longer. She had already purchased airline tickets and would be arriving in McCarthy on December 23 to spend a month with her daughter. Needless to say, both ladies had much to be thankful for this November 26! (Mrs. Holmes arrived on schedule.)

On December 6 Lois Ann celebrated her 27th birthday by inviting the community to help her celebrate. There were 14 in attendance.

**Kim Northrup:** Kim's stepfather, **Jim Guntis** from Tucson, AZ, arrived on December 5 to pay a visit to our area. He and Kim stayed busy visiting local residents. We hear, however, Gary Hickling "let" Jim give him a hand at wood

## Slana Ranger Station leveled by fire

By Rick Kenyon

The National Park Service Ranger Station in Slana burned to the ground the night of November 6, 1992. The building and contents were valued at \$150,000 and were totally destroyed. No one was injured in the fire. The cause of the fire is not yet known. Arson has not been ruled out, although the fire apparently started in an area of the building where the solar powered electrical system was installed.

According to Nabesna District Park Ranger Sean McGuinness, a Park Service employee staying in a nearby bunkhouse first noticed the fire shortly after midnight when the bunkhouse lights flickered and went out. The employee saw a glow of flame at the gable end of the ranger station which seemed

to come from a fire in or above the emergency cache room. He contacted next-door neighbor Bill Schrank. They called 911 for help, then tried to extinguish the fire with a large chemical extinguisher. Their attempts to save the building were not successful and it burned in less than 4 hours.

McGuinness was not in Slana the night of the fire and no other fire fighting help was available.

NPS Chief of Maintenance Will Tipton said that most of the ATV's, snow-machines and other equipment were in the Glennallen maintenance shop for servicing the night of the fire and were undamaged. "A 300 gallon gasoline tank located about 30 feet from the ranger station was cooled down with snow which probably kept it from rupturing or worse", Tipton said.

detail. Hope Gary didn't work him too hard! We would like to see more of Jim and Peggy (Kim's mother) in the future.

**Jeannie Miller/Thea Agnew:** On Friday, November 13, Kennicott was the scene of celebration and, maybe, even a few tears. A turkey dinner was prepared in honor of Jeannie Miller's birthday (somewhat after the fact!) and a going away party for Thea who flew to England for the Christmas holiday.

**Kelly and Natalie Bay:** Leaving McCarthy November 19, Kelly and Natalie flew to **Seattle, Washington**, to spend Thanksgiving with Kelly's folks who live in Redmond. They returned to their home at Nizina on December 22.

**Randy Elliot:** Randy, gold

miner from Dan Creek, finally pulled up stakes and headed for warmer temperatures. He left the area December 17 and we don't expect him back till after breakup.

**The Miller family/Mark Vail/ The Green family:** There was a mass exodus out of McCarthy and to **Anchorage** for the Christmas season this year. Jeannie, Mark, and Nancy's parents all came up from the lower 48 to spend Christmas with them and other family members.

**Lilly Goodman:** Lilly has certainly been enjoying the winter. She finally got enough snow to give her skis a good workin' out. However, Lilly left the area - temporarily, we hear - on December 19 to spend Christmas with her family in Berkeley, CA.

## Reader Survey Responses - Public Opinion Concerning Kennicott

In our first issue of Wrangell St. Elias News we published a reader survey entitled "Public Opinion Concerning Kennicott. We received 14 responses, half were from local area residents, the other half from Alaskans who live in other areas of the state.

Some of the comments follow:

When answering question #6, "Do you favor a major restoration of Kennicott?", one respondent answered "yes", but added, "Complete restoration by commencing mining again".

In fact, 3 people said they would like to see the mine re-open, all 3 were local residents.

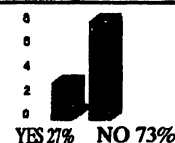
Other comments included:

"The current rebuilding is heartwarming. Thanks to citizens."

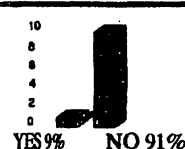
"Keep the Park Service away!"

"Born and raised in Kennicott. Don't want it turned into a tourist trap."

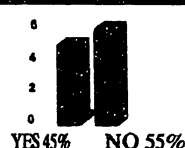
Do you favor the acquisition of Kennicott by the National Park Service?



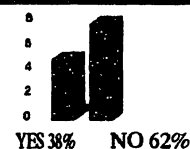
Do you favor the acquisition of Kennicott by the State of Alaska?



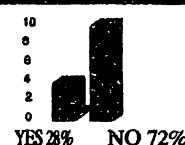
Do you favor the acquisition of Kennicott by a private non-profit organization?



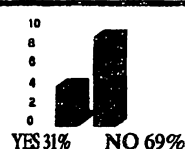
Do you favor the current work being done to preserve Kennicott?



Do you favor a "hands-off" policy of letting nature take its course?



Would you favor a major restoration of Kennicott?



### NPS Report on Kennicott & McCarthy causes stir among local residents.

A 10 page "Trip Report on Kennicott/McCarthy" written by the Project Coordinator for the Kennicott/McCarthy Special Research Study, Laura Rotegard, was not received very well by some local residents. The report was written to NPS management personnel in Denver, but was also circulated among McCarthy and Kennicott residents. (See the "open letter to the residents of Kennicott and McCarthy" in the November & December issue of Wrangell St. Elias News.)

The report paints a picture of a small town where everyone has built their own house, there are "few VCR's" but "most of the winter residents have a dog team", and on a sunny day most locals are out flying around in airplanes that they own or

have built themselves. Rotegard states that "The absence of cars is the single most repeated phrase among locals who describe the most cherished aspect of their lifestyle. Walking is the universal mode of movement, the communication means, the reconnaissance factor for the safety of the town and the eyes and ears on the children".

Laura was scheduled to be in McCarthy in November, but the trip was canceled at the last minute, apparently because of a lack of funding. However, a recent letter from NPS Superintendent Karen Wade said only that the trip has been "rescheduled for February".

### New Park Ranger coming to Wrangell-St. Elias

Starting January 1993, Wrangell-St. Elias National Park will have another Ranger/Investigator, Tim Saskowsky. Tim began work with the Park Service as a seasonal ranger in 1981, and in 1985 became a full time Law Enforcement Ranger. He has worked at Natchez Trace Parkway in Mississippi, Lake Mead NRA in Nevada, and most recently Channel Islands NP in California. In January, Tim will begin work by attending investigative law enforcement training at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in Georgia.

Mr. Saskowski's office will be located in the Gulkana Operations Center at the Gulkana Airport. He will work throughout the park investigating all federal offenses but especially wildlife cases. He will be available to assist the District Rangers with their casework.

Welcome to the Wrangells, Tim!

## Glennallen, McCarthy, and May Creek to get scheduled airplane service from Anchorage.

Lynn Ellis announced that beginning January 16, 1993, regular flights between Glennallen and Anchorage will link with the McCarthy mail run. This is part of a joint agreement between Ellis Air Taxi of Gulkana and Security Aviation of Anchorage.

With the new service, people will be able to leave Anchorage at 8:30 a.m. and be in McCarthy by 11:00 a.m. The Anchorage to Gulkana portion will use all-weather twin-engine aircraft. After a 3 hour layover, the twin will return to Anchorage, enabling McCarthy or

May Creek passengers to be in Anchorage by 2:00 p.m. The flights will be on Wednesdays and Fridays.

Security has several twin engine aircraft that it will make available for charter work from the Glennallen area, including a Cessna 550 Citation jet. Mike O'Neill, president of Security, said "Working with the Ellis family will be a great opportunity for us. Their flying service is well respected in the industry and use of our equipment will give them the opportunity to expand into aircraft not presently available in the Glennallen area."

## Friends of Kennicott

By RICK KENYON

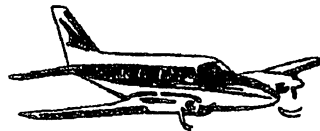
"Friends of Kennicott was started 4 years ago with the sole purpose of getting the emergency stabilization work at Kennicott done. Once the stabilization work is done, Friends of Kennicott would then dissolve. That's hopefully after the end of next summer." This statement by Rich Kirkwood, President of the Board of Directors for Friends of Kennicott, seems to sum up the goals of *Friends*. However, a notice in a recent *Friends* newsletter has some McCarthy residents concerned that the group's mission may be more far-reaching.

The last paragraph in the Minutes for the October 20, 1992, Board of Directors meeting was the culprit: "McCARTHY-KENNICOTT COORDINATION MEETING IN FEBRUARY?"

"For the past few years, a meeting has been held in Anchorage in February to go over a number of topics concerning McCarthy and Kennicott. These meetings give everyone a chance to update everyone else on what's happening. Business is definitely not limited to Friends of Kennicott, although we have used the Friends mailing list to send out meeting announcements. If you are interested in attending and have any scheduling constraints, please let me know. Also let me know if you have any particular topics or issues you think should be discussed. And stay tuned for more information." (Curiously, attached to the minutes was an URGENT plea for funds for operating expenses, "such as distributing minutes and meeting notices." The document goes on, "All of the government grant money we receive is dedicated to

### *Starting January 16, 1993, Scheduled Air Service from Anchorage to McCarthy with stopover in Gulkana!*

Now you can leave Anchorage at 8:30 on Wednesday or Friday morning and arrive in Gulkana at 9:45, McCarthy at 11:00. Or, you can leave McCarthy at 11:15 and be back in Anchorage by 2:00pm the same day! (Leaves Gulkana at 12:45) This service is year around.



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John M. Baalke Dale T. Judge

*(Friends of Kennicott, continued)*

emergency stabilization, not administrative costs...If we don't raise sufficient funds to cover our mailing costs, you may be dropped from the mailing list.")

In a recent interview with Rich Kirkwood, we asked him for some history on the group. (Unfortunately, we were not aware at the time of the controversy, so could not address that issue directly.) He told us that Friends had come out of the McCarthy/Kennicott Historical Museum. The group discussed stabilization work at the museum meetings, but some members did not want to expose the museum to the increased liability that would

arise from the project, so a new group was formed. The new group would try to obtain federal and state grant money, would hire a contractor to do emergency stabilization work, then would dissolve.

Rich said the group got \$200,000 from the State of Alaska as a grant in 1991. That was followed in 1992 by another grant, this time federal and coming through the Park Service, for \$376,000. "We spent all of the \$200,000 of the state money this spring. Now we're into the federal money. We've spent \$70,000 of that, mostly on materials," Rich said. Copper Valley Construction was the successful bidder on

the contract. They have used all local hire, with about 10 people who have worked on the project at various times.

We asked Rich about using state and federal funds to do work on buildings that are still privately owned. His answer: "That was brought up at the State Legislature. Brought up immediately. There are two things that counter that. One, the offer that the owners of Kennicott have made to the NPS. In that offer they are going to donate the large industrial buildings to the Park Service. So, if we do work on those buildings, there's no value increase to the buildings. They're going to give them the

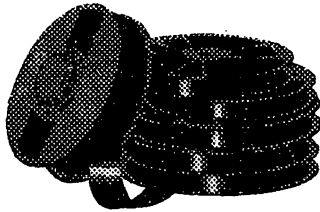
buildings anyway. That's the deal they offered. Secondly, the buildings, according to most appraisers right now, don't have any value anyway. In fact, they're probably negative value -- an attractive nuisance. Given that, you cannot improve the value of something that doesn't have any value."

Although Rich said he hoped that the goals of Friends of Kennicott could be met by the end of the summer of 1993, he did say that some of those involved think that Friends should try for additional funds. "We're not going to get everything done that we had hoped to get done," said Rich.

# OUR TOWN



1917 - 1918



Lights, Music.  
Admission 75 cents.  
Children 25 cents.

## MOVIES IN McCARTHY

The movie apparatus which the A. B.'s have just purchased arrived from the States yesterday. It is being installed today and we shall see pictures very soon in McCarthy. Electricians wired the hall during the week for the electric light.

Jimmy Jussey will turn the crank of the picture machine.

(November 17, 1917)

## CODFISH ARISTOCRACY

Alaska is a country where deeds, not birth, count. If aristocracy of birth counted the Territory of Alaska would be out of luck for most of its hardy sons and daughters are of the class in which personal achievement not the achievement of their forbears count. Whenever the cod fish aristocracy, having a few petty dollars, attempts to patronize the pioneer of the country, who by honest effort and diligent

toil has blazed the trail and suffered hardships which the effete Easterner is too ignorant to understand, it is time for Sourdoughs to rise with a yell that would make the rebel yell sound like the squeak of a mouse and declare himself.

(November 24, 1917)

## CONCERNING ROADS

The McCarthy section of Alaska paid into the Territorial treasury 3/4 of the total mineral production tax which is the basis of the road work. We have made frequent and vehement demands, both upon the Alaska Road Commission and the Territorial Road Board.

To date not a single inch of wagon road has been constructed in this vicinity by either board. More people travel over Sourdough Hill each year than travel out of Valdez on the Fairbanks trail.

Everybody in McCarthy and its environs is ready and anxious to do their bit. Back of us lies the Nizina district rich in possible tonnage. Every bit of this copper should be available to our government in these trying times. The mines and ore are both ready and all that is lacking is transportation and that cannot follow until public highways are constructed by the persons in authority. Are Wilson and others doing their bit?

Will Road Commissioner Wilson explain why thousands of

dollars are being expended on the Kotsina Trail out of Strelna, at whose instance this road was constructed and also how many tons of ore will go out to market over it during the coming year?

(December 1, 1917)

## McCARTHY versus SHUSHANNA JUNCTION

One thing that puzzles a newcomer to McCarthy, is the fact that, although the town and Post Office are called McCarthy, the depot and telegraph office are Shushanna Junction.

This causes inconvenience also - a McCarthy business man telegraphs to an outside firm for a rush order: the wire is sent from Shushanna Junction. Not being conversant with Alaskan vagaries, the recipient of the wire looks up the rating of the man wiring from Shushanna Junction and finds there is no such place in the business world.

Result, delay of the rush order.

We understand that the reason of the change was made on account of the fact that the Signal corps has a telegraph station at McCarty on the Fairbanks Trail and our McCarthy conflicts with it.

Shades of old man McCarthy! The name is not even spelt the same. McCarty has a fish wheel

and a ferry in summer, no more in winter - whereas our city is a big centre to which we can't do justice in this limited space.

To make a long story short, we would like to see Depot and Telegraph Office to match Town and Post Office; and really, the new name would not be as difficult for the railroad structure to live up to.

The cold December days are come

To freeze the wicked and the good,

Some folks perhaps will be quite numb,

Because the Smart One grabs the Dull One's wood.

## SANITARY BOARD

Under authority of Dr. Chase the Territorial Commissioner of Health for the Third Division a local sanitary board has been organized, consisting of Dr. H.J. Miller and F.H. Foster. A list of regulations has been promulgated for the proper sanitation of McCarthy as well for the prevention of disease and possible contamination of the water supply. It is to be hoped that the people of McCarthy will lend their hearty co-operation to a movement which has long been needed. That an epidemic of typhoid or some like disease hasn't cursed this community is due to good luck and the grace of God, not to ordinary care on the part of its citizens.

---(December 8, 1917)



## COPPER RIVER AND NORTHWESTERN RAILWAY FOUR TRAINS WEEKLY BETWEEN CHITINA AND KENNECOTT

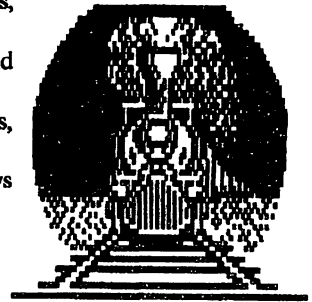
Leave Kennecott for Chitina, Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays.

Leave Chitina for Cordova, Sundays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.

Leave Cordova, Second Street Depot, for Chitina Mondays, Thursdays and Saturdays.

Leave Chitina for Kennecott Sundays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.

The above schedule subject to change without notice.  
CALEB CORSER Supt. GRANT REED Agent



## REVIEWING 1917

On this, the last Saturday in the old year, it is an excellent time to review what the past year has brought.

It has been a prosperous year in our town, with the building of fifteen miles of Mother Lode road, their new power plant, warehouse and buildings: then too, the new A.B. Hall, moving picture show, post office and many residences and business houses. The payrolls of our mines were never larger, every industry is working to capacity, there is work for everyone at a higher rate of wages, and we were never in a better condition to respond to worthy appeals than we are at present.

We are now doubly safe as regards fire protection. Two chemical engines have been procured and a night watchman stands on guard.

Never in the history of our town has there been a year like this.

Funds have been raised for the Belgian relief fund, for the building of the A.B. Hall, and the floating of the moving picture company. The Liberty Bonds have been generously subscribed to. We have assisted the Kennecott Red Cross not a little and also raised over \$1000 for our own chapter, all of which has been somewhat of a tax on peoples finances, but which

is a glorious reflection on our town and its people.

Now while it may seem that McCarthy has done its part, which it has, it is certain that we will never fall down when we are called upon to help any of those who need our aid.

The year past has seen many new properties opened up, and manifested the rich mineral center which is ours.

Altogether, McCarthy is twice the town it was a year ago and it is certain to continue to grow if we all support it as we should during the coming year.

(December 29, 1917)

## STRELNA

Strelna is getting more like Seattle every day. Tony Pete has sent word to Sam Escali to try and procure a barber chair for him to start in Strelna.

## FOOD CONSERVATION

Starting today, the Food Conservation regime will be followed by many in McCarthy.

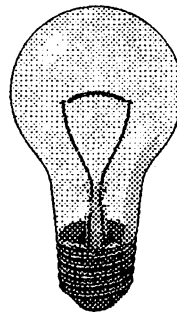
**Wasteless days**, with no half loaves of bread in the garbage cans, dabs of butter left on plates or sugar left in cups.

Also, for one day each week:

**Meatless days**, no beef mutton or pork but fish,

poultry, cheese, eggs, beans.

**Wheatless days**, this seems to be the part least understood, at present we are all asked to do at one meal a day, is to have no bread made ENTIRELY of wheat. Half graham, half rye or one third corn meal meets the requirements. To aid the future of our glorious country we can surely put a cupful of cornmeal in the sourdough.



## ELECTRICITY IN CHITINA

Chitina is now lighted with electricity and presents a brilliant appearance. The Chitina hotel alone has 60 lights.

## OBITUARY

On December 31st at 12 o'clock midnight - two old sourdoughs who landed on the beach at Valdez early in 1898, breathed a last odorous gasp, and AL K. Hall and J. Barley Corn were no more. Around the bedside were gathered the B.A.R. Tender

brothers, children and nephews of the deceased pioneers while the other relatives K.O. Kane and Mor Phene wept bibulously in the background.

There will be no funeral as the remains are too dead to bury.

Contributed by a prominent citizen.

(January 5, 1918)

## PERSONAL

The Soda Fountain for the Alaskan is expected next week.

The Rev. Shriver will be in McCarthy on Wednesday, and will hold service in the schoolhouse in the evening.

The Rev. E.P. Zeigler is in town for the weekend and will hold services in the schoolhouse Sunday afternoon at 3 o'clock.

G.C. Gwinn the Nizina oracle predicts an early breakup.

The mineral output of Alaska in 1916 is valued at \$48,632,138 being an increase of nearly 50 percent over the output of the previous year which was \$32,854,229. This increase has been due mainly to the activity in copper mining.

(January 19, 1918)

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## Local Businesses Reflect on Summer '92

### ***Willow Herb Mountain Depot - Terry and Dee Frady***

"Our second season and a very busy one at that. We were open for business seven days a week, ten hours a day, non-stop. Our volume of traffic stopping by increased dramatically from 1991. Folks love to stop and chat and it was not at all unusual for them to spend one or two hours doing so. We really enjoy the exchange of thoughts and ideas from different people. We had a very high percentage of European travelers this year. Also, we noted the majority of vehicles were rented cars. Taking on tire repairs proved to be far more time consuming than imagined. Terry found rocks, plain

nails, screws, dated nails, spikes, slashes and sidewall cuts in tires. Needless to say, a few bent rims as well!"

*Terry and Dee's log cabin gift shop is located at Mile 55 1/4 on the McCarthy Road - 2 1/2 miles before the tram.*

### ***J & J Services - Jim and Jeannie Miller***

"Our summer was a very busy one and we express our 'Thanks' to Elaine Base, Mary Ann Cunningham, Tom Finkle and Bridget Brosnihan, whose help made our summer much more enjoyable." *Jeannie Miller.*

"This has been the worse summer I have ever seen in McCarthy because of all the

bickering over money!" *Jim Miller.*

*Jim, Jeannie and family have lived in the McCarthy and Kennicott area since 1978. Besides providing a shuttle bus that makes frequent runs between both towns, they along with daughter Stacie, own and operate the McCarthy General Store.*

### ***Kennicott-McCarthy Wilderness Guides - Chris Richards***

"Had an excellent season with really great people as clients. We all had a good time, every time!"

*Chris has been a 'year-round' resident of Kennicott for 14 years and offers historical and nature tours throughout Kennicott.*

### ***Wrangell Mountain Air - Kelly and Natalie Bay***

"It was a good summer. Nice to be home all summer!" *Kelly Bay.*

"We had a lot of fun. We spent a lot of time on the porch talking to people. Sitting there. Amazing! We get paid for doing this. It's really interesting how easy it was to spend 16 hours a day sitting and talking to people from all around the world, all around the state. Sometimes they went flying." *Natalie Bay.*

*Kelly and Natalie are the owners and pilots for this locally-based air taxi. Besides offering flightseeing packages, they also provide service to various parts of Alaska.*

**Kennicott Glacier Lodge -  
Rich Kirkwood**

"Businesswise we had a very good summer. It was kind of cut short due to weather, but it still was good. I think the visitation in the area is increasing at a rate that can be handled and that's good. Visitation of this area, I think, will continue to increase. No matter what people think or would like to happen. We'll continue to see more visitors come to this area. We just need to find a way to share this area with them yet continue to have the lifestyle we want. That's the challenge."

*Kennicott Glacier Lodge is located on main street near the 40 buildings that remain from the original copper mining boom town of Kennicott.*

**St Elias Alpine Guides &  
McCarthy Wilderness Bed &  
Breakfast - Bob Jacobs**

"The great highlight of my summer, and St. Elias Alpine Guides, came early, in fact in May, when I led a small climbing team into the St. Elias mountains and we accomplished the first ascent of 11,000 foot Mt. Stellar. This beautiful mountain lies less than 25 miles from the ocean, and we experienced the full force of a Gulf of Alaska gale as we sat out hurricane force winds and over 5 feet of snowfall during a 4 1/2 day storm.

At the end of June we all hoped "real" summer would appear, but July and August never showed up and the clouds never went away. Since folks don't 'cotton' too much to exploring the Root Glacier in the rain ( and even frequent snow!), our summer was a bit slower

paced than times past. Our expeditions explored the Chitistone Canyon for the 14th consecutive year and we even fielded a custom trip that hiked from Skolai Pass to the Nizina River, jumped in a raft and floated to the old Nizina/McCarthy Road and then hiked back in to the powerhouse. I had a great crew, and St. Elias Alpine Guides certainly owes Richard, Thea, Jessica and Kate a rousing 'well done' and many thanks.

"Due to family complications, the McCarthy Wilderness Bed & Breakfast, after 6 years shut its doors forever this past September."

*Located near the banks of McCarthy Creek in downtown McCarthy, St. Elias Alpine Guides operates out of the old McCarthy Powerhouse.*

**McCarthy Lodge and Johnson  
Hotel- Gary and Betty Hickling**

"The summer was a great summer - businesswise. There were lots of people. I was really surprised just how much we had. And then you compare it to the numbers of how many of the Europeans that came to the state - McCarthy got a lot of them. But, that's on the good side. On the disappointing side - I was disappointed in the integrity of the Friends of Kennicott in their - on what they did on the trams. I thought they should have gone down there and repaired the basket and did what Rich said he was going to do. That's the only disappointing thing I found this summer. Other than that I think it's been a real good summer. This next summer I hope - I anticipate tram jams and probably more people, But, I hope we get



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# Young, Stevens and Murkowski get high ratings

## Alaska's Representatives fare well in Private Property Vote Index

WSEN STAFF

All three of Alaska's elected representatives are pro private property, according to a study done by The League of Private Property Voters. Senators Murkowski and Stevens received a 90 percent rating while Congressman Young got the highest rating possible, 100 percent. At the other end of the spectrum, Senators Cranston (California), Biden (Delaware), Akaka (Hawaii), Glenn (Ohio) and Kennedy (Massachusetts) got a big zero.

The League of Private Property Voters is an outreach of the National Innholders Association, a nationally known property

owners' organization. In its introduction, the Editors state that "this Index was developed because the Federal Government has developed an 'attitude' toward private property and private property owners that has become a serious national problem." They go on to say that the U.S. government owns more than one-third of the real estate in the U.S. and controls more than half the gross national product of the country through either direct ownership or regulation. The likeness is made to an "intrusive 800-lb. gorilla with a sizable appetite for what property it doesn't own or control."

The League took a group of ten votes from each house that dealt with private

property issues. Some of the issues covered were:

Minimizing regulatory "takings" of private property by Federal agencies.

Condemnation of private land.

Increasing Federal fees for patenting mining claims.

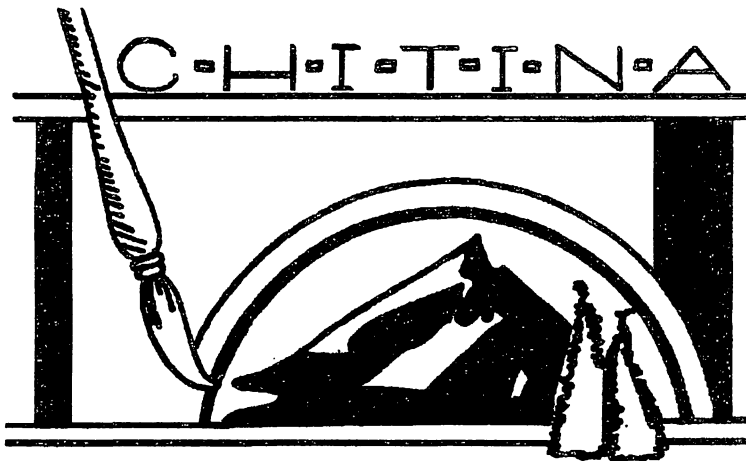
Permitting hunting in the new Mojave National Monument.

Federal reserved water rights for Wilderness area.

Since McCarthy is surrounded by the gorilla's native habitat, it is heartening to know that we have some allies in Washington. Anyone interested in more information can write to the League of Private Property Voters, P.O. Box 423, Battle Ground, WA 98604.

*"He who is about to reveal the Truth had better have one foot in the stirrup."*

*Old Hungarian Saying*



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## Local Businesses Reflect (cont.)

those trams fixed by next summer because that one basket over there looks terrible. To me, it's a reflection on the community - what the trams look like, how the parking lot looks. If somebody comes up there and there's trash all over, and there's junk cars, and nobody cares. What's going to happen they're going to come over here and not care. They're going to throw their trash somewhere and they're not going to heed our signs and that kind of thing so I think the impression we give at the parking lot has to be a good one." Gary Hickling.

"The trams need to be safe. If that's the access to the community, it needs to be safe." Betty Hickling.

"And people who are freighting such as myself would think I would be responsible for damaging the trams if I did." Gary Hickling.

Gary and Betty have been running the McCarthy Lodge and Johnson Hotel since 1987. They are located in downtown McCarthy.

*"He made the earth by his power; he founded the world by his wisdom and stretched out the heavens by his understanding."*


*--Jeremiah 51:17*


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## A look at the weather

By GEORGE CEBULA

After a record breaking September, McCarthy enjoyed a near normal October and November. October was rather dry with only four days of measurable snowfall. Total precipitation was 0.64 inches (1.11 in October 91); total snowfall 2.3 inches (9.2 in October 91). Temperatures were almost the same as last year. The highest was 52 on October 6 (51 on October 5, 91), all time high was 67 on October 7, 1967. The lowest was -15 on October 18 (-8 on October 28, 91). At the end of the month there was only a trace of snow on the ground (3 inches in October 91).

Some of the other area stations also showed a dry

October 1992. Old Edgerton had 0.35 inches of liquid and 2.8 inches of snow. Tonsina had 0.77 inches of liquid and 6.8 inches of snow.

November at McCarthy was a continuation of October's weather. Temperatures were warmer than last year. The highest was 41 on November 25 (33 on November 27, 91), all time high was 48 on November 1, 1970. The lowest was -22 on November 13 (-23 on November 17, 91) all time low was -46 on November 11, 1989. The average temperature for November was 16.5 (8.8 in November 91). Total precipitation was 1.35 inches (0.88 in November 91); total snowfall 10.3 inches (12.2 inches in November 91). November ended with only



Snow is a good insulator -- Lilly Goodman managed to find enough of the white stuff to do a fine job of insulating.

6 inches of snow on the ground (10 inches in November 91).

Area stations showed varied snow depths at the end of November. Old Edgerton and the Glennallen area only had a trace with Slana and

Nabesna both having about 12 inches.

As we go to press the first 11 days of December have had temperature averages around zero and little snow. Snow depth is only 7 inches.

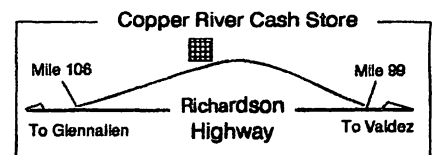
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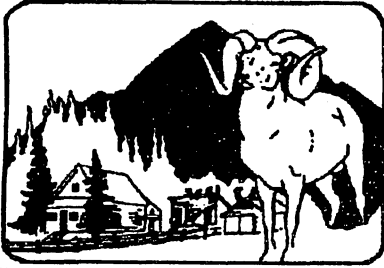


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## Soil thermometers installed

By GEORGE CEBULA

Regional Cooperative Program Manager NOAA

A new DC MMTS system was installed at McCarthy on October 12, 1992. This is the first unit in Alaska and is still being field tested. The system reports the air temperature and soil temperatures at 4, 8, and 20 inch depths. Maximum and minimum temperatures are read once a day. The system uses a 6 by 14 inch solar panel to keep the battery charged. The system failed during the installation and the main unit was replaced on October 21. The system now appears to be in normal operation as per installation instructions. As McCarthy usually has



temperatures below -40 and only short periods of winter sunlight, this should be a real test for the new system. The system is still operating as we go to press and in another week the sunlight will begin to increase again.

*Wrangell St. Elias News is published six times a year at McCarthy, Alaska. Edited and published by Rick and Bonnie Kenyon. Subscription rates are \$8.50 per year. Back issues are available for \$2.50 each postpaid. (Volume 1, Issues 1, 2, and 3) Please send your comments, suggestions and subscription information to Wrangell St. Elias News, PO Box MXY, Glennallen, AK 99588*

*A man was suggesting to do an exploration of the Sun and thought he had considered every aspect of it. When a friend suggested "but you will burn up!", the man said "oh, no, I will go during the night!"*

# FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

This was the speech given by Mark Vail at the Town Meeting held December 16, 1992.

"It appears to me that it is in our best interest to evaluate our location and status as a community of individuals with a variety of interests and ideas as to how the development of our community should take place. I would offer that in doing so we do it in a manner that both helps us prosper as individuals and as a community.

"Some here feel that we should be entrusted with the power of law through government, so that they can establish rules and regulations to guide the development interest that is arising in the world at large entailing the flow of humanity that wishes to visit our area because of the inherent beauty of our surroundings.

"This area has been recognized as an area of World Heritage and as a National Park, and there is little we can do to change that. The people are coming here no matter what we do, and our objective is to save some semblance of community. If as a community we can agree on any variety or number of aspects of this recognition it would do us well to endeavor as individuals and as a community to establish a means by which we may provide to the coming flow of interested people a story view of our heritage both local and individual as a result of our living in such a grand setting.

"Thus ensues a discussion by which we can encounter this process and devise an agreeable means which allows us each individual equal

access towards the development necessary to meet the demands that we (park area residents) will encounter due to the irrevocable past recognition of the geographical and historical aspect of our area.

"Opportunities abound. Numbers are great, but can we register in our thoughts and actions the right of those individuals who's lives and interests do not care or wish to participate in a process that they may deem — unnecessary, over encompassing, and of a capricious nature. (In other words those who want to live the bush lifestyle and not be involved in tourism.) The fact that the subsistence lifestyle is protected is an important matter, it is something that is established through law, (ANILCA, AUSCA, etc.) In our process we should keep in mind that there are people here who want to maintain that lifestyle.

"We must recognize our standing with the National Park Service. That is a major point because they own everything around us. I think this forum is important so that we can show NPS what we want, rather than them always doing things that are against our best interests. There will not always be a consensus as a community, but a vote can be taken, and the results published (along with the dissenting opinions). I think Rick's paper will be a good place to publish these results. Essentially, dealing with the Park Service is a major issue to start with, because they are in the process of planning what they are going to do around us. We, as individuals and as a community are protected by

law, but we must determine the parameters of that protection.

"They have at their disposal access to the tools necessary in a larger interpretation of the area. What they lack is a true to life vision of life in the park. They don't live here -- we do. And we can enrich the visitor's experience because of that.

"It is through our concentrated effort that we may effect the planning processes that have up until now been prepared and imposed upon us without due process. This in part has taken place because the individual has neither the time, interest or wherewithal to participate. In part the process has been used to alleviate our interest by making us think that our individual participation was not in the best interest of the process. NOT TRUE!

"I would argue that only through participation as individuals and using organizational skills beyond my present scope that we are endowed through our existence as locally knowledgeable individuals to participate fully in the planning process.

"Getting down to specifics, we must first recognize the level at which we can best organize the flow of information necessary to make informed decisions. This is describing the commons, anticipating the needs of the flow and prescribing an acceptable route of access to those commons. Defining acceptable levels of flow for various aspects of those commons without impeding the rights of the individuals as recognized through law. That is, ANILCA,

AUSCA, NPS statutes and other levels of law already in place through the structure of other acceptable governance.

"Identifying the needs of the public and the rights of the locals to make a livelihood though appropriate and historic means is a necessity if we are to protect those rights and enhance the understanding of the larger public.

"Developing a forum for the free exchange of ideas and information as it pertains to the area we live in is the task set before us. We are constantly reminded by the presence of the NPS that if we should fail to act many of the ideas and much of the information we hold dear may fall into the trap of federal regulation. One only needs to read the GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN to become aware of this.

"Collectively we must decide as yet unidentified issues. So a forum needs to be designed by which we can:

1. Identify issues
2. Collect and disseminate information about these issues
3. Devise a means for deciding and declaring a community view on these issues, always leaving room for the expression of individual differences.

"Using the powers that be to provide and proceed according to the local and public decisions."

Mark Vail

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Anchorage, Alaska  
November 24, 1992

Dear Rick & Bonnie,

I've been meaning to write you for some time to tell you how much we have been enjoying your newspaper, and this last one was the best to date!

I especially enjoyed Ed LaChapelle's editorial. I met Ed once when I was there with Eleanor Tjosevig Eidemiller, as she knows him well. I feel exactly as he does, but could never put it down on paper as he has. I sent Eleanor a copy of the editorial and also sent in a subscription for her.

Everyone I have discussed this with is in agreement. Of course, the six "Kennecott Kids" I met at the Alaska-Yukon Convention in Everett, Wa. in October, were all of the same opinion. Many say that the trams are an important part of the Kennecott area and part of the "adventure" of getting there.

I wish we had met you when we were there the middle of August, however, I'm sure we'll be back next year, hopefully in the fall.

Keep up the good work!  
Sincerely,  
Inger & Charlie Ricci  
(Jensen)

*Editor's note: Inger was born in Kennecott in 1918 and lived there until 1932. She attended high school in Seattle, then returned to Kennecott in 1936. She and Charlie live in Anchorage now.*

Valdez, Ak. 99686  
November 22, 1992

Dear Rick & Bonnie:

Thanks for the Nov/Dec Wrangell St. Elias News. Good to hear from you.

Can't help but think about how folks escape from the city and drag city ways along with them. Thinking about group effort makes sense however, as more join you in "solitude".

From my perspective it seems unlikely that any form of local government will be the answer. Pursuit of such an objective with its significant costs in time and funds could be in the end frustrated by your all encompassing federal neighbor. A "simple" matter such as defining a boundary for a political subdivision turns out to be controversial, time consuming and a real cost to those involved. The organizers will be severely handicapped without their own legal counsel.

All the interested agencies, with ample legal counsel, may give every sign of working with the citizen group. Yet, ultimately a ruling from headquarters will find such a political subdivision contrary to overall long term policy. The common good of in-holders may be better addressed by some other form of assembly. Certainly, there are similar experiences elsewhere from which one could gain useful information.

Rest assured that any form of citizen assembly involves a cost to its members. Once undertaken, such burden never lessens. Administration, enforcement and public service functions soon become growing budget items.

Funding has to be some form of self assessment, allocated on a reasonable basis. Grants-in-aid carry their own burdensome requirements of mandatory actions, assurances and detailed reporting to the grantor, as does any so called "revenue sharing" from other entities.

Best regards,  
Chuck LaPage

---

Kennicott, AK  
December 16, 1992

Dear McCarthy and  
Kennicott residents,

A new tram car is to be built for the first tram. This is to be donated by "The Friends of Kennicott". This will, hopefully, satisfy all local people. Though remember most local businesses and residents have abused the tram at one time or another. Tramming 1200 pound generators or 7 college students at one time are just a few examples.

It's unfortunate that the tram was singled out when the real problem is jealousy, greed for money, strife, lying and hatred that has slowly engulfed McCarthy in the last two years--caused by people

having to have more, more, more! That's my dollar not yours. Money is worse than any drug because it eats at your brain 24 hours a day.

Well, folks, I'm not playing the game any more. It's time to look ahead and not live in the past on dead dreams that eat a body up from the inside out. I'm standing up and giving the devil notice. Some people always have to have a scape goat to blame for what is really jealousy or the love of money. These people can't deal with their own problems so they nit-pick other people or organizations, try to blame their problems on them. Look in the mirror - most problems start right there.

Remember people come here to see Kennicott, the largest ghost town in Alaska, not for some home-cooked meal they could get anywhere. Also, remember the trams were built in 1983 and guaranteed for 5 to 7 years. Now who is going to take responsibility for the trams? Not the State - not the Feds - not non-locals - and not those who use excuses of liability or lawsuits. (When you're looking for an excuse any will do.)

But real locals will take care of it. We haven't forgotten the real reason we chose this lifestyle.

So people, what goes around, comes around. May God have mercy on you people because the devil already has your hearts.

Jim Miller

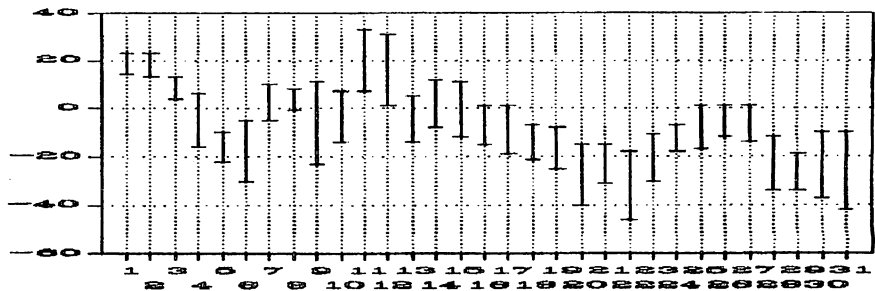
# This Time Last Year

"Oh, what a  
blamed un-  
certain  
thing  
This pesky  
weather is;  
It blew and  
snow and  
then it thaw,  
And now, by  
jing, it's  
friz!"

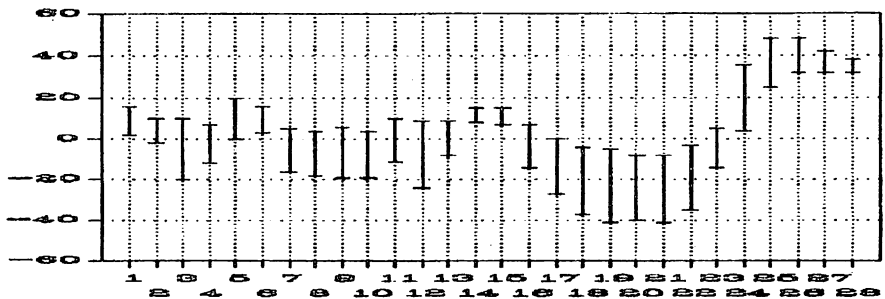
--Philander  
Johnson

\* No Data available for 1989, through 1992 as the local weather observers were observing seagulls in Florida!

January 1988 \*  
MAX/MIN



February 1992  
MAX/MIN



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