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Wrangell St. Elias News

"Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty"

Vol. Twelve Issue One

January & February 2003

Two Dollars

Mining in miniature



Mother Lode Upper Camp Model at the Copper Rail Depot

Ron Simpson has done it again. I stopped by the Copper Rail Depot to see Ron on our way home from Florida. Even though it was dark, below zero, and snow covered the ground, Ron couldn't wait so show me his new model—and I couldn't wait to see it! After reading the story on page 6 you won't want to wait either. Area history lives again in miniature.

A note from the publisher

BY BONNIE KENYON

The telephone rang early this morning and it was my neighbor Carmen Russo sharing the news that the sky was lit up with McCarthy's major winter entertainment northern lights. Knowing Rick and I rise early to begin our daily weather observations, Carmen knew she could safely call and share the good news. Rick and I immediately stepped outside and took in the moving picture! I was glad to be reminded of the wonder of living in the Alaska north.

We recently returned from visiting family and friends in Florida and thoroughly enjoyed the quality time we had with each. Daytona Beach is a wonderful place to take a vacation in the winter, that is! Besides seeing Rick Jr. and his family, we had the pleasure of having a mini-reunion with Rick Sr.'s Uncle Homer and Aunt Winnie Kenyon of Clermont, Florida. To our delight, they brought their daughter, Becky and her husband, Terry, whom we haven't seen in many years.

Long-time family friend (and WSEN subscriber) Wayne Wilber, introduced Rick and I to a new seafood restaurant and made sure we returned to one of our favorite eating establishments, Lone Star. If you ever get an opportunity to eat there, be sure to try their baked sweet potatoes. My, my...words escape me when I just *think* of that special dinner, Wayne! Thank you again.

When we returned to our cabin, we found stacks of mail waiting our attention. We dug right in and found our annual WSEN gift from Ted Cebula (George's brother). Ted has 6

issues (one year) of WSEN bound in a hardback cover for us. These make such good references and are a real keepsake for Rick and I. Thank you, Ted!

The downside of returning home was discovering that I had mistakenly mailed renewal letters to some of you whose subscriptions didn't run out until November/December 2003. Somehow I typed in the wrong year and several of you sent in your renewal fees a year early. I have done my best to return them to you and/or let you know what happened. Please forgive this secretary. I was trying so hard to get all my chores done prior to leaving here mid November that I must have forgotten what year it was! I am very sorry for the inconvenience this has caused you.

Another point I want to bring to your attention is the problem of missing issues due to our subscribers moving. If you do not contact us before we mail a WSEN, the post office usually tears off or copies the back of the paper, returning it to us with the new address printed on it. This is a nice service; however, it destroys the WSEN and, to my knowledge, you do not receive that particular paper. I try to replace it with a new copy using the address the post office gave, but this takes a lot of time before you receive your WSEN. To keep this from happening, I encourage you to please let us know you are moving, when you expect to be at your new address and, of course, the new address. Thank you for your understanding and help in this matter.

Rick and I want to apologize for any difficulties you may have had in reaching us since we

returned home mid December. The telephone service, locally and long-distance, has been disrupted most of this time. I'm happy to report that Copper Valley Telephone is in McCarthy as I type this (Dec. 27) helping to correct the problem so please try again.

I would like to welcome Maralee McMichael, of Slana, to this issue of WSEN with her article on Generator Power, page 23. When I read a slightly-altered copy of this article in the Copper Valley bi-Weekly, I related to its contents so much that I called Maralee to ask permission to run it for you. I couldn't have described any better the life-style of a woman in the bush of Alaska who relies (and is extremely grateful!) for electricity even if it is of one's own making. Thanks, Maralee and Sam Lightwood, for your permission and help to share this delightful story with our WSEN readers.

Before I run out of room, I must tell you of our enjoyable overnight at the (now) year-round Copper Center Lodge on our way back to McCarthy. Tom, wife Kim and son, Peter, Huddleston are the new hosts of the lodge and they are doing an excellent job. Our room was so cozy and warm that I decided to retire early, read my book and get a good night's rest. Rick and I decided we'd rather hit the McCarthy Road in full daylight and well rested. We were not disappointed!

You may recognize Tom from his helpful assistance at Homestead Supply in Glennallen. He and his family are offering a great service to the Copper Valley.

(Continued on page 33)

Items of Interest

BY BONNIE KENYON

The Keith Rowland family:
Yesterday (December 19th) Rick and I had a visit from three of the Rowlands Kaleb, David and Hannah. They arrived on their family's 4-wheeler. Rick had picked up their incoming mail the day before and these adventuresome young people came to fetch it. They did not come empty handed, however. With a heart to share their stash of candy bars, Hannah handed me two mounds bars for Rick and I. What a special treat, I told her. Was she sure she wanted to give us such a fine gift? I reminded her we were very far from the nearest store. With that special smile that only Hannah can produce, she said she was sure we should have them. After all, she reminded me, we were frequently sharing our candy with them. I humbly received her gift! David didn't want to be outdone in giving so he pulled two candy bars out of his pocket and proceeded to bestow his bounty as well. Thank you, Kaleb, David and Hannah, for your thoughtfulness. What a nice welcome home gift.

I invited them inside to warm up and then asked if they minded if I interviewed them for items. Taking a seat, each one contributed a nugget of news from their neck of the McCarthy woods.

Kaleb was celebrating his 11th birthday, he said, which happened to be that very day. His special birthday supper was on hold until his dad returned from a supply run to Fairbanks.

David had lost a tooth during the last couple of days, he informed me, with a wide enough grin to show off the missing gap.

I was impressed!

Hannah asked me if I recalled how she lost her last tooth. I had to admit, I did not. It seems her brother Daniel had been climbing the stairs above Hannah and accidentally kicked her in the mouth, dislodging the loose tooth. I could tell she got quite a kick out of the event and seemed proud of Daniel's assistance.

Keith, Laurie and the kids recently returned from a trip to their former home in Fairbanks in order to load up a 40' van with further belongings. Now that they have their McCarthy area home well underway, they were ready to move in. I asked Kaleb how he felt about the move from city life to McCarthy. His grin nearly matched his sister's and he assured me he likes living here better. He said they unloaded one house and began loading up another.

As I write this item, Keith is on his way in the McCarthy Road hauling a remaining piece of furniture that wife Laurie has missed immensely a Yamaha Grand Piano that will find a new home in the corner of the Rowlands' new living room. A perfect Christmas gift for Laurie, and I'm confident those ivories will warm to Laurie's accomplished touch before too long!

The Jim Miller family: The entire Miller family is home for Christmas so I expect the house is full of plenty of holiday cheer. In case you didn't receive a Christmas card from them, Jeannie told me she did up her own digital postcard with the help of Matt's wife, Julie, who is Jeannie's computer confidante. Julie celebrated a birthday a few

days ago. It is always a challenge to keep Julie's gifts wrapped, Jeannie tells me. Somehow she seems to think: if they are wrapped and if they have her name attached, it is a sure sign that the packages need opening and one (meaning Julie) need not wait until the designated day. Therefore, all gifts, whether birthday or for Christmas, are put on the endangered species

Wrangell St. Elias News

VOL. Twelve, Issue One,
January & February 2003.
Published every two months at
McCarthy, Alaska. McCarthy,
PO Box MXY, Glennallen, AK
99588-8998. Phone (907) 554-
4454. FAX (907) 554-4494

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Subscription price is \$10 for
one year in the USA. Canada
\$12.50. Other countries \$20.
Advertising rates upon request.
Deadline for publication in next
issue is February 15.

PERIODICALS POSTAGE
PAID AT GLENNALLEN,
AK. 99588.

POSTMASTER: Send
address changes to
Wrangell St. Elias News,
McCarthy, PO Box MXY,
Glennallen, AK 99588-8998.

list and guarded by other family members! I think Jeannie may have her hands full these days.

Stacie also celebrated a birthday on Dec. 6th. I asked Jeannie if Stacie is sharing her age these days but seems daughter would rather keep that to herself. Now I can tell you that Sammy, Stacie's dog, is 14 years old and knows full well what he wants for Christmas. It seems Sammy wants to move in (permanently) with dad Jim. Although Stacie has her own cabin and Sammy has full run of it, Sammy would rather shadow Jim wherever he goes. Jeannie says that when Jim leaves the house, if Sammy can't follow, he will sit on the porch watching eagerly for his hero's return. I guess Sammy leads quite a dog's life these days but is determined to live it where he chooses.

Tim Mischel: I was curious if Tim, who is presently at his mountain cabin above Kennicott, had any more snow than we did down here in the valley. I mentioned to him we only had 2 inches in mid December and he said he was able to get around on his snowmachine because the Angle Station had approximately one foot.

I asked Tim if he had any winter travel plans and he is considering a trip to San Francisco to attend another wedding. This appears to be a yearly happening in Tim's life. He says he has a lot of nephews and nieces and they are tying the knot right and left.

So, Tim, when the snow drifts get too deep for you, come on down to our neighborhood and pay us a visit. In the meantime, enjoy that snowmachining and do a little extra for us.

Meg Hunt and Ed LaChapelle: Once Meg realized we were home and ready to start

on the next issue of WSEN, she did me a huge favor she E-mailed me an item of interest. It's wonderful having neighbors like Meg who help me prime the pump, so to speak, in getting started on my assignments. Here, from Meg's own words, is she and Ed's news of an exciting fall adventure.

In September we visited the east coast of Greenland. September is the one month when the coastal waters are reliably free of sea ice (though not of icebergs!) Our ship, a refitted Russian research vessel with a Russian crew and very international leadership, sailed from Iceland across the Denmark Strait and into the fjords of Scoresby Sound, where we went ashore in Zodiac rafts to view flora, fauna, and landforms. This is definitely the way to travel. Our leader chose the itinerary based on existing weather and ice conditions, which is possible when you don't have to change hotel reservations. (There are no hotels in east Greenland anyway--nor much of any other human infrastructure.) We were very well cared for (warm bunks and great food), and there was accommodation for different levels of ability (from sitting in the raft to hiking up steep hillsides). The flora and fauna were much like that of parts of Alaska; the fjords, mountains, glaciers, and icebergs dwarfed most of those in this state. Since returning, we have had a quiet time here in McCarthy except for the earthquake (no damage) and the annual Ladies' Cookie Exchange, which Meg hosted because both Audrey and Carly were gone. We had a smaller crew this year; because of the timing of various holidays, many people were gone. However, the participants and the local bachelors all made out

like bandits on the sweets!

Neil Darish and Doug Miller: Neil and Doug, owners of McCarthy Lodge, are keeping the home fires burning for all the locals and winter visitors. They assured me the door is open for those who want a warm, comfortable visit with neighbors. Open all winter is their motto these days.

On November 23 the lodge hosted a potluck turkey dinner for radio station KCHU. The yearly fundraiser was a success, says Neil. Jurgen Ogrodnik was a big hit with his excellent, entertaining classical music which did much to encourage the 28 participants to donate \$28 more than last year.

It was classical music at its best! says Neil.

Pat Proden: Another business owner in our area is Pat Proden who I don't see very often. It is always nice to stay in touch. Pat just emailed us with his whereabouts and activities so I thought I would pass the info onto those of you who, like me, enjoy hearing from neighbors.

Pat has been in DC for the last month, he writes, working with the Peace Corps, participating in a month-long overseas training course. He has accepted a director's position of education with Peace Corps Tanzania in East Africa and plans on departing December 26th where he will be stationed in the lovely, but warm, Dar es Salaam for the next few years. Pat writes: I've heard nothing but wonderful things concerning Tanzania, its people, culture and landscape.

He invites his friends to come visit and stay in touch. Here is the address information as he sent it to me. US Peace Corps, 2140 Dar es Salaam Place, Dulles, VA. 20189-2140. E-mail pproden@tz.peacecorps.gov (after Jan. 1st).

Dave Hollis: As I was typing in Pat's item of interest the phone rang and it was Dave, whose nickname in these parts, is simply Hollis. I asked him what was new and he said he really enjoyed his stay at May Creek but was presently at Mark Wacht's place across McCarthy Creek. In about 2 weeks, he plans on moving again. This time he will house-sit Matt Smith's cabin in Kennicott where he will stay out the winter. He said May Creek was awesome but he is looking forward to spending the rest of the winter season at Kennicott. I told him he is getting a taste of various areas in the local neighborhood.

Chad Reymiller: Well, Chad is back in town and happy to see the snow accumulate finally. We now have a whopping 6 inches on the ground (Dec. 26) and snowmachining is at least possible. That is important to Chad who thoroughly enjoys this mode of transportation.

When Chad stopped by the other day I quizzed him on what he was up to. Not one to stay idle for long, Chad assured me he was well into this winter's projects building spiral stairs out of logs to reach his two lofts and putting together a log-frame bed.

The other night Keith and Laurie Rowland called on Chad for a helping hand. Keith's trip from Fairbanks produced Laurie's grand piano safe and sound. However, Keith needed help in transporting the piano from his van into the house. Chad brought along another neighbor, Dave Gutierrez, who added just the right amount of labor to complete the project.

Kurt, Peggy and Kelsey Smith: A big WELCOME to the Smith family. They have recently moved to our area and now call McCarthy their permanent year-round home. Although Kurt has

been visiting the area for the past 22 years and is not a new face to many of us, our paths had not crossed with Peggy and Kelsey until just the other night.

The Smith family have moved here from North Pole where Kurt worked for the Fairbanks Northstar Borough Parks and Recreation. His assignment was the Chena Lakes Recreational Area. His last day will be January 9, says Peggy.

Peggy is a nurse and has been in nursing for 20 years. She is now taking up a different profession—homeschooling 9 year old Kelsey.

Their home is located out the Nizina Road and their nearest neighbor is Jeremy Keller with Rick Petter and the Bay family also in their local neighborhood. I asked Peggy how far they are from town and she said, We are 15 miles from the parking lot at the Kennicott River.

Kurt is an avid dog musher and has run in the Yukon Quest. At the present time, his racing team is leased out.

Peggy is a quilter and is eagerly looking for quilting buddies.

The Smiths are planning their first major building project—a 30' x 30' log home. Keith Rowland of Rowcon Services, is waiting for the Nizina River and McCarthy Creek to freeze, at which time he will deliver the logs for the house.

We extend a warm welcome to Kurt, Peggy and Kelsey.

Congratulations! We are pleased to announce the birth of Corbin Jackson Smith who was born November 8 to Kelly and Weston Smith of Anchorage. Corbin is Kelly and Weston's first. Corbin's grandparents on Weston's side are Kenny and Donna Smith who are well known in our town.

Lane Moffitt, Betty Adams

and Kaylin: As Rick and I returned from our vacation in Florida, we passed Lane, Betty and Kaylin driving out the McCarthy Road on their way into town to visit their family and do what all of us out here like to do in Anchorage, stock up on supplies!

Lane didn't leave until he had successfully cleaned up some of our infamous McCarthy Road ice glaciers. We want to thank him for all his extra-mile work on the road so local residents and visitors can safely travel to and fro. We all appreciate you, Lane!

The other night Betty and Kaylin attended the annual Christmas celebration held at the McCarthy-Kennicott Community Church. Both mother and son came dressed for the occasion. Betty in a long dress and heels; Kaylin was sporting a bow tie! What a nice touch of culture for us McCarthyites.

Announcement! McCARTHY VENTURES, Doug Miller and Neil Darish of McCarthy Lodge are excited to announce that the first two of the planned eight storefronts will be ready for occupancy in the 2003 summer season.

One of the two rental properties is the historic Carriage House which is being restored and will be moved to a prime location in downtown McCarthy. It's new location will be next to the gift shop.

If you are hoping to begin your own business in this tourist destination, you will want to contact Doug or Neil at McCarthy Lodge. They are eager to work with you to help make your dream come true! You can visit their web site at: www.mccarthylodge.com or phone 1-907-554-4402 or Fax them at 907-554-4404.

Mother Lode Upper Camp model at the Copper Rail Depot

BY RON SIMPSON

Historic background

You have all heard of Mother Lode. It is commonly included as one of the five upper mine sites of Kennecott. They were, in order of processed copper production values: Jumbo @ 215,021 tons; Bonanza @ 194,922.9 tons; Mother Lode @ 166,038.3 tons; Erie @ 8,565.5 tons, and Glacier @ 3,526.3 tons, plus the slide ore (not ordinarily considered, but significant) @ 3,461.4 tons.

Mother Lode was developed independently of the other mines because those claims were originally held by another company. The ML was the only camp on the east side of the Bonanza Ridge facing McCarthy Creek. Ore mined from the overhead Marvelous workings was transported from the tram head at the 5,200 foot elevation to McCarthy Creek—a tram distance of 5,000 feet—for winter sledging to Shushanna Junction.

Originally the old ML company contemplated using the creek for hydro-electric power with a



dam placed at the narrow part of McCarthy Creek a few miles south of the lower camp. This was abandoned in favor of the ML power plant that still sits at McCarthy.

ML was undercapitalized. As a result it never developed the necessary mill nor an adequate means of moving the ore to the CRNW Railway terminal. Additionally, since the CRNW was owned by Kennecott, ML was at a distinct disadvantage when it

came to freight rates. In 1919 a series of avalanches wiped out the McCarthy Creek aerial tram system and power lines. That stretched the financial resources of the old company to its limits.

Kennecott and the original ML investors formed a new corporation, the Mother Lode Coalitions Mines Company, and resumed production with Kennecott holding 51 per cent of the shares. Kennecott had little interest in the Marvelous vein, which it considered relatively insignificant.

The Kennecott engineers as far back as 1914 had projected that a major copper vein extended from the Bonanza claims well into the adjacent ML claims. It was vital to obtain the rights to those claims in order to avoid a court battle.

As it turned out, the largest pocket of rich copper ore ever to be found was directly underneath the ML upper camp, but the old company did not know this. It was at the 1,250 level of Bonanza. The ML 1,252 stope was com-



ML tram terminal building destroyed in avalanche with workers probably searching for bodies, circa 1927, Simpson files

parable to the “big stope” at Jumbo, extending the life of Kennecott by many years. Kennecott connected ML to Bonanza by means of a tunnel at the 800 level to access the upper camp and provide power from the Kennecott power plant. It then drove the 1,250 crosscut, which accessed the main ore body and also made the upper ML camp obsolete. The upper camp was abandoned in 1926. It was destroyed by avalanches shortly thereafter.

An account of what likely occurred exists in the book *Legacy of the Chief*.

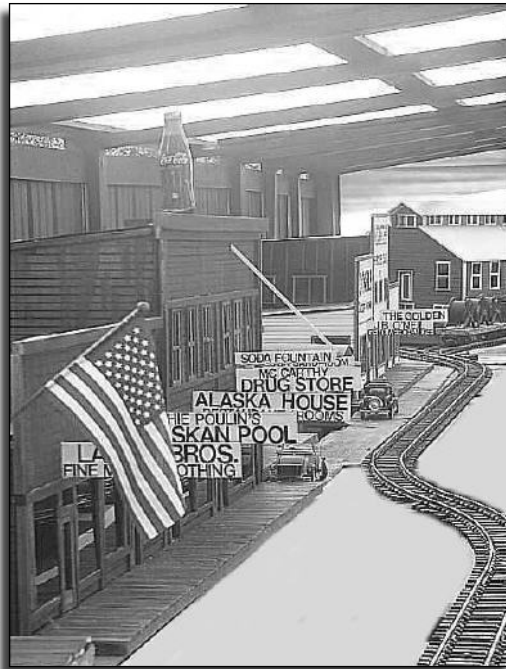
Building the model:

I have always wanted to build a model of Mother Lode in large scale. Once I had written the historic novel *Legacy of the Chief* which highlights the role of Mother Lode as a part of the Kennecott operation, this relatively unknown camp gained much greater significance to me.

When I began the historic railroad model-building project which was to include Kennecott on one end and Chitina on the other—that part of the railroad known as the “Chitina Local Branch,” I expected to build at least a part of historic McCarthy, including the ML power plant, but did not really expect to build the ML itself.

This season Johnny Galauska and I put together a new model-building and painting shop on the Copper Rail Depot complex where it would be possible to do all the things necessary to build and maintain what has become, in my opinion, a world-class historic operating model railroad. This new shop, while small, has enough room for me to draw up the plans in the large scale that I

use and do the wood-cutting and painting almost simultaneously. We have assembled all the tools and supplies necessary—after years of working on this elaborate project. Prior to this, much of the work had to be done off-site.



The two historic blocks of downtown McCarthy with ML power plant at the end. The US flag is not the correct one, however. The flag flown at that time would have had 48 stars instead of 50—or did you even notice that detail? Also, the railroad tracks only extended to the ML warehouse—not shown in this photo.

We completed the historic downtown McCarthy model, including the Kennecott River trestle, by mid-September. The part on display would include the depot two-bay locomotive repair and storage barn, the drug store block, the Golden block, the ML power plant and another interesting building which turned out to be the ML railroad warehouse.

The ML railroad warehouse

Both of these structures were painted in the same green-with-white-trim that ML had used originally. I found out about the ML railroad warehouse by phoning Al Swalling, to ask him about that particular structure. He confirmed the color and ownership. Al was in charge of maintenance of all the railroad structures except the bridges along all 196 miles of the railway during the 1930s. He has proved to be an incredible asset, holding a wealth of memories that has proved invaluable in moving this project along.

It seemed only logical to complete the circuit by including the ML upper camp, but where could I place so large a model? A space directly above and to the left of the model of the Kennecott mill appeared ideal. It was large enough for up to 12 feet of model and the buildings could be placed high enough to give the impression of an upper camp mine site.

This would serve the model well because many people confuse the Kennecott mill for the actual mine site, which it is not. Those sites are all at least three miles away, and 2,500 to 3,900 feet in elevation above Kennecott. Now I would finally have one of the mine sites on display so people could better visualize the true complexity of Kennecott.

ML is an ideal upper camp for model-building purposes—not too large, but it does include a barracks complex, a tram terminal, a boiler room, small office building, and a mine adit snow shed, including a long waste-ore tram, with a blacksmith shop next to the high-grade tram. Like all the other sites it was

built along steep slopes with barely enough room to support the large structures. It literally hung off a mountainside. I made no attempt to portray the mountainside, but when one looks up at this model, the mind tends to fill in the details.

We completed the historic McCarthy model project on September 20th and immediately began planning the new ML project. I took the few historic photos I had and did some calculations for size of the structures. Because no photos of the north face of the complex have ever surfaced, I made some decisions as to the likely construction of that side and proceeded with the drawings. These were completed in two days. As with all the other buildings, we built this one with 1/4 inch plywood and plexi-glass windows. The camp had no painted buildings. Some were tarpaper-covered. We treated them accordingly. The others were bare wood. These are varnished to a rich color. The support structure under the tram

terminal is treated in a rich, dark tone, as is the trestle-work under the waste ore rail tram-way. All the other supports are in a light color, the same as the tram terminal, large barrack, and the snow sheds and blacksmith shop. I wired this complex

with internal and external lighting—just like all the other models we have built.

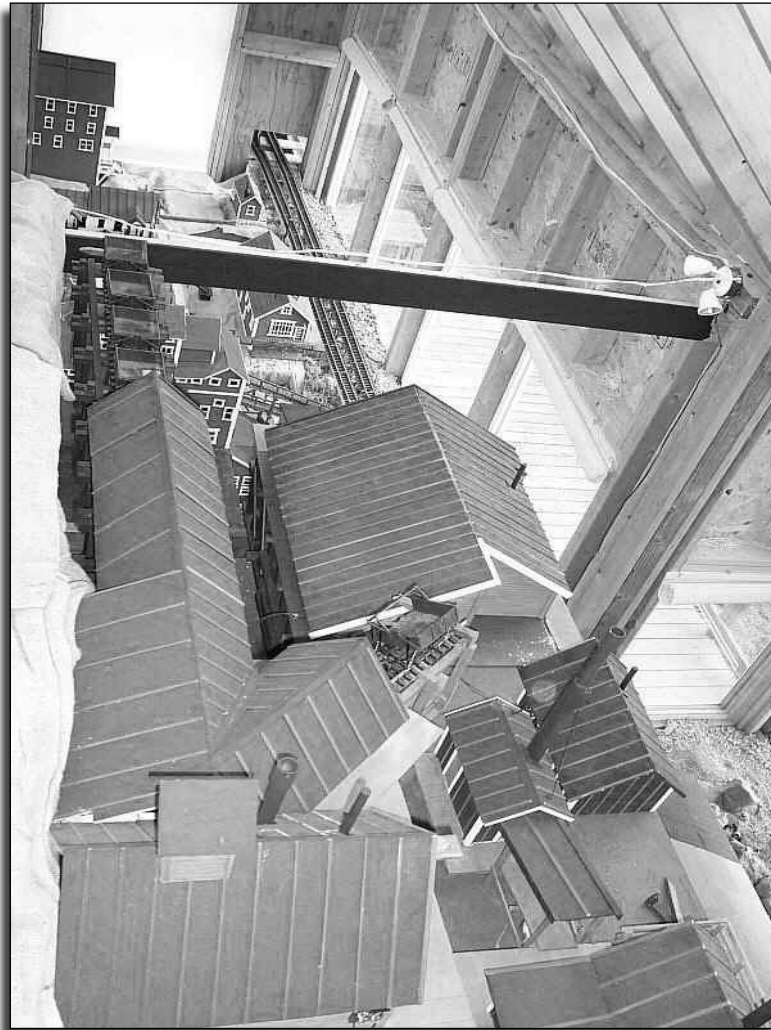
It is quite a process to build models such as this, especially when there are no existing pro-

company, although the tram head structure is quite substantial and appears to be a Kennecott rebuild. The boiler plant was definitely a late Kennecott addition—probably because they more than doubled the capacity

of the man-camp from perhaps 35 originally to a 75-man camp. This was an impressive camp worthy of the name Kennecott.

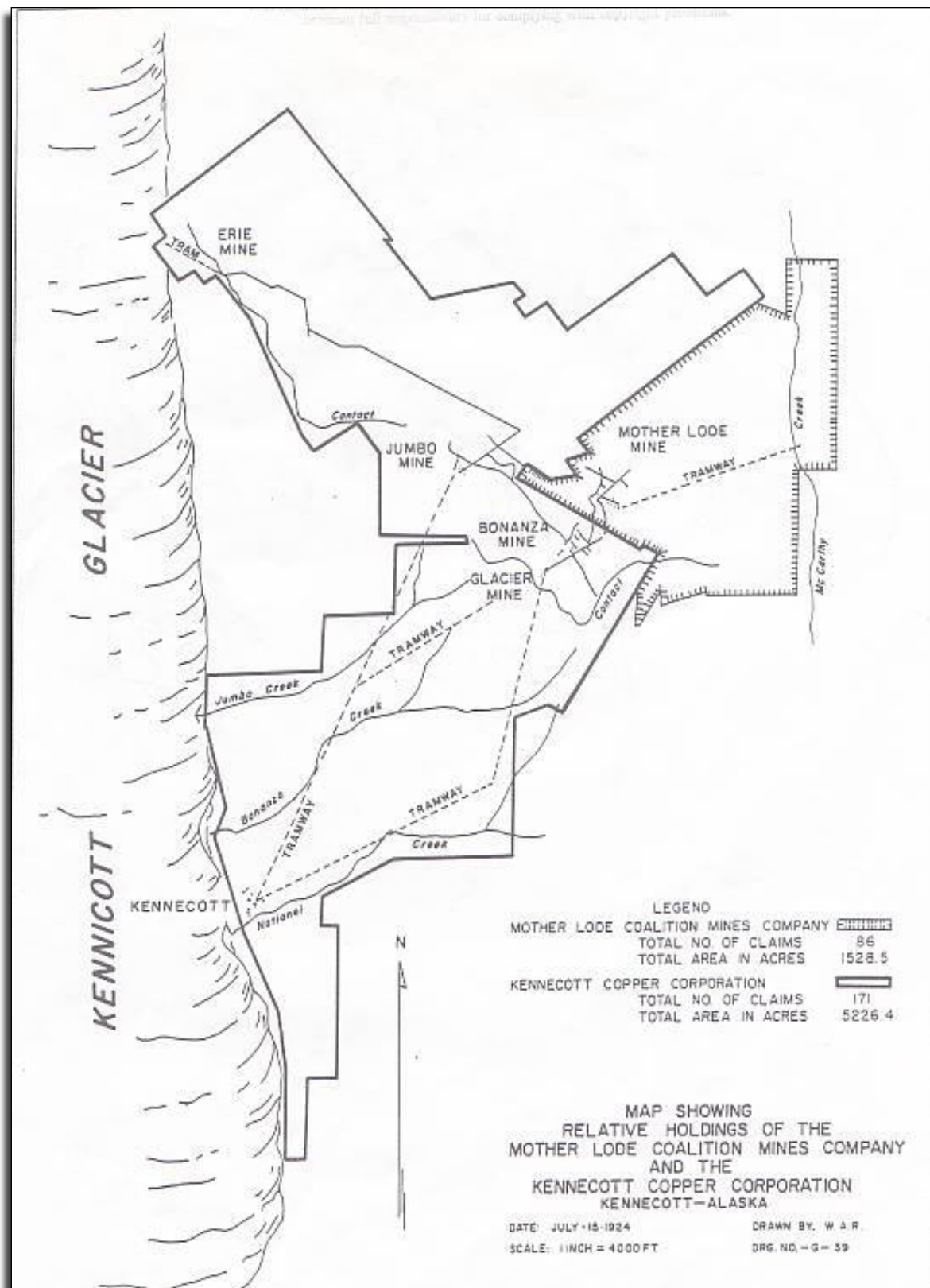
The final product was completed in early November. Because of a late winter, it was still warm enough to install the model in place above the mill where it now sits on display. Johnny Galauska did the wood work, plexi-glass cutting and placement and all the painting and varnishing. I took his pieces and did the assembly work.

This model now exists as a permanent part of the rich history of Kennecott and its Copper River & Northwestern Rail-



Mother Lode upper camp complex model with blacksmith shop and long snow shed adit shed to the left, the boiler building and office in the center with the larger structure that was the McCarthy Creek upper tram terminal. Just beyond—several feet below—is the mill model and tracks leading into Kennecott—taken in the Copper Rail Depot annex building.

totypes. While constructing the barrack I realized that the upper one was of a typical Kennecott design. That would have been the part that Kennecott built when it expanded into ML in 1920. The remaining buildings were probably built by the old



Chitina Maintenance Station back in operation

BY RICK KENYON

One of Frank Murkowski's first moves as newly-elected governor of Alaska was to restore funding for highway maintenance stations that had been closed last year under Governor Tony Knowles's administration. The Chitina Station was among those re-opened.

Area Maintenance Manager George LeVasseur said that \$185,850 was placed in the budget to open the Chitina maintenance station and refill the positions at last year's level.

Both Sam Taylor and Marty Helkenn plan to return there next week, said LeVasseur, and we will hire another person to fill the

vacancy left by Cal Datta's retirement.

LeVasseur said they also received \$253,500 to restore positions, supplies and equipment that were cut at several stations in the Southcentral area. Positions were lost at Cordova, Valdez, Nelchina, Paxson and Northway. These positions will be filled this coming year.

The Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF) received \$180,000 to resume maintenance on several Northern Region roads that were dropped last July 1st. The Denali Highway is included in this list. They plan to begin opening the

Denali in April.

Early December brought cold weather to the McCarthy Road area after a month of warm temperatures and almost four inches of rain. Road glaciers rapidly grew to the point that several people got stuck and had to be towed out. Local Chamber of Commerce grader operator, Lane Moffit, spent two days working on the road, tearing out glaciers from McCarthy to Chokosna. For the past two years, DOT&PF workers from Chitina helped keep the road open from Chokosna to Chitina. Sam Taylor told us he has received permission to do the same this year.

DOT reveals plans

BY DOUG VOLLMAN

(Reprinted with permission from the Copper Valley Bi-Weekly)

On December 3rd at Prince William Sound Community College in Glennallen, the Alaska State Department of Transportation (DOT) hosted an informal meeting outlining the upcoming and tentative DOT construction projects for the Copper Valley. The meeting, hosted by DOT planners Paul Prusak and Judy Chapman and attended by only 4 locals, was one of a series of meetings statewide to hear the concerns of residents and explain project planning, funding and implementation.

The Copper Valley area construction projects planned for 2003 include the construction of a bike path from Chitina to One Mile Lake, the Glennallen bike path, and the Glenn Highway

rehabilitation (MO 173-189), according to a list made available at the meeting. A major project to renovate the Caribou Creek area (MP 100-109) on the Glenn Highway is also planned.

When asked about the maintenance plans for the McCarthy Road and the Denali Highway, Mr. Prusak said that with a new administration priorities may change. He also said that the Copper River Road beyond O'Brien Creek, that experienced landslides in 2001 and was closed last year, will probably not be reopened this year. It will be a major project to stabilize the area above the landslides and DOT is still working on a plan that will satisfy the Army Corp of Engineers and the Native Corporations that own the land

adjacent to the right-of-way.

Judy Chapman explained the funding sources for DOT projects and maintenance. She said that much of the construction money comes from the federal gas tax which goes into the federal highway trust fund. Most states are required to fund 20% of the costs of projects but because of the vast amounts of federal land in Alaska we are required to fund only 10-15% of the costs of construction projects. According to Chapman the federal government provides virtually no money for maintenance of our highways although Alaska does receive some funding for pavement preventative maintenance.

There are four funding programs that provide capital project money: the National

Highway System; the Community Transportation Program; the Trails and Recreation Access for Alaska; and the Alaska Highway System. Because the state constitution does not allow dedicated funding most of the DOT maintenance funds are budgeted annually by the state legislature from the state general funds.

One of the four locals attending the meeting, a National Park Service employee, asked about the McCarthy Road environmental impact statement. Mr. Prusak said that it would

take 2-3 years to complete it.

Joe Hart of Chitina Native Corporation expressed his concerns over the closure of the Chitina maintenance station. He said he would like to see the Edgerton Highway resurfaced and the Chitina airport lighted and paved for medical emergencies. There are safety concerns in the Chitina area and poor maintenance affects the Chitina Native Corporation's ability to do business.

Also presented at the meeting was the Copper Basin

Area Needs List, a list of projects proposed but not necessarily funded. These projects include the improvement of the Klutina Lake Road, the development of a Copper River boat launch in Chitina, major improvements to the McCarthy Road, the Old Edgerton Highway, the Nabesna Road, and many segments of the Glenn and Richardson Highways.

For more information on Copper Valley DOT projects contact Jerry Rafson, area planner at 1-888-PLANDOT.

Fran to Frank: No problems at WRST

BY RICK KENYON

In a letter dated November 6, 2002, National Park Service (NPS) Director Fran Mainella told (then) Senator Frank Murkowski that although residents of the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park (WRST) did have some concerns about access, there really is no problem since the NPS will soon be working on a backcountry management plan.

As noted in the report, access issues were the primary topics residents wanted to discuss with our team, said Director Mainella. These discussions are timely, she continued, as several of our Alaska parks are beginning backcountry management planning efforts, including

Wrangell-St. Elias.

The report mentioned by Ms Mainella was signed by NPS Regional Director Robert Arnberger. It told of informal meetings that were held in Glennallen, Tok and Slana, as well as a lodge owner on the Nabesna Road. Park access for recreation and subsistence purposes was the number one issue raised by the residents during our meetings, wrote Arnberger.

Also mentioned is the fact that the 13-million-acre park is served by only 13 officially recognized trails, four of which are in need of immediate attention. No mention was made that a recent trail grant

obtained by NPS was used to repair a trail outside of the park, on BLM land.

Arnberger told Mainella that the team was not able to visit McCarthy, but that the McCarthy Road and Kennicott River Bridge were under the jurisdiction and management of the State of Alaska. He said that WRST Superintendent Gary Candelaria is preparing a briefing paper, which will outline associated issues including jurisdiction and access related matters. WSEN has requested a copy of that paper.

WSEN tried to contact Mr. Arnberger but he was unavailable until after the holidays.

Common looking people are the best in the world: that is the reason the Lord makes so many of them. Abraham Lincoln

Liberty must at all hazards be supported. We have a right to it, derived from our Maker. But if we had not, our fathers have earned and bought it for us, at the expense of their ease, their estates, their pleasure, and their blood. John Adams

NPS announces plans for walk-in campground

BY RICK KENYON

The National Park Service (NPS) has announced plans to build a walk-in campground near McCarthy. The campground would be located about one mile from the McCarthy townsite, and one-third mile from the McCarthy airport.

Plans call for 30 campsites (tent camping) and include vault toilets, bear resistant trash receptacles and food storage boxes, water and food preparation areas. Vehicles would not be allowed.

The 13 million acre

Wrangell-St. Elias National Park has only two campgrounds, both privately owned and operated. NPS had opened a primitive campsite several years ago at mile 58.5 on the McCarthy Road right across the road from the Glacier View campground run by Chris Epton. The NPS site was closed to overnight camping two years ago as a result of complaints that it was unfairly competing with the private sector.

Although there are no established commercial campgrounds east of the

Kennicott River, NPS is considering contracted management operations of the new campground by the private sector.

The Environmental Assessment is available online at www.nps/wrst or copies may be obtained by contacting the park at Post Office Box 439, Copper Center, AK 99573. Comments on the Environmental Assessment may be sent by mail to Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve at the above address until February 20, 2003.

NPS Incidental Business Permit program to be replaced

BY RICK KENYON

Incidental business permits (IBP) may soon be a thing of the past. New regulations proposed by the National Park Service (NPS) would replace the current system with a new class of permits called commercial use authorizations.

There are two types of commercial use authorizations being proposed: incidental activity commercial use authorizations and in-park commercial use authorizations. The types of commercial activities that may be authorized under commercial use authorizations are similar in many respects to the type of activities that are authorized by concession contracts. Generally, however, commercial use authorizations, unlike concession contracts, do not authorize the

construction of improvements in a park area by a holder, and, except in limited circumstances, require that the services provided by the holder begin and end outside of a park area.

Both types of proposed commercial use authorizations are quite limited in that gross receipts of the business may not exceed \$25,000 per year. If business revenues exceed that amount, they will be required to operate under a concessions contract.

Several people have raised concerns about the proposed changes. They believe that current IBP users will have a more difficult time getting the new permits, at a higher cost than present, with greater restrictions and reporting requirements.

This proposal was published

in the Federal Register: November 27, 2002 (Volume 67, Number 229) pages 70899-70904. (If you have internet access go to the Federal Register page, <http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/multidb.cgi> click on proposed rules, and enter the date and the search words commercial use authorization.)

Written comments on the rulemaking must be received on or before January 27, 2003. Written comments for the rulemaking should be sent to Cynthia Orlando, Concessions Program Manager, National Park Service, 1849 C Street, NW., (2410), Washington, DC 20240. Fax: (202) 371-2090.

Email:
WASO_Regulations@nps.gov.

Backcountry Management Plan underway for WRST

BY RICK KENYON

Alaska Regional Director Robert Arnberger has announced that the Backcountry Management Planning process for Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve (WRST) is underway. Regional scoping workshops were held in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Juneau and Seattle during the month of November. Gates of the Arctic and Glacier Bay parks are also developing management plans for the backcountry, and were included in the workshops.

What is backcountry? you might ask. According to Arnberger, Backcountry is that undeveloped national park and/or preserve land that does not have major facilities or roads. Sounds like most of WRST!

Area residents will want to be involved in this process as it concerns a number of areas of interest:

- " Snowmachine use.
- " Airplane landings.

- " Boating.
- " Access.
- " Hiking, skiing, camping and river running.
- " Cabins and their uses.

Local community workshops are being planned, but no dates have been set at this time. To get on the mailing list contact Vicki Snitzler, WRST, PO Box 439, Copper Center, AK 99573 or phone (907)822-5234.

The RS 2477 question

BY RICK KENYON

One of the issues that many people who live in or who visit the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park (WRST) are concerned about is access. Although the park is considerably larger than the nation of Switzerland, it has only two access roads and few trails. In fact, according to Regional Director Ron Arnberger there are only 13 officially recognized trails (approximately 100 miles in total length) in the entire park! And as we saw recently in the Slana area, trails that are not officially recognized by the National Park Service (NPS) can be closed at the discretion of the superintendent of the park.

The General Management Plan for WRST identifies 107 trails as possible RS 2477 rights-of-ways. (One of these is the McCarthy Road.) Why, then, does the NPS only recognize 13 trails? We asked WRST Superintendent Gary Candelaria that question. He responded with a note from the Chief of Lands in

the NPS Regional Office:

Although the State has made partial assertions that many old travel routes are RS 2477 rights-of-way, none has yet been established as a valid and actual right-of-way. Where a route crosses federal lands, validation would have to be done administratively by the managing agency or by a federal court. That has not occurred on any of them. So, as far as the NPS (USA) is concerned, no such rights-of-way are recognized or currently exist.

In order to understand the NPS position on these trails, some background on RS 2477 is necessary.

Just what are RS 2477 rights-of-way?

(The following information is from the Western Counties Resources Policy Institute of Utah, web site <http://www.rs2477roads.com/>.)

An RS 2477 Primer:

A brief analysis of a one

sentence law.

RS 2477 (which is an abbreviation of "Revised Statutes 2477") was passed in 1866 and is a very short law, only one sentence long. It states, in its entirety, that "the right-of-way for the construction of highways over public lands, not reserved for public uses, is hereby granted."

Defining some of the terms and phrases in this law clarifies the intent of Congress in passing this law which was designed to facilitate the settlement of the western frontier.

"Right-of-way"

"Right-of-way" means a bundle of rights widely recognized in common law and explicitly in many statutes and court decisions which govern access across a piece of property. In the case of 2477 rights-of-way, the rights are usually held by county government and apply to travel to and across federally-managed lands. The bundle of rights include the ability to travel

freely, maintain and improve the road under certain conditions, and otherwise manage its use.

"Construction"

The courts have interpreted "construction" to include a broad array of activities, from constructing a road or trail merely by the periodic passage of foot or animal traffic to more specific and formal road building activities. These interpretations make it clear that the definition was not limited only to actually altering the land by a mechanical device. Indeed, some of the "interstate highways" of the 19th century, such as the Oregon Trail, the Santa Fe Trail, the Mormon Trail and others were created only by the continuous passage of wagons and animals and not by mechanical means. It is obvious that Congress clearly intended to grant a right-of-way for such roads to local government as an aid to opening the West for settlement.

"Highway"

Similarly, the definition of the term "highway" is broad ranging. Several legal dictionaries and court decisions dating from the 19th century make it clear that the term "highway" not only included frequently-traveled, periodically-maintained roads but also included numerous other kinds of public ways, among them carriage-ways, bridle-ways, footways, bridges, turnpike roads, and even railroads, canals, ferries, or navigable rivers. The essential element of the definition is that whatever the transportation mode, the public has the right to come and go at will.

"Public Lands"

The term "public lands" used in the law was defined very

similarly to what we understand it to mean today. It meant, simply, land owned by the federal government. A 2477 right-of-way could be established only over land owned by the federal government which was not otherwise restricted or "reserved."

"Reserved"

The term "reserved" is commonly understood to mean setting aside a portion of public land as a national park, national forest, military reservation or for a similar facility. If the right-of-way grant predated the reservation of the land for one of these uses, it still remained a valid property right.

"Is hereby granted"

The term "is hereby granted" is particularly crucial to understanding this law and the 2477 rights-of-way controversy. By including this phrase, Congress made 2477 a self-executing law. When the minimal conditions were met, the right-of-way grant occurred. That grant is a legitimate property right, held by the state or local government for the public.

Because RS 2477 was a self-executing law, it was not necessary to apply for the right-of-way. Its transfer to the local governmental unit required no action by any land management agency. Congress did not even require that any paperwork be sent to the federal management agency specifying what right-of-way grants were accepted by local governments. The grant by Congress was nonetheless valid.

What is constructing a highway?

The specific requirements for "constructing a highway" and the

specific details of the grant, such as the width of the right-of-way, were defined by the laws of the state in which the right-of-way was located.

This method of granting rights-of-way across federal land was in effect from passage of RS 2477 in 1866 until the passage in 1976 of the Federal Land Policy Management Act (FLPMA) which repealed RS 2477. In FLPMA, Congress provided a new mechanism for the granting of rights-of-way across public lands from 1976 onward. However, in passing FLPMA, Congress made it absolutely clear that all pre-existing rights-of-way which had been granted during the preceding 110 years under RS 2477 were still valid and were in no way were affected by the passage of FLPMA. This meant that while no new rights-of-way grants would be made under 2477 after 1976, all the thousands of grants previously made were still valid.

Much of the recent controversy over RS 2477 rights-of-way stems from efforts initially by environmental activists but joined more recently by the Department of Interior to alter after the fact or otherwise try to infringe on the property rights granted to state and local governments in trust for the public.

(The following information is from the Alaska Department of Natural Resources or DNR)

1998 Legislation

In May 1998, the Alaska State Legislature passed a new law (AS 19.20.400) entitled "An Act Relating to State Rights-of-Way," that declares that more than 600 routes have been accepted as RS 2477 rights-of-way by public use and mandates that DNR record them in the

respective recording districts. This bill was signed into law as Chapter 26, SLA 1998 (AS 19.30.400).

In general, this statute:

- " identifies DNR as manager of these routes, unless transferred to DOTPF;
- " acknowledges that there may be other qualifying routes not yet identified by the project;
- " indemnifies the state from liability resulting from a person's use of an RS 2477 right-of-way;
- " outlines procedures and restrictions for vacating RS 2477 rights-of-way.

In addition, the legislative act mandated the recordation of the 602 routes listed in the bill as qualifying RS 2477 rights-of-way.

Whether or not an RS 2477 route is recorded, the right-of-way still exists and encumbers the property it crosses. The original RS 2477 route may be re-routed or eradicated only through an easement vacation process. By statute, the Legislature must approve an application to vacate an RS 2477 if no reasonable, comparable alternate right-of-way or means of access exists. However, if an alternate means of access exists, then the state may approve the vacation.

One example of a well-documented RS 2477 route

within the WRST boundaries is the McCarthy-Green Butte Trail. This is listed officially as RST 135 McCarthy-Green Butte Trail.

DNR describes it this way:

Situated in the Wrangell Mountains, the McCarthy-Green Butte Trail heads northeast from McCarthy, following McCarthy Creek roughly 15 miles to the Mother Lode Mine. The route is shown on the USGS McCarthy B-5, B-6 and C-5 map. It was referenced in early ARC documents as 57E. The DOT Trails Inventory depicts RST 135 on map 67 (McCarthy quadrangle) as trail 16.

Constructed by a mining firm, the route was flooded in 1927, after which the ARC took over repairs and maintenance. According to ARC documents, the route was passable by motor vehicles. Other documentation includes ARC annual reports, USGS bulletins, a DNR map, and mining history.

Of course many of us here in McCarthy have seen actual photos of cars driving the route, back when it was maintained with bridges and tunnels. There is no question as to its validity under RS 2477.

Another well documented RS 2477 route is the Jake s Bar trail, which is part of the much longer Nizina-Bremner Sled Road (RST 155).

This trail begins approximately 8 miles southeast of

McCarthy, just south of the Nizina River, near the Baultoff Lakes. It runs southwest roughly 35 miles to the historic settlement of Bremner on Golconda Creek, the former site of mining activity and the current site of an airstrip. The route is shown on USGS McCarthy A-5, A-6, A-7, B-5 and B-6 maps. In ARC documents, it is referenced as 61F.

Dating from the early 1920s, miners used this tractor trail to access the Bremner region. Historical documentation includes ARC annual reports, USGS bulletins, and a National Park Service publication.

There is much interest in this trail, as it gives winter access to routes leading to a number of places of interest in the Chitina Valley. The trail has suffered in recent years from the early snowfalls which caused many of the trees along the trail border to bend or break, effectively blocking the trail. DNR has a program by which snowmachine registration fee money is distributed for trail work. The Jake s Bar portion of this trail is a likely candidate for a trail grant.

Just the day after Christmas, the Department of the Interior announced new regulations which may make it easier to validate RS 2477 claims. If so, what a nice gift to the people who live in or visit WRST!

To me, old age is always fifteen years older than I am. Bernard Baruch

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Long Lake field report 2002

BY CLIFF COLLINS

Nest Box #81: 6-14-02

Squirrel activity in this box this morning. Dozens of swallows were flying around the entrance, all crying. A squirrel came out carrying an egg. Josh shot it. The squirrel got only one egg. The rest hatched.

Nest Box #64: 6-19-02

On rechecking this nest this morning we found the female had 6 eggs, but strangely, directly beside her and facing the same direction, was the male. Completely unruffled, but dead. Josh removed the dead bird, the female merely just scooped over and resumed her duty.

Nest Box #62: 6-25-02

We found a dead female swallow on her nest brooding her eggs. Josh removed the dead bird and the eggs.

Nest box #41

Again we had a dead female sitting on 6 eggs. We removed the dead bird but left the eggs. Sometimes, in the past, we have found that the male will continue the brooding.

This nest box is a little 4" piece of beach-combed bamboo that we have fashioned into a place for black capped chickadees. Today as we approached, 6 fledgling chickadees almost exploded out of the tiny nest box. I call this our wild half-acre because when a willow falls down and the

brush gets thick, we leave it like it is, just as nature intended. The chickadees love it. Chickadees nest 2 to 3 weeks earlier than swallows and I always forget that.

Before we got up this morning there was much rattling noise in the stove. When Josh opened the stove door there was a swallow inside. (The stove was cold.) It had apparently gone down the stove pipe to get warm since it was a cold night. Josh placed a band on her leg and gently released her. She appeared to be much frightened but unharmed. However, we found her dead down the airfield late this afternoon.

Nest Box #70

We checked this box again today; the birds have fledged. They left behind one fully feathered dead swallow plus one infertile egg. Numerous swallows have left behind one or two dead birds nearly all the runts that were left behind.

The grizzlies: We have a grizzly bear sow with two one year old mischievous and badly spoiled cubs interesting things! They go down the line of posts, knock the bird house down and smash it, sometimes even breaking off the post. Some of the bird boxes have been smashed 3 or 4 times. Once they wanted to see what was inside the greenhouse, so they just tear

the whole end out, play a few exciting games inside, then make a big hole and go out the other end.

Phil just made a fast trip to Long Lake and reported all the bird houses near the lake were torn down. Replacing these will be the first project in the spring.

This is living in Alaska! We like it.

Grandson Joshua has become an efficient and expert bird bander and helper. For this I am grateful and also for the help of Rene Welty who also is gaining much banding experience.

Previous years I have included in this field report a list of birds banded and the band numbers. To some this may be boring. It is available if wanted.

Death loss to adults and particularly to fledglings is much greater than normal, probably due to cool weather during the breeding and nesting period.

Our birds usually migrate by July 15, which many did this season migrating instinct overcoming the mother instinct. Consequently many babies starved.

Banded 13 females

25 birds carried old bands

Average 4.9 eggs per nest

Average 2.9 birds fledged per nest

Much to be regretted indeed would it be, were we to neglect the means and depart from the road which Providence has pointed us to, so plainly; I cannot believe it will ever come to pass. The Great Governor of the Universe has led us too long and too far...to forsake us in the midst of it...We may, now and then, get bewildered; but I hope and trust that there is good sense and virtue enough left to recover the right path. George Washington

MCCARTHY-KENNICOTT COMMUNITY CHURCH CELEBRATES

BY BONNIE KENYON

McCarthy: On Monday, December 23rd, 20 people arrived at the McCarthy-Kennicott Community Church to celebrate the Christmas season.

A recent snowfall giving town 6 inches of cover and a frozen river and creek provided several attendees reason to warm up their snowmachines. One adventuresome family (Kurt, Peggy and Kelsey Smith) traveled at least 14 miles to help sing in the holiday.

Hot chili and a pot of moose stew (thanks to Laurie Rowland) welcomed the winter travelers and before long everyone was warmed up enough to hit the high notes that accompany most of our favorite Christmas carols.

Rick Kenyon opened up the program by reading several quotes from people such as Charles Dickens, Francis Cardinal Spellman and Ronald Reagan. This quote by Dickens brought a show of humor from the audience: It is good to be children sometimes, and never better than at Christmas, when its Mighty Founder was a child Himself.

What better way to begin the festivities than to sing Happy Birthday to Jesus. A perfect introduction to the reading of the Christmas Story by Carmen Russo.

Interwoven between the Scripture verses were favorite

carols led by Bonnie Kenyon which supported the true meaning of Christmas.

This year's annual celebration was closed with a resounding keyboard rendition of *Deck the Halls* by Laurie Rowland.

Desserts were served downstairs afterwards.

Another Christmas in McCarthy is over, but the meaning of the season will never end. It He is eternal and He Jesus came to earth to give life everlasting to all who will just believe and receive. You are the reason there is a season called Christmas!

No snow too deep or ice too slick

The story begins with Copper Valley Telephone Technician Russ Jindra monitoring the McCarthy switch the week of December 23rd, 2002. Russ noticed intermittent echo failures occurring and projected that we were about to have a major failure of the DS1 circuit board.

Russ discussed the situation with his foreman, Terre Foster and they made the decision to obtain a replacement DS1 board. As luck would have it, they were able to locate another board and have it on hand the day it failed.

Knowing the McCarthy residents were out of service,

Terre contacted everyone he knew in an attempt to charter a plane to respond to the outage. No plane was available and rather than have the residents suffer through a long outage, the decision was made to drive to McCarthy.

A winter drive to McCarthy is not a picnic and anyone unfamiliar with the area or winter conditions shouldn't try it. Russ and Terre braved 14 below zero temperatures and snow as deep as a truck's running boards. Their truck broke through ice overflows on three occasions and they managed to free the vehicle each time to complete the drive to McCarthy in four and a half hours. All together it was a long

thirteen-hour day for Terre and Russ before they returned home to their families that evening.

Phil Simpson, who is the Glennallen Superintendent for Copper Valley Telephone, was asked for a comment concerning the outage. It would have been easy to just wait for a plane to become available, said Phil, but that's not being responsible.

I'm extremely proud of the Glennallen staff, he continued, and the professional response of Terre and Russ during this situation.

Just Some of the People you Know at Copper Valley Telephone Cooperative.

THE CHITINA LEADER

January 1911 February

DO NOT WASTE YOUR TIME IN FIGURING WHY A BLACK HEN LAYS A WHITE EGG – BUT GET BUSY AND GET AFTER THE EGG

EVERYTHING IN READINESS FOR BUILDING OF MORE BRIDGES

Trains are now running over the steel bridge which spans the Kuskulana gorge, and the hum of construction work will be heard from now on toward the Bonanza mine.

The cantilever span was connected Friday and after lowering it to place, the travelers were taken down, which required three days to complete.

Most of the riveting was finished on Thursday evening, and about thirty steel workers given their release. The balance of the men remaining to clean up and put everything in shipshape finish today. Bridge Superintendent A. C. O'Neill and all the men have come down and leave on Sunday's train for Cordova.

P. J. O'Brien, superintendent of bridges for the construction company, had four of the high bents next to the steel on the shore span of the bridge across the gorge, up on Friday evening, and had only three more to

put in, which could be completed today.

The construction trains can now begin hauling rails and ties across the gorge and the work will be pushed as rapidly as possible, for there are still a number of smaller bridges to be constructed, Supt. O'Brien stating that there was in the neighborhood of eighty days' work on bridges between Kuskulana and the Bonanza mine.

All the equipment of the bridge will be stored at Kuskulana and a watchman put in charge. Supt. O'Neill states that there is about \$30,000 worth of machinery and equipment now at the bridge, and the Katalla Company considers it a matter of economy to store the material where it is, for should they build or start the work on the Copper River crossing near Chitina, as is generally expected will be done, it would not pay to transport the material to Cordova. It will all be needed, and more.

Mr. O'Neill estimates that it will require about a \$100,000 equipment to build the bridge at the Copper

River crossing. First of all, a large power plant must be constructed before the caisson work can begin, and a first-class electric light system installed. The work on the Kuskulana bridge was greatly retarded owing to the absence of electric lights. Mr. O'Neill succeeded in borrowing a few acetylene lights from Superintendent Murchison, but stated that had he any idea the work would have been so prolonged, an electric light plant would have been installed in the beginning.

Nothing definite can yet be learned. If an appropriation has been made by the stockholders in the road, for the building of the bridge across the Copper, but the prevailing opinion seems to be that the caisson work will at least start, though it is not probable that steel construction will begin on the bridge before 1912.

The Kuskulana bridge is, and no doubt will be, the only steel bridge ever constructed in Alaska in the winter time. The peril to the workmen when the thermometer ranges below zero and the many difficulties

attending steel construction in the winter time are too great to be again considered. That there was no one killed or badly injured on the Kuskulana work reflects great credit on the officials, and on the workmen for their caution, courage and fortitude in holding out and completing what was considered by many to be an impossible task in the dead of winter.

Jan. 7

HAPPENINGS AT CHITINA

The past week was a tough one as far as the weather was concerned. Wednesday night the thermometer was reported to be all the way from 42 to 51 degrees below zero. The wind was blowing huge snow drifts all along the track from mile 28 to Tiekel several days this week, but beyond the old snow plow being a few hours late in throwing it off the track, the train pulled in as usual.

SUPT. MURCHISON RETURNS AND WILL RUSH CONSTRUCTION WORK

Superintendent Samuel Murchison arrived in Cordova on the steamer Alameda last night, and will leave for the front on Monday morning's train to rush the construction of the railroad from camp 149 to Kennecott. A force of about 300 men will be employed on this work and as there are a number of wooden bridges to build twenty-seven men were brought in on the Alameda to be added to the present force.

The steel is now laid to mile 154 and the work is progressing at the rate of about a mile a day. Bridge Superintendent P. J. O'Brien is busy decking the Kuskulana bridge, which he will complete the first of next week, after which he will take his bridge crew, which are housed in a portable camp, and go on to the other bridges. The workmen string about a mile of ties ahead of the steel each day, and by night the crew has laid the steel, and the portable camps are right on the job awaiting the tired men for their supper and rest. The material for the short track spur, which is to be constructed at mile 154, arrived and was ready to put in on Friday. A number of bridge carpenters and workmen have recently gone out to work, and those who have been at the front since the completion of the bridge

report great activity in the last stretch of railroad construction.

Jan. 14

GILHINA BRIDGE COMPLETED

On Thursday evening bridge Superintendent P. J. O'Brien finished the 1,000 foot crossing over the Gilhina River at mile 160. This breaks all previous records on the road in wooden crossings as the bridge was started on the 27th of January and finished within eight days.

When the news was received in Chitina, the general expressions heard from old-time railroaders were such as "going some, isn't it?" and "That Pat O'Brien is sure some whirlwind and a rotary thrown in, when it comes to putting in bents and rapid work."

"Call it what you want to," said a railroad official, "the work is nothing short of marvelous, when weather conditions and all are taken into consideration. For the past two weeks the thermometer has been ranging between 30 and 60 degrees below zero, and at times during the extremely cold hours, trouble was experienced by the carpenters in driving the bridge bolts, which split the heavy timbers like a cake of ice."

The foundations for a number of the bents had to be blasted and piling driven, which of course, took time

and care and working in frozen ground during winter is no picnic.

Superintendent O'Brien is anxious to get in the crossings as rapidly as possible so that there will be no delay in the laying of the steel, and, judging from the record made on this crossing, which is the largest and most difficult of any between Chitina and the Bonanza mine he will have completed all the bridges much sooner than even his closest friends who know his ability, dared or hoped to expect.

The work of decking and laying the steel over the bridge began yesterday and the first of the week will see the steel being laid on the other side of the Gilhina, at the rate of a mile or better each day for a distance of twelve miles before another crossing is reached.

Feb. 4

WORK ON PIERS TO START THIS SPRING

Chief Engineer Hawkins, of the Copper River & Northwestern Railway, has returned from a trip to New York, where he attended a meeting of the officials of the Alaska Syndicate and says that from now on work is to be rushed on the railroad and that shipment of ore will be made from the Bonanza copper mine at Kennicott during the latter part of April. A greatly increased force of men will be employed this summer in

ballasting the road and bringing it up to grade.

Mr. Hawkins says that the piers will be put in this summer for the Chitina bridge crossing the Copper River. Just what other work will be undertaken he did not state, but predicted that the mining industry would be given an impetus as a result of the large number of operators and prospectors who would visit this section in the early spring.

The terminal improvements at Cordova including the erection of coal bunkers, etc., will be dependent upon the opening of the coal fields.

OLD RUSSIAN COINS FOUND ON C. R. & N. W.

The Russians were the first whites that traded in and around the Copper River region. Once in a while one picks up evidences of their occupation of Alaska. The latest find bearing on the Russian occupation was made at mile 67 on the C. R. & N. W. railway and again at Long Lake. At mile 67 a five kopeck copper coin was found, coined in the reign of Peter the Great and bearing the date 1704. At Long Lake a three kopeck piece was also picked up near a small creek bed, dated 1773. Both coins were in fair state of preservation and the lucky finder refused an offer of \$10 each.

Feb. 18

Denali Fault Earthquake a Once-in-a-Lifetime Event

Editor's note: Normally we only run one story in the science area, but in this issue we present three stories about the recent earthquake that hit this area. These columns are 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 by email at nrozell@dino.gi.alaska.edu.

Many Alaskans now have a vivid memory of where they were on Sunday, Nov. 3, when the world's largest earthquake so far in 2002 rocked the state. Many Alaska scientists will remember the weeks after as a blur of activity.

One week after the earthquake, I dropped in on seismologists at the Alaska Earthquake Information Center on the third floor of the Geophysical Institute at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. A half dozen of them sat around a long table, looking weathered after a mission to install portable seismometers just off the roadways slashed by the rupture of the Denali Fault. The seismometers are measuring the hundreds of aftershocks that have followed the earthquake.

The scientists returned with tales from the road—about fractures in the ground that offset lines on the highways by as much as 22 feet, about a store owner on the Tok Cutoff Road who said his business was down about 50 percent because people were either leaving the area or holing up after the earthquake.

After the seismologists finished briefing State Seismologist Roger Hansen, he thanked them for a job well done. Just down the hall, Geophysical Institute Associate Professor Jeff Freymueller was waiting for a phone call from a Science News reporter who was writing a story on the earthquake. Freymueller uses

global positioning system receivers to detect Earth movement; when I visited, he had a crew of people installing receivers off the Parks, Richardson, and Alaska highways.

This earthquake is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, he said. It's bigger than the 1906 earthquake in San Francisco, and roads cross the fault in three places.

With the GPS antennas, Freymueller and his colleagues will measure how much the ground surface is moving after the earthquake, which will tell them something about Earth's upper mantle, a place about 30 kilometers (18.6 miles) beneath the ground surface where the rock is so hot it behaves like a fluid.

The Denali Fault earthquake may be a once-in-every-1,000 years event, Freymueller said. Post-doctoral Fellow Hilary Fletcher of the Geophysical Institute had made GPS measurements along the fault before the earthquake. She found the fault was slipping about 7 millimeters per year where it crosses the Richardson Highway and about 11 millimeters per year at its intersection with the Parks Highway. Based on the 8 meters (about 24 feet) of ground offset the earthquake left behind in places, Freymueller calculated that the strain had been building for about 1,000 years.

The Denali Fault cuts across Alaska in a line that on satellite photos looks like a canal dug

through the Alaska Range. The fault runs through the mountains west to east and then curves south along the path of the Alaska Highway. It crosses the Canada border through the town of Beaver Creek to Haines Junction, and on down to Haines. Glaciers fill much of the fault's trench through the Alaska Range; the Canwell Glacier off the Richardson Highway is smack on the fault line, as is the upper Black Rapids Glacier, much of which is now coated with rocks from landslides. On the Parks Highway, the bridge over the Nenana River a few miles north of Cantwell stands in the fault trench.

Hansen said the earthquake unzipped the fault, tearing the ground in a line that stretches about 192 miles. Geologists from all over the world soon flocked to the area to measure and photograph offset highways, deep scars on the snowless ground, and the trans-Alaska pipeline, still intact but teetering on its supports in places.

The earthquake ripped through the Denali Fault in a southeast direction, with much of its energy moving in that direction, toward the small communities of Mentasta Lake and Slana. The earthquake damaged houses and water wells there, but no people died.

While those who live on the fault cleaned up or moved out, scientists scrambled to take advantage of an event they will experience once in their careers.

I haven't gotten any of my normal work done since it happened," Freymueller said.

For everybody around here, in addition to their full-time job, it's another full-time job dealing

with the earthquake. But it's an opportunity we can't pass up.

No Rest for the Denali Fault

As Lissy Hennig set up a tripod on the flank of Panorama Mountain, I tried to feel the earth move beneath my feet. In the week following the Denali Fault earthquake, the mountain had moved as much as it had in the two years prior, and scientists weren't sure why.

Hennig's boss, Jeff Freymueller of the Geophysical Institute, wanted to find out more about the post-earthquake ground movement along the Denali Fault, so he sent Hennig down the Parks Highway with his tool of choice—global positioning system receivers. The GPS receivers Freymueller uses are sensitive enough to track the movement of Earth's plates, which creep along at the speed fingernails grow.

Since the Denali Fault earthquake of Nov. 3, 2002, GPS receivers deployed by Freymueller and others have detected one centimeter of ground movement each day at a site near Donnelly Dome outside Delta. That's about 300 times faster than before the earthquake. At sites off the Parks Highway that Hennig and I visited, the ground had moved about 2 centimeters during the first week after the earthquake. Before the earthquake, Hilary Fletcher, a post-doctorate researcher at the Geophysical Institute, had measured the ground movement in the area, finding an average of seven millimeters movement each year.

Freymueller had installed

most of his supply of about 30 high-precision receivers—which he borrowed in haste from colleagues across the country near where the Denali Fault rupture did the most damage, off the Richardson Highway, Tok Cutoff Road, and Alaska Highway. When he saw the results from a few stations near the Parks Highway, he pieced together a few antennas, receivers, and tripods. He wanted to find out whether a slippage of the Denali Fault west of where it ruptured in the mountains was causing the ground movement, or whether some source deep beneath the surface was to blame.

I traveled down from Fairbanks with Lissy Hennig, a student from Dresden, Germany, who had worked for Freymueller the past few months because she wanted to learn something about using GPS receivers to detect movement in Earth's crust.

Hennig's timing was good. Freymueller and other scientists consider the Denali Fault earthquake an event that occurs every 1,000 years or so. Scientists from the University of California at Berkeley and Purdue University traveled north to join Freymueller's group in the response to the earthquake.

The Denali Fault is a weak point in Earth's crust that cuts across Alaska in a trench filled with river valleys and glaciers. The lessons of the Denali Fault earthquake are of particular interest to scientists who study the San Andreas Fault in California. The Denali is similar

to the San Andreas in that they are both strike-slip faults; during an earthquake the ground on both sides of the fault line moves horizontally in opposing directions.

In between earthquakes, the friction of rock on rock tends to lock strike-slip faults, but researchers can measure subtle movement by setting up GPS receivers on both sides of the fault hundreds of miles away. Though the surface along a fault often doesn't move except during an earthquake, warmer rock about 10 to 15 kilometers beneath the fault continues moving. The Denali Fault earthquake will give clues to the behavior of underground layers of rock known as the lower crust and mantle.

Fletcher hopes to use information being gathered now to find out which part of the Denali Fault moved the most during the earthquake, and to find out more about the structure of Earth's crust and upper mantle along the fault. She, Freymueller, and many other Alaska scientists are keeping an eye on their instruments perched all along the Denali Fault, gathering information that they'll take with them to an international meeting of Earth scientists in San Francisco in December. There, organizers have created a special session on the Denali Fault earthquake at the Moscone Center, which is a short walk from that other famous strike-slip fault.

Glaciers Bear Scars of Denali Fault Earthquake

As we prepared to retreat from Canwell Glacier with the fading sun, Adam Bucki and I noticed an intriguing crack in the ice. We walked toward it, and soon ran into a fracture line that ran up the glacier as far as we could see.

We had found a scar left behind by the Denali Fault earthquake of Nov. 3, 2002. Bucki is my friend and a glaciologist at Denali National Park. He and I searched Canwell Glacier for examples of how the massive earthquake affected the many glaciers along its path. The magnitude 7.9 earthquake made changes in some glaciers that will be visible for hundreds of years.

The Canwell Glacier, often mistaken for the Cantwell Glacier near Healy, is located in the eastern Alaska Range off the Richardson Highway between Delta Junction and Paxson. Canwell is one of many glaciers that lie in the trench of the Denali Fault, which extends across the Alaska Range in a line that is visible on satellite photos and topographic maps.

As we looked at the unzipped portion of the Canwell Glacier, Bucki explained the jagged break running through the ice. Like the San Andreas Fault in California, the Denali Fault is a strike-slip fault with right-lateral motion.

That means when you stand facing the fault trace, the land on the other side is moving to the

right, Bucki said.

We saw an example of right-lateral movement at our feet. A stream channel on the surface of the glacier looked as if a giant bulldozer had severed it, pushing one half of the streambed about 15 feet up the glacier.

Bucki and I also saw large wedges of ice forced up from beneath the glacier like breaching whales. He said those were thrust faults, caused by the earthquake shoving ice together within the glacier until one block squeezed up past the other.

New snow and spring melting will probably hide much of the earthquake damage on the Canwell Glacier, but Black Rapids Glacier will show the marks of the earthquake for centuries, said Martin Truffer, a glaciologist with the Geophysical Institute at the University of Alaska Fairbanks.

Truffer flew over the Alaska Range with USGS glaciologists Dennis Trabant and Rod March three days after the earthquake. High up on Black Rapids Glacier, they saw three colossal rockslides triggered by the earthquake. They estimated that rocks as large as helicopters now cover about 13 square kilometers (about 8 square miles) of the glacier surface. Truffer has skied the length of the glacier before, a trip that would no longer be a pleasure.

It would be a huge effort to get over the rock slides, and it's going to get worse, Truffer said.

The rocks now covering a large section of Black Rapids Glacier will insulate the ice beneath them, Truffer said. The blanket of rocks covers the glacier in an area that loses more snow each year than it receives. Before the earthquake, the glacier lost about 4 meters (about 12 feet) of ice each year. Now it will lose much less, and the rock coating will persist for hundreds of years as the glacier carries it like a conveyor belt toward the Delta River.

The earthquake triggered other incredible rock, snow, and ice avalanches, such as on upper Gakona Glacier, and the collapse of huge ice towers on a tributary of the West Fork Glacier that was close to the earthquake's epicenter. Alaskans were lucky the earthquake struck in November rather than March, when mountaineers would have been climbing and skiing along the glaciers that fill the fault trench. Truffer, who was on Black Rapids last spring, said witnessing the rock avalanches on Black Rapids would have been a humbling experience.

It was like several mountains collapsing, he said.

If you were standing there, you'd probably be so scared that you'd never go on a mountain again.

I strongly suspect that if we saw all the difference even the tiniest of our prayers make, and all the people those little prayers were destined to affect, and all the consequences of those prayers down through the centuries, we would be so paralyzed with awe at the power of prayer that we would be unable to get up off our knees for the rest of our lives. Peter Kreeft, Professor of Philosophy, Boston College

Generator Power

BY MARALEY MCMICHAEL

One recent morning, I plunged our home into darkness for the first time this winter. I pushed the start button on the microwave not knowing my husband had his truck engine heater plugged in. The generator couldn't pull the load and shut down.

We usually run a fine balancing act. We keep some lights on at all times and a few other basics when the generator is running. But, in winter, my hair dryer and the truck engine heater are enough to send us into shut down. In the summer, when I have both the coffee maker and the pancake griddle on for our bed and breakfast guests, adding a hair dryer will also trigger a shut down. I know from experience.

When we first moved here, I quickly learned that turning the refrigerator off would give me that little extra power I needed for a few moments, rather than going around the house turning off all the lights. After a few times of forgetting to turn it back on for hours, I developed a signal system. When I turn the fridge off, I put a red scarf through the door handle. That way, if my husband is passing through, and sees the scarf, he knows I've forgotten to turn it back on. This system is not fool proof, but it certainly helps.

When we were contemplating moving to Slana and living without commercial power, my biggest concern was how to live without a freezer. I didn't think I could cook without my freezer. I didn't realize I would have enough power with a generator to run the freezer too. The freezer doesn't need much help from the generator in the winter

and it holds its temperature just fine in the summer without power overnight. We can only be gone three days in the summer, or else ask a neighbor to come start the generator and let it run for a few hours. Summer or winter, if we are gone more than one day, we empty the refrigerator and put the contents down in the cellar.

This is the fourth and longest time in our married life that we have lived without commercial power, so it is not a new situation to me. Many years ago on Chena Hot Springs Road out of Fairbanks we needed \$10,000 to bring power to our property. We lived there for a year and half. For eight months in California we lived in a homestead type situation with no electricity and a newborn. Because of some of these past experiences, I was as stubborn as a mule about having basic conveniences when we considered moving to Slana. Generator power was supposed to make all the difference and it has.

I knew the first week we lived here that the noisy hum of the generator was not going to be a problem for me as others said it was for them. In fact, we can hardly hear it inside our log home & just when the windows are open. Even so, the hum is reassuring. I know that all is well and that life can continue as usual. We have grown so accustomed to the sound, when there are fluctuations for whatever reason, we are both tuned into them.

The first two years, we used a 4½ kw Lister diesel with a 4 kw Honda gasoline as a back up. A year ago we bought a 5½ kw Northern Lights Luggier diesel

and now use the Lister for back up. I am checked out on starting either of them in the morning and shutting them down for the night, checking the oil, adding oil, and changing oil; but, I must admit my husband does most all of that.

The couple of times when he was gone and I had problems (one of my own making), two different neighbors came to the rescue. In our experience, generators certainly require some general maintenance and once in a while we have had to scramble to get a custom part out of Anchorage. Our generator is connected to a 500 gallon fuel tank just outside the generator shed and we have a standing keep full order with the fuel oil service company.

There was a big meeting in late April 2000 with Alaska Power & Telephone out of Tok. If all went well, the Slana area was supposed to have commercial power by the fall of 2002. All did not go well. Now I see why the long-time residents did not get very excited or hold their breath waiting for this to happen. Also, there are those who don't care to see commercial power come to the area, just as there were those who didn't want to see Alaska become a state. It would bring changes to a way of life.

As for me, I've adjusted to life with generator power, and as long as that generator keeps humming, I am perfectly content.

(This story originally appeared in a slightly altered form in the Copper Valley bi-Weekly, Dec. 5, 2002. Used by permission.)

Siblings Pedal the Alcan

Editor's note: Trae is the second oldest of the Lohse boys and the siblings this young teenager writes about are his older brother, Tyee, and two of his sisters, Lynette and Robin Lohse. WSEN is honored to reprint our local young people's writings which many do for homeschool projects.

BY TRAE LOHSE, REPORTER

Thirty days in April and May and two thousand miles and two sisters and their brother were finally in the Alaska border.

Where had they been? They had been biking up the formidable Alaska Highway. Through driving rain, icy sleet, mile long tunnels with trucks

roaring by, they battled. Wet nights in a two man tent and vertical two mile hills and windy switchbacks did not stop them. The result of this torture was sore muscles, short tempers, charley horses, legs of steel, a sense of accomplishment, and a special shared experience. It

showed them if you set your mind to do something you can do it, and they met a lot of real nice generous people who fed them, and gave them a place to sleep. These rugged Alaskans took the trip for the adventure, and because they thought it would be a cool accomplishment.

Mentasta trophies won and lost

BY KALEB ROWLAND, (AGE 11)

Menatsta Mountains, AK On the first of September the Rowlands left home and headed for the Mentasta Mountains to go moose hunting. Although we hunted hard for a whole week, legal bulls were hard to find, and the ones we did see disappeared too fast.

This year, regulations have changed from 50" or three brow tines to 50" or four brow tines, making it more difficult to track down something worth shooting.

Also, wolves and bears prey on moose. It is said that wolves only go after the weak and sick, but Keith Rowland, who is my

dad, says, Wolves are moose killing machines!

Here is my cousin Steve Rowland's opinion about the recent scarcity of moose: More hunters are coming from the south and hunting the whole season.

The following is a story about five wolves which may answer some of the why about the disappearance of the moose. About midday the first day of the hunt, Dad and I spotted three bulls, one cow and several caribou. It was then that Dad discovered a pack of wolves, skylining the mountain. When I

saw one, I said, It looks like a big gray coyote!

Just as dad was getting out the spotting scope *bang, bang, bang!* Steve and his boy, Andrew, shot at the wolves. They had been spotting the same group of bulls from up on the mountain.

They missed the wolves, but succeeded in splitting the pack. Throughout the day, I caught glimpses of running wolves, and heard their loud howls. Needless to say, we never saw the moose again!

I think hunting is fun even when you get skunked!

Book Review - Territory of Alaska

Territory of Alaska tells the lively history of the Last Frontier from the 1867 purchase to statehood in 1959. It explores the cultural, economic, and political history of Alaska as the raw, rough wilderness evolved into the 49th state.

This new publication covers a crucial 92-year period that brought a sixfold increase in population and molded the fundamental nature of Alaska's economy and society.

Prize-winning historian Stephen Haycox discusses Alaska Natives inspiring fight for

political viability and 91-year old pioneer Bob DeArmond brings to life the daunting struggle to form a state government. Author Richard Emanuel describes the territory's economic development including the commercial salmon fisheries and the timber and fossil fuel

industries.

The 96 page book pays tribute to the early dreamers, the intrepid builders, and the visionary leaders who united to bring stable government to this wild frontier and realized that to

get the job done, in the words of one politician, We had to just roll up our sleeves and do what s right for Alaska.

Published in September 2002, this softbound book sells

for \$23.95 plus \$3 shipping & handling. You may find this book in your favorite book store or call 1-888-255-6697; e-mail info@akgeo.com or visit website www.akgeo.com.



Alaska National Parks Seeking Public Comment

Alaska s National Parks are inviting comment on each park s Compendium. The Compendium is a compilation of all designations, closures and restrictions imposed under discretionary authority within the regulations covering national parks. The Compendium, as part of the park-related regulations, help provide for the use, enjoyment and protection of Alaska s National Parks.

A copy of each park s proposed compendium for the 2003 season is available by writing the park or at www.nps.gov/akso/compendium. The park addresses are as follows:

Wrangell-St. Elias N.P.
Attention: Compendium
PO Box 439
Copper Center, AK 99573

Klondike Gold Rush NHP
Attention: Compendium
PO Box 517
Skagway, AK 99840

Sitka NHP
Attention: Compendium
PO Box 738
Sitka, AK 99835

Kenai Fjords N.P.
Attention: Compendium
PO Box 1727
Seward, AK 99664

Glacier Bay N.P.
Attention: Compendium
PO Box 140
Gustavus, AK 99826

Western Arctic Parklands
Attention: Compendium
PO Box 1029
Kotzebue, AK 99752

Denali N.P.
Attention: Compendium
PO box 9
Denali Park, AK 99755

Lake Clark/Katmai/Alfognak N.P.
Attention: Compendium
4230 University Dr., #311
Anchorage, AK 99508

Gates of the Arctic / Yukon-Charley Rivers
Attention: Compendium
201 First Avenue
Fairbanks, AK 99701

Comments will be accepted by mail or e-mail between January 1 and February 15. Comments are welcome at any time in addition to this timeframe, but comments received after February 15 will be considered in future compendium revisions.

Cooking with Peggy - Part two

BY BONNIE KENYON

In our last issue's cooking column, I introduced you to my McCarthy summer neighbor and WSEN subscriber, Peggy Guntis. I just recently received an E-mail from her and husband, Jim, letting me know they were doing just fine and thoroughly enjoying the Christmas holiday season. At Thanksgiving Peggy hosted a sit down dinner for 38 people - two turkeys and three hams being the main course (not her guests!).

I am including several other recipes of Peggy's that you and I will want to try in the new year that is just around the corner.

Mexican Meatloaf

2 lbs. ground beef
1 can chopped green chilies
1 egg
1 Tablespoon minced onion
½ teaspoon garlic salt
12 saltine crackers
2 Tablespoons picante sauce (any salsa)
2 inches Velveeta cheese
Salt and pepper to taste
ketchup

Mix first 7 items. Place thin layer of mixture in the bottom of the baking dish. Slice Velveeta cheese in 3 equal slices. Place them in baking dish. Cover with remaining mixture. Shape and cover with ketchup. Bake at 350 degrees for about an hour. Drain off excess grease.

Glaze for top of Meatloaf

Everyone has their favorite meatloaf recipes. Actually, I have about 3. Anyhow, I add a glaze during the last 5 minutes or so of baking and it's great!

6 Tablespoons ketchup
2 Tablespoons honey

Cold Broccoli Salad

When the fresh broccoli comes in, take one bunch and make bite-size flowerettes.

Mix together with broccoli:
6 slices crispy bacon crumbled
1 small red onion sliced in half moons
1 cup sunflower seeds or walnuts
½ cup raisins
Dressing:
½ cup mayonnaise
2 Tablespoons vinegar
¼ cup sugar

Mix dressing ingredients and pour over salad. Refrigerate for several hours, if possible.

German Chocolate Upside-Down Cake

I made this for the first time this winter and love it. Now I keep all the ingredients on hand because it is quick to make and delicious for company.

1 cup flaked coconut
1 cup chopped pecans
1 package German Chocolate cake mix
1 stick butter or margarine
1- 8 oz. package cream cheese, softened
1 (1 lb.) box of confectioners sugar

Combine coconut and pecans; spread evenly on bottom of a greased 13x9-inch pan. Mix cake mix according to directions on package; pour over coconut-pecan mixture. Put butter and cream cheese into a saucepan; heat until mixture is warm enough to stir in confectioners sugar. Spoon mixture over the top of cake batter. (As cake bakes, the cream cheese mixture will settle to bottom with

coconut and pecans, making a delicious frosting. Bake at 350 degrees for 50-60 minutes, or until done. Serve from pan; do not cut until cake is cooled.

Apple-Cinnamon French Toast

I serve this with heated syrup and sausage. I've also eaten this without the syrup and it's plenty sweet enough. Serving it with sausage is great though. Enjoy!

2 large baking apples
5 Tablespoons butter
1 cup firmly packed brown sugar
2 Tablespoons dark corn syrup
1 teaspoon cinnamon
3 large eggs
1 cup milk
1 teaspoon vanilla
8 -1 inch thick slices baguette (French bread)

The day before serving: peel, core and slice apples. Butter a 13x9-inch baking dish. In a large, heavy skillet, melt butter over medium heat. Add apples and cook, stirring occasionally, until tender. Add brown sugar, corn syrup and cinnamon. Cool, stirring until sugar dissolves. Pour the mixture into the prepared baking dish and spread apples evenly.

Arrange bread slices in a layer on top of apple mixture. In a medium sized bowl, beat eggs, milk and vanilla with a fork until combined. Pour over bread, cover and chill overnight.

Before serving: Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Remove the cover and bake for 30-35 minutes or until mixture is firm and bread is golden. Let cool for 5 minutes. Invert a serving dish and flip so that apple layer is on top.



BY GEORGE CEBULA

October 2002 was warm and wet. The ground never had a chance to dry and was wet and muddy.

The average temperature for October was 36.6 (25.6 in Oct. 01 and 26.7 in Oct. 00). As you can see it was about 10 degrees above normal. The high was 55 on October 1st (53 on Oct. 9, 01 and 51 on Oct. 6, 00) and the low was 14 on October 27th (-15 on Oct. 27, 01 and -6 on Oct. 29, 00). There were only 2 days with the low 20 or lower and 4 days with the high of 50 or above. *This compares with Silver Lake's average temperature of 38.6 (26.9 in Oct. 01 and 27.4 in Oct. 00). The high at Silver Lake was 56 on October 15th (58 on Oct. 5, 01 and 47 on Oct. 17, 00) and their low was 21 on October 10th (-6 on Oct. 26, 01 and -3 on Oct. 30, 00). Silver Lake had no days with a low of 20 or lower and 9 days with a high of 50 or above.*

The total liquid precipitation was 3.26 inches (1.26 in Oct. 01 and 2.23 in Oct. 00). Only 0.04 inches of the precipitation fell as melted snow, with a total snowfall in October of only 0.35 inches (15.1 in Oct. 01 and 13.9 in Oct. 00). *Silver Lake had 2.44 inches of liquid (0.78 in Oct. 01 and 1.74 in Oct. 00) and no snow (8.0 in Oct. 01 and 7.7 in Oct. 00).*

The snow depth at McCarthy was only 0.3 inches on October 9th and quickly melted. *Silver Lake had no snow. Silver Lake was ice free all of October. (The lake was completely covered with ice by Oct. 26, 01 and Oct. 29, 00.)*

The first half of November was a continuation of mild temperatures and rain rather than snow. The data for the second half will be missing as the station will be closed until December 12.

Here are a few totals as of November 16. The high was 44 on November 3rd and the low was 2 on November 16th. Liquid precipitation was 0.42 inches with only a trace of snow. The Kennicott River is still open with a little shore ice. I'll do my best to summarize November in the next issue.

December and January are usually the coldest months with lows falling to -50 and colder.

Daylight is down to just under 5 hours by December 21, before it begins to increase again.

If anyone sees a gray and red suburban with an Alaskan plate CEBULA in your area neighborhood, please flag us down. Sophie and I will be traveling around the lower 48 for the next two months.

River freezes

On the morning of December 23, local resident John Adams was the first to brave the Kennicott River ice, crossing on

snowmachine. This is much later than last year due to the warmer temperatures during November and the first part of December.

Rick Kenyon and Chad Reymiller followed suit the next morning, making such chores as delivering and collecting mail much easier.

(A note from the Publisher continued from page 2)

Just in case you didn't know, there is a lovely dining room inside the lodge that serves a great meal, too. The drive to and from Anchorage can be a really tiresome trip. Breaking it up like we did this time made it much

more pleasant. Thanks, Tom and Kim, for a wonderful stay.

WSEN welcomes aboard the following new subscribers: Greg DeRango, CA; Al Swalling, AK; Wanda and Tom Plochocki, MI;

Gary and Maralee McMichael, AK; Mike McCann, AK; Patrick and Sandra O'Neill, CT; Julie Williamson, AK; Sharon Hagar, AK; Jerry Wittenauer, CA; The Pilgrim Family, AK.

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

Governor Murkowski, please get your broom

The story about the recent DOT&PF meeting in Glennallen (page 10) points to the need for a complete overhaul of the Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF).

Here's the story in a nutshell: Two top level planners travel from Fairbanks to Glennallen supposedly to tell area residents about the state's plans for transportation projects, and to gather input from those same residents. They don't tell anyone they are coming, so only four people show up. It was almost as if the DOT&PF folks didn't want anybody to come.

Think about it. How would you feel, if you had to tell a large crowd that, Yes, the O'Brien Creek Road is closed, and yes, the Lakina Bridge on the McCarthy Road may well wash out this coming summer, and we know you want major improvements to the McCarthy Road, the Old Edgerton Highway, the Nabesna Road, and many segments of the Glenn and Richardson Highways, but what we plan to do is to build you some paved bike trails in Chitina and Glennallen and a wayside park at the end of the McCarthy Road (that nobody will be able to get to if the Lakina washes out). Yes, small crowds are better. A large crowd could get out of control.

Unfortunately, this sad story has become all too common over the past eight years.

It has been my observation that the more loudly the DOT&PF proclaimed the merits of its public process, the less

influence the public has actually had in any decisions.

The department publishes two documents that relate to transportation projects. One is called the *Transportation Needs and Priorities in Alaska*, or Needs List. The other is called the *State Transportation Improvement Program* or the STIP.

The Needs List contains unfunded transportation projects in Alaska that residents, elected officials and transportation professionals have formally proposed.

...the more loudly the DOT&PF proclaimed the merits of its public process, the less influence the public has actually had in any decisions.

The STIP contains projects that the department has decided to pursue, after going through their public process.

Pick up any of the recent Needs Lists, and you will find it full of things like repairing or replacing bridges, repairing, upgrading or building roads, and airport improvements. Remember that these are the projects that the folks have proposed.

Now look at a copy of the STIP. In some mysterious fashion the bike trails (off-limits to snowmachines and ATVs), wayside parks, interpretive signs and other non-vehicular traffic projects jumped to the forefront for funding after the public process was complete.

The current Kennicott River

Wayside Project shows how the public process works. You announce a few public meetings. If a large group shows up, then cancel the meeting due to poor weather. (You don't actually expect DOT&PF planners to *drive* to a meeting, do you? Especially over the McCarthy Road, AKA the worst road in Alaska). Have meetings in Anchorage and Fairbanks, where you are assured that almost nobody will attend. Ask for written comment, then ignore it. (It's not voting, said project manager Janet Brown.) Go ahead with whatever plan that you and

two or three other unelected state workers decide is best for the community. Then announce loudly that you faithfully followed the public process, as set forth in state law and department policy. Look hurt when the public objects to the final plan.

Governor Murkowski ran on a platform that included major road upgrades and the construction of new roads and bridges. Several years ago, the good governor, who was then Senator Murkowski, said that upgrading the McCarthy Road should be one of the state's highest priorities. He mentioned it again during his campaign. We at *Wrangell St. Elias News* wholeheartedly agree. So do the eighty plus people who joined the Coalition for Access to McCarthy.

The proposed road upgrade has been the subject of almost continuous studies for at least the past 60 years. Five years ago the department decided to do an official Environmental Assessment. A year ago they

finally got around to giving a contract to a private firm to do the official document. On December 3rd, in Glennallen, DOT&PF planner Paul Prusak tells the four people present that

it will be another 2-3 years before the study is completed.

Governor Murkowski, please get your broom. DOT&PF needs a clean sweep, fore and aft.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Bonnie:

Thanks for the warning I do not want to miss a single issue of *Wrangell St. Elias News*. Even though there are fewer and fewer family names with each passing year. This past June it was 82 years since my Kennicott years began. But there are still several of us of that vintage still in contact.

You and Rick do such a good

job!

Sincerely,
Richard Osborne

WSEN

Dear Sir,

I do not wish to renew my subscription to your publication because of my age (95). However, I am enclosing a check for \$10 for a subscription to be sent to Mrs. Sharon Hagar.

Mrs. Hagar and son attended the Kennecott Reunion last May and enjoyed it, as she was the last baby to be born in the Kennecott Hospital.

Best Regards,

Bertha K. Ramer

ps I was the primary teacher at Kennecott during the years 1931 to 1933 and have many happy memories.