

Wrangell St. Elias News

"Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty"

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Former Wrangell-St. Elias Superintendent Jon Jarvis sworn in as NPS National Director

BY BONNIE KENYON

On September 24th the U. S. Senate confirmed Jonathan

"Jon" Jarvis for what must be the dream position for any long-time national park staff member—National Park Service Director.

McCarthy area folks, at least those who lived here in the mid to late 1990's, will recognize the name, Jon Jarvis. He served as the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park/ Preserve's (WRST) superintendent for nearly 5 years and paid many visits to the McCarthy and Kennicott area. While managing the world's largest park with more than 1 million acres of private holdings within its boundaries, he dealt with such issues as mining, aircraft, subsistence hunting and fishing rights, the acquisition of Kennicott, the early planning for the park visitor's center in Copper Center, to name a few. Many of us recall with gratitude Jon's willingness and success in developing park property near the end of the McCarthy Road. Not

all of Jarvis' predecessors had the same mind set. Fourteen years after our area was designated a national park/preserve, area visitors still did not have necessary facilities. How-

One such trail was the Crystalline Hills trail at mile 34. Many folks are now enjoying the results of what Jarvis began when he arrived in the latter part of 1994.



NPS photo

Secretary Salazar, Director Jarvis' brother, Destry, and Director Jon Jarvis.

ever, under his management, McCarthy/Kennicott area visitors were provided their first public toilets. A short time later an informational kiosk was constructed and staffed by a local resident who dispensed information to the public.

Jarvis worked close with the Alaska Department of Transportation on the planning of the McCarthy Road, identifying opportunities for visitor facilities and hiking trails.

In a 1999 interview with *Arctic Science Journey's* reporter, Doug Schneider, Jarvis acknowledged the "different approach" taken with the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park. Unlike other national parks where people are welcome only as visitors, Jarvis says WRST is a place where indigenous people are a vital aspect of the park.

"The park is directly associated with 12 native villages and four linguistic groups... The really unique part about

WRST, and many of the Alaska parks, is that these people have continued their traditional use of the land for thousands of years. We haven't gone in and run people off. We have councils and a very active cooperative relationship with these communities and the village councils, and residents of these communities. The people that live in these communities have the rights to hunt, to fish, to occupy, to trap, and

(continued on page 6)

A note from the publisher

BY BONNIE KENYON

A month ago today I was writing *A note from the publisher* for the November/December 2009 issue. Usually we have two months in-between *WSEN*'s. This time it is different. Rick and I are leaving McCarthy in less than 2 weeks to travel south for Christmas. The last couple years we celebrated Thanksgiving with family, but this year we decided to wait until the Christmas season. Both holidays are certainly priceless times to celebrate with family and friends!

In making that decision, however, we had to push the January/February issue's publication date ahead two weeks. Therefore, you will (or should) find your *WSEN* on your doorstep or in your online inbox earlier than usual. We trust you enjoy the contents. Rick and I certainly enjoyed putting it together for you.

Our major story covers the confirmation of the new National Park Service Director, Jon Jarvis. In the mid to late 1990's he served as the superintendent of the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park/Preserve. Rick and I recall those earlier years and even wrote several stories in our publication. One included an interview *WSEN* did soon after his arrival. I'm sure he has changed a lot over the years, but we do hope he hasn't changed too much! Jon not only recognized the need for

facilities for the ever increasing visitors to this park, but he actually did something about it. Many of us remember with gratitude his contributions.

Our thanks go to Tim Mowry for sharing his story about a glacier hike he took with one of our local guides, Paul Hanis, of Kennicott Wilderness Guides. The story originally appeared in the *Fairbanks Daily News Miner* on September 17th. Be sure to read it on page 8.

Kennicott Kid, Inger Jensen Ricci, of Anchorage, provided us historical information that we share with you on pages 17 and 18. I had no idea how diverse the nationalities of those who came to Kennicott to work the mines in the early 1900's. Also, the detail costs of an old-time Hunting Party in 1921. Thanks, Inger, for sharing your wealth of information with us!

Jumping ahead 30 years, we read about a survey crew in 1950 who mapped the area between Chitina and the Million Dollar Bridge. McCarthy resident Howard Haley and his wife, Chris, supplied the information from their storehouse of material they have collected on Howard's dad, Herb. Herb Haley was the pilot for this survey crew. Thanks, Howard and Chris, for entrusting me with the special scrapbook on Herb and his escapades in the air! *It's Rugged in Alaska!* is found on page 12.

Another McCarthy local, Jeremy Keller, submitted his

opinion piece on a present issue concerning the management of a recreational area near our town called Donoho Basin. The story portion starts on page 9, which I wrote with the help of information from the Park Service. Jeremy's comments begin on page 26, entitled, *The Donoho Controversy*. Thanks to all who contributed input on this issue.

Since the last "note" from our house to yours, winter showed up in McCarthy and decided to stay. At the beginning of November we only had 3 inches of snow on the ground. By the 15th of the month we had collected 15 inches. It was snowmachine time for sure!

Snowblowers and shovels soon came out from their summer hiding places. The early snowfall was fluffy and easy to maneuver through and now as I type this, just after Thanksgiving Day, the snow has settled to only 12 inches. After the snow let up, a cold spell showed up on our doorstep and our official weather thermometer revealed a minimum temperature of minus 35. Our high for that particular day was a not-so-balmy minus 17. Yes...winter has arrived and apparently it's here to stay.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all our readers! See you next year!

Wrangell-St. Elias News welcomes aboard the following subscribers: Stephen Wahl, AK; Elaina Fisher, IL.

Items of Interest

BY BONNIE KENYON

Nik Merlino: In the winter months, Nik is our closest neighbor. He stopped by the other day and filled us in with his activities —past, present and future. Right now he is grateful for the time he spent in insulating his 12' x 16' cabin. With the colder temperatures' arrival recently, he says he is keeping plenty warm (sometimes too warm) in his snug quarters.

He's presently putting up interior siding to give his home a more finished look. Nik is also doing what it takes to acquire a winter/spring job on the "slope." Until that comes together, his plans for "fun and adventure" are definitely in the making. He managed to get a permit (which is not easy to get, he says) for rafting the Grand Canyon in a couple months. He and 16 friends plan to leave Lees Ferry on January 20th and raft the 225 miles to Diamond Creek, hopefully reaching their destination February 10. During the trip, Nik plans to turn 30 years old, too, which makes this excursion memorable.

Nik reminded me he worked two years for Copper Oar Rafting of McCarthy and has a history of river guiding in Arizona. I was curious how many boats they would need for that many folks and gear. He responded, "Five oar boats which are 18' long and inflatable. There will be 2 or 3 people per boat including gear. We

plan on taking a paddle boat along, just for fun."

Nik surprised me with the information that he's been coming to this area since he was 10 years old. He said that he and his dad first came to the McCarthy/Kennicott area in the 1990's. His dad still visits the area regularly and Nik's mom first came to visit him this summer. Now that Nik is a landowner and has his own place, I expect he'll enjoy family visits more frequently.

Thanks, Nik, for providing a great item of interest. We'll look forward to getting a story on your winter rafting adventure!

Dorothy Adler, Logan, and Elaina Fisher: Although Dorothy and son Logan are staying more-than-busy in

Wasilla this winter, they squeezed in the time to bring a friend out to McCarthy for the Thanksgiving holiday. Dorothy is taking several courses while in the big city as well as preparing to instruct an Avalanche safety course. She was delighted her friend, Elaina, chose to visit her during this special time of the year.

Elaina and Dorothy first met while horseback riding in the Brooks Range three years ago. That trip north didn't include a visit to McCarthy so this time the ladies decided to take in the sights of our town. Rick and I were pleased to have them and Logan share Thanksgiving dinner with us. The ladies took to cooking and brought a delicious sweet

Table of Contents	
Former Wrangell-St. Elias Superintendent Jon Jarvis sworn in as NPS National Director.....	1
A note from the publisher.....	2
Items of Interest.....	3
Glacier hike is eye-opening, awe-inspiring experience.....	8
Donoho Basin—what is in its future?.....	9
It's Rugged in Alaska!.....	12
THE McCARTHY WEEKLY NEWS.....	14
The world according to a dog's nose.....	16
Pratt Hunting Party —McCarthy style—1921.....	17
Kennecott nationality table —July 18th, 1918.....	18
Cooking with Peggy.....	25
FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION.....	26
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.....	27

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potato casserole and homemade cookies.

I had the opportunity to visit with Elaina and found out that Franklin, Illinois, is a small town in comparison to Wasilla but a large one if I compared it with McCarthy. She said Franklin is a small farming town with about 600 folks. It's flat land, totally different from mountains that encircle McCarthy. They grow corn and soybeans, two items we cannot grow here with any great success. Elaina does see snow and ice in her neck-of-the-woods, but the low temperature in Franklin may dip to a mere -10 degrees! McCarthy has already seen -35 this year and the winter is far from over.

We really enjoyed our visit with Elaina, Dorothy and Logan. Thankfully, Elaina left a part of herself in McCarthy. Being an artist, she skillfully painted a beautiful mountainous picture on Dorothy's wood cookstove doors—a warm reminder of a good friend's visit! Come back soon, Elaina!

Thank you, D.O.T! With Thanksgiving freshly in mind...our thanks go out to the Department of Transportation operators assigned to the McCarthy area. Once again Smitty and Marty did a fine job plowing the McCarthy Road and airstrip on November 17th. We also appreciate the extra touches they do while in the area! Thanks, guys! Another job well done.

Another round of thanks: This is a long overdue thanksgiving. I want to thank the McCarthy mail sorters who turn out for our twice-weekly mail days. It is totally voluntary on their part.

Because McCarthy does not have its own post office (yet) or paid postal workers and postmaster, McCarthy area residents are responsible to handle the matter themselves.

Thankfully, we do have a small mail building we call "the mail shack" which is located on the McCarthy airstrip, easily assessable to the mail plane. Our official post office is located in Glennallen where our air

service provider, Copper Valley Air Service, picks up and delivers incoming and outgoing mail for McCarthy residents and visitors.

Mail sorting in the summer months looks very different than in winter. An influx of workers in our local businesses causes an abundance of letters, magazines, junk mail and numerous boxes. The volume is greatly increased. Winter sorting, on the other hand, is low in volume but is another story altogether. I can personally attest to the challenges of handling extremely cold letters, etc. in an even colder atmosphere. Our mail shack is not insulated but, thankfully, we have on hand a propane Mr. Heater which helps keep fingers thawed out when the gloves give way to the cold.

Any McCarthy/Kennicott local can and usually does sort mail at some time or another. However, there are a few dedicated sorters who can be found on a weekly basis doing service for their community—to those I say, "Thank you!"

Mike Monroe of Kennicott dutifully comes down from Kennecott, almost 5 miles one way, twice a week (unless he is out of town or something serious is going on at home). He uses a variety of transportation methods depending on the season: snowmachine, skis with dog Sammy giving him a tow, truck, 4 wheeler or bicycle. (I think I got them all!) Also, for all the times you have swept out the mail shack and took someone else's trash home with you to burn...thank you!

Audrey or Jim Edwards travel over 6 miles one way and come from the opposite direction than Mike, the west side of the Kennicott River. They brave crossing the river once it proves safe for snowmachine in the winter. In the summer you can see one of them traveling to the "shack" on their 4 wheeler, or Jim might just take to walking.

Neil Darish or someone representing him (at the present it is Jenny Rosenbaum who is babysitting the lodge) comes from downtown McCa-

rthy. The other mail day Jenny could not get her snowmachine started due to chilly morning temperatures so she started walking. Thankfully, she caught a ride with Howard Haley—another neighbor on his way to mail.

I am honored to sort mail whenever I can. Because I do, I am aware of the challenges and, sometimes sacrifices, of those who come faithfully and take seriously the importance of mail reaching the rightful party. Thank you, each and every one, that sorts the McCarthy mail, full-timers and those who have had to fill in for them. You are appreciated!

Craig Kowalski: While I'm on the roll with the giving of thanks, I am thankful for Craig's successful heart surgery. He was in Anchorage for a week where he underwent an 8-hour operation on his heart. All went well. He says he can tell the difference already and feels much better. He returned to McCarthy on the mail plane and is safe and sound in his quarters in downtown McCarthy.

Thanks goes out to Audrey Edwards for driving Craig home from the airstrip in her nice warm truck and to Laurie Rowland for giving Audrey a special pass to cross the river via the service bridge.

Jim Kreblin, Kurt, Lindsay (Kreblin) and baby Luke Jensen: In the last issue of WSEN, I left Jim up in the air. His cabin roof was still open to the elements while he and son-in-law Kurt worked steadily to improve that situation. I thought I better update our readers with the news that the new roof is in place and the insulation is up, allowing the heat from his wood stove to finally produce the desired results—warmth!

It happened just in time for Thanksgiving dinner with his daughter Lindsay, grandson Luke and Kurt. Turkey and all the "fixin's", as Jim put it, were prepared and thoroughly enjoyed by all.

Because Long Lake is now frozen and good enough for snowmachining, Kurt and Jim put out a couple Burbot (Ling Cod) sets, just in case

those rare winter delicacies would venture into Jim's fishing area. Nothing caught, yet, he reported.

The Jensen family are due to travel to Chicago to visit Kurt's family and then on to Green Bay, Wis. to celebrate Christmas with Lindsay's mom. We pray for safe traveling and a quality time with family and friends!

Jim has plenty of work to do yet this winter. Besides firewood detail, he plans to remodel his upstairs living quarters. The next time Rick and I visit Jim I expect to find the kitchen, living room and bedroom all in different locations under his new roof, along with a new bathroom.

There is never a dull moment at Jim's lakeside home so if you find yourself bored with nothing to do, my advise is to take your sleeping bag and head over to Jim's place. I'm sure he can put you to work and solve your case of boredom!

Howard and Chris Haley: Most McCarthy area folks take the winter months to relax and slow "way" down. Not Howard and Chris, at least not *this* winter.

Howard is heading to Anchorage real soon to catch a ride to Port Alsworth. A construction job is waiting for him on a carpentry project for the Lake Clark National Park. He could be gone up to 2 months, he says.

Chris is determined not to let the snow pile up under her feet while Howard is working. She is already on the move with plans to remodel her kitchen. Before Howard leaves, he is giving her two extra hands to install new cupboards. After he leaves, she intends to build her own counter top and lay tile down on that. This is a new hobby for her, she says. With books and tools in hand, she is teaching herself how to lay tile and is eager to begin her "fun experiment."

Chris (and Howard, too, I'm sure!) will state clearly that one project leads to another. Now that the old cupboards are down and new ones to go up, the sheet rock needs patching and it's a great time to

paint the kitchen. And, then, once all that is done and if Howard is still away at work, the kitchen floor could use another coat of paint...

I'm hoping she can take time to give Rick and me haircuts in the near future—maybe *before* she starts the kitchen floor! (Howard, at least Chris will be too busy to take your new 450 4-wheeler out for many spins in the snow.)

Jeremy, Allie and Bjorn Keller: The Keller family is enjoying the quiet of winter, says Jeremy. They celebrated Thanksgiving Day with a down-home-grown turkey dinner. "Tom" Turkey was an old-time breed called a Heritage turkey and dubbed the "best table bird." Tom was 6 months old when he was found roasting in the Keller's oven. Locally raised hog roasts were also on the menu, commented Jeremy. Mashed potatoes from Allie's garden were a hit, too. There was plenty of food left over after feeding 10 adults and 3 kids. Bjorn enjoyed the company of those nearer his age—Rye and Vida Petter, Rick and Tara's kids. The Petters came out to their cabin to enjoy the holiday with their friends, the Kellers.

The population of the neighborhood across McCarthy Creek is extremely low these days, but the Kellers don't seem to mind. There is always plenty to do.

At the present, Bjorn is being tutored by Alysia Herbert who has been staying at the Kellers in a nearby guest cabin which makes for a nice get-a-way for young Bjorn and his studies. Alysia, however, will soon return to her home in Pennsylvania. In that case, Jeremy and Allie will pick up the slack, I'm sure.

Tending their farm animals is a daily chore. Now that winter is here in full force and there is plenty of snow on the ground, Jeremy is making good use of his dog team—the Iditirod team, that is. According to their master and trainer, the team "is getting off light these days and only expected to help with fetching water and firewood." Eventually as

trails are perfected and the winter progresses, the team-in-training will get a real workout! In the meantime, the entire Keller homestead and residents are relishing in the blessings of wintertime.

Jim and Audrey Edwards: When I say there are a batch of "live wires" at the Edwards' household these days, I am not referring to Jim and Audrey, although they don't leave much snow packed under their feet in spite of winter!

Jim certainly has his hands full but it is literally with live wires. It is best put in his own words: "I am wishing I could get back to walking for mail, but I am bogged down in three piles of tools, 4 battery chargers, trying to catch up on two failed batteries (new ones, yet—how awful!) And an entire floor of our bedroom covered with wires and hot connectors just temporarily lying there to be stepped on. So far, Audrey goes for the mail or accompanies Bonnie and Rick."

It's true that Audrey and I have made numerous trips to mail via snowmachines or truck, depending on the weather. My truck heater works really well; therefore it is more comfortable to choose that mode of transportation when temperatures dip below freezing. On the other hand, snowmachines make for a fun-filled excursion!

On Thanksgiving Day, the Edwards joined Rick and me and a few other neighbors in celebrating the holiday with dinner and fine conversation. Audrey prepared a delicious pumpkin dessert and a fruit salad that I decided was worth getting the recipe.

Christmas is right around the corner and they are eager to enjoy it with Jim's son, Steve, and wife Lana and their two boys, Ben, and Jake. Hopefully, Jim will have all those live wires (not speaking of the boys, of course) all put back in place so Audrey can light up her Christmas decorations for the upcoming holiday season!

Jon Jarvis sworn in as NPS National Director

(continued from cover)

to carry on a subsistence lifestyle inside the park.” He said managing a park with human inhabitants has unique challenges, but, it’s the only way to preserve both cultural and natural wonders.

Outdoor activities were, and still are, normal for the new director. In an interview with *WSEN* in March 1995, Jarvis, a native of Lexington, Virginia, commented on recollections of earlier years as a young boy. “My dad was a life member of the NRA, gun dealer and a guide. I hunted and trapped as a kid through all my growing up years. I grew up on a farm with cattle and horses, so I’m fairly steeped in that stuff. I hunt and fish myself. Took an elk in Idaho last year. So, perhaps that provides some light on my general philosophy...”

In Mr. Jarvis’ nomination statement before the U. S. Senate Committee on Energy & Natural Resources on July 28, 2009, he reiterated his passion for the outdoors instilled in him from his early days being raised in the Shenandoah Valley. “I knew from that time I wanted to pursue a career related to the protection and enjoyment of the outdoors. I graduated from the College of William and Mary in 1975 with a degree in Biology and immediately took a road trip across the country, camping in many of our great national parks, like Yellowstone, Glacier, and Olympic. From that trip forward, I was hooked on the National parks.”

In 1976, when Jon Jarvis was just out of college, he took a temporary job with the National Park Ser-

vice (NPS) handing out maps about America’s bicentennial celebration to tourists on the National Mall in Washington, D.C.

Over the past 33 years, Mr. Jarvis’ career is best described in his own words: “I have served as a field park ranger in the most classic sense; delivering interpretive talks, working the information desk, conducting search and rescues, riding horse patrol, and ski patrol. I have fought fires, trapped bears, forded glacial rivers, rappelled off cliffs,



NPS photo

Director-designate Jonathan Jarvis—then the regional director for Pacific West Region—speaking to NPS superintendents at last summer’s conference in Utah.

made arrests, and helped thousands of visitors have a great experience in their parks. In my first 26 years of service in the NPS, I was an interpretive ranger, a protection ranger, a biologist and Superintendent in seven parks in seven states. For the last seven, I have served as the Regional Director for 54 national park units in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, California, Nevada, Hawaii, and the Pacific Islands of Guam, Saipan and American Samoa. My wife and I have moved nine times and lived in rural wet Texas, the Snake River Plain of Idaho...and I will be the first Direc-

tor to have ever served in bush Alaska. In each place, I have always worked hard to become a contributing member of the local community and have encouraged my staff to do the same. Gateway communities and parks have an important relationship that needs to be grown through mutual respect and cooperation, particularly when tourism is an essential part of the economy.”

Coming up through the ranks of park service philosophy—some good, some not so good—where does our new Director stand on issues of today and what are his passions concerning our national parks? These are his own words continued from his statement at the July hearing:

“The 391 units of the National Park System are a collective expression of who we are as a people, where our values were forged in the hottest fires. They are an aggregate of what we Americans value most about ourselves. They also deliver messages to future generations about the foundation experiences that have made America a symbol for the rest of

the world. And, of course, our great parks are places we pursue happiness, as a respite from a fast paced and congested world.....Never in its 200 years has this nation needed the National Park System more. It stands as a collective memory of where we have been, what sacrifices we have made to get here and who we mean to be. By investing in the preservation, interpretation and restoration of these symbolic places, we offer hope and optimism to the each generation of Americans....My pledge to you and to the American people is that I will bring all my en-

ergies to be the very best steward of American's best places and American's best idea."

Just prior to Jarvis receiving his recent position as Director, he, 56, with his wife Paula (a personal trainer), his son Benjamin, 25, and daughter Leah, 23, made two important visits—the first, to the home of 19th-century conservationist John Muir, in Martinez, CA. He was quoted as saying, "I stood under the trees Muir planted and hoped some of his wisdom would find me in the shade."

The second stop was to Yosemite National Park where the Jarvis family made an arduous trek up the back side of Half Dome ridge. According to an article in *Flathead Beacon*, no rangers were allowed to accompany them and smooth his way to the top. Each hiker shouldered his or her own pack.

Among the many challenges and problems facing the park service today, what is Jarvis' number one challenge? According to his response to Todd Wilkinson of the *Christian Science Monitor* and reprinted in the *Flathead Beacon*, our new Director calls climate change "the greatest challenge ever to face national parks." Jarvis told Wilkinson he thinks Glacier National Park (among other things) could be used to educate the public about global warming, which is—in his opinion—expected to melt all its glaciers within decades. Boosting the agency's \$2.5 billion annual budget would help bolster scientific research and education efforts about the issue, he says. But more money itself will not fix the threats to parks posed by changed park habitats.

Jarvis says parks could sequester carbon, serve as sanctuaries for species facing extinction, and bring to public attention the ways global warming is transforming the envi-

ronment. His first priority is to ensure that peer-reviewed science plays a foundational role in management decisions, especially in confronting climate change.

Another issue of concern he brought to reporter Paul Rogers of *The Mercury News*, was snowmobiles in Yellowstone. At the present there is a daily limit of 318 after several lawsuits over noise and smog. According to Jarvis, the issue is "far from settled."

During his career, Jarvis has backed removal of dams blocking salmon streams near Olympic National Park in Washington. He reduced development around Crater Lake National Park in Oregon to improve water quality. During his recent tenure as regional director, he criticized attempts to weaken park protection codes, end public education programs, and outsource ranger jobs to the private sector.

Jarvis is praised by the Coalition of National Park Service Retirees, which blanched when parks became political footballs in controversies ranging from reducing the number of snowmobiles in Yellowstone to attempts by Creationists to sell books on the rim of the Grand Canyon.

Small-government proponents such as Chuck Cushman, head of the American Land Rights Association, have often fought park expansion efforts in the past. Cushman recently wrote: "Now, with Jon Jarvis in charge of the Park Service, the National Parks Conservation Association and their green allies have their best chance yet for an enormous park expansion plan, huge buffer zones around every park, and a multibillion-dollar land acquisition trust fund."

Referring to his younger days when he and his family toured parks in the West, Jarvis says, "I like to

tell people that back in those days parks were 'bigger' because the landscapes around them were more rural and wild. Today, we have development not only encircling our crown-jewel nature preserves, but look at some of the Civil War battlefields that basically are now in the middle of the suburbs."

Jarvis has recently said that he would like to see the creation of at least two new park units. One would commemorate farm labor leader Cesar Chavez. Another, at Port Chicago near Martinez, would mark a 1944 Naval explosion that killed 320 people and led to racially charged mutiny trials for 50 sailors who refused to work in the dangerous conditions.

As the first park service director to be trained as a biologist, Jarvis said in an interview recently he plans to increase scientific research in national parks, extend their educational role to put more rangers in school classrooms and broaden the parks' appeal to American's growing ethnic populations. Friends of our 18th national parks' director, state he has courted relationships with local people and ethnic groups who haven't always felt welcome in parks and has a desire for having a park system available to all Americans today.

Congratulations to Director Jon Jarvis in his latest promotion. We wish him the very best in Washington, DC. We trust his new job assignment and the many challenges he will face in the days ahead will not cause him to forget his adventures in the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and his desire to have a park system available to ALL Americans, rich or poor. We thank him for his part in providing much-needed amenities for the many visitors to our nation's largest national park.

"At times like this, when the country is faced with a rancorous public debate and a tough economy, people turn to parks. They come to them for quiet and contemplation and family gatherings. I think we are in for a great renaissance." —Jonathan B. Jarvis

Glacier hike is eye-opening, awe-inspiring experience

BY TIM MOWRY

We were standing at the base of Root Glacier, a massive hunk of ice in Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve.

Unlike most of the glaciers in the park, which are accessible only by airplane, Root Glacier is about a two-mile walk from the historic Kennicott copper mill near McCarthy. The Root Glacier Trail takes you to the base of the glacier, where you can strap a pair of crampons on your feet and climb onto the glacier like Spiderman scaling a skyscraper.

That was our plan, with the help of Hanis, co-owner and lead guide for Kennicott Wilderness Guides, and fellow guide John Montepare. They run day and half-day tours on the glacier and we were fortunate to be among their final clients of the season during Labor Day weekend.

But first we had to learn how to walk with crampons, which is something that, as the outdoors editor of Alaska's second-largest newspaper, I'm ashamed to say I'd never done before.

Crampons are like snowshoes, only they are meant for ice, not snow. They are basically spikes that strap to the bottom of your boots. Each crampon has eight points on the bottom and two more on the toe.

"The idea is to have all the points of the crampons in the ice at the same time," Hanis was telling us as part of our safety talk before heading onto the glacier. "Don't walk on the tips of your toes. Don't walk heel to toe.

"Don't lean forward," he said, demonstrating what happens when you do so by pretending to trip and flailing his arms as if he were out of control. "If you start tripping on yourself you're probably going to fall down."

Falling down on a glacier is not a pleasant experience, which is one of the reasons we were all wearing gloves, even though it was a bright, sunny day and the temperature on the glacier was approaching 70 degrees.

The gloves were provided and are required, Montepare said, because of the "abrasive nature of the glacier ice."

"If you have to put your hand down on the ice it's going to get scraped up," he said.

The surest way to avoid falling is to walk like a duck, Hanis said, adding that quacking while doing so is optional.

"Usually the duck walk is the best way to go," he said, demonstrating the technique by pointing his feet out at angles. "Have your feet wider apart than you normally would. Pick up your feet more than you normally would. If you're shuffling along and one (crampon) tip catches, down you go."

"Pay attention to where you're putting your feet," Hanis told our group of eight hikers, two of whom were only 10 years old. "You can catch the tip of your crampon on the ice and trip and fall; you can twist your ankle; you can catch your crampons on your pants and trip; you can stab yourself in the leg."

Our first test came in the form of a short, steep hill we had to climb to get on the glacier. Using the technique Hanis demonstrated, even the youngest members of our group were able to duck walk their way up the short, steep slope that would have been tricky without some kind of added traction.

Once we were on the glacier, things got easier. The hardest part was paying attention to what you were doing while trying to absorb the incredible scenery that surrounded you — the 16,390-foot Mount Blackburn, the massive Stairway Icefall, the moraine-covered Kennicott Glacier and the 6,690-foot Donoho Peak. The hillsides above and below us were cloaked in orange, yellow and green. The glacier ice was a brilliant mixture of blue and white.

Because of the warm, sunny weather, walking on the glacier was like walking in a giant defrosting freezer. The sun had softened the ice slightly, and the crampon points sunk into it like a knife cutting into cheese. Each step produced a crunching noise under your feet that was reassuring.

"When it's cold and rainy, it's a lot harder to walk out here," Montepare told us. "You have to be a lot more aggressive with your crampons."

As it was, nobody in our group had any problems on the ice as Hanis and Montepare led us on a short tour of the glacier. We stopped by a small stream and filled up our water bottles

with what is billed as “the best-tasting water in the world.”

My 10-year-old son, Logan, and his 10-year-old friend, Addie, laid down on the ice and sucked glacier water out of the stream. They both agreed it was “cool.”

“The water you’re drinking right now has completed its journey from falling onto the icefall as a tiny snowflake to being compressed into ice and being carried down here where it just melted today for your enjoyment,” Montepare said with a grin.

Water is one of the two things that moves glaciers, he said. Water running underneath the ice serves as a lubricant and allows the glacier to slide. The other thing that propels glaciers is the weight of the snow and ice that builds up at the head of a glacier and drives it down the valley.

“All the ice we’re standing on started as a snowflake up there,” he said, pointing to the Stairway Icefall, the biggest icefall in the world outside Antarctica.

We passed another, bigger creek that resembled a water slide cut in the ice. It wound around and around before emptying into a moulin, a vertical shaft in the glacier formed by running water eating the ice away. The water finds a crack in the ice and the crack eventually becomes a small canyon.

This particular moulin was about 125 feet deep and had been formed during the course of three summers, Hanis said. He knew that because another glacier trip his company offers involves lowering ice climbers down into the moulin so they can climb their way out.

The roar of running water could be heard at the bottom of the moulin, the result of being resonated through the ice.

“When you get lowered down in there, that’s all you hear,” Montepare said.

All glaciers have a “plumbing system” under the ice but instead of running through pipes, the water runs through blue arteries carved in the ice, Hanis said.

“Nobody knows what the plumbing system looks like,” he said.

After that, we sat down on foam sleeping pads and ate lunches we had packed with us, with a view of Mount Blackburn and the Stairway Icefall. We could hear mountain bikers hooting and hollering as they bounced down a trail that ran along a hillside at the edge of the glacier.

Sitting there munching on a smoked salmon, cream cheese and bagel sandwich, it made me realize how lucky we are to live in Alaska. Here we were, standing on a glacier on a beautiful, sunny day, surrounded by scenery that words and pictures cannot describe, washing our food down with melted glacier water.

“This is one of the prettiest places I’ve ever been,” my friend, Alex Clarke, said as he tried to digest it all.

For once in my life, I was speechless.

This story originally appeared in the Fairbanks Daily News Miner Thursday, September 17, 2009. Used with permission.

Donoho Basin—what is in its future?

BY BONNIE KENYON

A favorite place for recreational users, Donoho Basin, is under inspection by managers of Wrangell-St. Elias National Park (WRST), local guide services and McCarthy/Kennicott residents. How should this popular destination be managed—short and long term?

Due to concerns of visitor safety associated with a history of

bear/human conflict, the National Park Service (NPS) staff at WRST temporarily closed the area to camping. According to NPS, many individuals voiced their concerns that the increase in use of the area is impacting the natural resources and the visitor experience, as well.

Over the past year the NPS staff and interested parties have engaged in a significant amount of discussion. Between July and September of 2009, four public meetings were held in McCarthy to

facilitate dialog and gather information that will help guide the decision of park managers. The purpose of this planning effort is to determine "short-term" management options during an interim period until a more formal planning process is completed. Long-term decisions will be made as part of the larger planning process scheduled to begin in 2010.

The area in question is located between the Kennicott and Root glaciers south of an east to west

line that crosses Donoho Peak. This line is the dividing line between park and preserve and designated wilderness and non-wilderness. According to the Park Service, "the scope of this effort has been limited to the management of recreational use in Donoho Basin only." This area is in the non-wilderness portion of the Wrangell-St. Elias National Preserve.

The goal of this process is to find ways to manage the area that conforms to the NPS mission statement: "conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as to leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations." It is the objective of the managers to identify and implement options that help to reduce bear/human conflict and impacts to Donoho Basin's natural resources and visitor experience.

Through verbal and written comments during and outside the McCarthy meetings, many points of general agreement were identified. It was determined that four specific issues would need to be addressed in the short term to better manage the Donoho Basin.

In October 2009 NPS asked for public comment on the Donoho Basin Draft Management Options that covered these issues. The comment period ended October 11th. Each issue was presented with three to four options each. A brief analysis of the issues and options chosen by the participating public was made available near the end of October.

WRST received 31 comments, representing 32 individuals or organizations. Of these 32 respondents, 29 chose preferred management options. Not all chose a preferred option for every issue.

The first issue was Group Size limit. Option #1 was chosen by the

majority. "All groups, guided and unguided, are limited to no more than 12 persons total. Exemptions will be considered for certain groups on a case by case basis."

The second issue addressed minimum distance between groups, guided or unguided, led by the same company or organization. Option #3 took the lead with 1/2 mile preferred.

The third issue covered education and registration. Option #1 won the majority's vote. "All groups of 8 or more people are required to register to camp in Donoho Basin and must attend an educational briefing in Kennecott prior to camping at Donoho."

The last issue spoke to Sanitation options. Option #4 was the most popular in choice. "This option follows existing regulation in conjunction with an increased educational effort: the disposal of human body waste within 100 feet of a water source or a campsite or within sight of a trail is prohibited."

On November 30th Superintendent Meg Jensen issued her decision for the management of Donoho Basin. The following statement is in her own words: Staff of Wrangell St. Elias National Park and Preserve (WRST) met to review the public comments received regarding options for interim management of recreational use in the Donoho Basin and made recommendations to me regarding an interim strategy. Staff and public comments have been given careful consideration as I went through the decision making process.

As Superintendent, I have decided to implement the following interim management strategy to guide park management of recreation use in the Donoho Basin through December 2012, or until the park's Frontcountry Management Plan is completed.

Group size limits for guided and unguided groups

Guided groups in the Donoho Basin are limited to no more than 12 clients. A minimum ratio of one guide per six clients must be maintained. Unguided groups are limited to no more than 12 people total. Exemptions to this limit for commercially guided groups will not be considered.

There was a diversity of public and park staff opinion on this issue. Clearly a compromise was needed, and a clearly defined guideline requested by a number of commenters. The analysis of the public comments received showed a clear difference between the preferred choice of the majority of Commercial Use Authorization (CUA) holders and that of the general public.

Several factors guided our decision on this issue. It is appropriate for guided groups to be allowed a larger group size than unguided groups. Groups led by professional guides, well trained in bear/human conflict avoidance and leave-no-trace practices, are less likely to cause impacts than the average unguided group of the same size. The park did not want to inadvertently limit supervision because of fiscal or logistical considerations. Therefore, no limits were placed on numbers of guides. CUA holders may send as many guides as necessary to adequately supervise the group.

A minimum guide -to- client ratio is necessary to assure adequate supervision, especially for youth and young adult-oriented groups. The prescribed ratio is the minimum level of supervision which will provide for safety of clients, adequate food storage, and implementation of minimum impact camping techniques, including proper disposal of human waste.

Finally, due to the potential total size of guided groups under this new group size restriction, no exceptions will be considered for commercial operations. In the summer of 2009 a number of exceptions were requested, and the only one granted was to allow for an additional guide. The park believes that the slightly larger group size which is allowed by this guideline will adequately address all the special circumstances which surfaced for commercial operators in 2009. Groups operating under a research permit or involved in a park sponsored project would be issued a special permit for those activities.

Unguided Group registration and education

All first-time visitors to WRST who plan to camp in the Donoho Basin will be strongly encouraged to watch park educational videos which address camping in bear country and proper food storage. All unguided groups of eight to twelve individuals are required to register to camp in Donoho Basin and as part of that registration, participate in an educational activity with park staff prior to camping at Donoho Basin.

A large number of public comments expressed the critical need to utilize education and registration to help meet the goal of reducing bear/human conflicts, minimizing impacts to resources and the visitor experience. Various group sizes were discussed during the park public meetings. Generally, small groups visiting the Donoho Basin have more Alaska/backcountry experience. As groups grow in size, there is greater potential for some if not most of the group members to be relatively inexperienced campers. The park

believes the 8 person threshold is a good size to begin a registration program, and is not excessively restrictive. This number may be adjusted up or down in the future as the park gains experience with a registration program.

Minimum camp distance between associated groups

The minimum camp distance between associated groups in the Donoho Basin is ½ mile. Associated groups are all groups lead by the same company or partnering companies or organizations.

The majority of commenters indicated that a ½ mile separation between these groups' camps is sufficient to maximize visitor experience and minimize resource impacts. The park agrees. It is recognized that Donoho Basin has a limited number of appropriate campsites large enough to accommodate groups. This distance will prevent monopolization of limited camp opportunities and minimize development of social trails between associated camps.

Sanitation

Increased enforcement and education of the existing regulation will be emphasized. The existing regulation (36CFR 2.14 Sanitation and Refuse) states the following is prohibited: ... "the disposal of human body waste within 100 feet of a water source,...., or a campsite, or within site of a trail." The park highly recommends that groups follow Leave No Trace standards for human waste and utilize a common latrine trench dug a minimum of 200 feet from a water source, high water mark on a water body, a campsite or within sight of a trail.

The park will increase enforcement and education per the existing regulation. Water quality testing completed in the summer

of 2009 proved inconclusive on the resource impacts of waste disposal. It appears that the primary impact of poor waste disposal practices in the Donoho Basin is currently a social impact: the quantity of human waste piles and toilet paper is perceived as excessive and offensive by park visitors and staff alike, and adversely affects the camping and hiking experience in the area.

In closing, I would like to thank everyone who participated in the dialogue regarding interim management guidelines for recreational use of the Donoho Basin. Your community spirit, public concern and commitment to follow through with the park in developing and participating in the interim planning efforts is greatly appreciated. I look forward to our on-the-ground get-together with many of you in May 2010 in the Donoho Basin as we discuss this issue further. I plan to revisit this management guidance again at the conclusion of the 2010 summer season and invite your feedback as well regarding how effectively these interim guidelines have assisted the park in achieving its objective in the Donoho Basin.

Long-range management guidelines for the Donoho Basin will be considered and implemented through the park's Frontcountry Planning process, which will be formally initiated in about a year. The park plans to host a series of pre-planning public meetings on the project in the summer of 2010 in the Kennecott-McCarthy area.

Thanks for your interest in management of Wrangell St. Elias National Park and Preserve.

Sincerely,
Meg Jensen
Superintendent

"For man, autumn is a time of harvest, of gathering together. For nature, it is a time of sowing, of scattering abroad." —Edwin Way Teale

It's Rugged in Alaska!

High winds, dust, snow, tough terrain were overcome in survey

(Editor's note: The following story is a true account of the Copper River Survey of 1950 which mapped out the area between Chitina and the Million Dollar Bridge. We believe the author to be Alfred O. Quinn, Chief Engineer for Aero Service Corporation (AERO), who also authored the book, "Iron Rails to Alaskan Copper.")

The account below took place late 1950. It first appeared in the Christmas 1950 newsletter called 'Prop Wash' which is no longer in print.

A copy of the article was given to us by Howard Haley, son of Herb Haley, pilot for the survey party. WSEN subscriber, Bob Leitzell, of California, was a member of the original Copper River Survey crew during the summer of 1950. It was during this time that he met Herb who was the pilot that flew Bob and his survey crew to various sand and gravel bars along the river where the crew set aerial survey control points.

Bob has returned to the area since that time, in 1954, 1992 and 2008. During the most recent visit, Bob and his wife Paula thoroughly enjoyed meeting Howard and Chris, Howard's wife, of McCarthy in person and reliving memories of his earlier days and his recollections of Herb. After the Leitzell's returned home, they sent WSEN a CD of pictures of that survey. We printed some of those in the July & August 2009 issue of WSEN. We had intended to reprint this story sometime back but misplaced the article, rediscovering it the other day. We hope you enjoy it. Our thanks to Howard, Chris, Bob and Paula and author Alfred Quinn.)

Job number 10591 is not an ordinary topo job even in AERO's wide-flying global operations. Job 10591 is an invasion of the last frontier, Alaska; it is a contest against cold, wind, snow, dust and mountains in a setting of breath-taking scenery and rich Alaskan history. We are mapping the Copper River Canyon for the Alaska Road Commission.

This project follows the old Copper River and Northwestern Railroad which was built in 1908-1912 to be used in transporting some \$400 million worth of copper from the Alaskan interior. The story of the original survey which took three years to complete is partially told in the novel by Rex Beach called "The Iron Trail:" the rewrite of this struggle against the elements is now a part of AERO's heritage.

Our work on the Copper began in September when Dean

Turner found a plane and an old-time bush pilot to fly the area. The Copper Canyon is like a monster wind tunnel—sharp mountains and glaciers rise on either side, and Dean flew the photographs at an altitude far lower than the tops of the surrounding canyon walls. Piloting a plane in this wind tunnel requires a special skill which the "bush" pilot must soon acquire if he is to keep his job—and life.

Alaskan airfields are postage stamps surrounded by trees and mountains which defy ordinary flying procedures and operations. The wind for the Copper Canyon is specially stored by nature, and breezes of 60 m.p.h. from any direction are common. The River itself carries a tremendous load of glacial silt which is dried and picked up by the winds, so that the Copper River winds are frequently as severe as mid-western or Arabian dust storms. The turbulence of the air

is terrific—ask one office yokel who made the trip to tell you how sick a man can get in a plane!

Field operations started early in September, AERO's representatives were Jack Ninneman, a real old-timer in photogrammetry and field surveys who has handled a lot of difficult jobs, and Bob Shinaman, one of our ace trig-traverse men. The Alaska Road Commission furnished the other field men including boatmen, cooks and pilots. A Trig-Traverse has been run along the river together with the necessary elevations to control the aerial photographs.

The surveys have been accomplished under almost impossible conditions. Field parties were moved between survey stations by plane—a Piper Cub equipped with tandem landing wheels. Walking in many areas in the canyon is very hazardous and

with the limited camping facilities available a sure method of rapid transportation became a must. Landings and take-offs were made in most unbelievable places—on sand bars. Often it was necessary for the surveyors to hold the plane's wings to assist in a take-off, and at other times, plane, passengers and equipment barely skimmed the silt filled river. The pilot, Herb Haley, won the praise of the whole gang; without his skill and ability the survey would not have been completed before the real snow arrived.

Here's a part of some of Jack's reports which gives some idea of the problems encountered. "Our No. 1 boatman was in Chitina to get the 2nd boat—which arrived that day. Then it was necessary to calk and tar it before use. He left with it at 4 p.m. Monday night and arrived at Tielcel at 1 a.m.—how, I will never know. The Indian refused to go through the Canyon—so this bird takes a fifth of rye and goes along—at night—and he made it. Of course, he is good—and then he was drunk, too.

"Now, we have two boats—however, because of our transportation difficulties, I now have our plane operating right with us. The pilot is marvelous. While the two boats handle the side-shot crews, he takes the forward crew ahead, goes back and brings Bob Shinaman ahead, goes back and brings up the flags—everything but drive the stakes. he can land on a tablecloth!"

As the job progressed, weather became an increasingly important factor. The crews were willing but the elements didn't

cooperate. Jacks says, "We are hitting this as hard as we can. You know we are at latitude 63degrees± anyway the sun (when there is one) goes down behind the mountains about 3:15 p.m. We have set our time ahead to help all possible, but daylight hours are very short.

"We will tie-in this Copper if we have to do it on our hands and knees, but if the snow gets a little lower we won't be able to make the Tielcel Canyon this fall. I am not trying to get out of a tough job but that country is impassable when there is snow—and I mean impassable by snowshoes or any other method. The cliffs are too high and are only passable when it is possible to use ropes and to see your footing. Remember, camp equipment must be transported, too.

"I suppose my letters do sound like all trouble—they are not exaggerated much—we are racing weather. Can't use boats now—ice running in the river. Incidentally, our boatman got through O.K.—first man down the Canyon all the way by boat...Consider this, too—one day we saw 19 of the big Alaskan brown bears—the largest carnivorous animal—and the least friendly. We seldom see fewer than six or seven per day...Today we fought high winds, sand blowing so one could not face it. Winds increased hourly—pilot got report of impending 80 m.p.h. gale and had to rush to place where plane could be tied down. Had to leave two men out tonight—without food—because of wind and impending gale, we did not have time to make another trip. Dropped the emergency double sleeping bag to

them as we went over them. Imagine they are cussing me right now. But they have an expression, "We hired out tough." Of course, most of them have proved it before..."

"Snow is very, very close—which means landing by plane near where the work is about over. Please keep on worrying a few days more, and I will do the same.

"Snow finally came and with it the really cold weather. Herb Haley put skis on his plane and finally evacuated all men from the last camp. By the time Herb could get in, the food supply had gotten low and Jack had to deal out reduced rations."

It is interesting to compare this year's survey operation with the one made over 40 years ago in the same area. The field time was reduced from three years to about two months; air transportation replaced mules and hard foot travel, but above all the aerial photograph has resulted in an overall economy of mapping effort.

The compilation of the maps is going according to schedule, and rough as the field job has been, the Trig-Traversal is again proving its worth in the rapid production of accurate results. As usual, the engineering requirements of the Alaskan Road Commission calls for a fast delivery, and there are prospects of additional topographic mapping further along the old railroad next spring. Jack and his crew are hoping for better weather: no snow, and temperatures above zero, but records tell us that the Copper faces heavy spring thaws and continued heavy winds."

THE McCARTHY WEEKLY NEWS

1919 January & February editions

DR. HALE OF CORDOVA

Dies of Pneumonia

All through its course this epidemic has taken its toll of the lives of the brightest & best. This week we mourn the death of Dr. C.L. Hale, who succumbed to pneumonia, on December 31, following an attack of influenza. Through all this Copper River district he was known with deep regard. Himself an ardent lover of the prospector's life, innumerable prospectors owe their chance to explore the hills to a grubstake from Dr. Hale. Now he is come over the everlasting hills and we sadly pay a tribute to a staunch friend, a fine sportsman, a game loser, and a splendid man.

NEWS ITEMS

The foundation for our bridge over McCarthy Creek is assuming a business-like appearance.

The Seltenrich family are occupying the log residence opposite the school, for the winter months.

School will reopen on next Monday morning at nine sharp.

Mrs. Gus Carlson and children spent last weekend at the Iverson ranch.

On New Years Mrs. Aron Erickson entertained the Iversons, Carlsons, and Eckstroms at dinner.

Frank Iverson is having good success with his chicken ranch, getting several fresh eggs daily and says if he had electric lights he could hypnotize the hens to double the output.

Jan. 4

SAM FOWLER MEETS HIS DEATH AT STRELNA

News received from Strelna this week tells of the death by drowning of Sam Fowler, an old timer of this district. He had been employed by

the Alaska Co. per Corporation Co. and accidentally stepped into an abandoned shaft which was full of water. Deceased was member of the local miners Union. Interment took place at Strelna.

Mr. and Mrs. J.B. O'Neill will return to McCarthy tomorrow, having spent the required time in the detention camp at Kennecott, since leaving Cordova, where they have spent the last two months.

Even though Kennecott is cut off from the rest of the population by the quarantine, it does not prevent Cupid from marking victims for his own within his boundaries. It is said that in a very short time the chief accountant of the Kennecott Copper Corporation will join the ranks of the Benedicts, having persuaded one of the hospital staff to share his lot. Mr. Richard V. Watkins has been many years in Alaska and has lots of friends, whose sentiments we echo when we offer him our congratulations, and wish him and his lady every happiness. The bride to be is Miss Christina Boag who came to Kennecott last April.

Jan. 11

Bulletin

This Bulletin is sent to you to announce that "The McCarthy Weekly News" will not be published this week, because C.F.M. Cole is laid up with an acute attack of sciatic rheumatism, or lumbago, inflammatory rheumatism, or whatever it is which attacks all who have spent many years on the trail, swimming rivers and traveling glaciers and sleeping on a mattress of spruce boughs on ice springs. Cole is the fellow who sets type and manipulates the press in this office, so when he is on sick

list and no one can be got to take his place, we are forced to disappoint our subscribers with this bulletin instead of the weekly sheet. Nothing short of death or sickness could make us do this. We have struggled with broken machinery and other impossible conditions, but, in the sixty three editions somehow we always made good.

Now we are up against it but next week we will come up smiling, anyway we are thankful we haven't got the "flu."

Jan. 18

Thru the courtesy of Mr. L.D. Brown we were privileged to see copies of "The Flu Special" a bright and witty paper published at Kennecott detention camp edited and printed by L.D. Brown and beautifully illustrated by the Rev. E.P. Zeigler.

Jan. 25

FLU NEWS

The McCarthy quarantine has been lifted and passengers will be permitted to land here from Cordova and way points. Up to now there has not been any great congestion of traffic on the road from the depot as the train arrives, but next week we expect a great influx.

Feb. 1

NEWS ITEMS

The Mother Lode plant closes down tomorrow for a few days, in order to thoroughly overhaul the machinery.

Clifford Cayouette is in town for a vacation. Soon after his arrival a dance was arranged for Saturday night: Clifford would not think he had been to town if he did not go to a dance.

Ed McCullen, of Shushanna, who has spent several months at the Ken-

necott Copper mines is in town preparing to leave for his property soon.

Chas. Hardning has purchased the lot on Second Street facing Barret Way from John Baltuff and will erect a substantial building in the spring.

A petition is now being circulated to have a wagon road built from McCarthy to Long Lake; adjacent to the Copper River & North Western Ry. If this is favorably reported upon it will not only help the present ranchers who have invested all they have got in their farms, but will enable others to take up homesteads and do likewise. But we must also bear in mind that our main trails into the Nizina and Chisana placer diggings are still incomplete and we want the improvements to continue along the Sourdough trail which were started so well last season. With our new bridge over McCarthy Creek, & the approach on the other side graded a well finished trail will make those ranches and mining camps more accessible, and considering that McCarthy derives much of its summer income from these regions, we should endeavor to make them more get-at-able.

McCARTHY

The Buckle of the Copper Belt, one of the coming cities of Alaska, situated on the Copper River and Northwestern Railroad, 191 miles inland from Cordova, between Kennecott and McCarthy Creeks, the junction for Chisana, Nizina, Dan, Chititu and Young Creeks head of Chitina and Chittistone. Original townsite located by John E. Barrett, whose homestead adjoins.

The Kennecott Copper Corporation operates the largest copper mine in the world five miles away. A fifteen mile run by automobile brings you to the Mother Lode mines, an extensive property now employing upwards of 50 men, and with untold wealth of ore in sight. The power plant and warehouse of the Mother Lode are located in McCarthy.

The Green Group, which is 5 miles nearer town, is steadily forging ahead as a big producer.

A resident United States Commissioner is stationed here also Deputy Marshal. The jail is always empty. Fine school buildings and twenty scholars. Fourth class post office and money order office. Up to date stores which carry stocks comparing favorably with any in Alaska. Restaurants which serve a better meal for 75 cents than you can get on the coast for \$1.00.

Feb. 8

NEWS ITEMS

Our city was very gay with visitors from the Mother Lode, Strelna and Kennecott this week.

Paul Harmi, watchman for the A.C. C-Co. Strelna is in town for a few days.

Mrs. W. Woodin begs to announce to the public that she has taken over Mrs. Rust's cleaning and pressing business and is also prepared to do all kinds of mending and repairing at the Heney Bldg. opposite the post office.

The management of the Golden Cafe have secured the services of Walter Quan Eng, expert chef, and the Cafe will now be open to patrons all night.

Watch for the big sale at Laurie Bros. next week. From 25 to 35 per cent reduction on everything.

Scratch tablets 15 cents, at the Weekly News office.

Just Received: Fresh Shipment Beef, Pork, Mutton, Oysters, Bologna, Head cheese Liverwurst, and Blood sausage. R.L.H. Marshall.

Wicks, mantles, and chimneys for Alladin lamps have arrived at Post Office store.

Copper River and Northwestern Railway

Our trains weekly between Chitina and Kennecott

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

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

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

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

The above schedule subject to change without notice.

CALEB CORSER Supt. GRANT
REED Agent

Feb. 15

BRIDGE COMPLETED TODAY

Gus Johnson of the Road Commission reports having completed the bridge over McCarthy Creek this a.m. Including the approach from the south end, the length is 175 feet and built very similar to the bridges on the Fairbanks trail. It is a fine piece of work and makes quite an improvement to the town.

OTTO LUBBE VERY ILL

Our townsman, Otto Lubbe who has been ailing for some time, has been removed to Kennecott Hospital. He is very dangerously ill and grave doubts are held as to his recovery. Mrs. Lubbe, Dorothy, and Willie are with him at the hospital. We can only hope for the best.

NEWS OF PROSPECTORS

Dan Steacy and B.A. Green left last week for a hunting and prospecting trip to the White River District, so they say, but the 40 cent nugget Chisana John found in the Nabesna last fall, looks good to the oldtimers, and may be responsible for the increasing travel in that direction.

Shorty Briggen is getting ready to leave for his mining property in the Chisana.

Joe McLellan left for Shushanna yesterday: he got ahead of the rest of the bunch but they figure to catch up with the fast dogs they have bought. Joe is a good judge of dogs himself, with Steve's greyhound for leader he may surprise them.

Feb. 22

The world according to a dog's nose

BY NED ROZELL

A dog can tell you a lot about the outdoors. When a Lab vacuums the ground with her nose and her tail moves like a helicopter blade, you know a grouse is about to fly. When the dog stops like a dragonfly, then runs off sniffing an invisible path, a snowshoe hare has crossed your trail.

All this entertainment is courtesy of that most sensitive appendage, a dog's nose. It's an instrument man has not been able to duplicate. Search-and-rescue groups use dogs to find lost people, dead people, and people buried under earth and snow. Dogs have also been used to find seals on ice, gas leaks and the presence of gypsy moth egg sacks.

Lurking behind those textured, damp nostrils are sensitive membranes that allow a dog to distinguish smells living or once-living thing. A dog processes odoriferous molecules more readily because a dog has a much larger set of scent membranes within its nose, explained Robert Burton in his book, *The Language of Smell*. While humans have a pair of these "olfactory receptors," each is about the size of a postage stamp in our noses. Dogs' receptors can be as large as a handkerchief, depending on how big the dog is.

Dogs' noses work much the way ours do: We inhale molecules of odor, which then dissolve in mucus. The dissolved odors are picked up by the olfactory receptors, located behind the spot where sunglasses rest on the nose. An organ called the olfactory bulb shunts the chemical messages straight to the part of the brain that deals with stored feelings and memories, bypassing the cerebral cortex, the main part of the brain. This short-circuit is one reason smells trigger strong emotions and memories that may have lain dormant for years.

With its larger olfactory membranes, a dog's nose does amazing things. Researchers at Duke University found that a randomly selected fox terrier could after three weeks detect the scent of a fingerprint on a glass slide when compared to four clean slides. When the researchers placed the slides outside in the rain and dust, the dog was still able to pick out the slide with the fingerprint after 24 hours of weathering.

Dogs have fantastic tracking ability because humans leave a pretty good scent trail. Most researchers think the scent trails consists of "rafts," tiny bits of skin cells that have an odor when mixed with sweat and fed upon by bacteria. Because the human body sheds about 50 million cells

each minute, rafts fall from the body like a shower of confetti. Dogs quickly detect these rafts, as well as other scents that may not be apparent to the producer, including breath and sweat vapor. Each person's scent trail is unique, and dogs are remarkably good at separating one person's trail from another's.

In an experiment performed a century ago, G. J. Romanes lined up 11 men behind him. He started walking, with each man walking precisely in his footsteps. After they walked 200 yards, the men dispersed, with five going to the right, six to the left. All the men hid. Another person released Romanes' dog, which found Romanes almost instantly after hesitating slightly where the men separated.

Seventy years after Romanes' study, H. Kalmus performed a similar test using identical twins. The twins must have had quite similar scents, Kalmus reported: "if the dog was given the scent of one twin, it would happily follow the other." When both twins were used in the experiment, however, the dog was able to pick one from the other.

What a great tool a dog's nose is—it rarely malfunctions, and the body it's attached to is always happy to see you.

This column is provided as a public service by the Geophysical Institute, University of Alaska Fairbanks, in cooperation with the UAF research community. Ned Rozell is a science writer at the institute. This column first appeared in 1998.

"If you meet it promptly and without flinching—you will reduce the danger by half. Never run away from anything. Never!" —British Prime Minister Winston Churchill (1874-1965)

Pratt Hunting Party —McCarthy style—1921

BY BONNIE KENYON

Big game hunting in McCarthy today and the cost of such an adventure is somewhat different than “the way they used to do it,” say, in the year 1921! What was the going rate for supplies, hunters, guides and transportation in the early days of this area?

In looking through my folder labeled “Future use,” I discovered a typed list of just such information, dated October 2, 1921. I believe this was given to me by a Kennecott Kid several years ago—Inger Jensen Ricci—who lives with her husband Charlie in Anchorage. They are always a source of encouragement to us and our publication.

I decided to go back into the old newspaper of the day, *The McCarthy Weekly News*, and see if I could find any mention of the Pratt hunting party excursion. There were three mentions of this event, in July, August and October 1921. Because McCarthy area contains quite a number of local residents who hunt as a part of the present lifestyle, and because this area still draws hunters from afar, I hope the following news items and the information Inger shared with us will prove interesting to all.

The McCarthy Weekly News —
July 23, 1921

Of Local Interest

Early next month a hunting party will arrive here which has been arranged for by the Kennecott Copper Corporation officials. Messrs. George Pratt and son, of New York, will comprise

the hunters, and will be accompanied by Al Fagerberg, chief guide, Bill Slimpert, assistant, Jack Erickson, chef, and W. Berry, horse wrangler.

The party will spend thirty five days in a trip to the head of the Chitina River, their objective being the big horn sheep which abound there, and possibly bear. Stephen Birch, who had hoped to be one of the party could not spare the time to make the trip.

The McCarthy Weekly News —
August 27, 1921

Personal

The Pratt hunting party are passengers on the Northwestern reaching Cordova today and will arrive on the next train, spending one night at Kennecott, they will proceed immediately to the head of the Chitina, hunting big horn sheep.

The guides will be Fagerberg and Slimpert, packer, Harry Boyden, chef, Jack Erickson, and Con Miller, photographer.

The McCarthy Weekly News —
October 8, 1921

Pratt Party has Successful Trip

George D. Pratt and son, of New York, returned last Sunday morning from their hunting trip to the head of the Chitina River and were well pleased with the results, securing five sheep and three grizzlies.

In addition to this the moving picture machine recorded eight hundred feet of film devoted to sheep, two hundred feet of this reel showing two bears and their exploits through a canyon.

The hunters were able to take Tuesday's train to Cordova and

make connection with the Alameda which sailed Monday evening.

I don't know what a big game hunting trip for 35 days would cost today, but I expect much more than it cost in 1921! According to the information I was given by Inger, the party of seven left Kennecott the morning of August 29th and returned on October 2nd. The total cost of the trip was \$3,926.84.

The food supplies ran \$461.74. Payroll for Al Fagerberg, Bill Slimpert, Jack Erickson, Con Miller and Harry Boyden totaled \$1575. Fagerberg, the chief guide, made \$12.00 a day. The others, \$8. Boyden, the packer, only \$6.

Horses were the mode of transportation and they leased 18 head at \$2.50 a horse per day. Each man received a \$25 bonus.

Even though Harry Boyden made the least per day in labor, he ended up making more on the trip than even Fagerberg. Fortunately, Boyden owned 10 of the horses, so along with his pay of \$210.00, his bonus of \$25, and \$875 for the use of his horses, he came out with a grand total of \$1110.00 for his part in the 35-day hunting trip.

I wish we could view the movie film that was taken on the trip, but I guess we will just have to use our imagination!

Thank you, Inger, for entrusting us with this above record.

Kennecott nationality table —July 18th, 1918

(Editor's note: Our thanks to Kennecott kid, Inger Jensen Ricci, for providing WSEN the following information.)

Have you ever wondered just how many different nationalities made up the awesome miners who helped make Kennecott famous and productive? If so, here is a summary of who was here on July 18, 1918, and where these folks came from.

This particular Table covers four specific mines: National Creek, Bonanza, Jumbo and Erie. There were a total of 406 miners working these mines on July 18. The various nationalities represented were as follows:

- Americans, 133
- Australians, 14

- Belgians, 5
- Bulgarians, 8
- Canadians, 6
- Danes, 3
- Dutch, 1
- English, 3
- Finns, 10
- French, 2
- Germans, 4
- Greeks, 53
- Hawaiians, 1
- Hungarians, 3
- Irish, 15
- Italians, 5
- Japanese, 23
- Lithuanians, 2
- Mexicans, 1
- Montengrans, 10
- Norwegians, 34
- Poles, 3

- Roumanians, 1
- Russians, 22
- Scotch, 2
- Servians, 7
- Swedes, 30
- Swiss, 4
- Welch, 1

(I spelled and copied these as they appeared on the Table.)

Kennecott was such an amazing accomplishment and with such a variety of people. It's no wonder this area has gained international attention. Folks from all walks of life and from many nations visit this place each year just to see the labors of these many and appreciate the rich history of what is now the largest national park in the United States.

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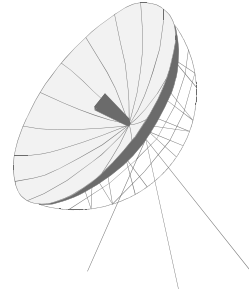
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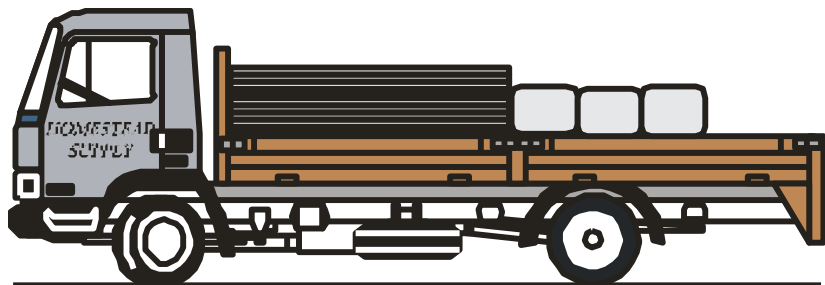
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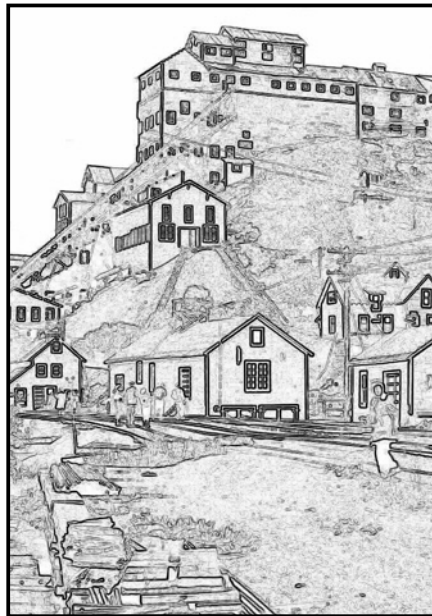
CONSIDER (continued from page 26)

that the general public willingly pays for, thus forming the fiscal basis for their operations? Generally, no; and, in the case of this Park, certainly less than one percent of its budget could come from fees collected. The rest comes from federal tax dollars. Where do these come from? Better yet, how long would the government be able to function fiscally if its budget came entirely from the taxes collected from its own employees? The answer, of course, is not long or not at all depending on how you begin this thought experiment. Within days or weeks, at best, there would be no money left to pay the wages from whence the taxes came, to say nothing of paying the heating bill.

When an honest reflection on this fact is undertaken it becomes quickly clear that all the tax dollars that fuel the engine of the government come from the private sector, from the market. It is a curious truth that the NPS mission to preserve and protect the resources in order to leave them unimpaired for future generations is entirely dependent on the private sector to protect the public lands from the private sector!

So what does all this mean for our little community? In Kennicott the NPS, running entirely on private sector resources, is building a shrine to one of the most impressive efforts in our history of resource extraction,

refinement and delivery to the market for wide-spread utilization. Mining. Of course, the ecosystem was significantly altered, some might even say ruined, at various points along the way. Clearly, the money currently



spent on the Mill Site restoration would be directed *against* a similar effort of resource use if that use were to commence today. The Park is so adamant about protecting resources from current or future use that, in addition to not being amenable to mining, they went so far this year as to attempt to restrict the subsistence use of standing dead timber (a resource in ubiquitous supply) and continued to incrementally restrict access. What volume of resources, extracted from somewhere else, is the NPS consuming in Kennicott in the

name of immortalizing an historical, ruthless and efficient resource extraction while duplicitously restricting contemporary local use on a significantly smaller scale? What is going on here?

Nearly everyone I have conversed with about the Park appreciates the role of the NPS in the protection of wild places. And, nearly everyone I have spoken to has mild to strong criticisms of the Park Service in some of its policies and actions spanning the nearly 100 years of its existence. Rarely do these criticisms get honestly and clearly stated in the public forum. I cannot name a single individual present in this community prior to 2000 whom I know to be pleased with what Kennicott has been transformed into. I can name many who are displeased after having watched ten years of shuck and jive, moving from “arrested decay” to full restoration, and from a Park-community partnership in the Rec Hall to Park control in the Rec Hall.

There are other issues, as well, that genuinely and defensibly upset some, but it seems I’ll grow old waiting for most of these objections to be publicly voiced.

Editor’s note. Jeremy asked us to reprint his letter to the National Park Service regarding the Donoho Basin controversy. For background on this issue see story on page 9.

“Firearms stand next in importance to the Constitution itself. They are the American people’s liberty teeth and keystone under the independence. The church, the plow, the prairie wagon and citizens firearms are indelibly related.” - George Washington

“He who does not bellow out the truth when he knows the truth makes himself the accomplice of liars and forgers.” —French poet, essayist and editor Charles Peguy (1873-1914)

Cooking with Peggy

BY PEGGY GUNTIS

Dear Friends, This is the time of year for most of us that when we come in from outside we want a nice warm meal and if we're the cook, one that's been cooking all day in the crock pot! I have no idea who invented that wonderful appliance but I love it. There's just nothing like coming into the house after a hard day's work and smelling that dinner is already cooked. When I'm in McCarthy, however, I hesitate to use the crock pot because of the length of time the power has to be generated (actually, Jim doesn't like it!) so I guess and convert the times on the recipes to oven time. Here's a recipe for Chili that we use all the time.

CHILI

1 lb. ground beef
 1 medium onion, chopped
 ½ teaspoon salt
 1/8 teaspoon pepper
 2 tablespoons chili powder
 1 can tomato soup
 1 15 oz. can tomatoes, chopped into pieces (include juice)
 1 can dark red kidney beans
 1 can chili hot beans
 1 cup (or more) tomato juice

Brown ground beef and onions. Drain well. Mix all ingredients together in a 4 qt. crock pot (or even a little smaller) and simmer on HIGH temperature for 5 hours or so.

TIP: Fill the cooker no more than 2/3 full and no less than half-full.

Another one I use my crock pot for is SWISS STEAK

About 2 ½ - 3 lbs. boneless top round steak
 2 cans cream of mushroom soup
 1 envelope onion soup mix
 ½ cup water

Place all ingredients in crock pot; simmer on low all day; serve sauce over rice, mashed potatoes or noodles.

Another recipe that we like is one for Barbecue Beef.

3-lb. boneless chuck roast
 1 cup barbecue sauce
 ½ cup apricot preserves
 1/3 cup chopped green peppers
 1 small onion, chopped
 1 tablespoon brown sugar
 12 sandwich rolls

1. Cut roast into quarters and place in a greased crock pot.

2. Combine the barbecue sauce, preserves, green peppers, onion, mustard, and brown sugar. Pour over the roast.

3. Cover and cook on low for 6-8 hours. Remove roast and slice thinly. Return to crock pot and stir gently.

4. Cover and cook another 20-30 minutes.

5. Serve the Beef and Sauce on rolls.

You're probably saying Enough! Enough! with the crock pot. So O.K. now I'll give you one for easy sandwiches you can serve with chips if someone drops by to watch the football game with you.

CHILI MUFFINS

1 tablespoon margarine or butter
 ½ lb. ground beef
 1 - 15 ½ oz. can chili con carne with beans

6 English muffins

1. Melt the margarine, add the beef and cook until brown. Stir in the chili con carne and cook until thoroughly heated.

2. Split and toast the muffins and spread with margarine. Spoon chili over 6 of the muffins. Serve the remaining muffins on the side.

Speaking of people dropping by for a football game or hockey or baseball.....I don't think I've ever given you many recipes for appetizers. I'd like to give you a couple of my old favorites. When I make these I always make extra so after everyone leaves and the dishes are all done, I can sit around all the next day and eat it to my heart's content.

SHRIMP DIP

1 lb. bag of shrimp
 1 cup ketchup
 2 tablespoons horseradish
 16 oz. cream cheese
 Tabasco to taste
 Worcestershire sauce to taste

Mix everything but the shrimp until smooth and then add the shrimp.

Here's another that my mother used to make for company. Mom's been gone now about 40 years so I love coming across some of her recipe cards and remembering eating the goodies way back when.

CHEESE LOG OR BALLS

6 oz. cream cheese
 3 or 4 oz. bleu cheese
 1 tablespoon grated onion
 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce

Mix and form into 16 to 20 balls and roll in chipped dried beef or walnuts OR make into a log and roll in the chipped dried beef or walnuts. Serves 6 - 8 people

Just one more appetizer because I can't resist. Again this is one that I always hope will have some leftovers. It's an old one so

all of you may have it but just in case.....

- PINEAPPLE CHEESE BALL
- 2 8-oz. packages of cream cheese
- 1 8 ½ oz. can crushed pineapple - drained
- 2 cups chopped pecans
- ¼ cup chopped green peppers
- 2 tablespoons chopped onions
- 1 tablespoon all-seasoned salt

Mix everything together reserving 1 cup pecans. Roll into 1 large or 2 small balls. Chill and roll in reserved pecans. This can be frozen.

Well, I hope I've given you enough to try for a little while. Have a great winter and I'll talk to you again in the spring.

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

The Donoho Basin controversy

BY JEREMY KELLER

It has long been obvious to me that a majority of the McCarthy-Kennicott community is interested in the increased regulation of visitors on Park land. The rationale behind this interest is sound. Let's limit the size of the herd so that it does not over-graze the pasture.

To my limited knowledge no comprehensive assessment of the carrying capacity of the Donoho Basin has begun. Yet, from many sides of our community it has been pre-supposed that this un-discovered carrying capacity has been breached and that the primary cause lies squarely at the doorstep of St. Elias Alpine Guides. I have heard several public accusations against them asserting that they continually abuse their privilege as a commercial operator and that in their capitalists' rush to make a buck, regularly violate reasonable safety practices, casually trample the eco-system and food habituate the bears. Many have gone so far as to express their dire concern for this to our superintendent, Meg Jensen, in

person and in writing. One gentleman, after declaring the Donoho Basin "ruined," went as far as to channel Thomas Hobbes. "So, please regulate us." Disturbingly, no one has yet provided any substantiation of their accusations. I, personally, asked for evidence of St. Elias Alpine Guides' (SEAG) gross negligence at the May 2009 McCarthy Area Council (MAC) meeting. And, in a packed and hostile room, no evidence, in addition to the few isolated events already on record by SEAG's own admission, was provided. Additionally, I am personally aware of errors made in the backcountry by other operators, Park staff and myself. Everyone is human, right?

The one very positive development to come out of the productive process this summer was how well cooperation and non-coerced compliance can work when everyone has a stake in the place and is willing to make allowances for other perspectives.

I am not writing to vote for any of the options, though I want to clearly acknowledge that the summary presented by Stephens Harper and Nora Martinez is a

fair representation of the summer dialog. Personally, I think that education and cleverly encouraged voluntary cooperation are magical tools and should be used exclusively until a serious study of all the impacts of concern is undertaken.

Additionally, I am not writing to defend SEAG against the charges that have been publicly leveled against them as I do not have any objective evidence either way.

I am writing in defense of Wayne and Gaia Marrs as individuals, community members and friends and to comment on the subtext of the park-community partnership. I grow weary of the witch hunt for these capitalists whom I know to be generous and excellent neighbors with a long history of being more than willing to stop what they are doing at a moment's notice to help whomever, whether the situation is dire or otherwise. They are good employers with a generally happy and content staff that volunteers in and contributes to our community.

I would also remind everyone who finds themselves in a finger

pointing mood that, in the spirit of the best of our justice system, the accused have the right to face their accusers and the accusers are obliged to provide an objective defense to their charges that can withstand scrutiny. At this point in the Donoho conversation the only thing that seems clear to me is a collision of different values. I feel it is worth noting that many of the voices opposed to seeing and being near to large groups in the

front-backcountry spend most of their year living in cities in a sea of people, largely on a massive concrete pad. And I, who live here in the Wrangells year-round, make no aesthetic or ethical distinction between one human animal in a purple Patagonia jacket or twenty. Who can explain these differences in perspective or assert that one is more correct than the other?

The most important concept to express to National Park Ser-

vice (NPS) staff and my neighbors concerns a remarkably unobserved contradiction. In our country today we are continually shifting responsibilities away from ourselves and into the hands of an omnipresent government. We mistakenly think that the government can solve the problems that we assume have originated in the market. But what does the engine of government run on? Does it create products and services of value

(Continued on page 24)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

October 30, 2009

WSEN,

You guys do a great job on a newsletter & I love getting it. It provides a connection to my late brother James Sill who lived & loved there. As usual, will be there this summer.

Thanks,

Judi Morack

Fairbanks, AK.

Nov. 11, 2009

Dear Rick and Bonnie,

Hope you all are ok. We are ok for old people. This place is still not home. Thanks for a great paper. Look forward to its coming. Makes us homesick. Keep up the good work.

Gene and Edith

Summerville, GA.

Aspen Meadows



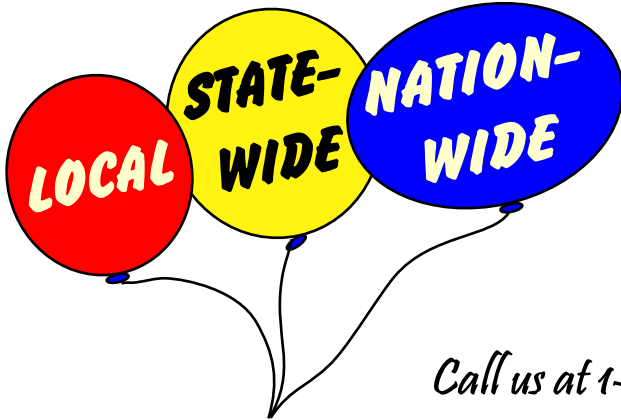
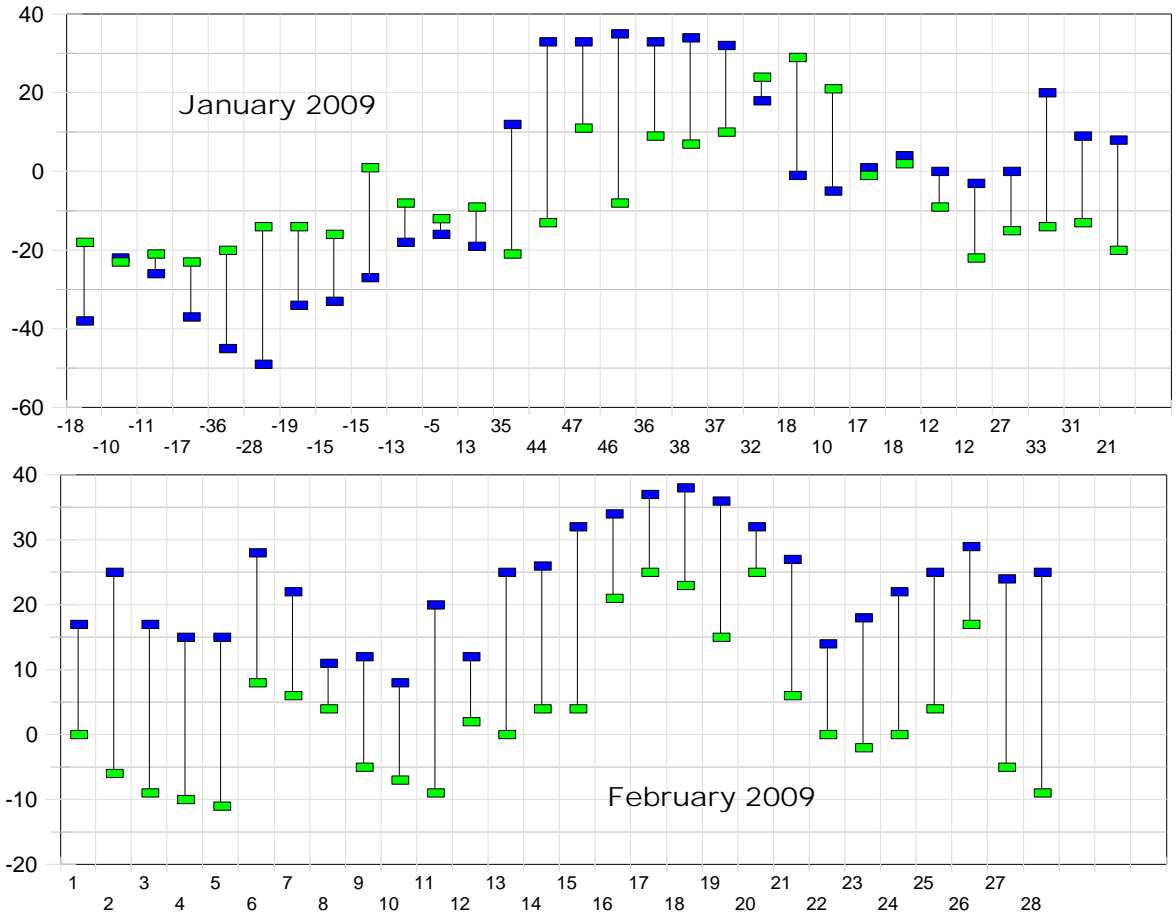
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