

Wrangell St. Elias News

"Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty"

Vol. Twenty-Three Issue One January & February 2014

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Wow—it's 2014! Happy New Year!

BY BONNIE KENYON

The new year began taking significant shape for McCarthy resident, Paul Hanis, as he joined fellow ice carvers in downtown Anchorage. Sunday, January 5th, as the sun set, he and his friend, Patrick Boonstra, put final touches on their intricate ice sculpture—Frozen Windowpane Impressions.

"The design, based on hoarfrost crystals on a window, was an absolute pleasure to see come to life," says Paul's wife, Jenny.

Many thanks to Laurel Andrews and the *Alaska Dispatch* for the following information:

The teams of two people each carved their block of ice over the weekend. Teams started Friday morning and worked until 4 p.m. Sunday. As they finished their pieces, crowds began to gather in town square. Several other works, scattered around downtown Anchorage, were also in various stages of completion on Sunday.

A five-judge panel assigned scores to the works and announced the winners after the Sunday deadline. Winners in the annual competition, hosted by Anchorage Downtown Partnership, were announced hours later as spotlights illuminated the



Photo courtesy Loren Holmes / AlaskaDispatch.com

carvings in Town Square against a dark winter sky.

Paul and Patrick were awarded first place, taking home a \$500 prize. The pair estimate their sculpture took around 40 hours to complete.

The ice carving competition is in its eighth year, said Erin Westfall, director of events. She describes how the ice is brought down from Fairbanks and carved from the same lake that provides ice for the World Ice Art Championships held every March in that interior community.

The ice blocks were carved out in March 2012 and have been sitting under a massive pile of sawdust in Fairbanks, kept

frozen despite blistering summer heat.

The Alaska Railroad and Lynden Transport ship the ice to Anchorage free of charge, says the event's ice manager, Tom Lewando. According to Lewando, 100,000 lbs. of ice were hauled down on the railroad.

The sculptures for the 2014 Crystal Gallery of Ice will be on display for the next few weeks, weather dependent. They will begin to melt in the sun and likely be unrecognizable by mid-February.

Congratulations, Paul and Patrick. Another successful ice sculpture and another win!

A note from the publisher

BY BONNIE KENYON

Happy New Year! This greeting is coming from Oak Hill, Florida, instead of McCarthy, Alaska. Rick and I are a long ways from our log cabin. We left home mid-October, earlier-than-usual, flying south for a longer-than-usual visit with family. Since our plans included being away from our office and printing equipment during the publication of the January/February 2014 *WSEN*, we researched the feasibility of doing this particular issue away from home. Without going into all the details of the “how-to,” I’ll just say we are doing it.

We located a small printing company nearby who will do the printing, collating, stapling and folding that Rick and I normally do in our cabin. Rick is presently putting the finishing touches on the layout and I’m writing the last page. My contacts for *Items of Interest* were easily acquired through email and Facebook messages. Thank you, neighbors, for being so quick to respond to my inquiries!

Shortly before our departure from Alaska, Rick and I received sad news about a close neighbor that was given a serious diagnosis. Since our arrival in Florida, our special neighbor/friend, “Flatbed” Larry Turnbull passed away at his home in McCarthy. We hope to have a more detailed article about him in the next issue. The picture of Larry on page 13 was provided for us by photographer (and McCarthy property owner) Peggy Morsch. Rick and I thank you, Peggy!

Our thanks also go to Jason Esler and Chrissy Harris-Haley for keeping us informed. A special gathering is being planned for this upcoming summer in McCarthy.

Christmas was spent without snow but plenty of sunshine and warm temperatures. Our son, Rick Jr., his wife Maria, and our four grandsons traveled to Oak Hill from Donalsonville, GA to help us celebrate the season. We had a wonderful time together. My mom, Neta Schafer, 92, and Rick’s dad, Carl Kenyon, 94, were with us, too. A highlight of family time this year was attending a Christmas Eve candlelight service at Edgewater Alliance Church. My brother, Ron Schafer, is the Minister of Music there and led a wonderful musical celebration of the reason for the season.

Rick and I are thankful for you, our subscribers, our advertisers and all those who helped us put together this issue. Thank you, *Alaska Dispatch*, Mike Campbell, Managing Edi-

tor (permission to reprint); Laurel Andrews, Reporter (text material); and Loren Holmes (photos) for the cover material in this issue. Laurel Andrews’ complete article, “Crystal Gallery of Ice” was published on January 5 in *The Dispatch*. She gave me permission to use an edited portion for our cover, allowing me to personalize it for our readership. The *Alaska Dispatch* covers news and voices from the Last Frontier and can be located at <http://www.alaskadispatch.com>. Be sure to check out this much-appreciated publication!

Since I am the major “proof-er” of *WSEN*, I extend my deepest apologies to our following advertisers: McCarthy Center, Rowcon Services and Wells Fargo Bank. I failed to catch a software error that misprinted their ads in the November/December 2013 issue.

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Items of Interest

BY BONNIE KENYON

Patt Garrett and family: Patt's summer "wrap-up" on her McCarthy visits got set on the shelf due to her very busy fall season. I managed to connect with her recently and get the following item of interest. Here it is in her own words:

"My granddaughter-powered paint crew returned this summer to work on Lot 23 Kennicott Ave, in beautiful downtown McCarthy. This year another Oregon college student joined us and brought his ukulele. He played music, carried rocks, stacked rocks, hauled water and mixed cement to work on the foundation and paths. The granddaughters scrapped, stained, painted, swept, scrubbed, cleaned, drove U-Hauls and then painted some more. The outhouse became a lovely Bungalow Blue.

"This grandma could barely keep up with a crew of three and the summer's heat made keeping food fresh difficult. I whined. Bugs were everywhere. The crew hung in there. I reacted to gnats, mosquitos and hornets in an un-ladylike manner. I waved my arms and screeched. I also worried a lot about the color yellow.

"Maybe some of you remember my agony of choosing 'red' last summer. Well, my angst over choosing 'yellow' is even greater.

We tried many yellows: Butter-scotch, Royal, Squash, Glitzy, Baby Poop, and Goldenrod. My combinations of red and yellow reminded the paint crew of McDonalds, Carl's Jr., the custom painted VW front of Tip's Bar in downtown Eagle River and several signs for Thai Food in Spenard. Finally, with only hours to spare, I brought down a gallon of Butterfields yellow.

"While I swore and slapped at hornets, the paint crew nodded 'yes.' Locals walking by voiced approval—tourists watched in awe—and thus Butterfields yellow trim on the Fireweed red house it is. It has been called 'too cute,' happy, friendly, cheerful, and whimsical. I think it will look lovely sitting in snow, which was the deciding factor. Since Chelsea and Andria still have two years of school, what will we do the summer of 2014?

"In September, my 88 year old father, Troy Garrett, joined other WWII Veterans on a Memorial Flight from Spokane, Washington, to Washington DC. Two days before the government shut down, they visited the War Memorials and watched the changing of the guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

"My father joined the Navy at age 17. He came home at age 21. He got a job in an underground lead

mine in North Idaho, and soon I was one of the first of the baby boomers. He raised a family. We moved a lot after he became a welder at Los Alamos and in the underground missile silos in the southwest. He seldom spoke about his work or his time in the Navy.

"Only when we family members helped arrange this trip did we gain more understanding of what four years in the South Pacific as a teenager might have been like for him. He returned hard of hearing, due to having no ear protection while serving as a gunner aboard the USS Bebas (DE 10). His deafness caused him a lot of problems throughout his lifetime.

"At Dad's reluctant request, we ordered a hat with his five battle ribbons on it and used a huge darning needle to poke holes for his three battle stars. Susan Hendrickson, with the VA in Shoshone County, Idaho, accompanied him and Dad could not have made the trip without her."

Joe Macchina: Joe is a nearby neighbor, but he stays pretty busy during the summer and fall months. Now that winter is a sure thing in McCarthy, Joe's activities are taking on a different life of their own. He writes: "It's been pretty cold here; no colder than most Novembers. Very quiet. The Rowland (fam-

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Contributors to this issue: Peggy Guntis, Dick Morris, Danielle Tiopan, Peggy Morsch, Loren Holmes, Laurel Andrews, Karen Laubenstein, Ned Rozell, and Rick Kenyon Jr. Subscription price is \$14 for one year in the USA. Canada \$16. Other countries \$23. Advertising rates upon request. Deadline for publication in next issue is February 15.

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ily) aside, I think there are only about 6 or so people on the west side. I'm just doing the normal thing that one does at -30—feeding the wood stove! I'm also getting firewood when it warms up to -15 or better. I am going to New York on the 10th of December through the 31st, visiting family and friends. I'll be living in Anchorage from January through May.

"I'm building a shower (about half done) inside my cabin. It's 3'x3'x5', all tile, that will drain into a 55-gallon drum that is buried outside. I have been working on the inside portion of that project and it's coming along great! The drain and outside portion will have to wait until spring. I will make as many trips in as possible this winter from Anchorage. After all this is my home! I love it here!"

Many of WSEN readers enjoy reading *Items of Interest*, Joe. Your "item" helps answer their question: What do folks do in the winter? You just helped answer that one. Thanks!

Patti Polizzo: Patti is definitely a "McCarthyite" this winter, her second year. Last year she stayed in a guest cabin belonging to Jim and Audrey Edwards at Swift Creek, just down the road from me. This winter, however, she is enjoying the quiet of downtown McCarthy, unlike summer season when things are bustling with guests visiting our area. Her summer job with McCarthy Lodge has extended into the fall/winter season. Her winter home is now the crew house where she has a few more amenities, like 24-hour electricity and propane/oil heat. No generator to (try) start and no fire wood to gather.

She says she is walking to mail with her dog-sitting charges, Dynamite (Neil Darish's dog) and Izzy (Greg Fensterman's). "It's been so beautiful. Dynamite is spoiled rotten now and doesn't like to go out much. I still have Izzy for a couple more days."

Dynamite needs daily encouragement to come out of retirement while Izzy keeps Patti guessing as to what he will bring home next. "Yesterday it was a roll of toilet paper," says Patti.

She loves creating her own cards (and is good at it) so she is putting Christmas cards together. With the slower pace of the winter season, she enjoys having more time to visit with her daughter, Emily, via phone, and catching up on family news.

Reading is one of her favorite pastimes, she says, and that is getting a lot of her attention these days. A great time to read those library books, Patti!

Neil Darish: As I was finishing up Patti's item, I received one in from McCarthy Lodge owner, Neil Darish. He is always busy and mostly it is with the various ventures of the lodge. Here's the latest happenings from downtown McCarthy: "We have made great progress on two major infrastructure upgrades during our extended summer-like weather that continued well into October and early November. We have upgraded our entire septic and leach field for the restaurant and the Lancaster. Keith Rowland and Rowcon Services have done a first-rate job on this project. This upgrade allows us to continue to grow our food services and accommodations well into the future.

"Our electrical system upgrade is a substantial improvement for McCarthy Ventures that is well under way. The new building housing our electrical plant is nearing completion. Jeremy Keller will finish the interior of the structure in April. In late April, the wiring for each building will be pulled through the new conduit lines that replace our old wiring. We anticipate going live with the new system in time to start the season.

"The town of McCarthy will hear (and see) the difference. The sound levels will be greatly reduced

with this new system. After implementation, we will be able to remove the overhead wires seen across Kennicott Ave and Barrett Way. The new wiring and transformers will increase efficiency. This will provide us with 17% more power using the same amount of fuel. We will also be able to run more services such as the 3-door freezer in the grocery store.

"During the season, we intend to implement a closed loop heat recapture and recovery system that will take excess heat produced by the diesel generators, and convert it to the Lodge and Lancaster's."

Thanks, Neil, for all the news. I'm already looking forward to next summer's mail day excursions to the grocery store. The fellowship of neighbors, the store's great deck and your fine ice cream cones all combine to make it a wonderful experience!

Jim and Audrey Edwards: If you read *A note from the publisher* before coming to "items," you know that Rick and I are presently in Florida for the winter. We came through Anchorage in mid-October to catch our flight to Orlando. Before heading to the airport we stopped at Jim and Audrey's Condo and had a cup of tea. Interestingly enough, they had recently returned from a trip to Disney World in Orlando. They had hoped it might work out that they would still be down here when we arrived. Maybe next year, Audrey!

Yesterday I called them to see how things were going. Audrey was busy making her famous chocolate-covered cherries. Jim was (somewhat) impatiently looking on with hopes to sample them. I told her I wish I could be transported there for another cup of tea!

Since their return to Alaska, the Edwards purchased a 21' Motorhome. Once the weather improves, Jim and Audrey are eager to go out on a few excursions. "Jim is chomping at the bit to go somewhere,"

says Audrey. "This is not the time, however, since travel is way too challenging due to the rain, icy road conditions and fog." In the meantime, they are enjoying life with visits to and from family and friends. The other night they were pleased to have dinner with Kenny and Donna Smith. Both Jim and Audrey are already looking forward to summer and their visits to their Swift Creek home.

Save a few of those cherries for Rick and me, Jim, and we'll stop in for tea on our way home.

Monte and Candyce Monte-pare: Facebook is proving to be an asset for me writing this particular *Items of Interest*. With neighbors going to and fro, making contact with them is made much easier via the internet. I just received this interesting "item" from the Montepares of Kennicott.

"We have been very busy having fun!" writes Candyce. "We just got to New Zealand's South Island. Monte and I are here with Ben and Ellie Grey (of Ultima Thule), Jared Steyaert and Tanya Bryson. The six of us have rented a house in the mountains of Queenstown for two months. Our adventures here have only just begun. We have been rock climbing, packrafting, hiking, and paragliding and we have only been in New Zealand for 5 days.

"For the past month and a half Monte and I have been traveling to Portugal, Spain, and Turkey. We have been on many endless adventures and there are only more to come."

Thanks, Candyce, for taking the time to say hello and give us a peak into your winter travels!

John and Barbara Rice: The Rices left McCarthy shortly after Monte and Candyce's wedding on September 7th. Before they left they took a 4-wheeler and hiking adventure up the mountain to visit friends/neighbors, Tim Mischel and Kathy Drury. Tim's mountain get-

away called the Angle Station is located above Kennicott.

After an uneventful drive home to St. Louis, they immediately went to another National Park. This time it was their own Ozark National Scenic Riverways in Missouri. After that it was off to the east coast to do a little visiting. "We spent a few days in North Carolina visiting our grandkids Kate and Robert," writes John. "After that we went on down to Georgia to take a look at the Barrier islands. From St. Mary's, we caught the ferry to still another National Park, Cumberland Island National Seashore. There is a lot of history on the island, but I would have to write a book to tell it all. One thing our generation should remember though is that John John Kennedy got married in a little church on the island. From Georgia, we went down to Oak Hill, Florida, to visit our Alaska friends the Kenyons."

Rick and I really enjoyed our visit with you, John and Barbara. We look forward to another get-together soon.

Jim and Peggy Guntis: Peggy took time out of her very busy holiday schedule to write us the following: "Thanksgiving is a very special time of the year for the Guntis family. We all just love it. Jim and I feel very blessed that we can have so many of our family and friends gather together to give thanks and be together. We usually have a large round table that seats about 22 or 23 people plus one or two long folding tables as extenders for additional family and friends who show up. Of course that means we have to empty the living room of all furniture and set up there! This year Jim decided to change the shape of the table to an oval. Many years ago I had a tablecloth made that would fit the round tablecloth that is 123" in diameter. Now I was being asked to figure how to cover the table that was changed to an oval and was made about two feet lon-

ger! Things were a little rough around here for awhile! I did figure it out though and since two of the six children and their families wouldn't be there, we were able to seat 29 at the oval just perfectly. Among those were people many of you in McCarthy know or certainly have met—Salley and Scott Wallin and our granddaughter, Anna; and George Cebula, who, besides being our neighbor in McCarthy, spends his winters in Phoenix. The rest of our family have all visited us in McCarthy for the 4th of July parades or other summer happenings.

"Our weather was great on Thanksgiving Day and since I love to cook we had more than enough with a couple turkeys, a couple hams and all the old traditional family favorites. We are so thankful to have such wonderful friends and family. Consider it an open invitation to any of you who would like to join us for a Thanksgiving dinner. Just be sure to let me know a few days ahead. I'll be sure you have a chair and lots of food!"

Congratulations to the Tschappat family: I just received this wonderful item of interest and it comes from mom Stefanie: "We are beyond joy, to announce the newest little mama to our family, Petra Lyn born 12.2.2013, safely arriving at home into the arms of mama and papa at 9:59 pm under a beautiful Alaskan starry night and the new moon. She is healthy, vibrant and serene. Her big sisters are ecstatic and in complete amazement that she is OURS to love everyday. We are so grateful to all of your many blessings, prayers, thoughts, and tidings that filled our hearts as we received one of life's truest gifts."

Congratulations to the entire Tschappat family—dad Adam, mom Stefanie, daughters Pheobe, Hayden and their new arrival, Petra Lyn!

Alaska Grown-1982

BY RICK KENYON JR.

As fall progressed, the seasonal changes became more pronounced with each passing day.

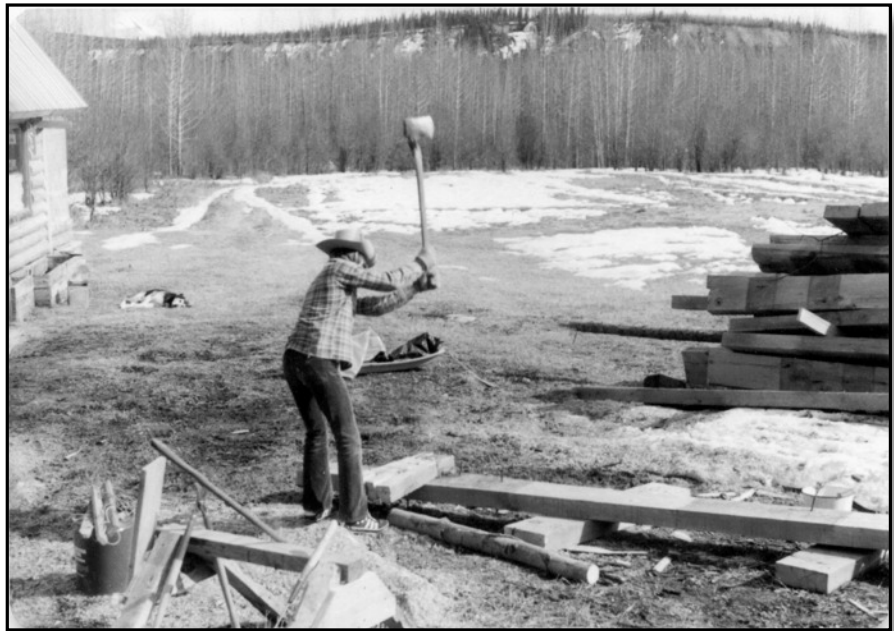
Alaska—known for its majestic beauty—is one place where the seasons are clearly defined. Fall has freezing temperatures at night and the leaves paint the landscape with brilliant yellows, oranges and reds as if some Great Artist liberally painted colors for all to see. It didn't last long, though, and those beautiful leaves fell down to the ground as winter made its presence well known with a blanket of snow. The transition from season to season each had its pro's and con's and for residents, it was something to live with and adjust to. My favorite season was fall and I loved to walk up the bluff behind our cabin to behold the Kennicott valley. Sam would accompany me up a small foot-path carved through those woods previously.

Tools and equipment would be moved under shelters for the coming winter. The rains that preceded snowfall made that job less enjoyable, but it was necessary to be prepared for the long winter that lay ahead. At the rain turned into snow, we continued to use the vehicle for transportation until it was too deep for travel. The snow machine was brought out for its seasonal use. Dad tweaked the sled for use and we drove over to McCarthy on mail days when the Kennicott River was frozen and safe for travel. We would take turns with the neighbors on our side of the river in getting mail each week.

Christmas came and went and soon a new year: 1982. I was 14 years old and in the 9th grade. The home school program said I was officially in high school and that was big stuff in my mind. I got to pick out a class that was an "elective" and that was pretty neat. School was

wards' airstrip. Dad put skis on the PA-12 during the winter months as the airstrip wasn't plowed.

Jerry and Lynn had a neighbor across their street by the name of John Bury. John was a ham radio operator (KL7QZ) and in the course of conversation,



WSEN staff photo

Rick Jr. tries his hand with the splitting axe. In the background is a pile of salvaged bridge timbers, from one of the washed-out local bridges. They came in handy for foundations and many other projects.

a job in way of thinking, and something to be endured! There were plenty of more interesting things outside to do and far more enjoyable.

Back in the summer, Dad had met Jerry and Lynn Bellezza in Valdez. Jerry and Lynn owned a PA-12 airplane that needed some work done. Dad agreed to bring the plane to McCarthy and work on it. It would stay with us for some time. At first, we parked it down at the "gravel airstrip," then later at Jim Ed-

introduced the idea of talking to people around the world on a radio that was similar to CB radio. Thinking of our family in Florida and us not having a telephone to use in McCarthy sparked Dad's interest in the idea of this type of communication. He brought home a book and audio tape for Mom and I to review and check out.

Morse code was a language in itself and one we were not familiar with, but, it was necessary to learn before getting a ham radio

license. I was sort of blown away by the sounds on the cassette tape that made up the alphabet. At first, it was easy to get the letters mixed up but as time progressed, it began to gel and get easier. There was a book to study with ham radio regulations and basic electronic theory, too. That gave us something to do during the long winter and helped pass the time.

I recall that trip to Valdez in the spring of 1982 to take the Novice test. Dad warmed up the PA-12 and we flew with skis on. (There was a place to land at the Valdez airport for ski-equipped airplanes.)

I met with John Bury and he gave me the test—which I passed!

We went to the airport to leave but the weather had

As we flew up through Thompson Pass, the clouds dropped down to the ground ahead of us. Dad circled for some time and my stomach began to get queasy. I closed my eyes and prayed! I woke up later, as our plane skimmed over the trees at our homestead and banked to land.

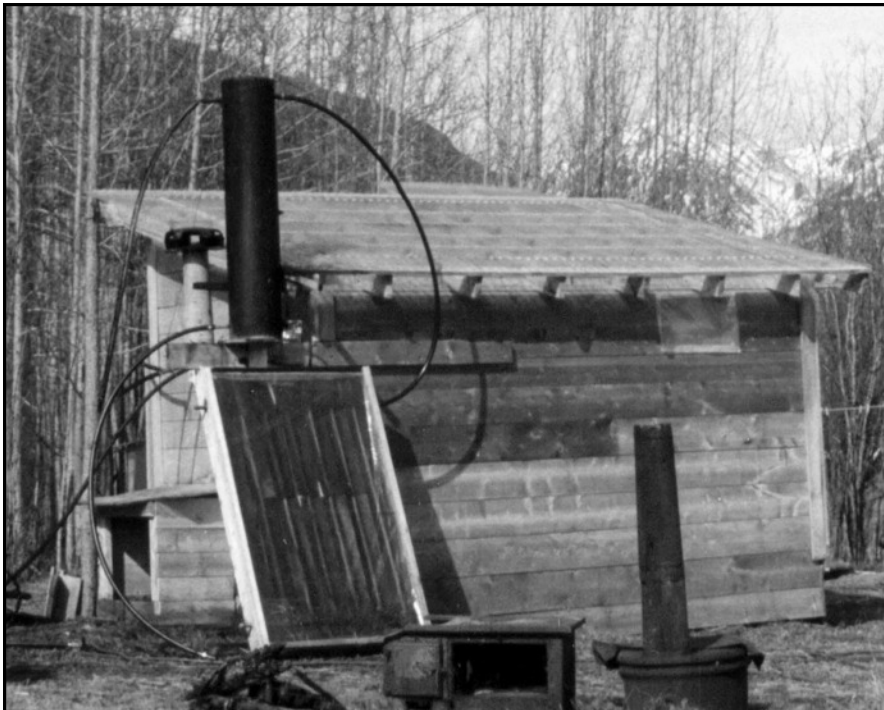
Mom came outside the cabin and waved. We were spared of having to make an emergency landing and our respect for the weather increased.

When my ham license came in the mail, I eagerly tore open the envelope from the FCC. My “call sign” was WL7AVL and allowed communication on certain band/frequencies and using Morse code only.

Mom, Dad and I would gather around the ham radio and copy the CW and check each other if we missed a word or two.

We made contact with John Bury in Valdez and later Lynn Bellezza got her ham license and would chat as time permitted. We ordered some study guides for the Technician and General Class tests. It would be that fall before we would be ready to take those tests in Anchorage.

Grampa and Grammy each studied for their novice licenses and got a radio also. It would become a way of communication for us for the years to come and a real blessing. Technology was an amazing thing!



WSEN staff photo

Bathhouse-sauna-laundry room. Dad built a solar water heater using copper pipe and aluminum press plates. Two cast-off stoves that were no longer safe to use indoors served as outdoor cook grills.

By spring we were ready to take the Novice class license test and met with John Bury at his house in Valdez where he administered it. Each of us passed and within six weeks our license came in the mail!

changed for the worse and we had to spend the night.

Jerry and Lynn had a spare bedroom so we spent the night with them.

The weather remained bad but finally we were able to leave.

“Sometimes it is said that man can not be trusted with government of himself. Can he, then, be trusted with the government of others?”—Thomas Jefferson

“Some people regard private enterprise as a predatory tiger to be shot. Others look on it as a cow they can milk. Not enough people see it as a healthy horse, pulling a sturdy wagon.”—British Prime Minister Winston Churchill (1874-1965)

Glaciers and wilderness

BY DANIELLE TIOPAN

Before I begin to explain what was most memorable about visiting Kennicott and McCarthy, let me first introduce the group I was with, where we are from, and why we were even visiting Alaska.

My name is Danielle Tiopan, and I am an undergraduate student studying Geology at California State University of Sacramento. An adventure trip was put on at the end of July, beginning of August 2013, by The National Association of Geoscience Teachers (NAGT). The goal was to bring 14 people from around the country to the outbacks of Alaska in order to experience the wilderness by camping, hiking, and what some would call "roughing it." What better place to experience the awe-strikingly open wilderness, than by visiting Alaska?

When we arrived at the vast wilderness of McCarthy we could only speculate what might have caused all the interesting folding of the rocks, and why the landscape looked the way it did.

There were many reasons we decided to visit McCarthy and Kennicott. This region of Alaska is very remote and not visited by many, but much like many of the residents of Alaska, we didn't want to be surrounded by people or cities. As we continued our trek to McCarthy we couldn't believe there was only one road, a dirt road, to the little town we would call home for a few days.

Upon arriving at Glacier View Campground, we immediately set up camp and rushed to

meet our Saint Elias Alpine guides to tour the mining town of Kennicott. I have seen many mining towns, as I live in a mining region in California, but the sight of Kennicott made me realize just how secluded the place we were visiting really was.

When we were touring the town, our guide was stellar in that he had some knowledge of the geology in the area, and was very knowledgeable about the mining processes and even the town itself.

I had never seen a mining town quite like Kennicott before. What made this town so different was the fact that the workers and miners could only use the resources found in that location. Whether this meant food, transportation (which was limited), or the materials to keep the mining going.

Learning about how hard the life of a miner really was opened my eyes, leaving me more thankful for what I get to enjoy in my everyday life.

Seeing most of the town in the process of being restored really gave a sense of how proud the locals and the National Park Service are to be part of this town.

The sight of the surrounding glaciers is sublime. The first glance of the debris-covered glacial terrain rekindled images of alien planets in sci-fi films, or the mountains and craters of the moon, perhaps. When we were looking at the debris on the glacier, a majority of us thought the glacier had receded and left a lot of sediment behind, but to our surprise, we discovered the Kennicott Glacier and the Root Gla-

acier were actually still moving down the mountain. With the two glaciers trying to squeeze into the same valley, the smaller (Root Glacier) is being pushed into the side of the valley by the Kennicott Glacier, which is moving faster and is more massive.

Seeing a glacier in person was incredible. There is a major difference between seeing a glacier in a magazine versus seeing the glacier for yourself. Being from California, where snow and wilderness are rare pleasures, such sights can be overwhelming. All I can say is... unbelievable.

The next day we went back to Kennicott, but this time we were getting ready to take a hiking tour of the Root Glacier. On our hike out to the Root Glacier, the guides, one of whom we had convinced to go with us the previous day, as well as two other guides, explained to us that the melting zone of the glaciers were under the surface sediment (moraine) which keeps the glacier itself insulated from the sun, slowing the melting down.

Coming from the lower 48, everyone in the group was not used to the East-West facing mountains as opposed to North-South facing mountains. We had a difficult time orientating ourselves to where North was and even had trouble judging distances. At a certain point on the hike to the glacier, our guides showed us that Mount Blackburn was 30 miles away, and at the exact same point on the trail the Chugach Mountain Range was also 30 miles away. The Chugach Range looked much further away than Blackburn Mountain.

Sadly, each year we are losing two meters off the Root Glacier from the melting processes.

I was amazed at how the glacial features were very similar to those seen on land, though the processes on the glacier were happening at a faster rate. While hiking on the Root Glacier we learned some new terms, such as an esker (which is a deposit from a sub-glacial river).

One feature some of us had never seen before, that was specific to the Root Glacier, was a moulin. A moulin is where a river starts to scour down into the ice. Moulins can get so big that they create a hole that allows the water to drain, causing the river to

dry up. We were able to see a moulin that measured approximately three to four feet across and sounded like a rushing river.

I was in awe at how pure and clean the water tasted. How many people can say they have tasted glacial water? On the hike back out to Kennicott from the glacier, one of the other group members and I were talking about how nice it would be to jump into some water and cool off. One of the guides heard us talking and had mentioned a local swimming hole he knew of.

As soon as the group walked back into the town and loaded up the vans, we told the guide that we wanted to stop in at the

swimming hole. He dropped us off at the hole and three of us jumped out to get into the freezing water. Since we had not taken a shower in a few days it felt really nice to be able to wash off a little before dinner.

We had such a great experience in McCarthy and Kennicott; the people were so friendly and helpful. Coming back to California and telling my story to people makes me want to visit this region again. I have already started planning my next trip up there, although I'm not sure when that will be. Hopefully soon.

November in May Creek

Editor's note: This story is continued from our last issue. It originally appeared in our November & December 1995 issue.

BY DICK MORRIS

We arrived at the Kennicott River, opposite McCarthy, at 8:00 p.m. on this third day out where the ignition points on the fire truck finally burned out. The hand-powered cable tramway McCarthy residents use to ferry themselves across the river stood out starkly in our lights like a monument to warmer weather. Total mileage for that day = 60 miles, travel time = 11½ hours.

Our first, and easiest, water crossing was made that night. Although the large, 17,000 lbs., Nodwell broke through the foot thick Kennicott River ice, both it and the M-116 clawed on through the hole. The local homesteaders who came along later with a load of groceries and fuel were not too happy about

that hole, but we compensated by giving them a lift home. That night in McCarthy was spent in Ken Rowland's house, the old Copper River Northwestern Railroad mess hall, a welcome warm place for some very tired people. Warm, hard linoleum beats cold, hard ice anytime!

A trip to help the museum and at the same time have a fun and interesting outing by now had evolved into a kind of determined military campaign and a contest of will. By Saturday morning, the fourth day, a "battle damage" list would have read "both large trucks disabled, the M-116 voltage regulator is out and it has to operate on battery power only, and the Nodwell's differential is loose and slinging hydraulic oil everywhere." "Are we having fun yet!?"

Fifteen miles from our objective, May Creek, we couldn't continue until the two tracked vehicles could be relied upon to

get us over and back. At this point it looked like we might have to return empty handed, but the crew all agreed that we had broken so much equipment the only way to go was forward, not to mention that our personal pride demanded it. Two groups were formed with one to work on the tracked vehicles while the other was to scout the Nizina River trail and possible river crossing on snowmachines, and to decide whether the river and McCarthy Creek were passable at all.

By noon the Nodwell was in improved condition and while the M-116's voltage regulator was burned beyond repair the M-116 could be kept running by swapping batteries occasionally with the Nodwell. Unfortunately this barred the possibility of using the gas-fired heaters on the M-116. Later in the afternoon the scouting party returned saying that the river could be

crossed. The recovery effort crawled onward. Somewhere during this time span the Nodwell took an alder "Lance" through its right windshield and a series of work gloves were used to plug the hole against the constant cascade of snow into the cab. Finally as alders kept snatching the gloves out of the hole, a loose wire from under the control panel was tied to a glove finger allowing the glove to be "reeled in" and the hole in the glass resealed.

Sunday, the fifth day, we woke up to -15. Once past a touchy first crossing of McCarthy Creek, which was running better than 5 feet deep under the ice in some places, the trip from McCarthy to the Nizina was slow and the alders continued to be a major problem. To make the larger Nodwell batteries fit the M-116 the engine cover had to be left open, causing a steady strong breeze of sub zero air through the cab. "Are we having fun yet?" Two of the crew decided to walk the last couple of miles to the Nizina, making better time than the Nodwell and staying alot warmer than in the M-116. It must be said that despite the mechanical mishaps that the frosted trails and sunlit approaches to the Nizina River were very beautiful.

Finally traversing the last steep switchback on the trail the last of the team descended to the Nizina River at last twilight. It was now too late in the day to attempt a crossing. The night was spent on the river ice in the vehicles, 6 people in the Nodwell and 2 in the M-116.

While jammed with men and gear the Nodwell was warmer,

but the unheated M-116 had slightly more space for two men and was more comfortable, if your sleeping bag would keep you warm at -15. However, all Museum Director John Cooper had to say between shivers the next morning, after chipping the ice off his sleeping bag zipper, was, "Are we having fun yet?" Eight men eating breakfast in the Nodwell, prepared on a small Coleman stove, was in some ways like a new form of group dance. With tight crouching room only each single pancake and cup of coffee made a careful relay through the vehicle to its destination and surprisingly most of them made it intact. It was like watching a centipede do aerobics.

It was now Monday of the sixth day and we found that the river had formed a new, small overflow channel between us and the shore. Ice dams were forming above and below us in the open channels causing new overflow and open leads across the ice. Safe crossing places from the day before were not so now. Also, going out too far and breaking off the thick shelf ice over deep water and hidden boulders was a really serious concern. To add to it all now the clouds became low overcast and it looked like snow was moving in. "Are we having fun yet?"

For this last push to May Creek it was decided that the river was too deep and fast for the M-116 which had no ice cleats. The heavier and higher Nodwell would cross alone and leave three of us behind for a second trip. The Nodwell then went on to capably cross the river channels, meeting water depths of 1' to 2 1/2'. However,

quite awhile was spent in finding the safest crossings and getting across the broad river delta. The sheer size and grandeur of the delta and surrounding mountains impressed us and made us realize our vulnerability before nature's might.

After a further three mile crawl past the Nizina the gnawing uncertainties about whether we were on the right trail or not were finally dispelled by the sight of Al Gagnon's new cabin and shortly beyond the May Creek airstrip and log post office! The museum's antique vehicles were lined up just as they had been left in 1985.

It started snowing hard and while a quick lunch was prepared in the all-purpose Nodwell, work immediately started on first loading the Model T one ton truck onto the back of the 1935 Ford stakebed truck. Based on information from miner Russ Hoffman a better trail to the nearby steam churn drill was also located. The idea for our first trip back was to tow the combined load across the Nizina and come back later for the rest with a four axle trailer. Considering our recent experience it was decided not to split the crew and leave an on site work party, in case something happened and we couldn't get back. That proved to be a wise decision.

By 3 p.m. the trip back across the Nizina began. With team members taking turns steering the 1935 Ford the first two channels of the Nizina were forded carefully and successfully. Anywhere water touched the vehicles metal slab ice quickly formed which later provided a

very useful "scratch guard" against the alders.

With it snowing and dusk approaching rapidly the Nodwell lights were kept on so the other crew party would see the Nodwell crossing the river plain and wait. It had been agreed that if the Nodwell was not back by dark the other crew was to return to McCarthy for the night. None of us wanted to spend another night on the river ice.

The third channel crossing approach appeared normal, but the depth which had been about two feet earlier in the day was now four feet without any visible changes. The passengers had some anxious moments as the Nodwell nosed over the thick shelf ice and the angle of descent got sharper and sharper. Soon the large brush guard bumper was entirely underwater, the engine radiator opening was submerged and the engine fan was slapping water into the passenger compartment through holes in the engine cowling.

There was a rapid and heated crew response: "Back up!" "Go forward!" "Where are the life jackets?" "Are we having fun yet?" On a quieter and more personal basis, "I'll be good, Lord, if you just get me out of this one." However, the tired but faithful old Nodwell lumbered onward, upward, and out with its tow intact. When crossing the river, on an even keel, there appeared to be several inches of freeboard. By this time all plans of another crossing to May Creek during this trip were abandoned.

Already 6 p.m. and dark the rest of the night turned into a steady battle against the cold and terrain. It took four hours

using winches and chains to climb the steep switchback and grade just above the Nizina and another session in getting unstuck from a surprise mudhole before finally being able to load the Fords onto a trailer for the last leg back to McCarthy.

On snowmachines with sleds and by M-116 five of the crew members by now had already gone ahead towards McCarthy, and warm food, leaving the Nodwell for the supposedly uneventful return run. However, no one was to be spared and true to recent tradition the M-116 nosed down the last steep grade into McCarthy Creek and had promptly become jammed on the shelf ice. As the flowing water and temperature quickly worked to make the vehicle a permanent winter fixture in the creek the crew had to leave it for later towing assistance by the Nodwell.

By midnight the Nodwell crept up and could not get by the M-116. Driver Bob Teeling by now had been at the Nodwell controls so long that he was ill, but his determination was such that Dan Hovermale and John Cooper literally had to force him to relinquish his seat and "sack out."

Taking over, Dan Hovermale capably prepared for towing the M-116 back out of the creek while John Cooper walked into McCarthy and roused the rest of the crew. A strenuous three hour effort of sawing ice with a chain saw by Chuck Strange and chopping ice by Ken Rowland and John Cooper combined with chaining and winching efforts by Jerry Ware, Dick Morris and Les Greenstreet finally got the M-116 and Nodwell across the

creek. The trailer was left for a daylight effort and the crew stumbled into bed by 5 a.m. "Are we having fun yet?"

On Tuesday, the seventh day out, the retrieval of the trailer across McCarthy Creek was a continuation of the difficulties of the night before. Taking the Nodwell across the creek by chaining the tracks to stumps and then climbing the chains, before returning with the trailer, was slow and tedious. (note: the M-116 had a small front mounted winch whereas the Nodwell did not.) Every metal angle, axle or tire possible seemed to get hung up on the ever-present shelf ice.

By Wednesday, the eighth day out, the tractor trailer was repaired by a team led by Dan Hovermale and a set of Chevrolet pickup truck ignition points, bartered from a local resident by Les Greenstreet, got the fire truck running again and at last we started for home. (Hot water and showers were by now much needed and lovingly dreamed about by all.) Of course in getting out of McCarthy we broke through the Kennicott River ice again and had to spend a couple of hours getting the trailer across the river, but by now we were getting pretty good at it and it didn't hurt as much. All in all we provided quite a community service in the area in the form of considerable amusement and entertainment for all local observers, who even came to be photographed with the fire truck. However, in our turn we will never forget the looks on the faces of the trappers, mushers, and homesteaders who passed our convoy on the trail with the most incredulous looks on their

faces. A prime moment for us came along the trail when Bob Teeling rolled down the fire truck window and in all seriousness asked a pair of stunned homesteaders, 35 miles from any town, "Hey, mister, isn't there a fire around here somewhere?" Some of us also witnessed a special "Driving While Intoxicated" incident and wondered how a policeman, even if there was one, would handle two tipsy, skylarking, mushers and a team of sled dogs enjoying an exhilarating run on a frosty winter night?

As the International Tractor was soon having difficulty in the new snow climbing the icy hills and crossing the glaciated areas of the trail, the M-116 was left unloaded and used as a push vehicle. In the end the M-116 was driven the 85 miles back to Kenney Lake, arriving at midnight. Without heat and only the occasional luxury of headlights that in itself was no small endurance feat for Dan Hovermale and Chuck Strange. Once back to a recognizable road the M-116 too turned a few heads as it rumbled by. The Hovermale farmstead looked and felt like heaven to all of us and we finally had a chance to contact some pretty worried families.

With the pressure of being home for Thanksgiving on us we continued homeward early on the clear and cold morning of the 27th, our ninth day out. The equally slow return trip, down country, was uneventful except

by now Les Greenstreet's Dodge truck engine was figuring out ways to throw oil and gulp water at the same time and just past the steep and winding Caribou Creek Hill the International, piloted by John Cooper, ruptured an oil line, complete with a complimentary engine fire. Of course it was after dark and snowing, the International was last in line and had a broken radio. Guess what happened? There wasn't even anyone to ask "Are we having fun yet?" After strong efforts at helping effect repairs, on a miserable snowy night, by a passerby and her teenage sons, the International was ingloriously towed back the last 45 miles to the museum. Fortunately, a \$2 oil line was all that was needed in repairs and no real damage to the machine was done.

Was it worth it? YOU BET!! Even though the trip did not fully meet initial expectations it was successful. Helped by cooperative National Park Service officials at the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and State of Alaska Department of Fish and Game we successfully learned the public lands access permit system. We proved to ourselves and state and federal agencies that despite limited means the museum could successfully field a team to complete a winter recovery, despite remoteness, rough terrain, and extreme temperatures. We improved the museum's collections by retrieving useful exhibits with documentable Alaska

histories. We successfully put in the field a volunteer team that had never worked together before who performed splendidly and who all "want in" on future trips. We definitely tested our equipment and learned its limitations and what we must do to prepare for future operations. We learned that we are going back to finish the job!

In closing our account of this adventure we want to express heartfelt thanks to Mike Slezak of the "Fodder House" Restaurant, near Palmer, who worked for days precooking and packaging the team's rations and then didn't get to go himself! With the travel and work conditions what they were, plenty of good "warm and serve" rations kept the crew well fed and functional with a minimum of effort. Thanks also to Brad Cella, James Hannah and Superintendent Richard Martin of the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park staff who helped us with the permit process, who tried to check on our condition from the air, despite the heavy snow, and who, for our families, met us on the McCarthy Road to see if we were still alive after all. Thanks also for a major boost from State of Alaska, Department of Fish and Game, Habitat Biologist Cevin Gilleland who hand carried a needed permit through the "system" and later the 42 miles to Palmer for us so that we could leave on schedule.

"Anger is an acid that can do more harm to the vessel in which it is stored than to anything on which it is poured."—Mark Twain

"No man for any considerable period can wear one face to himself and another to the multitude, without finally getting bewildered as to which may be the true."—Nathaniel Hawthorne

Larry Turnbull Dec. 30, 1941—Dec. 22, 2013

McCarthy resident, Larry Turnbull, died quietly at his home on December 22, 2013, just shy his 72nd birthday.

Close neighbor and long-time friend, Chrissy Harris-Haley, sums up her memories for us all: "He was a rough-looking character on the outside, but he had a heart of gold on the inside. Larry helped so many folks in our area, from Chitina to McCarthy. He was eager to come to a neighbor's aid with his experience and expertise on subjects anywhere from plumbing, electrical questions, guns and even government.

"He was one of my best friends. A gentleman through and through. I could talk to him about almost anything and he



Photo courtesy Peggy Morsch

wouldn't be judgmental. Larry

will leave an empty space for a lot of us."

L. Jo King Oct. 17, 1929-Oct. 18, 2013

Long time Alaska resident, L. Jo King lost her battle with cancer one day after her 84th birthday, October 18, 2013 in Tempe, AZ. Jo was born October 17, 1929 in Rock Springs, WY. She was raised on a ranch in Moffat County, CO. She attended school at Price Creek and went on to high school in Craig, CO where she graduated in 1947.

Jo was consumed with flying at an early age. She and a girlfriend fudged their ages so they could take flying lessons at the age of 15. She went on to earn her private license and became a flight instructor herself. She moved to Alaska shortly after graduation from high school and spent most of her life in the State she loved. Jo was one of the early female

bush pilots and loved flying over the diverse landscape of Alaska.

If it meant being around airplanes, Jo would try to make a living at it, even if it meant being a receptionist at an air taxi service until she could talk the owner into letting her be one of the pilots; a flight attendant for Wein Air; establishing her own flight training schools at various locations around Alaska, including Bethel and Cordova; and co-owning an air taxi flying service in Chitina, AK. Jo eventually went on to become an FAA air traffic controller in Alaska. Because she was a pilot and understood the difficult flying conditions that can occur in Alaska, she received the FAA National Outstanding Air Traffic Controllers Award and the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association award

for Outstanding Service for saving a pilot and his passenger when she talked him through whiteout conditions and brought him to a safe landing.

Jo lived life on her terms at a time when it wasn't easy for a woman to do so. Along with her friend, Lone Janson, Jo wrote a book, "Bird in the Bush" which told her story. She lived a life full of adventure, excitement and heartache. Jo lost her husband, Harley King in 1983 when a man murdered him and 5 other people in McCarthy, AK.

Jo is survived by her sisters, Margie (Virgil) Sheppard, Pat (Earl) Wintermute, brothers, Mike (Judy) Shelton, Pete (Judy) Shelton, Vern (Betty) Shelton and numerous nieces and nephews.

Jo was, indeed, one of a kind.

The McCarthy Weekly News

1923 January & February editions

LOCAL NEWS

Victor Marshall returned to Cordova the first of this week where he will finish high school.

Mike Knowles arrived from Chisana Thursday with the mail. Too Much Johnson also came in at the same time. Mr. Johnson states that the team he brought in is in shape to enter the dog race when it is run.

RENEWICK BOY INJURED

Sunday, Leonard Brenewick had an accident that could have easily been fatal. Leonard like most country and Alaskan children has been raised around horses and in consequence thought all horses would act the same as the stock that is used by his father. So, when Leonard was in Lenien's stable Sunday he started petting the horses and in passing behind a horse was kicked in the face. One of the corks entered the right cheek, passed through the flesh and knocked a tooth out. The blow was very severe and if it had been struck two inches higher it would have proven fatal. Dr. Mohr who is in attendance states the patient is doing as well as can be expected.

EXTRACTS FROM ADVANCE STATEMENT OF U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

According to advance information given out by the U. S. Geological survey there was less gold mined in Alaska during the past year than during 1921. This does not mean that next year will see a further decrease in Alaska's gold output however as many producers have spent most of the past season in developing ground in installing new machinery. Mr. Alfred Brooks states that this year should see Alaska's gold production reassume the status it held in the past.

Dredging is to gain impetus as are other branches of gold mining, from the feeders that are to be built along the government's railway. The roads will permit much ground to be worked at a profit that is now laying idle.

In 1921 we produced \$8,073,540 in gold last year, \$7,730,000 and this year experts compute about a nine million dollar output. In spite of the low price of copper the output for 1922 was 68,000,000 pounds. Kennecott was the main producer, while the Beatson-Bonanza on Prince William Sound, Rush & Brown, in the upper Ketchikan district, and several small mines followed in the order named. The advance in price will undoubtedly vivify copper mining activities throughout Alaska. Coal produced in the Territory during 1922 amounted to 60,000 tons, practically all of which was used locally.

January 6

LOCAL NEWS

Roy Snyder of the Alaska Café and the Dodge Taxi Service was a passenger on Monday's train to Chitina. Business concerning a dog to be used in the coming race is reported.

Tentative plans for a dance on Monday evening are being made to round out the excitement of the dog race. Better go folks: a good time will be missed if you stay away.

John Barrett has been spending most of his time at the Green Group doing some straightening up and preparing things for the coming season's work.

TOPIC OF THE TOWN TALK

After a strenuous winter of trying to draw a spade, to go with that heart, and diamond, everyone in town has taken up another item of local conversation – the coming dog race. Consequently these racing dogs and others have run miles and miles, around nearly every store in town. However, the actual entrants have been more active. They have taken the actual dogs out and have gone over the trail. There is little choice between the teams and all signs point toward an exciting race. Every entrant is proud of his team and is going to win the first money.

BIG DANCE AT KENNECOTT

Kennecott is a live camp. We done the best we knew how and then the Bills got together and decided to show us how a real Masquerade should be staged. We are not acquainted with all the Bills but, we'd bet that this dance will be a huge success. Plans are made for the entertainment of two hundred people and from what we can hear, the entire quota will be present. There will be appropriate prizes for the best costumes and for the best dancers.

The Elks have set February 17th as the night of devotion for disciples of Thespis and a good time is guaranteed to all.

January 13

LOCAL NEWS

Grover Hanneman, timekeeper at the Mother Lode, spent several days in town during the last week.

Charles White, employed at the Mother Lode in the capacity of hoistman left McCarthy, Thursday to go to work. Mr. White has been recuperating from an appendicitis operation.

Con Miller and Mr. Cole of Kennecott made a trip to town Tuesday returning to the Glacier City the same day. Mr. Cole is brother to Frank Cole of McCarthy and Cordova, and is a veteran of the war having put in four years overseas.

A. R. C. Notes

That the Nizina bridge is a much larger piece of work than is commonly realized, is made evident by the following facts.

The plans for the bridge call for six concrete piers; five of them being 182 feet apart, and one pier being 181 feet from its fellows. There is also a long approach to be constructed of piling. During the remainder of this winter the work will consist of putting down piling and preparing the concrete forms.

For the warm months the commission has planned the completion of the piers, owing to the impracticability of doing this part of the construction work while there is danger of freezing the concrete.

The coming fall and winter is to see the steel being erected while the summer of 1924 should witness freight moving across a first class bridge to the mines. Now that the bridge is a reality and not a supposition, operators are contemplating larger operations throughout the district.

There are 17 men now on the payroll, but in a short while the work will be far enough advanced to put on a full crew.

Freight is being moved by 10 commission horses and Shorty Gwynn's team, but as stock is released from other work, more teams will begin transporting material to the bridge site.

January 20

Accident on Road

Charles Hawkins, employed brakeman on the Chitina-Kennecott run suffered a very painful accident just before the train left Chitina Tuesday morning. While coupling in some cars, Hawkins unfortunately

got his hand between the bumpers and in consequence, one of his fingers got so badly smashed that the doctor was compelled to remove the finger at the first joint. While recuperating, Mr. Hawkins will make his headquarters in Cordova. He will return to duty within a couple of weeks if the finger heals as it should.

January 27

Bill Lang left town for Long Lake and vicinity Wednesday morning. Bill states that the different outdoor periodicals are bound to carry notices of a new trap that he has planned out. A working model is now being constructed.

Chitina News

Mrs. Barnes who runs the Copper Center Roadhouse returned home from her trip to Chitina and Cordova Tuesday.

Mrs. Joe Gyer who has been visiting in the States for some past returned recently, much improved in health.

Mrs. Thos. Lynch who has been visiting Mrs. Olts during the past week returned to her home at Strelina Saturday. While in Chitina, several social affairs were given in her honor.

All roadhouses on the Chitina Fairbanks Trail have received questionnaires from the steamship companies relative to the number of tourists that could be accommodated. The companies intend to include the trail in the itinerary of their Alaska tours.

Harry Hoyt and Paul Hyland who are freighting for the Elmore Property on Slate Creek left the city Tuesday with a load of freight. They are hauling with a tractor.

February 10

LOCAL NEWS

Mr. Radovan of Dan Creek returned from Valdez the first part of the week and has returned to his home. Mr. Radovan is very optimistic about the district and predicts a good deal of activity during the forthcoming season.

Bill Berry recently arrived in town from Chisana and is making his headquarters at the Golden. Everyone who is the owner of a dog sled that is in the need of repairs is taking them to Bill. He is also constructing a couple of these vehicles.

February 17

LOCAL NEWS

Suffers Severe Accident

While working around a pair of horses last Thursday, Andy Taylor nearly lost his life thru being kicked. In some manner he got in the way of the irritated animal and was kicked in the throat and the jugular vein was nearly severed by a cork. As soon as the accident occurred Andy was rushed to the Kennecott Hospital for treatment. Reports from the hospital today indicate that Andy's condition, while serious, is not as bad as was at first feared and that barring accident, he should be around in several weeks. This is the second accident that has happened within the last 10 days. Last Saturday Dad Wakefield was kicked in the face and was knocked out pretty badly and had to go to Kennecott to have his face dressed. The wound was around his mouth. In some way Dad caught cold in his wounds and he is feeling pretty bad in consequence.

Chitina News

Two Signal Corps men arrived in town recently from Copper Center, with a GMC truck for freight. They report the trail unsurpassed for auto travel except for a little drifted snow in one or two places.

Mrs. Chas. Kraemer of the Elmar property left for the creek to make preparations for the coming season's work.

Reports from several places along the road indicate that game is being poisoned. Some valuable dogs have also suffered from poison. Charles Simmons of King Lake lost a valuable retriever in this way. This dog was considered one of the best retrievers in this part of the country.

February 24

Grinding fish heads for the goodness within

BY NED ROZELL

NIKISKI — In a chilly building across Cook Inlet from the white pyramid of Mount Redoubt rest a few dozen plastic-lined cardboard totes filled to the brim with an amber liquid. Each chest-high cube holds about a ton of fish oil extracted this summer from the heads of salmon. It's a product that would have been lost to the Kenai River if Pat Simpson had not recovered it.

Simpson, 49, is a fisherman-turned-entrepreneur who has for the past few summers purchased salmon heads from fish processors who do business here in this small industrial town north of the Kenai River. Using precision equipment made in Europe, Simpson's team steams and grinds the heads of pink, chum and red salmon to render a product now available in box stores as 90-count bottles of "Wild Alaskan Salmon Oil" gel tablets.

"We sold all our fish oil the first three years (to companies that put it in capsules and sold it to large retailers)," Simpson said at his Nikiski plant, shut down and unheated for the offseason.

Simpson's venture with his company Alaska Marine Nutrition is part of a dream to enable fish processors in remote places to use the oiliest part of a salmon — its head — a portion of the fish prized in other cultures but often returned to the ocean in Alaska fisheries.

Simpson first sensed an opportunity to extract and sell fish oil when he was a boy growing up in Cordova. There, as in many rural Alaska places where commercial fishermen catch salmon, processors kept the high-value filets but ground up the carcasses and released the slurry back into the ocean.

With all the recent publicity on the health benefits of the omega-3 fatty acids in salmon oil, Simpson calculated the amount of wild Alaska salmon heads that made their way to fish processors near the mouth of the Kenai River. The numbers worked for him. He approached the owners of the area's seven fish-processing plants and told them he'd buy their fish heads.

They agreed to fill Simpson's totes with fish heads during the intense midsummer commercial salmon fishing season. He and his partners, his dad Ken Simpson and Richard Mullins, purchased a fish-



Photo courtesy Ned Rozell.

Pat Simpson of Anchorage holds up sockeye salmon oil he extracted from fish heads processed at his Nikiski plant.

processing facility in Nikiski and converted it to hold the specialized equipment used to extract oil from fish heads. Their plant stands amid refineries processing natural gas and oil from Cook Inlet rigs and metal-sided buildings of contractors who support the oil industry.

"We seem a little out of place here," Simpson said at his 12-acre facility, which includes his processing plant, office and bunkhouse for summer workers.

Simpson grew up working on his father's tender boats every summer. There, he and his crewmates would motor over to commercial fishing boats, pick up salmon and carry the

fish to local processing plants on shore. Sometimes he would travel as far from Cordova as Bristol Bay, a 6-day trip. On those trips, he learned his future was not on the decks of boats.

"I'd be lucky if I wasn't throwing up half of that," he said of the long run to Bristol Bay. "To be a successful fisherman, you have to be able to work in lousy weather."

Simpson looked to another passion, computer science. He went to the University of California at San Diego for college. After having success developing sonar devices for the military and the fishing industry, he returned to Alaska, longing to be connected to the industry he knew best. That's when he saw there might be a niche on the west side of the Kenai Peninsula. Of the more than 200 fish processors scattered throughout the state, only about half of them recover the fish heads and guts. The fishing industry produces and dumps back to the ocean more than 1 million metric tons of fish waste each year.

He sees a chance for them to get more out of the fish they're catching. He's started with extracting fish oil, but wants to produce more from the fish-waste stream, including fishmeal made up of ground-up fish carcasses and bones. That's in the future for Simpson, but for now he's pulling out the best fish oil he can and hustling to sell it to distributors in the Lower 48.

Back in his home office in south Anchorage, Simpson pulled a Mason jar of chum salmon oil from a shelf. He opened the jar of viscous, reddish blond liquid and took a swig.

"I wanted to build something I could hold in my hand," he said. "Wild Alaska salmon oil — that's our oil. It's very gratifying to produce."

Alaska's vitamin D production slows with the season

BY NED ROZELL

Interested people are needed to participate in a one-year study to assess the effects of long dark winters on the vitamin D and calcium levels of Fairbanks residents.

So began a recruitment poster Meredith Tallas created more than 25 years ago. Now living in California, Tallas was in 1983 a University of Alaska Fairbanks student who wanted to study how levels of a vitamin related to sun exposure fluctuated in people living so far from the equator.

"The most obvious vitamin to study in Alaska is vitamin D, because of the low light in winter," Tallas said over the phone from her office in Berkeley.

Forty-seven people responded to Tallas' 1983 request, and her master's project was underway. By looking at the bloodwork of those Fairbanks residents every month and analyzing their diets, she charted their levels of vitamin D, which our skin magically produces after exposure to a certain amount of sunshine. We also get vitamin D from foods, such as vitamin-D enriched milk and margarine, and fish (salmon are a good source). Vitamin D is important for prevention of bone diseases, diabetes and other maladies.

If you live at latitude farther north than about 42 degrees (Boston, Detroit, or Eugene, Oregon), the sun is too low on the horizon from November through February

for your skin to produce vitamin D, according to the National Institutes of Health. Tallas also saw another potential Alaska limitation on the natural pathway to vitamin D production.

"Most outdoor activity requires covering all but the face and hands approximately seven months of the year," she wrote in her thesis. "During the summer months residents keep much of their bodies clothed because of the persistent and annoying mosquitoes and biting flies and because of this, an Alaskan summer suntan becomes one of the face and hands."

But even overbundled Alaskans show signs of enhanced vitamin D production from the sun. Tallas found the highest levels of vitamin D in the Fairbanks volunteers' blood in July, and the lowest levels in March. Tallas attributed the July high occurring about a month after summer solstice to the time needed for the body's processing of sunlight and the conversion to vitamin D.

In Tallas' study, volunteers showed low levels of vitamin D in winter months, but most got sufficient doses of vitamin D from sources other than the sun. Tallas also found that males had an average of 16 percent more vitamin D in their blood throughout the study, which she attributed in part to men being outside more.

In charting an average for people's time outside (you can't convert sunlight to vitamin D through windows), she found December was the low point of sunlight exposure,

when sun struck the skin of her volunteers for less than 20 minutes per day. People spent an average of more than two hours exposed to Alaska sunlight in June and July. They seemed to hunker down in October, when time outside in the sun dropped to about half an hour. That was after almost two hours of daily sun exposure in September.

Vitamin D levels in the volunteers' blood dropped in August, September, October, November, December, January, February, and March, but Tallas saw an occasional leap in midwinter.

"When someone had gone to Hawaii, we could see, very exactly, a significant spike in their vitamin D levels," Tallas said. "The only surprise was how it came a month or two after."

In her thesis, Tallas wrote that a midwinter trip to somewhere close to the equator would be a good thing for boosting Alaskans' vitamin D levels.

"Presuming that an individual's lowest circulating vitamin D level in found in March or April, such trips could potentially have a very significant effect in improving late winter vitamin D status," she wrote in her thesis.

An easy alternative for Alaskans not traveling southward during the winter is eating foods rich in vitamin D or taking vitamin D supplements, Tallas said.

"The nature of the encroachment upon American constitution is such, as to grow every day more and more encroaching. Like a cancer; it eats faster and faster every hour. The revenue creates pensioners, and the pensioners urge for more revenue. The people grow less steady, spirited and virtuous, the seekers more numerous and more corrupt, and every day increases the circles of their dependents and expectants, until virtue, integrity, public spirit, simplicity and frugality become the objects of ridicule and scorn, and vanity, luxury, foppery, selfishness, meanness, and downright venality swallow up the whole of society." --John Adams, to the Inhabitants of the Colony of Massachusetts Bay, 1775

NPS Preferred Alternative chosen for Kennecott Operations Plan

Editor's Note: We received the following letter from WRST Superintendent Rick Obernesser regarding the Kennecott Operations Plan.

Dear Interested Party:

I am pleased to announce the release of the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Kennecott Operations Plan/Environmental Assessment. The FONSI is the decision document and describes the selection of Alternative 2, the National Park Service Preferred Alternative. The FONSI is accompanied by the Kennecott Operations Plan, which describes NPS goals and objectives for management of the NHL, as well as strategies and action items for management of historic structures, cultural resources, vegetation, access and parking, interpretation, and utilities and infrastructure.

This document represents several years of collaboration between staff at Wrangell St. Elias National Park and Preserve, staff at the Alaska Regional Office, and the McCarthy-Kennecott community. The Kennecott Operations Plan-Environmental Assessment was released for public review and comment in March of 2013. We received 19 comments from individuals, organizations, and agencies. Substantive comments are addressed in Appendix A of the FONSI.

The Kennecott Operations Plan and FONSI are available for public review but we are not accepting comments on these docu-

ments. They can be accessed as follows:

Electronically through the NPS Planning, Environment, and Public Comment website at: <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/documentsList.cfm?project=34130>. This will bring up a document list and you can choose the FONSI or the Kennecott Operations Plan for downloading.

Request a hard copy by calling 907-822-7276 (Bruce Rogers) or e-mailing bruce-rogers@nps.gov.

Thank you for your continued interest in this planning process.

Sincerely,
Rick Obernesser
Superintendent

WISE Science Lecture Series

—Dall Sheep strategies

Do ewes and rams have different strategies? Come learn about Dall's sheep in Wrangell-St. Elias National Park & Preserve at the Wrangell Institute for Science and Environment's Science Lecture Series. The presentation is scheduled for Friday, January 31st, at 7pm at Prince William Sound Community College Copper Basin

Center, located on the Alaska Bible College campus (north on Co-Op Rd. on the Glenn Highway).

Gretchen Roffler, USGS Science Center Wildlife Biologist, will share her research on habitat selection and dispersal, and the different survival strategies of ewes and rams. Theories of behavior predict that male and female Dall's sheep have differ-

ent strategies to stay alive and reproduce.

Ms. Roffler will share her research using DNA and aerial survey data in the park to test these theories, and to understand how genetic structure is influenced by patterns of dispersal and habitat uses.

Alyeska Pipeline Service Company is the sponsor for this series.

"The most perfect freedom consists in obeying the dictates of right reason, and submitting to natural law. When a man goes beyond or contrary to the law of nature and reason, he becomes the slave of base passions and vile lusts; he introduces confusion and disorder into society, and brings misery and destruction upon himself. This, therefore, cannot be called a state of freedom, but a state of the vilest slavery and the most dreadful bondage." —Samuel West (1776)

Capturing auroras

BY KAREN J. LAUBENSTEIN

In the 18 years I've lived in Alaska, I've seen some spectacular photos of the auroras (northern lights).

It's only recently that I took a Shooting the Auroras photography course and spent that evening in the midst of an aurora storm outside of Fairbanks, Alaska.

This time, I took the photos! Imagine that cold, invigorating wind on your face, the auroras dancing overhead, the snow crunching underfoot, and an energy that fills the air that you can't capture in digital! There is incredible aurora-viewing from BLM-managed lands near Fairbanks, Alaska.

The University of Alaska Fairbanks Geophysical Institute estimates the auroras are visible 243 nights a year from the Fairbanks

area. Many photographers escape Fairbanks's ambient lights by traveling the Elliott or Steese Highways to capture the auroras. A popular destination is the Wickersham Dome trailhead parking lot at Mile 28 and nearby pullouts on the Elliott Highway. Those trails lead into the BLM-managed one-million-acre White Mountains National Recreation Area and its winter trails. For the truly adventurous, a trip up BLM's Dalton Highway Corridor offers aurora seekers an unparalleled opportunity to see aurora borealis dancing across the Arctic skyline.

Although prime aurora viewing is typically around midnight or later, this aurora storm began before dark. By 8:30, the auroras were going strong, dancing and radiating across the skies over the Wickersham Dome trailhead

and throughout Alaska's Interior. In the midst of the show, scientists studying the aurora at the Poker Flat Research Range about 30 miles north of Fairbanks launched a two-stage, 46-foot National Aeronautics and Space Administration sounding rocket into the aurora. The rocket gathered information on space weather conditions that affect satellite communications by recording how radio waves travel through the plasma. Four 18-foot wire antennas helped measure the strong electric fields generated by the aurora. Photographers throughout the area caught the light stream of the rocket as it entered the auroras.

—Karen J. Laubenstein is a Writer-Editor for BLM Alaska State Office

Aurora Photography Tips

- Never use flash photography with auroras.
- Remove any filters and use a lens with a focal length as wide as possible (I used an 18mm; ideal is 24mm or less), and shutter speeds of about 3-5 seconds to capture as much of the sky as possible.
- Manual settings – as wide open an f-stop as your camera will go; fast ISO settings of 800 or more. If you open the shutter too long, it will blur or pick up star tracks, so it is a fine-balance to get your ISO, f-stop, and exposure settings fine-tuned for optimal aurora photos.
- Prefocus before dark if possible on stars or the horizon, do not set the 'infinity' setting as it will likely not be in focus. If you can't prefocus, focus on the stars.
- Learn how to hunt the auroras. Tools available include Facebook, Twitter alerts, the "salmon cam," University of Alaska Fairbanks geophysical institute aurora forecasts, and in Fairbanks, some hotels will alert guests when the auroras become visible. Study the forecasts; learn the levels of aurora activity and moon phases.
- Most auroras have the best viewing when the sun has geomagnetic activity; during the five days before and after a full-moon; with clear skies and subzero temperatures; and between the hours of 11 p.m. and 5 a.m.

"A fondness for power is implanted, in most men, and it is natural to abuse it, when acquired." — Alexander Hamilton

Targeted Hunt Aims to Reduce Moose-Vehicle Collisions in Mat-Su

(PALMER) —

Hunters in the Matanuska and Susitna valleys are making local roads safer this winter, even as they fill their home freezers with tasty, organic, wild meat.

The “targeted hunt” (AM415), initially established by the Board of Game in March 2011 to address serious nuisance-moose issues in Game Management Subunit 14A, is a winter hunt, which requires a permit from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. The department has increasingly used this permit hunt to reduce the number of moose-vehicle collisions in the Mat-Su, and the board expanded the hunt to include areas along the road system in Subunit 14B during a March meeting in Wasilla.

“One of the main objectives is to reduce the number of moose around roadways in high-collision areas and move them into the freezer without involving an insurance agent,” said Palmer Area Wildlife Biologist Todd Rinaldi.

Some 280 moose are struck and killed by motorists each year on Mat-Su roadways. During winters of unusually deep snow, that number can double as moose tend to congregate around high-

way corridors. Motorists are frequently injured and sometimes killed when vehicles traveling at normal highway speeds collide with the animals which may weigh between 500 and 900 pounds.

This winter’s hunt will open on January 6, and is scheduled to remain open through March 30. Each week, eight hunters will be assigned to one of four designated road corridors, where rates of moose-vehicle collisions tend to be especially high. The number of hunters permitted each week may be increased if the number of moose-vehicle collisions remains high or increases as snow accumulates over the course of the winter. The permits will also be issued for two additional areas in Subunit 14B, along the Parks Highway, to reduce moose-vehicle collisions in those areas. The department also issues permits to address moose problems on private property on a case-by-case basis after consulting with the landowner.

“Last winter we had a 75 percent hunter success rate,” said Rinaldi, who added that more than 1,100 prospective hunters signed up for this winter’s targeted hunt.

To be eligible to participate, hunters had to apply during the

open application period from October 1-31. Applicants were required to have successfully completed a certified state hunter education program prior to applying for the hunt, and a bow hunter education certificate is also required to participate in some areas. Because the hunt occurs near populated areas, only shotguns and bows, which have shorter trajectories than rifles, can be used.

Permitted hunters must have land owners’ permission to hunt on private land, and hunters will be required to wear a hunt-specific orange vest issued by the department to identify them as permitted hunters. The department and Alaska Wildlife Troopers will conduct random field checks to ensure hunters comply with permit conditions and conduct themselves in a safe, ethical, and legal manner.

For more information on the Mat-Su targeted hunt, contact Todd A. Rinaldi, Area Wildlife Biologist, at the Alaska Department of Fish and Game’s office in Palmer at (907) 746-6325. Additional information about this hunt can also be found in the 2013-14 Alaska Hunting Regulation booklets, as well as on the department’s website (<http://hunt.alaska.gov>).

“Economic power is exercised by means of a positive, by offering men a reward, an incentive, a payment, a value; political power is exercised by means of a negative, by the threat of punishment, injury, imprisonment, destruction. The businessman's tool is values; the bureaucrat's tool is fear.”—Novelist and philosopher Ayn Rand

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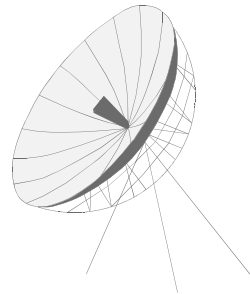
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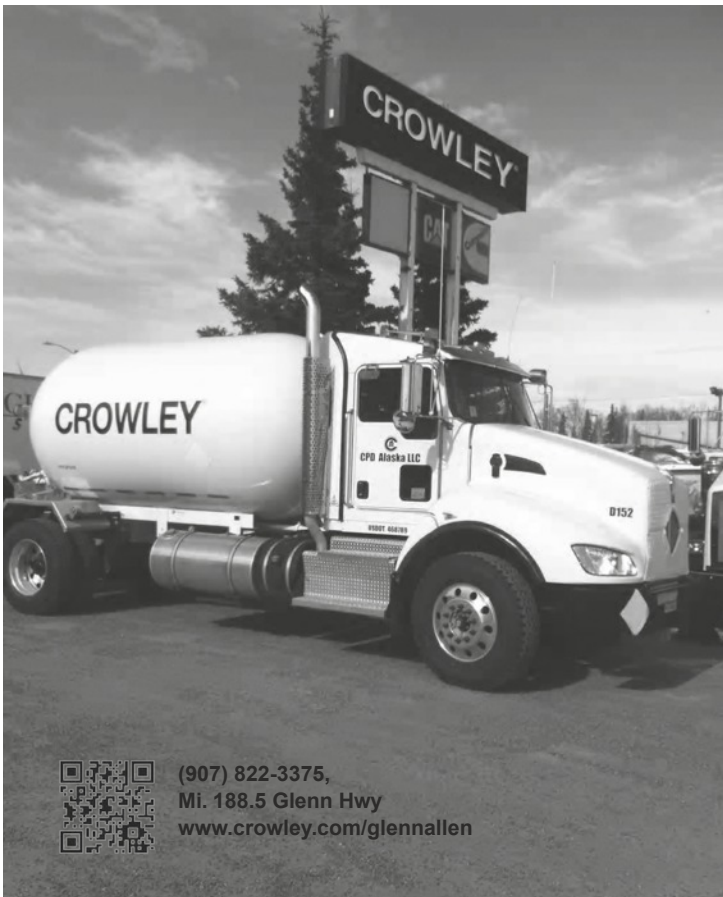
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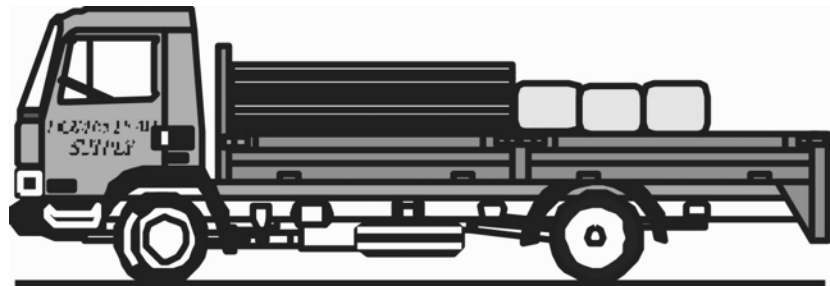
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Cooking with Peggy

BY PEGGY GUNTIS

Dear Cooking and Eating Friends (surely that covers everyone!), I hope you all had a wonderful holiday season. I would imagine that most, if not all of you, were able to spend it with family and friends. Even though I'm busier than at other times of the year, I wouldn't change a thing. I look forward to the gathering together to celebrate Thanksgiving, an annual tradition celebrated in this country since President Lincoln declared a Day of Thanksgiving and Praise in 1863. My family then celebrates Christmas but I'm sure many of you celebrate Hanukkah and other religious holidays, again with family and friends and, of course, with wonderful food.

Now that cold weather has arrived, hot dishes like soups, stews, and casseroles always sound so good. The first recipe I would like to give you is one that I gave you in 2011. I fixed it the other day for Jim and my visiting stepson and they really love it, so I thought I would give it to you again in case you didn't get a chance to try it before. If you decide to try it, you may look at the ingredients and say, "Apples in soup! I'm going to leave them out." Don't! The

first time you make it follow the recipe as written and then modify the next time, if you like.

RED BEAN AND SAUSAGE SOUP

- 1 pound turkey sausage links, casings removed (I use either turkey or pork sweet Italian sausage links)
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 3 cups chicken broth
- 3 medium tart apples, peeled and chopped (I use Granny Smith)
- 1 can (14 ½ ounce) crushed tomatoes, (don't drain)
- 2 tablespoons cider vinegar
- 2 tablespoons chopped green pepper
- 2 tablespoons chopped sweet red pepper
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar
- ½ teaspoon seasoned salt
- ½ teaspoon ground mustard
- ¼ teaspoon rubbed sage
- ¼ teaspoon chili powder
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- 1 can (16 ounce) kidney beans, drained and rinsed

In a large saucepan or soup kettle, cook the sausage and onion until meat is no longer pink, drain. Add the next 12 ingredients. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 45 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add beans and heat through. This recipe makes about 8 one cup servings.

Now, I'd like to give you another one that Bonnie and Rick shared with me that has become one of our favorites. It's a casserole that's easy to make but, oh, so good. I made it for the family to eat while they were here at the house to help trim our tree and light it for the first time for the 2013 holidays.

CRAB, MACARONI, AND BROCCOLI CASSEROLE

- 1 ½ cups shredded cheddar cheese
- ½ cup mayonnaise
- 1 cup milk
- 1 (10 ¾ ounce) can of cream of onion soup (the only place I've found this is Walmart so I always buy 4 or 5 cans at a time. Since we don't have a Walmart in McCarthy, Bonnie used cream of mushroom and said it worked well.)
- 4 tablespoons butter (divided)
- 2 cups diced broccoli, uncooked
- 2 medium tomatoes, diced
- ½ pound elbow macaroni, cooked and drained
- 1 pound imitation (or real) crab meat
- ½ cup fine bread crumbs (I have used both bread crumbs and panko crumbs)
- ¼ cup Parmesan cheese, grated

Combine shredded cheddar cheese, mayonnaise, milk,

and soup in a bowl and mix well. Melt 2 tablespoons of the butter in a skillet and saute the broccoli until tender crisp (about 3 minutes). Remove from heat.

Add the broccoli mixture to the cheese mixture, tomatoes, crab meat and macaroni. Place in a casserole dish (I used an 8" x 11" size). Melt the rest of the butter, and mix with the bread crumbs and Parmesan cheese.

Sprinkle the crumbs on top of the casserole mixture and bake at 350 degrees for 35 to 45 minutes.

Now, in this cold weather how about some stew! I tried this one first while we were in McCarthy in 2002 and have made it many times since then. As a matter of fact, we're having it for dinner tonight!

HEARTY BEEF STEW

2 pounds lean beef stew meat

6 medium potatoes, peeled and cut into 1 ½ inch pieces

2 medium onions, cut into wedges

8 medium carrots, cut into 1-inch pieces

4 celery ribs, cut into 1-inch pieces

1 can (4 ounces) sliced mushrooms, drained

1/3 cup quick-cooking tapioca

1 beef bouillon cube

1 teaspoon sugar

2 bay leaves

1 ½ teaspoons dried thyme

3 cups tomato juice

In a 4-quart Dutch oven or baking dish, layer the first 11 ingredients, pour tomato juice over all. Cover and bake at 300 degrees for about 3 hours, stirring occasionally, or until the meat and vegetables are tender. Remove bay leaves before serving. It makes about 8 servings.

I think that stews and soups always taste even better the next day so if there are leftovers, don't hesitate to serve them again.

Do any of you ever have to take a coffee cake to a Bible study meeting, or serve one to visiting guests for breakfast, or bring one for a pot luck? I have a recipe for you from a recipe book called Taste and See that the Lord is Good. It was compiled by the ladies in a church that I was a member of many years ago. I had given one of the books to Bonnie back then and this summer she pulled it out and tried one of the recipes when she needed a coffee cake for their B & B. I tried it then and we all agree, it's GREAT! If you're looking for something that isn't too sweet but is easy and good, try this one.

MAMA'S COFFEE CAKE

3 tablespoons margarine or butter

1 cup sugar

1 teaspoon vanilla

1 egg

1 ¼ cups milk

2 ½ cups flour

3 teaspoons baking powder

1 teaspoon salt

TOPPING:

1/3 cup brown sugar with about ¾ teaspoon of cinnamon.

Mix the margarine or butter, sugar, vanilla and egg. Add flour, baking powder and salt alternately with the milk. You can divide the mixture into 2 cake pans or use a 13 x 9 size. Sprinkle the top of the cake with cinnamon sugar.

Bake it at 325 degrees for about 30-35 minutes.

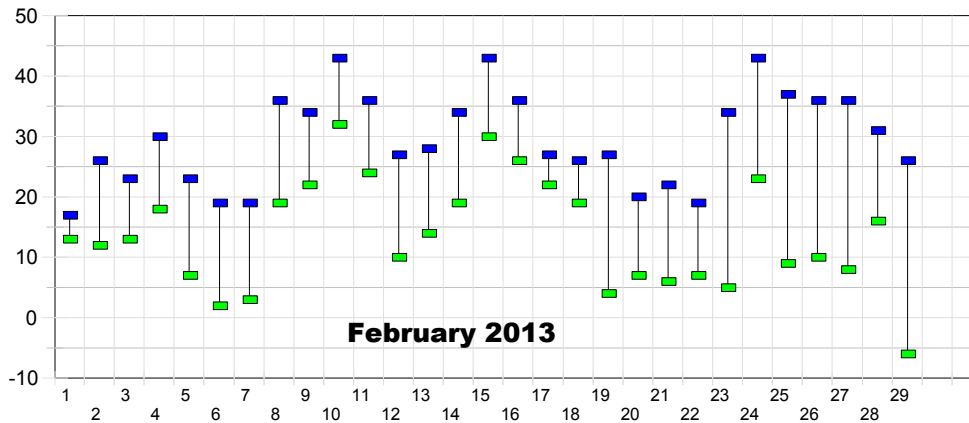
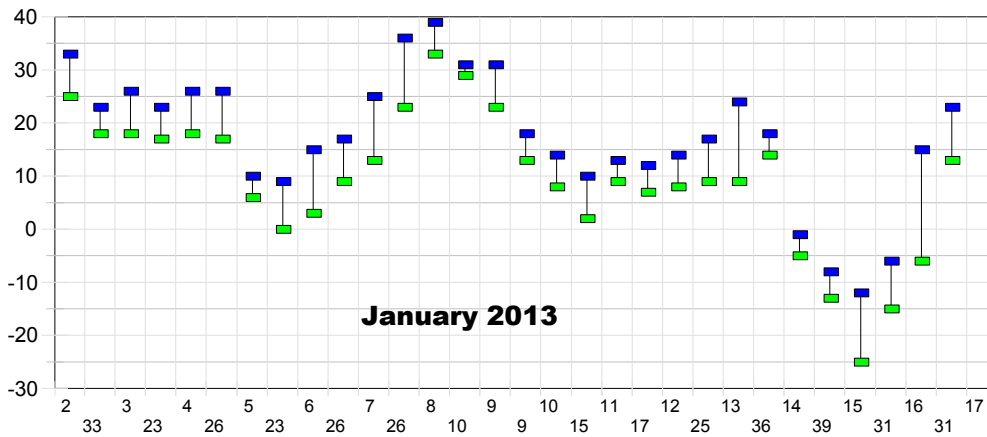
Thought I'd add a few "Tips" that I've picked up from magazines or online.

If you like to take bagel sandwiches or just a sliced bagel to work or in the car for a snack, try taking an old CD spindle (with the plastic covering, of course,) and use it as a bagel tote.

To make your grapes last longer as your snack, freeze the seedless ones and eat them frozen. They are great.

Want to save a few calories but still have that "ice cream"? Put your yogurt in the freezer for about an hour and a half or so and then eat it. It works for either the Greek yogurt or what I call regular old fashioned light yogurt. Jim and I have it every night for our dessert!

Have a good winter everyone. Drive safely in all that snow and ice and eat hearty.



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