

Wrangell St. Elias News

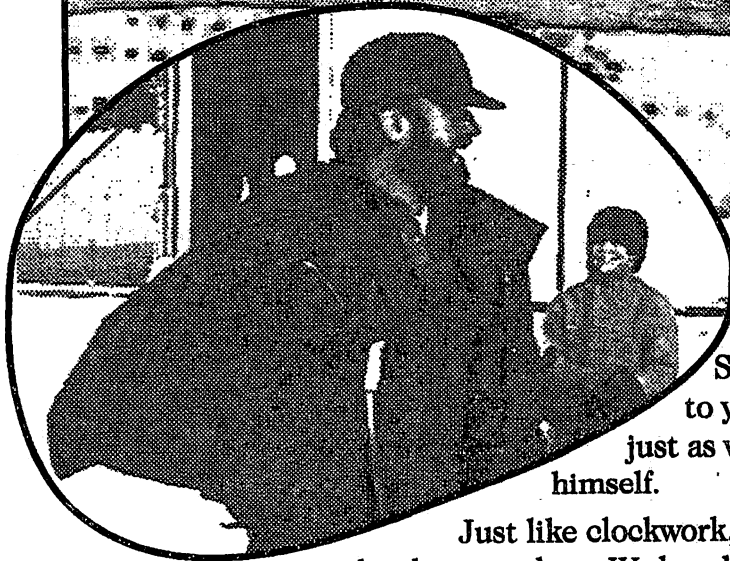
"Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty"

Vol. Seven Issue Two

March & April 1998

Two Dollars

Mail Day in McCarthy



Santa Claus? Well, maybe not, but to young Tye Lohse the mail pilot is just as welcome as the jolly old fellow himself.

Just like clockwork, pilot Lynn Ellis (of Ellis Air Taxi) makes his rounds on Wednesdays and Fridays, bringing all of us kids in McCarthy and May Creek bags full of goodies. Sometimes he even brings our mothers!

A note from the publisher

BY RICK KENYON

What a joy to be entering what I think may be the two most pleasant months in the McCarthy area – March and April. The days are getting longer, the extreme cold is (hopefully) over, the mosquitoes are not awake yet, and the seedlings for area gardens are soon to appear on windowsills everywhere. Now, if the fish will co-operate, we will need to look long and hard to find anything to complain about!

Actually, we have been counting our many blessings these past weeks also, as we see and hear about the devastation caused by El Nino in many parts of the lower 48. Our families in Florida narrowly escaped disaster when the worst batch of tornadoes in history ripped through, damaging many homes in their neighborhoods. To any of our readers who suffered loss from the tornadoes, floods, or other natural disasters this winter, our deepest sympathy goes to you. As for McCarthy, this may have been the easiest winter as far as weather goes since we moved here over 20 years ago.

Our cover this issue depicts a typical winter “mail day” at McCarthy. Twice a week the majority of area residents gather at the mail shack to send and receive written and verbal correspondence. Usually the local news (verbal) is distributed by the time the sound of the Cessna 185 coming up the valley can be heard. Then, kids of all ages look forward to seeing what our mail pilot Lynn Ellis has stowed

away in his little airplane. Often it is fresh produce, (sometimes a real problem when the thermometer shows 30 below), a new tool or piece of clothing, or a letter from friends and family. This particular week brought a special treat for Diane Ludwig—her mom was on the plane, here for a rare winter visit.

Since we have given the Letters to the Editor page to two readers with opposing views about upgrading the McCarthy Road, let me use this space to share a letter from one of our readers: “It was great to go to the post office today, here in the mountains of NE Georgia, and find in our box the WSEN. Of course, I looked first for what you had to report about Matt Hambrick and Kris Rueter, my favorite McCarthyites. We keep in touch by mail and phone, and now, increasingly, by email, but I still love to read about them. Then I read the news of other friends there, and then the

report on road improvements. I especially appreciated Neil O’Donnell’s Op-Ed to DOT. By the way, I believe I sat behind their family in church out there on Labor Day weekend. Every page of your publication has something I want to read: recipes (all the better for having visited Carly’s kitchen with Kris this summer), information about solar power (I’ve met that author too). Interesting history stuff and weather, always a concern for the mother from what Matt calls the “painfully domestic South.” Every page has something I want to read. Thank you! Genie Addleton, Sky Valley, Georgia.”

Wrangell St. Elias News welcomes aboard the following subscribers: Wilber Seelye, IL; Jeff Moffitt, WA; John Lindauer, AK; Randy & Kay Bond, MI; Howard & Susan Brewl, AK; Insight Passage’s Inc., AK; Gene & Ruby Torrey, AK; James H. Gifford, CA.

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Items of Interest

BY BONNIE KENYON

Harm Kahlke and Berti Becker: Harm and Berti, guests of Jim and Audrey Edwards, may officially hail from Germany but they are making themselves right at home here in McCarthy. Everyone around these parts has their favorite mode of transportation. Skis, an occasional dog team, 3 and 4 wheelers, a bicycle and a good number of snowmachines dot the McCarthy airstrip near the mail shack at our biweekly mail days. If you happened to be a mail day participant on a certain day in February and giving out awards for the most unusual vehicle, Harm and Berti would take the gold!

According to Berti, they made their first winter crossing on a Honda 90 motorcycle. For those of you who aren't that familiar with our river crossings from the west side to the east side of the Kennicott River, the river channels freeze over and make travel somewhat easier. Frequent snowmachine use of our winter trails and occasion "grooming" with a drag makes even motorcycle travel an option.

Harm and Berti are really enjoying their stay at Swift Creek. They are now gearing up to accompany local dog musher Mark Vail on a winter trip which will take them around Fireweed Mountain the first week in March. I hear the Honda will stay home this time, but snowshoes, skis, and dog mushing are in the picture. Have a great time, Harm, Berti and Mark!

Brooks and Diane Ludwig: Speaking of mail days...our mail

pilot, Lynn Ellis, brought in more than letters and packages for Brooks and Diane on February 20. Usually some of our short term or long term residents of McCarthy leave during the winter months and return in the summer, but the Ludwigs do it just the opposite. They move back in during the winter. Their jobs take them out of the area during the summer.

Although most relatives come visiting in the summer, Joan Plank, Diane's mother, decided that if she was going to see the Ludwigs' newly finished cabin, she would do things their way. And, so, she arrived in style! Traveling "in style" in the winter months between McCarthy and Anchorage is flying (in my opinion). Don, Joan's husband, who is a former air controller will enjoy hearing all about Joan's flight in with our mail plane, says Joan.

I asked Joan where she lives and she says home is in an RV "full time" but she does consider Anchorage home base. This is her 4th time to visit our area and the first family member to see Brooks and Diane's cabin in the completed stage. Although Joan hasn't been in a small plane in years, she said the flight was "wonderful."

Jim, Jeannie, Aaron and Matt Miller: I just got off the phone with Jeannie who was busy planting celery. It seems Jeannie is always one step ahead of me when it comes to getting our celery started. Several years ago, she clued me in on her secret to getting a jump on that slow growing vegetable. Soak the tiny seeds overnight, then

freeze them for at least 24 hours. Allow the seeds to sprout slightly before planting inside in containers to be eventually transplanted outdoors. Jeannie says she has had her seed catalogs spread out and she is trying a few new things this year. One item is red celery which has a shorter growing season. Now, that sounds good to me, I tell her, and she promises to save me a couple plants.

With such fine weather these days, Jeannie says she is getting outside more and giving her dogs lots of exercise. Jim is presently in Anchorage so she, Aaron and Matt are holding down the homestead. Stacie is fine. Katy, Aaron's tutor, is "doing a great job," reports Jeannie.

Terry and Dee Frady: The Fradys were just coming in from a nice long walk when I called for an update on their activities. No major projects are happening, says Dee, YET! Winter is a time for things to slow down for Terry and Dee and they are enjoying it. Terry is doing a few signs for their gift shop and Dee says she is working on her family's genealogy. The computer is playing an important part in her research. I wondered why I wasn't seeing much of Dee at mail lately and then I discovered that she was taking advantage of her time alone to work on their computer. Also, a new (for Dee) craft is soon to make a debut at the Willow Herb Mountain Depot this summer season and that is Dee's own line of bead jewelry. She is having fun, she

says, creating something new for her customers.

Things don't stay quiet very long at the Fradys and wood detail is just around the corner as well as the new addition to the gift shop. Dee says they hope to take that project slow and in stages. Working with logs is a subject the Fradys know plenty about but no matter how you cut it, it is hard work. And we all know, Terry isn't getting any younger!

Fred and Irene Denner: This last week Rick and I had the pleasure of having our annual cup of coffee and visit with Fred. Travel is much easier between Dan Creek and here when you can snowmachine over the rivers and through the woods. Fred reports that Irene is busy with her beadwork and dogmushing. They are having a good winter.

Jim and Audrey Edwards: Jim continues to make good progress on his airplane kit project. Audrey, while giving Jim an occasional hand – or two – still finds time to pursue her hobby of doll making. She and I had a nice, long conversation and I discovered Audrey once owned and operated a ceramic and porcelain shop in Anchorage. At that time she also taught reproduction doll making, she says, and still has drawers (and drawers) full of doll parts to be put together and painted. So, she had her kiln hooked up and was busy at work. She estimates she has enough pieces to assemble approximately 100 dolls!!

Larry, Rita, Joey and Garrett Hoare: Except for Rita's computer crashing just before I called, life for this Kennicott family is progressing on schedule. Joey finished his

American History for the year. Garrett is having a ball with his Aviation Unit, says Rita, (except when the computer crashes in the middle of his course!). In between homeschooling the whole family is packing their bags to head out on quite an adventure.

First stop is Medford, Oregon to visit Garrett and Joey's grandparents then off to Port Richmond, Ca. to see another set of grandparents. The next stop is Hawaii where Larry's mother and stepdad are each going to celebrate turning 75 years old with joint birthday parties. Larry, Rita, Joey and Garrett are invited to help blow out the candles!

Full-time mom and part-time schoolteacher Rita says Joey will take his science course with him. I groaned to think of doing schoolwork in Hawaii! Rita responded with, "We are going to study the tropics!" Have a great time and come home refreshed.

Mike McCarthy, Laura Bunnell and boys: When I began calling upon my neighbors to come up with items of interest for my column, most seemed hard pressed for news. Winter is usually our town's "quiet time" for the year so it's true our lifestyles slow down immensely. However, I figure any household that claims 3 boys has got to produce at least a few items of interest!!

Laura's Luke and Nick are turning out quite a trapline this winter. Luke got a rabbit for their lunch, says a proud mom, and Nick got a martin a couple days ago. Nick also managed to catch a porcupine in his rabbit snare which they plan on eating (as soon as Laura decides the best way to fix it). We agreed

that this is the time to call Carly Kritchen, our local cooking expert!

MacKenzie is about to embark on a trip to Disneyland and the desert with his mom but is expected back here for the summer.

Laura also informed me that they have a building project underway. A chicken coop. Sounded like Mike visited Ken and Carly's chicken yard recently to see how to build a winterized dwelling for those layers.

Ken and Carly Kritchen: And...speaking of the Kritchens. Carly is crowing about her 16 laying hens. In spite of the winter temperatures and extra darkness, those girls are producing up to 13 eggs a day! Amazing what a light bulb, good comfortable quarters and (knowing the Kritchens) lots of tender loving care will do.

When Carly isn't out collecting those fresh eggs, she can rely on her nephews to do the job for her. Tyee, Teal and Trae Lohse have visited their Uncle Ken and Aunt Carly several times recently. The boys and their parents, Ralph and Linda, are spending the winter at their Long Lake cabin.

Aunt Carly says the boys' favorite pastimes are keeping an eye on her chickens and riding the horses.

The Kritchens are taking full advantage of our milder temperatures and giving their horses daily outings. If they should show up at mail, I might have to retrieve Harm and Beri's "gold" award and give it to Ken and Carly!

Don, Lynn, Sarah and Rene Welty: The Welty family is enjoying and making the most of their first winter in McCarthy.

Due to the warmer temperatures this month, Don is resuming his construction work on Wayne Smith's cabin. Lynn and girls are making great strides in home school. I asked Lynn if Sarah and Rene were involved in anything exciting that I could report to interested grandparents and friends. She told me that both girls attended an Orienteering Class led by Katy Steger in Kennicott on February 18.

Sarah and Rene joined forces with MacKenzie McCarthy, Nick Nebesky, Aaron Miller and Joey and Garrett Hoare in learning how to read a compass and taking turns finding headings that were tagged on various trees. Rene reports that they all thoroughly enjoyed the cookies that were served afterwards at the Miller household. What was the most fun part of the class? Says Rene, "Just learning how to read a compass and using snowshoes."

For those of you who spend the winter months in a summer climate, you can experience a bit of McCarthy's winter with Sarah. Be sure to read her account of *A Walk on a Winter Road* on page 19.

George Cebula: George has been spending the last couple of months in Anchorage doing his citizen's duty of serving on Grand Jury. His latest Email informs us that he is soon to be relieved of his duty and is returning to McCarthy. We are looking forward to a full report when George gets home, and for those of you who like to keep abreast of our Weather columnist's activities and expertise, you can expect him to be at his McCarthy residence shortly after the first of March.

Kelly, Natalie and Tessa Bay: Even though I haven't had

the opportunity to visit long and hard with Natalie, I do know the Bay family is back from their travels to Australia and the state of Washington. Life is pretty quiet at their Nizina homestead compared to their summer quarters in McCarthy proper. I'm sure they are taking full advantage of the solitude to catch up on computer work. I did receive a lovely Valentine card and candy from Tessa and have visited with her on the CB several times. Welcome home, Kelly, Natalie and Tessa!

John Adams: Speaking of McCarthyites returning, John is back home after working several weeks in the big city. His new haircut caused such a stir among family (especially his mother, Denny) and friends that he decided to do it again! You got it; a second haircut was on the agenda during his visit to Anchorage and it looks great.

Matt Hambriek and Kris Rueter: Residents are coming and going this winter. Kris is presently working on a pollock processor boat in the Bering Sea, says Matt, and he is about ready to take off to attend a 2 week class at the Laborer's Training School in Anchorage. Because we are experiencing such a quiet winter this year, Matt found the time to write for this issue of WSEN. Be sure to read Matt's article *Long Lake Ice Fishing Report* on page 10.

Ed LaChapelle: I just received word that Ed is due to arrive on the mail plane any day now. Also, certainly an item of interest is Ed's latest form of transportation for the McCarthy side of the river—an electric vehicle! Ed says it is not a golf cart, but a "real" car. Reports are that Ed's solar panels will be put into service to keep the car's battery charged. We are

looking forward to getting a detailed report and pictures from Ed when he returns, hopefully a full-blown WSEN story on this technological wonder!

Mike Loso: Mike is back in town after spending Christmas with family and friends. His travels took him and 3 other summer people Chad, Jeremy and Howie, to Mexico where these adventurous fellas spent their time climbing volcanos.

Mike reports that he is filling in as Director for Wrangell Mountain Center while Jenny Carroll and Paul Dungan enjoy spending quality time with their new baby boy — Ren Dungan Carroll.

Kennecott Kid Reunion: According to Inger Jenson Ricci, a "Kid" herself, another reunion is to be held in Kennecott May 25-28. Inger says she is busy getting mailing lists checked out and invitations mailed. For further information you can contact Inger at (907) 279-1269 or write her at 3010 Lois Dr., Anchorage, AK 99517.

Condolences: We were saddened to learn of the passing away of the following subscribers and friends. Marge Seltenreich whose husband Bud was born in McCarthy; Bill Ellis, a well-known guide and father of our mail pilot, Lynn Ellis; Helen Seltenreich, whose husband Fred (Bud's brother) grew up and lived in McCarthy in the early 1900's; Gordon Burdick who spent many years in and out of our town.

We offer our sincere sympathy and prayers to the families and friends of these very special people. Each one will be greatly missed!

Sourdough Ridge repeater site may need new equipment

BY RICK KENYON

The equipment installed in the Sourdough Ridge repeater site may be "inappropriate and would likely not work without creating problems for customers in McCarthy." This revelation came in a letter dated February 13, 1998, written by Copper Valley Cellular's (CVC) General Manager John Monfils. "I am having CVC's attorney write a strong letter to New Horizons Telecom asking them to correct the problems we have experienced at Sourdough Ridge within a short time period. If they will not do so, I intend to put them on notice that Copper Valley Cellular will remove and replace the RTI equipment with equipment that we know will work before summer," wrote Monfils.

Representatives from Copper Valley Cellular, Copper Valley Telephone, New Horizons Telecom Inc., and their subcontractor Repeater

Technologies Inc., all gathered at the Sourdough Ridge site the week of February 3 in an unsuccessful attempt to resolve long-standing problems with the equipment there.

WSEN reported on the completion of the repeater site in our March & April 1997 edition.

"When the site was initially activated, callers only got a busy signal when attempting to dial out, and several local phones were knocked out of service by the signal from the repeater."

The problems lingered for some time, prompting us to write: "As we go to press on the 19th of February all of the local phones are experiencing difficulty in dialing and in receiving calls."

Since that time several trips to the site have been made by various technicians, but each attempt to activate the repeater resulted in problems for phone users in the McCarthy area. Copper Valley Cellular

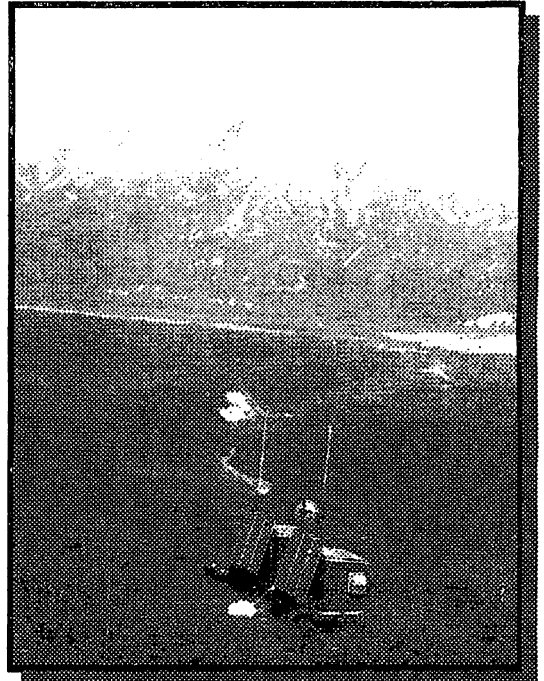


Photo courtesy Nancy Ferrell

Repeater site at the 3500' level on Sourdough Ridge overlooks McCarthy Creek and Kennicott River.

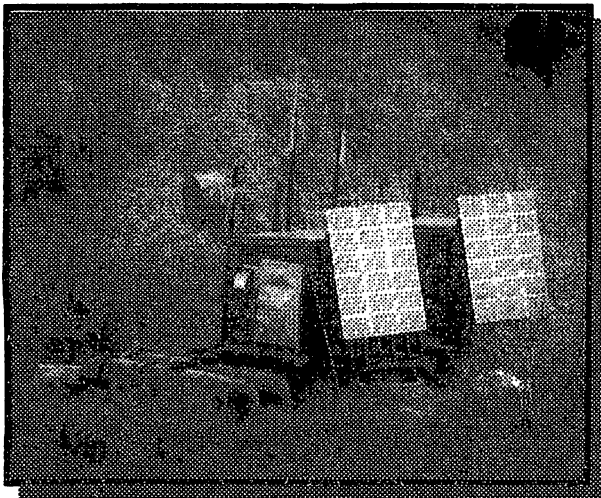


Photo courtesy Nancy Ferrell

"High-tech" site has been plagued with problems.

hired an Engineering firm to inspect the site. According to Monfils, the preliminary report was that the equipment was "inappropriate" and would likely not work with the existing Copper Valley Telephone equipment.

CVTC's plan to have the site operational by this summer has met with some skepticism in the McCarthy area. Some have expressed the opinion that the original equipment installed in McCarthy in 1994 was outdated, and may be the reason the Sourdough Ridge site has caused problems when activated.

"There are two rules for ultimate success in life: (1) Never tell everything you know."—unknown

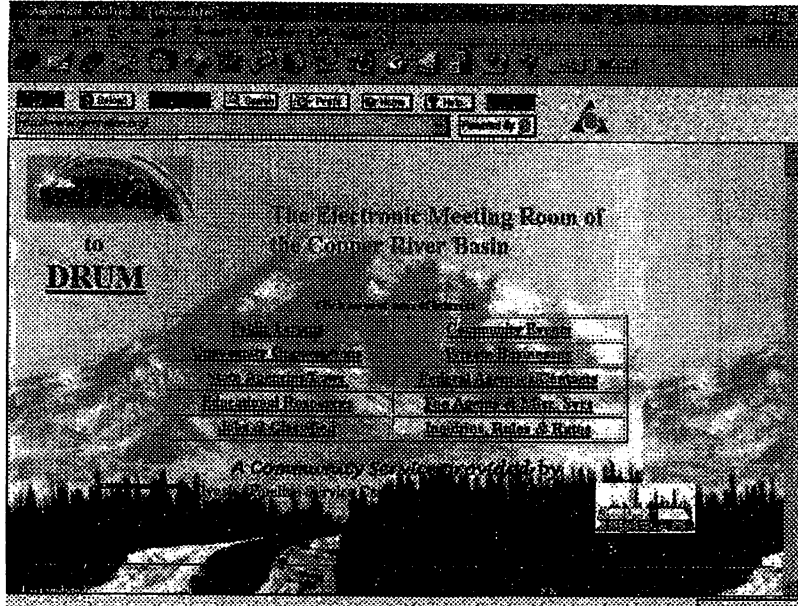
DRUM BBS provides electronic access to area

BY RICK KENYON

Readers with Internet access will want to check out a new WebSite, www.Glennallen.org. Called the DRUM BBS, the site provides direct links to Copper River Valley businesses who have their own Web page. Other area businesses are also listed with contact information provided.

Other categories include public forum, federal agencies and contacts, state agencies and laws, community events, community organizations, job and classified listings.

Here's a hint for McCarthy area AOL users. Turn off the Web graphics using the member preferences menu. This will considerably speed things up.



MAC meets

BY MATTHEW HAMBRICK

The McCarthy Area Council (M.A.C.) will meet Friday March 20th after mail.

If weather is not permitting an alternative location will be announced.

Agenda Items to include:

- 1) an update on the McCarthy Road upgrade, and safety

improvements, and 2) community planning possibilities (NPCA with Luther Probst).

MAC is all about everyone getting heard so get involved and speak up. Our community is ours to shape.

Residents and anyone else

interested in the future of the McCarthy/Kennicott area are all invited.

Agenda items for this meeting can be mailed to: Howard Mozen, P.O. Box MXY, Glennallen AK 99588 or e-mailed to howmoz@aol.com, or called into (907) 566-0771.

MCCARTHY POWER AND ELECTRIC COMPANY

THE MCCARTHY POWER AND ELECTRIC

COMPANY IS REQUESTING PROPOSALS FOR THE PURCHASE, INSTALLATION, OPERATION, AND MAINTENANCE OF A NUCLEAR POWER PLANT FOR THE MCCARTHY AREA. BESIDES PROVIDING ELECTRICITY FOR THE REGION, THE PLANT MUST BE ABLE TO HEAVILY SUBSIDIZE ITS OPERATION AT THE 90% LEVEL BY PRODUCING WEAPONS GRADE ISOTOPES FOR EXPORT TO THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES. SINCE NPS WILL UNDOUBTEDLY NOT WELCOME ANY REGULATORY COMPETITION IN THE AREA FROM THE NRC OR THE EPA, NO PERMITS OR IMPACT STATEMENTS WILL BE REQUIRED. FORTUNATELY, NPS DOESN'T REGULATE NUKES. PREFERENCES WILL BE GIVEN FOR PROPOSALS PROMISING LOCAL HIRE OF WORKERS REGARDLESS OF AVAILABLE EXPERTISE. SUBMISSION DEADLINE IS APRIL 1, 1998. CONTACT MPEC (ATTN. A. FOOL) AT BOX 65 FOR FURTHER DETAILS.

Copper River Trail Plan

Planning team recommends building \$27 million trail to Cordova

BY RICK KENYON

In 1996 Governor Tony Knowles asked Alaska State Parks to examine the feasibility of constructing a trail along the Copper River on the abandoned Copper River and Northwestern Railroad. As a result of their preliminary research, the planning team developed the following recommendations:

1. It is recommended that the trail be constructed in phases.

2. A trail facility user fee is recommended to pay for operating and maintaining the trail, public parking, restrooms, shelters and campsites along the trail, informational and educational materials, and public safety.

3. A cooperative agreement to operate the facilities along the trail is recommended. This agreement would be with a Consortium of five native landowners who are the principal stakeholders along the trail.

4. State Parks is the recommended agency for overall management maintenance responsibilities for

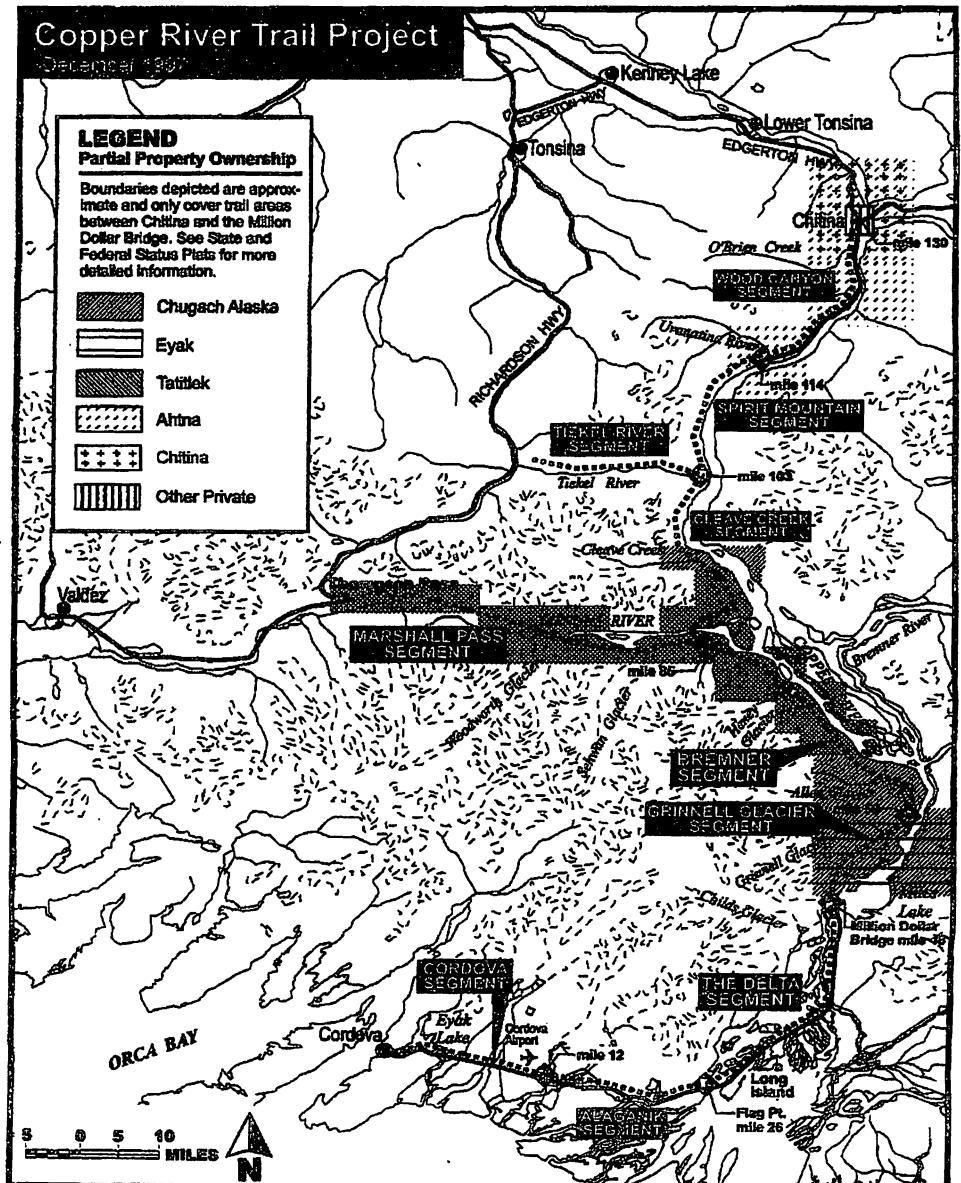
the trail and so shaded trail support facilities.

5. Portions of the trail will be designed and operated for non-motorized uses. The planning team recommends that motorized vehicles use of the trail should be prohibited in the summer, except in very limited portions of the trail.

6. It is recommended that

snowmobiles, currently used along parts of trail corridor, should be allowed to continue using the trail in winter.

The trail would feature amenities such as restrooms, parking, information education, camping, shelters, and drinking water sources at strategic locations along the trail.



According to the planning document, the Governor strongly supports this plan.

The total estimated cost of the trail project is 27 million dollars. The majority of funding would likely be federal ISTEAs "enhancement" funds.

In order to pay for maintenance, planners propose user fees which include a trail fee of ten dollars per day, an additional five dollars per night per person for use of developed campsites, 25 dollars per night per person for use of self service shelters, and a fee of fifty dollars per night per person (including dinner and breakfast) for use of caretaker attended shelters. The planners believe that between 5,000 and 20,000 visitors would use this trail between May 15 and October 15.

The Copper River Trail is only one in a number of trails proposed by Governor Knowles. His trails initiative is called the Trails and Recreational Access for Alaska (TRAACK). According to the draft proposal, the Copper River Trail will eventually connect the communities of Chitina, Cordova, and Valdez. However, according to the map provided with the plan, the nearest the trail would come to Valdez would be Thompson Pass, some 20 plus miles from Valdez.

Written comments will be accepted through March 15, 1998. Send comments to Alaska State Parks, Copper River Trail Project, 3601 C. Street, Suite 1280, Anchorage, Alaska 99503-5921.

What are people saying about the trail proposal? Here are a few comments that we have heard:

“During the hearings here it appeared those who may normally lean more toward economic development were in favor of the project and those opposed to development were against. Those in favor seemed to be rather lukewarm and most had a comment or two regarding changes they would like to see.”

“The whole thing's a waste.”

“Ridiculous!”

“Trail users are bound to require some services like bike rentals, food and lodging and guide services. So maybe some development could follow a trail project.”

“The state cannot even keep their campgrounds open.”

“Over 80% of Alaska revenues come from oil. That is not going to continue. We have to have more of an economic base. Like it or not tourism is the only thing on the horizon that is substantial enough to replace the lost revenue.”

“The whole plan smacks of political vote getting...”

“No plans to outfit or train any of the local fire and rescue organizations...”

“The Proposal is a pipe dream as far as to the cost per mile of building this trail. No way to ever get a return on that money.”

“It isn't that everybody is going to hike the trail, only a comparative few will, which is what occurs on the Milford Track [trail in New Zealand]. It is the name recognition that draws them to the surrounding area. Just like Mt. McKinley, only a few climb it but over 500,000 a year go to the park.”

“I thought the state got out of the McCarthy tram due to the worry about state liability.”

“Lots of bears and Salmon streams. Nice quiet path with brush right up to the edge of it. Lovely place to surprise a sow and cubs.”

“Mostly private land on both sides of the trail. You pay more to take a hike off the path or what?”

“One can argue that a vehicle access would even be better for the Alaska economy. This I believe is probably true. But under the circumstances that is probably not going to happen in my lifetime. They started in 1953 and I remember the kick off well.”

“For starters lets get the McCarthy road up to snuff and a trail to Cordova. Then go from there.”

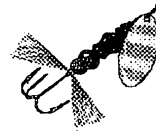
“I do like the idea of reconnecting Cordova and McCarthy/Kennicott and that may be a draw for bringing more folks into the area.”

“A truly real waste of money.”

“I did hear that snowmachining would be allowed and that sounds good to me, too.”

“I don't like the Tony Trail Plan at all. Put the money into true transportation.”

Long Lake ice fishing report



BY MATTHEW HAMBRICK

While there has been a fair amount of fishing on the lake this month there hasn't necessarily been a lot of catching. Though El Nino has been punishing most of the rest of the world McCarthy seems to be one of the few places to benefit from the meteorological menace. We have had mild weather to say the least for the majority of the winter and with the growing days this has made for some decent fishing weather. So the empty creels down on Long Lake so far this winter certainly aren't for a lack of effort or nasty weather. Last weekend I was out for a cruise and decided to check on a fishing party in case they had more fish than they knew what to do with. I'm always looking to help out.

As I cruised down the lake it was apparent that this was a full borne, legitimate attempt at pulling some fish out of the lake. This was no excuse to get together and slam down a case or two of Black Label. No sir. And at the sight of six boys serious about their fishing I began to have visions of my supper later: pan fried grayling, sautéed mushrooms, a spinach salad... well, at least the fish. In addition to the young fishermen there were a fair number of grown ups that included Ralph Lohsi, Mike McCarthy and Laura Bunnell and Ken and Carly Kritchen. Between all of them they had drilled somewhere in the neighborhood of twenty to thirty holes. And not a bite.

The lack of activity on the part of the fish is especially curious since "Grandpa Jim from Wisconsin's" 100 special

spikes (or maggots) weren't doing a lick of good. And they know ice fishing in Wisconsin. At least the holes were a pleasure to drill with "Grandpa Jim's" Laser ice auger, specially imported from Sweden. There has to be a little more activity in the catching department for this Southern boy to hang around the fishing hole, or at least some warm weather and a NASCAR race on the portable TV, so I headed for home. Kenny Kritchen reports that Ralph Lohsi did in fact get a nibble toward the close of the day on an artificial jig with a little herring. And there is some disappointment among the Long Lake ice anglers with Fish and Game's policy prohibiting unattended burbot sets. Regardless, the group says they are looking forward to the warmer days of March when hanging out on the ice isn't quite as painful to the extremities.

Another group of stalwart ice anglers was on Long Lake in the last week and they, too, were denied fresh fish for dinner. Rick and Bonnie were able to sneak away from their duties at the Wrangell St. Elias News for a fishing expedition late last week. Our publishers were using Daredevil spoons with salmon eggs to no avail. Rick and Bonnie put up a tent and did some amateur fish biology and watched the hole for over an hour in hopes of spotting some activity. In that time they report seeing only a minnow and a nasty old spawned out salmon. It is clear that the fish left them with some time on their hands. Rick also expressed dissatisfaction with the Department of Fish and Game's prohibition of

unattended burbot sets. But I imagine Rick and Bonnie will be back out there after them as soon as they get this edition of the News off the press.

Since the unattended burbot set regulation has more than a few folks disappointed I talked with Area Fisheries Management Biologist Tom Taube at the Glennallen office of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game to see if he could shed some light on the issue. Mr. Taube pointed out that the vastness of the region combined with the ever-shrinking agency budgets has not enabled Fish and Game to sample each and every lake. But Mr. Taube told me that the sampling that has taken place is "representative of a lot of the lakes in the area."

It is frustrating to pay the price for reckless and irresponsible anglers that have over fished their own lakes and I asked Mr. Taube whether or not it was possible our own Long Lake might be sampled and judged on its own merit in regards to the unattended burbot sets. Whether or not that is a possibility, Mr. Taube pointed out that because of the effectiveness and popularity of the unattended burbot set, a special classification for Long Lake would likely attract an "increased effort on the lake" from outsiders. Mr. Taube reminded me that as many lines as the daily bag limit are legal. So that means five attended burbot sets or a maximum of three burbot sets if the two remaining lines are for trout or grayling. Among the local ice anglers hopes are high for the fishing to heat up with the warming days of spring.

Pursuant to the Telecommunications Act of 1996 and in accordance with the FCC Rule 54.401(d)(2), Copper Valley Telephone Cooperative Inc. herein provides the following information regarding its universal services offerings:

Copper Valley Telephone Cooperative, Inc. offers single party local service on a flat rate basis (unlimited local calling) at a rate of \$9.25 per month for Residential Service and \$13.50 per month for Business Service.

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Copper Valley Telephone Cooperative, Inc. does not provide long distance or operator services directly. Long distance, operator service and directory assistance are available through interexchange carriers, many of whom have advertisements in the Yellow Pages. Rates for their services are not available through Copper Valley Telephone Cooperative, Inc.

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- Lifeline customers who voluntarily elect toll restriction will not be required to pay a deposit in order to initiate Lifeline service.
- Installation charges are at reduced rates depending upon the customers' individual circumstances.

Further information regarding these and other services provided by Copper Valley Telephone Cooperative, Inc. are available by calling our offices at (907) 835-2231 or (907) 822-3551 or by visiting our offices located at 329 Fairbanks Street, Valdez, Alaska or Mile 188.8 Richardson Highway, Glennallen, Alaska.



**COPPER VALLEY TELEPHONE
COOPERATIVE INC**

Murkowski: speed up development and road upgrade

Congress recently approved over four million dollars for acquisition of the Kennicott property. Now, some direction as to the use of that property is being given.

At a dinner with Interior Department Deputy Secretary John R. Garamendi in Fairbanks, Alaska Sen. Frank Murkowski

urged a speed up in development efforts at Wrangell-St. Elias National Park. Specifically, Murkowski asked the high-ranking Interior Official to support a speed up in road improvements to McCarthy, and a speed up in the timetable for historic preservation-renovation of the mining facilities at Kennicott.

"Kennicott can be the third leg in Alaska's tourism industry of the future adding to Denali and Glacier Bay as prime visitor destinations. It is vital given our needs, that improvements be speeded up at Wrangell-St. Elias," said Murkowski, chairman of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee.

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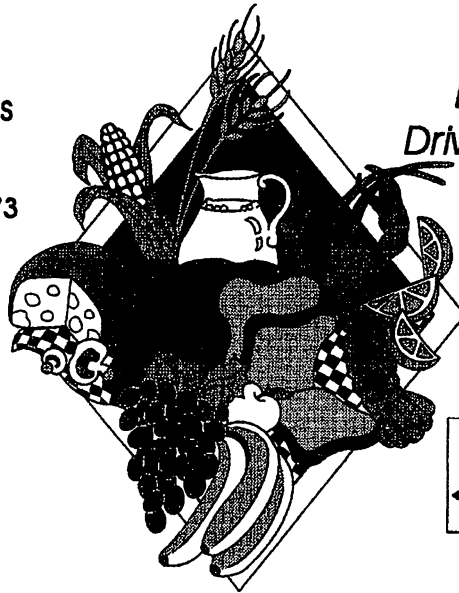
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Good News from the Wrangells

Part 4 "Our first winter"

BY BONNIE KENYON

Rick, our son Rick Jr. and I arrived in Valdez on June 22, 1976. A year in this beautiful Prince William Sound setting was a crash course in Alaska living.

Leaving the city of Sarasota, Fla. with its warm, southern climate and moving to a small northern town was challenging. When I think how quickly we adjusted to our new surroundings, I give credit to God Who moved upon our hearts to come here in the first place.

Before we knew it, summer was over and we were about to embark on a totally new adventure—our first Alaskan winter! I remember one night when four feet of snow fell. The next morning when Rick opened the door he was met with a wall of snow so deep that he had to shovel his way to work!

Our trailer lot was a couple of miles from downtown Valdez. We enrolled our son in a Christian school which met in the basement of a local church. Rick Jr. and I made daily trips to town which served as a great opportunity to learn the do's and don'ts of winter driving. There was a time or two when a motorist quickly came to my aid while I was learning the abc's of driving in a snowstorm. The weather at times was certainly foreign and unpredictable to us but the Alaskan people were just the opposite—warm, friendly and trustworthy.

One of the highlights at Christmas was our participation in a community event—a musical presentation of Handel's Messiah. There was something special about this occasion. Many of those who participated were like us—people far from home and family. By giving our time, talents and love for the

Greatest Gift of all, the distance between us and our families began to wane.

It was during our year in Valdez that I learned a priceless lesson: Our Heavenly Father is interested in not just our needs in this life but He enjoys filling the desires of our hearts.

One day my neighbor, Barbara, suggested we see if Kennedy Air Service would hire us to shovel their hangar and office roofs. Her boyfriend was a pilot there and Rick Sr. was the mechanic so Barbara and I figured we had a good chance. Rick did intercede for us with the owner and we got the job.

Shovels in hand, we reached the upper roof without incident. It soon became apparent that we were overdressed for the occasion so we threw our heavy winter jackets down to the lower roof. During one of our frequent rests, (good thing we weren't being paid by the hour), Barbara noticed a dog curled up on our discarded jackets. He evidently climbed the steep stairway to the lower roof and decided our jackets were just the bedding he needed for his break!

Barbara, loving animals and having a dog of her own, was convinced that Rick, Rick Jr. and I, too, needed the faithful companionship of a dog our own. I was not convinced. I felt our home—a 29' travel trailer—was already maxed out with 3 people and our newly acquired winter gear. I continually told my soft-hearted friend that I just wasn't interested. Period.

Our continued shoveling didn't faze the contented dog until Barbara and I descended to retrieve our gear and go home. There was something about the dog's big brown eyes that just seemed to grab your heart. Of course, Barbara called my attention to them and decided this poor creature must be one of

those "homeless, abandoned" dogs and I was just the one to have mercy! Well, I refused to look in his eyes or let my friend sway my opinion. Grabbing my jacket, I quickly descended the stairs, wanting to get as far away as I could from my friend and those deep brown eyes. As Barbara and I crossed the street to our trailers, we noticed the dog following us—as if he knew right where he was going. Barbara decided the dog would follow whoever should take care of him—either return him to his home or make one for him! Seeing that I hadn't shown the dog any attention, I felt certain he would follow close on Barbara's heels.

As Barbara and I were saying our goodbyes at my trailer, the dog slipped inside the door, curled up in a ball and promptly fell asleep. I insisted Barbara do something—anything. She informed me that it was heartless of me to wake the poor exhausted dog up. Seeing him curled up so comfortably, I decided I just didn't have the heart to disturb him. I convinced myself the dog would go to his proper home when the time came to show him the door.

When Rick Jr. got home from school, you should have seen his eyes when he discovered the sleeping dog! He was ecstatic and wanted to keep him. I explained that the animal must have a home. He didn't look undernourished or neglected. I called the local animal shelter but they had not been contacted by the dog's owners. We waited but no one showed up to claim him.

Rick Jr. finally confessed that he had asked the Lord to give him a dog. I realized this was no ordinary dog. He was the answer to my son's prayer to a gracious Heavenly Father Who is never too busy to hear your heart's cry.

OUR TOWN

March 1923 April

CHITINA NEWS

Bishop Rowe and Rev. E. P. Ziegler were passengers on Wednesday's train to Kennecott. The Bishop's intentions were to hold services in Chitina, upon his return there from Chitina he will go to Gulkana by auto, and from that point will penetrate into the Interior with a dog team.

CAFÉ TO OPEN THIS WEEK

The management of the Alaska Café announces that the work on the interior of that place is all but finished. New booths have been added and the entire wall newly redecorated. The kitchen has been enameled white, as has the lunch counter. With Dick Woodman doing the work a fine looking job is assured.

March 3

Wm. Holmes pioneer and prospector arrived in the city the early part of this week after an absence of thirteen months. He has been over on the Bremner River prospecting and reports that he has struck some good looking ground.

The school children

held a candy and cake sale this afternoon at the drug store. The children held the sale for the purpose of obtaining funds to have a picture framed and starting a fund for the purchase of a Victrola for the school. The nice display of candy and cake didn't last much longer than it took to lay out the display.

March 10

LOCAL NEWS

Lee Yancey who has been ill with influenza for the past several days was taken to the hospital Wednesday for treatment.

Nearly everyone who has had the flu is fully recovered.

Dan Campbell left for the glacier Thursday morning with a dog sled and trailer. He took an outfit large enough to supply his wants for some months. Dan states that he intends to catch a little fur next season if he finds it dull this summer.

George Petroff who with his partner was recently awarded the contract for cutting fifty cords of wood for the Road Commission, was in town

this week.

Wednesday afternoon William Weitzel returned from the states with his bride. The newlyweds will make their home at Kennecott.

CHITINA NEWS

Bishop Rowe returned to Chitina this week, having decided to abandon his trip to the Interior for the present.

Neil Finneson and Fred Burluy began freighting with a four horse team to the Finneson property on the Katsinia. This is the property recently bonded by Angus McDougall. The freight is taken five miles out the road, across the Copper River at Camp Comfort then up Horse Creek.

March 17

FOR SALE

Three Room Log House.
Opposite the School
Al G. Doze
McCarthy, Alaska

LOCAL NEWS

Gus Carlson who is employed at the Green Butte, spent a few days in town the first of the week. He reports that the tunnels that were being driven this last winter are in fine shape.

Earnie Lottsfeldt arrived in McCarthy yesterday from the States. Mr. Lottsfeldt will reassume his position as engineer for the Green Butte Mine.

FIRE SERIOUSLY DAMAGES STORE

Friday morning a fire broke out in Marshall's store causing a loss of some hundreds of dollars. The blaze is thought to have started from a cigarette.

The sound of crackling wood awakened Mrs. Marshall, who immediately awakened Mr. Marshall. By the time he got into the store from their apartment there was a large area of shelves in flame. The fire extinguishers got in their work and by the time they were empty there was plenty of help on the scene.

Mr. Marshall states that the damages will amount to nearly half a thousand by the time repairs are made.

CHITINA NEWS

One of the finest social events ever held in Chitina was a house warming given by the new proprietress of the Chitina Hotel, Mrs. Olts.

The ladies rest room was opened to the public. Its floors are covered with soft carpets and it is furnished with cretonne upholstered furniture.

Dancing was held all evening in the large lobby and later in the evening an elaborate lunch was served in the dining room, which was prettily decorated with streamers and festoons.

Each lady received a favor typical of the North, the mementoes ranging from ivory pen holders from Nome to vanity bags from

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Gas boat or Row boat anytime.

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Seattle.

March 24

Were you up early Sunday? No? Well, you missed a good sight. Frank Iverson "lined four" through the village street with all the style of a coach driver. You see, it was this way. A bunch of Kennecott folks decided to go out to Brown's Roadhouse for a dinner so they consulted Sig Wold, and between Sig and Frank the party finally got loaded up. The trip from Kennecott to McCarthy was hard, as the road was not broken for bob sleds. After the horses rested in this town, the party advanced on to the roadhouse. They danced and then had a chicken dinner and got back to Kennecott at eleven thirty. There were fourteen joy-riders and each one said he had a better time than anyone else.

CHITINA NEWS

The sad news of the death of Thos. W. Lynch of Strelna, during the past week, was received with deep sorrow by his many friends. An attack of la grippe, or flu, now so prevalent, proved fatal in his case, his lungs having been weakened by twice suffering with pneumonia several years ago. Dr. Mohr of Kennecott was in attendance a few days and had made arrangements to have his patient taken to the hospital. The night before he was to have gone however, Mr. Lynch passed quietly away. His wife was with him at the time of his death.

AIRPLANE SERVICE FOR CHITINA

Letters have been received in Chitina from Bobby Sheldon, pioneer auto stage driver, in regard to a landing field near Chitina. A group of

Fairbanks merchants have wired out for a plane and are going to establish passenger service between that city and Chitina.

March 31

A letter received by one of the residents here from Wm. Longly states that he had a lot of trouble crossing the glacier. He was on the ice a week before he managed to make the summit.

Pete Johnson recently purchased the saw mill formerly owned by George Anderson, and is putting it in shape to begin operations in the near future.

The Kennecott population was increased recently to the extent of one baby girl. Mrs. Ralph Rothe is the happy mother of the prettiest little 7 1/2 pound mite of baby girl ever born in the Kennecott hospital. The entire nursing staff pass the verdict, and the opinion is not disputed. Dr. Mohr who is in attendance reports mother and daughter doing nicely. The news wishes to extend congratulations.

April 7

Mr. T. H. Huddleston, Supt. of Construction at the Nizina bridge spent several days in town attending to personal business. He states that nearly all the work preliminary to pouring the concrete for the piers is practically finished. The concrete is to be poured this fall. Since beginning work on the Nizina bridge three months ago the Commission has hauled approximately 250 tons of freight to the bridge site, constructed a long approach on piles, driven steel casing for five piers, each pier requiring two sets of casing built a camp and otherwise advanced the

construction of the bridge.

In all, the record they have established is second to none.

Mr. Huddleston returned to the bridge Friday morning with the Commission teamsters. It is stated that the freight will all be at the bridge by the end of next week.

The motor sled that has occupied the center of the stage for the past couple of weeks, was put into commission last Thursday. After cutting the breeze for about an hour the machine turned turtle. No one was hurt but one of the blades of the propellor was broken.

Recently an Alaskan trapper was treed by four timber wolves. Soon two of them moved off. They returned in a short time with a beaver between them. The beaver was then forced to start gnawing on the tree. Before it had finished it's work however, a hunting party came along and the tragedy was averted. The trapper quit the country, saying, the wolves were getting too well educated for him to keep up with them.

April 14

SLED COMPANY WELL ESTABLISHED

President Jackson of the new Jackson Berry Aero Snow Plane Transportation Company had as guests, for a demonstration trip Thursday evening Messrs. Buhl and Danielson, employees of the Kennecott Copper Corporation.

If Messrs. Jackson and Berry's experiments prove themselves as practicable in actual work as they have been during the trial runs, a new medium of transportation will take its place in the district. The showing already made by the Snow plane bids us

believe there will be a new industry, of great value to the North spring up at McCarthy.

Bids will be received at the Post Office until May 15, for carrying 150 pounds of mail into Chisane. Mail to go every 30 days.

NOTICE

President Snowplane Company: We hereby request that you do not use the thoroughfares of our community for any more of your dangerous experiments; otherwise we shall be compelled to make a complaint to the authorities - Community

April 21

LAUNDRY FIRE AT KENNECOTT

Sunday morning the Kennecott Laundry was destroyed by a blaze started by a cigarette coming in contact with gas.

The fire was out in about fifteen minutes but all the laundry was destroyed and practically all the machinery. The loss is placed at about \$1,600, exclusive of the bundles.

New equipment has been ordered and the proprietors expect to have things in shape to do business in about 15 days.

DEATH OF LOCAL BOY AT CORDOVA SHOCKS ENTIRE COMMUNITY

News of the demise of Victor, son of R. L. H. Marshall and wife, was received from Cordova by his parents Friday morning.

The details were brief, merely stating that Victor had been on a bicycle on the dock and had fallen into the bay. Before help could arrive the boy was drowned.

April 28

Science Corner

The Tale of a Far North Message in a Bottle

BY NED ROZELL

Calum Stamper and his brother Adam went for a walk on the beach recently near Calum's home on the Isle of Lewis, off the northwest coast of Scotland. As the brothers explored, seven-year old Calum saw what he thought was a Frisbee resting in a pile of rocks.

It wasn't a Frisbee, and that's where this turns into a science column. Adam Stamper, Calum's 15-year old brother, looked closely at the yellow disc. It was about seven inches in diameter and thin enough to fold easily. He turned it over and saw a typewritten message:

One Dollar Reward on Return of Serial Number with Date Found, Location, Your Name and Address to Geophysics Institute, Univ. of Alaska, Fairbanks.

Soon after the boys walked indoors, Adam turned on the computer and scanned the Internet. After a 30-minute search, Adam found the name of Don Rice, a project engineer here at the Geophysical Institute. Adam typed an e-mail message to Rice, and the mystery began to unravel.

It turns out the yellow disc traveled even farther than Adam's e-mail message. The disc was one of 1,500 scattered on Beaufort Sea ice in May, 1979. The discs, deployed at spots just east and west of Prudhoe Bay, were part of an experiment nicknamed "Drifter." Scientists wanted to see where the discs would end up in hopes of simulating what would happen

to oil spilled on Beaufort Sea ice, which breaks up every year.

Many of the discs were recovered on beaches of Alaska's north slope, or islands just off the coast. But a few took a much longer ride, one that brings us back to two brothers playing on a Scotland beach.

Tom Weingartner, an oceanographer with UAF's Institute of Marine Science, described how the yellow disc No. 0093 most likely found its

scientists call the Beaufort Gyre. Caught in a giant loop, the disc spins near the North Pole for at least a decade.

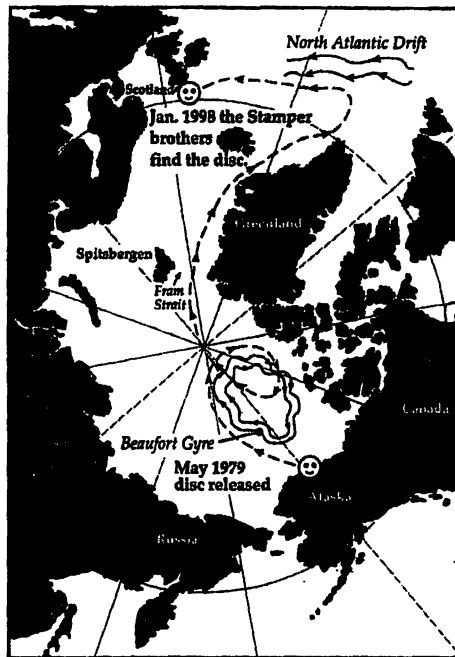
Once spun out of the Arctic Ocean, the little disc travels on its raft of ice through the Fram Strait, a channel between Spitsbergen and Greenland that oceanographers study because it forms an important link from the Arctic Ocean to the North Atlantic Ocean. From there, powered by the East Greenland current, the ice floe hugs the east coast of Greenland.

By this time, the ice floe is approximately the same latitude as Nome, and moving south. Hitting warmer water and air, the ice melts, and the disc continues the journey alone by floating to the southern tip of Greenland, where it encounters the North Atlantic Drift. One year has passed since the disc first encountered Greenland.

The North Atlantic Drift, an extension of the Gulf Stream off the coast of the U.S., is an east-flowing current. The current carries the disc slowly across the swells of the North Atlantic, a trip that takes two to five

years. Finally, a wave deposits the disc in a nest of wet rocks on Port of Ness beach on the east side of Lewis Island, the largest and farthest north of Scotland's Outer Hebrides. At Port of Ness beach, the same latitude as Juneau, a young boy picks up the disc and flings it, like a Frisbee, at his older brother.

Modern versions of the Drifter experiment are a bit



way to Calum Stamper's hand.

Envision the summer of 1979. Ice near the shore of the North Slope breaks up with a noise like distant thunder into ice floes, which separate like pieces of a jigsaw puzzle. The yellow disc hitches a ride on the back of a newborn ice floe. The ice floe carrying the yellow disc is caught in a clockwise circle of slow-moving ice, part of what

more high-tech, Weingartner said. Buoys installed on the moving sea ice as part of the International Arctic Buoy Program are tracked by satellites, which report the buoys' whereabouts more than a dozen times each day. The buoys also measure the air temperature and pressure, and transmit the information to international weather

forecasting stations.

Reports of found discs still trickle into the Geophysical Institute business office at the rate of about one per year. Roberta Greenlee still tucks a dollar reward in an envelope with a form letter and sends them off. Since the dollar's not what it was when the disc set sail in 1979, I sent Adam and Calum

an extra buck.

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

A walk on a winter road

BY SARAH WELTY—GRADE 7 AGE 12

The cold air pressed against me as I walked down the road. Snow covered trees and trees bending from the weight of the snow surrounded me. The bright moon had a pink orange ring around it. It cast shadows down onto the snow and made the snow that wasn't shadowed sparkle like diamonds. One star peeked over a frosty ridge. As I

walked on more stars appeared in the night sky. I breathed in the frosty air. Such a frosty fresh smell!

The snow crunched under my feet. The moon shined on the snow covered mountains. Off in the distance a snowmachine was heard flying over the sea of snow. I came upon a snow covered stream with a bridge over it. I walked off into the

riverbed aside of the bridge. There I saw a rabbit trail leading to a bent willow on which the rabbits must have feasted on. The branches brushed against my back as I walked. I stopped before going home to hear an owl hoot

once,
twice,
silence.

Oklahoma kids need you!

To whom it may concern,

The United States is a great place to live and learn about! The Fourth grade classes at Crosby Park Elementary School in Lawton, Oklahoma have begun our exploration of this beautiful land.

We would greatly appreciate any assistance your paper and readers could provide.

Sincerely,
Dara Gee, Krista Clavon, and
Lucy Boucher
Dear Readers,

Hi! We are a 4th grade class from Crosby Park Elementary School in Lawton, Oklahoma. Our class is starting a unit on the regions of the different climates, cultures, land forms, histories, product and natural resources and wildlife.

You can help us! We would like to receive postcards, maps, information, letters or anything you think would help us learn more about your state. Everything sent will be displayed by a huge map of the United States; and the whole school will be able to enjoy it. Please send response to:

Kareem Lockhart
c/o Ms. Boucher
Crosby Park Elementary
1602 N. W. Horton Blvd.
Lawton, Oklahoma 73505-2999

Thank you for taking the time to read our letter. We will appreciate your thoughtfulness as we are looking forward to hearing from you.

Your Oklahoma friend,
Kareem

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

In case anyone is considering doing some camping this summer, please note the following public service announcement: In Alaska, tourists are warned to wear tiny bells on their clothing when hiking in bear country. The bells warn away MOST bears. Tourists are also cautioned to watch the ground on the trail, paying particular attention to bear droppings to be alert for the presence of Grizzly Bears. One can tell Grizzly droppings because they have tiny bells in them.

Book Review — Skiing in Alaska

***Umbrella Guide to Skiing in Alaska* by Elizabeth Tower.**

PUBLICATION DATE: October 1997

PRICE: \$12.95

IBSN NUMBER: 0-9453967-45-3

FORMAT: Softbound, 160 pages, 5 ½" by 8 ½", b/w photos, maps

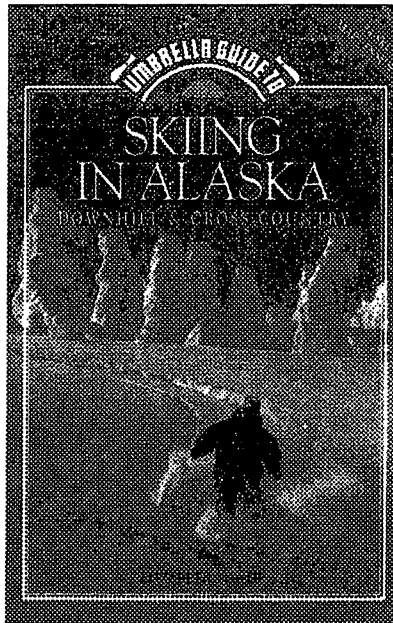
BY RICK KENYON

While this book is not specifically about the Wrangells, WSEN readers may recognize Elizabeth Tower as the author of *Icebound Empire—Industry and Politics on the Last Frontier*. Her newest book, *The Umbrella Guide to Skiing in Alaska*, is a "must have" for both the first-time and the avid skier in Alaska. This guidebook provides all the best skiing locations throughout Southeast, South-central, and Interior Alaska, including downhill resorts like Alyeska near Anchorage and Eaglecrest near Juneau...cross country destinations like the White Mountains National Recreation Area and Chena River National Recreation Area outside Fairbanks... and backcountry touring routes on the Kenai Peninsula and in Chugach State Park.

Skiing in Alaska, a 160-page trade paperback selling for \$12.95, also provides current maps of 24 downhill and cross-country trail systems, as well as important safety tips and local resources including equipment rentals, ski clubs, snow reports, and available accommodations.

Tower shares her enthusiasm of a sport that has been a way of life in Alaska since the turn of the century. Her expertise and insight take skiers to new heights by providing valuable details of Alaska's mountains, trails and backcountry touring. For skiing

addicts who cannot get enough during the regular season, Tower suggests summer skiing at Eagle Glacier Nordic Center, on an alpine ridge 5,700 feet above Girdwood. From this height, skiers are often looking down on mountain goats and other wildlife! In 1996 the U.S. Ski Team proclaimed "Eagle



Camp" one of the best glacier skiing facilities in the world, but the facility can be enjoyed by skiers of all skill levels.

Among the highlights of Alaska's ski season are the 50-kilometer Tour of Anchorage, the University of Alaska-Anchorage ski team's wild "Flattop Flyer," and the World Extreme Skiing Championships outside Valdez. The annual Iditasport Race along a section of the historic Iditarod Trail is a unique opportunity for athletes to

compare the speeds of two popular outdoor sports: cross country skiing and mountain biking.

Skiers can also explore the trails and runs of Alaska from the warmth of home by skiing the Internet. Tower includes addresses for sites that offer just about everything: additional maps, tips on how to ski better, membership in skiing associations, and entries to local competitions.

Dr. Elizabeth Tower and her husband, Dr. John Tower, established the first private pediatric practice in the Territory of Alaska in 1954. She is a charter member of the Nordic Ski Club of Anchorage and served as president in 1970. Now retired, Tower has published several books, and was recently named Alaska's Historian of the Year.

Copies of UMBRELLA GUIDE TO SKIING IN ALASKA may be ordered by mailing \$12.95 (Washington residents add \$1.11 sales tax) plus \$3 for shipping and handling to: Epicenter Press, Box 82368, Kenmore, WA. 98028. Phone (425) 485-6822.

"No entertainment is so cheap as reading, nor any pleasure so lasting. She will not want new fashions nor regret the loss of expensive diversions or variety of company if she can be amused with an author in her closet." — Lady Mary Wortley Montagu (1689-1762).

NPS on subsistence: A comedy of errors

BY WILLIAM TABMOW

Most backcountry travelers at one time or another have wandered into boggy ground where forward progress ceases as thick, vicious mud pools around their ankles. To continue in this direction would of course be pure folly, and to turn to either side would likely prove equally disastrous. Only one thing to do here—retreat and go around the bog-hole in a new direction.

This is exactly what the National Park Service has done in their new Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve Subsistence Plan—Review Draft. The NPS, finding themselves mired in the “problems, conflicts and/or unresolved issues of subsistence eligibility,” has decided “it is now time to look further than the existing regulations...and take a fresh and critical look at those regulations...”

In other words, we need to go around the bog-hole of eligibility problems and go in a new direction, never mind the fact that current regulations seem to more than adequately address any and all eligibility problems.

For example, the preserve eligibility section currently reads: “Local rural residents are eligible to hunt for subsistence purposes in the preserve. **The term local rural resident has not been defined.** [Emphasis added] However, any person who lives in the resident zone for Wrangell-St. Elias or who has been issued a 13.44 permit is eligible to hunt in the

preserve.”

Furthermore, Chapter 2, page 3 of the draft review includes a statement by Wrangell-St. Elias Superintendent Jon Jarvis that resident zone community boundaries are not necessary at

Wrangell-St. Elias
National Park and Preserve
Subsistence Plan - Review Draft



this time to determine Park eligibility. Now, if resident zones don't exist, (no boundaries—no zones?) and “local rural resident” has not been defined, it appears the only legal way to hunt in the preserve is to get a 13.44 permit. However, this is directly contradicted further on in the document's NPS Subsistence Program section, which states: “While the subsistence priority and national preserve areas is also limited to local rural residents, the regulations relating to national parks and monuments described above were not extended to national preserves.”

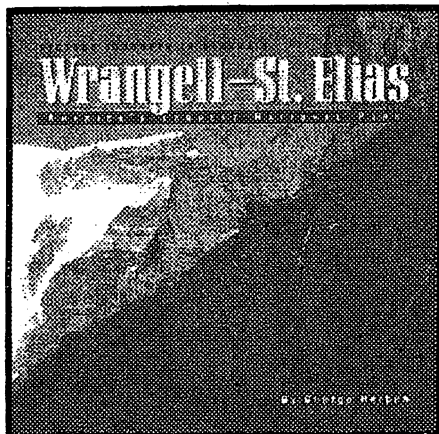
A simple solution to this self imposed problem would be for the NPS to follow its own regulations and identify local rural residents by the permanent address indicated on licenses issued by the State of Alaska Department of Fish and Game and drivers licenses. Just how many subsistence users can there be who would falsify an address on a hunting or drivers license in order to take advantage of subsistence opportunities in the park-preserve?

There are a host of other problems very similar to the above example, which are currently dealt with by contradictions, convoluted statements and misleading information—a comedy of errors which may well propel the NPS down the trail of new regulations and ever more control of the subsistence user's life.

Draft review available from:
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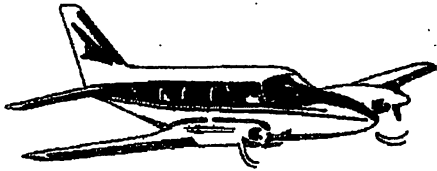
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CVTC technicians will be in the McCarthy / Kennicott area in mid-April 1998 to reconnect public pay phones at the tram and in Kennicott. While in the area, we will perform any reconnect service for our returning customers. We will also perform new installations, subject to accessibility of the customer's location.

Customers wishing to reconnect existing service or initiate new service should call our Glennallen office now (822-3551) to be placed on the schedule.



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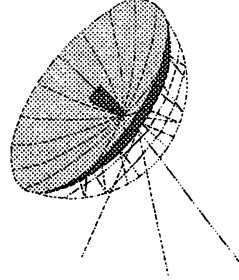
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We intend to make monthly trips to the McCarthy Kennicott area this year through November, based on demand. CVTC is also ordering two more toll trunks to serve the area.

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Cooking with Carly

BY CARLY KRITCHEN

This is a good time of the year to pull out those frozen berries from your freezer, and make something delicious with them! I freeze several varieties of berries at the end of summer, mostly because I'm busy and don't have the time to make anything with them at that time. Now, while spring is on the way but it's still pretty cold outside, is an ideal time to make use of those berries and remember the good time I had picking them last fall! I peeked in the freezer this morning, and I still have quite a few blueberries, lots of low-bush cranberries, a few cartons of raspberries, and some rhubarb.

I have quite a few wild berry recipes for desserts that I've collected over the years, and here are some of my favorites.

The blueberries in the McCarthy area are pretty disappointing after you've lived on the coast and picked the huge berries that grow there, so my husband picks blueberries when he's back in Cordova during fishing season. This recipe is rather lengthy, but absolutely delicious. The lemon frosting is what pulls the flavors together, so try it, too!

Blueberry-Ginger Cake

1 cup blueberries
 3/4 cup sugar
 1/2 cup butter
 1 egg
 1/4 cup molasses
 2 cups flour
 1 teaspoon baking powder
 1 teaspoon cinnamon
 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
 1/2 teaspoon salt

1/2 teaspoon ground ginger

1 cup buttermilk

Thaw and drain blueberries. Cream together sugar and butter. Add egg and beat well. Stir in molasses. In a separate bowl, stir flour, baking powder, cinnamon, soda, salt, and ginger until well blended. Add alternately to first mixture with buttermilk, mixing well after each addition. Fold in drained berries. Pour into an 8x8 pan, and bake at 350 degrees for 25 to 30 minutes. Cool.

Lemon Butter Frosting

1/4 cup butter

2 cups powdered sugar

1 teaspoon lemon peel

1 tablespoon lemon juice

1 to 2 teaspoons milk

Cream the 1/4 cup butter, gradually adding the powdered sugar. Blend until smooth. Add the lemon peel and juice; beat smooth. Add just enough milk to make frosting a good spreading consistency. Frost cooled cake.

I like this rhubarb recipe because it's different and easy. You can use either canned or frozen rhubarb.

Rhubarb and Dumplings

4 cups diced rhubarb (thawed)

1 to 1 1/2 cups sugar

1/2 teaspoon cinnamon

1/4 cup water (optional)

1/2 cup flour

1 1/2 teaspoon baking powder

1 tablespoon sugar

1 egg yolk

3 tablespoons yogurt (plain)

1 teaspoon lemon peel

Gently stew rhubarb, sugar, and cinnamon. Add water if necessary to get a soupy mixture. Remove from heat.

Mix the flour, sugar, and baking powder together. Beat the egg in a small bowl, add the yogurt and lemon peel. Stir egg mixture into the flour until blended. Let batter sit for a few minutes. Spoon batter to form dumplings on top of stewed rhubarb. Cover pot and return to stove. Cook until it bubbles; then reduce heat and simmer for 12 to 15 minutes. Serve hot.

I've used this recipe for a long time. I originally got the recipe from the book "Alaska Wild Berry Guide And Cookbook," but I've changed it quite a bit. It really does taste like a pie—cherry pie!

Yukon Cherry Pie

pastry for double-crust, 9 inch pie

3 cups lowbush cranberries

2 cups sugar

1/4 teaspoon salt

2 teaspoons vanilla

1 tablespoon grated orange peel (dry)

1 cup water

4 to 5 tablespoons flour

1 large slightly beaten egg

Prepare pastry and put bottom crust in pie pan. Cook the berries, sugar, salt, vanilla, and orange peel in the water until the berries are soft. Thicken with a paste made from the flour and a little cold water. Cool; then blend in egg. Pour into crust. Cover with a top crust, prick crust with a fork for vents. Place in hot 450 degree oven with a cookie sheet on the shelf below the pie to catch drips. Bake for 10 minutes, then reduce heat for 350 degrees and bake until crust is well browned, about another 30 to 40 minutes.

A LOOK AT THE WEATHER

BY GEORGE CEBULA

December at McCarthy was a continuation of the warmer El Nino temperatures and average precipitation. January was colder with average temperatures and light precipitation.

The average December temperature was 9.2, compared to -9.2 in 1996 (-5.1 in Dec '95 and 0.3 in Dec. '94). The high was 37 on December 24 and 25 (26 on Dec. 18, '96 and 31 on Dec. 31, '95) and the low was -28 on December 31 (-45 on Dec. 31, '96 and -46 on Dec. 6, '95). Seventeen days had low temperatures of zero or above and only one day below minus twenty. Six days had high temperatures of thirty or above. *Silver Lake had an average temperature of 8.9 (-10.7 in Dec. '96 and -6.5 in Dec. '95). The high was 36 on December 12 and 24 (24 on Dec. 19, '96 and 31 on Dec. 31, '95) and the low was -24 on December 17 and 31 (-46 on Dec. 31, '96 and -44 on Dec. 6, '95).*

December precipitation was about average with 1.01 inches of liquid precipitation, (0.29 in Dec.'96 and Dec.'95) the same as December 1994. All precipitation fell as snow with 13.3 inches (4.0 in Dec. '96 and

1.8 in Dec. '95). The snow depth was 17 inches at the beginning of the month, increased to 22 inches on Christmas Day, and ended the month at 21 inches. *By comparison Silver Lake had 1.65 inches of liquid precipitation (0.45 in Dec. '96 and 0.11 in Dec. '95) and 18.5 inches of snow (5.0 in Dec. '96 and 1.0 in Dec. '95). The snow depth was 7 inches on the 1st and 20 inches on the last day.*

1998 at McCarthy began on the cold side, but was rather mild with high temperatures at or near zero most of the month. Precipitation for January was light.

The average January temperature at McCarthy was -7.4, just .2 degree warmer than January 1997 and 16 degrees warmer than January 1996. The high temperature was 34 on January 31 (34 on Jan. 13, '97 and 16 on Jan. 1, '96) and the low temperature was -45 on January 6 (-48 on Jan. 8, '97 and -54 on Jan. 20, '96). There were 2 days with the high temperature at 20 or above and 3 days with the low temperature -30 or colder. *Silver Lake had an average temperature of -10.7 (-10.5 in*

Jan. '97 and -25.5 in Jan. '96). The high was 15 on January 30 and 31 (38 on Jan. 13, '97) and the low was -46 on January 6 (-50 on Jan. 8, '97).

January precipitation was light with only 5 days of measurable amounts. The total liquid precipitation was 0.42 inches (1.20 in Jan. '97 and 0.71 in Jan. '96). Snowfall was 5.6 inches (15.9 in Jan. '97 and 9.3 in Jan. '96). 1998 started with a 21 inch snow cover, increased to 24 inches on January 17 and ended the month with 23 inches. *Silver Lake had about the same precipitation as McCarthy with 0.38 inches of liquid (1.13 in Jan. '97 and 0.43 in Jan. '96) and 5.0 inches of snow (13.0 in Jan. '97 and 3.5 in Jan. '96). Silver Lake started the new year with 20 inches of snow on the ground, increased to 25 inches on January 18 and ended the month with 25 inches.*

February shows a steady increase in daylight and sunshine, but well below zero temperatures are still common. March is usually the beginning of the warmer temperatures with highs reaching into the 40s.

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FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

Editors note: A better road to McCarthy, or status quo? For your consideration are two letters, each advocating one of these positions.

January 27, 1998

Sedona, AZ

Dear Wrangell St. Elias News:

While I am somewhat sympathetic to those who drive the McCarthy Road often, (it can be a very bumpy ride especially if they are trying to drive it as fast as they can,) I still enjoy driving it. And is part of the reason I bought land at Long Lake, considering it part of the adventure.

But I believe the main reasons that business persons and others would like it paved are: greed, either economic or time wise or both.

They wish to have more tourists to exploit; squeezing every penny they can out of them. And so they can drive it faster, making the trip into Anchorage, Fairbanks, Glennallen, Valdez and elsewhere quicker.

But I believe it would be a big mistake to pave the McCarthy Road. Because of my experiences with other McCarthys in the lower 48. Each has regretted it.

In the lower 48 there are thousands of communities that were similar to McCarthy and Kennicott. In a very scenic and out of the way spot and down a dirt road. So they had their dirt road paved.

Some prime examples are: Jackson Hole, Wyoming; Vale, Steamboat, and Telluride, Colorado; Taos, New Mexico;

Lake Tahoe, California/Nevada; Palm Springs, Yosemite and Shaver Lake, California; Sedona, Sierra Vista, and Wickenburg, Arizona.

Each is now over run by tourists. And the only bears and moose that are now seen are on t-shirts. They have become paradise lost. More Disneyland than a Shangri-la.

Each believed that it wouldn't happen there, the change from paradise to Disneyland.

And the tourists are becoming residents. And forcing the old timers to leave.

These are not the kind of tourists that the Wrangells are now getting: Adventure oriented. They are the kind that want to be comforted. And eventually they will get more and more changes to the McCarthy/Kennicott businesses and community to suit them.

These changes will also bring changes to the life styles of McCarthy/Kennicott area residents. Making it more and more like the style we all fled to the Wrangells to escape. - The Rat Race!

And with faster speeds there will be crashes, injuries, and death on the McCarthy Road. When was the last time WSEN covered a crash on the McCarthy Road?

I think we need to decide if McCarthy/Kennicott should become another Jackson Hole or Vale? Should we go down the same path? And if we are going to either exploit the tourists or protect what God has allowed us to enjoy? Which is more important, money or the life

style? Once we start down that path there is no turning back. It has a way of snowballing on each community that does vote to pave.

As is, more and more tourists are finding McCarthy/Kennicott. And the tourist season is getting longer. And few businesses, if any, are failing. In fact more businesses are opening. Which implies business is good in McCarthy & Kennicott.

I think that a graded gravel McCarthy Road would be a fair compromise. It would make for a smoother ride and allow less adventurous tourists to make the journey to our community. But do we really need more?

And if the road remains too bumpy, for anyone, there is still flying in and out.

Sincerely,
Ric Quayle

February 10, 1998
Anchorage, AK

On January 22, 1998 U.S. Senator Frank Murkowski made the following statements to the Alaska Legislature:

"As much as we depend on responsible resource development, we should not forget that more than 1.2 million people come to visit us and see our spectacular landscape."

"I believe we must work together to expand tourism opportunities, look at new markets and attractions, extend seasons, and explore winter-use opportunities."

"I am also going to work with the National Park Service

to carefully establish a third leg in the Alaska national park destination triangle by developing access and facilities at Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve."

"Nothing is more important than improving the road to McCarthy. This will open opportunities all along the corridor. I ask you to make this a top priority for transportation funding this year."

On February 5, 1998, headlines in the Anchorage Daily News read: "Knowles wants \$1 billion for roads." The article went on to point out that this was for design and construction of numerous road projects throughout the state over the next three years. What's does it do for the McCarthy Road? Not much.

The current Statewide Transportation Improvement Program "STIP," from whence these numbers come, shows only one project on our road in this time frame. This is \$225,000 for design of the Kennicott Wayside (end-of-road) vehicle parking lot.

Why is it taking so long to get something accomplished on this road? At one time, only one concept for improving the McCarthy Road was on the drawing board. That involved an overall upgrade of the road, the work to be accomplished in phases, much the way the Edgerton highway was improved back in the 1960s. This project has been progressively delayed. There are now a number of federal funded McCarthy Road projects intermingled within the STIP. Additionally, the recently released "McCarthy Road Scenic Corridor Plan" suggests that even more plans will be thrown in. Included is an impressive

and expensive foot/bike trail that will generally parallel the road. This jumbled hodge-podge is an apparent factor in procrastinating a basic upgrade.

Well meaning but perhaps misguided input may be contributing to the confusion and delay. Some proponents of detached funding for a small project or two on the road argue that "upgrading of the road to secondary standards is unnecessary for access, either for residents or for visitors from the general public." Since their concept envisions that the road will remain primarily in its primitive state (only 2.5 million for improvements), they also seek additional and ongoing operating funds from a reluctant Alaska Legislature for the DOT&PF's Chitina Station. This funding is necessary for the grading and upkeep of a gravel surface.

A fear of visitors apparently fuels endeavors to quash effort to improve accessibility. Because of this a significant number of area residents signed a petition to the governor last fall, expressing essentially the same points as espoused by Senator Murkowski. Many agree access to this area provides a major economic benefit for the entire state, and road improvement should be more than just a local issue.

Petitioners are in favor of a significant upgrade and point out that the attention given smaller projects may be detracting from and delaying concerted efforts to upgrade the entire route under one multiple phase project. They realize that 2.5 million for safety improvements is obviously inadequate for meaningful enhancement of road safety. A

few years ago the DOT&PF spent close to a million dollars on just a few hundred feet of roadway in the Long Lake area.

Driving the Edgerton back in the 60s was quite an experience, besides being as rough or rougher than the McCarthy Road is now, the entire landscape was gray not green from all the road dust. When the major McCarthy Road upgrade takes place, some sort of hard surface, like a chip seal, would best be included. The hard surface will improve road corridor aesthetics through dust control. A hard surface also decreases the state's maintenance burden, meaning that it will save money.

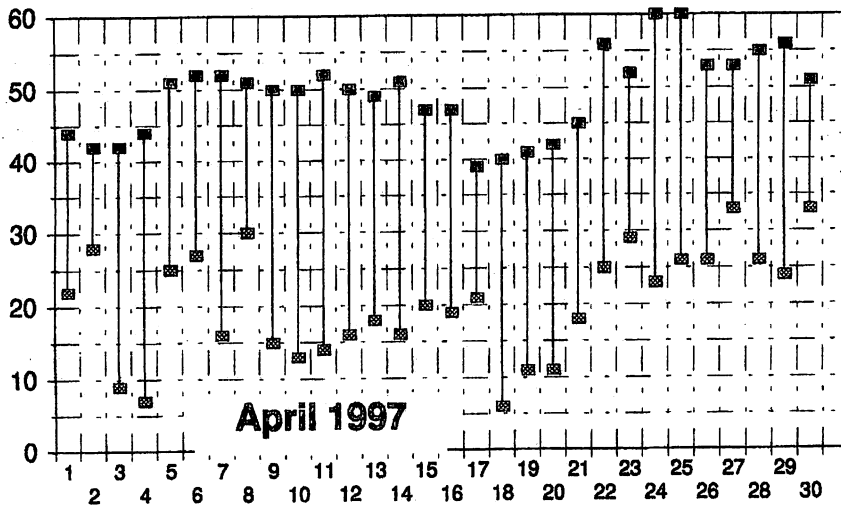
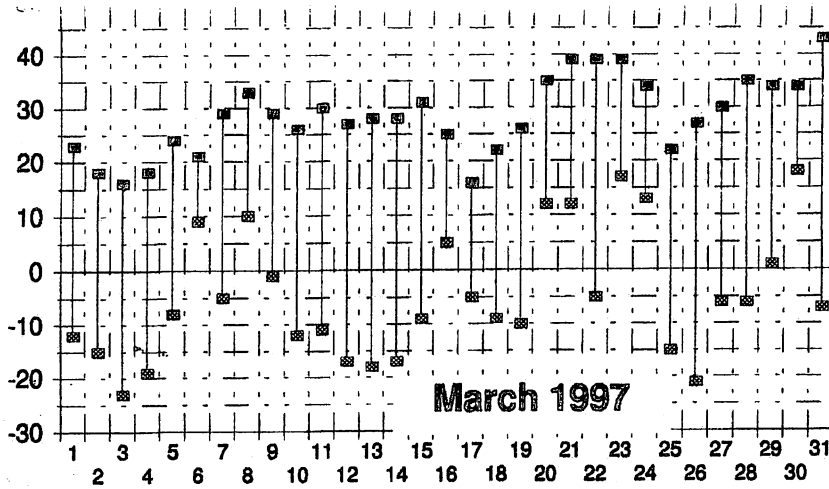
If the surface of the road remains status quo it will require frequent grading and increased dependence on general fund appropriations from the Alaska Legislature. Taking into consideration the current state of the Alaska economy, it is simply not reasonable to expect the legislature to fund, year after year, unnecessary maintenance on the road.

Efforts to improve this road must be viewed realistically. Logic seems to be telling us that we should:

- ▶ Welcome a few more visitors.
- ▶ Use FHWA funds to upgrade the road to the minimum width necessary to support a hard surface.
- ▶ Not continually bleed the state treasury to fund attempts at maintenance on an inadequate gravel surfaced road.

Kenneth D. Smith

Weather - What can we expect?



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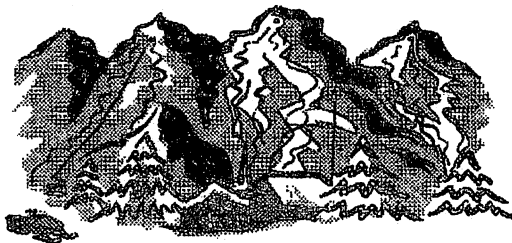
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