

Wrangell St. Elias News

"Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty"

Vol. Twenty-Three Issue Two

March & April 2014

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Travel was interesting this winter!



A McCarthy Road ice glacier at Mile 56 ½. Picture taken on January 18th by McCarthy local Terry Frady for the McCarthy Road Report page on Facebook.



Posted on January 31 by Chokosna Trading Post, "Yesterday, Mile 6. Rescued by the brave and able Strelna Volunteer Fire Dept."



Chris Haley of McCarthy responds, "Beautiful picture," after reading the post: "DOT just went through Chokosna at Mile 27."



Beginning on January 24th, massive avalanches occurred throughout Thompson Pass/Keystone Canyon on the Richardson Hwy. The debris blocked a 50 some mile section of the roadway from Mile 12-64 with debris that measured 20-50' deep. DOT began the nearly 2 week process of clearing the highway before it was once again open to traffic to and from Valdez.

A note from the publisher

BY BONNIE KENYON

Greetings (again) from Oak Hill, Florida! It is February 27th as Rick and I complete the March/April WSEN. We are still far from home and our cabin in McCarthy. Originally, we had thought we would wait until we got home mid-March to finish and mail this issue. However, being on vacation gives us more time to complete a project such as writing and collecting information for our publication. It came together quicker than usual. We opted to return to our small-town printer in nearby New Smyrna Beach and let them print and finish the issue for us.

We know when we return to our cabin there is always plenty to do. Snowshoveling, snowblowing, heating the cabin and settling back into our Alaska routine. Logs are great insulators but they do take their time in heating up!

I trust you received your January/February issue in good condition. We did have one subscriber call and say she had two of one page and one missing! Please let us know if you have any problems and we will replace your copy.

Last night Rick and I had a "touch" of McCarthy show up on our doorstep! Tom and Mary Kaye Golden have a summer cabin on the far side of McCarthy Creek. In the winter they enjoy their RV quarters in Titusville. A couple of years ago, Rick and I visited them and so enjoyed our tour of their home away from home. Tom takes full advantage

of the nearby golf course. Mary Kaye soaks up that good ole Vitamin D with family and friends. This year we had the privilege of giving them a tour of our new winter quarters. There is no golf club here in Oak Hill, but it certainly has plenty of good fishing spots. We also visited a seafood restaurant together and caught up on their news. Thanks for coming, Mary Kaye and Tom. We'll see you both up north this summer!

Rick and I want to thank Jason Esler, McCarthy landowner and resident, and Grady Candler, Executive Producer of the TV show, for their editorials on the benefit (or lack thereof) of Reality TV coming to McCarthy. Each of them did a fine job in giving their opinions for this issue. Thank you, Jason and Grady!

McCarthy Area Council's secretary/treasurer, Tamara Harper, was on vacation when she wrote her article outlining

and updating us on local improvement projects done with State of Alaska funds. Thank you, Tamara, for taking time for us while visiting family.

I know you will enjoy reading *Items of Interest* this issue. It amazes me to learn how many of our local folks travel extensively and, for some, great distances during the winter season. I know there are more that I could not reach in time for this issue. My thanks to those of you who responded to my Facebook messages or emails. I know each of you were busy enjoying your adventures. Thank you for taking the time to give us a peak into your whereabouts and activities.

Wrangell St. Elias News welcomes aboard the following subscribers: Eli Potter, AK; Bill McClintock, AK; Wayne Modisett, VA; Larry Hoare, AK; Roger Crawford, CA; June Pemberton, AK; Kate Purcell (online).

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Items of Interest

BY BONNIE KENYON

Paul Hanis and Jenny Rosenbaum: Jenny is currently in Anchorage finishing up her brief stint of working her accounting job in the office before heading home to the Nizina. She will work from home for the remainder of the tax season.

Paul is working on the slope right now, says Jenny. "I think his schedule is going to be quite busy the remainder of the winter."

Jenny says she is looking forward to getting home. "I'm hoping that there is still some snow left so I can go ski-jouring with the pups. In the meantime, I'll be working until mid-April. I'm already looking forward to summer. Seed catalogs are starting to pour in— exciting!"

Neil Darish: Rick and I are still in Florida as I type up Neil's item of interest. He is enjoying winter in Alaska. After our telephone conversation yesterday, I realized the slower pace of his winter season is soon coming to a close.

The McCarthy Lodge with its Ma Johnson's Hotel is slated to open nearly two months earlier than normal. Nine crew members of a TV production company is due to arrive in McCarthy March 1st. The Discovery Channel has purchased the show which is described

as a "Documentary-style" format that will explore life as it is in McCarthy by following the lives of several local folks. "What I think is potentially good is how the production company is genuinely interested in how we as McCarthy residents are self-reliant, without local government telling us what to do," commented Neil. "Self-governing communities are non-existent anywhere else."

For the last three years our town has been on the map as a potential location for a reality show. This time it looks like it could become a reality.

After doing personal research on the company, Neil discovered they have already produced a couple popular shows. One in particular—"Flying Wild Alaska"—was a documentary, drama-style, show that was a success, especially with Alaskans.

The production company is expected to remain through May, leave for the summer, but possibly return.

Neil has more-than-enough to do before the crew arrives. He hopes to have a plumber install the new heating system for the lodge and the Backpacker's Hotel. Also new tiling for the all the bathrooms in the Ma Johnson. A master electrician is due the end of April to

complete the upgraded wiring project. The chefs, Scott and Kurt, arrive March 8th. Neil intends to hire locals to help with getting the lodge up and running. Guy Holt has arrived in McCarthy and will be making supply runs for the lodge, restaurant and saloon. Welcome home, Guy.

Now if I could just talk Neil into opening the McCarthy Center grocery store early, providing his guests (and locals) with his famous ice cream cones!

Erin Phillipson and Bryan Campbell: Shortly after I completed last issue's *Items*, I received a newsy email from Erin. Since I was unable to include it at that time, I held it for this issue and got an update from her today. Erin and Bryan own property and a Yurt on the McCarthy side of the Kennicott River, spending as much time as they can in their home town. Erin writes:

"Bryan and I have been hard at work at one of Amazon.com's fulfillment centers in Fernley, Nevada, since November 19th. Originally that was supposed to end on December 21st, but they offered an extension and, needing the money, we accepted. We acquired this job through one of Amazon's seasonal work programs called Camper-Force. Basically, they hire folks who

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have and can live full-time in their Rvs while working at the Amazon warehouses. In exchange Amazon pays for the RV site at a local RV park (except electric) in addition to hourly wages. We had to buy a travel trailer to take the job, but are hoping to sell it afterwards and come out ahead.”

Warmer climes beckoned them to the Big Island in Hawaii. They were hired to work on a WWOOF farm, says Erin. Thankfully, she spelled this out for me! World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms. According to Erin, you can apply to work on one of their farms approximately 20-30 hours a week for a place to sleep and for some food.

The “farm,” says Erin, is more like a large yard with many garden beds and fruit trees. “We have our own cottage to stay in and an outdoor kitchen to cook our meals. Occasionally, we also get a few veggies and fruit from the garden. In exchange, we work 16 hours a week making new garden beds or clearing more place in the surrounding jungle so that a garden can be expanded. It is sweaty work, but the bugs are almost non-existent and there is a cool pond to take a dip in if a cool-down is needed. The weather varies from hot and sometimes muggy to warm but rainy.”

Erin and Bryan plan to return to California in late March where they left their truck and drive back to McCarthy by mid-April. Both of them applied for National Park guide jobs in Kennicott this coming summer. If they are hired they will spend the summer season at their home in McCarthy. Sounds like a great plan to me, Erin and Bryan.

Kenny and Donna Smith: Another couple searching for a fresh dose of Vitamin D this winter is Kenny and Donna. With Kenny’s permission I am reprinting his recent Facebook post of February 12th:

“It’s been a long winter so far, even though warmer than normal for a lot of it. But for the last couple of weeks it has been back to our mid-winter cold. The last three mornings it has been -2 here at the house. (Anchorage) We lost two-thirds of our snow during the heat wave, so we have a lot of bare ground now and the frost is being driven pretty deep. Not good.

“But it is nice we are escaping the cold and heading for the warmth, we hope, beginning at noon tomorrow. To San Diego, then hop on the boat and do the South Pacific for 30 days. Not so much in the way of new cultural experiences this voyage, just soaking up sun and listening to the waves lapping against the hull. Only 11 ports in all, so a lot of at sea days. We go as far south as Tahiti at 18 degrees south latitude, below the equator. Also we spend 5 days at various ports in the Hawaiian Islands but miss all the kids and grandkids by just a few days at Kona. They will be over there again at daughter Pam’s and family place for spring break, like we all did last year.”

Kenny and Donna are praying that the norovirus incidents on some ships, goes away, period, for all voyages—theirs and everyone else’s.

Soak up all that Vitamin D, Kenny and Donna. That should hold you until summer breaks lose at your McCarthy cabin!

Nik and Gina Merlino and family: The Merlino’s went on a search for Vitamin D, too, and found it in the state of Arizona. Nik writes: “We are soaking in the sunshine and 65 degree weather, enjoying the Arizona ‘winter.’ Due to the unseasonably warm temperatures this year, there is no snow; therefore, the sled-dog races were cancelled in Pinetop.” Their winter headquarters are in Flagstaff where the kids, Dylan and Cassidy, are

finishing up their school year. Dylan is in the 4th grade, and Cassidy the 6th grade. Mid-April will see Dylan turning 10 and Cassidy, 12.

The family have spent a good portion of the winter traveling. In October Nik and Gina took the kids on a short tour of Route 66, driving to Holbrook, staying the night in the historic Wigwam Motel, where each room is its own private “wigwam”—built in a horseshoe shape around a central lobby building. “These wigwams used to be located across Route 66 and the American south. Today there are only 3 left with the ones in Holbrook being the best maintained,” says Nik. “After we left Holbrook, we drove up through the Navajo and Hopi Indian Reservations stopping at Canyon de Chelly to look at the amazing sandstone rocks and historic cliff dwellings that were built on the Canyon Floor so long ago and Old Oraibi, which is the longest continuously inhabited town in North America.”

Thanksgiving break continued Dylan and Cassidy’s first-hand study of geography. The family’s travels and adventures took them to California and Nevada. Their knowledge of Gold Rush history was deepened with an exploratory visit to the Yuba River. “Driving into Death Valley at sunset and camping at 200 feet below sea level was one of the highlights of our trip,” writes Nik. “All in all it was a great family vacation!”

Christmas holiday was spent with Gina’s family in Indiana and New Year’s in Chicago. One more trip is planned before they head north. Nik is taking Gina to the Big Apple where Nik is eager to show her around the big city.

Nik and Gina and their McCarthy-based business, McCarthy River Tours & Outfitters, is gearing up for another busy summer season. A lot of bookings are coming in, says Nik. They are excited to announce

their newest guided day tour—a 4-hour Glacial Lake inflatable Kayak tour, spending time exploring the icebergs with possible hikes on the rocky glacier surface. Something else new for this year are Stand Up Paddle Boards for rent. Nik tells me that is a surf board that folks stand on, using a long paddle to propel themselves.

Nik is flying home to McCarthy in mid-April to get the cabin ready and the river gear out of storage. Gina and the kids will arrive for the summer in June. “We are all looking forward to getting home,” says Nik. “Cassidy is excited to re-start her dog drawing and watching business. She plans to work on the rafting side a few days a week, as well. Dylan is ready to undertake some more intensive yard work responsibilities with another year of experience and maturity under his belt.”

Sounds like you are one busy family, Nik and Gina, but plenty of time together having fun in the sun! See you next month.

Wayne Marrs and Gaia Thurston-Shaine: Another adventurous couple is Wayne and Gaia. Gaia writes: “Wayne and I spent seven weeks in October and November traveling in Fiji, Tonga and China with Wayne’s mother (aka “Mum-sy”) and had an incredible trip. She turned 65 on a tiny island called Caqalai in Fiji. We enjoyed the friendliest people in the world in Fiji, where we rafted in the mountains and swam in the ocean. Then the highlight was swimming up close and personal with humpback whales in Tonga—definitely a top 5 life experience. We had lots of adventures in China as well, including taking a gondola and wooden stairway to within 100 feet of the elevation of Mt. Blackburn in the southern Himalaya! It was Mum-sy’s first trip out of the country and she was completely blown away and is already asking where we’re going next year!”

Wayne and Gaia are returning to their summer home in McCarthy in May. Gaia says they are scheduled to open their business ventures St. Elias Alpine Guides/Copper Oar for glacier hikes, mill tours, etc. on May 25th.

Thanks, Gaia and Wayne, for sharing your world travels with us!

Howard and Chris Haley: At the time I received an item of interest from Chris, both she and hubby Howard were tucked away in their cozy cabin in McCarthy’s west side. It is only temporary, however, as they both have some traveling to do. Maybe not as extensive as the above “items,” but whenever anyone has to travel McCarthy Road in the winter *after* a 19” dump of fresh, fluffy snow, that is deemed an adventure in my book. Thankfully, our wonderful Alaska Dept. of Transportation came to the aid of local folks and plowed the McCarthy Road, making Chris and Howard’s travel plans go into effect.

Writes Chris: “I might be heading down to Port Angeles, WA. for a couple of weeks. My 95-year old granny took a spill a few days ago and fractured her upper arm. My mom and aunt are taking care of her and I thought maybe I could be of some help. This will give me some family time in, also.”

Prior to the snowfall, Chris said they had rain that turned into a lot of icy conditions. That made for interesting travel in the local area.

Howard is presently home, too, but scheduled to return to his park service job in Copper Center on March 10th. If he can fit it in, he may accompany Chris and get in some of his own family time with his aunt and uncle in Bothel, near Seattle.

“Other than making travel plans, we have been working on our kitchen. Pipes froze last year. The sheet rock had to be put back up, so mud and taping we went and a

new paint job, too. Just got things back in place a day or so ago. What a mess to deal with in the hub of the home! I’m glad that’s over. Today I’m baking a loaf of bread in my new clay bread baker in celebration of a job well done.”

Congratulations, Chris and Howard, and happy travels to you both.

Congratulations to Kaleb and Brittany Rowland! It is with great pleasure that we announce the birth of Kaleb and Brittany’s first child, born January 17th, two weeks early.

Kaleb writes the following day: “I gained the exciting new title of dad last night at 9 p. m. when my lovely wife, Brittany, gave birth to **Gilbert Blaine Rowland** after a very short water birth at the Fairbanks Birth Center. He weighed 9 lb. 2 oz. and was 22 inches long.”

Brittany adds a few details. “My labor was just short of four hours, and involved my water breaking in Renee’s driveway, a rush to the birth center as my contractions started very quickly. There was about an hour or two of labor and the birth in the water. It was a beautiful experience I got to share with my husband, my mom, Grandma Person, and the two midwives that helped deliver Kaleb’s siblings.

“We stayed the night at the birth center and then came home yesterday morning to find my sister and her two boys eagerly waiting to meet baby Gilbert.

“God answered my prayers with a quick birth and a beautiful son. He is so good to us! We are blessed by this little man, and all the love everyone has already shown us.”

Kaleb is the oldest son of Keith and Laurie Rowland of McCarthy. Kaleb and Brittany own and operate Roweon Builders— a framing contractor doing business in the McCarthy area.

Alaska Grown-1982

BY RICK KENYON JR.

Ham radio opened a whole new world for me and was the best geography teacher a kid could have. As I made a new "contact" via the radio, I would open a world map and look to see where that person lived. Required by the FCC to maintain a logbook of contacts, we each had a booklet with pertinent information of the other ham we met: Date, band/frequency, signal strength, first name and location and any other information we wished to keep up with. It also helped to know if it was a person you previously encountered. Our Alaska call-signs were unique and soon we found out very popular with the outside world. The small number of Alaskan ham radio operators and the geographic remoteness added to that rarity. I enjoyed the advantage that it often gave with overseas operators who heard the "KL7" prefix and tried to sort out through the pile-up of many calling to establish a contact (QSO in ham lingo).

Winter gave way to spring and soon the snow melted back so reveal dead grass it had covered with a blanket of snow. Grammy and Grampa left their winter residence in Florida and drove their camper up for the summer. We were excited to see them again and show them the improvements on the homestead since their last visit. Grampa brought his Honda 90 motorcycle and I was happy to have someone to ride with during their summer stay. We drove all around the woods on various

trails, checking on neighbors and their projects.

Dad flew the plane to Valdez in the early summer to get the PA-12 put on floats. It would be used to "spot salmon" for local fishing boats during the fishing season. There was some minor work to be done to the floats first. After that was fixed, the plane was tested out and ready for service. He flew back home for several weeks, landing at Long Lake and leaving the PA-12 at the Collins' dock. We drove to Long Lake to pick him up.

Grampa and I had a "project" on expanding the woodshed. I was his assistant and in no time it was ready to be filled up. We then set our sights on doing just that. Every morning, we would head to the woods with the chain saw, axe and our dog Sam. After Grampa cut the tree down, I would use the ax to clear the branches off and he would finish by cutting the logs into the proper lengths for our wood stove. We would stack the logs into piles to be moved later by pick-up truck. Sam would be busy, too—keeping the critters at bay with his watchful eye!

Mom and Grammy had their projects, too. There were always clothes to be washed, food to be cooked, and the garden needed to be tended.

We had company several times that summer. Mike and Judy Shelton from Gakona came to visit and brought their kids, Lorie and Duane. Lorie was around my age and Duane several years younger. I looked forward to having someone my age



Photo courtesy the author Rick Jr. In 2013.

to hang out with and we kept up by mail the rest of the year. (Mike was Jo King's younger brother). On Sundays, we met in our cabin for church. Sometimes Phil and Judy Collins would come from their summer cabin at Long Lake. They would bring their kids, Karen and Mike. It was always nice to have fellowship with other believers.

Dad left for Valdez to spot salmon during the season. He would fly several times a day, spotting for several fishing boats. At night, he would tie the plane up to a boat and catch some sleep. The weather was not always pleasant, being on the coast. Sometimes he would fly to Valdez and get supplies and things needed. Jerry and Lynn Bellezza would pick him up. The season lasted 6 to 8 weeks.

During this time, Grampa and Grammy stayed with Mom, Sam and I at the cabin in McCarthy. We studied for our next ham radio class license. Mom, Dad and I studied for our General class while Grampa and Grammy studied for their Technician class license. Our plans were to

go to Anchorage before they headed to Florida and take our tests there.

One day, Jim Edwards walked up to our cabin and he and I drove the motorcycles north towards the glacier. We parked the bikes and proceeded to hike over the gravel moraine to McCarthy. I wore tennis shoes which was not a good choice. Jim led the way, carefully skirting unsafe places as we slowly made our way to town. It took over 2 ½ hours. After walking to the mail shack, we picked up our

mail and put it in our backpacks. The walk back took longer, some four hours in all. I was beat and give out by the time we found the bikes. I vowed to "never again" make that trek!

The summer sped by all too quickly and it was nearing time for Grampa and Grammy to head south. Dad came home from Valdez, having put the plane on wheels for the winter. We caravanned to Anchorage to take our ham radio exams near the end of August. All five of us passed our tests and bid farewell in Anchor-

age. Grampa and Grammy headed toward Tok and would have over 5,500 miles to drive to Daytona Beach, Florida. Mom, Dad, Sam and I drove the Suburban back to McCarthy, packed with supplies to make it through the winter. We stopped in Glennallen at the Copper River School District's office. I had a box of school books for that winter and was not enthused at all to get started! The rest of the drive home from Glennallen was uneventful and the cabin was just as we left it.

Chitina Ice Fishing Derby

CHITINA:—

It's time to break out the ice augers and get out of the house for a fun weekend in Chitina! The 11th annual Chitina Ice Fishing Derby is scheduled for Saturday, April 5th. There will be special prizes for the kids so bring the whole family.

Fish any area lake from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., then bring your largest catch to Uncle Tom's

Tavern for weigh-in by 5 p.m. The prize for the largest fish caught is a brand new power ice auger.

Ice Bowling will be available at or near the Chitina Wayside from 11a.m. to 3 p.m. Prizes will be awarded for different age categories.

Door prize drawings will begin at 5 p.m. You must be present to win and at least 16 years old.

A Pig Roast will take place at approximately 6 p.m. at Uncle Tom's. Food is being prepared by Clyde Waller. Side dishes are always welcome.

Door prizes are always greatly appreciated. If you have something to donate, please call Beth at 907-823-4040. For more information, you may call Tom at 823-2253.

4G LTE Wireless service expansion scheduled

Copper Valley Telecom has announced that it will expand its state-of-the-art 4G LTE wireless network throughout the Copper River Valley, Valdez, and Cordova. Work will be completed by mid-summer 2014.

Wireless carriers categorize data speeds using the terms 3G, 4G, and 4G LTE, with 4G LTE representing the fastest speeds available in the industry.

"In 2013, we became the first carrier to offer 4G LTE over

a cellular network in our region. We upgraded ten of our wireless sites in Valdez, Prince William Sound, and Cordova and they are performing exceptionally well," said Dave Dengel, CVT's Chief Executive Officer. "Our network is meeting or exceeding all performance benchmarks including data speed, reliability, and coverage. We are excited to be able to expand the network this year."

The fourteen sites slated for upgrades to 4G LTE in 2014 are:

- Glennallen
- Tazlina
- Tolsona Ridge
- Willow Mountain
- Nelchina
- Chistochina
- Glenn-Rich (at Tok Cutoff)
- Silver Springs (Copper Center)
- Slana
- Cannon Hill (Chitina)
- Sourdough and McCarthy (McCarthy)
- 7-Mile/Alpine Woods (Valdez)
- Eyak River (Cordova)

Do-it-yourself electric power

Way back in 1997, we started a series of articles offering practical guidance for Alaska bush living. One area of interest was alternative energy. We were fortunate to have Ed LaChapelle as a local resident as Ed was an advocate of alternative energy and helped many of us set up our power systems. Although Ed is no longer with us, his practical advice lives on through articles he wrote for the WSEN.

Future articles will discuss details of diesel generator management and alternative power sources such as solar panels, wind and micro-hydro plants. This introduction reviews some basic principles of power generation. It originally ran in our March & April 1997 issue.

BY ED LACHAPELLE

Grid Power

To put home power in perspective, first consider the more familiar grid power, the kind that arrives from a distant source through power lines. Large central generators, whether hydro, oil, coal, gas or nuclear powered, feed electrical energy into a distribution system called the grid. This is an energy demand system in which the central generators deliver to the grid exactly the amount of energy used by the power company customers, plus internal losses in the grid. There is no electrical energy stored anywhere in the system.

Large central generators are extremely reliable and most power companies have more than one central source for redundancy. Economy of scale keeps the cost per kilowatt-hour low. The weak link in the grid system is the grid, that is, the distribution network with poles, towers and wires exposed to icing, wind, falling trees, avalanches and just about anything else nature can throw at it. For this reason all grid power systems experience unplanned power outages from time to time, lasting anywhere from minutes to weeks. Many grid customers maintain backup systems, ranging from candles to small generators for freezer sup-

port to elaborate emergency units with millisecond response time to protect computer files.

Alternative Home Power

Rapid technological advances over the past two decades have made alternative methods of power generation economical and practical. This leads to distributed power, where each consumer generates power locally at the point of use. Almost all such systems today use storage batteries to accumulate power from such sources as solar (photovoltaic) panels, wind generators, small hydro plants or even human muscle power driving a bicycle generator. These sources typically are irregular and often do not deliver power in synchronism with consumption, hence it must be held in batteries for use when needed. Alternative power, unlike the grid system, thus depends on energy storage. This stored electrical energy may be delivered directly as low voltage direct current, or it may support an inverter which delivers alternating current to conventional house wiring.

Distributed power generation does not enjoy economy of scale, hence the cost per kilowatt hour is much higher than in a grid system. This encourages the use of efficient lighting and appliances. While in principle a solar power system, for instance, can

be designed to supply any amount of power, practical questions of cost put a limit on this, leading to trade-offs with conservation measures like investment in energy efficiency and avoiding electrical energy for heating. At Alaskan latitudes, solar energy systems also usually require some generator back-up around the winter solstice. The big advantages of such systems are independence from external influences, very low environmental impact and, above all, reliability. A properly designed, installed and operated solar power system does not have power outages.

Small Generators

Generators powered by diesel fuel, gasoline or propane are a common feature of Alaskan bush homes. These are a hybrid power source occupying a position somewhere between grid power and alternative systems like photovoltaics. Small, local generators are a distributed power source, but operate on an energy demand basis just like their giant cousins. No electrical energy is stored, but is indirectly stored on site as chemical energy in the fuel tanks. While local operation is independent, generators still depend on the larger distribution system that supplies fuel and hence are vulnerable to supply interruptions.

The cost per kilowatt-hour of generator electricity also lies midway between grid and alternative power. Larger amounts of power can easily be generated than from a photovoltaic system, hence lower-efficiency appliances and electrical heating can be supported. A substantial amount of mechanical maintenance is required. Reliability depends heavily on the quality of installation and maintenance skills of the owner. The most reliable and efficient systems alternate between a pair of high-quality diesel units installed for co-generation to supply space or water heating.

Economic Factors

Large central generators feeding a distribution grid offer the lowest direct cost to consumers who live close to the grid. This advantage rapidly disappears with distance away from the grid, for the cost of running a service power line to an individual consumer is high. In the Copper River Basin, such power line construction costs around \$50,000 per mile, only a small percent of which is paid by the power company. The rest has to be financed by the customer. When amortizing such an investment is added to the kilowatt-hour rate, grid power can become very expensive indeed. This, in fact, is a major driving force for the installation of alternative energy systems. A photo-

voltaic system furnishing the power needs for a typical efficient small home can be installed for \$10,000 to \$15,000. If such a home is more than ¼ mile from the nearest grid con-

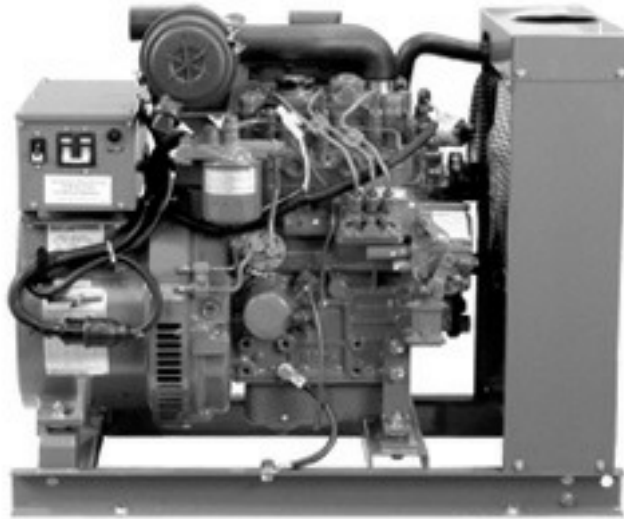


Photo courtesy Northern Lights Diesel

This 3-cylinder diesel generator is similar to the one used at *WSEN*, as a backup to solar power.

nection, alternative power becomes an attractive option. The amortization cost is the only power cost, for the sun does not send monthly bills!

Although centrally generated power offers the lowest direct cost to consumers, it has a high indirect cost to society in the form of large-scale pollution. Coal-fired plants are especially notorious in this respect, with oil-fired plants a close second. Hydro and nuclear power are pollution-free at the source, but create their own peculiar problems with landscapes flooded by reservoirs and the disposition of nuclear wastes.

Alternative power systems, on the other hand, generate pol-

lution-free power. The only significant indirect costs come from manufacture and recycling of component parts, such as photovoltaic panels and, especially, batteries. A higher cost to the individual consumer is the trade-off for minimum impact on society at large.

Small generator systems present a mixed picture. Larger amounts of local power can be generated at lower cost per kwh than with alternative energy systems, but the indirect costs to society are the largest of all. Small internal combustion engines are less efficient than huge central plants burning fossil fuels, hence they discharge more pollution per unit of fuel burned and are noted for their noise pollution. They have, however, the advantage of being small in total aggregate of fuel consumed compared with large central plants. They also have less noticeable impact because they disperse hydrocarbon pollution sources instead of concentrating it all at a single site.

Conclusions

There is no free lunch. Every source of electricity has its problems as well as benefits. Today it is possible to install highly reliable home power systems off-grid that can provide electricity for a comfortable life, even in remote areas of the Alaskan bush. Future articles in this series will explain some of the details.

"The theory of Communism may be summed up in one sentence: Abolish all private property."—
Karl Marx (1818-1883)

McCarthy & the Discovery Channel

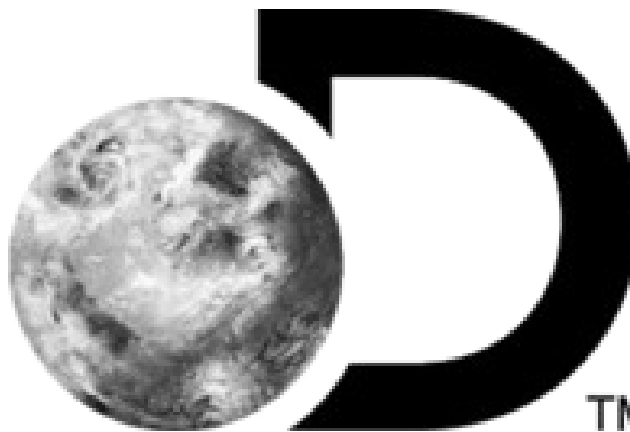
BY GRADY CANDLER

As news travels fast in a small town, I imagine everyone in the McCarthy area is already aware that the Discovery Channel is planning to shoot a new series in the area this spring. Since I will be in McCarthy overseeing the production for the duration of the project, I thought it might be helpful to share first hand information about what we hope the show will be.

I am the Executive Producer of this series, and I have been lucky enough to work on several different projects over the past 10 years that have taken me from the Inside Passage to the Y-K Delta and across the Brooks Range to the native villages of the North Slope. I have a background in nature programming and documentaries and have worked on television programs and feature films for National Geographic, Discovery Channel, History and Disney Nature. I think of myself as a documentary filmmaker first and foremost and take pride when my work can capture people and the world around them in their truest sense.

I have only spent a few short days in McCarthy, but I have become aware of some unique elements that draw people here and inspire them to rearrange their life so they can make a permanent home in the area. It's easy to spot the physical beauty of the place, and although it is not

the most remote location, I do feel a separation from the intensity and noise of more suburban and urban communities. Conversations with locals have also revealed a sense of the freedom in McCarthy. Part of it seems to be a financial freedom from some of the burdens of city living, such as high home prices and oppressive property taxes, part is free-



dom from onerous rules and regulations of strictly zoned and highly managed communities and part is freedom from the negative side effects of large societies – air, water & noise pollution, traffic, crime, etc.

Although there seems to be common themes that draw people to McCarthy, I have learned of many different ways that individual residents have chosen to carve out a life for themselves here. From Neil Darish who has chosen to run a business that makes its livelihood from summer tourists to Jeremy Keller who is trying to create a 100% sustainable lifestyle which provides all the food his family needs from the small parcel of land they own, it is intriguing how people who are drawn to a

place for similar reasons have very different ways of living their lives here. And that such a diversity of lifestyles and people come together in one small community.

This is the nature of what makes McCarthy and its residents such an interesting subject for the documentary series we are producing for the Discovery Channel, and what we hope to relate to audiences across the country through the stories we shoot. To do that authentically is always a challenge, as the mere presence of camera crews and outsiders will change the dynamic of the town to some degree, but we hope to still be as true to the nature of the community and its residents as possible.

Our show does fall under the umbrella of reality television, which includes a wide variety of programs that range from more scripted shows to documentary style series. I understand that McCarthy's last brush with reality TV involved a show that leaned towards the former, but the production company and I sincerely hope that our series will be the latter. One of the previous series I produced for Discovery was called Flying Wild Alaska and was based out of the village of Unalakleet on the Norton Sound. I spent four months working closely with the local residents to produce the first season of the series and the show returned twice more for another six months of shooting. I believe

this is testament to the fact that all of the participants were treated fairly and enjoyed the experience. I also believe we were able to capture a real sense of the life of residents in northwestern Alaska. I am hopeful that we will be able to do the same in McCarthy.

I have already had the pleasure of meeting or talking to many of the residents in McCa-

rthy, but I know there are many others I have yet to meet. If you have any questions about the program please feel free to drop by the lodge and say hello, or you can email me at grady@swellprods.com. I look forward to meeting all of you during our brief stay in McCarthy.

Finally, please know that the production company and I never

underestimate the fact that you are letting us into your world – our cameras are only ever there by your invitation. It's a courtesy we always take very seriously and are truly appreciative of, and this inspires us to make a television show that both the producers and the residents can be proud of.

Commodifying community representation: Reality TV comes to McCarthy, AK

BY JASON ESLER

With a continuing tax credit available for production companies, the development of “reality” television based in rural Alaska is alive and well. They have arrived in McCarthy and Kennicott this year, and are scheduling to show up in March and film through the spring season. The show is going to happen, how it is going to happen is another question for the community to consider. As an anthropologist looking at misrepresentation issues in our area of the state, I want to point out a few of my concerns in the hope that people will engage critically with the decisions associated with commodifying community and the potential impacts that could stem from it. Commodification, as I will discuss it, means turning something into that which can be bought or sold. It is the imagery of frontier lifestyles that is being commodified through reality TV in this example. I want to be clear, I am not implying people are incapable of making sound decision for themselves, I

am only sharing the information I have found to be relevant. I do not care if this happens or not, as it will not make or break the future of McCarthy. I just want people to be informed before they hear “action,” nothing more. I may even offer a few tunes for the musical score should I feel like it, and do not judge anyone for participating or not.

These production companies offer money, exposure, documentation, and opportunity for many of the residents in McCarthy and Kennicott. An opportunity to be paid cash for face-time on national television is appealing for many families in the valley. Income in the area is often based on tourism revenue, and many feel that this will benefit the community, not commodify it. Some residents feel this is an opportunity to show America what McCarthy people are like, how we interact with each other, how we harvest subsistence foods, where we collect water, what softball looks like on Friday night, and what the latest issue is with the National Park Service.

They want to give people an opportunity to experience what they have experienced. To allow viewers an opportunity to see the real Alaska. Plus, they get paid..right?

Unfortunately, the negative aspects of this commodification within community are often out of sight before it is too late. The film is already being shipped out with preconceived notions of plot being formulated at the editing desk. Misrepresentation, fictive narratives, and the direct creation of script for drama are among many of the concerns that can play out on screen for the nation to see. The power of creating that frontier rural imagery will be up to the production team and their sales consultants, not the community of McCarthy.

Scott van Doviak, at AVClub.com, puts it well in his piece “How redneck reality became the new working class sitcom.”

“While the rural-themed programming of days gone by tended to depict the small Southern town as a bucolic haven for good-hearted folk, redneck reali-

ty is more apt to acknowledge the social and economic ills of the subcultures it depicts. These shows are sanitized for the protection of viewers with blue-state sensibilities; when they occur at all, political discussions tend to center on generalized platitudes about freedom and family, rather than specifics that might turn off half the potential audience.”

The imagery of frontier heritage lifestyles is what the production companies are after. They don't care about life-story, relationships with the land, or roles within the household—they want to sell the image of it. Propagating stereotypical myths about Alaskans is expanding on the production side, and it is not beneficial for all rural communities. I have spoken with people that go through the entire production process, sell the footage, and can not believe the fictional aspects created in production. Last year, a production crew came through and filmed for a different reality show, in which participants ended up traveling from Kennicott to McCarthy via crossing—McCarthy Creek? A quick Google map reference and it's easy to see that this is of course geographically impossible, and it represents a great example of created truth and scripted drama. The crew coming this spring will do the same. They will create what they need to in order to get cliff-hangers

before commercial breaks. It's their job, you can count on it.

The footage which will sell commercials will make the show, and little resources are available for rebuking falsifications after the cameras are shut off. Once you sign the release waiver, they get to edit any clip how they want—for whatever reasons they want. This Frankenstein approach to documentation negates a clear view of authentic social interactions in the landscape, and paints a portrait of rural Alaska on the terms of outside companies, not Alaskans. This is not a Planet Earth or anthropological documentation of the human landscape; it's a sitcom. Producers and casting directors will tell us otherwise, however the contract outlines the details. It is not a documentary. Documentaries do not recreate events.

Of course, no one is the boss in McCarthy, and no one can tell you what is allowed or not. It's the only rule in town. Many Elders are expressing that exact sentiment about regulations, access, and restrictions in the face of National Park Service issues—and it's important. No one is saying people cannot do something, you most certainly can. If you need the cash that bad, you probably should.

On the other hand, the tourism and growth of a community can be impacted quickly when outlying editors from California

are designing and creating what imagery the American public gets to see. It's particularly a powerful factor in the Kennicott Valley right now because of misrepresentation issues amongst residents. With no formal government, thank goodness, there is no central location for representation under Alaska statute. This causes issues with identifying the impacts of different representations of the town. It has happened before—they make people look dumb, and America laughs. It could potentially be great for the community monetarily, and a disaster in terms of representation. Who knows, maybe they will create the best anthropological film in Alaskan history. That reality is yet to be seen, however.

The show offers a quick buck for very little effort, however selling heritage based imagery is a serious decision and I hope people in the valley will think critically about the potential ramifications from it. I hope they will remain themselves in front of the camera, free of self loathing rhetoric and embarrassing dialogue.

Just imagine that first night at summer softball, though, and the bar afterwards—with a camera crew, hovering lights and sound booms overhead. That's not “real” by any stretch of McCarthy's imagination. That's Hollywood, no matter how the editors slice it.

Robert A. Heinlein (1907-1988): "You can have peace. Or you can have freedom. Don't ever count on having both at once."

"Be courteous to all, but intimate with few, and let those few be well tried before you give them your confidence; true friendship is a plant of slow growth, and must undergo and withstand the shocks and adversity before it is entitled to the appellation." —George Washington, Letter to Bushrod Washington, 1783

NPS hearings on hunting restrictions

ANCHORAGE—

The National Park Service is holding public hearings in March on temporary restrictions for certain sport hunting practices in several national preserves in Alaska. The Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve hearing will also take comments on a proposal to prohibit domestic goats for subsistence and all other uses in the park and preserve. Public comments on these provisions will be taken from March 9 through March 22.

The reasons for the proposed restriction can be found in the draft 2014 compendium for Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve at: <http://www.nps.gov/akso/management/compendium-docs/2014-Proposed/WRST-2014-Proposed-Compendium.pdf>.

Pursuant to both 43 CFR 36.11(e) and 36 CFR 13.460, the superintendent is proposing to prohibit domestic goats in Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve. The reasons for the proposed restriction can be found in the draft 2014 compendium for Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve at: <http://www.nps.gov/akso/management/compendium-docs/2014-Proposed/WRST-2014-Proposed-Compendium.pdf>.

The wildlife hunting restrictions generally mirror those in place last year. These restrictions are in response to decisions by the Alaska Board of Game to liberalize hunting seasons and methods for wolves, coyotes, and bears. The board has also rejected proposals by the National Park Service to exclude preserves from these practices, an action that would have made federal restrictions unnecessary. The NPS restrictions do not affect subsistence harvest under Federal Subsistence Regulations.

The restrictions include:

Shortening the open season for wolves and coyotes. Under the proposed rule, wolf and coyote hunting would be open from August 10 through April 30. This would prevent the taking of wolves and pups at den sites during the early summer when the animals are vulnerable and their pelts are in poor condition.

Prohibiting the use of bait for the taking of brown bears. Until recently, the practice had been prohibited since Statehood and is the only such allowance in North America. The NPS is proposing to prohibit the practice to avoid public safety issues which can arise with bears conditioned to finding human food.

Prohibiting the use of artificial light when taking black bear sows or cubs at den sites. This practice was opened to all resident hunting license holders in 2010.

The full text of the restrictions for each affected national preserve will be posted before March 9 at <http://www.nps.gov/akso/management/compendiums.cfm>

In accordance with 36 CFR 13.50, public hearings will be held in a community in or near each of the affected national preserves during the weeks of March 10 and March 17. In addition, hearings will be held in Anchorage and Fairbanks, and written comments may be mailed. The NPS will also open a Facebook chat on the topic on March 20 from 10 a.m. to Noon and postings will be retained for the record.

The public hearing schedule is listed below. In certain locations, a toll-free number will be open for commenters to phone in to the hearing and make comments. Comments on any of the restrictions may be made at any of the venues. The dial-in number is 888-921-5898; users will then dial in a passcode, 5499349#, to be connected to the hearing.

Wrangell-St. Elias National Preserve, Copper Center, Monday, March 17, 4-5:30 p.m. Wrangell-St. Elias N.P. Visitor Center.

NPS Alaska Region, Anchorage, Tuesday, March 18, 6:45-8:15 p.m.

Comments in writing should be sent to 240 W. 5th Avenue, Anchorage, AK 99501 or emailed to AKRO-compendium@nps.gov.

"The Washington ruling class understands that the exercise of religion as a living, breathing 24/7 reality—as opposed to once-a-week worship—is perhaps the most significant threat to the expansion of government and its spreading control over our lives. Government's intimidation of competing institutions therefore necessitates an assault on their values as well."—Columnist Ken

Blackwell

The McCarthy Weekly News

1923 March & April editions

Local News

Several big outfits left town this week for the glacier. The trail that far is reported to be in fine shape.

Carl Whitam, for many years a resident of Chisana, arrived in the city last Saturday evening. He is very optimistic about the future of the entire district and of Chisana in particular. He returned to Chisana last Thursday morning.

Bill Lang the well known old timer spent a few days in town this week.

Reports from the hospital state that Andy Taylor is getting along very nicely.

Warren Nelson was in town the past several days finishing up a lot of business. He left for Chisana Friday where he will make his headquarters during the coming season.

The A. R. C. received a new shipment of horses on Wednesday's train. All of the stock has been making regular trips to the river.

When all is said and done this town is not as bad as a lot of the big cities. Everybody manages to get along.

The plans for a "hiyu" time on the 17 of March are well under way and if you don't attend you'll miss the time of your life.

Ectu Tormanoff employed by the Road Commission is spending a few days in town.

Charlie Veach purchased the laundry building, including the equipment, from John Amber on Friday. He intends starting a laundry in the building formerly occupied by the McCarthy Café.

According to the cards received from Capt. Hubrick, he is viewing the sights at the National Capitol.

Wm. Marhar claim owner and operator in Calamity Gulch and Young Creek arrived in town Thursday evening from Chisana. He reports a good season this last summer and is expectant of another good clean up this season.

Mike Knowles arrived in town on Thursday with the mail from Chisana. He brought in one passenger.

Mrs. Marshall was a Kennecott visitor last Wednesday.

Sig reports a great deal of traffic between McCarthy and Kennecott this week.

March 3

Local News

Last Monday Col. Gotwalls the vice head of the Road Commission made a trip of inspection to the Nizina Bridge, returning to McCarthy Tuesday. He states that according to the present schedule the concrete will be finished by spring as will the piling. Next summer the Commission intends to put the road to the bridge in shape for light traffic and next winter the steel structure is scheduled to be swung into place. During the summer of 1924 the road is to be put into shape to handle heavy traffic and otherwise be put into good shape.

Martin Harris, claim owner, who is located on Young Creek, spent two or three days in this city, returning to the creeks yesterday.

Mr. Cayonette has been spending a few days in McCarthy preparatory to beginning work on his claims on Dan Creek. He left for Dan Creek this morning. J. D. Esary Jr. also went to Dan Creek where he will install the new plant recently purchased by Mr. Cayonette. Old timers who were in Dawson during the days of the rush will remember Mr. Esary's father as the man who brought the first steam boiler into that camp.

Bob Johnston foreman of the Dan Creek Mining Company was a visitor in town for a couple of days this week.

Oscar Backman employee of the Erie Mine was in the city Tuesday evening visiting friends. A great many of the residents of McCarthy and Kennecott are suffering from a mild form of influenza. The number of patients in the hospital is not known, but in McCarthy, "everybody's doin' it. Sure and there's going to be a dance and a good one over at the McCarthy hall. All of the county will be there on the 17th."

(Probate in the matter of the adoption of George Pippin, a minor child. To Harry Pippin and Hilda V. Pippin parents who abandoned the child. O. A. Nelson and Sarah L. Nelson petition for the adoption and that the child's name be changed to Philip Cliugh Nelson.)

March 10

LOCAL NEWS

The platform for loading stulls and other timber consigned to the Kennecott mines, is nearly finished and hauling is to begin in a very short time.

It is reported that the actual work of erecting the hydraulic belonging to Mr. Cayonette will begin in a very short time.

Mrs. Brown of the Nizina Road house was an overnight visitor in town Wednesday and Thursday.

FOR SALE

Three Room Log House. Opposite the School

Al G. Doze

McCarthy, Alaska

WE HAVE NOW IN STOCK THE NEW VELVET

Icing Sugar

97% Pure Cane Sugar

3% Cereal Flour

For Cake Icing:

Creams: Candy and Fountain Uses.

POSITIVELY

WILL NOT LUMP

Recipe for White Frosting: -

1 cup Velvet Icing Sugar

1 Tablespoon hot water

1 Tablespoon lemon juice

Stir the hot water into the Velvet Sugar and add the lemon juice. If too stiff, add a little more boiling water.

J. B. O'Neill Merchant

March 24

Local News

News of doings in this section of the world interests most of us. Jack Carrol the well known mining man is spending a few days in the city preparatory to

returning into Chisana for the season. Jack states that his ground is showing up fine and that he expects to make a good clean up this year.

And Jimmy Brown of Nabesna, Chisana, and McCarthy has been saying "hello" to his friends for the past few days, having arrived last Tuesday from Nabesna. He's the possessor of as fine a matched pair of fox skins as you ever laid eyes on and he's also got a swell looking pair of wolverine pelts. Jimmy says he will stay in town for a while but that this summer will see him back to the Nabesna.

Oh yes! Grover Hanneman the well known time-keeper up at the Mother Lode went to Cordova on Sunday's train. Grover said he was going to Kanatak.

Did you know Ed Bassett was in from Nizina? He arrived Wednesday. Ed figures on visiting his friends for a few days before he leaves the city.

The way wood costs these days some of the boys are having a little piece mounted for a watch fob. Wonder who gets it?

According to Bill Berry the trail to Kennecott won't be any use this summer. You know the aircraft engine he owns? Well he is going to tune it on a sled and if it works good he will build a plane.

By the way! Sig Johnston arrived in town last night. He says that the mail team and Dan Campbell will be in before long.

March 31

Jack Carrol moved part of his summer's supplies out Friday; Roy Snyder is helping him and Bill Rede went along as trail cook. The boys expect to move clear into Chisana instead of relaying to the glacier.

Dan Campbell and Too Much Johnson moved another load of supplies out toward the glacier the middle of this week.

Then Charley White, Mother Lode employee for some time past, moved his personal effects down to McCarthy and is now contemplating a move to one of the nearby mines.

Business also on the move

Roy Snyder bought a half interest in the taxi concern formerly owned by Henry Olsen and George Anderson. The new stationary will read, "Olsen & Snyder."

Miss Janette Ptolemy, who has been employed at the Kennecott hospital for the past winter was a passenger on the north end local en route to her home. After visiting her parents for a short time she will continue her journey to the city of Princetown, New Jersey, where she has been employed as head nurse in a large hospital. Miss Ptolemy is well fitted to assume her new duties, having had a vast amount of practical experience "Overseas." Miss Ptolemy leaves a large number of friends, both in Kennecott and McCarthy, who wish her the best of luck in her new position.

Mrs. Martin Radovan of Dan Creek, returned to her home on Monday.

J. P. Gaskell and his brother Hal arrived in the city yesterday from Cordova. Mr. J. P. Gaskell will reassume his duties as the manager of the Green Butte mine. Some new equipment also arrived on the train Friday, and will be hauled out to the mine in a short time. A new truck and a team of horses belonging to the Green Butte also arrived yesterday.

April 7

LOCALS

Jimmey Dolan who has been located on the Snag in Chisane for the past year arrived in the city last Saturday and after purchasing supplies left for his claims Sunday morning. It is reported that Jimmey's ground is showing up in good shape.

After spending most of the winter at Nizina, Sam Means arrived in the city for a short stay. He returned to his home Thursday morning. Sam states that things are looking mighty prosperous for him.

Charles White who has been employed by the Mother Lode for the past two years has accepted a position at the Green Butte mine for the coming summer.

Colonel Stevenson the all around dog-musher and horse trainer arrived in town the early part of the week on personal business. While in the city he called on his friends and renews, "auld acquaintance." The Colonel returned to his home on the Nizina Friday morning.

Part of the summer crew of the Green Butte left for the mine the middle of the week. It is reported that the

past winter's work developed some very rich high grade that will be taken out this coming summer.

Jim Murie who arrived last Monday, and Mel Gollife are engaged in hauling what freight the mine has in town out to the property. The trail is going fast but the teamsters expect to be able to do their heaviest freighting before the snow melts.

April 14

A committee of four ladies was appointed during the past week to select a phonograph for the school. After a visit to different places a choice was made between two machines. The cost was more than covered by the funds obtained at the cake and candy sale held recently by the school.

Dr. and Mrs. Gillespie returned to Kennecott Wednesday morning from a six months trip to states. Before returning home they made a round-trip to Latouche on the Alameda. The numerous friends of the Gillespies, in McCarthy, are very glad to have them back.

Dr. Mohr, who was relieved of his duties at the Kennecott hospital by the return of Dr. Gillespie, left Thursday morning for the creeks, accompanied by Mrs. Mohr. Andy Taylor took them as far as Brown's Roadhouse with his dog team, From there they intend mushing it to Powell's on Rex Creek, and to the Nizina Placers on Nizina Creek.

Harry Dirks is a guest at the Golden. He intends to remain in the city for the next few days before going to the creeks.

April 21

John Amber who has been decorating the interior of the Chitina Hotel, located in that town, for the past couple of weeks, returned to McCarthy on Wednesday's train.

G. H. Birch was a special passenger on the train Thursday. Friday morning he left for Dan Creek where he will resume operations on his property, the Dan Creek placer mine.

The Green Butte freighters are hauling out a hoist and cable recently purchased from Kennecott.

About fifty men arrived at Kennecott Thursday, and fifteen or twenty got off here to go out to the creeks for the coming season.

April 28

Billions of bodies on the move

BY NED ROZELL

CREAMER'S FIELD, FAIRBANKS — "As this bird takes off, think about how they have to fly thousands and thousands of miles," Tricia Blake said to 21 first-graders sitting on wooden benches surrounded by birch and balsam poplar trees.

The biologist and educator then placed a ruby-crowned kinglet in the flat palm of a six-year old boy. The thumb-size songbird was probably born in northern Alaska this spring. During the past hour of its brief life (which will last about 4 years), it had a tiny metal band clamped around its ankle.

The greenish bird with a subtle red Mohawk hesitated for a few magic seconds on the boy's hand. Then it burst into flight.

The boy and 20 of his classmates watched the bird flutter upward and land on the branch of a nearby birch tree. After a few seconds of preening, the kinglet shot off in the direction of Mexico.

Blake, who in January started the Alaska Songbird Institute with April Harding Scurr, told the children one of their motivations for starting the non-profit after the recent demise of the Alaska Bird Observatory — they wanted to preserve a long-term study.

Since Tom Pogson in 1992 started capturing songbirds in feathery black "mist nets" each spring and fall, researchers and volunteers have caught and placed bands upon songbirds

like kinglets, blackpoll warblers, and gray-cheeked thrushes at Creamer's Field. More than 100,000 birds have worn bands installed in this forest refuge not far from the city limits of Fairbanks.

"This is a project that has been going on for more than 20 years," Blake said to the children. "And it will be going on for at least another 20 years."

Before removing another bird from a cotton pouch and calling forward another lucky kid, Blake asked the children why they thought volunteers in a nearby rain shelter were placing bands on the legs of the birds.

"So you can tell if you caught them before?" asked a girl.

"That's right," Blake said. "And we have questions about what birds are here and how many there are."

The metal bands, each stamped with a number, also allow people outside Alaska to report if they capture the birds in a Lower 48 mist net or if they find them dead. That hasn't happened often — only one out of perhaps 5,000 birds banded at Creamer's each year gets reported — but it's valuable information.

Along with leg-tag numbers, biologists here send information including the bird's species, sex, age and weight to the U.S. Geological Survey's Bird Banding Lab in Patuxent, Md. There, technicians enter information from Creamer's Field, a few other banding stations in Alaska

and others throughout North America.

Back at Creamer's, volunteers were monitoring two dozen mist nets on the half-hour, sometimes finding the flapping, warm bodies of thrushes, warblers and flycatchers. Their capture is a tiny subset of the billions of birds making their way out of Alaska before freezeup comes, and with it the sudden disappearance of insects and other food items.

As the state becomes less populated by orders of magnitude due to the exodus of migratory birds, Blake will continue to give tours to school groups like this one. The tours end on the last day of September, when the mist nets come down, the ground is hard and most birds are far away.

As kids clunked away in rain boots, Blake thought of her favorite part of the bird-banding demonstration, when she places a captured bird on the hand of a child. There it sits for a second or two, recovering, before it flies away to the freedom only a songbird knows.

The smile on the face of the little person who felt the almost-weightless presence and soft scratch of wings might be, she said, an indicator of one of those memories that sticks for a lifetime.

"It's a powerful moment," Blake said.

Reprinted from the Alaska Science Forum September 12, 2013

"An unarmed man can only flee from evil, and evil is not overcome by fleeing from it.—Col. Jeff Cooper (1920-2006)

State of Alaska Revenue-Sharing Funds support local improvement projects

BY TAMARA HARPER

SECRETARY/TREASURER, MCCARTHY AREA COUNCIL

Each year, the State of Alaska shares some of its oil tax revenues with communities throughout the state. Since 2008, the McCarthy Area Council (MAC) has received annual grants that are then distributed to projects that benefit our community. Many projects have already been funded and MAC continues to have money for future project proposals. As the Treasurer of MAC, my goals are to inform the local and greater communities about the program's achievements and opportunities and encourage increased participation.

The amount of grant money received by MAC each year varies and is never guaranteed. Fortunately, MAC has received \$258,703 on behalf of the community since 2008. MAC recently started setting aside \$7,500 a year for ongoing operational expenses, such as administrative costs and public outhouse cleaning, pumping and maintenance; so far, \$30,000 has been allocated to this fund. MAC's Board of Directors also created guidelines that allow any community member to propose a project to the MAC membership for funding approval. To ensure that grant money is available for as many projects as possible, a maximum amount that any one project can request is determined annually, based on the amount received from the state. Project propos-

als must show that at least 30% of the project is funded by sources other than MAC, in order to demonstrate community support and encourage cooperation with other entities.

Since 2008, \$138,598 has been approved by MAC members' vote and granted to many worthy projects and community organizations. The Kennicott-McCarthy Volunteer Fire Department has received the largest amount of funding, \$63,820, in 6 separate allocations. This money purchased land for their base of operations, a fire truck, generator and fire-fighting equipment, and paid for site work on the new land, as well as funding their general operations. The Wrangell Mountains Center received \$20,900 for 2 separate projects-helping to buy additional property/ buildings to expand their campus and creating educational material about reducing bear-human conflict. \$12,000 has supported our local Emergency Medical Service, creating and stocking community medical caches, buying medical equipment/supplies for the ambulance and oxygen tanks. It also funds ongoing expenses such as phones for EMS response and refilling oxygen tanks.

The Nizina Road has benefited from \$13,250 of MAC funds, in 2 separate projects. \$2,000 matched the University subdivision's funds for road maintenance south of McCarthy Creek, while \$11,250 was used to ditch, fill holes, grade and resurface

the stretch closer to the Nizina River in the fall of 2012. MAC contracted with Rowcon Services to remove abandoned vehicles, machinery and garbage along the Kennicott River; this river clean-up project cost \$6,500 and also involved hours of locals' volunteer time. The McCarthy-Kennicott Historical Museum received \$5,975 for infrastructure improvements, including solar panels, electrical upgrades, propane heating and deck repair. \$5,000 went toward McCarthy Creek-side stabilization; Rowcon Services installed gabions along the eroding stream bed near town.

As the first project to include a 30% community contribution, the Sweet Creek culvert project was granted \$4,153 to help replace the deteriorating culvert beneath the road to Kennecott. MAC supported our local radio station, KCHU, with \$3,100 to help relocate the radio transmitter in 2009. \$1,400 was used to buy a community-owned trail groomer that locals use in winter to improve snowmachine and ski trails. Two projects received \$1,000 each: a junk car removal project organized by the Natural Resources Conservation Service and the gravel/grading work by Rowcon on the road over the east/dry channel of the Kennicott River. Finally, \$500 was used to buy new doors for 2 of our public outhouses. The variety of projects is impressive and they represent a lot of work by committed locals on behalf of

the greater community. Thank you to everyone who has invested time and effort to use these funds in meaningful ways.

Our 2014 State grant of \$33,598 has been received and is available to fund projects this

year. The maximum amount any proposal can request in 2014 is \$5,219. MAC encourages locals to bring their ideas forward for the benefit of the greater MXY-Kennecott community. For further information on how to ap-

ply, please contact the MAC treasurer at mccarthyareacouncil.secretary@gmail.com to request the guidelines. We look forward to a productive 2014!

***McCarthy Road Report* now online**

BY BONNIE KENYON

Are you headed to or from McCarthy in the near future? If so, you will want to check out the *McCarthy Road Report* page on Facebook. It is a wealth of current information concerning the condition of the McCarthy Road.

I became aware of this page recently while perusing posts by friends and McCarthy area residents. The page, created by Sunshine Meitzner of Chokosna Trading Post, joined Facebook on January 5th and, by February 22nd had collected nearly 100 "likes." Needless to say, I was one of those thumbs up for a job well done!

Local area folks or travelers to and from McCarthy are posting up-to-date pictures, experiences and advise in driving the road. I am finding it most helpful as Rick and I are making plans to return to McCarthy this next month. Weather, temperature and even snow depths are being recorded by those who know first-hand what is happening on the ground. It is proving helpful to folks that want to make wise decisions.

On February 13th, due to a heavy snowfall, the McCarthy Road quickly changed from passable to unlikely to better not attempt. For some, like Nizina Road resident, Jenny Rosen-

baum, the information came at just the right time. She rescheduled her trip home from Anchorage. She is not the only one who took the posts seriously and made adjustments on their travel plans.

The Department of Transportation— Chitina Station— checks the page regularly. Martin "Marty" Helkenn of the DOT crew gave snow depths as it accumulated and later posted when they would begin plowing the road.

Folks along the McCarthy Road are checking in with their reports. Carrie Hale at Strelna; Summer Meitzner at Chokosna; Carole Morrison at Crystal Creek; Jim Kreblin, Long Lake and closer to the end of the road near McCarthy receives updates from Kaylin Moffitt.

By February 18th, things were looking up. Reports, pictures and updates were being posted. DOT was on the job plowing their way in from Chitina. On the 19th, Kaylin reported the road was plowed as far as McCarthy's service bridge. A post by Maggi Rader, the same day, gave the good news everyone was waiting to hear: "As of Wednesday pm, the road is plowed and graveled and nice driving. The usual watery glaciers, but nothing deep. I was out in 2.5 hours!"

I am including a wonderful source of information that I obtained from the *McCarthy Road Report*. It concerns the Strelna Volunteer Fire Department. You may want to post this and have it handy if you are headed out toward McCarthy!

Strelna Volunteer Fire Department: The SVFD, serving Miles 5-52 of the McCarthy Road, has been busy this winter extracting vehicles from the McCarthy Road. Fuel costs money and time is money so folks may want to consider donating to this community service oriented organization. They are a registered fire department with the State of Alaska Fire Marshall.

The McCarthy Road Stations are located at: Mile 10, Strelna, 823-4021; Mile 26.5 Chokosna, 823-4019; and Mile 41.4, Crystal Creek, 823-4011.

Further contact information is: PO Box 73, Chitina, Alaska 99566; 907-823-4015; Email is strelnavfd@yahoo.com.

Thank you, SVFD, for all the fine work you do for our communities. You are greatly appreciated!

The McCarthy Road Report is also a great place to post your thanks to DOT and others who are taking the time and effort to keep us all informed and safe.

To all, I say, "THANKS!"

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If you will be a visitor to our area this year, be sure to ask for your free copy of *A Visitor’s Guide to Kennicott & McCarthy* at area Visitor’s Centers in Tok, Valdez and Glennallen as well as the National Park Service Welcome Center in Copper Center or Chitina. Also many businesses in those areas distribute the *Guide*.

Or, you can request a copy via first class mail by sending \$2 S&H to Kenyon Services, PO Box MXY, Glennallen, AK 99588. The new Guides should be ready for distribution about May 15.

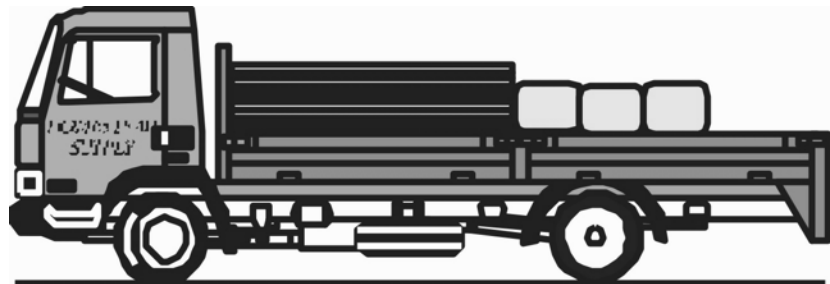
If you have a business in the local area or any of the areas mentioned above, we would love to have you join us this year. We believe that *A Visitor’s Guide to McCarthy & Kennicott* is one of the most affordable ways of telling people of your services. Contact Rick & Bonnie Kenyon at 907-554-1194 for further information. Or you can email us at wsenews@gmail.com

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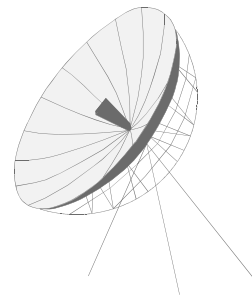
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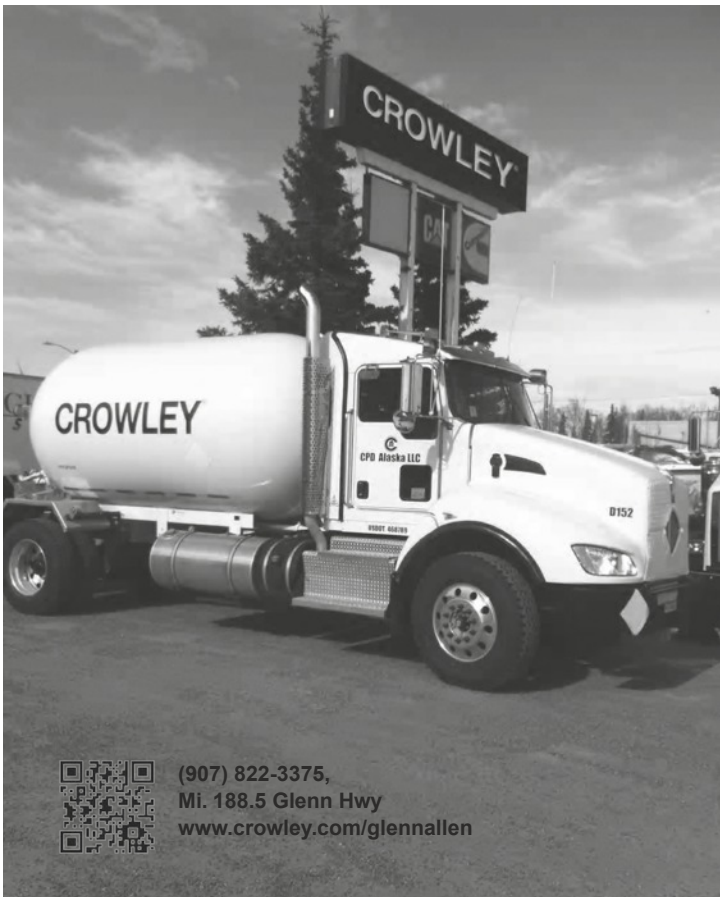
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Cooking with Peggy

BY PEGGY GUNTIS

Dear *Cooking and Eating* Friends, I'm writing this from Tucson and the weather isn't bad at all, but I know it hasn't been a good year weatherwise (is there such a word?!) for many of you. My daughter, Kim and her family live in Homer, Alaska and the weather has often been nicer there than it is here in the lower 48. You'll get this paper in the spring so I certainly hope sunny weather has arrived for all of you. Well, better get off of the weather subject and on to cooking and eating—my favorite things to do in ANY weather!

The other night Jim and I went to the Red Lobster restaurant. We hadn't been there for a long time and for some reason I was hungry for the crabcakes I used to order as an appetizer or main dish. I loved them. When I was told they didn't offer them anymore it made me hungrier than ever for crabmeat so I came home and looked up a couple of recipes. Do you like crab meat? Here are a couple you can try and anytime you want to share yours with me, just send them to the paper and Bonnie will get them to me. Please share!

Here's the first that was sent to me by a girlfriend in Virginia back in 1986. It's for

MARYLAND CRAB CAKES

1 pound lump crab meat
1 tablespoon mayonnaise
1 teaspoon mustard
¼ cup melted butter
1 piece bread soaked in milk
1 egg

salt and pepper to taste

Mix all ingredients and form into cakes. Place in refrigerator about one hour before frying. Fry in shortening until golden brown. Serves about 8. (I often smash these a little, melt a slice of cheese on them, and make them into a sandwich.)

Now here's another one for crab meat that was put into a Wisconsin church cookbook by a friend of a friend of a friend! It sounds good and since I'm in a crab meat mood.....

CRAB QUICHE BAKE

8 eggs, beaten
2 cups of half and half
1 large sweet red pepper, chopped
1 (8 ounce) package imitation crab meat, chopped (I'll use fresh or canned or imitation, depending on what is most available for me at the time.)
1 cup soft bread crumbs
1 cup shredded Swiss cheese
1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
½ cup chopped green onions
1 teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon pepper

In a bowl, combine all ingredients. Transfer to a greased 9 x 13 inch baking dish. Bake, uncovered at 350 degrees for 30-35 minutes or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean. Let stand 10 minutes before serving.

(This not only sounds good to me but it looks easy and I love those. I just got this recipe so I haven't had a chance to try it but will soon since between this one and the crab cakes I may be able to satisfy my hunger for crab

meat for awhile. By the way, I fixed the Crab, Macaroni, and Broccoli casserole recipe that was in the last issue and AGAIN it was wonderful!)

Now I would like to share two dessert recipes given to me by a dear friend here in Tucson. Both are treasured because they were often baked by her mother. The first is.....

MIRACLE WHIP CAKE

2 cups flour
4 tablespoons cocoa
2 teaspoons soda
1 cup sugar
1 cup Miracle Whip
1 cup hot water
1 teaspoon vanilla

Mix the dry ingredients, add Miracle Whip and then add the hot water slowly. Add vanilla. Bake in a 9 x 13 inch baking dish till done. (To me that means until the toothpick comes out clean!)

and the second is...

LAZY DAISY CAKE

Cake:

4 eggs
2 cups sugar
2 teaspoons vanilla
2 cups flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
½ teaspoon salt
1 cup milk
4 tablespoons butter

Frosting:

1 ½ cups brown sugar
1 cup melted butter
½ cup cream
2 cups chopped nuts

Mix eggs, sugar and vanilla and beat. Add dry ingredients.

Heat milk and butter to a boiling point and add to the mixture. Bake in a buttered 9 x 13 pan at 350 degrees about 30-40 minutes. Remove from oven and frost. To make frosting, mix all ingredients well. Frost cake and then return cake to oven for 10 minutes.

Now here's one my girlfriend, Pat, sent me from Virginia (don't you love it that even though we're in our 70's I can still call them my "girlfriends"). Since Jim and I try not to eat desserts at home, when I received it I decided instantly to make it for the ladies in my Bible study group which would make it legal for me to eat! Delicious!

LIME POUND CAKE

1 cup butter (softened)
 ½ cup shortening (I use Crisco)
 3 cups granulated sugar
 6 large eggs
 3 cups all-purpose flour
 ½ teaspoon baking powder
 1 cup milk
 1/8 teaspoon salt
 1/8 teaspoon vanilla
 1 teaspoon key lime zest
 ½ cup key lime juice

Directions:

Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Beat butter and shortening at medium speed, or until creamy. Gradually add sugar, beating at medium speed until light and fluffy. Add eggs one at a time, beating just until blended after each addition.

Stir together flour, baking powder and salt. Add to butter mixture alternately with milk, beginning and ending with flour mixture. Beat at low-speed just until blended after each addition. Stir in vanilla, key lime zest and key lime juice. Pour batter into a greased and floured 10-inch (12 cup) tube pan.

Bake at 325 for 1 hour and 15 minutes to 1 hour and 20 minutes (I had to bake mine for 1 hour and 30 minutes for my old oven), or until a long wooded pick inserted in the center of cake comes out clean.) Cool in pan on a wire rack 10 to 15 minutes, remove from pan to a wire rack.

Key Lime Glaze

1 cup powdered sugar
 2 tablespoons key lime juice
 ½ teaspoon vanilla

Mix all the ingredients and immediately brush over top and sides of cake (as soon as you remove it from the pan). Cool completely (will probably take about an hour).

This one is great for company because you prepare it and chill overnight. That way you aren't up frantically making breakfast as your guests stand there famished. This is from another girlfriend, Trish, back east. Love those girls!

APPLE-CINNAMON FRENCH TOAST

2 large baking apples
 5 tablespoons butter

1 cup firmly packed brown sugar
 2 tablespoons dark corn syrup
 1 teaspoon cinnamon
 8 1-inch thick slices baquette (French Bread)
 3 large eggs
 1 cup milk
 1 teaspoon vanilla

The day before serving: Peel, core and slice apples. Butter a 13 x 9 inch baking dish. In a large, heavy skillet, melt butter over medium heat. Add apples and cook, stirring occasionally, until tender. Add brown sugar, corn syrup, and cinnamon. Cool, stirring until sugar dissolves. Pour the mixture into the prepared baking dish and spread apples evenly.

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

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

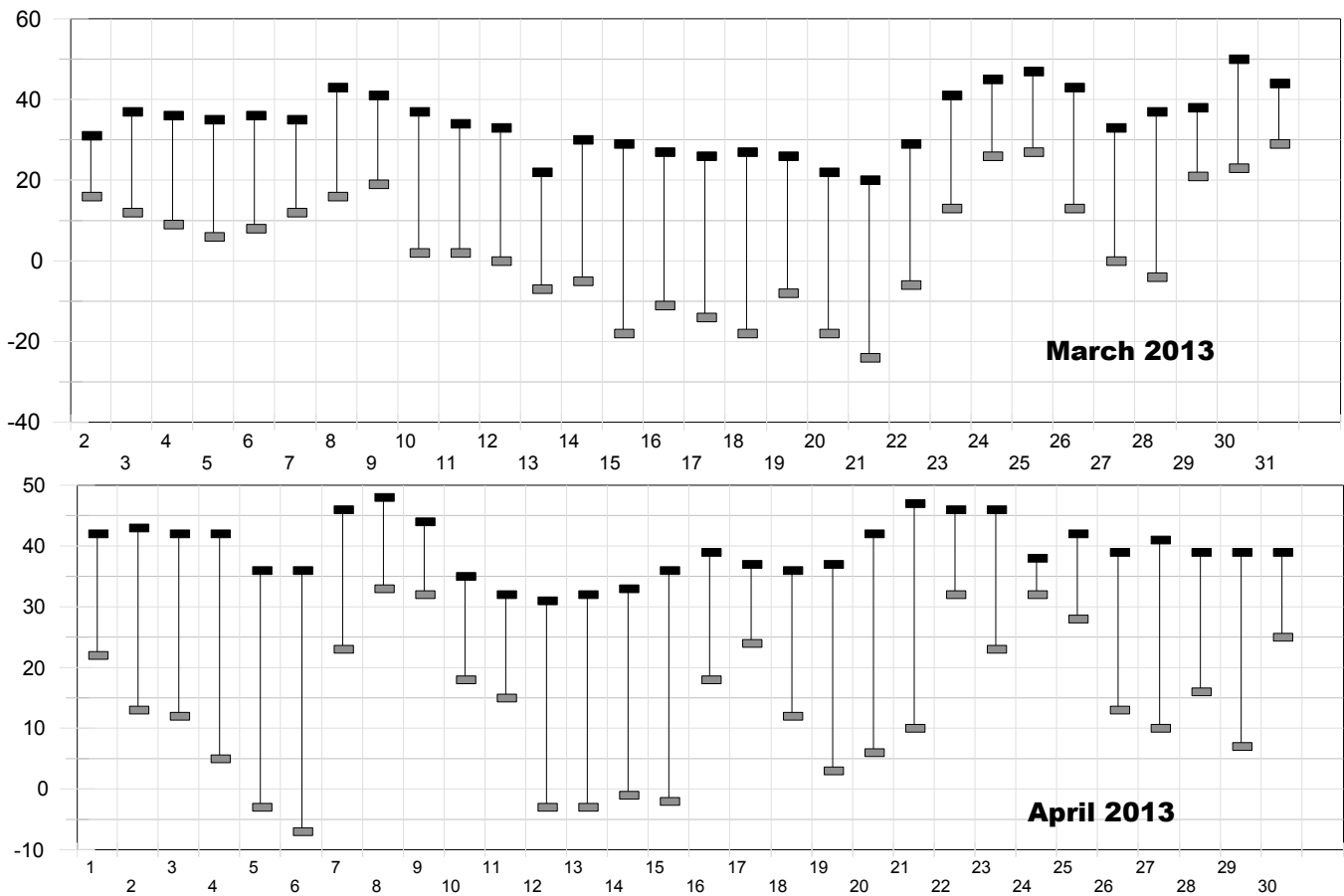
I served with heated syrup and sausage.

O.K. everybody, I have to go eat lunch. I can blame my love of eating on Jim since he loves to eat, too, and of course I have to make him happy; and sitting here typing all these recipes ALWAYS makes me hungry. Have a good spring everyone.

"Let everyone sweep in front of his own door, and the whole world will be clean."—Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832)

"Associate with men of good quality, if you esteem your own reputation: for it is better to be alone than in bad company." George Washington

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