

Wrangell St. Elias News

"Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty"

Vol. Twelve Issue Three

May & June 2003

Two Dollars

The Pilgrims—neighbors, friends

Story Page 11

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**and much more. Our
biggest issue ever!**



Photo courtesy Gray Grier

Pilgrim girls — Bethlehem, Lamb & (on ground) Psalms

A note from the publisher

BY BONNIE KENYON

The signs of spring are definitely in the air and on the ground here in McCarthy. I love this time of year. The only snow that remains now are piles of snow that accumulated from the snow blower or shovel and those are quickly disappearing.

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Today is April 28th and this past week I sighted my first robin of the season and a couple more seasonal visitors a white-crowned sparrow and a pair of juncos. With such a warm, mild winter, I couldn't help but wonder if we just might experience a late snowfall. Seeing our area's annual spring birds arrive on time, was an encouragement that winter was indeed over and a new season has begun.

Rick and I thank you our readers for your support in our endeavors to provide news from the McCarthy/Kennicott area. The March/April issue sold out even before some of you received your copy. (This is the first time this has happened since we began publication in July 1992.) We do apologize for the lateness in its arrival to certain states. We don't know why this happens sometimes. Rick had to do another short run for those of you who wanted multiple copies for friends and relatives.

This issue of WSEN is the largest (at 44 pages) than we have printed to date. Rick and I want you to know that we do not *enjoy* reporting the negative subjects concerning the National Park Service such as we did in last issue and in this one. We do not print things in order to sell papers and we are not against national parks. We do, however, believe it is irresponsible to NOT document what we see and understand to be the truth and what we are presently experiencing in our community as it relates to the activities of our local park

service authorities. Recently we read this statement from a major news network: We are not a lapdog for dictators, or an attack dog against America but we are a watchdog for everyone.

Because we do find pleasure in printing *good* things that those in the park service are doing, it is with great pleasure to bring you the first part of Jim Wilder's article on bears. Jim is a biologist with the National Park Service, and is known and respected by many local residents.

You may notice that *The Chitina Leader*, usually placed in the centerfold, is missing this issue. Frankly, we just ran out of space and we hope that the conclusion of the story, *Copper Spike driven 92 years ago*, (page 20) will suffice for our history lesson this issue!

For those of you who have asked us who McCarthy Annie is, we decided to include a picture of her with her story on page 14. It isn't the most recent picture in the world, but it was the best we could find. Besides, this controversial lady is somewhat camera shy these days!

WSEN welcomes aboard the following new subscribers: Gene and Edith Coppedge, AK; Mike Barton, AK; Stephen Wahl, AK; Jeff Bowman, AK; Jack and Susan Smith, AK; Dave and Carla Siemens, CA; Gary Green, AK; Henrietta Vaden, Solo Creek; Richard Shultz, AK; Richard and Sheila Sparks, Solo Creek; Tom Vaden, Solo Creek; Jennifer Vaden, AK; Kirk Stanley, AK; Todd Bureau, AK.

Items of Interest

BY BONNIE KENYON

George Cebula: George and Sophie arrived back in McCarthy February 21 after a successful road trip to lower 48. Their trip began Thanksgiving evening at Seward. The M/V Kennicott (Alaska Ferry) was used for the first and last leg. Prince Rupert, BC, was the destination and departure point of the ferry. By the arrival back in Prince Rupert on February 17th, 11,500 miles had been covered. Twenty states/provinces and three countries were visited.

Christmas was spent with brother Ted and family in Milwaukee and New Year's with George's mother and family in Ohio and Pennsylvania. Along the way, George and Sophie visited a lot of the local McCarthy neighbors. Their first stop was with Ken and Carly Kritchman in Baker City, Oregon. This was Sophie's favorite place as she was free to run with the other dogs and horses.

They found the Welty family at Lynn's mom and dad's home in Xenia, Ohio. Peggy and Jim Guntis hosted them in Tucson, Arizona. In Phoenix time was spent with Al and Fran Gagnon. Fran was enjoying the warm sunshine at the home of her daughter, Linda. While there George also had a chance to visit Bill and Lil Kirkwood.

The final week was spent with niece Sharon (Ted's daughter) in Kennewick, Wa. Sharon and her husband, David, are proud parents of Jacob. He arrived on February 5 and made quite a hit with Sophie. Every time Jacob cried Sophie was standing guard at his crib.

You meet people from Alaska

almost everywhere you travel. The Sunday after Christmas George and Sophie met two Alaska vehicles on the Ohio Turnpike. At the Grand Canyon, George was asked if he was the fellow driving the Alaska Suburban. This family was visiting from Anchorage. You never pass an Alaskan vehicle parked on the side without stopping. Just outside of Beatty, Nevada, George stopped and helped a couple from Fairbanks, who had a blowout on their pickup.

George says the weather was never a problem, except on the ferry trip from Valdez to Juneau. The Gulf of Alaska is known for some good storms at this time of year and George (being a retired weatherman) was made a believer. Sixty knot winds and 20 foot seas made it quite an adventure. The M/V Kennicott does well in rough seas and neither George or Sophie had any trouble. The trip north was uneventful and the ferry arrived in Valdez about 3 hours ahead of schedule.

It is always good to get home. Just ask Sophie. George says she spent at least 2 hours roaming the neighborhood as soon as the car door opened. Her first stop was my front porch! Welcome home, George and Sophie.

Howard and Chris Haley:

Chris just stopped by for propane so I took the opportunity to see what she and Howard were up to. The Haley's cabin is not far from mine so when they are in a building project, I can sometimes hear the activity. The last two weeks the Haley's have sent signals up my direction that led me to believe a construction

project was underway. Chris confirmed that what I was hearing was a new greenhouse being built and soon to be filled with all manner of goodies -- tomatoes, flowers, cucumbers, squash, to name a few.

Today Chris said she was trying out the wood stove that was installed for heat on those early spring days and cool nights. It won't be long before the Haleys will be sampling the fruits of their labors. Congratulations, Howard and Chris!

Walter and Ursel Mueller:

Most of our long time locals remember the Muellers from Switzerland who have made numerous trips to our area even building a small cabin on Jim and Audrey Edwards's property at Swift Creek.

I am pleased to announce that Ursel and Walter are planning a return visit to the McCarthy area this August. At the present time, Ursel tells me they hope to be in our immediate area August 10-12 and then the 26th through September 11th.

I personally have many warm memories of the Mueller's visits to our cabin. Coffee and cookies are a must and are always accompanied by friendly chatter and laughter. We are eagerly awaiting your arrival, Ursel and Walter!

Jim and Jeannie Miller:

Jeannie is lamenting the time she has to spend indoors these days. Spring is in the air here in McCarthy and Kennicott and I can't blame her one bit.

Tomorrow is Jeannie's annual Chicken House Cleanup which is simply those brave neighbors that seriously want homegrown fertilizer for their gardens who

turn out to give Jeannie a hand at cleaning out her chicken house. Of course, the workers don't go away empty handed, says Jeannie, but then most of them don't return the next year either!! Her flock of chickens number 41 and she assures me that they will not be running loose this year in spite of the fact our area visitors love seeing the local wildlife.

The Millers will once again open the doors of Tailor Made Pizza this summer. Jeannie often toys with the idea of retiring, spending all summer tending her fabulous garden and overseeing her animals (and family, of course!) but the outcry from the local residents squashed that idea. And, so, Memorial Day weekend you can be sure to recognize the aroma of pizzas being served up to the local populace as well as our seasonal tourists.

Matt and Julie Miller: The younger Millers are enjoying the springlike weather at their cabin in Kennicott. Yard cleanup is the main chore this week but Julie is finding time to enjoy her new puppy called Burt. Maybe when you get done, your yard spic-and-span, you can head down my way, Julie, and give me a hand?

Sourdough Drilling: Kirk and Linda Shively paid the area another of their successful visits during the third week of March. Four wells on the east side of the Kennicott River were drilled and one on the west side. The following people received water: the McCarthy Kennicott Community Church, Ken Rowland, Gary Baugh, John Bosshard (east side) and John Adams/Carmen Russo (west side). The average depth for all five wells was between 50 to 60 feet.

Due to a well-built ice bridge across the Kennicott River by the Pilgrim family and Keith Rowland

this winter, the drill rig was able to reach the town site customers.

The Shivelys returned to their home base in Wasilla for some much-needed engine work on the rig but are due to arrive back in the McCarthy west side area for more well drilling in the near future. If you are interested in a well this summer and have not yet gotten on the list, you may want to consider giving Kirk and Linda a call at: 373-5917 or 354-6917.

Keith and Laurie Rowland and family: There is always something happening in the Rowland household but the latest headlines are occurring with their recent business venture the Rowland Service Bridge. On March 31, the entire Rowland clan, including Keith's dad Ken, traveled to Valdez to pick up the first of two 90' long bridge spans. What a load of freight this was for Rowcon Services. The second span arrived on April 2. The bridge itself is not expected to go in until the fall of 2003 and the Rowlands are presently awaiting permitting by the U. S. Army Corp. Congratulations to the entire Rowland family on the safe arrival of this much-needed bridge!

Local fishing excursion: Several local fishing enthusiasts took to the air and land in order to wet their hooks and have some good ole' fun. The participants included: Ralph, Tyee, Teal and Trae Lohse of Long Lake; Rick Kenyon; Don Welty; Keith, Kaleb and David Rowland of McCarthy area. Kirk Shively, who was in town drilling wells, decided he needed a break so he tagged along for the adventure.

On the early morning of April 9th Gary Green of McCarthy Air flew overnight camping gear, fishing equipment and several fishermen to Lake Louise, approximately 40 miles away.

Within a matter of minutes of arriving at the lake, Ralph and Rick set up camp two Arctic Oven tents which Keith donated for the cause and a welcoming campfire for the few brave snow-machiners who ventured over land. Don Welty flew in with his SuperCub plane bringing daughter Rene in hopes (I think!) of enlarging his chance of catching more fish for the freezer.

Black bear stew was the main course that evening. It had been prepared beforehand by yours truly. I was told later that the guys gave Kirk quite a ribbing trying to convince him he was eating *lynx* stew! (Seems Kirk made the mistake of telling Rick that cat was something he couldn't begin to eat.)

The next day the men woke to Ralph cooking up a batch of hot oatmeal with all the trimmings. Hot drinks around the campfire and then it was time for the guys to go fishing. Before long, the young men discovered just how homely Ling Cod are. Ugly, yes, but, oh, so good to eat!

Don returned Rene to their home and picked up wife Lynn. Don transported several of the fishermen to nearby Hanigita Lake so they could try their hand at that lake's fish population.

I am told that Lynn proceeded to pull in the largest Lake Trout of the entire fishing trip. (I guess we now know who the real fishermen are in the Welty household!)

By the time Gary flew in the next day to pick up the gear and men, there was plenty of fresh fish for everyone's freezer and a group of guys considering this adventure worth repeating next year.

Chad Reymiller, neighbor and friend, dies

BY BONNIE KENYON

On March 22 Alaska State Troopers responded to mile 180 of the Richardson Highway at the Gulkana hatchery in Paxson following a report of the death of Chad Reymiller of McCarthy. The news of Chad's death reached our small community unexpectedly and with great sadness. Chad, 38, visited the McCarthy area many times as he was growing up but it wasn't until the spring of 1999 that many of us actually met Chad and began calling him neighbor and friend.

He and a friend Julia Coats of Paxson purchased property on the west side of the Kennicott River. They arrived in our area March 1999, settled into a cabin on Jim and Audrey Edwards' property, and immediately began harvesting spruce trees on their land to build a log cabin. It was a mammoth undertaking but Chad was one ambitious young man.

Each winter since then Chad made his way back here to continue the work of completing the 24' x 28' cabin. During the summer season Chad was

employed at the Gulkana hatchery—the largest sockeye salmon hatchery in the world and is one of five that is operated by the Prince William Sound Aquaculture. He loved his job, but whenever he got a few days off, he would make short trips out to the cabin site and add another log or cut another tree.

It takes a good dose of perseverance to build in the winter months and those of us in the neighborhood observed this in action in Chad and Julia's lives, especially during the winter of 2000. At least two good winter rains left layers of ice on the harvested logs that still needed peeling. The logs measured anywhere from 14" to 20" at the butt ends and thawing each log before peeling was quite a challenge and very time consuming, but it was accomplished, none-the-less.

Snowmachining was Chad's favorite mode of winter transportation. He seemed to know only one speed—fast. We always made sure to move off the

trail when on our daily walks if sounds of his machine heading our way were heard.

When Julia and Chad went their separate ways, Chad still returned to the cabin and during the winter of 2002, he reached his first goal of the season—he moved into the cabin by Christmas. Chad took tremendous strides to build everything he made with great skill. The log spiral stairs leading to the cabin's two lofts and the log-frame bed are all intricately handcrafted and are great examples of his creative abilities.

Chad returned to his job at the Gulkana hatchery earlier than usual this year. For sometime now Chad experienced much discomfort from a neurological problem. His death was classified as accidental and cause of death has been determined as an adverse reaction to his medication.

Chad will be greatly missed by his McCarthy neighbors and friends.

Anchorage cardiologist dies in avalanche

Robert L. Pulliam III, a 55-year-old Anchorage cardiologist, was killed in an avalanche Thursday, April 10, while skiing on the north side of the Hanigita Ridge in Wrangell-St. Elias National Park.

Pulliam and another Anchorage doctor had been staying at Ultima Thule Lodge on

the Chitina River and taking guided day trips into the nearby mountains.

Early Thursday afternoon, Pulliam, obstetrician-gynecologist Hedric B. Hanson, 61, and ski guide Andrew Drew Lovell, 27, were descending a ridge off the south side of Verde Peak,

some 40 miles southeast of Chitina, according to Tom Betts, the Chitina district ranger.

A team that included Betts, Lovell and the owner and several employees of the lodge and guide service, called Ultima Thule Outfitters, recovered Pulliam's body Friday.

Without liberty, law loses its nature and its name, and becomes oppression. Without law, liberty also loses its nature and its name, and becomes licentiousness. James Wilson

Town meeting: service bridge and wayside

BY BONNIE KENYON

McCarthy, AK On March 7, 2003, at least 20 residents of McCarthy and Kennicott met together at the McCarthy Lodge to discuss the Kennicott River Service Bridge and the Kennicott River Wayside.

The meetings were moderated by Rick Kenyon and opened with Keith Rowland of Rowcon Services describing his Kennicott River Service Bridge. He explained how he had acquired property specifically for the bridge project. The proposed bridge would be an all-season railcar bridge with a gate. The two 90' matching rail cars are in good condition. In profile, the bridge will resemble the existing footbridge with about the same elevation, and supported with one center piling, giving the river rafts ample passage underneath under normal Kennicott flows. Keith stressed that safety is a primary concern, pointing to the fact that the bridge will have guard rails.

Originally, the bridge's purpose was for Rowcon Service's own equipment and materials for jobs on either side of the river without going through the river. Desiring to recoup the costs that are coming out of his own pocket, the bridge will be available to the community for a yearly fee. He said he foresees a higher fee for businesses who need to get their supplies across the river safely and a lower rate

for families or residences. Access to the bridge will be across his own private property which gives him the ability to restrict access with a gate.

An application for a permit with the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers/Alaska was applied for in February. Public Notices were sent to many households and agencies and a public comment period which was due to expire on March 21, was extended another month.

Comments from those in attendance were, for the most part, in strong support of this project. It was seen by several as a business venture on Keith's part, on his own private property, and like other businesses in the area, he should have the opportunity to proceed with no strings attached.

The major concerns included the possibility that if there is a private bridge the DOT might not move ahead with a vehicular bridge and that some community members might not be able to afford the yearly pass.

The Kennicott River Wayside, co-sponsored by the National Park Service (NPS) and the McCarthy Area Council (MAC), has been met recently with much objection and concern from the community. Concerns were voiced over an exchange of letters written by NPS Superintendent Gary Candelaria and the Department of

Transportation's (DOT) Environmental Coordinator Patricia Wightman which strongly supported the wayside project wherein the park service offered to take an active role in maintaining the wayside once it was built.

The majority in attendance opposed this project because it would result in the condemnation of private property. The proposed wayside would be within the contested 200 foot State asserted right-of-way presently owned by Stephen and Kelly Syren and next to their existing parking lot and campground business.

One local resident reminded those in attendance of previous town meetings in which residents consistently showed their lack of support for the condemnation of private property. It could be any of us next!

Many felt the greeting of visitors, parking and amenities for them should be provided by the park service on their own property; if the NPS wants free parking, they should use their own land, declared others.

Several people stated that because MAC had a part in getting the wayside going in the first place, it was important that they speak up and state their position. Ed LaChapelle came to MAC's aid by stating that MAC participated but did not sponsor it.

There is a secret pride in every human heart that revolts at tyranny. You may order and drive an individual, but you cannot make him respect you. William Hazlitt

McCarthy says yes to road upgrade

BY BONNIE KENYON

McCarthy: On April 11th at noon a teleconference was held between folks in McCarthy, Fairbanks, Palmer and Senator Georgianna Lincoln's office in Juneau. The main thrust of the meeting was for participants to express their views on the future of the McCarthy Road. Other subjects that were addressed were the footbridge bollards and the Kennicott Wayside project.

Twenty-seven McCarthy area participants gathered at the homes of Ed LaChapelle, Rick Kenyon and the Ma Johnson Hotel. Stephen Syren, landowner of the land surrounding the proposed Wayside project, of Palmer was on hand via phone, Ralph Swarthout of Fairbanks, Director of the Department of Transportation's Northern Region and an assistant of Representative Carl Morgan's office in Juneau were connected as well.

Ralph Swarthout explained and updated the group on the McCarthy Road project's design stage. A McCarthy Road location study and an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be prepared. DOT is in the early stages of the EIS. A May agency scoping meeting is being planned along with a public hearing process to be completed in 2005. Swarthout reminded everyone that one of the options will be a no-build. Funding is available for a 2006 and a 2008 construction. The first phase of the construction will probably be the first 17 miles from Chitina to the Kuskalana Bridge.

Swarthout gave an update on the Kennicott River Wayside pro-

ject. He said there is an environmental document presently in the approval process which could take another month or two. If there is a build decision, construction could begin in 2005. He was quick to admit that there is a differing opinion on the Right-of-Way width.

The Kennicott Road slide repair and the Lakina River bridge repair projects are being planned for 2004.

The footbridge was addressed. According to Swarthout, the bridge was constructed as a pedestrian bridge. The bollards have been removed and replaced many times. He said he is working with the Attorney General and hopes they can find a solution.

DOT is also studying the possibility of building a vehicle bridge across the Kennicott River. His office is providing information to the Commissioner's office. There is also a no-build option on this project.

Out of the twenty people who responded with comments on the McCarthy Road, 100% spoke in support for the road upgrade. Road surface was broached by about 10 people with half supporting gravel and the other half stating support for a hard surface or chip seal. Many expressed a desire for the upgrade to begin as soon as possible with a request for the road study to be moved forward quickly.

Sixteen people commented on the Wayside project. Ten strongly said no to the project. Three people said Yes unless it was accompanied by condemnation of private property. Two

didn't vote one way or the other but said they could see the need for more infrastructure but, once again, their concerns were with what might result in the condemnation of private property.

Another said he saw too many problems and complications surrounding the wayside project. Two suggested the Park Service build the wayside on their own property located about a mile back from the footbridge. Stephen Syren, owner of the land in question and operator of a paid parking lot and campground next to the proposed site, said the building of the Wayside would put him out of business. He also has environmental and economic concerns since the wayside would be so close to his place of business.

Eighteen people responded to the footbridge bollards. Thirteen said to leave the bollards out. Two people suggested lockable or removable bollards. One said he didn't care one way or the other but did ask if a legal 4 wheeler access was possible. Two others said they were willing to deal with access restrictions and liked the pedestrian-only access.

Senator Lincoln thanked everyone for coming together for the teleconference promising that she, Representative Carl Morgan and DOT Northern Director Ralph Swarthout would meet together and would figure out how to proceed based on the information from this teleconference.

Editor's note: Many thanks to Cynthia Shidner and Laurie Rowland for their note taking during the meeting!

Regional Plan Workshop includes McCarthy

BY BONNIE KENYON

McCarthy: On March 11th McCarthy area residents and community members of Kenny Lake attended a sub-regional workshop via teleconference.

According to the Copper Valley Economic Development Council (CVEDC), A strategy plan is needed to qualify for assistance under most Economic Development Administration (EDA) programs, including public works and economic adjustment grants and to receive EDA ongoing planning grants.

There seemed to be a common thread that ran through this particular meeting people do not want to see a borough, a

government or taxation. These were some of the major values and concerns that were voiced by Kenny Lake and McCarthy area residents. Other items of interest and/or concern from McCarthy were: need for a major road improvement, increased small business developments, recreational trail developments, a desire for the National Park Service to not impose rules and restrictions, bringing in outside workers instead of local hire, and a vehicle bridge across the Kennicott River.

Out of the March meeting came a call for workshop participants to choose at least two community members to

represent them at the regional meeting in early May of this year. McCarthy participants chose Cynthia Shidner, Carmen Russo and John Adams.

On April 18th another workshop meeting occurred at the McCarthy Lodge with approximately 18 people in attendance. The group was encouraged to seek and define community projects with especial attention given to those projects that the community could do on their own without outside assistance.

The location of the May meeting is yet to be announced.

National Park Service comes to town

BY RICK KENYON

Following the teleconference on April 11, National Park Service (NPS) rangers who had attended the meeting posted Public Notices around town. The notices read, in part, Please be on notice that any use of motorized equipment on McCarthy Creek drainage, except on the Marvelous Millsite and Spokane Placer property is prohibited. The only exception is the use of snowmachine when adequate snow cover exists. The route created by the bulldozer is not a park road or designated route. Consequently the use of motorized vehicles including the bulldozer and any trailers pulled by the bulldozer on that route, or other park lands, is prohibited and illegal unless authorized by NPS permit.

Although I had attended the meeting, the first word of the notices came from a neighbor who said that the notices had been posted but were now gone. The rangers had given no hint of the upcoming action.

Early the next week, Chief Ranger Hunter Sharp called the McCarthy Lodge and set up a meeting with interested locals for Friday, April 18.

Wrangell-St. Elias Superintendent Candelaria was reportedly called back from a trip to California for the meeting and was accompanied by Ranger Sharp and Ranger Marshall Neeck. They were met in McCarthy by the Pilgrim Family, who were standing quietly across the street from the Lodge, and were carrying protest signs.

Candelaria was asked to read

the two notices that had been posted. This was followed by a question: What is the definition of a legal road? Why would you say now that it [McCarthy-Green Butte route] is not a legal access, [since it has] been access since the early part of the century.

Candelaria: Access, as access is in the park here, can be in a number of different formats. You can walk, take a snow-machine as we said when there's adequate snow cover, you can use an ATV in the pursuits of subsistence activities. You can use a horse, you can use a number of different methods of access. You can use an aircraft. Park folks do use aircraft, I know. The idea of a road being on the park or even a trail being improved on park lands, on public lands, without permit is

something that is not permitted in regulation. It's a process, for rights-of-way development & it's a process for establishing access to an inholding, a process for accessing your property or for people to access their properties. It's not a case of we're saying you can't go. The process has to be followed, though.

Although people vented frustration with the park service over other issues, the primary topic was the posting of the road closure notices. Most viewed the notices as being illegal. The following was typical of the exchange during the two and a half hour meeting:

Local: Gary, I think part of the problem we have here & these two notices imply that the Pilgrim family created this route in recent day. Was that your understanding or intention?

Gary Candelaria (GC): They created the improved bladed road in the fall.

Local: This road was used and supported by the Territory before you were born.

GC: Again I come back to the point that I understand that's your position, but I believe your position is wrong.

At various times Candelaria said the route was created last fall, was created in the distant past, was never adjudicated and was never asserted by the state of Alaska. Later, this exchange:

Local: Can you define customary/traditional uses?

Ranger Hunter Sharp: No I can't.

Local: What my impression of that is, and I'm sorry if you don't have one, but the fact that snowmachines can go up and down McCarthy



WSEN staff photo

Pilgrim family protest NPS closure of road that leads to their house.

creek. Not a single snowmachine ever traveled up and down McCarthy Creek until a bulldozer put in a trail. And that seems like a more traditional-customary use on that land than a snowmachine. They came first. It is an existing legitimate use.

Local: You know the old photographs have bulldozers in

them. The bulldozers were there before the park was there. Wouldn't it be easy for you guys to say we don't like it, but it's traditional use and it would be o.k. because you're the superintendent and everything goes away & it's really easy

GC: It's not that easy.

Local: Well, it could be if you wanted it to be.

And this:

Question: I am wondering why now today after 22 years & I guess you know everybody in this room, yourself included, knows that this is a particular where because the Pilgrims wouldn't talk to you, you're punishing them & or you are asserting this method to teach them a lesson.

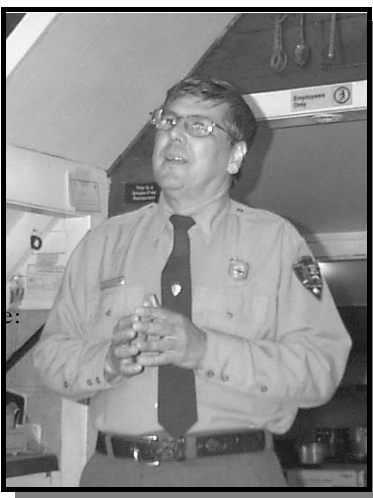
GC: No, No, No.

Local: The road already existed.

GC: I know that there was a road.

Local: So you admit there was a road?

GC: There obviously was. The road commission says in the



WSEN staff photo

WRST Superintendent Gary Candelaria speaks to irate crowd.

history of the area.

And this:

Local: The road, the tunnel, the bridges, the photographs, and the testimony from people that have been using it...it will only be clear that guess what? That was not a forest, it was a road! Everyone's gonna know it. It'll be clear at the end of the day.

Local: My point is this & why not just give us options. Say, leave the Pilgrims alone, they are never going to talk to us. If they destroy something, then go after them.

GC: Then I'm derelict in my duty and I can't do that.

Local: So do you plan to arrest them and if so do you plan to single them out or will you arrest all of us when we go and start maintaining that road?

GC: Until the road or the route is adjudicated as a legitimate right-of-way, yes you are subject to citation.

At one point, after a heated exchange about the legality of the road closure, the Superintendent pointed outside the window (at the Pilgrim family) and said: Do you know who created your problem? Those folks created your problem. The crowd went wild with hoots and cries of protest.

Some time was spent questioning Rangers Sharp and Neeck concerning allegations of phone surveillance. Both rangers strongly denied the charges.

Keith Rowland read a list of requests from the Pilgrim family concerning a land survey the NPS had posted notice it will do in June.

Bonnie Kenyon received applause from the crowd when she spoke:

I want you to know that I think a lot of people in this room want to give you honor, and want to respect the uniforms you wear. Some of the things we have seen out of the park service for the last 23 years have caused us to be ashamed of the uniform you men wear. We don't want to feel that way... We don't want to be angry. We don't want to have to point a finger accusing you. But we do want honor, we want respect. We're not ignorant savages in this room. We are people that are business people, we are residents, we are neighbors, and we are not going to stand by and see a family like the Pilgrim family or maybe some day any one of us, being picked off and targeted. That is the way we feel, Gary, maybe that is not your heart. But that is what we see and that is what we've experienced out of the park service for 23 years. We are tired of it. We want to respect you. I want to respect you. And I want you to know that. It's not that we are angry, we are not hot-heads, we're not bullies, that is not what we are. We are human beings that live in this town, call this

town home and I love my neighbors and they love me. I am not going to stand by and see somebody like the Pilgrims be picked on [in a manner that] we believe is wrong. We are not trying to be rebellious, and out of order and bring harm to anyone of you guys. We would not do that. This is my heart & to tell you that.

Hunter Sharp spent some time telling in detail of his recent trip up McCarthy Creek, and his fears of local residents.

Although most local residents showed support for the Pilgrim family and outrage at NPS actions, a few locals voiced their dislike of the Pilgrims.

After the meeting, many in the crowd took vehicles (including a bulldozer) and went up the disputed road as a protest. The rangers had been notified ahead of time that this was a peaceful protest and that no locals would be armed. As the party headed out, someone reminded the NPS that the group was going to work on the road. Ranger Neeck smiled and said, Have a safe trip.



WSEN staff photo

McCarthy residents caravan up the McCarthy-Green Butte road in protest of NPS closure notices. NPS Rangers were in town, but no citations were given.

The Pilgrim Story

BY DOROTHY ADLER

With all the recent activity surrounding the Pilgrim Family, access up McCarthy Creek, and relations with the NPS it is difficult to know or begin to understand this family, issues aside. It seems like many people in our community have wondered where the Pilgrims came from and why they chose McCarthy as their home. Although they have been in our community for a year now, The Pilgrims have remained somewhat of a mystery to many of us, and not many of us have gotten to know them on a personal level. I spent the day recently with some of the family members at their camp in McCarthy and was amazed with what I learned. So for all of you curious McCarthyites, here's the slightly censored version.

It was a sunny spring-like day, break-up in fact when I headed over to meet with the Pilgrims at their McCarthy camp. Leaping over puddles, feet sloshing around in the wet mud/snow, thoughts racing through my mind as to how the interview would begin & anticipation, curiosity; Gosh, I haven't interviewed anyone since college, let alone write a story on them as well. Oh, well, I think to myself and instantly, as if I snapped my fingers, (remember I dream of Jeannie) I was there in their yard, surrounded by Pilgrims, and two cows, a horse and three very big dogs. It was a bit overwhelming, really.

Not too long after I arrive I find myself inside the small, but tidy and organized cabin, their home base in McCarthy. I am greeted with a big hug from



Photo courtesy Gary Green

Pilgrim family at Happy Cabin.

Elishaba, the eldest child, who is endearingly called Sissy by Papa and siblings throughout my visit. She is also called

Elisabeth, the English version of her Hebrew name. I take a seat next to Papa and look around the room, realizing that half of the clan is sitting before me. The older children are here with Papa, while the younger ones are at home up McCarthy Creek with Mama (Country Rose). I have a list of questions to ask the Pilgrims so I take out my notepad and proceed to barely write anything down during the next six hours.

Papa Pilgrim is a storyteller. All stories begin somewhere. Papa's story began when he met Country Rose twenty-nine years ago in sunny southern California. In his thirties and trying to figure out what to do next, he comes across young Country Rose in the San Bernardino Mountains. She

asks him for a piece of cheese, which he doesn't have but attempts to find for her. A classic love story in the making. This is getting good, I think to myself. Not at all ready for what Papa will disclose next. Country Rose stands near a beautiful waterfall and God speaks to Papa and says

This is your wife, she is strong, she will bear you many children. Talk about prophetic. They get married, much to her parents dismay. She is much younger and has been reared in Hollywood of all places, none of which stops them from setting off to create a life together.

Without knowing their direction in life they head out on their honeymoon in their 41 Chevy truck. Not too much longer after this they find themselves giving birth to a daughter. To set the record straight, there are actually fifteen children on earth as the



Photo courtesy Gary Green

Family pauses at airstrip for a little music.

Pilgrims phrase it. Papa and Country Rose lost one baby, Hope, who they believe they will be reunited with in Heaven and they still include her when they talk about the children.

The interview continues, although there is a bit of a break to eat some lunch that Elishaba, a most gracious hostess, has served up. I am in awe of her throughout my visit as she pulls one thing after another out of a small oven. All of the children (they prefer to be called children) seem to have their roles in the family. That's what allows them to get along and get the work done. Where so many of us come from families where we fought and bickered with our siblings growing up, the Pilgrim children say they never grow sick of each other. In fact, they really enjoy being around one another and if separated for a while, can't wait to be together again. They are unique in that they, having

lived very remote in New Mexico, (they claim to have more neighbors here than at their Mt. Church Cabin in the Rockies) have come to genuinely rely on one another.

The Pilgrim family is not shy when it comes to their religious beliefs. In fact, I found that the Pilgrims, while modest, are open and honest people. They are quite simply an old-fashioned family living by the Bible. And so Papa began describing how he found Jesus, how he came to live his life as a Christian, and how he ended up in McCarthy.

Still searching for some direction, Papa, Country Rose, young Elishaba and now baby Joseph found themselves driving along in Texas, his home state. Papa described feeling empty from being raised with a life of riches and pride and not knowing what to fill that void with. Organized religion didn't work for them. Papa wasn't sure

what to do. He started seeking God. After some time and a calling, the family ended up in Rocky Mountains of New Mexico at 9,000 ft., where they were to live for 23 years. Papa said those early days were filled with studying the Bible for 14 hours a day. They dug a well, built a cabin, and lived a subsistence lifestyle. They worked for themselves raising vegetables, spinning wool from their sheep, making lye soap, sewing clothes, harvesting wheat, making cheeses. They were the hillbilly shepherds, the big Jesus family up on the mountain.

One can't have an interview with the Pilgrims without the music. So after a couple of hours of heavy conversation, the instruments came out and those sweet bluegrass tunes came rolling off their tongues, but it wasn't always this way as Papa began to explain.

I couldn't carry a tune back in my college days when I was in one of those fraternities. You know the frat boys would get together and sing and I was told to just mouth the words cause my voice was so bad. Papa in a fraternity? Now that's something I never imagined.

The only musical instrument for years was a guitar he found somewhere. He took it into town once a year or so and had it tuned at a music shop and then would take it home and play it until it went out of tune. It was a long, difficult, infrequent trip to town, so the guitar was out of tune much of the time. So how did they come to play that bluegrass so well? Inspired by a bluegrass festival around 1997, Papa put the names of various instruments in a hat. They gathered and prayed before each choosing a piece of paper from

the hat. That piece of paper determined what instrument they would learn. So without any formal training, they set out to praise the Lord with their music. Soon they received a calling for another Pilgrimage. They packed up the 41 Chevy, the same one they honeymooned in, and the same truck Joseph was born in, and headed for Alaska.

The Pilgrims were searching for a home. They felt they had outgrown their mountain home in N. Mexico of 23 years. They needed to spread out, they needed bigger country. The family had been so remote and secluded for many years. The children had little experience with the outside world and this journey would prove to teach many lessons and eventually find them a new home. Along the way Country Rose gave birth to Lamb (in the Yukon), so they stopped the bandwagon and set up camp for three weeks while the baby came and Rose regained her strength. The Pilgrims have a knack for making an impression on folks and they did so to the road crew that was working on that section of roadway near where they were camped. In their joy and celebration of another child, they pulled out their instruments and raised their voices to praise Jesus. Pretty soon they were chummy with the road crew. In fact, the road crew inadvertently helped the Pilgrims obtain a birth certificate for Lamb, which they desperately needed to get into Alaska, their final destination. One of the guys anonymously and unbeknownst to the Pilgrims called for emergency medical services in Whitehorse to travel out to this

secluded lake because a woman had just given birth. An ambulance makes the arduous drive to the Pilgrim camp to find baby Lamb and Country Rose happy and healthy and not in need of medical services. But since the professionals from Whitehorse arrived, they went ahead and recorded the birth. Birth certificate in hand, onward went the Pilgrims.

In 1998 they arrived in Alaska, first in Fairbanks with the idea to live out on the Yukon



Photo courtesy Gary Green

This cute cabin burned down last month along with many personal items.

River. While in Homer looking for a boat to bring back to the Yukon River they met some folks, found work (they had never worked for a living) and stayed. They spent some time around Homer, Kenai, and Soldotna, looking for land, searching for a home. They had some tough times with an employer who cheated them out of hard-earned wages, their first big lesson in realizing that the world is not just made up of hard-working, peace-loving folks like themselves. Then a friend told them about this place called McCarthy. And the Pilgrims said Well, can

you drive there? The Pilg rims found McCarthy on a map, loaded up the trucks, some of the family and headed off once again.

And so in the dead of winter, last year, when the temps were hovering at about 30 below, trucks full of Pilgrims headed down the McCarthy road. Papa and the children said when we got to the rock walls in Chitina, we knew we were home. The sleepy little town of McCarthy woke up when they arrived, especially after their search for

land led them to purchase 400 acres up McCarthy Creek, nearly doubling the winter population. Face it, we were all curious about how they might fair in this often tough bush-living environment, especially living way off the grid 15 or so miles from McCarthy with a big family and Country Rose preparing to birth another child. With some trials, tribulations, (one of their cabins burned to

the ground last month), a bit of time under the community microscope, lots of love and support from family and neighbors, the Pilg rims made it through their first year in McCarthy. So what s in the cards for the hillbilly, Jesus loving family up on the mountain? Probably some more hard work, following the voice of God, praising their calling through music, and trying to build a home and life like the rest of us living in the bush.

(Dorothy Adler is a year-round resident. She and husband Kevin are part owners of Kennecott Wilderness Guides.)

In Which, NPS rewrites history and law

BY MCCARTHY ANNIE

Saturday, April 19, 2003-

If you ever come to visit me in this rugged back corner of Creation, I'd love to offer you a ride in my old McCarthy Rig. She ain't so perty anymore, but she still runs, and she takes to these broken-down back trails like an old mountain nanny goat. Oh, the old gal's seen better days, but then, so have the historic roads she is accustomed to traversing.

Take the McCarthy-Green Butte Road, for instance. Built for the miners 100 years ago, this road follows McCarthy Creek all the way up to the Motherlode Mines on the other side of Bonanza Ridge. In the years since the miners' heyday, this road has been used and maintained by a variety of folks. Why, my old McCarthy Rig purred along that very roadway thirty years ago or so, when bridges were standing firmly in place and she could still pick her way along with dignity and ease.

Over time, age and neglect have taken their toll. Floods have washed the original bridges out, and those pesky willows have attempted a complete take-over. The hardy folks who range this valley have tried to keep the route passable, but with so few to help, and little in the way of resources, the relentless forces of nature have reduced this once-respectable road to a mere trail.

And lately, for the most part, my old McCarthy Rig sits quietly at home, just waiting.

It has been a long time since the valley of the Motherlode has had a family to call its own, to care for

it and protect it, to restore and once again inhabit the historic buildings, to rebuild bridges and wage war with the encroaching willows. The National Park Service has come and made claim to much of the land in the valley. Although they've seemed interested in preserving the historic Kennecott Mine, they've mostly ignored the roads and trails leading to other parts of this history-steeped region.

Until recently.

You see, the family that the McCarthy Creek valley has been waiting for has finally arrived. Children's laughter now rings out and echoes back from the sheer mountains surrounding their homestead, affectionately dubbed Hillbilly Heaven. Horses and equipment once again haul needed supplies along the McCarthy-Green Butte Road. Strong, capable young men have been skillfully restoring and rebuilding venerable cabins that the harsh elements have not yet been able to completely destroy. A new generation, life, love, and hope once again occupy the valley of the Motherlode.

You know who they are, for I have written about them before. When the Pilgrims arrived in our town last spring, they brought with them love, laughter, music and irrepressible joy. Their kindness and hospitality have touched us all, and their courage in the face of adversity has heightened our sense of respect.

Although the folks here at McCarthy have received the Pilgrims warmly, the family has encountered an entirely different reception from the NPS. You

see, it's no secret that the biggest threat to the Park Service is the McCarthy-Green Butte Road, because according to federal and state law, this road is open to public use and cannot be controlled by the federal government or anyone else. The Pilgrims' land is somewhere near the end of the road, and there is no other over-land access to their homestead, so for the last year, they've been using, improving, and maintaining the McCarthy-Green Butte Road, as is their right.

You know, it would seem to me that both this state-owned road (which accesses breathtaking scenery and the century-old Motherlode Mine) and the old-fashioned, hospitable family near the end of the road should be perceived as valuable assets to the Park. But if there's one thing that rankles those parkies more than public use of a public road which winds through the heart of prime park land, it is private landowners' use of a public road which leads to their private property in the heart of prime park land! You see, in the twisted view of those parkies, both the road and the inholders are perceived as some sort of threat to park resources.

And they are willing to do anything—inside or outside the law—to get rid of both!

It was about a week ago, on a Friday afternoon, when they made their move. The access issue was the hot topic of a town meeting that



day, and some NPS rangers had attended.

They failed to mention to us McCarthyites what they were planning to do that afternoon. If we had known, the riot would have been on a little sooner.

After the meeting had concluded and most of us had gone home for the day, Rangers Hunter Sharp and Richard Larrabee, acting on orders from Park Superintendent Gary Candelaria, quietly dropped a bomb on us, in the form of notices posted around our town. In these notices, Candelaria claimed that the McCarthy-Green Butte Road was an illegal road bulldozed on federal land, and forbade the use of motorized vehicles on the road.

Now, if you've read history and the law, as I have, you already know that statutes such as RS2477 were written to protect citizens against just such federal land grab tactics as this. See, the parkies acted illegally on two counts: 1) The National Park Service has no jurisdiction over a state right-of-way. Hence, NPS cannot legally close a state road, such as this one, to motorized traffic. 2) According to ANILCA, the Park/Preserve was established subject to valid existing rights, including rights-of-way established under RS2477. Therefore, it is illegal for the Park to deny landowners access to their home when that access is a valid, existing RS2477

right-of-way, as is the case with the McCarthy-Green Butte Road.

Evidently, other folks around McCarthy have been reading their law and history books, too, for before those parkies had dusted their heels out of town,

hunting grounds yep, you guessed it up McCarthy Creek. On four-wheelers, of course. Steely-eyed and armed with a .22 and a tape recorder, they made just one stop on their way-at the door of our local park ranger.

The ranger was at home, all right, but he seemed to be having some trouble with his door, for as soon as he had opened it, the door slammed shut again, leaving Rick and Keith outside. Surprised but undaunted, Keith decided to go ahead and speak to the young man through the closed door. Normally quiet and mild-mannered, Keith's voice now rang out with blazing authority.

I understand you park rangers illegally closed the McCarthy Creek Road, which is a state right-of-way. You closed it to all motorized vehicles other than snow machines as of yesterday. This morning, right now, in open defiance to that order, I am going up the McCarthy Creek State right-of-way on a

motorized vehicle that is not a snowmachine! Thank you.

It was at this point that Rick decided to inquire about the problem with the door:

Why'd you slam the door on me, [neighbor]?

Once again, the low, heavy door creaked open, and the young parkie peered suspiciously out. With a low, menacing growl, he spat out, I didn't invite you here, you're trespassing on my property, you're not here with good intent, and I would appreciate it if you'd leave, and we'll talk when I'm working.

all their notices had mysteriously disappeared.

A keen observer, however, would have noticed that, on the ground near where each of the signs had been, there was a very small pile of ashes. Except for one, that is someone had torn it down, but hadn't burned it. Gotta keep one for the record!

Around here, we don't take too kindly to flak-jacketed government thugs trying to bully us around!

Next morning, bright and early, two friends of mine were en route to some prime rabbit

Slam!

And so, with the NPS Good Neighbor Policy still ringing in their ears, the men went hunting.

Curious thing, how that door kept slamming shut. Hopefully he'll get it fixed, or I'm afraid that, after a while, the good folks here in McCarthy may begin to think him an unpleasant sort of guy.

By Monday morning, scathing letters protesting the Park's illegal actions had arrived on the rangers' desks. Phone calls from angry citizens sizzled with outrage, and the e-mail circuit was humming.

Politicians in the highest levels of government had been notified of our situation, and the mood at NPS Headquarters was becoming increasingly tense.

Desperately, the parkies tried to calm the situation, protesting to one caller, "We didn't mean for the notice to be aimed at your community & it was really just meant for the Pilgrims!"

Well, fellas, this was the wrong thing to say, because if there's one thing that will unify a small, close-knit community in a hurry, it's this: Big, Bad, Powerful Government Men singling out a peaceable, law-abiding family with lots of adorable, defenseless children, and doing illegal and mean things to try to force them off their land.

In this neighborhood, we don't stand for nasty government shenanigans, so a few of us decided to do something about

this outrage.

What to do? Well, of course! Get the locals together, fire up all the rigs we can find, and take a drive up that good old McCarthy-Green Butte Road!

A town/NPS meeting was called and scheduled for Friday afternoon. We wanted to give WRST Superintendent Gary Candelaria a chance to recant, apologize, and make an attempt to redeem himself, so it was decided that the McCarthy Creek Drive would be held off until after the meeting.

It seemed a mighty long shot, but maybe, just maybe, someone at NPS would read his

jeeps, and several four-wheelers, all lined up with their noses pointed toward McCarthy Creek. My old McCarthy Rig was there, and I could have sworn she was smiling.

There was a crowd of people, mostly children, surrounding these vehicles, along with dogs, a horse, and a black, shaggy Dexter bull. Closer inspection revealed that this crowd was actually just the Pilgrims—eleven of them—each carrying a hand-written placard denouncing this latest nefarious NPS edict. There were signs everywhere, plastered on the trucks and equipment, attached to the dogs

and horse—even that formidable-looking black bull had huge signs hung over his back, stating, "I'm tired of being BULLED around." Four-year-old Lamb was there, with her wide blue eyes of innocence, sweet and tender as a mountain flower in spring.

Please let me go home to Mama, her sign read.

Not all of the signs had such a pleading tone, however.

Consider this: If God is for us, who can be against us? Who is the NPS? Or this: God is bigger than the NPS. Watch out, HE'S GETTING MAD! Or, how about this one, seen on the blade of the bulldozer: McCarthy Creek Trail Rides.

When you're on the right side, there's no need to hide, apologize, or give in.

As expected, neither Gary, nor Marshall, nor Hunter had read their law or history by meeting time.



history and law before he opened his big mouth in McCarthy.

They came mounted on park green four-wheelers, outfitted with their trademark park green bulletproof vests, and packing Sig-Sauer handguns and pepper spray. As they approached the McCarthy Lodge Friday afternoon, Gary, Marshall and Hunter could not escape the scene before them. Trucks, a huge bulldozer, a farm tractor,

They still labored under the delusion that the McCarthy-Green Butte Road had been illegally bulldozed in recent days, although we tried to explain to them that the road had been built a century ago and was an existing right-of-way which the Pilgrims had been maintaining and improving in recent days.

They were still completely in the dark about the meaning of RS2477, which guarantees the public the right to maintain and travel on historic roads such as this one (the McCarthy-Green Butte

Road is listed as RS #135 on the DNR map). They seemed unaware and unconcerned that this law was written specifically to protect citizens from the very situation we were protesting here ruthless, railroad-over-the-little-guy land grabbing by the federal government, under the phony guise of protecting park resources.

Worse, they asserted that they would arrest us if we traveled on this route using non-customary and traditional means and then they had to admit that they were unable to define customary and traditional! It seems to me, since a bulldozer originally built the road, then a bulldozer used to spruce up the road would be

customary and traditional!

As if to add insult to injury, they asserted that those of us who call McCarthy home are now inholders. Never mind that we've never been considered

apply &

We had a real good time on the Great McCarthy Creek Drive, my old McCarthy Rig and I, and I sure wish you could have



inholders before this meeting. For you see, if they can convince us that we are inholders, then they can exercise more and more control over us. Let me tell you, Control is the name of their game!

And, heaps of evidence and many eye and earwitness accounts notwithstanding, they have never, never, NEVER monitored anyone's phones!

Yeah, right!

Of course, the NPS men uttered not one word acknowledging that the Public Notice they had cooked up amounted to a complete revision of both history and law.

Truth to tell, only 5 words on their phony Public Notice were true: This notice does not

been there. A fair-sized crowd of locals joined us in motorized vehicles of all sizes and shapes. It was a colorful and festive procession; there were smiles and cheer all around. Someone said we should call our demonstration Civil Obedience, for when we drove up the McCarthy-Green Butte Road, we were exercising rights guaranteed us by federal and state statutes.

After all, we mountain folks know our history and law.

Funny thing about those parkies we really went out of our way to make sure they were duly informed of the Great McCarthy Creek Drive.

But none of them ever showed up!

Is the McCarthy-Green Butte route a legal road?

BY RICK KENYON

If you are paying attention at all, you will realize there is a dispute about the legality of the road that runs between McCarthy and the Mother Lode Mine, running up McCarthy Creek for about 14 miles.

Speaking of the Green-Butte Road, National Park Service spokesman Superintendent Gary Candelaria repeatedly told those assembled at McCarthy on April 18, I understand that it has been asserted by individuals to be a state right-of-way. Nevertheless, neither the State of Alaska, nor the NPS, nor the Department of Interior recognize it as such.

The Superintendent is in error. While the National Park Service may not recognize the route as a public right-of-way, the State of Alaska most assuredly *does*. In fact, as one Department of Natural Resources official told me, We even passed a statute naming it as a legal road what more do they want?

Alaska Statute AS 19.30.400 is called Identification and Acceptance of Rights-of-Way. It was passed by the Alaska State Legislature in 1998, and specifically lists the McCarthy-Green Butte as right-of-way number RST 0135.

The statute states, The state claims, occupies, and possesses each right-of-way granted under former 43 U.S.C. 932 (this is the RS2477 statute) that was accepted either by the state or the territory of Alaska or by public users. **A right of way acquired under [RS2477] is available for use by the public under regulations adopted by**

the Department of Natural Resources... (emphasis added)

It goes on to say, The rights-of-way listed in (d) of this section have been accepted by public users and have been identified to provide effective notice to the public of these rights-of-way.

Section (d) is where the McCarthy-Green Butte route is identified as RST 135.

I asked Judy Chapman at the Department of Transportation about the phrase *asserted to be a right-of-way*. We don't have to assert anything, said Judy, we only have to show that the conditions have been met to receive a valid RS2477 grant. It is a self-executing grant, and becomes effective at the point in time when the conditions of use are met.

Superintendent Candelaria also said that the road had not yet been adjudicated as a legitimate ROW.

Again, not true. The State of Alaska has done an administrative adjudication on the McCarthy-Green Butte route and it is on file with the Department of Natural Resources in Fairbanks. Joe Sullivan at the Department of Natural Resources confirmed that the route is indeed on file as having been adjudicated by the State of Alaska as a valid right-of-way.

Chief Ranger Hunter Sharp has a little different view of the subject than his boss.

We know that the State has listed this route as a potential right of way, said Sharp. Although nobody at NPS has been able to explain the process, apparently the Department of Interior made a decision under

former Secretary Babbitt to ignore RS2477 and relevant state laws, thus denying the existence of these rights-of-way. They are fond of words such as potential, possible, and assert.

Governor Frank Murkowski is seeking an agreement with Interior similar to the one that Utah Gov. Mike Leavitt and Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton signed recently. It is clear, however, that the Alaska agreement will need to be significantly different from the Utah agreement, which excluded roads and trails within Conservation Units such as National Parks. It also excluded trails that had not been developed into roads, and prohibited further development of existing routes.

The General Management Plan for Wrangell-St. Elias National lists 107 routes as possible RS2477 rights-of-way and says this about them: The park/preserve was established subject to valid existing rights, including rights-of-way established under RS2477. The validity of these rights-of-way will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Asked which routes NPS has determined to be valid, Ranger Sharp said, I don't know, perhaps the McCarthy Road.

The Coalition for Access to McCarthy (CAM) had requested that the Governor make this issue a top priority during his administration. Environmental groups have fought against RS2477 for years, and agencies such as the National Park Service have seemed all too eager to accommodate them.

McCarthy area teens feed hungry children

BY BONNIE KENYON

McCarthy: Five teenagers of McCarthy decided to do something to raise the awareness of hunger and poverty in the world. Teal, Trae, and Tyee Lohse and Rene and Sarah Welty participated in a 30-hour famine that began Saturday, April 5th and came to an end Sunday afternoon with a share-a-dish meal prepared for them by family and friends.

Sincerely desiring to make a real mark, this group of young people chose to go 30 hours without food to get a taste of global starvation and to raise money that would go to help feed and care for hungry children in Africa, South and Central America, Asia and even right here in our own nation.

The inspiration came from an organization called World Vision whose mission is to lift up the needy of the world through humanitarian aid, sponsorship of poverty-stricken children and the sharing of the love of God.

The project began with a

Slave Auction and Bake Sale on Saturday morning at the McCarthy Kennicott Community Church where all five teens attend. Nineteen people not counting the slaves turned out to bid for these young workers who were willing to do outdoor or indoor chores at their highest bidder's choice. They were willing to work up to 6 hours each. The auctioneer was Ralph Lohse whose humor had everyone nearly rolling in the aisles. Every teen was purchased and most have carried out their labor. For instance, Laurie Rowland and Meg Hunt divided up Sarah Welty's 6 hours. I understand Sarah did an excellent job at dusting the ladies' houses, giving them a jumpstart on their annual spring cleaning.

After the auction, folks went downstairs to inspect all the baked goods on display for sale. An assortment of freshly-baked cookies, breads and brownies were quickly purchased.

The young people, along with

Don and Lynn Welty, spent the rest of the evening at the church leading and participating in Bible studies.

At the Sunday morning church service, the teenagers shared how the 30-hour fast and the special time they spent together had effected them. They performed a skit with Tyee, Trae and Teal Lohse depicting the hopeless lifestyles of young people from poor countries, Rene Welty contrasted those pictures with someone who had it all but whose priorities were in the wrong place, and Sarah Welty was a young lady in a poor country but who had been helped by World Vision and given hope and a future.

Nearly \$2000 was raised with more still arriving, says Sarah. The young people are thankful for all the love and support they have received during this very special event in their lives, but are even more thankful for the difference the finances will make in the lives of those children they were doing all this for.

McCarthy Kennicott Community Church gets addition and finds water

BY BONNIE KENYON

McCarthy: The McCarthy Kennicott Community Church has completed Phase One of a recent building expansion project. Heading up the construction work was John Adams and Carmen Russo along with Joseph and David Pilgrim.

The new two-story rear addition measures 16' x 24' which

provides a room for the young people, expanded kitchen area, utility room and a bathroom in the downstairs portion and increases the sanctuary space upstairs.

There is still much work to be done before next winter but the progress so far is being greatly appreciated. Our thanks go out to John, Carmen, Joseph and David who did a terrific job!

Another blessing to report occurred on March 22. Kirk and Linda Shively of Sourdough Drilling based in Wasilla put in a successful 60' well for the church. We thank the Shivelys for a job well done.

Come and worship with us. Join us on Sunday mornings at 10 a.m. in worship of our risen Lord!

Copper Spike driven 92 years ago part two

Editor's note: It has been 92 years since the Copper Spike was driven, signifying the completion of the CR&NW Railway from Cordova to Kennicott. This was extremely big news in Chitina, and the Chitina Leader carried huge headlines reading RAILROAD COMPLETED TO THE COPPER BELT and COPPER SPIKE IS DRIVEN AT MINE. The story is quite long so we will run it in installments. This is part two.

Equipment of Railroad

Everything is of the most modern and substantial character and includes 15 locomotives, eight coaches, 256 cars, four steam shovels, two rotary ploughs, one wrecking crane, track driver, two spreaders, one dozer, all of which were purchased at a cost of \$750,000. This motive power runs over a standard gauge railroad with 70-pound rails to Chitina, and 60-pound rails on the Chitina branch to Kennecott. Native ties have been used throughout, while all of the track fittings, sidings, frogs, switches and other AP-standards.

The motive power was built by the American Locomotive Works and includes several consolidation engines of most modern type, equipped with electric headlights and used exclusively in the hauling of passenger and mail trains. Two snow rotaries are in constant readiness to give battle to the snow and prevent blockades. The rolling stock is of the latest approved pattern, the freight cars ranging from sixty to one hundred thousand pounds capacity, with a large complement of auxiliary cars for construction and maintenance purposes. A table d'hôte dining car service is maintained on all passenger trains between Cordova and Chitina, the service of which is unexcelled on the standard railways in the states, insuring appetizing meals in comfort at all hours.

Preliminary Work on C. R. & N. W. Railroad

After the Alaska syndicate acquired the Bonanza mines, under ownership of the Kennecott Mines Company, the necessity was at once apparent for the construction of a railroad to reach their valuable copper properties and also to open up what was considered a rich mineral belt running to the north and south of the Chitina, Nizina and other rivers. Engineer M. K. Rogers decided that the cheapest route was north from Valdez, and in the spring of 1905 he secured rights and started to build from Valdez. The difficulties of getting through the canyon and the high grades necessary in climbing the mountains brought discouragement.

In the fall of 1905 the valuable coal deposits of the Katalla fields began to be generally discussed and the Alaska Syndicate was impressed with the necessity of taking the coal question into consideration in the construction of a railroad. Work was suspended at Valdez and Mr. Rogers directed his attention to Katalla and the Copper River country. It was then decided to build from Katalla, in preference to Valdez or Cordova, active work starting in the early spring of 1907. Efforts to construct a breakwater and secure a suitable harbor at Katalla soon met with unsatisfactory results, after

trestles had been built, ten miles of grading done and eight miles of track laid.

In June, 1907, the Syndicate secured the services of E. C. Hawkins, formerly chief engineer of the White Pass & Yukon railroad. He came north on July first to study the whole situation. For over three months he tramped over the various suggested routes for reaching the Bonanza mines. He held in mind the necessity for starting at tide water at a common point to tap both the copper belt and the coal fields, with the lightest possible grade. He also desired an open harbor the year round, with deep water and secure anchorage, where a large fleet of vessels might be safely sheltered.

Mr. Hawkins satisfied himself that Cordova offered more advantages than any other point, even though the cost of constructing from there would be greater than from some other port. He went to New York and at a meeting of the Syndicate in October, reported in favor of discontinuing work at other points and starting from Cordova. The meeting decided on the line from Cordova.

On November 15, 1907, Mr. Hawkins was made chief engineer and general manager of the Katalla Company, organized for the purpose of constructing the railroad, and which positions he continues to hold. He was placed in absolute charge of the engineering and construction

work.

The first contract was for rebuilding the old part of the Copper River Railroad five miles out from Cordova and new construction to Abercrombie or mile 54. Track was laid to this point by October 30, 1908, with the exception of the bridge crossing the river at mile 49. The next contract was to Tiekel, or mile 101, which was completed on December 1, 1909. The road was completed to Chitina, or mile 131, on September 12, 1910. Track was laid to Kuskulana, mile 149, October 23, and the steel bridge across the river was completed December 25. The trestle 880 feet long and from eighty to ninety feet high was built across the Gilahina River, mile 160, in eight days, and trains were running over it January 28. For the rest of the distance the actual track laying in the dead of winter and over ice and snow

progressed at the rate of nearly a mile per day not including the building of the trestle, until the end of the line was reached on the afternoon of March 28, 1911.

Some Items of Expense

Some of the most expensive rock work in railway building has been encountered, ranging from nominal amounts to \$220,000 per mile. Faces of mountains and canyons were literally torn away by tremendous charges of dynamite and powder. Practically along the entire line north of Miles and Childs Glaciers the very mountain summits echoed and re-echoed again and again the martial-like sound and explosions proclaiming the

indomitable will and physical hardihood of the industrial soldiers of peaceful progress blazing a way for the enrichment and convenience of generations to come. There were 5,680,000 cubic yards of excavation, of which 3,140,000 were of solid rock. Great quantities of explosives were used, at a cost of \$375,000. Over 1,200,000 yards of gravel were moved by steam



Museum of History & Industry, 14130

The Kuskulana steel bridge.

shovels, at a cost of \$290,000.

Already \$8,300,000 has been paid labor for wages, exclusive of the wages paid for contract station work. Fuel was an important item and cost \$610,000. Over \$375,000 was paid for lumber and ties, while the government will receive nearly \$100,000 for stumpage. The cost for piling aggregated \$118,000. An expensive item was the rails, for which \$1,110,000 was paid. Building wagon roads and trails so as to transport materials cost \$78,000. The big and substantial wharf at Cordova cost \$136,000. An expensive item will be the 190,000 tons of freight received by sea and much of which came by rail from the

Eastern states. The charges for this item will likely run up to over \$2,000,000.

Effective Hospital Service

In the employment of thousands of men there are necessarily many accidents. It has always been the policy both of the Katalla Company and M. J. Heney to afford the maimed the best possible accommodations and the best medical assistance obtainable. During the period of construction work for the contractor, Dr. F. B. Whiting has acted as chief surgeon, which position he also filled during work on the White Pass & Yukon Railroad.

To know Dr. Whiting is to know a man who stands high in his profession, and a man who is possessed of boundless energy and a sympathetic heart. Any distance or hour of the day or night would find him responsive to a call of distress. He is a man of strong organizing ability, and in the selection of his assistants he secured the best men obtainable. His hospitals have been provided with the latest and most up-to-date instruments and facilities for the treatment of patients. Some of his operations performed required the highest skill of his profession, which merited the exceptional success that his efforts earned. As a result there were surprisingly few fatalities.

At present the main hospital is at mile 146, where Dr. Broderick is the assistant. As work progressed others have

been maintained at miles 55, 96, 101, 123, 133, 182, and 191.

The Katalla Company has always maintained a splendid hospital at Cordova. Until last summer it was in the charge of Dr. W. W. Council, when he gave way to Dr. Smith, who has since been in charge. Other hospitals have been maintained by the Katalla Company at Miles Glacier, for the benefit of the bridge workers, and at Abercrombie Canyon, when the snow sheds were being built, and at Kuskulana, when the bridge was erected.

Alaska Syndicate

The men who have financed the Copper River & Northwestern Railway are M. Guggenheim Sons and J. Pierpont Morgan, with their friends. They formed a combination for working purposes, known as the Alaska Syndicate. The first purchase for \$3,000,000 of mining claims, including the Bonanza mine at Kennecott, 196 miles into the interior, made necessary the building of a railroad to reach this property. After having experts examine the many mining claims that were then located by various individuals and companies in what is known as the Copper River district, a conclusion was reached that sufficient tonnage would be available soon after the completion of a railroad to warrant the construction of a standard gauge, high-class railroad.

Several million dollars were spent in the effort to establish the proper sea coast terminal. Finally Cordova was decided upon as the most desirable and feasible point to reach the coal and copper fields. From that time forward the work has been

prosecuted with diligence and without interruption. As estimates for costs were submitted the Syndicate endorsed the expenditures and promptly supplied the necessary money. The financiers are represented in New York by S. W. Eccles, who has very largely reflected the policies of the Syndicate and conducted their business from that end.

The Katalla Company and Railway

This company was formed for the purpose of constructing the railroad. Certain contracts were awarded to M. J. Heney on a percentage basis, while the construction of the steel bridges and certain other work after the contractor had turned over a completed division, was performed by the Katalla Company. Of this company S. W. Eccles, of New York is president, while E. C. Hawkins is vice-president and general manager.

To Mr. Hawkins was given practically absolute authority on matters of construction, that involved the expenditures of many millions of dollars. He has had the absolute confidence of the financiers who are building the road. They early realized his wonderful genius as an engineer and railroad builder, and he has always been regarded by them as a man of sound judgment, unswerving integrity, and of exceptional energy.

To Mr. Hawkins, more than any one man, is due the credit for the accomplishment of one of the greatest engineering feats and best pieces of pioneer construction ever attempted in the United States. After his preliminary plans were complete

there was necessity for the almost continuous exercise of his fertile brain to meet and dispose of the many complex and unusual questions that were arising in all quarters. His mental and physical strength were at times tried to their utmost. But his courage never failed, and today he can look upon the accomplishment of a gigantic work with the consciousness that his duties were not only well performed, but that the results merit him the highest possible credit and honor.

Through his kindly consideration for all employees Mr. Hawkins won their confidence and regard to such an extent as is seldom enjoyed by a head official. And in return the loyalty and energy they displayed redounded to the advancement of the work and to the credit of all concerned. During the past three years Mr. Hawkins has had valued assistance and co-operation from all of the employees, and particularly the following head officials: Alfred Williams, assistant engineer; C. E. Harrison and L. J. Caswell, division engineers; G. H. Spangler, special engineer; A. C. O Neel, bridge engineer; J. W. Covert and H. A. Brown, assistant bridge engineers; S. Corner, chief draftsman; Fred W. Hawkins, Philip Caleb Corser, L. M. Price, Henry Dyo, T. W. Secrest, E. C. Eby, Daniel Boyle, Homer McHadley, C. E. Wingate, J. C. Scurry, S. A. Walker, S. E. Sellows, C. J. McCain, T. C. Brill, B. Dreitenstein, W. J. Ford, W. A. Richelsen, resident engineers; W. S. McCune, chief timekeeper.

In the operation of the Copper River & Northwestern Railway the resident officials are E. C. Hawkins, chief engineer; J. R. Van Cleve, division

superintendent and master mechanic; R. J. Barry, general freight and passenger agent; W. J. Ford, auditor; I. W. Young, storekeeper; L. Wernicke, division engineer.

The general officers at the New York and Seattle offices are as follows:

S. W. Eccles, president, New York; F. W. Hills, comptroller, New York; J. H. Young, vice-president, Seattle; C. J. Jones, traffic manager, New York; D. H. Jarvis, assistant treasurer, Seattle; W. E. Bennett, secretary, New York; W. H. Bogle, attorney, Seattle; J. K. MacGowan, purchasing agent, New York; W. B. Sprague, assistant purchasing agent, Seattle; Kenneth Kerr, industrial agent, Seattle.

M. J. Heney, Contractor

The contract for the grading, track laying and trestle work of the railroad was awarded to M. J. Heney, who had been the contractor for the White Pass & Yukon Railroad. Mr. Heney at once proceeded to effect an organization that was characteristic for its loyalty, strength and efficiency. He surrounded himself, as heads of the different departments, with men of experience and exceptional ability, who soon justified his wisdom by proving themselves able and faithful, remaining loyal unto the end.

Mr. Heney was in the wreck of the steamer Ohio in August, 1909, but later proceeded to Cordova and directed and labored with his old-time energy, until he left for the states on December 6, 1909. He proceeded to New York, but soon returned to California, where his weakened condition developed into pneumonia and heart

trouble, from which he died October 11, 1910. The thousands of men who were in his employ grieved and mourned over his death with such deep feeling and sincerity as is seldom witnessed in this generation. But to all M. J. Heney was a friend, and not a taskmaster. He was loved and respected by all his men and the public generally.

As during his previous contract Mr. Heney had as his first lieutenant Samuel Murchison. He has much of the same force and many of the characteristics of his chief. When the absence and illness of Mr. Heney required that he assume full responsibility, Mr. Murchison never faltered, but took hold and labored with a fidelity and energy that endeared him to his chief and won him the favor of all the employees. Since the death of Mr. Heney the work has been under the absolute direction of Mr. Murchison, and he has made for himself such a record as will forever establish him as one of the foremost and successful railroad builders of the country. He has a splendid knowledge of men, and his kindly and courteous treatment of his employees resulted in securing their confidence and loyalty to a marked degree and with such results as is only achieved by men of giant force and great consideration.

The personnel of M. J. Heney, contractor, is composed as follows: General superintendent, Samuel Murchison; superintendent of bridges and buildings, P. J. O'Brien; superintendent of transportation, W. C. Robinson; superintendent of motive power, H. R. Simpson; superintendent of track, A. L. McCoy; general foreman, Daniel Hedican; chief

surgeon, Dr. F. B. Shiting; chief storekeeper, Archie Shiels; assistant storekeeper, Thos. Fitch.

The Heney company has considerable work still to perform before turning over to the Katalla Company the remaining section from Chitina to Kennicott. Filling in ties, completing trestles, ballasting, and some general work will keep the present employees busy until the 15th of April. On that day Mr. Murchison will turn over the last section of the railroad to General Manager Hawkins, and from that time on all necessary ballasting and additional improvements on the railroad will be performed by the Katalla Company.

The work of the Heney company has been energetically and skillfully performed. Some delay was occasioned by reason of discovered ice seams and slides in heavy rock work. This delayed the building of the Kuskulana bridge until an extreme bitter season, and naturally resulted in necessary delay in the completion of the work. Otherwise it was up to schedule and such delay as there was is attributed to the elements.

The Bonanza Mine

The direct reason for the construction of the Copper River & Northwestern Railway was to reach the mining property of the Kennecott Mines Company, which had been acquired by the Alaska Syndicate for a consideration of \$3,000,000. This property now consists of thirty-two lode claims and eighteen placer claims, embracing a total acreage of 3,240 acres. Practically the only development was on the Bonanza group, which had \$6,000,000 of rich copper ore in sight. But it was apparent from the start that

the Syndicate would not be justified in building a standardized modern railway to carry the tonnage of their own property. They realized the prospective development of many greater producers on claims close to the railroad and so decided to build a substantial and permanent road, in the belief that development would give ample tonnage.

The Bonanza Mine is located upon a high ridge between Kennecott Glacier and McCarthy Creek. It is six miles above, the foot of the glacier and three miles from the town of Kennecott, where the concentrator and ore bins are located. The mine is 1,500 feet above the timber line, at an elevation of about 4,500 feet, with a good trail leading to it. The ore is practically pure chalcocite or copper glance, and is stained upon the surface by copper carbonates. Comparatively little work has as yet been done in the development of the mine. There are about 1,000 feet of tunneling and 150 feet of raise. Possibly 2,000 tons of ore has been taken out, most of which will run 65 per cent, and some higher, in copper.

The ore is conveyed by a three mile tram to the concentrator and ore bins. Ore is now being sacked, preparatory to shipment over the railroad to Cordova, from whence it will be taken to the Tacoma smelter. It is expected that the ore will run over \$200 per ton and that 1,500 tons will net \$300,000. When the smelter return is announced within two or three weeks, it is believed that the high value of the ore, and in much great quantities, will startle the mining world. And it certainly will prove a stimulus to prospectors and those who are at present

interested in the Kotsina-Chitina copper belt to exert greater effort in the discovery of valuable properties and the development of those already acquired.

Last year the Kennecott Mines Company took in over the trail the machinery for a sawmill. After that was established sufficient lumber was cut to supply the 200,000 feet necessary for the erection of a large concentrator building 44 feet wide of six stories of benches ranging from 16 to 22 feet. Other construction consists of tram terminals, transfer bunkers, ore chutes and 375 feet of snow sheds between the mine and ore bins.

The sawmill also furnished the lumber for a two-story addition to the main office or headquarters, a new cottage, another bunkhouse, with sleeping, reading, sitting and bathrooms for twenty men, and a warehouse. In addition to the erection of buildings around the Bonanza property, a dam is being constructed across National Creek near the end of the tramway for the purpose of furnishing a sufficient head of water to operate the machinery for the crushers and concentrators, as well as furnishing power for the electric and steam plants to be installed.

The general manager of the Kennecott Mining Company is Stephen Birch. The superintendent is E. B. Emory, who formerly worked for the Guggenheims in Mexico.

Kotsina-Chitina Copper Belt

When the charge is so flagrantly made that the Alaska Syndicate has practically all the copper in the interior of Alaska,

it may be interesting to know that their four groups of forty claims are a very small part of the 200 groups of 4,000 copper and gold claims that have been located by other individuals and companies. These locations have been made in the Kotsina-Chitina copper belt. This is a tract of mountainous country, east of the Copper River and embracing the watersheds of the Kotsina, Kuskulana, Gilihena, Strelna, Lakina, Nizina, Kennecott, Chitistone and Chitina Rivers with their tributary streams, notably, Nugget, Elliott, Dan, Chititu, Young, Glacier creeks.

One of the biggest companies operating in this part of Alaska is the Great Northern Development Company. E. F. Gray is one of the owners and also general manager. Associated with him are Phillips, Dodge & Co., of New York, part of the Amalgamated copper combination. This company has already expended \$800,000 in development work and improvements, employing 140 men last season on two properties located at Copper Mountain and on the Kotsina. Several thousand feet of tunnel has been driven and large bodies of ore uncovered. This year's work on a larger scale will go on and a branch line of the railroad will likely be built 12 miles up the Strelna to the property. Three or four miles distant, near the Kuskulana Glacier, are the Dillman properties, worked by the Alaska United Copper Exploration Company. Considerable work has been done on the Finch group and the tunnels show rich bodies of glance and bornite. A crew of men this season expect to open up the property so as to make it an early shipper. Assays show

from 30 to 45 per cent copper. This company is also working the Westover group on the mountain side above Dan Creek. As the work progresses values hold good, and the lead of bornite ore retains its width of 16 feet. Assessment work is being done on other properties.

The California-Alaska Development Company, composed of Capt. A. E. Lathrop and San Francisco parties, will work their Kotsina properties this season on a larger scale than ever. Others operating on the Kotsina are the Hubbard and Elliott, the McCarthy Company, and the Guilmeau Mining Co. The Cushman properties on the upper Strelna, the Deyo and Price group and others, will be worked. The Mother Lode Mining Co., beyond Kennecott, and the Millard Company, which owns the Nikolai Mine, propose to work on a larger scale than ever, as does also the Blackburn Mines Co.

The Dan Creek Mining Company is operating extensively on Dan Creek. The Birch brothers and Jim Galen have taken in considerable hydraulic machinery to work their placer ground. Geo. Max Esterley has taken in machinery and expects to take out several hundred thousand dollars in placer gold from Dan and Chititu creeks. The Kernan Company will also operate on Dan Creek.

Scores of other operators will assist this year in disproving the theory that the Guggenheims have gobbled up all the valuable copper and gold properties in this district.

Rates on Ore

While the rates on the transportation of ore have not been officially announced by the railroad company, yet, it comes

from a reliable source that the maximum rate per ton will be \$20, with the minimum running down to about \$5 per ton. The price will be graduated in accordance with the value of the ore, as is the custom of all railroads in mining countries. Usually ten per cent of the value is charged. Most of the ore in the Copper River country will run from \$50 to \$250 per ton in copper, and the freight rate as quoted will be more than satisfactory to them. As one operator declared, he expected to and would be perfectly willing to pay 20 per cent of the smelter returns.

Some Interesting Facts

About fifteen per cent of the railroad is composed of bridges and trestles.

The railroad is on a water grade from Cordova to Chitina. On the Chitina branch to the end of the line except two pusher grades, the maximum is 1.15 per 100 feet.

Joe Redmond, chief blacksmith for the contractor, fashioned the copper spike that was driven at the end of the road by General Manager Hawkins, of the Katalla Company, and General Superintendent Samuel Murchison, of the contracting company. It was cut from a solid piece of native copper, taken from the bed of Chittitu Creek, a stream near the Bonanza Mine. The spike was afterward drawn and will be properly inscribed and sent by Mr. Hawkins to the head office in New York, as the first return received from an investment of over forty million dollars. Mr. Redmond also presented Mr. Hawkins as a personal memento, a copper horseshoe with nails projecting to be used for penholders, and a

pick and shovel acting as a backholder.

One of the hardest worked and most conscientious officials in the service of the Copper River & Northwestern Railway is J. R. Van Cleve, superintendent and master mechanic. His ability and energy are towers of strength in the operating of the new railroad.

A half million tons of steel rails have been laid since January 7.

When the Katella branch line is constructed from mile 39, the distance from the coal mines to Cordova will be 93 miles.

Any timber cut by the railroad up to mile 89 had to be paid for, as it was within the government reserve. Practically the only available timber in the entire reserve is near mile 13, where there is fine native spruce, which was largely used for ties and piling. With this exception a selected quality of Puget Sound Douglas fir was used for all timber work. Three and one-third cents for each tie cut was paid to the government.

When the railroad reached mile 54 a steamboat landing was established and until the end of last season three steamers, the Tonsina, Chitina and Nizina, were used to transport freight and supplies for the railroad up the river. The cost was \$1.07 per ton per mile. The cost of building these steamers was \$215,000.

During the summer of 1909 the ferryboat Gulkana was used to transfer supplies from the railroad at camp 49 across the Copper River to connect with the rails. Until the Miles Glacier bridge was completed last summer, the supplies were taken across on scows drawn by cables and donkey engines.

The Largest Black Spruce in Alaska

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 by email at nrozell@dino.gi.alaska.edu.

Forester Tom Malone recently guided me on a trek to see Alaska's largest black spruce tree. It was a short adventure. The 71-foot tree is a two-minute walk from my office.

The Alaska champion black spruce tree stands on the campus of the University of Alaska Fairbanks. The tree lives in a mixed forest next to large white spruce trees, mature birch, and a few alders and willows. The tree leans uphill, and its trunk is 45 inches around. When I hugged it, I could barely clasp my hands together. The largest black spruce in Alaska is a lucky tree, because its neighbors to the north are gone, removed in the mid 1990s during the installation of a power line.

The Alaska champion black spruce stood exposed for a few years before a researcher visiting from Iceland, a land of many volcanoes but few trees, pointed it out to forest geneticist John Alden as they walked by in spring of 2001.

He said, "That's a black spruce," Alden said. I said, no, it was too large. I didn't think it could be a black spruce.

Alden, a longtime university forest geneticist who now works

at the Alaska Division of Forestry, thought the tree was a type of white spruce that is darker green and has coarser bark than other white spruce. When the snow melted, Alden walked back to the tree and saw beneath it the telltale sign of black spruce-pudgy cones, about one inch long. White spruce cones are longer and pointier.

Alden nominated the black spruce in The Big Tree Challenge, a nationwide program that is run in Alaska by Tom Malone, a research assistant at the UAF Department of Forest Sciences. Malone used a laser-measuring device to confirm the tree's height of 71 feet, which bested the old record of 65 feet for a tree that stands near where the Tolovana River empties into the Tanana River in interior Alaska.

Alaska's largest black spruce stands up well against national competition. The U.S. record is a 78-foot black spruce in Taylor County, Wisconsin, according to the National Register of Big Trees. The tallest trees are not always the winners of The Big Tree Challenge; foresters score trees on height, circumference, and the spread of a tree's crown.

The black spruce on the UAF

campus is taller than the state record western paper birch, a 67-footer near Haines, and Alaska's tallest balsam poplar, a 60-foot tree on the Kuskokwim River. Alaska's current champion white spruce will soon give up its title, Malone said. The 112-foot tree in the floodplain of the Tok River is dying from an exposed root system.

Other Alaska state champions are a 126-foot quaking aspen off Cache Creek Road west of Fairbanks, a 132-foot black cottonwood providing a lofty perch for eagles in Haines, a western hemlock standing 150 feet tall on Admiralty Island, and a Sitka spruce near Exchange Cove on Prince of Wales Island that is perhaps the tallest tree in the state at 185 feet.

I say perhaps because Malone and Alden both think larger trees are out there in Alaska—people either haven't noticed them or haven't nominated them. If you know of a big tree that might be an Alaska champion, get in touch with Malone at (907) 474-7079 or fntpm@uaf.edu. A tree near you may already be a winner.

It is easy to think the State has a lot of different objects—military, political, economic, and what not. But in a way things are much simpler than that. The State exists simply to promote and to protect the ordinary happiness of human beings in this life. A husband and wife chatting over a fire, a couple of friends having a game of darts in a pub, a man reading a book in his own room or digging in his own garden— that is what the State is there for. And unless they are helping to increase and prolong and protect such moments, all the laws, parliaments, armies, courts, police, economics, etc., are simply a waste of time. C.S. Lewis

The Bears of the Kennicott Valley

BY JIM WILDER (THE BEAR GUY)

The young black bear sat in the alders, licking his sore shoulder, disconsolate and confused. A cloud of mosquitoes droned around his big ears. Far off in the twilight, he could hear the rush of a glacial river and the low drone of a plane taking off. This last was a novel sound to him, and dimly piqued his curiosity. He was in unfamiliar territory and very hungry. His last few weeks had been very traumatic and his world had been totally turned upside down. His mother had recently begun acting very strangely towards him, displaying unprovoked aggression and finally driving him off in no uncertain terms when a large adult male had begun doggedly following her. This last development had definitely hastened his departure; to stick around longer would have been to invite serious injury or even death. He had wandered aimlessly, far from the familiar territory of his mother's range into the great unknown of independence, occasionally feeding in lush meadows as he went, but more often running from other more dominant bears that he met or sensed in the woods around him. Now, as he vaguely followed the curious sound of the airplane, the young bear was drawn toward a wide glacial valley. As the valley drew nearer, he picked up a quick tantalizing smell of something very enticing, something that made his stomach churn in anticipation &

The young bear circled furtively around the clearing in the forest, his sore shoulder

completely forgotten. Through the trees, he could see a log cabin and some other outbuildings. He was extremely nervous and wary in the face of these new stimuli, but the delicious smells emanating from the recently used barbecue grill and burn barrel were overwhelming his natural caution. Eventually, he furtively slunk from the protective cover of the woods and into the clearing, his every sense alert for danger, his nose filled with the novel heavy scent of humans and dogs. At some deep subconscious level, these scents triggered a deep-seated fear and aversion, so his approach was very wary &

The outcome of the preceding fictional scenario will be very instrumental in determining this young bear's response to humans and their developments in the future. A positive outcome for the bear (e.g. it receives garbage, dog food, human food) will encourage it to investigate humans and their developments in the future, for the bear will have learned to associate humans with food (it will have become food-conditioned). This is a dangerous development, as bears who learn to ignore their fear of humans for the potential food rewards that humans often provide are more prone to cause property destruction and human injury. A preferable result might go something like this:

& as he got closer to the barbecue grill and burn barrel, the bear grew bolder as hunger dominated wariness. With increasing confidence he approached, ignoring the intense man/dog smell in anticipation of

the more compelling food/garbage smell. He paused briefly to investigate several thin wires that surrounded the barbecue grill and burn barrel. He pushed his tender nose forward to sniff the wire when WHAM!! & he leapt back in pain and surprise as his nose was viciously stung by the electric fence, much like the time when he pawed open a yellow jacket nest. Shaking his head violently, he failed to notice the door of the cabin open a crack as the muzzle of a shotgun was pushed through. Suddenly, something screamed over his head and exploded off to his left, scaring him terribly and injecting a rush of adrenaline into his system. Even as he jumped and spun about to flee, he heard the fierce barking of a dog as it leapt after him from the cabin's interior. Galloping back toward the tree-line for all he was worth with the dog close behind, the bear heard loud yelling and another explosion behind him, followed immediately by a sharp pain in his rear as a rubber slug bounced off his hide. He ran and ran and didn't stop for a half-mile or more, long after the dog had given up the chase. His heart didn't stop hammering for many minutes afterward as the young bear rubbed his sore nose and tried to soothe his stinging rear &

This is one possible (and desirable) conclusion to this particular drama. Although bears are very enjoyable to watch, we do not want them to become habituated to humans. If they become too bold, and seem intent on investigating human garbage, compost, pet food, etc., they need to be educated, or aversively conditioned. Ideally,

aversive conditioning would be applied on an escalating scale of unpleasantness for the bear, ranging from yelling, clapping, and banging pots and pans to the use of non-lethal shotgun rounds such as screamers (used above), cracker shells, bean bags, and rubber buckshot and slugs. In the example above, the bear learned a very valuable and poignant lesson regarding humans and their developments that they lead to a very negative experiences and should be avoided in the future. It will likely think twice before approaching human areas again. Bears are very intelligent animals and are very good at nutritional cost-benefit analyses. If the potential reward does not justify the risk and potential costs, then the bear will likely look elsewhere for foraging opportunities. If our fictional bear were to approach human areas again and receive a similar reception, the odds of it becoming a problem will be greatly diminished; consequently the bear's odds of surviving will be greatly increased. For various reasons (to be discussed next issue), this is a much preferred alternative to the indiscriminate killing of bears in the Kennicott valley.

First Bear Research in Wrangell-St. Elias National Park

From 1999-2002, I had the good fortune to conduct bear research in the Kennicott Valley of Wrangell-St. Elias National Park & Preserve, the very first bear research ever conducted within the park boundaries. This study was funded by the National Park Service in order to address three major objectives: to obtain an estimate of the minimum population of brown and black

bears in the valley, their sex ratios and spatial distribution; to examine the location and causes of bear-human conflicts and to describe local bear ecology; and to infer management strategies for reducing the occurrence of bear-human conflicts. I decided to use the relatively new technique of non-invasive genetic sampling (NGS) to accomplish this task. In a nutshell, NGS involves collecting hair and tissue samples from barbed wire hair traps, rub trees, bears killed in defense of life or property (DLP), and from conflict sites where a bear left a hair sample (for example, a dumpster tipped over by a bear). Genetic analysis of these samples yields the species, sex, and individual identification of the bear that provided the sample. The use of NGS negates the need to trap, drug, handle, and collar large numbers of bears. In fact, the bears are never aware that they are being studied.

The NPS commissioned this study in response to the increasing number of bear-human conflicts reported in the Kennicott valley in the years leading up to 1999, particularly near the end of the road. The potential for human injury and property damage as a result of these conflicts seemed to be increasing, and yet there were no data available as to why this might be. These concerns were dramatically illustrated by the events of July 1999. Many local residents vividly remember that in 1999, a female brown bear with 2-year-old cubs chased, treed, and cornered people and destroyed property on numerous occasions near the end of the road (these events were reported in the Sept/Oct 1999 issue of this publication,

McCarthy under siege). Those bears were extremely aggressive and were successful in obtaining food and garbage numerous times. My study was designed to determine the underlying factors that could contribute to such a dangerous situation in the Kennicott valley, and to develop specific recommendations to reduce or eliminate the probability of such an event occurring again. In so doing, I wanted to take local knowledge and the realities of bush living into consideration. Hopefully this and subsequent articles will provide information with which McCarthy-area residents can better co-exist with the local bears and appreciate them for the fascinating animals that they are.

Major Findings, in Brief

My study area stretched from the Nizina River in the south to Donoho Peak in the north, and from Swift Creek in the west to Bonanza Ridge and Porphyry Mountain in the east. Genetic analysis of hair samples collected within this 143 square mile area in 2000-2001 resulted in the identification of 92 individual bears (84 black and 8 brown). It should be pointed out that this is a minimum population count rather than a total. Based on other interior Alaskan bear studies, I had originally estimated that a total of 30-60 black bears and 6-8 brown bears would reside in the study area.

A total of 157 conflicts were reported for 2000-2001. Seventeen individual bears were identified from hair samples collected at 24 of these sites, which suggests that a relatively large number of bears are coming into conflict with humans, rather than just a few problem bears. The main

causes of bear-human conflicts were human food and garbage, particularly for residents, who were involved in 80% of all reported conflicts. Of particular concern is the fact that bears received a food reward in 37% of all reported conflicts. Although bear-human conflicts occurred throughout the summer season, there is a dramatic peak in conflicts in July.

Between 1999-2001, at least 24 bears, and perhaps as many as 36, were killed by humans in and around the Kennicott valley. Of 20 cases where the residency of the shooter was known, local residents killed all but one bear. Confirmed deaths include at least 9 brown bears, of which at least two were females and 4 were cubs; and 15 black bears, at least 3 of which were females. Considering the small resident human population in the Kennicott valley, this is an astounding number of bears killed, and is probably unsustainable, particularly for brown bears.

What does it all Mean?

The peak of bear-human conflicts in July is probably due to a combination of increasing bear use of the valley, and their habituation and food-conditioning. Family break-up also occurs in June-July; therefore many newly independent sub-adult bears are searching for a home range during this time. In addition, soapberry (*Shepherdia canadensis*), a highly nutritious and preferred bear food, ripens around July 25th. The ripening of soapberry draws many bears into the Kennicott valley, some of which are likely naïve with respect to humans. While bears await berry ripening, they inevitably encounter humans and conflicts ensue. Conversely, once

bears begin feeding on berries, they are less inclined to range widely and seek out human foods, thus reducing the incidence of conflicts in August and September (this will be discussed in-depth in the next issue of WSEN).

When I first began this study, I predicted that most bear-human conflicts would involve visitors. Therefore, I was very surprised to find that local residents were involved in 80% of reported conflicts. The obvious question is why? Upon further investigation, I found that 69% of all conflicts occurred within 200 meters of a private development. This is because private developments function as point-sources of attractants, such as human food, garbage, burn barrels, barbecue grills, livestock, and dog food. This situation exists because local residents live in fixed locations with no local garbage disposal services of any kind. Therefore, they have to store and dispose of their own garbage on site. Local residents also raise gardens, smoke fish, use compost, and often must store their possessions in less than desirable circumstances for excluding bears.

The fact that bears received a food reward in 37% of all reported conflicts is indicative of the many opportunities bears have to become food-conditioned in the Kennicott valley, and suggests that a dangerous situation probably exists in the valley. This is because habituated and food-conditioned bears learn to associate humans with food and cause 66% of all human injuries attributed to grizzly bears and 90% of all injuries attributed to black bears. Such bears are also 3-4 times more

likely to be killed by humans.

Why Should I Care?

The main reason you should care is because habituated and food-conditioned bears pose a serious community safety issue, as exemplified by the grizzly bear trio of 1999. It is fortunate that no one was injured by those bears. Apathy is not an option once it is understood that our actions (or inactions) with respect to bears directly affect the well being and security of our neighbors' families and property. It is everyone's responsibility to keep a clean camp and to help educate bears to avoid humans. To do otherwise is to contribute to the creation of habituated and food-conditioned bears and to be an irresponsible neighbor. It is all fun and games until someone gets hurt.

There is Hope

Although bear-proofing a homestead is not easy, every little thing you can do to keep bears apart from human foods and garbage counts. There is hope, as can be graphically illustrated by Denali National Park. In 1982, Denali National Park had the highest rate of backcountry bear incidents of any park in the U.S. However, by implementing strict education and food and garbage storage requirements within the park, Denali reduced their bear incidents by 90% within one year.

Although the Kennicott valley is not Denali National Park, nor am I suggesting that it ever should be, there is a lesson to be learned here. Through effective food and garbage management, Denali was able to bring about a significant decrease in the occurrence of bear-human conflicts within the park. The same principle applies

to the Kennicott valley, or for that matter, to any locale where bears and humans co-exist. The main difference in the Kennicott valley is that effective bear management will require a concerted effort by local residents and landowners. The community must police itself. Progress will come about not through some agency-mandated regulations, but rather through individuals taking responsibility for keeping a clean camp. With appropriate foresight and attention to detail, there is little excuse for bears to receive human food and/or garbage.

Some small steps that can be taken to reduce the occurrence of bear-human conflicts follow. Don't compost meat or fish scraps. Consider using a better burn barrel, one that burns with high intensity and completely incinerates trash (see reprint of Ed LaChapelle's article, this issue). Practice secure garbage storage; 55-gallon drums with locking lids and metal lockers work well. Do not use outdoor freezers that aren't secure within an outbuilding. Don't leave dog food and horse feed out where it can be accessed by bears. If you keep fowl and rabbits, consider enclosing them within an electric fence. Having a bear-savvy dog on the premises is also a good strategy. Secure your barbecue grills when they are not in use.

It is important that residents begin educating bears early in the season. If bears are taught early and often to avoid areas of human occupation, conflicts should be minimized. Once a bear becomes food-conditioned, however, aversive conditioning will likely not deter it from

actively seeking human foods and garbage. Proper food and garbage storage and dogs are by far the most effective deterrents used by local residents to dissuade problem bears. Airhorns, rubber shot, and electric fences are also very effective.

The bottom line is that in these situations, humans, particularly residents, need to provide bears with negative experiences with humans rather than positive ones. Killing bears is not a learning experience, for either the bears or humans, and likely only perpetuates the problem (this point will be explored in the next issue). Given a chance, bears can learn to live in close proximity to humans. For example, a 23-year old female black bear legally harvested in 2001 near the Kennicott River had likely lived in the valley her whole life, learned how to successfully live around humans, and had no doubt passed these survival skills on to many generations of her offspring.

Resources for Local McCarthy-area Residents

For interested McCarthy-area residents, there are resources available to assist in deterring bears. As part of a cooperative agreement between Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and the Wrangell Mountain Center, the park can now provide local residents with electric fencing and bear-proof storage containers for use around their homes and property, at no charge. This program began in 2002, and will continue as long as resources allow. It should be noted that the effective use of

electric fencing requires that it be properly installed, properly grounded (most importantly), and regularly maintained. Lightweight portable electric fencing is also easy to use around hunting camp meat caches and in other remote camps. In the future, better burn barrels may also be available. Bear-resistant food containers for use while backpacking are available for loan from the NPS contact points in the valley, free of charge. The National Park Service can also provide pertinent and up to date bear literature, bear safety videos for viewing at Kennecott, and can conduct site visits, if requested, to provide recommendations on bear-proofing a homesite. The park wildlife biologist (Mason Reid) can also provide information on proper aversive-conditioning techniques.

Please report any and all bear-human conflicts to the park wildlife biologist. The best way to avoid conflicts is to understand why they occur. Detailed reporting provides important information which directs future efforts to prevent conflicts, such as installing electric fences, providing bear-resistant storage, etc. The park is also willing to assist local residents if bears are killed in defense of life and property. Assistance would include helping to fill out the DLP paperwork, transport of the hide (with claws attached) and skull to the ADF&G offices in Glennallen, and providing specific recommendations on how to avoid bear problems in the future. All inquiries and bear reports should be directed to Mason Reid at 907-822-7400.

A Note on DLP s (from Living in Harmony with Bears)

In Alaska it is legal to kill a bear in defense of life or property. Officially, over 1000 brown and black bears were killed in defense of life or property between 1985 and 1996, although I suspect that this is a gross underestimate of the actual number. The law makes it clear that a bear cannot legally be killed because of improper disposal of garbage or a similar attractive nuisance. A bear can only be killed if all other practical means to protect life and property are exhausted. If a bear is killed, it is the property of the state and the skull and hide (with claws attached) must be surrendered to the Alaska Department of Fish & Game and a report completed within 15 days.

The number of bears killed in DLP circumstances in Alaska is increasing. If Alaska is to have sustainable bear populations, the increases in DLP killings will have to be offset by reductions in hunting opportunities. Such reductions have already occurred on the Kenai Peninsula.

If you have any questions or comments about this article, please send them to the editor, and I will be happy to respond to them in the next issue. For the next issue, I hope to write an article on the local ecology of bears in the Kennicott valley, the probable reasons for the large bear population in the valley, and techniques for the proper aversive conditioning of bears.

Suggested Reading here are a few of the many good books available on living with bears (from Living in Harmony with

Bears).

Herrero, Stephen. 1985. *Bear Attacks: Their Causes and Avoidance*. ISBN: 0-941130-82-7. A classic by the world's foremost expert on bear-human interactions.

Smith, Dave. 1997. *Backcountry Bear Basics: A Definitive Guide to Avoiding Unpleasant Encounters*. ISBN: 0-89866-500-X. Highly recommended for anyone going into the field in bear country. There isn't a better book about safety in bear country.

Stonorov, Derek. 2000. *Living in Harmony with Bears*. A project of the Alaska state office of the National Audubon Society, this is an excellent and concise publication on living with bears in Alaska. Available free upon request from the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park Wildlife Biologist at 907-822-7400.

Videos Safety in Bear Country Society in cooperation with the International Association for Bear Research and Management. 2001.

Staying Safe in Bear Country. Available for viewing at the NPS contact point in Kennecott. This is the best bear safety film available, and is a major educational tool for people living, playing, and working in bear country.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank all the people of the Kennicott valley for their assistance with and enthusiasm for this project. I would particularly like to thank the local NPS seasonal rangers (Kris Reuter, Nancy Cook, Katy Steger, Jessica Speed, Elizabeth Shaefer, Stephanie Peikert, Gaia Thurston-Shane, and Catie Bursch) and Lynn Welty for their assistance in gathering data for

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I would also like to thank the following businesses, who were all very helpful and supportive of this project: Copper Oar, Fireweed Mountain Arts, Kennicott Glacier Lodge, Kennicott-McCarthy Wilderness Guides, Kennicott River Lodge and Hostel, St. Elias Alpine Guides, Wrangell Mountain Air, the non-profit Wrangell Mountain Center, and the *Wrangell-St. Elias News*.

About the Author

James Wilder is a biologist who worked for Wrangell-St. Elias National Park from 1998-2002. He studied the bears of the Kennicott valley from 1999-2002 as his research project for his Masters of Science in Wildlife Biology at the University of Idaho. He currently works for the NPS Regional Office and is involved in wildlife research throughout Alaska's national parks, including bear-human interactions in Kenai Fjords and Glacier Bay. He has also worked on research projects on brown bears in Katmai National Park, harbor seals in Disenchantment Bay, wood frogs along the McCarthy Road, polar bears on the Beaufort Sea, faerie penguins in Tasmania, and tiger sharks in Western Australia.

Burn Barrel Basics

BY ED LACHAPPELLE

Dealing with garbage in a responsible way is a perpetual problem for bush life. Incineration in a burn barrel is a common solution, but observation shows that not many barrels are operated efficiently. Here's how to do it right.

Good garbage management recycles as much as possible, usually glass and aluminum as a minimum. Composting vegetable wastes for the garden absorbs much of the kitchen production. Everything else goes into the incinerator. It is helpful if this remainder is sorted into dry and wet garbage, cardboard and paper products like magazines and catalogs.

Prepare a 55-gallon drum as shown in the accompanying sketch. Getting the draft holes the right size and in the right place is important. Have on hand a long, heavy poker to stir the burn. About 5 feet long at least; with the barrel going full blast, you won't want to get any closer.

Here are the steps to a good burn:

1. Start with an empty barrel. If it is half-full of half-burned garbage from the last burn, it won't work.

2. Dump in enough dry

garbage (loose paper, plastics, etc.) to half-fill the barrel, prime with a cup or two of fuel such as diesel oil or kerosene and ignite. Never use gasoline.

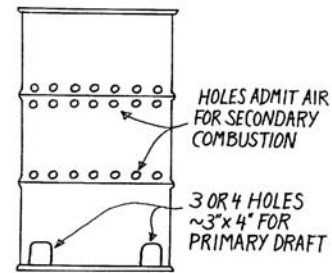
3. With a good fire under way, add some of the cardboard. Old corrugated cardboard boxes are a prime fuel for incineration.

4. Now the barrel should be getting very hot, with flames shooting into the air and no smoke. Add the wet garbage a bit at a time, alternating with more cardboard and compact paper waste like catalogs.

5. As the burn dies down, start stirring with the poker to revive the fire. Keep stirring from time to time. If the remainder is not burning well, add another cup or two of fuel (but never gasoline) and keep stirring. Charred paper from compact sources takes the longest to get rid of. Keep stirring.

6. When the ashes are cold, remove them or else cover the barrel. Rain falling on the ash will leach out lye that will eat out the bottom of the barrel.

Remember that incinerator ash is recognized by the EPA and DEC as a hazardous waste, so dispose of it responsibly. Storage in a barrel and backhauling to a legal dump is the ideal solution.



Keeping the ashes covered to prevent the leachate from rain getting into the water table is practical.

A properly-run burn barrel should be HOT. Aluminum melts, any glass present should start flowing and a red glow may even show along the side of the barrel. The burn will also be clean, with flames shooting ten feet or more into the air and hardly any visible smoke. A cloud of smelly, white smoke tells of poor combustion and a cold burn.

The burn barrel works even better with a forced draft. An old hair drier works fine (disable the heater coil). Use about 3 feet of 2" pipe to lead the drier output into one of the primary draft holes and shield the drier from heat that can melt plastic parts. The biggest advantage from a forced draft comes when getting rid of compact paper at the end of the burn.

Now if there just was some way to capture all that heat and store it for use in the winter.....

Fun at Bonanza

BY KALEB ROWLAND, AGE 11

Your Travel & Recreation Editor

Have you ever gone sledding at the historic Bonanza Mine? It's a grueling two-mile snowmachine climb up the side of a steep mountain, but once

you arrive, the majestic mountains, expansive glaciers and river valley create a breathtaking scene.

My family tries to do the trip every spring, equipped with warm gear, sleds and camera. At this time of year we can expect lots and lots of snow. The Bonanza sledding hill plunges almost three hundred feet down a steep slope. The ride lasts 5 to 15

seconds, depending on how much weight is on the sled. Once, my brother, David, and cousin, Sharon, went whipping down the hill, their excited faces full of snow, and did a record-breaking jump.

Although it's a rough climb up, the sledding experience at Bonanza is a *real bonanza*!

Am I a resident?

BY RICK KENYON

One of the hot topics around McCarthy lately is what, or who, is a resident? How many residents are there? The Census Bureau in 2000 listed 42 residents in 26 households. (25 male and 17 female!)

Although the area has a number of non-profit organizations, only one claims to have a residency requirement, the McCarthy Area Council, or MAC. Government agencies like to look at the results of the local city council meeting to know what the mood of the area is, so naturally they tend to see a group with Council in their name as the voice of the local residents.

Some MAC members, like Marci Thurston, help foster that image. In a March 25, 2003 letter to the Corps of Engineers Ms Thurston writes, The McCarthy Area Council (as McCarthy Area's citizen voice) needs more time to work out ...

So just what constitutes a McCarthy area citizen? (By the way, the dictionary says a citizen is A resident of a city or town, especially one entitled to vote and enjoy other privileges there.)

According to Ed LaChapelle, MAC's residency requirements are ownership of a residence within a defined geographical area embracing drainages of upper Chitina River basin. No restrictions are placed on how much time the residence is occupied.

The dictionary defines resident as One who resides in a

particular place permanently or for an extended period. What do others think?

Some, like Cynthia Schidner, have very strong feelings on the issue. Perhaps I feel so strongly about this issue because I consider McCarthy to be my home, yet I must spend 9 months away from my home if I want to work in my chosen career as a classroom teacher, says Cynthia .

Bob Cook articulates a theme that I heard from many.

Residency is a legal term that is based on where a person is registered to vote and is determined by the individual, writes Bob. The only requirement is that one can only be registered to vote in one place in the United States. He continues, I vote in Alaska and am actually present in the State about 5 months out of the year. This time varies from year to year, however, it does not change my voting status or my legal residency.

Bob's daughter Nancy is in Fairbanks attending the University there. She has a cabin near McCarthy and spends lots of time in the area. Nancy says this: It seems an open-ended discussion about residency could feasibly compare and contrast various types of residents based on total number of months present in the Kennicott Valley over the past decade or two decades.

Laurie Rowland had a succinct definition of a resident as One who lives here and takes their

vacation somewhere else. Replies Nancy, I actually like that one a lot, and certainly I must be included in this category since the large chunks of the past twelve years I've spent building working on my own cabin, working for various businesses, working to build and rebuild bridges, working to reach fair community decisions at countless meetings etc. can hardly qualify as a vacation.

Tim Mischel has lived in the area since the mid seventies and thinks that residency requirements for a local voice group should be based on this being their *primary residence*, and could be based on voter registration. Some people have indicated using the same criteria as the Permanent Fund, which requires one to be physically present in the state for a certain length of time.

Interestingly enough, the *Federal Register* defines Local Rural Resident as pertains to qualifying for subsistence use of the park. Any person who has his/her permanent home within the resident zone as defined in this section, and whenever absent from this primary, permanent home, has the intention of returning to it. Factors demonstrating the location of a person's primary, permanent home may include...the permanent address indicated on licenses issued by the State of Alaska...tax returns and the location of registration to vote.

Hmm, sounds like the feds have already had this discussion!

Museum work day

There will be a work day at the McCarthy-Kennicott Historical Museum on Friday, May 9 after mail (about noon). Volunteers are needed to clean and spruce up the place for the start of the season. For more information, please call Meg at 554-4408.

Cooking with Peggy Part Four

BY PEGGY GUNTIS

Editor's note: I want to thank Peggy for all her efforts in providing us with some of her favorite tried and true recipes. These are the last of those she submitted for publication and so I invite any of you who would like to share special recipes with us all to feel free to participate in our cooking endeavors. I know it won't be long before the Guntis will make their annual pilgrimage to their McCarthy summer home. Rick is looking forward to those chess game nights, Jim, and Peggy, mom and I will do our very best to beat you at Rummicube!

Sicilian Meat Roll

This is another old favorite. Serves 8.

2 beaten eggs
3/4 cup soft bread crumbs (1 slice of bread)
1/2 cup tomato juice
2 tablespoon snipped parsley
1/2 teaspoon dried oregano, crushed
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon pepper
1 small clove garlic, minced
2 lbs. lean ground beef
8 thin slices boiled ham
6 oz. (1 1/2 cup) shredded mozzarella cheese
3 slices mozzarella cheese halved diagonally

Combine eggs, bread crumbs, tomato juice, parsley, oregano, salt, pepper, and garlic. Stir in ground beef, mixing well. On foil or wax paper, pat meat to a 12" x 10" rectangle. Arrange

ham slices atop meat, leaving a small margin around edges. Sprinkle shredded cheese over ham. Starting from short end, carefully roll up meat, using foil to lift, seal edges and ends. Place roll, seam side down in a 13" x 9" x 2" baking pan. Bake 350 degrees for 1 hour 15 minutes or until done. (Center of meat roll will be pink due to ham.) Place cheese wedges over top of roll, return to oven for 5 minutes or until cheese melts.

Cold Broccoli Salad

When the fresh broccoli comes in, take one bunch and make bite size flowerettes. Mix the following ingredients together.

6 slices crispy bacon crumbled
1 small red onion sliced in half moons
1 cup sunflower seeds or walnuts
1/2 cup raisins

Dressing:
1/2 cup mayonnaise
2 tablespoon vinegar
1/4 cup sugar

Mix dressing and pour it over the salad. Refrigerate for several hours if possible.

Nutty Spinach-Coleslaw Salad

1 package fresh spinach (10 oz.), tear in pieces
1 package cole slaw salad mix (shredded cabbage & carrots), 16 oz.
6 green onion, thinly sliced
small bag of slivered almonds
2 tablespoon sesame seeds
2 packages Ramen noodles (do not include flavor packet)

Dressing:

3/4 cup salad oil
1 teaspoon Accent
2 teaspoons salt
1 teaspoon pepper
4 tablespoons sugar
6 tablespoons rice vinegar (may be found in the Chinese food section)

Mix spinach, slaw and onions in a large bowl. Brown almonds in small non-stick skillet. When almost brown, add sesame seeds until both are brown.

When cool, add to spinach mixture. Refrigerate. Prepare dressing. Before serving, crumble noodles over spinach. Pour dressing over salad, mix and serve.

(If you are making the salad ahead of time, do not add the almonds and sesame seed until you add the noodles.)

I sometimes add 1 seasoning package of the Ramen noodles to the dressing. It's up to you.

Chocolate Mallow Pie

1 package (8 oz.) cream cheese, softened
2 cups cold milk, divided
1 package (3.9 oz.) chocolate instant pudding mix
1 1/2 cup mini marshmallows
1 9" graham cracker crust

Beat cream cheese and 1/2 cup milk until smooth. Add pudding mix and remaining milk; mix well. Fold in marshmallows. Pour into crust. Refrigerate until serving. 6 servings.

"In the long run, the greatest weapon of mass destruction is stupidity." Thomas Sowell



BY GEORGE CEBULA

February and March saw a continuation of mild winter temperatures. The precipitation was just about average for both months.

The high temperature for February was 44 on the 5th (45 on Feb. 28, '02 and 42 on Feb. 26, '01). The lowest temperature recorded at McCarthy in February was -12 on the 20th (-28 on Feb. 22, '02 and -16 on Feb. 19, '01). The high was 40 or above on 6 days and the low was 0 or lower on 4 days. The average February temperature was 23.6 (8.3 in '02 and 13.6 in '01). This is very mild compared to -5.9 in '99. *Silver Lake had a high of 45 on February 5th (37 on Feb. 12, '02 and 38 on Feb. 27, '01) and a low of -10 on February 18th (-30 on Feb. 23, '02 and -18 on Feb. 18, '01). The average February temperature at Silver Lake was 22.9 (5.8 in '02 and 11.3 in '01).*

The February precipitation was 0.70 inches of liquid (0.18 in '02 and 3.02 in '01). Total snowfall was 7.3 inches (2.6 in '02 and 14.2 in '01). *Silver Lake had 0.09 inches of liquid (trace in '02 and 1.41 in '01) and 1.0 inches of snow (trace in '02 and 13.0 in '01).* McCarthy began February with 13 inches of snow on the ground and ended the month with 14 inches. *Silver Lake had 36 inches on the 1st and ended February with 3 inches.*

The sixth of March saw the return of below zero temperatures and plenty of sunshine. The high temperature for March was 46 on the 28th (45 on Mar. 25, '02 and 49 on Mar. 15, '01). The low temperature

for March was -32 on the 14th (-29 on Mar. 9, '02 and -22 on Mar. 21, '01). The average March temperature at McCarthy was 16.5 compared to 10.1 in Mar. '02 and 20.9 in Mar. '01. The high reached 40 or higher on 12 days and the low was -20 or below on 4 days. *Silver Lake had a high 44 on March 4th and 29th (39 on Mar. 1, '02 and 43 on Mar. 11, '01), a low of -26 on March 14th and 11th (-30 Mar. 11, '02 and -13 on Mar 22, '01). The March average temperature at Silver Lake was 14.9 (6.9 in Mar. '02 and 20.7 in Mar. '01).*

March liquid precipitation was 1.02 inches (0.68 in Mar. '02 and 0.14 in Mar. '01) and snowfall was 11.3 inches (10.2 in Mar. '02 and 2.3 in Mar. '01). *Silver Lake had 0.59 inches of liquid (0.90 in Mar. '02 and 0.43 in Mar. '01) and snowfall of 6.0 inches (12.0 in Mar. '02 and 4.0 in Mar. '01).* By the end of March the snow cover was 18 inches at McCarthy and 4 inches at Silver Lake.

The total snowfall for '02-'03 was 44.5 inches (67.1 in '01-'02 and 84.0 in '00-'01). This total is complete, with data supplied by Ed Lachapelle for Nov 19 through Dec 12, as the station was closed. The greatest snow depth was 21 inches. This compares with an average ('80-'02) of 64.2 inches and a snow depth of 27 inches. The greatest snow fall was 99.9 inches in '90-'91 and the lowest was 27.3 inches in '86-'87. The greatest snow depth was 39 inches in '90-'91 and the lowest was 16 inches in '86-'87 and '98-'99. An interesting fact, after adding Ed's data, shows 3.76 inches of rain in late November.

If this had been snow, that would have been approximately 38 inches, bringing the total snow fall to about 82 inches. Instead of below average, it would have put it well above average. *Silver Lake had a total snowfall of 51.0 inches and the greatest snow depth was 36 inches.*

With the addition of Ed's data I now have updated and complete data for November and December, 2002. The average temperature for November is 27.6 (24.5) and December 5.7 (-2.8). The total liquid precipitation for November was 4.26 inches (0.43) with 2.6 inches of snow (0.1). December had 0.82 inches (0.48) of liquid and 10.6 inches of snow (7.6). Thank you, Ed, for making your data available.

A gradual warming of temperatures has occurred during the first half of April. By the 15th we are observing lows near 15 and highs in the mid 40s. There is about a foot of wet snow left, but more open patches of ground are appearing each day. It is safe to say that breakup has begun.

May should see a rapid increase in temperatures with highs in the 60's by mid month. Precipitation is usually on the light side with an average amount of less than an inch.

June is usually the warmest month at McCarthy with an average temperature in the mid 50's, highs in the 70's and about 2 inches of rain.

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

The State of Alaska and the National Park Service have had a tempestuous relationship since 1980. If current events in Wrangell-St. Elias (WRST) are any indicator, a new storm is brewing. Ill winds threaten to blow inholders right out of the park.

In 1978, then President Jimmy Carter declared this area to be a National Monument. Two years of tense debate in the halls of Congress followed. Alaska's delegation was not willing to have immense areas of the state turned into lower-48 type parks where hunting, mining and other traditional Alaskan activities would not be allowed.

The result was the *Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act*, which became law on December 2, and became known as ANILCA. It spelled out the terms that Wrangell-St. Elias National Park would be managed.

Among other things, ANILCA guaranteed Alaskans the right to hunt, fish, recreate and even operate mines in the park. Although the ability to create new roads or trails in the park was eliminated or severely curtailed, the right to use valid existing routes was pledged. RS2477 routes were specifically singled out for protection.

Unfortunately for Alaskans, the National Park Service lost little time before attempting to erode the provisions of ANILCA. For the most part they were able to eliminate or severely curtail mining and hunting through the use of restrictive regulations, ostensibly to protect the resource.

Now the National Park Service has sunk to a new low. The administration at WRST are using discretionary powers to single out an individual and his family for punishment. The crime? Superintendent Candelaria says there may be no crime. Nevertheless the family has been targeted for punitive action.

As I type these words, the Pilgrim family are trying to decide how to get home over the 14 mile road that connects their home to the town of McCarthy. Park Rangers posted a Public Notice saying that the route was suddenly an illegal road created by the bulldozer.

The McCarthy-Green Butte road, which leads to the Pilgrims house, has been in use by Alaskans for over one hundred years. It was at various times maintained by miners, the Alaska Road Commission, and sundry local residents. The bulldozer that created the road has long since been retired. Many bulldozers have come down that trail in the 23 years since the creation of the park. But suddenly, the Pilgrims bulldozer is singled out. Why?

By my count, Candelaria and crew have had to violate one Alaska State Statute, at least two specific sections of ANILCA, former 43 U.S.C. 932 and their own General Management Plan in order to harass an innocent family.

Consider the following exchange that occurred on Friday, April 18 at a public meeting in McCarthy:

Question by local resident: [Superintendent], this is customary/traditional use..if you

cannot define it and we view traveling up and down McCarthy Creek as customary/traditional use how can you deny it when you can't even define it?

Superintendent Gary Candelaria (GC): Customary and traditional is something that in many areas is undefined. In many parts of the nation.

Question: How can you outlaw what you can't define? It's a legitimate legal question.

GC: I am not a lawyer.

Question: You need to define this issue before you ban an activity.

GC: The activity is a result of an illegal action.

Question: What is the worst case example of what they destroyed on that road?

GC: I don't know what they've destroyed.

(crowd goes wild! Laughter)

Question: So they might not have done any harm at all?

GC: May be not.

Question: Isn't it true that this is all about you guys being upset because they didn't talk to you?

GC: No, no

Question: The whole thing is not about them not talking to you?

GC: No, the action they took without talking to us is & (interrupted)

Question: Action, what action? You said you don't know what action they took.

GC: Because we haven't had the chance to go over the ground yet.

Try to imagine two and a half hours of the above lunacy, and

you have a picture of the recent town/NPS meeting.

This action follows months of harassment by the NPS in the form of slanderous innuendos and rumors toward the Pilgrim family.

The rangers say that their numerous overflights of the

family's property show that they may have gotten off their property with the dozer, then add, we don't know where the property lines are.

Some people charge that what NPS actually wants is the 400 acres the family live on. The Park Service apparently tried to

negotiate with the former owner, but were unsuccessful.

Whatever the motivation, the fact is that these people have been singled out for punishment although there is no evidence that they have done any damage. And in America, that is w-r-o-n-g.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear WSEN:

As a resident and business owner it is nice to see the community in agreement on an important local issue. The Alaska Dept of Transportation and our two most vocal local groups (MAC & CAM) are also in agreement on the repair & rebuilding of the road to McCarthy. Here is the best part: Senator Georgiana Lincoln, and Representative Carl Morgan, had a Constituent Teleconference for McCarthy residents on April 11th. Everyone agreed on the prime issue of the teleconference: immediate major repairs and improvements are needed on the McCarthy Road. The Governor's Office is in full support of the McCarthy Road improvements such as those in *The Scenic Corridor Study*.

The fact is that although DNR, NPS, & the DOT have signed off on the Scenic Corridor concept for the McCarthy Road, it has taken a lot longer for some community members to agree in principal to the major points in the Scenic Corridor. Now, the town's people projected clear agreement about the basic point, a better road, instead of projecting complete disagreement on every detail.

Senator Lincoln requested the town meeting to determine from testimony what the locals thought about the road—is there any consensus? Now picture two locals that you know that are at absolute opposite opinions on the road issue. Imagine their testimony in agreement about fixing the serious

problems as fast as possible; widening the road, but to no more than 24'; keeping the charm; encouraging small vans while discouraging massive busses, and creating a safe and dependable road. Like any community, there is still some controversy, for instance some people prefer gravel over any hard surface, others preferred chip-seal.

Concessions and compromises over the past winter months have resulted in one important realization for our legislators; we in McCarthy *can* come to agreement.

Neil Darish

Dear Bonnie and Rick,

Thanks for the reminder that a new subscription is due. We both enjoy the *WSEN* so much and would not like to miss out.

Wish I had some Kennicott news for you but unfortunately I do not.

I did get to spend some time with Frank and Jeanne Morris at Pioneer of Alaska convention in Fairbanks last September and also to greet George and Margaret Sullivan there as well, then at Christmas time, received cards and notes from Eleanor (Tjosevig) Eidemiller, Inger (Jensen) Ricci & Charlie, Mary Ellen (Duggan) Clark, Gene and Nola Garrity and Mike and Evonne Sullivan. It has been a pleasure to keep in closer contact with some of them by E-Mail. They, as well as Oscar and myself seem to be keeping well

and enjoying life.

I am anxious to try some of Peggy's recipes, especially the apple cinnamon French toast and the German chocolate upside down cake. If her recipes should run out, perhaps some of the Kennicott Kids would like to share some with her.

Thank you for the most enjoyable newspaper.

Greetings to the wonderful McCarthy / Kennicott folks.

Sincerely, Oscar and Nell Watsjold

Editor's Note: We got more than the usual amount of responses to our last issue of WSEN. The following are representative. In the interest of protecting the innocent we are withholding names.

Howdy ;

Just got your paper and want to thank you for a job well done. *The NPS gets a Spanking* was a super great article. I'm going to forward this article to everyone that I know. The people from around here are behind you people all the way.

Three hoorays for the Pilgrim family, Keith Rowland and Rick Kenyon.

Hi Rick,

I wanted to let you know I received my first issue, and I'm enjoying it very much. I especially liked the story about the bollards.

WSEN,

I recently finished reading the Trails in the Park story in the

current issue of WSEN and I am interested in the Coalitions petition. Is it a Locals Only thing or can other state residents sign your petition? Or has it already been signed and sent to Juneau? If it's not too late, I would like to add my name to it. Though I live in Anchorage I am very much interested in the McCarthy area. Again, Many Thanks for a

Wonderful Publication.

Hi, I read a copy of your article in the (March-April) publication on the PILGRAM-PARK DIABOLICAL. I would like to express my appreciation for your coverage on this and other on-going threats to our civil liberties. When your May-June issue is published, would you

please send me a copy?

PS Do to the fact that I am a employee of the Wrangell-St. Elias NPS, I don't feel at liberty to voice any opinions at this time do to the possibility of (known or unknown) eaves-droppers.

High praises for your
coverage.