

# Wrangell St. Elias News

*"Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty"*

Vol. Twenty-Two Issue Three

May & June 2013

\$2.50

## Where's Spring?

McCarthy is still experiencing winter conditions. It is the end of April and there are 16 inches of snow on the ground with very little signs of spring. The Pussy Willows are defying the below-freezing temperatures (10 degrees last night) and are budding anyway—determined spring WILL



arrive! We decided to take the hint and do what we could do to push back those wintry signs and replace them with spring-like ones. Thus, the choice of cover pictures for the May/June WSEN.

The large wooden bowl full of Morels was taken last June. We had a bumper crop, giving Rick and I plenty of fresh mushrooms to eat and a quart jar of dried ones for the winter months.

Bruce James shares his knowledge of these strange-looking, but delicious, fungi. The end of May and early June is the time to hunt and harvest. This picture encourages me that it "really" won't be long before spring arrives in the McCarthy area.

The picture of the green grass in our yard definitely leaves me with a warm feeling. This visiting moose seemed rather intent on accompanying me to mail! Naturally, I didn't encourage it to hop in.

The garden transplants are growing despite the snowy conditions they view each day from our cabin's southern window. Tomatoes, egg plant, broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, basil, dill, pansies and petunias are doing what good seeds always do—produce after their own kind. Seedtime and harvest are God-things and I enjoy playing an active part in the creative process.

Last year at this time, Rick had our little greenhouse all ready for occupancy and transplant storage by mid-April. This



year he sensed we should "hold off" and I'm glad he did. However, during the late morning hours and into the afternoon, if the sun is shining, we carry our seedlings to the greenhouse for an extra boost of daily overhead sunlight. They enjoy it, and so do I! The warmer surroundings encourage me and provide hope for tomorrow. Spring and summer are just around the corner!



# A note from the publisher

BY BONNIE KENYON

It is April 23<sup>rd</sup>. The south window of our cabin is full of garden transplants. The challenge is thinking it should be spring in the air when all I can see out that same window is snow on the ground and more coming down profusely! Amazing! It is a fact that spring always arrives, but, this year, McCarthy folks, including me, wonder “when” it will appear. The fourteen inches of snow on the ground is refusing to budge. Ah, well, it will eventually! In the meantime, I am thankful there is plenty to do in the office these days. One being this May/June issue and the other project is the 2013 Visitor’s Guide to Kennicott and McCarthy. It is always a pleasure to work with our local businesses and with those outside our area who are eager to encourage and inform the variety of guests heading our way. For your information, the guides are distributed free to visitors. If you would like to have one mailed to you, we do ask for \$2 to cover postage and handling. You may email me at [bonnie.kenyon@gmail.com](mailto:bonnie.kenyon@gmail.com) or call me at 907 554-1194. Whether you are coming out here or not, you just may want to see “who” is offering their valuable services to locals and guests.

This segment of Ocha Potter’s journal—*A Wife and Child become Pioneers*—is the last in our series. (Page 10) We are glad many of you have enjoyed the true account of the very courageous and adventure-some mining engineer who came to the McCarthy/Kennicott area in the early 1900s.

Thanks to our neighbor, Neil Darish, for the “heads-up” on the status of Tom Kizzia’s new book, *Pilgrim’s Wilderness*. It enabled us to do a write-up in this issue before we went to press. Since time was short, Tom gave us permission to

take information off his web site to pass on to you. Thanks, Tom! We are eager to get our copy as soon as they are available. Be sure to read the update on page 19.

We are pleased to reprint an article by Bruce James entitled, “Morels.” It was first published in *The Copper River Record*, June 14<sup>th</sup>, of last year. Since we ran out of room and time, we decided to save the article until this year. The Morel is one of our favorite mushrooms that we always manage to find time to hunt every year. They usually (hopefully) arrive end of May and early June. Some years the harvest is better than others, but we always enjoy the hunt. Thanks, Bruce, for your wealth of information and willingness to share it! His story is on page 13.

Our neighbors down the road from us, Larry and Lindee Satterfield, are back from a winter trip outside, just in time for Larry to write about a very special gift he was blessed to create for a very appreciative lady. You may even want

one of these! Find Larry’s story on page 14, *Stovemaker*.

Another heads-up came from Katie Ringsmuth, National Park Service historian. She made sure we (and you) were in the know concerning a couple of upcoming events. Be sure to read the details on page 21: *Wrangell Mountain Skyboys on exhibit*.

Last, but not least, is a thank you to regular contributors, Peggy Guntis, George Cebula and Rick Kenyon, Jr., for their faithfulness to do their articles in spite of a variety of other priorities. Peggy and hubby Jim are busy packing to head north to Alaska (McCarthy, that is), after a winter in Tucson; George just returned from a winter trip to Phoenix; and Rick Jr.’s schedule is rather full these days with he and Maria’s four sons and their college and sports events. Thank you one and all!

WSEN welcomes aboard the following subscribers: Tina Muglach, FL; Margaret Smith, TN; Michael Nelson, WA; Albert Whitehead, AK; Copper Rail Histories, AK.

Table of Contents	
A note from the publisher.....	2
Items of Interest.....	3
McCarthy Area Council holds its spring meeting.....	6
Alaska Grown-1980.....	7
McCarthy Angels.....	8
Copper Basin Subsistence Update.....	9
A Wife and Child become Pioneers.....	10
Morels.....	13
Stovemaker.....	14
National Park Service releases Compendiums for 2013.....	15
The year without summer.....	18
Pilgrim’s Wilderness—Coming July 2013.....	19
NPS to Burn piles of debris to reduce fire risk.....	19
Wrangell Mountain Skyboys on exhibit.....	21
WRST Superintendent Obernesser updates community.....	22
Cooking with Peggy.....	29
A LOOK AT THE WEATHER.....	30

# Items of Interest

BY BONNIE KENYON

**The Jeremy Keller family:** A telephone call from Jeremy during the first week in April gave me a pleasant heads-up that a visit from “dad” and his two boys was just around the corner. One of the benefits of selling propane gas to local folks is the opportunity to see neighbors regularly. Jeremy, along with his empty propane tanks, and sons Bjorn and Liam, arrived on the 8<sup>th</sup>. I made sure the hot chocolate was set out for the boys. Thankfully, I even had a few cupcakes ready for our party.

Liam, 2, was a bit on the shy side as we’ve only met twice. With his older brother helping to break the ice, we soon got right down to business. While Jeremy and Rick took care of their priorities, Bjorn, Liam and I made the most of our time together. I got my tablet out and Bjorn was all set to give me an “item.” While he and I caught up on the Keller family-life, Liam made short order of the cupcakes. The fluffy white icing gave him the greatest mustache. I should have taken his picture for you.

The first farm-related announcement came from Bjorn, “We now have four goatlings.” I

had to remind him that I was not a farm girl. “What exactly are goatlings?” I asked. He replied, “Baby goats, of course.” Right! I should have known that one.

A few more goats are expected and if they turn out to be boy goats, says Bjorn, they will name them Whopper and Big Mac. (I think I know where he likes to eat when he accompanies his dad to the big city of Anchorage.) They are trying to bottle feed some of the goatlings, so dad rounds each one up and Bjorn does the feeding, using a good powdered milk concoction. That saves on the goat milk. “That way we (the family) can use more of the goat milk for drinking and making more yogurt.” Bjorn says goat milk is his favorite milk. He would turn down a glass of cow milk for goat milk any day. As for the yogurt, sugar and coconut are terrific additions, he says.

I could tell Bjorn was doing his math in his head as he spoke again. “We have 11 ducks, 11 dogs and no more pigs!” Six of their dogs are sled dogs.

Speaking of counting, the boys are working together on counting. Liam is doing well with his big brother’s help. Bjorn is in the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. His dad is the

teacher, he says, and his main subjects are Math, Reading and Writing. He is also learning the construction trade alongside his dad. Bjorn reminds me that he had a birthday in February, and is now a year older than the last time we visited.

Gardening is in the picture for this summer. It always is at the Keller farm, but, this year, Bjorn will have his own plot. “It will be 8' x 18' and I will plant peas, lettuce, baby greens, cabbage, kale, beets, radishes, parsley, carrots and flowers.” He was really whetting my appetite for our own garden’s produce. With 16 inches of snow still on the ground (mid-April), I must use my imagination to see summer’s arrival. It always comes.

Thank you, Jeremy, Bjorn and Liam for another wonderful visit. Don’t forget to take some pictures of your garden, Bjorn!

**George Cebula and dog Shane:** Shortly after Rick and I arrived home in March, George and Shane flew in on the mail plane coming in from Anchorage. Shane did very well on that flight, says George, but his long ride in the kennel from Arizona to Alaska was another story altogether. “Shane wasn’t too happy riding in

**Wrangell St. Elias News** (USPS 011301) VOL. Twenty-Two, Issue Three, MAY & JUNE 2013.

Published every two months at McCarthy, Alaska. McCarthy, PO Box MXY, Glennallen, AK 99588-8998. Phone (907) 554-4454. FAX 1-866-487-7657. **E-mail: [wsenews@gmail.com](mailto:wsenews@gmail.com)**. “Copyright © 2013 by Wrangell St. Elias News. No part of this publication may be reproduced by any means without the express permission of the publishers.”

Contributors to this issue: Peggy Guntis, Bruce James, Larry Satterfield, George Cebula, Ned Rozell and Rick Kenyon Jr. Subscription price is \$14 for one year in the USA. Canada \$16. Other countries \$23. Advertising rates upon request. Deadline for publication in next issue is June 15.

PERIODICALS POSTAGE PAID AT GLENNALLEN, AK. 99588.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Wrangell St. Elias News, McCarthy #42, PO Box MXY, Glennallen AK 99588-8998.

the kennel,” says George. But, since this was his first flight, he feels Shane did very good. Of course, Shane was more-than-happy to see his master at the Anchorage airport.

George is back to taking his daily walks around the neighborhood with Shane at his side. Both of them are trying hard to stay upright on their feet, however. The icy road conditions make walking a challenge these days. Some of us have dug out ice cleats for our boots, just to be on the safe side—upright.

The mail shack sorters are glad to see George as he is always ready to help unload the mail plane and sort incoming mail. Welcome home, George and Shane!

**Jim and Jeannie Miller:** The Millers are certainly ready for spring, as are the majority of McCarthy/Kennicott folks. Winter doesn't seem to want to release its grip on our little town, but there is great hope that spring is going to arrive—it always does! Jeannie is getting ready, no matter what things look like. (She is estimating a still-remaining 19 inches of snow on the ground at their Kennicott home. Rick and I have 15 inches on April 19.) A path to her greenhouse is shoveled, and her garden vegetable transplants are filling her cabin's south windows. Tomatoes, flowers, cole crops are enjoying the abundance of sunshine they are receiving these days. Her new crop this year will be a cross between a kale and Brussel sprout. She's eager to sample the harvest. I'm just as eager to hear the results! Keep us posted, Jeannie!

In early May, Jeannie is leaving on a rare excursion to her old

hometown of Republic, WA. Her mother and her mom's twin brother are celebrating their 80<sup>th</sup> birthdays. They are the last of 9 children, says Jeannie. “It's quite a big thing with a lot of family and old friends expected.” It was 35 years ago that she and Jim moved to McCarthy and, since that time, has not seen folks she will meet again this next month.

Jim will babysit the plants and animals. Jeannie assured me he does a great job. She has left them in his hands before and she has no complaints.

Speaking of animals, the Millers have 12 chickens and they are babysitting 3 of the Shidner's flock. Jeannie posted a sign on the mail shack recently announcing fresh eggs for sale. She is doing a good business these days. On mail days Jeannie is now known as the egg lady as she comes to town with a crate filled with egg cartons for various folks. She estimates that during the month of March they collected 303 eggs, making it an average of 10 a day. Not bad at all! Jeannie is really impressed with the present layers she has. They were merely baby chicks last June. According to her, they are a cross-breed between two exceptionally good layers. One of the good points is the ability to tell the males from the females due to their colors.

The work summer season begins around the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of May for Jeannie when she will don her chef's hat for Kennicott Glacier Lodge. Jim hopes to be back on the park service's maintenance crew.

**Tim Mischel and Kathy Drury:** Tim and Kathy arrived back at their McCarthy property on March 18<sup>th</sup>. After spending 5

months in warmer climes, they weren't real impressed with the -20 degree temperatures that greeted them on their return! Their winter travels began with a flight out of Anchorage to Washington state. After picking up Kathy's Jeep, they took a leisurely drive to Arizona then on to San Diego, visiting family members along the route. They had a wonderful vacation, says Kathy. On their trip home, they drove to Bellingham, WA and took the ferry back to Alaska, bringing Kathy's Jeep to McCarthy.

Since their arrival home, they are enjoying what's left of winter with various snowmachine trips. Their more recent one was a rather arduous trek up to Tim's Angle-Station property, which is at the 3,800 ft. level. McCarthy locals, Zack Barrett, Chris Smith and Malcolm Vance joined Tim in breaking trail from the ridge to the “bowl.” Tim and Tenley Nelson and their kids, Conner and Sylvia, of Mile 12 McCarthy Road, accompanied Tim and Kathy the following day to the “station.” The “straight-up” direction over a knoll wasn't exactly fun. It demanded more than one try but they all made it safe and sound. “The view is spectacular,” explained Kathy, which helped soothe the challenging travel conditions. Kathy managed to serve up a wonderful spaghetti dinner and a chocolate cake for dessert. Now that is living!

I happened to call Kathy while they were sitting on their porch overlooking the valley. I was surprised to know they were up there. It was April 14<sup>th</sup>, as I recall, since our conversation drifted off to the income tax deadline the following day. Kathy was needing to Efile her tax re-

turn. When I called her today, she informed me that she had successfully completed her return (with her daughter's help) over the phone! I couldn't help but comment, "What a difference from the old days when Tim lived 'on the mountain' year-round and our only mode of communication was a CB radio!" We have certainly come a long ways! Kathy says Tim's old CB radio is still mounted on the wall of the Angle-Station—just in case, you know.

Welcome home, Tim and Kathy!

**Mike and LeAnne Christenson:** This morning I received a phone call from long-time WSEN subscriber, Mike Christenson. He was pleased to report (and I was pleased to get the report) that he and his wife, LeAnne had moved to their Silver Lake, Mile 11 McCarthy Road, property—full-time. Mike is officially "retired," he says and making the most of it, too. He wanted Rick to know that he was doing his share of catching fish from his front yard, Silver Lake, and nearby Strelna Lake. The other day, Mike caught a 23 inch Rainbow Trout, with a 21 incher following suit. Having plenty of time on his hands now, he decided to try out the fishing at Strelna. "It was like eating at Golden Corral," says Mike. A lot of variety such as Silvers, Arctic Char and Rainbow Trout. I think he was sending out "bait" to Rick to come fishing. I suspect your phone call will draw Rick in, Mike, but not until this issue of WSEN makes its way to the post office!

Dan and Heika Frost of McCarthy are good friends of Mike and LeAnne. Dan is a past co-worker with Mike.

I'm sure we'll be seeing Mike and LeAnne up this way regularly, either by 4 wheeler or snowmachine, says Mike. He is eager to visit old acquaintances from up our way and we are eager to see the Christensons.

Welcome to the extended neighborhood, Mike and LeAnne!

**Neil Darish:** Neil is busy with summer plans for his business ventures in downtown McCarthy. His seasonal employees are gearing up to either return or arrive for the first time in our town. Patti Polizzo, General Manager for the hotel, is already reporting for duty after spending her first winter in McCarthy.

Locals, Jeremy Keller, Jason Lobo and Keith Rowland, are working on a power distribution building for the various outlets of McCarthy Ventures. According to Neil, the project is expected to take 2 years and the crew started October of last year. Once done, the upgrade will increase their power capabilities with the greatest benefit for the whole town—a much quieter generator!

The grocery store has a new ice cream chest, says Neil (I'm sure he knew I'd want to know that bit of news!) which allows for more ice cream selections. The only down side of that item is the challenge of making a choice on our mail day excursions to the store!

**Mail Shack update:** Trig Triggiano is planning to rework the mail shack boxes in the near future. We have run out of mail boxes and other people are requesting boxes. Please contact Trig at 554-4551 or drop a note in his mail box, if you'd consider subdividing your current box. The new divided boxes will be labeled

with the same number and the letters A or B.

Also, if you are not using your box number on incoming mail, it would be a big help to the mail sorters, if you did. It might help eliminate missorts. Thank you very much!

**McCarthy's annual Yard Sale:** McCarthy's annual yard sale and seedling swap is scheduled for June 1 at the Tony Zak House. For further information contact Tamara Harper at 907-980-2290.

**Wilderness First Aid course:** The Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve will be hosting a 40 hr. Wilderness First Aid/Wilderness First Responder refresher in McCarthy June 24-27. The location is at the Kennicott Recreation Hall. The daily scheduled times are 8:00 am to 6:00 pm. The tuition is \$250 plus \$20 registration fee.

Melis Coady will be instructing the 40hr. Wilderness Advanced First Aid class which is open to anyone, no experience required. Participants will receive a certificate in Wilderness Advanced First Aid, and Adult and Child CPR from the Wilderness Medicine Institute upon completion of the class.

The class will also count as a Wilderness First Responder Refresher class for anyone with a current 70 hr. WFR certification (SOLO, WMI, WMA, etc). Refreshers must attend the full 40 hr. course. WFR Refreshers will be issued a new WMI WFR certification.

For more information about the class, lodging, food, travel, etc., please contact Luke Hodgson at (907) 960-1023 or by email [Luke\\_Hodgson@nps.gov](mailto:Luke_Hodgson@nps.gov).

## McCarthy Area Council holds its spring meeting

**O**n March 28<sup>th</sup>, approximately 25 folks turned out for the first MAC meeting of the year. The meeting was held at the Tony Zak House. Vice President, Elizabeth Schafer conducted the meeting.

**Malla Kukkomen** with Alaska Department of Fish & Game (ADF&G) reported on the National Park Service/ADF&G community subsistence harvest surveys taking place in McCarthy.

**Stephens Harper**, NPS District Ranger, gave an update on park service activities. Due to federal sequestration budget cuts, the park's budget was cut by \$330,000 for this fiscal year. It was accommodated in part by not refilling several permanent positions that have recently gone or will go vacant. As a result, seasonal positions will not be affected by budget cuts for this year. Permanent positions that are vacant include: Danny Rosenkrans, Lands Manager, retiring in May, whose position will not be rehired; Norah Martinez, Chief Ranger, retired in December 2012. Her position may be hired this summer. Jon Colson, Kennecott Project Manager, retired. His position may be filled as a seasonal maintenance employee; one District Ranger position retired, will not be rehired. The park has consolidated ranger districts from 5 to 3 (North, South and Yakutat), with 3 District Rangers instead of the previous 5. Further budget cuts may

affect seasonal positions in the future.

The draft **Kennecott Operations Plan's** final public review ended April 30<sup>th</sup>. The next planning effort will be a Wilderness Stewardship plan, specifically focused on the 9.6 million acres of designated wilderness within Wrangell-St. Elias National Park/Preserve. Funding for this project is not yet available, so public meetings related to this plan will likely not happen this summer. Wilderness management planning will work closely with commercial operators and others using the wilderness areas of the park. Please contact Bruce Rogers for more information at 907-822-7276.

The process to choose the next **concessions contract** for the Kennecott Mill tours is almost complete. It is expected that the contract will be awarded sometime in April.

The **Kennecott Recreation Hall** will be leased and managed by the Wrangell Mountains Center again this year.

The **Kennecott Mill building's** stabilization work will continue this year with Twin Peaks Construction doing the foundation and 1-7th floors work. The project will continue for this summer season. The Mill building will be closed again this summer.

Other buildings slated for stabilization include the west bunkhouse, hospital, National Creek bunkhouse and one cottage. Routine maintenance,

painting and repair will also occur on most other buildings.

Elizabeth Schafer and Matthew Emht will be working on Stephens' **Kennecott ranger staff** this summer. Law enforcement rangers, Luke Hodgson and Bekky Andersen, will be working in Slana, on the north side of the park. The second law enforcement ranger position in Kennecott will be refilled if funding becomes available.

**Emergency medical response** is being increasingly coordinated between NPS and the community EMS team, headed by Jacob Shultz. The EMS response number is 554-1240, and will be answered by a dispatcher who can respond or coordinate a response.

The **Kennecott Visitor's Center** will be open for Memorial Day weekend and then will have limited hours until opening full-time in June. It will be open until Labor Day, and possibly later into September, depending on funding. The **Chitina Ranger Station** will only be open 5 days a week this summer (Thursday-Monday), due to funding cuts.

Fred Dure gave a **Nizina Road** update. Rowcon Services has completed the road work, with one last grading to be done this summer. Fred asks folks to use the road carefully. He is planning to erect a few "slow" signs on a couple of blind-corner turns and is considering a sign regarding the appropriate use of the road during different times of the year. Comments can go to Fred at 907-554-1092.

---

"The battle, sir, is not to the strong alone; it is to the vigilant, the active, the brave." --Patrick Henry

# Alaska Grown-1980

BY RICK KENYON JR.

Every fall in the cold North requires some preparation for the long winter season. Firewood needed covering against the coming snowfall, tools were put away in storage, and a good supply of staples should be stocked up on. The fall of 1979 was no different.

As I began my school year of home-studies, the snow was already creeping down the mountain peaks above Kennecott. Summer residents left McCarthy and the surrounding area for other regions. Our neighborhood began to thin out and the crowd of residents was smaller on Mail Days. The ducks and geese headed south; the sound of honking birds grew fainter as those familiar "v-shaped" formations flew towards the Canadian border.

The nights dipped below freezing and the leaves fell off our trees. As rain set in, a dreary feeling enveloped our part of the world. I never enjoyed that transition of the seasons—fall to winter.



Once winter arrived in full swing, however, the sunshine was more prevalent and the clean, white snow covered the ugliness of bare tree branches. Once enough snow fell—and stayed—it was time to break out the skis and snow machine! Our spirits lifted with a fresh outlook for the winter solace.

After Christmas came the New Year. The year of 1980 turned out to be a rather busy year. Plans were being made for the summer as we corresponded with our family. First of all, Grampa and Gram-



my wrote to update us with their plans. My great-grandmother in Michigan was in bad health and Grammy felt the need to be closer to attend to her mother, so the home in Montana was put up for sale and sold quickly.

The other big "news" was that Uncle Ron was engaged to be married in Atlanta, Georgia, in the summer. That was a wedding not to be missed and mom was planning on being there. In the meanwhile, dad had a job offer on a survey crew at Fidalgo Bay in the Prince William Sound. It would take most of the summer.



We were in better shape that winter as far as firewood went. That summer and fall we were able to get our wood shed filled and ready for the cold winter days that would come. Despite our preparation, the stove had an endless appetite and consumed our hard-earned supply of firewood. By spring time, it was nearly empty and the cycle to restock would begin again.

After spring arrived and as the winter's snow melted, we donned our break-up gear and brought firewood up from the woods to be split and stacked in the woodshed for the next winter. It would have a chance to dry all summer. Sam and I enjoyed the warmer days and the sunshine. I put his harness on and tied it to my radio flyer wagon. He wasn't too enthused about pulling it, though. (His idea of a "sled dog" was for him to ride in the sled and someone else pull it!)

Our garden wasn't going to be much of a show piece as we were making plans to be gone for most of the summer. Airline tickets arrived in the mail for mom and I. After the snow was completely gone, we loaded up in the green suburban and headed to Anchorage. Mom and I had several suitcases of clothes and boarded the airplane at the Anchorage airport. Our plane arrived in Seattle. We

boarded a smaller airplane bound for Missoula, Montana. The Big Sky State!

Grampa and Grammy met us at the airport and we drove to their nice cabin home just outside Hamilton. Their home was at the base of the Bitterroot Mountains and just outside the city limits a few miles. Most of their items were already packaged and we assisted in last minute packing. We were convoying from Montana to Upper Michigan. Grammy and I led the "convoy" in a 1968 red Chevy pickup. Mom followed in a tan Chevy Impala and Grampa brought up the rear in their Monaco motorhome. All three vehicles were packed to the gills. (We had

to take out several items at night to sleep in the motorhome.)

Our trip was uneventful, thankfully. I "helped" Grammy by reading out loud my favorite detective books. We had a hand-held walkie-talkie and could talk with Grampa and mom as needed. After several days, we arrived at Perch Lake in upper Michigan.

Grampa and Grammy had a small cabin there and we spent a few weeks unpacking furniture and house hold items that would stay.

Granny Grunch had a summer cabin just up the gravel road within a stone's throw. Aunt Hazel and Uncle Don owned a cabin directly across the road from her cabin. Uncle Don also owned a few cabins on Perch Lake that were rented by

vacationing families. Mom and I felt right at home as there was no telephone or running water. Mom and I washed clothes on a trailer with wash tubs filled with water from the well. Grampa even let me ride his Honda motorcycle around the yard which was a lot of fun!

During this time, Dad and Sam were at their surveying job at Fidalgo Bay. The job was in the middle of nowhere and the men erected a temporary shelter to sleep in. Dad, Sam, the crew and supplies arrived by boat. They got to fish in their spare time. Sam had a good time and enjoyed the adventure.

## McCarthy Angels

BY BRUCE JAMES

God's blessings come in many forms and in my journey to recover from cancer and its terrible treatments, my wife and I have been graced with many. One of the most unexpected happened recently on a quiet Sunday afternoon.

Kayane and I were emotionally worn out from a busy weekend and three major blessings that came our way during the previous 48 hours. Our brains just seemed numb and when the dog started barking, I didn't know what to expect. Upon making it outside, my jaw dropped and all I could do was call Kayane.

Coming in our driveway was a convoy of pickup trucks from McCarthy with full loads of firewood! Don Welty had emailed us previously but it had slipped our minds. There were four trucks, three loaded with cut and split

wood along with about a dozen woodchopper angels. And not only did they deliver, they even stacked it into our woodshed. Also part of the blessing was a large tasty chicken pot pie and a bag of brownies!

When the stacking was complete, we formed a circle and Don led us in a prayer to thank our creator for the miracles he bestows. After they left, Kayane and I were very humbled! Firewood was a concern for us as I





have loss use of my right arm and limited use of the left.

Now we have a full woodshed (in the spring no less!) and we want to say thanks to the angels. Unfortunately I don't remember all their names and I should have

written them down before they drove off. Let's just say that some of McCarthy's biggest hearts gave up their Sunday afternoon to help us through our difficult journey.

Our thanks go out to all the generous and thoughtful people that have prayed or contributed to our relief!

Bruce and Kayane James  
Mile 27 McCarthy Rd.

## Copper Basin Subsistence Update

BY BONNIE KENYON

*Editor's note: The following information comes from Alaska Fish and Game and Barbara Cellarius, National Park Service (NPS) project Coordinator and McCarthy Area Council.)*

On March 28<sup>th</sup> National Park Service (NPS) and Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) staff and McCarthy area assistants began conducting household surveys/mapping about subsistence harvest practices. They are updating subsistence data last taken in the McCarthy/Kennicott in 1987. Management policies and decisions are made based on the collected data. Surveys took place for about a week. Participation was voluntary and confidential.

Says Cellarius, "The survey effort for the Copper Basin subsistence Update in McCarthy has wrapped up. Project staff will present preliminary results from the survey at a McCarthy Area Council meeting this fall or in the spring of 2014."

Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve (WRST) in cooperation with the ADF&G will be administering surveys in four Copper Basin communities in winter/spring 2013 about their subsistence activities. The communities of Chistochina, Copper Center, Slana, Mentasta Lake and

Mentasta Pass were surveyed in 2010 and 2011 during the first two years of this project.

The project involves a survey documenting the subsistence lifestyle in all its complexity. The survey is used to estimate subsistence harvest and to describe community subsistence economies. The study year was 2012, but researchers will ask questions about residents' observations about changes in subsistence harvest over the past 5 years. In addition to the survey, maps will be used for residents to indicate where they harvest various resources. The outcome of the survey will be a community summary of subsistence harvests and uses.

The most recent comprehensive subsistence harvest survey in the Copper Basin was conducted in the mid-1980s. To meet its regulatory mandate, the NPS would like to update the community harvest assessments for most, if not all, of the resident zone communities for WRST.

Collecting harvest and use information through in-person household surveys give a more comprehensive picture of a community-wide subsistence economy than investigating reported harvests for individual species such as salmon or large land mammals. The survey includes resources and activities that aren't monitored through harvest reporting, such as the harvest of berries and how re-

sources are shared between households.

The program includes training of local researchers in each study community and partnerships with local governments and regional organizations to support implementation and maintenance of the project. Communities will also have the opportunity to review the data collected before it becomes final sometime in the fall of this year. Complete study findings will be available spring 2014 with the final report sent to communities in October 2014.

The resulting information will assist state and federal managers in their subsistence management responsibilities, be of use to local and regional advisory councils in making recommendations for regulatory changes, and will assist the State of Alaska Board of Fisheries and Game and the Federal Subsistence Board in the informed management of fish and wildlife in the region. Final results will be summarized in a technical report as well as included in the Division of Subsistence Community Subsistence Information System. Both are available online from the Division of Subsistence, ADF&G.

For more information, you may contact Barbara Cellarius, NPS, at 907-822-7236, [barbara\\_cellarius@nps.gov](mailto:barbara_cellarius@nps.gov) or ADF&G contact Robbin La Vine at 907-267-2362, [robbin.lavine@alaska.gov](mailto:robbin.lavine@alaska.gov).

# A Wife and Child become Pioneers

*This is the last installment of the adventures of mining engineer, Ocha Potter, transcribed from his own journal.*

BY OCHA POTTER

The next few months were full of anxiety while my former employers considered my report and pondered what to do. Some of the world's best known geologists had examined and reported on the Kennecott ore body. The U. S. Geological Survey had published its findings. Apparently all the experts agreed on a theory that was directly opposed to my conclusions. Considering my limited mining experience and college training, it was not surprising that my backers hesitated. Later on I was to lose faith in my own judgment.

Early in January 1908, Mr. Rice called me to the bank and told me he had decided to risk not only his own share of the expense of another expedition but to finance the share of a partner who would not or could not raise the necessary money. I was to organize another party and to leave when I was ready. His orders were to select the claims I thought most valuable to do enough work on them to secure government patents and therefore full ownership.

I wired Bill and Tony the news and with my wife and son, then two and a half years old, left for Seattle.

At Seattle I picked up two experienced typical old-time miners from the Western camps, "Mac" and George, who had recently arrived from the Tonopah Goldfield district of Nevada. They had left these rich gold mines hurriedly because of the sudden activity of law officers looking for "high graders." When we became better acquainted they told me they had

taken between \$12,000 and \$14,000 each during the previous year from the mines in which they had been working. They were normally honest men and proved to be good workers and competent miners, but they had grown up in the old Western tradition that no moral turpitude was involved in taking and selling high grade ore from their employers—providing they were not caught. It was a sort of game, a matching of wits.

Arriving at Valdez in mid-February, we were soon on the trail to McCarthy Creek. We reached the spot I had selected for headquarters in late May, something over 90 days out of Valdez. (In 1938 a letter from a friend at Kennecott told me that visitors had left the coast by airplane after breakfast, landed at Kennecott, transacted business, and returned to the coast for lunch.)

We built a temporary camp of tents and board floors as my plans contemplated doing only enough work to get our claims patented by the U. S. government. Without waiting for the snow to go, I selected twelve claims I thought most likely to prove valuable of the forty or fifty I had staked. I then chose the site for a tunnel to be driven into the face of the mountain. I knew the tunnel could have no possible value either for finding ore or operating a mine if ore were eventually discovered. The federal law required only that a certain amount of work be done and my object was merely to secure complete and undisputed ownership. According to my theory the valuable ore would be found only at considerable depth.

To get up to the tunnel location required a climb of 3,000 feet

or more vertically over a path about three quarters mile long. We dug a trail along the side of the cliffs over rock slides and across a small glacier at whose edge we started our work in the face of the mountain. The tunnel was so small only one man could work in it. Once started we kept the work going continuously twenty four hours per day.

Soon the snow began to melt and occasionally we could hear the thunder of snow and rock slides in nearby valleys. One day I started from the tunnel after finishing my shift and heard a soft mysterious rushing sound ahead and above me. I stopped to listen and suddenly a torrent of snow leaped through an opening in the cliffs near me and on to the top of a big slide over which we had made our trail. As it passed swiftly downward it spread and gathered depth and momentum until it seemed the whole side of the mountain was moving. It was a magnificent spectacle viewed from a safe position—until suddenly I realized our camp lay directly across the creek valley. Then the snow slide hit the creek bed, clouds of snow rose hundreds of feet and the camp sheltering my wife and son and the rest of the men disappeared from view—completely blotted out. I waited, horror stricken, until the air cleared and finally one by one tents appeared, safe and unharmed, with tiny dark figures I knew to be my companions, moving about. The slide had piled up to a depth of perhaps three hundred feet in the valley but had stopped less than a hundred steps from our camp.

A summer of routine followed. A steady climb of nearly two hours

up to the tunnel, eight hours swinging a "single jack" (small miner's hammer) drilling and blasting, and shoveling broken rock, and then the fifteen minute rush down the mountain over fine slide rock taking twenty or thirty foot strides and letting the finely crushed rock and gravel carry one along.

Occasionally the monotony was relieved by a sheep hunting expedition but sheep were few in number and wary. Once we shot a big shaggy mountain goat but after two or three attempts we gave up all thought of trying to eat goat meat. It was tough as shoe leather and had a peculiarly offensive taste and odor.

Before leaving Valdez I had arranged to have a qualified government engineer come in during the late summer to survey our claims for official recording. Fortunately I was able to get him up to where I could show him traces of ore but he was "mountain shy" and when I wanted to show him our most valuable discovery, he balked. He looked up the face of the cliffs I had started to climb and stopped.

"Do you mean to say your discovery is up on that cliff?"

"Yes."

He looked dubious for a few minutes. Finally:

"Well, I'll take your word for it."

I described the ore deposit as best I could and he gravely wrote down the description to go in his report. That was as close as he ever got to it. But it was official and there was no one to dispute it.

I had staked a very large placer claim in the valley below for a mill and town site. Such a site was necessary if we were to operate in the future and the only way I could obtain ownership was

through location as a gold placer mine. We sank shafts in the gravel benches and in the beds of streams to do the amount of work required by law to obtain a patent, always hoping to find the few specks of gold which were also required by law before a patent could be issued. The law did not state that gold must be found in commercial quantities. If it did, not many claims in Alaska could have been patented. But there must be gold no matter how small the quantity. And we couldn't find a flake of it.

Before the surveyor was due at our camp I sent one of the boys over to a gold placer district about forty miles away where he bought \$10.00 in gold dust from one of my friends. I "salted" the bottom of one of our prospect shafts and was ready for the surveyor. He was a very conscientious official so far as gold claims were concerned and promptly began to dig in the bottom of the shaft for the gold which I had assured him was there. He brought up a bucket of gravel, took it over to the little stream nearby and carefully "panned" it. At the appearance of the pretty little "tail" of yellow gold in his pan he looked very much interested. Not quite satisfied, he went down and brought up another bucket of gravel. Same result. After some time out for thought, down he went again. I began now to get worried. Looking down I could see him digging deep into the bottom, far below any possibility of superficial salting. But I had some loose fine gold dust in a pocket. As the bucket was drawn up I leaned casually over the shaft and let the last of my treasured gold dribble through my fingers. By the time the bucket reached surface it, too, was thoroughly salted. When he saw the yellow tail from that sample, he

asked me if I had staked the claims above, and when I said "no," he grabbed a pick and shovel, and disappeared upstream. When he came back to camp that night he looked at me rather sharply but nothing more was said about the validity of our "gold" claims. Months later he wrote asking how I had "put it over," but I never explained and my conscience has never bothered me.

By the end of August we had completed our task and were ready to leave and for the first time it dawned on me that I faced a real problem in getting my young wife and child out over a rough 190 mile trail crossing several mountain ranges, threading thick swamps, and fording swift glacier-fed rivers. This was all in the day's work to the men. But for a delicate city-bred young mother and a child only three years old it was something to think about. We discussed various plans and finally I put the proposition up to my wife. Did she think she could walk and ride over that 190 miles of trail? Sure, it would be a lark!

So one bright morning our pack train started the seventeen mile stretch down to the mouth of McCarthy Creek, Mrs. Potter riding and holding our son in the saddle with her. After a few miles she tired of riding and walked. The trail was vague and difficult. We had to ford the stream a dozen times, not dangerous water but deep enough to reach to the knees. When we finally reached Donahoe's abandoned cabin at the mouth of McCarthy, my wife said she felt fine. But the next morning her feet were blistered so badly she couldn't get her shoes on. However, she still insisted she could make the journey. So we started again, picking our way over the Kennecott Glacier around the famous "Pot Hole" where the

river boiled its way up to surface from its passage underneath the ice, and finally reached heavy spruce timber on the opposite bank not over two miles in a direct line from our starting place. One look at my wife's face we made camp.

That night we had a council meeting. Fortunately we had brought a whip saw (for cutting boards from logs by hand power). It was decided we should camp where we were and build a boat in which to take Mrs. Potter and son George down the rivers to the coast. A couple of days and we had enough boards. We had brought nails. For caulking we used one of our quilts and bacon grease mixed with resin gathered from the spruce trees. Oars were cut and shaped from small trees with an axe. I chose Bill to go with us in the boat leaving the rest of the party to make their way over the trail. Finally we were ready, shoved off and waved goodbye to Tony who was to take the horses to Valdez.

(Tony and I have not met since that day but I have heard and read a great deal about him. A year or so later he accidentally shot himself though his thigh owing to a sudden movement of the horse he was riding when he was drawing his pistol to shoot a ptarmigan. He nearly died from exposure and loss of blood but was found by friends, taken out to the coast and spent two or more years in a hospital. To pass away the time he read law. Upon recovery he passed the necessary examinations, was admitted to the board, and soon became one of Alaska's most distinguished attorneys. He is now and has been for several years, Alaska's delegate in Congress at Washington.)

All three Alaskan glacier streams are swift water. No rowing was necessary as the current var-

ied from three or four to twenty miles per hour. We had only to keep the boat in midstream and stay away from submerged rocks and bars. In less than an hour we passed out of the Kennecott River into the broader—and swifter—Nizina River. Approaching the upper entrance to the Nizina Canyon and rapids, Bill and I discussed another problem. These were the rapids where under similar conditions two years before Montgomery and his wife and child had been drowned through capsizing of their boat.

If we landed and walked the many miles around the canyon to its lower end we would be delayed several days. Furthermore, we would have to leave Mrs. Potter and George alone at least one day and possibly a night while we went back to run the boat through. And if anything happened to Bill and me, the chances were very good they would die of starvation and exposure as it was not likely anyone would pass that way for months.

We decided to run the canyon. And then another argument started. Bill wanted to go through with the bow of the boat downstream maintaining steerage way by rowing the boat faster than the current. This is standard practice all over the world in running rapids, but I knew that was the method Montgomery had tried and I reasoned we could more easily steer and skid the boat around the sharp turns in the canyon by going through stern first and slowing the speed by rowing upstream or across the current. Being the boss I made the decision—and by that time we were caught in swift water. Within two or three minutes solid walls of rock rose a hundred to two hundred feet on each side of us. About midway the river narrowed at a sharp right angle turn,

piling up beneath an undercut cliff and forming a vicious whirlpool. This was the place where Montgomery had been trapped. By rowing desperately upstream and across current we just barely managed to keep out of the clutches of the whirlpool and as we passed around the bend below we shoved our oars against the face of the cliff to keep the boat away. In a little over twelve minutes from the time we entered the canyon we pulled up in quiet water on a gravel beach at the mouth of the river three miles below, wet with spray but happy. We made camp. Later that evening the first white woman and child ever to successfully run Nizina Canyon (and perhaps the last) stood with me in solemn respect before the grave of the first white woman and child to make the attempt—at the cost of their lives. I have always believed it was my knowledge of the method they had used and its failure that saved our own lives.

The next day we floated lazily down the Chitina River, a much bigger and somewhat slower stream. Near midday we sighted a steamer puffing slowly upstream against a heavy current. We could scarcely believe our eyes. We had heard of no steamer and later we learned it was her first trip. During the next five years she made regular runs taking supplies up to a shortcut trail to the Kennecott Mine and to the camps of workers building the new railroad from Cordova on the coast.

Watching the steamer and exchanging waves of our handkerchiefs with the crew, we forgot we were running a river until several rapid blasts of the whistle warned us something was wrong. Looking hastily downstream we found we had been carried almost into the face of a cliff where the current was so swift that white waves

(continued on page 20)

# Morels

*Editor's Note: This article first appeared in the Copper River Record in their June 14, 2012 issue. It was written based on last year's weather and harvest results. We hope this year's crop is also as productive!*

BY BRUCE JAMES

One sign that summer has arrived is the sudden appearance of black morel mushrooms (*Morchella elata*).

These are among the finest tasting mushrooms that can be picked anywhere (Bruce's opinion)!

And for those that are reluctant to harvest wild mushrooms for fear that you may get a poisonous one, morels are one of the easiest to identify and thus you can feel safe about eating the delectable fungi. The one caveat is: the first time you try them, only eat one or two as some people still have reactions to them and only eat them cooked, never raw. My suggestion is to either pair up with somebody that can show you the right mushrooms to pick or to purchase a copy of a reliable guide. I know they have these at the Park visitor center and I am sure they are available other places as well.

The recent wet weather definitely has helped the morel crop. Without rain at the right time, few of these mushrooms actually come up. With the rain we have had in late May and early June, they are popping up everywhere (sorta). My wife and I found our first ones of the year right in our lawn on the last day of May and we find more every day. While the 'srooms' may continue to come up, as the underbrush springs back to life it becomes

harder and harder to find them among the greenery.

Here comes the tough part... where to find them. I wouldn't recommend asking a picker where their hotspot is as all you are likely to get from them is a



Photo courtesy Bruce James

A black morel pokes through the leafy ground-cover. Black morels are fantastic eating!

glazed over look on their face and a shrug of their shoulders. At best they may mumble something out like "in the woods" as dedicated pickers would rather face a questioning by an IRS agent then divulge their honey hole of morels. When you find your own honey hole, DON'T TELL ANYONE. Failure to heed my suggestion will result in all your "friends" searching through your spot and picking the mushrooms before you get there! If by

chance you are caught coming out of the woods with your prize, hide them quickly in a pack where they can't be seen. When asked what you were doing, mumble something about looking for a knife you lost last year while out hunting. Say anything but picking mushrooms!

I will give you some general guidelines to get you started though. Morels like well drained but moist soil. They are also found at times in lawns, on the edge of the road, and about everywhere in between. Most, however, are found in the woods where there has been a disturbance of the soil in the past few years. I have never found them in a solid spruce forest, rather, most of mine come from a young poplar patch that is warmed by the sun. While I have never taken advantage of the following advice, it seems genuine: check out areas that were burned over by wildfires in the past few years. I am told that sometimes you can find so many that you couldn't carry them all out. It would be in this situation that you would hopefully be able to keep them fresh enough to bring out and sell them to others. Back in the Midwest, they went for about \$30 per pound. To keep them fresh, never place them in a plastic bag, always use a paper bag or some kind of clean box. Also keep them moist but not wet. And try to use/sell/freeze/dry them in a day or two as their fine flavor starts to fade with time.

Last but not least is preparing them for the plate. Kayane dunks them in some salty water to rinse away dirt and to remove any little bugs or worms. She removes them quickly and shakes off any water and splits them lengthwise with a small knife. The halves are placed on a dry paper towel to remove any more water for several minutes while she warms a cast iron frying pan. Some butter is placed in the pan and when it seems hot but not scorched, she lightly

dusts the mushrooms with flour and places them into the hot skillet. Depending on how big the mushrooms were, it will take several minutes before they start to gain a golden brown color. A spatula is then used to flip them over and as soon as they are browned on the other side, take them out and look over your shoulder. If the rest of the family isn't paying attention, sneak a couple for a "taste test." If they still haven't caught on, repeat the previous advice. Save them a

few though as family feuds may result from the wonderful aroma of fried morel mushrooms hanging over an empty plate!

Finally, remember where you got them as it is fairly common to pick more in subsequent years. Unless of course you ignored my advice and told somebody about your honey hole. Then all you will find is boot prints and maybe the hint of somebody snickering!

## Stovemaker

BY LARRY SATTERFIELD

I float hunted the Kobuk River in northwest Alaska for seven years in a row, each year gaining a higher addiction of the true wilderness of the area.

My hunting partners and I would fly from Fairbanks to the native river village of Kobuk, Alaska. From there, we would be shuttled with raft & gear via water taxi, east or (upstream) to the end of the Gates of the Arctic Wilderness and float some 60 miles west, returning to the village of Kobuk.

I eventually became friends with the native water taxi owner, Raymond Woods. The Woods' family is one of the oldest families that have lived on the river since time immemorial.

On the way downstream, each year, we have to make a sabbatical stop at the Woods' fish camp. That's where I met Josephine Woods, who is Raymond's mother



Author shown with stove.

Photo courtesy the author

and the matriarch of the Woods' family.

The very first time I laid eyes on Josephine, a small petite lady, was when I entered a large tent where she was tending a fire in a stove. As I was having coffee and conversation with her son Raymond, I watched intently as she struggled (on her knees) to make do with the dilapidated wood stove.

My heart went out to her! Here is an elderly women who spent all of her life on the river giving and

taking life under some very harsh conditions, most of which modern people could not comprehend. She deserved better for her remaining days on earth!

So I asked her son Raymond, "Do you think Josephine would mind if I make her a new stove?" He said, "I don't know, let me ask her."

"Hey, mom," he yells, "Larry here wants to know if he can make you a

stove!"

"Really," her eyes light up. "If you do, I will make you many meals!"

She proceeds to tell me that her husband was going to build one, but had died before getting around to it.

That was it! My steel fabrication experience was destined to make this woman a stove!

I returned home and soon after started to design and fabricate the

stove. The stove was completed in the following late spring and sent north to Kobuk. It flew from Anchorage to Kotzebue on Alaska Air, then from Kotzebue to Kobuk on Northern Air Cargo, then 55 miles upriver on her son's boat to the fish camp. That gives you an idea of how "far out" in the bush the 190 lb. stove traveled.

After waiting a few days, I called to see if it had arrived. Josephine answered and said, "It is soooo beautiful, are you coming in the fall?"

I said yes, and she said she will see me then, and immediately hung up.

The following fall, I planned that year's hunt with two of my brothers from Ohio. Raymond shuttled us upriver that September and dropped us and our gear off to start our float back to the village of Kobuk.

Before he sped off in his boat he smiled and said, "Larry, be sure you stop at the fish camp, somebody there wants to see you!"

That fall it rained a lot, so needless to say the hunting and fishing was poor. We stayed at the drop-off point for a few days.

My brothers and I decided to pull stakes and head down to another area. This meant going by the fish camp!

As we made the final river bend in the raft before the fish camp, you could see several people waiting on the bank. My brothers ask me if "they" were friendly.

"I guess we'll see," I said facetiously. When we made the shore, I stepped out of the raft and started towards the camp only being met halfway by Josephine.

"Is that you Larry?" She gave me a big motherly hug and a heart-

felt thanks. That evening, we had moose liver, eggs and apple pancakes!

Later that evening she said, "Larry, people stop at fish camp, they see stove, they say Josephine, where do you get stove?"

She said, "I tell them this tall white friend of mine, Larry, made it for me!"

Plans changed and we flew out of Shungnak that year which is the next village downriver from Kobuk. While arriving at both villages floating downriver, we would have people approach us and ask questions of who made the stove?

As we were flying out of Shungnak, my brothers turned to me and said, "We just realized what your Indian name would be," they said jokingly.

"What's that?" I asked.

"You are Stovemaker."

## National Park Service releases Compendiums for 2013

*(Editor's note: The following information is taken from an Alaska National Parks News Release, Anchorage.)*

The National Park Service (NPS) has released the Alaska park compendiums for 2013. These are compilations of all designations, closures and restrictions imposed under the discretionary authority within the regulations covering national park areas.

Public meetings began in December 2012 and a public comment period in January and February. The draft compendiums received more than 59,000 comments. According to NPS, the majority of the letters supported changes to proposed restrictions to sport hunting relations in several national preserves. Letters op-

posing the proposed action were also received.

Most sport hunting practices and seasons in national preserves continue to be regulated by the State of Alaska. The restrictions adopted by the NPS are in response to recent state regulations which liberalize the taking of wolves, coyotes, and bears in some game management units. The NPS changes are a result of differing legal and policy frameworks between NPS and the State of Alaska.

The NPS now prohibits the take of wolves and coyotes between May 1 and August 9 in several Alaska national preserves, including the Wrangell-St. Elias (WRST). The seasons remain open from August 10 to April 30.

The compendiums for Denali, WRST and Yukon-Charley Rivers

include a prohibition on the taking of brown bears at a bait station. The NPS has also renewed a prohibition on using artificial light to take black bears at dens and taking black bear sows with cubs at dens in Denali and Gates of the Arctic National Preserves.

The 2013 compendium for WRST also closed an old trail for motorized, recreational use. The trail is located off the Nabesna Road. In 2012 this multiple use trail was rebuilt in a nearby location that is dried and more sustainable.

The compendiums are available at: [www.nps.gov/akso/management/compendiums.efm](http://www.nps.gov/akso/management/compendiums.efm).

A written copy may be requested directly from any park or the NPS, 240 W. 5<sup>th</sup> Ave., Anchorage, AK. 99501, Attn: Compendium.

# The McCarthy Weekly News

## 1922 May & June editions

### LOCAL AND PERSONAL

Roy F. Snyder has been appointed school tax collector for McCarthy.

G. C. Gwin has been awarded the four year contract for the summer mail to Dan Creek and Nizina, beginning July 1st, for the consideration of \$35 a trip. The present contract, J. H. Murie's expires June 30th.

The ice flow on the Copper River is daily expected to break, and the decking is being taken from the bridge near Chitina. There is very little water running in the river but the ice run always comes suddenly.

### CHITINA NEWS

#### May 1st. (Special to the News.)

The death of our ex-U.S. Commissioner, Judge Wm. O'Connor on Saturday, April 29th, came as a great shock to the community, as he had not seemed seriously ill, and was up and about. His only complaint was that he found his food did not agree with him. On April 27th, he went to Kennecott and an examination disclosed a cancerous growth in one of the tubes leading to the stomach. It was too late for an operation and within a couple of days he passed away. He leaves a wife and five married children, three daughters and two sons. One of his sons, Charles O'Connor, lived in Chitina and McCarthy a couple of years ago. Before his death, the Judge requested a wire be sent to his youngest son Lewis, to come up and take charge of his affairs. This has been done and it is expected he will be here on the next boat.

Mr. Frank Bingham, the Willow Creek Roadhouse owner whose house burned a week ago was found to be unhurt and is occupying a cache he has in the timber nearby.

### THE SPRING RUSH

McCarthy presents a very busy aspect this week, when the town has been full of travelers to the various mining camps.

Mr. and Mrs. G. H. Birch arrived from New York on Monday evening and left next day for Dan Creek. Charlie Range has returned and will be one of the foremen for the Dan Creek Mining Co.

L. H. Carvey, Stephen Palmer and his father, Wright Palmer, passed through on

their way to the Andrus property at Chititu. Six tons of extra freight is being hauled to Chititu by wagon.

Mr. James P. Gaskill and his brother arrived on Thursday's train and will leave immediately for the Green Group, where a large force of men will be employed. The opening up of the Green Group property is a big thing for McCarthy, as practically all outfitting is done locally and all the men hired here.

#### Chitina, May 2nd. (Special to the News.)

Automobile owners here are making plans to carry tourists in considerable numbers this summer.

Claude Stewart, Frank Lamson and Chas. Garwood will arrange for through service to Fairbanks and return.

Billy Frame has his car ready and undoubtedly the Gibson Stage line of Fairbanks and a number of other operators there will be on the Trail. All roadhouses will be in operation.

Mr. John McCrary has been notified that he has secured the Chitina Gulkana four year mail contract. The Gulkana Dempsey mail contract has not yet been awarded.

Work will soon begin on the railroad tunnel at Chitina. All the earth is to be removed, making it practically an open cut.

May 6

### LOCAL NEWS

Lewis O'Connor, of Seattle, was a McCarthy visitor on Thursday, en route to Kennecott to make arrangements for the funeral of his father, the late Judge Wm. O'Connor, who died suddenly April 29th. He returned to Chitina yesterday with the body and the funeral will be held at that place upon the arrival of his elder brother, Chas. O'Connor who is expected on the S. S. Watson.

Mrs. B. V. Eriksen reported a robbery at her residence last week during her absence to dinner at the restaurant. Sixty three dollars in currency, one gold nugget pin, kodak and flash light are missing.

Mike Knowles has purchased the Cope Cabin from Harry Brown.

J. P. Gaskill, president of the Green Butte Copper Corporation has rented one of John Amber's houses for the summer.

### PIONEERS ACTIVE

McCarthy will celebrate the Fourth of July in a fitting manner. This was decided on at the last meeting of the McCarthy Igloo, Pioneers of Alaska, who will this year take full charge of the arrangements to make the day a pleasant one for the home folks and the visitors.

A program will be gotten up very shortly by a special committee and it is safe to say that the principal event will be a baseball match between McCarthy and Kennecott. Baseball enthusiasts at Kennecott this season are many and two crack teams are ready for play. One of these will probably play a match at Cordova on the Fourth and the other will play McCarthy on that day.

There has been some talk about an excursion running to Cordova from Kennecott on the Fourth but Jas. Dennis, Captain of the Kennecott Baseball League, said when interviewed yesterday that he had no knowledge of it; as far as he knew only the team would make the trip to the Coast.

### MINING NEWS

Two distinct plants will operate at the John Andrus' property this season. On No. 9 Chititu every thing is in readiness for the water—mining will be done on the left limit of the creek this season. L. H. Carvey is in charge, with Geo. Madden as day foreman and George Nickles foreman of the night crew. Ed Bassett is chef, George Saxon assistant.

No. 2 above discovery on Chititu will also be mined this season, the whole hydraulic plant from Rex Creek is being moved there and will be installed under the direction of Al Jackson. Stephen Palmer will be in charge of the workings with Paul Latham as piper. This outfit will occupy the camp buildings on No. 4. Mr. and Mrs. Powell are employed there in charge of the messhouse.

Altogether about forty men will be employed at Chititu this season. Al Jackson, who has the contract for supplying the lumber will use the sawmill when the water runs.



May 20

**CHITINA NEWS****Chitina, May 24th. (Special to News.)**

The funeral service for the late Judge Wm. O'Connor was held in the A. B. Hall on the evening of May 23rd. The Rev. E. P. Zeigler officiating. A large number of people attended & the beautiful Episcopal service was very impressive. The song "Lead Kindly Light" was the opening hymn, chosen because the deceased had many times expressed his appreciation of the beautiful thoughts expressed by the words. The beautiful old song "Asleep in Jesus" was sung as a duet by Mrs. C. H. Philips, soprano, and Mrs. Joseph Ketchum, alto, accompanied by Mrs. O. A. Nelson at the piano and Mrs. M. S. Wilson, violin with muted strings.

The Rev. Zeigler reviewed the life of Judge O'Connor briefly, and eulogized his gifts of mind and his sincere patriotism. His life was vigorous and forceful to its very end, in its 69th year. His son Lewis was the only member of his family present. The evening was wonderfully calm and lovely and the service at the grave very impressive in the soft evening light on Cemetery Hill,

overlooking the Copper and Chitina Rivers. May he rest in peace.

\*\*\*\*\*

Henry Olsen, who returned from Valdez last Tuesday, is putting his cars in shape to handle the passenger traffic this summer.

John E. Barrett says he has some good baseball material amongst the Green Butte force.

Daylight for nearly twenty four hours, perfect weather, no unemployed, every train bringing men, freight and machinery to develop the great resources of this section of the country, every thing quiet and peaceful in the township itself, school kids happy at the thought of long vacation — in short, all's well!

May 27

**OF GENERAL INTEREST**

James Hussey and Roy Snyder have wired for a new Dodge car. It will be used on the McCarthy Kennecott run.

A special train arrived last Sunday bringing Mr. Stannard on an official visit to Kennecott. He and Mr. Nelding paid a visit to the Green Butte Copper Co. on Thursday by automobile. Mr. Stannard returned to the coast this morning. The train left quite early this morning and will reach Cordova this afternoon.

John Nelson, our genial assistant depot agent, will celebrate his birthday next Monday, June 5th, 73 years and still going strong.

**CHITINA NEWS****Chitina, May 24. (Special to the News.)** Crowded out of last week's issue.

Mr. Fred Nicholls, wife and four children returned this week from the States and left today for their roadhouse on the Chitina-Fairbanks trail. Mr. Nicholls has secured a number of wood contracts from the government to supply the telegraph stations. He brought with him from Seattle a Ford automobile and trailer. Also supplies and live chickens. Billy Frame is helping him move his outfit, using a Ford truck. The cars will probably be able to travel to within a few miles of the roadhouse but a glacier is usually found on the trail near their home, Paxons, and they will cross this afoot, leaving a part of the outfit till the glacier melts.

**WORK ON TUNNEL AT CHITINA**

O. A. Nelson, who has the contract for removing the earth from the railroad tunnel, has a crew of men blasting out the stumps. A donkey engine has been taken to the top of the hill for power and a scraper will be used as soon as stumps and brush are removed.

June 3

**PERSONAL**

Asa C. Baldwin, U. S. Mineral Surveyor, arrived on Tuesday's train and will spend the summer in this section of the country, having surveys to make on Dan, Glacier and Rex Creeks, also at Mt. Regal. He left on Thursday for Dan Creek, Oscar Anderson and C. F. M. Cole accompanied him.

Mike Knowles left yesterday for Chisana to get his horses which have been wintered at Horsefelt. He will return in ten days.

A. E. Trim and family have moved from their ranch to the Mother Lode lower camp for the summer. Trim and Jack Maloy have a contract to supply mining timbers to the Mother Lode.

**TOWN TOPICS**

The Fourth of July will be a great day in McCarthy this year much interest is being shown by nearby camps. The Green Butte boys have announced their intention to attend "en masse" and have backed this with contributions. Mr. James Gaskill headed the list with \$50 and several hundred dollars was raised. Next week the town donations will be collected and the program arranged.

Mr. R. L. H. Marshall has purchased a Ford truck and is now able to make rapid deliveries within a large radius with Victor as chauffeur. This particular car is one of the used trucks auctioned by the government at Valdez last month, where it was bid in by George Anderson, shipped to McCarthy and sold to its present owner.

Dionisios Kontogianotos, a miner at the Mother Lode, died on June 9th at Kennecott hospital of miliary tuberculosis after an illness of ten days. Deceased was 38 years of age, a native of Greece, where his father is living. The funeral was held at Kennecott on June 12th, and was largely attended by his countrymen.

June 17

**CHITINA NEWS****Chitina, June 21st. (Special to the News.)**

Mr. Thomas Holland, one of the first residents of Chitina, who left for the outside nearly three years ago returned on the last Alameda and has again taken up his residence on his homestead here. He reports many men out of work outside, and is very glad to be back in Alaska again.

Mr. John McCrary has a new Ford car which arrived on the last boat. The mail to the interior will be promptly delivered and good service rendered.

Mr. and Mrs. Frank Simmons, who purchased the Kenny Lake roadhouse about a year ago have bought several cows from Frank Bingham and will sell dairy products. The pasturage is excellent round the lakes.

**PERSONAL**

Miss Nita Johnstone, who was schoolmistress at Kennecott for the term of 1920-21, and spent last year teaching at Cordova, is spending the summer at Chitina. She has rented the apartment above Mr. O. A. Nelson's residence and will be joined soon by her sister Miss Naida Johnstone from the States and Miss Spence from Cordova. They plan a hiking trip to Fairbanks.

Mrs. Barrett, Mrs. Doze, Mrs. Hubrick and Mrs. Cavanaugh took a long hike on the evening of the longest day of the year, and picnicked on the Iverson trail, taking midnight pictures of the surrounding scenery by time exposure.

Pete Brenwick has secured the new McCarthy to Chisana mail contract beginning July 1. One trip a month at \$175 a trip.

June 24

# The year without summer

BY NED ROZELL

An April snowstorm whirling outside my window today seems to be announcing the postponement of spring. As I sit here watching the show, it makes me think back to the shortest summer ever.

In 1992, it snowed more than 9 inches on May 12th. A string of 70-degree days that followed ate that up in a hurry, but the snow returned in early fall. By September 13th, more than one foot of snow cushioned the ground, and leafed birch trees arced under the weight of ice crystals. Twenty-one years later, some trees still bow to that memory.

I wondered if 1992 was the best example of a year without a summer. The perfect man to ask is Rick Thoman of the National Weather Service. Besides having an encyclopedic memory of Alaska weather events, after 20 years as lead forecaster in the Fairbanks office, Thoman just started a new job as the Weather Service's Climate Science and Services Manager.

As usual, he sharpened my memory.

"Ninety-two was actually a warm summer, bracketed by heavy snows," he said.

A better example of a year without a summer was 1981, he

said. Every month of the summer was cooler than normal in Anchorage, and 1981 was the only year in the last three decades during which Fairbanks had no June, July or August with an average temperature of 60 degrees Fahrenheit or warmer.

An even colder summer was in 1922. In an Alaska climatological record book is a report from the captain of the U.S. Revenue Cutter Bear, which, sailing southward along the coast, encountered sea ice as far south as Point Lay on August 24th. Also in 1922, the official weather station at the experimental station on the University of Alaska Fairbanks campus registered a below-freezing temperature every single month of the year.

"It's the only year that ever happened," Thoman said.

Alaska can be a cold place in summer. The official low for Anaktuvuk Pass on June 25, 1967, was minus 1 degree Fahrenheit. Barrow dropped to 4 degrees Fahrenheit on June 6, 1969. Alaska weather observers have never recorded an official temperature below zero in July or August, but summertime lows below freezing are common in Alaska's upper Tanana Valley and Fortymile River country.

"Which is why it's hard to grow a garden in Tok," Thoman said.

Snow has fallen in Alaska at lower elevations in every month of summer. On a midsummer day 10 years ago (July 17, 2003), more than six inches fell on Cantwell.

Now, on to warmer thoughts. Alaska has cooled a bit according to a recent study by climatologists, but they note that most of that colder weather happened in winter, with summer temperatures holding steady for the first decade of the century. Alaska's all-time high temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit (the same as Hawaii's) happened on June 27, 1915 in Fort Yukon.

And one of the hottest Alaska summers on record was 2004, which was the only year Anchorage has recorded a monthly average temperature warmer than 60 degrees Fahrenheit for June, July and August. That summer was also the warmest in the last 32 years in Juneau. But it was also a year when patches of Alaska equal in area to Vermont burned, smoking every living creature in the Interior like a salmon. Living in that brown haze altered some peoples' desire for the warmest summer possible.

"The only criteria I use is smoky bad, not smoky good," Thoman said.

---

"We have a system that increasingly taxes work and subsidizes nonwork." —economist Milton Friedman (1912-2006)

"It is a general popular error to suppose the loudest complainers for the public to be the most anxious for its welfare." —British statesman Edmund Burke (1729-1797)

## ***Pilgrim's Wilderness*—Coming July 2013**

BY BONNIE KENYON

**T**om Kizzia, Alaskan writer and journalist, has completed his recent literary contribution—*Pilgrims' Wilderness*, A True Story of Faith and Madness in the Alaska Frontier. The book is scheduled for release this summer from Crown, a division of Random House.

The author traveled widely in rural Alaska when he was a reporter for the *Anchorage Daily News*. His stories about the Pilgrim family (once residents of McCarthy, Alaska) won a President's Award from McClatchy Newspapers. His work has appeared in *The Washington Post* and been featured on CNN. His first book, *The Wake of the Unseen Object*, was named one of the best all-time non-fiction books about Alaska by the state historical society.

*Pilgrim's Wilderness* is a true story about the Pilgrim family who moved to the small community of McCarthy which is located in the heart of the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park/Preserve, the nation's largest national park.

Papa Pilgrim, his wife, Country Rose, and their 15 children nearly doubled the size of this small community. When the family first appeared in McCarthy, their new neighbors had little idea of the trouble they were in for. The Pilgrim family presented themselves as a shining example of the home-spun Christian ideal complete with beautiful old-timey musicianship. But, their true story ran dark and deep. Within weeks, Papa had sparked a tense confrontation with the National Park Service while attempting access to their recently-acquired property at a once abandoned copper mine. Neighbors found themselves taking sides in a battle over where a citizen's rights end and the government power begins.

In *Pilgrim's Wilderness*, Kizzia unfolds the remarkable, at times harrowing story of a charismatic spinner of American myths who was not what he seemed, the townspeople caught in his thrall, and the family he led to the brink of ruin. As Kizzia discovered, Papa Pilgrim was in fact the son of a rich, Texas family with ties to Hoover's FBI and strange, oblique

connections to the Kennedy assassination and the movie stars of Easy Rider. As Pilgrim's fight with the government in Alaska grew more intense, the turmoil in his family made it increasingly difficult to tell whether his sons and daughters were messianic followers or helpless hostages in desperate need of rescue.

The author is scheduled to appear at a Book event at Homer Public Library on July 16<sup>th</sup>, Publication day, at 7 pm. He is also appearing on Talk of Alaska. Alaska Public Radio Network on July 23, a book event at Anchorage Museum on July 23 at 7 pm; a book signing at Firewise Books in Palmer on July 24<sup>th</sup> at 4-6 pm.

Be sure to visit the following web site for further information and how to acquire *Pilgrim's Wilderness*: [www.tomkizzia.com](http://www.tomkizzia.com) or [www.pilgrimswilderness.com](http://www.pilgrimswilderness.com).

*Editor's note: The above material was taken from Tom Kizzia's web site with his permission. WS-EN is waiting for a copy of Pilgrim's Wilderness for a future book review.*

## **NPS to Burn piles of debris to reduce fire risk**

COPPER CENTER, ALASKA—

**W**rangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve wildland fire staff will burn piles of debris consisting of trees and brush beginning April 23 through May 3. The piles are located in the McCarthy and Kennecott vicinity with additional burn piles near the Chokosna River off the McCarthy road and at the Viking Lodge public use cabin, mile marker 21.8 off the Nabesna road. Fire staff will ignite the debris piles in the

morning and monitor them throughout the day. Smoke may be visible throughout the area.

The piles resulted from an interagency effort in 2011 and 2012 to reduce thick vegetation along the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park boundary to McCarthy. The decreased vegetation reduces the fire risk to McCarthy and increases public and firefighter safety during a wildfire. Burning the debris piles is the last step before completing this successful project. Visit

<http://www.nps.gov/wrst/parkingmt/firemanagement.htm> for more information about the park's wildland fire management program.

Learn how fire staff reduce the fire risk to NPS structures and how you can do it too at <http://www.nps.gov/akso/nature/fire/firefuels.cfm>.

For additional information, contact Wrangell-St. Elias Public Affairs at (907) 822-7223 or visit <http://www.nps.gov/wrst/index.htm>.

**A wife and child become pioneers continued from page 12**

curled back over the surface. During the next twenty or more minutes we were so busy trying to keep away from that wall of rock we forgot all about the steamer and when we finally swept around the turn into safety she was far in the distance. We later met a New York gentleman who was on the steamer and he told me they all thought we would be lost and that he had watched us through field glasses until we were safe.

That day we reached the mouth of the Chitina after having to again fend our boat off a cliff with an oar and made camp at an old abandoned Indian village on the Copper River. Evening of the next day found us far down the Copper camped at some clear spring water streams where I took my .22 caliber rifle and looked for stray ducks. I found no ducks but in some shallow water I saw scores of salmon swimming lazily about and occasionally rising to the surface. Watching my chance I shot two of them through the body just back of the head and dragged them ashore with a stick. When I sauntered into camp and casually threw down my "bag" there was much curiosity.

"Where in the world did you find them?"

Up in a tree looking for a place to spawn."

Early the following day we were at the head of the Copper River rapids above Miles and Childs glaciers. There were rapids that could not be run. It would be necessary to "line" our boat through and climb along the face of the mountain at the river's edge. Much to our surprise and relief we found a large railway construction crew had blasted a good trail along the river, and when their astonished eyes saw my wife

step out of our boat with her child in her arms our troubles were over. We were treated as guests of honor. Our outfit was carried past the rapids and in the meantime a feast was prepared for us. Later we were placed in a railway construction boat and run through the quieter waters past the glaciers down to the end of the railroad where the late Mr. Heney greeted us and placed a tent at our disposal. He took us to Cordova next day in his private car and we slept that night at the hotel in Mr. Heney's suite which he had wired ahead to have prepared for us.

Mrs. Potter and son George were the first white woman and child to come down the Copper River and the first to make the trip out over the new railway. A few days later we sailed for Seattle.

In the spring of 1913 I was called into the general office one day and asked to go to Alaska with an independent mining expert to report on various copper properties on which my company had secured options. Among them, much to my surprise, were several which I had examined six years previously. Nothing had been done by the old Houghton syndicate with the claims on which I had secured patents in 1908, so I promptly arranged a deal for an option between my company and the syndicate officials.

The expert and I sailed from Seattle some time in June by the direct route across the Pacific to Cordova. Compared to the Alaskan ships of earlier days, this vessel was luxurious and the time for the voyage was reduced by more than half. From Cordova we traveled by train to the mouth of the Chitina River where we took a steamer to a landing only twenty odd miles from the Kennecott

Mine. As our steamer ride up Chitina was unexpected and made possible only through the courtesy of Kennecott Copper Company officials, there was no pack train to meet us at the landing. Kennecott officials arranged to let the expert, an elderly man, have a spare horse to ride. I walked and carried my pack. Back to the old happy days!

We finally connected with our own pack train and started our tour of inspection. As is customary among mine experts, there was no comment on what we saw and no exchange of opinions. But such development as had been done during the intervening six years had opened no ore bodies of any promise on the properties my company had optioned and at last we went up McCarthy Creek to my old headquarters of 1908.

The expert tried to get permission from Kennecott Copper Company officials to visit their mine which was quite properly, under the circumstances, refused. One morning we started up the mountain to examine the syndicate claims which were all I had to show for five years work and the expenditure of \$60,000.00 of my backers' money. We reached the edge of our claims where the formation rose through a glacier and I started to climb the cliffs leading up to our best outcropping of ore. This was the same spot where the government surveyor had balked in 1908. I looked back to see if the expert was following. He was still standing on the ice looking up at me.

"Wait a minute," said he.

I climbed down again.

"Is your discovery of the same type as that I have seen on these other claims?" (I had first shown him the three fractional claims of

the three old prospectors because they were easily accessible.)

“Yes.”

“Well, that is all I want to know.”

And he started off down the trail. His attitude was plainer than speech. I knew he considered our claims worthless. All the way down that mountain my temper continued to rise. We had come 3,000 miles, a round trip of 6,000 miles; principally, from my point of view, to examine this property, and our expert had not set foot on the claims, much less seen the deposits. Nor did he give me a chance to explain the conditions. Returned to our camp I sat on a log and thought over the situation, and the more I thought about it the madder I became. Finally I gathered my few belongings in a pack and started afoot across the mountains over the old trail for Valdez 190 miles away—alone. Fortunately, I met Dr. Brooks of the Alaskan Geological Survey in a camp on the Kennecott side of the range and he invited me to accompany him as far as Tonsina.

On the voyage back to Seattle and the long train ride to the Copper Country, I had plenty of time to consider the situation. The claims on which I had expended so much of my former employers money and for which I had risked not merely my own life, but the lives of my wife and son and others, had been rejected as not worth examination by a mining expert employed by one of the world’s great copper producing companies. I must have been dreaming dreams, seeing things that were only visions because of my inexperience when I staked those claims and recommended their development. By the time I reached Houghton I was a sadly disillusioned young man. Some time later Mr. Rice, President of the syndicate, sent for me. A young fellow with a strong Irish brogue had made an offer for our Alaskan property. He claimed to be an attorney and frankly admitted he had had no experience in mining. I had met him in Alaska and knew of his reputation as a “wild cat” speculator. I knew also

he had made an offer for the three fractional claims adjoining ours. Mr. Rice said the promoter offered to pay back all the money the syndicate had spent in Alaska with interest of 6%. What would I recommend?

Having been thoroughly deflated by our expert’s attitude I was ready to concede I had probably over estimated the value of the property. Evidently I was a failure as a geologist. I advised Mr. Rice to sell. Our claims were consolidated with the three fractional claims to form a new company and the promoter sold stock all over America at almost any price he could get. There was a story that at one time he paid a board and room bill in stock. In due time the Kennecott Copper Company bought a controlling interest and operated the mine until 1938. As the “Mother Lode Copper Co.” the property has paid many millions of dollars in dividends, just how many millions I have never quite had the heart to learn.

## Wrangell Mountain Skyboys on exhibit

BY BONNIE KENYON

*Editor’s Note: The following information comes from Katie Ringsmuth, National Park Service historian, and the Anchorage Museum.*

“For all you flyboy fans out there, here’s two upcoming events you might be interested in attending at the Anchorage Museum,” says Katie.

An exhibition opens on May 3<sup>rd</sup> and runs through August 25<sup>th</sup>. A summer supplement to *Arctic Flight: A Century of Alaska Aviation*, this focuses on the daring pilots who established aviation in Alaska’s Wrangell-St. Elias moun-

tain region, some of the highest and most rugged terrain in the country.

Through historical photographs learn about the adventurous lives of legendary pilots including Bob Reeve, “Kirk” Kirkpatrick and Merle “Mudhole” Smith. These resourceful flyers opened Alaska to mineral development and to mountaineers aiming to conquer the continent’s highest peaks. these pilots took exploration and science to new heights, opened new territory to trophy hunters, and became national war heroes.

The determined Harold Gillam probably best represented the Wrangell Mountain Skyboy’s frontier image—a portrait crafted not by the aviators, but journalists and other 1930s-era writers. Gillam pioneered reliable air service in the region but received the most media attention for his pet polar bears and uncanny ability to fly in weather that grounded most pilots.

Gillam was known for using his remarkable flying skills to save people’s lives, including Carl Whitham, owner of the nearly inaccessible Nabesna Mine. In December 1934, Whitham fell down a mineshaft. Gillam attempted a res-

cue, risking an emergency flight out of the mine in 35 miles-per-hour winds. *The Valdez Miner* reported that, despite Gillam's efforts, Whitham died. A week later, however, the paper ran a correction, stating that Gillam indeed had saved Whitham and that the report of his death was "very much exaggerated."

"No wonder these pilots were considered 'Angels in Fur,' said Katie. "They could resurrect people from the dead!"

The flyers making history above the Wrangell Mountains developed unique skills and knowledge to establish a vital and visionary profession. This exhibition conveys how bush pilots brought eastern Alaska into the modern age, while simultaneously reinforcing a frontier identity that continues to resonate with residents today.

Exhibition collaborators include the National Park Service Alaska Regional Office, Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Pre-

serve, and the Wrangell Mountain aviation community.

On Friday, June 14<sup>th</sup>, Katie will do a presentation at the National Park Service auditorium in Copper Center. It will begin at 4 pm with the subject of Katie's book, *Tunnel Vision*. The second part at 7 pm will address aviation in Alaska. This series of talks are being supported by the Wrangell Institute for Science and Environment (WISE). Please contact Robin Underwood at 907 822-3575 for more details.

## WRST Superintendent Obernesser updates community

BY BONNIE KENYON

Shortly before finalizing this issue of *WSEN*, we received a letter from Wrangell-St. Elias National Park's superintendent, Rick Obernesser. The yearly spring letter to the McCarthy/ Kennicott community, outlines the summer work season for the maintenance crew on Kennecott Stabilization and additional work in the Kennecott mill site area. Since I didn't have room to include the entire letter in this issue, please be sure to read District Ranger Stephens Harper's report at the March 28<sup>th</sup> McCarthy Area Council's meeting on page 6. Please find the following edited quotes from the superintendent's letter:

"Successful management of Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve is directly linked to a healthy relationship between the NPS and local communities. We are committed to regular communication regarding management of your public lands and resources and will continue to actively seek your input.

"This year, I have asked District Ranger Stephens Harper to serve as the Kennecott/McCarthy Liaison to the park leadership team. We have also hired Eliza-

beth Schafer to assist with some planning efforts and to support Stephen's in his role as Liaison. I too plan to be out in your neighborhood frequently this season and am looking forward to meeting with many of you in person.

"As we move into the 2013 season, Kennecott interpretation anticipates that our opening dates will be Friday, May 24 through September 2, 2013 (Labor Day). Improving on the scheduling successes of last year, we are going to be opening the Kennecott Visitor Center earlier in the day. Our visitor center will be open from 9:30 am to 7:00 pm seven days a week. The historic buildings will open at 9:30 am and close shortly after 7 pm each day. As we prepare for the upcoming season, there will be a few days at the end of May and the beginning of June when the visitor's center will be closed or have limited hours. To check on our early season hours, visit the park website at [www.nps.gov/wrst](http://www.nps.gov/wrst) or call the Visitor Center at 1-907-822-7476 or 554-1103.

"The McCarthy Road information station will continue to be an un-staffed visitor service kiosk and information station. We will still have an outhouse, free day parking, and a phone at the site for

visitors to call the Kennecott Visitor Center during normal business hours. It is anticipated that the Chitina Ranger Station will be open Thursday to Monday from 10 am to 4:30 pm.

"Work will be conducted to stabilize the foundation of the Mill Building and replace structural timbers inside the building. The NPS will continue working with contractor Twin Peaks Construction on Levels 1 through 7, as well as completing the stabilization of the hillside on the South side of the Mill. The work will keep the Mill closed for the 2013 season.

"We have decreased the number of district rangers from five to three...Meghan Seifert and Matt Smith will be taking a break from working for WRST this year to pursue some personal interests and make progress on their new home in Kennecott. Luke Hodgson and Bekky Anderson have moved to Slana and will be working on the north side of the Wrangells this year. Elizabeth Schafer and Matthew Emht will be working in the positions previously held by Meghan and Matt.

"I wish you all well and hope you have a safe and productive summer season."

[www.PropertyRightsResearch.org](http://www.PropertyRightsResearch.org)

Julie Smithson, Researcher  
213 Thorn Locust Lane  
London, Ohio 43140-8844  
propertyrights@earthlink.net  
740-857-1239 (voice/no fax)

"Evil must be confronted in its womb and, if there is no other way to do it, then it has to be dealt with by the use of force."  
~ Czech President Vaclav Havel, in New York, September 19, 2002

---

MOTHER LODE COPPER MINES COMPANY OF ALASKA  
201 Barrow Street #1 • Anchorage, AK 99501

## Sourdough Drilling Water Wells

Paul Barr  
Sourdough Drilling  
PO Box 721  
Soldotna, AK 99669  
907-262-5494 or cell 907-398-7898

MARY KAY®

## stress-free holiday Shopping

This season, get **fabulous gifts** for everyone on your list...all from the comfort of your home. Just call me or visit my **Web site**. You'll find pampering products, fragrances and more at your **convenience!**

Tammy Rowland  
Independent Beauty Consultant  
[www.marykay.com/trowland1](http://www.marykay.com/trowland1)  
(907) 581-5881

First in Fuel, First in  
Service; Family  
Owned Since 1892.



Residential & Commercial  
Heating Oil  
Gasoline  
Diesel Fuel  
AvGas and Jet Fuel  
Chevron Lube Oils and Greases  
Tanks/Accessories

Call Us: 822-3375  
Mile 188.5 Glenn Highway  
Box 276  
Glennallen, AK 99588

# CROWLEY®

# FOR SALE

**2003 John Deere Backhoe**

**310 SG 4x4 extenda hoe  
only 2400hrs TT**

**Like new**

**Located in McCarthy**

**\$35,000.00**

**Call Dave Felts @**

**907-554-1152**

**or**

**973-335-7380**

## *McCarthy-Kennicott Community Church*



**Sunday 11am Worship**

Interdenominational—All faiths welcome

Located on the “island” near the footbridge  
554-1194

## *Scheduled Air Service from Anchorage to McCarthy with stopover in Gulkana!*

Now you can leave Anchorage at 8:30 on Monday or Thursday morning and arrive in Gulkana at 9:45, McCarthy at 11:00. Or, you can leave McCarthy at 11:15 and be back in Anchorage by 2:00pm the same day! (Leaves Gulkana at 12:45) This service is year around.

# Copper Valley Air

**[www.coppervalleyair.com](http://www.coppervalleyair.com)**

**Phone 822-4200**

**Or toll-free 866-570-4200**

**Gulkana Airfield Box 234, Glennallen, AK 99588**

RESPONSIBILITY FOR DEPARTURES, ARRIVALS, CONNECTIONS.

Copper Valley Air will not be responsible for damages resulting from the failure of flights to depart or arrive at times stated in this timetable, nor for errors herein, nor for failure to make connections to other airlines or of this company. Schedules are subject to change without notice. Schedules shown are based on expected flying times. Because weather and other factors may affect operating conditions, departures and arrivals cannot be guaranteed.



## Mile 57 McCarthy Road McCarthy



Website: [http:// mile57mccarthyroad.ePropertySites.com](http://mile57mccarthyroad.ePropertySites.com)  
For more pictures instantly: Text "534500" To 79564

Awesome mountain views! This house has all the right stuff! Solar panels, well, septic system, full bathroom, 2 wood burning stoves plus Toyo backup oil stove, solar operated freezer, washer and dryer, small out building, spruce trees, lower pasture, beautiful deck area, green house, bedroom, bath, kitchen and living room plus mud room. It's all here! Call about this property today! 60 Miles east of Chitina on the McCarthy Road.

- 1 bedrooms
- 1 bathrooms
- 600 approx sq.ft.
- Propane Refrigerator
- Propane Cooktop/ Oven
- Inside Plumbing
- Metal Roof
- SolarOperated Freezr
- Mud Room
- Green House
- Garden Plot
- Mountain Views!
- 1 Bedroom
- Full Bath w/ ClawTub
- Roomy Kitchen
- Nice Living Room
- Satellite Dish
- Deck off Kitchen
- 6.54 Acres
- No Taxes
- Existing Well
- Full Septic System
- Out Building

**Offered at: \$125,000**

### The Details



#### Agent Information



**Linda Warren**  
Cell Phone # 602-677-3109  
LindaWarren@Realtor.com

**Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage**  
3113 E Lincoln Drive  
Phoenix, AZ 85016

**Owner/Agent Licensed to sell Real Estate in Arizona**



**WELLS  
FARGO**

We've Been A Part  
Of The Local Scenery  
Since 1852<sup>®</sup>



Wells Fargo was one of the first companies to do business around here. So, you might say we've grown up together. Thanks for all your support over the years.

**Glennallen Team**

Mile 187.5 Glenn Highway

© 2008 Wells Fargo Bank, N.A. All rights reserved. Member FDIC. AS-3216 9551

wellsfargo.com

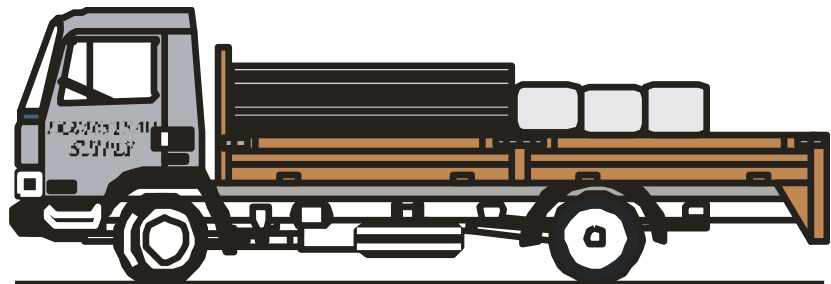
# **HOMESTEAD SUPPLY**

*Lumber, building materials and hardware delivered to the McCarthy area at Anchorage prices!*

Give us a call or come in and browse our new ACE Hardware store.

*NEW! Greenhouse and potting supplies!*

**907-822-3987**  
or  
**FAX 822-5209**



Mile 115.5 Richardson Highway (Box 49) Glennallen

# ROWCON SERVICES

GENERAL CONTRACTOR  
McCarthy, Alaska 554-4498

Keith Rowland, Owner  
Lifetime Alaskan

Excavation & Gravel Products  
DEC-approved septics

♪ Over the river and  
through the woods, ♪  
a-freighting we will go.

Lowboy & Heavy Freight Service



**Current McCarthy  
Road information**  
<http://www.wsen.net/page3.html>

## COPPER RIVER RECORD

Community Newspaper  
for the Copper Valley  
**Subscribe \* Advertise \* Contribute!**  
P.O. Box 277 Glennallen, AK 99588  
907-259-5277 fax 888-870-3167  
[contact@copperriverrecord.net](mailto:contact@copperriverrecord.net)

## WRANGELL MOUNTAIN TECHNICAL SERVICES

Providing Civil Engineering and  
Land Survey Services

*Serving the Copper Basin and throughout Alaska*

On-Site Water and Wastewater Designs  
Engineering Consultation  
Residential Home Inspections  
Construction Inspection and Management  
As-built Surveys, Boundary Surveys, Sub-  
divisions, Construction Surveys & Sanitary  
Surveys

### ALLEN MINISH, PE PLS

Mile 32.1 Edgerton Hwy  
P. O. Box 118, Chitina, AK 99566  
**907-823-2280**

# MCCARTHY'S GROCERY & HARDWARE CENTER

ALL YOUR GROCERY NEEDS. FRESH PRODUCE.

FULLY STOCKED HARDWARE STORE.

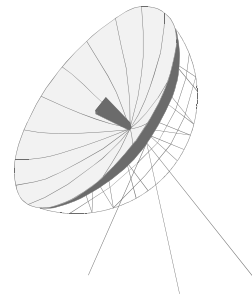
Thanks to you, 2012 was a great year! We look forward to  
serving you in 2013.

**MCCARTHY CENTER**

MA JOHNSON'S HOTEL - MCCARTHY LODGE BISTRO - GOLDEN SALOON -  
MOUNTAIN ARTS GIFTS - NUGGET LIQUORS - LANCASTER'S HOTEL

# The New **Caribou Hotel**

*Getting tired?  
Stop at the Caribou Hotel!  
The coffee pot's always on!*



**Warm atmosphere — Hot Tubs — Satellite TV  
Full Menu Restaurant**

Mile 187 Glenn Hwy. 822-3302 Glennallen, AK

# Cooking with Peggy

BY PEGGY GUNTIS

**D**ear Cooking and Eating Friends (that just about covers everyone, doesn't it!). Here it is springtime in Arizona and just about time to pack up and head north. I can hardly wait to get to McCarthy, see all my friends, and just relax a little. We're not staying as long this year because we are planning to leave early in August and drive to the east coast to see friends, relatives and go to my 55th high school reunion! I've never been to one before so I'm really looking forward to it. For now though, let me get back to my job and share a few recipes that I've collected this winter.

*This first one was one I collected from a good friend at church. She and I are in Bible Study together and we take turns with the other women bringing the coffee and snacks. Shari brought a wonderful*

## **APPLE COFFEE CAKE** **Serves 18-24 average pieces)**

CAKE:

½ cup butter  
1 cup granulated sugar  
2 eggs  
1 teaspoon vanilla  
2 cups flour  
1 teaspoon each baking powder and baking soda  
½ teaspoon salt  
1 cup sour cream  
1 cups finely chopped apples

Grease a 13 X 9 baking dish. Cream butter and sugar. Mix in eggs and vanilla. Beat well. Stir in flour, baking soda, baking

powder and salt alternately with the sour cream. Fold in the apples. Spread batter in the pan.

TOPPING:

1 cup brown sugar  
½ cup chopped nuts  
2 teaspoons butter  
1 teaspoon cinnamon

Mix topping ingredients together and sprinkle evening over the batter.

Bake at 350 degrees for about 35-45 minutes.

*Here's another one that I got from a church friend that would be good if you were requested to bring something for a breakfast gathering or maybe you have house guests and would rather serve one casserole than fix eggs, potatoes, meat, etc. separately. It is wonderful served with some fresh fruit, maybe some orange juice, coffee and some rolls or toast.*

## **CHRISTA'S FAVORITE BREAKFAST CASSEROLE**

1 pound breakfast sausage (I'd use Sweet Italian sausage links with the casing removed and then crumbled.)  
3 cups hashbrowns (thawed if frozen)  
¼ cup butter, melted  
12 ounces mild Cheddar cheese, shredded  
½ cup onion, shredded  
1 (16 ounce) container small curd cottage cheese  
6 jumbo eggs

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Lightly grease a 9 X 13 inch baking dish. Place sausage in a large, deep skillet. Cook over

medium-high heat until evenly brown. Drain, crumble, and set aside. In the prepared baking dish, stir together the shredded potatoes and butter. Line the bottom and sides of the baking dish with the mixture. In a bowl, mix the sausage, Cheddar cheese, onion, cottage cheese, and eggs. Pour over the potato mixture. Bake 1 hour in the preheated oven or until a toothpick inserted into the center of the casserole comes out clean. Let it cool for 5 minutes before serving.

*Now let me give you one from our Pennsylvania friend, Colleen Reeves. I've given you some of her great recipes before and she's come up with another! She's here in Tucson visiting my sister who is thrilled to have a guest that does most of the cooking!*

## **CHOW MEIN BURGERS**

2 stalks celery, chopped (makes about ½ cup)  
½ cup sliced mushrooms  
1 cup canned bean sprouts (drain and chop)  
¼ cup soy sauce  
1 or 1 ½ pounds ground round  
1 tablespoon onion flakes  
garlic powder  
½ cup dry milk  
2 dashes Worcestershire

Brown celery, mushrooms and bean sprouts in soy sauce in nonstick pan. When celery is soft, drain vegetables and mix with the meat and condiments thoroughly. Shape into patties and broil. Enjoy!

*Now let me share one I got from Weight Watchers back in 2003. By the way, since I joined*

*again and lost my weight AGAIN, I've kept it off 1 year and 4 months. Yea! I try to eat fish at least 4 times a week and this is one of my favorites.*

**HONEY GLAZED SALMON**

- 2 tablespoons honey
- 1 tablespoon fresh orange juice
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon Hoisin sauce
- 2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- 4 (6 oz.) Salmon fillets (about 1" thick)

Preheat the broiler.

Combine the first seven ingredients and stir well with a whisk.

Place fillets on a broiler pan that has been coated with spray. Brush with honey mixture; cook for about 12 minutes or until fish flakes easily with a fork, basting frequently with honey mixture. Couldn't be any easier! I always remove the skin before I cook it so I can flip it if I want and put a little of the glaze on that side too. (Remember I just put it in a hot pan for a minute or two or even under the broiler

for a minute or so and the skin just peels off.)

*Here are a couple of fun tips that you might want to try! Turn on your seat warmer to keep pizza hot while driving home! Use a muffin tin to serve condiments at a BBQ! Turn fresh bread upside down and cut it on the soft side. This saves the bread from being squished and is easier to cut!*

See you in McCarthy! Enjoy your springtime and enjoy all your food!

## A LOOK AT THE WEATHER

BY GEORGE CEBULA

February and March 2013 were about average in temperature and precipitation.

The high temperature for February at McCarthy was 44 on the 10<sup>th</sup> (42 on Feb 12, '12, 40 on Feb. 2, '11, 43 on Feb.18, '10 and 38 on Feb. 18, '09). The lowest temperature recorded in February was 2 on the 6<sup>th</sup> (-15 on Feb 19, '12, -36 on Feb 16, '11, -10 on Feb. 13, '10 and -11 on Feb. 5, '09). The high was 40 or above on 3 days and the low was 5 or lower on 4 days. The average February temperature was 22.1 (20.2 in Feb. '12, 5.4 in '11, 16.5 in '10, 13.2 in '09, 6.8 in '08, 1.7 in '07, 11.6 in '06 and 12.3 in '05). This is warm compared to -5.9 in '99. The February '13 data was recorded by Terry Frady, as the regular observers were gone.

The February precipitation was 0.51 inches of liquid (0.77 in '12, 1.88 in '11, 0.78 in '10, 1.01 in '09, 0.81 in '08, 0.05 in '07 and 1.72 in '06). Total snowfall was 5.5 inches (11.5 in '12, 16.7 in '11, 9.7 in '10, 14.4 in '09, 9.9 in '08, 2.5 in '07 and 8.6 in '06). McCarthy began February with 25 inches of snow on the

ground and ended the month with 25 inches.

March was a continuation of February in temperature and well below in precipitation.

The high temperature for March was 50 on the 30<sup>th</sup> (48 on Mar. 28, '12, 49 on Mar. 29, '11, 49 on Mar. 28, '10 and 45 on Mar. 26, '09). The low temperature for March was -24 on 21<sup>th</sup> (-25 on Mar. 13, '12, -34 on Mar 13, '11, -13 on Mar. 13, '10 and -25 on Mar. 3, '09). The average March temperature at McCarthy was 19.5 compared to 15.7 in Mar. '12, 9.6 in Mar '11, 23.0 in Mar. '10, 15.0 in Mar. '09, 21.7 in Mar. '08, 4.2 in Mar. '07, 10.0 in Mar. '06 and 28.7 in Mar. '05. The high reached 45 or higher on only 3 days and the low was -20 or lower on 1 day.

March liquid precipitation was only a trace (0.35 in Mar. '12, 0.13 in Mar. '11, 0.03 in Mar. '10, 0.93 in Mar. '09, 0.51 in Mar. '08 0.21 in Mar. '07 and trace in Mar. '06) and snowfall was only a trace (4.9 in Mar. '12, 2.7 in Mar. '11, 0.7 in Mar. '10, 15.4 in Mar. '09, 11.3 in Mar. '08, 3.7 in Mar. '07 and 0.1 in Mar. '06). March started the month with 25 inches of snow on the ground

and ended the month with 20 inches.

The first 15 days of April have seen well below normal temperatures. The highs have mostly been in the low to mid 30s, and the lows have been in the single digits. The Kennicott River ice is still solid and the snow depth on the ground is 15 inches. Just over a trace of precipitation has occurred.

I still have a lot of missing data for December and January. I'm working on getting this data and hope to summarize the winter months in the next issue.

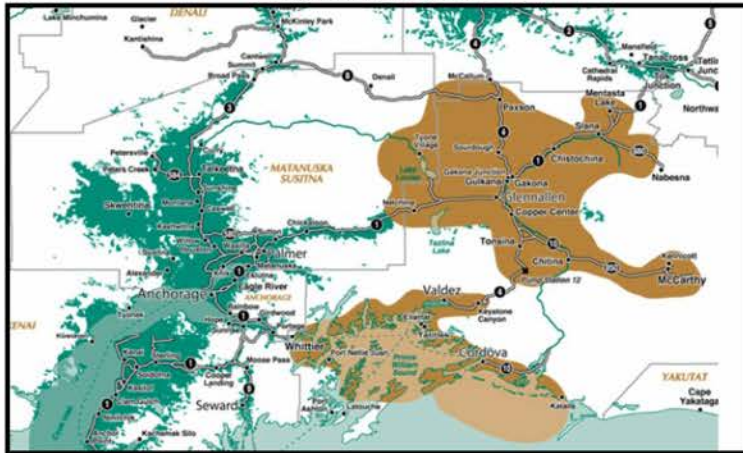
The snow is usually gone by the end of April, but that might not occur this year. The low temperatures need to stay above freezing at night; so far that is not happening.

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.

# Copper Valley Wireless Has You Covered!

If you are living in or visiting the Copper Valley Wireless service area – and you have a CDMA phone – you should have great cell (talk and data) service. Copper Valley Wireless's service footprint is vast as shown in the map by the dark shaded areas.



While exploring the great state of Alaska, as long as you have service from CWV or one of our CDMA partners you'll be connected!

## Copper Valley Public Wi-Fi Hot Spots

### Valdez:

- \* Airport
- \* Civic Center
- \* Mancamp
- \* Small Boat Harbor
- \* Kelsey Municipal Dock
- \* Ferry Terminal



### Glennallen area

- \* Hub of Alaska
- \* Caribou Motel

### Chitina & McCarthy

- \* Downtown

(Up to)	Regular 512KB	\$4.95/hour	\$8.95/day	\$24.95/wk	\$39.95/mo
(Up to)	Enhanced 1.5MB	\$7.95/hour	\$14.95/day	\$32.95/wk	\$79.95/mo

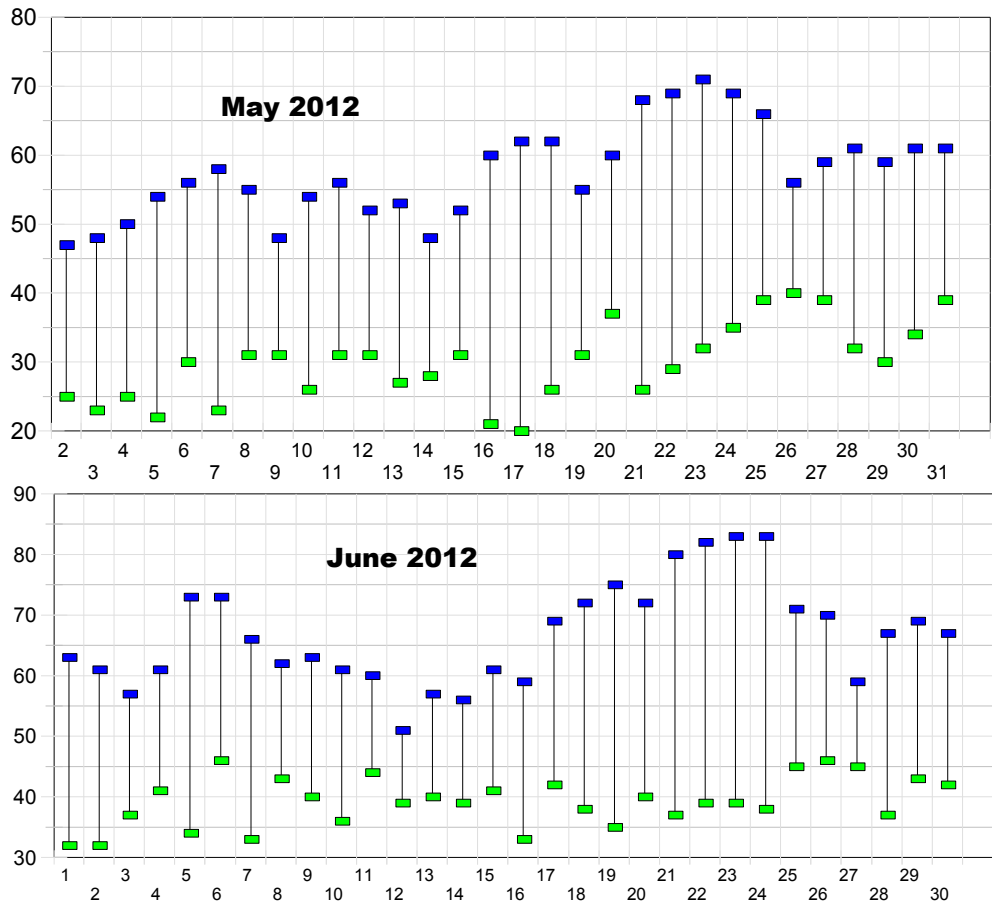
### Valdez

Billing#: 835-2231  
Help#: 834-4357

### Glennallen

Billing#: 822-3551  
Help#: 822-4357





# Aspen Meadows



of McCarthy

formerly **Wrangell St. Elias News**

- ◆ Private cabins for 2 to 6.
- ◆ Convenient access by automobile.
- ◆ Historic homestead setting. Enjoy Alaskan bush living.
- ◆ Quiet, Peaceful location away from the crowds!
- ◆ Private or shared bath

Phone (907)554-4454 or Email [Bonnie.Kenyon@gmail.com](mailto:Bonnie.Kenyon@gmail.com)

See us on the WEB at <http://www.wsen.net/AspenMeadows/>

*Your hosts Rick & Bonnie Kenyon*