

# Wrangell St. Elias News

*"Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty"*

Vol. Seven Issue Six

November & December 1998

Two Dollars

## The Copper River and Northwestern



photo courtesy C.L. Siebert Jr.

### "Bonanza railroad to Kennecott"

by E.M. McCracken

Don't miss this never-before published history of the railroad that made it all possible.

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## *A note from the publisher*

BY BONNIE KENYON

**G**reetings from McCarthy! I thought for sure I could report that winter had arrived in our northern bush community and relay how many inches of snow was on the ground. After all, last year at this time (Oct. 16), it was snowing AND snowing with a whopping 25 inches on the ground. Rick and I wondered if we'd be able to drive out to catch the Florida bound plane. If I recall correctly, several of us called the DOT with an SOS and they did come to our rescue by plowing the McCarthy Road.

The fall colors were beautiful this year which made it a pleasure to be outside, harvesting garden produce and filling up the wood shed. With those chores done, we have now turned our attention to getting

this issue of WSEN mailed. Rick and I have airline tickets to fly south for the month of November. Once again we'll be visiting my mom, Neta Schafer, Rick's folks, Carl and Virginia Kenyon, in So. Daytona, Fla., our son, Rick Jr., his wife, Maria, our two grandsons, Jonathan and Stephen in Donalsonville, Ga. and my brother, Ron, his wife, Rhonda and our nephews Nicholas, Nathan and Scotty in Deltona, Florida.

For those of you who have not already heard, Rick and I are expecting our third grandchild anytime now. Maria, our daughter-in-law, tells me she is more than ready to cooperate. Be prepared for a picture from Grandma Bonnie in the next issue!

The WSEN office will be closed from Nov. 1 to Dec. 3 or 4. If you need to contact us during that time, you can use the email address found in the masthead. Rick checks our email daily while on vacation.

I want to thank all the contributors to this issue. Because we are working on a critical deadline, we weren't able to give you as much time to respond to our requests. I must say how thankful I am for the various modes of communication that exists even in a bush community! We were able to reach Mark Vail of Fireweed Mountain Subdivision via the CB radio and Ralph and Linda Lohse of Long Lake by Caribou Clatter. Each replied so kindly and quickly with their written memories of Pat Ward. Kenny Smith e-mailed us his story. Mary Ann Ward, Pat's granddaughter, faxed us a story she wrote and read at the funeral service.

With the elections coming up, we received more editorial matter than we had room for. If your letter to the editor or article was not included, we apologize. We do want to thank you, however, for taking the time to send us your opinions.

Wrangell St. Elias News welcomes aboard the following subscribers: Jane Digman, WV; Chris Epton, AK; Len Dure, TX; Dean Kirkpatrick, KS; Russell and Wanda Lewis, AK; Todd Salat Shots, AK; Jay and Kim Williams, AK; Peggy Morsch, WI; Theodore Book, Vatican City State, Europe.

### ***Wrangell St. Elias News***

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# Items of Interest

BY BONNIE KENYON

**Kris Rueter:** Kris dropped in just as I was about to start this issue's *Items of Interest*. Perfect timing, Kris! While we finish off the morning's pot of coffee (and sample Kris's delicious sweet rolls), Kris informs us that she is organizing an art class for the local kids. On Wednesday, October 21, she and her group plan on meeting at Tony Zak's house in McCarthy. According to Kris, they will "experiment with printmaking, carving out blocks, rolling them up with ink and printing the images on paper." I hope we have a few samples to share with our readers next issue.

Kris says she is planning to stay in the area through October and assist the park service in keeping a watchful eye on Kennicott. After that, her agenda includes visiting family in the lower 48, taking a short trip to Mexico to soak up the sunshine before heading out to Dutch Harbor and her winter fishing job.

We expect Kris to return to her McCarthy cabin sometime in March. She says she hopes to bring in a new snowmachine.

**Jim and Audrey Edwards:** I'm wondering if the ladies of our town should consider starting up a snowmachine club! I suggested this to Audrey who, by the way, purchased a brand new Arctic Cat Panther. Jim brought it home the other day – still in the crate! They are both looking forward to some fun adventures this winter. Of course, this machine will make wood hauling much more enjoyable.

The BIG news around the

Edwards' homestead is the birth of grandson Jacob ("Little Jake") Jesse Edwards, son of Steve and Lana Edwards of Anchorage. The proud grandparents say Jake was born on September 26 and weighed in at 8 lb. 4 oz. Our congratulations to the entire Edwards' family!

**Kelly, Natalie and Tessa Bay:** I managed to find Natalie in the office today. I had heard the Bay family had moved back to their Nizina homestead for the winter. Fortunately for me, Natalie was finishing up some end-of-the-season work in McCarthy when I called. She says she, Kelly and Tessa are enjoying being back at their cabin "before the snow was on the ground, for a change!" The reprieve is enabling them to straighten up the homestead and do those chores that usually get left undone when the first snowfall catches us unawares.

Tessa is starting Kindergarten this year and having fun! This will be Natalie and Kelly's first year at homeschooling. Natalie says they plan on sharing the teaching responsibilities.

**Chris Richards:** Chris is really enjoying the peace and quiet of Kennicott these days. After a busy summer season with his guiding service, he is finding time to relax. He says several of his guides are staying in the area this winter. Chris hopes to spend a couple of months visiting his family in the states this winter. In the meantime, if you need to give Chris a call, please be patient and let the phone ring an extra time or two. He is in "relax mode." Enjoy, Chris!

**Peggy Morsch:** I want to

introduce you to a new face in our neighborhood. I was pleased to meet Peggy for the first time this fall. She is a photographer (Cedar Creek Images) and lives in Milwaukee, WI. I expect we'll see more of Peggy in the upcoming years. She assures me that she is planning on returning next summer. Welcome to Our Town, Peggy. I look forward to future visits.

**Fred and Ann Dure:** Although Rick and I met Fred and Ann awhile back, we have not made the trip over to their Nizina property to see firsthand what progress they are making on their building projects. SO...Fred wrote us an exceptional "Item" that I want to pass on to you. Here goes:

*Here's an update on what we have accomplished this summer at our Nizina site. 1) We have installed one of the largest solar electric systems around, 40 panels (20 on each array) that are on single axis (azimuth) trackers. They do a great job orienting the arrays perpendicular to the sun from sunrise to sunset. They produce a peak 40 amps an hour and are wired in series and parallel in a 48 volt configuration. The parcels feed into a 40 battery bank (L-16s) to store 1750 amp hours at 100%. A Trace 5.5 KW inverter gives us that luxurious AC power. Obviously, we're only drawing a fraction of the power produced, with the shop and refrigerator producing most of the load. Our Vestfrost fridges are 6 to 8 times as efficient as a "normal" fridge and draw less than a 150 watt lightbulb for only 3-4 hours a day. Cool! All batteries and power*

*components are located in our cellar 25' down in the ground, maintaining 40-45 degrees all year 'round.*

2) *A 12 KW Northern Lights diesel genset is our back-up installed in a separate building – for those few hours we hope to need it. The luxury of power with no generator noise is a very valuable benefit in the “wilds.”*

3) *We've also installed a septic system and a water supply line into our new crawlspace where utilities are centralized. The new addition will be built to the west of the existing house.*

4) *Our foundation (sonotubes) are in and ready for erecting our straw-bale/post and beam addition in May/June. We hoped to get the addition up this summer, but delays in getting our construction documents and an overall very busy construction season in Alaska hindered our effort in getting a first-rate post and beam “bush” builder – so we're ahead of the curve now for the '99 season!*

*As always, our area friends are welcome out to visit – and see what we're up to out here on the Nizina. We hear wolves howl, see red-tailed hawks come in for visits, and have black bears drop by in early mornings. It's quite the area out here!*

**Al and Fran Gagnon:** Since I am out the Nizina way (in my thoughts), I make a mental stop at May Creek. I discover that the Gagnons have been in the lower 48 visiting friends and family but are due back to the area any day now. I am told (by a very reliable source) that Al and Fran are not coming home empty-handed—they are expected to bring in a satellite dish! I understand (by this same little bird) that George Cebula is going to give Al a hand in the installation project. This

makes 5 satellite dishes in our area now. What is the “bush” coming to??

**George Cebula:** Speaking of George...he and brother Ted had a wonderful visit this last month. Ted is from Milwaukee but makes yearly trips to our area. Ted is full of adventure-packed stories of their younger days, and he kept us all in stitches one day over lunch. It appeared to me that when George and Ted were kids, George tried to keep Ted in line (and out of trouble). I suspect Ted's yearly visits to McCarthy are his way of repaying George and doing his turn by keeping George in line!

**Bill and Lil Kirkwood:** I knew there was someone I missed seeing this summer season. When I received a letter from Lil the other day, I realized who the “missing persons” were— Bill and Lil! The Kirkwoods make their home in Phoenix but are usually fall visitors to Kennicott where son, Rich Kirkwood, operates the Kennicott Glacier Lodge. Bill and Lil don various hats when they arrive to help Rich close down the lodge for the winter.

According to Lil, she and Bill had just returned to the Valley of the Sun after being gone for several months—to their cabin in Upper Peninsula of Michigan, side trips to Bill's home town of Lake City, Mn. to visit his sister and attend their “9th annual Kirkwood Invitational Golf Tournament.”

Lil reports that the weather in the lower 48 was “perfect” all summer and they managed to travel 9,000 plus miles. Although they missed their annual fall trip to our area, Lil says she and Bill are really looking forward to seeing Rich, Jody and the girls the latter part of October.

As always, Lil, thank you for your kind words of encouragement on our WSEN publication!

**Jim and Peggy Guntis and family:** In a previous issue I shared the surprise arrival of daughter Kim who was not expected this summer, but suddenly made a change in her plans and appeared on their doorstep. Rick and I were honored to be on hand for Kim's grand entrance!

The excitement had scarcely settled for Jim, Peggy and granddaughter Anna when another surprise greeted them. This time Rick and I were in on it from the beginning.

Jim's daughter (and Anna's mom and dad), Sally and husband Scott of Tucson called us and announced their plans to visit McCarthy and their family. Could they rent our guest cabin for a week in September? There was one special request, however. Could we keep their arrival a secret from Jim, Peggy and Anna? (Kim was in on this one already.) I answered yes to both questions.

When September 3 arrived, so did Scott and Sally – right on schedule. They managed to drive to our place without being seen by family members. When Sally and Scott arrived, I called Kim who came over and escorted them next door. (For those of you who don't know, Kim and her folks' property is well within walking distance of us.) I wasn't in on Jim, Peggy and Anna's reaction when they saw Sally and Scott, but I did receive a phone call from Peggy soon afterwards, giving me her opinion on how I could keep the secret from her! Well, Peggy, it wasn't easy, believe me!

The Wallins were here for a week and Jim, Peggy, Anna and

Kim kept them busy sightseeing in the area. I was assured Scott and Sally will return. Their daughter Anna had a ball this summer babysitting for Betty Hickling at the McCarthy Lodge. She is promising to return next summer! That's good, Anna; I'll be sure and plant plenty of lettuce for us all.

**The Welty family:** Don, Lynn, Rene and Sarah are not available for comment so I will speak for them. Lynn and Don finished up their summer work season in McCarthy and took a week off to travel into Anchorage for a shopping trip. They returned home but I managed to miss seeing them before they flew off in another direction! Literally. The whole family flew over to Ultima Thule on McCall Ridge the day after they returned from the big city. I am told they are doing some work for the Claus family and should return in another week.

**Francoise Drean:** When the Welty family went to Anchorage, Lynn asked Francoise (we call her "Fran-swaws") to house-sit and take care of the rabbits, chickens and Shadow, the dog. Many of our locals have already met Francoise who is visiting our area from France. She has spent the majority of the summer in our local area. One day she shared her concern about one of the chickens. It seems when she was feeding them, one hen flew the coop and Francoise was not able to catch it. The next day she still couldn't find the wayward critter. She told me she wanted to replace the hen for them as she felt very bad about losing it.

When the Welty family returned from their Anchorage trip, Francoise sadly broke the news to them. Rene searched the chicken pen for the "lost" hen,

but told Francoise that all were accounted for. There was no lost chicken! Much to Francoise's amazement, the hen had discovered another way into the coop and had not been wayward for long.

**Jim, Jeannie, Matt and Aaron Miller:** Things are really quiet up at the Miller homestead at Kennicott. Jeannie says, "Just the usual fall chores like butchering the two pigs and filling the woodshed are on the agenda these days."

Aaron is busy on his schoolwork and working with Katy Steger again this year. Matt is giving Jim a hand with his chores. Stacie is still attending school in Fairbanks.

Actually, Jeannie is glad to be taking it easy after experiencing a very busy summer at the pizza parlor, so even though there isn't much happening up their way, I can tell the Millers are enjoying it immensely.

**Katy Steger:** Katy is having a great time as she settles in for the winter. She is staying in Thea Agnew's house at Kennicott and tutoring Aaron Miller. In return, it seems Katy is receiving some tutoring herself. She says Jim Miller and Mike McCarthy are giving her chain saw instruction and she has acquired several necessary items that every bush lady needs these days – her own chain saw, gas pump and Chevy truck!

Katy plans on being in town for the winter except for a trip to Richmond, Va. to spend Christmas with her mom and dad.

**Thea Agnew:** Just a short item on Thea...I am told she is attending the university in Berkeley, Ca. and studying for her master's degree in Theology. Have a great winter, Thea!

**Ron Simpson:** Just before going to press with this issue, Ron e-mailed us with the following information: "I have created a large historic web site of the Copper River & Northwestern Railway and Kennecott. This can be viewed at: <http://members.tripod.com/~Blackburn49/index.html>. Ron is also putting the finishing touches on his model of the old Kennecott powerhouse. Watch for it in our next issue.

**Ladies Tea in Kennicott:** On Thursday, September 10 a ladies tea was held at the Kennicott Glacier Lodge and hosted by Cheri DeFederico. It is reported that fun was had by all eighteen ladies who attended the fine festivities. Cheri, who worked at the McCarthy Lodge and Tailor-Made Pizza this summer, presented the ladies with the "ladies only" tea as a way of saying thank you to them for all their help and encouragement this summer.

**Tony Zak's life is celebrated:** Approximately 30 people gathered at the Tony Zak house in McCarthy on Saturday, September 12 to share memories of their friend and neighbor, Tony Zak. Tony, a longtime Alaskan, and local resident, died on July 21, 1998, leaving his home and land to the community of McCarthy and Kennicott as a community center.

Original poetry by Tony and his favorites were read. Memories by those present were shared as well. A pot luck was served on the grounds. Local pilot, Kelly Bay, consummated the celebration with the scattering of Tony's ashes over the Kennicott Glacier.

# The Copper River and Northwestern

## Bonanza Railroad to Kennecott

BY EUGENE M. MCCRACKEN

The Copper River and Northwestern Railway came about, so tradition asserts, by the chance encampment of two prospectors on the side of what was later to be named Bonanza Mountain. Looking for grass for their horses, one of them is reported to have spotted a patch of green near the top of the mountain. "Grass!" he called to his companion. But investigation proved it to be the world's largest outcrop of almost pure chalcocite. "Copper ore—a whole mountain of it," the two prospectors exclaimed in amazement.

After the rush to the strike had started, Stephen Birch, who had bought out the claims of several prospectors, and had helped to form the Kennecott Copper Corporation, became, in 1906, at the age of thirty-six, that corporation's president. Backed by the Morgan-Guggenheim interests, his firm had surveyed rights of way for railroads to the copper mines from two different ports on the coast of south-central Alaska. Kennecott's fight with the Alaska Home Railway over control of the pass through Keystone Canyon, just north of Valdez, has become classic through Rex Beach's *The Iron Trail*. The route was finally abandoned in favor of a shorter line out of Katalla. The latter route passed the Bering River coal fields, and afforded direct gradeless access to the Copper River Valley.

Michael Heney, the builder of the famous White Pass and Yukon Railway, backed by Close Brothers of London, chose

Cordova as a terminus from which to build a railway to the mines. Longer than the route from Katalla Cordova offered a natural and protected harbor. Katalla, without a harbor, lay open to fierce north Pacific storms. Heney's Copper River Railway was built on gravel fill for the first forty miles across the Copper River delta.

Plagued by labor troubles, and nearly short of funds, Heney was about ready to throw in the towel, when an exceptionally fierce storm tore out the breakwater at Katalla and flooded the town. The Morgan-Guggenheim interests, determined that they were going to get a railroad to their isolated mines, bought out Close Brother's Copper River Railway, and formed the Copper River and Northwestern Railway.

The railroad was completed to Kennecott on March 29, 1911, and the first train to return to Cordova carried on it copper ore valued at \$250,000.00.

Although during its entire life it was essentially an ore-hauling road, during its early years, the Copper River and Northwestern Railway did hold some pretensions of expansion. A branch of thirty-eight miles was surveyed from Katalla Junction, mile thirty-eight on the railroad eastward to the Bering River coal fields. The 1915 Official Guide also showed a proposed extension of the railroad north from Chitina to Fairbanks. The ill-feeling of many Alaskans against the Morgan-Guggenheim "monopoly," the United States' Government's 1906 land withdrawal order, and the

unfavorable publicity arising from the Cunningham coal claims stopped all further private railroad construction in Alaska. Any further plans that the Kennecott Copper Corporation might have had for railroad expansion were stopped forever with the Government's announcement in 1914, to build a railroad from Seward to the interior. Forced to buy Canadian coal by the closure of the near-by coal fields, the citizens of Cordova staged a take-off on the Boston tea party, when they dumped a load of Canadian coal into the harbor. During World War I, the railroad converted its locomotives to oil burners. The oil came from California.

Built at a cost of \$22,000,000, the C.R. & N.W. incorporated many features of construction unique to "cold-land" railroading. The most notable achievement of its builders was the completion of the "million-dollar bridge" across the Copper River at mile 48, between the faces of Mile's and Child's Glaciers. Although in former years Child's Glacier had advanced to within three-hundred feet of the site of the bridge, a far greater danger arose from the millions of tons of silt and ice that the river carried down to the sea each year. Concrete pilings for the four-span bridge were sunk one hundred fifty feet through water and muck to bed rock. To preclude further damage by the ice a wood truss work was erected around each piling to take the brunt of the force of the spring break-up. The bridge has remained to this day.

Between miles 57 and 65 much of the road bed was laid on the moraine of Baird Glacier. Active ice frequently lay but two feet below the level of the grade. Each spring, as the ice moved, thousands of cubic yards of gravel fill were required to replace washed out sections of the road bed. During 1914, a relatively mild year, 400,000 cubic yards of fill were used to repair the damage in this area.

Over one hundred wooden bridges and trestles graced the one hundred thirty-one miles of right-of-way between Cordova and Chitina. The railroad had planned to replace the major spans later with permanent steel structures. Where this had been the plan, the temporary wood trestles were built below the level of the grade. The wood structures were to have been used as a framework for the construction of the steel bridges. Because throughout its life the C.R. & N.W. built only three permanent steel bridges, what would have been essentially a water-level route was plagued by many short stretches of two and three percent grades leading down to and away from the numerous temporary trestles. The railroad employed two permanent bridge crews to maintain its many spans.

Less spectacular than the "million-dollar-bridge," but far more dangerous, was the temporary pile trestle across the Copper River beyond Chitina. Very early in its life the railroad made surveys and drew plans for a permanent steel, four-span bridge across the Copper River at this point. The proposed bridge, whose rails would have been one hundred feet above the surface of the water, would have eliminated the four percent grades leading down from the bluffs on each

side of the river to the water's edge. Even with the necessity of double-heading from the trestle to the tops of the bluffs, the railroad estimated that it could afford to replace the wood trestle twice a year for a good many years for the price of one steel bridge. As it was the railroad had to replace the trestle at least once every year. The pressure of the water alone was enough to shake the nine hundred, fifty-foot structure, and train speeds were limited to ten miles an hour while crossing it. The trestle was never a match for the ice during the spring break-up. It always went out. During the early years the railroad let nature take its course, but later, the rails, the 18 x 8 hemlock stringers, and the caps were taken up in preparation for the break-up. The line was out of commission for from three to four weeks each year during this time.

In addition to its nuisance value, the bridge was a real killer. At least fifteen lives have been attributed to it—five at one time once, when it collapsed while a bridge crew was repairing it. State Representative Warren Taylor, of Fairbanks, who once fired for the C.R. & N.W., claimed that his train just missed being dunked in the water once. The center of the bridge collapsed as the last car reached dry land. Today, all that remains to remind one of those stirring times are a few rotted pilings sticking up above the water on each side of the river.

During its hey day, the C.R. & N.W. owned eighteen locomotives—six saddle tanks of unknown origin, three Baldwin moguls, numbers 100, 101, and 102, and four Alco consolodations. Numbers 20, 21, 22, and 23, and one that has not been

identified, were used during the construction of the road. Four Alco, super heated, light mikes, numbers 70, 71, 72, and 73, joined the roster about 1921. Representative Warren Taylor, of Fairbanks, who left the railroad during 1922, to study law, recalled that these were the first locomotives on the line that could handle heavy trains over the line without the need of helpers. They were used mostly between Chitina and McCarthy, where the grades were heaviest.

Although trains ran through from Cordova to Kennecott, all crews changed at Chitina. In the early days three mixed trains each way per week covered the line. A fourth train ran once a week, carrying only ore, from Kennecott and McCarthy to Chitina. Train service was increased to daily except Sunday during the twenties, but after 1930, only two round trips per week covered the run from Cordova to Kennecott. In addition to the above, an excursion train operated on steamer days between Cordova and Mile's and Child's Glaciers.

Until 1933, a dining car operated on the mixed train from Cordova to Chitina. Charlie Jacobson, of Chitina, recalled that the diner "served a pretty good meal for a dollar—better," he added, "than the section houses at Tiekel and Strelna." Warren Taylor said that a man named Baird ran the diner. Once, when he was dead-heading down the line, Taylor went back to the diner and asked Baird what he had to eat. "I've got bacon and eggs, and ham and eggs," answered Baird. "I highly recommend the bacon and eggs. We're out of the ham."

At the time of its closure, the C.R. & N.W. owned five passen-

ger cars: one observation coach (formerly the diner), one coach, two combines, and one mail-baggage car. All of them were four-wheel-truck, open-platform cars. In speaking of them, Henry Schulze, of McCarthy, said, "They were comfortable, but of the most primitive type." During its odd thirty years of operation, the company never replaced them. Prior to the depression, passengers paid 12 ½ cents per mile to ride in them.

With less than 4,000 persons living in the entire Copper River plateau area, the railroad's operations could hardly have been profitable without the copper mines. But before the completion of the Alaska Railroad during 1922, the Copper River line was a link in a popular route to Fairbanks and the interior. The Northern Commercial Company, which operated a stage line over the old Richardson Trail, advertised in 1911:

*Agents for the Seattle Short Line via Chitina and the Copper River Route, connecting at Cordova with vessels of the Alaska Steamship Company. The new government road from Willow Creek is in fine condition. Try the Route and you'll use it always. (Kitchener, D.L., Flag Over the North, Superior Publishing Company, Seattle, 1954.)*

By 1923, however, the "Seattle Short Line" was popular with only a few summer tourists.

Snow and high winds were perennial enemies of the railroad in the lower Copper River valley. Three and four locomotives were required to push the road's huge rotary plow through the fifteen and twenty-foot drifts. Commenting on the line's operations, the Alaska Engineer-

ing Commission wrote of the snow in its 1913 report to Congress, "The train must follow the rotary plow very closely in some sections, before the wind drifts the snow back over the track."

When the mines at Kennecott closed temporarily during the height of the depression, all railroad service was performed by speeders. The transfer across the river at Chitina was made by ferry. An un-posted letter found in a cabin at McCarthy attests to the hard times in the Kennecott area during those years:

*McCarthy, Alaska, August 1, 1933: The speeder is due any minute and I want to get this letter out on this mail. I don't know what we are going to do if things don't pick up. It is terrible here and no prospect for better times until next year, if then.*

Times did pick up. The mines opened again in 1934, and the trains ran again. But it was not like the old days. Prior to the depression from twenty to thirty cars of ores and concentrates were shipped out of Kennecott every time the train ran. After 1933, the railroad was fortunate to ship even ten cars of copper on each train. During the last four years of its operation the railroad closed down regularly for from three to four months during the winter. Business was so light that the agent at Kennecott was instructed to hold all cars and all waybills for shipment from that point until the bridge was reopened at Chitina. The total capacity of the yards at both McCarthy and Kennecott was less than one hundred cars.

High grade ores were fast playing out, and as early as 1935, the annual report of the Kennecott Copper Corporation hinted at the closure of the mines

unless new strikes of high-grade ores were made. The price of copper dropped to 15 cents a pound during 1937. What with the increasing cost of mining lesser-grade ores, and the shipment of them from the mines to the smelter at Tacoma, Washington, the railroad became an expensive luxury. No new ore was found, and the 1937 annual report confidently predicted the closure of the Alaska operation during the following year.

Surprisingly enough, few persons in Alaska seemed to have been aware of the impending closure. Trainmen on the railroad went out on strike successively during 1935, 1936, and 1937. During the 1936 strike they got everyone else on the railroad to go out with them. When the strike was settled, the trainmen got a raise; the others got nothing. The company was further plagued by strikes both at the mines and on the steamships.

No outward sign of abandonment seemed visible. During 1937, the company gave each of the buildings on its properties a new coat of red paint. The "Route of Marvelous Natural Wonders," as the C.R. & N.W. advertised in the Cordova Daily Times, seemed destined to go on forever. But on September 7, 1938, the route-of-marvelous-natural-wonders ad was replaced with a notice of proposed closure. The mines were expected to close about October 15, and "termination of all operations of the Copper River and Northwestern Railway sometime between October 15, and November 1." Although the mine closure had been rumored about the area for several months, editorial comment on the company's announcement was lacking. No person to whom I have talked seems to have taken



he announcement very seriously. Cordova.

The last tramway brought ore from the Jumbo mine to the mill on October 23, 1938, and the last train passed through Chitina, enroute to Cordova, on November 11. Henry Schulze, who was a member of the railroad bridge crew at the time, watched the train as it slowly steamed into oblivion. "What did you think?" I asked him, "as you watched that train roll past the station for the last time?"

"Oh! I don't know," he answered. "It was just like any other day. The train came in. It had four or five cars of ore and a couple of cars of mine machinery. A couple of passengers got on and off the combine, and then it left."

These words just about summed up the general feeling throughout the Copper River Valley at that time. Not many persons really thought that it was the last train. The trainmen were sure that the closure was on their account, and that as soon as labor difficulties were solved, the railroad would reopen. The miners were certain that the price of copper would go up, and that the mines would reopen. The citizens of Cordova confidently told themselves that the closure wouldn't effect them. But, within two months of the day the last train ran, the *Cordova Daily Times* dropped the *Daily* from its name as it "temporarily" went on three-days-a-week production. The Federal Government opened an unemployment office in Cordova during February, 1939. During the same month, Clifford Collins, unaware of the town's plight, came from Seattle to Cordova to take over E. A. Hegg's famous photograph shop. Mr. Collins said he never saw a town in such "doldrums" as that he found in

An Interstate Commerce Commission investigation, held in Seattle, during January, 1939, to determine if abandonment of the railroad had been justified, found that only five percent of the railroad's meager traffic originated at or was destined to other points than the Kennecott mines. One by one the railroad's locomotives and cars were shipped out of Cordova; the Alaska Railroad got the big rotary plow and all of the road's steel flat cars. The McCloud River Railroad in California, and the Midland Terminal in Colorado, each got two locomotives.

The Kennecott Copper Corporation turned over the railroad right-of-way to the Alaska Road Commission. Short stretches of track out of Cordova and south of Chitina were torn up to make way for roads. The bridge at Chitina, of course, washed out, and it has never been replaced. For a number of years, The Alaska Road Commission operated a hair-raising tram bucket on a suspension cable far above the river at Chitina. The late O. A. Nelson, of that town, used to operate the speeders left by the railroad, from the east bank of the river to McCarthy. His store sold and delivered supplies to the isolated families along the line. Archie and George Polin, now the oldest residents of McCarthy, said, "Each trip you could count on losing five gallons of gas out of a twenty-five-gallon drum from the bumping the cans got on the rough road bed. The speeder trip to McCarthy was a favorite route of sheep hunters bound for the Wrangell Mountains. But after the war some of the bridges had deteriorated to the point where one hunter said of them,

"Only the rails were hanging together across some creeks. The trestles had collapsed beneath them."

Cordova Airlines made good use of the speeders at McCarthy to haul tourists up to the mill at Kennecott, five miles north. Now, even that service has ceased, as the rails were torn up two years ago. The old trestle across Kennecott Creek, at McCarthy, was sawed up last summer for winter firewood by that town's seven permanent residents. Some of the rails south of Chitina were used to build the Alaska Railroad's Eilson Branch. By fall of 1963, the last of the rails between Chitina and McCarthy will have been torn up. They are being stacked along the east bank of the Copper River, beyond Chitina. When the river freezes over, trucks will cross on the ice, load the rails, and take them down the highway to Valdez, where they will be loaded on a steamer bound for a Japanese steel company. Last summer the Copper River Highway was extended to mile 51 on the old railroad roadbed. The "million-dollar bridge" was paved. The State of Alaska plans to continue the highway for the length of the old railroad. When that highway is finished, a chapter in the history of bonanza railroads will have come to a close.

*This article was apparently written in early 1963. An interesting addendum is that the rail never made it to Japan. It arrived in Valdez in time for the 1964 earthquake, which dumped it into the ocean. The highway to Cordova has not yet been built. Mr. McCracken died in 1966. Used by permission — University of Alaska, Fairbanks.*



## Visitation to Alaska exceeds expectations

BY RICK KENYON

Substantial growth in the number of border crossings on the Alcan and Top of the World Highways were recorded in 1998. As of the last available figures, 106,322 people had crossed into Alaska—7.11 percent more than at the same date in 1997.

According to the Division of Tourism, August was the highest month for Alcan border crossings in 10 years. "We have eclipsed the previous highest August, 1993, by 19.5 percent," Division of Tourism Director Tom Garrett said. "Compared

to last year, border crossings on the Alcan increased by 48.12 percent."

Top of the World Highway crossings in August were the second highest in ten years—6,578, only 13 people behind 1996's record number of 6,591. Compared to last year, border crossings on the highway were up 13.83 percent.

"While our numbers for 1998 are incomplete, if September remains consistent with previous years, this will be the highest year ever for border crossings," Garrett said. ♦

## McCarthy—Shangri-la of the north!

BY RICK KENYON

Subscriber Lee Adler sent us an interesting document the other day. Published by the Alaska Department of Community and Regional Affairs, it is their community database for McCarthy. For the most part the document is quite accurate and has such sections as Location and Climate, ("...61 miles east of Chitina...snowfall averages 52 inches...")Economy and Transportation, ("Employment is limited and seasonal...")and Facilities, Utilities, Schools and Health Care ("Water is drawn by hand from a clear water spring.")

It is under the heading of History, Culture and

Demographics that we find the most amazing thing about our little town. "*During the 1990 Census, there were 66 total housing units, and 54 of these were vacant. The official unemployment rate at that time was 100%. 100% of all adults were not in the work force. The median household income was \$23,750, and 0% of residents were living below the poverty level.*"

Wow—a place where *everybody* is unemployed and yet *nobody* is poor. Just wait 'til the word gets out! ▲

## Land trade impending

BY RICK KENYON

According to sources in the National Park Service, some state land within the boundaries of Wrangell-St. Elias National Park (WRST) is being considered for a possible trade.

The small town of Gustavus, in southeast Alaska, apparently wants to retire it's diesel-powered generator system in favor of a hydro-electric plant. Some of the land needed for the plant is currently designated wilderness, within

the Glacier Bay National Park system. Seems the Department of Interior may be willing to change the wilderness designation on the land needed for the hydro-electric plant, if the state is willing to cede title to some land in WRST.

Although the deal is still in the "talk" stage, state lands between the Lakina River and the Nizina River are being considered as possible candidates for transfer to federal ownership.

□

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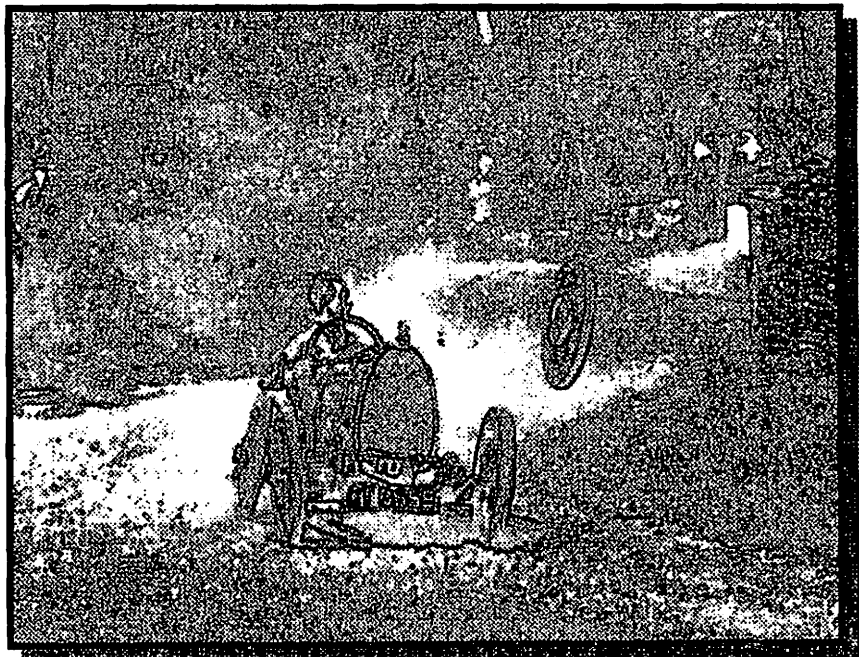
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**The number one rule before driving the McCarthy Road  
is to check your spare tire!**

## NPS publishes Kennecott newsletter

**T**he *Kennecott Cable* is the name given to a small newsletter published September 1 by the National Park Service. It is described as "A newsletter of communication for the Environmental Assessment in the Kennecott Mine Site area."

The newsletter gives an overview of the Kennecott property acquisition, tells of activities that went on this past summer, and goes on to discuss the five year interim planning process for the site.

Basically, the three alternatives that we reported in our last issue of WRANGELL ST. ELIAS NEWS are given: No

action, NPS stabilized Historic Site, and Managed Historic Site.

If alternative one is chosen, "Continuation of the present course of activities will be pursued." Limited efforts at providing visitor services such as information, water, restrooms, and other elements would occur under independent programs by both NPS and private interests.

Alternative number two would include stabilization of at least some of the structures. "Artifacts would be preserved in their present locations and condition, but miscellaneous debris would be removed from the site. Tours would be

expanded to include tours of varying lengths and subject matter, possibly including selected mine tours/access."

The Managed Historic Site alternative would allow for a number of buildings to be "adaptively re-used" and others to be stabilized but have restricted visitor access. Still others would be stabilized and open to the public for "controlled walk-through and self-guided interpretation activities."

If you would like to comment on any of the proposals, you can write to Vicki Snitzler at the Nabesna Ranger Station, PO Box 855, Slana AK 99586.

## Friends of Kennicott investigate options

BY MICHAEL LOSO

**F**ollowing the National Park Service's acquisition of the Kennicott National Historic Landmark in June 1998, one question commonly emerged: "Now what?" One local nonprofit organization is helping to answer the question.

Friends of Kennicott, incorporated in 1990 as a charitable and educational non-profit organization, will be working closely this winter with the local community and the NPS to help plan the future management of Kennicott.

Most folks around town know "Friends" for the emergency stabilization work in Kennicott - since 1991 they have funneled over half a million dollars into new roofs and beams and walls for the protection of deteriorating historic buildings. With that work substantially completed, however, Friends has turned its attention to

the larger project of assessing the future management of Kennicott.

Since 1994, Friends of Kennicott has recommended non-governmental, non-profit operation and management of the Kennicott National Historic Landmark in the event of NPS acquisition. With potential advantages of minimized bureaucratic presence, more efficient expenditure of public funds, and maximum utilization of the local community's expertise, the idea has found supporters in both the NPS and the local community. But nobody has yet articulated a clear and detailed vision of how this all might work.

What work exactly might Friends of Kennicott do? In partnership with whom? The National Park Service? Local businesses and community members? Other local non-profits? With what goals for the future? And who is going to pay for it?

This summer, Friends of Kennicott decided to hire a consultant (me) to help them answer these questions. Throughout the winter, I'll be working out of an office at the Old Hardware Store, in McCarthy, to formulate a detailed plan for the management partnership. My job is to explore options and make recommendations - the ultimate decisions will be made by Friends of Kennicott, the NPS, and any other non-profits that have a potential management role. But we all hope to settle on a plan that appropriately serves the needs of visitors, local residents and businesses, the NPS, and of course, Friends of Kennicott.

The scope of work, a formal description of my contract, is printed below. I'll be seeking out the opinions of a lot of folks, but don't wait around to share your thoughts. Contact me in town, or at PO Box MXV, Glennallen AK

99588, (907) 554-4464,  
<MikeLoso@aol.com>.

Scope of Work: Development of Partnership Management Strategy, Kennicott National Historic Landmark, Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve

-Propose language for a mission statement of operation that builds upon previous documents, current conditions, local knowledge, and make recommendations for site development and protection, including priorities for adaptive reuse, natural interpretative options, camping, and use of appropriate technologies.

-Evaluate options for involvement of nonprofit groups in various functions at Kennicott, including but not limited to public

safety/enforcement, programming, interpretation, site maintenance/stabilization, community advocacy and fund raising/support.

This evaluation will include recommendations for 1) timing and phasing of activities, 2) developing the capacity of locally-based nonprofit organizations to participate in various facets of Kennicott management, and 3) recommend partner relationships with the NPS.

-Identify 1) entities interested in participating in the operation of Kennicott, 2) the potential level of commitment each party could make, 3) functions and roles appropriate and desirable for each party, and 4) a possible structure for linking participating entities and the NPS.

-Recommend a structure,

roles, membership, and procedures for an advisory committee which could provide increased public participation and oversight for ongoing management of Kennicott National Historic Landmark.

-Work closely with interested nonprofit organizations such as the Wrangell Mountains Center and the McCarthy-Kennicott Historical Museum, local community members, interested business and public members and NPS on all facets of this project.

-Participate in development of an NPS newsletter and development of NPS management alternatives concerning partners.

-Participate in NPS public workshop concerning the future of Kennicott.

## An EFT to MXY

BY BONNIE KENYON

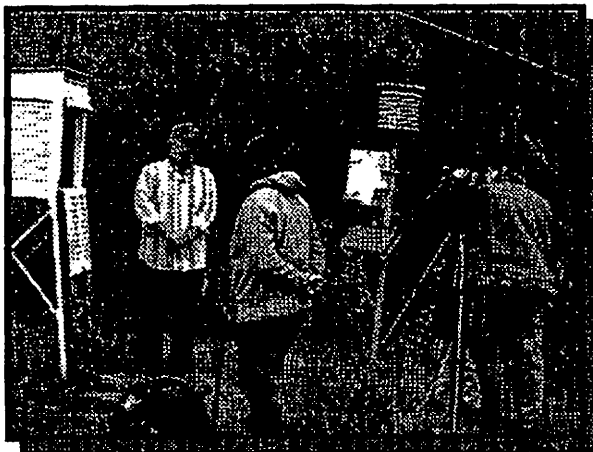
Many McCarthy and Kennicott residents found themselves in another world as they participated in, what is referred to, as an Electronic Field Trip (EFT). The excursion took place in our local area during the week of September 10 through the 16<sup>th</sup>.

Funding for this project was provided by PBS's South Carolina Educational Television, the Satellite Educational resources and The Weather Channel. According to *The Kennecott Cable*, a National Park Service publication: "Electronic Field Trips link park resources to

national middle school and high school curriculum standards in schools across the nation through live satellite broadcast

time is the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park.

Video footage included the Kennicott Glacier, the McCarthy-Kennicott Museum, the Kennicott mill site and the McCarthy area. Local participants included Sarah Welty, Tyler Green, Aaron Miller, Nancy Cook, Kris Ructer, Mike Loso, Rick Kenyon and George Cebula covering subjects such as glaciology, railroad and mining history and past and present weather conditions.



WSEN staff photo

TV CREW FILMS RICK KENYON DOING A WEATHER OBERVATION.

teacher and student materials, and the World Wide Web." This filming is the second Electronic Field Trip and the "field" this

By the way, the designator for McCarthy is MXY (actually it is now PAMX, but the post office and most locals still use MXY). Hence, the EFT to MXY. Got it? Get it! ☺

## Patricia Ellen Ward 1924—1998

McCarthy resident Patricia Ellen Ward, 74, died from heart problems Oct. 6, 1998, at the Providence Alaska Medical Center in Anchorage.

A funeral Mass was held on Saturday, Oct. 10, at Holy Family Cathedral with the Rev. Urban Bates officiating.

Pat was born May 9, 1924, near Hendon, Saskatchewan. She was the seventh of 10 children born to Ukrainian immigrants Nicholas and Parascivia Stasuik. She attended St. Paul's Hospital Nursing School in Vancouver, British Columbia, and graduated as a registered nurse in 1948.

Immediately after graduation, she and a classmate responded to an advertisement in a local paper requesting nurses to work in Alaska, where their adventurous spirits soon found them employed at Providence in Anchorage. She met Calvin L. Ward who was employed as a commercial pilot. They were married in 1950. They settled in Cordova and raised three boys, Doran, Arthur and Calvin Jr. In 1960, they moved back to Anchorage, where Pat practiced nursing at Providence.

In 1973, they moved to their McCarthy homestead, where Pat loved to grow a big garden, and the family enjoyed wilderness living. They also spent several years in Glennallen and eventually purchased a home in North Pole, where she and Cal lived when not at McCarthy. Pat and Cal continued to spend most summers and part of their winters at the McCarthy homestead.

Pat is survived by her

husband, Cal; sons, Doran, Art and Calvin, Jr.; daughters-in-law Veronica and Ann; grandchildren, Randy, Mary, Joseph, Nelson, Adam, Erin, Bekah and Sarah Ward; brothers, Paul, George and Nicholas Stasuik; sister, Nellie Romanuik, Kae Krochak, Mary Minnie Stasuik, and Sylvia Dubyk; and mother-in-law, Mazella Ward.

Pat was buried in Anchorage.



### A Smile

BY MARK VAIL

Dear Pat,

You always had a smile to greet me. We first met after our tracks crossed on winter snow. We were both surprised, you by my bike tracks in December, me by ski tracks coming off the mountain and out of the bush. For over a decade our friendship grew. We comforted each other

through life's trials and enjoyed the beauty and bounty of God's green earth. We shared the pleasures of tending our gardens and watching things grow. I was often a guest at your table, where the food was prepared with love and shared in the name of the Lord. I'll always remember the smile you wore and the love you shared with family and friends. I'll miss these things, but I'll see your smile in every flower that blooms, and hear your voice in every bird that sings. I'll show your love in all God's creation and share it with a smile, as you, Pat, shared with me.

With love for your family,  
Your friend Mark

### Pat was hospitality

BY RALPH AND LINDA LOHSE

Pat Ward will be remembered as a person who truly lived the words of the Apostle Paul, "let your hospitality be known to all men..." Pat was hospitality! Pat and Cal Ward have been a very important part of the special memories our family has of our life here in the Wrangells. Her heart and home were open to anyone.

In the early 70's, when we brought our 6 week old first born daughter out here, Pat became surrogate Gramma and a much appreciated "baby sitter" while we X-country skied or snowmachined our traplines around Fireweed Mountain. Besides reading to and entertaining the girls with numerous outdoor and indoor activities, Pat would prepare a full course meal for our return. Pat made us feel she was honored to care for our daughters and she truly blessed our lives.

Children were a genuine joy to Pat as can be seen by the choice of "art" displayed at her home on Fireweed Mountain. You won't find any famous artists' work there, but you will see family photos and children's art. There among her treasures, as she shared with us the Saturday before God took her home, were gifts of art by our daughters. Thank you, Pat.

One of Pat's little-known skills was as "bombardier" for Cal. While Cal was famous for his skill at dropping notes and supplies with extreme precision, many times it was Pat, who leaning out of the plane door, "let it go." We think she developed this skill while "bombing" her boys with ice cream and cookies on their mountain climbing expeditions. We witnessed this skill when a saran wrapped note dropped on our cabin doorstep as the Ward's plane buzzed overhead. It was an invitation to dinner the next day if we'd meet Cal at the Long Lake airstrip for a flight to the Ward's home. This was an

experience our children will never forget.

One of Pat's special memories from the early 70's was a night when she served Christmas dinner at Fireweed Mountain. It was a wonderful evening shared by the Ward family with Al Fejes and their neighbors from the Long Lake area. The night was a beautiful, crisp, cold -30 degrees. Someone had the idea to go "carol" McCarthy. Cal insisted on staying to babysit and keep the cabin warm for our return. We bundled up, left Cal and headed out on several snowmachines. As we went from house to house, Ralph found Pat loved to sing Christmas carols as much as he. We sure surprised the McCarthy folks and had a great time. The return trip to Fireweed Mountain was spectacular with an almost full moon shining down on frost crystals the size of birch leaves. The countryside had been transformed into a world of sparkling diamonds. The brightest diamond being the warmth, friendship and

hospitality awaiting us all at Pat and Cal's home that night as on any other night.

## **Pat was a great lady**

BY KENNY SMITH

Wards and I go back a long way. Cal was my dad's chief pilot in Cordova for much of the 50s. He taught me to fly in a Cessna 170.

Pat was a great lady and perfect mother. I remember one time when Cal was giving me cross country flight instruction, she decided to go along. We went to Gulkana on a real hot summer day. That was when the Gulkana airport was still that huge asphalt war airport and radiated a lot of thermals. When I took off I was all over the place. I was embarrassed and mentioned it to Cal when we got into the air. He said don't worry Pat doesn't know the difference anyway. Last year I mentioned that to her and she said she didn't recall, with a smile. I said you are still being kind, nobody could forget a horrible takeoff like that one.

## **A Remembrance of my Grandmother, Patricia Ellen Ward**

BY MARY ANN WARD

Patricia Ellen Ward was born and grew up on a farm on the Saskatchewan plains, daughter of Ukraninan born parents.

She once told me that as a child her two dreams were to travel the world and to make it a better place.

Since the country school she and her 9 siblings attended was 4 miles away, in the cold winters they drove to school in a box-like enclosed wagon (they called it a caboos). Complete with a small wood stove, it was drawn by 2 horses.

A story she liked to tell, always with a good laugh, is bound to bring a few smiles. One winter day when the snow was piled high along the narrow road's sides, Pat and her sister, Minnie, were driving home. A farmer's herd of pigs was loose on the road. One sow ran down the road in front of them. Alarmed at being separated from her companions, she whirled around and charged back right between the horses and straight under the caboos! As the caboos was not engineered for large sows to run under, the pig naturally became stuck fast. The

caboos careened from side to side as the horses, excited from the squealing, ran down the road. After several strides, the girls were able to stop the horses, the loudly protesting pig still lodged firmly underneath the now high-centered caboos. Alerted by all the commotion, the owner of the pig came running to the scene. The sisters, certain they were in trouble, tearfully explained that they had run over his pig! The farmer, laughing so hard he could hardly lift, managed to heft a corner of the caboos high enough for the unfortunate pig

could hardly lift, managed to heft a corner of the caboose high enough for the unfortunate pig to escape and BOY did she RUN!

The Patricia I knew was Grandma. Totally giving of herself she would never hesitate to drop what she was doing to help someone else. Whether it should be baby-sitting, fixing lunch, cleaning ducks, collecting pop cans for the church's fund raisers, or helping us grandkids with our many endeavors such as catching camp robbers.

In the winter keeping warm with all the wool hats, mittens and socks she knitted for us, we made snow forts. Grandma was great at making tunnels—chiseling them out with the long green ice chisel.

At Christmas time she baked hundreds of sugar cookies giving a box to nearly everyone she knew. Grandma would then invite the grandchildren to come over and help her frost them.

She was three times as fast as us, never using a commercial cake decorator. Instead she used toothpicks and a knife and each one looked expertly frosted. It

was a good thing she was so quick for we would tire of it long before she did when there were still many unfrosted cookies remaining which she diligently finished.

It wasn't just at Christmas—the rest of the year she was busy baking: pizzas, pies, cakes perogies and much more. Mysteriously, the cookie jar always had cookies in it, never once being empty. When visiting, she always managed to slip her grand kids a little bag of candy.

She loved to prepare dinner for folks and I'm sure all of her relatives and friends have enjoyed more than one of her delicious many course meals.

An avid gardener, we all experienced the benefits of her well kept garden plot, a variety of her veggies always a part of the meals she served.

The day she fell ill, she was making cranberry juice, cookies, popcorn and a barbecue dinner. When it became evident she was seriously ill—always one to put others first her main concern

was finishing dinner and she left the cabin apologizing to our dinner guest for spoiling the meal.

I will forever remember her as just about the best Grandma a kid could have.

Though I think she changed her mind about traveling the world when she married Grandpa, I believe the many people whose lives she touched with her kindness will agree she did indeed fulfill her dream of making the world a better place.

We found a poem that seemed to fit Grandma perfectly:

*God saw she was getting tired,  
And a cure was not to be.  
So he put his arms around her  
and*


*Whispered "Come with me".  
With tearful eyes we watched her  
And saw her fade away.*

*Although we loved her dearly  
We could not make her stay.*

*A golden heart stopped beating  
Hard workings hands to rest  
God broke our hearts to show us  
He only takes the best.*

*(anonymous)*

God Bless You, Grandma!



**"I know just what to  
give for Christmas.  
WSEN gift  
subscriptions—they  
keep giving all year!"  
only \$10**

**Wrangell St. Elias News**  
McCarthy #42 Box MXY Glennallen AK 99588



# Good News from the Wrangells

BY BONNIE KENYON

**E**arlier this month—on October 6th—my friend and neighbor, Pat Ward, passed from this earth. I recall the many times she and I sat around my kitchen table, sipping our hot tea and catching upon recent events. Gardening, family news, travel activities and future plans were topics of interest to us both. One day in particular that I will always cherish is when she and I broached a subject that touched the heart strings of each of us.

Pat was raised and staunchly clung to her Catholic faith; I, in contrast, was raised in a Protestant home. We shared the differences in our upbringing, but only briefly. Pat was one to go quickly to the core of the matter and that day was no different.

The bottom line for each of us was not the church walls, so to speak, but the foundation of our faith. The One Who was and still is the Author of our faith—the Lord Jesus Christ. Tears came to our eyes as we reached down into the depths of our hearts and pulled up for each to examine the love of God towards us personally and for the whole world.

In memory to my friend—who I am assured of seeing again some day—and because of her love for everyone she came in contact with, I dedicate the following "Good News" which I wrote several years ago.

## **A Gift of Love**

**W**hether I write or speak of God's love, it far exceeds my words. The love of God has no measure; it has no end. The

Bible says God is love and He is eternal. God's love is strong. So strong as to pen these words:

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world should be saved through Him." John 3:16, 17.

To describe God's love is to see the very nature of God Himself. To know God, to have a relationship with Him, and to fellowship with Him, you and I must receive His love. A gift may be valuable beyond measure, but unless that gift is received, touched, and unwrapped it remains but hidden treasure.

God gave His love to us and it came wrapped up in His Son, Jesus Christ. God is offering His Gift of love to you today because He wants to bless you. He wants to fill you with joy and saturate you with His peace. His heart's desire is to spend eternity showing you the great riches of His favor and kindness. What a future!

When you choose to believe in Jesus and receive Him as Who He is—God's love Gift to you—the Bible describes what occurs:

"Therefore if any person is (ingrafted) in Christ, the Messiah, he is (a new creature altogether) a new creation; the old (previous moral and spiritual condition) has passed away. Behold, the fresh and new has come! But all things are from God, Who through Jesus Christ reconciled us to Himself (received us into favor, brought us into harmony with Himself)

and gave to us the ministry of reconciliation – that by word and deed we might aim to bring others into harmony with Him. It was God (personally present) in Christ, reconciling and restoring the world to favor with Himself, not counting up and holding against (men) their trespasses (but canceling them); and committing to us the message of reconciliation." 2 Corinthians 5:17-19.

A gift is free but it must be received. Jesus is for all, not just a few. He was given for anyone who will just believe in Him. Believing in Him is having faith or putting your trust in Jesus to save and deliver you. Your works or efforts to please God or gain His favor is not necessary. Isn't that good news? You see, religion pressures man to do "something"—to try reaching up to God or some force. But, God in Jesus reaches down to us and brings us into His presence. God becomes our Father and we, as believers, become His sons and daughters.

God's gift is easy to receive. Romans 10:9 says: "Because if you acknowledge and confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and in your heart believe (adhere to, trust in, and rely on the truth) that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved."

A favorite poster of mine best describes what I have experienced since I made the decision to believe and receive God's love for me. It says, "I am no longer the same, Jesus has made all the difference." He truly has—and that difference will go on for eternity. ☺

# OUR TOWN

## November 1923 December

### TOWN TALK

George Flower, the well known Long Lake trapper, who has been under the doctor's care for the past two weeks is now practically recovered. George states that he has made preparations to handle approximately 147 miles of trapline during the coming cold weather. Fur of all descriptions is said to be fairly plentiful.

Nels Tjosevig took Mr. and Mrs. Neys to the road camp yesterday. He reports the trail some rough going for cars and advises any one with a tendency toward seasickness to walk it.

Bill Berry chauffeured Mrs. Seltenreich, Buddy, and Mrs. Mencini to the Seltenreich ranch yesterday.

Jack O'Neill and Dick Woodman have about decided that this is a heck of a life when a man can't even slip away from grim toil for a few days' hunting.

### ITEMS OF INTEREST

Frank Iverson states that he and Mrs. Iverson will leave for the states Sunday.

The trip will be extended from Seattle, where Iverson was once chief of detectives, to eastern Washington. From Washington the Iversons will tour California by auto.

After visiting friends, Frank will start for home, arriving at McCarthy sometime in February. Mrs. Iverson will probably visit

relatives in the old country, before returning to Alaska. Everyone wishes the couple a good trip.

### MCCARTHY BREAKS ALL RECORDS

Just about ten o'clock Saturday evening a fire broke out on the row and after a half-hour's fight the blaze was brought under control.

The building, which was partially consumed, was the property of Lou Miller, who has been in Cordova for the past couple of months.

During the past year there has been three incipient fires, which if not promptly extinguished, would have caused large property damage. The prompt and effective measures taken at the beginning of these fires has averted repetitions of the blazes that consume the Kennedy, Chong and other buildings in the town. Knock on wood.

### LOCAL

Charley Chong threw open the doors of his new establishment on Second Street last Thursday. He has redecorated and otherwise renovated the building and has attractively furnished the entire place.

Nov. 3

### GREEN BUTTE BUNKHOUSE COMPLETED

Mr. James Gaskill, manager of the Green Butte mine, states that the

dormitory on the hill is practically completed and that a few more days work on the quarters at the lower camp will complete them.

The bunkhouse will provide accommodation for about fifty men in addition to the office and dry room. Both the upper and lower camp dormitories are substantially built and rooted with corrugated iron, laid over heavy building paper. The entire interior of both structures is sealed.

The structure is three thousand feet in length and has a gradient of approximately forty five percent. The line will be run in the same manner as the Erie tram, hitherto afore the supplies have been taken from the switch back to the mine by means of a gravity system.

The mine is being rapidly developed to the point where it will begin paying dividends in spite of the fact the company has a long wagon haul on top of the rail and water charges. Without a doubt there will be a spur put up McCarthy creek in a short time if present indications of the mine develop properly.

During the past year the company has shipped some cars of ore all of which was high grade. The ore was sacked as shot, no attempt of picking being made. What mill run ore was mined is stored in chutes where it will remain until it is put through a mill which will be installed as

soon as developments warrant.

### BLACKSMITH SHOP IS OPENED

Friday the blacksmith shop belonging to Mrs. Underwood located on Front Street was sold to Art Powell. It is understood that the sale price was fifteen hundred dollars.

Art immediately took possession and fired up the forge and is now swamped with work. He is prepared to do all kinds of general blacksmithing, repair work and horseshoeing. He will install machinery of any description anywhere.

Capt. Hubrick has been refinishing the Latton house that is situated on Arctic Avenue, but has been unable to work for the past couple of days on account of illness.

Today's train brought in a large Delco plant consigned to Mrs. Kate Kennedy. The Kennedy building is being wired throughout, Dick Woodman having the contract, and in a few days the plant will be running.

We will skate this winter, if human endeavor, Henry Olsen and Sig Wold have their way. The boys have a small gas engine and pump, with which they intend to flood a nice piece of ground and charge admission.

Sunday the North end local is to start on the winter schedule, the train making one trip daily from Kennecott to Chitina. The

tieup will be at McCarthy. During this season Conductor Wilson will take 'em away from the passengers.

Owing to the deep snow, Pete Brenewick took passengers to Kennecott by team last Wednesday.

## GRAND OPENING

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A. E. POWELL'S SHOP  
FRONT STREET

Nov. 10

## STORK AGAIN VISITS MCCARTHY

There is an increase in the Powell family to the extent of a fine five pound baby boy. The stork brought the new arrival at five minutes to twelve, Wednesday evening.

Art, the big chested daddy, states that what the boy lacks in size he makes up in voice.

Both mother and son are doing well and are expected home in a week.

## NEWS FINALLY GETS A HOME

After this week the News will have a permanent home at number One Riverside Drive, the management having purchased the Jack Schultz residence.

There is ample room

on the lot to expand the present plant so consequently we are now prepared to grow with the town.

Nov. 17

## NEW BUSINESS TO OPEN ON THE FIFTH

The laundry which has been under construction for the past couple of months will open on the fifth of December according to Mr. Minchine, who will be in charge of the new establishment.

Mr. Minchine and his partner are renting the building and machinery from Charley Veach. Both men state that they know the business, so there is no reason for them not making an unqualified success of the new venture. The town should support a laundry and undoubtedly the new establishment will receive ample patronage.

Nov. 24

## KENNECOTT

Frankie Morris the two year old son of Mr. and Mrs. Jack Morris entertained several of his little friends at a birthday party Friday afternoon. Nice lunch and plenty of games made the party a huge success.

Dec. 1

## TOWN TALK

Johnny Hill, who has been employed at the Green Butte for some time past is engaged in putting a new foundation under the McCarthy Garage. He has also taken a contract to move the frame house belonging to Mrs. Kennedy, down from Dynamite hill to the lot formerly occupied by her hotel.

The Seltenreich family have moved into the big log residence on Dynamite hill.

Dec. 8

## MESSENGER CARD ROOM TO OPEN

E. D. Gerken and Billy Graham will open a new establishment on lower Second street about the twentieth of the month.

In addition to the card room a messenger service will be instituted, the annunciators having arrived on today's train.

## SUMMER'S RESIDENCE CHANGES OWNERS

The Summer's residence was purchased during the past week by Harry Boyden, the purchase price being three hundred and fifty dollars. It is understood the Boydens will renovate the interior and otherwise improve the appearance of their new domicile.

Dec. 15

## DOGS RACING DEATH INTO NELCHINA

The creaking of snowshoes, a harsh "mush", to a ten dog team and now and then a curse are the only sounds that mark the passing of two natives, who are racing death to a lonely cabin far in the interior, where Perry Darce, an old time prospector and trapper is suffering with appendicitis.

Darce and his partner, Archie M. Alphin have a trap line along the old Nelchina trail, the home cabin being located some forty miles up the Tazlina River.

When Darce was taken ill, McAlphin realizing that there would be a better chance to save time by going for help rather than trying to break trail and haul his partner in on a Yukon sleigh, started for

Tazlina. Upon his arrival, he notified Wilson Miller of his need for help so the latter immediately secured the services of two natives and took the back trail. After a short rest, McAlphin also started on the return journey. According to a report received at Chitina, Miller played out and was forced to return to Tazlina, the natives pushing on toward their destination.

An auto has been sent out the highway and will bring the sick man into Chitina, from which point he will be taken to Kennecott.

Dec. 22

## TRAPPER UNDERGOES OPERATION

Perry Darce, the man that was taken sick with appendicitis, at his cabin 40 miles up the Tazlina River, was taken to Kennecott for operation. Owing to the hardship he was forced to take, Darce was in a very weakened condition when he arrived at the hospital.

## TAYLOR HAS PAINFUL ACCIDENT

Friday morning Andy Taylor suffered a painful accident while helping load a car of logs. Ever since it was erected, Andy has been handling the big derrick that A. E. Trimm uses to load mining timbers consigned to Kennecott. Yesterday morning Andy in some manner got his finger in the tackle and narrowly missed losing his hand. The finger was badly lacerated but no bones were broken.

Dec. 29

# the Languid Lady

## Wildflowers of the Wrangells—Part 4: "Evergreen Plants"

BY DEE FRADY

As I look out the front door of our cabin, I only see gray limbs. November is fast approaching and all the deciduous trees have lost their colorful leaves. The flowers have faded and the short growing season is all but over. The snow has not yet arrived so it appears quite barren except for the green spruce. Do you think it is really as drab as it appears at first glance?

One of my treasures is a book printed in 1887, "Gray's Lessons In Botany." The book defines the word evergreen as holding the leaves over winter and until new ones appear, or longer. If you look closer at the small plants and ground covers, green leaves remain all through the woods. Even when the snow covers them, they remain green through the winter and become the first signs of green as the snow melts in the spring.

### LARGE-FLOWERED WINTERGREEN (*Pyrola grandiflora*) Wintergreen Family

The Wintergreen family contains small plants often with simple evergreen leaves. This plant found primarily in woodlands or on mountainsides can also grow on dry tundra. The thick, round, evergreen leaves are a shiny dark green that grows around the base of the stem. At the top of 5 to 10 inch stems are greenish-white, dark-veined, flowers with 5 petals. These flowers are larger and showier

than the pink variety. They bloom in June and July. Typical of *Pyrolas* they have a pronounced style that curve at maturity. Although great for growing in shady places and transplants, these flowers are best enjoyed in their native habitat. *Pyrola*, from the Latin *pyrus* ("pear tree"), refers to the leaves of some species that resemble those of pears. Medicinal usage includes skin salves from leaves, tea for skin eruptions and mouthwash for canker sores and gum inflammations.

### PINK PYROLA (*Pyrola asarifolia*) Wintergreen Family

A dainty inhabitant of moist woods and meadows. The round, shiny leaves cluster around the base of the stalk. The straight 8 to 12 inch spike contains pink to reddish, slightly nodding flowers with 5 petals and protruding styles. The delicately scented flowers bloom in June and July. They make excellent cut flowers in a small vase. Some botanists believe these plants exist in a symbiotic relationship with conifers.

One of my favorite flowers to press as they turn a dark pink color. They press well as spikes or individual florets.

### SIDEBELLS PYROLA (*Pyrola secunda*) Wintergreen Family

Also prefer a woody habitat, as many of the different species are found growing in the same area. A low plant with green, oval-shaped, smooth leaves that

grow in a basal cluster. These evergreens grow from long, creeping roots. The small, green, bell-shaped, drooping blossoms hang to one side of a curved 3 to 6 inch stem. They also have a protruding style. Flowering occurs in June and July.

These charming plants appear in abundance around our store in areas of disturbance. They are interesting to press for miniature work.

Two other common evergreens are: Green *Pyrola* (*P. chlorantha*) which has yellowish-green flowers and Shy Maiden (*Moneses uniflora*) which has one very fragrant star-shaped flower per plant. (Also called Single Delight or Bethlehem Star.)



SHY MAIDEN ( STAR-SHAPED FLOWER ALSO CALLED BETHLEHEM STAR)

**TWINFLOWER** (*Linnaea borealis*) Honeysuckle Family

This trailing shrub (a woody perennial) prefers woods and dry, open slopes in the mountains. The small, dark evergreen leaves oppose on stems. The stalks, 3 to 6 inches tall arise from the stems and contain one or two sets of leaves topped by two pale pink, bell-shaped flowers. (Always appear in pairs, thus the common name.) Large patches of Twinflower abound and are as fragrant as a delicate perfume. This delicate little beauty flowers from mid-June to early August. Named in honor of Swedish botanist, Carolus Linnaeus (1707-78), father of botanical names. It is said he liked to pose for his portrait with a sprig of Twinflower in his hand. This beautiful ground cover is easy to transplant. It grows around the world in northern latitudes. The foliage resembles that of Kinnikinnick.



TWINFLOWER ( FLOWERS APPEAR IN PAIRS)

**KINNIKINNICK/BEARBERRY** (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*) Heath Family

The Heath family contains shrubs, often evergreen and

includes blueberries, huckleberries and cranberries. Kinnikinnick, commonly seen in dry spruce forests or sandy, open sites is a sprawling, evergreen shrub that has a main tap root and woody, trailing stems that form large mats. The rounded, oblong leaves, tapered at one end have a leathery top and rough underneath. The small, pink, Chinese lantern-shaped flowers bloom in May and June. The dull, reddish-orange, mealy berries form in August or September. They are insipid in flavor and not generally used for food. However, during poor berry production years they are useful as a filler. The berries persist on plants throughout the winter providing forage for spruce hens, moose and sheep. The plant by itself is sometimes confused with Twinflower or Lowbush Cranberry. Found also in northern Europe and Asia,

Kinnikinnick is an Indian word meaning "smoking mixture." Reportedly, the dried leaves once were crumbled and used as a substitute for tobacco. Leaves are grown commercially for use as a diuretic and astringent for relieving kidney and bladder problems. One alleged medicinal use included the control of several sexually transmitted diseases. A tea was concocted by Alaskan homesteaders by soaking the leaves in brandy and consuming for minor health problems. In Greek arctos is "bear" and staphyle "grape" whereas in Latin uva is "a bunch of grapes" and ursus is "bear." The berries are indeed commonly eaten by bears. One other use is to plant on slopes to prevent soil erosion.

**LOW-BUSH CRANBERRY/LINGONBERRY** (*Vaccinium vitis-idaea*) Heath

## Family

Also called Mountain Cranberry this plant likes acid soil of a rocky, dry, peaty nature and grows in woods. A low, evergreen shrub that creeps from horizontal roots, the 3 to 8 inch branches have many, small oval, shiny leaves with rolled edges that alternate. Brown spots on undersides of the leaves distinguish this plant from uva-ursi. The pink, bell-shaped flowers cluster at branch ends in June and July. They produce round, firm, dark red berries that ripen early in September. They are best picked after a frost. The berries are similar in appearance to the commercial cranberry but much smaller. They also range across northern Europe and Asia.

Since they contain benzoic acid, the berries can be kept without preserving by storing in a cool place. Cranberries are easily frozen or successfully dried. Esteemed by Hudson Bay Company and sent as gifts to England. Chew the berries for a sore throat as they contain Vitamin C. Munch on berries to relieve an upset stomach as they stimulate gastric juice production. The acidic fruit often persists through the winter and provides a source of food for ptarmigan, grouse and bears. I have found flocks of Bohemian Waxwings and voles to consume large quantities of these fruits. The foliage may be useful to reindeer and caribou as winter browse. Boiling the leaves and stems with alum produces a red dye. Easy to transplant they are a fine ground cover for full sun to partial shade. Bog Cranberry (*Oxycoccus microcarpus*) is also an evergreen that grows on boggy hummocks, produces flowers that resemble tiny Shooting Stars followed by edible fruit.

Probably the most useful of

Alaska's berries as well as having a superior flavor over commercial cranberries, nothing heralds the holiday season any better. Cranberry sauces to go with Thanksgiving turkey is a must, not to mention it is also a good digestive aid. Cranberry liqueur is a wonderful accompaniment for Christmas. How about Cranberry Waldorf, muffins, nut

bread, preserve for toast or the best of herbal teas? The recipes abound.

Worth mentioning is one last evergreen family, useful in holiday arrangements. The Club Moss family grows as a low, creeping plant that has spike-like branches or can resemble tiny

pine trees. Creeping Jenny (Christmas Greens) has branched leaves resembling cedar. These plants have no flowers as they are a moss and produce spores. They make lovely arrangements around candles or with spruce boughs for Christmas wreaths. Happy Holidays!



## Kennecott Kids Korner

BY NAN MOORE HENDERSON

*My dad was James Allen Moore, a mining engineer for Kennecott Copper Corp. I was born in Kennicott in 1932 and left in 1937. We lived in the last house down from the steam plant. I'm SO proud to be a Kennecott Kid!!*

### **I remember**

I remember that we used to pose for pictures all the time and now I'm glad we did as we're able to share albums with the others at our Kennecott Kids reunions!

I remember Christmas—we always had a real tree, decorated with strings of cranberries and popcorn—and stockings full of oranges, nuts and candy.

I remember that all the houses and buildings were painted red and white, except for the hospital, and it was white.

I remember the train parked in front of our house in the winter—my sister (Jeanne Moore Elliott) and brother (Jim Moore) and I used to "play house" on the flat cars and one spring it left with all our dishes and dollies!

I remember that mother and daddy used to go to the recreation center for parties, dances and movies.

I remember getting lost in McCarthy when I was 3 years old. Lem Hays and his dog found me.

I remember keeping things cold in a box that daddy built onto the outside of the window in the winter. I think it was our freezer.

I remember drinking powdered milk called KLIM (which is milk spelled backwards).

I remember Daddy playing tennis on the tennis courts with red tennis balls.

I remember picnics at Long Lake, and I remember George Flowers was my friend.

I remember we had a garden beside our house in the summer.

I remember I had a bunny fur coat and bunny fur mittens.

I remember seeing the glacier behind our house and think Daddy's electrical pole was the North Pole!

### INQUIRY

Has anyone any history of my father Jack Reynolds, U. S. Marshall from (?)1916 to 1934 of McCarthy?

Would appreciate any info,  
Lillie Reynolds Tatum

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### **McCarthy Weather on Web**

If you have access to the World Wide Web, set your browser to:

<http://tgs7.nws.noaa.gov/weather/current/PAMX.html>  
to check on the McCarthy weather.

# Beavers not entirely to blame for Beaver Fever

BY NED ROZELL

The last time I went hunting, I brought home more than moose burger. After a day in Fairbanks, I could barely stay awake, and the noises from my abdomen were so loud my dog barked at them. Though I'm always extremely careful about treating my drinking water, I came back to town with an intestinal parasite known commonly as Giardia.

When I told people, everyone offered their own story about Giardiasis, the medical name for the disease. Conflicting stories drove me to the university's biomedical library, where I picked up a book, *Giardia and Giardiasis*, edited by Stanley Erlandsen of the University of Minnesota and Ernest Meyer of Oregon Health Sciences University. Here's what they told me: Giardia is the name commonly used to describe several species of one-celled animals that thrive in an airless environment. One of their favorite anaerobic places is in a human's small intestine, near where it connects to the large intestine. Giardia lamblia is the creature that most often knocks humans out for a week or two. It lives in two states—one, the trophozoite, looks sort of like a microscopic teardrop. The trophozoite lives in human and animal intestines, where it divides by binary fission and makes thousands of copies of itself that attach to the lining of the small intestine.

Trophozoites, which are so small that dozens of them could

line up on the edge of a knife, move with the aid of flagella, first described in 1681 as "sundry little paws" by Anton van Leeuwenhoek, a Giardia sufferer who owned a microscope.

Humans pick up the disease by swallowing the resting stage of Giardia, the cyst. Cysts are hardy little tablets that exit an infected animal's body along with feces. Animals known to carry Giardia include dogs, cats, beavers, muskrats and bears, and possibly Dall sheep and moose. Beavers usually get the rap for spreading Giardia (some people call it Beaver Fever), but William Bemrick, a University of Minnesota researcher, said beavers are blamed far too often. He cited studies on muskrats that showed them to carry even more cysts than beavers that lived nearby. Bemrick also pointed out that infected humans do more than their share of spreading the disease. Three-hundred million cysts may be present in one milligram of human feces, Bemrick wrote, and these cysts can survive for a month in cool water.

Here's a way someone might pick up Giardia: A muskrat with Giardia defecates in the Melozitna River, releasing millions of cysts that are invisible to the naked eye. A science writer motors a canoe, loaded heavy with bags of moose, upstream. River spray comes over the side of the

canoe and wets his face. He licks his lips and swallows a few of the cysts. A single cyst makes it to his small intestine, becomes a trophozoite, and begins dividing. In two weeks, enough Giardia have taken up residence to cause a fever, fatigue, and diarrhea. Though the water route is the most common, Giardia can also be spread by direct contact with feces. In one case tracked by the Minnesota Department of Health, a woman spread Giardia by preparing a meal of salmon after diapering her infected 12-month old grandson. Even though she had washed her hands, researchers figured there were still enough cysts present, perhaps under her fingernails, to infect 31 people. Once you have Giardia, treatment is usually quick and easy with antibiotics, but in some cases it hangs on for months or years. The best plan is to avoid the parasite, especially in rivers and lakes with beavers and muskrats. Boiling water kills the cysts, and filtering water will also remove them. And if river spray hits you in the face, take these words of advice, also handy in other life situations: Keep your mouth shut.

*This column is provided as a public service by the Geophysical Institute, University of Alaska Fairbanks, in cooperation with the UAF research community. Ned Rozell is a science writer at the Institute.*

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"Everyone can't be rich, but everyone can be kind." — Margaret K. Harvill



Photo courtesy Peggy Guntis

HONEST, FOLKS, THIS WAS NOT STAGED! OUR GOOD NEIGHBOR PEGGY GUNTIS SENT US THIS SCENE THAT SHE CAPTURED ON THE DAY OUR SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER EDITION WAS DISTRIBUTED. SHOWN IS GRANDDAUGHTER ANNA WALLIN WITH HER FOLKS SCOTT AND SALLY.

## Boost Your Technocabulary

Envy government writers? Wish you could compose prose which would convince the reader you are knowledgeable (even if the subject is completely foreign to you)? Simply employ the "Buzzword" writing method. It is simple. There are three columns of words involved, as follows:

- |                 |                     |                           |
|-----------------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| 0. balanced     | 0. management       | 0. contingency            |
| 1. total        | 1. organization     | 1. hardware (or software) |
| 2. integrated   | 2. reciprocal       | 2. projection             |
| 3. compatible   | 3. monitored        | 3. time-frame             |
| 4. synchronized | 4. digital          | 4. concept                |
| 5. optimal      | 5. modular          | 5. programming            |
| 6. responsive   | 6. transitional     | 6. mobility               |
| 7. functional   | 7. incremental      | 7. capability             |
| 8. parallel     | 8. third-generation | 8. flexibility            |
| 9. systemized   | 9. policy           | 9. options                |

Just select any three-digit number; then use the corresponding Buzzwords from the above grid, e.g., 257: "integrated modular capability." Don't worry if it doesn't make sense to you; it won't mean anything to anyone else either, but they'll think you're just smarter than they are so they won't say anything!! You can propose "systemized reciprocal options" (929) to achieve "optimal transitional flexibility" (568), and your boss will probably promote you!!

---

**"Life is a gift. Freedom is rare. Civilizations must be built a brick and a law at a time—and be defended by blood. Prosperity can only be earned. Whenever reason is lost and judgement fails, disaster fills in. Our generation does not know this."—Rich Karlgaard, writing in Forbes, October 5, 1998.**

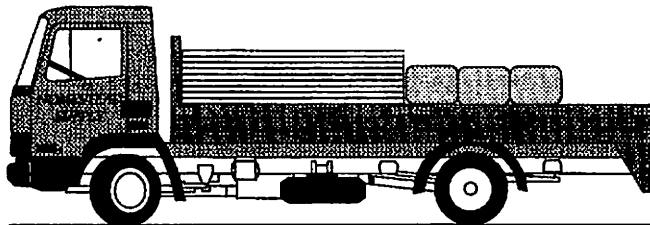


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## Position Statement on Trapping and Snaring of Furbearers

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH & GAME—FEBRUARY 1998

*Editor's note: The signatures of sufficient Alaska voters were obtained to place an initiative on Alaska's November, 1998 General Election Ballot that would prohibit the use of snares in trapping wolves. The following information is the summary information used in the petition booklets: Bill Prohibiting Trapping Wolves With Snares. This bill would prohibit a person from using a snare with the intent of trapping a wolf. It would also prohibit a person from possessing, buying, selling, or offering to sell the skin of a wolf known by the person to have been caught with a snare. Breaking the law would be a misdemeanor. The penalty could be jail time of up to one year, and a fine of up to \$5,000.*

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game supports regulated trapping and snaring as legitimate harvest methods for use of Alaska's furbearer resource. Snaring and trapping are labor intensive harvest methods and trapper success rates are inherently low. Trapping and snaring are regulated by the Alaska Board of Game to insure that harvests do not exceed sustained yields. The Department recognizes public concerns regarding the issue of animal welfare in the context of trapping and snaring, and is dedicated to the continued improvement of trapping methods and equipment that conform to the principles of humane harvest.

Most trappers are careful to set their traps and snares properly. Instances where snares do not kill immediately or catch other animals besides wolves are the exception. The Department supports and promotes humane and ethical trapping using the best techniques available. The Department participates in annual trapping schools to teach trappers responsible techniques and ethical considerations.

The following background information may help clarify some important points regarding the use of snares for trapping wolves in Alaska.

Snaring and other methods of trapping are strictly regulated in Alaska. Trappers must abide by restrictions on the size of snare, use of bait, snow-machines, airplanes, boats, artificial lights, and radio communications. Trappers 16 and older must be licensed.

Trappers are encouraged to attend special clinics where ethical and humane trapping principles are taught.

Department of Fish and Game biologists monitor wolf and other furbearer populations throughout the state to assure that populations remain healthy and are not over harvested.

The Department has been working at the national level to help develop trap standards to address the issue of humanness. It is also involved in studies to identify methods to make snaring and trapping as humane as possible.

Trapping is an important part of the economy in rural Alaska. It is part of traditional fishing, hunting, and gathering activities. In some rural communities in the Interior, as many as 87 percent of households trap for income.

Snares are particularly important in cash poor villages of Interior Alaska because they are the most effective way to trap wolves in areas of deep or frequent snowfall.

In addition to cash,

trapping generates other products used by rural households, including food for human consumption (e.g., beaver, lynx, ptarmigan, and hare) and raw materials for clothing (especially cold weather gear for the head, hands and feet).

Snares are usually made of wire or cable. They are designed to catch animals around the neck, torso or foot. They can either be lethal or used only to restrain an animal. Many wolf trappers prefer snares because they are lighter than other traps, less expensive, more effective than leghold traps during freezing and thawing weather, and remain operable after snowfalls.

Snares are legal in 39 of 49 states that have regulated trapping seasons as well as in all the Canadian provinces.

A 1992 Gallup survey found that 80 percent of Alaska trappers use snares and that 30 percent of their catch is taken by snaring.

In 1996-97, 1,280 wolves were harvested in Alaska. Of these, 435 were taken in snares; 415 were shot; and 381 were trapped using other methods (mostly leg-hold traps). Over the last five years, snares have accounted for an average of 29 percent of the wolves harvested each year in the state.

The Alaska Board of Game

will review snaring and trapping regulations in March 1998. At that time, the Board will consider public proposals for changes to snaring and trapping regulations to ensure that Alaskan trappers are using trapping equipment and methods that are consistent with the best conservation and

management practices for the use of Alaska's furbearer populations.

Trapping furbearers has been economically and culturally important to Alaska's people for centuries. The seasonal harvest of wildlife provides meat and warm clothing needed to sustain and

enhance life in the North. Historically, trapping was at the heart of trade in Alaska, and it is still a vital part of rural economies and cultures. Like hunting, viewing, and photography, trapping is a legitimate use of our wildlife resource. ♣

## Gardening good at Fireweed Mt. Subdivision

*We got the following letter and picture from subscriber Harold Michal. Harold and wife Carol live at the Fireweed Mountain Subdivision, between McCarthy and Long Lake.*

To the editor:

Hi! This is J. Harold Michal from Fireweed Mt. Subdivision. I'm sending you a picture of my wife Carol holding a 17 point carrot from her fabulous garden this year. She had two turnips that weighed over five pounds and Kolorabi larger than grapefruit. Her pet herbs are celeriac and fennel, both of which are wonderful added to salads and soup. We live off her garden each and every summer. It seems almost everything she plants grows to enormous size and so sweet and tender. She gives away a large part of her produce each year to the Senior Center in Valdez.

By the way, we have just moved into our newly rebuilt cabin and we love it.

Your subscribers,  
Harold and Carol



Photo courtesy Harold Michal

CAROL MICHAL WITH 17 POINT CARROT GROWN AT THEIR  
FIREWEED MOUNTAIN HOMESTEAD.

**"Research is what I'm doing when I don't know what I'm doing."—Wernher von Braun**

**"Ignorant people are sure of the causes of everything."—James Thorpe**

---

**I would like to take this opportunity to request your vote for State Senate.**

MOVED TO ALASKA IN 1969

GRADUATED 1977

MARRIED TO GLENDA 1978

20 YEAR ANNIVERSARY WITH GLENDA THIS SEPTEMBER

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SELF-EMPLOYED 18 YEARS, AS GENERAL CONTRACTOR,

COMMERCIAL FISHERMAN 14 SEASONS

BUSINESS OWNER, VALDEZ STORAGE FACILITY

**I STAND STRONG FOR SMALL BUSINESS:** I believe it is the private business sector that provides the backbone of a stable economy. Sound, environmentally friendly, resource development, should be the goal of state government. This will allow Alaska to grow, while adding jobs to the economy for our children's future. Then they will have the opportunity to remain here at home and raise their family in this great state.

**FAMILY:** Whether it is abortions for minors without parental consent, partial birth abortion, same sex marriage or any other attack against the family. I will stand strong against these attacks on our family values! Georgianna, has consistently voted in favor of these things, eroding the family value system we once took for granted.

**GUN CONTROL:** I believe that gun ownership is a right, guaranteed to the people of America, under the second amendment and should not be infringed upon. This again puts me on the other side from Georgianna, who consistently votes to limit our rights to keep and bear arms.

**MONEY MANAGEMENT:** The goal should be to operate more efficiently with the resources currently on hand in the State Budget. Leave the Permanent Fund ALONE!

**STATE INCOME TAX:** I do not believe we need more taxes at this time. I believe taxes slow the financial growth of the people being taxed and would be counter productive at this time! Georgianna has pushed for reinstating state income taxes.

*The difference is clear, the choice is yours, THANK YOU for your support.*

Sincerely,

Scott Smith

Candidate for State Senate

Paid for by Doyne Houghton

**Scott Smith**  
**State Senate**

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## When is a sourdough?

MCCARTHY WEEKLY NEWS 1923

Two words that intrigue the Alaska bound traveler on his northward journey are "chechakoo" and "sourdough."

If he is from the far East, he will generally seek enlightenment at the first opportunity. If he is wise he will not commit himself, but will eventually glean from the conversation of his fellow passengers the information that the latter term is applied, not to an article of diet peculiar to the country, but to a resident of the territory who has seen "the ice come and go on the Yukon."

Now, a year's residence in the country might entitle one to speak of Alaskan affairs with as much conviction as our law-makers, who spent the summer in Europe, show in discussing the problems of that continent; but it would not necessarily make one a sourdough. Because "sourdoughism" is not a matter of time or place of residence in the North; it is a frame of mind. Moreover, it does not lend itself to a concise definition. Some have attained it by dint of years of mushing over unbroken trails,

of living on bacon and beans, of feverish digging for the "pay;" others have acquired it by enjoying the comforts of civilization at Anchorage or Ketchikan and listening to their tales; there are some who will never reach it, regardless of where or how they live. It is peculiar to neither youth nor age. Alaska boasts many a youth and maiden of seventeen summers that is fully as seasoned a sourdough from the chechako so plainly, that Seattle-ites can spot us a block away.

"Wolves are frequently deterred from feeding on animals shot by the hunters on the prairies, who, aware of the cautious and timid character of these rapacious beasts, attach to the game they are obliged to leave behind them a part of their clothing, such as a handkerchief, or scatter gun powder around the carcass, which the cowardly animals dare not approach although they will watch it for hours at a time, and as soon as the hunter returns and takes out the entrails of the game he had left thus protected, and carries off the pieces he wishes, leaving the coarser parts for the benefit of these hungry animals, they come forward and enjoy the feast. The hunters who occasionally assisted us when we were at Fort Union, related numerous stratagems of this kind to which they had resorted to keep off the wolves when on a hunt." — John James Audubon, 1785-1851 *Quadrupeds of America: Volume II*

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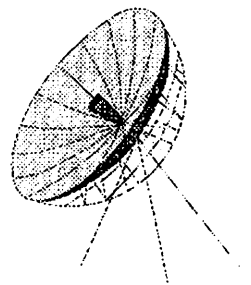
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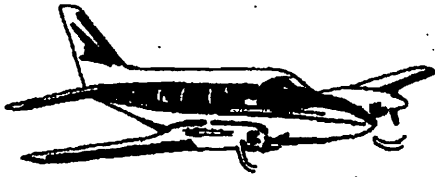


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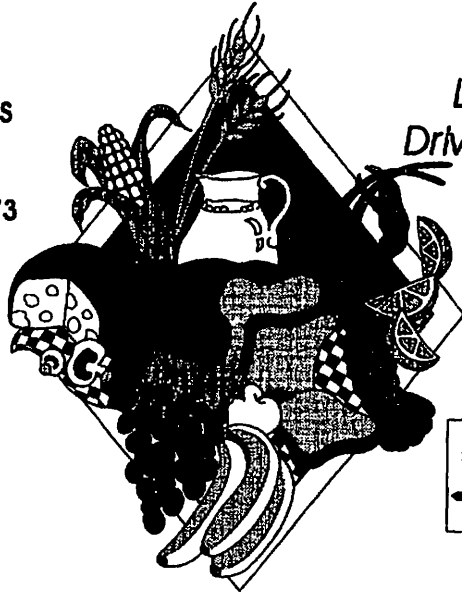
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# Urban Canada Geese Choose Summer in the City

BY NED ROZELL

*This column is provided as a public service by the Geophysical Institute, University of Alaska Fairbanks, in cooperation with the UAF research community. Ned Rozell is a science writer at the Institute.*

Anchorage, which is Alaska's hub of more than 257,000 people, attracts a fair amount of wildlife. Moose live in patches of woods throughout the city, lynx have been spotted on ski trails, and an occasional black or grizzly bear wanders through town. One creature that's taken to the city life, the lesser Canada goose, has worn out its welcome at airports, parks and businesses. Wildlife managers are now experimenting with ways to reduce by half the Anchorage population of urban Canada geese.

In 1995, an AWACS jet taking off from Elmendorf Air Force Base sucked Canada geese into several engines, causing a crash that killed 24 people. The birds also drop about six tons of feces a day during their summer stay in Anchorage, according to a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service report. Another problem is that urban geese lose their shyness, and often chase and bite people who stray close to nests.

Why does a wild creature want to live in Alaska's biggest city? Dave Crowley, a wildlife biologist with the Anchorage office of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, said geese love the parks, lakes and lawns of Anchorage. "Clipped, fertilized, watered grass is perfect food for a goose," Crowley said. "We've created a goose paradise in town." As Anchorage grew, the geese followed. The first pair may have settled in Anchorage after flying up from Potter Marsh in the early 1970s; more were lured

by new parks and airports. In the mid-to-late-1970s, a few hundred geese spent their summers in

Anchorage. Today, the population is about 4,500, Crowley said. The managers' goal is to trim that population to about 2,000. To reach that number, people from groups as diverse as the Department of Transportation and the local chapter of the Audobon Society banded together to form the Anchorage Waterfowl Working Group.

The simplest suggestion the group offered, to kill more than half the adult geese by decapitation, inspired demonstrations from animal rights activists. The group also has looked at many other, non-lethal, alternatives, one of them studied by Lea Hix.

Hix is a graduate student at the University of Alaska Anchorage whose master's degree project is to document the reproductive success of the urban Canada goose. She's studying what happens when people remove eggs from Canada goose nests. One of the goose-control methods being tested is to have volunteers hike through nesting sites and remove all but one egg from each nest they see. Hix has found that by leaving one egg, the mother goose will usually not nest again, and the number of goslings is reduced to one from an original clutch of about five eggs. Though the method of taking every egg but one may be successful, Hix said Anchorage has a unique

problem—many people collect the eggs to eat. When they grab the eggs, they usually don't leave any in the nest. "If somebody comes and takes all the eggs, the birds re-nest," Hix said. "Not only does that make more goslings, it's very energy consumptive." Biologists are also moving goslings from Anchorage to other areas. When geese migrate north, they return to the areas where they learned to fly. When I called Crowley, he had just returned from transporting 80 goslings from Anchorage International Airport across Cook Inlet to Susitna Flats. In theory, those goslings will join wild geese there, then migrate in fall to Baskett Slough in Oregon's Willamette Valley, where geese from Anchorage hang out in winter. Next spring, they should return to

Susitna Flats rather than Anchorage International. Removing eggs from nests and giving goslings airplane rides will only slow the growth of the Anchorage goose population. The inevitable next step is to kill some of the adult geese, Crowley said, a plan supported by many people in Anchorage but again opposed by animal-rights activists. The killing of adult geese is seen by biologists as the most realistic method of reaching the goal of 2,000 geese by the year 2001. "The only way to get to our population goal is to actually kill adults," Crowley said. "We know this is going to be necessary." ☺



# A LOOK AT THE WEATHER

BY GEORGE CEBULA

August 1998 was cool and cloudy with average precipitation. There were 7 days when the high temperature reached 70 or above and 12 days when it only made it into the 50's.

The high temperature for the month was 74 on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> (78 on Aug. 4, '97 and 74 on Aug. 16, '96).

The first freeze was on the 4<sup>th</sup> as the temperature fell to 31, this was only for a short time and most of the garden plants were spared. The temperature fell to 28 on the morning of the 9<sup>th</sup> and a lot of the plants were killed. There were 10 days when the low was 32 or below and the low temperature for the month was 25 on the 27<sup>th</sup> (29 on Aug. 20, '97 and 28 on Aug 8, '96). The average monthly temperature at McCarthy was 49.8 compared to 53.3 in Aug. '97, 50.5 in Aug. '96 and 51.8 in Aug. '95. *Silver Lake had a high temperature of 79 on the 1<sup>st</sup> (80*

*on Aug. 5, '97 and 74 on Aug. 16, '96). The low temperature at Silver Lake was 28 on the 19<sup>th</sup> (33 on Aug. 29, '97 and Aug. 22, '96). The Silver Lake average temperature was 50.5 (55.7 in Aug. '97, 51.9 in Aug. '96 and 52.9 in Aug. '95).*

The August precipitation at McCarthy was 2.84 inches compared with 4.02 inches in Aug. '97 and 2.30 inches in Aug. '96. There were 20 days with a trace or more of rainfall recorded, the same as Aug. '97. *The precipitation at Silver Lake was heavier with 3.30 inches recorded (2.74 in Aug. '97 and 1.57 in Aug. '96). There were 16 days at Silver Lake with a trace or more recorded.*

September 1998 was another average September in both temperature and precipitation. The high temperature at McCarthy was 64 on the 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> (70 on Sept. 4, '97 and 69 on Sept. 4, '96). The low temperature was 17 on the 29<sup>th</sup> (12 on Sept. 30, '97 and 8 on

Sept. 30, '96). There was only 1 day with the 20 or below and 4 days with the low 40 or above. The average monthly temperature at McCarthy was 43.7 (44.1 in Sept. '97 and 40.2 in Sept. '96). This was almost 10 degrees warmer than the record 34.3 of September 1992.

There was an inch of snow recorded at McCarthy on September 30<sup>th</sup> and the total precipitation was 1.79 inches. This compares with the 1.83 inches in Sept. '97 and 1.26 inches in Sept. '96. There were 16 days with measurable rainfall.

*Silver Lake data for September was not available at press time.*

The first 15 days of October have been a continuation of the cool and sunny days of late September. There is still no snow cover. The lowest temperature has been 0 on the 13<sup>th</sup>, with a mild 46 recorded on the 16<sup>th</sup>. Winter should arrive any day now. \*

(Letters to Editor continued)

ballot, is simply to eliminate the use of animals. In the past, these organizations have tried to eliminate dog sled races, the eating of meat, wearing of fur and all forms of hunting.

Where would Anchorage and the rest of the state be without the economic impact of the Fur Rondy and the Iditarod as well as hunting and fishing? The outside groups who are funding ballot initiative #9 have publicly stated their intention to use the same process to achieve their other goals if initiative # 9 is successful.

They will use video footage

of an isolated snaring incident which resulted from a government control program that went seriously wrong. This is portrayed as something that typically occurs on trap lines in Alaska and nothing could be further from the truth. A wolf in a properly set snare typically dies quickly and humanely, much more humanely than almost any other death that nature would have in store for that same wolf.

Trapping is well regulated in Alaska and our furbearer and game populations are abundant because of it. Check with your local Fish and Game biologist to verify this.

This kind of issue does not belong on a ballot. Such a process takes the decision out of the hands of people who have spent a life time studying and working in the field of wildlife and asks a poorly informed public to decide on an issue that can devastate our wildlife populations as well as the rights and livelihood of our state's rural citizens. As a conservationist and a trapper I am asking you to vote NO on ballot measure #9.

Patti Barber  
HC02 Box 7330 Palmer, Ak.  
99645 (745-4446)

☐

# FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

## Editorial Opinion On Ballot measure #9 — A ban on snaring wolves

BY SUE ENTSMINGER

Ballot Measure No. 9 reads—"this bill would prohibit a person from using a snare with the intent of trapping a wolf. It would also prohibit a person from possessing, buying, selling, or offering to sell the skin of a wolf known by the person to have been caught with a snare. Breaking the law would be a Class A misdemeanor." Should this initiative become law? Yes or No.

Alaskan voters will have this choice on November 3.

On August 17th of this year, the Alaska Supreme Court overturned a Superior Court decision and directed the State to place the Wolf Snare Initiative on the November ballot. The Alaska Supreme Court did not address the arguments for or against. They simply reversed Judge Beistline's decision which stated the issue was improper for the ballot. The State of Alaska, Governor Knowles and Lt. Governor Ulmer appealed Beistline's decision to the Alaska Supreme Court. Because of what our governor did, "Outside" Animal Rights groups will spend hundreds of thousands of dollars battling Alaskans and our "Way of Life."

To deal with this dreadful attack, A Coalition for the Alaskan Way of Life (CAWL) formed. [P. O. Box 60954, Fairbanks, Alaska 99706] Their sole purpose is to defeat the animal rights at the polls in November. Natives and Non-natives have joined together on this campaign with endorsements across the state. Ben Hopson Jr. (Anatuvik Pass) is the chairman with Pete Buist (Alaska Trappers Association)

and Gabe Sam (Tanana Chiefs Conference) are co-chairs. Alaska Trappers Association and the Upper Tanana 40-Mile area kicked off the campaign with a banquet and auction in Tok October 3. Over \$8300 was raised from donations and volunteers.

Their effort has mushroomed with communities across the state wanting to do their part to preserve the Alaskan Way of Life.

Two years ago, the first wildlife ballot measure hit Alaska, the ban on hunting a wolf the same day airborne. Many rural Alaskans didn't feel this issue would win. Hunters & trappers naively watched the outside animal rights money spent on ads that cleverly misled the public to believe that wolves were being shot from an airplane. We lost by 57 % of the vote.

Just a few ads were placed by Alaskans. I wish to see Alaskans more informed this time. I personally feel most Alaskans are hungry for the truth and sincere about our wildlife and people.

I am a trapper and a skin sewer (living in rural Alaska). I've snared wolves and cut up many snared wolf pelts each year as does my native family and other skin sewers. Wolf pelts are heavily used for parka ruffs that adorned many native and non-native parkas across Alaska. They are also used for mittens, coats, hats, ear muffs, ceremonial dress, and many other items. The information the animal rights people are feeding the public about snaring comes from the Alaska Department of Fish & Game (ADFG) government wolf control program done south of Fairbanks. This data does not represent the average trapper at

all. Incidentally, the department program actually resulted in more wolves as more ungulates provide more food source for wolves.

Whether the question should even be on the ballot is open to debate. "Outside" animal rights people paid petition carriers \$1 for each signature they gathered last winter. Many of the petitions were used illegally (laying around with no petition sponsor present), making you wonder if they actually had the legal amount of signatures.

Animal rights people have tried to stop any method of wolf take for decades. Let's go back in history when poisoning wolves and aerial hunting was done by the government personnel. Bounties were given for wolves.

Many natives would seek out wolf dens and take every pup for the bounty.

During this heavy take of wolves, the wolf population never went. I'm sure incidental take occurred, but no wildlife ever became extinct. Even though these programs were successful, animal rights stopped them.

Private pilots had the right to hunt, YES, wolves from the air. Animal rights groups got this stopped in 1972. People were allowed to hunt a wolf the same day they were airborne until 1996. There is virtually only two methods of wolf take left, trapping and hunting. A woods wise person knows how many chances one has of taking a wolf by hunting—darn few.

Trapping is the last effective method. Taking away snares will drastically decrease wolf harvest. Animal rights groups are not concerned for the animals, they won't quit until all hunting and

trapping is completely stopped. Wolf populations were not endangered during the days of poisoning and they are certainly not endangered now.

How will anyone know a wolf pelt was snared or not? But just possessing one is a maximum penalty of \$5,000. How will they

prove what year it was taken?

Suddenly your parka ruff you got last year or 5 or 10 years ago could be taken away.

The ugly photos used are all from the ADFG wolf control program. These photos should never be used to shut down the

lifestyle of Alaskans and the individual trapper or the individual skin sewer or the individual who has wolf products.

Preserve the Alaskan Way of Life—VOTE NO on Ballot Measure #9.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

September 16, 1998

Mulino, Oregon

Dear Bonnie,

Thank you so much for sending me the 1998 Visitor's Guide. I'm looking forward to receiving your publication "Wrangell St. Elias News." Thanks!

I was thrilled to hear that you were publishing my inquiry. I'm sure you are probably wondering why I am so interested in the Kennecott mining operation and surrounding area.

I believe I mentioned in my note to you that my husbands' uncle had worked in the Jumbo mine in 1915 & '16. The uncle's name was Andrea Wellington Marshall. (He went by "Wells.")

In 1915, at the age of 24, Wells left Oregon for Alaska, to work in the copper mines of the Kennecott mill. On October 12, 1915, Wells sent a postcard home to his mother. It was a picture of the Kennecott mill. Wells marked a cross on the picture where the Jumbo mine was.

On March 30, 1916, Wells sent his mother a letter.

Perhaps you would be interested in what it said:  
*Dear Mother—Here's another*

*stray letter from your beloved son. I hope above all you're not worrying yourself to death about me, as I'm about as near heaven as I can get.*

*I am working in the copper mines which are located in the ton (?) of the mountains shown in the picture. (On the post-card) I got tired of sleeping in the caledonia.*

*I had a delightful time coming up here 'till we hit the open sea. Then my stomach got weak.*

*I didn't get home as soon as I expected. I must have got off the track, don't you think? I intend to go home sometime in a year or two or sooner.*

*Hoping this finds all well at home. I will close for this time.*

*Good by Mamma*

*Wells Marshall (My address Wells Marshall, Jumbo Mine, Kennecott, via Cordova Alaska)*

Bonnie, this was the last letter received from Wells. The family never heard from him again.

So—you see, this has always been a family mystery. What happened to Wells? Could he have died in a mining accident? Did he just decide to remain in Alaska, and never contact his family

again? Did he ever marry? Did he have children? As you see, there are many unanswered questions. I would love to be able to solve the mystery for our family. Thank you for all your help!

Sincerely,

Wanda Marshall

18564 S. Windy City Rd.

Mulino, OR 97042-9750

August 31, 1998

Charleston, WV

Dear Mr. Kenyon:

What an effective job you and your writers do to make the news interesting! Based upon the letters, you bring your readers up-to-date on the news of "their local residents."

Enjoyed meeting some of the folks from the area and enjoyed reading about them and others in your paper. I look forward to future issues.

Sincerely,

Jane B. Digman

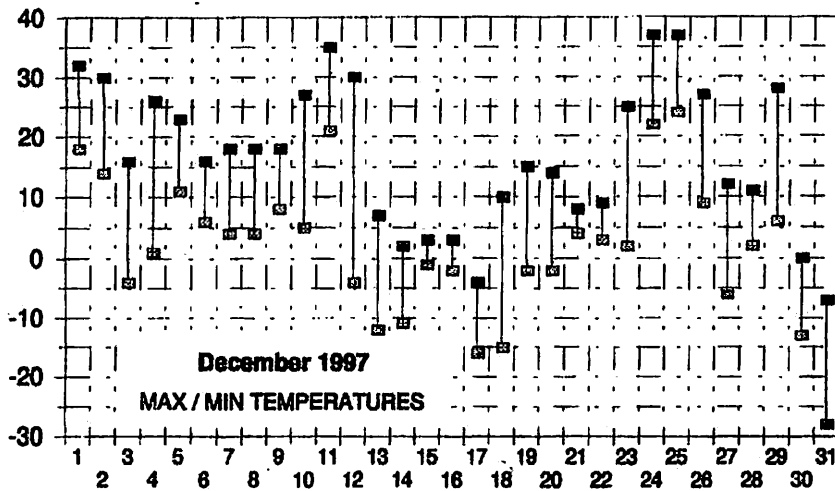
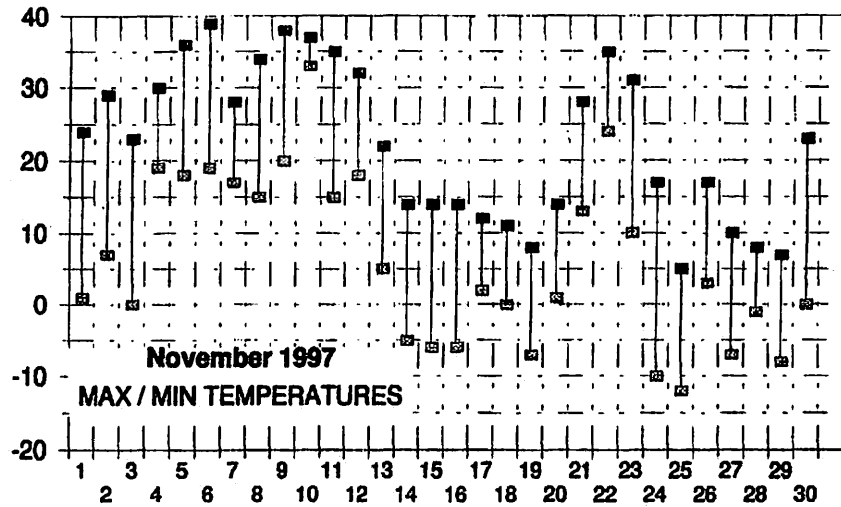
Dear Editor,

The upcoming election has a very controversial ballot issue which would determine whether snares would be outlawed for controlling wolf populations in Alaska. The ultimate goal of the outside-financed animal rights groups, that placed this issue on the

(Continued on page 33)

*Weather - What can we expect?*

Wrangell St. Elias News  
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