

# Wrangell St. Elias News

*"Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty"*

Volume Fourteen Issue Five

September & October 2005

Two Dollars

## 4<sup>th</sup> annual McCarthy Kennicott Half Marathon

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### Off to a good start!

Neil O'Donnell, #210, a great supporter of the McCarthy Kennicott Half-Marathon, runs for a 3<sup>rd</sup> year in a row. When Neil isn't hard at work at his law firm in Anchorage, he can be found at his McCarthy home away from home. Although Neil got off to a good start, he finished some 25 minutes behind the winner. We think he was still stiff from a hike up to the Bonanza a few days prior to the race!

WSEN staff photo

## Dog Days are here again

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Adriana Cameron's dog Zeta appears to be whispering encouraging words to Dog Days' entrant Clark Rice who appears too shy to enter without the help of his friends! Clark belongs to John and Barbara Rice, McCarthy summer residents.

WSEN staff photo



## A note from the publisher

BY BONNIE KENYON

McCarthy is experiencing a seasonal change and with that change comes end-of-summer chores and projects. When Rick isn't sitting at his desk writing articles for the next *WSEN*, I often find him digging in our garden. It is that time of year when we are eager to discover just what is going on under those depleted potato plants.

My mom, Neta Schafer, spent the summer with us and happily displays Rick's initial "find." We have already sampled the spuds shown in this picture and they were worth waiting for. The other day Rick decided to check out two other plants and what he found was very encouraging – 27 potatoes under one plant and 23 under another! On a side note, which has absolutely nothing to do with this publication, we have been using the same kind of potato (called Lemhi), since about 1979. We have a root cellar where we keep our potato crop throughout the year and use our own seed potatoes each year. Perhaps I could conclude that eating all these good homegrown Kenyon spuds, gives us the energy to keep producing the *WSEN*!

I would like to apologize to all the other racers in the half marathon who did not get a mention. I was unable to attend the race com-

pletion in McCarthy or connect with Dan Myers, the race co-ordinator, before this issue went to press. Everyone who participated was important and it was my desire to report the finish times of all racers this year.

My thanks go to Barbara Rice who came to my aid in writing up *Dog Days are here again*. She was my eyes and ears (and cameraman) at the event, helping me fill in the names of all the participants and their masters.

Rick and I had a very busy, but rewarding summer. Each year we meet such wonderful people either through this publication, our yearly Visitor's Guide, the B & B or the church activities. Mid summer I had the opportunity to don another hat with a different assignment—that of a NPS volunteer at the McCarthy Information Station (also known as the kiosk). I cannot help but put myself in the place of a visitor who has ventured down a long, and sometimes lonely road only to find the place providing information closed. It was a pleasure to greet some of our area's guests and welcome them to our town and the ser-



vices that are available. I hope you, our special readers, have enjoyed your summer and are looking forward to the change in season.

We are sorry to say goodbye to Elaine Seager, our former Postmaster at the Glennallen office where the bimonthly *WSENs* are mailed from. Elaine encour-

aged me and helped me understand the correct way to do a second-class mailing for this newsmagazine. If she didn't know the answer, she always directed me to the one with the answer. Personally, I will miss her greatly. It is my understanding that Elaine and some of her family members are presently relocating to Beloit, Wisconsin, to care for her parents. Goodbye, Elaine, and thank you for all the kindness and assistance you have shown to us here at *WSEN*.

*WSEN* welcomes aboard the following subscribers: Tom Pirog, AK; Frank Pirog, FL; Michael Duke, AK; Luz and Tony Comfort, VA; Kathy Madej, AK; Hank Fannin, FL; Frank and Pat Bruen, CO; Skip Mallory, AK; Mr. and Mrs. Stratton, MD; Katy Englund, MN; Kristen Parsons, AR.

**Wrangell St. Elias News** (USPS 011301) VOL. Fourteen, Issue Five, September & October 2005.

Published every two months at McCarthy, Alaska. McCarthy, PO Box MXY, Glennallen, AK 99588-8998. Phone (907) 554-4454. FAX (907) 554-4494 **E-mail: [WSEN@wsen.net](mailto:WSEN@wsen.net)** "Copyright © 2005 by Wrangell St. Elias News. No part of this publication may be reproduced by any means without the express permission of the publishers."

Contributors to this issue: Ken Smith, Peggy Guntis, George Cebula, Don Welty, Susan Smith, Arlene Rosenkrans and Ned Rozell.

Subscription price is \$11 for one year in the USA. Canada \$12.50. Other countries \$20. Advertising rates upon request. Deadline for publication in next issue is October 15.

PERIODICALS POSTAGE PAID AT GLENNALLEN, AK. 99588.

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

## Items of Interest

BY BONNIE KENYON

**Pat Proden:** Rick and I were pleasantly surprised to meet Pat on the road the other day while we were covering a local race. Pat wasn't running in the event but he was getting a bit of exercise on his bicycle. This was my second occasion to visit with Pat this summer. Earlier in the season, he had dropped by the cabin to say hello. Rick was out and about but my mom and I invited Pat in so we could catch up on his activities.

Many of Pat's "activities" take him out of our neck of the woods, and I mean way out! He is Director of the Peace Corp in Tanzania with approximately 110 volunteers under his oversight. He is primarily responsible for the Corps' health, environment, and education programs. Some of you will remember Jay Bitely who spent the winter in our town last year. Pat got to know him while Jay served as a peace corp volunteer math teacher in Tanzania.

At the present time, Pat is on home leave and in-between tours. Thirty-three months is a long time and I'd say he deserves a vacation; that is, if you call working on building and painting projects a vacation. In spite of the work, I could tell he was enjoying the labor of improving his McCarthy area property, seeing friends and visiting neighbors. I know Rick, mom and I certainly enjoyed hearing about a place far beyond the borders of Alaska. According to Pat, the Peace Corp is involved in 70 different countries and the country he has been assigned to is a great

place to work, live and visit.

Welcome back to your McCarthy home base, Pat, and try to squeeze in some of that good old leisure time!

**Tim Mischel:** Rick and I were sorry to miss meeting Tim's sister, **Sharon Wald**, when she came calling today. He and I had to run an errand and she came while we were gone. We decided to walk down to Tim's place and see if Sharon was still in the neighborhood. Tim informed us she and son Joseph had just left the area to return to their home in Dickinson, North Dakota. This was Sharon's second trip to McCarthy.

Tim has three sisters and one brother. Sharon, Tim's older sister, is now an area property owner (as well as Joseph) and both are quite taken with the area, says Tim. Therefore, I am assured Sharon will return and I will eventually get to meet her face to face.

**Happy Birthday, King Jim, from Princess Lindsay!** That is what greeted Jim Kreblin when he got off work August 26. He probably just expected to pick up his vehicle at the Glacier View Campground and head home that evening but, in-

stead, he was surprised by a group of approximately 18 people eagerly wishing him a happy birthday celebration. After all, 58 is nothing to sneeze about, Jim.

Birthday cakes, ice cream and lemonade and a group of excited well-wishers made the day special for Jim. Daughter Lindsay wanted to be sure "King" Jim knew how much he meant to her and his/her friends alike.

**Lindsay Kreblin and Sarah Welty:** It is always hard to say goodbye even if it is only temporary, but that is what we had to do concerning Lindsay and Sarah. Lindsay is attending Jackson Hole Bible College in Wyoming and Sarah is beginning her first year at Asbury College in Kentucky. Both young ladies are eager to learn valuable truths, gain new and lasting friendships and come home richer in character than when they left. Lindsay and Sarah, we send you our love and miss each of you very much! P.S. Lindsay, congratulations on winning the pie eating contest during the 4<sup>th</sup> of July festivities this year.

**John and Barbara Rice:** On the evening of Jim's birthday party, Rick, mom and I also attended a

dinner engagement at the Rice's new home. Anna Wallin was also in attendance. We had a grand time visiting, inspecting John and Barbara's new kitchen cabinets and, of course, sampling Barbara's favorite dishes. My mom likes turnips (Rick and I aren't normally that fond of them) and so do the Rices. Barbara had promised mom that she would make the three of them a special dish of creamed turnips. Rick and I are pretty brave



and they looked delicious so we decided to at least taste them. Unfortunately for the three turnip lovers, we decided we liked them so they graciously shared them with the rest of us.



WSEN staff photo

Foreground; Neta Schafer.

Left to right; John Rice, Barbara Rice, Anna Wallen, Rick Kenyon. Photographer Bonnie Kenyon.

It has been a very busy summer for the Rices. Barbara managed the McCarthy Lodge gift shop and John worked in the office. They still found time to squeeze in several social events such as this particular dinner. They also played host and hostess to Barbara's sister and husband, Sally and Chuck Yates, also of St. Louis, who drove up here specifically to see the Rices' new McCarthy home. The Yates fit right in and made themselves at home in our town. The Sunday church dinners had an eager kitchen assistant in Sally. We were more than ready to keep her around!

Thanks for sharing your family and your home with us, John and Barbara. You both are a wonderful addition to the neighborhood.

**Kelsey Smith:** Kelsey and her mom, Peggy, have been the center of attention at our Friday mail days this summer season. Kelsey, 12, is turning into quite a gardener and cook with the help of her mom who is Kelsey's most staunch supporter and teacher.

Kelsey loads up the back of her mom's pickup truck with whatever veggies are in season from their garden on the Nizina River, a variety of canned goods such as cranapple

butter and homemade ketchup and freshly-baked goods. Of course those of us who arrive to collect our Friday mail gravitate to the local "farmer's market" (maybe we'll get a few more farmers to contribute next year!). Some people don't wait until they get home to sample the goods. One week **Jürgen Oğrodnik** sliced a plump turnip and passed it around. That didn't take others long to see what they were missing. I doubt Kelsey returned home with any remaining turnips that day.

Congratulations, Kelsey, on contributing to the good health of our town!

**George and Ted Cebula:** Speaking of the mail plane.... Ted, who hails from Milwaukee, arrived on the Wednesday mail plane (September 7<sup>th</sup>) and was greeted by his brother George and dog Sophie. Both were eager to see Ted. Sophie especially likes it when Ted comes visiting because it means more walks and outdoor activity. For instance, today Ted stopped over for his morning cup of coffee and announced that he and Sophie were going to walk up to Kennicott to say hello to Terry and Dee Frady. Now that is quite a trek, I told Ted, but he assured me they would take their time and make it an enjoyable event – take a few pictures and visit with neighbors and guests along the way. Ted plans on being here for about 2 ½ weeks. Welcome back, Ted!

Don, Lynn, Sarah and Rene Welty: Don, who is usually off at hunting camp this time of year, has been enjoying the fall season at home for a change, says Lynn, and she is pleased to have him around the house. Daughter Sarah is settled in at Asbury College in Kentucky and Rene is busy working at Long Lake for the Park

Service counting fish at the fish weir and helping to gather information for their research. In early October, Rene is planning to participate in a school district program called Outdoor Leadership which will take her to the state of Maine where she, and other young people, will canoe down the Allagash River and expand on their leadership skills for the future. Don and Lynn, I hope the "quiet" around the homestead won't be too loud!

**Mike Monroe:** Things are "somewhat" quieter in Mike's house at Kennicott these days. Daughter Michele and grandson Harley left for their new home in Texas but, shortly before they left, someone else came to live with Mike. Her name is Samantha ("Sam") and she is 3 ½ months old. Sam was one of Julie Miller's puppies that found a good home with Mike on August 12.

Mike tells me he started building his house October 1, 1976, and has been improving on it – little by little. I do believe that is the McCarthy/Kennicott "way." Rick and I met Mike the winter of 1977 while we were living at Long Lake prior to moving to McCarthy. It certainly is great having Mike in the area full time now!



**Local ladies shop and lunch:** Writing about the Fradys reminded me of the shopping excursion several of us ladies made earlier in the season. It was a rather impromptu event, but it doesn't take ladies

long to gather when you mention the word “shop” and “lunch.”

July 15<sup>th</sup> was a mail day, so the plan was to meet at the mail shack and proceed from there to Fireweed Mountain Arts and Crafts – Terry and Dee’s gift shop in downtown Kennicott.

Peggy Guntis filled her truck with ladies and others made the 5-mile trip by 4 wheelers. We all met at the gift shop and spent considerable time oohing and aahing over the Fradys’ new location and the beautifully chosen gifts that filled the building. After making our purchases, we ladies walked across the street and had a delicious lunch at the Kennicott Glacier Lodge. Lunch was superb with a special treat from the chef on duty that day— Kennicott resident Jeannie Miller— a platter of fresh veggies and dip.

The ladies who attended the excursion were: Anna Wallin; Betty Adams and her mom Denny Vivian (visiting from Wasilla); Laurie Rowland, daughter Hannah and son Jubal; Peggy Guntis and daughter Kim (Homer); Dee Frady (we ladies managed to convince Dee Terry could handle the store while she took a ladies’ break); myself and my mom Neta Schafer (visiting from New Smyrna Beach, FL). I hope I didn’t leave someone out.

**Dave and Renee Persón and family:** If you are traveling from McCarthy to Kennicott these days, you cannot help but notice a new structure near the Tony Zak house. The beautifully-constructed log house belongs to the Persón family of Fairbanks. Dave (Laurie Rowland’s brother) and Renee have spent many a day visiting the McCarthy area. In fact, if you read Keith and Laurie’s article, *Spring break ‘05*, in the May/June issue of WSEN, you will recall Dave made the news with his snowmachine expertise.

I expect the Persóns are planning ahead for further spring breaks and we McCarthyites will see a lot more of this fun-loving family. Con-

gratulations, Dave and Renee, on a beautiful addition to our town!

**McCarthy-Kennicott Museum update:** The summer season has come to a close but there is still work to be done at the museum. John Adams of McCarthy Building Services informed me that he is expecting a load of building materials from Homestead Supply of Glennallen to arrive any day now which will enable him to begin work on a new deck for the museum building. He hopes to have the work completed before winter sets in.

**Meg Hunt and Ed LaChapelle:** Speaking of hard work... Meg says, “I have pickled the beets and made a small batch of sauerkraut. We are eating tomatoes, but letting the sweet peppers turn red before eating them. The onions, carrots and potatoes await a later harvest. It’s always great eating this time of year, when all the hard work pays off!”

**McCarthy-Kennicott Community Church welcomes Steven Austin:** Guest speaker Dr. Steven Austin, PhD, geologist, gave a presentation on the eruption of Mount St. Helens during the Sunday morning service on August 21. Footage of Mount St. Helens before, during and after its 1980 eruption through aerial movies and slides embellished Dr. Austin’s lecture-style presentation that challenged conventional geology and gave significant evidence for creation versus evolution. Dr. Austin is also a contributor to the book *Grand Canyon: A Different View*.

Many thanks go to Paul Claus for flying Dr. Austin from Ultima Thule to McCarthy and for the words of his personal testimony to God’s grace that he freely shared with the congregation. More thanks go to Don Welty for arranging the meeting on such short notice and returning Dr. Austin to Ultima Thule.

The service was well attended and was followed by a luncheon.

**Park Service opens kiosk door to local volunteers:** On Friday, July 29, John Adams, Michelle Casey and Bonnie Kenyon met with Megan Brokaw, park interpreter, at the McCarthy Road Information Station at Mile 58 of the McCarthy Road to receive training on how to distribute information on visitor services and Park Service operations.

All three volunteers were asked to work at least one evening shift per week at the McCarthy Road station from the date of training through Labor Day weekend, enabling the informational kiosk to better serve the visiting public.

**Wedding bells ring in Kennicott:** We extend our congratulations and best wishes to Megan Brokaw and Richard Richotte and Stephanie Piekert and Aaron Miller. Both couples are celebrating their wedding vows in separate ceremonies in Kennicott—Megan and Richard on Friday, September 9<sup>th</sup>; Stephanie Piekert and Aaron Miller, on Saturday, September 10<sup>th</sup>.

Megan and Richard are employees of the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park/Preserve. Stephanie and Aaron are residents of Kennicott. Stephanie is best known locally as “Spuddy” who owns and operates the Potato. Aaron is the son of Jim and Jeannie Miller also of Kennicott.

**Announcement:** McCarthy Area Council’s annual meeting is scheduled for Friday, September 30, at the Blackburn Center. Jeremy Keller, president, is encouraging all members and interested parties to attend this very important meeting. It is expected that several people from D.O.T. will be on hand to address issues such as the McCarthy Creek access. Mari Montgomery, University of Alaska Lands’ Manager, is also expected to attend and address the meeting. For more information, please contact Jeremy at 554-4407 or by email: [ibuild@starband.net](mailto:ibuild@starband.net).

## 4<sup>th</sup> annual McCarthy Kennicott Half Marathon – a very exciting race!

BY BONNIE KENYON

**M**cCarthy: – The 4<sup>th</sup> annual half marathon on behalf of the American Diabetes Association (ADA) gathered at the starting point – Glacier View Campground at mile 59 McCarthy Road. The date for this year's race was Saturday, September 3<sup>rd</sup> and the race organizer was Dan Myers.

Dan has been the local organizer since the race's conception in 2002. At that time Dan shared his dream, "I hope this will become an annual event." And, to date, Dan's dream is coming true.

The ADA has a dream, too, and the bottom line is still "Cure, Care and Commitment." Phoebe O'Connell, District Director of ADA for Alaska, was on hand again this year to provide encouragement and assistance in getting the approximately 56 participants signed up properly. The registered racers have increased yearly. In 2002 the roster showed 26; in 2004, 40. The event is growing each year and Dan's dream is being fueled with more and more participation from those who really care to raise awareness and promote a healthy lifestyle for those who are diagnosed with diabetes.

The oldest participant this year was 71 year old Eleanor Claus of Ultima Thule. Eleanor's granddaughter, Ellie, was on hand to support her favorite runner. Eleanor is not a newcomer to running marathons, although this was her first to run in the McCarthy Kennicott Half

Marathon. Since she started running 45 years ago, she has successfully participated in a total of 24 marathons. She has traveled to places like Chicago and Boston to run and in June of this year she ran the Mayors Marathon in Anchorage.

Each person who registered for the local race paid a \$30 entrance fee and received the annual T-shirt depicting this year's race. Diane Thorn of Kennicott was on hand to assist Phoebe in making sure everyone was properly checked in. At 2:10 pm the race began its 13-mile upward climb to Kennicott via the Wagon Road and back down the main road to end in downtown McCarthy.

The first place winner this year was Paul Hanis, a guide with Kennicott Wilderness Guides, whose finish time was 1 hr. 23 minutes and 8 seconds. Paul took third place in last year's race. Second place winner was Julian Hanna of Lake Tahoe, CA. His finish time was 1 hr. 23 minutes 17 seconds. This was Julian's first time to run a half-marathon and first season to work as a guide for St. Elias Alpine Guides of McCarthy. Julian takes getting the message out by means such as this particular race very personal. His mom has diabetes – finding a cure, caring and being committed to do something about it is a major concern for Julian. Running with fellow guide, Paul, was a highlight for him. "This was a very exciting race," said Julian.

As Phoebe put it during our first marathon, "Events such as the Mc-

Carthy Kennicott Half-Marathon not only raise money for research – 20 cents of every dollar – but they provide a network of education for health aides in the bush and produce summer camp programs for children. Every six months new information, new medications and insulin become available."

Perhaps you are interested in being involved in a marathon or helping put one together. According to ADA's website, Team Diabetes is a fund-raising and training program of the American Diabetes Association. It is designed for individuals who desire to walk or run a full or half marathon. You can participate in a marathon that takes place in a desirable location while raising funds for the American Diabetes Association. Your fund raising can help find a cure for diabetes and improve the lives of all people with diabetes. The program is open to runners and walkers of all abilities. Training will be tailored to meet your ability level.

Join ADA for the Reggae Marathon and Half – Marathon in Negril, Jamaica, on December 3, 2005.

Contact Phoebe O'Connell at 272-1424 or 1-888-342-2383 or [poconnel@diabetes.org](mailto:poconnel@diabetes.org) or Coach Britta Maas at [runningbuff@yahoo.com](mailto:runningbuff@yahoo.com).

For other information or to make a donation, please contact: American Diabetes Association, 801 W. Fireweed Lane, Suite 103, Anchorage, AK. 99503.

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*"If you will not fight for right when you can easily win without blood shed; if you will not fight when your victory is sure and not too costly; you may come to the moment when you will have to fight with all the odds against you and only a precarious chance of survival. There may even be a worse case. You may have to fight when there is no hope of victory, because it is better to perish than to live as slaves." — Winston Churchill*

# Airport Snow Removal Equipment

BY KEN SMITH

The historicity of airport maintenance equipment is a rather dull topic unless one lives in a rural community where transportation is highly dependent upon allowable usage of such items. This is particularly relevant in some airport communities where equipment was originally purchased with federal airport trust funds, then, for all practical purposes, removed from any real public benefit.

Having spent much of my professional background within the air carrier industry and then having fulfilled almost 23 years of public servitude with the Alaska Division of Aviation and then the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) I was witness to the evolution of a program. This is the program under which most airport maintenance and rescue equipment in Alaska is purchased. True, I have been retired for some years now so pertinent policy and procedure may have changed somewhat, but I doubt it.

By the early 1970s Congress was fed up with its members continually soliciting allocations for airport improvements within their states. As continues today, in many other aspects of federal funding, these "pork" projects were distributed unequally across the nation. As a remedy, Congress developed an airport improvement trust fund program similar to that used for the federal highway system. Trust fund money is granted to an airport under a matching formula, which is highly disproportionate in favor of the airport. For example, the airport pays only 6% in some cases, while the federal contribution is 94%. The revenue source for this fund comes from hidden taxes in every airline ticket one purchases. In addition, other taxes such as gateway fees and

taxes on revenues generated with aircraft having 6000 pounds or more gross weight also go into the kitty.

Every so many years Congress revisits this act, often modifies it, and usually gives the resulting program a new title. The first as I recall was the "ADAP" program for, Airport Development Aid Program.

Initially, use of such funds was very strictly controlled and limited to capital improvements only, such as creation or improvement of runways, ramps, taxiways, etc. or for terminal construction. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) was selected to administer this program. They do so utilizing rules and procedure where funds are administered to US airports under a classic bureaucratic complex and convoluted apportionment process.

At the inception of the program the word was that it was going to be absolutely taboo for any funds to be used for ongoing operational expenses associated with airports or any other aspect of aviation. Today, things have changed.

With respect to equipment on airports, originally these funds were not authorized for such proposes. Slowly, amendments were made. Crash Fire Rescue equipment was the first to be authorized. Then the State of Alaska requested and received authority to purchase snow removal equipment. Hundreds of various items of snow removal equipment were purchased for use at many Alaska airports. Most of this equipment had the functional capacity to be used for purposes other than snow removal, such as dozers, dump trucks with belly blades or graders.

The great majority of rural airports in Alaska are gravel surfaced and not paved. A hue and cry soon erupted over the prohibition against

using a village's sole piece of maintenance equipment, such as a grader, from grading the local gravel runway during the summer. Alaska's congressional delegation applied pressure and the FAA responded by changing rules allowing "snow removal equipment" use on gravel. Additional and pragmatic accommodations were also to be made.

One of these being elimination of the requirement that this equipment be relegated to use on the airport only. Many communities have village to airport roads. Soon it became permissible to use such equipment for local road maintenance as well.

When an airport receives trust fund monies it enters into a contract with the federal government. Numerous requirements are imposed upon the airport as a result. For instance, when a runway is constructed the airport is required to maintain and keep the runway open for public use for a period of twenty years. Say, this runway cost the trust fund one million dollars and the airport decided to close the runway after ten years. The airport would owe the trust fund \$500,000 for the ten years not fulfilled. After twenty years the airport could close the runway with no penalty. As far as equipment items go, the obligation period is only ten years.

From time to time one hears from either a state Department of Transportation and Public Facilities employee or an FAA Airports Division employee that airport equipment cannot be used on local roads. During my tenure with the department these utterances usually occurred for one or two reasons: Ignorance or a desire on an employee's part to shut an inquisitor up since the employee didn't want the equipment to be used off the airport, for whatever reason.

Like I stipulated initially, things may have changed since I left public service. However, at the time I retired we had been maintaining almost 130 village airports in Alaska and it was common procedure to utilize airport maintenance equipment on local roads. My numerous assignments and responsibilities with the department over the years almost always involved aviation, therefore I was generally prejudiced toward the airplane related side of things. As a result I became rather chagrined with the FAA's continued acquiescence to the broad use of

airport funds. Shortly before I left I witnessed a worse case scenario.

The airport at Goose Bay across Knik Arm from Anchorage had used airport trust funds for a maintenance building and a grader. Our Matanuska and Susitna District had all but given up maintaining Goose Bay although the obligation period was still well within ten years. They had even moved the grader up to Palmer. Someone ratted this situation out to the FAA and they undertook an investigation. I figured we would get a rather sound spanking over this. Imagine my surprise as I

sat in the Regional Director's office and heard them explain that this particular practice was A-okay as far as the FAA was concerned.

What about the grader at the McCarthy Airport? In my opinion it is okay to use it to maintain the road to Kennecott, to the Nizina, to the footbridge and all the way to Chitina for that matter. Besides, isn't the ten year obligation period up or almost up?

*We sent Ken's story to Joe Junker, who is the Tazlina maintenance chief for the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF). Joe said he didn't think that he could take the airport equipment off the airport, but that if he had his "druthers" he would replace it with older equipment as it has been very little used. Joe said he would forward the article to his superiors in Fairbanks and we got this response from Clark Milne, who is the Maintenance Engineer for DOT&PF's Northern Region.*

I am writing you to aid/support Joe Junker in responding for the Northern Region of ADOT&PF about the opinions and "understandings" you've cited in the tentative news story you sent us on Wednesday.

Unfortunately we can't agree with you on at least two of the key precepts you've stated, which led to your punchline ending, "In my opinion it is okay to use it to maintain the road to Kennecott, to the Nizina, to the footbridge and all the way to Chitina for that matter."

We contend that it is standing policy, and good sound policy, to continue to constrain the use of FAA-funded AIP equipment solely to work on airport property, and — in several remote circumstances — ONLY the airport access road to the town/village being served by the airport, to facilitate year-round access to the airport. (This is authorized by the FAA Alaska) We maintain a stretch of "airport road" at a dozen or two of our 103 NR airports. In every case the only off-airport road that we maintain is the direct route from the airport to the population center, generally the US Post Office location. And in each of those cases there is no other State or municipal equipment available to provide an alternative to using the DOT's airport grader. At most of our remote locations we don't maintain anything off the airport at all because there is usually a workable alternative.

With regard to the ten-year grant obligation period, you are correct that both the loader and grader at McCarthy Airport are beyond ten years old, but this fact doesn't change the underlying theory stated above.

We do not, and will not, authorize Sam (our Chitina foreman) or his operators to take the airport grader off of the airport because the DOT's road-funded graders can access McCarthy via Keith Rowland's bridge and do the necessary, periodic road work that way instead.

Clark Milne, PE  
Northern Region, ADOT&PF  
Maintenance Engineer  
(907) 451-5285

*So there you have it. Although there is a quarter-million dollars of almost unused equipment sitting at the McCarthy Airport, and although the ten year grant period is up, it cannot be used to do anything other than remove snow from the runway. Instead, older equipment must be moved 120 miles and over a toll bridge to maintain the state's roads on the east side of the Kennicott River. The reason? Because it is "policy."*



# Future of Chitina Health Center unclear

BY SUSAN SMITH

Just over a month ago the Chitina Health Center opened its doors at the newly renovated building at 5-mile on the Edgerton Highway next to the state DOT camp and airport. For years services were provided to the community from their aging trailer up in the village. But a grant from the Denali Commission allowed the Chitina Traditional Indian Village Council (CTIVC) to remodel their existing cold storage building at 5-mile to provide a first-class medical facility with a competent staff for the community. Now, problems have arisen that could possibly close its doors.

Years ago the Council began looking at options for improving their clinic. Alaskan Indian Health Service (IHS) grants were typically funded in 3 to 10 year cycles, based upon critical needs of communities throughout the state. The Denali Commission (DC), specifically established by Senator Ted Stevens to provide for Alaskan's needs, was approached to fund the design and construction of the new medical facility with public, tax-based money.

In 2001, the CTIVC Board of Directors passed a resolution to keep the clinic open to the public after they applied for and received a Community Health Aide Training and Supervision (CHATS) grant from the State of Alaska. A business plan was signed with the DC in 2003 in which the Council assured they had the financial and managerial ability to sustain the clinic for 30 years, keeping it open to the community at large, and charging fees according to a patient's ability to pay for services.

Almost \$1 million of DC funds were spent to renovate the clinic and it opened in July. After only 3 weeks of operation, trouble started

brewing with the Council. After heated discussions, one board member launched personal attacks against certain staff members. The DC received word that one Council Board member advocated providing services only to tribal members.

Clinic staff was shocked and disturbed at this attempt to breach the DC agreement. Failure to abide by its terms would require the Council to pay back the full million dollar grant. Since public money was used to build it, the general public must be served. Physician Assistant Jerry Van Ben Coten took the opportunity to bring other issues to the table.

"I'm being placed in a very uncomfortable position," Jerry remarked. CTIVC has never had a financial policy or budget in place for the operation of the clinic during the 2 1/2 years that he has been employed. Technically by law, as a contractual employee, Jerry cannot supervise the staff under him, other than on a medical basis. Most clinics have their own director and board to oversee operations.

Also, according to regulation, any facility taking Medicaid funds for an IHS contract (also held by CTIVC) must provide an accurate accounting of the money, and that money should be put back into the facility within one year of its receipt. Funds may be used to sustain the facility, provide raises, expand services, or develop new programs. CTIVC has never presented an accurate accounting of the moneys received or spent.

Until the proper checks and balances are in place, Jerry risks personal liability if the Council is accused of fraudulent practices; his signature alone authorizes Medicaid billing. At this time, all Medicaid and insurance billing has been suspended. Some non-native members of the community have been denied

service on the days that Jerry does not work.

As the community learned of the controversy, a letter to the DC and Senator Ted Stevens was circulated throughout Chitina for signatures, calling for an investigation into the financial and managerial practices of CTIVC with respect to the clinic. In closing, the letter states, "To have the facility revert back to being a tribal facility only because the tribal government has refused to use sound business practices is not right or fair to the taxpayers of the community and the tribal government should not be able to benefit from such actions or inactions." Reportedly, several tribal members also signed the letter.

As a result of the letter campaign, the DC sent a notice to CTIVC this week reminding them of their obligations to keep the clinic operational for everyone, or be responsible for paying back the million-dollar cost of design and construction.

Some tribal members would like to see Jerry leave. In that case, community health aides (CHAs) would see patients and services would change dramatically. CHAs are not licensed by the state; they can perform exams and suggest a diagnosis, but any actual treatment cannot be given until a doctor at Alaska Native Medical Center in Anchorage authorizes it. Currently, that authorization takes between 4 and 24 hours, and in many cases, patients would have to return the following day for treatment.

And, Physician Assistants (PAs) aren't exactly jumping at the chance to come to our area. Copper River Native Corporation, Mt. Sanford and Crossroad medical centers have all been trying to attract PAs to their facilities for some time without success. Jerry makes other sacrifices to keep our facility going,

even living in a one-room cabin without running water. He has also been instrumental in establishing the Chitina Volunteer Ambulance Service, a non-profit organization which will operate in the near future without the constraints of tribal management.

Other sources of public funding are available through Health and Human Services which could keep the clinic operational without the help of the Council, should they breach their agreement. Clinic staff is committed to keeping the facility open for the community.

What are Jerry's recommendations for easing tensions and keeping the health center operating successfully? "There should be the appointment of a board whose sole purpose is overseeing the operations of the clinic. It doesn't need to be a large board, maybe 3 people, but it should have a board member, a tribal member, and I strongly suggest they have someone from the community," Jerry suggested. Then

appoint a Health Center Director. Provide sound and accurate accounting practices with an annual budget, frequent reporting, and a separate clinic bank account to assure that funds are properly used. Provide another staff member to replace one who recently left to be responsible for billing Medicaid and insurance. And, develop a new feeling of cooperation and commitment to their current staff and their DC agreement to keep the facility open to everyone for 30 years.

I asked David Finnesand, Vice President of the CTIVC Board, to comment. He denied that the Council was trying to exclusively treat tribal members. He did admit that he would like to see Jerry leave, but said that CTIVC was committed to keeping the facility open. They have contracted with Alaska Accounting Services to track the clinic expenditures and receipts to get their information current. A job description is being drawn up and will soon be posted for a Director. He also men-

tioned that a public meeting is being scheduled in Chitina for the last week of August to discuss the issue openly.

Without the clinic in operation, members of the Chitina, Kenny Lake, and McCarthy communities are forced to drive all the way to Valdez or Glennallen, a trip of several hours for McCarthy Road residents, causing serious consequences in emergency situations. "Let's all sit down. Let's do what needs to be done," Jerry proposed. Hopefully, the clinic staff and council board will come to the table to settle their differences so that the facility can continue to provide excellent service to the entire community.

Anyone interested in commenting on the issue is encouraged to write to Senator Ted Stevens, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510, and the Denali Commission, 510 L Street, Suite 410 (Peterson Tower), Anchorage, AK 99501.

## Subsistence Resource Commission to meet

Copper Center, AK— The Wrangell-St. Elias National Park Subsistence Resource Commission will meet at Fast Eddy's Restaurant in Tok, Alaska, on September 22 and 23, 2005, to consider a range of issues related to subsistence hunting and fishing in the park.

Commission business will include a review of the 2006-07 federal subsistence fisheries proposals that would affect Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve and adjacent federal waters. Among the proposals to be considered are ones that would allow the sale of handi-

crafts made from nonedible byproducts of fish and shellfish, revise the customary and traditional use determination for freshwater fish in the Tanana River drainage to include residents of Mentasta Lake and Chistochina, establish a customary and traditional use determination for freshwater fish in the Prince William Sound Area downstream of Haley Creek, and place requirements on how often fishwheels in the Upper Copper River District must be checked. Wildlife proposals for the 2006-07 season may also be developed.

The meeting is open to the public, and public testimony opportunities are provided.

The meeting will begin at 1:00 PM on Thursday, September 22, and will conclude at approximately 5:00 PM. An evening session may be held at the call of the chair. The meeting will reconvene at 8:30 AM on Friday, September 23, and adjourn at approximately 4:00 PM or when business is completed.

Additional information may be obtained by calling Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve at 822-5234.

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*"Let the pulpit resound with the doctrine and sentiments of religious liberty. Let us hear of the dignity of man's nature, and the noble rank he holds among the works of God... Let it be known that British liberties are not the grants of princes and parliaments."* —John Adams

## Pilgrims wait for 9<sup>th</sup> Circuit decision

BY RICK KENYON

After nearly a year and a half, the Pilgrim family's lawsuit against the National Park Service (NPS) has finally been heard by a three-judge panel of the 9<sup>th</sup> U.S. Circuit Court of appeals.

On March 11, 2004, the court granted the appeal brought by Pacific Legal Foundation on behalf of the Pilgrim family. But it was not until July 12, 2005, that the case was actually heard.

Attorney Russell Brooks said the Pilgrims were denied reasonable and adequate access to their property as promised in the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act. According to Brooks, the Park Service could take steps to ensure park assets were not harmed, but extending that to a review under the

National Environmental Policy Act, which took more than nine weeks, was a violation of the act's mandate.

A temporary, one-year access permit issued in March 2004 authorized the Pilgrims to use their bulldozer and trailer over the road when the ground was frozen. But the family never accepted the permit. That permit was issued late in the winter, Brooks said, and the road was too dangerous to use because of glaciation on mountainside sections. Likewise, the road was too dangerous to use after freeze-up last October, Brooks said. The Park Service made unreasonable demands while nominally allowing access, Brooks said after the court hearing. "They can come off looking like the good guys," he said of issuing the permit. "It's useless."

"I think the Park Service permit that they gave the Pilgrim fami-

ly, the Hales, is basically a cheap publicity stunt because they gave them a permit knowing that it was unsafe and unusable," said Ray Kreig of the Alaska Land Rights Coalition.

The question of whether a property owner might be required to obtain a permit in order to access his property was a contentious issue when the NPS came out with their first draft of an Access Handbook last year. New Wrangell-St. Elias National Park Superintendent Jed Davis has been tasked with the rewrite of the document, and assured local residents that, at least if he has his way, there will be no permit requirement for existing access routes.

The 9<sup>th</sup> Circuit panel did not give any indication when they would announce a decision on the case.

## Home repair loans offered

USDA Rural Development is seeking additional applicants for its home repair and remodeling loan program (Sec 504). Under the program, income-eligible Alaskans who own and occupy dwellings in need of repair can obtain funds to repair or modernize their homes or remove health and safety hazards.

"This is a popular program," said Acting Housing Director Debbie Andrys. "It's being used by home-owners to purchase insulation, buy generators, fix roofs, install septic systems and dig wells. It's also designed to allow residents to make their homes accessible to the handicapped. That includes construction of ramps and wheelchair lifts." Andrys noted that \$4 million in home repair loan funds has been

allocated to Alaska in this fiscal year and most of that money remains available to prospective borrowers. "These 1% loans may be repaid over a 20 year period. After we receive a completed application, we usually make a decision within 30 to 60 days."

Andrys noted that there is also limited grant funding available under the program for income-eligible homeowners age 62 or older. "These grants can be for up to \$7,500 and can be combined with the loan program. That means that if the applicant meets age and income requirements he or she can receive up to \$27,500 to make repairs. Grant funds can only be used to pay for repairs and improvements resulting in the removal of health and safety hazards," Andrys said.

While the \$4 million in loan funds for home repairs is available until the end of the federal fiscal year (September 30th, 2005), Andrys asks that interested Alaskans file applications as soon as possible to allow time for processing to occur. Rural Development home loan and grant programs are available everywhere in Alaska except in the Municipality of Anchorage, the City of Fairbanks and the City and Borough of Juneau. Those areas are excluded due to population limits. For more information about Rural Development programs contact any of our 7 offices across Alaska. Offices are located in Bethel, Dillingham, Palmer, Kenai, Nome, Fairbanks and Sitka.

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"The merit of our Constitution was, not that it promotes democracy, but checks it." —Horatio Seymour

## Public meeting examines McCarthy Road Improvements' Project

**McCarthy:** – On July 14<sup>th</sup> a town meeting was held at the Blackburn Center. The purpose of the meeting was to give an update on the McCarthy Road Improvements' Project. The main objective of the "Project" is the improvement of the McCarthy Road.

Janet Brown, Engineering Manager for the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, opened up the meeting with descriptions of several alternatives: **No Build** — Maintenance of the road would continue as it is today; **Improve the worst areas** — Certain problem areas such as the Kotsina Bluff and the Lakina River Bridge would be selected along McCarthy Road for improvement, and the rest left alone; **35 mph alignment** — Road improvements along the entire alignment would be reconstructed to meet 35 mph design standards; **50 mph alignment** — Road improvements along the entire alignment would be reconstructed to meet 50 mph design standards; **Hybrid alignment** — Road improvements along the entire alignment would be reconstructed to 35 mph design standard for approximately 20 mile stretches at the Chitina end and at the McCarthy end with a stretch that meets 50 mph design standard in the middle.

According to Brown, impacts to the human and natural environment vary depending on the alternative. For example, the 50 mph alignment would involve more curve straightening than the 35 mph alignment. Possible realignments are being considered between the Tunnel Cut and Chitina, Kotsina Bluff, Kuskulana, Gilahina and Long Lake.

Bridge replacements are expected at Chokosna, Gilahina and the Lakina River increasing the width from one lane to two.

### Update

Public meetings were last held in July 2003. Since then field data concerning wetlands, visual effect, vegetation, fish, birds, eagles and amphibians have been gathered. Sixteen salmon streams and three resident fish stream crossings were identified, 90 species of birds and wood frogs (only amphibian species) were also identified.

The State of Alaska Dept. of Natural Resources' Office of History and Archeology completed its report of findings and recommendations. For example, the Tunnel Cut (out of Chitina), as a cultural resource could be lost to a 2-lane road alignment. The Gilahina Bridge is a top resource as well as the Chokosna buildings and Ahtna sites. Time has not been good to the McCarthy Road and there just isn't much left to the road bed.

### What remains prior to public review of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)?

More wetlands' work, vegetation and habitat assessment, further preliminary engineering on alternatives and realignments and analysis of and identification of impacts to human and natural environment.

The DEIS is expected to be completed and available for public review in 2006.

The question most asked by McCarthy Road users is: When could something get built? According to DOT unless the No Build alternative is chosen, construction could take

place no sooner than 2008. This project would most certainly be constructed over a number of years in a series of different construction projects.

According to Brown, the McCarthy Road is now seen as a year round road, not seasonal. Road cover choices will be addressed in the DEIS, hopefully the summer of 2006. Priority locations for waysides along the road have been suggested at the Kuskolana and Gilahina and the Long Lake areas.

The state legislature recently appropriated \$2 million in state funds. Sam Taylor, head of the Chitina maintenance station which serves the McCarthy Road, was on hand to answer the question, how does this funding relate to this project. This year, maintenance plans to clear brush, drill and shoot Hug-A Boulder Bend, using rock for repairs at the Lakina Bridge and crush and stockpile aggregate near Kuskulana and Milepost 27 and replacing culverts where necessary.

Although DOT has many projects, how does the McCarthy Road upgrade rate? The project is #1 on the region's list. Governor Murkowski is eager to see this project succeed and the Commissioner's office is passing the word along, said an official at the meeting.

If you have comments or questions, please contact:

Janet Brown, P. E., Engineering Manager, State of Alaska, Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, 2301 Peger Road, Fairbanks, AK. 99709, (907) 451-2283 or email: janet\_brown@dot.state.ak.us

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*"The Supreme Court has reconstituted itself as a permanent constitutional convention, amending the Constitution at will to suit the ideology of the majority. If that weren't enough, the Left is convinced that it has a divine right to determine the philosophical composition of the high court, regardless of the outcome of elections." —Don Feder*

# Dog Days are here again

BY BONNIE KENYON

**M**cCarthy: – The third annual Dog Day’s event occurred in downtown McCarthy on Sunday, September 4<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 pm. Local resident Tessa Bay, 12, was this year’s co-ordinator.

The eight eager (?) contestants and their masters were as follows: Jake and Kelsey Smith; Tazzie and Tessa Bay; Clark and Barbara Rice; Diesel and Joe Machinna; Layla/Schotze and Rebecca Bard; Synda Lou/ Buddy and Chris Chester.

There were six categories for contestants to show their abilities and win a prize. The events and winners for this year were: Agility - Jake; Tricks - Layla; Fetching - Layla; Obedience - Tazzie; Dress - Layla; Show dog - Jake.

Tessa has played a major role in each Dog Day’s celebration. She would like to thank all who participated—master and dog alike—and a special thanks to Logan Claus of Ultima Thule who assisted her in setting up this year’s



Photos courtesy Barbara Rice

Above: Layla dances..

Upper right: Schotze, all dressed up.

Right: Tazzie relaxes in the background, Clark in the foreground.

# Copper Valley Telephone Co-op comes calling

**M**cCarthy: – The sun was shining, the rain had finally quit. It was noon on July 22 and a perfect day for a picnic. Several employees of the Copper Valley Telephone Co-op (CVTC) thought the same thing because they turned out in style with all the fixins’! The outdoor aroma of grilled hot dogs and hamburgers quickly filled the air as the CVTC folks began pulling out all the stops to make this annual picnic a special treat to say “thanks” to the folks of McCarthy.

The yard around the Blackburn Center began to fill with local folks (and I suspect a few area visitors as

well!). Boxes of chips, soft drinks, bottled water, cookies and free gifts were available for all in attendance.

The food was great; the camaraderie outstanding. Thanks, CVTC, for putting on such a banquet for us. Another terrific annual picnic!



## James Joseph Sill 1961—2005

James Joseph Sill, 44, was laid to rest on July 8<sup>th</sup> 2005 high on a mountain on his land in Kennicott, Alaska.

James was born in Cresco, Iowa, in 1961 and lived and traveled in many places. He chose to build his home and live in Kennicott, Alaska, where he has resided for several years. At the time of his death he worked for the National Park Service in Kennicott.

James was a man of many special skills. He started the volunteer fire department in McCarthy and was the fire chief of this small community.

He was an avid climber and knew the Wrangell Saint Elias Range well. He was a professional chef working for the Alaska Railroad, the Kennicott Glacier Lodge and other restaurants in the Virgin Islands, Palm Springs, White Sulphur Springs, and Anchorage. As a chef he became an advanced garde manger, an accomplished cake decorator and an exquisite pastry artist. He was a talented ice carver and entered competitions in Fairbanks and Anchorage. He learned carpentry at the age of 16 from his sister's husband with whom he lived in Colorado at the time. He has used these skills in helping to restore the

historic copper mine site at Kennicott.

James had many good friends that he considered his family in the Kennicott and Girdwood communities. Besides his extended family in Kennicott, James is survived by his father, Severance A. Sill; sisters, Mary Lou Pullen, Barbara Staggs and Judi Morack; his six brothers, Robert Sill, Tom Sill, Jon Sill, David Sill, Dan Sill, Joe Sill; his nieces, nephews, cousins, aunts and uncles in Alaska, Washington, Colorado, Iowa, and Minnesota.

James was preceded in death by his mother, Claire C. Sill.

## Albert Fejes – 1933 to 2005

Strelna resident, Albert "Al" Fejes, 71, died August 12, 2005, at his nephew's Anchorage home of cancer. A graveside service was held August 17 at Fort Richardson National Cemetery.

Mr. Fejes was born Dec. 8, 1933, in Shafton, Pa. He served in

the U. S. Air Force, where he was an airframe and power plant mechanic. He was accredited as a commercial instrument pilot and worked as a bush pilot and fish spotter.

Mr. Fejes moved to Alaska in 1963. He enjoyed flying, hunting, trapping and photography.

Mr. Fejes is survived by his brothers, John, Ed and Samuel Fejes, sister, Mina Planjo; nephews, John Jr., Samuel Jr., Robert, James, William and Christopher Fejes; and nieces, Kathy Martin and Suzan Fejes. He was preceded in death by his brother, Paul Fejes.

*"The Christian and the Materialist hold different beliefs about the universe. They can't both be right. The one who is wrong will act in a way which simply doesn't fit the real universe. Consequently, with the best will in the world, he will be helping his fellow creatures to their destruction." —C. S. Lewis*

*"So we are left with Judeo-Christian values and secular left values. The latter, as noted, hold sway among the world's elites. But they are personally so unfulfilling and morally so confused that they cannot work. Western Europe will hopefully awaken to this fact as its socialist economies fail and as it realizes that you cannot fight faith (radical Islam) with no faith (secularism). ... The Judeo-Christian value system is not only the best value system for humanity; it is the only viable one. If we do not promote it, moral chaos will ensue. And we can't promote it if we don't know what it is." —Dennis Prager*

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### CLASSIFIED

**WANTED:** Five to sixty acres in McCarthy area. \$10,000 to \$50,000 range. Contact Ron at (303)940-6539

**FOR SALE:** Motorola Star-Tech cell phone \$20 call 554-4454 email RickK@starband.net

**FOR SALE:** Rossi Gallery Gun .22 pump action rifle. Just right for spruce hen! \$160. Call Rick (907)554-4454

# The world around us

BY DON WELTY

I was looking through one of those “pilot” magazines recently, the kind with all the articles on the most recent and advanced innovations in the aviation industry. I was impressed by many of the performance capabilities and high tech control and navigation systems. While I studied a picture of one of these technologically advanced aircraft, an even more amazing flying machine landed on my arm, making a mockery of the one in the magazine.

This flying machine had just made a vertical landing I could barely feel and had already begun to re-fuel. As I brought my hand directly over this seemingly pesky critter I stopped short and watched in amazement. It took on a payload of body fluid that was so large its fuselage had to expand, making it weigh more than double its own weight. In spite of this it was then able to make a vertical take off with a center of gravity so far back that it should have crashed. As it began to reach forward cruise speed and its escape seemed assured, its guidance system missed a small detail ahead.

I watched as it crashed into a solid clear window at cruise speed at gross weight. I was sure it had to be just a splotch on the window. Amazingly it not only survived the impact with no obvious damage but it actually landed and hung onto this smooth vertical surface until the next takeoff.

As I watched it fly off, I began to think of many more features of this flying machine that made it so enviable.

1) Wings with a weight to strength ratio we can only dream of, powered by 30 odd wing muscles, the most powerful muscles known per cross-sectional area. Beating at up to 60,000 times per minute<sup>1</sup>, allowing excellent maneuverability

even in heavy turbulence, (like behind your head when you are running away!).

2) Landing gear able to take large G-loads on uneven slippery or even vertical surfaces, and on occasion, water landings, without floats!

3) Able to sense and track CO<sub>2</sub> and heat sources, navigating in darkness without a conventional electrical system.

4) Able to refuel itself on readily available organic substances.

5) Able to accomplish complicated flight maneuvers (like escaping a fast hand) the first time they try to fly, without getting any flight lessons. Took me three months' training!

6) Sensory organs capable of detecting the sky's plane of polarization, helping it to navigate and detect movement.<sup>2</sup>

7) Able to reproduce up to 3,000 other aircraft with only the help of a few others and an occasional drop of blood (blood is optional in some species).

8) Completely biodegradable structure.

Obviously the work of an intelligent designer, one has to use quite a bit of imagination to come up with a way this creature could ever arrange itself over eons of time and chance.

The time and chance theory gets even more imaginative when you consider the fossil record. Insect detail preserves well as fossils due to their exoskeleton. Hundreds of thousands of insect fossils have shown nothing but fully developed wings, and no evidence of partially developed wings has ever been found. Almost all insects have folding wings. A university neuroethologist calls folding wings “the most morphologically complex joint in the animal kingdom”<sup>3</sup>, yet the fossil

record shows folding wings existed in the earliest forms. The fossil record also shows compound eyes every bit as complex as those today in the earliest forms. Metamorphosis, the separation of insect life into two different stages such as in a butterfly, shows up early in the fossil record and no evidence of it evolving has ever been found.<sup>4</sup> Change has occurred such as in extinctions and size. Many were much larger than those living today but otherwise very similar. We lack credible evidence for an evolutionary origin for the many complex structures that are unique to insects like, compound eyes, wings, joints, and metamorphosis. A change in size, or the loss of structures such as wings, is a loss of genetic information and the opposite of evolution.

Remember the complexity of the single cell and then think of all these complex units living and working together at the same time to make this awesome creature work. Might make you think twice before trying to squash the next mosquito you see, and this is just one of the “simple” ones degenerated by the fall. It makes me want to praise the creator! I hope as you marvel at the world around us you will see God's hand and give thanks.

1) Aberlin, M.B., Air Power ;virtual reality for insects, The Sciences 35(6);13,47 1995.

2) Hardie R.C., Properties of photo receptors R-7 R-8 in dorsal marginal ornatidia in the compound eyes of *Musca-Domestica* and *Calliphora-Erythrocephala*, J. Comparative Physiology A Sensory Neural and Behavioral Physiology 154(2); 157-166, 1984.

3) Dickinson, quoted in Aberlin; ref. 47, pg. 13.

4) Callahan, ref. 5, pp. 80-81.

# THE CHITINA LEADER

## September 1913 October

### NEWS SUSHANNA STRIKE

The steamer Northwestern arrived this afternoon with about fifty more stampedeers, who are anxious to get started for the new gold fields at the earliest possible moment. They have with them 21 horses. It has been arranged to run a special train to McCarthy tomorrow morning, leaving at 8 o'clock and reaching that camp about 7 o'clock in the evening. The regular local train will leave Thursday morning, so that if any of the gold seekers are delayed in leaving Wednesday they will have an opportunity to get away the following morning. On the steamer today there were 28 second-class passengers and the following first-class passengers for the interior:

C. Hansen, N. G. Nelson, G. B. Whitehead, L. Larsen, F. Baxter, P. M. Long, Mrs. J. H. Sellen, Miss Ruth Milroie, C. Jensen, F. E. Taylor, J. Soule, W. W. Soule, Ned Hale, Ned Williams and wife, J. H. Scott, N. N. Hilton, R. G. Baxter, A. J. Elliott, W. G. Witte, C. B. Gayer, J. H. McFarland, J. T. Baster, C. Labelle, and J. M. Morrison.

Reports from Engineer Forester, who is in charge of the crew who are repairing the trail around Sourdough hill and up the Chittistone, are most encouraging. They have already repaired the worst parts of the trail and so widened it that it can now be used as a wagon road. The mucky places where horses used to sink deep have disappeared and instead there exists a good corduroy road. A wire today states that a light wagon holding 1,000 pounds of supplies had been drawn by two horses over the road from McCarthy to the Nizina river, across the river and up to the foot of the Nizina glacier. A

request was sent to the railroad company to send a heavier wagon so that a greater quantity of supplies can be handled with a team.

### Winter Route from McCarthy

	Miles
McCarthy to Dan Creek	15
Dan to mouth of Chittistone	5
Chittistone to Nizina Glacier	11
Around part glacier to Skolai Creek	5
Along Skolai Creek to Skolai Pass	17
Over part Russell Glacier	6
From glacier to Solo cabin	6
From cabin to Bonanza Creek	28
	—
	93

### Summer Route from McCarthy

The present summer route to the Chisana gold fields is about 99 miles, as follows:

McCarthy to Nizina Roadhouse	12
To Dan Creek	5
To Glacier Creek	15
To Breedman's Chittistone Roadhouse	17
To Skolai Pass	6
To Russell Glacier	2
Across glacier	8
To Solo cabin	6
To Bonanza Creek	28
	—
	99

September 2

### Cordova, September 8

Word came to town yesterday afternoon that a fire had been raging

in the woods on part of Sourdough hill. For possibly a mile over toward the Nizina River side, the flames burned much of the timber. As a result many of the charred trees fell across the new corduroy road that had been built and crashed through a few small bridges that had been built across small streams. A crew of men went to work today and it is expected that soon the damage will be repaired and that teams can again be drawing supplies from McCarthy to Nizina.

### Cordova, September 8

Grant Reed was a passenger this morning for McCarthy. He will assist Station Agent M. V. Lattin for a few days and then take charge of the railway office during the absence of Mr. Lattin. He will take a vacation of two months and make a trip outside.

M. Finkelstein returned Saturday night from a trip to the interior, going as far as McCarthy. He reports that pack trains, augmented by the individual hauling, is largely supplying the demand for food that has existed in the Chisana district.

The people of McCarthy, Blackburn and Kennecott, who have been in rather close touch with the stampedeers on their way in and out from the new placer gold diggings, believe that they should have such assistance as is given prospectors on the Canadian side of the line. As a means to attaining that end they are now securing signatures to a petition addressed to the governor of the territory, expecting that through him relief will be afforded.

O. Haglund, who makes his home near Boston was an arrival last evening from McCarthy Creek. He is one of three men who located the Mother



Lode mine in 1906, and continues to be one of the large stockholders. Each season finds him working on the property, and he is now on a visit to his family, expecting to return in the spring.

Mr. Haglund states that the Mother Lode Copper Mines Company is now working 43 men on their property, of which number 17 are putting in a 6,000 foot tram from the mine on the hillside to connect with the road which has been built 13 miles to McCarthy, where connection is made with the Copper River & Northwestern Railway. It is expected that this tram will be completed in two or three weeks.

Mr. Haglund states that enough high grade copper ore has been taken out to fill 5,000 sacks aggregating 500 tons. Already 2,000 sacks have been filled and sent over the tram to be hauled later over the ice to McCarthy, from where they will be transported over the railroad to Cordova, to go from here by steamer to the Tacoma smelter. It is estimated that this ore will all run 60 per cent copper. It has been taken out from a tunnel that has a depth of 200 feet and is 150 feet long. They are now drifting on 35 feet of almost solid glance that runs about 75 per cent copper.

September 9

**McCarthy, Sept. 25** – Information has been received here indicating that the Hazelet expedition, which is marking a short winter trail to the Chisana country, had reached a point three miles over the summit onto Chisana glacier. They found a passable trail over the Nizina glacier, which was properly marked, and are now pushing on toward the end of their journey. Ross Kinney, a representative of the Alaska Road Commission, who had just returned with A. C. Baldwin, of the Alaska Boundary survey, from a trip to the Chisana, reported by wire from here to the road commission. He was instructed to return and join the Hazelet party and make an inspection of the new

route. Mr. Kinney had been on the far end of the Chisana glacier and states that the rest of the route by the Hazelet party would be easy. He states that it is now assured that a short wagon and sled route for winter traffic is assured. The news has been heard here with great satisfaction. As a result of the good news, Otto Rubbe is now contracting to deliver freight for 25 cents per pound from McCarthy to the Chisana. He will start with an outfit at once, going the first 30 miles, as far as the Nizina glacier, with wagons.

September 30

Charles Goodall is now in Chitina where he is erecting an additional building for S. Blum & Co. They require more storage room so as to keep a big stock of goods on hand in case of a tie-up or other emergency.

In a letter from James J. Godfrey, president of the Mother Lode Copper Mines Co. he says that the tramway has been completely and successfully installed, and that "it works like a charm." Work is now being directed toward improving the road from the end of the tram to McCarthy creek. This will complete the easy transportation of ore from the mine to the railroad. Two years ago a good wagon road was built about 12 miles along McCarthy creek to the town of McCarthy. It is expected to ship out 500 tons of high grade copper ore this winter.

October 7

**Cordova, October 8**

George C. Hazelet, who returned yesterday from the interior country, and who was in charge of the expedition to blaze a trail across the Nizina and Chisana glaciers, returned to town yesterday afternoon. Upon the return of the other members of the expedition he will make a detailed report to the Cordova Chamber of Commerce, under whose direction the work was undertaken. Mr. Hazelet states that he has established beyond question a

fine trail or wagon road that can be utilized either winter or summer. He declares that he can put anything over from a sack of flour to a steamboat.

Mr. Hazelet declares this to be not only a practical and short route but that it is a most desirable route with few disadvantages, the grade at no place exceeding 10 or 12 per cent. Horses can easily draw double enders holding from 500 to 850 pounds. Most of the distance is over smooth ice. Starting on the Nizina glacier and going a distance of 16 miles to the summit the road was well staked and travelers can experience no difficulty in following the trail. The stakes are on the right hand side going north and are placed from 100 to 250 feet apart, and are 10 feet high. The work on the other side is now being completed and stakes will be placed across the Chisana glacier and clear into the new camp.

Relief stations have been built a mile and a half this side of the summit and a mile and a half on the other side of the summit. Road houses have already been established at convenient locations leading to the foot of the summit. Preparations are making for establishing similar places of supply and rest on the other side of the summit and it is expected that within thirty days "all the comforts of home" can be enjoyed every few miles from McCarthy to the Chisana diggings. Mr. Hazelet states that Ross Kinney in the employ of the Alaska Road Commission is enthusiastic over the new route. He went through to the Chisana and will come out in a few days. Several pack trains are about to start over the glacier trail.

John Bloomquist and family of Blackburn, were outgoing passengers on the Sampson. They will spend a couple of months in the states.

October 14

# Northern woods filled with potential drug

BY NED ROZELL

Saplings of the Alaska paper birch tree produce a sticky resin on new branches that discourages snowshoe hares from eating them. Some scientists think that such chemical defenses might be useful drugs and a new natural resource for Alaskans to tap.

Tom Clausen and John Bryant think so highly of birch trees' promise that they took a 600-mile journey up and down the Porcupine River early this summer to clip birch twigs from different locations. Using Clausen's 21-foot wooden strip boat with a 30-horsepower motor, the researchers compared twigs from Circle all the way up to Old Crow in the Yukon Territory. They found new twigs of birch were more heavily encrusted with resin nodules the farther north they went.

"As we went upriver, the trees got gooier and gooier," said Clausen, the chairman of the University of Alaska Fairbanks' Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry.

In the late 1970s, Bryant, a UAF professor emeritus who now lives in Wyoming, noticed that Alaska birches seemed to protect themselves from hares by producing resinous glands on saplings and stems growing close to the ground. Current UAF Provost and chemist Paul Reichardt determined that the stems of birch saplings are studded with tiny beads of papyriferic acid, a sweet compound with a bitter after-

taste. Twigs growing higher on mature trees don't have the glands.

"When a tree gets knocked down, the tops are like candy for hares," Clausen said.

The papyriferic acid on sapling twigs causes snowshoe hares to pass more sodium with their urine. This loss of sodium indicates birch defenses, such as papyriferic acid, which are potential hypertension drugs, Bryant said.

"Papyriferic acid and other substances are clearly affecting hares, and things that affect mammals are of interest as potential drugs," Clausen said. Medical researchers first derived aspirin, for example, from a chemical extracted from willows, and the cancer drug Taxol originated in Pacific yew trees.

The north has a bumper crop of birch and other trees and shrubs that seem to be loaded with papyriferic acid and other potentially valuable chemicals. Bryant has sampled trees from Connecticut to Galena, and the northern ones are the richest.

"In Connecticut, trees contain no papyriferic acid; Old Crow trees have 50 percent," Bryant said. "That's a huge difference."

On their recent trip to the village of Old Crow and beyond, Clausen and Bryant found a striking relationship between forest fires, snowshoe hares, and resinous birch. The extreme forest fires of the North—an area the size of Vermont burned in Alaska in 2004—could be

a reason why it's such a storehouse for papyriferic acid and other natural chemicals.

"Fire yields hare habitat, which yields hares, which yields hares eating plants, which yields juvenile plants evolving a chemical defense against hares," Bryant said.

Since the birches with the highest concentrations of the chemical are between Fort Yukon and northwest Canada, Bryant envisions potential for villagers to start a new industry of harvesting young birch and other woody plants. This sort of small industry is already underway in Minnesota, where researchers from the University of Duluth have joined a biotech company to harvest birch bark for betulin, a chemical effective as a herpes and skin cancer drug, and as a component of cosmetics.

"If one wants to look for drugs, it makes sense to look at plant-mammal interactions," said Bryant, "and the strongest plant mammal interaction is between hares and trees and shrubs of northern Alaska and northern Canada."

"There's tons of this stuff right outside our door," Clausen said.

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

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**Aleutian goose continues comeback:** The Aleutian cackling goose, formerly known as the Aleutian Canada goose, has recovered so well from near-extinction that officials in Oregon—where the smaller cousin to the Canada goose spends the winter—have taken the bird off the state's endangered species list. Biologists recently counted more than 64,000 birds in Oregon. In 1962, Alaska biologist Bob "Sea Otter" Jones found a few hundred birds on Buldir Island in the western Aleutians when others thought the goose was extinct. The removal of foxes from the Aleutians and the closure of hunting season on the birds' wintering grounds helped their recovery.

## Author of *Sisters* visits the McCarthy area

BY BONNIE KENYON

It isn't often that I answer a knock at my cabin door and find a successful author like Samme Gallaher standing there with her book in hand, desiring to make my acquaintance. But, that is just what happened on July 24<sup>th</sup>.

Sam and Chris Taylor of Copper Center hosted Samme's visit to our local area. Most of us know Sam as our DOT man from the Chitina maintenance station. Usually he is seen operating a state-owned grader while making improvements on the McCarthy Road. This time he was off duty and driving a normal, everyday vehicle. I almost didn't recognize him. It was also a pleasure meeting Sam's wife, Chris, who says she is an avid WSEN reader.

Samme, 94, was a delightful guest in our home and in our town. While in Kennicott and McCarthy, she took in the sights and was available to personally sign her book *Sis-*

*ters* which she co-authored with her older sister Aileen. Aileen passed away in 1994 but left written accounts of her adventures and marriage to a trapper named Clyde C. "Slim" Williams. These along with Samme's recollections while living with Aileen and Slim, brought about *Sisters: Coming of Age and Living Dangerously in the Wild Copper River Valley* published in 2004 by Epicenter Press.

Samme kindly presented Rick and I with an autographed copy of her book. It didn't take me long to read her and Ailene's account of life in the Copper River country during the time period of the 1920s and 1930s. Their existence in this wild country was spent in isolated trapping cabins, driving dog teams over dangerous river ice during the fierce cold of winter and what it was like for two young sisters to leave their home in Fresno, California, for a totally different lifestyle in Alaska.



The 160-page book comes in paperback, contains 30 photos and sells for \$14.95. If you do not find a copy in your favorite bookstore, you can order it online at: [www.EpicenterPress.com](http://www.EpicenterPress.com).

Samme lives in Thousand Oaks, California, and is presently working on another book about her grandmother. She hopes to return to the Copper River Valley next summer – this time with a printed version of her latest achievement.

(SHAME; continued from pg 31)

That is the bleak picture painted by author Bill Sherwonit in the summer issue of *National Parks*, the magazine of the National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA).

As someone once said, the good news is that the bad news is not true.

The National Parks and Conservation Association (NPCA) describes itself as "a private nonprofit 501(c) 3 educational organization devoted solely to the protection, preservation, and enhancement of the national parks. Dues and contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law."

Supporters see the group as a protector of the nation's park system. Critics say it is an extension of the National Park Service (NPS), lobbying Congress at the behest of park managers.

Both sides expect a certain amount of hyperbole from an organization of this type. After all, people need a cause before opening their wallets. Why pay money over and above your taxes to save the parks if they are not in danger?

Sadly, NPCA goes far beyond merely exaggerating problems in their efforts to spur the troops to keep giving.

Hyperbole is one thing, deceitfulness another.

In an article titled *End of the Line*, Sherwonit relies on sophistry to paint a picture of Wrangell-St. Elias National Park (WRST) as being threatened by a "spiderweb" of "proposed roads."

"Since the mid-1980s," writes Sherwonit, "politicians [in Alaska] have been using RS2477 claims to push for the construction of roads

through national parks and other public lands."

NPCA's Alaskan Regional Director Jim Stratton is often quoted by Sherwonit.

"The state sees RS2477 as a way to jam motorized access into parks, refuges, and other wilderness areas..." says Stratton.

Sherwonit and Stratton cite no examples to bolster these wild claims. Having lived in the heart of the WRST park since long before it was a park, I can assure you that it has been a struggle just to get the state to fund improvements on the existing 100 miles of road within park boundaries. If they are trying to "jam motorized access" or "push for the construction of roads" through this park it is a well-kept secret.

To their credit, NPCA has placed a representative in McCarthy

(continued on page 22)

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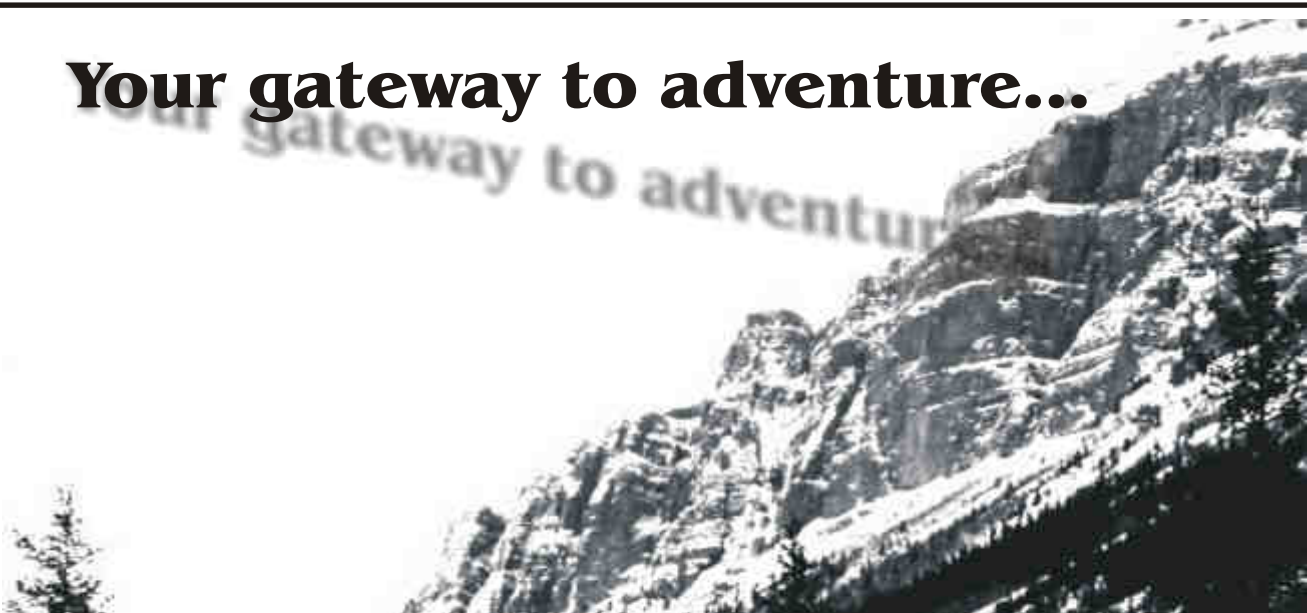
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## Canning meat in jars

The Copper Valley Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) program is coordinating another canning class this fall with meat (caribou, moose, beef, etc.) in jars. Julie Cascio from UAF Extension in Palmer will be the instructor. She was out in early June doing fish and it was well received. She can also test pressure gauges if you schedule this ahead of time.

The class will be Saturday afternoon, October 1st from 1:00 to 4:30 pm at the Denali Lutheran Church in Copper Center on the Silver Springs Loop Road. The cost for the class is \$10 to help with supplies and publicity.

Contact:

Arlene Rosenkrans  
Copper Valley RC&D Coordinator  
P.O. Box 29, Glennallen, AK 99588  
arlene.rosenkrans@ak.usda.gov  
(907) 822-5111 phone  
(907) 822-5009 fax

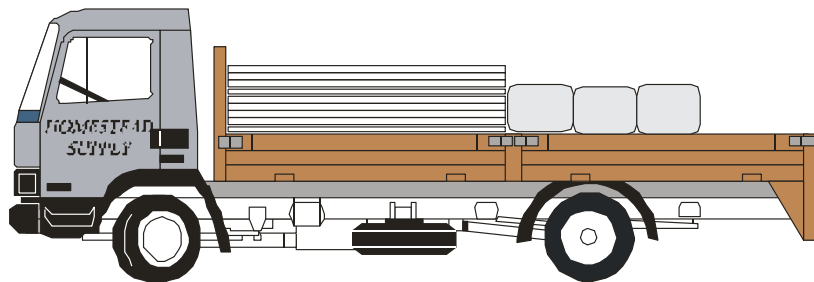
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(NPCA from page 19)

in an effort to improve community relations. Stratton also wrote to Superintendent Davis supporting "no-permit/no-fees" for existing access to private property within park boundaries. However, they do their supporters a disservice by not presenting the RS2477 issue in a more reasonable manner.

I think enthusiasts of the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park can take comfort in the fact that the truth is too bland to be of use in fund-raising for groups like NPCA.

---

## Alaska wildfires pump out the CO

During June through August of 2004, forest fires in Alaska and Canada gave off as much carbon monoxide as all the cars, trucks, factories, and woodstoves in the Lower 48 in the same time period, according to Gabriele Pfister at the National Center for Atmospheric Research in Boulder, Colorado. Carbon monoxide is a poisonous, odorless gas. During the worst of the smoke that choked Fairbanks in June 2005, a CO-measuring instrument in downtown Fairbanks recorded 9.2 parts per million of CO; typical midsummer readings are 2 or 3 parts per million.

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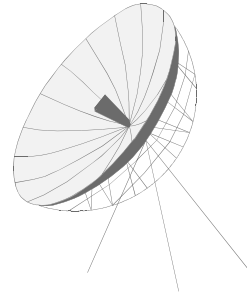
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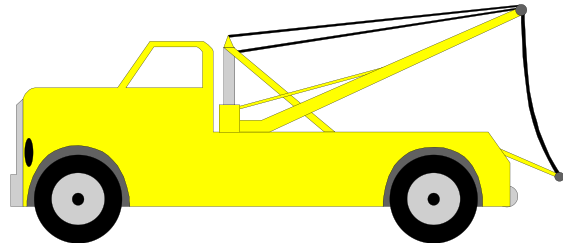
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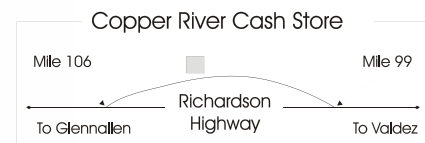
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# Cooking with Peggy

BY PEGGY GUNTIS

**H**i everyone! Well, here I am in McCarthy (4,000 miles from Tucson, not 2,000 as I said in the last issue) sitting at the kitchen table, drinking a large cup of coffee and getting ready to give you a few of the recipes I've already collected from some of the wonderful women here in town.

First from Fran...When I heard that **Fran Gagnon** was having a "yard sale" prior to her final move to Phoenix, Arizona (from May Creek, Alaska), Friday morning just couldn't come soon enough. Bright and early Jim and I hooked up our little wagon to the 4-wheeler and headed to the sale. Believe it or not, we had to make about three trips with our newly-found treasures! Among them was a little tin box with some of Fran's old recipes. Her daughter, Linda, had thoughtfully indexed them. The first one I tried that I want to share was the **No Knead Whole Wheat Bread**.

- 4 teaspoons yeast
- 2/3 cup warm water
- 2 teaspoons honey
- 5 cups whole wheat flour
- 3 tablespoons molasses
- 2/3 cup warm water
- 1/3 cup wheat germ
- 1 1/3 cup warm water
- 1/2 tablespoon butter
- 1 tablespoon sesame seeds

Sprinkle yeast over 2/3 cup warm water. Add 2 teaspoons honey. Leave to "work" while doing dough. Warm whole wheat flour in 250 degrees oven about 20 minutes. Combine molasses and 2/3 cup warm water. Combine yeast mix with molasses mix. Stir into warmed flour, add wheat germ and 1 1/3 cup warm water. Mix well but don't knead - dough will be sticky. Turn into well-greased bread pan, smooth with

spatula that has been rinsed in cold water to prevent sticking. Sprinkle sesame seeds over top of loaf. Let rise to top of pan. Bake at 400 degrees for 30 or 40 minutes or until crust is brown and sides are firm and crusty. Remove to rack to cool. Makes 1 loaf. Hope your loaf tastes as good as mine did!

Next is one I got from **Betty Adams**. Betty's welcoming smile was one of the first Jim and I saw when we were new visitors to McCarthy about fifteen years ago. Because of her and my daughter, Kim, of course, we looked forward to returning each year until now we are "summer residents."

The recipe Betty wanted to share was one she found in a cookbook from Kenny Lake, Alaska. Thank you, Kenny Lake, and thank you, Betty, because this was scrumptious.

## Rhubarb Custard Pie

- 3 eggs
- 2 2/3 tablespoon milk
- 2 cups sugar
- 4 tablespoons flour
- 3/4 teaspoon nutmeg
- 4 cups red rhubarb, cut up
- 1 tablespoon butter
- Favorite 9" 2-crust pastry

Beat eggs slightly. Add the milk. Stir together sugar, flour and nutmeg; mix in egg and milk mixture. Add rhubarb and mix. Pour into 9-inch pastry-lined pan. Dot with butter. Cover with lattice top. Bake at 400 degrees until nicely browned, 50-60 minutes. This was easy and absolutely delicious!

Another recipe using rhubarb (which Bonnie so generously gives me from her garden) was given to me by **Shanna Miller-Elliott**. Shanna, Randy and the boys have moved to Kenny Lake where my granddaughter, Anna, and I visited them

last month about a week before their little girl was born. Shanna had fresh coffee and rhubarb pie waiting for us that was so-o-o good. She not only shared the pie recipe with me but also one for **Blueberry Rhubarb Sour Cream Coffee Cake**.

## Filling:

- 1 1/2 cup chopped fresh or frozen rhubarb (1/4" to 1/2" pieces)
- 2/3 cup fresh or frozen blueberries
- 2 teaspoons lemon juice
- 1/2 cup white sugar
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch

## Cake:

- 1 2/3 cup flour
- 2/3 cup white sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup butter or oleo cut into pieces
- 1 cup Land O' Lakes sour cream
- 2 eggs
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- Topping:
- 1/4 cup flour
- 1/4 cup white sugar
- 1/2 cup quick cooking oatmeal
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/4 cup butter or oleo cut into pieces

In medium saucepan, combine filling ingredients, mix together well. Cook over medium heat until it boils and continue cooking until thick and clear. (About 5 minutes.) Set aside.

In large bowl, combine flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Cut in butter until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Stir in sour cream, eggs and vanilla. Spread half of the cake batter evenly into a greased 8" square glass baking pan. Carefully spread filling on top. Drop remaining cake batter by tablespoons over the filling and spread carefully.

In a small bowl combine flour, sugar, oatmeal, and cinnamon. Cut in butter until it resembles coarse crumbs. Sprinkle over cake batter.

Place coffee cake on middle rack, bake at 350 degrees for 40-50 minutes (center of cake should feel as firm as the edges.) Cool. Cut into squares. Makes 8-10 servings. Doubles nicely.

I just made this cake this morning and hope that after my continuous sampling, there will be enough to share with Bonnie, Neta and Anna on game night! If my notes are correct, Shanna found this recipe at a garage sale. Yeah, garage sales!

**Barbara Rice** gave me this next wonderful dessert recipe. She has made it several times for the fellowship luncheon after church, so I'm sure many of you lucky McCarthy readers have already tasted it. Barbara and her husband John come to McCarthy as summer residents from St. Louis, Mo. John has been busy working on their new house this summer while Barbara is the smiling face you see at the McCarthy Lodge gift shop. Here is Barbara's **Apple Spice Custard Cake**.

1 package (2 layers) spice cake mix  
2 cups chopped apples, unpeeled  
1 can 14 oz. sweetened condensed milk (not evaporated)  
8 oz. sour cream

1/4 cup bottled lemon juice  
Cinnamon

Prepare cake mix as package directs; stir in apples. Bake at 350 degrees in 9"x13" greased, floured pan for 30 minutes.

In medium bowl, combine milk, sour cream and lemon juice. Spread on top of cake. Return to oven for 10 minutes. Sprinkle with cinnamon. Try it; you'll like it!

For those women of McCarthy whose recipes I already have, watch for them in upcoming issues; for those of you I haven't yet contacted, listen for your phone!

## A LOOK AT THE WEATHER

BY GEORGE CEBULA

So far the summer of 2005 has been a good summer, as far as the weather goes, with June and July temperatures about average and precipitation above average. The high temperature for June was 82 on 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> (89 on June 19, '04 and 81 on June 30, '03). The low was 27 on June 2<sup>nd</sup> (29 on June 3, '04 and 27 on June 4, '03). The average temperature for June was 55.2. This compares to 57.7 in June 2004 and 52.7 in June 2003. There were 3 days with a high of 80 or above and 4 days with a low of 32 or lower. The total precipitation was 1.49 inches (0.62 inches in June 2004 and 1.29 in June 2003). *Silver Lake had a high of 83 on June 18<sup>th</sup> (88 on June 20, '04 and 79 on June 11, '03) and a low of 31 on June 2<sup>nd</sup> (30 on June 3, '04 and 30 on June 1, '03). The average June temperature at Silver Lake was 56.1 (57.5 in 2004 and 52.9 in 2003) and the total precipitation was 0.78 inches (0.30 inches in 2004 and 1.34 inches in 2003).*

July was warm and wet. The high for July was 80 on the 15<sup>th</sup> (82 on July 16, '04 and 83 on July 19, '03). The low was 35 on July 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> (32 on July 26, '04 and 33 on July 18, '03). The July average temperature 56.1 compared to 58.3 in 2004 and 57.0 in 2003. There was only 1 day with a high of 80 or above and 2 days with a low of 35 or lower. The total July precipitation was 5.34 inches (1.65 inches in 2004 and 2.22 inches in 2003). *Silver Lake recorded a high of 76 on the 10<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> (83 on July 13, '04 and 85 on July 20, '03) and a low of 42 on the 24<sup>th</sup> (40 on July 26, '04 and 40 on July 9, '03). The average July temperature at Silver Lake was 56.9, compared to 59.3 in 2004 and 58.4 in 2003. The total precipitation recorded at Silver Lake for July was 3.88 inches (1.76 inches in 2004 and 0.57 inches in 2003).*

Hidden Creek Lake began releasing its water on June 19<sup>th</sup>, the earliest on record, (July 10, '04, July 3, '03, Aug 2, '02, July 2, '01 and July 26, '00). The water in the Kennicott River began to rise during

the morning of June 19<sup>th</sup> and crested at 3:00 pm on June 20<sup>th</sup>. The crest was 30.30 ft. The increase was 4.80 feet in 33 hours. The crest was almost a foot above the 29.50 ft. last year and there was no flooding, but some bank erosion. The river was back to its normal level by the morning of June 23<sup>rd</sup>, but remained around 26 feet for the rest of June.

The first week of August saw cool and wet weather with more than 2 inches of rain. The second week was sunny and hot with highs in the low to mid 80s. Then the smoke from the wild fires to the North moved into the area.

It's about time to think about covering the plants in the garden. The first frost usually occurs in mid August and lows below 32 are not far behind.

Freezing temperatures will begin to appear by early September and the first snow should arrive by the end of September. Summer is just about over and winter around the next corner.

# Abandoned Car and Metals Removal Planned for 2006

BY ARLENE ROSENKRANS, RC&D COORDINATOR

The Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Program at the Copper Valley Development Association (CVDA) has been building support over the past two years for the removal of at least 500 junked cars, along with metals, batteries, tires and associated waste from the southern Copper Valley communities. The project currently extends from McCarthy/Kennicott to Tazlina, just south of Glennallen. This presents many challenges with such a large area, with cars located on both private and public lands and scattered throughout the communities.

Requests for assistance from McCarthy Area Council, and Tazlina and Chitina Villages helped to initiate the project. Abandoned car removal has also been identified in the region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. Donations from private businesses, the Kenny Lake Soil and Water Conservation District, and the National Park Service (NPS) helped to begin the project. The RC&D then approached the State of Alaska for support and CVDA has been awarded three funding grants totaling \$50,000 through the offices of John Harris and Woody Salmon to be used towards the project. The EPA has also been approached for funding and support. It now looks like the project will be able to proceed in 2006 with the actual removal of the vehicles. Many of the logistics of such an operation are now being planned, while inventory of the existing vehicles continues.

While building financial support, the RC&D began coordinating clean up efforts of batteries, aluminum cans and trash at several sites in McCarthy, Chokosna, Chitina and Willow Creek. In May 2005, volunteers, with support from Conoco-Phillips collected 1,650 lbs. of

aluminum at one site in Willow Creek. Sierra Club Volunteers helped NPS bag aluminum, glass and trash in Chokosna in early June. The Traditional Indian Village of Chitina began cleaning out their vehicles in August. All trash except for scrap metals needs to be removed from the vehicles by land-owners before they can be

describe what will be needed from contractors, volunteers and community supporters, how contract bids will be let and jobs that may be available through the project. We hope to find out what still needs to be done to assure project success and the greatest amount of materials that can be moved per dollar spent. Our goal is to collaborate



NPS Staff Photo

Garbage and recyclable material bagged at Chokosna

transported. Fluids and other hazardous wastes will be removed by professional contractors during the processing and crushing.

There will be a Summit about this project on Friday, September 30<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm at the Kenny Lake Community Hall at Mile 7.5 of the Edgerton Hwy. This will involve community stakeholders and managers from the Copper Valley and adjacent regions, potential contractors, waste managers, State and Federal employees and any other interested community participants.

The Summit will discuss basic logistics and concepts, staging areas, and the best timing for communities and contractors. We will

with neighboring communities to assure that transportation costs to a port are minimized, hopefully getting a barge to Valdez.

Measures to assure environmental concerns with hazardous wastes will also be addressed, along with disposal options for tires, batteries, refrigerators and other associated waste. We hope to gather ideas from the collective knowledge of attendees about project logistics.

If you have vehicles that you would like to have removed, have further questions or would like to attend this Summit, you may reach the RC&D Coordinator Arlene Rosenkrans at (907) 822-5111 or [arlene.rosenkrans@ak.usda.gov](mailto:arlene.rosenkrans@ak.usda.gov).

# FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

## A ray of hope for national parks

Finally, someone in the higher echelons of the Department of Interior is trying to make some much-needed changes in the way the nation's national parks are managed. The Old Guard is terrified.

The hand-wringing by the extreme left is just amazing. Led by one Bill Wade, spokesman for a group called the Coalition of National Park Service Retirees, a chorus of "the sky is falling down" is being heard from the *New York Times* and their allies.

Long time *WSEN* readers may remember Karen Wade, superintendent during the early 90s. Ms Wade left her post suddenly after telling congress she needed more money to hire armed rangers to deal with in-holders with a "frontier mentality." The public outcry was fast and furious and Karen's desk was cleaned out over the weekend. It turns out that spokesman Bill Wade is Karen's hubby.

And what is Wade's group saying? "They charge that the Department of the Interior is watering down the Park Service's sacred mandate from Congress to preserve the scenery and its resources for future generations," writes one Phillip Gomez of the Stephens Media Group.

Sacred mandate? Handed down by Congress? I thought only God handed down sacred mandates.

In a nationwide telephone press conference staged by the Coalition of Park Service Retirees, former Park Service associate director of cultural resources Jerry Rogers recited a recent *Newsweek* story on spirituality in America. In a poll conducted by the news magazine, Rogers said, 21 percent of respondents said they felt the presence of God when they were in a house of worship and another 21 percent said they felt God's presence more in nature.

"I think it's profound that the same number of people feel the presence of God when they're in nature as when they're in a cathedral or a house of worship," Rogers said.

"Yes, ladies and gentlemen, if you want to find God, come to the National Parks before that wicked president of ours destroys them entirely," seems to be the rallying cry of the old guard.

Apparently the furor arose when one Paul Hoffman, a deputy assistant secretary in the Department of Interior, circulated among the upper echelon of NPS managers what the retirees are calling a "secret memo" which purportedly changes the policies of the National Park Service. And what are these drastic and wicked changes? Well, he wants to open the parks for greater use and enjoyment by more people, and he would like to have more commercial services available to them; further, Hoffman's "secret rules" would

allow state and local officials more say in park management decisions.

Worse, they say, he wants to promote horrendous secular sins allowing the sale of "religious merchandise" and purging reference to evolution in our parks.

These ideas, of course, threaten the power of bureaucrats and the environmental preservationists who have been running the Park Service.

The new policies, the coalition said, would "hijack the American national parks, leaving them wide open for what are now barred uses and making it extremely unlikely that the sites would survive as unspoiled treasures for future generations."

In 1872 when Yellowstone National Park was established, the park was largely inaccessible except to hardy souls who would tolerate primitive and sometimes dangerous conditions. Before long, Congress authorized construction of roads, trails, scenic overlooks, campgrounds and water access sites. Wanting the American people to be able to enjoy the park, railroad tracks were laid, cabins and grand hotels were built to accommodate visitors.

Rather than ruining the land, these works enhanced the parks and opened them to more people and a variety of uses.

Our hats are off to Mr. Hoffman and we trust that the new policies will prevail.

## Shame on NPCA

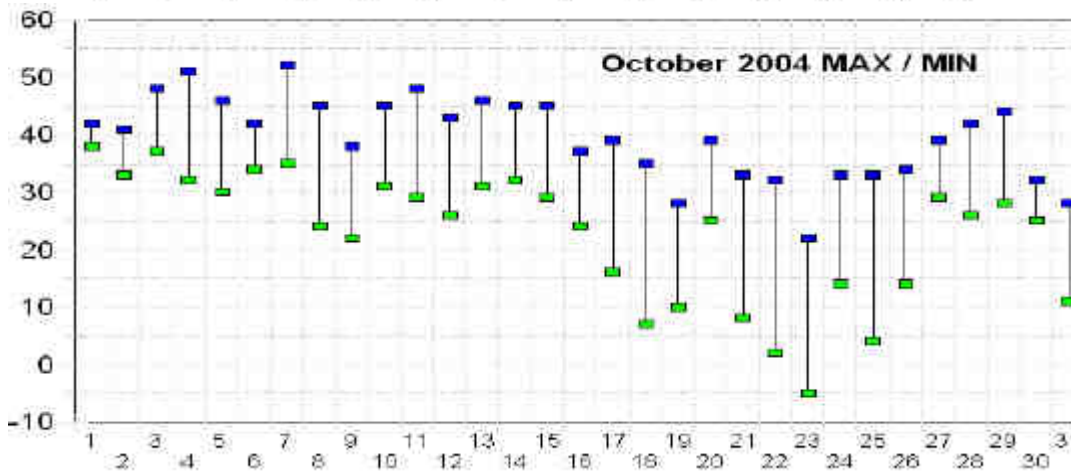
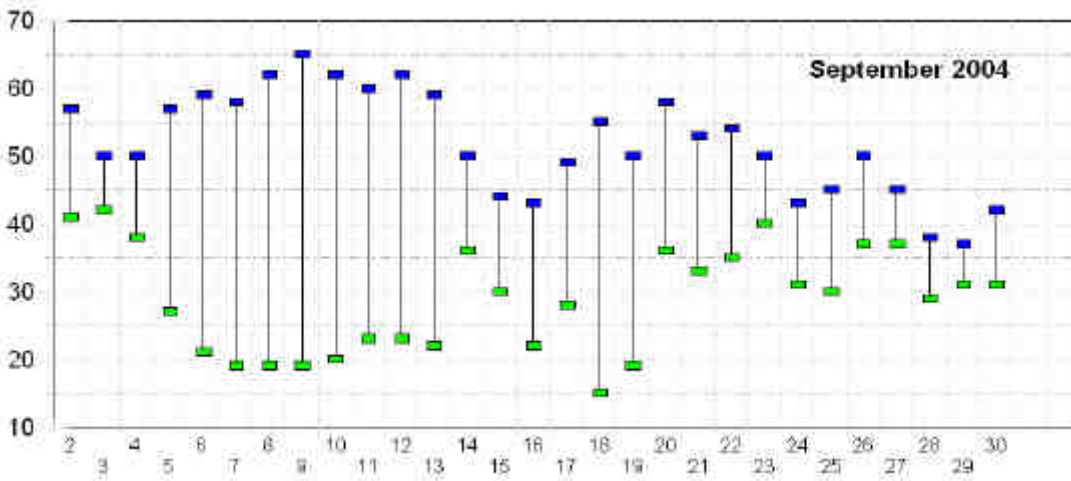
Imagine the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park (WRST) with 1,702 miles of new highways, a virtual "spiderweb" of roads across "pristine land." Imag-

ine the plant communities destroyed, the permafrost exposed to melting, with the resulting damage affecting run-off, fragmenting wildlife habitat and turning wildlands into eyesores. Just imagine cultural treasures destroyed, and imagine

increasing development efforts on private property inside the park boundaries leading to local residents poaching wildlife and riding ATVs willy-nilly with no regard for mother earth.

(continued on page 19)

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