

# Wrangell St. Elias News

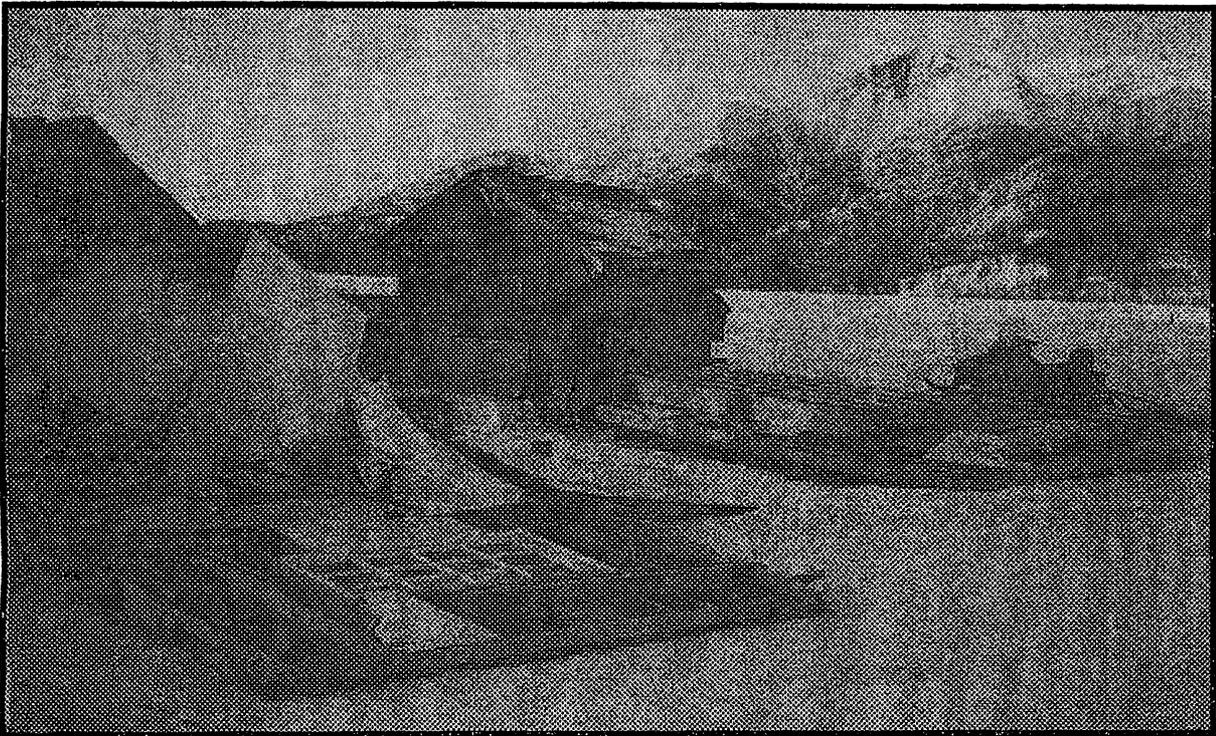
*"Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty"*

Vol. Six Issue Two

March & April 1997

Two Dollars

## High winds level McCarthy mail shack



McCarthy—December 22, 1996. Winds estimated near 100 miles per hour at the McCarthy Airport destroyed the town's "mail shack." See story on page 5.

### *In this issue—*

**Do-it-yourself electric power** pg. 8

**New ferry to be named "Kennicott"** pg. 10

**Telephone repeater site completed** pg. 12

**Book reviews—**

**"Alaska Ascents" & "Alaska Amanac"** pg. 19

## *A note from the publisher*

BY RICK KENYON

**A**s we go to press in late February it seems the quiet, peaceful winter is coming to a close. Weather-wise, it almost seems like we skipped February and went directly to March. Some are worried that February weather will show up later—uninvited!

Besides changes in the weather, the local "activity level" seems to be increasing. Although the "bridge crew" has not arrived yet, preparations are being made for their lodging and logistics, and lots of other projects that will be going on concurrently with the bridge project are also being prepared for and talked about. We will be covering the progress of the footbridge in our next issue, but current word is that the construction people will arrive the first week in March, and hope to be completed with the project before the summer tourists start arriving. If you're planning an early spring trip to McCarthy, the road should be plowed by mid March, but watch out for heavy equipment and large trucks!

It looks as though the National Park Service (NPS) will have a greatly increased presence in the McCarthy area this summer, with a "visitor information center" and

"interpretive ranger" near the end of the road. Park Service acquisition of the 3,000 acres at Kennicott seems likely. See pages 6 & 7 for an update on NPS activities.

Changes are also underway up in Kennicott. The old "horse barn" that belonged to Tim Mischel has changed hands and plans are afoot for a major renovation project there. Another interesting project is in the planning stages that we hope to be able to report on in our next issue!

Even the Nizina district is scheduled for its share of development—talk of water wells, house moving and an improved runway is being heard.

What a shock to learn that the McCarthy mail shack had been destroyed by high winds. If you get mail at McCarthy and were not here, especially if no one was taking care of your mail, it is likely that some of your mail ended up at May Creek or points beyond. Everyone chipped in and help locate and sort mail, but undoubtedly some was lost. We are very grateful to George LeVasseur and the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities in Valdez for helping the community out with building materials for a new mail shack. A work party is

scheduled for next week to begin construction.

On a different subject, Bonnie and I worked extra hard to get the January & February issue of WSEN mailed out by December 20, hoping that you would get them near the first of January. Well, our friends in Switzerland said theirs arrived in only two weeks, (before their November & December issue arrived!) but family members in Florida did not get their copies until mid February. A call to the Post Office shed no light on the hang-up, but it is likely that severe weather in the lower 48 during that time was responsible for at least some of the delays. If your copy was late, we apologize.

Wrangell St. Elias News welcomes aboard the following new subscribers: Brooks Ludwig, AK; Reed Hellman, MD; John & Sherry Williams, AK; Bob & Sandy Woolsey, AK; Bryon & Pat Jones, AK; Alma & Blum, AK; Dan Bryant, MA; Fred Walatka, AK; Martha Hoza, IL; Judy Moerlein, AK; Babbie Jacobs, AK; Heidi Eliason, ID; L. L. Trigiano, NV; Mary Cummins, IL; Nancy Ferrell, AK; Mike Loso, CA; Richard Voss, AK; Willy Hersman, AK; Brad Grossweiler, AK; Homer Kenyon, FL.

**CORRECTION:** We are sorry to report that in the January/February 1997 issue of WSEN, we made a couple of mistakes under Jim and Audrey Edwardses' Item of Interest on page 4. Corrections and additions are as follows: Steve Edwards and his sister Ms. Shelly Edwards, son and daughter of Jim and both of Anchorage, were the witnesses at the wedding of Jim and Audrey on Oct. 29, 1996. Jim's first grandchild, Ben Edwards, son of Steve and Lana Edwards, was also in attendance. Audrey's sister, Marelyn Avant, (not Betcher) was in attendance as well. Our apologies to the entire Edwards family!

# Items of Interest

BY BONNIE KENYON

**George Cebula:** George FINALLY returned to McCarthy on January 23. He spent October and November housesitting for Gene and Edith Coppedge at Silver Lake.

Gene and Edith drove their 5th wheeler "outside" to visit family. George and Buddy, Coppedge's German Shephard, looked after things in their absence.

After a few weeks in Anchorage, George did some traveling of his own. George's mom, Helen Cebula, and brothers, Tom and Ray, in Campbell, Ohio, received a visit from George over Christmas. Next, was a stop in Milwaukee to see brother Ted and family. By New Years, George was back in Anchorage and (we thought) preparing to head our way. As he waited for McCarthy weather to warm up, he decided to take a side trip to visit friends in Maui. Actually, who can blame him. Let's face it, -43 is not something to come home to! Needless to say, George came home sporting a nice tan. Welcome home, George!

**Walter and Ursel Mueller:** Seeing the warm and sunny smiles of our friends, Walter and Ursel from Switzerland, seems to have pushed us into an early spring.

Their home away from home is the Beaver Creek cabin on property belonging to Jim and Audrey Edwards.

Since their arrival in McCarthy on January 28, their skis have made miles of tracks in our snow covered neighborhood. To mail and back, a lunch engagement in

Kennicott, a "welcoming home" party, a 3 day dog mushing adventure and numerous visits to old friends in the area.

By the time you receive this issue of WSEN, our friends will be on a much longer cross-country trip, back to Switzerland. Thank you for coming such a long way to see us all, Walter and Ursel. A cup of coffee, freshly baked cookies, Swiss chocolate bars and a visit with the Muellers—that is hard to beat!

**Jim and Audrey Edwards:** I cannot write about Walter and Ursel without mentioning the Edwards family. It was through Jim that we first met the Muellers in the first place.

Jim flew to Anchorage in time to meet them and fly them back to Swift Creek. Rick and I were privileged to give Jim and Audrey a hand at putting together a welcome home party for Walter and Ursel. Old and new acquaintances gathered together on January 31 at the Edwards' house to celebrate our friends' return.

On a rather interesting note...not many party invitations carry a warning to watch your step when approaching the scene of the gathering. The hazard in question is an ever-growing glacier that is seen creeping down the Edwards runway, into Jim's hangar and, as if not satisfied with its new territory, is encroaching on their front yard—even threatening to move in with them! Rick and I have taken several pictures at different times but, unfortunately, none have turned out good enough for reprint.

The source of the problem is Swift Creek which runs down the hill and flows in a creek bed in front of Jim and Audrey's house. No one knows why but the creek seems to have a mind of its own this year. There were signs of glaciering last year but nothing like this. The ice build up in the hangar has kept Jim hopping, trying to keep his two planes above the rising ice field. Jim and Audrey have spent hours diverting the wayward creek. As of press time, things are under control, but Audrey is still wondering how she is going to get their greenhouse thawed out in time for spring planting!!

**Al and Fran Gagnon:** The Gagnons are old timers to the May Creek area but rare to items of interest. We just don't see much of them. We've had the pleasure of seeing Al more than usual this winter. He says he and Fran are in good health. They are thoroughly enjoying eating Sitka blacktail deer which he brought home from a hunting trip to the Cordova area last fall..

This year Al has been making frequent snowmachine trips across the Nizina River. "I'm going to be very, very busy with my Kennicott property," comments an excited Al. Al recently purchased Tim Mischel's "horse barn" at Kennicott. When he starts talking about the bulldozer that he has leased for the month of March, and all the upgrade he's planning to do with it, his eyes light up.

The "horse barn" which Al plans on renovating was just that in the Kennecott Copper Mine days. A new foundation

and a septic system are on the list of projects. According to Al, the barn has approximately 3,000 sq. ft. and he plans on redoing it to accommodate several top quality motel rooms—each room having a private bath.

He certainly has his work cut out for him, but he's off and running (or should I say dozing?)!

**Rick Jurick:** As most of you know (if you read this column on a regular basis), Rick owns a Kennicott cottage on Silk Stocking Row. When Walter and Ursel returned from an outstanding lunch at Rick's place recently, they brought back glowing reports of Rick's workmanship on the inside of his cottage. Even his new outhouse (a 5 week winter project) could win a top prize for construction design and detail. Congratulations on all your hard work, Rick. It certainly is paying off with many good reports!

**Mike McCarthy, Laura Bunnell and boys:** Mike reports that he and Matt Hambrick spent 2 hard-working days opening the trail to Green Butte. Mike and son McKenzie, 8 ½, went on a beaver trapping expedition up that way but didn't have any success so far.

Luke, 11, is busy working on a school paper about our community's history. Mike and Laura dropped him off at Fireweed Subdivision where Luke spent a couple of days interviewing Mark Vail who is full of exciting stories about the area.

Nick, 8, celebrated his birthday on February 8 on the trail--the Bonanza Trail, that is. Family, friends, a campfire and roasted hot dogs helped make the day special, for a very

special young man!

Laura is staying busy with the boys' schoolwork and says she very proud of their work this winter.

**Kris Rueter and Matt Hambrick:** Matt is back in the area and getting a chance to try out his new snowmachine. He says he talked to Kris on the phone on Valentine's Day. She is at Dutch Harbor working on a fish catcher/processor boat and could be back here sometime in mid March..

**Ken and Carly Kritchen:** The Kritchens were pleased to have Matt housesit for them while they drove into town on a horse purchasing expedition. They found just what they wanted in Palmer and hope to bring their two horses back to the homestead as soon as the road is plowed. Working on their corral is a high priority these days.

**Brooks Ludwig and Diane Showalter:** Fireweed Subdivision is buzzing with activity. Diane says they are clearing trees around their cabin and even getting in some skiing. In between those outside activities, Brooks is turning out a variety of baked goods, I hear, and Diane is busy sampling. Sounds like you're doing a terrific job, Brooks. Rick and I will have to plan our visit at just the right time!

**Mark Vail:** I can only imagine the excitement in Mark's dog yard as he readied his team for the mushing trip to Green Butte. He first stop was at the Mueller's Beaver Creek cabin on Wednesday afternoon where he spent the night. The next morning he, Walter and Ursel divided the near dozen dogs into two teams. Having borrowed a second sled, the three embarked on a 45 mile

round trip adventure.

According to the Muellers, they had a great time together and the dogs performed well. The cabin where they spent two nights received a much-needed cleaning in hopes future occupants will treat it with the same respect. On Saturday they woke to fresh snow and a warning from Mark that it was probably raining down our way. They quickly packed up and headed down the trail. Sure enough, it was raining here in McCarthy, but they arrived home in plenty of time to have supper and dry out.

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

VOL. Six, IssueTwo, March & April 1997.

Published every two months at McCarthy, Alaska. McCarthy, PO Box MXY, Glennallen, AK 99588-8998. Phone (907) 554-4454. FAX (907) 554-4454. E-mail Wsenews@aol.com.

"Copyright © 1997 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: George Cebula, Carly Kritchen, Jon Jarvis, Leah Jarvis, Loy Green, Ed LaChapelle & Lael Morgan. Subscription price is \$10 for one year in the USA. Canada \$12.50. Other countries \$20. Advertising rates upon request. Deadline for publication in next issue is April 15.

PERIODICALS POSTAGE  
PAID AT GLENNALLEN, AK.  
99588.

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



High winds early in the morning of December 22, 1996 destroyed the "new" mail shack at the McCarthy Airport. According to Gary Green, who spent much of the previous night trying to keep his airplanes on the ground, the mail shack came apart around 2 a.m.



Volunteers clean up debris. Mail was scattered for some distance, but local residents picked up and sorted what they could find.

On the brighter side of this disaster was a generous offer by George LeVasseur at the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) to supply enough building material for a new mail shack. About the only thing reusable from the building is the floor. All 4 walls and the roof were extensively damaged.

On January 7, 1997, at 10:30 a.m. six local residents met a DOT&PF truck at the McCarthy Airport to help unload lumber and roofing for the project.

A building party is scheduled for some time in March or early April.

Thank you, DOT, for your timely and generous help!

## NPS news

BY JON JARVIS  
WRST SUPERINTENDENT

**Visitor Center:** Site surveys, preliminary site planning, architectural design and exhibit planning are in progress. A road has been constructed to the site and a well drilled that produces 35 gallons per minute. To reduce construction and operation costs, two design alternatives are being considered: a single Visitor Center/Exhibit Hall/Theater building or a "campus" approach with individual buildings placed around an ethnobotany garden courtyard. Additional cost cutting has resulted in the two alternatives estimated at \$6.5 to \$4.5 million (net construction). A decision on which alternative will be made in March of 1997 after an analysis of cost/benefit. Phase I construction of the utilities, roads, and well house is estimated at \$1.4 million and can be awarded in FY98.

### **Kennecott Mine**

**Acquisition:** The NPS plan is to complete the acquisition of this property by November of 1997. Kennecott Corporation conducted a site investigation and clean-up of hazardous materials at Kennecott, and reports spending \$3,000,000 on this effort. The NPS conducted a hazardous materials review to determine the cost of remediating remaining hazardous materials. This is estimated to be \$180,000. The surface owners have tentatively agreed to pay for \$125,000 of additional clean-up from the proceeds of a sale. The Conservation Fund, Great Kennecott Land Company and Consolidated Wrangell Mining

Company have entered into a purchase agreement that expires at the end of 1997.

The National Park Service is having the property surveyed to identify encroachments, is resolving land title problems, and is reviewing an appraisal of the Great Kennicott Land Company's and Consolidated Wrangell Mining Company's holdings. This review is expected to be complete by mid-January, 1997.

Acceptance of donations for mineral estate and fee interest lands would be of minimal cost to the federal government; acquisition of the surface estate is estimated to be \$4,200,000. There are currently approximately \$1,000,000 of existing NPS funds that can be applied toward the purchase price, thereby lowering the amount of L&WCF monies that would be needed. There will also be the cost of stabilization of historic structures and other modifications of the site.

**McCarthy Road Planning:** In 1995, following recommendations from the community of McCarthy, DOT&PF entered into an agreement with the National Park Service (NPS), and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to prepare a plan for the McCarthy Road scenic roadway. The purpose of this plan is to determine the type of public facilities (turnouts, picnic areas, etc.), and methods of preserving the scenic/historic character of the roadway, including the style of road construction that will retain the general character of the road and be compatible with

the park. Twenty-nine planning/public meetings have been held with representatives from the communities and Native corporations, and other land owners and managers. The results of this study will be summarized in the draft EIS, and available for further review, comment and amendment as part of the overall road study document.

**Public Toilets:** WRST and the State of Alaska Department of Transportation signed an agreement to construct a pair of public toilets in McCarthy in the spring of 1997. Materials have been purchased and the tanks are in place near the McCarthy Museum. A second set of toilets are being planned for the McCarthy Road side of the tram to be installed this summer. The NPS will also install a "kiosk/Bulletin Board" for public information and have a seasonal interpreter "roving" along the McCarthy Road.

**Public Use Cabins:** WRST has funded the restoration of five historic cabins that are now available for public use on a first come first served basis. The cabins are at Nugget Creek, Jake's Bar, Hubert's Landing, Too Much Johnson, and Solo Mountain.

**Trails:** WRST has identified at least 38 historic trails with potential for reconstruction for public access to WRST. The Skookum Volcano Trail will be opened in the summer of 1997 with a Sierra Club work group. This trail provides a loop route from the Nabesna Road that can be completed in five hours.

**Nabesna Road Planning:**

WRST and the State of Alaska Department of Transportation signed an agreement to begin the planning for a Nabesna Scenic Road Plan. This plan will mirror the McCarthy Road process by involving all the local communities, land owners, and native organizations in the planning for public and private amenities along the Nabesna Road. Road width, surface type, picnic areas, parking areas, camping, trailheads and interpretation will all be a part of the plan.

**Nabesna Road Amenities:**

WRST has installed five picnic tables, several fire rings, and trail head information signs along popular areas on the Nabesna Road.

Camping is being encouraged at both Twin Lakes and Jack Creek.

**Copper River Trail:** The Governor of Alaska has directed a study to be started on re-opening the historic railroad route between Chitina and Cordova as a trail.

Public meetings have begun and there was a public meeting, hosted by the State of Alaska in Chitina on Feb 11.

**Backcountry Airstrips:**

WRST expends approximately \$22,000 per year maintaining 20+ bush airstrips for public access to Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve. All of this work is done by hand tools.

**Local Hire:** In 1996, WRST had 22 permanent employees of which 8 are local hires. For the summer we issued 8 local hire announcements and hired 20 locals as seasonal employees.

**Community Economic Development:** WRST received a \$30,000 grant from the National Park Foundation to

develop a Native Alaskan Interpretive Curriculum through the Prince William Sound Community College. This curriculum will be used to stimulate local "ecotourism" businesses within the native and non-native community.

**Cell Site:** WRST approved the installation of a cellular telephone antennae and repeater on Sourdough Ridge above McCarthy. This provides cell telephone coverage for the public and residents in the McCarthy, Kennicott, McCarthy Road, Dan Creek and Nizina areas.

**Subsistence:** WRST is responding to the request of the Subsistence Resource Commission in drafting a rule to add Northway, Tetlin, Dot Lake, and Tanacross as resident zone communities. WRST developed and implemented the Mentasta Caribou Cooperative Management Plan that resulted in a successful ANILCA Section 804 registration hunt for Native elders in the fall of 1996.

**Alaska Land Managers**

**Forum Chitina Valley Project:** The AMLF has created a small committee to investigate the development of a task group similar to the South Denali task group that would focus on private/public tourism infrastructure in the Copper/Chitina valley. The Copper Valley and Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve is being proposed as a major alternative destination to Denali National Park.

**Mining:** WRST has approved two Plans of Operation for mining on mining claims and is currently reviewing two additional plans. Close communication between the NPS and the miners has resulted in both protection of park resources and the

opportunity for the miner to operate.

**Copper Valley Ecosystem:**

The National Biological Service has developed a multi-party agreement for the various land managers in the Copper Basin to cooperate in studies of the ecosystem of the Copper River and Prince William Sound. In October of 1996, the NBS hosted a very successful workshop to look at spruce bark beetle effects in the Copper Basin.

**Concessions:** WRST operates 16 hunting guide concessioners. In 1996, the Superintendent re-issued exclusive use of some cabins to those hunting guides that have an unbroken record of use since before 1980 (ANILCA). WRST now has 49 Incidental Business Permits for air taxis, river rafters, backpacking guides, mountaineering guides, and game transporters.

**Village Histories and Government-to-Government Relations:** WRST has entered into a number of cooperative agreements and provided funding to Village Councils and the Copper River Native Association to prepare Village histories and government-to-government guides for the National Park Service.

*Editor's note: As we were going to press we received the following information from District Ranger Tom Betts:*

We are planning on building a small structure to provide visitor information on the park and the local area. This will be located across from John Adams place by the entrance to the park service road that goes north to the river. If all goes well we should have this in place by mid-June. It will be staffed five days a week (cont. page 11)

# Do-it-yourself electric power

*As part of our on-going series of articles offering practical guidance for Alaska bush living, we now turn to power generation. Future articles will discuss details of diesel generator management and alternative power sources such as solar panels, wind and micro-hydro plants. This introduction reviews some basic principles of power generation.*

BY ED LACHAPPELLE

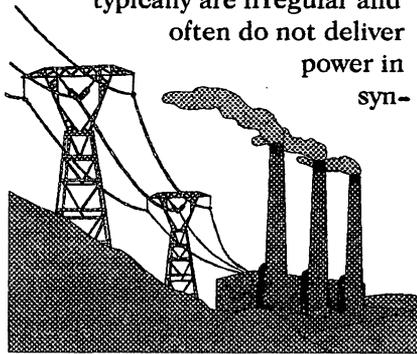
## GRID POWER

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

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

## ALTERNATIVE HOME POWER

Rapid technological advances over the past two decades have made alternative methods of power generation economical and practical. This leads to distributed power, where each consumer generates power locally at the point of use. Almost all such systems today use storage batteries to accumulate power from such sources as solar (photovoltaic) panels, wind generators, small hydro plants or even human muscle power driving a bicycle generator. These sources typically are irregular and often do not deliver power in syn-



chronism with consumption, hence it must be held in batteries for use when needed. Alternative power, unlike the grid system, thus depends on energy storage. This stored electrical energy may be delivered directly as low voltage direct current, or it may support an inverter which delivers alternating current to conventional house wiring.

Distributed power generation does not enjoy economy of scale, hence the cost per kilowatt hour is much higher than in a grid system. This encourages the use of

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

## SMALL GENERATORS

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

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

#### ECONOMIC FACTORS

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

expensive indeed. This, in fact, is a major driving force for the installation of alternative energy systems. A photovoltaic system furnishing the power needs for a typical efficient small home can be installed for \$10,000 to \$15,000. If such a home is more than ¼ mile from the nearest grid connection, alternative power becomes an attractive option. The amortization cost is the only power cost, for the sun does not send monthly bills!

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

Alternative power systems, on the other hand, generate pollution-free power. The only significant indirect costs come from manufacture and recycling of component parts, such as photovoltaic panels and, especially, batteries. A higher

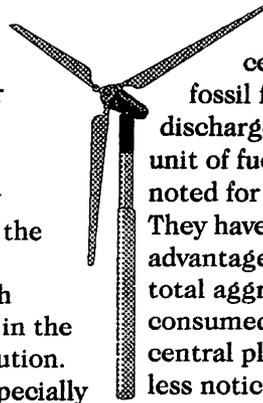
cost to the individual consumer is the trade-off for minimum impact on society at large.

Small generator systems present a mixed picture. Larger amounts of local power can be generated at lower cost per kwh than with alternative energy systems, but the indirect costs to society are the largest of all. Small internal combustion

engines are less efficient than huge central plants burning fossil fuels, hence they discharge more pollution per unit of fuel burned and are noted for their noise pollution. They have, however, the advantage of being small in total aggregate of fuel consumed compared with large central plants. They also have less noticeable impact because they disperse hydrocarbon pollution sources instead of concentrating it all at a single site.

#### CONCLUSIONS

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



## Museum news

BY LOY GREEN

The mid winter museum board meeting approved a number of progressive items. The first is funding for 2 caretakers for the 1997 season (Memorial Day to Labor Day). There will be a caretaker present at the museum every day from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

(subject to change) 7 days a week. The marketing of photos and other items will be enhanced greatly. I expect donations to increase as well.

Also approved is the acquisition of Ron Simpson's diorama of the Jumbo Mine and tram, along with extensive documents and reports of the Kennecott Mine, plus numerous photos of the railroad and trains. The Alaska Railroad has

made available to the museum 1 box car and 1 caboose. These can house the diorama and new records. At present, I am exhausting every means I am able to contact to arrange to get the cars transported into McCarthy. May I request your suggestions, information, or assistance on this project? For the present I can be contacted at 554-4488.

## New ferry to be named "Kennicott"

*When the Alaska Marine Highway System needed a name for a new ferry, they turned to some of the state's top talent—its elementary school students! Several state agencies jointly sponsored an essay contest open to all Alaskan 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students. The best essay from each school was selected and sent to the district where the district winner was chosen. The top ten were sent to Juneau where Lt. Governor Fran Ulmer, Senate President Drue Pearce and Speaker of the House Gail Phillips made the final selections.*

*On January 13<sup>th</sup> at 7 a.m., as Leah Jarvis was getting ready for school, she received a phone call from Lt. Governor Fran Ulmer, telling her that she was the top winner of the contest. Leah's essay will be posted on-board the "Kennicott." She and her parents will also receive a 6 day ferry pass.*

*Speaking of parents, Leah's father is Jon Jarvis, Superintendent of Wrangell-St. Elias National Park. According to Jon, Leah was very surprised and humbled by the award and all of the attention that goes with it. Prior awards that Leah has won include her essay on racism written in the third grade in Idaho which won a state contest, as well as her design for the Idaho Fish and Game T-shirt contest.*

*Here is the full text of Leah's winning essay. Congratulations, Leah!*

LEAH JARVIS, 6<sup>TH</sup> GRADE

I think the new Alaska ferry should be named after the Kennicott Glacier. The Kennicott Glacier is a spectacular glacier located on the southern side of the Wrangell Mountains inside Wrangell-St. Elias National Park, the largest national park in the United States.

It is a dazzlingly beautiful glacier that stretches for 27 miles and is 4 miles wide at the widest. The lines of moraine carried by the glacier cause it to look like a ribbon winding through the wilderness. The glacier flows off of 16,390 ft. Mt. Blackburn, which is one of the tallest peaks in North America. The Ahtna name for Mt. Blackburn, K'als'i Tl'aadi means "the one at cold waters." The Kennicott Glacier feeds into the Chitina River, a tributary of the Copper River, which is the largest river draining into Prince William Sound. Chitina is the Ahtna word for "copper."

In 1899, the Kennicott Glacier was named after Robert

Kennicott by Oscar Rohn the first non-Native American to describe the Kennicott area. Kennicott was a pioneer explorer and leader of the Western Union Telegraph Expedition to Alaska of 1865-1867. The goal of this expedition was to build a telegraph line stretching all the way from California through Canada and Alaska, across the Bering Strait, through Russia and into Europe. Even though the line was never completed, the information Kennicott's team collected helped Congress to decide to buy Alaska from Russia. Because Robert Kennicott is an important part of Alaska's history, I think naming the ferry for him would honor this great explorer greatly.

Lieut. Henry T. Allen led the first non-native expedition up the Copper River in 1885. While traveling, Lt. Allen met Chief Nicolai, who told him the secret of the copper deposit near the Kennicott Glacier. This led to the development of the mining town of Kennecott, the site of one of the richest copper

discoveries in the world. A railroad was built along the Copper River to transport the copper ore from the mines in Kennecott to the coast so it could be shipped out. Cordova was established as a port for the ships carrying the ore. The Kennecott mine produced an astounding 214,000,000 lbs. of copper and 9 million ounces of silver between 1904 and 1938.

One thing that I should clarify is that the correct spelling of the Kennicott Glacier is with an "i" instead of an "e". When the owners of the Kennecott mine got to Alaska, they misspelled Robert Kennicott's name and it became the common spelling of the name of the town and the mine.

The Copper River railway offered an all American route to the Alaskan interior, a route that was free of Canadian taxes. The railway extended for 196 miles, took 4 years to construct, and cost \$23,000,000 to build. In 1938, the mine shut down and the railway was closed due to lack of copper ore.

Today tourists can drive to Kennecott to see the old mining town and the Kennicott Glacier. I've been there and it is really neat to see the old mining town and the mine itself. You can walk among the crumbling buildings, and if you close your eyes and listen very hard you can almost see and hear the

workers shouting to each other and the rumbling of the huge machines. Suddenly you open your eyes and come back to reality. But one thing has hardly changed from the time when the mine was at work. The huge Kennicott Glacier still stretches in front of the whole place.

Kennicott is a great ferry

name because it is a well known name, it isn't an obscure glacier that tourists can't see and have never heard of, it drains into Prince William Sound, it is adjacent to a mine that is a big part of Alaska history, it is beautiful, and it was named for a famous Alaska explorer.

**NPS news** (cont. from page 7) through Labor Day with an interpretive ranger. This person will also be roving in both McCarthy and Kennicott on a daily basis. We do not perceive this to be a replacement for, or competition with, the local Chamber of Commerce. We will not be recommending any service over another, nor will we be handing out business brochures.

Our primary interest will be in providing information on the federal and possibly the state lands in the area.

We will be putting out a job

announcement in the next few weeks. This will be a "local hire" register—in other words, only local residents are eligible to apply. This will be a multi-job register which will also be available for interpretation jobs in Copper Center and Chitina. We will announce it on the radio when the announcement is out. Interested individuals will be able to apply by calling or stopping in at our headquarters in Copper Center. We feel like there are some good candidates in the area who could provide excellent information to the

visitors.

The Root Glacier trail and area will continue to have the food storage requirements that were instituted last summer. We feel that this is an area that will always have bear/human problems and so would like to start the year right and not have the bears get into the habit of raiding packs and tents like they did last summer. We will have the area signed and will be advising visitors of this requirement at every opportunity.

## Satan(s) may be converted to help McCarthy residents

BY RICK KENYON

One of the problems McCarthy's "e-mailers" have had to contend with is poor telephone connections to the Internet. It is possible that Russian SS-18 ballistic missiles (nicknamed "Satan" by NATO experts because of the destructive power of the 10 nuclear warheads each could deliver) will be converted into launch vehicles for an "Internet in the sky" network of satellites

that will allow us bush dwellers high speed access to the Internet.

According to an article in the Wall Street Journal, Microsoft's Bill Gates and cellular phone pioneer Craig McCaw have teamed up and are talking with officials of Russia and the Ukraine about using the missiles to launch at least some of the 840 low-orbit satellites

planned for the project. The joint venture company, Teledesic Corp., hopes to launch its first satellites by 2001, and have the entire system operating by the following year. The network would offer unrestricted access to high quality voice, video and computer transmissions throughout the world, even in remote areas.

"If a man empties his purse into his head, no one can take it away from him. An investment in knowledge always pays the best interest." — Benjamin Franklin

## New telephone repeater site completed



Telephone repeater site on Sourdough Ridge. Thirty-six solar panels take up most of the south-facing wall.

BY RICK KENYON

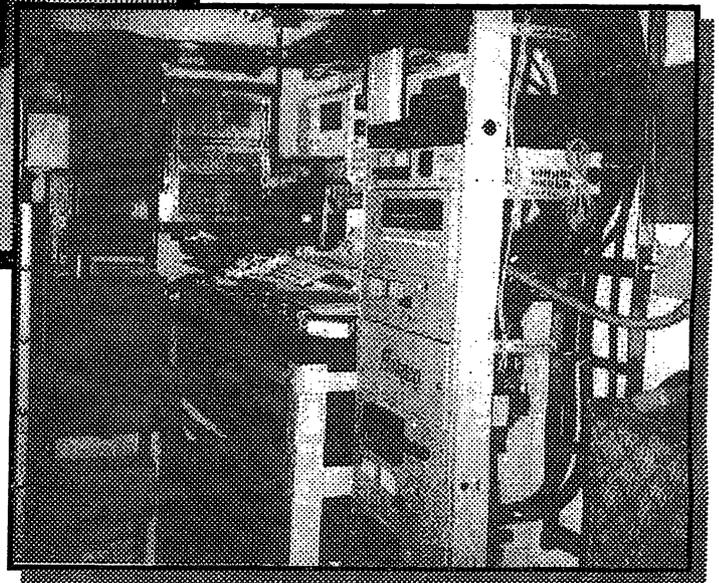
Technicians from New Horizons Telecom, Inc. and Copper Valley Telephone Cooperative have been seen riding their snowmachines or, more recently, flying in a helicopter up to the 3500' foot level on Sourdough Ridge. The object of their attentions has been the telephone repeater site located there.

New Horizons personnel had placed the buildings, propane tanks and solar panels last September, and in November they

returned with batteries, propane generators and radio gear. This most recent trip was to complete the wiring and work out the bugs. When the site was initially activated, callers only got a busy signal when attempting to dial out,



and several local phones were knocked out of service by the signal from the repeater. As we go to press on the 19<sup>th</sup> of February all of the local phones are experiencing difficulty in dialing and in receiving calls. You might call it "growing pains!"



# Chitina makes headlines

BY BONNIE KENYON

Chitina, our neighboring community, is making headlines these days. Some good and some not so good.

In the Friday, December 20, 1996, issue of the Anchorage Daily News, a headline reads: "Chitina residents want truckers to slow down."

The article describes the building discontent of some Chitina residents over the speed of logging trucks that roll through town frequently. Daily News reporter, S. J. Komarnitsky, relates an incident that occurred on the previous Tuesday between one resident and a truck driver for Copper River Forest Products Co, Inc, which has a contract with Ahtna Inc. to log land along the Copper River: "Michael Duran maintains he was shooting at a spruce hen. Truck driver Richard Solt says Duran was aiming for his logging truck."

Doug Ode of Chitina was interviewed, pointing out that many of the drivers obey the speed limit, but others roll through at much faster speeds, upsetting residents and endangering children and pets. A letter written by resident Darnay Franco to the Copper River Country Journal revealing her negative reaction to the truckers was partially quoted as well.

Alaska State Trooper Burke Waldron told the Daily News that he did not know if Duran shot at the truck, but on Tuesday Duran was charged with assault, reckless endangerment and misconduct involving a weapon. Duran

posted bond the next day and was released.

Although Rose Mary Ivey, owner of Chitina Fuel and Grocery, was not quoted in Komarnitsky's article, she did have the following to say to WSEN: "I know some had driven too fast, like locals do—but they certainly are slow now."

If you were planning a trip to Chitina this winter and expecting to stop for a burger and fries at the Chitina Saloon, you won't find either in their usual place. Another headline in the Thursday, January 2, 1997, issue of the Anchorage Daily Times featured the loss of the town's only bar to a fire which occurred the previous Monday night.

Owners Rita Hatch and her son, Chris, of Chitina have had more than their share of loss due to fire. Although the article stated that this fire was "the fourth fire in a decade to hit the bar," and that "the bar had burned three times in the same location," WSEN was told by a local resident that the fire of the 29th was the fourth fire for the Hatch family - 3 in the one location. But, it was the Liquor store itself that burned when Hatches owned it. It was rebuilt and sold. The 3 fires in one location were in 15 years, not a decade, as quoted in the above article.

On the brighter side, Chitina Fuel and Grocery and its owner, Rose Mary Ivey, received quite an honor by Washington Post Staff Writer, Bill O'Brian in his March 24, 1996, article in the Post's Sunday edition. O'Brian includes himself as one of many who has "wanted to come to

Alaska all their life: to see nature in the pristine and in the extreme." He, his wife and 13-year-old son finally made their trek north during the summer of '95. His article covers the high points of their trip, and is titled, *ALASKA by THE LOOK Getting to the Heart of the Last Frontier.*

O'Brian handed out what he calls his unofficial, highly subjective "Best of Central Alaska" awards and awarded Chitina Fuel and Grocery as the Best Gas Station during his 2,112 mile trip. To quote O'Brian: For reasons that still aren't clear to me, one Sunday evening we ended up more than 30 miles from the main highway with very little gasoline. We were on a remote road with consecutive billboards urging the United States to get out of the United Nations and inviting passersby to join the John Birch Society. Our only hope was that the gas station in nearby Chitina (population 49) was open. It was. The attendant was an exceedingly pleasant woman who didn't mention a thing about John Birch or the U.N., and we fell in love with the settlement. We had dinner at the It'll Do Cafe, which did do fine. However, it was in Chitina, with such manifestations of a strong anti-government sentiment in mind, that we decided for the rest of the trip to tell Alaskans who asked that we were from "Virginia" rather than Washington, D. C."

Although O'Brian may have mistaken anti-government sentiment for patriotism, he made no mistake on his view of Chitina as a settlement visitors fall in love with.

# Bertha Charlotte Smith 1908-1997

Alaska pioneer Bertha Smith died peacefully on February 14, 1997, at the Mary Conrad Center in Anchorage. Family members were with her when she passed on following a brief illness. Bertha Charlotte Oglesby was born in the farm country of York County, Nebraska on December 6, 1908. She was the second oldest of 6 children born to Adilla and Glenn Oglesby. After graduation from high school she worked ten years for the Lincoln Telephone and Telegraph Co. In 1936 she was assistant chief operator for the company when she met Merle K. Smith, a pilot for the Kansas based Inman Brothers Flying Circus, during a barnstorming visit to Nebraska. Soon after they met, Merle accepted employment as a pilot in Cordova, Alaska. In April 1938 Bertha traveled by train and steamship to Cordova. She married Merle hours after getting off of the ship on April 28.

Shortly after, the two made their home in McCarthy, Alaska, near the Kennecott Copper Mines, where both were employed by Cordova Air Service. From 1942 to 1944 the

couple lived in Anchorage where Merle flew for war contractor Morrison-Knudsen Co. In 1944 the couple returned to Cordova

both semi-retired in 1968 after merging their airline with Alaska Airlines. Bertha lived her entire life for her family.



when they purchased Cordova Air Service.

By 1944 Merle had become a legendary bush pilot with the nickname "Mudhole Smith." Later the couple expanded their flying service into an airline, Cordova Airlines, with extensive routes in eastern Alaska. They

After Merle's death in 1981 she continued to focus on her family and her historic home in Cordova. A few years ago, her close friend and Cordova mayor Margy Johnson proclaimed her as one of the "grande dames of Alaska." She was preceded in death by her mother and father, husband Merle and brother Rolland Oglesby. Survivors include her sisters Lucile Foote and Margaret Stevens; her brothers JC Oglesby and Lloyd Oglesby; brother and sister-in-laws, Paul Smith and Helda Richardson; her sons Kenneth and Wayne Smith, daughters-in-law Donna and Diann Smith; grandchildren Pam Okeson, Weston Smith, Skyler Smith and Patricia Smith; Pam's husband

Phil Okeson and great granddaughter Alexandra Marie Okeson. She will be buried in the spring alongside Merle at the Cordova cemetery. A memorial service was held at the Cordova Baptist Church on March 1, at 3:00 P.M.

---

"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14:2, 3

"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." John 11:25, 26

---

# Good news from the Wrangells

BY BONNIE KENYON

*Editor's note: In last issue I told our readers about receiving a letter from a subscriber (Jeanne Moore Elliott of Knoxville, TN., to be exact) who asked that I write my story. Jeanne's first question was: how did a young lady from Florida find her way to McCarthy, Alaska? This article is the first of several in my attempt to answer Jeanne's questions.*

## Part 1 "Florida girl finds her way to Alaska"

Alaska! What do many 28 year old females from the sunshine state think of when they hear that word? Polar bears behind every tree and snow and ice year round, I imagine. I was no exception.

Recently I discovered a diary that I used while on our move north. In the front of the book I found the following entry which might help describe what was going through my mind prior to leaving Florida in April 1976.

December 14, 1975. "Being my first entry it's hard to know where to begin. So many people have asked the question, 'Why Alaska?' Actually, Alaska has been a topic discussed by us for sometime, however, it has always been with 'getting away from it all' or with just plain jest! Alaska was mostly a pipe dream or a big joke!"

In 1975 Rick, our young son Rick Jr., and I were quite content in our lifestyle. We owned two businesses, were youth group leaders in a local church in Sarasota, Florida, had a nice, comfortable home, were not too far from our family and felt fulfilled in what we were doing. However, during the

summer Rick approached me with a strange request. He said he sensed the Lord was calling us to make a move to Alaska. My first reaction was, "I'd have to hear an audible voice from God before I'd move to Alaska!" It wasn't long before God took me up on the challenge.

Perhaps I should insert here the following background to better help you understand where Rick and I were coming from at this time in our lives. Both Rick and I were raised in Christian homes and we feel so wealthy to have this heritage. When we each got out on our own and in the beginning of our marriage in 1967, we strayed from what we knew was the truth. Our lives and home suffered much. In 1974, however, we returned to the God of our fathers, so to speak, and He became the most important Person in our lives—individually and in our home. We had made a decision to conform the rest of our lives to His will, wherever that would take us.

Shortly after Rick's startling request, a girlfriend of mine was having supper with us. During the meal a strong urge to turn on the television came over me. As hard as I tried to shake the idea, it only became stronger. It wasn't our custom to have the TV on during mealtime. I finally got up from the table, telling Rick and our guest that I "just had to turn the TV on NOW."

As I knelt down and turned the knob to the on position, only inches from the screen, the faces of two men loomed into view. One I knew and the other I didn't. The familiar face was of Rev. Oral Roberts, who I greatly

respected as a man of God and whose ministry I had followed ever since I was a young girl. The strange face was of Lowell Thomas, Jr. who I later learned was Lt. governor of Alaska at the time. The program was being filmed in Alaska.

Thomas pointed directly at the camera (and me!) and said, "If you want to be close to God, come to Alaska." I nearly fainted. Of course Rick and my friend nearly doubled over with laughter when they saw my reaction. Needless to say, I wasn't laughing! It took me awhile to totally place my will in the Hand of the One Who knew me best but once I did I knew I was in for the time of my life! I don't know how you feel about signs from Heaven, but in my heart I knew God had a new direction for my family and I and that road led north. As Alaska's motto says: North to the Future. (to be continued)

**McCarthy-Kennicott Community Church says thank you!**

Our thanks go out to Pastor Charles Barineau and New Hope Worship Assembly of Donalsonville, Ga. for their help in the purchase of two propane heaters for the church building. Rick Kenyon and John Adams successfully installed them in time for a community get-together. The stoves got quite a work-out during the few days prior to the event. Temperatures had dropped to -31 and Rick and John were more than thankful for the heat while they finished installing the ceiling lights and fans.

(Continued on page 29)

# OUR TOWN

March 1922 April

Reprinted from the  
McCarthy Weekly News,  
March and April 1922  
issues.

Word has been received that work on the river, in the shape of drilling tests for the site of the Nizina bridge, will be started this month. Gus Johnson of the Alaska Road Commission will be in charge of the work. He is leaving Seattle, where he has been spending a vacation, on the next boat and will put a crew to work at once.

Jack Erickson, who is at present chef at the Kennecott private mess, will be in charge of the culinary department of the camp at the river.

**Where Quality and Service Are First  
The Alaska House  
Cafe and Well  
Furnished Rooms  
Under New  
Management  
PROPRIETORS  
Con Miller — Sig Wold**

March 4

## A.R.C. CREW ARRIVES

The Alaska Road Commission crew arrived on today's train to proceed to the Nizina River, where, under Engineer Lukins the work of making the drilling tests will begin.

Of the crew, Foreman Gus Johnson has just returned from a fine trip to the States. Jack Bishop and Ed Young have also had a trip to the States. John Neyes, Ben Cleary, Ralph Rhoades, Jim McConnell and others are here.

## ABOUT TRAVELERS AND TRAILS

Carl F. Whitham,

mining operator of Chisana, is in town to secure his season's outfit: he arrived on Thursday evening by dog team. Zeke Mullet, accompanied him to the homestead, where he is preparing to relay freight.

The landing of freight into Chisana at this time is no easy task—by horses and bob sleds to the glacier and from there on to Chisana by dog team, consumes a considerable amount of time and effort, especially as what staking there is on the trail, has been done between storms by those who are using it.

Notwithstanding the fact that we are continually assured by the authorities that work will be done on this trail, so far this winter it has drawn a blank.

Frank Farnan, who has been at Kennecott for the winter, is in town getting an outfit ready for a season's prospecting across the Chitina River. He will build a boat and make a start as soon as the water runs.

Warren Nelson, who is spending the winter prospecting his property on Copper Creek, is a visitor to town this week. In a new shaft he has sunk 23 feet and there is every indication that he is close to bed rock.

March 11

## MINING DEALS

Chitina, Special to News.

Pete Monahan has refused fifteen thousand dollars for a half interest in the Monahan and Nelson property on Valdez creek. Later reports state that he has sold out to New York

capital. If this is true there will be immense workings.

## CHITINA NEWS

Mrs. Griffith of Gulkana arrived in town Tuesday and has taken a short trip to Strelina. Mrs. Griffith reports a good fur business at Gulkana.

Fred Nichols and his family are returning from the States this Spring. He has the government wood contract for Signal corp stations and will also run a stage line from Chitina to Fairbanks and handle Totem Pole tourist travel.

Charlie Meiers of Meiers Roadhouse who has just arrived from the States with his bride, are spending a short time in Chitina before leaving for the trail.

At an open house gathering of the Chitina Igloo of Pioneers on Wednesday evening, twelve couples were present. Refreshments were served after the dance.

Quite a contingent of drummers are delayed here owing to a tie up on the South end.

Connection with Cordova is expected daily.

In the estate of John Underwood, deceased, Mrs. Tjosevig filed her final accounting on the 15th. This has been postponed till the 27th at the request of the widow's attorney, in order for any person to file objection as to why accounts should not be approved.

## SERIOUS FIRES AT COPPER CENTER

Chitina, March 16th. Special to the News.

A serious fire occurred

at Copper Center last night when the roadhouse farm and store houses owned by John McCrary were totally destroyed.

The fire was caused by creosote in the stove pipe, and had reached a great height before awakening Murdoch MacLean who was the only occupant of the house and escaped by jumping from the second story in his underwear. He was wakened by the noise of cartridges exploding.

The loss is estimated at forty thousand dollars, for in addition to buildings, stock of provisions and furs and twenty quarters of beef which had been raised on the place, were destroyed.

Mr. McCrary, who has the mail contract between Chitina and Gulkana, was absent on a mail trip. A small insurance was carried.

Although he is very much upset at this tremendous loss, it is Mr. McCrary's intention to rebuild as soon as possible.

McCrary's place was one of the finest on the Fairbanks trail, and the fruit of nearly twenty years of labor on the part of the family. Everybody in the Copper River Valley is sympathizing with them.

## AT THE RADIO STATION

On Tuesday last, during a high wind, a fire broke out at the U. S. Radio Station at mile 14 resulting in the destruction of several residences and other buildings. Details are not available, but it is believed many dollars worth of damage was done.

Sparks from a stove pipe at the Dwyer Inn, set fire to the roof during a wind storm on Monday evening, many hands promptly extinguished it, but not before several hundred dollars worth of damage was done.

March 18

#### LATEST TRAIN NEWS

We are indebted to local agent Sommer for the following:

Train will probably leave Cordova tomorrow, bringing freight and mail, arriving in McCarthy Monday. The Branch local will pull the main line local to Teikel, from there the rotary will take it to Cordova tomorrow.

Mrs. Martin Radavon, who with her husband has been prospecting for placer on Dan Creek for the past two years with indifferent results, has found a pay streak running through one of their claims which will net them a handsome profit as soon as they are able to clean up, according to reports received from musers from that direction.

March 25

Al Doze, one of our pioneer residents and ranchers, who has been spending several months in Seattle returned here on Tuesday's train and surprised his friends by bringing back a bride, having married Miss Richardson of Seattle, a very excellent young lady, who will be a welcome acquisition to McCarthy. The wedding took place in Seattle on March 15th, in the presence of a few relatives and friends.

The happy couple are receiving the congratulations and good wishes of the community in which the News heartily joins.

#### FREIGHTERS LEAVE

Dan Campbell and Bill Berry left Thursday with six tons of freight consigned to Chisana. Operators, E. Saari, of Kennecott will accompany them for a vacation and for the novelty of the experience. If he can follow Berry he will sure get the experience.

#### LATEST TRAIL NEWS

Jack O'Hara and Ed Briggen left early this week for Chisana to spend the summer. G. C. Grin hauled their supplies to the foot of the Nizina Glacier and from there the boys will relay by dog teams.

Realizing that the glaciers & mountain passes in the Spring time present a sight that is rarely reproduced by camera, Jack Schultz and Steve Kansky have left for the Rohn glacier with a photographic apparatus and expect to secure some beautiful negatives.

Our Pot Holes throwing water hundreds of feet into the air with a background of snow capped mountains, is a picture that should appeal to the average tourist that comes to Alaska.

It is true that we lack the Totem Pole but that is easily remedied by a few of us getting together and putting up half a dozen in unfrequented places & by co-operating with other Alaskan Commercial Clubs it is bound to bring a goodly number to this beautiful but practically unknown spot—from a tourist point of view.

April 1

A sale of the one-half interest in the seven placer claims on Rex Creek, belonging to Oscar Hanson, deceased, were sold to James McGavock, of

Kennecott, by Peter Erichson, Administrator, at a sale held last Wednesday under order of the Probate Court. The price paid was \$450.00.

April 8

John Amber, who is one of McCarthy's earliest business men, and still an extensive property owner here, returned this week after an absence of three years. He will spend the summer here and will have all his buildings put in thorough order and a new roof on the Laundry building, as he confidently expects such an improvement in conditions in our city within a short time, as to cause a great demand for real estate.

On Monday evening, April 10th, a new little resident arrived for McCarthy, in the shape of a seven pound daughter, Mary Therese for the J. B. O'Neill's. Who are receiving every one's congratulations. Big sister Deanie is specially delighted. Mother and baby are reported very well at Kennecott hospital.

#### ONE BRIGHT SPOT

The fact that McCarthy is not an incorporated town, although often regretted by the residents, is a matter of thanksgiving to the property owner, who does not have to pay taxes during the dull times. Many owners of real estate in incorporated town, have found the payment of the taxes beyond their means and had to surrender properties.

April 15

#### ARBUCKLE FILMS BARRED

New York, April 20th. Will H. Hays, high potentate of the Motion Picture Producers' Association, has today cancelled the showing all Arbuckle Films.

This action, while a profound shock to the comedian and his promoters, will meet with the approval of all who uphold decency and a better moral atmosphere in the movies.

Sig Wold, of the Alaska House made a flying trip to Cordova this week, but was glad to return to the place with the perfect climate.

The postponed sale of the lode mining interests of the Oscar Hansen estate took place last week, when the 1/4 interest in the "Big Four" and the 1/3 interest in the "Idaho" claims 1,2,& 3 were disposed of to Jas. McGavock of Kennecott, he being the only bidder for \$100.

April 22

The Chisana returns have just arrived: Republicans, Galen 11 Sutherland 1. Elsner 2 Wade 3 Foster 6 Murray 7 Selby 7 Staster 5. Democrats none.

#### CHITINA NEWS

Chitina, April 26th. (Special to the News.) The Savoy restaurant, formerly owned by Louis Bregonzy, has been purchased by Charles Davis and wife, who will continue to operate as formerly. Mr. and Mrs. Bregonzy will leave in a few days for Cordova.

#### COURT NEWS

Through her Attorney, Mr. Medley, Mrs. Nels Tjosevig has taken an appeal to the District Court from the decision of the Probate Judge, McCarthy Precinct, awarding the property to the widow and the disallowance of the administratrix's fees and expenses in the estate John Underwood, deceased.

April 29

## Winter Activities at the 1997 Valdez Snowman Festival

**VALDEZ**— The countdown continues for the 1997 Valdez Snowman Festival. The Festival events are scheduled over two weekends in March, including March 7, 8, and 9 and March 14, 15, and 16, 1997. The Festival is a community-wide celebration in honor of the city's record-breaking winter snowfall accumulations.

This year's events include a community torchlight parade, community bonfire, wild and wacky outdoor golf, the Rosemary's Splash-in, dog sled rides, ice bowling, horseshoes, international food fair, and children's carnival. The Valdez Arts

Council will host a live performance by the Homer comedic improvisational group, Fresh Produce, on Saturday, March 15, 1997.

One of the many highlights of the two week festivities will include a mens' basketball tournament featuring local and out-of-town teams. Local hotels are offering special rates for accommodations ranging from \$50 to \$79 per night based on double occupancy.

For more information you can phone the Valdez Chamber of Commerce at (907) 835-2330.

## Legislature Now On-Line at [www.akrepublicans.org](http://www.akrepublicans.org)

### Legislative Leaders Announce New Majority Web Site

**JUNEAU** — Senate and House Majority leaders announced the creation of an internet web site on January 24, 1997.

Senate President Mike Miller and House Speaker Gail Phillips explained the Majority Web site's main purpose is to disseminate information about legislative news and events 24 hours a day. Web surfers will find current press releases, legislation text and much of the information traditionally included in bill packets, such as sponsor statements and fact sheets.

In addition, each majority member has a home page where personal legislation, photos, biographies, articles, and position papers are posted.

"Now, bad weather and long distances will not hinder Alaskans from getting up-to-date information about legislative action in Juneau," said Senator Mike Miller. "Our vast state, compared to most in the lower 48, stands to benefit greatly from the Internet. It will bring Alaskans closer together."

"By making information quickly available on the Internet, we hope more Alaskans will stay involved with state government," said Representative Gail Phillips. "Moving into the 21st century means providing our constituents with accurate information that will help them make good business and personal decisions."

In the near future free subscriptions to an e-mail news service will be available. Users can subscribe through the website to receive legislative updates. The updates will be automatically sent to each subscribers' e-mail

address as news occurs.

You can reach the new Senate and House web site at <http://www.akrepublicans.org>

"The only place where money comes before success is in the dictionary." — Keith Herrmann

## Wrangell Mountain Air

*"From the world to the wilderness"*

- Glacier Flightseeing
- Fly-in Wilderness Hiking
- Daily Service from Chitina
- Direct Service from  
Anchorage  
Glennallen  
Valdez
- Van Service to Kennicott

If you're planning a trip to the Wrangell-St. Elias Park & Preserve, give us a call.

**1-800-478-1160**

**Wrangell Mountain Air  
McCarthy, PO Box MXY  
Glennallen, AK 99588**

# Alaska Ascents— World class mountaineers tell their story

EDITED BY BILL SHERWONIT (ALASKA NORTHWEST BOOKS, 1996, \$16.95)

BY RICK KENYON

The St. Elias, Wrangell and Chugach mountain ranges—these are of what the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve are made. In Alaska Ascents, outdoor writer Bill Sherwonit has gathered first-hand accounts of renowned climbers who have conquered many of the mountains in Alaska, including those of Wrangell-St. Elias.

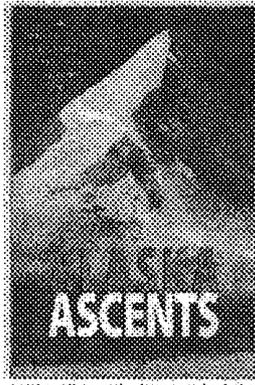
The collection is organized in sections covering the four major ranges and the stories

within are chronological. There are accounts dating back to 1897, the first ascent of Mount St. Elias by Filippo de Filippi, and the first ascents of Mount McKinley, including the first winter ascent. Bradford Washborn, known for his explorations on Mount McKinley, is included in this collection with his story of the first ascent of Mount St. Agnes (now known as Mount Marcus Baker)

in 1939.

Probably my favorite is the story by Dora Keen of her 1912 ascent of Mount Blackburn. The only man to accompany her to

the top was George Handy, a McCarthy resident who she later married. Her account starts like this: *"I haven't lost anything at the top of Mt. Blackburn," remarked John Bloomquist, a big Fin. We were sitting in his cabin, 1,500 feet above sea level, at the foot of the great Kennicott Glacier. At the head of it rose Mt. Blackburn. It was thirty-five miles away, but its glistening summit was plainly visible from above the Copper River Railway which passed the port of Cordova, 192 miles away, to make a second attempt to climb this great mass of snow and ice, and Bloomquist was assuring me that, for him at least, it "ain't going to be no pleasure trip."*



## The Alaska Almanac

FACTS ABOUT ALASKA (ALASKA NORTHWEST BOOKS, 1997, \$11.95)

BY BONNIE KENYON

What do the following words have in common: akutak, conk, qiviut, seiche, bunny boots and williwaws? They all appear and are explained within the 240 pages of The Alaska Almanac.

Since this newly revised and updated edition arrived the other day, I haven't had it far from my reach. It seems to follow me from the coffee table to my desk then back again. I've used it at least a half dozen times while researching information for articles in this issue of Wrangell St. Elias News alone.

Whether you want to know the population of Chitina (64), Alaska's state motto (North to the Future), or how many

glaciers there are in Alaska (100,000), this handy softbound book includes a wide variety of statistics, maps, facts and just plain fun facts about our vast and diverse 49th state.

More than 204 subjects are covered in the 20th edition of The Alaska Almanac. It is published by Alaska Northwest Books and sells for only \$11.95. Take my word; it's a must for every Alaskan household and office. Whether you live in Alaska or

are planning a visit, I highly recommend adding this easy-to-read reference book to your library. A thought just

occurred to me...maybe I should purchase one for my mom so she can interpret my Alaska jargon. Although a sudden attack of the "williwaws" might be life-threatening, it certainly

isn't what it sounds like—a case of fearful depression!

(According to the almanac, the williwaws are "sudden gusts of wind that can reach 113 miles per hour after the wind 'builds up' on one side of a mountain and suddenly spills over into what may appear to be a relatively

protected area.") Hmm ... I wonder if it was a williwaw that got the McCarthy mail shack!



# How to find your gold rush ancestors

BY LAEL MORGAN

ALASKA TOURISM MARKETING COUNCIL

At the turn of the last century, gold rushes lured more than 200,000 stampedeers to the Far North, and descendants still try to track them. Some are professional genealogists, but increasing numbers are driven by curiosity, the spirit of adventure, a quest for lost kin, and/or the hope that a lucrative gold claim still exists in the family name. Typical is a letter received by the Elmer E. Rasmuson Library, University of Alaska, Fairbanks:

"My grandfather, Charles Homer Campbell, died in Alaska under suspicious circumstances while mining gold at the approximate age of 32-35 . . . Please send me any information you may possibly have regarding his death and also some general information about the history and location of different gold mines in Alaska."

Surprisingly, even though most early day stampedeers were highly transient, inquiries like this one often produce quite a bit of solid information.

"Some have said it is impossible to find anything about one's Alaska relatives because of the scarcity of records and documents," notes David Hales, head of Reader Services for the library. "It is true genealogy records of the last frontier are not as prevalent as those of Pennsylvania and Massachusetts. Nevertheless, there are some very interesting sources, and we keep finding new ones. It's just amazing!"

Most amazing is an electronic database called "Ancestors," developed in 1992 by Hales, professional genealogist Connie Bradbury

and Nancy Lesh of the University of Alaska Anchorage. It contains references to early obituaries, records of pioneer organizations, articles from regional newspapers and magazines, mining reports, early gazetteers and business directories. Currently it is available only through the Alaska and Polar Regions Department at the Rasmuson Library (P.O. Box 756800, Fairbanks, Alaska 99775-6800, Tel. 907-474-7261), but by next fall it will be on the Internet with references to some 130,000 pioneers.

Also useful will be a resource guide titled, "Sources on Alaskan and Yukon Gold Rushes and Gold Rush Communities," to be published this spring by the Alaska Historical Society and Alaska's Office of History and Archaeology through an Alaska Humanities Forum grant. Jo Antonson, the state's historian, hopes to have a list of more than 100,000 names by 1997. Meanwhile, she is inviting families to send information to her office in Anchorage.

Those who do not wish to travel north to "do the digging" themselves, often hire a researcher. Sources include archives at the University of Alaska Fairbanks (\$25 an hour), the genealogical societies of Fairbanks (\$5 an hour), Anchorage, Kenai, Seward, Ketchikan; Connie Bradbury, long the only member of the Association of Profession Genealogists listed for Alaska (\$10 an hour); and Pauline Utter, president of InformAlaska, an Anchorage

research firm.

But increasingly, families prefer to undertake their own investigations because it's a great adventure and gives them a vested interest in touring the Far North.

According to librarian Hales, many travel with Elderhostel, but the number of researchers booking independently also is on the rise. Among them are Alaska Natives, many relatively young, who were moved from their indigenous homes as children and yearn to discover their roots.

Researchers planning to follow the gold rush trail in person will find pre-planning useful. The first step, of course, is to interview older relatives for family history, check out family Bibles for records and note the spelling of names.

One of the best places to begin a reference search, librarian Hales suggests, is early New York Times indexes because that paper covered Far North stampedeers with unusual thoroughness. Or, if you have names, approximate dates or even a few broad hunches, you might write vital statistics agencies in Alaska or Yukon Territory for records of births, deaths and marriages. (Bureau of Vital Statistics, P. O. Box 110673, Juneau, Alaska 99811-0675, Tel. 907-465-3392; or Vital Statistics, Box 2703, Whitehorse, Yukon Territory, Y1A 2C6, Tel. 403-667-5207).

Alaska's Vital Statistics office also maintains a collection of Alaska church records. Denominations that

were unusually active in the region at the turn-of-the-century were Russian Orthodox, Catholic, Episcopal, Quaker, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Moravian, Anglican and the Evangelical Covenant Church of America, most of which maintain impressive archives at their home offices. And, the Mormon Church in Salt Lake City, Utah, also has copies of many of its records. Native Indians, Aleuts and Eskimos should begin by contacting the Bureau of Indian Affairs Enrollment Office, P.O. Box 25520, Juneau, Alaska, 99802, Tel. 907-586-6735, or its Canadian counterpart, the Department of Indian and

Northern Affairs, Room 122, 300 Main Street, Whitehorse, Yukon Territory Y1A 2B5, Tel. 403-667-3353.

As for mining records, the State of Alaska does not have the budget to do individual searches but does maintain indices to 34 recording districts. These are available to the public, and office staff can refer inquiries to a title office if a researcher is needed.

For information, contact State Recorder Sharon Young, 3601 C Street, Suite 1180, Anchorage, Alaska 99503, Tel. 907-762-2437.

Early Canadian mining records are with the Dawson

Museum, P.O. Box 303, Dawson, Yukon Territory Y0B 1G0 Tel. 403-993-5291. Those seeking additional American information or wanting to order "Sources of Alaskan and Yukon Gold Rushes and Gold Rush Communities" should contact the Office of History and Archaeology, Alaska Department of Natural Resources, 3601 C Street, Suite 1200, Anchorage 99503, Telephone 907-762-2622.

An excellent source for additional Canadian information is the Yukon Archives, Box 2703, Whitehorse, Yukon Territory Y1A 2C6, Tel. 403-667-5321.

"Success is when you get what you want. Happiness is when you want what you get."  
— Anonymous



## COPPER VALLEY CELLULAR HAS A GIFT FOR YOU THAT KEEPS GIVING ALL YEAR LONG

### NEW LOWER RATE PLANS\*

**Quality Plan**

\$25.00/month  
\$0.25 minute  
100 free

**Leisure Time Plan**

\$40.00/month  
\$.50 peak/\$.15 off peak  
60/300 free

**Economy Plan**

\$20.00/month  
\$.50 peak/\$25 off peak  
20/120 free

### BARGAIN PRICED PHONES\*

Motorola DPC 550 flip	\$39.95	Nokia 232	\$79.95
Sony "Candy Bar"	\$39.95	Motorola Lite II	\$89.95

\*Other phone models also available. Requires activation and one year contract. \$200 penalty for early termination.

Another great deal from Copper Valley Cellular—

The Company That YOU own!

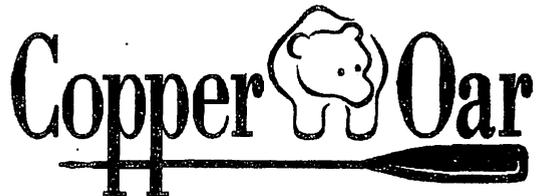
1-800-235-5414

## **Kennicott-McCarthy Wilderness Guides**

*"In the heart of the  
Wrangell Mountains"*

Chris Richards  
Box#1, Kennicott via Glennallen, Ak 99588  
(907) 554-4444

Wilderness rafting in the  
Wrangell-St. Elias National Park



PO Box MXY McCarthy  
Glennallen, AK 99588  
1-800-523-4453 or (907)554-4453

In the National Historic District

## **Kennicott**



## **Cottage**

Reservations - Information

**907-345-7961**

[www.alaska.net/~kennicott/kcc.htm](http://www.alaska.net/~kennicott/kcc.htm)  
email: [kennicott@alaska.net](mailto:kennicott@alaska.net)

## **McCarthy-Kennicott Tours & Transportation**



**BACKCOUNTRY CONNECTION**

*Scheduled Van Service & Day Trips*

P.O. Box 243 Glennallen, Ak 99588  
Phone or FAX (907) 822-5292

## **ST. ELIAS ALPINE GUIDES**



Full range of guided trips available  
Phone (907) 277-6867

*Bob Jacobs, Owner, Certified Alpine Guide*

## **Kenny Lake Mercantile**

RV Park—Water & Sewer Dump for Campers—Hotel

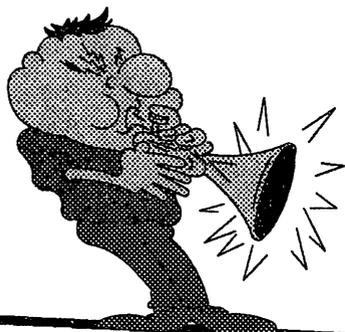
*Laundry and Showers*

*Patty Ryan's "Silver Fox Cafe"*

Propane-Hardware-Gas-Grocery-Auto Parts-Feed

Phone 822-9863 Mile 7.5 Edgerton Hwy. May 31-Sept 30 Hours 9-9 7 days a week

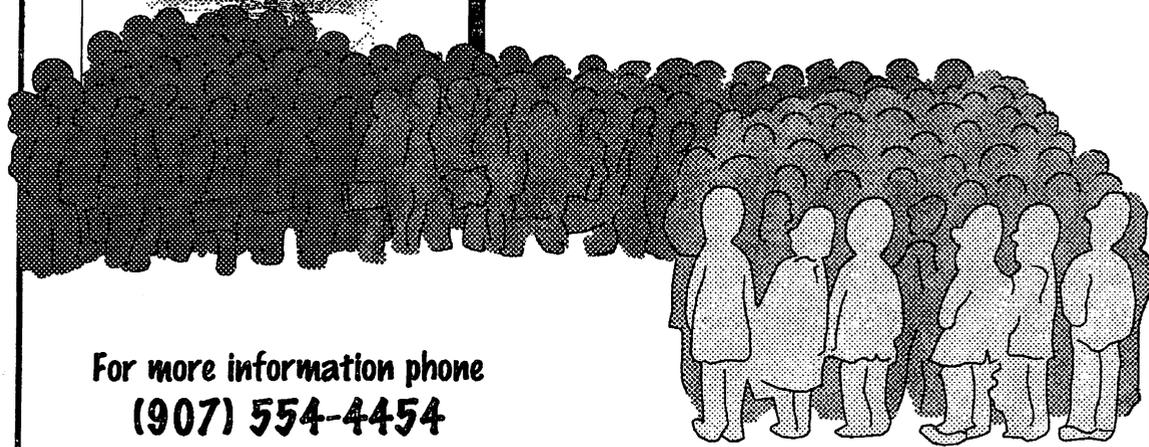
**IF YOU DON'T TOOT YOUR OWN HORN,  
NO ONE WILL TOOT IT FOR YOU!**



A  
Visitor's Guide to  
Kennicott & McCarthy  
1997



*If you have a business  
or offer a service in the  
Cordova, Valdez,  
Copper Center,  
Glennallen, Kenny Lake,  
Chitina, McCarthy or  
Kennicott area, the best platform  
to toot your horn from is  
**A Visitor's Guide  
to  
Kennicott & McCarthy  
1997***



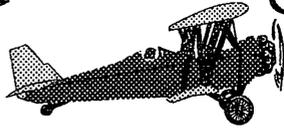
For more information phone  
**(907) 554-4454**

or write:  
WSEN

McCarthy # 42  
Box MXV  
Glennallen, AK 99588

**BIGGER AND BETTER  
FOR 1997!**

## Silk Stocking Air



**Glacier Flightseeing  
Air Taxi Charters  
Remote Drop offs**

Located in Kennicott  
#13 Silk Stocking Row

*Michael P. McCarthy*  
McCarthy #4, Box MXY  
Glennallen, Alaska 99588  
email [silkair@aol.com](mailto:silkair@aol.com)

**907-554-4469**

## Historic Kennicott Bed and Breakfast

Come experience the Wrangell St.  
Elias Park while staying in our 1918  
Kennicott Mine house. We are  
located on Silk Stocking Row in  
the Old Town of Kennicott.

Your hosts Michael P. McCarthy  
and Laura Bunnell welcome you.

**Call or write for Information**

**907-554-4469**

**Historic Kennicott Bed and Breakfast**  
McCarthy #4 Box MXY  
Glennallen, Alaska 99588  
email [kennicotbb@aol.com](mailto:kennicotbb@aol.com)

## ***Snowmachining the Wrangell Mountains!***

**The place to stay during your  
snowmachine visit to the  
McCarthy area.**



***Local trail information and assistance***

## **McCarthy Trail Rides**



John Adams  
PO Box MXY  
Glennallen, AK 99588

**(907) 554-4433**

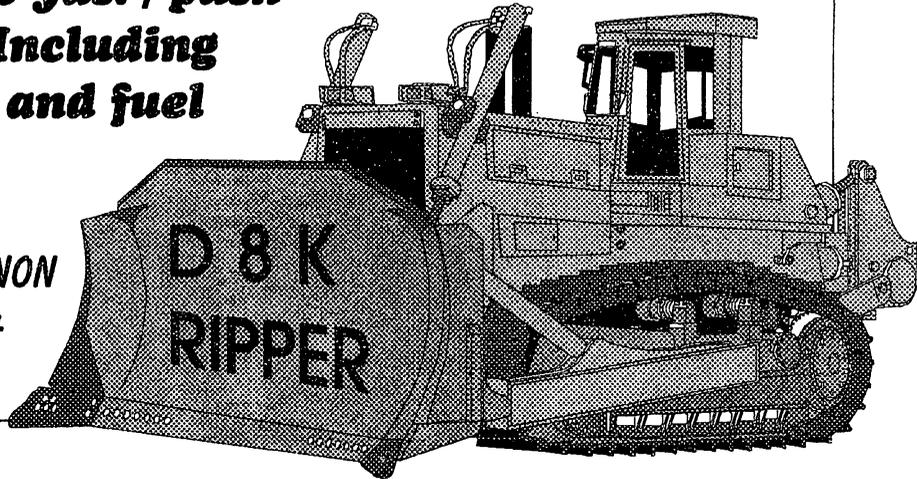
# AVAILABLE MARCH 1—APRIL 1

MCCARTHY, KENNECOTT, NIZINA AREAS

## D8K U-blade Dozer with Ripper

**Will rip frozen ground**  
**Pushes 16 yds. / push**  
**\$125 hr. Including**  
**operator and fuel**

CONTACT AL GAGNON  
(907) 554-4454



## Service Oil & Gas

### RESIDENTIAL • COMMERCIAL

- Heating oil
- Gasoline and Diesel Fuel
- AvGas and Jet Fuel
- Chevron Lube Oils and Greases
- Fuel Tanks and Accessories

*Service sometimes  
means going more than  
the extra mile.  
"We appreciate all our  
BUSH CUSTOMERS"*

For the First Name In Service, Call  
SERVICE OIL & GAS



# Chevron

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

## "Rural Tourism" seminars offered

ANCHORAGE - Alaska Village Initiatives' Rural Tourism Center is looking to coordinate Rural Tourism seminars for Alaska communities interested in learning more about tourism development and management. These custom-designed seminars take into consideration each community's infrastructure development and progress in setting up a tourism industry. All rural-based Alaska communities or individuals are encouraged to use the Center's services free of charge.

"In cooperation with other tourism organizations, such as Alaska Visitors Association (AVA), the Alaska Tourism Marketing Council (ATMC), and the Alaska Division of Tourism, we have already organized seminars in several areas, such as Nome, Bethel and Unalaska. We have found these seminars to be most helpful in allowing communities to define their roles in tourism development," said Carolyn Bettes, coordinator of the Rural Tourism Center.

Rural Tourism Seminar topics might include how to assess a community's tourism potential; the current state of rural tourism; community

development and tour planning; how to create a successful tour product; ways to work with tourism partners; tourism associations and how they work; business planning; identifying visitor needs; and, marketing.

A combination of guest speakers and local experts are typically used to lead a seminar. There is no cost for using the Rural Tourism Center's coordination services, but those interested in holding a seminar could be asked to pay for room rental, refreshments, background materials and, in some cases, travel expenses for guest speakers.

The Rural Tourism Center was created one year ago to assist individuals, companies and communities interested in developing rural tourism products and services. It already has helped more than 75 individuals determine their next step in the tourism development process and has served as an important link between economic development and the tourism industry.

Over the last year, the Center also has created a tourism development resource library, developed a network of

rural tourism contacts and completed a survey of lodges in rural Alaska. Another survey to define the different types of rural tour products is planned for the coming year.

"Interest in the potential of tourism in rural areas of the state continues to grow," said Bettes. "I encourage anyone who is considering their options in the tourism industry to contact us."

For more information on Rural Tourism Seminar coordination or other services offered by the Rural Tourism Center, call toll-free at 1-800-848-2332 or in Anchorage at (907) 274-5400 or write to 1577 "C" Street, Suite 304, Anchorage, AK 99501.

The Rural Tourism Center is a joint venture between the Alaska Division of Tourism and Alaska Village Initiatives, a non-profit membership-based company dedicated to improving the well-being of rural Alaska communities, families and individuals. The center also receives support from the U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development.



## ARECA gets new Executive Director

Eric Yould has been named the new Executive Director of the Alaska Rural Electric Cooperative Association (ARECA). ARECA is the trade association for electric and consumer-owned cooperative utilities in Alaska. It is headquartered in Anchorage.

Eric and his wife Patty are frequent visitors to the McCarthy area. They recently built a post-and-beam style cabin on their property near the Nizina River, about 9 miles southeast of McCarthy.

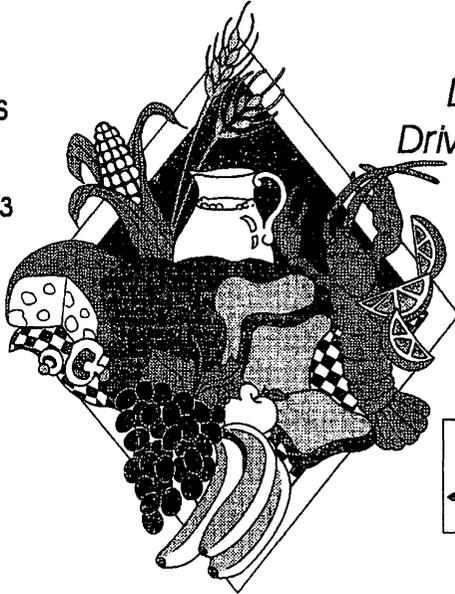
Yould replaces David Hutchens, who retired January 1, 1997, after being with ARECA for 18 years.

WSEN wishes Eric all the best in this new position.

# Copper River Cash Store

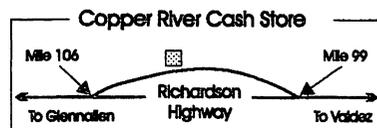
We handle BUSH ORDERS  
with SPECIAL CARE!  
PO Box E  
Copper Center, AK 99573

We take VISA  
Master Charge  
Alaska Option  
FAX 822-3443



Everyday  
LOW PRICED ITEMS:  
Drive a little & SAVE \$\$\$\$

Stop by and Check  
for the Weekly  
IN-STORE SPECIALS

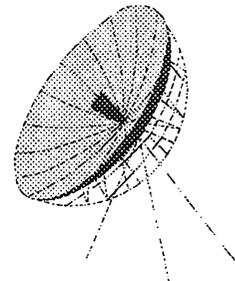


Downtown Copper Center 822-3266  
Store Hours 9 am to 7 pm, Monday - Saturday

The New

# Caribou Hotel

*Icy roads? Snowing? Getting tired?  
Stop at the Caribou Hotel!*



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

**Mile 187 Glenn Hwy 822-3302 Glennallen, AK**

# Cooking with Carly

BY CARLY KRITCHEN

I thought I'd write my column this month on one of my husband's first choices for breakfast—waffles! Although I'm not usually too enthusiastic about making much of anything early in the morning (it takes me awhile to get going!), I enjoy making waffles because of our waffle iron. We have a really great old-fashioned iron, the round cast iron type that fits the top of a stove burner, and it makes the best waffles. It might be my imagination, but they taste better than the ones out of our electric waffle iron!

*When I was about 7, my family went to Hawaii for the first time. My sister and I loved it! We stayed at a really lovely hotel right on the beach, and my sister and I rode the freight elevator down to the dining room (by ourselves, this was really the old days!) for breakfast while my parents slept in. We either had macadamia nut pancakes, or coconut waffles every day that we were there. My mom asked for the waffle recipe before we left, and it became a big family favorite. Serve them either with coconut syrup, or one of the two sauces that I list after the recipe (and don't forget to stick a little umbrella on them, too!).*

## Coconut Waffles

1 ½-2 cups flour  
 1 ½ tsp. baking powder  
 ½ tsp. salt  
 1 Tbsp. sugar  
 3 eggs, separated  
 1 ½ cups milk  
 3 Tbsp. melted butter  
 ½ cup freshly grated coconut  
 (or packaged)  
 extra coconut

Sift flour with baking powder, salt and sugar. Beat egg whites until stiff; set aside. Beat egg yolks and add with the milk to the flour mixture; stir until well blended. Stir in the butter and coconut. Fold in beaten egg whites. Bake in a medium hot to hot waffle iron. Serve sprinkled with extra coconut. Makes 4 or 5 large waffles.

## Butterscotch Sauce

2 cups brown sugar  
 ¼ cup butter  
 ½ cup evaporated milk  
 dash of salt  
 1 tsp. vanilla

In the top of a double boiler, combine the brown sugar, butter, evaporated milk, and salt. Cook over boiling water, stirring frequently, for about 15 minutes. Stir in the vanilla. Serve warm. If necessary, thin the sauce with additional milk to a good pouring consistency.

## Hot Pineapple Butter

3 Tbsp. butter  
 1 can crushed pineapple with syrup (9 oz.)  
 2 Tbsp. brown sugar  
 dash nutmeg

Melt butter in a small saucepan. Stir in pineapple and syrup, brown sugar, and nutmeg. Heat until slightly reduced. Serve warm.

*This is another old family favorite. It's a good recipe to use up bananas slightly past their prime.*

## Banana Waffles

2 cups flour  
 2 ¼ tsp. baking powder  
 1 Tbsp. sugar  
 ¾ tsp. salt  
 3 eggs

1 ½ cups milk  
 ⅓ cup shortening (melted)  
 1 cup mashed bananas

Sift flour along with baking powder, sugar, and salt. Beat eggs, add milk, and stir in sifted flour mixture, along with melted shortening and mashed bananas. Continue mixing until all lumps are gone from batter. Bake in a hot waffle iron until golden brown.

*My idea of perfection is potato pancakes served with applesauce and sour cream, and these potato waffles are almost as good. Make sure your waffle iron is well greased or the batter will stick!*

## Potato Waffles

3 lb. peeled potatoes  
 4 large eggs  
 ½ cup chopped onion  
 ½ cup salad oil  
 2 Tbsp. lemon juice  
 ⅔ cup flour  
 4 tsp. baking powder  
 1 tsp. salt  
 ½ tsp. pepper  
 ½ tsp. sugar

Finely grate potatoes. Squeeze dry. Stir eggs with onion in a large bowl until combined. Add oil, lemon juice, flour, baking powder, salt, pepper, and sugar. Stir until well combined. Then mix in potatoes until just barely blended.

Heat waffle iron to medium hot. Oil grids; fill ⅔ full with batter and spread. Cook until golden brown, or about 10 minutes. Place in a warm oven until all waffles are cooked. Serve warm with sour cream and applesauce. Makes about 5 waffles.

# A look at the weather

BY GEORGE CEBULA

December at McCarthy was the coldest month of this winter, with very little precipitation. January was a bit warmer with about average precipitation.

The average December temperature was -9.2 (-5.1 in Dec. '95 and 0.3 in Dec. '94). The high was 26 on December 18 (31 on Dec. 31, '95 and 36 on Dec. 12, '94) and the low was -45 on December 31 (-46 on Dec. 6, '95 and -38 on Dec. 2, '94). Three days had low temperatures of zero or above and three days had high temperatures in the twenties. *Silver Lake had a average temperature of -10.7 (-6.5 in Dec. '95 and 9.8 in Dec. '94). The high was 24 on December 19 (31 on Dec. 31, '95 and 42 on Dec. 5, '94) and the low was -46 on December 31 (-44 on Dec. 6, '95 and -34 on Dec. 9, '94).*

December precipitation was very light with only 0.29 inches of liquid precipitation, the same of December 1995 (1.01 in Dec. '94). All precipitation fell as snow with 4.0 inches (1.8 inches in Dec. '95 and 11.8 inches in Dec. '94). The snow depth was 7 inches at the

beginning of the month, increased to 10 inches on the 17th and ended the month at 10 inches. *By comparison Silver Lake had .45 inches of liquid precipitation (0.11 inches in Dec. '95 and 0.65 inches in Dec. '94) and 5.0 inches of snow (1.0 inches in Dec. '95 and 4.0 inches in Dec. '94). The snow depth was 4 inches on the 1st and 9 inches on the last day.*

1997 at McCarthy began on the cold side, warmed to 34 on the 13th and got cold again. It was nowhere near the record January 1996 frigid cold. Precipitation was about average.

The average January temperature at McCarthy was -7.6 (-23.7 in Jan. '96 and -2.6 in Jan. '94). The high temperature was 34 on January 13 (16 on Jan. 1, '96 and 33 on Jan. 22, '95) and the low temperature was -48 on January 8 (-54 on Jan. 20, '96 and -30 on Jan. 11, '95). Other January lows are -55 on January 25, 1993 and the all time low of -57 on January 11, 1972. There were two days with a high of 30 or higher and 11 days with a low of -30 or colder. *Silver Lake had a average temperature of -10.5 (-25.5 in Jan. '96). The*



*high at Silver Lake was 38 on January 13 and the low was -50 on January 8.*

The precipitation at McCarthy in January was about average with most of it occurring in the first 12 days. The total liquid precipitation was 1.20 inches (0.71 in Jan. '96 and 0.55 in Jan. '95). Snow fall was 15.9 inches (9.3 in Jan. '96 and 5.4 in Jan. '95). The year started with a 10 inch snow cover increased to 22 inches on the 12th and ended January with 18 inches. *Silver Lake had about the same precipitation as McCarthy with 1.13 inches of liquid ( 0.43 in Jan. '96) and 13.0 inches of snow ( 3.5 inches in Jan. '96). Silver Lake started the new year with 9 inches of snow on the ground, increased to 23 on the 21st and ended the month with 23 inches.*

The temperatures continued to warm in early February with highs in the low thirties and lows above zero. There has been some light freezing rain and light snow, but the snow depth is still 18 inches.

---

## Good new from the Wrangells

(Continued from page 15)

A special thanks, too, goes out to Rick Jurick who so graciously showed up to give Rick Kenyon and John an "experienced" hand on fan construction and installation!

Of the approximate 29

people remaining in the area for the winter, 22 turned out to help us celebrate. Plenty of heat, lots of light and an abundance of good cheer filled the little church building on the

evening of December 17.

I personally want to thank all of you who came. It was so wonderful to be together during such a special time of the year.

"We can do no greater thing; only small things, with great love." — Mother Teresa

# FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

BY RICK KENYON

## Do your bit—pay a little tax, please

The “Mandatory Borough Bill” has reared its ugly head again—this time in the form of Senate Bill No. 30. Apparently Senator Torgerson is determined to shove more government down our throats whether we like it or whether we don’t. Senator Lincoln reported that she received more negative comments on a similar bill introduced last year than on any other legislation since she had been in Juneau.

The main thrust of the bill is taxation. Areas deemed to have the most taxable property would be identified for incorporation first, followed by areas with lesser appraised values. After the state assessor turns over his report, the Department of Community and Regional Affairs has a short time (as little as 6 months!) to submit a borough incorporation proposal to the Local Boundary Commission. The bill states, “Within 30 days after receiving notice from the Local Boundary Commission of its acceptance of an incorporation proposal, the director of elections shall order an election in the region of the proposed borough to determine whether the voters desire incorporation and, if so, to elect the initial borough officials.”

If a majority of the voters in an area are so crass as to disapprove incorporation, they are punished by being considered a separate unorganized borough, and the following January 1<sup>st</sup> they are required to pay an annual tax of six mills on “the full and true value of taxable property...”

## To sue or not to sue

In its January 1997 newsletter, “Environmental Action Report,” a group who call themselves *Trustees for Alaska* say they are “monitoring Alaska Department of Transportation (DOT) plans to upgrade the McCarthy Road.” After some rhetoric about how this upgrade would undoubtedly ruin the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park (“Increased vehicular access... would significantly increase pressure on the park and threaten backcountry wilderness values.”) they close by saying, “We will monitor the preparation of the EIS [Environmental Impact Statement] and *provide legal assistance to those concerned about development in the McCarthy-Kennecott area*

*and the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park.”* (emphasis added)

Now, I will admit that I do not know personally the members of the Trustees for Alaska. I’m sure that many of them are fine people—so, if you belong to this organization, please do not take the following personal. But I hope you *will* take it to heart.

I remember as a kid, when the bully would start ordering us around someone would say: “Who died and left you in charge?” In a similar vein we might ask these folks, “Who appointed you as trustees over the McCarthy area, the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park (WRST), or any of the rest of Alaska?” The dictionary says that a trustee is; 1. *One, such as a bank, that holds legal title to property in order to administer it for a beneficiary.* 2. *A member of a board elected or appointed to direct the funds and policy of an institution.* If you folks hold legal title to Alaska, how did you get it? Were you elected or appointed by the people of Alaska? I don’t recall voting or electing you. It seems you may have usurped power that is not rightfully yours.

I think the way it is supposed to work in this country is that we either manage our own private land, or we *appoint* trustees such as the National Park Service (NPS) or DOT to manage large tracts of public land such as the WRST, or to decide what type of transportation corridor is needed to handle the traffic. That way, the people who do the managing have some accountability to the people who actually own the land. In the case of the McCarthy Road, both NPS and DOT have been working jointly to come up with a plan for upgrading the road. Believe me, there have been lots of public meetings and will undoubtedly be many more before any decision is made on what type of upgrade is needed. No one needs a group of self-appointed “trustees” holding a legal gun to their heads during the process.

The McCarthy Road is becoming one of the most dangerous roads in Alaska—not because it has been upgraded, but because it has not. For a group of lawyers to solicit frivolous lawsuits over the proposed upgrade is not in the best interests of the public.

Please—let the public process do it’s job.

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

February 1, 1997  
Ixtapa Zihautenejo, Gro  
Mexico

Dear Rick and Bonnie,

I have been working here in Mexico for quite some time and I have not seen a newspaper in weeks. Knowing how much I love Kennecott my family sent me the latest copy of WSEN. Oh, how nice it was to get the news that matters. I was glad to hear that all is well out there, and wanted you to know that I appreciate all you do by keeping the community informed.

Please let everybody know that I miss them all and I am looking forward to another great season. Who knows, if I make enough money down here I might start building on my University land in the spring.

Well, space is running out and fax is very expensive from Mexico. I would love to hear from all of you. My address here is:

Club Med Playa Quieta  
Ixtapa Zihautenejo, Gro  
Mexico  
fax# 755 20040

Thank you again for all your time spent on the paper. I know it means a lot to all of us.

Dan Elofson

P.S. Please tell Tim Mischel that I am very interested in his property. He can fax me or write.

Kankakee, IL  
January 13, 1997

I just finished reading the May/June 1996 copy of the WSEN - (again).

My grandson Chris got it for me when we were in Chitina.

I came to Chris' high school graduation and stayed for 30 days in the area of Delta Junction.

Sincerely,  
Mary Cummins

Thal Switzerland  
December 16, 1996

Hello Bonnie and Rick,

We have received our edition of the Wrangell St. Elias News. One thing I've wanted to say for awhile is how grateful we are of so much information about the location of the Kennecott Laundry. Otto and myself would like to thank:

Inger Ricci, Jim McGavock, Mary Ellen Clark and Ronald Simpson very much for being so co-operative.

In the near future we may come to McCarthy and Kennecott and have a look at the former location of Kennecott Laundry.

We enjoy the Wrangell St. Elias News. Thanks a lot.

We wish all of you, Bonnie, Rick and the McCarthy people a Merry Christmas and a blessed and happy New Year.

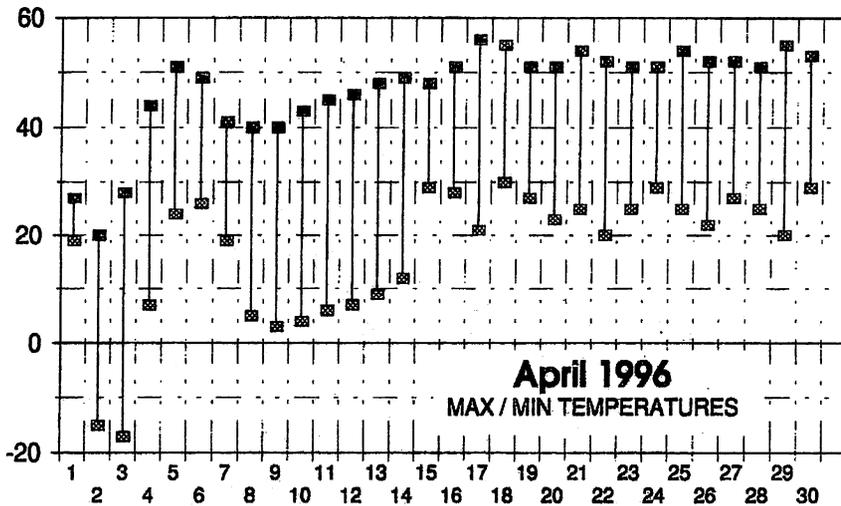
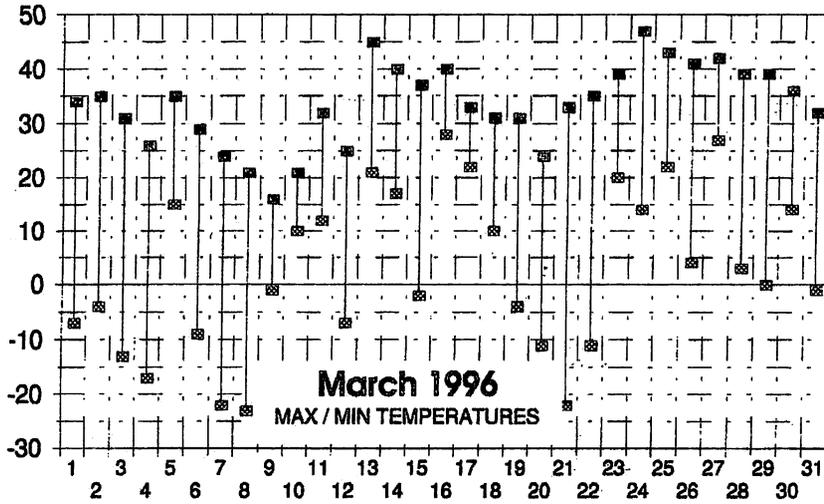
With best regards,  
Otto and Wilma  
P.S. Could you tell me in what year the Kennecott Copper Mine closed in Latouche, Alaska?

*Editor's note: Hello, Otto and Wilma! Because your letter arrived right after we mailed our last issue of the paper, we weren't able to print it until this issue. Thank you so much for the pictures (and the delicious chocolate bars!!). And a big congratulations on becoming grandparents of triplets! Sounds like your son Jurgen and his wife Susan will need all the help you can give them!*



Joseph Otto Seitz, father of Otto Seitz. This picture was taken in the '30's. Joseph became an American citizen in 1932 and lived in Kennecott until 1935. Did any of our readers know him?

*Weather - What can we expect?*

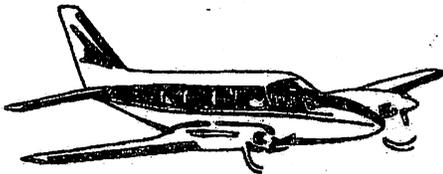


Wongell St. Ellis News  
McCarthy  
PO Box MMY  
Glennallen, AK 99588

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

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

**This service is year around.**



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

**Rates:**

Gulkana/McCarthy	\$56*
McCarthy/Gulkana	\$56*
Gulkana/MayCreek	\$60
May Creek/Gulkana	\$60
Anchorage/Gulkana	\$105*
Gulkana/Anchorage	\$105*

\* Ask about special round-trip rates  
Baggage allowance 40 lbs.  
(charge for excess baggage)  
Rates do not include tax @ 10%

*Ellis Air Taxi, Inc.*

Phone 822-3368  
800-478-3368

Gulkana Airfield Box 106, Glennallen, AK 99588