

Wrangell St. Elias News

"Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty"

Volume Eighteen Issue One

January & February 2009

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HAPPY 2009!



Photo courtesy Barbara Rice



Photo courtesy Audrey Edwards

From one extreme to another

Everglades City is not quite as far as you can get from McCarthy while staying in the USA, but it must be near that spot!

When your dedicated and intrepid (characterized by resolute fearlessness, fortitude, and endurance) reporters heard about the "McCarthy of Florida," we determined to check it out for you, our readers.

The little town of Everglades City has a NPS Visitor Center, a handful of Mom and Pop businesses, bustling tourist trade during a short season, and rolls up the sidewalks and goes to sleep during the off season. Sound familiar?

We bravely endured sunburn, fearlessly faced imaginary alligators behind each log, and valiantly conquered numerous species of fish totally foreign to us McCarthyites. (Story page 10.)

Then, to prove we hadn't gotten soft, we returned to face the harsh realities of a northern winter. Photo at right is our publishing headquarters and humble home the first of January with the temperature at minus 48F.

An annual tradition—the Ladies' Cookie Exchange.

Left to Right: Allison Keller, Lindsay Jensen, Laurie and Hannah Rowland, Jeannie Miller, Sarah and Lynn Welty, Kathy Drury and Diane Malik. Audrey Edwards was the hostess, taking the photo. Story page 13.



WSEN staff photo

A note from the publisher

BY BONNIE KENYON

HAPPY NEW YEAR, subscribers and readers of *Wrangell St. Elias News*! As I begin this “note” to you, McCarthy area is experiencing a cold snap similar to our early days when we moved here in 1978. In those days, a snap was really a spell because it lasted a week or so. Today, January 1st, the minimum thermometer read -48. This is a perfect occasion to write you and put the finishing touches on yet another issue of *WSEN*.

Rick and I just recently returned from our annual visit to family members in Florida and Georgia. Our son, Rick Jr., daughter-in-law Maria, and our 4 grandsons, Jonathan, Stephen, Joshua and Caleb traveled to Daytona Beach where we, along with my brother and his family, my mom and Rick’s dad, Carl, celebrated Thanksgiving dinner. Prior to our family gathering we hooked up with John and Barbara Rice (summer neighbors) and drove to Everglades City for a few days of fishing and boating in the 10,000 Islands. Be sure to read Rick’s story of our excursion on page 10.

While still in Florida, *WSEN* subscriber and McCarthy area landowners, Larry and Lindee Satterfield, emailed us a fine article that Lindee wrote describing their remote “haven” and giving you an inside look at the specialness of their place. You can read it for yourself on page 7.

Once we arrived in Anchorage, a visit with Burnie and Arlene Johnson was first on our list. Not only are the Johnsons subscribers but they are friends as well. Our first evening back in Alaska found us surrounded by friends, Ray and Lee Kreig, Paula Easley and our dinner host, McCarthy resident Neil Darish. Neil was spending some winter time in Anchorage and decided to put his

chef’s hat on and cook us all an amazing array of Asian dishes. I had no idea he was such a superb cook! I wish I could tell you (and spell) the variety of items he placed so elegantly before us, but I know I would dishonor each course. Thank you, Neil, for such a wonderful evening!

The next day the Kreigs, Neil, Rick and I were privileged to meet with the new Wrangell-St. Elias National Park’s Alaska Regional Director, Sue Masica, and Vic Knox, Deputy Director. We were graciously received and appreciated the opportunity to exchange ideas on the growing relationship between community members and the park service.

Once we got settled in, meaning getting the -6 degrees inside temperature of our cabin to a comfortable 70 plus, we began compiling the articles for this new *WSEN*. Susan Smith, of Chokosna, and a frequent

contributor on important issues to our local area, wrote two articles that you won’t want to miss. One, in particular, includes two items of very important local interest—the new planning process for subsistence firewood permits and local hire. Please be sure to read Susan’s entire article on the Citizens’ Advisory Commission on Federal Areas meeting held first week in November. It begins on page 6.

Last but not least is “thank you” to Mary Odden, publisher of the *Copper River Record*, who wrote a tremendous article on the park service’s local hire issue, and one she willingly shares with us in this issue. Look for it on page 22.

Wrangell St. Elias News welcomes aboard the following subscribers: Kyan Kirby, TX; Cal Datta, AK; Mark and Susie Hem, AK; Lisa Haley, AK; Colleen Price, AK; Jen McCormick, AK.

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Items of Interest

BY BONNIE KENYON

Tom and Mary Kaye Golden and son Dan Elofsen: I'm not too sure who is more well known, the Golden's or son Dan. Whatever the case, the Golden's checked in via email today with an item of interest about themselves and Dan.

Tom writes: "Hope you are doing well and staying warm. We're in sunny Florida for a week. We are at The Great Outdoors Resort which is in Titusville about 50 miles south of Daytona Beach. Mary Kaye was planning to retire January 1st but her employers convinced her to work another 6 months. Maybe not a bad idea given the economic situation here. I plan to be back in McCarthy early May. We have a new 1750 Watt solar system we are eager to get started. Mary Kaye will come up 'for good' around July 4th. Dan is spending the winter in McCarthy. We talked with him on Christmas. He was telling us about snowmachining on the Nizina. Look forward to seeing you again in the Spring."

Sounds like Dan, along with Gary Green and Mike McCann, is getting in on a bit of local outdoor adventure —breaking in a snow-machine trail to Mike's winter trampoline area. He's also dog sitting

for a neighbor or two. No time for boredom, Dan, even in the cold of winter!

Carl Donohue: Carl may be a new face to *Items* but he isn't the new man on the block anymore. He not only lives just down the road but, Carl has become a regular user of our Internet services. That gives Rick and I an opportunity to meet him instead of merely recognizing a face.

Carl moved here on a more permanent basis in January of 2008. His quarters have a name familiar to many of us in the McCarthy area. "Shacky." It is a small guest cabin located on Jim and Audrey's property. Many folks have called that their temporary home over the years.

During the summer months he runs backpacking trips all over Alaska but his favorite spot is the Wrangell- St. Elias National Park.

The winter months fill with wood gathering, photographing special scenes that will eventually find their place in Carl's book-in-the-making. His book will contain photos of the landscape and wildlife of this park, he says.

Carl moved to the United States from Australia in 1991. Although he loves it here, he still has family near Sydney and plans

to visit them in the near future. Some of them, his dad being the most recent, have paid a visit to this area. Now they know why he calls this special place "home."

Jim and Audrey Edwards: Shortly after Rick and I returned from our trip south, Audrey filled me in on her routine for mail days. For those of you who don't know, McCarthy has two mail days a week (well...unless the weather refuses to cooperate). The incoming mail is picked up at the Glennallen Post Office by our new mail pilot, Dave Parmenter of Copper Valley Air Service which is based at the Gulkana airport. His normal arrival time is approximately 11 a.m. That doesn't give the local contacts much time to inform the residents if there is any change in sight. Rick and I are part of the group (others are George Cebula and Mike Monroe) who try to stay on top of the weekly mail situation. Since our departure in November, Audrey so willingly stepped up to the plate and filled in the gap. Since our return, she and I decided to share the responsibilities. Thanks, Audrey! You are doing a great job. Before I leave this subject, Jim is an active player on mail days. He is a regular "sorter" at the mail shack and

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helps out frequently in mail pick-up and delivery for several folks on the west side. Thanks, Jim!

Jim, who is never short of projects summer or winter, is working on an inside job these days—installing new and improved kitchen drawer slides for Audrey. Now she can get to those items that somehow get lost at the back of the drawer.

The Edwards are home for the winter this year, but Audrey is planning a trip to Disneyland with her sister and oldest niece at the end of March. It should be a great family time and opportunity to take in all that Vitamin D that Florida is good for.

Cal Ward, Jr: The sound of Cal's voice on the phone was most welcome. Cal is now back home at his cabin on Fireweed Mountain. He says he is recovering remarkably well. He is managing with the nominal effects of the gall bladder infection. After surgery in mid-October, he recuperated in Salsha with brother Art and then flew to warmer climes to spend time with brother Doran in Washington state. He arrived back home shortly after Thanksgiving Day.

He says he is continually improving and now picking up chores and projects that he started in the fall prior to his illness. He is also enjoying the benefits of his small solar set-up that he installed this last summer. The savings on his generator usage is obvious, he says.

Thanks for the update, Cal, and all the good news!

Mike McCann, Dorothy Adler and Logan: While Mike is busy cutting firewood, trying to stay warm in minus 40 degree temperatures and breaking a snowmachine trail to his trapline, Dorothy and baby Logan are finding the California temperatures a bit easi-

er to take—some snow and sleet with plus 40 and promises of warmer weather any day now.

Mike, Dorothy and Logan traveled to Illinois to visit Mike's 94 year old grandmother and his family over Thanksgiving. While Mike returned home, Dorothy and Logan continued their travels to California to visit her sister and family, spending Christmas with them.

Dorothy writes, "Logan's favorite gift was from my sister (a chainsaw), although he was a bit frustrated when we took it outside and he tried to fell a tree. It doesn't cut like mom's chainsaw!

"Logan is keeping the local grocery stores in business with his consumption of raspberries. I hate buying them when I know I have about 15 pounds of local raspberries in the freezer at home. Oh, well, at least he enjoys healthy foods."

Sonny Asbury: Speaking about my neighbors who are enjoying warmer temperatures this winter...Sonny called Christmas Day. He is in Texas traveling between Johnson City and Granite Shoals visiting his sister and his daughters. His winter mode of travel isn't his snowmachine but his trusty Harley-Davidson motorcycle. He did admit to wearing his leather jacket the day he traveled between the two towns, but Christmas Day he said he was decked out in Bermuda shorts and basking in the heat. When we told him McCarthy had 20 inches of fluffy white snow on the ground, I think for a "short" moment he might have traded places with us. At least long enough to take his snowmachine out for a spin in the winter wonderland. Sonny sends his best to the neighborhood and wishes everyone a Happy New Year!

Larry and Lindee Satterfield:

While some folks plan trips south where it is "warmer," some folks like the Satterfields plan a trip to a "colder" location. With a few days off work, Larry and Lindee chose to drive out to their cabin in McCarthy. It was Sunday, December 28th. Instead of coming so far (they live in Anchorage, about 300 miles from their cabin) for just a day trip in to check on their cabin, Rick and I invited them to spend the night in our guest cabin. That way Larry and Lindee would have extra time and we could enjoy their company. They took us up on the offer.

Once they arrived, we settled in for a visit and a supper fit for a king. Larry so graciously brought in a package of rib-eye steaks which he and Rick expertly cooked on our outdoor grill (I might add in spite of the -21 degrees). That night the temperatures plummeted. We woke to -38. Larry and Rick had to put heat on the Satterfield's truck and battery before it would start. It did, however, and they were able to drive back to Anchorage that same day. Lindee writes: "After I called you from Kenny Lake, we traveled to Copper Center and ate dinner at Copper Center Lodge. That is a neat place. We now have somewhere else to choose from for food and lodging. Thanks for the suggestion. Anyway, it was 40 below in Glennallen when we drove through. Yikes! We got gas and on we drove to Anchorage. It got to a balmy 15 below when we arrived. Whew! Thanks for the prayers. It was a beautiful drive out.. but, too cold to be on the back roads of Alaska! It was good to see the cabin too. Spring can't come fast enough!"

Mark Vail: It's New Year's Eve; the temperature is -45 degrees outside. Nothing seems to be mov-

ing here in my neck-of-the-woods. I think it is all happening at Mark's cabin—outside, that is, among the wildlife. Within the last few days, Mark reports that a variety of birds have come calling. Goshawks, hawk owls, at least 8 horned owls, Pine Grosbeaks, flocks of chickadees, spruce grouse, woodpeckers and, not to be outdone, rabbits! The birds of prey have had a field day with the influx of rabbits in 2008.

Last winter Mark was in the big city for the majority of the season, but, this year, he did a couple month work stint in the fall. Now he has "hunkered" in for the winter. Plenty of books to entertain and educate him. When it's time to take a break from those winter diversions, he watches the antics of a flock of spruce grouse who find Mark's "diner" a welcome sight in the midst of a cold snap. The eatery is a barrel on its side with a good supply of sand and gravel, just what the grouse are looking for this time of year!

The phone visit soon takes a different direction when Mark brings up the subject of the upcoming gardening season. He is certain it is time to order his favorite seed catalogs. I agree! We discuss the promise of a much better growing season in 2009 than this last summer. Hope is a huge, uplifting word and we are ready to give those new varieties a second chance.

Kurt and Lindsay Jensen: There is a lot of excitement in the Jensen's home these days! And, they are eager to share some really great news. Are you ready? Kurt and Lindsay are expecting a baby boy on or around April 13th. This is their first winter in McCarthy. They are living in Michelle Casey's cabin just down the road from me.

Kurt is expanding his carpentry skills by working alongside Don Welty on a construction project. Lindsay snowmachines to the Rowlands' house, helping Laurie with homeschooling chores.

When I called Lindsay last night, she reported that neither she nor Kurt had worked that day on their individual jobs due to the cold snap. Temperatures (our low in December dropped to minus 48 F.) such as we've been experiencing lately make outdoor equipment balk at the mere thought of being used.

On the bright side, the Jensens have a lot of planning and traveling to do before their son arrives on the scene. In mid-February they plan to drive to the lower 48 to visit Kurt's parents in North Carolina and then on to Wisconsin to see some of Lindsay's family. By mid-March they hope to head north again, traveling to Fairbanks where they will await the entrance of their first child.

They hope to return to McCarthy end of April.

Christmas Day Kurt and Lindsay visited Lindsay's dad, Jim Kreblin, at Long Lake. Lindsay cooked a Turkey dinner for him and several other lone men of the community: Cal Ward, Jr., Mark Vail, Howard Haley and Jim Stripe. In the evening a rousing game of Scrabble took place with Mark Vail playing the winning word. Lindsay says that Mark isn't that hep on winning. "He likes to make good words." But, she "plays to win." Well, maybe next game, Lindsay. In the meantime, please know we share in your great excitement and good news!

Jim Kreblin: Speaking of Jim...he reports that the annual Long Lake (wooden spruce) Cari-

bou herd has now migrated from his basement south to the lake. If you should be traveling the McCarthy Road at approximately Mile 45, you will get a glimpse of these amazing animals. They visit the area every winter once the ice freezes solid enough to hold their weight (and Jim's!).

During the cold spell, Jim says he is staying busy with indoor projects. Lately he's put in a few hours doing a couple repair jobs for his fellow neighbors, Mark and Cal. It seems Mark's radio was on the blink and Cal's head lamp needed attention. Both are up and running now so Jim says he is making plans to do some traveling in the near future. He hopes to visit his mom in Wisconsin. She turns 97 in March, he says. Have a safe and an enjoyable trip, Jim, and we'll see you on the ice when you get home. My new ice-fishing rod is just itching to drop a line!

CALLING ALL FISHERFOLK!

The annual Long Lake Fishing Derby is once again in the making, says host Jim Kreblin. He advises us to begin gathering our ice-fishing rods and gear so we'll be ready to head to the lake on Saturday, March 28th. Make sure you include lures or bait that will attract the Dolly Varden, Rainbow Trout or, just maybe, those illusive Lake Trout!

Birth Announcement: Congratulations to Matthew and Elishaba (Hale) Speckels of Palmer, on the birth of a beautiful little baby girl on November 20th. Esther Grace came into this world at 4:25 pm, weighing in at 8 lb.10 oz. and measuring 21 ½ inches long. To God be the glory; great things He has done in the lives of this young family.

CACFA discusses local hire, questions firewood permits

BY SUSAN SMITH

The Citizens' Advisory Commission on Federal Areas (CACFA) held its third regular meeting in Anchorage November 6th and 7th at the Legislative Information Office on West Fourth Avenue. Present were commissioners Mark Fish of Anchorage, Rick Halford of Eagle River, State Representative Wes Keller of Wasilla, Ken Kreitzer of Juneau, Alex Tarnai of Tanana, Frank Woods of Dillingham, Chairman Rick Schikora of Fairbanks, and myself, Susan Smith of Chokosna.

Commissioner McKie Campbell of Juneau submitted a letter of resignation from CACFA to accept the Minority Staff Director position for the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, for which Senator Lisa Murkowski is the new Ranking Member.

The commission welcomed its newly-hired Executive Director (ED) Stan Leaphart of Fairbanks, who returns to his position, having served under the original CACFA which operated from 1982-1999.

The first half-day meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. After roll call, approval of the meeting agenda, and approval of the June meeting minutes, ED Leaphart reviewed the commission's correspondence since the last meeting. Federal agencies were contacted to ensure that CACFA receives copies of all planning documents, draft regulations, and management policies. Other letters provided comments with regard to pending legislation.

Reports from Chairman Schikora and ED Leaphart presented the following issues for consideration:

1) The equal-value land exchange between Doyon, Ltd. and Yukon Flats National Wildlife Refuge, which would give US Fish &

Wildlife Service (FWS) control over more than 200,000 acres of Doyon inholdings;

2) FWS's Alaskan Guide Service Evaluation Form to be given to clients of all commercial guide services operating in Alaskan wildlife refuges in order to monitor services, client satisfaction, and impacts on resources;

3) FWS's adoption of a flat fee policy for outfitting and guiding land use fees for the Alaska Region;

4) Formation of the Denali National Park Aircraft Overflight Advisory Council to advise the Secretary of the Interior, through the National Park Service (NPS), on mitigation of impacts from aircraft overflights while recognizing the importance of back-country air travel and scenic air tours;

5) NPS's preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement to develop and manage vehicles on the Denali Park Road through an extensive study of historic records and the movement of wildlife, visitors, and vehicles through the park; and,

6) Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) Record of Decision on the Kobuk-Seward Peninsula which guides management of approximately 11.9 million acres of public lands and mineral estate.

A period of public participation followed as members of the public voiced their concerns over a number of topics. One long-time guide objected to the new U.S. Forest Service (FS) user fees and management policies. Another placer miner with a state-permitted claim in the Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve is being prevented from working his claim by NPS due to decibel level restrictions on water and aircraft, and conflicts over jurisdiction of navigable waterways. A recreational snowmachiner from

the Cantwell/Broad Pass area called for the establishment of several 17(b) easements across Ahtna priority-selected lands to provide access to public lands.

CACFA's official By-laws and Guidelines were approved by the members after some discussion. Chairman Schikora then adjourned the first meeting day at 5:00 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 8:30 a.m. on November 7th, and after a call to order, a number of reports were heard from representatives of federal agencies.

Helen Clough, Division Chief, Planning and Policy Division, FWS, Alaska Region, spoke of her agency's program to revise the Comprehensive Conservation Plans (CCP) for the Alaska units of the National Wildlife Refuge System. Compatibility determinations are a key component of the CCPs where uses must parallel refuge purposes. The revised CCP and environmental assessment for the Koyukuk/Innoko/Nowitna refuges are currently up for review.

Meg Jensen, NPS Superintendent, and Bruce Rogers of Wrangell- Saint Elias National Park and Preserve (WRST) gave a presentation about the Nabesna Off Road Vehicle (ORV) Trail Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) being prepared to determine if ORV use is compatible with the purposes and values of WRST. The public is being asked to participate in the development of the alternatives for the draft EIS due out in November of 2009. The *WRST Nabesna ORV Plan of EIS Draft Alternatives* is open for public comment only until January 10, 2009. The plan considers 6 alternatives, from *No Action* to *Maximum Trail Improvements*, with varying degrees of usage, closures, and maintenance, proposing annual permit

(continued on page 14)

Winter Havens

BY LINDEE SATTERFIELD

McCarthy is our wilderness. Anchorage is our modern society with its conveniences. When we discovered McCarthy several years ago, we were mesmerized as each mile passed, driving on that long dirt road. Little did we know that our spur-of-the-moment, turn-off-the-beaten-path decision would lead us to our future "haven" in the woods. It's funny I should choose the word "haven," as it has two meanings. The first is "a place of refuge or rest," hence our wilderness woods in McCarthy, and the second being "a harbor or anchorage, a port," hence the city of Anchorage.

When asked where we live we like to think of it as, "we live in Anchorage when we are working, but we live in McCarthy when we are not." The contrast that happens in an 8 hour drive from city to wilderness is astounding. I realize Anchorage is not a huge city, but you know when you are far away from it when you start on the McCarthy road.

We have experienced McCarthy during spring, summer and fall seasons and each has its own unique beauty and gifts to offer. What we have "tasted" recently was the winter season.

As we drove out of Anchorage, there was barely any snow on the ground, a chill in the air and the roads were free of ice and snow. We didn't notice the stars in the sky till we left the city lights in the dark of the morning. Hours and miles later the Copper River bridge greeted us with a blizzard of blowing snow and a definite winter chill. We started on the McCarthy road on what turned out to be a bright sunny day. The sign

at the beginning of the road warns of driving at your own risk, letting someone know of your plans and having survival gear for this winter drive. Of course, driving in the city on a winter's day is not only driving at your own risk, but your survival "gear" would be your cell phone to call for a tow truck. The McCarthy road was snow packed and quite smooth at that. We did not miss the potholes and washboard dirt road of the summer gone by. We were in winter scenery heaven as we entered our 13th mile in. Just when we were thinking how great the road was, that's when we figured out the snowplow must have turned around at this point. Well, with 46 miles to go, we could still follow somebody's tire tracks in. I was praising our 4 wheel drive at this time. In the same light, I was grateful for the glistening winter wonderland that we were driving into. I thought, where else can you drive 50 miles one way and not pass one vehicle on the road. It seemed like it was our very own very long driveway with scenery to call our own. Now in the city, you will always pass another vehicle, even in the middle of the night, even on a very snowy day!

We came across snow undisturbed by human footprints, but playfully imprinted by the four footed species. In the city, it's hard to find animal tracks undisturbed by human tracks. In the wilderness, you can smell the crisp fresh air. Even breathing through my balaclava it was fresh! (I always have to hesitate—is it balaclava or baklava?) In the city, you can get fresh air, but maybe with whiffs of exhaust fumes from motor vehicles or jet fumes if you are close to the airport.

Once we got to our "haven" in the woods, we started up the wood stove in the cabin to chase out the cold. In the meantime, we checked out the surroundings outside and listened to the "silence." Unlike the city, this was our relief from the noise made by humans and machines alike. That big jumbo jet sounds and feels like it's about to land on us at times. Back at the cabin there were signs of rabbits and Gray Jays. The rabbits left us tons of "kix cereal" lying around and the gray jays, well, they flew down to greet us looking for handouts of course. They think Larry talks bird talk because they sure chirp up a storm at him when they see him. To our surprise a spruce grouse decided to get in on the handouts too. Kind of comical to see this good-sized bird walking on our deck railing. In the city, the birds are pretty skittish, all of them. We don't see snowshoe hares, but we do have our share of moose. Every winter you will see one with Christmas lights tangled in their antlers and that you may not see in McCarthy. I would say the moose are smarter in the wilderness not to get tangled up in any human habitat.

There is a peace that settles within us as the cabin warms up and the smell and sound of a wood fire carries our relaxation into the winter evening. Going into a slumber late at night is short lived as the fire in the stove needs tending to, usually by Larry or nature calls usually for me. You can hear the rabbits chewing on branches outside and see them all scatter on my way to the outhouse. Nighttime is definitely alive with movement. We enjoy the spontaneous entertainment both day and night have to offer in the wilderness. In

the city, the winter night is alive with wildlife too, that is, of the human kind, all bundled up and scurrying to their next place of entertainment. In the city, you have city lights shining into your room and sounds of civilization surrounding you.

A trip to the outhouse is always an experience in itself. At night the walk is amazing with the bright moonlight covering the snowy earth. It's a beautiful night when it's bright enough that you don't even need a flashlight to go to the outhouse. (The outhouse does not have heat, and I insist I have stamina to have to warm up the seat on my own.) The big dipper shines bright over the moonlit mountain top in all its glory along with millions of other stars as we stand on our deck. Gives me goosebumps...and that's not because of the chill in the air. In the city, you turn up the thermostat to take the chill out and walk a couple feet to a warm bathroom without putting boots on and piles of winter gear! The street lights

cover the snowy ground and the stars sometimes hide or don't seem as bright or as many, above the city lights.

We had hoped to see the Northern Lights above us during this time, but God probably didn't think we could handle so much glory all at once, and maybe He wanted to save some for next time. We have experienced the aurora borealis before, but not yet in our winter wilderness in the woods.

When daylight arrived we took a walk down toward the river and we felt the solitude. You could hear birds off in the distance and then hear nothing but the wind. It's fun to drive the ATV, but the walk was much more invigorating and quiet. An old-timer named Richard Proenekke quotes "a motor noise stills the sounds of the wilderness." In the city, one could lose that connection with the earth and solitude, with the crowding of people and busyness and noise that goes with it.

While Anchorage does have lots to offer in the season of winter with winter sports and festivals, McCarthy has that wilderness appeal for those who like the seclusion it offers and more of an adventure at that.

We passed the snowplow on our drive back out on the McCarthy road. It turned from a wagon trail to a super highway in an instant. We appreciate those snowplow guys for sure. We checked out more animal tracks in the snow and came across those of a grizzly bear. This one apparently was not yet ready to sleep for the winter. We never tire of the scenery this part of Alaska has to offer.

Now I wondered as we got closer to the city of Anchorage, if our adventure wasn't over yet. As the snow fell and the traffic became heavier, we drove defensively as the roads became icy and the ditches swallowed up unlucky commuters. Maybe, we should take the next exit and turn around and go back to the wilderness.

Wrangell-St. Elias ORV alternatives offered

COPPER CENTER—

Six draft alternatives for managing recreational off-road vehicle use in the Nabesna Road area of Wrangell-St. Elias National Park & Preserve are available for public review and comment through January 10, 2009.

The park is developing an environmental impact statement considering the effects of ORVs on nine trails in the Nabesna District of the park. Comments on the draft alternatives will be used to refine the alternatives which will be fully analyzed in a draft environmental impact statement, which is scheduled to be released for public comment in November 2009.

The EIS process was started last year in part to comply with the settlement of a lawsuit regarding National Park Service management of ORV use in the park. "The intent of the plan is to provide continued opportunities for appropriate and reasonable access to wilderness and backcountry recreation including sport hunting in the preserve, while accommodating subsistence uses, access to inholdings, and protecting fish and wildlife habitat and other park values," said Park Superintendent Meg Jensen.

The alternatives addresses ORV use on the Caribou Creek, Trail Creek, Soda Lake, Lost Creek, Reeve Field, Boomerang, Suslota, Tanada and Copper Lake trails.

Comments are being sought on draft proposals that include opening recreational ORV use on all nine trails, closing use on those trails, three alternatives which provide for varying levels of trail improvements for ORVs, and the implementation of a trail user fee.

Copies of the draft alternatives are available on-line at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/wrst>. Comments may also be submitted on this website. Copies of the 14-page alternatives document can also be requested by phone at 907-822-7276. Hard copies of the document are available at park headquarters in Copper Center, the Glennallen Public Library and the Slana Post Office.

Alfred T. Clayton, Sr

1914-2008

Alfred T. "Al" Clayton, Sr., was 94 years young when he passed away peacefully at his home in Homer, Alaska on November 9, 2008. Memorial services will be held at the Homer United Methodist Church in Homer at 2:00PM, Saturday, May 9, 2009 and at the Kluti-Kaah Hall, in Copper Center at 1:00PM, Saturday, May 23, 2009.

Al Clayton was born to William James and Almeda Tibbles Clayton on May 3, 1914, in Lakeview, Montana. Al was destined to be an "Alaskan." He grew up hunting and trapping in a high mountain valley near Lakeview, Montana, called the "Alaska Basin." Al made his first trip to Alaska in 1935 with his mother to check things out. He returned alone in 1940 to make Alaska his home. He bought and developed 10 acres in Anchorage where West 25th Avenue runs between Spenard Road and Minnesota Drive. Over time, he lived in many parts of Alaska.

Although trained as a diesel mechanic, he first worked for the Alaska Road Commission and the Alaska Railroad. During WW II he operated the power plant in Seward which powered the guns at Caines Head in Resurrection Bay. He worked for Chugach Electric in Anchorage and ultimately retired from Copper Valley Electric Association in Glennallen in 1979.

Al was a registered big game guide for most of 30 years. He worked with many other guides and outfitters including Lee Han-

cock, Bud Conkle and "Doc" Taylor. His clients took trophy sheep, moose, bear and caribou from places like Unimak Island, Hicks Creek and Ptarmigan Lake. He was still guiding sheep hunters in the Nutzotin Mountains at age 70.



He traveled by Grumman Goose, Super Cub and pack horses.

Al took lots of slides, 16mm film, and video of his hunting adventures and his rich life with his family and friends. He enjoyed reading about Alaska history and visiting with other longtime Alaskans. He was a member and Past President of Homer Men's Igloo #32 of the Pioneers of Alaska and a member of the Homer United Methodist Church.

Al met S. Martine Burdick in Seward where she worked as a nurse at the Seward Sanatorium treating tuberculosis patients. They married in 1954 and had four children who were raised in Glennallen. The children grew up with a deep appreciation for the beauty of Alaska, especially at places like Al's cabin on Kenai Lake which he acquired in 1947.

In 1988 Al and Martine moved to Homer where they enjoyed a more moderate climate in their retirement years. Al took great pleasure in his raspberry patch and his apple orchard. His list of retirement projects was endless. On November 9, 2008, he had not yet gotten around to fixing the clutch on his Oliver tractor, but he had harvested his apples.

Al was preceded in death by Martine in 1998 and granddaughter, Kelley McMichael, in 1981. He is survived by his children and their spouses: Maraley and Gary McMichael of Slana, Jeanette and Joe Pedginski of Kenai, Shirley and Bruce Cain of Cordova, and Alfred, Jr. and Beth Clayton of Anchorage. His grandchildren include: Patrick McMichael and his wife Leanna, and Erin Montez and her husband Jay; Josiah, Jimmie Mae, Jesse and Jonathan Pedginski; Rebekah Burket and her husband Justin, David Cain, Hannah Irigoyen and her husband Joe, Nathan Cain and his wife Rebecca, Harrison, Naomi, and Isaac Cain; and Trevor and Taral Clayton. His great grandchildren include: Harlan Montez; Theodore and Ellaina Cain; Autumn Irigoyen; and twins Marian and Amelia Burket.

Al's children invite you to contact them to share stories or special memories. Memorial donations may be made to a local Alaskan historical society or the American Heart Association.

McCarthyites in the Everglades?

BY RICK KENYON

Tucked away in the southwest corner of Florida is a small town which has been billed by some as the “McCarthy of Florida.” Sounds preposterous, right? Being dedicated journalists as well as long-time McCarthy residents, Bonnie and I just had to check it out!

Everglades City has a population of slightly less than 500, which of course is somewhat greater than McCarthy (slightly less than 50) but I have to tell you that this 30+ year resident of McCarthy felt right at home there. To give you an idea of the atmosphere there, shortly after we arrived another guest was walking past our screen porch and said, “Man, this is paradise—and I live in Florida!”

Our adventure began in Daytona Beach, where my Dad lives and where we try to visit at least once a year. Bonnie’s mother lives in New Smyrna Beach, just a few miles south of Dad, so

we get to spend time with both parents. (Son Rick Jr., who grew up in McCarthy, lives 6 hours north in southern Georgia with his family.)

Our friends and summer neighbors John and Barbara Rice met us in Daytona. John pulled their 16’ boat all the way from St. Louis and was eager to put it to use. We launched it at the Port Orange Bridge, a place reported to have



WSEN staff photo

“Captain” John Rice and publisher Bonnie Kenyon. Bear Island is in the background, Everglades city just beyond.



WSEN staff photo

Barbara Rice with the first fish of the day.

stantly faced with the evidence, we decided to do something about it. We pulled anchor and motored south to the Ponce Inlet, a short run using the Inter-Coastal Waterway.

Not far from the inlet we spotted some bait in the water at the edge of the canal, and slowing down, cast into the disturbance where a spotted sea-trout promptly nailed our offering. This was more like it! (Unfortunately trout-season was closed, so we re-

luctantly practiced catch-and-release.)

After that first fish, they started coming more rapidly. We drifted the inlet and caught a number of blues, and John landed a nice 4-pound black drum. A fitting way to start any adventure, and it served as sort of a useful rehearsal for our Everglades trip as we learned that it is best to put the drain plug in *before* you launch the boat, rather than after!

The next day we headed south and west to Naples, via the Interstate system then the old

good sheepshead fishing. We tied up near the pilings and observed another boat a short distance away, the occupants of which were pulling up a nice-sized fish every few minutes. But try as we might, John and I could not get a single bite.

Not liking to think that we were somehow inferior to those other fishermen, but being con-



WSEN staff photo

Not to be outdone, the author displays one of his trophies

“Tamiami Trail,” also known as Route 41. At a wide spot in the road called Carnestown we left the Trail and took route 29 about 5 miles to our destination.

Let me pause here and give credit to another McCarthyite who actually was responsible for our ever going to EC. Chuck Gretske. Chuck is co-owner (along with Chris Epton) of the Glacierview Campground at mile 58 on the McCarthy Road. Chuck also runs a charter air service at Lake Hood in the summer. Several years ago, while enjoying BBQ ribs at Glacierview, Chuck told us that he spends the winters in Florida where he flies fishermen and tourists to the 10,000 islands area from EC. Chuck is a pretty good salesman, and of course I am a sucker for any place reported to have good fishing, so the seeds of this trip were sown on the deck of Glacierview in 2006.

We hoped to meet up with Chuck in EC, but a call to his cell phone revealed that he was weathered in at Michigan and wouldn't

be in Florida for several more days.

Our 2-bedroom apartment at the Captain's Table Lodge and Villa was lovely. They have their own boat ramp, but the attendant advised that we would be better served to pay the \$20 boat-launch fee at the Rod & Gun Club as the water was deeper there and the likelihood of running aground would be lessened.

This area of the Florida Gulf coast is noted for its numerous mangrove islands—hence the name, “10,000 Islands.” You can go for many miles and not see water 20 feet deep. In fact we were advised to stick to the marked channels as much of the area has water depths from one to three feet, and it is easy to become grounded on an outgoing tide.

The many islands provide shelter from the winter winds, and many people choose canoes or kayaks as their mode of travel. A number of places offer them for rent. Numerous Airboats also are evident in the area.

We enjoyed the comfort of the Rice's lovely boat, and spent two days exploring this amazing area, which by the way is near the border of the Everglades National Park. There are numerous primitive campgrounds marked on the chart that we bought, so we decided to explore the nearest one, on a small island called “Indian Key.” The island was lovely, but no sign of any camping activity that we could detect. Not even a burned ember from a campfire. Apparently one of the recent hurricanes washed the island clean of anything remotely resembling human contact.

Besides exploring, we caught lots of fish, got sunburned, and enjoyed excellent meals at the Seafood Depot next door to our room. (The Depot is so named as it served as the railroad depot in the “old days” when farming was the primary activity in the area.)

Did we enjoy it? Plans are already laid for a return trip next year, this time for a whole week. 'Nuff said.

Kennecott mining pioneers honored

BY BONNIE KENYON

On November 6th 2008, Rick and I were privileged to attend the induction ceremony of the Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Foundation (AMHF) at the Sheraton Hotel in downtown Anchorage. Three mining pioneers important to the development of the famed Kennecott Mines in the Chitina Valley of South-Central Alaska were honored as well as their momentous accomplishments. The program highlighted the historical background of the rich copper discovery and its development by Kennecott Copper Corporation. The presentations included

plaques honoring Earl T. Stannard, William C. Douglass and Rueben McClellan. Wrangell-St. Elias National Park Superintendent Meg Jensen was on hand to receive one such plaque. Another plaque was presented to Neil Darish of McCarthy for the McCarthy-Kennecott Museum.

Logan Hovis, historian with the National Park Service, gave a short historical slide show of Kennecott and shared the story of Rueben McClellan.

The AMHF program was supported by the Alaska Miners Association and jointly presented with

the U. S. National Park Service, Alaska Region.

Earl Tappen Stannard, 1882-1949, was a talented metallurgical engineer who successfully designed the ammonia leach circuit at the Kennecott mill that allowed for the upgrading of copper carbonate-rich ores. His years at the Kennecott Mine were 1913-1920. Stannard received some popular acclaim as a baseball player on the Kennecott team. In the July 4, 1913, game against McCarthy, Kennecott won largely on the strength of Stannard's hitting. After leaving Alaska, he was given more executive responsibilities and rose to prominence in the Kennecott Copper Cor-

poration. Stannard left Kennecott stronger than he found it.

After the 1938 mine closure, Stannard was in contact with representatives of the National Park Service about a possible future for the Kennecott area as a National Park. He pledged road maintenance and preservation of some buildings that might be valuable to a future park.

Stannard was killed in one of the first airplane bomb incidents while on his way to Quebec. It was found that Albert Guay, a French Canadian citizen from Quebec, had planted a bomb to kill his wife, also a passenger, for her \$10,000 insurance policy. All 23 on board, 4 crew and 19 passengers, on a Canadian Pacific DC-3 (C-47) perished. The fatal crash was on September 9, 1949. Kennecott's loss that day was huge, and the company's management was decapitated. Arthur Storke, Stannard's successor to run the company and R. J. Parker, Vice President of Exploration for Kennecott Copper were both on board the same deadly flight. When Stannard came to his sudden and unusual death, Kennecott was the world's largest copper mining company.

William Crawford Douglass, 1889-1979, served not only as an able mining engineer at Kennecott but also as a superb manager who inspired workers and greatly improved labor-company relations.

"Bill" was an exceptional athlete, a musician and an historian. At Kennecott he knew every miner and citizen of Kennecott by his or her first name. He became the preeminent manager of the entire Kennecott-Alaska operation, managing with great efficiency and leading the mines at Kennecott to their height.

Douglass went to Kennecott in 1916 as a working foreman. He stayed until 1929, leaving as General Superintendent. At first he lived

with the miners in their bunkhouses thousands of feet above the mill level and the staff houses where the professional engineers lived. As a mining foreman who actually worked with the miners, he got to know them well while also gaining operating experience. He eventually married Mabel Dixon and moved into one of the staff houses in Kennecott.

Douglass made changes that improved operations and added to the quality of life at Kennecott. He added heated lunchrooms to the underground mines; utilidors delivered steam heat to the staff houses. He authorized a lighted ice rink for hockey, contests, and winter carnivals. Douglass himself played on the baseball team that played McCarthy and Cordova, sometimes with pitchers brought from as far away as Seattle.

Douglass left Kennecott in the early summer of 1929. Years later he wrote a history of the Kennecott Mines. The work, first published by the State Division of Mines (now Division of Geological and Geophysical Surveys), covers much more than technical matters. It includes accounts of the pre-Bonanza discovery expeditions, the discoveries and acquisition by Stephen Birch, and the construction of the Copper River and Northwestern Railway.

Bill Douglass died in 1979 just short of his 90th birthday. He was an exceptional miner, but also an exceptional man and, in the view of his children, an exceptional father.

Reuben Frederick McClellan, 1859-1930, led the prospecting team that discovered what became the Kennecott Mines. "Fred," as McClellan was often called, organized and was the central figure in the informal mining partnership that made the initial discoveries and negotiated the sales of the mineral

claims that became Alaska's Kennecott mines. McClellan and his team of fellow prospectors in 1899 came to Alaska to search for copper as well as gold. Based on information from Native informants, they raced other prospecting groups for a number of copper prospects. In the end, they acquired a one-third interest in the Nikolai prospect, a bornite showing on McCarthy Creek east of the Kennicott Glacier. In 1900 he and others staked the Bonanza outcrop, the rich, green chalcocite showing at the heart of the future Kennecott mines on behalf of the group. Two days later they staked the first claims on the nearby Jumbo showing.

McClellan and the other partners negotiated the sale of their individual interests to Stephen Birch who transferred title to the Alaska Syndicate a few years later. He made arrangements to work on the Bonanza as well as prospect other locations. Among other things, he was the manager of the Kennecott Mines until the Copper River and Northwestern Railway was completed.

McClellan left Alaska in 1911 and relocated to California.

The AMHF has previously inducted two pioneers important in Kennecott's history: Kennecott founder Stephen Birch in 1998, and exploration geologist Wesley Earl Dunkle in 1999.

AMHF Honors Chair Charles C. Hawley compiled the biographies of Stannard and Douglass. Lovan Hovis compiled the biography of McClellan.

Editor's note: The above information was acquired by notes taken at the ceremony and from The Paystreak, Volume 10, No. 2, Fall 2008 newsletter of the Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Foundation.

"I want the people of America to be able to work less for the government and more for themselves. I want them to have the rewards of their own industry. This is the chief meaning of freedom."—Calvin Coolidge

The ladies-only annual Cookie Exchange—another delicious event

BY BONNIE KENYON

McCarthy:—The McCarthy area has residential “pockets” that have acquired local names to aid in describing where folks live or do business. In the case of the Edwards’ home where yet another Christmas Cookie Exchange took place, locals refer to their location as Swift Creek. The creek runs right in front of Jim and Audrey’s house where we ladies have met for the majority of the annual Cookie Exchange’s gatherings.

The idea all began thirteen years ago (please see editor’s note at the bottom of the article) with former resident Carly Kritchens who delighted in a specific reason to open her cabin to a ladies-only event. She and husband, Ken, usually traveled to Cordova over the Christmas season to celebrate with their family. However, during Christmas 1995 they decided to stay put in McCarthy. Carly came up with the idea for a “ladies’ tea” and our first Christmas cookie swap. It was such a grand success that we ladies hoped it would not be the last. When the Kritchens moved to Bakers City, Oregon, the dream did not end. Audrey Edwards kindly stepped up to the plate and offered to keep “Carly’s dream” alive for the ladies of our town. Says our new hostess, “I still consider the event ‘Carly’s cookie exchange.’”

Thirteen ladies of various ages turned up at that first event. I guess McCarthy winter population hasn’t grown that much since her earlier days. This year’s tea brought out nearly every lady in the area for a total of 10. Although I have attended every annual exchange, this year I was not among the ladies of the area. (Rick and I had not yet returned from our trip south.) I do get the privilege of writing up this fine event.

The 2008 exchange took place on Friday, December 12, after mail. According to Audrey, my source for the “facts,” the day dawned bright and beautiful. (Meaning there was no adverse weather to hamper the traveling ladies and their wares.) It was a good choice of dates because the temperature took a nose dive the next day and has been cold since this writing.

This year’s tea was a first for Kennicott resident Diane Malik, westsiders Kathy Drury and Lindsay Jensen. Other participating ladies were: Lynn and Sarah Welty, Laurie and Hannah Rowland, Allie Keller, Jeannie Miller and, of course, hostess Audrey Edwards.

A large pot of hot spiced tea, prepared by Jeannie Miller, awaited each lady which was served in Audrey’s special china tea cups—only used once a year, she says.

Lunch consisted of Teriyaki and peach-glazed chicken sandwiches, potato salad, a variety of dips and crackers and pumpkin cake for dessert. Audrey passed out individual carrot cakes for each lady. (Even though I was not in attendance, I was gifted with one of those cakes and can vouch for their superb taste.)

As is the tradition of the exchange, plates of cookies were distributed to the bachelors and men whose wives are out-of-town. Approximately 9 plates were given out this year.

While the ladies visited, Audrey placed a phone call to Carly. The ladies said their hellos and passed on their good wishes. Some, like Diane Malik, had a great time regaling stories of the past when the Kritchens still called McCarthy home. Plenty of warm memories were exchanged as well as loads of thanks to the original hostess of the ladies’ tea. “After all, this was all her ‘idea,’” says Audrey.

I believe I can speak for the ladies of our town in saying: “Thanks, Audrey, for taking over where Carly left off, in providing us with an annual, delicious Christmas event!”

Editor’s note: In double checking the length of years the annual Cookie Exchange has taken place, I discovered I had miscalculated last year’s number. I wrote 13th annual but THIS year is the 13th. My apologies to all!

Always eat grapes downward - that is eat the best grapes first; in this way there will be none better left on the bunch, and each grape will seem good down to the last. If you eat the other way, you will not have a good grape in the lot. —Samuel Butler

CACFA continued from page 6

fees for recreational use of the most improved trails.

Next, Meg was asked about the new planning process for subsistence firewood permits in WRST. NPS claims they could better manage forest and other natural resources, protect firewood harvesting opportunities for qualified subsistence users, and remain consistent with other land management agencies in the Copper River basin by establishing a permitting system for subsistence firewood harvesting. Jensen remarked that several options were being considered during this winter's study including requiring permits for cutting along the road corridor, and cutting only in specified areas without a permit.

A recent regulation change to Title 36 CFR 13.485 deleted the word "live" from the standing timber regulation, and now states that the superintendent "...may permit cutting in accordance with the specifications of a permit" for standing timber for appropriate uses, such as firewood. However, the next paragraph in the regulation states, "... the noncommercial gathering of dead or downed timber for firewood shall be allowed without a permit in park areas where subsistence uses are allowed."

Commissioners, and a member of the State's ANILCA team, objected to the use of permits to accomplish NPS goals and agreed that there was regulatory inconsistency. The sheer preponderance of beetle-killed spruce in WRST would seem to preclude any need to limit the cutting of dead standing wood. I also pointed out that permits imply the granting of a privilege, not assertion of a right given by ANILCA law. Simple reporting forms would

allow residents to record quantity and location of harvested timber while meeting NPS goals.

An item of new business involved FS public use cabins in conflict with wilderness policies in the Tongass National Forest. In an effort to reduce maintenance costs, facilities would be closed which did not meet certain site criteria, had high maintenance costs, or low occupancy. Out of 314 recreation sites in the Tongass, 58 have been slated for closure or decommissioning. About 45 of those 58 sites are public use cabins. The Friends of the Tongass Cabins (FTC) organization formed to negotiate keeping as many cabins open as possible.

Territorial Sportsmen, Inc. (TSI) is a voluntary group which has helped maintain cabins in the Admiralty Island National Monument/ Tongass National Forest area for over 50 years. A recent FS decision has disallowed the use of chain saws, although by regulation their use may be authorized by the Forest Supervisor. Now, TSI finds it very difficult to accomplish their tasks with non-motorized equipment and are close to dissolving the 50-year partnership. One representative from FTC was present at the meeting, and FS personnel and one TSI representative was connected by teleconference to the meeting.

Another new business item was a topic of local interest to the McCarthy area, the ANILCA Section 1308 Local Hire Program which authorized federal agencies to hire local residents with specific knowledge or expertise in or near conservation system units without regard to the standard agency competitive hiring procedures requiring minimum periods of formal training or experience or employment preferences. The federal Office of Personnel Management (OPM) deter-

mined that the program was not in compliance with federal laws and regulations and, by Department of the Interior (DOI) mandate, the local hire program was closed for all DOI agencies in August of 2008.

Vic Knox, NPS Deputy Regional Director, spoke to us about current developments. Lynn Scarlet, Deputy Secretary of the Interior, recently lifted the local hiring freeze; NPS will be able to hire their personnel for the 2009 season through the program. However, OPM still feels that the issue is being handled incorrectly. Local hire is an "excepted" appointment, not a standard "competitive" hiring procedure. Senator Lisa Murkowski has sponsored legislation to provide competitive status to all local hires. But regional NPS personnel feel that the approach most likely to receive OPM approval would convert local hires to competitive status after a number of years of proven service so that employees are eligible for benefits and able to move up the agency hierarchy.

After a discussion of the fiscal year 2010 budget for CACFA, action issues were addressed to identify correspondence to be written to federal agencies voicing the Commission's concerns about several of the key agenda items. The next CACFA meeting was scheduled for February 6th and 7th in Juneau, then the meeting was adjourned.

CACFA meets 3 times annually, in Juneau, Fairbanks, and Anchorage to allow public participation in as many areas of the state as possible. Alaskans having problems with federal agencies on federal lands are encouraged to contact Executive Director Stan Leaphart, at 3700 Airport Way, Fairbanks, AK 99709-4699, or by phone at 907-374-3737.

"So I became a newspaperman. I hated to do it but I couldn't find honest employment."

—Mark Twain

Good news from the Wrangells

BY BONNIE KENYON

You and I are stepping into a new year, one containing all sorts of possibilities, plans, purposes, pursuits and priorities. With each new year comes sincerely-made resolutions—promises to ourselves and maybe others—for changing lifestyles that effect all areas of our lives. Perhaps we are entering 2009 with an excessive amount of weight that we are determined to lose before the year runs out. Maybe we desire to stretch our mental capacity by learning a new language or taking an educational course. Then there is always the plan to put more into savings and spend less so there is more at the end of 2009 than we saw at the end of 2008. And what about our social lives? We resolve to spend more quality time with friends and family and less time with those who desire to draw us away from what we believe is the right path for our life.

Last, but what I sincerely believe is the most important priority, is our spiritual condition and growth. Is our relationship with God, our Creator, deeper and more intimate than when we began the previous year? Or did we allow other “priorities” to draw us away from the One who knows us best and loves us most? A new year is always a befitting time to reflect on where we've come from and where we are going.

While it is of vital importance that our physical condition be sound, that our minds be productive, that we have enough money to pay bills and meet our daily needs, and that we have good relationships with family and friends, I wonder where on the scale of priorities do we position our heart

condition. The Bible (the Manufacturer's manual) tells us in Proverbs 4:23, “Keep and guard your heart with all vigilance and above all that you guard, for out of it flow the springs of life.” Jesus' words in Matthew 6:33 are some of the most important in all the Bible. They are foundational to life in God: “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”

I have heard the kingdom of God described as a place where God rules and reigns—a place where things are done God's way. It is difficult to know how to do that without reading His book. In the second half of that verse where it says these things shall be added unto you, the “things” are food, drink and clothing—the daily necessities of our lives. This is further proof to me, and I hope you, too, how important our walk with God is.

I am convinced that the most powerful thing we can do in life is seek God with all our hearts. The more I do this, the more I discover His goodness. Today's world is often a very unhappy place. We all need to experience God's great goodness on a daily basis. We all have need to be loved and this is what God, through His Son Jesus Christ, is all about.

May I encourage you as I have been encouraged, especially at this time of the year, to make a quality decision to put God first place. Seek Him in His book, the Bible. Ask Him to reveal more and more of His goodness to you. Believe me, it will affect every other area of your life. Walking with God, fellowshiping with Him, will bring His goodness into your home, your family and your

friends' lives. God desires to spend time with you, too. Remember He has plans and a purpose for your life and He wants to reveal them to you.

While in Florida on vacation, I saw a beautiful painting by artist Thomas Kinkaid. He is described as “The Painter of light.” The best way I can describe the effect of a particular piece by Mr. Kinkaid is to say when I looked at it, I was there in it. Does that make sense? I am not a connoisseur of art but peace and joy reached out and grabbed hold of my heart.

The painting to which I refer is entitled Garden of Promise.

There are stone steps that lead up to an iron gate which stands open as if someone has gone ahead and is waiting for me. Alongside the steps are flowering bushes that seem to have been placed there on purpose to be a blessing to the one entering the garden. Beyond the gate are trees with leaves that glimmer in the light. That light is the focus of it all.

It comes to mind that Jesus said, “I am the light of the world: he that follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.”

Underneath the painting is the scripture verse: “The Lord is faithful to all His promises and loving toward all He has made.”

This God is the One who wants to walk and talk with you everyday of your life and reveal His faithfulness to you. Let's make and keep Him the number one priority in our new year. It'll make all the difference in the world!

(Originally published in the January & February 2001 issue of WSEN. Updated by author.)

THE KATALLA HERALD

Vol. 1. No. 39. Katalla, Alaska, January & February editions, 1909. Published weekly by J. F. A. Strong

Staking Oil Claims

With the opening of the new year renewed interest in Katalla oil lands is being manifested, and yesterday there was considerable staking, though nothing approaching a stampede. Thomas G. White went up to Bering lake on Thursday and staked some likely lands Jan. 2, and Fred Runnels was out all day yesterday.

JANUARY 2, 1909

RAILROAD WORK TO BE RESUMED

It is stated that construction work will be resumed on the Copper River & Northwestern early in February. All reports to the contrary, M. J. Heney will be the directing genius of the work of construction.

Apropos of the same report comes another to the effect that the road to the coal fields will be built by way of Charlotte Lake pass, with a connecting branch from the coal mines to Katalla. It is thought, however, that the report is entirely misleading, in view of the surveys made from Katalla to the coal fields and to a connection with the mail line. There seems to be little doubt that the Copper River road will begin work from Katalla early the coming spring.

JANUARY 9, 1909

HYDRAULIC MINING—Is a Great Success On White River

Everything is quiet down Yakataga way, according to H. R. Calfee, a well known miner who arrived from the famous beach dig-

gings this week having come up on the Corsair. Provisions which were getting rather low have been replenished by the Corsair. There has been no sickness, and the health of the community is good.

There are about thirty people at Yakataga, but as this is the closed season so to speak, no mining is being done, and not much will be doing until along about the first of March, when mining operations will be resumed.

Marvitz, Eberly & Co., who last year installed a hydraulic plant on White river, about four miles back of the beach, are doing "dead work" on their property, preparatory to next season's work. Although they did not get their plant in operation until late last fall, it was a great success. It is claimed that they have a good paying proposition, and one that will not be exhausted for years. In addition to their hydraulic plant they have also erected a sawmill.

A LONG SPELL OF COLD WEATHER

For three full weeks and a day Katalla has been enjoying beautiful winter weather; the sky has been practically cloudless and the wind has kept close to his cave. The sea has been like a millpond, and the frosty stillness of the great White Silence broods over land and seascape.

Old timers say the present cold snap is the longest they have known here. And yet the mercury for most of the time has been above ze-

ro. Early on Thursday morning it dropped to three below, and Friday morning it was four below, but at noon it registered 12 above. Last night the mercury hovered about the cipher.

White slough and the mouth of the Katalla river are frozen clear down to Gray's dock, and as the tides are at neap stage it was stated last night that it was doubtful if the launches will be able to meet the steamer expected today or tomorrow.

KILLED MOUNTAIN GOATS

The local supply of fresh meat was increased on Thursday and yesterday by the arrival of several carcasses of mountain goat, which were brought in by natives from the Martin river country. The meat netted the natives 30 cents a pound.

Local and Personal

The Cordova Alaskan claims a population of 1,000 for that enterprising town.

Cordwood now retails at \$7 per cord, delivered and the cords are not so big either.

The influx of miners this week from Yakataga has given a stimulus to business along various lines.

Mrs. E. Campbell, a Seattle woman, recently left Valdez for the Koyukuk, unaccompanied and mushing her own dog team.

Walter Edkins and Otto Koppin left this week for Stillwater. From that place they will go on a hunting and prospecting trip in the country between Martin and Copper rivers.

Ducks are still being secured by hunters, though in small numbers, Eddie Johns having bagged a few this week. Blue-jays are numerous and shrill, and the saucy magpie is abroad in the land.

Fred Runnels while a fine axeman is a better marksman, as he demonstrated the other day, and yet his marksmanship did not accomplish the desired end. Fred is getting in the family wood and had felled a tree which lodged in a neighbor's branches, on its way to earth, being suspended by a single splinter. He looked over the situation and concluded to shoot off the refractory splinter, and let the tree down gracefully. So getting his rifle he blazed away at the offending sliver. He quit after he had used up a box of cartridges, although he swears he hit the mark every time.

JANUARY 16, 1909

WORK ON THE COPPER RIVER ROAD

Work on the main line of the Copper River & Northwestern railway to the Bonanza copper mines will be resumed March 1, according to the statement of Archie W. Shiels, who is here to resume the active management of the Pacific Coal & Oil company. The construction work on the railroad will be continued by M. J. Heney, notwithstanding all reports to the contrary. Mr. Heney returned to Seattle from New York on Jan. 10, and is now making preparations for the summer's work. Chief

Engineer Hawkins is still in New York.

Mr. Shiels says that when he left Seattle nothing had been decided as to the company's plans for building from Katalla.

Some Railroad "Dope"

In a letter received by O. L. Wiloughby, from Capt. E. J. Rathbone, who is in Seattle, the latter states that the outlook for Katalla the coming season is good. He also says that the latest railroad dope is to the effect that the Copper River & Northwestern will make its terminal at Kanak island, and will build its railroad shops at Katalla.

TO RUSH RAILROAD TO BONANZA

Fifty miles of railway to be constructed, giving employment to 3,500 men by June 1, is the plan of M. J. Heney for his summer work on the Copper River railway. Twelve million dollars has been pledged by the Morgan and Guggenheim interests to extend the line from its present terminus, at the head of Abercrombie rapids, fifty-four miles from Cordova to the Bonanza mines.

"The work of pushing the Copper River railway through to the Bonanza mines is assured," said Mr. Heney, who arrived in Seattle from the east January 11. "The question of money has been solved, for the Morgan and Guggenheim interests have already pledged the money, \$12,000,000, that is necessary to put the line through. We will build the 150 miles to be constructed before November, 1910. That is the contract I made when I was in New York.

"We are beginning the work now. That is, H. R. Simpson, assistant master mechanic, who came down

to meet me, says the rotary snow plow is ready, to be sent out on the line at any time. As soon as we complete our plans, which will be in about a month, we shall clear the present line and begin shipping our supplies to the end of the road. They will be freighted to various points along the survey, where we will establish camps. In this way I shall be prepared to handle a large number of men as soon as the snow is off the ground. For the real summer work the boats on the Copper river will be used to supply these camps, and by getting an early start and having everything ready in the spring, I have no hesitancy in saying that we shall have fifty miles of the road finished long before the snow flies.

"The next 100 miles of the line can be rushed through easily, for during the coming summer the steamers will be used to carry supplies along the entire distance of the survey, so that when the following spring arrives all we will have to do is to send our men to the established camps."

JANUARY 23, 1909

NEWS NOTES OF ALASKA

R. F. McLellan, superintendent of the Kennicott mines in the Copper river region, arrived recently in Valdez with thirty men to work in the company's mines.

JANUARY 30, 1909

STEVE BIRCH TALKS OF THIS SECTION

In an interview in Seattle not long ago Steve Birch talked as follows about this section and the interior country:

"The whole mineral country drained by the Chit-

tina and Copper rivers looks to me more promising than ever before. Many mines are being developed in anticipation of the completion of the railroad and the opening of traffic by rail and steamboat lines this year, and of which the outside world knows little. In addition a great deal of development work is being done on Prince William sound. It will only be a few years until that whole section of Alaska will contribute enormously to the world's wealth in gold and copper.

"At the Bonanza mines we have completed tramway and many of the buildings and will be prepared by August 1, next, possibly before, to deliver ore in large quantities to the railroad and steamboat lines.

"At Cordova a sampling works will be established in the near future for the benefit of the mine owners in the Prince William sound country whose development has not progressed far enough to permit of large individual shipments of ore. By the means of the sampling works these mine owners will be enabled to dispose of their ores at Cordova, where they will be shipped to the Tacoma smelter, thus materially forwarding the development of that portion of Alaska."

FEBRUARY 13, 1909

EXTENT OF DAMAGE —To Copper River Road Is Not Yet Known

According to the latest news received from the Copper river country it will take some time to ascertain the full extent of the damage caused by the Miles glacier overflow over the track of the Copper River railway. As stated in the last issue of The Herald, four miles of the

track have been covered to an unknown depth by ice and debris, and nothing is known of the condition of the roadbed beneath.

J. W. McCord, who is employed by the Katalla company in the Copper river country, reached Katalla last Saturday night, having come overland from Cordova, in company with Clarence Cunningham, the well known coal operator of the Carbon mountain region. When McCord left Cordova little was known there of the disaster, the first intimation that something was wrong being the "finding of a river where there never before had been one." Supt. Murchinson and a gang of men were busy opening the railroad, which had been cleared of snow as far as camp 7. In the deep cuts where the snow had accumulated to a great depth it had to be dynamited. Excellent progress however was being made with the work.

McCord estimates that it will take 300 men a month to clear the track, and added to this will be the repairs to the roadbed and the replacing of piling and bridges. He thinks that the moving of supplies to the other side of the canyon, for use in the interior this summer, will not be greatly delayed, as these can be moved by horses from the end of the operated track, through the canyon.

Chief Engineer Hawkins and Contractor M. J. Heney were expected in Cordova on an early steamer, when an examination of the extent of the damage will be ascertained, as far as possible.

FEBRUARY 27, 1909

Alaskans' vitamin D production slows to a halt

BY NED ROZELLE

Interested people are needed to participate in a one-year study to assess the effects of long dark winters on the vitamin D and calcium levels of Fairbanks residents.

So began a recruitment poster Meredith Tallas created 25 years ago. Now living in Oakland, California, Tallas was a University of Alaska Fairbanks student in 1983 who wanted to study how levels of a vitamin related to sun exposure fluctuated in people living so far from the equator.

"The most obvious vitamin to study in Alaska is vitamin D, because of the low light in winter," Tallas said recently over the phone from her office in Berkeley.

Forty-seven people responded to Tallas' 1983 request, and her master's project was underway. By looking at the bloodwork of those Fairbanks residents every month and analyzing their diets, she charted their levels of vitamin D, which our skin magically produces after exposure to a certain amount of sunshine. We also get vitamin D from foods, such as vitamin-D enriched milk and margarine, and fish (salmon are a good source). Vitamin D is important for prevention of bone diseases, diabetes and other maladies.

If you live at latitude farther north than about 42 degrees (Boston, Detroit, or Eugene, Oregon), the sun is too low on the horizon from November through February for your skin to produce vitamin D, according to the National Institutes of Health. Tallas also saw another potential Alaska limitation on the natural pathway to vitamin D production.

"Most outdoor activity requires covering all but the face and hands

approximately seven months of the year," she wrote in her thesis. "During the summer months residents keep much of their bodies clothed because of the persistent and annoying mosquitoes and biting flies and because of this, an Alaskan summer suntan becomes one of the face and hands."

But even overbundled people like Alaskans show signs of enhanced vitamin D production from the sun. Tallas found the highest levels of vitamin D in the Fairbanks volunteers' blood in July, and the lowest levels in March. Tallas attributed the July high occurring about a month after summer solstice to the time needed for the body's processing of sunlight and the conversion to vitamin D.

In Tallas' study, volunteers showed low levels of vitamin D in winter months, but most got sufficient doses of vitamin D from sources other than the sun. Tallas also found that males had an average of 16 percent more vitamin D in their blood throughout the study, which she attributed in part to men being outside more.

In charting an average for people's time outside (you can't convert sunlight to vitamin D through windows), she found December was the low point of sunlight exposure, when sun struck the skin of her volunteers for less than 20 minutes per day. People spent an average of more than two hours exposed to Alaska sunlight in June and July. They seemed to hunker down in October, when time outside in the sun dropped to about half an hour after almost two hours of daily sun exposure in September.

Vitamin D levels in the volunteers' blood dropped in August, September, October, November, December, January, February, and

March, but Tallas saw an occasional leap in midwinter.

"When someone had gone to Hawaii, we could see, very exactly, a significant spike in their vitamin D levels," Tallas said. "The only surprise was how it came a month or two after."

In her thesis, Tallas wrote that a midwinter trip to somewhere close to the equator would be a good thing for boosting Alaskans' vitamin D levels.

"Presuming that an individual's lowest circulating vitamin D level is found in March or April, such trips could potentially have a very significant effect in improving late winter vitamin D status," she wrote in her thesis.

"Unfortunately a majority of Alaskan residents do not take such trips often."

An easy alternative for Alaskans not traveling southward during the winter is eating foods rich in vitamin D or taking vitamin D supplements, Tallas said.

Following the initial publication of this column in November, Meredith Tallas showed me a recent study on vitamin D in which the researchers concluded that wild salmon contain more of the healthful substance than farmed salmon.

"We recently conducted a study and observed that wild-caught salmon had on average 5001000 IU vitamin D in 100 g (3.5 ounces), whereas farmed salmon contained 100250 IU vitamin D per 100-g serving," wrote Michael Holick of Boston University School of Medicine in the April 2008 American Journal of Clinical Nutrition. "The most likely reason is that vitamin D is plentiful in the food chain but is not plentiful in the pelleted diet fed to farmed salmon."

Book Review—*Codfish Aristocrat* by Ken Lord

BY PEGGY GUNTIS

Many of you will recall that in the Nov./Dec. 2007 issue of *WSEN*, Rick and Bonnie published the short story of Ken's called *The Suspicious Death of a Codfish Aristocrat*. Along with many of Ken's other books, you could also purchase a copy of the story online. It was so well received that Ken wrote and published a 278 page book called *The Codfish Aristocrat*.

This novel is historical fiction taking place in the early 1900's in McCarthy, Alaska. The core story is based on facts of that important time in the history of the Kennecott Copper Mine and

the town of McCarthy. The theme is the story of a young woman, Rose Silberg, who trades her life as the wife of a businessman in New York for that of a highly paid prostitute, McCarthy Rose, in McCarthy, Alaska when the town was at its height in population and importance. Rose is mysteriously murdered and buried in a place, unknown but to a few, somewhere along the train route between McCarthy and Cordova, Alaska. Don't worry, I'm not telling you anything you won't learn in the first chapter!

I loved the book. The characters were real; Rose's death and the subsequent mystery of her murder were well developed; the

effects of World War I, the influenza quarantine of 1918 and the discovery of copper on the hard working people of Kennicott and McCarthy are felt and understood. Now, when I walk down the main street of McCarthy, I see and hear the hustle and bustle of what it once must have been and am pretty sure I even know where Rose lived! Thanks, Ken Lord, for a great book.

Kenniston (Ken) Lord is a prolific author from Tucson, Arizona. The book was published by Lulu in 2008 and can be purchased at www.lulu.com/kenlord and is available either in print form or as an electronic download in PDF format.

Pataky named new WMC Director

BY LILA VOGT

The Board of Directors of the Wrangell Mountains Center is pleased and excited to announce the hiring of a new Executive Director. Jeremy Pataky was in a field of outstanding candidates for this position; but his multiple and varied skills, his unbridled enthusiasm, the overwhelming positive recommendations of his references (including his current employer) and the positive impression he made during the interview process made him the clear choice.

Jeremy first came to the Wrangell Mountains several winters ago and, like all of us, fell in love with the landscape and the community. He has worked for two seasons as a guide in the

Wrangells and has positively integrated himself into the wider community, participating in several WMC community events, as well. He has a wide range of experience, including grant writing, grant management, an MFA in Creative Writing and marketing university programs. Jeremy was proactive in seeking this position as soon as he heard from Jessica that she was not renewing her contract this fall. He is brimming with ideas to improve our current systems and operations and creative innovations for future expansions of programs. He has great administrative skills, a broad background in development and marketing and is just a "can do" kind of guy.

Please join us in making Jeremy feel welcome and be pre-

pared for some exciting new steps forward for the Wrangell Mountains Center.

We would also like to recognize the outstanding contributions of outgoing Executive Director, Jessica Speed, to the accomplishment of many of our short and long term goals during her two year tenure. Jessica was a very hard worker and brought fresh energy and creativity to the E.D. position. We look forward to her continuing involvement with the WMC. To her, we say thank you, but not good-bye.

Looking ahead to another successful year of providing quality science and arts based programs in the Copper Valley and communities in and surrounding Wrangell St. Elias National Park and Preserve!

ORV trail comments sought

BY SUSAN SMITH

In 2006, a lawsuit was filed by the National Parks Conservation Association, the Alaska Center for the Environment, and the Wilderness Society against the National Park Service (NPS) regarding off-road vehicle (ORV) use on nine trails in the Nabesna district of Wrangell-St. Elias National Park & Preserve (WRST). The lawsuit claimed that NPS failed to find, as specified by regulation, that ORV use is compatible with WRST values and purposes, and failed to prepare an environmental analysis evaluating the impacts of ORV use.

As a part of the lawsuit settlement, WRST is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to evaluate the impacts of ORV use on park resources. Access to inholdings and subsistence uses are not being challenged; the focus is recreational use only.

On December 3, 2008, NPS released its *WRST Nabesna Off Road Vehicle Plan of EIS Draft Alternatives* for public comment. To solicit more public participation in the planning process, NPS is accepting comments on the content of these draft alternatives. But only until January 10, 2009. The suggestions will be used to refine the alternatives before the Draft EIS is released in November of 2009.

A copy of the draft alternative package may be downloaded at <http://www.nps.gov/wrst/parkmgmt/planning.htm>. It may also be downloaded at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/WRST> and comments may be submitted at this site. A hard copy may be requested by calling WRST headquarters at 907-822-7276. The document is also available at WRST headquarters in Copper Center, the Glennallen library, and the Slana Post Office.

Common to all alternatives are restrictions on vehicle size and weight, which apply to subsistence and inholder access on these trails, as well as recreational use. Wheeled vehicles may be up to 1,500 pounds curb weight. Recreational ORV users are required to obtain a permit from NPS, stay on existing trails, and stay out of designated wilderness.

Six alternatives are presented in this document, representing varying degrees of trail usage, improvements, and maintenance. Charts are included for each trail, explaining the implications of each alternative. Maps are also provided for the 3 trail improvement alternatives.

Alternative 1 is a *No Action* approach. Recreational ORV use would be permitted on all trails, but would only be allowed on the Suslota, Tanada, and Copper Lake trails under frozen conditions. There would be no change to subsistence ORV use, other than the weight restrictions. Permits are encouraged for subsistence use, but not required, and travel would be allowed off established trails and in wilderness. No major trail improvements would occur and 41% of the trails would be subject to seasonal closures to ORV use.

Alternative 2, *Open to Recreational ORV Use*, would permit recreational ORV use on all nine trails. Subsistence uses would not change and no major trail improvements would be implemented.

Alternative 3, *Closed to Recreational ORV Use*, would only allow the recreational use of snowmachines under frozen conditions. No major trail improvements would occur. Subsistence use would not change, but some non-motorized routes would be designated.

Alternative 4, *Minimum Trail Improvements*, would improve some trails, but would rely upon the ad-

ministration of ORV usage to control trail use and degradation. All ORV use would be subject to temporary closure on trails prone to degradation. Trail maintenance would increase to correct unsafe conditions, and resource damage. This alternative would upgrade approximately 8 miles of trails to a maintainable condition. Seasonal closures to recreational ORV use would occur on 66% of trails.

Alternative 5, *Moderate Trail Improvements*, would require recreational ORV users to pay an annual user fee of \$30 for a permit. Trail maintenance would increase and additional non-motorized trails would be designated. Improvements would be made over 28 miles of trails.

Alternative 6, *Maximum Trail Improvements*, relies on a significant investment in trail improvement projects to correct trail and resource degradation. Trails would be upgraded to accommodate multiple uses such as mountain biking, hiking, and horseback riding. New, non-motorized trails would be constructed to provide a diverse range of recreational experiences. Trail maintenance would also increase. Almost 49 miles of trails would be improved, but 22 miles would still be subject to seasonal closures.

Comments are most helpful to NPS if they are specific and directed at actions proposed within the alternatives. If one or more alternatives are objectionable, explain why and make a new suggestion.

Comments may be submitted to NPS by emailing the project manager directly at bruce.rogers@nps.gov. They may be mailed to WRST, Attention: Bruce Rogers, PO Box 439, Copper Center, Alaska 99573. Comments may also be submitted through the park planning website mentioned earlier.

Although the deadline for comments is January 10, 2009, I would encourage submission of comments even after that date. In most cases, I am told, late entries are not ignored. And take note, the Copper Center zip code is incorrect on the NPS cover sheet for WRST head-

quarters. It should be 99573, not 99673.

We appreciate the opportunity that NPS has given us to help shape the draft EIS alternatives. Your comments are an important part of the process if we would like to see

our trails managed and maintained in a user friendly manner for as many ORV uses as possible. WRST residents and users have a unique knowledge of the trails in this area; your input is especially useful.

Robert Allen Hale: Papa Pilgrim

The Darkest Place

BY RICK KENYON

Several years ago, during the height of the "Pilgrim controversy," we met a young man named Mark Kirby. Mark was then editor at National Geographic Adventure magazine, and was in McCarthy to look into what was going on between the National Park Service and the Hale family. At

that point he, nor any of us, had any idea of the story that would eventually emerge out of what once was called "Hillbilly Heaven, but turned out to be what he now terms "the darkest place."

Mark has written a very well done piece on the "Pilgrim Story." Unlike earlier pieces Kirby has managed to tell the story—in depth—

without the reader coming away with a sense of his having sensationalized it.

Kirby's story ran in the December issue of Outside magazine. It is also posted online at <http://outside.away.com/outside/culture/200812/robert-allen-hale-papa-pilgrim-1.html> and is worth reading.



Alaska National Parks Seeking Public Comment

Alaska's National Parks are inviting comment on each park's Compendium. The Compendium is a compilation of all designations, closures and restrictions imposed under discretionary authority within the regulations covering national parks. The Compendium, as part of the park-related regulations, helps provide for the use, enjoyment and protection of Alaska's National Parks.

A copy of each park's proposed compendium for the 2009 season is available at www.nps.gov/akso/compendium. A written copy may be requested directly from the park or the National Park Service, 240 W. 5th Avenue, Anchorage, AK 99501, Attn: Compendium.

Comments will be accepted by mail or e-mail to Andee_Sears@NPS.gov between January 1 and February 15. Comments are welcome at any time in addition to this timeframe, but comments received after February 15 will be considered in future compendium revisions.

Local Hires will continue at Park for now

BY MARY ODDEN

Copper Center – The Wrangell-St. Elias National Park says its January 13 Glennallen Job Fair will go on as planned. The job fair is an event that fills the ranks of the park's 80 or so summer seasonal employees and provides important income and skills training for youngsters and other local residents.

The plans to go forward with the job fair and local hire at the park are in spite of a hiring freeze which suspended the National Park Service's and other Department of Interior (DOI) agencies' use of the Local Hire Authority allowed by ANILCA (Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act).

The freeze was the result of an audit performed by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Anchorage. OPM determined that the USFWS, the NPS, and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), as well as the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) in the Department of Agriculture had incorrectly been using the Local Hire Authority since the passage of ANILCA in 1980.

Specifically, OPM said the local jobs should have been placed in a "competitive" rather than an "excepted" service arena. At the time of the hiring freeze, according to Ann Crow, Administrative Officer for WRST, agency officials hoped that OPM and DOI could resolve the issue quickly, but "Unfortunately, that hasn't happened yet."

Crow said that OPM has, in several meetings this fall, rejected the DOI's recommendations about how to proceed with local hire. After a recent meeting in November, the

USFWS and BLM decided they will abide by the DOI hiring freeze and advertise open positions nationally.

The Alaska National Park Service has chosen to continue using its local hire authority, although utilizing more stringent guidelines for the program. According to Crow, the NPS will determine if each position considered for local hire will benefit from having a person placed in it who has a "special knowledge of the area." If so, then the park will proceed with a local hire process for that position.

Crow says WRST has a number of visitor-serving seasonal positions where local knowledge is important to the services provided. Also, she says that the DOI is still working with OPM for a permanent resolution to the hiring problem.

Local hire is important to federal agencies that bring on seasonal employees to accomplish work in the short Alaskan summers. WRST Superintendent Meg Jensen told a local land managers' meeting in October that the park fills 25% of its jobs through the local hire provisions in ANILCA. "The hiring freeze presents a significant challenge for the park," she said.

Shutting down local hire would have meant advertising those positions nationally through USA Jobs, the federally contracted, nationwide hiring service for federal employment. Job-seekers access USA Jobs through its online website, www.usajobs.gov.

Hiring through the national process can mean sorting through a national pool of employees, and at a significant cost to the park. Advertising for each job in each location runs approximately \$1300 per announcement, according to Beth

Betts, Human Resource Assistant of WRST.

Betts says the park recruits for positions in Copper Center, Slana, Kennecott, and Yakutat, and hiring local people with area knowledge and skills means that the staff are quickly operating up to speed as employees in the short summer season. In Kennecott, 80% of the park's summer seasonal employees are hired under the local hire authority.

For local residents, applying through the USA Jobs site would be much more competitive than applying directly to the park. Theresa Absher of the Glennallen Job Service office says her office can help local residents prepare applications for the nationally advertised positions, which require more and different information than local hire applications.

The Park Service is currently advertising locally for a GIS Specialist position, and is preparing to advertise nationally for four permanent positions.

According to Marnie Graham of the Bureau of Land Management, Glennallen Field Office summer positions are advertised nationally through the USA Jobs site, typically as early as January.

Federal agencies hire summer employees early in the year, generally in January and February. In recent years, this early hiring period has become more important as employees also have to pass a homeland security background check adjudication process which can take four to six weeks.

(Originally published in the Copper River Record. Used by permission.)

"If the government gets into business on any large scale, we soon find that the beneficiaries attempt to play a large part in the control. While in theory it is to serve the public, in practice it will be very largely serving private interests." —Calvin Coolidge

Emergency vehicle upgraded

COPPER CENTER —

Recently one of the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park & Preserve emergency vehicles was marked "US Park Ranger" and lights and siren were installed, in line with other Alaskan Parks and as required by National Park Service policy. "This modification also helps make Park Law Enforcement/emergency services vehicles more recognizable so that Rangers can provide service to the public," stated Park Superintendent Meg Jensen. "In addition, it

allows more timely response to accidents, rescues, and other emergencies, where rapid travel is required."

Through a long-standing mutual aid agreement with the State of Alaska, Park Rangers and State Troopers are available to assist one another as needed within or outside the Park. National Park Service Law Enforcement Rangers are required to be trained for and respond to emergency medical incidents, technical searches and res-



cues, fire, and other emergencies. This first marked vehicle will enable Rangers to more effectively and safely be of assistance.

Wrangell-St. Elias and high school groups partner with service projects

COPPER CENTER —

Wrangell-St. Elias National Park & Preserve and the varsity hockey teams from Kenny Lake and Glennallen High Schools recently partnered to improve visitor services and seasonal employee housing. The Park entered into a five-year cooperative agreement with the Copper River School District to enable partnership work and the transfer of funds. Two Public Land Corps grants received by the Park this year

enabled the Park and School District to put the cooperative agreement to work.

Thirty Kenny Lake High School varsity hockey players and their parents worked with Park staff and volunteers for three weekends in late September and early October to construct three 12' x 16' cabins, complete with insulation and windows. These cabañas will serve as seasonal housing for summer employees near Park

headquarters in Copper Center. In a second effort, twenty Glennallen High School varsity hockey players and their parents worked with Park staff and volunteers for five days in late October and early November constructing 40 picnic tables, each a robust 400+ pounds. These tables will be distributed throughout the park for visitor use. Both projects were completed at the schools;



Photo courtesy NPS

Glennallen School varsity hockey players work with their parents and National Park Service employees building 40 picnic tables

for their efforts, each team was funded with approximately \$7,000 to support hockey team expenses. "This is a perfect example of the Park and community working together for mutual benefit," stated Park Superintendent Meg Jensen. "We hope in the future to engage in more such projects which place school groups, parents, and Park employees working hand in hand to improve visitor services and benefit the school district."



Photo courtesy NPS

Kenny Lake High School varsity hockey players, their parents, and National Park Service employees building cabins

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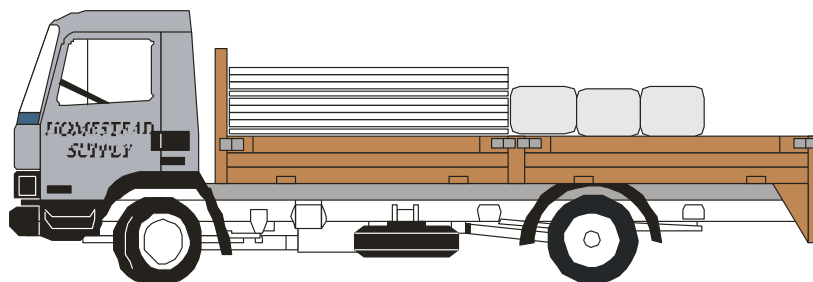
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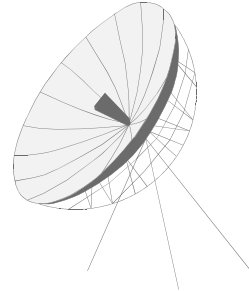
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Cooking with Peggy

BY PEGGY GUNTIS

Hi all you readers who love to eat. I hope you had a wonderful holiday season of doing nothing but that. You are all probably in the deepest part of the winter now and that's when food tends to taste so.o.o good.

First I would like to apologize to all of you for keeping secret a wonderful recipe that a friend in McCarthy gave me for the column some time ago. Actually I would have shared it before but it got stuck in the wrong file and I just found it. It's one that Trig Trignano gave me that is from "Diane and Marie's Aunt Kay." If you've been to McCarthy you know that Trig is the man who is followed by every dog in town because he ALWAYS has a pocket filled with dog biscuits. They even know him at mail! And would you believe it folks, he owns a very lovable cat! We, the people, know him as a neighbor who comes to McCarthy for the summer and every chance he gets so he can work on the house he's going to live in when he retires. The recipe he wants us to have is for a

CORN DISH

Mix together:

2 cans corn (Trig uses 1 creamed, and 1 regular)
1 ½ cups milk
2 eggs, beaten
16 Ritz crackers, broken up
Salt and pepper

Then:

Cube and saute in butter 3 or 4 slices bread.

Pour mixed ingredients into buttered 9 x 9 baking dish.

Place crumbled bread on top.

Cover with foil. Bake for 45 minutes at 350 degrees, then for 15 minutes uncovered to brown.

I'm sorry I wasn't organized enough to have that recipe for you for Thanksgiving. Enjoy!

Jim and I love trying new things so I'm always looking through new recipes. Have you ever bought the ones that women's groups in churches or other organizations put out to raise money? Of course they always put in their favorite ones so I'm never hesitant to try them. Here's one that was in the collection put out in 1974 by the Women's Hospital Auxiliary of Rockingham County in Virginia (I lived there for 10 years). It's easy and good.

PORK TENDERLOIN SUPREME

12 sliced bacon
Salt and pepper
6 slices onion, ¼" thick
6 pork tenderloin patties
6 slices tomato, ½" thick

Cross 2 slices bacon, place a patty in the center and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Place a slice of tomato on the patty, season, top with a slice of onion. Add more salt and pepper. Bring bacon ends up over the onion slice and fasten with a wooden pick. Place in a pan, cover and bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes.

Here's another one we love to eat! I found it in the collection put together in 1997 by Mount Olive

Lutheran Church in Tucson and Peace in the Valley Lutheran Church in Benson, Arizona.

SAUERKRAUT CASSE-ROLE

½ lb. diced bacon
1 lb. ground beef
1 med. onion, diced
1 large can sauerkraut
2 cups potatoes, cooked and mashed
Salt and pepper, to taste

Fry the bacon until crisp. Drain and set aside. Brown beef, onion; season with salt and pepper. Place beef mixture in the bottom of a 2 quart casserole. Wash and drain sauerkraut well. Put on top of the beef mixture. Fold on mashed potatoes. Cover with lid. Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes or more. Remove lid and bake 5 to 10 minutes more to brown potato topping. Serves 4-5 (As you notice the recipe does not tell you what to do with the bacon. I divided it and put some with the beef mixture and sprinkled some on top. You do what sounds best to you.)

Now for a little reminiscence - after the New Year don't some of you want to clean out drawers, change the furniture around, and sometimes look back at old pictures, yearbooks, and if you're at all like me, old recipes? My Mom died back in the late '60's. I'm lucky enough to have some of her recipe books and cards so when I was looking through them the other day I came across one that she had received from a friend in 1958. According to her friend and written on the recipe was the statement that the recipe at that

time was at least 150 years old. Since that would have been about 1808 and during the time of Thomas Jefferson (who loved good French cooking, by the way), I'm sure the recipe instructions have had to change somewhat if for no other reason than the change in ovens! But try it and feel nostalgic for times gone by.

CRUMB CAKE

4 cups flour
2 cups brown sugar

1 cup shortening
Rub (don't you love that!) the three above ingredients together and take out 1/2 cup for top of cake.

Add: 1 lb. (1 pkg.) raisins that have been cooked and drained well. Cool.

Also - 1 teaspoon cloves and 1 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon

Mix well.

Stir 2 teaspoons baking soda into 2 cups buttermilk and add to the above mixture.

Nuts may be added if desired.
Bake in moderate oven (350 degrees) until cake leaves side of pan.

(The recipe doesn't say what size pan but it looks like a 13 x 9 size recipe to me. It also doesn't remind you to put the 1/2 cup of saved topping on. You could mix the nuts in with that too.)

Stay warm this winter everyone and enjoy your food. Thomas Jefferson did so we can too!

▲ LOOK AT THE WEATHER

BY GEORGE CEBULA

October 2008 was below average in temperature and about average in precipitation.

The average temperature for October was 24.2 (30.3 in Oct. '07, 33.2 in Oct. '06, 30.0 in Oct. '05 and 31.1 in Oct. '04). This was about 2 degrees below normal. The high was 47 on October 3rd (50 on Oct. 14, '07, 50 on Oct. 12, '06, 53 on Oct. 3 '05, 52 on Oct. 7, '04 and 75 on Oct. 2, '03). The low was -20 on October 31st (4 on Oct. 19, '07, 6 on Oct. 29, '06, -1 on Oct 30, '05, -5 on Oct. 23, '04 and 0 on Oct. 31, '03). There were 5 days with the low 0 or lower and 5 days with the high 45 or higher. Kennicott had an average temperature of 26.5, with a high of 46 on the 3rd and 13th and a low of -3 on the 25th and 31st .

The total liquid precipitation was 2.84 inches (0.82 in Oct. '07, 5.65 in Oct. '06, 0.40 in Oct. '05, 3.27 in Oct. '04 and 0.61 in Oct. '03). Total snowfall for October of 24.6 inches (7.8 in Oct. '07, 8.4 in Oct. '06, 3.7 in Oct '05, 12.3 in Oct. '04 and 3.5 in Oct. '03). The snow depth at McCarthy was 0 inches on October 1st and increased to 10 inches on the 3rd and ended the month with 9 inches on the ground. Kennicott had 3.50 inches of liquid precipitation and 30.0 inches of snow. There was 4 inches of snow on the ground at Kennicott on October 1st and 11 inches on the 31st.

The first 10 days of November recorded about average temperatures and precipitation. The data for the rest of November will be missing as I will be away until February.

Here are a few totals as of November 10. The high was 21 on

November 3rd and 4rd (43 on Nov 1, '07, 26 on Nov 1, '06, 15 on Nov 10, '05 and 43 on Nov 10, '04). The low was -16 on November 9th (-7 on Nov 13, '07, -29 on Nov 15, '06, -32 on Nov 6, '05 and -7 on Nov. 17, '04). Liquid precipitation was 0.35 inches with 6.7 inches of snow, compared with 1.40 inches and 17.5 inches of snow in '07. There was 11 inches of snow on ground, the same as on November 1st. The Kennicott river was completely covered with ice the morning of November 8th . I'll do my best to summarize November in the next issue.

December and January are usually the coldest months with lows falling to -50 and colder.

Daylight is down to just under 5 hours by December 21, before it begins to increase again.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

November 27, 2008

Dear Bonnie & Rick,

Here's my 2 year subscription renewal. Just read "Pastor Rick's" article & say "good for him." Yes God is both good and sovereign!

Just returned from a pilgrimage to Israel & Egypt (3 day cruise down the Nile River) and it was a Blessing...God is very GOOD & I am a grateful one. Often think of cousin

Tony (Zak) and miss his letters. Helen & I are still in touch.

Christmas Blessings,
Wanda Peddle
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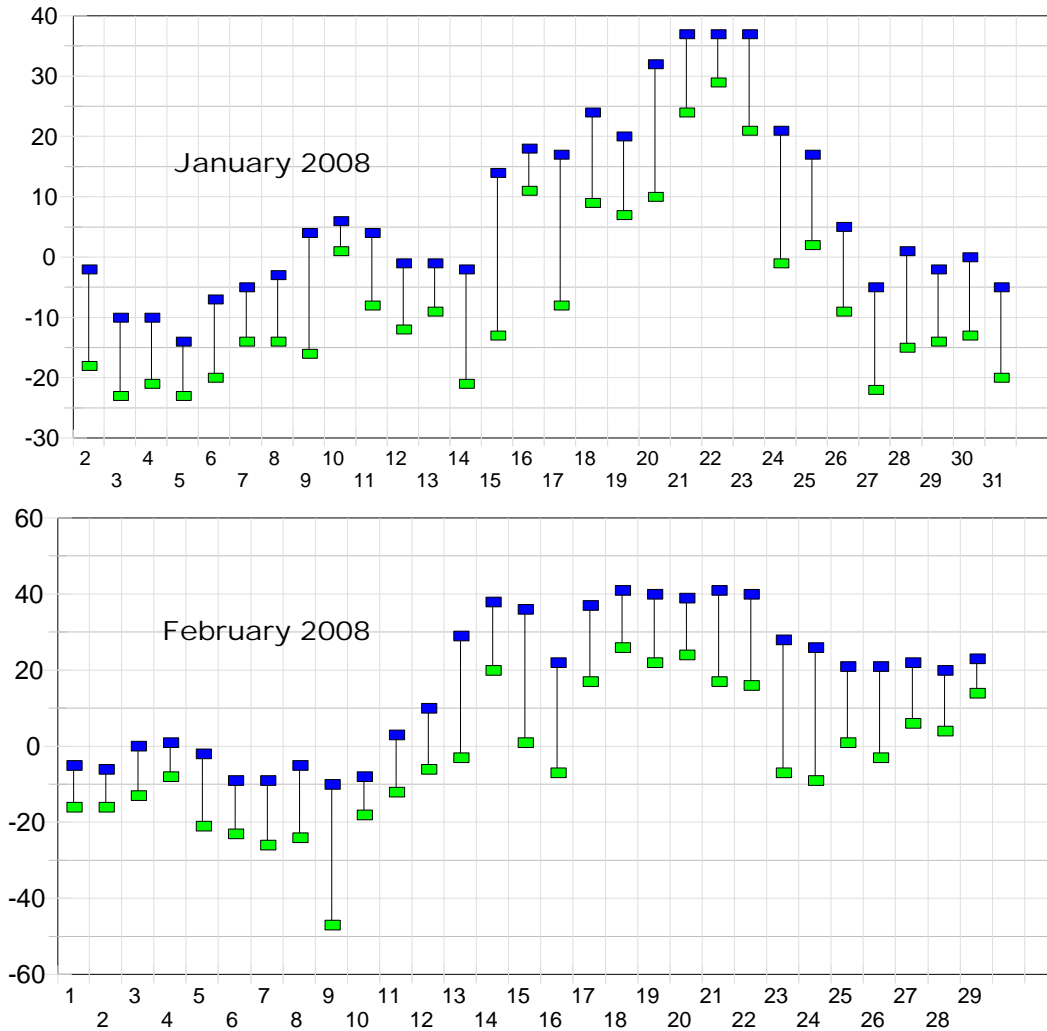
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