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# Wrangell St. Elias News

*"Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty"*

Vol. Ten Issue Two

March & April 2001

Two Dollars

## Over (under?) the river and through the woods...



photo courtesy Carmen Russo

Our weather editor, George Cebula, was doing his good deed for the day by taking the "west side" neighborhood mail across the river to the McCarthy Airport, and picking up the incoming mail for both himself and his neighbors. Unfortunately, the ice gave way and George and his snowmachine got a dunking. Fortunately, George and his machine ended up on an ice shelf about 3' below the waters' surface as the water was much deeper at that point. A couple of Good Samaritans helped George recover his machine.

*Airplanes in  
the Wrangells—  
The mergers*



## *A note from the publisher*

BY BONNIE KENYON

It is February 23<sup>rd</sup> and we are putting the final touches on this issue of WSEN. Rick and I usually make "a note" the last page we write in case there is something we need to share with you before Rick cranks out the finished product.

This last week I turned on my computer to start a day's work and discovered it wasn't responding to any commands on my part. Rick - the expert - did an in-depth inspection which included a long, drawn-out phone call to technical service. The diagnosis was "terminal" and a new computer has been ordered. This wasn't the most convenient time for my trusty companion to go belly up so Rick hooked up our laptop and I've been able to continue my job. However, it did slow us down a bit.

We hope you enjoy this issue of WSEN. Subscribers like Jim McGavock of Ogden, Utah, are really appreciated. Jim submitted the article "Recollections of an Electrician at Kennecott" by Wesley Bloom, formerly of Kennecott's early days. I was aware Wes had passed away but I desired to know the date. I called

Jim and he said he'd get back with me as he needed to search it out. It wasn't long before he called us back, and relayed the information we were looking for! Thanks again, Jim, for your interest in our publication and your desire to see our readers enriched with the history of Kennecott!

As you will see, a local homeschool teacher, Stephanie Peikert, shares her experiences with her students, Bekah and Adam Ward. If you homeschool as a parent or tutor and you have any pointers, we welcome your input. Also, if you are a pupil of the homeschool system and have written any poems or stories, please feel free to send them to us here at WSEN.

A short while ago I received an email from my friend Tonia Alexander who is a dedicated mother of 3 school-age boys, Josiah, Seth and Levi. She is also their homeschool teacher and takes her job seriously. She sent me information that you "teachers" or "students" will want to look into, I'm sure. "Lightspan.com offers a nearly inexhaustible source of

educational materials, screened by educators for topic, grade level and educational quality of material," writes Tonia. "The nice thing about it is that the parent can search at the Learning Search for any topic at the grade level that their child is at. There are lesson plans all ready to go, games and activities at the click of the mouse, and on-line printable worksheets... At the Teacher's Center, there are pre-tests (assessments) and evaluation (post-tests) to see exactly where your child is in a specific subject, plus on-line help, etc. It is a wealth of info for parents. Anyone with IDEA has special privileges using IDEA'S username and password, as IDEA purchases a package with Lightspan for \$25,000 for use of additional resources. However, anyone can use the site without the password."

Thanks, Tonia, for your timely input!

*Wrangell St. Elias News* welcomes aboard the following subscribers: David Huffine, NC; Steve Cone, NC; Sharon Lavalley, RI; Carol Holder, AK; Tom Kizzia, AK.

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

VOL. Ten, Issue Two, March & April 2001.

Published every two months at McCarthy, Alaska. McCarthy, PO Box MXY, Glennallen, AK 99588-8998. Phone (907) 554-4454. FAX (907) 554-4494 (note this is a new number).

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Contributors to this issue: George Cebula, Ned Rozell, Kenny Smith, JoAnne Woolever, Wesley Bloom, Alexis Candelaria, Roni English, Stephen Simmons, Stephanie Peikert, Bekah Ward and Adam Ward. Subscription price is \$10 for one year in the USA. Canada \$12.50. Other countries \$20. Advertising rates upon request. Deadline for publication in next issue is April. 15.

PERIODICALS POSTAGE PAID AT GLENNALLEN, AK. 99588.

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

## Items of Interest

BY BONNIE KENYON

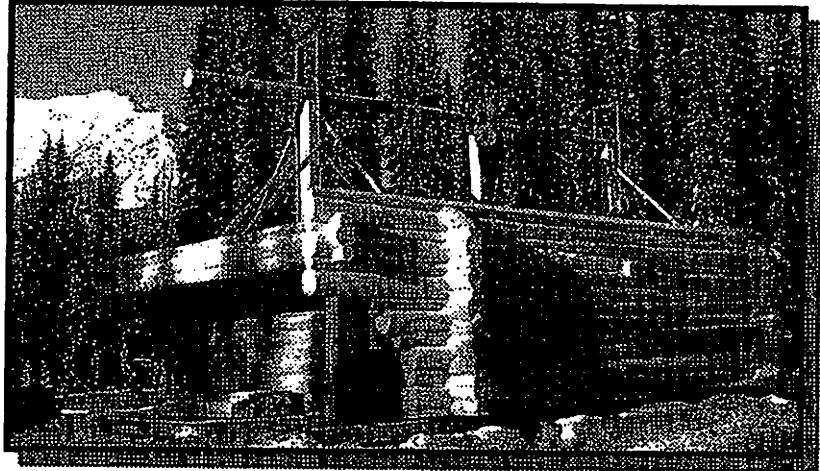
**Chad Reymiller and Julia Coats:** When Chad and Julia stopped by this morning they didn't know they were going to be my first "item" for this issue. These two winter neighbors are good sports, however, and eagerly updated me on their latest cabin-building progress.

Not many people in our northern state tackle log construction during the long, cold winter months. Chad is quick to warn others of the manifold challenges that go hand-in-hand with winter building projects!

Chad and Julia are more-than-excited to report they have reached a mammoth milestone. Their ridgepole is up and in place. I can't help but use the adjective "mammoth" because that is the best descriptive word that comes to mind when I see the diameter of their logs! Needless to say, I ask them how many neighbors helped them raise the pole. They said, "Just us!" They were quick to add the two chain hoists they used on each end of the log, took the weight of the project.

Although these two very ambitious and diligent young people have done nearly all the work themselves, it is always a blessing to have an expert nearby. According to Chad, a local "logsmith" stopped by and gave them a much-appreciated hand this past week in counseling them on preparing the ridgepole for its final home.

They are both extremely excited to say "all log work is done." The huge pile of logs is *finally* depleted and Julia's peeling job is over.



WSEN staff photo

CHAD AND JULIA CELEBRATE PUTTING THE RIDGEPOLE IN PLACE!

Congratulations! Just think, Chad, next winter you can join the guys on those ice-fishing trips and, Julia, you can kick your feet up and enjoy a cup of tea with the ladies!!

**Brooks, Diane and Ian Ludwig:** Speaking of a "cup of tea"...Diane invited a few of us ladies to visit her and Ian. Brooks was gone for a short while on a trip to Delta and she and baby Ian would love to have some company. Lynn, Sarah and Rene Welty and myself snowmachined to the Ludwig's cabin at Fireweed Mountain Subdivision. It's about 10 miles from my place.

Linda Lohse and her nearby neighbor, Lorelei Haukness, came from Long Lake which is about the same amount of distance.

We met Diane's neighbor, Mark Vail, on the trail who assured us we weren't lost; in fact, he was busy "grooming" the trail for us. We certainly appreciated his efforts. Because of a recent snowstorm, we thought we might run into portions of windblown trail.

We ladies (and Ian) enjoyed the laid-back get together over tea, chocolate chip muffins and other finger food that Diane had waiting for us.

Ian is keeping mom and dad quite busy these days due to the exciting milestone of learning to walk. He is doing a wonderful job and seemed to enjoy the challenge of making the rounds to see which lady would offer him a sample of their goodies. (I for one, was a certain pushover!)

Thanks for the wonderful time, Diane and Ian.

Brooks is due to arrive home in a few days and coming in with him is Diane's father, Allen Showalter of Anchorage.

Although Mr. Showalter has visited the area before, he has not had the privilege of seeing the Ludwig's cabin. We welcome him to our town and wish him a wonderful time in the Wrangells!

**Don, Lynn, Sarah and Rene Welty:** The Welty family has returned from their vacation trip south. Don reports they had a splendid time visiting his parents, Don and Marge, in New

Smyrna Beach, Florida and Lynn's parents, John and Nancy Burtch, in Xenia, Ohio. While in Florida, he successfully acquired his multi-engine rating, they spent some time on the beach and went canoeing.

Ohio was a bit cooler so the activities took on a different look: ice fishing with Lynn's dad, tobogganing, and bowling. Lynn says this was the first time Sarah and Rene had ever tried their hand at bowling and they did surprisingly well. Sounds like they had a great time with a variety of memories.

Since arriving back home, Don has found time to get in a year's wood supply and Lynn and girls are back in homeschool mode.

I am glad to report Shadow (their dog) survived their absence and was well taken care of by Julia and Chad. Sarah and Rene's pet rabbits managed to thrive in spite of a near lynx attack and my lack of rabbitsitting know-how. Welcome home, Welty family!!

**Ralph, Linda, Tyee, Teal, and Trae Lohse:** Long Lake is home to the Lohse family who always finds things to do no matter what season it is. Linda's major job is homeschool teacher with Ralph helping out in-between house finishing projects. The three boys sometimes find schoolwork quite challenging. Not because they are not capable students but because of the call of the wild. Now that trapping season is over, the boys are dreaming of more fishing time. Dad is getting pressure to take a desired camping trip to Silver Lake where Tyee is sure the rainbow trout are just waiting for him!

Teal is planning the construction of a snow igloo on Long Lake. Trae is keeping tabs

on the 3 eagles that pay regular visits to the area.

Somehow Linda found time to knit Ralph a hat using Mark Vail's very own handspun wool yarn. A perfect Valentine's Day gift.

**Jim, Jeannie and Aaron Miller:** The Millers are home from what sounds like a glorious trip to Hawaii. It seems it is hard not to lose something when traveling and Jeannie was no exception. She pointed out to me that somewhere en route home she lost 80 degrees. That sounds serious!

For someone who loves to garden, Jeannie couldn't help but notice the "year-round gardening" Hawaii affords. They camped for 3 days in the Botanical Gardens. Beautiful? Yes. Any drawbacks? Yes. According to Jeannie, Jim and Aaron had a rough time sleeping due to the noise of the many wild chickens that roam free on the island. Jeannie, who is used to her own flock of chickens, didn't seem to mind the distraction and managed to sleep through it all.

Another "welcome home" is in store for the Miller family!

**Chris Richards:** Chris has been keeping an eye on Kennicott while most all of his neighbors are traveling this winter. A few nights ago our area experienced a real snow/wind storm. According to Chris, Kennicott really saw its share of gusting winds. In fact, he says he considers this storm as a "top wind storm" from the 20 years he has lived here. Snow was drifting in three directions, he reports. Glad to know you are safe and sound, Chris!

**Keith Rowland:** Keith paid the area a short visit recently when he came out to do some work on his property. We are always glad to have one or all of

the Rowlands in the neighborhood. Of course, we are especially pleased they chose this area to build their dream home some day and I can't help but hope that "day" will be sooner than later!

**Al and Fran Gagnon:** When Fran answered the phone today, I was sure to tell her that it wasn't mail day. Usually I call Al and Fran with any mail day information so Al can meet the mail pilot, Lynn Ellis, at the May Creek mail shack. Today, however, was no mail day but just a social call with items of interest in mind.

Fran and Al are doing just fine and enjoying the quiet winter months, even though Fran and I decided we really haven't had an Alaskan winter this year. Believe me, we aren't complaining! I guess you'd say we are counting our blessings that the warmer temperatures are bringing us this year.

**Doran Ward, Roni English and family:** When Bekah answered the phone, my first question was immediately answered - are Doran, Roni and family home yet? They got in yesterday, said Bekah, and they had a fun trip. I was glad to hear that!

The trip was to Seattle where they spent about a week attending to doctor appointments, etc. (I'm sure Roni had a long list of "to-do's.") The drive in on the McCarthy Road was uneventful, although Roni reports that a few of those road glaciers are beginning to take on a slanted look again.

Since getting home, Roni says they are seeing plenty of coyote, lynx and wolf tracks in their area. In fact, shortly before they left for Seattle, Bekah and Stephanie received quite a thrill while out on a skiing trip. They

saw a wolf about 50' from their trail. The experience made their trip quite an adventure.

Glad you all had an enjoyable and profitable trip! Welcome home and back into the winter routine on Fireweed Mountain.

**Stephanie Peikert:**

Stephanie took good care of Doran, Roni, Bekah and Adam's animals and kept their house from freezing. She has chalked up quite a few miles on her skis this winter, making good use of the Ward/English dog Cloudy and Stephanie's own Keela for what must be her favorite sport – skijouring. It is a 15 mile round trip excursion from the Fireweed Mountain home to the mail shack on McCarthy's airstrip. So, mail day is a day long venture but one Stephanie must enjoy as she's made quite a few trips for mail this winter.

On one of her more recent trips, Stephanie met up with a moose on the trail. I understand she was extremely glad the two dogs were firmly fastened to her and well in control. Eventually, the animal decided it would give way to Stephanie and team and moved off the trail. I'm sure Stephanie was relieved.

Tim Mischel: Usually I don't have too much trouble locating Tim because his trusty cell phone goes everywhere with him. However, the day I wanted an item of interest from him, the phone wasn't operating. Then, yesterday at mail he showed up on his snowmachine. He checked his phone and everything appears to be working now. Tim reports all is well with him and he claims this is the warmest McCarthy winter he can remember.

**Congratulations to Cliff and Jewel Collins on the celebration of their 68<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary!**

**Call for Proposals to Change Federal Subsistence Fisheries Management Regulations**

**SUBSISTENCE BOARD PRESS RELEASE—**

The Federal Subsistence Board is accepting proposals to change Federal Subsistence Management Regulations for subsistence fisheries on Federal public lands and waters in Alaska. This is the first step in the development of regulations for the March 1, 2002 to February 28, 2003 regulatory year. Proposals must be submitted to the Board by 5 p.m. on Friday, March 30, 2001. Call 800/478-1456 or 907/786-3888 to request a proposal form or more information. Electronic copies of this form are available on the Office of Subsistence Management internet home page at <http://www.r7.fws.gov/asm/home.html>.

The Board will consider proposals to change federal subsistence fishing seasons, harvest limits, restrictions on methods and means of harvest, and customary and traditional (C&T;) use determinations.

The Board will also accept proposals for an individual C&T; use determination for individuals who live in resident zone communities of National Parks and National Monuments and people who already hold a Section 13.44 subsistence use permit.

All proposed changes must be for regulations for the March 1, 2001 to February 28, 2002 regulatory year, which will be published in the Federal Register in late January and in the Subsistence Management Regulations for the Harvest of Fish and Shellfish on Federal Public Lands and Waters in Alaska booklet in early March. A copy of the proposal form and

instructions will also be found in the 2001/2002 fisheries regulations booklet. Proposals will NOT be accepted for changes in federal subsistence wildlife regulations at this time.

Federal Subsistence Management Regulations apply only on Federal public lands and waters, including limited marine waters, in Alaska. These lands and waters include national wildlife refuges; national parks, monuments, and preserves; national forests; national wild and scenic rivers; and national conservation and recreation areas. The regulations do not apply on State of Alaska lands or private lands.

**Regional Contacts:**

**Southeast Region:** Fred Clark, (800) 586-7895 or (907) 586-7895

**Southcentral, Seward Peninsula Regions:** Ann Wilkinson, (800) 478-1456 or (907) 786-3888

**Kodiak/Aleutians, Bristol Bay Regions:** Cliff Edenshaw, (800) 478-1456 or (907) 786-3888

**Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Region:** Alex Nick, (800) 621-5804 or (907) 543-3151

**Western Interior Region:** Vince Mathews, (800) 267-3997 or (907) 456-0277

**Northwest Arctic, North Slope Regions:** Barb Armstrong, (800) 492-8848 or (907) 442-3799

**Eastern Interior Region:** Donald Mike, (800) 478-1456 or (907) 786-3888

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*"I never wonder to see men wicked, but I often wonder to see them not ashamed."  
—Jonathan Swift*

# Airplanes in the Wrangells

## "Mergers"

BY KENNY SMITH

By 1967 there were nine Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB) certificated interstate air carriers in Alaska; these were classed as "Alaska Service" carriers. In the rest of the United States there were eleven "Domestic Trunk" carriers and twelve "Local Service" carriers. In addition there were two Hawaiian carriers and the International carrier "Pan American."

Today this classification system for air carriers no longer exists nor does the CAB nor do most of these carriers. This was primarily due to the Airline Deregulation Act of 1978. Large Trunk and International carriers such as Braniff,

Eastern, National, Northeast, Western, Pan American and now TWA have disappeared. All the Local Service carriers, such as Allegheny, Bonanza, Central, Frontier, North Central, Southern, Mohawk, Ozark, Piedmont, Trans-Texas, and others are also gone. Some of the Local Service carriers combined to form the current US Air which itself may now be merging.

In 1967 the Alaska interstate carriers were: Alaska, Alaska Coastal, Ellis, Cordova, Northern Consolidated, Reeve Aleutian, and Wien Alaska. Two smaller Alaska carriers also held CAB authority but were relegated to operate aircraft with gross weights of 12,500 pounds or less, these were: Kodiak Airways and Western Alaska Airlines. Pacific Northern Airlines (PNA), the

largest of the Alaska carriers, had just been absorbed into Western Airlines and Alaska Coastal Airlines had acquired Ellis Airlines in 1965.

With the exception of Reeve and PNA all the Alaska carriers were recipients of federal subsidy. The CAB's 406 Subsidy Program had been in existence since 1938 when Congress stabilized the US air transport

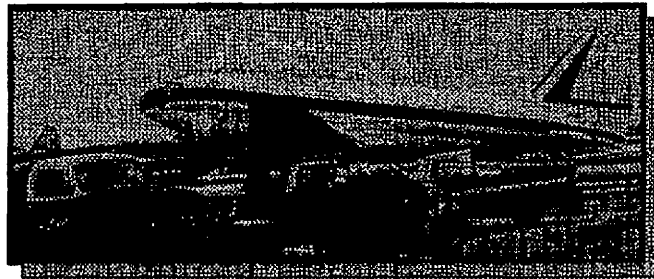


Photo courtesy Ken Smith

CORDOVA AIRLINES 55 PASSENGER SUPER C-46.  
MARCH 1967

system by enacting the Civil Aeronautics Act. All the US Local Service Carriers also received this subsidy as well as one Domestic Trunk, Northeast. This subsidy program had been politically unpopular for some time. By 1967 the handwriting was on the wall, "get off subsidy or close up shop."

This article is about airplanes in the Wrangell Mountains. As I discussed in the previous series, Cordova Air Service/Airlines was the first organized flying operation in the Wrangells, if we consider Harold Gillam to be the founding father of that company. Therefore, it just so happens that Cordova Airlines was the catalyst that led to a national parade of subsidized carrier mergers that culminated in economic deregulation of all airlines in

1978. This story concerns those events and as Vice President of Cordova Airlines, I was there to witness it.

In February 1967 Northern Consolidated Airline's (NCA) Chief Financial Officer, Stuart Fitzugh (Fitz) and long time friend of Merle K. "Mudhole" Smith, paid him a visit. NCA was unquestionably financially strongest of the subsidized

Alaska carriers. Fitz said his boss and CEO of NCA, Ray Peterson, was more frustrated than he had ever seen him. Like Mudhole, Peterson was an early Alaska bush pilot and the two were long time friends. Peterson was also an excellent

businessperson. In my opinion he was the shrewdest and perhaps smartest of all the Alaska carrier CEOs. Fitz explained that Ray's anxiety came from his belief that the infrastructure of Alaska aviation was about to drastically change and Ray did not want NCA to be secluded. He said Ray had considered all possible options and earnestly wanted to explore merger with Cordova Airlines (COA).

Business the winter of 1966/67 was slower than usual for carriers in Alaska and that made it even more difficult to scratch up payroll funds. On top of that, Mudhole had, for some time, shared Ray's uneasiness. It was definitely time to talk. In order to prevent rumor from circulating among the employee

groups it was decided to hold discussions in Washington D.C. where both carriers had legal council and CAB specialists.

Within a few days Mudhole and I met Fitz in Washington. Strangely, Ray had suddenly come up with a reason to temporarily stay behind. Fitz said Ray was obligated to show a visiting politician around and would join us in a few days. Along with our legal councils we spent the better part of a week listening to NCA rhetoric involving virtually everything but merger.

Finally Ray arrived. Ray also put on a good show, expounding upon NCA's corporate history for hours but never once did we get down to considering consolidation. It was obvious that both Ray and Fitz lacked enthusiasm for the merger that Fitz had seemingly promoted just days before. They had suddenly gotten cold feet. After another day, the four of us had a final lunch together after which Ray planned to catch a flight to Colorado in order to visit his son in college. The lunch was like a wake. It appeared to me that Ray and Fitz might want to sweat COA a little longer in hopes the financial stress might make negotiations a little more favorable for NCA.

Mudhole was not a happy camper. We went back to our hotel and discussed COA's options. It just so happened that the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Alaska Airlines (ASA) had a residence in Washington D.C. and he was home at the time.

His name was Charles F. Willis Jr.; Charlie was married to Elizabeth Firestone, (an heir to the famous Firestone Tire Company fortune) and he had quite a reputation. He was a World War II hero, a navy pilot who had earned, among his many attributes, three separate Distinguished Flying Crosses in addition to the purple heart he

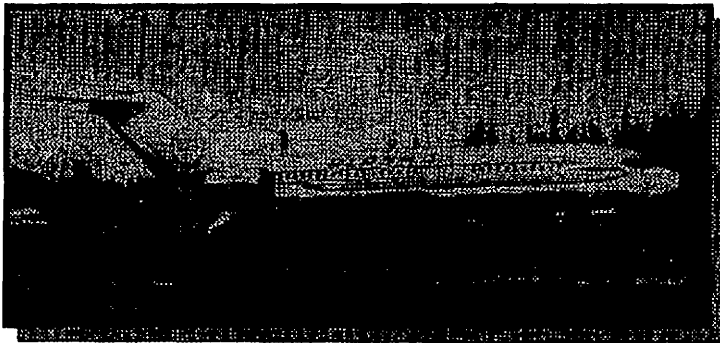


Photo courtesy Ken Smith

FIRST LANDING BY LARGE TURBOJET TRANSPORT AT CORDOVA. MARCH 1967.

received after being wounded during the Pearl Harbor attack. He once served on President Eisenhower's White House staff of aviation advisors. He ran his airline like he fought the war, taking such extreme risks that he was continually driving company directors and stockholders nuts.

Willis had suggested merger to Mudhole on a number of occasions. Alaska Airlines desperately wanted to gain a foothold in the southeast Alaska market and a jet airport at Sitka was just about to be completed. Alaska Coastal's CAB route authority confined it exclusively to southeast. PNA, which was just completing a merger with Western Airlines, had the only authority between southeast and Seattle and they shared authority with COA between Juneau and Anchorage. Willis believed that an ASA/COA merger would give the CAB grounds to grant ASA

authority from southeast on into Seattle (ASA already had Anchorage-Seattle authority). But Mudhole had been afraid of Willis's eccentricities. Besides, they didn't call him "Whiskey" Willis without reason.

As we sat in the hotel room discussing COA's plight, Mudhole suddenly reached for the phone and called Willis at home. Willis

was ecstatic. In those days Willis had ASA ticket offices everywhere, he even had them in Tokyo and Paris. Of course he had one in Washington D.C., which was located up on Connecticut Avenue. Willis wanted us to meet him there

in thirty minutes. We did. Within forty-five minutes we had a deal, much better than what Mudhole had ever dreamed he would get out of a NCA/COA merger. Mudhole would own 14% of the merged carrier. That night Mudhole did not suffer from insomnia.

Willis wanted to meet with the CAB the next morning so that a press release could be issued as soon as possible. It seemed like every member of the CAB was at the meeting. They were extremely enthusiastic. Normally a stolid bunch, this time they were all but slapping us on the back. This was the first break they had after many years of trying to persuade the subsidized carriers to consolidate. Mudhole made a speech in which he suggested to the CAB that they not screw the merger up this time. Nobody including Willis knew what he was talking



about. Remember, in 1942, when Mudhole was off working on the war effort, the stockholders of Cordova Air Service had agreed to merge with Alaska Star Airline. The CAB had turned that one down but was so slow in doing it both companies pretty much went broke.

After the session with the CAB I was sent to Seattle to meet with other ASA executives. After that I was to head for Anchorage with a nice fat ASA check that was certainly going to help with future payroll problems. In Seattle I was greeted by a headline and story in the local newspaper

expounding on the big merger between Alaskan air carriers. That evening, while in my Seattle hotel room, Mudhole called. He said Peterson had just called from Colorado and doubled the ASA offer. Mudhole had to tell him "he was a day late and a dollar short."

Within two weeks Willis had organized a special flight using one of ASA's brand new Boeing 727s (complete with plush "Gay Nineties" decor and Robert Service rhyme flight announcements) so that a bunch of us from COA and ASA could travel down the coast and make the first ever large turbo jet transport landings at Cordova and Yakutat. At the time, the runway in Cordova was much shorter than it is today. A local FAA employee was said to have lost a wager that day, in which he bet that no jet would ever land in Cordova.

After Yakutat we stopped briefly at Juneau en route to Seattle. In Juneau we picked up Alaska Coastal's Chief Financial Officer and Vice President, O.F. "Ben" Benecke. On the way into Seattle, Willis and I, while sipping liberally from



Photo courtesy Ken Smith

FIRST LANDING BY LARGE TURBOJET TRANSPORT AT YAKUTAT. MARCH 1967.

Whiskey's store of fine whiskey, worked on Ben in an attempt to convince him that Alaska Coastal's best interest would be served by merging with COA and ASA and not NCA or Wien Alaska. Even through my boozy haze I could see in Ben's prudent eyes that he harbored the same concerns about Willis that Mudhole had.

Nevertheless, three months later, Alaska Coastal decided to join us in our merger with ASA. The marriage turned out to be a good one for all. A few years later the CAB removed Western Airlines from southeast Alaska giving ASA exclusive authority there, a move that undoubtedly saved ASA from aviation's economic hard times in the 1970s. Alaska then went on to become the large and financially successful carrier it is today.

Willis didn't survive past

1972, as he was fired during a nasty board of director's coup orchestrated in part by O.F. Benecke, who then became ASA's CEO. Even though Willis often played fast and loose with the airline, even bordering it on bankruptcy, he contributed much to the carrier and was instrumental in its positive evolution over the long haul. Although Willis sometimes gave him fits, Mudhole remained loyal to Willis until the end. Mudhole was an ASA director and said that he always believed Willis to be a man true to his word except that Willis frequently over committed to the point it was simply financially impossible to keep all his

promises.

NCA ended up merging with Wien Alaska Airlines, NCA being the surviving corporation and the merged airline was named Wien Consolidated Airline. When Ray ran the merged carrier it enjoyed a stretch of profitable years, but it ended up bankrupt. That occurred after Ray had retired and sold out. The two CAB carriers which operated only small aircraft, Kodiak and Western Alaska, also merged, but they too ended up selling their assets and getting out of business. Recently, Reeve Aleutian Airways announced that they were closing down all scheduled passenger and freight operations and terminating most of their work force. So, of all these early Alaska carriers, only ASA remains solvent today, therefore we can say, Harold Gillam's legacy still continues.



# Homeschooling in the Wrangells

BY STEPHANIE PEIKERT

With homeschooling, we never have snow days. The kids that I teach, Adam and Bekah Ward, only have to troop about twenty feet from their house to my cabin, five days a week, at eight o'clock to start school. In lieu of snow days, however, there are teacher sick days (like when I came down with the flu) or days when all of the kids in town are attending a birthday party. What, you ask, all of the kids in town are allowed to skip school for social gatherings? Well, yes.

One of the benefits of homeschooling is flexibility. We can teach anywhere, whether in McCarthy, Mexico, Ohio, or Florida, without worrying about pulling the kids out of school. Or, on those days when an opportunity arises to go to a birthday party or ice fishing, it's easy to make up the day of school. For those of you who aren't familiar with education here, let me explain a little more about why we homeschool and how the system works.

The most obvious reason that we homeschool is that here in McCarthy we have no other alternative; there simply aren't enough kids for the state to maintain a public school. Even if there were a formal school here, it would be logistically difficult for the families. We, for example, live on the McCarthy Road, eight miles out of town and another mile off of the road. Another family lives at Long

Lake, over sixteen miles from McCarthy. And even within town, the kids are still spread out. Some live in Kennicott, five miles from McCarthy, and one family lives out by the Nizina River. In other words, if we had a formal school, there would probably be a lot of snow days.

So this leaves it up to the families out here to teach their own kids, or in the case of the Wards and some other families, hire someone like me to teach. We aren't completely on our own, however. Families choose a home-school district with which to work, and are assigned a corresponding teacher who checks in on progress and gives advice on the curriculum and grading. Since the state is required to offer public education for all children, they cover the expenses for teaching at home when a formal school isn't provided. The district gives each family a budget based on how many kids they have, and then the parents or teacher use the budget to pick the different textbooks and teaching aids that they want to use. Most, if not all, of the students out here have computers provided by their district to learn typing and other technology skills. The budgets sometimes also cover additional expenses; for example, Mark Vail (our nearest neighbor) teaches my kids art, and his classes are included in our budget. Other locals have taught music lessons to some of the kids around here, also on a homeschool budget.

The advantages of homeschooling are numerous, starting with the amount of attention that the kids receive. Extra help on a project, someone there to explain those tough math problems, or edit a story—no problem, whether it's Mom or Dad or Miss Peikert doing the teaching. Also, much to the kids's chagrin, someone notices immediately when they haven't finished their homework or aren't paying attention to the lesson. We can always advance at the kids's own pace in each individual subject, without boring them with work that is too easy or frustrating them with work that is too hard. And with only a few students, less of our school time is wasted than in an actual classroom. More efficient work means a shorter day; Adam and Bekah and I are finished every day by 1:30 in the afternoon. That gives us all more time to play outdoors, which is especially important when the days are short and sunlight is limited. And, while some of you may be worried about the amount of social interaction that the kids get when they aren't at a school with their peers every day, the winters are actually a great time for them to get together, whether it's after mail at Tony Zacs (the community center), going to other kids's homes for sleep overs, or sledding and skiing together. All in all, homeschooling out here makes for happy, healthy, well-balanced children.

## *The Ermine*

Hi, my name is Bekah. I just want to tell you about this little animal that lives at our house. This little animal is called an

ermine. An ermine has sharp teeth and sharp claws. He is very small, about 15" long including the tail and about 2" in diameter. The ermine lives in our wood pile outside. My dog, Cloudy, likes to

go over there every morning and look for it (no luck). One time Cloudy got too close to it and it hissed. Ermines eat meat such as squirrels and voles (mice). Ermines are carnivores. Ermines

are a type of weasel. You never want to catch one because they are really aggressive and bite hard. Ermines change colors. In the summer they are brown and in the winter they are white with

black tip on his tail. The reason it has a black tip is so that it can trick the hawks and owls. When they see the tip they go after it but all they get is a beak full of

snow (yuck). I always like watching it climb up and down our log cabin and look in the windows. Ermines are cute and helpful animals to have around.

### ***Bekah's Bear Story***

This is about me and a bear adventure that happened last summer in Alaska. I was 10 years old and now I am 11 years old writing this. My cousin, and my dog and I were going to clear trees out of the summer trail down to the road, because my cousin was going to have friends up to the homestead (cabin) and because then they could see the trail better. The reason we have a summer trail and a winter trail is because the summer trail does not have as much water as the winter trail. The water on the winter trail is from a beaver dam and it freezes in the winter. On the way to the swamp I heard a grunting sound, and I told my cousin, who was about 15 years old. She said, "It is just a car on the road." So we cleared some more brush and then we came to this bridge we had to cross. My cousin stopped and said, "Oh no." I said, "Is that a black bear or a grizzly?" Mary said, "It is a grizzly!" Medium size grizzlies are 7 feet tall when they stand up.

And this one was standing! My uncle was in a Super Cub

### ***The Lynx***

Hi, my name is Adam Ward. Here is a description of an animal called a lynx. Lynx are a type of wild cat that lives in Alaska. Lynx are about the size of a medium size dog. Their fur is gray with light brown, white and some black mixed in. On their bellies are small black spots. The tail is about 4" long

(small airplane that holds two people) and dropped a note saying, "Your friends are at the road waiting for you." But we didn't read the note. We thought that he saw the bear and was going to come down and help us. I was screaming "help." My mom heard me a mile away. She sent Adam and my other cousin, Brett, down to get the horses off the runway because my uncle was circling. Now we all thought different things. My mom thought that I was getting dragged by a horse. We thought that my uncle was going to come help us. My uncle thought that we knew that the people were at the road and were going to go down and see them. You probably think why do we have horses on the runway? The reason we have horses on the run way is so that they can run and they can graze. Our runway has grass so the horses can graze. Do you know what circling is? It is when a pilot gets really low and goes in circles about 75 feet off the ground. But what he was circling was us.

My mom got really mad because my brother had her shoes and she couldn't really

help me. She was down on the runway yelling at Adam, "Get up here and give me my shoes back." She heard bushes moving and thought that it was Adam, but it was really the other bear cub that was in the woods. There I was, down at the swamp, and my dog went by me with a bear cub chasing her. I was climbing a small tree and fell a foot. Then I was 15 yards from the mother bear. Luckily the mother bear did not pay attention to me, so then I went to another tree and tried to climb it, but I fell out of that one too. So my cousin and I started to walk back to the road. When we got to the road I started to cry because I thought that the bear killed my dog. But she was safe, we were all safe. But, to warn you, do not run from a bear because they will think that you are prey and will try to attack you. Let me tell you how protective mother bears are of their cubs. If you get near a cub and the mother bear sees you and you don't see her don't go up to the bear cub—you could get Hurt!!!! by the mother bear.

I hope I did not scare you.

with a black tip. Lynx ears are outlines with black along with black tufts on the tips.

The paws are large for the size of the animal. They are about 4 to 6 inches wide and very furry. The fur keeps their feet warm. The size of the paw makes them stay close to the top of the snow so they can move faster. Naturally lynx are predators but at times they are also prey.

Sometimes wolves or another lynx will kill and eat a lynx. People are another predator. They trap the lynx and sell the fur. Lynx are very quiet. If they see you they will either stand still hoping you won't notice them or run away. They will not attack unless they are cornered or you are near their babies. If you ever come to Alaska and see a lynx don't be scared.

# One Morning in Glennallen

BY ALEXIS CANDELARIA

*Reprinted from the school newspaper Pushka.*

Pushka reporter Alexis Candelaria was invited by race officials and her father, the Superintendent of Wrangell/St. Elias National Park to attend the Copper Basin 300 dogsled race in Glennallen, Alaska. This is her firsthand account of her experience being a dog handler on the morning of the race.

**I**t was still hours before the race, and the dogs were already eager to run the Copper Basin 300 trail.

My father and I were so bundled up against the sub-zero weather we couldn't feel the difference between the dog crews' "warm up" tent and the dark Glennallen morning. It was perfectly clear outside, and sound echoed a long way; the barks of the teams, gradually being unloaded from their trucks and staked out in holding lots, boomed loudly over the murmuring of human tenders and handlers.

Dad and I gathered with the rest of the Wrangell/St. Elias Park Service volunteers and listened as a race official outlined our job, his breath steaming despite the trio of gas heaters inside the tent. He explained that once the dogs are in harness and hooked in place ahead of the sled, they just want to run, they don't care whether they're at the starting line or not. So groups of handlers have to hold the main line as the musher clips his dogs into position, and then act as extra weight to keep the team from literally running away with the sled before it's the team's turn to start.

Since there are twelve dogs to a team there needed to be about six handlers to a group, one behind each pair of dogs. Hunter Sharp, Chief Ranger, organized the Park Service's cadre of volunteers into two groups of six, one lead by himself

and the other by his wife, Devi Sharp. I wound up with Devi, and our first team was #2, owned by Jason Mackey from Gakona. At first no one really knew exactly what we were supposed to do – there were several places where the team had to stop on the path to the starting line, but nobody was sure where those stations should actually be. The teams had to be spaced out enough that there wouldn't be any fighting or tangling, but they also had to be close enough together that each team would be released exactly two minutes apart.

As everyone was trying to get organized, I found myself standing just a little ways from where Mackey's dogs were chained to his truck. Most of them were excited, sniffing and yipping and looking around enthusiastically, but there was one who captured my attention. There, curled up under the front fender of Mackey's dog transport was a small, wolf-coated husky, whose light blue gaze only occasionally lifted to take in the scene whirling around him. His nose was tucked calmly into his busy tail, and he appeared to be half-asleep as he momentarily gazed about before shutting his eyes again.

Considering the state the most of the other dogs were in, the sleepy self-possessedness of this canine was fascinating. Even after his owner had pulled him up and briskly hauled his harness over his head, the four-legged racer didn't seem to catch the near-frenzied energy of his team-

mates; he stood calmly, glancing around as though he didn't have a care in the world. I couldn't help watching him, wondering why he didn't seem affected by the bustle going on. When one of the team handlers quickly picked up his front feet and walked him up to his place on the gangline I made sure to take a position right behind him – I asked her quickly what his name was. The handler yelled back over her shoulder that his name was Marble and he always got nervous before a race. Nervous? I thought. He had looked perfectly confident when I had been watching him just a moment ago, but suddenly I realized it was true, Marble was staring straight ahead, actually *trembling* in his place. I looked down at him and smiled – a sled dog self-conscious enough to be nervous? That was even sweeter than the "professional" attitude I had been visualizing with his earlier tranquility. I rubbed the shivering Marble's shoulders (the musher had already told us that all his dogs were friendly) and told him that this was his job, he must have run plenty of races before and done just fine. He looked up at me and licked my glove, huddling a little closer to my knees in the early dawn light.

When Marble finally looked up ahead of his team and started to wag the tail that until then had been tucked between his legs, I realized that we were minutes away from dashing across the lot and getting the #2 team lined up for their turn out of the chute. I rubbed Marble's

ears again and returned to my place holding onto the gangline behind him, but he didn't seem to notice my absence. Now that he could tell it was almost race time his head lifted, his tail fanned the arctic air, and he even barked once, pawing at the ground and shoving at the team mate beside him with an excited nose.

It was an experience trying to hold back Mackey's team when it was time to head for the starting line. Once the handlers gave the dogs an inch of slack they were off, heading for the open country. I held onto the line and even tried to dig my heels in once, but one teenager is hardly a match for a dog pack in full cry. It took all the handlers together to bring the team to a skidding halt at each of the stations, and even then the dogs still tried to lunge ahead, leaping and yelping in their harnesses. Well, most of them. I was still watching Marble just in front of me, and now he didn't seem scared – he seemed, in fact,

to be even more excited than the others although he didn't show it physically. Only the occasional small bounce and tug at the end of his line betrayed how much he wanted to be off, running past the people and out into the quiet country beyond, but he seemed so *focused*. I ruffled the fur of his back gently and he glanced at me for a moment, his pastel eyes almost asking if I could hear the trail calling too.

At the last station just before the starting gate, the musher suddenly decided to make a last rearrangement of his dogs. He noticed Marble and made a quick switch, picking him up and moving him to a position further up the line. I could still see him, but only just – the two dogs I had a hold of now were twin balls of energy, jumping high and straining forward as they announced their readiness with furiously joyous cries. I had my hands full and just barely held the pair back for the countdown to two minutes

– at two seconds the musher cried for all the handlers to let go and get out of the way, which we did. The team surged forward in a flying mass of canine muscle, gleaming eyes and noses flashing past on a wave of brown, black, white and gold fur; I barely caught one more glimpse of Marble before the team was gone down the open track of snow ahead.

Out of the fifty-three teams that came, I must have worked with almost a dozen others besides Jason Mackey's that day. Still, Marble is the dog that sticks most in my mind, his almost humanlike spirit and quirky personality. I realize I'll probably never see that dog again, and even if I do he won't remember me. But I will never forget that winter morning in Glennallen, when the sun rose over the mountains and fell on at least one canine who knew exactly what racing was all about.

## Mail Day in McCarthy

*Editor's Note: We think the following short stories, written by Roni and sent to her sister, Rita Bassett's 5th grade class in Topeka, KS, will enlarge your picture of life in the Alaskan bush. Many thanks to Roni for sharing them with us.*

BY RONI ENGLISH

**H**i, I'd like to introduce myself and my family to you and tell you a little about what we are doing. My name is Ms. Roni English. My husband's name is Mr. Doran Ward. Our children are Adam and Rebekah (Bekah) Ward. Adam is in 8<sup>th</sup> grade and Bekah is in 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Their teacher's name is Miss Stephanie Peikert (Pie Kurt).

One of the highlights of their week is going to mail. Now that may sound a little strange. But going to mail is different here in the McCarthy, Alaska area. For one thing mail only comes twice a week, Wednesday and Friday mornings at 11 am—weather permitting! That means if the

weather is good enough for a small plane to fly. If it is too snowy, windy, rainy, foggy, or cold the mail plane can't fly.

To get to mail we all bundle up in our warmest clothes that we look like multicolored snowmen. Then Doran and I get on the snowmachine. Adam and Bekah hop on the sled that is attached to the snowmachine. The sled looks very similar to a dog team sled. One of them stands on the runners in the back and the other rides sitting down on the sled bed. It can be a very cold ride. Miss Peikert doesn't snow-machine, she skijors into mail.

Then we start down our trail. The snowmachine trail is about 4 ft. wide with snow piled up on both sides. We feel the skinny

dark spruce trees whip past us. After about ½ mile we reach the beaver pond. We cross the frozen beaver pond, then up a little hill, down another forest trail, across the frozen swamp to the road. Finally we are on the road. Then we snowmachine on the road for the next 7 miles. We go past the moose ponds (where moose are in the summer), past creeks, through the forests and on to the river. We cross the river on the ice bridge—a bridge that forms at water level when the river begins to freeze. Early in the season it is kind of scary because there is open water flowing on both sides of the narrow piece of ice we are crossing.

Then we ride through town

where other people are also snowmachining, cross-country skiing, skijoring, and walking to mail. We go past some small private houses, the old train depot, Tony Zaks (the community center), and up to the airstrip. The whole trip takes about 1½ hrs. from the time we start suiting up.

When we get to the airstrip we all meet at the mail shack. The mail shack is a small building about ¼ the size of your classroom. One side has a door with a window next to it. There are small cubbies (probably like you had in kindergarten) on 2 sides. Our cubby is number 75. The fourth wall has a counter for sorting mail on top and storing packages underneath. There is a big green bag hanging by the door in which to place outgoing mail.

On Fridays, the day we go to mail, most of the kids in the area are there. All the adults stand around outside and visit. The kids play outside on the old equipment and in the trees. The plane arrives and taxis up to the mail shack. Everyone goes and helps the pilot, Mr. Lynn Ellis, unload the plane and put the outgoing mail on the plane. Then 2 or 3 people take all the incoming mail into the shack and sort it. After they tell us the mail is sorted we all crowd in and see if we received any mail.

After mail all the families with children go to Tony Zaks. Tony Zak died several years ago and left his house for the community to use. It has 2 rooms and the whole house is about the size of your classroom. We eat snacks, and the parents talk about all kinds of things

including how to help their children learn. There is no school here so most parents have to teach their own children. The kids play, eat and some times have a class. Adam and Bekah have had science and computer lessons there. Once there was a teacher from the state who came out to give a class and talk to the kids.

Then we go home. Through town, across the ice bridge, 7 miles down the road past the moose ponds, onto the forest trails, across the swamps, up and down the hill, across the beaver pond, and ½ mile up to the house. The whole trip takes about 5 hrs.

So you can see getting the mail is a little different than going to the end of the driveway and opening a mailbox.

## Sunlight in Alaska

BY RONI ENGLISH

The days are getting longer here in Alaska. Six weeks ago at Christmas time we had very short days. The sun didn't come up until after 10 am and set before 2 pm. True there was light in the sky about 30 min before the sun showed above the mountains to the south east of our cabin. Then the sky stayed light until about 30 min after the sun set behind the mountains to the south west of our cabin.

When the days are as short as they are at Christmas time we have shadows on sunny days the whole day. Even at noon the shadows are long thin sticks pointed north. The angle of the sun is so low that the light doesn't even reflect off the snow. Everything appears to be washed in gray.

The light is thin and watery. It feels like it is barely here, as if it can't wait to disappear and let us see the brilliant night stars

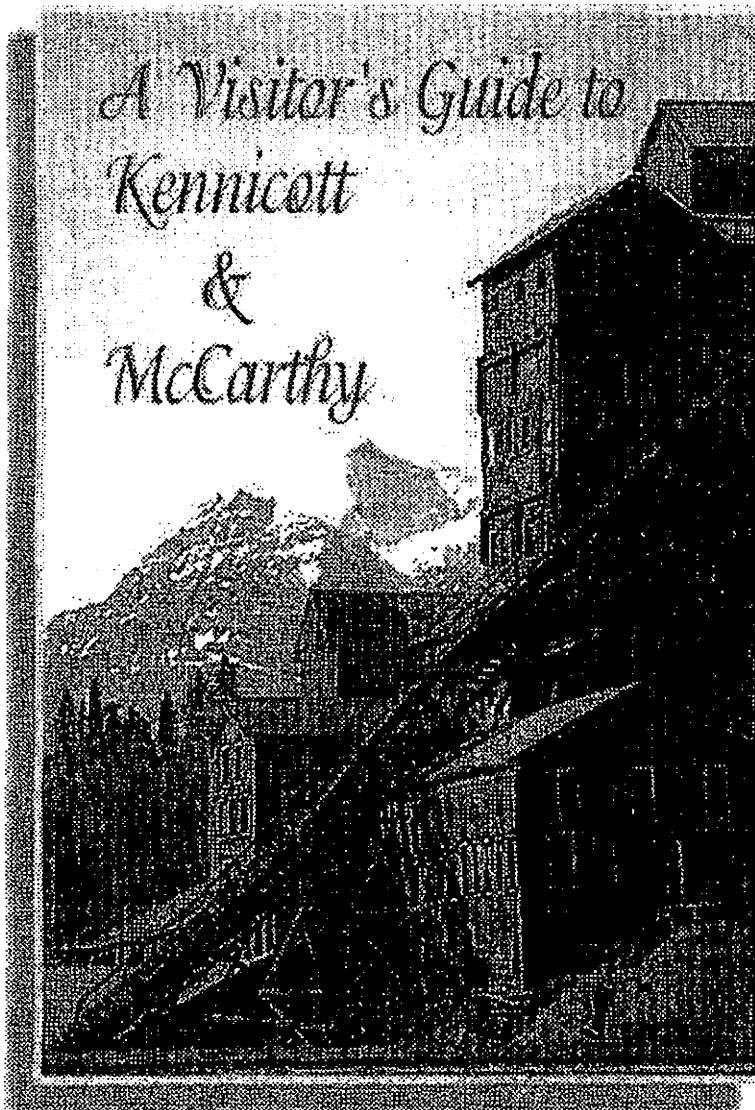
during the afternoon. It seems to apologize for even making that short of an appearance. During the week before and the week following Christmas the light is so weak and short that it is not uncommon for us to have the generator on the whole day. We do not have electricity here in the bush of Alaska unless we make it ourselves with the generator.

The sun is coming back now and getting stronger. At this time there are about 5 to 6 more minutes of sun every day. About 3 more minutes in the morning and 3 more in the evening. Now I know that to you 3 minutes at the beginning and end of each day doesn't seem like much. But think about it. It has been increasing since the first of the year. It has now been about 40 days since the days started noticeably lengthening. That means we now have 200 + more minutes of sunlight a day. Several hours! It is so strong that

on sunny days we must draw the curtains if we aren't to be blinded inside the house. Sunglasses are needed outside when we play. On these bright cold sunny days the air has diamond dust in it.

We are enjoying every minute of it. Adam and Bekah can ski, sled and skijor until supertime. The adults are into all kind of projects. Many of them are outside things that are fun to do without the bugs that are around later in the year. Every 10 days we get another hour of daylight.

By the end of June we can read outside without a light until after 11 pm. You barely get to sleep and the sun is shining in your bedroom window at 4 am. We are heading toward all that light like we are on a freight train with no brakes. Those are the days that last all night. It is fun and what we look forward to all winter when it is so dark there doesn't seem to be any day.



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# Good News from the Wrangells

BY BONNIE KENYON

*Have you ever experienced a deep desire to express your heartfelt feelings about someone you love and you struggle to put those inner thoughts to words? If it's a holiday or a birthday for that someone special, you most likely will go shopping for that perfect card that says just what is in your heart.*

*Yesterday Rick handed me the following article that he found on-line at Sixgunner.com. Tears came to my eyes as he read it out loud. I knew these words expressed what is in my heart for the God I serve.*

*As you long-time subscribers know, I choose this regular column to bring "good news" to you. In a world where there is way too much heartache, I hope the very personal aspect of this page does not offend you but rather offer you hope and a "knowing" that there is Someone bigger than any problem you face in life.*

Unashamed explanation of the God I serve.....

He is the First and Last, the Beginning and the End!

He is the keeper of Creation and the Creator of all!

He is the Architect of the universe and

The Manager of all times.

He always was, He always is, and He always will be...

Unmoved, Unchanged, Undefeated, and never Undone!

He was bruised and brought healing!

He was pierced and eased pain!

He was persecuted and brought freedom!

He was dead and brought life!

He is risen and brings power!

He reigns and brings Peace!

The world can't understand him,

The armies can't defeat Him,

The schools can't explain Him, and

The leaders can't ignore Him.

Herod couldn't kill Him,

The Pharisees couldn't confuse Him, and

The people couldn't hold Him!

Nero couldn't crush Him,

Hitler couldn't silence Him,

The New Age can't replace Him, and

Donahue can't explain Him away!

He is light, love, longevity, and Lord.

He is goodness, Kindness, Gentleness, and God.

He is Holy, Righteous, mighty, powerful, and pure.

His ways are right,

His word is eternal,

His will is unchanging, and

His mind is on me.

He is my Redeemer,

He is my Savior,

He is my guide, and

He is my peace!

He is my Joy,

He is my comfort,

He is my Lord, and

He rules my life!

I serve Him because His bond is love,

His burden is light, and

His goal for me is abundant life.

I follow Him because He is the wisdom of the wise,

The power of the powerful,

The ancient of days, the ruler of rulers,

The leader of leaders, the overseer of the overcomers,  
and

The sovereign Lord of all that was and is and is to come.

And if that seems impressive to you, try this for size.

His goal is a relationship with ME!

He will never leave me,

Never forsake me,

Never mislead me,

Never forget me,

Never overlook me, and

Never cancel my appointment in His appointment book!

When I fall, He lifts me up!

When I fail, He forgives!

When I am weak, He is strong!

When I am lost, He is the way!

When I am afraid, He is my courage!

When I stumble, He steadies me!

When I am hurt, He heals me!

When I am broken, He mends me!

When I am blind, He leads me!

When I am hungry, He feeds me!

When I face trials, He is with me!

When I face persecution, He shields me!

When I face problems, He comforts me!

When I face loss, He provides for me!

When I face Death, He carries me Home!

He is everything for everybody, everywhere,

Every time, and every way.

He is God, He is faithful.

I am His, and He is mine!

My Father in heaven can whip the father of this world.

So, if you're wondering why I feel so secure, understand this...

He said it and that settles it.

God is in control, I am on His side, and

That means all is well with my soul.

Everyday is a blessing for GOD Is!

*Submitted to the sixgunners.com website by Paul Moreland. Paul is a missionary in Columbia, with the South American Christian Mission.*



# OUR TOWN

## March 1926 April

### REMODELING ALASKA CAFÉ

Mrs. Kennedy is in the midst of having the part of her building which was formerly occupied by the Alaska Café remodeled into a lounge room for her rooming house and is adding seven more rooms at the rear. The vestibule will occupy the whole frontage of the building on Front Street.

### FIRE AT K.C.C.

A fire at Kennecott Saturday night destroyed the building housing the tailing donkey engine and only quick action saved the laundry building. The donkey engine was little damaged and would soon put in commission.

### ANTON ANDERSON TO GO TO ARCTIC

Aberdeen, Wa. — Anton Anderson, Grays Harbor logging engineer, formerly with the United States Engineering Corps in Alaska, has been selected to accompany Lieutenant Leigh Wade on his forthcoming arctic expedition. Anderson has traveled 15,000 miles by trail and on foot in the north. He predicted discovery of land less than 500 miles north of Point Barrow.

Cordova Times  
March 6

### HOLMES AND NEIMI RECEIVE SENTENCE

Walter Holmes and Joe Neimi who were arrested last Saturday morning with a still and liquor in their possession were tried before Commissioner Harwood Monday and pleaded guilty. Walter was sentenced to sixty days in jail and Joe to a fine of fifty dollars.

### JIMMIE MORRIS MARRIED

Mrs. Underwood of Cordova wishes to announce the wedding of her son, James Edward Morris to Miss Zelie Garrissere on

March 3 at San Francisco. They will make their home at Palo Alto, California.

One day this week a coyote wandered into the yard of Al Doze in broad daylight.

### March 13 I SEE BY THE PAPER THAT:

Mr. and Mrs. Jorgenson and Mrs. Victor Johnson of Kennecott went to Green Butte Monday by dog team returning Tuesday.

Mrs. Sam Seltenreich with Teddy and Buddy arrived in McCarthy Monday after an absence of nearly a year in Seattle. Sam and Freddie will follow them in a short time.

Mrs. J. P. Hubrick and Mrs. A. V. Doze visited Mrs. Tjosevig at the Green Butte last week.

J. J. Price while assisting with some tunneling work at his Dan Creek property had his knee severely wrenched last week and is still unable to use it.

### LEM HEY OPENS RESTAURANT

Lem Hey, who has been busy for some weeks putting restaurant fixtures in the old Panhandle building next to the McCarthy Club, threw open the doors for business Wednesday. Lem has been associated with the restaurant business here for a number of years and the quality of his meals is well known.

### JOHN BENCE DIES SEATTLE

Word has been received here of the death of John Bence, well known in McCarthy and Kennecott, in a hospital in Seattle. No further details have been received.

Statistics of merchandise shipped from the United States to Alaska towns during the year 1925 show that McCarthy received \$175,944 worth in that

time.

March 20

### I SEE BY THE PAPER THAT:

Frank Farnan went down to his Moose Lake mining property Wednesday.

### SULZER PARTY STARTS FOR WHITE RIVER

Fred Renald, who has been looking after the Wm. Sulzer interests in the White River country, returned Sunday from the Outside to head another party into that country for the summer season to do assessment work and develop Mr. Sulzer's extensive mining properties there.

Accompanying Mr. Renald is Mr. Guise, mining engineer, who has been with the Guggenheims for a long period, and who will remain for the summer in the White River to handle the technical end of the work.

Mr. Guise has pursued his profession in most parts of Alaska, having been with the Copper River Railway in its construction, and also in Malaya and Siberia, the South Sea Islands and Java. He has also made one excursion well into the Arctic Circle.

The party including Jack O'Hara and Jack Meloy, left for the Snag River, via Chisana Friday morning where they will commence operations on a property of Jack O'Hara's. Jack Meloy is taking the supplies over the glacier by dog team and will remain with the party for a part of the season. Pete Brenwick will take the outfit to the foot of the glacier with horses.

### ANDY TAYLOR RETURNS FROM MOUNT LOGAN

Andy Taylor, who left some two months ago accompanied by Joe Hutchings to salvage supplies

left at the Mount Logan base camp, rushed into town Wednesday, after having attained his objective, with a load of the supplies.

They had a most difficult trip throughout having to fight adverse weather and deep snow over the entire course and were further handicapped by the loss, through sickness, of two of their dogs. However, they pushed on until they reached the base camp of the Mount Logan Expedition where much valuable equipment had been left when the party scaled Mount Logan last year. They then relayed the supplies to another cache near the International Boundary and started home with what they could handle in one load. They will return later for the balance.

### MYERS TEST

The Commissioner of Education at Juneau recently submitted a special test in all subjects to Alaska Schools, which is known as the Myers Test, and of which it is claimed, "these tests are diagnostic in nature." This means that they are of value in determining weaknesses and strong points in a subject for either a grade or an individual pupil. Teachers should analyze the results carefully for the purpose of determining these high and low spots and adapt instruction to meet the situation.

In putting this test to the McCarthy school children recently the lowest showing made was 81, there were three grades of 100 and the average of the school was 96.

### OFTEN THE CASE

"It's not the school," said the little boy to his mother, "it's the principal of the thing."

March 27

**I SEE BY THE PAPER THAT:**

Mr. and Mrs. C. E. Osborne were Kennecott arrivals this week after having spent a three months vacation Outside.

J. B. O'Neill went to Chitina this morning to meet Mrs. O'Neill and Molly'O who are returning from Seattle.

Con Miller of Cordova is engaged in constructing a 26 foot flat bottom boat to use on the Copper River this summer in taking out hunting parties. It has a seven foot beam and a 25 horse power speed engine. The craft is capable of holding about five tons and will accommodate a large number of passengers. Mr. Miller who is a licensed guide, plans to use the boat for both spring and fall hunting parties.

**KENNECOTT MOVIES**

Sunday April 4th

Rudolph Valentino

in

**"A SAINTED DEVIL"**

From the Story

**"Rope's End"**

by Rex Beach

**GOLDEN HOTEL SOLD TO LOCAL MEN**

Ronald Veitch this week completed a deal whereby he disposed of his interest in the Golden Hotel to W. E. (Dud) McKinney and Henry Olsen, both of this town. The new proprietors went into possession Thursday.

R. Veitch and Chas. Lubbe purchased the Golden from Wm. Lubbe last December and Veitch bought out the interest held by Chas. Lubbe about two months ago.

April 3

**I SEE BY THE PAPER THAT:**

Mrs. J. B. O'Neill and little Molly'O arrived Sunday after an absence of five months in Seattle. Deanie remained in Seattle to continue her musical studies.

J. E. Barrett returned Sunday from a three months trip to Seattle where he had surgical treatment on his nose.

Mrs. Don Miller and Miss Helen McCreary of Chitina were Kennecott and McCarthy visitors this week, coming up on Tuesday and returning Friday.

Billy Urlass came in from the Homestead last Saturday with a nice catch of lynx and two wolverine.

**CHURCH SERVICES**

The Rev. Mr. Kent of the Cordova Episcopal Church came up from the coast Tuesday and held church services here and at Kennecott. The McCarthy services were held at the school house at four o'clock in the afternoon and at Kennecott in the evening. He returned to Cordova Wednesday morning.

Mr. Kent promises to return about the first of May.

April 10

**I SEE BY THE PAPER THAT:**

P. W. (Bill) Holmes returned to town Wednesday after an absence of more than a year which time he was at his home in Valdez. He went to Chititu Creek Thursday morning.

A work train came up Sunday to work this end and is now busy hauling tailings from Kennecott along the line. They will be here about a month.

According to conductor Dan McCarthy, the Chitina bridge may go out any day now.

Thos. Scott of Cordova was in Kennecott and McCarthy from Monday to Thursday of this week in order to allow aliens to declare their intention of becoming citizens. In the short time he was here he accepted many applications for first papers.

**SMALLPOX IN CORDOVA**

Smallpox which has been so severe in Seattle and down the Coast has finally shown up in Cordova when a case was found there last Saturday, and another case has since developed in the

same family. These are the only cases so far reported.

As a result no one is allowed to leave the boats without being vaccinated and the Kennecott Copper Co. has issued an order that all employees must likewise be vaccinated.

**SNYDER AND ANDERSON MAKE LONG MUSH**

Roy Snyder and Carl Anderson arrived home Tuesday via the C. R. N. W. from Chitina after completing a six hundred and fifty mile trip with two dog teams.

They left by way of the White River and Shushanna loaded with about 600 lbs. each and made the circle to Tanana and down the Richardson Highway to Chitina. They were gone just a month.

**WORD FROM JACK O'BRIEN**

A letter has recently been received here from our old friend Jack O'Brien who is at present in Fairbanks where he expects to be for some time. His letter in part is as follows:

"Charlie Foncell, who used to keep time at Kennecott, is in the office here. Bill Noel, Ted Tronstad, Jim Gilkey, and Shorty Briggen are here. Shorty doesn't know what he will do yet, will probably return to McCarthy. The Polar expedition is having a lot of hard luck here. A newspaper correspondent was killed and both planes wrecked. The landing gear doesn't seem heavy enough to hold them when they land. They have graders and tractors scraping the landing field ever since I have been here. Don't know what they will do in the Polar regions as it is almost impossible to take a scraper and tractor up there. Wish Bill Berry was here."

April 17

**I SEE BY THE PAPER THAT:**

**BORN** - At Kennecott hospital Sunday, April 18 to Mr. and Mrs. Jack Morris of Kennecott, a daughter (8 1/2 lbs.).

**CHITINA BRIDGE GOING OUT**

The southland local leaving here Wednesday morning failed to get across the Chitina bridge which is in shaky condition and will be carried out by the breaking up of the ice very soon. It is expected that the regular schedule will be disrupted for only a few days and meanwhile the mail is being transferred from the south to the north end by boat across the river.

The bents of the Chitina bridge were swept away Friday morning before the northbound freight and mail could be put across.

**I SEE BY THE PAPER THAT:**

Mrs. O. A. Nelson and two children of Chitina are McCarthy and Kennecott visitors this week having come up Wednesday evening.

Thos. Donohoe, Jr. was a McCarthy visitor on business this week.

F. A. Hansen, Supt. of the C. R. N. W. came up by speeder Tuesday and returned to Cordova Wednesday.

Martin Radovan is in from Dan Creek this weekend.

Geo. Vogt was in from Chititu for a few days this week returning Friday.

This week's passenger list contains the name of Mrs. Robt. Mooney and baby daughter.

Kriss Miteff and Kay Wada leave for Dan Creek Monday.

J. B. O'Neill and Andy Taylor took a fishing trip Friday.

Fresh vegetables today -  
Celery, Green onions,  
Tomatoes, Cabbage, New  
potatoes, Bananas,  
Cucumbers, Asparagus.

At J. B. O'Neill's.

April 24

# Avalanches an Avoidable Hazard in Alaska

BY NED ROZELL

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

On March 21, 1999, Jill Fredston woke to a beautiful sunny day on the hillside above Anchorage. After rising from bed, she checked her backpack for its beacon, shovel, and snow probe. Then, she made a bag lunch and waited. The phone call came in late afternoon.

"We've got an avalanche at Turnagain Pass," the trooper said.

Several snowmachiners were missing, and they needed a rescue team.

Fredston and her partner Doug Fesler, directors of the Alaska Mountain Safety Center, knew the March day had all the ingredients for disaster—a fresh, heavy snowfall that coated an older, weaker layer of snow, and sunshine and warmth to lure people into the mountains. By the end of the day, searchers shoveled out the bodies of two snowmachiners, the first of six fatalities.

Recovering the bodies of people suffocated by snow is a normal part of the job for Fredston and Fesler, the foremost avalanche experts in Alaska. Fredston traveled to Fairbanks recently to give a free workshop on avalanches sponsored by two area snowmachine clubs. Her winters are never boring. The weekend before she arrived in Fairbanks, Fredston knelt on chunks of snow about 80 miles east of Palmer, at the site of another massive avalanche that killed two snowmachiners.

Per capita, Alaskans are the

most likely to die by avalanche. Until recently, mountain climbers and backcountry skiers were the top avalanche victims, but, during the 1990s, snowmachiners climbed to No. 1.

"Snowmachiners have the odds stacked against them," Fredston said, citing the power of new machines and the inexperience of some users. "They can get into trouble pretty fast."

That trouble often follows the script of Turnagain Pass in 1999, where snowmachiners playing a game called high-marking disturbed the fragile bond between snow layers on a steep slope. When highmarking, snowmachiners make a run straight up a mountain slope until they can get no higher, at which time they turn 180 degrees and head back down the slope. Though highmarkers often deserve the blame for triggering avalanches, a 600-pound snowmachine is not required. A jump-turn by a skier, a powder landing by a snowboarder, or the footfall of a mountaineer can be enough to displace the few grains of cohesive snow required to start an avalanche.

Avalanches come in four varieties:

1. loose snow slides, which often are caused by warm weather;
2. the breaking and falling of cornices, which are curls of snow formed on ridgetops;
3. the collapse of unstable ice blocks from a glacier;
4. and the sudden release of snow in slabs, the most

dangerous type.

"This is the beast that kills people," Fredston said of slab avalanches.

During a trip to the mountains east of Palmer, Fredston and other searchers stumbled around slabs as large as dump trucks. These blocks of snow came from a fracture line on the mountains that ranged from 18 inches to 15 feet thick and 3,000 feet wide. However, slabs don't need to be as large as dump trucks to be dangerous. The trouble begins when a weak layer of snow exists beneath a slab.

Slope angle is another key avalanche ingredient. The steeper the angle of the slope, the greater the stress on the snowpack. Hills rising at 35-45 degrees—nice slopes upon which to carve a few turns—are most prone to avalanches.

"The slopes we like to play on are the slopes that cause avalanches," Fredston said.

Fredston's workshop made me squirm as I watched videos of violent waterfalls of snow burying skiers and snowmachiners, but I learned about the nature of avalanches. After the workshop, she told the 60 participants that the odds of avoiding an avalanche are good if one enters the backcountry with awareness and humility.

"Don't be afraid to go out there," she said. "Forty people in the U.S. die in avalanches a year. Three-thousand die by choking on meat."

# Recollections of an Electrician at Kennecott

*Editor's Note: Our thanks to subscriber and Kennicott Kid, Jim McGavock, for submitting the following recollections of Wesley Bloom who passed away on August 27, 1993, at the age of 86. He writes: "Wes worked at Kennecott for about two and a half years. A journeyman electrician, he came in contact with about everyone in camp. I was a regular visitor at the electric shop and we were good friends." According to Jim, Wes's recollections were requested by the Cordova Historical Society and the National Park Service.*

*We also are most grateful to Eleanor Bloom of Turlock, Ca. for giving us permission to reprint her husband's memories*

BY WESLEY O. BLOOM

I was born in Kansas in 1907, moving to Concrete, Washington, during World War I in 1917. After graduating from high school, I attended the National Electrical School in Los Angeles, California in 1926 and 1927. I then worked 7 years as motor tender, sub-station operator, lineman and maintenance electrician for the Superior Portland Cement Company in Concrete, Washington (100 miles north of Seattle). It was the largest cement plant on the Pacific Coast and had a capacity of 7,000 barrels (28,000 sacks, 4 sacks in a barrel) a day. Being the only cement plant in the Northwest, it got all the orders for cement to Alaska. So when I came to Alaska, all the concrete I saw, I knew the cement had come from the Superior Portland Cement Plant where I worked. It was built in 1900, before I was born. (It was closed and torn down in 1948.)

During part of the "Great Depression," the plant would run a couple months and shut down for several months. (That was the time of the 6 hour day and 30 hour week.) Being single I would take this time to find work in the logging camps, if any were running and electrical work if possible. In 1934 the Washington Pulp & Paper Co. was building an addition to their mill in Port

Angeles, Washington, and I worked there for several months. I had some large cable to pull and was given 2 extra electricians to help on the installation. We finished a little before quitting time and one of the men helping me was Bill Beech. He told me about working in the copper mines in Peru and Kennecott. I was interested but thought no more about it. About three months later I got a call from the cement plant office (as I was working there again) to answer a long distance call from Port Angeles. It was Bill Beech, he told me that Kennecott Copper was going to reopen after a long shutdown and they wanted him to return and bring another electrician with him. He was having trouble finding one that would leave and go to Alaska. So he went to the Electrical Superintendent at the Paper Mill. He said, "I know just the man you want and I have his name in the office, and that I had worked at the cement plant in Concrete." So Bill called me telling me about the job, paying \$5 a day, 7 days a week and that it worked the year around. He said that if I would accept, to meet him at Pier 2 in Seattle Tuesday morning. This was Friday. I was so delighted at this opportunity to get away from the dirty cement plant. Being single I had no problem getting ready to

go. So I quit my job, after being told all the work in Alaska was seasonal, and a promise of my job back, if they were operating. (The Superintendent wrote me 6 months later wanting me to come back and promised 2 ½ years steady work as they had gotten the contract to furnish all the cement for the Coulee Dam; I wrote back saying I was staying at Kennecott.)

I met Bill at Pier 2. Tuesday morning and we got on the S.S. Yukon heading north after waving goodbye to some friends on the pier who had come to see me off. Also going to Alaska were several other miners, millmen, nurses, and a doctor. This was in May 1935.

I had been in Los Angeles (not working) for 2 months. It was warm, trees were budding and leaves were coming out, so I decided summer was coming and went back to Washington. I got a job at a logging camp setting chokers on the side of a mountain in a foot of snow. Oh why did I leave L.A. so soon? About 6 weeks later, it was getting warmer, the trees were budding and the leaves were coming out and I thought summer was about here. This was nearly the first of May. When we got to Kennecott, snow was all over and yet it was winter all over again. In June the trees began to

bud, and the leaves began to come out, the weather got warmer, but now I'm in Alaska. So after three attempts to get into summer I succeeded.

I enjoyed the trip; my first on salt water. When we got to Cordova I was surprised to see several men in the middle of the main intersection talking for over an hour, no cars, no traffic. This was Alaska, not Los Angeles or Seattle. I noticed no concrete was used for building foundations; they were all made of lumber. Lumber was available and cement had to be shipped in from Seattle.

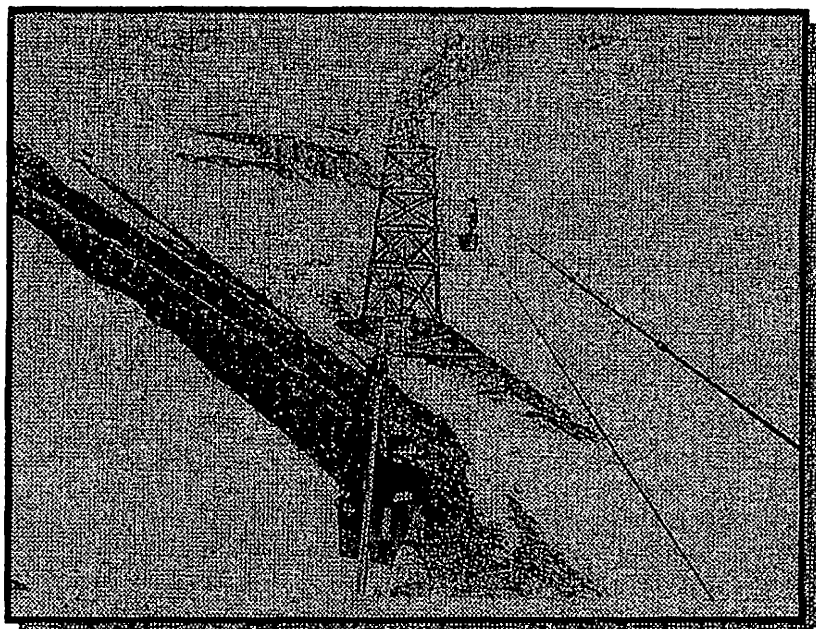
We got on the Copper River & Northwestern Train and headed farther north. We stopped at Abercrombie Canyon and saw what a real river in Alaska was like, and what a surprise to see the Million Dollar Bridge, but I couldn't appreciate how it was built and set into place until after reading *The End of the Iron Trail* by Rex Beech. The Childs and Miles Glaciers were awe inspiring.

It was some time before the mill, mines and tram were operating and I enjoyed every bit of it, working and looking. We had two days off a year, the Fourth of July and Christmas. We had a baseball team and the Kennecott office put up \$200 for the winner between Kennecott and McCarthy. Everyone attended that could. The Kennecott baseball field was on the tailing dump behind the West Bunkhouse. This made a good flat area for ball games, ice rink, recreation, etc. A good hit would send the ball over the side of the tailing dump behind third base and go another 200 feet down toward the bottom of the glacier. Kennecott lost each time as McCarthy would fly a pitcher in from Cordova and collect the

\$200.

I really enjoyed riding in a bucket on the trams to the mines, getting on and off at various towers and checking the telephones and lines while the tram was running. In the winter I would take my skis with me and get off at the Angle Station on the Bonanza Tram line and have about a three mile run coming in at the mill. I often did this alone, but one time as I was coming down the side of the mountain between the Bonanza Tram and the Jumbo Tram, my skis

power lines from the transformer building by the power plant at the mill to the Bonanza Mine, also feeding power to the Angle Station on the Bonanza Tram line. There were no power lines along the Jumbo Tram as the power went through the mine underground to the Jumbo Camp. There was no way to get from the mill to the mines in the winter except by riding a bucket on the tram, because of deep snow, steep mountains and danger of slides. If one power line was out of service the other would carry the load. However, if



Candy Waugaman Collection, courtesy Ron Simpson

disappeared. I came to a stop and the snow came up to my hips. I looked above and the whole mountain of snow had slipped, leaving a break in the snow about 30 feet wide on the hillside where I had skied across a few seconds before. I don't know what caused the slide to stop because it could have been an avalanche and gone another 1,000 feet down to the glacier and I would have been there yet.

There were two 10,000 volt

both lines were out of service, which did happen, the trams would still operate by gravity. The loaded buckets (about 700 pounds each) going down, being much heavier than the empty buckets going back up to the mines, made it possible to go back and forth to the mines using the manual brakes to keep the speed of the tram normal not tending to over speed, until the power lines were repaired. The power lines followed the top of the ridges where possible so snow

slides would not take them down into the canyons. If the weather was too severe we would wait a day or two until the storm abated. Then go with our snowshoes to the broken lines, put on the lineman's climbers and make the repairs. When the power was on, the 50 horsepower electric motors that controlled the tram would not ordinarily pull the cables but acted as a brake, so no manual brake was used unless power was lost. While the motor acted as a brake to hold the tram at normal speed, it actually generated power and the electric meters were connected in reverse to show how much power was generated while the tram was in operation. It would average about 10,000 kilowatts a month.

One time they couldn't start the upper half of the Bonanza Tram. One place the tram line was 400 feet over the bottom of the canyon below. Evidently a williwaw hit the tram line and as it was a long span between these towers it threw one traveling line with an empty bucket over the other stationary line causing a knot in the cable when it pulled into the tower and stopped the upper half of the Bonanza Tram line. It was something that couldn't happen but it did. Fortunately, it happened in the summer and no snow was on the ground.

Another time on the Jumbo Tram where the tram line and the buckets came within 15 feet over the ground, a man was coming down from the mine and for some reason the bucket he was riding in came off the stationary line and dropped down into about 5 feet of snow. For some other reason it unlatched itself from the traveling cable, leaving the bucket and the man all by themselves. The tram

continued to run normally but the one bucket with the man in it was missing. Whenever a man got into a bucket, the operator would call up or down depending on which way he was going, so the next operator would watch for the bucket with the man in it and they would slow the tram so the man could get out safely. When this bucket didn't arrive, they immediately sent men out with an extra pair of snowshoes to find him before he froze. All went well and he got back O.K. He was still in the bucket as the snow was too deep for him to get out but he said he was getting scared.

One April Fools Day, Steve Gutano was working at the Angle Station on the Bonanza Tram, and he got an old hat and coat and some weeds from under the station and made it look like a man, then he poured water on "him" so next morning he was frozen solid. So Steve set "him" in a bucket going down and called the "Bucket Chaser" at the mill saying a man was coming down. They always called ahead when a man was coming down so the "Bucket Chaser" would be watching for him and slow the tram so he could get off safely. When the Bucket Chaser saw him coming (Steve had purposely set him high in the bucket) he said, "Get your head down." The "man" did not move and the Bucket Chaser hollered again, "Get your head down," just then his head hit the trip. Well, anyway the bucket automatically came off the line like it was supposed to do, but the Bucket Chaser thought he had killed a man. He sure was happy when he saw it was a dummy, but he was pretty mad at Steve. Jack Morris, Tram Foreman, always used young fellows as Bucket Chasers and Jack and I were up there to

watch the reaction. I felt bad for the Bucket Chaser because he was so scared, but this was April first.

The power plant at the mill alongside of the glacier had five Alternators. One 1,000 kilowatt steam turbine drive, one 500 kilowatt steam turbine drive, one 250 kilowatt Pelton water wheel drive used in summer when water was available and two 500 kilowatt driven by two 600 horse power McIntosh-Seymour Diesel engines, for a total output of 2,750 kilowatts. There were four oil-fired steam boilers to operate the steam turbines and furnish steam heat throughout the entire camp into every building and the homes that were furnished to the married families living there. An oil storage tank located on the hill above the power plant held enough oil to operate Kennecott all winter. This was one of the largest power plants in Alaska if not the largest at that time. At 30 degrees below zero the steam plant was a nice place to work.

The two 10,000 volt power lines that went from the mill to the Bonanza Mine were about 20 feet apart. When they were first built they dug a hole, set the pole and poured concrete in the hole and about 18 inches above the surface for added strength. This must have been done about 1910 and evidently didn't work out too well, as all the original poles had rotted off at the base. So all of the poles set in the concrete bases had to be replaced by other ones set in new holes. How they mixed the concrete and poured it around each pole from the mill to Bonanza I still don't know, but I believe someone said they could get all the help they wanted from Seattle for 35 cents an hour. So maybe they used a lot of Swedes. Those concrete stumps will stand there forever.

After we got to Kennecott, it didn't take me long to find out that the Swedes were called "Squareheads." I heard that there were a lot of them when they built the mill years before. As all of my grandparents were born in Sweden, I didn't say much until I found out most of the miners were from Finland, and everyone seemed to like them—even if they did do a lot of fighting in McCarthy! So when someone asked me what nationality I was, I told them I was a Finlander and got along fine. Anyone that knew me up there thought I was a Finn.

There was another 10,000 volt power line that went from the transformer building by the power house along the Kennecott Glacier to the Root Glacier, then up a very steep ridge to the entrance of the Erie Mine. All of the poles had rotted off at the base going up the ridge and the poles and lines were laying on the rocky ridge, and we had to restore power back to the Erie Mine. I looked over the situation and as it was to be used temporarily, decided to dig out the rotted base of the poles and use the same hole as they were not set in concrete and use what remained of the old pole as they were in fairly good condition, with cross arm wire and insulators still attached. After getting the line rebuilt, the wires didn't clear the ridge more than 15 feet in places. But that would be high enough for the bears, goats and porcupines to cross under. Nothing else would be up there. It was so steep I would not let some of the helpers come up. One fellow dropped a digging bar and it slid about 800 feet to the glacier. It is still there.

One day I was up on a pole putting tie wires on an insulator, and directly across Root Glacier,

high on Donohoe Peak, a snow avalanche started from the top and cascaded all the way down to the bottom and out on the glacier. Then another and another. I hung my arms across the cross arm and saw a most awesome sight that you could probably see only in Alaska. I learned then how rocks got in the glaciers and what started moraines. The avalanches would "bounce" from one side of the gully to the other taking rocks with it, getting bigger and bigger until it splattered out on the glacier. There were 7 or 8 avalanches that came down. This was in June and probably does that only once a year when the weather was just right for the snow to start to slide. My helpers and I had the choice location for that most beautiful sight. I still wish I had a camera that day. Every year the "Pothole" would break at the end of the Kennecott Glacier at McCarthy, I never saw it break but got down there as fast as I could, quite a sight too.

There were two other electricians that stayed at the mines, so most of my work was at the mill and on the lines. In the mine they had electric motors that pushed the ore cars back and forth and any major repair needed, the parts would be put in a bucket and sent to the shops at the mill for repair.

The mines were 4,000 feet higher than the mill and it wasn't unusual for the temperature from December to February to be 30 degrees below zero at the mill and 10 degrees above at the mines. Sometimes it would be much colder at the mines but being higher would get winds changing temperature; however the mill on the side of the glacier at the bottom of the valley would stay cold all the time until a wind

would come and stir up the air and maybe get 10 or 20 degrees warmer. There was a thermometer located on the outside wall of our bunkhouse. I read it at 6 A.M. one morning in January, it was 30 degrees below zero. Then I moved it and put it on the outside south (warm side??) wall of the electric shop in the direct sunlight and at noon it was exactly the same 30 degrees below zero. Absolutely no heat in the sun, only brightness. At the mill on the side of the glacier sometimes the temperature would stay 30 degrees below zero three weeks at a time, night and day between December and February. The yard crew made up a nice skating rink on the recreation field in October and we had a lot of nice skating until it got to 10 degrees below zero or the snow piled up faster than we could keep it off.

The Company kept a train crew at Kennecott all winter, while the Railroad was closed down from December until June. To move loaded cars to a siding near McCarthy and return some empties every 3 or 4 weeks. One time a group of ladies, children and men got permission to ride the train to McCarthy for an outing. Art Holt was the engineer and for some reason the brakes would not operate. Some said the train was going 70 or 80 miles an hour when it rounded the curve as it passed McCarthy. They considered throwing some of the children off into the snowbanks.

However, the train did not leave the tracks and came to a stop at the bottom of the grade where it started to go up hill.

I asked Jimmie McGavock if he was glad when the train came to a stop he said, "Yes, and everyone began to smoke Chesterfields."

Elmer Hedstrom, one of the



operators in the power house, wanted to quit and go to Anchorage for Christmas. In no way would he fly in an airplane. Finally he did agree to come back with Harold Gillam if he could take the last train to Cordova in December. So that was agreed on. He was on Gillam's plane leaving Anchorage with a shipment of light bulbs and other material for Kennecott after Christmas. Fog and clouds closed in and Gillam tried to get out and finally had to make a forced landing in shallow salt water near Anchorage. Fortunately, they were not injured but had to climb on top of the wings until they were rescued. And we never saw Elmer again.

I went into the west Bunkhouse one afternoon and turned on the short wave radio in the Recreation room. A plane had been forced down on the beach on Admiralty Island. He

was calling and calling Juneau but getting no answer. So I went to the power house where the Master Mechanic Jim McGavock was and told him what I had heard. He had a Collins Transmitter and receiver at his home, so we rushed back to his house. Jim got on the air right away and they were still calling and calling Juneau. He answered and the pilot of the plane that was down could hear and talk loud and clear with Jim. Then Jim called Juneau and got them immediately. They were unable to hear the pilot that was stranded on the beach, but they could hear Jim loud and clear. They dispatched a boat to the plane and Jim had saved the day in another emergency situation.

I used to check all the electric motors on Sundays, starting at the top of the mill and working down. Jimmie McGavock was about 12 years old, and he would always meet me there and

would carry the oil can and follow me all through the mill. He never failed to be there with me every Sunday.

Jim McGavock, the Master Mechanic, did not agree with Richelson, the General Superintendent, on Company policies, so he and his family left Kennecott abruptly. I liked Jim and told Richelson if Jim was leaving I was too. So after nearly two and a half years, I left Kennecott in August 1937. Telling my friends I was going to New York to see the Statue of Liberty, Radio City, the Empire State Building and to stand on 49th and Broadway. Then I left by train for Cordova. I was there for two days enjoying fresh Razor Clams before leaving for Seattle.

There are many other recollections of social activities, short and long days, Northern Lights and howling winds that I still remember.

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## McCarthy vehicle trivia

Our roving car-counter, John Adams, has checked in again this year with a count of 116 vehicles on the east side of the Kennicott River. This is not a great increase from his last count in 1998 when he found 115. However, John reports that this year's count does not include any of the vans from the two lodges or the two shuttle van services, nor the NPS vehicles, all of which were out for servicing at the time of the count. He also said it appeared that there were a higher percentage of vehicles capable of movement under their own power than there were 3 years ago.

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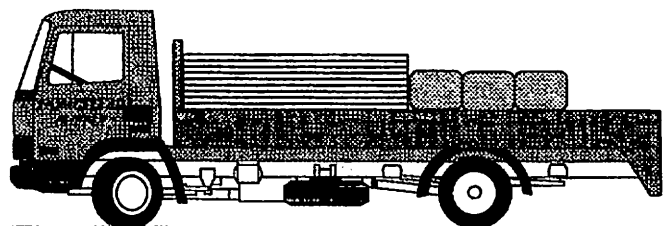
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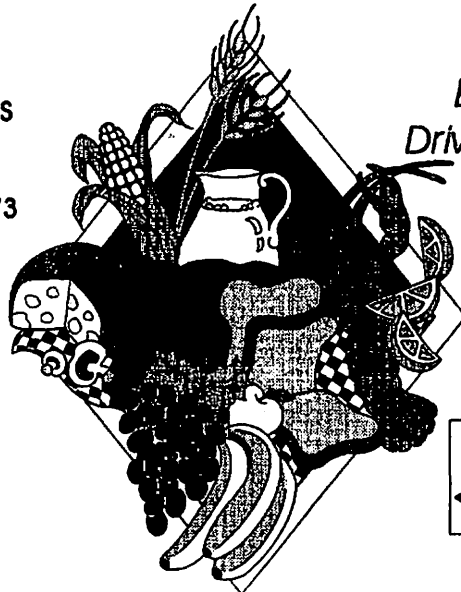
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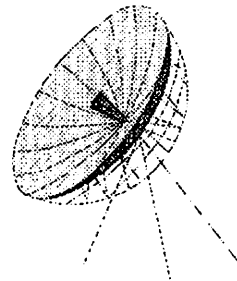
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# JoAnne's Cooking Column

BY JOANNE WOOLEVER

Since winter has finally come to Alaska and it is snowing in Anchorage, my thoughts (and perhaps yours as well) are of keeping warm and cozy. One of the best ways that I know of is coffee!

Fortunately, I live in a state where you can't go 10 feet without running into a coffee shack. Some of these places are literally 5 ft. x 5 ft. plywood huts with interesting names to draw your attention (not to mention your money) to them. You don't even have to leave the comfort of your home or office because the majority of them deliver! For those people who don't drink coffee there is the ever expanding world of tea as well!

Another beverage that has created its own niche recently is a tea-based concoction commonly referred to as Chai. I really love this stuff! However, it takes all kinds of tastes in this world to make it interesting.

During my last visit to my parents in Florida, I decided to prepare some Chai for my Dad. My father and I have pretty similar tastes so I assumed he would become a Chai lover, too. Wrong! After a few attempts to lure his palate I had to give up. When I would ask what beverage he would like he would reply with, "Anything but your perfumed coffee!"

Some offices in Juneau, as an added perk (no pun intended) have cappuccino/espresso machines installed in their break rooms to keep their employees happy. Some enterprising entrepreneurs make a living by delivering coffee by bicycles. They carry portable espresso

machines (and all of the coffee necessities) with them. Just give them a ring on their cell phones and pretty soon they will be at your desk steaming you a fresh mug of your favorite beverage!

This career does not appeal to me since I don't like riding a bike in the rain and snow, but I assure you that the recipients of this freshly-brewed coffee appreciate it.

For all of us who can't or won't part with the \$3-\$10 per mug of these speciality drinks, there are options available to warm up our tummies. We can purchase all of these treats in various forms from our favorite stores. From Costco to Kaladi Brothers to the Internet. From whole beans (and leaves) to instant powders we can do it all ourselves at a much lower cost.

A friend of mine "stuffs" her own tea bags! Let me tell you, she has come up with some pretty interesting (but not always appealing) flavor combinations. I just don't have the patience for that. Do any of you?

*Here are a couple of good recipes for making your own "instant" flavored coffees. By the way, I am in search of a Chai recipe, instant if possible. If you have one please be kind and share it with me and the rest of the WSEN readers. For those of us who have to watch our caffeine intake these recipes can be made with decaf as well!*

## Swiss Mocha

1 cup instant coffee  
1 cup sugar  
2 cups nonfat dry milk  
4 teaspoons cocoa powder  
Blend until powdered. Put 2 rounded teaspoonfuls into a cup,

fill with boiling water and stir. Sit back and enjoy!

## Café Orange Cappuccino

1 cup instant coffee  
1 ½ cup sugar  
2 cups nonfat dry milk  
1 teaspoon dry orange peel

Blend in blender or food processor until powdered. To serve, put 2 rounded teaspoonfuls in a cup. Fill with boiling water and serve.

## Café Vienna

1 cup instant coffee  
1 1/3 cup sugar  
1 1/3 cup nonfat dry milk  
1 teaspoon cinnamon

Blend a little at a time in a blender until powdered. You won't need more than 10 seconds. You can use a food processor for this, too. In that case, you can dump the whole mixture in at one time. To serve, put 2 rounded teaspoonfuls in a cup, fill with boiling water and stir.

## Italian Mocha Espresso

½ cup instant coffee  
½ cup sugar  
2 1/4 cup nonfat dry milk  
1/4 cup cocoa powder

Blend until powdered. Put 2 rounded teaspoonfuls into a cup, fill with hot water and stir.

Sugar Twin may be substituted for sugar (16 teaspoons equals 1 cup). Also, Sanka or other coffee may be used in place of the regular coffee.

*If keeping your children or grandchildren amused during inclement weather is difficult try this "edible" play dough recipe for indoor entertainment!*

## Edible Play Dough

1 cup creamy peanut butter

1 cup corn syrup  
1 1/4 cup powdered sugar  
1 1/2 cup powdered milk

Mix all ingredients together. Roll into a "snake" and hand to the child; wrap "snake" around child's wrist, show how to make

ball, pancakes, etc.

Great winter activity when it is too cold for mud pies. Encourages fine motor skills and exploring with touch, taste and smell. It tastes good and has lots of protein.

Hint: Save this activity for a snack before bath time for easy clean-up. A highchair or other confined space keeps the mess in one place.

See you next issue!

# A LOOK AT THE WEATHER

BY GEORGE CEBULA

December at McCarthy was on the mild side, but no record high temperatures like December of 1999. January on the other hand was warm and wet.

The average December temperature was 5.7 (4.7 in Dec. '99 and -3.3 in Dec. '98). The high was 42 on December 5 (56 on Dec. 21, '99 and 34 on Dec. 9, '98) and the low was -26 on December 15 (-31 on Dec. 26, '99 and -28 on Dec 31, '98). Twelve days had low temperatures of zero or above and only two days below a minus twenty. Two days had high temperatures of forty or above and three days zero or below. *Silver Lake had an average temperature of 7.2 (2.3 in Dec. '99 and -5.7 in Dec.'98).* The high temperature was 39 on December 6 (55 on Dec. 23, '99 and 36 on Dec. 5, '98) and the low was -18 on December 17 (-36 on Dec. 16, '99 and -34 on Dec. 26, '98). *Silver Lake had five days with a high of thirty or above and seven days with a low of minus ten or colder.*

December precipitation was below average with only 0.44 inches of liquid precipitation (3.44 in Dec. '99 and 0.51 in Dec. '98). 0.03 inches fell as rain and freezing rain. Total snow fall was 5.6 inches (18.3 in Dec. '99 and 8.4 in Dec. '98). The snow depth was 16 inches at the beginning of the month, decreased to 14

inches on December 5 and ended the month with 14 inches. *By comparison Silver Lake had only 0.12 inches of liquid precipitation (4.96 in Dec. '99 and 0.39 in Dec. '98).* All precipitation fell as snow and total snowfall was 2.0 inches (29.0 in Dec. '99 and 18.5 in Dec. '98). The snow depth was 3 inches at the beginning of the month, decreased to 1 inch on December 6 and ended the month with 1 inch.

The average January temperature at McCarthy was a very warm 17.7 (0.6 in Jan. '00 and -4.5 in Jan. '99). The high was 42 on January 15 (38 on Jan. 31, '00 and 35 on Jan. 23, '99) and the low temperature was -16 on January 30 (-42 on Jan. 13, '00 and -50 on Jan. 21, '99). There were thirteen days with a high of thirty or above and two days with a low of minus ten or colder. *Silver Lake had an average temperature of 19.7 (0.4 in Jan. '00 and -7.7 in Jan. '99).* The high was 43 on January 15 (36 on Jan. 25, '00 and 33 on Jan. 24, '99) and the low was -11 on January 31 (-42 on Jan. 14, '00 and -52 on Jan. 21, '99).

January precipitation was above average with seven days of measurable amounts. The total liquid precipitation was 2.34 inches (1.50 in Jan. '00 and 1.06 inches in Jan.'99). Just over an inch of rain and freezing rain fell on January 7. Snowfall was 9.2 inches (18.3 in Jan. '00 and 17.7 in Jan. '99). 2001 started with a

14 inch snow cover and increased to 18 inches on January 31. *Silver Lake had 0.65 inches of liquid (1.38 in Jan. '00 and 0.91 in Jan. '99) and 2.0 inches of snow (18.0 in Jan. '00 and 9.0 in Jan. '99).* *Silver Lake started 2001 with 1 inch of snow on the ground and increased to 2 inches on January 31.*

The first half of February finally returned to normal winter weather with lows dipping to near -20. The highs, with the help of nine hours of sunshine, are making it into the twenties. The snow depth has increased to almost 30 inches.

February shows a steady increase in daylight and sunshine, but well below zero temperatures are still common. March is usually the beginning of the warmer temperatures with highs reaching into the 40s.

Finally I would like to wish Frank Moore a Happy 86<sup>th</sup> Birthday. Frank is a good friend and a subscriber who lives in Spokane, WA.

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"Security is mostly a superstition. It does not exist in nature, nor do children of humans as a whole experience it. Avoiding danger is no safer in the long run than outright exposure. Life is either a daring adventure or nothing."—Helen Keller

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# FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

## ***Subsistence Position***

**OP-ED BY STEPHEN SIMMONS**  
*Director of Forestry & Land  
Manager, Chickaloon Village  
Traditional Council*

I have given this particular subject of Subsistence a great deal of my time. I will not attempt to present my entire argument. I will simply attempt to lay a foundation upon which we can become educated and eventually work to a reasonable solution.

I am a member of this Matanuska Valley Advisory Committee, and through this avenue I have listened to a lot of different characterizations and perspectives about the term Subsistence.

Most of these perspectives share a common argument. That is, with an activity like subsistence hunting & fishing, the state is creating two classes of people, one class receiving special privileges over the other. Another common bond in the argument is the constitutionality of the practice, and plain and simply "It ain't fair." Another popular position is that citizen's rights are invariably being taken away.

I call differing versions of this perspective "the here and now cry." This perspective is brought forth without any historical knowledge and recent background information to base it's assumptions on.

Over the years there have been allowances made for colonization, development and economic growth. The processes of the last 50 years have yielded the fabled Russian American land sale, Federal Territorial occupation and legislation,

varying forms of judicial law, Statehood Compacts, Constitutions, land claims, and the establishment of Reservations in the form of national parks, refuges, and land trusts, all with a special emphasis on preservation. All this adds up to certain conditions, restrictions, and expectations for the citizens that reside in Alaska.

One expectation of the State and its citizens is that we must honor and respect the inherent right of the original people to provide food for their families and preserve a way of life.

Everyone reading or hearing this will agree with me when I say that by being a U.S. citizen we have the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. We all run our households as best as we can given our understanding of life, level of education, knowledge passed down from our ancestors, our ability to adapt to our environment, and our ability to take advantage of opportunity. Most people would object to an outside influence telling you how to run your life, or how to raise your kids, and you would especially object to anyone telling you what food you can put on your table, and how you must come to put that food on your table.

Rights are a funny thing. We rely on the written word in the form of a Constitution to guarantee us a right to function in a stable environment free from intervention, manipulation, harassment, imprisonment, and even death. I am here to tell you that these protections have not been applied equally. Many indigenous peoples have suffered

great injustices.

If your families were subjected to the kind of treatment my Native brothers and sisters have received, you would be screaming that your constitutional and human rights were being violated, and you would be contemplating some kind of separation, maybe even civil war. But as it stands, the aggressor, a significantly large part of the non-native population of the state, are pretty much secure in their lifestyles, activities, and freedoms, but still are screaming that their rights are being violated when a Native person's right to feed their families is interfering with the state's sporting activity.

The immigrant population that has moved to Alaska has brought with it competition, endless laws, societal norms, ignorance, a multitude of religious differences, and a dependency on an economic structure that is centralized and constantly manipulated in major metropolitan areas far from Alaska. All these things are foreign to this country's indigenous populations.

The economic engine that I have described has many advantages, and disadvantages. In Alaska we must not jump to the conclusion that this condition is the norm. But many of us do. This is a new thing. It is a constant struggle for the legislature to appropriate and distribute funding in a way that is effective. In it's current form of development, it is simply not possible to believe that everyone in Alaska is on an equal footing. In fact a difference in levels of

education, choice of jobs, and location makes it impossible to assume we are all equal. We can not assume that everyone has a job, running water, a comfortable home, electricity, sanitation facilities, and adequate refuse facilities. In fact, I personally would choose to not be employed simply because I would rather be doing many different life enrichment activities. A job has many strings attached to it, and as time passes, so does legislation to enable more strings to be attached. Government is establishing numerous ways to threaten the working man's private gain to support governmental functions for whatever reason. In this context, employment is a form of slavery, in my opinion.

Native cultures in Alaska obviously do things differently. If you were to take the time to learn and understand us, then you might begin to understand that we are not that different after all. We all want to live a life that we are comfortable with, free from intervention, intimidation, harassment, imprisonment, and death. But in Alaska, we are coerced, intimidated, harassed, discriminated against, imprisoned, and sometimes killed for attempting to put food on the table as we have for centuries. What is fair about that?



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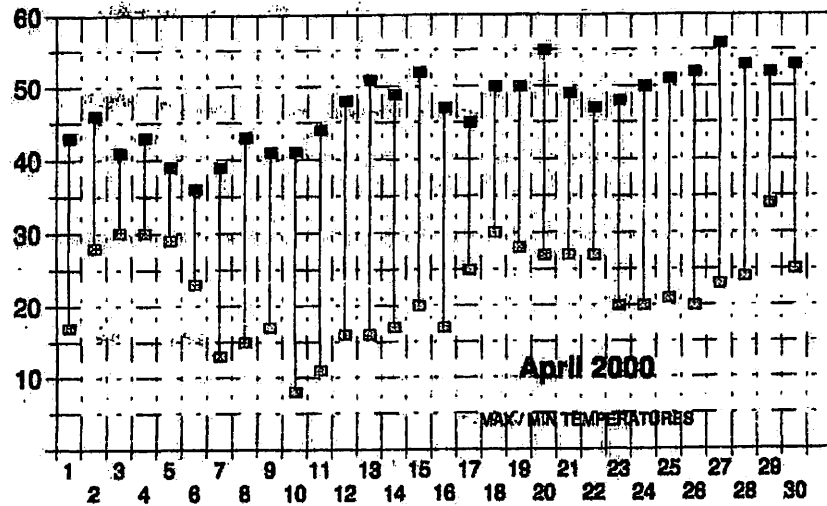
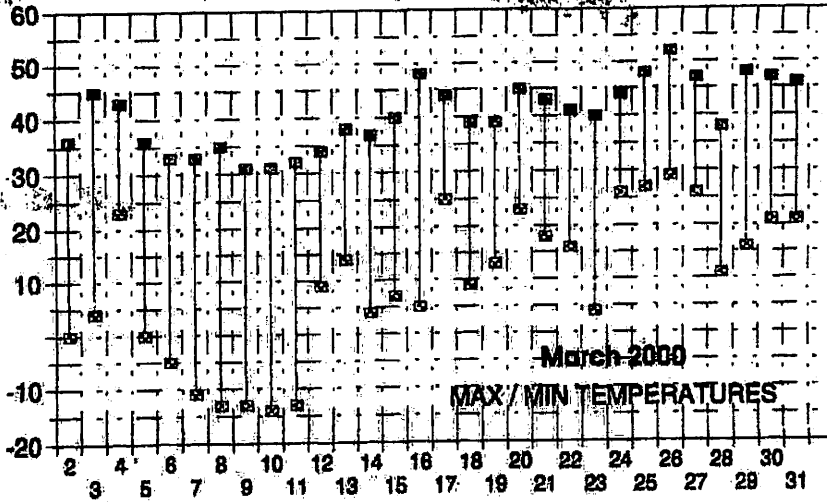
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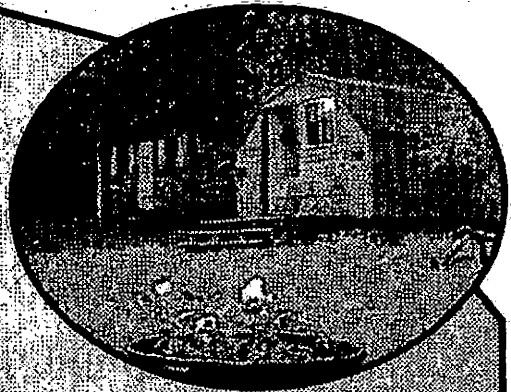
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