

Wrangell St. Elias News

"Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty"

Volume Eighteen Issue Two

March & April 2009

\$2.50

2009 Long Lake Fishing Derby

Saturday, March 28



Don't miss it!

- ★ Fun
- ★ Food
- ★ Fellowship
- ★ FISH!



Caribou herd will be in attendance.



Host Jim Kreblin



A note from the publisher

BY BONNIE KENYON

Today is March 6th and the writing for this issue is nearly completed. At the moment, the office is extremely quiet except for the muffled hum of the snowblower outside. The “muffled” sound is the result of the 7 inches of fresh snow that is still falling as I type. The Copper River Basin (including McCarthy area) is under a winter weather advisory with local alerts for the McCarthy area.

Yesterday as I sat at my computer, the effects of early spring were in the air. Long icicles hanging from the cabin eaves were dripping and shrinking in size. Today however, we awoke to a totally different picture. Our snow level on the ground has ballooned to a total of 35 inches.

Feeling the faint touch of spring in the air a couple days ago, and because our gardening calendar said “plant tomato seeds,” Rick was motivated to sow our seeds in several small pots and place them in a warmer spot on the upstairs landing. I trust the first green leaves that will soon sprout will not find the white-out conditions too discouraging! No matter where you live, spring seems to be a most welcome season for us all. I know our grassy meadow will soon be green and our garden plot will eventually throw off its snow cover to welcome the warmer temperatures. It’s a sure thing; every year it happens just that way.

As I was finishing “Items of Interest” yesterday, I heard someone lightly tapping on my front door. There was Bjorn Keller standing there with his infectious smile. He and his dad, Jeremy, needed propane so while Rick and Jeremy were taking care of business, 4 year old Bjorn decided to see if I wanted to play hide ‘n seek. “Sure,” I said. Squeals of laughter ensued with each discovery. By the time father

and son left, I was ready for another round of desk work. Thank you, Bjorn, for visiting. I hope you remembered to give your mom the piece of candy you stored in the pocket of your snowpants!

Any minute now the quiet of the cabin will take on the sounds of the two printers pumping out yet another issue of *WSEN*. Rick and I just recently returned from a trip outside. Although Rick did a large portion of this issue on his laptop while gone, there was still a fair amount left to complete once we got home. That will account for this issue being a bit on the late side.

On our way home from Florida, we made a stopover at Redding, CA, where long-time subscribers and friends, Martin and Mollie Flack live during the winter months. The Flacks used to own and operate the SAPA Greenhouse in Kenny Lake. Many of our locals will recall their

beautiful flower baskets, etc. We had a wonderful time catching up on family and activities. Mollie is a great cook and says she tries Peggy Guntis’ recipes regularly and reads the *WSEN* from cover to cover. What great encouragers you are, Martin and Mollie!

We want to thank all our contributors to the March/April *WSEN*. Carrie Hale is Carole Morrison’s daughter and both these ladies did a fine job on an article about wildfires on page 7. The Morrison family has lived and worked in the area for many years and are well-known for their excellent building and log work.

Wrangell St. Elias News welcomes aboard the following subscribers: James Williams, AK; Donald Bernardt, AK; Kathleen Shannon, AK; Stanley Leaphart, AK; Scott and Maria Strickland, WA; Jeremy Pataky, AK; Eric McGhee, AK.

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Items of Interest

BY BONNIE KENYON

Harold and Carol Michal: In the summer months, the Michals frequent their cabin located at Fireweed Subdivision. On mail days I often get the opportunity to visit Carol when she comes to town (on her motorcycle or her 4-wheeler!) to collect her weekly mail. She and Harold recently made a major move from Valdez to Wasilla into a Senior Center to be closer to medical facilities. Both Carol and Harold are “very happy” in their new apartment and making friends. Carol says they have attended two birthday parties already. They are enjoying visits from Harold’s son of Eagle River and a grandson from Wasilla. Being closer to family enables the Michals to attend family dinners, too.

Harold, who is 97 “young,” loves to read and finds plenty of time in the winter to catch up. Carol reads, too, but enjoys her needlework and stays busy cooking and baking for Harold.

“The Senior Center in Wasilla is very comfortable and quiet,” says Carol. “We were on the waiting list for 2 years.”

Carol just celebrated her 80th birthday and informed me that she and Harold are “planning their summer trip to McCarthy” and “waiting for spring to come to Wasilla.”

Thanks for keeping us updated, Carol and Harold, and read an extra book or two for me!

Joe Macchina: McCarthyites are certainly attached to “home,” but more and more they are traveling the world. Joe is one such example. He is back home (and glad to be back, too, he says) and presently house sitting for Howard and Chris Haley. Since I last talked to Joe, he has spent his winter visiting his mom, sisters, nieces and nephews, all in places such as Italy, New York and Massachusetts. He certainly racked up those frequent flyer miles!

Joe is hoping to continue his summer work with the park service this year and make further strides on his cabin addition.

We wish you well, Joe, and say, “Welcome home!”

Mike McCann, Dorothy Adler and baby Logan: This may be the last item I describe Logan as “baby.” After all he will turn 2 years old in April and is presently potty training himself, says Dorothy. Logan and “mom” enjoyed a wonderful trip and visit to Dorothy’s sister, Rachel, and her family in California. They are now home and back into the daily chores of winter wilderness living. Harvesting firewood is on the top of the “to-do” list. Logan takes along his bright orange chain saw and gives him mom and dad a hand

(well...tries to, at least!). Mike is tending his trap line these days and recently celebrated a birthday.

Dorothy is pleased to announce she is giving a **First Responder Class** in early May. (The exact dates and times have not yet been decided. Please feel free to contact Dorothy at 907 554-4469 for further information.) The first class will be an 80-hour Wilderness Medical Training course. The second class will be held in June and will be a 16-hour course.

Dave Hollis: Hollis (formerly known as Dave) writes: “I’ve been anchored in Anchorage for the winter—hanging out with some McCarthy friends. I’ll be flying to Florida mid-February through mid-March. My mom is having knee replacement surgery, so I’ll be helping her for a few weeks.

I’ll return to McCarthy with a load of freight when the road is good in late March.

Terry Blosser, Jeremy Pataky (Wrangell Mountain Center) and I have been organizing this year’s John Denver Tribute II. It’s on Friday, June 19, 2009, in the Kenne-cott Rec Hall. We’ve lined up two more exciting local acts, and we hope to have Tony Oney as the Guest of Honor. Tony was Denver’s bush pilot throughout Alaska, and he was an owner of the major Ken-

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necott mining buildings that were sold to the NPS in 1998.”

Jim Kreblin: Now that daylight hours are longer and the sunshine is really kicking in these days, Jim and his neighbors, Cal Ward and Mark Vail, decided to take advantage of the conditions. They gathered at Long Lake for a fishing excursion. According to Jim, he caught the biggest fish but Cal racked up the most. The popular biting species of the day was Dolly Varden. Too bad it wasn't the 2009 fishing derby, Jim, or you might have actually won a prize. On the other hand, the derby host doesn't usually get to take home a prize, just purchase them!

Speaking of the upcoming derby, please read on for the pertinent details of this year's activity.

CALLING ALL FISHERFOLK!

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

Mark Vail: All is well at Fireweed Subdivision, says Mark. The last item I did on Mark was New Year's Eve and his temperature was -45! That is a far cry from the plus 6 degrees he is enjoying today. Even though the wind has blown for 3 days now, he says the abundance of sunshine is keeping his solar panels busy taking in all that good energy to power his computer. He's not complaining!

Now that his woodshed is replenished (he spent a month on that project!), he is getting a jump start on his garden. A variety of flowers, tomatoes and herbs are already sprouting, he says. That spurred me on to check my garden calendar and Mark is right on. It is time for us to get the tomato seeds out.

A future project is also getting some attention and that is a wood shop. He managed to keep the snow shoveled off the building site in hopes to begin work on the building. Mark is well-known for his handcrafted diamond willow furniture. He plans to have a shop separate from his living quarters that is heatable for the long winter months when he has the time to create his unique furniture.

Cal Ward: My next "item" happened to be Cal who gave me another picture of the fishing expedition with Jim Kreblin and Mark Vail. According to Cal, he and Jim TIED catching the largest fish. I guess I'll have to get back with Jim on that story. You know how fish stories can get out of hand!

With March on the scene now (a good ice-fishing month), Cal said he is looking forward to a few ice-fishing trips to Silver Lake with Rick. They are gearing up to do some serious fishing, I hear.

In the meantime, Cal is tinkering on those outside projects now that we are getting extra daylight hours. He said he did a welding job for his neighbor, Mark Vail, repairing a part on Mark's snowmachine.

Although the winter has been a quiet one and what seems like an extra long one, Cal made a trip to Fairbanks in early February to visit family members. Now he is expecting his brothers, Art and Doran, along with their families to arrive soon and pay him a spring visit.

Jim and Audrey Edwards: The Edwards' are thoroughly enjoying the quiet winter months and find plenty to keep them from getting bored. Jim's workshop is attached to the house and just off the kitchen so he can do his inside winter projects without having to walk out into the cold temperatures. When I called Audrey, she said he was out there as we spoke working on his tractor.

Audrey is gearing up (I think she may be already packed!) to head

south with her sister and take in the sights and sounds of Disneyland. She is really looking forward to the warmer temperatures and a fun time in the sun.

Mark, Emily and Ross Bass: My next door neighbor, Emily, just called to say hello. She drove in yesterday from Anchorage and managed to avert any problems navigating the famous McCarthy Road. Sometimes it can be a challenge even for the best of winter drivers!

Husband Mark and son Ross are due to arrive in a few days.

The last trip Emily made was earlier this winter. Emily described it as one of her "most interesting accomplishments." She was accompanied by Elizabeth Schafer and Ellen, a friend of Emily's. When the adventurous ladies began their journey on the McCarthy Road, Emily said the temperature was -7 but by the time she arrived at her cabin, it had dropped to -25. The ladies were in for one of McCarthy's cold snaps.

Thankfully, the Besses' water source—a local spring named Bear Skat Creek—was still running and Emily was able to gather 7 gallons of water. She was more than pleased! She successfully got the house warmed up, too, although it took awhile.

Son Ross is having a grand time in the big city of Anchorage. On Saturdays while Emily is coaching a paralympic race team at Aleskya, Ross spends the entire day skiing the nearby mountain slopes with close friends. He is having a ball!

Mark is working hard but finding time to enjoy their new home. Ice skating on the mud flats on Turnagin Arm is one of their favorite outings. They have plans to attend a surprise birthday party for Mark's dad, Dick Bass, who lives in Chicago. **HAPPY 80TH BIRTHDAY, DICK!**

Mark, Emily and Ross expect to spend a large portion of this summer at their McCarthy home.

Adam, Stefanie and baby Pheobe Tschappat: All is well and quiet at the Tschappat house at Long Lake. Pheobe is almost 8 months old now and is the major entertainment for Adam and Stefanie. Mom says she loves to dance to music, talk a lot, is growing fast and keeping their hearts warm this winter. They did travel outside to visit family and friends for 6 weeks early in the season, but are staying close to home these days and not minding it one bit. On occasion Stefanie ventures out to visit Dorothy Adler and son Logan. (Logan just loves Pheobe, says Dorothy.) Pheobe, Adam and Stefanie did take a family outing the other day—a 4-hour trip to check “Dad’s” trap line. Pheobe had a blast and is doing just fine in her wilderness cabin home on the lake.

Neil Darish/McCarthy Lodge: Neil is one excited guy! He certainly is looking forward to the upcoming summer season in McCarthy. Neil had just gotten off the phone with Ian Gyori, the lodge’s Executive Chef. Both men are eager to work with (and learn much from) the new Sous Chef coming to McCarthy Lodge this year. “Joshua” is a friend of local resident Peggy Smith and has worked for a well-known restaurant owner and chef, Thomas Keller. The Thomas Keller Restaurant Group contains a family of restaurants. Keller was awarded the highest, three star rating in the inaugural Michelin Guide for New York for his restaurant Per Se, and in 2006, he was awarded three stars in the inaugural Michelin Guide to the Bay Area for his restaurant The French Laundry, making him one of only two chefs in the world with two simultaneous three-star restaurants. He is famous for his Bouchon bakeries, as well.

Creating memorable experiences for guests is a motivation that Joshua brings to McCarthy from his experience with Thomas Keller. We locals and area guests can expect to sample a variety of interesting fla-

vors, says Neil. Thanks, Neil, for giving us a heads-up on what we can expect and look forward to this summer in our town.

On another note, local contractor Jeremy Keller will be upgrading and making renovations at the Lancaster Backpackers Hotel for Neil. I’m eager to take a “look-see” on that item, too.

McCarthy Lodge has purchased a glass crusher which will alleviate trips for hauling glass bottles overland. The glass crusher is designed to pulverize the glass, enabling the lodge to dispose of the product on site. Neil is very interested in community input. Would locals desire access to the crusher? Please let Neil know your thoughts.

Craig Kowalski: Writing about Neil prompted me to call Craig who is keeping things in fine working condition at the lodge this winter. After last year’s tourist season came to a close, Craig traveled to Hong Kong but returned to McCarthy just before Thanksgiving. That has given Neil an opportunity to take in some time in the big city of Anchorage. Although the lodge is closed during the winter, there is always a need for someone to be on site. This is where Craig comes in. “I love McCarthy and I’ve loved being here this winter,” he says.

In the summer Craig’s number one priority is his maintenance job at the lodge, but, of course, McCarthy’s quiet winter months give Craig extra time to explore opportunities for improving our town’s living conditions. Craig is no slouch to the benefits of sufficient insulation and waterproof coating products. In the past he has worked (35 years, Craig says) in Alaska consulting and working with polyurethane foam insulation. Just recently, he came into possession of a machine that puts him in a position to offer his services in our town! Be sure to see Craig for the details of his venture.

On a different note, but certainly an item of interest, is the news that Craig’s son, Jeffery, is joining the McCarthy Lodge staff this summer as a breakfast cook. Craig is looking forward to having his son join him in McCarthy this year. An early WELCOME, Jeffery!

Peggy Morsch: While I was typing up the last item, the phone rang and it was long-time subscriber and McCarthy landowner, Peggy Morsch. Her cabin is located within a short walk of our place so when Peggy visits the area, we are sure to see her. Not only was she touching bases but she was giving me heads up on her March trip to McCarthy from her winter home in Milwaukee, WI.

Photography is Peggy’s niche and a good one at that! She is excellent at her profession and Rick and I are always eager to see her recent creations. I believe her favorite place on the earth to capture is the McCarthy/Kennicott area, so we fully expect to view our local scenery through her eyes and lens!!

Kurt and Lindsay Jensen: Last, but certainly not least of an item, is Kurt and Lindsay. Many of our readers remember Lindsay as Jim Kreblin’s daughter. The Jensen’s are presently on a trip outside visiting friends and family members. When Lindsay answered her cell phone, she said they were in Indiana to attend a wedding, but were working their way north, hoping to arrive in Fairbanks in about 2 weeks—plenty of time before their baby is due to arrive on the scene!

They are having a “great time” on their travels. Even a snowfall in North Carolina didn’t dampen their spirits.

Once they return to McCarthy, their plans are to move into Jim and Audrey’s caretaker cabin. With a new baby in hand, the extra living space will be greatly appreciated, I’m sure!

Have a wonderful trip home, Kurt and Lindsay!

Centennial project coming to WRST

(COPPER CENTER, ALASKA) —

Visitors arriving at the entrance to the Kennecott Mine in Wrangell-St. Elias National Park will soon enjoy new exhibits and a covered shelter at which to wait for shuttle rides to nearby lodging.

Thanks to a Centennial partnership with the Stephen and Mary Birch Foundation, the National Park Service will be able to build the shuttle gateway this summer, along with providing new exhibits for the recently renovated Kennecott Visitor Center. The Kennecott mill town is one of the best preserved early 20th Century copper mining camps in the country, and is the most visited part of Wrangell-St. Elias, America's largest national park. Since acquisition of the site in 1998, the NPS has worked to rehabilitate and stabilize the historic structures and provide services for visitors.

"This \$100,000 project was made possible by a \$50,000 donation from the Stephen and Mary Birch Foundation, and we are truly grateful for their support," said park superintendent Meg Jensen. "In addition to being a real help to visitors, this will give a nice boost to the local economy." Jensen expects that the shelter construction and exhibit installation work will be done by local day labor crews, while the exhibit fabrication will be done by contract.

National Park Service Director Mary A. Bomar said, "In these economic times, creative efforts like the Centennial Challenge provide a great return on

investment for both the American taxpayer and the philanthropic community. Where else can you be guaranteed to double your money?"

Congress approved \$10 million for Centennial Challenge projects and programs for the current fiscal year and park partners brought another \$17 million for a total of \$27 million in projects and programs at nine national park units in nine states and the District of Columbia.

The Birch Foundation's ties to Kennecott go back to the copper mine's earliest days. Stephen Birch purchased the Bonanza mining claims in 1900 and went on to start and serve as president of the Kennecott Copper Corporation in 1915.

In celebration of the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service in 2016, America invites the world to discover the meaning of national parks.

- What parks mean in people's lives
- What inspires people to experience parks
- What inspires people to become devoted to these special places

The National Park Centennial Initiative provides a framework for the National Park Service to engage the public in its mission. Its goals and strategies will embrace new constituents and gain support from a broad array of public and private partners to ensure America's national parks continue to thrive into the next 100 years.

Centennial Challenge projects and programs for 2009 are:

Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve, Alaska

Add transportation gateway and exhibits in the Kennecott Mines National Historic Landmark

\$50,000 – Stephen and Mary Birch Foundation, Inc.; \$50,000 – Centennial Challenge

Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska

Improve Exit Glacier visitor facilities

\$100,000 – Alaska Geographic; \$100,000 – Centennial Challenge

Haleakala National Park, Hawaii

Remove and control invasive species and restore rare and endangered plants

\$600,000 – Maui Invasive Species Committee; \$600,000 – Centennial Challenge

Independence National Historical Park, Pennsylvania

Rehabilitate the Ben Franklin Museum at Franklin Court

\$12,000,000 – The Pew Charitable Trusts; \$6,000,000 – Centennial Challenge

Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore, Indiana

BioBlitz! Conduct an all-taxa biodiversity inventory

\$150,000 – National Geographic Society; \$150,000 – Centennial Challenge

Jefferson National Expansion Memorial, Missouri

Replace the Arch tram operating system

\$185,000 – Metro Business Enterprises; \$185,000 – Centennial Challenge

National Capital Parks – East, Washington, D.C.

Expand "Bridging the Watershed" environmental education program

\$200,000 – Alice Ferguson Foundation; \$200,000 – Centennial Challenge

Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, California

Rehabilitate Gillette Ranch building as a visitor center

\$2,640,000 – Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority; \$2,640,000 – Centennial Challenge

Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming, Montana, Idaho

Conduct molecular all-taxa biodiversity inventory for Yellowstone Lake

\$500,000 – Yellowstone Park Foundation; \$500,000 – Centennial Challenge

For complete information about the initiative, more details on the 2009 Centennial Challenge projects and programs or to download a Centennial Initiative 2008 Progress Report, please visit www.nps.gov/2016.

The threat of wildfire is ever present

BY CARRIE HALE AND CAROLE MORRISON

With the lengthening of the days and the warmth returning with the sun, spring comes once again to the Copper River Basin. The melting of snow, budding of willows, mud puddles and singing birds are all things we have come to know, expect and anticipate. How beautiful and tranquil, this majestic place we call home can be! However, with the coming of spring also comes the hazard of wildfire.

The first months of spring typically between April and June, when the ground and the fuels are dry, as the sun beats down and the wind gently carries away the moisture from the forest brings a threat we often fail to recognize or even acknowledge is there. The deadly combination of high temperatures and low humidity combined with increased human traffic from our summer visitors sets the stage for unbelievable catastrophe. One abandoned campfire, one carelessly tossed cigarette, one lucky lightning strike...

The last fire to sweep through this area was in 1915, named the Sourdough Hills Fire. It was presumed to have been started by sparks from the railroad track. It swept from the Copper River to the Kennecott River and from the Chitina River to the mountains north,

an incredible 384,000 acres burned unchecked.

Despite its horrific reputation wildfire is a part of nature, a vital event in the cycle of our ecosystem. The lack of wildfire in this area has resulted in a massive build up of dead and dying fuels, seen nowhere else in the state, making the Copper River Basin the most watched area by fire suppression agencies.

With this in mind it is time to prepare, just as we prepare for the bone chilling cold of winter, the sloppy wet mess we know will come with spring melts; we must begin to prepare for that which could eventually come, wildfire.

Here are some things you we can do to be ready.

- Make a plan: Thinking realistically, ask yourself, What will you do? Will you evacuate? Where will you go? Will you stay? What will you need?
- Firewise your home: Firewise is a proven method of national standard developed to reduce the loss of property in the event of Wildfire. It recommends clearing back at least 100 feet around your home. For more information, visit www.firewise.org. Firewise Assessments, to help you decide what you need to do to make your home Firewise safe, are now being offered by Morrison Construction. They also have a qualified crew to do the landscaping work if needed. You

can visit them online at www.morrisonconstructionak.com or call 907-554-4456.

- Support your Local Fire Department: Many Volunteer Fire Departments in the Copper River Basin have wildland initial attack responsibilities in cooperation with State of Alaska Division of Forestry who has suppression responsibility for the entire area. They all need your support. What can you do? Get involved at the local level! Get to know the responders and find out about the equipment and gear! Volunteer a few hours! Attend fire training sessions! Donate if you can! Remember to thank them when you see them. They give their time to help keep you safe.
- Be Safe with Fire! 90% of all fires in the Copper River are human caused, most of them innocently. ALWAYS use an approved burn barrel. ALWAYS have a Burn Permit and follow burn stipulations. NEVER leave a burning campfire, ALWAYS check ashes before disposal, be cautious with sparks such as grinding in dry fuels and NEVER throw down a burning cigarette. Information on burning regulations can be found on the State Forestry website at www.forestry.alaska.gov.

Procedure for spending MAC Revenue Sharing Funds

MCCARTHY AREA COUNCIL RELEASE—

The money that MAC has received from the state is YOUR MONEY, coming from state oil revenues. The state has asserted that we can spend the money more efficiently than state bureaucrats, to be specific to our needs, and that MAC is the only appropriate local body to administer these funds. We realize that we need a means to fairly and efficiently disburse this money. We have many more local needs than can ever be covered by the amount we have, so we must choose wisely. To this end, the MAC board has come up with the following guidelines:

Any person who would be eligible for MAC membership (an adult who maintains a residence in this valley) may submit a request for funding a project; only MAC members may vote on requests.

Requests that positively affect the most community members and

have long-lasting benefit are encouraged.

Requests need to be submitted in writing, so that they can be circulated to the membership. Any proposal will be submitted at one meeting and voted on in the next meeting, or a later one, so that folks can be informed and think about it.

When submitting a proposal at a meeting, the sponsor or someone representing them should be present to answer questions and, possibly, make revisions to the proposal that will make it more likely to pass. After the presentation, the proposal (as revised, if needed) will be circulated to the membership by email or paper copy in the mail shack and voted on at the next meeting—or a later one if there needs to be more discussion/amendment, etc.

The written proposal should contain the following information.

PLEASE do not write more than 2 pages!

- Name of sponsor:
- Contact info:
- Please answer the following 4 questions.
 - 1) Describe the project. Be specific.
 - 2) Who will benefit from this project? Explain.
 - 3) What is the proposed budget for the project? Itemize as best you can (materials, hours of labor/rate, hours of machine time/rate, etc.)
 - 4) If this is a matching grant, how will this grant be matched and by whom? Be specific.

Within a month of the end of your project, please submit to the MAC board a brief report on exactly what was done, and an itemized accounting of all the money that was spent on it.

Chitina dip net harvest drops

BY TIM MOWRY

FAIRBANKS DAILY NEWS-MINER

FAIRBANKS — As expected from the grumblings of disappointed dip-netters last summer, the salmon harvest in the Copper River personal-use fishery at Chitina was the lowest in almost 20 years.

That suspicion was confirmed last week when the Alaska Department of Fish and Game crunched the numbers from almost 7,000 harvest reports returned by dip-netters.

The preliminary harvest total of 83,766 salmon was the lowest by dip-netters at Chitina since 1990, according to area fisheries biologist Mark Somerville in Glennallen. The average catch of 10

fish per permit holder was also the lowest on record since the personal-use fishery opened in 1984.

The numbers jibe with reports from dip-netters last summer that the fishing at Chitina was slow, even though sonar counts by the Department of Fish and Game were above average.

“If you look at the number of fish that came through the sonar, there should have been a better harvest overall,” Somerville said.

In 2007, dip-netters reported a harvest of just more than 131,000. The average harvest for the previous five years at Chitina was 116,428 salmon.

In 2008, Chitina dip-netters reported catching 1,915 king salmon, 79,300 red salmon and 2,146 coho

salmon. All those totals were below the five-year averages of 2,360, 111,302 and 2,344, respectively.

The low harvest numbers at Chitina didn't surprise charter operator Mark Hem, who has been ferrying dip-netters to and from fishing holes on the Copper River for more than 20 years. It took dip-netters longer to catch fish last summer and many went home without their limits, Hem said.

“It was a pretty tough summer all over for getting people their fish,” he said.

Part of the reason for the low harvest might have been fewer dip-netters. Though the state issued 8,041 Chitina permits, which was about 400 fewer than in 2007, only 4,811 permit holders — about 60 percent — reported fishing, Somerville said.

ville said. Normally, about 65 percent of permit holders report fishing, he said.

“The word was that it was slow fishing and people didn’t show up,” Somerville said.

Hem concurred. “A lot of people didn’t fish. Poor reports from the (Department of Fish and Game) and on our hotline kept a lot of people from coming down to fish.”

Fishing was slow early in the season and never got what dip-netters would term hot, Somerville said.

“I don’t think this was a year people could go down and catch their fish in two hours, but if they went down and took the time to catch them they were there,” he said.

People did go to Chitina during the last two weeks of July, Somerville said. A surge of fish passed the Miles Lake sonar in early July, prompting the Department of Fish and Game to announce back-to-back supplemental periods from July 14-27. Dip-netters can keep an extra 10 fish during a supplemental period.

Approximately 26,000 salmon — almost one-third of the total harvest — were caught during the two supplemental periods.

“When people saw that big pulse of fish come through, they really came down,” Somerville said.

Harvest by subsistence fishermen using fish wheels and dip nets in the Glennallen subdistrict above the McCarthy Road bridge was also down last year, Somerville said.

The average catch of 40 fish per permit was the lowest on record since 1984, and the total harvest of 47,652 fish was the lowest since

1992. The state issued 1,186 subsistence permits.

Fishing at Chitina might not be too hot this summer, either, based on projections from biologists with the Division of Commercial Fisheries.

Biologists are forecasting one of the lowest Copper River salmon returns on record. The projection for this summer’s sockeye salmon run is 1.3 million, which would make it the fifth-lowest on record since 1980, according to biologist Steve Moffitt in Cordova.

Last year’s run was a poor one, even though an estimated 718,000 fish made it past the sonar. The total run was estimated at 1.1 million, one of the lowest on record since 1980, and the commercial harvest was only 320,000, less than half of the pre-season projection. The average commercial harvest is about 1.1 million.

Biologists project the size of the sockeye salmon run by gauging the number of 3- and 4-year-old fish in the previous year’s run. The bulk of the Copper River sockeye run is made up of 5-year-old fish.

“I’m hoping I’m wrong, but we’ve had really cold ocean temperatures for the third year in a row, and that doesn’t usually bode well for wild salmon returns,” Moffitt said.

The high number of fish past the sonar last year — the 11 highest escapement in 29 years — was a result of major restrictions on the Cordova commercial fishery, Moffitt said. At one point, the commercial fishery was closed for two straight weeks.

“We had major restrictions on the commercial fishery to make

sure we were going to get our escapement,” he said.

This year’s Copper River king salmon run, meanwhile, is projected at around 77,000, which would be a significant improvement over last year’s estimated run of 53,000 chinook, one of the lowest on record in the last 10 years. The commercial king harvest last year was 11,400, the lowest since 1980.

Moffitt is keeping his fingers crossed for a good king return but said he’s “not holding out hope” the run will be a good one after poor returns of chinook around the state last year.

Fearing restrictions because of low returns, the Chitina Dipnetters Association and Alaska Outdoor Council filed a suit last month against the Department of Fish and Game and Alaska Board of Fisheries to have the personal-use fishery reclassified as a subsistence fishery.

If classified as subsistence fishermen, dip-netters would have a higher priority to Copper River salmon stocks than commercial or sport fishermen. Last summer, fishing time and harvest limits for dip-netters were cut late in the season. As the management currently stands, the dip net harvest is reduced by 50 percent if commercial fishermen can’t fish for 13 straight days, regardless of what happens after the closure.

“All that fishing time they cut in late July and early August is when a lot of people come down,” Hem said.

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<http://newsminer.com/news/2009/feb/12/chitina-dip-net-harvest-drops/>

“We cannot afford to differ on the question of honesty if we expect our republic permanently to endure. Honesty is not so much a credit as an absolute prerequisite to efficient service to the public. Unless a man is honest, we have no right to keep him in public life; it matters not how brilliant his capacity.” —Theodore Roosevelt

Governor expresses support for concealed weapons regulations

JUNEAU, ALASKA—

Governor Sarah Palin has encouraged U.S. Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar to support recently adopted regulations allowing concealed weapons in national parks and wildlife refuges. Secretary Salazar has directed a review of the regulations that were approved by the previous administration.

In a letter to the Interior secretary, Governor Palin outlined the

importance of the possession and use of firearms as a matter of safety.

“The possession and use of firearms are critical to urban and rural hunters in Alaska. As you know, my state contains vast, pristine areas where the ability to carry firearms can address a potentially life-threatening situation, enabling citizens to respond to bear and other wildlife conflicts. In addition, many urban and rural hunters utilize firearms in the pursuit of wildlife to satisfy their nutritional and cultural needs. Like the residents of other states, Alas-

kans also rely on firearms for self-defense in the vast acreage encompassed by our national parks and refuges.

“In my opinion, reliance on state laws governing the possession and transport of firearms will not detract from the purposes of national parks and wildlife refuges. Existing state and federal laws are adequate to protect public safety and natural and cultural resources against poaching, vandalism, and other offenses.”

Regulatory Commission grants rate ceiling increase to CVTC

BY RICK KENYON

The Regulatory Commission of Alaska has granted Copper Valley Telephone Cooperative the right to raise rates up to 36% in all but its Valdez area. This in response to a request by CVTC prompted by competition in the Valdez area.

Copper Valley's CEO and General Manager Dave Dengel stated that as competition in Valdez requires CVTC to move its rates in that ex-

change down to the cost specific to the exchange, it is forced to adjust its rates up in the other exchanges to cover the cost of service in those exchanges.

Dengel said that the current rates in the non-Valdez exchanges are not sufficient to cover the cost of providing service in those exchanges.

The Co-op requested (and the Commission granted) the ability to move its rates to the new ceiling in

a phased approach, rather than in one jump, in order to reduce the potential for what it calls “rate shock.” The plan calls for no more than ten percent per year increases.

What could have been a real shock to McCarthy area customers was a request to allow rate increases of almost 300% in the McCarthy area. Business users who now pay a base rate of \$23.65 could have seen that skyrocket to \$98.35. The Commission denied this request.

Wells Fargo offers personalization for cardholders

Wells Fargo customers now have the option of adding a personal touch to their wallets. Wells Fargo & Company (NYSE: WFC) has launched the Wells Fargo® Card Design StudioSM service, which gives consumer and business customers the option to customize the design of their Wells Fargo Check Cards or Credit Cards.

“The reason we launched Wells Fargo® Card Design StudioSM is two-fold,” said Brenda Yost, Wells Fargo Debit Card marketing manager. “First, our cardholders told us they want to be able to personalize their cards. Second, by giving our

cardholders the ability to design their cards with their favorite images, we hope our cards become their payment form of choice.”

Customers can add a photo to their card of themselves, a snapshot of their family or friends, a picture of a pet, or an image of a special hobby. Customers can customize the card background with an image of their choice or one from Wells Fargo's Image Library. Or they can add a personal headshot to the top left corner of their card.

Business owners can showcase their business on their cards by adding their logo or a photo that represents their business. Business

owners have three options in creating their card design. They can customize the card background with an image of their choice or one from Wells Fargo's Image Library. They can add a logo to their cards with their business name and tagline. Or they can add a personal headshot to the top left corner of the card.

The Card Design Studio service is available free to card customers enrolled in Wells Fargo Online® or Business Online Banking. More information about The Card Design Studio is available online at www.wellsfargo.com/carddesignstudio.

Alaska Attorney general's office urges consumers to be on the lookout for scams preying on economic fears

ANCHORAGE, AK—

The Alaska Attorney General's Office urges consumers to take advantage of information available as part of National Consumer Protection Week, March 1-7, and to be aware of scams that prey on consumer worries over the national economy. The theme for NCPW 2009 is "Nuts and Bolts: Tools for Today's Economy." The NCPW website, www.NCPW.org, provides information to help people get the most for their money, whether they are trying to stretch their paychecks, find a fix for a spotty credit history, or tell the difference between a real deal and a potentially fraudulent product or service.

"In these challenging economic times, consumers need to be especially wary of scams aimed at exploiting people's fears about the economic downturn," said Richard Svobodny, Acting Attorney General. "As a prosecutor in Alaska for over 30 years, I am all too aware of how adept criminals can be at taking advantage of people's fears and vulnerabilities. But the good news is that education and awareness go a long way in preventing consumer fraud. NCPW is a good reminder for consum-

ers to educate themselves in order to avoid scams and to make smart choices in the marketplace," Svobodny added.

Some examples of scams aimed at financial fears include:

- 1) Debt elimination/reduction scams. Businesses may claim they can reduce or eliminate credit card or other debt, but they may charge high fees, fail to pay creditors as promised, or do other things that put you in a worse financial position. If you need help with debt problems, take time to seek out a legitimate credit counseling organization.
- 2) Mystery shopping scams. Classified ads or unsolicited emails may claim you can make thousands of dollars a week working at home by evaluating a business as a mystery shopper. The scammer sends a check and instructs the victim to withdraw funds to make purchases and then, after deducting a "commission," to wire the remaining funds back. The check is fake, but the victim has withdrawn real money and sent it to the scammer. When the bank determines the check was fake, the victim of the

scam is responsible for the funds. Fake checks are also used in lottery scams, internet auction scams, and rental scams. These checks look real, but they are just a way to steal your money.

- 3) "Phishing" scams. Thieves use phony e-mails and web sites to extract personal financial information like social security numbers, passwords, and account numbers. The e-mail may appear to be from your bank or other financial institution with a warning that your account has been compromised and you need to provide a password or other personal information. Remember that legitimate businesses have your account information; they don't need to call you or email you for it. New twists on the phishing theme include "vishing" (or "voice fishing") and "smishing" (text messages to a cell phone).

For more information about NCPW, visit www.consumer.gov/ncpw. For information about consumer protection issues in Alaska or to file a consumer complaint, visit www.law.state.ak.us/consumer.

"The whole aim of practical politics is to keep the populace alarmed (and hence clamorous to be led to safety) by menacing it with an endless series of hobgoblins, all of them imaginary."— L. Mencken

"In reality there is perhaps no one of our natural Passions so hard to subdue as Pride." — Benjamin Franklin

"The capacity for self-deception, and self-justification, is large." —Jay Nordlinger

Voles in Alaska

Small but Mighty Important

BY ELIZABETH MANNING

Voles are among the smallest mammals – adults weigh less than four ounces – yet they play a huge role in the food chain. They are the primary food source for many small mammals and birds in Alaska, including weasels, martens, foxes, coyotes, owls, hawks and jaegers.

Even bears and wolves will eat voles, with black bears sometimes turning over logs and breaking into brush to find them.

“Anything predatory will take them opportunistically,” said Ian Van Tets, an assistant professor of biology at the University of Alaska Anchorage who is studying red-backed voles in Anchorage. “Voles are that fundamental step between plant energy and nutrition and carnivore energy and nutrition.”

In other words, voles are a fundamental prey species at the base of the food chain.

Lemmings play a similar role wherever they are found. Voles and lemmings look similar but while voles have a tiny tail, lemmings have a stump for a tail, Van Tets said.

Millions upon millions of voles live throughout Alaska but are rarely seen. They are active and awake all winter but live mostly under the snow, moving between their nests and foraging areas via extensive tunnel networks.

Voles memorize the tunnel routes and become so accustomed to their routes that

should a rock suddenly be placed in the middle of one, the vole would most likely run right into it with its head, Van Tets said. The tunnels will typically stretch for hundreds of meters under the snow.

They keep under the snow to keep warm in winter, and to hide from predators.

“They stand out like a little brown snack on legs against a white background,” Van Tets said. “So they hunker down.”

Even so, predators hunt the tunnels and break into the nests in winter to eat voles.

Mice do exist in Alaska but are rare outside of cities and towns. If you think you’ve seen a mouse outside of human settlements, odds are it’s probably either a vole or a shrew, Van Tets said.

There are two main groups of voles – red-backed voles and meadow voles. Red-backed voles typically live in the forest in small groups while meadow voles form large colonies and tend to live in open meadows or in tundra.

Red-backed voles, the species that Van Tets is studying, nest in groups at the base of trees or in dead fallen trees, above the ground but under the snow. They live in groups of half a dozen to a dozen, with mostly females and a few males. Living collectively helps them conserve body heat in the winter.

The younger males, which tend to be cast out on their own,

are often the first ones to freeze to death in winter.

“It’s sad, being a vole sometimes,” Van Tets said. “Yes, a lot of them die in the winter.”

Voles also don’t live very long; they rarely live to be older than a year.

A vole’s diet changes with the seasons. In spring and summer, they eat a lot of grasses and young leaf shoots. Later in fall and winter, they shift over to roots, fungi and seeds but will also eat carrion when they find it or even other voles.

“If they find a dead vole in winter, they don’t waste it,” Van Tets said.

In the winter, they will happily nibble on fallen antlers.

Like lemmings, voles go through periodic booms, though not as dramatic as the vast population fluctuations that lemmings go through. In boom times, their population might be 50 to 100 times higher than usual. Those boom times, which usually occur every four or five years, also result in increased breeding for weasels and other animals that rely heavily on voles for food.

Even secondary prey species benefit from vole and lemming booms because generally, they and their young are safer from predators during those boom times. Eiders, for example, increase their breeding activity when lemming numbers are at a peak.

Van Tets’ current research on voles is focused on how the

animals maintain the energy to survive and breed, particularly during Alaska's harsh winters. With captive northern red-backed voles at the Alaska Zoo, Van Tets and his students are monitoring the vole's energy use and correlating it with snow depth and temperature. The research is funded by a National Science Foundation grant.

Breeding typically starts during late winter and continues through August. Gestation is about 21 days and litters are typically number from six to eight. Females can have up to six different litters in a year.

Bear Fence

BY HOLLIS (FORMERLY KNOWN AS DAVE)

Returning from a flyout backcountry adventure in the Wrangell mountains, I was stunned to see a Park employee installing an electric fence around our seasonal employee wall tent housing.

I felt physically imprisoned in the middle of a 13-million acre National Park!

My employers had okayed the bear researcher installing an experimental fence on their private property in McCarthy as a deterrent to

Accordingly, the population can expand rapidly.

As part of his research, Van Tets is studying why some red-backed voles can continue to reproduce throughout the winter. While most male voles' testes reduce dramatically in size in winter and become sexually inactive, one in five voles is able to maintain large testes size, if the conditions are just right. If it is not too cold, snow cover is sufficient and food is available, those males can continue to breed, which can boost the overall population.

Van Tets said it is possible that climate change could result

in higher vole populations if the conditions are such to induce more winter breeding.

"If climate change doesn't affect them, that's good news," he said. "But if it does affect them, it will also affect snowy owls, jaegers, and any animals that preys on voles and lemmings. Any change in their populations will affect everyone else."

Elizabeth Manning has worked as a journalist and outdoor writer. She is an educator with the Division of Wildlife Conservation, based in Anchorage.

This story originally appeared in Alaska Fish & Wildlife News, November 2008.

potential problem bears that wandered near town.

I firmly told the bear guy that if my cat was injured by the electric shock that I would hold him personally responsible! He quickly hiked downtown, called the fence manufacturer, then returned and told me that the shock wouldn't hurt my cat. I repeated that I would hold him personally responsible if anything happened to my precious pet Miss Kitty!

Later I went on a rampage against the fence. I tried to short it

out, then I cut down some of the small bushes the wires were tacked unto, and finally I just cut the wires to stop the current.

I almost got fired, but my employers sent the handyman up to easily repair and re-activate the fence.

My cat did get zapped a few times without injury.

Two summers later I bought some land and set up a camp. The Park Service was giving out free electric fence systems to local residents—I got the first one!

Centennial project coming to Kenai Fjords National Park

NPS SEWARD, ALASKA—

Funded jointly by the National Park Service and Alaska Geographic, a new education pavilion adjacent to the Exit Glacier Nature Center will provide a staging area for educational groups and programs. Construction on the project is due to begin in this summer.

According to park superintendent Jeff Mow, "walking out to view Exit Glacier and feeling the winds

off the Harding Icefield is one of the outstanding visitor experiences in the State of Alaska. This Centennial project will enhance that experience by improving visitor understanding and appreciation of Kenai Fjords National Park. Completing the Education Pavilion will help us to reach out and welcome the thousands of schoolchildren that come to the Exit Glacier each year. We will be increasing visitor safety by relocating the picnic area and showcasing

sustainable design through the development of renewable energy sources for our park operations."

Upon hearing the announcement, Charley Money, Executive Director of Alaska Geographic remarked, "As the educational non-profit partner to Alaska's parks, forests and refuges, we are proud to support this extremely worthwhile project to enhance visitor enjoyment of one of Alaska's most accessible National Parks."

How to Burn Wood Effectively

BY RICH SEIFERT

Our energy future is likely to include more burning of wood in Interior and Northern Alaska where wood is available and a preferred choice. For energy security, we recommend that at least one source of heating in a home be from a resource that does not require electricity. This has great advantages in emergency situations where electricity may not be available and you want to keep your home and food and whatever else that may be damaged by freezing from being exposed to very cold temperatures.

Wood Heat meets these demands in a very positive way. Because of some negative implications with wood burning, particularly wood smoke concerns and pollution, doing it right is very important.

The chimney

First and foremost, you must make sure that the wood heating system is installed to safety codes. In each community where it's possible to get this information, check in with your local fire department and find out what they have available, especially for installing safe chimney penetrations for woodstoves.

The chimney is obviously a critical component of a wood heating system. It's much more than a simple exhaust pipe. It's the engine that drives the system by producing the pressure difference or draft that draws the combustion air and expels exhaust outdoors.

To work properly, a chimney must be installed up through the warm space of the house rather than through a wall and up the outside. Running the chimney outside cools the flue, which makes it harder to start a fire. It also makes it easier, unfortunately, to backdraft combustion gases back into the house.

Keeping the flue system straight is also important because the pressure drops in the flue stack every time you turn a 90 degree angle. Warm air rises and combustion flue gases are warm and want to rise. They do not want to go horizontally through a wall.

The best performing system has the flue pipe running straight up from the flue collar of the wood-burning appliance to the base of the chimney that runs straight up through the roof.

There are advanced technology wood-burning appliances that have been available since 1990, and these are about one-third more efficient than the older units such as the 1970s and 1980s airtight stoves. They are available and identified by their Environmental Protection Agency's certification or compliance with CSA Standard B415 of the Canadian Standards Association.

Preparing firewood

Good quality firewood is essential for efficient and convenient burning of wood. Good firewood is the right size for the appliance firebox and is properly seasoned. While hardwoods like birch are fuel for cold winter weather, soft woods like poplar and spruce make for better fuel in milder spring and fall weather.

Air drying can reduce the moisture content of wood to 15 to 20 percent and that's a 'must' before the wood can burn efficiently. How you process and store wood is crucial to achieving its moisture reduction.

The size you cut your wood pieces should be determined by the opening of the firebox. For convenient handling and fire management, most wood burning appliance fire pieces should not exceed 16" in length.

Piece lengths as short as 12" can be better for small heaters. Just

because your stove's firebox can handle 20" logs doesn't mean logs that long are needed or even desirable.

Split the wood into a variety of sizes for convenient fire building and maintenance. Large pieces are fine for large fires in cold weather, but small pieces are needed in cold weather for fast ignition of new fires or for kindling.

Drying wood

It's desirable in much of Alaska to stack wood in the spring and let it dry for an entire year, even perhaps through the second summer into the fall.

The tops of the stacks of firewood should be covered to prevent rain soaking down through them. It is best to store wood outside rather than inside in a woodshed, because reducing the air flow around the wood means it won't dry properly in time for the heating season. If you can store wood close to the house but out of the weather, such as on a deck or under a covered deck, that is desirable.

Storage of wood should be under cover from rain but at least 30 feet from a house, in case of wild fire. Use good judgment for your particular situation and always use seasoned wood, which means it is at least one winter old.

Stoking the fire

As unlikely as it may seem to those who've sat around a campfire, smoke is not a normal, unavoidable by-product of any fire. It is a waste situation resulting from poor combustion.

There will be no visible smoke from your chimney if the wood burns with bright, active flames. After an overnight fire, you'll find some coals at the back of the firebox, farthest from the combustion air inlet. This is the best time to remove a small amount of this ash.

How you handle the remaining charcoal can have a big effect on how much creosote and air pollution your fire makes. Don't spread the charcoal evenly out and place a new load of wood on top. This can lead to extended smoldering before the wood ignites.

Find where the combustion air enters the firebox. For most stoves and fireplaces it is at the front at the loading door. Rake the coals toward that air inlet.

To rake the coals properly you'll need the right tool. While many stove and fireplace tool sets include a poker, these are for decorative fireplaces. A properly built heating fire should not need poking. A stove rake is the best tool for stoking fireplace stoves and furnaces. A simple rake can be made by welding a steel rod of suitable length to the center of a steel rectangle about the size of a business card.

Place the wood on and behind

When the season or the weather changes

Fires should be built with a seasonal consideration. For example: to produce a low-heat output fire during relatively mild weather, use small loads of soft wood in a criss cross formation. Soft wood will burn quickly and will not leave a large coal bed that can overheat the house.

To produce a high heat output in cold weather, use larger loads of harder wood placed compactly in the firebox. If your firebox floor is roughly square you can load the wood east to west so that the combustion air reaches the sides of the logs and also approaches the ends of the logs.

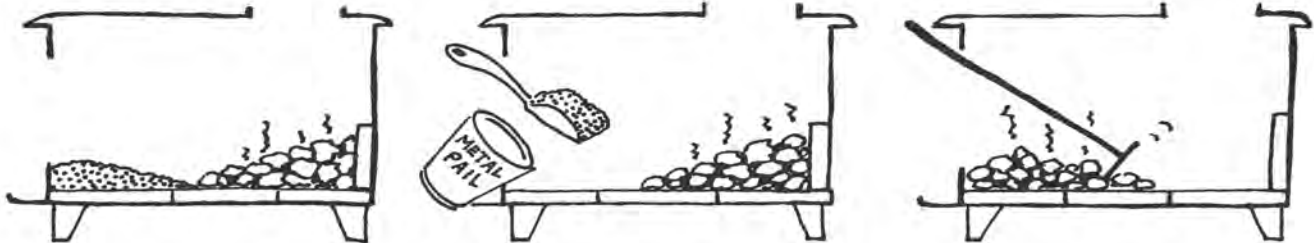
To get the fire completely burning, leave the air control fully open until the firebox is full of flame, the new wood is charred black, and the edges are glowing red. Then turn down the air control in two or three

and to operate the heater so the flue gas temperature is kept low.

This is not a good policy because heat released to the chimney is not waste but is the fuel the chimney needs to produce the draft and stay clean. Also, burning low to reduce heat loss to the chimney can lead to smoldering, smoky fires, which are extremely inefficient and can lead to deposition of creosote and sometimes-dangerous fires.

Don't be afraid to give your chimney the heat it needs to stay healthy. Especially in mild weather, it's more efficient to burn a series of short, hot fires throughout the day than to try to burn one load of wood slowly.

Rich Seifert collected this information from local experience in Alaska, and from publication CE 57 of the series Building, Renovating & Maintaining Your Home, by the Canadian Mortgage Housing Corporation,



Left, coals at back, ash at front; center, removing ash; right, raking coals.

the coals and always place the smallest, driest piece of wood directly near the raked bed to act as the igniter. Your igniter should begin flaming almost immediately. As it burns it will ignite the larger pieces.

Do not add wood steadily throughout the burning cycle, but rather place wood on and let the fire burn through its complete cycle. Wood burns best in that way.

A cycle begins when a new load of wood is placed on and behind a coal bed, and ends when that wood is reduced to a similar sized coal bed.

stages to avoid shocking the fire into a smolder.

Long burn times do not indicate effective burning

Longer burn times are not an indication of efficiency or effectiveness. In fact, burn cycles of 8 hours or less usually achieve peak efficiency. In order to keep stoves maintenance-free and free of creosote, burn hot and fast and often.

Because it takes a lot of work to gather firewood, and then to cut it, split it and store it, most people try to conserve fuel. This is understandable. It is tempting to view heat lost up the chimney as waste,

www.emhc.ca/en/burema/gesein/abhose/abhose_081.cfm.

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<http://www.uaf.edu/coop-ext/faculty/seifert/absntoc.html>.

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THE KATALLA HERALD

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Published weekly by J. F. A. Strong

Local and Personal

Last week Walter Edkins and Otto Koppin killed two mountain goats, over the divide. They did not succeed in getting the carcasses to town however, on account of deep snow.

James McCarty has brought to Valdez, to be sent to the A. Y. P. exposition, two fine copper ore samples. They are from the McCarthy claim on Nugget creek, one weighing 187 and the other 157 pounds.

March 6, 1909

ONLY FEW YARDS OF LINE INJURED

Chief Engineer Hawkins of the Copper River & Northwestern, takes an optimistic view of the damage caused the road by the glacial outburst of Feb. 14. A Seattle paper of March 10 says:

“Mr. Hawkins says there is no way yet of deciding just what caused the big body of water far back on the glacier to break loose. It may perhaps have found its way through an immense crevasse, but he is more inclined to believe that a local earthquake rent an immense fissure in the great field of ice and liberated the waters which have been held back for hundreds of years. At least he insists that in no other way could the escape of water have been so rapid.

“Mr. Hawkins says that but several yards of the line was injured and that while ice has been piled high on the grade in some places it is easy to remove.”

Local and Personal

Attorney Fred M. Brown, of Valdez and Seattle, and who is said to have political aspirations, will start a newspaper at Cordova, it is reported. R. J. McChesney, formerly of the Fairbanks News, is to be manager.

March 20, 1909

NOBODY CAN TELL

Damage Done to Copper River Road

The extent of the damage sustained by the Copper River railway, the outburst of the glacial stream from Miles glacier on Feb. 14 last, will not be fully ascertained until the vast masses of ice that now cover the track for several miles, have disappeared by natural means—either by melting by the influences of sun and wind or by being moved out by the freshets of spring; and even then the destruction wrought by the glacial out-break may never be known; for the spring breakup of the Copper river may complete the disastrous work begun by the glacier.

These are some of the statements made by William Dody, a hunter and trapper of the Copper River basin, whose camp is about thirty miles from Cordova. Dody was in Katalla this week on a brief visit, and he said emphatically, from personal observation, that there is at present no way by which the damage can even be approximated. Wherever the glacial waters reached there is a solid mass of ice; the stream rushed over the snow-cov-

ered ground of the valley, carrying great blocks of ice with it, and the thoroughly saturated snow fields have become ice plains.

Below camp 11, except where the roadbed was overflowed, there has been no damage. Men are now employed clearing the ice from the track in that direction, but no attempt has been made to clear the track beyond camp 11. From the canyon down to that camp the ice-cap is heavy, the great mass apparently being frozen to the bottom. Water is still flowing and freezing as it flows, and the ice accumulations are steadily increasing.

Contractor M. J. Heney had 600 tons of supplies for use on construction work above the canyon which he expected to transport to the end of the track, and then freight them through and beyond the canyon with horses, but no attempt to do this has been made, nor will it now be made, and this will curtail construction operations materially the coming summer.

Contrary to a report published in a Seattle paper of March 10, the ice in Copper river has not been broken up. Instead, the ice is very thick and solid, the snowfall has also been heavier in the Copper river valley than for years past, and should the snow disappear at all rapidly a tremendous freshet is likely to result, sweeping before it everything movable in the Copper river basin.

News Notes of Alaska

Fox sharks are reported to have killed more than a dozen Eskimo hunters in Bering sea, during the past few months. The fox shark is commonly known as the thrasher.

Local and Personal

Capt. Martin Barrett has engaged in the fur-buying business and among his purchases this week was a large and beautiful lynx pelt, the beast having been trapped near Chilkat.

Trappers who make a specialty of catching muskrats in Wisconsin and Minnesota are to visit the Martin river country for the purpose of securing muskrat skins in large numbers.

March 27, 1909

RAILROAD BUILDING

Katalla Company May Get Busy

There seems to be a possibility that Katalla may be connected with the main line of the Copper River railway this year, and that the work of constructing the road from Katalla to the coal fields will also be begun. This is the opinion of Katalla men who have recently returned from Cordova, among them N. Nathan and Capt. Ben Durkee.

It was stated some time ago that the money for building the coal road had been appropriated by the Morgan-Guggenheim interests, but whether the road would be built this year depended upon the probability of patents to the coal lands

being issued by the government.

Chief Engineer Hawkins was an out-going passenger on the Northwestern on Monday, for Seattle. He is making a brief visit only, and will return almost immediately to Cordova. The coal road will be built by the Katalla company, it is said, as Mr. Heney's work is now confined to pushing as rapidly as possible, that portion of the line between Abercrombie canyon and the Bonanza copper mines, to which point, according to the terms of a contract between the Kennecott Mines company, the owner of sixty per cent of the Bonanza group, and the Morgan-Guggenheims, who own the balance, the railroad must be completed not later than 1910.

A Seattle dispatch of a recent date is as follows. "At a conference of representatives of the Guggenheims at their headquarters in this city yesterday, plans were considered for building sixty miles of railroad into the Bering lake coal fields. It was not decided definitely that this work would be done during the coming season, much depending upon the attitude of the government toward a change in the coal land laws. But enough preliminary work will be undertaken so that subsequently the railway may be pushed speedily."

Local and Personal

A. B. Hunt came down from Carbon mountain where he had been for ten weeks continuously, expecting to go outside on the first steamer. On arriving here he received telegraphic instructions to resume work at the mine. Early yesterday morning he left for the mine with

Walter Edkins, Otto Koppin and Joe Esplin, but the traveling was so bad they were compelled to return.

April 3, 1909

News Notes of Alaska

Over-exertion followed by a sudden chilling, caused the death of William Wagner and nearly proved fatal to Leo Iten in Keystone canyon recently. The men were walking to Fairbanks, pulling a sled, and they became exhausted on the trail.

It is stated that the school board is in communication with Miss Ida Rider, an experienced teacher holding Washington and Montana state certificates, with a view to engaging her for the local school. Miss Rider is now at Cordova.

BURNED TO GROUND

Katalla Company Hospital at Camp 1

Fire which started in the house occupied by John Longacre, electrician for the Katalla company at camp 1, on Wednesday morning about 1 o'clock, destroyed the building and then spread to the hospital which was also burned to the ground, with a portion of its furniture, fixtures and appliances.

Mr. Longacre's escape from death was almost miraculous, and was probably due to the cries of the house cat, which roused him from sleep to find the house a mass of smoke and flame.

Mr. Longacre was alone in the house. Mrs. Longacre having gone to Martin point to join a party which was going on an outing next day to Softuk bar. He retired about 11 o'clock and was soon sleeping soundly. About two hours later he was partially aroused by a crackling sound, but not fully.

Just then the loud cries of the cat awakened him completely. He jumped out of bed and made his way to the outer room, which was filled with smoke, while flames were licking up ceiling and walls. He tried to reach a window but found himself again in the bedroom where even the bed was then on fire. Dropping to the floor to escape instant suffocation, he crawled toward the window and fortunately, this time he reached it, just as the wall separating the two outer rooms fell down. Nearly suffocated he fell against the single pane of the lower window, breaking it and then tumbled through the opening to fresh air and life. Getting to his feet he tried to shout but he had inhaled too much smoke and could not. Clad only in his night clothes, and sockless, he made his way to Red Christensen's house and gave the alarm. By the time that Mr. Nathan and others reached the place the hospital building was in the grip of the flames and attempts made to save it, and it were futile, was soon consumed.

It is believed that the fire caught from a terra cotta flue in the ceiling. After escaping from the house Mr. Longacre remembered that he had recently installed a gasoline stove in the kitchen at the rear of the house, and the fire not having reached it, he succeeded in rescuing it intact.

Mr. and Mrs. Longacre lost all their household effects, clothing and other belongings. A portion of the hospital equipment had been packed for shipment to Cordova, and taken to the dock, but a large amount was lost. The hospital was built by the Katalla company in 1907, and with equip-

ment, which was an excellent one, probably cost \$25,000. The entire plant of the company is covered by insurance.

April 17, 1909

New Notes of Alaska

Very rich ore has been struck on the Lucky Boy copper claim of the McCarthy estate on Nugget creek, in the Copper River country. The ore is bornite and glance.

It is stated that the Morgan-Guggenheims have purchased the Havemeyer interest in the Bonanza copper mines, and the building of the railroad will proceed more leisurely. The price reported is \$3,000,000.

James Gray, James Montgomery and Jack Williams were killed by a snowslide near the Bonanza mines on April 6. Seven men were engaged in making a trail on the Kennecott river when the slide took place. The other four escaped uninjured. Williams was a well known old timer throughout Alaska.

Local and Personal

A few wild geese are being bagged by hunters. The birds are said to be in very good condition, notwithstanding the scarcity of food, due to the backward spring.

G. F. McDonald came down from Bering lake this week, bringing with him some trout, the first catch of the season, which were delicious, as The Herald can testify.

April 24, 1909

A mission to study crops in the Far North

BY NED ROZELL

More than 100 years ago, a man traveled north on a mission most people thought was ridiculous—to see if crops would grow in the frozen wasteland known as the Territory of Alaska.

That man, Charles C. Georgeson, was a special agent in charge of the United States Agricultural Experiment Stations. The secretary of agriculture charged Georgeson with the task of finding out if crops and farm animals could survive in the mysterious land acquired just 21 years earlier from the Russians. When he landed at Sitka 100 years ago, Georgeson set in motion agricultural studies that are still carried on today at the University of Alaska Fairbanks' Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station.

Georgeson was not a man easily discouraged. In 1898, the experimental station site was in the middle of a swamp. Until he could clear and drain the land, he borrowed patches of land from Sitka settlers, as he explained in an interview in *Sunset* magazine in 1928.

“My plots were scattered all over the village and having insecure fences, or no fences at all, the local boys, cows, pigs and

tame rabbits rollicked joyously through them,” he said. “The seeds came up to become the playthings of diabolical ravens, who, with almost human malice, pulled up the little plants merely to inspect their other ends.”

From this shaky start came the federal government's discovery that crops could indeed survive in the far north, some better than others. Georgeson quickly helped establish other experimental stations: a Kodiak station in 1898, one at Rampart on the Yukon River in 1900, and another at Copper Center in 1903. The final three stations, the only ones still remaining, were the Fairbanks station, which opened in 1906, the Matanuska farm station, established nine years later, and the Palmer Research Center, which opened in 1948.

Federal interest in Alaska agriculture waned during World War I and the Great Depression. By 1932, the agricultural stations at Sitka, Kenai, Rampart, Kodiak and Copper Center had all closed despite some success (for example: grain and potatoes did well at Rampart; the Sitka hybrid strawberry is among the hardiest of all breeds; and cattle and sheep thrived at the Kodiak station until the eruption of Novarupta volcano in 1912 coated

the pastures with up to 18 inches of ash).

The Fairbanks and Matanuska stations have endured. Horticulturists and animal breeders today carry on the same type of experiments Georgeson did 100 years ago, finding species of plants and animals capable of adapting to the Far North's extremes in day length and temperature. From crossbreeding studies came first the Sitka hybrid strawberry, developed by Georgeson in 1907. Agriculture and Forestry Experiment Station researchers have bred a few dozen other varieties that thrive in the north, including the Alaska frostless potato (1970, in the Matanuska Valley), Yukon chief corn (1974, in Fairbanks), and the Toklat strawberry (1976, in Fairbanks).

Today, Alaska-grown crops and animals account for less than 10 percent of what Alaskans consume. But the potential for more is here. Crops and animals do well in some areas of Alaska, such as the Tanana and Matanuska valleys.

Someday it may not be cheaper to import foods from outside Alaska. Maybe then Georgeson's dream of Alaska as an agricultural state will be realized.

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.

And he gave it for his opinion, “that whoever could make two ears of corn, or two blades of grass, to grow upon a spot of ground where only one grew before, would deserve better of mankind, and do more essential service to his country, than the whole race of politicians put together.”—author Jonathan Swift

Source: *Gulliver's Travels—Voyage to Brobdingnag* (pt. II, ch. CII)

Book Review—*Thunder on the Tundra* by Lew Freedman

Do subjects like football, northern Alaska, hope and brighter futures draw your attention? If so, you will want to read *Thunder on the Tundra*: Football above the Arctic Circle by a familiar author to many in Alaska—Lew Freedman.

This is yet another publication by Alaska Northwest Books and chronicles the inspiring story of the Barrow Whalers. This fledging football team made history, attracted national media coverage, and demonstrated that the Eskimo tradition of team work also applies to football.

Located on the edge of the Arctic Ocean, where grass won't grow and snow falls in July, Barrow, is a town more likely to field a bowhead whale hunt than a football team. But the adults hoped a football program would reverse soaring teen suicides, substance abuse, and drop-out rates, and the kids wanted to play.

One of the greatest challenges, however, was that no one in Barrow had ever played football. Few had ever even seen a game in person. The field was full of rocks, and flour was used to mark the lines. Then ESPN came to cover the story. In Florida, the tale brought tears to Cathy Parker's eyes. "My family believes football can do a lot of things to encourage young people. And it was just one of those things that kept burning in my heart, and I wanted to do something," she told ABC News. What she did was help raise \$500,000 for an artificial turf field and a chance for the team to attend a football camp in Florida."

Author Lew Freedman traveled with the team throughout its 2007 season. "I knew when I heard that Barrow was fielding a team that I wanted to be part of it," Lew wrote. The result is an insider's view that takes you far beyond the first big national news stories. You get to know the players—who are not just

Eskimos or all male—and you get to experience key games. Interspersed among the team stories are chapters on football in Alaska, oil development, and whaling in Barrow that give the book a rich historical and cultural context—making it far more than just a sports story.

Today, the community still comes together around whaling, but it also comes together around football. "It is not simply a football field," says the locals, "but a field of dreams to inspire our children."

Football seems to be doing just that. "It's good for me," said lineman Robin Kaleak. "Last year I was failing in school. Football helps me get my grades up."

Freedman is an award-winning journalist who has worked for the *Chicago Tribune*, the *Anchorage Daily News*, and *The Philadelphia Inquirer*.

Thunder on the Tundra comes in softcover, 264-pages, with 29 Black and White photos. It sells for \$14.95.

Book Review—*Bird in the Bush* by L. Jo King

A collection of true stories, *Bird in the Bush*, is about the life of pioneer Alaska bush pilot, L. Jo King, her friends, family, and a colorful cast of characters found only in the Alaskan bush. From a small rocky mountain town to the abandoned copper mines of the Wrangell Mountains, and points in between, Jo King takes her readers on an adventurous experience of Alaska as a bush pilot. Jo shares the reality of be-

ing a bush pilot, flight instructor, and air traffic controller at a time and in a place where women were seen as less capable than their male counterparts. Jo tells her tales with humor and honesty from inspiring triumphs of spirit to close calls and heartbreaking losses. Readers will encounter extreme weather and airplane crashes, visit ghost towns and gold mines, meet angry bears and hungry wolves, go on a polar bear hunt, fly high

over Prince William Sound, Bristol Bay, and Alaska's great mountain ranges—then visit with presidents, movie stars, captains of industry, and astronauts. The stories are of a brave young woman and the dreams she dared to live. Enjoy the adventure.

L. Jo Edwards King grew up in a ranch in northwestern Colorado with dreams of becoming an Alaskan bush pilot. While attending high school in Craig, Colora-

do Jo sees an opportunity to become the next Amelia Earhart. Along with her best friend, Jo exaggerates her age to enroll in a flight school and receives her flying license at the age of 14. The girls enjoy the freedom of flight soaring through the Colorado Rockies capturing the joys of youth and daring to live the impossible dream. After graduation from high school Jo left for Anchorage where she reunites with her flight instructor who introduces her to the Alaskan bush. She returned to Anchorage to become a flight instructor and pilot. She also works on receiving her commercial pilot's

license and returns to Alaska when her friend, Don Sheldon makes his famous life-saving landing on Mt. McKinley. Jo is there to witness the event. Jo met Jacqueline Cochran, one of aviation's greatest proponents and most esteemed female pilots. Jo learns about real power and influence while working for Cochran. In Alaska, Jo forged new roads for women in aviation and became one of the first women air traffic controllers in the nation. Jo now splits her time between Alaska and Arizona. She still owns and sells property in the McCarthy, Alaska area.

Bird in the Bush is considered a biography and autobiography with the help of Jo's long-time friend and author, Lone Janson. Introduction and maps are credited to Holly Knight. The cover photo was done by Todd Salat, well-know Alaskan photographer who specializes in capturing the famous northern lights. The publisher is Kiwe Publishing Ltd. Of Anchorage, Alaska. The book is 221 pages and comes in softcover. It can be found at your favorite bookstore or purchased online at

<http://www.kiwepublishing.com>

Who takes home Alaska wildlife?

BY RILEY WOODFORD

At the end of hunting season, who takes home Alaska's wildlife? Is it residents or out-of-state hunters? The answer depends on the animal – most brown bears head out of state, most moose and caribou are eaten by Alaskans.

Alaska is home to almost a million caribou and close to 200,000 moose. In 2007, Alaskans took home 90 percent of the 7,400 total moose harvested. About 6,750 moose were harvested by Alaskans and 685 by nonresident hunters.

Nonresident hunters harvested only about 1,350 caribou in Alaska in 2007, out of a total harvest of about 22,000 animals. That's about six percent. Alaskans took home about 94 percent of the caribou harvested in the state – and probably more, since that estimate of resident harvest is conservative.

Nonresident Harvest in Predator Management Areas

Critics of predator management claim the practice is done to benefit, "...wealthy out of state hunters," and "...non Alaska trophy hunters." But the numbers don't support that, and hunting is closed to nonresidents in most of the areas where predator management is taking place.

Predator management is taking place in six areas: near Fairbanks in parts of Game Management Units 20 and 25, near Tok in Unit 12, near Glennallen in parts of Unit 13, near McGrath in parts of Unit 19, west of Anchorage in parts of Unit 16, and on the southern end of the Alaska Peninsula in part of Unit 9. In all these areas combined in 2007, nonresident hunters took just six percent of the caribou and five percent on the moose.

Wildlife biologist Becky Schwanke helps manage Unit 13 near Glennallen, an area that's home to the Nelehina caribou herd. Schwanke said all the caribou harvested in Unit 13 in 2007

were taken by residents, as well as 100 percent of the moose.

Schwanke said that because of the structure of the intensive management law as well as subsistence laws, nonresident hunting is eliminated when there is not enough game for residents. But even before Unit 13 was closed to nonresidents, the majority of hunters were residents. In 2001, only two percent of the almost 3,000 hunters in Unit 13 were nonresidents.

Wildlife biologist Roger Seavoy is based in McGrath and helps manage wildlife in that area, GMU 19. Seavoy said that the area is closed to nonresident hunting. He wrote, "There are no nonresident seasons for moose within 19A or the portion of Unit 19D East where we have a predator control program. It is fair to say that there is no nonresident harvest in any of the predator control areas managed out of McGrath. Once in a while a nonresident reports taking a moose within these areas, but on further review, it generally

turns out that they have misreported a moose taken elsewhere.”

Why are nonresidents taking even a few percent of the animals in predator management areas? GMUs are divided into smaller subunits, and hunting may be permitted in one subunit and not another. Predator management is implemented to increase numbers of caribou in some areas, moose in others. Predator control in the Delta Junction area (20D), for example, is intended to benefit caribou, and nonresidents are permitted to hunt moose there. Thirdly, unlike moose, caribou move extensively between Game Management Units depending on the season and the year, and caribou management focuses more on the herd than on the GMU. Nonresidents may be allowed to hunt one herd in a GMU but not another.

Harvest of Bears and Other Big Game

Alaska has an estimated 30,000 brown bears statewide. Nonresident hunters harvest more brown bears than Alaskans. In 2007, about 1,900 brown bears were harvested in Alaska. About 700 were taken by Alaska residents and about 1,200 were taken

by nonresidents – about 67 percent.

About one-third all the brown bears harvested come from the Alaska Peninsula: 630 bears were taken from Unit 9 and more than half those came from the southern half of the peninsula, Unit 9E, where 50 bears were taken by residents and almost 300 by nonresidents. Kodiak Island (Unit 8) and Southeast Alaska’s Admiralty, Chichagof and Baranof islands (Unit 4) are the other top brown bear producers.

There are an estimated 100,000 black bears in the state of Alaska. Over the past five years, harvest has averaged about 2,800 each year. Statewide, harvest has increased steadily over the past five years, from about 2,500 in 2003 to 3,250 in 2007.

In general, about half the statewide harvest of black bears is by resident and half by nonresidents. However, that varies tremendously from area to area, and some areas see considerable nonresident hunting. In Unit 2 in Southeast Alaska, Prince of Wales and adjacent islands, the five-year average (450/year) shows that about 88 percent of the black bears are taken by nonresident hunters.

Alaska’s Dall sheep are popular with nonresident hunters, and the harvest is split fairly evenly between residents and nonresidents. In 2007 nonresidents took 403 sheep, while resident hunters took 513, about 57 percent.

In 2007, 518 mountain goats were harvested in Alaska, 158 by nonresidents (about 30 percent) and 360 by resident hunters.

Other animals receive virtually no attention from nonresident hunters. Only one musk ox was taken in 2007 by a nonresident, and 257 were taken by Alaskans. Only three bison were taken by nonresidents, and 117 were harvested by residents.

Although nonresidents take less than 10 percent of the game hunted in Alaska, they contribute almost 70 percent of all the hunting fees collected by Fish and Game.

Riley Woodford is the editor of Alaska Fish and Wildlife News and the producer of the “Sounds Wild” radio program. He can be reached at riley.woodford@alaska.gov

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Guns ‘n Noses

BY MARY ODDEN

I’d like to share a fear I have for my country: that we could self-destruct out of sheer gullibility, especially since we have become just barely literate enough to read our email messages but not smart enough to investigate their truth value or significance, and way not wise enough to keep our fingers off the “forward” button.

As the evangelical minister Rick Warren says, political division easily jumps to hatred: “All of a sudden, the guy you disagree with is evil, and you demonize him.”

Gun rights, in particular, threaten to make us rural folks caricatures of ourselves by inspiring quick fear whenever we perceive a threat to a prized and primal part of our lives—our ability to feed and defend ourselves.

Never mind the not inconsiderable support of the US Supreme Court which, in 2008, confirmed for the first time in our history that the right to bear arms is an individual right.

We go crazy when we see any control of firearms proposed, leaving behind our also famous rural skepticism of “believe nothing that you hear, and only half of what you see.”

I spent several hours this week chasing down an “Ammunition Accountability Act,” which has been coming up on email since 2007 and around my kitchen table as recently as Christmas, as a measure that (the emails now say) requires coded ammunition by June 30 of 2009.

Most of the first several hundred of the 10,400 hits I got on Google on the AAA were variations on the same email: “Remember how Obama said he wasn’t going to take your guns? Well it seems that his minions and allies in the anti-gun control world have no problem with taking your ammo....”

In fact, the AAA never came up in Congress but it has come up in 18 states without becoming law anywhere. Factcheck.org says, “Such a proposal is being pushed by a company that holds a patent on bullet-coding technology. But none of the 31 bills introduced last year ever made it out of committee.”

Ah, it’s those free enterprise guys again, trying to take my guns.

And then someone forwarded me the text-only of US HB 45, and when I went to investigate its status in Congress on the internet, I ran into the same wall of fear and repeated emails without any helpful information about whether or not this bill poses a real threat to my possession of firearms.

Our politicians, bless their hearts, do not always help us distinguish between real threats and threats that can be used to make political hay.

In my perfect world, which does not exist, here is how my state legislator would respond to me when I contact him after someone sends me a copy of a piece of federal gun legislation with no surrounding documentation which makes me fearful as a hunter, a gun owner, and a somewhat free citizen in the fiercely independent state of Alaska:

“Mary, this bill has just been introduced. It would, as you suggest, do a lot of bad things including 1) discourage gun ownership in a whole class of citizens outside the criminals with semi-automatic weapons it is trying to target, 2) prevent our children from proper gun and hunting education, 3) stomp on states rights, and 4) drive the Attorney General of the United States stark raving mad because it makes his office directly responsible for repeatedly (every 5 years) handling the registrations of every single one of these firearms owned by every single person in the country.

“But Mary, I am not going to defame the character of Representative Bobby L. Rush of the 1st Congressional District of Illinois, a guy who started the Chicago chapter of the Black Panthers more than 40 years ago in 1967 and in fact once spent 6 months in prison in 1972 on weapons charges.

“I wouldn’t tell you those details without also telling you that Representative Rush ran the free breakfast for school children program and started a medical clinic while he was a Black Panther, but left the group when they ‘started glorifying thuggery and drugs.’ He holds two masters degrees, is a Baptist minister, and has been a U.S. Congressman since 1992.

“Since 1999, the year his son was murdered, he has sponsored 30 pieces of gun control legislation.

“He was moved to write HR45, which is a rewrite of the also misguided HR2666 which he introduced in 2007, by the deaths of 31 Chicago school children in gun violence in that year, including Blair Holt, the namesake of the bill, who was shot while trying to shield a friend from a gunman’s bullet.

“But before you get mad at him for being a creep, take a deep breath and think what an amazing thing it is that a person who formerly associated himself with a radical

group that sometimes encouraged violent political protest (we would now call them terrorists) is now—a mere four decades later—an elected representative of his district.

“That is a political version of beating a sword into a plowshare, and a fulfillment of the promise of our democracy.

“He is a federal legislator who submits his ideas and those of his constituents at the ground level of the American political process and trusts that, if that idea is well-enough supported in the society through its elected officials, it may become a law of the land.

“I will not attack the character of Representative Rush by letting mention of his long-ago gun conviction just hang out there by itself and thereby imply that he is still a terrorist. As a congressman, he apparently believes he is representing the interests of his constituents, though he also apparently does not know enough about the lives and livelihoods of people who live outside his inner city universe.

“And Mary, since my staff and I have researched this bill carefully, keeping a vigilant eye out as always for threats to the security and rights and cultural identities of Alaskans, we are happy to tell you that this legislation has not a snowballs’ chance in Hades of advancing to law.

“In the month since it was introduced, it has not attracted a single co-sponsor, which it must have to even advance through committee. And because this piece of legislation perfectly combines elements which make many citizens fearful—gun control, a radical connection, a person of color who can be objectified to “one of them,” and not to mention a democrat—I want to reassure you and anyone else who wants to polarize Americans by blowing this out of proportion, that the resistance to this asinine piece of legislation is bi-partisan.

“In short (although it is too late for that), Mary, these bills are introduced very often, and not just lately since you-know-who got into office.

“So although the Senate and House Joint Resolutions we are introducing in opposition to this US House Bill 45 confirm our responsiveness to the concerns of our constituents and will be remembered by the most ardent of our gun owners and sportsmen when they later see our names on the election ballot, you could justifiably view these Joint Resolutions as an overreaction, a bit of grandstanding, and a waste of political energy and everybody’s time in our short 90-day session.”

Alas, my state legislator made no such explanation about US HB 45.

When I called US Congressman Don Young’s office, though, Press Secretary Meredith Kenny described the status of the bill as above and called it a “non-starter.”

Mary Odden is Editor and Publisher of the Copper River Record. Used by permission.

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Photo by: Peggy Morsch

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Congratulations, Richard and Kim!



Congratulations to Richard and Kim (Northrup) Frost, who welcome their son, Robert (Robbie) Franklin Frost into the world. Robbie was born December 30, 2008. Many McCarthy folks will remember Kim from her days working at the McCarthy Lodge and living in the area. Kim is Peggy Guntis’ daughter.

Richard, Kim and baby Robbie had the pleasure of visiting Kim’s family in Tucson during the month of February. A baby shower was given by “Grandma” Peggy with approximately 20 folks attending the celebration.

The Frosts make their home in Homer and still visit the McCarthy area often.

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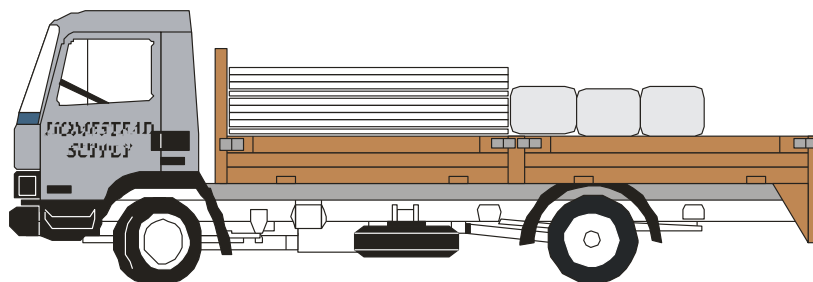
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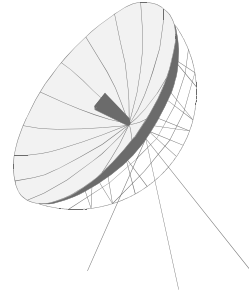
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Cooking with Peggy

BY PEGGY GUNTIS

Hi there cooking fans. Each time I write an article I have to decide which recipes you might be interested in having and which one I should start with. Today I decided to start with the one I'm sitting here at my desk eating!

I was at my sister's house the other night for a potluck and she provided the most wonderful pasta salad. Because she and I usually prepare way too much, there was quite a bit of the salad left over and she very graciously offered it to me (I have to admit I hinted life or death threats) so I'm eating to my heart's content. Fortunately, I only have to share the recipe and not the food so...

KATHIE'S PASTA SALAD

- 2 packages refrigerated cheese tortellini
- ½ pound or a little less of seedless grapes (purple and/or green)(cut each grape in half)
- 2 small cans or 1 large can of mandarin oranges (drained and cut each slice in half)
- ¼ cup (or more if you like) chopped nuts—pecans or walnuts
- (¾ of a cup or so of shredded carrots makes this salad extra delicious)
- ¾ of a bottle of Litehouse honey mustard salad dressing (either the light or regular will work and is usually found in the area of the fresh vegetables in the supermarket)

Boil the tortellini as directed on the package and then drain and cool in the refrigerator.

Into a small bowl combine the grapes, mandarin oranges, shred-

ded carrots if you desire, and nuts and add to the cooled tortellini.

Pour on the dressing and mix well. Kathie saves the remainder of the bottle of dressing so that if she takes it out of the refrigerator the next day and the tortellini has absorbed too much of the dressing, she adds a little more.

Enjoy!

Next is the recipe for the chicken I took to the potluck. I took it from a recipe book called Crazy Plates (1999) by Janet & Greta Podleski. Their first book was Loo-neyspoons which came out in 1997. I LOVED both of them. Both books are filled with humor, tips, and recipes for low-fat food that are irresistible. Actually, they are two of my favorite recipe books. By accident I discovered that they've just published a third called Eat, Drink, and be Merry. That one was ordered within 10 minutes of my discovery! Please believe me, I don't know these authors at all but I wanted to pass along my recommendation because I love what they've done. The recipe I took to the potluck is called:

THE THIGH WHO LOVED ME

- 3 pounds boneless, skinless chicken thighs (about 12 pieces)
- ¾ cup ketchup
- ½ cup salsa
- ¼ cup honey
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- ½ teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch

Trim off any visible fat from chicken. Arrange thighs in a single layer in a 9 x 13-inch baking dish. Set aside.

In a medium bowl, whisk together ketchup, salsa, honey, Dijon mustard, chili powder, and cumin until well blended. Pour sauce over chicken. Turn pieces to coat both sides with sauce.

Bake, uncovered at 400 degrees for 45 minutes. When chicken is done, arrange thighs on a serving platter and keep warm. Pour sauce into a small saucepan, skimming off as much fat as possible. In a small bowl, mix cornstarch with 1 tablespoon water until smooth. Add to sauce. Bring to a boil and cook until sauce thickens, stirring constantly. Pour extra sauce over chicken or serve it on the side as a dipping sauce.

Makes 4 to 6 servings.

I'm sure most of you who love to cook and even those of you who don't but have a hungry husband have gotten recipes from friends and neighbors. I'd like to share one I got from a long-time friend who is a wonderful cook. She's one of those people who can just whip up a meal when unexpected company drops in. I panic; she puts out a dish like this one:

CRUSTLESS SAUSAGE-APPLE QUICHE

- ½ pound bulk pork sausage
- 1 ½ cups finely chopped apple
- ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1 cup (4 oz.) shredded sharp cheddar cheese
- 4 eggs, beaten
- 1 cup half-and-half
- ½ cup biscuit mix

Cook sausage until browned, stirring to crumble, drain well. Set aside.

Combine apple, spices, cheese, and sausage. Spoon into a

9-inch quiche dish or deep-dish pie plate.

Combine eggs, half-and-half, and biscuit mix in a mixing bowl; mix well. Pour over apple mixture. Bake at 375 degrees for 40 minutes or until set.

This is great for breakfast, brunch or that Sunday evening when you had your heavy meal at noon but you want something tasty in the evening.

Now, how about some POTATO PANCAKES instead of hash browns in the morning or instead of French fries for lunch or dinner. They are easy and good and given to me by another friend who loves to cook.

POTATO PANCAKES

8 large potatoes peeled and grated

1/2 teaspoon salt

3 eggs

1 tablespoon grated onion

1/4 cup cream or rich milk

1/2 cup (more or less) flour or enough to take up some of the liquid (should be thin batter-like)

Fry on a hot griddle until brown. Don't turn until well set.

Makes about 6

Do you ever wonder what foods can be frozen and which cannot. I'm going to pass along some information that I got online from the University of Minnesota Extension regarding dairy products. Sometimes after a holiday dinner I have leftover cheese etc. and I wasn't sure if they would freeze and things are just too expensive to waste now days so here are a few tips.

1. Freeze high quality butter six to nine months and margarine for 12 months in original coated paper packages. Do NOT freeze whipped butter or margarine.

2. Cream cheese, dry cottage cheese and farmer's cheese keep in the freezer three months. Frozen creamed cottage cheese breaks down and becomes mushy. Use it in cheesecake, freeze and then blend it in the blender. Cream will be crumbly after thawing. Use it in spreads and dips.

3. To freeze hard cheese such as cheddar, Colby, Edam, Gouda, Swiss or brick, cut and wrap in

small pieces of less than one pound, or grate and freeze in freezer-weight bags or rigid freezer containers. Moisture may cause a mottled color. Before using, thaw it in the refrigerator. Freeze light and heavy cream, evaporated milk and half-and-half for up to two months. Heavy cream may not whip after thawing. Remove original wrappings or can and store in plastic freezer containers or glass jars. Leave one-inch headspace. Thaw in the refrigerator and use for cooking.

4. To successfully freeze eggs, break the eggs and add one tablespoon milk or water per egg and a dash of salt. Scramble well and pour into freezer container. Thaw in the refrigerator and use for scrambled eggs, French toast, pancakes or waffles.

You are all probably heading into spring as you read this so relax and enjoy yourselves. Come and visit us up in McCarthy this summer. The more the merrier and please, if you have a recipe you would like to share just send it to Rick or directly to me at guj1072@q.com.

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

Threatening Hope

BY JEREMY KELLER

The essential argument to be made against any and all movements by a society towards collectivism is that once that direction is affected, reversing back towards individual freedom and liberty becomes an extremely difficult task. It requires radical change. Even though a majority may become convinced of its essential correctness, they will not sup-

port it in practice until they are suffering severely and can no longer see the tunnel, let alone the light. In this sense, hope is the enemy. It is only when this false prophet has been exposed that we may decide to become Free Men again, and become willing to climb towards and live in the rarified air of liberty.

Freedom is to be found at altitude.

Liberty lives in the high country.

When a people, every so often in the course of human events, successfully reject the tyranny of their day, they quickly and invariably discover that the real work lies in keeping what they have captured. It is as if human civilization has unconsciously (and unwisely) chosen water as its mentor. The force of gravity by which water is relentlessly pulled to the

lowest unobstructed point, is matched by the force which relentlessly pulls Man from his heights. Though he bled and sacrificed to summit, he quickly tires of the view and the effort required to keep his own counsel on matters political and economic. He then begins his inevitable descent towards the lowest common denominator. His collectivist, socialist nature knows no opposition save his will, his force of intellect, and the intensity of his integrity.

On His way down, the attraction of the valley becomes overwhelming as it comes into view. The promise of the prophets be-

comes all that is heard. In the abbreviated words of Rudyard Kipling, "...and as soon as the brave new world begins, when all men are paid for existing, and no man must pay for his sins....."

The Free Man strives to make clear that a better world can only be achieved by understanding the fundamentals of human nature. He calls these fundamentals "The way things ARE." Once thoroughly understood, then the possibility emerges to create a world for Man in the template of the "The way things COULD BE." All the while he fights with the full fury of his intellect those who would promise

a brave new world taking the form of "The way things AUGHT TO BE." He knows these fantasies for what they are.

They are the Dreams of Dragons.

During his descent, individuals repeatedly discover the collective mistake and choose to reverse their personal directions, but the greater body remains unaware until it is well past the point of no "easy" return.

Perhaps it is in fact "Hope" that is just another word for nothing left to lose.

"It is equally dangerous giving a madman a knife and a villain power." —Socrates

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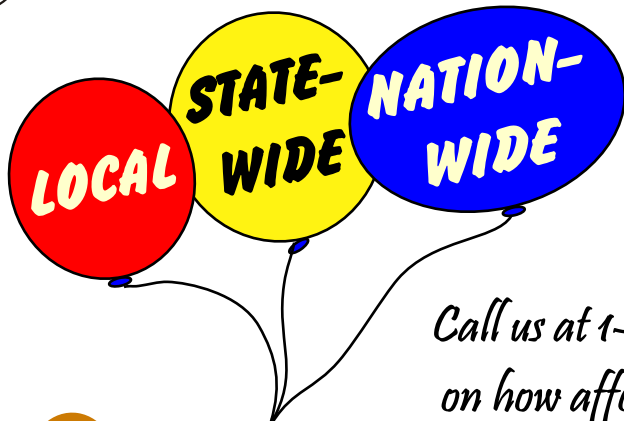
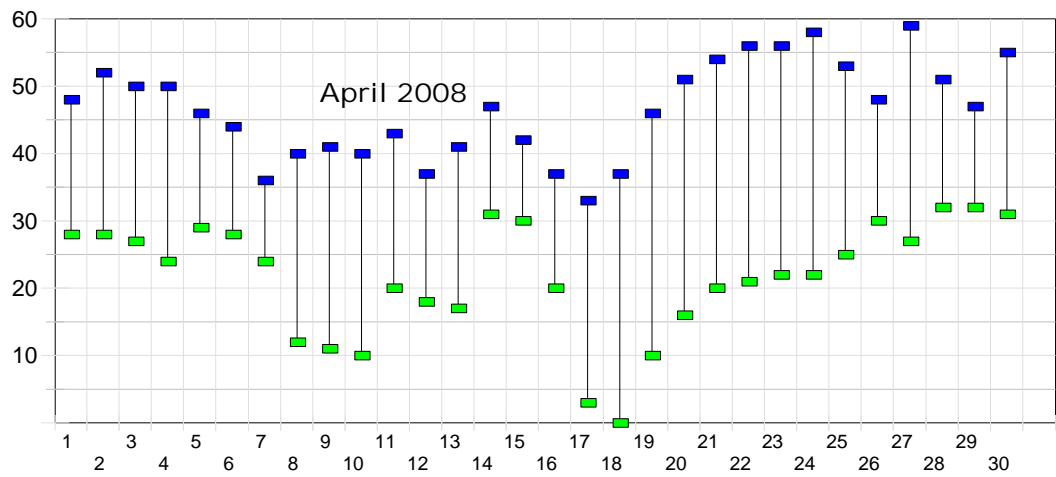
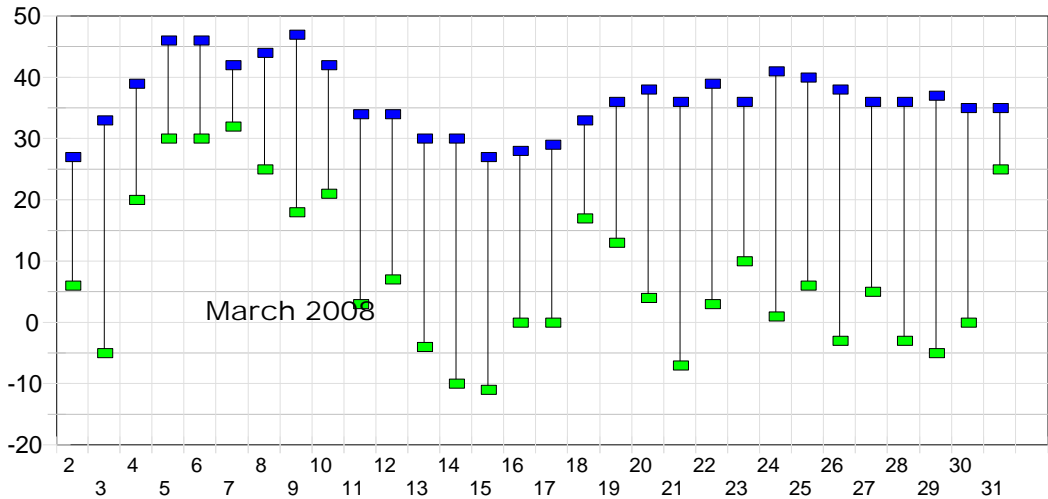
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