

adventure

ALASKA

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Delightfully Uneventful

...that's how we've chosen to describe this past summer. The weather was near perfect for all trips, folks were well-behaved (for the most part) and our seasoned guides all arrived at the summer's end with some shreds of sanity still intact --they say they're all willing to come back next year! We had several lovely family groups this summer, some returning past clients (one for her fourth trip!) and some wonderful wildlife viewing experiences. All in all, it was a darned good summer. Uneventful is good, in that it means no major dilemmas.

And so now we look toward 2008; with bookings already coming in, it's looking like it may well be a busy one. Our Iditarod Adventure in late February is full already and some summer trips are nearing capacity. This time of year can be a terribly frantic one for us, as we wrap up the summer, both mentally and physically, while at the same time, trying to re-focus on the coming season. We do realize though, in the midst of this chaotic transition, how fortunate we are to do what we do --to get to meet so many interesting people, from so many places, and to be able to show them some of our favorite places in Alaska. It's quite rewarding when we sit and look back on it. In fact, we had an impromptu little "guide party" last week, and sitting around the big kitchen table, we found ourselves reminiscing, and fondly recalling favorite moments of the past summer and seasons. There's no doubt about it, we're privileged to do what we do.



A favorite "secret" --Eagle Feather Point



Our Iditarod canine staff, at Moosehorn Lodge

Old News New News

Once again this year, we do not have any major building projects to report on. The great McCarthy cabin venture delusion was decided to be put on pause, during increasing moments of lucidity. Aging bodies and the selfishness of sanity have for the time being, won out. One cabin is finished, another probable along with some out-buildings. The spot is still superlative for the camping itineraries, and that's part of the selfishness!

... And speaking of building in McCarthy, here's an update on the Kennicott flood damage from last fall. Thanks to the collective efforts of the National Park Service, the State of Alaska and many local volunteers, much of the flood damage in Kennicott has been repaired, if not just temporarily. New foot bridges now span National, Jumbo and Bonanza creeks, allowing for some awesome views of the damage done by the flooding, and making it possible to once again hike out to the glacier. Some of the historic buildings are still heavily damaged and will require some major effort, but the work is underway.

It seems the landscape is always changing in that part of our world - just last week we went out to McCarthy for a little post season R&R, and discovered that McCarthy Creek had flooded the week before, washing away our fire ring, and relocating much of itself on the far bank of the river bed. It's never dull out there in our Nation's largest National Park!

Trip itineraries will remain the same essentially for next summer (Why mess with a good thing?) with no new trips in the works this year. But we would like to again point out, those two "new" itineraries, which premiered this summer: Interest was encouraging, but schedules conspired to only have a smattering of bodies spread over a variety of dates, precluding running any.

The 6-Day **Alaska Highlights Tour** still promises to touch upon just that – some of Alaska's highlights along the paved road system. It's a "tour" which means the comfort of indoor lodging each night, hot showers, and toilets that go whoosh. It features Denali for two nights, Fairbanks, Chena Hot Springs, Valdez and Prince William Sound. Even with an overnight at a hot springs, its spirit is still in the hallmark of adventure, exploring some of Alaska's lesser visited locales.



"Glassing" for mountain goats above Hope

The 10-Day **Alaska Multi-Sport Adventure** is still hoped to be a great addition to the list. Designed for those who want a tad more motion/excitement in their vacation, it will feature some moderate hiking, glacier walking, sea kayaking and river rafting. Camping half the nights will allow groups to fully appreciate the landscape (and the whims of the Elements). Though an adventure for sure, this trip is designed, as are all our adventures, for anyone with a moderate level of fitness and a propensity towards flexibility and fun!

Staff Updates

Once again, we have to give major credit where it's due and brag about our wonderful guide staff. Though we were conspicuously missing one - Sheri! - we still managed to pull it off. Patrick, Joe, Kathleen and Chris all kept busy and had fun to boot. Here's the details: **Patrick** was back for his 14th year, effortlessly guiding his eager ducklings

around Alaska and showing off his numerous special places along the way. He's now relaxing on the beach in California no doubt, before heading off to France and Australia for the winter. **Joe** kept busy, guiding our Yukon River and camping trips as usual, entertaining his groups with Robert Service readings and wowing them with his backcountry and glacier knowledge. He and Erin, with kids, Jack & Sadie, are now calling Hope their second home, spending every possible weekend and currently building a small cabin on their lovely property. **Kathleen & Chris** managed to do several trips for us this summer and as always, delighted their charges with numerous stories only those who were born and bred here can do. They are both now back at their "real" jobs, teaching elementary and high school in Wasilla. **Sheri**, as mentioned previously, decided to take a year off from Alaska. She and hubby Michiel spent their post Antarctica time traipsing the globe in search of more personal adventures. Stops included New Zealand, Iceland, Tanzania and of course Michiel's homeland of Holland. They are both back in Alaska currently, catching up with old friends before heading back down to "the ice" (that's Antarctica - again!) and vowing that they **WILL** return in May to take up the guide torch once again.



Sometimes they think that it's their trail

Barb & Todd (and 5 1/2 year old Liam) continue their attempt at holding it all together from our "basecamp" in Hope, and occasionally, if lucky (?), they get to actually guide a trip or two! Todd had a great time showing some fine folks the Yukon and his favorite outpost, Eagle on an August tour. With Liam now school-age, yet the travel bug everpresent, we'll be homeschooling while doing a good bit of exploring around the Lower 48 this winter. Life is good and infinitely interesting.

!!! Repeat Offender Program !!!

ANNOUNCING JUSTIFICATION FOR THOSE GLUTTONOUS ENOUGH TO THINK OF RETURNING FOR A TRIP WITH US —If you've survived one before, you get a 10% discount on the next one. Maybe try a new itinerary or another season --The Iditarod! We'd love to see a few of our friends again!