

adventure

ALASKA

October 1998

Volume 04 Number 1

Nineteen Ninety-Eight Another Great Year . . .

Yup, we survived another one. In fact it was quite a good year for those of us at Adventure Alaska. Our staff members were all back from previous seasons and all (almost) of our guests were exquisite. Memories were had aplenty and we managed not to lose or maim a single guest. The fact that we have the opportunity to meet and come to know so many folks with each their unique lives, is truly one of the most rewarding aspects of this enterprise. It's particularly when paths cross again, that one can't help feeling a bit like part of an extended family.

A dominant delight for us this past year remained expanding the lodge in Hope (the concept of actually being finished, seems too painlessly finite). Instead of being content finishing what was already in progress, we decided rather to seek some additional, concurrent chaos and build some more. What was starting to look like a (yikes!) yard, we proceeded to turn into moonscape, laying the utilities and piping underground to the pavillion-to-be. Guests were surely impressed with the saturation bombing landscaping motif. The end goal having a building for additional bathrooms (and a hot tub!) was accomplished with the underated help of slave labor --we put on a timber framing workshop. After days and countless hours of chiseling mortises and tenons in the tradition of milleniums past, our team of volunteer victims was able to erect a beautiful structure, and all without nails. Priorities apparent, the hot tub was installed before the roof was finished. The timber frame technique is truly an art, and steaming in a tub, not a bad way to admire it (and forget the pain involved). Hats



Manhattan North - NYC resident Peter Herzog in Barrow



The new timber-frame "pavillion" at Discovery Cabins

off to local Jon Gantenbein for his masterful expertise.

And yes, you might have noticed that we finally did in fact arrive at a name for our little compound, "Discovery Cabins". After much anguish, we threw a dart at the list of names suggested by our guests.

Not to neglect the operational side or rather the actual business, new this year were two great itineraries that featured different places and means of locomotion. The *Arctic Explorer Tour* wandered to Barrow and all the way to Inuvik in the Northwest Territories, combining several flights to shorten the distances, with some of the most unique roads on the planet. It's a hauntingly different North from our other trips, and so it attracted a number of wonderful folks that had journeyed with us previously. It was a great success and thus a keeper. We've long had request for something featuring the feet, and our answer to that was the *Day Hiker Adventure*. With each day high-lighted by a hike in a contrasting area, and three nights camping in some wonderfully "secret" spots interspersed with sheets and showers, the itinerary proved very popular. Playing outside is great fun.

New Goodies For Next Season

No new major building plans are envisioned for next year. But then again, it's not yet next year and when the recent wounds heal and the memory recedes, who know what folly may follow. As for tours, the old stalwart itineraries won't be changing by much, and the two new debutantes have earned starter status. Just to keep us loony though, we've

devised a couple new ones.

Our shortest itinerary ever of five days debuts, with the *Kenai Explorer Tour* guaranteeing some of the best that our fantastic little peninsula has to offer. From the perennial favorite of the Kenai Fjords National Park to the tiny seaside community of Seldovia inaccessible by road, and our lovely (a *possibly* biased opinion) community of Hope, the tour is a leisurely exploration of some very special places. It is intended as an add-on to existing tours, or, for those suffering a distinct injustice in the amount of vacation days available, as an alternative to the ghastly bus package standards promising the best of Alaska in twenty minutes (—or was it twenty t-shirt shops?)

New too, is the eight day *Alaska & Yukon Explorer Tour*. While visiting some of the North's more famous attractions such as Denali and Dawson, equal time is given to the ends of the road in Talkeetna and the "secret" gem of Eagle on the Yukon River. Contrasting destinations and an intimate variety of travel, from road to plane to river, serve to foster a deeper appreciation for the uniqueness of these lands than more cursory tours could possibly. Combined with the *Kenai Explorer Tour*, it is a true Alaska few could claim to experience.

Two new trips —just the ticket to rationalize another trip to North . . .



A sordid gathering atop the Root Glacier on the Day Hiker

Staff Updates

The roster this year at Adventure Alaska remained remarkably unchanged, with mostly the same wonderfully twisted crew in its employ. Masochists they must be, and we're hoping that will continue . . . And now for a bit of news: **Jeannine** has at last, in part, embraced the concept of semi-retirement. From handling all of the initial brochure requests and mailings for years, her chosen travel schedule now only allows seasonal duty as, Queen of E-mail, fielding and coordinating what has rapidly become a

principal forum for inquiries and client contact. As a dedicated modern cyber-grandma, she sports a computer that might have John Glenn and NASA calling in a pinch. She's agitating to ferry a van up this spring and will hopefully upon arrival, be roped into chairing the landscaping committee for us in Hope, now that the backhoes and bulldozers have temporarily been put away. **Sherry Ward** is the newest Adventure Alaska name, foolishly consenting to join our "family" and take care of many of the initial phone contacts. Her savvy is considerable and hopefully her pain threshold high, so that we can benefit from her talents for years to come. **Barbra** and **Todd** remain the principal company jesters, holding down the office world, construction projects and occasionally impersonating



Along the Iditarod Trail

guides. Their post-season sanity restoration activities included flying a small plane to New Hampshire, buzzing cows and camping under the wing along the way. Upcoming plans include a marketing (strictly, no play involved of course) trip to Australia, and a wee barnstorming trickle about the Lower 48. **Patrick** as usual juggled consummately well, the summer's multi lingual and personality challenges. His off-season intentions are to buy a round-the-world air ticket, and make full use of the unlimited stops. With his predilection for obscure places, we fervently hope that he doesn't become the special of the day for some cannibal. This winter **Heidi** will work again in a shop repairing outboard motors after spending part of her summer building trails across Kachemak Bay. **Chris and Kathleen** are back in their "real" jobs, teaching in the Wasilla school district, after spending much of this summer and several to come on the other side of the classroom, pursuing Master's Degrees. This past year **Lorraine** continued her dog sledding program and demonstration in Homer for the summer visitors, to help support her extended (and extending) four legged family.

!!! Repeat Offender Program !!!

*ANNOUNCING JUSTIFICATION FOR THOSE GLUTTON-
OUS 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. If you've already stumbled back before this offer, apply it to the NEXT trip. We'd love to see a few of our friends again!