

# adventure

# ALASKA

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## Nineteen Ninety-Nine A Memorable One . . .

Looks like we're going to make it through this millenium, and actually in fine fashion. In fact it was the best year ever for those of us at Adventure Alaska. Stalwart staff were all back from previous seasons and we added some dandy new ones. Memories were had aplenty and we managed not to lose or maim a single guest --though a few caused us to debate whether that should be a goal without exceptions. The overwhelming caliber of folks we have the opportunity to meet and come to know, is truly one of the most rewarding aspects of this enterprise, and one can't help but end up feeling like part of an extended family. Of course in every family there are usually a few members with whom one has a hard time admitting common genetic material (--ask us about the carrot tantrum fellow --we used to advertise that our trips were only for adults, until we found that it wasn't always the younger set that acted the part!)

All in all though, it is the vast majority of our guests that are just a delight and a privilege to host --and they're the ones that keep us enthused and remind us how fortunate we are to, "do what we do". We even had nomad Bill Hudson back for his third trip with us, though we might soon be hard pressed to come up with a new itinerary in order to see him again. Sy and Liz Sypolt along with Marietta Mayberg reprised their inimitable troika, and also returned to cut a different swath across the north.

As for other newsworthy events of the past season, those of you that visited Discovery Cabins in Hope were all visually apprised of our lovely "Move The Driveway"



Look Mom, only 34 flat tires this season!



Iditarod '99 Survivors

project, compliments of the unfathomable depths of the human psyche as evidenced by our dear neighbor. In what was apparently a surveying error, the corner marker of our lot was off, resulting in the urgent "necessity" of moving our only access and lots of buried cable a few feet in the midst of our busiest time. We now have a new fence as a monument to the mental dust bunnies that sometimes collect at the end of the road.

Another highlight, beyond great people, scenery and the occasionally cooperative wildlife union, was some remarkably fine weather for most of the trips (to those of you that endured the payback days of inclemency -- thanks!). Somehow, somewhere though, one of us must have peevd the rubber gods, because rare was the trip that did not enjoy multiple practice sessions at tire changing. One group in fact had five, and with field honed experience, guide Patrick contemplates a pit crew career change.

## Old News

## New News

This past year saw the advent of two new itineraries, the *Kenai Explorer* and the *Alaska & Yukon Explorer*, and feedback from both has garnered them starter status next season. Featuring some out of the way little gems that fortunately the big buses have up to this point ignored, we feel fortunate to be able to allow others an authentic taste of the North. It is though, an ideal increasingly difficult to promise, as the lobbying interests of large scale tourism carry great weight. For those of you that have had the privilege to experience the exquisite Denali Highway while

still gravel and lightly traveled, you'll be saddened to know that it is slated to be paved, a result in great part of pressure from the cruise companies to make it more "accessible". If you'd like to weigh in on the public comment, you can address your thoughts to: Joe Keeney Dept. of Transportation 2301 Peger Rd. Fairbanks, AK 99709. Thanks.

And to ensure that our future remains chaotic, we've added a new itinerary for 2000, the *Kenai Trail Hiker Cabin Tour*. Basing primarily from Hope and heading to a different mountain trail each day, the 6-day trip features a wonderful variety of environments from the subarctic alpine to an ageless icefield. The *Dayhiker Adventure* has proven very popular, but there seemed to be call for more strenuous hikes, followed by a bed instead of a tent at night. And the hot tub might be popular too.



Marietta's mental state after her 2nd trip with us

## Staff Updates

The roster this year at Adventure Alaska sported the same wonderfully twisted crew in its employ, with some fine new additions. Masochists they must be, and we're hoping that will continue . . . And now for a bit of their news:

**Jeannine** has emerged from semi-retirement to handle, "special projects". She'll be back to fielding all of the initial brochure requests and mailings for a bit this fall after a social visit here in September. She led an expedition up the Alcan highway this last spring to deliver a van, with crew members, Patrick's mother, a college friend and multiple past client, Olive Langlois. They've all reenlisted for a reenactment this coming spring, joined possibly by Sherry's mother. Soon there will be a waitlist. Speaking of **Sherry**, she switched from handling some office duties to guiding a couple of trips. This winter she's working on a real estate license and hopefully sales we be slow for a few weeks next summer . . . **Barbra** and **Todd** remain the principal company jesters, holding down the office world, construction projects and occasionally impersonating

guides. Their post-season sanity restoration activities include flying a small plane around the country, buzzing cows and camping under the wing along the way. Upcoming plans include a marketing (strictly, no play involved of course) trip to New Zealand. **Patrick** as usual juggled consummately well, the summer's multi lingual and personality challenges. After a stint in Baja, his off-season intentions are to buy another round-the-world air ticket, and make full use of the unlimited stops. With his predilection for remote South Sea islands, 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 as her day job, with a few evening musical forays as part of the all, *Girl Band*. Uncertain yet if the



Lazy days on the Yukon

CD will pass the censors. **Chris and Kathleen** are back in their "real" jobs, teaching in the Wasilla school district, after finishing their Master's Degrees this summer. Just to make their thesis projects challenging, they moved to a new home at the same time. This past year **Lorraine** inaugurated a fly-in dog sledding program on a glacier near Seward, reportedly garnering coverage on CNN (hopefully her 15 minutes aren't up). **Joe Schumacher** joined the sordid team this summer and was a wonderful addition. He did show a poor work ethic though, by getting married in August on the East Coast. This winter he's enthused about being charged with designing and implementing an outdoor education curriculum for the Anchorage School District. Working with elementary age kids might not be all that different. **Mark Bass**, a longtime friend familiar with the operation, became our Kenai specialist, guiding all of the new Kenai Explorer trips. We're hoping he still considers *us* friends. In addition to manning the Anchorage base and a stint of dog sitting, he's back to juggling jobs for his high end commercial wall covering business of many years. And that's all from us.

## !!! 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. 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!