

Tells of 25,000 Mile Trip Across U. S. To Alaskan Wilds

Following is a continuation of the round robin letters sent to friends by Mr. and Mrs. Robert W. Patton on their 25,000 mile trailer trip to Alaska.

In spite of the lack of social contacts time has slipped by much too fast. The sunrise and sunset are a sight to behold as old sol traces its low path across the southern sky, painting the sky with unimaginably beautiful hues of red and gold. Sue finds it hard to do her few daily chores during the four hours of sunlight. The movie entertains us evenings, when we are not sleepy and we get that way early in the evening, with darkness shutting in and the stars shining brightly at 3 o'clock. We have done a lot of reading from the library. One book on Alaska and a detective story a week, plus the current magazines. Long hikes have filled in and the last three months have flown. I have watched the airplanes coming in and taking off for points all over the north, first with wheels and as snow fell on skis. One afternoon I counted 24 planes on the field with a big Lockheed Electra landing with mail and passengers from Juneau.

All through November I hounded the weather bureau keeping check on flying conditions as we wanted to get in our Nome flight before early December. What we wanted was clear weather around Mt. McKinley so we could get pictures of that most beautiful mountain. Unfortunately the ceiling was too low and we have postponed our trip to after Jan. 10 when light conditions will be better than now.

We had one very interesting P.M. when we went out to a gold mine and saw a huge dredge working. The first operation in working low pay dirt is to sink pipes about an inch in diameter over the area to be worked. These pipes are about 10 feet apart. Cold water or steam is forced into the pipes through hose connections and as the ground thaws they are hammered down until bed rock is reached. The muck or overburden has been first removed by a dredge line, a sort of steam shovel idea or bull dozer like a snow plow in front of a big caterpillar. The following year water is forced at very high pressure through fire hose on the thawed out gravel and the loose silt is washed away so when the dredge floating in its own made lake, moves along it gathers up the gravel and gold in a chain of buckets washing the gravel over riffles which catch the gold. The gravel is carried out and dumped behind. It is large scale mining and has proven profitable in working over areas previously skimmed by pick and shovel.

On glancing through my diary I notice on Oct. 20 we had 61 degrees temperature. From all reports our beautiful fall has been much more pleasant than all over the states. Slightly warmer than this minute when we are just sitting down to lunch and it is 33 below. Warmed up quite a bit from this morning, 1 degree.

Another time we watched gold being melted down into bars at the bank. Each lot is placed in a separate receptacle in a furnace and melted, then poured into molds. I was surprised to learn that all gold is not pure and varies in value from \$27 to \$35 depending on the assay. The reddish gold seems to assay the brightest while the green the lowest. It comes to the bank in leather bags or pokes and looks like sand and small pebbles.

We watched the freeze up the first step to becoming a sourdough and now the ice on the Chena River is 23 inches thick. The last step is to see the break-up sometime in May which we will miss, so we will be only half sourdoughs.

Every week I have attended the chamber of Commerce luncheons and thus have gotten an insight into life here, perhaps different from the average visitor. Directly after lunch Sue has met me and we have gone out to the University of Alaska for two lecture courses being given for the general knowledge of the townspeople. Ours is on the History of Alaska and the other on the natives. Both are very interesting. The picture one forms of the natives (Siwash) is of a degraded race, debased by their contact with white. They are not immoral as temporary marriage is very common among them. If a young couple are attractive to each other, they may try a month on the trap lines before reaching the altar.

However many of the Indian customs, though apparently discarded, still prevail. In Nenana a boy from Fort Yukon came down to the Tanana Indians to get a bride from the opposite clan. He was quite surprised to find his brides family were disgusted to find he ate bear meat, it being taboo among the Tanana tribes.

Cabins here in the north are sealed up in winter with storm windows, well anchored by long screws. Ventilation is secured by opening the door for those that like fresh air, otherwise each room has its 4x4 inch ventilator with shutters to let in fresh air. As there is no wind little fresh air comes in. We purposely left off the storm sash from our bedroom so as to cool it down at night. Last night with over 30 below outside, it was about 45 above in the room when I got up this morning.

Tata for now and a Happy New Year to you all, Bob, Sue, and Dick.

Boy Scouts
Notes of Troop and Camp

Nineteen hundred and thirty-nine was a great year in scouting in the communities served by the North Shore Area council. As of December 31st there was a total membership of 3,834 which includes 888 Cubs, 2,228 Scouts for total Boy Scout membership of 3,422 one year previous at which time there were 726 Cubs, 2,094 Scouts for total boy membership of 2,820 and 602 men. The North Shore Area council was organized on Christmas Eve in 1926 at which time there were 311 Scouts no Cubs and 33 men.

Those interested now in the progress of the council since its inception will have an appreciation of the figures revealed in the following table of the growth since the beginning of the council.

NORTH SHORE AREA COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

13 Years of Growth 1926 - 1939			
Year	Boys	Men	Total
1926	0	311	311
1927	77	603	780
1928	189	681	870
1929	247	1023	1270
1930	273	1172	1445
1931	317	1286	1603
1932	343	1367	1710
1933	362	1369	1731
1934	392	1714	2106
1935	477	1874	2351
1936	626	1944	2570
1937	764	2002	2766
1938	726	2094	2820
1939	888	2228	3116

The objective of the council for the next five year period is 4,000 boys and 1,000 men.

The North Shore Area council is now the fifth largest council in boy membership in Region 7 comprising the states of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, and Wisconsin. The larger councils in order are Chicago, Detroit, Milwaukee, and Indianapolis. Popular Merit Badges

Figures just released from the

headquarters office of the North Shore Area council covering the Merit badges earned by scouts during 1939 will prove interesting to those desirous of keeping in touch with this youth movement in our North Shore communities. The figures reveal that there were a total of 1832 Merit badges awarded during the calendar year of 1939. In order of popularity and the number of badges earned the following is the correct listing of the 35 most popular badges.

35 Popular Merit Badges - 1939

1. Personal Health	105
2. Swimming	101
3. First Aid	101
4. Metalwork	97
5. Public Health	73
6. Safety	72
7. Firemanship	68
8. Handicraft	67
9. Pathfinding	67
10. Civics	66
11. Music	61
12. Reading	61
13. Athletics	59
14. Camping	59
15. Woodwork	59
16. Cooking	54
17. Pioneering	54
18. Life Saving	50
19. Carpentry	44
20. Bird study	43
21. Scholarship	34
22. Wood carving	32
23. Electricity	32
24. First aid to animals	19
25. Wood turning	19
26. Leathercraft	16
27. Painting	16
28. Physical development	16
29. Art	16
30. Machinery	14
31. Canoeing	13
32. Plumbing	13
33. Basketry	12
34. Marksmanship	12
35. Photography	12

Eighty eight and seven tenths per cent of all the Merit badges earned were in the 35 Merit badges listed above. In addition to the badges listed there were 54 other Merit badge subjects including 207 awards. The above statement reveals outstanding progress in the movement by scouts registered in the North Shore Area council.

Civil Service to Hold Examinations For Postmaster

The United States Civil Service commission announces an open competitive examination for the posi-

tions of postmaster at Ravinia and Fort Sheridan. This examination is held pursuant to an act of Congress, approved June 25, 1938, which placed presidential postmasters within the classified civil service. Highland Park residents desiring to compete should call at either post-

office for application blanks, which must be filed by January 26th.

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County Medical Society Sponsors Lecture January 17

The recommendations of the American Medical association for the betterment of public health will be discussed by Dr. Eben J. Carey, dean of the school of medicine of Marquette university, in his address on Medical Trends and Medical Progress in the auditorium of the Research building of the Abbott Laboratories, North Chicago on January 17 at 8 p.m. The lecture will be open to the public, free of charge, and is sponsored by the Lake County Medical society.

A major recommendation is the establishment of a federal agency to coordinate and administer medical and health functions of the government exclusive of those of the army and navy. Another calls for the allotments of funds authorized by Congress for the prevention of disease, the promotion of health, and the care of needy sick to the various states.

In its recommendations the American Medical association points out that attention to public health and provision for medical service are a local responsibility. The need should be determined locally and the administration carried on locally. The American Medical association further recommends that there be the utmost utilization of qualified medical and hospital facilities already established.

Dr. Carey will discuss the encouraging statistical record in regard to the control of contagious diseases, the prepayment plans for hospitalization and medical care, and current legislation in regard to public health.

He will point out that 1938 showed the highest general level of health and the lowest death rate ever known during the 150 years of United States history and that the life expectancy of man has been raised from 35 years to 62 years, in an almost 100 per cent increase. He will describe the contribution which the physicians have made to this progress.

N. S. Division of Illinois Police to Hold Dance, Feb. 1

The North Shore Division of the Illinois Police Association will sponsor a benefit dance at Labor Temple, 387 North avenue, Thursday evening, Feb. 1.

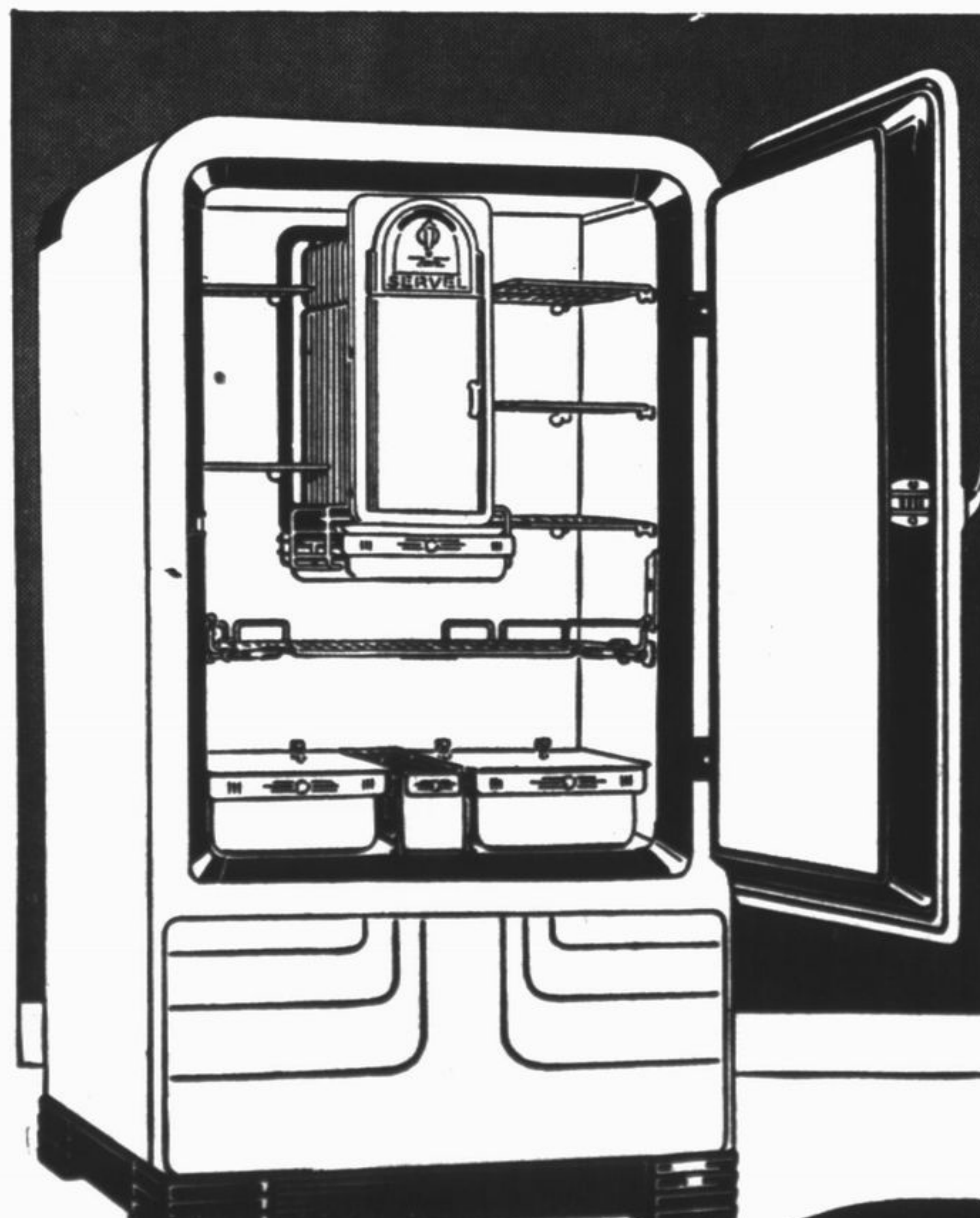
Two popular orchestras, both of radio fame, will be on hand to play for continuous dancing from 9 until 1 o'clock. Frank Westphal, composer of popular songs and formerly of radio station KYW, and the Rock Ridge Rangers of WLS will perform.

Tickets will be sold at the door only and there will be no advance sale, it has been announced.

Cub Pack to Meet Tonight, January 11

There will be a Pack meeting of Cub Pack 86 at Lincoln school on Thursday evening, January 11, at 7:30 p.m. Lieut. Comdr. G. D. Lyon will show very interesting talking movies of the U. S. Navy.

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