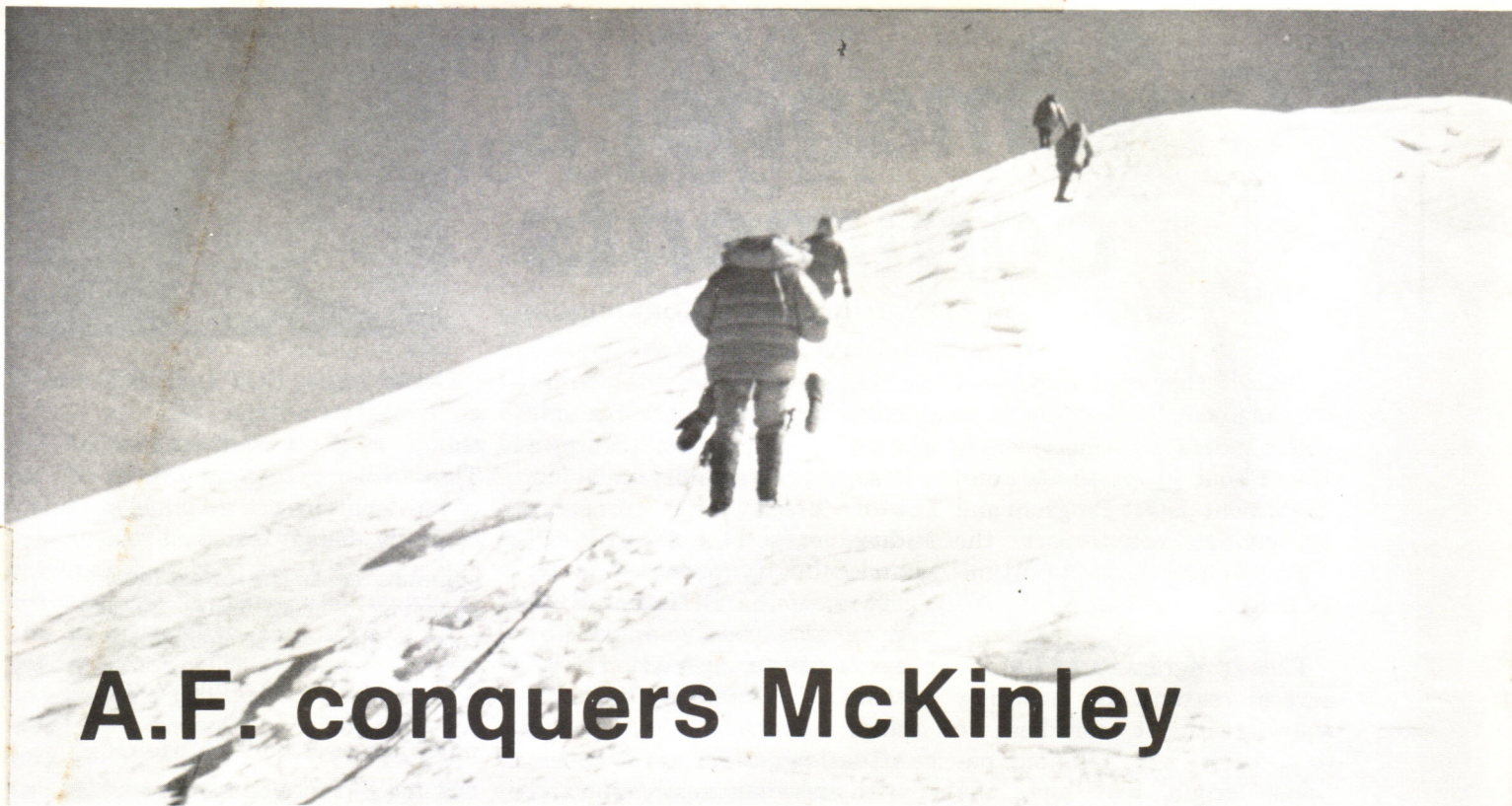




A.F. conquers McKinley



TRUDGING through blowing snow with pack, ice axe and safety line, TSgt. Michael French, 303d ARRS, March AFB, Calif., makes his way to the summit of Mt. McKinley. Sergeant French, an air reservist, was one of the five to complete the climb.

After 19 days of climbing, five members of an Air Force climbing team made it to the summit of Mt. McKinley. Ten members departed to conquer North America's largest mountain. Five returned for various reasons.

SSgt. Robert L. LaPointe lead the group and was assisted by TSgt. Terry Wetzel. Other climbers were: SSgt. Daniel Holder, Sgts. John Cassidy, Gerald Hoag, Paul Koester, Thomas Crouch and SrA Bruce Hickson, all of the 71st Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron (ARRS). Also making the climb were TSgt. Michael French, an Air Reservist from the 303d

ARRS, March AFB, Calif., and TSgt. George Gonzalez, an Air National Guardsman from the 102d ARRS, Suffolk City, New York.

The climb provided realistic high altitude training for the ten pararescue specialists who started the sojourn. Those who climbed to the summit were LaPointe, Wetzel, Holder, Cassidy and French.

A high altitude CH-47 helicopter from Ft. Wainwright was summoned to the 18,000 foot level on June 8. Two climbers, SrA Hickson and Sgt. Crouch were suffering from acute mountain sickness and cerebral edema. After climbing 18 days and coming



TEAM lead:
Holder and
20,320-foot
Ten parares
reached the



SSgt. Robert L. LaPointe (left) and Sgt. Daniel Hoag planted the American flag to the snow and ice at the summit of North America's tallest mountain. The men began the climb May 22, but only five days later they reached the peak.

within 2,000 feet of the summit TSgt. Gonzalez, the guardsmen from New York, volunteered to escort the ill climbers back to safety, giving up his chance to reach the summit.

According to team leader LaPointe, "Hickson needed immediate medical attention and I felt it necessary to send a medical technician with him and Crouch."

Another climber, Sgt. Hoag, started suffering from mountain sickness at the 17,000 foot level and as a precautionary measure was escorted back to base camp by Sgt. Koester. Both Hickson and Koester reached McKinley's summit the year before.

According to the climbers the weather during the 19 day climb was terrible. Storms and high winds kept the climbers inside their tents for several days. Minus 60 degree temperatures as well as 60 to 80 knot winds were common.

The team's goal was to conduct high altitude training and reaching the top just added to the climb. As a result of the climb, team members have been certified as high altitude rescue specialists and will make two climbs a year to remain current in high altitude operations.



BURDENED by his pack of essential equipment for the biting cold and high altitudes, SSgt. Robert L. LaPointe, observes his team members while on his decent climb of Mt. McKinley.

story by Capt. Richard Hodges

photos by Sgt. Paul Koester

Financial manager: battling the budget

(Editor's note: This is a series of six articles on personal financial management from the 21st Composite Wing Management Analysis Office.)

Who is financial manager? You are. So are the spouse and children. Consider how and where each dollar is spent. With every purchase, you assume the role of a financial manager. Each of us must analyze the price, quality and priority of each purchase. The reason we have to analyze each purchase is because we all have limited funds. We cannot buy everything, so we must select the best buy from the funds which are available.

Ever wonder where the money went for the month? Rent, utilities, gasoline, food, phone bill, club dues — but what happened to all the rest of my hard earned paycheck? Exactly how much was spent on food? Didn't I already pay that phone bill?

It is sometimes hard to figure out where all the money did go. Develop-

ing and keeping a budget can help, but it's not easy. First, cooperation between you and your spouse is necessary. Go slowly and if tempers flare, quit until the next day. Establish mutual goals and weigh the priority of each purchase. In establishing a budget, start with information at hand. The leave and earning statement (LES) shows income and allotments. If there are other incomes from your spouses' job or from moonlighting another job, add in these amounts. Cancelled checks are an excellent source to show where money was spent. Monthly credit card statements also show where the money goes.

Start tracking where money is being spent. It's too late to worry about money already gone, but learn from unwise purchases. Set a goal for saving money. If you want to buy a car, stereo or new furniture, try to save for it. Paying for merchandise in cash eliminates finance charges which drain buying power.

Next week: Checking accounts.

Air Force surveying Southeast for possible radar site

A joint Air Force and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) team will be in Southeast Alaska for approximately ten days beginning Tuesday, surveying sites in three areas for possible future location of additional radar facilities.

Areas to be surveyed are Middleton Island (near Cordova), Yakutat and Sitka. At Yakutat, the team may be looking at locales such as the old White Alice site (Ocean Cape) and an area adjacent to the Yakutat airport. Four areas near Sitka will be surveyed—Hill 3160, Mount Verstovia, Mount

Edgecumbe and the Vortac site on Biorka Island.

The survey and future installation of additional radar facilities in the Gulf of Alaska area are part of a new program the Air Force calls PAVE GULF. The objective of the PAVE GULF program is to extend the existing Alaskan Air Command/Alaska North American Air Defense Command Region (AAC/ANR) and FAA radar network into the Prince William Sound area and along the Southeaster Panhandle of Alaska.



GI bill not dead yet

Contrary to popular belief, say Air Force education officials, the GI Bill is not dead. Active duty people can still attend school with VA educational assistance, but some pay a third of their school costs, while others have their costs covered by the Veterans Administration.

Persons with active duty service between Feb. 1, 1955, and Dec. 31, 1976, may receive VA educational assistance at the rate of one and one-half months of schooling for each month of active duty. Forty-five months of educational assistance is the maximum entitlement. For courses taken while on active duty, the VA will pay the cost of tuition up to \$311 per month.

Persons who entered active duty on or after Jan. 1, 1977, may receive educational assistance under a contributory plan known as the Veterans Educational Assistance Program (VEAP).

Local base education centers have more information about the GI Bill and the VEAP program.