



COMMUNITY

Alaska Railroad Corporation
1st Quarter, 2011



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**Alaska Railroad
Ongoing Projects:**

**Northern Rail Extension
and Tanana River Crossing**

**Fairbanks Intermodal
Improvements**

**North Pole Road/Rail
Crossing Reduction**

Positive Train Control

Port MacKenzie Rail Extension

**Healy Canyon Safety and
Reliability Improvements**

Ship Creek Intermodal Center

Chugach Forest Whistle Stop

South Wasilla Rail Relocation

**Bridge Improvements and
Track Rehabilitation**

**Seward Coal Loading Facility
Improvements**

**For updates or comments on
these projects, visit the Alaska
Railroad web site at
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"RAILROAD DAYS" OPEN HOUSES RETURN

ARRC schedules popular springtime community events

The Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC) invites the public to two *Railroad Days* open house events in late spring. The Anchorage event is 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Saturday, May 7, at the Anchorage Historic Depot. The Fairbanks event is 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, May 14, at the Fairbanks Depot.

The last ARRC community open houses were held in 2008 and were suspended in 2009 and 2010 due to capital project construction and cost-cutting measures. *Railroad Days* events provide Alaskans with a unique opportunity to learn about the state's railroad.

The events will feature ever-popular free train rides and static displays of locomotives, railcars and other equipment that afford an up-close, hands-on experience. Events will also include live band entertainment and several activities geared toward children, such as railroad balloons and tattoos. Hot dogs and beverages will be available for purchase and the railroad's depot gift shops and rail ticket counters will also be open.

These events have drawn several thousand people to participate in years past and there is every indication that attendance will be similar in 2011.

ARRC Supports Fur Rondy

Fur Rendezvous fireworks light up the sky on February 26, providing a dramatic backdrop for an SD70MAC locomotive parked in the Anchorage Rail Yard. The Alaska Railroad supports this annual cabin-fever-busting festival with a public use permit that provides railroad land to accommodate several Fur Rondy activities, including: 1) the fireworks show orchestrated on Ship Creek Point Road; 2) the snow sculpture competition located in the Ship Creek Plaza parking lot across from the Comfort Inn on Ship Creek Avenue; and 3) the snow boarding competition organized along the Anchorage Historic Depot parking lot on First Avenue. In addition, an intricate model railroad display was set up inside the Anchorage Historic Depot. (Photo by David Blazejewski ©)



STB RELEASES PORT MAC EXTENSION FINAL EIS

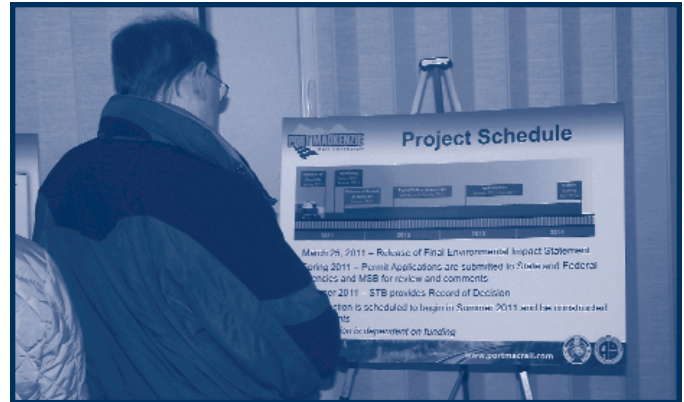
Study recommends Mac Central-Houston South rail route option for construction

The Surface Transportation Board (STB) released the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) on March 25 for the Port MacKenzie Rail Extension. The FEIS recommends the Mac East Variant (Mac Central) and Houston South rail route. The option links the deepwater port to the railroad's mainline at a point near Houston, as opposed to Willow or Big Lake.

The STB determined Mac Central-Houston South alignment has the fewest environmental impacts among all options. Along the 32-mile corridor, only one house would need to be relocated. Trail access would remain intact and crossings would be built to accommodate officially-recognized recreational trails. Six bridges and several culverts would also facilitate water flow and fish passage.

Funding is available to pursue final design and construction of the first five miles of embankment, which is expected to begin this spring. The Alaska State Legislature is considering an additional appropriation of up to \$55 million, which would fund another 12.8 miles of the rail embankment in summer 2012.

For more information and a link to the FEIS, visit the project web site at www.portmacrail.com.



The project team hosted an open house April 7 to discuss the FEIS. Top: One of the nearly 150 attendees studies the project schedule. Bottom: Alaska Railroad Project Manager Brian Lindmood uses a map to explain phased construction for the recommended route.

RAILROAD BOARD ELECTS NEW CHAIR LINDA LEARY

The Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC) Board of Directors elected a new Board Chair, Linda Leary, during a regular board meeting February 16. Governor Sean Parnell appointed Leary to the ARRC Board in October 2009.

"After 13 years leading the Alaska Railroad Board, I asked Linda Leary to step up as chair. Linda's abilities and temperament will serve her well as she leads the board and the corporation," said outgoing Chair John Binkley. The board collectively thanked Binkley for his dedicated leadership through many transitions. Binkley remains on the Board as a director.



Linda Leary



John Binkley

"Transportation has been near and dear to me for a long time and I am excited about the railroad's future. I look forward to working with the board to pursue economic opportunities and to address the pressing issues at hand," said Leary.

Leary is president and co-owner of Carlile Transportation Systems. She has worked for Carlile for more than 25 years in Alaska and the Pacific Northwest. Raised in Maine, Leary earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Maine. After moving to Alaska, she earned a masters degree in logistics management from the University of Alaska Anchorage.

MULTI-AGENCY BOMB SQUAD CONDUCTS RAIL DRILL

Railroad supports Anchorage Bomb Team with membership and training opportunities

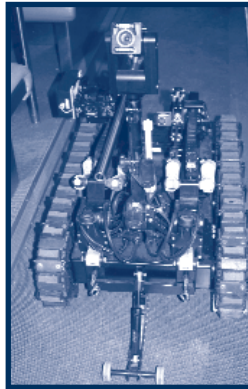
Elvis trotted down the aisle of the passenger railcar, sniffing intently as Officer Scott Trent followed closely behind. The Anchorage International Airport (AIA) police officer was demonstrating the remarkable bomb-detection skills of his K-9 partner. With a nose at least 50 times more sensitive than a human, the Belgian Malinois is able to discern the scent of bomb materials hidden in a backpack or buried among dozens of passengers and their luggage.

The duo were taking part in a recent Anchorage Bomb Team exercise using several passenger and baggage railcars. The team is comprised of officers from the Anchorage Police Department (APD), AIA Police Department, Alaska Railroad (ARRC) Police & Security Department, and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). Two Transit Security Agency (TSA) bomb dogs also participated.

The January training was designed to familiarize the Bomb Team with railroad passenger equipment, as well as determine the best approach and operations to use in a railroad-based situation.



*Top: Officer Trent and K-9 Elvis investigate a railcar for "bombs."
Bottom: A small robot assists in bomb detection.*



Explosive detection dogs were used to discover potential bomb devices onboard a train. The team also trained to identify, check and remove suspicious baggage by employing the dogs, X-ray equipment and some very impressive robots.

ARRC Special Agent John Bennett has been a certified bomb team member since 1999, when he was an APD officer. Bennett joined the railroad in 2010. "John's continued membership in the bomb team enhances our interagency coordination and cooperation," said Dan Frerich, Director of ARRC Police & Security. ARRC supports other cooperative emergency response training including an upcoming late April crisis negotiation drill involving the FBI and APD. The railroad has also hosted special weapons and tactics (SWAT) teams from the FBI and Alaska State Troopers to conduct drills on a passenger train.

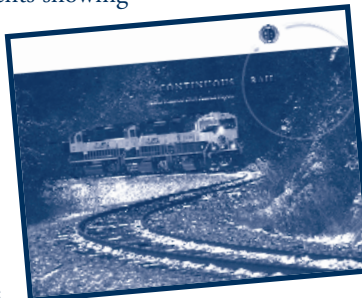
Fortunately, the railroad has not experienced any real-world issues on the train that required a SWAT team or the bomb squad to respond. However, said Frerich, "The Alaska Railroad's operations and equipment are unique, and if such a situation arises, this training will help these specialized response teams resolve the issue more effectively." ●

ALASKA RAILROAD POSTS 2010 ANNUAL REPORT

Railroad reports stronger-than-anticipated revenues for 2010

The Alaska Railroad released its 2010 annual report April 1, with audited financial statements showing \$13.4 million net income on total revenues of \$167.1 million.

"We've been working diligently towards a leaner business model and it is proving successful considering the tough global economy and other challenges we faced," said President/CEO Chris Aadnesen. "We will continue to make calculated, informed business decisions that benefit our customers and Alaskans, while ensuring the corporation remains financially sound."



The theme for the 2010 Annual Report is *Continuous Rail*, a term used for welding rail segments together to form longer, stronger sections of rail. The theme stresses the railroad's continuity and resiliency in pursuing greater efficiencies, while advancing capital investments in the wake of significant 2009 cost and personnel reductions that impacted railroad operations throughout 2010.

An electronic copy of the annual report is available at www.AlaskaRailroad.com/Corporate (click ABOUT ARRC, and then Reports & Policies.) ●

RAILROADER'S ART IS BASIS FOR 2011 STATE COIN

ARRC Facilities Mechanic Chad Harpel wins Alaska Mint and State of Alaska contest

During the week, Chad Harpel can be found at any Alaska Railroad building, fixing everything from a facility's structure to its furniture. But on some weekends, this Facilities Maintenance Mechanic finds time to create works of art, one of which was chosen as the basis of the 2011 Official Alaska State Medallion, a limited edition coin commissioned by the State of Alaska.

Artists from around Alaska vie for this honor through an annual contest that is judged by the State of Alaska Arts Council. The council looks for images that evoke the beauty of Alaska, said Mike Robuck, owner of the Alaska Mint, which has minted the official state medallions since 1992. Harpel is now among an elite group of about 10 Alaskan artists whose work is enduringly etched into the face of an official state medallion.

Harpel's winning image of an eagle flying over Mount McKinley is exceptionally realistic, and per-

haps that accuracy can be traced to technical drawings that inspired Harpel's art early on. "My father and sister are physical therapists and I grew up with human anatomy books as art references and I reference them often in my paintings still today," he said.

Although art is his passion, facility construction and maintenance has paid the bills. Construction experience and artistic skill make Harpel an easy choice for railroad facility jobs that require visual finesse, said Facilities Director Paul Farnsworth.

"For, example, he's done a superb job on refinishing the CEO's desk and building a display wall and shadow boxes for the Anchorage Historic Depot," he said. "We're proud of Chad's accomplishment with the Alaska Mint. He's an excellent and professional representative for our shop and for the railroad." ●



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RAILROAD RE-MARKS RIGHT-OF-WAY

Anchorage ROW delineation promotes public awareness and safety

The Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC) is delineating (marking) the right-of-way (ROW) boundary through Anchorage to increase boundary visibility and promote public awareness of the ROW as a railroad utility and safety corridor.

The primary purpose of the ROW is to operate trains while providing maximum public protection from safety risks inherent in railroad operations. Higher train speeds, more frequent trains and increased residential development make protecting and maintaining the ROW imperative. State law also requires the ROW to be preserved for transportation, communication and transmission purposes.

This summer, residents and businesses along the main railroad track through Anchorage may notice workers installing durable 6-foot blue posts (*pictured at right*) every 200 feet to physically mark the ROW boundary (*see map on page 2*). Installation will conclude before snowfall. New markers augment the U.S. Survey monuments that currently mark the ROW boundary.



(see "Delineate" on page 2)

3 HERBICIDE PERMITS HELP VEG CONTROL

Railroad gains traction in battle against fast-growing weeds

Alaska's long summer days are back... and so are the weeds. Thanks to three herbicide use permits in force this year, the Alaska Railroad gained some traction in the battle against vegetation that poses safety risks along the track and in the yards. The herbicide AquaMaster (very similar to Roundup®) was applied June 20-27, 2011, within rail yards and along select areas of track in and around Seward, Anchorage, Healy and Fairbanks. In accordance with the permits, areas near surface water were avoided.

A two-year permit approved in 2010 by the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) covers the stretch from Seward to Indian. The railroad used this permit for the first time last year after an administrative appeal was denied. An appeal to the court

(see "Weed Control" on page 2)

DELINEATE...

(continued from page 1)

The delineation is part of an effort to preserve ROW integrity by addressing existing uses. ARRC is currently evaluating residential lawn-and-garden use, crossings, trails, utilities, commercial and special uses. New policies to address different types of ROW uses are being developed by an ARRC Board of Directors committee. Once policies are drafted, the public will be notified and invited to comment before they are finalized. ●



ARRC TALKS TO COMMUNITY LEADERS

Meetings with local government officials promote dialogue

Early summer marked the start of ARRC's annual local government meetings in which senior railroad managers engage with local political leaders. These face-to-face get-togethers provide a forum to discuss railroad and community issues of mutual interest, and exchange ideas for resolving problems and capitalizing on new opportunities. Meeting goals include maintaining important relationships, facilitating community dialogue and keeping lines of communication open with neighbors and customers. The railroad's President-CEO Chris Aadnesen, along with vice presidents and key staff from Corporate Affairs, Real Estate and Train Operations departments are participating (depending on local issues).

Meetings kicked off in Seward with Mayor Willard Dunham, City Manager Phil Oates and others representing the community and city council. Interior meetings followed to include Fairbanks North Star Borough Mayor Luke Hopkins, Fairbanks City Mayor Jerry Cleworth, and North Pole Mayor Doug Issacson. Next came a trip to Whittier to connect with Mayor Lester Lunceford, Vice-Mayor Jerry Vandergriff, Interim City Manager Robert Prunella and Senator Gary Stevens. In July and August, meetings are scheduled with mayors of Houston, Wasilla, Palmer, Mat-Su Borough, Anderson, Nenana, Denali Borough and Anchorage ●



L-R: ARRC Real Estate VP Jim Kubitz, Senator Gary Stevens, Whittier Mayor Lester Lunceford and ARRC President/CEO Chris Aadnesen discuss community development plans during a walk along along the Whittier Boat Harbor July 13. (Photo by Tim Sullivan)

WEED CONTROL GAINS TRACTION...

(continued from page 1)

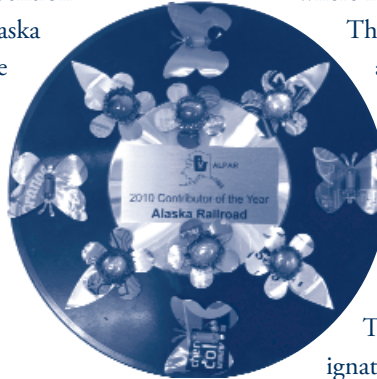
system was filed May 27, 2011, and is pending. This appeal is on procedural and constitutional grounds only; it does not involve health or safety issues related to the herbicide. Until the courts hear the appeal, the permit remains in force.

ARRC applied for additional permits (Anchorage and Healy/Fairbanks) in January 2011. No comments were made during public hearings in mid-February and ADEC received relatively few comments by the mid-March deadline. These permits were approved in early May and the 45-day waiting period ended June 15, allowing the permits to be used by late June. No legal actions opposing these permits have been filed as of press time. ●

ALPAR PRESENTS RAILROAD WITH 2010 AWARD

Recycling and litter prevention group salutes railroad's support of recycling backhaul

In late spring, the Alaskans for Litter Prevention and Recycling (ALPAR) presented the Alaska Railroad with its 2010 Contributor of the Year Award for outstanding service to ALPAR and Alaska communities. The award recognizes ARRC's backhaul services in support of recycling along the railbelt. In particular, ARRC helped with the transport of 5.8 million pounds of recyclable materials in 2010.



where materials are loaded into 53-foot containers.

The containers are then loaded onto flat railcars at the Alaska Railroad's Trailer on Flat Car / Container on Flat Car (TOFC/COFC) operation in Anchorage, and then transported to Whittier, where railcars are loaded onto a barge bound for Seattle, and ultimately delivered to Smurfit in Renton, Washington. The Alaska Railroad donates the TOFC/COFC service for containers/trailers designated to support ALPAR.

The Alaska Railroad maintains a steady relationship with Alaska West Express / Lynden (AWE/Lynden), whereby recyclable materials are moved from Anchorage to Whittier to the Lower 48 for recycling. AWE/Lynden trucks pick up recyclable materials at Smurfit-Stone Recycling Center in Anchorage, and bring recyclable materials to Lynden's yard,

ALPAR is a non-profit organization dedicated to increasing economically viable recycling and eliminating litter in Alaska. In April 2007, ALPAR also presented the Alaska Railroad with its 2006 Board of Directors Award for similar contributions to recycling support. ●

IT'S FOG, NOT DUST

Water spray from a new fogger system dampens coal as it is dug out from the pile at the Seward Coal Loading Facility. The fogger was installed in 2010 on the bucket wheel of the stacker/reclaimer as a dust control measure. Spray from the nozzles is sometimes mistaken for coal dust, when in fact the fine droplets work to mitigate dust during movement of coal. In this photo coal is being moved from the pile onto a conveyor leading to a ship at the coal dock.

(Photo by Matt Kelzenberg)



ICE ALASKA UPDATE

Railroad helps ice carving venue move

Ice Alaska has found a new home on 25 acres it purchased in mid-June, located about one mile west of the railroad property at Chena Landing, where Ice Alaska has hosted the BP World Ice Art Championships. The Alaska Railroad is assisting Ice Alaska with moving equipment and facilities to the new site. The railroad delivered eight 40-foot containers and contracted with a local trucking company to move full containers and building sections.

The Chena Landing site encompasses O'Grady's Pond, which was used to produce carving ice renowned for its clarity and consistency. The Alaska Railroad has issued a no-fee permit to allow future dredging and cleaning of O'Grady's Pond and subsequent ice harvesting as needed.

Given Ice Alaska's uncertain status, ARRC was previously unable to market the land that Ice Alaska used three to four months out of each year to host the ice carving event. Following the move, ARRC will pursue new lease opportunities, capitalizing on the millions of dollars originally invested in the 1990s to construct a road through, and connect utilities to, Chena Landing. ●

RAILROAD HIRES NEW EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MANAGER

Tim Sullivan to focus on government relations and community outreach

Tim Sullivan, Jr., has joined the Alaska Railroad's (ARRC) Corporate Affairs team as Manager, External Affairs. He is responsible for government and public relations, community outreach and special project requests. Sullivan's experience includes six years as a legislative aide and 11 years as a government relations and resource development consultant. Most recently, he worked for the state's Division of Economic Development (DED), Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development (DCCED). As a DED Business Development Officer, Sullivan worked on agricultural, fisheries and small business issues as well as department outreach.

Sullivan's experience working for the Alaska State Legislature and DCCED will be valuable as ARRC works with the public and elected officials on providing transportation services for Alaskans and access to Alaska's resources.



"The Alaska Railroad has always been an important part of Alaska's history and economy," said Sullivan. "My family grew up around the Alaska Railroad, from Fairbanks and Nenana all the way down to Seward and I'm thrilled at the opportunity to now play a part in how the Railroad will help develop Alaska's future."

A fifth-generation Alaskan, Sullivan graduated from West Anchorage High School and earned a bachelor's degree in business administration from Gonzaga University, Spokane, Washington. He has lived in Anchorage, Fairbanks and Juneau.

In 2007, Sullivan was named one of the "Top 40 Under 40" by the Alaska Journal of Commerce. He currently serves on the boards of the Alaska Manufacturing Extension Partnership and the Bayshore Elementary School PTA. His interests include community service, camping and history. ●

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TANANA RIVER BRIDGE GROUNDBREAKING

Ceremony features 21-shovel salute by dozens of dignitaries

A 21-shovel salute concluded a groundbreaking ceremony September 28 at the Tanana River bridge construction staging site near Salcha. More than 125 people attended the dignitary-peppered event to celebrate the start of the long-anticipated Northern Rail Extension, which is expected to boost local and state economies with millions of dollars spent on local equipment, materials, supplies, lodging and labor.



(see "Bridge Groundbreaking" on page 3)

RAILROAD WINS GREEN STAR SUPER NOVA

New award recognizes above-and-beyond recertification effort

Green Star Inc. initiated a new award in 2011, and in August the Alaska Railroad was notified that it would be one of the first organizations to receive it. The *Super Nova Award* recognizes a higher level of leadership and commitment to doing business in an environmentally responsible manner. Green Star presented the award during the Anchorage Chamber's Make it Monday lunch forum on October 17.



"The Alaska Railroad Corporation became a Green Star awarded business in 1994 and since then it continually pursues a number of green initiatives, policies and operations, a reason why it is one of the first companies in Alaska to receive Green Star's newest recognition, the *Super Nova Award*," said the Green Star staff. "Green Star is proud that Alaska Railroad Corporation continues to lead the community by example towards environmental stewardship. Congratulations Alaska Railroad!"

(see "Green Star Award" on page 2)

2012 POSTER

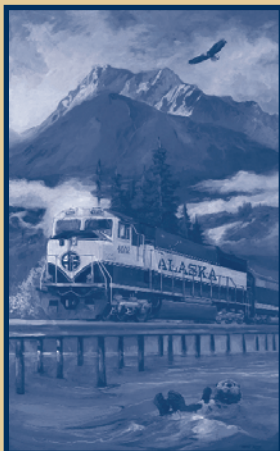
The Alaska Railroad will release its 2012 annual poster/print at public sale-and-signing events featuring Wasilla artist Taffina Katkus.

- **SEWARD: Fri. Dec. 2**, in conjunction with Seward's holiday fair. Details TBD.
- **ANCHORAGE: 10am-2pm, Sat. Dec. 3**, at the Anchorage Historic Depot (411 W. 1st Avenue)
- **FAIRBANKS: 10am-2pm, Sat. Dec. 10**, at the Fairbanks Depot (1745 Johansen Expressway)

Entitled *Seward Solidarity*, the oil painting depicts a collage of scenes from the railroad's southern terminus in Seward, Alaska.

The 2012 ARRC print costs \$55, posters cost \$30 and pins cost \$5. Following the events, prints, posters and pins will remain on sale at the Anchorage Historic and Fairbanks depots, and may also be purchased via the online ARRC Gift Shop at

AlaskaRailroadGiftShop.com



ANCHORAGE CHAMBER GOLD PAN

Chamber recognizes railroad volunteer and community service

The Anchorage Chamber of Commerce presented the Alaska Railroad (ARRC) with its 2011 *Distinguished Community Service Award for Large Businesses / Organizations* in September. ARRC was recognized as a long-time participant in the Anchorage School District's School Business Partnership, including the Tour Guide Program, which offers tourism curriculum and jobs to high school students. ARRC was honored for charitable giving, such as donation of the *Denali Business Car* to non-profit fund-raising events, and in-kind donation of rail tickets and posters / prints to 400-plus non-profits each year. ARRC was noted for support of environmental stewardship and infrastructure investments within the community. Finally, railroad employees also volunteer off-work time to numerous non-profit boards and committees.

Another Anchorage Chamber award underscored ARRC's community service through employee volunteering. In mid-September, Anchorage Chamber Immediate Past Chair Bill Evans presented Chairman's Awards to members of the chamber's Finance Committee, which includes Alaska Railroad VP Finance Bill O'Leary, who chairs the committee. O'Leary also volunteers his time to serve as the chamber's secretary/treasurer.

"The Finance Committee did a remarkable job last year in overseeing significant organizational structuring, outsourcing our financial management, and combining all of our members into a single billing cycle, as opposed to a twice-per-year cycle," explained Chamber President Sami Glascott, noting that it is customary for the outgoing chair to present Chairman's Awards shortly after the newly elected board members are seated. ●

GREEN STAR AWARD...

(continued from page 1)

In its most recent 2011 recertification, ARRC noted a number of new improvements since its 2008 recertification. Highlights include:

- **Waste Reduction:** Decreased bottled water purchases by one-third, eliminating more than 100,000 bottles from the waste stream.
- **Recycling:** Expanded the company-supported recycling program to include cardboard and plastic bottles in more locations, plus continued support of Alaskans for Litter Prevention & Recycling (ALPAR), earning a 2010 ALPAR award (presented April 2011).
- **Facilities Management:** From 2008 to 2010, reduced Anchorage facility utility expense by \$500,000 through efficiency upgrades; plus developed Alaska's first historical building renovated to Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards.
- **Public/Alternate Transportation:** Continued support for Regional Transportation Authority formation to enhance commuter alternatives, including rail; plus increased support of bike-to-work initiatives in Anchorage and among railroad employees.
- **Pollution Prevention:** Reduced locomotive emissions through new locomotive purchases, emission system upgrades and idle control system installation. Also purchased two bi-fuel natural gas / gasoline vehicles and one all-natural gas fueled van (*pictured above*). ●



ARRC CREATES TIE AND SURPLUS SALES WEB PAGE

New internet page offers details about used tie sales and sources, and other extra items

The railroad's Supply Management Department has established a new page on the corporate web site to provide instant information about railroad surplus sales, including the popular used tie sales.

www.AlaskaRailroad.com/SurplusSales

While public used tie sale events have ended for 2011, the web page will list upcoming sales information when events resume in May 2012. In the meantime, the

web page provides information on other sources of used ties, as well as information for individual purchases of large bulk quantities (i.e. 3,000 or more used ties). The railroad's Surplus Sales web page also includes information and invitations to bid on other surplus sales items, such as used or unneeded equipment and supplies.

Questions about surplus sales and the web site page information should be directed to Purchasing & Materials Technician Muriel Lewis at 265-2630 or LewisM@akrr.com. ●

BRIDGE GROUNDBEAKING...

(continued from page 1)

ARRC President / CEO Chris Aadnesen and ARRC Chair Linda Leary welcomed attendees, before a procession of dignitaries added words of praise and support from national, state and local government levels. Dignitaries included, in order of speaking, Alaska Adjutant General Major General Thomas Katkus, U.S. Senator Lisa Murkowski, U.S. Congressman Don Young, Alaska Dept. of Transportation Commissioner Mark Luiken, Alaska Senator John Coghill, Alaska Representative Eric Feige, and Fairbanks North Star Borough Mayor Luke Hopkins.

At the end of remarks, the ceremonial shoveling commenced. Leary wielded the "gold" shovel, and was joined by the aforementioned dignitaries, the rest of the ARRC Board of Directors, several more state legislators and local mayors. The photo below identifies the participants. The ceremonial "gold" shovel will be on display at the Fairbanks Depot.



U.S. Senator Lisa Murkowski adds her remarks in support of the Northern Rail Extension projects. (Photo by Stephenie Wheeler)

The multi-phased Northern Rail Extension (NRE) project will eventually expand railroad track infrastructure from North Pole / Eielson 80 miles southeast to Delta Junction. Expected to be a three-year effort, NRE Phase One will construct a new bridge across the river and an associated levee. The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was completed in 2010. ●



L-R: Rep. Bob Miller, Transportation Commissioner Marc Luiken, Adjutant General Tom Katkus, Sen. Joe Thomas, former Governor Bill Sheffield, Rep. Steve Thompson, U.S. Congressman Don Young, Rep. Eric Feige, U.S. Sen. Lisa Murkowski, Sen. John Coghill, ARRC Board Chair Linda Leary, ARRC President/CEO Chris Aadnesen, ARRC Board member John Binkley, Fairbanks Mayor Jerry Cleworth, Fairbanks North Star Borough Mayor Luke Hopkins, ARRC Board member Jon Cook, Sen. Joe Paskvan, Commerce Commissioner Susan Bell, North Pole Mayor Doug Isaacson, former Governor and U.S. Sen. Frank Murkowski, and ARRC Board member Jack Burton.

TRAIN CREW TAKES FAIRBANKS BOY UNDER WING

Train conductors and engineers foster enthusiasm of special young rail fan in Fairbanks

In celebrating four decades of service with the Alaska Railroad, Conductor Steve Culver has become a master at recognizing those extra measures that delight rail customers...an onboard display of his Alaskana collection, stories that bring passing scenes to life, train stops to relish an animal sighting or learn about fascinating plants. Locals along the route also appreciate Culver's thoughtful gestures, like delivering newsletters to remote cabin dwellers. His service savvy is infectious, inspiring many train crew colleagues to engage more.



Conductor Steve Culver and protegee Eric Hume.

Culver had time to explain the responsibilities of a conductor, and even occasionally allow Eric to assist in welcoming passengers aboard the train. Other crew members soon caught on and contributed in their own way. For example, if Culver is not on duty, Harry Ross and Marty Wetherell and other

conductors may allow Eric to greet passengers as they board.

One example of train crew engagement comes by way of a young Fairbanks boy who captured the hearts of railroad conductors and engineers. Crew members have fostered the enthusiasm of Eric Hume, a mildly autistic boy who took a serious shine to trains last winter. Dressed in a conductor hat (a gift from Culver) and dark three-piece suit to replicate the conductor uniform, Hume arrives at the Fairbanks Depot almost every Sunday during the winter to help the train crew send off passengers traveling from Fairbanks to Anchorage.

The weekly trip to the depot is a wintertime diversion when the pace is typically slower for train crews who tend to smaller passenger loads. During the less hectic winter schedule,

Engaging with train crew has boosted Eric's confidence and social development, said his mother Hettie Hume. "It's changed his world. He's come so far. He used to be so nervous talking in front of groups; now he's comfortable talking to many passengers."

Culver certainly has a knack for recognizing this kind of win-win-win situation. While the Hume family deeply appreciates Eric's opportunity to engage, train crew members benefit from a thoughtful community connection. Moreover, passengers are delighted with the impeccably dressed mini-conductor who offers astute safety guidance with all the seriousness an 11-year-old boy can muster. ●

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Alaska Railroad Corporation
4th Quarter, 2011



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Alaska Railroad
Ongoing Projects:

Northern Rail Extension
and Tanana River Crossing

Fairbanks - North Pole
Rail Relocation

North Pole Road/Rail
Crossing Reduction

Positive Train Control

Port MacKenzie Rail Extension

Healy Canyon Safety and
Reliability Improvements

Ship Creek Intermodal Center

Chugach Forest Whistle Stop

South Wasilla Rail Relocation

Bridge Improvements and
Track Rehabilitation

Seward Coal Loading Facility
Improvements

For updates or comments on
these projects, visit the
Alaska Railroad web site at
www.AlaskaRailroad.com

FEDS APPROVE PORT MACKENZIE RAIL

Surface Transportation Board issues record of decision



On November 21, the federal Surface Transportation Board (STB) issued its decision to allow construction and operation of the Port MacKenzie Railroad Extension. This is an important step in clearing the way for construction to begin on a 32-mile link from the mainline of the Alaska Railroad near Houston to Port MacKenzie.

Project Sponsor Matanuska-Susitna Borough and the Alaska Railroad have jointly worked on the project since 2007. The STB released the final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on March 25, 2011, recommending the Mac East Variant (Mac Central) and Houston South as the preferred route.

The first construction bid opened in December 2011, and will construct five miles of rail embankment north of Port MacKenzie. A second construction bid for another six miles of rail embankment is planned for release in February 2012. To date, the borough has received about \$95 million from the State of Alaska in support of the project, including completion of the EIS and construction of a bulk commodities road loop at the port. Existing state funding will be used for the first two rail embankment segments. An additional \$180 million is needed to complete the project. The borough is requesting \$60 million in state appropriations for FY2013.



The EIS identified a preferred route to Houston.

“Once again Alaska’s Congressional Delegation had gone to bat to support infrastructure and transportation projects in the state,” said ARRC President & CEO Chris Aadnesen. “The Port MacKenzie Rail Extension project has benefitted greatly from the efforts of Senators Mark Begich and Lisa Murkowski and Congressman Don Young.” ●

ARRC LAUNCHES 2012 PRINT SALES IN SEWARD

Railroad organizes first print/poster sale-and-signing event in Seward

For the first time, an annual Alaska Railroad print / poster sale-and-signing event was held in Seward on December 2, as part of the community's holiday craft fair. The 2012 Alaska Railroad annual print/poster is the first to feature Seward.

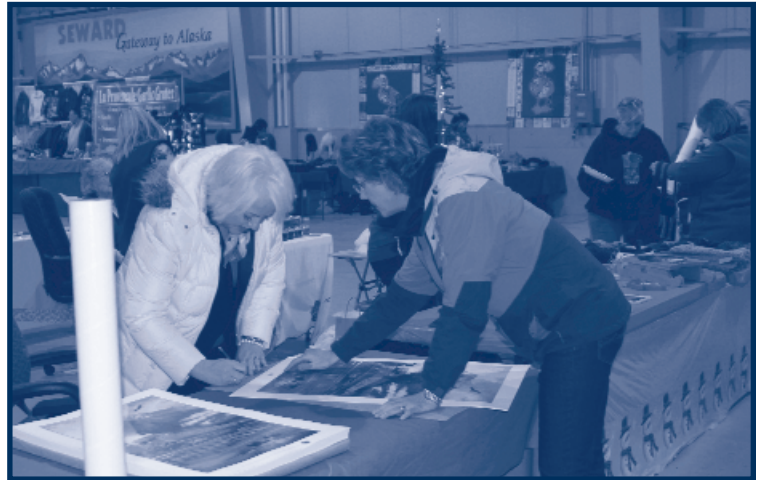
Wasilla artist Taffina Katkus created the oil painting *Seward Solidarity*, which features a collage of Seward scenes. Katkus was on-hand to sign prints and posters at the Seward event, as well as at events held December 3 in Anchorage and December 10 in Fairbanks. Prints, posters and pins will remain on sale at the Anchorage

Historic Depot and the Fairbanks Depot, and may also be purchased online via the Alaska Railroad Gift Shop website at AlaskaRailroadGiftShop.com.

Renowned artist John Van Zyle produced the first official Alaska Railroad painting in 1979. Since then, the annual print/poster has evolved into a popular collector's item. More information about the Alaska Railroad's annual art print program, including history and images of prints from the recent past, are available on the Alaska Railroad Corporation web site — www.AlaskaRailroad.com/Corporate — Click on COMMUNITY, then Annual Print Contest. ●



Artist Taffina Katkus, left, and Seward City Council Member Christy Terry pose with a mounted 2012 print.



Artist Taffina Katkus signs a print for a Seward resident during the event held in conjunction with the Seward Holiday Craft Fair December 2.

RAILROAD SCHEDULES 2012 PROJECT OPEN HOUSES

The Alaska Railroad (ARRC) Program of Project (POP) Open House events are scheduled mid-January to mid-February 2012. Events give the public an opportunity to learn about, and comment on, capital improvements plans along the rail line. Fact sheets, display boards and project managers will be on-hand to answer questions.

The capital budget for the upcoming year totals \$55.4 million, with more than \$31 million allocated to track rehabilitation. Other notable projects funded include \$5 million to continue the federally mandated Positive Train Control initiative, \$4 million for vehicle and equipment purchases/overhauls, \$3 million for bridge work, and \$1.2 million for the continuing locomotive overhaul program.

Smaller, but no less important, projects encompass everything from construction of a section maintenance facility at Portage, to design and construction of a sewer line for Real Estate tenants, to replacing aging copier equipment. Get the details at the following open house events:

- **ANCHORAGE: 4:00 - 6:30pm, Tuesday, January 17**, at the Anchorage Historic Depot (411 W. 1st Avenue)
- **WASILLA: 4:00 - 6:30pm, Wednesday, January 18**, at Evangelo's Restaurant (Mile 40 Parks Highway)
- **FAIRBANKS: 4:00 - 6:30pm, Tuesday, January 17**, at the Fairbanks Depot (1745 Johansen Expressway)
- **SEWARD: 10:00am - 1:30pm, Friday, February 17**, at the Breeze Inn (303 N. Harbor Street). ●

RAILROAD APPLIES FOR 3 NEW HERBICIDE PERMITS

Permits require 60-day comment periods and public hearings Jan. 31, Feb. 1, Feb. 2

The Alaska Railroad has applied for three new herbicide use permits from the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC). The permit process requires a 60-day public comment period (starting January 12, 2012) public hearings in three communities, and public notices published in local news media. Permit applications cover the following areas, and includes the following public hearings:

- **CLEAR - FAIRBANKS:** 60 miles of track, from Clear AFS to Fairbanks. Hearing 4:30-6:30pm, **January 31** in Fairbanks
- **PALMER - WASILLA:** 12 miles of track, including Palmer Branch and mainline from branch to Palmer-Wasilla Hwy. Hearing 4:30-6:30pm, **February 1** in Wasilla
- **GOLD CREEK - BROAD PASS:** 38 miles of track, from Gold Creek (34 mi. north of Talkeetna) to Broad Pass. Hearing 4:30-6:30pm, **February 2**, in Talkeetna

In each case, the permitted area is limited to the 16-foot wide track bed along the railroad right-of-way. If approved, permits would authorize the use of AquaMaster, a glyphosate-based herbicide that is approved for use on land and water, beginning as early as this summer.

Public comment must be received by ADEC no later than 4:00 p.m. March 12, 2012. Comments should be directed to: Rebecca Colvin, ADEC
555 Cordova Street, Anchorage, AK 99501
Rebecca.Colvin@alaska.gov.

For more information about the application and permit process, contact:

Karin Hendrickson, ADEC Pesticide Program
1700 E. Bogard Road, #B103, Wasilla, AK 99654
Karin.Hendrickson@alaska.gov. ●

GUARD MEMBER/EMPLOYEE APPRECIATES SUPPORT

Guard member/ARRC employee nominates another ARRC employee for Patriot Award

Alaska Railroad, Safety & Training Manager Dwight West recently accepted a Patriot Award from the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR).

Hired in May, Alaska Railroad Track Laborer Phillip Corre nominated West to receive the honors. The *Patriot Award* is presented to employers (company, supervisors or co-workers) who demonstrate exceptional support of Guard and Reserve members in helping them to meet their military obligations.

"It's our policies that won the award," said West who noted that he was surprised to learn of the nomination. "During the New Hire Orientation, I recall Phillip was deeply concerned that he would lose his employment with the

ARRC if he responded to a deployment for training with the Guard. I enlightened him about the process and made a few calls to help him out."

"In my working career, especially as a young man, few employers went beyond the motions of making someone feel like a member of the team, or family, as we like to call it in

the railroad business," said West. "During our new hire process I stress that we are all in this together, coming to work here makes you a member of the "family". Welcoming a new hire to the family is one thing, if you don't treat them like family, it's nothing."

Corre is deploying to Afghanistan with the Guard near the end of the year. ●



Dwight West, left, accepts the Patriot Award from ESGR representative Michael Buzinski, in early November.

RAILROAD HAS 2 EMERGENCY RESPONSE DRILLS

Fuel spill drill and passenger train drill exercises emergency response plans, equipment

The Alaska Railroad recently completed two emergency response exercises that employed the Incident Command System (ICS). Throughout the year, dozens of railroaders from every department train with regular lunch-and-learn sessions, ICS-coursework and table-top exercises that aim to prepare the railroad to respond to a bad situation. The culmination of this training comes annually with mandated drills that test the railroad's readiness.

On October 13, an oil spill drill kicked off in the early morning hours. The scenario involved a fuel train derailed on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson near Clunie Lake. Mandated by the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC), this annual drill involved a full deployment to test response to an on-water spill.

Three weeks later, the ICS team was again activated to manage a passenger train emergency drill. The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) mandates this type of annual drill for railroads that carry passengers. The November 7 drill involved a passenger train with 100-plus passengers, and a scenario including injuries, cold weather and remote location operations, and coordination with local emergency responders. Fire departments from Anchorage, Girdwood and Whittier participated at the drill site located near the Anchorage Historic Depot on First Avenue. ●



Anchorage firefighters tour a locomotive to gain perspective on potential response scenarios involving a passenger train.



Firefighters practice passenger egress from the window of a passenger railcar

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