Alaska Designs

Volume 41, No. 2, March 2018 The Official Newsletter of the Alaska Professional Design Council

Alaska Report Card: Marine Highway System Gets a D

Key Marine Highway Facts

- The total economic impact of the Alaska Marine Highway System (AMHS) results in 1,700 jobs and an estimated $273 million in direct and indirect spending.
- In 2015, AMHS served 288,133 passengers and 100,547 vehicles per year, 2/3rds of which are Alaska residents.
- Alaska has 6,640 miles of coastline, and the AMHS serves 33 communities using 11 vessels.
- Every dollar of General Fund money budgeted to AMHS generates $2.30 economic activity in Alaska.
- Fewer ferries and more downtime will result in increased cost of goods, which will significantly increase the cost of living in coastal communities.

What You Should Know about the Alaska Marine Highway System

The Alaska Marine Highway System (AMHS) is the state's publicly owned ferry system. As is typical throughout Alaska, highway access is unavailable to most Southcoast communities, many of which are on islands or in remote areas where roads are not feasible. These coastal communities therefore rely heavily on the AMHS for travel and to transport goods.

This critical infrastructure system currently consists of 10 vessels connecting 33 Alaskan and two non-Alaskan communities through scheduled ferry service. From the southern terminus in Bellingham, WA, the AMHS stretches more than 3,500 miles to Unalaska/Dutch Harbor. Overall, the AMHS generates about 1,700 direct and indirect employment jobs.

The M/V Taku

The AMHS is a cohesive system of vessels and dedicated staff that provide essential connectivity in our state. The AMHS also includes all the terminal facilities that allow passengers, their vehicles and cargo to load and offload. The AMHS was designated as a National Scenic Byway by United States Department of Transportation in 2002 and earned the distinction as an All-American Road in 2005.

AMHS passenger traffic has averaged 320,000 passengers over the last 10 years. Over the same period vehicle traffic has averaged 106,400 vehicles per year. AMHS also plays an important role in freight transport, where goods such as perishable food, seafood, vehicles, trailers and all-terrain vehicles are shipped in tractor trailer vans, allowing customers to take delivery of their new car etc. in their home community.

There are three categories of vessels in AMHS:

- Mainline Ferries
- Day Ferries
- Shuttle or Fast Ferries

The Mainline Ferries all have the amenities needed for passengers who may be onboard overnight or for multiple days. Cabins are available for rent and cafes and restaurants offer food for purchase. Not surprisingly, stateroom utilization is much higher on longer journeys. The Chignik – Kodiak link shows a cabin utilization of 92% during 2015. Judging by the last 10 years' traffic levels, it appears that AMHS does have the capacity for current and likely future demands.

The Department of Transportation and Public Facilities owned 11 vessels, when the report card was completed. In a press release on January 19, 2018, DOT&PF announced that the sale of M/V TAKU had been finalized. Ownership was transferred

Continued on Page 2

Inside This Issue

Alaska Report Card: Marine Highway System Gets a D

Continued from Page 1

to Jabal Al Lawz Trading Est. The final sale price was $171,000.

With five of the operating vessels being 40 years old or older, and three of those vessels being over 50 years old, the AMHS is operating with an older fleet that is nearing the end of its life expectancy.

An aging fleet requires significant investment for maintenance. To combat costs associated with maintaining old vessels, new vessels (e.g., the Alaska Class Ferries) are being designed and built. The new vessels will have smaller crews and may have better fuel efficiency. Two vessels are scheduled for delivery in 2018, both will have capacity for 300 passengers and 53 vehicles. These vessels are intended for day-traffic, on shorter routes where the ferry returns to the point of origination the same day.

The vessels TAKU and CHENEGA, were removed from service in 2015 due to lack of funding for overhaul necessary to keep the vessel in good operational condition. For February 2018 eight vessels are in scheduled service.

The ownership and configuration of shoreside facilities vary from community to community. Owners include the State of Alaska, Bellingham Port Authority, the Prince Rupert Port Authority, various city owned wharves, and privately owned fish processing docks. Common for all 42 separate berthing facilities in these 37 communities is that above water components are inspected biennially, and underwater inspections are performed on a five-year cycle.

AMHS provides year-round and seasonally scheduled ferry service. The schedule varies from year to year, depending on available funding and operation budgets. Based on available funding ADOT&PF prepares an operations schedule to best meet the essential needs for community service.

Labor and fuel costs have grown over recent years. In 2014 and 2015, fuel accounted for 20% and 18% respectively of overall operating costs. The three largest cost groups for operations and maintenance (O&M) are Marine vessel operations (which includes payroll) at close to 70%, Fuel at about 17-18%, and Shore Operations at about 5% of overall O&M expenditures.

In 2008, ADOT&PF anticipated an average annual need of $120M for O&M. In review of the financial reports of fiscal years 2009-2015 we can see that the actual numbers have ranged between $122M in FY10 and $152M in 2013. This range represent the amount provided by state legislators in appropriations.

Rather than being the representation of the actual O&M need, expenditures are the result of operations planning to utilize the budgeted funds to the greatest utility for the community. The financial reports alone are therefore not a good measurement of the actual trends of Operations and Maintenance costs. Maybe a better indicator of the challenges AMHS is facing for O&M is the fact that MV TAKU and CHENEGA were taken out of service due to lacking funding for scheduled overhaul of the vessel.

We also studied fare-box recovery rates and found that the cost recovery has gone from about 50% in 2004 to just over 30% in 2015. This illustrates maybe the greatest challenge for AMHS: How to contain operating costs while maximizing revenue generation.

The AMHS is run as an enterprise fund, relying on the Alaska Legislature to appropriate general funds to make up for the shortfall in revenue vs. expenditure to operate the system.

AMHS spent $84.0 million in Alaska in 2014 counting operations ($45.7 million) and capital ($38.2 million) expenditures, and an additional $100.7 million in payroll expenditures. If we place those expenditures alongside the operating revenues, which in 2015 were $53.9 million, we can see that the state needs to appropriate more than $100 million annually. However, current fiscal challenges may result in significant budget cuts, which will result in challenges for operations and maintenance. This was illustrated in FY 2015 when budget cuts resulted in the removal of MV TAKU and CHENEGA from service, as capital funding for necessary overhaul was eliminated from the budget.

In addition to the two new vessels scheduled to enter service in 2018, the four oldest vessels in the

Continued on Page 3

Help Wanted

CITY OF KENAI, ALASKA
Position Announcement

Public Works Director. Full-time, $47.38 - $56.86 per hour plus excellent benefits package. This position provides an excellent opportunity to serve the community as part of a dynamic and cooperative work environment. The Public Works Director is responsible for all functions, operations, activities, and personnel related to the Public Works Department, including the Shop, Streets, Water and Sewer, Wastewater Treatment, and Buildings divisions. The work involves short- and long-range planning, providing infrastructure support, managing a budget, personnel administration, and acting as the project manager on maintenance and capital improvement projects. Submit resume and City of Kenai application form by March 15, 2018. The City of Kenai is an equal opportunity employer. For more information and to apply online, visit the City of Kenai's Job Opportunities page at www.governmentjobs.com/careers/kenai.

Report Card: AMHS Gets a D

Continued from Page 2

fleet need to be replaced over the next 12 years. The 2008 transportation plan identified this need to be a total of $600M, in addition to this capital investment in new vessels ADOT&PF also anticipates an average annual cost of $23M for vessel refurbishment and recertification. In the Shore facilities report from 2015 the need for capital improvements to Ferry Terminals and Docks was totaled to be $92.4M.

Approved capital investments for the next 5 years can be found in the Alaska Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, latest draft was released January 31, 2018. The list of projects includes Ferry Terminal Modifications in Gustavus, Haines, Auke Bay, Skagway, Tenakee, and Ketchikan, shore facility and vessel condition surveys, ferry refurbishments, construction of new ferries, and upgrades to the sewage systems at several terminals. These capital improvement needs total close to $400M.

Let's Raise the Grade

- Plan and budget for adequate annual maintenance to minimize the amount of vessel downtime.
- Continue to seek operational efficiency improvements in order to decrease the cost of vessel and shore side operations.
- Provide a one-time increase in the funding in the Marine Highway System Fund to allow the system to have time and resources to accommodate annual changes in funding support.
- Develop a long-range strategic plan for the operations of the AMHS to direct business decisions regarding scheduling and vessel usage.
- Develop a long-range vessel repair and replacement plan to make sure that the vessels are operating at peak efficiency.
- Implement strategies to increase ridership including consideration of commercial carriers and visitor use.

Find Out More

To find out more visit the report card website www.infrastructurereportcard.org/alaska. ❖

APDC LLC Wrap-Up Call Scheduled for March 8

By Dale A. Nelson, P.E., F. ASCE

The Alaska Professional Design Council Legislative Liaison Committee (APDC LLC) wrap-up call concerning the Juneau Fly-In on February 7-8, 2018, will be 5:30 – 6:30 pm Thursday, March 8. Contact Dale Nelson or Vicky Sterling to be added to the LLC email list and receive call-in details.

John Walsh, APDC LLC Lobbyist, will review his notes of the Fly-In member comments provided, and there will be updates of the Senate and House Bills that we were discussing with our Legislators.

Your comments and suggestions as to what we can do to improve what we do at the APDC LLC Fly-in are welcome. Are there legislative items or state agency items that we should be addressing? We do not need to stop with the Fly-In or the legislative session. Our activities are for the year and each year thereafter. If you have a thought, share it with us during the conference call or send me an email at dale@denelsonak.com.

We look forward to hearing your thoughts and comments on Thursday, March 8, 2018. Thank you for your participation. ❖

The monthly newsletter of the Alaska Professional Design Council does not necessarily express the opinions of the Council, the member societies, or their members.

Engineering Excellence Awards Announced at Dinner

Congratulations to the Engineering Excellence Awards project winners announced last night (March 2) at the Engineers Week Banquet.

Grand Awards

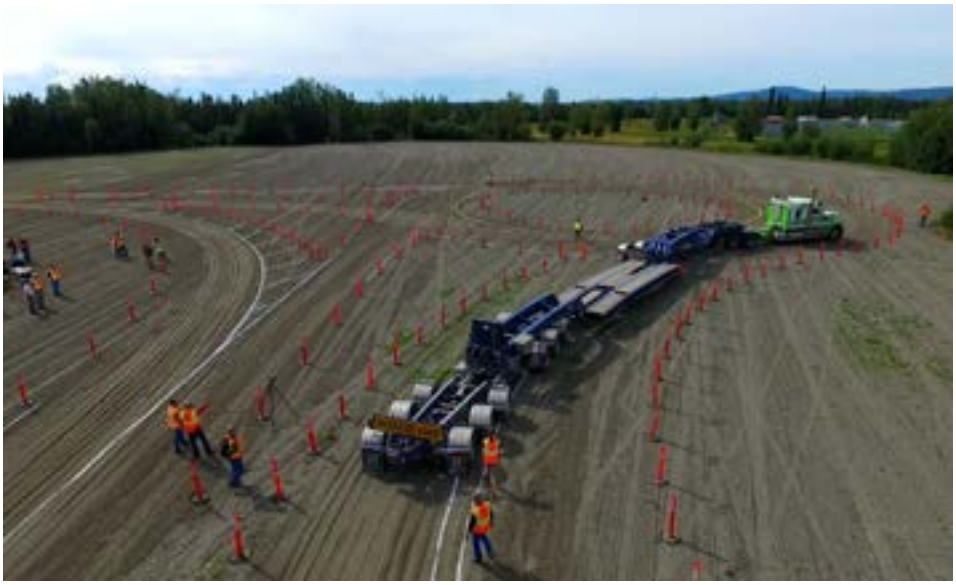
Danby-Wembley Roundabout Public Involvement, R&M Consultants Inc.

Alaska DOT&PF, Northern Section

Even though they are a proven safety countermeasure, roundabouts are still met with skepticism in Alaska due to their relatively small numbers and the dissemination of misinformation. Planners and engineers engaging stakeholders during roundabout project development are often challenged with overcoming this sentiment to focus on the merits. To rise above the noise, innovative tools for showcasing how a roundabout will address the context sensitive needs is required. Today's media-driven society demands something more than static plan-view displays.

The Fairbanks Danby-Wembley Roundabout project was faced with opposition from the local trucking industry due to the project's location along a major truck route for highway legal and Oversize/Overweight (OS/OW) trucks. After a scoping meeting with the trucking industry, the consultant team organized and conducted a truck trial, utilizing a 1:1 representation of the proposed roundabout geometry and inviting the various design vehicles to traverse the course. The event was documented extensively, including with the use of an Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV, aka drone) for aerial video and ground-based GPS receivers for tire track recording. This data was used to validate the computer-generated turning movements, as well as aid in targeted stakeholder outreach. In the court of public opinion, this use of real life media was key to assure project success.

Dena'ina Elementary School



Danby-Wembley Roundabout

Dena'ina Elementary School, BBFM Engineers Inc.

Matanuska-Susitna Borough

The Dena'ina Elementary School is located off the Knik-Goose Bay Road in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough. It is an approximately 44,000 square foot facility with classrooms, administrative offices, library, music room, gymnasium, kitchen, and a large center atrium/multi-purpose room. The structure's vertical system is a two-story steel frame using open web steel joists, wide flange steel beams and girders, and tube steel columns. The lateral system is a series of special steel concentrically braced frames. The foundation is concrete strip and spread footings and contains an 18000-gallon water tank. The second-floor walkway cantilevers into the atrium at the classrooms. At the offsets in the walkway, the floor structure hangs from the high roof.

The primary challenge for the

Continued on Page 5

Engineering Excellence Awards Announced at Dinner

Continued from Page 4

building was providing for a cohesive lateral load resisting system. The roof consists of a large high roof over the atrium (about one third of the building footprint) creating a large hole in the low roof. The two separate low roof diaphragms are connected at the two ends and at two intermediate points by drag struts. The diaphragm at the second floor is the shape of an amorphous U due to the absence of a second floor at the atrium and gymnasium. Adding to the challenge, the diaphragm chords are discontinuous because the floor is offset eight feet at every other classroom. The last challenge was two large roof-top ventilation units on the low roof at the second-floor level, which required diaphragm duct openings and tall screen walls.

Palmer Airport Pavement Rehabilitation

Palmer Airport Rehabilitation, HDL Engineers

City of Palmer

For almost 40 years, the pavement on the 6,009-foot Runway 16/34 at Palmer Municipal Airport (PAQ) withstood heavy aircraft operations (Douglas DC-3, DC-4, and DC-6, Lockheed C-130, and others), as well as the harsh Alaska climate. About 15 years ago, the Alaska Division of Forestry (Forestry) based its fixed-wing wildland firefighting operations for all of Southcentral Alaska at PAQ, adding more frequent use by Convair 580s, DC-6s, and C-130s. Occasionally, aircraft as large as the Boeing C-17 Globemaster have used this runway. The pavement's performance was nothing less than remarkable considering the typical 20-year design life of pavement, the heavy loads on an only three-inch pavement thickness, and that pavement maintenance was limited to crack sealing only four times in nearly 40 years. A 2013 pavement condition survey confirmed that it was time to replace the pavement on this critical runway.

In November 2016, Palmer awarded a design contract to HDL Engineering Consultants, LLC to rehabilitate the runway pavement, extend and improve the runway safety area beyond both runway ends, and other related minor improvements. This project was anticipated to cost $7.3M. However, through innovation, coordination with FAA, and reuse of onsite materials, HDL was able to assist Palmer to complete a single $7.8M project that also added six acres of paved apron, improved the runway shoulders, updated Runway 10/28 markings, added a compass calibration pad, removed obstacles from critical airport surfaces, and added a heliport. In all, Palmer completed five years' of projects identified in the airport's capital improvement plan at a savings of nearly $6M from original program estimates. Additional benefits of the sustainable use of resources include reducing materials imported to and exported from the airport, thereby minimizing impacts to the environment and improving traffic safety and congestion.

Operational requirements at the airport, including Forestry's use of the runway to support wildland firefighting, also added to the complexity of the project. HDL balanced user needs and developed a construction schedule and sequencing that completed the work with minimal disturbance.

Project of the Year

Juneau Cruise Ship Docks, PND Engineers Inc.

Port of Juneau

With the introduction of larger cruise ships into the worldwide market, individual ports have responded by expanding their port facilities. Southeast Alaska is no different. This rugged region is on a popular itinerary for the cruise industry and Alaska's capital city, Juneau, is the central port-of-call for the Alaska cruise itinerary. To accommodate the frequency of larger ships, Juneau developed and constructed the largest cruise ship berth project in Alaska state history.

Juneau is in a steep mountain-

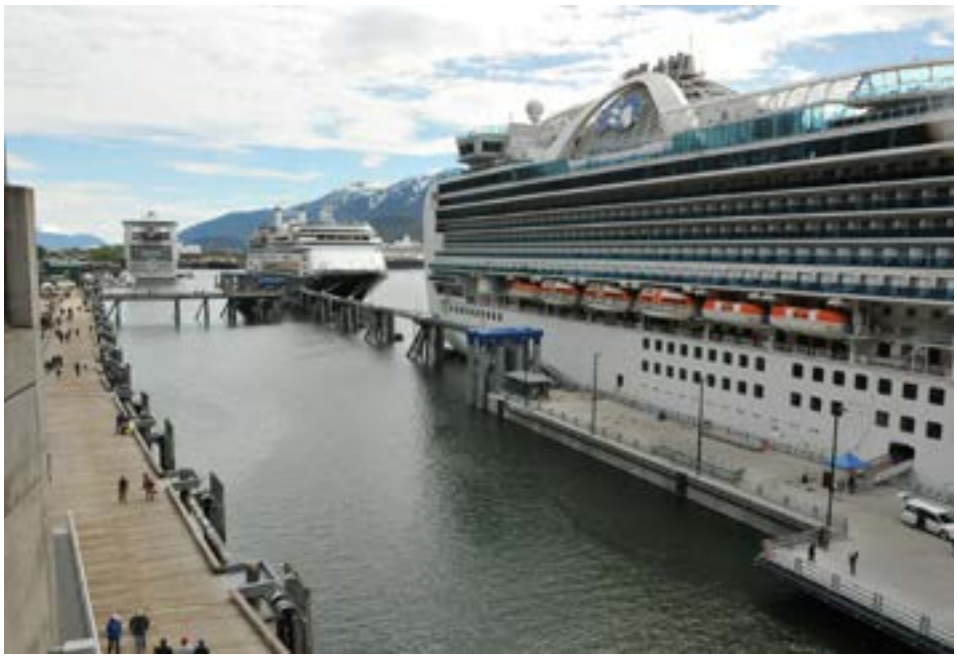
Continued on Page 6

Engineering Excellence Awards Announced at Dinner

Continued from Page 5

ous region in Alaska's inside passage. The remote and awe-inspiring scenery that attract visitors from around the world also present challenges for design and construction of marine transportation facilities. PND Engineers, Inc. (PND) worked closely with the City and Borough of Juneau (CBJ), the Owner, to develop creative and viable project alternatives to accommodate the unique site conditions of the downtown Juneau waterfront area. The selected concept consisted of two independent, floating concrete pontoons that accommodate passenger transfers from the vessels through the 25-foot tide cycle. The south pontoon measured 300 feet long by 50 feet wide and the north 400 feet by 50 feet wide. The combined length of both berths is 2,100 feet long and will support two vessels with overall lengths of 1,063 feet and a gross tonnage of 144,000 tons each simultaneously.

The design team overcame the challenges of the deep water, variable bedrock elevation and loose/weak marine sediment overburden by using a combination of rock anchors, rock sockets, and SPIN FIN® pile tips. PND used rock anchors in piles with high tension loads and shallow overburden. At locations with deeper overburden, SPIN FIN® pile tips were utilized to resist high tension loads in overburden with low frictional resistance. The utilization of SPIN FIN® pile tips appropriate to the site conditions saved the CBJ several millions of dollars on the project cost. ❖



Juneau Cruise Ship Docks

Looking Back Two Decades in *Alaska Designs*

By Vicky Sterling, Editor

Twenty years ago, *Alaska Designs* was printed in black-and-white on tabloid size paper, folded, and mailed to members of APDC Member Organizations (MOs) using a Bulk Mail permit. The March 1998 issue was 12 pages, most were 8. Blythe Campbell was the editor.

APDC officers were Kathy Gardner, AEMAA, president; Claire Waddoup, AEMAA, president-elect; Bonnie Ivy, AEMAA, treasurer; Arnold Harder, ASPE, secretary; and Craig Savage, ASPLS, past president. (AEMAA was the Architect/Engineering Marketing Association of Alaska.)

The March issue included announcement of the 1997 AIA Design Awards winners; a report from the LLC Fly-in; APDC board meeting minutes; report on Anchorage MATHCOUNTS competition; and reports from PEPP, ASPLS, and ASLA.

Ten years later, the newsletter was distributed electronically and posted online. It was no longer limited to black-and-white, and the page-count wasn't restricted to multiples of 4. The March 2008 issue had 9 pages. Vicky Sterling was the editor.

Officers of the board were Rob Lang, ASCE, president; Frank Rast, ACEC, president-elect; Mary Knopf, ASID, treasurer; Mike Hendee, ASCE, secretary; and Shawn Florio, ASPE, past president.

The headline article was a press release from Rep. Craig Johnson's office (R-Anchorage) providing an overview of legislation requiring a uniform indemnification clause. Passage of this legislation was a goal and victory for the APDC LLC. The issue also announced the induction of Patrick Kalen and Steve St. Peter into the Alaska Surveying and Mapping Conference Hall of Fame. Other articles covered AHFC Fair Housing training; ASCE western region seminars; highlights from AELS board meeting; and announcement of changes in leadership at Alaska Rim Engineering. ❖

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USFS term contract, AK RR term contract, various DNR and Borough subdivisions, work in various boroughs and numerous villages. Areas of projects range from Canadian border retracement to St. Lawrence Island to Barrow to south of Craig.

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Alaska Professional Design Council Calendar

Monday, March 5, 2018

ASPE Fairbanks, Noon, WestMark Hotel (1st Mon)

Tuesday, March 6, 2018

ITE Alaska Anchorage Chapter, Noon, BP Energy Center (1st Tues except June, July & August)

Thursday, March 8, 2018

ASPE Anchorage, Noon, BP Energy Center (2nd Thurs)

SEAAK Noon, BP Energy Center, Regular meeting, presenter TBA (every other month, usually 2nd Wed)

Sunday, March 11, 2018

Daylight Savings Time: set your clocks forward one hour!

Tuesday, March 13, 2018

ACEC Board, 4:00 p.m., PDC, Inc., Anchorage (2nd Tues)

Wednesday, March 14, 2018

ASCE Juneau Branch and ASPE Juneau Chapter jointly hold membership meetings at Noon at the AEL&P 2nd Floor Conference Room from September through May (2nd Wed)

ASLA Alaska Board, 12:10 p.m. in the URS 3rd floor conference room (2nd Wed)

ITE Alaska Fairbanks Chapter, Noon, DOT McKinley Building (2nd Wed except June, July & August)

Tuesday, March 20, 2018

ASCE Anchorage, Noon, Moose Lodge on Arctic Blvd. (3rd Tues)

ASPLS Anchorage, 5:30 pm social, 6 pm meeting at Las Margaritas Restaurant (3rd Tues with even months at Noon at the BP Energy Center and odd months at 5:30pm)

Deadline for the next issue of *Alaska Designs* (20th of each month, or Monday)

Wednesday, March 21, 2018

ASCE Mat-Su Branch, Noon at the Mat-Su College (Mile 2 Trunk Road) in Room FSM 206 (3rd Wed)

ASCE Fairbanks, Noon, WestMark (3rd Wed)

Tuesday, March 27, 2018

ASPLS Fairbanks, Noon, WestMark Hotel (4th Tues)

Wednesday, March 28, 2018

ASPLS Valley, Noon, Troutfitters, Wasilla (last Wed)

Monday, April 2, 2018

ASPE Fairbanks, Noon, WestMark Hotel (1st Mon)

Tuesday, April 3, 2018

ITE Alaska Anchorage Chapter (1st Tues except June, July & August)

Thursday, April 5, 2018

ASPE Anchorage Directors, 7 a.m., McDonald's, 800 W Northern Lights Blvd. (1st Thurs)

APDC, Noon, Bettisworth North, 2600 Denali St, Suite 710, Anchorage (1st Thurs)

Tuesday, April 10, 2018

ACEC Board, 4:00 p.m., PDC, Inc., Anchorage (2nd Tues)

Wednesday, April 11, 2018

ASCE Juneau Branch and ASPE Juneau Chapter jointly hold membership meetings from September through May (2nd Wed)

ASLA Alaska Board, 12:10 p.m. in the URS 3rd floor conference room (2nd Wed)

ITE Alaska Fairbanks Chapter (2nd Wed except June, July & August)

Thursday, April 12, 2018

ASPE Anchorage, Noon, BP Energy Center (2nd Thurs)

Tuesday, April 17, 2018

ASCE Anchorage, Noon, Moose Lodge on Arctic Blvd. (3rd Tues)

Tuesday, April 17, 2018 (cont'd)

ASPLS Anchorage, Noon, BP Energy Center (usually 3rd Tues with even months at Noon and odd months at 5:30pm)

Wednesday, April 18, 2018

ASCE Fairbanks, Noon, WestMark (3rd Wed)

ASCE Mat-Su Branch, Noon at the Mat-Su College (Mile 2 Trunk Road) in Room FSM 206 (3rd Wed)

Friday, April 20, 2018

Deadline for the next issue of *Alaska Designs* (20th of each month, or Monday)

Tuesday, April 24, 2018

ASPLS Fairbanks, Noon, WestMark Hotel (4th Tues)

Wednesday, April 25, 2018

ASPLS Valley, Noon, Troutfitters, Wasilla (last Wed)

Send calendar notices/updates by the 20th of each month to Vicky Sterling, sterlingtouch@gci.net.

When and Where

Always check locally to confirm meeting times and locations. Some organizations suspend or reschedule meetings in summer months. The newsletter publication calendar generally does not allow time to include holiday and last-minute schedule changes.

Alaska Designs welcomes articles and letters on subjects of interest to design professionals. The deadline is the 20th of each month for the following month's issue. Items may be edited for length or content and will be published as space is available. Submit items to the editor, Vicky Sterling, via email at sterlingtouch@gci.net and expect confirmation of receipt.