



*All Aboard* is a news bulletin for employees/retirees of the Alaska Railroad. The emailed version includes short briefs with links to longer stories or more information, most of which are posted on our employee website, **Inside Track**, <https://insidetrack.akrr.com/>.

## BUSINESS NEWS

# Railroad to issue RFQ to replace Seward Terminal

The Alaska Railroad (ARRC) is taking the next step in pursuing a public-private partnership to develop the rail-marine terminal in Seward into the southcentral tourism industry's lynchpin infrastructure. ARRC will advertise a Request for Qualification beginning Sept. 16. The RFQ asks interested parties to describe their capabilities and concepts for replacing an aging passenger dock and cruise terminal facilities in Seward. ARRC plans to identify potential partner(s) by the end of 2019, and to negotiate project details in 2020.

The *Seward Cruise Terminal Replacement* [project](#) stems from an extensive *Seward Marine Terminal Expansion Planning* project (also known as Railport Seward) conducted in 2016-2017. That effort resulted in a master plan for developing the railroad's Seward Reserve, including docks, terminal facilities and uplands. The ARRC passenger dock is nearing the end of its useful life, and must be replaced. The railroad is seeking a private sector operator or consortium partner to design and construct a replacement dock, and to develop terminal facilities to accommodate anticipated cruise traffic for the next 50 years. The railroad is also open to developing terminal uplands for expanded operations and to foster economic opportunities.

To facilitate the procurement / partnership identification processes, ARRC launched a project website — <http://www.railportseward.com/> — in late August. The site offers project facts, resource documents and a way for investors and developers to express their interest. The project manager is Elizabeth Greer. ARRC Director of Supply Management Tom Erickson is overseeing the RFQ process.



## New phone system update: about half have Cisco IP

The internally-funded project to upgrade the Alaska Railroad's phone system is well underway, and over half of the company's facility phones are now of the new Cisco IP 8841 variety.

Earlier this summer, the new system was first installed in the Communications & Signal shop to facilitate training. Next, communication teams completed installation in Cantwell and Fairbanks. By mid-August, installation in most of the Anchorage Yard facilities were completed, including the Anchorage Operations Center, Trailer-on-Flat-Car, Warehouse 1, Building 6 (Heavy Equipment Operations and Facilities), Building 63 (Mechanical Administration and Safety), and most of the yard Mechanical shops.

Pending facilities include the Headquarters / General Office Building (GOB), which must be rewired to support the new phones. This re-cabling project is projected for October / November. Passenger Services and other departments located in the Anchorage Historic Depot are slated for transition later this year, as are facilities in Seward, Whittier, Wasilla and Talkeetna.

During this first phase of installation, offices with an existing computer will receive a new phone. However, phones in break rooms, open shop and a few other areas may be upgraded during a second phase in 2020, when additional data connections are added to support the new phones. Cabling upgrades will also improve network connectivity.

Railroaders may notice that the caller ID function does not work between old and new systems. Once migration is complete, railroaders will see the normal caller ID that shows names. Until then, those calling between old and new systems will either see the full 10-digit number or the last 4 digits. Railroaders should also know that the new phone system is tied into Active Directory. This means that Communications & Signal cannot change your caller ID display. The display mirrors the information HR has entered into JDEdwards, which in turn pushes into Active Directory.

As railroaders get their new phones, crews have distributed a [Quick Start Guide](#) and Supplemental phone and voice mail [instructions](#). These references, as well as other online guidance, are available on [Inside Track > REFERENCES > Technology-Telecom > Telecom Instructions](#).





## Fall specialty trains (and beer!) grow in popularity

We know summer is truly over when we start promoting, in earnest, our fall specialty trains — all three of which generated solid participation in 2018, warranting a repeat this year. Two Fairbanks trains operate near the end of September. The first, a [Fairbanks Family Fun Train](#), is scheduled for 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. departures on Friday, Sept. 27. It's a day off for the Fairbanks School District, offering a perfect opportunity for Alaskan families to enjoy our newest kid-friendly train, featuring games, crafts, snacks, and sweeping views of Alaska's Interior and fall foliage.

The [Fairbanks HooDoo Choo Choo](#) will depart 4 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 28, headed round-trip to Nenena. This train is a partnership between the Railroad, HooDoo Brewing and the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) Culinary Arts program. Guests are treated to tasty eats and a sampler of craft beer during the 4.5-hour journey.

In Anchorage, the [Great Alaska Beer Train](#) will run 4 - 8:30 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 5. Not only does the Glacier Brewhouse offer an array of brews, but also a multi-course Oktoberfest dinner, served during the round-trip journey to Portage. This one is almost sold out.

As always, no employee discount is available for special event trains; however, if you appreciate fine craft beer and/or lederhosen-friendly social outings, you might want to snag a seat. To book, call the friendly folks in the Reservations Department at 265-2494. Find details on all of our specialty trains at [AlaskaRailroad.com/ride-a-train/event-trains](https://alaskarailroad.com/ride-a-train/event-trains).

## OPERATIONS NEWS

### Alaska Railroad hosts national GCOR committee

The General Code of Operating Rules (GCOR) are used by a majority of railroads operating in the United States. GCOR is discussed and kept current by a committee comprised of railroad representatives — including ARRC's own Safety Rules and Operating Practices Director Phil Rogers.

This group meets twice per year in locations around the country. It was Alaska's turn Sept. 10-12, when about three dozen representatives from Amtrak, Class 1, short-line and commuter railroads attended. During this meeting, the committee held final deliberations on changes proposed for the next edition. GCOR undergoes a major update every five years. The GCOR 7th Edition was issued April 1, 2015, and the GCOR 8th Edition will be issued in April 2020.

"It's been several years since the Alaska Railroad played host to the GCOR committee and we did well by our guests," said Rogers. He noted that presentations by ARRC Chief Operating Officer Clark Hopp and Reservation & Ticketing Manager Tucker Remley were well-received. Rogers also thanked Transportation / Safety Admin Assistant Nancy Davis, Admin Support Technician/Receptionist Lilly Henry-Pasia, and Legal Administrator Julie Zappas for their help with meeting logistics.



*The GCOR committee held meetings in the ARRC headquarters / GOB building's third-floor Board Room. Photo by Phil Rogers.*

## IN THE COMMUNITY

# United Way: Sept. 13 to Oct. 31

Our Employee United Way campaign kicks off Friday, Sept. 13, and ends Friday, Oct. 31. The theme is *Change doesn't happen alone — Calling all Champions!* Posters are up in Anchorage, letting employees know about several campaign activities (also listed below). The Fairbanks campaign is coming together as well. Keep an eye out for emails with more information about the food drive and campaign activities in both communities. Anchorage contacts are Meghan Clemens, ext. 2543, [ClemensM@akrr.com](mailto:ClemensM@akrr.com); or Stephenie Wheeler ext. 2671, [WheelerS@akrr.com](mailto:WheelerS@akrr.com). Fairbanks contacts are Calvin Gustafson, ext. 6086, [GustafsonC@akrr.com](mailto:GustafsonC@akrr.com); and Andy Burgess at ext. 6042, [BurgessA@akrr.com](mailto:BurgessA@akrr.com)



<b>Friday, Sept. 13,</b> 8-11 a.m.	Campaign Kick-off Coffee (Cafe D'Arte)	GOB Lobby
<b>Thursday, Oct. 3,</b> Noon	United Way Luncheon	GOB Board Room
<b>October 1 - 31</b> all month	Hogwarts House Food Drive	5 Anchorage Locations
<b>Wednesday, Oct. 9,</b> 11 a.m.	United Way Luncheon	Heavy Equipment Shop (Yard)
<b>Thursday, Oct. 31,</b> 8-11 a.m.	Campaign Conclusion Coffee (Cafe D'Arte)	GOB Lobby
<b>Friday, Nov. 1,</b> morning	Campaign Door Prizes announced	via Email

## IN THE COMMUNITY

# Get 2020 print / poster signed at November events

The Alaska Railroad will release its 2020 annual collector's poster and print at two public sale-and-signing events featuring Anchorage artist Jason Vukovich. Event details are:

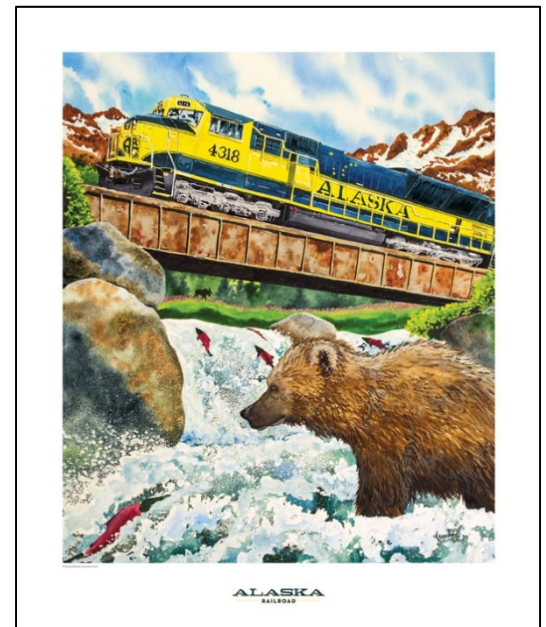
- **ANCHORAGE:** Saturday, Nov. 16, 2019  
10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Anchorage Historic Depot  
(411 W. 1st Avenue)
- **FAIRBANKS:** First Friday, Nov. 1, 2019  
4-7 p.m. at the Fairbanks Depot  
(1031 Alaska Railroad Depot Road)

Each Railroader receives one free POSTER. Employees may buy pre-signed and numbered (1-750) art prints at a discount price of \$45 (regular \$55) and additional posters for a discounted \$25 (regular \$30).

To reserve a print with a specific number, complete a [print number reservation form](#) found on [Inside Track > RESOURCES > Forms > Passenger Ops / Guest Services Forms](#). Return it to the ARRC Gift Shop by **Friday, Oct. 11, 2019**. The form has detailed instructions.

Entitled *Journeys*, the watercolor painting depicts an Alaska Railroad passenger train moving along a steel deck girder bridge over a river packed with salmon making their annual journey upstream to spawn. Knowing a feast awaits, bears journey to the salmon-rich streams to fatten up before winter and hibernation.

Get more information on [Inside Track > NEWS > Events/Announcements - Current](#).



## Steam Engine 557 turns 75 in September

Steam Engine 557 is 75 years old! The historic locomotive rolled out of Baldwin Locomotive Works in September 1944 as one of 2,120 identical machines built for the U.S. Army Transportation Corps. Enthusiastic friends of the Engine 557 restoration project threw a 75<sup>th</sup> Birthday Party Open House on Sept. 8 in the restoration venture's Wasilla Engine Shop. The event featured hands-on show-and-tell by 557 volunteers, detailed scale models of the 557 locomotive (pictured at right), and birthday cake. An impromptu gift shop bloomed in the locomotive cab to meet the demand for 557 mementos.



Engine 557 Restoration Company President Pat Durand (pictured at right) welcomed the crowd and answered the inevitable question, "When will she be in steam?" Perhaps by 2022 if all goes well in terms of funding and Positive Train Control (PTC) challenges.



As it stands, Steam Services of America (SSA) contractors worked with 557 volunteers this summer to install the replacement firebox. SSA is prepared to return this fall to lead boiler tube and superheater flue installation. Driving boxes and bearing brasses must be sent south for rebuild. While volunteers support these activities, funding is not yet pledged to cover the \$140,000 cost. If funding is secured, steam tests could occur in 2021, and the project could be completed over the 2021-2022 winter. Ideally, the engine could be available for service in 2022.

Aside from funding hurdles, no steam engine is currently PTC compliant. Waivers or new technology could address this issue. The 557 group is part of a consortium of steam locomotive operators looking for solutions. The Alaska Railroad's Palmer Branch and the industrial spur to the Palmer Airport track are currently outside ARRC's PTC implementation plan, and might be used for 557 training and operation.

A 557 fund-raiser is slated for 7 p.m., Oct. 8, at the Palmer Moose Lodge on Cobb Street. One hundred tickets are on sale for \$100 each and are available by calling 907-350-4340. The event will highlight historic photos and the rich history of the "first family of Alaskan Railroading" headed by John and Clara VanCleve, who arrived in Skagway in 1898 aboard the White Pass and Yukon Railroad. The fund-raiser features major door prizes and a dessert auction.

### EMPLOYEE BENEFIT

## Health Fairs coming up – free flu shots and lab tests

**BAD news:** the influenza season is just around the corner. **GOOD news:** Flu shots offer protection. Vaccinations are FREE for Railroaders and eligible dependents attending a Coalition Health Fair in Fairbanks on Sept. 15, Palmer on Sept. 21 or Anchorage on Oct. 5. **MORE GOOD news:** The health fairs also provide easy access to preventive health lab tests that screen for blood chemistry, thyroid problems, prostate disease and Vitamin D deficiency. Attendance is free, but pre-registration is required. Get more information on [Inside Track > BENEFITS > Health Fairs](#), and be sure to register now!





## EMPLOYEE BENEFIT

# Post-season employee Gift Shop sale – Half-off 1 item

It's HALF-OFF time at the Alaska Railroad Gift Shop, where Railroaders can get a 50% discount on ONE item Monday-Friday, **Sept. 16-20**. Employees already get 20-30% off on many items. The half-off bonus buy happens just twice per year — pre- and post-summer season (early May and mid-September).

If you've been interested in buying a particular ARRC logo item, or you're inclined to browse the store

([AlaskaRailroadGiftShop.com](http://AlaskaRailroadGiftShop.com)), now may

be the smart time to it. Shop hours in the Anchorage Historic Depot are 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Questions? Call the Gift Shop at ext. 2326 or contact John Simmons at ext. 2242.



## DIALOG

# Survey says... Greetly will remain Greetly

Dozens of Railroaders had some fun with a recent employee survey to consider renaming the greeting kiosk located in the Headquarters (GOB) building lobby. The survey ended Aug. 31 with 90 railroaders taking part.

More than a quarter (26%) of the respondents voted to keep Greetly... perhaps because it is gender-neutral, and accurately reflects what the kiosk does. All things considered, Greetly garnered the most support compared to any of the survey's proposed alternate names, or any of the newly suggested names.

Among the five names noted as possible alternatives, none emerged with a clear mandate. Indeed, the weighted average scores of the top two contenders were fairly underwhelming -- VERA (Virtual Electronic Railroad Attendant) at 2.59 and HAL at 2.49. Essentially, reactions fell between "eh" (2 stars) and "meh" (3 stars). Nearly one-third (30%) of the survey respondents offered some entirely new ideas. Some were serious, some were funny, some were confounding, and some seemed to assume Greetly does more than it does.

Several comments made us think twice... and agree.

- A receptionist position — including the kiosk greeter app — should not be assumed female. Point taken.
- The sign identifying the kiosk could use an upgrade to something a bit more permanent. Yep..

Railroaders can get the full scoop on the [Inside Track > DIALOG > Employee Surveys](#) page, where these documents are available:

- [Recap of survey results and outcome](#)
- [Survey Monkey survey results](#), including graphs





## RECOGNITION

# Kenai Borough names ARRC a top tourism supporter

The annual Kenai Peninsula Borough Industry Appreciation Day was held Aug. 25, a Saturday dedicated to celebrating the industries and companies that define the Kenai Peninsula community. Traditionally, the event draws more than 3,000 people, including members of our federal and state legislative delegations, local dignitaries and elected officials. This year's attendees included Gov. Mike Dunleavy, Rep. Ben Carpenter, Sen. Peter Micciche and Borough Mayor Charlie Pierce.

In celebrating key industries — including oil and gas, commercial fishing, tourism and health/medical — event organizers present a number of awards. The *2019 Outstanding Support Business in Tourism Award* was presented to the Alaska Railroad. ARRC Seward Port Manager Christy Terry was on hand to accept.

## IN CASE YOU MISSED IT - AUGUST NEWS

### Leadership Memos in August

Five memos from senior railroad leaders were emailed and posted in August. President & CEO Bill O'Leary noted the posting of recent responses to "Ask the CEO" questions, announced our reaffirmation of our Equal Employment Opportunity policy, and provided an update on Board make-up, grant funding and a Seward project. COO Clark Hopp applauded Railroader response to a spectrum of Mother Nature's challenges. CFO Barb Amy provided a recap of July Financials. Read them on the [Inside Track](#) > NEWS > [Leadership News](#) pages.

### News Releases in August

We kept the community apprised of how the railroad responded to multiple incidents involving wildfires, heavy rains, ice jams and resulting flooding. To read the incident-related releases, visit [AlaskaRailroad.com](#) > CORPORATE > News / Media > [Press-Media](#) (then, click on the 2019 Press Releases drop-down folder).



- Aug. 28 – Labor Day weekend Fair Trains confirmed
- Aug. 26 – Snow River flood waters recede; track repairs get underway
- Aug. 23 – Fair Train cancelled due to weather and wildfire impacts on resources
- Aug. 23 – fire and flooding threats warrant continued monitoring and modified rail service
- Aug. 21 – Service restored north of Anchorage; high water near Seward
- Aug. 19 – McKinley Fire north of willow cancels train service between Anchorage and Denali Park
- Aug. 16 – Nenana River high water causes erosion and retaining wall failure

## Great Shot! Send your photos for *All Aboard* use

The *All Aboard* editor is always looking for photos that capture railroaders and railroading in action. Got a great shot? Forward it to Stephenie via email to [WheelerS@akrr.com](mailto:WheelerS@akrr.com). Similar to years past, railroaders who contribute photos during the year will be included in an end-of-year drawing for a \$200 prize. Below, Freight Customer Service Manager Sasha Kincaid submitted a photo on behalf of Rail Advisors consultant Dave Booker, who captured this great shot during his hike to Portage in mid-July. Booker was in Anchorage to assist Sasha and Emily Hoffman with freight billing and automation in TMS.

