

# COMMUNITY



## t i e s

Alaska Railroad Corporation  
4th Quarter, 2001

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## YEAR IN REVIEW

### ARRC pursues vital role in state's economic development

by Patrick Gamble, President & CEO

**R**eflecting back on 2001, the Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC) spent tremendous time and resources to bolster its role as a vital artery for Alaska's economic development. We vigorously pursued safe, responsive and financially sound operations so the Railroad can be the kind of partner the state, communities and businesses can depend on for growth.

To that end, ARRC made every effort to serve more customers and increase revenues. We brought new services online. We enhanced environmental protection measures, coordinated community planning, and took many capital projects from the planning stage to construction.

**Customers & revenue.** Real estate proved to be a star performer. Gross revenues topped \$10 million for the first time — up from \$9.28 million last year. Freight revenue is also on a record-breaking course to surpass \$80 million. Gravel was up, oil field freight exceeded expectations and a record number of fuel cars were hauled from North Pole, breaking several daily, weekly and monthly thresholds. Passenger numbers were up slightly as well. These revenue streams are the backbone of our work force and our services.

**New services.** Part of our freight-end success is due to a partnership established last year with Lynden to provide barge service between the Lower 48 and our dock in Whittier. On the passenger side, we established the *Grandview* train to deliver direct Seward-Anchorage service for cruise ship customers. A new web-based passenger reservation system goes on-line by the end of 2001, promising Internet convenience for customers and global exposure for the Railroad.

**Environmental measures.** The Railroad significantly enhanced emergency and spill response through new equipment, employee training, and an overhaul of our spill response plan. Crafted to meet new state regulations, the plan has been filed with the Department of Environmental Conservation and will be available for public review in January. ARRC also joined Alaska Chadux Corporation, a primary spill response co-op, to augment internal spill response capabilities.

**Community involvement and planning.** Our people have worked hard to better coordinate our planning efforts with the communities we serve. ARRC will soon be named an official member of the Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Study (AMATS) Technical Advisory Committee

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Alaska Railroad  
Ongoing Projects:

Anchorage Airport Rail Station

Fairbanks Intermodal Facility

Fairbanks/North Pole Rail  
Relocation Study

Whittier Equipment  
Maintenance Facility

Anchorage-to-Wasilla  
Track Realignment

Southcentral Commuter Study

Denali Depot Improvements

Anchorage Yard Expansion

Ship Creek Improvements

Improved Sidings & Signals

Avalanche Program

South Anchorage Double Track

For updates or comments on  
these projects, visit the  
Alaska Railroad web site at  
[www.AlaskaRailroad.com](http://www.AlaskaRailroad.com)

# STATE-OF-THE-ART AVALANCHE DETECTION

## Newly-installed prototype ready for winter duty

The job description for those installing the Alaska Railroad's new state-of-the-art avalanche detection system reads like a James Bond help wanted ad:

*Seeking physically fit applicants capable of hiking long distances on steep terrain (45 degrees) with considerable vertical gain (2,600 feet above the track). Job may require applicant to spend nights on remote mountain sites without helicopter support. Previous mountaineering experience a plus.*

Project supervisor Dave Hamre hand-picked a team of such rugged professionals this summer. Their mission: improve the Alaska Railroad's existing avalanche risk management system, and reduce risk to travelers, railroad and highway personnel, and communities.

The Railroad's Avalanche Program includes a series of projects from installing early detection systems and building new weather stations, to positioning remote-controlled blaster boxes and developing a multi-agency forecaster network.

The prototype avalanche detection system borrows technology used by Swiss Rail (Switzerland) and is the only



*A blaster box is installed by an avalanche path near Girdwood.*

system of its kind in the U.S. It employs three mountainside stations that sense movement when an avalanche releases, and then triggers an alarm.

The Railroad just completed several new weather stations and enhanced existing stations along the avalanche-prone route from Girdwood to Moose Pass. Information from these stations is processed by new groundbreaking software. The Railroad, Alaska Dept. of Transportation & Public Facilities, and Alyeska Resort now have access to the software, timely weather forecasts, avalanche observation data, and tools such as Doppler Radar and weather maps.

Also recently completed was the installation of precision blaster boxes and additional howitzer guns — devices used to trigger small snow slides to avert full-scale avalanches. ●

## NEW RESERVATION SYSTEM ONLINE

### Software affords Internet perusal and purchase

The Railroad's new flexible, automated passenger reservations system is up and running. By the end of the year, travelers will have instant access to train schedule, package and tour information, and the ability to pay online via [www.AlaskaRailroad.com](http://www.AlaskaRailroad.com).

"We will have a much easier time responding to marketing needs and feedback from our customers with this software." said Steve Silverstein,

VP of Markets, Sales & Services. "I am impressed with the opportunities we have for tracking information as well as offering flexible pricing and packaging options."

Developed with proven expertise, *RailRes 2000* software was bought from FSS Travel & Leisure Systems, a leader in developing affordable systems for railroads worldwide. The system can accommodate current and projected needs, and capitalizes on consumer demand for Internet information and transactions. ●

### OPEN HOUSES TO SHOWCASE PROGRAM OF CAPITAL PROJECTS

Anchorage Anchorage Depot	Jan. 9 4-7 p.m.
Fairbanks Fairbanks Depot	Jan. 16 4-7 p.m.
Wasilla Lake Lucille Inn	Jan. 23 4-7 p.m.
Seward	TBD

Includes overview of ARRC's proposed program of capital projects for 2002, individual project displays, fact sheets, and door prize drawings!

# ARRC 2002 OFFICIAL PRINT READY FOR RELEASE

## Annual Alaska Railroad rendition proves popular as collector's item



"My up-close and personal approach to the painting demanded much detail and accuracy," said Dubac. "The foreground wildflower focus adds extra blasts of color to 'big blue & gold' charging through the Portage-to-Potter blend of scenery."

Dubac will be on hand to sign prints and posters in the Anchorage Depot noon-2 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 5, and in the Fairbanks Depot noon-2 p.m. the following Saturday, Jan. 12. About 4,500 posters and 750 prints are made and are on sale at the depot ticket windows in Anchorage and Fairbanks. Posters cost \$25 and prints are \$50.

The first official Alaska Railroad painting was produced in 1979 by John Van Zyle. Since then, the annual rendition (except 1984) has evolved into a popular collector's item, with requests coming from all over the world. ●

**T**he Alaska Railroad's annual print is on schedule for a January release. Painted by Anchorage artist Debra Dubac, this year's image depicts two SD70 MAC locomotives pulling interline freight on the trip from Whittier to Anchorage. Dubac and the painting are pictured above.

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(TAC) and has also been included in the Fairbanks Metropolitan Area Transportation Study TAC. We are working with several other groups, including the Anchorage Chamber of Commerce, Anchorage Economic Development Corporation and the Alaska 20/20 effort, to ensure the Railroad's vision complements and supports the overall plans and strategies developed by our state and municipalities.

**Capital Improvements.** Since 1996, federal funding has laid the groundwork for building a more safe, efficient Alaska Railroad. This year, we saw many years of planning materialize as construction got underway on several projects, some of which were completed. The new freight dock in Seward is up and running, track was straightened on Elmendorf Air Force Base, double track is nearly complete in south Anchorage, new sidings were constructed along the rail line, and an improved avalanche detection and prevention system was installed.

**Looking Ahead.** Expect the Railroad to maintain the momentum. For example, new intermodal depots at Denali, Fairbanks and the Anchorage airport will greatly enhance passenger service and safety. Ongoing efforts to straighten track and automate train traffic control systems will increase our efficiency and speed. As we continue to modernize infrastructure and hone operations, the Railroad will become more valuable as a partner Alaska can depend on. ●

## WINTER SPECIALS

Details on these great Winter Specials are on the ARRC web site — [www.AlaskaRailroad.com](http://www.AlaskaRailroad.com).

### **Borealis Bound Weekend Getaway**

A complete weekend excursion! Bus to Talkeetna, rail to Fairbanks, fly back to Anchorage. Lodging in Talkeetna and Fairbanks included. — \$325 per person

### **Aurora Winter Rail Special**

One-way rail to Fairbanks, overnight and return flight to Anchorage via Alaska Airlines — \$239 per person

### **Saturday Stowaway Special**

Round-trip rail to Talkeetna and overnight at the Talkeetna Alaskan Lodge — \$139 per person.

For reservations call 265-2494; or 800-544-0552 outside Anchorage.

# THE RAILROAD WISHES ALL A HAPPY HOLIDAY

Railroaders all along the line send holiday cheer to customers, communities



*Cheryl Sautel  
Executive  
Secretary*



*Greg Wyatt  
Carman*



*Diana Brake  
Project Manager*



*Gerald Valinske  
Conductor*



*John Leis  
Baggage Handler*



*Willow Peyton  
Business  
Systems Analyst*



*Steve Perkins  
Fairbanks  
Equipment  
Operator*



*Pam Dotomain  
Receptionist*



*Rich Holzapfel  
Fairbanks  
Track Forman*



*Stephan Kester  
Dispatcher*



*Chris  
Anderson  
Real Estate Leasing*



*Davy Registe  
Engineer*



*Steve Love  
Healy  
Roadmaster*



*Rodney Frank  
Conductor*



*Paul Gangstad  
Anchorage  
Safety  
Technician*



*Heather Stone  
Seward Station  
Supervisor*



*Anabel Chavez  
Administrative  
Assistant*



*Pat Gamble  
President/CEO*



*Sally Vanderstarre  
Fairbanks Ops  
Support*



*Robbie Casey  
Fairbanks  
Carman*



*Jim Murphy  
Fairbanks Signal  
Technician*



*Randy Springstead  
Seward  
Mechanical  
Supervisor*



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