

THE ASTAC MESSENGER



Spring 2011
Quarterly Newsletter

We've got you covered Free. Convenient. Safe.

A wireless phone that works where others don't, the Motorola M900 bag phone provides extended coverage in remote areas. ASTAC is offering a free bag phone with a two-year contract (\$499.99 value) through the end of April. The Motorola M900 is perfect for hunting, whaling, fishing or any other time you're out of ASTAC's regular wireless-coverage area. It also has twice the power of a standard cell phone and includes an extended battery and AC/DC charger. You can also add an extra antenna for increased strength. The bag phone will give you peace of mind when you can't rely on other cell phones.



- FREE with 2-year contract
- Includes extended battery with AC/DC charger
- Extended coverage

New data service

ASTAC will launch data service in Barrow and Point Hope this April, allowing customers to access the Internet and e-mail from their smartphones and texting phones.

New website coming soon

ASTAC is excited to launch its new website this spring. The new site will include online-ordering capability for wireless phone services and products. Visit the site at www.astac.net.

National broadband plan update

by Steve Merriam, CEO/General Manager

ASTAC is keeping a close eye on possible broadband changes in rural Alaska. Of particular concern for ASTAC and its membership is the overhaul of the Universal Service Fund (USF) and its replacement over time by a new Connect America Fund. USF is responsible for keeping high-cost rural areas on a similar price and services basis as urban areas. We want to ensure that any transitioning to support broadband does not do so by sacrificing quality and affordable voice service, particularly since satellite transport is our only "broadband" option for the immediate future.

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is releasing several Notices of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRMs) on aspects of the National Broadband Plan and updates will soon be available. The NPRMs will provide more details into the thought processes of the FCC for deploying broadband to under-served and un-served rural parts of the country. It will also allow affected companies to provide comments on the plan and suggest alternatives that work for specific rural markets.

Rest assured, we are tracking this issue closely. If and when we need to have you weigh in with a grassroots effort to our delegation, we will organize that effort. Thanks for staying informed on what is at stake.



Directory-cover contest winner

This year's cover photo was taken by Bill Tracey Sr., an amateur photographer who lives in Point Lay, Alaska.

Bill traveled to Alaska when he was in high school and eventually found his way to Point Lay. Bill and his wife, Marie, raised a family of three sons. Protecting his family's way of life, the environment and the animals that share the North Slope are his passions.



The photograph is titled "Hauling out," and captures some of the 20,000 walrus that migrated to Point Lay last fall. The photo was also used for ASTAC's first annual calendar. Bill will receive a \$200 prize as the winner of the 2011 Directory Photo Contest.

To submit a photo for the 2012 cover, e-mail your photo to info@astac.net.

ASTAC brings free WiFi to Barrow Airport

Good news for air travelers. ASTAC is installing a free WiFi and cell phone charging station at the Barrow Airport next month. The station will include a shelf for laptop computers and plugs for up to eight cell phones. Look for the illuminated ASTAC sign near the baggage claim and enjoy our free service.

GSM launch

ASTAC is pleased to announce the completion of the Deadhorse cellular network conversion to Global System for Mobile Communications (GSM). The digitized signal allows background noises to be filtered out, and the technology also dramatically extends battery life and talk times. North Slope users can now access sites like Facebook, Twitter, MySpace

Did you know...

- Studies show driving while texting makes it anywhere from eight to 25 times more likely that a driver will have a deadly collision.
- A person looks down for five seconds while driving and texting, during which time a car or truck at highway speed can cover the length of a football field.
- Allstate Insurance found that despite knowing the danger, 83 percent of teenagers admit to talking on the phone while driving and 68 percent admit to texting while driving.



68% of teenagers admit to texting while driving

~ SCHOLARSHIP NEWS ~ Win a \$1,000 college scholarship

ASTAC is getting ready to award its annual college scholarships. Each year ASTAC gives away two \$1,000 college scholarships to resident students from the area ASTAC serves. The most qualified applicants will receive the award with a restriction being that only one scholarship be available to a Barrow student. This enables the remaining North Slope students to qualify for at least one scholarship. The application deadline is April 4, 2011. For more information and to download the application, check out our website at www.astac.net/scholarships.php.

and e-mail while on the go. Mobile data is also available to customers when they travel to Anchorage, Seattle and beyond. In December, the last of the TDMA phones were converted to the new GSM network, recognized as the worldwide standard for mobile networks. All ASTAC-served villages from Kaktovik to Point Hope now have cellular service available. ASTAC also offers many advanced handsets, smart phones and even a seven-inch Android tablet phone.

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