

# MESSENGER

Fall 2018



## AULLAQISSAAQ – A NEW ERA

By Jens Laipenieks CEO/General Manager



Team ASTAC enjoyed a spectacular week of Annual Meetings with the weather, bugs, and airplane all cooperating to make it one of the most memorable tours to date. It's always great to reconnect with our ASTAC membership and communities, hear concerns, and see the services we provide put to use. We were lucky enough to be in Wainwright to witness the bounty and celebration of the

beluga harvest. It was a glimpse into the traditions of the past that reminded me of the true heritage of the land.

The theme of our annual report this year was Aullaqissaaq, which in Inupiaq means, "the beginning of a new era". It seems even more appropriate after witnessing the improvement of so many facets of the Arctic, not just the bandwidth, 4G wireless, and fiber networks we provide. The upgrades I saw first-hand to infrastructure like runways, roads, schools and gyms was simply amazing. These improvements will give future generations of ASTAC members the tools and opportunities to grow. Collectively, I see these advances as the start of a new era to the future prosperity of the Arctic. I applaud all those who have worked tirelessly to make them a reality.

ASTAC will continue to do our part to expand the impacts and benefits of broadband to all the membership in this new era. This year our focus is on Utqiagvik where we are actively building out new fiber optic cable to every house and business. Our plan is to complete this build by mid-2019.

The network improvements we have made and planned are only possible because of you, our members. We appreciate the confidence you have placed in us by choosing ASTAC as your service provider.

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\*Home Internet<sup>10</sup> available in select markets, see our website for details.

# 2018 ANNUAL MEETINGS



**Wainwright, AK**



**Utqiagvik, AK**

ASTAC members attending annual meetings.

## ELECTION RESULTS

Annual meetings were held throughout the North Slope July 9-13. Board of Director elections were held in the communities of Nuiqsut, Utqiagvik, Deadhorse and Anaktuvuk Pass. Daniel Perkins of Deadhorse and Pearl Burris of Anaktuvuk Pass were newly elected and Marlene Bolt of Nuiqsut and Marietta Aiken of Utqiagvik were re-elected.



*Daniel Perkins*



*Pearl Burris*



*Marlene Bolt*



*Marietta Aiken*

Members were able to vote online this year through SmartHub, in addition to by mail and in-person.

## BATTLE OF THE BOOKS



ASTAC presented a \$15,000 check to the North Slope Borough School District (NSBSD) for their upcoming Battle of the Books program during ASTAC's Annual Meeting in Utqiagvik on July 11. ASTAC is pleased to partner with the NSBSD for a fifth year on this student reading incentive program which promotes better academic success. Over the last five years the number of participants has grown by 25 percent.

"ASTAC's continued strong support of the Battle of the Books has led to increased participation because there is a constant funding source for purchasing the books. Continuity builds a program," said Brian Freeman, Coordinator of Grants, Foundations & Partnerships for the NSBSD.

The donation will cover the cost of books and supplies for every school in the district.

# ASTAC PHONE DIRECTORY COVER IMAGE RECOGNIZED



ASTAC was awarded second place for its 2018/2019 telephone directory cover design at Alaska Telephone Association's Annual Meeting in Homer on May 22. It was the second time ASTAC was awarded second place in the contest and was honored to be recognized out of the 11 submitted designs.

The directories were mailed to every current member in May and June. If you have not received a copy, contact Customer Service at 1-800-478-6409.

## MOVING ON

When ASTAC Administrative Assistant Daisy Swisher thinks about her 10-year career at the company the word 'family' comes to mind first. Originally from Wainwright, Daisy, her husband and their youngest son moved to Anchorage in 2000 for better job opportunities. She worked at several companies before getting hired at ASTAC.

"From day one ASTAC felt like a family. Families support each other and that's what I've received," said Daisy. "During the 10 years I've been here, they've taught me about the latest technology and have participated in Annual Meetings as an Inupiaq translator. I've always felt special at ASTAC."

Daisy, has been vital to ASTAC's Inupiaq-speaking customers who have relied on her to explain everything from

how to pay their bill to how to use a new phone.

"I've talked to elders who got their first cell phone and love when they've said things like, 'I can carry my phone around with me. I can talk on the phone when I'm out hunting!' ASTAC customers have become part of my family too," said Daisy.

Daisy looks forward to her next adventure – retirement – and plans to spend much of her time with her grandchildren and visiting family in Wainwright.

"I'll miss ASTAC, but I get to look back and say, 'I was part of something really great.'"

## 2018 ASTAC EVENTS

### September – December 2018

Swoosh annual free-throw competition, check [ASTAC.net](http://ASTAC.net) and Facebook for details

### October 17

ASTAC Board Meeting

### October 18-20

AFN in Anchorage

### Home Internet<sup>10</sup> Trainings

\*Stay tuned to Facebook and our Sales Events web page for updates

## UNCLAIMED CAPITAL CREDITS

Capital Credits (also known as patronage) represent a member's portion of the positive net margin ASTAC generates annually. They are not cash, or an overpayment, and cannot be cashed or used to pay your bill. ASTAC retires Capital Credits at the direction of the Board of Directors when cash flow is sufficient to do so and have retired Capital Credits through the year 1987.

To see if you may be owed Capital Credits, review our list at: <https://www.astac.net/company/member-info/capital-credits/>



*Daisy Swisher's retirement party at the ASTAC Anchorage office.*

## LIFELINE

**Lifeline Service:** Provides an individual fixed/mobile broadband or voice service residential line, 911 service, access to operator services, long-distance access (unless toll blocking is requested), and access to directory assistance. Under this enhanced plan, eligible customers will receive basic local service for \$0.00 per month.

**Link-Up Assistance:** Offers up to \$100.00 discount on applicable, new, non-recurring service connection charges.

**Eligibility Requirements:** A customer must fill out the Lifeline service and/or Link-Up Assistance application and participate in a qualified program, including proof of program participation or income to confirm eligibility. Contact Customer Service for assistance with eligibility requirements.

## INTERNET BASICS FOR ELDER'S TRAINING

ASTAC's Customer Sales and Training Coordinator, Steve Bohlen held ASTAC's first Internet Basics for Elders training class in Utqiagvik on June 25. Topics included 'What is the Internet?', 'What are websites?' and 'How do you access the Internet?' The training was well received, and attendees expressed interest in additional training in the future. ASTAC will continue to host Elders training in Utqiagvik and other villages throughout the year.

## ASTAC COMPANY PICNIC

ASTAC held its first Annual Company Picnic at Kincaid Park in Anchorage on June 27. The picnic was western themed and barbeque cuisine was served. Employees were encouraged to dress up in their western wear and activities included cornhole, a photobooth, sack races, a piñata and face painting.



## ALASKA RELAY

Alaska Relay Service is a statewide service that connects standard (voice) telephone users with deaf, hard-of-hearing, deaf-blind, speech-disabled, or late-deafened people who use text telephones (TTYs) or other telephone devices available depending on the type of relay services used. This service allows relay users to communicate with standard telephone users through specially trained Communication Assistants (CA). Calls can be made 24 hours a day, 365 days a year with no restrictions on the number, length, or type of calls. Dial 7-1-1 to place a Relay call, or for more information visit [www.AlaskaRelay.com](http://www.AlaskaRelay.com).



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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**Ella Kowunna**  
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