Engaging members through Alaska Chamber outreach

By Pete Nolan

Membership outreach is one of the critical factors we strive for to engage Alaska Chamber members. Through our weekly Capitol Notes during the legislative session to our It’s Your Business updates we work to give our members important information in a timely fashion that they need to operate their business in Alaska.

The Chamber also engages members through events that occur throughout the year. The Legislative Fly-In brings members to the heart of the Alaska political arena in Juneau and helps them to meet and share their concerns with the legislators who will make important decisions for all Alaskans.

Our Fall Forum is a time for members to meet and agree on Chamber priorities for the coming year and participate in the social interactions during our Top Business Awards. These and other events are an important aspect of Chamber membership outreach. Recently our Chamber President, Curtis Thayer, “hit the road” to meet with members throughout the state. You could call it a listening tour.

While Curtis hasn’t been the President and CEO of the Alaska Chamber for very long, lading the job this past November, he brings a wealth of political and economic experience in leading the Chamber’s efforts to promote and support Alaska businesses.

But good leaders know that sometimes, to get a clear picture of the task at hand, it takes getting out of the office and spending some time on the front lines. From the Sitka Chamber to the Kenai Chamber and points in between, he has been the featured speaker at many local chambers in communities he has visited.

This outreach to promote the message of the Chamber continues with Wasilla, Palmer, Seward and Fairbanks Chambers on the speaking agenda for the near future.

The Chamber works very hard to reach out to our members and listen to their concerns and issues. But the greatest outreach of all must come from Chamber members themselves. It’s your Chamber. Its effectiveness depends upon you.

We encourage you to reach out to the staff and the board members. Let your voice be heard. And then encourage business people you know and work with to join us as we continue to work for the best interest of business in Alaska.

After all, members are the greatest source for outreach that we have.

Pete Nolan is the Membership Director for the Alaska Chamber. He can be reached by phone at (907) 278-2733 or by email at pnolan@alaskachamber.com.
Governor Jay Hammond did more aware of State government? and regions of the state – were Alaskans – across all age levels in his Message From The Chair.

The landscape for the upcoming election cycle for Alaska's economy, as well. Chamber years; possibly one of the most important newest of a strong group of champions for these great Alaskan companies, Chamber members. When you

By Curtis W. Thayer (907) 278-2744 or nschuh@alaskachamber.com


By Casey Sullivan
Can you remember a time when Alaskans – across all age levels and regions of the state – were more aware of State government? If so, it was probably 1959 when Alaskans pulled together to win our bid for statehood. Or maybe it was 1980 when Governor John Hammond did away with Alaska's income tax and the Alaska Permanent Fund Corporation was established. Those are both cornerstone, defining moments in Alaska’s history. And it's looking like we'll need an equally monumental movement to preserve the blessings that statehood and our oil-funded cash reserves have brought us. To do that, we need the right people in Juneau. The Alaska Chamber does not endorse individual candidates. In fact, does, however, grade each House and Senate member, as well as the Governor, on how supportive they are of Alaska’s private sector businesses. These grades are a powerful historical resource for voters. They show very clearly which lawmakers perform well on major business issues and who falls consistently short of the mark. This fall, we need to support our pro-business incumbents by getting out the vote and filling in the oval next to their names in the ballot booth. As for the others, Alaska quite literally can't afford lawmakers who don't make the grade.

Earning the grade
At the beginning of each legislative session the Alaska Business Report Card group meet with legislators to give advanced notice of the issues we'll be following. We walk new lawmakers through the process. We show them how they'll be evaluated not only on how they vote, but also on how they perform in committee meetings, how they vote on bills they sponsor, and what leadership they provide – positive or negative – on key business issues. The legislature runs on a two-year cycle. So after the first year, we meet with lawmakers again to privately discuss how they perform and if they wish to continue participating. We provide them with an unpublished, interim grade.

It can come as no surprise if a legislator earns poor marks at the end of their term in office. And yet, we have some chronic anti-business incumbents who linger in office. Sometimes running unopposed or re-elected on name recognition alone.

When opportunity knocks
Presidential elections always draw high numbers of voters to the polls. The hyper-contentious nature of this year’s presidential race is likely to generate higher voter turnout than Alaska’s seen in a very long time.

We need to harness that turnout to send 60 pro-business legislators to Juneau with a mandate to put Alaska on a sustainable spending path, to ensure stability and efficiency in our tax and regulatory processes, and to foster a healthy business climate in Alaska. Sure, that sounds great. But how do we do that? We start with education. We're going to see some serious changes in the make-up of the Senate and the House, with some notable, long-term legislators retiring from office. It may be easy to get drawn into the pageantry surrounding the presidential race, but take time to follow along with local debates and primaries.

Look for candidates that understand the value and importance of Alaska’s business community and those of your company during
campaigning for office is challenging work and it’s also expensive, particularly this year when national elections threaten to dominate the media. If you aren’t comfortable giving directly to a candidate, consider contributing to the Alaska Business Political Action Committee or another pro-business PAC.

And lastly, let’s do our best to encourage our family members, employees, and others who care to vote. For government to be truly representative of the people, we need to participate individually – in our communities and in our state as a whole.

Meet the candidates that will represent your interests and those of your company during their term of service. Support the ones that share your views. Vote November 8! And I'll see you at the polls in November!
The Alaska Chamber is pursuing three state and two federal priorities in 2016.

2016 State Priorities
• Support reduction of spending to sustainable levels
• Support comprehensive workers’ compensation reform
• Oppose a natural gas reserves tax

2016 Federal Priorities
• Support oil and gas exploration and development in Alaska’s federal areas
• Support repeal or mitigation of the ‘Cadillac Tax’

The Chamber took action on 54 individual bills during the 29th Legislature, supporting 25 of state legislation and opposing 29. The State’s unfoundedness to bring spending into alignment with revenues created a 2016 special session that was dominated by a host of new, poorly defined tax proposals from the Walker administration.

Notable successes include a bill establishing a State Arctic Policy for Alaska, increase in timber sales, streamlining regulations to allow business opportunities, recognition of the success of tax reform, and a series of resolutions endorsing resource lease sales and opposing wilderness designations.

Also included in the list of 2016 successes is the latest in a long list of incremental reforms to Alaska’s cumbersome Workers’ Compensation system; a system that is perpetually ranked last in the nation.

To this end, our proposals for comprehensive workers’ compensation reform address the following broader topics within workers’ compensation:
• Improving Administrative Inefficiencies
• Reducing Medical Costs and Improving Medical Outcomes
• Revising the Dispute Resolution/Legal Process
• Amending the Reemployment Benefits System
• Addressing Legal Decisions and Precedent
• Modify Indemnity Benefits to Reflect Original Legislative Intent
• Strengthen the fraud statute to reduce benefit fraud

A second summer of special sessions
Governor Walker called the legislature into special session on May 23. This is the fourth special session called in the past two years as the administration pressures lawmakers to pull money for state operations and a pipeline project from Alaska businesses and the Permanent Fund.

The Chamber has opposed recent attempts to address the spending gap with a host of new spending cuts to economic investment. We will continue to bring the focus back to long-term, sustainable state spending. Now more than ever, Alaska is in urgent need of leadership. Due to falling oil prices and unsustainable spending, we face a fiscal cliff here in Alaska that, if not addressed decisively, is a real threat to the livelihoods of all Alaskan families.

• Budget policy should focus first and foremost on reversing the unsustainable state budget growth of the past decade. A multi-year series of annual reductions in the state operating budget—including entitlement reform—will be required.
• Create an endowment model or similar framework to use the Permanent Fund earnings to support essential services, and do so in a timely manner (2016) to avoid liquidating enormous amounts of state financial reserves.
• Only after a reduction in spending, and the implementation of a long-term, sustainable plan for use of permanent fund earnings should other revenue be considered.

A listing of all legislation the Chamber supports or opposes—including bills introduced during special session—is available online at alaskachamber.com.

Wrapping up 2016 and the 29th Legislature... so far

Welcome New Members

Alaska Gasline Development Corp.  Apublic corporation of the state of Alaska with a legal existence separate and distinct from the state, Alaska Gasline Development Corporation ensures that Alaska’s vast North Slope natural gas resources are available for the maximum benefit and use of Alaskans. Visit them online at agdc.us.

Alaska Maritime Agencies  Alaska Maritime Agencies is an acknowledged industry leader in providing ship agency services in the Alaskan Region. Founded in 1956, Alaska Maritime Agencies serves owners and operators of cargo and passenger vessels calling at any point along the 47,000 miles of Alaskan coastline. Visit them online at alaskamaritime.com.

Chris Birch for Alaska  A pioneer Alaskan, Chris is a consulting engineer and candidate for the state legislature. He and his wife, Pam, have been married since 1978 and have two grown children and four grandchildren born and raised in Alaska. Visit him online at chrusbirch.com.

Denali Occupational Health  Denali Occupational Health facilitates the placement of workers according to their physical, mental, and emotional capabilities. With pre hire physicals, functional exams, drug and alcohol testing we provide both employee and employer with a general assurance that they are qualified to perform the job in which they were hired. For more information call (907) 677-1083.

Dimond Center Mall  Founded in 1957 by Joe & Patty Ashlock, Dimond Center Mall started out as a two-level interior mall of 100,000 square feet. Today, the Dimond Center is home to retail stores, restaurants, professional offices, a bowling alley, ice rink, theater, and a variety of shops and services, and do so in a timely manner (2016) to avoid liquidating enormous amounts of state financial reserves.

Financial Reality Foundation  Formed in 2015 by the Matanuska Valley Federal Credit Union, the Financial Reality Foundation offers consumers of all ages the opportunity to learn about finances in a fun, realistic and memorable way. Visit them online at financialreality.org.

Matson  The leader in Pacific shipping, Matson’s transportation offerings span the globe delivering a wide range of multi-modal services throughout North America. Matson has completed the acquisition of Horizon Lines’ Alaska service and is excited to bring more than 130 years of Pacific shipping expertise to Alaska. Their on-time performance sets their service apart from other ocean carriers. They also serve more locations in Alaska than any other carrier. To book freight to Alaska or find out more about their Alaska service, please contact 1 (877) 678-SHIP.

My Place Hotel  The new three-story, 64-room My Place economy extended-stay hotel feature’s the My Kitchen, complete with 2-burner cooktop, microwave, and full refrigerator. Affordable daily, weekly, and monthly rate options are available, stay longer and save more at My Place! Visit them online at myplacehotels.com.

Saltwater Safari-Fishing in Seward  Saltwater Safari is a fishing operation offering deep-sea fishing charter adventures. Saltwater Safari maintains its reputation as the Seward charter service that targets big halibut, lingcod, rockfish and salmon. Visit them at saltwatesafari.com.

Sleep Centers of Alaska  Utilizing state-of-the-art equipment and highly trained and skilled professional staff, Sleep Centers of Alaska offers complete diagnosis and treatment of sleep disorders with state-of-the-art equipment in a comfortable environment. Visit one of their four locations across the state or online at sleepercentsofalaska.com.

St. Elias Specialty Hospital  Located in the heart of Anchorage, St. Elias is Alaska’s first Long Term Acute Care Hospital. A Provider of Medicare services, St. Elias provides customized, physician-driven programs for patients requiring longer stays in an acute care environment due to multiple or complex medical conditions. Visit them online at elashospital.com.
Arctic Information Technology ranked globally as a leading MSP provider

Arctic Information Technology (Arctic IT) has been recognized as the top managed services provider in Alaska and ranked number 196 in Penton Technology’s ninth-annual MSPmentor 501 Global Edition — a distinguished report identifying the world’s top 501 managed service providers (MSPs). The complete 501 list is currently available on the MSPmentor website.

“We are honored to be recognized by MSPmentor as one of the top managed service providers globally,” said Steve Bike, President of Arctic IT. “This ranking is a true testament to the excellence of our team and how we serve our customers in Alaska.”

The 2016 MSP 501 list is based on data collected by MSPmentor and its partner, Clarity Channel Advisors. Data was collected online from March through April 2016. The MSP 501 list recognizes top MSPs and service providers based on metrics including recurring revenue, growth and other factors. In addition to a ranking on the MSP 501 list, every company that participated in the study has been assigned a score reflecting its intrinsic value. The measure, known as the Total Service Provider (TSP) score, evaluates an MSP’s mix of revenue from various activities, including consulting, cloud, reselling and managed services.

About Arctic IT

Founded in 1998, Arctic Information Technology, Inc., a Doyon Government Group Company, has been providing integrated technology solutions and network management and support services to small and medium-size business and enterprises — including non-profit, commercial, tribal and local government organizations — for nearly two decades. Visit us at www.arcticit.com or follow us on Twitter @ArcticIT.

For more information about Arctic IT contact Mark Mathis, Senior Account Manager at mmathis@arcticit.com.

About Arctic IT sales team Mary Gasperlin and Mark Mathis at AOGA’s 50th Anniversary Conference on May 25.
First National is local. They understand our business and our economy.

Richard Schok, President & Owner, Flowline Alaska

For more than 90 years, our focus has been on offering strong, business financial solutions. But we never forget that it’s our expertise, experience and responsive, local service that set us apart. From lines of credit to ACH, from cash management to expansion financing, First National helps leading edge businesses like Flowline Alaska to innovate, grow and succeed.

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“First National saves us time and money. We’ve worked with other banks in the past, so we know the difference.”
Richard Schok
June 9 Member Appreciation Reception a hit

Alaska Chamber members arrived at the home of Governor Bill Sheffield for a Member Appreciation Reception on what proved to be a stunning Alaskan evening.

The reception was a thank you to both long-standing and new Chamber members for their support in promoting a healthy business environment in Alaska.

In addition to Chamber members, we were pleased to welcome Governor Bill Walker and his wife Donna, and many members of the Alaska State Legislature.

PHOTOS BY FLAVIN PHOTOGRAPHY FOR ALASKA CHAMBER

RIGHT: Chamber Chairman Casey Sullivan and President and CEO Curtis W. Thayer recognized Chamber members for their long-standing support. BOTTOM RIGHT: Governor Bill Sheffield welcomes Chamber members to his home. BELOW: Governor Walker and his wife Donna visit with Chamber members.
AECOM makes leadership changes in Alaska

AECOM, a premier, fully integrated global infrastructure firm, announced today that it has made several leadership changes within its Alaska operations to enhance the impact of the organization in the region.

Laura Young assumed the role of technical services manager. In this new role, Young will oversee engineering, geographic information system and computer-aided drafting disciplines.

Young will also continue to serve as the federal business development lead for Alaska. Young joined AECOM, through legacy Dames & Moore, in 1995.

Elizabeth Bella, PhD, was named planning group manager. In this new position, Bella will continue to manage projects and will also serve as strategic and business development lead for the planning group.

Bella has 15 years of applied ecology and regulatory experience, and she joined AECOM in 2015.

Joy Wakefield-Gonzalez was named business manager. In this new role, Wakefield-Gonzalez will be responsible for project management improvement, business management and financial planning.

Wakefield-Gonzalez joined AECOM, through legacy firm Tryck Nyman Hayes, in 2008.

“We are excited to welcome Laura, Elizabeth and Joy into their new roles. They are very capable and experienced in their fields and will continue to serve an asset to our team,” stated Joe Hegna, AECOM Alaska operations manager and vice president.

“I am looking forward to seeing all they accomplish in their new positions.”

About AECOM

AECOM is built to deliver a better world. We design, build, finance and operate infrastructure assets for governments, businesses and organizations in more than 150 countries. As a fully integrated firm, we connect knowledge and experience across our global network of experts to help clients solve their most complex challenges.

From high-performance buildings and infrastructure, to resilient communities and environments, to stable and secure nations, our work is transformative, differentiated and vital.

A Fortune 500 firm, AECOM had revenue of approximately $18 billion during fiscal year 2015. See how we deliver what others can only imagine at aecom.com and @AECOM.

WASHINGTON TO WASHINGTON

Senator Dan Sullivan welcomed Alaska Chamber and Tacoma-Pierce County Chamber members during their 31st Annual Washington to Washington trip in May.
When you’re looking to maintain a positive cash flow.

We can help you manage your business finances.

With Wells Fargo small business resources, you’ll have access to:
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Stop by and speak to a local banker today, or go to wellsfargo.com/appointments to schedule an appointment at a time that’s most convenient for you.

Additional tools and resources are available on wellsfargoworks.com/run.