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### Arctic & Western

- **Unalaska Marine Center Dock Position III & IV Replace**
  - **Turnagain Marine**
  - **TC Construction**
  - $34,066,670
- **Bethel Port Operations Building**
  - **TC Construction**
  - $1,329,000

### Interior

- **Fairbanks Area Signal Upgrades Stage I**
  - **HC Contractors Inc**
  - $14,143,690
- **Dalton Hwy MP 265 Roche Moutonnee CK Bridge**
  - **Tutka LLC**
  - $4,903,523
- **Dirtworks Inc**
  - $4,063,950
- **Rehabilitate Toklat Utility Infrastructure**
  - **Dirtworks Inc**
  - $4,063,950
- **Heavy Equipment Operations Building**
  - **Doyon Industrial Group LLC**
  - $2,806,030
- **2012 & 2013 Er Denali Hwy Corridor Flood Repairs**
  - **Mass Excavation Inc**
  - $2,359,224
- **Interiors Area Signal Upgrades Stage I**
  - **HC Contractors Inc**
  - $14,143,690
- **Dalton Hwy MP 265 Roche Moutonnee CK Bridge**
  - **Tutka LLC**
  - $4,903,523
- **Dirtworks Inc**
  - $4,063,950
- **Rehabilitate Toklat Utility Infrastructure**
  - **Dirtworks Inc**
  - $4,063,950
- **Heavy Equipment Operations Building**
  - **Doyon Industrial Group LLC**
  - $2,806,030
- **2012 & 2013 Er Denali Hwy Corridor Flood Repairs**
  - **Mass Excavation Inc**
  - $2,359,224

### Southcentral

- **Sterling MP 58-79 Rehab Skilak Lake Rd to Sterling MP 60-79**
  - **Granite Construction Co**
  - $53,907,758
- **ANC Taxiway Y Reconstruction**
  - **QAP**
  - $18,592,071
- **Glenn Hwy Rehab W Chickaloon Grade MP 77.4-78.2**
  - **Granite Construction Co**
  - $11,809,138
- **Glenn Hwy: Airport HTS Drive to Hiland Road, Pavement ESR**
  - **Granite Construction Co**
  - $9,995,858
- **Antihc Childcare and Education Center**
  - **M-Alaska Construction LLC**
  - $8,178,916

### Merrill Field Improve Rehab Taxiway Quebec Phase 6

- **Mass Excavation Inc**
  - $6,577,179
- **Homer: East End Road MP 5.5-12.6 Pavement ESR**
  - **Granite Construction Co**
  - $6,096,323
- **Turnagain Blvd Upgrade Spandan Rd to Mccrae**
  - **Annette’s Trucking Inc**
  - $4,942,558
- **Duben Ave Upgrade Patterson St to Muldoon**
  - **Pruhs Construction Co LLC**
  - $4,719,603
- **Soutcentral Law Enforce Tactical Range, Train Fac SR Bales**
  - $4,373,000
- **Bartlett HS Cafeteria & Kitchen Renovate**
  - **Orion Construction Inc**
  - $3,695,000
- **Safety Improve: Lake Otis Pkwy At 68th Ave Channelization**
  - **Neeser Construction Inc**
  - $3,554,977
- **Yosemite Drive Upgrade Eagle River LP to Yellowstone Dr**
  - **Mass Excavation Inc**
  - $3,532,007
- **Merrill Field Airport Security Improve Phase 4**
  - **Alcan Electric**
  - $3,416,389

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**Note:** Winning Bids and Construction Trends

1. Source from projects advertised in the AGC of Alaska Bulletin
2. Calculations based on date of bid
3. Supply/Service; Non-Construction bid results are not always advertised in the bulletin
4. RFP results are not always advertised in the bulletin
SEWARD ROAD IMPROVEMENTS
- KNIK CONSTRUCTION CO INC
  $2,228,204
- DOWLING RD: OLD SEWARD TO LAKE OTIS PKWY PAVE PRESERVE
  GMG GENERAL INC
  $1,963,246
- TRUNK ROAD EXTENSION SOUTH PH II
  AHTNA CONSTRUCTION & PRIMARY PRODUCTS CORP
  $1,715,637
- SOUTH PENINSULA HOSPITAL OR HVAC RENOVATE
  STEINER'S NORTH STAR CONSTRUCTION
  $1,702,131

SEWER IMPROVE INTERCEPTOR A-68TH AVE ACCESS MANHOLE
- SOUTHCENTRAL CONSTRUCTION INC
  $995,000
- RICHARDSON HWY VALDEZ GLACIER STREAM BRIDGE, LOWE RIVER BRIDGE
  QAP
  $947,918
- STUDENT NUTRITION EFFICIENCY PROJECT
  NORCOAST MECHANICAL INC
  $925,000
- HSIP: PEDESTRIAN FENCING
  GRANITE CONSTRUCTION CO
  $821,902
- 2ND AVE POST RD SEWER REHAB, 2ND AVE NELCHINA ST STORM DRAIN
  CONSTRUCTION UNLIMITED INC
  $773,535

SOUTHEAST
- AIRPORT DRAINAGE IMPROVE & PAVEMENT REHAB
  SOUTHEAST ROAD BUILDERS
  $9,826,115
- UAS KETCHIKAN REGIONAL MARITIME & CAREER CENTER
  ORION CONSTRUCTION INC
  $4,699,000
- KAE KEKU ROAD PAVEMENT REHABILITATION
  MILLER CONSTRUCTION CO
  $4,194,814
- ASPEN AVENUE PAVE & DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS
  PACIFIC COAST PAVING INC
  $1,419,154
- WESTWARD CAPTAIN’S BAY ELECTRICAL INTERTIE PROJECT
  NORTHERN ALASKA CONTRACTORS LLC
  $1,399,060
- BLUEBERRY HILLS RECONSTRUCTION
  ARETE CONSTRUCTION CORP
  $826,261

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Alaska has its flaw — it lacks infrastructure

Fact: Alaska encompasses about 375 million acres. That’s about twice the size of Texas, no offense to our friends from Texas.
Fact: Alaska has more than 33,000 miles of coastline.
Fact: Alaska’s population is 741,894, which is one person for every 505.5 acres.
Fact: Rural Alaska has the highest cost of goods and services in the United States.
Fact: Alaska has an abundance of natural resources, one of the largest in the United States.
Fact: Many of Alaska’s natural resources are expensive to extract and take to market due to the lack of infrastructure and the cost to do business in an arctic/remote environment.

Alaska is unique in so many ways, but the things that make it unique can also sometimes be flaws. For example, the incredible vastness of our state is unmatched, but it hinders transportation and access to rural and remote Alaska.

Communities, both urban and remote, rely on aging or nonexistent transportation infrastructure in many locations. Alaska, being the second-youngest state and being geographically remote, lacks the infrastructure that many states in the Lower 48 take for granted. This is especially true in many of our rural and coastal communities.

Connecting rural communities to larger communities such as Barrow, Nome, Dillingham and Bethel or to larger cities such as Anchorage requires infrastructure — infrastructure built by the members and supporters of the Associated General Contractors of Alaska.

Projects, communities and even ways of life depend on transportation to and from every corner of our great state. But infrastructure is also necessary for Alaska’s natural resource development and the industries that support it.

It’s unfortunate that Alaskans often expect the federal government to build our infrastructure with the hope that these projects will lead us to prosperity. I believe Alaska should invest the people’s money in the right opportunities to build our own way back to prosperity.

In fact, a state dollar goes further in a construction buildout than a federal dollar does. Federal dollars often have strings attached and many stipulations on how to spend those dollars. But each state dollar counts for construction projects in Alaska, from hospitals to airports to bridges.

Alaskans are and have always been forward-thinkers. Today more than ever we need to move forward with large-scale projects that give us opportunities over the long term. We need to quit thinking about today and start building for the future.

Across the country, every day, there are billion-dollar projects being built by states with no money or less money and opportunity than Alaska has. Alaska has the capital to grow our economy by building and improving access to our communities and resources.

New construction and the maintenance of existing infrastructure are necessary for the growth, safety and success of communities.

Every additional road, port, bridge, rail extension, dam and runway can help lower the cost of goods and services to a community as well as lower the costs for potential resource development. Examples include fishing, mining, timber, and oil and gas projects.

Over the years, I have heard many colleagues say that Alaska is broke and that we cannot afford to build high-dollar or even mid-range projects. Actually, Alaska has billions in the bank and the financial ability to take on projects one phase at a time.

AGC members stand ready to build out Alaska’s infrastructure needs because WE BUILD ALASKA.
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Finally, a treated glulam that doesn’t look treated! The Treated X-Beam is constructed from Douglas Fir in sizes to match standard framing widths and I-Joist depth and is protected by Hi-Clear II industrial wood preservative that leaves the beam an attractive honey color while protecting against decay, mold, bacteria, and insects. Ideal for visible applications such as decks and architectural overhangs. Backed by a 25 year warranty.
Having a good time while growing our own

You are probably familiar with the various events AGC holds throughout the year and what we’ve been doing for years to grow a well-trained workforce in the construction industry. These topics may sound unrelated, but there is a direct connection between them.

The summer golf tournaments in Anchorage and Fairbanks are some of our more popular events. These tournaments sell out every year and provide a day of golf and comradery, some bug bites and sunburns if we’re lucky. They culminate with a filling meal and awards.

In August, AGC presents the popular annual Sporting Clays Shoot. This sport is described by some as “like golf with shotguns.” As in golf, shooters are part of a team of five and take turns shooting at a variety of targets. There is a lot of time for conversing with teammates and members of other teams. AGC Sporting Clays gets better every year.

To ease the winter doldrums, we host events indoors during the colder months. In Anchorage in late February, we present Casino Night. The event features a scrumptious dinner, games of chance, member celebrity dealers and special entertainment. In Fairbanks, we hold the annual Bowl-A-Thon in late January, when more than 150 people typically come out for a day of bowling, food and refreshments, friendly competition and great prizes.

Members’ expectations don’t stop there. This past April, the Spring Train Ride was back by popular demand. And in October, the Chili Cook-off, going on its 10th year, continues to stir up fiery competition and great-tasting chili.

Not just a good time, these events are great opportunities to network. They allow AGC members to get together and meet other AGC members and build business and personal relationships. These events take considerable time, effort and expense for AGC staff to put on, and they require sponsorships and donations from many of our member companies and registration fees from the participants.

Just as importantly, these events provide AGC a way to invest in Alaska’s workforce through a variety of scholarships and sponsorships.

From the proceeds of many years of events, AGC of Alaska recently contributed a $100,000 gift in support of scholarships to the University of Alaska Fairbanks in celebration of its centennial year. You’ll read more about this later in this issue. Including this year’s centennial gift, AGC’s philanthropic support of UAF has totaled more than $250,000 over the past two decades.

AGC’s endowed scholarships at UAF have provided 70 students with over $90,000 in financial assistance since 1998. Looking through the list of recipients during the past 20 years, I see many students who have become leaders in Alaska’s construction industry, working for construction companies, A/E firms and owner agencies.

Each year, more than $50,000 in scholarships and sponsorship is made possible by your support of AGC.

Each year at our golf reception in Anchorage, we have awarded $20,000 in academic scholarships to students pursuing a range of construction-related careers and at a variety of institutions. The governing criteria is that they plan to make a career in Alaska. A few years ago, we increased the individual scholarship amount, offering fewer but larger scholarships. Interest ballooned, and the number of applications almost tripled. Recipients are some of the best of the best.

It’s not just scholarships that we support. There are many state and national competitions that Alaskans take part in that hone their skills and show we can compete at the highest levels.

The UAF Steel Bridge Team has an impressive history of performance, consecutively placing first in the Pacific Northwest and in the Top 10 at the national competition. This (Continued on page 14)
Introducing the CASE Rental Advantage – a unique collection of intuitive machines, service solutions, and hands-on expertise designed to add depth, efficiency, and simplicity to your business. From smarter machine controls to more cost-effective maintenance programs and warranties, we can show you how to take your team to the next level. To get started, download our 6 Tips For All-Around Easier Rental at CaseCE.com/Rental.

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The Concrete Canoe competition is one of the more challenging ones. Design criteria change every year.

The Concrete Canoe competition is a new one for UAF. The team puts in hundreds of hours designing and constructing a lightweight four-person concrete canoe to race in the Idaho competition. Last year the team placed fourth against schools that have been participating in the competition for over 30 years. When the team lost its campus shop space this year, it built the canoe in the garage area of our Fairbanks office. We’ll make a place for them next year.

The Construction Industry Progress Fund — CIPF — supports Alaskans in the SkillsUSA competitions. SkillsUSA is a national partnership of education and industry working together to ensure America has a skilled workforce in trade and technical occupations. CIPF also supports the University of Alaska Anchorage Construction Management Team at the Associated Schools of Construction competition — the most prestigious event for construction management students in the country. This year, the UAA team beat 12 other teams in the grueling three-day competition and took first place in the heavy-civil category.

For more than 20 years, AGC of Alaska has been committed to developing Alaska’s workforce and the next generation of the construction industry. That commitment is even stronger today. Each year, more than $50,000 in scholarships and sponsorships is made possible by your support of AGC and the various AGC events we hold throughout the year. The golf tournaments, the Bowl-A-Thon, the Spring Train Ride, Casino Night, the Sporting Clays Shoot — as you see these are not just fun times and great networking events.

Your participation and support are an investment in the future of our industry and Alaska.
Sometimes it’s obvious when you’ve had a breach.

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At the time of this writing, after exhausting the 121-day session limit, the Alaska State Legislature is 10 days into a special session. Lawmakers continue to try to resolve differences in a number of key pieces of legislation. Having just passed the operating and capital budgets, the key pieces remaining are Oil & Gas Tax Credit Reform and restructuring the Permanent Fund — and some taxes.

Those exact sentences were the beginning of our Legislative Wrap-up — last year. In the words of Yogi Berra, “It’s deja vu all over again.” As we experienced the past two years, the Legislature is again in a three-way tug of war to close out the session.

On May 17, Gov. Bill Walker called another post-regular-session special session to deal with the unfinished business and a few more items. There are eight items on the agenda, most of them well along in the process — but unfinished. The eight items are:

**Opioid Prescriptions and Monitoring:** This was close to passing at the end of the regular session. It would increase reporting requirements for opioid prescriptions by doctors and pharmacies in an attempt to reduce overdosing and illicit use of prescription opioids.

**Motor Fuel Tax:** This would increase the motor fuel tax from 8 cents to 24 cents a gallon over the next two years. In addition, the bill creates a transportation infrastructure fund within the general fund and directs motor fuel tax proceeds to be deposited into the fund. Of course, all funds are subject to appropriation and can only be designated for a purpose, not dedicated. AGC and others have long supported this increase for such designated purposes.

**Operating Budget:** There was clear distinction between the significant operating budget differences of the House and Senate. The House majority opposes most of the budget reductions proposed by the Senate, saying they’ve already cut too much. The House took the governor’s budget that proposed few reductions and added more money back in. The Senate’s budget proposal includes additional cuts, affecting university and K-12 education.

**Capital Budget:** Similar to record-low capital budgets from the past two years, this year’s budget is no different. It does, however, include more than $130 million in state funds that leverage over $1.3 billion in federal funds for construction projects. Of the $3.5 billion in general fund reductions, our capital budget has taken half of those cuts. The Senate capital budget did repay some of the tax credit debt and reappropriated $50 million from the Alaska Gasline Development Corp. to put toward education, public safety and road maintenance. We’ll see what they do with that.

**Mental Health Budget:** There was no reason this shouldn’t have passed during the regular session. It is being held hostage with the two other budget bills. This is an annual bill with no controversy, appropriating funds for the operating and capital expenses of the state’s integrated comprehensive mental health program.

**Oil and Gas Tax Credit Reform:** This issue has undergone extensive hearings and will require more expert testimony. Many legislators are concerned about increasing oil taxes at a time of low oil prices and production operating losses. The Senate has agreed to eliminate the “cashable credits,” and the House wants to increase taxes. Although some adjustments to the credits may be justified to help fill the fiscal gap, the question that must be answered is whether our sole focus is raising revenue for government or ensuring that Alaska has a business climate that supports and encourages private-sector activity.

**Permanent Fund Protection Act:** The House and the Senate are just $250 apart on this one.

**Broad-based Tax:** Late in the session, the Senate drew a line in the sand and voted down the House’s proposed income tax on working Alaskans. It believes that a judicious use of savings accompanied by cuts and a few revenue measures is a fiscal plan. There will be a new proposal on the table during this special session, possibly a statewide sales tax.

The Associated General Contractors of Alaska has said and continues to say that a Comprehensive Fiscal Plan needs be adopted to stabilize Alaska’s economy. The plan should be built on a restructure of the Permanent Fund...
(and dividend). It must also include a balance of new revenue (taxes) and further cuts to the operating budget. What constitutes a balance depends entirely on where you place the pivot point; as a former president said, it depends on what the meaning of “is” is. Any plan that imposes additional oil and gas production taxes and a state personal income tax (with at least 60 additional state employees in a mini Alaska IRS), combined with the failure to provide any cuts to the budget, is a Full Employment Act for Government. It is not a balance.

What they did accomplish:

REAL ID Act Compliance: This Legislation is necessary for state-issued identification to be used for civilians, including construction crews, to be admitted on military bases as well as facilitating Alaskans’ ability to travel by commercial aircraft. The legislation makes a compliant ID an option; if you’re willing to submit all the required personal information, you can get a compliant ID. If you don’t want to provide that information, you check the box for a basic driver’s license.

Transportation Network Companies: The Uber and Lyft bill. This bill clarifies an earlier ruling by the labor commissioner that drivers offering alternative transportation services are independent contractors and not employees, allowing services such as Uber and Lyft to operate in Alaska. Another step by Alaska into the 21st century.

Insurance for Dependents: With this legislation, the state will provide continuing health insurance for dependents of peace officers and firefighters who die in the line of duty. While mandatory at the state level, the Legislature did avoid an unfunded mandate by making it a local option. Conceptually it is a good thing to do, but it should have been done at the contract bargaining table. The Legislature gave up a valuable bargaining chip in upcoming labor negotiations with Public Safety Employee unions.

Next year, the Legislature should get around to other bills of interest to AGC. Workers Comp reform will have dueling bills — one from the administration and one from the Senate put together with assistance from a state Chamber subcommittee. We’ll be involved in a bill that will increase weekly unemployment insurance benefits, where the first-year costs are covered by a federal grant, and we know what happens when the grant goes away. There is also a bill extending the same warranty and lemon-law protection for mobile heavy equipment that is given to licensed vehicles, boats and ATVs.

Fortunately this year the Legislature didn’t pass:

Bad Bill of the Session No. 1 is one that does not solve our financial situation, and it certainly doesn’t strengthen the private sector. In fact, it hurts it. HB14 would require legislative approval for certain large-scale mines. By allowing politicians to overrule the decisions of professional technical staff working for the state and the federal government, it politicizes a process that’s been in place for decades. This legislation would add instability and uncertainty to the permitting process and make Alaska unattractive to investors.

Bad Bill of the Session No. 2 is a certain industry killer. HB 199, the Enhanced Fish Protection Act, is intended to protect any stream that is, or could be, a salmon stream. If you’re doing business around water, it affects you. A bridge over the Yukon River, a walkway near a salmon stream — no matter. You will either need an anadromous permit or an agency finding that this isn’t going to affect fish. This goes way beyond actually protecting fish; it appears to be clearly aimed at stopping development.

An important step in becoming a doctor, the Hippocratic oath is something medical students must take. One of the promises within that oath is, “First, do no harm.” It would be wise if we made legislators take a similar oath: “Do no harm.”

Meg Nordale and Regina Daniels are co-chairs of the AGC Legislative Committee. John MacKinnon is executive director of AGC.

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Discover how we can help you get your business on the road to success. Give us a call 907-777-4362 or 1-800-856-4362.
Jay Frawner, owner and president of Frawner Corp., never expected his company to reach such a high level of diversity when he started it 17 years ago, but his small road-bore operation expanded quickly after 2002 when he received funding through a Native American Aid program.

Shortly after its inception, Frawner Corp. picked up an array of general contracts for civil, mechanical and carpentry projects around Alaska. Frawner attributes his company’s development of full-service management to three main factors.

“I’ve surrounded myself with good, intelligent people,” Frawner said. “And we’ve taken a couple of risks here and there. Our diverse skill set keeps the ball rolling. It allows us to stay competitive.”

Frawner Corp. specializes in general and utility construction in addition to commercial and industrial mechanical, civil and trenchless technologies. Frawner has augmented his company’s capabilities by adding a fleet of heavy equipment, allowing it to complete much of its work in-house while keeping subcontracts at a minimum.

“When people ask what we do, it’s kind of hard to answer,” Frawner said. “We do a lot of things. We are not just a general contractor.”

Nick Hebnes, project manager for Frawner Corp., said the company’s unique talents are most apparent when it comes to trenchless technologies. Horizontal directional drilling is a steerable, trenchless method of installing underground pipes, conduits and cables with minimal impact on the adjacent area.

Depending on the environmental conditions, Frawner Corp. can bore up to 2,000 feet in length, with hole diameters ranging from 2 to 36 inches. Another method known as auger boring is ideal for areas that require specific grades and elevations of the bore in areas accessible only from one end of the bore.

The auger removes excavated material out the back of the bore pipe to create a clean bore for underground pipes and utilities. Trenchless technologies have a lot of advantages, especially when it comes to completing work with little disruption at a high-traffic job site.

“We were working on Northern Lights and...
Benson, west of Minnesota, on a water main,” Hebnes said. “And from ground level it looked like there was just this pit. No one really knew the complexity of the project.”

As with any kind of specialized technology, Hebnes admits there are challenges. While the impact to the environment is minimal, often Frawner is dealing with unknown elements. If workers hit an obstruction, they won’t know exactly how it could potentially affect the project until it has been dug up.

“There are often reasons for using trenchless technologies versus other methods,” Hebnes said. “So problems can be magnified anytime you go underground this way. However, the benefits often outweigh the risks in terms of less disruption to the environment and activities in the surrounding area.”

Innovative skills coupled with efficient equipment has resulted in a long list of successfully completed projects. Among the most notable, Hebnes said, have been the renovation and design-build projects for Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, and utility and sewer projects for Anchorage Water & Wastewater Utility.

From expanding living and working facilities at JBER to improving AWWU water infrastructure, Frawner Corp. has added to its solid reputation. Hazin Yunis, chief of project management for the JBER 673rd Civil Engineer Squadron, has worked with Frawner Corp. since the beginning; he said he is always willing to recommend its services, given its high-quality work.

“Frawner is easy to work with, very conscientious, pays attention to detail, insists on good workmanship and provides courtesy and respect for personnel and property, which contributed to successful projects on base,” Yunis said. “They know what the base wants.”

Frawner Corp. is slated to work on a vehicle barrier system for the JBER 673rd Civil Engineer Squadron this summer in addition to several projects with other JBER project managers. Frawner has 20 to 30 employees who work year-round, a number that rises to 45 at peak season.

Frawner Corp. has a member of AGC since 2005. Frawner said AGC membership provides important networking and educational opportunities that keep his company relevant, and his firm frequently takes advantage of services such as AGC’s online plans and participates in organizational events throughout the year.

As for the future, Hebnes is positive that Frawner Corp. can navigate the state’s economic changes.

“We aren’t cornered into a single type of work,” Hebnes said. “We have a lot of different irons in the fire between military and city contracts. We will be able to handle the ups and downs of our industry.”

Frawner said a successful business is as much about mental perspective as it is actual operations: “In order to run a successful business, you can’t run a business on fear.”

Rachael Kvapil is a freelance writer and photographer who lives in Fairbanks.

In addition to utility, carpentry and general building construction, Frawner Corp. specializes in industrial mechanical and mechanical work, with comprehensive experience in heating systems, domestic plumbing and mechanical piping.
Regulations that federal contractors need to know

Are you familiar with the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs, the laws it is responsible for and its federal contractor requirements? If your business has contracts with the federal government or you hope to become a federal contractor, you need to know what human resource laws and regulations you must follow. The following also apply to subcontractors of federal contractors.

I recommend you check out the OFCCP website at www.dol.gov/ofccp before you submit a bid or immediately after you have been awarded a bid. You should review your regulatory compliance and ensure you follow the requirements of this agency.

The Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs is responsible for ensuring that businesses with federal contracts of at least $10,000 do not discriminate and that they follow affirmative action laws in hiring.

Employers must:
• Develop a written affirmative action plan
• Create an internal auditing and reporting system
• Post notices of nondiscrimination and employees’ rights under OFCCP laws
• Retain employment records
• File an EEO-1 report with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
• Allow the OFCCP access to your records during a compliance audit or complaint investigation

Federal contractors are also required to take affirmative action to hire and promote qualified veterans. You must also file a Vets 100 report, which reflects your hiring statistics, if you received a federal contract of $25,000 or more before Dec. 1, 2003, or if you received a federal contract of $100,000 or more after Dec. 1, 2003.

If you receive a federal contract, there are more laws that pertain to wages and benefits you need to be aware of. Make sure you follow the applicable laws of your contract because you want to pay employees appropriately before you begin the work.

• **Davis-Bacon and Related Acts:** Requires the employer to pay employees under the contract no less than the locally prevailing wage and fringe benefits for equivalent work on similar jobs at the location. This applies to federal contractors with contracts over $2,000 for the construction, alteration or repair of public buildings or works.

• **McNamara-O’Hara Service Contract Act:** Requires the employer with a federal contract over $2,500 to pay employees no less than the prevailing wage and fringe benefits for the area or the rate of the predecessor’s collective bargaining agreement.

• **Walsh-Healey Public Contracts Act:** Sets the minimum wage, maximum hours and health and safety standards for work over $10,000 that involves the manufacturing or furnishing of materials, supplies, articles or equipment to the U.S. government or the District of Columbia.

• **Copeland Anti-Kickback Act:** Requires federal contractors to submit weekly reports of compliance. Federal contractors involved in building construction or repair are prevented from inducing employees to give up compensation they are entitled to under their employment agreement.

• **Executive Order 13201:** Requires federal contractors to provide a notice clause to employees requiring nonexempt federal contractors to post notices to employees informing them of their rights under federal law regarding union membership and the use of union fees. This clause must be included in government contracts for contracts below the Simplified Acquisition Threshold, currently $150,000.

There may be overlap between some of the wage and hour laws, so I strongly suggest you talk to your CPA, attorney or human resources professional before you begin a project.

Federal contractors were required as of September 2009 to begin using E-Verify to electronically verify the employment eligibility of their workforce. This falls under Executive Order 12989. The service is free and allows you to electronically confirm an employee’s legal working status.

If you are a federal contractor you must post the following posters in your break room or other location where employees will see them.

• **E-Verify Poster**
• **Right to Work Poster:** Must also be displayed in Spanish and English.

• **Drug-Free Workplace Act**
• **National Labor Relations Poster:** Must be 11-by-17 inches.

• **Walsh-Healey Public Service Contracts Poster:** Required by federal contractors with government service contracts of $2,500 or
more, or more than $10,000 if in
the manufacturing or furnishing of
materials industry.
• **American Recovery and Rein-
vestement Act Whistleblower
Rights Poster:** Required by em-
ployers receiving funding under
the ARRA.
• **Department of Defense Fraud
Hotline Poster:** Required by em-
ployers who have contracts with
the Department of Defense of
more than $5 million.
• **Department of Homeland Se-
curity Fraud Hotline Poster:**
Required by employers who have
contracts more than $5 million
using the DHS disaster relief funds
and must be posted in Spanish and
English.
• **Notice to Workers with Dis-
abilities/Special Minimum Wage
Poster:** Required by employers
who receive approval from the
Department of Labor to pay
disabled employees a special
minimum wage due to certain
physical or mental impairments.
• **Davis-Bacon Act Poster:** Re-
quired by contractors with any
federally funded construction
project for $2,000 or more for the
construction or repair of public
buildings or public works.
• **Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Construction
Poster:** Required by contrac-
tors working on federally funded
highway construction projects.

As you can tell, doing business with
the federal government requires the
employer to comply with many laws
and regulations. Your business needs
to implement an affirmative action
plan, if required. Post your job open-
ings with the appropriate state agency.
Document your recruitment efforts to
reach women, minorities, veterans and
individuals with disabilities with two
sources from each group. Institute an
applicant tracking system. Analyze pay
equity at least annually, and request
race, gender and veteran status of
current employees and new hires. You
may also need to comply with local
and state laws as part of the contract.

Federal contracts are increasingly
more complex from an HR perspec-
tive. Ensure you can pass a compliance
audit before you begin work, which
will save you hours of time and dollars
down the road.

This column provides information
about the law designed to help users
safely cope with their own legal needs.
However, legal information is not the same
as legal advice — the application of law
to an individual’s specific circumstances.
Although we go to great lengths to make
sure our information is accurate and useful,
we recommend you consult a lawyer if
you want professional assurance that our
information, and your interpretation of it,
are appropriate to your particular situation.

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Ever notice how the third lane of the southbound Seward Highway tapers into two lanes, just as the highway begins approaching its most congested access point, Dimond Boulevard?

Or, have you ever found yourself caught in a holiday-time queue of vehicles backing up onto the highway at the southbound Dimond exit?

Those annoyances will soon become a thing of the past.

Construction is underway on a $55.9 million, two-year project to widen the Seward Highway to three lanes in each direction between Dimond Boulevard and Dowling Road, to replace aging culverts to assist fish passage in Campbell Creek’s flows beneath the highway and to create new connections in areas east and west of the highway to provide alternate routes to the 50,000-plus-vehicle-per-day Dimond Boulevard-Abbott Road shopping district artery.

QAP is the contractor on the project.

“The purpose of this job is to increase capacity on the highway to relieve those pressures, delays and congestion,” said Chong Kim, the Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities’ project engineer for the Dimond-to-Dowling project.

Dimond-to-Dowling is the second of a three-phase project. The first phase involved revamping the

**HIGHWAY REVAMP UNDERWAY**

$55.9 million project adds alternate routes to busy shopping artery

By TRACY KALYTIAK
rarily divert the channel so the old culvert could be removed.

To make this process possible, the frontage roads — Brayton Drive on the east side of the highway, from Dimond to 68th Avenue, and Homer Drive on the west side of the highway, south of 68th Avenue — were closed, with detours funneling traffic onto the northbound highway at Lore Road and to local businesses on the east side via Sandlewood Place (which will be extended 1,000 feet to Lore to enable a connection to Meadow Street and then 72nd and 68th avenues) and on the west side via the Old Seward Highway. Storm drains were also installed.

The connectivity aspect of the project involved building an underpass connecting Lore Road with 76th Avenue, necessitating raising the highway 25 to 26 feet.

Enabling this to happen, traffic was shunted off the southbound highway onto Homer Drive just south of Dowling and then returned to the highway just north of Dimond. Then in early June, the same process took place on the northbound lanes of the highway, with traffic shunted onto Brayton Drive north of Dimond and back onto the highway just south of Dowling.

“My goal is to make sure people don’t feel it, that it’s a smooth transition,” Kim said, in early May, of moving highway flow onto and then off the frontage roads.

Next year, construction begins on roundabouts at Lore that will enable access to the highway. And, the frontage roads will be improved, with paving, striping and sidewalks being added.

“Seward will be over the top,” Butcher said of the new bridge. “Dowling is a double-car roundabout; this will be a single-car roundabout.”

An exit will eventually be added at 92nd Avenue, to offer another alternate in addition to the new Lore-76th connection.

“We’ve got to have traffic onto the Seward by Oct. 31, with traffic over the new bridge,” said Ray Butcher, QAP’s project supervisor. “Next year, Homer and Brayton will be reconstructed. 2019 will be touch-up stuff, landscaping.”

Butcher added that construction is expected to be complete by the end of June 2019.

Check AlaskaNavigator.org to see the updated status of the Dimond-to-Dowling project.

Tracy Kalytiak is a freelance writer who lives in Palmer.
With a state as big as ours, officials at the Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities have a plethora of road projects in progress this summer. If you travel through Alaska’s biggest city, especially south of Dowling Road, one goal seems to be clear: Connect Anchorage.

In an effort to improve east-west traffic flow, the DOT&PF is moving forward with its plan to connect more of Anchorage along the Seward Highway.

Starting this summer, the Seward Highway will be getting a facelift between Dowling and O’Malley roads. Between Dowling and Dimond Boulevard, the highway will widen to three lanes and an overpass will allow East 76th Avenue and Lore Road to connect under the highway. Frontage roads, sidewalks and bike paths will also receive upgrades.

Evidence of this $55.9 million project is obvious to most motorists. But a less-obvious and less-expensive project is happening just south of the Dimond Boulevard onramp to the Seward Highway.

What was once home to a rare chunk of undeveloped land — sitting between the New Seward Highway and Old Seward Highway south of Dimond — will now be a highway exit and onramp that the DOT&PF calls the 92nd Avenue interchange.

“It is part of a master plan to alleviate congestion and improve safety on the Seward Highway,” said Shannon McCarthy, the department’s public information officer.

West 92nd Avenue runs west-east mainly between C Street and where it dead-ends at railroad tracks. Just eastward at the Old Seward Highway, the corresponding street would be the smaller, lesser known Abbott Road. However, with the new interchange, the road connecting the Old Seward to New Seward will be called Scooter Avenue, McCarthy said.

The DOT&PF is working with Bristol Construction on Phase I of the $10 million, federally funded, 92nd Avenue (Scooter Avenue) and Academy Drive project. Bristol was awarded the bid in March 2016. The project started in May 2017 and should be completed by the end of June.

Phase II will raise the Seward Highway as an overpass above 92nd Avenue. Eventually, 92nd Avenue will connect to Academy Drive on the east side of the highway and to Vanguard Drive, which curves northward and
meets the larger, more well-known Abbott Road.

According to DOT&PF, this new artery will improve access between the Old Seward Highway/Dimond Boulevard commercial districts and the residential and commercial areas east of the Seward Highway. On the highway, ramps to and from the south will also provide lanes to exit and merge.

“The purpose of the new exit- and on-ramp locations is to better serve the community by providing more access in and out of the Dimond commercial district. The new exit and ramp give the public more options and alleviate traffic on the Dimond interchange,” McCarthy said.

Creating an exit- and on-ramp is no easy task. The first step is for the community to identify a need for one, McCarthy said.

“The need is communicated through the local community council or assembly to the DOT&PF area planner,” she added. “In the case of the 92nd Avenue ramp, the need was identified as part of a larger transportation needs study of the Anchorage Bowl back in the early 2000s to increase safety and capacity along the Seward Highway between 36th Avenue and Rabbit Creek.

“The project then competes for a spot and gets added to the State Transportation Improvements Program.”

Once the project is included in the STIP, McCarthy said, the DOT&PF process generates a more formal purpose and need with significant input from the local community and stakeholders. There’s an appropriate environmental analysis too, which is done to select a preferred alternative to the project’s footprint.

The preferred alternative is designed, advertised and constructed, McCarthy said. An open line of communication with the local community and stakeholders for last-minute concerns helps the finished project address the needs of the competing interests within the community.

In addition to taking public comments, another challenge with a project of this magnitude is heavy traffic. The Seward Highway is Anchorage’s main north-south corridor as well as a national highway system, connecting the city to the Glenn Highway and beyond.

“Having to accommodate traffic on one of the busiest corridors during construction near one of the most active commercial districts was definitely a challenge,” McCarthy said.

But thanks to DOT&PF, Bristol Construction and 27 subcontractors, the Seward Highway is on its way to connecting more of Anchorage.

Kevin Klott is a freelance writer who lives in Anchorage.
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▲ Dawson’s Ketchikan Water Street Bridge project in 1979 (top) and the current rehabilitation (bottom).

dawson.com
MEMBER PROFILE

A fraction of a second is all it takes to form a first impression about a person. The same could be true in the world of construction, especially while working with a contractor for the first time.

Tracy Vanairsdale of Bettisworth North Architects and Planners learned this quickly after working with Dawson Construction LLC on the Haines K-12 addition and remodel project in 2007. The $13.7 million project not only consolidated all grades into one building but also generated a mutual respect between Bettisworth North and Dawson Construction.

“That school was our first project together, and it was the beginning of a great relationship between our firms,” Vanairsdale said. “We have since done the Ketchikan Fire Station, the Ketchikan library, the Valdez middle school and the Skagway Public Safety Facility.”

Projects along Alaska’s coastal and outlying regions are Dawson Construction’s specialty. The company excels at the planning and logistics needed to coordinate transportation, materials, resources and subcontractors in these markets, said Pete Dawson of Dawson Construction LLC.

With 45-plus years of experience in Alaska and Washington, Dawson Construction has grown into one of the leading general contractors in the region.

The Dawson family legacy began in 1943 and spans three generations. Since it began, Dawson has grown to about 130 employees. With its primary market in Southeast Alaska, Dawson is managed and staffed out of Juneau with construction yards in Juneau and Ketchikan. The company has worked in other areas of Alaska and Northwest Washington. It even hopped across the Bering Strait to complete a project in Russia.

Current projects include a marine exchange in Juneau and a Water Street rehabilitation project in Ketchikan.

In Juneau, Dawson is also constructing the new vessel tracking facility, which is being built on a pile deck foundation. In Ketchikan, Dawson Construction crews began work in June 2016 on the removal and replacement of a trestle bridge for the Alaska Department of Transportation.

“This project has come full circle,” Dawson said, “as Dawson rebuilt this same bridge back in 1974.”

When asked what past projects the company is most proud of, Dawson highlighted these five:

• **Denali National Park Eielson Visitor Center:** The first LEED Platinum project in Alaska features various renewable energy strategies, making its remote location more sustainable (accessible by vehicles only from mid-May to mid-September).

• **Walter Soboleff Center (Sealaska Heritage Institute):** This beautiful cultural heritage center was constructed on a constricted site in busy downtown Juneau.

• **Gilson Middle School in Valdez:** Value engineering yielded $500,000 in savings, and the project was delivered four months ahead of schedule so students could begin the year in the new school.

• **Ketchikan Shipyard Improvements:** Multiple contracts were fast-tracked to deliver a modern ship production facility a full season early. The shipyard space can accommodate 95 percent of the marine vessels operating in the Southeast region.

The Ketchikan Shipyard Expansion started in 2010 and ended in 2013. Project manager Karl Reiche of the Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority said Dawson Construction participated in the design, providing plan reviews, cost estimates, value engineering recommendations and help with adjusting the overall project scope to fit within budget constraints.
**Haines Schools Replacement:**
Construction took place in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, which caused an escalation of construction prices nationwide. Dawson worked with the owner to ensure the project could be built within its budget, regardless of the construction price escalations.

Karl Reiche, a project manager for the Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority, worked closely with Dawson Construction on the $45 million Ketchikan Shipyard improvement project in 2010. He couldn't give enough praise for Dawson Construction's professionalism.

“DCI (Dawson Construction Inc.) worked well as a team member, along with the owner (AIDEA), the shipyard operator (Vigor Industrial) and the engineer (URS) to make the best use of project funds,” Reiche said. “DCI was able to deliver all phases while working in an active and congested shipyard.”

As the project manager, Reiche said he worked closely with Dawson Construction and would recommend the company to any business owner or public agency looking for a top-notch general contractor.

“DCI’s organization has many experienced and capable staff,” he said. “In particular, I extend thanks to Gary Hovde (DCI project manager) and Bob Dunbar (DCI superintendent) for making the project a success.

“Both Gary and Bob are experienced senior staff. The project benefited from their ability to run an efficient organization, pick capable subcontractors and suppliers, resolve issues, negotiate fairly and to commission a complex project.”

Dawson Construction Inc. recently restructured to become Dawson Construction LLC and is now under the joint ownership of several employees.

Working construction runs deep in the Dawson family.

It began with J.C. “Clint” Dawson, who was selected by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to help build a 90-mile stretch of the Alaska Highway near Skagway during World War II.

When Clint’s son, Jack Dawson, graduated high school, he joined his father as a jobsite laborer. In 1950, Jack worked his first project in King Salmon. Nine years later, he and Larry Strengholt founded a construction company in Alaska and Washington, but they eventually parted ways. After the split, Jack started Dawson Construction Co.

Pete Dawson, son of Jack Dawson, followed in the footsteps of his father and grandfather by working in the construction industry. Pete worked for companies outside the family business, but in 1997 he eventually transitioned into ownership of Dawson, which then became Dawson Construction Inc.

Dawson Construction takes pride in family, but it’s not the only thing.

“Dawson prides itself on being a customer service-oriented contractor, and we always strive to do the right thing on behalf of our clients,” Pete Dawson said.

This philosophy has resulted in never having a project end in litigation while under Pete Dawson’s leadership.

Dawson Construction has been an AGC member since 2014. Pete Dawson listed several benefits for members: excellent training and certification opportunities; lobbying on behalf of the industry and keeping members apprised of regulatory changes; helping create a common bond with peers to facilitate industry innovation and improvement; and offering resources and education to improve construction safety.

Not only is there strength in being AGC members but also strength within a company that takes pride in delivering an excellent project.

“We are a group of problem-solvers who push each other to constantly learn and improve,” Dawson said.

“Our people are experts at planning, logistics and problem-solving as a result of working primarily in remote and semi-remote regions.”

Kevin Klott is a freelance writer who lives in Anchorage.
Long lines. Flight delays. Ever-changing security regulations. It’s hard enough for passengers to negotiate the confusion of an airport. Now imagine you’re a construction company tasked with a major renovation of that facility — a renovation that must happen while the airport stays up and running, providing service to hundreds of passengers a day.

That was the challenge faced by Cornerstone General Contractors Inc., which was selected by Alaska Airlines for a $4.2 million renovation of its 12,500-square-foot terminal in Kodiak. As the airport’s busiest terminal, serving over 67,000 passengers in 2016, it was imperative that the Alaska Airlines terminal stay open while Cornerstone led its team of subcontractors through the renovation, which began in August 2016.

The project is part of the airline’s Alaska Facilities Reinvestment Program, a multiyear initiative aimed at improving the design and function of Alaska Airlines’ 11 facilities in the state.

Keeping the terminal operating while the airline maintained service, despite the construction, meant getting creative.

“We’re used to working in tight spaces, but this was a new element, being an occupied space as well,” said Cornerstone Field Engineer Wayne Flesch. “Somewhere in the neighborhood of about 500 people go through here a day.”

Cornerstone strategically sectored off small portions of the building, trying to focus its work on one section at a time. Anyone who has traveled through Kodiak’s Alaska Airlines terminal, though, knows the building was small, so construction crews had to complete their work in extremely constricted spaces.

Cornerstone’s team alleviated congestion by reaching out to neighboring businesses, which accommodated passengers by providing waiting areas during construction.

One of the biggest challenges turned out to be maintaining a functioning bathroom inside the facility for the duration of the project.

“The tight space wasn’t just hard on us but on the passengers too, so we tried to mitigate it the best we could,” Flesch said. Part of the solution was to work nights as often as possible.

“We also built the new bathrooms, which are in a new location, before we closed down the old ones,” added Joe Jolley, president of Cornerstone. “We focused on turning over the new spaces before we took away the old ones so the passengers weren’t as impacted by the construction.”

In addition to the passengers who pass through the terminal daily, Cornerstone juggled accommodating Alaska Airlines and Ravn Alaska, both
The new passenger check-in and ticketing area has new podiums and ample space for employees to efficiently transfer checked luggage to the baggage screening station.

of which operate out of that terminal, as well as the U.S. Department of Transportation and TSA. “Trying to renovate a functioning airport is quite a hurdle when you take into account all the IT, all the building systems, all the safety systems and ground-to-air radios that have to be 100 percent functional the whole time during construction,” Flesch said.

Despite those hurdles, the result is a complete overhaul. “When people walk in the building, nothing will be familiar,” Jolley said.

The renovation includes new bathrooms, new ceilings and walls, a new baggage carousel system for baggage return and full LED lighting. Cornerstone also upgraded and reconfigured the ticketing area, TSA passenger and baggage screening, hold rooms and other support areas.

“One of the most special-order products we used in this building was the flooring system,” Flesch said. “It’s a resin flooring application from Stonhard, and it’s actually quite the hurdle to place in a functioning space, but it’s nearly indestructible, and it’s got a nice, distinct wave pattern. It’s a very clean, easy-to-maintain flooring system.”

On the outside, new durable exterior paint in the airline’s colors was applied. A new ADA-compliant ramp and entry stairs, energy-efficient doors and windows, and new overhead doors in the cargo area were also installed.

Slated to be completed in May, the project recently underwent trenching for the placement of new fiber optic lines and a new power supply.

Major subcontractors include Midnight Sun Electric, Klebs Mechanical, Great Alaska Flooring Inc., Carl’s Drywall & Paint LLC, Elite Acoustics, B&R Fish By Products (civil), Five Star Airport Alliance Inc. and Stonhard Inc. Team partners include Alaska Airlines Kodiak, RSA Engineering Inc. and architect Jae Shin with KPB Architects.

“It was a challenging job but a fun project nonetheless,” said Brian Ginder, project manager. “The people of Kodiak have really been team players, taking it all in stride, especially the staff at the airport in Kodiak. They’re really second to none, really supportive of what we’re trying to do, and we’ve done our best to accommodate them. They’re stellar teammates.

“The work itself was really straightforward, but the element of keeping the facility open was the challenge, and those guys have been great in supporting us to do that.”

Jamey Bradbury is a freelance writer who lives in Anchorage.
A U.S. Air Force F-35 Lightning II from Hill Air Force Base, Utah, flies alongside a 100th Air Refueling Wing KC-135 Stratotanker during a flight to Estonia in April. The F-35s are participating in their first flying training deployment to Europe.

U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Christine Groening
As state capital budget dwindles, federal spending helps fill some of the gap

Alaska’s proposed capital budget for 2018 is $1.4 billion, less than half what the state worked with just five years ago. As the economy struggles and uneasy businesses are apparently hesitant to build new office or warehouse space, it’s little surprise that the construction industry is losing jobs.

However, one bright spot on the economic horizon is the more than two dozen federal military and defense contracts scheduled to be let in the next two years, most of them related to the new F-35 Lightning II aircraft set to bed down at Eielson Air Force Base.

While those contracts might hold some jobs in place, the job forecast for the industry remains grim. The state Department of Labor said construction industry jobs are down 900 from March 2016 to March 2017, and the trend is likely to continue, with 1,200 job losses estimated for 2017, on top of 1,500 jobs lost in 2016. According to the department, the total number of jobs is expected to decline from 17,700 to 15,000 by the end of 2017.

General contractors, engineering firms, architects — everyone — is scrambling to work on the pared-down list of state contracts, and there’s more competition for federal contracts, such as the $842 million to be awarded in fiscal years 2017 and 2018.

Millions of dollars for some

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Alaska District oversees the awarding of millions in military-related, civil and environmental projects each year in Alaska. Chris Tew, the Corps’ chief of the Contracting Division, says the 27 military-related projects planned for Alaska in the next few years are generating a lot of interest among contractors and will likely provide a boost in an otherwise slow market.

“Everyone is looking at Eielson,” said Neal Fried, an Alaska Department of Labor economist.

Most of the projects are related to a decision to locate two squadrons of F-35 Lightning II aircraft at Eielson Air Force Base by 2020. The decision means an influx of more than 2,700 people, about 1,500 in new military and civilian jobs and 1,200 more in military dependents, according to the Fairbanks North Star Borough.

The expansion means millions of dollars in new and renovated infrastructure at Eielson, from weather shelters and aircraft maintenance facilities to a new flight simulator building, dining hall and dormitory to accommodate the new Air Force personnel.

For Alaska contractors, the work provides a boost on several fronts. Tew said a percentage of the Corps’ Alaska District projects are reserved for bidders that fit a certain profile, such as businesses owned by a service-disabled veteran, by a woman or by owners who are socially or economically disadvantaged, such as minority-owned businesses.

One of the F-35 projects already in progress is a $7.8 million plan to build in-ground concrete shelters to house the missiles that F-35s use. The successful bidder was a joint venture between Anchorage-based Watterson Construction and Callahan Construction Co., based in Fairbanks. The business, owned by former Watterson employee Ben Callahan, qualifies as an 8(a) small business. Watterson said the joint venture is set up as a mentor-protégé contract, in which Watterson mentors Callahan and helps his company gain vital experience.

“He doesn’t have bonding capacity for the project, so we provide that, and we provide help and advice,” Watterson said.
Per the contract, Callahan’s company will do more than 40 percent of the fieldwork on the project. So, while Watterson will have some employees on the job, most employees will be Callahan’s.

Only two other contracts have been awarded: a $22 million F-35 flight simulator building at Eielson, which went to Watterson Construction, and a $33 million hangar for the nine “Grey Eagle” unmanned combat drones the U.S. Army said are destined for Fort Wainwright. Anchorage-based UNIT COMPANY was the successful bidder on that project.

The list of capital projects from the Corps’ Alaska District has the construction industry abuzz right now, but Tew said the overall amount being spent isn’t much more than what the Corps typically spends in Alaska in a year.

According to the Corps, 2007 marked the largest contracting year in the past decade. Just over $600 million was spent on contracts in that year, Tew said. About $464 million is projected to be spent in the 2017 fiscal year, which began in October 2016. That’s about $140 million more than was spent in 2016.

“This is all good work for industry,” said Tew, adding that the U.S. Air Force will likely bid around another $100 million in building renovations and upgrades, projects that are not included in the USACE list of capital projects but will nonetheless need to be completed before the F-35s arrive.

The project budget is expected to be lower in the 2018 fiscal year — $378 million is forecasted — but it’s expected to jump to $451 million the following year.

Tew has been traveling the state to give presentations to several groups and said he plans to continue giving at least quarterly talks to industry groups.

As for whether the effort to talk up the projects is paying off, Tew said it’s too early to tell. He said he has seen an uptick in interest from companies that have not previously bid on USACE projects, and his office has tried to adjust bidding rules to better accommodate these new players. On contracts in which past performance on similar projects is part of the bid, for example, Tew said the Corps has allowed contractors to include 10 years of relevant experience rather than its typical cutoff of five years.

“Pricing thus far has been very competitive, and it’s been very good for the taxpayer,” he said, citing the projects that have so far been let with a smaller dollar value attached.

Projects with a greater dollar value
might not see a lot more competition than they usually would as there are a limited number of general contractors in the state that can secure bonding for higher-value contracts.

**Long Range Discrimination Radar brings another boost**

Another bright spot in the construction industry is the Lockheed Martin project to build a Long Range Discrimination Radar for Alaska, along with a mission control facility at Clear Air Force Station near Nenana. The LRDR, as the project is called, updates the U.S. Missile Defense Agency’s current missile defense system to the tune of $784 million. The company estimates that more than $325 million will be spent in Alaska in the next six years.

Lockheed is developing the software for the new program. On its website, the company calls the new radar “the backbone of the Missile Defense Agency’s layered defense strategy to protect the U.S. homeland from ballistic missile attack.” Lockheed recently completed construction of a scaled testing facility in Moorestown, New Jersey, where the new radar system can be tested before construction begins on the LRDR Electronic Shelter at Clear. Lockheed says its crews will deploy to Alaska in late 2018.

Lockheed Martin media relations officials said the company has forged partnerships with the University of Alaska in advance of the work planned for Alaska. Partnering with ASRC, it held Alaska STEM Day at the University of Alaska Anchorage in September and established an agreement with the university to participate in Lockheed Martin’s facilities design review for the electronic shelter, as well as establishing job requisitions for engineering internships with the company.

Lockheed also established a quarterly LRDR newsletter for distribution to Alaska chambers of commerce and, in August, held Industry Day to establish contacts with Alaska supply chain members.

The company will rely on Alaska
improvements and utilities needed to deploy the camp were constructed last fall and the camp modules were fabricated and installed over the winter. The camp will be ready for occupancy July 1, and ASRC will operate it for five years, or as long as the Missile Defense Agency requests.

McAnally said he expects a workforce of between 15 and 20 people to operate the camp, from cooks and housekeepers to maintenance and front desk personnel and home office support personnel.

“It’s definitely a new opportunity for ASRC and the government to work together on this,” McAnally said. “They were for a cost-effective and practical way to house and feed a large workforce without having to build their own permanent facility at Clear.”

Building boom requires a temporary city

An estimated 350 workers are expected to be on site at Clear during the peak of the LRDR project, Tew said. But finding housing and accommodations at Clear or in nearby Anderson for that many workers is difficult, so the Corps and Missile Defense Agency are working with Arctic Slope Regional Corp.’s subsidiary ASRC Builders to construct a 320-room camp at the site.

“Our team has worked diligently to build a facility that offers comfort and privacy for the workforce — from recreation and fitness areas to single-status living quarters, we believe we have hit the mark,” said ASRC Builders’ project manager Patrick McAnally. “ASRC is proud to have an all-Alaskan workforce from start to finish on this project. Hiring locally is a priority for our company.”

The project is unique in that ASRC will own and operate the facility for the Corps and Missile Defense Agency for the duration of the LRDR project, which is expected to wrap up in 2021. McAnally said the camp was designed by Winchester Alaska Inc. and fabricated by Builders Choice Inc., a subsidiary of ASRC. The site improvements and utilities needed to deploy the camp were constructed last fall and the camp modules were fabricated and installed over the winter.

The camp will be ready for occupancy July 1, and ASRC will operate it for five years, or as long as the Missile Defense Agency requests. McAnally said he expects a workforce of between 15 and 20 people to operate the camp, from cooks and housekeepers to maintenance and front desk personnel and home office support personnel.

“It’s definitely a new opportunity for ASRC and the government to work together on this,” McAnally said. “They were for a cost-effective and practical way to house and feed a large workforce without having to build their own permanent facility at Clear.”

Being flexible, knowing your strengths and keeping a lean crew

For the contractors who aren’t lucky enough to win one of the military contracts, the keys to surviving...
the economic downturn seem to be three-fold: be flexible, know your strengths and don’t overhire.

For some companies, being flexible means being willing to work in other states. Last fall, Roger Hickel Contracting Inc. won a contract to build a new elementary school in Lake Stevens, Washington. Neeser Construction Inc., a company more well-known for innovative vertical construction projects such as the University of Alaska Anchorage School of Engineering and Industry, is doing more civil projects such as the $41 million Glenn Highway and Muldoon Road interchange in Anchorage.

Davis Constructors & Engineers is hoping to ride out the downturn by working on a few multiyear projects. The company is part of a joint venture with ASRC to build a new hospital in Bethel, a project with a budget of more than $225 million. Davis and Haskell Corp. are working together
on another multiyear project, at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, to upgrade the 50-year-old combined heat and power plant at the university. The total project cost for the upgrade is pegged at $245 million.

Meg Nordale, president of GHEMM Company in Fairbanks, said while her company has bid on some military contracts and may bid on more, not every project is a good fit — or is worth the considerable effort of bidding.

Design-build projects, for example, can be expensive to bid. A team of architects and engineers generally come up with a cohesive project design as part of the bid, a process that takes much time and effort.

Nordale said GHEMM Company’s strategy is to stay lean and stick to its base. The company runs a tight ship when it comes to full-time employees, hiring out union workers for its jobs.

“I think we’re all having to work a little harder, and we’re all having to learn to live with a little less,” she said.

GHEMM typically operates with about a 50/50 split between private and public work, though in the current climate, she said, it’s skewing toward more public work — and is seeing a lot of competition.

A recent project GHEMM Company bid on from the Fairbanks North Star Borough had 10 general contractors vying for the project. In a normal year, she estimated five generals would have bid the project.

Rustin Krafft, purchasing officer for the Mat-Su Borough, said he’s seeing a similar situation. More bidders — some of them new to bidding at the borough level — competing for work, and the resulting contracts have generally been below the engineer’s estimate.

“We’re getting a lot more value for the dollar right now,” Krafft said.

Rindi White is a writer for MARCOA Media Alaska.
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Presentations from Lockheed Martin, Arctic Slope Regional Corporation Federal and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers were well attended. The three organizations are working together on the Long Range Discrimination Radar project at Clear Air Force Station.

Pratt said she sees several recurring problems for companies new to contracting. One common problem is simply not meeting minimum requirements, such as being registered in the federal database System for Award Management (or SAM), or having a Data Universal Numbering System (or DUNS) number, which is needed to establish a business credit file with the government.

Another common problem is that businesses don’t expect the government payment cycle, which can be significantly longer than commercial business cycles – think 90 days versus 30 days. And if an error is made in the invoice, the process can take longer, even if the error is not the fault of the contractor.

A third common problem, she said, is that businesses may overestimate their ability to perform the task. Like most problems, this issue is generally avoidable if the company keeps an open line of communication with its contracting officer.

“Sometimes a company gets scared, or they’re trying to backpedal and cover up what their challenges are. In many cases, these can be resolved by contacting their contract officer,” she said.

PTAC is holding monthly workshops titled “Are You Ready If Opportunity Knocks?” in Fairbanks through the fall. The workshops are every second Thursday at the Alaska PTAC office at 3750 Bonita St. in Fairbanks.

Nancy Porzio, the Small Business Administration Alaska District director, said her office is also seeing an increase in interest in federal contracting and is hearing from businesses new to federal contracting. Her office works to help them with the basics and steers them toward other programs that might be helpful.

(Continued on page 44)
construct a 25,058-square-foot facility and a 1,786-square-foot fill stand. Award is expected in January 2018 with a projected value of between $13 million and $18 million.

- **Operations Support Squadron/Weapons/Intel Facility:** This design-build project would construct a 12,141-square-foot facility. Award is expected in January 2018 with a projected value of between $6 million and $10 million.

- **Satellite Dining Facility:** This design-build project would construct a 4,703-square-foot facility. Award is expected in January 2018 with a projected value of between $5 million and $7 million.

- **Repair Central Heat and Power Plant Boiler (Phase 3):** This design-bid-build project has a projected value of between $22 million and $32 million. Award is expected in January 2018.

- **Consolidated Munitions Admin Facility:** This design-build project would construct a 21,000-square-foot facility. Award is expected in February 2018, with a projected value of between $15 million and $22 million.

- **South Loop Utilidor:** This design-bid-build project would construct a new utilidor to the south loop with steam, condensate and water. Award is expected in 2018, with a projected value of between $25 million and $35 million.

- **Fuel Truck Covered Parking South Loop:** This design-build project would construct a six-bay, 5,801-square-foot shelter. Award is expected in March 2018 with a projected value of between $5 million and $10 million.

- **Renovations for a Conventional Munitions Facility:** This design-bid-build project would add all 1,258 square feet and alter 1,076 square feet of Building 6385 with a projected value of between $2 million and $3 million. Award is expected in April 2018.
(Continued from page 42)

“They need to know about bonding,” Porzio said of new businesses seeking to get into federal contracting. SBA promotes a surety bond guarantee program to assist small businesses.

“They need financing,” she said. SBA offers financing to businesses through the 7(a) Guaranteed Loan Program that works in partnership with local lenders.

“We fund all aspects of a business operation to include working capital. That is critical when a company is seeking contracts,” Porzio said. “And one of the critical areas that we focus on these days is having mentors.”

The SBA has a new mentor-protege program for any firm that qualifies as a small business, she said. Having the help of a company that has been through the contracting process can make a huge difference to a new business or a business new to government contracting.

For companies that qualify under the minority-owned or other 8(a) rules, SBA’s 8(a) Business Development Program can be a useful tool. It’s a nine-year program in which a business meets regularly with SBA specialists who perform regular checks on numerous aspects of their business, from making sure employees are treated well to checking that the business has filed appropriate taxes.

“We’ve been pretty successful helping these businesses get off to a good start. We do see, when they go through the 8(a) program and get into contracting, their success rate goes sky high,” Porzio said.

SBA offers monthly 8(a) orientation classes on the third Wednesday of each month. It also offers a “First Friday” workshop series the first Friday of each month with various topics. Both are held at the SBA Alaska office at 420 L St., Suite 300 in Anchorage.

For more information on the programs and services of the SBA, visit its website at www.sba.gov/ak.

Rindi White is a writer for MARCOA Media Alaska.

• **Hangar/Squad Operations/Aircraft Maintenance Unit:** This design-bid-build project would construct a two-bay hangar with additional room for squadron operations and aircraft maintenance. Award is expected in February 2018 with projected value of between $30 million and $40 million.

• **Missile Maintenance Facility:** This is a design-bid-build project to construct an 11,300-square-foot facility. Award is expected in April 2018 with projected value of between $5 million and $10 million.

• **Aircraft Weather Shelter:** This design-bid-build project will construct an 81,700-square-foot, 16-bay shelter for Squad 2. Award is expected in May 2018 with projected value of between $50 million and $65 million.

**Long-Range Discrimination Radar program**

• **Mission Control Facility at Clear Air Force Station:** This project will build a Mission Control Facility larger than 50,000 square feet, with operations and maintenance space, utilities for the radar system and environmentally controlled equipment areas. A joint venture between UNIT COMPANY and ASRC Builders LLC was awarded the contract, with a bid of $112.9 million.

• **Shelter Foundation:** This design-bid-build facility would build a 24,000-square-foot, reinforced concrete foundation that is protected from High Altitude Electromagnetic Pulses (HEMP) on which Lockheed Martin can build its LRDR equipment shelter and radar arrays. Award is expected in July with projected value of between $5 million and $10 million.

• **Fire Station at Clear Air Force Station:** This design-bid-build project would construct a fire station with four drive-through vehicle bays, an alarm and communications room, fire detection and suppression systems and other standard features. Award is expected in October with projected value of between $7 million and $14 million.

• **LRDR Power Plant:** This design-bid-build project would build a power plant at Clear, valued at between $80 million and $120 million. Award is expected in October 2018.

• **LRDR Vehicle Maintenance Facility:** This design-bid-build project would construct a vehicle maintenance facility and do final site work. Award is expected in July 2019, with a projected value of between $9 million and $14 million.

**Other U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – Alaska District military projects**

• **Missile Defense Switch Gear Facility at Fort Greely:** This project would construct a shielded switchgear facility to support the two existing In-Flight Interceptor Communications System Data Terminals. Award is expected to be bid at any time. The projected value is between $5 million and $8 million.

• **Construct truck off-load facility at Joint Base Eielson-Richardson:** This project would build a loading facility with expected value of between $2 million and $4 million. Award is expected at any time.

• **Unmanned Aircraft System Hangar at Fort Wainwright:** This project would construct a cold-climate operations and maintenance hangar with shops, special foundations, taxiways, aircraft aprons and organizational parking. The projected value is between $30 million and $40 million, and award is expected at any time.

• **Airborne Warning and Control System at JBER:** This project would upgrade the JBER AWACS Alert hangar to house aircraft maintenance, squadron operations and air crew quarters in the same facility. Award is expected at any time; projected value is between $20 million and $30 million.
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Early May was a record-breaker for Haskell Corp. and Davis Constructors & Engineers Inc. (commonly known as Haskell-Davis Joint Venture). It may have even been a record for Fairbanks. Haskell-Davis was scheduled to pour 2,138 cubic yards of concrete in an 80-by-80-foot square, 9.5 feet thick, in preparation for the final stages of the University of Alaska Fairbanks power plant upgrades set for completion in 2018.

“We are hiring every available concrete truck in the city in addition to bringing up a few from Anchorage,” Davis project manager Jed Shandy said.

Mike Ruckhaus, senior project manager for UAF Design and Construction, estimates it will take 207 truckloads of concrete to build the foundation, which will support the ash storage silo on campus. However, this is just a fraction of what has already been accomplished on the two-year project that will ultimately cut emissions and increase efficiency of the campus power plant.

“As of the end of April, we are about 40 percent finished,” Ruckhaus said. “Soon we will increase the workforce by 20 percent and keep rolling through summer.”

The plant upgrades include a new facility adjacent to the existing Atkinson Heat and Power Plant that houses a new circulating fluidized bed boiler to replace the two existing coal-fired stoker boilers. It will also house a new steam turbine that will transform the output from high-pressure steam to electricity and low-pressure steam for building heat loads.

The new CFB boiler can burn solid fuels (coal and biomass) mixed with limestone. Air flows through the boiler, allowing the fuel to burn while moving fluidly on a bed of sand. The result is a reduction of

By RACHAEL KVAPIL.
PM2.5 pollutants, the tiny particles that are a significant health concern to Fairbanks, and 20 percent more energy efficiency.

The power plant is key to day-to-day operations on campus, providing electricity, heat and cooling for about 3 million square feet of space. UAF had been planning upgrades for about 10 years before breaking ground two years ago. Since then a majority of the foundations have been poured, the main boiler island is structurally complete and about three-quarters of the exterior envelope has been completed. A bridge has also been built between the existing plant and new facility, and the steam turbine generator has been installed.

“We’re holding to schedule despite some delays in our steel delivery,” Ruckhaus said.

Shandy added that crews chose to work extra hours to ensure the project finished on time.

The $245 million project saw some minor changes to its scope, such as methods for tapping into the university’s water line and increases in size to the overall structures. However, Shandy said these changes have not significantly affected the cost.

“We are going to use every bit of the budget,” he said. “But we are doing well for a project that was estimated three years ago based on preliminary designs.”

Circulating fluidized bed technology has been around for almost 40 years, developed shortly after the construction of the Atkinson Building. The existing boilers’ two auxiliary boilers, one of which burns oil and the other, both oil and gas, will remain as backup. Prior to upgrades, the university would have to switch to oil-fired heat and electricity as backup, which could add as much as $20 million per year to power and heating costs.

Shandy estimates that the new plant will be mechanically complete by June 1, 2018. At that time, UAF will start a six-month commissioning process, when staff will be trained and everything tested and fine-tuned to meet efficiency standards.

“It’s going to be a really long startup before we turn over the keys at the end of November,” Shandy said. “After that it should be a highly automated process.”

Ruckhaus said that Haskell/Davis has done well in integrating all aspects and entities involved in this project. Though there will be some traffic delays along Alumni Drive during the spring concrete pour, he said there has been minimal impact to the area.

Rachael Kvapil is a freelance writer and photographer who lives in Fairbanks.
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How employers can deal with relaxed marijuana laws

By BRENNEN PORTALSKI, C-SAPA
Beacon Occupational Health and Safety Services Inc.

W ith recreational marijuana now legal in Alaska, its use is on the rise and so are the numbers of positive workplace drug test results for marijuana.

Although it has been several years since these laws went into effect, there is still a lot of confusion between employers and employees. The marijuana laws are also affecting employers and their recruitment and retention of employees. More and more we are hearing that it is difficult for employers to hire new employees because they are testing positive for marijuana.

So if you’re an employer looking to maintain a drug-free workplace program, how do you deal with this issue? Removing marijuana from a drug test panel to accommodate employees isn’t a good idea, and it’s not even an option for employers hiring employees into Department of Transportation-regulated positions.

There’s no doubt that this is a difficult time for employers, but there are ways that you can overcome these challenges that you need to know about.

Communicate drug-free expectations in job postings

First, let’s talk about job postings. The job posting is a critical part of the hiring process. You want to ensure that you hire the most qualified candidate for the position as well as one who will comply with your workplace policies. Whether your job postings state something along the lines of, “The possession, use, consumption and/or distribution of drugs in our workplace is strictly prohibited,” “All prospective employees will be required to pass a pre-employment drug test before beginning work,” “This is a drug-free workplace” or all of the above, including this language will help ensure that the applicants you appeal to are well aware of your drug-free workplace policy.

This necessary language in job postings will help reduce the number of applicants who test positive for marijuana and thus reduce your overall costs for pre-employment drug tests. When moving into the interview process, ensure the applicants are aware they must pass a drug test, including marijuana, before beginning work.

Ignorance isn’t bliss; educate employees

The next and possibly the most important step is employee education. Drug and alcohol awareness is a requirement for employees who work in certain industries. Also, an important part of keeping your business drug-free is educating employees about your company policies. Make sure that when onboarding new employees, you distribute and review your drug-free workplace policy with the employee, answer any questions about the policy and have the employee and a witness sign an acknowledgement of receipt and understanding of the policy. The acknowledgement helps protect employers from claims that the employee was unaware he or she would be tested for marijuana and other drugs or alcohol.

Consistency in enforcing the policy also helps prevent employees from using marijuana or other drugs. When applicants or employees are sent for pre-employment, random, post-accident and other reasons for drug tests, it maintains awareness among the workforce. In fact, drug testing is one of the biggest deterrents of employees using drugs, and the policy must be enforced consistently.

Offer work-sponsored activities

Maintaining awareness, educating employees and enforcing a consistent policy is often enough to prevent most
employees from using drugs, but when it’s not enough, what can be done?

Unfortunately, drug use is a problem in our society, and there are certain circumstances when, even after implementing barriers to prevent the use, it continues to occur. As an employer, you have the right and responsibility to maintain a drug-free workplace, but on the other hand, there is only so much that you can do.

Offering extracurricular activities such as workplace fitness challenges, summer recreational sports teams or other team-building activities in addition to the established policy and barriers can also help prevent drug use. But if an employee has a problem with marijuana, other drugs or even alcohol, it is important for employers to provide resources to help. Employee Assistance Programs offer assistance for employees who self-disclose, have a positive result or refuse a drug test.

EAPs can offer referrals for employees to get assistance with substance abuse issues and further training and education for employees. Employers that hire employees into DOT-covered positions are required to have an EAP in place, and for those employers with nonregulated testing programs, it is a great resource for helping maintain a drug-free workplace program.

Understanding the issues surrounding marijuana, hiring and employee retention is key for employers with drug-free workplace programs, and knowing how to address these issues is imperative. It is safe to say that times are challenging and can even be a bit confusing when it comes to hiring.

To maintain a drug-free workplace, make sure that prospective and current employees are aware of the issues, they are continuously updated and educated on the issues and they are given options and resources for additional assistance.

Taking these steps will help with the recruiting and employee-retention process, cut down on costs and time spent on recruiting and training, and help maintain a drug-free workplace.
The U-Med district continues to grow with the area’s newest project: the Alaska Pacific Medical Center, a 35,000-square-foot structural steel brace frame core and shell building. The design-build team, led by Pfeffer Development, completed construction on the $15.5 million project this year.

“The building is on a ground lease on Alaska Pacific University Endowment Lands, which generates income to support the operation of the university,” said Bob O’Neill, director of project management at Pfeffer Development. “We were excited to help the university while also providing a great new location for medical practices in Anchorage.”

The Medical Center, which broke ground in March 2016, is the first project under an agreement between APU and U-Land LLC, the latter created solely to develop APU lands to create long-term income for the university.

Pfeffer Development chose Criterion General Inc. as the general contractor for its design-build team, asking Criterion to participate from the concept phase and throughout design- and cost-development stages and construction. KPB Architects was the architect for the project.

“Criterion has been our design builder on a number of projects over the last several years,” O’Neill said. “Criterion has worked well with us to establish fixed budgets early in the design process. They then manage the design and construction process to meet those fixed budgets every time. Criterion has also met or bettered every project schedule to date. We continue to be impressed with Criterion’s on-time, on-budget delivery of high-quality buildings for us and our clients.”

“We establish a budget, we manage the project to the budget and we work hard to come in under,” Criterion president Dave DeRoberts said.

With the issue of available land solved under the APU/U-Land agreement, Criterion nevertheless faced a location-related problem. The site was known to straddle the edge of an old dumpsite, which was assumed to contain unsuitable fill and debris.

“We found concrete, asphalt and posts and netting of an old tennis court buried 22 feet, all of which had to be removed to install the foundation,” said DeRoberts. The debris had to be trucked to the landfill.

“Criterion was able to perform a geotechnical site investigation including soil borings, multiple test
pits and trenches to clearly define the subsurface conditions very early in the design process,” O’Neill said.

“Excavating the complete dump-site wasn’t going to be cost-effective,” DeRoberts said. “We were able to slide the building as much as we could to limit the excavation, saving the owner that cost, ultimately.”

Criterion also worked to complete the building’s shell and the third-floor space a week ahead of schedule to allow the location’s anchor tenant, Denali OB-GYN Clinic, to move in before its lease at its previous location expired. The clinic was a full floor, 11,863-square-foot tenant improvement design by RIM Architects that includes 24 nurses’ stations, 20 exam rooms, two specialty exam rooms, two ultrasound rooms, a lab, sterilization, a conference room, a break room and energy-efficient mechanical and electric systems.

The first floor is leased, and 12,000 more square feet are available on the second.

“The building was designed to be a very efficient medical office building,” O’Neill said. “The sidewalks, drop-off area and handicapped parking spaces are heated for snow melt. Employee parking is located across the street so patients and their families can easily park close to the building entry.”

A glass lobby with seating areas and covered outdoor seating also allows for convenient patient pickup. The project includes exterior terracotta wall panels; high-performance, energy-efficient exterior glass; two elevators; and highly efficient, high-quality mechanical systems to maintain the comfort of patients and staff.


Jamey Bradbury is a freelance writer who lives in Anchorage.
**WORK ZONE SAFETY**

**HEADS UP IN SUMMER CONSTRUCTION CORRIDORS**

Summer marks another big season for work on highways and bridge construction as the Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities continues to resurface highways, widen shoulders, add passing lanes and rest areas and make safety upgrades on roadways across the state. Commercial construction projects in Anchorage, Mat-Su, Fairbanks and around the state increase the alertness and caution required of motorists who drive through construction work zones.

For the next few months motorists will be sharing Alaska roads with flaggers, construction workers and heavy equipment. Sometimes traffic will be restricted to one lane. Sometimes pilot cars will lead long one-way caravans through busy construction areas. Motorists are advised to build in extra time for driving through work zones. Reducing speeds and heeding warning signs will help ensure your trips are safer while lowering the risk of injury to construction workers.

Upgrades, repairs and maintenance are scheduled from Homer to the Matanuska-Susitna valleys, the DOT&PF’s Central Region; and on northward from the Mat-Su to Tanana, Fairbanks and the Dalton Highway to Prudhoe Bay, the Northern Region.

In Anchorage, for instance, flaggers will be protecting crews working on the new diverging diamond interchange at the Glenn Highway and Muldoon Road; about 4 miles of the Parks Highway from Church Road to Pittman Road (MP 44.5 to 48.8) will go from two-lane to four-lane with a new bridge at MP 46.5 and continuous lighting and new signals at four locations; and the Richardson Highway will see 11 miles of lane restrictions, flagging, pilot car operations, gravel, and truck crossings during resurfacing from MP 24 to MP 35. Travelers can go to www.dot.alaska.gov/regions-portal.shtml to check their routes in advance for construction and possible delays.

This year’s National Work Zone Awareness Week (April 3-7), under sponsorship by the American Traffic Safety Services Association (“Safer Roads Save Lives”), kicked off the highway construction season.

Speeding and distracted driving are the biggest causes of work-zone wrecks, with rear-end crashes the most common. The Federal Highway Administration’s most recent “Work Zone Safety for Drivers” brochure (2014) noted:

- Of the 4,400 people who died in work-zone crashes over five years, 85 percent of them were drivers or passengers, and 200,000 more people were injured.
- Summer and fall are the most dangerous because these busiest construction months coincide with the busiest travel months.
- In 2014, 669 people were killed in work zones nationwide.
- Speed is lethal: Most of the fatal work-zone wrecks took place on roads where the speed limit was over 50 mph.
- Vehicles can’t stop instantly. At 50 mph, it takes:
  - Dry road, 300 feet
  - Wet road, 400 feet
  - A loaded 80,000-pound tractor-trailer rig takes almost 50 percent more distance to stop
  - Higher speeds don’t save much time; it takes just 25 seconds more to travel a mile at 45 mph than at 65 mph

New driving patterns

Drivers accustomed to old routes may suddenly encounter something unexpected in a work zone: different traffic patterns, narrow or closed lanes, traffic slowdowns, and construction equipment and workers. Caution and vigilance are the keys to safety. Slow down and pay attention to signs, cones and flaggers to avoid damage to vehicles and expensive construction equipment, prevent injuries and save lives. Remember: Traffic fines double in work zones.

In 2016, 39 percent of highway contractors nationwide reported that motor vehicles had crashed in their construction work zones during the previous 12 months, the Associated General Contractors of America said. These crashes were far more likely to injure drivers or passengers.
(44 percent) or kill them (12 percent) than construction workers. But those in the hard hats were at risk too — 18 percent of the crashes injured a work crew member, and 6 percent ended with a fatality. Motorists can improve their odds by slowing down and paying attention; work crews can do the same with proper use of safety gear and safe practices when they’re on the job.

**Motorists hold the key to safety**

When it comes to what’s important for highway safety, drivers are No. 1. Those behind the wheel should be cautious, keep an eye on the speedometer and watch for sudden stops or changes in traffic.

The list of causes contributing to road construction-zone wrecks includes speeding; distractions like texting, cell phone use or twiddling with the radio or some other gadget; weariness; inattention; and aggressive driving. Don’t tailgate! Keep healthy space between you and the next vehicle to avoid rear-end collisions. An alert driver who’s watching for signs, not exceeding the posted speed limit and paying attention to changing traffic patterns keeps everyone safer. As the ATSSA puts it, “Don’t Be THAT Driver. Work on Safety. Get Home Safely. Every Day.”

Work-zone accidents also can force temporary construction shutdowns, seriously affecting road completion schedules and costs. In May 2016, 77 percent of the 870 contractors responding to the Associated General Contractors’ survey believed motor vehicle crashes in construction zones were a greater risk than they were a decade ago; 82 percent thought stricter enforcement of existing laws would reduce the number of these crashes, injuries and deaths.

**Plan, don’t fume**

Drivers should plan ahead and leave a little earlier than usual when they know they’ll be traveling through a work zone. Work-zone delays can be frustrating, but being patient during those few extra minutes will get you where you’re going safely.

Keep up with Alaska roadway conditions with these resources:
• ADOT&PF posts weekly updates of construction areas and how drivers will be affected at www.alaskanavigator.org.
• The Alaska 511 system provides information on statewide road conditions including road closures, emergency and weather alerts. Call 511 or go to 511.alaska.gov, alaska511 on Twitter, or www.facebook.com/Alaska511.

The Associated General Contractors of Alaska urge all motorists to stay vigilant, slow down and exercise caution when driving through work zones, and obey signs and flaggers’ instructions. Everyone on the road shares responsibility for keeping work zones safe — motorists, bicyclists, pedestrians and construction workers alike.

### TIPS FOR DRIVING IN WORK ZONES

By driving safely in work zones, motorists can help make sure everyone gets home safely.

- **Expect the unexpected:** Things may change overnight. Normal speed limits may be reduced, traffic lanes may be closed, narrowed or shifted, and people may be working on or near the road.
- **Don’t speed:** Speeding is one of the major causes of work zone crashes; obey posted speed limits.
- **Don’t tailgate:** Keep a safe distance between you and the car ahead of you and the construction workers and their equipment. Rear-end collisions account for almost 40 percent of work zone crashes.
- **Obey road crew flaggers and signs:** Flaggers and warning signs are there to help traffic move safely through the work zone.
- **Stay alert and minimize distractions:** Dedicate your full attention to the roadway and avoid changing radio stations or using cellphones and other electronic devices while approaching and driving in a work zone. It is illegal in Alaska to text while driving.
- **Keep up with the traffic flow:** Do not slow down to “gawk” at road work.
- **Know before you go:** Check radio, TV and websites for traffic information and schedule enough time to drive safely. Expect delays and leave early so you can reach your destination on time.
- **Be patient and stay calm:** Work zones aren’t there to inconvenience you. Remember, the work zone crew members are there to improve the road and make your future drive better.
- **Wear your seatbelt:** It is your best defense in a crash. In Alaska, drivers and passengers alike must be buckled up, and children must wear seat belts or, if younger, be strapped into car seats or booster seats.

**REMEMBER — Dads, sons, brothers, moms, sisters and daughters work here!**

*Source: Federal Highway Administration*
Several hundred people gave up their shoes on a recent spring Saturday to walk around downtown Anchorage — not for fun but to draw attention to a growing problem in Alaska.

The Barefoot Mile is a 1-mile barefoot walk to raise awareness about human trafficking and to walk in solidarity with impoverished children who are most vulnerable to trafficking.

Davis Constructors & Engineers Inc. partnered with Joy International, Priceless Alaska, MyHouse and Covenant House to present the first Anchorage Barefoot Mile fundraiser. The event took place May 20
at Town Square Park in Anchorage — and reached its goal of over $200,000. Davis Constructors & Engineers provided initial matching funds of $50,000.

Half the money raised from the Anchorage event went to Joy International, an organization that fights human trafficking globally. The remainder went to Priceless Alaska and two nonprofits that serve homeless youths, Covenant House in Anchorage and MyHouse in Wasilla.

Human trafficking is the fastest-growing crime in the world and is an annual $150 billion industry.

Two million children are exploited every year in the international commercial sex trade. Between 14,500 and 17,500 people are trafficked in the U.S. each year.

In Alaska, human trafficking is also considered one of the fastest-growing crimes, with homeless youths especially vulnerable. A study released by Covenant House Alaska this year shows that at least one in four homeless youths in Anchorage said they were victims of human trafficking.

The Barefoot Mile is a reminder of how a community can be effective in supporting this common goal.

Sharon Stockard is managing editor of The Alaska Contractor.
It’s been almost a decade in the making, but the Mt. Edgecumbe High School Aquatic Center in Sitka is under construction and scheduled for completion in December.

Anchorage-based Cornerstone General Contractors broke ground on the $26.9 million project in July 2016. That’s six years after funding was procured through two appropriations from the state when Alaskans voted to funnel state funds toward large construction projects in schools, libraries and research and learning institutions, according to Travis Miller, Department of Transportation & Public Facilities project manager.

State Sen. Bert Stedman, who represents Southeast Alaska, was instrumental in obtaining those funds and has supported the project throughout the state’s economic roller coaster.

“My staff and I have worked hard to get this project over every obstacle thrown our way and across the finish line,” Stedman said by email. “This pool has been stuck in the mud a couple of times, and we just kept prying it out,

Still in its early stages, this room will contain an eight-lane swimming pool with diving boards, a water slide and seating for 300 spectators.

Cornerstone General Contractors Inc. workers remained on the job all winter in Sitka to erect the 31,650-square-foot facility. The aquatic center is being built on the site of a former World War II powerhouse.
so I am very glad to see construction nearing completion.

“The biggest remaining hurdle is the operating costs,” Stedman said. “If it was in Anchorage, it would have been built very quickly after the bond package was approved in 2010. We’ll work through the operating cost issue and get this pool open for the kids.”

Miller said operating costs, estimated at $583,000 annually, are expected to be paid by the state and potential user fees.

**Design changes**

Budget constraints dictated design changes.

The project was downsized from a 50-meter Olympic-size pool to an eight-lane 25-yard competition pool with an adjacent diving well, therapeutic/kiddie pool and seating for 300 spectators, Miller said.

“The diving well can be used to create a four-lane 25-meter race course,” Miller said. “The diving well will include two 3-meter diving boards, a drop slide, a climbing wall, a climbing rope and a winch for supporting cages used in deep water rescue training, including storage for the Alaska State Troopers and Coast Guard training gear.”

That’s great news for the 430 students at the 70-year-old boarding school, many of whom are Alaska Native youngsters who hail from small villages across the state where pool access is not available.

Mt. Edgecumbe School Director/Superintendent Janelle Vanasse said that students have been heavily involved in identifying their priorities for using the pool and providing input on planning.

“Instruction is our first priority. We hope to provide many students their first chance at swim lessons,” Vanasse said. “We also hope to host specialized trainings like cold water survival and lifeguard training. These have tremendous potential to impact not only our students but the communities they live in.”

“Additionally, the facility will serve as a training base for the Alaska State Troopers and U.S. Coast Guard,” Miller said. “The facility will provide a venue for both organizations to train their staff in a variety of swimming-related challenges: subduing suspects near/in water, deep water rescue and creating other water obstacles.”

Sitka’s public will also have access to the pool. A six-lane pool built in 1968 at Blatchley Middle School is currently the only pool available to residents of the coastal city.

**Construction hurdles**

As with many Alaska construction projects, the aquatic center was not without its unique challenges.

The 31,650-square-foot facility is near Mt. Edgecumbe High School on the site of an old 2 million-gallon fuel tank. Soil contaminated with petroleum, oil and lubricants became Cornerstone’s first obstacle to resolve.

“The original plan was to excavate a pit under the new parking lot area to accept approximately 1,500 cubic yards of contaminated fill encapsulated in a sealed liner similar to a giant burrito,”
Cornerstone superintendent Keenan Quirk said.

But when the amount of petroleum, oil and lubricants fill material was found to be beyond expectations, Plan B went into effect.

“We prepared another site (Millerville) under the guidance from the environmental consultant Nortech,” Quirk said. “We cleared the land, installed berms around the perimeter of the new containment cell and lined it with multiple layers of fabric and reinforced poly so as to not contaminate the new holding area.”

Cornerstone project manager Jonathan Hornak described the biggest structural challenge as how to set in place two 106-foot-long beams that span the entire natatorium.

Originally the beams weighed 45,000 pounds apiece and would need a large crane brought in from Seattle or Anchorage to lift them, he said. With a little value engineering, the beams were redesigned down to 27,000 pounds each and a Grove RT750 crane was brought from Juneau, greatly reducing costs of erecting the building.

Being able to meet challenges head-on and come together to create solutions is what the Cornerstone team is most proud of.

Formed in 1993, “Cornerstone approaches all of our projects with intentions of developing the best team mentality that we can for every job,” Quirk said. “This approach to our work has produced great relationships with the companies we have worked with and even greater projects delivered.”

A member of the Associated General Contractors since it began operations, Cornerstone values the benefits it has received through connections to the contracting community and various training offered through AGC, Quirk said.

Nancy Erickson is a freelance writer who lives in Moose Pass.
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Anchorage was a far different place in 1948. The population was less than 20,000. There was no public high school, major library or international airport. Alaska wouldn’t achieve statehood for another 10 years. With electricity in short supply, the city relied on cobbled-together sources that included diesel generators and the boilers and generating equipment of a wrecked ocean-going tanker beached at the mouth of Ship Creek.

On March 1, 1948, to create the distribution system that would meet current and future residents’ electricity needs (the Anchorage population increased nearly 1,500 percent between 1940 and 1951), Chugach Electric Association was incorporated as a Rural Electrification Administration cooperative.

Discussions had started the year before, when 200 individuals came together to form a cooperative with the goal of turning on and keeping the lights shining for Anchorage. Today, Chugach is Alaska’s largest electric utility, providing service to more than 68,000 members at 84,000 metered locations.

According to Julie Hasquet, Chugach’s corporate communications manager, three primary types of ownership exist for electric utilities: investor owned, where profits go to shareholders; municipal systems, where profits go to the local government; and cooperatives, in which to receive service you must become a member and margins are allocated back to the members of record for the year in which they were earned.

“Through superior service and safe, reliable and competitively priced energy, Chugach is fulfilling the responsibilities of a public utility organized as a member-owned, nonprofit electric cooperative,” Hasquet said.

Chugach is a “vertically integrated” electric utility, meaning it provides generation, transmission and distribution services to parts of Alaska’s Railbelt. It accomplishes this through generation facilities, such as the jointly owned Southcentral Power Project and Eklutna Power Plant; the state-owned Bradley Lake Hydroelectric Project near Homer; and Fire Island Wind, a wind-turbine project three miles off the coast of Anchorage.

Its area extends from Anchorage to the northern Kenai Peninsula, and from Whittier to Tyonek. The utility’s 531.2 megawatts of generation capacity includes 2,153 miles of energized line — 434 miles of transmission line including Chugach’s share of the Eklutna transmission line; 896 miles of overhead distribution line; and 823 miles of underground distribution line.

The cooperative philosophy means Chugach exists solely to serve its members. Its seven-member board of directors, elected from within the membership, “sets policy, employs a CEO and fulfills fiduciary responsibilities,” Hasquet said.

In years when revenue exceeds expenses, those margins are allocated to the members of record for the year in which they were earned through the Capital Credits program. In December 2016, more than $4 million in a retail Capital Credits retirement was distributed among 58,795 members from the year 1990 and a portion of 1991. Checks ranged from a few dollars to $179,000, with an average credit/check of $61.

Over its nearly 70-year history, Chugach has experienced its share of challenges. There are operational challenges faced by utilities operating
in the Alaska environment, such as those brought about by avalanches, earthquakes, snowstorms, volcanos and wildfires.

In recent years, the company successfully managed and mitigated the construction of a major new power plant, the expiration of a pair of long-term wholesale contracts to provide power for two other utilities, and the transition of natural gas producers and contracts in the Cook Inlet Basin.

Thanks to years-long, thoughtful planning, the addition of a new power plant and the loss of two wholesale customers resulted in only modest increases in rates.

“The average Chugach members in the three major service categories — residential, small commercial and large commercial — today pay less for electric service than customers of other Railbelt electric utilities,” Hasquet said.

Chugach continues to receive high ratings from its members in annual surveys. Recently, it has taken a leadership role in seeking to work with other utilities on behalf of their collective customer bases.

- In 2013, the jointly owned (70 percent Chugach/30 percent Municipal Light & Power) Southcentral Power Project was completed ahead of time and under budget. “Its efficiency is saving members millions of dollars a year in avoided fuel purchases,” Hasquet said.
- In 2016, Chugach and ML&P jointly purchased ConocoPhillips’ one-third working interest in the Beluga River Unit gas field (30 percent Chugach/70 percent ML&P) — a deal that is estimated to save the residents of Anchorage millions of dollars and supply a significant portion of the utilities’ gas needs over the next two decades.
- This year, Chugach, ML&P and Matanuska Electric Association announced they had reached agreement on a joint power pool, which will use the most efficient units of the three utilities to serve the collective needs of their customers, providing additional fuel savings and further reducing carbon emissions. The details of the agreement are still being worked out, and the utilities plan to file for approval from the Regulatory Commission of Alaska in 2018.

“MEA and Chugach Electric have been integrally linked for decades,” said MEA CEO and general manager Tony Izzo. “Recently, our relationship shifted from a wholesale power-purchase arrangement to a partnership between two vertically integrated utilities. This, combined with new leadership, has resulted in innovative solutions that promise to reduce costs, lower carbon emissions and improve reliability for our members. We are optimistic this is just the beginning of a more cohesive and cost-effective Railbelt electric system.”

Looking ahead, Chugach CEO Lee Thibert said the company is “very excited about a resolution recently passed by our board emphasizing sustainability as a business philosophy for Chugach. As a member-owned, not-for-profit cooperative, we are focused on creating and supporting a strong economy for future generations of Alaskans. Sometimes called the ‘triple bottom line,’ it means you take a more holistic view of the business and the implications of decisions.”

Part of that approach, Thibert continued, “is evaluating economic, social and environmental measures when we are considering projects and initiatives. Focusing on a long-term, sustainable business helps ensure we meet the present-day business needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet theirs. Our goal is to provide a stable supply of energy for the long term at a reasonable price. By being a sustainable energy provider, we support economic development and job creation for Alaskans.”

Carly Horton Stuart is a freelance writer who lives in Anchorage.
Surviving the OSHA inspection

The goal of the Occupational Safety and Health Act, which created the Occupational Safety and Health Administration in 1970, is to ensure safe and healthy working conditions by setting and enforcing standards and to provide training, outreach, education and assistance.

Two branches within OSHA carry out this mission: The Enforcement group is responsible for compliance, enforcement and inspections, while the Consultation and Training group provides services to employers such as training, education and consultation services while also managing voluntary and cooperative programs such as the Construction Health and Safety Excellence Program and the Voluntary Protection Program. This article will focus on the enforcement side of the agency. A subsequent article will focus on consultation and training.

Overview of Alaska state plan

Alaska is one of 24 states with a “state plan,” meaning that OSHA-related activities (for most employers) are carried out by a state agency. In Alaska, the Alaska Occupational Safety and Health Division (AKOSH) is part of the Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

The Alaska State Plan covers all private-sector places of employment in the state with the following exceptions:

- Maritime employment
- Worksites on navigable waters
- Native American health care facilities that are federally owned and contractor-operated
- Employers within the Metlakatla Indian community on the Annette Islands except the state school district
- Employers within Denali National Park
- Contractors at Cape Lisburne Air Force Station, Point Lay Air Force Distant Early Warning Station, Eareckson Air Station, Fort Greely and certain U.S. Coast Guard stations
- U.S. Postal Service contractor-operated facilities
- Certain agricultural temporary labor camp operations.

OSHA’s primary goal is to correct hazards and maintain compliance rather than issue citations or collect penalties.

Inspection priorities

Obviously, OSHA cannot inspect every workplace so it has developed a list of inspection priorities, listed in order.

- Imminent danger situations, in which inspection usually takes place the same day and no more than 24 hours after the notification. Employers will be asked to correct hazards immediately or remove endangered employees.
- Severe injuries and illnesses employers must report:
  - Occupational accidents that result in the death or overnight hospitalization of one or more employees.
  - All work-related inpatient hospitalizations, amputations or losses of an eye within 24 hours.
- Worker complaints: Allegations of hazards or violations receive high priority, and employees may request anonymity when they file complaints. To register a workplace safety or health complaint in Alaska, call 800-770-4940. The employer has a right to see a copy of the complaint with the complainant’s identification removed to retain confidentiality.
- Referrals of hazards from other federal, state or local agencies, individuals, organizations or the media.
- Targeted inspections aimed at specific high-hazard industries or individual workplaces that have experienced high rates of injuries and illnesses receive priority.
- Follow-up inspections to check for abatement of violations cited during previous inspections.

Types of inspections

OSHA may conduct different types of inspections depending on whether the inspection is scheduled or unscheduled; the result of a complaint or dangerous working conditions; the result of an injury; the result of high incident rates; or part of an industry-specific or equipment-specific program emphasis.
A comprehensive inspection is thorough and will likely cover every potential hazard identified.

A partial inspection may be limited to certain potentially hazardous conditions or operations.

**Inspection process highlights**

Upon arrival, the compliance safety and health officer will present the general scope and nature of the inspection, ask for any necessary private employee interviews, request documents, outline the inspection process and provide other information. The officer will initially review the employer’s injury and illness records for the previous five years.

During the walkaround, the employer and designated employee representative may (and should) accompany the compliance safety and health officer. The company rep — ideally a safety professional with knowledge of regulations — should have the authority to abate any easily corrected violations or hazards.

The compliance officer may also conduct private interviews with employees asking about workplace conditions, exposure to hazards, safety processes and systems, and any other relevant information.

**Findings and results**

The compliance officer will notify the employer representative and the employee representative of any safety and health violations, documenting interview statements, the hazard, the identity of the employee exposed to the hazard and the employer’s knowledge of the hazard.

For a violation to occur, the hazard must be recognized by the employer, the industry or by general observation. Violations will be issued only when employee exposure to the hazard can be documented within six months of the inspection.

OSHA must issue a citation and proposed penalty within six months of the violation’s occurrence. Citations describe OSHA requirements allegedly violated, provide proposed penalties and give a deadline for correcting the hazards.

**Appeals**

When OSHA issues a citation, it will offer the employer an opportunity for an informal conference with the OSHA area director to discuss citations, penalties, abatement dates or any other information pertinent to the inspection. Unless the citation will be contested, it is best to take advantage of this opportunity to meet with the area director to create a good working relationship, to indicate a willingness to work with the agency to improve safety and health and to learn about available services.

The agency and the employer may work out a settlement agreement to resolve the matter and eliminate the hazard. OSHA’s primary goal is to correct hazards and maintain compliance rather than issue citations or collect penalties.

Alternatively, employers have 15 working days after receiving a citation and proposed penalties to formally contest the alleged violations and/or penalties by sending a written notice to the area director. OSHA forwards the contest to the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission for independent review. Citations, penalties and abatement dates that are not challenged by the employer or settled become a final order of the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission.

**Preparing for inspection**

Long before an inspection, employers should have a robust and effective safety management system in place. This includes a process to identify hazards, train employees, document exposures and maintain records. To reduce hazard exposure to the lowest practical level, knowledgeable employers use the Hazard Control Hierarchy to assess and abate risk.

Other key elements of an effective safety management system include employee involvement, good housekeeping, annual program review and top leadership commitment.

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The Engagement Effect, a division of Ross Performance Group LLC, offers solutions in organizational results, safety and health, leadership, talent management and culture change. Learn more at www.theengagemementeffect.com or email the author at chris@theengagemementeffect.com.
A fire devastated the Royal Suite Apartments in Anchorage this past winter. Three people died, many escaped with only the clothes on their backs and at least 30 households were left without homes.

The experience of escaping the February fire only added to the turmoil and despair. Not long after, the Anchorage Home Builders Association's endowment board held its quarterly meeting.

"The fire had just happened, and we always talk about, 'Is there a need right now?'” said Nikki Giordano, AHBA executive officer. “Typically, members bring something to the table, with information and details, and then the group decides.”

This time, AHBA committed to helping residents displaced by the fire. Within days, the AHBA Care Endowment provided $500 to each household, with a total donation of $20,000.

“They were not expecting anything from anyone,” Giordano said. “Some said they could get food and restart their lives. They said they would make that $500 go a long way. They were working, some had kids, and some of them had stories of escape that were awful. It was a traumatic experience for them, and talking to them really brought it home to some of us.”

**Building bridges to the future**

Helping those in need is exactly why AHBA started the endowment fund after the 9/11 terrorist attacks in 2001. The idea was that members would donate money into the endowment every year, sustaining its ability to contribute to the community over the long haul.

AHBA includes about 230 members, including builders and those associated with the building industry, such as suppliers, contractors and agents. The builders tend to contribute based on houses sold, so the amount donated each year depends in part on the housing market, but the endowment hands out money every season each year.

The Care Endowment supports those in immediate need, like the former residents of the Royal Suite Apartments, as well as those participating in ongoing programs, such as high school students who receive scholarships for college, university or trade or vocational schools.

The endowment also supports the Shoebox Program, now in its
15th year. The program hands out backpacks with gifts, toys and necessities to a thousand Anchorage students every December. AHBA coordinates the effort and helps drive support by encouraging contributions and engagement from other organizations, including the Associated General Contractors of Alaska.

Nonprofits also apply for support from the Care Endowment, Giordano said. This year, the AHBA endowment gave $5,000 to Kids’ Corps for its summer program and $5,000 to the King Career Center for its SkillsUSA program.

**Detecting need and filling it**

Making homes safe and educating homeowners combines several AHBA interest areas, so the endowment board also committed to buying 500 carbon monoxide detectors to donate to the Anchorage Fire Department for distribution.

The donation followed several carbon monoxide poisoning cases in Alaska, including one that led to the death of a teenager and the hospitalization of seven others in Anchorage.

Battalion Chief James Dennis, the hazardous materials coordinator for the fire department, does not recall a donation of carbon monoxide detectors before.

“This was uncommon,” Dennis said. “It gave the AFD a chance to educate the community on the local news stations, in the fire stations when handing the detectors out, and in their homes when we installed them.”

The department gave away 300 detectors at fire stations and installed 200 more when at homes that needed them. People often forget or overlook detectors because buying or testing them can get lost in day-to-day life, Dennis said.

“I come from a long line of firefighters,” he said. “Growing up, I remember our home fire drills and smoke detector tests in the middle of the night. Now my children experience the same type of awareness training. I can imagine that it would be difficult for people to ponder a colorless, odorless, tasteless gas lurking in their home.”

Yet they must because even a low battery can mean not knowing about a fire or high carbon monoxide levels in time to escape or call for help. The detector, Dennis said, gives people and fire crews a fighting chance to respond in time to minimize harm.

The $10,000 AHBA gave toward carbon monoxide detectors did much more than put working detectors in hundreds of homes. It also allowed firefighters to talk to people in person and through the media, reminding thousands about a device that can save lives.

Dawnell Smith is a freelance writer who lives in Anchorage.
# 38th Annual AGC of Alaska FAIRBANKS GOLF SCRAMBLE

**Friday, July 14th**  Chena Bend Golf Course, FWW  
**Breakfast:** 7:00 am  **Captain’s Meeting:** 7:45 am  **Shotgun start:** 8:15 am  
**Kick-off Party @ AGC - 5:30 pm Thurs., July 13th**

## REGISTRATION

- **TEAM** (AGC Member: $875 / Non-AGC Member: $1,000)  **INDIVIDUAL** ($175 per golfer)

  *Entry fees includes green fees, carts, meals, refreshments, and prizes!*

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In celebration of the 100th anniversary of the University of Alaska Fairbanks, the Associated General Contractors of Alaska recently gave $100,000 to support its three endowed scholarships at the School of Management, College of Engineering and Mines, and UAF Community and Technical College.

AGC has been partnering with UAF for almost two decades to help students complete their degrees as part of its commitment to growing Alaska’s workforce. With this year’s centennial gift, AGC’s philanthropic support of UAF has totaled more than $250,000.

AGC’s scholarships have provided 70 students with more than $90,000 in financial assistance since 1998, and will continue to help UAF students achieve their educational goals for many years to come. Many of those students have become leaders in Alaska’s construction industry.

A special thank-you is extended to the AGC Fairbanks Task Force for its outstanding fundraising efforts over the last 10 years. Its hard work and the continuing support of the many AGC member sponsors made this centennial gift possible. The task force’s efforts also enable AGC to continue to support the AGC Student Chapter at UAF.

By investing in education and the community, AGC of Alaska is ensuring that the next generation of leaders is prepared for the demands of an evolving construction industry landscape in Alaska.
The AGC of Alaska Executive Board expresses our sincerest thanks for those who attended the Spring Board of Directors meeting in Fairbanks. We wish you all the best in this year’s construction season. Thank you for building Alaska!

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One of the first discussions we have with a client considering filing a bid protest regarding a federal procurement (pre- or post-award) is which forum to choose for the protest: the Government Accountability Office (GAO) or the U.S. Court of Federal Claims (Court). Choosing the right forum can mean the difference between winning and losing a protest. In deciding, here are some key factors you, as a protester, should consider.

Value of a stay of performance of the protested contract

Usually the first consideration we address with our clients is the value of, or need for, a stay/suspension of performance of the protested contract while the protest is pending. A stay can be valuable to a protester for several reasons. In a services contract, because a stay of the protested contract will usually result in an extension of the incumbent contract while the protest is pending, obtaining a stay can be valuable to an incumbent contractor filing a protest.

Obtaining a stay may also be necessary in certain cases to preserve the potential for meaningful relief if your protest is ultimately sustained. This is particularly the case in construction and supply contracts, where it is difficult to untangle contract performance once it’s substantially commenced. In such cases even if you win your protest, the GAO or the Court may limit your relief to your bid and proposal costs if performance has already substantially progressed during the protest.

When obtaining a stay is critical or highly advantageous to the protester, there is a major incentive to file the protest at GAO, where the protester is entitled to an automatic stay of contract performance if the protest is filed within the time specified in 31 U.S.C. § 3553.

Conversely, at the Court a protester is not entitled to an automatic stay and must either hope that the government agrees to a voluntary stay or the Court issues a temporary restraining order (TRO). While the government actually agrees to voluntary stays of performance in many protests, there is no guarantee one will be offered. And obtaining a TRO can be difficult and adds to the cost of the protest.

Scope of discovery

Another major consideration in choosing a protest forum is the difference in what documents the government must produce to the protester’s attorney (under protective order) during the protest. Generally, GAO will only require the government to produce documents that are relevant to specific arguments raised in the protest. In other words, if you protest the technical evaluation but not the past performance evaluation, GAO is unlikely to require the government to produce documents that are relevant to specific arguments raised in the protest. In other words, if you protest the technical evaluation but not the past performance evaluation, GAO is unlikely to require the government to produce documents pertaining to the past performance evaluation. Similarly, if you protest your technical evaluation but not the technical evaluation of the awardee, GAO is unlikely to require the government to produce the awardee’s technical proposal.

On the other hand, at the Court the scope of what the government must produce is much broader. At the Court, the government must produce the complete administrative record, which includes all documents relied upon by the government in making its procurement decision, and the documentation of the government’s decision-making process. If you file your protest at the Court, the government will likely be required to produce all of the above-mentioned documents (and much more) even if those documents are not directly relevant to an argument raised in your protest complaint.

One big advantage of having a broader scope of discovery is that often a protester will have no reason to know of major errors in a procurement unless the protester’s attorney gets to review the procurement record in its entirety. In fact, protests are usually won not based on the arguments you initially raise, but based on supplemental arguments discovered during the review of the documents produced by the government during the protest.

Thus, a broader production of documents is likely to increase your chances of winning a protest. This factor weighs in favor of filing a protest at the Court (especially when a stay of performance is not critical).

Subject matter of your protest

Another consideration when choosing a protest forum is the subject matter of your protest. While the two forums generally apply the same legal standard to a protest, there are certain protest subjects that are more suited for one forum than the other.

For example, in recent years, the Court has been more receptive to protests challenging the scope of
Because GAO handles 25 times as many protests as the Court, the GAO has a much more extensive library of case law and precedent than the Court, and the Court is not bound by GAO case law. Therefore, if a GAO decision is closely on-point to the facts/argument central to your protest, then that should be a major factor in deciding whether to file your protest at GAO or the Court.

**Hearings**

Sometimes a protest is better explained and debated in oral argument than in written briefings. In such cases, it is a major benefit for the protester if a hearing is conducted. The Court conducts hearings in the majority of protest cases, whereas GAO only conducted hearings in 2.51 percent of cases in FY2016.

**Cost of protesting**

Another key consideration for contractors considering where to protest is the varying costs of filing and litigating bid protests at GAO versus the Court.

The cost in attorney’s fees of litigating a protest is usually higher at the Court than at GAO, largely because the Court requires formalities in the protest process and filings that are not required at GAO. And, while GAO rarely conducts hearings on a protest, the Court conducts hearings in most protest cases. However, on occasion, the cost of litigating a protest at GAO will be higher than the cost at the Court. This is most likely to occur when multiple rounds of supplemental protests are filed or where GAO elects to conduct a hearing.

Another consideration pertaining to the cost of the protest is the ability to win your bid protest costs and attorney’s fees if you win your protest. At GAO if you win your protest, GAO will recommend that the government also reimburse your attorney’s fees. For large businesses, the rate of reimbursement is constrained by a statutory hourly rate, but small-business protesters are not similarly constrained.

At the Court, only a subset of small-business protesters is eligible for an award of attorney’s fees if they win their protest. And, unlike at GAO, the award of fees is not automatic and is restricted by a statutory hourly rate. Large businesses are not eligible for award of attorney’s fees at the Court, even if they win their protest.

**Bottom line**

While many companies choose to protest at GAO by default, there are many occasions when filing your protest at the Court is actually the better route. The above are just some of the considerations we discuss with our clients, as the decision on whether to file at the Court or GAO is one of the most critical steps in the protest process and can easily make the difference between winning and losing.

**This column provides information about the law designed to help users safely cope with their own legal needs.**

However, legal information is not the same as legal advice — the application of law to an individual’s specific circumstances. Although we go to great lengths to make sure our information is accurate and useful, we recommend you consult a lawyer if you want professional assurance that our information, and your interpretation of it, is appropriate to your particular situation.

Adam Lasky is a partner at Oles Morrison, where he focuses his legal practice to help clients win and navigate government contracts. With extensive experience litigating bid protests, Adam has a notable track record of success in multiple protests before the U.S. Court of Federal Claims, GAO and state/local agencies. Government contractors look to Adam for counsel on how to enhance the chances of receiving contract awards, ensure FAR and SBA regulatory compliance, and minimize risks and resolve disputes that arise during contract performance.
The AGC of Alaska’s Spring Train Ride returned this year — with a twist. The train went south instead of north. The four-hour trip aboard the Alaska Railroad — hosted by AGC’s Associates Council — took passengers on a leisurely tour with beautiful views along Turnagain Arm in April. The scenic trip included casino games, silent auction and other on-board activities, as well as food and beverages.

The event was a chance for AGC members and guests to mingle for fun, fellowship and networking before the busy summer season begins.

AGC expresses its appreciation to the following sponsors:

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Scholarship testimonials

Shane Ohms

Thank you for selecting me as a recipient of the AGC scholarship for the upcoming school year. Your scholarship will help me to continue focusing on getting the most out of my Civil Engineering studies, just like it has enabled me to do in previous years.

During my time at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, I have had the pleasure of working on the engineering projects that AGC sponsors such as the ice arch, concrete canoe and steel bridge. Without these projects that you make possible, I would be lacking these important extracurricular learning opportunities that simply aren’t found in the classroom setting.

AGC has been there to support the most invaluable parts of my education at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, and for that I am incredibly grateful. So in addition to the AGC scholarship I am very thankful for all of the other educational opportunities you have made possible.

Karen Mae Agonoy

I am extremely honored and thankful to be a recipient of the AGC/CEF scholarship. Coming from a low-income family, money was always an issue. Receiving this scholarship has tremendously lightened my financial burdens and provides assistance for me as I continue pursuing my education.

This summer I will be interning with Byler Contracting in Kodiak. They will be constructing a building for additional guestrooms for the Best Western Kodiak Inn. This will be my first out-of-classroom construction experience.

It is an amazing feeling knowing that your organization sees potential in me and believes in my abilities. I hope I will have the opportunity to help students achieve their educational goals just as you have helped me.

These scholarships were funded by the AGC of Alaska golf tournaments and CEF.

How to apply

The Associated General Contractors, through the Construction Education Foundation and the Alaska Construction Academies, is involved in all levels of construction education in Alaska. The Construction Academies provide entry-level construction skill training to both secondary and post-secondary students. The foundation works with AGC of Alaska to offer the AGC scholarship to college-level students taking classes toward a degree that will support the Alaska construction industry.

The annual scholarship information is listed on the AGC of Alaska website every January.

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Mike Travis and Larry Peterson have two things in common: a sense of adventure and an entrepreneurial spirit. These are prerequisites when your mission is to transport time- and temperature-sensitive materials from all parts of Alaska to big-city laboratories. Oh yeah — potentially contaminated materials.

They’re prepared and willing to use whatever it takes — boats, snow machines, vehicles, airplanes — to get the samples delivered successfully. The Travis-Peterson duo know the fate of their customers’ projects depends on it. The chances for failure are great, and the window for success is narrow. They pride themselves on “threading the needle” to success.

Both Travis and Peterson are Alaskans by choice and graduates of the University of Alaska Fairbanks with backgrounds in engineering and earth and environmental sciences. Working in the environmental services field for a variety of large corporations brought them to the realization that large contractors are limited in their ability to provide such services to smaller companies, and they saw the potential for a smaller, locally minded environmental services firm.

“Large corporations have high overhead costs that require pursuing big federal and state contracts,” co-founder Mike Travis said. “We identified the need for an environmental services company that could nimbly provide cost-effective services to small businesses, miners, contractors, tribes and Native corporations.”

The pair joined forces in 1998 to form Travis/Peterson Environmental Consulting Inc. Today, TPECI specializes in working with smaller construction firms to help them secure environmental permits and maintain compliance. Permits include wetland permitting, storm water management, spill prevention, hazardous materials management, spill response and contaminated site remediation. They also perform environmental site assessments and provide documentation to satisfy the National Environmental Policy Act.

“With our offices in Fairbanks and Anchorage, we can quickly access most parts of Alaska. Many of our customers only require a specific permit or remedial services. We pride ourselves on our ability to quickly solve their problem and get them back to work,” Travis said.

To accomplish this mission, TPECI employs eight full-time year-round employees including biologists, engineers, geologists and environmental scientists. It operates across the state in both rural and urban environments, from Ketchikan to Barrow, Adak to Kotzebue, and points in between. “We have supported construction companies along the Haul Road to Prudhoe Bay and down the Alaska and Richardson highways,” Travis added.
Like all companies that bridge the rural-urban divide in Alaska, TPECI recognizes the unique challenges in the state. Travis said No. 1 among them is logistics.

“Safely getting our people to and from very remote sites is a huge challenge,” he said. “Many times, our people have to carefully transport environmental samples of contaminated materials to Anchorage and Fairbanks while keeping the materials within tight temperature requirements and laboratory holding times.

“Transportation is expensive, and usually our client’s fate is determined by the condition of our samples. We only have one chance to do this right and can’t screw it up; we are immensely proud of the herculean job our people do to protect their samples and get the job done right the first time.”

A commitment to providing excellent environmental services to many different clients across the state has paid off over the two decades that TPECI has been doing business in Alaska. One longtime customer, Anchorage-based residential builder John Hagmeier, owner of John Hagmeier Homes LLC, said he has contracted with TPECI often, and enthusiastically recommends its services to others.

“A view overlooking the tank farm and dock of Dutch Harbor, where TPECI provides permitting and environmental site cleanup to the city of Unalaska, seafood processors operating in the area and North Pacific Fuels.

“Mike and company executed the most knowledgeable and professional service available and within the required timeframe,” he said. “We have worked with them on wetlands and subdivisions, and I personally hired them for an environmental cleanup on a piece of family property in Juneau. I recommend them as a contractor to anyone requiring environmental services.”

Since its inception, TPECI has been an active member of the Associated General Contractors of Alaska and fully recognizes the benefits of AGC membership.

“Our relationship with AGC has been good for our company,” Travis said. “We value the networking, training and group advocacy. On more than one occasion AGC has interceded on our behalf with commissioners of state agencies and helped us develop cost-effective solutions for contractors.”

TPECI has done its part to give back to the organization as well, writing position papers on behalf of AGC regarding proposed environmental regulations and providing other member companies with contractor training — especially storm water management.

Like many Alaska small businesses, TPECI has been hit by the state recession triggered by the oil price collapse. As a result, the company was forced to shrink its full-time workforce by about 30 percent. Nevertheless, Travis is encouraged about prospects for the future and pleased to be expanding his seasonal workforce to meet the needs of the busy summertime construction season.

“We believe the future in Alaska is good for our company and the services that we provide,” he said. “As environmental regulation becomes increasingly more complex and restrictive, contractors will continue to need our help to remain in compliance. We are proud to provide the best service possible to benefit our customers and maintain the environmental quality of the great state we all call home.”

Susanna Orr is a freelance writer who lives in Anchorage.
When my mom and dad started having health problems about a decade ago, my wife, Maddy, and I said, ‘Do we want to have a discussion about our own long-term care?’” recalls Dr. Ken Dychtwald. “And we both realized we did not want to talk about it because it is a horrible discussion to have. You know, what happens if you have a stroke, or you can no longer walk?”

Not even experts in the field of aging like Dychtwald and his wife, Maddy, co-founders of Age Wave, an organization that studies the challenges of aging, want to think about frightening health-related “what-ifs” when it comes to their personal lives.

“My generation — the boomers — prefer to think of ourselves as indestructible,” Dychtwald says. “But, you know what? We said to ourselves, ‘It is not fair to either of us or our kids not to have this discussion.’” So the Dychtwalds did their homework. “We made some important decisions. For one, we decided to buy long-term care insurance.”

Talking about how you will pay for your future health needs is just one of several critical conversations related to health and wealth that family members should be having.

“For many, it is the missing piece of the retirement puzzle,” Dychtwald says.

Yet as important as these conversations are, the vast majority of people are not having them. Seven of 10 couples age 50 and older have not discussed how much they will need to save for health care in retirement, and only one in five people age 50 and older has talked about long-term care plans with their adult children, according to a 2015 Merrill Lynch study conducted in partnership with Age Wave.

Here are four questions that can help you start having these important family conversations. Sit down with your spouse, your children, your parents and your siblings. Talk about your expectations. Make plans together. Then should one of you become ill, you can all concentrate on one another instead of worrying about the finances and whether you are doing the right thing for everyone concerned.

1. Where will the money come from?

It is never too early to talk about the potential costs and other consequences of medical care for yourself, your children or your parents. The considerations should include possible outlays for such expenses as home health care or changes to your house to accommodate a disability.

“Once Maddy and I had our talk, we felt better,” Dychtwald says. “We may not be able to wave a magic wand and make ourselves perfectly healthy for the rest of our lives, but at least we know that we are covered should one of these things happen to either of us.”

Though long-term care insurance was an appropriate choice for the Dychtwalds, it is not right for everyone. There are a number of other financial choices you can consider, from hybrid forms of life insurance and Health Savings Accounts to simply saving and investing more for eventual medical costs.

Michael Liersch, head of Behavioral Finance and Goals-Based Planning for Merrill Lynch, recommends considering the following next steps.

A logical next step, after you discuss these issues with your family, is to review your choices with a financial advisor to help ensure that your retirement and any legacy you hope to pass on will not be threatened.

2. Will our parents have the care they need as they grow older?

In addition to considering their own future, many people struggle with aging parents’ unwillingness to face their limitations. The best response is to ask specific questions: At what point would it make sense for you to stop driving or to have a caretaker come in to help with meals?

Michael Liersch, head of Behavioral Finance and Goals-Based Planning for Merrill Lynch, recommends considering the following next steps.

A logical next step, after you discuss these issues with your family, is to review your choices with a financial advisor to help ensure that your retirement and any legacy you hope to pass on will not be threatened.

Put plans in place to help prepare yourself for what might come.
Consulting at Merrill Lynch Wealth Management, advises bringing these issues up long before safety concerns arise, and then positioning yourself as your loved ones’ ally.

“Often when you first broach the topic, you will be rebuffed,” says Kate Wilber, professor of gerontology at the University of Southern California Davis School of Gerontology. “That is normal. It does not mean the door is closed. This will likely take more than one conversation.”

3. Who will provide the caregiving, if it is needed?

Taking care of aging parents — or paying for their care — can be a large responsibility, and yet it is a responsibility that often falls unevenly in families.

Liersch recommends that siblings talk first among themselves about how they will share the caregiving role. “You want to be sure that both your parents’ and your own needs are considered,” he says. “Sometimes it makes sense to cobble together a combination of in-home and outside care.” That way, siblings can at least share the costs if not the hands-on responsibilities.

4. What about end-of-life issues?

Having this conversation can help ensure that a loved one’s (or your own) wishes will be honored. Among the things to consider: Which medical treatments do you want to be used or avoided at the end of your life? Whom do you want to be your health care proxy if you are unable to communicate your wishes? You can use a health care power of attorney and a living will to document your choices.

Once you have discussed these tough subjects with your family, it is important to keep talking as years go by and circumstances change. “No one can predict their health future,” Dychtwald says. “But you can put plans in place to help prepare yourself for what might come.”

Having these important conversations is the first step to getting there.
AGC members’ projects

Fairbanks Memorial Hospital Surgery Addition

CONTRACTOR: GHEMM COMPANY
PROJECT LOCATION: FAIRBANKS
PROJECT MANAGER: MIKE DAVIS, PE
PHOTOS BY KEVIN G. SMITH PHOTOGRAPHY
AGC members’ projects

Parks 44.5-48.8 Reconstruction
Church Road to Pitman Road

Contractor: KNIK Construction
Project Location: Wasilla

Photo by Harold Pelham
AGC members’ projects

Anchorage Museum Expansion and Alaska Gallery Renovation

CONTRACTOR: DAVIS CONSTRUCTORS & ENGINEERS INC.
PROJECT LOCATION: ANCHORAGE
PROJECT MANAGER: LUKE BLOMFIELD

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Photo essay
Administrative assistant hired in Anchorage office

AGC of Alaska welcomes Megan Chase as its new administrative assistant to its Anchorage office.

Chase arrived in Alaska in 2015 and decided “this is where I wanted to live.”

Chase is from Muldrow, Oklahoma, and graduated from high school in 2015. After arriving in Anchorage, she was smitten with the beauty of Alaska.

“I enjoy hiking, cooking, baking and being able to spend time with my family,” she said. “Working retail since the beginning of my job history, I am delighted to be an administrative assistant with AGC. I am looking forward to learning about the construction industry and the people building Alaska.”

UAF chapter completes ice arch at university

Congratulations to the University of Alaska Fairbanks AGC Student Chapter on the completion of the 2017 UAF ice arch. It is an inspiring work of engineering worthy of UAF’s 100th anniversary.

UAF has an 80-plus year tradition of building an ice structure on campus each year during Engineers Week. Teams composed mostly of civil engineering students work to impress judges with new designs, materials and construction methods to demonstrate their skill and ingenuity in overcoming the challenges in Alaska’s harsh climate.

Different design methods have been used over the years. Most designs have used a mixture of sawdust and water called pykrete, which when mixed at the right ratio and frozen in layers, has structural properties similar to concrete.

AGC recognizes eight ‘Hard Hatting’ graduates from UAA program

AGC of Alaska salutes all graduates of the University of Alaska Anchorage’s Construction Management program. A number of the graduates were recognized at a “Hard Hatting” ceremony in May at AGC’s Anchorage office. They include Randy Adams, Michael Burno, David Freswick, Ryan Honea, Zach Archuletta, Melody Miller, Jon Conner Bethka and Daniel Hansen.

UAF Steel Bridge Team again wins top honors

AGC commends the University of Alaska Fairbanks AGC Student Chapter for its continued success at the 2017 American Society of Civil Engineers Pacific Northwest Conference competition.

The UAF Steel Bridge Team took first place overall for the third consecutive year at the ASCE regional competition in April in Boise, Idaho. The team also took first place in structural efficiency; first place each in lightness and stiffness; and second place each in stiffness, construction speed and construction economy, which put the team in first place overall for the Pacific Northwest conference.

The team again earned an invitation to compete at the national competition at Oregon State University, where it placed second for lightness and 10th overall on May 27-28. Team members were competing against top engineering schools — over 227 schools overall, including universities from five countries.

Team members include then-AGC Student Chapter president Elliott Anderson (now employed by KNIK Construction), Danny Smith, Wilhelm Muench, Taylor Tharp, Nick Donets, Ben Fetterhoff, Nick Marcello, Nathan Barnett, Jacques Neptune and Catherine Estus.

Each year, the Steel Bridge Team spends much of the school year designing, fabricating and building the bridge, as well as fundraising to buy materials and to pay for travel to the regional and national conferences.
Two men with deep ties to construction industry are mourned

Two men instrumental to the construction industry in Alaska were killed in a plane crash in late May. Howard A. “Buzz” Otis, 63, of North Pole and Sam Richard Brice, 81, of Fairbanks died after Brice’s single-engine Arctic Aircraft S-1B2 “Arctic Tern” crashed about 50 miles east of Fairbanks on May 27.

Brice had taken Otis on a flight to check on Otis’ son, who was overdue on a trip on the Salcha River. Otis’ son was fine, but the plane crashed near Butte Creek on the return trip.

Brice was a founding member of Brice Inc. and the Brice family of construction businesses. Otis was founder of Great Northwest Inc., as well as a former Fairbanks North Star Borough Assembly member and sled dog race organizer.

They are deeply mourned by those in the construction industry and the communities where they worked and built reputations for excellence and commitment.

Alaska Sen. John Coghill of North Pole recognized Otis and Brice on the Senate floor, saying the two had contributed much to their communities.

“Both were wonderful men, key to many, many things in our community, and they did live well,” he said. “They were significant givers, and builders and contributors to the community.”

Brice and Otis met more than 30 years ago when Great Northwest did a landscaping job for Brice. Otis founded Great Northwest Inc. in 1975 with partner John Minder. The company grew from a residential landscaping company to a large general contractor that specializes in road and airport construction, underground utilities, erosion protection and riverbank restoration. Otis later sold his share in Great Northwest.

Otis became a revered community leader in North Pole and helped start the annual North Pole Christmas in Ice event. He was serving as executive director of the North Pole Economic Development Corp.

Otis was also the lead organizer of the North Pole Championships and Junior North American Championship sled dog races.

“Buzz was a tireless advocate for the community of North Pole and the North Pole area and was always working to improve it,” said Jim Dodson, CEO of the Fairbanks Economic Development Corp. “You couldn’t say enough good things about Buzz.”

Otis also had served on Fairbanks Economic Development Corp. including as board chairman. He served on the Borough Assembly in the 1980s and became the Assembly’s presiding officer.

Brice was a founder of Brice Lumber Co. in 1961, with his brothers, Al and Andy, and their parents, Luther and Helenka. The business grew into a Fairbanks-based land-clearing company called Brice Inc. that helped clear the right of way for the trans-Alaska oil pipeline. Their first public works project was the construction of the Noorvik Airport in 1964.

Hard work, dedication and inventiveness turned Brice Inc. into an efficient, specialized “off-the-road-system” construction company that built infrastructure across Alaska. The remote nature of the work required innovations and specialized tools. The company soon had its own air transport, marine fleet and equipment that included “firsts” in their application in Alaska.

These investments combined with an “all-hands-on-deck” management philosophy that allowed the company to work successfully in some of the most difficult locations in the state.

In 2014, Sam Richard Brice, along with his brothers, Al and Andy, were honored with AGC of Alaska’s coveted Hard Hat Awards for their outstanding contributions to the Alaska construction industry.
Welcome new AGC Members
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WHY AGC?


These and many other benefits of AGC membership can be yours whether you are a general contractor, a specialty contractor or you do related work for the construction industry.

Here is what our members say about the reasons to join one of Alaska’s leading associations.

Gary Klebs
Klebs Mechanical Inc.
I believe anyone who is in construction, or is associated with construction, has a responsibility to advocate for the industry — whether it is politics, apprenticeship training, technical training or educating the population. AGC offers a way for individuals through their member companies to become involved and advance its member-driven agenda. AGC also provides a great way to expand individual knowledge through networking with others during the numerous AGC-sponsored events. Why AGC? … Maybe it’s as simple as this: Being a member will bring a smile to your face.

Jenith Flynn
Davis Constructors & Engineers Inc.
Joining committees and working with the AGC staff allow me to push forward on industry trends and topics that are important to Davis Constructors. AGC of Alaska is our local voice to solve common industry challenges and to bring upcoming issues to the forefront. It allows contractors, subcontractors and vendors to work in collaboration to steer local AGC programming. From local and national legislative issues, to training, research and safety — AGC allows me to have a voice.

Scott Vierra
North Star Equipment Services
We greatly appreciate AGC advocating for our industry, offering apprenticeship programs and educational classes regularly. The annual conference along with their Online Plans truly bring exceptional value to its membership. Monthly networking functions, the membership roster and the AGC app are phenomenal for our industry.

Kiel Beloy
Kiewit Building Group Inc.
As an employee of one of the only remaining founding AGC of Alaska charter members still working in the state, I am proud of our company’s rich history with AGC. The training programs and networking opportunities provide as much value today as they did when AGC of Alaska was formed in 1948. It’s a great way to stay connected to the local industry.

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Executive Board Meeting
July 13 in Fairbanks

Golf Kickoff PARtee
July 13 in Fairbanks

Golf Tournament
July 14 in Fairbanks

Sporting Clays Shoot
Aug. 25 at Grouse Ridge

National and Chapter Leadership Conference
Sept. 24-26 in Washington, D.C.

Executive Board Meeting
Oct. 11 in Anchorage

Chili Cook-off
Oct. 11 in Anchorage

General membership and board meeting
Nov. 9-10 at Hotel Captain Cook in Anchorage

Annual Conference
Nov. 8-11 at Hotel Captain Cook in Anchorage

National Construction Leadership Conference
Nov. 15-17 in Los Angeles

Executive Board Meeting
Dec. 6 in Anchorage

Christmas Open House
Dec. 6 in Anchorage

Christmas Open House
Dec. 7 in Fairbanks

AGC Legislative Fly-In
Jan. 30-31 – Juneau

Dinner & Casino Night
Feb. 16, 2018 in Anchorage

Bowl-A-Thon
Feb. 24, 2018 in Fairbanks

AGC of Alaska
Calendar of Events

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