

MESSENGER

Summer 2019



ONE FOR ALL, AND ALL FOR ONE!

By Jens Laipenieks CEO/General Manager



Just like the Musketeers, this slogan could also be the battle cry for ASTAC. As a cooperative, we are dedicated to enhancing broadband access for ALL our members, in ALL communities, not just those who have the benefit of a fiber optic connection. Membership in any ASTAC community contributes to

and strengthens the cooperative as a whole (ONE).

Admittedly, over the past few years we have focused efforts preparing our fiber fed markets, but we are now moving to enhance our services in our "final four" markets. The villages of Kaktovik, Atkasuk, Anaktuvuk Pass, and Point Lay are all scheduled to be upgraded in 2019. The reality of a satellite connection has not changed, but ASTAC has decided to invest in making satellite service better. This summer we will be moving our service to a new satellite and installing new dishes and modern electronics in each market. These changes will increase both the reliability and overall bandwidth that is shared by those communities.

These upgrades will have a noticeable improvement to both the home Internet and wireless services we provide.

In 2015, our Board of Directors passed a resolution which fully supports connecting all ASTAC markets. ASTAC has also been working on a long-term solution for these markets, and that is to get off satellite and move to terrestrial service. These projects will extend capacity from a nearby fiber fed market to the more remote community via overland fiber optic cables or modern microwave systems. ASTAC has spent the last year developing detailed construction plans to connect both Kaktovik and Atkasuk and are actively pursuing grant funding to help make these projects a reality.

Our sincere thanks go out to all of you that have provided letters of support and comments supporting our recent grant applications and we will continue to work hard to make them ALL a reality. It's this unstoppable loyalty to ONE another, like the credo of the Musketeers, this solidarity is what binds us together and is the driving force behind ASTAC.

UNLIMITED
Voice & Data.
Unlimited Adventure.

GET 1 MONTH FREE*

The advertisement features a background image of a person in a blue jacket holding a smartphone that displays a colorful scene of people in a boat. To the right of the phone is a circular badge with the text "GET 1 MONTH FREE*". The main text "UNLIMITED Voice & Data. Unlimited Adventure." is prominently displayed in large, bold, blue letters.

ASTAC

BROADBAND, LLC

In April, ASTAC's business and enterprise team traveled to Utqiagvik and hosted two launch events at the Inupiat Heritage Center for our new company, ASTAC Broadband, LLC. The company was created earlier this year to distinguish it from our Local Exchange Carrier (LEC) company and will be used by the enterprise sales team when soliciting non-LEC services. Our products are created from an "outside in" approach to ensure they are specifically tailored to our business customers' individual needs.



The ASTAC Broadband, LLC Team at an April launch event in Utqiagvik

HAPPY RETIREMENT JOHN BAKER

Utqiagvik Technician John Baker retired on April 26 after 44 years in the telecommunications industry, the last five with ASTAC. John has been an integral part of ASTAC's Fiber to the Home, LTE and 4G projects.

He will be remembered for his outstanding contributions, hard work, and dedication to the company. John will be spending his well-deserved retirement in Idaho enjoying time spent with family, hobbies and future vacations.



2018 Swoosh GRAND PRIZE WINNER

ASTAC's Grand Prize Swoosh Winner, Etta Attungana, and her Aunt, Hilda Attungana had a blast at the 2019 NCAA Final Four Tournament in Minneapolis, Minnesota April 6-8. The Virginia Cavaliers defeated Texas Tech Red Riders 85-77.

Etta and her Aunt Hilda estimated that they walked more than 80,000 steps over the course of their trip. While in Minnesota, they also visited the Mystic Casino, the Sea Life Aquarium, and went shopping at the Mall of America and the Nicolet Mall.



2018 Swoosh Grand Prize winner Etta Attungana of Point Hope her Aunt Hilda at the NCAA Men's Final Four Tournament in Minneapolis, Minnesota

TOP OF THE WORLD GOLF TOURNAMENT

The 2019 Top of the World Golf Tournament was a great success with a record of 57 golfers coming out to play in Utqiagvik during the 36th Annual Piuraagiaqta Festival. Teams were treated to a warmer than usual day playing the 9-hole course on the Middle Lagoon. This year we had a 2-way tie for 2nd place. To break the tie, officials referred to the lowest score on the 9th hole, which still resulted in a tie. Officials had to refer to the 8th, 7th & finally the 6th hole to break the tie! This year's top three teams are as follows:



A golf tournament participant celebrates after sinking a putt on the 9-hole Middle Lagoon course.

PLACE	TEAM	
1ST	L3mmings	Roderick Miguel, Josh Ledford & Jayson Soriano Prize: Samsung Galaxy S10
2ND	NSB Fire Dept	Mark Suesue, Viane Vaina, Maaku Suesue Prize: \$500 Cash
3RD	Fore!	Josh Sabik, Jonathan Hayden, Lars Stevenson Prize: Apple Watch

A special thank you to our sponsors who helped make this year's tournament one of the best: Airway Technologies, CoBank, Ericsson, GME Supply, Mid-State Consultants, Morgan Stanley, Moss Adams, NewCore, Pinnacle Project Management, U-Line and Vertex.

FIBER TO THE HOME – UTQIAĠVIK

Fiber is coming to Utqiaġvik! In April we began scheduling installations by zone and will continue throughout August 2019. During the install, ASTAC technicians will bring the fiber into your home and change out your existing equipment with a free GigaCenter (wireless router with built-in WiFi). This equipment along with the new fiber connection will allow ASTAC to deliver faster data speeds throughout your home. Current and new customers can pre-register for installation on our web site.

WHAT'S DIFFERENT ABOUT FIBER TO THE HOME?

- Performance is not limited by distance or interference and is not shared bandwidth like cable. Currently the further away you are from our Central Office, the harder it is to provide a constant connection or speed; this fixes it!
- Capacity – What's capacity? Sometimes the information highway is clogged because it's not big enough for all the data – movies, photos, music, games – to flow through. Fiber increases the 'information highway', also known as the capacity of your Internet connection.
- There's less time buffering and more time video chatting, uploading family videos and playing your favorite online games. Just click and you're there!

VOTE ONLINE OR BY MAIL YOUR COOPERATIVE. YOUR VOTE.



ASTAC members in Point Lay, Point Hope and Atkasuk will have the opportunity to vote for their community's board of director June 10 – July 1. Like last year, the option to vote online within SmartHub will be available and encouraged. Each vote will earn members one entry into a raffle for a \$250 ASTC bill credit. Each **online vote** will earn **one additional entry**.

Step-by-step directions as well as a how-to video can be found on our website, under Company, Member Info, Voting.

SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM WINNERS

Claire Mueller, Utqiaġvik

Claire Mueller is a high school honor roll student ranking first in her class and selected as valedictorian. She plans to attend the University of Portland to study biology. Claire participated in cross-country, newspaper, yearbook, theatre and band and has taken college level science classes at Ilisagvik College. Claire has worked as a gymnastics spotter and Circus Summer Camp counselor, but her favorite summer job has been working as crew member on the Tundra Garden project. She and other students worked with a Soil Scientist and Tundra Ecologist to build a botanical garden in Utqiaġvik.



Nichole Hank, Point Hope

Nichole Hank is a high school honor roll student ranking first in her class and was selected as the 2017-2018 Distinguished Student of the School. She plans to attend the University of Alaska Anchorage to study biology and pre-veterinary medicine and return to Point Hope to provide care for the pets and wildlife of her community. Nichole participated in basketball, volleyball, cross-country, yearbook and recently started learning how to play the guitar. She is an active member of her church, and during whaling season she helps cook and prepare for her family's whaling crew.



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ELLA KOWUNNA: IN MEMORIAM

In early April, ASTAC's Point Hope Board Member, Ella Kowunna retired after 27 years of committed service and sadly passed away on April 28. She will always be remembered for her years of hard work and contribution to our cooperative.

Ella had been a cornerstone on the ASTAC Board for as long as I can remember, and I have been with the company for 10 years. In fact, she was the longest serving Director in the history of ASTAC, almost 30 years. She not only witnessed the evolution of the Cooperative but played a major role in shaping our destiny through the years.

Over the years Ella was a contributor on many fronts, she served as the Board Vice President and on numerous committees. The scholarship committee was her favorite as she so loved to see the next generation of leaders develop. She cared deeply about the ASTAC employees, their wellbeing, and quickly welcomed new employees into the ASTAC family. Ella was all about family, truly caring about one another, and I am honored that I was able to be part of her family.

– Jens Laipenieks, CEO/General Manager

I first met Ella when I joined ASTAC in 2000. She was, even then, one of the more experienced members of the Board. That experience continued to pay dividends through decades of service for the Cooperative, her fellow newly elected Board members and myself as I grew with the company.

Ella was always cheerful and respectful. She was an early adopter of using Facebook to give public praise to the accomplishments of ASTAC employees. Her quiet demeanor belied the fact that she was one of the most seasoned leaders in the room. Ella's mantra in my opinion was like that of a skilled carpenter, "Measure twice and cut once." When she had something to offer, I was taking notes! She will be missed by her community and the ASTAC family.

– Steve Merriam, ASTAC Federal Advocate

Ella was such a delight to be around. Her lovely spirit brought peace to those around her. She had a rascally streak, accompanied with a twinkle in her eye, that kept us on our toes. The world is a better place because Ella was in it.

– Clover McNeil, Chief Financial Officer

Ella's presence will be greatly missed, and my memories will forever be treasured. I will always think of her at every board meeting going forward. She was a true inspiration with my career at ASTAC.

– Megan Clapper, HR/Office Manager



WELCOME: STACY MARSHALL

In April, ASTAC's executive directors hired Stacy Marshall as the director of customer experience.

Ms. Marshall brings over 20 years of experience in the telecommunications industry. She most recently worked as the director of business sales for Alaska Communications over the commercial and healthcare vertical. Prior to that she held various leadership roles within the organization to include sales operations, retail, contact center, and was the key stakeholder in driving process improvement.

In her new role with ASTAC, Marshall will lead the Customer Experience, Product and Marketing Departments and develop successful processes to deliver meaningful business value. Marshall will work with the executive team to meet and exceed customer expectations and retention goals across the North Slope.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Paul Bodfish Sr.
PRESIDENT, ATQASUK

Ella Kowunna
VICE PRESIDENT, POINT HOPE

Marietta Aiken
SECRETARY/TREASURER, UTQIAĠVIK

Carla SimsKayotuk
ASSISTANT SECRETARY/TREASURER, KAKTOVIK

Marlene Bolt
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DIRECTOR, POINT LAY

Pearl Burris
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