

NorthernLine

"Behind is a great forest that goes to the Arctic...and here we must draw our line."

~ Gary Snyder, *Front Lines*



Northern
Alaska Environmental
Center

Fall 2009 Volume XXXI, Number 3

It's Easy Being Green

....that's the theme of the Northern Center's dinner and auction on November 14th at the Princess Hotel, but "being green" goes far beyond a buzzword. **It means living a life that acknowledges the importance of all the inhabitants and habitats of the planet.** That includes every one of us. We are important and powerful; our lifestyle and activity choices have profound consequences.

The "easy" part of being green? Actions you take to promote the long-term sustainability of our shared planet often have immediate benefits to your health or your wallet:

- **Staying in shape by biking or walking reduces your carbon emissions and saves you money on gasoline and vehicle maintenance.** In colder weather, you can add public transportation to your commuting mix. Your neighbors are doing it—check out the results of Fairbanks' "Don't Be Fuelish" competition on our website.
- **Keeping our air clean and healthy by burning seasoned wood in an efficient stove also saves our forests and your money by requiring less wood per BTU.**
- Taking a few minutes now to **speak up for Arctic wilderness** (p. 4) and **clean water** (p. 6) to ensure recreational opportunities, healthy streams and drinkable water for your family.



Executive Director **Karen Max Kelly** shows how easy it is to be green.

We all have the power to create the green world we want to inhabit. I know our members make green choices, and we'd like to hear about them. At our auction dinner, you can share your best "It's Easy Being Green" ideas by entering your suggestions into our drawing. Two lucky entrants will receive "green" prizes, but our whole community wins because the Northern Center will post your suggestions to our website. I look forward to being green with you on November 14th! ♻️

Karen M. Kelly

Karen Max Kelly, *Executive Director*

CONTENTS

Calendar of Events	2
Wish List	2
Congrats	2
Run for the Refuge	3
Wilderness Bill Gains Support ...	4
Directional Drilling	4
Air Quality	5
Clean Water for You	6
Meet NAEC newcomers	7
Camp Habitat	7
Gift Membership and PFD	8

Save The Date!

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 14 NAEC ANNUAL AUCTION PRINCESS HOTEL (new venue!)

It's **EASY** being GREEN! This year's NAEC auction will feature lots of Earth-friendly items. Join us for live music, dinner, and fabulous homemade desserts in celebration of Alaska's great wilderness!

5pm Doors Open for Socializing and Silent Auction

6pm Sit-down Dinner

7pm Outcry Auction

After glow Music & Dancing into the night!

ADMISSION BY RESERVATION ONLY!

Reserve your seat by 5pm November 11
\$30/person includes choice of dinner entrée

• **CALL** (907)452-5234 or (907)457-6714 to reserve by credit card

• **STOP BY** the NAEC to reserve and pay with cash, check or credit card.



The Northern Line

Environmental News of Arctic and Interior Alaska

The Northern Line is published by the Northern Alaska Environmental Center (NAEC), 830 College Rd., Fairbanks, Alaska, 99701. EMAIL: info@northern.org WEB: www.northern.org Copyright © 2009 by NAEC. All rights reserved. Subscription rate is \$35 annually and includes membership. We encourage submission of letters and articles for publications. We reserve the right to edit all submissions. The Northern Alaska Environmental Center is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

MISSION: The Northern Alaska Environmental Center promotes conservation of the environment in the Interior and Arctic Alaska through advocacy, education, and sustainable resource stewardship.

The Northern Alaska Environmental Center has 1599 members*
 *To accurately reflect the number of household members who reside at the same address as partners and spouses sharing similar environmental values and read the Northern Line, it is standard practice to use a single multiplier factor of 1.67 to estimate members who have given in the past 18 months.

STAFF

Karen Max Kelly, *Executive Director*
 Brook Brisson, *Clean Water & Mining Program Director*
 Katherine Davis, *Arctic Intern*
 Jessie Peterson, *Local Issues & Energy Coordinator*
 Pamela A. Miller, *Arctic Program Director*
 Amy Snider, *Campus Energy Organizer*
 Heidi Supkis, *Membership Coordinator*
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 Adele Wiejaczka, *Camp Habitat Summer Camps Director*

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Sylvia Ward Schultz (Chair), Jim Hunter (Vice Chair), Cindy Adams, John Luther Adams, G. Ray Bane, Florence Collins, Dan Swift, and Ginny Hill Wood.

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NAEC Wish List

Here are a few things NAEC could use if you can spare them:

- Airline miles for staff professional training travel
- Carpet steaming services
- Indoor painting services
- Good snow shovels
- Heavy-duty outdoor brooms (for snow)
- Ladders: small step ladder & 8-foot ladder

Calendar of Events

November 6-8 Far North Conservation Film Festival

Nov. 6: 6 – 10pm @ Schaible Auditorium, University of Alaska Fairbanks

Nov. 7: 1 – 3pm *Family Day* @ Morris Thompson Cultural and Visitors Center

Nov. 8: 6 – 10pm @ Pioneer Park Centennial Center

Featuring a diverse group of films about the conservation of wildlife, cultures, and wild places around the world. Free admission to all events. Sponsors include the Alaska Public Lands Information Center, the National Park Service, the Fairbanks Arts Association, the UAF Student Activities Office, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the UAF Wildlife Society, and the FNSB Dept of Parks and Recreation. For a full schedule of films, please visit www.farnorthfilms.com.

December 5 Annual Eco-Holiday Bazaar

10am – 5:30pm @ The Alaska Bird Observatory (418 Wedgewood Drive). Shop for locally made crafts, Alaskan books & DVDs, t-shirts and other environmentally friendly gifts! Contact ABO for more information at 451-7159.



NAEC Congratulates Our Members who won Alaska Conservation Foundation Annual Conservation Achievement Awards!

Roger Kaye of Fairbanks received the prestigious Lowell Thomas, Jr. Award for Outstanding Civil Service.

Deborah Williams of Anchorage was recognized with the esteemed Olaus Murie Award for Outstanding Professional Contributions.

NAEC THANKS the Alaska Conservation Foundation (ACF) for its outstanding support. ACF has partnered with NAEC for a professional financial review; help with ED search and transition; significant energy and legislative work; and ongoing intern opportunities. 🌱

2009 Run for the Refuge

By Jenna Hertz

On Sunday, August 16th, a lively and diverse crowd of 150 runners, walkers, volunteers and canine companions gathered to celebrate their common stake in protecting Alaska's wild places. This year marked the Northern Alaska Environmental Center's 13th annual Run for the Refuge. We are proud to report that this tradition is alive and growing, supported by thirty-seven local sponsors and unprecedented media coverage.

The theme of this year's run was the coastal plain, or 1002 area, of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. The coastal plain supports a vibrant and unique community of plants, animals, and people and is in need of wilderness designation to protect it from oil and gas drilling schemes like directional drilling. As a tribute to this special place, local artist Maggie Hallam designed a special coastal logo and Arctic Village native Odin Peter used environmentally-friendly water-based ink to print the design onto bandanas from his Fairbanks business, Nomadic Stars. As one optimistic participant pointed out, the light rain made for ideal running conditions and many winners emerged throughout the day. Andrea Devers and Neill Toelle were the winners of the 5k

race. Heather Best and Stian Stenscand led the 10k race. Kris Kelly won the raffle grand prize of a round trip ticket on Wright air. The Northern Center staff led the way in the costume

...this year's run was a proper tribute to its theme of protecting the coasts of the Arctic Refuge.

division, with Executive Director Karen Max Kelly completing the entire race while hugging a tree and Camp Habitat Director Adele Wiejaczka and her dog, Quita running as a wolf and caribou

This year's Run for the Refuge was infused with a strong conservation message. Participants warmed up and finished to the beats of Pete Peter's Indian Pete and the Cruiserz and their "Arctic National Wildlife Refuge"



Sarah James sings and plays a drum to celebrate the Arctic Refuge. © Greta Burkhart

song. Conservation hero Sarah James performed a traditional Gwich'in song and reminded participants that the whole system of life supported by the beautiful coastal plain is priceless in terms of its scientific, economic, spiritual, and cultural value to all people. By bringing together Fairbanks' diverse citizens and businesses and showcasing Gwich'in music, this year's run was a proper tribute to its theme of protecting the coasts of the Arctic Refuge. 🌿

THANKS to all our VOLUNTEERS!

Luci Beach, Greta Burkhart, Sarah James, Aaron Johnson, Stan Justice, Brenna McConnell, Ritchie Musick, Marilyn Richardson, Matias Saari, Mary Shields, Trey Simmons, Anne Swift, Anne Undry, Spencer Zachel, and All the NAEC Staffers!

MANY THANKS TO THIS YEAR'S SPONSORS

The Alaska Club Fairbanks, Apocalypse Design, Arctic Audubon Society, Arctic Travelers Gift Shop, Arctic Treks, The Athlete's Foot, Beaver Sports, The Blue Loon, Blueberry Baby, Bruegger's Bagels, Calypso Farm & Ecology Center, Dancing with the Spirit, Food Factory, Fred Meyers West, Glow Putt Alaska Mini Golf, Grassroots Guitar, The Great Alaskan Bowl Co., Gulliver's Books, Gwich'in Steering Committee, Hot Licks Homemade Ice Cream, Indian Pete and the Cruiserz, Joanne Gates Massage Therapy, Lavelle's Bistro, Maggie Hallam Designs, McCafferty's Coffee House, New Horizons Gallery, Nomadic Stars, Pike's Landing, Prospector Outfitters, Raven Cross Country, Running Club North, Safeway, Sam's Club, Test the Waters Adventure Sports, The Toy Quest, University of Alaska Fairbanks, and Wright Air Service.



Smiling through the rain, this year's runners get off to a great start!
© Greta Burkhart

Arctic Refuge: A Closer Look at Current Threats

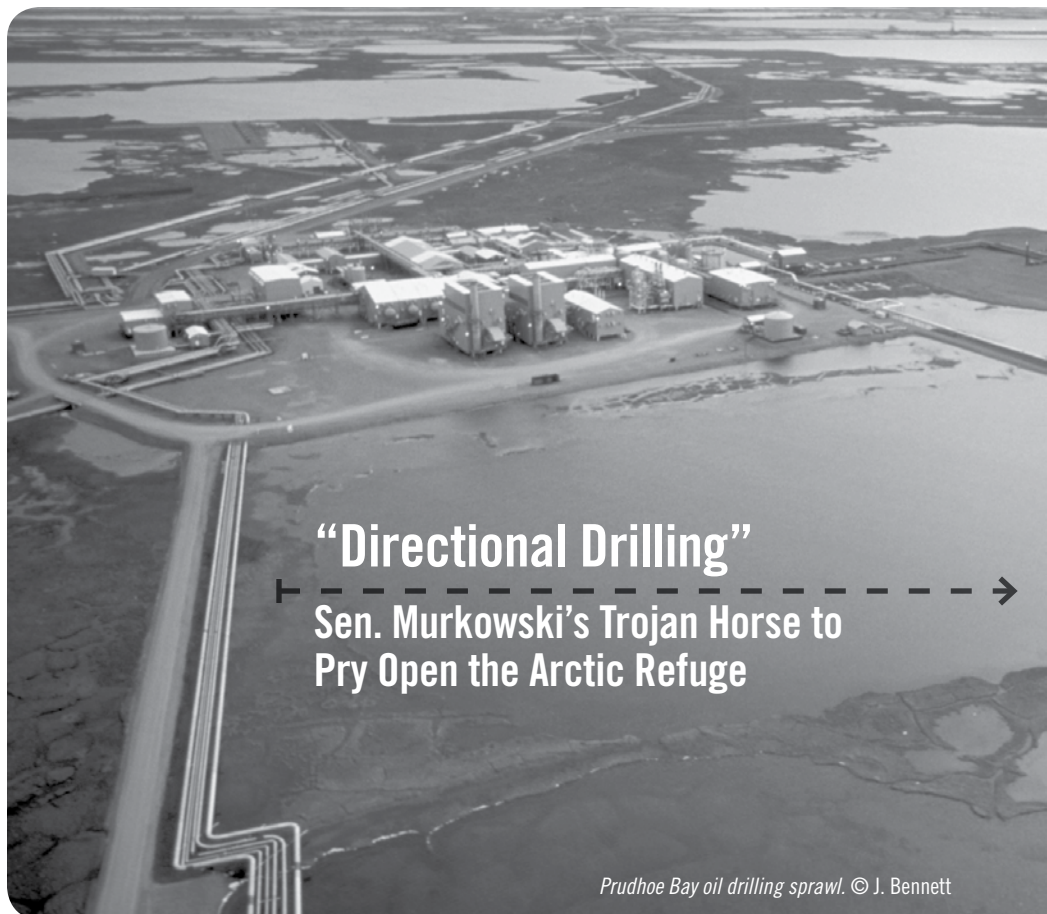
By Pamela A. Miller

Wilderness Bill Gains Support

Support is building in the Congress for permanent protection for the Arctic Refuge. In the House, the Udall-Eisenhower Arctic Wilderness Act (H.R. 39) has 70 cosponsors. The Senate bill (S. 231) has 25 cosponsors. Please ask your members of congress to support these bills to permanently protect the wildlife, wilderness, and Gwich'in people that which depend on the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge coastal plain. Protecting the Arctic Refuge from oil drilling is a tangible symbol of our nation's commitment to move toward clean, renewable energy that halts global warming pollution. ☘



1002 Area – Caribou on the coast. © Pamela A. Miller



“Directional Drilling”
 Sen. Murkowski’s Trojan Horse to
 Pry Open the Arctic Refuge

Prudhoe Bay oil drilling sprawl. © J. Bennett

A Guide to the so-called “Directional Drilling” Bill (S. 503)

To see the full Guide go to www.northern.org or call NAEC at (907)452-5024

THE BOTTOM-LINE:

It’s a Wildlife REFUGE

- The purposes of S. 503 are antithetical to the purposes for which the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge was established by President Eisenhower in 1960: the preservation of its wildlife and wilderness; and by Congress in 1980: conservation of fish, wildlife and habitats, subsistence, water quality and quantity, and to uphold international treaties for Polar Bears.
- National Wildlife Refuges are the only system of federal lands devoted specifically to wildlife, and they require the Secretary of the Interior to maintain the biological integrity, diversity, and environmental health of the system.

YOU CAN POINT OUT...

Murkowski Claims... This bill represents a “true compromise” or “change”

- S. 503 is an old bill in new clothes and flanked by “sexy,” misleading rhetoric.
- The only real change is to open the coastal plain to oil industry drilling and misplaced faith in unproven technology.
- Change—lowering in environmental standards, shift in management from Fish & Wildlife Service to Bureau of Land Management.
- Compromise—of our moral obligations to future generations, precedents, and the essential purposes of the refuge.

Make it Personal!

By Jessie Peterson

The latest threat to the Arctic Refuge is the so-called "directional drilling" legislation (S. 503) which waive national environmental laws and has tricky details obscuring the fact that it would open the entire Arctic Refuge Coastal Plain to oil leasing, exploration, and development. With drilling focused at first along the Canning River and 100 miles of Refuge coasts, the bill places vital polar bear, bird and caribou habitats and wilderness shorelines at risk of devastating oil spills, pollution, and noisy industry.

Alaska's U.S. Senators tout unproven, exaggerated oil potential from the Refuge's speculative resources sought ostensibly through directional drilling dependent on buried subsea pipeline technology that is currently untested in Alaska. Sen. Lisa Murkowski promised to offer her amendment again when the renewable energy and climate change bill comes to the floor of the Senate later this year, so we must remain vigilant to beat back this Trojan Horse. ♻️

VOICES FOR WILD ARCTIC COASTS

Do you know which state has the longest coastline in the U.S.?

It's Alaska and more than 1,100 miles of these productive waters are in the Arctic!

NAEC joined with conservation and Alaska Native groups to generate almost 300,000 comments to Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar in support of protecting the Arctic Ocean and Bristol Bay. Salazar is reconsidering the former administration's draft 5-Year Plan expanding Beaufort and Chukchi Seas leasing. NAEC is also tracking environmental risks of Shell Oil's proposed drilling in sensitive waters off the Arctic Refuge coast and in the Chukchi Sea — where the lack of proven technology to clean up most oil spills imperils polar bears, bowhead whales, Pacific walrus and sensitive coast lines. Check out www.northern.org for our latest action alert. ♻️

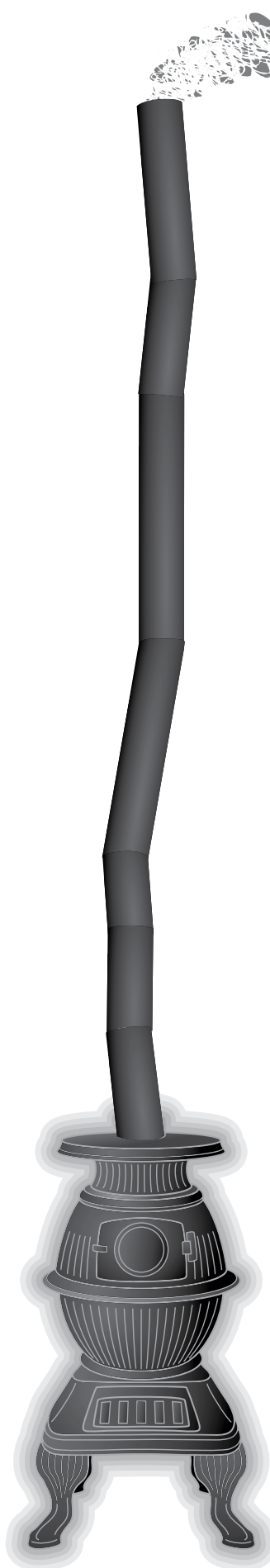
If there is one thing most Alaskans can agree upon, it's that we are a stubborn and passionate group with strong ideas on the direction our communities should progress. A significant lesson we can all learn from the contentious summer of national health care debates is that without solid facts, mutual respect for our neighbors, and a willingness to reflect on personal actions, meaningful change is not possible. The Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB) is decidedly grappling with significant decisions during this beautiful season of change, most notably the issue of our air quality fine particulate (PM 2.5) regulations. We can be responsible community members by empowering ourselves with the facts, and by committing to acting out our conservation values in our daily lives. Personal responsibility can be a contagious first step for positive community change. On September 22nd, the NAEC and Interior Alaska GreenStar hosted a community session entitled Take a Deep Breath to help community members understand the facts of the current FNSB air quality debate.

On October 6 FNSB residents voted for local Borough regulation of EPA air quality standards instead of punting responsibility to the Department of Environmental Conservation at the state level. It is important to reiterate that the FNSB's goal is to meet federal standards for healthy air in Fairbanks. The process of crafting an effective attainment program can bring our community together around shared desires for clean air, affordable energy, and maintaining our Alaskan traditions of self-reliance and neighborliness. Each of us affects our local air quality; each person can take a lead in the effort to reduce our PM 2.5 levels; each of us can easily be part of the solution through personal actions. Clean air is a fine reward for the small efforts we can each put forth!

Here are simple ways individuals can contribute to cleaning up our air:

- Use an EPA certified stove and one that is efficient
- Use dry wood and keep the fire small and hot
- Split the wood to increase the surface area
- Don't leave vehicles idling in parking lots
- Carpool

We can improve the health of our community by demonstrating sound conservation ethics and responsibility in our daily actions. Let's all be cognizant of our actions, do our own part, and reach out to fellow citizens to achieve our shared objective to improve the air we breathe. ♻️



Clean Water for You, by You!

By Brook Brisson

You may have read the recent *New York Times* article “Clean Water Laws Are Neglected, at a Cost in Suffering.” If you did, you were likely struck by the statistics that while there have been 506,000 Clean Water Act (CWA) violations nationally since 2004, only 3% of those violations resulted in fines or other formal punishment by government agencies charged with enforcing the CWA.¹ The CWA was passed by Congress in 1972 with the goal that “the discharge of pollutants into the navigable waters be eliminated by 1985.”² To achieve this end, section 402 of the CWA makes it illegal to discharge a pollutant from a point source into jurisdictional water without a national pollution discharge elimination system (NPDES) permit. Thus, industrial, municipal, and other facilities that discharge pollutants from a “discrete conveyance” must obtain a NPDES permit and comply with all permit limitations. The requirements and limitations imposed by a permit can vary greatly, depending on the identity of the discharger, the content of the discharge, and the receiving body, and permit conditions are meant ensure that all discharges comply with state water quality standards.³ Violations of permits — including discharging in excess of permit limits as well as reporting violations — can bring various levels of sanctions by the permitting and enforcement authority. However, as forcefully illuminated by the *New York Times* article, state agencies’ abilities to administer and enforce the NPDES program are lacking.

The ability of a state agency to effectively administer and enforce the NPDES permit program is a particularly timely issue for Alaskans. The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) earned approval from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) last October to administer the NPDES permitting system in Alaska (to be called an APDES permit once ADEC begins issuing the permits).

EPA’s approval began a three year transition during which the EPA will incrementally hand over permitting and enforcement authority to ADEC; EPA will retain oversight of permitting and enforcement once the transition is complete.⁴

Water is an important resource for all Alaskans. Clean water is essential to proper ecosystem functioning, and we all rely on clean water and healthy ecosystems — for personal use, subsistence activities,

recreation, employment, and cultural and spiritual activities. Thus, it behooves us all to ensure that Alaska’s waters are, and remain, clean. One way you can protect Alaska’s waters is to take an active role in the APDES permitting process by commenting on draft permits, highlighting your concerns and encouraging ADEC to issue an environmentally protective permit. To make sure that you are kept aware of the various proposed permits, write or email ADEC to ask to receive their Permit Issuance Plan (PIP), a biannual document listing all proposed new permits or permit renewals.⁵ By making some time in your schedule to be an active participant in the permitting process, you

will help protect Alaska’s water and all of the elements that a healthy aquatic system supports, including you! 🌿

It behooves us all
to ensure that
Alaska’s waters are,
and remain, clean.

1 Charles Duhigg, *Clean Water Laws Are Neglected, at a Cost in Suffering*, N.Y. TIMES, Sept. 12, 2009.

2 Clean Water Act § 101, 33 U.S.C. § 1251(a)(1).

3 Alaska’s water quality standards can be found in 18 AAC 70.

4 Various villages and conservation groups are currently challenging EPA’s approval of the transfer of Clean Water Act authority to Alaska; briefing is currently before the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals.

5 This document is also available on ADEC’s Division of Water, Alaska Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Program web page.



Meet NAEC's Newcomers!



Meet NAEC's new Clean Water and Mining Program Director!

Brook Brisson grew up hiking, canoeing and playing in the beautiful Green Mountains of Vermont. After college, she headed to Colorado to ski and teach environmental education. When it came time to pursue an advanced degree, Brook chose Lewis and Clark Law School. Upon graduation, she moved to Alaska, and spent last year clerking for the Court of Appeals. Brook is very excited to be back in the conservation community, and is already hard at work protecting Alaska's waters and wildlands. Find out more about Brook's work for the Northern Center at www.northern.org/programs/clean-water-mines.



Welcome NAEC's Campus Energy Organizer!

Amy K. Snider is a senior at the University of Alaska Fairbanks who studies environmental policy and natural resource management. Her interests include public lands management and energy issues. She is excited to be interning at NAEC and hopes to open more dialogue on environmental and energy solutions between the greater community and university, as well as gain valuable skills and experience in her field.



The Northern Center THANKS all those who helped make the "AIR QUALITY" Beer & Bull Session a successful event!

David Bantz, Jim Conner, Joan Hardesty, Karl Hough, Marc Lee, Karl Monetti, Justin Powell, Patrick Roach, Nathan Sapp, Don Trometter, and Silver Gulch Brewery for donating their "tasting room" to host the event.



Camp Habitat THANKS all 2009 donors – we couldn't deliver these great programs without you!

Sandhill Crane Sponsors (\$1,000+)

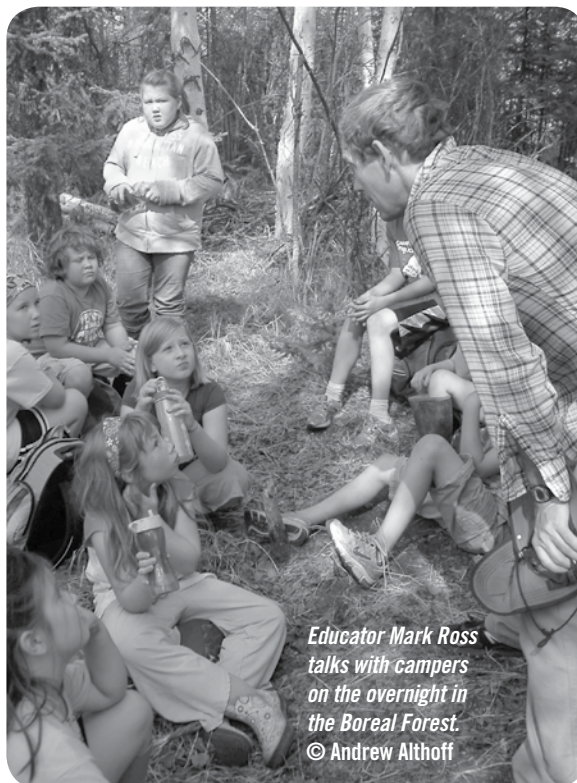
Ben Rogers, Ken Martin, Stan Justice

Golden Plover Sponsor (\$250+)

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Image Optical, Inc.
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Chickadee Sponsor (\$100+)

Guardianship for June Weinstock



Educator Mark Ross talks with campers on the overnight in the Boreal Forest.
© Andrew Althoff

THANKS to these folks for their help around the NAEC office!

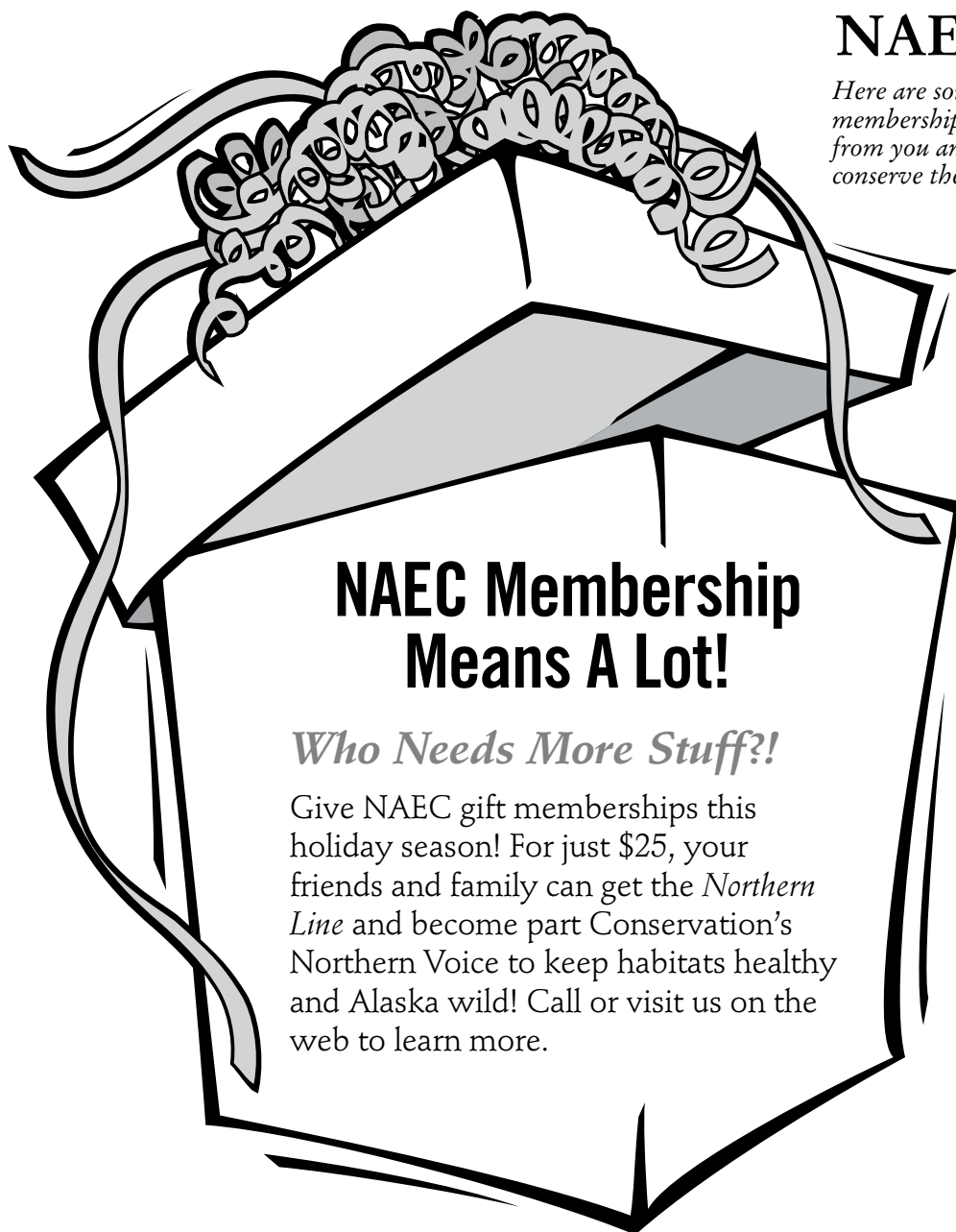
Sylvia Burns, Ritchie Musick and Mary Ann Nickles for stuffing envelopes; Larry Fogleson for painting the exterior trim; Stan Justice for checking the boiler and cleaning the HRV; Jon Miller for installing a new energy-efficient front door; Carl Rosenberg for redirecting office airflow to cool our computer room; and Mary Zalar for filing.



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NAEC Membership Means A Lot!

Who Needs More Stuff?!

Give NAEC gift memberships this holiday season! For just \$25, your friends and family can get the *Northern Line* and become part Conservation's Northern Voice to keep habitats healthy and Alaska wild! Call or visit us on the web to learn more.

NAEC Members Say...

Here are some notes members included with their membership renewals and donations. We enjoy hearing from you and thank you all for doing what you can to conserve the environment!

- "Let me apologize for the tardiness of my contribution—and sorry that it is only \$15, but I am currently unemployed."
- Anonymous
- "All the best with your invaluable work—someone needs to coordinate the conservation work statewide..."
- Erich Franz Schimps, Arcata, CA
- "Thanks for all your good works. I am 70 years old and won my 1st Conservation Award at 14 years of age. I live in Cordova and am a commercial fisherman since 1963. I have watched land distributed to folks over the years only to see it accumulate junk and no trespassing signs. I love the idea that the land belongs to ALL of us! Having a say in how and what kind of development happens where I live is very important."
- Steve Smith, Cordova, AK

Alaskans: Where is your PFD going?

Take that oil money and recycle it into a donation that protects where you live. Donate some or all of it to the NAEC. We'll use it to keep air and water clean, promote clean energy, and preserve cultural connections to critical lands and habitats. **Click on Join & Support at www.northern.org**