

The Willow Chamber of Commerce Year 2013- Presidents report

2013 started with officers President Jim Norcross in the second half of his 2 year term, vice president Jim Huston, Secretary Gail Just, Treasurer Tom Phillips and Board of Directors Barry Stanley and Larry Jacobson.

The first Chamber of Commerce event of the year was placement of the chamber Kiosk on Willow Lake as an information booth for the Iditarod Restart. We supplied four volunteers for that event, providing security and information. Next event was a week later the State Winter Golf Tournament. This is our largest fundraiser, we raised over \$5000.00 Through the rest of the ice season we maintained the golf course and supervised and gave golf instructions to elementary and high school students who had supervised field trips to the lake. We supplied golf balls and clubs to the students. The chamber donated the money (under \$100) for hot dogs and marshmallows for families at the Spring Classic Golf Tournament and supplied golf equipment.

Every year the Chamber hosts the Adopt-a-highway program for litter pickup. The chamber again sponsored Willow Clean Up Week. We distributed the yellow bags through out over 60 miles of roadsides around Willow, provided a collection site where pickers dropped off full bags, free cookies and drinks were available. Chamber members picked roadside bags and took all to the dump. The chamber provided cash prizes as incentives to pickers and this helped to make the nine day clean up week a huge success."We were able to give a \$1000.00 college scholarship to James Davenport to help expenses at the Colorado School of Mines. We also provided another scholarship to a talented local girl to attend basketball camp.

The Chamber donated money to the Willow P.T.A. for the annual Easter Egg Hunt. The chamber also donated money to help the family of Dave Walker to clean up the Thrift Store grounds. The chamber always helps Santa by buying candy for his holiday dinner appearance.,

Another program that was an honor to establish was to recognize some of the special people that are among founding fathers of Willow. Dean and Mazie Bunker, Bill Waldron, Sunny Spain and Emil Stancic, joined the previous winners and namesakes of the award Dorothea Taylor and George Murphy. Each of these people received gold pan awards and will be joined by other Willow Pioneers in years to come. 2013 also added and honored Aileen and Joe Rayfield and Dorothy Taylor and George Murphy as lifetime members of the Willow Chamber of Commerce.

Two longtime family business in Willow shared the 2012 Business Leaders of the Year. Those being Spain and Sons, Inc. and Bunker and Bunker Bus Service. Thank them again for each serving the community for over 50 years.

Through out the entire year our invited speakers presented interesting information on such topics as: legislative progress in Juneau, The Railroad Spur to Pt. Mckenzie, The Gas Pipeline as planned from the North Slope, The Iditarod and restart, the K.A.B.A.T.A.-Kink Arm Bridge Crossing, Sunshine Clinic and Alaska State Troopers investigation into local thefts.

We are making continued progress on a joint venture with W.A.C.O. to execute a \$65,000 grant for improvements to the community center grounds.

And finally we have an ongoing project working with the State of Alaska, Dept. of Transportation (Airports) to finalize a long term permit for all Willow groups like W.A.C.O., the Chamber of Commerce, The Methodist Church, Willow P.T.A. And the Willow elementary school to use Willow Lake for Winter recreation events.

Thank you,
Jim Huston, President