



The Spiral

January, 2009

President's Message

August 28 and the Fall Colors abound. We are aboard domed explorer car *Eklutna** on the Alaska RR McKinley Express train. Hardly an express train, it will carry twenty of these two level domed cars one hundred and forty eight miles up sixteen hundred feet from Fairbanks Alaska to the Denali National Park rail station in four and one half hours.

The lower level of each car offers a breakfast of scrambled eggs, sour dough toast, reindeer sausage and fresh coffee served on china over thick white linen. After breakfast we are not far from Fairbanks when we return to our seats on the observation level. For the ninety passengers on the observation level the views are unrestricted through a clear Plexiglas half cylinder covering the entire length of the railcar. The guide assigned to our railcar asks passengers to interrupt her milepost descriptions by shouting out the 'clock' position of animal sightings. 'Moose at three o'clock', 'eagles overhead at eleven o'clock', 'swans on the pond on the left side' come the interruptions, and passengers rise and extend their cameras to capture the sighting.

Directly viewed or reflected on mirrored pools populating the tundra, aspens are showing their golden leaves against the stunted green spruce and flaming red fire weed. The train will travel at times so slowly that you are tempted reach out from between the cars and somehow capture the colors waving in the gentle air wake made by the train's passing.

At times the elevation change requires the track and train to turn back almost onto itself in its climb such that you can see the train from its blue and yellow electromotive diesel to the last domed car. Overlooking the Nenana river

canyon from the rail track ledge two hundred feet above we see eagles soaring in search of their prey, Dall Sheep on the opposite canyon rim, and rafters gliding over grey green and white glacier waters made into torrents by the boulder strewn river bed.

By the time we arrive at Denali National Park train station we have passed some points of historical interest as noted on the Alaska Railroad Mile Map. '**Happy**' - Once the beginning of a narrow-gauge railroad serving remote mining districts to the north; '**Mears Memorial Bridge**' - The 700-foot steel structure, one of the world's largest single-span bridges; The Indian village of '**Nenana**' - It was a railroad construction camp in the early 1900s. Today it serves as a hub for barge operations, serving communities up and down the Yukon River and connecting waterways for hundreds of miles.'

We will re-board the McKinley Express to travel south to Anchorage two days hence after we explore the Denali National Park; the subject of my next message.

* Eklutna village is located at the head of the Knik Arm of Cook Inlet, at the mouth of the Eklutna River, 25 miles northeast of Anchorage. The area encompasses 6 sq. miles of land and 4 sq. miles of water. The Eklutna area was the site of many Athabascan Indian villages as long as 800 years ago. Today's residents are descendants of the Tanaina tribe.

Larry Peyser, Academy President

Academy Board Vacancies

Academy Treasurer Edie Mayer has resigned for personal reasons. The Academy is now in need of a President-Elect, Curriculum Chair-Elect and Treasurer, each of which is a Board Position. To discuss, volunteer, or commiserate please call Larry Peyser at 642-7170.

Dr. Bob Botsch to Address the Academy at the January General Meeting January 9.

USCA Professor of Political Science Dr. Bob Botsch, will discuss the political impact of the 2008 National Election in Aiken County.

Bob Botsch received his BS in math and physics from N.C. State University in 1968. He then served 3 years in the military attached to the White House Communications Agency during the Nixon administration. He earned his Ph.D. from UNC Chapel Hill in political science in 1977. After a year at Illinois State University, he came to USC Aiken in 1978. Since 1978, Professor Botsch has authored three books, four online texts he makes available to his students at no cost, and numerous scholarly articles, book chapters, and technical reports. He was honored in receiving the USCA Outstanding Service award, the Scholarly Activity Award, and twice winning the Teaching Excellence Award. In 1988 he was named the Carnegie Foundation's CASE "professor of the year" for South Carolina and one of the top ten professors in the nation. He is a Carolina Trustees Professor and holds the Mary Grew Chair in American Studies. In his spare time he oversees the Social Science and Business Research Laboratory, which has been performing surveys in the Aiken County area since the early 1980s.

The January General Meeting will be held Friday, January 9 at 2:00 pm in Penland 106 on the USCA campus. Academy members and guests are welcome. Following the meeting will be a reception with refreshments.

Courses and Events Beginning in January

Please see the published course catalog for more complete descriptions (available on the web at <http://web.usca.edu/dotAsset/5157.pdf>). To enroll, return the form in the published catalog or contact Laura Anderson at USCA (641-3563 / lauraa@usca.edu).

- **Metropolitan Opera Series** – Dr. Maureen Simpson presents four operas to later be seen on screen in Augusta: 1) "Orfeo ed Euridice," by Gluck (screen date 1/24) 2) "Lucia di Lammermoor," by Donizetti (screen date 2/7) 3) "Madama Butterfly," by Puccini (screen date 3/7) 4) "La Cenerentola," by Rossini (screen date 5/9).
Dates: 4 Mondays, starting Jan 12
Time: 11 am to 12:30 pm
- **Healthy and Home Sweet Home- Forever!** - Health care planning for your future. This class is offered to increase your knowledge and 'jump start' your thinking about how to make your desires known without imposing or making unexpected lifestyle changes. Presented by Theresa Feiner, RN, BSN, CLNC, Admissions Coordinator, Hospice.
Dates: 4 Tuesdays, starting Jan 13
Time: 10 am
- **Special Event: The USCA Convocation Center** - Jennifer Kelly, General Manager of the Convocation Center, will show us what it takes to put on a concert, family show, or special event at the Convocation Center. At the end of the discussion you will have a personal tour of the facility.
Date: Wednesday, January 14
Time: 10 am. – 12 noon
- **International Exchange Rate Determination - Why Europe Is So Expensive for Americans** - The factors contributing to the dollar's recent decline relative to European currencies, and its impact on the current high cost of foreign travel and the domestic economy, and future prospects for the dollar in international markets. Presented by Dr. Marsha Shelburn, PhD in Economics from UNC-Chapel Hill and Professor of Economics at USC-Aiken.
Dates: 3 Thursdays, starting Jan 15
Times: 11 am
- **Introduction to American Sign Language – Basic Skills** – Retired sign language interpreter Kathy Reiter will introduce the manual alphabet (fingerspelling) as well as some basic signs of American Sign Language.
Dates: 4 Thursdays, starting Jan 15
Times: 1 pm
- **Aiken County – Political Surveys** - Dr. Bob Botsch, Distinguished Professor Political Science at USC-Aiken, will use annual USCA survey data, to review politically relevant opinions and identifications of Aiken County residents, paying particular attention to the impact of those who do not consider themselves southerners.
Dates: 2 Mondays, starting Jan 19
Time: 3:15 pm
- **Aging and Cognition** – Technical aspects of the effect of aging on cognition. Dr. Dawn Morales will discuss normal changes, risk factors for abnormal changes, reducing the chance of experiencing changes, types of dementia, and testing in older adults,
Dates: 2 Wednesdays starting Jan 21
Time: 1 pm
- **American Conflict - The Declaration of Independence vs. The Constitution** - Ken Brace, Academy member and former social studies teacher from Montgomery County, Maryland, will

lead a discussion on these two pivotal American documents which were designed for two very different purposes and have contributed to serious conflict within the United States.

Dates: 4 Wednesdays, starting Jan 21

Time: 3:30 pm

- **Dulcimer Lectures** - Vicki Gibboney, dulcimer instructor and founding member of the Savannah River Stringband, will present three classes on the Dulcimer. Topics covered will include the two types of the instrument itself, and the early American traditional music often played on them.

Dates: 3 Wednesdays, starting Jan 28

Time: 12 noon

November Board Meeting Summary

(The Academy Board does not meet in December.)

November 14, 2008, 12:30 PM

The meeting was called to order by President Larry Peyser. Also in attendance were Edie Mayer, Erna Arkin, Judy Perkins, Mary Anne Cavanaugh and Dr. Elaine Lacy.

The Treasurer's report was read and accepted.

There were no changes or amendments to the minutes of the last meeting.

Committee Reports

- **Curriculum:** Erna expressed confidence that courses for fall '09 were being organized well. She is expecting the January 5th Curriculum meeting to be able to finalize some courses, and bring more choices to work on further.

Erna and Judy will pursue having an author's class at the Book Stall.

- **Public Relations:** Judy noted that the *Mature Times* supplement to the *Aiken Standard* to appear Thanksgiving week will include the course offerings for the spring '09 semester, plus an article by Doug Wilson about the Academy.
- **Membership:** With the absence of Kathy, Larry pointed out the Christmas party at Woodside was being well organized by Elayne Kantor.

Old business:

- **Open officer positions:** Larry has asked Geraldine Bankoff to be a nominating committee

to try to find people to fill the positions of president-elect and curriculum chair-elect. Geraldine has graciously accepted and is working on the project.

- **Mt. Vintage:** A presentation will be made 11/17/08 regarding the activities of the Academy in hopes of gaining new members.
- **Fee Schedule:** The wording by Wesley Sloan was accepted with the addition of one sentence. Therefore future publications should include this paragraph: "Membership: \$50 per person per semester OR \$100 per academic year (September to May). Membership has its privileges, but also its responsibilities. You may register for as many or as few courses as you wish. In many cases class size is limited by available space. You may only attend those classes for which you have a confirmed registration. A wait list will be established for over-subscribed classes."
- **Catering:** We will continue to have receptions catered into 2009.

New Business:

- **2009 meeting dates:** Board and General Meetings are scheduled for January 9, February 13 and March 13.

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Academy Officers: Larry Peyser, President; Vince Coughlin, Immediate Past President; (Vacancy), President Elect; Glenn Knowles, Secretary, and (Vacancy), Treasurer.

Chairpersons and Other Members of the Academy:

Board of Directors: Erna Arkin, Curriculum Chair; (Vacancy), Curriculum Chair-Elect; Judy Perkins and Elizabeth Majors, Publicity Co-Chairs; Kathy Shulz, Membership Chair.

Non-Members: Mary Anne Cavanaugh, Director of Conferences & Continuing Education; Dr. Elaine Lacey, Faculty Liaison; Dr. Deidre Martin, Vice Chancellor for University Advancement.

Academy on the Web:

<http://web.usca.edu/conted/academy/>

ACADEMY CALENDAR – January 2009						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7 <i>Curriculum Committee</i> 9am [B Conf]	8	9 <i>Board Meeting</i> 12:30pm [P110] <i>General Meeting</i> 2pm [P106]	10
11	12 <i>Opera</i> 11a – 12:30p	13 <i>Staying in Home</i> 10a	14 <i>USCA Convocation Center</i> 10a – 12 noon	15 <i>Intl. Exchange</i> 11 a <i>Sign Language</i> 1 p	16	17
18	19 <i>Opera</i> 11a – 12:30p <i>Aiken Surveys</i> 3:15 p	20 <i>Staying in Home</i> 10a	21 <i>Aging and Cognition</i> 1 p <i>Amer. Conflict</i> 3:30 p [CC]	22 <i>Intl. Exchange</i> 11 a <i>Sign Language</i> 1 p	23	24
25	26 <i>Opera</i> 11a – 12:30p <i>Aiken Surveys</i> 3:15 p	27 <i>Staying in Home</i> 10a	28 <i>Dulcimers</i> 12 noon <i>Aging and Cognition</i> 1 p <i>Amer. Conflict</i> 3:30 p [CC]	29 <i>Intl. Exchange</i> 11 a <i>Sign Language</i> 1 p	30	31

[Location Codes] B = Business & Education Bldg @ USCA H = Humanities & Social Sciences Bldg @ USCA
 N = Nursing Bldg @ USCA P = Penland Bldg @ USCA CC = Cedar Creek Community Building