



Progress Report from the Project Director

MORRIS THOMPSON CULTURAL AND VISITORS CENTER

December 8, 2004

- It's the season for celebrating, and we certainly have reason to do just that! **Congress approved another \$6 million for the Thompson Center.** This brings the total federal contribution to just under \$15 million (our federal fund-raising goal). We now turn our focus to securing our state of Alaska goal of \$4 million and private goal of \$7 million. Thanks to last year's state appropriation of \$550K and Doyon, Limited's gift of \$500K, we have a great start on that already.
- The Fairbanks Daily News-Miner published a story entitled *Funding Milestone Reached* that caught the attention of Robert Sparks, chair of the Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce Transportation Committee. He invited me to make a presentation to his committee about the Center and the recent federal appropriation. Response was very positive, as usual. **Community support for the project is simply overwhelming.**
- Sam Kito sent a letter to the ANCSA Regional Corporations asking for a gift to the Center. **Dennis Metrokin, President of Koniag, Inc. responded with his own personal gift and an invitation to speak at Koniag's January Board of Directors meeting.** We'll be there!
- At the invitation of the Rasmuson Foundation, Robin Renfroe/TCC's Chief Administrative Officer and I are scheduled to take part in a Foraker Group workshop in January in Anchorage with a national consultant who helps non-profits around the country develop a sustainable operating budget for cultural programming. **We appreciate the foundation's willingness to invest in our project, as well as the productive conversations we've had with foundation President Diane Kaplan and board member Nadine Hargesheimer.**
- We are sad to be saying goodbye to APLIC Director Clay Alderson who is retiring next month. We wish him well as he and his wife Claudia relocate to their cabin in the Yukon. In anticipation of his departure, Clay introduced me to David Mills, Superintendent of the National Park Service/Gates of the Arctic and his staff recently. It is likely that Mills will take over management of APLIC. **It is critical that the National Park Service stay involved with our project as we begin the next phase of exhibit planning early next year.** We want to make sure the Center's exhibits meet their needs.
- It was good to see Leadership Team member Bill Deaver, President of Totem Ocean Trailer Express, when he was here Fairbanks for the annual TOTE Holiday reception. **Bill said he's looking forward to the next Leadership Team meeting so we can get to work. Thanks Bill! It's that kind of enthusiasm that will get this project finished!**
- **The land acquisition process is well underway.** Pat Smith/City of Fairbanks reports that he and our land acquisition contractors have had discussions with each of the eight landowners (or their representatives) on our preferred site. Appraisals have been ordered so offers can be made.
- **Don't forget -- the deadline for charitable contributions for this year is Dec 31st.** Call me at 907.459.3880. I'll take your tax-deductible donation over the phone and add your name to our growing list of *Friends of the Morris Thompson Center.*

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