

ALASKA RAILROAD

News Release

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Railroad sets Annual Print Sale-and-Sign Events *2016 artwork features Northern Lights for first time*

ANCHORAGE, Alaska – The Alaska Railroad (ARRC) will make its 2016 annual poster/print available at a sale-and-signing event as part of the *Fairbanks First Friday* program for December 4. The signing event will be held 4:00 to 7:30 p.m. at the Fairbanks Depot (1745 Johansen Expressway). Alaska artist Jason Vukovich will be on hand to sign prints and posters.

Entitled *Lights Above Houston*, the original watercolor painting depicts an Alaska Railroad locomotive moving into a winter landscape with the northern lights shimmering overhead.



2016 artwork by artist Jason Vukovich features the aurora borealis.

“I find endless inspiration in the natural world. In my artwork, I attempt to capture slices of the enormous beauty surrounding us,

throwing in some humor along the way,” said Vukovich. His railroad painting included clear Alaska icons as a means to underscore Houston as a very Alaskan community as it marks its 50th anniversary. For the 2016 print, the Alaska Railroad asked artists to submit ideas featuring Houston, which was incorporated as a city in 1966, and which sits at the juncture of the railroad’s existing main line and a current project to extend a rail spur to Port MacKenzie.

“In addition to showing the Houston area on a clear winter night and the spectacular aurora borealis, I wanted to showcase two of the very best ways to see Alaska – mushing a dogsled and riding the Alaska Railroad,” said Vukovich.

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During the Fairbanks event, the depot gift shop will be open to offer other items that feature the 2016 artwork (such as ornaments, mugs and coasters) along with other ARRC gifts and apparel. The 2016 prints, posters and pins will remain on sale at the Fairbanks Depot (and Anchorage Historic Depot), and may also be purchased from the Alaska Railroad's online Gift Shop at www.AlaskaRailroadGiftShop.com/. Signed and numbered prints cost \$55, posters cost \$30 and pins cost \$5.

A native of Illinois, Jason Vukovich (pictured at right) started his art education in first grade and kept with it for 16 years, earning a degree in Sculpture from the University of Illinois. Soon after graduation, Vukovich joined the Army, which transferred him out of the flatlands and into mountain territory, beginning with his first station at Fort Lewis, WA, followed by tours of duty in Georgia, Europe, Egypt / Middle East, Afghanistan and Central Asia. As a decorated infantry officer, he spent 6 years active duty and 7 years Army Reserve before leaving the military in 2013. That year he moved to Alaska, a mountain haven he dreamt of even as a child. Vukovich is a Control System Designer for Doyon Anvil in downtown Anchorage. His spare time is consumed with family and creating art.



His artwork has been shown across the United States and in British Columbia and Vukovich regularly participates in Anchorage's First Friday art openings. Primarily a watercolor painter, he also works in acrylics, welded steel, and draws dinosaurs with his 6-year-old son Henry. For more on Jason, his artwork and exhibits/showings, follow JasonVukovichArt on Facebook and Etsy, or visit his web site at <http://vukovichart.blogspot.com>.

Renowned artist John Van Zyle produced the first official Alaska Railroad painting in 1979. Since then, the annual tradition (except in 1984, when no painting was released) has evolved into a popular collector's item. More information about the Alaska Railroad's annual art print program, including history and images of prints from the recent past, are available on the Alaska Railroad web site - www.AlaskaRailroad.com/Corporate > Click on COMMUNITY > then Annual Print Contest.

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The ARRC is an Equal Opportunity Corporation. If you need special assistance (including language) in order to participate in any ARRC service, program, or activity, please contact the Alaska Railroad Corporation; P.O. Box 107500; Anchorage, AK 99510; Attention: Legal Department, zappasj@akrr.com, (907) 265-2461; via Alaska Relay Service for hearing impaired - dial 7 11 anywhere inside Alaska, OR dial toll-free from anywhere outside the state 1-800-770-8255 (voice); 1-800 770-8973 (TTY). Upon request, printed materials can be made available in alternate formats.