



When art and engineering collide, a functioning fountain of creativity springs forth

CH2M HILL employees in Anchorage, Alaska, banded together with one of the office's most important clients and local construction contractors, refurbished an outdoor art fountain that today is an eye-catching landmark and a tribute to community volunteerism.

The Loussac Library ice fountain was designed by innovative artist Carl Nesjar in the late 1980s. It was designed to spray water over steel arches laced with cables. In the wintertime, as the water froze it would cling to the steel and be naturally sculpted by the winds. An interesting public arts project, it unfortunately lacked sound engineering.

"It was more of an art project than an engineering project," said CH2M HILL's Jim Wodrich.

The artist, who at the time was delving into the new medium, didn't take into account the problems Anchorage's frigid winter temperatures would have on the fountain's intricate plumbing. The system's

pipes repeatedly froze and broke and repairs became too technical and costly for the volunteers who maintained the fountain. As a result, it sprayed nary a drop of water for about 10 years.

Spurred on by a local community activist, eight CH2M HILL employees worked with the Anchorage Water and Wastewater Utility, which managed the project and will maintain the fountain, to design a system that withstands the cold weather. CH2M HILL also provided assistance with permitting and construction documentation.

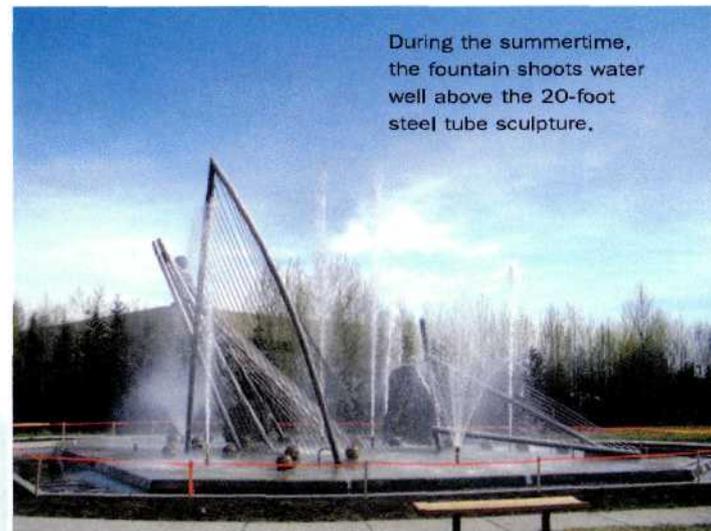
With much fanfare, including front page coverage in the *Anchorage Daily News*, the fountain came to life in May.

"It worked better than we thought.... and that's always nice," Wodrich said.

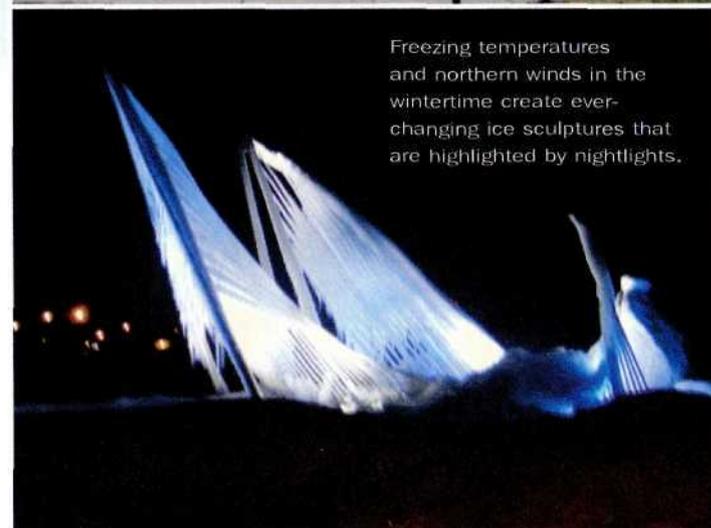
The fountain was dedicated to long-time community activist Kay Linton, who garnered support for the refurbishing effort before her death in January.

CH2M HILL volunteers

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|----------------|---------------|-------------|
| Breck Alderson | Jim Wodrich | Tom Wolf |
| Liao Yang | Rory Benfield | Sue Kennedy |
| Jeff Sever | Floyd Damron | |



During the summertime, the fountain shoots water well above the 20-foot steel tube sculpture.



Freezing temperatures and northern winds in the wintertime create ever-changing ice sculptures that are highlighted by nightlights.