



Light from the Great Land

Volume 3, Issue 1

March 1, 2011

Grand Master's Message

Greetings My Brothers,

Debbie & I would like to thank everyone for the hospitality and warm wishes for a successful 2011. We are genuinely looking forward to meeting as many of you as possible, making new friends and sharing the fellowship that is a Masonic staple.



So far, we have hit the ground running. After Grand Lodge we attended the Potentate's Ball where Illustrious Potentate, Nik, presented me with a new Fez and we enjoyed wonderful entertainment and the camaraderie of friends. On Super Bowl Sunday, Debbie flew home and I went to the Super Bowl party at the Shrine and, boy, do Shriners have fun!

Our Grand Treasurer offered to put me up (or maybe that should be put up with me) for a week and the two of us attended regular Lodge meetings at Anchorage #17, Matanuska #7, and Eagle River

#13. My first "official" meeting was a reception by Anchorage Scottish Rite on Friday the 11th. I can't thank you all enough for wonderful dinners and fellowship; it's good to be a Mason especially in Alaska!

I drove home on Saturday to begin preparing for the Western Conference of Grand Lodges and the Conference of Grand Masters of North America both will be held in Denver. These conferences allow us to network with our peers from the West and all over the continent. It is a way to learn how other Grand Lodges deal with the same challenges we face: getting and retaining members. I hope to learn how other Grand Lodges keep their "members of many years" active and involved in the craft.

And last, but certainly, not least Debbie and I would like to thank MW Johnnie & Mary Wallace for a fun and productive 30th Grand Communication. Many months go into the planning of this event and it showed in the many smiles on the faces of those attending.

Fraternally Yours,
Debbie & Ron Ackerman, GM

*To Learn, Read
To Know, Write
To Master, Teach*

*Motto of The Idaho
Lodge or Research No. 1965*

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Deputy Grand Master



Brethren,

The Grand Lodge Communication for 2011 was a great time for us to meet new friends and renew old friendships. It was a wonderful meeting and I enjoyed talking with all who were in attendance. MW Johnnie Wallace had an outstanding Grand Lodge Communication and the festivities will be remembered for a long time. Thank you MW Johnnie for a great year.

Congratulations to MW Ron Ackerman and in keeping with his theme, I hope to Stand Tall and Strong as we undertake our duties and responsibilities for the year ahead. Each brother adds his contribution to our lodge programs to keep it running. Some show it more than others, but I'm sure that each lodge has a brother or brothers that come to lodge every meeting and seem to remain in the background and unnoticed. He usually says very little except as part of the ritual. He contributes to ensuring the lodge runs efficiently but no one notices. He takes his duties seriously and performs this small task very well. This brother is the one I want to talk about and recognize.

I'll use Bill Smith as the name to give our brother, but the name has no relationship to any active or past brother. Bill usually is one of the first to show up at a lodge meeting. He often is the one that helps in the kitchen during meals and usually wash-

es the dishes after the meal. He will attend lodge committee meetings, whether a member of the committee or not, and sit at the table rarely say anything. Bill is often very attentive as if taking-in all of the conversation between members like a sponge. Usually, no one asks him for his opinion or to make a comment and at the conclusion of the meeting he will help clean up and depart the lodge building without saying very much. Perhaps, Bill is happy in what he is doing for the lodge. Maybe, just maybe, Bill would like to say something but he is rather shy and feels he would be criticized or ridiculed if he says anything. Do you have anyone in your lodge like Bill?

I think every lodge has a Bill or Bills. We need these brothers to help keep our lodge functioning and growing. We usually assign Bill to be the Marshall, Stewards, or Tyler. Maybe Bill is happy in performing these duties and then again, maybe not. Because we assign Bill to these small and menial jobs, we often think that is all Bill is capable of doing. Has anyone offered Bill a chance to be the Chaplain or Junior Deacon or even an elected position? I believe with a little encouragement, Bill can excel, if given the opportunity. He probably knows more about Masonry than you or I because he has kept his mouth shut and listened and learned as others talked about the craft.

We need the Bill Smiths in our lodge but we need to help every Bill Smith become a better person and member. We need to encourage him to get more involved with his lodge and especially to participate and share his thoughts about the lodge and Masonry. I believe that Bill will become a better brother and the lodge will benefit too.

RW Jerry W. Pinion
Deputy Grand Master

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30th Annual Grand Lodge Communication

The Grand Lodge of Alaska met in annual communication February 3 – 4, 2011. This was a festive occasion, with time to meet old friends and to make new ones. The Grand Master, MW Johnnie L. Wallace, conducted the business of Grand Lodge with aplomb and precision. All business was completed on time and with no difficulty. During the business session, the Grand Master made the following pronouncements:

Civil suit between Alaska Masons (Angleton v. Cox) resolved: Grand Master Wallace read a statement into the record apologizing to the plaintiffs in the case for any injuries they may have suffered as a result of actions by previous Grand Lodge officers. MW Wallace stated that all parties in the dispute had agreed that this apology would bring closure and that no further legal actions would be pursued. Final disposition of the case will be made by the superior court sometime in March in consideration of the agreement between the parties.



Honorary Past Grand Master: In the history of the Grand Lodge of Alaska there have been two members named as honorary Past Grand Masters (MW Wendal H. Kuecker in 1997 and MW Thomas O. Mickey in 2001). In his message to the Craft, MW Wallace named RW Donald P. Frizzell honorary Past Grand Master for the

Grand Lodge of Alaska for 2011. After a motion and second, the members present unanimously approved the Grand Masters appointment and welcomed MW Don with whoops and cheers.

Alaska Mason of the Year: At the Fellowship Banquet held on Thursday evening, February 3, MW Wallace announced his selection of Alaska Mason of the Year for 2011. W Van O. Chaney was selected to receive this honor for his significant contribution to Alaskan Masonry. Well done and well deserved Brother Van.



In addition to reports from the various Grand Lodge committees, several legislative items were discussed and voted on. Following is the disposition of the resolutions presented and voted on (synopsis provided for brevity):

Carryover Resolution 2010-10 – “To require all newly raised Master Masons to pass an examination of proficiency on the Master Mason degree before being enrolled in a Lodge.” (**rejected**)

Carryover Resolution 2010-11 – “To delete the requirement for Lodge Secretaries to read the minutes of the previous stated communication at the opening of the next stated communication.” (**adopted**)

Resolution 2011-1 – “To ensure that petitioners for the degrees of Masonry, affiliation, or dual membership answer all the required items on the petition and to eliminate the requirement for the petitioner to provide his Social Security Number.” (**adopted**)

Resolution 2011-2 – “To provide consistent language between the Alaska Masonic Code and

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30th Annual Grand Lodge Communication

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The petition for degrees by replacing the word “God” with “a Supreme Being” wherever the word appears.” **(rejected)**

Resolution 2011-3 – “To amend the *Bylaw* section of the AMC to allow electronic distribution of the Grand Lodge proceedings.” **(adopted)**

Resolution 2011-4 – “To amend the *Constitution* section of the AMC to allow electronic distribution of the Grand Lodge proceedings.” **(adopted)**

Resolution 2011-5 – “To require that amendments to Lodge bylaws be mailed to members of the Lodge, upon request, prior to balloting on the amendments.” **(rejected)**

Finally, after elections were concluded, the Grand Lodge of Alaska found itself with a new slate of officers for 2011. The 2011 elected Grand Lodge officers are:

MW Ronald L. Ackerman, Grand Master
RW Jerry W. Pinion, Deputy Grand master
RW James R. Herrington, Senior Grand Warden
RW David Worel, Junior Grand Warden
RW James D. Grubbs, Grand Treasurer
RW Jerome P. Wasson, Grand Secretary

For further details see the 2011 Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Alaska.

Junior Grand Warden

My Brothers,



Here we are waiting for spring to shine. Weather getting warmer, days getting longer. Our energy is growing. I am so looking forward to spring time!!!

First, I would like to thank all the brothers who had a vote of confidence for me. I was so surprised of the outcome of the elections. Believe me when I say I am

so honored.

I really not sure how many people read this. And I say this because I have never received any letters from Grand Lodge. So with that being said I will say--- My intention was to announce I was

interested in the Jr. Grand warden Job in 2012. John and Billy are two good people and well deserve the recognition of what they have done in each of their lodges! When I heard there were people wanting me in the job this year I was shocked. Actually I still am!! Again thank you!!!

I will continue to work as hard as I have in any Masonic Job. I’m looking forward to traveling with the GL officers to the GM conference in Denver. Please if any one has any questions and Idea’s to make Masonry move forward in Alaska I am all ears.

Finally, congratulations to all the GL officers that moved up in office. More especially, our Grand Master.

Remember if we work as a team we can grow. Our Mason is the number one priority in our fraternity!!!!

Fraternity Yours,
David Worel
Jr. Grand Warden



Light from the Great Land

Immediate Past Grand Master



Brothers all,

Thank you for your continuing support to the Lodges and Grand Lodge in Alaska.

This past week we held our 30th. Annual Communication in Anchorage, Alaska. The

business was conducted and election and Installation of the new Officers was accomplished. Congratulations to the new elected and appointed officers for 2011, we wish for you a great year. Thanks to all that helped to make this session run smoothly, with out your support it would not have been possible.

To all the Brothers that contributed so generously to the Grand Master appeal, the four funds have benefited greatly. AMLAM fund \$1565.00, AMFC fund \$5130.00, Travel fund \$600.00 and General fund \$4720.00. The total donated to date has reached \$12,015.00. During special presentations at the Grand Lodge session a total of \$3,750.00 was received from the Lodges designated for either the General fund, Permanent fund or the Travel Fund. With your continued support this Grand Lodge will continue grow and support the Lodges in Alaska.

It has truly been an honor to serve this year as your Grand Master, an experience I will never forget. Your friendship and fellowship are what makes this Fraternity special.

MW Johnnie L. Wallace
Past Grand Master, 2010

District NEWS



DISTRICT No. 1:

Brethren,

The year is off to a busy start in District 1.

Tanana 3 hosted a First Responder First Aid and AED certification class on February 12. The

lodge bought a defibrillator two years ago, and the bi-annual certification trains members to use the device. Later that evening the interior Lodges held a Valentines dinner at Tanana 3. It was a catered dinner with live entertainment. It was very well attended and all who attended had a great time. Upcoming events include an open house and rummage sale in April, in May they will host International Days, and the Sojourners will present their flag tribute at the June Stated meeting in honor of Flag Day. Tanana 3 has received several petitions, so it should be a busy year for degree work. The District Deputy will

make his official visit at the Stated Meeting on April 13th.

Valdez 4 will be holding a Pancake Breakfast on Saturday, February 26th from 9 am to Noon. The breakfast will be held at the lodge and is open to the entire community. This breakfast is part of an on-going effort that they hope will revitalize the lodge by: 1) helping to generate some recognition and encourage local interest in Masonry, and 2) could be a viable fundraiser for the lodge. If all goes well this breakfast will become a monthly event. The District Deputy's official visit is scheduled for June 14th, and the Gold Rush Days parade is August 7th.

Fairbanks 12 will be cleaning their assigned stretch of road on May 7th as part of Alaska Clean-up Day. On May 19th, at the Stated Meeting, the Sojourners will visit and present their flag tribute ceremony, and the June Stated Meeting and dinner on June 16th will be themed as a tribute to St. John the Baptist, in recognition of St. John the Baptist Day, which is June 24th. The District Deputy will make his official visit to Fairbanks 12 on April 21st.



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North Pole 16 moved into their new Lodge home in January. They had an open house on January 17, and held their first stated meeting in their new home that same evening. It is a very nice facility. The big improvements over their previous home are: the Lodge Room is on the first floor, it is warmer, carpeted, newer, and the furniture doesn't have to be taken down and stored after every meeting. The only negative is the lack of a kitchen and dining area. For the time being they are meeting for dinner at Pagoda prior to the Stated Meetings. At the February Stated meeting the Sojourners will present their flag tribute ceremony. At the April Stated meeting there will be a brief presentation on the history of Paul Revere. On June 18 they will hold the second annual Turkey Shoot at the Chena Hot Springs Road shooting range. The District Deputy will make his official visit to North Pole 16 on March 21st.

Fraternally submitted,
Mike Starkey, DDGM

DISTRICT No. 3:

Aurora Lodge No. 15 (Reported

by Jon Ward, WM)

Our planned special events and communications for the coming year will be as follows.

- Tuesday April 19, MWGM's official visit to District 3 hosted by Aurora 15.
- May 7, Ladies night, Mothers day dinner/dance. Location to be announced. Open invitation to Masons and their wives. Bring your lady and enjoy the agreeable charms of music, have a good dinner and cut the rug. Please make your reservations and inquiries by email to Jonwardaurora@gmail.com

Anchorage Lodge No. 17 (From WM's calendar)

April 16th, 11:00 PM Ladies Night Dinner



DISTRICT No. 4:

I have made contact with the five Lodges in my District, as to the official visit of the Grand Master in April, 2011.

April 5th, **Mt Juneau Gastineaux # 21**

April 6th, **Mt Verstovia # 18**

April 7th, **Ketchikan # 19**

April 8th, **Petersburg # 23**

April 9th, **White Pass # 1**

I am looking forward to a fun and exciting trip with the Grand Master on his Official Visit. Each Lodge received a copy of the Grand Master's Itinerary and I instructed the Lodges, as to some of the things the Grand Master would like to see happen in each Lodge this year.

My 1st article contains some of my intentions; the next article should be filled with interesting news from the Lodges in my District.

VW AI Brookman, DDGM

DISTRICT No. 5:



On Monday, December 27th (St. John the Evangelist's Day), District 5 Masons met for the First Annual Feast of St. John. The occasion was marked by a Table Lodge where the Ritual of the Seven Toasts was observed. Special guests included MW Johnnie L. Wallace, Grand Master of Masons in Alaska and Dr. Talis Colberg, Director of the Mat-Su Campus of the University of Alaska. Dr. Colberg gave a talk on "The Legend of Prestor John". (editor)

Matanuska Lodge No. 7 (Reported by Dennis Oakland, WM)

In April, at a time & date yet to be determined,
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Matanuska Lodge will perform a Temple building Spring cleanup, followed by an open house and picnic.

Our Lodge is participating in the “Bikes for Books” program for the first time this year. On May 4th we will be presenting bikes to six lucky Swanson Elementary students and six more to Sherrod Elementary students at a later date in May.

In late April and early May, our Matanuska Masonic Foundation will make scholarship/grant presentation to deserving Matanuska-Susitna Valley High School seniors. This will be the fifth occurrence of this annual event. The application deadline for this year’s scholarships is March 15th. For more information please follow the link to our page on the Grand Lodge website at http://alaska-mason.org/h_lodges/lodge_07/lodge_07.html.

In June, we will have our annual Chili Cook off at 6:30 PM before our stated communication on the 7th. A planning meeting to prepare a schedule of the times all participating Lodges and appendent and concordant bodies will be responsible for manning the Mason-

ic Booth at the Alaska State Fair will also be held in June at a time and date yet to be determined.

In July, we will be participating in the 4th of July Parade in Wasilla and the Bear Paw Festival in Eagle River. July also marks our celebration of the 60th Anniversary of Matanuska Lodge. This celebration will be held at the Palmer Railroad Depot on Sunday, July 10th.

Iditarod Lodge No. 20 (Reported by Creig Boyd, WM)

Iditarod Lodge will be conducting a bake sale at the Three Bears store on Pitman Road just off the Parks Highway on April 23rd. The Lodge is currently seeking volunteers to provide baked goods and to man the table.

On April 25th, Iditarod will host the Grand Master’s official visit and reception for the Lodges in District No. 5.

Senior Grand Warden



Commitment

Hello to all. It is indeed an honor to be elected as the Senior Grand Warden of the Grand Lodge of Alaska. It’s very hard to explain the honor I feel and I want to thank everyone for electing me. I promise to do the best possible job I can. If you have any concerns or issues that you would like to discuss I am always willing to listen to them. You can call, e-mail or phone.

I want to borrow MW Bro Joe Dees theme for this

issue of the quarterly news letter. Without commitment you will never reach your goals. Most people make a plan every day then commit to it whether they realize it or not. I respectfully request that you recommit yourself to Freemasonry and your lodge. For some, I understand that you have other responsibilities in your life. And yes, sometimes we just want to take an evening off and relax. I honestly believe we all need to do that on regular basis. I understand that some of the Stated Meetings are sometimes boring, but you must also realize that they are necessary. Petition must be balloted on and budgets must be adopted. I think everyone will agree on that. The most important meetings I request you consider committing to is the degree work done in your lodge. How many of you remember when you

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went through your degrees? I'm sure you were very pleased at how many brothers showed up and gave up an evening out their busy schedule to be present at your initiation, passing and raising. And by you attending the degree work in your lodge, you are paying back those brothers that were present during your degrees. Again, I ask each and every one of you to make a commitment to at least try to be present at one or two of the upcoming degrees in your lodge.

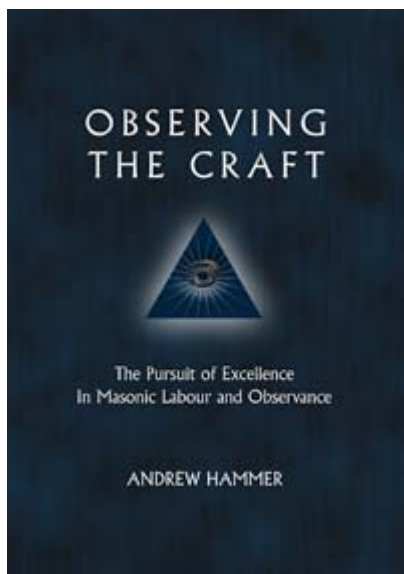
The last thing I request that you consider is to visit another lodge near you if at all possible. I understand that some lodges are located where it is almost impossible to visit. But, I would suggest that if you are planning to travel anywhere, if there is a

lodge there, try to plan your trip in conjunction with their meeting so you can accomplish two things during one trip.

I look forward to seeing everyone as we travel with the Grand Master this year. Last year we had a great time and I met a lot of brothers and sisters and I hope to see you again. Take care and God Bless and I hope the Good Lord takes a likening to ya.

Respectfully
RW Bro James R. Herrington
Senior Grand Warden

Recommended Reading



Book Review by Bo Cline

As I traveled around the country this past summer, I had the pleasure of crossing paths with Brother Andrew Hammer (WM of Alexandria-Washington Lodge No. 22). On August 27th, Andrew spoke before the National Symposium of the Masonic Resto-

ration Foundation in Colorado Springs, CO, and on September 25th, he spoke before The Masonic Society's 2010 Semiannual Meeting in New Orleans, LA. In his presentation, Andrew described the "Keys to Lodge Improvement", which he emphasized as follows:

1. Maintaining silence and circumspection during lodge meetings (i.e. no private discussions among the members or interruptions from the sidelines while lodge is in session)
2. Providing music and appropriate lighting (the lodge musician is in charge of the music and lighting accompanied by a script)
3. Conducting a "Moment of Reflection" after the program presentation
4. Using a gong on bringing a candidate to "LIGHT"
5. Maintaining a higher standard of attire within the lodge (dress code)
6. Providing a program of education at each meeting and using world class speakers
7. Guarding the West Gate. Investigating committee should ask a petitioner:
 - Why do you want to join with us?
 - What do you think Freemasonry is?
 - Why should we select you as a candidate?

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8. Learning the laws of Grand Lodge and putting them to work to improve the lodge

Andrew's paper was a precursor to his new book, "*Observing The Craft – The Pursuit of Excellence In Masonic Labor and Observance*", which was released this past October. *Observing The Craft* is celebration of the preeminence of Craft Masonry. In his book, Andrew describes the elements of an Observant Lodge and how implementing those elements yield a transforming experience for each of its members. Observant Masonry has its distractions and Brother Hammer points out that Freemasonry is diminished when emphasis is focused away from its mission of promoting self awareness and self improvement. ***Observing The Craft is a must read for those men who value Craft Masonry and are seeking a method to restore its greatness.***

Praise for *Observing the Craft*

'In an engaging and balanced style, Andrew Hammer presents a compelling rationale for a more thorough observance of Masonry's best traditions within today's lodges. At a time when Freemasons are clamoring for education and quality events, *Observing the Craft* is an ideal sourcebook for lodge leaders who desire to realize positive and lasting change.'

—Shawn Eyer, Editor, *Philalethes: The Journal of Masonic Research & Letters*

'Brother Hammer has issued an extraordinary call to arms. Brethren young and old who believe that there must be more to lodge than paying bills and approving the minutes need to read his compelling argument. The future of the Craft is in good hands with those who advocate such excellence.'

—Robert Wolfarth, Editor, *The Plumblin: Journal of the Scottish Rite Research Society*

'This treatise, written with passion and conviction, leads the reader back onto the true Masonic path, one from which he will never again be tempted to stray. Every Lodge should read it, and have a copy available for study. The results could lead to re-generation of the Craft, and to richer and more meaningful Masonic pursuits for all.'

—Julian Rees, Past Junior Grand Deacon, United Grand Lodge of England; Contributing Editor, *Freemasonry Today*; Author, *So You Want To Be A Freemason?*

Observing The Craft is currently available online for \$15.99 through book sellers: amazon.com and lulu.com. It will soon be featured as a "Short Talk Bulletin", published by the Masonic Service Association of North America.



Grand Lodge of Alaska sitting Worshipful Masters for 2011.

Thanks to Dave Oaks and *Top Of The World Graphics* for providing the graphics for this newsletter!