



Light from the Great Land

Volume 2, Issue 3

June 1, 2010

Grand Master's Message

Hello Brothers!

Spring is here and what a great time it is to be a Mason in the World today. This year started out great and continues to be. Most of the Lodges in Alaska continue to see a rise in the number of petitions submitted to become a Mason.

The Grand Lodge Officers have been busy since our Communication in February. Several of your officers attended the Western Conference and the Grand Master's Conference in Alexandria, VA. The Western Conference met on Feb. 20, 2010 at the George Washington Masonic Memorial. Our Junior Past Grand Master, MW John R. "Bo" Cline, hosted the session, which was well attended by the six Grand Lodges represented at the meeting. We thank Executive Director of the GWMM, George D. Seghers, for providing the transportation to and from the session and for the use of the North Lodge room to hold the meeting. The Grand Master's conference was held in Alexandria, VA on February 21st & 22nd. On the 22nd we were all bussed to the George Washington Masonic Memorial in the afternoon to continue our meetings and to celebrate George Washington's Birthday as well as the 100 year anniversary of the Masonic Memorial.

Since returning to Alaska, the Grand Lodge Officers have made visits to the lodges in Southeast Alaska for the Grand Masters Official Visits. We were warmly received at each of the five lodges and well fed. I commend all the lodges for all the hard work they put into making us feel special; the fellowship was outstanding.

On April 15th we departed to New Orleans to attend the Scottish Rite Leadership Conference, which was attended by Scottish Rite Brothers from all over Alaska as well as members from all the other states in the southern jurisdiction. The conference was well worth attending with many good subjects discussed and many ideas noted to take us that next step forward.

After arriving back home late evening of April 18th, Mary and I packed our bags and headed to Fairbanks. RW Ron Ackerman and I attended the 41st Annual Prince Hall Grand Lodge Communication which was held at Pike's Landing. We were warmly received by MW Clifford Hastings, his officers, and all the Brothers in attendance. Their newly elected and installed Grand Master is Honorable M W Timothy Mullins. Congratulations to all the newly elected and installed Officers. On the 21st we drove back to Anchorage to attend the joint meeting of Glacier Lodge No. 10, Aurora Lodge No. 15, and Anchorage Lodge No. 17.

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Deputy Grand Master

Greetings My Brothers,

In February I joined several of our Grand Lodge officers at the Conference of Grand Masters in Virginia and had a wonderful time. Seeing the capital of our great nation (even if it was colder than Alaska), dining with General and Martha Washington, and networking

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Grand Master (continued)

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Again the dinner was outstanding and fellowship was abounding. The lodge officers did an outstanding job of opening and introducing the Grand Lodge Officers. On April 26th a joint meeting of Matanuska Lodge No. 7, Eagle River Lodge No. 13, and Iditarod Lodge No. 20 was held at the Elks Lodge in Eagle River. The Pot Luck dinner was great and again the officers did an outstanding job of opening and introductions. On May 8th it was an honor to attend the 25th Anniversary of Eagle River Lodge No. 13. Thanks to all that attended and a special thanks to all the Grand Lodge Officers and Committeemen that have traveled to these meetings in support of the Grand Lodge.

Many projects are being worked to improve Masonry in Alaska. In the near future you will see a new look on our web page. Since our Annual Communication in February, the Grand Secretary has been working to complete the annual report, which

has been delayed due to several year end reports having not been received. I can now report that the total membership for the Grand Lodge of Alaska stands at 1,977 Master Masons. In 2009 we experienced 59 deaths, 27 NPDs, and 35 new Master Masons for the year, for a total gain of 59 and a loss of 101, for a net loss of 42 Brothers. On another matter of ongoing concern that the Grand Lodge has is the Lodges reporting to IRS on the 990 form, the Grand Lodge office has not received copies of those filings from all the Lodges. This year if all lodges in Alaska do not complete the filing by May 15th we stand a good chance of losing our tax exempt status, so please Worshipful Masters make sure your lodge has filed the correct form and provided a copy to the Grand Lodge Secretary's office.

With spring here and summer just around the corner, I wish for you and your family a fun and safe season. Enjoy this time with your families and catch all the fish you need. The month of June will be a busy one for Mary and me as we travel to several Grand Lodge Communications outside.

MW Johnnie L. Wallace

Deputy Grand Master (Cont.)

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with hundreds of brother Masons from North America are just a few of the benefits of this experience. There is nothing better than making new fraternal friends and renewing old friendships.

The ability to meet the Grand Lodge officers that will be your peers as you go through the chairs is, as the commercial says, priceless. Being able to listen to their ideas and give them yours (compare notes) while looking for ways to improve our Grand Lodges and ultimately our local lodges is an invaluable opportunity of which I urge every Grand

Lodge officer to avail themselves.

One of the reasons I like to go to the Conference of Grand Masters is for the classes! The most asked questions are: How do we keep members? How do we get them to come back to Lodge after they make Master Mason? How do we keep the Lodges growing? Sound familiar? None of the worries we have about our own lodges are new, someone else has had, or still has, those same worries and at large Masonic gatherings you will find others that are willing to help you answer those questions. The following are five steps that several Lodges have taken to assist them in fulfilling this objective more successfully:

First - One motivated craftsman is worth one hundred who sit around and do nothing. In fact, many of these

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Deputy Grand Master (Cont.)

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successful lodges have between 20 and 30 hard working, dedicated, and spirited members who invest their time and energies to make sure that new members are engaged, educated and mentored all the way through becoming Master Masons. It doesn't take 20 or 30; however, it just takes one.

Second - Communicate expectations to new as well as seasoned members. You will be surprised to find that many masons do not know what their lodge expects of them as members or, in the case of the officers, what their expected roles are within the Lodge.

Third - Create an experience for new Masons. You don't have to have fireworks or circus clowns at every degree but each degree should be memorable. Ask each individual if some part of the experience made their degree work worth remembering. The best way is to call or check in on them as they go through the process.

Fourth - To often we see members in lodges put into roles that they either dislike or are unable to perform. Listen to your brothers; not all are leaders. Many are happiest working hard in the background to improve their lodge or add to its success.

Finally - Reflect upon the obligations we all take as Freemasons and teach them to the new members so that they in turn can better understand them and truly live them. The success of a lodge has many aspects and depends on different measures that ensure its good governance and effective management.

And now on to the best part of my job, traveling around the State with the Grand Master, where I get to renew old friendships and make new fraternal friends. I hope to see you all in your Lodges.

Fraternally, Ron Ackerman, DGM



Pictured above our Deputy Grand Master, Ron Ackerman, helps to spruce up the Masonic plot in Skagway's Pioneer

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Senior Grand Warden

I send you greetings from the West, Brethren.

The Grand Lodge Elected Officers have been traveling a lot since the last newsletter. The Grand Master, MW Johnnie L. Wallace; the Deputy Grand Master, RW Ron Ackerman; Senior Grand Warden, RW Jerry Pinion; and the Junior Grand Warden, RW Jim Herrington was in attendance at the start of the District #4 Official Visitation in Mt Juneau-Gastineau Lodge in Juneau in April. The Grand Master, Deputy Grand Master, and Junior Grand Warden continued to visit the other four lodges in District #4 but I chose to return to Anchorage for other scheduled activities. I still promise to visit all lodges in Southeast Alaska next year. We had addi-

tional Official Visitations to District #3 and District #5. During all of the visitations, I met a lot of old friends and made some new ones. I always find it interesting and enjoyable to listen to many of our lodge brethren give their viewpoints on Masonry and a variety of other subjects. I enjoy having our wives attend to listen to the Grand Masters Message.

Our visitations are over until September so I want everyone to have a wonderful summer of fishing, camping, hunting, fishing, boating, fishing, cutting the lawn, and all the other things we do with all of the great weather and many, many hours of daylight.

Don't forget to attend the Grand Assembly of Rainbow June 14-17, 2010 in Anchorage. See you there!

In Brotherly Love and Friendship,
RW Jerry W. Pinion, Senior Grand Warden

Junior Grand Warden

My Brethren,

As the new Junior Grand Warden I have been put in charge of Fund Raising for the Grand Lodge. At the present time the Grand Lodge office has some very nice items for sale. We have some belt with the engraved square and compose on the buckles. These belts are extremely long and must be cut to you desired length. Be careful not to cut them too short. One you put a knife to them they are yours. Our hats have the square and compose embroidered on them also. They are tan in color and we don't have very many of them left. The jackets we have are by order only. Unfortunately I do not have a picture of one for your inspection. We also have some T shirts and some polo shirt for sale. The ties were very popular at Grand Lodge and we have ordered some more of them in different colors other than just the black. Once I receive them I will let you know just what has arrived and then you can order some. If you are interested in any of these

items please call Tom at the Grand Lodge Office or e-mail him and let him know what you would like to order. Tom or I will box it up and send it out to you.

The second item on my mind is new ideas to raise money for the Grand Lodge or your Lodge. If your lodge is doing something that seems to be working please pass it on to me in order that I might let the other lodges know what you are doing. I know that Matanuska Lodge No. 7 had a bake sale last fall and they raised a nice chunk of money. I don't remember the exact amount but I'm pretty sure it was over \$500.00. They also had brochures available and of course a couple of petitions on hand for those interest.

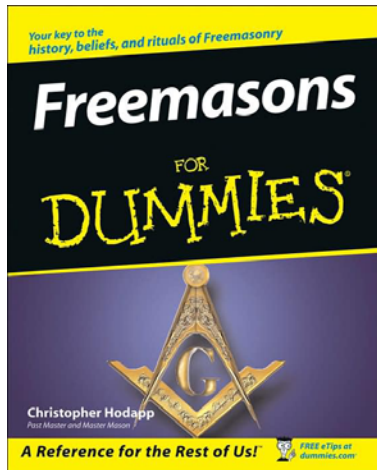
I want to wish everyone a great summer and please be safe while you are out there on the roads and water. Remember water safety and don't think wearing a life jacket is only for children. If you get tired while driving pull over and take a cat nap or at least a break. Remember it's better to be late than not to get there at all.

Fraternally,
James R. Herrington
Junior Grand Warden



Light from the Great Land

Recommended Reading



Book Review by Don Chaffin

I recently had the opportunity to attend a presentation by Chris Hodapp who was the guest speaker at a lodge near my New York home. I had heard of his book and was planning on purchasing it. Attending this speaking engagement afforded me the opportunity to not only purchase the book, but to meet and speak with the author as well.

Freemasons for Dummies is an excellent resource for both individuals familiar with Freemasonry and those who are not. As the title of the book is *Freemasons for Dummies*, it implies that it would only be useful to someone who knew nothing about Masonry. In this respect, the title is very misleading. Even someone who considers themselves very knowledgeable on the subject of Freemasons will certainly learn a thing or three by reading this book. Additionally, it is subtitled *A Reference For The Rest Of Us* and as such I will forever utilize it as a reference when I have a question about Masonry that I need answered. Brother Hodapp passes along a great deal of knowledge in the book and I especially like the way he presents this information, utilizing a humorous tone.

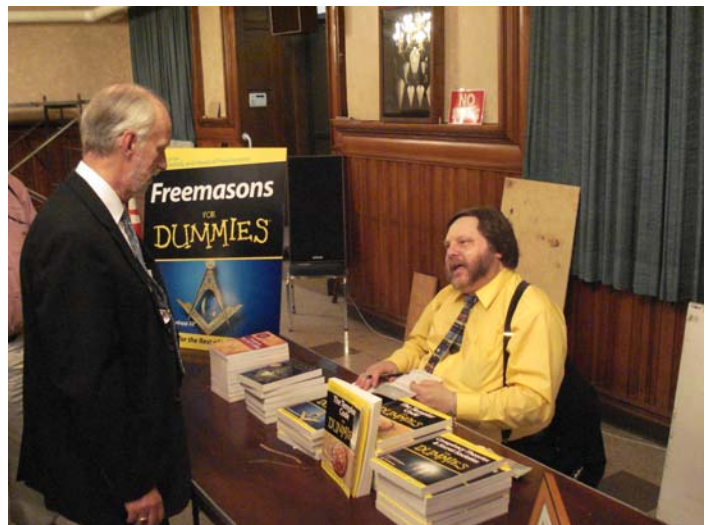
This is the perfect time for a book of this type to be on



Brother Chris Hodapp addresses brethren at the Albany, NY Masonic Temple.

the market. Dan Brown's books and movies are causing a lot of interest in Freemasonry. *Freemasons for Dummies* is being read by many people who might not have otherwise read a book about Masonry, especially one that conveys accurate information about the Craft. Masons and non-Masons alike

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M.W. Brother Don Chaffin meets with W. Brother Christopher Hodapp at a book signing held at Albany Masonic Temple in Albany, New York.



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will find this book very informative about all things Masonic.

Freemasons for Dummies is not going to make you an expert on Masonry. However, it is a great primer to get your feet wet. When you finish reading this book, you'll understand the basics of Freemasonry and a little about many of the Appendant and Concordant bodies.

This is a great book for someone who wants to get a solid foundation of knowledge about Freemasonry. I would especially recommend this book to someone that is considering joining, but hasn't yet made up their mind. This book will give you a quick peek into the world of Freemasonry and will help you decide if it's what you are looking for.

I believe that *Freemasons for Dummies* belongs on every Mason's bookshelf. One of our brothers suggested that our lodge might want to consider donating a few copies of this book to our town library, and maybe even our local high school libraries. This would be a great way of informing our community about Freemasonry.

It might be a good idea for each lodge to present new members with a copy of *Freemasons for Dummies*. However, my bet is that they probably already own it.

Happy reading!

Fraternally,
Don Chaffin, PGM

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