



Light from the Great Land

Volume 4, Issue 2

June 1, 2012

Grand Master's Message



Greetings Brethren,

It has been an exciting and informative three months since becoming your Grand Master. The Grand Lodge Officers and I attended the Western Conference of Grand Lodges and the Conference of Grand Masters of North America in

Atlanta the latter part of February. What a wonderful time to meet with my counterparts from other jurisdictions during the conference and discuss issues relating to Masonry throughout North America and the world.

My wife, Ginger, and I took the opportunity to visit the Grand Lodge of Japan in March and meet the new Grand Master, Kuzufumi Mabuchi and the Past Grand Master and Grand Secretary, Phil Ambrose. MW Phil has visited our Grand Communication several times and I thought we should return the favor. MW Kuzufumi and MW Phil promised to attend our Grand Communication in February. During our visit, Ginger and I were treated royally.

The Grand Lodge Officers and I began the Of-

ficial Visitations to the Alaska Lodges in April with Mt Juneau-Gastineaux No. 21 being the first lodge. Again, we were met at the hotel by a limousine and transported to dinner, lodge, and back to the hotel. Before dinner, the Scottish Rite brothers from the Juneau Valley honored us with an Archway of Swords during introductions. The Worshipful Master Robert Heflin and the brethren of Mt. Juneau-Gastineaux No. 21 provided us with a wonderful evening.

The next day, we were off to Sitka and Mt. Verstovia Lodge No. 18 where we had a delicious dinner, great fellowship, and a sunny sky. The Worshipful Master, David Reid, and all of the brethren of Mt. Verstovia Lodge No. 18 were very gracious with their honors and courtesies.

Ketchikan Lodge No. 19 was our next Official Visit where the weather was still sunny and beautiful. Worshipful Master Bruce White and the brethren treated the attending Grand Lodge Officers and me to a great dinner, friendship, and lodge meeting.

It was on to Petersburg Lodge No. 23 and the weather was still beautiful. The Grand Lodge Officers and I had a wonderful time walking around Petersburg and enjoying the good food and friendly people. Roger Hansen, Lodge Secretary, was the only officer to join us for dinner since the other Lodge Officers were busy with the fishing season.

Our last Official Visit to Southeast Alaska was to visit Skagway and White Pass Lodge No. 1. The lodge meeting was in the afternoon before dinner but was well attended and went very well. Our brethren from Whitehorse, Yukon Territory came to visit during our stay and we really enjoyed everyone's hospitality. We sincerely appreciate the efforts of the Worshipful Master Andrew Tronrud, MW Ron Ackerman, and all of the brethren in White Pass Lodge No. 1 for making our visit a memorable one.

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"A book is the most effective weapon against intolerance and ignorance."

- Lyndon Baines Johnson



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Sandwiched in between the Official Visits was a trip to the Grand Lodge of Hawaii. The Grand Master, Monty Glover, rededicated the renovation to the Grand Lodge Office Building with a Corner Stone Laying Ceremony which was performed very well. I attended the Grand Lodge of Hawaii Communication and was impressed with the Installation of the new Grand Master, Antonio M. Lagaya. Ginger and I had a wonderful trip but it was too hot.

We continued our Official Visits during April to the three lodges in Anchorage. Aurora Lodge No. 15 was the first and the Grand Lodge Officers and I were received honorably by the Worshipful Master Joe Dahl. Dinner was delicious and the lodge room was full of members and visiting brethren. Thank you Worshipful Joe for a great evening.

Anchorage Lodge No. 17 was the second visit where the lodge room was again full of members and visiting brethren. The dinner was again delicious and the Worshipful Master Mark Sledge and brethren of Anchorage Lodge No. 17 hosted us very well.

Glacier Lodge No. 10 was the last Official Visit of the Anchorage Lodges. Since this was my home lodge, the Worshipful Master Bruce Morgan and brethren treated me and the Grand Lodge Officers to a wonderful Prime Rib Dinner cooked perfectly by W Clarence Keto. I was honored to present a Past Masters Apron to W David Prentice during my visit. Thank you Glacier Lodge for all of the Honors and Courtesies extended to the Grand Lodge Officers and me during my visit.

The Official Visit for the first half of the year culminated with the visit to District No. 5 which consists of Matanuska Lodge No. 7, Eagle River Lodge No. 13, and Iditarod Lodge No. 20 on May 8. During the visit, I was honored to present the Mark Twain Award, Sponsored by the Masonic Services Association, to Matanuska Lodge No. 7. This is the first lodge in Alaska to receive this

award. Additionally, I presented MW Harry Koenen with his 25 Year Membership Certificate and Pin. My thanks go to all of the officers and members of Matanuska Lodge No. 7, Eagle River Lodge No. 13, and Iditarod Lodge No. 20 for a wonderful evening of good food and fellowship.

During all visitations, I presented my message and theme for the year, "Getting Back to Alaska" to all of the lodge brethren. I believe it has been well received by all and most agree that we should do Alaska Masonic Work.

"May the God of Love and Peace delight to dwell with you and bless you."

MW Jerry W. Pinion
Grand Master



Presentation of Mark Twain Award to Matanuska Lodge No. 7

(Pictured l. to r.) MW Bo Cline, VW Dennis Oakland, W Mitchel Coultard (WM), and MW Jerry Pinion (GM)

We're on the Web. Check us out at:
<http://www.alaska-mason.org>



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Deputy Grand Master



I recently came across this story and thought it was interesting. I have provided it for your pleasure. It is in no way meant to point fingers, or to ridicule anyone. I think it could apply to some but not to all. The author is unknown:

Setting the Standards

I had stepped into the anteroom to dispose of my empty coffee cup. We had just finished with an officers' meeting that I had to attend as the Senior Deacon. I noticed that Ferris Thompson, a Past Master and the current chaplain was setting down his brief case and haphazardly packing his pipe. "I suppose I'll join you outside for a cigarette," I said. We stepped into the chilly winter night, the sky was clear and the wind was blowing stiffly from the northwest.

While I pulled one of my Winston's out and lit it, Ferris asked me how the officers' meeting went. "Well, it was okay" I responded, "but I can't understand why most of our officers refuse to fulfill the duties of their chair."

"I share your frustrations," Ferris said, absent mindedly puffing his pipe. "It doesn't seem as though some of the men who desire to be important necessarily appreciate the responsibility. They love the title, the attention, but lack the true desire to lead. I've seen it throughout my thirty years in the fraternity. Past Masters who never return to lodge after they have that feather in their cap, men who are officers in every organization and are never around to do the work, and especially those who can't even perform the simple task of being proficient in opening and closing the lodge."

Ferris paused to tamp the dying embers in his Stanwell: I considered the fact that this has been a

problem for quite some time. "What can we do to stop it? I mean, just because it has become the norm doesn't mean it is right."

"Well that is the rub isn't it?" he was looking up at the stars. "We stay silent in hopes of preserving harmony, yet if we were as skilled in the art of leadership development as we are in the art of silence we could set a new standard. You are an up and coming officer in the line, don't let those who succeed you fall short of your expectations. Teach them their office and how to perform their duties. Then, when you become Master, you will have a line full of competent and helpful officers."

What if some of the officers refuse to learn what I teach them?" "Simple, you ask that the Worshipful Master to halt their advancement. Harmony is one thing letting the blind lead the blind is another." He placed his pipe in his pocket and opened the door.

"I guess I have a bigger responsibility as Senior Deacon than I thought I did." I said.

"That depends," he replied, "are you going to set a new Standard?"

Fraternally
RW James R. Herrington
Deputy Grand Master





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Senior Grand Warden



MENTORING

To retain the new membership in your lodge a strong Mentoring program is an important ingredient in your Membership Plan. I would like to share a little about the importance of a Mentoring program: what a mentor is, what mentors do, and the characteristics of an ideal

mentor. The following outline was extracted from the [College of DuPage, Glen Ellyn, IL website](#), and is reproduced here with their permission:

1. What is a Mentor?

A mentor is a person who agrees to help teach and guide another person. Historically, the relationship between the mentor and the person seeking a mentor has been voluntary, informal, and mutually-agreed upon. A person may seek out a specific mentor; or a mentor may select a specific protégé—the best relationships often happen with self-selection (rather than through a formal assignment).

2. What Do Mentors Do?

Mentors teach through

- Sharing
- Modeling
- Guiding
- Advising
- Supporting
- Networking

Mentors **SHARE** their own experiences—both successes and failures. They teach through stories and anecdotes, and offer insights that can only come with experience.

Mentors **MODEL** professional behavior.

Mentors **GUIDE** people through the learning landscape of their particular lodges; they teach people things that cannot be taught in school.

Mentors **ADVISE** people on complex situations that may not have a single right answer or approach. They offer observations and explanations that help people learn.

Mentors **SUPPORT** people and offer reassurance when learning becomes difficult or overwhelming.

Mentors **NETWORK** with other members for growth and development, and provide people with the opportunity to do likewise.

3. What Are the Characteristics of Your Ideal Mentor?

First, consider the characteristics of a good mentor.

These may include:

- A desire to help
- Broad-based and up-to-date knowledge and technical skills
- Life-long learner with aptitude for teaching
- Strong people and communication skills
- High energy levels (and not the first person out the door at closing)
- Positive outlook and sense of humor
- Good manager of time and resources

Next, decide what characteristics you value most in a mentor. This will vary from individual to individual. One person may value a friendly, easy-going relationship with a mentor most, while another may value knowledge and technical skills over people skills.

4. What are Your Goals in Working with a Mentor?

Determine how a mentor could best help you, and what you wish to learn. Set specific learning goals, whether they are tactical (learning how a particular job is done) or strategic (learning what and why something is done). Also set a specific time period to



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achieve your goals.

5. What Can You Do to Be an Effective Mentoring Protégé?

Effective mentoring requires that everyone involved be committed to learning. Once you have determined your goals, you must also:

- Accept responsibility for your learning
- Be open to new ideas and ways of learning
- Communicate effectively
- Accept feedback and act on it
- Cooperate
- Be able to ask for help when you need it

6. What Can You Do for Your Mentor?

Effective mentoring requires time and effort on the part of the mentor. You will get the most benefit out of a mentoring relationship when you are proactive and responsible. You can help your mentor out by:

- Communicating regularly and efficiently
- Being helpful and supportive in return
- Keeping trust levels high through confidentiality
- Holding yourself to professional standards
- Staying positive
- Addressing problems as they arise

Tips for Mentoring Protégés:

How to become less tactical and more strategic

Strategic thinking considers why a job is done. It involves thinking, planning, and actions.

How to think strategically:

- Consider the big picture
- Recognize patterns and trends
- Honor priorities
- Anticipate issues
- Predict outcomes
- Have smart alternatives to fall back upon
- Deal with issues
 - * Understand the overriding mission and purpose of our fraternity
 - * must have knowledge or know how to get the answers

- * Know what our Masonic family does that other fraternities do not or cannot do.
- * Visualize where the fraternity will be in the future

Tactical thinking concerns how to get the job done:

- Knowing the hands-on skills necessary.
- Making sure strategic goals are met.
- Performing each task with quality and efficiency.

How to get your mentor to help you become more strategic:

- Interview your mentor about strategic versus tactical approaches to your job.
- Ask your mentor to help you develop strategic approaches to your job or learning activities.
- Ask your mentor to be frank about your strengths and weaknesses.
- Do a self analysis using past projects or learning activities.
- Research the literature and report to your mentor.
- Shadow someone with a reputation for being strategic and learn from them.
- Network with your manager and your peers.

I hope this information helps you with your membership plan.

My Friends, Please contact me anytime. I'll be happy to help set up a plan or even come to your lodge to explain further. I'm here to support you and your lodge. Finally, Kathy and I wish you and your families a very happy Summer!!!!!!

“Remember if we work as a team we can grow”

Fraternally Yours,

David Worel
Sr. Grand Warden
Contact info (907) 378-4640
Email dw@nlhc.com



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Masonic School Awards

“Motivation plays a part in every kind of activity. What is the motivation for Masons to foster and promote the numerous school awards programs and scholarships that we have? It is this: Freemasonry wishes to build better people and better tomorrows. Freemasonry is firmly committed to building a better community and a better world. For these reasons, we feel the nurturing of the leaders of tomorrow's society is vitally necessary! Freemasons, collectively, must support the public school system. We recognize the unique opportunity that scholarship and awards programs offer in recognizing and supporting tomorrow's leadership. That, in a "nutshell", is what school awards and scholarship programs are all about.

We are depending on our young people for the future, but for the present, we must let them know that they can depend on us!”

(From the MSA Short Talk Bulletin, [“Freemasonry and Public Education”](#) by MW Sidney Kase, PGM, Grand Lodge of Washington and provided here at the request of W Clarence Keto, Chairman, Public Schools Committee. The full text of this Short Talk Bulletin may be read by clicking on the hyperlink above- - Editor)

THE SITKA BIKE PROGRAM

Once a month, beginning in January of each year, Mt. Verstovia Lodge No. 18 awards a bicycle to a third grade student selected from one of five classes, at the Keet Gooshi Heen Elementary School in Sitka. Three or four members from Mt. Verstovia Lodge are present to make the award, along with the student's parent/parents and representatives from the local press. This event is repeated every month until a student in each of the elementary school's five third grade classes is awarded a bike. During the bike presentation, a member of Mt. Verstovia Lodge gives a short bike safety talk. The teacher is then asked to tell why the student, who is to receive the bike, was selected, after which the student's name is

read. The student is also presented with bike helmet and lock.

The bike give away was the brain child of our recently departed Brother Carol Fader, who brought this program to Sitka, when he relocated there from Ketchikan. When he introduced the program to the Lodge, Bro. Fader explained that each third grade teacher would establish their own standards for selecting the student from among their class, with no involvement from the Mt. Verstovia Lodge in the selection. The teachers then provide the students' names to Mt. Verstovia Lodge, who purchase, transport, and award the bike.

Mt. Verstovia Lodge No. 18 has continued the tradition this year, with the presentation of bikes to one student in each of the five third grade classes in the Sitka School District, who best represented the good citizenship criteria established by their teachers and the Lodge.

Jack Ozment

Mt. Verstovia bike program chair

RAYMOND, JESSIE, & RAE STEVENS TRUST SCHOLARSHIP

Rae Hoops was the owner and operator of a dress shop in downtown Juneau before tour ships and tee-shirt shops took over that part of town. She retired to Santa Barbara and according to oral tradition, married and on her death, left an estate to be managed for scholarships for graduating seniors from Juneau. The proceeds from the trust are split between the Juneau Elks Lodge # 420 and Mt Juneau Gastineaux Lodge No. 21 (MTJG21). There is a story that the bankers and estate attorney in Santa Barbara were so bold as to suggest that Juneau was too small to be able to manage such funds. The recently departed VW Jim Taylor, a CPA, wrote and advised the scoundrels who had been milking the cash cow, that the Alaskans were fully capable of handling that and much larger sums without any problems. The prob-



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lem ceased to be a problem.

For the graduating class of 2012, MTJG21 awarded scholarships of \$2000 per year, renewable for up to 4 years (\$8000 total) were awarded to 6 highly qualified seniors. Two were awarded to Thunder Mountain High School (TMHS) graduates, and 4 to Juneau Douglas High School (JDHS) graduates. The awardees for 2012 are Sorcha Hazelton (TMHS), Hannah Everett (TMHS), Sarah McDermott (JDHS), Haila Schultz (JDHS), Kathleen Strehler (JDHS), and Ethan Roemeling (JDHS). Mr. Roemling has the distinction of being selected by both the Elks Lodge and Mt Juneau Gastineaux Lodge for two scholarships from this trust fund. Sorcha Hazelton is a Past Worthy Advisor of Juneau Assembly No. 3, International Order of the Rainbow for Girls. The Lodge also provides a lap top computer with each scholarship. The laptops are presented at the awards ceremony by Lodge Officers.

Ken Vaughan, Junior Warden
Mt. Juneau Gastineaux Lodge No. 21

KENAI OUTSTANDING STUDENT OF THE YEAR AWARDS

On Friday April the 27th at 6:30 pm at Kenai Central High School in the Large Theater the 45th Annual Outstanding Student of the Year Awards will be presented by the Kenai Peninsula Masonic Lodges which are Seward Lodge #6 Kenai Lodge #11 and Sterling Lodge #22. This is the first year all three Peninsula lodges have officially participated in the event however members from all the lodges have supported and contributed since its beginning.

This year we are honoring 30 Students from 28 Schools in the Kenai Peninsula area, the Honor students will receive a cash award to be announced, an Outstanding Student of the year certificate from our lodges and a certificate from the Governor's office a personalized plaque for their home and a name plate to be placed on the Honor Awards plaque located in each school. A book on Dynamic Freedom and the

Students will be introduced and presented on stage during the formal event.

We also will be presenting three one thousand dollar scholarships, two to local students one to a student from the Nome area, all yet to be announced.

Representatives from all three lodges, Mr. Dave Jones Assistant Superintendent of the Kenai Peninsula School District and the Mayor from Soldotna Peter Micciche will be presenting the awards.

The Hero's of 76 Sojourns of Alaska will be giving a flag presentation. This flag presentation consists of the history of our nations flags, with replica flags and the Sojourners are in colonial attire.

The Master of Ceremonies will be Ralph Sterling who is currently Chairman of the Outstanding Student Awards program and Master of Kenai Lodge #11 Free & Accepted Masons Located in Soldotna Alaska.

Refreshments will be provided by the Ladies of the Order of the Eastern Star, "Star of the North Chapter # 17" also located in Soldotna and the local Shriners will be attending as ushers and escorts as needed.

Ralph Sterling, WM
Kenai Lodge No. 11

MATANUSKA MASONIC FOUNDATION ACADEMIC GRANTS

On Tuesday evening, May 15, 2012, two Mat-Su Valley seniors received educational grants (scholarships) from the Matanuska Masonic Foundation (MMF) totaling \$3,000. The presentations of a \$1,500 check to both Carly Colligan and Conner Mattson were made during the graduation ceremony of the Wasilla High School. This presentation marked the seventh consecutive year that MMF has given scholarships.

In 2002, a Mat-Su Valley Freemason left a parcel of land to of Matanuska Masonic Lodge No. 7 in Palmer. The Lodge realized that this gift provided an opportunity to create perpetual funding in support of



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public education in the Mat-Su Valley from the sale of the land. The Lodge processed the necessary paperwork with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), and in 2005 received 501 (c) (3) charitable status for MMF. The money received from the sale of the land was carefully invested, and in 2006 MMF presented their first educational grants to deserving graduating Mat-Su Borough High School seniors. In the seven years since that first scholarship presentation, MMF has contributed a total of more than \$33,000 to deserving High School seniors in the Borough.

Selection of recipients for scholarship is based on completion of an application, including a copy of the applicants High School Transcripts and an essay describing their personal goals after graduation from high school. The applicants are evaluated on academic achievement, involvement in extracurricular activities within their school, support of their community through their involvement in activities or organizations outside of the school environment, and quality of their essay.

MATANUSKA MASONIC FOUNDATION “BIKES-FOR-BOOKS”

On Wednesday, May 9, members of Matanuska Lodge No. 7 participated in the “Gold Medal Reading Awards” program at Swanson Elementary School in Palmer, Alaska. Children in Kindergarten, First, and Second grades were recognized for their reading accomplishments. The Masons also awarded bicycles, helmets, and locks to one boy and one girl in each of the grade levels (a total of six bikes), which were donated by members of Matanuska Lodge and the Swanson Elementary School Library.

Matanuska Lodge is donating 12 bikes this year as part of the “Bikes-for-Books” program, which is sponsored by the Matanuska Masonic Foundation (a 501 (c)(3) corporation). They will be presenting a bike to one lucky girl and boy at six different Elementary Schools in the Matanuska-Susitna Valley.

The Schools participating in the program this year include:

Butte Elementary
Finger Lake Elementary
Pioneer Peak Elementary
Sherrod Elementary
Sutton Elementary
Swanson Elementary

This is the second year that the Matanuska Masonic Foundation has sponsored the “Bikes-for-Books” program in the Mat-Su Borough Schools, where this year they have expanded the program from two to six schools. The bulk of the money to support the program this year has come from generous contributions from members of Matanuska Lodge No. 7. Additional grants were provided by Wasilla Walmart, Palmer Fred Meyer, Matanuska Telephone Association, the Palmer Stamp Cache, and the Palmer UPS Store.



MW Bo Cline, W Jim Summers, and W Mitch Coulthard (WM) presenting bikes at Swanson Elementary School



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News from Around the Jurisdiction

DISTRICT No. 1:



Brethren,

Tanana 3 had a breakfast and silent auction on February 25. They raised a couple thousand dollars from the auction and made about \$120 from the breakfast. They conferred a Fellowcraft Degree on February 29, and on March 18 the Past Master's conferred an Entered Apprentice degree which was followed by a festive board to honor the Past Masters. Each Past Master was presented with a commemorative certificate suitable for framing. At the May Stated meeting 50 year awards were presented to two of Tanana's members, Brothers Ralph Miller and Robert Parker, and to a visiting Brother, Don Thomas, from Vermont. It was one of the most memorable Blue Lodge meetings I have ever attended. Tanana will be conferring a Fellowcraft degree on May 16th and a Master Mason degree on the 30th. After that Tanana will go dark for the summer. The Worshipful Master has announced that the July stated meeting will be a casual affair. Dinner will be a cookout in the parking lot and dress for the evening is t-shirts and shorts.

Valdez 4 will be busy helping sell the Vidalia onions this week in support of the Shrine. They will be hosting a military appreciation breakfast later this month that will be open to the public. The next event on the calendar is the Gold Rush Days parade in August. They are planning to start the monthly pancake breakfasts up soon, but haven't established a set schedule as of yet.

Fairbanks 12 will be volunteering at the Fairbanks food bank on May 19th. They will be conducting a 50/50 raffle very soon as a fundraiser for the lodge and to assist a family who is in need of assistance covering the bills associated with traveling to get medical treatment for an ill child. They have also decided to start a memorial fund in mem-

ory of Irving Hernandez Jr., a Lodge Brother who was killed in combat in Mosul, Iraq. The fund will be used for charitable purposes.

North Pole 16 will be cleaning their assigned section of Laurance Road on May 12th. On the 19th they will have a booth at the Cruisin' with Santa car show in North Pole, where they will hand out water and sell Raffle tickets for the Corvette raffle. The annual Turkey Shoot will be May 26. This a friendly contest using .22 rifles. It will be held at the Chena Hot Springs Road shooting range. There will be a range safety officer to ensure a safe, fun time. There will be a picnic/potluck after the competition is over and the range will be available for shooting your pistols, high powered rifles, or whatever other shooting toy you may have. WM Ed Rogers of Tanana 3 won the event last year, and the traveling plaque is hanging in the lobby of Tanana Lodge # 3.

In June they're going to host a Past Masters night at the stated meeting dinner. Nothing too extravagant. This should be a fun, family event.

In July North Pole lodge #16 will be taking part in the City of North Pole's 4th of July Parade! There may be a family picnic afterwards, but that has yet to be decided.

All three of the interior lodges will have members reading names at the Vietnam Memorial Traveling Wall when it is in Fairbanks the first of June.

The District Deputy has made his Official Visit to all three of the interior Lodges, and will visit Valdez 4 at their next Stated Communication on June 12th.

The District Meeting was scheduled for May but had to be cancelled because everyone was just too busy to attend. WM Rob Deaver of Valdez 4 has to come to Fairbanks the first week in July, and once he has his schedule for the week we are going to try and schedule the District Meeting for a day that will fit his schedule while he is in town.

Fraternally submitted,
VW Mike Starkey, Deputy District No. 1



Light from the Great Land

News from Around the Jurisdiction - Cont.

DISTRICT No. 2:

With the permission of the Deputy of the Grand Master for District #2 & our Worshipful Master, being the same, here is an article for the Grand Lodge News Letter from Sterling Lodge #22.

A Special Session of Sterling Masonic Lodge was opened to confer the Sublime Degree of Master Mason on Brother E. Dean Lawson, Saturday, March 3, 2012.

The Lodge was opened by WB Bill Roberts at 3:30 P.M. and who thanked the Brethren for their attendance. There were 22 Brothers in attendance of which included six Brothers from Kenai Lodge # 11, one Brother from Seward # 11 & 6 and one Brother from # 17 & 22. WB Roberts especially "thanked" those Brothers who drove from the Anchorage area to assist with the presentation.

Introductions of both RWB James R. Herrington (13), Deputy Grand Master of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free & Accepted Masons in Alaska and VWB Carl Lindstrom (22), Deputy of the Grand Master for District # 2, were made. Additional introductions of WB Ralph Sterling, Worshipful Master of Kenai Masonic Lodge # 11 and a first time visitor, Bro. Dwight Locke, Kenai # 11 were made as well.

The First & Second Sections of the Degree were accomplished by the members of Sterling Lodge # 22, the Historical Lecture was delivered by RWB Jim Herrington and, VWB Bill Harris delivered the Charge to the Candidate.

MWB Les Little closed the Lodge at 5:45 P.M. after he thanked the Brethren again for their attendance and assistance.

The doors of the Lodge were then opened for a "pot luck" dinner which followed the Special Session. There were 43 Brothers, family members and friends in attendance. The Menu was:

Foot Long Hot Dogs with Cheese, Chile, Sauerkraut, Onions, etc...

Baked Beans, Potato Chips, Pasta Salad, Cole Slaw and Jell-O Salad.

The delicious, sugar free apple dessert was prepared by Mrs. Betty Josey and the very beautifully decorated and delicious cake was prepared by furnished by Claudia Johnson(OES 17), Deputy to the Most Worthy Grand Matron in Alaska, of the Order of the Eastern Star.

Fraternally yours,
WB Bill Roberts





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News from Around the Jurisdiction - Cont.

DISTRICT No. 3:

DISTRICT No. 4:

(No reports received by press time)



DISTRICT No. 5:

Reported by the
VW Dennis Oakland, Deputy

This past quarter has been very busy for District No. 5. Having had the pleasure assisting in EA and Fellow Craft degrees at Iditarod No. 20. At Eagle River No. 13, besides our Stated meetings, we conferred a 1st degree, a 3rd degree and we had a past masters dinner, which was very well attended. At Matanuska Lodge No. 7, we have conferred two 1st degrees, a Fellow Craft and a Master Mason degree. Two of these degrees were done in a fashion that I hope will spread throughout the jurisdiction.

We took a step back in time and conducted those degrees with subdued lighting, soft music, a hint of incense and in silent introspection. Matanuska Lodge has also formed what is called the Renaissance Committee which is exploring different aspects of the deeper meaning of Masonry and developing a means of implementing those methods into our degree work without “making innovation in the body of Masonry” or violating the Alaska Masonic Code. This has been a very rewarding experience that has those two candidates very excited about their Masonic journey.

The “Letter Perfect” Short Talk Bulletin from the Masonic Service Association has been a hit in all three lodges in District No. 5, and most members seem very excited about the direction of Masonry in Alaska.

Iditarod Lodge has made their annual contribution of school supplies to Big Lake Elementary school. Eagle River Lodge will soon be making its annual contributions to local elementary schools, and

will begin the annual Highway Cleanup project in May. Matanuska Lodge will be presenting the winners of the Bikes for Books contest also in May. Six elementary schools will be awarded 2 bikes to each school.

On May 5th, Matanuska Lodge installed an access ramp at the home of Brother Mel Jones in Palmer to aid him in his recovery from a stroke.

At the Grand Masters Official Visitation for combined District 5 Lodges, we had over 40 people in attendance and had a wonderful dinner hosted by our Junior Warden Br. Gary Satterfield assisted by Chapter No.14 Order of the Eastern Star. Grand Master Jerry Pinion gave his presentation before the tiled lodge and was very well received. Later after the Lodge was closed, he presented Matanuska Lodge the Mark Twain Award from the Masonic Service Association for Community Excellence. Grand Master Pinion was also present as MW Harry Koenen was presented his 25 Year pin and certificate. The Master of Matanuska Lodge, in honor of the Grand Masters visit, presented him with a gift of an Alaska themed handmade artwork on behalf of all of District No. 5.

VWDennis N. Oakland
Deputy in District No. 5





Light from the Great Land

Masonic Education - Looking to the Future



(The following message was presented at the 2012 Grand Secretaries Conference in Atlanta and is included here in its entirety at the request of our Grand Secretary, RW Jerry Wasson. The message was authored by RW Thomas W. Jackson, PGS of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania and Executive Secretary

of the World Conference of Regular Masonic Grand Lodges - - - Editor)

My brothers, I apologize for not being with you today to present this paper in person. It is only the second time in 33 years that I have missed the Conference of Grand Secretaries.

I specifically scheduled my surgeries to make certain that I would be present at this conference but complications have prevented it. After 20 years of service as a Grand Secretary, I have a great appreciation for the contribution that you make to the craft.

I have had more requests to present this paper than any other I have written and Brother Jerry Kopp requested that I present to this conference. I want to make it very clear, however, that I speak for no Grand Lodge or any other Masonic body. What I express is my opinion based on 50 years of Masonic membership and 40 years as a serious student of the craft.

It is my primary intent when I speak to cause you to think. If I do not accomplish that I waste both my time and yours. It is not as important that you agree

with what I have to say as to just think about it.

The title for my paper is; Masonic Education-Looking to the Future. This is an interesting subject for me to speak and to write on. One might expect that as expressive as I have been concerning the lack of Masonic education in American Freemasonry that I would be well prepared to speak on it but even though I have been critical on our lack of education and strongly supportive of the need for it and even though I have written many papers for Freemasonry I have written very little relating specifically to the subject of Masonic education in the past.

Around 20 years ago I made the observation at the Northeast Conference of Grand Masters, Deputy Grand Masters and Grand Secretaries that North American Freemasons were the most ignorant Freemasons in the world concerning Freemasonry. Some of the Grand Masters present at that time took offense to my remark. So I qualified the remark by saying we were not only the most ignorant we were the most cheap.

Before going further, my brothers, let me clarify and emphasize that ignorance does not mean lack of intelligence; it means a lack of Masonic knowledge.

Also, there can be no question but that we have sold North American Freemasonry far more cheaply than probably any other grand jurisdiction in the world. While we in North America deal in dollars or hundreds of dollars, the rest of the Masonic world deals in hundreds of dollars or thousands of dollars.

Much water has flowed under the bridge since that conference and many changes have been wrought in North American Freemasonry but I stand here today and make that same observation with no reservation. Indeed, with all my traveling in recent years I've become even more convinced regarding it. With all of the changes that we have made in North America to alter the image of the craft and to change the direction that we have been traveling, we have done precious little to educate our membership and thus we remain the most ignorant Freemasons in the world and we have done little to alter that fact.

There is no one factor upon which to place the



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blame for the ongoing decline of the interest in Freemasonry in North America but there can be no question concerning the lack of an educational commitment as being a major contributing factor.

How can we possibly expect there to be an interest in an organization in which so few of the membership itself, even I, knows what we are or our purpose. For the last 25 years very few major programs conducted by the leadership in North American Freemasonry have been for programs other than to increase numbers or to raise monies to give away to charity.

I have had over the past 20 years the great privilege of traveling over much of the world visiting Lodges and Grand Lodges and observing how they operate. I have spoken at meetings, seminars and symposiums in over 30 different countries on Freemasonry.

About 10 years ago I was speaking at a symposium in Argentina that was attended by approximately 500 Argentinean brothers. The symposium was being held over a period of five days and I asked my host what these men did for a living that they can take five days of their time to attend this symposium. Argentina is a large country and it meant traveling for many hundreds and in some cases thousands of miles for some to attend. I can only recall a few of the occupations of the brothers that he pointed out around the room but I do recall two men that he told me were neurosurgeons, one that was a nuclear physicist and one that was the conductor of the Philharmonic Orchestra in Saltzburg, Austria. My friends, he pointed to many brothers that we can only dream of having men like them in our craft in North America today but they were integral members of the craft in our past.

Two years ago I spoke in Romania where I serve as honorary president of the cultural organization on the subject of "*Freemasonry Fraternalism, and the Rise of the Idea of Liberty in Central and Eastern Europe*". I spoke for the same Grand Lodge the previous year at a symposium that presented a series of intellectual discussions relative to Freemasonry and

its involvement in current civil societies. These programs attract some of the greatest thinking leaders in Eastern Europe.

I also was given the privilege of addressing a public forum on the subject of Freemasonry in New Delhi India. These programs were not only for the purpose of educating the membership but also the general public on the value of Freemasonry to their societies.

I do not mean to imply that there is no place in Freemasonry for we ordinary individuals, indeed one of the primary reasons that Freemasonry became as great as it did is because men from all walks of life are accepted as equals but I am certainly cognizant of the fact that another of the primary reasons was because it attracted some of the greatest minds that ever lived and even to this day we continue to point with pride to these great men but where are they in North American Freemasonry today?

The Xth World Conference of Regular Masonic Grand Lodges was held in Gabon, Africa two years ago. Presidents of four of countries were present. At least seven presidents of African countries are members of Freemasonry, two of them serving as Grand Masters. I attended the consecration of the new Grand Lodge in Mozambique two years ago where the Prime Minister was installed as the Grand Master.

Freemasonry continues to be held in high esteem in most countries of the world even though they have to struggle far beyond what we in North America have ever known to even exist as a fraternity. One glaring feature about the Freemasonry as it is practiced in most of the rest of the world is that their members are required to learn. The acquisition of knowledge as has been universally professed in our craft has not become a lost art as we have made it in North America.

I find nothing in our Freemasonry to compare with the stimulus for intellectual discussion that tends to permeate Freemasonry in most of the world. Sadly, this lack of challenge to our members tends to diminish the intellectual quality for which Freema-



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sonry has been historically known. As a result, we have lost much of our allure to a segment of society that structured and gave Freemasonry its societal image.

Regretfully, today only a relative small percentage of our members truly understand the significance of the purpose of the craft. They may understand the words but words are simply words. Understanding must transcend the words and today this may be the greatest failure on the part of North American Freemasonry. Unless we understand the meaning of the words how can we possibly understand the purpose for which we exist?

My friends, in the name of political correctness today we live in a society where our leaders feel that everyone should have the same as everyone else regardless of initiative or ability. We live in an environment that rewards mediocrity so well that there is little incentive to rise above it. We live in a society that desperately needs a stimulus to excel beyond the norm. We live in a society that needs an infusion of civility and logic into our civil society.

Unfortunately, Freemasonry has bought into this political correctness concept and as a result we have seriously damaged our image in society and reduced our effectiveness to make future contributions. Of what value is an organization that made this world what it is if it has lost its capacity to do so? We need more than ever a leadership with a vision to see beyond self-satisfaction and a dedication to rising above the mediocrity of today's social structure. The future of Freemasonry in North America may very well be dependent upon the leadership's realization that Masonic education is a vital component for our survival. After all, how can we possibly convince society of how significant we are if we ourselves do not even know what we are or were? We live in a society that needs the Freemasonry with the characteristics of our past.

Historians are finally acknowledging the influence that our craft has had on some of the greatest leaders that the world has ever known at a time when we are failing to educate our own membership of this

influence. My friends, Freemasonry is an organization that should always pull others up to us not climb down to meet with them.

Freemasonry played a vital role during the age of the Enlightenment as one of the principal organizations in North America that provided an enclave wherein great thinking minds from different social strata met and created the concept of a democratic society based upon the structure they found in Masonic lodges. My friends, should you ever doubt the significance of these enclaves, consider that both Canada and the United States of America are the result.

I also learned in Argentina, however, that when a man petitions a Lodge in that jurisdiction he will be investigated for a period of a year and if he passes the investigation he may be entered. Upon being entered, during the next year he will have presented a minimum of three learned papers on Freemasonry to the Lodge and then stand examination to qualify to be crafted. Upon being crafted he will go through the same procedure prior to raising.

Last year when I was speaking in Chile, I asked a brother what was required to become a Freemason there. The period of one year is again mandatory for investigation and upon entering he will be required to attend every meeting for two years for educational purposes and the lodges in Chile meet once a week. Following an examination he will be crafted and then go through the same process before raising.

My brothers, these members know more about Freemasonry when they are raised than the vast majority of our members will know in a lifetime about our craft.

This is far more characteristic of the Freemasonry of the world than the Freemasonry that we have known in America over the past 25 to 50 years. In that period of time we have excised from the craft most of the intellectual and philosophical qualities for which it has been known to history and for which it continues to be known in most of world today.

Is it not an incomprehensible phenomenon that an organization of the likes of Freemasonry with the



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avowed purpose of improving the man and in stimulating a desire for him to seek to acquire knowledge should lack any major system for substantial education like we do? Instead of trying to raise our standards and to improve our image in society we continue to reduce our standards and to lower the requirements to become a mason, and to remain a mason. And what have we accomplished? We have barely slowed the rate with the avowed of loss in our numbers.

I am not convinced that the Freemasons of today are any less intelligent or are any less capable than were our brothers in the past but we are definitely more ignorant; more ignorant of our past, more ignorant of our present and definitely more ignorant of our purpose. If it be true, that our brothers of the present day are just as intelligent and just as capable as were the brothers of the past then lack of Masonic education must be a root cause of a declining interest and the responsibility for this failure must lie at the feet of the leadership of the craft.

I emphasized in Russia several years ago when addressing the Grand Lodge that we must not forget that Freemasonry did not impact this world by rolling over it by the vast quantity of the membership. It impacted the world through the influence of the quality of its membership. It also, did not impact this world by massive contributions to charitable organizations that will get the credit for spending those contributions. One can never buy admiration and respect. Nor did it impact this world by expounding upon its greatness in public venues. We do not need to expound upon how great we are. If we live the philosophy of the craft, the world will know that.

Freemasonry impacted this world by improving good men, by taking one good man at a time and making him a better man and we made him better by infusing into him the realization that he was far more capable than he himself considered possible. We stimulated him to want to be better and incited his intellect to want to become more knowledgeable, to want to become more capable and to want to participate in improving the society in which he lived.

It was then the better man, the more knowledgeable man, the more competent man that impacted the evolution of civil society. Freemasonry became the educational tool that provided an environment wherein men like Washington, Franklin, William Mercer Wilson, Sir Christopher Wren, Newton, Matheson, Voltaire (even though he was a member for a short while) and many others like them crafted the ideas that created the ideals of a democratic society. God knows this world needs men like them today and Freemasonry should play a vital role in crafting these men. Fortunately, it continues to do so in many countries.

My brothers, this world is as it is today because Freemasonry lived and Freemasonry lived because it undertook the responsibility of taking the good man and making him a better man by teaching him the precepts and philosophies of Freemasonry through a process of Masonic education. These better men then became the leaders that created modern-day civil society. It has lived when hundreds of other fraternal organizations have long ago ceased to exist.

We can no longer choose to live in the glory of our past. We can no longer have our survival depend upon the claims of how great we were and point with pride to the greatness of our past brothers. We must now decide what we want to be. If we wish to be an organization that will be remembered in history as one that contributed to the greatness of our countries but one that slipped away worthy of little note, then we continue the path we are walking today. If we wish to continue the heritage that was granted to us by our past brothers, then we must make the decision that our current membership deserves that heritage and develop programs whereby we educate them concerning that heritage.

In my travels representing the world conference, I have been received by presidents, prime ministers, members of the royal families and even African chiefs.

I have had serving as my "caretaker" a pulmonary surgeon and chief of pulmonary medicine at University of São Paulo, Brazil, a man regarded as



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the greatest surgeon in Greece, members of parliament, the military and other government officials. I have been seated next to the chief justice of the Supreme Court in Italy and the Romanian astronaut that flew on the Russian spacecraft. I have participated along with the president in placing a wreath at O'Higgins tomb in Chile, on the tomb of the unknown soldier under the Arc de Triomphe in Paris and along with the president on the grave of the past resident of Gabon. I have helped dedicate a Masonic monument on the national Mall in Valpariso, Chili. I have addressed senates and military leaderships. I have been interviewed by the press and appeared on numerous television programs in a number of countries.

My brothers, you must realize that none of this was done for me, it was done for what I represented to their society; the Masonic fraternity. That is the type of image we carry in the world outside of North America.

Even as the age of the Renaissance lifted the veil of ignorance from the European world, Freemasonry needs an age of Renaissance in America today to lift the veil of ignorance of our membership.

These young men that are showing an interest in Freemasonry today are seeking much more than we are providing. They are on a quest searching for something that society is not providing to them. They are searching for a quality organization far above the mediocrity of present-day society. They are searching for knowledge and a system that will provide it for them. They know more about Freemasonry before they petition a Lodge than have any of their predecessors. What they know, however, is what they have learned about the Freemasonry of the past. It is now up to us to provide for them that for which they search. Each one of them and each one of us wishes to be affiliated with a quality organization and that is what Freemasonry must be.

Freemasonry is being given an opportunity that it may never see again. The writings of Dan Brown along with a couple of movies and television programs have stimulated an interest in Freemasonry

that has not been seen for decades, even perhaps for a hundred years or more. This interest has created a potential to re-create an image of Freemasonry that has been lost to us. It will, however, require that the leadership uses it as a potential to improve the quality of the craft and not simply as a recruitment tool to improve the quantity of the craft. History has proven time and again that when quantity is lost it may be regained but if quality is lost it is extremely difficult to ever regain. This re-generated interest in Freemasonry is giving us that opportunity.

I have probably expressed quite clearly my opinion on the subject of *Masonic Education: Looking to the Future*. This world truly needs an organization based upon a foundation of the philosophical purposes of Freemasonry. If we are deserving of our heritage then we must undertake a program of educating ourselves and our membership. The legacy of our past brethren deserves that respect and respect given to the craft will be proportional to the educational requirements of the craft.

Let me tell you a quick little story that happened to me several weeks ago. I got up at four o'clock in the morning to catch a plane for Utah where I was to speak to the Rocky Mountain Conference. I stopped at a little convenience store for a coffee and a doughnut. When I went to check out, a young lady, probably in her early 20s at the counter saw my Masonic lapel pin and asked, "are you really a Freemason". I said yes ma'am. She said I just love you guys. I responded, thank you ma'am, it is great to be loved.

I went to my car ate my doughnut and drank my coffee then went back into the store and asked the young lady, why did you say that? She responded, I don't know. I read the da Vinci Code and have been reading more about Freemasonry. Now my husband is interested in joining.

My brothers, I am sorry that I cannot be with you today. It has been a great honor for me to have served as a Grand Secretary and I trust that each of you regard it in the same light.

Thomas W. Jackson