



# Letters from District No. 10

Free & Accepted Masons of Washington

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Happy New Year !

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January 2012

## Happy New Year!!

### Whatcom Lodge (End of Year) Report

**Stated Meeting** - Our stated meeting of 2011 was held on December 15<sup>th</sup> with 20 brothers attending, 3 of which were visitors. In addition to the regular business of the lodge the FC Degree was conferred on Bro. Trevor Kellow.

**Proficiency:** Prior to the degree, Bro. Trevor Kellow recited his EA Posting Lecture, it was very well done and it was obvious he had worked hard.

**Degree:** Bro. Terrell Goertz conferred the FC Degree on Bro. Trevor Kellow, with Bro. Tony Anton as SD, WB Jerry Mason stepped in to recite the circum-ambulation part and Bro. Alex Bruner did a nice job presenting the Working Tools. Brother Terrell gave the "G" lecture, JW Jesse Petersen delivered the Master's Lecture and SW Terrell Goertz gave the Charge.

**Presentations:** WB Gary Pitcher was escorted to the East where it was announced that the Brothers of Whatcom Lodge had conferred on him the title of Honorary Past Master of Whatcom Lodge. He was then presented with his Whatcom Lodge Id badge and accorded the PGHs.

WB Larry West was the next brother brought to the East. Secretary John Browne read a citation noting Larry's long, devoted and dedicated service to the lodge. WM Monte Thompson then presented WB Larry West with a Hiram Award certificate and pin. WB West was also accorded the PGHs.

**Dinner & Lodge Visitation:** December 1<sup>st</sup> was to have been a degree but due to a work conflict our candidate became unavailable. After visiting WB John & Vivian Burley, see column to the right, ten or so brothers met at Lee's Restaurant for dinner in a reserved room. At about 6:50 pm. WM Monte Thompson, JW Jesse Petersen, Sec. John Browne and WB Bruce McGinnis headed up to Ferndale and visited Lynden Int. Lodge #56. During the lodge meeting WM Monte presented to the Brethren of Lynden Lodge the MLA Traveling Light.

**Upcoming Degree:** Our next Degree will be on Thursday, January 5<sup>th</sup> when Bro. Wade Balkman will be raised as a MM.

**Year End Report:** This past year in Whatcom Lodge the brethren have been busy and the membership has grown. The year however, did not begin so well as three of our brothers passed to the Celestial Lodge: WB Buck Strickland Jr. and Br. Frank McKain in January and Br. Corwin Slentz in February. Our membership dropped from 82 to 79. During the remaining months of the year petitions for the degrees and for plural membership came in. In March Br. Ty Myers was raised to the MM Degree and so was Br. Tristan Burgess in April. Also that month WB James Hawley joined us as a plural member and another brother was reinstated, bringing our membership back up to 83. In July Br. John Brown became a plural member and he stepped right into the role as Junior Deacon. In October Br. Al Gregor joined as a plural member and Br. Craig Bruner was raised as a MM, which brought our membership up 86.

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### Stated Meeting Dates of the District Ten Lodges

Jan 5<sup>th</sup> San Juan Lodge - 7:30

Jan 6<sup>th</sup> Lynden Lodge - 7:30 pm

Jan 7<sup>th</sup> Bellingham Bay - 7:30 p

Jan 10<sup>th</sup> Ferndale Lodge - **Dark**

Jan 11<sup>th</sup> Fairhaven Lodge - 7 pm

Jan 12<sup>th</sup> Nooksack Valley Ldg - **Dark**

Jan 20<sup>th</sup> Whatcom Lodge - dinner at 5:30; meeting at 6:30 pm.

### NEW YEAR'S PARTY

Hosted by

Nooksack Valley Lodge

at the Nooksack Masonic Center  
Nooksack, WA

Monday, January 2<sup>nd</sup> at 6 PM.

Bring your favorite snack and perhaps a beverage, NO Charge to attend, just folks enjoying each other's company and to welcome the New Year.

### Hiram Award Presented To WB John Burley

On Thurs, Dec., 1<sup>st</sup>, Twelve Whatcom Lodge brothers, lead by WM Monte Thompson gathered at about 5:30 PM, at the of WB John Burley to honor him.

WB Monte read the citation outlining WB John's long and worthy record of labor in the quarry of Whatcom Lodge. At the conclusion of the citation WB Monte presented to WB John a well deserved Hiram Award, certificate and pin. The event would not have been complete without acknowledging the long time support of Vivian Burley who was given a well deserved round of applause.

## Notes from Lynden Lodge No. 56

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Jan 5<sup>th</sup> Stated Meeting 7:30 PM

Jan 19<sup>th</sup> Special Meeting 7:30 PM

VW Charles Cunningham  
Worshipful Master

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### NWSC

Happy New Year Nobles & Ladies.

On Friday January 27, 2012 we will have our open Installation of Officers. The menu for the evening, Prime Rib or Salmon ( you need to choose one), Mashed Potatoes/Gravy, Peas/Pearl Onions, Caesar Salad, Rolls, Coffee, Tea, Special Dessert. Cost will be \$25.00 per person. Zem Zem@6:00 P.M. Dinner@7:00 P.M. Installation @ 8:00 P.M. This will take place at Bellingham Masonic Center 2626 W. Maplewood Ave. Call Noble Ron Fine for reservations at 360-676-5747 or E-mail at Ron-Fine2@aol.com. **DEADLINE IS THURSDAY JANUARY 19<sup>th</sup>, 2012!**

May your New Year be a happy, healthy & wealthy one. It's been a pleasure serving as your secretary.

Yours in Faith  
Ron Fine, Secretary

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### Words for Consideration

“Half our life is spent trying to find something to do with the time we have rushed through life trying to save.”

~ Bro. Will Rogers, 1879 - 1935

The lame man who keeps the right road outstrips the runner who takes a wrong one.

Nay, it is obvious that the more active and swift the latter is the further he will go astray.

~ Francis Bacon, 1561 - 1626

The reason lightning doesn't strike twice in the same place is - that the same place isn't there the second time.

~ Willie Tyler

You can't learn too soon that the most useful thing about a principle is that it can always be sacrificed to expediency.

~ W. Somerset Maugham, 1874 - 1965

Here is what **Bellingham Bay**

has going on.

**Friday January 6<sup>th</sup>** Special meeting at 7:30 PM.

**Friday January 20<sup>th</sup>** Stated meeting at 7:30 PM

Brothers, Sisters, Family & Friends, I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone who attended the 128<sup>th</sup> Open Installation of Officers for Bellingham Bay Lodge No. 44. It truly was a very special evening for me and your presence made it all the more so.

A special thanks goes to the Installing Team who did such a marvelous job and to our Sisters of Maple Leaf Chapter OES for the delicious treats we enjoyed after the ceremony.

Now my Brothers, its time to go work and I have full confidence that together we will have a productive Masonic year!

WM Russ Weston

**The secret of happiness is not found in seeking more, but in developing the capacity to enjoy less. ~ Socrates**

**WHATCOM LODGE Report**  
continued from page one, column one:

Whatcom Lodge was fortunate to confer 5 EA degrees, 3 FC degrees and raise 3 Master Masons during 2011. Also, we conferred a courtesy FC degree for a brother who now lives in our area and belongs to Silver State Lodge No. 95 of the M.:.W.:. G.L. of Colorado.

It has been a real pleasure to watch the development of new ritualists in our lodge over the past two years. Whatcom Lodge can now field all the parts of the Third Degree Drama from within the membership of the lodge. Still, we greatly appreciate the help we've received from WB Gary Pitcher, WB Thom Baughn, VW Winton Smith (all now Honorary PMs of our lodge) and WB Jerry Mason - thank you so much. This success is due to so many newer brothers who love the esoteric & ritual material of our craft. We now have brothers who have learned all-of or large sections of the three degree lectures, allowing us to have two or three two-man degree-lecture teams. The past two years, both Senior and Junior Wardens have chosen to confer the FC & EA degrees respectively and that has helped to motivate other brothers in learning new degree roles.

**Next meetings**— Our Special meeting is on January 5<sup>th</sup>, dinner at 5:30 pm. and we plan to confer the MM Degree on Bro. Wade Balkman.

The next Stated meeting is on January 19<sup>th</sup>, dinner at 5:30 pm & lodge at 6 30 and another degree is likely.

*Fraternally, John Browne* - Secretary/Treasurer, contact information is at the bottom of column two on the back page.

## Masonic Leadership Association

### Why?

Masonry is often said to be an organization which takes good men and makes them better. This statement leads as many answers to the statement, "takes good men and makes them better", as there are lodges in the Grand Lodge of Washington.

The Worshipful Master is charged with the task of giving good and wholesome instruction and the leadership to reach this end. Some Lodges define instruction as involvement in the community such as; Bikes for Books; Operation Outreach; CHIPs; Educator of the year; Scholarships; Youth Soccer Sponsorships; Baseball team sponsorships; supporting of the Arts; Placing of US Flags plus many more community service projects. Some Lodges define instruction as work with new members through the three degrees as mentors, coaches, dedicated ritualists, lectures on history of the various Orders and other Masonic subjects. Some Lodges define instruction as just getting the newest members to take an officer chair using the open book policy just to get the chairs filled with no other goal than to have at least three or more Master Masons present, read the bills and then to go to refreshments if there are refreshments.

In the absence of Good and Wholesome instruction from the Lodge caused the Districts to form; Lodge Officers Association, Symbolic Lodge Officers Association, and maybe with the hope of attracting more diversification and education, Masonic Family Leadership Association. Just like the Worshipful Master, the definition of Good and Wholesome instruction was as varied as there were hours in the day.

In the absence of Good and Wholesome instruction from the Districts, Grand Lodge attempted to form committees to cover the gap. Our Lodge Brothers were informed that all they had to do was ask and they would build it. Very few asked and the field was only partly complete. Many of these Grand Lodge Brothers were dedicated to their cause but they were never asked, or worse yet, they were not qualified in their respective areas of instruction.

Now those of you who have gotten this far in this article, I congratulate you. The headline was "Masonic Leadership Association - Why?" As you have read, It makes no difference what information or education you provide, you will never satisfy everyone.

At the January 21<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Masonic Leadership Association, the members of District 10 will be blessed with a special speaker from the Grand Lodge Team on the subject "The Use of the Rod by the Deacons and Stewards." It will be interesting to see how many Deacons and Stewards attend. Any guesses?

continued at bottom of column 2:

## Scottish Rite – Valley of Bellingham

Scottish Rite News and Views Year 2011 ended with a holiday gathering on December 21<sup>st</sup>. The room was full with many new faces and regular and prospective members. The Valley says thank you for a great 2011 and we are looking forward to a better 2012. Our new members are finding that the Scottish Rite are full of information and education.

January 4<sup>th</sup> will be the first stated meeting of the new year with dinner at 6:30 and meeting at 7:30. The education subject will be one of the degrees from the Lodge of Perfection. All Scottish Rite members are encouraged to attend.

The Valley of Bellingham starts the new degree year with the 18<sup>th</sup> Degree on January 18<sup>th</sup>. We have three prospective new members waiting to receive their 4<sup>th</sup> degree. Any Master Mason interested in good standing desiring to learn more about masonry and Scottish Rite, are encouraged to contact the Secretary.

Happy New year to all,  
John Sleeth, *General Secretary*  
secretary@scottish-rite.com (360) 733-1103

The Whatcom Brothers  
send their wishes for

A Very Happy January Birthday!

To:

Bro. Tony Anton - January 3<sup>rd</sup>

Bro. Steve Schuman - January 4<sup>th</sup>

Bro. Corky Johnson - January 22<sup>nd</sup>

**MASONIC LEADERSHIP ASSOCIATION - Why?**  
continued from column 1:

We will also be discussing the future of the Masonic Leadership Association in District No. 10. If you would like to be part of the positive future of this group, please let me know. We prefer to have Past Masters form this leadership team. We do not want a brother to take an office just because we need someone to fill the chair.

Bro. John Sleeth  
Acting President  
MLAjrsleeth@speedy-inc.com  
Jan 21 - 9:30 Social Hour  
2626 W Maplewood Ave.  
Bellingham, WA 98225  
Ferndale Lodge Hosting

# Property Tax Exemption

Grand Lodge has recently managed to get a revision of the Property Tax Exemption from the Department of Revenue after some long negotiation over several definitional meanings. These changes will likely mean that most Temple Associations will be in line for a reduction of their property taxes, if they will follow the guidance and carefully fill out the forms as a “Public Assembly Hall”. The main restrictions are:

At least 51% of the events/uses in the space must be “public gatherings.” This includes uses by individual members of the public, events sponsored by other organizations that are open to the public, and events held by the building ‘owner’ that are for nonmembers as well as members.

The ‘owner’ cannot block out more than 25% of available time for its own event/uses.

The number of “public gatherings” must equal or exceed the number of events hosted by the ‘owner’ that are not open to the general public.

There are limits on the extent of “Business Activities” in the space.

With some judicious work, most of the buildings in the jurisdictions can lower their taxes. For instance, Alki Lodge #152 in West Seattle managed a \$20,000 reduction on their 2011 property taxes, and expects to gain a similar retroactive exemption for their 2010 and 2009 taxes as well.

One point that needs to be brought out is that the state’s previous assumption that all Masonic family activities were one and the same as the owner has been changed. Now, each organization is taken separately, so that the only activities that are ‘owner’ activities are the actual controlling lodge’s meetings, and the temple board meetings. This means that just having two other Masonic family groups meeting will help get the building over the 51% uses threshold. The ‘public gatherings’ threshold does not mean that the public must participate in the activity, only that they must be able to do so. Therefore, if refreshments are noted to be open to the public, or the dinner before is noted to be open to the public, those meetings will be ‘open’ meetings.

With a little work and some documentation, most of the buildings in the jurisdiction can get a substantial reduction in their property taxes, which is something that most of the more struggling lodges find as a severe handicap in working on their finances and trying to keep the buildings in reasonable shape and well maintained. The forms can be found on the Grand Lodge website under the Grand Lodge Office/publications heading. The file is in PDF format, which can be read with an easily downloaded free Abode Reader program.

continued at bottom of column 2.

## Nooksack Valley Lodge No 105

**NEW YEAR’S PARTY** - Monday, January 2<sup>nd</sup> **6 PM.**

Nooksack Valley Lodge is Dark during December & January, as far as Stated Meetings go. However, we are hosting our 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual New Year’s Celebration on Monday, January 2<sup>nd</sup>. We start at 6 pm—simply bring your favorite snack, and maybe a beverage.

We hold our New Year’s Party in the main floor lobby, where there will be tables set up for the snacks and chairs for lots of good conversation and reflection on the wonderful Masonic year which lies before us. You’ll be able to depart at a reasonable time so a good night’s rest can be had prior to returning to the work of the “Outer World” with its concerns and employment.

Next Stated Meeting is Wednesday, February 15<sup>th</sup>, 6 pm. We’ll open lodge at 6 pm, go to refreshment and then enjoy a fine “potluck” dinner with our Ladies. We resume labor at 7 pm, do our work and close lodge.

The Brethren of Nooksack Valley Lodge  
sends each of you our wishes for a very  
Happy New Year!

WB Tim Springstead  
WM Nooksack Valley Lodge No. 105

There is no expeditious road  
To pack and label men for God,  
And save them by the barrel-load.  
Some may perchance, with strange surprise,  
Have blundered into Paradise.  
~ Francis Thompson, 1859 - 1907

continued from column 1.

I would recommend that each Temple Board Association set up a committee to carefully review the new guidance, work the necessary records to submit for an exemption, and look at ways to ensure that future years will see the fraternity qualifying for successive years of property tax exemptions, so that we can continue to use our buildings to help the communities, and reduce our taxes to the lowest levels that we can legitimately pay. Also note that if your application is denied, Grand Lodge will be willing to help in the appeals process for legitimate applications. With a little work, a great deal of money can be saved for better uses of the fraternity.

RWB Bruce Vesper, JGW

BMC = Bellingham Masonic Center on W. Maplewood ; FMC = Ferndale Masonic Center;  
 FHMC = Friday Harbor Masonic Center; NMC = Nooksack Masonic Center; SRH = Scottish Rite Hall

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>1</b> NEW YEAR'S DAY  Eighth Day of Christmas	<b>2</b> Hesperus Com-mandery No. 8 - 7:30 F-OES #223 7:30 p. (FMC) N VL # 105 - New Years party 6 pm at NV Masonic Ctr lobby Bring favorite snack Ninth Day of Christmas	<b>3</b> ML-OES # 58 (BMC) 7:30 p.  Tenth Day of Christmas	<b>4</b> SJ # 175 - stated 7:30 p. (FHMC)  Eleventh Day of Christmas	<b>5</b> L # 56 stated meet-ing 7:30 pm  W #151 - Spl. Comm—we are planning a MM Degree. Dinner at 5:30 pm. Lodge opens at 6:30 pm.  Twelfth Day of Christmas Twelfth-Night begins at Dusk	<b>6</b> BB # 44 - stated 7:30 pm.  Epiphany - <i>The Wise Men visit the manger!</i>	<b>7</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> F # 264 - Dark Bellingham Council No.16 R&SM - 7:30 p	<b>10</b> F # 73-stated 7 pm. (BMC) Evergreen RB # 17 7 p. (FMC)	<b>11</b> NV # 105 - Dark	<b>12</b> Bethel # 25 at 6 pm.	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>15</b>	<b>16</b> Bellingham Chp Royal Arch - 7:30 p. F-OES # 223 7:30 p. (FMC) Martin Luther King Jr. Day	<b>17</b> ML-OES # 58 7:30 p. (BMC)	<b>18</b> SJ # 175 - Spl. 7:30 p. (FHMC)	<b>19</b> W 151 - stated dinner at 5:30 lodge opens 6:30 pm.	<b>20</b> BB 44 Spl Comm 7:30 p. (SRH)	<b>21</b> MLA hosted at 9:45 am
<b>22</b>	<b>23</b> F # 264 - Dark  Chinese New Year	<b>24</b> F # 73-Spl. 7 pm. Evergreen RB # 17 7 p. (FMC)	<b>25</b> NV # 105 - Dark	<b>26</b> Bellingham Temple Association meeting 7:30 PM	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> Bethel #25 at 6 pm
<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>

**Assembly No. 17 - Int. Order of Rainbow Girls**

**In December:**

The Rainbow Girls held their annual Tolo for Lynden and Lynden Christian High Schools. We would like to thank all of the men who took their time to help with the dance. Every December, Rainbow has their annual giving Christmas Party. They donated to the Ronnie Juntunen Fund, Salvation Army Angel Tree, The Lighthouse Mission, and they adopted a family who'd 2yr old is in the Seattle due to a unknown disease. They're going dark the last meeting in December for the Christmas - New Year Holiday.

**In January:**

Step Up and elections will be on January 10<sup>th</sup> starting at 7pm

Installation of Evergreen will be on January 21<sup>st</sup> at 2pm.

The second meeting will be on January 24<sup>th</sup> at 7pm.

Wendy Knowlton

*The Promised Land always lies on the other side of a Wilderness.*

~ Havelock Ellis British psychologist 1859 - 1939

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**John Sleeth** (Ext 301)

To contribute to this newsletter please send your letter, comment, historical fact, poem or calendar announcement, by the 20<sup>th</sup> day of each month, to:

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 Ph. 360-599-3481

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