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President's Letter

Scott Carrlee

Dear Membership,

I am sure you are all eagerly awaiting the next installment on Carson's development, so let's get that out of the way right in the beginning. He has started Montessori preschool which, for anyone not familiar with their program, instills a love of "meaningful work" in all of their charges. The unintended consequence so far has been an enduring obsession with vacuum cleaners and frequent floor cleaning sessions. It is amazing how assertive a toddler can be at six o'clock in the morning. But "meaningful work" isn't the only thing that occupies Carson. He has ample attention for trucks, balls, domestic animals, and other fun things. His is a fitting metaphor for our upcoming annual meeting for which I am putting together a program that balances work and play.

In keeping with the theme of conservation in the extreme I have the following talks so far:

Conservation in Antarctica

Treatment of waterlogged baskets and other materials from Alaska

In situ conservation of a 50-year-old acrylic window mosaic

Treatment of organic materials recovered from melted ice patches in Canada

Research into recovery methods for soot covered books

Treatment of archaeological sled runners from Barrow.

I am still looking for more papers so let me know if you wish to present.

As far as play is concerned I can recommend a few great activities. If you want to take a great boat trip I recommend the *Adventure Bound*. Captain Steve will take you into the Tracy Arm fjord which is hundreds of feet deep but only a hundred yards wide in places. At the end of the fjord is the Sawyer glacier which calves off into water, often before your very eyes. Momma seals hang out on the icebergs with their newborn pups. You can also ride a helicopter up onto the ice field and actually touch down for a stroll on a real glacier. For the more adventurous crowd there are plenty of hikes where you can gaze upon one of the 7 glaciers within the city limits. (Juneau's city limits are very large!)

Even if you did not come up to Juneau aboard the Alaska Marine ferry there are still several ferry trips to be had. Sitka is a wonderful destination by ferry. A six hour ride puts you in the former Russian capital and the only really picturesque city in Alaska. If you are looking for off the beaten path, try a ferry ride to Pelican, a hardy fishing village of 135 inhabitants. You can stroll the boardwalk without fear

of cars as there are none. A forty five minute floatplane ride back to Juneau completes the journey. There are also seakayaking possibilities for day rentals or longer trips. Contact me if you have any questions.

And what president's letter would be complete without the mention of cheese? In late February, we held a very successful mid-year board meeting in the back room of the Cheese Store of Beverly Hills. In between bites of double-cream brie and aged goat cheeses, we discussed such heady topics as how to keep WAAC current with the expectations of an internet age and what WAAC can do to help the membership in these troubled economic times. I am very happy to announce that we are making progress in simplifying membership renewals and registration for the annual meeting online. Very soon both of these activities will be available from the WAAC website. As for our current economic crisis which will undoubtedly affect the lives and livelihoods of all of our membership, we discussed how the very nature of WAAC can be its own economic stimulus package of sorts. It is through collegial support and networking that we will weather this storm. We encourage you all to reach out to your colleagues and be supportive. Keep conservation relevant to the higher ups and the general public. Continue to promote conservation, not as a frill but as an essential part of keeping our culture alive and healthy. In these hard economic times, you may feel like cutting back, hunkering down, laying low. What we need to do is the exact opposite. We need to redouble our efforts for public outreach, we need to be prominent in the public eye so as not to be forgotten or marginalized. Now if ever is the time to get out there and make some noise.

For example the Juneau meeting will be a great opportunity to network and to go public with conservation. There will be multiple opportunities to bring conservation to the public's attention. The Angels project in the St. Nicholas Russian Orthodox Church will be a very public way of bringing conservation to the forefront. We received an FAIC Angels project grant to help fund the supplies. There is still time to join in and help out. There will be a conservation clinic on the Saturday following the conference at the Juneau Douglas City Museum.

Public outreach should not only occur during the annual meeting but should be a part of our consciousness and our daily work.

I hope to see you all in Juneau!

Scott