

ALASKA PIONEER PATHFINDER

Fred Thorsteinson
Grand President

October 2015
Volume 20, Issue 4

A LETTER FROM THE OFFICE OF THE GRAND PRESIDENT

Brother and Sister Pioneers:

I want to thank the members of Men's Igloo 31 and Women's Igloo 11 for hosting the 2015 Grand Igloo Convention in Palmer. A lot of hard work goes into planning and hosting a convention and they did a wonderful job.

On behalf of all Pioneers I want to thank Grand President Jim Rhodes for his leadership over the past year and his wife Frances for enduring the hardships of his absence while he was performing his duties.

I am very honored to serve as Grand President of the Pioneers of Alaska and I promise to do my best to represent you well.

The 99th Grand Igloo Convention was historic due to the passing of the constitutional amendment to reduce the residency requirement for membership in the Pioneers of Alaska from 30 years to 20 years. I know that there is concern that we will lose some aspects of our heritage but this change does not affect the basic tenants of the Pioneers that are to unite the Pioneers of Alaska, to record and preserve the history of our great state and to promote the best interest of Alaska.

I believe that this change will be significant in attracting new members and much needed new energy and ideas but, this measure alone does not bring new members into our Igluos. We must all spread the word about our organization and work to make it more visible in our communities. I am asking each Igloo to schedule at least one event that is open to the public, possibly sponsoring another charitable organization or purpose. This is a good way to increase our visibility, help

Alaskans and recruit new members. Ask a friend to become a Pioneer of Alaska.

Another significant decision made at the convention was the approval of a long term project to preserve and digitize the records of the Grand Igloo. There is a great wealth of information that is not accessible and is in danger of being lost.

I am very encouraged by the enthusiasm of our Grand Igloo committee chairs and members. Some of the things the committees will be working on are:

- To produce an information brochure "Why You Should Be a Member of the Pioneers of Alaska" that will answer many of the questions we are asked by prospective applicants for membership. The brochure will include a membership application and space for each Igloo to provide their contact information.
- To establish a Public Relations Committee that will develop ways to make the Pioneers of Alaska more visible.
- To find new ways to communicate through the Grand Igloo website.

The State of Alaska is facing an extreme fiscal crisis due to the low price of our oil resource. The deficit is estimated to be 3.1 billion dollars with oil prices at \$60 per barrel. The current price is well below this planning figure. Budget decisions that will be made in the upcoming legislative session will affect Alaska's future. The Pioneers of Alaska must let our elected officials know where we stand in regard to reductions to services and new sources of revenue. The Legislative and Government Committee will send a survey to each Igloo to determine the position that the Pioneers of Alaska will

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support. This position will be communicated to the Governor and our legislators and we will be vigilant of the decisions being made by them in Juneau.

I look forward to working with other Grand Officers, the Grand Igloo Committees and all Igluos during the upcoming year. Our primary goal is to all increase our membership numbers. Let's start showing some positive numbers.

If you have ideas on how to improve the Pioneers of Alaska you may contact me at fredthorsteinson@gci.net.

I look forward to meeting you all in January.

Sincerely,
Fred Thorsteinson
Grand President

THE CONVENTION

Master of Ceremonies Bernadette Wilson, radio talk show host on radio station KFQD, opened the 99th Grand Igloo Convention. The Colony High School JROTC presented the colors and the Colony High School choir sang the Alaska Flag Song and our national anthem. Accompanying them was the Colony High School Marching Band, the only marching band in the State.

Ms. Wilson then presented the guest speakers Bert Cottle, Mayor of Wasilla; Mat-Su Borough Mayor, Larry DeVilbiss; Delena Johnson, Palmer Mayor; and Governor Bill Walker. Governor Walker was joined by First Lady, Donna, and Pat Pitney, Director, Office of Management and Budget.

The speakers all shared something in common: they are all Alaska high school graduates and all members of the Pioneers of Alaska.

Governor Walker shared a cute story with us about a question he was asked by a young man from Kivalina: Are you some kind of Mayor or just the Governor? That had to be a little humbling for Governor Walker.

At 1:00 p.m. the business session was opened by Grand President, Jim Rhodes. There were some interesting reports presented and we will try to bring our readers highlights from those reports in a future issue of The Pathfinder.

It is sad to see our membership rolls continue to fall. Statewide the Pioneers of Alaska have a total membership of 4,520. The largest Igluos are Fairbanks Men's Igloo 4 with 425 members and Fairbanks Women's Igloo 8 with 673.

The smallest are Wrangell Men's Igloo 21 with 52 and Delta Junction Women's Igloo 19 with 50 members. The Pioneers initiated 98 new members, 44 were reinstated, and we lost 194.

The Constitutional Amendment changing the residency requirement for membership from 30 years to 20 years passed.

Joan Skilbred and Wanda Huber, Women's Igloo 8, have undertaken the huge project of digitizing the Grand Igloo Records. This is a long term project approved at the Convention and is estimated to take about five years.

Did you know:

The Pioneers of Alaska statewide gave out a total of \$64,000.00 in scholarships this year? That is an impressive figure.

Erika Miller, Fairbanks Women's Igloo 8 has identified and placed 305 grave markers through the Grand Igloo Foundation.

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This year's medallion was designed by Amber Church-Whaley, granddaughter of Past Grand President Bill Church and his wife, Ruby.

One of the highlights of the Convention was to see Past Grand President, Wes Perkins again. This is the first convention he has attended since he was badly injured by a bear. He is to be admired for his indomitable spirit and great attitude.

Past Grand Presidents in attendance were:

Kenneth Kareen (1989)
Edward Barber (1990)
Donald Dinkel (1993)
Wes Perkins (2005)
Bill Church (2006)
Russell Braun (2007)
Edward Johnson (2008)
Frank McGilvery (2009)
Alfred Clayton, Jr. (2010)
Jerry Krier (2012)
Troxell Hebert (2013)

A fashion show featuring Women's Igloo 11 members as models was the entertainment at the Women's Luncheon. An added bonus was the parade of the Pioneer ladies who heeded the call to wear kuspuks. There were some original and beautiful kuspuks on display. Ziggy and Friends provided the music while the ladies were eating and during the fashion show.

The Men's Luncheon featured a slide show of antique cars presented by the Antique Auto Musers of Alaska. In addition there were antique cars on display.

Thursday night a Chili and Cornbread feed was held and in lieu of skits this year attendees were treated to some wonderful entertainment by the Borealis Dancers and Hillary, their soloist and ventriloquist. Perhaps most entertaining was Past Grand

President, Al Clayton, Jr. who "volunteered" to assist Hillary as her "dummy" as she sang "I've Been Everywhere." He performed his part very well even though Hillary was mostly in control! He instantly picked up the honorary title of "Our Favorite Dummy."

The Grand Ball, featuring the music of Marge Ford and the Polka Chips, was a great success. The Grand March was very well organized and had great participation from the attendees. Mary Castle and her marching partner displayed their great sense of humor by carrying a banner of three white fabric squares strung on a rope with the notation "Three sheets to the wind."

There were lots of participants in theme attire which made it difficult for the judges to pick the winners. Winner of the "Best Couple" were the Scarecrow and the raven. Unfortunately we do not have their names but have heard they are from Palmer.



Don Benson, Palmer Men's Igloo 31, wearing his straw hat, farmer attire and carrying a basket of turnips won "Best Man." Jennifer Wrede, Fairbanks Women's Igloo 8, won the "Best Woman" award. She was dressed in her bib overalls with appliques – one was strategically placed on her backside – and a wonderful quirky red bonnet.

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Thanks to Nick Nugent, Fairbanks Men's Igloo 4 for the three photos.

The Grand Ball capped off the festivities for the 2015 Convention. Following another delicious meal Linda Block presented a talk "Believe in your Dreams."

Once again the Colony High School ROTC members were pressed into service and served as the wait staff. They were so polite and helpful and did a great job.

Kudos to the Convention and Committee Chairs and everyone who participated and

worked hard to make this another successful convention

YOUR NEW OFFICERS

The newly elected Grand Officers took the Oath of Office Saturday afternoon. They are:

G. President:	Fred Thorsteinson	Juneau
G. 1 st VP:	Ken Pysz	Palmer
Grand 2 nd VP:	Lee Pederson	Anchorage
G. Historian:	Jim Casement	Cordova
G. Recorder:	Linda Conley	Fairbanks
G. Secretary:	Vision Money	Homer
G. Treasurer:	Debbie Dauphinais	Homer
G. Chaplain:	Virginia Calloway	Juneau
G. Sgt.-at-Arms:	Ben Esch	Nome
G. Inner Guard:	Virgil Campbell	Seward
G. 1-Yr Trustee:	Mary Castle	Ketchikan
G. 1-Yr Trustee:	George Lounsbury	Fbks
G. 2-Yr Trustee:	Don Burt	Homer
G. 2-Yr Trustee:	Peggy Cartmill	Juneau
G. 3-Yr Trustee:	Erika Miller	Fairbanks
G. 3-Yr Trustee:	Steve Searles	Valdez

A NUGGET

Two good ol' boys in an Alabama trailer park were sitting around talking one afternoon over a cold beer after getting off of work at the mill.

After a while the first guy said to the second, "Iff'n I was to sneak over to your trailer Saturday and make love to your wife while you was off huntin' and she got pregnant and had a baby, would that make us kin? "

The second guy crooked his head sideways for a minute, scratched his head, and squinted his eyes thinking real hard about the question. Finally, he says, "Well, I don't know about kin, but it would make us even."

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GRAND PRESIDENT'S 2016 INSTALLATION SCHEDULE

January 3	Delta Junction
January 4	Fairbanks
January 5	Kodiak
January 6	Nome
January 9	Anchorage
January 10	Palmer
January 11	Valdez
January 13	Cordova
January 15	Homer
January 16	Kenai
January 17	Seward
January 20	Sitka
January 25	Ketchikan
January 26	Wrangell
January 27	Petersburg
January 29	Juneau

FAIRBANKS IGLOO NEWS

Submitted by Joanie Skilbred, Women's Igloo 8

The Fairbanks Men's Igloo No. 4 and Women's Igloo No. 8 put together a very nice display for Alaska Day in the Noel Wein Public Library display case here in Fairbanks. This display is 12' x 7' in size and is located in the high traffic foyer of the library. This display features the Fairbanks Igloos in a positive light and gives us more public visibility.



Left to Right: Rodger Hopp, Joan Skilbred, Pat Myers, Susan Nugent & Nick Nugent.

Come by Rail, Sail or Hit the Trail to Fairbanks for the 100th Grand Igloo Convention, September 14-17, 2016.

The 2016 Fairbanks Convention Committee is pleased to announce that Past Grand President Wes Perkins from Nome Men's Igloo No. 1, is the official first registrant for the 100 Grand Igloo Convention. For the rest of you, registration will open in early 2016 when the registration packets go out in the mail. Mark your calendars and plan on attending this historic convention, which will be a memorable event for the Pioneers of Alaska.

For more information regarding the 2016 Grand Igloo Convention go to the Grand Igloo website at www.pioneersofalaska.org. Keep checking back because updates will be added as more information becomes available. You can also contact the 2016 Convention Committee at their website giconvention@gmail.com if you have any questions or need further information. See you in September.

PIONEER MEMORIAL SERVICE

As always the Convention Memorial Service was conducted with honor and dignity. As each absent Pioneer's name was read a small paper forget-me-not was placed on a large gold heart. The flowers surrounded a painted white cross centered among delicately hand-painted forget-me-nots. The heart was prominently displayed and a wonderful tribute to our departed Pioneers.

The Celtic Pipes and Drums played at the beginning of the service and ended with the lovely and emotional hymn "Amazing Grace."

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END OF THE TRAIL

Men's Igloo 1- Nome

William Garrison
Gary Longley
Donald Peterson

Women's Igloo 1 – Nome

Bessie M. Billberg
Verna von der Heydt
Agnes Walsh

Men's Igloo 4 – Fairbanks

Whitten (Bud) Anderson
Herbert Barker
Clarence Beers
Bob Bettisworth
Bob Blockolsky
Roy Breckenridge
James Cox
Wallace Duhon
Wilbur Green
Gale H. (Pete) Gunn
Robert W. Hager
Carl Heflinger
Lee Hoover
Mark L. Linck
Jim Madonna
Derrall (Mac) McBirney
Andy E. Miscovich, Jr.
Troy Nance
John Nelson
Don Piatt
Stanley Rybachek
Claude Shoemaker
Robert Sibold
Jack Stallings
Frank C. Steward
Edward Walters
Lloyd Welty
Walt Wigger
Theodore Whitbeck
Elmer Stone, Jr

Women's Igloo 8 – Fairbanks

Joan M. Braley
Debra Sue Chesnut
Alene R. Christiansen
Sandra J. Crabb

Women's Igloo 8 – Fairbanks (Cont.)

Francis Sheldon Erickson
(Charter Member)
Beverly Nice Fantazzi
Mary E. Fitzgerald
Patricia Franklin
Lois M. Franz
Alma R. Ginn
Josephine H. Hoskins
Bernice A. Kinney
Carla I. L. Licalsi
Helen A. Logan
Alice Helen McKee
Helen Mane
Magdalene M.. Mitchell
Aileen I. Paun
Elizabeth Betty Perala
Anna L. Powell
Olive Rogers
Yvonne Shaver
Lillian M. Shellinger
Lucille E. Shriner
Pearl F. Shuros
Evelyn Olga Speinle
Lucille Maxine Thayer
Marian E. Thomas
Barbara A. Trigg
Claire Lardner Vanderbilt
Lourene Washeleski

Men's Igloo 6 – Juneau

Forest W. Bates
Staley A. Beadle
Robert Lamar Cartmill
Elton E. Engstrom
Frank Monroe Hall
Edmund A. Hinke
Robert James Larson
Marucie V. Long
Robert L. Stevenson

Women's Igloo 6 – Juneau

Catherine Lena Alter
Violet Cope
Helen Dapcevic
Patsy Ellsworth
Margaret Mary (Peggy)
Garrison
Heather (Weir) George
Margaret Germain

Women's Igloo 6 – Juneau (Cont.)

Beverly Jones
Ada Barbara Klinkhammer
Burnette Diane (West) Ooley
Lorene Paul
Mary Elizabeth Pusich
Jean Elizabeth Thorsteinson

Men's Igloo 7 – Valdez

Darwin Barrie
Steve Guest
Jim Lindsey
Jeff Mekinda
John Rogers, Sr.
Bernard John Whalen

Women's Igloo 2 – Valdez

LeNora Conkle
Frances harris
Emily Kaiser
Jean Kulstad
Geraldine Plaster

Men's Igloo 9 – Seward

Jack Hoogland
Tom Walker

Women's Igloo 9 – Seward

Julia Ducham
Peggy Reynolds
Marilyn VanPelt
Pat Williams

Men's Igloo 15 – Anchorage

Donald C. Barnett
Daniel H. Cuddy
Charles A. Davis, Jr.
Earl D. Deater
William D. Dudley
CR Kelly Foss
Vincent Huebsch
Larry M. Luedke
John Maakestad
Ralph Marcott
Leo E. Obermiller
G. Mike Nauann
Don C. Schroer
Arthur Schwankl

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Women's Igloo 4 – Anchorage

Della Barry
Kay Bielawski
Patricia Cavanaugh
Donna Chiacchia
Patricia Green
Wanda Griffin
Diane Hayes
Marian Hill
Jean Jackson
Maxine Jackson
Yvonne Krotke
Mary Lakshas
Julia Lesh
Marlene Leslie
Louise Nichols
Tina Pilch
Inger Ricci
Reva Rhoton
Lee Robertson
June Robinette
Diann Sanchez
Lila May Schroeder
Pauline Sharrock
Viola Stansell
Rose Steiner
Helen Strusz
Beverly Strutz
Mildred Tapscott
Florence Teufel
Lillian Villwock
Susan Wise-Kaiser

Men's Igloo 16 – Ketchikan

Calvin Anderes
Robert D. Anderson
Michael M. Bellanich
Ronald P. Kline
Robert S. Race
Leon Snodderly

Women's Igloo 7 – Ketchikan

Leliah Anderes
Mary Fitzgibbons
Connie Griffith
Lucile King
Margaret McCombs
Mary C. Smith
Judith Stenford

Men's Igloo 18 – Kodiak

None Reported

Women's Igloo 17 – Kodiak

Sally Morris

Men's Igloo 19 – Cordova

Neil Schultz
Ron James Shaw

Women's Igloo 19- Cordova

None Reported

Men's Igloo 21 – Wrangell

Sam Privett

Women's Igloo 15 – Wrangell

Lenora Moore

Men's Igloo 22 – Sitka

Gene Prewitt
Myron Wheeler

Women's Igloo 12 - Sitka

Pauline Fern Bergdoll
Letty Cole
Betty Lou Keck
Lois Shirley Perensovich
Lorein Savikko
Mary May Whitcomb

Men's Igloo 26 – Petersburg

John Johnson

Women's Igloo 10 – Petersburg

Darlene Conn
Shari Otness

Men's Igloo 31 – Palmer

Bill Ferris
Leslie Kelml

Women's Igloo 11 – Palmer

Nancy Austin
Marie Betts
Evelyn Bush
Margaret "Jackie" Cabo

Women's Igloo 11 – Palmer (Cont.)

Rosemary Carlow
Lyla "Jinx" Cornelius
Henrietta Nugen
Wilhelmina Pedersen
Barbara Sexton
Carol Ann Stewart

Men's Igloo 32 - Homer

William A. "Bill" Corey
Robert B. Turkington

Women's Igloo 14 – Homer

Edna Farsdahl
Edna Bernice Fisk
Patricia Ann Lawlor-Lavelle
Vada Lucille Moore

Men's Igloo 33 – Kenai

Hank Every
Stan Thompson

Women's Igloo 16 – Kenai

Lila Mae Schrader
Elsie Sidback

Men's Igloo 35 – Delta Junction

Garald Hobbs

Women's Igloo 19 – Delta Junction

Marie Fett
Julie Lee
Fran Colombo (Charter Member)

First Class
Please Forward
Address Service Requested

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From The Editors:

We want to thank all of you who have generously donated monies to The Pathfinder and all of you who subscribe.

The Pathfinder is published four times a year and is \$1.00 per issue. If you wish to subscribe please contact us. For submissions, comments or corrections please notify us at the address listed below.

The July 2015 Issue should be No. 3 not No. 4. We are sorry for any confusion this may have caused.

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