

**President's Letter**

*Scott Carrlee*

Dear Membership,  
 You can stop reading right here. Nobody reads the president's letter anyway. Before Susi started writing about cheese, I never read the president's letter either (sorry all). Most of the presidents' first letters thanked the membership for electing them, (thank you membership!!) and thanked the past president for the hard work in planning the annual meeting (thank you Susi!! It was a great meeting!) and the members of the board for keeping the organization running over the past year. (You are hard-working bunch without whom WAAC would not exist. Thank you, thank you!) I only know all this because I went

back and read the past 10 years of letters before I started writing this one. It is good to give thanks, and I am grateful to be serving as your president and writing this letter.

Though not as historic as the presidential election, WAAC did have a good turnout for this year's election to the board. Marie Laibinis Craft was elected our new vice president. Albrecht Gumlich was elected as a Member at Large and Marie Svoboda re-elected to a second term as Member at Large. Thanks to Dana Senge, Ria German-Carter, and Maria Sheets for their willingness to run for office. Dana will continue as a Member at Large, and Susi, as outgoing president, will fill Marie's place on the board.

Now with that done, I can turn to what I really want to write about. No, it is not cheese, it's my 15 month old son Carson. One of the things I have noticed about him is that he is naturally curious about everything. (I am pretty sure all babies exhibit this tendency but hey, he's the only one I'm watching.) In our house we call him the "baby scientist" because he will spend a considerable amount of time discovering the fundamental nature of things. For example there is an "inside" and an "outside" to things, such as with a box. You can put things in the box or you can take things out of the box. There is the "divisibility principle" such as with paper; you can tear off a piece and now you have two pieces of the same thing. And of course the "solidity of things." Some things look solid, but are not, like the stream of water from the faucet. The baby scientist takes nothing for granted and must prove over and over again that the fundamentals of nature remain true.

Watching Carson got me thinking about conservation. I believe it requires a lot of that same curiosity, maybe more so than other professions. How else could we all sit in the same room, regardless of specialties, and listen to talks ranging from Russian icons to mass fumigation of automobiles to the history of turpentine and find something interesting in all of it? Every WAAC annual meeting I have attended has been like that, and I have learned something every time. It is one of the great benefits our organization has to offer. That is why I am super excited to be planning for the next annual meeting to be held in Juneau in August of 2009. Some of you may have been to Alaska before but for many of you this will be your first trip. I have been busy planning the meeting and making sure it will be



up to the high standards of previous meetings. We have a great venue in the Juneau Arts and Culture Center which is right in the center of town, close to hotels and restaurants. The banquet will be a salmon bake at the Thane Ore House, a very Alaskan venue. We have managed to get a great rate at the designated conference hotel. Keep in mind that Juneau receives a lot of tourists during this time of year so make your plans early.

**President's letter, continued**

Many of you will want to make the most of your trip up here so I will be providing information about tours such as whale watching and day cruises. You can even dog sled on a glacier if you so desire. Juneau is in the world's largest temperate rainforest so be sure you bring a good rain coat. If every one brings their raincoat, it will surely be sunny the whole time. There are more miles of hiking trails in the rainforest than there are miles of paved road in Juneau.



I am also planning on an Angels Project to help a Russian Orthodox Church with icons, candelabras, and other items. This church serves a small Native Alaskan community. They have many needs but not many resources. You can get some additional information from their website... [stnicholasjuneau.org](http://stnicholasjuneau.org)

If you are interested in helping out, please contact me. Also contact me if you are interested in giving a paper. I already have two papers lined up but we will obviously need a lot more.

I hope to see you all in Juneau this summer!

Scott



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