

## The Grand Lodge

The ISMA Grand Lodge is made up of elected officers, elected delegates, and appointed officers from the local lodges. It is the body through which ISMA forms its official positions regarding legislation and conducts the majority of its official business.

At least once each year, the Grand Lodge convenes to consider proposals offered by the local lodges, elect new Grand Lodge Officers, and set a course for the organization for the coming year. All ISMA members are invited to attend each session of the Grand Lodge at the annual ISMA Convention.

## Local Lodges

Local ISMA lodges from around the Great Lakes conduct regular meetings that feature lodge business, maritime-related programs and speakers and, most importantly, the opportunity for members to share in conversation.

Local lodges are active in the following areas:

Port Huron, MI	Lodge #2
Chicago, IL	Lodge #3
Cleveland, OH	Lodge #4
Detroit, MI	Lodge #7
Toledo, OH	Lodge #9
Duluth, MN	Lodge #12
Georgian Bay, ONT	Lodge #15
Thunder Bay, ONT	Lodge #16
Ashtabula, OH	Lodge #17
Green Bay, WI	Lodge #18
Northeast Michigan	Lodge #19
Niagara Dist., ONT	Lodge #20
Muskegon, MI	Lodge #21
Twin Sault, MI/ONT	Lodge #22
Traverse City, MI	Lodge #23

## ISMALetter

Providing the backbone of communication throughout the year, ISMA publishes a newsletter to maintain a consistent avenue of information to all members - including those who are on board ship for extended periods.

The Association's bi-monthly newsletter, **ISMALetter**, contains information on maritime operation, navigation, and safety items; details of maritime events of interest; ISMA Convention information; news from the local lodges; member news; and history.

## ISMA Committees

The Association appoints numerous committees to investigate issues facing mariners and issue reports for consideration by the membership. Commissioned on both the Local Lodge and the Grand Lodge levels, committees include: navigation, engineering, and legislation; membership; events; and jurisprudence.

## Annual Convention

The Association sponsors an annual convention for all ISMA members to gather for events ranging from educational sessions and guest speakers to discussion of issues and ISMA business. Hosted by a different local lodge each winter, activities also include business luncheons, theme dinners, and excursions around the convention city. Each convention is capped by the impressive Grand Lodge Officer Induction Ceremony followed by the formal Ship Masters' Grand Ball.

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## The Merchant Marine Officers' Respected Voice



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## INTERNATIONAL SHIP MASTERS' ASSOCIATION

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An Invitation  
to Membership





## A Maritime Tradition on the Great Lakes

In 1886, a group of Buffalo ship masters united to form an organization for the mutual benefit of professional mariners.

Originally called the Excelsior Marine Benevolent Association, the organization was to provide financial support to disabled members or their beneficiaries in case of death, to provide educational opportunities for the improvement of navigational skill, and to insure that Great Lakes ship masters had a voice in the formation of safety and navigation rules and regulations.

The organization was not conceived as a labor union, but as a voluntary association of individuals with a commitment to the betterment of their own profession.

The association was soon embraced by most Great Lakes ship masters and changed its name to the Ship Masters' Association in 1893.

A growing Canadian presence was reflected in the change of the name to the International Ship Masters' Association in 1917.

From then on and continuing today, mariners from both countries work with government agencies and the marine industry toward the creation of a safer and more efficient maritime commerce.

## Our Philosophy

"The purpose of the Association shall be to unite all ship masters and licensed merchant officers of good moral character; to evaluate the character of its members; and to utilize their professional experience to promote safety on the Great Lakes and any navigable waters." (ISMA Constitution)

The International Ship Masters' Association functions as the representative of all Great Lakes mariners in many important ways. Through meetings, committees, newsletters, and communication between members, ISMA informs and educates its members on issues of vital concern to mariners.

And through the respected ISMA name, mariners of all levels have a collective voice when critical decisions on maritime affairs are made by government. The Association plays a cooperative role with the Canadian and US Coast Guard and various other maritime organizations and associations.

## Goals of the International Ship Masters' Association

- 🚢 Promote the fraternity of our profession through the exchange of ideas, experiences, and education of our members.
- 🚢 Serve as the Merchant Marine officers' respected voice in matters concerning the navigation and operation of vessels with regard to safety and the environment.

## Benefits of International Ship Masters' Association Membership

- 🚢 The chance to meet professional mariners with the same interests and concerns as your own
- 🚢 A forum in which to exchange opinions and ideas on issues concerning maritime operations and safety
- 🚢 Being informed of happenings in the maritime industry through our bi-monthly newsletter, the ISMA Letter
- 🚢 The opportunity to meet and discuss issues with industry and regulatory officials
- 🚢 The opportunity to play an essential part in the future of our profession
- 🚢 Recognition by your peers through your involvement in an organization of Merchant Marine officers for the betterment of our profession

## Past ISMA Accomplishments

- 🚢 Provided input into the establishment of recommended courses on the Great Lakes
- 🚢 Offered advice to the US and Canadian Coast Guards on the placement of countless aids to navigation
- 🚢 Worked with the US Corps of Engineers in the planning of channel improvements
- 🚢 Offered guidance to the National Weather Service on efforts to improve marine weather forecasting

