



Operation Gratitude

VAN NUYS - This past November, seven members of the Van Nuys Rebekah Lodge #239 worked at Operation Gratitude in Chatsworth, CA.

Operation Gratitude annually sends 200,000+ care packages filled with food, entertainment, hygiene, and handmade items, plus personal letters of appreciation to Veterans, First Responders, New Recruits, Wounded Heroes, their Care Givers, and to individually named U.S. service members deployed overseas and their families waiting at home.



Their mission is to lift the spirits and meet the evolving needs of the Military and First Responder communities, and provide volunteer opportunities for civilians anywhere in America to express their appreciation to all who serve our nation.

The hardworking group from Van Nuys took boxes down the assembly line and helped to fill the boxes for our troops. All of the items that go into the boxes are donated by the community and/or other organizations. The group packaged and boxed magazines, black socks, CD's, DVD's, toiletries, bracelets (made from parachute cords), letters and cards written to the troops, and candy.

In an amazingly short period of time, about four hours, we were able to complete 7,200 boxes. It was a good event for a great cause! We wore our Rebekah shirts and got some wonderful advertising for the organization, when two of our members, Nela and Nancy Latu were interviewed after the day was complete. Both had on Rebekah shirts and mentioned the organization in the interview.

The lodge is already looking forward to coming back next year!

Ocean View Celebrates!



HALF MOON BAY – This past January, Ocean View Lodge #143 celebrated their 149th Annual Roll Call Dinner with 42 members in attendance. It was the largest Roll Call gathering the Lodge has ever had!

The night began with a festive social hour managed by Lodge Secretary Gail Harvey and her group of volunteers. A wonderful dinner and dessert was served to all

the members in the historic hall. After dinner, Noble Grand Joe Brennan conducted the Roll Call and installed the new officers: Vice Grand, Marty Steiger; Secretary, Gail Harvey; Co-Treasurers, Joan Jama/Liz McCaughey; Financial Secretary, Kathy Bristol. Nancy Margulies was sworn in as Trustee.

Celebrating Our Veterans

By: Col. Don Lang, PGM

SAN JOSE - As we celebrated this 98th Anniversary of Armistice Day, by having our annual Veterans' Day Parade in San Jose, we were extremely proud to be a part of this celebration.

This year, we were unit 76 out of over 90 units honoring the veterans. Leading our section of the parade was 3 Sigma Tau girls, Honor, Elizabeth & Serenity carrying the Odd Fellow & Rebekah Banner. Following them was Col. Don Lang escorting the American flag, carried by

Grand Master of CA, Peter Sellars. Following them, was Lady Debra LaVergne Past President of IALAPM, carrying the Rebekah flag and Maj. Bonnie Sellars Dept. Quartermaster



carrying the Odd Fellow flag. Peter was wearing his Marine tee shirt with his Grand Master collar and Don, Debra and Bonnie were in their Patriarch Militant uniforms. Following them, in Don's Odyssey Van, was Col. Laurie Prescott, Dept. Commander PM of CA driving and John Meierdierks sitting in the passenger seat waving. The Grand Master of California magnetic signs were attached to both sides of the van. The van was patriotically decorated with all kinds of flags and flag decorations.

As we turned onto Market Street from Santa Clara, they made a nice announcement about Odd Fellows and Rebekahs and then again when we passed the Grand Stand on Market Street. Everyone felt really proud about participating and we wish that next year we will have even more members take part.

Partnering in the Community

DAVIS - The Davis Odd Fellows Lodge Community Support Committee issued it's year-end report on charitable giving showing benefits to 20 community and charitable groups.

In 2016, the Community Support Committee donated \$5,100 to 13 community and charitable groups, and also permitted an additional 7 community groups to use the Odd Fellows Lodge Hall without charge in co-hosted events. The Odd Fellows Community Support Committee was created 12 years ago and has been providing financial and other benefits to local groups every year. Long time Co-Chairs of the Community Support Committee are Lea Rosenberg and Holly Bishop. Said Co-Chair Rosenberg: "Over the past dozen years, through our Community Support Committee, the Davis Odd Fellows have been able to provide well over \$60,000 in funds for local organizations which serve the needs of our town and our county. The free use of our Lodge Hall for community groups to hold their fundraising events has provided a similar in-kind level of contribution. Odd Fellows are proud of our work to support and elevate the good in our community."

The following community and charitable groups received direct financial donations in 2016: Partners in Education - Newspapers in Education - \$500; Yolo County Healthy Aging Alliance - \$500; Community Meals and Housing - \$500; Best Buddies (supporting young people with needs) - \$500 ; Running with the Turkeys (Yolo Food Bank) - \$500; Don Saylor's Soups On - \$500; Unleashing the Possibilities (building a new animal shelter) - \$500; United in Unity (helping teenagers) - \$500; Davis Phoenix Coalition (anti-bullying) - \$300; NAMI (assisting persons with mental illness) - \$250; Yolo County Mexican-American Concilio - \$250; Davis High School Jazz Choir - \$150; and the City of Davis Volunteer Day - \$150.

Neither Snow, Nor Sleet...



Nor rain deterred determined Odd Fellows and Rebekahs from the annual seminar. The "Membership Educational Seminar" for Odd Fellows and Rebekahs, hosted by the Grand Lodge of California, attracted 112 Odd Fellows and Rebekahs from all over California this year. For the second year in a row, the seminar venue was the El Dorado Hotel and Convention Center in Reno. Participants gathered over the weekend of January 13-15, 2017. Most came by car, some came by carpool, many came by train, and a few even flew into the airport.

Participants registered for \$200 and received two days of education and training, two nights at the El Dorado, a binder of educational materials, and two hosted breakfasts.

A wide range of subjects were covered at the seminar, presented by experienced and knowledgeable instructors. Subjects included the structure of IOOF, the Codes, parliamentary procedure, Odd Fellows history in California, improving the appearance of your Lodge, all about rental agreements, proper reporting to Grand Lodge and Rebekah Assembly, Escorting at an Odd Fellows Lodge, duties of Lodge officers and trustees, how to be an effective representative at Grand Lodge Sessions, community service, membership with examples of effective membership development. Especially popular were the Q&A sessions hosted by Peter Sellars and Dave Rosenberg. Audience members wrote out questions on a wide range of subjects, including difficult Lodge issues, and Peter and Dave answered every question during the course of the seminar.

Instructors included Grand Master Peter Sellars, Deputy Grand Master Dave Reed, Grand Warden Mel Astrahan, PGM Rick Boyles, PGM Dave Rosenberg, RA Secretary Karolinne Livingston, Past Chaplain Rita Cooper, and Grand Guardian Henry Rosenthal. Chairman of the 2017 Seminar was Dave Rosenberg, assisted by his daughter Janis Rosenberg, who is Treasurer of Davis Lodge #169.

"Evaluation sheets from participants showed that this was a very educational and well-received seminar," said Seminar Chair Dave Rosenberg. "We tried some new things this year that proved very popular. We set up small breakout sessions in the conference center where incoming officers and trustees could meet with each other to focus on issues unique to their offices. We also hosted Odd Fellows Trivia (with prizes) ultimately won by Colonel Laurie Prescott of the Patriarchs Militant. All-in-all, it's fair to say that every single participant left the seminar with new energy and new knowledge."

Dates of the 2018 Seminar were announced: January 5-7, 2018. Location still to be determined, so mark your calendars now! - *Dave Rosenberg, PGM*

In This Issue
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"Promoting Odd Fellowship through
Positive Communication"

Don't Miss The Cave Degree

The date for the 71st Annual Second Degree Cave Ceremonial will be August 5, 2017. The moon should be rising at about 7:30 PM, so we should get to see it rising above Mt. Shasta as we prepare to start the degree.

To prepare additional candidates for the Second Degree at the Cave, there will again be a special afternoon meeting of Yreka Lodge No. 19, at which the Initiatory and First Degrees will be conferred on any candidates available and qualified to receive them. These degrees will begin at 1:00 PM in the Yreka IOOF Hall and conclude in time for the evening dinner, prior to the 7:00 PM departure of the bus to the Cave. We will also be conferring the Third Degree on Sunday morning, after breakfast is served in the Lodge Hall by the regular and Cave Associate members of Yreka Lodge No. 19 and members of the Grand Lodge Cave Degree Committee. Cost of the dinner and other details will be presented at Grand Lodge in May and printed in a later issue of this publication.

All Lodges are invited to bring their qualified candidates. A letter under the seal of the Lodge, giving the names of the candidates and the degrees for which they are qualified, should be sent to the Yreka Lodge, No. 19, P.O. Box 445, Yreka, CA 96097, or hand-delivered by a member of the Lodge before the Degrees are scheduled to be conferred. Our incoming Grand Master, Dave Reed, will have the privilege of arranging for the Degree Staffs to confer all of the Degrees.

For Motel reservations, call Miner's Inn (Best Western) at 1-800-444-1320, Holiday Inn Express at 1-877-684-9381 or 1-530-842-1600, Super 8 at 1-530-842-5781, Baymont Inn at 1-530-841-1300 or Motel 6 at 1-800-466-8356 or 1-530-842-4111. For more information, please call Secretary Alfred Brandon at 1-530-468-2477 or Noble Grand Richard Brouse at 1-707-251-1592.

The date for the 72nd Annual Second Degree Cave Ceremonial will be August 25, 2018. Moonrise then will be about 8:10 PM. We will get to see the moon rise above Mt. Shasta during the early part of the degree. This date is soon after Sovereign Grand Lodge, which could reduce attendance, but we need to follow the moon schedule.

Thank you for your continuing support of this unique program.

Please bring your candidates.

- Dick Brouse, Chairman

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Bringing Smiles to Local Children



Pictured from left to right are Odd Fellows David Haber, Fireman Ryan Robbs, Odd Fellows Diane Webb, Fireman Chris Walker and Noble Grand Tony Delgado.

VAN NUYS - Van Nuys Odd Fellows Lodge #442 once again donated several hundred dollars' worth of toys to Fire Station No. 47's Spark of Love Toy Drive in Simi Valley, bringing joy to many local needy children. Over the past 24 years, the Sparks of Love Toy Drive has collected over nine and a half million toys for needy children!

Official Visit by DGM

MARIPOSA - Mariposa Lodge #39 was honored to have an official visit from Deputy Grand Master, Dave Reed, at a recent meeting.



DGM. Reed spoke of the needs of lodge and the future of the order. His words were warmly received. It is very important to have the visits of the Grand Lodge representatives, as many lodges feel

isolated and disconnected from the Grand Lodge.

Grand Lodge may not have all the answers, so it is up to each Lodge to find their own purpose and way to serve their membership and community. To survive each Lodge must find a way to be relevant in their community.

Thank you DGM. Dave Reed for the visit and we look forward to your leadership in the future.

Don't Miss Grand Lodge

The 164th Session for Grand Lodge and the 126th Rebekah Assembly Sessions for California will be held from May 17-21 in Visalia.

Please see your lodge secretary for Registration Information. Hope to see you there!

Empowering Our Members

by Michael Greenzeiger

I've had the privilege of belonging to several different lodges and visiting a number of others across the country. There are many different ways to be a good leader and to run a successful lodge. One commonality I have observed among successful lodges, however, is the willingness to empower others.

Many of us have been able to bring new members into our lodges, but keeping them active and engaged is another story. When new members feel that their ideas aren't being heard or that they have no say in how the lodge is run, they are quick to lose interest in Odd Fellowship. Too many of us are not willing to let others try out their ideas or to place them in a position to help make important decisions. This even extends to lodges where the members have been around awhile, but one member holds on to the reigns of power and won't share with others. When this member dies or can no longer participate, all their know how and experience is at risk of being lost, since they haven't mentored anyone who can take their place.

Fortunately, those who came before us in Odd Fellowship understood the importance of empowering our members and passing on the ability to run the lodge to subsequent generations. This is the magic of the "progressive line" where each year we ideally have a new Noble Grand, Vice Grand, and all the appointed offices which lead up to them. This ingenious system is meant to prevent the lodge from becoming the fiefdom of a single member and to ensure we are all placed in position to learn the leadership and organizational skills needed to run the lodge.

When we give others a chance to try new things, to learn from their mistakes, and to grow into positions of leadership within the lodge, we are giving that member a great gift, but we are also receiving one in the form of a vibrant and effective lodge. Some of the very best suggestions I've heard for new events or new ways to improve a lodge have come from a new member. Let us always remember to listen to and value all of our members no matter how new or how old and to give them the opportunity to show us all what they can bring to our Order when given the chance.

Uplifting The Community

NEVADA CITY - The Nevada City Odd Fellows, Oustomah Lodge #16, IOOF, selected Uplift Family Services in Nevada City, to support this holiday season. Lodge members donated \$540, and the Lodge matched those donations, for a total gift of \$1080. Member Caroline Wilson was able to arrange a donation of Christmas trees as well.

Uplift Family Services supports seventy (70) Nevada County families with children in distress. Uplift Family Services is a statewide nonprofit agency, and our programs help children and adolescents with complex behavioral and emotional challenges, as well as their families.

"This year, Uplift Family Services is so very grateful that the Independent Order of Odd Fellows from Nevada City has chosen us to be the benefactor of their generous donation. The total collected was \$1080 for



Oustomah Treasurer Richard Gorman presents check to Brenda Lorns, Office Manager, with Deborah Stevenson, Clinical Program Manager and Katherine Meadows, Facilitator.

the children we serve. The Odd Fellow members donated money and the Odd Fellows Fellowship of Nevada City matched the generous donation. We also received Christmas trees from Odd Fellow member Caroline, who received the trees from Jack Tatitucci's farm in Weimar. "We do not have enough words of praise for the Odd Fellows and their treasurer, Richard Gorman, who was their liaison in making this happen for our kids. Thank you for making your way through our doors and into our hearts!"

Uplift Family Services will be distributing this generous contribution to our children and families. It will go towards the essentials that many of their Nevada County families truly need, such as food, winter outerwear, the holiday party for kids and their families and gifts for the holidays.

Oustomah Lodge #16 was founded in Nevada City in 1853. We are currently undergoing a revival. Website coming soon. Find us on Facebook.

A NIGHT TO REMEMBER



SARATOGA - On December 3rd Odd Fellows Lodge #428 held their annual Christmas party entertained by Saratoga High School alumna, and now comedian, Sandy Stotzer.

The guests were serenaded by members of Bay Area Opera with arias from Carmen between dinner courses with a delicious meal served by Girl Scouts of America Troop 476. A good time was had by all and the great news is that several new members were recruited!

Celebrating in "True" Style



On October 22, 2016, a celebration was held for Marilyn True, Rebekah Assembly Conductor.

It was a Disney theme brunch event and many people in attendance got into the action by wearing costumes or Disney related clothing. Sister Marilyn transformed into a Princess on her event and wore her princess gown with her magic wand and tiara.

There were over 90 people in attendance. Presentations were made by quite a big group of people, including her fellow officers, her lodge, and her family.

Flag Presentation to the Veterans

By Don Lang

SAN JOSE - On Monday, November 14, three days after Veterans Day, Col Laurie Prescott, Department Commander, Lady Debra LaVergne Past President of the IALAPM, and Col. Don Lang PGM all in their uniforms, with Randy Richmond an Odd Fellow and Veteran, presented all the different military branches, with military flags, one at a time, at the special veterans program at the Live Oak Adult Day Care Center, in Willow Glen, CA.

The group presented wreaths and folded American Flags, honoring 4 dead service men. They also demonstrated the folding of the American flag. While they were doing this, a reading was presented in the meaning of each of the folds.



The program was started by firemen from a fire engine station in Willow Glen, coming there. The firemen raised the American flag on the Home's flag pole, right at the entrance way in the parking lot to the Home. The Veterans present, really appreciated this special program and all the special attention and effort that went into it, just for them. I am sure it brought tears to their eyes; I know it did to mine.

Cupertino Performs Initiatory Degree

CUPERTINO, CA - On January 16th, the District #107 Degree Team performed the Initiatory Degree for a group of 10 candidates.

The team is composed of members from Cupertino Lodge #70, Mountain View Lodge #244, True Fellowship Lodge #52, and Saratoga Lodge #428 and performed the 1896 version of the degree which has become their custom over the past couple of years.



The District #107 rendition of the degree includes period appropriate clothing and music, the singing of traditional Initiatory odes, and the inclusion of some props which are no longer used in the contemporary degree.

Grand Master Peter Sellars was in attendance to witness the degree and addressed the candidates afterwards. The District #107 team is available to host the degree for any lodge with prospective members and also extends the invitation to any Odd Fellow who would like to witness this special version of the degree.



SAN FRANCISCO - This past January, 163 Members and family attended the 168th Installation and Roll Call Dinner of California Lodge #1. This event was held at the Basque Cultural Center in So. San Francisco.

California Lodge #1 continues to work hard to continue the growth of our lodge and incoming Noble Grand Jenny Dadoun was pleased to announce that our efforts succeeded, and that last year we brought in 34 new members to the Order. Many of these new members were in attendance that evening, and are looking forward to supporting their new lodge in its future endeavors!

The new elected officers were truly surrounded with Friendship, Love and Truth; great food and a wonderful band "the Hot Rods" to dance the evening away.

Happy Birthday!

DAVIS - On February 4, the Davis Odd Fellows Lodge Hall was the venue for the celebration of Jim Cheney's 90th birthday.

Jim is the oldest active member of Davis Lodge #169. On hand were 200 of his closest friends and many members of the Lodge. Also on hand were three of his daughters - Sharla Cheney, Sarah Worley, and Lin Spangler - all members of the Lodge, as well as grandson Evan Daly, who is also a member of the Lodge.

Jim Cheney holds all degrees in the Lodge, is a member of Davis Encampment #21, and also a Chevalier in Canton Davis #7.



Helping The Less Fortunate

VAN NUYS - This past November, four members of the Van Nuys Rebekah Lodge #239 delivered a check to the San Fernando Policy Auxiliary Council for \$500. This will help them to put together baskets for those less fortunate people in the community. The Police Chief was very grateful for the generous donation.

Installation of Officers



Deputy Grand Master Dave Reed (far left in the photo) and Past Grand Master Dave Rosenberg (far right in the photo), both members of Davis Lodge #169. The elected officers of the Lodge are picture left to right: Financial Secretary Duff Devine, Treasurer Janis Rosenberg, Secretary Jim Smith, Noble Grand Stewart Savage, and Vice Grand James Bledsoe.

DAVIS - Officers of Davis Lodge #169 were installed on January 21, 2017. The installing officials included, Deputy Grand Master Dave Reed and Past Grand Master Dave Rosenberg, both members of Davis Lodge #169. The elected officers of the Lodge are Financial Secretary Duff Devine, Treasurer Janis Rosenberg, Secretary Jim Smith, Noble Grand Stewart Savage, and Vice Grand James Bledsoe.

Over 70 members of the Davis Lodge, plus applicants and friends, attended the Installation Ceremony, and enjoyed a wonderful dinner prepared by Lodge Catering. 2016 Noble Grand Jean-Paul Montreuil presented awards for service to the Lodge and the community in 2016. Over a dozen superlative members of the Lodge received Merit Jewels. In addition, major awards were given to exceptionally active members: the annual "Member of the Year" award was presented to Juelie and Kurt Roggli, the annual "Noble Grand's Award" was presented to Janis Rosenberg, and the annual "Spirit Award" was presented to Ed Lewis.



From your Rebekah Assembly President

February 9, 2017

Dear Sisters & Brothers:

Over the course of the year I have met many of you in your lodges and during my travels, I'm positive that you all have Rebekahs in your hearts and are trying everything to make your lodges grow.

At Rebekah Assembly this year all Rebekahs are invited to join us whether you are a past noble grand or not. Become involved and attend Rebekah Assembly. I will bring back the pride we had in our sessions and try to get as many of you involved as possible.

Also at Assembly I would like to have a ceremony to present jewels for 25 years or more. If you have a member that qualifies for a Jewel, please contact the Rebekah Assembly office and get the paperwork filled out. Please notify me of this member's name so they can be added to the ceremony.

This year your Executive committee has been very busy by working to update and provide a new per capita form that will be submitted only once a year, starting December 2017. This form will also be available electronically for those of you interested. There will be a Rebekah Assembly Website just for you to get information you need and the updated code information that will have been approved at Rebekah Assembly. Please go to www.RebekahAssembly.org to look for it.

The executive committee has been working on the sorely needed code changes that have been missed or not updated. This year we have been trying to increase communications and in the near future will try to collect as many of your email addresses as possible to help increase these communications with all members. The more communications we can have between members, the more united we can become.

Any suggestions from the membership is greatly appreciated and will be looked into. Hoping to see most of you at Rebekah Assembly. Here's to turtle power.

Together We Can Accomplish Anything.

*Roberta J. G. Prosk,
President of Rebekah Assembly*

Bring in the New to Save the Old: Renew so as to Retain

In the time that I have had the honor of serving our Order as both Grand Chaplain and Board member I have had the privilege of visiting a number of our California Lodges. Often I came away from the visits with two distinct feelings: (1) fond remembrance of the friendly warmth of our Brothers and Sisters in this Fellowship of Friendship, Love and Truth, graced by the enduring value and beauty of our shared traditions and venerable rituals; but, (2) dismay at the obvious shrinkage in too many of these Lodges in the number of Odd Fellows there to honor the traditions, to revere the rituals, to carry on the Mission.

And so it came to me: We must bring in the new to save the old! We must renew the body to retain the soul of our Fellowship. Now the emphasis here is on the word "new". Certainly we should maintain our effort to bring in young people, but I am suggesting that each Lodge should develop some specific strategies to recruit new people and I believe there are several situations that people find themselves in that can lead them to appreciate what the IOOF has to offer: men and women in a particular kind of transition: new "empty-nesters", newly discharged or retired military, new Americans, new retirees and new arrivals in the community.

There may be other types of transitional situations and I would love to hear your suggestions, but most of all I would like to work with you to develop recruitment initiatives, to create programs at the Lodge level to identify and recruit candidates for Odd Fellowship.

Of course simply bringing in new people to our Lodges is not enough. They must see and feel the reasons that this relationship, this facility, will be comfortable and rewarding to them, because of things such as: an attractive building exterior, a warm, lively, up-dated private club-like interior, hospitality facilities for food and drink, engaging activities like parties and trips, charitable activities that are valued by the community and committees that engage Lodge Members and that get things done.

Surely there are other valuable features that you might suggest. I'd like to hear about them from you and work with you in developing them.

Let's ring in the New Year with plans for renewal, plans to regain our strength in numbers, so that we may retain our relevance and protect the Odd Fellow way, protect our rituals and traditions for the coming year and those that follow.

In Friendship, Love and Truth,

Rita Cooper
Director - Grand Lodge of California

Don't Miss Friendship Night!

Visalia - Grand Lodge Sessions are coming up in less than four months - on May 17-20.

This year we will be at a new venue in Visalia.

As we have done for the past five years, DMC will once again be hosting and organizing a social event for Thursday evening at the Grand Lodge Hotel, open to all Grand Lodge and Rebekah Assembly representatives, and all Odd Fellows, Rebekahs and guests who wish to attend. We are calling the event "Friendship Night" and it will run from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. The event will feature live music, a no-host bar, an all-you-can-eat Taco Bar, a few brief comments by leaders of our Order, and a great time to socialize and relax. The cost to attend the event will be a very low \$15 per person in advance, or \$35 at the door.

We are able to keep the cost per participant very low because of the generosity of a few critical sponsors - both Lodges and members. If your lodge wishes to participate as a Sponsor \$250+ please contact Dave Rosenberg.

Please join us that night! Sign up today and send your check made payable to "Grand Lodge" before May 8th to Dave Rosenberg, Odd Fellows Lodge, 415 2nd Street, Davis CA 95616. Please write "Friendship Evening" in the memo section of your check!

Looking forward to seeing you at this year's Grand Lodge Sessions!

Recruiting New Members

I commend any Odd Fellow who tries to recruit a new member to join his or her Lodge. But these recruitment efforts often fail because the Odd Fellow paints a picture of an Order that has not existed since horses drew buggies down Main Street. Let me explain what I mean. When Odd Fellowship was founded in England hundreds of years ago, it soon morphed into what the British call a "beneficial society." In other words, the fraternity provided benefits to its membership. This made good sense in the days when virtually no social services were provided by the government. So, in those early days, Odd Fellowship provided medical and hospital services, support for widows and children of deceased members including orphanages, retirement homes for aged members and widows of members, cemeteries for burial of members and widows, sick and death benefits, financial support for members who had lost their jobs, assistance to members trying to find new jobs, and more. All fraternal orders grew exponentially in the 18th and 19th centuries because of these benefits.

All this changed in the 20th Century. Government stepped in to provide assistance to people. Private insurance also became readily available. The need for fraternal assistance and support diminished dramatically. Today, in the 21st Century, Odd Fellowship provides only a small fraction of the kinds of services and supports that a 19th Century Lodge used to provide. That is the reality.

I raise the issue because it directly affects today's recruitment of new members into the Order. As we all know, our membership numbers have been declining in a steady line since World War II. One of the prime reasons for the decline is that in many Lodges (and I have personally observed this to be true) members are attempting to recruit new applicants on a completely outdated and outmoded premise. They seek to interest members in joining Odd Fellowship by contending that we will offer many benefits to them - as if we were still the "beneficial society" of old. This is, however, a 19th Century view of Odd Fellowship and is misleading, at best. Sure, there are the "benefits" attendant to "camaraderie" - but to imply that we offer a range of benefits for members and their families is just wrong. Any applicant recruited on this premise will soon be disillusioned.

To paraphrase the famous expression by President John F. Kennedy: "Ask not what your Order can do for you, ask what you can do for others." Frankly, the 21st Century recruitment effort should not emphasize benefits to members. On the contrary, it should emphasize the good works Odd Fellows can do for others, and the fun and satisfaction that Odd Fellows can have as Lodge members. Do not underestimate the importance and draw of public service to the new generation of potential Odd Fellows. There are many young men and women who are looking for an opportunity to do good charitable and community work in their home towns. The Odd Fellows Lodge can provide a venue for that endeavor. Local opportunities to help others - whether it be children, seniors, veterans, poor or hungry people - and local opportunities to do good environmental work abound. That is what attracts those potential members in their 20's, 30's and 40's that Lodges desperately need in order to survive and flourish.

This should be our focus going forward. Not a 19th Century ideal that has long since passed us by.

F - L - T

Dave Rosenberg, Past Grand Master

Gone But Not Forgotten

It is with great sadness to report that two long time members of the Order, who have been very involved during the past years in Grand Lodge and Rebekah Assembly, have both passed away on New Years Eve. Both deaths were unexpected.

Bob True, was a member of Van Nuys Lodge #442, in southern California, was an Emeritus Director of the Rebekah Children's Home in Gilroy and was Past Grand Color Bearer of Grand Lodge, for Past Grand Master Gerald Poarch.

Bob's wife Marilyn, is the current Conductor for Rebekah Assembly President Roberta Prosk. Bob has worked many years for the Rose Parade float, by being in charge of the parking lot.

Lois Mullen was the past Director of Rebekah Assembly and among other things, Past Outside Guardian of Rebekah Assembly for Past President of Rebekah Assembly Carolyn Deboer.

Both Carolyn and Gerald served office at the same year 1992/1993 and were therefore both part of the same Odd Fellow and Rebekah family.

Don and Mary Lou Lang were also part of that same family, Don being the Grand Instructor for Gerald. Lois was a member of Olive Branch Rebekah Lodge #48 and Bay View Odd Fellow Lodge #109 in Redwood City. Services were held on January 17.

A New Space

SAN JOSE - This past February a dedication for the new remodeled Grand Lodge office was held.

This building was originally the old San Jose Odd Fellow Lodge. The building was totally renovated, both inside and out, at a cost of approximately 3 million dollars.

The space will be a wonderful addition to the previous cramped space the Grand Lodge held. Now, besides offices, there are conference rooms, and a beautiful museum with a wealth of Odd Fellow and Rebekah paraphernalia being displayed.

Nancy Johnson, past Rebekah Assembly President spent many hours putting the museum together, and we thank her for this labor of love!

It was a great afternoon, and all there enjoyed refreshments and the camaraderie of Odd Fellowship!



Coming To Grand Lodge... You won't go hungry!

VISALIA - This year, Four Creeks Lodge in Visalia will be open and will be offering a wonderful selection of food, snacks and beverages for your pleasure during the Grand Lodge Sessions!

Each day they are planning to have a reasonably priced lunch or dinner for your choosing! Items such as pulled pork with homemade coleslaw, all you can eat salad bar, and chicken alfredo are some of the tempting choices!

Saturday night will include a Dinner and Dance with raffle, prizes, live entertainment and more - so be sure to come and check it out! Four Creeks is looking forward to hosting all visitors to their wonderful city!

For more information, including what will be served per day, and food pricing, please contact Jennifer at 559-697-1680.

GRAND MASTER'S MESSAGE

Greetings Brothers And Sisters!

This has certainly been an entertaining year, if anything. With only a short while remaining in my term, the year - to date - has been pleasurable. I appreciated seeing receptive members at each of the lodges I managed to visit. Thanks to all of you for your hospitality.

Some of the questions and concerns this year dealt with nominations and elections of lodge officers. These kinds of details should be routine in your lodges. Balloting, voting, the sign, the grip, the Honors, should also be routine. Submitting annual per capita reports should be straightforward as well. Knowing the chain-of-command, per se, within the Order should also be common knowledge. I am not saying all of you need to know everything in the Order; but, all of you should be working toward knowing the rules and even where to locate subjects within our code books.

With all of that said, now I also need to ask you not to use our codes to beat people over the head, you should be using our Ritual and Code passages as guides to have a better lodge.

Our Grand Lodge sessions are nearly upon us. I would like to see every lodge represented at the session. Did you know that a roll call of all the lodges is taken at the sessions? All 200 members hear the responses to the roll call. When a lodge is absent, it is an indicator that lodge is not in good shape or the members have not acquired the knowledge of the Grand Lodge session or could even be intimidated. Our Order is a friendly Order, one of Friendship, Love, & Truth, where all you need to do is ask for guidance and the "how-to's" to get started at the Grand Lodge session. No one is going to judge you because you do not know what to do at sessions.

Every May, is where we gather to get updates with our Order's activities. It is where we nominate and elect the leaders of the Order. It is where we present proposals for changes in our Order or the way we want to see our Order. This is the place to discuss your legislation or resolutions and to hear your ideas for improving the Order. Keep in mind, if you have an idea for changing something you believe needs to be changed, submit it in writing to the Grand Lodge office by APRIL 1st of any year. If you need help on writing your legislation, there are members who would gladly assist you.

Let us make our lodges better. Let us ensure our lodges have a purpose in the community. Make a commitment to be a value to your community and not just a fence post, withering and weathering away. If anything, wouldn't you rather belong to a lodge that is doing a good work(s) in the community than not doing anything?

I look forward to seeing all of you at this year's sessions at Visalia, May 17, 2017 through May 20, 2017. Come and say, "hi." If I hear you, I'll return the greeting.

Start preparing for 2019. This is our Order's 200 anniversary year in the United States. Start planning events. Have your Mayor sign a Proclamation and recognize the Order, as it is one of the oldest fraternal organizations in your town.

In F.L. & T

Peter Sellars
Grand Master

Protecting Your Lodge (odd insurance man insights)

Most of us agree that insurance is a “necessary evil.” But what is the alternative? An organization or individual could self-insure a risk (which translates into earmarking large sums of money to a dedicated bank account). Entities like Cal Trans do this. Maybe pool resources with like entities to share reduce premium expense, like a group of small municipalities do, might work. By far, the most common method of managing risk is to contract with a reputable insurer in exchange for paying for a premium.

A “standard” insurance policy for your lodge is anywhere between 195 to 225 pages in length and may be described as a Commercial Line Policy or a Business Owner Policy. Policies like these contain common items such as: Declarations Pages, Common Forms/Conditions and Endorsements, Property Coverage, General Liability and Exclusions. When reading your policy you will notice that it advises: “read your policy carefully.” This is especially true when the Company is excluding some coverage form or amending the policy. Someone in your lodge really should take the time to read the policy as it is a legal binding contract between the Insuring Company and your lodge. However, the reality is that most of us will read the declarations pages (summary of insurance) and pay the bill. If a question or problem arises, we call the servicing agent.

We know that the most common occurrences that are insured against are “trip and fall”, fire, water damage and theft. These perils and others are carefully spelled out in your policy. Hopefully, your lodge will not have to file a claim. There items that help your lodge avoid claims by

employing simple Risk Management techniques:

MAINTAIN YOUR LODGE: It is important to keep electrical, plumbing, heat/air, exterior and the roof in good working order. Underwriters and actuaries describe the behavior of insureds who take good care of their buildings as “pride in ownership”. Buildings that are well kept are less likely to have claims.

SAFETY AND COMPLIANCE: Items of importance here include: ADA compliant entrances to the building, certified elevators, ADA compliant bathrooms, emergency lighting and exit lighting and fire alarms.

LONG TERM LEASE AGREEMENTS: For those lodges that lease commercial space as source of income will have some form of a Property Lease Agreement. Upon the signing of the lease, It becomes a legal binding contract. Within the “guts” of your contract, there should be very clear reference to Indemnity and Exculpation. Essentially, the tenant is expected to hold the landlord harmless from all damages caused by the tenant. Furthermore, there should be language in the contract stipulating minimum public liability limits (\$1,000,000 per occurrence and \$2,000,000 aggregate is an industry standard) as well as property damage (anywhere from \$300,000 to \$1,000,000). As a landlord, your Lodge should be certain to obtain a Certificate of Insurance. Furthermore, your Lodge has the right to be named in the tenant’s insurance policy as Additional

Insured. If you need help evaluating your current contract, seek the advice of a legal professional who specializes in contracts or visit a legal website such as Nolo.com.

SPECIAL EVENTS: Many lodges derive income from special events such as weddings, reunions, company parties and such. For lodges that do this, it’s important to have the renter apply to rent the lodge. As with long term leases, once signed by both parties, an application becomes a legal contract. Within the application/contract, it is imperative to include language that will indemnify and hold your lodge harmless regarding claims for personal injury or death and for damage or loss of property relating to rental of your lodge. If the renter is an individual, their homeowner’s policy may offer protection. If no coverage is afforded by a homeowner’s policy, special event insurance can be purchased online or from an insurance agent. If caterers are involved, they should have a commercial policy. If alcohol is being served, the appropriate permits and Liquor Liability endorsements should be in place. As with commercial leases, your lodge has the right to insist on being named Additional Insured on the renter’s policy. If you need help evaluating your current contract, seek the advice of a legal professional who specializes in contracts or visit a legal website such as Nolo.com.

LODGE HOSTED EVENTS AND FUND RAISERS: Events such as seminars, exhibits, dances, crab feeds, etc. that are hosted by your lodge on lodge premises are covered under the

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lodge insurance. However, care must be taken to inform your agent about hosting events that are over 300 people in attendance, consumption of alcohol (whether for sale or not) and if admission is charged. For smaller events, the insuring company most likely will not list the event in the policy. Larger events (especially if they are expected to be annual reoccurring activities) should be endorsed on the Policy and may have some additional premium. For lodges that serve alcohol regularly should be certified as TIPS compliant (Training for Intervention Procedures) or a similar program. The most convenient source of training is available online.

CONCLUSION: The purpose of insuring your lodge properly is to avoid paying large sums of money in a law suit and even losing your lodge in a settlement. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the lodge trustees to understand the unique risks to their lodge. If there is any question about the features of your insurance policy, seek assistance of a trusted insurance professional. You will benefit greatly from your efforts to protect your lodge!

Duff Devine is a licensed independent insurance agent who specializes in fraternal non-profit insurance. He wrote this article as a result of attending the Membership Seminar held in Reno NV. He is a member of Odd Fellows #169 and Encampment #121, Davis CA. Brother Devine can be contacted by email: duff@devineins.com or by phone: (530-304-7288).

Californians visit West Virginia

WEST VIRGINIA - Joyce Link, President of IARA along with two of her officers: Ruth Morgan, Chaplain and Mary Beth Hiscock, Guardian from Nevada, traveled in December to attend the Testimonial for Larry Ferguson, SGM. Travel buddies were Ray Link and Marcia Weaver. The warm welcomes from the 'Hill Billies', as they call themselves, started when they stepped off the plane and continued until they left.



Several meals were enjoyed at a diner where Larry is on a first name basis. We toured his Church and his home that were fully decked out for Christmas. We ate cinnamon rolls at every meal, cautiously shopped for 'take homes', and fell in love with the wonderful people there. Larry's Lodge fed and entertained us Thursday night, fine dining and a live Christmas/gospel music festival was on Friday and Saturday was the finale.

Elkins, West Virginia rests in the heart of Coal country and has a population of 7,100. It didn't take long for us to figure out Larry knows them all. There were large vans to transport us everywhere so we could see 'God's country'. We especially enjoyed the trip to their only Odd Fellow Home. A huge 3-4 story historical brick building, with much of the history our Saratoga home enjoys. Our vans traveled over rolling hills and fertile valleys that once made the home self-sustainable. Every room is filled with antiques, curved stairways, and was beautifully decorated for Christmas. We were deeply saddened to meet the only 3 residents with a full staff. The future of that home was uncertain as we departed.

Larry was well honored at his Testimonial, with many honors bestowed on him. Joyce did a great presentation, while providing information that produced a lot of laughter, a few tears, and new memories for us all. The photo was taken at the altar of Larry's Church.

Happy New Year

DAVIS - In what has become an annual tradition, the Davis Odd Fellows Lodge #169 hosted its third New Year's Eve Party featuring the popular local band "Mumbo Gumbo." Over 200 tickets were sold to the community, and it was staffed by over 20 Odd Fellows volunteers. The band started playing at 9:15 p.m. in the Upper Hall and didn't stop till 12:30 a.m. on January 1. At midnight, champagne was served, balloons dropped from the ceiling, and noisemakers were passed out to the guests to say "goodbye" to 2016 and "hello" to 2017.



The NYE party was organized by the Lodge's Music and Concerts Committee, headed up by Juelie and Kurt Roggli. It coincided with the 100th anniversary of the chartering of the City of Davis in 1917 and was the first event in the city's year-long celebration. The Davis Lodge has actually been around longer than the City of Davis, having been instituted in 1870 under the name Yolo Lodge #169.

Independent Order of Odd Fellows
Grand Lodge of California, I.O.O.F.
14414 Oak Street, Suite B
Saratoga, CA 95070-6186



Lodge Number or Expiration Date After Name

Riding High!



PASADENA - Gray skies without rain greeted this year's Rose Bowl Parade, Echo's of Success in Pasadena. A bit of gray weather could not dampen the spirit of all those involved, and the annual parade went off without a hitch!

The Odd Fellow and Rebekah float was titled "Through the Ages" and celebrated the nearly 200 year history of charitable activities, social events and the educational programs and benefits of Odd Fellowship! The float featured a gazebo at the front and a large book at the rear. The book showed a history of the Odd Fellows good works back to the 1880's.

There were many guests and dignitaries on this year's float including Grand Master Peter Sellars, Lola Gianelli, PDDGM of San Francisco, now of Casper WY, Larry Ferguson, Sovereign Grand Master, Joyce Link, President of the International Association of Rebekah Assemblies, Daniel Mathews, General Commanding of the Patriarchs Militant and Barry Prock, PGM. If you would like to see the float in the parade, check the link below. <http://www.oddfellows-rebekahsrosefloat.org/>

