



Independent Order of Odd Fellows
Dedicated Members for Change

April 22, 2011

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

1. The 2011 Grand Lodge is less than one month away. This year, the Grand Lodge sessions will be conducted in Sacramento, at the Doubletree Hotel, 2001 Point West Way, Sacramento, CA 95815. Our group, Dedicated Members for Change - which was just formed last December - will hold its inaugural dinner meeting at the hotel on Thursday, May 19 at 6 p.m. Thank you to all who have RSVP'd.

In our first newsletter, we announced that the cost of the dinner is \$39 (that is precisely what the hotel charges us - DMC makes no profit on this dinner), but because of the generosity of some members and Lodges, we would be able to subsidize the first 50 RSVP's - the first 50 will be able to attend at \$19 per person. All 50 initial slots have been spoken for. After the first 50, the cost of the dinner is \$39 per person - the actual cost charged us by the hotel. If you wish to come to the inaugural dinner, please send your RSVP to me and let me know the names of the folks in your party. We only have about 20-25 seats remaining. Checks for the dinner should be made payable to "Alameda Lodge" and should be mailed to Rick Boyles at Alameda Lodge #3, P.O. Box 2183, Alameda, CA 94501.

We now have the dinner menu. The inaugural DMC dinner will be a buffet including hearts of Romaine with glazed walnuts, red onions, and Shaft blue cheese with dressing; tri-color orzo pasta with peas, feta cheese, olives and roasted peppers, marinated cucumbers in garlic sour cream and fresh dill; balsamic marinated chicken breast with Dijon mustard sauce; sliced tri tip; roasted red potatoes with garlic and herbs; seasonal vegetables; fresh baked rolls and sweet cream butter; assorted cheesecakes. Doesn't sound like anyone will leave hungry!

2. I ran across an old website - long since discontinued - that is still kicking around on the Internet. It's worth a visit. The website is www.oddfellows.blogspot.com. Check it out. It looks like a handful of Odd Fellows in 2005 started a website, talking about their concerns regarding the diminution of the Order. They seemed to be very down about loss of members. The concerns they raised in 2005 are just as valid today. Looks like they kicked the situation around for a few months, and then got discouraged, and just stopped talking about it. The last post was in the latter part of 2005. Perhaps they even gave up. Well, we're not giving up - that's why we formed DMC. We can turn this around.

3. The 2011 Grand Lodge will be an interesting and important one for us. For one thing, there are some good people running for Lodge offices. We need to support those people who understand the great history of this fraternity, but also understand that business as usual will not



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save this Order. The only person who has timely submitted a statement of qualifications for the office of Grand Warden is Rick Boyles. I think the world of Rick. He is far-sighted, hard-working, a loyal Odd Fellow, and also a member of DMC. He is just the kind of leader we need in the coming years.

4. Here's a sad statistic. I've just learned that the regular membership of all Encampments in California is only 217 members. Only 217! If this isn't a big red flag regarding the slow death of this Order, I don't know what is. In contrast, my Davis Encampment #21 was down to 2 or 3 members less than 3 years ago, when I got involved and re-energized it. We adopted a mission: sending kids to summer camp, specifically the Three Links Camp. The Davis Encampment now has 18 regular members with 7 applications currently pending. When we give the three encampment degrees to these 7, we will have 25 members, making us the second largest encampment in California. Clearly, we can absolutely turn around and stop the decline of our membership. We just have to be focused on what attracts folks in the 21st Century to join a fraternal order and to stay with it.

5. I've submitted 8 resolutions for consideration at the 2011 Grand Lodge. These resolutions will help us transform the Order. Seven of the 8 resolutions are focused on the Grand Lodge - on what we can do right here to help the Order in California. (I've given up on Sovereign Grand Lodge for the time being - they are intransigent at SGL. At least for now. Once they see how we can transform California, their hearts and minds will follow. But that's for another day.) The 8 resolutions - if adopted - will do the following:

One - The officers and directors would be directed to work with Lodges which have less than 21 members in a 3-year project to help them get back up to a minimum of 21 members.

Two - The officers and directors would be directed to work with the Lodges to develop community outreach and community and charitable works by Lodges with the goal of at least two IOOF community and charitable projects per Lodge.

Three - The officers and directors would be directed to work with the Lodges to develop good fellowship activities in each Lodge with the goal of at least four good fellowship activities in each Lodge for the fraternal and social benefit of members.

Four - Lodges would be encouraged to hold open business meetings (without revealing secret ritualistic work) and each Lodge will be encouraged to hold such open meetings at least six times each year.



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Five - The Grand Lodge Membership Challenge Grant program will be continued for another year - enabling individual Lodges to receive up to \$100 for each new member.

Six - Individual Odd Fellows and Rebekah Lodges - which wish to do so - will be encouraged to hold joint open business meetings (without revealing secret ritualistic work), not to exceed one per month.

Seven - The Grand Master, Deputy Grand Master and Grand Warden shall no longer be required to visit Lodges, but rather the visitations will be voluntary - the intent is to allow these officers to focus on leadership, not honorific visitations.

Eight - As a statement of protest and sign of dissatisfaction with the intransigence and inflexibility of SGL, the Grand Lodge of California Grand Representatives shall not attend the 2011 SGL.

See you at Grand Lodge!

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Dave Rosenberg