



Independent Order of Odd Fellows
Dedicated Members for Change

January 13, 2012

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

We're happy to share with you some thoughts by a distinguished member of our Order, a member of the Grand Lodge Board of Directors, and an accomplished author of excellent books on the history of Odd Fellowship, our friend and Brother Peter Sellars. The article below is food for thought!

Fraternally,

Dave Rosenberg

To All The DMC:

Progressiveness is the key to success and part of that includes tying your lodge into the community. Being community focused will bring your lodge to the forefront of attention. Sharing your lodge does not mean having to "sell" people on the idea of membership so they will join your lodge. These three statements I will explain below.

The most important thing I could do this year as the membership committee chairman was to write straightforward articles hoping those who cared and those who needed motivation would read those and take what they could and start moving ahead. With the wasting of our Membership Promotional Funds on the 2011 Float tab, we will not save enough money to take on a project sizable enough to do our Order justice. Getting the word out by short writings are also effective.

Being progressive means leaving bigotry, racial indifference, sexual orientation, gender inequality, and other discriminating factors at the door. Face it; lodges as I have described still exist and they hurt all of us. If you open the doors to everyone who wants to become a member and is willing to pay their dues, then your lodge is progressive. Your lodge will grow by leaps and bounds by eliminating these barriers.



Independent Order of Odd Fellows
Dedicated Members for Change

It is truly sad to see a lodge full of seniors who have never entrusted the lodge to others they see not worthy or capable of taking over the lodge. These are the lodges, along with the ones who set the barriers, who fail.

Sometimes, money needs to be spent to get the attention of your neighborhood. My lodge can gain many members, as it does, by showing our potential members we support community activities and causes. In my city of San Francisco, I promise you there are many causes and organizations who look for support. They recognize the support and some apply to our lodge. This is what being community focused means.

If you set up an information booth at a local event within your community let it be there for information only. Use the brochures we have. Do not try to get new members at this point. If they want to join after you have explained everything about the Order and your lodge, then you have done a good job. Do not try to sell them on membership. Try to show them how wonderful your lodge is so they will want to join. Show an interest in their ideas and interests. That is the key.

We appeal to a wide range of members. From a few homeless individuals to those I have described, to the most affluent we have them all. This past month, we brought a new member into our lodge who was just visiting us. He came back for his degrees and is now a member of our lodge. He is a top neurosurgeon in his field and often flies around the world performing surgeries with his team. His name is Tom Kopitnik and we are proud to add him to our diverse membership. That is what should attract members the most: that we do not set barriers other than the few simple qualification we set as an Order.

This past year, my lodge has brought in thirty-four new members, two transfers, one reinstatement, and three associate members. It has four major activities a year which many choose one or more as a favorite. These events include an overnight trip somewhere in the state, a Day-At-The-Races event, our annual dinner-installation event at a local restaurant, and a ghost walk tour in the city. For new applicants, there is no charge. Our meetings have attendance prizes, refreshments, and an hour and a half socializing before the meetings.



Independent Order of Odd Fellows
Dedicated Members for Change

If you think Dave or Rick write a lot, you have not seen too many of my writings. But, like them, I love to share ideas on growth. Good-luck brothers and sisters.

Fraternally,

Peter V. Sellars