



Independent Order of Odd Fellows
Dedicated Members for Change

June 1, 2013

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

The Advanced Proceedings for the 2013 Grand Lodge Sessions reveals some interesting preliminary statistics regarding the state of the Order in California. I provide you information from the Advanced Proceedings with a caveat. The information is preliminary and not final. The membership and Lodge information is based on Annual Reports that were received at Grand Lodge as of March 31, 2013, and reflects information as of December 31, 2012. Further, fully THIRTEEN Lodges had not provided their annual reports as of March 31. That fully 13 Lodges had not turned in their annual reports by March 31 is, in and of itself, a sad statistic.

So what do the preliminary statistics reveal as of December 31, 2012? Lots.

First, there are 126 Odd Fellows Lodges in California at the end of 2012, down from 131 at the start of the year. This is the result of 3 Lodge consolidations, 1 charter surrender and 1 charter suspension.

Second, membership in the Order dropped to 4,404 dues paying members at the end of the year, from the start of 4,783 at the beginning of the year. On the plus side, there was actually a small gain in female members, offset unfortunately by a bigger loss in male members.

Third, the 10 largest Lodges in California have 1,734 members which means that 40% of all Odd Fellows in California (4 out of every 10) belong to just those 10 Lodges. Even more startling, the 5 largest Lodges in California (California #1, Apollo #123, Yerba Buena #15, Davis #169 and Golden West #322) have 1,236 members, which means that just those 5 Lodges make up 28% of the total IOOF membership in California. In other words, more than 1 out of every 4 Odd Fellows belong to just one of those 5 Lodges. In terms of net gains of members, only 9 Lodges showed double digit gains (gains of 10 or more members) for the year.

I won't have the final statistics until the final Proceedings of the Grand Lodge are published. But if the stats continue what I saw last year, we will see that fully half of our California Lodges show less than 20 dues-paying members on their books. Typically, as we all know, not all dues-paying members participate actively in their Lodges. So, for example, a Lodge with 18 members might have only 8 or 9 active participants - such a Lodge doesn't even have enough members to fill all officer positions, and such a Lodge runs dangerously close to having quorum problems.



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So, we see a continuation of the membership and Lodge decline. And we also see the phenomenon of a few of our Lodges getting bigger and bigger, while the majority of Lodges struggle with static or declining numbers.

These statistics are not sustainable for a healthy, statewide Order.

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Dave Rosenberg