



Independent Order of Odd Fellows  
Dedicated Members for Change

August 17, 2013

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

Why do people join an organization, a club, or a Lodge?

If you think about it, the answer is obvious. People join because the organization, club, or Lodge satisfies a need. The need may be many things. It may be the need for social companionship. It may be the need to do important work in the community. It may be a need to fulfill any number of factors - ultimately providing satisfaction to the person.

So, as you seek new members for your Lodge, or as you encourage current members to continue, please keep in mind the varied good community works done in the name of Odd Fellowship. These good works encompass many things including but not limited to visual research, the educational foundation, the Odd Fellows Homes of California, and Rebekah Children's Services. In this regard, please see the attached article by the President of RCS Nancy Johnson. Nancy is also a long-time member of DMC, and serves this Order in many capacities, including as Grand Color Bearer.

Read the attached article about Rebekah Children's Services. You will be proud of the long-standing and important work done by your Order on behalf of children.

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Dave Rosenberg, GW

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## **Rebekah Children's Services**

### **Nancy Johnson, President RCS Board of Directors**

It surprises me, when I visit a Lodge, to hear our members still think Rebekah Children's Services, (RCS) does not need the help of our lodges because it is now funded by the government. I understand how this perception may have started, but let's set the record straight. After nearly 60 years of running our Gilroy facility, as a non-profit group home for at-risk youth, and no longer the orphanage we started in the late 1800's, we need your help more than ever.



The history of our Children's home, not only in California but across all jurisdictions, is noble. Our Membership took care of orphans in a time



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when money was tight and locating family was a challenge. The Rebekah Children's Home in California was opened in 1897. The land and materials were donated by Caroline Hoxett, a Past Rebekah Assembly President who lived in Gilroy. We quickly grew in size and in the care provided to our youth. By 1925 we housed over 100 orphans, all sponsored by members of the order. In the late 1950's, the Federal Government de-institutionalized the system of orphanages. They mandated a governed support system that allowed orphaned children a way to stay connected with family. When family was not available, a foster family maintained the continuity of a family environment.

During this time of transition, between our courts and our Odd Fellow community, many orphanages closed their doors. Here in California we opened our doors to the opportunity of supporting at-risk youth who need special care and counseling. In 1957, Rebekah Children Services took in its first court appointed youth to our residence program. Today, The Odd Fellows and Rebekahs of California can proudly say that we still own, govern and maintain our Children's Home.

RCS provides services that range from County "Wrap-Around" programs, where families receive needed services in their homes, to our new "Hospital Diversion" program that takes at-risk youth from the hospitals and bring them to a secure, controlled environment with full counseling opportunities. We have "Links to Life" (TAY), which incorporates several programs for older youth ready to move into the workforce including a "Culinary Academy". We also have a non-public school, parenting education, fostering, and adoption services available.

These services are partially funded by health insurance or government grants. This program funding is very specific to what can be covered and government cuts have affected every level of care from the federal to the school district. Our facilities and overhead are not covered by government funding. To maintain the high quality of our staff and facilities, it takes the support of everyone in the world. When called upon in your lodges, we ask you to make a contribution to support the needs of this wonderful facility so that we can continue to support our youth.

RCS VISION STATEMENT: *"To be the national leader in creating, shaping, teaching and providing services that achieve positive, permanent outcomes for children and families."* Today, we are a National Leader in our industry, one that is looked upon by our peers for guidance and support. We do not take this role lightly and appreciate what our lodges around the world may do to help. It is most important; we get the word out about what RCS does. We must change the perception; we are not self supported by government funds.

If you have any questions on our services or to make a donation, please visit our Web Site [RCSKIDS.ORG](http://RCSKIDS.ORG).



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Thank you for your past and continued support of our home. If you wish to have your donation designated to a specific fund, here is a list of funds that have been set up by our Board to assist where there is the greatest need; “Major Medical”, our kids at the home do not always have enough insurance to cover the needed medication. “Holiday”, along with our annual Christmas party for our residents, this fund also covers birthdays and other parties given at the home for our kids. “Good Times”, we send residents to prom, leadership conferences, job fairs and much more. “Facilities”, our building and grounds need constant upkeep. “Links to Life”, is a group of programs set up to link our transitioned youth (TAY) into the real world including developed culinary skills. “Scholarships”, we offer several scholarships.

Our Board is very excited about the work that we do in California and are pleased to have the opportunity to share our excitement with all of you.