



Independent Order of Odd Fellows
Dedicated Members for Change

January 27, 2014

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

Our Order has an Historical Committee co-chaired by Nancy Johnson and Peter Sellars. This committee performs an important service for Odd Fellowship, but often operates under the radar. It's time to bring more attention to the work of our Historical Committee. Nancy gave a well-received presentation this past weekend to the 75 attendees of the Members' Seminar held in Santa Nella. The presentation focused on what our Lodges should do to preserve the historical records in our possession. Hopefully, Lodges have their own historical committees (but if not, Lodges should consider forming such committees), composed of members who really care about preservation of our papers and artifacts. When no such committee exists, the duty often falls on the Lodge secretary. Nancy stressed the need to preserve and protect not only the old minute books, but all the records, including receipts, ledgers, and documents of the Lodge. Virtually all the records of the Order stored at Grand Lodge were destroyed by the great San Francisco earthquake of 1906 (all that was saved was the Grand Lodge Charter), but many Lodges have preserved their own records pre-dating 1906 in the Lodge. These records provide an historical glimpse of Odd Fellowship, but also can be used to track down ancestors who were in the Order. Nancy stressed, however, that these old papers are delicate and must be handled with cotton gloves, and stored in places of low humidity. In addition to the work of preserving records, the Historical Committee also maintains museums of Odd Fellows' records and memorabilia, and also takes possession of such historical items when Lodges lose their charters - an event that occurs with increasing frequency these days. If you would like more information on how to maintain and preserve your Lodge's historical records, please contact Nancy Johnson at sewkind@comcast.net.

In a recent DMC Newsletter, we published a letter from an Odd Fellows who lives outside the USA about the rudeness that member has seen at some American Lodges. The letter was disturbing. And I heard from a number of you, including Past Grand Master Gene Breeland, who writes the powerful letter, below, as follows:

Dave,

Shame on us! We are all guilty in some respects of this brother's findings. If you belong to a lodge with a brother or sister who is abusive to other members and do nothing about it, then you are as guilty as the abusive member. Our GM in a recent article talked about being nice to each other; yet we still have many members (many of whom are older) that do not understand that friendship should be unconditional. These people want a lodge of clones and will accept nothing less. The other option is that they are clinging to a power structure that places them in constant control of all the lodge's functions, and come heaven or hell they will not relinquish power. Their ego will not allow it, they must be always in a position of importance even to the detriment of the rest of the membership. These members are not really interested in Friendship, Love, and Truth, they are interested in fealty. Protect the power structure, be sure that anything that the



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lodge does that they personally get recognized and credit. I have seen it. It is a shame that these small minded people maneuver themselves into leadership positions and hold on with a bulldog tenacity. I understand where Brother Rick is trying to go, but find it difficult to see how he is going to sell his plan to someone with the attitude that I don;t have to be nice to them, they have to be nice to me. Time in service should not be a criteria, but too often some of our older members try to make it so with the attitude that when I have gotten all I want then those behind me can have their turn. I wish I had positive answers that some of these older members would listen to. We can not give up the effort.

In FL&T
Gene Breeland, PGM

And here's a reminder that our Grand Lodge Sessions begin on Wednesday, May 14, in Modesto this year. Make sure you fill out the registration form that was sent out to all Lodges by Grand Secretary Ray Link. We'd like to see you all there! We will hold our fourth annual DMC Dinner during Grand Lodge sessions. The dinner is scheduled for Thursday evening, May 15. You can sign up for the dinner as part of your Grand Lodge registration packet. The dinner is \$35 per person, and you don't have to be a registered voting representative to attend. The DMC dinner is open to all registered representatives, members and guests. The price of the dinner includes a wine tasting of local area wines, a fabulous buffet with several stations (e.g. pasta, Caesar salad, taco bar, etc.) and you can choose to visit all the stations, live entertainment, and a handful of brief comments by leaders of this Order. I guarantee that the DMC dinner will be a highlight of the sessions.

The reason we can keep the price of this dinner so low is that a number of Lodges and members contribute funds to subsidize the dinner. And we thank those Lodges, brothers and sisters publicly for their generosity. We have already received a subsidy donation from Yerba Buena Lodge #15. (Thank you Yerba Buena Lodge!) If you would also like to help subsidize the event, please send your check (payable to Grand Lodge) to my attention:

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Dave Rosenberg
Grand Warden