The Future of Odd Fellowship

To Be or Not to Be

By Dave Rosenberg
The Future of Odd Fellowship

To Be or Not to Be

By Dave Rosenberg

Edited by Renée Liston

Copyright 2012
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preface</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay – “Three Legged Stool”</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay – “Ten Principles”</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IOOF Goals for 2007</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IOOF Goals for 2008</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two Resolutions for the Future</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resolution: Challenge Grant Program</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership Statistics 1960 – 1980</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IOOF Goals for 2009</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Resolutions Presented to the California Grand Lodge</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protocol for the Membership &amp; Initiation Committee</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Davis Lodge Mentor Program</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Resolutions for the 2011 Grand Lodge</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay – “The Call to Arms”</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History and Facts about the Odd Fellows</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Pledge Book” Requirements</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Odd Fellows Essay – “Not so Odd Anymore”</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay on the Future of IOOF – “The Two Possible Futures for California Odd Fellowship”</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay – “100 Reasons to be an Odd Fellow”</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Preface

Prior to 2004 I imagine I had no greater knowledge of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows than any other non-Odd Fellow. I do remember walking by the Odd Fellows Lodge in my town of Davis, California one day and peering inside through the locked glass front doors. There wasn’t much to see, frankly. No lights were on. I could discern a couple of old signs with days and times for meetings. And I could make out a black board with removal letters – some of which were missing – identifying the names of some people to contact in case of emergency. And there was a railing going up to the second floor with one of those old-fashioned single seat chair lifts. There was a sign on the door advertising a local church which held service on Sunday. There was no outside signage identifying the place as an Odd Fellows Lodge. A stranger to town might have believed that this building was actually a church.

In 2004, I was a little more knowledgeable than the stranger to town. I had served on the City Council of Davis for twelve years, four of which I served as Mayor, and I had served on the County Board of Supervisors for seven years. I knew something about Davis and I knew that this building was the Odd Fellows Lodge Hall. But that was about the extent of my knowledge.

My life changed on October 10, 2003 when the Governor of California appointed me to be a Judge of the Superior Court. Up to that point, I had been extremely active in government and in political life. At the time of my judicial appointment, I was serving as an elected County Supervisor, and I was also working on the senior staff of the Governor. Additionally, I was serving as Chairman of the California State Lottery Commission, as Chairman of the Victim Compensation and Government Claims Board (formerly known as the Board of Control), and as a member of the Commission on State Mandates. All that changed on October 10. When you become a Judge, you have to give up your political life and you have to give up all your roles in the Executive Branch. I resigned everything, and dedicated myself to the judicial life that had been given to me. But I was certainly not ready to give up my involvement in my community.

It was my good fortune that a long-time friend of mine, Ted Puntillo, whom I had helped to become the Veterans’ Services Officer for the County when I worked as a county supervisor, was a member of the Davis Odd Fellows Lodge. In early 2004, when I was looking for a way to stay involved in my community, Ted asked me, almost off-handedly, if I would be interested in joining the Davis Odd Fellows Lodge. Perhaps to his surprise, and somewhat to my own, I said that I was interested.
But my reason was, I imagine, quite different than the normal reason that folks give when they join the Order. Let me explain.

One of the hallmarks of my tenure as Mayor and Councilman in Davis was my work in energizing our Downtown. In fact, I had become known as the Father of Downtown Davis. I had worked hard to revitalize that Downtown through a number of projects including expanding Central Park, locating the Davis Farmers’ Market in Central Park and building a huge shade structure for that market, bringing in two multi-screen movie theater complexes to the downtown, as well as two parking garages, saving and restoring a third historic movie theater, putting in new street paving and historic street lighting, developing a multi-modal train station and restoring the historic station, and a number of other business-boosting activities. It was with this background and context that I accepted the invitation of Ted Puntillo to apply to the Odd Fellows. In my mind, I was interested in joining the Lodge because it was located right in the Downtown of Davis and I saw enormous potential in the development of that Lodge building as a further way to revitalize that Downtown.

Well, like most Odd Fellows Lodges that get a new prospect, I was rushed into the process and the initiation. Before I knew it, in a matter of weeks, I was initiated – in March of 2004. It’s interesting to note that at the time I was initiated into the Davis Odd Fellows Lodge, the Lodge had about 40 members on the books – and that, of course, meant that the Lodge had less than 20 “active” members. And then a strange series of events occurred.

First, virtually everyone who had come to the Lodge to conduct the initiation disappeared within the next few months. I never saw those people again. They just stopped coming, or moved, or allowed their membership to lapse, or resigned. Second, the man who was Noble Grand of the Lodge when I was initiated wound up with a new job in another city, and within just a few months, he left the Lodge and was never heard from again. So, in October-December of 2004, we were a very small group of members, with just a handful of members who had joined before 2004 and a handful who had joined in 2004. During the nominations and elections for new Noble Grand, I nominated a young man for Noble Grand who had become a member about the same time that I did, and he nominated me for Vice Grand. We both won. We plodded along as best we could for a while, and then the third event occurred: the young man who had just been elected Noble Grand resigned. And so, in late 2005 I became Acting Noble Grand and then in 2006 became Noble Grand of the Davis Odd Fellows Lodge. Perhaps the greenest and most ignorant Noble Grand in the history of the Davis Lodge.
But perhaps because I was so green and came into this with no pre-existing assumptions, I was able to discern that for all its great history, ritual and strength, Odd Fellows was a dying Order in North America and California. I started coming to this realization in 2006, and became more fully aware of the scope of the problem in 2007 and 2008. This book entitled “The Future of Odd Fellows – To Be or Not to Be” is the result of that realization and my many years of work attempting to gain recognition by the Odd Fellows’ power structure that something was seriously amiss. This book reflects a series of letters, articles, resolutions and essays that I (and others) have written on the subject of our future.

Let me state from the get-go that while many of these writings appear dire, I am inherently an optimist. And I believe that the future of Odd Fellowship can be bright. I base that on the fact that I have been able to transform my own Lodge. While virtually every other Lodge has lost members or stayed stagnant, from 2005 to 2012, my Lodge has grown to close to 200 members, an increase of 500%.

It can be done.

Finally, allow me to recognize and thank my friend, Renée Liston, an Odd Fellow in my Davis Lodge and Past Secretary of the Lodge, who was instrumental in this final product. She is a great editor. I wish to also recognize and thank my Odd Fellows Brothers Don Smith, Rick Boyles, Rod Metoyer, Peter Sellars, and others whose writings and ramblings are also contained in these pages. In particular, in our creation of “Dedicated Members for Change” we have all written articles and essays on the future of this ancient Order. I thank them for their insight and foresight, as well as their courage in joining me to lay out a future for Odd Fellowship in America.

Dave Rosenberg
October 1, 2012
Since the end of World War II in 1945, this great Order of Odd Fellows has lost 90% of its membership. If you aren’t shocked by that fact, let me put it another way: For the past 65 years, the Order has virtually without fail, year after year, lost members. The California jurisdiction had over 50,000 members in 1946 – it now has less than 5,000. And, as we all know, 5,000 members really means 2,000 “active” members. Further, many of our Lodges can barely muster a quorum, and some Lodges have members no younger than their 60’s, having effectively skipped a generation or two of new members. We now have over 40 Lodges with less than 15 members.

Anyone who doesn’t believe that Odd Fellowship is at the very brink today ignores history and is doomed to watch the continuation of that decline. This Order will not long survive, I’m afraid, without some fundamental revitalization and change. The irony of all this is that we don’t have to do anything radical to save this Order. Instead, we only have to look at our own fraternal history and revisit the things that once made this Order great in the 1800’s and 1900’s. In those days, people sought out membership in the Odd Fellows. It was the place to be in the community. Why is that?

Odd Fellowship was strong (and can be strong again) by viewing the fraternity as having three great legs of support, or to put it in more mundane terms, as a three-legged stool. If all legs are strong, the stool will support the body. If one of the legs is weak, the stool will totter and fall. If two legs are weak, the stool will certainly collapse. Odd Fellowship was strong in the past because Lodges were supported by three strong legs of the stool. Odd Fellowship is weak today because most Lodges simply rely on one leg and have de-emphasized, ignored or forgotten the other two legs of the stool. So, what are these three legs which should support and can transform our Order?

Fraternity

We begin with the great fraternal history and substantial assets of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows. We have, indeed, a distinguished past on which we can build. We have fine and dedicated members. We have Lodge Halls which stand in the heart of many communities. We have a tradition and rituals which (while needing modernization and revision in some instances)
have served us well for over two hundred years. This leg is quite strong throughout the Order. The other two legs, however, are in need of strengthening in virtually every Lodge.

Community

We have to re-connect with our communities. Once, long ago, the IOOF Lodge was the very center of the town. It can be again. But too many of our Lodges have withdrawn into their four walls and have become virtually invisible in their towns. That has to change. Lodges need to open themselves up to the community. This can be done in many ways. Lodges should have open meetings from time to time – a great way to invite prospective members to see what the Lodge does as well as get to know the Lodge members, and for Lodge members to get to know prospective members. Lodges should sponsor events on behalf of charitable and community groups. Two or three such annual events can go a long way to establish a Lodge’s reputation as a leading community organization. Those Lodges that own Lodge Halls should make those Halls available for the community for appropriate events. Lodge members need to emerge from the four walls of our Lodge Halls.

Fellowship

We are members of a fraternal order and that involves much more than passwords, signs and grips. A fraternal order is a fellowship. And that means that the Lodge must foster events and functions that bring members together to enjoy each other’s company and socially interact: breakfasts, lunches, dinners, hikes, trips, movie nights, game or card nights, wine tasting, beer brewing, dances, whatever the members feel will encourage good fellowship. What some members choose to ignore or forget is that Odd Fellowship was founded in the pubs of Old England as a social fraternity. I’m certainly not saying that our Lodges should become pubs – although we shouldn’t forget that our Order was founded in an English pub - but I am saying that we ignore the social aspects of our fraternity at our peril.

Ultimately, we have to ask ourselves: Why does anyone wish to become an Odd Fellow in the 21st Century? If we are brutally honest with ourselves, we would have to conclude that very few people join because of the ritual, passwords, signs and grips. Realistically, people join because of two reasons: (1) IOOF does good works in the community, and (2) IOOF provides a social network where members can enjoy each other’s company and have a little fun.
In my Davis Lodge we have not just talked the talk, but we have walked the walk. So I know it can be done. When I first joined the Davis Lodge in 2004, our membership was under 40, and we could barely scrape together 12 members for a meeting – a situation in which many Lodges currently find themselves. Today, the Davis Lodge has over 175 members, and 20 applicants for membership. We have more than quadrupled our membership in just a few years. And more importantly, our members range in age from under 20 to over 80, we have every religion and ethnicity, and about half our members are women. Our newly elected Noble Grand is a young black woman with two small children.

How is this possible? It’s possible because we have focused on all three legs of the stool: fraternity, community and fellowship. We can stop the slow diminution of our membership. We can grow this Order. I know, from personal experience, that it can be done.

**Ten Principles**

*First written by Dave Rosenberg in early 2006, and modified in subsequent years*

I

The 18th Century admonitions of our Order to “relieve the distressed, bury the dead, and educate the orphan” sound largely outmoded in the 21st Century. The ancient admonitions should be honored as the basis for the founding of our Order, but they need to be retired. The new admonitions shall re-charge the Order to “enhance our communities, protect our environment, and help our children in need.”

II

The Rebekah Order was trend-setting in the mid 1800’s when it was founded. But in the 21st Century there is no need for separate but equal Lodges. The IOOF must develop a five year plan for unifying Rebekah Lodges and Odd Fellows Lodges that wish to voluntarily unify. Rebekah members with at least two years membership should, if they wish it, automatically be conferred the initiatory degree in Odd Fellows.
III

The Branches of this Order – including Patriarchs Militant, Ladies Auxiliary Patriarchs Militant, the Encampment, Ladies Encampment Auxiliary, etc. - must be consolidated and unified into the one Order: Odd Fellows.

IV

Odd Fellows charities are too numerous and too diffused. Efforts must be made to identify a single major charitable work which the public can identify with Odd Fellowship.

V

The ritual of our Order needs to be re-written, revised, streamlined and modernized. This project should be completed within two years. In addition, at the end of the revision period, the Order shall have only one password, only one sign, and only one grip. The password, sign and grip may be changed annually.

VI

Lodges of less than 10 members shall be given two years in which to increase active membership to at least 10 members. Lodges of less than 21 members shall be given three years in which to increase membership to at least 21 active members. At the end of the three-year period, the minimum membership in each Lodge shall be 21 active members. This shall be known as the 21st Century Project.

VII

IOOF members must actively participate in the work of their Lodges. It is not enough to pay dues. Each IOOF member under the age of 90 and in good health is expected to attend a minimum of six Lodge meetings each calendar year. Failure to do so will result in initiation of suspension proceedings.

VIII

Emphasis in each Lodge will be more on good community works and good fellowship, and less on ritual. Lodges shall conduct at least four but no more than six ritual meetings each year. Remaining Lodge meetings shall be business meetings, open to the public.
Lodges shall strive to be more visible and active in their communities. Each Lodge shall develop a Community Action Plan by December of each year, to be implemented in the succeeding calendar year. The Community Action Plan shall encompass a series of goals and actions that the Lodge will undertake to (1) do good community works and projects, (2) increase good fellowship and social interaction within the Lodge, (3) inform the public of Lodge works and projects, and (4) bring new members into the Lodge.

Our Order must appoint a Revitalization Committee to continually review the structure of our Fraternity and to make proposals to renew and refresh the Order and make it relevant to a new generation of members. This structural review shall include developing a protocol and process for the consolidation of Lodges, Encampments and Cantons.

Letter to California Grand Secretary Gerald Poarch – December 16, 2006

Grand Secretary Poarch
Grand Lodge of California
Independent Order of Odd Fellows
P.O. Box 2669
Saratoga, CA 95070

Dear Grand Secretary Poarch:

By way of introduction, I am the Acting Noble Grand and Noble Grand-elect for 2007 of Yolo Lodge Number 169, Independent Order of Odd Fellows. However, this letter makes a suggestion reflecting my personal views and is not written on behalf of my Lodge. I am delighted to be a member of this wonderful fraternal order, and I commend IOOF for being the first national fraternity - in 1851 - to include both men and women when it adopted the Rebekah Degree. However, it is now 2006 – 155 years later – and it seems to me incongruous to continue to have two “separate but equal” organizational structures, particularly when Odd Fellows Lodges already include so many women, and Rebekah Lodges include men.
I propose that the Grand Lodge of California develop a five-year plan to legally and organizationally merge all local Odd Fellows and Rebekah Lodges. Short of that, I propose a five-year plan to create a legal and organizational structure where local Odd Fellows and Rebekah Lodges can voluntarily choose to merge. To me, it just makes sense to do so now that we are in the 21st Century. I believe that such a merger will strengthen our Lodges and position Odd Fellowship for future growth, development and good works.

Fraternally yours,

Dave Rosenberg

Press release -
March 23, 2007

You Are Invited to the Re-opening of the Odd Fellows Hall
415 2nd Street, Downtown Davis
March 23, 2007, from 5 to 8 p.m.

A long-time fixture in Downtown Davis has undergone a major remodel and face-lift. The Odd Fellows Hall, located at 415 Second Street, will open its doors for a Gala Grand Opening on Friday, March 23, from 5 to 8 p.m. The public is cordially invited to see the new Hall.

The Hall has been closed for over one year during a major remodeling project. The new Hall will be completely ADA compliant and will feature a newly installed elevator. The kitchen has been rebuilt and upgraded with the latest in stainless steel technology. New bathrooms have been installed. But the centerpiece of the project is the basement lodge hall which is now styled in an art deco look with wood-paneling, acoustic ceiling, 1930–style lighting fixtures, and lush carpeting.

The Hall jointly houses and is jointly owned by Yolo Lodge Number 169 Independent Order of Odd Fellows (the Davis Odd Fellows) and Davis Rebekah Lodge Number 253. The Lodge Hall, and all Odd Fellows and Rebekahs property is jointly managed by the Hall Board composed of three Odd Fellows Lodge members (Dave Rosenberg, Bob Bockwinkel, and Lea Rosenberg) and three Rebekahs (Andrew Skaggs, Rhonda Gruska, and Eva Mae Hatton).
“We are extremely proud of our new Lodge Hall,” said President of the Hall Board Andrew Skaggs (who is member of both the Davis Odd Fellows and the Davis Rebekahs), “and we look forward to opening it up to our community.”

The Grand Opening will feature wine tasting by local winery Rominger West, finger food supplied by Nugget Markets, pizza from Woodstocks, and ice cream from Schwann’s Creamery. Members of the Odd Fellows and Rebekahs will be available to give quick tours of the newly remodeled facility.

The Odd Fellows Hall is available for public rentals at reasonable rates, for meetings, conferences, dinners, weddings, birthdays, and other events subject to availability. Persons interested in the rate schedule and rental of the Hall should call the facility administrator Joe Patti at 758-4949 or 304-5760.

The Odd Fellows trace their history back to 1748 in England and 1819 in the United States. The first California Odd Fellows Lodge (Lodge Number 1) opened in San Francisco in 1849. Yolo Lodge Number 169 was chartered in 1870 (five years after the end of the Civil War) and is the oldest continuously operating organization in Davis, pre-dating the City of Davis and UCD. Odd Fellows are called the “three-link fraternity” based on the logo featuring three interlocking links which stand for friendship, love and truth. Close to 80 members have joined the Davis Odd Fellows, headed by Noble Grand Dave Rosenberg. The Davis Odd Fellows are very active in support of charitable and community causes in Yolo County supporting groups such as Pine Tree Gardens, Hospice, the Mexican-American Concilio, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, and others. The Davis Odd Fellows put on the Picnic Day Pancake Breakfast in April and the Breakfast with Santa in December.

The Rebekah Order was founded back in 1851. At the time, Odd Fellows was the first organization that founded Lodges for women when it established the Rebekah Order. Schuyler Colfax – Vice President to U.S. Grant and a member of the Odd Fellows – was the driving force behind the founding of the Rebekah Order. Davis Rebekah Lodge Number 253 was instituted on April 5, 1901, and today boasts close to 40 members, both women and men, under the leadership of Nobel Grand Betty Sauce. The Davis Rebekahs provide scholarships to college students, support the Odd Fellows and Rebekahs float in the annual Rose Bowl Parade in Pasadena, and are supportive of the Odd Fellows youth camp, among other community activities. The Davis Rebekahs also provide support to two Rebekah and Odd Fellows retirement homes in Napa and Saratoga, and support the heart fund, the arthritis fund, and visual research.
Further information on the Grand Opening can be obtained by calling Lea Rosenberg at 756-0697. The Odd Fellows website is at www.davislodge.org.


Hon. Richard S. Kim, Sovereign Grand Master
The Sovereign Grand Lodge, Independent Order of Odd Fellows
422 Trade Street NW
Winston-Salem, NC 27101-2830

Dear SGM Kim:

I am the Noble Grand of Yolo Lodge 169, I.O.O.F., in Davis, California, and am a Superior Court Judge. I have been an Odd Fellow for a bit over 3 years. I read with interest your “acceptance speech” contained in the September-October 2007 issue of I.O.O.F. News. I would like to address your question: “Why are we losing members and what is causing the folding of the lodges?”

In my opinion, Odd Fellows will continue to lose members and lodges will continue to fold UNLESS we REVITALIZE our order. Simply put, ODD FELLOWS MUST FIND A WAY TO BE RELEVANT IN THE LIVES OF A NEW GENERATION OF MEMBERS, or face the prospect of a slow decline. Odd Fellows cannot rest on the past. For example, concepts such as “educate the orphan” may have had great significance in Nineteenth Century England, but it has little relevance to Twenty-First Century America. Ancient and anachronistic rituals which may appeal to seventy-year-old long-time members of a lodge have marginal importance to the thirty-year-old men and women we wish to attract for the future of our lodges. Historical division of “men” and “women” as Odd Fellows and Rebekkahs makes little sense in the modern world, particularly with declining memberships in both organizations. In this regard, I propose that you appoint a Special REVITALIZATION COMMITTEE, give it a mandate and a deadline, consider their recommendations and – if appropriate - implement them.

When I look to the experience of our own lodge in Davis, I see the ingredients for future success for I.O.O.F. generally. Our lodge currently has 79 members with 5 pending initiation. We have added about 30 members in the last year, and a significant number in the year before that. Our new members are young (30’s and 40’s and 50’s), ethnically diverse, and about equal men and women. We have added many “husband-wife” teams to our membership. Our lodge
has created an active committee structure and we have charged our committees with specific responsibilities. We are actively involved in our community, hosting numerous events at our newly-remodeled lodge hall. We contribute heavily to community and charitable organizations with money, manpower and free use of the hall. We also try to have fun as a group by hosting social hours, evenings just to socialize, and trips together. We have recently started to operate bingo at the lodge as a further way to have fun and raise money for charity. We spend a relatively smaller amount of our time in meetings, and the bulk of our time in community activities. We believe we have achieved the ingredients to be relevant to our members and to be active in our community. Frankly, at this point, we don’t need to seek out new members to our order because potential members now seek us out.

I am happy to discuss this with you in further detail if you wish.

Fraternally yours,

Dave Rosenberg

---

**Davis Lodge Goals for 2007 and Results by Dave Rosenberg, Noble Grand - January 1, 2008**

**IOOF Goals for 2007**

**Focus on Fellowship, Fraternity and Fun**

1. Start the New Year with a New Energy and New Spirit: Installation Dinner in early January and Gala Grand Opening of the refurbished Lodge Hall in late January or early February. The January installation dinner (at Sudwerk) was well-attended by 30 Odd Fellows, followed the ritual for installation, and was a great success. We presented several awards to outstanding members. The “Gala Grand Opening” of the Lodge Hall was delayed till March, but over 150 folks attended this great event and were impressed with our new Hall.

2. Schedule a three-degree day for our new members in February or March. Afford initiated members the opportunity to achieve all three degrees and be eligible to serve as appointed or elected officers of the Lodge. In 2007, we have held THREE initiatory degree ceremonies (run by Captain Leslie Patti), and we also held a three-degree day. THIRTEEN members achieved their three degrees on our three-degree day, an all-time record.
3. Bring in at least four new members to the Lodge in 2007. Focus on quality and diversity, not quantity. Sponsors of members should expect, in the future, to serve as mentors to those new members. We have FAR exceeded our goal — and at year-end we have EIGHTY-ONE members and FIVE more awaiting initiation in 2008. By my last count, we have initiated TWENTY new members in 2007. That’s got to be a record for the Davis IOOF.

4. Increase commitment to Good Fellowship with the appointment of a Special Fellowship Committee. Increase social interaction with a social hour at 6:30 p.m. prior to our monthly business meetings. We have appointed a Good Fellowship Committee, the committee has met, and has already started the “fun and games.” We have started our social hour prior to business meetings, and we had a “fun night” at the Lodge just for Odd Fellows. The committee (chaired by Barbara Geisler) has big plans for 2008.

5. Co-host at least three joint fundraisers at the Lodge Hall with three deserving community groups. On March 17 our Community Support Committee (chaired by Lea Rosenberg) facilitated an event at the Hall for Progress Ranch. In May we co-hosted an event with CASA, in June we co-hosted an event with Yolo Hospice, and in October we hosted a third event to benefit Suicide Prevention of Yolo County. A VERY active committee! And at each of our events we have had over 20 IOOF volunteers. We have facilitated the raising of over $50,000 — directly and indirectly — for community groups in 2007.

6. Increase Lodge Hall rentals 100% over 2005. Interest in the newly remodeled Lodge Hall has never been so high. In 2005, Hall rentals brought in $1,800. In the first 6 months of 2007 alone, Hall rentals brought in over $13,000, exceeding our goal. By year’s end, our rentals have not just increased by 100% — they have increased by 1000%.

7. Increase communications between officers and trustees by the hosting of joint officer-trustee meetings. Increase communications with and between members. Use web site to aid communication. Post member bio’s and photos on “member only” page of web site. Host one or more joint events with the Rebekah Lodge. We have had a formal joint meeting of the Officers and Trustees. Our e-mail communications have increased. Our web site (organized by Richard Yamagata) has never been better, although our posting of member bio’s and photos is still in the works.

8. Increase participation by members through full appointment to Lodge positions and Lodge committees. For the first time in anyone’s memory, we have filled all committees and all Lodge officer positions.
We have created three new committees which are fully active: Bingo Committee, Music and Concert Committee and Good Fellowship Committee.

9. Increase use of Lodge ritual through formal Lodge business meetings. Our first formal, ritual meeting of the year occurred on March 28, within days of the grand re-opening of the Lodge. More full and formal ritual meetings were held. We have box ballot voted on new members, in accordance with IOOF ritual, and we have conducted three initiatory degrees and one three-degree day in accordance with Lodge ritual.

10. Explore Bingo at the Lodge Hall as a possible IOOF fundraiser and community activity. Our Bingo Committee (chaired by Mike Jensen) has launched Bingo run by the Lodge. The City of Davis has approved the Odd Fellows to run Bingo (the first such approval in city history). We have run Second Sunday Bingo at the Lodge Hall since the Fall. Bingo could become a big fundraiser for the Lodge which will provide us the opportunity for more good works in the community.

11. Increase IOOF visibility in the community. The visibility of Odd Fellows in the community has never been higher. We make sure that our events (Breakfast with Santa, Gala Grand Opening, Picnic Day Pancake Breakfast, Bingo, etc.) are well publicized.

12. Continue to host Breakfast with Santa – now at the Lodge Hall – in December. Breakfast with Santa on December 1, at the Lodge Hall, was a huge success with 3 seatings serving 300 children and families. THIRTY-THREE Odd Fellows volunteered and helped on this fun event.

Davis Lodge
“Santa”
Doug Hatton
and his court
December
2007
Gerald,

Thank you for sending me the Proceedings of the Grand Lodge (155th Annual Session). As I thumbed through the volume, I was struck by several things:

1. The last year that IOOF Lodges actually gained membership in California was 1947. In that year, the Grand Lodge had 30,739 members. From that point to the present day (a period of 60 years) the Grand Lodge of California has lost membership each and every year for a steady decline to its present 5,564 members (as of 2006).

2. There are Lodges in California with as few as 7 or 8 members. Since 1968 (40 years ago), only one new Lodge was started in California - and that Lodge opened in 1996 only to surrender its charter in 1998. Since the first Lodge was chartered in San Francisco in 1849 over 500 Lodges have been chartered in the Grand Lodge of California, however today only about 150 are still “active.”

3. I don’t have the statistics for the Rebekah Lodge but I saw from the IOOF Newsletter that all the Rebekah Lodges in all of California added 24 new members in 2007.

Do the Officers and Directors of the Grand Lodge understand that the Odd Fellows and the Rebekahs are dying Orders and that business as usual can no longer be the practice? Status quo is unacceptable. In fact, minor doses of vitamins won’t do it. Fairly radical surgery is required to revive and patient and bring him back to good health.

The IOOF has some great things going for it: (1) A long history and tradition, (2) Major real estate holdings and assets, (3) Good people. However, the Order seems to have stopped evolving at the time of World War II.

When I see our Lodge in Davis doubling its membership in just three years, full of enthusiastic women and men in their 20’s, 30’s, 40’s and beyond, I know we can bring our Order back. Otherwise we will go the way of the dodo. I really do believe the IOOF is at a crossroad: one road leading to stagnation and decline, the other going towards change, progress and growth.

Dave Rosenberg
Noble Grand - Yolo Lodge Number 169
Letter to Past Sovereign Grand Master Don Smith -
September 24, 2008

Dear Brother Don,

Thank you for writing, Don. It was a pleasure hearing from you and I look forward to meeting you in the very near future. I am sure that we can accommodate your two members on Saturday, October 11, if they wish to come to Davis and obtain their 3 degrees. We’re not very fancy, and we’re not very talented, but we get the job done pretty efficiently. We will have breakfast that day at 8:45, launch into a brief business meeting at 9:30 and hopefully by 10:00 we can start the 3 degrees. We hope to be done before 1 p.m. Let me know the names of the two individuals who wish to obtain their 3 degrees.

I am very impressed that a man of your experience and tenure with IOOF understands the need to change to meet the 21st Century.

I appreciate your thoughts on the future of our order. When you joined after WW II, the order was beginning its descent losing more members than it was adding. And that has continued for the past 60 years. It’s a tide that has to be stopped. I am a relatively new member of the IOOF (having joined just 4 years ago) but I have served as NG of our Lodge for over two years now and have managed to turn things around pretty dramatically. I am committed to moving the Davis Lodge forward. We are at a point now where folks in the community come to us, seeking membership. You might visit our website at www.davislodge.org.

I would be interested in assuming a position of leadership in the Grand Lodge of California. However, I am no spring chicken any longer – I’m in my early 60’s – and I have to be selective in my community efforts. I don’t have the time or inclination to fool around. I am an active Judge of the Superior Court, in fact, my colleagues selected me to be Presiding Judge of the Court. If, however, I assume a leadership position in this jurisdiction, it will only be if the Grand Lodge is ready to move in a new, more dynamic direction. I will not assume leadership of a sinking ship. However, if the Grand Lodge is ready to put the ship into drydock for a while, to rebuild and to modernize the ship, then I would consider doing so. Let me know what you think. I have never taken on a project that hasn’t succeeded. If you want more information about me, please visit my website at www.daverosenberg.net.
I would be interested in your thoughts, Don.

F – L – T
Dave Rosenberg
Noble Grand
Davis Odd Fellows

Letter from Past Sovereign Grand Master Don Smith -
September 27, 2008

Dear Brother Dave Rosenberg,

Since reading your letter, several months ago, in the IOOF News, I wanted to meet you in person. I obtained your e-mail address when Don Lang asked if we were having any 3-Degree Days in this area. We held one in Stockton on August 23rd, but have nothing planned in the near future. We still have two Initiatory Degree members that need the three degrees, and if you are having a 3-Degree Day on Oct. 11th it might be possible to get them to Davis.

I am an “Old Timer” in the Order, and have held most offices during my 60 years of membership, starting as a Junior Odd Fellow in 1947. At 25 years of age I was installed as Grand Master of California, and I am the Senior Past Grand Master in years of service. Serving as Sovereign Grand Master in 1969-1970 makes me the second to senior PSGM with the senior being a 100-year-old attorney from Nebraska.

I didn’t intend to go into so much information about myself in this e-mail, but rather I wanted to learn if you might be in a position to assume positions of leadership in California Odd Fellowship. As a first step you might consider serving on the Board of Directors of the Odd Fellows Home of California. Valued at nearly $200 Million Dollars, our two homes in Saratoga and Napa are very upscale and successful operations.

Our board meetings are held every other month on the fourth Saturday, usually in Napa or Saratoga. Some of our wives travel with us to the board meetings for shopping excursions or enjoying the local area. Our board at the present time is chaired by Gerald Worth, a retired CPA from Napa. The Vice Chairman is Mary Ann Tschernoscha, Records Manager for McDermott Will & Emery, the 20th largest law firm globally with offices throughout the world. Would you wish any additional information with reference to serving as a Home Director?
My lodge makes fraternal visits to other lodges few times during the year, and I would like to know if Davis Lodge would like a visit? We usually have 6 to 12 members during our visitations.

As I indicated above, I am looking forward to meeting personally.

Fraternally yours,

Don R. Smith, Assistant Secretary
Odd Fellows Home of California
5350 Harrison St., Linden, CA 95236

---

E-mail to California Grand Master Barry Prock
October 31, 2008

Dear Grand Master Prock,

I commend you for adopting a slogan for your term as Grand Master which states: “Now is the Time for Change.” Indeed it is. My Lodge and I heartily agree. In fact, we are, as an Order, well overdue for change. The statistics alone, support change. For the last 60-plus years, ever since World War II, IOOF has lost members year after year.

The bottom line finds many of our Lodges whose members, by and large, are from the WWII generation. Some Lodges have less than 10 active members. Unless we attract a new generation of members, our Order is on a slow path to diminution and dissolution. It doesn't have to be that way. I know in my own Lodge we are growing by leaps and bounds. We have added 21 new initiates in 2008, coming on the heels of 16 new initiates in 2007. Our new members are young and diverse. Our Lodge is active and involved and has high visibility in our community.

I urge you to consider the appointment of a Revitalization Committee, charged with recommendations to revitalize, refresh, renew, and reform our Order to make it more relevant to the Twenty-First Century. I can think of no more important task for our Order.

Fraternally,
Dave Rosenberg, Noble Grand, Davis Lodge No. 169
IOOF Goals for 2008

2008 Review

Continue the Focus on Fellowship, Fraternity and Fun

13. Start the New Year with our Installation Dinner and Awards Ceremony in early January. Over 50 Odd Fellows and guests attended the 2008 Installation Dinner and Awards Ceremony – an all-time record. Dinner was wonderful and lots of awards were presented. What a great way to start the year!

14. Schedule at least one three-degree day for our new members in 2008. Afford initiated members the opportunity to achieve all three degrees and be eligible to serve as appointed or elected officers of the Lodge. A three-degree day was held at the Lodge Hall on October 11. Additionally, we now have the three degrees on a CD.

15. Increase Lodge membership to 100 members in 2008. This means we need to bring in 17 new members in 2008 (in addition to our two pending initiates). New members must be committed to being active members of the Lodge. Schedule at least one initiation in 2008. We exceeded this ambitious goal. Two initiations were held in 2008 with 21 members initiated into the Lodge. We are the fastest growing IOOF Lodge in California, if not the USA. (At the same time, we have continued to “clean up” our lists and have placed six members in suspended status who have not paid their dues nor participated in the work of the Lodge.) Our membership at the current time is 96 with 8 pending applications.

16. Increase commitment to Good Fellowship with the scheduling of two “fun nights” at the Lodge and one day trip for Lodge members, coordinated through our Good Fellowship Committee. Our Good Fellowship Committee has hosted a fun night, a movie night, and other events and gatherings. A Bunko night is scheduled in late September. More movie nights and Bunko nights are planned. Attendance at our Lodge meetings is now over 50, and the energy and enthusiasm is high. A special committee organized a great wine trip to Amador County for Lodge members on November 1.

17. Co-host three joint fundraisers at the Lodge Hall with three deserving community groups, coordinated through our Community Support Committee. Co-hosted and co-sponsored events were held or planned in 2008 for the Yolo Family Service Agency, the Acme Theater
Company and the Norwood 4-H. Breakfast with Santa will benefit the Yolo Food Bank. Odd Fellows walked in the Stand Up for Cancer, participated in the Food Bank can drive. A special committee is organizing a family night at the Lodge for foster families on November 15. Another special committee is organized an effort called “Senior Project” to help frail elderly in their homes.

18. Encourage at least 8 Odd Fellows to join the Rebekah Lodge in 2008, to increase communication, cooperation and coordination between the Lodges. In fact, we exceeded this goal when 15 Odd Fellows joined the Rebekah Lodge in 2008 and recent IOOF members have assumed four of the five elective offices of the Rebekah Lodge, including Noble Grand. The Davis Rebekah Lodge has been given new energy and vitality and has become the fastest-growing Rebekah Lodge in California. The Davis Odd Fellows and the Davis Rebekahs have started and will continue once-a-month joint meetings.

19. Increase communications with and between members through more active use of our Lodge web site, coordinated by the Communication and Web Site Committee. The Davis Odd Fellows Web Site is, by far, the best web site of any Odd Fellows Lodge in California. Visit the site at www.davisoddfellows.com. The site was made even more user-friendly by hooking up with clubrunner.com.

20. Continue to offer Bingo at the Lodge Hall at least once per month, (and if feasible) moving to once each week, coordinated through our Bingo Committee. Our active Bingo Committee continues to offer Second Sunday Bingo once each month and celebrated the one-year anniversary of Bingo at the Lodge. Attendance is beginning to move over 70. The Bingo Committee is beginning to conduct Bingo fundraisers for community groups such as the DHS Football Boosters.

21. Increase the visibility of our Lodge Hall and IOOF through the hosting of at least three music venues at the Lodge, coordinated by our special Music Committee. Our newly formed Music and Concerts Committee has been active in hosting music venues at the Lodge and in sponsoring bus tours to music venues. The committee has begun to host events at the Lodge broadcast live on KDRT.

22. Continue to increase IOOF visibility in the community as one of the premier community support organizations in Davis. The Lodge officially changed its name to be “Davis Odd Fellows” and the visibility of the Lodge in the Davis community has never been higher. A significant number of community leaders are now members or soon-to-be members of the Lodge. An IOOF LED sign went up on the Lodge Hall dramatically increasing public visibility. The Odd Fellows were Gold Sponsors of the UCD 100th Centennial Celebration and staffed a
booth for that event. Two poster boxes went up outside the Lodge Hall providing public information about IOOF and its activities.

23. Appoint an active Finance Committee in 2008 to review all books and records to ensure compliance with IOOF procedures. A Finance Committee was appointed, reviewed the books twice, and determined that the books and records of the Lodge were in good order.

24. End the year with our “Breakfast with Santa” now at the Lodge Hall in December. Once again, Breakfast with Santa was hosted by the Lodge on December 13, accommodating over 330 Davis children and adults. The beneficiary for funding will be the Yolo Food Bank. Thirty Odd Fellows and Pledges volunteered and helped at this fun event.

Article published by the Sovereign Grand Lodge -
January 11, 2009

Throughout California and North America, there are Lodges HUNGRY for change. We, as a fraternal order, can’t keep going down the same road or we will continue to experience the same fate: declining memberships for the past 60+ years will simply continue.

Here’s the bottom line question we have to ask ourselves: Why do people in 2009 join a fraternal order?

If we are completely honest with ourselves, we will admit that virtually no one joins an order for the ritual or the history. Folks in the 21st century (particularly the younger folks in their 20's, 30's and 40's) will join because the order does good, important and relevant community works and because it is a social network where they can have some fun.

So, the Lodges that spend 90%+ of their time on ritual will be relegated to slow disintegration and oblivion. Those that spend 90%+ of their time on good community works and fun social activities will attract new members, will flourish and grow. So, it’s really a three-legged stool that will give us the strong foundation for future success and growth:

(1) the rich history, tradition and ritual of the Order; (2) strong charitable and community works; and (3) a Fraternity that offers social interaction and fun. If one of the legs is weak or missing, the stool will collapse.
In our Davis Lodge #169 I set up the formula for success, including yearly goals (which we review quarterly), a strong committee structure (with committees dedicated to Community Support, Good Fellowship, Music and Concerts, Bingo, etc) where we do 90% of our Lodge work, and open meetings with great public exposure. We currently have 24 pledges who have applications on file, and another 10 who are contemplating membership this year. I fully expect that in our two initiation ceremonies this year, we will add 40 new members to this Lodge - thus more than tripling the membership from the time I first became Noble Grand in 2006. As was the case in the 1800's when Odd Fellows was King, we now don't have to seek people out - they come to us WANTING to join. This is the way it was when our Order was strong - this is the way it can be again.

We have people of all ages, all races, gay, straight, single, married, etc. in our Lodge. It is a cornucopia of society. They are all enthusiastic. As a sign of that, we have a VERY high renewal rate on our Lodge dues and huge attendance at our meetings (we had over 70 attend a recent breakfast meeting yesterday and over 100 attended our Installation and Awards Dinner).

In the last three years, we have admitted an almost equal number of women and men to our Lodge. Our Rebekah Lodge was in decline last year and we re-charged it when 16 Odd Fellows joined. Now we have, one each month, a joint Odd Fellows-Rebekah meeting. To be blunt, having a separate “men’s Lodge” and a “women’s Lodge” is a relic of the past. Our Davis Odd Fellows Lodge and Davis Rebekah Lodge have jointly proposed that we be allowed to unify in a pilot project, if the Grand Lodge and Sovereign Grand Lodge authorize it.

We make sure the public is invited to our Lodge, we publicize our activities, we have a user-friendly website at www.davisoddfellows.com, we support numerous community and charitable groups at our Lodge Hall, and we have fraternal nights and take fraternal trips together. We operate Bingo for the public. We set up a legacy tree committee to plant trees in our community and do good environmental work. We put on a dinner for foster children and families. We set up a “senior project” where we help frail seniors in our town with work around their homes. We hold movie nights at the Lodge for our members, and we play cards together as members. In short, we have created a FRATERNITY which attracts people and keeps people engaged because we do meaningful work and we have fun together as a group. It's not rocket science.
Two Resolutions for the Future -
January 15, 2009

Two Resolutions for the Future
by Dave Rosenberg
Noble Grand, Davis Lodge No. 169

Davis Lodge No. 169 has approved and submitted two resolutions for consideration by the Grand Lodge this May. These resolutions, if adopted, are two important first steps toward moving our Order into the 21st Century, and in attracting the new generation of Odd Fellows that we need to replenish and expand our Fraternity. We hope that other Odd Fellows Lodges in California will support our efforts at revitalizing, re-energizing, and reforming our Order.

Revitalization of Odd Fellows Admonitions

The first resolution is titled “Revitalization of Odd Fellows Admonitions.” As we all know, the ancient admonitions of our Order are to “relieve the distressed, bury the dead, and educate the orphan.” These old and hoary admonitions were impressive and progressive when adopted in the 18th Century. We understand that was a time of little or no government services and supports. There were few hospitals, there were few cemeteries and there were many orphanages. When Odd Fellows adopted the admonitions, they were decades ahead of the curve of society. Our Order, for example, established Odd Fellows’ Cemeteries at a time when indigents were placed in mass pauper’s graves.

While respecting the historical 18th century significance of the ancient admonitions, we must recognize that they have diminished relevance in the 21st Century. In fact, to the 21st Century mind, these admonitions seem curious. How do we attract young members to our Order if we admonish them to “bury the dead” or “educate the orphan”? Every County in California has a
program to provide burials for indigent persons. Traditional “orphanages” are few and far between in California, and there is little doubt that the State provides educational opportunities for “orphans.”

Our three links – Friendship, Love and Truth – are timeless and are as relevant today as they were yesterday and as they will be tomorrow. Our admonitions, however, need to be respected, but should be retired.

We, as an Order, need to adopt new admonitions that will be relevant to current and future generations of Odd Fellows and will foster the continued growth, health and vitality of our Fraternity. So we urge the adoption of new admonitions: “To enhance our communities, protect our environment, and help our children in need.”

Lodge Unification

The second resolution is entitled “Lodge Unification” and applies only to the Davis Odd Fellows Lodge and the Davis Rebekah Lodge. The resolution asks the Grand Lodge to request that the Sovereign Grand Lodge set up a pilot project and establish a protocol whereby the two Lodges can unify into one Lodge to be known as the Davis Odd Fellows-Rebekah Lodge.

Many members of the Davis Odd Fellows Lodge and the Davis Rebekah Lodge hold memberships in both Lodges. The two Lodges have held joint business meetings and have created joint committees to work on fraternal and community matters. The By-laws of both Lodges, duly approved by the Grand Lodge and Rebekah Assembly as appropriate, contain provisions that allow the two Lodges to unify by majority vote, if such unification is permitted by the Sovereign Grand Lodge.

It is not our intent to impose this unification on any unwilling Lodges. This is a strictly voluntary effort and the Davis Lodges have offered themselves as a pilot project. Now, the devil is always in the detail, and so the careful development of a protocol to achieve unification, is critical. But we believe it can and should be done.

When the Rebekah Degree and the Rebekah Lodge system were created in the mid-1800’s it was progressive and far-sighted. The Odd Fellows were the first fraternal order to establish a lodge for women. In the beginning, members were spouses, sisters and daughters of Odd Fellows. Rebekah Lodges grew and membership soon evolved beyond relatives of Odd Fellows. Over time, the Odd Fellows Lodges were known as the “men’s lodge” and the Rebekah Lodges were known as the “women’s lodge.”
In the 21st Century, however, Odd Fellows Lodges admit women and Rebekah Lodges admit men. Separate but equal lodges for men and women are puzzling, at best, and offensive, at worst, to the young men and women we wish to attract to our Order.

For over 60 years, Odd Fellows and Rebekahs have – year after year – lost membership. This must stop. If we do not evolve, however, we will continue this diminution of our Fraternity. I am confident we can reverse the trend and grow this Order to the prominence it enjoyed in a prior Century. Adopting these two resolutions at the Grand Lodge will be two small, but significant steps to the new future that awaits our Order.

Letter to Odd Fellows –
January 30, 2009

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

Imagine an Odd Fellows lodge that has added 45 new members over the past 3 years, and is on tap to add up to 40 additional new members this year. Imagine a lodge that is growing by an equal number of women and men, with most new members in their 20’s, 30’s, 40’s and 50’s. Imagine a lodge that reflects a cornucopia of society with people of all ages, races, religions, straight, gay, single, married, professional people, members of the city council, school board members, judges, doctors, lawyers, students, etc. Imagine, also a lodge where members are enthusiastic, where renewal rates are almost 100%, where meetings attract more than 70, and lodge dinners attract over 100.

Is this just a dream?

On the contrary, it is a reality. Our Davis Odd Fellows Lodge – situated in a small town in California – has done and is doing all of the above.

How do we do it?

We start with the basics. Every year we develop yearly goals for the lodge. We review them quarterly. We meet or exceed our goals year after year. We’ve increased our community profile. We remodeled our lodge hall and opened it to the public. We send out press releases on lodge activities. We run bingo games for the community. We bring high-profile community members into the lodge. We developed an interactive web site at www.davisoddfellows.com for our town and for our members.
Most importantly, we focused our lodge on the two things that bring 21st Century people into a fraternal order and keep them involved: (1) good, responsible community projects, and (2) fun, social activities for lodge members. Our lodge has developed committees that focus on the interests of our members: (1) a Community Support Committee that actively works to support community and charitable groups with co-hosted dinners at the lodge hall; (2) a Good Fellowship Committee that promotes activities for lodge members such as wine trips, movie nights, dances, and bunko nights at the lodge. (3) a Bingo Committee which hosts live bingo for the community; (4) a Music and Concerts Committee that takes trips to music venues and hosts music and entertainment at the lodge hall; (5) a Legacy Tree Committee that works to plant trees and does other good environmental work in the community. In addition we have special project committees such as a “Senior Project Committee” helping frail seniors with tasks in their homes, and a “Foster Families Committee” which organizes a dinner for foster parents and children. The energy of our lodge members is contagious.

Over the past four years, we have admitted virtually an equal number of women and men to our lodge. Last year, our Davis Rebekah Lodge was suffering the same malaise as most other Rebekah lodges in North America – declining and aging membership and very few new member additions. It was almost on its last legs with only a handful of active members. So, last year we infused new life into our Rebekah Lodge when 16 Davis Odd Fellows joined the lodge and re-charged it. Now we have once each month a joint Odd Fellows-Rebekah meeting. To be blunt, having a separate “men’s lodge” and a separate “women’s lodge” is a 19th Century anachronism. Our Davis Odd Fellows Lodge and Davis Rebekah Lodge have jointly proposed that we be allowed to unify in a pilot project, if our Grand Lodge and Sovereign Grand Lodge authorize it. Lodges that wish to voluntarily unify should be given authority to do so, and SGL should establish a protocol to allow that to happen.

Last year the Davis Encampment was also on the defunct list with only one active member. It was suffering the same fate as encampments throughout North America where membership is declining even more rapidly than the lodge declines. Fourteen Davis Odd Fellows re-charged the Davis Encampment by joining last year.

In short, we have created a fraternity which attracts people and which keeps them engaged because we do meaningful work and we have fun together as a group.

Can other lodges do it?
Yes, they can. A top-to-bottom reform of our order must be on the table. I have developed “10 Principles” which, I hope, can be a starting point for the revitalization of our fraternity. Unless the Independent Order of Odd Fellows changes to reflect the modern world, the past will reflect our future: Our membership will continue to diminish as it has done for the past 60+ years. If we welcome fundamental fraternal change, the future of Odd Fellows is bright.

Dave Rosenberg, Noble Grand
Davis Lodge No. 169, Independent Order of Odd Fellows

E-mail to California Deputy Grand Master Paul Kramer -
March 24, 2009

Dear DGM Paul,

I read with interest the Minutes of the Grand Lodge meeting of December 6, 2008, where you were quoted as follows:

“Odd Fellowship is in a crisis. Our membership and that of the other branches is at a stage where drastic measures need to be taken. We need to address this challenge immediately or we will cease to exist as a viable organization. I reiterate that I am willing to dedicate myself to this great challenge, but I need your help. As I prepare and implement my programs please support them.”

I wholeheartedly agree that Odd Fellowship is in a crisis and that drastic measures need to be taken. In my opinion, these drastic measures require change and require us to think outside the box. Unfortunately, Odd Fellowship has been in a crisis for many years. Declining membership is not a new thing. In fact, our great Order has seen membership decline - year after year - for well over 60 years. At least four major studies have been submitted to the SGL indicating many of the problems in our Order, and there is a lot of “talk” about change, but very little action.

My own Lodge - Davis Lodge #169 - has dramatically bucked this sad trend. In 2007, my Lodge added 16 new members. Last year, my Lodge added 21 new members. This year (and its only March) we already have 35 applications for membership pending - and I expect by the time the year is over we will have initiated close to 50 new members. By years end, my Lodge will have
approximately 125 members. The members of my Lodge include community leaders, many members who are in their 20's, 30's and 40's, include an almost equal number of men and women, and represent the diversity of our community. I do believe that we represent the future of this Order. There was a time when Odd Fellowship was King in California - anybody who was anyone wanted to join - we can recapture that again if we just recognize what it is that encourages folks to join a Lodge. In the 21st Century, very few people want to join a Lodge simply because of the ritual or because they have secret passwords and signs, or to “bury the dead.” People want to join a Lodge for two simple reasons: (1) the Lodge does good community and charitable works, and (2) the Lodge provides a social network where folks can enjoy themselves and have some fun with their brothers and sisters. This is not to diminish the rich history and traditions of the Order, but simply to recognize what it is that attracts membership today.

When GM Prock and several of his Grand Lodge Officers visited the Davis Lodge a couple of months ago, we had 70 members and applicants in attendance in a very vibrant atmosphere. I was aghast reading the December 6 Minutes which detailed visits to other Lodges where only a dozen members attended and in some Lodges they were unsure and unprepared to conduct meetings. You know and I know that there are Lodges in California with less than 10 active members and where the youngest members are in their 60's. That is a recipe for disaster.

I am VERY interested to hear about your programs and will do all I can to support them if I am convinced that they will represent the change that is needed.

As you undoubtedly know, I will have four proposals (in both bill and resolution form) before the Grand Lodge in Modesto. These proposals lay the groundwork for significant change in the Order - they are the kids of “drastic measures” which I hope you will support.

Friendship - Love – Truth
Dave Rosenberg, Noble Grand
Davis Lodge #169, Independent Order of Odd Fellows
E-mail to California Grand Secretary Ray Link
re Challenge Grant Resolution -
June 3, 2009

Ray,

What an interesting experience at my first Grand Lodge. I have 9 resolutions I'm working on for the 2010 Grand Lodge.

I attach a copy of the “Challenge Grant” resolution that was passed by Grand Lodge (I believe it was unanimous, or almost unanimous). I hope, in your position of leadership with the Board of Directors, you can help move this through the process. The Challenge Grant program is a proven program and it will work, and it is measurable. This program, alone, will reverse the tide of losing members. That’s the keystone first step to recovery and change. The program also allows each individual Lodge the independence to choose what recruiting methods work for them. It imposes no requirements on any Lodge. Just provides incentive for growth. It is a win-win scenario.

And here’s the kicker. It pays for itself. Increased dues through the 1,000 new members allows the program to pay for itself in in a few years.

Let’s implement this in California and show the rest of the jurisdictions what can be done to slow and reverse the tide of decline. And let’s do it soon.
I’ll see you at the OFHC meeting in July.

Best,
Dave

Grand Lodge Resolution No. _____

Submitted by Davis Odd Fellows Lodge No. 169

Title: Membership Challenge Grant Program

Whereas, membership in Odd Fellows Lodges throughout North America and in California has been steadily decreasing for the past 60-plus years, and

Whereas, such a decline in membership seriously erodes the fraternal order and substantially undermines the strength, well-being and morale of our Lodges, and

Whereas, the Grand Lodge’s recent expenditure of over $100,000 on television advertising in an effort to substantially increase membership did not produce the desired result, and

Whereas, Odd Fellows seek to significantly increase membership in the Lodges of this Jurisdiction through a Challenge Grant Program to foster the continued growth, health and vigor of our Order, and

Whereas, a successful Challenge Grant Program will, through dues, reimburse the Grand Lodge the cost of the program within three years,

Now, therefore, be it resolved, that the Grand Lodge of California shall adopt a Challenge Grant Program as follows: (1) A Challenge Grant Program to increase membership shall be established for a six-month duration, which six-month period shall commence after notification to each Odd Fellows Lodge in the jurisdiction; (2) The Grand Lodge shall pay to each participating Odd Fellows Lodge a membership stipend of $100 for each new member initiated into that Lodge during the six-month challenge period and who has paid his/her 2009 dues in full (subject to certification by the Noble Grand and Secretary of that Lodge within the six-month challenge period but in no event later than 30 days following the end of the six-month challenge period); (3) The Challenge Grant Program shall be applicable only up to the first 1,000 new members so certified.
Email to members of the Davis Lodge –
September 27, 2009

Dear Odd Fellows,

I just received a copy of the "Advance Reports of the Officers and Committees of the Sovereign Grand Lodge of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows" from their gathering in Santa Clara a few weeks ago. The report is over 300 pages in length, but I just wanted to share with you some of the statistics relating to membership in the Order.

Nationally, the Order, regrettably, continues the decline in Odd Fellow membership which started in 1946, and has continued year after year to the present. Although 2,303 new members were added in 2008, as a result of losses (deaths, resignations, withdrawals, etc.) Odd Fellowship experienced a net decline in membership in 2008: On December 31, 2008, the Odd Fellowship numbers had a net decline of 7,932 members from December 31, 2007.
Of course, the Davis Lodge bucked the trend (again). We were one of only a handful of Lodges which had a net gain in 2008. The net gain in the Davis Lodge will continue in 2009 - I expect that the Davis Lodge will have a net gain in 2009 of over 50 members. Unfortunately, in 2009 I expect the net losses in California and nationally to continue.

In 2008, Odd Fellows Lodge in the California dropped from 151 to 149, a loss of 2; the numbers nationally dropped from 1,755 Lodges to 1,677.

Membership in all California dropped to 5,444 (including only 800 women) in 2008. In 2010, I expect membership in California to drop below 5,000. By contrast our Davis Lodge is growing year after year, and is virtually 50-50 women-to-men. Our Davis Lodge is actually adding slightly more women than men, yet overall, women still account for only a small fraction of all Odd Fellows members in California.

Once again, it is clear to me that the Davis Lodge - with our community support and our good fellowship activities - is on absolutely the right track. Odd Fellowship in California and nationally is on absolutely the wrong track.

Sooner or later, they will figure it out.

F - L – T , Dave Rosenberg, Noble Grand, Davis Odd Fellows

**E-mail to California Grand Patriarch Peter Sellars - September 12, 2009**

Peter,

I write on behalf of and at the unanimous request of the members of the Davis Encampment. Our Encampment has resolved the following:

1. There are parts of the Encampment ritual for degrees that are racist and sexist. We refuse to read or utilize those racist and sexist parts of the ritual.

2. We demand that the Grand Encampment ask other like-minded Encampments in California and elsewhere to refuse to read or utilize those racist and sexist parts of the ritual.
3. We further demand that the Sovereign Grand Lodge immediately delete racist and sexist language and instructions from the ritual of the Encampment.

Fraternally,

Dave Rosenberg
Davis Encampment

cc: Members of the Davis Encampment

E-mail to Grand Patriarch Peter Sellars -
September 12, 2009

Peter,

You know, I was reading and thinking about the message of “toleration” of other religions and ways of life, and on reflection, it is not a very comfortable message. It’s really a very 19th Century message, certainly not one we should embrace in the 21st Century. “Toleration” does not mean understanding or acceptance of other religions and ways of life. “Toleration” means only “to put up with.” What sort of teaching is that? It’s not a positive message at all. It rather implies that we don’t understand or accept other thinking - we just tolerate (put up with) it.
Even the name of “Patriarch” is sexist. (So is “High Priest” by the way.) The title “Noble Grand” can equally apply to men or women. But the title of Patriarch is clearly masculine. If the title were “Matriarch” I think you would see my point. A better, non-sexist title would be “Ruler” or “Teacher” or “Mentor” or dozens of other possibilities.

The ritual is completely male oriented. There is not one female in the skits nor is there any mention of men and women. It’s all about “men” and “brothers.” How can that be acceptable in the 21st Century?

And, of course, the references to “yellow race, black race and brown race” and the attendant tableau are all unacceptable.

There are dozens of offensive passages in the ritual.

About half the members of my Encampment are women or people of color. It is embarrassing and hurtful to these folks to have to follow a ritual that is so blatantly sexist and racist.

What was the reason that the SGL gave you in turning down the proposed changes to the ritual? Did they say that they weren’t making any changes due to a moratorium? (Hard to believe as I think the Rebekah ritual was changed.) Or did they reject the changes on the merits?

Dave

Article Submitted to the California IOOF Newsletter - September 22, 2009

Carol:

Below is a short article that I would request you consider publishing in the Newsletter.

Dave
Over the last few years, the Davis Encampment, like many encampments around California and North American, had fallen on hard times. Membership was down to less than three. So last year, to remedy the situation, fourteen Davis Odd Fellows joined the Davis Encampment and recharged and rejuvenated it.

Regrettably, once we joined, we found that the ancient ritual of the Encampment contained racist and sexist material. Peter Sellars, the past Grand Patriarch, attempted to address many of our concerns with the Sovereign Grand Lodge, and sought to delete and modernize some of the most racist passages in the ritual. Much to his (and our) great amazement and disappointment, he was rebuffed. The SGL failed and refused to act.

That failure and refusal is unacceptable to the members of the Davis Encampment, and should be unacceptable to each and every Odd Fellow. We cannot and should not tolerate racism and sexism in any form.

Odd Fellowship teaches subordination to civil government and its laws. Odd Fellowship also teaches that we must be grateful to our Creator, faithful to our country, and fraternal to our brothers and sisters. These teachings leave no room for racism and sexism in any fashion or form, and certainly not in our ritual. It may have been “fashionable” a Century ago when written, but racist and sexist passages in our ritual have no place today and are unacceptable. Accordingly, the Davis Encampment has written to the Grand Encampment of California as follows:

The Members of the Davis Encampment, by unanimous vote taken on September 12, 2009, have resolved:

1. There are parts of the Encampment ritual for degrees that are racist and sexist, and therefore discriminatory and demeaning. We refuse to read or utilize those racist and sexist parts of the ritual.

2. We demand that the Grand Encampment ask other like-minded Encampments in California and elsewhere to refuse to read or utilize those racist and sexist parts of the ritual.
3. We further demand that the Sovereign Grand Lodge immediately delete racist and sexist language and instructions from the ritual of the Encampment.

Fraternally,
Dave

E-mail to the Leadership of the California Grand Lodge -
September 27, 2009

Gentlemen:

A long-time Brother has been tracking SGL-reported membership statistics starting in 1960. I enclose his spreadsheet with this e-mail. The numbers are sobering, and frankly, shocking. The Odd Fellows is clearly a dying Order, unless significant and drastic changes occur. It is clear to me that some of the parts of the Odd Fellows body - such as the Ladies Encampment Auxiliary, the Patriarchs Militant, etc. - are already beyond saving. The Encampment is probably in that realm, or very close to it. The Rebekahs will be there in just a handful of years - their numbers are dropping with increasing frequency - they cannot continue to halve their membership every few years. Their members are aging without commensurate new memberships.

The Odd Fellows Lodge, itself, cannot sustain such losses much longer. Unless we consolidate this Order, and unless we develop best practices among our Lodges to follow the path of those few Lodges that are successful and growing, I am afraid our Order will continue to diminish. At some point the trend will be unstoppable.

Please make change your highest priority. If we continue to be complacent, and if we continue just to talk about change without actually changing, we are destined to follow the path of other fraternal orders which have diminished in significance or have disappeared.

Fraternally,

Dave Rosenberg, Noble Grand
Davis Lodge # 169
Independent Order of Odd Fellows
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Membership</th>
<th>1960</th>
<th>1970</th>
<th>1980</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Odd Fellow Membership</strong></td>
<td>486,158</td>
<td>304,453</td>
<td>190,894</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Odd Fellow %/Yr. decline from prior period</td>
<td>4.572</td>
<td>4.561</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Odd Fellow %/Yr. decline since 1960</td>
<td>4.572</td>
<td>4.567</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Encampment Membership</strong></td>
<td>71,741</td>
<td>41,323</td>
<td>25,754</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encampment %/Yr. decline from prior period</td>
<td>5.367</td>
<td>4.618</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encampment %/Yr. decline since 1960</td>
<td>5.367</td>
<td>4.993</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Encampment as % of Odd Fellows</strong></td>
<td>14.757</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compound %/Yr. decline from prior period</td>
<td>-0.833</td>
<td>-0.060</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compound %/Yr. Change since 1960</td>
<td>-0.833</td>
<td>-0.447</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Patriarchs Militant Membership</strong></td>
<td>19,509</td>
<td>13,350</td>
<td>9,591</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PM %/Yr. decline from prior period</td>
<td>3.723</td>
<td>3.253</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PM %/Yr. decline since 1960</td>
<td>3.723</td>
<td>3.488</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Patriarchs Militant as % of Odd Fellows</strong></td>
<td>4.013</td>
<td>4.385</td>
<td>5.024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compound %/Yr. Change from prior period</td>
<td>0.891</td>
<td>1.370</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compound %/Yr. Change since 1960</td>
<td>0.891</td>
<td>1.130</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Patriarchs Militant as % of Encampment</strong></td>
<td>27.194</td>
<td>32.306</td>
<td>37.241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compound %/Yr. Change from prior period</td>
<td>1.738</td>
<td>1.432</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compound %/Yr. Change since 1960</td>
<td>1.738</td>
<td>1.585</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rebekah Brothers Membership</strong></td>
<td>71,927</td>
<td>43,012</td>
<td>30,043</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compound %/Yr. Decline from prior period</td>
<td>5.012</td>
<td>3.525</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compound %/Yr. Decline since 1960</td>
<td>5.012</td>
<td>4.271</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rebekah Brothers as % of Odd Fellows</strong></td>
<td>14.795</td>
<td>14.128</td>
<td>15.738</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compound %/Yr. Change from prior period</td>
<td>-0.460</td>
<td>1.085</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compound %/Yr. Change since 1960</td>
<td>-0.460</td>
<td>0.309</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rebekah Sisters Membership</strong></td>
<td>588,267</td>
<td>404,773</td>
<td>292,256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compound %/Yr. Decline from prior period</td>
<td>3.670</td>
<td>3.204</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compound %/Yr. Decline since 1960</td>
<td>3.670</td>
<td>3.437</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ratio of Rebekah Sisters to Odd Fellows</strong></td>
<td>1.210</td>
<td>1.330</td>
<td>1.531</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership Type</td>
<td>Current</td>
<td>Previous Year</td>
<td>Prior Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ladies Encampment Aux. Membership</strong></td>
<td>10,174</td>
<td>9,104</td>
<td>8,784</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Compound %/Yr. Decline from prior period</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Compound %/Yr. Decline since 1960</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>L.E.A. as % of Rebekah Sisters</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.729</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Compound %/Yr. Change from prior period</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Compound %/Yr. Change since 1960</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ladies Aux. Pat. Militant Membership</strong></td>
<td>18,014</td>
<td>14,274</td>
<td>11,290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Compound %/Yr. Decline from prior period</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Compound %/Yr. Decline since 1960</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>L.A.P.M. as % of Rebekah Sisters</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.062</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Compound %/Yr. Change from prior period</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Compound %/Yr. Change since 1960</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ratio of LAPM Ladies to LEA Matriarchs</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Compound %/Yr. Change from prior period</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Compound %/Yr. Change since 1960</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Davis Lodge "OddtoberFest"
with Lodge members
Diane Steele (left) and Lea Rosenberg
October 3, 2009
E-mail to California Grand Master Gene Breeland –
October 29, 2009

Dear Gene,

I am delighted to welcome 22 new members of the Davis Lodge, Independent Order of Odd Fellows. We held a fine initiation last night at the Lodge Hall. Congratulations to the 22 new members of our Order listed below:

James Bledsoe, Marc Langlais, Kumar Sah, Sheila Allen, Skip Baker, Lellingby Boyce, John Eleen, Molly Eleen, Jonathon Howard, Lewis Kimble, Betsy Marchand, Dani Rogers, Juelie Roggli, Kurt Roggli, Bobby Weist, Jeff Reisig, Tracie Olsen, Sandy Dietrich, Peter Dietrich, Elizabeth Crossley, Darren Pytel, and Jeannie Pytel.

I'm pleased to say that we now have 133 members of the Davis Lodge. This year alone, we have initiated 50 new members. And I'm also happy to say that we already have five men and women who have applied and are pending initiation in the Spring of 2010.

Dave Rosenberg, Noble Grand

The new initiates of the Davis Odd Fellows Lodge
October 29, 2009
Change can happen in your Lodge. When I joined the Davis Lodge (called “Yolo” Lodge at that time - I changed our name as well) we had about 40 members on the books and only about 10-12 “active” members. So change is possible. Here’s what is required in your “plan” to change, improve and grow.

1. Leadership. First and foremost, you have to have the leadership and vision to make it happen. Without this, forget about anything else. All you need is one strong leader. You may be the person, Butch, that can move your Lodge into the 21st Century.

2. Goals. You should set goals every year (right now in fact) for the coming year. You should have at least 8 goals, but no more than 12. They should push your Lodge forward, but should be achievable. For example, one goal might be to add 8 new members to the Lodge in 2010. Another goal might be to make your Lodge more visible in the community. Another goal might be to organize 3 Lodge events benefiting charitable or community groups in the year. Each goal should be accompanied by a plan on how to achieve the goal. And then
monitor the goals quarterly and see how you are doing. Let the Lodge members know how you are doing.

3. The Lodge Hall. If you have a Lodge Hall, make sure to use it. Make it visible in the community. Rent it out. Make sure you have an IOOF sign on the Lodge and that it is visible and lighted. Put on functions. Send out press releases. If no one knows about your good works, then the tree has fallen in the forest.

4. Membership. Without members signing up for a new year and without bringing in new members, your Lodge will die. You have to ask yourself: “Why would people join this Lodge?” I submit that virtually no one joins a lodge because of the ritual. People join a lodge if it provides a social network and if it does good works in the community. And who joins a lodge composed only of 70-year-old white men? I made a push to recruit husbands and wives, young people and people of diverse ages, races and religions. Our Lodge (currently 132 members) has virtually the same number of women and men, MANY couples, members in their 20’s, 30’s and 40’s, all races and religions. I have gotten many prominent community members to join: the police chief, the superintendent of public schools, county supervisors, city council members, school board members, judges.

5. Philosophy. The old ways don't work any more. Odd Fellowship has lost membership for the past 65 years - year after year. The new philosophy has got to envision Odd Fellowship as a 3-legged stool. One leg is the history and ritual of our ancient order. The second leg is community service and active involvement in the community. The third leg is a social network - true fraternity. If any leg is weak, the stool will wobble and eventually collapse. Our Lodge is very active in the community - we sponsor Bingo with all proceeds going to deserving community groups (different groups every month), we do three or four co-hosted events with charitable groups every year - they get all the proceeds, we get the visibility. We put on events to benefit the town all the time (e.g. Breakfast with Santa with 350 kids and families every year). We also do FUN stuff together as a true fraternity: we bottle beer, we do wine tasting and take wine trips, we do movie night at the Lodge, we put on an “OddtoberFest” at the Lodge for members and guests, we go on hikes together, etc.

6. Committees. The vehicle through which you will achieve much of your changes is a strong committee structure. These committees need good leadership, as well, and at least 3 or 4 strong members. The key committees I set up are: Good Fellowship Committee - this committee is charged with organizing internal events for the benefit of Lodge members. Community
Support Committee - this committee organizes external events to benefit the community and charitable groups. Other committees we formed include, for example: Music and Concerts Committee (organizing music venues at the Lodge Hall and taking trips to music venues); Bingo Committee - putting on monthly Bingo for the committee.

Good luck, Butch, and keep me posted. Don't get discouraged. Some of the old members don’t want change. Some old members would rather the Order die than change. You have to move beyond this suicidal philosophy and steer your Lodge into the 21st Century.

Fraternally,

Dave Rosenberg
Noble Grand
Davis Odd Fellows

Davis Lodge Goals for 2009 and Results by Dave Rosenberg, Noble Grand - January 1, 2010

IOOF Goals for 2009

End of Year Review

Fellowship, Fraternity and Fun Is Our Focus

1. Start the New Year with a Joint Davis Odd Fellows Lodge and Davis Rebekah Lodge Installation Dinner and Awards Ceremony on January 10, open to the public. The Lodge conducted a Joint Installation Dinner with the Rebekah Lodge in January and over 100 members attended – making this the largest and most successful Installation Dinner in Lodge history.

2. Increase Lodge membership to over 100 members in 2009. This means we need to bring in 12 new members in 2009, an average of 1 per month. While we currently have 96 members, we will lose some through attrition and suspension. New members must be committed to being active members of the Lodge. Schedule at least one, and possibly two, initiations in 2009. Enhance and improve our three-degree day video so that initiated members can achieve their three degrees at any time. The Lodge initiated 28 new members in April (and suspended 6 inactive members to clear the
books of non-participants) and initiated another 22 new members in October, adding a total of 50 new members in 2009 – a record for our Lodge and any Lodge in the 21st Century. The Davis Lodge reached, surpassed and blew by its goal of 100 as we currently have 132 regular members and 1 associate member. (Our roster was decreased by 1 with the sad passing of Paul Gerowitz. In December, the Lodge conducted a memorial for Paul with his family in attendance.) Another 10 initiates are already pending for 2010. On top of all that, our renewal rate for membership from 2008 to 2009 is 100%.

3. Increase commitment to Good Fellowship with the scheduling of three “fun nights” at the Lodge and at least one day trip for Lodge members, coordinated through our Good Fellowship Committee. A newly re-charged and very active Good Fellowship Committee (they call themselves “Good Fellows”) planned and executed a movie night at the lodge, three hikes, beer making (Oddly Brewed Beer), wine tasting, Odd Dancing, and more! On October 2 the Lodge held its “First Annual OddtoberFest” – and 80 members, pledges and guests attended this fun event. At the end of December a holiday party was scheduled at the home of Kathy White and Ray Ramirez.

4. Co-host three joint fundraisers at the Lodge Hall with three deserving community groups, coordinated through our Community Support Committee. A co-hosted event was held in April to benefit the Yolo County Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Center. A very successful fund raiser was also held to benefit Davis Community Meals (feeding the hungry). A third event is held on August 1 to benefit CES (helping developmentally disabled adults find work) which alone raised over $27,000. On September 19, the Lodge co-hosted an event with the YCCC. So the Committee has surpassed its goal of three events. On top of that the Committee organized an enormously successful walk to raise money for cancer research with over 50 walkers and thousands of dollars raised.

5. Encourage at least 8 Odd Fellows to join and re-charge the Davis Encampment in 2009. Done! Fourteen Odd Fellows joined and brought the Encampment back to life, and three others are awaiting initiation. The Davis Encampment sponsored six children at the Three Links Camp.

6. Increase communications with and between members through more active use of our Lodge web site, coordinated by the Communication and Web Site Committee. Post photos of all active members on the web site. Our web site www.davisoddfellows.com was completely remodeled and
run through "Club Runner." Web site usage has skyrocketed. It’s the best Lodge website in North America. Our Bingo website and our Hall rental website were re-built as well at www.davisbingo.com and www.rentdavislodge.com. We are the most connected Lodge in the USA.

7. Continue to offer Bingo at the Lodge Hall at least once per month, coordinated through our Bingo Committee. At least half the Bingo days should be co-hosted with a community group which will receive the proceeds. Bingo continues once each month. The active and energetic Bingo Committee has expanded to 23 members. The Bingo Committee has co-hosted Bingo to benefit numerous community groups including the SPCA and Davis Soroptimists, providing substantial funding to these groups.

8. Increase the visibility of our Lodge Hall and IOOF through the hosting of at least three music venues at the Lodge, coordinated by our Music and Concerts Committee. A lively and enthusiastic Music and Concerts Committee has organized a number of music venues at the Lodge to benefit KDRT. The Fall saw Thursday night music at the Lodge attracting hundreds of participants.

9. Continue to increase IOOF visibility in the community as one of the premier community support organizations in Davis, by designating the Lodge Co-Secretaries as Public Information Officers for the Lodge. In conjunction with our 139th Lodge Birthday, the Lodge had a huge 139th Birthday Celebration. Lodge visibility has never been higher: Our Lodge Hall sports a large lighted IOOF sign that is on 24 hours a day and we have poster boards outside our Lodge Hall full of information about the Lodge and about our activities. This year, for the first time, the Lodge had a float in the Davis Picnic Day Parade.

10. Schedule at least three meetings in 2009 with formal use of Lodge ritual. The remainder of our meetings shall be open business meetings. Five formal, ritual meetings were held this year, including two initiations.

11. Propose Resolutions to the Grand Lodge and Sovereign Grand Lodge to change the ancient admonitions of our Order, and to set a process whereby the Davis Odd Fellows Lodge and the Davis Rebekah Lodge can unify if they choose to do so. Three progressive resolutions/bills have been delivered to the Grand Lodge and were debated and voted on this May with some success. A representative of the Davis Lodge attended
Grand Lodge this year for the first time in over five years. The Lodge has now proposed 12 resolutions for May 2010.

12. End the year with our “Breakfast with Santa” at the Lodge Hall in December. The Community Support Committee planned the best Breakfast with Santa ever for December. Some 345 kids and families purchased tickets to the event. To show the popularity of Breakfast with Santa, all tickets this year sold out in just two weeks.

E-mail to New Jersey Deputy Grand Master Jim Amman - February 24, 2010

Jim,

The change has to start somewhere and typically it has to start with one strong leader like YOU. Don't let the opponents of evolution and change get you down.

In the case of our Lodge, we hold two meetings per month. Our Saturday morning breakfast meetings are ALWAYS open so that is a great opportunity to bring in new people and potential members. Our Wednesday evening meetings are often open, but sometimes they are closed ritual meetings. Again, new members do not join because of the ritual. They join because of the social events and the community support. The open meetings allow you to increase your visibility in the community and that's important as well.

It will be hard at first to overcome the resistance. I suggest you bring in 5 or 6 new members that are of like mind to you. Eventually, you will have the support and the majority. Perhaps you can agree, at first, that half your meetings be “social” or open meetings. That's a start. The other half of the time you can still do ritual meetings as you transition to the new reality.

In our case, I came into the Lodge six years ago just at a point where the old-timers were phasing out - they could barely muster enough for a quorum. I started having social meetings, in fact, started having joint social meetings with our Rebekah Lodge. Seemed to work out just great.

We wish you every success, Jim.

Dave Rosenberg
Brother John Harris,

Here are the 12 resolutions that I will be presenting to the Grand Lodge this May. We currently have 13 co-sponsors of delegates to Grand Lodge, and the list is growing. I send these to you at your request. Ultimately, change will require leadership at the LODGE level. Members like YOU will have to make the difference. Eventually, Grand Lodge and Sovereign Grand Lodge will follow.

These 12 resolutions will be before the Grand Lodge. Time will be set aside on the agenda for extensive discussion. They are, in my opinion, the first step to restoring and revitalizing our Order. We simply cannot continue to drop membership year after year as we have done since World War II.

Frankly, none of the resolutions are radical. They just make sense. They include the change we need to survive as a fraternity.

You will note that one of the resolutions would allow current NG's and current VG's to be delegates and voting members to the Grand Lodge. We need to freshen and expand the universe of members or nothing will ever change.

Fraternally,

Dave Rosenberg, PG
Davis Lodge # 169
Independent Order of Odd Fellows

Grand Lodge Resolution No. _____

Submitted by Dave Rosenberg, Davis Odd Fellows Lodge No. 169

Title: 21st Century Revitalization of Our Order (1)

Whereas, the membership of Odd Fellows in North America and California has shown a steady decline for over sixty-five years, and

Whereas, the membership of Odd Fellows in the Jurisdiction of California alone, has declined from 50,000 to 5,000 in that time period, and

Whereas, there now exist Odd Fellows Lodges with less than twenty, and some with less than ten members, and
 Whereas, members of many Odd Fellows Lodges are aging, some Lodges show the youngest members in their sixties having skipped one or two generations of potential members, and new applicants for membership are few, and

 Whereas, members of many Odd Fellows Lodges are aging, some Lodges show the youngest members in their sixties having skipped one or two generations of potential members, and new applicants for membership are few, and

 Whereas, often Lodges find up to fifty percent of their members pay dues and do little more in the way of participation, and

 Whereas, Odd Fellows desire to refresh and modernize our Order for the benefit of current and future generations of members; to foster the continued growth, health and vitality of our Order; and to encourage a new generation of members to join our Order,

 Now, therefore, be it resolved, that the Grand Lodge of California directs its Sovereign Grand Lodge Representatives to recommend to the Sovereign Grand Lodge that the Sovereign Grand Lodge appoint a Revitalization Committee, and that this Revitalization Committee be given a two-year charge to analyze and recommend legislation and/or protocols to:

 Review, update, and modernize the oaths and obligations contained in the rituals and proceedings of our Order to make them shorter, simpler, less convoluted and more meaningful.

 Grand Lodge Resolution No. _____

 Submitted by Dave Rosenberg, Davis Odd Fellows Lodge No. 169

 Title: 21st Century Revitalization of Our Order (2)

 Whereas, the membership of Odd Fellows in North America and California has shown a steady decline for over sixty-five years, and

 Whereas, the membership of Odd Fellows in the Jurisdiction of California alone, has declined from 50,000 to 5,000 in that time period, and

 Whereas, there now exist Odd Fellows Lodges with less than twenty, and some with less than ten members, and

 Whereas, members of many Odd Fellows Lodges are aging, some Lodges show the youngest members in their sixties having skipped one or two generations of potential members, and new applicants for membership are few, and
Whereas, often Lodges find up to fifty percent of their members pay dues and do little more in the way of participation, and

Whereas, Odd Fellows desire to refresh and modernize our Order for the benefit of current and future generations of members; to foster the continued growth, health and vitality of our Order; and to encourage a new generation of members to join our Order,

Now, therefore, be it resolved, that the Grand Lodge of California directs its Sovereign Grand Lodge Representatives to recommend to the Sovereign Grand Lodge that the Sovereign Grand Lodge appoint a Revitalization Committee, and that this Revitalization Committee be given a two-year charge to analyze and recommend legislation and/or protocols to:

Permit unification of Odd Fellows Lodges and Rebekah Lodges that wish to voluntarily unify and consolidate into one Lodge.

Grand Lodge Resolution No. ______

Submitted by Dave Rosenberg, Davis Odd Fellows Lodge No. 169

Title: 21st Century Revitalization of Our Order (3)

Whereas, the membership of Odd Fellows in North America and California has shown a steady decline for over sixty-five years, and

Whereas, the membership of Odd Fellows in the Jurisdiction of California alone, has declined from 50,000 to 5,000 in that time period, and

Whereas, there now exist Odd Fellows Lodges with less than twenty, and some with less than ten members, and

Whereas, members of many Odd Fellows Lodges are aging, some Lodges show the youngest members in their sixties having skipped one or two generations of potential members, and new applicants for membership are few, and

Whereas, often Lodges find up to fifty percent of their members pay dues and do little more in the way of participation, and

Whereas, Odd Fellows desire to refresh and modernize our Order for the benefit of current and future generations of members; to foster the continued growth, health and vitality of our Order; and to encourage a new generation of members to join our Order,
Now, therefore, be it resolved, that the Grand Lodge of California directs that the Grand Lodge Board of Directors shall develop and implement a three-year project to:

Initiate and implement a “21st Century Project” to assist Lodges with less than 10 members to increase membership to 10 within two years, and to assist Lodges with less than 21 members to increase membership to 21 within three years with the goal that the minimum number of members of a Lodge be 21.

Grand Lodge Resolution No. _____

Submitted by Dave Rosenberg, Davis Odd Fellows Lodge No. 169

Title: 21st Century Revitalization of Our Order (4)

Whereas, the membership of Odd Fellows in North America and California has shown a steady decline for over sixty-five years, and

Whereas, the membership of Odd Fellows in the Jurisdiction of California alone, has declined from 50,000 to 5,000 in that time period, and

Whereas, there now exist Odd Fellows Lodges with less than twenty, and some with less than ten members, and

Whereas, members of many Odd Fellows Lodges are aging, some Lodges show the youngest members in their sixties having skipped one or two generations of potential members, and new applicants for membership are few, and

Whereas, often Lodges find up to fifty percent of their members pay dues and do little more in the way of participation, and

Whereas, Odd Fellows desire to refresh and modernize our Order for the benefit of current and future generations of members; to foster the continued growth, health and vitality of our Order; and to encourage a new generation of members to join our Order,

Now, therefore, be it resolved, that the Grand Lodge of California directs its Sovereign Grand Lodge Representatives to recommend to the Sovereign Grand Lodge that the Sovereign Grand Lodge appoint a Revitalization Committee, and that this Revitalization Committee be given a two-year charge to analyze and recommend legislation and/or protocols to:
Implement participation criteria for members of Lodges so that every active member of a Lodge under the age of 90 be encouraged to attend a minimum of two meetings per calendar year, except those members prevented from doing so because of illness, infirmity, profession or employment, or because they have moved out of the Lodge’s general area, or because of any reason deemed sufficient by the Noble Grand.

Grand Lodge Resolution No. ______

Submitted by Dave Rosenberg, Davis Odd Fellows Lodge No. 169

Title: 21st Century Revitalization of Our Order (5)

Whereas, the membership of Odd Fellows in North America and California has shown a steady decline for over sixty-five years, and

Whereas, the membership of Odd Fellows in the Jurisdiction of California alone, has declined from 50,000 to 5,000 in that time period, and

Whereas, there now exist Odd Fellows Lodges with less than twenty, and some with less than ten members, and

Whereas, members of many Odd Fellows Lodges are aging, some Lodges show the youngest members in their sixties having skipped one or two generations of potential members, and new applicants for membership are few, and

Whereas, often Lodges find up to fifty percent of their members pay dues and do little more in the way of participation, and

Whereas, Odd Fellows desire to refresh and modernize our Order for the benefit of current and future generations of members; to foster the continued growth, health and vitality of our Order; and to encourage a new generation of members to join our Order,

Now, therefore, be it resolved, that the Grand Lodge of California directs that the Grand Lodge Board Directors shall develop and implement a three-year project to:

Emphasize and encourage community outreach, community visibility, and good community and charitable works by individual Lodges.
Title: 21st Century Revitalization of Our Order (6)

Whereas, the membership of Odd Fellows in North America and California has shown a steady decline for over sixty-five years, and

Whereas, the membership of Odd Fellows in the Jurisdiction of California alone, has declined from 50,000 to 5,000 in that time period, and

Whereas, there now exist Odd Fellows Lodges with less than twenty, and some with less than ten members, and

Whereas, members of many Odd Fellows Lodges are aging, some Lodges show the youngest members in their sixties having skipped one or two generations of potential members, and new applicants for membership are few, and

Whereas, often Lodges find up to fifty percent of their members pay dues and do little more in the way of participation, and

Whereas, Odd Fellows desire to refresh and modernize our Order for the benefit of current and future generations of members; to foster the continued growth, health and vitality of our Order; and to encourage a new generation of members to join our Order,

Now, therefore, be it resolved, that the Grand Lodge of California directs that the Grand Lodge Board of Directors shall develop and implement a three-year project to:

Emphasize good fellowship activities (for example, Lodge trips, Lodge game nights, Lodge dinners, Lodge socials etc.) for Lodge members within individual Lodges.

Grand Lodge Resolution No. _____

Submitted by Dave Rosenberg, Davis Odd Fellows Lodge No. 169

Title: 21st Century Revitalization of Our Order (7)

Whereas, the membership of Odd Fellows in North America and California has shown a steady decline for over sixty-five years, and
Whereas, the membership of Odd Fellows in the Jurisdiction of California alone, has declined from 50,000 to 5,000 in that time period, and

Whereas, there now exist Odd Fellows Lodges with less than twenty, and some with less than ten members, and

Whereas, members of many Odd Fellows Lodges are aging, some Lodges show the youngest members in their sixties having skipped one or two generations of potential members, and new applicants for membership are few, and

Whereas, often Lodges find up to fifty percent of their members pay dues and do little more in the way of participation, and

Whereas, Odd Fellows desire to refresh and modernize our Order for the benefit of current and future generations of members; to foster the continued growth, health and vitality of our Order; and to encourage a new generation of members to join our Order,

Now, therefore, be it resolved, that the Grand Lodge of California directs that the Grand Lodge Board of Directors shall develop and implement a three-year project to:

Emphasize Lodge business meetings open to family members of Lodge members, prospective Lodge members, and invited members of the public; and suggest that closed formal meetings be reduced to no less than six and no more than twelve such meetings per calendar year.

Grand Lodge Resolution No. ______

Submitted by Dave Rosenberg, Davis Odd Fellows Lodge No. 169

Title: 21st Century Revitalization of Our Order (8)

Whereas, the membership of Odd Fellows in North America and California has shown a steady decline for over sixty-five years, and

Whereas, the membership of Odd Fellows in the Jurisdiction of California alone, has declined from 50,000 to 5,000 in that time period, and

Whereas, there now exist Odd Fellows Lodges with less than twenty, and some with less than ten members, and
Whereas, members of many Odd Fellows Lodges are aging, some Lodges show the youngest members in their sixties having skipped one or two generations of potential members, and new applicants for membership are few, and

Whereas, often Lodges find up to fifty percent of their members pay dues and do little more in the way of participation, and

Whereas, Odd Fellows desire to refresh and modernize our Order for the benefit of current and future generations of members; to foster the continued growth, health and vitality of our Order; and to encourage a new generation of members to join our Order,

Now, therefore, be it resolved, that the Grand Lodge of California directs its Sovereign Grand Lodge Representatives to recommend to the Sovereign Grand Lodge that the Sovereign Grand Lodge appoint a Revitalization Committee, and that this Revitalization Committee be given a two-year charge to analyze and recommend legislation and/or protocols to:

Create structural reform within the Order to increase officer terms of office from one year to two years, and reduce the number of officer annual visitations depending upon the size of the jurisdiction.

Grand Lodge Resolution No. _____

Submitted by Dave Rosenberg, Davis Odd Fellows Lodge No. 169

Title: 21st Century Revitalization of Our Order (9)

Whereas, the membership of Odd Fellows in North America and California has shown a steady decline for over sixty-five years, and

Whereas, the membership of Odd Fellows in the Jurisdiction of California alone, has declined from 50,000 to 5,000 in that time period, and

Whereas, there now exist Odd Fellows Lodges with less than twenty, and some with less than ten members, and

Whereas, members of many Odd Fellows Lodges are aging, some Lodges show the youngest members in their sixties having skipped one or two generations of potential members, and new applicants for membership are few, and
Whereas, often Lodges find up to fifty percent of their members pay dues and do little more in the way of participation, and

Whereas, Odd Fellows desire to refresh and modernize our Order for the benefit of current and future generations of members; to foster the continued growth, health and vitality of our Order; and to encourage a new generation of members to join our Order,

Now, therefore, be it resolved, that the Grand Lodge of California directs its Sovereign Grand Lodge Representatives to recommend to the Sovereign Grand Lodge that the Sovereign Grand Lodge appoint a Revitalization Committee, and that this Revitalization Committee be given a two-year charge to analyze and recommend legislation and/or protocols to:

Create a methodology whereby Lodges, Encampments and Cantons can voluntarily and easily consolidate.

Grand Lodge Resolution No. _____

Submitted by Dave Rosenberg, Davis Odd Fellows Lodge No. 169

Title: Resolution to Change Qualifications for Grand Lodge Representatives (10)

Whereas, there is a need to provide more involvement and training for local leaders in our Order, and

Whereas, there is a need for new ideas and new energy at the Grand Lodge, and

Whereas, the Noble Grand and Vice Grand are the current leaders in each local Lodge, and could obtain first-hand inspiration, motivation and information, as well as new ideas and new energy if they were permitted to actively participate in the work of the Grand Lodge, and

Whereas, a change in our code would give local Lodges the option of electing the current Noble Grand and/or current Vice Grand as representatives of the Lodge if the Lodge believed that it would be of benefit to the Lodge and the Order, and

Now, therefore, be it resolved, that the Grand Lodge of California directs its Sovereign Grand Representatives to present at the next Sovereign Grand Lodge session, in proper form, the Bills and/or Resolutions appropriate to change the Code of General Laws of Sovereign Grand Lodge so as to allow
the Grand Lodge of California to change its Roberts Code of California Odd Fellows Law to read as follows:

All Past Grands, and the current Noble Grand and current Vice Grand, who are members in good standing in an Odd Fellows Lodge operating under a Charter granted by this Grand Lodge, shall become members of this Grand Lodge, upon receipt of the Grand Lodge Degree.

Grand Lodge Resolution No. _____

Submitted by Dave Rosenberg, Davis Odd Fellows Lodge No. 169

Title: Odd Fellows Membership Challenge Grant Program (11)

Whereas, membership in Odd Fellows Lodges throughout North America and in California has been steadily decreasing for the past 60-plus years, and

Whereas, such a decline in membership seriously erodes the fraternal order and substantially undermines the strength, well-being and morale of our Lodges, and

Whereas, membership challenge grant programs are a proven method of increasing membership and provide easily measurable results, and

Whereas, Odd Fellows seek to significantly increase membership in the Lodges throughout the Jurisdiction of North America through a Challenge Grant Program to foster the continued growth, health and vigor of our Order, and

Whereas, a successful Challenge Grant Program will, through dues, reimburse the Sovereign Grand Lodge the cost of the program within three or four years,

Now, therefore, be it resolved, that the Grand Lodge of California direct its Sovereign Grand Lodge Representatives to present at the next Sovereign Grand Lodge session, in proper form, the Bills and/or Resolutions appropriate to establish a Sovereign Grand Lodge Odd Fellows Challenge Grant Program as follows: (1) A Challenge Grant Program to increase membership shall be established for a twelve-month duration, which twelve-month period shall commence after notification to each Odd Fellows Lodge in the jurisdiction; (2) The Sovereign Grand Lodge shall pay to each participating Odd Fellows Lodge a membership stipend of $100 for each new member initiated into that
Lodge during the twelve-month challenge period and who has paid his/her yearly dues in full (subject to certification by the Noble Grand and Secretary of that Lodge, and the Grand Secretary of the jurisdiction, within the twelve-month challenge period but in no event later than 60 days following the end of the twelve-month challenge period); (3) The Challenge Grant Program shall be applicable only up to the first 2,000 new members so certified.

Grand Lodge Resolution No. _____

Submitted by Dave Rosenberg, Davis Odd Fellows Lodge No. 169

Title: Odd Fellows Membership Challenge Grant Program for California (12)

Whereas, membership in Odd Fellows Lodges throughout North America and in California has been steadily decreasing for the past 60-plus years, and

Whereas, such a decline in membership seriously erodes the fraternal order and substantially undermines the strength, well-being and morale of our Lodges, and

Whereas, membership challenge grant programs are a proven method of increasing membership and provide easily measurable results, and

Whereas, Odd Fellows seek to significantly increase membership in the Lodges throughout the Jurisdiction of North America through a Challenge Grant Program to foster the continued growth, health and vigor of our Order, and

Whereas, a successful Challenge Grant Program will, through dues, reimburse the Sovereign Grand Lodge the cost of the program within three or four years,

Now, therefore, be it resolved, that the Grand Lodge of California directs that the Grand Lodge Board of Directors shall implement a Challenge Grant Program in this Jurisdiction to commence not later than September 1, 2010, as follows: (1) A Challenge Grant Program to increase membership shall be established for a twelve-month duration, which twelve-month period shall commence after notification to each Odd Fellows Lodge in the jurisdiction; (2) The Grand Lodge shall pay to each participating Odd Fellows Lodge a membership stipend of $100 for each new member initiated into that Lodge during the twelve-month challenge period and who has paid his/her yearly dues in full (subject to certification by the Noble Grand and Secretary of that Lodge during the twelve-month challenge period and who has paid his/her yearly dues in full (subject to certification by the Noble Grand and Secretary of that Lodge, and the Grand Secretary of the jurisdiction, within the twelve-month challenge period but in no event later than 60 days following the end of the twelve-month challenge period); (3) The Challenge Grant Program shall be applicable only up to the first 2,000 new members so certified.
Lodge, and the Grand Secretary of the jurisdiction, within the twelve-month challenge period but in no event later than 60 days following the end of the twelve-month challenge period; (3) The Challenge Grant Program shall be applicable only up to the first 1,000 new members so certified.

Launching the World’s Greatest Bicycle Parade –
March 20, 2010

Dear Odd Fellows and Pledges,

We’re looking for a few good men and women.

Noble Grand Dave Reed has appointed Frank Giustino as Chair of a new special Committee to plan, organize and implement our most ambitious project to date. Frank has designated me to act as Media Liaison and has also asked that I send out this e-mail to invite interested Davis Odd Fellows members and pledges to attend the first meeting of this new Committee. So, I write to invite each and every one of you who want to be part of an exciting project, and who have time to dedicate to the project, to this first meeting. The meeting will be held at the Lodge Hall this coming Tuesday, March 23, from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.

The Project: **Odd Fellows will organize the 2010 Guinness World’s Record Longest Bicycle Parade in Davis to Benefit our schools.** The current record was set in 2007 and is held by Taipei City in Taiwan - they had a parade of 1901 bikes. Our goal is 2010 bikes. The record is established by Guinness and we intend to work with Guinness to set the new record. We will organize this as an event to benefit the Davis Schools Foundation. We will work with every organization in Davis that wants to participate. We will raise money in various ways, including sponsorships, T-shirt and memento sales, registration, coffee and refreshments the morning of the event, etc. We hope to hold the parade in May, so time is of the essence.

As you can imagine, **we will need a lot of dedicated volunteers** who will organize the many, many aspects of this event, including but limited to the following: working with the city to set up the parade route, liaison with Guinness, liaison with the Davis Schools Foundation, treasurer, secretary, refreshment sales, T-shirts and mementos sales, registration of participants,
coordinator of sponsors, coordinator of service clubs, liaison to the schools, services coordinator, etc. etc.

Clearly, this sort of event has great potential to raise a huge amount of money to the cash-strapped Davis Schools, and also to bring a great deal of very positive publicity to our city and to the Davis Odd Fellows. It has potential to be a big story in the press locally, statewide, nationally, and even internationally. In addition, the Odd Fellows publications statewide and nationally will pick this up. The California Odd Fellow and Rebekah Newsletter has already told me they wish to feature this on the cover of their summer edition.

So, please come to the first meeting of the 2010 Guinness Longest Bicycle Parade Committee: Tuesday, March 23, at 6:30 p.m. at the Lodge Hall. If you need more information or wish to communicate with the Committee Chair Frank Giustino, he can be reached at fg@agrigoldbiodiesel.com.

F - L – T

Dave Rosenberg, PG, #169
Media Liaison, 2010 Bikes Committee
Davis Odd Fellows

Protocol for the Membership & Initiation Committee -
April 18, 2010

To assure a reasonable period of time for members of the Lodge and applicants for membership to the Lodge to get to know one another, the Membership and Initiation Committee ("the Committee") shall follow this Protocol for the processing of applications for a vote by the membership and initiation:

1. Applications for membership shall be submitted to the Chair of the Committee only on the form prescribed for that purpose. If properly executed, the application shall be read at the next Lodge meeting after submission. Once read at a meeting, the applicant shall be considered a pledge of this lodge.

2. All applicants must have a sponsor. A member of the Lodge shall not sponsor more than four (4) pledges at one time.
3. At the time an application is submitted, the Committee shall assure that every pledge be assigned to a mentor, who shall be a member of the Lodge in good standing who shall have been a member for at least one year. The mentor shall guide the pledge in an understanding of Odd Fellowship and shall actively introduce the pledge to members of the Lodge.

4. The minimum pledge period between the reading of the application and initiation shall be five (5) months.

5. Each pledge during the pledge period shall attend a minimum of eight (8) meetings and events of the Lodge.

6. Each pledge during the pledge period shall serve as a pro tem member of at least one Lodge committee, appointed by the Noble Grand.

7. Each pledge during the pledge period shall meet and get to know at least twenty-five (25) members of the Lodge. Each pledge shall be given a “pledge book” by the Chair of the Committee at the time the application is submitted. In that pledge book, each pledge shall obtain the signatures and comments of at least twenty-five (25) members of the lodge. The pledge book shall also record all events and meetings attended by the pledge, confirmed by the signature of a Lodge member.

8. The Committee shall interview each pledge and make a recommendation of membership to the Lodge. The Committee shall provide to each Lodge member an information sheet on each recommended pledge.

9. If the Committee makes an affirmative recommendation of a pledge, Lodge members shall vote on the admission of that pledge to membership in the Lodge. Any pledge who receives an affirmative majority vote of the members of the Lodge is entitled to be initiated upon the payment of dues and initiation fee.

10. Initiations shall be scheduled on dates that the Lodge directs based on the number of pledges ready for initiation.
Davis Lodge Mentor Program -
April 29, 2010

Membership and Initiation Committee- Mentoring Program

1. Project Goal:
   a. To promote a pleasant and mutually beneficial social experience that incorporates applicants into the organization in a manner that fosters friendship, stimulates civic responsibility, and promulgates a place for Odd Fellowship.

2. Project Aims:
   a. Guide the applicant through the initiation process.
   b. Act as an advocate for the applicant.
   c. Ease the transition of the applicant from an applicant to an active member in good standing with the Lodge.

3. Aim 1: Guide the Applicant Through the Application Process
   a. For some individuals, joining a new organization and meeting new people can be a daunting task. The objective of a mentor is to:
      i. Encourage the initiate to participate in several committees to find the best fit.
      ii. Encourage/Join the applicant in Odd Fellow sponsored activities.
      iii. Help the applicant with completion of the applicant book.
      iv. Address any concerns raised by the applicant during the application process.
      v. Meet with the applicant at least twice a month to check on the applicant’s progress and to answer any questions/concerns the applicant may have.

4. Aim 2: Act as an Advocate for the Applicant
   a. Applicants generally have the opportunity to voice their opinion about many of the Lodge’s activities. One exception occurs during procedural votes by the active membership regarding the initiation of applicants. The objective of a mentor is to act as an advocate for his/her applicant during these times.
      i. During procedural votes, besides the sponsor, the mentor should be the best representative for discussing the actions of the applicant during the application process.
      ii. Mentors should address issues/concerns that have developed between members and applicants during the application process.
5. **Aim 3: Ease the Transition of the Applicant from an Applicant to an Active Member of the Lodge**
   a. The initiation process can be time consuming, leaving an applicant wary of Lodge activities/participation requirements. One objective of a mentor is to help keep the newly initiated member active and contributing to the organization in a positive manner.
      i. Encourage the newly initiated member to remain active in at least one of the committees they participated in during the application process.
      ii. Encourage the newly initiated member to try new activities within the Lodge and to continue to build relationships with existing members.
      iii. Offer to continue to meet with the newly initiated member.

6. **Overseeing the Mentor Program by the Membership and Initiation Committee**
   a. Address issues concerning mentor-initiate interactions, including by not limited to, personality conflicts, scheduling conflicts, and irreconcilable differences.
   b. Mentor assignments are at the discretion of the M&I committee.
      i. If possible 2 mentors (1 newer, 1 older) should be assigned to each applicant.
      ii. Mentor re-assignment may occur if mentor-initiate issues cannot be resolved.
      iii. Active members are expected to serve as a mentor at least once every 3 initiation cycles.
   c. The M&I committee will work with the secretary to track initiate attendance at meetings/activities and present a report at the bi-monthly meetings.

---

**Essay on the Future of the Order -**
**May 6, 2010**

**The Road to Modesto**
**by Dave Rosenberg, Past Grand #169**

On May 23 through 27, I will be taking vacation days from my day job and traveling to Modesto, California. But it won’t be for a vacation.” That’s obvious, of course, since no one ever travels to Modesto for a vacation.

I’ll be spending several glorious days and nights in a Modesto hotel as an official representative of the Davis Lodge to the Grand Lodge of California.
The Grand Lodge is the statewide organization governing Odd Fellowship. All Lodges in this state were chartered under the auspices of the Grand Lodge, and the Grand Lodge creates many of the rules and regulations governing the operation of the Lodges under its jurisdiction. Subject only to the controlling jurisdiction of the Sovereign Grand Lodge (located in North Carolina), the Grand Lodge can grant charters, withdraw charters, and set up rules for the conduct of our Lodge operations, among other things.

For many years, no representative of the Davis Lodge ever attended the Grand Lodge. That changed in 2009. Last year I attended that gathering, along with about 140 other Grand Lodge representatives from other Lodges. Only Past Grands of a Lodge may be official representatives, and I earned the “Grand Lodge Degree” by my attendance.

This year I will attend again, and I have a full agenda of substantive measures to discuss with the other representatives. In fact, the Davis Lodge has 12 resolutions on the agenda. (See the attached resolutions.) These resolutions will push the envelope of our discussion at Grand Lodge. I can almost guarantee that the 12 resolutions will be at the center of our substantive discussions in May. If most or all of the resolutions are enacted, we will have taken a giant step forward to transforming the Order to make it relevant in the 21st Century. I am delighted to say that I currently have 20 co-sponsors of these resolutions – men and women of prominence in our organization from other Lodges.

The 12 resolutions address a variety of subjects, but all are grounded in the concept that we cannot continue business as usual. In 1946 there were 50,000 Odd Fellows in California. In 2010 there are 5,000 members. This is a 90% drop in membership – to me a shocking statistic. The Order has steadily lost membership year after year. There are Lodges in California with less than 20 members (some with less than 10), which barely muster a quorum. There are Lodges that do little more than meet from time to time, and are invisible in their communities. Every year, Lodge charters are withdrawn because of loss of members. Every year, the vast majority of Lodges show a loss of membership – very few Lodges show an increase.

The resolutions, if adopted, will transform our Order. They will modernize and encourage Lodges to be more active in their communities, to have fewer formal ritualistic meetings and to have more meetings open to the public, and to encourage Lodges to have good fellowship activities. The resolutions will set up a mechanism to grow Lodge membership.
Our own Davis Lodge has used many of these techniques over the past five years. While the Order in California and in the past five years has shrunk in membership, our own Davis Lodge has more than tripled in membership. I know it can be done. But it is a difficult task because many of the members of our Order are wedded to the past. They still think of Odd Fellowship as a “friendly society” as it was in the 18th and 19th Century – where it’s major function was to take care of its own members who got sick, or needed to find work, or died. But the “friendly society” Lodge function has diminished in the 21st Century. Today, Lodges need to focus on community involvement and good fellowship activities for its members, while retaining the ritual and tradition which makes us unique.

But change is hard. I have spoken to members of other Lodges who have told me, flat out, that they would rather see the Order die, than change. Well, I disagree. I would rather see the Order change, than die. And I will be working to this end in beautiful downtown Modesto later this month.

Press release on the “World’s Greatest Bicycle Parade” which ultimately set a world record held by the Davis Odd Fellows and raised $10,000 for the Davis Schools -

May 30, 2010

For Immediate Release
May 30, 2010

Have you ever wanted to hold a world’s record in something? Consecutive left-handed bouncing of a basketball? Walking backwards for the longest distance? Most hops on a pogo stick? Biggest homemade pancake?

How about the Guinness World’s Record for largest parade of bicycles?

The Davis Odd Fellows announced today a citywide effort to break the record for largest bicycle parade – a record recognized by the Guinness World Record Book. The attempt to set a new record will be on October 3, 2010. Thousands of bike riders are expected. Details will follow in the coming weeks, but the event is expected to start early in the morning and end around noon, followed by a community-wide fest in Central Park.
“We will make an attempt to break the current world’s record and bring it to Davis” announced Frank Giustino, Chairman of the Committee organizing the effort. “At the same time, we are working with sponsors to raise money which will all go to benefit the Davis Schools through the Davis Schools Foundation.”

Funds for the schools will be raised through major sponsorships, commemorative T-shirt sales, and registration of participants. The Odd Fellows hope to include many community groups and clubs in the effort. Community leaders have already endorsed the effort, including State Senator Lois Wolk, Assembly Member Mariko Yamada, City Council members Don Saylor and Steve Souza, and School Board members Sheila Allen and Gina Daleiden.

The current record is 3,515 bicycles, held by Bangkok, Thailand. “We have registered with Guinness and will follow the strict rules established by their World’s Record Book operation,” said Committee Media Coordinator Dave Rosenberg. “The parade of bikes is limited to two-wheelers, must be at least 2 miles in length, with no more than 2 bike-length gaps. The rules are strict, but in this bicycle-friendly town, anything is possible.”

A web site is in development for the Bicycle Parade, and will be available for public viewing in the next few weeks. Details, including how to register, where to go for the start of the parade, times for the parade and the family festival in the park, will be announced in the next few weeks as well.

“In the meantime,” announced Committee Co-chair Holly Bishop, “we urge members of the community to mark the date of October 3 on their calendars. That’s the date Davis takes on the record.”

The Davis Odd Fellows, a fraternal order, are the oldest organization in Davis, having been chartered in 1870. Often called the “three-ring fraternity,” the symbols of the Odd Fellows are the three interlocking rings which stand for “friendship, love, and truth.” Currently, the Davis Odd Fellows Lodge, located at 415 Second Street, has over 150 members.
Summary of the 12 Resolutions

1. Our Order has the longest, most convoluted, and confusing oaths and obligations of any organization on the planet. If the President’s oath is 34 words, why do our oaths have to take 340 words? This resolution asks the SGL to review our rituals to make the oaths and obligations shorter, simpler, less convoluted and more meaningful.

2. We need to modernize and recognize that the Odd Fellows are no longer the “men’s lodge” and the Rebekahs are no longer the “women’s lodge.” This resolution asks the SGL to set up a process whereby Odd Fellows and Rebekah Lodges that wish to voluntarily unify and consolidate can do so.

3. We need to help the smaller Lodges. This resolution asks the SGL to create a “21st Century Project” to increase membership so that, within a three-year goal horizon, all lodges will have a minimum of 21 members.

4. Why belong to a lodge if you aren’t going to attend or participate? This resolution encourages all members under 90 to attend a minimum of two meetings per calendar year. There are numerous exceptions and exemptions, and there is no sanction for non-compliance.

5. This resolution encourages community outreach, community visibility, and good community and charitable works by lodges as a way to attract and keep members.

6. This resolution emphasizes good fellowship activities (such as lodge trips, lodge social events, etc.) as a way to attract and keep members.

7. This Order must emerge into the daylight. Lodge business meetings ought to be open to family members, prospective members and invited members of the public. Formal, ritual meetings be reduced to no less than six and no more than twelve such meetings per calendar year.

8. The way officer positions are configured for one-year terms and with visitation requirements, officers have no time to actually lead. This resolution would result in increasing officer terms to two years and decreasing annual lodge visits.
9. This Order must evolve to survive. We simply have too many units. This resolution would develop a methodology by which Lodges, Encampments and Cantons can voluntarily and easily consolidate.

10. Limited voting membership of Grand Lodges to Past Grands is too restricting. This resolution would open Grand Lodges up to the current Noble Grand and current Vice Grand of each lodge, thus bringing in new blood and new ideas.

11. Challenge Grant Programs are proven effective in increasing membership. This resolution would have SGL develop a Membership Challenge Grant Program which provides $100 to individual lodges for each new member brought into the Order. It will result in 2,000 new members nationwide.

12. (This resolution applies only to California.)

**Continuing the Davis OddtoberFest – October 10, 2010**

Dear Odd Fellows and Pledges,

The original Oktoberfest was held in Munich, Bavaria, Germany on October 12, 1810 to honor the marriage of Crown Prince Ludwig (later King Ludwig I) and Princess Therese of Saxe-Hildburghausen. This great fest continues now into its **200th** year in Munich.

The original OddtoberFest was held in Davis, Yolo County, California on October 2, 2009 to honor the fourth year of the Noble Grandship of our beloved Past Grand (who shall remain nameless in this paean). This grand fest continues now into its **2nd** year in Davis.

If you haven’t RSVP’d to the 2010 OddtoberFest, your last chance to RSVP is to do so by tomorrow (Tuesday). RSVP to dody@blacksmail.net. To date, we have received **79** RSVP’s!!!! This is an event you won’t want to miss.

**The 2009 Fest will be held in the Odd Fellows Lodge Hall this Friday, October 15, starting at 6 p.m.** - with a German dinner being served from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Our Zymurgy Committee has outdone themselves with a specially brewed OddtoberFest Bier.

F - L - T (and Prost), Dave Rosenberg, For the Good Fellowship Committee
I Refuse to Watch the Demise of the Odd Fellows
by Dave Rosenberg, PG #169

A few weeks ago my wife, Lea, and I traveled to Ashland, Oregon for the Shakespeare Festival. It was our first time in that lovely town. As we were walking around the quaint downtown of Ashland, I looked across the street and noticed an old, tall, and stately building which displayed our Order’s three-rings and the letters “IOOF” near the very top of the building. Of course, we hurried across the street to check out the Odd Fellows Lodge Hall. We opened the old wooden double doors and climbed the ancient steps to the high-ceilinged second floor.

Well, we didn’t find an Odd Fellows Lodge. What we found was a British pub. There were no indicia of a Lodge inside the building, no Lodge furniture, no Lodge photos. Nothing. We chatted with the pub employees and, eventually, we found one older employee who told us that the Odd Fellows Lodge was long-gone. All that remained was the shell of the historical building.

I don’t want this tale of Ashland to be an allegory for the Order. But I’m afraid too many Lodges in California, and across the nation, are losing their Lodge Halls, surrendering their charters, or consolidating. Too many Lodges are diminishing in membership to a point where they can barely muster a quorum for a meeting.

Since World War II ended in 1945, this Order has seen a steady decline in Lodges and memberships. That’s a period spanning two generations. Some Lodges find themselves with their youngest members in their 60’s. In 2009 alone, in California, the Rebekahs lost EIGHT Lodges. The Rebekah’s contributing membership dropped down to 2,816 – diminishing by 469 members from the prior year. Only 82 new members were initiated into the Rebekahs in all of 2009. Encampment and Patriarchs Militant statistics are even more dismal.

As for the Odd Fellows Lodges, I was reviewing the Minutes of the Grand Lodge Board of Directors meeting of August 6, 2010 and I noted that they discussed Solano #22 being shut down, Farmington #296 having “issues with the Lodge and the Hall,” Fort Bragg #360 requesting consolidation into Garcia #240, Clear Lake #130 requesting consolidation into Upper Lake #131, among other concerns.
In 2010, California dropped (again) to 145 Lodges (after 3 were suspended), and our membership diminished (again) by 198 from the prior year. What is truly shocking, however, is that 43 of those 145 Lodges have 15 or fewer members. A Lodge with 15 or fewer members cannot long survive (and can barely muster a quorum), unless dramatic changes occur.

Year after year, our Order loses members. In California (the largest jurisdiction of Odd Fellows in the United States) our Lodge membership has dropped to less than 5,000, and I suspect that our ACTIVE Lodge members now number less than 3,000. And yet, Sovereign Grand Lodge’s current leadership continues down the same path they have traveled for the past 65 years. The world of 1945, however, is not the world of 2010. What may have worked in the 1940’s will not (and does not) work today.

A wag once said that the definition of “insanity” is to do the same thing over and over again and expect a different result.

We just can’t, as an Order, continue with “business as usual.” We can’t live within the four walls of our Lodges and simply talk to ourselves. We can’t just rely on nifty slogans and platitudes. The bottom line is: We have to grow our membership, or our Order will diminish and expire. And this means we have to embrace “change” to reflect the times and attract the folks in their 20’s, 30’s and 40’s whom we need as new members. This does not mean we abandon the rich history and ritual of our Order. It does mean that we have to open many of our meetings to the public and involve ourselves actively in our communities. Let’s be honest. We won’t attract new members because we have secret passwords and signs, wear regalia or because of ancient rituals. Those are significant parts of who we are. But, we have to be much more. We need to embrace community involvement and service, and we must develop good fellowship activities for Lodge members as fraternal orders have historically done.

The three pillars of our success going forward have got to be: (1) respect for our Order’s great history and heritage, (2) open and public meetings of our Lodges and active involvement of our Lodges within our communities, and (3) reinvigoration of our Lodges through interesting, fraternal and social activities for members.

My own Davis Lodge has used these three pillars as the foundation for our progress. We have grown over the past five years from 40 members to almost 160 members. It can be done.
E-mail to Rick Boyles -
November 2, 2010

Rick,

You certainly have my support for GW in 2011. I will be there for you.

But I agree, we need to turn things around. SGL leadership are stuck in the past - they mouth platitudes and elect each other to office while the Order collapses around them.

And I agree that we need to focus on California. We can make some significant changes in California that will save the Order in this jurisdiction and show SGL the way. We can set the example. I suspect other jurisdictions will follow. And perhaps even SGL will see the light some day.

I have a list of at least 7 things we can do in California to stem the tide and save the Order. But it's going to be difficult to wait much longer. If we elect you GW in 2011, we have to be prepared to elect an equally progressive GW in 2012 and again in 2013, and significantly, we have to elect strong, progressive members to the Board of Directors, and get some key people appointed to chair committees.

I'm happy to discuss this with you in greater detail.

Dave
Dear Brothers and Sisters,

You know and I know that we cannot continue business as usual in this Order.

At the end of calendar year 2009, we had another net loss of members in the California Odd Fellows Lodges and Rebekah Lodges. This continues the ugly trend of over 65 years of such losses. We suspended or closed down more lodges last year (again). Our dues paying membership in Odd Fellows has dropped to less than 5,000 and in Rebekahs to less than 3,000 in California.

Sovereign Grand Lodge is not ready for change. But we can change in California and we can show other jurisdictions and SGL the way.

In the last five years, Odd Fellowship in California has lost hundreds of members and closed, suspended or consolidated dozens Lodges. During that same time period, my own Davis Lodge has grown almost 400%. So, I know change works and I know it can be done.

I will be focusing my efforts at Grand Lodge next year towards change in this jurisdiction. Sovereign Grand Lodge is not ready for change - yet. They will be once they see what can be done. And we can set the example here in California. I will be proposing four or five significant resolutions to Grand Lodge - proposals for what we can do right here in California without the need for SGL “permission.” I will send copies of the resolutions to you soon.

Equally as important, we must start electing progressive leaders to our top positions in California. One such leader is Rick Boyles. I will be encouraging Rick to submit his name as a candidate for Grand Warden in 2011. I believe that Rick is willing to provide the leadership to encourage the changes we need to survive and flourish, and to reverse the membership declines.

And we must continue to elect forward-thinking men and women to the Grand Lodge Board of Directors. Change must start at home - right here in California.

Remember, at the 2010 Grand Lodge, we adopted 10 progressive resolutions by overwhelming majorities. That was a message from the grassroots of our Order. The message was: We can't continue business as usual - it's time for change. We can do it again in 2011. Keep in mind that we only get about 170 voting members at Grand Lodge. Eighty-six progressive members can make a big difference!
Spread the word in your Lodge and to your list of contacts. We can change the Odd Fellows world and ensure the survival of this great Order.

Fraternally,

Dave Rosenberg, PG #169
Davis Odd Fellows Lodge

E-mail on Five Resolutions for the 2011 Grand Lodge -
November 8, 2010

Dear Odd Fellows and Pledges,

You may recall that we introduced a number of resolutions at the 2010 Grand Lodge that met with great success. They met with less success at the Sovereign Grand Lodge. I am convinced that the Order in California is ready for change. The Order, nationally, is not quite there yet. However, it is my belief that once we show how successful we are in California with our new approach to Odd Fellowship, the rest of the country will follow.

We have shown the way to the future of Odd Fellowship here in Davis. The rest of California is just about ready to follow our lead.

The five resolutions that I have attached are the next step. I will propose them to you at the meeting of our Lodge this Saturday. I hope to present them at Grand Lodge in May of 2011. I am very optimistic that Grand Lodge will adopt them and that they will be implemented throughout California. Our success in the Davis Lodge can be replicated statewide, and eventually, nationally.

While we have been achieving great things, growing and adding members in Davis, statewide Odd Fellowship membership and Lodges continue to decline. We now have 43 Odd Fellows Lodges in California with 15 or fewer members - that is a recipe for disaster.

Success for Odd Fellowship in the 21st Century cannot rely solely on the great history and ritual of this Order. Lodge members cannot just sit in the four corners of their Lodge halls and talk to each other. Success must also rely on community visibility and outreach and good community and charitable works. It must further rely on a strong social and fraternal network and good
fellowship activities within the Lodge. Those are the keys to our great success in Davis. Those can be the keys to success for the Order in California.

F - L – T

Dave Rosenberg, PG #169

2011 Grand Lodge Resolution No. ______

Submitted by Dave Rosenberg, Davis Odd Fellows Lodge No. 169

Title: 21st Century Revitalization of the California Order (1)

Whereas, the membership of Odd Fellows in California has shown a steady decline for over sixty-five years including the net loss of 198 Odd Fellows members and 469 Rebekahs in 2009, and

Whereas, the membership of Odd Fellows in the Jurisdiction of California, as of December 31, 2009 has declined to 4,643 dues-paying members, and the membership of Rebekahs in the Jurisdiction of California has declined to 2,816 dues-paying members, and

Whereas, in 2009 three Odd Fellows Lodges and eight Rebekah Lodges have lost their charters, been suspended or consolidated, and

Whereas, at the end of 2009 there were 43 Odd Fellows Lodges in this jurisdiction with 15 or fewer members, and

Whereas, members of many Odd Fellows Lodges are aging, some Lodges show the youngest members in their sixties having skipped one or two generations of potential members, and

Whereas, often Lodges find up to fifty percent of their members pay dues and do little more in the way of participation, and

Whereas, Odd Fellows desire to refresh and modernize our Order for the benefit of current and future generations of members; to foster the continued growth, health and vitality of our Order; and to encourage a new generation of members to join our Order,

Now, therefore, be it resolved, that the 2011 Grand Lodge of California directs that the Grand Master, Grand Lodge Officers, and Grand
Lodge Board of Directors shall within six months initiate, develop, and implement a “21st Century Project” to assist Lodges with less than 21 members to increase membership to 21 within three years with the goal that the minimum number of members of a Lodge be 21.

2011 Grand Lodge Resolution No. ______

Submitted by Dave Rosenberg, Davis Odd Fellows Lodge No. 169

Title: Encouraging Community Works in the California Order (2)

Whereas, the membership of Odd Fellows in California has shown a steady decline for over sixty-five years including the net loss of 198 Odd Fellows members and 469 Rebekahs over the past year, and

Whereas, the membership of Odd Fellows in the Jurisdiction of California, as of December 31, 2009, has declined to 4,643 dues-paying members, and the membership of Rebekahs in the Jurisdiction of California has declined to 2,816 dues-paying members, and

Whereas, in 2009 three Odd Fellows Lodges and eight Rebekah Lodges have lost their charters, been suspended or consolidated, and

Whereas, at the end of 2009 there were 43 Odd Fellows Lodges in this jurisdiction with 15 or fewer members, and

Whereas, members of many Odd Fellows Lodges are aging, some Lodges show the youngest members in their sixties having skipped one or two generations of potential members, and

Whereas, often Lodges find up to fifty percent of their members pay dues and do little more in the way of participation, and

Whereas, Odd Fellows desire to refresh and modernize our Order for the benefit of current and future generations of members; to foster the continued growth, health and vitality of our Order; and to encourage a new generation of members to join our Order,

Now, therefore, be it resolved, that the 2011 Grand Lodge of California directs that the Grand Master, Grand Lodge Officers and Grand Lodge Board of Directors shall within six months encourage and emphasize community outreach, community visibility, and good community and charitable works by individual Lodges. To this end, the Grand Master, Grand Lodge Officers and Grand Lodge Board of Directors shall facilitate three workshops for
Lodge leadership and members providing information on “best practices” for community outreach, community visibility and good community works. Each Lodge in the Jurisdiction of California shall be encouraged to undertake at least two IOOF community and charitable projects per year in their local venue.

2011 Grand Lodge Resolution No. ______

Submitted by Dave Rosenberg, Davis Odd Fellows Lodge No. 169

Title: Encouraging Good Fellowship in the California Order (3)

Whereas, the membership of Odd Fellows in California has shown a steady decline for over sixty-five years including the net loss of 198 Odd Fellows members and 469 Rebekahs over the past year, and

Whereas, the membership of Odd Fellows in the Jurisdiction of California, as of December 31, 2009, has declined to 4,643 dues-paying members, and the membership of Rebekahs in the Jurisdiction of California has declined to 2,816 dues-paying members, and

Whereas, in 2009 three Odd Fellows Lodges and eight Rebekah Lodges have lost their charters, been suspended or consolidated, and

Whereas, at the end of 2009 there were 43 Odd Fellows Lodges in this jurisdiction with 15 or fewer members, and

Whereas, members of many Odd Fellows Lodges are aging, some Lodges show the youngest members in their sixties having skipped one or two generations of potential members, and

Whereas, often Lodges find up to fifty percent of their members pay dues and do little more in the way of participation, and

Whereas, Odd Fellows desire to refresh and modernize our Order for the benefit of current and future generations of members; to foster the continued growth, health and vitality of our Order; and to encourage a new generation of members to join our Order,

Now, therefore, be it resolved, that the 2011 Grand Lodge of California directs that the Grand Master, Grand Lodge Officers and Grand Lodge Board of Directors shall within six months encourage and emphasize good fellowship activities (for example, Lodge dinners, Lodge trips, game nights, movie nights, Lodge socials, etc.) within individual Lodges. To this end, the Grand Master, Grand Lodge Officers and Grand Lodge Board of Directors
shall facilitate three workshops for Lodge leadership and members providing information on “examples” of successful good fellowship activities undertaken by Lodges. Individual Lodges shall be encouraged to undertake at least four good fellowship activities each year for the fraternal and social benefit of members.

2011 Grand Lodge Resolution No. _____

Submitted by Dave Rosenberg, Davis Odd Fellows Lodge No. 169

Title: Encouraging Open Meetings in the California Order (4)

Whereas, the membership of Odd Fellows in California has shown a steady decline for over sixty-five years including the net loss of 198 Odd Fellows members and 469 Rebekahs over the past year, and

Whereas, the membership of Odd Fellows in the Jurisdiction of California, as of December 31, 2009 has declined to 4,643 dues-paying members, and the membership of Rebekahs in the Jurisdiction of California has declined to 2,816 dues-paying members, and

Whereas, in 2009 three Odd Fellows Lodges and eight Rebekah Lodges have lost their charters, been suspended or consolidated, and

Whereas, at the end of 2009 there were 43 Odd Fellows Lodges in this jurisdiction with 15 or fewer members, and

Whereas, members of many Odd Fellows Lodges are aging, some Lodges show the youngest members in their sixties having skipped one or two generations of potential members, and

Whereas, often Lodges find up to fifty percent of their members pay dues and do little more in the way of participation, and

Whereas, Odd Fellows desire to refresh and modernize our Order for the benefit of current and future generations of members; to foster the continued growth, health and vitality of our Order; and to encourage a new generation of members to join our Order,

Now, therefore, be it resolved, that the 2011 Grand Lodge of California directs that the Grand Master, Grand Lodge Officers and Grand Lodge Board of Directors shall encourage Lodges to hold Lodge business meetings open to family members, prospective Lodge members, and invited members of the public, to gain a knowledge about the worthwhile programs.
and activities being presented and sponsored by an Odd Fellows Lodge without revealing any of the ritualistic, unwritten work and passwords of the Order. The Grand Master, Grand Lodge Officers and Grand Lodge Board of Directors shall encourage each Lodge in this jurisdiction to hold such open meetings at least six times each year.

2011 Grand Lodge Resolution No. _____

Submitted by Dave Rosenberg, Davis Odd Fellows Lodge No. 169

Title: Continuation of Membership Challenge Grant Program for California (S)

Whereas, membership in Odd Fellows Lodges throughout North America and in California has been steadily decreasing for the past 65 years, and

Whereas, such a decline in membership seriously erodes the fraternal order and substantially undermines the strength, well-being and morale of our Lodges, and

Whereas, membership challenge grant programs are a proven method of increasing membership and provide easily measurable results, and

Whereas, Odd Fellows seek to significantly increase membership in the Lodges throughout the jurisdiction of California through a Challenge Grant Program to foster the continued growth, health and vigor of our Order, and

Whereas, a successful Challenge Grant Program will, through dues, reimburse the Grand Lodge the cost of the program within three or four years, and

Whereas, it is important to give all Lodges – particularly smaller Lodges - an opportunity to participate in such a Challenge Grant Program, and such opportunity may not have been fully available in a one-year program, and

Whereas, a resolution passed at the 2009 Grand Lodge instructed the Grand Lodge Board of Directors to commence such a Challenge Grant Program in this jurisdiction, and the Grand Lodge Board of Directors did commence such a program to run from October 1, 2009 to February 28, 2010,

Now, therefore, be it resolved, that the Grand Lodge of California directs that the Grand Lodge Board of Directors shall continue the Challenge Grant Program that was begun in 2009-10 and shall run that program for another cycle to run from October 1, 2010 to February 28, 2011. The Challenge
Grant Program which was begun in 2009 and which shall continue to 2011 shall apply only up to the first 1,000 new members so certified and shall not exceed the sum of $100,000 total for the entire two year span of the program. Further, no single Lodge shall receive in excess of $3,000 for the entire two year span of the program.

E-mail to Sovereign Grand Secretary Terry Barrett – November 27, 2010

Terry,

My comments in the article were targeted to the SGL officers who continue to give lip service to the need to increase membership and continue to mouth platitudes and slogans. But they do little to make change happen. 65 years of lip service won't cut it. This Order is heading toward the edge of the cliff, and it's not willing to make even the smallest change to reverse the trend. Patriarchs Militant and the Ladies Auxiliary to Patriarchs Militant are already beyond saving, and the Encampment and Ladies Encampment Auxiliary are not far behind. The Rebekahs will be there within 5 years, and Odd Fellows will be there in less than 10, unless we make significant changes to the way we do business and the way we structure this Order. The number of new members is far exceeded by our losses of members, and you and I both know that many of the members listed on our books as paying per capita fees do little more than pay the fees - they are invisible in their Lodges.

We need to expose our Lodges to the world with some open meetings, we need to be active and visible and involved in our communities, we need to create good fellowship and social activities within our Lodges to attract and retain members, and we need to merge our disparate branches into one Odd Fellows Order - the days of separate but equal “men’s” Lodges and “women’s” Lodges is long past. We need to simplify and modernize our ritual. We need to eliminate the sexist and racist text that we find in our ritual.

Frankly, I've pretty much given up on SGL, Terry. At the last Sovereign Grand Lodge, all the proposals made by California - and they were pretty innocuous - were shot down. The change will have to happen at the local level and at the Grand Lodge level.

Fraternally, Dave
E-mail initiating “Dedicated Members for Change” - December 6, 2010

Dear Don, Rick, Peter, John, Brian, Robin, Mark, Richard, Frank and Julie,

I think it’s time we created a new “alliance” at the Grand Lodge (perhaps we should even schedule our own breakfast or dinner at Grand Lodge) - a progressive alliance of leaders, if you will. The eleven of us are a good start, but I could see this group easily grow to 50 or more at the Grand Lodge. Our starting point would be to support progressive candidates for office, support appropriate resolutions and legislation, etc. Do you think this is a good idea? If so, please send me names and e-mail addresses of those you think would be good charter members. If each of you sent me two or three names and e-mails, we would have over 30.

We should even give it a name. Here are some possibilities:
Alliance to Revitalize the Order (ARO)
Progressive Coalition (PC)
Alliance for Change and Evolution (ACE)

I’m sure you have other suggestions.

Your thoughts?

Dave

E-mail launching “Dedicated Members for Change” - December 13, 2010

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

This e-mail constitutes the “official” launch of this new alliance. Dedicated Members for Change (DMC) is not meant to be an exclusive group - rather, the intent is to be inclusive. The criteria for inclusion in this group is simple: Odd Fellows who are dedicated to the Order and are willing to discuss, explore and implement changes to bring this fraternity into the 21st Century and to retain and increase membership.
Last week I said that the e-mail list would be open to all unless you requested (by last Sunday) that your name be removed. I am delighted to say that only one recipient asked to be removed (actually, it was the spouse who asked that the e-mail address be removed - the member and spouse shared one e-mail address). You will see that the membership of DMC constitutes a big tent.

But we want more members in this alliance. I would like to see 75-100 in this e-mail group going into the 2011 Grand Lodge. And that's something YOU can do. If you have a member of the Order who you believe should be added to this grouping, please contact that person, ask if they wish to be included, and if so, send me their name and e-mail address and they will be immediately added. Let's grow this list!

I hope we can have some interesting and lively discussions in the coming months, leading to the Grand Lodge. We'll also try to organize a breakfast or lunch for DMC during Grand Lodge. More information on that to follow. In the meantime, just to get the dialog going, I have attached five resolutions that will be presented to the Grand Lodge in May. I submitted these resolutions to my Lodge, they received unanimous support, and they are being submitted to Grand Lodge for consideration and, hopefully, adoption. There are things we can do right here in the jurisdiction of California that will result in the changes we need to grow this Order.

In friendship, love and truth, Dave Rosenberg

---

E-mail to Norm Sheehan -
December 15, 2010

Norm,

The basic precepts of Odd Fellowship are valuable and important and should not change. On the other hand, this is not the 18th Century. Concepts like “bury the dead” and “educate the orphan” are seriously out of touch with the 21st Century. The Rose Bowl Parade float and many of the other efforts that we undertake are throwbacks to WW II. The ritual is nice, but NO ONE joins because we have a secret grip or use passwords. These are remnants of another age. The ritual itself is full of archaic terms that mean very little today. The ritual also contains racist and sexist references. The ritual is offensive in some parts to people who are Moslem, Jewish, Buddhist, and Hindu.
Believe me, you won't find 1 in 100 who want to join because of the ritual.

It’s all about stopping the decrease in members. We’re down to less than 5,000 in California. And you know that means about 2,000 “active” members. We are (and have been) in a crisis - but some won’t admit it. This Order is almost dead. Patriarchs Militant, the “Ladies Auxilliary,” the Encampment and it's “Ladies Auxilliary” are remnants of the past - they are defunct even though no one admits it. Rebekahs will be beyond saving within 5 years. Odd Fellows will be there within 10.

Unless we change.

What attracts new members is two things: (1) the social structure (the fraternity) of our Order - we have to provide good fellowship activities to our members, and (2) doing good for our community be it planting trees, or helping seniors, or assisting local charities, etc. That’s why people will join this Order. In Davis we have gone from 40 members to close to 160 in 5 years - it certainly can be done.

That is not to say that we abandon the ritual - that’s what makes us unique. But we have got to modernize it, eliminate the offensive parts, make it relevant and simplify. The oaths that are given, for example, are unbelievably long and convoluted. The President of the USA takes an oath of less than 50 words. Why does ours have to be 500?

Dave

---

**E-mail re developing Dedicated Members for Change - December 17, 2010**

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

As we launch this new alliance of DMC, our first task should be to increase our membership. We've already added some new blood, but I'd like to see 75-100 in this e-mail group going into the 2011 Grand Lodge.

Each of you can help grow our e-mail list. The criteria to be in this group is simple: Odd Fellows who are dedicated to the Order and are willing to discuss,
explore and implement changes to bring this fraternity into the 21st Century and to retain and increase membership.

So, if you have someone in mind who fits this criteria - with special emphasis on those who will be voting representatives at the Grand Lodge this coming May - please talk to them about it, find out if they are interested in being added to our group, and let me know their name and e-mail address. No one is added to this group unless they wish to be on the e-mail matrix.

In other news, we will be planning a gathering at Grand Lodge to have a nice meal and to discuss issues of mutual concern. Still working on whether that gathering will be a breakfast, lunch or dinner – depending on the Grand Lodge schedule. But we'll keep you posted on that. Rick Boyles has graciously agreed to work on scheduling of that gathering.

Also, the Membership Committee, through the leadership of Don Lang, is about to launch some best practices workshops throughout California focused on how we can increase membership. I'm pleased to say that the first such workshop will be coming up on Saturday, January 29, 2011, at the Davis Lodge #169 - open to interested leaders and members. The time will be 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. More information will follow.

In friendship, love and truth,

Dave Rosenberg

---

E-mail having a little fun with Patrick Henry -
December 24, 2010

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

I thought you might enjoy the attached (with apologies to Patrick Henry) which I drafted up this morning.

I sincerely wish all a happy holiday season.

F - L – T  Dave Rosenberg
The Call to Arms
(With apologies to Patrick Henry’s speech of 1775)
by Dave Rosenberg, DDGM Dist #59, PG #169
Independent Order of Odd Fellows

Members of the Order, it is natural to people to indulge in the illusions of hope. We are apt to shut our eyes against a painful truth. Is this the part of wise men and women, engaged in a great and arduous struggle to preserve this Order? Are we disposed to be of the number of those, who, having eyes, see not, and having ears, hear not, the things which so nearly concern their temporal salvation? For my part, whatever anguish of spirit it may cost, I am willing to know the whole truth; to know the worst, and to provide for it.

I have but one lamp by which my feet are guided; and that is the lamp of experience. I know of no way of judging of the future but by the past. Let us not, I beseech you, deceive ourselves longer. We have certainly done some things to avert the storm which is now coming on. We have remonstrated, we have uttered slogans, we have created committees, all to staunch the loss of members of this Order and to curtail the closing of our Lodges. Our remonstrations have gone unheeded, our slogans have been ignored, our committees have been largely disregarded, and the foot of demise is at our throats. In vain, after these things, may we indulge the fond hope of growth and prosperity of our Order. There is no longer any room for hope. If we wish to be a free and progressive Order – if we mean to preserve inviolate these inestimable privileges for which we have so long contended – if we mean not basely to abandon the noble struggle in which we have been so long engaged, and which we have pledged ourselves never to abandon, until the glorious object of our contest shall be obtained – we must evolve and change! An appeal to arms in this struggle is all that is left us.

They tell us that we are weak – our membership waning after 66 years of decline – unable to cope with so formidable an adversary as complacency. But when shall we be stronger? Will it be next week, or the next year? Will it be when we are totally disarmed and our Lodges nearly abandoned? Shall we acquire the means of effectual resistance by lying supinely on our backs and hugging the delusive phantom of hope, until complacency has completely bound us hand and foot?

We are not weak if we make a proper use of those means which the God of nature has placed in our power. There are still 5,000 members of our Order in this jurisdiction. In such Lodges as we still possess, we are invincible by any force which complacency sends against us. Besides, we shall not fight
our battles alone. There is a just God who presides over the destinies of us all. But it is upon us to raise up friends – new members of our Lodges – who shall join us to fight and our battle against complacency. The battle is not to the strong alone; it is to the vigilant, the active, the brave.

It is in vain to extenuate the matter. Some may cry, “stay the course” – but our experience over the past 66 years proves that the current course leads inevitably to the demise of our beloved Order. The battle has actually begun! There are Brothers and Sisters already in the field and in the fight! Why stand we here idle? What is it that you wish? What would you have us do? Is the way of the past so dear, is repeating the ritual so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of closures and consolidations of Lodges, of continued losses of members? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take, but as for me, give me change or give me death!

---

**E-mail to DMC Members - January 10, 2011**

Dear Dedicated Members for Change (DMC),

We can all agree, I think, that this Order cannot continue business as usual - we've lost too many members for two many years with “business as usual.” The world has changed dramatically since the 1940's yet Odd Fellows in America has not adjusted. We can all also agree that our Order has a rich history, inspiring goals, and substantial assets. We can build on that.

Change can mean not only looking to the future, but also can mean looking to the past. In this e-mail dialog, there have been at least two schools of thought developing on what “change” really means. One school looks to the past and says we should try to recapture the beneficial spirit that this Order used to possess. I believe that this is an avenue worth pursuing, although I don't believe we can ever recreate a society where fraternal orders provided the benefits that government and private insurance now provides. On the other hand, a number of you have pointed out things we can and should be doing in our Lodges which cost little or no money, e.g. attending to members who are sick or in distress, finding member discounts, etc.. Another school of thought (one which I espouse) is that our fraternity can grow, prosper and add members if we are much more involved in our communities and if we put more emphasis on good fellowship activities within our Lodges. I suggest that these two schools of thought are not inconsistent.
On another subject, I appreciate all the constructive criticism many of you provided on my proposed resolution #8 (not sending our two representatives to SGL in 2011). One of my goals was to generate discussion on a number of topics. This resolution certainly has started to do that. When we have our DMC meeting at GL in May, we can discuss #8 further. Frankly, if the members in DMC are substantially opposed to it, I may very well pull #8 from consideration. (By the way, a number of you have written to me asking me to stand for election as Grand Representative. Thank you for the expressions of support. But I will pass on that. I am focused on making substantial changes here in the jurisdiction of California. I think change here come first. If we can show a change in the dramatic slide of membership, and a movement upwards here in California, that will go a long way toward taking the next steps at SGL.)

Finally, I am pleased to report that our Brother Don Smith is making progress. He was moved to a hospital in Stockton because there was some indication that he would need surgery, but that doesn't appear to be the case now. Looks like the antibiotics are doing the job. He will be moved to a nursing facility to continue with the antibiotics and to start some walking and physical therapy - he's been flat on his back for two weeks. Let's continue to keep Don in our thoughts and prayers. He's a strong man and a fighter, but this infection really knocked him for a loop.

Fraternally,

Dave

---

E-mail coordinating a Davis Membership Workshop - January 13, 2011

Dear Presenters!

Attached you will find the agenda for the Grand Lodge Membership Workshop to be held at the Davis Lodge on Saturday, January 29 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. (see APPENDIX A) The workshop lasts 4 hours and is presented in 20-minute segments. The agenda shows you approximately when your segment begins and ends. Please also note that there will be coffee and donuts available from 9:30 to 10:00 a.m. There will be a simple lunch available at noon (it costs $5 if you pay for it when we start at the 10 a.m. time) - we will work right through lunch.
The focus of the workshop is membership development. We will help other Lodges by showing them our “best practices.” You will be talking about stuff you already do and know, so no real preparation time will be needed.

I will write each of you in the next few days, individually, and make some specific suggestions for the focus and subject matter of your topic area.

Thanks for volunteering! See you soon.

Best,

Dave

---

**E-mail to the DMC - January 13, 2011**

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

I’m delighted to say that – thanks to you – our little e-mail matrix group has grown substantially over the past several days. And I welcome all the new members of Dedicated Members for Change. Keep up the good work. If you have more potential members to suggest, please check with them to make sure that they wish to be on the e-mail matrix, review the “ground-rules” with them, and then if they consent, send me their name and their e-mail address. We are primarily looking for members who will be official voting representatives at Grand Lodge in May.

Let me review the ground-rules:

You have to be a member in good standing of the Order who understands that business as usual no longer works, membership needs to be increased, and change is needed to preserve and enhance this Order.

You have to be willing to be a member of this e-mail matrix.

Communications in this e-mail dialog must be focused on how we can increase membership in the Order. All such communications must be courteous and in the spirit of our fraternal Order. Communications which disparage the Order, or a Lodge, or a member, or which are negative or insulting to members are unacceptable. Further, e-mails must be short and to the point – no long tomes.
You will note that this e-mail is sent to the address of “recipient list suppressed,” with member’s names and e-mail addresses being hidden in bcc format. This is to accommodate the wishes of several members who have requested it, and also to ensure the privacy of participants as we grow. Further, this is to ensure that all future communications comply with the ground-rules above. Some members have complained to me about negative e-mails and we have had a couple of members actually drop out because of the negativity of some of the e-mails. That’s a real shame, and this new mailing format will eliminate that problem. Also, if and when members violate the ground-rules, they will be deleted from the e-mail matrix.

So as we grow, we enter into the next phase of the DMC. If you wish to send a communication to the entire group, please send it to me at daverose@jps.net and I will forward the e-mail, intact and unedited to the entire group. The only exception is if there is a violation of the above ground rules. Such e-mails will not be forwarded.

I want to remind everyone of the Membership Workshops (sponsored by the Grand Lodge Membership Committee and sanctioned by the Grand Master Gene Breeland) at the Davis Lodge on January 29 and at the Cupertino Lodge on February 26. This will be the same workshop in both Lodge so you don’t have to attend both. But you and members of your Lodge are cordially invited – I think you may gain some great ideas for increasing the membership of your Lodge. Contact me if you wish to come, and/or need more information about the workshop.

We will continue a positive e-mail dialog, and we are also planning a DMC dinner meeting at Grand Lodge for those who are able to attend. The best is yet to come.

Fraternally,

Dave
E-mail to the DMC -
January 26, 2011

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

This is the “last call” to the Membership Workshop scheduled for this coming Saturday (January 29) at the Davis Odd Fellows Lodge. If you haven't already RSVP'd and would still like to attend, please let me know in reply to this e-mail.

The focus of this workshop in Davis is: **HOW CAN MY LODGE INCREASE ITS MEMBERSHIP?** The workshop will provide a plethora of ideas and best practices for membership development and retention. This will be a very useful and productive 4 hours and I guarantee everyone will leave the workshop with good ideas that can work for your Lodge. The workshop is supported by Grand Master Gene Breeland and is a project of the Grand Lodge Membership Committee.

The Davis workshop will start promptly at 10 a.m. and will end promptly at 2 p.m. There will be coffee and donuts available (compliments of the Lodge) at 9:30 a.m. Attendees can also purchase (for $5) a lunch prepared by a private chef. We'll make it a working lunch so we use our time productively.

The Davis Lodge is located right in Downtown Davis at 415 Second Street.

Please spread the word to your Lodge and other Lodges. All Odd Fellows and Rebekahs are welcome.

Fraternally,

Dave Rosenberg

---

Essay on the History of IOOF -
February 5, 2011

**History and Facts about the Odd Fellows**

**History**

The Odd Fellows is one of the oldest world-wide fraternal orders. Some books actually claim to trace Odd Fellowship back to Roman times when members of the Roman Legions in England were called “Fellow Citizens,” but that sort of claim is speculation, at best. What is said to be the earliest printed record of an Odd Fellows Lodge appears in a reference to a Lodge meeting at a
Globe Tavern in England in 1748. The Lodge number was nine, so apparently there were at least nine associated Odd Fellows Lodges at that time.

How did “Odd Fellows” get its name? The generally accepted belief is that it stemmed from 18th Century England where lodges and fraternal orders were founded to foster and advance a particular profession, and it was “odd” to find people of various professions organized for the purpose of giving aid to those in need and pursuing projects for the benefit of mankind. Those who belonged to such an organization were called “Odd Fellows.” Odd Fellows are also known as “The Three Link Fraternity” which stands for Friendship, Love and Truth.

Odd Fellowship started in England and it is still active there. Odd Fellows came to the United States through the work of an Englishman who came to this country. Thomas Wildey, founder of Odd Fellowship in North America, was a man of immense vitality, humor, and warmth. He was born in London, England, in 1772. He was left an orphan five years later – and the Odd Fellow pledge to “Educate the Orphan” sprang from his personal childhood experiences. At the age of 14, Wildey went to live with an uncle. After he had 9 years of schooling, he became an apprentice to a maker of coach springs. He joined the Odd Fellows in England in 1804. Restlessness brought Thomas Wildey to America in 1817. The British, however, were still unpopular in the States because of the War of 1812. In 1817, Baltimore, where Wildey settled, was suffering both a yellow fever epidemic and mass unemployment. Wildey missed companionship so he advertised in the newspaper to determine if there were any other Odd Fellows in Baltimore. He requested that they meet him at the Seven Stars Inn. On April 26, 1819, Wildey and the four men who responded to the advertisement met and began a process that would lead to the formation of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows in North America, dedicating the Order to achieve philanthropic goals. Other Englishmen who were Odd Fellows had grouped in the States along the Eastern Seaboard, and Wildey gathered them all into the newly formed fraternity. He traveled widely to set up Lodges in the most recently settled parts of the country. At the time of his death in 1861, there were more than 200,000 members of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows all across North America.

The Odd Fellows were the first organization that organized Lodges for women through the Rebekah Order way back in 1851. Schuyler Colfax, Vice President of the United States under Ulysses S. Grant, was the force behind the movement. Odd Fellows were also the first group to form Homes for their aged members and the first such home was in Pennsylvania. Odd Fellows also
have Lodges for boys and girls, Junior Odd Fellows and Theta Rho, as well as youth camps – including summer camps in California.

The Independent Order of Odd Fellows has been active in California since September 9, 1849, one year before California Statehood and eleven years before the start of the Civil War. At that time, California Lodge Number 1 was established in San Francisco. There are over 300 Lodges in California today, under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of California, and (nationally) the Sovereign Grand Lodge located in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Yolo Lodge Number 169 (now called the “Davis Lodge”) was chartered in 1870, well before there was a City of Davis and a University of California at Davis. The Davis Lodge is the oldest, continuously operated organization in Davis. The first IOOF Lodge Hall in Davis was constructed in 1875 and was located on G Street. The second IOOF Lodge Hall is the current Hall at 415 Second Street, and was constructed in 1955. The Lodge Hall and surrounding buildings is jointly owned by the Davis Odd Fellows Lodge and the Davis Rebekah Lodge.

**Activities**

Any person over 16 years of age is eligible to be an Odd Fellow. That person must be sponsored by a Lodge member and be of good character, be loyal to their country, and believe in a Supreme Being. There are two levels of membership: regular and associate. A regular member may possess all three degrees and then may vote and hold office. A regular member may become an associate member in another Lodge. In addition to the Initiatory Degree, there is the First Degree (the Degree of Friendship), the Second Degree (the Degree of Love), and the Third Degree (the Degree of Truth). An Odd Fellow who possesses all three degrees may also join the Rebekah Order. There are affiliated degrees such as the Order known as the Encampment. This is open to any Third Degree member and confers three additional degrees: The Patriarchal, Golden Rule, and Royal Purple Degree. An Encampment member who has attained the Royal Purple Degree may join a semi-military organization known as the Patriarchs Militant Degree. This degree is based upon the principle of Universal Justice and is intended to be purely military and for the purposes of display.

Internationally, Odd Fellows is a worldwide fraternal order with over 10,000 Lodges in 25 countries, actively involved in civic and philanthropic efforts. Odd Fellows and Rebekahs spend over $775 million in relief projects annually. The Educational Foundation provides substantial loans and grants to students. SOS Village provides a caring home for orphaned children in Cambodia. Living Legacy focuses on planting trees and enhancing our
environment. The Odd Fellows and Rebekahs also support the Arthritis Foundation, the Visual Research Foundation, and the United Nations Pilgrimage for Youth.

In California, the Order operates the Saratoga Retirement Community and the Meadows of Napa Valley which include large independent and assisted living centers, as well as skilled nursing facilities and memory care, Fellowship Plaza which provides senior housing facilities for those with limited income, and the California Odd Fellows and Rebekah Children’s Home serving as a home for abused and/or severely disturbed children. The Grand Lodge of California also operates a youth summer camp available to children and grandchildren of members.

Locally, over 160 current members of the Davis Lodge, provide substantial donations to civic and charitable groups (such as Pine Tree Gardens, Hospice, the Yolo County Mexican-American Concilio, the Martin Luther King Jr. dinner, YCCC, foster children and families, and others), and sponsors community events (like Breakfast with Santa and the Annual Picnic Day Parade Breakfast) that benefit the citizens of Davis and Yolo County.

E-mail to some brothers and sisters re the future -
February 15, 2011

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

No one ever said that evolution and change would be simple or easy. It is a process, and it takes time. At a minimum, it is uncomfortable for folks who have gotten into a routine and have been doing something the same way for 20, 30, 40 or more years. I have noticed that some Lodges do little more than meet and go through the strict ritual of an opening, running a meeting per the agenda in the book, and formally closing the meeting. Some of the older members spend their time telling the others what they are doing wrong: “The Warden’s chair should be in this location” or “You have to stand over there.” or “It’s three raps, not two,” etc. They have gotten completely wrapped up in the ritual and little else.

For other members, the achievement of a particular office is the highest achievement of their lives. For still others, Odd Fellows provides a livelihood or extra money.
All these folks are resistant to any change or any disruption in their established and known routine.

What they ignore is that they are part of a dying Order. It's been dying since World War II.

I joined the Order in 2004, and by early 2006, I had figured out that we were done for unless we changed our approach. I thought that the best way to change the Order was to make an example of the Davis Lodge and prove to folks that there was a way out of the morass. I've been criticized by some, of course - that is expected - but now a majority understands that this is the path for the future. And that is not to say we abandon the ritual - not at all - that is a valuable part of what makes us a fraternity. But we have got to emphasize the things that attract and keep members: outreach/community support and good fellowship activities within the Lodge. That's why the Davis Lodge currently has 153 members, we are about to initiate 16 more on February 23, and we have 21 applications in hand (our new Pledge Class) for the Fall Initiatory Degree. I have had to cut off applications because we get so many. Folks who apply now will be funneled into the Spring 2012 Pledge Class.

Most of our new members and applicants are in their 20's, 30's, and 40's. Half are women. Many are married couples. We have people of color, people from every religion, straight members, gay and lesbian members - essentially a microcosm of our community. We have so many children who come with our young members that we have babysitters at our meetings.

The energy of our Lodge is contagious. People in the community contact US wanting to join. This is the future of Odd Fellowship.

Dave

E-mail to new Davis Lodge applicants to join a committee -
February 25, 2011

Dear Fall 2011 Pledge Class,

Congratulations to the members of the new Fall 2011 Pledge Class. There are 21 of you. We are delighted to have you seek admission into our Order and our Lodge. There is no question that the Davis Lodge is the fastest growing and
most dynamic Lodge in the Order, and that we are the model for the future of Odd Fellowship. Make no mistake: every other Lodge in California (and many Lodges around the country) are watching us very closely.

But it’s not just numbers. It’s got to be about quality. That’s why I urge each and every one of you to become active in your new Lodge. Find a place in the Lodge that you enjoy and that brings you satisfaction - in other words, find your niche. If everyone contributes in some way, we will be the premier organization in this community and will be a leader in Odd Fellowship.

We do most of our work through our active committees. **If you are not already a member of a committee, I strongly urge you to join one.** As a Pledge, you are eligible to join as a committee member “pro tem.” To join a committee, simply contact Noble Grand Dave Reed and let him know which committee or committees you wish to serve on. The Noble Grand appoints all committees. Dave Reed can be reached at dreedng@gmail.com.

**The following are committees you might consider joining:**

- Bingo Committee (Chaired by Deanna Chavis)
- Community Support Committee (Chaired by Holly Bishop)
- Communications & Website Committee (Chaired by Stewart Savage)
- Good Fellowship Committee (Chaired by Dody Black)
- Music & Concerts Committee (Chaired by Bob Bockwinkel)
- Legacy Tree Committee (Chaired by Lewis Kimble)
- Social Services Committee (Chaired by Bob Schelen)
- Helping Seniors Committee (Chaired by Sharon Schauer)
- Bicycle Parade Committee (Chaired by Frank Giustino)
- Zymurgy Club (Chaired by Tim Carroll)
- Wine Club (Chaired by Elysa Hillis)

There are other committees, as well, and if you are interested in learning about any of these committees, let me know.

Again, congratulations for being part of this Pledge Class - and in the spirit of Odd Fellowship, be active in your Lodge!

F - L – T

Dave Rosenberg, PG #169
Chair, Membership & Initiation Committee
Davis Odd Fellows Lodge
E-mail to new pledges re “Pledge Book” requirements -
February 27, 2011

Dear Fall 2011 Pledge Class,

If you haven’t already done so, please visit our Lodge website at www.davisoddfellows.com and on the home page you will see a section entitled “Downloads.” Under that section you will see the “Pledge Book.” Please download this Pledge Book, and read and review it. During your pledge period (from now till initiation at the end of September) you should carry your copy of the Pledge Book with you at all times when you are at the Lodge. It is chock full of information which will help you learn about your Lodge and should answer most of your questions about Odd Fellowship. Other questions you may address to me or to your mentor.

There are two sections of the Pledge Book that are particularly important:

1. One page of the Pledge Book has 18 lines for you to record your attendance at Lodge meetings, events and activities and to obtain the initials of a Lodge member verifying your attendance. We do expect you to attend 18 such meetings, events or activities over the next 6 months. These might include attendance at music nights at the Lodge, or bowling, or the breakfast meetings, or wine club activities, committee meetings, helping build the picnic day float, etc. For those of you who attended the pledge orientation meeting last week on February 24, that counts, so you can fill in that line and I will be happy to initial it next time you see me and ask me to do so.

2. There are pages for member’s biographies. The Pledge Book has 25 of them and suggests that you interview 25 members. We’ve modified that so we only require that you interview 13 members between now and your initiation. The interviews are a great way for you to meet members and for them to meet you. It’s a great ice breaker. These are pretty basic interviews - just fill in the blanks - and you will find that they only take about 3-5 minutes to complete.

As I told those of you who attended the orientation meeting, although I sincerely hope all of you make it through the pledge process and get initiated as Odd Fellows, it’s been my experience that not everyone makes it. We’ve already had one pledge drop out due to business commitments, so this class is now “down” to 20 members. Still a big pledge class. I wish all of you good luck in this process. Believe me, it’s worth it. The Davis Lodge is a great Lodge - lots of social activities, lots of good fellowship and camaraderie, and lots of good works for the community.
Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

(1) It's been requested that we put out a weekly “newsletter” leading up to the 2011 Grand Lodge. We aim to please, so let this e-mail be “newsletter #1” for 2011. Please do mark your calendars for the 2011 Grand Lodge - the dates are Wednesday May 18 through Saturday May 21 - this year in Sacramento. That's a major commitment of time, particularly for those members who are not retired, but that's the reality and those are the dates. Perhaps in future years, we can strive to shorten Grand Lodge to three days, or even two, and thereby increase participation. In any event, we certainly hope many, if not all, of you can attend the 2011 Grand Lodge, or at least some portion of it. We have a number of resolutions that will be before the body which, we believe, will go a long way toward moving this fraternity into the future. We also have members of our DMC who are candidates for Grand Lodge office.

(2) And in particular, please mark your calendars for Thursday evening, May 19. Our group - Dedicated Members for Change (DMC) - has reserved a room at the Grand Lodge hotel and we'll be having a dinner and meeting. I guarantee you that this dinner and meeting will be well-attended, will be lively and interesting, and will be a highlight of your Grand Lodge experience. The dinner meeting will begin at 6 p.m. on Thursday, May 19. In addition to a fine meal and good company, we will be discussing some thought-provoking resolutions that will be presented to Grand Lodge, PGM and PSGM Don Smith will talk about the history of change at Grand Lodge, and member of the Grand Lodge Board of Directors Rick Boyles will discuss some of the hot issues facing Grand Lodge these days. More details will follow, but your RSVP is requested now. If you wish to attend the dinner meeting, please e-mail me and let me know how many are in your party (your spouse and/or guests and interested brothers and sisters are welcome). The cost of the dinner is $39 per person. However, through the generosity of some DMC members, the first 50 who
RSVP will only pay $19 per person (the remainder of the cost will be subsidized by these generous members). After the first 50, the cost will be $39 - the sum charged to us by the hotel. So, needless to say, we encourage you to RSVP soon! First come, first served.

(3) We launched DMC in December of last year and our goal was to be an inclusive (not exclusive) group within the Order with a simple announced goal: “We want to include Odd Fellows who are dedicated to the Order and who are willing to discuss, explore and implement changes to bring this fraternity into the 21st Century and to retain and increase membership.” In this regard, we welcome additions to the DMC e-mail list. If you know a brother or sister who is interested in being included, and who shares our goal, please send me their name, their Lodge and their e-mail address. We'll make sure to include them. We already have a terrific list of members - we are happy to expand that list.

(4) We wish to remind each of you of the “Membership Challenge Grant” program. Through this program, your Lodge can receive a grant of $100 for every new member you bring in ($50 at the time the member is initiated, and another $50 at the time the member receives his/her three degrees), up to a maximum of $1,500 per Lodge. Don’t miss out on this opportunity to grow the Order, and to increase your Lodge’s bank account at the same time! More information on the Membership Challenge Grant program can be obtained by visiting the Grand Lodge website at www.caioof.org.

(5) If you have items you wish to contribute to this weekly DMC newsletter, feel free to write to me!

Friendship - Love - Truth
Dave Rosenberg

DMC Newsletter -
April 27, 2011

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

Good news.

As you know, we are planning our inaugural DMC meeting and dinner during the 2011 Grand Lodge in Sacramento. This year, the Grand Lodge sessions will be conducted in Sacramento, at the Doubletree Hotel, 2001 Point West Way,
Sacramento, CA 95815. The DMC dinner meeting will be at the hotel on Thursday, May 19 at 6 p.m.

We previously announced that - through the generosity of some dedicated members and Lodges - we were able to subsidize the $39 dinner ($39 per dinner is what the hotel charges us) for the first 50 who sign up. For those first 50, we are able to charge only $19 due to the subsidy.

More good news.

We have received even more contributions from generous members and Lodges, and are now able to subsidize the first 80 who sign up. So, there is still a window of opportunity to come to the DMC dinner at the special reduced price of $19.

If you wish to come to the inaugural dinner, please send your RSVP to me in response to this e-mail and let me know the names of the folks in your party. 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.

Here’s the wonderful 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.

The DMC dinner meeting is open to DMC members, Odd Fellows and Rebekahs and their guests. We particularly encourage voting representatives at Grand Lodge to RSVP and attend. This will be a memorable dinner and meeting. Don’t miss being in on the ground floor of a group that is bringing energy and excitement to this Order.

See you at Grand Lodge!

F - L - T
Dave Rosenberg
DMC Newsletter -  
April 29, 2011  

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

The article, below, was forwarded to me by Brother Don Smith - it was sent out to the oddfellowsIOOF@yahoogroups.com. It comes from Colorado. You will find it an interesting and instructive read. It’s no surprise that Lodges around the nation are skating on very thin ice. That’s because 2011 is a very different time than 1819 (when Odd Fellowship was brought to the USA). This dilemma is not just restricted to IOOF, but applies to all fraternal organizations. Unless we evolve, we will, as an organization, go the way of the dodo.

This is why groups such as Dedicated Members for Change are so important to our Order. We are the nucleus of a reinvigorated, refreshed and reformed Odd Fellows.

F - L - T
Dave Rosenberg

Odd Fellows - Not so Odd Anymore
by Nathan Ward

Is it the end for fraternal organizations in mountain towns, or just the chance to reinvent themselves?

The first snowstorm of the winter whipped across Salida but the lights blazed at the Poncha Springs Grange hall. The smell of fried chicken floated out through the snowflakes as a few hearty souls gathered to meet Frank Pegoraro, the Colorado Grand Master of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows (IOOF). He and fellow member Doug Pittman, also known as the Grand Secretary for the Order, had traveled to Salida from Canon City with their families to stir up interest and hopefully sign up a few new members for the flagging local Odd Fellows organization.

Lengthy titles aside, Frank and Doug hoped to create a buzz in the time tested way of shaking hands and sharing a meal with friends and strangers. They were in luck, besides existing IOOF members, there were a few fresh faces in the crowd. Maybe the sun has yet to set on the Salida Odd Fellows.
The Odd Fellows have always been rebels, reveling in their oddness for nearly 300 years. In 17th Century England, people fended only for themselves, living without much compassionate regard for their fellow humans. Frank explained, “At that time it was odd for someone to go help their enemy.” The Odd Fellows, along with other fraternal guilds, started to counter this trend by acting oddly, by caring for their fellow men and their families.

After establishing the IOOF in the USA in 1819, American Odd Fellows cared for their members in a time when there were no systems in place to insure one’s welfare, health or job protection. Salida Odd Fellow, Roy Kelly Sr. explained, “They took care of each other. If a man needed a job, the Odd Fellows would help him find one. If they couldn’t find one locally, they would pay his way to the next IOOF lodge and this would continue until he got a job.” The Odd Fellows provided each other with a type of self-generated insurance that covered employment, death benefits, health benefits and care for widows and orphans.

Indeed, the IOOF mission still reads “To visit the sick, relieve the distressed, bury the dead and educate the orphan.” It’s a mission that has been pursued by hundreds of thousands of members, who have undoubtedly improved the lives of millions of people worldwide. Even today their charitable work continues, despite a rapidly declining membership.

The IOOF recently opened a new million dollar orphanage in Cambodia, run assisted-living facilities nationwide, fund medical research, provide scholarships to students and build a yearly float in the Rose Bowl Parade, among other things.

The IOOF has always been open to everyone. They accepted women into the order in 1851 and started a partner sister organization called the Rebekahs. Religion is no impediment explained the Colorado Grand Master, “We accept all religions as long as they believe in a higher being. We’ve got Methodists, Catholics, Baptists, Jews and all types. When you say the prayer to start the meeting, just say it in your own faith.”

In fact, one doesn’t even have to be a fellow to be an Odd Fellow. If women don’t want to join the Rebekahs, they can join the Odd Fellows. Next year, when Frank’s term as Grand Master ends, a woman named Kim Beaton from Canon City will become the next Colorado Grand Master of the IOOF.

So, why does it seem like the era of the Odd Fellows, and other fraternal organizations, might be drawing to a close? The sparsely-attended dinner in
Salida hinted that there may not be much interest in fraternal service organizations any more, despite a long history in the area.

The Salida Odd Fellows chapter started in 1883, just a few years after Salida became a town. Although most of their work seems to have been to serve members within the organization, their building served as the USO during World War II, members donated the land and created a pond with giant Franzhurst trout to promote Salida from the 1920s to the 1950s, they awarded scholarships to students and worked to clean up the highways.

Today in Salida, the Odd Fellows Lodge has 17 members and the Rebekah Lodge has 12 members. These members represent 13 families, many who live out of the area because they needed to find work and couldn’t find it locally.

Roy Kelly Sr., a lifelong Odd Fellow, works hard to maintain the deteriorating IOOF building on First Street in Salida, a building owned and maintained by the organization for 127 years. His son Randy Kelly helps him and mused on the local demise of the group, “It’s just hard to get people out of the house these days. There are so many more things to do today.”

It’s an understatement for sure. When fraternal organizations were started, the world was a very different place. Since then, we’ve had the industrial revolution, doubled the Earth’s population, invented the automobile and the airplane and built the suburbs. In more recent times, television and the internet have totally changed the way we live. Why head out to a club with real humans when we could stay at home and be entertained by 500 channels?

Beyond entertainment options, many of the original reasons to join a fraternal organization no longer exist today. Government programs, insurance companies and other non-profit organizations fill the needs originally met by the IOOF. And to be fair, groups like the Odd Fellows also suffer from a public image that hasn’t changed at the same speed as the times.

Frank’s suggestion at the meeting to “Just have a pinochle party to create community,” isn’t going to draw the younger generations in, probably ever again. Despite their admirable community work, people see groups like the Odd Fellows as “drinking clubs” or places where one goes when they are old and want to run around in funny hats and drive child-size cars in small town parades.

Besides being a social outlet, fraternal organizations provided a way for people to have structure, ritual and companionship in their lives. Even though many of
the original purposes of groups like the Odd Fellows seem antiquated, there is still a need for some of them. We still need community. We still need to socialize with friends face to face. It's hard to have a conversation with your television. We still need to work on charitable causes to be well-rounded, spiritual beings.

If the IOOF wants to grow again, and even stay in existence in mountain towns like Salida, maybe the key lies in totally changing their image and modifying their purpose. I'm not talking about the Salida Odd Fellows turning their headquarters into a satirical hipster parody of the old club where members would wear funny hats and robes, give each other secret handshakes and drink themselves silly, although that could be fun and might raise plenty of money.

What if the Salida IOOF updated their mission by deciding to focus almost exclusively on local needs? They want to generate a buzz to recruit new members and keep the club alive, but they have few resources. One possibility would be to turn their historic building into a community meeting hall, a place where non-profits meet, youth groups hold events and businesses or private parties rent for functions. It's hard to imagine local people paying dues that might be sent away to build a Rose Bowl float, but it's easy to imagine them coming together to create a public resource that would benefit the local community directly.

This is just one small idea and not enough to insure the long-term survival of the IOOF, but it would be a start. The Odd Fellows are eager to recruit fresh members and ready to hear new ideas. Bring your odd ideas and see if you can turn them into something good that will last another 300 years.

Source:  http://salidacitizen.com/2011/03/odd-fellows-%E2%80%93-not-so-odd-anymore/

DMC Newsletter -
April 30, 2011

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

Did you happen to have the opportunity to see the Minutes of the California Grand Lodge Board of Directors' meeting of March 12, 2011? On page 2 of those minutes, under the relatively innocuous heading of “Lodge Issues” is
written - in black and white - the sad reality of Odd Fellowship in this jurisdiction today.

There are 20 Lodges listed under “Lodge Issues” and here is a sampling of what is said:

San Mateo #265: consolidation into Bay View #109 completed.
Clear Lake #130: TBC: consolidating into Upper Lake #241.
Lemoore #280: Audit conducted - Lodge not meeting.
Chowcilla #454: Charter to be suspended.
Kernville #58: Special Deputy, Rents to Grand Lodge.
High Desert #41: Charter Suspended.
Fontana #283: Charter suspended.
Bellflower #463: Audit ordered.
San Leandro #231: Lodge officer problems.

The sad litany continues.

This is not a problem that has suddenly popped up in the Order. It's been slowly building for decades. It has now hit us square in the face. Our single greatest problem as an Order is simply this: We are not attracting new members in sufficient numbers to replace the members who are leaving, not renewing or dying.

I've looked at the statistics of the California IOOF for the last several years and most Lodges in California - year after year - show a net loss of members. A small percentage of Lodges are “holding their own” in that they show either a zero net loss or a small net gain (e.g. a net of one to four new members). Only a handful of Lodges in this jurisdiction show significant net gains in membership.

Obviously, this trend cannot continue. It's eroding the Order. The Grand Lodge is in a constant battle to help out, audit, and protect IOOF assets. Lodges with only a few active members have little or no checks and balances to avoid problems and to ensure that protocols and sound financial management are followed. If the trend continues, then the Order will either dissolve or devolve into a very few strong Lodges. Instead of over 100 California Lodges throughout the state - we will see less than 20 Lodges survive the devolution.

This scenario is not far-fetched.
Let me give you two real world examples: The Fraternal Order of Knights of Pythias and the Improved Order of Redmen. These are two fraternal orders - much like the Independent Order of Odd Fellows. Just like the IOOF adheres to “Friendship Love Truth,” the Pythians talk about “Friendship Charity Benevolence” and the Redmen focus on “Freedom Friendship Charity.”

The Knights of Pythias were founded in 1864 and proclaim that they are the first fraternity chartered by an Act of Congress. In 1935 they had 500,000 members in the USA; today they have far less than 10 percent of that number. The Pythians have only one Lodge remaining in California, in the Los Angeles area. Their website is www.pythias.org.

The Improved Order of Redmen calls itself “America's Oldest Fraternal Organization” having been founded in 1834. This fraternity was abundant in the USA. Today, the Redmen have only 14 “Tribes” (what they call their Lodges) remaining in California. Their website is www.redmen.org.

These fraternities, like Odd Fellowship, face significant challenges in attracting new blood in the 21st Century. And this phenomenon is not restricted to fraternal organizations. Business organizations and clubs (including Rotary, Lions, and Soroptimists) also have difficulty attracting young members today. The complex Internet-driven world of the 21st Century is a far different place from the 1800's and 1900's when fraternities and clubs flourished.

Is it a lost cause? Hardly. In this fast-moving and impersonal world, there is an even greater need for organizations which can foster a sense of community. Fraternal organizations - like Odd Fellows - can experience a Renaissance if they re-focus. This is not rocket science. We need only look to the Lodges that have succeeded in attracting the new members in their 20's, 30's, and 40's to Odd Fellowship. These Lodges prove that it can be done. The potential new members aren't joining because the Lodge has secret grips, signs and passwords. They join because the Lodge offers a social network, good fellowship activities, community involvement, charitable and environmental work, and because of the great history and assets of the IOOF.

And ultimately, that is the focus of Dedicated Members for Change. We need to re-focus our great fraternal order on membership development. And we need to re-vitalize, re-energize and ultimately reform our organization to survive and flourish in this new century. Our enemy is complacency. Too many in our Order, for too long, have been content just to continue business as usual, to elect each other to multitudinous offices, and to announce slogans, colors,
songs and flowers. That won't work anymore. It will take a lot more than
slogans and happy talk to move us forward. We are out of time.

F - L – T
Dave Rosenberg

DMC Newsletter -
May 8, 2011

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

I'm very pleased to inform you that the popular “Membership Development
Workshop” will be presented at the Doubletree Hotel during Grand Lodge!

This “Membership Development Workshop” is sponsored by the Grand Lodge
Membership Committee, with the approval and sanction of the Grand Master.
It was previously presented at the Davis Lodge and at the Cupertino Lodge to
large audiences - and participants gave very positive feedback. The workshop
focuses on proven techniques and best practices which will help Lodges
increase membership. As you know, the focus of DMC is all about how to
staunch the decline in our Order’s membership and how to actually increase
membership in our Lodges - all within the parameters of our code. This
workshop will give you useful and practical information on just how to do that.

The workshop is interesting, entertaining and lively. Subjects include, for
example, how to write an effective press release, how to develop and
effectively use a Lodge website, how to develop and use a Lodge “pledge book”
for your applicants, how to reach out into the community, suggestions for good
fellowship activities, etc. Everyone will leave this workshop with some good
ideas to take back to your Lodges.

The "Membership Development Workshop” will be presented right after
sessions end on Friday afternoon, around 3 p.m., probably in the same room
that we are using for sessions. Please mark your calendars and pass the word
along to other members of your Lodge who may be attending Grand Lodge.
There is no charge, of course, and all Odd Fellows and Rebekahs are cordially
invited to attend. This is a great opportunity to participate in this popular and
informative workshop without additional travel time - it's being offered to you
while you are in Sacramento attending Grand Lodge.

Fraternally, Dave Rosenberg
Dear Odd Fellows and Pledges,

(Caution: This e-mail is long, but I am summarizing four days of meetings that occurred this week.)

I have just returned from attending the 159th annual Grand Lodge of the California Odd Fellows. This event is a Marathon, officially running from Wednesday evening through Saturday. Since I joined the Lodge in 2004, no one had attended these gatherings from the Davis Lodge till I started attending in 2009 (although PGs Bob Bockwinkel and Andrew Skaggs had attended some Grand Lodges prior to 2004).

This is the third Grand Lodge that I have attended. My first one, in 2009 was a learning experience to say the least. My second one, in 2010 began a process of proposals and resolutions that achieved some success - and showed me that there were members in California who were ready for changes to the Order. This third one, in 2011 has to be rated a remarkable success from the perspective of the Davis Lodge and for those who are pushing for evolution and change in this ancient Order. There are, indeed, progressive forces at work in the Order in California, led by the Davis Lodge. There are, however, still conservative forces, resistant to change.

Before I begin to describe what happened at the 2011 Grand Lodge (and I will give some details at this Wednesday's evening Lodge meeting) I want to give a special “thank you” to NG Dave Reed, PG Bob Bockwinkel, and PG Andrew Skaggs. In the past, I attended as the sole representative of the Davis Lodge. This year four of us were in attendance. I was there “bell to bell” and Dave, Bob and Andrew were there most of the time, and certainly, at all important votes. Special thanks also to Lea Rosenberg, who attended the Rebekah Assembly which met concurrently with the Grand Lodge. She braved it alone! Further, thanks to other Davis Lodge members who attended the inaugural “Dedicated Members for Change” dinner and meeting during Grand Lodge - Jim and Penny Smith, Dave Reed and Sheryl Cambron, Lea Rosenberg, Bob Bockwinkel, Andrew Skaggs, Kandice Richardson Fowler, Bob Schelen, Vic Bucher and Bob Schelen. Progressive members of the Order formed this new organization (Dedicated Members for Change) and we had 80 attendees, including many leaders of the Grand Lodge. Finally, special thanks to other members of the Lodge who came to Grand Lodge to help present our now-famous “Membership Development Workshop” - Dave Reed, Dody Black, Juelie
and Kurt Roggli, Lea Rosenberg, Stewart Savage, Frank Giustino, and Jim Smith. Once again, a great presentation - giving other Lodges an insight into the special things we do at the Davis Lodge. A DVD was made of our prior workshop presentation in Cupertino and that was provided for sale to other Lodges - at least 20 DVD's were purchased for viewing by other Lodges.

As far as statistics are concerned, the stats showed that the Odd Fellows Lodges and Rebekah Lodges have lost members, again, throughout California. Regular dues paying Odd Fellows in California are now less than 5,000. Regular dues paying members of the Rebekahs are now less than 3,000.

As to Odd Fellows, we have 141 Lodges at the end of 2010 (down from 145 last year). Of those 141 Lodges, only 29 had a net gain of members. That means that the other 121 Lodges either were stagnant in terms of membership or had a net loss. Of the 29 net gain Lodges, 12 had a net gain of only 1 or 2 members. In fact, only 5 Lodges (Davis included) had a net gain in double-digits. Other than the Hayward Lodge (which was re-constituted from a defunct Lodge and so their 71 new members were counted as a net gain of 71) Davis was the fastest growing Lodge in California (and hence the United States) with a net gain of 20 members. As of the end of 2010, we are now the fifth largest Lodge in California, exceeded only by four Lodges in San Francisco. Here are what I perceive to be the successes for our Lodge and for our progressive view for the future of our Order:

1. **The Davis Lodge resolutions.** Our Lodge proposed eight resolutions to the Grand Lodge. Six of the resolutions passed with overwhelming support. This, alone, was a great step forward for us and for progressives, and was an eye-opening experience for the more conservative members. One resolution was defeated and one I withdrew.

   The six that passed did the following:

   * Start the development of the “21st Century Project” to ensure that all Lodges have a minimum number of 21 members.

   * The Grand Lodge officers are charged with developing a program to foster community outreach and good community works by Lodges.

   * The Grand Lodge officers are charged with developing a program to foster good fellowship activities within Lodges.

   * The Grand Lodge encourages a minimum of six open social meetings of Lodges per year. open to the public and prospective members.
* The Membership Challenge Grant Program (which was proposed by our Lodge) will continue for another year.

* The Grand Lodge encourages joint social meetings of Odd Fellows and Rebekahs Lodges.

Defeated was our proposal to make Grand Lodge officer visits voluntary, rather than mandatory. And I withdrew our proposal to boycott Sovereign Grand Lodge (I did so for good and valid reasons as will be explained below).

2. **Elections.** This was a watershed year because we elected a progressive to the position of Grand Warden. This is a key position because the Grand Warden becomes the Deputy Grand Master next year, and becomes the Grand Master of California the year thereafter. Rick Boyles - whose thinking about the future of the Order is very much in line with mine - was elected with 54% of the vote (versus Terry Cree, a candidate with more conservative views). The fact that we were able to achieve such a strong majority speaks well for the future. Keep in mind that the only ones who can vote at Grand Lodge are Past Grands elected by their Lodges - this is a group that tends to the conservative. The fact that we have made inroads in this group is remarkable. Also I should mention that I was re-elected (without opposition) to the Odd Fellows Homes Board (the Board that runs our two retirement communities in Napa and Saratoga) and Vic Bucher - a member of our Davis Lodge - was also elected to an open position on that Board. This is a powerful Board as the Homes are the biggest single operation of the Order and generate over $50 million in gross income each year.

3. **Contributions.** On behalf of the Davis Lodge, I presented $1,000 in contributions to Grand Lodge charities including: the new Odd Fellows and Rebekahs Beneficial Fund (this is a new fund which can provide assistance to needy members of the Order), the Odd Fellows and Rebekahs Homes of California (for the Napa library), the Rebekah Children's Service, the Visual Research Program, and the 3-Links Camp. This was well-received at Grand Lodge, and the first time we have made such contributions in many years.

4. **Dedicated Members for Change.** Along with Don Smith (a former Grand Master and Sovereign Grand Master) and Rick Boyles, I launched a new organization within the Order called “Dedicated Members for Change” (DMC). We are members of the Order seeking evolution and change. We held out first meeting and dinner at the Grand Lodge and - much to our delight - attracted 80 members to this event! What was striking were the number of leaders of the Order who attended, including Rod Metoyer who is now the Deputy Grand Master, Rick Boyles who is now the Grand Warden, and numerous Past Grands
of Lodges throughout California. As noted above, we had a great turnout from the Davis Lodge - and I thank the members for their support. Our e-mail matrix of DMC now contains the names of close to 100 Odd Fellows and Rebekahs.

5. **Membership Workshop.** As noted above, our Davis Crew presented its popular “Membership Development Workshop” at Grand Lodge. This is the same workshop we presented in Davis and at the Cupertino Lodge. We had about 20-25 leaders from other Lodges in attendance. Our workshop DVD was also available for sale by the Grand Lodge office and numerous DVD's were purchased.

6. **Sovereign Grand Warden.** One of the highlights of this Grand Lodge was the attendance of Charles Renninger, the current Sovereign Grand Warden. Charles is an articulate and urbane member of the Order from back east. He is in line to become the Sovereign Deputy Grand Master, and then the Sovereign Grand Master. I had a couple of useful chats with him. It is clear that there are leaders of the Order at the highest levels who understand that we need to change and evolve. In his remarks on the concluding day, Charles told the body that “We’re all in the sinking ship together.” He stated that there would be significant changes proposed in the coming year, including a 5-year Revitalization Plan (which I had proposed two years ago) which would suggest some dramatic changes to the way we do business. I, personally, predict that the plan will include merging of the various units of this Order into one (e.g. instead of having separate Encampments, we would just make the encampment degrees additional degrees of Odd Fellowship). I am hopeful that some day soon, we will see the merging of Rebekahs and Odd Fellows - the days of separate Lodges for men and for women have long-since passed.

F - L -T
Dave Rosenberg, PG #169, DDGM
Grand Lodge Representative

**E-mail to Deputy Sovereign Grand Master Charles Renninger - May 22, 2011**

Brother Charles,

It was a pleasure meeting you at the California Grand Lodge. Although I thought our initial conversation was a bit strained, I felt that our subsequent chat was open, sincere and useful. I must say that I was impressed with your
presentation and your obvious dedication. As you say, we are all on the sinking
ship together.

I am a relatively new member of the Order, having just joined in 2004, but I saw
as early as 2005 that this Order was headed downhill and significant changes
would have to occur to insure this Order’s survival in the 21st Century. I
decided that I would create a model for the future - the only Lodge I had to
work with was my own, of course. And so, from 2006 to 2010, I implemented a
five-year plan to show that Odd Fellows Lodge could stem and reverse the tide
of declining membership. We grew from 40 members to over 160 members
today. It can be done.

Again, I am very encouraged by your words and plans. I know it can be done,
and I understand the inertia that has to be overcome at SGL.

I am there to help you in any way I can.

Fraternally,
Dave Rosenberg, DDGM, PG
Davis Lodge #169, Independent Order of Odd Fellows

E-mail to California Grand Master Paul Pike -
June 18, 2011

Dear Grand Master Paul,

I read with interest your “Grand Master’s Letter” at page 9 of the California
Odd Fellow and Rebekah Magazine.

I was very pleased to read the letter, and in particular the following comments:
“We believe that this order needs to make some significant changes if it is to
survive in the years to come. We need to blend the old with the new. Changes
can be hard, but are very necessary to the revitalization of our order. Without
change we will become extinct, and we all know that is not what we envision
for the future of Odd Fellowship.”

I couldn't agree with you more, Brother Paul, and will do all I can to help you in
your year as GM achieve the evolution we need to keep this Order alive,
growing and vibrant. You can count on me. By the way, would you like to be
included in the “Dedicated Members for Change” e-mail roster? Sounds like
we are on the same page.  Dave
Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

If you have ever wondered whether the Independent Order of Odd Fellows is in trouble, look no further than the Minutes of the California Grand Lodge Board of Directors of June 4, 2011. This Order is in deep trouble, and the minutes confirm that fact. To be frank, my heart goes out to the Grand Lodge officers and the members of the Board of Directors. These hard-working members are fighting fire after fire. And if we in California - the Flagship of Odd Fellowship in the USA - are in trouble, you can just imagine how the other jurisdictions are faring.

We all know that the membership of our Order in California has diminished over 90% since the end of WW II - dropping from around 50,000 to less than 5,000 today. We have - on the books - some 140 IOOF Lodges in this jurisdiction, but let's be honest: Many (perhaps a majority) of our Lodges are in difficult straits, and a remarkable number of our Lodges are at the brink of losing their charters. Here is just a brief litany of what the minutes show:

Willows #121 audit possible, charter suspension.
Chowchilla #454 charter to be suspended.
Kernville #58 charter to be suspended.
Merced #208 charter suspended.
Manteca $425 numerous calls and no responses.
Camp Seco #66 audit and suspend charter.
Yosemite #97 audit ordered, special deputy assigned.
San Leandro #231 lodge officer problems, complete audit and suspend charter.
East Nicholas #269 suspend the charter, raise the rent or close.
Berkeley #270 special deputy needed.
Bellflower #463 audit ordered.

In addition to the above, numerous other trouble spots abound, principally with Lodges that operate cemeteries.

Why do so many of our Lodges have problems? It's not rocket sits business affairs and property interests. And the Lodge certainly lacks sufficient talent to provide the financial checks and balances that are required.

And why do Lodges lose members? Again, it's not rocket science. The answer lies in the aging of our membership and the failure to recruit a new generation of members. For some of our Lodges, unfortunately, it is now too
late. When a Lodge has skipped an entire generation of members, and in some cases skipped two entire generations of members, it's just not feasible to recruit the new members in their 20's and 30's that we need to ensure our health and growth. Why would a young man or a young woman in their 20's or 30's join a Lodge where the members are all in their 70's and 80's and do little more than hold formal meetings and an occasional Lodge dinner?

Brothers and sisters, we can only save our Order by attracting a new generation of members and working every day to increase our membership. I, personally, have brought about 100 new members into our Order over the past five years so I know it can be done. When I write to you next, I will offer - for those who may be interested - my 10-point plan to change the Order and increase our membership. Business as usual is no longer acceptable. The status quo will lead to the decline of our Order. The last 50 years certainly proves that. And at the rate we are declining, we cannot survive another 10 years.

F - L - T
Dave Rosenberg

DMC Newsletter -
September 5, 2011

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

The Sovereign Grand Lodge Report for 2010 showed that the California Jurisdiction had dropped to only 247 members of the Encampment and the Ladies Encampment Auxiliary had dropped to 165. Patriarchs Militant in California had dropped to 88 and the Ladies Auxiliary Patriarchs Militant had declined to 77. Clearly, this is unsustainable. They point, however, to the future of Odd Fellows and Rebekahs - if we don't change the way we do business as an Order.

There are only three keys to the future sustainability, success and growth of our Order: (1) Membership, (2) membership, and (3) membership. Yesterday, I said I would suggest to you a 10-point plan to change the Order and increase our membership. Here it is:

1. **Community action.** Each and every Lodge must be part of it's community and must involve itself in its community. Lodges must sponsor community events which benefit community and charitable groups. One of the great
attractions for potential new members is to join an organization that does good works right in their own community.

2. **Good fellowship.** We are a fraternal order and we need to re-focus on social activities for the membership including breakfasts, dinners, Halloween parties, barbeques, wine tasting, bike trips, hikes, movie nights, game nights, and the myriad of activities that a social organization can offer. Another great attraction for potential new members is a social network - a place to meet people, have some fun, and make some lasting friendships.

3. **Social meetings.** Virtually no one joins our Order because of the secret ritual, closed formal meetings, passwords, signs, grips, and the like. These are important and are what distinguish us from every other fraternity or club. But if this all - or virtually all - a Lodge does, it will not sustain itself with new members. We need to open up our Lodges to the light of day. At least half our meetings must be “social meetings” - meetings without ritual and regalia - where the public, and potential new members, can meet us and see what we do and who we are. Social meetings are permitted and are not contrary to our Code.

4. **The next generation.** If our Lodges target only members of the same age group, we will fail. It is very important that we target the next generation of members. If the Lodge's membership is in it's 70's, we need to target potential members in their 50's. If the Lodge's membership is in it's 50's, we need to target potential members in their 30's.

5. **Community leaders.** Once, a hundred years ago, Odd Fellows Lodges were the premier place to be - the place where community leaders wanted to be. And those community leaders brought in other community leaders, and community members. We need to look to the past in this regard, and do it again. Our Lodges need to target community leaders and seek to bring them into the membership. Even just one community leader - a city councilman, a school board member, a sheriff, a county supervisor, a judge - will result in an elevation of the stature of the Lodge and will encourage others to join.

6. **Couples.** We miss the boat, as an Order, if we just look to men to join the Odd Fellows and just look to women to join the Rebekahs. The days for separate but equal entities are long since past. A great technique for increasing membership is to target couples - husbands and wives and significant others - into membership.
7. **Diversity.** Odd Fellowship should be a big tent. We limit ourselves if we do otherwise. Our Lodges should welcome people of all races, religions, colors, sex, sexual orientation, political persuasions and ages. In diversity is strength.

8. **Technology.** Communication is crucial in the 21st Century. Horse-and-buggy communication techniques simply don’t interest or attract new members in their teens and in their 20's, and are ineffective in reaching out and encouraging membership participation. Lodges need to invest in active websites and e-mail communication.

9. **Pledges.** When a person applies for membership, Lodges should not automatically initiate them. Lodges should put applicants through a “pledge period” of at least a couple of months. Let the applicant learn about the Lodge and let the Lodge learn about the applicant. This pledge period results in a member who really wants to be there for the long term. It’s also useful to assign a “mentor” to each pledge - a member who can be a big brother or big sister and help the pledge understand the Order.

10. **Visibility.** Too many Lodges are invisible in their communities. Historically, Odd Fellows Lodges were the center of town, the place to be. Many Lodges have fallen on hard times and are barely noticed in their towns. We have got to get out from behind our four walls and have got to become a presence in our communities. Press releases and posters of our activities are a must.

The Grand Lodge has a membership development program put on by the Davis Lodge that was put on video, and it’s available to any member to purchase for $5 (plus shipping costs). Just write to the Grand Lodge Secretary and let them know you want a copy.

F - L - T
Dave Rosenberg

**DMC Newsletter - September 24, 2011**

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

A number of you have wondered what happened to all the DMC Newsletters. Well, we’re still alive and well and flourishing as a movement - we just took a little “recess” and “breather” after the 2011 Grand Lodge. Here we go again toward 2012.
And at the 2011 Grand Lodge, we did achieve great success, both in terms of resolutions passed by the GL and in elections. I predict next year we will continue our record of success as we work to transform this Order. Ultimately, for us, it's all about increasing membership. We cannot continue down the road that we have traveled for the last 50 years - losing members and closing Lodges.

Even Sovereign Grand Lodge (SGL) is beginning to “get it.” Business as usual simply doesn't work anymore. Year after year of losses of members and closings of Lodges just won't cut it. SGL is now moving forward with a 5-year plan that will impose many changes to solidify and save this Order.

In California, unfortunately, our Grand Lodge Board of Directors constantly has to fight fires as Lodges experience serious membership problems, leadership problems, and financial problems. As Lodges diminish to 20 or fewer members, with only a handful of active members, the normal checks and balances built into our Lodge system start to fail. When Lodges have no members younger than 65, it becomes very difficult, if not impossible, to attract young, active and energetic new members in their 20's and 30's.

Today, I was given a copy of the 2011 “Advance Reports” for the SGL held in Winston-Salem North Carolina. The membership story continues to be a sad one. Within the jurisdiction of the SGL, all branches experienced a net loss of members. Odd Fellows Lodges in the SGL jurisdiction had a net loss of 3,733 members and Rebekah Lodges lost 3,738 members. In fact, in the entire jurisdiction, the report shows that in 2010 only 7 Odd Fellows Lodges and 3 Rebekah Lodges showed a net increase in membership, while 6 Odd Fellows Lodges and 7 Rebekah Lodges showed no gain or decrease (they held steady). All other Lodges (and we’re talking about over 3,000 Odd Fellows and Rebekah Lodges nationwide) showed a net loss for the year. Nationwide, 38 Odd Fellows Lodges closed or were consolidated in 2010. Shocking.

Each of you can help in the efforts to transform this Order. While we gear up for 2012, we certainly want to expand our e-mail list. If you know of a member who is likely to go to the 2012 Grand Lodge as a voting member, who you believe would be a good addition to our DMC list, please ask his or her permission, and send me the name and the e-mail address. We'll put 'em on the list.

And stay tuned. More information will follow on changes that need to happen, or that are happening in our Order. And more information will follow on our annual dinner meeting which will be scheduled during Grand Lodge in Sacramento. We'll be making reservations at a great restaurant near the GL.
hotel for a fun meeting, a terrific meal, good fellowship, etc. And just like last year, the folks who reserve early will receive a great discount through the generosity of members and Lodges who believe that change is in air.

F - L - T
Dave Rosenberg
For Dedicated Members for Change

---

**Essay on the Future of IOOF - September 25, 2011**

**The Two Possible Futures for California Odd Fellowship**
by Dave Rosenberg, PG Davis Odd Fellows Lodge #169
September 25, 2011

There’s an old adage that the past is prologue for the future. Indeed, we should not underestimate the lessons of the past as those lessons help us to prepare for the future. We ignore those lessons at our peril.

What does the past show us regarding Odd Fellowship in California?

The past shows that we have a dying Order. I’m sorry to have to say it – but those are the facts. If we continue in the trajectory that we’ve traveled for the past two generations, we will – within the space of the next 10 years - shrink and devolve into only 15 to 20 viable Lodges in California, with a membership of less than 2,500. On the other hand, if we make needed changes and modernize this Order, we can reverse the trend, grow, expand and prosper as we enter this 21st Century.

Let’s look at the facts.

When the Grand Lodge of California started keeping membership statistics in 1853 we had 985 members, statewide. There was pretty steady growth, year after year, for a substantially long time – interrupted now and then with some occasional losses during war years or other turbulent times – but generally growth was recorded. A high-water mark was reached in 1928 with 58,820 members in the California jurisdiction. But then, the depression hit and membership also took a hit. It started up again and hit another high mark right after World War II with 30,739 members. But then, since 1947, membership in the California jurisdiction of Odd Fellows has dropped year after year.
year (with the exception of 2002 when membership rose by 34) FOR 64 STRAIGHT YEARS.

In 2010, membership in California had dropped to a nadir of 4,985. Even this number is misleading, as dues paying members total only 4,566. And we all know that just because a member pays dues, that doesn’t mean the member is active or even attends meetings and functions. If we assume that half the dues-paying members are “active,” then we have 2,283 such active members in all of California. And I am confident that many of those active members are will into their 60’s, 70’s and 80’s.

Over the past five years, the jurisdiction has dropped 199, 124, 137, 198, and 119 members. Unless things change, we can anticipate a continued drop, year after year, of between 120 and 200 members. How long can such an Order survive? It doesn’t take a rocket scientist to realize that no Order can survive such a precipitous and steady diminution. In fact, we see the problems of declining membership today as Lodges are in financial trouble, Lodges have officer and leadership issues, Lodges are losing their charters or are consolidating, and Grand Lodge revenues decline. With fewer and fewer members, the normal checks and balances are not present, and Lodges run into serious financial issues.

What’s even worse, when Lodges don’t add new blood and new members, it becomes increasingly difficult to do so. When new members are skipped for a generation, or even two generations, and when the youngest members of a Lodge are in their 70’s and 80’s, it’s unlikely that new members in their 20’s and 30’s will be attracted to join.

On January 1, 2010 we had 145 Odd Fellows Lodges in California. On December 31, 2010, we were down to 141 Lodges – a net loss of 4 Lodges. Of those 145 Lodges, 118 either LOST members or stayed stagnant. Only 27 of the 145 Lodges had a net gain of members in 2010. And of those 27, fully 12 had a net gain of only 1 or 2 members. In fact, only 5 of the 145 Lodges had net gains in the double digits (and 1 of those 5 was a reconstituted Lodge). The 10 largest Lodges in California (out of the remaining 141 Lodges) had a total membership of 1,721. Accordingly, fully 1 out of every 3 Odd Fellows in California belonged to one of those 10 large Lodges.

These FACTS show that Odd Fellowship can follow only one of two paths in California. If we do nothing (or next to nothing) to change the way we do business, we will devolve into just a few (perhaps 15 to 20 viable Lodges) in the entire state. The other Lodges will slowly diminish and either lose their charters or consolidate. That’s one possible future for the Order in this state.
The other path is a path of evolution and change. We need to evolve to attract the life-blood of any fraternal order: NEW MEMBERS. This does not mean we abandon the history and ritual which brought us here – on the contrary, that’s what makes us unique. But we have to evolve to invest ourselves in active community participation, support and action. And we have to re dedicate ourselves to good fellowship activities within our Lodges. New members will come if we are active in the community and if we provide the social network they crave. We have to open ourselves up to the world – our closed, ritual and secret meetings cannot be the only things we do. Odd Fellows Lodges must hold open social meetings so that the public – and future members – can see who we are and what we do.

I know that this can be done. My own Davis Lodge has grown 400% over the last 5 years, and is now one of the 5 largest Lodges in California. We have focused on community involvement and good fellowship activities within the Lodge, and we have waiting lists of applicants for membership. Many of our new members are in their 20’s and 30’s, represent a great ethnic diversity, and are almost evenly divided men and women.

Two possible futures. For me, I prefer the future of growth and expansion of the Order – because the idea and the message of Odd Fellowship is too important to fade away. I prefer evolution and expansion.

DMC Newsletter - October 1, 2011

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

Time marches on! Here we are in October already. Below is an October 1 letter from California Grand Warden Rick Boyles for your reading pleasure.

DMC invites you to submit your thoughts for the the future of Odd Fellowship. All “living entities” evolve, and if our Order is to continue as a living entity, we must evolve as well. The focus of DMC is simple: We must attract new members to survive as an Order; and to attract new members we cannot just rely on the status quo - we must evolve.

And a reminder: Our DMC list is growing and expanding! If you have a member of the Order who understands that change and evolution of our
fraternity is necessary, who has indicated an interest in being added to our DMC e-mail matrix, please send me their name(s) and e-mail address(es). Thank you.

Fraternally,
Dave Rosenberg

The Independent Order of Odd Fellows is an admirable group. We carry no preconceived notions. We have no hidden agenda. There are many raucous and abrasive groups in existence. There are some that preach hatred or divisiveness. Our group preaches love and inclusion. All walks of life are welcome. No one may be excluded. This is an admirable trait of which we should all be proud. There are those among us though who seem to be bent upon exclusivity, who would seek to prevent newspeak or new thoughts. Who do our thoughts turn to when we think of newspeak, when we think of fresh thinking? Our founding fathers, of course, those who founded our great nation. A nation which becomes greater by the day and by each action it takes. Our group can learn a lesson from our founding fathers. Because, of all the great things our wonderful nation has learned to do, it has learned enough to evolve. It has promoted inclusiveness. It has stated that all men are created equal, and stands by this very fact. We must evolve as well.

235 years ago, much of our population could not read or write. The most important news was often heard by listening to the town crier, who would announce the news in the town square. Those who learned to read and write became the privileged and often were the highest ranking officials. When the Odd Fellows were founded in America, generally the principal members of a lodge were those who could read and write. Other members committed to memory their charges and the unwritten work, which was passed on by word of mouth. Our lodges banded together in order to provide security and sustenance to each member. Not only did the lodge depend upon each member, each member depended upon the lodge. Therefore, the lodge was an integral part of the member’s life. The term Odd Fellows was a term of endearment meant to encompass the oddities and traits of friendship, love and truth. Although it was odd, it was also enviable. Each meeting, every member would wear his finest clothes, and go to lodge to listen to the lodge members as they related the news of public events, as they would affect the members, and members individually could express their thoughts or concerns.
Today, it is a much different world. All of us can read and write. No one needs to commit anything to memory as we have the guidebooks to guide our way. Most of us can happily state that our lives are self-sustaining, that whatever we do provides income for ourselves and our families. Therefore, lodges of all types have ceased to have an integral part in our lives. While a dinner out may be a welcome interlude to our home lives, it is no longer the necessity it once was. So then, the question presents itself, how does the lodge retain importance? How can it survive? Seen in this light, it becomes apparent that it needs to reinvigorate its own importance. It needs to announce to the town that surrounds it its meaning for existence, in this time, in this new world.

That is why we have sought to form this committee - Dedicated Members for Change. It is not a committee bent upon hatred or exclusion. It is a committee formed solely to reinvigorate membership. Those who seem to state they don't like one or two members from the committee miss the point. There is no one way to bring in members. They are as varied as each lodge and its members. So if you think your lodge is now viable, then you are in fine shape, and the rest of us envy you. But for many of us, our lodges are shrinking, our membership aging, and our purpose for existence quickly fading away. However we look at it, we must do something. Sheer numbers bear this out. There are states and whole jurisdictions now faced with extinction. Sovereign Grand Lodge now encourages widespread change. Anyone doubting this fact, may question any SGL official, or read any new document being sent by SGL. It is time to wake up! We need to stop bickering between ourselves and stand up and welcome change. Change is coming, whether we on a personal level want it or not.

Last year, the Dedicated Members for Change, held a dinner at Grand Lodge where we attracted 90 members, many of whom paid $39 each, to attend our inaugural dinner meeting at Grand Lodge. In our first year, we attracted almost 50% of Grand Lodge attendees. This coming year, our goal is 75%. We are going to have the dinner very near, yet away from the Grand Lodge hotel, so that all may attend without censure or embarrassment, as there were some who were specifically told not to attend. Again, we have no purpose other than to share ideas of how to garner members. Holding grudges or encouraging negativity is no longer an option. We will be able to offer a better meal to all attendees at a better price. All attendees who have insight as to how to attract new members will be entitled to speak. Some, who have invigorated their own lodges, will be encouraged to speak. We count many prominent members in our group already, and will welcome any and all new members with open arms. In closing, we are all-inclusive, and love every
member equally. If you are a member who does not seek change, we envy you, but unfortunately, for many, change is imperative and welcome, and the sooner we initiate change, the more likely we will be able to grow and survive.

In Friendship, Love, and Truth, Rick Boyles

DMC Newsletter -
October 28, 2011

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

As we head into the “pre-holiday” season, it’s time to turn our attention to the single most important thing we can do on behalf of our Order. That single thing is, of course: Bringing new members into Odd Fellowship.

Without new members, our Lodges will simply wither away. It’s an insidious process, because it doesn’t happen overnight. It happens over a period of years, and then before you even realize it, a Lodge is so far gone it’s almost impossible to salvage it. When the membership of a Lodge averages in the mid 60’s or mid-70’s, it’s awfully hard to attract new members in their 20’s and 30’s. And when membership of a Lodge gets too small, the normal checks and balances that we have in this Order are just not there - and we have a situation that is ripe for abuse and financial mismanagement.

Yet, there are Lodges that are increasing in membership and are booming. How is that possible?

The answer is that those Lodges put a lot of thought, time and attention to membership development. And those Lodges have one or two members who are “rainmakers” in terms of bringing in new members. I want to take a moment to talk about the membership program of my own Lodge - the Davis Lodge. Now, I’m not asking you to replicate the Davis Lodge program - because each Lodge is unique and has to find it’s own level of membership development. But I offer it to you as one example of a successful membership program - and it might offer some ideas that you will find useful in your own Lodge.

First and foremost, in Davis, we don’t make it easy to join the Lodge. If an applicant applies to the Davis Lodge, we don’t rush them into initiation in a matter of weeks. Instead, we make them earn it. We put them through what
we call a “pledge process.” This is a process that takes about six months (and
sometimes as long as 10 months) between the time that they submit their
applications until the evening of initiation. It’s a process that allows the pledge
to really get to know the Lodge, the Order and the members. And it’s a process
that allows the members to really get to know the prospective member.

There are requirements for the pledges to accomplish, including going to social
meetings and events at the Lodge, and to interview members to get to know
those members. I invite you to go to the Davis Lodge main website at
www.davisoddfellows.com. On the home page, on the left side you will find a
column entitled “Download” - under that column you will find “Pledge Book.”
Click on that and check it out. We have our pledges download the Pledge Book
and carry it with them when they are at the Lodge. The Pledge Book is full of
information for them, and things they have to accomplish. (You are, by the
way, welcome to download it - modify it for your Lodge - and use it in your own
Lodge if you wish.)

We also assign each pledge a mentor. The mentors are not the applicant's
sponsor. Typically, the mentors don’t even know the pledges to whom they are
assigned. The mentors are members of the Lodge (sometimes long-time
members and sometimes new members) who are like a big brother or big sister
to the pledge - they are there to help them along, introduce them to others,
and answer questions.

In addition, we expect our pledges to be active in the Lodge - to attend social
meetings, to come to events, to volunteer, to join committees of the Lodge.
We want them to understand who we are and what we do. We also want to
see their mettle - after all, these are prospective Odd Fellows.

At the end of the process, if they make it, we have an informed new member
who really wants to be an Odd Fellow and who stays with the Lodge. Our
membership renewal rates are typically 100% or close to it.

The process works for us. We have so many applicants for membership that
we have to have two classes of pledges each year. We just initiated 10 new
members into our Lodge in the Fall 2011 Pledge Class, and we just launched the
Spring 2012 Pledge Class with 17 members. Not all of the 17 will make it
through to the end of the process - but you can be assured that many will and it
will add to the diversity and vibrancy of our Lodge.

F - L – T
Dave Rosenberg
Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

Allow us to share with you (below) some reflections on the future of our Order, penned by our brother, Rick Boyles. Food for thought.

As always, if you have members of the Order who would like to be added to our growing e-mail matrix, just check with them to confirm that they wish to be added, and then send along their name(s) and e-mail address(es).

It’s hard for all of us to wander outside our own comfort zones, to meet new people, open our hearts to someone who shares different interests, and beliefs, but that is what we should do to enable all of us to climb into the world of tomorrow. The world is becoming more technological with each new day, and yet we ask new members to succumb to a world of yesteryear. Somehow, over the last 50 - 75 years our order has lost its way, has forgotten to advance any further than 1920, and we are lodged within our desperate caricatures. Many of our oldest members are adamant in their refusal to change, and yet you can see prospective members shake their heads in disbelief at our antiquated mannerisms and rituals. It is not the rituals that turn people off, but the sheer idea that we deny reality as it is. Anyone who says that the Odd Fellows have never changed from the beginning does not know its history. The Odd Fellows were constantly changing and evolving until we hit the roadblock of a declining membership and then our lodges began to shrink unto themselves to the dire point we are at now where most of us refuse to go outside our lodges to encourage the public to attend. In fact, now whenever we invite the public to join it seems to be in jest, as if we suspect no one would ever join. A prayer that almost always goes unanswered sooner or later becomes its own mockery.

One prominent member said to me that before we work on getting new members, we have to make sure we have a suitable environment for that new member to see. This is true. Some lodges now are incapable of getting new members because they have shrunk to such a point that they can hardly be called a lodge. Even though the code allows for a lodge to be a lodge with 5 members, is that our idea of a lodge? When a lodge gets below 20-25 members, alarm bells should go off, that alerts the remaining members that it is time to grow. Growth is the main defense against stagnation. Growth is not a simple word but a constant challenge to all of us. We should not be satisfied with our lowly quorum that remains in attendance because the simple life
expectancy rates will force us all to succumb to dissolution sooner or later. Many lodges fail and close mainly because their primary members die off. The idea that the oldest among us fear change is ridiculous because change is inevitable and change will endure because the only other choice is stagnation.

Then there are those members who see all arguments as personality based. Perhaps they believe they know the correct path for our order to take and the rest of us do not. This is short-sighted at best. There can be no racist, sexist, or prejudicial path to a valid future. Hatred is self-defeating. In order for us to survive we have to look at the future with open hearts and minds. The code and the ritual are created by us for our benefit. If something goes against the code, and yet seems logical, it should indicate that it is time to question the code. Just like our order, our code should reflect our desire to grow and to adapt to today. No group can operate without parameters, but neither should a group be forced to live within an ever-diminishing space. If we are to grow, we must see each lodge as its own flower, and nurture its growth delicately.

Happily, there are areas of growth in California, and those areas now comprise a great percentage of membership within our state. Davis, Hayward, San Francisco, and several other lodges now make up a large percentage of our membership, and an even larger percentage of our active membership. That is the true yardstick of membership, because many lodges have quite a few members but only a handful who are active, which itself should indicate problems. Why are many members no longer active? Obviously, there are many reasons, but a primary reason is that our membership in total is aging, and many members drop off yearly for the most personal reason of their own death. In a way, our order has been saved by lengthening life spans, otherwise, we would be much smaller already, but if you look at it that way that should also emphasize that our order has aged itself out of the mainstream. In point of fact, just by checking mortality tables, our order will cease to exist within 20 years, because all of us, or almost all of us, will have passed away.

In summation, that is the reason I see for our group - Dedicated Members for Change. All are welcome to join us. We seek nothing but to study the ways in which our order may grow. We love all members, but no one member has all the answers. If you disagree with any of us, keep in mind that almost all of us will be gone from this order within 20 years, and if you really want our order to survive, it is our duty to see how it may continue without us. This year our goal is to have 75% of all Grand Lodge attendees at our dinner. We are well on our way. Many members will be encouraged to share their ideas for growth. No one will be denied. One of our prominent members, Dave Rosenberg will be running for Grand Warden, and we will be honored with his attendance. We
will be having a dinner close to Grand Lodge but not within the hotel so that we can keep the price economical. We hope to see you there!

In Friendship, Love and Truth, Rick Boyles

E-mail all about the fez -
November 12, 2011

Dear Members of the Davis Encampment,

So, our Encampment received a 5-page treatise on “The Fez.” If anyone is interested in it, let me know. I will give you the highlights:

The history of the word “fez” is traced to the City of Fez in Morocco, which had a monopoly on the manufacture of fez caps.

The fez (plural fezzes) is sometimes called the tarboosh. It’s a felt hat either in the shape of a red truncated cone or in the shape of a short cylinder. Both usually have tassels. It originated as a Greek headgear fashionable among the inhabitants of the Aegean islands, and was widely adopted in the Ottoman Empire in the early 19th Century. The fez was developed to fashionable heights by Jewish tailors with a special style in Tunis by the 17th Century.

After Sultan Mahmud II suppressed the Janissaries in 1826, he decreed that the official headgear for his modern military would be the fez with a cloth wrapped around it. Wearing the fez was legally banned in 1925 as part of the modernizing reforms of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk of Turkey.

The traditional fez is red.

There are several fraternal organizations which wear the fez today, most notably the Shriners. It was widely worn by various branches of IOOF, but today is only worn by members of the Encampment. It is purple with a gold tassel, emblazoned with the encampment tent with crossed crooks and three links with the name and number of the encampment (also in gold) to which the wearer belongs. The wearing of the fez in encampments started before 1900.

F - H - C

Dave Rosenberg, Chief Patriarch, Davis Encampment #21
Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

Six months ago – from May 18-21 – many of us attended the 159th annual session of the Grand Lodge of California. At the Grand Lodge, six resolutions that I introduced were passed by votes of the assembled representatives at Grand Lodge. All received strong majority votes – some received overwhelming support. I know that many of you are rightfully curious about what happens to resolutions once they are passed at Grand Lodge, so I thought I would send you this update to let you know that, regrettably, it appears that resolutions approved by Grand Lodge often fall into a black hole and never see the light of day. That is certainly what has happened (so far) to the six resolutions. Sad, but unfortunately, true.

Let me bring you up to date.

The six resolutions I refer to are Resolution 1 through 6, inclusive, and they can be found at pages 29-32 of the Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of California.

The confirmation of their passage can be found at page 148 of the Proceedings. To refresh your memories, all the resolutions focused on the 90% decline in membership in our great Order, and were targeted to efforts to retain and increase membership. Worthy goals. Each of the six resolutions provided unambiguous direction from the Grand Lodge to the Grand Master, Grand Lodge Officers and Grand Lodge Board of Directors, as follows:

**Resolution Number 1:** “The Grand Master, Grand Lodge Officers and Grand Lodge Board of Directors shall within the next six months initiate, develop, and implement a 21st Century Project to assist Lodges with less than 21 members to increase membership to 21 within 3 years with the goal that the minimum number of members of a Lodge be 21.”

**Resolution Number 2:** “The Grand Master, Grand Lodge Officers and Grand Lodge Board of Directors shall within six months encourage and emphasize community outreach, community visibility, and good community and charitable works by individual Lodges. To this end, the Grand Master, Grand Lodge Officers and Grand Lodge Board of Directors shall facilitate three workshops for Lodge leadership and members providing information on best practices for community outreach, community visibility and good community works. Each Lodge in the Jurisdiction of California shall be encouraged to undertake at least two IOOF community and charitable projects per year in their local venue.”
Resolution Number 3: “The Grand Master, Grand Lodge Officers and Grand Lodge Board of Directors shall within six months encourage and emphasize good fellowship activities (for example, Lodge dinners, Lodge trips, game nights, movie nights, Lodge socials, etc.) within individual Lodges. To this end, the Grand master, Grand Lodge Officers and Grand Lodge Board of Directors shall facilitate three workshops for Lodge leadership and members providing information on examples of successful good fellowship activities undertaken by Lodges. Individual Lodges shall be encouraged to undertake at least four good fellowship activities each year for the fraternal and social benefit of members.”

Resolution Number 4: “The Grand Master, Grand Lodge Officers and Grand Lodge Board of Directors shall encourage Lodges to hold Lodge social meetings open to family members, prospective Lodge members, and invited members of the public, to gain a knowledge about the worthwhile programs and activities being presented and sponsored by an Odd Fellows Lodge without revealing any of the ritualistic, unwritten work and passwords of the Order. The Grand Master, Grand Lodge Officers and Grand Lodge Board of Directors shall encourage each Lodge in this jurisdiction to hold such open meetings at least six times each year.”

Resolution Number 5: “The Grand Lodge Board of Directors [shall] continue the Challenge Grant Program that began in 2010 and shall run that program concurrently through December 31, 2011 . . . .” [The Challenge Grant Program follows a resolution I submitted in 2010, approved by the 2010 Grand Lodge, to provide up to $100 to a Lodge for each new member brought into that Lodge.]

Resolution Number 6: “The Grand Master, Grand Lodge Officers and Grand Lodge Board of Directors shall encourage and support joint open social meetings of Odd Fellows and Rebekah Lodges that wish to voluntarily hold such joint meetings. Such joint meetings shall not reveal or utilize any ritualistic, unwritten work and passwords of the Order. Such joint meetings shall not exceed one per calendar month.”

I am informed that all six of these resolutions were presented to Sovereign Grand Lodge and all were approved by Sovereign Grand Lodge. There is no reason that these resolutions should not have been implemented.

To my knowledge, however, even though six months have elapsed since the May 2011 Grand Lodge, nothing has been done to implement Resolution Number 1, 2, 3, 4 or 6. And as to Resolution Number 5, although I understand that the Membership Challenge Grant Program was continued, the Grand Lodge Board of Directors has not pro-actively informed Lodges that the
program was available to them and that Lodges could receive up to $100 for new members brought into that Lodge.

I bring this matter to your attention for two reasons: (1) These resolutions are all important components to our efforts to increase membership in our Lodges, are all in accordance with Code, were all passed by Grand Lodge and should have been implemented. (2) The resolutions have not been implemented, and Grand Lodge needs to be held accountable. The highest authority in our Jurisdiction is Grand Lodge, and when Grand Lodge gives a directive to the Grand Master, Grand Lodge Officers and Grand Lodge Board of Directors, that directive needs to be followed – or Grand Lodge becomes a charade.

In Friendship, Love and Truth,

Dave Rosenberg

Press release -
November 21, 2011

Press Release For Immediate Release

November 21, 2011

Contact: Dave Rosenberg daverosesjps.net

The next phase of the Davis Odd Fellows Hall remodel project has just been completed. The Upper Hall boasts 2,500 square feet of newly remodeled space, suitable for banquet seating of 200 and theater seating for 300. The Lower Hall adds 2,250 square feet of space, including further banquet space for 120 and lecture space for 200. Both Upper and Lower Halls are available to the public for rental, as is the modern and industrial kitchen facilities. Further information on rental of the Hall is available from Operations Manager Dody Black at davislodge@sbcglobal.net.

The Odd Fellows Hall has been a downtown Davis fixture at 415 Second Street since 1955. Over the past five years, the Odd Fellows Hall has undergone a million-dollar remodel project including complete accessibility, an elevator, modern bathrooms facilities and kitchen, chandeliers and carpeting. The Upper Hall project - the latest to be completed – includes a stage, surround sound, a full bar facility, wood paneling and elegant chandeliers. Dion Davies of
Specialized Construction was charged with completing the work in the Upper Hall.

Numerous regional and local groups are renting the Lodge Hall for meetings, seminars, dinners, retreats, weddings, anniversaries, and similar events.

DMC Newsletter -
November 22, 2011

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

Following is an article just written by our Brother Don Smith. As you know, Don has a long and distinguished history in this Order, having served in many leadership capacities in his Lodge, at Grand Lodge and at Sovereign Grand Lodge. He was a young and energetic Grand Master of California, and also an able and respected Sovereign Grand Master.

Some may consider our group - Dedicated Members for Change - innovative and new. But to be very frank, the idea of evolution and change in Odd Fellowship is hardly new. Don’s article reminds us of a prior group - Concerned Brothers - that made efforts a generation ago to change this Order. Their efforts were only partially successful. In Dedicated Members for Change, we pick up where Concerned Brothers left off.

Please read and enjoy Don’s article. And if you wish to recommend a member of the Order to join our e-mail matrix, simply check with that member, and if they wish to join us, please forward his/her name and e-mail address to me.

F - L - T
Dave Rosenberg

With the formation of the “Concerned Brothers Group” 23 years ago, many members realized that steps needed to be taken to solve many of the problems facing Odd Fellowship in California. Nine goals were established, and while one of those was accomplished - the re-organization of the Grand Lodge of California - the majority of them were unresolved.
Having been very much involved in the formation of the Concerned Brothers Group, nothing would please me more than to have the Dedicated Members for Change successfully resolve some of those problems, principally overcoming the great decline in membership.

Change is difficult to accept, but we must make changes IF Odd Fellowship is going to survive. We can't waste any more time if we want to save our Order. We certainly haven't been doing something right, or we wouldn't be in the condition that we are at the present time. As I mentioned previously, to make changes is difficult, but we as representatives of our lodges, must be willing to stand up and support a program that seeks to remedy the problems facing Odd Fellowship to day.

Let's not kid ourselves. We have problems today like we have never had in the past. Let's give Odd Fellowship a chance for surviving and becoming one of the most successful organizations in existence. We were once the largest and most influential organization in California, but that is now history.

When lodges have constantly shown a declining membership, something is wrong, and while the resolutions presented by Davis Lodge are no guarantee that things will turn around, we must at least give it a try. I want to give my very best to saving Odd Fellowship, rather than lying down and seeing the Order crumble to extinction.

WE MUST MAKE CHANGES IF ODD FELLOWSHIP IS GOING TO SURVIVE. Comparison of Odd Fellows in California between 60 years ago and today is very alarming.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>60 Years Ago -1950</th>
<th>Today - 2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>29,096 Members</td>
<td>4,560 Members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>368 Lodges</td>
<td>141 Lodges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79 Members per Lodge</td>
<td>32 Members per Lodge</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is very important that the Dedicated Members for Change Group continues to support our goals of affecting changes in Odd Fellowship.
envision the DMC Group as the “Think Tank” for Odd Fellowship in California. After the formation of the GL Board of Directors they originally served in that capacity until they became so bogged down with putting out fires.

There are still a few members of the original Concerned Brothers that are active in Odd Fellowship today in addition to myself. Some of those brothers are Wayne Roberts, Ray Link, Peter Bregman, Bob Forthun, and Ron Carrey. When we were striving to make some changes, there were many Grand Lodge officers and members that said we were an illegal group, but Grand Lodge supported some of our proposals. The goals and topics of the original Concerned Brothers Group can apply equality to the DMC Group, and I am sharing them below. You might have other goals or ideas that can be added to the following list.

1. Grand Lodge Re-Organization (Accomplished)
2. Steps for Increasing Membership
3. Updating Odd Fellows’ Mission and Motto
4. Improving Image of Odd Fellowship
5. Improving Local Lodge operations
6. Developing Literature, AV materials and Forms for Order
7. Revision of Degree Work
8. Overall structure of Order (Other Units)
9. Involvement of Family and Youth in Odd Fellowship

We gladly welcome any Odd Fellow or Rebekah as members of the DMC Group. To be included contact Dave Rosenberg, Rick Boyles or myself and you will be included in future newsletters.

Don Smith
100 Reasons to Be a Davis Odd Fellow
(Thanksgiving 2011 – November 24, 2011)
by Dave Rosenberg, PG

1. We are the oldest organization in the City of Davis, having been chartered on April 12, 1870. On April 12, 2020, our Davis Lodge will be 150 years old.

2. Odd Fellowship follows a tradition that was established in Great Britain hundreds of years ago – it is an ancient fraternal order.

3. The Davis Odd Fellows Lodge #169 currently has 175 members in 2011, making us one of the five largest Lodges in California.

4. The Davis Lodge emphasizes active community support as well as social activities for members, in addition to the historical traditions.

5. Odd Fellows are a fraternal order, so new members learn secret rituals, signs, handshakes and passwords.

6. About 20 applicants for membership are currently pending in two pledge classes.

7. The current Odd Fellows Lodge Hall was built in 1955 and sits right in the heart of Downtown Davis.

8. Over the past four years, we have totally remodeled the Lodge Hall, complete with new elevator, new restrooms, new modern kitchen, new roof, wood paneling, and carpeting.

9. The Lodge Hall, both the Lower Hall and the Upper Hall, is constantly busy – being utilized about 20 days every month for Lodge and community uses.

10. The Davis Odd Fellows Lodge shares ownership of our property with the Davis Rebekah Lodge #253, which was chartered in 1901. Many Odd Fellows are also members of the Rebekah Lodge.

11. The Davis Lodge is the fastest-growing Odd Fellows Lodge in North America, having quadrupled its membership in the last 6 years.

12. We are recognized throughout California Odd Fellowship and within the Sovereign Grand Lodge as the cutting edge of this Order.

13. Our members include members of the Davis City Council, County Supervisors, the Chief of Police, members of the School Board, Judges, the Director of the Farmers’ Market, lawyers, ranchers, students, homemakers, community activists and many others.

14. Our annual Lodge Installation and Awards Dinner is a highlight of the year, and is well-attended.
15. We put on an annual OddtoberFest for the members that attract 100 participants.
16. We have an annual Noble Grand’s Halloween Party for members.
17. We organize a “Senior Project” where we help needy frail seniors with projects in their homes.
18. In the past, our Lodge has hosted dinners for families of foster children.
19. We have organized a computer project for seniors, where we help seniors learn how to use their computers.
20. The Lodge has a Social Services Committee which provides support for persons with mental health issues.
21. The Odd Fellows have a “wine club” for members interested in enology to sample varietals. The wine club meets about once each month at member’s homes.
22. We have a “zymurgy club” where members interested in zymurgy can brew Odd Fellows beer, and sample different brews.
23. The Lodge rents a bus and takes an annual trip to spend a day in the rolling hills of Amador County, visiting wineries and enjoying an outdoor lunch.
24. We have an active Good Fellowship Committee which sponsors numerous good fellowship events, including a weekly Lodge “Club Night.”
25. California Odd Fellows operate a children’s summer camp called the “Three Links Camp” and – through the Davis Encampment - provide scholarships so that needy Yolo County children can attend.
27. For many years, our Lodge provides an annual Picnic Day Breakfast for the community.
28. When a Lodge member is sick or in distress, the Lodge Visiting Committee visits that member, and sends flowers or a plant.
29. Lodge members have helped raise money through bell ringing over the holidays.
30. Lodge members have helped serve food for Davis Community Meals.
31. Odd Fellows started a Legacy Tree Committee in 2008 and work with Tree Davis in the planting and maintenance of trees in town.
32. Odd Fellows have co-hosted numerous events at the Lodge Hall for worthy organizations such as Hospice, Pine Tree Gardens, the Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Center, Davis Community Meals, etc. and have provided hundreds of thousands of dollars in community support.
33. Odd Fellows, as a fraternity, have fun together with movie nights, wine trips, Bunko nights, and other activities as Lodge members.
34. Odd Fellows support each other when illness or tragedy strikes. A few years ago when a member needed cancer treatment, the Lodge organized an event which raised $10,000 for the member.
35. When an earthquake struck Haiti, the Lodge organized “Hope for Haiti” which raised over $20,000 for relief.
36. Odd Fellowship is open to all good men and women. Our Lodge has members of all ages from the 20’s to the 80’s, all ethnic backgrounds – we reflect the diversity of the community.
37. Odd Fellows host numerous music venues at the Lodge Hall through a very active Music & Concerts Committee.
38. The Odd Fellows Lodge is available for rental for weddings, birthdays, dinners, lunches, receptions, conferences, lectures and the like, and is well-utilized by community groups.
39. Members of the Lodge can, under certain conditions, use the Lodge Hall free of charge, for personal events such as anniversaries.
40. The Hall Board Association maintains a full liquor license, and the Lodge has a full bar which is available for community groups that rent the Hall.
41. Odd Fellows rented a bus for an all-day trip to the Napa Wine Country.
42. Odd Fellows have taken an urban hike in San Francisco.
43. Odd Fellows in California own two retirements communities (the Saratoga Retirement Community and the Meadows of Napa Valley) which are first-rate operations open to the public. A Davis Odd Fellow serves as the Chairman of the Board of Directors, and another Davis Odd Fellows serves as a member of the Board of Directors of these communities.
44. Odd Fellowship supports Rebekah Children Services (a group home for foster children), a research program for eye disease, and many other good charitable works.
45. The Lodge is open to all. Odd Fellows do not discriminate. Our membership is diverse, almost 50-50 men to women, and includes all ethnicities, sexual orientations, and religious beliefs.
46. We don’t discuss religion, politics or commercial business in the Lodge.
47. Davis Odd Fellows has the best website in Odd Fellowship at www.davisoddfellows.com.
48. The Odd Fellows Lodge provides educational scholarships to children and grandchildren of members.
49. Odd Fellows have organized numerous hikes throughout northern California for interested members.
50. The Odd Fellows Bingo Committee hosts Bingo for the community every second Sunday of the month. This is real Bingo with prizes up to $250, authorized by the City Council. All proceeds go to a designated charitable or community group each month.

51. The Odd Fellows Lodge hosts a breakfast meeting once each month for members – the best breakfast in town – at no charge.

52. The Odd Fellows symbol is the 3 links which stand for Friendship, Love and Truth.

53. The Davis Odd Fellows Lodge displays a full-color lighted LED sign showing the three links and the letters IOOF, standing for Independent Order of Odd Fellows.

54. Odd Fellows came to California in 1849 and historical Lodge Halls can be found in cities and towns throughout the state, particularly in the Gold Country.

55. The Davis Odd Fellows Lodge, the Rebekah Lodge, the Davis Encampment, and the Hall Board Association are all on sound financial footing.

56. The Davis Lodge Hall and adjacent property are managed and owned by the Hall Board Association, composed of three Odd Fellows and three Rebekahs.

57. Since the Davis Odd Fellows was chartered in 1870, about 600 people have been initiated into the Lodge.

58. The Davis Odd Fellows have donated hundreds of thousands of dollars to charitable groups over the years.

59. The Odd Fellows Lodge is the landlord for Hunan, voted the best Chinese food in Davis.

60. The Inns of Court – composed of Judges, lawyers and law students - meets monthly at the Davis Lodge.

61. Jazzercise has used the Davis Lodge for many years, several times each week.

62. We have opened the Davis Lodge to meetings of the Davis Chamber of Commerce and the Downtown Davis Business Association.

63. Once a member earns all three degrees in Odd Fellows, that member can join the Davis Encampment #21.

64. There are many officer positions to which members can aspire – including Noble Grand, Vice Grand, Financial Secretary, Warden, and the like.

65. The Davis Odd Fellows has a “photography club” for members who enjoy that hobby.

66. Aspiring cooks can practice their skill at our monthly breakfast meetings – breakfasts are prepared entirely by members and pledges.
67. The Davis Odd Fellows and Rebekahs host the annual Breakfast with Santa, which serves 360 children and families.
68. The Davis Odd Fellows have recently been asked by the City of Davis to host the popular Breakfast with the Bunny, another very popular community event for children and families.
69. Davis Odd Fellows can purchase numerous items with the special Davis Odd Fellows logo, including sweatshirts, Polo shirts, hats, and the like.
70. There are rings, necklaces, pins and jewels with Odd Fellows logos and images on them – real collector’s items.
71. Initiation into the Lodge is painless – no hazing – and is historically interesting. The initiation ritual goes back almost 200 years.
72. The Lodge Hall has a full commercial kitchen, a full Lower Hall with banquet seating for 120, a full Upper Hall with banquet seating for 200, and a soon to be developed Conference Room for up to 25.
73. Community events have been held at the Lodge Hall accommodating over 500 people.
74. The Lodge Hall is fully accessible.
75. The pledge process leading up to initiation takes 5-6 months – which gives pledges and members time to get to know one another.
76. The Davis Lodge webmaster distributes an electronic newsletter to members and pledges on a regular basis.
77. In addition to the main Lodge website, we maintain three other sites – all accessible from the main site – one for Lodge Hall rentals, one for bingo, and one for the bike parade.
78. Our Davis Lodge website is so good, that the Grand Lodge of California has asked our webmaster – Stewart Savage – to develop the Grand Lodge website.
79. All Davis Lodge members and pledges are connected via e-mail.
80. Renewals of Davis Lodge memberships are very high – at times approaching 100%.
81. The Davis Odd Fellows led a community effort to set a Guinness World Record relating to bicycles, and contributed thousands of dollars to the Davis Schools in the process. And we did set the record!
82. We have one Wednesday evening meeting each month (fourth Wednesday), and have a social hour prior to the meeting.
83. Flags and other regalia hanging up at the Lodge Hall are historical items which go back a century.
84. The Lodge Hall is so busy that we have an Operations Manager to maintain and market the Hall and supervise rentals.
85. The Lodge Hall has a fully certified commercial kitchen.
86. New pledges are each assigned a mentor – a member of the Lodge who helps the applicant through the process.
87. The Davis Lodge has developed a “Pledge Book” which can be downloaded from our website, and is now utilized by other Lodges in California.
88. The Davis Lodge has a very large number of husbands and wives who are members.
89. The Davis Lodge has members who are under 20 years of age, and members who are over 90 years of age.
90. Lea Rosenberg, a Davis Odd Fellow, is a former Citizen of the Year and also was chosen Humanitarian of the Year in Davis.
91. Many members of the Davis Lodge are in their 20’s and 30’s with lots of small children.
92. The Davis Lodge provides babysitting services during our Saturday morning breakfast meetings.
93. Many famous Americans – including Franklin Roosevelt, Ulysses S. Grant, and Earl Warren – were Odd Fellows.
94. The Davis Lodge used to be known as the Yolo Lodge – we changed the name just a few years ago.
95. Odd Fellows dues are only $55 per year – a bargain.
96. We initiated 26 new members into the Davis Odd Fellows in 2010.
97. Judge Dave Rosenberg led the Lodge as Noble Grand for four years, followed by Judge Dave Reed who led the Lodge as Noble Grand for two years.
98. In November 2011, our Lodge elected our first woman Noble Grand – Kandice Richardson Fowler – a young woman with two small children.
99. Davis Odd Fellows are recognized as one of the premier organizations in Davis.
100. It’s cool to be known as an “Odd Fellow.”
History of the Davis Lodge Hall
(Updated November 27, 2011)
by Dave Rosenberg, PG #169

On April 12, 1870, “Yolo Lodge #169” Independent Order of Odd Fellows was instituted at “Davisville”, Yolo County. Years later, in the fledgling community of Davisville (later Davis) the Order moved into its first Lodge Hall on the second story of a building on G Street. The facility slowly deteriorated over the years, and the Order had numerous problems with plumbing, rats, rodents and all manner of insects, and was hoping to move into new quarters.

In 1949, Frank Weber, a member of the Davis Odd Fellows passed away. His estate was valued at three-quarters of a million dollars – a substantial amount of money at any time, but certainly so in 1949. Frank Weber left a will donating much of his money to charitable organizations, including the Davis Odd Fellows Lodge and the Davis Rebekah Lodge. In fact, the bequests to the two Lodges were close to $200,000. The Lodges were delighted as this gave them the funds to build a new Lodge Hall. However, a second will emerged and in the second will, an attorney by the name of Thomas B. Leeper was named as the principal beneficiary. The wills were inconsistent.

Years of litigation followed, and the matter was not sorted out till the early 1950’s. So there is a history of involvement by Superior Court Judges with the Davis Odd Fellows. A wise Superior Court Judge ruled in favor of the Lodges, and against Leeper, and the matter was appealed and confirmed by the Third District Court of Appeal. Even more interesting, Leeper was sentenced to state prison on charges of perjury and intent to commit grand theft. Apparently, his will was fraudulent and a fake. It took years in the judicial system to sort that all out.

So, the Davis Odd Fellows Lodge and the Davis Rebekah Lodges were the beneficiaries of Mr. Weber’s generosity. On October 21, 1954, the Odd Fellows Lodge and the Rebekah Lodge – in anticipation of the new Lodge Hall construction and development – formed that Hall Board Association, filing Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws. The Hall Board Association would own the property and assets of the two Lodges and would be composed of three Rebekah Lodge members and three Odd Fellows Lodge members. (The Hall Board Association continues to this day and is currently composed of Odd
Fellows Dave Rosenberg, Dave Reed and Bob Bockwinkel, and Rebekahs Lea Rosenberg, Barb Geisler and Marge Fagan.)

Once the Court case was resolved, the new facility was built in 1955 at its current location – 415 Second Street, Downtown Davis. On June 23, 1956, the new Lodge Hall was dedicated as the home of Yolo Odd Fellows Lodge #169 and Davis Rebekah Lodge #253. The two-story Lodge Hall was a great improvement over the G Street facility, and the Odd Fellows and Rebekahs happily moved in, and abandoned the G Street hall. (Ultimately, the Masons moved into that old and decrepit facility – if you drive by the old building on G Street and look up, you can still see the Masonic symbol on the outside – although the Masons eventually moved out of the G Street location into a new facility in South Davis.) The June 23, 1956 dedication ceremony was attended by the Mayor Pro Tem of Davis Ed Roessler, the Provost of UCD Stanley Freeborn, and numerous dignitaries from the Grand Lodge of California and the Rebekah Assembly of California.

The Lodge Hall was used by the Odd Fellows and Rebekah Lodges (and to some extent by the Davis Encampment #21), but was not used generally by the community, and was not that visible in the community.

In 2006, the Hall Board Association undertook a major remodel and refurbishing of the Lodge Hall. The name of the “Yolo Lodge” had also been officially changed to “Davis Lodge” to reflect the new times, new membership and new Lodge Hall. The major remodel cost the Hall Board Association almost $1 million, but included a modern kitchen, four new bathrooms on both floors, an elevator to replace the chairlift, carpeting and major refurbishing of the Lower Hall including wood-paneled walls, window covers, new ceiling and chandeliers, among other improvements. In addition, an LED, multi-colored sign was installed out front, with the three links and the letters “IOOF” creating visibility in the community. The sign has been lit since its installation.

On March 23, 2007, the newly remodeled Lodge Hall opened to the public and hundreds of Lodge members and residents toured the facility or many “oohs” and “aahs.” Since the remodel, the Lodge Hall has been rented out for public events on a regular basis. In addition to Lodge meetings and events, the new Lodge Hall has been rented for dinners, lunches, weddings, music venues, meetings and activities of all kinds.

In 2011, the Hall Board Association undertook further major upgrades and remodel activity. A new roof was installed on the Lodge Hall and the adjacent property. Also, the Upper Hall was completely remodeled with wood paneling, a stained concrete (and very sturdy) floor, chandeliers, an accessible
stage, two levels of hidden storage. The Upper Hall can now seat up to 200 people for a banquet, and 300-plus for lectures and concerts. The final phase of the remodel project will see the upstairs storage room transformed into a Conference Room, suitable for up to 25.

DMC Newsletter -
December 1, 2011

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

Hard to believe, but it's already December. Following is a column written especially for our DMC Newsletter by Grand Warden Rick Boyles. He has taken us "alphabetically" through some issues that have led to the decline in membership. As you well know, the focus of DMC is to RECOGNIZE, STOP and REVERSE the decline in our Order’s membership. Rick's column is food for thought!

And again, if YOU know of a member of this Order whom you believe would be a good addition to our growing e-mail matrix, please check with them, confirm that they would like to be included, and send me their name and e-mail address. We’re happy to add them to our expanding DMC list.

Fraternally,
Dave Rosenberg

Dedicated Members for Change -
December 2011

Our group was formed with the sole rationality of finding ways in which to add members to our order. Whether or not you agree with our actions, you can't dispute our motivation. Our order is swiftly failing. Just in the period in which I have been a member, we have lost 20% of our total membership. We can't handle this rate of decline much longer. We have seen once thriving lodges now virtually on the brink of collapse. Members have left our order at a much greater rate than we have garnered new members. Why? For a number of reasons, of which, here are a few spelled out.
a) Many of the older members have died, or no longer attend.

b) A large percentage of our lodges have become virtual vacuums, with no desire to attract new members, to the point that now they have become almost totally exclusionary.

c) There are a number of members who belong to the order merely for self-serving reasons, to protect an agenda, financially generally. While this is not wrong, it is wrong to fear new members because of a fear of intrusion or self-examination.

d) Older members resent newer members, claiming that they are not “true odd fellows,” when, in effect, they can’t even state what a true odd fellow is, except to point at themselves. In point of fact, the members who oppose new membership are the ones who actually are beginning not to resemble true odd fellows. Has Odd Fellowship come to mean hatred and fear?

e) We as an order for years have resisted any trend towards technological advancement. Most of us refuse to use email, although obviously, it is here to stay. It is also obvious that those who are connected by email and other modern methods, such as facebook, twitter, etc. are more apt to be connected to the order in general.

f) Long term members like to guard their own existence by fear and resentment, often belittling new members or those who try to be the least bit innovative. I personally have been berated by people I have long admired for being part of a group simply formed around studying how to get new members. They have allowed anger and resentment to guide everything they do. They intend to stifle change by ignoring the need for change. Or, they say the order needs change, just not “our change.”

g) Rumor and gossip about newer members is so rampant that anyone new is subjected to slander unless they toe the party line, which is so outmoded as to be ludicrous.

h) New members, who join to be part of revitalized lodges, are often treated as lesser members, since perhaps they joined for musical, dramatic, or other lodge committee reasons. Yet, we cease to realize that people must join for one reason or another. No one is born an odd fellow. No one odd fellow is truer than another.
i) Racial or Sexual bias. Long a part of our history, we still seem focused upon hatred of one type or another. Yet, we talk about friendship, love and truth. Whose friendship, love and truth are we referring to? Just our own?

j) Ludicrous dress codes. Both our male and female members practice total immersion into the 1920’s dressing in tuxedos and long dresses. Every time I ask a new member why they don’t attend a function they answer that they don’t possess the appropriate dress or tuxedo. Nowhere else in modern life do we ask people to dress in such an outlandish manner.

k) We’re the boss and you’re not. That is the attitude of the old line. They don’t want new members, and certainly don’t want to have new members sit at their table. They have controlled the order so long now that to go against what they believe, would amount to their vision of treason.

l) Functions revolve around the elderly. Even our committee is made up of primarily elderly individuals, but we have gotten to the point where most of our functions are geared towards the elderly. Functions are planned which actually exclude anyone with a job. Annual trips tend to be grand voyages to far off places for 2 weeks at a time. So, we get the same old retirees every year. I personally have spoken to many members who would like to attend annual events but can’t because of employment or family responsibilities.

m) The code. We have allowed the code, or codes, to become bludgeons. Every time some member announces a new idea or event, we search the code to see why it should not be allowed. In fact, the code is meant to maintain a semblance of order and congeniality. Nothing else. We have come to the point where we only legislate mediocrity. The code should be edited down to the point, where all that is undesirable is conduct unbecoming of an odd fellow. If we say that the order in general is failing, what does that say about our code? Simply put, the code has become too restrictive.

n) React but don’t overreact. Too many times, we close lodges rather than counsel individuals. Most people mean well. Rather than pull a charter, we should examine an issue. Sooner or later, there will be too few charters to pull. If a member is bad, it does not follow that a lodge is bad.
o) Along those lines, a lodge should be allowed to remove a member or members for cause. Period. The code allows for this, but also has been so written that a trial by a lodge is so convoluted that even Perry Mason would have a hard time getting it right. Many people have left the order because of another member being too disruptive or destructive. Neither should be tolerated. If we are really serious about conduct unbecoming an odd fellow, than no one should be allowed to promote violence, swear, or otherwise disrupt a lodge. Why would we want that in any lodge? Certainly all members have a right to feel safe and secure in their own lodge, and that should allow them the right to remove someone who is threatening or overbearing. Years ago, a large lodge could be self-policing. Now, smaller lodges are being commandeered by those who have only their own agenda to protect.

p) Protect our heritage. Too many times, lodges have been sold lock, stock, and barrel without first assessing its internal possessions or property. Some lodges date back to the gold rush, which means that many of the furnishings or possessions date to that time as well. I have gone to lodges in disrepair which house great stores of antiques or first editions, yet they close or fail in bankruptcy. For many years, no member even viewed a property that was put up for sale. Would you handle your own property in such a cavalier manner?

q) Membership drives designed to fail. Too many times, we initiate or continue membership drives that have little or no consequence. Other times, we resist the urge to try something new. If we are to grow, we must drop what has not worked and try something new. We look for things that are inexpensive, and yet, we still don't realize, that the internet is free, that email is endless, that facebook and twitter are worldwide, and all can be done in the comfort of our own homes. Even my own 85 year old mother enjoys email and facebook. It is time that the order actually at least climbed into the 1980's (at least!).

r) Hatred. Too many of the older members are carrying longstanding resentment towards others. This should not be tolerated. No matter what the position of the odd fellow, no matter what he or she has originally accomplished no hatred should be tolerated. Yelling at another member causes only discomfort.

s) Fear. We all fear the new or unseen. But if we are to guide by friendship, love and truth, this should act as a shield to protect us.
those who are to join us also practice friendship, love and truth, we have nothing whatsoever to fear.

t) Truth. We must first examine ourselves. Are we handling ourselves in the correct manner? Do we love what we do? Are we in the order for the proper reasons? Everyone joins for one reason or another. All clubs or lodges maintain a focus, but has our focus been dulled? Do we see all people as prospective members? Too many times, we eliminate people before we even take the time to know them.

u) Acceptance. Many of us are old. All of us will end up old. We must understand that new members bring new ideas. This is not to be feared. If we lead by love, those we want to join us will reciprocate.

v) Time. We are almost out of time. We are all good at procrastination, but soon there will be little left for us to procrastinate about. Many lodges now have only a quorum of 5 members in attendance at meetings. If we just lose one more member at each lodge, it closes. Now is the time to react.

w) Keep it going. We start with what we have and allow it to breathe. Give that new member a job. Let him or her know you care about their opinion. Don’t be the obstacle to growth.

x) Go outside the lodge. Look outside the window. It is a big world. Anyone could be a member if we allow them to be. If we look at people as enemies they are destined to become them.

y) Learn by example. There are lodges that have had success. Let’s not waste our time filled with resentment or slander. Let’s see what they do right and adopt what we think might work for us.

z) Love. If we practice this, we have little or nothing to fear. That is why I joined, and I hope and pray that is what will keep us afloat.

Oops! Out of Space!

In Friendship, Love and Truth, Your Grand Warden, Rick Boyles
10 Helpful Hints to Bring New Members into the Order
by Dave Rosenberg, PG #169
December 2011

Most of you who read this article will have been Odd Fellows longer (perhaps far longer) than I have been. I’m a relatively new member of the Order, having been initiated in March of 2004. So, as I write this article, I’ve been an Odd Fellow for about seven years. And yet, I am asked, again and again, for advice on how to bring new members into the Order. In response to these many requests, I’ve been urged to write this article. And, ladies and gentlemen, we absolutely have to recruit new members – Odd Fellowship in California has now dropped 90% in membership since WW II, and we have less than 5,000 dues-paying members. This situation is unsustainable, and – as Lodges diminish in membership - is causing innumerable problems throughout the state.

I suppose that I’m asked for advice because I have, personally, brought so many new members into Odd Fellowship. Specifically, I’ve sponsored about 100 new members. In 2009, the Sovereign Grand Lodge recognized me as #2 in the SGL jurisdiction in bringing in new members; and in 2010, SGL recognized me as #1 in the jurisdiction. I am a member of the Grand Lodge’s Membership Committee, and I’ve developed a “Membership Development Workshop” which, by the way, Grand Lodge has available to anyone who wants it, on a DVD. I serve as the Chair of my own Lodge’s Membership and Initiation Committee.

Yet, I do not profess to say how YOU or YOUR Lodge should recruit new members. Frankly, that’s up to YOU to determine. What I can do is give you some helpful hints that have worked for me. If those hints happen to make sense to you, or fit your style, or you wish to try them out, then please do! So, without further ado, here’s Dave Rosenberg’s 10 Helpful Hints to Recruiting New Members into the Order:

Recruitment on the Brain. The single most effective tool in recruiting new members is to have “recruitment on the brain” at all times. Talking to potential new members is not an occasional thing – it has to be a constant thing. When I meet new folks, I size them up, assess them, get to know them, and often ask them to consider applying for membership to the Lodge. For example, we recently hired a contractor to do some work at our Lodge Hall. After getting to know him, I talked to him about Odd Fellowship, and invited
him to apply. He did. And I never give up. I talked to one woman for over five years about joining the Lodge. Recently, she did. I constantly carry application forms in my pocket. You never know when you may need one.

**Functions at the Lodge.** One of the absolute best tools for recruitment is to have an active Lodge. Most of the new members I have recruited have first come into contact with the Lodge through Lodge functions. They come to the function, have fun, meet members and are curious about Odd Fellowship. I have recruited dozens of new members who first came in contact with the Lodge through our community events such as “Breakfast with Santa” or who came to the Lodge as a guest of a member during our annual “OddtoberFest” or when we rented a bus to visit wineries in Amador County. Active Lodges create opportunities to recruit.

**Husbands and Wives.** I have found that one of the best draws for new members is to make it user-friendly for husbands and wives (or significant others), and also for young parents with children. Very few organizations offer couples the ability to work and play together. Odd Fellowship does. Those Odd Fellows Lodges that restrict membership, or discourage membership of women, have cut off 50% of the population. Those Lodges that fail to recruit young parents have cut themselves off from a large segment of the community.

**Community Support.** The regalia, ritual, grips, passwords, and symbols of Odd Fellowship make us unique and distinguish us as a fraternal order. They should and will always be with us. However, virtually no one joins because of that. A full appreciation of the ritual will develop over time. But, frankly, most folks are drawn to IOOF when the Lodge engages in local community support. New members want to be part of good works in the community – whether it’s feeding hungry people, or working with people with developmental disabilities, or planting trees. When a Lodge engages in active community support activities, that Lodge opens a gateway to recruitment.

**Good Fellowship.** The other draw for potential new members is good fellowship activities within the Lodge. People today seek a social network and a fun place to enjoy activities with others. When Lodges have a full slate of social activities, recruitment of new members is dramatically enhanced. My Lodge, for example, hosts music events, good fellowship “Lodge Nights,” an “OddtoberFest,” a Halloween Party, and numerous other social events for members and potential new members. Let’s not forget that Odd Fellowship was started in Old England in pubs.

**Social Meetings.** Social meetings are not prohibited by the Code of Odd Fellowship, and in fact, are encouraged by Grand Lodge. What’s a social
meeting? It is simply a meeting of the Lodge where no regalia are worn, no ritual is employed, and no secret signs, grips or passwords are used. Lodges that engage in social meetings have another huge technique available to them for recruitment. Potential new members can attend, can see what the Lodge is up to, and can meet members.

**Don’t Make it Easy.** There are Lodges that are so desperate for new members that when they get one, they immediately rush into an initiation. And then, once initiated, that new member is plunged into a formal, ritual meeting, and often the Lodge never sees him/her again. In my Lodge, the process of joining (we call it the “pledge period”) takes at least 5-6 months, the applicants (we call them “pledges”) have a number of requirements to accomplish before the interviewing committee and membership even vote on them. This makes the goal of membership a valuable goal for them – plus it gives them a chance to meet the members and for the members to meet them – to determine if Odd Fellowship is the right fit.

**Diversity.** The strength of America is its diversity. That should be the strength of Odd Fellowship, as well. When I recruit new members, I am looking for diversity in age, ethnicity, employment and gender. I want the Lodge to look like my community. It’s particularly important to bring in new members in their 20’s and 30’s. They are the next generation of Odd Fellowship. When a Lodge’s members are all in their 60’s and 70’s and older, it’s virtually impossible to attract the younger generation we need to grow.

**Leadership.** A critical factor to growth of a Lodge is the ability to attract community leaders. A century ago, everybody who was anybody in town was an Odd Fellow. We lost that edge over time. But, if you can attract one or two community leaders, those leaders will attract others. Members who are recognized leaders in the community will elevate the status of the Lodge and open the Lodge up to new memberships. In my Lodge, for example, we have elected city and county officials, school board members, the police chief, several judges, the district attorney and public defender, and so on. What a great recruitment tool you have when you can tell prospective members that your Lodge is the Who’s Who of the community.

**Mentors.** It’s important not only to attract new applicants, but to keep them in the process and to actually initiate them. In this regard, it’s useful to appoint a Mentor for each new pledge. The Mentor may be an experienced member, but often it’s better to have a relatively new member Mentor the pledge. The Mentor acts as a big brother or big sister, a buddy, available to answer questions and to introduce the applicant to other
members. An effective Mentor system can really help move the applicant into membership.

Recruitment of new members is a job for each of us in this great and ancient Order. We can’t just sit back and wait for the “other guy” to do it. YOU are the other guy.

DMC Newsletter -
December 20, 2011

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

I was delighted to read the message from Sovereign Grand Master Delmar Burns in the November-December IOOF News. Our SGM sent a message to all Odd Fellows and in the strongest possible terms said: “You must come out of your Lodge Room and be known in your community as Odd Fellows and Rebekahs building a better world in your community.” I couldn’t agree more.

To grow and prosper as a fraternal order, we must reach out and be part of our communities, and we must engage in good community works. At the same time, we must bring the community into our Lodges. It is clearly the right thing to do - and it is also a great way to develop new members for our Lodges. However, too many of our Lodges remain isolated, with members operating only within their own four walls. It’s no wonder that membership is declining.

One of the best ways to expose ourselves to our communities is to have “social meetings.” DSGM Charles Renninger, at our last Grand Lodge, made it very clear that social meetings were perfectly permissible, and were not in any way against our Code. In fact, the Grand Lodge body has strongly supported and encouraged social meetings. At our last gathering in May, the Grand Lodge passed Grand Lodge Resolution #4 (which I had proposed) which encouraged our Lodges to hold social meetings “open to family members, prospective Lodge members, and invited members of the public, to gain a knowledge about the worthwhile programs and activities being presented and sponsored by an Odd Fellows Lodge without revealing any of the ritualistic, unwritten work and passwords of the order.” These social meetings - which be held in conjunction with Rebekah Lodges - are a dandy way to expand the universe of Odd Fellowship.

So what are “social meetings”?
In this regard, I had an e-mail dialogue with Brother Renninger, and following is a listing of what one **cannot** do at a social meeting, and what one **can** do at a social meeting.

Here are things that are **not permitted** at a social meeting of an Odd Fellows Lodge:

* No formal opening or closing of the meeting can be conducted.
* No ritualistic work, secret work, passwords, grips or signs may be used.
* No formal reports by officers or committees may be presented.
* No collars may be worn.
* No formal votes may be taken.

Here are things that are **permitted** to be done at a social meeting of an Odd Fellows Lodge:

* The social meeting may be open to members, applicants, potential applicants, family members and guests.
* Officers, members, applicants, and guests may be introduced.
* Informal discussion of plans for social events (e.g. dinners at the Lodge, bus trips, charitable events, Oktoberfest, etc.) may be had.
* Participants can be informally polled to determine who may be attending events. Sign up sheets for attendance at future events may be circulated.
* Joint social meetings with Rebekah Lodges may be held.
* At a social meeting, informal discussion of members sick and in distress may be presented.
* Members may wear pins and pocket jewels.

I pass this information on to all of you, and encourage you to schedule social meetings in the future. They are great ways to reach out to your community, encourage family by allowing your members to bring their spouses and children to the Lodge, bring in potential new members and expose them to the Lodge, and generally to increase your exposure to and viability in your communities. The Grand Lodge has already voted in favor of encouraging social meetings, so go for it! We have nothing to lose. And we have a lot to gain - specifically, new members.

And to the growing list of Dedicated Members for Change - may we wish you and your loved ones a happy and healthy holiday season.

F - L – T, Dave Rosenberg
Any Odd Fellow knows that Odd Fellowship started in Merry Olde England in the beginning of the 18th Century, meeting in the taverns and pubs of the countryside and the towns. It started small, but picked up speed when George IV of England (while he was Prince of Wales) became an Odd Fellow sometime after 1780. The Order evolved through several names and in the mid-18th Century, split into two factions: “The Order of Patriotic Oddfellows” based in the south of England, and “The Ancient Order of Oddfellows” based in the north of England. In 1789, the two Orders formed an amalgamation called “The Grand United Order of Oddfellows.” But it didn’t stop there. The Order continued to evolve. In 1810, a number of Lodges became dissatisfied with the Grand United Order, so they met and organized the “Manchester Unity of Odd Fellows” which was a split from the mainstream Odd Fellows organization of the day. Between 1819-1825, the American Order (originally known as Grand Lodge of the United States) was founded and subsequently affiliated with the Manchester Unity. In 1842, the Odd Fellows of the United States declared their independence, split from the Manchester Unity, and adopted their own American-style ritual – this was done because the laws in England forced the English Odd Fellows to abandon their secret work and much of their degree work, and this didn’t sit well with the Americans.

Odd Fellowship in England certainly had a history of change and evolution.

Many Odd Fellows history books rightfully state that Thomas Wildey was the founder of Odd Fellowship in America. Unquestionably, Thomas Wildey was a great leader and can rightfully be called the father of American Odd Fellowship based on that leadership and his tireless efforts to expand and grow the Order in the United States. But, contrary to popular opinion, Thomas Wildey did not actually start the first Lodge in America.

The first Lodge established on the North American continent was called Shakespeare #1 in New York City. That Lodge was established on December 26, 1806. Solomon Chambers, who came from England, and his son were the founders of Shakespeare #1, along with three other members. These early American Lodge members helped to organize other Lodges. In 1809 there were six Lodges in New York City, with 36 members. Soon thereafter, there
were Lodges sprouting up in other places on the Eastern seaboard. In 1815, there were two Lodges in Halifax, Nova Scotia. In 1819, James Barnes, who also emigrated from England, and four others instituted Massachusetts Lodge #1 in Boston. And then, on April 26, 1819, Thomas Wildey, and four others, started Washington Lodge #1 in Baltimore, Maryland. All these first North American Lodges used ancient rituals from England, and “self-instituted” – that is, the members gave the obligations to themselves in the presence of the other members. On December 26, 1821, Pennsylvania Lodge #1 was formed – and like those Lodges in New York, Boston, and Baltimore, the members became Odd Fellows through “self-institution.”

These early Lodges banded together to ultimately create Grand Lodges and what eventually became a Sovereign Grand Lodge. At first they affiliated with the Manchester Unity, but then separated and went their own independent way – developing their own ritual. In 1823, Lodges in Pennsylvania, New York and Massachusetts were established or reorganized, and they recognized the Order in Baltimore as the head of the Order in America. On January 15, 1825, a meeting was held in Baltimore to organize the Grand Lodge of the United States as the supreme Odd Fellows body in America. Thomas Wildey was elected Grand Master, but in the following year this title was changed to Grand Sire.

In 1969, Myrtle Russell, then President of the International Association of Rebekah Assemblies, wrote these words about Thomas Wildey: “He lived to see the fruits of his labor. The Order took a firm hold in the community. Its membership improved in quality as well as quantity. It became better organized with a better system and a better ritual. It abolished old customs which were distasteful to the rising generation and separated from the Manchester Unity and became an independent body.

So, clearly, Odd Fellowship in the United States had an early history of change and evolution.

Subsequently, Odd Fellowship, created the Grand Encampment and the branch of Encampments in 1841. And in 1851-52, under the leadership of Schuyler Colfax, the Order created the Rebekah Degree, opening Odd Fellowship up to women and becoming the first fraternal order to do so. And the branch of Patriarchs Militant was created in 1885.

Evolution and change in this Order is part of the unique fabric of Odd Fellowship.
And now we look to “modern history” – the year is 1946 and World War II has ended. The world has changed dramatically. Women were working while men were at war. Men came home from the war, changed. Social security and a great range of government services went into effect in the USA. Music was different. Television permeated society. Society changed big time. Yet Odd Fellowship failed and refused to evolve. The result? Since World War II, our Order’s membership has declined 90%. Notwithstanding the great history of change and evolution which has been the hallmark of IOOF since it’s very founding, the Order changed very little after 1946. In fact, some might say that there are Lodge in our Order which today function much like they did in the 1940’s.

Let’s take a lesson from our own history. We need to re-look at how we operate. We need to become relevant again to a whole new generation of potential members – men and women born in the 1980’s and 1990’s. We need to understand that the current and the next generation of members will not join our fraternal order because we have a secret handshake and a secret password. They will, however, join an Order that makes a difference in their community and that provides a social network and a fellowship for its members.

We ignore the lessons of the past at our peril.

Reform, revitalization, renewal should not frighten us. It’s part of the fabric of our Order. It’s how our Order will attract the current and coming generations. Let’s take a lesson from Thomas Wildey and the founders of our Order in America to “organize a better system and a better ritual” and where necessary to abolish “old customs which were distasteful to the rising generation.”

DMC Newsletter -
January 1, 2012

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

Happy New Year. I've now got to get used to writing "2012." We hope your 2012 is healthy, happy, safe, and productive. In the spirit of Odd Fellowship, here's the latest DMC Newsletter, written by Grand Warden Rick Boyles. Rick provides us good food for thought as we head into the new year.

F - L – T, Dave
What now seems like years ago, our committee formed for one specific reason, which was to study how to acquire new members. Try as one might, it is difficult to dispute the fact that our order is quickly failing. Many lodges now meet with barely a quorum (five members) in attendance. We all say we want members, but the question is what are we willing to do to gain them? The order provides applications for new members, but unlike other groups, we seem to lack a definite message to newcomers. Consider 150 years ago, when our order was young. Our order performed services we no longer provide, such as a sense of security, sustenance in trying times, companionship in a hard and lonely environment. In today's world, even in these times of recession, most of us have jobs or are in retirement, have ample access to companionship and sustenance, so our needs are less basic, and yet they clearly still exist. So, then, the issue of what we as The Independent Order of Odd Fellows, should do to attract new members must adapt to these new and more measured needs.

Some of our biggest successes in the order now address needs by the individual lodges and members by focusing on their private interests. Hayward Lodge, which has just been rejuvenated over the last couple of years, has been rejuvenated primarily as a lodge focused on music and they are an exciting lodge to visit. They love to bring singing into their lodge, which clearly harkens back to our beginnings. Their lodge is featured on the cover of our latest magazine issue. Davis Lodge has become a strong lodge hall by overseeing a number of committees within the lodge addressing special interests of individual members, such as community/charitable work and good fellowship/social activities. Therefore, members attend these lodges for specific reasons, and not for the old rationale of dinner, security, or companionship. Other lodges have varied measures of success, but in order to grow, we need to look at our members more individually. We need to look at our members and say to ourselves, what keeps them coming?

The argument some old time members may provide is that these new members are not “real” members, but I have personally become bewildered by this argument. I have yet to hear what a “real” member is. Some say that this new approach creates a club like atmosphere, but in reality, what was the initial purpose of the Odd Fellows if not to be club like? In point of fact, most of the lodges now in descent are extremely club like, even to the point of looking at the outside world as the enemy. Many lodges that have lost their members don't want new members and would not know what to do if they got new members. The simple reality is that a lodge with 5 members in attendance is only a semblance of a lodge, not a lodge in reality. A real lodge would seat all positions, and each member would feel valued not used. We have forgotten to look at members personally, we only look at them as completing our quorum,
but this will not last long. The quorum will collapse, the fifth member will die or fail to attend, and we will be forced to close another lodge until we realize that members are people with interests outside this lodge hall. Certainly, not all interests can be shared or are shared, but many can be. By working to our members' interests, we may find others in our communities which share these interests, and they will be more likely to join and stay interested.

So, in closing, our committee does not know the answer for your lodge. And we will never know the answer for your lodge, because you, dear member, are in charge of your own destiny in your own lodge. Yet, it is time to realize that something must be done with your lodge in order to return it to vitality. Will another dinner do it? Perhaps, but you might also look at your members as individuals and see what would make them happy? What are their core interests? Friendship, Love and Truth are our core values, but how do we utilize these core values today? We find what our members hold dear and try something that would pique their inner desires. Lodges that have encountered success have addressed the private interests of individual members and this is what we must do if we care to be more than a diminishing quorum. No one knows what is right for you, but if you express your own interest to others, you may be surprised that it attracts those who may share it with you.

Happy New Year to all, and may we all work together to bring in a more vital group.

In Friendship, Love and Truth, Rick Boyles

E-mail to California Deputy Grand Master Rod Metoyer - January 2, 2012

Rod,

FYI:

Our Lodge started 2011 with 152 regular members. We initiated 26 new members in two pledge classes during the year, giving us 178 members. However, we suspended two members for non-payment of dues, and 5 members withdrew. So the net gain was 19. We ended 2011 with 171 regular members in the Davis Odd Fellows Lodge. Once again, we may very well be the fastest growing Lodge in California, if not the USA.
We currently have 16 applicants awaiting initiation in the Spring, and already have another 7 applicants for the next group of initiates for the Fall.

Best,
Dave

DMC Newsletter -
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.

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.
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

DMC Newsletter -
January 19, 2012

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

As you all know, the major purpose of Dedicated Members for Change is stem the tide of declining membership in our ancient Order. This is a mission that ALL Odd Fellows and Rebekah should support. Over the last 60+ years our Order (like other fraternal organizations) has been victimized by steeply declining membership. This decline ultimately affects everything we do, and as a result we have seen Lodges losing their charters, consolidating, and declining in membership to such an extent that Lodges can't fill officer positions, have lost their checks and balances, and often can barely muster a quorum of five members for a meeting.

We believe that we, as a fraternal Order, must become relevant to men and women in the 21st Century - and in this way we will be able to attract the new members to re-create the vibrant Lodges we enjoyed in the 19th and 20th Centuries. We need to be more visible and more active in our communities, and we need to develop an active social program to foster good fellowship in our Lodges.

More and more Odd Fellows and Rebekahs understand this, and so I am happy to say that the e-mail matrix of Dedicated Members for Change continues to grow by leaps and bounds. Welcome to all the new DMC members. And here's a reminder to all DMC members: if you have members of the Order you believe would enjoy DMC, please check with them and get their approval, and then send me their names and e-mail addresses - I will add them to the list. And thank you!

What follows is an article by the leader of one of our more active Lodges. DMC doesn't believe that there is just “one way” for Lodges to be active and grow. Each Lodge must find it's own special recipe that makes them unique.
Sycamore Lodge # 129 in Hayward has discovered the formula that works for them! Please see the article below from Brother Frank Goulart, the distinguished and active Noble Grand of Sycamore Lodge #129. In my opinion, Frank is the kind of dynamic leader that every Lodge eventually needs.

Fraternally,
Dave Rosenberg

E-mail to Don Smith and Rick Boyles - February 11, 2012

Don and Rick, what a day!

We had over 100 attend our Breakfast meeting this morning - and they were all members and potential members! We just voted in the next class of members into our Lodge this morning (14 new ones from the Spring 2012 Class) and are about to launch our next class of pledges (16 are already in the Fall 2012 Class and that class won't officially launch till March). Our Lodge currently has 171 members, and we will clearly go over the 200 mark next year.

And then in our Encampment, we now have 30 members (we had 3 when I joined in late 2009) and have another application - at 31, we will be the largest Encampment in California.

Odd Fellows should be exploding in memberships - not declining.

Dave

DMC Newsletter - February 19, 2012

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

The discovery of Gold at Sutter's Mill in Coloma on January 24, 1848, brought tens of thousands of fortune-seekers to California, beginning in late 1848 and continuing into 1849. They were called the “49ers” and they flocked here. The rush was so great and so intense that California became a state in 1850. Even before California's statehood, an Odd Fellows Lodge was instituted in San Francisco on September 9, 1849. We can learn from the lessons of history. I
recently came across an article by Dr. John Morse in his History of Sacramento published in 1853 which recited the following:

“From the first of August, 1849, the deluging tides of immigration began to roll into the city of San Francisco their hundreds and thousands daily; not men made robust and healthy by a sea voyage, but poor, miserable beings, so famished and filthy, so saturated with scurbutic diseases, or so depressed and despondent in spirits, as to make them the easy prey to disease and death. In the month of July, 1849, these subjects of distress and the appeals of misery became so common that men could not escape them and if there had been the utmost attention paid to the exercise of charity and protection, it would have been impossible to have met the demands of the destitute, sick and dying as a commensurate sympathy would have dictated under such circumstances.

“If there was ever a time in the annals of human misery, when a power was needed stronger than the power of gold, that time had come. If among men there was an influence that could come like the tempest, or, 'a still small voice' and check them in their pursuit of wealth, to listen to the promptings that would awaken again the instincts of humanity, the voice of nature cried out for that influence to come and stay the tide. At such time there were those who, remembering that in the past, in the far off country where their homes were, they had learned of the love that bound David to Jonathan; and like the still small voice, they heard the passing arrow, the messenger of a fraternity's devotion.

“General A.M. Winn, was the first to respond, leading off in the path of humanity towards an organized effort for the relief of the unfortunate. On the morning of August 20th, 1849, he caused to be distributed printed notes, calling upon 'The Odd Fellows of Sacramento City' to meet that evening at the store of Winn, Baker & McGhee. A goodly number answered to the call, and the General, as chairman, being called upon to explain the objects of the meeting said:

"Brothers - You are assembled under the most extraordinary circumstances - we have not the power to work as a Lodge, and yet the immense amount of suffering among the members of the Order, requires our most active benevolence in carrying out the great principles taught us at the alter of Odd fellowship. We have met for the purpose of finding out who of our citizens are Odd Fellows, and to form an association for the relief of sick and distressed brothers. A dreadful calamity has overtaken us - hundreds are lying sick, rolled in their filthy blankets, without wife, children or friends to nurse them while sick or bury them when dead. We who have health and means should be liberal
to those in distress, as long as in our power. Let us do all we can, without a violation of the principles of our Order.”

By analogy, I find General Winn's call to do all we can, as long as it is in our power, without a violation of the principles of our Order to be chillingly apt today - 163 years later. Today, of course, we don't have sick and dying “49ers” coming off ships. But today, many of our Lodges are sick, and our Order is dying. It's time for all of us to step up to do all in our power to reverse the trend, and bring in new members to replenish, rejuvenate and recharge our Lodges, and thus, our Order. That's why DMC was formed.

F - L - T
Dave Rosenberg

E-mail from Past Sovereign Grand Master Don Smith to Dave Rosenberg - February 19, 2012

Dave,

Your talents are so many, and you skill for writing is extraordinary. You are making a notch for yourself in the history of Odd Fellowship. I can see where you will go down in history as one of the great men in the IOOF along with Thomas Wildey, and others in the early days of the Order.

Don

Don R. Smith, Director
Odd Fellows Home of California

E-mail to Davis Lodge Members - February 25, 2012

Dear Odd Fellows and Pledges,

Please join us on the Oddest Day of the Year - **Wednesday, February 29** - from 5 to 8 p.m. at the Lodge. Since it's Leap Year Day, we're going to have Lodge Club Night that very evening.
The bar will be open with special member club night prices. The big screen television will be on. Members, pledges, and guests of members and pledges are invited to just drop by and enjoy the company.

In addition, we invite everyone to bring a potluck dish on Wednesday. The theme is “PASTA” - so bring one of your favorite pasta recipes to share. No time to whip up a pasta dish? Then bring a salad.

So, at Lodge night this Wednesday, you can socialize, you can have dinner, you can have your favorite libation. All this on Odd Night.

Fraternally,

Dave Rosenberg
For the Good Fellowship Committee

Brothers and Sisters,

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Dedicated Members for Change.

Odd Fellowship, and its unique opportunity to enrich and improve our lives and the lives of others, has been renewed in Hayward in the last two years. There are too many of you to mention who have continued to help me and the members of our Lodge with our Odd Fellow education. Thanks to all of you.

The story of Hayward’s Sycamore Lodge No 129 is instructive to the issues of saving lodges and increasing membership, both critical issues of the day for our Order.

The story of Hayward’s return from charter revocation is simple on one level.

A group of musician/artists were motivated by a local historian to save an endangered local treasure and use it as a base to help local non-profits and agencies co-operate to encourage music and art education, especially in the public schools, to relieve the distressed students of all ages who desperately need the music and art as a fundamental part of education.

What a concept! Save a local historic landmark! Get together with like minded people to do good in our community and have a good time, while respecting a historic landmark and the moral traditions that have served the Order well for 160 years in the State of California and for 145 years in Hayward.
To the issue of saving the lodge, we must candidly admit that a majority of those who joined were of a mind to save an important historic building.

The Odd Fellows Building, built in 1868-9 was not quite completed when the great earthquake of 1868 ruptured the earth some 100 feet southwest of the building. When the shaking stopped, the building stood, its first floor finished, the second floor framed and the roof on top intact. The Lodge Room was renovated in 1926.

This shared interest in saving the building has played a major role in increasing our membership. Our guests are regularly attracted to the Order after coming up the stairs to the Lodge Room.

With regards to increasing membership, the factors we have identified involve community service via a shared interest and good fellowship events. Sometimes both factors utilize the talent in our lodge.

Sycamore Lodge members definitely have a shared interest in the arts, music in particular. This is in addition to the common shared interest we have in protecting the building, which is also a service to the community. Our list of projects is driven by interests shared by our members, and discovered by listening to our members.

And we try to listen to our members to discover ideas for good fellowship events at the lodge. Dinners and pot lucks are always popular. We have had readings, historic presentations, classical and popular pianists, chamber music groups, small combos, big band, pick up jams and sing-a-longs, all led by one or more lodge member.

Along the way, we have discovered Odd Fellowship, which has given us a unique opportunity to enrich our lives. Just as we respect and admire the integrity of our historic building, we have grown to respect and admire the many facets of the Odd Fellows, and how it can improve our lives and the lives of others.

Just as we seek to spread music and art in our community, we seek to spread the news of opportunity to join this good Order, to work together on worthy projects. Odd Fellowship is the glue which will make our efforts endure and have meaning, as relationships and fellowship underlie it all. Sycamore Lodge feels blessed to have re-connected to its roots.
May we all continue to help each other in our quest.

Friendship, Love and Truth

Frank Goulart, Noble Grand
Sycamore Lodge No 129

DMC Newsletter –
February 25, 2012

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

Here are some thoughts as you contemplate the future of our Order.

F - L - T
Dave Rosenberg

WORDS I WOULD RATHER NOT HEAR IN THE LODGE
by Dave Rosenberg

When I first joined this great order eight years ago, I remember attending Lodge meetings where we could barely muster 10 members. The members who attended were 6 or 7 of the “old-timers” (long-time members of the Order who were in their 70's and 80's), 1 or 2 “journeymen” (members who had about 3 or 4 years of membership under their belts), and 2 or 3 of us “newcomers” (newly initiated members who, in reality, had limited knowledge of the Order).

I have distinct memories of those early days. At the time, the Lodge, basically, did little more than have formal meetings twice each month, considered donating relatively small amounts of money to local charities and causes (e.g. $25 to the local boy scouts) and to Odd Fellows charities ($50 to the Children's Home), and spend about 6 months in planning a spaghetti dinner. I also have memories of us newcomers - fresh and shiny - suggesting all sorts of things at the meetings, primarily under the “new business” agenda. However, the clearest memories of these early days are the memories of the words spoken by the old-time members each and every time one of us new members made a suggestion.
You may have heard words like these in your own Lodges.

Here are the words that were spoken by the old-time members in response to the new members' suggestions:

“We can't do that.”
“That's against the Code.”
“We tried that before - it doesn't work.”
“That's not the way it's done.”
“That's a stupid idea.”

Can you imagine how discouraging (insulting even) these words are to a newcomer? Some of our new members, after hearing the negative and dismissive attitudes, simply never came back to meetings and quietly left the Order, soon after initiation. But, fortunately, I never did - and others hung in there as well. And, to be fair, we had one of the old-timers who had the courage to stand up to his colleagues, and push back a bit - giving the Order's new blood the opportunity to make suggestions, discuss ideas, plan things, make some mistakes, and actually change the way the Lodge functioned. Our Lodge became active, and that attracted new members. And eventually, the old-timers stopped being so negative.

So the moral of this little story is that if you hear words spoken like those above, push back a little. No idea is stupid. Just because it's never been done, doesn't mean it shouldn't be tried. Even though it's been done a certain way in the past, doesn't mean that this is the best way. Merely because it's been tried in the past and failed, there is no law that says it can't be tried again in the future. And just because someone says “it's against the Code” doesn't mean that it is - one should actually check the Code to see. Let's resolve to be more positive and supportive in our Lodge meetings, not so negative and dismissive.

DMC Newsletter -
March 4, 2012

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

All living things evolve to some extent to fit their environment. If they don't, they go the way of the dinosaur and the dodo bird, and eventually become extinct. Things change even in our modern society. The computers we used just 10 years ago are now viewed as outmoded clunkers. After World War II there were 12,000 bowling alleys in the United States - today there are only
3,000. Even organizations evolve - and if they fail to do so, they suffer the consequences. The landscape of America is littered with the corpses - hundreds of them - of dead and dying fraternal orders. It is the goal of DMC to work to avoid that fate for the Odd Fellows. Our concern is that our membership has declined steadily since World War II. Our membership numbers have declined 90% since the 1940's and we now stand at less than 5,000 dues-paying members in California, with about one-third of our Lodges having less than 15 members on the books. We have Lodges where the youngest member is approaching the age of 70. Those facts, to DMC, are big red flags.

The other day I ran across an interesting article on the Internet. Under the title of “Looking Under the Fez,” it was all about a fraternal order in distress. No, it wasn’t about the Odd Fellows or even our branch, the Encampment. It was all about the Shriners. But many of the thoughts conveyed in the article could be about any fraternal order, including the Odd Fellows. It was written in 1993 (when lodges generally were all-male), but in many respects the article is applicable today. I share excerpts of that article (with some minor editing) for your reading pleasure:

“Once they roamed the earth, proud and free. Mighty herds of Moose and Elk, great flocks of Eagles, pride and after pride of Lions. But the finest example of all was the Shriners. Romping and gamboling & driving miniature cars in precision formation, the gold-and-rhinestone trim on their bright red fezzes sparking in the sun; truly they were the most playful of all fraternal organizations.”

While they are not extinct, these days the Shriners could be called an endangered species. At the turn of the century, millions of men - possibly one out of every five adult males in the United States - belonged to one or more fraternal lodges. But as times and attitudes change, these all-male social organizations are literally dying out. 'The Black Camel is advancing on us' say the Shriners, who have lost over one-third of their membership since 1980. And it's hard to see where they'll find young replacements for the members who leave in a hearse. It never occurs to most of us nowadays to belong to a lodge. When was the last time one of your buddies turned to you and said, 'Dude, next week I'm joining the Knights of Pythias'?

Apparently, fraternal organizations offer things that nobody wants any more: buddy-buddy fellowship, mumbo-jumbo rituals and frequent mandatory meetings. Even though we may not want to join them, it's still possible to admire them from a certain (ironic) distance. It's a bit like watching the last of
the dinosaurs thunder off into the sunset, doomed but glorious. We know the world will never see their like again. The Shriners, the boldest and most in-your-face of all the fraternal organizations, hold a special fascination for me and many others.

Most of us couldn’t tell an Elk from a Moose from an Odd Fellow, but we all know at least something about the Shriners: that they wear those funny hats, that they support a network of charity hospitals for children, that they’ve organized themselves around a hokey Arabian Nights theme. And most of all, we know them from their public appearances in parades and such, dressed as clowns, or teetering on tiny mini-bikes, or tooling around in go-karts. Though most of us have some idea what they look like, not many know what the Shriners actually are. Officially, they’re the Ancient Arabic Order of the Nobles of the Mystic Shrine (A.A.O.N.M.S.) founded in 1872. A colorful Near East theme runs through everything they do. Their 191 chapters or “Temples” bear names like Sahara, Tangier, Damascus, Mecca, and Nile. They surround themselves with Ali Baba trappings of pyramids, camels, palm trees, and scimitars. Dressed in Bedouin robes, new Nobles are initiated in a symbolic journey across a desert’s burning sands to an oasis, where thirsts are quenched with free-flowing wine. But rearrange the letters A.A.O.N.M.S. and they spell ‘A Mason’ a not-so-subtle clue that one must first be ‘A Mason’ in order to become a Shriner. For centuries, outsiders have speculated about the Masons’ secret oaths, rituals and handshakes, all based on legendary stonemasons who supposedly built medieval cathedrals and Old Testament temples. (For this reason, Masonic symbols include builder’s tools like the compass, the square, and the trowel.)

[Why has membership in the Shriners diminished] A conflict that keeps modern men out of the fraternal life is society’s demands on our time. We’ve all heard that life was harder back in Great-Grandpa’s day, but he did seem to have plenty of leisure time to spend down at the lodge. Today we’re busy with our careers, busy with our families, and when we want entertainment, we’ve got TV and videos and the Internet right in our homes. After days of packed schedules and time conflicts, the last thing we want is the Lions’ Club or the Shriners making more irritating demands on our time.

Dave Rosenberg
Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

Attached to this DMC Newsletter is an article entitled “Moving Forward as an Order” from California Deputy Grand Master Rod Metoyer and California Deputy Grand Warden Rick Boyles. Please take a moment to read the article, and please consider making the article available to the members of your Lodge. The actions and options spelled out in the article are a major step forward in the evolution and progress of our Order. We are determined to halt the decline in membership of Odd Fellowship in California, and to (finally) start on the road to increasing membership in our Lodges.

The way forward envisions an increased emphasis in local actions which attract and retain new members in their 20's, 30's and 40's in terms of what interests THEM in joining a Lodge. What attracted folks to join Odd Fellowship in 1912 simply is no longer the case in 2012. Today and in the future, we have got to emphasize a 21st Century vision of fraternity, including: local community outreach, social activities within the Lodge, an increased emphasis in social meetings, more joint social meetings with our Rebekah Lodges, participation in the Membership Challenge Grant Program, and “best practices” assistance to those Lodges whose memberships have fallen below 15.

F - L - T
Dave Rosenberg

Moving Forward as an Order
by DGM Rod Metoyer and GW Rick Boyles

At Grand Lodge sessions in 2011, a number of resolutions were presented by Brother Dave Rosenberg and the Davis Lodge which were adopted by votes of the representatives. These resolutions were discussed by the Grand Lodge Board of Directors, and the next step in this process is this letter. We write to alert you of these important resolutions, and we encourage you and your Lodge to discuss them and, ultimately, to implement them. We feel confident that our California Lodges can stop the decline in membership, and can bring in the new members we need to prosper as an Order.

The resolutions make reference to the fact that the membership of Odd Fellows in this jurisdiction has shown a steady decline for over sixty-five years, including the loss of 198 Odd Fellows members and 469 Rebekahs in 2009, and that as of December 31, 2009, Odd Fellows had declined to 4,643
dues-paying members and Rebekahs had declined to 2,816 dues-paying members. In 2009 three Odd fellows Lodges and eight Rebekah Lodges lost their charters, were suspended or consolidated. At the end of 2009, there were over 40 Odd Fellows Lodges in California that had 15 or fewer members. And the stark reality is that many of our Lodges are aging – some Lodges show the youngest members in their sixties, having skipped one or two generations of potential members.

Obviously, this trend cannot continue.

The resolutions which were adopted at the 2011 Grand Lodge sessions, we believe, can reverse this trend. We commend them to you, urge you to discuss them in your Lodges, and most importantly, implement them. The intent behind these resolutions is to move our Order into the 21st Century, to make our fraternity relevant to the young men and women we need to bring into our Lodges, and thus to reverse the trend of declining membership. There are six resolutions that we invite you to consider:

**Community outreach.** Lodges must encourage and emphasize community outreach, community visibility, and good community and charitable works. Successful Lodges reach out into their communities and do projects in their communities. These successful Lodge know that member satisfaction is high when the Lodge does good community works. Further, these good community works allow Lodges to be more visible, thus encouraging interest in the fraternity by members of the community.

**Good fellowship.** Members and potential members want to be in a Lodge that provides a social network, and frankly, provides for a good time. In this regard, successful Lodges foster lots of good fellowship activities such as Lodge dinners, trips, game nights, movies nights, Lodge socials, and the myriad activities which encourage members to socialize and enjoy each other’s company. When members enjoy their Lodge experience, satisfaction is high. This encourages members to bring in friends and acquaintances as potential new members.

**Social meetings.** Lodges are encouraged to have formal business meetings, but also to have social meetings. These social meetings are open to family members, prospective Lodge members and invited members of the public. This allows folks to get a sense of the worthwhile programs and activities sponsored by the Lodge, without revealing any of the ritualistic work and passwords of the Order. We can’t always operate in secret. We have to be open as part of the community.
Joint meetings. Odd Fellows and Rebekah Lodges are encouraged to hold joint social meetings. We are all part of the same Order, and we may find that working together, we can accomplish much more.

Membership challenge grant. This program was extended, and Lodges can receive up to $100 for each new member that they bring into the Order. These funds can be used by Lodges to assist in recruitment efforts.

The 21st Century project. Finally, the Grand Lodge is in the process of developing the “21st Century Project” which will assist Lodges with less than 21 members to increase membership to a minimum of 21. We cannot be complacent about the need for new members, and this voluntary program will help. If your Lodge has less than 21 members, and would like to garner assistance to bring membership back up to 21, please contact one of us. We will be glad to put you in touch with members of Lodges which are growing — these members can share “best practices” with you. Who knows? They may suggest an approach that will really work to bring in those new members you want.

DMC Newsletter -
March 15, 2012

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

Welcome to March 15 or “the Ides of March.” The term “the Ides of March” is viewed as the 15th of March - the day that Caesar was assassinated in the Roman Senate. But the word “ides” actually refers to every month. It comes from the Latin “idus” which means “half division” and was used to describe the approximate middle of each month. In fact, the “ides” of March, May, July and October is the 15th day of those months; and in the other months, the “ides” is the 13th day of the month. OK, so much for today’s history and Latin lesson.

I can’t tell you how many times I’m asked the question, “How did your Lodge start the process of change?” Members of other Lodges complain that whenever they want to make changes in the way the Lodge does business, they are met with fierce resistance from long-time older members who say things like, “That won’t work” or “We can’t do it that way.” Tough question. No easy answers.

I can tell you that when I joined my Lodge in 2004, my Lodge had less than 40 members on the books, could barely scrape together a dozen members for a
meeting, was virtually invisible in the community, and the Lodge Hall hadn’t changed or been modernized for 50 years. Today, my Lodge has 171 members (and will be initiating 14 more later this month), has 17 new applicants for membership, brings close to 100 together for meetings, is highly visible and recognized in the community, and has an upgraded and modernized Lodge Hall that is used virtually every day of the month (including the “ides”).

How did that all start?

When I reflect back to 2004-2006 (when the “change” all started) I believe that the ingredients of success were the following: (1) We brought in a handful of new, young members; (2) Those new members had ideas for the Lodge that they put on the table, and notwithstanding some push-back from older members, the Lodge moved forward on them; (3) The new members moved rapidly into leadership positions.

I think the single biggest change that was implemented in the early years was the creation of Lodge standing committees. There were no such committees before this time. And, at my suggestion, the Lodge created committees to focus our ideas and energy, and to involve the members. Everything was fair game. We allowed the members to use their creativity. So, over the years, we created a Good Fellowship Committee, a Community Support Committee, a Bingo Committee, a Music & Concerts Committee, a Tree Planting Committee, a Senior Project Committee, a Social Services Committee, and many others. When a member had an idea, we said “go with it” - we weren’t afraid to try it. So, for example, a member wanted to go on hikes - so we created a hiking group and every few months, that group would plan a hike. Another member wanted to brew beer - so we created a Zymurgy Committee which engages in the science and art of beer brewing. A member wanted to help frail seniors in their homes - so we have a Senior Project Committee that once each month helps seniors identified by the Senior Center as needing assistance in their home (e.g. prune trees and bushes, build a shed, help understand their computer, etc.). A member wanted to do wine tasting - so we have a wine club that meets monthly in member's homes to socialize and sample varietals. A member wanted to help the environment and plant trees - so the Tree Planting Committee works with Tree Davis to plant trees around town. A member wanted to help folks with mental health issues - and so we created a Social Services Committee where members can work one-on-one with adults with mental illness. A member proposed once-each-month Bingo to assist community groups - so we do that and last year provided $8,500 to various community organizations. Another member wanted to raise money for our schools - so we organized a Bike Parade and raised $15,000 for our schools.
Members have proposed Bunco Night at the Lodge, Family Movie Night, Dance Lessons at the Lodge, bus trips to the wine country, fundraising dinners for various community groups, an OddtoberFest, a Halloween Dance, a fundraising event for developmentally disabled adults, etc. All these ideas, and more, have been implemented.

Has every idea worked? No. But most have. And our Lodge is willing to take the chance on member's ideas. As a result, we have a Lodge that is highly visible in the community, that involves the members, and that provides significant member satisfaction. When members enjoy the social activities of the Lodge, and enjoy the community support actions of the Lodge, they remain as members, and they bring in new members.

Did this happen overnight? No. It took years to develop and to flourish. But it does work.

F - L - T
Dave Rosenberg

DMC Newsletter -
March 19, 2012

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

Here is the latest "DMC Newsletter" for your reading pleasure. Today we have an article written by California Grand Warden Rick Boyles.

Brother Dave Rosenberg had an excellent point when he wrote about lodges having shared interests. Lodges many years ago had shared common interests, and were often town centers. In a different atmosphere and certainly a different time, they offered security, camaraderie, and a place where a tired soul could not only get sustenance for his body, but for his mind as well. Today's world is more complex and faster than those earlier times. Yet, there are many lonely souls out there, many who would benefit from our beautiful thoughts of friendship, love and truth. A prominent member of the order said to me that before we invite new members in, we should search within ourselves to see what we offer. This is an important point. Some of our lodges no longer provide welcoming atmospheres to the point where they have almost become anti-social. They may have members who practice berating
others or guided by their own self interests. They fail to attract new members due to a flaw within themselves. Our order is a benevolent one, and is meant to aid each member who wanders into our midst, but it can't help one to the exclusion of others. My feeling is that we have to expunge fear and hatred from our midst. Not only are all men created equal in our country's heroic constitution, all souls should be loved equally within our walls. The real question before us today, is do we have the fortitude to banish hatred, to diminish rhetoric, to admire the majesty in each person's smile? If so, then we will survive. If not, we will just fail by virtue of our own flailing hatred and screaming dissent. Our country and our order were both founded by nurturing dissent. We should not forget that, nor should we think that it is best if the majority of us remain silent while someone else derides our good intentions. We are all brothers and sisters, and through our own diversities spring salvation.

Sometimes, at some lodges, we allow one member to dictate to others, and all others become subservient to him or her. This is the wrong route to take, since eventually it constricts all growth. No one person, no matter how noble, no matter how knowledgeable supplants our need for growth and universal acceptance. We are not an order shaped in one human's image, but rather a composite of all of us. We can't allow one member to bankrupt our lodges morally or financially. Moderation in all areas is the key.

Then, we come to the basic question we all ask, is how do we grow? I believe that we grow by suspension of fear. In other words, many of us whom have grown comfortable in our lodges with our fellow members have to realize that there is nothing to fear in attracting new members. If we guide the new members correctly, then there is nothing to fear from them. Some of our long term members may say that they don't fear new members, but I believe all of us share a certain apprehension of anything new and different. If we realize that new members are not joining to attack us but rather to make us stronger, than it should follow that new members are our greatest asset.

Does what work at the Davis Lodge work for the rest of us? Perhaps not. But, let's analyze the arguments against the Davis Lodge. The arguments that I hear is that Davis is run by judges and lawyers and so naturally attracts other judges and lawyers. Some of this is true, but I have found members at the Davis Lodge who now join to be part of specific committees within their lodge. I have spoken to members who did not know Brother Rosenberg prior to joining the lodge and only joined to be on the wine committee, the bike committee, the hiking committee, the beer committee or any of the myriad of other committees they now have. Another argument I hear that it is a club and
not a lodge. What does this mean, exactly? I have attended a number of their lodge meetings. They follow the ritual. They have many reports, where most of the smaller lodges are now silent. They have elections, visiting committees, new and unfinished business of substance. In short, they have everything we require of a lodge. Their push towards modernization is now endorsed by Sovereign Grand Lodge. In short, I believe that many who cast aspersions on the Davis Lodge just fail to smell the coffee. The order is shrinking quickly. Our older members are dying off. Receptions and other order-related functions are becoming less attended almost by leaps and bounds. Where receptions used to draw hundreds and thousands, now they are lucky to draw 50 hardy individuals, many of whom are compelled to attend. Let's wake up, before it is too late.

In closing, I don't suggest that we all emulate the Davis Lodge, but we can find what works for us and use it. If we have a specific interest, hobby, or cause, let's run with it. Let's not be so stubborn that we forget what our goal as an order is which is to survive. If that makes us club like, then let's take a look at our history and see what has proceeded us, because many of our successful lodges are indeed club like. Do you recall the video SGL presented several years ago on a motorcycle club who re-vitalized a lodge in the Midwest? Was that not club like? How about in the 1800's when most members could not read the ritual and each lodge was run by politicians, lawyers, judges, business people, who could read the ritual was that not club like? If our intention as an order is just to cast aspersions on the few successful lodges still in existence, then we truly have lost our way.

A final note: defunct orders now listed as curiosities are multitudinous online. We could easily join their ranks. Let's try and work together to prevent this.

In Friendship, Love and Truth, Rick Boyles, Grand Warden

DMC Newsletter -
March 24, 2012

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

I never knew that a little 3 x 2 inch card could be a time machine. Let me explain.
I am a member of the Encampment (in fact, I am Chief Patriarch of our Davis Encampment #21), and the other day I looked on the back of my official Encampment membership card and took a trip through time. I know that very few of you are members of the Encampment. I understand that there may only be about 10 Encampments that remain in California and the membership in all of California numbers just a bit over 200 - so you probably don't have this card. So, let me share with you what I found on the back of the card.

It was a trip to another age.

On the back of the card (in very small print) is a listing of “Telegraphic Cipher and Key.” Now, I don't know about you, but I haven't used a telegraph recently. In fact, I suspect most of the folks reading this e-mail have never used a telegraph. It's a device from another era that became slowly out-dated when folks started using telephones, then telefaxes, and now e-mails and texts. But there it was on the official card of the Encampment distributed in 2012.

There were 22 separate “telegraphic ciphers and keys” identified on the card. They include the following:

**Benefit** - What sick and funeral benefits do you pay?

**Black** - He is a fraud, and if he has a card or other papers from this lodge, they are forgeries.

**Boat** - He is an expelled member and has not been in good standing for ________________.

**Cash** - Is in our city asking financial assistance, and claims membership in your lodge in good standing.

**Caution** - Look out for a fraud named ________________________________.

**Doubt** - Identity in doubt. Wire description.

**Final** - A member of your lodge died here.

**Funds** - Shall we aid him and draw on you to the extent of $ ____________?

**Green** - Wire instructions to us at once as to the disposition of his remains.
Grip - Draw on us for the amount of expenses incurred.

Help - Will your lodge pay nurse hire, and how much per day?

House - Is in our city, holding a visiting card from your lodge and asking of us financial assistance.

Lodge - Forward remains to this place by ______________________________.

Purple - We think best to bury him there.

Red - Holding a visiting card from your lodge died here.

Regalia - Assist him and we will honor draft to the extent of $ ____________.

River - Has your lodge a member by the name of ________________________.

Rock - A member of our lodge is in your city needing assistance. His name and address are ________________________________.

Secretary - He has a fraudulent card.

White - We don't know any such party, and he does not belong to our lodge.

Widow - Wife or child of a deceased member of your lodge is in our city asking assistance. Shall we draw on you to the extent of $ ________________?

Yellow - Is in our city and very sick. Claims membership in your lodge. Shall we give him attendance on your account?

These “ciphers and keys” harken back to a completely different time. For one thing, the references are all male-oriented. Of course, today, we have Odd Fellows, Rebekahs and members of the Encampment of both sexes. There was a time, of course, (we'll call it “The Telegraph Age”) when Odd Fellows would travel to different towns, primarily seeking work or financial assistance. Lodges in these other towns relied on passwords, signs, grips and primarily relied on cards to determine membership. Apparently, some folks who were not members of the Order would carry fake cards to gain assistance. The Telegraph Age was a time when lodges would assist traveling members who
needed money, who were ill, and even those who died and needed burial. These “ciphers and keys” were the code words by which lodges could check with each other to determine what should be done.

It’s certainly an interesting trip through history. But it also shows the dramatic evolution of this Order. We are no longer living in The Telegraph Age.

Dave Rosenberg

DMC Newsletter -
March 29, 2012

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

Reading the Minutes of the Grand Lodge Board of Directors shows many positive aspects of Odd Fellowship in California. But it also shows that our hard-working Board of Directors is grappling with increasing problems brought on by the decline in membership in our Order.

It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out that when Odd Fellows Lodge membership in California falls to below 5,000 (as we currently have) there is trouble in River City. And we all know that the number of dues-paying members does not reflect the actual number of active members. At best, we can expect that half the dues-paying members are active in their Lodges - and that’s a recipe for trouble. While the 10 or 20 largest of our Lodges may be in pretty good shape in terms of membership, it is apparent that the remaining 120 of our Lodges have issues - large and small - caused by lack of membership.

Imagine a Lodge with only 12 members on the books. That Lodge probably has about 6 active members, and probably struggles to get 5 to 8 members to attend a meeting of the Lodge. Sometimes, that Lodge even has difficulty obtaining the minimum quorum of 5 members for a meeting. That Lodge can’t fill all officer positions. But more importantly, because of the lack of members that Lodge can lack the financial checks and balances inherent in our Order. That Lodge may overly rely on only 1 or 2 members to do almost everything - run meetings, prepare minutes, deposit money, finalize financial reports.

The problems created by declining membership are, regretfully, reflected in the minutes of Grand Lodge Board of Director meetings. For example, the minutes of the December 3, 2011, meeting show (in part) the following:
Oakdale #228 - Temporary suspension.
East Nicholas #269 - Charter suspended.
Whittier #315 - Consolidate with America #385 complete.
Victor #429 - Consolidate with Ontario #345.
Merced #208 - Charter surrendered - building to be sold.
Kernville #58 - Charter suspended.
Manteca #425 - Charter pulled.
Campo Seco #66 - Charter to be suspended.
Yosemite #97 - Audit ordered.
San Leandro #231 - Audit complete - possible charter suspension.
Osceola #215 - Audit complete - recommend consolidation with Healdsburg #64.

This is, unfortunately, may be just the tip of the iceberg of what is happening - bit by bit - throughout the jurisdiction.

The most significant problem we face as an Order is the decline in membership that we have been experiencing for the last 65 years. Our efforts to help Lodges bring in new members should be our main short-range and long-range focus. And THAT is the goal of Dedicated Members for Change.

F - L - T
Dave Rosenberg

E-mail to Grand Warden Rick Boyles -
March 31, 2012

Rick,

The situation with our Lodges is worse than I thought. The losses of Lodges and members are increasing exponentially. And now, half of our Lodges have fewer than 21 members. And only 5 of our Lodge have memberships in the triple digits. We're a mile wide and an inch thick as a fraternity.

Dave
Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

It’s April Fool’s Day (April 1) but what I'm about to talk about in this newsletter is not a joke.

The preliminary 12-31-11 statistics (these numbers may still change as Lodges provide late reports to Grand Lodge) for the California Odd Fellows Lodges have just been provided to me and the statistics, sadly, show not only a continuation of the trend of declining membership, but an actual acceleration of that trend. The numbers paint a bleak picture of the status of Odd Fellowship in California. They show that we continue to be a mile wide as an Order, but in most places we're just an inch thick. Numbers don't lie. Here are the statistics to note:

* On 12-31-11 there were 4,377 dues-paying regular Odd Fellows in California. On 12-31-10 that number was 4,566, and on 12-31-09 that number was 4,643. So the net decline from 2009 to 2010 was 77 members, and from 2010 to 2011, the net decline was 189 members. You can see that our losses have not stopped, or even diminished - they have accelerated.

* On 12-31-11 the Order showed 132 Odd Fellows Lodges in California. On 12-31-10 that number was 141, and on 12-31-09 that number was 145. The net decline from 2009 to 2010 was 4 Lodges, and from 2010 to 2011, the net decline was 9 Lodges. Again, you can see that our decline Lodges has not stopped, or even diminished - but has accelerated.

* If you drill down and analyze the member numbers for 12-31-11 even further, the results are even ominous:

    * Of our 132 California Lodges, 66 show less than 21 dues-paying members. That is, fully half the Lodges in our jurisdiction show 20 or fewer members on their books.

    * Of our 132 Lodges in California, only 26 have 40 or more members on their books. Of our 132 Lodges, only 19 have 50 or more members. And of our 132 Lodges, only 6 Lodges (California #1 in San Francisco; Apollo #123 in San Francisco; Yerba Buena #15 in San Francisco; Davis #169; Golden West #322 in San Francisco; and Lodi #259) have memberships in triple digits (100 or more members).
Of our 132 Lodges, only 26 showed a net increase in members (and most of those showed a net increase of only 1 member) - the remaining 106 Lodges showed a net decrease in memberships or were static.

These statistics continue to paint a grim picture for our great Order in California (and I am sure that these sorts of statistics are common throughout the USA. As I have said before, since World War II (some 65 years ago) our jurisdiction has shown a steady decline in membership. The situation continues year after year and is unsustainable. At the rate we are going, our order will show less than 4,000 members in two years - and we all know that only half the members in our Lodges are “active.” What is especially troubling is the knowledge that fully half of our Lodges have less than 21 members. That's a big red flag for our Order. If a small Lodge has not shown a net increase in membership for years, there is a serious problem that needs to be faced and addressed.

This trend - unless reversed - can have only two possible futures: (1) This Order will diminish and expire within the next decade or two, or (2) This Order will devolve so that only the largest 20 (or so) Lodges survive to carry on Odd Fellowship. It is the goal of Dedicated Members for Change to reverse this trend, strengthen and sustain the Order throughout California. Thank you for your participation in and support of DMC.

F - L - T
Dave Rosenberg

DMC Newsletter -
April 6, 2012

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

I'm delighted to include an article for our newsletter from Don Smith, Past Sovereign Grand Master of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, and Past Grand Master of the California Jurisdiction, and a founding member of Dedicated Members for Change. Don has been a leading member of this Order since his 20's - and has seen it all. His words should inspire us all.

Fraternally,

Dave
Considering the membership problems in Odd Fellowship brought to my mind a statement by Grand Sire James B. Nicholson, serving in 1862-1864, when he stated that outward opposition to the IOOF will not be the cause or the failure of Odd Fellowship. He commented: “None but Odd Fellows can destroy the majestic fabric that Odd Fellows have reared and naught but internal divisions and internecine (mutually destructive; or fatal) strifes can sap our strength or destroy the influence arising out of the example of a united, a grand, a glorious fraternity.”

Opposition to several successful lodges like those in Davis, San Francisco, Hayward and elsewhere has been expressed by Grand Lodge officers, past officers and directors with comments like: “They are a social or service club and are not a fraternity.” “They don't hold regular lodge meetings.” “They don't utilize the IOOF Ritual.” “They don't carry out the principles of Friendship, Love and Truth.” “They don't support Odd Fellow programs and projects.” And many other such negative and divisive comments.

I am sure those making such statements haven't taken the time to visit and investigate these lodges and see that true fraternalism exists while carrying out good deeds for their members and non-members. They are truly helping to make this world a better place in which to live.

**SUPPORTING IOOF PROGRAMS**

Some of these lodges are the largest supporters of Rebekah Children’s Service, sending children to the Three Links Camp, benefiting the Odd Fellow Homes, supporting the Scholarship Foundation, planting trees for the SGL program, etc. These lodges also provide monetary donations to our Odd Fellows charities and programs.

**SUPPORTING THEIR COMMUNITY**

Many of these lodges have also supported their community with worthwhile programs and projects like supporting school and senior citizen centers, awarding scholarships, concerts, hosting dinners and breakfasts, allowing use of the lodge halls for free, etc. These activities have been responsible for many applications for membership.

**LIVELY SOCIAL ACTIVITIES**

Individuals don't want to belong to an organization that holds one or two business meetings each month and does nothing except pay the bills, occasionally play cards or bingo and has a pot luck dinner. Developing a
program of social activities will attract new and younger members. Get some ideas from those lodges that are successful and enlist ideas from your new members.

**ATTRACTIVE IOOF HALL**

A clean and attractive IOOF Hall is a reflection on Odd Fellowship, so make sure your lodge hall leaves a good impression on the general public so your members will be proud to claim affiliation with the Order. The successful lodges have clean and attractive halls.

**UTILIZE THE IOOF RITUAL**

The principals of Odd Fellowship are clearly pointed out in the IOOF Rituals and becoming familiar with the rituals can provide a great lesson about our fraternity. But even SGL understands that not every meeting of the lodge has to be a formal, ritual meeting. Social meetings are not only permitted, but encouraged.

**TRUE FRATERNALISM**

Participating in the activities of a lodge enables members to become better acquainted and develop closeness between Brothers and Sisters. I witnessed a demonstration of true fraternalism when visiting a meeting of Davis Lodge when a young lady expressed her thanks to the members of the lodge for sharing Odd Fellowship with her husband and herself. She had tears in her eyes when saying they were moving from the community due to work opportunities, and will miss Odd Fellowship and the lodge members. I also saw a long-time Rebekah member stand and say how much she appreciated the rejuvenation of the Odd Fellows and Rebekahs in her community - her Rebekah Lodge was dying, and the Odd Fellows re-charged that Lodge when 12 young Odd Fellows became Rebekahs.

**IT'S TIME FOR A CHANGE**

Odd Fellowship in California has been going down hill for many years, and we need to take to heart the goals of the “Dedicated Members for Change” group which has a single goal of “Increasing Odd Fellow Membership.” It is hard to see where any good and dedicated Odd Fellow can oppose such a goal.
You can attend the “Dedicated Members for Change” dinner during Grand Lodge on Thursday, May 17th in Sacramento at the reasonable price of $10.00 per person. We hope to see you there.

Don R. Smith, PGM and PSGM

DMC Newsletter –
April 9, 2012

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

A few days ago I received an e-mail from a young lady - a DMC member from Northern California - who was a relatively new member in the Order and who was a bit frustrated by an attitude often displayed by some of the long-time members of the Order. Whenever she or some of the newer and younger members step up and attempt to put a new idea on the table, they are invariably met with the words “it won't work” uttered by some of those long-time members. I guess those long-time members of the Order don't truly understand how frustrating and demoralizing that lack of support can be to the newer members. Here's a suggestion. Rather than immediately saying “it won't work,” how about trying the words “let's explore that” or even better, “let's talk about how we can make that work.” Long-time members of the Order can play a significant role not only in teaching newer members about rules and rituals of the Order, but also in encouraging the newer members to make their own personal contributions. Look, just because it hasn't been tried before (or it was tried 20 years ago and didn't work then) doesn't mean that a new member with a new idea should be ridiculed or deflated, or even humiliated. Where's the brotherly love in that? If we don't support each other, who will?

Even Sovereign Grand Lodge now realizes that we all have to emerge from the four walls of our Lodges and start reaching out to our communities in ways that we haven't done before. So, it's OK to have some social meetings, open to potential new members. It's OK to work on community projects - such as helping seniors, planting trees, working with youth groups, helping raise money for charitable causes, etc. - and to open our Lodge Halls to such projects. It's OK to be visible in our towns and communities and to issue press releases when we do good works.
So when that young, new member proposes a community pasta feed to raise money for the local high school football team, or proposes that the Lodge sponsor a breakfast with Santa for the children of the community, or proposes that the Lodge members have a poker and wine evening, or proposes a Lodge bike-a-thon to raise money to combat child abuse, or proposes any other new idea, don't immediately respond with the words “it won't work.” Every member has to feel that his or her ideas and contributions matter. Every member has to be given the opportunity to put his or her imprint on the work of the Lodge, and add to body of our work. Praise that new member for proposing an idea, and engage in a good-faith discussion to see if it can be made to work. It’s what a true Odd Fellow should do.

F - L - T

Dave Rosenberg

p.s. And our DMC e-mail list is growing every day. If you have someone you would like to add to the list, please check with that person to make sure they wish to be added, and if so, please send me their name and e-mail address. We will promptly add them to the DMC e-mail matrix. DMC is all about increasing our membership and growing our fraternal order - no more, and no less. We understand that we cannot continue the status quo of the last 65 years and we cannot continuing losing members and closing Lodges. Losing 100-200 members year after year and closing or consolidating 5-10 Lodges each year is unsustainable and unacceptable. In this regard we should ALL be Dedicated Members for Change.

DMC Newsletter –
April 11, 2012

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

One of our sisters forwarded the thoughts, below, from a Lodge in the Philippines. We all know that Lodges in the Philippines have shown considerable growth in recent years - they are willing to be active and innovative. I forward it to you for your viewing pleasure.

Also, I remind you that the Grand Lodge office has a video that you can purchase for $5 (and if you want it shipped to your Lodge, there is an extra $1.10 parcel rate charge). It’s an excellent Membership Development video that was created last year by members of my own Lodge, under the auspices of
the Grand Lodge Membership Committee. I commend it to you. Just contact Daniel, the clerk at the Grand Lodge at gl-desk1@sbcglobal.net to order your video for your Lodge.

F - L - T
Dave Rosenberg

10 TIPS FOR A STRONG LODGE

NUMBER ONE: Strong Recruitment: You are either growing or you are shrinking. If your recruitment is strong, that means that outsiders believe in what you are doing. Put importance of the mentoring process - educate new members about the history, purpose and what makes the fraternity important and relevant in their lives and their communities. Make them feel welcome and comfortable and make sure that the majority of the new members will stay as members. This is one of the strongest signs that you have a strong lodge.

NUMBER TWO: Strong Finances: This is probably the truest internal reflection on the strength of your lodge. The brothers and sisters in a strong lodge will want to pay their dues, because they realize that the fraternity provides great value to them. With good finances, come good activities and events that all members could enjoy and find fulfillment.

NUMBER THREE: Lively Social Life: Nobody wants to continue their membership in a lodge that is always serious and rigid – your lodge needs to know how to have fun and enjoy! Is your lodge providing the social outlet that the brothers and sisters expect? This is much more than dinners, lodge meetings and initiation ceremonies. This should go beyond inside the lodge room. Organize social activities that invite people from the community – both members and non-members alike. Strong lodges have countless events that ensure the morale stays high.

NUMBER FOUR: Create Leaders: Does your lodge develop new leaders or you just allow younger and newer members to just sit beside and feel useless? Every new member should be trained to be a leader from the very start they have become members - give them responsibility, elect and appoint them in lodge positions and do not be afraid to step back while supporting them behind the scenes. Seniority is not good, mentoring is better. The easiest way to see if your lodge is producing leaders is by seeing that younger and newer members take on roles and leadership positions not just in the lodge but in the
community. Strong Lodges have leaders all over the city or town, not just in the lodge room.

**NUMBER FIVE:** Active Community Service: Strong lodges are active in community service because they want to make a difference, not because they are forced to participate. Make the community service events fun, and the brothers and sisters, as well as community members who can be potential members, will want to show up to do their part.

**NUMBER SIX:** Clean and Well-Maintained Lodge Hall: The Lodge Hall is a reflection of how strong the fraternity is. This is a lodge’s most prized possession. Strong Lodges take great pride in their Lodge Hall or Building’s appearance. Let your lodge be of service to its members and community. Make your lodge a place where community people and members will feel welcome and comfortable - a place where people could spend their spare time and enjoy the camaraderie.

**NUMBER SEVEN:** Active Senior and New Members’ Involvement: When older brothers or sisters disappear, the lodge will lose its wisdom and knowledge. When younger brothers and sisters disappear, the lodge will lose its hope for the future and the possibility of innovation. Oftentimes, the lodge blames members who leave for being the problem but it is actually the lodge that is the problem. The fraternity must cater to all its members, not just the younger or older ones. After holding the top position in the lodge, encourage senior or older members to still stay involved and supportive to the younger ones. Have programs in place that the older and younger brothers want to be a part of, and as a result, the most experienced brothers remain active in the fraternity while the younger ones will also stay. Strong Lodges should put importance in listening to the ideas of both new and senior members.

**NUMBER EIGHT:** Positive Reward System: Strong lodges should show appreciation and recognition to their members. It could be better to organize an awarding ceremony every year - give away awards of recognition or prizes to the most active member every year, the member who arrives the earliest in every meeting and so on. These may just be small certificates or tokens but this shows that you give importance to brothers and sisters who make good contributions to your lodge. It increases the morale of the lodge.

**NUMBER NINE:** Educate the Public: One big problem with a lot of lodges is they do a lot of good things but no one knows about it. This may be good because it shows that the lodge is not after recognition for the good things they do. However, this is also bad because no one will really know what we really do.
and people can misinterpret our purpose as a fraternity. Also, several lodges existed for over hundreds of years in their community but no one knows that they still exist. Do not be too secretive. Do not hide what good things you do. Educate the public of the existence of our fraternity. Let your lodge participate in public parades, community events and conduct seminars about the fraternity. Create a descent and attractive website for your lodge, have someone write an article about your lodge in the local or national newspaper, post photos and videos in the internet of your lodge activities and projects. Take advantage of technology, mass media and the internet world. When you post something good about your lodge in the internet, you are not just helping your lodge - you are actually also helping lodges across the world. Whatever good photos, articles or videos about the fraternity that you post in the internet can actually reach thousands of miles and millions of people. The best thing about it is it is for free.

NUMBER TEN: Strong Risk Management: The biggest problem of most lodges is when internal issues and problems occur such as conflicts and misunderstandings between members. Depending on how effective the risk management is, conflicts and misunderstandings can either make up or break up a lodge leading to its demise. So, this is something that strong lodges should realize - put a solid risk management plan in place to prevent this from happening. Strong lodges should put more importance on relationships than finances and individual pride.

[Non-text portions of this message have been removed]

DMC Newsletter –
April 13, 2012

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

Well, happy Friday the 13th to each and every one of you. Our numbers in “Dedicated Members for Change” grow every day - and that’s because we are loyal Odd Fellows who see the statistics showing losses of members and closings of Lodges year after year - we understand that this cannot continue. We simply can’t lose 100-200 members a year and close 5-10 Lodges a year and hope to survive as an Order. DMC continues to point a laser focus on the need to evolve our fraternity so that we start attracting those new members which are the lifeblood of our future. Our DMC members have come up with numerous suggestions on how to do so. And many Lodges are beginning to
implement those suggestions in ways that work for them. We know we can stem the tide of losses that have washed over the California jurisdiction for the last 65 years. DMC serves a valuable purpose in the Order by encouraging new ideas, by developing new leadership, and by being a constant reminder that we need to focus on ways to increase membership in our Lodges. The status quo is no longer acceptable. DMC members are all optimists: We are optimistic about the future of this Order.

And if I can digress for a moment: Last night my own Davis Lodge #169 celebrated its “142nd birthday” - we were instituted and chartered on April 12, 1870. Over 60 members attended a little informal “birthday party” at the Lodge complete with cakes, candles, and good fellowship. We are proud to be Odd Fellows.

Below is an inspiring message written for our DMC newsletter by Grand Warden Rick Boyles. I commend it to you for your reading pleasure.

Dave Rosenberg

To All Members:

When I was a child, many years ago, I remember going to church with my parents and thinking what a wonderful place it was. Everyone wore a smile, and those in pain or grief were cared for, both in words or actions. That is also how I feel about our order. When I first joined, my friends who brought me in as a member kept repeating “friendship, love and truth” and I felt just as I did in going to church that here was a place where I was welcomed unconditionally without respect to my own imperfections. I did jobs within the order because just as in my church when I was younger, we did things for others to feel better about our imperfect selves. Somehow, some of that has been lost in our order. Some people feel the need to overpower others, to control a space that is supposed to be filled with friendship, love and truth. This is when our order loses its way. If we forget congeniality, if we feel the need to scream to get our message across, if we really think that all members should walk in some tired lockstep to “my way or the highway,” we have really succumbed to our own fears and prejudices.

The Dedicated Members for Change group loves all members. Our goal is solely to study ways in which to get more members. That is our entire focus. Again, our sole goal is to study ways in which to get more members. Our committee now numbers in the hundreds of members. We have as many flaws as we have members, and those who are not on our committee we love just as
much as those who are. Lately, our committee has become the target for many who are mad for one reason or another. When I personally answer a complaint about the committee, I simply repeat continually that “we are just about membership.” That is our sole concern and reason to exist. If our order had no membership concerns, we would happily disband as a committee - but the need clearly exists.

DMC was formed in December of 2010 made up of a number of concerned members who were worried that our order would continue its inevitable decline in membership. DMC has grown dramatically in numbers. Frankly, one of our first plans was to study lodges where they have had success. San Francisco, Hayward, Lodi, Davis, and a few others have contributed information to our group, and of course, all have members in our committee. Meanwhile, smaller lodges are closing at the rate of 5-10 yearly - and year after year we lose more members than we gain. Obviously, this is a rate of decline that can't be maintained. Yet some people state that our group causes trouble and they criticize DMC. How can the call to increase membership cause trouble? Why should the call to increase members be criticized by any Odd Fellow? Just by people stating our committee is causing trouble will not stem the rate of decline. If people who know the answer to waning membership are not on our committee, they are obviously still welcome to answer the issue. It is tiresome and in fact self-defeating to blame our committee for people growing old, becoming disenchanted or just dropping off our membership rolls. Blaming DMC is like blaming fire-fighters because we have fires. It makes no logical sense.

We have found some similarities in lodges having success. First, they are active and they share interests. Secondly, they are happy places to visit. Third, they do not attack other members. And lastly, they preserve the basic tenets of our order: that good old “friendship, love and truth.” It is my impression that if we can preserve the ideals of our order, we will survive, but if we do nothing but hurl insults, pass edicts, close our doors to the public, we are clearly doomed. I have spoken to many members in my years as a member, and I see the good in everyone. We need to convey love, not wield a code book which entraps every soul who attempts something new. As long as we can show others our affection, nothing else is insurmountable.

In Friendship, Love and Truth, Rick Boyles
E-mail to California Grand Lodge and Rebekah Assembly –
April 15, 2012

Dear Grand Lodge and Rebekah Assembly,

Please be so kind as to send the e-mail below, and the attached two forms via e-mail, and also by regular mail, to each of the Odd Fellows Lodges in California. This is a wonderful opportunity to provide scholarships to deserving young men and women, nominated by Odd Fellows or Rebekahs. Thank you.

Fraternally,

Dave

Dear Odd Fellows and Rebekahs,

One of the major tenets and ancient admonitions of our great Fraternal Order is the call to "educate the orphan."

In this regard, I am pleased to announce a great opportunity to do so. As a result of a generous and continuing family donation in honor and remembrance of an outstanding Odd Fellow and an outstanding Rebekah, and at the request of their family, we have created the “Triffle P. & Anne G. Ivancovich Orphan Scholarship Fund.” A California corporation has been established and it has been granted Section 501 (c) (3) recognition by the Internal Revenue Service. As a result, we are opening nominations and applications to provide scholarships to deserving orphans and foster youth in memory of Triffle and Anne. All applicants must be nominated by a California Odd Fellow or Rebekah in good standing, and the nominee must submit an application form. The simple nomination form and the simple application form are attached.

Nomination forms and application forms must be mailed to:

Davis Odd Fellows Charities, Inc.
Attn: Dave Rosenberg, President
415 Second Street
Davis CA 95616
The deadline for nominations and applications this year is June 1, 2012. Instructions are provided on the attached forms.

F - L - T
Dave Rosenberg
President
Davis Odd Fellows Lodge Charities, Inc.

Application Form (see APPENDIX B)

Odd Fellows and Rebekahs in good standing may nominate eligible orphans and foster youth or emancipated foster youth for educational scholarships provided by Davis Odd Fellows Charities, Inc. All decisions by Davis Odd Fellows Charities, Inc. are made in the sole discretion of the corporation. To be eligible for consideration, nominees must be orphans or foster youth, must be at least 18 years of age at the time they enter college/university, must be U.S. citizens, must have attained at least a B+ average upon high school graduation, and must be accepted to an accredited college/university and entering as a freshman. Educational scholarships, if approved, will be at least $5,000 and up to $10,000 for the freshman year, based on merit and need. Students may re-apply for a subsequent year, up to four years in total, based on merit, need, and the ability to maintain a GPA of at least 3.33. When complete, mail to: Davis Odd Fellows Charities, Inc. Attn: Dave Rosenberg, 415 Second Street, Davis CA 95616.

DMC Newsletter –
April 21, 2012

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

I received a big red flag in the mail the other day.

No, it wasn’t actually a “big red flag.” It was a letter from the Rebekah Assembly Finance Committee addressed to the President, Officers, Representatives and Members of the California Rebekah Assembly. I received it in my capacity as Secretary of my Rebekah Lodge. The underlying concern of the letter was the rather significant drop in membership of the Rebekahs. Membership had declined by 179 members in the first six months of 2011, and the committee was projecting that this trend would most likely continue for the last six months of the year. The immediate impact of this significant drop in membership is a budget which would be substantially negative (in other
words, more money spent than money received). Because a negative budget is untenable, the committee was proposing three scenarios - all of which would increase per capita. And, of course it goes without saying that raising dues will undoubtedly have a further depressing effect on membership - higher dues will result in some members opting to withdraw.

But to me the underlying message is especially distressing. The California Rebekah Assembly assumes only 2,200 dues-paying members for budgeting purposes. If we further assume continued net losses of 200-300 members per year, it doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out that the Rebekahs will be hard-pressed to survive as a unit within the next 10 years. And it may be even more dire than that. Assuming 2,200 dues-paying members, it's typical for organizations (not just our Order) that only half the membership is "active." How will the Rebekahs survive as a unit if the "active" membership, statewide, diminishes to just 800, or 500, or 200.

And the larger numbers don't tell the whole story. When an individual Lodge's membership drops below 15, that Lodge has difficulty filling offices, undertaking activities, and even the simple and basic act of making a quorum for meetings.

There is no silver bullet which can solve the problem of declining membership. But there is a way to combat it. While it's a wonderful thing to grow old together in a marriage, it is imperative in a Fraternal Order that Lodges continually bring in the next generation of members. Without the new generation, a Fraternal Order simply can't survive. And those new members have to do their part in bringing in more new members. That's the lifeblood of any Fraternal Order. But in the Odd Fellows and Rebekahs and in all our units - for the past two generations - we have lost more members each year than we have brought in. Clearly, that is not a sustainable path for us.

For Odd Fellows Lodges, our "early warning system" is to look at what is happening with Patriarchs Militant, the Encampment, and the Rebekahs. In California today, I will be surprised if there are more than 100 active members of the Patriarchs Militant, or more than 250 active members of the Encampment. With rare exceptions, Cantons and Encampments are declining. But there is a solution.

We have to look at the handful of our units that are actually experiencing a net gain in membership. Yes, there are Encampments, Rebekah Lodges, and Odd Fellows Lodges which are growing. They are few and they are the exceptions. But if we don't look at these few and start to understand and appreciate what they are doing to buck the trend that 90% of the others' are experiencing, then
we face continued decline. That is unacceptable to many of us. This great Fraternal Order has a history spanning some 300 years. Let’s not let it decline during our watch!

F - L – T

Dave Rosenberg

DMC Newsletter - April 26, 2012

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

The DMC Newsletter is happy to feature another article from Grand Warden Rick Boyles. Please read it, below. It carries many thoughts worthy of consideration.

F - L – T
Dave Rosenberg

All of us are in this together. Of all the things we all discuss, the one subject we can all agree with is that our order is diminishing. This is impossible to dispute because the numbers bear it out. Not only are we diminishing, we are diminishing quickly. The Rebekahs stand to lose 10% of their membership this year alone. If you have an issue with the DMC that is certainly your privilege, but to ignore the issue itself, simply accentuates the problem by one more member. The few of us who still remain within the order have gotten petty, not simply in our minds, but in our actions as well. We should not spend our time discussing the message we should focus on the problem itself. The person who points to a house on fire is not the issue, the house on fire is. It’s time to think of ways to put out the fire.

We in California are fortunate in that we have a number of successful lodges, which stand little or no chance of closure. Remarkably, some of these are experiencing consistent growth. These lodges may not be perfect, but we can learn valuable lessons from each successful lodge. A friend of mine said that the DMC has done nothing for their lodge, so what value do they have? In point of fact, no membership committee can do anything for your lodge it must be initiated on your own within your own lodge. But we can all learn valuable pointers with which to take back to our lodges. Here are some points we have learned thus far.
Decorum. To me, this is one of the primary issues now happening in some of the smallest lodges. Many lodges are losing the sense of decorum and fair-mindedness we all should have. Nobody wants to join a lodge where members do not get along. Arguing, screaming, and abuse on another member have no place within our order.

Open Minds. Of course, this sounds almost silly, but many of the smaller lodges have closed their minds, and hearts, to anything or anyone new. In order to grow, those we invite in may be different, but that does not make them less of a human being. We must learn to look at the prospective members with the same affection we might give one of our oldest friends. This may be difficult, but it may also return rewards.

Shared Interests. All people have personal interests, hobbies, or favorite recreation habits. Whether it is as ordinary as watching sports, television, playing chess, or as intricate a pastime as acting or singing, there are many interests that may be shared with others. This is the glue which is beginning to bond many of the larger lodges together. How can we do this at smaller lodges? Perhaps the smaller lodges have no shared interests, but that does not mean that members may not join who share your own interests. This tells a member that his attendance has value, that what he does is important, and goes beyond the dinner or dessert that the lodge may serve. Serving dinners may bring people in, but it is something that is too impermanent to have lasting significance.

Form committees based upon shared interests. If your lodge finds interests that are shared by different members, form committees based upon these shared interests. Several successful lodges now have committees made up of members who share similar interests with one another. In the ritual, there is a section entitled “reports of committees” and in successful lodges, this tends to be an intriguing section of their meetings. Smaller lodges have few or no committees; therefore they tend to lose the cohesiveness that may merge them.

Go outside the lodge to share committees. Odd Fellows, ever since their inception, have been a welcoming influence on their communities; therefore, the natural progression is to share successful aspects of a lodge with the public. Dinners can bring a prospective member in the door, but it will not retain them unless you can interest them further. Another way to look at why our order is quickly declining is to ask ourselves why people leave. Nothing sustains their interest. This is something you may hear when you talk to a member who ceases to attend. How can this be, when dinners or desserts are still being
served? Something must exist beyond sustenance of the body. It has to include sustenance of the mind.

**Humor.** This sounds almost ludicrous, but many of us have forgotten the gentle gift of laughter. Not at each other’s expense, but if we begin to exhibit the joy of our order this can give it an exhilarating effect as well. Maintaining decorum is one thing, playing dead is another. If all we do is talk in a monotone, there is no future, and actually, there is no rationality for new members. Boredom is a primary reason for failure, as well.

These are some of the methods by which I have arrived at on behalf of our committee. Our many members may suggest more. Thank you for your kind indulgence.

In Friendship, Love, and Truth, Rick Boyles

---

**DMC Newsletter - April 28, 2012**

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

**Some Thoughts About the Davis Lodge**

by Dave Rosenberg, PG

I’d like to chat for a moment about my own Lodge, the Davis Odd Fellows #169. From time to time, I hear criticisms (sometimes directly, but generally indirectly) about my Lodge. The criticisms always intrigue me because they seem to be based on assumptions, and not on actual observations. I think of myself as part of the New Odd Fellows - based, frankly, on what Odd Fellowship was in the 1800’s. We are, in Davis, a throwback to the past. In the late 18900’s and early 1900’s, Odd Fellows Lodges were the center of town, and membership in the Lodge was a highly desired quest for community leaders and community members. That’s the way it was in the 1800’s - and that’s the way it is in Davis in 2012. So, perhaps to understand my Lodge better, we should examine the three biggest “criticisms” of the Davis Lodge:

1. **The Davis Lodge has had all this great growth because they are in a “University town,” not like the rest of us.**

   Yes, the Davis Lodge has experienced enormous growth in the past eight years, and yes, the Davis Lodge is located in a University town. But in this case,
2 plus 2 doesn't equal 4. To understand what I mean, we need to look at the history of the Davis Lodge. The Lodge was chartered in 1870 - so it’s been around for 142 years as of 2012. The University of California at Davis has been around for over 100 years, having been founded in 1905. From 1872 to 2004 (a period of 134 years) the Davis Lodge initiated a total of 425 members - averaging around 3 per year. From 2005 to 2012 (a period of only 8 years), the Davis Lodge initiated 178 members, averaging about 22 per year.

From 1905 to 2004, the Davis Lodge was located in the same “University town” as it was from 2005 to 2012, yet membership crept along in the former years and exploded in the latter years. So, being a “university town” is the not the reason for the Davis Lodge's enormous growth in the last eight years. Why the huge difference? With all due humility, the difference is that I became the Noble Grand of the Davis Lodge in 2005 (and served for five years in that role) and changed everything about the way we do business. When I joined the Odd Fellows in 2004, my Lodge was just like most other Lodges in California (even though we were in a “University town”) - we had about 40 members, and could barely get a dozen to attend meetings. We now have 185 members, 18 applicants for membership, and we get 100+ at meetings and events. In the last eight years, our Lodge has increased our membership by over 400% - at the same time that other Lodges were either static or losing members. We have brought in members in their 20's, 30's and 40's, and we have brought in community leaders. We have so many applicants that some have to wait close to a year before we can initiate them. Why the huge difference? We went back to the old days of Odd Fellowship and recaptured what made Lodges the center of town. Many Lodges today are one dimensional - but we focused on three dimensions: the historic ritual of our Order, active involvement in our community, and social activities within the Lodge to foster good fellowship. In other words, we made the Lodge desirable to folks in the 21st Century.

So, when I hear folks say that their Lodges can’t do what Davis does because they aren’t located in a “University town” I view it as an excuse. Every Lodge can do it - in their own way. The secret of success is increasing membership. The way to increase membership is to make the Lodge a place that people want to join. And people want to join a Lodge where they can do good works in their communities and also find a place where they can enjoy a full plate of social activities.

2. The Davis Lodge may be growing, but they aren’t “true Odd Fellows.”

I’m not sure, of course, what people mean when they say “true Odd Fellow,” but it sure sounds like a criticism to me. I am saddened to hear it, however,
because it doesn't display the level of brotherly love and tolerance I would expect of an Odd Fellow.

What is a “true Odd Fellow”? I should think that one who follows the ancient admonitions of our Order would be considered such a person. The main tenet of Odd Fellowship is to “relieve the distressed, bury the dead, and educate the orphan.” In the Davis Lodge, we don’t just talk the talk, but we walk the walk.

“Relieve the distressed.” The Davis Lodge has a Social Services Committee whose members volunteer to spend their time working with persons who have mental illness. The Davis Lodge has a Senior Project Committee which goes to the homes of frail seniors in town, at their request, to help them with household and yard chores. The Davis Lodge has a Bingo Committee which runs Bingo games every month, each of which provides the proceeds to charitable and community groups in town. The Davis Lodge has a Community Support Committee which has hosted and co-hosted events at the Lodge and in the community to benefit developmentally disabled persons, cancer survivors, persons with mental illness, and victims of sexual assault and spousal abuse. The Davis Lodge members have provided meals to men, women and children at the homeless shelter. The Davis Lodge hosted a huge musical event called “Hope for Haiti” and provided over $22,000 to relief organizations which assisted the people of Haiti after their devastating earthquake.

“Bury the dead.” One of our newer members has just proposed the creation of a “Death and Dignity Committee” which will be working with the County Public Guardian/Public Administrator (who is also a member of our Lodge) to develop ways to provide dignified burial services for the poor in our community. A number of members of the Lodge have expressed interest in the work of this new committee.

“Educate the orphan.” Members of the Davis Lodge have recently launched the “Triffle P. and Annie G. Ivancovich Scholarship” through the Davis Lodge Charities, Inc. (a Section 501 (c) (3) corporation) to provide scholarships to orphans and those who were in foster care. Large scholarships will be provided to qualified young men and women so that they can get a full education, and contribute back to society - just like Thomas Wildey did.

3. The Davis Lodge members don't follow “the code.”

I wonder how many folks who talk about “the code” have actually read the document. I have. I’m Chairman of the Grand Lodge Judiciary Committee so I know something about the code. And I can say that the Davis Lodge follows the code, the ritual, and more importantly, the SPIRIT of Odd Fellowship. In
fact, the Davis Odd Fellows go through the same initiation as every other Odd Fellow, we take the same oath as all other Odd Fellows, and we run formal meetings with the same ritual and wear the same regalia as every other member of the Order.

The members of the Davis Lodge are very interested in developing as Odd Fellows. At every one of our meetings, our Vice Grand is charged with talking about the history of Odd Fellowship. Members proudly wear sweatshirts, jackets, caps, and shirts with the Odd Fellows three-links logo on them. The other night, a number of members wanted a refresher on the passwords, grips, signs, etc., so we met in the conference room and confidentially reviewed them. The interest in our ritual is so great that we now have 31 of our Odd Fellow 3-degree members who have joined the Davis Encampment #21 - making it the largest Encampment in California - they joined because they wanted to obtain an additional three degrees and continue their education in our great Order.

Does our Lodge have social meetings, open to prospective applicants? Sure we do. We find that when prospective applicants meet our members and see what we do, they apply to join us. And as incoming Sovereign Grand Master Chuck Renninger has told us, social meetings are permitted and perfectly compatible with “the code.”

So, in short, I'm proud to be a member of a Lodge - the Davis Lodge - which has shown a path for the growth and development of this Order. And make no mistake about it - we each have to take responsibility for the growth and development of our Order. We cannot continue to turn a blind eye to the dramatic drop in our membership. And growth requires that we change the way we have been doing businesses. For over 65 years we have been doing it the “old way” and for over 65 years we have lost members. Someone once said that the definition of “insanity” is doing something over and over again and expecting a different result. We must embark upon a “new way.” That new way means we must reach out to our communities and engage in good works in those communities, and we must develop the social activities within our Lodges that foster good fellowship. We have to become attractive and relevant to the men and women of the 21st Century. Or else we become the dodo.
Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

This group of brothers and sisters - Dedicated Members for Change - has just one mission: Providing a focus on the single most significant problem facing our Order - declining membership - and suggesting ways to combat the problem. No more, and no less. While the mission is singular, it is of vast importance to our Order of Odd Fellows. We simply can't continue the decline.

As I'm sure everyone knows, our great Order used to be HUGE in California. Mayors, Judges, Senators, Governors, and Community Leaders up and down the State were members of the Order. The membership in California once numbered in the six figures. Odd Fellows Lodges were the centers of their communities. Everyone who was anyone aspired to be an Odd Fellow. Odd Fellows were active and involved and very visible in their towns and villages. And, as I am sure that everyone also knows by now, Odd Fellowship has seen a precipitous decline over the last two generations. Since World War II (a period of 66 years) Odd Fellows membership in California has declined year-after-year (with the exception of only one year when membership saw a small increase). Today, our dues-paying regular membership has dropped to below 5,000. (And we all know that a “dues-paying regular member” does not always translate into an “active” member - I suspect that we have only about 2,000 “active” members in our Order in California today.) There are Lodges in this state that have skipped an entire generation, sometimes two generations, of new members. We lose Lodges virtually every year, as well. Where once California had hundreds of Lodges in every town and hamlet, today Odd Fellowship has just 132 Lodges in this State. And fully half of those Lodges show less than 21 members on their books. We know that there are Lodges that have difficulty convening a quorum (only 5 members) for a meeting. And as a sign of the times, it cannot be ignored that the five largest Lodges in California now constitute about 25% of the state's membership - that is, one out of every four Odd Fellows in this state belongs to one of those five Lodges. It shows that we are devolving to just a few Lodges - in 10 years, at this rate, we may have less than 20 Lodges in this state with a regular membership of only 2,000 or less.

We can't just sit back and watch this slow train wreck in progress.

In these DMC newsletters, we have suggested, over the past year, many ideas and “best practices” used by the handful of Lodges that we have in California that are actually growing. Yes, while the vast majority of Lodges in this state
are static or have declining membership, we actually have some Lodges that are growing. And a handful of them are growing significantly. These Lodges show that Odd Fellowship remains relevant to Californians today, and that Lodges CAN grow their membership. If we ignore their successes and methods, we ignore the last, best hope of Odd Fellowship in the 21st Century. Clearly, Lodges that continue to operate like they did in WW II, are doomed to repeat the decline. On the other hand, Lodges that look to new methods to attract and retain members can enjoy a re-birth of Odd Fellowship in California.

Here’s what I believe: Growth of membership CANNOT be accomplished by the Sovereign Grand Lodge; it CANNOT be accomplished by the Grand Lodge; it CANNOT really be accomplished by a Lodge. Growth in membership is something that can only be accomplished by the individual brothers and sisters in our Fraternal Order. In other words, it all depends on you and me. And we can do it. Since I joined this Order in 2004, I have personally sponsored about 100 new members into our Order. Since 2004, other members of my Lodge have brought in an equal number of members. And the vast majority of those new members have remained members of the Order. Why is that? It's because we have taken upon ourselves the personal desire, responsibility, and commitment to bring in new members. Equally as important, we have created a Lodge which attracts and keeps those new members - offering numerous community and charitable projects which fulfill member’s desire to help their communities, and offering numerous Lodge-sponsored social activities which provide the good fellowship and social interaction that member’s want in the 21st Century. In short, we have made our Lodge relevant and desirable to the folks in their 20’s, 30’s, 40’s and 50’s who are, after all, the lifeblood and the future of a fraternity.

In my Lodge, we use many techniques to grow membership. I’d like to share with you one of those techniques.

We don’t make it easy for potential new members to join our Lodge. Now, this may seem completely counter-intuitive to you, but believe me, it really works. Let me explain. In some Lodges, when they finally find a potential new member, they rush that member into initiation, sometimes initiating within mere weeks after the application is submitted. What then happens, in some cases, is that the new member attends his/her first meeting, gets to meet his/her new brothers and sisters for virtually the first time, is kind of shocked by it all, and that Lodge may not see the person again. We do the opposite. Once a person submits his or her application, they enter into a six-month processing period. We encourage them to attend our Lodge events and our social meetings, and get to meet and know their future brothers and sisters.
We give them goals and projects. We expect them to “interview” at least 13 members (an ice-breaker technique which helps them get to know the members and allows the members to get to know them). At the end of the long period, they are interviewed by the Membership & Initiation Committee, and then if recommended, are voted on by the entire membership. At the end of this process, the applicant REALLY looks forward to initiation, and they know the members and the Lodge a lot better. Once initiated, they dive right into membership, and fully participate in our activities and programs. They feel a real kinship from the very start.

It works.

F - L – T
Dave Rosenberg

DMC Newsletter -
May 10, 2012

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

As you all know, the focus of DMC is all about increasing the membership in our Lodges. We simply cannot continue on the steady decline in membership we have seen in this Order for the past 66 years. Clearly, it’s not sustainable. You know the old adage, true insanity (as one wag said) is doing the same thing over and over and over again, and expecting a different result. Many of our Lodges have skipped an entire generation of new members - sometimes two generations. A number of our Lodges have no members under 65. Before World War II we had tens of thousands of members in California and we had hundreds of Lodges. Today, we have less than 5,000 dues-paying members (and we all know that means about half that number are actually “active” members) and we have dropped to 131 Lodges. In a concerning trend, our largest five Lodges in California now make up about 20% of our entire membership. And it’s alarming to realize that literally half of our Lodges have less than 21 members, and we have many Lodges with less than 12 members. Our hard-working Grand Lodge Board of Directors have, essentially, become fire-fighters, because they are constantly fighting the fires created by declining membership - quorum problems, financial problems, leadership problems, property management problems popping up all over the state.

So, from the perspective of DMC, our greatest challenge is bringing in new membership, new blood if you will, into the DNA of our Order. In this regard,
after a number of requests, I have attached (again) an article I wrote last December which highlights 10 helpful hints that you can consider as you try to increase membership. And make no mistake about it: increasing membership CANNOT be accomplished by the Sovereign Grand Lodge, it CANNOT be accomplished by Grand Lodge, it CANNOT even be accomplished by the Lodge - it must ultimately be accomplished by YOU and ME. Increasing membership is a person-to-person exercise, reinforced by a Lodge which is active in the community and active, socially, within the Loge. Those Lodges that focus 90% of their efforts in just holding meetings are, frankly, doomed to repeat the decline of the past 66 years. Those Lodges that take a new approach - reaching out into the community to do good works and reaching within the Lodge to create fun social events and activities for the members - will survive and will grow.

But keep in mind that success will NOT occur overnight. It's a step-by-step process that will probably take you a good three years to develop. It's much like running a business. You can't just open your doors, hang out a shingle, and hope that the customers will come. You have to develop a business plan. The same is true with Odd Fellowship and growing a Lodge. You have to develop a plan - and establish goals to see how you are progressing. That's the first step. And perhaps the single most important thing you can do to re-energize your Lodge is to make a concerted effort to bring in at least one new member who is a live wire and a community leader who can start bringing in other community leaders. So, focus your recruiting efforts on that city councilman, or school board member, or chamber of commerce president, or any other proven community leader. If you can get such a person into your Lodge, and committed to the Lodge, you have the nucleus of future growth and development.

F- L - T
Dave Rosenberg

DMC Newsletter -
May 12, 2012

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

As we prepare for 2012 Grand Lodge Sessions in Sacramento next week, it's good to reflect on our three degrees and the by-words of our Order: Friendship, Love, Truth. In this regard, today's newsletter contains a message
from one of our DMC founding members and Grand Warden Rick Boyles. It's an important message for us all to remember.

Our DMC e-mail matrix has grown remarkably in the last few weeks. As members share these newsletters with other brothers and sisters, we find that many want to be included and wish to receive future newsletters. Great. Keep 'em coming. Our message about increasing membership is an important one, and the techniques we suggest really do work. For example, I recently read a report that shows that California's Membership Challenge Grant Program (which I suggested we deploy two years ago) really does work - the statistics show that California brought in 142 new members in the first year and 227 new members in the second year for a total of 369 new members brought into the Order. It's not the silver bullet - but it's part of an overall plan which focuses on Lodges and members and gives further incentive to membership development. I think 369 new members (through this new program) is nothing to sneeze at.

And don't forget the Second Annual DMC Dinner on Thursday, May 17, during Grand Lodge sessions. We're at El Rorito Restaurant & Cantina - a mere 4-minute slow walk from the Grand Lodge hotel - cocktails at 5 and a sumptuous dinner at 6 p.m. We already have over 90 pre-paid attendees! Amazing. Remember, the first 100 pay only $10 for the dinner, after that the full $18 price is charged. And if you haven't already RSVP'd and signed up, you can come and pay at the door. Because of the enthusiasm for this dinner, we'll be prepared to accommodate 120 for the dinner.

F - L – T, Dave Rosenberg

DMC Message

All of us are in this together. We might as well be friends. Have we considered fully the alternative to being friendly? There is none, really. We are not a paramilitary group, nor do we idolize a certain political agenda. Our taglines are friendship, love and truth, so we should feel compelled to honor these perfect and simple words. I believe that our future hinges on our adherence to these words. In order for us to grow, we are going to have to prove to the world that these taglines mean something, and that they are not just words for us to carry along in a code book and to otherwise forget about.

I like to think of our order as a microcosm of our great country. A group that emulates this great country of America can't go wrong. America is the country most founded in democratic principles, most steeped in free thinking, diverse
as it is wide, and content in its ability to permit open discussion. Just like our
country, our order will fail if we feel the need to stifle discussion, if we punish
diversity, if we pursue a bland and flat way of thought in exchange for quelling
whatever fears we have in anything new. A famous thinker in describing
democracy says that democracy is organized chaos, which is essentially true. In
a free society, freedom of discussion must be embraced even though it may be
contrary to popular thought. In any society, to quell discussion inevitably leads
to a closed society.

In our Odd Fellows universe, we need to remember the tagline of love. Love
is the glue by which we are all bonded, and it surely can endure any concoction
of lively discussion. Discussion must be founded both in the love of the order,
our members, and all that we say and do. Pointing fingers at a specific
individual is both mean-spirited and counter-intuitive, inevitably leading to bad
thoughts about both the accused and the accuser. One of the main items
currently affecting our order is this trend towards pointing fingers at this or
that individual and casting blame which invariably is meant for all of us. We
must shake this desire to punish people for contrary thoughts or just like a
troubled society we will likewise become a troubled order. Just as the bible
states let he who is perfect cast the first stone, it does not seem appropriate
for any of us to prejudge another human being just because they are not
completely identical to ourselves. It is a sign of a person's own weakness if
they feel the need to punish another just on the basis of a belief or thought. A
good Odd Fellow, while cognizant of his or her own flaws, should be willing to
accept flaws in others. Perhaps this is where it all begins. In order for us to
realize that new members will be imperfect, we must also recognize the
imperfection of ourselves, and learn to embrace the imperfection of all of us.

In a few days, we will be immersed in Grand Lodge Sessions, and we need to
realize that all of us have input, and all of us have value. If we recognize the
love for each other we will survive and show the world that we welcome
growth, we may even grow. If we do nothing but cast aspersions on each
other, we are only hastening our own demise. It does not take a genius to
realize that failure comes from closed minds and closed doors. Our country
was founded on democratic principles and freedom of speech; we should at
least try to emulate these great ideals. If we do nothing but hurl insults, we
only hurt ourselves. No title or length of service should be the underlying basis
for demeaning another. If we punish one member for not doing something as
perfect as the person who has been a member for 50 years, we are forgetting
that we want members, not robots, and that casting stones is not a titled right.
All of us make mistakes. All of us mean to be good Odd Fellows, and to hate
someone because they don’t mimic another’s beliefs exactly condemns our order to fail in a descent towards total hatred.

It’s time to wake up! It’s time to realize that we all want new members! If we don’t, we are surely fooling ourselves. The new members may be entirely different than we are. But ideally, they will mirror us in our affection. We must transcend hatred, despair, and its inherent loneliness. We can survive if we recognize the ability to share love. Without this ability, all of us are surely lost.

In Friendship, Love and Truth, Rick Boyles

DMC Newsletter -
May 13, 2012

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

Happy Mother’s Day to all. I am pleased to send along to you some thoughts from Don Smith. Brother Don has been an active and involved member of our Fraternal Order for over 60 years. He has served the Order in numerous capacities, in his Lodge, at Grand Lodge and at Sovereign Grand Lodge. He has held the office of Noble Grand, Grand Master, and Sovereign Grand Master, and continues to hold office in his Lodge. He is one of the founding members of Dedicated Members for Change. Heed well his words - they come from age, experience and wisdom.

F - L – T
Dave Rosenberg

Success Favors the Bold

They say success favors the bold. Fortuna, the Roman goddess of luck, was rumored to reward those who take action and embrace risk.

At times you do have to be bold and embrace risk to be successful with any undertaking, but recently it seemed more like you just needed to participate. Attending and participating in the “Dedicated Members for Change” dinner at Grand Lodge can be a first step or a continuing step. You will be participating with other Brothers and Sisters who are sincere in wanting Odd Fellowship to show an increase in membership.

We can learn much from successful lodges. One idea can be the start of
achieving success in your lodge. It is time we view successful lodges as offering us a plan or blueprint for success. As pointed out on many occasions what works in one lodge or locality may not work in every locality, but let’s look at all successful lodges, and I am sure some will offer you ideas to utilize in your lodge. The spark for a growing lodge must come from an individual that desires to see Odd Fellowship grow and prosper. It only takes one dedicated individual Brother or Sister to start the increase of membership in individual lodges. That one person can be a current member or a non member that is invited to join the Order to help with the revitalization of Odd Fellowship.

For the past 60 plus years there has been stressed the need for change in Odd Fellowship. Then as now there was a lot of talk about change, but it has grown louder through the years. We have tried to legislate change, but it hasn't produced a growth in membership over the years.

Back in the 1970’s, I and Past Sovereign Grand Master Shelby McCauley of Arizona had discussed and recommended some changes. Together we were successful in making a few changes, but not enough to produce a consistent growth in membership. Changing the requirement for all business in the local lodge to be conducted in the Initiatory Degree rather than in the Third Degree was one change, but that hardly produced enough change to make our fraternity successful.

Brother McCauley had listened to beautiful phrases, speeches and orations about streamlining, modernizing and rebuilding Odd Fellowship. With all the wonderful slogans, catchy words and phrases he pointed out we have managed to change very little in our fraternity. He pointed out that if you want a tree to be healthy and to do the job for which is was planted, you prune it. An orchardist does what is best for the tree and not what is best for the branch. There is no time for sentiment and weakness but a time for wisdom and courage. Are we wise enough to be a good husbandman for the tree of Odd Fellowship? It is time to save Odd Fellowship, or it may well die.

The contribution from Dave Rosenberg’s "10 Helpful Hints to Bring New Members into the Order" can well provide you with initial steps to take for achieving success.

Attending the DMC dinner on Thursday, May 17th, during Grand Lodge in Sacramento may reinforce your determination to attract new members for our Order.

Don R. Smith
Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

Deputy Grand Master of California Rod Metoyer, who is also a member of Dedicated Members for Change, asked that I send along his thoughts as we prepare for Grand Lodge Sessions. I am pleased and honored to do so:

Tomorrow evening we will open the 160th Session of the Grand Lodge of California. I wish each of you a great session, and let's keep open minds to each others' ideas. We will open the door of opportunity and take advantage of today's technology, and let the world know what the Independent Order of Odd Fellows can and will do for them. Again, let's have fun and word toward a better future for this great order.

Rodney M. Metoyer, Deputy Grand Master
Grand Lodge of California

Our Second Annual DMC Dinner Meeting is coming up this Thursday, May 17. We're going to have a great turnout - we already have 98 advance reservations! If you haven't made a reservation, you can still come and pay at the door. We have ordered 120 dinners, so there is room for just 22 more to attend.

No-host cocktails begin at 5 p.m. and dinner commences at 6 p.m. - attire is comfortable and casual. The location is El Torito Mexican Restaurant & Cantina, which is less than a block away from the Grand Lodge Hotel, the Doubletree. El Torito is located at 1598 Arden Way, about a four-minute walk from the hotel. The entire dining room of the restaurant has been reserved for us! The dinner will feature El Torito's famous taco buffet with fresh handmade corn tortillas filled with grilled steak, chicken or carnitas, as well as cheese enchiladas, rice, re-fried beans, sweet corn cake, seasonal fresh fruit, guacamole, lettuce, cheese and fresh salsa. In addition, the dinner includes soft drinks, iced tea, coffee or lemonade, and flan for dessert. That's an amazing meal.

We invite Odd Fellows, Rebekahs, and their spouses and family members to this special dinner. We promise speeches will be brief and will be kept to a minimum. Speakers will include Rod Metoyer (Deputy Grand Master of California), Rick Boyles (Grand Warden of California), Don Smith (Past Sovereign Grand Master and Past Grand Master of California), Kandice Fowler (Noble Grand of the Davis Lodge) and Dave Rosenberg (Chairman of the Board of
Directors of the Odd Fellows Homes of California, Chairman of the Grand Lodge Judiciary Committee, and Member of the Grand Lodge Membership Committee). Subject to space available, please come out to enjoy a wonderful Mexican meal and a good time with your brothers, sisters, and friends. I promise you that the DMC Dinner will be a highlight of your Grand Lodge experience.

F - L – T, Dave Rosenberg

DMC Newsletter –
May 16, 2012

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

We’re active internationally! Below is a message from our Brother Louie Sarmiento, the spark plug who is moving this Order forward in the Philippines. Hope you enjoy his message!

And as to the Second Annual DMC Dinner tomorrow evening (Thursday) at El Torito Restaurant & Cantina (cocktails at 5 and dinner at 6) I am delighted to say that we got our 100th RSVP last night. So all 100 seats (at the subsidized $10 per person) are spoken for and taken! We still have 20 seats available - I have ordered dinner for 120 - but they will be at the full price for the dinner of $18 per person (and we are covering the tax and tip for you). If you come you can pay at the door, space available.

See you in Sacramento at Grand Lodge Sessions. I’ll be there today, chairing a meeting of the Odd Fellows Homes of California Board of Directors, and then attending the memorial service, the joint formal opening, and then the dinner, speeches and presentations. Let’s make some progress and have a good time!

F - L – T

Dave Rosenberg

Dear dedicated brothers and/or sisters,

I just would like to share that we now have 5 lodges in the Philippines and on our way to forming a Grand Lodge in due time. In connection, I would like to
share this new membership education or recruitment video that may be useful and attractive in educating new members about our Order or convincing someone to join. You may post this on your facebook account, website or any online forum you have for the hope that you may convince people to join or at least make people learn what we are about. This video consists of photos of Odd Fellows in almost every part of the world. You may download this video using youtube downloader.

This is the link to the video, just click and you will see:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f_McgJ8m9Aw&feature=youtu.be

When we decided to revive the Odd Fellows in the Philippines way back 2009, it was sad to know that there was little information we can find about our Order on the internet and how sad it is to know that only few actually have heard that such GREAT FRATERNITY actually exists because of our lack of VOICE in this modern world. But now, I am happy to observe and see that many lodges and Grand Lodges are now putting an effort in spreading the word about Odd Fellowship and sharing lodge ideas through the internet by taking advantage of technology such as the use of social networking sites to promote our fraternity (such as facebook.com and many more). And much better news is that many jurisdictions are even creating their own educational/promotional online videos on the internet such as Germany, etc. If you view the internet these days, you can now see a lot of information about Odd Fellowship and it has indeed educated maybe hundreds or thousands of people about our Great Fraternal Order although not all of them have joined but at least, we now have the VOICE shouting “WE ARE HERE, WE STILL EXIST, WE ARE A GOOD ORGANIZATION TO BE A PART OF.”

The word is already out there, just by taking advantage of the internet our name have reached distant lands such as Japan, Taiwan and many more and surely reached some people in your locations. I also found out that some people joined a lodge in British Columbia because they read some information/video we posted on the internet and they got intrigued and joined a lodge there. While we may be declining in membership because there will always be HOPE for growth if we open our minds and try to apply and emulate the best practices of effective and growing lodges rather than always saying “NO” or “IT WON’T WORK.” Let us start thinking in advance and put an organizational edge by doing better improvement to Odd Fellowship so people will think our fraternity is worth joining.

May we all serve as keepers of the hundreds of years of fraternal legacy and traditions of this worldwide brotherhood and sisterhood and SPREAD IT ONCE
AGAIN in our own community and then TO THE REST OF THE WORLD! Stand proud and always stay proud to be an Odd Fellow!

WE LOVE THIS ORDER, PLEASE INSPIRE US AND GROW...

In Friendship, Love and Truth!

Louie Sarmiento

DMC Newsletter –
May 18, 2012

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

The Second Annual DMC Dinner at El Torito Restaurant & Cantina was a smashing success. We had 120 DMC members and friends in attendance, including two Past Grand Masters, several Grand Lodge Officers, several members of the Grand Lodge Board of Directors, incoming Grand Master Rod Metoyer and Incoming Deputy Grand Master Rick Boyles, and dozens of NGs and PGs. Seems like everyone had a good time. The “speeches” and comments during the meeting portion all focused on what we can do to increase membership in our Lodges.

Grand Lodge Sessions offered some election disappointments to us. Some really hard-working and dedicated brothers were not re-elected to their positions, including Don Lang, Randy Krassow and Neil Allen. The votes were close (Randy lost by 1 vote). And my candidacy for Grand Warden came up just a bit short of the mark.

As you may know, I was a candidate for election to the position of Grand Warden (that's the position that becomes Deputy Grand Master in a year and then Grand Master a year later). I came close, but was not elected. The vote tally was 82 for Tim Brown and 75 for Dave Rosenberg. (It could have been even closer - one voting member came up to me afterwards and, slightly embarrassed, told me that a member of his Lodge had admitted that he had checked the wrong box. And one of my own Davis Lodge members arrived just after the voting and didn't get the chance to cast his vote. So, that could have resulted in a vote count of 81 - 77, still on the losing end, of course.) A couple of years ago, it would not have been this close. So we are making progress. While 75 out of 157 cast votes is a significant vote for “change” in the order, it was not quite enough. My sense was that I was the candidate of change, and
Tim was the candidate who wanted to stay the course. Apparently, in 2012, Grand Lodge is not quite ready for the change I had to offer. And unfortunately, the losses of membership continue in California. Once again this year (as in the past 66 years) the Order had a net loss of members, and the vast majority of Lodges continue to decline in membership. On a personal plus side, since I am not going to serve as Grand Warden, I will have even more time to devote to the growth and development of my own Davis Lodge. And I send Tim Brown good wishes, and certainly wish him success as our new Grand Warden.

I also extend good wishes to DMC Members Rod Metoyer and Rick Boyles as they assume their new duties, respectively, as Grand Master and Deputy Grand Master.

F - L – T
Dave Rosenberg

DMC Newsletter – May 22, 2012

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

Grand Lodge sessions were certainly “interesting” at many levels. But after all that “motion,” many wonder if there will be any “movement” on the primal issue that faces our Order in California: Declining Membership. Recently, I came into possession of documents showing the recent history of membership in Odd Fellows in California. The statistics are - to put it mildly - very concerning. Numbers don't lie. Let me give you a flavor of those statistics:

* At the end of 2007, there were 5,440 Members in our Order.
  At the end of 2008, there were 5,334 Members in our Order.
  At the end of 2009, there were 5,105 Members in our Order.
  At the end of 2010, there were 4,987 Members in our Order.
  At the end of 2011, there were 4,782 Members in our Order.

* In 2008 we had 149 Lodges in California.
  In 2009 we had 145 Lodges in California.
  In 2010 we had 141 Lodges in California.
  In 2011 we had 131 Lodges in California.
In 2008 35 of our Lodges showed a net gain of Members. 114 Lodges showed no gain or a net loss of Members.

In 2009 38 of our Lodges showed a net gain of Members. 107 Lodges showed no gain or a net loss of Members.

In 2010 29 of our Lodges showed a net gain of Members. 112 Lodges showed no gain or a net loss of Members.

In 2011 37 of our Lodges showed a net gain of Members. 94 Lodges showed no gain or a net loss of Members.

In 2008 4 Lodges showed net gains of 10 or more Members. 6 Lodges showed net losses of 10 or more Members.

In 2009 8 Lodges showed net gains of 10 or more Members. 11 Lodges showed net losses of 10 or more Members.

In 2010 4 Lodges showed net gains of 10 or more Members. 9 Lodges showed net losses of 10 or more Members.

In 2011 9 Lodges showed net gains of 10 or more Members. 17 Lodges showed net losses of 10 or more Members.

* In 2008 there were 6 Lodges showing 100 or more Members.
  In 2009 there were 7 Lodges showing 100 or more Members.
  In 2010 there were 8 Lodges showing 100 or more Members.
  In 2011 there were 6 Lodges showing 100 or more Members.

* In 2008 there were 64 Lodges showing 20 or fewer Members.
  In 2009 there were 71 Lodges showing 20 or fewer Members.
  In 2010 there were 70 Lodges showing 20 or fewer Members.
  In 2011 there were 65 Lodges showing 20 or fewer Members.

In the coming weeks and months, we will be offering specific suggestions on what Brothers and Sisters, Lodges, and even Grand Lodge can do to reverse the trend of our declining membership. And we welcome any suggestions from
YOU, the Dedicated Members for Change. We don't want to merely TALK about this elephant that's in our living room. We want to DO something about it.

F - L - T
Dave Rosenberg

DMC Newsletter –
May 26, 2012

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

The front page of the current edition of I.O.O.F News (May-June 2012), published by the Sovereign Grand Lodge, contains the following words in big and bold letters: “Let's Reach Out Into Our Communities . . . .” I couldn't agree more. I have said time and time again that to grow our membership (and our Order) we can't just focus on one thing. We need to focus on three things: (1) Our rich heritage and ritual as Odd Fellows - the things that make us a unique fraternal order; (2) Good fellowship activities within our Lodges - the social activities and interaction that members want to have when they join a fraternity; and (3) Reaching out into our communities to do good community works - the civic and charitable involvements that members want to engage in and which give them satisfaction. If any one of these elements is missing, we have turned our backs on a great source of potential recruitment of new members. Even Sovereign Grand Lodge recognizes the importance of emerging from our four walls and reaching out to our communities. Yet to this day, we have Lodges who barely touch the subject of community outreach. What a shame.

F - L – T
Dave Rosenberg

DMC Newsletter –
May 27, 2012

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

It gives me great pleasure to forward on to each of you a message from two of our leading DMC members: Grand Master Rod Metoyer and Deputy Grand
Master Rick Boyles. It's an important message leading our California fraternal order into our future.

And if any of you know brothers and sisters who would like to be added to our growing DMC e-mail matrix, please check with them and confirm that they wish to be added, and then send me their name and e-mail address - they will be added. DMC is all about focusing the attention of our members and our leaders on the need to grow our Order. DMC is all about finding methods and ways to increase our membership. DMC understands that we need to evolve as a fraternal order to be relevant to folks in the 21st Century; we need to build on our rich history and heritage while reaching out to our communities in new and exciting ways. DMC does not accept that we continue to decline in membership as we have done for the past 66 years. In this regard, we should all be Dedicated Members for Change.

F - L - T
Dave Rosenberg

**A Message for Every Member**

170 years ago, our ancestors began our order in California. Many of our lodges were formed in the gold country of Northern California. Meetings were held by candlelight. Many of our members could not read or write. Often, the third degree members were those who were literate; the mayor, the constable, and other prominent townsmen. Being a member of our order was a source of pride, chairing a position, or holding a title carried with it an implication of duties and responsibilities. Not being a member gave one a source of shame or inadequacy and since your neighbor was probably a member, it also led to a feeling of exclusion and the dangers inherent in such a tough time and environment. The order obviously was a security blanket for those who were members, and it helped to feed, cloth, and even educate, as many of the early lodges were even lending libraries, where the members could take a book out and read it, returning it so another member could learn as well. The order's place in our early California society was assured for several reasons: the order educated, the order nourished, the order entertained, and even at the end of one's life, the order handled one's burial. So then, the order could not fail, because it filled basic human needs, and the axioms of friendship, love and truth, were emblems that bore no scars, that carried no personal human baggage.
Today, 170 years later, it is a different world. We live in mainly urban areas; we are all literate; we have homes and many methods by which to communicate in our communities. Very few of us spend our days sifting for gold because of the insecurity of it, and also because we need income daily and not simply by good fortune. Many of the goldmines are now closed or infrequently mined. Now, the goldmines we mine are our jobs, our pensions, our social security, our families and our friends. We should alter our mindsets accordingly. No longer do we need a lodge setting to protect us from a harsh external environment, but there are other things a lodge may do. Now, it's more a question of what psychological impetus a lodge may hold. Too many of us sit all alone in an old building waiting for another soul to enter the doorway. Too many of us see the doorway with apprehension or fear. It is time to ask ourselves what are we afraid of, if not simply anything new or different. Let's try and be understanding of every individual in our order, and then perhaps we can see what it is we all have to offer.

There are many of us who desire change, and there are many of us who want to protect our heritage. These do not need to be in conflict. An old rock song goes “Life is change, how it differs from the rocks”; invariably, change happens whether we like it or not. Yet our heritage can be a source of great pride and give us inner strength, so both should be embraced. It's not a question of conflict. If we allow one side of the equation to dominate and the other side to fail, our order will falter and die even quicker. We must see that as our order declines, it becomes more and more imperative for all of us to read the writing on the wall. Either we work together or we will die. A quick Google search can easily point out fraternal groups that have already gone away. Do we want to be part of this ever increasing list? One key to survival is to recognize the fact that all of us deserve respect, all of us want to feel needed and appreciated, all of us are brothers and sisters under the mantle of Odd Fellowship, and together we can succeed if we lose this internal fear we seem to have of our fellow member’s new idea or dream for the future.

We are all in this together. Our order is in a downward spiral. It does not matter whether you want change or don’t want change; there is no disputing this one important fact. The numbers of our order are steadily decreasing. We must work together to forge a brighter future or we will succumb to our own fears. Let’s remember that all of us are brothers and sisters, all of us cherish friendship, love and truth, and if we can just receive new members in this same spirit of openness, perhaps we will live to see a better tomorrow.

In Friendship, Love and Truth, Rod Metoyer and Rick Boyles
E-mail to California Grand Master Rod Metoyer –
May 27, 2012

Rod,

The year 1928 was the high-water mark for Odd Fellowship in California - we had 58,820 members. Take a look at the chart since that time. Other than a brief bump during the war years, look at the trajectory of this order since 1928. Clearly, we are headed to chaos, trouble, and eventual oblivion unless we dramatically change the way we do business. I still remember a respected brother (a traditionalist) who told me two years ago, “I would rather that this fraternity die, than change.” I don't accept that philosophy. I would like this fraternity to evolve and live.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1928</td>
<td>58820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929</td>
<td>55089</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>48945</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>45680</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>41926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>38006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1934</td>
<td>35138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>33186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>31631</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>30365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938</td>
<td>29621</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939</td>
<td>28302</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>27474</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>26515</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1942</td>
<td>25567</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1943</td>
<td>25837</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1944</td>
<td>27370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>28762</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td>30239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>30739</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>30600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949</td>
<td>29894</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>29096</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>28144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>27379</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>26794</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>26141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>25323</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>24415</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>23571</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>22713</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>22300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>21744</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>21084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>20247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>19286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>18220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>17430</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>16662</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>15881</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>15200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>14561</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>14027</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>13512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>13029</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>12585</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>12111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>11800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>11292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>11045</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>10772</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>10503</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>10151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>9822</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>9550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>9322</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>9041</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>8903</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>8532</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>8242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>8041</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>7819</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>7617</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>7487</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>7444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>7373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>7174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>6915</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>6821</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>6484</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>6190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>6074</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>5846</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>5778</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>5812</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>5766</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>5736</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>5680</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>5564</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>5440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>5303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>5104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>4987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>4782</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sad numbers showing a steady decline. And keep in mind, that these numbers just reflect the dues-paying members. We all know that at least half the members just pay dues and little else. So if the stats show 4,782 members in California, we really only have 2,400 who are “active” members. I know some high schools that have more members than that.

You are our leader. You have to make some hard decisions - do you want to lead the remains of a dying order, or the beginnings of a resurgence in this fraternity? Dave

DMC Newsletter –
May 28, 2012

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

One of our DMC members, Linda McGahen, has created some striking charts and graphs showing in detail the troubling decline in California Odd Fellows membership (see APPENDIX C).

I urge each of you to take a careful look at these compelling charts and graphs. I urge you further to share them with the members of your Lodges. And for the DMC members who are in leadership positions, or serve on the Grand Lodge Board of Directors, I urge you to discuss the ramifications of these charts and graphs. The numbers do not lie, and they show an ominous trend. We must work together - in friendship, love and truth - to reverse that trend.

Attached, prepared by Linda, are two tables and five figures. They show the following:

Table 1. This is an analysis of Odd Fellows membership in California from 1928 to 2011. The year 1928 is significant. Even though we have statistics for membership going back to 1853, it was the year 1928 when Odd Fellows in California reached the high water mark. In that year, membership in California was 58,820. In fact, one out of every 100 Californians was an Odd Fellow in 1928. In that year, 1.1% of the California population was a member of the Order. Table 1 also shows that in 2011 - after a pretty steady decline in membership - our numbers were only 4,782. What is also significant is that our membership numbers were declining even though California’s population was increasing. In 1928 the population of the state was only 5,344,000; in 2011, the population was 37,691,912.
Figure 1. This figure shows the drop in our percentage of membership. In 2011, our membership number of 4,782 was only 8.1% of the 1928 membership number - a decline of over 90%.

Figure 2. In 1928, 1.1% of California's population was an Odd Fellow. In 2011, only 0.013% of California's population is an Odd Fellow. Our membership is 87 times lower, in reference to population of the state, than it was in 1928.

Figure 3. This graph shows, in a stark vision, the precipitous decline in our Odd Fellows membership from 1928 to 2011.

Figure 4. This graph shows the commensurate dramatic increase in California's population during those same years, 1928-2011.

Table 2. This table takes a closer look at our Lodge membership decline from 1947-2011.

Figure 5. This graph shows the curve of decline in the number of our Lodge members from 1947 to 2011.

Linda has prepared additional charts which I will share with you in the coming days. Once we analyze this troubling data graphically displaying the PROBLEM, we will turn our DMC attention to SOLUTIONS. Because only by increasing our membership can we reinvigorate this Order in California. It is just not rational to believe that we can maintain the status quo and somehow our membership will miraculously increase. If we keep doing what we have been doing for the last 50, 40, 30, 20, 10 years - the result will be the same as we have seen over the last 50, 40, 30, 20, 10 years - steady decline in our membership.

No one should feel complacent that our Lodge membership in California has dropped to below 5,000. But what is even more troubling is that we know 5,000 dues-paying members really means 2,500 (or less) active members. We all know that Lodges carry members on their books who pay their dues, but do little else to participate in the life and activity of their Lodges.

Sincerely,

Dave Rosenberg
DMC Newsletter –
May 31, 2012

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

Our excellent “chart-maker” Linda McGahen has prepared a couple more pages of charts and graphs, tracking the recent history of declining membership in California (from 2007 to 2011) (see APPENDIX D). The decline continues. And it is our focus and goal as DMC members to help stop the decline and help start the ascent of this Order. Our focus is singular: Increasing the membership of Odd Fellows in California.

In the coming weeks and months, we will use this “newsletter” to discuss strategies, ideas, and techniques to grow membership. Trust me when I say that declines in membership are not unique to Odd Fellows. We see it in fraternal orders and clubs and social organizations around the country. But in my opinion, we have the history and the assets in this Order to be attractive to a new generation of members. We simply have to bring them into our doors.

So, DMC members, I invite YOU to write to me with your suggestions on what we need to do to attract new members into our Lodges. As I have said many times in the past, growing membership is not something that Sovereign Grand lodge can accomplish; it’s not something that Grand Lodge can do; it’s nothing that YOU and your Lodge have to do. In particular, if you have used a strategy or a technique that has worked for YOU and your Lodge, please share it with the rest of us. In the face of the terrible decline in our membership, SOME Lodges are growing (and growing well) - what is it that they do that makes a difference? Let’s use this newsletter as a healthy forum to discuss ways to grow the membership of Odd Fellows in California.

F - L - T
Dave Rosenberg

DMC Newsletter –
June 1, 2012

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

Over the last few newsletters, I’ve shared charts and graphs regarding the dramatic decline in membership for the Odd Fellows, all prepared by Linda McGahen.
McGahen. What about the Rebekah Lodges? Linda has prepared a series of charts and graphs that show a very similar, and troubling, pattern (see APPENDIX E). In fact, in many ways it is a bleaker picture because the numbers are smaller. As of 2012 there are only 80 Rebekah Lodges in California and 2,114 members. In comparison, the charts and graphs show that in 1950 there were 53,112 Rebekahs in California in 367 Lodges.

As recently as 1980 there were 25,941 Rebekahs in 307 Lodges, but since that time there has been a steady decline in membership, year after year. And since 2000, we have seen 87 Rebekah Lodges close or consolidate.

Even though the books show 2,114 active members today, we all know that not all members who pay dues are active in their Lodges. So the universe of Rebekahs in California has shrunk to a small fraction of what Rebekahs used to be in this state. Obviously, this sort of diminution, year after year, cannot be sustained.

F - L - T
Dave Rosenberg

DMC Newsletter –
June 2, 2012

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

The story of the re-birth of Sycamore Lodge #129 (Hayward) is inspiring. It shows that if we are innovative and flexible, and think outside the box, Lodges can be re-charged and revitalized, and perhaps even re-instituted.

The story begins with Frank Goulart, an historian, who lives in Hayward. Back around 2005, Frank (who was not an Odd Fellow at the time) met an Odd Fellow at a Historical Society Dinner - the Lodge was being presented an award
for the preservation of the building. Frank had previously visited the Lodge and had seen a large signature of Leander Linekin, an important figure in Hayward’s history. Frank was aware that Linekin had also served as treasurer of the Encampment for about 30 years, and Frank was thirsty for information about Odd Fellows. But at the Historical Society Dinner, Frank did not get his questions answered. Nor did that Odd Fellow ever open the building for Frank. The Lodge was essentially closed off to the community, and the Lodge dissipated.

Fast forward to 2010. Frank was looking to include the Odd Fellows Building on his history walk of B Street, and Frank still had that thirst for information about Odd Fellows. At a Thanksgiving Dinner, Frank met Daniel Honnibal. Frank told Daniel that he was an historian and wanted to get into the Odd Fellows Lodge in Hayward for some historical research. Daniel told Frank that the Odd Fellows building had been sold. Frank also said that he had purchased a building, made a lot of repairs and made it an historical building. Frank had wanted to see if any artifacts could be shared from the Lodge to be displayed in Frank’s historical building. Frank is an advocate for preserving the historic City of Hayward, and in their conversations, Daniel learned that Frank knew many people in Hayward who were prominent in the community. As the evening wore on, Daniel learned that these prominent people also shared another passion: music. So Daniel put 2+2+2 together and realized that organizations and musicians have a common need - a place to meet and to perform.

After some continued discussion, Daniel asked Frank: “If you could rent a 5,000 square foot building for $60 per year, would you be interested? All you have to do is learn to be an Odd Fellow and all I need to start a Lodge is 12 of your best friends.” Well, Daniel answered a lot of Frank’s questions about Odd Fellowship. According to Frank, “Friendship, love and truth were very appealing as a calling card, and I began to see the potential of the Hayward Lodge becoming the ‘point guard’ for the arts in our community of Hayward.”

The result of these casual conversations? Sycamore Lodge #129 was re-instituted. Frank Goulart became Noble Grand. And at the end of 2010, the Lodge had 71 members.

F - L– T

Dave Rosenberg
Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

As indicated in a previous newsletter, it’s time for us to put ideas, techniques and suggestions forward for ways to bring new members into our Lodges. Frankly, there is no more important issue facing Odd Fellowship today than the issue of our rapidly declining membership and reduction in the number of our Lodges. So, DMC Members, in the spirit of our fraternal order and for its healthy future, I invite you to submit your ideas to this newsletter. We will publish them all. We welcome all your ideas, but the best ideas are the ones that you have tried and that have WORKED in your Lodges. Obviously, not all ideas that will be suggested in this newsletter are going to work for YOUR Lodge. But it is hoped that in the mass of ideas put forward by successful, growing Lodges, you may find one or two that will be comfortable for YOUR Lodge.

So, to kick off this dialog, I will start with the Lodge that I know best - the Davis Odd Fellows Lodge #169. Here are 5 ideas, techniques and suggestions that we have actually implemented in our Lodge that have proven successful in attracting applicants to our Lodge.

1. We have made a distinct effort to double our applicant pool by a very simple technique. When we invite a potential new member to apply, and that potential new member is married (or has a relationship with another person as boyfriend-girlfriend, significant other, fiancee, etc.) we make a point of inviting BOTH to apply. Not only does this almost instantly double our applicant pool, but we also find that our new members are more loyal and committed to our Lodge when their spouse (or significant other, etc.) is also in the Lodge.

2. We make a point of having frequent social meetings of the Lodge (without ritual, regalia, or other secrets of the Lodge). Typically, we do this at our Saturday morning breakfast meetings. At these meetings we discuss our social plans and community projects. We find that this is a wonderful and relaxed way to invite prospective members to join us and see who we are and what we do. (By the way, Saturday morning meetings are a great time to meet - and serving breakfast is a great way to spend those early hours on Saturday morning.)

3. We really do emphasize community projects and community involvement. Not only is this a wonderful thing for our community, but our members (and prospective members) really do appreciate the ability to give back to the
community. One of the main reasons we find that folks (particularly younger folks in their 20’s and 30’s) are interested in joining a Lodge is the wide array of good works we do in the community. Examples of this kind of community service are: tree planting projects, helping frail seniors in their homes on the weekend, blood drives, allowing charitable groups use of our Lodge Hall and supporting them with volunteers, running bingo games for community groups with all proceeds going to a charity partner, getting a team together to help in a walk-a-thon or other fundraiser for charity, etc. We also provide the Lodge free of charge for young people in the community to perform with their bands - we call it Rock the Hall - and we provide a venue for local artists and musicians. Hundreds of community members come to our Lodge Hall to watch the performances.

4. We organize fun activities and social activities in the Lodge (or outside the Lodge) for the benefit of our members and our applicants for membership. These activities include such things as family movie night, bunko night at the Lodge, wine tasting at member’s homes, hiking, “OddtoberFest,” a Halloween Party complete with costumes, renting a bus for wine country trips, etc. We have found that a major reason that prospective members are interested in joining a Lodge is because of the camaraderie and social interaction that fraternal membership offers.

5. We try to organize major community project two or more times each year. This not only helps our fundraising recipient, but it creates high visibility for the Lodge in the community. For example, we put on “Breakfast with Santa” at the Lodge every year, and we also organize “Breakfast with the Bunny” at the Lodge each year. We have organized a Community Bike Parade which set a Guinness World Record and involved hundreds of community members. We raised funds for Haiti after their great earthquake. All these events brought many new people to the Lodge, and each of them generated interest in Odd Fellowship, and ultimately applications to join.

That's just a few ideas. But let's hear from YOU! What have you tried, and what has worked for you?

F - L – T
Dave Rosenberg
Davis Encampment #21 is pleased to announce that it is funding tuition for 15 boys and girls to attend the Odd Fellows’ Three-Links Camp this summer. This will be the first camp experience for most of the children attending this year. The boys and girls going to camp are all in 7-14 age range (plus one 16-year-old junior counselor) and each will be at the overnight camp for a full week. The children are all from Yolo County, with most coming from Davis. Several of the children are in the foster care program.

“We are delighted that we can help these children experience the great outdoors,” said the Encampment’s Chief Patriarch Dave Rosenberg. “This will be a camp adventure that will highlight their summer, and will be a great memory for them for years to come.”

Davis Encampment #21 was chartered in 1956 and is part of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows. Members of the Davis Odd Fellows Lodge #169 who have attained the maximum three degrees available in Odd Fellows, are eligible to join the Davis Encampment, and will obtain an additional three advanced degrees in that program. The Davis Encampment is the largest in California with 31 members. Davis Encampment members have laid out their mission to send children to summer camp, and help pay their way.

Davis Encampment member Doug Hatton, who is also known as Santa, has donated much of the money he obtains as Santa, to support this camp program, and other members of the Davis Encampment have contributed to support this program.

The Three-Links Camp has been operated by the Independent Order of Odd Fellows and Rebekahs since 1958 and provides a rustic camp experience every summer in three one-week sessions. The camp is located on 25 acres in the Sierra Forest in Tuolumne County, about 18 miles east of historic Sonora.
Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

I hope you all get a chance to review the July-August-September 2012 “California Odd Fellow and Rebekah Publication.” On page 13 you will find a great article by new Grand Master Rod Metoyer and new Deputy Grand Master Rick Boyles (both of whom are members of DMC) on the future of the Order, entitled “Moving Forward as an Order.” The article focuses on six resolutions, submitted by me and my Lodge in 2011, and all adopted at Grand Lodge Sessions.

I urge all of you to discuss these issues at an upcoming meeting of your Lodge. I believe the philosophy espoused in these six resolutions will dramatically help Odd Fellowship as it moves forward into the 21st Century, and will help our Order GROW.

F - L – T
Dave Rosenberg

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

A lot of Odd Fellows and Rebekahs from around California and, frankly, from other jurisdictions write to me. Most of the messages are supportive and positive. They hear our message of change and evolution, the energy and the power that comes from being active members and active Lodges. However, I also receive messages - some from DMC members and some from folks who are not members of DMC - that are sad and discouraged. I heard from a long-time Rebekah who is so discouraged with her Lodge that she is prepared to not renew her membership and to phase out. She says the meetings are boring and unproductive - nothing really gets accomplished. She has energy and ideas, but they are rejected out of hand, and she feels her creativity is stifled. An Odd Fellow has written to me complaining that there is too much “clashing of personalities” going on in his Lodge and at his meetings - “too much back-biting and too many power plays.”
Wow.

When did we forget that this fraternal order is all about FRIENDSHIP, LOVE AND TRUTH? When have we grown so detached and so focused on our own selves and our own agendas that we forgot to speak openly person-to-person to our brothers and sisters? When did we decide that we had to pass along a “rumor” about a brother or sister, rather than candidly and directly speak to the affected brother and sister? When was the quest for “power” in the Lodge or in the Order so great that we could criticize or diminish or hurt a Lodge brother or sister?

A little self-reflection is always in order. We are here to “elevate the character of man.” Let’s make sure to start with our own character.

Lodges should be welcoming and comfortable refuges for our members. Lodges should be places where we support one another.

Let’s resolve that:

1. No idea proposed by a member is “stupid” or “silly” or “unworkable.” Every idea is worthy of consideration and discussion. Ultimately, the idea may be accepted, modified or rejected. But let’s give our proposing brother or sister the courtesy of fair consideration.

2. No brother or sister should be talked about behind their back. Let’s give our brothers and sisters the courtesy of direct face-to-face conversation. If they have done something really good, take the time to tell them so. If they have done something that bothers you, take the time to talk to them about it in a friendly, open and non-threatening way.

3. No one in the Lodge should start a rumor about another member. And if you hear a rumor, it should stop with you.

4. No meeting should be boring or unproductive. Why have a meeting if nothing gets accomplished? Every meeting should have a focus and should move toward a goal - whether it is planning a Lodge dinner, or organizing an event to support a local charity, or planning an installation of officers, etc.

5. In everything we do in our Lodges, we should always ask the question: “Am I doing this for the good of the Order?”

F – L – T
Dave Rosenberg
Letter from John Harris, Costa Mesa Vice Grand -
June 15, 2012

Bravo. I agree. When I first joined my lodge, it was that way. A couple of us “newer members” said lets fix the problem or we don't have to be here.

We fixed the problem and realize we are all brothers and sisters and we are a family.

Thanks Dave for your commitment and dedication!

Brother John. Costa Mesa lodge 29. V.G

John Harris

DMC Newsletter -
June 23, 2012

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

Here are some thoughts from Brother John Fraher following up a recent trip to Nova Scotia, Canada. Unfortunately, too many of our Lodges are virtually invisible in our communities. We need to open our doors to welcome our communities - after all, that's where our future members live.

F - L – T
Dave

Last week, Carol and I were on vacation and one of the stops was Halifax, Nova Scotia. While touring an old house, converted museum, there were two plaques on the wall about celebrating the local lodge’s 137 year anniversary in 1999. I was so excited that this small town had a lodge. I wanted to find it, take pictures, and hopefully maybe find a member or two there to meet and exchange Odd Fellow stories. I went to the people running the museum but they didn’t know what Odd Fellows was nor where the hall was. I went to a boutique faire and asked many of the individuals there. One person pulled out the telephone book and we looked up all possibilities but there was no address or telephone number. One person thought it might be on the other side of town. So Carol and I walked all around but no luck. We even tried looking it up on the internet, but had no luck either.
I thought how sad this was. What would have happened if I moved to this
town, not being able to find a lodge and lose my membership with Odd
Fellows. Then I started thinking of the lodges in California. I wonder how many
lodges have no way of contacting them except if you actually ran into a
member?

Many lodges, including California Lodge No. 1, have great internet sites with
names and telephone numbers of contacts, but I guess since most lodges meet
once a week or less, there’s no need to own a lodge’s telephone number. And
some internet sites don’t have a common address (i.e. “ioof...”) that would be
common around the world so if you went to any city that a lodge had an
internet address, that would be a universal beginning to locate a local member
or lodge.

Needless to say, I wasn’t able to exchange any friendship with my fellow
brothers and sisters in Halifax. Is there something in place that I’m unaware
of? Is this possibly an area we should investigate to implement by Sovereign
Grand Lodge? Connection, communication, public awareness are a must if we
want our fraternity to grow.

Just a thought.

John

DMC Newsletter -
June 28, 2012

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

We are very pleased and fortunate that both Grand Master Rod Metoyer and
Deputy Grand Master Rick Boyles are members of DMC. Below is a joint article
written by Brother Rod and Brother Rick, that carries an important message for
all members of this great Order to consider.

F - L – T

 Loose Lips Sink Ships

Our order is older than the proverbial hills. This wonderful state of
California is literally laced together with the history of Odd Fellowship. A study
of Western Americana would show that many of the historical figures in our
state were members of the Odd Fellows. Peter Sellars has written 2
tremendous early histories of our order in this state, and it shows what an
investigation into our early order might emphasize which is that Odd Fellowship served a purpose in those early desperate times. It was a security blanket to those who were hard-pressed to wear much else. If you were a gold-miner or a merchant in those times, you were often cold and hungry. In such hard times, a lodge must have seemed like a palace to those cold and hungry early settlers. The idea of a warm meal, a welcoming handshake, and a smile from a fellow member must have appeared almost alluring in that otherwise barren time.

Now, it is a different world. Odd Fellowship has regressed into the recesses of local society. All of us are filled with responsibilities and jobs beyond the scope of a lodge hall. Many of us attend almost as an afterthought, leaving our families and our ball games to sit through a meeting which sometimes seems too long or becomes rancorous, too often complete with divisions and angry members, voting on decisions or subjects which may cause dismay on one level or another. In today's world, one can see a lodge meeting as a burden to endure, a discussion about a lodge issue can appear frightening when illuminated by someone packed with personal agenda.

An onlooker tasked to look into our order might compare us with other orders which are on the downswing. The following traits accompany a downswing: turmoil, short-sightedness, loss of caring, fear of the public and of ourselves and mean-spirited rumors. If we are not careful, we will soon epitomize these very traits.

Rumors in particular serve no purpose except to besmirch another person or persons. They have no place in an order professing to admire the precepts of Friendship, Love and Truth. Conduct unbecoming an Odd Fellow is a charge we level if we feel an Odd Fellow has wronged another member, but we are all somewhat guilty. We must lose our hatred in order to grow. We must see that most if not all members mean well, and that it is not our implied duty to discern who the bad members are. Lately, rumors seem more rampant than ever, and we should all do our best to dispel them. If a member does something against our code or wrongs another member, it is certainly appropriate to call attention to it, but it is not appropriate to spread rumors about that individual. Rumors serve no purpose beyond blowing off steam. No member should feel compelled to insult another member. If a member does something contrary to code, there are remedies, but rumors are not the remedy. No one gets a pass on hatred. In order to grow, this is the first step we must all take - the purging of hatred.
If we want to grow and survive into the future, we need to band together as a unit. Many members talk about change, and many members idolize our heritage. It bears repeating that these ideas need not be in conflict. The future is something none of us may foresee. If we possess the inner strength to love each other as we profess to within our rituals and codebooks then we can't fail. If we refuse to get along, if we only spread vicious rumors about each other, and yell at one another in lodge halls, it will certainly only result in a mass exodus from the order in general. When we see our members, let's remember first that they have love for the order just like us, and realize that together we win.

In Friendship, Love and Truth, Rod Metoyer and Rick Boyles

DMC Newsletter -
July 2, 2012

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

Many of you have written to me with ideas, techniques and suggestions for growth of this Order. All your ideas, techniques and suggestions are welcomed and encouraged. And many of your ideas, techniques and suggestions will undoubtedly find their way into the work of the Grand Lodge Membership Committee.

However, I have concluded that there is only one sure method to encourage potential new members to submit applications for membership to Odd Fellows. It doesn't involve high-priced consultants, and it doesn't involve advertising, or posters, or radio or television spots, or any other hoop and whistle. Bringing in new members is all about YOU. The single best source for new members is YOU. The single best spokesperson for Odd Fellowship is YOU. The single best recruiter for your Lodge is YOU. It's really that simple.

You can't rely on someone else to do it. You can't rely on Grand Lodge, or Sovereign Grand Lodge to deliver new members to your door. You can't rely on other members of your own Lodge to do the heavy lifting. YOU have friends and colleagues, and perhaps even relatives, who would enjoy Odd Fellowship, so YOU should chat with them about it.

And once you have their application in your hand, what then? Well, there is one more important element to the process of bringing in new members. While YOU are responsible for the recruitment of new members and the
submission of application forms, you have to give potential new members a REASON to follow through and get initiated. So, if your Lodge is inactive, invisible and impotent - your recruit really has little reason to follow through to initiation.

That's it in a nutshell.

F - L – T

Dave Rosenberg

DMC Newsletter -
July 9, 2012

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

Here is a message from DMC Member and Chair of the Grand Lodge Membership Committee Peter Sellars. Let’s make sure we have a great turnout on August 25 for this important Membership Event in Sacramento.

F - L – T

Dave Rosenberg

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

On Saturday August 25, 2012, there will be a one-day seminar event on Membership and some new topics around a successful lodge. Starts at 9:30 am and ends at 4:00 pm. This is a gearing up for the Membership/Lodge/Officer - Seminar in February and other future events.

The Grand Master wants to have more positive ideas flowing throughout our Order and our jurisdiction. The Membership Committee (all of the members) who each are from successful lodges, have an idea on lodge growth and/or success for all of you. If you have ever asked for ideas on growth and the “how to's,” this is the event. If your lodge needs ideas, come to this meeting on August 25, 2012.

Come casual and relaxed. Just sit back and listen. Ask a question when ever you wish. Lunch is free. If you have any questions, please call Pete Sellars 415-861-1737.
Your lodge should receive a letter concerning this event in the mail.

Fraternally,

Pete

E-mail to the Davis Lodge -
July 26, 2012

Dear Odd Fellows and Pledges,

I'm pleased to say that the Davis Odd Fellows Lodge last night voted into membership the following 12 men and women:

Sean Chaffee
Robin Dewey
Alekka Fullerton
Graham Fullerton
Michael Fullerton
Kerry Danne Loux
Dan Maguire
Fran Maguire
Jeff Munoz
Rea Nakanishi
Ed Prieto
Mona Prieto

Congratulations to each of them. We will be scheduling a formal initiation for the new members in the near future.

F - L - T
Dave Rosenberg
Chair, Membership & Initiation Committee
Davis Odd Fellows Lodge #169
Press release on Davis Lodge's new members -
July 26, 2012

Last night (July 25, 2012), the members of Davis Lodge 169 voted the follow 12 men and women into the Lodge as members. A formal initiation will be scheduled in the near future.

Sean Chaffee, 23, lives in Davis and works as a bartender.
Robin Dewey, 56, a health educator from Davis.
Alekka Fullerton, 44, Davis, an attorney.
Graham Fullerton, 16, a Davis resident and high school student.
Michael Fullerton, 56, from Davis, father.
Kerry Danne Loux, 57, lives in Davis and works as a landscape architect.
Dan Maguire, 45, a Superior Court Judge, living in Davis.
Fran Maguire, 45, a California Department of Public Health Analyst, residing in Davis.
Jeff Munoz, 33, works in construction and security and lives in Sacramento.
Rea Nakanishi, 55, resident of Davis and retired.
Ed Prieto, 68, Sheriff of Yolo County, resides in Davis.
Mona Prieto, 57, a resident of Davis, works as Deputy Chief of the California Highway Patrol.

“This is a strong group of new members to our Order and to our Lodge,” said Past Grand Dave Rosenberg, who also serves as Chair of the Lodge's Membership & Initiation Committee. “These new members will add their considerable skills to the great pool of talent in our Lodge. These new members are focused on helping the community and our Lodge does so in many ways.”

The Davis Odd Fellows Lodge helps the community by providing donations of funds to charitable and community groups, by providing use of the Lodge Hall at little or no cost to groups, and by direct assistance to people. Among the programs sponsored by the Lodge is “Thursday Night Live” where local musicians are given a venue for their music once each month; Davis Odd Fellows Bingo, offered on the second Sunday of every month with all proceeds benefiting a local charitable or community group; a “Senior Project” where members help frail seniors with projects in their homes; a “Planting Trees Committee” which works with Tree Davis to plant trees in town; and a “Social Services Committee” where members befriend persons with mental illness.

“We try to have fun together as members of a fraternal order, and we respect
the ancient rituals of the Odd Fellows,” said Noble Grand Kandice Fowler, “but we also focus a lot of our efforts to helping the greater community in which we live.”

When initiated, the 12 new members will bring the total membership of the Davis Odd Fellows Lodge to 195. The Davis Odd Fellows Lodge Hall is located at 415 Second Street in Downtown Davis. The Davis Odd Fellows Lodge was originally chartered in 1870 and has been a fixture in Davis for the past 142 years, predating the incorporation of the city and the founding of the University of California at Davis.

DMC Newsletter -
July 26, 2012

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

I have attached an article recently prepared by DMC Members Rod Metoyer (our Grand Master) and Rick Boyles (our Deputy Grand Master). Please take 3-4 minutes to read the important message contained in that article about the future of Odd Fellowship. And thank you Rod and Rick!

F - L – T

Dave Rosenberg

Does Your Community Know You Exist?

Sometimes in our order, we become jaded. A number of our lodges are large enough to feel like their own separate worlds. But many of our other lodges have become simply a refuge from society. Ask an onlooker how they view the I.O.O.F. and they will probably give you a puzzled look. Very few of the public have ever even heard of us. If you point out that the lodge is the biggest building in the oldest part of town often times the person will remark that they had no idea that the order even existed. Or, even worse, they may say that they had no idea that the order still existed. In some cases, the public will respond in a startled manner, almost in disbelief. Our order could easily become a vestige of history, an afterthought to the history of a town. Yet, if we were to delve into our history, we would usually find that many prominent citizens were members, in years long past. This is one of our strengths. We have a long and vibrant history, with many instrumental members from almost
every community in this populous state of California. This is a factor that we should not forget.

In our journeys as elective officers we have found lodges that are on the cusp of dissolution. These are lodges that without one or two of their most influential members in attendance that will inevitably close. In most cases, the influential members are elderly, often quite elderly. While we owe a vote of gratitude to these fine individuals, we have to seek new ways in which to attract new and vital members. Without new members, our order will cease to exist within the next 20 years. Whatever your view of our order may be, there can be no disputing, that we must work together to mobilize our lodges to invigorate our present members and to somehow attract new members. It can be done. There are a number of lodges throughout the state that have experienced growth, and they have done it using various methods, but simply sitting in a lodge building behind a locked door will not do the trick. We can’t attract anyone if we don’t make an effort. Think about your role in your community. Is there something your lodge could do to attract new members?

Look at the interests in your own lodge and in your own local community. Perhaps your lodge likes antiques, old cars, board games, music, art, or any of a myriad of other interests. This connection tends to draw prospective members. Often times, a lodge forms a committee devoted to a single interest and this may attract new members. One lodge has a beer-making committee, another lodge has an antique car committee, a third deals with historical memorabilia, a fourth celebrates music of all types; you get the idea. The public will join if it sees something of interest. Advertise your interest, and you could be surprised at the interest it creates. If a lodge has as one of its interests an antique car club, does this make it less of a lodge? Certainly not. Lodges have always been connected by shared interests. No one was born an Odd Fellow. They have to be created. What is an Odd Fellow Lodge without specific interests? It is a lodge waiting for the end. This notion that somehow a lodge with a specific interest transforms itself into a club is clearly negative thinking. A lodge should be what it has always represented, a loving parent with encircling arms. One lodge can house many clubs, or interests.

The Odd Fellows must step back and ask themselves what are they, exactly? This is clearly one of our core issues. In every lodge, we should begin to develop a core interest or multiple interests. Otherwise, ask yourselves what draws new members? Simply stating that we have a pot luck at 5pm on Tuesday nights will not do the trick. Times, they are a-changing. We must learn to change with them.
Around the order there are those who speak of lodges with success with almost derogatory speech, but those larger lodges now are the reason we still exist. Can you imagine an order with lodges of less than 10 members each thinking somehow that they are the example for the future? It simply is not feasible to have an order where lodges have no real core, no interest, and no point to existence. Yet this is the position now of most failing lodges. If you as a member of a failing lodge can’t tell an onlooker why they should join your lodge than your lodge has failed. Some members think that each lodge should develop a lodge Mission Statement, and this is an excellent idea, but it should have consistency. It should say something substantial. Just repeating the terms Friendship, Love, and Truth, ad infinitum, will not do the trick. All of us should give serious thought to why we are members, and prepare a speech, written or vocal, to tell to anyone who may show interest in our order. If we can imagine why a prospective member might join our order, it may just happen!

In Friendship, Love and Truth, Rod Metoyer & Rick Boyles

E-mail to Sovereign Grand Master Delmar Burns —
July 26, 2012

To: SGM Delmar L. Burns

From: Dave Rosenberg, PG Davis Lodge #169, California

Dear SGM Burns,

I am responding to your request for community projects. The Davis Lodge has, for the past five years now, created a number of Committees based on the interests of the members. The Committee structure in Davis is very strong. These committees take three forms: (1) Administrative Committees. We have a number of committees which focus on administrative or internal matters. These include the Finance Committee, the Bylaws Committee, the Membership & Initiation Committee, and the Visiting Committee. (2) Social Committees. We have a number of committees that focus on organizing fun activities for the members of our Lodge. These include the Good Fellowship Committee and a number of subcommittees such as the Family Movie Night Committee, the Wine Club, the Zymurgy (beer brewing) Committee, the Hiking Committee, the Rafting Committee, the Wine Trip Committee. It is noteworthy that many of these committees organize events that include the community (e.g. we put on an OddtoberFest every year and a Halloween Party and Dance every year) that
attracts members from the community and potential new members. (3) Outreach Committees. These are the Committees that focus on community projects, and primarily the issues upon which you are focusing. These Committees include the Community Support Committee, the Music & Concerts Committee, Social Service Committee, Senior Project Committee, Tree Committee, and the Bingo Committee. I will list community service projects engaged in by these outreach committees:

- **Breakfast with Santa.** One of our members is Santa and we provide a popular community breakfast every year to 300 children and family members.
- **Breakfast with the Bunny.** The City of Davis asked us to take over this very popular event during Easter, providing breakfast, a parade, and arts and crafts projects. Over 200 children and families participated.
- **Picnic Day Float and Breakfast.** For years now we have been providing a $5 breakfast to the community during the big annual University of California, Davis, event – Picnic Day. We have also entered an Odd Fellows-Rebekahs Float in the big parade.
- **Kids to Summer Camp.** This year, under leadership of the Davis Encampment, we sent 15 children to summer camp (the Three-Links Camp) paying their tuition in full. The children were all foster kids (the modern-day “orphans”) and low income children.
- **Bingo at the Lodge.** For the past five years we provide live Bingo at the Lodge on the Second Sunday of every month. All proceeds from Bingo go to a community and charitable group each month. The group actively participates.
- **Thursday Night Live.** Once each month on the first Thursday we showcase bands at the Lodge – hosting up to 250 people. It’s always free to the community.
- **Rock the Hall.** We have started “Rock the Hall” at the Lodge – once each month we feature teenage bands. The kids just love it. So do their parents. Always free.
- **Davis Music Fest.** One of our members coordinated 55 bands and 15 venues (including the Lodge Hall) for a huge community music festival.
- **World’s Greatest Bicycle Parade.** We set a Guinness World’s record, garnered lots of publicity, and had over 1,000 community participants. We raised over $10,000 for our schools.
- **Odd Poetry.** A group of Lodge members wanted to recite poetry once each month. It’s now part of the Davis Arts Walk on one Friday each month, and has attracted 30 people to the Lodge.
• Helping Frail Seniors. We work with the Senior Center an send Odd Fellows (and their family members) to the homes of Seniors to help with little projects. Lots of good-will generated.

• Senior Computing Project. We have assisted seniors with their computers and their high-tech phones.

• Working with People with Mental Illness. Our Social Service Committee connects members with persons with mental illness, so they can have someone to chat with.

• Walk for the Cure. We have fielded a team, with another community group, to raise money for cancer research.

• Tree Planting. We work with Tree Davis to plant trees throughout the community.

• Co-hosted events. We organize 4 or 5 events each year at the Lodge so that community groups can raise money for their causes. We let them use the Lodge at no cost and provide other assistance.

• Hosting Community Forums. At the request of the City, the Chamber of Commerce or the Downtown Association, we have allowed them to use the Lodge for community forums (e.g. forum on homelessness).

• Renting the Lodge Hall. Our Lodge Hall is rented and used virtually every day of the week by community groups such as Rotary, the Chamber, Jazzercise, Weight Watchers, a church, etc. The Lodge is always open.

• Hope for Haiti. When the big earthquake devastated Haiti, we held a big music event at the Lodge and raised close to $25,000 to assist recovery. There was an outpouring of support from the community and large attendance.

• Zombie Walk. Some of our young members wish to organize a fun zombie walk in the downtown to raise money for charity.

All of these events, and others, have not only helped the community, but have dramatically raised the visibility of our Lodge. Virtually everyone in Davis knows about the Odd Fellows and knows where the Lodge is. We are recognized as the premier organization in the town and membership in the Lodge is sought by community leaders. In the past six years we have grown from a Lodge of less than 40 members to a Lodge of almost 200 members.

Top succeed in the 21st Century we must look back at our rich history and remember that we were (in the 19th Century) the center of the community – a fraternal order that was very attractive to people - a place that people wanted to join. We do this by getting outside of our four walls and bringing the community into the Lodge. We don’t accomplish this by just practicing the
ritual of our Order. We must supplement that by good fellowship activities for the members, and by active community outreach.

Best personal regards,

Dave Rosenberg, PG

DMC Newsletter -
July 28, 2012

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

I often hear the words “he is a true Odd Fellow” or “he is not a true Odd Fellow.”

What is a true Odd Fellow? Let me offer a suggestion on this subject.

The symbol of our Order is the three links, containing the letters “F - L – T.” The letters stand for “friendship, love, truth.” Each of these words is the basis for a degree of Odd Fellowship: the first degree (the Degree of Friendship), the second degree (the Degree of Brotherly Love) and the third degree (the Degree of Truth). The links are inter-locked, meaning that they and the words they represent (friendship, love, truth) are bound together, supporting and sustaining each other. The lack of any one of them results on a broken chain. For example, friendship without truth is an empty facade.

So we, Odd Fellows and Rebekahs all, entered into our initiations and received the three degrees, professing an understanding of friendship, love and truth. We took solemn oaths and obligations on these principals and precepts. It is, after all and at bottom, the essence of Odd Fellowship. Without the binding obligations to friendship, love and truth, we might as well be bird watchers, sports fans, or chess club members. Friendship, love and truth make us uniquely Odd Fellows.

But let me ask all of you three questions. And be honest because we don't need to answer these questions to me. We just need to answer them to yourselves, in the privacy of your mirror.

Do we, in our daily lives, follow these precepts of friendship, love and truth? Do we welcome our brothers and sisters of this order with true friendship and
brotherly love? Do we always speak the truth to them and to others about them?

If your honest answer to any of these questions is “no” then we have a disconnect. Criticizing our brothers and sisters behind their backs, maligning them to others, is (at best) gossip, and (at worst) not in the spirit of this Order. It can be hurtful and it can be cruel. Let’s all rededicate ourselves to the essential spirit of Odd Fellowship contained in the words “friendship, love, truth.” If we live within the walls of these precepts, we are, indeed, true Odd Fellows, and we can never go wrong.

F - L – T
Dave Rosenberg

E-mail to Davis Lodge re social events -
July 29, 2012

Dear Odd Fellows and Pledges,

There are two events at the Lodge this Thursday evening, August 2. Come by and enjoy either or both!

First of all we have Club Night at the Lodge, in the Lower Hall, from 5 to 8 p.m. Just a low-key atmosphere, have a drink at the bar at special member prices, watch the big-screen TV, and time to socialize. This event is only open to members, pledges, and guests of members and pledges.

Second, we have Thursday Live!, in the Upper Hall, featuring TWO bands: Hardwater and the Mike Justis Band. The show starts at 7:30 p.m., is open to the general public and music aficionados of all ages and is always free. The two bands feature some of the best local musical talent the area has to offer. There will also be a no-host bar open in the Upper Hall.

Come by the Lodge this Thursday for some great music and good vibes.

F - L - T
Dave Rosenberg
For the Music & Concerts Committee
Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

I attach to this e-mail an article (see APPENDIX F) just written by DMC member and Deputy Grand Master of the California Lodge Rick Boyles. Rick, who has a droll and refined sense of humor, has written a thought-provoking and provocative piece. Please keep in mind that it is quintessential satire, written in that style to make some serious points, and encourage some serious dialogue. So enjoy the satire, sarcasm, irony and humor, but please reflect on the underlying messages. Enjoy!

Also, I remind all Brothers and Sisters that the annual “Odd Fellows Homes of California” barbeque is TOMORROW: Sunday, August 12, from 11:30 a.m. till about 3:00 p.m. The barbeque rotates from Meadows of Napa Valley one year to the Saratoga Retirement Community the next year. This year the barbeque will be at the Saratoga Retirement Community. And it's a special event celebrating the 100th Anniversary of that wonderful retirement campus, owned by the Odd Fellows.

Please come - even if you haven't RSVP'd - just come! It's $10 per person, a bargain. You get a fine barbequed lunch, entertainment, and if you wish, tours of the facility.

F - L - T

Dave Rosenberg
This year, the barbeque was held at the Saratoga Retirement Community. It was also the 100th year anniversary of the Saratoga home. Hundreds of residents, Odd Fellows and Rebekahs attended the barbeque, including Grand Master Rod Metoyer, President of the Rebekah Assembly Sharon Burgess, Deputy Grand Master Rick Boyles, Grand Warden Tim Brown, Grand Treasurer Jay Johnson, and Grand Secretary Ray Link. The menu featured barbequed chicken, fresh caught tuna, coconut encrusted mahi-mahi, old fashioned hotdogs, and lots of other goodies. No one left hungry. Entertainment was provided by the Southern California group, “The Harmonettes.” Eight Davis Odd Fellows attended including Dave, Vic Bucher (also a member of the Board of Directors), Sandy Dietrich, Vita Salmiera, Penny and Jim Smith, Duff Devine, and Rea Nakanishi.
Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

Since Odd Fellowship was founded in Merry Olde England in the 1700's, it appears to me to have undergone at least nine dramatic changes in its history. We learn about our future by understanding our past, and so I think it would be useful to travel down the historical path of this great Order.

1. Odd Fellows started when working men of different trades met in the pubs of England. The earliest printed record stems from 1748 where “Odd Fellows” met in the Globe Tavern in England. I'm reasonably confident that drinking ale was a major part of these social gatherings. There is also evidence that our fraternal Order was linked to the “Ancient Order of Bucks,” and its symbol of three bucks with antlers intertwined. These men were led by a “Most Noble Grand” and also met in taverns.

2. Odd Fellows were not the only fraternal order in England - in fact, there were dozens of them. And most of them evolved into what was known as “friendly societies.” Before social security and unemployment insurance and health care subsidized by employers, folks in England were pretty much on their own. In stepped Odd Fellows (and other fraternal orders) to help members who were sick or in distress, to educate orphans of members who died, and to bury members in Odd Fellows cemeteries. Odd Fellows Lodges were the social fabric (in lieu of government) which helped members and their families. In large measure, this is why Odd Fellows developed secret grips, signs and passwords - only by such secrets could one Odd Fellows Lodge know that it was helping a true Odd Fellow, as opposed to someone who was passing himself off as an Odd Fellow simply to receive financial or other assistance.

3. And then for a time, Odd Fellows and other friendly societies were suppressed by government in England.

4. But eventually, these fraternal organizations became prevalent, and the suppression ceased. Odd Fellowship was revived in 1803 by an organization called “London Union of Odd Fellows” which, in turn, morphed into “The Grand Lodge of England” which assumed control over all Odd Fellows Lodges in England.
5. But not all Odd Fellows Lodges in England were happy with that. In 1809 Victory Lodge in Manchester declared itself independent of the Grand Lodge of England. And in 1814 the six Lodges in Manchester met and joined together as the “Manchester Unity of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows” and proceeded to elect officers and “standardize” the degree work.

6. Odd Fellowship came to the United States in 1806, but it wasn't until 1819 that Odd Fellowship in America took off like a rocket with the work of Thomas Wildey. He and a handful of others “self-instituted” an Odd Fellows Lodge called Washington Lodge #1 in Baltimore, Maryland. In 1820, they received a charter through an English Lodge, and then Odd Fellowship - through the work of Wildey - rapidly expanded across the country.

7. In 1834, Odd Fellowship in America became independent of the Order in England.

8. In the middle of the 1800's, Odd Fellowship became the first fraternal order to open its doors to women with the formation of the Rebekah Lodge; and in the late 20th Century, membership in Odd Fellows Lodges were opened to women and in Rebekah Lodges were opened to men.

9. And in 1869, a California Lodge (Templar Lodge #15 in San Francisco) helped to establish a Lodge in Germany (Wuertemberg Lodge #1 in Stuttgart), and from there Odd Fellowship traveled world-wide.

Frankly, the history of Odd Fellowship is a history of change. Why should it be any different today? In fact, I suggest that Odd Fellowship is in the midst of another historical change in its personality - the tenth change, if you will. Sometimes it is difficult to discern change when you are in the midst of it. And I assure you that change (evolution) is happening right now. Both Grand Lodge and Sovereign Grand Lodge recognize that Odd Fellowship - to survive in the 21st Century - must evolve. This evolution must open Lodges up to the public. We have simply got to be more visible in our communities. This means more community outreach, involvement and support. This means inviting the public into our Lodges in social meetings and social events. This does not mean revealing the secrets of the Lodge. But it does mean becoming an active part of the communities in which we live. If we do so, we will attract the young blood of new members which we need so that the Order can flourish.

If we fail to leave the four walls of our Lodges, those walls will become the coffins of our Order. F - L – T, Dave Rosenberg
Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

I am very pleased to attach an excellent article (see APPENDIX G) written by Dedicated Members for Change Rod Metoyer, the Grand Master of California, and Rick Boyles, the Deputy Grand Master of California.

This article makes an important point about the future of our Order! I commend it to you and hope you will share it with your Lodge Brothers and Sisters.

F - L - T
Dave Rosenberg

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

On the front page of one of my morning papers this morning - the Sacramento Bee - is an article entitled, “Band of brothers is fading with age.” I’m an active-duty US Army veteran myself, so it caught my interest. The gist of the article is that the established veterans’ organizations in America are losing membership because younger veterans just aren’t joining. These groups reached their peaks at the end of World War II and since then have found their numbers diminishing. Respected groups like the American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars are rapidly dropping in their membership counts. Here’s a quote from a veteran in the article: “Younger veterans don't want to join an organization with a bunch of older guys.”

Sound familiar?

What’s happening to the veterans’ organizations is the same phenomenon that is happening to fraternal orders - including the Independent Order of Odd Fellows.

The generations born in the 1960's, 1970's, 1980's and 1990's have different interests and different perspectives that the prior generations. Here’s another quote from the article: “Rather than hanging out . . . with their buddies and
reminisce, younger veterans prefer family-friendly amenities, an emphasis on community service . . . . free Wi-Fi at the halls might help, too. In fact, it struck me that as I am reading this article in the newspaper, the folks in their 20's and 30's and 40's are probably reading the same article on line, and probably on their smart phones.

It’s just different now.

For example, ancient Odd Fellows admonitions from the 1700's and 1800's like “educate the orphan” and “bury the dead” have great significance in the history of Odd Fellowship, and historically were remarkable achievements in past ages when society had many orphans and many folks who died who had no way to be respectfully buried. But let’s face it. Today there are very, very few orphans in America, and virtually every county has a public guardian who provides for indigent burials. We need to “evolve” these ancient admonitions to the present age - for example, society is filled with foster children (and young adults who have recently “graduated” from the foster system) - we can “evolve” the concept of “educate the orphan” to “help foster children and children in need.” This is just one example (of many) of the modernization in which our Order must engage. If we have the courage to talk about it and actually deal with it.

The great teachings of our Order - exemplified in our degrees - are timeless. But beyond that, I submit that very, very few new members join this Order because they want to wear regalia or learn the secret grip and passwords. The vast majority of new members (and potential new members) want to join because this Order is a fraternity that offers social contact and friendships, and because our Lodges can do good works in our society and in our communities.

Accordingly, those Lodges that actively develop social activities and functions for the membership, and those Lodges that are active in helping local charities and community groups (as well as Odd Fellows’ charities) will attract the young blood we need and will flourish and grow. Those Lodges that continue to sit behind closed doors and do little more than conduct formal meetings (with an occasional potluck) will continue to diminish as members pass on. Quoting another veteran from the article this morning: “We don’t have time to sit in three meetings every month.”

Food for thought.

F - L - T
Dave Rosenberg
Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

I recently came into possession of a rare volume, entitled *The Illustrated History of Odd Fellowship*, written by Theodore A. Ross in 1917, who at the time of its publication had served as Grand Secretary of the Sovereign Grand Lodge for close to 20 years. It’s quite a tome, numbering well over 600 pages. I’d like to quote a couple of passages from this book which you may find interesting:

“The Order of Odd Fellows originated in England in the Eighteenth Century. In the early part of that century the celebrated Daniel De Foe mentions the Society of Odd Fellows, and in the *Gentleman’s Magazine* for 1745, the Odd Fellows Lodge is mentioned as ‘a place where very pleasant and recreative evenings are spent.’ The poet James Montgomery, in 1788, wrote a song for a Body of Odd Fellows. The *Odd Fellows’ Keepsake* states that the early English Lodges were supported and their members relieved by each member and visitor paying a penny to the Secretary on entering the Lodge. These allusions are sufficient proof of the existence of the Order at the time, but they tell us nothing of its aims, objects and characteristics.

“From other sources it is known that the Lodges were originally formed by workingmen for social purposes, and for giving the brethren aid and assisting them to obtain employment when out of work. When a brother could not obtain work he was given a Card and funds enough to carry him to the next Lodge, and if unsuccessful there, that Lodge facilitated his farther progress in the same way.

“When he found employment, there he deposited his Card.

“At first there was little or no Ritual, and no formal method of conducting the business of the Lodge. These were matters of gradual and slow growth.”

These excerpts reveal a great deal of the path taken by our Order. What do we learn from the passages?

Well, to begin with, we learn that Odd Fellows is an evolving and changing Order. In the beginning, it appears that Odd Fellows were akin to a club - a place to spend “very pleasant and recreative evenings.” And we know that “Lodges were originally formed by workingmen for social purposes.” We can just imagine the early brothers drinking ale, throwing darts, and having an all-
around enjoyable evening together in the social atmosphere of the local pub. And it appears that early Lodges were open to not only members, but visitors. Those early Lodges provided a measure of support for needy members by collecting a small tithe – “a penny” - from members and visitors. (Although I hasten to add that a penny in Eighteenth Century England was the equivalent of a dollar today. For a penny one could purchase a cup of coffee or a pint of ale. A penny wasn't even the smallest denomination in Olde England - a penny could be divided in fourths called farthings or in half called ha-pennies.)

But early Odd Fellows Lodges kept evolving into places that supported members who had lost their jobs. Odd Fellowship became the social services provider. Remember, this was in a time well before governments provided any sort of social safety net. This was well before the time of government operated Employment Development Departments. When a member in Town A lost his job, he could depend on his Lodge to give him a Card, a little traveling money, and a good wish before his Lodge brothers sent him on his way to a Lodge in a neighboring town. Hopefully, at this new Lodge, a local Brother would help the traveling Brother find a job. If he did, the traveling Brother would deposit his card and stay.

Clearly, with Brothers traveling from town to town and Lodge to Lodge to find work, it was necessary to develop secret grips, passwords, and signs which would change from time to time. Only in this way could a traveling Brother be distinguished from a fraud or charlatan who just wanted money, or a place to sleep, or a job.

Indeed, Odd Fellowship evolved and changed from a social club, into a mutual benefit society, and ultimately into a true fraternal Order which admits men and women. And it is my belief that Odd Fellowship must continue to evolve today to meet the needs and attract new members. The world in the Twenty-First Century is quite a different world than the one that existed in the Eighteenth Century or even the Nineteenth or Twentieth Centuries. Yet we have today some members in our Order who view Odd Fellowship through lenses cut in prior centuries. But here's the rub: unless we modernize and make our Order relevant to the men and women of the Twenty-First Century, we will continue the downward death spiral that we have seen take hold of our Order for the last sixty-plus years.

F - L - T
Dave Rosenberg
Dave Rosenberg is a Judge of the Superior Court in Yolo County, California, a position he has held since 2003. Judge Rosenberg has worked as Senior Advisor to two California State Governors, has served three terms on the City Council including two terms as Mayor of his hometown of Davis, has served two terms as a Yolo County Supervisor including two terms as Chairman of the Board, has served four terms as Chairman of the California State Lottery Commission and as Chairman of the Victim Compensation and Government Claims Board, and has chaired numerous city, county, regional and statewide boards and commissions. Prior to becoming a Judge, Rosenberg had a distinguished 19 year career as a trial lawyer, and spent two years on active duty with the United States Army, serving as an officer in the European theater.

As a Judge, he has been elected Presiding Judge of his Court on three occasions, served as Chairman of all 58 California Trial Court Presiding Judges, and serves as a member of the California Judicial Council. He presides over a felony trial calendar.

In 2012, the California Judges Association (composed of 2,000 Judges) selected Judge Rosenberg as the “Humanitarian of the Year.”

Judge Rosenberg is the author of “Rosenberg’s Rules of Order,” a guide to parliamentary procedure used by hundreds of cities, counties, special districts, corporations, neighborhood associations, and organizations throughout the country. He is also the author of “Endgame,” a novel.

Judge Rosenberg became an Odd Fellow in 2004. He has served four terms as Noble Grand of his Lodge – Davis Odd Fellows Lodge #169, two terms as Chief Patriarch of Davis Encampment #21, and two terms as Secretary of Davis Rebekah Lodge #253. He holds the Grand Lodge Degree and has served on numerous Grand Lodge Committees, and as a District Deputy Grand Master. Judge Rosenberg has served as Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Odd Fellows Homes of California.

Rosenberg has been married to Lea Rosenberg for 44 years, and has two adult children and a grandson. His wife is also a member of the Davis Odd Fellows, the Davis Encampment and serves as Noble Grand of the Davis Rebekah Lodge.
APPENDIX A

Membership Workshop

Davis Odd Fellows Lodge - January 29 (10 a.m. to 2 p.m.)

Agenda

9:30 - 10:00 Donuts and coffee available
(lunch can be ordered at $5 per person)

10:00 a.m. Workshop begins

10:00 - 10:20 Welcome, logistics, introduction
Dave Rosenberg

10:20 - 10:40 Good Fellowship Committee activities
Dody Black/Dave Rosenberg

10:40 - 11:00 Community Support Committee activities
Lea Rosenberg/Barb Geisler

11:00 - 11:20 The “Big Splash Project”
Dave Reed/Frank Giustino

11:20 - 11:40 Bingo Committee
Stewart Savage/Deanna Chavis

11:40 - 12:00 Music & Concerts Committee
Bob Bockwinkel/Kurt Roggli

12:00 noon a working lunch will be available -
no halt in the workshop
12:00 – 12:20    Using Your Lodge Hall
Dody Black/Dave Rosenberg

12:20 – 12:40    Ideas for Lodge Activities
Dave Reed/Kandice Fowler

12:40 – 1:00    Working with Rebekahs/Encampments
Barb Geisler/Dave Rosenberg

1:00 – 1:20    How to work with the press
Dave Rosenberg

1:20 – 1:40    Recruiting/Mentoring New Members
Dave Rosenberg

1:40 – 2:00    Wrap up/Questions
Dave Rosenberg

2:00 p.m. workshop ends
APPENDIX B

APPLICATION FORM FOR SCHOLARSHIP

Please Print

Name of Applicant
____________________________________________________

Date of Birth ___________  Age _______

Are you a US citizen? ______________

E-mail Address
_____________________________________________________

Mailing Address:
_____________________________________________________

Are you an orphan or foster youth? ______

At what age did this occur? ___________

Name of High School ___________________________

Year of Graduation _______________________

Address of High School
_____________________________________________________

GPA on Graduation _________

Have you been accepted to college/university? ________

Name of college/university
_____________________________________________________

Accredited? ____  Date when school starts _________

Expected graduation year _______

Your major? ______________

Amount of requested scholarship ________________
Please answer the three questions on the next page as part of this application. Also attach a transcript showing your grades achieved during the previous school year.

I certify the information above and on the next page is true and correct.

Dated

_______________________________________
Signature of Applicant

What are the circumstances of your becoming an orphan or foster youth?

Why do you need this scholarship?

What do you hope to accomplish in your life upon graduation?

NOMINATION FORM FOR SCHOLARSHIP

Odd Fellows and Rebekahs in good standing may nominate eligible orphans and foster youth or emancipated foster youth for educational scholarships provided by Davis Odd Fellows Charities, Inc. All decisions by Davis Odd Fellows Charities, Inc. are made in the sole discretion of the corporation. To be eligible for consideration, nominees must be orphans or foster youth, must be at least 18 years of age at the time they enter college/university, must be U.S. citizens, must have attained at least a B+ average upon high school graduation, and must be accepted to an accredited college/university and entering as a freshman. Educational scholarships, if approved, will be at least $5,000 and up to $10,000 for the freshman year, based on merit and need. Students may re-apply for a subsequent year, up to four years in total, based on merit, need, and the ability to maintain a GPA of at least 3.33. When complete, mail to: Davis Odd Fellows Charities, Inc. Attn: Dave Rosenberg, 415 Second Street, Davis CA 95616.
Please Print

Name of Odd Fellow/Rebekah
Nominator ______________________________________

Lodge Number ___________ Lodge Name ____________

Lodge City _____________

Address of Lodge
____________________________________________________

Nominator’s Phone Number
____________________________________________________

Nominator’s E-mail Address
____________________________________________________

Nominator’s Mailing Address
____________________________________________________

Name of Applicant you are nominating
____________________________________________________

Address of Applicant
____________________________________________________

Have you discussed this nomination with Applicant?
____________________________________________________

Does the Applicant wish to be nominated?
____________________________________________________

Why are you nominating this Applicant?
____________________________________________________

I certify the information above is true and correct.

Dated
____________________________________________________

Signature of Nominator
____________________________________________________

252
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>No. of PCT</th>
<th>Total C.A.</th>
<th>PCT Drop</th>
<th>Total C.A. PCT</th>
<th>% of 2011</th>
<th>PCT</th>
<th>% of 2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2022</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2023</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
255

(See Figure 2)

4.75/87 times lower membership rate, than the in 1928.

However, as the actual current total membership in 2012 is 4.75 members.

Based on the estimated population in 2011 for CA of

Over 4.14865 members.

Was in 1928, the current number of total members in CA as of now (year 2012) would

Had odd Fellow membership been maintained at 1.10% of the CA population as it

Think about this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Total CA Population of 1928</th>
<th>CA Pop. of 1928 at 1.10%</th>
<th>CA Pop. as of Year 2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1928</td>
<td>Nov 1</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929</td>
<td>Dec 1</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>Jan 1</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>Feb 1</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>Mar 1</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>Apr 1</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1934</td>
<td>May 1</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>Jun 1</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>Jul 1</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>Aug 1</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938</td>
<td>Sep 1</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939</td>
<td>Oct 1</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>Nov 1</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>Dec 1</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1942</td>
<td>Jan 1</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1943</td>
<td>Feb 1</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1944</td>
<td>Mar 1</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>Apr 1</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td>May 1</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>Jun 1</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>Jul 1</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949</td>
<td>Aug 1</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>Sep 1</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>Oct 1</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>Nov 1</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>Dec 1</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>Jan 1</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>Feb 1</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>Mar 1</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>Apr 1</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>May 1</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>Jun 1</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>Jul 1</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>Aug 1</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>Sep 1</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>Oct 1</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>Nov 1</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>Dec 1</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Year
Think about this:

66,830 Odd Fellows

Population
1.10% of CA
members or
Fellow

Had Odd Fellowship been maintained at
1.10% of the CA Population as it was in 1968, the

4782 members of the

1948, 87% = ~4,782 members

1921 = ~4,782 members

4,782 / 4.782 = 1.0 times lower membership.

However, as the actual current total membership in

~376,912 people

Based on the estimated population in 2011 for CA of

Year 2012 would be over 4,148,855 members.

Current number of total members in CA as of now

0.013% of CA population

0.478% of CA population

Figure 2: Lodge Membership as % of Corresponding CA Population for Same Year
The loss of 15 lodges in CA since 2007.

The "population collapse" has already been manifested.

The "population collapse" is more likely due to "fractal" reasons once a "fractal" and go to infinity. This is known as the "population collapse phenomenon." The data is not linear, so the curve appears to just flatten until the data is seen is linear, not the relationship in the x-y values for the curve is linear.

Figure 5: No. of Lodge Members in CA

Due to the bump in the data between 1944-1947 (see graph).
Table 1. CA Rebekah Memberships States from 1928 - 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>NC</th>
<th>NC</th>
<th>NC</th>
<th>NC</th>
<th>NC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

APPENDIX E
Figure 2. Reckless Membership as % of Corresponding CA Population for Same Year

Membership as % of Total CA Population

Year

0% 0.2% 0.4% 0.6% 0.8% 1.0%
2010 2015 2020 2025 2030

Think about this:

- Reckless Membership as a % of Total Population in CA
- Membership as % of Total CA Population for Same Year

Based on the estimated population in 2011 for CA of 352,760 members of CA, the current number of reckless membership been maintained at 0.936% of

However, if the actual current total membership in 2011 is 0.961% people,

- Then that in 1981:
  - 352,760 / 2.46 = 142 times lower membership, California.

Note: If you need specific calculations or analysis, please provide additional data or context.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Old Program</th>
<th>Old Program</th>
<th>New Program</th>
<th>New Program</th>
<th>Change in Regular Member</th>
<th>Change in Full Member</th>
<th>Change in Non-Member</th>
<th>Change in Total</th>
<th>Change in Regular Member</th>
<th>Change in Full Member</th>
<th>Change in Non-Member</th>
<th>Change in Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/20</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>270</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/20</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>270</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/20</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>270</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/20</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>270</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/20</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>270</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/20</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>270</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/20</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>270</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8/20</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>270</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/20</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>270</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/20</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>270</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/20</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>270</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/20</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>270</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 4. No. of Rebekah Lodges in CA from 1890 - 2011
Figure 6. Ratio of the No. of Rebekahs : No. of Odd Fellows in CA from 1928 - 2011

Historically, the number of Rebekahs in CA lodges is generally been greater than the number of Odd Fellows. Median Ratio = 1.67
Average Ratio = 1.79 = 0.62
Ratio of Odd Fellows : Odd Fellows
APPENDIX F

An Ever Decreasing Circle of Dwindling Logic
for Those Who Desire No Change
by Rick Boyles

Rules we must follow in order to circumvent change and remain the same. Commonly known as “Rick’s Rules of Disorder” It goes without saying that anyone who writes an article such as this suggesting change should be brought up on charges. After all, change is to be feared, for some reason, although it seems hard to verbalize. While I write this being almost completely tongue-in-cheek, I have heard similar comments (said seriously) by those who want to remain static. My view is that change is emblematic of life itself. Change invigorates. Obviously, change has taken place in the last 175 years, whether we like it or not, and change will continue to take place. The absurd thing is to try and block change. It is easily shown that those fraternal groups which have opposed change are the very groups that have most quickly died. It is time to look at the future rationally, not to just vocalize our fears. If you stand on the side which opposes change, consider this, how could no change cause improvement? For many years, our leaders have talked about staying the course, sticking to the ritual, holding our meetings expressly as written, but what is the harm in humor, or caring, or open arms to a wondering public, or just that overstated but underemployed term “friendship”? Isn’t friendship our very first tenet? Let’s try and remember that we face an uncertain future together, but together perhaps we can forge a path to a new millennium.

Rick’s Rules of Disorder, or, a Not Too Secret Path to Our Certain Demise

1) No new members. This is easy. We need do nothing different to accomplish this. Our lodges shall remain closed to the public. Why bother to change what doesn’t work? A store gets no customers with the doors closed. Our lodges should be run in the same fashion.

2) Enlarge the code, and use it as a bludgeon by which to punish our members. Also easy. What we need are layers of codes that conflict. Wait, we already have that!

3) Call into question every member not within a core group whose only goal is the total empowerment of the core group.

4) The object of power is power. The phrase coined by George Orwell’s classic book 1984, carried forward into the Odd Fellow universe. Forget the theory that representatives are supposed to represent. “Representation”, of course, is ludicrous and would smell of
democracy. Certainly, the rabble cannot govern themselves, and if they decide to do something, find a way to undo it.

5) All new members are bad. All old members are good. This is implied by our actions. New members tend to have new ideas. New ideas should be discouraged as being counterproductive to the same old course of action. Obviously, if we follow the same old course of action, we will get the same old results, so this is evidently what we want.

6) Old members are entitled by their length of service to berate new members. New members are to be subjugated to duties generally performed ever since the dawn of Odd Fellowship. All old members carry a title. All new members have no title so they are naturally of lesser quality. A title allows the older members to bully the newer members. Also, should newer members say or think anything new, they should be ignored completely.

7) If a lodge has any success whatsoever, that success is to be dismissed as being contrary to Odd Fellow tradition. Lodges of less than 10 members are to be envied because they are able to maintain the same meeting size, date, location, seating, and jokes. The goal is always to get a quorum of five members.

8) Elective positions must spend their time picking their favorite mascot, their favorite song, their favorite flower, their favorite day of the week, ad infinitum. We should all worship under the sign of the duck or whatever ludicrous creature we can find which has not been used in the last three years. Our colors are red, white and blue because it is a well known fact that the older elective officers are more patriotic than the newer communistic members.

9) Everything an officer does must be more elegant and stylish than the one previously. All events are to be handled just as they were in the 1940’s. Our favorite singer is Ethel Merman. Our favorite band is Benny Goodman. Nothing since 1950 is allowed. This will help to make our order more uninviting to anyone under the age of 75.

10) Men are encouraged to wear tuxedos. Women are encouraged to wear corsets and long flowing dresses. Especially in heats of over 100 degrees, heavy sweating is the purpose of all events. No one respects a person who is dressed in modern clothes. Forget the fact that it is becoming harder and harder to find traditional old style clothing, and let’s gather together to eat our lasagna and our chicken, wear our bibs, and talk about whatever we want that is within our coded list of rules.

11) Rule number 1 of course is that the public is not allowed. Nor should we allow anything that may be attractive to the public. No committee
shall be allowed which might be interesting to a prospective member. This will keep the membership at the same lower amount, which is, after all, what we want.

12) A lodge which does anything unique must be discouraged. Uniqueness should be against the code unless of course you are one of the powerful older members than your uniqueness will be attributed to a quirk of personality.

13) Successful lodges we call “clubs,” therefore we can demean them. If we call them clubs, we can belittle them enough so that we can force them to walk in lockstep with the rest of us.

14) Fun is not to be permitted, unless we call fun eating thawed lasagna while reciting the chants in unison. Therefore, we wish to attract only white Anglo-Saxon overweight Christians. No one else need apply. The name “Odd Fellows” is now actually contradictory so it might be a good idea to re-name our group “The Nothing Out of the Ordinary Fellows” which would be a more accurate term. Never mind the fact that America is a melting pot of religions, colors and national origins. We must ensure that our order does not reflect modern society but rather the society as it was 175 years ago.

15) Representatives shall not speak for the order; they will only speak for themselves. Voting is irrelevant, and the results of all votes will be determined by those in charge.

16) Even though multiple codes are in common usage, policies can be changed at the whim of anyone in charge. Codes in conflict leads to worlds in collision which leads to bedlam made policy.

17) Any member interested in change should be brought up on charges. Change, although inevitable in all other avenues, is to be discouraged at all costs. Respect is earned by wearing the sign of the duck-billed platypus or whatever goofy animal we are wearing this year and singing patriotic songs, while demeaning all who may disagree.

18) Any member with an opinion should be brought up on charges. Charges are to be enhanced to include tar and feathering, flogging, and time in the stocks.

19) Any member not willing to drive 300 miles weekly at their own expense is suspect. We judge the quality of a member by their willingness to travel great distances at their own expense. Any sign of individuality is to be brought into question.

20) Meetings are to be held which will conflict with normal working hours. Every effort will be made to prevent normal working people from joining as members.

21) No one under the age of 75 is to be trusted. A retooling of a popular phrase coined in the 60’s which goes “trust nobody over 30,” these
same individuals now fear the young. The real meaning, therefore, is obviously trust nobody but them. Of course, this calls into question what happens when those over 75 pass away? I ask this question a lot, and invariably, the answer is “why would we care?”

The point to this longwinded article is that if we don’t react quickly to our diminishing numbers, we are doomed to fail. That popular saying that we should repeat the same steps over and over but expect different results is appropriate here. Do we really expect improvement doing everything exactly how we have always done it? I personally love all my fellow members but we have to guard against complacency, we have to revisit our own youth, we have to seize the opportunity we now have to make progress before we descend into utter dissolution. Our declining numbers can’t be disputed. There are lodges which have made headway. We should learn from their example. Do we really think that lodges with less than 10 members are somehow the most to be admired? Every lodge and every human being is flawed but we need to learn from each other, and stop accusing each person as inciting problems. If we really want the order in general to walk in lockstep, we are doomed to walk in lockstep to our own graves.

This article may cause some controversy, but it is time to realize that we either adapt to today’s world, or we accept the fact that we will soon decrease as an order to nothing. Let’s remember our similarities, and see that it is our emblem of “friendship, love and truth” which we should show to the public and know that it is a measure of our ability to show these traits to the world which will gauge our success into the future. We as an order must have a frank and open discussion about our future path and stop hurling insults, spreading rumors and instilling fear in all our members.

In Friendship, Love and Truth, Rick Boyles
APPENDIX G
Essay by Rod Metoyer and Rick Boyles

News Flash: Membership in the Independent Order of Odd Fellows in California increased to nearly 10,000 members, as of June 30, 2012. While many volunteer organizations and fraternal orders report declining membership, the Odd Fellows experienced its fifth straight year of membership increase in California. Grand Master Rod Metoyer commented, “We expect to give charters to 20 new Lodges in 2012-13, bringing the number of Lodges in California to over 150. We’ve seen a net increase of almost 2,000 new members in the last year alone.” Fiction? Unfortunately, yes. For the Odd Fellows this is indeed, fiction.

BUT, it’s a true story for another volunteer organization, the Lions Clubs International. A recent news release about the Lions noted that membership in that organization increased to nearly 1.35 million as of June 30, 2012, the fifth straight year of membership increase. Wayne Madden, the 2012-13 President of Lions Clubs International was quoted as saying: “We chartered more than 1,500 new clubs, bringing our total number of clubs to a record high of more than 46,300 clubs. In the last five years we have increased our membership by nearly 60,000 members.”

How did they do it? They did it in a surprisingly simple way. They used a formula that has been proven to work – a formula that others (such as the Davis Odd Fellows Lodge) have used with remarkable success. And what is especially noteworthy is that the Lions did it without two of the important assets that Odd Fellows possess – Odd Fellows have a rich history and ritual, and Odd Fellows, for the most part, have Lodge Halls that they own. Using the Lions’ formula, and the added assets of Odd Fellowship, we can do the same.

So, what’s the formula for success used by the Lions? It encompasses three simple things:

First, quoting the article: “Lions membership has grown as Lions have concentrated on expanding the programs and service they are providing to their communities.” Good community outreach and good community works. This is something that ALL of our members and Lodges can do. We simply need to get off our collective derrieres, get outside of the four walls of our Lodges, and reach out to our communities. We have to do so in ways that make a difference. We can plant trees, we can help frail seniors, we can organize bingo for the community, or we can offer music for the community at our Lodges. The possibilities are endless. Good community works not only helps the
community, but it exposes the Lodge to the community, and most importantly it is the source of new members. Successful Lodges in California can attest that many of their new members have come to the Lodge as a result of community project initiated by the Lodge. Good community works just makes good sense.

Second, again quoting the article: “The fastest growing demographic group in Lions clubs is women. Also expanding rapidly is the number of members from the same family.” Those Lodges that primarily seek out and admit men in their 60's, 70's and 80's, are sowing the seeds of their demise. We simply cannot ignore half the population of women, and we cannot ignore half the population of people under 40. Successful Lodges today are almost 50-50 men and women. Successful Lodge seek out not only mom and dad, but teenage children as well. Bringing the family into the Lodge is just smart.

Third, once again quoting the article: “We are reaching out to younger people by increasing our efforts in social networking.” It’s the young people who are the future of Odd Fellowship. In some of our Lodges, everyone is connected by e-mail and newsletters are electronic. In other Lodges, virtually no one has e-mail and virtually everything is done with paper. That’s not the world of the 21st Century. Successful Lodges focus on activities within the Lodge and community service that appeal to folks in their 20’s and 30’s. These potential members aren’t interested in potluck dinners. They are interested in music, and movies, and wine tasting, and beer making, and hiking, and Facebook. This is the future of our Order. We have looked at the Lodge books of successful Lodges in the 1850’s and 1860’s. It’s interesting to note that the members who joined Lodges in those days were primarily in their 20’s and 30’s. Let’s go back in time to discover the secrets of success to the future.

As a great sage once said: “The journey of 1,000 miles begins with a single step.” So, we ask YOU and your Lodge to start using the formula for success. But don’t try to do everything at once. Take that single step, then take another, then another. Develop that one community project that your Lodge can handle, that will do a good turn for the community, that will raise the visibility of Odd Fellows, and that can expose your Lodge to potential applicants for membership. Seek out that one dynamic community leader (city council member, county supervisor, school board member, bank president, lawyer, judge, physician, teacher, etc.) who could become a Lodge member and who has the potential to bring in more new members. Talk to husbands and wives as potential members of your Lodge. Take that single step.

In Friendship, Love, & Truth, Rod Metoyer and Rick Boyles
APPENDIX H
The ABC’s of Odd Fellowship
by Dave Rosenberg, PG, and Don Smith, PSGM

(April 2010)

A

Anniversary

Organized Odd Fellowship emerged from Eighteenth Century England, and traveled to the United States in the early Nineteenth Century. On April 2, 1819, Thomas Wildey, John R.B. Welch, Richard Rushworthy, John Duncan and John Cheatham met at the Seven Stars Inn in Baltimore, Maryland, and Odd Fellowship in America was born. On April 2, 2019, Odd Fellowship in the United States will celebrate its 200th birthday.

Admonishments

Founded in the Eighteenth Century as a “friendly society” (a group formed for the mutual self-help of its members), Odd Fellowship developed ancient admonishments including: “visit the sick, relieve the distressed, bury the dead and educate the orphan.”

B

Bylaws

Every Odd Fellows Lodge has a set of Bylaws, approved by the Grand Lodge of the jurisdiction. The Bylaws govern the conduct and proceedings of the Lodge, but must conform to the rules and regulations of the Odd Fellows Ritual, Code of General Laws and the Roberts Code of California Odd Fellows Laws.

C

Creed

Odd Fellows believe in the universal brotherhood of Man and the fatherhood of God. Odd Fellowship is non-partisan, non-sectarian, and welcoming of all people without regard to religion, race, gender, sexual orientation, and national origin.
Committees

Many Lodges conduct much of their work through Lodge Committees such as the Finance Committee, By-laws Committee, Good Fellowship Committee, Community Support Committee, and others.

Character

A goal of Odd Fellowship is to “elevate the character of Man.” In the daily exercise of friendship, love and truth, Odd Fellows strive to make a better world.

Conductor

The conductor is an officer of the Lodge, appointed by the noble grand. The main charge of the conductor is to receive candidates for initiation when they enter the Lodge room, and to perform all duties assigned in conferring degrees.

California

Along with the Gold Rush, Odd Fellowship came to California. On September 9, 1849, one year to the day before California became the 31st State of the United States, California Lodge #1 was chartered in San Francisco.

Degrees

Once a member is initiated into the Lodge, he/she is said to hold the Initiatory Degree. As an initiated member, he/she has all rights and privileges of the Lodge, including the right to vote. The initiated member cannot hold office in the Lodge until he/she holds the other three degrees of the Lodge. The three degrees are the Degrees of Friendship, Love and Truth.

Dues

Dues are collected annually from each regular member of the Lodge. A portion may be retained by the Lodge, and portions of the dues are shared with the Grand Lodge of the jurisdiction as well as the Sovereign Grand Lodge.
Encampment

Odd Fellow Lodge members who have earned all three degrees in their Lodge may seek to join an Encampment. Members of the Encampment are known as Patriarchs. Each Encampment also confers three degrees – the degrees of Faith, Hope and Charity – and has a full slate of officers, just like the Odd Fellows Lodge.

Financial Secretary

The financial secretary is an elected officer of the Lodge charged with correctly keeping the accounts between the Lodge and members, receiving all monies due to the Lodge and working with the secretary and treasurer to properly maintain the books.

Flag

The United States flag is honored in every Lodge and is an important part of the Lodge ceremony and ritual.

Friendship

The first degree of Odd Fellowship is known as the Degree of Friendship. It is represented by one of the three links – the link on the left.

Grand Lodge

The Lodges in a jurisdiction are part of a “Grand Lodge.” In California, the Grand Lodge convenes once each year for four or five days and governs Odd Fellowship in the jurisdiction, with a Board of Directors conducting the affairs of the Grand Lodge in the interim. Delegates at Grand Lodge elect that Board, as well as the Officers of the Grand Lodge: the Grand Master, the Deputy Grand Master, the Grand Warden, the Grand Secretary and the Grand Treasurer.

Guardians
The Lodge has an inside guardian and an outside guardian, appointed by the noble grand, to guard the doors leading into the Lodge meetings, to ensure that only qualified Lodge members enter.

**Good Fellowship**

Part of the joy and reward of belonging to a fraternal order is the good fellowship that comes with membership in the Lodge. Different Lodges engage in a wide variety of social and fellowship activities for the members including dinners, trips, wine tasting, beer making, and the like. Odd Fellows Lodge can provide a social network for members.

**Homes**

The California Grand Lodge opened a home for aging members in Thermalito, Butte County, in 1895. Today, the Odd Fellows Home of California Board of Directors operates two outstanding retirement communities: The Saratoga Retirement Community and The Meadows of Napa Valley, serving Odd Fellows, Rebekahs, and members of the general public. Odd Fellowship was the first organization to establish homes for senior members and for children in 1771 in Pennsylvania.

**Hall**

Many Odd Fellows Lodges own and operate their own Lodge Halls (sometimes also called Temples). Often, these Halls are owned in conjunction with a local Rebekah Lodge. Typically, the Lodge Hall is managed and maintained by a Hall Board, composed of Lodge members. Small towns throughout Northern California contain historic Odd Fellows Lodge Halls.

**Independent Order of Odd Fellows**

The Independent Order of Odd Fellows (IOOF) is a fraternal order with a long history. At a time when other fraternal orders were forming in England to help themselves, the Odd Fellows formed in part to help others who were less fortunate. They were called “odd fellows” because they helped members of society who needed their help. Community service is part of the history of this Order.
**Initiation**

An applicant for membership to a Lodge must be voted on by the existing members in a secret ballot. If the applicant receives an affirmative vote, and pays dues and the initiation fee, the Lodge will initiate the applicant in a secret ceremony and the applicant will be a member of the Lodge holding the Initiatory Degree.

**Initials**

The Order uses initials to designate offices and past offices. For example, the Noble Grand is identified as NG, the Vice Grand as VG, the Right Supporter of the Noble Grand is RSNG. A Past Grand of a Lodge is identified as PG, the Past Grand Master is PGM, and the Past Sovereign Grand Master is PSGM.

**Installation**

Once each year, the Lodge will install its newly elected officers. Typically, officers are nominated in October, elected in November, and installed in January. Elected Lodge officers are the Noble Grand, Vice Grand, Secretary, Treasurer and Financial Secretary.

**J**

**Jewels**

Odd Fellowship provides a plethora of “jewels” which are badges reflecting service and achievement in the Order.

**K**

**Knowledge**

Every member of the Order is expected to gain knowledge from participation in the Initiation. Further, by attaining the First, Second and Third Degrees, members increase their knowledge about their fraternity and about themselves.

**L**

**Love**

The second degree of Odd Fellowship is the Degree of Love. This degree is represented by the link in the center of the three links.
Links

Odd Fellowship is often called “the three-links fraternity” based on the symbol of the order – the three intertwined links standing for “friendship, love and truth.”

Membership

Membership in a Lodge can be either regular or associate. Every member must be a regular member of one Lodge, but may be an associate member of more than one Lodge. To survive and flourish in the 21st Century, every member of Odd Fellows must seek out and bring new members to the Order.

N

Noble Grand

The “president” of each Odd Fellows Lodge is called “Noble Grand.” Other elected officers are Vice Grand, Secretary, Treasurer and Financial Secretary. Each Lodge also has a number of appointed officers, including Warden, Conductor, Chaplain, Inside Guardian, Outside Guardian, Supporters of the Noble Grand and Vice Grand, Scene Supporters, Musician and Color Bearer.

Odd Fellowship

A member of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows is referred to as an Odd Fellow. Because this is a fraternal order, members may refer to each other as Brothers and Sisters.

Odd Fellows

No one knows, for sure, how the name “Odd Fellows” came into being. Some have speculated that it was due to the fact that the original members spent a fair amount of time helping others, which was an odd thing to do in early fraternities; hence they were called “those odd fellows.”
**Past Grand**

After a Noble Grand has served his/her term, that officer is known as “Past Grand.” Past Grands can be appointed to the position of District Deputy Grand Master, and can be delegates to the Grand Lodge.

**Patriarchs Militant**

Those Odd Fellows who have earned all three degrees in their lodges, and who joined an Encampment and earned all three degrees in that encampment, are eligible to join the Patriarchs Militant. This is the uniformed branch of Odd Fellowship.

**Quorum**

The traditional number of Odd Fellows required to conduct business at a meeting is five.

**Quality**

More than the quantity of our members, it’s the quality of our members and the good works that are done by Odd Fellows Lodges that distinguish this Order.

**Rebekah**

Odd Fellows were the first fraternal order to admit women. Schuyler Colfax, Vice President of the United States and an Odd Fellow, is credited with the proposal to create the Rebekahs. In the middle of the 1800's, Rebekah Lodges were formed to be “sister” lodges to Odd Fellows Lodges. The distinctions have lessened since Odd Fellows Lodge membership has long been open to women, and Rebekah Lodge membership has long been open to men. The Odd Fellows Grand Lodge of California and the Rebekah Assembly of California jointly operate a Children’s Home in Gilroy, California, and a Youth Camp in Tuolumne County, California.
Ritual and Regalia

Harkening back almost 200 years, Odd Fellowship has developed a ritual including rites of initiation, a secret grip and secret passwords. The officers and members of the Lodge wear regalia during closed, ritual meetings. It’s part of what makes Odd Fellows a fraternal order.

Sovereign Grand Lodge

The Sovereign Grand Lodge is made up of Grand Lodges throughout the world, including Independent Grand Lodges in Europe and Australasia. The officers are the Sovereign Grand Master, the Sovereign Deputy Grand Master, the Sovereign Grand Warden, the Sovereign Grand Secretary and the Sovereign Grand Treasurer.

Secretary

The secretary is an elected officer of the Lodge, charged with keeping accurate records of the transactions of the Lodge.

Service

Service to the community is an important part of the work done by Odd Fellows Lodges. Different Lodges have undertaken support functions of varying kinds – helping senior citizens, hosting fundraising dinners for charitable groups, bingo for the community, mentoring children, and the like.

Treasurer

The treasurer is an elected officer of the Lodge, in charge of all the funds of the Lodge. The treasurer pays on all orders drawn by the noble grand, attested by the secretary, and keeps accurate accounts of the Lodge finances.

Truth

The Degree of Truth is the third degree of Odd Fellowship. It is represented in the three links symbol of the Order as the link on the right.
Universal Justice

Odd Fellows believe in universal precepts such as friendship, love and truth, and working to elevate the character of Man. The motto of the Patriarchs Militant, a uniformed unit of Odd Fellowship, is Universal Justice. At the height of its popularity before World War I, it was common to see hundreds of Chevaliers in uniform participating in community parades. During the 1915 session of the Sovereign Grand Lodge meeting in California that year, over 10,000 Chevaliers marched in a parade observing the session in California.

United Nations Pilgrimage for Youth

Under the auspices of Odd Fellowship, the Order arranges for interested young people to travel to the UN each year.

United Kingdom

This is the place where Odd Fellowship began. Odd Fellows Lodges started as “friendly societies” in the 1700’s.

Veterans

The Odd Fellows and Rebekahs of California, desiring to honor veterans, donated a quarter million dollars to the State of California to construct an Occupational Therapy Building at the Veteran’s Home in Yountville.

Vice Grand

The number two elected officer in the Lodge is the Vice Grand. The main job of the Vice Grand is to support the Noble Grand, and fill in when the Noble Grand is absent. Often the Vice Grand is next in line to serve as Noble Grand of a Lodge, so service as Vice Grand is an important training period.

Wildey

Thomas Wildey is recognized as the person who brought Odd Fellowship from England to the United States. The very first Lodge was established in Baltimore
in 1819, and then Odd Fellows Lodges spread like wildfire across the United States, particularly in the 1800’s.

Warden

One of the key appointed offices in the Lodge is the Warden. This officer is charged to ensure that all persons attending closed, ritual meetings of the Lodge are members of the Lodge holding the appropriate degree. The Warden is also charged with the care and safekeeping of the regalia.

Websites

Many Lodges have individual websites such as www.davisoddfellows.com. The Grand Lodge of California website can be found at www.caioof.org. The Sovereign Grand Lodge website is www.iiof.org.

Excellence

Odd Fellowship provides a number of checks and balances within the rules of the Order to ensure excellence in record-keeping of minutes and bookkeeping of funds. Each Lodge has a Secretary, a Treasurer, a Financial Secretary and a Finance Committee to ensure that the rules are followed.

Youth Camp

The California Odd Fellows and Rebekahs own and operate a Youth Camp near Yosemite. Children and grandchildren of members and the general public can participate in a week-long summer camp, and greatly reduced rates.

You

An organization is only as good as its members. Every member – and that means YOU – has got to find his or her niche in the Order. Every member has got to find his or her way to contribute to the improvement of the Lodge and the fraternity.
Z

Zest

With sufficient “zeal” and “zest” there is nothing that Odd Fellows can’t achieve.