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The Triple Links Silicon Valley Odd Fellowship

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Established 1987



First Degree Conferred at Mountain View

The first degree was conferred by the Mountain View Lodge #244 on Thursday, May 30th. They have been doing first degree on the 5th Thursday of the month for some time now. There were 7 candidates and a total of 18 members from the local Odd Fellows lodges in attendance. The following 7 candidates received the first degree; from Saratoga Lodge 428 **Clay Franklin, Tony Nova** and **Amy Borgese**, from Cupertino Lodge #70 **Robert Devlin**, from Volcano Lodge #25 **Emily Holton** and **Jim Reyner** and from Mountain View Lodge **Katie Dickenson**, who is **Jessica Dickenson Goodman's** mother. As was stated in another article in this paper, Jessica is the director of the degree and will be moving to Washington, DC in a very short time.

Mountain View lodge held a reception in honor of the candidates, of food and drinks at 7:00 PM and then the degree started at 8:00 PM.

This was the first time I saw the MV team in action. I was very impressed. They put their own twist to the degree, which I thought was very unique and thinking outside of the box, but holding true to all the speaking parts. I would suggest for some of you Odd Fellows who haven't been to a first degree in a while, to visit Mountain View lodge on the 5th Thursday of the month. You will not be disappointed.

By *Don Lang*



Third Degree at True Fellowship

On May 22nd, 4 brothers and sisters from district 107 learned the sacred lessons of the third degree, also known variously as the degree of truth, the priestly order, or the scarlet degree. They were **Bex Clark** and **Lisa Harrigan** from True Fellowship #52, **Todd White** from Cupertino #70, and **John Fitzpatrick** from Saratoga #428.

The degree team also included members of Cupertino, True Fellowship, and Saratoga. **Mark Saint-John** was high priest, **Debbie Wolf** and **Annie Cronin** were Noble Grand and Vice Grand respectively,



with **Mason Wolf** as Past Grand. **Zandria Elbert**, **Paul Klunder**, **Jane Beckman**, and **Paul Milleson** supported, while Warden **Andrew Crockett** and the Inside and Outside Guardians, **Jeff Rively** and **Honor Wolf** respectively, kept order. And tying it all together, Conductor **Ron Myres** did an excellent job keeping everyone where they needed to be. The next opportunity to receive the third degree at True Fellowship will happen on July 24th. Congratulations to everyone who participated, but especially those new third degree members who are newly eligible to become officers in their lodges and join the encampment.

By *Mason Wolf*

Report From Grand Lodge Sessions

My first Grand Lodge Sessions was memorable, to put it mildly. I won't go into any detail about the various dinners and entertainment that was provided for us in Reno, except to say it was nice, and I was able to meet quite a few members from around the district and state.

As for the actual bills and resolutions, only a few actually passed. The threshold to change the code is two-thirds, and most bills didn't even get a majority. Many of them were also pulled by their makers. A few bills that did pass:

- It is now permissible to skip reading the minutes at the beginning of a meeting, provided they were emailed ahead of time. Since most lodges are already doing this, it's good that code caught up to us.
- If someone is in a lodge that becomes extinct, they automatically join the Gene J Bianchi Jurisdictional Lodge #4 (this is not new). They are expected to join another "real" lodge within 2 years. What's been changed is there are no longer exceptions. Previously they could avoid joining a lodge if there wasn't one within 25 miles, if they were over 50, or if they had a health issue that impaired their mobility.
- The \$10K for the Rose Float was entered/re-entered into the code under special project spending. There was some confusion over whether the bill was even necessary, but no confusion that it passed overwhelmingly.

In other news, our lodge dues are increasing by \$5, and it's partly my fault. Grand Lodge was presented with a nearly balanced budget that actually had a slightly positive balance, but it assumed we would be selling Gilroy's former building and taking \$200K in income. Before the budget could be voted on, I made a motion to take my resolution, "Save Gilroy lodge for future generations" out of order. The motion to consider passed, and then the resolution itself passed overwhelmingly, preventing Grand Lodge from selling that building.

This action kicked off a scramble to find ways to cut the sudden \$200K budget deficit, which Brother **Colby LaPlace** (Franco-American #207) undertook, offering an amendment which cut several line items, especially travel. But he couldn't make up the deficit entirely with cuts and so his proposal also raised the dues to \$60. The budget passed as amended, and we're going to pay a bit more, but we're getting a lodge back, and I think it's a worthy sacrifice. I hope you agree.

After voting to stop Grand Lodge from selling their building, I then motioned to restore the charter and return all assets and property to Gilroy #154. This passed unanimously by voice vote, and it was an experience I will treasure.

On the subject of officer elections,

Brother **Ben Shuler** was re-elected to the home board, but for only a 1-year term. **Terry Olson**, surprisingly, lost his seat from that board.

Even more surprisingly, Brother **Dave Rosenberg** also lost his seat on the board of directors. It was a genuinely shocking moment, in a vote that had to go 3 rounds, because the first two resulted in ties. As parliamentarian, Dave was in the awkward position of overseeing the election that he would eventually lose. Sister **Suzanne Waligore**, a woman I've come to consider a friend, will take his place.

As a side note, on Easter Sunday, Suzanne and I were sitting side by side in the lodge office at the Meadows of Napa Valley, where she lives, and where I was visiting my grandmother. I was crafting my resolution for Gilroy, and she was submitting her qualification statement to join the board. Neither of us expected what would happen that Friday at Sessions, but it feels good that we were there for one another where it sort of all began.

Our next Grand Warden is Brother **Carlos Juarez**, who also happens to be the current Grand Monarchs of AMOS Xanadu Sanctorum #321, where I'm a member.

On a related note, one of the greatest highlights of my trip also included conferring the AMOS degree of humility on Brothers **Andrew Crockett** and **Paul Milleston**, who are now my fellow Samaritans. The then-Grand Master of California, **Fred Dolling**, and the Sovereign Grand Master, Brother **John Cupp**, assisted in the conferring of this degree as well. I believe that Andrew and Paul are now some of the only AMOS members in the world, in history, who can say that they were initiated by their GM and SGM at the same ceremony.

The event wrapped up with the installation of officers on Saturday night. I escorted **Debra LaVergne**, the Rebekah Assembly president and my aunt. And at that time, I also received my official commission as DDGM for District 107. I genuinely look forward to serving our district.

By Mason Wolf



From left to right: Mason Wolf, Suzanne Waligore, Carlos Juarez

A Hawaiian May Day Celebration

On May 4, 2024, Cupertino Odd Fellows Lodge #70 had its 1st Annual “May Day is Lei Day” Fundraiser. All proceeds went to *Kāko’o (support) Maui*, an organization helping with the ongoing recovery from the Lāhainā fire on Maui last year. Donated raffle prizes together with entry donations at this sold-out event totaled \$1750!

The evening started with a “*lu’au*” (feast) of delicious pot luck dishes and desserts. The Hui ‘Ilima Dancers, led by member **Haunani Neil**, provided the Hawaiian entertainment that opened with the traditional blowing of the conch shell, followed by the Presentation of the Royal Family—King Keefe, Queen Pomai, and Princesses Iwalani & Kawena—and performances by hula dancers in colorful costumes. After the show, music continued with a *kanikapila* (music jam) led by members **Rich & Karen Sanico**. The audience was able to participate by playing ‘ukuleles, singing, and dancing the hula.

It was a successful event in honor of a special day in Hawai’i celebrating *nā lei*, flower garlands that symbolize love and the Aloha Spirit.

By **Haunani Neil & Karen Sanico**



Barnes Encampment 77 Pancake Breakfast

On June 1st, True Fellowship in San Jose played host to a special pancake breakfast, provided by Barnes Encampment #77. In addition to pancakes, the meal included eggs any style, ham, and homemade triple berry compote topping. It was a delicious way to start the morning, and since it was so close to the Grand Lodge, most of the officers stopped in for breakfast before the regular meeting.

For those not on the board, if they felt like staying in the dining area, the zoom broadcast was on for the entire meeting, letting diners participate remotely with the business of running the Grand Lodge. Although the event was lightly attended, it was still fun for the people who came. The members of Barnes encampment were all pretty happy with how it went, and will likely make this a regular tradition in months when the board meets. So stay tuned - more pancake breakfasts may be in store for San Jose!

By **Mason Wolf**

Cupertino Fourth of July Rebekah Children's Services Fundraiser Monday, June 24th

Please come join the Cupertino Lodge #70 members celebrate our nation's birthday as well as raise funds for the Rebekah Children's Services. Doors open at 5:30 pm, followed by standard BBQ fare and a short presentation by the Philotesian Rebekahs about how RCS can help those in our community, so we can better reach out and connect to those in need.. There will be a \$20 donation, per person.

Musical entertainment provided by members **Karen and Richard Sanico**.

Please register your seats, **By Thursday, June 20th**, at <https://www.cupertinooddfellows.org/events/cupertino-lodge-meeting-4th-monday-w-public-social-2-2024-06-24/>.

FLT
Cupertino Lodge #70 -

By **Jim Kabage**

Philotesian Mother's Day Tea Party

Everyone had a great time at the High Tea held on Mother's Day at the Cupertino Lodge Hall.

There were so many Fresh from the oven warm homemade scones, Lemon Curd made with **Debra's** Myer lemons, Olive & Cheese Sandwiches on special breads, Egg salad spread on freshly baked fluted bread, Miniature brownies, Fresh Strawberries, Grapes and of course Teas; all served in fine China cups & tea pots. Everything above was served expertly on authentic tri-layered tea caddies.

All mothers present were presented with a gift of a lavender sachet and a wonderful gift basket was drawn as a door prize. Extras were gathered up to take home. Everyone agreed it was such a nice way to celebrate Mother's Day. The afternoon was enjoyed by all. Afterword we washed the borrowed white table cloths lent to us by our brothers from Cupertino, who let us use the hall for the event.

By **Mary Lou Lang**



Pride Flags at Mountain View Lodge celebrate 4th annual flag raising

For the fourth year in a row, Mountain View Lodge has kicked off Pride Month with a colorful display of pride flags, representing the different identities of members of the lodge and communities who use it. With the help of a prospective member and xer* partner, we raised the flags from the roof, over the main awning, and filled the front windows with a lovely display by member **Katy Dickinson**. The prospective member was so impressed xe filled out an application on the spot!

A few hours later, Mountain View lodge played host to our quarterly performance of the First Degree. This was my last time directing it, as I am moving with my family to Washington DC to pursue a dual masters in foreign service and history at Georgetown University, but **Aer van de Water**, **Zoe Timmerman**, and **Sinéad Toolis Byrd** will be taking over the planning for the October 31st degree.

*Note there are two words in the above that are not typos: xer and xe. Those are the neopronouns of the newest applicant to our lodge.

By *Jessica Dickinson Goodman*



Life Line Screening

Life Line Screening will be here at Cupertino Odd Fellows Lodge 70 on Tuesday, June 25, 2024 offering safe, painless, non-invasive preventive health screenings that are typically not a part of a routine physical. To be more proactive about your health for yourself, your family and your community, please register for these health screenings today.

There is no time like the present to take action!

Two ways to register:

- Call toll-free: 1-888-814-0466 promo code HSCA001
- Online: <https://www.illsa.social/hzca>

By *Don Lang*

President's Program: Little Acts of Kindness

Assembly President **Debra LaVergne** has created a new program this year. Each Rebekah lodge is getting a notebook to pass around at meetings so that members can write down their little acts of kindness since the last meeting. Members can sign or initial or leave their entries anonymous, as they choose. Lodges will turn in the notebook next Assembly, where they will be displayed for everyone to look at.

We do these small kind acts all the time in our normal lives, but we do not give ourselves enough credit. A small kindness can make a big difference in the recipient's day, but the giver thinks nothing of it. By writing these acts down, we take a moment to feel good about ourselves.

Some examples:

Take someone to a meeting or shopping or medical appointment.

Grocery shop for friend, family, neighbor, or member Accompany someone to a medical appointment

Accompany someone to the emergency room or urgent care

Keep in touch:

Send a card or e-mail

Make a phone call (Call your mother)

Write and send a letter

Send flowers

Donate time or goods:

Donate blood

Donate to food bank

Volunteer at community service agency, food bank, library, blood bank, animal shelter, etc.

Attend an event at another lodge

Be kind:

Hold the door open for someone

Compliment someone

Thank a cashier

In FL&T,

By *Debra LaVergne, President of Rebekah Assembly*



True Fellowship gets into the spirit of pride month too, with rainbow lights!

Updates on the Cave Degree

On July 7th, Odd Fellows from around the state will gather in Yreka for a special dedication ceremony that we use to commemorate the moment a lodge room is built and ready to start doing the work of Odd Fellowship for the first time. This time will be a little different, because the room in question doesn't have 4 walls, and was technically restored to usability, rather than built new. But it's still a moment to celebrate the conclusion of a major construction project: The cave degree is coming back into service!

The cave degree has been run by Yreka 19 for over 80 years. But in 2020, the degree had to be canceled as the whole country shut down for the pandemic. It remained closed for 2021 and 2022. And in 2023, even as the rest of the world emerged from lockdowns, inspections revealed that the platform and stairs had deteriorated to such a degree that it would not be safe to bring people up for degree work. Yreka 19 did not feel it had sufficient resources and expertise in order to conduct the necessary repair work, and made the difficult decision to turn the cave over to the Grand Lodge of California.

Under **past Grand Master Fred Dolling**, a repair contract was signed with Brother **Michael Steineke**, a professional contractor who had a significant level of expertise in the type of difficult and remote work that would be necessary. Together with two other Odd Fellows who also specialized in construction, Brother **Joseph Ouellette Jr** and Brother **Mark Ellender**, they performed extensive repair work. This included replacing the entire deck within 12 feet of the platform edge, rebuilding an entire set of stairs that had become weathered to the point of loose debris, and reinforcing another set of stairs.

The work was financed in part by Grand Lodge, but mostly covered by the generosity of Odd Fellows and supporters who wanted to see the work completed. The last of the work is scheduled for later this month, when the handrails are to be installed.

And that ceremony in July will not only celebrate the completion of the construction, but also the chartering of a special lodge that will be formed to take over the degree work at that location beginning this summer. "Richard Brouse Historic Lodge #190" will receive its charter and mark its institution date as July 7, 2024.

The name honors **Richard "Dick" Brouse**, an Odd Fellow who truly loved the cave degree. For almost 30 years he would bring people to Yreka to receive their

second degree. And then after hearing people tell him how they had candidates who couldn't get the degree because they weren't first degree members yet, but would've loved to participate, he expanded the work to include the initiatory and first degrees as well. It proved such a popular addition, that they eventually added on the third degree too.

Despite living 4 hours away, Dick was heavily involved with every aspect of the cave, and even became Noble Grand of Yreka 19 for several years, when that was what was needed to help keep it going. It was a long drive, but he made it to every meeting.

As for the number, 190 was chosen to honor Yreka 19, which for so many years protected and cherished the cave, and like Dick Brouse, are never to have their support for the cave degree forgotten.

This year, we plan to have 2 degree weekends - August 17-18, which is also the last date Richard Brouse himself picked (he would forecast dates well in advance), and then another one on September 14-15. And that second date is going to involve another innovation we haven't tried before - we're going to confer the Patriarchal Degree, which is the first degree of the encampment. It's open to all 3rd degree Odd Fellows, so as long as they have an encampment willing to accept them. A brother or sister could come and get their other degrees, and then leave on Sunday the 15th as not just Odd Fellows, but patriarchs and matriarchs!

Registration for the degrees will be available soon, and registration for the dedication ceremony is open right now. Just go to oddfellowscavedegree.com/dedication. Cost is free, thanks to our generous donors. And if anyone wants to become a member of the new historic lodge, they can apply on the website for only \$10 -

oddfellowscavedegree.com/becoming-a-member/.

By *Mason Wolf*



Photo taken from the platform of the cave toward the end of the restoration work.



Saratoga Lodge 428 Social

Hello 3-Links Reader, I wanted to share the verbiage of how enticing and clever wording in an email invite actually draws more guests to a regular monthly social, occurring on a hard to fill weekday evening. (Specifics at the end.)

In our case, socials fall on 4th Tuesday evenings. Frequently they have low attendance. But at our April social the attendance was about 20 people, including a spy from the Cupertino lodge - **Todd White**. (He actually connected with me days before, and verified that all socials that Saratoga 428 has are open to all members of all lodges - and are free.)

The theme based food (a variety of seasoned chicken skewers, Rice-Or-Rony, and Salad), canned music, subdued lighting, and fun Libations all added to a warm atmosphere that encouraged lots of comradery and deep conversations.

At the event we acquired one new application for membership. Several people accused us of using AI to create this message, but it was all the creation of our Trustee **Neal**.

Here follows the invite that worked:

We're eager for you to join us Tuesday at 6 PM for another mouthwatering feast, promising a culinary journey where your taste buds take flight alongside our chicken creations.

Appetizers, salad and desserts are welcomed. And as always, bring a bottle of wine to share!

Grill sergeant **Terry** is manning the barbecue with teriyaki chicken skewers - the culinary equivalent of tiny swords piercing through tender chunks of chicken, bravely facing the fiery inferno of the grill. As they sizzle and dance over the flames, they whisper to the veggies nearby, "Fear not, for we shall all emerge from this grill hotter and tastier than ever before!"

Not to be outdone, **Neal's** in the kitchen roasting yakitori chicken skewers. Ah, yakitori! Those little grilled chicken skewers are like little samurai's -- each one a tiny warrior on a stick. With their savory armor of soy sauce and mirin, they bravely face the flames, ready to battle until perfectly charred.

So gather 'round, friends, and let's embark on this epic adventure of skewered chicken hilarity!

Please RSVP, so we can get a headcount.

By Paul Milleson

CAVE DEDICATION

JULY 7TH, 2024

1PM LUNCH AT YREKA #19

3PM CEREMONY AT CAVE

COST: FREE! (THANK YOU, DONORS!*)

RESERVE YOUR TICKET AT:
ODDFELLOWSCAVEDEGREE.COM/DEDICATION

* THANK YOU:
 ○ DAVIS #169
 ○ ROMERO #413
 ○ VENTURA #201
 ○ CAMPO SECO #66
 ○ DEBBIE CONOVER
 ○ GRASS VALLEY #12
 ○ CA GRAND ENCAMPMENT

UNIVERSAL JUSTICE
 FIDELITY
 CHARITY
 HOPE
 FAITH
 TRUTH
 LOVE
 FRIENDSHIP
 PURITY

ODDFellowCaveDegree.com/Dedication

JOIN US AS WE DEDICATE THE RESTORED CAVE DEGREE AS THE BRAND NEW "RICHARD BROUSE HISTORIC LODGE #190"!

Grand Master & President Reception

Odd Fellows and Rebekahs from all around the state came together in Cupertino on Sunday, June 2nd to honor **Grand Master Dave Reed** and **RA President Debra LaVergne**. The event included a BBQ lunch provided by Emerald Bay Lodge's cooking team who traveled all the way down from South Lake Tahoe. The menu included chicken, tri-tip, pulled pork, and Portobello mushroom entrees in addition to a variety of salads, beverages, and desserts.

The formal program was led by Master of Ceremonies **Dave Rosenberg** and also included a musical performance by **Janet Dove**. Grand Master Reed even played his own guitar together with **Grand Musician Ted Seitz** on the viola.

It took many people to make this event a reality. **Lea Rosenberg** and **Sheryl Cambron** worked with me on the reception committee. We were also aided by **Ria Toolis** who decorated the hall in exquisite fashion, including a special backdrop for attendees to take photos in front of. The setup crew included **Joseph Ouellette**, **Lawrence Byrd**, **Don Lang**, **Sinéad Toolis**, and **Ron Myres**. **Mary Lou Lang** managed the registration table and **Pat Aanenson** provided corsages. Clean-up was expeditiously handled by a dedicated crew from Davis Lodge. **Adam Potolsky**, **Vanessa O'Connor**, and **Zoe Timmerman** provided indispensable assistance where needed.

Thank you to everyone who pitched in as well as to all the speakers and attendees. It was really great to see so many lodges and individuals come together in celebration of our leaders.

by *Michael Greenzeiger*



Dues are due

Cupertino Lodge #70 and Mountain View Lodge #244 have their dues due on June 1st, right after the Grand Lodge session. This was done just in case the dues were increased at session. In the past, this occurred fairly often. So both dues will now become \$60 on the first of June. So if you already paid your dues of \$55, you now owe another \$5. There are many other lodges in the same situation, however, I am not aware of what the dues are, so they will have to wait until their Financial Secretary lets them know what they have become, if a change is required.

By *Don Lang*