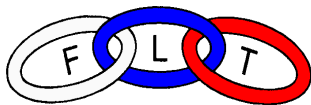


Established 1987



### The Degree of Friendship Held in Mountain View

On Thursday, May 29th, once again, Mountain View Lodge #244 hosted a fully produced First Degree to welcome **Helen Bobias** (Cupertino #70) and **Victor Gonsalves** (Mountain View #244). Despite many schedule conflicts, a successful production of the degree was performed in all its dramatic themes of Friendship, thanks to the efforts of several Lodges, including True Fellowship #52 and Cupertino #70, in addition to Mountain View #244. Thanks to cast members **Aer van de Water**, **Sally Calpo**, **Deborah Wolf**, **Mason Wolf**, **Debra LaVergne**, **Jane Beckman** (True Fellowship #52), **Randee Chin** (Cupertino #70), and **Steven Franke** (Cupertino #70). Everyone enjoyed dinner and fellowship together beforehand.

-- By **Jane Beckman**



Upcoming Degrees: Initiation at Cupertino 70 on Monday June 30th at 7PM  
Second Degree at Bay View 109 on Tuesday July 1 at 7PM

### Comics, Crafts, and Community at the Mountain View Lodge

The Mountain View Odd Fellows Lodge played host to a colorful and energetic pop-up the weekend of May 3-4, thanks to the South Bay Comickers, a local group of artists and creators led by Odd Fellows members **Sushu Xia** and **Mark Flider**. The event featured the work of over a dozen artists, filling the hall with comics, stickers, paintings, handmade notebooks, t-shirts, tote bags, and more.

There was a little bit of everything—zines with bite-sized stories, detailed prints, and art that made you laugh, think, or wonder where you could hang it in your house. The vibe throughout the weekend was relaxed and welcoming, with artists catching up with one another, chatting with guests, and sharing their work with a steady flow of

curious visitors from all over the community.

One of the biggest highlights? Sushu's daughter, Aurora, who set up her own table and hand-drew stickers to sell to guests. Her creative hustle paid off—she ended up selling more items than anyone else at the show. (It helps when you're not only a great artist, but also the most adorable salesperson in the room.)

The event wasn't just about connecting with the public—it also had a mission. Thanks to strong sales and commu-



nity support, the Comickers were able to donate \$220 of their proceeds to Advocates for Trans Equality, a cause close to the group's heart. In a time when support and visibility matter more than ever, the donation was a meaningful part of the weekend's success.

As always, it was wonderful to see so many people wandering into the lodge, learning about the Odd Fellows, and discovering local art they might not have otherwise come across. Events like this help put the lodge on the map as a creative, community-driven space—and it's easy to imagine a future where folks just expect to see something fun, strange, or beautiful happening there on any given weekend.

The South Bay Comickers hope to return soon with another event, and they're grateful to the Mountain View Odd Fellows for generously sharing the space and supporting the arts. Stay tuned—there's more to come!

-- By **Mark Flider**

## Odd Fellows Honor Memorial Day with a Cemetery Visit

Did you know we have a member who is still fulfilling one of the original missions of Odd Fellowship, burying the dead? On Memorial Day, a number of Odd Fellows from District 107 headed to Livermore to get a cemetery tour at Memory Gardens Cemetery, where **Jon Hart** of Livermore Lodge provides these services at a much lower cost than most. As we toured the grounds and the crypt/columbarium with him, we learned how modern cemeteries function and heard stories of local history. Jon is dedicated to providing more affordable options for burial than is generally the case in the modern era and shared his hopes for a continuing tradition of Odd Fellows providing for burying the dead with other like-minded members of our order. This was followed by a late lunch at the local brewpub and tour of the Livermore Lodge (one of the oldest buildings in Livermore!).

Interested in lower-cost burial alternatives? Contact Jon at Memory Gardens Cemetery at 3873 East Ave. Livermore, CA 94550. (925) 447-8417

-- By *Jane Beckman*



## Mountain View 244 Display Honoring Mental Health Awareness Month

Mountain View Lodge #244 is very fortunate to be located on Castro Street in downtown Mountain View. We are on the corner between Castro Street and Villa Street and can put on window displays in our Castro Street windows.

### This month is dedicated to Mental Health Awareness

Mental Health Awareness Month is an annual observance founded by Mental Health America in 1949 to highlight the importance of mental wellbeing, educate the public, reduce stigma and promote support for those affected by mental health conditions. Each year, individuals and organizations come together to raise awareness and advocate for better mental health care and resources.

**Did you know that the average adult will say "I'm fine" 14 times per week, yet only 19% actually mean it?**

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/our-work/public-engagement/green-ribbon-mental-health-awareness/green-ribbon-faqs>



### Mental Health Awareness Colors

**Green** is the designated color for mental health awareness. It symbolizes new life, renewal, and growth found in nature. This vibrant color represents the idea that individuals facing mental health challenges can experience recovery, healing, and personal growth.

### Influence of Color on Mental Health

Color has a profound impact on our emotions and well-being. The color green, associated with nature, has a calming and refreshing effect. It is often used in spaces where relaxation and stress relief are important, such as hospitals and waiting rooms.

<https://www.socialrecoverycenter.com/mental-health-awareness-color>

-- By *Ria Toolis*

## Rebekah Assembly 2025: A View from the Podium

I had multiple hats for the week. As Grand High Priest of the Grand Encampment, I was part of the team responsible for the Joint Memorial Service. We used the Rebekah Lodge opening prayer, the Odd Fellows Lodge opening ode, the Encampment closing ode and the Patriarchs Militant closing prayer around a memorial display based on a poem by Ella Wheeler Wilcox, "Life's Journey".

Rebekah Assembly seemed to run very smoothly. I might have been frantic the hour before, but once sessions opened each day, all stayed calm. My officers know what I need, and provided a few small bottles of Diet Coke every day, along with other gifts.

Nominations for office filled Thursday morning. The only position with two candidates was for the three-year term as Rebekah Assembly Director.

Thursday was visiting time as well. After I declared the lunch recess at noon, I took my officers over to Grand Lodge to visit before they took their lunch break. Grand Lodge officers were scheduled to visit the RA sessions as soon as we went back into sessions at 1:30pm. Since these visits took away from our meal time, I had arranged for a box lunch for the Rebekah Assembly and Grand Lodge officers.

The first highlight of the week was when **Dave Reed** sang "Give Yourself to Love" for me.

Thursday afternoon, we handled legislation. We had only seven bills and one

resolution for the legislation committee to consider. They had most of it in advance and worked with the makers to clarify the intent before the bills came before the Assembly.

Thursday evening was the DMC, Dedicated Members for Change, reception. I attended briefly. Having woken up at 3:30am, my bed called me away.



Friday morning was the report of the Finance Committee and presentation of the Budget. After that passed without controversy, we took a break then went into elections for Rebekah Assembly. The slate of officers elected are President **Marcy Harper Seibel**, Vice President **Linda Hoelscher**, Warden **Melinie Caines**, Secretary **Donna Miller**, 3-year Director **Heather Reynolds**, 1-year Director **Nancy Latu**, IARA Representa-

tive **Marilyn Nichols**, Alternate IARA Representative **Sue Michener**, RCS Director **Phoebe Astill**, 3-year Homes Board Director **Dianna Mann**, 1-year Homes Board Director **Debra LaVergne**, Odd Fellows Foundation Director **Joyce Link**.

The Legislation Committee presented the one resolution, which was updates to the RA Standing Rules to make it more gender-neutral. After a little discussion, it was adopted.

Past President **Elizabeth Mowry-Harbstreit** spoke about Sister **Betty Moates**, because Sister Betty's Past President jewel had been in her keeping, and she had brought it for me. This jewel was first given to Lizzie Coombs, a member of Stella Rebekah Lodge #22 at the completion of her term in 1909. It was passed to her daughter, Ruth Bettinger, in 1965. Ruth Bettinger had brought Betty Dawson into membership in Sigma Tau Theta Rho girls club when Betty was 15. When Betty completed her term as President in 1975, the Bettinger family gave it to her.

Friday was a luncheon at the Black Bear Diner for the Past Appointed Officers of Rebekah Assembly.

Friday evening was Good Fellowship Night. The first filk piece presented was "The 12 Hours of Grand Lodge". The evening ended with a showing of *Join or Die*, which is now available on Netflix.

Saturday morning was time for President-Elect Marcy to present her officers and program, and for IARA President **Mira Pittman** to give awards. I received the Medallion Award.

Saturday evening was installation. Dave Reed and I turned everything over to the Installing officers, and sat together in the back row on the podium, until I went down to be obligated as a Director, then commissioned as DDP for District #3. We had given our officers their past officer jewels before the installation started, but we went down to the floor to be with them when their jewel presenters pinned them. Dave Reed and I pinned each other's jewels.

-- By **Debra LaVergne**



## Saving our Buildings, our History, and our Order: The Ukiah Resolution

At Sessions this year, among all the many bills, resolutions, motions and elections, one action stands out both for its audacity, and its potential implications for the future of Odd Fellowship in California. The very last thing we voted on, a resolution crafted from the floor of Sessions itself rather than submitted in advance, concerns one building in Northern California. One shabby, old, and poorly maintained building, that just may point us toward the future of Odd Fellowship.

To provide a little background, in Mendocino County, what would eventually become the town of Ukiah began as a small settlement in the 1850's, as Anglo settlers began arriving after California's admission to the Union. Its name sprang from the valley's original inhabitants, a nearby band of Pomo Indians called "Yokayo", who still live in the area to this day.

By 1859, Ukiah had 100 residents and a post office, and by 1876 it was incorporated. But development was still slow until 1889, when it was finally added to the San Francisco and North Pacific rail line, which linked it to the national rail network. This makes it all the more impressive that Ukiah's IOOF building

was erected in 1882, back when building materials still had to be either created on site or shipped in by stage coach.

Ukiah Lodge #174 was originally chartered in 1870. But in 1992, facing dwindling numbers, it consolidated with Little Lake Lodge #227. When Little Lake lost their charter during the pandemic, the Ukiah IOOF building passed to the control of the California Grand Lodge.

The building has been somewhat neglected, to put it mildly, but it remains an income-generating property. The current tenants send their rent each month, but there have been complaints, and even at least one lawsuit, about the state of the building. The upstairs, where the lodge once met, now lies vacant. The roof has outlived its functional life and needs to be replaced. When it rains, water seeps in and has caused problems for the tenants. As the building itself is built with unreinforced masonry, seismic retrofitting may be necessary in order to preserve it.

In 2024, a squatter was found living there who did a considerable amount of damage, and to even use the upper floor of the building, the city of Ukiah requires an extensive amount of renovation. Seeing little benefit to holding onto it, the Grand Lodge board voted in April to sell the Ukiah building and began their search for a buyer.

But that's on pause, at least for one year, thanks to the actions of the Grand Lodge body, led by **Larry Guenther** of Davis Lodge #169. His resolution, adopted after extraordinary parliamentary maneuvering - which included an initial motion to consider, a hastily written resolution presented the following day, a motion to table, a motion to pick it up off the table, a move to call the question, and finally a vote to pass (which actually succeeded handily) - in the very last vote taken at Sessions in 2025. It should be noted that other than making the motion, at no point did poor Larry

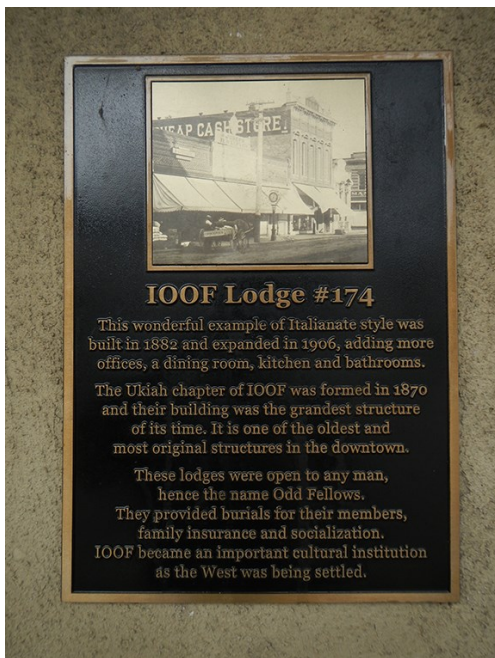


ever actually get to speak on the floor about it! But it didn't matter. The members of Grand Lodge saw a plan to save a building and when they finally got the chance to vote, they said, resoundingly, "yes."

As for the plan itself, it's interesting. Larry discovered that within the California code, there is a Grand Lodge Real Estate committee that hasn't had anyone appointed to it in years. As one of the chief proponents of monetizing, rather than selling, our old buildings, Larry saw the Real Estate committee as potentially becoming the group of Odd Fellows who can take charge of those properties that Grand Lodge owns, fix them up, and then rent them out in order to earn a steady income that's not dependent on membership dues.

As so often happens when someone proposes an idea, **Rita Cooper**, the new Grand Master, quickly appointed Larry to head the committee to make it happen.

Joining him on the committee are PGM **Fred Dolling** of Stanislaus #170, who's both there as Grand Lodge board liaison, and also as the person most often credited with saving the Three Links camp. Additionally, they'll have **Marcus Marino**, of Davis #169, a licensed architect, **Jaimie Garcia**, of San Fernando



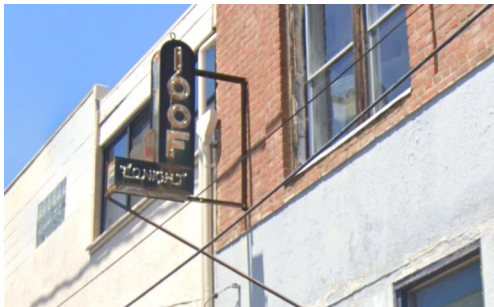
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#365, a licensed real estate broker, and from Cupertino #70, **Ron Myres**, bringing in his expertise as a contractor.

These five brothers are going to determine, first and foremost, whether this building can be saved, and it's far from clear at this point. This is a large building. The costs of a seismic retrofit, which may be essential to ever using the upper floors again, can run into the millions. Plus, adding a new roof is going to be a high priority, as according to first person accounts, when you stand on the upper floor and look up, there are places where you can see daylight streaming in.

But this is an important piece of history, and there may be grants available to help pay for it. The building itself is cashflow positive, and with improvements, more units could be made available for rent, and rents could be raised to market value, helping to offset the costs of loans that may need to be taken.



Further, if they do manage to save the building, it may even become a lodge again. There's already a charter in the possession of Brother **Jack Cain**, of Upper Lake #241, to form a lodge in Ukiah, where he lives. He already has the people, he just needs a space to meet. His dream is to see Odd Fellowship return to Ukiah, and just how cool would it be if they returned to their original building?

Whether or not this specific project succeeds, I'm delighted that we're giving it a shot. For generations, as the Order has shrunk, we've been selling off bits and pieces of it and spending down the proceeds. It's helped cover a year of budget shortfalls here and there, but since we haven't been reinvesting the capital, we've just been dragging ourselves closer and closer to the point where we simply don't have Odd Fel-

lowship in California anymore.

Some might say, "we're running out of members anyway, who are we trying to preserve Odd Fellowship for?" But I don't think that. Larry Guenther doesn't think that. Friendship, Love, and Truth are still going to be necessary centuries from now, and so the Order can persist as well. But we've got to take care of what we've inherited so that future members have something too.

The Real Estate committee has a huge job, and the stakes are high, not only for one building in Ukiah, but to determine the viability of this whole concept: monetizing our assets rather than selling them off. Even if the committee fails; if they come back to Sessions next year recommending that after looking at all viable alternatives, it really is in the best interests of the Order to sell that building, it makes an enormous difference that we tried. Whatever we learn in the next 12 months, and no matter what happens to that building on North State Street in Ukiah, here's hoping that we figure out a better way to preserve the legacy that's been handed down to us, and regrow our beloved Order in our time.

-- By **Mason Wolf**

## Making True Fellowship Proud

Even though it goes without saying that **Mason Wolf** is an exemplar of Odd Fellowship, sometimes it is important to embarrass him just a little bit by pointing out that his home Lodge community at True Fellowship Lodge no.52 is very proud of his accomplishments. At Grand Lodge Sessions, he not only completed his term as District Deputy Grand Master of District 107 and awarded the Past-DDGM pin from our own Sister **Debbie Shuler**'s personal pin stash, he was also recognized in front of the combined Grand Lodge Sessions for his extraordinary contributions to California Odd Fellowship in the last year with the Grand Master's Award, with special focus on all he has done for setting up the Richard Brouse Degree Lodge no.190.



Additionally, Sister **Debbie Shuler** was herself bringing pride to True Fellowship, as she not only became the first woman Past Grand Patriarch in California history, she also received an Encampment Meritorious Service Jewel - "for meritorious service performed on behalf of Odd Fellowship beyond the usual and customary duties of membership" - service which included orchestrating the first known conferral of an Encampment Degree at the Pythian Cave in Yreka, California. Additionally, she completed the longest single term of any Grand Patriarch in California history, because California's Encampment extended her term so as to sync California's Encampment Sessions to be in the same week and location as California Grand Lodge Sessions.

-- By **Andrew Crockett**



**Mason Wolf** receiving a Grand Master's award from **Dave Reed** (above). **Debbie Shuler** receiving a certificate of recognition from IARA President **Mira Pittman** (below).

## ELECTED AT SESSIONS

This year, we had several members of our district who took the step of running for one of the elected offices at Grand Lodge. Each of them was invited to share a little about themselves and what they hoped to accomplish. (Our new Grand Warden, **Adam Potolsky**, is featured on the next page.)

### Connie Hall: Rebekah Children's Services Board



**Connie Hall** was re-elected to the Board of Rebekah Children's Services (RCS) at Grand Sessions for a 4 year term. She is also the current Secretary of Saratoga IOOF Lodge, 428.

She is a retired RN and was appointed and has served on the Board of RCS since 2019 and was elected in 2020 and 2021.

RCS grew out of the Rebekah and Odd Fellow's "Children's Home," or orphanage, built in 1897 in Gilroy. They cared for hundreds of children at this facility. In the early 1960's, RCS began transitioning to serving Foster youth and their families for Outpatient services.

Today, RCS annually serves over 14,000 children, youth, and their families, and is supported by a variety of funding programs, which include the State of CA, the County of Santa Clara, School Districts, special grants, and fundraising and these monies are used for counseling services, mental health services, and drug abuse prevention counseling services. One of their most popular and successful programs is their Culinary School for disadvantaged youth.

Today, with over 225 staff, RCS is its own Non-profit Agency. Odd Fellows and Rebekah members still serve on the Board of Directors. Connie has served on the RCS Programs Committee, PQI (Quality control), Funds Development, and Investment Committee.

Connie has promoted the annual "Toy Drive" of RCS, which collects toys or donations from Lodges and the com-

munity starting in the early Fall, with the goal of giving a gift to every child and their siblings that are currently served by RCS and these are delivered in December.

If you are interested in learning more about RCS or the annual "Toy Drive", please contact: [Connie.wr5@gmail.com](mailto:Connie.wr5@gmail.com)

### Deborah Shuler: Odd Fellows Foundation Board



The week before Encampment / Canton / Grand Lodge Sessions started like any other.

On Tuesday, we took **Ben [Shuler]** to the doctor and he cleared him to make the weeklong trip to Reno, NV.

Wednesday was fine, went to lodge, started packing everything to go.

Thursdays is Ben's day to spend with his mother and sister, so I was surprised when I realized it was 9:30 and he hadn't told me "it's time to go" yet. I went out to the living room and Ben was in his recliner. I told him what time it was, and to go get ready. By the time that he came back to the living room, he could hardly breathe. I asked him if he needed to go see the doctor, and he refused saying "take me to my mother and sister". So I did just that. We took him to lunch, he could hardly make it to the dining room, and then I got him in the car and took him to the hospital. I had already notified the doctors that I would be bringing him in. I am glad we fed him lunch, because he would have gone hours without food. When we got to the ER they immediately got him into a room and on oxygen as well as other tests. It was discovered that Ben was in Respiratory distress. He would be checking into the hospital, starting dialysis that day, and probably not be released until Monday.

We talked and agreed that I would still go to convention, finish the job and work that I had to do. I called his sons and arranged for someone to be with him until I got home. I spent time with him on Friday at the hospital, and then went home to get things ready to go.

Saturday I went to Reno and got checked in after stopping in Sacramento and spending a couple of hours with Ben Jr. going over everything so far.

I was at the airport at midnight picking up **Gen Laswell** and his sentinel from the airport with no issues.

Sessions opened with the Canton on Monday. I took the General to Black Bear Diner for lunch.

Tuesday started my sessions, finally finishing up a 1 ½ year term. Everything went smoothly and by 11:00 we were ready for presentations. **Fred Dolling** and I were called to the center of the floor and presented with Meritorious Odd Fellows jewels. And then we had exchanging of the collars and jewels, followed by installation at two, when I was presented with my Past Grand Patriarch's jewel.

Wednesday, I worked with **Rich Gunnels** and **Shay Harris** at the registration desk, and Wednesday night was opening. I took the GMC part in the Memorial Service.

Thursday I was back at registration and then sessions where I and **Janet Sinclair** were awarded coins and Certificates for being female veterans. I was nominated to run for another 3 years of the Odd Fellows Foundation board. Running unopposed, I was elected.

I headed home on Sunday morning and picked up Ben in Davis. Monday we started his 3 times a week on Dialysis and 1 day a week with his mother.

### Michael Greenzeiger: Grand Representative



I am grateful for the support of the Grand Lodge of California for electing me as Grand Representative for the 2025-2027 term. I look forward to representing California at The Sovereign Grand Lodge and weighing in on the important issues which face our Order today. I expect to continue serving on the Committee on Ritualistic Works which primarily makes recommendations on resolutions to change the Ritual of our Order. This year the sessions will be held in Charleston, WV from August 15th to 21st.



## Becoming Grand Warden

Adam Potolsky making his candidate speech at Grand Lodge on Friday, May 16, 2025

The first years as a member of the Independent order of Odd Fellows I spent focused on my lodge and what I could do as a member. Because the lodge, like many in the great state of California, was small and lacked the membership to build from, I was quickly put into the line to become noble grand. After being initiated by DVD, I then went on to obtain my 3 degrees in the Hayward lodge hall, again by DVD. It was immediately apparent to me that this method was lacking in the ability to help me understand the full depth of Odd Fellowship. While I was moving through the chairs the Saratoga lodge began to grow as the few newer members began bringing in their friends and neighbors and as the costs of maintaining the lodge went up they looked to the Grand Lodge for assistance by increasing the rent of the first floor. This began an unfortunate series of events but also led to my diving into understanding the rules of the order.

As the desk officers began their various discussions, a number of factors came into play that made it necessary for the lodge to understand what its requirements were and what expectations could be imposed on them within the code of laws and California code. This was the year I became Noble Grand of Saratoga #428 for the 1st time and I began pouring over the rules that were being cited at us by various grand lodge representa-

tives and officers. This was the process that not only brought my interests in understanding the laws and how they are and should be applied, but also in being able to cite sources and explain the code to others. The end result was the lodge losing its tenant, but it made the lodge stronger as the members rallied together and learned more about the real meaning of Odd Fellowship. After these events and my tenure as Noble Grand were over, I began to attend Grand Lodge and began the same work except at the state level.

At Sessions I met many members of the Order from all over the state, and began to understand how various regions and lodges can be very different in their needs and wants. While many of the same issues of a few high level officers citing rules and practices continued, my initial mission was to do the best I could for my home lodge, but also for the Grand Lodge membership as a whole, by bringing up concerns when rules were misquoted or misused. I had no interest in going beyond being a member of the Grand Body and that remained for a number of years. Many jokes were made about running up to the microphone with computer in hand, as well as those about spending so much time at the mic, but outside of the hall, many members would thank me for my efforts to protect the Grand Body, and hold the best inter-

ests of the Grand Lodge of California to heart. After a number of years it became clear to me that it was no longer enough to talk the talk from the floor and work on committees, but I needed to become part of the Grand Lodge Board and officers to continue my work of advocating for the lodges and the Grand Lodge membership.

Deciding to become Grand Warden was more difficult because of the scale of the job for the next 3 years. I would be leaving the home more often and for longer times for Board of Directors meetings, as well as visiting lodges and attending receptions and other events. The time came as my youngest child is graduating high school and I would not have so many responsibilities as a House Husband to drive them around the area many nights a week, and travel with them many weekends to their various activities. While I still have plans that might take attention away for some time over the next year and a half, the calendar is as clear as it might ever be for the next 3 years. Ultimately this was the timing that allowed me to seriously consider not only an interest in running, but also knowing that I would have the resources to dedicate to the position. It is an honor to serve my lodge, the district, and the Grand Lodge of California as your Grand Warden.

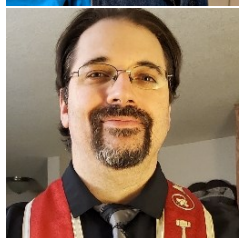
-- In FL&T, Adam Potolsky

## NEW APPOINTMENTS

In addition to the members of our district newly elected or re-elected to Grand Lodge offices, there were several notable appointments. While there are several members remaining in existing appointed roles, the following are new appointments we'd like to acknowledge.



**Andrew Crockett:**  
Finance  
Committee



**Mason Wolf:**  
District 45  
DDGM



**Michael Greenzeiger:**  
Chair of the  
Judiciary  
Committee



**Ria Toolis:**  
Good  
Fellowship  
Committee



**Rodney Metoyer:**  
Sovereign  
Grand  
Chaplain



**Ron Myres:**  
Real Estate  
Committee &  
District 107  
DDGM



**Tom Blackburn:**  
By-Laws  
Review  
Committee



**Zoe Timmerman:**  
Grand  
Instructor &  
Historical  
Committee

## Meritorious Service Jewels in District 107



A Meritorious Service Jewel is considered the highest award in Odd Fellowship. By Sovereign Grand Lodge code, they can only be awarded by a Grand Lodge, Grand Encampment, or Department Council. And grand bodies are limited in the number they can award based on their number of members. It is reserved for those who render service above and beyond the scope of ordinary Odd Fellowship, and beyond the scope of their own unit.

The Meritorious Service Jewel can be earned once only, in a person's entire lifetime, and so it is remarkable that, this year, three members of our district achieved that incredibly rare honor.

To help explain why these awards were bestowed, here are the summaries of the resolutions in which the Grand Lodge and Grand Encampment were encouraged to grant them:

## **Ron Myers** Recommended by: **Cupertino Lodge #70**

Cupertino Lodge #70, District #107, and the wider world of Odd Fellowship in California have benefited tremendously from the service of Brother **Ron Myers**, and we propose that he receive the Meritorious Service Jewel.

## **Deborah Shuler** Recommended by: **Barnes Encampment #77**

Sister **Debbie Shuler** has shown up time and again, for many years, to advance the interests of the Order. She's served with distinction as an officer in the Rebekah Assembly, the Grand LEA, the Grand Encampment, the LAPM and the Patriarchs Militant, as well as continuing to hold the duties of a desk officer in her Odd Fellows and Rebekah home lodges.

## **Michael Greenzeiger** Recommended by: **Emerald Bay Lodge #50** **Morning Star Lodge #20**

Emerald Bay Lodge #50 and Morning Star Lodge #20, of California Odd Fellows District 12, are in accord in their desire to award our 2021-2022 Past Grand Master **Michael Greenzeiger** the Odd Fellows Meritorious Service Jewel for his show of outstanding leadership, his skills in enlightening and enlivening members to the practice of Odd Fellowship, and his dedication to animated service toward the good of the order in his nearly 20 years holding multiple offices in the Independent Order of Odd Fellows.

Brother **Ron Myres**, Sister **Debbie Shuler** and Brother **Michael Greenzeiger**, your district commends you for this achievement and we are incredibly grateful you for your extraordinary service.

-- By *Mason Wolf*

## An Unexpected Award

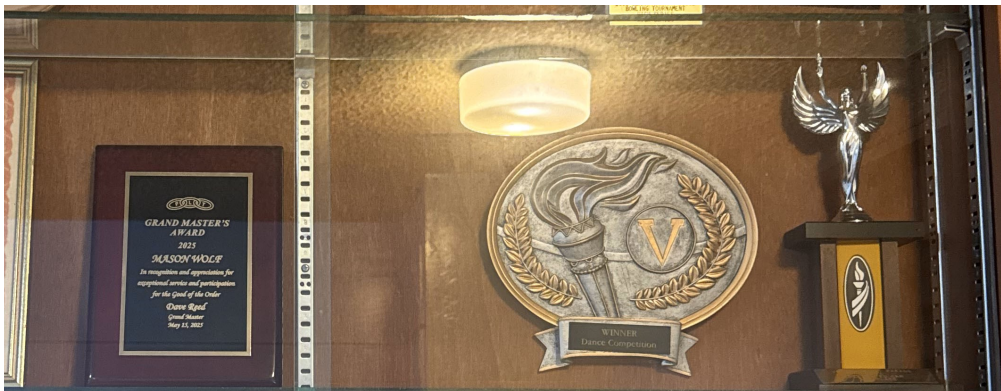
On Friday May 16 at Sessions, I was surprised and honored when Grand Master **Dave Reed** called me up on stage, along with **Marcus Marino** of Davis Lodge #169. He had 3 Grand Master's awards to hand out: myself, Marcus, and **Jack Cain** of Upper Lake #241 (who unfortunately was unable to attend).

In his presentation to me, Brother Dave expressed his appreciation for my efforts to help restore the annual cave degree weekend in Yreka and form California's first degree lodge in over 50 years. But it was a big undertaking, and I certainly didn't manage it all by myself.

I wasn't really prepared when I received that award, but there's a lot of people I would have liked to thank. I had incredible support from people like **Joseph Ouellette Jr.**, who really stood up for the cave as something we could do, and at a price we could afford, and in a sense, I joined him in bringing it back, rather than the other way around. And I had **Debra LaVergne**, who is really the one responsible for pushing back on the idea that we could even have a degree lodge, even when the Sovereign Grand Secretary refused to issue a charter, because it was no longer in the SGL code. She pointed out that it was still in the ritual, which supersedes the SGL code, and still in the California code, which gave our Grand Lodge the right to issue its own charter for it. And then she created a beautiful charter for us! And of course, Dave Reed himself had to make the ultimate decision to allow it, and he not only allowed it, he joined it! And he's faithfully attended our meetings as my right supporter. And of course, I had my wife, **Debbie Wolf**, encouraging and supporting me at every turn along the way. I could not possibly have succeeded without her.

In the end, our charter held 40 names of brothers and sisters who wanted to help bring this thing back and bring the degree lodge to life. We had support from lodges and individuals all throughout California and Oregon, many of whom supported financially, or by bringing candidates to receive degrees.

We also had amazing support from the members of Yreka 19, who had origi-



The new award now sits in the display cabinet in the lobby of True Fellowship Lodge #52

nally founded the cave degree tradition, and were absolutely essential in bringing it back. They were incredible hosts, and we gained so much by working with them. My own lodges, True Fellowship #52, my primary lodge, as well as Mountain View #244 and Cupertino #70, my associate lodges, contributed money to the rebuilding effort, plus the majority of the degree team we brought last year. And last year's Grand Encampment Patriarch, **Debbie Shuler**, was essential in getting the encampment involved in restoring the cave degree, and is the reason why in September of last year, we were able to use the cave to induct 6 new members into the encampment in a live outdoor ceremony (which is really how all encampment degrees ought to be conferred). She also brought in \$2500 with her jam sales, making her one of the largest donors to the restoration effort.

This is only a small portion of the people who helped, either with the restoration of the cave, its dedication, or its conversion into a degree lodge, but to everyone who helped, encouraged, or participated in any way, thank you. We have a degree lodge, and it's one of the things I am most proud of in my life. I got involved with it to honor my grandfather, **Richard Brouse**, who passed away in July of 2023. He loved the cave degree so much, and devoted so much of his life to it, and I wanted to see his legacy continue. The hope now is that it lasts long after I'm gone as well. As Davis #169 said on the plank they sponsored, "May the cave live for 1,000 years!"

Thank you.

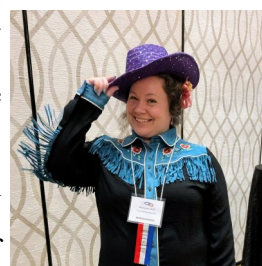
-- By **Mason Wolf**



## Fashion-raising Fundraising

Yee-haw! Bolos were back big time at Western Wear Day at the 2025 Grand Lodge Sessions in Reno, Nevada!

And True Fellowship Lodge no. 52, IOOF met this need, raising over \$1,000 as it sold dozens of True Fellowship Bolo Ties to Odd Fellows from across the state (and even the nation), selling bolos to several Past Grand Masters, and the



Deputy Sovereign Grand Master in addition to the many Grand Lodge Representatives in attendance. This "fashion - raising" paired well with the members of

True Fellowship Lodge no. 52's exuberant style - with Sisters **Debbie Wolf**, **Angela Commean**, and **Debbie Shuler** dressing so colorfully that other Odd Fellows got in on the fun!

-- By **Andrew Crockett**

## Just For Fun - From the "Filk Festival" Archives

A "filk" festival (a deliberate misspelling of "folk") is when people come together and play songs that take familiar tunes and combine them with original words. During Good Fellowship night at Grand Lodge, they had several individuals and groups take the stage. One of the crowd favorites, performed by Nancy Schlesinger and Icarus "Orion" Kranzke, was a song based on Grand Lodge Sessions itself, set to the tune of *The 12 Days of Christmas*:

### *The 12 Hours of Grand Lodge Sessions*

- In the twelfth hour of Grand Lodge, Grand Master said to me,  
 12. "Balance the budget!"  
 11. "No applause please!"  
 10. "Is this a friendly amendment?"  
 9. "You're out of order!"  
 8. "End of Discussion!"  
 8. "All reps must vote now!"  
 7. "What's wrong with your clicker?"  
 6. "Speakers must be nice!"  
 5. "No politics!"  
 4. "What lodge are you from?"  
 3. "What is your name?"  
 2. "Speak into the microphone!"  
 1. "We need a bathroom break now!"

## More Fun Ahead in June!



### BARNES 77 PANCAKE BREAKFAST

**DATE:** Saturday, June 7

**COST:** \$10 for a full breakfast

**TIME:** 7:45am - 9:45am

**PLACE:** 1035 Emory St, San Jose

At 9, they'll put the GL board meeting on the big screen to watch as we eat.

**URL:** [True52.org/pancakes](http://True52.org/pancakes)



**KUPAOA AND MARK YAMANAKA**

### **FATHERS DAY CONCERT**

**JUNE 15, 2025 - 5PM SHOW**

**\$55 DINNER INCLUDED**

**ODD FELLOWS LODGE #70**

20589 HOMESTEAD RD, CUPERTINO - TIX AT [EVENTBRITE.COM](http://EVENTBRITE.COM)

### FATHERS DAY DINNER CONCERT

[cupertinooddfellows.org/fathersday](http://cupertinooddfellows.org/fathersday)



### KANIKAPILA BURGER FRY

**DATE:** Wednesday, June 25

**COST:** \$15 for dinner and a show

**TIME:** 6 - 9PM

**PLACE:** 20589 Homestead Rd, Cup

Enjoy delicious food and Hawaiian music. True Fellowship brings the burgers!

**Open Mic @ Mountain View Odd Fellows**

For creative performances - music, poetry, monologue!

**When:** Friday, June 27 & Saturday, June 28 6-11pm

**Where:** 823 Villa St, Mountain View, CA 94041

Do it for pride! LGBTQ+ acts & content to the front!

[QR Code](#)

**-- Scan here to sign up!**

### OPEN MIC NIGHT

**DATES:** Fri-Sat June 28 - 29

**COST:** FREE!

### GRAND MASTER OFFICIAL VISIT

**DATE:** Tuesday June 24

**TIME:** 6 - 10PM

**PLACE:** 14414A Oak St, Saratoga

**COST:** FREE!

**RSVP:** 408.206.2163 (or use [link](#))

Enjoy a delicious Italian dinner catered by Buca di Beppo, followed by a meeting with Grand Master Rita Cooper and the members of Saratoga 428. **RSVP must be received by June 17.**



### JANE AUSTEN DANCE

**DATE:** Saturday, August 9

**COST:** \$25 in advance, \$30 at door

**TIME:** 7 - 10:30PM

**PLACE:** 1035 Emory St, San Jose

**URL:** [True52.org/RegencyBall](http://True52.org/RegencyBall)

See more events on the district calendar: [siliconvalleyoddfellows.org/district-calendar](http://siliconvalleyoddfellows.org/district-calendar)



Image of the Month: Joel Greenzeiger drives the backhoe at Odd Fellows Cemetery, 5/26