

OVER THE BACK FENCE NEWS

Masonic Homes of California at Covina

Volume 29, Issue 2



Will you be my Valentine ?

I'm sending to you
A verbal bouquet;
My love to you all

Happy Valentine's Day.



FROM THE "NOW YOU KNOW" DEPT.

GROUNDHOG DAY

Groundhog Day will always fall on February 2 as this marks the midpoint between the Winter Solstice and Spring Equinox. Many years ago, farmers needed to determine when to plant their crops so they tried to forecast whether there would be an early Spring or a lingering Winter. If the day was bright and sunny, it meant snow and frost would return and continue for six weeks. If it was dark and cloudy, warmth and rain would thaw the fields and get them ready for planting.

Our Groundhog Day is a remote survivor of this old tradition. According to legend, if a groundhog sees its shadow on this day, there will be six more weeks of Winter; if it doesn't, Spring is just around the corner.

Punxsutawney Phil has announced Spring's arrival since 1887.

Farmers around the world have had similar traditions although they used other animals such as bears or badgers. In the 1800's, German immigrants to Pennsylvania brought the tradition with them. Not finding badgers, they adopted the groundhog to fit the lore.

VALENTINE'S DAY

The most popular legend is that St Valentine - a priest from Rome - was arrested after secretly marrying Christian couples, who were being persecuted by Emperor Claudius II in the third century AD.

As helping Christians was considered a crime, St Valentine was imprisoned; while in jail he attempted to convert the emperor to Christianity and was condemned to death. He was beaten with stones and clubs, before being beheaded outside the Flaminian Gate. He was buried on February 14 at the Roman cemetery on the Via Flaminia, the ancient road from Rome to Rimini.

According to some, while in prison St Valentine fell in love with the jailer's daughter and sent her a love letter signed 'from your Valentine' on February 14, the day of his execution, as a goodbye.

DESTINY LODGE #856 ANNUAL INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

On Saturday, January 12, Destiny Lodge held its Sixth Annual Installation of 2019 Officers at Solomon's Square on the Covina Campus of the Masonic Homes of California. The event was very well attended despite the heavy rainfall that morning.

The Installation Team included the Most Worshipful Russel Chanvonia, Past Grand Master of Masons in California, who served as the Installing Officer; Past Master Joseph Babineau, as the Master of Ceremonies; District Inspector Robert Sechrest as Installing Chaplain; Past Master Stephen Miller as Installing Organist and Past Master Juan Mena, Retiring Master of Destiny Lodge.

The Installation began with the Invocation delivered by Installing Chaplain Sechrest, followed by the impressive Presentation of the American Flag by the George Washington Chapter, Order of DeMolay. The officers to be installed marched into the room under the Arch of Steel presented by Knights of the St. Bernard Priory, Order of DeMolay.

The elected and appointed 2019 officers were installed as follows:

Tiler.....Duane Bente*

Jr. Warden.....Paul Bente

Organist.....Stephen Miller

Sr. Warden.....Ernest Salcido^

Jr. Steward.....Juan Mena, PM

Master.....Herschel Mazer*

Sr. Steward.....Richard Haren

Marshal.....Gus Cordes

*Denotes Resident of Masonic Homes

Jr. Deacon.....Steve Hawkins*

^Denotes staff of Masonic Homes

Sr. Deacon.....John Pomroy

Chaplain.....Stephen DeMuth

Secretary.....Jerry Chandler*

Treasurer.....David Harris*

As if by magic, the clouds parted and the sun came out to shine at the end of the 90 minute Ceremony. Participants and guests retired to the reception room for refreshments hosted by the Destiny Divas.

A good time was had by all, who attended the Installation.

By: Steve Hawkins, Resident

OUR NEW DIRECTOR OF DIETARY SERVICES

Fransisca Janbakhsh was born in Malay. Her military father is English and her mother is from Spain. Fran has two adult children, Rosita and Jonathan. Her hobbies are traveling and cooking for family and friends.

Fran earned her Culinary Degree at a culinary college and began her career as a Head Chef specializing in fine dining and French cuisine. She went on to become a Director of Food Services at various multi-level retirement communities and has over 35 years of experience in Food Service. "I am so pleased and very excited to be here at Masonic Homes in Covina and to get to know everyone".

ACTIVITIES DEPARTMENT

Jennelee Ramos was born and raised in the Philippines by her grandparents when her parents left to come to America in order to provide for the family. As she turned 18, her parents had their children join them in the U.S. The transition from the Philippines was very difficult for Jennelee and for sometime she begged to be allowed to go back. As time went by, she found work, married her husband five years ago and is now very happy to be with us in Covina.

Hazel Rodriguez is a native of Los Angeles and is the eldest of three girls, whose father is Donato Rodriguez, Manager of Facilities Engineering here at our Masonic Homes in Covina. She is Donato's back-up "handyman-lady" at home and is the "boy he never had". She loves the beautiful sights and smell of the beach at Long Beach and going to the Long Beach movie theater. "I am pleased to be here and when you see me, be sure to say Hi."



TO OUR FEBRUARY BIRTHDAY RESIDENTS

02 – Gene Sloyer

19 – Milton Freer

04 – Opal Abernethy

20 – Florence Gerber

07 – Clement DeAlwis

“29” – Howard Steinore

TOTAL POPULATION = 60 Women = 32 Men = 28

Couples = 6

(Including 4 Outplacements)

Parker, Betty Claremont Place

Pickett, John Palm Desert

Reidel, Robert Palm Desert

Stoddard, Yvonne Fullerton Board & Care

Temporary Stays

Ripley, Daisy Pilgrim Place

Off Campus

Bente, Clara Claremont Care Center

July 30th, 1733

Boston Masons Organize First Grand Lodge in America



On this day in 1733, 18 men gathered at the Bunch of Grapes Tavern on King Street in Boston and organized the first Masonic Lodge in North America. The fraternal society was based loosely on medieval stonemasons' guilds. Members pledged to be true to each other, to God, and to their king. However, a number of Masons — including George Washington, John Hancock, and Paul Revere — played major roles in the Revolution. Long associated with secret rituals and symbols, Freemasons are now more open about their mission of self-improvement and service to the community. Mason George Washington helped lay the cornerstone of the US Capitol in 1793, he did so in a Masonic ceremony.

Even today, when Masons are more open about their activities and goals, the nature of Freemasonry remains shrouded in mystery. It developed, in part, out of stonemasons' guilds. By the seventeenth century, English gentlemen who had never practiced the craft of stonemasonry began to join the fraternity for social reasons. In time, the fraternity borrowed various regulations, tools, and mythology from the stonemasons to create a code of conduct and a system of morality.

Freemasonry's overarching allegory is the Biblical story of the building of King Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem. Through symbols, ceremonies, and lectures, Freemasonry teaches its members the tenets of "Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth." Following earlier stonemasons' customs of boarding in lodges located near their place of work, Freemasons organized themselves into membership "lodges" where they meet periodically for fraternal and social activities.