



# The Messenger

Published for the Residents

Masonic Homes of California at Union City

## **Top Workplaces**—Written by Joseph Pritchard, Clinical Operations Officer

The Masonic Homes of California has again been recognized as one of the Top Workplaces in the Bay Area. This is the second year in a row that the Masonic Homes has earned this title. The award, from the Bay Area News Group, is only given to companies that have provided an amazing work environment for their staff, which is verified during the annual staff engagement survey. This year, over 70% of staff participated in the survey. This metric alone puts the Masonic Homes among the most elite companies.

The Masonic Homes is incredibly proud of this achievement. The two areas that have been critical are resident satisfaction and staff engagement. Without these two foundational elements, the Masonic Homes would be unable to flourish. By helping the staff of the Masonic Homes stay engaged in rewarding work and surrounded by a top-notch work environment, they are able to provide the best care and support to the residents.

More importantly, the Masonic Homes, like any Masonic organization, believes in equity and fair treatment of all. By supporting a Top Workplace, the hope is that the Masonic Homes adds to the prestigious reputation held by the Fraternity. The Freemasons have always been known as a compassionate and caring organization. That legacy continues and is enhanced by this award.

**TOP  
WORK  
PLACES**

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**2020**

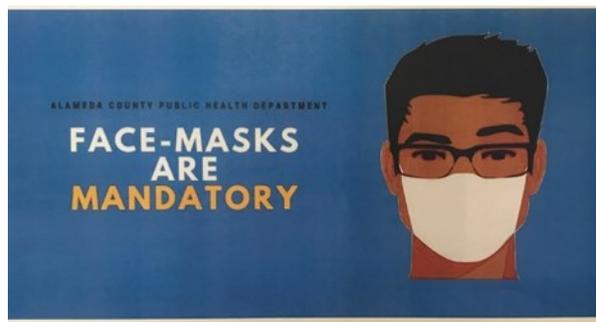
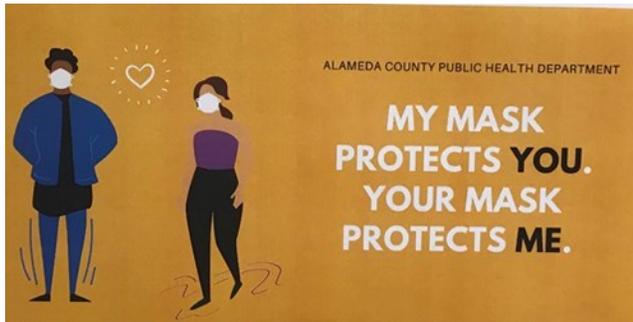
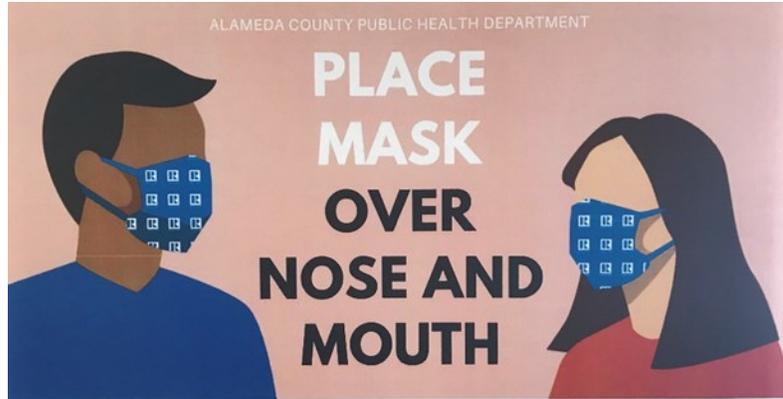
*hello*  
**September**  
*please be good.*  
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# Mask Wearing is Improving, But—

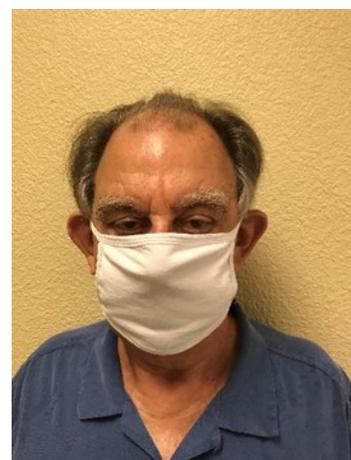
Written by Resident, Bruce Rick

Residents, correct mask wear is improving, but we can still make improvement! The Masonic Home of Union City management has been kindly reminding all of us to wear masks and yet not everybody is honoring their request.

You must have seen the many signs on all floors



Now, most residents are wearing masks regularly inside and outside their respective apartments. The staff has been super careful in making sure anyone they are escorting is wearing a mask and when taking medical transportation.



Random walks show the many styles of masks being worn by residents: commercial, resident made and plain from the front desk

## Mask Wearing...

*Continued from page 2*

Hey, it's the rules coming down from the Federal, State and Local governments. Help us all, by following the rules.

This, again, is simple: if you refuse to wear a mask properly, including covering your nose, management may have to restrict more of the services we now enjoy, assuring outsiders that the Masonic Home is doing all it can in these tough times. Already, we must get appointments for the common rooms (lockable ones under management supervision) and the gym. Let's improve!

For you residents who are wearing masks and see a resident without a mask, simply remind him or her, "I noticed you're not wearing a mask." Just that. I've gone out the apartment door and even got off my floor before noticing I forgot to put on my mask. We all do this. I bet every staff member has, at least once, left home and either turned around or got one at the sign in desk. Oops is heard around here a lot.

You've heard the requests and seen the signs, let's do so well with mask wearing that CEO Gary Charland will forget to mention the subject!

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## Take Time—Submitted by Jeanne Benedict

*From the files of Irwin M. Fershleiser, PM, Late Masonic Grand Chaplain*



Take time to think  
It is the source of power.  
Take time to read  
It is the foundation of wisdom.  
Take time to play  
It is the secret of staying young  
Take time to be quiet!  
It is the chance to seek God.  
Take time to be aware  
It is the chance to help others.  
Take time to love and be loved  
It is God's greatest gift.  
Take time to laugh  
It is the music of the soul.  
Take time to be friendly  
It is the road to happiness.  
Take time to dream  
It is what the future is made of  
Take time to pray  
It is the greatest power on earth



And take time for charity... it is the key to heaven

*Jeanne's note on: "Time to Play" - Well, we have Bingo for those who enjoy it; then there is Solitaire and maybe playing along with the old Jeopardy shows. On Time to help Others" - Let's make some phone calls to those we miss seeing in the dining room. "On Time to Dream" - this one is easy. Dream of the outings we might go on again, or maybe remembering the old ones.*



# The Chaplain's Corner

By Chaplain Joel Ingram

## Hello from the "Other" Side

A year or so ago, a famous singer, Adele, released a song entitled, "Hello from the "Other Side". The title of that song got me thinking about that old saying, "There's always two sides to a story". These things (the song and the saying) got me thinking about how it so often seems we are living in a world cut in two or more pieces.

There's the obvious, Republicans and Democrats and all the rest; those who push for wearing face masks and those who think it's not necessary, a purely personal decision or both. There are those who feel it's time to stress that "Black Lives Matter" and those who feel we should always only say that "All Lives Matter". Some people love audiobooks (me) and some people are only interested in the written word if it's written and has a cover. And then, there's the most important divide of all; should the last bit of paper hang over the roll (of course) or hang down behind the roll (why on earth!)? ☺



While the purpose of this little article is not to choose sides (except on the TP non-question), I thought I'd say a few words about the fact that there usually is another side. That no matter how obvious a given answer might be to me, there's a very good chance someone around me sees things differently. Of course, the chances are exactly zero that we'll all sit down and finally settle all our differences, so what are we to do?

It seems to me that if we'll never get all on side A or B we should ask ourselves, "What can we do to get along when our opinions remain divided?" – and "Have we (have I) done everything possible to consider the "other side"? To put that last question another way, "Have I ever considered how much of my position is based on something other than facts?" I know, we'd all like to think our position is based always and only on the facts, but consider this...

When a friend does us wrong it's easier to forgive them than when a stranger does so – and harder still when it's someone we already have a hard time with. And yet, in all three cases, the same offense may have been committed. Our response is different (forgiving/understanding, mildly unhappy or "cat on a hot tin roof" mad) not because the "wrong" was different but because our starting place – our "opening feeling" toward the other person was different.

It's rather interesting that sometimes I've seen things that would have been better had I swapped things out. Sometimes when that friend does me wrong, I

## The Chaplain's... *Continued from page 4*

really need to speak up more. In such a case, my friendship may have become my excuse for not being forthright and accurately expressing my feelings. Not good. And when I'm quickly angry or critical of someone who already gets on my nerves, how much better things might go if I could find a way to give them the patience, "room" or consideration I'd give a good friend who did me wrong. Sometimes we mostly see what we want to see; a minor mistake by a friend; a colossal mistake by a foe.

Social Scientists often say it's important to remember that even if you can't see any good or logic in why someone does X, Y or Z, we'll interact better if we assume the other person likely feels there is a perfectly good reason for why they do what they do.

I might never agree with them about the point in question but developing an interest in why they do what they do, or why they think what they think is a good starting place toward finding peace in the spaces between us. From one side.... or, the other, and hoping for peace in the midst of our differences...—*Chaplain Joel*

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## September Facts—Written by RCFE Recreation Team

*There are three traditional flowers associated with the month of September: the aster, symbolizing love; the forget-me-not, representing memories and love; and the morning glory, symbolizing unrequited love.*

Hello all and Happy September! As Summer comes to a close and Fall makes its way towards us, we hope, like the colors of the leaves, we can begin to change as well; change our outlook on the happenings around us and see things with a more positive perspective. The Recreation Team continues to work hard at



bringing you things to keep you happy, hopeful, and entertained. We are steadily looking for new and exciting things to bring to the Home and to your doors.

Like always, we ask that if you have any suggestions or recommendations of what you would like to see or do, please do not hesitate to reach Eddie Silva at ext. 2119 or Susana Vuong at ext. 6468.

Thank you again for your continued patience and support as we navigate through these times.

Since the last update there have been 15 Blue Box Cards submitted as of July 24, 2020. There were two compliments in this batch. One was for Recreation and Dining Services for the July 4th Lunch Out. Many thanks to the Recreation staff for the set up and planning, and to Dining Services for all the work to make it happen. The other was for the Father's Day Rose. A resident expressed his gratitude for the rose and for the thought. He mentioned his thoughts for his daughter and 2 grandkids. Both cards were sent to the Directors of these departments so that they can thank their staff.

There were 2 resident concerns and both cards also had a related suggestion.

- ◆ One resident noted that the Dining Room was looking worn and shabby. They mentioned, the carpeting, tile, lighting and chairs. They suggested that while the residents are not using the Dining Room, it would be a good time to give the room a facelift or remodel. Further suggesting that it might make attracting a replacement for when John retires an easier task. This concern and suggestion were sent to Administration and Facilities for review. A Dining Room refresh will be considered/discussed during the budgeting process.
- ◆ One resident has a concern about Alexa. She made a request for a maintenance item, but the response for the request came as a call from a nurse instead. She suggested to "Fix it or remove it." This concern with a suggestion was sent to James MacRae so that he could investigate and address the issue directly.

There were 4 cards with suggestions.

- ◆ One resident stated, "Pad B is no longer just a pad. Gary needs a new name for his updates. I suggest "Skilled Nursing at Acacia Creek Progress and Construction" (SNACK PACKs for short). – Sent to Gary Charland.
- ◆ One resident suggested that the give-away table be returned since residents are still putting items out on the floor. Sent to Administration for review. Due to infection control concerns other avenues for exchanging items among residents will be discussed.
- ◆ One resident suggested that we have liver on the menu again. Also, less asparagus, and more variety in the lettuce in salads. This was sent to John Marshall for review.
- ◆ Someone anonymously suggested a senior dog mascot for relief of all the anxiety and panic that is happening due to COVID-19. This was sent to Administration. Unfortunately, it does not conform to our Service & Support animal policy.

Additional cards received.

- ◆ There were some cards that were regarding staff issues related to items such as COVID-19 pay, appreciation gifts, pay equity, management communication, and the stress of working during the pandemic.

Thank you very much for continuing to use this communication tool, especially for any safety related issues. Please keep the cards coming!

# Emotional & Mental Wellbeing in time of Covid-19

Written by Joseph Pritchard, Clinical Operations Officer



COVID-19 is quickly becoming a defining moment of this generation. The pandemic has reached almost every corner of the world and is currently ravaging the United States. California, in particular, is experiencing record numbers of cases and deaths. The mental and physical toll this disease has placed upon the residents and staff of the Masonic Homes is almost incalculable.

The first step to repairing some of the damage caused by the disease is to be aware of the fact that COVID-19 can hurt you even if you never contract the disease. In some cases, the source of the pain is obvious. Losing a loved one, friend, or even an acquaintance can be traumatic. However, sometimes the effect is subtle.

During this time of COVID-19, you have been asked to isolate yourself, wear a mask, take tests, and change your lifestyle to a massive degree. Some people have been cut off completely from their social group, friends, and family. Others have had to watch significant life events (the birth of a grandchild or a school graduation) from a small tablet. These sacrifices can wreak havoc on our psyche.

Reports have shown that there is a significant uptick in depression, anxiety, and other behavioral issues during these last few months. People all over the world are experiencing negative behaviors that are unexpected and unwelcomed. This is especially true in vulnerable populations (like senior citizens).

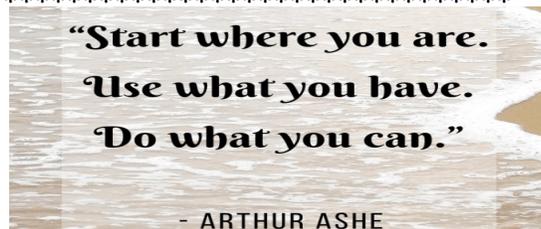
It is vital that we recognize this problem and face it head on. Please reach out to staff or your healthcare team if you are experiencing some of these emotional issues. Stress and depression are among the most dangerous side-effects of this unprecedented time. People are getting sick due to stress or anxiety, and while this isn't directly related to a COVID-19 infection, these illnesses are indirectly related to the environment COVID-19 is forcing us to live in.

So, I implore you, dear reader, reach out to the staff, your friends, family, or loved ones. Perhaps you are experiencing issues that they can help with. Perhaps your call will be a lifeline to them as they go through this frustrating time. We must all pull together and unite against this disease, and that needs to include a constant and in-depth look at our own mental and emotional health.

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Quotable



## Fun at Home Task Force—Written by Kim Hegg, Event Coordinator



The Fun at Home Task Force continues to meet on a weekly basis to brainstorm ideas for activities for the residents that continue to keep the health and safety of the residents as our top priority.

One of the activities the Task Force was passionate about starting, was helping residents celebrate their wedding anniversary. With the suspension of the monthly Candlelight Dinner, the team felt it was important to bring back an updated version of that celebration. In June, we began celebrating anniversaries by offering a “Private Dining Experience” to the celebrating couple.

Residents are personally called by Mary Henneuse, who finds out their ideal menu for this very special occasion, followed by a personal invitation to a private dinner in the Music Room, where a member of the staff sees to their every need, from the first course to dessert.

So far, the Fun at Home Task Force has been honored to serve Marla & Richard Cummings, Barry & Barbara Brown, Sharyl & Jim Leggate, Ilse & Hans Straub, Charmaine & Don Peckinpaugh, Jim & Norita Church, and Bruce & Evelyn Rick.



One of the most touching anniversaries we were able to celebrate, was the 51st wedding anniversary of Jack and Jackie McClellan. How wonderful it was to be able to have these two share their special day together in the Wollenberg visitation area. While they may have been separated by a plexiglass window, that didn't stop the couple from enjoying their time together,

## Fun at Home...

*Continued from page 8*

reminiscing about their life together and how incredibly lucky they are to be living at the Masonic Home. Even as I sit here writing this article, I find it hard to keep from tearing up. How lucky for me and Victoria Ventigan to have been a part of their special day.



Wollenberg  
Visitation  
Area



Many thanks to the facilities staff for setting up the Music Room, the dietary team for the 5-star rated dinners, and to Mary Henneuse for coordinating the menus and serving the dinners.

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## Safety Corner—Wildfire Season—Written by Mike McComas

Since Autumn is right around the corner, we are heading into the Northern California Wildfire Season. Although this risk for us is fairly low, we still need to take the necessary precautions to ensure our resident and staff safety. A few steps we take to reduce fire risk are; we have excess vegetation removed from our local hill sides by goat livestock, and we perform monthly fire drills for our staff. My favorite part of fire preparedness are the goats. Not only is it the most environmentally friendly way to remove the vegetation, but it is also the cutest way to remove the vegetation. They were here chomping away on all of the grasses, shrubs and thistles. I hope that you were able to catch a view of them!



# Field Trip to the Garden of Eatin’

Written by Resident, Evelyn Rick

It was Friday in late July, and a fine morning for us happy wanderers to visit the kitchen’s vegetable garden, where some of our food is ripening. Our first view of the garden was from the usual spot, the 3rd floor bridge between Head and Sedam. From there, the garden below looks overflowing with green. When we got up close, it was positively overflowing with good things to eat. All this food production was started 15 years ago by John Marshall and one tomato plant. Before that, the area held some rhododendron bushes and a lawn with a neglected horseshoe pit. Now, much of what the kitchen serves us comes from here, and everything that is not eaten goes to our on-site composting operation.



John and his trusty helper, Byron Corley, were just harvesting deep purple beans from the vines along the fence. These must be magic beans, because I was promised they would turn into green beans for our lunch on Saturday. We have been eating the zucchini and yellow squashes for a while now, but the beets I pulled up today will be pickled before going to the salad bar. The bed of basil looks lush but has already supplied enough basil for John to make 10 gallons of pesto sauce. There are 20 different varieties of heirloom tomatoes that will hit our plates in about a month. Some of the 120 tomato plants are taller than me. Up above in the orchard, the satsumas, oranges, grapefruit, apples and pears are all coming along nicely. (The lime tree will be our little secret.) It seems like every variety of vegetable and herb good for eating is here, from pumpkins to arugula, from sage to bay leaves, from eggplant to several kinds of chili pepper.

## Field Trip...

*Continued from page 10*

But, just as in the Garden of Eden, there is one thing you should NEVER eat: the Trinidad Scorpion pepper. This nasty little chili not only has a tail like a scorpion, it is officially one of the hottest peppers in the world. So, enjoy the bounty of the garden, but be careful what you taste test.

The harvesting chores complete, we said a fond farewell to the garden until our next visit. As we waved goodbye, John's parting words were "I always could use more helpers."



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## Autumn Knowledge—Written by RCFE Recreation Team

This year has gone by so fast due to COVID-19; it feels like summer just flew by. As we approach the Fall season, make sure to spend some time outdoors and observe the changes in nature. Test your Autumn Knowledge with the trivia below.

1. What do you call trees that shed their leaves annually?
2. Which famous poet wrote 'Ode to Autumn'?
  - a. Robert Frost
  - b. Lord Byron
  - c. John Keats
3. Americans and Canadians both celebrate this holiday in the fall, but not on the same day.
4. What is a Harvest Moon?
5. In what month does Autumn start in the Southern Hemisphere?
6. In poetry, what emotion is Autumn often associated with?
7. What does the term 'Equinox' mean?
8. Which sports season starts in early Autumn in North America?
9. Many birds migrate in Autumn; in which direction do they travel?
10. Why do leaves turn to a different color in Autumn?



*Answers on page 14*

# Spotlight on the Masonic Homes Way-By MHW Team

With so many people going the extra mile to help us work our way through Covid-19, it's not hard to find a person or department to feature as doing a great job. That's a good thing. On the other hand, because everyone is doing such a good job, to leave any off the "praise roll" feels unjust.

This month, we're going to highlight on many, as opposed to a few, by simply giving thanks to those whose actions exemplify the four pillars beautifully. For efficiency's sake (a pillar itself) we'll bullet list our thanks.



◆ **THANK YOU**—All department staff that have worked extra shift or flexible shift so that resident needs for service and safety could be met.

◆ **THANK YOU**—Lorber and Traditions Team members for exercising extra diligence and care in helping us overcome the threat of shared infections in July.

◆ **THANK YOU**—Dining Room Staff for working so hard to make shared mealtimes possible again – AND – for being flexible and understanding when all your hard work had to be put on hold.

◆ **THANK YOU**—Administrative Staff for staying abreast of Covid-19 trends and working extra hard to keep our Home safe.

◆ **THANK YOU**—Facilities and Housekeeping Staff for all the extra time you've spent disinfecting and keeping our Home clean and for doing repairs quickly in the face of staffing challenges.

◆ **THANK YOU**—Masonic Homes Staff AND

RESIDENTS for taking seriously the need for continued diligence regarding mask wearing, hand washing and social distancing. Success is possible when everyone joins in.



## Reminiscing with Betty Newman

Written by Ola Afolabi, UC Communications Manager

Did you know one of our residents was a former Activity Director? Yes, you read right; she resides in W415. In September of 1981, at age 49, Betty needed a change of scenery from her then employer, Parkmont Convalescent Hospital in Fremont. As luck would have it, a friend of hers who was a nurse also at Parkmont, informed her of the Activity Director position opened in Masonic Home

Union City.

Betty decided to go for the job. She called the Home for more details. To Burt Brown's surprise (the Administrator at that time) asked her how she came to know about the position that wasn't even "put out yet", said Betty. Two weeks after the call, she was invited for an interview and got the job. Betty was under the wings of a friendly Ruth, Burt's wife, who gave her a tour of the Home.

Betty with a twinkle in her eyes and the enthusiasm you can hear in her voice, while recalling those fun-filled years of working with her, stated that Ruth was a very talented woman who started a group amongst the residents called "The Hill Toppers". She did all the talent hunting while Betty was known for organizing the activities, such as Lodge meetings, tours, accompanying residents to movies, shows and games.

When asked to compare the activity department now to the time of her being an Activity Director, she admitted they were quite the opposite considering the difference in generation. She said the generation back then accepted the way things were without qualms. The residents gave up 100% of their assets to live here at the Home and given \$25.00 per month allowance. When she came on board, she increased their allowance to \$50.00, which caused her boss to raise an eyebrow. Luckily, Betty was still able to keep her job after she told the management to take it off the budget if they don't want her to increase the residents' allowance. Smoking and gambling were not allowed in the community. A resident had to be 70 years old (60yrs is now the entry age) to live at the Home, and residents were entertained for free. Betty's son was in one of the concert groups that entertained for free. Betty would provide the entertainers with refreshments as compensation.

Betty worked at the Home for 4 years but had to quit after suffering a mild stroke in June of 1985. She came to visit after 6 months of separation and kept in touch with the residents.

Being the Activity Director did not come without it's ups & downs. With a chuckle, she remembered an incident; her first time of attending an Opera with the residents. During intermission, a resident decided she'd had enough and walked out with the intent of going back home. Unfortunately for her, but fortunately for Betty, she had no money to return home and that was how she was found, waiting on the street corner of Van Ness. The second incident was just a month into her position, when she bought tickets to attend the Ice Follies at the Oakland Coliseum in a \$300.00 rented bus for 50 people. On the day of the show, a resident came by to let her know that the date on the ticket was a day before. She said to herself, "I will definitely be fired", but again as luck would have it, Ruth graciously intervened. She contacted her husband who pulled the strings, and not only did they get the tickets, they were able to all sit together in the arena without being scattered all over the place. The next day, Mr. Brown with his arms around Betty, asked her, "Now what lesson have you learned from this incident?" She responded shyly, "To always read the date on the

ticket”.

She lived most of her life in the bay area. She has been married to her sweetheart Gene, for 62 years and have four children together. When Betty moved into the MH Union City with her husband Gene, in 2010, she said 3 things blew her mind: the entry level age, a female Administrator (the late Dixie Reeve) and alcohol served with dinner. Time indeed has changed!

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**10 interesting Facts about Food to keep you Entertained**

Written by Dietary Department

1. Cranberries—If you can get your hands on a very ripe cranberry, try bouncing it like a bouncy ball. Word on the street is they're supposed to bounce sky high.
2. Peanut Butter—Arachibutyrophobia is the fear of getting peanut butter stuck to the top of your mouth. (Yes, this is a real fear.)
3. Ice Cream—In the state of Kentucky, it is illegal to hold an ice cream cone in your back pocket.
4. Fruit Loops—I apologize in advance to eight-year-old you, but no matter what color Fruit Loops you eat, they all taste the same.
5. Hamburgers—McDonald's sells 75 hamburgers every second of every day.
6. Case of the hiccups?—Dry swallowing one teaspoon of sugar can commonly cure hic-ups.
7. Junk Food—Ounce by ounce, nutritious food costs up to 10 times more than junk food.
8. That’s Bananas!—In 2001, there were more than 300 banana-related accidents in Britain, most involving people slipping on skins.
9. State Veggie & Fruit—California Governor Newsom, proclaimed artichokes the California state vegetable and avocados the state fruit back in 2013.
10. Hot Dogs—The winner of the 2013 Nathan’s Hot Dog Eating contest consumed 69 hot dogs in 10 minutes.



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**Answers to Autumn Knowledge:**

1. Deciduous
2. John Keats
3. Thanksgiving
4. The full moon closest to the Autumn Equinox
- 5 March
6. Sadness
7. Day and night are of equal length
8. Football
9. South
10. As the weather changes, they lose chlorophyll (green) and expose other colors



<b>Resident Birthdays</b>	
John Dahle Jim Leggate	9/4
Alfreda Anderson	9/5
Ron Hein	9/7
Olga Foraker Arthur Westerback Lois Reed	9/13
Barbara Raney	9/18
Barbara Dippel	9/20
John Gates Maxine Freeman	9/21
Billie Fulton	9/25



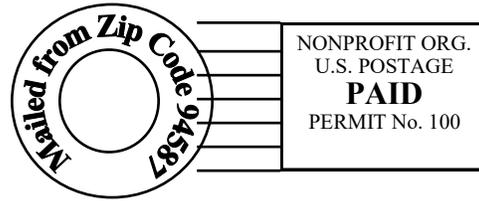
<b>Resident Anniversaries</b>		
<b>Residents</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Years</b>
Wyn & June Selwyn	9/4	38
Jerry & Liz Fiske	9/7	62
John & Pat Gates	9/22	63



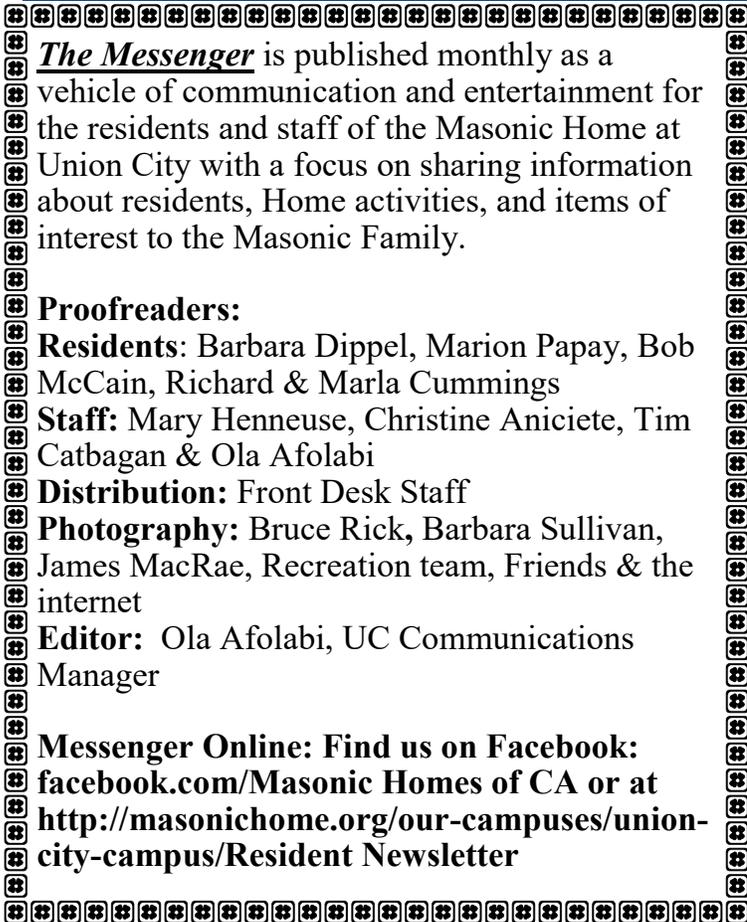
# The Messenger

Masonic Homes of California

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**Address Service Requested**



**The Messenger** is published monthly as a vehicle of communication and entertainment for the residents and staff of the Masonic Home at Union City with a focus on sharing information about residents, Home activities, and items of interest to the Masonic Family.

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## Table of Contents — September 2020

Top Workplaces.....	1
Mask Wearing.....	2
Mask Wearing cont/Take Time.....	3
The Chaplain’s Corner.....	4
The Chaplain’s cont/September Facts.....	5
Blue Box.....	6
Emotional & Mental Wellbeing.....	7
Fun @ Home.....	8
Fun @ Home cont/Safety Corner.....	9
Field Trip to the Garden of Eatin’.....	10
Field Trip cont/Autumn Knowledge..	11
Spotlight on the MHW.....	12
Reminiscing with Betty Newman.....	13
Reminiscing cont/10 interesting/Answers... ..	14
Birthdays, Anniversaries, In Memoriam.....	15
You’re Lookin’ At It.....	16

*Mission: “Together we create meaningful life experiences that make a profound difference.”*

*The Pillars: Safety, Personal Connection, Experience & Efficiency*