



The Messenger

Published for the Residents

Masonic Homes of California at Union City

Happy Wanderers Go to Town—Written by Bruce & Evelyn Rick



Do you remember the old movie *Ma and Pa Kettle Go to Town*? That's how we happy wanderers felt when we left our isolated country life to venture into the big city. For so many months, we have been close to the cows and turkeys, but far away from the metropolis spread at our feet. Finally, we were ready to put on our city clothes and nervously venture outside the gate. Finally, we

had an easy, although unfamiliar, way to do it.

When we gave up our gasoline-powered car soon after we came to the Masonic Homes, we were ready to jump into the Homes' Resident Car Sharing Program. This is the use of an all-electric Leaf car shared by residents but owned and maintained by the Masonic Homes. This is an option available to every carless resident, with the stipulation that you pass an on-road driver test. Once you qualify, the Masonic Homes pays for the car, the insurance, the tires, the maintenance, and the electricity. (I was going to say gas, but there isn't any gas involved.) But the pandemic hit, and no drive tester could come to the Masonic Homes. So here we sat, carless but with nowhere to go anyway.

Fast forward to now. We passed our driver's test, well let's go! Where? How about a little drive and a trip to the grocery store? Let's even try one of those curbside pickups instead of paying Instacart one more time to deliver our goodies to Acacia Creek by mistake. You drive over and I'll drive back.

Then the anxieties started. Do we have enough electricity? Where can we fill up? Can we use the radio? How about the heated seats and heated steering wheel? Do you remember how to get to the store? Where is the Google Maps option to avoid freeways? How do you start this thing? How come the parking brake is in a different place from our old car?

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Happy Wanderers...



By the time we had gone around a few blocks, all of those worries disappeared. We cheered when we passed a gas station, thinking about those times we only had a dollar for gas and spilled the last drops on the side of the car. We passed another gas station and cheered again when we remembered we don't have a car payment. We passed the park where we used to walk around Lake Elizabeth with the walking group, thinking how easy it would be to just pull in and take that lovely walk. Next trip for sure, but we were on a mission now.

Hurray, we made it to a couple of stores and all the way back. We even had electricity left over! The handy cart at the South Mall made it easy to haul up our supplies. (I'd like to say it was all organic produce from Whole Foods, but that's not quite the case.) Next trip, we're off to Target and maybe we'll take that walk. Think of all the places we can go eat! And on our own schedule! No more signing up a month in advance and waiting for the bus trip.

We are now not only happy wanderers, but happy motorized wanderers. If you are a frustrated driver too, you are welcome to join our group. There is plenty of room for more people to share this "wanderful" little car. Just talk with Ola Afolabi at the front desk, and she can get you started on the process. Unless there is another pandemic this month, you might be pulling into the parking space of your choice very soon.

New Residents



Lolita Galindo
Sponsoring Lodge: Suisun #55
City: Fairfield
Moved in: May 18, 2021

Rodrigo Galindo
Mason of: Suisun #55
City: Fairfield
Moved in: June 15, 2021

“One Nation under God Indivisible, with Liberty and Justice for All”—*From the files of Irwin M. Fershleiser, PM, Late Masonic Grand Chaplain*



This month, we celebrate the birthday of this nation on July 4th. An idea conceived by men (many of whom were Masons) who believed in, fought for, and died for the right to stand as men and women, free to worship, free to live one’s life in a nation “of the people, by the people and for the people”.

We pledge our allegiance to this idea many times in school, in our Lodges, at sporting events, and public gatherings, etc. We recite the words standing as free men and women with our hands over our hearts. We say the words and we hear them said. But unless we live them, believe in what they

stand for and understand that it is not for us alone, but all mankind—no matter what color or national heritage—then they are just words.

When you next stand to pledge your allegiance to this idea, born two hundred and forty-five years ago, stand with pride, recite the words not only with your voice, but with all your heart. But most of all believe and understand what is behind those words. For if we (all of us) keep the pledge to our God, our flag, each other, and yes, even to ourselves, **“THIS NATION UNDER GOD INDIVISIBLE WITH FREEDOM AND JUSTICE FOR ALL”** will be a promise fulfilled.—*Shared by Jeanne Benedict*

The Pledge of Allegiance



“I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.”



Quotable

“They fought together as brothers-in-arms. They died together and now they sleep side by side. To them, we have a solemn obligation.”—Admiral Chester Nimitz

Our Masonic Homes—Written by Bro. Joe Ross, Island City Lodge #215

The Masonic Homes glitter and shine like a piece of yellow gold,
The residences so good, so warm, so good keeping out of the cold.

With brotherhood and sisterhood loving each other is just great,
Singles, and married couples all together they really, really rate.
These homes that are loved by Masons and Star together they share.
Brotherly and sisterly love is here, this love we really, really care.



This is your home you love with friendships some far some near,
We're so proud with nature and such looking at all the wild deer.
We have wild turkeys, on land and some of them up in the trees.
Thank God for the beauty of nature, and blessings on our knees.

Years ago, we planted, picked fruit, and canned you could see,
We enjoy Jam and Jelly Day celebrating, keeping busy as a bee.

Gathering Masons and Eastern Star here in August each year
Home members, happy to escort the Grand Officers are very dear.
Volunteers and home cooks furnishing a potluck lunch for all,
Everybody gathered in Masonic Love is best we recall.

Our volunteers gathered every year to decorate many of our trees,
Christmas and cheers bringing happiness like a soft warm breeze.

The thoughts of our members some near, some far we love so,
Love for our fraternity is gratifying, we always look forward also.
Our home in the North and in the South always looking out for all,
Keeping lives together and wishing happiness to all is in our call.

Holidays we cherish with many days we just all look forward to,
Together, happy with our brothers and sisters with things to do.
Come and visit us at any time during the year, gathering is fine,
We can sit in the lounge or hall, visit, talk to each other and dine.

Enjoyment of friendships make time of life continue with love,
The Bible says that which flutters and flies like a beautiful dove.

May your stay here be the best with absolute love we all care,
We love you all, to say how much, is like the breeze of fresh air.
May you all be happy right here in your beautiful Masonic stay,
To search with love is just a few miles from the Pacific and Bay.



Mystery of the Cornerstone Date vs The Building

Cornerstone Date—Written by Resident, Bruce Rick

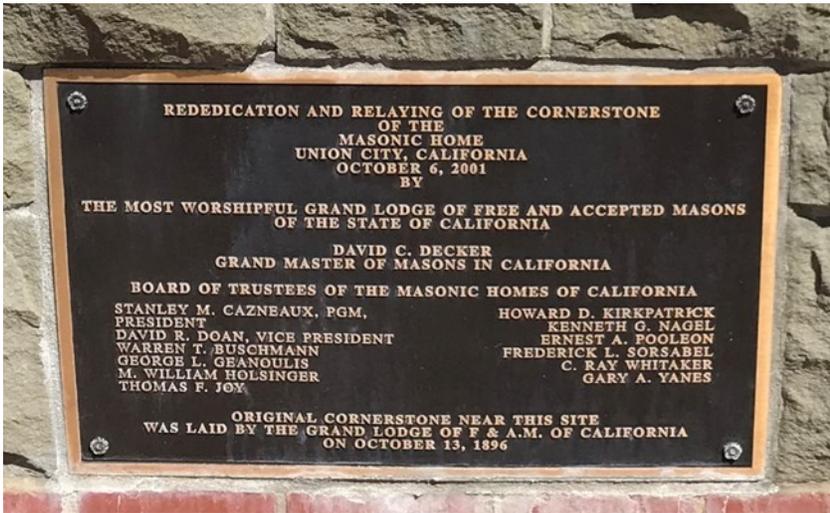


Outside the South Mall entrance to the Masonic Homes at Union City, California is a stone and brick monument, which contains a plaque commemorating the rededication and relaying of the Masonic Home's Cornerstone from its original site but with an incorrect date.

The original site of the cornerstone was fifteen yards from this monument at the Southwest corner of the Head building. This positioning will become important as you read on. Here is a little history on cornerstones and especially cornerstones laid by Masonic Grand Lodges.

In early times, a cornerstone was the first stone set in the construction of a masonry foundation. All other stones would-be set-in reference to this stone. As building construction techniques advanced, a cornerstone was not needed and its use became symbolic. One can now see

cornerstones on many buildings with inscriptions in stone indicating construction dates and names of individuals associated with the construction.



The Masonic cornerstone-laying ceremonies began in the early 1800s as the physical extension of the experience of a new Entered Apprentice Mason, when, while he is given instructions by the Master of the Lodge for his future conduct and in his Masonic life, he stands in the Northeast corner of the lodge room. At that moment,

he is a spotless cornerstone of the Masonic lodge. Since then it is customary to place the cornerstone in the Northeast corner of a building.

The cornerstone ceremony typically involves the placing of offerings of grain, wine and oil on or under the stone. These are symbolic for the corn of nourishment, the wine of refreshment, and the oil of joy. Some cornerstones include time capsules from the time a particular building is constructed.

However, many buildings do not have their cornerstone located on the Northeast corner, as noted by our own original placement and relocation in 2001. Our Masonic Homes at Union City cornerstone is now located in the Northeast corner of the Head building.

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In the late 1900s, a major remodeling effort was made of the North, South and Head buildings and so the 1996 one-hundred-year cornerstone rededication was postponed until the project completed in 2001, thus the cornerstone event in 2001.

During the construction project, the original time capsule was removed and stored. The original cornerstone of the Head (Administration) building was relocated during the Grand Lodge visitation in October of 2001. The original time capsule's contents from 1896 and a new time capsule from 2001 were both encased in the freestanding brick and stone monument near the South Mall entrance. This monument was constructed in honor of the rededication of the Head, North and South Buildings and dedicated to all past and future Freemasons of California, on October 6, 2001. Since the Original 1896-time capsule was a welded copper box (9" x 10" x 14"), the 1896 contents and the 2001 contents were placed into two separate, state of the art, time capsules.

To be continued next month

**Spotlight on the
Masonic Homes Way-By MHW Team**

It seems much of our attention these days is given to “opening up” activities. Residents are starting to get back outdoors, and MH staff are starting to resume tasks and events on hold for more than a year. There’s a lot of change in the air and one of these areas of change brings us to our Masonic Homes Way Spotlight for the month of July.

Covid or no Covid, a community has got to eat! Thankfully, our wonderful cooks, servers and tray line staff have done an amazing job in adapting the various needs this pandemic has created. From social distancing and service modification at its beginning, to room-to-room meal deliveries for many, many months, to a return to socially distanced community dining – they’ve done it all. They’ve literally served us with a smile and ready attitude.

This month, we give a hearty “Thank You” to all our kitchen and dining room staff that provided for us through such difficult times. It’s not saying too much when we say we couldn’t have made it without you!





The Chaplain's Corner

By Chaplain Joel Ingram

“Cheer Up the Lonely Day”

A few months back, I used my space to talk about all the crazy and “special holidays” that have taken over our calendars. To be sure, July has just as many silly days as any other month. For example, this month holds such wonders as, International Kissing Day (July 6th), National Different Colored Eyes Day (July 12th) and Pi Approximation Day (July 22nd). I did however find one day worth a bit of investigation; Cheer Up the Lonely Day on July 11.

Turns out this is not just another day created by industry wanting your hard earned cash (I'm thinking of you, National Drive Thru Day - July 24th), but a day created for the sheer good of it by a kind-hearted soul. Francis Pesek of Detroit, Michigan came up with the idea for such a day because he felt more should be done to promote “kindness toward others who were lonely or forgotten as shut-ins or in nursing homes.”

Now, as soon as one sets up a special day to do or remember something, there's always a group of people who chime in that we should be doing or remembering that “thing” every day. Depending on the “thing” to be celebrated, that might be the case. But there is something to be said for giving special time or attention to a cause or concern. And care for the lonely, often overlooked, is as good a cause as any.

I guess everyone wants to believe and feel they are important just because of who they are – or – to put it another way, to feel they are important because they are. One of the great risks in a shareholder driven and profit focused society is that people can come to be seen as mere cogs on a wheel. People may be valued to the degree they are active and cheerful contributors to the stated objective of the institution or industry.

Such a focus ultimately turns around and bites us when we retire (if it doesn't bite us all along the way). For when we are no longer “active, name-tag-wearing contributors, we can come to feel less valuable, less important and generally speaking, less “worthy”. “Worthy” of what? Potentially everything: time, attention, and respect.

The end result can be a feeling of worthlessness and isolation. Isolation because “Who needs me out there?” We may rub elbows with many other people day after day but feel increasingly lonely because our presence is no

Continues on page 8

A graphic with a light yellow background. The text is arranged in several lines, using different colors (red, green, yellow) and fonts. The text reads: "EVERY DAY MAY NOT BE GOOD... BUT THERE IS SOMETHING GOOD IN EVERY DAY." There are small owl and heart icons at the end of some lines.

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The Chaplain's...

longer special or desired. Us being “us” – me being “me” is just not good enough. And yet it should be... shouldn't it?

Our parents treated us (at least I hope they did) like we were the center of the universe when we were nothing more than an “itty bitty.” At that stage of the game, our only “contributions” were dirty diapers and late-night cries. Mostly trouble we were, but somehow, we were “worthy” of all kinds of time, attention, and love. Just because we were.

So exactly when did we fall off the charts? When did productivity surpass the original creation? Hopefully it hasn't. “Cheer Up the Lonely Day” reminds us that it's not. Its goal is to let someone who might feel overlooked know they are valuable, loved, and special -- just because they are.

July 11th will be upon us soon. Do you know someone who might be feeling passed by and overlooked? If so, do something special for them. National Drive Through Day can wait until next year... Until next month, *Chaplain Joel*

Spotlight on Lorber EVS—By Mike McComas

Last month I wrote about our Laundry Department staff and how our residents might not know who they are as these team members generally work behind the scenes. This month I would like to give a shout out to our Skilled Nursing Facility Environmental Services staff.

This group is very special to me as when I started working here 9 years ago, I was a janitor in the Lorber building for my first 18 months. This was some of the hardest work I have ever done as caring for the residents requires so much attention from the staff. Guaranteeing that the residents have a clean and safe environment is the department's #1 goal and knowing that we are making a difference in the lives of our residents is such a fulfilling reward.

Let's take a moment and thank all of the dedicated staff in Skilled Nursing, whether it be the housekeepers, nurses, or dining service members, without them we would not be the loving and caring community that we are.



Left to Right: Silvia Covarrubias, Beatriz Obispo, Jeff Krahulec, Martha De Munoz, Antolina Duran, Eli Alcantar, Rhona Akramy, Aziz Akramy & Omar Cartagena (not pictured, Lee Dockett & Soledad Bustamante)

Innovations Update—Written by Jasmine Myers



Happy July, Masonic family. Early last month, we wrapped up our latest smart toilet study with startup company, Toi Labs. They were working with our residents to refine the experience around this preventative healthcare innovation.

Toi Lab’s seat, called the TrueLoo, uses a computer to detect UTI’s, blood, dehydration, constipation, infections, and even COVID-19. Gut health is vital to our overall health so catching problems early makes all the difference.

Thank you to all the residents that participated and helped contribute to this important study. We are excited to have been a part of improving the senior healthcare industry for the better.

Here are some pictures from the uninstalling process. You may have seen Jasmine and guests from Toi hauling around toilet seats and tools last month which was quite a sight.



Speaking of sights, one couple decided to surprise us when we got to their room by decorating their TrueLoo! The hat says “I’m their leader. Which way did they go?” Thank you, Ray and Charlotte Hoffman for the hilarious ‘potty humor’!

Where’d She put Them?—Submitted by Zelma Campbell

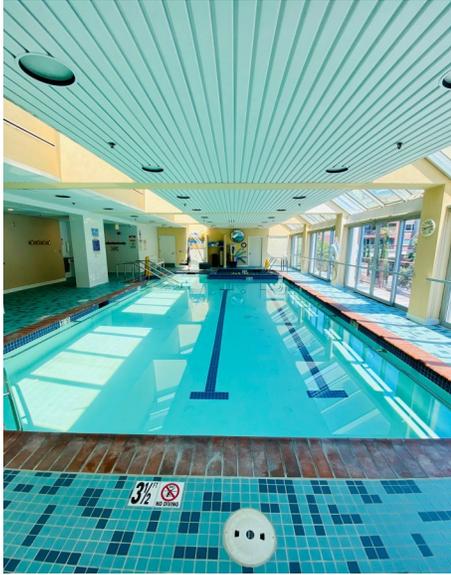


While his son did his geography homework, his dad sat at the computer scrolling through his emails.

“Hey, Dad,” the boy said, where are the Andes?”

“Go ask your mom, son” he replied distractedly. “She puts everything away in this house.”

Making a Splash—By Kim Hegg, Sr. Director Events, Recreation & Volunteer Services



After many long months, numerous questions from residents, questions to Alameda County Health, and meetings with the Executive Director, the pool is now open! And just in time for what looks to be a long, hot summer!

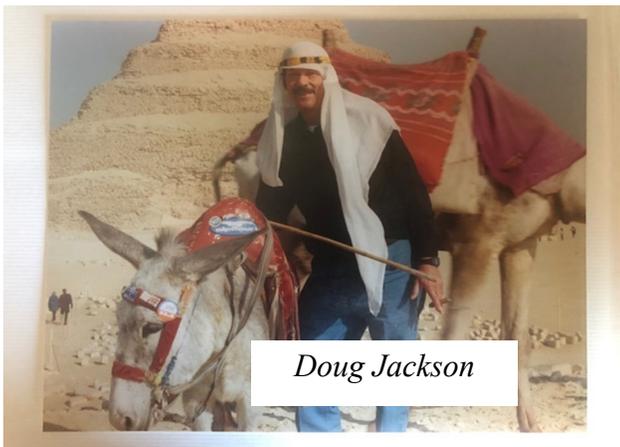
On June 16, JoAnne Wright, volunteer swim instructor, held her first of many Wednesday morning classes. Since there is a limit on the number of people that can be in the pool at one time, JoAnne’s Wednesday morning classes require residents sign-up to attend. The sign-up sheets are located on the bulletin board next to the resident mailboxes on 2nd Sedam. It is requested that residents not sign-up for several weeks in a row, allowing other residents the opportunity to sign-up. If there are openings, residents will be informed based on the waitlist.

The pool will also be used for prescribed Aqua Therapy classes. There will be no free swim allowed during the days and hours that Aqua Therapy is scheduled.

Free swim is also encouraged for those that don’t want the structure of a swim class. As was the practice prior to the pandemic, free swim requires residents to use the “buddy system” when using the pool – two to six people in the pool at any one time. Those interested in free swim, grab a buddy, check out the pool key at the front desk and lap your COVID pounds away!

Please stop by the 2nd Sedam Recreation Board and sign-up for a swim class with JoAnne or let the Recreation Team know if you are interested in Water Aerobics or Water Walking classes by expressing your interest on the Interest Sheet! Pool hours and availability will be posted on the pool door. Welcome back to the Pool!

Sailing the Mediterranean Sea—By the SNF Recreation Team



Lorber residents and staff were able to jump aboard “The Lorber Destiny Cruise” ship to celebrate travel and countries along the Mediterranean Sea. Last year Lorber’s Travel week was put on hold due to COVID-19.

This year, Doug Jackson, who enjoys traveling and enjoyed many cruises with his wife, helped us in deciding our cruise’s Ports of Call which included Turkey, Egypt, and Morocco.

Each country’s excursions throughout the day allowed for learning about the country’s geography, historical landmarks, culture, music, and dances. With the help of Dining Services, our travelers enjoyed treats that were representative of each country.

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Sailing...



Liz Hart

Lillian Jung



Kay Hankins

Nadine Wood



Willie Rae Gordon



Edwin Clarke



Mary Morris

From the Pyramids in Egypt to the markets in Istanbul, this cruise was enjoyed by all. Bon Voyage until next year when we sail the seas again.

A Farewell Letter from Rosita



Hello Everyone,

Today is my last day. Starting tomorrow, June 10, I'm officially retired. I want to say goodbye and want to let you all know that I'm so thankful for all the years that I have worked here at Masonic Home. I thank you all, both my coworkers and the residents for all the good memories. I will cherish those memories for the rest of my life. Thank you all for your best wishes and your wonderful gifts. Let's keep in touch! Thank you and God Bless You All!

Sincerely,
Rosita Orpilla

Editor's note: Rosita as she is fondly called sent her last email to the Masonic family and friends on June 9, 2021. She retired officially after a meritorious service of 29 years, 3 months and 16 days on June 10. We wish Rosita a Happy Retirement!

Since the last update there have been eight Blue Box Cards submitted as of June 16, 2021. There were three compliments among them. There was one compliment for Carlo Flores in IT department who has fixed problems and taught the resident that submitted the compliment a lot. He was also described as being very nice and professional. This compliment was sent to his supervisor so that he can hear that the writer described him as the best!

There was a compliment for Irma Montes de Oca. The writer reports that Irma goes out of her way to do special things whenever possible. This was sent to Irma's supervisor to recognize her great work!

There was a compliment for the Dining Room food server, Ahmad Hameed, aka "Sulliman". The resident wrote, "I sit with a woman who is easily confused and Sulliman has been consistently kind, patient, and helpful. Wonderful qualities in a young person! To be so kind to an older person the way he is, is a joy to behold. I would like him to be thanked and congratulated on our behalf!" DONE! This message was sent to Sulliman's supervisor so that he can be recognized for his kindness.

There were five concerns in the cards submitted.

1. One was reporting that the breakfast sausages are way overcooked and burnt every time. The author suggested that they have someone in the kitchen check them before serving. Sent to Chef Manny Lopez for review.
2. One anonymous person wrote, "When the staff has a party, residents are not invited. When residents have a party, staff is there en masse. What's wrong with this?" This was sent to Administration for review.
3. One card stated, "Questions are requested for Town Hall, but quite often several of us residents who have asked reasonable questions do not have our questions addressed, nor do we receive a phone call addressing the item personally. Why request questions if there seems to be no response to the inquiry?" I know that Soledad Martinez, Joseph Pritchard, and I discuss all of the questions submitted for Town Hall. We try to sort them and divide the responsibility of addressing them among us. Many times, the same questions seem to be asked in different ways so we may paraphrase, but we genuinely do try to address each one. I'm sorry that we have not been fully successful in doing so during our recordings. Hopefully, once Town Hall returns to a live format where questions will be asked in real time, we will have a clearer question and answer correlation.
4. One resident asks, "Why can't we have mashed potatoes and gravy more? Except for chicken fried steak we do not have it. Not even with turkey! With turkey it is dressing only. We would also like to have mashed yams. We only have roasted, baked, and boiled! Everything is so dry. We should be able to ask for certain items to not be put on our plates." This was sent to Chef Manny and Mario so that they can address the concerns.
5. Lastly a card was submitted to remind everyone about FIRE SAFETY: "**Do Not Block Extinguisher** signs need to be placed on every extinguisher on campus. People still pile up boxes, furniture, etc. in front of the extinguishers and this can be very dangerous! This goes for plants and the like, too..." This concern and suggestion was sent to the Safety Committee chair for review.



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

Transitioning Through Covid—Written by Joseph Pritchard, Chief Clinical Officer

Thanks to strong vaccination rates, low incidence of new cases, and a much more hopeful outlook, California has started on the road towards reopening. For most of the state, life has almost returned to normal. There are few restrictions on large gatherings and businesses can choose to require masks, but for many people, life is returning to normal.



However, for healthcare facilities, long-term care communities, and a few other businesses changes are slower in coming. For the Masonic Homes, we are slowly working with the various government regulators to specify what we can and cannot do. The focus is (and will always be) on the safe return to an active campus. Right now, we must trust the experts on the reopening process and work with them to ensure that services are resumed, and restrictions are lifted in a

timely fashion.

One of the big restrictions that has been lifted in most of the state is the mask or face covering mandate. In most places, face coverings are not required especially for people who are fully vaccinated. However, for the Masonic Homes campus, face coverings are still required in most situations. For staff, masks are required while on campus unless they are alone in an enclosed room. For residents, face coverings must be used while walking in hallways and any time they are with a possibly unvaccinated individual.

Fully vaccinated residents can remove their face coverings if they are in a room with other fully vaccinated residents or staff. If the vaccination status of all participants cannot be verified, then face coverings are still required. Thankfully, all residents of the Masonic Homes in Union City have been fully vaccinated and thus they can visit each other or meet in groups without masks.

We all hope that the restrictions that remain in place will eventually be lifted. Vaccinations have made a powerful impact on reducing the effects of COVID-19. Due to our sacrifice and disciplined response, we all deserve a safe return of the community activities and events we used to enjoy. We look forward to the day when we can return to normal.

We haven't reached that ideal world yet. We are close to getting there safely. We can only get there together. I look forward to getting there with you all!

Celebrations



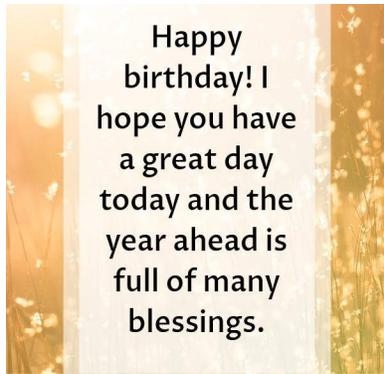
Barry & Barb Brown's 55th Wedding Anniversary



Richard & Marla Cummings' 21st Wedding Anniversary



Ed & Janet Auguadro's 14th Wedding Anniversary



Birthdays/Weddings Anniversaries/In Memoriam

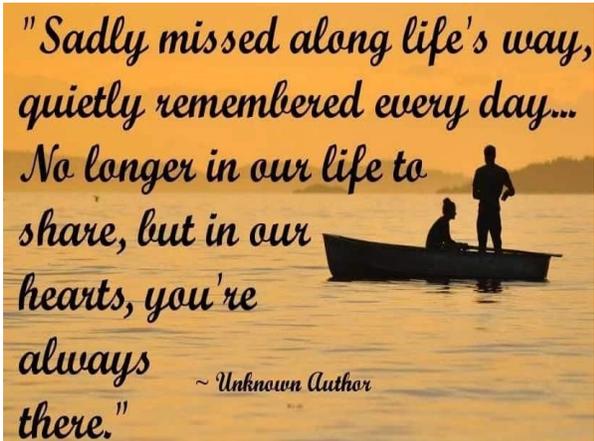
Resident Birthdays	
BOB MILLER	7/4
LOUENE CHRISTENSON	7/7
DON PECKINPAUGH	7/10
ELIZABETH FISKE	7/11
SHARYL LEGGATE SALLY SANDERS	7/13
CHERYL COSTA	7/14
KAY CLENDENNING	7/16
ELIZABETH SIMMS	7/18
CAROLE BENNETT	7/20
DONNA CALDWELL	7/26
BOB SCHWARTZ	7/31

Resident Anniversaries		
Residents	Ann. Date	Yrs
Don & Charmaine Peckinpaugh	7/14	70
Jim & Norita Church	7/29	77
Bruce & Evelyn Rick	7/31	18

In Memoriam



Bea McGraw
November 9, 1922—June 5, 2021
Sponsoring Lodge: Winnedumah #287

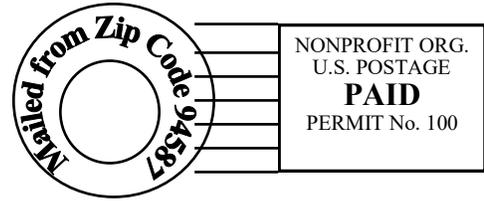




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The Messenger is published monthly as a vehicle of communication and entertainment for the residents and staff of the Masonic Homes at Union City with a focus on sharing information about residents, Home activities, and items of interest to the Masonic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

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

The Pillars: Safety, Personal Connection, Experience & Efficiency