



The Messenger

Published for the Residents
Masonic Homes of California at Union City

Lorber Summer Olympics—Written by the SNF Recreation Team



The world celebrated and watched athletes from around the world compete in the 2020 Summer Olympics held in Tokyo, Japan from July 23 to August 8, 2021. The Games showcased the top athletes competing for national pride as well as the cultural history of the host country with a spirit of unity and friendship.

Lorber residents were not left out. They held their own Olympic Week with



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Lorber...

events such as archery/darts, relay race, and a horserace game. At the end of the week long event, gold, silver and bronze medals were awarded to the winners.

Special thank you to Alan Schattenburg, Lorber's Master of Ceremonies during the Olympic Games Award ceremony.

Mystery of the Cornerstone Date vs The Building Cornerstone Date—Written by Resident, Bruce Rick (*Conclusion*)



With the significant construction on the Head building and the new South Building in the late 1920's, the cornerstone was taken out, stored and put back without any fanfare, but commemorated with an inscribed block "Re-erected 1930".

Then, in 2001 the cornerstone was moved to its new location in the Northeast corner of the Head Building so it would not be disturbed in any future building remodel.

Now we wait until 2096 for the next "Cornerstone Rededication"! Many thanks to David R. Doan, Past President of the Masonic Homes of California, for much helpful information for this article.

An Artisan at Work—Submitted by Chuck Jeronimo, PM



During the refurbishing of the North, South, and Administration buildings, many of us who lived here at the Masonic Homes were aware of a highly skilled Stone and Brick Mason Contractor, who within the span of 4 years, (1997-2001) replaced all the deteriorated masonry with new brick and stone to match. That "Operative Mason" was Wor. Chuck Jeronimo, PM, also a "Speculative Mason", a member of Mosaic Lodge No.

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An Artisan...

218 and a 32° member of Oakland Scottish Rite.

According to Wor. Chuck, removing damaged bricks was the easy part of the job. Finding matching replacement bricks was the tough challenge. The original bricks were made and laid between 1896 and 1923. Fortunately, Wor. Chuck located a brick manufacturer in Marin County who had brick that were the right size, hardness, texture, quality, and colors to match the original brickwork. This made it possible to avoid a “patched up” look.

In several locations, a gray quarry stone was used – specifically on the base of the Administration building and on the landscaping and small retaining walls. Wor. Chuck again searched and was able to find the original gray stone used. “Sonoma Stone” was still being quarried in Sonoma County because that gray stone was also used to build the Broadway tunnel (the Posey tube) from Oakland to Alameda. The total masonry used in the project was 4 tons of gray stone, and over 200,000 brick.



In addition to the masonry refurbishing work done, there were four Time Capsule monuments built by Wor. Jeronimo. The first capsule was built in 1896. He opened the capsule and removed its contents before refurbishing its brick and stone façade. Currently the 1896 capsule holds a small copper box with a letter explaining that the original contents are now alongside the 2001 capsule at the South Mall.

The second and third capsules are at the left and right sides of the Siminoff Lodge entrance. The one on the right was built in 1989 and the one on the left was built in 1998. The fourth capsule is located in the arched monument at the south mall entrance; it was built just after the September 11, 2001 attacks.

There were two different designs drawn by Wor. Jeronimo for each monument. These designs were submitted to the Union City Masonic Homes Board of Directors for their approval. The South Mall time capsule came into being because the Administration building time capsule was too small to contain the two copper boxes with the 1896 and 2001 contents.

When Chuck bricked up the vault in the south monument, he placed a plastic baggie filled with pennies, nickels, dimes, and special minted quarters from the New York series in honor of 9/11/01 and a Sacagawea dollar coin to be found on top of the copper box.

Brother Jeronimo said to me; “George, I felt it to be a once in a lifetime privilege to be the Mason who opened the 1896-time capsule and read its contents; and to build a new monument for our future Masonic Progeny to enjoy. I am forever grateful for that honor.”

Wor. Jeronimo’s Masonic background is as follows: He became a Master Mason in East Belt Lodge No. 391 located at Tuolumne City, CA. on December 19, 1980.

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An Artisan...



He demitted to Gemini Lodge No. 825 in Fremont, CA. and served through all the chairs to Worshipful Master in 1987. He was their Officers Coach from 1988 to 1991. He was then appointed as the 151st District Inspector and served in that position for nine years. He was appointed as Inspector of the 159th District in 2002 and served in that position for another nine years. A truly dedicated Mason. Thank you Wor. Chuck Jeronimo and your crew for a job well done.—
George Petri PM, January 2003

Editor's Note: Charles "Chuck" Jeronimo is an avid reader of the Messenger. Who would have thought that Bruce Rick's article on "Mystery of the Cornerstone..." would strike a cord? This spurred Chuck to share an overdue 18-year old interview with a resident columnist about his involvement in the South Mall Cornerstone which should have been published in the January 2003 Messenger, BITS & PIECES by the Late George Petri. It was a jaw dropping moment when I received an email (see an excerpt below) with the attachment on June 29 that he was the builder of the South Mall Cornerstone. What came to my mind was Disney's "It's a small world after all" and Doris Day's "Whatever will be, will be..." It was an honor to be the one to bring to light the interview the Late George Petri had with Chuck. I was also fortunate to have met the Petris' (George & Eleanor) residents of the Home then as a front desk newbie.

...“I am a retired General & Masonry Contractor now living in San Antonio Texas, and a life member of Mosaic Lodge #218 in Livermore California, and a 33rd degree member of Oakland Scottish Rite. In addition, I am the masonry contractor who refurbished the brick and stone on the North, South, and Administration buildings of the Union City Home.

As a subscriber to “The Messenger” I enjoyed reading your edition about the mystery of the Cornerstone and Time Capsule monument dates. Now I would like to enlighten my Masonic Brothers and Sisters who reside at the Home about the how and why the monuments were built.

Accompanying this letter there is an attachment regarding an interview by Brother George Petri PM, who at the time in 2003 was a resident of the Home, and an occasional contributor to The Messenger. Wor. George died a short while after, but before his death he interviewed me again. At that time, I gave him much more pertinent information regarding the construction of the buildings and the four monuments. He was hoping to send this latest interview to Grand Lodge to be published in the “Masonic Magazine”, unfortunately he died, and it never came to fruition.

The pictures included here show me enclosing the 100-year commemoration time capsule at the left side of Siminoff Lodge entrance. I also placed a plastic baggie containing pennies, nickels, dimes, and quarters on top of that copper box. The fourth picture was taken at the South Mall arched monument by Wor. Petri as I worked to finish it about a week after 9/11/2001.

I sincerely hope that you and your staff of “The Messenger” keep the monument information I have sent you in a permanent file available to anyone wanting to know the history of the stone and masonry work at the Masonic Home in Union City.”...

Resident Council Accomplishments in 2020/2021

Written by Jeanne Benedict, Secretary



- ◆ November 2020—Requested Administration provide an up-to-date organizational chart to all residents
- ◆ By-law changes: Qualifications for Council - Strike the words NO MEMBER shall serve two

(2) consecutive terms. We felt it is hard enough to get qualified members to serve on the Council.

- ◆ Duties of the Treasurer – Add “Be a co-signer on the EAP—Employee Appreciation Fund Checking Account.” We felt a member of the Council should be a co-signer on the checking account.
- ◆ Title of residents handling the EAF checking account – The President shall appoint a committee of 3 trustees to oversee the EAF checking account. The Trustee, the Treasurer, and a 3rd person. Jim Leggate was appointed Trustee and Marge Ammons is Treasurer
- ◆ The By-laws with these changes was posted on the Resident Council bulletin board by the mailboxes.
- ◆ We requested the Executive Director provide the Council with office space upon the completion of the Adams renovation.
- ◆ Accepted the resignation of Jeri Chamberlain and appointed Richard Cunningham to fill her position.
- ◆ December 2020—We distributed the EAF funds to the employees with a note thanking them for extra efforts during the COVID-19 quarantine.
- ◆ January 2021—We contacted 2 continuing care communities in San Francisco who use Morrison Living as their food service contractor. We received good reports from both communities.
- ◆ We continued to urge Soledad Martinez, Executive Director, to keep residents updated on the progress of opening up again after getting our vaccinations.
- ◆ February 2021—We discussed concerns we had all received from residents about errors being made by the new Accounting Department staff. We took these concerns to Administration.
- ◆ March 2021—We sent out a memo explaining the purpose of the Employee Appreciation Fund (EAF) and encouraged residents to donate.
- ◆ April 2021—We reported to Administration what seems to be a problem in the South Wing of no hot water in the mornings.
- ◆ May 2021—At Ola Afolabi's request we are critiquing the announcements made by the Front Desk staff, rating quality and clarity of these announcements. We also voted on a new format for the notices given residents when they have a Package, Box or Prescription to be picked up at the Front Desk.
- ◆ We asked to have a meeting with Gary Charland and Tom Boyer concerning the on-going problems in the Accounting Department.
- ◆ June 2021—We sent a list of 7 safety issues on campus to Administration.
- ◆ We recommended two residents from Union City to be considered for the Resident position on the Masonic Homes Board of Trustees.

Since the last update there have been 13 Blue Box Cards submitted as of August 18, 2021.

There were nine compliments among them! There were five compliments for various meals served recently. These were sent to the chefs so that they can bring back the much-loved items! There was also a compliment to Administration who have worked hard remotely throughout the worst of the pandemic, welcoming them back and commenting that it's good to see their faces again. There were two shout outs to the Recreation department. One was for the Cinco de Mayo celebration (noting that it was being submitted a little bit late) but wanting to acknowledge that the celebration was one of the best! The other was for the games on the patio and the efforts to find fun and creative activities. It was also suggested that when the games are held on the patio it is always under the umbrellas to combat the sun and heat.

Finally, there was a compliment for the Dining Room serving staff who do a marvelous job and are very caring to the residents. All the compliments have been sent to the appropriate departments so that the hard work that brought them forth can be acknowledged. Thank you very much for your kind words!

There were two concerns in the cards submitted.

- ♦ One was noting that the silver coffee and tea service in the First Floor Living Room is in need of cleaning and polishing. This is being sent to facilities services so that it can be taken care of.
- ♦ One was a request that servers station themselves around the Dining Room so they are more aware of when someone needs their help, and the manager on duty should roam the Dining Room several times.

Lastly, there was a suggestion card:

- ♦ In the Dining Room – the table should have a small red flag raised (when you need service) instead of putting up your hands. When served, put down the red flag. I have seen more than 1 server go to a table in a difference of seconds. This will eliminate duplication and enhance faster service. Also, there should be a server always watching the Dining Room during mealtime.

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

New Residents



Ronald
"Ron" (PGM) &
Theola "Terry"
Sherod
Sponsoring
Lodge: Siminoff
#850
City: Union City
Moved in:
August 24, 2021





The Chaplain's Corner

By Chaplain Joel Ingram

A World of Wonder...

Last month, I shared an article by Jim McClellan. Several residents let me know they found the perspective shared insightful and beneficial. So, this month I thought to see if another “literary selection” hits the spot. Here’s the article. It’s written by Lane Parker... I’ll share a few of my own thoughts at the end.

Spring is in full swing, and gardeners of all varieties are striving to help their plants thrive. I remember hearing, many years ago, that plants grew better if you talked to them. The words didn’t matter; simply talking produced beneficial results. I also remember being skeptical.

Sure, plants send signals to people all the time. If a plant gets too hot or too cold, too wet or too dry, we know because it droops, turns brown, or shrivels up and dies. It’s an elemental, though ineffective way of communicating. But plants responding to our attempts at communication? That sounded like science fiction. Now all that could be changing.

Back in 1926, Aldous Huxley described his tour of the Bose Institute in Calcutta, India during which, using graphs and bells, researchers demonstrated the instant reactions of plants to stimuli such as sunlight, electric shock, and chloroform.

Roald Dahl had his own take with his 1949 short story, *The Sound Machine*, in which a hobbyist builds a device that allows him to hear the otherwise inaudible cries of plants as their stems are cut.

Huxley’s science and Dahl’s fiction have met in recent years, with researchers striving to find out what kind of information plants might transmit. Scientists now know that plants communicate with each other through the soil using chemicals in their roots. Engineers have embedded spinach leaves with carbon nanotubes and shown that the plants can quickly detect explosive chemicals and send signals in reaction. The doors are open to a variety of plants one day being able to convey to us a variety of information.

It turns out plants respond not to the human voice but to the carbon dioxide exhalations of the people talking to them, what scientists call “the CO2 fertilization effect.”



needs to us. They might say, “I’m thirsty,” or, “I’m cold.” Or even, “Talk to me.”

Still, in this brave new world of science fact meeting science fiction, there may come a time when we talk to our plants and our plants talk back. Wired to speakers and using algorithms to translate chemical reactions into spoken words, our plants might be able to effectively communicate specific

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The Chaplain's...

Okay, thanks, Lane.

Indeed, it is interesting that plants and animal can interact with us at all. I guess I wanted to share this article mostly taken with the idea that for all we know about our world and how it works, it's worth noting and remembering there's still so much we don't know or don't understand. It means we not only live in a wonderful world but are surrounded by a world of wonder. It would be a real shame to only view our world based on what we know (or think we know) instead of a place full of blessing and wonder still inviting us to know more.

May you be known and know in the best of ways in the month ahead. Until next month, blessing! *Chaplain Joel*

Spotlight on the **Masonic Homes Way-By Chaplain Joel**



Sometimes you just can't make a surprise happen. I know, I've tried to do many things for my wife and catch her off guard, but most of the time that sixth sense of hers just foils my best efforts. Similarly, there's no way I can "surprise" Ola Afolabi with a MHW tribute because she enters and edits all the articles for the Messenger. So Ola, this month it's you. **SURPRISE!**

So, what might we say about Ola and how does she embody our Masonic Home way principles? By the way, do you REMEMBER what those 4 pillars are? Safety, Personal Connection, Experience and Efficiency. Space prevents me from going over all four, so I'll just praise Ola for the last two: Experience and Efficiency.

I don't know if you've noticed, but Ola is through and through a positive minded soul. I'm sure she's not happy all the time, but you'd barely know it because she always greets residents and staff with a smile and kind words. Think about your life and interactions. Is that easy? Is it "automatic"? I don't think it is. It's something wonderful that a person decided to make a part of their life and social interactions. And Ola has made it part of hers. Lucky us!

Next, the pillar of Efficiency. If Ola could do the things you want done before you even ask, she no doubt would. But this being impossible, she regularly does what needs doing with great speed and helpful communication. I looked up the meaning of ASAP in the dictionary and it just said "Ola". OK, I'm fibbing there, but there's no denying Ola gets things done.

Now, it's easy to take either or both of these traits for granted; "that's just Ola" you might say. But that's the point. If you've not thought about or appreciated the way

Continued from page 8 **Spotlight...**

Ola not only carries herself but also makes our front desk team perform so successfully and kindly, then – well – this is your chance. So, Ola, thank you for all you do and that special way in which you do it.

The Rose—Written by Rodrigo (Rudy) Galindo



The lady and the rose are one and the same
Only named differently
When the rose begins to bloom
The birds will be singing and likewise
The bees will be buzzing

When the singing or buzzing are being performed
In the right time, at the right place, by the right “actor”
The petals will open, one by one
Gradually, willingly, and very graciously
Then, the harvest of the nectar will commence simultaneously.

During the peak momentum of the harvest
An “atomic bomb like” explodes
Where the “whole world” stops (it seems)
And even the hands of the wall clock seem to pause
“A new organism in the new life cycle”
Has just begun.

EVS Employee of the Quarter—By Mike McComas

On July 23, 2021, the Facility Services department nominated Jeffrey Lee as their Department’s Employee of the Quarter.

Jeffrey has been with the Environmental Services Lorber Team for 1 year and 1 month (at the time he was awarded). His teammates chose him for this honor as Jeffrey has taken his role very seriously and has always been eager to help all those who have asked.

We are very appreciative of his can-do attitude and his dedication to the team. Thank you, Jeffrey!



Innovations Update—Written by Jasmine Myers



Happy September! How about some jokes?

- ♦ Why are iPhone chargers not called Apple Juice?!
- ♦ Don't use "beef stew" as a computer password. It's not stroganoff.
- ♦ What is the biggest lie in the entire universe? "I have read and agree to the Terms & Conditions."
- ♦ Did you hear about the monkeys who shared an Amazon account? They were Prime mates.

This month, the Innovations department is adding another reason to stop by the Head Library on Thursdays, Virtual Reality! Come swim with sharks, soar above the clouds, or take a calm tour through a famous city all without leaving the Masonic Homes or even your chair! Mr. and Mrs. Rick had a chance to go to Paris and you can read about their experience below!

Traveling isn't much of an option for our residents these days but using Virtual Reality allows you to feel like you're actually there. The Oculus goggles play sounds of the area and allow you to look around for 360-degree views of whatever adventure you chose.

We'll be available in the Head Library on **Thursdays at 2:00pm**, after Innovations office hours or by appointment if you would like to take a trip. Please RSVP ahead of time so we can ensure safe travels. Call me at **x6354**, if interested.

The Happy Wanderers go to Paris— Written by Bruce & Evelyn Rick

We had not been off campus for a while, so we were very excited to get an email with our electronic ticket for a trip to Paris, France! When the time came for our flight, we realized that we had forgotten to pack. Oh well, we strolled down to the First Floor Head Library anyway where our private tour guides Jasmine and James were ready to help us take off. We were outfitted with our special equipment, consisting of a Virtual Reality headset with a custom 360-degree narrated tour already loaded.

Hello Mr. and Mrs. Rick,

I'm pleased to inform you that you've been invited to redeem
your round-trip ticket for:

Paris, France

Thursday, August 12th, 2021

At 2 O'Clock in the afternoon

Please come to the First Floor Head Library at the listed time to claim
your exclusive prize.

Seated in a comfy chair, we each had a turn to visit the Louvre--without even standing in line for a ticket. We walked down the Champs Elysees, where we could almost taste the croissants. We gazed up at an Egyptian obelisk and went inside the Paris Opera House.

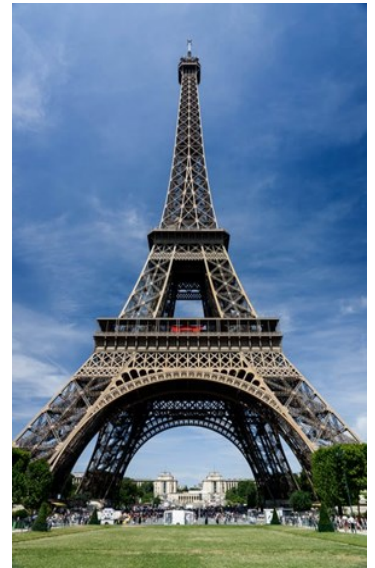
It was a special treat to stand *right under* the Arc de Triomphe and see it very close up (something we had not been able to do from the tour bus on our last trip). The grand finale was the gorgeous light show put on by the Eiffel Tower. C'est magnifique!

The best things: no jet lag, no TSA, no lost luggage, no language barrier, and realizing that we could go anywhere in the world in complete comfort and safety.



The one worst thing: our tour didn't stop at any gift shop, so we had no chance to buy our usual refrigerator magnet or to send a postcard.

After our whirlwind visit to Paris, we wished our guides a fond farewell and planned to book our next trip. Where shall we go? Japan? Egypt? Venice? Alaska? Hawaii? Maybe Munich for the Oktoberfest later this month. You are welcome to come along. All it takes is a phone call to Jasmine at x6354, your friendly travel agent. See you on the Italian Riviera?



Dietary Department New Team Member



I would like to take the opportunity to introduce myself. My name is Pritika Priya Nand, the new head server for the Pavilion. It is a pleasure being part of the team!

I have always had a passion for helping others when I was growing up. Whether it was my mom, grandparents, or siblings, I always had a helping hand. I am currently in school for nursing to become a registered nurse and I just earned my real estate certification as well to get my License. I am looking to build my future and career with the Masonic Homes as it is a great pleasure assisting the kindhearted residents here.

I have a dog named Simba. He is the best thing that has ever happened to me! He's loving, cute and most definitely spoiled! I enjoy taking him to dog parks, adventures or just a stroll down the block during my down times. I have been living in Hayward all my life and I truly love my hometown. Thank you for having me, looking forward to working with you all!





Quotable



Humor During Troubled Times—Pictures by Barb Sullivan



Richard Fiechtner and Phil Smith realized they needed to be 6' apart at meals, Richard made this "telephone" with plastic cups and string!



Patriotic Marty Trudell walked by Harold Scott's table & decided to salute the flag on his scooter.

End of Summer Beach Party



Putting Your Thoughts into Action

Compiled by Chris Gershtein, Senior Director of Quality Management

As you may know the Masonic Homes of California was named one of the Top Places to Work two years in a row by the Bay Area News Group! What you may not know is all the work that it took to get there. Not that long ago it was noted that the staff morale seemed to be low and our employee survey results were not where we would like them to be.



Gary Charland and the Board of Trustees agreed that something needed to change. Energage group was brought in to help us with staff satisfaction and employee engagement. We participated in surveys that were designed to help us to identify what the causes of lower engagement and low satisfaction were, and to be able to determine areas of focus

for improvement. Directors and Managers worked with Energage to understand the results of the surveys in their specific departments so that they could work together with staff groups in their departments to come up with “Action Plans” to help work on the issues causing dissatisfaction among the staff. These groups were tasked with putting their ideas into action.

Over the last two years groups from each department have met to talk about what they as a group would like to see happen in order to reach a goal that will help improve a specific item of need identified. All of their hard work has paid off as Masonic Homes Employee Satisfaction score soared, and we became one of the Top Places to Work in the Bay Area.

Now that I’ve bragged about the results of their hard work, let me brag about what each of the groups have done! The work that they did was fantastic, and they deserve a lot of praise for truly thinking about what they needed as a group to be more successful and for finding ways to make it happen!

Facilities and Environmental Services

This group took a very structured approach that worked really well. They identified an Action Item, a goal, a solution, and then identified the steps needed to get there. They did this for a number of items, but the ones that they feel have made the most impact are:

Action Item: *My job makes me feel like I am a part of something meaningful.*

Our Goal: Show staff how important each of their jobs are. Also show them how much their team members and management appreciate them by nominating them for the award.

Our Solution: Starting a Facilities Employee of the Quarter program. This has seemed to help lift our team’s morale and also the team seems to enjoy doing this.

Action Item: *MHC enables me to work at my full potential.*

Our Goal: was to ensure staff doesn’t get bored by doing the same job every day.

Our Solution: We have started letting staff work in and get trained in other areas other than their own. What we have noticed in doing this is at first staff were very hesitant, but after they completed it, they are very happy, and it also makes them more confident in their abilities. We now have staff volunteering in other areas when we are short-handed, so we feel this has played a huge role in lifting morale and also in making our team stronger.

Jeff Krahulec said, “I personally have noticed a big change in our team morale and their willingness to help each other is amazing since we have implemented these action items.”

Celebrations



Jim & Norita Church's 77th Wedding Anniversary

Thank you for treating me just
as special on the days that are
not our anniversary.

Happy Anniversary!



Ed & Kathy Burgle's 52nd Wedding Anniversary



Bill & Suzie Hem's 39th Wedding Anniversary



Bruce & Evelyn Rick's 18th Wedding Anniversary

Birthdays/Weddings Anniversaries/In Memoriam

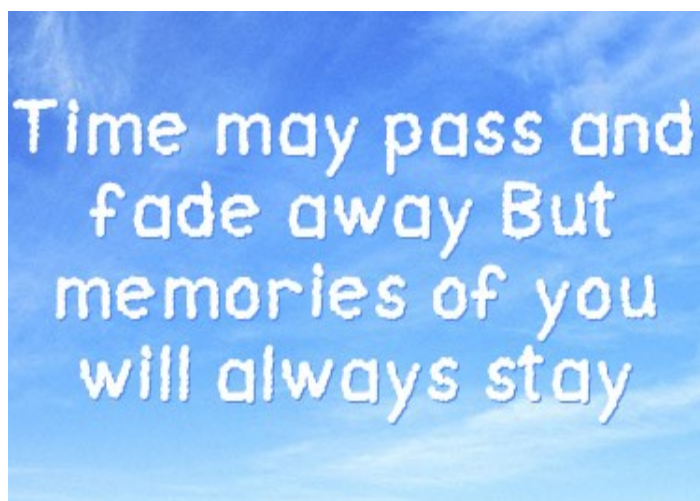


Resident Birthdays	
John Dahle Jim Leggate	9/4
Melvin Cohu	9/8
Lois Reed	9/13
Barbara Raney	9/18
Barbara Dippel	9/20
John Gates	9/21
Billie Fulton	9/25



Resident Anniversaries		
Residents	Date	Years
John & Pat Gates	9/22	64

In Memoriam



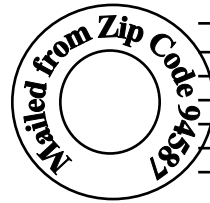
Patricia "Pat" Cross
February 25, 1933—August 2, 2021
Sponsored by: Golden Rule #479



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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