



# The Messenger

Published for the Residents  
Masonic Homes of California at Union City

## Holiday Traditions—Compiled by the Lorber Recreation Team



The holiday season is one of joy, love, and togetherness. We gather with family and friends,

sharing moments and laughter filled with traditions. Lorber Residents share their favorite holiday memories.

“My family attended church on Christmas Eve midnight service, we had Christmas dinner with friends and family. Being surprised by thoughtful gifts family gives. One Christmas when I was younger, I received a Skippy sled from a hardware store in Cripple Creek, Colorado. I would go ice skating and took lessons at the rink.”—Margaret Cunningham



**December  
2022**



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**Holiday...** *Continued from page 1*

“I spent Christmas at home with the family. I would make mince pie for everyone.”  
—Alma Hartman



“We always had turkey dinner Santa Claus would visit and we would have a gift exchange. We really put an effort for the kids to make it special.”  
—Letha Tatro

“Christmas Eve everyone in my family gets to open one present, which can be a tough decision and often led to opening more than one gift. Christmas morning the kids would wake up before sunrise asking to get up and would want to skip breakfast to get to the presents. We would have blueberry muffins, enjoy breakfast, and read after all the presents were open.”—Ari Eddleman



“I remember one year I made everyone bathrobes, which they wore Christmas morning. We had a nice orange juice or tea before opening presents and then made waffles, everyone would get excited. Then we attended church on Christmas.”—Dorothy Nelson

“Riding in a one-horse open sleigh, I lived in Pennsylvania and enjoyed the snow.”  
—George Stewart



Barbara Dippel, of blessed memory, spearheaded her “Love for Lorber” campaign in 2018 after receiving an upcycled Christmas tree made from greeting cards from her daughter. She enlisted some crafty resident volunteers to create a handmade tree for every resident in Lorber. Each one was a unique and charming piece of art.

Before her passing this year, she passed the torch on to Colette Mahurin, who in turn asked Suzie Hems for assistance. “I was happy that this could be continued and finished in record time.” Suzie and her group were perfect, says Colette.

Together with volunteers Susanne Greaves, Kay Black, Sandy Smith, Diane Priddy and Linda Walli, were able to knock these out very quickly. Suzie says, “It’s a lot of work and you need the right tools.” We can’t thank these ladies enough for the time and effort they put in to show some “Love for Lorber” this holiday season.



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Gene Goodman  
 Moved in on: November  
 14, 2022



**New Resident**

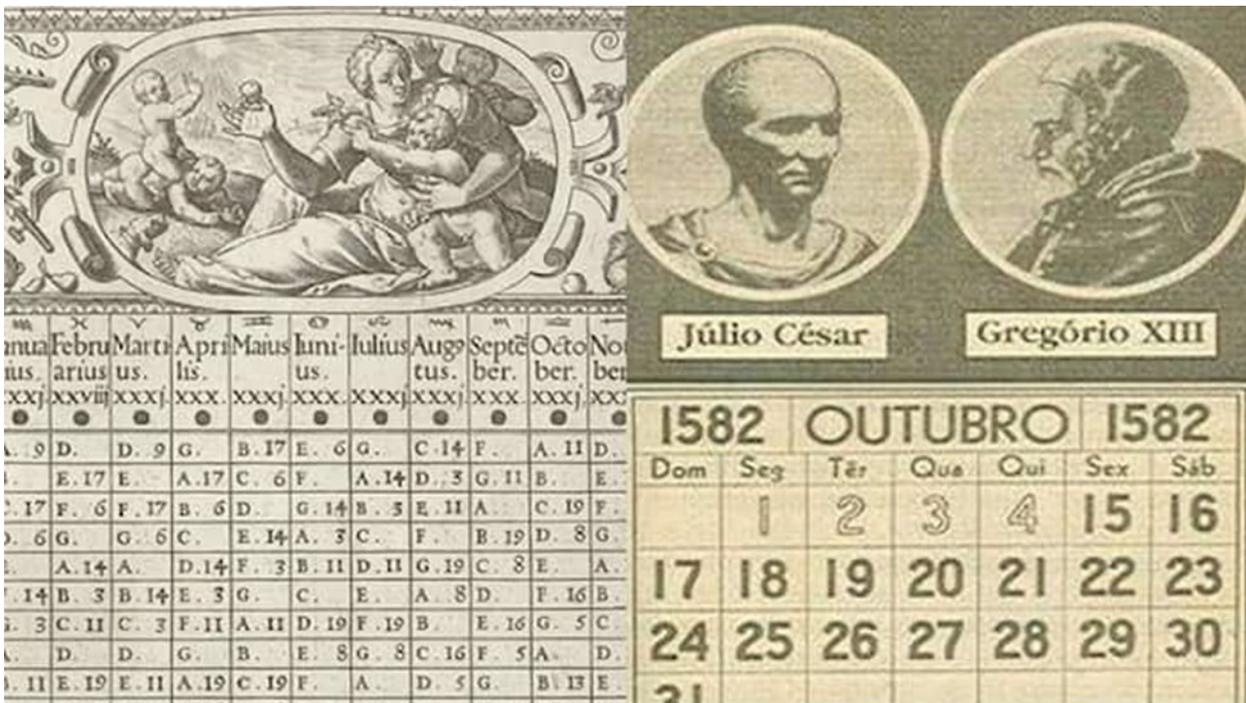


# The Chaplain’s Corner “End of Days”

Even though many local banks have a tradition of sending out New Year’s calendars this time of year, don’t give them credit for coming up with the idea. Many historians believe the breakdown of our year into 12-month blocks hails from Ancient Egypt. They divided their year into three parts: The Rise of the Nile, Planting Season, and Harvest—each “Section” being 4 months long.

The Egyptians were skilled at Science and Math (their Nile surveyors giving us Geometry), but for all their expertise, they came up just short of figuring out a numbering system that had ten digits (0-9). Instead, they had repeated numbers or figures. The “number” for one million was a man holding his hands over his head as if to say, “Oh my, my what a big number!” It was all rather cumbersome. To write the number 999 took 27 figures!

They were also good at Astronomy. They logged stars up to the order of the 5th magnitude (barely visible with the unaided eye) and worked their annual calendar to 365 days by having 12 months of 30 days and then adding 5 “bonus days” at year’s end. We need 365.25 for a more accurate calendar, hence our leap year. They were always falling a bit behind.



They were corrected for the missing hours in 44 AD, by order of Julius Caesar—this gave us the “Julian Calendar.” In 1582 Pope Gregory XIII made an

“improved calendar” by removing the “extra day” in century years not divisible by 400 (February 29<sup>th</sup>) – and voila – the “Gregorian Calendar” you and I get from our banks each year was born.

So, why the big history lesson? Well, you see, I had this big page I needed to fill with words and ... No, that’s not it. In truth, I just learned all this calendar-centric goodness myself, but while doing so, I was made to think of how very long mankind has taken note of the “sands of time” fluttering through our hands.

We’re at such a moment ourselves, this being December and all. So, it seemed to me there’s no better time than now to look back over this past year and consider what our days have held. Good things? Give thanks. Bad things? Take courage. Boring things? I’m sorry, I’ll try and preach better sermons moving forward! (Seriously, I hope I didn’t come to mind on that one!) The point is, looking back and considering our days just past is a good thing. And – so is looking forward. Will you make it to 2024? I don’t know. Will I? I don’t know that either. But assuming I am able to begin 2023, I hope to do so with thankfulness for the year now ending and plans for an even better year to come.

I hope you’ll join me in this endeavor. Until next month, *Chaplain Joel*  
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**A Timeless Holiday Message**—Submitted by Jeanne Benedict

We are fast approaching the season of frenzied shopping, filled with anxious anxieties, turbulent tempers, and harried hurried humans. We are so wrapped up in our card sending, gift buying, gift wrapping, home decorating and food preparation; we have a tendency to forget the reason behind this holiday season.

This season of joy and peace to our fellow man, and the remembering of the miracles told to us in our Holy Writings, maybe the following words will put us back on track.



**What Money Can Buy**

- Money will buy:
- A bed—but not sleep
- Books—but not brains
- Food—but not appetite
- A house—but not a home
- Luxuries—but not happiness



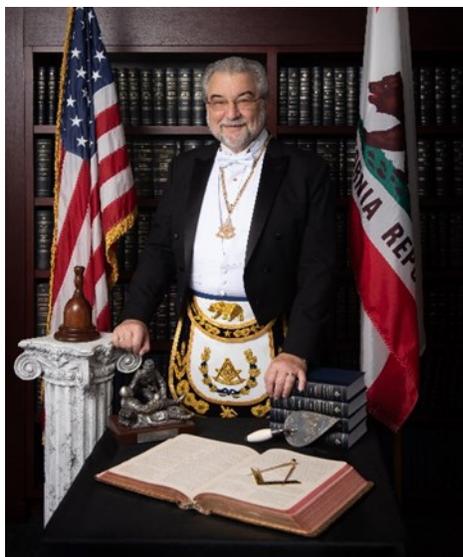
A temple of worship—but not heaven.

What money can not buy; God can give freely without charge. Spread the joys of this season with love in your hearts and faith in our God.—*From the desk of Late Chaplain Irwin M. Fershleiser, P.M.*

Note from Jeanne: As I read these words I had to reflect on the line, “A house— but not a Home.” Over 100 years ago, our Masonic Brothers built this house for us. It is up to us now to make this a Home. Each of us must be a part of making it a Happy Home like Irwin did.

# Meet the New Grand Master!

Written by Kim Hegg, Sr. Director Events, Recreation & Volunteer Services



Brother Randall Louis Brill was raised a Master Mason in San Diego Lodge No. 35 on September 9, 2005. He served as Master of the lodge in 2009.

Brother Brill currently serves the Grand Lodge of California as its Grand Master and has served in several roles over the last decade. He was appointed Grand Chaplain in 2012. He served on the Fraternal Support Services committee, Institute for Masonic Studies, Masonic Education Committee, and the Public Schools Advisory Council for which he was the San Diego Chairman. Brother Brill acted as a Facilitator for Grand Lodge leadership retreats and the Inspector Development Academy, serving as the chairman of the program and of a recent task force to reorganize it. For

six years, Brother Brill served as a Trustee for the California Masonic Foundation and has been an integral leader in the Let's Write the Future Campaign, as well as on the board of the Nob Hill Masonic Center, the California Masonic Foundation, Acacia Creek, and the Masonic Homes of California.

In addition to this service, Brother Brill is active in the concordant and appendant bodies. He is a 33° Inspector General Honorary in the Scottish Rite Valley of San Diego. He served as Venerable Master of the Lodge of Perfection in 2012 and served as General Secretary of the Valley for ten years, from 2009 to 2019. He is a member of San Diego Chapter No. 61 Royal Arch Masons, San Diego Council No. 23 Cryptic Masons, and San Diego Commandery No. 25 Knights Templar. He has been a member of the Al Bahr Shrine since 2008. Brother Brill was a member of Inkopah Council No. 86 Allied Masonic Degrees and served as Sovereign Master in 2012. He's a past Puissant Sovereign of the San Diego Conclave Red Cross of Constantine and a member of the Southern California Rosicrucian College.

Brother Brill received a Ph.D. in Experimental Psychology from Loyola University in Chicago. After four years of teaching Science and Math at a private school in Illinois, he began a long career in marine mammal training and research that led to research and leadership assignments around the globe. In 1975, he was a Marine Mammal trainer and Training Supervisor for the Chicago Zoological Society.

After proving that dolphins use their lower jaws to hear returning echolocation signals, he went on to serve as a Scientist and Branch Head of the Scientific and Veterinary Support Branch of the U.S. Marine Mammal Program, in the Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command Center in Hawaii and California. During this time, he received the Professional Achievement Award from the International Marine Animals Trainers Association. He served as Technical Agent and Contracting Officer for the Defense Advanced Research Project Agency. He was the Office of Naval Research science advisor to the commander of the U.S. Naval Central Command and Fifth Fleet in the Kingdom of Bahrain and received the Global War on Terrorism Civilian Service Medal from the U.S. Department of Defense. Randy returned to the

Meet... *Continued from page 6*



Space and Naval Warfare Systems Center in San Diego as a Leadership Coach for the Lean Six Sigma Process Improvement program. He retired in 2009 after 20 years of service.

Randy and his wife Susan live in Escondido; they have four adult children and four grandchildren.

Most Worshipful Brother Randy was installed as Grand Master on Sunday, October 23, 2022, at the Nob Hill Masonic Center in San Francisco.

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## New Veterans Memorial at the Masonic Homes Union City

Written by Bruce Rick



A new Veterans Memorial fountain, with Veteran Name Plaques, has been installed on the Promenade.

As you visit the memorial and walk around reading the name plaques, note that there are no ranks to distinguish officer from sergeant or

private.

The names are in no particular order, not in chronological or alphabetical, nor any specific conflict. Simply veterans among other veterans. Each served in a branch or branches of service, basically, to preserve freedom.

The first veteran plaque, by date of service, was George W. Chambers, who served in the Army and came to the Masonic Home in 1899, sponsored by his home lodge—Crocket Lodge No. 139, now San Francisco Lodge No.120.

It is interesting to note that Bro. Chambers was one of the first twenty-one men and women to move into the home in 1899. We thank each one of these veterans for their service.

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## 50-Year Pin Recognition—Written by Lydia McComas



On November 10th, 2022, Bob Harband received his 50-Year Golden Veteran pin from San Francisco Lodge #120.

Members of California Lodge #1 were also in attendance to recognize and celebrate this achievement. “It’s something I’ll never forget,” says Bob.



ARRIVING FROM... CANADA!

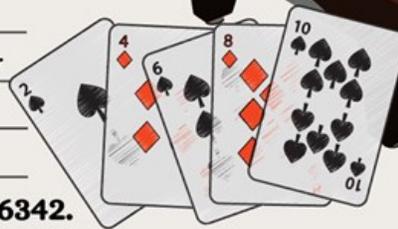


**The Masonic Homes extends a warm welcome to our new resident and family member, Derek Jones! Derek enjoys playing the card game Hearts! Any Residents looking to play cards?**

**His favorite country is the Netherlands! "God built the world; but the Dutch built Holland."**

**Derek is eager to learn how to play pool. Residents are welcomed to reach out to help!**

**Derek can be reached at A519, ext. 6342.**



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**Old Age Isn't for Sissies**—Submitted by Resident, Zelma Campbell



Kenny, in his late fifties, noticed that senior citizens get free coffee at a local café. He asked “How old do you have to be, to be a senior citizen? The waiter looked at him for a few seconds and without saying a word, poured him a cup of coffee.

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Alice was asked by a friend if she ever thinks about the hereafter. She said, “I do all the time. No matter where I am in the house, kitchen, den, upstairs, downstairs, I ask myself, “Now, what am I here after?”

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Thanksgiving comes after Christmas for those grandparents who entertain the whole family on Christmas Day.



Since the last update there have been eight Blue Box Cards submitted as of November 15. There was one compliment in them.

- ◆ “I have a compliment about our Fabulous Recreation Team. These people work harder than most of us realize, and they are always on the “front line,” which isn’t easy. They do it with a lot of grace and love. They put creativity into trying to make our lives more interesting at the Masonic Homes. Whether or not one participates in recreation activities please take time to acknowledge and thank them for their efforts. We would be lost without them.”

In the blue box there were seven concerns/requests submitted:

- ◆ Many residents don’t know about the “Coin Star” and “Golden Pillar Awards” for staff. I tried to find the forms—can’t (used to be in “HR,” not there). I suggest there is a plastic rack on side hall wall of Dietary Office—put some there maybe a second location and let residents know at Town Hall that they are to honor special staff events, and where to find the forms! Thank you! (We have some great staff!)
  - ◆ Agreed! We do have some great staff! We are no longer doing the Coin Star program because it was replaced with the Golden Pillar Award. I know that the forms are at the Front Desk and in the Copy Room on the first floor. If it’s more convenient to also have these forms on the 2nd floor of Sedam, I will ask if we can put them there as well, and will announce the locations at Town Hall. Thanks for the suggestion!
- ◆ The ice machine on 5th Adams will not dispense ice cubes. This has been for over 5 weeks. The problem has been reported 4 times by me. It is a new machine and should work. The apartments on 5th Adams do not have ice makers in rooms. The large machine is our only choice. Please see if the problem can be fixed.
  - ◆ Facilities services reports that there is someone scheduled to come out on November 16, to fix the ice machine. Hopefully that means that by the time you read this, it will be fixed! Thanks for your reports!
- ◆ May we have some chairs near the elevators in Adams? Also 3rd Sedam?
  - ◆ This suggestion/request was sent to Facilities Services and Administration for their review and to see if we have some appropriate furniture available. Facilities services noted that there is seating by some of the elevators, but not all. They will be looking to see if we have furniture to cover all of the elevators in Adams as well as 3rd Sedam. Thank you for your observation!
- ◆ I have a concern about dinner on Monday and Tuesday October 17 & 18.  
Monday: Meat was overcooked and tasteless. Noodles were dried out and stuck together. Parsnips were like wood.  
Tuesday: Veal was overcooked and not chewable. I suggest a good conversation with Victoria Gumila and Juan Valencia. They were asked to come out of the

kitchen, but never appeared.

- ◆ This concern was sent to the current Dining Services Director and Chef for review so that they can address the issue.

- ◆ Oh! For the days when Sunday Brunch was something we looked forward to!!

**GONE**

- ◆ This concern was sent to the current Dining Services Director and Chef for review so that they can address the issue.

- ◆ November 4 Lunch—Oven fried potatoes: Looked good—could not eat as they were too hard.

- ◆ This concern was sent to the current Dining Services Director and Chef for review so that they can address the issue.

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

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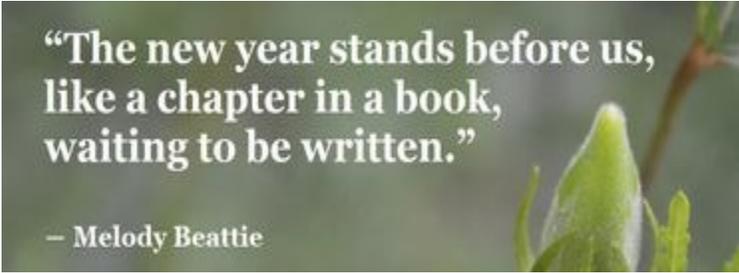
‘Tis the season for the Facility Services Department to thank our residents, clients, and colleagues and wish them a very warm and happy Holiday Season.

We are once again grateful to be a part of so many wonderful lives and we look forward to another successful and prosperous New Year.

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**Quotable**





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

### Two for One



Tous pour un, un pour tous (All for one, and one for all). That is the famous saying of the Three Musketeers. This month, we don't celebrate 3 Musketeers, but we are pleased to honor two absolutely fantastic employees of our Home.

**Rhoel Frieria** and **Raul Ting** are almost always working together as a facilities department “tag team,” so it's quite fitting we honor them together this month. Both came to work for the Home at about the same time—seven years ago. They both work in the same department, and both pretty much know how to fix anything and everything. Change an air filter—check. Mount a TV—check. Need a personal loan—check. Okay, maybe not that last one, but they do it all!

They are honored this month not because they did something great and unexpected task last month, but because day after day and month after month they simply do great work that benefits us all. While much of their work relates to the Masonic Homes Way pillars of safety and quality of living, their accessibility and friendly attitudes touch on the “Personal Connections” pillars as well. We are blessed to have them on our team.

Their manager, Matt Patrick, put it this way, “Everything these guys do is special. They are always ready and willing to assist our residents and staff, in whatever they might need.” Indeed, they were especially supportive of our efforts to get the Adams area of the Home up and running. How busy they were helping residents move in—and then—getting vacated rooms turned over.

You guys are fantastic! We need 12 more just like you. But, seeing how that's not going to happen, we'll just have to let you know how much we appreciate you—personally and professionally! For this and more, we honor you as the Masonic Homes Way honorees of the month.



# Golden Pillar Award Winners

Written by Joseph Pritchard, Chief Operations Officer

The Masonic Homes Way, in essence, is a set of values that we all can use to improve our resident service and empower ourselves to make good professional decisions.

The Pillars of **Safety, Personal Connection, Experience, and Efficiency/Innovation** provide a set of priorities that help us navigate the challenges of our industry.



These Pillars also set lofty standards for us to aspire to become a better team. We are always asked to be excellent, and the Masonic Homes Way is the roadmap to that excellence.

Every quarter, three of our teammates are recognized for getting just a little bit closer to excellence. They have taken a few more steps down the path towards exemplifying the values of the Masonic Homes Way. This quarter, our Golden Pillar Award Winners are:

- ◆ Jennielyn Milanes
- ◆ Rhoel Frieria
- ◆ Araceli Asis



If you haven't had the chance to meet these incredible people, I would suggest you take the opportunity. But, since it's hard to approach strangers, please let me introduce them to you!

Jennielyn is a Lead Pharmacy Technician who has grown within the Masonic Homes. She started as a Pharmacy Technician and was asked to take a leadership role because of her skillset and ability to create strong personal relationships. Jennielyn is excellent at her job and takes a proactive approach in resident service. Furthermore, her strengths shine even more when she leads her team. She steps in to support them whenever they need her. She delivers meds, answers phone calls, and performs many spontaneous duties when necessary. Most importantly, she takes the time to create strong connections with her team. Strong connections allow the team to work better and feel supported, and the connections also give every team member a good reason to come to work. Jennielyn preaches safety, she creates strong personal connections, and she provides incredible experiences in an efficient way.

Almost everyone knows Rhoel. He is often seen running or briskly walking from job site to job site. He helps with both emergencies and routine repairs. He has a wide set of skills that he has honed while serving the residents and staff of

## Golden Pillar... *Continued from page 12*



the Masonic Homes.

Throughout the day he is always thinking about safety not only in his space, but in every space he visits. As for personal connection, everyone who meets Rhoel remembers his smile, his grace, and his positive attitude. You will also see him running around with his work twin, Raul Ting. The relationship between Rhoel and Raul is a perfect example of a strong professional

connection that enhances both teammates. But, for this award, Rhoel was recognized for the service experience he provided to a specific resident. He came in for one job but completed three! He saw the opportunity to be very timely and efficient and provide a beautiful experience to an amazing resident.

Araceli, or Ara, has earned her reputation as a trusted CNA in the Lorber Skilled Nursing Facility. Ara is often asked to perform minor miracles on a daily basis. She works with residents who are at their most frail—mentally, emotionally, and physically. She supports them at the most difficult parts of their lives.

But it isn't just the clinical support that she is known for; the residents don't love Ara just because she is great at her job, they love her because she approaches the dark times with a smile, with compassion, and with warmth. She brings a feeling of peace and security to residents going through their own personal storms. Every time she walks into a room she makes things better, even if she can't do anything but to offer friendship and care. The residents see this, and her teammates see it. Sometimes, it is the small smiles that are more important than the big changes. Ara is filled with small smiles that make big changes in the world. And for that, she is most deserving of the Golden Pillar Award.



I hope you learned a little bit about these amazing human beings. Seek them out. Congratulate them. Learn what you can. Offer them support too. They are working alongside you. Trying to make the same impact you are.

We all believe in making a profound experience for the residents we serve.

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**Golden Pillar...** *Continued from page 13*

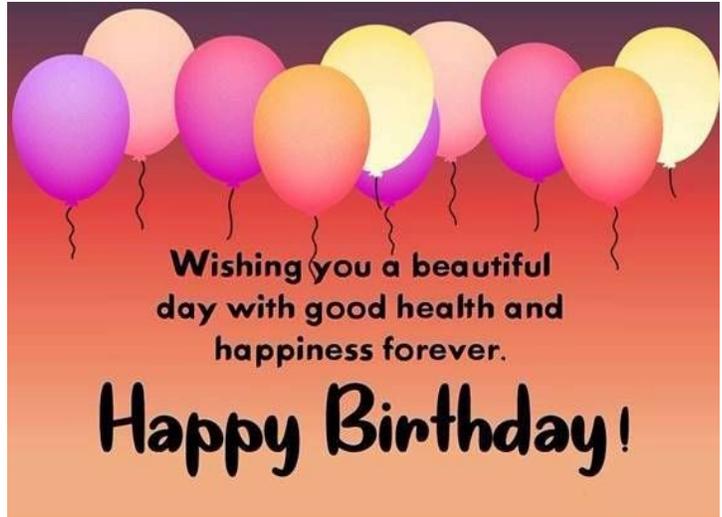
Rhoel, Ara, and Jennielyn are making that happen this quarter and I am sure they are willing to help you make it happen any day!

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# Celebrations



*Bill Fretz and grandson, Bill on his 104th birthday recently celebrated with family and friends.*



*Ray & Charlotte Hoffman's 66th Wedding Anniversary on November 4th*

<b>Resident Birthdays</b>	
Jo Scott (101 yrs.)	12/5
Sandy Smith	12/10
Graciella Strassburger Sheri Purington	12/15
Richard Cunningham	12/18
Betty Caria (101 yrs.) Ray Hoffman	12/19
Betty Newman	12/20
Ruby Rush	12/21
Pat Beltranena	12/23
Bob Harband	12/24
Bev Petterson	12/29
Bruce Rick	12/30

# In Memoriam

# In Memoriam



Edwin "Ed" Clarke  
December 22, 1928—  
November 4, 2022  
Mason of Los Altos #712



Claude "Jack"  
Palmer  
November  
19, 1925—  
November 7, 2022  
Mason of  
Crocker #212



James "Jim" Helton  
December  
16, 1949—November 7,  
2022  
Mason of Santa Cruz-  
San Lorenzo Valley #38



Barbara Dippel  
September 20, 1934—November  
8, 2022  
Sponsoring Lodge: Corinthian-  
Hammonton #9



Geno Acevedo  
May 30, 1940—  
November 18, 2022  
Mason of South Valley  
#187

