



The Messenger

Published for the Residents
Masonic Homes of California at Union City

Did You Know...—Written by Bruce Rick



Valentine's Day, also called Saint Valentine's Day or the Feast of Saint Valentine, is annually celebrated on February 14th.

It originated as a Western Christian liturgical feast day honoring one or more early saints named Valentinus, and is recognized as a significant cultural and commercial celebration in many regions around the world, although it is not a public holiday in any country.

Several martyrdom stories, associated with the various Valentines that were connected to February 14th, were added to later martyrologies. These include a popular hagiographical account of Saint Valentine of Rome, which indicated he was imprisoned for performing weddings for soldiers, who were forbidden to marry, and for ministering to Christians, who were persecuted under the Roman Empire.

According to legend, during his imprisonment, Saint Valentine healed the daughter of his jailer, Asterius, and before his execution, he wrote her a letter signed "Your Valentine" as a farewell. The day first became associated with romantic love within the circle of friends of Geoffrey Chaucer in the 14th century, when the tradition of courtly love flourished.

In 18th-century England, it evolved into an occasion on which lovers expressed their love for each other by presenting flowers, offering confections, and sending greeting cards (known as Valentines).

In Europe, Saint Valentine's keys are given to lovers as a romantic symbol and an invitation to unlock the giver's heart, as well as to children in order to ward off epilepsy (called Saint Valentine's Malady).

Valentine's Day symbols used today include the heart-shaped outline, doves, and the figure of the winged Cupid. Since the 19th century, handwritten valentines have given way to mass-produced greeting cards.

FEBRUARY 2023

Valentine's Day—Submitted by Jeanne Benedict

February 14th, Valentine's Day, is the day set aside to celebrate, honor, or remember love . . . or a loved one.

Is it not ironic that the symbol used to depict love is the heart? The heart is one of the most important organs in all living things. When it stops working, life as we know it ends. How many times have we used or heard these words?

"I love you with all my heart."

"Take my heart . . . it is yours."

"I give my heart to you."

Are we then saying,

"I love you with all my life," or

"I give my life to you?"



If the beating of our heart sustains life, maybe love in its many forms and ways is a strong helping hand. With this thought I implore you to ---

Love one another with all your heart.

Think of each other, with the goodness of your brain.

And last but not least,

Have faith with all your being!

Fraternally,

Late Chaplain Irwin Fershleiser



Brain Fitness-Keeping your Mind Active & Fit

Written by the Lorber Recreation Team



The human brain is the most complex part of the human body. Its job is to take in information from our environment through our senses and interpret the information to control behavior or initiate body movements. Our brain can do this through many neurons that work as pathways for communication through the body.

As we age many of the connections are lost. However, scientists now believe that these connections can remain and grow by keeping the mind active through cognitive exercises.

People of all ages can benefit from incorporating a few brain exercises into their lives to stay mentally strong. All it takes is a few minutes each day.

Studies have found it is beneficial to work on these exercises a little bit each day, instead of spending a few hours each week, and to incorporate a variety of activities.



Some cognitive exercises we can do that have been shown to maintain our brain are:

- ☐ Working on puzzles, playing games, has been shown to activate both sides of your brain, improve memory, improve problem solving skills, enhance mood and lower stress levels.
- ☐ Use all your senses—try incorporating activities that engage all five of your senses like gardening or trying new foods. Using all your senses helps to strengthen your brain by focusing on smelling, touching, tasting, seeing, and hearing all at the same time.

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- Learn a new skill—this will strengthen brain connections because when you learn a new skill, you work multiple areas of your brain. For example, your memory comes into play, your brain learns new movements and you associate things differently.

Social Services News—RCFE Team



ARRIVING FROM...
FRESNO!



The Masonic Homes extends a warm welcome

to our new resident Charlotte Mikkelsen! She has always loved The
Masonic Order even before she moved in. Her husband joined Clovis
Lodge #417 at just 28 years old!

Her hobbies include baking, making all kinds of soup
and visiting her neighbors. Charlotte
enjoys volunteering and helping out
wherever she can!

Charlotte can be reached at A317,
ext. 4849.





Quotable

Goodbye January,
Hello February!
Please be a good month
and bring smiles and
happiness to my
family and friends.

LoveThePic.com

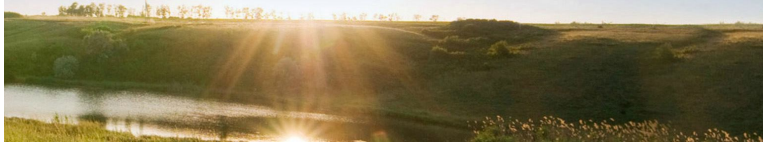


The Chaplain's Corner

by Chaplain Joel Ingram

Annual Service of Remembrance

**Perhaps they are not stars
but rather openings in
heaven where the love of our
lost ones shines down to let
us know they are happy.**



If you've been a resident of the Masonic Home for more than two years you likely know about our **Annual Service of Remembrance** held in the Spring of each year. However, as we have many new residents among us, this month I'd like to say a few anticipatory words about this Pastoral Care event we will hold in the month of March.

Each year, besides for the last two years due to Covid, a Service of Remembrance is

held for all residents lost to us in the preceding year. This is a combined service for residents of the Masonic Homes and Acacia Creek next door.

I felt very sad (and bad) about our not being able to have this service these past few years. In my opinion, it is a beautiful, even sacred opportunity for us to pause and give thanks for those who have been our friends and brothers, tablemates, and neighbors in our shared space on the hill.

I am pleased to be able to say we will again have this gathering in March, and I very much hope that you will join us for it. While the program will especially feature those who passed in 2022, we will also remember those who died from 2019-21 in an adjusted format.

I know some find it especially difficult to attend programs that focus on those no longer with us. I understand this feeling. It is a sad thing to be without friends and loved ones so long as a part of our journey. But in truth, our gathering is not about those we have lost as much as it's about those we know and love still. It is a celebration of what remains. It is about saying "Thank You". It is about our being reminded that life is short and precious, resilient yet fragile, often joyful if at times sad and wistful.

I hope that you will join me in March as we remember with fondness and love those lost to us in recent years. Until then, I wish you all a blessed February ahead.



Since the last update there have been five Blue Box Cards submitted as of January 19, 2023. There were two compliments in them.

- ♦ “I have a compliment about the Cornell Lab Feeder watch Cam. I want to thank IT department for keeping the bird feeding station on channel 1-2. This provides me great peace when life does not seem peaceful. My mom lives in Lorber, and it helps her immensely in her Lorber life. Please always keep this program available to us. Thank you!”

Remark: Thank you so much for providing this wonderful feedback! This message was sent to Administration and the IT supervisors so that they see how much this means to you and your mother.

- ♦ An RCFE staff member wrote that they tried to reach IT department by phone to help a resident who needed assistance urgently, but no one answered. This staff member then called James MacRae knowing that he is not IT but is tech savvy. He answered right away and came to help the resident. The staff member sends thanks and praise to James for being there for the residents!

Remark: Awesome work, James! Thanks so much for once again embodying the Masonic Homes Way!

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

There was one card with a number of concerns listed which included:

- ♦ The Home is untidy—nothing is put back after use.
- ♦ Adams Building was not re-done for residents—it is a shame.
- ♦ Now new Main Dining Room is not fit for power chairs.
- ♦ This is the residents’ home and not just for “show.”
- ♦ Where are the residents in power chairs supposed to eat? They live here!!

Remark: The power chair item was discussed in the December Town Hall and previous Blue Box Messenger article. It will be addressed again this month and ongoing updates will be made as the Main Dining Room remodel project progresses. The Adams building including the 2nd floor is happily occupied and used by residents daily. The author of this card is encouraged to come to me or someone else in Administration to give specific examples of needs or concerns that are not being met so that they can be fully addressed.

There was one card that described a space outside the 2nd floor of the main building which becomes messy and full of leaves and other debris quite often. The author asked for the space to be cleaned previously and it was, but unfortunately, it again has become full of debris.

- ♦ The author of the card suggested that we do something more appealing with that space, i.e., filling it with live flowers or perhaps plastic flowers to be changed or rearranged monthly, or anything else that seems appropriate.

Remark: Unfortunately, that space is not easily accessible. It does not have a door opening to it. Only windows. Also, that space is in a location that gets lots of leaves and other falling “stuff” from trees and wind landing in it. Because it’s hard to access and clean, it does tend to look messier than ideal. Facilities services understands the issue and does clean it on a regular basis so that it doesn’t build up mold or become a hazard, but unfortunately, it will have the windblown look more often than other outdoor spots.

The final card contained a suggestion that we put a directional sign at the intersection which includes the right turn into the Front Lot so that people are fully aware and follow the one-way direction loop around the flagpole island to the front of the building instead of going the wrong way on the road between the Main building and the island.

Remark: This suggestion/request was sent to Administration and Facilities Services, and they have gone out to inspect the spot to come up with a final solution.

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



—Submitted by Zelma Campbell

◇ I like TV better than the movies—it’s not so far to the bathroom.

◇ What a difference a few decades make.

When TV first came on the scene, it was only on the air for a few hours... and half that time was taken up with cowboy chases.

◇ You know you’re getting old when you must sit down to brush your teeth.

◇ If God had to give women wrinkles, why couldn’t He put them on the bottom of thier feet?

◇ Pundits advice on getting older... If you can’t recall it, forget it.

◇ I’m never lonely because I have four men in my life...

I get up in the morning with **CHARLIE HORSE**.

I spend the day with **ARTHUR ITIS**.

I dine with **WILL POWER**.


I go to bed every night with **BEN GAY**.

Spotlight on the Masonic Homes Way-By Joel Ingram

Who will we highlight for exemplifying a Masonic Homes Way Pillar in this month's Messenger? I hope those are the first thoughts that come to your mind when you open your copy of our monthly newsletter.

Okay, that's likely a bit of a stretch, but I hope you do take note of this column to learn about employees and residents that have done something to make our Home a better place. Toward that end, this month I am taking a break from highlighting a "do gooder" and wish to talk about how you can give someone due recognition in this space yourself.

THE GOLDEN PILLAR AWARD



Nominee Name: _____

Your Name: _____

Which three or more pillars did the nominee exemplify?

☐ **Safety**

- I look for innovative ways to safely perform my job.
- I take action to always put safety first.
- I take personal responsibility for the safety of the staff & members I work with.
- I actively identify areas to minimize individual and organizational risk.
- I use triage and risk assessment as tools for reducing organizational risk and providing appropriate service/care.

☐ **Personal Connections**

- I treat everyone with courtesy and respect.
- I maintain proper boundaries of communication.
- I am an active listener.
- I make an intentional effort to treat my colleagues with the same courtesy and respect I do with my clients/residents.

☐ **Experience**

- I am available.
- I communicate with care.
- I ensure my area has a welcoming appearance.
- I perform my job with excellence.

☐ **Efficiency**

- I support an environment of innovation that constantly seeks new tools and skills to meet our goals.
- I partner with other team members in order to create an environment where, together we meet our goals.
- I perform my role at the Masonic Homes efficiently and effectively so that members get the most out of their life experiences.
- I use my time and resources wisely.

I hope all of our staff and residents know what the FOUR PILLARS of the "Masonic Homes Way" are. In case you don't know, they are Safety, Personal Connections, Life Experiences and Efficiency. Briefly summarized, **Safety** is anything done to make the Home a safer place. Examples: Reporting a door stop that is broken or a chair that has a loose leg. **Personal Connections** are things done to improve the interactions and working among staff and/or residents. So, deciding to host a Bridge Club for the Home would apply, or calling residents on their Birthdays. **Life Experiences** are about things done to keep residents engaged in whatever brings fullness and vitality to their life. The Bridge Club just mentioned would apply here as well, or something like someone making a special effort

to make sure a resident who isn't very ambulatory has a way to get books from the Home library so he/she can keep up his/her favorite hobby of reading. And **Efficiency** is anything that improves the way we do things. So, any action or suggestion that saves time or money or improves the quality of our efforts is supportive of the Efficiency Pillar.

The Golden Pillar Award recognizes employees who have gone above and beyond in providing services at the Masonic Homes. In order to be eligible, your nominee must meet all four of the following criteria:

1. Exemplified at least three pillars.
2. Genuinely desired to improve the quality of service provided to clients and fellow employees.
3. Anticipated needs and took initiative to meet them.
4. Went out of the way to make an interaction or situation more memorable or successful.

In the following space, please describe how your nominee went above and beyond.

Who can suggest someone to be featured for MHW recognition? Staff can, but residents can too! If you know someone (resident or staff member) who has done something special (or who habitually does something special) that falls into one of these categories, just reach out to



David Bible or Chaplain Joel and give them the details. We are looking for good honorees every month!

It's easy to talk about or focus on things that aren't quite as good as we think they should be. But many great things take place in our Home all the time (and on a routine basis too). It's important that we note and talk about these things as well. In doing so, we give thanks for what's been done and remind ourselves and others that we all can make a difference if we try. I hope we'll all try in the month ahead.

Old Jokes for Old Folks—Submitted by Diana Swing

- ◆ My doctor asked me how I feel, and I said: “Like a semi truck. It takes me a long time to get going, I go uphill really slow, and I’m pulling a big tank of oxygen.
- ◆ Jim sat with his grandchildren watching a Cubs game. He began to get a little melancholy. “You know, kids,” he said, I’m getting older, and I might not be around long enough to ever see this team win the World Series.” The grandchildren were quiet for a while, then little Sally piped up, “Don’t worry, Grampa, maybe you’ll go into extra innings!”
- ◆ Why are so many retirement villages called Happy Acres? If I’m happy, it means I’m NOT aching.

Celebration—Written by Joseph Pritchard, Chief Clinical Officer



The Masonic Homes has much to celebrate this year. The campus master plan in Union City is nearing its completion. The Wollenberg building is one of the last large projects for this phase of the campus master plan. As of January 30th, 2023, residents have started living in the new and improved Wollenberg. For those of you who had the chance to tour the building during the open house, you know that it is beautiful and will meet the needs of our community for decades to come.

This year we also celebrate the 125th anniversary of the Masonic Homes in Union City. In 1898, this enduring edifice was completed, and the first residents filled these hallowed halls. Over the years, our Home has evolved and grown.



We have added more services, expanded our footprint, and become among the leaders in the senior living industry. Among many of our peers, the Masonic Homes is held in the highest regard.

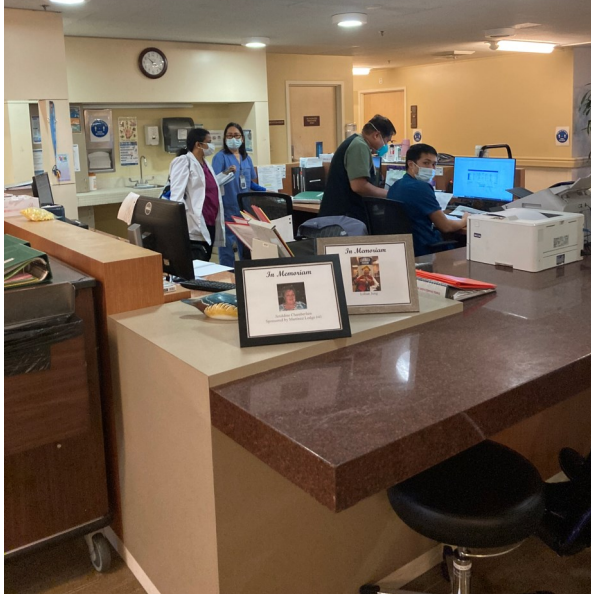
To commemorate 125 years of excellence, Kimberly Hegg and her team, along with a host of other staff members and resident volunteers, will be holding events both big and small. A gala will be held on June 10th to truly memorialize this year, but other smaller events will add to the festivities. Books will be written, dances will be danced, songs will be sung, and by the end of the year, we will all be fully satisfied with our celebrations.

This year we also celebrate the victories we have had against the COVID-19 pandemic. Though the world was swift to return to a sense of normalcy, the senior living industry is still feeling the impact of the pandemic. Masks are still worn, distances are still kept, and events are still restricted. We have continued to battle against the ravages of the virus while balancing the reopening of our campus.

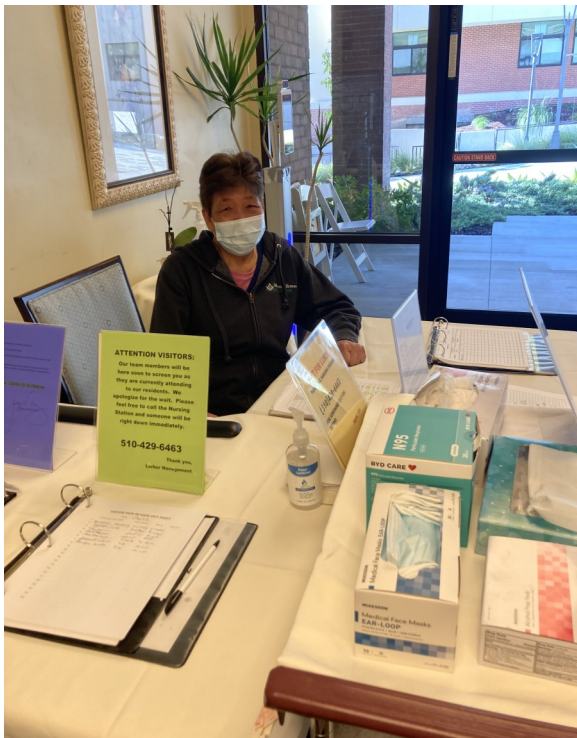
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Celebration...

We have been blessed to not have suffered the most tragic outcomes of COVID, and though we have lost loved ones, our community has remained relatively safe. Let us celebrate that safety, while moving towards a brighter tomorrow. A tomorrow filled with smiling faces and wonderful parties.



Let us take these moments to appreciate and celebrate what we have done and what we will do. The Masonic Homes remains a shining community on the hill that serves as a beacon for brotherly love, relief, and truth. And that no matter how dark the storm or strong the wind, we will remain steadfast in our service. Let us celebrate who we are!



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Previous Month's Activities

Didier Bouvet Trio Band



Previous Month's Activities

Bingo



*Dick & Barb Sullivan
32nd Wedding Anniversary*



*Orrin & Jeanne Benedict
4th Wedding Anniversary*



New Residents



Clyde Sheley
Sponsoring Lodge: Rio Linda #786
City: Rio Linda
Moved in: January 6, 2023



David Montoya
Sponsoring Lodge: San Jose #10
City: San Jose
Moved in: January 17, 2023



Norm & Sheila Gorsuch
Sponsoring Lodge: Orinda #122
City: Orinda
Moved in: January 18, 2023



Ronald Oliphant
Moved in: January 24, 2023



Resident Birthdays	
RUTH CARMICHAEL	2/2
BARBARA SULLIVAN	2/3
ED AUGUADRO JIM NIKAS	2/6
JODY TAYLOR	2/8
GENE MOORE	2/9
BOB HUBER JAMES LEONARD JACKIE PURDY	2/10
BILL SHAFFER	2/11
ED BURGLE CHARLOTTE HOFFMAN	2/13
JANET AUGUADRO	2/14
NEVIN CHAMBERLAIN	2/16
LARRY HOLLOMON	2/22
COLETTE MAHURIN	2/24
DON WALDEN	2/27



Residents	Ann. Date	Years
Harold & Jo Scott	2/3	78
Robert & Linda-Biancalana Church	2/3	1
Cecil & Colette Mahurin	2/14	28
Earl & Sheri Purington	2/14	16
Ted & Letha Tatro	2/20	30
Norm & Sheila Gorsuch	2/24	43



Jerry Chamberlain
November 7, 1939—January 16, 2023
Sponsoring Lodge:
Martinez #41



Lillian Jung
April 17, 1922—January 13, 2023

“ There are no goodbyes for us. Wherever you are, you will always be in my heart. ”

— Mahatma Gandhi



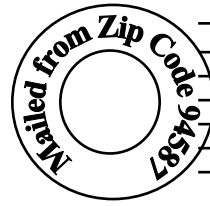
Birthdays, Weddings, Anniversaries & In Memoriam



The Messenger

Masonic Homes of California

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**February is
American Heart Month**



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***

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