



# A Note From The Directors

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Dear Masonic Senior Outreach Clients, Families and Lodges:

Happy 2023!! We hope your new year is off to a great start. The MOS Department wants to thank all of you for your outstanding participation in the 2022 MSOS Annual Satisfaction Survey. We loved hearing from you and thoroughly enjoyed reading all your suggestions and comments. In this spring edition of the MSOS Gazette, the department shares fun stories and holiday articles.

Thanks,

Amy & Sol

## New Co-Directors Of MOS

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Hello Masonic Outreach Clients, Families, and Lodges! My name is Amy Averweg, LCSW, and I am the new Director of Masonic Senior and Family Outreach Services. Prior to my promotion to this position, I served as the Masonic Outreach services Manager for Divisions 5, 6 & 7 for 5 years. Now, I will be supervising the MOS managers and overseeing the Care Manager Team for the entire state. I received my Master's in social work from California State University, Los Angeles and became a Licensed Clinical social worker in 2009. Prior to coming on board with Masonic Outreach Services, I was the director for a non-profit community mental health agency that provided support for children and their families. I look forward to continuing to serve this wonderful membership.



Hello everyone! My name is Sol Silverman, and I am the new Director of Masonic Assistance and Outreach. I previously served as the Manager of Masonic Assistance and have been with Masonic Homes for nearly 6 years. Prior to joining the MOS team, I worked as a care manager and social worker with Jewish Family and Community Services. I have my Master of Social Work (MSW) from California State University East Bay. As the Director of Masonic Assistance and Outreach, I oversee the Masonic Assistance central intake program, as well as the Lodge Outreach and Education program, and I'm excited to continue to serve the Masonic community in my new role.

## Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP)

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Good news, all internet providers are offering a low income option for internet and there is a government program that will pay for your internet if you are low income. The Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) will pay \$30 towards your internet package and all you must do is apply. MOS clients are almost always eligible for this program, and it is a MOS requirement that you apply. Many clients had an upgrade to their internet service as the program pays for a good level high speed internet that will meet your needs. Please ask your Care Manager about applying for this program, it is time we catch up with our ever-changing world.

Shelly J., MOS CM SoCal

## Caregiver Appreciation Day

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According to National Today, 40 million caregivers provide care to 16.6% of Americans in the US, they range from 45-64 years of age and the vast majority are female. Caregivers provide a range of support to people with chronic illnesses, temporary illnesses, disabilities and to the elderly and the demand for caregivers has risen because of the pandemic. In fact, we're currently facing a caregiver shortage due to heightened demand and turnover as caregivers are forging new career paths in the wake of the pandemic.

Regardless, caregivers of past and present, frequently set aside their own needs in pursuit and care of others. Caregivers face challenges such as isolation, burnout, financial strain, and lack of support, and when caregivers provide care to a family member, it can be a thankless job. It goes without saying that caregivers play a critical role in the lives of those that they provide care to, and it's crucial that they receive emotional and practical support from those around them. Caregiver Appreciation Day is March 3rd so please take a moment to celebrate the caregiver in your life by simply saying "thank you", buy them a gift, or ask them about their lives.

Quyhn T., MOS Manager SoCal

## Breezie Program

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The Breezie program is comprised of clients who possess a "Breezie tablet." The Breezie tablet's function is to enrich the participants' lives by electronically connecting them to the outside world and tailoring the use of the tablet to their specific interests (e.g., listening to music, games, video chats, etc.). Interns collaborate through the Masonic Outreach Services Department to participate in facilitating a bi-monthly Breezie Social group. The MSW Interns regularly collaborate to coordinate as group facilitators and host a small group. The group is to socially engage its members through group conversation, games, and trivia. Its primary goal is to foster meaningful connections and for the members to have fun. MOS also distributes a post-

Breezie survey, where we ask Breezie participants questions about the Breezie Program. The purpose of the survey is for us to better understand what the Breezie participants think about the program and if there are areas where we can improve. At this time, we have had 85 Breezie sessions. Our hope is that Breezie participants will continue to engage in and enjoy the socialization opportunities available through this program .

Cenarus B, SJSU Intern

## World Turtle Day

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Did you know that May 23<sup>rd</sup> is World Turtle Day? The day of observance began in 2000 and was created to bring awareness to the challenges turtles and tortoises face with disappearing habitats. In the last 100 years we have lost 80% of the population. There are many ways that this day is promoted; some people dress up as turtles, wear green, and/or adopt from rehabilitation centers. American Tortoise Rescue is the sponsor of this day and they provide Turtle Day lesson plans and craft projects that can be used in the classroom. Without intervention, many of the species could become extinct by 2050.

David G., MOS CM SoCal

## Women that Change the World

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At the age of 29, Viola worked as a Postmaster in the city of Aukum located in California. Viola has always been the type of person to stand up for her beliefs and advocate for herself and others. One example she shared is how she was able to change the name of the city of Aukum to Mt. Aukum.

In 1960, during her time as a Postmaster, there was always an issue from residents not receiving their mail or having their mail delivered late. This was due to the fact that Aukum mail was being sent to Auburn, a city located only an hour away from Aukum. Viola had heard many residents complain because of this issue and she took it upon herself to do something about it. Viola went door to door to ask residents if they would agree to change the city name, and she did not encounter anyone who opposed this change. Once Viola had the signatures she needed, she had to go to the state capital to submit the paperwork. Overall, after 6 months the official name change was passed.

Tony P., SJSU Intern

## St. Patrick's Day

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Saint Patrick's day is always on March 17th regardless of the day it lands on. March 17th is the anniversary of the death of St Patrick who lived during the 5th century and was the patron saint of Ireland who brought Christianity to this country. The Irish have observed this day as a religious holiday for over 1,000 years. More than 100 St Patrick's day parades are held in the USA with special foods, music, drinking and a whole lot of green. People wear green and decorate with shamrocks. The shamrock is the most iconic symbol of St Patrick's day and legend states that the shamrock was a vital part of St Patrick's teaching. The deep color green of the shamrock became Ireland's emblem that is said to cancel out the superstition that it brings bad luck to wear green. So, whether you have some corn beef & cabbage, Irish soda bread, colcannon or have some green beer on St Patrick's day enjoy the fun festivities around

Patricia P., Masonic Assistance Social Worker

## Woman's History Month

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Women's History Month is celebrated in the United States in March of each year to honor women's contributions to history, culture, academia and society in general. The United States has celebrated Women's History Month since 1987, as it was birthed out of a weekly celebration that was organized by the school district in Sonoma, CA in 1978. During this year, presentations on women's issues were given at dozens of venues in northern California, and a parade honoring women's contributions was held in Santa Rosa.

In the following years, other communities replicated the celebrations. In 1980, President Jimmy Carter, issued the first presidential proclamation declaring the week of March 8 as National Women's History Week. Six years later, the National Women's History Project successfully petitioned Congress to expand the event to the entire month of March.

Each year there is a theme highlighting aspects of women's contributions. This year's theme is titled, "Celebrating Women Who Tell Our Stories". The theme focuses on "women; past and present, who have been active in all forms of media and storytelling including print, radio, TV, stage, screen, blogs, podcasts, news, and social media."

Kai H., MOS CM NorCal



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## **Lodge Outreach Program**

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As Lodge Outreach (LO) wraps up another year, the 3rd annual LO Program Survey was sent out via email to all LO training coordinators. This was sent out last December and the outcome was presented to all CA divisions at the first LO meeting for 2023. The LO program sustains the strong partnership between MOS and lodges. This provides an opportunity for LO training coordinators to provide their thoughts and feedback as to what needs to be implemented in LO meetings. MOS is grateful for another year of LO and truly appreciate those who took the time to submit their responses. We truly look forward to achieving great work and extraordinary outreach efforts this year. We appreciate those who are a proud partner in helping shape the LO Program for 2023!

Camille S., Manager of Outreach & Education

## **Easter**

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For many Christian churches, Easter is the joyful end to the Lenten season of fasting and penitence. It is also believed that Easter is a symbol of hope. It is a celebration, though our lives are full of sorrow and pain, sickness and unwanted diagnoses, death and betrayal, it brings us hope amid the messiness of life. Happy Easter! May your Easter basket be filled with happiness, peace and hope this season and always!

Eleanor A., MOS CM NorCal

## **Social Work Month**

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Every year in March we celebrate the great profession of social work and their constant contributions to our society. We honor this helping profession on March 19th as National Social Workers Day. National Social Work Month was first organized in March of 1963 by National Association of Social Workers, to encourage public support for the profession. Also, each year Social Work month has a theme and for this year's theme is Social Work Break Barriers. MOS staff all work to provide the best care and support to all their clients. MOS continues to make a difference and positive change in both individuals and communities.

Camille S., Manager of Outreach & Education