

MSOS GAZETTE

DECEMBER, JANUARY, FEBRUARY

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTORS

Hello Masonic Senior Outreach Clients and Families,

The holiday season is upon us, and we wish you warm Holiday Cheer! This quarterly edition of the “MSOS Gazette” features stories about holiday memories from our staff and clients, as well as important events that take place during this season.

We want to thank everyone who participated in this year’s Annual MSOS Client Satisfaction Survey and Lodge Satisfaction Survey. We will begin compiling the results next month and will share the results with you in the new year. If you haven’t sent back your survey, please do so as there is still time. We truly appreciate your feedback.

Wishing you all a very Happy and Safe Holiday Season!
Amy & Sol

Navigating the Aging Journey: What to Watch for and How Senior Helpers Can Assist

As loved ones age, it becomes crucial to be attuned to their changing needs and ensure they are safe and healthy. Aging can sometimes bring unique challenges, such as physical limitations, cognitive decline, and increased susceptibility to health issues. Keeping a watchful eye on certain indicators can help identify when additional support may be needed. First, observe changes in mobility and balance. Frequent falls or difficulty moving around may indicate the need for assistance. Cognitive changes, such as forgetfulness or confusion, should also be monitored, as they can impact daily activities or remembering to take medication as prescribed. Additionally, note any changes in personal hygiene, weight loss, or signs of malnutrition, as these may signal difficulties in self-care. This is where in-home care companies such as Senior Helpers can help. Senior Helpers offers a range of support services tailored to the individual needs of seniors, including companionship, meal preparation, and assistance with activities of daily living. Their professional caregivers are trained to provide compassionate and personalized care to enhance the overall well-being of seniors. By proactively addressing the evolving needs of aging loved ones, families can help their loved ones to live safe and healthy with the support and assistance they need. It's a proactive approach to aging that prioritizes dignity, independence, and a high quality of life for our cherished seniors.

Article submitted by Senior Helpers, a Masonic Value Network Provider of in-home care.

VOLUME 10, ISSUE 4



BOXING DAY

Boxing day, a holiday after the holiday! Boxing day is a public holiday celebrated on December 26th. Traditionally, this holiday is celebrated in Great Britain, some Commonwealth countries, including Canada and New Zealand; the United States doesn't honor "boxing day".

There's conflict surrounding the exact origin of "Boxing Day, but it has been said the holiday has grown out of longstanding British traditions of charitable giving and goodwill. These are practices associated with the Christian festival of Saint Stephen's Day.

The name comes from a time when the wealthy used to box up gifts to give to the poor and traditionally offered a day off. On "boxing day" the help would receive a special Christmas box from their employers. Gifts were given to the help as a gesture of appreciation. Today, the tradition includes showing appreciation to anyone who provides a service with a small red box such as the mail carrier or trash collector. It's customary to greet people with warm wishes, good food, and lots of love.

Boxing day is another opportunity to connect with loved ones and unwind after the festivities of Christmas and spend time with family. This is an awesome opportunity in the United States for an excuse to extend the holiday and make special moments with loved ones.



Submitted by Brandi, MOS SoCal CM, from: ndtv.com

SS MEDICARE INCREASE 2024

Part B monthly premium of \$174.70. This is an increase of \$9.80 from 2023. The Part B annual deductible is also rising by \$14 to \$240.

As we wind down 2023 and approach a new year, there are changes ahead in SS, SSI, and Medicare. As the saying goes "What goes up must come down" as more than 71 million Americans will receive their annual benefit increase, but it won't be nearly as high as it was last year. Americans should anticipate a 3.2% increase in their benefits. Additionally, most Americans enrolled in Original Medicare Part A and B, or a Medicare Advantage Plan must pay a standard Part B monthly premium of \$174.70. This is an increase of \$9.80 from 2023. The Part B annual deductible is also rising by \$14 to \$240.

On a more exciting note, Medicare is expanding services in 2024. For the first time ever, mental health counselors and marriage and family therapists are eligible to enroll as Medicare providers! This means that Medicare beneficiaries who are struggling with depression, anxiety or substance use disorders will have access to a wider network of mental health providers. Furthermore, those who are struggling with chronic pain (pain lasting at least 3 months) will have coverage for pain control and management via pain assessments, medication management and care planning and coordination.

Written by Quynh T., MOS Manager



WELCOME SJSU INTERN JACKY

Hello everyone! My name is Jacky Jimenez, and I am currently pursuing a master's degree in social work at San Jose State University. Recently, I graduated from CSU East Bay with a bachelor's degree in Sociology. I discovered my passion for social work during my time in the healthcare field, as I have worked in the field for 8 years. In specific, witnessing the immense positive impact that social workers have in our communities inspired me to strive to be an empathetic advocate for those in need and promote the overall well-being of society. Hence, I am blessed to intern at Masonic Homes of California, as this internship is effectively preparing me to succeed as a social worker. During my free time, I enjoy cooking, baking, watching anime, traveling, sightseeing, reading, and trying out new restaurants. In fact, if anyone is interested in a baking tip, oddly enough, mayonnaise is my secret ingredient for moist banana bread. I was hesitant to try this when it was first suggested to me – but it works!

MASONIC SYMBOLS



Have you ever wondered where some of our Masonic Symbols came from? As a 32-degree Scottish Rite Mason, I have often seen the double-headed Eagle but was unaware of where it came from and how we got it as our symbol. But then I read "A House Adorned for Beauty", published by the Supreme Council of the Southern Jurisdiction of Scottish Rite Masonry. The double-headed Eagle is "The Eagle of Lagash" and is one of the oldest heraldic devices known from Lagash in Iraq. The symbol was also used in Turkey, Europe, Russia, and other areas. In 1768, it was discovered in Germany and was presented to the Supreme Council, 33', Southern Jurisdiction, by the American Military Scottish Rite Bodies during their 8th anniversary in Frankfurt

in 1976.

In 1801, the double-headed Eagle was adopted as a symbol for the two highest degrees in the Scottish Rite by the Supreme Council, 33', Southern Jurisdiction.

Submitted by MOS client Alan P. from a brother of his Lodge

A MASON'S DESTINATION

On a day in 1973 my parents met my uncle Alex at Woolworths on Market and Powell St. in San Francisco for coffee. He suggested to my father that I should explore the idea of becoming a Mason. At my parents' house we were having dinner and my father brought up the conversation he had had earlier with my uncle Alex about becoming a mason. I asked what is a mason? His answer was ask uncle Alex and he will tell you. He answered me by inviting me to a stated meeting dinner at his lodge, King Solomon Seaport Lodge #260 in San Francisco. When I arrived at the Lodge the first person I met was Ulysses G. Petropolis who was at the time the district inspector. The night was filled with many fun and enjoyable members. It was a special experience for me realizing it was a privilege to be present. Ulysses and Alex coached me through all three degrees including the proficiencies within three months.

During my masonic career I was a member and affiliated with King Solomon Seaport #260, Fidelity Lodge #120, Burlingame Lodge #400, Natoma Lodge #64 and San Francisco Lodge #120. I participated in the following activities in these lodges: New Membership Development Committee, Candidates Coaching and Interviewing new candidates to become future masons.

After retiring from being in business, an opportunity came up to become master. In the past I fulfilled prior positions up to Senior Deacon which qualified me to be Junior Warden in 2016, Senior Warden in 2017 and Master in 2018. Being a master allowed me to accomplish key objectives to a wonderful year and mostly because of supportive officers. Down below are these key objectives: Giving the ritual, putting on degrees, making new master masons, social events, Grand Lodge Activities and social interactions with new masons and reacquainting with masons in my past, as well as staying within budget.

Being a master for 2018 really touched me emotionally. I realized how fortunate I was to have great officers and their wives who many times pitched in for set ups of events and filled in with wonderful suggestions. My wife Adrienne and I are very fortunate to have received so much cooperation for the year 2018. Every stated meeting felt like a celebration and we enjoyed it all. You are only as good as the people among you.

Fraternally,
George Sardonis PM



CHINESE NEW YEAR 2024 – YEAR OF THE DRAGON

Saturday February 10th, 2024 is the first new moon of the Chinese lunar year and marks the beginning of the Chinese New Year. Each Chinese New Year is associated with an animal for one of 12 animals in the Chinese zodiac.

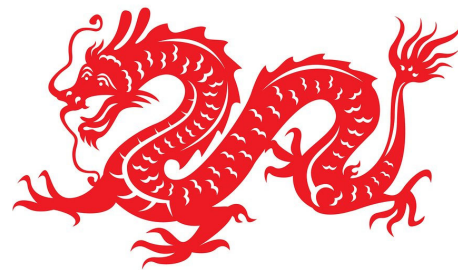
In 2024 this animal is the Dragon. A Dragon year occurs every 12 years. Recent years of the Dragon: 1928, 1940, 1952, 1964, 1976, 1989, 2000, and 2012.

Of the twelve signs in the Chinese Zodiac, the dragon is the only mythical animal, and it is considered one of great power and energy.

The personality traits of people born in the year of the dragon are charismatic, intelligent, confident, powerful and they are considered naturally lucky and gifted.

Dragon people can be quite tenacious and known for taking pleasure in challenges and projects that test their abilities to conquer whatever might be difficult or oppose what they desire to achieve.

Famous people born in the year of the dragon: Florence Nightingale, Sigmund Freud; Martin Luther King and John Lennon.



Written by Suzanne, MOS NorCal CM

ALZHEIMER'S AWARENESS MONTH - JANUARY



Alzheimer's Disease is a form of dementia, like Lymphoma is a type of cancer. It affects memory, thinking and behavior. Over time these symptoms grow severe enough to interfere with daily tasks and lead to increased need for ongoing support.

The number of Americans living with Alzheimer's is growing — and growing fast. More than 6 million Americans of all ages have Alzheimer's. An estimated 6.7 million Americans aged 65 and older are living with Alzheimer's in 2023. Seventy-three percent are aged 75 or older.

As the size of the U.S. population age 65 and older continues to grow, so too will the number and proportion of Americans with Alzheimer's or other dementias, barring the development of medical breakthroughs to prevent or cure Alzheimer's disease.

People with memory loss or other possible signs of Alzheimer's may find it hard to recognize they have a problem. Signs of dementia may be more obvious to family members or friends. Anyone experiencing dementia-like symptoms should see a doctor as soon as possible. If you need assistance finding a doctor with experience evaluating memory problems, your local Alzheimer's Association can help.

<https://www.alz.org/alzheimers-dementia/facts-figures>

Written by Angela D., MOS Manager

WELCOME SJSU INTERN MARGARITA



My name is Margarita Gaytan. I am currently attending San Jose State University to get my master's in social work. In 2021 I completed my bachelor's degree in Sociology at California State University, East Bay. I have previously worked with individuals navigating their workers' compensation claims as a case manager and with families in need of financial assistance. I am pursuing my master's in social work with the goal of being able to provide better assistance to the communities I am serving. I am excited to apply what I have learned so far and to

learn from everyone at Masonic Homes! In my free time I enjoy going on hikes, reading, and streaming shows. I look forward to the experience that this internship will provide me and am grateful for this wonderful opportunity!

WELCOME NEW LODGE OUTREACH COMMUNITY EDUCATOR, AMANDA



Hi everyone! My name is Amanda Levy, and I am the new Community Outreach Educator. I will be overseeing the Lodge Outreach program for Northern California and am excited to partner together with Masons all over California to help grow outreach efforts and make sure Masons and their family members have access to beneficial services and supports! Prior to joining Masonic Outreach Services, I worked as a case manager and social worker with individuals with developmental disabilities for over 8 years. I have worked together with a wide range of individuals from every age group- from babies to older adults! I have my Master of Social Work from Chico State, and a background in development throughout the life span, with a Bachelor's in Human Development. I look forward to serving the Masonic community in my new role!

JOE JACKSON AWARD

This year marks the 10th year of recognizing lodges with the Joe Jackson Award. This year, we congratulate Santa Barbara Lodge No.192 for earning the 2023 Joe Jackson Award! Joe Jackson was a dedicated Mason and lodge leader in San Diego who demonstrated amazing outreach efforts and spearheaded the Lodge Outreach Program, which we now have today. In Joe's honor, we created this annual award and recognize a lodge for their exemplary outreach efforts to their members and their community.

Santa Barbara Lodge demonstrated exemplary communication and community outreach. When the Lodge Outreach Program was rolled-out in Division V, Santa Barbara Lodge graciously hosted the first Lodge Outreach meeting and has consistently partnered with MOS, supporting their members and local community. These noteworthy efforts have been spearheaded by an active Lodge Outreach Training Coordinator at this lodge. A heartfelt congratulations and thank you to this lodge Truly well-deserved!



Written by Camille S., Manager of Outreach and Education

HOW TO AVOID HOLIDAY BLUES



The holiday season can be a difficult time for some people. The lack of sunlight in winter can make us feel sad or depressed, which is commonly known as SAD or the holiday blues. This can be especially hard for seniors who are alone or have lost loved ones. But there are things you can do to help avoid feeling down:

- ⇒ Change things up! Try celebrating in a different way by doing something new or connecting with loved ones through video calls or special decorations.
- ⇒ It's okay to feel sad. Letting others know how you feel can help them understand and offer support.
- ⇒ Reach out to others. Attending events near you or chatting with seniors at a living community this can really boost your mood! –
- ⇒ Volunteer. Helping others can make you feel good and give you a sense of purpose.
- ⇒ Take care of yourself. Try to stay active, eat healthy, and get enough sleep this can help you avoid feeling down.
- ⇒ Help someone else. If you know someone who's struggling with depression, you can offer support by helping them with daily tasks or going with them to appointments and events.

By making small changes and spending time with loved ones, you can still enjoy the holiday season and feel happy and refreshed.

Written by Minnie I., MA Intake and Resource Coordinator

MASONIC HOMES OF CALIFORNIA



Masonic Homes
of California

MASONIC OUTREACH SERVICES

1650 E. OLD BADILLO RD.
COVINA, CA 91724

MASONIC ASSISTANCE:
888-466-3642

Our Mission:

In keeping with the tenets of freemasonry, the Masonic Homes of California will promote the quality of life by empowering our members, their families and our communities to live well and achieve meaningful and rewarding lives.

We're on the web

