



The Messenger

Published for the Residents
Masonic Homes of California at Union City

Welcome Spring!

Written by Joseph Pritchard, Chief Operations Officer



As the days grow longer and the promise of spring approaches, now is the perfect time to embrace the energy and vitality that comes with the changing season. This March let's make a commitment to staying active, engaged, and vibrant at the Masonic Homes.

Physical activity is not only important for our physical health but also plays a crucial role in maintaining our mental and emotional well-being. There are countless ways to stay active and energized right here in our community, whether it's through fitness classes, walking groups, or outdoor activities in the fresh spring air. Let's make a concerted effort to prioritize our health and wellness this month by finding activities that bring us joy and vitality.

In addition to physical activities, staying mentally active is equally important for our overall well-being. This March, we encourage you to take advantage of the educational opportunities available to you. Check out a book from the library, find a historical documentary to watch, or share stories with your neighbors and friends. Engaging in intellectually stimulating activities can help keep our minds sharp and our spirits lifted.

Furthermore, let's not forget the importance of social connection in promoting our well-being. Building and strengthening relationships with our neighbors, participating in group activities, and



MARCH 2024



Continues on page 2




Welcome... *Continued from page 1*

attending community events are all excellent ways to stay connected and engaged. Let's make a point to reach out to our fellow residents, share a meal together, or simply enjoy a friendly chat in the common areas.

As we welcome the arrival of spring, let's embrace the spirit of renewal, growth, and vitality that this season brings. Let's take this opportunity to recommit ourselves to our health, well-being, and connection with one another. Together, we can create a vibrant, active community that nurtures and supports each other in living our best lives.



Wishing you all a March filled with energy, enthusiasm, and a renewed sense of purpose. Stay active, stay engaged, and stay vibrant!

Social Services News—RCFE Team



ARRIVING FROM...
WEST VIRGINIA

The Masonic Homes extends a warm welcome to our new resident and family member, Harold Windell! Originally from Charleston West Virginia, Harold moved here from Brookings, Oregon, and is ready to dive into our community. Harold is a proud father of 6 daughters, one son, and over 15 grandchildren. He has a passion for wargaming and ceramics. Formally an Engineer Services Supervisor in Berkeley, he played a part in the Sky Lab 02 System and even has a quirky story involving experimental artificial hearts for cows. Harold is eager to join the ceramic group and create beautiful pieces for his apartment. Harold can be reached at A314 at ext. 4845.





Quotable

Messenger—March 2024—Page 2

"Pottery is the perfect blend of science and art, where craftsmanship meets creativity."

Statistics.Fm



The Chaplain's Corner—by Chaplain Joel Ingram

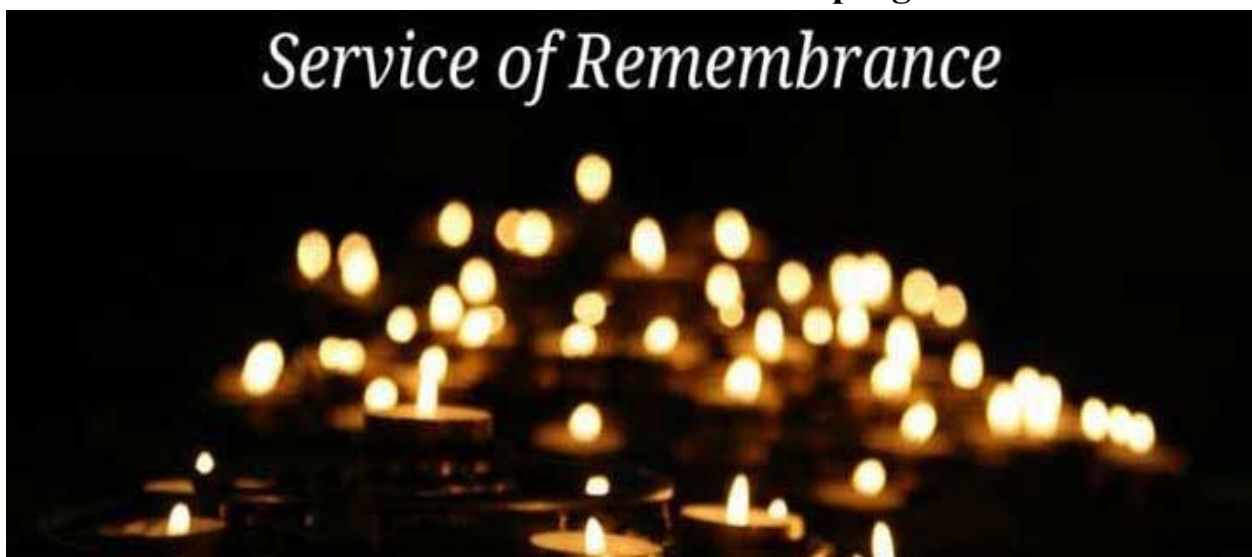
We Remember Them...

If you've been a resident of the Masonic Homes 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, I'd like to say a few anticipatory words about this service to be held in March.

Each year (but for a break during our "Covid Years"), 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.

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. So, consider this your personal invitation to join us on **Wednesday, March 13th at 6:30 pm, in the Masonic Homes Auditorium for our 2024 program.**



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 no longer a part of our journey. But in truth, our gathering is not about those we have lost as much as it's about those no longer with us but whom 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 full of remembrances of days that were.

I hope that you will join me in March as we remember with fondness those lost to us in 2023. Until then, *Chaplain Joel Ingram*

Celebrating Mardi Gras—Written by Lorber Recreation Team



Lorber residents held a Mardi Gras party last month, celebrating New Orleans style. Although Mardi Gras or “Fat Tuesday” is celebrated around the world, it is often associated with the festivity in the city of New Orleans.

Mardi Gras is the day before Ash Wednesday, and many celebrate with music, food, colorful parades, and guilty pleasures before the fasting Lent season. Lorber’s festivity included a music performance, a taste of New Orleans with Dirty Rice, a delicious Louisiana staple, bread pudding, and Cajun pasta.



A Touch of Valentines'...—Written by Connected Living Team



On every door in Traditions and 1st Pavilion floors is a simple hook for hanging wreaths or other seasonal decorations. The residents each month work on decorating a themed project.

This past month of February came with a Valentines' theme. Our residents meticulously decorated wreaths to give their home a homier feel.

After the Valentines' themed project rolled around, this time the residents embarked on another project with a little Mardi Gras flair and a whole lot of heart. They enjoyed music, food, and good old fashioned valentines' party. Thank you to all the resident celebration committee who came to help, Ed Rounds for the music, and all the people who wrote Valentine's cards. It made the day special.



Facility Services Update—Written by Mike McComas



As we say goodbye to Winter and hello to Spring, I would like to thank our Masonic Home residents who reside in the North, Head and South buildings for allowing us to replace all of your HVAC filters last month. Fresh new air filters will help in eliminating some of the pollen particles from circulating inside your room which can cause allergies to act up. Plus, it also helps in keeping our equipment running smoothly.

***** Information Technology Frequently Asked Questions

by Alan Davies, Director of IT

Question: Residents believe staff service calls are a priority, but how do we know when resident calls are delayed because you are responding to staff needs?

Response: Resident requests are handled by trained and knowledgeable staff who focus on resident requests. Their primary responsibility is to our residents and the technology being used by our residents. There may even be occasions where technology staff that are traditionally focused on staff services will aid a resident with their technological needs. In times when there is a campus emergency such as a power outage, all technology staff may come together.

Question: “When do we know if resident requests are delayed?”

Response: We let the front desk know the technology team is not able to provide its services, such as staff being sick or on vacation. Our aim is to respond to MHC resident requests within 24 hours on working days. If we’re not able to reach the resident by calling or stopping by, and the resident isn’t available, it may delay scheduling a visit. Once we are in touch with the resident, we schedule a time to complete the task.

For Acacia Creek, the resident will book a time with staff through the shared calendar. For MHC residents, if staff are at their desks and a resident calls, we answer the phone.

Spotlight on the Masonic Homes Way-By MHW team



This month's Masonic Homes Way honoree is likely well-known to most staff and many residents, but I'm guessing only a few know her service path for the Home.

Jennifer MacRae originally came to work for Masonic Homes on January 16, 2007, and for 14 years she served as Administrative Assistant for John Marshall, the former Director of Dining Services. She did a great job in this area, and even though her work was rather tucked away, everyone knew and loved Jenn for her infectious laugh and easy-going and friendly style.

In August of 2021, she stepped out of a back office into a front office where she served as Executive Assistant for Joseph Pritchard for a number of years. Evidently, Jenn works so efficiently that Joseph couldn't keep her busy. Now, Jenn serves as Executive Assistant to not one but two team leaders: Chris Gershtein, the VP for Clinical Services, and Kim Hegg, Sr. Director of Events, Recreation and Volunteer Services.

And yet, she's still got extra time on her hands (okay, maybe not extra time, but extra skills!) because Jenn also heads our new Home Employee Engagement Team. The goal of this group is to learn from staff what types of events and Home initiatives bring them joy and purpose, an improved capacity and connection as team members, and a meaningful platform to celebrate the achievements of employees of the Home. Jenn is perfect for this task as it allows her creativity and engaging style to shine. And shine it does! She and her team hosted the recent Food Fest that was so well attended and an absolute blast. She was also a lead for the recent Breast Cancer Awareness events, which staff and residents said were a huge success.

Whether acting as a lead or as an assistant, Jenn helps others be successful in living Masonic Home principles of life lived with **Safety**, having **Personal Connections** filled with **Meaningful Experiences** done with **Efficiency** and Joy.

Spotlight...

Continued from page 6

Thank you, Jenn, for all that you have done (and are doing) to make the Masonic Homes a great place to be. For this and more, you are our March Masonic Homes Way Honoree.



Written by Chris Gershtein, Vice President of
Clinical Operations

Since the last update there have been five Blue Box cards submitted as of February 18, 2024. There were three compliments in the most recent submissions! Two residents said that “the February Sunday Brunch was fabulous. The staff as always was great!” One resident stated, “The blueberry muffins at breakfast on February 7 were a good treat!” Two residents said that “Mel(issa) of speech therapy does a great job!” These compliments have been sent to the supervisors of each of these areas so that they can recognize the staff on a job well done!

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

- ♦ Suggestion: “The bacon needs to be cooked better. It was limp-not cooked. The fat part was almost raw.”
 - ♦ This suggestion has been forwarded to the chef and Dining Services Administration for review so that they can address.
- ♦ Concern: Some residents’ behaviors such as one resident calling other residents names is inappropriate.
 - ♦ Remark: I completely agree! We all need to treat each other with respect. That is true for residents as well as staff. If you observe this occurring, please bring it to the attention of a senior staff member so that they can address it immediately. The Resident and Staff Handbook each address the issue of offensive/abusive behavior. It is not tolerated.
- ♦ Concern: “We continue to have the issue of staff members not wearing masks appropriately. Especially staff coming from the kitchen into the Dining Room. Many times, the Dining Room staff also don’t wear gloves.”
 - ♦ Remark: I spoke about this with Soledad and the Management Team at our weekly Operations meeting. Managers will continue to impress upon staff the need to always wear their masks properly. The Dining Room management will address mask wearing as well as glove use. Dining Staff are instructed to wear gloves whenever they are serving food. You may notice them at other times without them on, but that is perfectly acceptable.

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

News from Active Living Department

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



It is my pleasure to announce that Luz Garcia has been promoted to the position of Active Living Program Supervisor! Luz has done amazing things within the Active Living Department in a relatively short amount of time, joining the team mid-2021.

In the last few months, Luz has proven what a valuable asset she is to the organization, taking on responsibilities within the department not in “job description”, keeping the ship upright and headed in the right direction. She has forged relationships across the campus, building rapport with the team at Acacia Creek, finding new ways to provide arts & crafts, entertainment, and outings campus wide.

Over the next several weeks, Luz will be building her team, looking for the right individuals to fill the open positions in Active Living. When you see Luz in the hall, congratulate her on her new position, and thank her for all the wonderful work she’s done and will continue to do into the future! Congratulations Luz!



Dining at El Portal—Written by Luz Garcia, Active Living Supervisor



For months, I've been hyping up my favorite Mexican restaurant to the residents. Finally, on February 23rd, I caved and took them to El Portal Mexican Restaurant in San Leandro.

In my opinion, it offers the most amazing authentic Mexican food in the Bay Area, from their tacos to their Chile Verde. Every resident was satisfied with their orders, some even opting for takeout.

Afterward, Queen and I decided to treat them to a little detour to the San Leandro Marina to enjoy the view of the bay. Despite its brevity, the residents truly relished the experience.

A big thank you to the residents who signed up for these outings; you truly make our excursions memorable.



Food for Thought—Submitted by Ralph McNitt

HATE has 4 letters but so does **LOVE**.
ENEMIES has 7 letters but so does **FRIENDS**.
LYING has 5 letters, but so does **TRUTH**.
CRY has 3 letters but so does **JOY**.
NEGATIVITY has 10 letters, but so does **POSITIVITY**.
LIFE is 2-sided, choose the better side of it.

You must be Bluffing—Submitted by Resident Zelma Campbell



Jill looked up in amusement as her husband finally wandered into the kitchen at 11:30 in the morning. Since they'd both retired, he hadn't exactly been keeping what she'd call "office hours".
"You must have been on quite a streak last night at the casino to get home so late! Were you winning or losing?"
"I wasn't out that late!" protested her husband.
"Losing then?" said Jill.
"No, really I wasn't out that late. You were just sleeping very, very soundly by the time I got in."
"Well," Jill replied, "Then I guess I'll have to tell the paper boy to stop delivering the paper under the front wheel of your car!"

Don't Be Chicken—Submitted by Diana Swing

A farmer is retiring, selling his land, and giving away his stock of animals to all his neighbors. He has a sly sense of humor: He devises a plan to give a horse to the houses where the husband is the boss, and a chicken to the houses where the woman is the boss. The farmer arrives at a small farm where the couple is outside doing some weeding. "who's the boss around here?" the farmer asks. "I am," replies the husband. "Great, I have a white horse and a black horse to give away," the farmer stated. "Which one would you like?" The husband considers it for just a moment and says, "Why thank you, I'll take the black one." "Oh no you don't. We want the white one," the man's wife says abruptly, "Okay. Here's your chicken," says the farmer.

My grandkids wanted me to get something called a "smart phone." When I was their age, a smart phone was one on a land line that you could unplug when the neighbor was calling to find out who broke her window with a baseball.

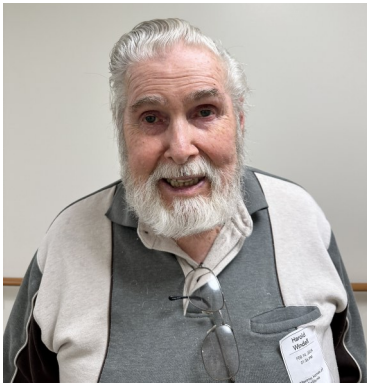
New Residents



Edward "Ed" & Jayne Glenn
Sponsoring Lodge: Palmdale No. 769
City: Palmdale
Moved in: February 1, 2024



Sandra Pistore
Sponsoring Lodge: Naval
No. 87
City: Vallejo
Moved in: February 13, 2024



Harold Windell
Sponsoring Lodge: Liberty
No. 299
City: Santa Clara
Moved in: February 14, 2024



Eleanor Moore
Sponsoring Lodge: Alameda
No. 167
City: Fremont
Moved in: February 22, 2024

Jokes—Submitted by Jeanne Benedict

- ◆ Today I was in a shoe store that sells only shoes, nothing else. A young girl with a tattoo and green hair walked over to me and asked, "What brings you in today, I looked at her and said, "I'm interested in buying a refrigerator." She didn't quite know how to respond; she had that deer in the headlights look.
- ◆ I was thinking about old age and decided that old age is when you still have something on the ball, but you are just too tired to bounce it.
- ◆ When people see a cat's litter box they always say, "Oh, have you got a cat?" I just say, "No, it's for company!"
- ◆ Employment application blanks always ask who is to be called in case of an emergency. I think you should write, "An ambulance."
- ◆ The older you get the tougher it is to lose weight because by then your body and your fat have gotten to be really good friends.
- ◆ The easiest way to find something lost around the house is to buy a replacement.
- ◆ Have you ever noticed: The Roman Numerals for forty (40) are XL?
- ◆ Did you ever notice that when you put the 2 words "THE" and "IRS" together it spells "THEIRS"?
- ◆ Aging: Eventually you will reach a point when you stop lying about your age and start bragging about it.



Resident Birthdays	
Mildred Housholder	3/1
Barry Brown	3/6
Mike Sanders	3/9
Richard Fiechtner	3/11
Suzie Hems	3/15
Kay Ellen Black	3/19
Shirley Brown Rudy Galindo Oma Bruch (101 yrs.)	3/20
Barbara Thomas (100 yrs.)	3/21
Doug Jackson Walter Paynter	3/26
Dulcie Tullis	3/30

Resident Anniversary

Resident	Ann. Date	Years
Ed & Jayne Glenn	3/17	59

Previous Month's Celebration



*Norm & Jessie Rushing
53rd Wedding Anniversary*

Masonic Homes of CA Opens Doors to Prince Hall Masons: Staff, Residents, Grand Lodge of CA Board Partner in Historic Moment

Written by Joseph Pritchard, Chief Operations Officer

In a groundbreaking and historic move towards inclusivity and unity within the Masonic fraternity, the Masonic Homes of California have announced that they will be welcoming Prince Hall Masons into their esteemed institution. This significant decision not only symbolizes a step forward in bridging the historical divide between mainstream Grand Lodges and Prince Hall Masons but also highlights the collaborative efforts of staff, residents, the Grand Lodge of California Board, and the broader Masonic community in shaping this transformative moment.



The partnership between the Masonic Homes of California Board of Trustees and the Grand Lodge of California has been instrumental in facilitating this historic transition towards inclusivity. Through ongoing dialogue, strategic collaboration, and a shared commitment to the principles of brotherhood and unity, the two entities have worked together to create a more inclusive and welcoming environment for all Masons, regardless of background or affiliation. Their dedication to

promoting diversity, equality, and mutual respect within the Masonic community has set a powerful example for the broader Masonic fraternity to follow.

The staff of the Masonic Homes of California, in close collaboration with the Grand Lodge of California Board, have played a vital role in supporting this momentous occasion. Their unwavering dedication to upholding the values of Freemasonry, their tireless efforts to promote inclusivity and unity, and their commitment to creating a welcoming and supportive environment for all members of the Masonic community have been instrumental in shaping this historic decision. Through their collective efforts, staff and Board members have demonstrated a shared commitment to building a more harmonious and equitable future within the Masonic Homes.

Residents of the Masonic Homes of California, guided by the collaborative spirit fostered by the Board and the Grand Lodge, have also been active participants in this transformative moment. Their open-mindedness, enthusiasm, and unwavering dedication to the principles of brotherly love, relief, and truth have helped lay the foundation for greater unity, understanding, and inclusivity within

Masonic... Continued from page 14

the Masonic fraternity. By embracing this spirit of partnership and working together towards a common goal, residents have exemplified the values of compassion, tolerance, and fellowship that define the Masonic community at its core.

As the Masonic Homes of California, the Grand Lodge of California Board, staff, residents, and the broader Masonic community join hands in this historic moment of inclusivity and unity, we celebrate the collaborative efforts and shared commitment of all those involved. Their collective dedication to fostering a culture of mutual respect, acceptance, and unity within the Masonic fraternity serves as a shining example of the transformative power of collaboration and partnership.

In Memoriam



Melvin Cohu
Sep. 8, 1938—Feb. 22, 2024
Mason of Vesper No. 84

**“May there be
comfort in knowing
that someone so special
will never be forgotten.”**

—JULIE HÉBERT





Editor's Note—Correction on
last month's Newsletter:
*Dick & Barbara Sullivan
celebrated their 33rd
Wedding Anniversary*

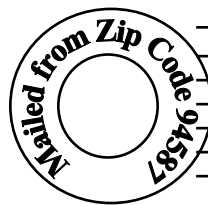




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Masonic Homes of California

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A spectacular view of the double rainbow over Acacia Creek & Pavilion captured by Norm Rushing on February 8, 2024 from Masonic Homes Dining Room.

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Table of Contents — March 2024

Welcome Spring.....	1
Welcome cont/Social Services/Quotable.....	2
Chaplain's Corner.....	3
Celebrating Mardi Gras.....	4
A Touch of Valentine's.....	5
Facility Services/Information.....	6
Spotlight.....	7
Spotlight cont/Blue Box.....	8
News from Active Living.....	9
Dining at El Portal.....	10
Food/Laughter/Old Jokes.....	11
New Residents.....	12
Jokes/Birthdays/Anniversary/Previous.....	13
Masonic Homes of CA.....	14
Masonic cont/In Memoriam/Editor's Note.....	15
You're Lookin' At It.....	16

Mission: "Together we create meaningful life experiences that make a profound difference."

***The Pillars: Safety, Personal Connection,
Experience & Efficiency***

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.

Proofreaders:

Residents: Evelyn Rick, Marty Trudell, Bob McCain, Diana Swing, Dawn Hicks, Richard & Marla Cummings

Staff: Lia Gibson, Emily MobleyShiela Tulabing, Marisol Gutierrez & Irma Montes De Oca

Distribution: Front Desk Staff

Photography: Lia Gibson, Norman Rushing, Brenda Leon, Bruce Rick, Recreation, Friends & from the Internet

Editor: Ola Afolabi, UC Communications Manager

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