

A Great Charity Event

When we think of Oddfellows, we think of the key values that come with it: Friendship, Truth, and Love. These principles define who we are. To reflect on these principles, Mountain View Lodge #244 hosted a pop up gallery every month from October to December. For those who do not know, a pop up gallery is an art event that only lasts for a limited time. These pop ups allow a space to show new art pieces on a regular basis and prevents the space from having stale artwork overtime. Proceeds from each pop up gallery went directly to a charity that focused on protecting immigrants.

I believe this topic is important because many people know that this is a crisis but feel helpless about it or do not know what to do. Even though this seems like an insurmountable task, the least we can do is to send aid to organizations that will do the best work they can for us in our stead. Another reason to care about this situation is because many people don't know what it is like to go through immigration. I personally don't know what it is like, but my parents do.

I am a first generation from an immigrant family of 5. All of my siblings were born right here in the states. My father is from Liverpool, England. My mother is from Glasgow, Scotland. But how did they become citizens in the first place? Well there are only four ways you can be a legal citizen of the United States: Family, Employment, Good luck, and Bad luck. If you become a citizen through family, then a fellow sibling, parent, or child can help you get into the country, though the wait is very long. Employment means that you gain a Visa and then a Green Card to work here. Good Luck means that you entered an immigration lottery. But this is mostly granted to countries that have a smaller population and even though 22 million apply, only 50 thousand get in a year. Lastly there is bad luck where you are a refugee and you had no choice. This can range from famine or war torn regions.

Luckily for my family, they came in on Employment. My father started working in the states as a specialized contractor in 1988. In order for

him to get his Visa he had to prove that he 1) Did not have a criminal background and 2) wasn't going to take an American Citizen's job. The same applied to my mother as well. Luckily he was hired to work in a broadcasting company using equipment that came from Britain. Ergo, couldn't take another American job because the technology didn't exist in America and his company covered the expenses for that Visa. This took 3 months. In 1989 he applied for his Green Card thanks to that same company. This time it took him 6 months. It was only in 1995 when my father applied for his citizenship and that took 9 month. In all that time my father worked in America, he could have gotten rejected and had to move back to England, but at least he had a good country with good vocation to return to. Some are not so lucky, they don't have anywhere else to go.

That is why we held this event. Many people fall into the 4th immigration category of bad luck. They come here seeking a shining city on the hill and many of them don't even get to see it. One example is that when people claim asylum they are immediately turned away. So they need to wait just outside the border until the checkpoints open up again. This causes people to wait in terrible and unsanitary conditions with little food or water. Others have to live in tents or tarps that stand between them and the elements, even as the surrounding temperatures drop to below freezing in the desert. Many of them have to rely on volunteer workers from both the US and Mexico in order for them to survive. It is unnecessary suffering and it needs to stop.

We as Odd Fellows need to be out on our values and let the world know where we stand in such a crisis. This event is a great way to show the community at large what we are about. Not only can the community see that we do care about our fellow neighbors both local and abroad, but they also can see the faces of the organization. This allows our neighbors to come into the lodge, to ask questions on the work we do, the principles we follow, and to know that when they do good to our fellow neighbors, they are not only helping others who are in need, but in a sense, following the principles of the Odd Fellows. It is in this act that we help expand the communities knowledge on what is happening, how to help our neighbors from abroad, and also to inform the community that we are here to help and that they can also make a difference. Whether is is through a small donation to these 501(c)3s or by joining the Odd Fellows and making a greater difference in the world through their actions.

By *Vanessa O'Connor*

Silicon Valley Odd Fellowship

An Education of Odd Fellows

While rush hour was in full bloom, **Jessica Dickinson Goodman** picked me up and we set off for Modesto, towards the Membership Educational Seminar where Odd Fellows and Rebekahs from all over California would gather for the weekend. In the trunk packed bags and a respectable collection of games. Nervous about the company of strangers, I had announced I would bring tabletop games to play in the evening. **Sally Calpo** and **Debra LaVergne** added their games to the collection. Together with **Sinead** and **Ria Toolis**, **Annie Cronin** of Cupertino Lodge and **Kati** and **Kelli O'Day** of Davis Lodge, we made two merry nights of it.

Since I'd been planning to elevate the quarterly first degree ceremony in our lodge from habit to tradition, I went to both the presentation and break-out session on organizing a degree team, by **Michael Greenzeiger** and **Linnea Bredenberg**. They taught and had us do a read-through of the sit-down dinner that is the short form of the initiation. It left me with quite a lot of notes and ideas.

Kait Osman came as well, who had joined Odd Fellows at the same time as me. After initiation, in Mountain View Lodge #244, our first few months are spent on collecting the achievements set up to advance through each degree, such as helping out at an event, which helps create a feeling of camaraderie. Since this had prompted me to submit an article to **Dave Rosenberg's** newsletter *Dedicated Members for Change*, I was happy to be able to shake his hand. Similarly, to be introduced other august personages from Grand Lodge and – if I remember correctly – Sovereign Grand Lodge. **Adam Potolsky** was happy to heckle – and be heckled – from the back row in the grand ballroom where we were taught for a day and a half.

I went home with a sense of foreboding, however. The blend of Christian tradition, secular identity and members of many religious backgrounds was familiar... Odd Fellows and Rebekahs, lodges and leadership, had yet to resolve the identity crisis that comes with the post-Christian era. My Dutch church's deciding battle in that crisis had been over whether to bless civil partnership, essentially, same-sex marriage. And here I had outed myself as queer – and Christian – in my lodge, in two of the order's publications and, just then, in person at the seminar.

2020 was going to be an interesting year.

By *Arike van de Water*

Pancake Breakfast

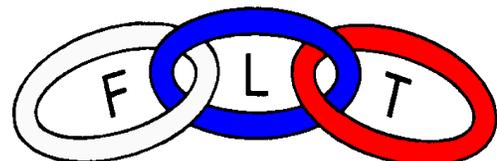
Save the date, Saturday March 14th, will be the day for Cupertino Lodge to hold it's big fund raiser to fight cancer. Lets try and beat last years results. The menu hasn't been set yet nor the price, but the date has. Every able body member is expected to help in some way, either in cooking, serving, set up, clean up or advertising. We also get to meet our friends that we don't get to see that often. See you there. Tune in next month for the real information.

Cupertino February 17 Social

Cupertino's new Noble Grand, **Adrian Otero**, is planning something a little different this month, for their third Monday social. It will be "**Game Night**". It will include both board games and video games along with Pizza and beer or soda. Why not drop in and join in the fun? It should start at 6:30.

3rd Degree, January 29

The third degree will be conferred at True Fellowship lodge on Wednesday, January 29 at 7:30. However, I do not believe the newsletter will be published in time, to inform the members, but the e-mail version may. It should be a very large class, with 6 candidates coming from Mountain View lodge and 1 from Cupertino and possibly a couple from True Fellowship and Saratoga. The degree was scheduled during this busy month because we were trying to confer the members so that they can be installed. They could have been installed at a later date, however, they would have missed out in all that excitement of that big special event and also the officers doing the installing. congratulations to all of the new officers.



Theta Rho Assembly in San Jose

Sigma Tau Theta Rho Girls Club #92 has the honor and responsibility of hosting Theta Rho Assembly on February 15-16, 2020. The Joint Youth Committee has hopes of instituting Junior Lodges for Auburn, Oakdale and San Jose, and restarting Grand Junior Lodge.

Donations toward the expenses of the weekend would be greatly appreciated. We want to thank the lodges that have signed up to take care of all of the meals. Saturday dinner will be a Taco Bar by Clara Rebekah Lodge #34. Sunday breakfast will be by True Fellowship Odd Fellows #52. Sunday lunch will be pizza provided by Mountain View Odd Fellows #244. Sunday dinner will be Chinese provided by Ted Wong on behalf of Cupertino #70 and Philotesian Rebekah Lodge #145.

Monetary donations would cover meeting materials and our food expenses to make sure the girls and boys have a good time and will come to our meetings excited and ready. The youth will each get a small duffel bag, instead of a tote bag, paid for out of the donations. Donations received above the expenses of Theta Rho Assembly will help send Sigma Tau Theta Rho to Sovereign Grand Lodge. They are working on a dance and on a skit.

Please make checks payable to Sigma Tau Theta Rho #92 and mail to Sigma Tau Theta Rho #92, c/o 2369 Saint Francis Drive, Palo Alto, CA 94303.

The schedule for the weekend is

Saturday February 15	Sunday February 16
11:30am Registration	7:30am Breakfast
Noon Practice for Assembly	8:00am Registration
1:30 - 3:30pm Good Fellowship Practice	9:00am Opening of Theta Rho Assembly
5:00pm Opening	1:00pm Lunch
6:00pm Dinner	1:30pm Officers Meeting and Installation practice
7:00pm Good Fellowship Night	5:00pm Dinner
There will be a sleepover at the hall.	6:00pm Graduate Degree, Memorial and Installation

Hamburger Fry Dates in 2020

Please come to the first Hamburger Fry of 2020 at the Santa Clara Odd Fellows Temple, 1035 Emory St, San Jose on Wednesday, March 25.

There will be homemade desserts as well as the usual hamburgers, cheeseburgers, and chili.

Doors open at 5:45 pm. Serving from 6:00pm - 7:00pm.

\$2.75 - Hamburger with all the trimmings

\$3.00 - Cheeseburger with all the trimmings

Chips, Coffee, Soda, and Dessert Available

Hamburger Fries are sponsored by True Fellowship Odd Fellows #52 and benefit Sigma Tau Theta Rho Girls Club #92 and the potential new Junior Odd Fellows Lodge.

Other Hamburger Fry Dates are

April 29, May 27, June 24, July 29, August 26, September 23, and October 28.

By *Debra LaVergne*

Clara Rebekah Lodge

#34

Joint Installation

-Clara had a **Joint Installation** with True Fellowship # 52 on 1/25. The main hall was used. A fun time was had by all.

Omelet Breakfast

-Please join us for the **1st Omelet Breakfast** in 2020! **SATURDAY**

2/1 8:00 - 11:00 am

Custom Build your

Omelet or Crepe!

\$7.00 -1 Omelet/2 Crepes

(sweet or savory)

+ all the sides and beverages!

YUMMY !!

INFO-

Ruth De Sando's Memorial (95)

Church Service

SAT. 2/8/2020 at 10:30 am

St. Christopher's Church

2278 Booksin Avenue SJ 95125

Celebration of Life

SUN. 2/9/2020 at 2:00 pm

Three Flames Restaurant

1547 Meridian Av,

near Hamilton Av SJ

She was a member of

Clara Rebekah Lodge

