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The Triple Links Silicon Valley Odd Fellowship

November 2023
Don Lang - Editor
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Established 1987



Initiation Held on October 30th

On Monday October 30th, there was extra excitement getting ready for one of our largest initiation to take place so far. The number of new candidates reached 16 coming from 4 lodges in the district, Volcano #25, True Fellowship #52, Cupertino #70 and Saratoga #428. As it worked out, only 10 candidates actually made it there. Counting the candidates, there were 35 Odd Fellows at the special degree meeting. For the Halloween season, **Debbie Wolf**, from True Fellowship, artfully carved 4 pumpkins with Odd Fellows symbols, the 3 Links, skull and bones, the all seeing eye and the heart in hand, as can be seen in the picture above. The degree was really specially performed, with music and candles spread all over the room.

After the degree, professional pictures were taken by **Tom Blackburn** and then we all preceded to the dining room for refreshments which included cake, fruit and assortment of cheeses. A picture of the new members can be seen below.

By **Don Lang, Editor**



Third Degree to be Held on November 29th at True Fellowship

Any member who has attained the second degree and has the permission of their lodge to receive the third, may receive it at the live conferral ceremony on November 29th at True Fellowship lodge in San Jose. The ceremony will begin promptly at 7pm. Candidates are requested to arrive by 6:30. Candidates must have a letter from their lodge, or an email may be sent to secretary@true52.org.

If you are already a member in the third degree and are interested in being part of the degree team, please contact **Mason Wolf** - mason@true52.org.

By **Mason Wolf, NG True Fellowship 52**

Grand Patriarch Reception

Reception honoring
Grand Patriarch
Deborah J. Shuler

Saturday, November 4, 2023
San Jose Odd Fellows Center
1035 Emory Street, San Jose 95126

1:00 pm Hamburger Luncheon \$15
2:00 pm Reception
Followed by Sock Hop!
With Live Music!
Dress for the 1950's!

Call Debra LaVergne for Reservations
(650) 575-4565



Silicon Valley Odd Fellowship

Join or Die

On Saturday, October 21st, the Cupertino Odd Fellows concluded their annual Oktoberfest with a screening of a new documentary with an intimidating name, "Join or Die." The movie follows the research of Dr Robert Putnam, a social scientist who, for over 50 years, has been studying the question of why some democracies succeed while others fail. His research has led him around the world and through history, and his findings have caught the attention of politicians and political scientists the world over. So, just what is it that makes a democracy succeed? According to Dr Putnam, it's clubs!

"Social Capital" is the formal term he uses to express how connected a society's members tend to be with one another. The more connected they are, the less likely they are to cheat each other, and the more likely they are to do random acts of good, even with people they don't necessarily know. Putnam refers to this happy situation as "generalized reciprocity," and it has enormous benefits for society.

But the key to making this work are the organizations, clubs, associations, fraternities, leagues, guilds, unions, congregations, etc. within that society. When people come together in these types of groups, they gain a new sense of empathy and community that has benefits for their entire society. It helps them become more active citizens in their democracy, imparts a sense of camaraderie with their neighbors, and gives them the courage to potentially run for office themselves. Leaders in societies with high levels of social capital tend to be more honest, and the level of negative polarization (seeing one's opponents as enemies) is lower.

Unfortunately, as the documentary explains, what we see today is the result of having lost so many of those clubs that used to bind us to one another. Rising inequality, feelings of isolation and loneliness, hyper polarization, and governmental gridlock and dysfunction, are all highly correlated with the fact that so few people in American society today are willing to join anything. The effects on our society have been disastrous, and the effects on the isolated individuals have been terrible as well, as evidenced by the surge in overdoses, suicides, and early deaths in general. In fact, according to medical researchers, your chance of dying in any given year drops by 50% if you join at least one organization, as compared to people who don't join anything.

After the movie, viewers were treated to a discussion with one of the directors, Pete Davis, where he answered some of our burning questions and we talked about how we try to turn this around.

And there definitely is hope! Because as a country, we've been here before. At the beginning of the 20th century, we were dealing with many of the same issues that are facing us today, and rather than give in to despair and watch our democracy collapse, we instead started turning toward each other, and away from the isolation and hyper-partisanship of the Gilded Age. We started clubs and joined them, in huge numbers, and in the process, we created a more inclusive and nurturing society.

So, if we want to start healing our country again, being an Odd Fellow is actually a good start! In fact, the movie both opened and closed on the members of Waxahachie Lodge #80 in Texas. Our Order brings people together, exactly as we need to be doing. And if we're going to reverse our civic decline, we need to keep bringing people in, showing them that a diverse, caring community is a good way to live.

Because ultimately, the only way we're going to turn things around is if we do it together. As Pete Davis put it, the key verb in a democracy isn't "vote". It's "join".

By *Mason Wolf, Noble Grand TF 52*

Cupertino Christmas Dinner

Plans are being made for this years Christmas Dinner at the Cupertino Lodge, on Monday, December 18. The when and where are complete, but the what and how need to be decided.

However, there is no social planned for November, mainly due to the Thanksgiving holidays and the lodge rentals for the month..

By *Don Lang, Editor*



Mal Hopkins Passes

Malcolm Hopkins passed away quietly in his sleep on Saturday, 9/30/23. He was almost 87 years old to the day. Mal join Cupertino lodge on 3/6/2006, but he originally joined a lodge in Shenandoah, Pennsylvania in the 60's where he dropped out after being a member for some time. Mal was a Past Grand and was secretary several times as well as a Trustee. He would always be there to help at different lodge activities, whether it was working in the kitchen, setting up the dining room for a social, or for decorating at Christmas or Oktoberfest time, or finding the cheapest sale on soda, water and beer that he always kept our refrigerator full.

We did hold a short draping of the charter ceremony for him and we are looking at having an Odd Fellow Ceremony Service for him in the future. He will be surely missed.

By *Don Lang, Editor*



Soup Supper

Philotesian Rebekah Lodge will hold its first annual Soup Supper on **Wednesday, November 8th at 6:30 PM** at the Cupertino Hall. Guests are invited to join us and see what we do. All the members of all Lodges and their families are invited. We will serve Home Made Split-Pea Soup – with all the trimmings and Homemade Chicken Soup. With Salad and Hot Crusty Country Bread. A great way to take the chill off. There will be no meeting after just good fellowship and warm greetings. Call 408-252-3954 so we have enough soup for all.



Philotesian will serve a soup supper and Community Services donation drive on Wednesday, November 8, 2023 from 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm at the Cupertino Odd Fellows Hall, 20589 Homestead Road, Cupertino.



Soups available will include vegetarian chili, chicken noodle soup and split pea soup. They will be accompanied by green salad, cornbread and homemade biscuits.

Please bring goods or money to donate to Cupertino Community Services.

Their wish list for donated goods extends beyond canned goods (especially canned meals like beef stew, hash, chili) to include:

Large diapers (size 3-4),
baby food,
baby clothes,
cereal,
powdered milk,
career clothes,
pillowcases
paper grocery bags

Call or e-mail **Debra LaVergne** at 650-575-4565, debra.ella@gmail.com with any questions.

By **Mary Lou Lang & Debra LaVergne**

Veterans Day Parade

Plans are being finalized for our section of the San Jose Veterans Day Parade, which will be held on Saturday, November 11, 2023. We will meet this year at a new location, the Odd Fellows Grand Lodge Office at 122 Race Street in San Jose, at 10:30. They have a large parking lot that is all fenced in and the cars will be protected while we are at the Parade. We will gather there and then car pool to central San Jose, near the train station, where we will assemble for the parade. The parade will start at 12:00 noon, but it usually takes another hour before it gets down to us, but I do not know where in the parade we will be. Usually we are towards the middle to end of the parade. We will have one antique car, **Andrew Crockett's** antique car and **Rod Metoyer's** brand new truck. Members can sit in the back of the truck, if they have trouble walking the one mile of the parade.

We would like as many Odd Fellows and Rebekahs who are able, to take part, and join us in the parade. We would like to have a great showing. Please email me and let me know you plan on attending. If you are a canton member, make sure you wear your military uniform, if you are an encampment member, please wear your fess and your purple encampment shirt, if you have one. If you belong to AMOS wear your AMOS shirt and fess and if you are an Odd Fellow or Rebekah wear your lodge shirt. You also can wear a cap that has some Odd Fellow or Patriarch advertisement on it.

By **Don Lang, editor**

Festival of Trees

The Rebekah Children Services in Gilroy, is having their yearly big fundraiser, the Festival of Trees, on Saturday, November 18. RCS is one of the Order charities that Cupertino Lodge 70 supports. We have been donating to them and have been getting a table at their Festival of Trees for several years now. This year we will only have 4 people going so far, **Don and Mary Lou Lang** and **Tom and Lilly Blackburn**.

This is a very big fancy event, with most men wearing tuxedos and the women wearing fine dresses and their best jewelry. The tickets are \$150 a person, which really only covers all the things you get while there. Of course the dinner itself is excellent and you are served Champaign and fine wines.

20th Annual Festival of Trees A night of Elegance & Illusions



The Glass House, S J
81 W. Santa Clara St.
#100

San Jose, CA 95113

6:00 PM to 10:00 PM

By **Don Lang, Editor**



Cupertino DeAnza Lions Club Thanksgiving Food Drive

The Cupertino DeAnza Lions Club is holding their annual Thanksgiving Food Drive the weekend before Thanksgiving, November 18 through the morning of the 20th. They will be standing in front of 3 Lucky Food Stores on Saturday and Sunday, asking shoppers to support the drive by purchasing Turkeys and other selected foods that would be included with the thanksgiving dinner, or by donating money to buy what food is still needed. The food for 139 families fits into two large cardboard boxes per family. The Cupertino Lodge dining room is used for this occasion. All of our dining room tables are set up in the dining room and the empty boxes are put on the tables. The food that is collected at the stores are collected and dropped off at the lodge many times during the day on Saturday and Sunday, where they are put into the selected boxes. However, the food that needs to be refrigerated needs to be stored in a refrigerator truck until when they are taken out Monday morning and put into the boxes lined up at the lodge. A pair of winter gloves is recommended to save your fingers from freezing when unloading the truck on Monday morning. After that, the boxes are loaded into the different cars or trucks which are then taken to the different drop off points. This year if the Cupertino Odd Fellows would like to lend a hand in helping out the Lions, please give **Don Lang** a Call or email. He can put you on their list where needed. You can help by either asking for food at the stores for 3 hour shifts, or carrying food out of the Refrigerator Truck on Monday morning, (8:00 to 10:00) or help with lending your truck or car and driving food to a drop off spot. Please help out, this is a very big job, contact **Don Lang**, he will help you with what you need to know. **408 835-7261** or donlang@sbcglobal.net

By *Don Lang, editor*

Join the Odd Fellows at the Dickens Fair

On Sunday, November 19th, the Odd Fellows of District 107 invite you on a journey to Christmas past, with the Great Dickens Christmas Fair and Victorian Holiday Party. See the historic Cow Palace transformed into historic London, replete with authentic public houses and live entertainers. See (and smell!) the way Christmas used to be, a season of goodwill, boisterous cheer, and childlike wonder - embellished with a flourish provided by the characters of Charles Dickens himself.

If you want to join, contact Mason Wolf - mason@true52.org, or sign up online at <https://true52.org/dickensfair>. Since we're purchasing tickets as a group, we're able to enjoy a significant savings over the face value price of the tickets. Cost is \$31 for adults, \$26 for seniors (62+) and \$21 for children (12 and under).

Money is due no later than Friday, November 10. Once you sign up (or email Mason) you'll be sent instructions on how to pay.

By *Mason Wolf, NG True Fellowship 52*



Davy Jones' (Kid Friendly) Pirate Carnival of Terror at Mountain View Lodge

300 people visited Mountain View lodge (#244) during the pirate festival on Halloween, in downtown Mountain View. Sister **Jessica Dickinson Goodman**, who headed up the organization for the event, reported that the event brought much about much joy and curiosity regarding the Odd Fellows. Children enjoyed the various minigames that had been set up.

By *A. M. van de Water*

