



Independent Order of Odd Fellows  
Dedicated Members for Change

March 1, 2012

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

We welcome the month of March, and we welcome a DMC Newsletter article by Grand Warden Rick Boyles, which follows.

But first, a quick reminder to all: We're going to have a great dinner meeting during Grand Lodge on Thursday, May 17 at El Torito Restaurant & Cantina (this restaurant is located less than a block away from the Grand Lodge Hotel, the Doubletree). This event is our Second Annual DMC Dinner! The event is open to all representatives of their Lodges and their guests. No-host cocktails at 5 p.m. and dinner at 6 p.m. Due to the generosity of several DMC members, we are able to subsidize the cost of the dinner for the first 100 who RSVP. For those first 100 persons who RSVP it's only \$10. To RSVP send your check (payable to "Dave Rosenberg") for \$10 per person, and the list of the attendees to: Dave Rosenberg, Davis Odd Fellows Lodge, 415 2nd Street, Davis CA 95616. Don't delay. It's filling up fast.

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Dave Rosenberg

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DMC Message for March

By Rick Boyles

One of the greatest assets our order has is a long and storied history. Many of us have read various histories of the IOOF. Our friend, Peter Sellars, has penned 2 great histories, and there are other books available which talk about all the years and changes the Odd Fellows have been through. The important piece of information a reader may derive from these sources is that change is endemic to the order. If we realize that change is endemic then it should follow that change is not something to be feared. In fact, if we realize that change is endemic, than we should also realize that not to change is what causes stagnation.

Consider, if you will, all the changes that have transpired in 170 years. Is it logical to assume that the I.O.O.F. alone would be able to resist change? In point of fact, it is ludicrous to assume that change would not occur. If farming is no longer our primary source of income, should we still dress as farmers? If we no longer drink water from a well, should we still carry a tin cup



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around with us, in honor of the time when our ancestors did? Of course not, because it is logical to adapt. And adapt is what we should do, and soon.

There are those who say that we can't alter our basic moral guidelines of friendship, love and truth, but whoever would dream of touching these dynamic ideals? In my mind, we have strayed from these ideals by enduring members who resist anyone with new ideas, who banter about friendship love and truth while they plan a tireless subterfuge which only succeeds in weakening our order even more. This year at Grand Lodge we are going to have to decide which path our order is going to take. Do we go back, or do we go forward? If we go back, I believe we doom ourselves to ultimate failure, simply by virtue of doing nothing. Nothing means that if our average age is 65 to 70 years old, simply by adhering to modern mortality tables, our order will be gone within 10 years. If we go forward, we say to the world, that we want the young to join us, not just as our juniors, but as our heirs, as those great individuals that will be able to propel us into the near and distant future.

What should be encouraging to each and every member is that there are lodges which embrace the world of today. Some lodges fear new members to such a degree that they no longer open their doors to the public at all, but the lodges which are growing, are those who realize that the true future to the order, if we are to survive, is to find a common ground with a diverse public. Is this a radical notion? Hardly, in fact, in William Whalen's book "Handbook of Secret Organizations" he notes that the I.O.O.F. was originally started as a common man's response to the more exclusive group, the Masons. So, if this is the case, our group was founded initially on the basis of change. In my opinion, it is the lodges that fear change that are really harming the order. Which lodges point to success - the Davis, San Francisco, Hayward lodges which now boast a large percentage of our statewide membership, or the lodges that struggle to maintain a quorum on a regular basis? It's time to smell the coffee before we all vanish simply by virtue of our age.

No one says that all lodges should be run like Davis. On the contrary, our committee is made up of concerned members from throughout the state. But, conversely, should we be listening to those who are unable to garner a quorum in their own lodge? We are at a critical juncture, and must listen to anyone and everyone with their ideas for membership. Let's not as an order dismiss any individual who has a new and fresh idea. Just as our moral guidelines call for friendship, love and truth, let's realize that our future relies on the way in which we cope with today. Let's not let our actions be guided by anger and resentment towards anything new. No member, no matter how sincere, should be allowed to bully others into submission. It's time that we all join hands and realize that our basic precepts of friendship, love and truth are the bonds which will enable us to face an uncertain future.



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Please join us at Grand Lodge, on May 17th, at El Torito restaurant for dinner and our 2nd annual DMC meeting. All members are invited. Tickets are going fast at \$10 each! Please send payment to Davis Lodge.

The following individuals will be running for office:

Rod Metoyer, for Grand Master

Rick Boyles, for Deputy Grand Master

Dave Rosenberg, for Grand Warden