



Independent Order of Odd Fellows  
Dedicated Members for Change

June 23, 2012

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

Here are some thoughts from Brother John Fraher following up a recent trip to Nova Scotia, Canada. Unfortunately, too many of our Lodges are virtually invisible in our communities. We need to open our doors to welcome our communities - after all, that's where our future members live.

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Dave

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Last week, Carol and I were on vacation and one of the stops was Halifax, Nova Scotia. While touring an old house, converted museum, there were two plaques on the wall about celebrating the local lodge's 137 year anniversary in 1999. I was so excited that this small town had a lodge. I wanted to find it, take pictures, and hopefully maybe find a member or two there to meet and exchange Odd Fellow stories. I went to the people running the museum but they didn't know what Odd Fellows was nor where the hall was. I went to a boutique faire and asked many of the individuals there. One person pulled out the telephone book and we looked up all possibilities but there was no address or telephone number. One person thought it might be on the other side of town. So Carol and I walked all around but no luck. We even tried looking it up on the internet, but had no luck either.

I thought how sad this was. What would have happened if I moved to this town, not being able to find a lodge and lose my membership with Odd Fellows. Then I started thinking of the lodges in California. I wonder how many lodges have no way of contacting them except if you actually ran into a member?



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Many lodges, including California Lodge No. 1, have great internet sites with names and telephone numbers of contacts, but I guess since most lodges meet once a week or less, there's no need to own a lodge's telephone number. And some internet sites don't have a common address (i.e. "ioof...") that would be common around the world so if you went to any city that a lodge had an internet address, that would be a universal beginning to locate a local member or lodge.

Needless to say, I wasn't able to exchange any friendship with my fellow brothers and sisters in Halifax. Is there something in place that I'm unaware of? Is this possibly an area we should investigate to implement by Sovereign Grand Lodge? Connection, communication, public awareness are a must if we want our fraternity to grow.

Just a thought.

John