



Independent Order of Odd Fellows
Dedicated Members for Change

September 14, 2013

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

My wife and I have just returned (yesterday at 1 a.m.) from a 12-day vacation in Bavaria. It's great to wander, but it's good to be back.

In addition to returning to California yesterday, I also had the opportunity to participate in a Skype hook-up to a Southern California Lodge that was giving a 50-year recognition to one of its members. This particular Lodge is one which has a number of older members, but also a significant number of newer and younger members. And this caused me to reflect on the fact that my own Lodge, in Davis, was in a similar situation 10 years ago. At that time, the Davis Lodge was significantly smaller than it is today and one man in the Lodge - also a 50-year member - bridged the gap to encourage the Lodge to bring in new younger members. That is precisely what had occurred in the Southern California Lodge to which I was speaking.

And as I was speaking to the members of this Southern California Lodge, celebrating the 50-year accomplishments of an important member, I could not help but reflect on the symbol of our Order - the Three Links representing Friendship, Love and Truth. These are not only symbolic of Odd Fellowship, but also of the links in the chain which connect us all to this fraternal order. We are each an important link in that chain. And it is the task of each and every one of us to make that link stronger and greater. When we joined our Lodge, it was because SOMEONE in that Lodge forged our link to the Order. SOMEONE stepped up and brought us into the fraternity. And now brothers and sisters, it is our responsibility - each and every one of us - to continue strengthening that link by bringing in new members.

Odd Fellowship in California would not have a membership problem if each one of us brought in one new member.

That is a simple statement that is the truth. The problem is that while some of our members are active in bringing in new members, others (in fact most) just don't even try. And that's the main reason that Lodges diminish and fold. Because it is ultimately just math. Every year we lose members who die or withdraw. Every year we add new members, however, in lesser numbers than our losses. Unless we bring in new members in numbers exceeding our losses of members, Lodges will die. That is the reality of fraternal life.

So, I challenge each one of you - at your very next Lodge meeting - to encourage your Lodge



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mates to meet the membership challenge of the 21st Century. Surely, each of us knows at least one person who would add to our Lodge DNA and would be a good member. Don't wait for "the other guy" to bring in new members. The very existence of our Order depends on EACH OF US to add links to the chain of Odd Fellowship.

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Dave Rosenberg, Grand Warden