



**FIRST MEETING:**

December 7, 2023

Office: (304) 201-3880

Reservations: (304) 201-3880

**Oakland Lodge #61, F.&A.M. ORIGINAL CHARTER**

Rockridge Masonic Hall

5449 College Avenue

Oakland, California 94618

[www.oakland61.org](http://www.oakland61.org)

SIGNED: May 4, 1855

Secretary: (415) 425-2661

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**February 2025**

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**VIEW FROM THE EAST:**



I was once told "You get out of Masonry what you put into Masonry." That quote has stuck with me throughout all my years here.

While we are a busy and active lodge, there is something for everyone. If there is something you would like to see or do, please contact me, even if it just to talk about your day or vent if that is what you need. I know it sometime seems it is all about working for the craft, but that work helps bring us together and makes us have a stronger bond as brothers. We are always here for each other.

February is upon us my brothers and it is going to be a busy month. We start off with stated meeting on February 6th. Social at 6pm, diner at 6:30 with the meeting at 7:30. Please make your RSVPs by Tuesday the 4th so that we have enough food.

February 13th will be our first Entered Apprentice degree. Officers will be in tuxedos. Let us have as many brothers there as possible to make this a great degree.

February 20th will be officers practice for the Fellowcraft degree which will be on February 27th.

Clairemont middle school pancake breakfast will be on February 22nd. Help is always wanted.

Then on March 1st is our Crab feed. Get your tickets as soon as you can. Before they sell out.

**Ben Newsom, PM**  
**Master**

## VIEW FROM THE WEST



It feels a bit strange to write this. I'm the Senior Warden of Oakland Lodge #61, which is a position I never thought I'd hold when I first walked through these doors. Truth is, I was skeptical when I first joined. But here I am, standing in this role.

I remember walking into my first meeting thinking, *this is it, this is where I'm going to find purpose*. I'd been searching for something more meaningful, a sense of connection.

As I sit down to write this, I'm filled with gratitude. Gratitude for the brothers I've met and the experiences I've had as part of this lodge.

Freemasonry, at its core, is about building strong relationships based on mutual respect and a commitment to helping each other grow. But too often, I feel that we miss opportunities to fully embrace this ideal. It's easy to get caught up in the traditions, the meetings, the committees—and forget the reason why we're all here in the first place: to be here for one another.

It's about making sure that every member, from the newest Entered Apprentice to the most seasoned Past Master, feels valued and supported. The strength of a lodge doesn't come from how many people walk through the door; it comes from how we make each other feel once we're here.

Fraternally,

**Drew G. Spitzer**  
**Senior Warden**

## VIEW FROM THE SOUTH



Hello Brethren!

As we step into the month of February, our Masonic Year is just getting started and we already have a busy month lined up. As I mentioned last month, we need everyone to pitch in to make every event a success. From welcoming a new brother into our ancient and honored fraternity to helping at the annual pancake breakfast for Claremont Middle School, there are great opportunities to pitch in this month.

Fear not, there are also great purely social events on the calendar too, from our Super Bowl party to the Crab Fee (get your tickets soon they are going fast!). Be sure to check the calendar on our website for all upcoming events, along with the weekly emails. And as always, please be sure to RSVP for all events by using the links in the weekly emails.

Lastly, if you have any requests, or would like to help with preparing the dinners, please feel free to reach out to me directly.

Sincerely & fraternally,

**James McVey**  
**Junior Warden**

## FROM THE TREASURER

Brethren,

Happy New Year from the Treasurer. I wanted to take care of a few house-keeping items at the beginning of the year.

The first is all invoices, bills and reimbursements must be submitted to the Treasurer on the Friday before the Stated Meeting to be paid at the Stated Meeting.

Secondly, any reimbursement must have The Oakland Lodge #61 reimbursement form completed. I have those and can forward one to you as needed.

In the case where an out of pocket expense occurs during the month and you need reimbursement sooner, that can be handled. Thank you for your cooperation.

Fraternally,

**Brother Phil Williams**  
**Treasurer**

## FROM THE SECRETARY'S TABLE



***" There is no teaching to compare with example. "***  
***Martin Luther King Jr.***

Dear Brethren,

As we step into the heart of the new year, it's a fitting moment to reflect on the strength of unity within our Lodge. The concept of working together—whether in fellowship, charitable efforts, or the pursuit of personal growth—lies at the very core of our Masonic journey.

Freemasonry teaches us that every member plays an essential role, and together, we can achieve far more than we could individually. Each of us brings unique talents, wisdom, and perspectives that, when combined, create a force of purpose and impact. This is a time for us to reaffirm our commitment to supporting one another and to recognize that our collective efforts have the power to elevate the Lodge, our community, and ourselves.

As we prepare for the coming months, we have several exciting opportunities for each of us to contribute. Whether through our regular meetings, community outreach programs, or internal Lodge improvements, there is a space for all to participate. These activities not only strengthen the bonds between us but also uphold the values of charity, brotherly love, and service that we hold dear. Your participation, whether through donations, volunteering, or spreading the word, will be a vital part of its success.

*Continued on Page 4*

*From the Secretary's Table, Continued from Page 3*

In the spirit of growth, we will also be continuing our masonic education nights, where we will delve deeper into the teachings of our Craft and explore ways to bring its lessons into our daily lives. These sessions are a perfect opportunity for all members, regardless of experience, to learn and grow together.

I encourage each of you to take an active role in the life of our Lodge. Attend meetings regularly, offer your help in upcoming events, and most importantly, take the time to connect with your fellow brethren. The strength of our Lodge lies not just in the ceremonial rituals, but in the genuine bonds we form as brothers working together for the common good.

In the words of the great Masonic philosopher, **Albert Pike**, "Masonry is a progressive science. It seeks to make the man better, the family happier, and the world brighter." Let's continue to honor these ideals by working hand in hand, lifting each other up, and together, creating a brighter future for our Lodge and our community.

Thank you for your support as your secretary, my door is always open.

**David Forsyth P.M.**  
**Secretary**

**ROCKRIDGE HALL ASSOCIATION**

Brethren & Friends,

We had our annual meeting and elected the following officers for 2025:

- |                 |                         |
|-----------------|-------------------------|
| Philip Williams | President               |
| David Forsyth   | Vice President          |
| Tyrone Davis    | Chief Financial Officer |
| Kirby Kinhead   | Secretary               |

The 2025 Hall Budget was approved.

The January regular meeting was held after the Annual meeting and future projects were discussed. We are getting bids for HVAC, Solar Power and other various projects. The main objective is to keep the building safe and upgrade the infrastructure to maintain the integrity of the building. We look forward to another productive year.

Sincerely and Fraternally,  
**Brother Phil Williams**  
**Board President**

## Announcements

**FLASH:** Until this past week the Grand Lodge Dues Invoice system contained significant error. It listed a CLOSED **Oakland No.61, PO Box 29677** as our remittance address. If you chose to pay your dues by check, please mail it to Oakland No.61, 5449 College Ave, Oakland, CA 94618.

**Something New:** You will notice a new approach to our Trestleboard Calendars. We hope their layout is helpful.

**LYFT Concierge:** We know that for some, getting to a Lodge event can be challenging. Members with transportation limitations are able to utilize our complimentary Lyft Concierge program to get picked up from your home, or wherever you may be before the lodge event and dropped off after the event. If you want to use this option, contact W. Tyrone Davis (341) 235-0271 to set up your ride.

### **iMember 2.0**

1. Go to [https://member.freemason.org/membership\\_registration](https://member.freemason.org/membership_registration) (there is an underscore between "membership" and "registration.")
2. Fill in the information: a) Lodge #, b) Member ID which is on both your dues card and the mailing label of you your California Freemason Magazine c) Your last name. Then click "Check Member Status."
3. Enter your "E-mail address, password (at least 8 characters long), and re-enter your password on "Password Confirmation," then click "Sign-in."

**2025 Dues:** Our dues will remain at **\$131.00** The first dues notices went out in the second week of November and continue with physical and electronic dues notices until February 2025. **Please see Dues Payment Information elsewhere in this issue.**

### **Sunshine Report**

- Bros. Lucas Strauss and Bill Kambic continue to battle cancer. As of last week, Lucas returned home after a 21 day stay as UCAF's Parnassus campus. He is beginning a 6 month chemotherapy program. He asked me to pass along his thanks for all the calls and other support from his lodge brothers. Additionally, he told me he has lost 110 lbs.  
Bro. Bill hasn't passed along any progress reports to me but did send me the following inspiring message which he asked me to pass along to fellow brothers: "Dear God, one of the men that I appreciate the most is reading this message. He is generous and loving and I am very proud of him, please help him to live his life to the fullest, bless him and enlighten him on his path and please protect him and his family as we go into the New Year! In Jesus's name Amen."
- Bro. Rick Macintire spent Christmas and several days thereafter in the hospital with the flu (not covid). Fortunately, he has recovered and is back to work.
- Worshipful Jim Macintire tells me he checks in on Pat Gholson weekly. Fortunately, her children are close and providing excellent support to Pat following Bro. Don's death.
- I heard from Bro. Will Smith. He tells me he is dealing with some balance issues but is taking advantage of a VA exercise program which is helping. He plans to join us at the February Stated Meeting.

*\* If any brother knows of another brother or a sweetheart whose status should be included here, please contact me at either 707-592-7217 or [ajr1943@pacbell.net](mailto:ajr1943@pacbell.net)*

## **Dues Payment Information**

As previously mentioned, our 2025 dues are \$131. We will continue to use the Grand Lodge billing system and if you are an annual dues payer, you should have received your first dues notice in the second week of November. They will send out both physical and electronic notices. **We urge you to registrar for iMember 2.0 and pay your dues online.**

Please note, there is a small service fee. Once Grand Lodge records your payment, you can print your dues card from your online portal at [member.freemason.org](http://member.freemason.org). Additionally, you can still pay the Lodge directly by check addressed as follows: "Oakland Lodge No. 61, 5449 College Ave, Oakland, CA 94618." Once we record your payment, you can print your dues card from your online portal at [member.freemason.org](http://member.freemason.org). However, if you wish, we can print and mail your card to you. Please indicate your preference with your payment.

As always, if you are unable to pay your dues because of financial hardship and/or serious health issues, please contact the Secretary.

If you have questions about any of the above, please contact our Secretary or Assistant Secretary at [secretary@oakland61.org](mailto:secretary@oakland61.org) and [assistant.secretary@oakland61.org](mailto:assistant.secretary@oakland61.org)

## **Life Members**

2025 Dues Cards are now available. That said, if you are unable to print your card from your online portal at [member.freemason.org](http://member.freemason.org), please let the Secretary or Assistant Secretary know. One of them will print and mail it to you.

For those interested in purchasing an Oakland #61 Life Membership, please see the chart below.

***One makes a single payment of the amount equal to the Lodge's annual dues at the time of purchase of the life membership multiplied by the factor indicated opposite the member's age in the following schedule:***

*Age 49 and under, a factor equal to or greater than 24 times annual dues  
50 to 54 inclusive, a factor equal to or greater than 20 times annual dues  
55 to 59 inclusive, a factor equal to or greater than 18 times annual dues  
60 to 64 inclusive, a factor equal to or greater than 16 times annual dues  
65 to 71 inclusive, a factor equal to or greater than 14 times annual dues  
Age 72 and over, a factor equal to or greater than 12 times annual dues.*

### **Brothers Birthdays in February**

George E. Davis (1), Aaron T. Kornblum (1), Donald D. Salo, PM (1),  
Alfredo Avila (2), Charles R. Mack (2), James R. Causa, PM (3),  
Michael G. McLean, Jr. (3), Timothy L. Fairley, PM (4), Timothy Jackson (4),  
John F. Hutchens (5), David E. Davis (6), Guillermo E. Rodriguez (6),  
Grove L. Gill (7), Gerald E. Lindemuth, PM (12), Hank K. Fung (14),  
James P. Beere (17), Ronald F. Parker (17), Thomas A. Gonda, Jr. (18),  
Patrick A. Love, PM (19), James A. Filice (21), Jeffrey T. Wilson, Sr. (23),  
Victor G. Borlaug, II, PM (24), Christopher C. Mills (25),  
James S. Boblak, Jr. (26), Raffy A. Khoroizian (27), Julio F. Abella (28),  
and Stefan A. Gibson, Sr. (28).

### **February Masonic Anniversary Dates & Years of Service**

Myron E. Temple, Jr., PM (2/26/1964), 61 years  
Robert C. Ellis (2/11/1965), 60 years  
Thomas W. Lee (2/26/1975), 50 years  
John K. Mc Guire (2/10/1987), 36 years  
Paul D. Emery (2/24/1994), 31 years  
Romeo N. Escobar (2/24/1994), 31 years  
Cesar M. Datuin (2/8/2001), 24 years  
Rodney E. Simmons (2/21/2002), 23 years  
Luciano Chessa (2/12/2005), 20 years  
Lucas B. Strauss (2/8/2007), 18 years  
David A. Forsyth, PM (2/19/2008), 17 years  
James M. Anderson (2/24/2011), 14 years  
Earl D. Love, Jr., PM (2/9/2012), 13 years  
and Jisu T. Kim (2/24/2015), 10 years

### **2025 Memoriams**

**Carl P. Lampkin**, passed away on 11/22/2024  
**Donald B. Gholson**, passed away on 11/22/2024

## February 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
January 26	27 7pm - Book Club	28	29	30 6:30 - Masonic	31	February 1
2	3	4	5	6 6pm - Oakland 61	7	8
9 2pm - Super Bowl	10 7pm - Book Club	11	12 6:30pm - Hall	13 6:30pm - Entered	14 Valentine's Day	15
16	17 President's Day	18 6:30pm - DOSI @	19	20 6:30pm -	21	22 8am - Pancake
23	24 7pm - Book Club	25	26	27 6:30pm -	28	March 1 Crab Feed



## March 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
February 23	24 7pm - Book Club	25	26	27 6:30 -	28	March 1 Crab Feed
2	3	4	5	6 6pm - Oakland 61	7	8
9 Daylight Savings	10 7pm - Book Club	11	12	13	14	15
16	17 St. Patrick's Day	18	19	20 6:30pm - DOSI	21	22
23	24 7pm - Book Club	25	26	27 6:30pm -	28	29
30	31 Scholarship	April 1	2	3 6pm - Oakland 61	4	5



## **CANDIDATES LEARNING CENTER WELCOME CANDIDATES!**

The free, newly updated Candidate Learning Center is now available in an easy-to-navigate flipbook format. Meet the requirements of the California Masonic Code for the Basic Masonic Education Course at your own convenience - wherever you are!

These courses have been prepared by California Masons, for California Masons and include a wealth of extra study materials, as well as personal interviews from fellow Masons! We hope you will enjoy this exciting period in your Masonic career.

### **How to use the Candidate Learning Center**

- The flipbooks match your degree status in the Member Center. (Entered Apprentices will only see the Entered Apprentice degree, Fellow Crafts will see the Entered Apprentice and Fellow Craft degrees, and so forth.)
- Select the name of the degree course to open each flipbook in a new window.
- Thoroughly review each flipbook to immerse yourself in the lessons of each degree. If any questions come up during your review, make a note of them to discuss them with your coach.
- Once you feel adequately prepared for each degree, you can take the final exam for the course.
- A score of 70 percent is required to pass each course. Once you pass, a checkmark will appear in the box in the "passed" column and your score will appear in the "score" column. You can take the test as many times as you would like. If you score a new, higher score, it will replace your previous score in the score column. Record of your passing the course will also appear in your member record in the "Basic Masonic Education Courses" section.

Oakland Lodge #61  
***Super Bowl Party***  
Sunday, February 9th  
2:00-7:00 pm



*This is a Potluck Event for all Oakland Members, families and prospects. However, the lodge will provide the “Protein”.*

**Rockridge Masonic Center**

5449 College Avenue  
Oakland, CA 94618

Please **RSVP** to the email announcement  
or call (304) 201-3880

# Oakland Lodge #61



**Saturday, March 1, 2025**

**6:00 PM**

**\$55.00 Per Person**

Limited to 80 Tickets

*Tickets must be purchased by **Tuesday, February 25th***

*Family Style Dinner with Beverages*

**Rockridge Masonic Center**

5449 College Avenue

Oakland, CA 94618

**For Tickets:**

<https://buytickets.at/oaklandlodge61/1503574>





***Now Serving Parents, In-Laws, and CA Masons of All Levels***

## **Expanded Eligibility at the Masonic Homes of California**

For more than 125 years, the **Masonic Homes of California** have provided members of our fraternal family with relief and care when they need it most. Now, the Masonic Homes is beginning another chapter in its—story and continuing to evolve to meet the changing needs of its members.

In recognition of the changing landscape of senior care, services offered through the Masonic Homes of California—including **independent living, assisted living, memory care, and skilled nursing at the Masonic Homes' retirement communities in Union City and Covina** will now be open to more members of our fraternal family than ever before.

That includes, for the first time:

- **All parents and parent-in-law of California Masons**
- **Master Masons with less than five-year membership in California lodges**
- **Entered Apprentice and Fellow Craft Masons in California**

In many cases, entry into the Masonic Homes of California's retirement communities in Union City and Covina is now available to these groups on an "assignment-of-assets" contract, meaning the cost is partially underwritten through Masonic relief dollars. In other cases, services will be available on a "fee-for-service" contract.

The result is that more California Masons and their families will have access to the expert care and services that have made the Masonic Homes of California the "jewel in the crown of California Masonry" for more than a century.