



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

SIGNED: May 4, 1855
Secretary: (415) 425-2661

August 2025

VIEW FROM THE EAST:



Hello Brothers,

Welcome to August and back from our little summer vacation, although it seems more like March than July.

As we get back on track with meetings and events, we have a major hiccup in our plans. As many of you know we have lost our elevator for the time being. We are not sure how long it is going to take to get it fixed. This is not one of those "Oh a circuit broke;" it is a major part. We are working on having a chair lift installed as we speak in order to get people from the ground floor to the second floor. We will work on other plans for food and such as things progress.

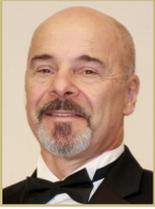
With it being August and the 8th month of the year, it is time to start looking towards the next year and what we will do as events. If you have any suggestions or events you would like to run, please contact our Senior Warden as he will probably be our Master for next year.

Please make your reservations for events as it helps us ensure we have enough food for all.

See you there,

Ben Newsom, PM
Master

VIEW FROM THE WEST



Hello my brothers,

Well, it is said that in January, the lodge will be dark. It does not mean that there will not be activity in the lodge. There will be a stated meeting so we can pay our bills. Also, it's time for our officers to perform their proficiencies. Not an easy task for anybody. It seems just when you get good at your station. It's time to move ahead. Knowing your work is one thing. Performing the work in front of all your brothers is another. To do it well takes much practice. It makes you feel good and proud when you get it right. Our Worshipful Master Ben will not let the integrity of our work be cheapen by lack of practice. This he has made perfectly clear and as always, he follows through on his words. I would like to congratulate Brothers Paulo and Jalil on becoming Master Masons. Both men are a joy to spend time with and will represent our craft well.

Please be safe and stay healthy,

Dana Janke, PM
Senior Warden

VIEW FROM THE SOUTH



Brethren,

I'm filling in for Brother James as he is out of state dealing with family issues. I'm sure he and his family would appreciate you adding them to your prayers. Hopefully, he will be able to pass along his own message in September. Beyond that, please help in any way you can to move the lodge forward in his absence. Further, if you are moving up in the line next year, please take advantage of every opportunity to prepare for that roll and ask for help if you need it.

Sincerely & fraternally,

Allen Rodda
Trestleboard Editor

FROM THE SECRETARY'S TABLE

"God gave burdens; he also gave shoulders"

Yiddish Proverb



One of the most enduring and sacred obligations we hold as Masons is the care of the widows of our departed Brothers. This is not just a kind sentiment, it's a solemn commitment embedded in our Masonic teachings, practiced for centuries across the Craft.

The charge we receive during our degrees reminds us that "it is our duty to aid and support the widows and orphans of our brethren who have passed to the Great Lodge Above." These are not just words—we are called to action.

In today's world, caring for a widow may not always mean financial support. Often, it means being a consistent presence in their lives. Here are a few ways our Lodge can—and does—honor this responsibility:

- **Check-ins & Visits:** A phone call, a visit, or even a simple note can brighten someone's day. Loneliness is a silent burden for many widows.
- **Inclusion in Events:** Many of our widows appreciate being remembered during Lodge dinners, holiday events, and community service days.
- **Help Around the Home:** Some may need assistance with small tasks—from changing a lightbulb to clearing the yard.
- **Celebrating Milestones:** Birthdays, anniversaries, and special holidays offer us opportunities to show that we remember and care.

Our Sweetheart Committee, chaired by Wor. Fred Loeser is committed to updating our contact list and would appreciate any help in verifying our current information. If you know of a widow who may not be receiving Lodge communications or would welcome contact, please notify Wor. Fred and the Secretary.

When a Brother passes, we lose a friend—but his legacy lives on in those he loved. By caring for his widow, we show the world that Masonic Brotherhood extends far beyond the grave.

Let us never forget: We are measured not only by our ritual, but by our actions. Let us be known as a Lodge that remembers that honors, and that cares.

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

David Forsyth PM
Secretary

ROCKRIDGE HALL ASSOCIATION

Brethren & Friends,

The heater replacement is complete. Amazing how fast we can heat the building with proper heaters and venting. We look forward to a warm winter. You can barely hear the heaters when they are on.

For those of you who have not heard, our elevator is out of service. During the required stress test, the elevator shaft failed. We have to replace the shaft and whatever else has been damaged. The estimate on the project is 3 to 6 months to repair. We are waiting to receive the estimate and will advise when we need the approval. In the meantime, we are going to install a chair lift from the ground floor to the first floor. We will keep this as an insurance policy. This is going to take 3 to 4 weeks to install. The elevator repair is going to be expensive. This will probably put a hold on capital improvements for a while. We have ring fenced the funds for major repairs on the building. We will be asking for approvals for moving funds when we know the cost.

Sincerely & Fraternaly,

Brother Phil Williams
Board President

Discovering Masonic Secrets ***Replaces the Book Club***

Join us on the second and fourth Monday of each month for an illuminating deep dive into *Discovering Masonic Secrets* — an evening dedicated to exploring the rich tapestry of Masonic tradition, symbolism, and modern practice. This session will feature **guest speakers** sharing unique insights, **esoteric investigations** into hidden meanings, and an in-depth look at **tracing boards** and their deeper significance. Engage in **thought-provoking discussions and respectful debates**, explore **interesting articles** that challenge and expand your understanding, and examine the role of **modern Masonry** in today's world. We'll also cover the essentials of **Masonic etiquette**, ensuring every Brother is equipped to navigate the Craft with confidence and decorum. Whether you're a seasoned Mason or newly initiated, this gathering promises to be both enlightening and engaging.

Curious minds and open hearts welcome.

Kirby Kinhead
Lead Explorer

Announcements

News flash: The Lodge elevator is out of commission. At this point we are waiting for a bid and timeline. We are told it could cost from \$100,000 to \$150,000 and take from 4 to 6 months to complete. Much more to follow.

Discovering Masonic Secrets: Bro. Kirby Kinkead, the Lead Explorer, reported that at June 9th meeting included had a great conversation about Entered Apprenticeship and involved a really lively discussion about Masonic themes in general. Kirby said it was a great night.

Please see event pictures in the pages that follow.

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 (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 remain at **\$131.00** and if you chose to pay your dues by check, please mail it to **Oakland No.61, 5449 College Ave, Oakland, CA 94618.**

If you haven't paid them you are non-current. Please tender them ASAP or reach out to our secretary/assistant secretary.

Sunshine Report

- Sadly Bro. Thomas (Tommy) Lee suffered a stroke and passed away on the date of his 50th Year Award presentation. Our sincere sympathies to the entire Lee family.
- Brother Lucas Strauss reports that he is in the 65th day of the projected 100 day transplant recovery plan. He is now able to get out and go to the store. He is looking forward to being able to get more exercise. He is most appreciative of the rides to his treatment that Worshipfuls Fred Loeser and Daren Mill have been able to give him.
- Worshipful Dave Ewing, who experienced some serious health problems a few months ago and has to spend some time in a rehab facility is now home. Currently he is dealing with a painful hematoma which the docs say with time will heal. Other adjustments he has made is moving his bedroom downstairs and not driving. However, the good news is that he should be able resume driving in a short while.
- Worshipful Rick Edick usually rides with me when we go to lodge. His health is up and down but when it's up, he is a positive guy and more concerned with others than his own problems. He is suffering from pulmonary fibrosis which gives him significant breathing problems.
- I touched base with Worshipful Bob Baird and his wife Carolee, and they are doing fine. I inquired about Ruth Leong, Worshipful Larry's widow, as she is a fellow Acacia Creek resident. Bob reported that she is doing well.
- When I heard about the flooding in Texas, I checked on Bro. Nigel Brown who lives in Austin. When I caught up with him, he was out of state but said his neighbors reported that their neighborhood had not suffered any damage.

** 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 jr1943@pacbell.net*

Dues Payment Information

As previously mentioned, our 2025 dues are \$131. **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. 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. **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 or Assistant Secretary at secretary@oakland61.org and 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, 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 August

Everett L. Messer (1), Benjamin L. Bartlett (4), Richard D. Anderson, PM (5), Raed Y. Alfayoumi (6), Michael J. Bischoff (6), Richard B. Parkin, Jr. (6), Steve Stavropoulos (7), Richard D. Ketels, PM (8), James R. Mountain (9), Richard D. Herrera (10), Drew K. Steadman (10), Patrick S. Ryan (11), Daren M. Miller (12), Vince E. Renfrow (12), Robert E. Baird, PM (13), Thomas M. Andrus, PM (15), Williard N. Smith, Jr. (15), Walter G. Crossley (16), Andrew O. Ochoa (23), David A. Parsons (23), Chris E. Bokamper (24), Nicholas A. Ragsdale (24), Robert B. Anderson (26), Roberto Ballou (26), John Kirkpatrick (26), Robert L. Charboneau (27), Ronald J. Mac Leod (28), and Michael W. Armstrong (30).

August Masonic Anniversary Dates & Years of Service

Donald W. Spruance, PM (1955/8/29), 70 Years
Larry E. Fingerut (1957/8/29), 68 Years
Gary W. Browning (1962/8/9), 63 Years
John Stamison (1970/8/20), 55 Years
Roy C. Fetterly (1970/8/26), 55 Years
Steven K. Harris (1970/8/26), 55 Years
Donald G. Nelson (1971/8/27), 54 Years
Andrew O. Ochoa (1972/8/18), 53 Years
Kurt M. Carter (1974/8/21), 51 Years
Frank R. Haswell (1980/8/21), 45 Years
Donald D. Salo, PM (1981/8/29), 44 Years
James R. Mountain (1982/8/20), 43 Years
Allan R. Diaz (1984/8/21), 7 Years
Patrick L. Healy (1986/8/23), 39 Years
Brent D. Goodale (1987/8/15), 38 Years
Mickey L. Benko, PM (1989/8/17), 36 Years
Ronald F. Parker (1991/8/10), 33 Years
Robert Mayer (1991/8/28), 34 Years
Daniel E. Moss (1992/8/29), 26 Years
Isauro P. Rafael (1994/8/26), 31 Years
James K. Petersen, III (1997/8/14), 28 Years
Kirkpatrick (1997/8/21), 28 Years
Charles T. Poole (1998/8/23), 27 Years
James D. Dobson (1998/8/29), 27 Years
Michael D. Dobson (1998/8/29), 27 Years
Thomas W. Dobson (1998/8/29), 27 Years
Edgardo F. Alvarez (2000/8/31), 25 Years
Lester Lyons (2002/8/2), 23 Years
Paul T. Adams, PM (2005/8/9), 20 Years
Adolph L. Keyes, Sr. (2006/8/17), 19 Years
Gilberto Estrada, Sr. PM (2007/8/30), 18 Years
Tillman M. Butler (2009/8/27), 11 Years
Daniel A. Bible (2009/8/29), 16 Years
Dana A. Janke, PM (2010/8/26), 15 Years
Christopher Bair (2011/8/23), 14 Years
Sheldon Williams (2016/8/18), 9 Years
Richard J. Macintire (2016/8/27), 9 Years
Drew G. Spitzer (2021/8/28), 4 Years
James A. Filice (2022/8/9), 3 Years
Christopher C. Mills (2022/8/30), 3 Years

2025 Memoriams

Carl P. Lampkin, passed away on 11/22/2024
Donald B. Gholson, passed away on 11/22/2024
Thomas F. Arnold, PM, passed away on 2/5/2025
Charles D. Gerow, Jr., passed away on 5/22/2025
Donald E. Weisse, Jr., PM, passed away on 6/6/2025
James T. Geanekos, passed away on 6/13/2025
Thomas W. Lee, passed away on 6/19/2025

August 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
July 27	28	29	30	31	1	2
	Discovering Masonic Secrets 7pm @ Oak #61.			Stated Meeting. 6pm @ Oakland #61. Dinner 6:30, Meeting 7:30. Please RSVP via the email announcement or (304) 201-3880.		
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
				Stated Meeting, 6pm @ Oakland #61. Dress is coat & tie with dinner 6:30, meeting 7:30. We will present Bro. Tommy Lee's 50-yr Award to his family. Please RSVP via the email announcement or (304) 201-3880.		
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	Discovering Masonic Secrets 7pm @ Oak #61.			Degree Rehearsal/ Coaching. Dress is casual with dinner at 6:30. Rehearsal/ coaching to follow. Please RSVP via the email announcement or (304) 201-3880.		
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
				DOSI. 6:30pm – DOSI @ Orinda #122. Dress is casual. Dinner 6:30, Meeting 7:30. Please RSVP via the email announcement or (304) 201-3880.		
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
	Discovering Masonic Secrets 7pm @ Oak #61.			Degree Rehearsal/ Coaching. Dress is casual with dinner at 6:30. Rehearsal/ coaching to follow. Please RSVP via the email announcement or (304) 201-3880.		
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Sept Labor Day			Stated Meeting. 6pm @ Oakland #61. Dinner 6:30, Meeting 7:30. Please RSVP via the email announcement or (304) 201-3880.		

September 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
August <div style="text-align: right;">31</div>	<div style="text-align: right;">1</div> <p style="text-align: center; color: green; font-weight: bold;">Labor Day</p>	<div style="text-align: right;">2</div>	<div style="text-align: right;">3</div>	<div style="text-align: right;">4</div> <p style="color: magenta; font-weight: bold;">Stated Meeting. 6pm @ Oakland #61. Dinner 6:30, Meeting 7:30.</p> <p style="color: magenta; font-weight: bold;">Please RSVP via the email announcement or (304) 201-3880.</p>	<div style="text-align: right;">5</div>	<div style="text-align: right;">6</div>
<div style="text-align: right;">7</div>	<div style="text-align: right;">8</div> <p style="color: magenta; font-weight: bold;">Discovering Masonic Secrets 7pm @ Oak #61.</p>	<div style="text-align: right;">9</div>	<div style="text-align: right;">10</div>	<div style="text-align: right;">11</div> <p style="color: magenta; font-weight: bold;">Degree Rehearsal/ Coaching. Dress is casual with dinner at 6:30. Rehearsal/ coaching to follow.</p> <p style="color: magenta; font-weight: bold;">Please RSVP via the email announcement or (304) 201-3880.</p>	<div style="text-align: right;">12</div>	<div style="text-align: right;">13</div>
<div style="text-align: right;">14</div>	<div style="text-align: right;">15</div>	<div style="text-align: right;">16</div> <p style="color: magenta; font-weight: bold;">DOSI. 6:30pm — DOSI @ Acalanes #480. Dress is casual. Dinner 6:30, Meeting 7:30.</p> <p style="color: magenta; font-weight: bold;">Please RSVP via the email announcement or (304) 201-3880.</p>	<div style="text-align: right;">17</div>	<div style="text-align: right;">18</div> <p style="color: magenta; font-weight: bold;">6:30 pm - TBD</p>	<div style="text-align: right;">19</div>	<div style="text-align: right;">20</div>
<div style="text-align: right;">21</div>	<div style="text-align: right;">22</div> <p style="color: magenta; font-weight: bold;">Discovering Masonic Secrets 7pm @ Oak #61.</p>	<div style="text-align: right;">23</div>	<div style="text-align: right;">24</div>	<div style="text-align: right;">25</div> <p style="color: magenta; font-weight: bold;">Oakland #61 visit to Orinda #122. Dress is tuxedo for officers. Social time begins at 6:00 with dinner at 6:30 followed by the degree at 7:30.</p> <p style="color: magenta; font-weight: bold;">Please RSVP via the email announcement or (304) 201-3880.</p>	<div style="text-align: right;">26</div>	<div style="text-align: right;">27</div>
<div style="text-align: right;">28</div>	<div style="text-align: right;">29</div>	<div style="text-align: right;">30</div>	<div style="text-align: right;">1</div>	<div style="text-align: right;">2</div> <p style="color: magenta; font-weight: bold;">Stated Meeting. 6pm @ Oakland #61. Dinner 6:30, Meeting 7:30.</p> <p style="color: magenta; font-weight: bold;">Please RSVP via the email announcement or (304) 201-3880 by the Monday prior to practice.</p>	<div style="text-align: right;">3</div>	<div style="text-align: right;">4</div>



June 2025 Stated Meeting & Inspector's Visit



June 2025 Discovering Masonic Secrets Meeting



Group picture of Paulo's 3rd Degree



Group picture of Jalil's 3rd Degree, 6-26-25



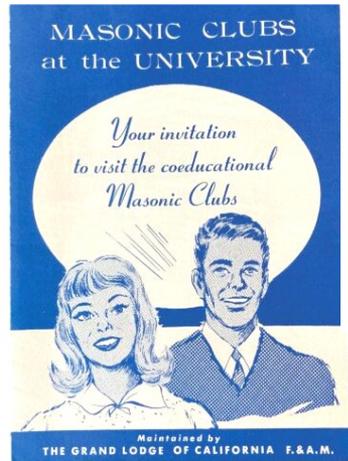
Founding members of Fiat Lux U.D., comprised of Cal alumni, under Sather Gate at UC Berkeley.

California Freemason Magazine

In Berkeley, a New Lodge is Reviving an Old School Idea

In 1920, the Grand Lodge found that there were 500 Master Masons among the student body at the University of California in Berkeley, along with several hundred members of the Eastern Star and more than 60 Masonic faculty. That, in turn, led to the formation of a special Masonic Clubhouse at the university, which for more than 50 years was the beating heart of Freemasonry on campus.

Now, decades later, a new group aims to revive that legacy: Fiat Lux, UD, a lodge comprised primarily of UC Berkeley alumni, and meeting just steps from the old clubhouse site. Read more in this lodge profile from *California Freemason* magazine.



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.