



FIRST MEETING:
December 7, 2023

Office: (304) 201-3880
Reservations: (304) 201-3880

Oakland Lodge #61, F. & A. M.
Rockridge Masonic Hall
5449 College Avenue
Oakland, California 94618
www.oakland61.org

ORIGINAL CHARTER
SIGNED: May 4, 1855

Secretary: (415) 425-2661

September 2025

VIEW FROM THE EAST:



Brethren & friends,

As most of you know, we have lost the use of our elevator for the foreseeable future. Hopefully by the time this article is read by you the new chair lift will have been installed from the first floor to the second. I know this is not what we are wanting, but this is the reality we are going to have to live with for a few months.

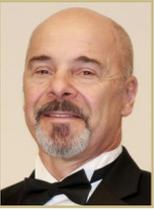
September is our official visit to Orinda Lodge. This year it will be on the 25th. We will be putting on a 2nd degree for one of their brothers. Please let our Junior Warden know if you are planning on attending.

I wanted to let you all know how grateful I am that I have been able to serve you this year as master. I may not say or show it, but I care for you, my brothers. I know that we always do not see eye to eye, but that is what life is. I remember an old radio show that spoke of a perfect valley. This valley had everything you desired. Perfect weather all the time. Go hunting and your choice of trophy deer would stand there and wait. Same for fishing or anything you want or need. The person who went looking for this and found it realized that it really wasn't what he wanted after all and was not ready to live like that. So, he decided to head back home. He said that he needed a challenge in life. Perfection was not what he thought it would be. To live life without a purpose or challenge was giving up on life. So, I am glad that I can be both challenged and still sometimes seek perfection.

Please join us for as many functions as you can throughout the remainder of the year,

Ben Newsom, PM
Master

VIEW FROM THE WEST



Hello my brothers,

I hope everybody is doing well and enjoying the beautiful Bay Area weather. There is not a lot going in the lodge far as degrees. But on the other hand, there is a lot of practice for officers and many hours of work being put in by our hall association leaders. As we should all know by now, the elevator is broken. Getting it repaired or replaced is no easy task. It takes a lot of meetings and a lot of phone calls and we're not there yet. No one's giving up and everybody has a sense of urgency to get the elevator repaired or replaced. In the meantime. A chairlift has been installed for the first flight of stairs to the second floor. It isn't replacement for the elevator, but it will sure help the guys who need help getting up all those stairs. On another note. We should be performing a fellow craft degree at the Orinda visitation. I am proud to say that I will be Master that night. Working with my Brother officers keeps me excited and coming back. We really want a good turnout for the visitation. It's always a good time and a good meal. Please call for meal reservations. A good turnout shows the solidarity of our lodge and shows why we're the best lodge in the west. It's not easy to be the best but we are.

Be safe,

Dana Janke, PM
Senior Warden

VIEW FROM THE SOUTH



Brethren,

First and foremost, I would like to offer my heartfelt apologies for my recent absence from the lodge meetings and activities. Life, as it sometimes does, placed obligations before me that I could not postpone. I want to thank everyone who stepped up to help cover my responsibilities while I've been out of state.

I also appreciate all of you who have reached out. Even if I did not pick up or respond, I truly appreciate it. I have missed the conversations, the camaraderie, and the collective pursuit of light that defines Oakland 61. I look forward to seeing everyone this month and catching up.

Sincerely & fraternally,

James McVey
Junior Warden

FROM THE SECRETARY'S TABLE

*"fool is known by his speech, and a wise man by silence."
Pythagoras, Greek philosopher*



Among the many lessons impressed upon us in our Masonic journey, two virtues stand out as both shield and guide—Silence and Circumspection. Silence prevents us from speaking rashly or betraying trust; circumspection prevents us from acting in ways unworthy of our calling.

In a world where we often speak too hastily, silence gives us the opportunity to really listen, and reflect, and then measure our response. A Mason does not reveal what is entrusted in confidence, nor does he speak when silence will preserve peace and harmony. Silence is not weakness—it is wisdom in practice.

Circumspection is the watchful guard upon our actions. We are always observed, and our conduct, both within the Lodge and in the world, reflects upon us as well as the Craft itself. To be circumspect is to consider not only what we say but how we live, ensuring our steps are taken with prudence, demonstrating justice in our plain dealings, exercising temperance in all our decisions and facing our fears with fortitude.

Together, these virtues safeguard the reputation of our fraternity and strengthen our character as men.

Let us, therefore, as Brothers, hold these lessons close to our hearts. May we be careful in our words, mindful in our actions, and ever faithful to our mutual trust. In doing so, we preserve the harmony of our Lodge, the honor of our Craft, and the dignity of our own lives.

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

David Forsyth PM
Secretary

ROCKRIDGE HALL ASSOCIATION

Brethren & Friends,

The building keeps asking for more attention. We have installed the chair lift to the second floor. The new hand railing is next to complete the stairway. The elevator is an ongoing project. We are progressing in the approval and repair process. We don't have a start or completion date yet. We have had a chronic problem with our sewer backing up are now working on a repair to our drainage system.

Then there is the normal care and maintenance on the building. Worshipful Tim has a lot of projects going on. Some of them are noticeable and others are things we never see. We will keep everyone informed on the progress on elevator repairs.

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

Updated Elevator News: The Lodge elevator is out of commission and will need to be replaced. We are in the process of obtaining three bids and timelines. We are told it could cost \$390,000 and may take 6 months to complete. More to follow.

Oakland #61's Union City Masonic Homes Tour: 10:00 am - 1:00 pm. Dress is casual and lunch will follow the tour. Please RSVP via email announcement or (304) 201-3880. Our coordinator is W. Cal Gilbert.

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 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

- Prior to our August Stated Meeting, Worshipful Ben Newsom presented Bro. Thomas (Tommy) Lee's 50th Year Award and flowers to Tommy's family. In addition to the Lee family.
- Brother Lucas Strauss has now passed his 100 day transplant recovery plan and is cutting back on some of his meds. He was able to get out and return to the gym two days ago. He very much appreciates the supportive communication from W. Ben Newsom and other brothers.
- Worshipful Dave Ewing reports he is doing much better. He is driving but only during the day. He looks forward to joining us at lodge once we install the lift chair.
- Notwithstanding his health issues, W. Rick Edick is hanging in there. Due to a recent surgery, stairs are a non-starter. He is looking forward to coming to lodge once we install of our lift chair.
- I again touched base with Worshipful Bob Baird and his wife Carolee, and they are doing fine.
- Bro. Will Smith checked in and said he is suffering from overdoing things following his auto accident some months back. Additionally, he said he is receiving top notch care from both the VA and the Stanford Hospital System. Finally, he asked me to pass along his best wishes to the entire Oakland 61 family.
- I heard from Bro. Bill Kambic. He retired from his crane operation business and will reside in Hawaii for the next six months. He said he retired from his crane operations but helps out his friend W. Doc Bailey Hawaii operation on occasion.
- Please keep the Rolf Haas family in your prayers. Rolf's wife, Laurie, is experiencing health issues which so far, three different doctors haven't been able to diagnose. Additionally, and sadly, Laurie's sister passed away on Sunday, August 17, 2025.

** 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 September

Gregg W. Parsons (1), John A. Peterson (1), William F. Butler, Jr. (2), Joshua S. Elowsky (2), Stephen S. Hawkins (2), Douglass R. Emberton (3), Eduardo Rodriguez (6), Marcos M. Valerio (7), James W. Holland, Jr. (8), Dustin D. Brace (9), Joseph M. Sahagun, Sr. (10), Donald R. Colbert (11), Mickey L. Benko, PM (12), Alexandre M. Bayen (14), Robert C. Ellis (14), Donald G. Nelson (14), Rolf K. Haas (15), Rhodri C. Scantlebury (15), Jack L. Fair (17), Stennis Scruggs, Jr. (18), Michael T. Baird, PM (19), Scott B. Beaver (19), Herbert F. Bradley (19), Daniel Mullane (20), Robert A. Gordon, Jr. (23), Nicholas L. Daly (27), Nicholas L. Hayworth, PM (28), and William S. Sereni, Sr. (30).

September Masonic Anniversary Dates & Years of Service

James C. Macintire, PM (9/18/1964), 61 Years
Richard B. Parkin (9/20/1967), 58 Years
Daniel E. White (9/17/1971), 54 Years
David R. Arp, PM (9/26/1972), 53 Years
Patrick A. Love, PM (9/30/1977), 48 Years
William F. Butler, Jr. (9/9/1978), 47 Years
Richard D. Nutting (9/25/1978), 47 Years
Christopher J. Jiannalone (9/26/1978), 47 Years
Victor G. Borlaug, II, PM (9/18/1980), 45 Years
Grove L. Gill (9/15/1981), 44 Years
Bradley A. Gill (9/29/1981), 44 Years
Richard D. Ketels, PM (9/27/1983), 42 Years
David A. Hansen (9/21/1984), 41 Years
Barry R. Rodriguez (9/23/1986), 39 Years
Donald G. Heckenlively (9/27/1988), 37 Years
James W. Holland, Jr. (9/12/1989), 36 Years
Donald R. Parker, PM (9/15/1990), 35 Years
David F. Ewing, PM (9/21/1990), 35 Years
Christopher R. Weaver (9/14/1999), 26 Years
Azi Vajravai (9/10/2002), 23 Years
Robert A. Gordon, Jr. (9/24/2002), 23 Years
Otha L. Cotton, PM (9/18/2004), 21 Years
Richard T. Edick, PM (9/14/2006), 19 Years
David E. Davis (9/10/2007), 18 Years
David C. Renshaw (9/13/2007), 18 Years
Eduardo R. Rodriguez (9/30/2010), 15 Years
Jesse W. Wallin (9/8/2011), 14 Years
Andrew L. Altomare (9/29/2012), 13 Years
Willard N. Smith, Jr. (9/19/2015), 10 Years
Raed Y. Alfayoumi (9/8/2018), 7 Years
Olushola S. Bello (9/12/2019), 6 Years
Eric R. Skinner (9/17/2019), 6 Years
Daniel F. Dietzel (9/9/2021), 4 Years
Benjamin P. Woosley (9/9/2022), 3 Years
James M. McVey (9/12/2022), 3 Years
Jesse L. Schultz (9/27/2022), 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

September 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
August 31	1 Labor Day	2	3	4 Stated Meeting. 6pm @ Oakland #61. Dinner 6:30, Meeting 7:30. <i>Please RSVP via the email announcement or (304) 201-3880.</i>	5	6
7	8 Discovering Masonic Secrets 7pm @ Oak #61.	9	10	11 Degree Rehearsal/ Coaching. Dress is casual with dinner at 6:30. Rehearsal/ coaching to follow. <i>Please RSVP via the email announcement or (304) 201-3880.</i>	12	13
14	15	16 DOSI. 6:30pm – DOSI @ Acalanes #480. Dress is casual. Dinner 6:30, Meeting 7:30. <i>Please RSVP via the email announcement or (304) 201-3880.</i>	17	18 Degree Rehearsal/ Coaching. Dress is casual with dinner at 6:30. Rehearsal/ coaching to follow. <i>Please RSVP via the email announcement or (304) 201-3880.</i>	19	20
21	22 Discovering Masonic Secrets 7pm @ Oak #61.	23	24	25 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. <i>Please RSVP via the email announcement or (304) 201-3880.</i>	26	27 Oakland #61 Union City Masonic Homes Tour. 10:00 - 1:00. Dress is casual with lunch to follow the tour. <i>Please RSVP via the email announcement or (304) 201-3880.</i>
28	29	30	October 1	2 Stated Meeting. 6pm @ Oakland #61. Dinner 6:30, Meeting 7:30. <i>Please RSVP via the email announcement or (304) 201-3880.</i>	3	4

October 2025

Sunday		Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday		Friday		Saturday	
September	28		29		30	October	1	2		3		4	
									<p>Stated Meeting, 6pm @ Oakland #61. Dinner 6:30, Meeting 7:30.</p> <p>Please RSVP via the email announcement or (304) 201-3880.</p>				
	5		6		7		8			9		10	11
									<p>Sweethearts Dinner</p>				
	12		13		14		15		16		17		18
		<p>Columbus Day</p> <p>Discovering Masonic Secrets 7pm @ Oak #61.</p>							<p>DOSI. 6:30pm — DOSI @ Oakland #61. Dress is casual. Dinner 6:30, Meeting 7:30.</p> <p>Please RSVP via the email announcement or (304) 201-3880.</p>				
	19		20		21		22		23		24		25
											<p>Friday - Sunday October 24 - 26th: The 176th Grand Communication will commence at 1:00 pm on Friday.</p> <p>Please RSVP via the email announcement or (304) 201-3880.</p>		<p>Grand Lodge Annual Communication</p>
	26		27		28		29		30		31		
<p>Grand Lodge Annual Communication</p>		<p>Discovering Masonic Secrets 7pm @ Oak #61.</p>							<p>Degree Rehearsal/ Coaching. Dress is casual with dinner at 6:30. Rehearsal/ coaching to follow.</p> <p>Please RSVP via the email announcement or (304) 201-3880.</p>				



Tommy Lee 50-year Presentation, 8-7-2025



Additional Tommy Lee 50-year Presentation Photo, 8-7-25



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.



176th Annual Communication

A Weekend of Brotherhood, Business, and Celebration Awaits!

With representatives from lodges across California and around the world, attendees of the [176th Annual Communication](#) will enjoy a festive weekend that blends business and fellowship. From the celebratory [Grand Master's Gala at a NEW location](#) at the Hilton San Francisco to informative legislative and business sessions that help shape the future of Freemasonry, you'll reconnect with old friends, forge new bonds, and deepen your connection to the fraternity.



Together, we will hear key updates on organizational initiatives, vote on impactful legislation, and elect officers for the year ahead.

REGISTER NOW

Assisted Living and Memory Care, Elevated



The PAVILION

AT THE MASONIC HOMES

Welcome home! The Masonic Home at Union City is pleased to announce the grand opening of its new Pavilion, where those who need memory care and assistance with day-to-day living can enjoy comfortable living quarters in a beautiful, community-minded atmosphere.

Our person-centered philosophy of care offers residents the opportunity to live their best life safely, with a helping hand when needed. From a rousing card game, an event in our communal living spaces, or just relaxing in their beautiful new apartments, residents find that the Pavilion offers a haven for their body, mind, and soul.

**Call to schedule a tour today:
(888) 466-3642**

34400 Mission Blvd. in Union City, CA



**Masonic Homes
of California**

Masonichome.org

RCFE #011440129 SNF #02000063 COA #151