



FIRST MEETING:

December 7, 2023

Office: (510) 576-6729

Reservations: (510) 576-6729

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

Rockridge Masonic Hall

5449 College Avenue

Oakland, California 94618

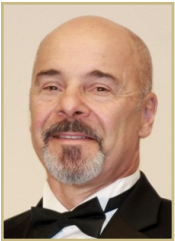
www.oakland61.org

SIGNED: May 4, 1855

Secretary: (415) 425-2661

May 2026

VIEW FROM THE EAST:



Hello everybody,

I hope everyone is doing well, enjoying the weather and received a nice tax refund. So far this year, our lodge events have been fairly well attended but we have many more to come. As a Lodge, we should be proud of our community work and donations to local schools and youth orders. It is our intention to make a difference in the local community. On occasion, just a few thousand dollars, we'll keep the kids' league running by such actions as buying needed equipment, team jerseys, etc. All this helps them feel proud of their team. I know it makes me feel good about being a little part of what it takes to keep the kids on the field. So far this year, every Grand Officer that has visited our lodge has said how proud they are of the work we do in our community and with the youth. Also, their words and actions reflect their appreciation for our support of Grand Lodge programs. Even though I don't understand everything the kids do or say, it is still a pleasure to watch them grow up and contribute to their communities. So, for now, goodbye and remember call in for your reservations for the wonderful meals we enjoy.

**Dana Janke, PM
Master**

VIEW FROM THE WEST



Brethren,

As we move further into the year, it's remarkable how quickly the time is passing and how much we've already accomplished together. The momentum within our lodge has been strong. It's clear that this is shaping up to be a productive and fulfilling year for us all.

I would especially like to extend my sincere thanks to the brothers who gave their time and energy on April 18 in service to our community. Your efforts supporting the Frog Park Cleanup and/or Claremont Middle School's Gala did not go unnoticed.

Our service to our community, at events like these, reflect the very best of what we bring to our communities: a willingness to serve, a spirit of brotherhood, and a dedication to making a positive impact. Thank you to all who continue to contribute to our lodge and our community. Let's carry this momentum forward in the months and years ahead.

Sincerely yours,

James McVey
Senior Warden

VIEW FROM THE SOUTH



Greetings Brethren and Friends,

As we close the month of April and move into May, let us associate this month with Spring festivities and flowers. I would like to wish all the mothers of our brethren and friends a Happy Mother's Day wish in advance and thank you for everything you do, and to those brethren whose mothers have passed away, cherish their memories and let us not forget the great times we had with them.

Our stated meeting dinner for the month of May will be a Mexican dish from our chef Josh. The entree will be Quesabirria (Quesada with meat) with a green salad and a caramel flan and not Spaghetti and meatballs. Spaghetti and meatballs will be our June Stated Meeting meal with garlic bread, a green salad, and vanilla ice cream. *Please don't forget to RSVP!*

Fraternally,

Luzon Byrd
Junior Warden

FROM THE SECRETARY'S TABLE

“You can't get very far until you start doing something for somebody else.”
Brother Melvin Jones and founder of the Lions Clubs International



We are a steady pillar of support in times of need. From organized charitable foundations to individual acts of kindness, Masons contribute to causes that uplift families, strengthen communities, and restore hope. Whether it is providing scholarships to deserving students, supporting local schools, or aiding disaster relief efforts, the collective impact of our fraternity is both profound and far-reaching.

Just recently three of our brothers demonstrated what it takes to step in and help. These brothers helped a member in extreme need. They also provided a welfare check on another brother with whom we lost touch by calling at his last known address. This was made possible by Allen Rodda and his retention team who make calls and follow up with those we have not heard from in a while.

When an aging lodge member faces declining health, isolation, loss of a spouse, or other health challenges we provide ongoing support beyond lodge assistance by connecting brothers with Masonic Senior Outreach Services (MSOS). It is vital that we bridge the gap between lodge members and the Masonic agencies they may not know about. For example, MSOS provides our members with access to Medicare and MediCal/Medicaid resources, veterans benefit counselors, and transportation agencies.

These services and resources allow members to stay healthy and safe in their homes or home communities. And when more care is needed MSOS can arrange for caregivers to help senior members live independently in their own home or if appropriate discuss a move to one of the Masonic Home properties.

Our Masonic Homes are truly jewels in the crown of California Masonry providing all levels of care to members and families. Independent living, assisted living, skilled nursing and memory care are all available depending on the needs of our members and families. It all starts when we check in on a brother and his family. Our charity is not an occasional act, but a way of life. If you want to know more about MSOS call Bro. Phil Williams, he is our Masonic Outreach expert.

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

David Forsyth, PM
Secretary

ROCKRIDGE HALL ASSOCIATION

Brethren & Friends,

Our elevator is finished and is now fully functional. The kitchen remodel is moving forward, and our second floor upgrade is being worked on. The front doors will be upgraded all at the same time. Our scheduling for all this will start in June with most of the construction being done in July.

We are getting ready for the 100th birthday of our building. That will happen later in the year with an open house to the community and local businesses. The improvements we are making now will carry us well into the future.

Effective May 15th, our new management company, 2B LIVING will be managing the building. We will have our Manager at a future stated meeting.

Sincerely and Fraternaly,

Brother Phil Williams
Board President

Discovering Masonic Secrets

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

Elevator News: It is up and running with no problems.

Tired of a different QR Code for each event? If you are, the QR Code will link to all events for which we are selling tickets or RSVPing. **See the attached QR Code.**



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."

2026 Dues: If you haven't paid for 2026, you are delinquent. Please submit them ASAP or contact W. David Forsyth or Bro. Allen Rodda.

Event pictures: See elsewhere in this issue.

Sunshine Report

- Worshipful Rick Edick is still suffering post abdominal surgery problems. Please continue to pray for him.
- Worshipful Don Parker reports his and our brother. Ron Parker really enjoys residing at the Union City Masonic Home.
- Just heard from Bro. Bill Kambic and reports he is still battling cancer. In his words, "this cancer stuff is no joke, pretty nasty." Also, he thinks he'll be back in our area in about two months or so. All the best Bro. Bill.
- Bro. Phil Williams has lately been suffering for breathing problems, and his pulmonologist now tells him that he has bronchitis. Hopefully, there are antibiotics that can help and not interfere with other transplant rejection drugs. Get well soon Brother.
- Recently, I caught up with W. Ted Aquino whose primary residence is in the Philippines and where he is an active member of Mount Kaladias No. 91 in Dumaguete. As of this writing, he plans to come state side in September and will visit us.

** 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

Dues 2026 remain at \$131 per year. **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.

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 & assistant.secretary@oakland61.org

Life Members

2026 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 May

Barry Rodriguez (2), Christopher M. Ellis (4), George E. Graham (4), Philip J. Williams (4), Gilberto Estrada, Sr., PM (5), Jong H. Lee, Ed.D (6), James K. Petersen, III (6), Khalil H. Sweidy, PM (7), Perry D. Curry (8), Kyle Johnston (12), Terrance S. Hanson (13), Benjamin P. Woosley (13), Andrew L. Altomare (16), David E. Levinson (16), Wilbert D. Yip, PM (17), Randall K. Diehl (18), David S. Tucker III (19), Frederick A. Loeser, Jr., PM (20), David R. Woods (22), Philip N. Brown (23), Christopher A. Rohrer (27), Charles A. Jolivet (28), Daniel F. Dietzel (29), and Myron E. Temple, Jr., PM (31).

May Masonic Anniversary Dates & Years of Service

Russell R. Crow, 81 Years
Lorraine W. Cherry, 70 Years
William C. Herbert, PM, 62 Years
Robert E. Baird, PM, 59 Years
Everett L. Messer, 58 Years
Robert J. Buckingham, 55 Years
Alan D. Filiau, PM, 51 Years
Colin McDonald, 50 Years
Henry J. Gannett, PM, 46 Years
Lawrence A. Altomare, PM, 32 Years
Stefan A. Gibson, Sr., 30 Years
Chris E. Bokamper, 29 Years
David R. Woods, 28 Years
Rolf K. Haas, 27 Years
Aaron T. Kornblum, 27 Years
Timothy I. Michel, 27 Years
Frederick A. Loeser, Jr., PM, 26 Years
Richard D. Anderson, PM, 25 Years
Edward V. Cabrera, 25 Years
Alejo S. Galvez, 25 Years
Gabriel Basso, 18 Years
Dustin D. Brace, 17 Years
John Martin, 17 Years
Philip J. Williams, 15 Years
Benjamin G. Newsom, PM, 13 Years
Benjamin L. Bartlett, 12 Years
Darren A. Miller, PM, 12 Years
Ovanes Chobanian, 11 Years
Marcos M. Valerio, 11 Years
Robert B. Anderson, 10 Years
Michael R. Solomon, 9 Years
Robert E. Bonem, 4 Years

2026 Memoriams

Jim Odle, passed away on 2/26/2026
John M. Burk, passed away on 4/20/2026

May

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
April 26 <div style="border: 1px solid purple; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">Grand Lodge</div>	27 Candidates Coaching & Discovering Masonic Secrets 6:30pm - 9:00 @ Oakland #61.	28	29	30 Annual Paint & Sip Gathering 6:30 - 9:30 pm Dress is casual. <i>Please RSVP via the email announcement or (510) 576-6729.</i>	May 1	2 Orinda Lodge #122 Rib. Dress is casual and the event will start at 6:00 pm run to 8:00. Tickets are limited to 100 guests. Attendees need to RSVP via the Oakland Lodge "The First District-Wide Rib Cook Off" email by 4/28.
3	4 Easter Monday Candidates Coaching 6:30pm - 8:00 @ Oakland #61.	5 Cinco de Mayo	6	7 Stated Meeting & Teacher of the Year. Dress is coat & tie. Social time begins at 6:00 pm with dinner at 6:30 and the award presentation and meeting to follow. <i>Please RSVP via the email announcement or (510) 576-6729.</i>	8	9
10 	11 Candidates Coaching & Discovering Masonic Secrets 6:30pm - 9:00 @ Oakland #61.	12	13 Rockridge Hall Association Meeting 6:30 - 9:00 pm Dress is casual.	14 Officer's 3rd Degree Rehearsal & Candidates Coaching. Dress is casual. A light meal at 6:30 pm, the rehearsal & coaching at 7:00	15 - 16 12pm - Grand Lodge Leadership Retreat SE. Noon to noon and dress is casual.	
17 <div style="border: 1px solid blue; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">Grand Lodge</div>	18 Candidates Coaching 6:30pm - 8:00 @ Oakland #61.	19	20	21 DOSI. @ Orinda #122. Dress is casual. Dinner at 6:30 pm followed by instruction at 7:30 <i>Please RSVP via the email announcement or (510) 576-6729.</i>	22	23
24	25 	26	27	28 Potential 3rd Degree. Dress for Officers is tuxedo and dressy casual for others. Social time begins at 6:00 pm with dinner at 6:30 pm with the degree to follow.	29 - 30 12pm - Grand Lodge Leadership Retreat SW. Noon to noon and dress is casual.	
31 <div style="border: 1px solid blue; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">Grand Lodge</div>	June 1 Candidates Coaching 6:30pm - 8:00 @ Oakland #61.	2	3	4 Stated Meeting. Dress is coat & tie. Social time begins at 6:00 pm with dinner at 6:30 pm and the meeting at 7:30. <i>RSVP via the email announcement or (510) 576-6729</i>	5	6

JUNE

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
May 31 Grand Lodge	June 1 Candidates Coaching 6:30pm - 8:00 @ Oakland #61.	2	3	4 Stated Meeting. Dress is coat & tie. Social time begins at 6:00 pm with dinner at 6:30 pm and the meeting at 7:30. Please RSVP via the email announcement or (510) 576-6729.	5	6
7	8 Candidates Coaching & Discovering Masonic Secrets 6:30pm - 9:00 @ Oakland #61.	9	10 Rockridge Hall Association Meeting 6:30 - 9:00 pm Dress is casual.	11 Golden Veteran Awards. Dress for officers is coat & tie and dressy casual for others. Social time begins at 6:00 pm with dinner at 6:30 and the Awards Presentation to follow. RSVP via the email anncmnt. or (510) 576-6729.	12	13
14 Flag Day	15 Candidates Coaching 6:30pm - 8:00 @ Oakland #61.	16 DOSI. @ Acalanes Fellowship #480. Dress is casual. Dinner at 6:30 pm followed by instruction at 7:30 Please RSVP via the email announcement or (510) 576-6729.	17	18 TBD	19 Juneteenth	20
21 Happy Father's Day	22 Candidates Coaching & Discovering Masonic Secrets 6:30pm - 9:00 @ Oakland #61.	23	24	25 TBD	26	27
28	29 Candidates Coaching 6:30pm - 8:00 @ Oakland #61.	30				

Masons4Mitts

Step Up to the Plate for Kids in Your Community and Give a Mitt Today!

We're on the verge of a major milestone— help us Push Masons4Mitts past the \$3 million mark!

Now in its 18th year, our favorite Masonic baseball fundraiser is back, and this season comes with our most ambitious goal yet! The California Masonic Foundation is **aiming to raise \$325,000, a goal that will officially bring Masons4Mitts to \$3 million** in support for young players across California.



Each year, we team up with the San Francisco Giants, Los Angeles Angels, Los Angeles Dodgers, and the San Diego Padres for one of our fraternity's most impactful philanthropic traditions. Through Masons4Mitts, we provide high-quality leather baseball mitts to children in our community programs supported by our Major League Baseball partners—giving kids in our communities the tools to build teamwork, grow confidence, and enjoy the game in a safe supportive environment.

Last season alone, Masons4Mitts raised \$298,000—enough to provide 14,950 mitts to young players. Since 2009, our fundraiser has contributed over \$2.675 million, positively impacting more than 100,000 children across California. Now, with your support, we can reach our highest goal yet and celebrate crossing the \$3 million threshold. Let's lift up our youth, and show what Masons can accomplish when we rally together!

Give a Mitt and Make a Difference for Local Kids In Your Community!

ORANGE COUNTY REGION

SAN DIEGO REGION

LOS ANGELES REGION

NORCAL REGION

Attention: Bay Area Masons

Your Lodge Can Make the Difference! Volunteer at the Masonic Homes



The Masonic Homes of California in Union City is excited to share a new way for local lodges to get involved on campus. We've launched an updated volunteer platform designed to make it easier and convenient for lodges to explore opportunities and register online.

No experience is needed for most roles—just a kind heart and a willingness to connect. With opportunities available for both lodges and individual volunteers, you can get involved in ways such as:

- **Arts and crafts:** Help lead or assist residents with creative projects.
- **Music and entertainment:** Share musical talents, host programs and activities such as bingo, trivia, and other favorites.
- **Escorting residents:** Help residents travel safely to dining, activities, or outdoor spaces.
- **Supporting residents in memory care, assisted living, and skilled nursing:** Assist with daily activities, support a warm, engaging environment.
- **Additional opportunities:** Clerical support and help with special events.



April 2026 Stated Meeting Group Photo



2026 Frog Park Clean-Up Group Picture



April 2026 DOSI



**2026 Group Picture of Lodge Volunteers
at the Claremont MS PTA Fundraiser**