



Rebekah Assembly of California
President 2024-2025
Debra LaVergne
2369 Saint Francis Drive
Palo Alto, CA 94303-3136
Debra.ella@gmail.com
650-575-4565
<http://www.burwur.net/IOOF/>



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To all Rebekah Lodges,

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukah, Joyous Yule and Happy Holidays to all!

Inspired by my visit to Fidelity #29, I was thinking about membership, specifically about sources of members. Odd Fellows Lodges in recent years picked up a lot of members who were intrigued by Odd Fellows symbolism that they encountered on the Internet, and who were at a place in their lives where they wanted in-person contact in addition to their online friendships. This group is mostly men, often under 50 years old.

Women under 50 are likely to be so busy juggling work and parenting that joining any organization not directly related to work or family is not plausible until a future date when the kids are grown up. Once the kids have flown, the "empty nesters" do have time for community organizations. But the organizations that collect these new members are likely to be ones people have encountered over the years of parenting. The organizations have been visible to them if they weren't directly involved with kids.

Rebekah Lodges need to think about how to be organizations that parents encounter while the kids are growing up. Sponsoring a juvenile sports team would be one idea. Donating money is a place to start, but members attending games, running a concession stand and providing an awards banquet would greatly increase the level of interaction between the lodge and the parents.

A Rebekah lodge could provide a summer lunch program for school children. That might entail packing bag lunches once a week to deliver to another organization's summer school location, or the Rebekah lodge might host a lunch distribution center with other organizations providing the food.

Scholarship programs are another contact with parents of school-age children. Whenever a lodge offers their own scholarship, please mention that the Rebekah Assembly, Grand Lodge and Sovereign Grand Lodge also offer scholarships for children and grandchildren of members. Those scholarships are a significant piece of our benefits to members.

None of the above ideas are going to work instantly, but will take a few years to yield results. Our membership decline has been decades in the making. Turning it around will be decades of work. Let us start on that work NOW, before the time for Rebekah Lodges is past.

Please sign up for our Rebekah Membership Seminar at the Rebekah Lodge Hall in Chowchilla on Saturday, January 4.

In Friendship, Love and Truth,

Debra LaVergne, PRA