Virginia I.O.O.F. & Rebekah Newsletter

November, 2026



From the Grandmaster's desk

Greetings Brothers and Sisters,

I hope everyone has had a great summer and is in good health. The last couple months have been busy with the Statewide Picnic and our car show in Brookneal. I want to thank everyone that came out for the picnic and hope everyone enjoyed their time and fellowship. I made a whirlwind run up to Charity Lodge to meet with DDGM Laura Frappollo before their lodge meeting as I had forgotten to put her programs in the mail, I'm good for that.

I am concerned that several lodges are not meeting and that members across the Order are falling out of the habit of attending. I know we all have lives outside of the Order and things come up, but let's not let "I'll go next meeting" become our standard statement. I would welcome ideas on how to help with this issue.

As we go into the big holiday season, I hope everyone is safe on their travels and joyous in their celebrations. Remember those less fortunate during these times and contribute if you can to food pantries, community meals and maybe make a child or an adult smile on Christmas morning with a small, donated gift.

In Friendship, Love and Truth,

Tony Whitley, GM

Grand Lodge of Virginia



Grand Lodge Warden

Greetings Brothers and Sisters,

Brenda and I just returned from driving part of RT 66, one of our bucket list items. Starting in Chicago, we were able to drive to Claremore, OK before business in Virginia required us to return. Not on the route but an attraction that we wanted to see was the DeMoulin Museum in Greenville, Il. If you are not familiar with the name, DeMoulin was a manufacturer of much Odd Fellows paraphernalia, everything from ballot boxes and robes to the collapsing chairs, strength testing paddling machines, water squirting cameras, knife throwing boards and "goats" that were all a part of becoming an Odd Fellow in days past. One particular "goat" that attracted my attention was an approximately five-foot diameter metal cage with a goat inside, so think of a rocking horse but this rocking horse could revolve in a full circle. So, the candidate would be placed upon the goat and fully restrained and of course, they would be b_____ as you were during your initiation. Then, the Brothers could rock the candidate as gently or as vigorously as was the pleasure of the initiating members and I suppose could possibly result in the candidate being totally inverted. Ah yes, those were the good old days.

So, what's the point to this story? There was hazing but not hurting. Maybe you were aware of what was in store for you during the initiation process when you agreed to proceed and maybe you were not but you trusted that your Brothers and Sisters would do you no harm. Then in your Obligation, you pledged your sacred honor to never wrong a Lodge or another member. It was your affirmation that the members could trust you to do right. In addition to the Obligation that we all took, officers and trustees are obliged to be fiscally responsible with the funds entrusted to them. The members placed these people in their positions because they expected that they could trust them. Trust is important but trusting does not mean that we should not also verify. If it is in your scope of authority to examine the books and records of your lodge, then Ride that Goat!

Last, but not least, I want to give a round of applause to Sister Angela and anyone else who helped with the picnic. It was a fine day of fellowship and good food.

Paul Schilinski, Grand Warden
Grand Lodge of Virginia

REBEKAH ASSEMBLY PRESIDENT



Hello Sisters and Brothers,

Fall season is here. The leaves are beginning to turn their colors.

I am still in therapy for my shoulder and arms. Being left-handed and having broken my left shoulder has made it hard for me to write.

Sister Barbara Field, a member of Harmony Rebekah Lodge #36, passed away on September 30, 2026. She joined the lodge on September 30, 2010 and was an active member until her death.

Sister Doris Hedrick, Warden of the Rebekah Assembly of Virginia, made her official visit to Harmony Rebekah Lodge #36 on October 14, 2026. Sister Doris is planning to travel with Sister Judy Gordon to California in December to work on the Rose Float and attend the parade. Sister Judy will be riding the Oddfellow and Rebekah Float in the Rose Parade representing Virginia.

I'm looking forward to seeing each of you at the Officer Banquet at Madison Heights Baptist Church on November 14, 2026.

In Friendship, Love and Truth,
Nadine Dulaney, President
Rebekah Assembly of Virginia

Department Commander



Hello my fellow Chevaliers, Brothers and Sisters,

Well, the holidays are swiftly approaching and we will all be looking to elect new officers in our respective lodges/cantons. Sorry you are stuck with the current slate of officers for the Department Council!

I hope you all are/were able to attend the Officers Banquet on November 14, 2026, and show your support of the folks you have elected to lead the Order.

I thought I would share who the Patriarchs Militant are:

Patriarchs Militant is the highest uniform branch (or "degree") of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows (IOOF), established in 1885 to promote chivalry, patriotism, and universal benevolence. The branch is based on "Universal Justice" and advocates peaceful methods while defending rights.

The Valediction (Pledge)

Members of the Patriarchs Militant pledge to be true to the fraternity and their fellow men. A key aspect of their pledge and belief system is "to visit the sick, relieve the distressed, bury the dead, and educate the orphan".

Key Aspects of the Patriarchs Militant:

- **Purpose:** Organized to provide visible support at parades, ceremonies, and to support the fraternal mission.
- **Name Origin:** The name refers to a group of leaders ("Patriarchs") who are "Militant" in their devotion to doing good work, rather than military conquest.
- **Ritual:** The ritualistic work, including the "Valediction of Odd Fellowship" or specific, formal promises, emphasizes "Friendship, Love, and Truth".
- **Significance:** They are considered the showpiece of the fellowship and often participate in events like the Annual Odd Fellow Pilgrimage to the Tomb of the Unknowns. [1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6]

Common Beliefs within the Order:

- **Faith:** Believing in the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man.
- **Charity:** Contributing to the betterment of humanity.
- **Service:** Actively working to improve their communities.

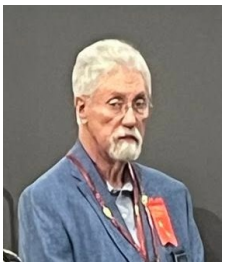
Members of this branch are often called "Chevaliers".

Chivalrously,

Thomasa Trent

Thomasa Trent, Department Commander
Department Council of VA

Grand Patriarch



Greetings Patriarchs!

While attending SGL this year, I was named to the Committee on Ritualistic Work. There was a resolution that was referred to my committee that could affect the Encampment. I say could because it was a layover until the 2027 session. So, for your information, the resolution (No. 21) addresses “racially insensitive language” in the Golden Rule Degree. The resolution continues to say that new members joining the Encampment are from a variety of ethnic and religious backgrounds and the characterization of races and religious groups currently presented in the Golden Rule Degree is offensive in contemporary culture. The language to be removed and the amendments cover at least eight pages in the ritual and are too lengthy for inclusion in this newsletter but I wanted to advise you of proposed changes.

Another resolution, although not pertaining exclusively to the Encampment, but which will be appreciated by many was the resolution to require the complete and fresh printing of the Code of General Laws. This will mean a lesser possibility of errors when removing and replacing individual pages. The complete and updated Code is to be available for sale by January 31, 2027. Maybe a nice Valentines Day gift for the one you love.

In my program for this year, I asked that each Encampment perform some act of kindness or

recognition for veterans and one of my suggestions was the Wreaths Across America program. You can go to their website to buy wreaths directly for $17 each or there may be a local group that can benefit from your purchases. In Winchester, our Lodge made a contribution to the local Civil Air Patrol (CAP) chapter and when they purchased the wreaths, the chapter then received a portion of the cost of the wreaths. The CAP conducted the wreath laying ceremony at the Winchester National Cemetery and Patriarchs and family members from our Encampment assisted in placing the wreaths. So, if you are unable to purchase wreaths, you can still volunteer to help lay them. Remember, the mission of WAA is to Remember the fallen, Honor those who served and teach the next generation the value of freedom. Whatever you do, be sure to wear something that distinguishes you as an Odd Fellow and take some pictures for the newsletter. Remember, there is no Encampment without Odd Fellows.

FLT
Paul Schilinski, Grand Patriarch
Grand Encampment of VA

SICK

Robert Burks	Larry Wood	Ray Karnes
Gerald Key	Howard Malin	Earnie Taylor
Janet Gibson	Judy Aleshire	



DEATHS



Barbara Ann Field

Dr. Barbara Ann Field (née Scofield), 85, of Vinton, Virginia, went to be with the Lord on September 30, 2026.

A beloved mother, sister, aunt, wife, grandmother, great-grandmother, and friend, Barbara will be deeply missed. Her absence will be felt at every family gathering, but her warmth, compassion, and adventurous spirit will remain with all who knew her.

Barbara was born on April 5, 1941, in Bronxville, New York, to Vincent Scofield and Mary Dee Wickenden. The eldest of three daughters, she graduated from Millburn High School in 1959. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Biology from Upsala College in New Jersey in 1965. She then stepped away from her studies to start a family. Barbara moved to Germany with her first husband, Peter Urban, and their daughter, Jeanne. Their son, Hans (John), was later born there, and the family lived in Germany for several years.

Determined to continue her education, Barbara eventually returned to school. She earned a Master of Arts in Counseling in 1977 and a doctorate in Counseling Psychology in 1980, both from Ball State University. Earning her doctorate was one of Barbara's lifelong goals. Achieving it required great dedication and perseverance, but it allowed her to fulfill her calling to help people in need.

Barbara and Peter parted ways, and she and her children returned to the United States in the late 1970s. She later established a joint clinical psychology practice with her second husband, John Breeskin, in Camp Springs, Maryland. Her work touched many lives, and she developed a special passion for supporting Vietnam veterans. She continued her practice until retiring in 2000 to devote herself fully to farm life.

Barbara eventually left the suburbs for a small farm in the heart of an Old Order Amish community. From an early age, she had held a special place in her heart for animals, and her Amish neighbors taught her much about caring for livestock. Over time, she gathered a remarkable menagerie that included cattle, horses, goats, chickens, pigs, hogs, peacocks, guinea hens, ducks, geese, and even emus. She loved and cared for them all. Whether an animal was injured, disabled, adorable, or rebellious, Barbara wanted to welcome it and give it a home.

During this chapter of her life, Barbara and John ended their relationship. She later married her third husband, William "Danny" Field, and together they moved to Mayo, Florida, accompanied by all her beloved animals. After several years of living next door to her sister Sally, Barbara and Danny returned north and settled in Virginia, bringing their ever-growing animal family with them.

Her life was full of the family, friends, and the animals she cherished, Barbara spent the remainder of her days in Virginia. She was preceded in death by Peter Urban, John Breeskin, and her husband, William "Danny" Field.

Barbara was an active member of the Harmony Rebekah Lodge No. 36 in Vinton, a service-oriented organization affiliated with the Independent Order of Odd Fellows.

She is survived by her daughter, Jeanne Manville, and Jeanne's husband, AJ; her son, John Urban, and his wife, Heidi; five grandchildren, Kelsey Lynn and her husband, Keith, Rebekka Hughes, Kate Urban, Natalie Urban, and Gabriel Urban; three great-grandchildren, Levi Lynn, Paisley Lynn, and Reagan Hughes; and her younger sisters, Sally Wanner and Cindy Steinmann.

Barbara leaves behind a legacy of perseverance, generosity, compassion, service, and love. She will be remembered for her devotion to and support of her family, her commitment to helping others, her affection for animals, her love of nature, and her determination to live life on her own terms.

A memorial service was held at noon on October 10, 2026 at Lotz Funeral Home in Vinton, Virginia. Interment alongside her husband, William “Danny” Field, followed at Lighthouse Bible Church Memorial Gardens.

Brookneal Oddfellow Lodge #267

Generational Membership:

Barbara Wright Martin when becoming a member of the Brookneal Oddfellow Lodge #267 told a beautiful story of a generational membership. The year was 1950, James Edward Wright at the age of 25 years old, became a member of this lodge. He later had a daughter, Barbara who would as a small child of 5 years old come to meetings with him. She would play while they met. Fast forward to 2024, she herself became a member of Brookneal Oddfellow Lodge #267.

This membership became full circle. She was so excited to sign her name in the same membership book as her father had many years ago. To commemorate this, she has donated in his memory. This beautiful barn quilt that has been placed on the Brookneal Oddfellow building on Main Street in Brookneal, Virginia.



Chester Lodge No. 281: Growing in Membership, Service, and Fellowship

Chester Lodge No. 281 continues to grow and make a difference! In October, we proudly initiated six new members—three Brothers and three Sisters—bringing our total to **nine new members initiated in 2026!**

Our commitment to service remains strong. What began as quarterly meals for veterans through Liberation Veteran Services is now growing into a **monthly partnership** with *The Village*, a service organization led by our own Sister Diann Dickenson. Our Lodge has become well-known for firing up the grill and preparing meals on-site, something the veterans have come to eagerly anticipate!

We have also launched **“Words for Thirds,”** providing personal dictionaries to every third-grade student at C.E. Curtis Elementary School. This project holds special meaning, as Brother C.E. Curtis was a member of the original Chester Lodge in the early 1900s. Next fall, we hope to expand the program to three additional schools!

At the heart of everything we do is fellowship. We believe that strong bonds between Brothers and Sisters create a stronger Lodge, and a stronger Lodge creates a stronger community. Whether sharing a meal, welcoming a new member, or serving our neighbors, we strive to put **Friendship, Love, and Truth into action** every day.

Sharon Harris, Editor
90 Back Creek Lane
Buchanan, VA 24066

FROM THE EDITOR

All articles are welcomed from everyone.

If you have something, please send them to me—

Sharon Harris at 90 Back Creek Lane, Buchanan, VA 24066 —

Phone 540-254-1414 or E-mail to Ladysharonh1211@aol.com

Everyone can receive the newsletter either electronically or by mail.

All articles for the next Newsletter are due before December 25.