

Grand President's Message

April / May 2018

The last Grand Parlor, in its discretion, saw fit to hon-or me with the proud position of Grand President of the Order; and while feeling profoundly grateful for such a mark of esteem, I yet assumed the duties of the office with trepidation, lest I might inadvertently omit some effort in behalf of the Order we all so highly regard. I have discharged the duties of my high office to the best of my ability and ask the indulgence of the brothers for any mistakes I may have made.

To quote probably every Grand President that came before me, and at least all of those in the last 20 years of The Native Son archives I could find, "this has been the longest and shortest year of my life." I set out this year with very proactive, forward-thinking and in some cases, controversial goals; all intended for the improvement and ultimately, the salvation of our Order.

In my first message as Grand President in these pages, I noted that The Native Sons had become "too caught up in our own politics, internal strife, and dissension... For too long have too many sat on the sidelines, giving voice to ideas, but never having the courage to step forward..." While I found this still to be true amongst our Orders notorious nay-sayers and malcontents, (although none of them had the intestinal fortitude to voice their complaints openly); I was happy to find, amongst the rank and file members, a deep love of this Order. Most members and many parlors display an abiding dedication and determination to save our Order, while at the same time being open to the inevitable changes that are necessary to accomplish this important goal. From the start, I identified important areas that I, and my Goals & Objective Committee, believed were essential to move our Order forward. I asked that we find ways to promote the identity of the Native Sons as an enviable, observable way of life. To that end, Grand Trustees Steve McLean and Jeff Schmidt, along with invaluable assistance from PGPs Wong and Dutschke, were able to secure from the California State Legislature, a resolution formally recognizing the contributions of the Native Sons to the fabric of California life. Great work, Brothers!

We also asked that our parlors become more visible and involved in the communities in which they reside. I was pleased to see many parlors heed this call and take on new challenges and perform new charitable services for their communities. Whether it was Modesto #11 donating over 3,000 books to the Stanislaus County Public Library (which included stamping each and every one with a note "Donated by Native Sons of the Golden West, Modesto #11); or Napa #62 turning their hall into a donation center for

victims of the devastating fires last fall; on more occasions than I can count, I was extremely proud of the efforts of our members and their commitment to make a difference.

There are only few more weeks until I convene the 141st Grand Parlor in South Lake Tahoe. I am particularly pleased to welcome a few parlors that have not participated in Grand Parlor in many years back into the fold and I encourage every delegate to fully participate in all the meetings and training sessions. Your participation in the deliberations and vote is crucial in determining the future of the Native Sons of the Golden West.

Finally, I would like to thank the Native Sons that granted me the honor and privilege to serve as your Grand President. I am cautiously optimistic by the small, but necessary changes that have been implemented this year or are on the horizon. The forthcoming corps of Grand Presidents in Carey, James and Joe encourages me that the momentum won't be lost and our last chance to save our beloved, amazing Order will not be squandered. If we continue to, "stand, hand in hand with our children and they with theirs, linking the past with the future" we may yet realize the full aspirations and glory of the Native Sons of the Golden West.