**TRESTLE BOARD**

**DECEMBER 2024**

**Ionic Composite Lodge No. 520**

**2244 Westwood Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90064**

**(424 273-1054) / ioniccomposite.com**

Dear Brethren,

 As we come to the end of another year, I wanted to give you an update on the state of the Lodge and its progress.

 First off, in terms of financial health, we have, to the best of my knowledge, never been in a better position. Our funds have been doing brilliantly with the aid of the Grand Lodge Investments team, and we are consistently ending each year with more money in the bank (or investment fund) than when the year began. And not just slightly more, either, but major gains, even after accounting for the money we pull out for our annual budget, which includes our large charitable contributions, as we have been allowing our dedicated charity fund to grow for a bit. Essentially, Brethren, I have nothing but good news on that front.

 Next, I want to give you an update on our membership. While we are still technically declining in *overall* membership due mostly to attrition (deaths by old age, demits for those moving to other parts of the country or the world, etc.), our level of *active* membership is actually noticeably increasing. Due in part to the considerable and ongoing efforts of Brother Stan Sax as our Prospect Manager, who ensures that Prospects sent to us via Grand Lodge make it to our doors without slipping through the cracks, as well as all the Brethren who come together to help greet and welcome Prospects once they arrive, we have a steady stream of eager, enthusiastic, and energetic young men actively knocking on the Lodge’s doors, putting in applications in due course, and moving through their degrees. We have had a number of first degrees this year, as well as a couple second degrees, and the Officers are doing our best to ensure that EA’s and FC’s actually start doing the work of getting through their proficiencies again. It is slow in some cases, especially where people have been stuck for long periods of time or where busy schedules interfere, but we *are* beginning to see an uptick in progress. Small steps forward, perhaps, but forward progress all the same.

 Finally, I’d like to talk about the general direction and image of the Lodge – our reputation, our character, and our brand, as it were. I have for quite a while now been mentioning a social media campaign that has still not quite made it to the platforms yet. While I can’t give an exact launch date, I am assured by the Brother taking point at this time that progress is being made, and that part of the delay is due to the fact that a large backlog of content has to be prepared ahead of the first day in order to generate the appropriate kind of momentum. Frankly, as someone who knows little about social media, I do not feel I am personally qualified to dispute that point, and to be honest, it kind of makes sense. So, more information to come on that as it happens. Aside from that, I am pleased to report that we are gaining (or perhaps have already gained) somewhat of a reputation in Grand Lodge as a Lodge that focuses on making people feel welcome, on high levels of charitable giving both by its Officer Corps, its members, and the Lodge itself, and for being ready and willing to embrace the idea of Masonry in this new age. Our Lodge leaders are maintaining strong and ongoing relationships with members of Grand Lodge past, present, and many who we have reason to suspect might one day ascend to higher stations as well. Our Lodge is actively reaching out to our community – both in terms of the non-Masonic world by way of the local Police, Fire, and our new partnership with Charnock Road Elementary school, as well as other Masonic bodies, such as budding relationships with members of California Prince Hall, Amaranth, the Youth Orders (Job’s, DeMolay, Rainbow), Scottish Rite, the Shrine, and the York Rite Bodies.

 There is plenty of work left to be done, brethren, and building relationships, just like erecting cathedrals or palaces, takes both time and effort. But just as it was with our Brethren of old, it remains true today that many hands make light work, so come and join us. I think you’ll be surprised just how much you will find yourself getting out of it if you do.

 I am looking forward to what I expect will be my last term as Master, and I invite everyone to the annual Installation of Officers, which will begin promptly at 6:00pm on Saturday, December 14th. Doors will open at 5:30pm, so get there early. A free dinner will follow the ceremony. I look forward to seeing you all in Lodge.

Jacob Gershbock, PM

Master

**DECEMBER CALENDAR**

**December Menu**

Arugula Salad-V

Chimichurri Picanha Steak

Roasted Red Potatoes-V

Cream corn

Apple Cobbler

RSVP by email to Lodge Secretary at [**https://www.ioniccomposite.com/lodge-events/stated-meeting-2/stated-meeting-rsvp/**](https://www.ioniccomposite.com/lodge-events/stated-meeting-2/stated-meeting-rsvp/)

**Monday December 2nd 6:00pm: Executive Committee Meeting**

**Thursday December 12th, 7:15pm**: Installation Practice

Officers being installed are required to attend.

**Saturday December 14th, 6pm:**

**Annual Installation of Officers**

You are cordially invited to attend our Annual Installation of Officers. Doors Open at 5:30pm

Program starts PROMPTLY at 6pm

Officers required to be on site by 3pm - Tuxedos for Officers

Dress for all non-Officers is Suit and Tie (or equivalent for ladies)

Dinner to follow, provided by the Lodge (no charge)

Open to all - Masons, Ladies, Prospects and Guests, so bring friends and family!

RSVP by email to Lodge Secretary at Ioniccomposite@gmail.com for headcount.

The lodge is dark for the remainder of the calendar year.

Wednesday December 11th, 7:00pm The Officer Appreciation Dinner

All the 2024 and prospective 2025 officers are invited to the home of the Master for a home-cooked meal in appreciation of your hard work and dedication.

**Think About It**

**Ron Koretz, P.M.**

**Several months ago, I wrote a column about aspects of paying college athletes. At that time, the body that has the authority to allow colleges to do so, the National Collegiate Athletic Association, or NCAA, had not yet approved such an action, although athletes were already able to be compensated for the use of their names, images, and likenesses (NILs). However, in May 2024, three suits claiming that the NCAA rules were restricting the earnings of college players were settled and the NCAA agreed to pay almost $3 billion in damages to various athletes. On October 7, 2024, Judge Claudia Wilken preliminarily approved the settlement. Interestingly, the final hearing is scheduled for April 7, 2025, which is the date when the final basketball game of March Madness is to be played.**

**Not surprisingly, the focus of this story has now switched to how this money, as well as future income sharing, is going to be accomplished. In addition, there is concern about the effect that this policy will have on “non-revenue” sports. As an aside, it should be remembered that these latter sports are the ones that train many of the athletes who participate in the Olympic Games.**

**My concern is about the future of college athletics. It has now become a business and no longer is an opportunity for some young people to get a college education, thereby improving their opportunities for success. For these athletes, college educations (along with graduations) will be irrelevant; since they have a job playing a particular sport, why should they even bother to attend classes? The college teams will just be minor league entities for various professional sports organizations. While this is already the case for the National Football League and the National Basketball Association, minor league baseball (and even hockey) may become obsolete. Furthermore, I can see the development of unionization as college players seek greater voices (and amounts of money) in what transpires on the field. We can probably look forward to having major athletic events (e.g., March Madness) threatened by work stoppages.**

**I also have some concern about how college funding programs in the future will be affected. Athletes’ salaries in college will likely be driven by the same forces that drive professional ones. As these salaries increase, there will be less money available for non-athletic scholarships as well as diminished efforts being made to raise more, as those efforts will be directed to raising funds to pay the athletes. After all, what will be more important to alumni donors, fulfilling the needs of some poor high school senior or winning a national title?**

**In the beginning, college athletics were simply an avenue for students to get some exercise and blow off some steam while obtaining a higher education. It is unlikely that we will ever see that time again, at least not in the Division I colleges. Instead, we can look forward to March Madness being won by coaches who field the best team money can buy.**

**Think about it.**

**Brethren, if you have not already paid your 2025 dues, the time is approaching fast. Please pay the amount on iMember or send it to the lodge address. If you have any questions, contact the secretary.**

**Brethren who have previously been remitted or will need remission in 2025, please send the Lodge Secretary a letter or email before the end of the year stating your needs and reason why you request a remission.**

**Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.**

**December Birthdays**

Wesley D. Challacombe 12/14

Gary Cremo 12/01

Harold M. Foster 12/22

Etan B. Goldman 12/16

Vartan Gukasyan 12/06

Marshall B. Krupp 12/13

Norman H. Langer 12/19

Morris I. Lazar 12/04

Jason F. Louv 12/11

**CASTING CALL**

**Wannabe Actors, Thespians**

**And Those Who Want Great Ritual**

***You*** can help enhance the Masonic degrees for our candidates by taking part in the ceremonies. We want to put together ritual teams in all three degrees that will create memorable experiences.

Note that Entered Apprentices can take part in the 1st degree, Fellowcrafts in the 1st and 2nd degrees, and Master Masons in all three.

We are also looking for Master Masons who want to be officers. We have openings for 2024.

We want and need your involvement. If interested, please contact:

Bernie Morse, PM

Officer’s Coach

(310)556-4463

BRETHREN AND FAMILY MEMBERS

Sick and Visitation Committee Report

*Brother Errol Stambler is recovering at home from an injury*

*Evan Weiss PM has been permanently moved to the Skilled Nursing section of the Union City Masonic Homes campus. He's in good spirits and doing well.*

Fraternally,

Stan Sax

BEWARE...

of scam / phishing emails asking for money or personal information. Scammers are pretending to be Masons, even the Worshipful Master!

We’ll never ask you to send money or gift cards via email.

Reach out to Lodge Leadership directly or by phone.

**HOW TO GET YOUR DUES CARD**

With the installation of the iMember 2.0 online system a few years ago that all brothers can access upon registration, lodge secretaries no longer receive all the dues cards to mail out after payment.

The dues card is now online and can be printed or downloaded in an 8 ½ x 11 format which can be printed or downloaded to a phone.

There are 2 ways to get you dues card:

1. Login to [www.member.freemason.org](http://www.member.freemason.org), select “Ionic Composite Lodge” bar, then select Virtual Card.

2. Send an email to our lodge Secretary Mike Bear PM (michael.bear@mac.com) requesting that it be mailed to you.

If you need help registering for iMember contact the Secretary.

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| 2024 OFFICERS | Master – Jacob Gershbock | Marshal  |
| Senior Warden – Jeffrey Bear, P.M. (Trisha) | Senior Steward – Kerin Surents, P.M. (Suzanna) |
|  | Junior Warden – Steve Resnick, P.M. (Sheelah) | Junior Steward  |
|  | Senior Deacon – Chay Alexander Wright, P.M | Tiler – Roy Steinfeld, P.M. |
|  | Junior Deacon – Luis Tananta (Maria) | Inspector for the 626th Masonic District Gevork Asatryan P.M. |
|  | Treasurer and Officers CoachBernie Morse, P.M. (Carolyn) | Trestleboard Layout – Michael Mosbach |
|  | Secretary and Head Candidate Coach Michael Bear, P.M. (Debbie) |  |
|  | Assistant Secretary - Michael Mosbach |  |