**TRESTLE BOARD**

**A logo of a freemason lodge

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Description automatically generated January 2025**

**Ionic Composite Lodge No. 520**

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

**(424 273-1054) / https://www.ioniccomposite.com**

Dear Brethren,

As we come to the close of 2024 and the start of 2025, I am once again honored and gratified to have been installed as Master of Ionic Composite for the fourth time. It will, however, be my last time – certainly for the time being, at the least. However, before I step down from the East, I have an opportunity to complete the cycle of work which I began three years ago.

In 2022, when I first ascended to the Master’s chair, we were in the process of selling our old building, moving to our new home, and celebrating our 100th anniversary with a Rebirth of the Lodge. The next year, we put down roots and made new connections in our community, and this past year, we built on that, strengthening existing ties and forging new ones. Through the hard work and dedication of myself and my officers, as well as other brethren who have stepped up and taken on important roles such as Prospect Manager, helping with investigating committees, or even filling in when installed officers were absent due to illness, we have held on through what I sincerely hope will one day be seen as the most difficult period of our Lodge’s history. Now, through their combined and determined efforts, we have made it through and found the light on the far side.

Today, we have active brothers of all three degrees getting increasingly involved in the running of our Lodge. We have brethren who are returning after long absences, those who are resuming their journeys and working on their proficiencies after long periods of stagnation, and a number of energetic newcomers who are just getting started and show every evidence of being the kind of men our Fraternity was *made* for. In short brethren, it’s time for us to begin Inspiring and training the leaders of tomorrow.

I have often thought of the Lodge as being like a fruit tree: it was in dire need of being transplanted, because its roots were being poisoned where it was before. In 2022, we moved it and gave it a chance at new life. In 2023, having made the move, it sunk its roots into the new soil and began the process of healing, with the first signs of new growth appearing. In 2024, it finally started to put forth new leaves, and the signs of decay almost entirely disappeared. Now, in 2025, with new buds visible on the branches, and healthy green leaves once again drawing light from the sun, it is time to nurture those buds and see that they reach their full potential.

It may be the completion of a cycle brethren, but the work – and the life – of the Lodge does not end here. Rather, it starts anew, but with a renewed sense of hope and purpose, once again secure in the knowledge that our Lodge, with all its history and traditions, will not fade into history, but will instead continue to *make* history well into the future.

We have a great year planned for 2025, in which we once again show the world the full potential of what Ionic Composite Lodge has to offer. We are resuming Masonic Education nights with a quarterly Speaker series, starting in March with a talk by Worshipful Nicholas Mitchell. We are gearing up and planning ways to ensure that last year’s record Masons4Mitts campaign *pales* in comparison to what we will pull off this year. We will of course be continuing with our annual Festive Boards, our First Responders and Public Schools nights, and we look forward to another amazing reception for our new Grand Master. And, of course, we fully expect to be busy with the business of making and training the next generation of Masons, with more than one degree already planned and scheduled.

I may not be able to predict the future brethren, and I am not a betting man, but if I were, I would put good odds that 2025 is going to be a great year for Ionic Composite Lodge. I invite you to come see for yourselves. Our doors are *always* open for our brethren. Just knock.

Fraternally,

Jacob Gershbock, PM

Master

**January Calendar**

**Monday, January 6th, 7pm: Stated Meeting**

**Join us for our monthly business meeting and the presentation of Worshipful Roy Steinfeld’s Florida 50 year pin.**

**Menu:** Mixed green salad-V  
Chimichurri flank steak  
Smashed garlic red potatoes-V  
Roasted Corn  
Peach cobbler

**Use the link below to RSVP:**

[**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, January 13th, 7:15pm 2nd Degree Practice**

Fellowcrafts encouraged to attend.

Sideliners and those wishing to brush up on ritual welcome!

**Monday, January 20th, 7:15 pm 2nd Degree Conferral**

Light refreshments will be served.

**Monday, January 27th, 7:30 pm, OSI**

Officers’ School of Instruction. All Officers required to attend.

Master Masons welcome.

Ionic Composite Hosting. Topic: 1st Degree in full, including Lecture

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

Save the Date!

We are pleased to be able to announce the return of our

**Annual Sweethearts’ Night**

at the February Stated Meeting.

February 3rd, 2025

**2025 Masonic Speaker Series Kickoff!**

Join us on March 10, 2025, as Worshipful Nicholas Mitchell delivers the first of our quarterly Masonic talks with a look at the significance of the number 15 in Masonry and Masonic History.

Masons of all Degrees welcome to attend.

Light Refreshments will be served. RSVP using the link below:

<https://www.ioniccomposite.com/lodge-events/upcoming-events/non-stated-meeting-rsvp-form/>

**Think About It – Ron Koretz, P.M.**

**Think About It**

There is a growing problem in science, namely the numbers of published papers that are being retracted. There is even a website called Retraction Watch which provides daily updates of these events. The use of computers has allowed people to more easily identify instances when material is plagiarized; we have already seen a number of examples where alleged leaders in the field have faced increasing scrutiny over such instances. From a scientific perspective, there are more serious reasons to question the value of any scientific paper, including falsification, or even fabrication, of data.

A recent example of this phenomenon is the retraction of a paper that created much consternation when it was published in 2012. The paper, by Vinson et al, described a so-called “randomized double-blind, placebo-controlled, crossover study” that concluded that the consumption of a green coffee bean extract resulted in weight loss in overweight individuals. This study achieved particular attention at the time because Dr. Frank Oz publicized it.

Comparative clinical studies can be divided into two types, observational ones and randomized trials. An important difference between these two types is the method whereby the control group is identified. In observational studies, the control group consists of patients who, usually for unstated reasons, do not receive the intervention of interest. In randomized trials, the decision to treat or not treat is determined by chance. Randomized trials are afforded more credibility because they are less likely to be confounded by whatever factors led to the decision to treat or not treat, making the use of the intervention the only variable that is changed.

The study by Vinson et al was allegedly randomized and presumably the data were more reliable. However, when I read the paper, I was struck by a very large number of methodologic flaws that undermined any conclusions that could be made. (These problems had also been identified in 2012 by Scott Gravura, a Canadian pharmacist who is interested in evidence-based medicine, although his commentary seemed more directed at debunking Dr. Oz.)

To be fair, the defects in the paper by Vinson et al are not uncommon in the medical literature. In fact, they frequently are found in many published randomized trials. Their presence is not a cause for retraction; rather, the reader of the paper should be able to identify them and downgrade the confidence that he or she places on the results. My fear is that, in this era of castigating science, the temptation will be to find a reason to remove any publications that simply do not agree with our own opinion. However, in this case, the retraction did not occur for 12 years, and the reason for that action was that an investigation by the the Federal Trade Commission concluded that the study authors altered the data substantially, a fact that could not be determined simply from reading the paper.

My take-home lesson from this incident is that our healthcare workers, including Dr. Oz, need to become more skilled in critically reading the literature and then provide us with assessments of how strong the evidence really is. Given the increasing pressures to retract articles, such actions should be limited to violations of the scientific process, not just to differences in opinion.

Think about it.

**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, select Imposite 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.

BRETHREN 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.

From the Secretary

Brethren

This being the start of a new year, I want to remind you that your 2025 lodge dues are due to the lodge. By now you have received several mailings reminding you of this and how to pay them.

If you have any questions about this or, if you have any situation whereby you would have difficulties in paying them, ***please*** contact me and we can discuss the options you may have. Being a member of this lodge and Freemasonry has many benefits even if you are unable to attend lodge meetings.

To those of you who have not been advancing in your degree proficiencies, ***please*** contact me and I will find someone to work with you, I know that it may have been a long time since you took your degrees, again, together we can get you back of the road of becoming a Master Mason!

If you have any changes to your contact information, **please** contact me, or make your changes on your iMember page. If you are not on iMember, you guessed it, contact me and I will help you create your account.

Lastly, if you have ideas for programs, activities, speaker topics, or things you would like to see your lodge get involved with, contact the Master or me. We want your input. This is your lodge!

Fraternally yours and best wishes to you and your family and friends for a great 2025.

Michael Bear, P.M.

Secretary

[michael.bear@mac.com](mailto:michael.bear@mac.com)

C: 310-962-4346

**January Birthdays**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **First Name** | | **Last Name** | | **Birthday** |
| William | Weiss | | | 5 |
| S | Samuels | | | 7 |
| Ronald | Koretz | | | 11 |
| Andre | Richardson | | 12 | | | |
| Kerin | Surents | | | 13 |  |  |
| Steven | Kierman | | | 14 |  |  |
| Vrej | Eskandarian | | 17 | | | |
| Donald | Gordon | | | 19 |  |  |
| Rubi | Montejano | | 19 | | | |
| Nazareth | Guluzian | | | 20 |  |  |
| Stuart | Horwitz | | | 27 |  |  |
| Bradley | Zalben | | | 29 |  |  |
| Michael | Mosbach | | | 31 |  |  |
| Kyle | Ware | | | 31 |  |  |

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| 2025 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 – Michael Mosbach |
| Senior Deacon – Chay Alexander Wright, P.M  (Virian) | Inspector for the 626th Masonic District Gevork Asatryan P.M. |
| Junior Deacon – Luis Tananta (Maria) | Trestleboard Layout – Cody Blair |
| Treasurer – Bernie Morse, P.M. (Carolyn) | Piano – |
| Secretary – Michael Bear, P.M. (Debbie) | Tiler – Roy Steinfeld, P.M. |
| Assistant Secretary - \* |  |