

JANUARY 2024

# TRESTLE BOARD

## Ionic Composite Lodge No. 520

2244 Westwood Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90064

(424) 273-1054 / [ioniccomposite.com](http://ioniccomposite.com)

Dear Brethren,

I would like to start by thanking the brethren for placing their trust in me once again to lead them as Master in 2024. As always, I will do my best to be worthy of that trust.

At Installation, I spoke about my theme for the coming year: "Building Community", which is more of a multi-year concept than a single-year goal. In my first year as Master, with the sale of the old building, the move to the Liberal Arts building, and the 100th Anniversary, we were somewhat like a small seedling being transplanted. The goal was Rebirth – making it through the year and surviving long enough to take the next steps. Last year, it was about Making Connections – putting down roots and getting a firm foundation for future growth developed. Now, we're ready to grow – to build. We have a number of EA's and FC's ready or nearly ready to progress, a number of good candidates and prospects in the wings ready or almost ready to apply for membership, and a strong Officers line ready to tackle it all.

More than that, despite what many were concerned was a large budget draw this past year, we ended our year VERY firmly ahead, with a 6-figure financial net gain, despite large charity donations (such as the one to the Masonic Homes) made directly from the operating budget. At the January Stated Meeting I will be presenting this year's prospective budget, which I developed in conjunction with Wor. Bernie Morse based on this past year's financial data and our projected needs, and Brethren, we are going to be pulling less than 1.8%, whereas our investments generally return upwards of 6-8%. In short, we are ending each year with more money than we began with, even as we increase the amount we are donating and using to impact the community and the institutions and charities that we so deeply care about.

We plan on working on a new Social Media campaign, with Wor. Chay Wright, our Senior

Deacon (and this year's Junior Grand Deacon as well) taking point, with myself and Wor. Tim Shiner helping with content generation and production. If you are interested in helping out, please contact one of us. It will be based on the #MasonsAreBuilders theme, and we will hopefully be able to leverage this to help draw more good prospects to our doors. Likewise, we plan on trying to help our local Youth Orders.

All in all, it's a busy year ahead, and I hope and pray that it will be an even more successful year than our last, which was, despite several hiccups, quite successful.

Before anything else, mark your calendars now for not one, but TWO Grand Lodge receptions we will be hosting this year. First, a joint reception with Beverly Hills Lodge for our very own Worshipful Chay Alexander Wright, this year's Junior Grand Deacon. He is a Past Master and Life Member of Beverly Hills, but he also cares enough for our lodge that he asked that we host a joint reception (since the Grand Master said he would only come to one). It will be at our March 4th Stated Meeting. Our 55th Annual Reception of the Grand Master for Most Worshipful G. Sean Metroka will be a lunch affair on Sunday, July 21st. This is the afternoon of the Los Angeles Masonic Service Bureau's Men's Breakfast in his honor, by his request, as he needs to travel back north in the evening. We look forward to both, and you won't want to miss either one.

I wish everyone has a happy, healthy, and safe New Year, full of blessings and success. I hope to see you in Lodge, because if you haven't been coming, you've been missing out. It's time to come home and see what's going on.

Fraternally,  
Wor. Jacob Gershbock, PM

# UPCOMING EVENTS

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JANUARY 1

DARK FOR NEW YEARS DAY

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JANUARY 8

JANUARY STATED MEETING

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MENU IS

BRAZILIAN CHOPPED SALAD  
ROASTED CHIMICHURRI CHICKEN  
FRIED PLANTAINS  
BRIGADEIRO TRUFFLES

DINNER IS \$15, PLEASE EMAIL [MICHAEL.BEAR@MAC.COM](mailto:michael.bear@mac.com) TO RSVP

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JANUARY 15

LODGE DARK FOR MLK DAY

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JANUARY 22

SECOND DEGREE PRACTICE

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JANUARY 29

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February 5

Stated Meeting

Menu

Waldorf Salad  
Soy Glazed Salmon  
Rice & Quinoa Pilaf  
Peach Pie

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## MARK YOUR CALENDARS - March 4th 2024

In Honor of our own Wor. Chay Alexander Wright PM  
being formally received by the Lodge in honor of his being the Junior Grand Deacon.

**Watch for more details!**

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## 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 in an 8 ½ x 11 format which can be printed and also downloaded to a phone.

There are 2 ways to get you dues care:

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](mailto:michael.bear@mac.com)) requesting that it be mailed to you.

If you need help registering for iMember contact the Secretary.

## IONIC COMPOSITE LODGE NO. 520

**We are considering getting a group together for the**

**Academy Museum of Motion Pictures**

**6067 Wilshire Blvd**

**Los Angeles, Ca 90036**

**Sunday, February 25, 2024**

**Time TBD**

<b>Group Fees:</b>	<b>Adult</b>	<b>\$22</b>
	<b>Senior 62+</b>	<b>\$17</b>
	<b>Students 18+</b>	<b>\$13</b>
	<b>Children to 17</b>	<b>Free</b>

**For information and reservations please contact Bernie Morse PM at (310)704-2262 or email [brnhrd18@yahoo.com](mailto:brnhrd18@yahoo.com).**

### 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 1<sup>st</sup> degree, Fellowcrafts in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> 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

## JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

William Weiss 5	Steven Kierman 14	Stuart Horwitz 27
S Zachary Samuels 7	Edwin Siegel 16	Bradley Zalben 29
Ronald Koretz 11	Vrej Eskandarian 17	Michael Mosbach 31
Andre Richardson 12	Donald Gordon 19	Kyle Ware 31
Kerin Surents 13	Nazareth Guluzian 20	



# THINK ABOUT IT

RON KORETZ, P.M.

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2023 was a year in which labor actions were commonplace. However, one strike was at least temporarily avoided when doctors, dentists, and veterinarians employed by the County of Los Angeles agreed to postpone the one they planned for December 27th while third party experts reviewed the tax laws about an upgrade to their benefit package. There are two different benefit packages for employees in Los Angeles County, namely Choices and MegaFlex. Choices is the plan that is provided to most of the employees, but MegaFlex, which is a more expensive one, is reserved for only certain workers, such as various county lawyers and leaders of county services. It was estimated that, if only these healthcare professionals were to switch to MegaFlex, the additional cost to the county would be relatively small, a 0.04% increase in its \$46.7 billion budget (about \$19 million/year). The doctors, represented by the Union of American Physicians and Dentists, or UAPD, have been negotiating with the county for over 2 years to make this change, but the county has refused.

This story has a personal side for me, as I was a doctor who worked for the county for over 30 years. In 1999, the UAPD won an election to represent the doctors. However, as soon as that representation became official, the doctors, who had been under MegaFlex, were switched to Choices. The reason for this action was that the two plans cover different types of employees, namely those who had (Choices) or did not have (MegaFlex) union representation. It turned out that the UAPD actually knew about this in 1998, but in their campaign to achieve recognition, withheld this information during

the union vote. It was only after the fact that the documentation about their pre-knowledge became available.

This failure to warn the doctors was the major factor for a subsequent vote to decertify the UAPD and the return of MegaFlex to the doctors in 2003. A couple of years later, the UAPD was successful in achieving recertification after they negotiated with the county to allow those who were currently employed to continue MegaFlex, but requiring all new hires to be given Choices. (By this time, I had left county employment.)

Of course, this was a short-sighted solution that created a two-tier system and, as was predicted at the time, over the years a higher and higher percentage were enrolled in Choices, resulting in the current situation. The slant in the newspaper stories appears to have been provided by the UAPD, the group that initially was responsible for, and then recreated, the problem. These stories have not included the fundamental eligibility requirements of the two plans. Clearly, the county cannot afford to give one represented group MegaFlex without then offering it to all others, resulting in a much larger budget increase. A strike by the doctors (which has always seemed to me to be an unethical act in any event) is not going to change this situation. On the other hand, if the doctors want MegaFlex, they can achieve that goal (and avoid a strike) simply by decertifying the UAPD again.

Think about it.

# BRETHREN AND FAMILY MEMBERS

## Sick and Visitation Committee Report

Ron Koretz                      Recovering at home from knee surgery.

Roy Steinfeld                 On the mend after a fall & hip related injury.

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Brethren Please, a Telephone call from you could brighten their day. To get the contact information of those listed please contact the lodge Secretary or Master. If you know of a Brother or a member of a Brother's family who is ill, please contact the Lodge Office.

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**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.**

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### 2024 OFFICERS

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