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Mt. Moriah Lodge #292 F. & A. M.  
Wayne Heimsoth, Secretary  
PO Box 33242  
Los Gatos, CA 95031-3242

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July, 2014

Calendar	
<a href="http://www.calendarwiz.com/calendars/calendar.php?crd=mtmoriah292">www.calendarwiz.com/calendars/calendar.php?crd=mtmoriah292</a>	
July 03 6:30 PM	(Thursday) Dinner
7:30 PM	Stated Meeting
July 10	(Thursday) TBD
July 17	(Thursday) TBD
July 24	(Thursday) TBD
July 31 7:30 PM	(Thursday) Hall Association Meeting

**Changes Happen!**  
Call the Lodge Hotline: (408) 502-NEWS (6397)



Mt. Moriah Lodge No. 292 F. & A. M.

# Trestleboard



**Volume 19 Number 7**

<http://www.mtmoriah292.org>

**July 2014**

**Is your info current?**

- Notify Secretary Wayne Heimsoth of changes in address, email, or phone numbers

Send email to:  
[secretary@mtmoriah292.org](mailto:secretary@mtmoriah292.org)

- Send snail mail to:  
PO Box 33242, Los Gatos, CA 95031-3242

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- Saves postage costs



**Mark Houge First Degree**

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**From the East**

Brethren,

Please join me in welcoming Bro. Mark Houge to Masonry and our Lodge. We had a wonderful degree last Friday evening.

Many thanks to the sideliners who attended.

We have at least two more First Degrees coming up in the next month or two, so stay tuned.

Fraternally,  
Jeff Powell, *Master*

Jeff Powell  
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**The Modern Cowan**

By Floren L. Quick

In Scotland, the operative Mason knew cowans to be ignorant builders who put stones together without mortar. They piled rough fieldstones into a wall without hewing them true, or squaring them. They masqueraded as Masters, but they did not have the Word.

Now and again, today - fortunately not too often - we find a modern equivalent of the operative imposter. One such is the Mason who manages a place in an officer's line with little or no effect of his own to deserve it. With only that exertion that is necessary to maintain his place, he continues to advance in line until he receives the jewels and honours that he prizes so highly. But he does not know the Constitution, and he does not understand the traditions and dignity of the Craft. As a presiding officer, his vocal ability is more noteworthy than his executive ability; and when his term is ended, he is seldom seen until another honour or prize appears to be within his grasp.

He is a contemporary builder who works without the benefit of the mortar of real enthusiasm or accomplishments. His structure is likened unto the rough stone wall, having little beauty of value. He is the cowans of modern speculative Masonry.

He is to be pitied, for he is a Masonic failure. His honours are shallow. Bringing no interest to his position, he received little of the satisfaction and respect that belong to the real Master.

Masonry has failed to reach him with a clear understanding of those marks of true devotion which she has to offer. He never knows the opportunities that the Craft makes available to those who diligently seek them. He misses the opportunities that the Craft makes available to strive for a just and worthy cause. He misses the opportunity for continuing fellowship and friendship. He misses the opportunity for loyalty and devotion. He misses the opportunity for development of his executive, intellectual and oratorical abilities. And most of all, he misses the opportunity for service - to God - to his community - and to his fellow man.

These are the jewels that Masonry has to offer, but in his quest for position and honours, the modern cowan misses them. Like the operative cowan, he does not have the Word.

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**TRESTLEBOARD**

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I would like to touch upon the destruction of the ballot so that if a Master decides to destroy a ballot without announcing the result and hold another ballot some of the new members would not be confused.

Although prior to 1920 there was no positive enactment governing the matter, it was deemed advisable that a ballot should be destroyed only once before announcing the results, but the destruction of two ballots is now permitted with announcement of the result of the third mandatory. If the Master wishes to consider a ballot a second time, he should destroy it as soon as he discovers that it is not clear and proceed with the new ballot without announcing the result of the ballot that he destroyed. In such case, the balloting must be continuous and uninterrupted by any other business or proceedings and before any Brethren who participated in the destroyed ballot have left the Lodge. I encourage all of the newer members who do not have a copy of the Handbook of Masonic Law of the State of New York to get one and study it for within those covers are found all of the statutes by which we as New York State Freemasons abide.

In closing I cannot stress the importance of a secret ballot and I offer you a quote from Brother Albert Mackey's Encyclopedia of Freemasonry; "Secrecy of the ballot is essential to its perfection as its independence. If the vote were to be given viva voce, it is impossible that the improper influences of fear or interests should not sometimes be exerted, and timid members be thus induced to vote contrary to the dictates of their own reason and conscience. Hence, to secure this secrecy and protect the purity of choice, it has been wisely established as a usage, not only that the vote shall in these cases be taken by a ballot, but that there shall be no subsequent discussion of the subject. Not only has no member a right to inquire how his fellows have voted, but is wholly out of order for him to explain his own vote. And the reason is evident. If one member has a right to rise in his place and announce that he deposited a white ball, then every other member has the same right; and in a Lodge of twenty members, where an application has been rejected by one black ball, if nineteen members state that they did not deposit it, the inference is clear that the twentieth Brother has done so, and thus the secrecy of the ballot is destroyed. Should a rejection occur and is announced by the Master, the Lodge should at once proceed to other business, and it's the sacred duty of the presiding officer to check any rising discussion on the subject. Nothing must be done to impair the inviolable secrecy of the ballot."

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## ELECTION BY BALLOT

Written by Arthur D. Radlein, PGHP

Edited by Alfonso Serrano, GSB

There have been many questions asked about the ballot:

Where did it originate?

Why do we elect by ballot?

Why are black balls really cubes?

The search for the beginning of election by ballot has led into many broken avenues. However, in the canonical works, of which China has probably the oldest system (older than the writings of Confucius for they date back to the year 2000 BC which would be about 1,100 years before the building of the Temple by King Solomon), it states "by a count of the black over the white it was so decided among the nobles that the prince would be separated from his head". In the Rabbinical system it reads, "a man's life shall hang in the scales between the black and the white". The use of black and white balls, or balls cast into different receptacles, can also be traced back to ancient Greece and Rome, where voting for various purposes, —even verdicts on juries— required the voters to march by and cast shells or pebbles in vases or jars. The English word ostracized comes from the practice of ancient Greece wherein one was banished or cleared according to the casting of the shells called ostraka.

First, let us seek the answer to why black and white. Black and white are extreme opposites. They are not considered colors—one is referred to as light; the other, absence of light. Some artists may consider them shades, but they present the most perfect symbols of complete opposites. Also, they represent day and night. Since the beginning of man's knowledge, black has been associated with night, while white has been the symbol of the day.

Also, in Masonry, and other schools of education, darkness has been the symbol of ignorance, while light has been the symbol of knowledge. These are also two exact opposites. A man may be color-blind to the different colors in the spectrum but no man is so blind to color that he cannot tell the difference between black and white unless he is totally blind.

As to the question why the ballot is made up of black and white balls, it must be remembered that from the beginning of man up into the period known as the dark ages and even later, the great majority of men could neither read nor write. This was a common fact even among the nobility; even kings had their scribes for the purposes of writing their letters and dispatches. Therefore it is only natural that a ballot of any secret nature could only be held by the simple process of a black and white pebble or stone, as the casting of a yes or no vote; as direct opposites there could be no question in counting the ballots. Also, a small pebble could be held out of sight in the hand until deposited in a common bowl.

Why do we have a secret ballot? According to the Handbook of Masonic Law of New York, written by Brother Howard P. Nash section [545] (III): *Ballot must be secret*. The ballot on a petition should always be strictly secret and inviolable and should be so spread that no one present will know how any other Brother has voted. Part of the Standard Works and Lectures of the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons the State of New York contains the work of the ballot, in which is found an admonition to all members present who are eligible to vote by the Worshipful Master, "Brethren, you are about to exercise one of your most sacred rights as a Master Mason. Before you cast your ballot, I would remind you that it is important that you act in the best interests of Masonry. You must not allow personal prejudices or private piques and grudges to influence your ballot. You are to consider only the moral qualifications of the petitioner.

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“There must be none among us who would cast a blemish on the Lodge and the whole Fraternity by balloting for an unworthy petitioner or by rejecting a worthy applicant”. In casting your ballot as a Freemason it is every member’s duty to pay particular attention to the reading of the report from the investigation committee on a particular candidate. This committee is charged by the Worshipful Master to investigate the motives of the petitioner for wanting to join Freemasonry and determine whether he is a man, freeborn, of lawful age and well recommended.

The Investigating Committee is the preparatory work of the ballot. I caution all present that if you are charged by the Master to investigate a petitioner, be as thorough as you possibly can. Do not be hesitant to ask him or his family personal question within reason. I have always asked the petitioner’s spouse how she feels about her husband’s desire to seek admission into the Masonic Fraternity. Toady the Masonic Fraternity is still feeling the effects of spurious men who have been admitted into its ranks. Among them are Leo Taxil, who wrote many books about the Secrets of Freemasonry after he was expelled from the Loge Le Temple de L’Honnuer Francais in Paris, France, all of which were exaggerated and imagined rituals of Freemasonry— one of which is that the newly initiated Entered Apprentice is given a dagger and told that before him is a Mason who has violated his obligation and therefore must suffer the penalty of death. In his books he claims that a sheep is sheared down to the bare skin and placed before the candidate. So, in a ceremony such as the one Taxil invented, if the initiate strikes, although he will plunge a dagger into a brute animal, in his heart he has committed murder. Taxil, at a religious convention held in Paris on April 17, 1897, admitted that all of his books about Freemasonry were a hoax perpetrated on the Catholic Church for his own monetary gain.

Anti-Masons today still quote from those books and others who use Taxil as a source of reference. In this light, had that particular Lodge refused admission to Taxil, his desire to write these books may have been stopped because he never would have received the rank and title of Freemason. A Mason therefore may have to reject by casting a black ball— a relative, his own employer, his own minister, a local judge, or even a private, his general, if he knows them to be an immoral person. There are many reasons why a ballot must be secret, but above all a Mason’s livelihood and peace of mind may be at stake if his ballot were to be discovered. The Handbook of Masonic Law of New York states the following in section [1399] (II) b. Particular Offenses – (I) Disclosing Ballot: *The penalty for disclosing the manner of casting a ballot, the number of white or black balls cast, or declaring how any other Brother balloted, is suspension for not exceeding one year.*

How many black balls or cubes may reject? According to the Constitutions of the Grand Lodge of the State of New York, Section 354, *The ballot on a petition for initiation, or for affiliation, can be taken only at a stated communication, and if the ballot shall contain three or more black cubes, the petitioner shall be rejected.* Section 353 also states that *“after twelve months a rejected candidate may present a new petition for initiation, which shall take the same course as the previous one”*.

Who may vote upon the petition of a candidate? According to the Handbook of Masonic Law of New York: *Every member of a Lodge present at any balloting therein for initiation, advancement or affiliation must vote. No one can be excused, ask to be excused or state any reason for voting or not voting, except Tiler who may. The Tiler, while attending to his duties, is not present in the sense that he must vote, but he should be accorded the opportunity to do so if he expresses the desire. Refusal of a brother, when present, to cast his ballot at any balloting for initiation, advancement or affiliation constitutes a Masonic offense.*

As to why you may find black cubes instead of black balls in the ballot box: Many years ago in the early days of the Colonies, and even in England, the lighting in the Lodge was very poor. Candlelight was the best that the lodge could offer. To see into the ballot box was almost impossible for the elder members and even the younger men had a hard time trying to distinguish between a black ball and a very dirty white one. A member drawing forth a ball from the box to get a closer look at the color disclosed many a ballot. In desperation, measures had to be taken, so it was decided to cut square cubes and paint them black.

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## From the West

Brethren,  
Baseball season is well under way, and Masons throughout California have been rallying together in our friendly competition to support at-risk youth through our Masons4Mitts program. Mt Moriah Lodge is part of team South Bay Bombers. Remember that every contribution is helping a child that wouldn’t otherwise have the opportunity to participate in a baseball program get in the game.

[www.masons4mitts.org](http://www.masons4mitts.org)

You can also send donations to:

Masons4Mitts

Attention: Joshua Castro

California Masonic Foundation

1111 California Street

San Francisco, CA 94108

All checks can be made out to "Masons4Mitts".

Fraternally,  
Nick Schilling

*Senior Warden*

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## From the South

Brethren,  
The menu for our July Stated Meeting dinner, which will take place at 6:30 PM on Thursday, July 3rd, 2014, in celebration of Independence Day, will consist of a Green Salad, Smoked Pork Spare Ribs, and Honey Baked Beans, with Apple Pie for dessert. A Vegetarian alternative is available. Contact my wife at 408-252-5340 at least three days in advance to reserve your vegetarian meal. The cost of the dinner will be \$10 per person. If you are planning to attend the dinner, please RSVP by Tuesday, July 1st, 2014, preferably by email, to [dialdice@gmail.com](mailto:dialdice@gmail.com). You may also RSVP via phone or text, at 408-550-5039. As usual, I will use the RSVP count when planning for how much food to prepare. These dinners are always a great way to share good times with fellow brothers and their families. If you have any suggestions for a future dinner this year, please let me know. Also, any help, especially with taking money at the door or cleanup afterwards, would be greatly appreciated.

Independence Day, commonly known as the Fourth of July, is a federal holiday in the United States commemorating the adoption of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776, declaring independence from Great Britain. The legal separation of the Thirteen Colonies from Great Britain occurred on July 2, 1776, when the Second Continental Congress voted to approve a resolution of independence that had been proposed in June by Richard Henry Lee of Virginia, declaring the United States independent from Great Britain. After voting for independence, Congress turned its attention to the Declaration of Independence, a statement explaining this decision, which had been prepared by a Committee of Five, with Thomas Jefferson as its principal author. Congress debated and revised the wording of the Declaration, finally approving it on July 4. Although the resolution of independence was approved in a closed session of Congress on July 2, Americans have always celebrated independence on July 4, the date shown on the much-publicized Declaration of Independence, rather than on July 2.

Fraternally,  
Allen Diamond

*Junior Warden*

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