

# *Official Rules*

## *Maryland Traveling Gavel*

- 1. *Notice of Intent*** - As a courtesy to the Master, he must be informed of the intention of the visiting lodge members in attempt to obtain the gavel, at least 3 days previous to the visit. Capture of the Traveling Gavel may only be made during Stated Communications or Special Communications, excluding Installation of Officers.
- 2. *Current Dues Cards*** - Each visiting member must show his current dues card to the Master of host lodge.
- 3. *Display of Gavel*** - The Traveling Gavel has to be placed in clear view of all visiting Brothers.
- 4. *Minimum Visitors*** - A minimum of four (4) members from the visiting lodge must be present in order to obtain the gavel. Required are the Worshipful Master and one of the remaining two principal officers, (Senior Warden or Junior Warden), plus at least two other members of that visiting lodge (all with dues cards).
- 5. *Winner*** - Should four (4) or more members from two (2) different visiting lodges attend another lodge's meeting (and be in possession of their dues cards), the lodge with the highest number of visiting members "captures" the gavel.
- 6. *Tie(s)*** - In case of a tie, the lodge that traveled the farthest will receive the Gavel (as determined by map, square and compasses and GPS). If a tie still exists then there is no winner and the Gavel remains in possession of the holding lodge.
- 7. *Capture*** - If these requirements are met, the lodge in possession of the Traveling Gavel "loses" it to the visiting lodge, who take it back to their lodge.
- 8. *Notification and Tracking*** - Any lodge newly acquiring the Traveling Gavel must notify both of the "Administrators" of the recently won acquisition within five (5) days. Failure to do so will result in forfeiture of the gavel and time of possession removed from the records. Notifications by lodges must be made by human-to-human telephone call, regular mail, or email sent with electronic return receipt from recipient. The two Administrators are:  

<b>Birmingham Lodge # 188</b>	<a href="mailto:birmingham188@verizon.net"><u>birmingham188@verizon.net</u></a>
<b>Odenton Lodge # 209</b>	<a href="mailto:secretary@odentonlodge209.net"><u>secretary@odentonlodge209.net</u></a>
- 9. *Time of Possession*** - The months of July and August will not be counted toward time of possession. The lodge in possession of the gavel just prior to the 2nd Tuesday of June must "surrender" the gavel to Bonnie Blink Daylight Lodge #1 at 10:30AM. This may be done by any one or more members of the lodge. The lodge surrendering the gavel to Bonnie Blink Daylight Lodge #1 will be granted a 30 day time of possession bonus.
- 10. *Award*** - Every November the lodge with the previous year's longest possession - accumulatively - will be awarded special recognition.

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### **Suggested Ceremony of Winning Possession**

#### **Determining Winner:**

##### **Single Winner:**

After the visiting lodge members show their current dues cards the Worshipful makes declaration of the capture of the Maryland Traveling Gavel to be logged in the lodge minutes (see below).

##### **In Case of Tie:**

- The highest ranking officer of each participating lodge (including incumbent lodge) are invited to the Secretary's desk by the Worshipful Master.
- Each lodge identifies the address of the lodge's actual location to Secretary.
- If necessary, the Maryland street map (that accompanies the Traveling Gavel) is retrieved from the transfer case, and laid flat on the Secretary's desk.
- "Ceremonial use" of the **compasses** is used to determined measure from lodge of origin to lodge of capture, for each contesting lodge ("ceremonial use" means with fanfare and pomp, with words chosen and spoken by the Worshipful Master losing ownership of the Gavel)
- If the distances are determined to be equal, and the contesting lodges do not meet in the same building location, then use of GPS positioning may be used to determine exact distances.

##### **Null Capture:**

- In the case of tie and/or the contesting lodges do meet in the same building location, then capture of the Maryland Traveling Gavel is declared null and ownership remains with the hosting lodge.

#### **Statement of Declaration:**

**WM:** The visiting brethren have shown the spirit of fraternal friendship and fellowship with our brothers by visiting our lodge. I declare possession of the Maryland Traveling Gavel to have been captured by \_\_\_\_\_, No. \_\_\_\_\_.  
So ordered Brother Secretary.

**OR**

**WM:** The visiting brethren have shown the spirit of fraternal friendship and fellowship with our brothers by visiting our lodge, an irresolvable tie exists between visiting lodges from the same location. Accordingly and in agreement to the rules I declare the capture attempt null. So ordered Brother Secretary.

**NOTE:** This "ceremony" is intended to be fun and jovial. It is not required, but sure would be nice for all to see.