

01

January 2026

FREEDOM LODGE NO. 118 TRESTLEBOARD

The Southern Least Lodge in Virginia

Freedom Lodge No. 118
28 E Broad Way,
Lovettsville, VA 20180

[CONTACT US](#)

VISIT US ONLINE
[HTTPS://FREEDOMLODGE118.ORG/](https://freedomlodge118.org/)

From the East

Brethren,

As we stand at the threshold of the 2026 Masonic Year, it is fitting that we pause to reflect upon the work that lies before us. At my installation, I shared that this year Freedom Lodge No. 118 will embrace the theme “Strength in Brotherhood, Service in Community” with the guiding motto “Building Bonds, Building Community.” This theme is not meant merely to sound fancy when spoken aloud; it is meant to serve as a blueprint for our labor in the months ahead, directing our thoughts, our fellowship, and our actions.

The strength of any Lodge rests first upon the bonds of Brotherhood among its members. Without unity, ritual becomes hollow and labor becomes heavy. But when men are bound together by the cement of Brotherly Love, the Lodge becomes more than a building. It becomes a living fellowship where wisdom, strength, and beauty are shared freely among Brothers. In the year ahead, join me in rededicating ourselves to cultivating those ties. This means taking time for fellowship, mentoring our newer members, reconnecting with brothers we haven’t seen or spoken to in way too long, checking on one another in times of need, and celebrating together in times of joy. By investing in Brotherhood, we ensure that our Lodge stands upon a firm and enduring foundation.

But Masonry has never been intended to exist only within the walls of the Lodge. What we want to build here among the brothers must be carried into the community where we live and labor. The motto “Building Bonds, Building Community” reminds us that the work of strengthening ties among ourselves must naturally lead to visible acts of service outside our doors. In the year ahead, I hope to see our Lodge active in Lovettsville and Loudoun County — not only through organized local charities and town events, but also through the quiet, daily actions of Masons living uprightly by the plumb, dealing justly upon the square, and walking humbly upon the level. The world does not judge us by the words of our ritual, but by the lives we live. May our Lodge be known as a source of Good in the community and not just as a historic building in town. Let’s be known for our presence as a light of integrity and service.

Finally, the strength of our Brotherhood and our service to the community depend on the inner labor of each individual Mason. Every man begins as a rough ashlar, and every day presents the opportunity to shape ourselves more nearly into the perfect form. Self-improvement is not optional in our Craft — it is at its very heart. This year, I challenge each of us to revisit the lessons of our working tools and apply them afresh: to live uprightly by the plumb, to act justly by the square, and to remember that we meet upon the level with all mankind. When we do this work, we do more than improve ourselves; we strengthen our Lodge and enhance our ability to serve the world around us.

Brethren, the labor ahead is great, but it is joyful labor when undertaken together. With the bonds of Brotherhood renewed, our service in the community visible, and our own lives guided by the working tools of Masonry, I believe Freedom Lodge No. 118 will flourish in 2026. Let us, therefore, enter the year with confidence, unity, and purpose, determined to live out the lessons of our Craft and to leave behind a legacy of strength, service, and brotherhood.

∴ Bill Hohl
Master 2026

From the West

Brethren,

The 2026 Division Education Leadership Conference (DELC) sessions that are closest to us are the ones in Front Royal and Alexandria. As the Front Royal event occurs during our Stated Communication, the only really viable local option is the next day in Alexandria. All Lodge Officers and the LEO should attend this session in Alexandria if at all possible. If you can't attend the Alexandria session contact the Worshipful Master. Please let the Secretary know which one you went to.

- February 7 DELC at Alexandria at 9a. George Washington Masonic National Memorial

There will be a monthly District Ritual School the last Wednesday of each month, all brothers are welcome.

This month, we will have a visit from the District Deputy Grand Master, our own Brother Mark Canter! We'll also be scheduling as many fraternal visits as we can this month as he visits other lodges in the district. Please join me in traveling and fellowship!

Brad Westerman

Senior Warden 2026

From the South

Brothers,

It is a great honor to have been voted in as your Junior Warden for 2026. This year I will have a focus on one thing: Food. I hope that my one-track mind will bring more Brethren to our Lodge to share in our meals, and that we will begin to make connections in our community.

The New Year Stated, January 2nd Meal will be our traditional New Year Tradition Meal. I was raised on pork, hop'n John's black eyed peas, red rice, greens, and of course, cornbread to bring good luck in the new year. And so, some variation of that will be provided by myself and a few volunteers.

For the Sweetheart's Dinner, which will be some time around Valentines Day, I am working with Chef Jason Lage at Market Table Bistro to host us. The cost will be in the range of \$50-60 (alcohol not included), and will be a weekend loosely related to Valentines Day. I will be asking for RSVPs and payment in advance of the event in an email with more precise information as I lock in a date and time with Market Table.

This event is more than just an easy brunch date (you're welcome, in advance), it is our Lodge's way of honoring our past Brothers by supporting their Widows.

I look forward to sharing many meals with you all this year.

Jeff Dell

Junior Warden 2026

Please remember to bring a donation for the food pantry, we will be collecting every first Friday!

Freedom Lodge No. 118 Officers

Worshipful Master: Bro. Bill Hohl
Senior Warden: Bro. Brad Westerman
Junior Warden: Jeff Dell, PM
Treasurer: Bro. David Kirk
Secretary: Matt Duley, PM
Senior Deacon: Bro. Al Erickson
Junior Deacon: Bro. Dejan Susic
Chaplain: Wes Hirschhorn, PM
Tiler: Greg Valker, PDDGM
Marshall: vacant



Lodge Instructor of Work (LIW): Harris McGarragh, PDDGM
Lodge Education Officer (LEO): Phil Brooks, PDDGM
Lodge MAHOVA Ambassador: Bro. Dejan Kocic
Blood Coordinators: Greg Valker, PDDGM (regional)
Bro. David Kirk (local)

Lodge Calendar

<https://tinyurl.com/yckzjc4j>

Fri
2



Freedom Lodge Stated Communicat...
8:00 – 9:30 PM at 28 E Broad Way, Lo...

Jan 4 – 10, 2026

Mon
5

DDGM Official Visit to Olive Branch...
7 – 10 PM at Olive Branch Lodge No. 1...

Jan 11 – 17, 2026

Tue
13

DDGM Official Visit to Ashburn Sterli...
6:30 – 8:00 PM at Ashburn-Sterling M...

Thu
15

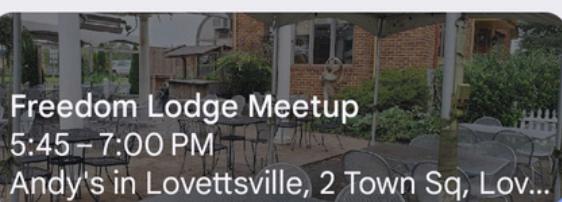
DDGM Official Visit to Hamilton-Tho...
6:30 – 9:00 PM at Hamilton-Thomps...

Jan 18 – 24, 2026

Mon
19

DDGM Official Visit to Herndon #264
6:30 – 9:00 PM at Herndon Masonic L...

Wed
21



Lodge practice
7 – 9 PM at 28 E Broad Way, Lovettsvill...

Sat
24

Kena Shrine' s Robert Burns Night -...
5:00 – 8:30 PM at 9500 Technology D...

Jan 25 – 31, 2026

Wed
28

Masonic District No. 2 Ritual School...
6:30 – 8:30 PM at Olive Branch Lodge...



Ever heard of a Moon Lodge?

When American Masonry was still in its infancy, Virginia was a wild and unsettled place. It is difficult for us today to imagine the thoughts and feelings of an eighteenth-century Mason stepping into the bitter cold of a winter night after a Lodge meeting to pursue his travel homeward. For him, a trip of several miles at night after a Lodge meeting was a major undertaking where even the task of finding one's way home was formidable. For this reason, many of those early lodges adopted the custom of holding their meeting during the week of the full moon. The moon provided a beacon that guided our brethren of yesterday homeward along the dirt roads and beaten pathways throughout the commonwealth. At one time, over one hundred Virginia Lodges followed this tradition and were known as "Moon Lodges."

The Moon Lodge is slowly but surely disappearing from the American scene. The invention of the automobile and street lighting together with the general decline of agriculture made the setting of Lodge meetings by the phases of the moon, rather than on a fixed day, a nuisance without purpose. Sixty years ago there were more than 3,000 Moon Lodges in the United States. Now there are less than 500. A number of Grand Lodges have legislated Moon Lodges out of existence, insisting that all lodges must meet on definite dates. As with so many customs of old, the advent of modern society and its technology has slowly driven the Moon Lodge to the status of a quaint anachronism. In 1899, all the lodges in the Charlottesville and Albemarle County area were Moon Lodges. The only one left is Murray Lodge No. 175, at Fredericks Hall. For over 150 years, Widow's Sons' Lodge held its stated communication on or before the full moon, then in 1962, the Lodge finally changed to the third Monday in each month, ending a tradition that had its origins in the eighteenth century.

From "Selected History of Widow's Sons' Lodge" by Rt. Wor. Robert E. Simpson. One of hundreds of Masonic research papers available for free on Virginia Research Lodge's website.

Add a brick to our Walk of Masonry!



Order using the form at <https://www.freedomlodge118.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Walk-of-Masonry-Order-Form-v7.pdf>

Congratulation to Brother Sam Colston!

The excitement was palpable the evening of December 17 when Brother Colston was initiated!



Please join the brothers every third Wednesday at a local restaurant for our Monthly Meet-up dinner followed by the lodge ritual practice at 7! On January 21st we'll be at Andy's in Lovettsville then practice lodge ritual.

From the Secretary

Brethren,

Your 2026 dues are now due. Payment of your annual dues at the beginning of the Masonic year help your lodge to maintain its operating status and pay our bills.

Your timely attention is appreciated.

In addition to paying your dues via check or money order (preferred), you can also pay your 2026 dues online!

See this link on our homepage:

<https://www.freedomlodge118.org/pay-your-2026-dues-online/>

Payments mailed to the lodge should be sent to the lodge PO Box listed on your dues notice.

Please note that paying electronically via our online option does add a significant fee.

We are looking into other options for the future, but this is what we have available at present.



Please also note that the electronic payment option only covers your 2026 dues.

For those select few of you that still owe some or all dues for 2025, that must be paid by December 31st of this year as noted on your Dues Notice.



I will have Dues Cards available for distribution in person at each of our Stated Communications.

Dues cards will be mailed to those who are unable to attend lodge regularly once your payment is received.

As a reminder, if you are in financial distress and cannot complete your moral obligation, please reach out directly to the Worshipful Master.

Matt Duley, PM
Freedom 118 Secretary

As a fundraiser for the Lodge, Bro Duley has purchased 200 of these stone tokens, which were crafted by a brother Mason. Instead of a standard lodge coin, we have something that really stands out and reflects the connection to operative Masonry. They are made of honed marble, so each one is unique. They are \$10 each, and 100% of the profit will go directly to Freedom Lodge. Please see the Secretary to purchase stone tokens.



MakersHandsWorkshop

Shop Masonic Gifts, Freemasonry Collectibles, and Apparel by MakersHandsWorkshop located in Lexington, South Carolina.

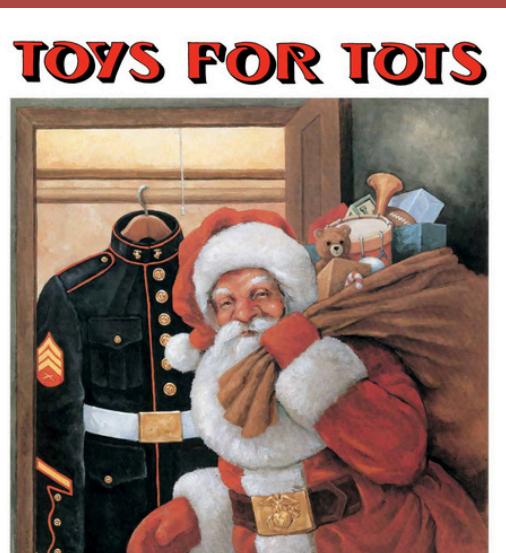
 [Etsy](#)

Relief and Charity

Freedom Lodge participates in many community outreach events and supports many charities throughout the year!

Toys for Tots

The lodge supported Toys for Tots giving new, unwrapped toys to children whose families may be experiencing hardship. These donations ensure that every child has the opportunity to experience the joy, hope, and dignity that come with receiving a gift during the holidays.



Western Loudoun Food Pantry

Freedom Lodge continues our support of the Lovettsville local food pantry. We're continuing our collection efforts throughout 2026. Remember that hunger is a need that begins again each morning and doesn't go away at night.

Pick up a few extra cans or cash in those rewards points at the grocery store each month to keep the food pantry stocked. Please check out their site for what they need most at any given time:

<https://www.njlclovettsville.org/food-pantry>

UpsideDown Moments

This year Freedom Lodge also supported Daisy Troop #70368 in their toy and book drive for UpsideDown Moments. UpsideDown Moments is an organization in Hamilton which supports youth newly entering the foster care system with clothing, transition care packages, luggage for the move and other care items. UpsideDown Moments meets a need that is hyperlocal; Thank you for your help
<https://www.upsidedownmoments.org/>

Masonic Birthdays

January



Axel Alanis, 2018

Reach out to these brothers to wish them a happy Masonic Birthday!

Living Past Masters	
Brother	Year(s) Served
Larry D Frye	1983, 2005, 2006, 2007
Harris McGarrah	1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 2011
Clifford S. Free	1996, 1997, 1998, 1999
Dick Phillips	2000, 2001, 2002, 2003
Gary R. Ing	2004
George M Shoemaker, Jr.	2008, 2009, 2010
Phil Brooks	2012, 2014, 2023
Chuck Wyant	2017
Wes Hirschhorn	2018, 2025
Mark Canter	2020, 2021
Matt Duley	2022, 2024



Grand View is the all-in-one member platform for Virginia Freemasons. You can use Grand View to find lodge and Grand Lodge events, and connect directly with Brothers. Stay up to date on the latest announcements from the Grand Lodge and lodges around the state, find helpful resources related to the degrees and even keep a virtual member card. All this and more available through the Grand View member portal.

For assistance in activating your Grand View account, contact your Lodge Secretary.

Are you on Social Media? So are we!

Check out:

facebook.com/groups/freedomlodge118/

And the Grand Lodge:

facebook.com/GrandLodgeVirginia/

x.com/GrandLodgeofVA

youtube.com/user/GrandLodgeofVirginia

instagram.com/glofva/

threads.com/@glofva

tiktok.com/@glofva

In accordance with the procedure to nominate the DDGM established in the methodical digest and with the tradition of rotating that nomination around the district; at our February Stated Communication, Freedom Lodge will review the recommendation made by a fellow district 2 lodge, discuss, and vote to concur with their choice of nominations.



District 2 News

2026 District 2 Schedule

December 31 M&W (6:30p) + District School (7p)

January 2 DDGM Official Visit to Freedom #118 (8p)

January 5 DDGM Official Visit to Olive Branch #114

January 13 DDGM Official Visit to Ashburn Sterling #288

January 15 DDGM Official Visit to Hamilton-Thompson #37

January 19 DDGM Official Visit to Herndon #264

February 6 DELC Front Royal at 6:30p

February 7 DELC at Alexandria at 9a. George Washington Masonic National Memorial

April 7 Grand Master's Official Visit

<https://www.vamasonictdistrict2.org/>

QR code for https://www.vamasonictdistrict2.org/

Join us for the D2 Ritual Schools. This year the schools will be held in conjunction with and immediately following the D2 Masters & Wardens meetings (which are scheduled to be on the *last Wednesday* of each month start at 7:00pm (potluck dinner 6:30)).

All Master Masons are welcome to attend the Ritual School, and all Line Officers are specifically encouraged to attend as many as they can.

Attendance is highly encouraged for those seeking a Warden's Certificate.

District Officers

DDGM: RW Mark Canter

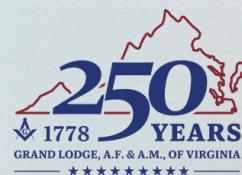
DIW: RW Christopher Thompson

DEO: Wor. Eric J. LeHew

District MAHOVOA Ambassador: James Cromer

District Blood Coordinator: Franco Aguillon

District Membership Coordinator: Gregory Schwarz



Grand Master

Most Worshipful Matthew Todd Szramoski



The Family of Freemasonry

Bethel #52



Girls aged 10 - 20

This wide age range allows for members to learn skills alongside their peers and mentors.



Bethel 52 Meetings

2nd & 4th Tuesday
Herndon Masonic Temple
820 Eldon St. Herndon, VA 20170

Cmdr William L Herndon Chapter

Order of DeMolay

Herndon DeMolay is dedicated to serving their community and faithfully improving the young men of the chapter. They build themselves upon ideals which our nation is prone to forget.

Cmdr W L Herndon

1st & 3rd Thursdays
7:30 pm
Herndon Masonic Lodge
820 Eldon Street
Herndon, VA 22070



The International Order of the Rainbow for Girls

Ashburn Assembly #11 International Order of the Rainbow for Girls meets each month in Ashburn. If you would like more information about how to join, please email us at

ashburn@virginiarainbow.org

January 2026

- 10 – Manassas Installation @ 2 pm
- 11 – Norfolk Installation @ 2 pm
- 24 – Richmond Installation @ 2 pm (Manchester Lodge)
- 25 – Hampton Installation @ 2 pm
- 31 – Ashburn Installation @ 2 pm

ORDER OF THE EASTERN STAR VIRGINIA



Herndon Chapter #55 was chartered in 1914 and has enjoyed a rich history of Masonic fellowship, community outreach, charity fundraising, social gatherings, fun activities, and much more.

We meet on the 2nd Wednesday of every month at 7:30 PM and there are no meetings in July and August.





I am excited to report that this past year Freedom Lodge added 3 new members to the Scottish Rite! Congratulations and welcome to them!

Reunions to bring in new members are held in April and October each year to communicate and confer the Scottish Rite degrees at the conclusion of which you will be a 32nd degree Master of the Royal Secret.

Each year we also traditionally host a Blue Lodge night in which non-Scottish Rite Masons are welcome to attend and enjoy a meal. Stay tuned for the date of that event.

The Scottish Rite Representative for Freedom Lodge is currently Wor. Matt Duley.

Brochures with much more information are available in the dining hall for more details, or visit <https://www.alexandriascottishrite.org/>

Below are members of Freedom Lodge who can sign a petition for those Master Masons interested in joining.

Matt Duley
Cameron Gore
Romano Bolkovic
Gary Ing
David Kirk
Dejan Kocic
Jim Krunk
Dan Little
Josip Sapunar
Nebojsa Todorovic
Shannon Stong