

06

June 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 the days grow longer and the sun reaches its meridian, we are reminded of the central symbol of light in Masonry. The sun gives warmth and growth to the earth, just as the light of Masonic truth guides and refines us. In June, our focus turns once more to the inner work of self-improvement. A Lodge may be adorned with beautiful ritual and strong traditions, but it is the character of its members that gives it life and power. The theme "Strength in Brotherhood, Service in Community" is sustained only when each Brother takes seriously the lifelong work of shaping himself into a more perfect ashlar.

Self-improvement in Masonry is not measured by lofty titles or external honors but by the daily practice of virtue. Are we walking uprightly by the Plumb? Are we acting fairly and honestly upon the Square? Are we remembering that on the Level, we are Brothers and equals? These are questions each of us must answer anew each day. This month, I encourage us to take time for reflection – whether in Lodge, in prayer, or in conversation with a trusted Brother. By striving to embody the principles of our Craft in our daily lives, we ensure that the light of Masonry does not fade but continues to shine ever more brightly within our Lodge and in the world around us.

We have some great opportunities to get together as brothers and family in the next few months. Please contact me about the Cannons Baseball game on 6/12 and the 250th Celebration on 7/3. The parade and picnic on July 3rd will need a lot of us all pulling together as many hands make light work. It will all be well worth it though as we're all looking forward to the festivities!

Straw Hat Day and Summer Attire:

As the warmth of summer returns, Freedom Lodge will once again observe our annual summer "dress down" period for our June, July, August, and September First Friday Stated Communications.

This custom reflects a long-standing American tradition known as Straw Hat Day on May 15th and Felt Hat Day on September 15th. In years past, the dapper gentlemen would put away their heavy felt hats and don lighter straw hats as a sign that summer had arrived. The tradition marked the change of seasons and the beginning of a more relaxed summer atmosphere while still maintaining the dignity expected of a gentleman.

In that same spirit, our summer attire allows Brethren to remain comfortable during the warmer months while continuing to conduct the important work of the Lodge. Although jackets and ties may give way to lighter clothing, the principles of Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth remain unchanged. The strength of our Lodge is not found in the formality of our attire, but in the quality of our fellowship, the sincerity of our labor, and our dedication to one another and to our community.

We encourage all Brethren to join us throughout the summer as we continue Building Bonds and Building Community together.

∴ Bill Hohl
Master 2026

From the West

Brethren,

One of the greatest lessons Freemasonry teaches is that growth is a lifelong endeavor. The working tools of our Craft remind us that improvement does not happen all at once. A rough ashlar is not transformed into a perfect ashlar with a single strike of the gavel. Instead, it is shaped gradually through steady effort, patience, and perseverance. In much the same way, our own personal growth is achieved through small, consistent actions repeated over time.

As Masons, we are challenged to examine ourselves honestly. Are we growing in wisdom? Are we strengthening our character? Are we becoming more patient, more charitable, and more understanding than we were a year ago? These questions are not always easy to answer, but they are worth asking.

The world around us often celebrates quick results and immediate success. Freemasonry offers a different perspective. It teaches that meaningful growth takes time and that the most important work we do is often unseen by others.

This month, I encourage each Brother to dedicate a little time to self-reflection. Consider where you have made progress and where you still wish to improve. Every step forward, no matter how small, contributes to the betterment of yourself, your family, your Lodge, and your community. Then reach out – *As iron sharpens iron, So one man sharpens another* – share your wins and your struggles with your brothers

Fraternally,
Brad Westerman
Senior Warden

From the South

Brothers,

Our obligation to care for our Widows is once again upon us, June 6th, the Saturday after stated, we will be meeting at Casey Shapiro's house to clean her yard up. She has been waiting very patiently for us to organize ourselves to assist her. Please arrive at 9:30AM - the more hands we have, the faster this will go. Last year there was quite a lot of work to be done.

July 3rd Celebration & Fireworks: At stated we will be assigning committee members for this event. We will need someone to be in charge of the parade (float decorations, candy, etc), someone to be in charge of the Lodge presence (open house, tours, etc), and the BBQ Master (coordinating the potluck for after the parade).

We are still waiting for the formal schedule to be released by the Town, as soon as that is available I will send out our schedule.

Dinner:

June: I will be smoking whatever meat strikes my fancy and serving traditional BBQ sides.

July: Grilling & Potluck

Sincerely and Fraternally,
Jeffrey Dell
Junior Warden

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: Bro. Cameron Gore



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

June 2026

Fri
5

Freedom Lodge Dinner

7 – 8 PM

Freedom Lodge No. 118 AF&AM, 28 E...

Stated Communication

8:00 – 9:30 PM at 28 E Broad Way, Lo...

Fri
12

Purcellville Cannons Baseball Game

7 – 10 PM

Fireman's Field, Firemens Field Park, 2...

Sat
13

District Ritual School and Ashburn D...

8:30 – 10:30 AM

Ashburn-Sterling Masonic Lodge #28...

Wed
17

Freedom Lodge Meetup

5:45 – 7:00 PM

Daughter Thai, 19 E Broad Way, Lovett...

Lodge practice

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

Wed
24

Saint John the Baptist day

Masonic District No. 2 Ritual School...

6:30 – 8:30 PM at Olive Branch Lodge...

Action Items

This Month:

- Sign up for the July 3rd Freedom Feast (see Bro. Dell)
- Pay your 2026 dues if you haven't!

Upcoming Stated Programs:

- June - A Special Presentation of the three pillars of Freemasonry and a visit from Luther W. Slater
- July - "Build a Flag" with the Sojourners, **Also: July 3rd Freedom Day Family Picnic**
- August - Joe Martinez
- September - Bro. Wes Hirschhorn: Hawaiian Shirts and Celebrating the Masonic Legacy of Hawaii's Last King

Masonic Travel

Back in January, Brother Brooks shared an article titled *Ever heard of a Moon Lodge?* I encourage you to refresh your memories by giving it another read! At the end of May, Brother Brooks, Brother Dell, and I had the opportunity to visit a Moon Lodge in Pennsylvania and it was a fantastic experience!

"What is a Moon Lodge?" you ask. Well, a Moon Lodge is one that holds its meetings during the week of the full moon. The tradition dates back to a time when hardworking farmers would spend long days in the fields and then travel to Lodge in the evening. The extra light provided by the full moon helped them make the journey home more safely. Today, Moon Lodges are quite rare; there may only be two remaining in Virginia.



So how did three wandering brothers from Freedom Lodge find themselves all the way in Collegeville, Pennsylvania? Great question! For me, this journey was six years - and more than ninety years - in the making.

Growing up, I remember my father wearing a gold ring set with a double-headed eagle on a black stone. He received that ring when his grandfather passed away. Following family tradition, his grandfather's own ring was interred with him, and my father began wearing the ring that had belonged to his great-grandfather. I was about five years old at the time, just a year younger than my son is now.

My father, grandfather, and great-grandfather were all Masons. Looking back on my upbringing and the lessons they taught me, I can clearly see the influence of Freemasonry in how I learned to be a man. I always knew I wanted to become a Mason. I admired the men around me and wanted to follow their example. I saw the brothers who attended my great-grandfather's and grandfather's Masonic funerals and felt the bond they shared. Yet one thing or another always seemed to get in the way (college, entry-level jobs, early marriage) and eventually the idea drifted into the background.

Then I learned that I was going to have a son. As I reflected on the kind of man he would look to as a role model, I realized that something was missing. That realization led me to seek out Freedom Lodge. I was raised in Masonry during the height of COVID, six years ago.

Only ten days after my raising, RW Phil Brooks told me about something called a Lewis Jewel—a recognition of Masonic lineage that symbolizes one generation uplifting the next into Masonry. In researching my family history, we discovered that my great-grandfather, Henry R. Rawn, was a Past Master of Warren Lodge No. 310, the very same lodge to which Phil's uncle belonged. What a small world! As Phil said at the time, "Maybe a road trip is in our future."

It turns out that Warren Lodge No. 310, located in Collegeville, Pennsylvania, is one of the few remaining Moon Lodges. After plenty of coordination and scheduling, the trip finally became a reality.

Visiting a Pennsylvania lodge was about as different from Virginia Masonry as it could be while still being unmistakably Masonic. The ritual differed considerably in form, though never in substance. The brethren were warm, welcoming, and genuinely pleased to have visitors from Virginia. It was a wonderful opportunity to meet new brothers, experience a different Masonic tradition, and, for me personally, sit in the same lodge where my great-grandfather once presided as Master more than ninety years ago.

Some journeys take a little longer than others, but this one was well worth the wait.

Freedom Lodge No. 118

The Southern Least Lodge in Virginia

Invites our friends and family to join us for a
Day of Celebration on Friday, July 3rd 2026

Schedule of Events

4:00 Gather at Lodge to prepare

5:30 Annual 3rd of July Parade

6:30 Cookout at the lodge

Join us for hotdogs, hamburgers, and a cookout!

(Pot-luck sides!)

7:00 - Sojourners/Heroes of 76 Public Presentation

“Building The Flag”

Sojourners in colonial uniform explain some of the flag’s special features, and answer many intriguing questions about our Flag as it literally takes shape stripe by stripe and star by star before your very eyes. And, if you listen closely, you will even hear a beautiful soliloquy known as “Old Glory Speaks.” This is a wonderful program for those of all ages and particularly the youth of our Nation to gain new insights about the flag to which we are so privileged to pledge our allegiance.

8:00 brief Stated Communication

9:30 Fireworks

The favor of an RSVP is requested to a lodge officer!

CONGRATULATION BROTHER CONRATH!

Brethren,

On Wednesday, May 20, 2026 there was a called communication to confer the Entered Apprentice degree on Brother Rick Conrath. An excellent evening and great presentation of the ritual.



Take Me Out To The Ballgame!

Freedom and the Brothers from District 2 are going to a Purcellville Cannons game on June 12. All are welcome including family and friends!

Event Details:

June 12, Gates open at 5:30PM Game starts at 7:00PM

Location: Fireman's Field, 250 S. Nursery Ave, Purcellville, VA 20132

Tickets: Adult – \$7.00, Youth (Ages 4-12)- \$3.00

Cannons information: <https://www.purcellvillecannons.org/>

Questions? Ask Bro. Hohl or Bro. Gore



From the Secretary

Brethren,

Concerning dues:

If you have not already paid your 2026 dues, they are now *overdue* and you will see it reflected in your Grand View profile. Payment of your annual dues at *the beginning* of the Masonic year help your lodge to maintain its operating status and pay our bills. Members who still have yet to pay dues for any preceding year will be reported to the Grand Lodge by August 1st, as per the Methodical Digest.

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 as we may be able to offer some relief.

Concerning the Grand Lodge Grand View application:

Those of you who have *not yet* registered to use the Grand View application (and have an email address on file with us) have been sent a registration email via Grand View so check your email for it. We are attempting to get folks connected who did not sign up during the program rollout so that you feel connected to Virginia Masonry. In order to receive notifications from the Grand Lodge, as well access to the variety of Masonic resources available to you, you have to sign up. It is especially important that every officer of the lodge be registered. If you need help completing this, or guidance on where to find a particular resource, please let me know and I will be happy to help. Please note that while you can access some content via your mobile phone, the best site experience is via a desktop web browser.

Matt Duley, PM
Freedom 118 Secretary

Commemorative Items

Honed marble stone tokens, crafted by a brother Mason. Each one is unique and has its own special character. \$10 each. Please see the Secretary to purchase stone tokens.



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

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>



Lodge Polo Shirts

2-tone navy/white and can be customized with your name on the right. \$55 (or less with a larger order) Order by going to <https://forms.gle/14pTaUB9GMt7RRku8> or scanning the QR code



Masonic Birthdays in June



Robert William Sagers, 6/26

Reach out to Brother Sagers to wish him 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
J. David King	2016
Chuck Wyant	2017
Wes Hirschhorn	2018, 2025
Mark Canter	2020, 2021
Matt Duley	2022, 2024



<https://www.vamasonicdistrict2.org/>

District 2 News 2026 District 2 Schedule

June 12 - Purcellville Cannons Game

June 13 - District Ritual School and Ashburn DeMolay Monthly Breakfast

June 24 M&W (6:30p) + District School (7p)

September 12 - Kenneth O. Shelton Area Ritual School

August - District End of Summer picnic

Halloween Parade

Grand Master

Most Worshipful Matthew Todd Szramoski

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





The Alexandria Valley of the Orient of Virginia is now accepting petitions for our Fall reunion. 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

