

08

August 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,

If July reminds us of fellowship, August calls us to action. The world does not know Masons primarily by the words spoken in our meetings, but by the lives we lead beyond these walls. Our theme urges us toward visibility and service, and our motto “Building Bonds, Building Community” reminds us that the two go hand in hand. The bond of Brotherhood is not meant to be hidden; it is meant to bear fruit in the form of relief, charity, and service.

This month, I ask us to consider what impact Freedom Lodge can have in Lovettsville and Loudoun County. Can we be present in town events, showing our unity as Masons? Can we offer our labor, our resources, or our time to those in need? Service need not always be grand in scale – even a small act of kindness may be the spark that brings light to another’s day. By laboring together in the community, we not only demonstrate the value of Masonry but also show that our Brotherhood is a force for good in the world. In August, let our Lodge be known not only for its history but also for its living service.

There is a lot of Masonry ahead of us this fall and I’m very excited to be with you all, Brothers!

∴ Bill Hohl
Master 2026

CALLED COMMUNICATION

Brethren,

On Wednesday, August 19, 2026 Freedom Lodge will have a called communication opening a Lodge on the Second Degree of Masonry to confer the degree of Fellowcraft. Lodge will open promptly at 7:00 PM. Jacket and tie required. We will meet at the Lodge for our regularly scheduled meetup dinner; pizza or some other takeout option will be available.

From the West

Brethren,

One of the most meaningful lines in our ritual reminds us that *Harmony* is the strength and support of all institutions, especially our institutions and this should be carefully preserved. Those words are as timely today as they were when they were first said long ago. It often seems that our world encourages division more readily than understanding. Differences of opinion quickly become disagreements, and disagreements too often become reasons to separate rather than opportunities to learn from one another.

Freemasonry calls us to a higher standard. Harmony does not mean that every Brother shares the same opinions or experiences. In fact, one of the great strengths of our Fraternity is that men from different walks of life meet together as equals. We are united not because we agree on everything, but because we have chosen to value Brotherly Love above personal differences. Within the Lodge, we practice listening with respect, speaking with kindness, and remembering that every Brother deserves the same consideration we hope to receive ourselves.

When we leave the Lodge and return to our homes, workplaces, and communities, we carry that spirit of harmony with us. Each of us has the opportunity to be a calming influence in a world that often rewards conflict. By choosing patience over anger, understanding over assumption, and respect over division, we demonstrate that the lessons of Masonry are not confined to the tiled Lodge but are lived every day.

Fraternally,
Brad Westerman
Senior Warden

From the South

Brethren,

Gathering around the table continues to help us foster connections and strengthen our fraternal bond. Our Third Wednesday of the meetups are an excellent opportunity to meet prospective petitioners and EA/FC Brethren. Please do make a point to join us!

Our next meetup will be at the Lodge for the called communication on August 19th; pizza or some other easily shareable meal will be available.

Lodge dinner on August 7th will be another home cooked meal; likely involving my smoker and whatever happens to look good at the grocery store leading up to Stated.

Oktoberfest: This year we will be co-hosting an Oktoberfest food stall with the Game Club. Brother BK will be bringing his catering skills (and certifications) to cook at the event. This is one of the few events we have done or planned that actually has the potential to draw some actual revenue for the Lodge – and have a great time representing our town at the same time! I will be sending a sign up out for the different shifts of the event, we will also have volunteers from the Game Club assisting.

Mark your calendars: Saturday 9/26. Make it a priority to come out for at least part of the day to support the Lodge.

Sincerely and Fraternaly,
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 Valke, 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)

Lodge Calendar

<https://tinyurl.com/yckzjc4j>

August 2026

Tue
4

National Night Out
4:30 – 8:30 PM at Town Green Lovetts...

Fri
7

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...

Sat
8

District Ritual School and Ashburn D...
8:30 – 10:30 AM
Ashburn-Sterling Masonic Lodge #28...

Wed
19

Freedom Lodge Meetup
5:45 – 7:00 PM
Freedom Lodge No. 118 A.F. & A.M., 2...

CALLED COMMUNICATION - Secon...
7 – 9 PM at 28 E Broad Way, Lovettsvill...

Aug 23 – 29

Wed
26

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

Action Items This Month:

- Pay your 2026 dues if you haven't!
- Bring donations to Stated
- Add Called Communication to your calendar

Upcoming Stated Programs:

- August - Joe Martinez
- September - Bro. Wes Hirschhorn: Hawaiian Shirts and Celebrating the Masonic Legacy of Hawaii's Last King
- October - Eric LeHew
- November - Move Up/Past Masters night with Matt Duley speaking

Stated Summer Attire:

- Jacket and Tie not required through the September Stated
- Collar shirts required
- Long pants required

Masonic Education

Brother Benjamin Franklin –

Printer, Scientist, Diplomat, and America's Most Influential Mason

Few men have left a greater mark on both Freemasonry and the birth of the United States than Brother Benjamin Franklin. Printer, inventor, scientist, philosopher, diplomat, and Founding Father, Franklin embodied the Masonic pursuit of knowledge and the betterment of mankind.

Initiated in St. John's Lodge in Philadelphia in 1731, Franklin quickly became one of the most influential Masons in colonial America. He was elected Grand Master of Pennsylvania in 1734 and published the first Masonic book printed in the American colonies—an edition of *Anderson's Constitutions*. Throughout his life, he viewed Freemasonry as a society devoted to morality, education, charity, and the improvement of one's fellow man.

While Franklin's achievements as a scientist—including the lightning rod, bifocal spectacles, and the Franklin stove—are well known, it was his service as a diplomat that may have saved the American Revolution.

In December 1776, at the age of seventy, Congress sent Franklin to France to seek military and financial support. His reputation as one of Europe's most celebrated scientists opened doors, but another advantage proved equally valuable: his Masonic connections.

In Paris, Franklin became a member—and later Vénérable Maître (Master)—of the prestigious Lodge of the Nine Sisters (La Loge des Neuf Sœurs). This lodge was unlike any other in Europe. Its membership included many of France's leading intellectuals, artists, scientists, philosophers, government officials, and influential nobles. Through the friendships and trust cultivated within this Masonic circle, Franklin gained access to men whose counsel reached directly into the court of King Louis XVI.

While historians rightly note that France entered the war because doing so served its strategic interests, Franklin's relationships within the Lodge of the Nine Sisters greatly enhanced his ability to influence French opinion and cultivate support for the American cause. His Masonic fellowship helped open doors that formal diplomacy alone could not.

The result was transformative.

Following the American victory at Saratoga in 1777, Franklin successfully negotiated the Treaty of Alliance of 1778, securing French military forces, naval power, financial assistance, weapons, ammunition, and supplies. French intervention ultimately proved decisive at Yorktown, where General Washington's army, supported by French troops under Rochambeau and the French fleet commanded by Admiral de Grasse, forced Lord Cornwallis's surrender and effectively won American independence.

It is not an exaggeration to suggest that without Benjamin Franklin's diplomatic success in France—and the relationships he cultivated through both diplomacy and Freemasonry—the outcome of the Revolution might have been very different.

For Freemasons, Franklin's life demonstrates that the principles we practice within the Lodge do not remain within its walls. Brotherly Love builds friendships. Relief fosters mutual support. Truth earns confidence. Franklin carried those principles across the Atlantic, where they helped forge alliances that changed the course of history.

As we commemorate the 250th anniversary of our nation's founding, let us remember that one of America's greatest victories was achieved not only on the battlefield, but also through the wisdom, integrity, and fraternal bonds of one remarkable Mason.



**"An investment in knowledge
pays the best interest."
— Brother Benjamin Franklin**



Masonic Travel

My visit to Slovakia and Lodge Kosmopolit #2 (Grand Lodge of Slovakia)

During my travels through lodges across Central and Southeast Europe, I have had the opportunity to observe how different national traditions express the same universal Masonic principles. Each country carries its own historical weight, its own interruptions and renewals, and its own way of preserving the Light.

My recent visit to Slovakia offered a particularly vivid impression of this continuity — a place where the past and present of Freemasonry meet in a distinct Central European spirit.

Freemasonry in present day Slovakia has roots reaching back to the 18th century, when Bratislava — then Pressburg — was one of the most vibrant cultural centers of the Habsburg Monarchy. The first lodges gathered physicians, professors, nobles, and urban intellectuals who believed that society could be improved through knowledge, tolerance, and personal development. In this period emerged the lodge **Mičanlivost' (Taciturnitatis)**, founded in 1872, which became one of the focal points of the city's intellectual life.

From that era comes a well known anecdote: a brother from Pressburg brought into the lodge a manuscript of a banned philosophical work. When the authorities began searching houses throughout the city, he hid the manuscript in the lodge library, saying it was "the safest place in Pressburg." Contemporary notes record: *"They searched the entire city, except the one room where freedom was discussed."*

After the Second World War, the communist regime completely banned Freemasonry. They erased every single symbol of freemasonry inside Bratislava. Lodges ceased to exist, archives disappeared, and the fraternity withdrew into silence. Renewal began only after 1989.



Today, the **Grand Lodge of Slovakia** is active, under which works **Kosmopolis Lodge No. 2**, an English speaking lodge in Bratislava with a distinctly international character.

The Lodge works in the **Kvapil Ritual**, one of the most notable ritual traditions in the region. The ritual was created by **Karel Kvapil**, a Czech Freemason and reformer from the first half of the 20th century. The Kvapil Ritual is rational, ethically clear, oriented toward moral work and social responsibility.

It carries the spirit of Central European Enlightenment: less ceremonial complexity, more direct moral discourse and intellectual discipline. This makes it particularly suitable for international lodges such as Kosmopolis #2.

S&F

Brother Nebojsa Todorovic

We'd love to hear about your experience as a traveling man too!



Lovettsville Masonic Lodge & Game Club Oktoberfest Grille
Saturday 9/26 from 11:00AM to 8:00PM.

The Game Club and Freedom Lodge 118 are serving
up fresh, hot-off-the-grill German brats with
sauerkraut, classic fixings, and ice-cold drinks.

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

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.

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

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.

Matt Duley, PM
Freedom 118 Secretary

Relief and Charity

Blood Drive

8 August - Blood Drive at the *Lovettsville Game Club* **8 AM - 12:30 PM**

Back to School

8 August - An event for needy kids and their families. Pastor Josh had asked us to provide 'snackable' type food items for the event, **PLEASE BRING THESE TO THE AUGUST STATED!**

UpsideDown Moments

UpsideDown Moments is a Virginia nonprofit dedicated to helping children in foster care, at-risk youth, and young adults aging out of foster care. Through essential resources, mentoring, education, transportation, and housing support, we help vulnerable youth build stable, independent futures.



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.njclovettsville.org/food-pantry>.

We continue to collect regularly. If within your cabletow, be sure to bring something to each stated to donate!

What should our next charity support? A group we've helped before? A new need you've heard of?
Contact the Senior Deacon with your thoughts

National Night Out

Lovettsville's Summer on the Green is honored to host National Night Out on the Town Green Tuesday, **August 4th** alongside the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office, Virginia State Police and Lovettsville Volunteer Fire and Rescue.

Event Details:

-  Town Green, 11 Spring Farm Drive
-  6:00PM - 8:00PM National Night Out
-  Movie at Dusk: Zootopia 2
-  LIONS CLUB will be on site providing hot dogs, hamburgers, soda, and chips
-  Splash Soda Shop will have your favorite drinks for sale
-  Gruto's Soft Serve on wheels will be on site with your favorite ice cream treats!

Commemorative Items

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



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 August



Robert J. Still, 8/4

Robert Samuel Miller II, 8/10

Clifford Steven Free, 8/15

Wes Hirschhorn Jr, 8/23

Jeffrey Dell, 8/28

*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
J. David King	2016
Chuck Wyant	2017
Wes Hirschhorn	2018, 2025
Mark Canter	2020, 2021
Matt Duley	2022, 2024



District 2 News

2026 District 2 Schedule

August 8 - District Ritual School and Ashburn DeMolay Monthly Breakfast

August 26 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



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

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

