

09

September 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 summer begins to wane and the harvest season approaches, we are reminded of the fruits of labor. A farmer does not sow his field one day and expect a harvest the next. He tends it patiently, returning day after day to work the soil, pull the weeds, and provide what is needed for growth. Much of that labor is quiet and unnoticed, but over time its results become plainly visible. There is a lesson in that for us as Masons. The improvement of our character happens much the same way: not through one great effort, but through the small choices we make and the work we undertake each day.

We are each rough ashlar, continually shaped by experience and by the lessons of the Craft. The working tools we were introduced to in our degrees were never intended to remain merely symbols within the Lodge room. The Square challenges us to be honest and virtuous in our dealings. The Level reminds us of our equality and common humanity. The Plumb calls upon us to walk uprightly before God and man. Their lessons are simple to recite, but considerably more difficult to faithfully practice when we return to the pressures and distractions of everyday life.

The real work begins when we carry those tools beyond the Lodge room. It is there, amid the ordinary concerns and employments of life, that their lessons are put to the test. Patience when patience is difficult, kindness when it is unexpected, integrity when no one is watching; these are the quiet strokes by which the rough edges of our character are removed. No single act makes the perfect ashlar, nor is the work ever truly finished. We simply return to our labor each day, striving to leave ourselves a little better than we were before.

The fruits of that labor reach farther than ourselves. As we become better men, we become better Brothers, better husbands and fathers, better friends and neighbors, and better members of our communities. In that way, the work we perform upon ourselves strengthens everything of which we are a part. We may not always recognize that growth as it happens, just as we do not watch the crops grow from one moment to the next, but over time the results of faithful labor become evident.

As we enter this season of harvest, let's take a moment to consider both the progress we have made and the work that still lies before us. There will always be another rough edge to smooth, another lesson to apply, and another opportunity to put our principles into practice. May we continue patiently and diligently in that labor, remembering that its greatest reward is not found in recognition or praise, but in the men we are continually striving to become.

∴ Bill Hohl  
Master 2026

## CALLED COMMUNICATION

Brethren,

**On Wednesday, August 19, 2026 Freedom Lodge opening a Lodge on the Second Degree of Masonry to confer the degree of Fellowcraft on Brother Sam Colston. Our heartfelt congratulations to him for all his catechism work and becoming our newest Fellowcraft!**

Brethren,

This month, Freedom Lodge lost a Brother who meant a great deal to many of us. When I think of Phil, one of the first things that comes to mind is how much he enjoyed traveling to other Lodges and meeting new Brothers. Having joined during COVID myself, we talked about how much we wanted to get out to travel and do Masonry again. When we were finally able to, it seemed that wherever we went, Phil already knew at least half the brothers there. He understood that Brotherhood wasn't confined to the walls of our own Lodge. He valued the friendships and connections that Masonry creates, and he genuinely enjoyed being among Brothers.

Many were fortunate to have Phil as a mentor, and one of the things I learned from him was that there is no contradiction between enjoying ourselves as Brothers and taking the Work of Freemasonry seriously. His dry humor was never far away, but neither was his understanding of the importance and gravity of the Craft. Phil believed our ritual, our traditions, and what we profess to stand for deserved our best efforts and should be treated with respect. More importantly, he carried those principles beyond ritual. When a Brother was struggling, Phil was someone who would listen without judgment, offer advice, share his own experiences, or simply be there. He understood that sometimes the most meaningful work we do as Masons happens quietly, between two Brothers, where no one else ever sees it.

Phil's absence leaves a very real hole in Freedom Lodge, and there are things about him that simply cannot be replaced. Part of remembering a Brother is deciding what lessons from him we will carry forward. We can travel and introduce ourselves to a Brother we haven't met. We can talk about the Craft with our friends and neighbors. We can enjoy the laughter and fellowship that make this Fraternity special while still holding our Craft to a high standard. And we can pay a little closer attention to the Brother beside us who may be carrying a burden quietly. We can honor him by striving to be for another Brother what Phil was for so many of us.

Fraternally,

## From the South

Brethren,

**IMPORTANT: Freedom 118 will be hosting an Oktoberfest event this year, co-hosted with the Game Club. This will be an excellent source of marketing for our Lodge, as well as a way to raise funds for both organizations.**

Brother BK will be joining us for Stated to discuss what is needed to ensure we have a successful and properly run food event. Mark your calendars: Saturday 9/26. Make it a priority to come out for at least part of the day to support the Lodge.

Stated Dinner will be yet another mystery – whatever I can cobble together

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 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>

September 2026

Fri  
4

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  
12

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

Wed  
16

Freedom Lodge Meetup  
5:45 – 7:00 PM  
Andy's in Lovettsville, 2 Town Sq, Lov...

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

Sat  
26

Oktoberfest Grille with the Game Cl...  
11 AM – 8 PM  
28 E Broad Way, Lovettsville, VA 2018...

Wed  
30

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
- Sign up for helping with Oktoberfest!

## Upcoming Stated Programs:

- 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
- Hawaiian shirts encouraged for September!



# Masonic Education from the L.E.O.

## Brother George Washington

George Washington was an active Freemason throughout his life, joining the fraternity in Fredericksburg, Virginia at the age of 20 in 1752. He became a Master Mason, the highest basic rank, the following year.

### Key Aspects of George Washington's Masonic History:

Washington was initiated as an Entered Apprentice in Fredericksburg, Virginia, in 1752, and became a Master Mason the following year. He maintained his connection with Freemasonry throughout his life. During the Revolutionary War, he supported the formation of Masonic lodges within the army. In 1788, he was elected Master of Alexandria Lodge No. 22. He took his presidential oath on a Bible from St. John's Lodge in 1789 and presided over the laying of the US Capitol cornerstone in 1793. Washington received a Masonic funeral in 1799 and was buried wearing his Masonic apron. His Masonic legacy is commemorated at the George Washington Masonic National Memorial in Virginia.

### Why did George Washington join Freemasonry?

It is believed that Freemasonry's emphasis on virtue, brotherhood, and civic duty resonated with Washington. Joining was seen as a rite of passage and an expression of civic responsibility. The order provided a common bond, especially among his officers during the Revolutionary War.

### Masonic Influences:

Some point to potential Masonic symbols, such as the Eye of Providence on the dollar bill, as reflecting the era's connection to Enlightenment and fraternal thought. According to the George Washington Masonic National Memorial, Washington's life exemplified the Masonic ideal of being a "just and upright Mason". He is considered a "living stone" who became a cornerstone of American civilization.

*Important Note: Although Washington held leadership positions, some sources suggest his public duties occasionally limited his daily participation in lodge activities. However, he remained a respected member and embraced the fraternity's principles.*





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. Current year dues payments not received by December 31<sup>st</sup> will be reported to the Master as being eligible for Suspension.** 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 1<sup>st</sup>, as per the Methodical Digest.

**Online dues payments have been suspended pending the implementation of a new solution. All dues payments should be sent via check or money order to the lodge. Cash is accepted for in person transactions at the lodge. Payments mailed to the lodge should be sent to the lodge PO Box listed on your dues notice.**

**All members are reminded that if you wish to Demit from the Lodge and no longer pay dues, you must both submit the Request to Demit form in writing with your signature AND be current on your dues to be considered by the lodge before such a request can be considered. Members can request the form from me.**

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

# Masonic Birthdays in September



Chris Thompson, 9/26  
Brad Westerman, 9/14

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

It is with heavy heart that we announce the passing of Brother Philip Brooks, Past District Deputy of District 2 and Past Master of Freedom Lodge in 2012, 2014, 2023. A Brother beloved and missed.



## District 2 News

### 2026 District 2 Schedule

September 12 - Kenneth O. Shelton Area Ritual School  
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



# Relief and Charity

## Blood Drive

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

## 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.njlclovettville.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

Manassas Assembly#13's  
**Vendor Craft Fair**  
Saturday, August 29th  
9AM - 3 PM  
Kena Shrine  
9500 Technology Dr  
Manassas, VA 20110  
Rain or Shine  
30+ Vendors!

Handmade Soap, Candles, & Essential Oils  
Knit, Sewn, & Crocheted Crafts  
Ceramic & Wooden Art  
Cosmetics & Jewelry  
Baked Goods  
AND MORE!

## 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





The Alexandria Valley of the Orient of Virginia is now accepting petitions for our Fall reunion which will occur on both Saturday, October 17th and 24th.

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

