



Trestle Board

Olive Branch Lodge 114
Leesburg, Virginia



September-October 2025

From The East

Brethren,

Summer officially ended today. Costco and Hobby Lobby have Christmas Decorations on display. The 100 ° days have left us. The leaves are beginning to change color. School started, and football is back. Must be Fall.

With the change of seasons comes many changes to our lodge. We have several new inquiries, and our EA and FCs are all progressing. We are working with officers to move up a chair and to install a new worshipful master.



The change from summer to fall offers Freemasons a powerful metaphor for our spiritual journey. As the lush growth of summer gives way to the harvest and preparation for winter's introspection, so too should we, as Masons, reflect on the fruits of our labor. This transition from a season of growth to one of balance and stillness is a time to assess one's commitment to the fraternity's core tenets of Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth. Just as the leaves of a tree must eventually fall to nourish the earth, Freemasons are reminded to shed complacency and rededicate themselves to the philosophical teachings that guide their quest for moral and spiritual enlightenment. In this way, the changing of the seasons, often symbolized by the cyclical journey of the sun, illustrates the eternal rhythm of life and death, growth and reflection, that is central to Masonic philosophy.

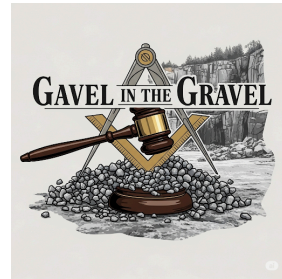
I hope you enjoy autumn, whether you are here in Loudoun County or wherever you reside. May the upcoming holidays bring you and your family some joy. I also hope you have a moment to reflect on your role in the lodge and how Freemasonry can sustain and nurture your personal growth. Please remember that your brothers are here to support you.

Fraternally Yours,

Worshipful Master Alex Fogelson

Gavel in the Gravel

Our September meeting was held in the Luck Stone rock quarry. This was our second annual Gavel in the Gravel. Sixty brothers from our lodge, district, and from across the DMV area attended.



The theme for the evening was how each of us plays a fundamental role in masonry, laying the stones that form the foundation of our lodges. There's a special kind of magic being down there, 300 feet or so below the surface. We were surrounded not just by the ancient rocks, but by a circle of brothers, each one a foundation stone in his own right. In that quarry, we were not just outside, we were in a sacred, sunken amphitheater carved by time itself. As the world above falls away, its noise silenced by the weight of the earth, all that's left is us, this moment, and the deep, resonant connection that binds us all together.



News from the Grand Lodge of Virginia

The Grand Communication will be held in Richmond on Saturday, November 15. All Master Masons are encouraged to attend. One of the items being voted on this year is an increase in the Grand Lodge assessment of \$25. This increase will support several new initiatives and help the Grand Lodge maintain its financial stability. This increase is expected to pass. As our bylaws state, this additional \$25 will be incorporated into the annual member dues. Look for more communications about our annual dues coming later this fall.

Future Stated Meetings

We have a full slate of programs scheduled for the remainder of the year. In October, we are recognizing Brother Bill Roberson for 60 years of membership in Olive Branch. Our November meeting will be move-up night, where officers will move up one chair. We will also hear about the Shriners and about masonic research projects. In December, we will be voting on new officers. I hope you can attend. Please reach out if you need a ride.

Upcoming and ongoing activities

Be sure to check our lodge calendar for all events. It is updated regularly and can be found on our website at <https://www.olivebranch114.org/calendar>.

Office Initiation

Olive Branch will hold an open installation of officers on Saturday, December 6. All brothers, friends, and family members are invited.

Holiday Parade

Olive Branch has applied to participate in the Leesburg holiday parade. Brother Joe Schwarz is leading the planning. Please contact him if you have time to help.

Clothing and More Drive

Brothers, join us in making a difference by supporting our community! Our lodge is hosting an ongoing donation drive for Hope's Treasures. During this drive, we collect clothes, bags, and shoes in the blue bin in the lobby.

Food Drive

We continue to collect dry foods for Loudoun Hunger Relief. Boxes will be placed in the lodge to collect the food regularly taken to Loudoun Hunger Relief. Please bring canned food (veggies, soup, beans, etc.), cereal boxes, hygiene items (soap, shampoo, toothpaste, etc.), rice, pasta, and peanut butter. A complete list will be provided at the lodge. This year, we are challenging ourselves to a 1K where we donate either 1,000 pounds of food, \$1,000, or any combination of the two.

Practice and Fellowship

We continue to meet on Saturday and Sunday mornings for study, practice, and fellowship. We gather at the lodge at 8:30 a.m. for fellowship and begin work around 9:00 a.m.

A few potential petitioners have attended our Saturday and Sunday morning get-togethers. These events have been great ways to get to know potential candidates and introduce them to our fraternity. If you know someone interested in becoming a Mason, invite them to visit on Saturday or Sunday mornings.

Staying in Touch with the Lodge

Our primary method of reaching out to members is through our email list. Please reach out if you are not receiving our emails to our secretary at secretary@olivebranch114.org. We also use the Signal app to send out messages that are more time-sensitive, such as reminders and information about our weekend meetups. If you would like to be invited to our Signal group, contact our secretary at the address above.

Lodge Information



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