



HENRY KNOX FIELD JOHN BLAIR LODGE

NO. 349 • A.F. & A.M. • VIRGINIA

TRESTLEBOARD

FEBRUARY 2023

Tuesday, January 31
Friends and Family Night

Tuesday, February 7
1830 Degree / Ritual School

Saturday, February 11
0930 Division Leadership
Conference
Alexandria Scottish Rite

Tuesday, February 14
Stated Communication
1830 Dinner
1930 Opening of Lodge
"George Washington"

Monday, February 20
George Washington Masonic
National Memorial
Cornerstone Centennial
Celebration
1300 Parade
1630 Ceremony

Tuesday, February 21
1830 Degree / Ritual School

Tuesday, February 28
1830 Degree / Ritual School



A MESSAGE FROM THE EAST

Brethren,

February in Virginia Masonry looks to be a very busy series of events! We'll have our stated on Valentines, multiple DDGM official visits, numerous events associated with the Conference of Grand Masters of Masons in North America, and a parade through Alexandria that will culminate in a reenactment of the cornerstone laying at the George Washington Masonic National Memoria (GWMNM). If you are interested in participating in any of the events, I encourage you to visit aw22.org where you'll find a link to the GWMNM and then to the Conference of Grand Masters. For our part, we will need to get a contingent of brothers to walk in the parade on the 20th of Feb. – details to follow in the weekly communications. Those things aside, there is always work to be done in the quarry, and room for improvement in our ritual; so I'm hoping we can gather for at least a couple ritual practices throughout the month.

This month, being the birth month of our Illustrious Brother George Washington, I've selected him as our Giant. For our stated meeting, Worshipful Brother Froggett will be giving us a presentation on Washington that is sure to be enlightening and to highlight his contributions to Freemasonry, the United States, and in many ways, the world. As we are all fairly familiar with Washington, I'll leave it to Wor. Bro. Froggett to expand our horizons of enlightenment, and will offer another topic of consideration for this month's article that I feel important to the lodge, the craft, and the brotherhood – seasonal affective disorder (SAD).

This time of year, as we pass from the holidays and into the bills resulting from the holidays, shorter days, and cold induced isolation, many of us are affected in many ways by varying levels of depression. Depression that may present itself mildly by putting us to bed a little earlier than usual, or severely by inducing withdraw from our loved ones and all social activities, or increasing our alcohol intake to a level that becomes unhealthy. While I'm certainly not a medical professional capable of diagnosing or treating depression, I'd like to offer some pertinent facts and suggestions for identifying and dealing with SAD or what is often referred to as "winter depression." Furthermore, as we have all sworn to befriend and relieve any of our brethren that may need our assistance – sometimes, that requires us to get a little uncomfortable and help with the uncomfortable and a nudge to reengage with each other, and the world outside of our doors. I get that some of us, due to the generations we come

from, are challenged even further to acknowledge, or even discuss such topics. However, I also know that depression is real, and that rather we want to talk about it or not, we all have a close friend, brother, or acquaintance that is struggling right now; and it just might be a simple word from you or I that brings them back to light.

If you, or someone you know is struggling severely, and may be contemplating suicide, I'm here to tell you that there is help out there, even if it's just a call to me to meet for lunch. However, if you or someone you know need more immediate help, I encourage you to reach out to the National Suicide Prevention Hotline at 800-273-8255 for free, confidential support 24/7. And finally, my brethren, I ask only that we do good unto all, look out for each other, and be courageous enough to ask for help – we are your brothers.



Sincerely & Fraternally,
Mark A. Boughner
Worshipful Master (Elect)
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703-489-2530

Not Sure What to Say to Someone Experiencing Depression? Here are 7 ways to Show Support

2022 healthline.com Jamie Elmer

If you know someone who is experiencing depression, it can be difficult to know how to best show them support. Focus on letting them know you're there for them, that they are not weak, they are not alone, and that there is hope.

Understanding depression - major depression is one of the most common mental health disorders in the world, so it's likely someone you know or love is, or has been, affected. As of 2021 research, the World Health Organization estimated that 5% of adults are living with depression worldwide. Knowing how to talk with someone living with depression can be a great way to support them.

While reaching out to someone with depression can't cure them, social support can remind them that they are not alone. This can be hard to believe when depressed, but it can also be incredibly helpful in a crisis situation. 2017 research has shown that the likelihood of depression is reduced with high quality social connections and that social support is a protective factor against depression and anxiety.

Seasonal affective disorder (SAD) is a type of depression that has a seasonal pattern. The episodes of depression tend to occur at the same time each year, usually during the winter. As with other types of depression, two of the main symptoms of SAD are a low mood and a lack of interest in life. Other symptoms of SAD include: being less active than normal; and sleeping more than usual.

Winter depression - SAD is sometimes known as "winter depression" because the symptoms are more apparent and tend to be more severe at this time of the year. The symptoms often begin in the autumn as the days start getting shorter, and are most severe during December, January, and February.

What causes SAD? - The exact cause of SAD is not fully understood, but it is thought to be linked to reduced exposure to sunlight during the shorter days of the year. Sunlight can affect some of the brain's chemicals and hormones. However, it is not clear what this effect is. One theory is that light stimulates a part of the brain called the hypothalamus, which controls: mood, appetite, and sleep.

So, what do you say to someone who is experiencing depression?

1. **Do you want to talk about it? I'm here when you're ready** – while you can't force someone to talk, knowing you are available can help them feel supported. If they have not been forward with you about their depression, you may want to mention that you've noticed they are having a hard time, and that you're there if they want to talk.
2. **What can I do to help today?** – Depression often causes fatigue, trouble sleeping, and a lack of motivation. Sometimes just getting out of bed can be hard. Just asking what you can do, can really help them get through their day. Maybe they need a morning call or text to ensure they get to work on time. Offering to do so is a way to let them know it's ok to ask for help. Sometimes, you just need to listen. Helping doesn't have to be a huge, drastic effort. It can be as simple as picking up a phone, sharing a meal, or driving them to lodge.
3. **How are you managing? How's your depression?** – This can give you some insight into how they're doing, or if they might need help getting professional assistance. Depression is a medical condition, it's not a flaw or a weakness. It is important to assure them they are not weak or defective. If someone you know or love has depression, encourage them to seek professional help if they haven't done so already. Remind them that asking for help is a sign of strength, not weakness.
4. **You're not alone – I may not understand exactly how you feel, but you're not alone.** Depression is incredibly common. Depression can make many people feel alone and like they should isolate. Remind them they are not alone, and that you want to be there for them. Remember to keep the focus on them – and to listen first.

What Not to Say – Just remember, advice isn't the same as asking for help. If they ask for your advice, give it if you so choose. But do not offer them "helpful" solutions or statements that seem like a cure for their depression – this can feel judgmental or not as empathetic.

Do not say:

- "Just think happy thoughts. I don't understand what you have to be so sad about."
- "Everything will be OK, I promise."
- "You just need to snap out of this."
- "So many people out there are worse off than you."

5. **You are important to me** – It's always nice to know you're loved or wanted. When someone's depressed, they may feel the exact opposite. This is why telling someone that they are important to you, that you need them in their life, and that they matter can be so comforting. You can also be more specific about what you like about them or how much you appreciate them for something they do.
6. **That sounds like it's really hard; how are you coping?** The purpose is simply to acknowledge that you realize how hard it is for them. Acknowledging how hard depression is, and how difficult its symptoms can be, can help them feel seen. It is also a good reminder that you are listening, that you see them, and that you are there to help them cope.
7. **I'm really sorry you are going through this, and I am here for you if you need me.** – the fact is, there is no perfect thing to say to someone living with depression. Your words will not cure them – but they *can* help. Reminding someone that you are there for them whenever they need you – whether that's in the form of help with a small task or someone to call in a crisis – can be essential to saving the life of a friend, brother, or loved one.

Treating SAD - As with any type of depression, SAD can be difficult to live with. It can make you feel tired, stressed, and unhappy. However, it can usually be successfully treated. Talking to someone, asking for help, and recognizing that you or a loved one is experiencing SAD or depression, is often the beginning to successful treatment and recovery.



The Most Worshipful Grand
Lodge of Virginia,
A.F. & A.M.
fraternally invites you to
participate in the
**George Washington National
Masonic Memorial Cornerstone
Centennial Celebration**
as part of the
2023 Conference of Grand
Masters of
North America
*Monday, February 20, 2023 at
1:00 P.M.*



**EARLY BIRD! 2023 Parade
Unit Registration**

Parade Registration Fee is \$50



www.grandmastersva23.com





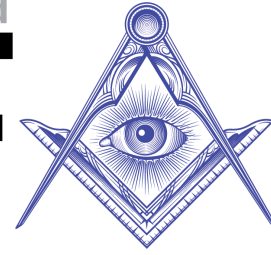
February Masonic Birthdays

Bro. Rodney Gerald Bourassa , Feb. 24, 58 years
 Bro. Murray Cameron , Feb. 3, 53 years
 Bro. Dennis Earl Brown , Feb. 4, 48 years
 Bro. James Arthur Bland , Feb. 1, 40 years
 Bro. Lowell Aloyous Griffith , Feb. 20, 33 years
 Rt. Wor. David Benjamin Browning Jr., Feb. 8, 18 years
 Wor. Timothy J. Fisher , Feb. 20, 7 years
 Wor. Clayton Jennings Mitchell , Feb. 20, 7 years

henry knox field

HKF

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JBL

NO. 349

john blair lodge

2023 OFFICERS

Mark A. Boughner
Worshipful Master

Jonathan Summers,
Senior Warden

Steven Aguilar
Junior Warden

Wor. Kenneth R. Reynolds,
Treasurer

Wor. Daniel E. Froggett
Secretary

Xavier Mariscal
Senior Deacon

Arnold McNeal
Junior Deacon

Ronald E. Markiewicz
Chaplain

Bradley J. Watts
Steward

Wor Clayton J. Mitchell
Tiler

Wor. Robert Hook
Asst. Treasurer

Wor. T.J. Fisher
Asst. Secretary

Wor. JH Flores
Webmaster

