

April 17, 2026, #146

Dear Brethren and Friends,

Special Announcements:

Sickness & Distress:

The funeral for W.: Robert George Boucher will be at 2 pm, Saturday April 24, 2026 at the Akdar Shrine Center. <https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/name/robert-boucher-obituary?pid=211252091>

Continued prayers for W.: Jim Parham. He is back in St. Francis Hospital and underwent a procedure to stop some bleeding in his brain. April indicates the procedure was a success. They will be in St. Francis for a couple weeks while he undergoes continued rehabilitation.

4th Annual Masonic Jamboree has been moved from Saturday, June 13 to Saturday, July 11, 2026. Still at Chandler Park. Please mark your calendars.

April 25 (Saturday) – Master Builder School – 8 am continental breakfast for a small donation, 9 am start. All masons are welcome, even EAs and FCs. If you want to learn the ritual in each degree, this is the perfect time to learn or to sharpen your skills. If you are an EA or FC, you will just be able to attend the training on the highest degree you have obtained.

My Ramblings by W.: Scott A. MacDonald © 2026

Wake Up!

Did you know that sleep deprivation can impair your reaction times and cognitive abilities just like drinking alcohol?

A landmark study published in 2000 by researchers Anne Williamson and Anne-Marie Feye concluded that after 17 to 19 hours without sleep, the participants' performance on various tests was equal or worse than someone with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .05%. After 24 hours, performance was equal to a BAC of .10%, which is considered impaired in most states.

In masonry, we are taught to keep our conduct within certain boundaries. This admonition would extend to becoming “under the influence” where our judgment becomes impaired where we lose our inhibitions and make poor decisions.

Sleep deprivation can have a host of other consequences, including:

Mental & Emotional Issues

- Difficulty concentrating and staying focused
- Slower reaction times and increased risk of errors
- Impaired memory and learning
- Irritability and mood swings
- Heightened anxiety and stress
- Increased risk of depression

- Emotional overreactions (amygdala becomes overly sensitive)
- Poor decision-making and judgment
- Higher chance of risk-taking behavior
- Possible false memories or distorted thinking

Physical Issues

- Weakened immune system (more colds, flu, and slower healing)
- Increased inflammation throughout the body
- Weight gain and increased appetite (due to hormone changes)
- Higher risk of obesity
- Insulin resistance and greater chance of type 2 diabetes
- Elevated blood pressure
- Increased risk of heart disease, heart attack, and stroke
- Higher cholesterol levels
- Chronic fatigue and low energy
- Headaches and muscle aches
- Slower physical reaction times and coordination problems
- Accelerated brain aging and higher long-term risk of dementia

Other Serious Long-Term Effects

- Shortened overall lifespan
- Greater accident risk (driving, work, etc.)
- Hormonal imbalances
- Reduced creativity and problem-solving ability

Proper rest is therefore essential for overall wellbeing and longevity.

Here are some tips on getting better sleep:

Build Better Sleep Habits (Sleep Hygiene)

- **Stick to a consistent sleep schedule — Go to bed and wake up at the same time every day, even on weekends. This strengthens your body's natural clock.**
- **Create a relaxing bedtime routine — Spend 30–60 minutes winding down with calming activities like reading a book, taking a warm bath, or listening to soft music.**
- **Avoid screens at least 1 hour before bed — The blue light from phones, TVs, and computers suppresses melatonin (your sleep hormone). Dim lights in the evening instead.**
- **Keep your bedroom cool, dark, and quiet — Aim for 60–67°F (15–19°C). Use blackout curtains, earplugs, or white noise if needed.**
- **Reserve your bed for sleep and sex only — Avoid working, scrolling, or watching TV in bed so your brain associates the bed with rest.**

Watch What You Consume

- **Cut caffeine after early afternoon** — Its effects can last 8+ hours. Skip coffee, tea, soda, and chocolate late in the day.
- **Avoid heavy, spicy, or large meals close to bedtime** — Finish eating at least 2–3 hours before bed to prevent discomfort.
- **Limit alcohol and nicotine** which may help you doze off initially but disrupt deeper sleep and cause night-time wake-ups.
- **Stay hydrated earlier in the day** — Reduce fluids in the 1–2 hours before bed to minimize bathroom trips.
- **Turn off your phone 60 minutes before bed** or put your phone in another room to charge

Move Your Body and Relax Your Mind

- **Exercise regularly** — Daily physical activity helps you fall asleep faster but finish intense workouts at least 3–4 hours before bed.
- **Try relaxation techniques right before sleep:**
 - **4-7-8 Breathing:** Inhale quietly through your nose for 4 seconds, hold for 7 seconds, exhale through your mouth for 8 seconds. Repeat 4 times.
 - **Progressive Muscle Relaxation:** Tense and then slowly release each muscle group from your toes to your head.
 - **Military Method:** Relax your face, drop your shoulders, release tension in your arms and legs, then clear your mind by visualizing a calm scene or repeating “don’t think” for 10 seconds.
- **Practice mindfulness or guided imagery** — Picture a peaceful place using all your senses, or simply focus on your breath to quiet racing thoughts.

Quick Fixes When You’re Tossing and Turning

- **If you’re not asleep after 20 minutes, get out of bed** — Do something calm (like reading or listening to soothing audio) in another room until you feel sleepy, then return to bed.
- **Write down worries or tomorrow’s to-do list earlier in the evening** — This “brain dump” prevents rumination once the lights are off.
- **Turn off your phone or put it in another room.**

One of the main causes of sleeplessness is anxiety. So, if you have a lot on your mind, write your worries/concerns/problems on a piece of paper before you go to bed. Keep the paper by your bed in case you wake up with another problem, then write it down. This helps to clear your mind of trying to keep a “to-do” list.

Hope some of these techniques help you.

So, what does the Great Light of Masonry say about sleep?

Psalm 127:2 — “It is in vain that you rise up early and go late to rest, eating the bread of anxious toil; for he gives to his beloved sleep.”

Psalm 4:8 — “In peace I will both lie down and sleep; for you alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety.”

Psalm 3:5 — “I lay down and slept; I woke again, for the Lord sustained me.”

The Bible tells us not to be afraid. Try and keep that in mind as you toss and turn with daily worries.

Lord, give us rest to renew our minds and improve our health and wellbeing. In His name I pray, Amen.

Lodge Calendar

April 21 (Tuesday) - Stated Meeting. Dinner at 6 pm, lodge at 7 pm.

April 25 (Saturday) – Master Builder School – 8 am breakfast, 9 am start.

April 28 (Tuesday) - Fellowship night. Dinner at 6 pm.

May 5 (Tuesday) - Stated Meeting. Dinner at 6 pm, lodge at 7 pm.

May 12 (Tuesday) – Fellowship night. Dinner at 6 pm.

May 19 (Tuesday) - Stated Meeting. Dinner at 6 pm, lodge at 7 pm.

May 26 (Tuesday) – Fellowship night. Dinner at 6 pm.

July 11 (Saturday) – 4th Annual Masonic Jamboree. 10 am to 3 pm. Location is Chandler Park, 6500 W 21st St, Tulsa, OK 74107. Masons, family and friends are welcome. No charge. Lots of activities for adults and children.

Grand Lodge Activities – Open to the Public

April 26 (Sunday) - McAlester Withdrawal from Cornerstone – All Saints Episcopal Church; 325 E. Washington; McAlester, OK. 1:30 pm.

April 27 (Monday) – Cornerstone – Adair Public Schools – 1 pm. 202 Glen Harley A Hughes Ave, Adair, OK

May 20 (Wednesday) – 50-year pin presentation at Red-Fork Masonic Lodge, 1030 W 51st St., Tulsa

See you at Lodge!

Sincerely,

W.: Scott A. MacDonald, Treasurer and Membership Calling Chairman

PS – I will be posting the weekly newsletter on our website at <https://ba-mason.org/newsletter>

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