



GRAND LODGE *Newsletter*

<http://www.elks.org>

Elks Care — Elks Share

April 2013

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Spring renews push to get Members involved

Welcome to all of the new Officers and Lodge and District Committee Chairs as we begin our 2013-14 fraternal year. Elections are behind us and our focus now becomes how to achieve the goals we set for the year.

Spring is a time of renewal, and the markers of our accomplishments have all been re-set to zero. Our ENF and State Major Project per capita goals begin anew. Our membership drives are starting, and we look for new and stimulating ways to get our Members involved in the Lodge.

As we know, some Members originally joined the Lodge solely for the fraternal aspect of our Order. They enjoy coming to Lodge, knowing it is a good place to bring the family or for dinner or a swim. They often meet with their friends for a drink or to participate in the special events. These Members make a significant contribution to the success of our Lodges.

It is essential that we provide the activities



Message from the Grand Exalted Ruler

THOMAS S. BRAZIER

that meet their needs in our Lodges. Don't be afraid to try new things. Just because "We tried that (20 years ago) and it didn't work!" doesn't mean it won't work now. You might be stunned what that event will do this year!

However, your Lodge will not succeed if it focuses on the fraternal side alone. Our charitable work is the heart of what we do and who we are. This is the time when we Officers should look at how to engage our Local Lodges more in our communities, whether through the schools, veterans'

services or a project that can serve a need.

Many tools are available to help you to find and fund valuable projects. Your newsletter is a prime communication tool. Let your Members know you are looking for project ideas and for their contributions. Brainstorm with your Officers and PER Association to find where your Lodge should focus its attention. Invite in local community leaders for their ideas. Then set your priorities and work on those projects that have merit and can make a significant impact in your community. As you are out in the community, be sure to invite the media to cover your event. Personal contact cannot be overdone. Let our "Beacon of Hope" shine on all involved.

Thank you all for continuing your leadership in our Order. It's an extraordinary experience to be a Lodge Officer and one you should cherish. Take pleasure from the year and enjoy yourself!

Unaffiliated spouse of a Member

Inquiries have been received pertaining to whether a spouse who chooses to take an Absolute Dimit or has been dropped for non-payment, may enter and stay in the Lodge. Yes, Section 14.190 Opinion 03 of the 2012 Statutes Annotated applies: "The exception

permitting visitation of a Lodge by a non-suspended spouse, or a delinquent Member spouse, means that

the non-suspended or unaffiliated spouse is treated as if he or she were never a Member."

GRAND SECRETARY

Bryan R. Klatt

Have you filed your Annual Membership and Charity Reports? April 30 is the deadline. I've been asked when Grand Lodge-calculated membership totals will be lowered to coincide with Local Lodge totals. That will happen when the Annual Report is filed, the Secretary sends the proper paperwork to the Grand Secretary, both documents have been accepted and the Grand Lodge year is closed.

GRAND LODGE FRATERNAL COMMITTEE

POW risked beatings to recite Pledge

by JOHN McCAIN
United States Senator

As you may know, I spent 5 1/2 years as a prisoner of war during the Vietnam War. In the early years of our imprisonment, the NVA kept us in solitary confinement or two or three to a cell. In 1971 the NVA moved us from these conditions of isolation into large rooms with as many as 30 to 40 men to a room.

This was, as you can imagine, a wonderful change and was a direct result of the efforts of millions of Americans on behalf of a few hundred POWs 10,000 miles from home.

One of the men who moved into my room was a young man named Mike Christian. Mike came from a small town near Selma, AL. He didn't wear a pair of shoes until he was 13 years old. At 17, he enlisted in the U.S. Navy. He later earned a commission by going to Officer Training School. Then he became a Naval

Flight Officer and was shot down and captured in 1967. Mike had a keen and deep appreciation of the opportunities this country and our military provide for people who want to work and want to succeed.

As part of the change in treatment, the Vietnamese allowed some prisoners to receive packages from home. In some of these packages were handkerchiefs, scarves and other items of clothing. Mike

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GRAND LODGE FRATERNAL COMMITTEE

Membership in Elks and the thrill of it all

by **ROBERT E. MORWICK**
Committee Member

I recently took part in one of the greatest experiences in Elkdome. On January 19 in Laughlin, NV, a new Lodge was instituted. It was the best of the best and an experience to remember always.

The actual institution was performed by Past Nevada State Presidents dressed in white dinner jackets. The Initiation was performed by Nevada's nationally award-winning Ritual team from Reno, which drove more than 1,100 miles to participate. They gave a beautiful rendition.

They were dressed in black tuxedos as was the installation team, which was made up of Past Exalted Rulers from Boulder City and other Nevada Lodges. The ceremonies to welcome another new Lodge into our Fraternal Brotherhood were very exquisite.

Besides the new Members being initiated, there were approximately 200 guests in attendance. It was extremely impressive, not only to the new charter Members but also to all the guests.

To start off the new Lodge, the Jewels, Bible, Elks Antlers, Elks Head for mounting, Alter Cloth and many other gifts were presented by various Elk Lodges from Nevada. Even Bullhead City Lodge (from across the Colorado River in Arizona) donated the Stations.

The new Lodge is presently renting a building and hopefully as their funds increase will be able to buy a permanent Lodge building.

Once again, it was a memorable experience to witness and proudly take part in.

Membership and Fraternal ties take a special place in all our hearts, not only for the charitable things we do for our communities, veterans, our youth through scouting, athletic activities, scholarships and our individual State Projects, but for the good fellowship. It is great to say you're an Elk – one of the *Best People On Earth*.

Make government relations a high priority in your Lodge

by **RODNEY D. BELLMAN**
Committee Member

Recognizing the important activities we do in our Lodges cannot be overemphasized. The information contained in the Annual Report allows the Government Relations Committee and every Elks Member to bring to the attention of government agencies and legislators the impact we have on youth and veterans in our communities.

GRAND LODGE GOVERNMENT RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Last Lodge year, the cash contributions by Members and volunteers totaled \$54.5 million. Noncash contributions were \$294 million.

That is an astounding \$348.5 million!

A detailed report of activities can be found in the December/January issue of The Elks Magazine. Please use it in your Lodge and State Newsletters.

This year the Elks National Foundation has pledged a record \$23.6 million in grants and appropriations, including \$6.5 million to invest directly into our Lodge communities.

The information from the reports, combined with the ENF pledges, gives every Elks Member unequaled knowledge to supply community leaders and legislators with factual results of our Order's works.

We urge every Exalted Ruler, Officer and Member to make Government Relations a priority. Be sure that you know what your government is doing for you and to you at all times.

Our responsibility as Members of our Order is to keep a constant vigil on all legislation at all levels of government, to see there is no indifference to unfair legislation that would prevent us from having the rights and privileges we enjoy as a private organization. We must remember that each and every one of us is really a Member of the Government Relations Committee. Your eyes, ears and individual help are invaluable.

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DRUG AWARENESS PROGRAM

Drug awareness is an important youth activity

by **FRANK SCARPINO**
Missouri State Drug Awareness Chairman

In this new Elks year, one of the first events is the Elks National Youth Week held May 1-7. The Grand Exalted Ruler requests all Local Lodges in the Order to dedicate the first seven days of May to the nation's youth and plan special ceremonies, celebrations and events that will be attractive, interesting and beneficial to them. Governors, lieutenant governors, mayors and other elected officials should be asked to proclaim Elks National Youth Week through a special message to all communities.

What a great opportunity to promote drug awareness. Lodges could utilize an

Elks Drug Awareness Trailer not only as a billboard, but as an information center by distributing drug awareness brochures, coloring books and bookmarks. If you hold a Youth Week event, include a visit from Elroy the Elk and perhaps distribute drug awareness items such as pencils, balsa airplanes, yo-yos or other drug awareness giveaways. If your Lodge has access to a pair of fatal vision goggles, these make for a great activity for the older kids – try to walk a straight line, bounce a tennis ball or even try to pick up a set of keys.

In supporting the Elks National Youth Week, the Elks National Drug Awareness Program strives to teach all children and parents about the dangers of

illegal drug use and prevent the abuse of legalized and prescription drugs. As the nation's largest volunteer drug awareness program, the program relies on state, district and Lodge volunteers to promote a drug-free lifestyle by their attendance at all Elks youth events such as Youth Week, Hoop Shoot, Soccer Shoot or Kids Fishing Derby. A drug awareness activity should always be included to illustrate the Elks' commitment to combating youth drug use through education and inspiration, and creating stronger activities and greater communication with local schools.

For information, please go to www.elks.org/dap/

We can help Elksdom grow by spreading Antlers

by **JEFFRY L. DURANT**
Committee Chairman

Elks Lodges serious about their long-term prospects for boosting membership should give another look at starting an Antlers program to kindle interest in community service in our Elks of tomorrow.

**GRAND
LODGE
ACTIVITIES
COMMITTEE**

A scant 7.4 percent of Elks Lodges nationwide now sponsor Antlers programs, 2012 Grand Lodge figures show, but hundreds more are needed as one more

means of increasing our membership ranks and to better ensure our survival as a viable nationwide benevolent society.

A blueprint for establishing an Antlers program for youngsters ages 12-20 is easily available at Elks.Org. Go to the Activities

Committee home page and click on "Antlers" on the right side of the page. Print out the electronic files of bylaws, rules and regulations for setting up an Antlers program for Lodges' review. The material provides all the framework a Lodge would need to start a program.

The only ingredient Lodges will need to supply is the desire to see both the program and our Order grow over the long haul.

The Antlers have been around since before World War II but interest waned in the 1960s, and the program was disbanded. The program was revived at the 2002 Grand Lodge Session and implemented by the now-defunct Grand Lodge Youth Activities Committee. Your Grand Lodge Activities Committee now administers the program.

The major objectives of the Antlers remain squarely in line with those we all hold dear as Elks Members:

- To quicken the spirit of American patriotism;
- To teach respect for parents and love of home;
- To inculcate the fundamentals of good citizenship;
- To aid in a worthy cause;
- To establish a foundation of character;
- To promote the welfare and enhance the happiness of its members, and
- To respect the convictions of others in matters of worship and religion is true Americanism.

Please, Elks Lodges, your Grand Lodge Activities Committee calls upon you to consider the benefits that your communities could reap by starting an Antlers program. A strong program would also help ensure our future of service to our towns, states and nation through a thriving membership.

POW From Page 1

got himself a bamboo needle. Over a period of a couple of months, he created an American flag and sewed it on the inside of his shirt. Every afternoon, before we had a bowl of soup, we would hang Mike's shirt on the wall of the cell and say the Pledge of Allegiance.

I know the Pledge of Allegiance may not seem the most important part of our day now, but I can assure you that in that stark cell it was indeed the most important and meaningful event.

One day the Vietnamese searched our cell, as they did periodically, and discovered Mike's shirt with the flag sewn inside, and removed it.

That evening they returned, opened the door of the cell, and for the benefit of all of us, beat Mike Christian severely for the next couple of hours. Then, they opened the door of the cell and threw him in. We cleaned him up as well as we could.

The cell in which we lived had a concrete slab in the middle on which we slept. Four naked light bulbs hung in each corner of the room.

As I said, we tried to clean up Mike as well as we could. After the excitement died down, I looked in the corner of the room, and sitting there beneath that dim light bulb with a piece of red cloth, another shirt and his bamboo needle, was my friend, Mike Christian. He was sitting there with his eyes almost shut from the beating he had received, making another American flag. He was not making the flag because it made Mike Christian feel better. He was making that flag because he knew how important it was to us to be able to Pledge our Allegiance to our flag and country.

So the next time you say the Pledge of Allegiance, you must never forget the sacrifice and courage that thousands of Americans have made to build our nation and promote freedom around the world. You must remember our duty, our honor, and our country.

"I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

– Submitted by Committee Chairman Ira W. Earp

GRAND LODGE ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

States take lead in contests formerly held by Grand Lodge

by **RON OLSON**
Committee Member

As we enter a new Lodge year and things around us change, hopefully we all can adjust and move forward in our efforts to become a *Beacon of Hope* within each of our communities.

We know that Grand Lodge has eliminated almost all of its contests. This does not mean that they should be eliminated at the State level. Hopefully, your State Association has decided to continue these contests at their level. By keeping competition on a more local level, the spirit of Elksdom and our good deeds become more rewarding for those Lodges that could not necessarily

compete nationally.

If your State Association hasn't already done so, it is urged to establish these contests.

Over the past several months requests have been received for Youth Activity, Student of the Month/Year, and Teenager of the Month/Year Certificates. In working with the Grand Lodge Publications Department, these customizable certificates will be posted on the Activities Committee page at Elks.Org after the next Grand Lodge Convention.

Remember, again this Elks year ENF will continue its Grant Programs. Don't miss out on these opportunities to help your Lodge fund your community programs.

Speeches, prayers for Elks events

Elks Lodges in the market for specially made speeches and prayers tailor made for Elks events can get them with publications written by Past Grand Chaplain, the Rev. Father Kevin Cassidy.

A collection of speeches aimed at those Elks events is available in "Father Cassidy's Speech-O-Matic," a 91-page booklet of speeches on topics ranging from acknowledgment of awards to welcoming visiting Elks.

For Elks on stand-by to say a prayer, Cassidy is also the author of a two-volume prayer book set,

which includes his first (or classic) edition of Father Cassidy's Elks Chaplain Prayers and More Elks Chaplain Prayers (or New and Improved Volume II).

For the Speech-O-Match, write a check for \$8, made payable to Father Kevin Cassidy. The prayer books are \$16 for the set or \$8 individually. Costs include shipping.

October to June, mail checks to Cassidy at 10518 Bright Angel Circle, Sun City, AZ 85351. July-September his address is P.O. Box 391, Mauston, WI 53948.

Medal honors the fallen

by Amos A. McCallum, PGER
Past Chairman

The Medal of Valor program commenced in April 2007, and was promoted by your Grand Lodge Elks National Veterans Service Commission. Its purpose is to give Lodge Members the opportunity to honor individuals who served in our military and made the supreme sacrifice defending our country and our freedoms.



**ELKS NATIONAL VETERANS
SERVICE COMMISSION**

The Medal of Valor is to be presented to the deserving family of the fallen hero who gave up his or her life in the ongoing Iraqi and Afghanistan conflicts.

The medals are made in the United States and come with a presentation case. The front of the medal is engraved with "Operation Enduring Freedom" on top and "Operation Iraqi Freedom" on the bottom. The back of the medal is suitable for engraving the name of the deceased veteran and also states "Presented by the Grand Lodge of the B.P.O. Elks to the family of (Name) in recognition of their supreme sacrifice." The cost is \$8 per medal, which includes shipping.

If you know of a family or families in your community who have lost a loved one in Iraq or Afghanistan, it would be a wonderful gesture to honor that person by presenting a Medal of Valor to that family. It could be presented to the family at a function at your Lodge or at some other appropriate venue, showing that Elks care and are grateful for their service and protecting us and our country.

To order the Medal of Valor, contact the National Veterans Service Commission at B.P.O. Elks, USA, 2750 N. Lakeview Ave., Chicago, IL 60614-1889 or by e-mail to vets@elks.org and the medal will be promptly shipped to you.

Thank you for doing what you can to honor our deceased veterans!

ELKS NATIONAL FOUNDATION

Brighter Beacons – Good news for all Lodges that plan to continue serving their communities using ENF Beacon Grants for ongoing, charitable, Elks-driven, community projects. At its February meeting, the ENF Board of Trustees doubled the Beacon Grants to \$2,000 each! This additional funding will allow Lodges to build even stronger communities with these Community Investments Program grants. Visit www.elks.org/enf/community for details.

More for ENF Most Valuable Students – In 2014, the ENF will increase funding for the Most Valuable Student scholarship program for the first time in six years. The contest will now feature 20 top awards — 10 for males, 10 for females— of at least \$20,000.

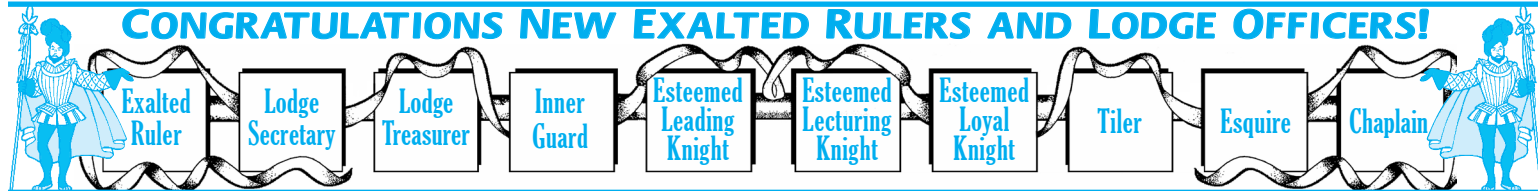
The 20 top finalists will participate in a Leadership Weekend in Chicago during which they'll interview with the national judges. These finalists will be vying for two first-place awards of \$50,000; two second-place awards of \$40,000; and two third-place awards of \$30,000.



The remaining 480 runners-up will receive fifth-place scholarships of \$4,000. Visit www.elks.org/enf/scholars for complete details.

The Road to Springfield – For the 72 national finalists, the road to Springfield culminates at the 41st Elks Hoop Shoot national finals on April 20, 2013. Get in on the action! If you won't be in Springfield, Mass., you can follow the contest from home using the Elks National Foundation's online shot-tracker. Before April 5, wish your favorite finalist good luck by sending an e-greeting. To send e-greetings, access the online shot tracker and read the latest Hoop Shoot news, visit www.elks.org/hoopshoot.

CONGRATULATIONS NEW EXALTED RULERS AND LODGE OFFICERS!



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