



**GRAND
LODGE**

Newsletter

<http://www.elks.org>

Elks Care — Elks Share

February 2014

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Now's the time to recognize your better half

Officers and committee persons in Elks leadership log many long hours in service to this organization planning, fund raising, implementing and working projects to the benefit of others. Time is a precious and expendable commodity, and each minute spent must be deducted from the ledger that makes up our busy lives. That minute is gained at the cost of something or someone else, usually a spouse.

What better time than February, Valentine's Month, to take a moment to recognize the contributions our spouses make by allowing us the time necessary to carry out the responsibilities of service as an Elks Officer?

If we are lucky, there are projects that involve both spouses. Nothing is more enjoyable than working together in a community or Lodge service



Message from the Grand Exalted Ruler

MILLARD C.
PICKERING

project as a couple.

Most likely, however, any office will require some time apart handling different duties to cover for the other spouse's service.

On behalf of the Grand Lodge, I extend many thanks and deep appreciation for the contribution made by all Elks spouses in affording their loved one the time to serve. Thank you for the late nights, the out-of-town trips, the un-

mowed lawns and the late or un-done projects around the house promised but not done because of an Elks commitment.

Rest assured their time and service is never wasted on our communities, our Veterans and service men and women, young people and the innumerable projects of a local nature that make this world a better place for everyone.

One of the most memorable lines from a famous sonnet by John Milton always comes to mind when I think of the many who grant us the grace to be of service:

"They also serve who only stand and wait"

Their service is essential, necessary and deeply appreciated.

But so is yours.

Lodge Committee Chair reporting

After the Lodge Officer elections in February and before April 15, you must enter your 2014-2015 Lodge Committee Chairpersons information in CLMS2Web and confirm acceptance. You may have or

GRAND SECRETARY

Bryan R. Klatt

shortly will receive a worksheet to assist in compiling the needed information. REMEMBER:

this information is to be filed online via CLMS2Web. Mailing to Grand Lodge or your District Deputy is no longer required.

With the automatic submission of the November 2013 Membership Report, the Order showed a gain of 15,787 (1.9 percent) Members, but the Order has 80,709 (9.6 percent) Members who are delinquent in paying their dues. Lodges have 9,092 membership applications being processed. Personal contact is a must in retaining those delinquent Members.

GRAND LODGE GOVERNMENT RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Charitable reporting key to our success

By THOMAS M. ZISA
Committee Member

A major goal of the Government Relations Committee is to ensure that *all* of the tremendous charitable work of our Members, Local Lodges and State Associations is completely and accurately reported at year end as part of the Grand Lodge Annual Report. That report requires you to account for all charitable activities for April 1 through March 31.

With less than two months left in the Lodge year, I cannot overemphasize the importance of accounting for *all* hours spent, miles traveled, and cash and non-cash contributions made by your Members and Local Lodges in charitable programs.

It matters because each year, after the Grand Secretary receives all Annual Reports from Lodges and State Associations, his office spends much time and effort to total the numbers, after which the hours and miles reported are

assigned a dollar value according to IRS guidelines.

The resulting final report is the only documentary proof of the total dollar amount of charitable work done by Elks nationwide. For 2012-2013, our Great Order accounted for an astounding \$422 million in charitable work, making our Order the nation's greatest fraternal organization; and, because we maintain these records, we can prove it!

Documenting the dollar value of

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GRAND LODGE ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

Let's kick it in gear...

by **STEVEN A. DAVIS**
Committee Member

Each year, my wife and I enjoy our favorite season, autumn, by taking in all of the beautiful sights of nature. We thoroughly enjoy watching the leaves change colors.

On a recent drive through town we noticed another change as we passed by different parks and school yards – more kids kicking soccer balls than throwing baseballs, basketballs or footballs. Indeed, we saw mini soccer games going on all over town. We weren't sure if it was just that particular day, but our epiphany was that soccer is here to stay.

To validate our finding, we inventoried our family ball bin at home. We counted one football, two basketballs, one baseball, a couple of old tennis balls and two soccer balls. Not surprisingly, our son's outdoor soccer ball was at the top of the pile.

At our house, soccer has become a year-round activity for our 15-year-old son – from school soccer in the fall, to winter indoor league soccer, to spring indoor soccer and to competitive traveling soccer in the summer.

While soccer is considered the most popular sport worldwide, many in the United States may find that hard to believe. Americans just need to look at the activities of our youth to see soccer is definitely gaining in popularity. The success of the 2013 Elks Soccer Shoot Program is testimony to the growing momentum of this sport. Soccer Shoots were held at the Lodge, district, state and regional levels nationwide. Wouldn't it be awesome to see a national Elks Soccer Shoot? Someday soon we will see a contest similar to that of the successful Elks Hoop Shoot.

Soccer Shoot is contested in four age groups – 7 and under (U-8), 8-9 (U-10), 10-11 (U-12) and 12-13 (U-14). The U-8 and U-10 groups compete in a five-goal contest, the U-12 and U-14 in a grid-goal contest.

If your Lodge doesn't currently participate in Soccer Shoot, I encourage you to do so. The program is easy to implement at very little expense. For information, refer to the Elks Soccer Shoot Program Manual at <http://www.elks.org/grandlodge/manuals/default.cfm?>

Elks Soccer Shoot, as well as all Elks Youth Activities, is aimed at providing fun-filled, productive, character-building activities for our youth. Let's "kick it in gear" and make a difference for our youth....start a Soccer Shoot program in your Lodge!

Let Beacons shine all over!

By **JEFFRY L. DURANT**
Committee Chairman

At the National Convention in Reno, I challenged Exalted Rulers and District Deputies to increase the number of Beacon Grants to Lodges, which were \$1,000 each last year and \$2,000 this year.

I am a little disappointed, but also encouraged, by the figures posted on the ENF website. Last year, 650 Lodges received \$1,000 to host an Elks-driven event in their communities. So far this year, 466 have been approved, 114 need a follow-up, and three have been submitted and are awaiting action – a total of 583, if every Lodge follows through and completes the grant. The figures are somewhat disappointing, but also ahead of last year.

If you are waiting for warmer weather to host the event, get your grant started. The deadline to apply is March 31, 2014. If you have questions, call ENF and ask. This hard-working group has ideas for successful projects and is more than willing to assist you. Ask your community leaders what would most benefit a large number of people. Ask your schools and if a project to help children during the summer months is in order.

There are many ways to help and many areas for Elks to show that "*Elks Live – Elks Give.*" There are sports and reading programs for underprivileged children and support and activities for homeless veterans. There are meals for families in need and weekend backpacks of food for local students. The ideas are boundless.

Every Lodge could use this \$2,000 grant to highlight your Lodge and its good work in the community.

Some areas of our country need more help than others, and you can be instrumental in getting your local ball rolling. When community members see Elks' enthusiasm and dedication, they'll want to pitch in and help your Lodge make an even bigger impact.

Get your committee together and call on your mayor, council, church leaders or schools. Enlist those you are helping in your project. When they see the work we do, maybe they will want to be a part of our group. A membership increase is an added bonus.

The main thing is – get started. Find a need, make a plan, apply and fulfill that need. Show your little corner of the world what the Elks are all about. Show them how we solve problems and take care of our own. Show them that we care about our communities and we share unselfishly our talents and time. Get your Beacon Grant and give your friends and neighbors something to talk about. Let's get that increase in grants over last year and help our communities in the process. Applications are online now and available through the ENF website and CLMS2Web (for Lodge Secretaries). The March 31 deadline is just around the corner. Apply for your Beacon Grant today.

Charity From Page 1

all the charitable work is essential to maintaining our status as a non-profit, tax-exempt, private organization. I have personally used the Government Relations charitable statistics to defend New Jersey Lodges appearing before: the State Alcohol Beverage Control Commission to mitigate fines and penalties; the State Games of Chance Commission to show proper use of raffle funds; and county boards and local tax assessors to obtain or maintain real property tax exemptions. The statistics are also invaluable in applying for corporate or foundational grants,

donations and sponsorships, as well as in making elected officials aware of just how much charitable work Elks do.

So with the year-end near, we need your help. Have you and your Members diligently kept a record since April of time spent, miles traveled, funds expended and donations made attending meetings of charitable committees; or to prepare for, run or attend charitable events; to help a special-needs child; to run a youth activity; to support our troops and veterans; to obtain scholarships for deserving students; to assist those less fortunate or to help your community?

If you have kept such records, that's great. Please make sure you turn that information in to your Lodge Secretary

before March 31 for including in the Lodge Annual Report. If not, it's not too late to go back month by month to list all charitable events and activities you were involved in and report to your Lodge Secretary your time, miles, expenditures and contributions.

It's important work, so we ask all District Deputies, State, Regional and District Government Relations Chairs to ensure your Lodges are fully reporting their charitable time and efforts. With your help we will have another banner year, proving "*Elks Care – Elks Share*" more than any other private organization in the nation. Committee members are here to help you in any way needed.

GRAND LODGE FRATERNAL COMMITTEE

Membership – The website & social media

By **ASHLEY BUCKWELL**
Committee Member

How does your Lodge keep its Members updated on Lodge activities and club functions? Many Lodges are now turning to Lodge websites, e-mail and social media such as Facebook and Twitter to spread the word. With membership declining, a big challenge to Lodges is not just securing new members, but retaining them. Keeping Members informed so that they feel remembered and a part of the Lodge, and not just a number, is vital in this effort.

While most Lodge newsletters are published monthly or bi-monthly, the Internet allows Lodges to provide news to Members as it happens. We all have a tendency to forget what we read in the newsletter we received last month, however a weekly email update of meetings, Lodge functions, and other important material such as obituaries, changes to published events etc. will encourage a Member to be more involved and connected.

The Lodge website is also where Members can go for contact information on Lodge committees and club hours, etc. Pictures and articles on the website or on Facebook can also allow those who cannot travel to the Lodge, to stay in touch with friends.

While the Fraternal Committee encourages all Lodges to communicate with Members using today's media, it also reminds Lodges that the information you put on the Web that is not password-protected, is available to anyone. Lodges are advised not to post Members' addresses and phone numbers, confidential information regarding Lodge finances and meeting minutes. Also, do not post pictures showing Members with drinks in their hands. Instead, post pictures that show the charitable, youth and veteran activities of the Lodge.

A website and social media are tools every Lodge should use to attract membership and reduce lapsation.

Acquisition, utilization, retention

By **KEVIN L. BROUSE**
Committee Member

Membership remains a key focal point of Elkdome. Our shrinking numbers remind us of our constant challenge to increase both membership and fundraising.

Membership can best be addressed by focusing on Acquisition, Utilization and Retention.

We look to *acquire* quality people, who possess the "donation gene." These people freely give their time and finances for causes they support. Our job continues to be to emphasize the good Elks do, and boost membership. Acquiring the right people should help sustain our Order's benevolent deeds, and hopefully promote our growth!

How we *utilize* our Members is the single most important key to retaining them. When we strive to keep our Members active, our workload becomes lighter and our accomplishments bring us closer together as a Lodge! How well we utilize our Members, in addition to how well we publicize what we do, can make membership growth self-fulfilling.

With positive media coverage, many Members take pride in being recognized for the positive impact they have on their communities. Non-members who read about our Local Lodges being great community assets, are more easily recruited to join our ranks. After all, who doesn't want to be involved in an organization that is viewed positively within the community?

Retention of Members can best be achieved by creating an environment that makes the Lodge a destination, not an obligation. Keep the Lodge positive and filled with events that meet both our obligations as Elks and those that create fellowship and bonding among Members.

Finally, let's not overlook the resources available to your membership committee, nor the importance of having a strong committee chair. I recommend the Grand Lodge Membership Program and Planning Manual, which can be downloaded at <http://www.elks.org/grandlodge/manuals/default.cfm?>, and the Second Step Program, which is accessible from the California Hawaii website, <http://www.chca-elks.org/>. Click on membership for some great additional resources.

150th convention set for 146-year-old Order of Elks

Elks Lodges, Members and authorized vendors are reminded that New Orleans will be the site of the 150th Grand Lodge Session in July 2014, which is the 146th year of the Order of Elks' existence.

The Order has had more sessions than birthdays because more than one session had been held in several early years of Elkdome.

"We need to clarify to the Members and our licensed vendors that the New Orleans Convention is *not* the 150th anniversary of the Order," Grand Lodge Convention Director Tina Haran said. "Apparently, Members are requesting this be printed on T-shirts and other items to be sold at the New Orleans Convention."

The 150th anniversary of the Order will be February 16, 2018.

Test of time Lodges celebrate 100 years of Elkdome

Here are the Lodges celebrating their 100-year anniversaries during 2014-15 in service to humanity, our nation and our Order's noble principles:

<u>Lodge Name</u>	<u>Instituted</u>
Cohoes-Waterford, NY No. 1317	9/22/1914
Rock Hill, SC Lodge No. 1318	3/19/1915
Lamar, CO Lodge No. 1319	5/24/1915
Miami, OK Lodge No. 1320	6/3/1915
Union, SC Lodge No. 1321	6/4/1915
Niles, MI Lodge No. 3122	6/24/1915
Patchogue, NY Lodge No. 1323	6/25/1915
Glendive, MT Lodge No. 1324	6/25/1915

Veterans From Page 4

make contact with the veterans.

2. The state chairperson will divide the list among the Lodges in close proximity to the facility and forward the names to the appropriate district chairperson.

3. The district chairman will determine how many Veterans each Lodge wishes to adopt and provide the Lodge with their names.

In addition to visits and greeting cards, gifts of personal-care items, reading material, games and similar items should be considered. Luncheons and dinners at a restaurant or the Lodge are highly recommended.

Now is the time to make a difference. Get active in your Lodge program or help your Lodge start an Adopt-A-Veteran program if it doesn't already have one.

Adopt-A-Vet: Now is the time to make a difference

By **ROBERT M. HENNINGS**
Commission Director

In 1983 the Elks National Veterans Service Commission implemented the Adopt-A-Veteran Program. With more than 30,000 Veterans adopted last year, the Adopt-A-Veteran program has become one of our most popular programs. Every Lodge should participate in the program. The question often arises, which Veterans are adoptable?

1. Veterans in State or Federal Veterans hospitals.

2. Veterans in assisted care facilities, nursing homes, convalescent homes, retirement and senior living centers.

3. Any Veteran with limited, or no family contact who is lonely or shut in.

4. Veterans in homeless shelters. More than one Lodge can adopt Veterans. Feel free to adopt from afar. How does the program work?



**ELKS NATIONAL VETERANS
SERVICE COMMISSION**

The VAVS Representative at a state facility secures the names of veterans without family or friends nearby from the hospital or facility and forwards the list to the state National

Veterans Service Chairman. Nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and some senior facilities have activities or

social directors who can give you a list of Veterans who reside there. It is often helpful to contact local churches, Veteran groups, the American Legion, VFW posts or even your Lodge Secretary to get a list of Veterans nearby who are lonely and unable to get around on their own.

IMPORTANT: Due to privacy laws it is highly recommended that written permission is granted by the Veteran, stating that he or she would like to receive cards, invitations, and visits. Under no circumstances are the names and birthdates of Veterans to be published in Lodge bulletins or websites. This information must be held in confidence and only given to those who will actually

Please see **VETERANS** Page 3

BRYAN R. KLATT, Grand Secretary

Benevolent and Protective
ORDER OF ELKS

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February 2014

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ENF donation deadline for 2013-2014 is March 31

Help the ENF help you build stronger communities. Donate to the ENF before the end of the 2013-14 fiscal year, and your donation will not only help youth, veterans and Elks communities, it will also count toward your Lodge's 2013-14 per-member-giving goal. Donations mailed to the ENF, 2750 N. Lakeview Ave., Chicago, IL, 60614, must be in the ENF office by Monday, March 31, 2014. You can also donate online until 11:59 p.m. Central



**ELKS
NATIONAL
FOUNDATION**

Time on March 31 by visiting enf.elks.org/donate.

Claim your Lodge's Gratitude

Grant – Has your Lodge met the GER's \$4.60 per-Member-giving goal? The ENF wants to thank you with a \$2,000 Gratitude Grant. Your Lodge can use its Gratitude Grant, part of the ENF's Community Investments Program, to serve community members in need. Visit www.elks.org/enf/community for information on how to apply for the Gratitude Grant and other CIP grants.

News to Use – Show Members how the ENF is helping you build stronger communities. Visit the News to Use section of the ENF website to find articles to include in your Lodge newsletter and speaking points to share at Lodge meetings. Check out www.elks.org/enf/mediabrochures/newsletter.cfm each month for updated information.

