



Grand Lodge NEWSLETTER

Elks Care – Elks Share



Community awareness is theme for 2017-18

As I begin my journey this year, I want to extend my sincerest gratitude to you, the Elks community, for trusting in me to serve as your next Grand Exalted Ruler. I could not have achieved this honor without the unwavering support and guidance of many of my fellow Elks, family and friends.

My theme for the 2017-18 fraternal year is *"Strengthening Elksdom Through Community Awareness."* By definition, community is "a feeling of fellowship with others, as a result of sharing common attitudes, interests and goals."

Elks are community, and it is my hope for the coming year that by working together with the Elks National Foundation and through our more than 775,000 Members and nearly 2,000 Lodges nationwide, we can build both



Message from the Grand Exalted Ruler

MALCOLM J.
McPHERSON JR.

stronger communities and stronger Elks.

With the Elks mission of supporting veterans, aiding special and underprivileged children, and promoting the growth of our youth through scholarship, Drug Awareness and sports programs, we will ultimately build a bond with each other while making our local communities a better place to live.

For 2017-18, one of my goals is to increase membership. As we begin celebrating our

150th year of Elksdom, I ask that you promote the great work of Elksdom to your communities. To exist for 150 years, the Elks are doing great work. We must continue to inform our communities of our great works to increase membership and continue to strengthen our programs.

I challenge you to identify the specific ways in which you can foster the Elks values of charity, justice, brotherly love and fidelity in the places you live and work.

Pat and I are looking forward to meeting many of you in your Local Lodges and communities throughout our travels this year. Until then, I leave you with the old Irish Blessing: *"May the road rise to meet you; may the wind be always at your back; may the sun shine warm upon your face..."*

And may the hand of an Elk always be near.

Membership loss smallest in 31 years

Final membership figures for 2016-17 show a total of 775,092 for a loss of 5,955 (-0.8 percent) from 2015-16, the smallest loss in more than 31 years. With more attention to membership, the Order can show a gain in the next couple of years.

Totals from the Annual Charity

GRAND SECRETARY

Bryan R. Klatt

Reports show the Order donated \$334,292,982 in time, mileage and in-kind gifts. This

dollar amount would have been greater but 33 Lodges did not file a charity report. Again, this year, with everyone's help, we will strive to reach that elusive 100 percent reported.

The Reno Grand Lodge Convention has come and gone. Thanks to the Nevada Host Committee, the volunteers and Past Grand Exalted Ruler Louis J. Grillo for providing the manpower for another successful convention. Now, it is onward to San Antonio, Texas, for celebrating our 150th year and the 2018 convention.

GRAND LODGE FRATERNAL COMMITTEE

2017-18 award forms now at Elks.org

By JAMES R. ARNOLD
Committee Member

Now that August is here, and the kids and grandchildren are contemplating heading back to school, we Members of the Elks are contemplating our own fall activities.

One of those activities should be to become more familiar with the Grand Lodge and its website, Elks.org, an exercise that can be well worth your time. You can find information and ideas that can be of tremendous benefit to every Elk.

A wealth of information available on this website. Grand Lodge wants all Members to enjoy having easy access to past, current and future information at Elks.org.

All State Associations and Local Lodges should also have a website and/or Facebook page that provides Members the same ease of access to information. Keep your Members informed, connected and engaged so they have an opportunity to

learn and participate in what is happening in your Lodges, districts and states.

The Grand Lodge Fraternal Committee administers numerous programs of the Grand Lodge, and awards are given for: All-American Lodge – Contest "A"; Americanism Essay Contest – Divisions 1 and 2; State Association Bulletin – Contest "I"; State Association Website Award; Local Lodge Website Award; and State Association Major Project Display Award.

States and Lodges can find information

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Don't forget to file your 990 and 990T forms

By PHILLIP B. JOHNSON
Committee Member

At a Government Relations Committee seminar in Chicago in October, Thomas M. Zisa of the Grand Lodge Committee on Judiciary discussed Unrelated Business Income Tax (aka UBIT, UBI and UBTI), a topic on which all Elks Members should be trained.

I am neither a tax attorney nor a certified public accountant and, therefore, not giving legal tax advice. My objective here – based on points that Zisa raised in his discussion – is to make Members understand why the need to follow the rules of the Order, with which they might not necessarily agree.

The Lodge Secretary, Treasurer, Audit Committee Chairperson and Trustees

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS COMMITTEE

would be well advised to meet with a CPA or tax attorney who deals with UBI taxes. They also should understand the Grand Lodge Auditing and Accounting Manual before filling out the Lodges' taxes, so that they have a better understanding of UBI.

During audits, the IRS has been looking at UBI income in order to take away our tax status. Depending on the IRS agents, they may contend we have more UBI than what IRS guidelines allow, causing them to take away your tax exemption.

Things that can be classed as UBI are: sales of goods or services to non-members (guests at our Lodges); therefore, only take payment from the Member. Bingo

income can be classed as UBI if we don't follow local and state laws, and also renting Lodge property when we also provide food and/or beverages. If your Lodge is renting the hall and providing food and/or beverages or other services you need to have two separate contracts.

Other publications that can help answer your questions on UBI are IRS Publications 598 and 3386, Public Accommodations Guidelines and Section 13.140 of the Grand Lodge Statutes.

Don't forget to file your federal income tax forms 990 and 990T. The deadline is Aug. 15.

For Zisa's UBIT Power Point presentation, contact your Area Member of the Grand Lodge Government Relations Committee.

Assistance available for worthy, needy Members

Needy Elks Members can qualify for up to \$1,000 in an emergency 50-50 matching grant from the Order under Section 5.070 of the Grand Lodge Statutes.

The assistance would be available to "worthy and needy Members of the Order who are suffering from diseases of an incurable character or from total disability, and who are without funds or property or relatives able or willing to care for them," the Statute states.

The Statute also provides that the Lodge of the assisted Member "shall contribute toward the relief of the Member an amount not less than one-half of the sum that is contributed by the Order."

The assistance program is administered by the Board of Grand Trustees, which is authorized to appropriate up to \$10,000 annually for the program. The board by resolution may give the Grand Exalted Ruler up to \$1,000 so that authorized payments may be made regularly by him.

"The monies so appropriated shall be administered by the Grand Exalted Ruler with the consent of a majority of the Board of Grand Trustees," the Statute states.

History of the Elks, Vol. 2, available at HQ

The History of the Order of Elks, Volume 2, 1988-2008, is on sale at the Elks National Headquarters in Chicago.

The book is written by Past Grand Exalted Ruler Ted Callicott.

In addition, the History of the Order of Elks, Volume 1, 1868-1988, is back in stock and available at the National Headquarters.

Local Lodges may place orders for either book through their Exalted Ruler, Lodge Secretary or Chairperson of the Lodge Trustees. Orders for State Associations must be approved by and billed to the State Secretary.

Local Lodge Members may order

through any of the Lodge Officials listed above to obtain a copy.

Order the books by the assigned code number – 511300 for History of the Order, Volume 1, \$25 each; or 511301 for History of the Order, Volume 2, also \$25.

Place orders at <http://www.elks.org/shopping/GrandLodge/AllProducts.cfm> (Secretaries only) or by calling 773-755-4710, e-mailing shipping@elks.org, faxing at 773-755-4711 or mailing Attn: Shipping Department, BPOE, 2750 N. Lakeview Avenue, Chicago, IL 60614-1889.

Prayer book set a must-have for Elks Lodge Chaplains

Elks Lodge Chaplains on stand-by to say a prayer, can reach for their "Lifeline" – Past Grand Chaplain Kevin Cassidy's two-volume prayer book set.

The set includes Cassidy's first edition of Elks Chaplain Prayers and More Elks Chaplain Prayers (or New

and Improved Volume II).

The books can be bought as a set for \$16 or singly for \$8, which includes shipping.

Send checks made out to PGER James C. Varenhorst, PO Box 141096, Grand Rapids, MI 49514-1096.

Awards From Page 1

regarding these programs and contests by signing into elks.org and select Grand Lodge, then select Grand Lodge Committees. Once there, select Fraternal Committee and you will then select Program Info & Downloads. The files have already been updated for 2017-18.

In addition, Fraternal Committee Members also distribute to our Lodges, GER "Outstanding Service Commendations" as chosen by your Lodge Exalted Ruler or designate and "Making a Difference Special Citations" for ER's and Lodges who have participated in six of the programs listed on the Fraternal Committee website.

The committee was not pleased this past year by the poor showing of Lodges that failed to request award certificates for their Members who performed outstanding service to their Lodge.

Exalted Rulers, don't forget this Lodge year to thank your Members and to award those outstanding Members who make a difference in your Lodge and community.

Remember ... "*Elks Care – Elks Share*"!

Veterans From Page 4

Even if you're not a hunter, you can still help this program! Any VA Voluntary Service Representative can order gloves for veterans at no cost, or finished leather to be used for therapy. Any Lodge Veterans Chair can order free craft kits for veterans in non-VA facilities.

Visit elks.org/vets for leather program instructions, to order flyers and brochures to help spread the word and to get more information about all our programs.

New comic book 'What Heroes Do' now available!

By **FRANK SCARPINO**
Special Contributor

In the past, the Elks Drug Awareness program comic books used fictional "Superheroes." The program's newest comic book – "What Heroes Do" – features actual everyday heroes and kids who become special because of their decisions to stay drug free and be the best they can be.

This comic teaches kids to deal with emergency situations, in which they have to use skills, for example, to save the life of a friend.

The Elks are committed to giving factual information about the use of illegal drugs and the abuse of legalized drugs. We have developed many educational and fun tools to teach kids to be a good friend and citizen.

We want kids to realize that there are

DRUG AWARENESS PROGRAM

many ways to be a hero, and that they do not have to wait until they are an adult to be one. Kids can be a special hero right now by doing what they know is right and having the courage to say NO to the things they know are wrong.

All Local Lodges and districts should know that, to place an order for a school or special events, the proper form must be completed.

Remember, Drug Awareness comic books cannot be used to hand out at parades, festivals or like events. If you or a Lodge is asking for comic books for a special event, please make sure you provide as much detail as possible of the event on the form.

The printed version of the "What Heroes Do" comic book is available for

classroom use. To order a "What Heroes Do" comic book kit, please contact your State Drug Awareness Chairperson for the order form. Contact information is posted at <http://www.elks.org/dap/contact.cfm>.

Note that both a school official and your State Drug Awareness Chairperson must sign the form before the comic books can be shipped to a school.

The online version of "What Heroes Do" is posted at <http://elkskidszone.org/what-heroes-do/>.

Also, be sure to check out Elks Kids Zone at elkskidszone.org and/or elks.org dap.



GRAND LODGE ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

Elks to the rescue, help kids gain a foothold in soccer

Disaster Relief Committee: Meeting the challenge

By **MANUEL C. RODRIGUEZ**
Committee Member

Should a natural disaster hit your area, is your Lodge ready to assist those in need?

Does your Lodge have an active Disaster Relief Committee in place? In the nation's Midwest, South, Southeast and East Coast, these unforeseen acts of nature can hit when least expected, and we need to be ready to assist the victims.

Do you know of the Grand Lodge Disaster Relief Program?

While charitable organizations such as the Red Cross, United Way and Salvation Army provide immediate assistance to disaster victims, the Elks have to be ready to deal with the after effects. By joining forces with these first responders the Elks will be better able to perform whatever needs to be done to aid victims. This is where the Elks can show that "Elks care" about what happens in their community.

Along with winter's beauty comes weather-related catastrophes, and the Lodge's Disaster Relief Committee should be able to cope with these uncontrollable incidents. When massive snow storms occur, this is when your Lodge Disaster Relief Committee should respond.

Now is an opportune time to get in touch with the first responders in your community to see how the Elks can be of service. To obtain items such as clothing, first aid kits and water, a telephone committee could work together to start a collection.

Let's step up and show that the Elks care about what happens in our communities. By getting involved we can bridge the gap between our Lodges and our communities.

Soccer Shoot easy to start and is inexpensive

By **STEVEN A. DAVIS**
Committee Chairman

It's happened! My youngest child has graduated from high school.

As he prepared himself this summer for the next chapter in life, he took up recreational slow pitch softball. I've spent a good share of my evenings of late watching him play.

Between innings, and sometimes even during mid-pitch, I caught myself glancing over to the nearby soccer field. I couldn't help but notice the excitement and youthful

exuberance of the players. The mere glimpse of those kids kicking the ball around brought back such fond memories.

Since elementary school my son played soccer, which truly helped shape him into the man he is today.

Soccer, the world's most popular sport, is quickly becoming so in the United States. Times are certainly changing and so are the sporting opportunities for youth nationwide. The nature of soccer, the numbers involved and how it is played, present a great opportunity for youth participation.

The momentum of soccer as a

youth participatory sport is nothing short of amazing, and the Elks organization has a great program to accommodate that interest.

At the core of the Elks Soccer Shoot Program, as well as all Elks Youth Activities, is the importance of providing fun filled, productive, character-building activities for

our youth. It doesn't take long before one truly appreciates the impact these programs have on these youngsters.

Just sit back and watch the smiles and laughter of the kids participating in the next program your Lodge sponsors.

The Elks Soccer Shoot Task Force recently

updated the Elks Soccer Shoot Program Manual. The primary goal was to gain consistency in how the rules and regulations are administered for Lodge, district, state and area/regional contests.

If your Lodge doesn't currently participate in the Elks Soccer Shoot, I encourage you to get started. The program is easy to implement at very little expense.

For information, refer to the Elks Soccer Shoot Program Manual (revised January 2017) at <http://www.elks.org/grandlodge/activities/manuals.cfm>.

Elks and soccer...it's a kick!

The momentum of soccer as a youth participatory sport is nothing short of amazing

Veterans Leather Program, a time-honored Elks tradition

By **MARY K. MORGAN**
Commission Director

This July, we officially kick off the 150th anniversary celebration of the Elks, which makes it a perfect time to reflect on the Order's long history of veterans service. Nearly since the Elks began, their passion for supporting and serving veterans has been a guiding force.

The Elks National Veterans Service Commission was formally established in 1946. Also started that year was the Veterans Leather Program, making it our most long-standing program.

Through the Veterans Leather Program, hunters can donate hides to Local Lodges.



These hides are then tanned and the finished leather serves veterans in three different ways.

Some is used for recreational and occupational therapy throughout the Veterans Administration Health Care System by our VA Voluntary Service Representatives.

Some is turned into craft kits for veterans in rehabilitation.

And some is used to make fingerless gloves, a popular item for veterans in wheelchairs. These gloves protect veterans' hands and help them gain traction on their wheels.

The success of this program depends on

volunteers across the country. And those volunteers came through again this year!

In 2016-17, volunteers from 27 states donated 17,763 hides. Like in years past, Missouri, Iowa and Arkansas again battled it out and came in first, second and third, respectively, in terms of hides donated.

These donations allowed us to distribute 2,885 pairs of gloves, hand out 2,456 craft kits and donate more than 8,700 square feet of crafting leather to hospitals and clinics. Together with the leather donated to make craft kits, the total value of leather program donated last year was \$429,305.

Please see **VETERANS**, Page 2

BRYAN R. KLATT, Grand Secretary
**Benevolent and Protective
ORDER OF ELKS**

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Tips to recruiting new Members, improving Lodge PR

Members initiating or reinstating three Members into the Order will receive the prestigious GER pin award.

Members initiating or reinstating 11 or more Members will receive an Elks watch. (Sizes available for both men and women.)

To encourage your recruiters, award them with a Thank You! poster that includes their photo.

You also could:

■ Hand out Thank You! tickets each time a recruiter brings in a new Member. Each ticket offers the chance

for a monthly drawing for something as simple as a \$25 gift card.

■ List your recruiters in your Lodge newsletter/website and social media page, and thank them.

■ Create a recruiter of the month parking space (or two) at your Lodge.

■ Create a special recognition program for great recruiters – because without new Members we can't survive!

– Rick Gathen, Grand Lodge
Membership/Public Relations Manager

**MEMBERSHIP
AND
PUBLIC
RELATIONS**

HERE ARE TIPS ON IMPROVING
your Lodge public relations effort:

■ All community events should include a strong public relations and membership presence.

■ Set up a table with handouts.

■ Think of an airplane. Public relations and membership are wings that allow the plane to take flight.

■ Earn a good reputation as a premier charitable organization in your community.

■ Provide a family- and member-friendly environment.

**"STRENGTHENING ELKDOM
THROUGH
COMMUNITY AWARENESS"**



1-Tank
is all it takes!

Visit Local Elks Lodges.



Blood Drives

Save Lives!