



Grand Lodge NEWSLETTER

Elks Care – Elks Share



Oh, the places Elks will go over 150 more years

What an extraordinary year it has been! It's hard to believe that my tenure as your Grand Exalted Ruler is coming to an end. Pat and I are extremely humbled and grateful for this experience that allowed us to not only travel the United States, but to meet all of the men and women of the Order and witness the positive work you are doing.

As you know, my theme of the past year was "Strengthening Elkdom Through Community Awareness," and you have far exceeded my expectations. I'm so proud to say that Elks are thriving in every corner of our country. Each and every Lodge we visited is making a tangible difference in their communities in many valuable ways: unique initiatives to support our youth and those with special needs, numerous scholarship awards, and generous donations to our veterans. It was inspiring to see many Lodges use



Message from the Grand Exalted Ruler

MALCOLM J. McPHERSON JR.

their 150th Anniversary Grants to further their local causes and respond to unexpected tragedies, such as helping the victims of the devastating hurricanes last summer.

I look forward to seeing many of you again this month in San Antonio for my final stop on this adventure, to celebrate your extraordinary accomplishments over the past year and the 150th birthday of our Order. You have so much to be proud of and I can't wait to raise

a glass in your honor.

While I may be closing this chapter of my journey, our journey together as Elks is just beginning. There is much more we can accomplish and give back to our communities as we head into the next 150 years. I encourage you to keep striving for success. As Dr. Seuss wrote in his famous children's book *Oh, The Places You'll Go!*, "You're off to Great Places! Today is your day! Your mountain is waiting, So... get on your way!" I truly believe the Elks are on the road to great places, and it is you, our outstanding Members, who will lead us there.

Pat and I are overwhelmed by your generosity, hospitality, and enthusiasm in welcoming us into your lives and Lodges and will forever cherish the lasting memories we have made. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts. We'll see you out there again soon.

Online Membership Application

Has your Lodge promoted the online Membership application for signing up new Members? Through elks.org, a current paid-up Member of the Order can forward a membership invitation to family members and friends. Invitees can complete the application and submit their membership application online.

Lodge Secretaries will be notified of these applications via the "Alerts" screen of CLMS2. They then can process the electronic version the same as a paper application. All data provided by the applicant will be imported into the Lodge's CLMS2 database with the simple click of a button. What better way to gain a Member than by using technology to its fullest?

GRAND SECRETARY
Bryan R. Klatt

GRAND LODGE FRATERNAL COMMITTEE

All American Lodge winners named

By **RICHARD C. CONWAY**
Committee Member

Winners have been announced for the All American Lodge—Contest "A", which recognizes Lodges that have best administered Elks Programs throughout 2017-18. The contest had 165 entries.

The Exalted Rulers of first-place Lodges should pick-up their awards at the start of the Grand Lodge session at the convention in San Antonio. Second- and third-place winners' certificates will be on display and available for pick-up at the Fraternal Committee booth.

Division I (300 Members or fewer)

- 1st Place:** Raceway, AZ No. 2852
- 2nd Place:** Cedar Grove, NJ No. 2237
- 3rd Place:** East Stroudsburg, PA No. 319

Division II (301-500 Members)

- 1st Place:** Lake Hopatcong, NJ No. 782
- 2nd Place:** Walnut Creek, CA No. 1811
- 3rd Place:** Ferndale, MI No. 1588

Division III (501-700 Members)

- 1st Place:** Columbia, MO No. 594
- 2nd Place:** Calabash, NC No. 2679
- 3rd Place:** Manahawkin, NJ No. 2340

Division IV (701-1100 Members)

- 1st Place:** Phoenix, AZ No. 335
- 2nd Place:** Osage Community, MO No. 2705
- 3rd Place (tie):** Merced, CA No. 1240, and Mountain Home, AR No. 1714

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GRAND LODGE GOVERNMENT RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Milestone is time to reflect, celebrate, prepare

By **THOMAS J. WIDZINSKI**
Committee Member

150 years! Think about it. The number is astonishing. As we each reflect on these 150 years, we need to look back on how we have changed the lives of people in our communities. My thoughts immediately turn to the clock on the wall of my Lodge where the hour of eleven will forever remain. I envision the many people who have helped make our Lodge a better place. A caring place known for “Charity, Justice, Brotherly Love, and Fidelity” in our community. I am proud to call myself an Elk and even prouder to have been a part of its past.

150 years! Think about it. There is much to celebrate! How many scholarships have been given out over the years? How many youth participants have attended our various contests? How many families have had a better Christmas because of our help? The list is endless. At our annual Grand Lodge

Convention in San Antonio, we will not only review our many accomplishments of this last year, but also the achievements of the previous 149 years. Our celebrations will honor the memories of all those who have come before us and have given their time and talents. Above all, we celebrate who we are today and the many things we continue to achieve.

150 years! Think about it. Can we keep going the way that we have in the past? In some ways, yes, but as the times change so must we. Membership has become more important today than at any time in our existence. Remember the names of the past and honor their memory as we welcome new Members into our fold. Our story must continue to live on, and your experience is needed to guide the success of the future.

In other ways, we can’t merely go about our business the way we have done for many years. Record keeping and documentation must be a vital part of everything that we

do. Our very existence as a non-profit organization depends on it. Record keeping and documentation must become a way of life. We must become diligent in our relationship with the government and officials in our communities, our state, and our nation. The use of our record keeping statistics will verify and document the many ways we make an impact. We can no longer remain to be the best kept secret in our communities.

As the new Lodge year unfolds, let us all seriously renew our pledge to make this year the best that our Lodges have ever seen. Complacency can no longer be a part of our routine. We must retrain our daily actions as we look to the future. Our Order depends on each and every one of us to do so.

Reflect on our past achievements! Celebrate the accomplishments of today! Prepare for the future!

Stand proud as an Elk. We have much to be grateful for.

DRUG AWARENESS PROGRAM

Fentanyl discussion can be life-saving

By **FRANK SCARPINO**
Special Contributor

Fentanyl—a popular mood-modifying, recreational opioid that can be taken on its own or laced into other drugs—has gained a reputation as the Grim Reaper of illicit drugs. The number of deaths and near deaths originating with fentanyl use is shocking.

Parents must initiate a serious discussion with their children and teens about fentanyl and other drug use. In this case, talk is the primary preventive.

Many parents avoid a direct discussion with their kids about drug use because they feel that they have a limited knowledge base and anticipate that they will not be taken seriously. Unfortunately, children tend to have a superficial knowledge of drugs. They are often encouraged to experiment by their friends, classmates, and older acquaintances. If they feel insecure about their social status or lack self-confidence, they will be more tempted to experiment with drugs when pressed by their peers. In short, joint fact-gathering should be discussed but the topic itself must be initiated by parents.

While there is nothing new to the idea that responsible parents should engage their young children and adolescents in a serious discussion regarding actual or potential drug use, the lethal quality of fentanyl makes that discussion a parenting must!

The relevant research on street drugs has clearly indicated that fentanyl has been found in party drugs, including ecstasy, cocaine,

and speed, as well as the more commonly used marijuana. Overdose deaths directly from fentanyl or laced into other drugs can and does happen to those just experimenting with drugs, including even first-time users. Scaring children and youth off of drugs with exaggerated messages has a poor record of effectiveness, so most researchers advise parents to avoid exaggeration and declarative instructions. Instead, they advise respectful and intelligent discussions with the young regarding the relative risks of different drugs and drug mixtures.

Since we have entered a period of more legally available use of marijuana, we must recognize that, while legal regulation is important, there will be consequences, possibly including a shift of “dealer” marketing to the promotion and sale of harder drugs sold at more congenial prices. The American College of Pediatricians reported last year that about 17 percent of those who use marijuana during adolescence and 25 to 50 percent of daily users acquire a dependency on the drug. Marijuana can also be a gateway to other less benign drug use. A recent study indicated that teenagers who regularly smoke pot are 26 times more likely to use other drugs by their 21st birthday.

Talk to your kids about drug use. Do so with respect and enhanced knowledge and encourage them to do some research on their own, thus making them invested in the conversation. Treat it as a teachable moment for both of you. It may save the life of one you dearly love.

ELKS NATIONAL FOUNDATION

Gone (Fly) Fishing

By **TAYLOR ODISHO**
ENF Communications Assistant

A day of fly fishing is a time to relax and clear the mind while letting go of stress and, for veterans experiencing post-traumatic stress disorder, the memories of war.

Members of Moscow, Idaho Lodge No. 249 have gone fishing using an Impact Grant that helps returning Iraq and Afghanistan war veterans with PTSD who attend nearby University of Idaho and Washington State University. Seven Elks set up fly fishing lessons, which the Lodge supplements with a high-quality rod, reel, and line for each of the 16 participating veterans.

The Lodge holds four weekly lessons on the essentials of fly fishing: fly casting, insect morphology, and stream reading. Fly fishing is considered by many enthusiasts to be more challenging than traditional fishing. Casting requires thought and technique, which benefits the bodies and minds of participants.

A dozen Lodge Members were happy to volunteer their time to help teach the veterans about the sport. “This project will give them a life-long hobby that they can relax with and enjoy with friends and family,” said Dr. George Paris, the project manager.

In 2009, researchers found that combat veterans who participated in a fly fishing study had significant reductions in stress and PTSD symptoms and improvements in their sleep quality after just one retreat.

The Lodge plans to gather feedback from participants and volunteers and eventually expand the program from 16 to 24 veterans.

GRAND LODGE ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

Be loud to raise Elks awareness

By **TERRY R. LIERSAPH**
Public Safety Medals of Valor & Service
and Assistant Scouting Coordinator

Congratulations to all of our new Exalted Rulers! You are embarking on a very exciting and memorable year of your life.

As Elks, we are guilty of keeping our Order a well-kept secret. It is time for your Lodge to make your Members and your community aware of what an Elks Lodge truly is. This is where your Grand Lodge Activities Committee comes in to lend a helping hand.

By accessing the Grand Lodge web site at elks.org and clicking on the recently updated Activities Committee site, you can find many tools and suggestions to help you achieve greater Lodge recognition. Information about the Medal of Valor and Medal of Service are available. The Medal of Valor is presented to the family of a deceased police officer, EMS, or firefighter who has fallen in the line of duty, and the Medal of Service can be awarded to active public servants who have gone above and beyond the call of duty. This is a perfect opportunity to show your respect and gratitude. Certificates that can be personalized, downloaded, and printed

are available on the Activities Committee web site.

Information on other programs that can help with Lodge participation includes Youth Golf, the recently updated Antlers Program, Elks Student of the Month awards, Elks National Youth Week, the Dictionary Project available to third grade students in your local schools, Elks in Scouting, and the Community Project Contest.

The cost of these programs does not have to be a major concern. Help is available through the Elks National Foundation grants if criteria is met. The Beacon, Promise, Gratitude Grants, and this year's \$1,500 Anniversary Grant in commemoration of the 150th Anniversary of our great Order, are available to qualifying Lodges. The Impact Grant for projects up to \$10,000 is also available.

Let's be loud and proud. The Elks motto is "*Elks Care - Elks Share.*" Let's share our mission and let our communities and Members know how much we care.

New Exalted Rulers please take time to get involved in these worthwhile and meaningful projects. Congratulations again and best wishes on your journey this year.

Kids kick boredom with Soccer Shoot

By **PAUL A. GALARNEAU**
Soccer Shoot Coordinator

School is out for the summer, which means children are looking for activities to keep them busy. Now is the perfect time to conduct youth activities sponsored by your Lodge.

Remember, the youth of today are the leaders of tomorrow. We must provide opportunities that will enhance their future. There are many youth-related programs that the Grand Lodge Activities Committee suggests that you implement at your Lodge.

I suggest that your Lodge take part in the Soccer Shoot Program this summer or fall. Soccer is the fastest-growing sport in the country. Take a ride past your area playgrounds on any weekend and you will see a youth soccer game in progress.

The Soccer Shoot sponsored by your Lodge needs to be well-planned. Selecting a qualified chairperson for the contest is crucial to the program's success. Soccer Shoot is open to both boys and girls, and I am sure that many of your younger Members would relish the chance to help the program succeed.

The program is easy to conduct. The rules can be found on the Grand Lodge web site. In many areas of the country, the contest progresses from the Lodge level to the District level. All District winners will then compete either in a Regional contest or a State contest. The winner of the State Shoot will then compete in an Area Shoot.

Tracking the participation in the Soccer Shoot at every level is crucial. The results of each shoot must be properly reported in CLMS. We hope that someday we will be able to conduct a National Soccer Shoot, similar to the Hoop Shoot Program.

Any questions you may have regarding the Soccer Shoot can be presented to either your District Youth Activities Chairperson or your Soccer Shoot Chairperson. He or she will happily guide you through the process.

As summer continues, I hope all of you have a safe and healthy season, and that you keep making positive impacts on our communities and our youth.

Fraternal From Page 1

Division V (1101-1500 Members)

1st Place: Orange, CA No. 1475

2nd Place: Mission Viejo-Saddleback Valley, CA No. 2444

3rd Place: Oceano/Five Cities, CA No. 2504

Division VI (1501 Members or more)

1st Place: Sun City, AZ No. 2559

2nd Place: Lake Havasu City, AZ No. 2399

3rd Place: Santa Maria, CA No. 1538

Award recognizes JROTC students

By **THOMAS A. BIANCO**
Student/Teenager of the Month/Year Coordinator

The Grand Lodge Activities Committee is introducing a new program to recognize outstanding high school students enrolled in the Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps.

Our research shows that 943 high schools throughout the United States offer Junior ROTC classes. Any Lodge in the country that would like to adopt a school should sponsor a program and give a medal and certificate to an outstanding individual chosen by a Junior ROTC representative, much like we do with the Student of the Year Award.

Selection criteria should include the following leadership attributes: academic achievement, community service project work, and maintaining the highest standards of performance in all JROTC fields of endeavor.

The cost of such an award would be around \$10 for a certificate, medal, and display box. If an Elks JROTC award was given to a worthy cadet at each of the 943 participating high schools, the total cost would be approximately \$7,500. We envision that each sponsoring Lodge will cover the cost of the award.

We are asking for your support. Our children, community, and country are the cornerstones of Elkdom.

How we can be a part of the solution

By **JAMES S. MASON**
Disaster Relief Coordinator

Disaster Relief is a very important program that requires the attention of all Elks. The Grand Lodge has a special account with funds contributed by Lodges and individual Members for when a disaster occurs. If you are interested in supporting the program, please send your gift to your Lodge or to the Grand Secretary's office in Chicago. The program will succeed only through the help of all our Members.

Many Elks, or family and friends, have experienced some form of natural disaster. Unfortunately very few were prepared and needed to rely on assistance from charitable organizations, including the Elks.

Hopefully, each Lodge has contacted the leaders in their cities to see how the Members of the Lodge could help, should their participation be needed. Each Lodge should set up a committee to follow through when their area suffers from a natural disaster. This can require storing medical supplies, water, non-perishable food items, and bedding. Also, some Lodges may be able to offer temporary housing for people whose homes are red-flagged.

Thank you for considering how you and your Lodge can be a part of disaster relief.

Elks' veterans service dates back to World War I

By **JAMES L. NICHELSON**
Commission Member

The Elks' commitment to veterans is not quite 150 years old, but it will certainly endure for the next century and a half. In celebration of the Elks' 150 years of service, the Veterans Service Commission renews the pledge, "As long as there are veterans, the BPOE will never forget them."

The Elks' passion to serve veterans dates from the World War. The Elks started a War Relief Fund in 1917 to care for the sick and wounded on the battlefields of France, establishing the first two base hospitals on the front. In 1918 the Order constructed a 700-bed hospital in Boston and donated it to the federal government, thus establishing the first Veterans Medical Center. That hospital

is still in operation.

Between 1918 and 1924, the Elks made 40,000 rehabilitative, vocational, and educational loans to veterans with disabilities, inspiring the GI Bill. In 1948, the Elks Veterans Leather Program brought free wheelchair gloves and rehabilitation supplies to veterans. During the Korean War in 1951, the Elks partnered with the Secretary of Defense to collect over 500,000 pints of blood.

The Elks began its signature veterans program in 1955 by joining the Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service Executive Committee and bringing Elks volunteers to every veterans medical facility. In 1997, the Elks again partnered with the

VA to support adaptive sports events, which help recovering veterans and veterans with disabilities to stay healthy and active.

The ENVSC Freedom Grants Program began in 2011. This program offers 300 Freedom Grants to Lodges to more effectively serve veterans in their communities. Again in partnership with the VA, the Elks launched the Welcome Home Program in 2016 to combat veteran homelessness.

This is the briefest of what is a very storied history of Elks' service to veterans. There is much more, all of it inspiring pride and renewed commitment. We celebrate 150 years of Elksdom and we celebrate many years of veterans service.



BRYAN R. KLATT, Grand Secretary
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ELKS NATIONAL FOUNDATION

Lodges boost communities with Anniversary Grants

By **TAYLOR ODISHO**
ENF Communications Assistant

The Elks National Foundation, wanting to offer something special to celebrate the Elks' 150th Anniversary, introduced the Anniversary Grant, a \$1,500 grant to use for charitable purposes. More than 1,500 Lodges received the Anniversary Grant—that's 82 percent of the Lodges!

Wallace, ID Lodge No. 331, used the grant to create individualized care packages

based on a wish list from veterans at a rehab center. These veterans asked for common items many people take for granted such as socks and gloves.

State College, PA Lodge No. 1600 used the Anniversary Grant to host a 1950s "Sock Hop" in October, which is also Domestic Violence Awareness month. Attendees assembled 150 care kits for the Center County Women's Resource Center.

Bend, OR Lodge No. 1371 donated the entire grant, plus \$1,500 of its own funds, to

the St. Vincent de Paul society, a community charity group. York, PA Lodge No. 213 used the grant to buy office equipment for the Children's Home of York Transition Home for young men. Weslaco, TX Lodge No. 2057 put its grant toward the Aurora House Hospice, a facility that provides residential compassionate end of life care.

Anniversary Grants will return in 2018-19, and all Lodges are eligible to apply again. Find more information about the grant online by visiting enf.elks.org/AnniversaryGrant.

Happy Independence Day