



Grand Lodge NEWSLETTER

Elks Care – Elks Share



June: Our flag, our loyalty, and our veterans

Honoring the flag of our country on a day of national recognition for our flag is one of the proudest things we can do as Elks. After all, Flag Day was first introduced by the Elks.

You should be honored to put on the Flag Day ceremony. Talk to your city if they have a memorial that can be performed in conjunction with the Legion or VFW. My Lodge has performed it at a Veterans Hospital. Perform the ceremony in a place where many will see it and be educated by it. As you can see by my pin, the flag of the greatest country on earth is something that Stacey and I cherish deeply. I hope you will feel the same sense of pride this Flag Day.



Message from the Grand Exalted Ruler

PAUL R. RYAN

That being said, you should also honor fathers this month. I know that my father has taught me a great plenty in life and I am so proud to call him dad.

My father-in-law has also been a great influence on me. My wife may have been the one that got me into the Elks, but he was the one who set me on my path

and mentored me to where I am today. I am proud of them both and I am so glad that they have both been an influence to me.

Make sure to come to Tampa and partake in all of the great convention seminars and meetings. There is so much to do and so much to learn. You will also have a chance to meet other great Elks throughout the nation and gain new ideas and develop new connections. Don't just rush out and join your own state in their hospitality room—go get introduced to others.

Stacey and I look forward to seeing you soon in Tampa. Remember to *Create Momentum for the Future of Elkdom!*

Lodge bulletins: USPS vs. E-mail

The Grand Secretary's Office has seen an increase in inquiries about e-mailing the Lodge bulletin to save the Lodge money. Per the following Statute and Opinions, yes, a Lodge can e-mail the bulletin to a Member. Consequently, a Lodge cannot mandate all Members will receive the bulletin electronically if a Member requests a paper copy via regular mail:

GRAND SECRETARY
Bryan R. Klatt

Section 1.115: "Notice: Except as otherwise directed by Executive Order, any notice required to be sent or mailed to all Members of the Lodge may be included in the Lodge Bulletin or sent electronically to any Member who has given written authorization to receive notices electronically. Notice which is required to be served upon a specific Member must be served personally, by United States Mail or by United States Mail, Certified, Return Receipt Requested as specifically provided."

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GRAND LODGE ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

Keep up momentum with Antlers

By **RICHARD E. BARD**
Committee Member

It goes without saying that this year has presented us all with some challenges. However, even in the face of a stiff wind, we must continue to build on the momentum that we have created.

Perhaps your Lodge was one of the several that took the leap and instituted a program. Even in the midst of a worldwide pandemic, Lodges in our Order took the necessary steps to start an Antlers program. Those Lodges and those communities will reap the benefits of having our youth become involved in service to help us get back on track. The opportunities for good, positive community service are endless.

If your Lodge wasn't able to do much in the way of youth programs, as we open back up again, the Antlers would be a great place to start. Many of our kids have been in some form of isolation. Social outlets such as school and sports have been spotty to non-existent. This might be a perfect time to consider starting an Antlers Lodge. Sure, there is a little

work that must be done to start one, but the rewards far outweigh any bumps you might encounter along the way.

Information about starting an Antlers program can be found on the Grand Lodge website. Please feel free to contact me as well. There is nothing that could be more beneficial to our Order and to our communities than to engage our young folks in positive charitable work.

The need is obvious. The reasons are many. Make this the year that we come back bigger and better than ever. Our young people are our future, and we can make the future brighter for us all. Build on the Momentum and start or grow an Antlers Program. Contact your Area Activities Chairman, and let's get started together.

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DRUG AWARENESS PROGRAM

Report: For teens, cannabis almost as addictive as opioids

By WILLIAM J. BRYAN
Assistant National Director

A few years back, the Elks DAP decided to shift our marijuana anti-legalization efforts to increase our educational efforts warning youth about the dangers of marijuana. We faced pushback, such as arguments that said marijuana is not addictive, and that most states have either legalized recreational use or are moving in that direction. The Elks DAP have been warning the youth that although marijuana may not fit the clinical definition of addiction, it is still dangerous and can cause dependency.

A recent report, published by the American Medical Association monthly peer-reviewed journal JAMA Pediatrics, found that teenagers' addiction rates for cannabis are about the same as for prescription opioids, according to a study of drugs and youth.

The study indicated that a year after first trying cannabis, almost 10.7% of adolescents age 12 to 17 met the criteria of addiction. Those in the same age group who tried prescription opioids had a similar addiction rate of 11.2%. This is an alarming statistic.

The findings contradict widely-held perceptions that cannabis isn't particularly addictive and may attract attention amid a broad U.S. push to liberalize its use. The rates of addiction were significant, especially since teenagers' brains are still developing, according to Nora Volkow, an author of the study and the current director of the U.S.'s National Institute on Drug Abuse.

The findings underscore how important it is for doctors, parents, and those who work with young people to talk with teenagers about recreational drug use, something that isn't always emphasized at younger ages.

In other news, the Elks DAP is looking forward to seeing attendees at this year's convention in Tampa. The theme for this year will be: *"COVID hasn't stopped the work of the DAP."* We will conduct our annual training, which will be video streamed to State Chairs who are unable to attend. We will also hold our annual Open Session for membership, although attendance will be limited due to COVID-19 regulations. Those interested in attending will need to pre-register. In addition to the Open Session, the DAP will be holding smaller workshops on a variety of topics. Hope to see you there!

GRAND LODGE FRATERNAL COMMITTEE

Student writers show patriotism

By DAVID P. CIOE
Committee Member
Americanism Essay Contest Administrator

Final judging of the Americanism Essay Contest for 2020-21 has been completed. The theme was *"How Can Patriotism Be Demonstrated?"* A huge round of applause and many thanks to all the students, parents, guardians, teachers, Lodges, and State Associations who followed through on the process to reach the submittal and judging stages of this contest. Great job everyone!

The submissions were excellent and once again made the job of judging quite difficult. Due to the ongoing pandemic, our challenge was to complete the judging while keeping our team of judges safe. Again we relied on technology and the internet. Our team of judges reviewed the entries and judged "virtually," meaning all entries were scanned and voted on by our judges via the internet. In all, a total of 71 submissions were received, as compared to 84 from last year. The results are as follows:

DIVISION I Fifth and Sixth Grades (36 submissions)

1st Place: Eliza Cordray, sixth grade, Thomas Jefferson Middle School, Winston-Salem, NC, sponsored by Winston-Salem, NC Lodge No. 449.

2nd Place: Parinya Jain, fifth grade, Thomas W. Hamilton School, South Weymouth, MA, sponsored by Weymouth-Braintree, MA Lodge No. 2232.

3rd Place: Marley Neesvig, sixth grade, Thompson Falls Elementary School, Thompson Falls, MT, sponsored by Clark Fork Valley, MT Lodge No. 2757.

DIVISION II Seventh and Eighth Grades (35 submissions)

1st Place: Cole Adair, eighth grade, Queen of All Saints School, St. Louis, MO, sponsored by Oakville, MO Lodge No. 2726.

2nd Place: Dan Sickels, eighth grade, Hasbrouck Heights Middle School, Hasbrouck Heights, NJ, sponsored by Hasbrouck Heights, NJ Lodge No. 1962.

3rd Place: Tyne Roth, eighth grade, Eagle Middle School, Eagle, ID, sponsored by Boise, ID Lodge No. 310.

Congratulations to all the winners! Your plaques will be on display at the Americanism Essay Contest Seminar on Monday, July 5 during the upcoming Elks National Convention in Tampa, FL, July 4-7. State Association Presidents or their designees may pick up the plaques for presentation at the Seminar. The Americanism Essay Contest Theme for 2021 – 2022 is *"What Does It Mean To Love Your Country?"*

We enjoyed reading all of the students' essays submitted on demonstrating patriotism, and all of us in Elkdom are extremely proud of **all** of the contestants!

GRAND LODGE GOVERNMENT RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Tell your Members, tell your mayor

By ANTHONY MARKARIAN
Committee Member

We were charitable last year, even despite the pandemic. Now is the time to publish your Lodge and Grand Lodge Charity Reports in your newsletter.

It is amazing to see what a well notified Membership can accomplish. Here's an example: Right now, Lodges are reaching out to those who are delinquent. A few on the fence are saying, "Should I pay this bill? We really don't go as much as we used to."

After reading the Charity Report, they realized their dues were going to a good cause, so they paid at the first opportunity. Further research is showing, after reading about the charitable dollars generated by the membership, they are

proud enough to tell neighbors, friends, and family.

Next, your local city and county government officials need to know ASAP. Send an official correspondence to every council member by using one of the templates in your Government Relations Manual. They will write back thanking you for your service to the community and for keeping them informed. Just like that, you started a relationship with your local government. Invite them over to discuss grant opportunities and give them a tour.

Lodges have been boasting about their contributions more than ever by using banners to proudly show their accomplishments. They realize the Charity Report can be used as a tool to both increase Membership and earn respect in their community.

GRAND LODGE ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

After past year, kids need guidance more than ever

By **DUANE D. HELDENBRAND**
Committee Member

As this year of Elkdom comes to a close, we are left with the question of, “What next?” Due to this past year, we have become accustomed to the unexpected and have had to navigate the unknown waters of a global pandemic. We have had to set our sense of normalcy to the side and figure out how not only to survive but move forward within such a tumultuous year. While we have all made sacrifices in our daily lives, we are not the only ones suffering a tremendous blow from the pandemic.

With school closures and the introduction of virtual learning, the youth of America have experienced an upheaval unlike any other. They were pulled from their classrooms and placed in front of computer screens. Instead of attending camps, going to friends’ birthday parties, or playing sports, they were plucked out of all activities and thrown into a virtual atmosphere void of community. What little control they had of their day-to-day lives had changed drastically, seemingly overnight.

Elks have always recognized children as an integral part of America’s communities and a primary focus of this organization. Now, more than ever, we as Elks have the undeniable duty of helping today’s youth move beyond regaining a feeling of normalcy. President Franklin D. Roosevelt once said, “We cannot always build the future for our youth, but we can build our youth for the future.”

Keeping that in mind, let us approach this year with a feeling of fervor. As an Order that already gives so much to its communities, it can seem like a tremendous task to give even more. However, as an organization that already has programs dedicated to promoting the growth of youth in this country, we are more than capable of giving the children of today a chance to expand their current viewpoints to make tomorrow better.

Whether it is sponsoring a Girl Scout or Boy Scout troop within your area, recognizing the hard work of students in your local schools, or introducing youth to the Elks Antlers Program, no child within a Lodge’s reach should go without the benefits that Elks Activities

programs can provide. Without the many projects offered by State Associations and Local Lodges, more and more youth could be subjected to negative influences that could drive them from being the leaders of tomorrow. If anything, be bold when reaching out to your community’s children. Let them know that regardless of what may be happening in the world around them that the Elks will always be there to promote, nurture, and help them become the future leaders of their homes, communities, country, and perhaps even The Benevolent & Protective Order of Elks.

If your Lodge is struggling to create or implement an active Youth program, please refer to the Grand Lodge Youth Activities manual. There are many ideas within that can be a great fit for your community. Get on the Grand Lodge website to download this and many more manuals that will benefit your Lodge. Contact other Lodges for advice. Call your district and state chairs for guidance. And always know the Grand Lodge Activities committee person for your Area is only a phone call or e-mail away.

VETERANS From Page 4

With so many veterans in need, Silva is grateful her granddaughters are here to help. “It’s nice to have the girls with me when I’m doing the shopping because it usually takes a couple of shopping carts. When I was doing the shopping by myself it was hard.”

Silva puts a lot of work into building and delivering Welcome Home Kits, “but it’s so worth it just to see [the veterans’] smiles.” Now, she is teaching her grandchildren to have the same passion she has for helping people in need.

Go to elks.org/vets/welcomehome.cfm to learn about the Welcome Home Kit program.

BULLETINS From Page 1

Section 16.150 Opinion 03: “If a Lodge publishes any magazine, newspaper, bulletin or other periodical devoted to the interests of the Order, every Member of that Lodge is entitled to receive a copy of each such publication, whether by electronic delivery or by regular mail.”

Section 16.150 Opinion 04: “The Lodge Bulletin may be sent electronically to any Member without written authorization from that Member, unless otherwise requested by the Member.”

Sapulpa Elks give shelter during storm

Record weather and snowstorms hit the southern United States in February, leaving already vulnerable populations more susceptible to hardship. After a man experiencing homelessness passed away due to the severe cold in nearby Tulsa, the Sapulpa, OK Lodge No. 1118 decided to help their community by offering the Lodge as a homeless shelter.

The Sapulpa Lodge took to Facebook to appeal for donations to temporarily transform the Lodge into a shelter for those in need. The Sapulpa Elks were blown away by the response they received from their community—food, money, sleeping bags, and clothes were donated.

“We were overwhelmed with the donations,” said Brian Stephens, a Sapulpa Lodge Member. “The community really came out and gave us everything we needed. Someone dropped off two dozen donuts. He wasn’t even from Sapulpa, just saw it on Facebook and said he wanted to help.”

Inspired by the generosity of the Sapulpa Lodge, other organizations like Shoulder 2 Shoulder Ministries donated manpower to the cause—or in some cases, kid-power. A group of youth volunteers called Young Minds, Big Ideas aided the Sapulpa Elks by gathering games, puzzles, and other donations from local businesses.

They also served food to those sheltering at the Lodge.

Many people sought refuge with the Elks. When Tulsa shelters reached capacity, people found safety at the Sapulpa Lodge. Even non-Oklahoma residents relied on the Sapulpa Elks—a Montana resident asked them to check on a friend living in a trailer nearby, resulting in the Elks and Shoulder 2 Shoulder Ministries bringing the person blankets.

The shelter was for anyone in need, no questions asked. “We had one guy who wasn’t homeless, but his house didn’t have heat. So, he stayed with us.”

Helping people in need not only runs in the Sapulpa Lodge, it runs in the Stephens’ family. Brian’s brother Mark serves as the Secretary for the Sapulpa Lodge and writes all its grant applications. In 2020-21, the Sapulpa Lodge used its Gratitude Grant to provide coats, backpacks and PPE to people with disabilities, and used a merged Beacon and Spotlight Grant to help fund the local food bank.

Between CIP grants and the shelter, Members of Sapulpa Lodge showed that #ElksAlwaysCare and inspired the community to band together to help those most in need.



Veteran outreach can become a family affair

By **NADEZH MULHOLLAND**
Programs Associate

Denise Silva, Chaplain of Walnut Creek, CA Lodge No. 1811, knows about giving back to her community. Ever since Denise learned about the Welcome Home Kit program at the Elks National Convention in 2017, she has stayed busy providing kits of household supplies to veterans throughout Contra Costa and Solano Counties. Welcome Home Kits help veterans exiting homelessness to get the items they need to establish new homes. Along with these smaller household essentials, Walnut Creek Lodge also includes donated furniture in each kit.

Lately, Silva has been bringing her

three granddaughters with her on shopping trips and to deliver kits to veterans in need. All three of her granddaughters are Girl Scouts, and they come bearing a special treat of Girl Scout cookies for every veteran they visit. “The girls like it best when the veteran has a dog,” Silva adds with a laugh.

The kids got to know one veteran—and his canine companion—especially well over the four trips they made to his home to drop off furniture and household supplies. The Lodge depends on donations and the kindness of others to procure furniture, and the timing isn’t

always predictable. Silva likes to deliver the items as soon they become available: dishes and cleaning supplies one day, a recliner chair another day, and a bed on a third day.

Veterans sometimes ask her why she is willing to travel so far to drop off a single item. “I don’t want you sitting on the floor, I don’t want you not to have some way to fix food and eat,” she tells them. “If I don’t have the furniture you need, I at least take the household stuff so they can cook for themselves, do laundry, have clean towels.”



Please see **VETERANS**, Page 3

BRYAN R. KLATT, Grand Secretary
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GRAND LODGE PUBLIC RELATIONS AND MEMBERSHIP MARKETING COMMITTEE

Virtual guides make it easier to boost membership

By **RICK GATHEN**
Membership Marketing Manager

Elks.org has two comprehensive virtual resources: the Membership Guide, and the Marketing Guide. They are full of templates, videos, scripts, manuals, tip sheets, and other tools that help Members grow the Order.

The Membership Guide contains an annotated road map that details the five stages of membership: invitation to join, orientation and initiation, volunteering, leadership, and revitalization and retention.

The virtual guides help grow membership. Share the “Why We Join”

video, write to local news outlets to share Lodges’ charitable news, and establish or improve a Lodge’s website and social media pages.

Many informative videos are ready to use, like “Welcome to the Elks” and the “Elks Orientation Video.” These can be found under the “Initiation & Orientation” section. The “Revitalization & Retention” section contains phone scripts and letter templates that can be used to contact delinquent Members, persuading them to re-join and get engaged.

In addition to traditional “Brick Marketing” strategies, the Marketing

Guide has a section for “Click Marketing” that is done online. It contains several videos about the history and message of the Elks and the Elks National Foundation. The section also has resources for producing e-greetings and making promotional videos, along with links to Elk’s websites and social media pages. The guides can be found at the top of the “Manuals” page in the Grand Lodge section of Elks.org.

Please also visit our new Recruitment website Join.Elks.org.

ELKS Do!